

# Vulgar Errors

I N 41. 21.

# DIVINITY

## REMOVED.

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*Qui erranti comiter monstrat viam quasi lumen  
de suo lumine accendit, facit nihilominus  
ut ipsi lucet.*

Mat. 22. 29.

*Ye err not knowing the Scriptures.*

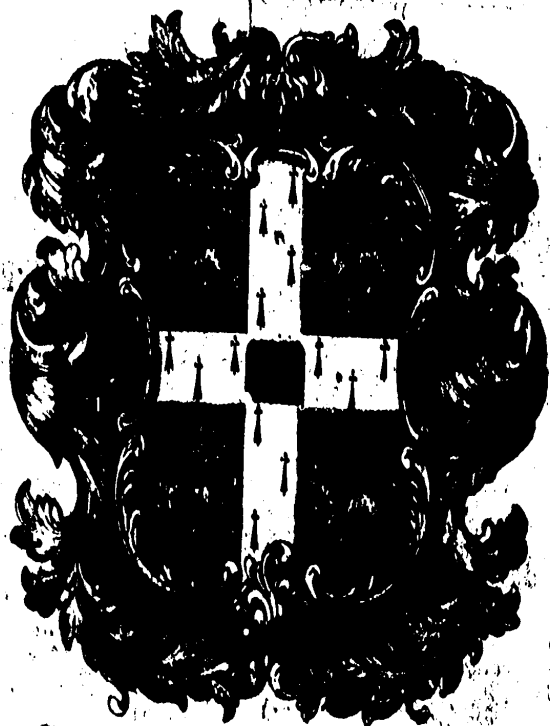
2 Pet. 3. 16.

*In St. Pauls Epistles are some things hard to  
be understood, which they that are unlearned  
and unstable wrest, as they do also the other  
Scriptures.*

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Liber.

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TO  
The Right Honourable  
**THOMAS**  
Earl of *Sussex*, Baron *Dacres*,  
One of the Gentlemen of His  
Majesties Bed-Chamber,  
Health and Happiness.

My Lord,



Am bold to Dedicate  
these my first fruits  
to your Honour as a  
testimony of my  
grateful mind for your Lord-  
ships favours towards me. Three  
A 2 things

## *The Epistle Dedicatory.*

things prompted me on to this undertaking.

First, The great honour I bear to Almighty God, whose Nature being mistaken, his Name is blasphemed, whilst he is rendered so unlovely, as fatally to doom the greatest part of Mankind to everlasting fire, chiefly for his own glory, and not for the bad usage of the Talents they have received at his hands by making their sins but the subordinate cause of their damnation, and Gods omnipotent power to justify such a Decree. Now I would fain know how these fatal Dogmatizers could paint out the Devil in worse colours, than they do our gracious God, if he had Gods omnipotent

## *The Epistle Dedicatory.*

power to abuse, towards the far greatest part of mankind. But certainly God is more merciful than these men would have him be; else such blasphemers of his merciful nature had not died the common death of all men.

Secondly, The great honour I bear to the King, and the great love I bear to Kingly Government, as least subject to oppression; or renting the State in pieces by Faction. In all Governments some body must necessarily be trusted with the Supremacy upon their honesty; and who is fitter to be trusted than he whom God and Nature shall design for so great a trust? If ungodly men have a mind to change, still they must

A 3

## *The Epistle Dedicatory.*

must trust, or again rebel, and so in *infinitum*; for unless somebody be trusted at last, there can be no peace. Who shall keep the Keeper is an unanswerable question, unless you say God alone. If you say the Law, that indeed ought to keep him in the Right, and to be the Kings Director, but the Law cannot keep him as his Superior, so as to touch life or limb if he be a Transgressor. He that hath a Prerogative to save other mens lives, when by Law condemned, must needs be supposed to be above Law for his own. And blessed be God for the Kings Prerogatives, without which the Nation could not long continue in peace and safety.

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## *The Epistle Dedicatory.*

ty. If we revolve the English Histories of King *Henry III.* in the Grant given the Douze Peers (as they were called;) or of King *Charles I.* in the Grant to the Long Parliament, and consider the fatal destruction of *Simon de Montford* their General, and most of the Peers in the end; (although so triumphant at *Lewis* in *Sussex* at the first) as a consequence of the one; and of King *Charles* of blessed memory; (after so much bloodshed, and oppression) as a consequence of the other; it may teach us how unsafe it is for the People, to desire any thing of the King, or for the King to grant away any Prerogative to the People, which may make him too weak for

A 4 Govern-

### *The Epistle Dedicatory.*

Government, upon any difficulty, or fair pretence whatsoever.

Thirdly, The great love I bear to the truth, as desirous to raise the decayed credit of it; that so men may walk in it. For Error embraced debases the understanding, as a Noble person his blood by marrying one of mean Parentage and base conditions; and men acting generally according to those Principles they have espoused; ( for all their after reasonings, and deliberate actions, are founded on those Principles ) when they are erroneous they take false measures of honour, and dishonour, of right and wrong, and the more zealous they are for them, the

### *The Epistle Dedicatory.*


the worse they are, as the Arrow ill levelled at hand, the further it flies, the further it is off the Mark. That God would give your Lordship length of days, riches, and honour, and at the end of those days everlasting felicity, is the Prayer of,

Your Lordships obliged

Servant, and Chaplain,

*Ralph Battell.*

## To the Reader.

 I have seen a double or pleated Picture, on one side appear a beautiful Woman; but if you go to the other side of the Room, it would appear an odious Serpent: So (although truth be but one, and not double) yet it will appear diversly, according as we look upon it. For if with solid judgment we behold it, it will appear lovely, as it is; if with prejudice, being wrong byassed with interest or education it will appear a foul error. Wherefore thou art desired that readeest this Book to lay aside all prepossession, and to weigh what

## To the Reader.

is said, with candour and ingenuity with naked and impartial reason. One adviseth very well to suppress at least nine years, any Notions we have a mind to make publick, and if then upon so long consideration, we still like them, to set them forth. I assure thee I have done so by most of these herein contained, and upon mature deliberation bring them into light, and if God lend me life and opportunity intend a Second part of a like nature. If any thing seem contrary to the Church of England, I am confident it is thy error to think so: but if my Superiours judge so: I here disown it, for I never thought any new Notion of mine so good, but the authority and peace of the Church was much better, and to be preferred before it. Shall I speak plain English?  
Those

## To the Reader.

Those that are brought up in Error I have but little hopes to recover, but rather think I shall provoke such to produce their little exceptions, and vulgar plausible blinds, to keep up their Party. But I nourish a good hope that those that are disengaged from error (in the particulars herein mentioned) this Book may prevent them from embracing it, which is the hearty desire of the Author.

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Vulgar



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# Vulgar Errors

## CONCERNING

# REPROBATION

Removed.



That some are Reprobates is out of question, broad is the way that leads to destruction, and many there be go in it: But how they come to be so; is not without great controversy, nor without great mistake. Some say, that God meerly for his glory made some Vessels of wrath, according to the good pleasure of his Will: So that the object of Gods Decree of Reprobation, was not mankind considered as sinners, but meerly  
B as

as his Creatures, which is such a Doctrine, that whosoever brings I shall never bid God speed. Now the Texts of Scripture at which they have stumbled, and fallen into this unmerciful opinion are such as these; First, that of St. Paul in the ninth Chapter to the Romans, ver. 11. *For the Children being not yet born, neither having done good or evil; that the purpose of God according to Election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth, it was said unto her, the elder shall serve the younger, as it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated: You see, say they, before Jacob or Esau had done good or evil, one was loved, and the other hated. My answer is: First, these words are not spoken of Jacob or Esau's persons; but by a figure the person of either is put to represent, and shadow out the condition of their Posterities. Secondly, the Election there mentioned is meant chiefly concerning things Temporal, not things Eternal. That that saying, The elder shall serve the younger,*  
was

was not meant of their persons, but of their Posterities may appear from Gen. 25. 23. *Two Nations are in thy Womb, and two manner of People shall be separated from thy bowels, and the one People shall be stronger than the other, and the elder shall serve the younger. Esau in his own person never served Jacob; nay, Jacob called Esau his Lord, and bowed seven times to the ground before him, Gen. 33. 3. and was glad by a Present to obtain his peace of him. If Esau had done so to Jacob, how would they have triumphed in their personal sense? Secondly, that the love and hatred was meant chiefly concerning things temporal, see Mal. 1. 2, 3. from whence the words were taken. Was not Esau Jacobs Brother, saith the Lord? Yet I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau, and laid his Mountains, and his Heritage waste for the Dragons of the Wilderness. So that you plainly see the Apostle means not personal Election to eternal life, or hatred to eternal death; but of choosing Jacobs Posterity, to be a greater Nation than the Off-*

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spring of *Eſau*; meerly for his good  
pleasure which no man can juſtly ſpeak  
againſt; for he may do what he pleaſes  
with his own good bleſſings. If it be  
ſaid, the temporal bleſſings on *Jacob's*  
Poſterity did ſhadow out ſpiritual:  
'tis not denied but they might, and  
certainly to be brought ſo nigh unto  
God, as to be his peculiar People in  
Covenant was a ſpiritual bleſſing, and  
if all that were in Covenant were  
elected, the Argument were of force;  
but ſeeing they are not all *Israel*,  
which were of *Israel*, it falls to the  
ground. The truth is, the words  
are here uſed by the Apoſtle, by  
way of Allegory, and all that he ac-  
commodates them to, is to ſhew that  
God might juſtly caſt off the Jews,  
the People of the elder Covenant of  
Works, and take in the Gentiles, thoſe  
minors, and youngers, into the Cove-  
nant of grace in their rooms, as may  
appear from *Rom. 9. 30.* *What ſhall*  
*we ſay then to theſe things? That the*  
*Gentiles which followed not after*  
*righteouſneſs, have attained to righteouſneſs,*

*Reprobation removed.* 5  
*teouſneſs, even the righteouſneſs*  
*which is of faith: But Israel which*  
*followed after the Law of righteouſ-*  
*neſs hath not attained unto the Law*  
*of righteouſneſs. Wherefore? Because*  
*they ſought it not by faith, but as it*  
*were by the Works of the Law. And*  
this he makes the concluſion, and is  
the chief, if not the only thing he  
doth infer from the whole Allegory,  
And what he ſays to *Moses* is moſt  
equal, *I will have mercy on whom I will*  
*have mercy*; that is, it belongs to me  
to appoint upon what terms I will ſhew  
mercy, and juſtifie men, whether by the  
Law of Faith or by Works: For as he  
that builds an Hoſpital hath an equi-  
table right to appoint the qualifications  
of the perſons that ſhall partake in his  
gift, whether poor Children, or Wi-  
dows, Aged perſons, or the like; ſo  
it belongs to God to appoint upon  
what terms he will juſtifie men, whe-  
ther by the Law of Works, or by the  
Law of Faith; and ſeeing neither  
Works nor Faith can deſerve it at  
his hands, Juſtification is not of him  
B 3 that

that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. God hath reason enough for all his doings, but in distributing mercies which have no foundation in merit, he need give no account or reason of it, but his Will. And so likewise for his judgments upon *Pharaoh* (here used as a Type of the obstinate Jews) although God had reason enough to raise him up, (I suppose out of the former Plague, to reserve him for a more famous overthrow) because the Hebrew hath it, *I have made thee stand*; The Septuagint hath it for this cause, *διετηρήσας ἑως τῆς νῦν*, *Thou hast been preserved till now*. The Chaldee Paraphrase, and *Junius* so likewise explain it. And although God had reason enough to find fault with him for hardening of his heart, though now judicially hardened, and he could not help it; yet the Apostle waves these Reasons, and says, *Nay, but O man, who art thou that repliest against God?* As if he had said, it is intolerable presumption to quarrel at the ways of

of God as unequal when they clearly appear to be his: You ought rather with reverence to presume there is wisdom and righteousness in them, though you through ignorance cannot comprehend them: For as his power in forming man ought not to be found fault withal, and none ought to say, *Why hast thou made me thus?* So neither his Justice, which is as infinite as his Power, and renders to men only according to their Works.

A second Scripture is this: *I have not the Potter power over the Clay of the same lump to make one vessel to honour, another to dishonour*, Ver. 21. Whence they infer, God is the Potter, we the Clay; the Elect are the Vessels of honour, the Reprobates the Vessels of wrath and dishonour; and if God make a Vessel of wrath, shall the thing framed say to him that framed it, *Why hast thou made me thus?* To this I answer; We are indeed in Gods Hands, as the Clay in the hand of the Potter, and when he framed man of the dust of the earth, he might

B 4 have

have made him the tail and not the head of the Creation; he might have moulded us Dogs, or Swine, or loathsome Serpents, and in that sense Vessels of dishonour, but to make us Vessels of wrath, and in that sense Vessels of dishonour, so the good God could not make us, no more than he can lie, or be cruel, or deny himself. The nature of God cannot come so nigh the nature of the Devil as to be a Murderer from the beginning. There can be no Vessel of wrath without sin, *Ephes. 5.6.* For these things sake, having fore-mentioned many sins, he saith, *the wrath of God comes upon the Children of disobedience.* But we cannot be sinful as we come out of his hands, and therefore cannot come out of his hands Vessels of wrath; he like the good tree cannot bring forth corrupt fruit, *Jer. 2. 21.* God doth avouch he never made a degenerate Plant, *Yet I had planted thee a noble Vine, wholly a right seed.* The Apostle says, *God is not willing that any should perish, 2 Pet. 3. 9.* But now if a man

man come a Vessel of wrath out of his hands, 'tis senseless to say he would not have that man perish: If he would have had him sav'd, he would have made him a Vessel of mercy, and not of wrath: But the Apostle saith, he would have no man perish, therefore he doth not make any Vessels of wrath, in their sense. *God made man upright, but he found out many inventions, Eccl. 7. 29.* Now as God says in another place, *What iniquity have you found in me, that you depart from me?* So say I, What hard dealing have you ever found from God that you should ever entertain such hard thoughts of him? That you should embrace their opinions that make him a hater of his Creatures, before they were born, or considered them as doing either good or evil: and be angry with those that represent him as a mild and merciful Creator unto you; he is so far from making a Vessel of wrath, that he doth what can be done in a rational way to keep men from making themselves so: and doth promise, that if any

any that hath made himself such a one shall purge himself from his defilements, he shall receive him as a Vessel of mercy, and so use him, *2 Tim. 2. 20.* *Shew me that Creature, that hath more goodness in him than the Creator,* says *St. Ambrose*; but if God should ruine an innocent Creature, he should have less goodness in him in this particular than a good man. For a good man would not do such a thing; for him not to have made his Creature had been no injustice, but to forsake his Creature before his Creature forsake him, is such a piece of unmercifulness as the Father of mercies cannot be guilty of. Every breach betwixt God and man is still begun on the Creatures part; God can hate no man as his Creature before he consider him as a sinner. We read in *Gen. 1. 31.* when God created the world he beheld all that he had made, and it was very good: now what is not only good, but very good, could not be the object of his hatred, for it hath some small resemblance of himself, who

is good, and the chiefest good. Man above all Creatures here below was made after his own image; now as God cannot love those that resemble the Devil; no more can he hate those that resemble himself, whence it irrefragably follows, that until man had defac'd the Image of God in him, there was nothing but mercy and goodness intended towards him. *St. Peter* calls him *a faithful Creator*, *1 Pet. 4. ult.* intimating, that there is an engagement on him, the Author of being, to have a due care for the thing created, as a Father by nature is bound to provide for the Child, which those that do not are below the brute beast, *Isa. 27. 11.* *It is a people of no understanding, therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them, &c.* Intimating, if they had nor strangely wax'd out of kind, they had not been forsaken of him. But thirdly, it is objected from *Acts 13. 48.* when *Paul and Barnabas* preached unto the Gentiles, *as many as were ordained to eternal life believed;* whence

whence it follows, that they that did not believe were not ordained to eternal life, and consequently, were ordained to condemnation. I answer, the original word *παραμένοντες*, which we translate ordained, relates to the marshalling of an Army in rank and file, or setting any thing in order, and might as well have been translated disposed. In *1 Cor. 16. 15.* there it is translated addicted; *the house of Stephanas addicted themselves to the Ministry of the Saints*; and so it might have been translated there, as many as were addicted to eternal life believed. Our Saviour compares the preaching of the Word to the sowing of the Seed. Now that the Seed may prosper it is requisite that the ground be prepared beforehand for the receiving of it: even so it is necessary, that the hearers of the Word be disposed and addicted to receive it, that they come with honest and good hearts to hear it. Now the Gentiles, and some of the Jews came with such hearts and believed; but the most part of the Jews coming with

with envy in their hearts, *St. Pauls* Sermon to them was like the seed on the untilled soil; their unpreparedness made them incapable to be wrought upon, by such a measure of grace which wrought upon the Gentiles. Fourthly, it is objected, the Apostle, treating of Gods absolute and eternal Decrees of saving some, and of damning others, cries out *Rom, 11. 33. Oh the depth both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!* But if God damn men only upon foresight of their sin, and final impenitency, you have search'd out his ways, and found out that which the Apostle says is past finding out; therefore no cause is to be assigned why they are Vessels of wrath but only the good pleasure of his Will. I answer, if this part of the Chapter treated of Gods eternal Decrees, not to be search'd into, why men are sav'd or lost to all eternity, their Argument were unanswerable: But they wrest this Scripture, I dare not say, to their own

own destruction, but I dare say, to establish a false opinion of the destruction of others. Read from *v. 17.* to this exclamation in *v. 33.* and you will find he treats only of the breaking off the Jews the natural branches, and grafting in the Gentiles in their stead: or to speak without Allegory, of the casting off the Jews because of unbelief, and of bringing in the Gentiles into the visible Church of God, and admires his just judgments upon the Jews, and his wisdom upon taking this their unbelief as an occasion of shewing mercy to the Gentiles; and thereby provoking the Jews to emulation. Fifthly, they argue thus: Although it seem unreasonable to us that God should thus damn men by Prerogative, yet indeed it is not; for although mans Will be ruled by Reason, yet Gods is not, but his very willing a thing makes it reasonable and just: for a thing is not first reasonable and just, and then willed by God; but upon his willing it, its become both. As for the Will of God, I grant it is never separated

separated from justice, and it ought to bind us at all times to due obedience; but herein lies their mistake to think there is not an intrinsical good, and an intrinsical evil in the nature of things themselves; but only that Gods willing it makes it good, and his nilling a thing makes it evil; one says most blasphemously, God out of the absolute sovereignty of his Will may command all the wickedness he hath forbid, and forbid all the holiness he hath commanded. But as there are eternal verities, as that equals added to equals still make equals, and the cause is in order of nature before the effect: So things eternally just, as to love God, and to give him thanks; to hate God is so intrinsically evil that it is impossible but that it should be forbid. If it were possible for this not to be forbid, it were possible for this to be lawful, for where there is no Law there is no Transgression; but it is utterly impossible it should be lawful, therefore it must be granted there is an evil in order of nature before the



the prohibition of it: and so some things must needs be good in their own nature, as bearing a resemblance of the Image and goodness of God, before any external Law pass upon them. These things premised, my answer is, Although the Will of God be a rule of justice to us, yet it is not a rule of justice to himself: but his justice is rather a rule of his Works, and of his Will; and he works all things according to the Counsel of his Will; and that Counsel adviseth nothing rashly, or unmercifully, unreasonably, or unjustly; but according to the greatest Equity and Chancery in the world, and therefore cannot without the greatest violence to Reason and Religion, be thought to make irrelative Decrees, to torture for ever the greatest part of mankind chiefly for the pleasure of his Will. Again, they say Omnipotent Power authorizes all actions. Now if God will make Vessels of wrath, what hath any one to do with it? May he not do what he pleases with his own Creatures? My answer

answer is, we must not magnifie Gods Power so much as to eclipse his goodness, or his truth; which doth assure us that he is loving unto every man; and that he delights not in the death of any sinner. These men make God a Tyrant, rather than a King, and attribute such Prerogatives to God as are broadly inconsistent with his nature. Acts of Power are not good in themselves, but as they are accompanied with Justice and Mercy; otherwise they are bad, and lay a mans honour in the dust; we must not so magnifie one Attribute in God, as to juggle out all the rest. The Lord proclaims his name to *Moses, Exod. 34. 6.* after this manner, *The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin.* Now Gods name is every ways agreeing to his nature; which is (rather than his Creature should perish) to forgive iniquity, transgression, and sin, and not to decree everlasting fire to it,

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with.

without the intuition of sin. Let us not therefore entertain any hard thoughts of Almighty God. *Rev.* 20. 12, 13. when the earth and the Sea gave up their dead, they were all judged according to what was found in the Books, and those Books were written only according to their works. Conscience is one of those Books which shall be opened at the last day, and it will acquit God of all hard dealing towards men that perish. When *Moses* prayed thus, *Exod.* 32. 32. *Either forgive this People, or blot me out of the Book which thou hast written;* The Lord said, *Whosoever sins against me him will I blot out of my book:* Where you see sin only blots out of Gods Book, and not any Fatal Decree. If it should happen to men according to their Lots to be under such or such a Decree, and not according to their Works, there would nothing be remaining for us to do, but only patiently to obey Fate; for if an irrelative Decree do shut up the most of men under Condem-

nation,

nation, can any one of those men by all his industry alter his Destiny? Surely no: unless he were stronger than he that made that Decree. To what purpose then were all his endeavours, or to what purpose should we beat the air, and persuade him to impossibilities? Yes, to good purpose, say the Abettors of such a Decree, because no particular man knows under which Decree he is. I confess, this answer is the best they have to give, but it nothing enervates the Argument; for it is not the knowing of a Decree, or the being ignorant of a Decree, makes any thing to the altering of a Decree, for neither if I know it, will it be repealed, neither if I be ignorant of it, will it cease to be accomplished: Now then, although no particular man knows under which Decree he is, yet he must needs know he is under one of them (if there be such Decrees) and under which soever he be, he is bound with an Adamantine Chain unto it, and his end is fixt by reason of it as unalterably as the

Laws of the *Medes* and *Persians*: Who then, believing this, can believe, that his fasting, weeping or mourning, rent heart or garment can avail any thing to the altering of that Decree under which it was his Lot to be born. So that he that hath imbibed this Doctrine hath cut the Sinews of all industry, if he acts consequentially to what he himself doth believe. Nay, but the means are ordained as well as the end may some say! True, they are so: But to the far greatest part of men, if their opinion were true, God should command them to seek his face in vain; for those means could never attain the end for which men should use them, namely, the Salvation of their souls: For never any man from the foundation of the world under that Decree was sav'd, neither indeed can be, though *Moses*, and *Samuel* should pray for him; or an Angel from heaven preach unto him, he could not believe. To what purpose now was the means ordained to these, or the use of them? Nay, to what purpose

purpose should God with the conversion of such sinners? send his Embassadors to intreat and beseech them, expostulate the case with them, *Why will ye die?* swear unto them, *As I live, I had rather you should live*; if in the mean while he hath decreed their death before they did good or evil, and in order to that Decree was resolved, never to afford them power to perform any one act of saving grace? Now, whether there be insincerity in these Expressions, or in their Opinions, judge. Nay, let God be true, and every man a liar. Let us heartily believe that every mans destruction is wholly from himself, and not from any fatal Decree of God.

Lastly it is objected, the seventeenth Article of the Church of *England* says, *God hath decreed before the foundations of the world were laid by his Counsel secret to us, to deliver from Curse and damnation those whom he hath chosen in Christ out of mankind.* From whence they thus argue, Before the foundations of the world were

were laid, no man could do good or evil; but even then some were chosen; and consequently, some not: therefore those that were not chosen were rejected before they had done good, or evil. To this I answer; as some were chosen in Christ, and consequently, others not chosen before the foundations of the world were laid: so known unto God were all things before the foundations of the world were laid. He knew the first man would fall, and all mankind in him; so that when he chose them in Christ he look'd upon them as sinners, for the whole need not a Physitian, but those that are sick. He that is not a Sinner needs not a Saviour; and so when the non-Elect were rejected, they were considered as Sinners, and not as Creatures; my meaning is, not merely under the Notion of Creatures. So that the Article, if rightly understood, doth not impugn, but rather confirm this great truth which I so much contend for: namely, That God doth not hate any man  
as

as his Creature before he consider him as a Sinner.

These things have I written to shew, that Gods ways are equal, and if we perish, it is because our ways are unequal. To vindicate the mercy of God, which doth prolong our days, and fill our years with goodness, from the malignity of that Doctrine that doth insinuate, that to get himself glory God from all Eternity had no good will to save the greatest part of mankind. Lastly, To raise up the weak hands, and strengthen the feeble knees, and settle the discomposed and fainting spirits of such as fear, there is an eternal Decree of heaven gone out against them; in assuring them, that no irrelative Decree of God, sends any man to hell; and that only their own sins can cause their damnation: Which damnation to prevent, what could have been done more than God hath done? *For so God loved the world, that he sent his only begotten Son into the world that whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

# Vulgar Errors

CONCERNING  
Kingly GOVERNMENT  
Removed.



God is a God of Order, he hath made Angels and Men in a wonderful Order. Now Order is the disposing of unequal things to their proper places, as some to sit on the Throne, others to grind at the Mill ; Servants to be on foot, and Princes on horseback. It is a Vulgar Error which some have imbibed, that fear first made men into Societies ; or else that strength only usurp'd a power over them. This Principle is the fruitful mother

mother of Rebellion ; for it doth insinuate, that as soon as it will stand with their interests, men may free themselves from their bonds. “ But how “ false and unnatural this Principle is “ may appear by this; that God made “ our condition such, that no man is, “ or ever was born into the world, “ but was under Father or Mother, “ which could not be usurpers of Government over their own Children; “ but their Children by the Law of “ Nature were bound to obey them, “ as one very well observes. When Families grew great, the elder of the house was their natural Lord, and so ’tis likely they continued till some mighty *Nimrod* invaded their rights, and usurp’d Government over them, which when others heard of, ’tis rational to conjecture, that to prevent that spreading Gangrene amongst them likewise, the wise and good men, that were Fathers of several Tribes, gave up their right to one whom they called a King. So that he came not to this height by Usurpation, or Ambition,

tion, but by a free and chearful conjunction of several Tribes to that Tribe, which had so good and potent a Father over them, as was both able and willing to preserve their Liberties and Laws. *Justin*, one of the most antient of the Latine Historians, says almost as much. So that Kingly Government is not only the most natural, but it is the antientest Government in the world. It is likely some were of old likewise for a Commonwealth; either out of ambition to have part in the Government, or else moved to it by the ill administration of Justice by Kings, or by their envy and discontent. But *Homer*, the antient Greek Poet, cries out, *ἅν’ ἀγαθόν*, the Government by many is not good; let there be but one King, one Governour, indeed herein he resembles God; who being but one, governs all the world. As Monarchy resembles God in Majesty; so likewise in Mercy: All other forms of Government come short of Monarchy in Mercy. His Prerogative can dispense with the rigour of the Law,

Law, where he sees there is hopes of amendment for the future, or where the evidence was not so clear as was to be wish'd against the condemned person, or where it should be very tragical to take away the life of the offender. Considering how apt we or our Children are to be tempted, and overtaken in a fault of a high nature, it is our great priviledge that we and they are born under Monarchy, which if it please can shew mercy to the condemned, and consider those favourable Circumstances which the Law could take no notice of, nor *Aristocracy* or *Democracy* do consider. The Beasts in the Fable were afraid, if they admitted the Lion to be their King, that then he might prey upon them at pleasure; To whom the Fox replies, If you do not, the Bear, and the Wolf, and every beast of prey will tear us, whilst we have none that can, or will defend us. The Moral of it is this, As there is no Government upon earth but may be subject to inconvenience, if the Ruler be wicked, yet Monarchy

is least subject to it; for if one be thought troublesome, what ease or security can there be when their name is Legion? It was certainly a great villany, though, being successful, it went for virtue in *Brutus* and his Confederates among the *Romans* to depose *Tarquinius*, and afterwards upon that to call all Monarchy Tyranny; but never did the world know greater slavery than under the *Aristocracy* of *Athens*, where instead of avoiding one, they set up thirty Tyrants; and an Historian tells us, the *Roman* State could not long have been preserved, if it had not submitted to a Monarchy; for the popular heats and factions were so great, that the Annual Election of Magistrates was but another name for a tumult. Nay, it is observable in the beginning of the *Roman* Commonwealth, when they rebelled against *Tarquinius*, and set up Consuls; this example was so prevalent with the Souldiers that they soon set up a Tribune of the People against the Consuls, and this Tribune and the Consuls

Consuls were often at daggers drawing who should be uppermost, but at last *Cæsar* threw them both out, and took the Empire upon himself. It is likewise a Vulgar Errour, that hath obtained with many, that God governed his own people in nature of a Commonwealth-Government until they sinfully desired a King: From whence they conclude *Aristocracy* to be the best form of Government: But when God delivered the Jews out of *Egypt*, he governed them, not only as their God, but as their Sovereign also; and he gave them Laws, not only for Piety, but for Polity also; and he set up his Deputies, *Moses*, and *Aaron*, and *Samuel*, to govern them, according to those Laws which himself had made to govern them by, both in Church and State. They could make no Laws to govern the State by, as we do Acts of Parliament, nor abrogate any; for as yet God was their Sovereign. When they were angry at this, and would have a King to be like the Heathen; they angered God,

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not but that they chose the best kind of Government, but they rejected God the best Governour, 1 Sam. 8. 7. God says thus to *Samuel*, *They have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them.* They preferred an earthly King to reign over them before an heavenly; and Laws of his making before Laws of Gods making. *Samuel* told them what Laws he would make, *He will take*, said he, *the best of your Fields and Vineyards, the tenth of your Seed and of your Cattel and give to his Officers, &c.* Nevertheless, they would have it so, rather than God should reign over them any longer; and hence it was, that he gave them a King in his anger. How ungrateful either *Democracy* or *Aristocracy* hath been to their greatest Patriots, and the defenders of their Country, the Histories of *Miltiades* and *Aristides* among the *Greeks*, and of *Scipio Africanus* among the *Latines* do abundantly testifie. Indeed, eminency of virtue in their Governours must needs create jealousies



### 32 *Vulgar Errors concerning*

jealousies of introducing Monarchy, which, they to prevent, did often unjustly imprison or banish their best Commanders. It is likewise a Vulgar Error, that from the beginning of the world there was a propriety of Law to make a Monarch; whereas to matter of fact, to any that will not shut their eyes, it must needs appear a vain Hypothesis. For I would fain know whether *Adam* held his Title over his Children so: or any other Hereditary Prince at first; or whether rather the right to Government was not inherent in his very Bloud, Person, and the next of the Family. If it be said, but few Nations have been so happy as to have the Succession derived to the eldest of the Family long together, but one of these two things often hapned, either some Usurper obtained the Government by the commotion of a People, or some other Nation got the Crown by Conquest: We demand in such cases, is not that Government from God? I answer, God suffers the Devil to have a great power,

### *Kingly Government removed.* 33

power, but is it therefore a lawful one? And will you from thence argue, that all men therefore ought, as well as most men do, obey him? A Permissive power is one thing, and a just power that comes with Gods Commission is another. Where the People rebel against their lawful Prince, and set up an Usurper, here is Gods Permission: But as for Gods Commission to such a Power I am to seek, and so I believe is every Usurper, as well as was *Henry* the Fourth of *England* on his death-bed; who looking on his Crown, which stood on his Bolster, sighing, said to his Son, *What right I had to this Crown God only knows*: Or as was *Richard* the Third, the night before *Bosworth* Field was fought, as *Polydor Virgil* relates. I will give it you in his own words, speaking how he was scared in the Night, he says, *Id puto non fuisse somnium sed Erinnem Conscientiæ. I do not think it a dream affrighted him so, but his guilty Conscience*. Secondly, where some other Nation by Conquest ob-  
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tained the Crown, if it were unjustly gotten, (as it was where the Conquerour was the Aggressor) it is no lawful Power: For if Robbers of whole Countries be Gods Vicegerents, surely Thieves, and Bandittoes are his under Officers. As a *Bastard till the tenth Generation might not enter into the Congregation of the Lord, Deut. 23. 2.* So such a bastard Government, must have length of time to make it legitimate; but if it was a lawful Conquest, as it might be where the Conquered gave just occasion of a War; or else began the War first: Yet the Title is weak to the conquered Crown, till by length of time, and death of all just Pretenders, it becomes the true Title, because it becomes the only one. It is likewise said by some of late times, that Kings have nothing to do to meddle in Ecclesiastical matters, but only to govern in Civil Affairs; but it is apparent, that as the Fathers of the Families in the beginning of the world were vested with a Kingly power over their own Posterity,

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so likewise they were Priests to their own Households; and *Esau* is called a *prophane person*, because *he sold his birthright*, Heb. 12, 16. to which the Priesthood was annex'd. He is not called a Fool, or an Idiot, but a profane person, one that did unhallow himself. So that from the beginning it was not so as they would have it, neither is it so yet; for whatever things or persons were not exempted from the power of the chief Magistrate before Christs time, are not by him exempted. Now, if we shall enquire what was the manner of the Nations of the World, or of Gods People in this point, it will appear, that the Magistrate ever regulated Religion, and religious persons: Witness the Decree of *Cyrus* to build Gods Temple; of the King of *Ninevey* to proclaim a Fast for all; and of *Nebuchadnezzar*, first, for Idolatry, and afterwards, for to worship the true God; all which are at large recorded in Scripture. And although in the Jewish Commonwealth God separated

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the Prince from the Priest, yet still the Priest remained subject to the Prince, as by the Stories of *David* and *Solomon* sufficiently appear. The Kings were blamed if things of Religion were amiss: which certainly they had never been, had not the affairs of Religion appertained to their inspection. But it is objected, that in the Primitive time of Christianity, the power to govern the Church was only in the Apostles, and their Successors, and not in heathen Princes. To that I answer, Those heathen Princes had a right to Christianity, and also to the Government of Christian Churches in their Dominions, but they scorned to own their right to either, or to subject their Scepters to a Crucified Saviour. But when in *Constantine's* time the Government became Christian, *Socrates* tells us, all the Affairs of the Church returned to the Royal Authority, and *Constantine* repress'd the *Arian* Doctrine; and *Justinian* the Emperour establish'd the Code of the Universal Church, consisting of the  
four

four first general Councils, and some ancient Provincial ones, and made them Laws of old reforming Kings, were commended: now, God never commends busie-bodies in other mens matters; every one ought to glorific God with that Talent which he hath received. Now the Sword is the Magistrates Talent, and with that he is to be an avenger of those that do evil: But evil in the Church is evil, as well as in the State, and tends to overthrow the State, and therefore it belongs to him to avenge it. He goes against the Laws of our Land, and may make him too weak for Government, who will not allow the King Supremacy in the Church, as well as in the State, not as supreme Ordinary unless he please to go into Sacred Orders; which he may at any time, but he always is Supreme Governour in his Territories, as well Ecclesiastical as Civil. It is no less dangerous to teach, that People may rebel upon grievances on the outward State, and that Nature then teaches them, by

38 *Vulgar Errors concerning*

the meer force of rationality to constitute another Governour, or institute another Government. My answer to this is manifold, first, Who shall be judge of those grievances? If you say the Common People, alas, what incompetent Judges are they in weighty matters; especially where they are concerned themselves? If you say, the Nobles, and chief of the People, why, these are not infallible; see *Num. 16. 1, 2, 3. Corah, Dathan, and Abiram, and two hundred and fifty Princes of the Assembly, famous in the Congregation, men of renown, gathered themselves together against Moses, and against Aaron, and said unto them, ye take too much upon you. Wherefore lift you up your selves above the Congregation of the Lord? Will ye put out the eyes of this people? &c.* It is as possible now adays people may be ignorant, or ambitious, as in former times. But be it granted, for argument sake, there be a real grievance, is not the Law open to redress it? Will not the great Council of the Kingdom, think you,

*Kingly Government removed.* 39

you, move the King to give him up to justice who durst advise the King to go against Law; thereby weakening his Throne, which is upheld by Justice; thereby dishonouring the King, and making him less valuable to his People? Will nothing serve but stretching forth the hand against Gods Anointed, or rising up in Rebellion? Certainly, both these courses are as plainly forbid in Scripture, as the Word of God can speak it. If objected, But those that killed Tyrants were always admired for sacrificing their own lives for the good of their Country. I answer, It was greatly done for *Lucretia, Cato, or Cleopatra* in their circumstances to kill themselves: but yet done wickedly; and so here; only the greatness of the action causeth men to take false measures of it, and so admire and commend it; especially if good follow upon it, it more blinds their judgments. But you must not judge by the good event the goodness of the action; for sometimes a bad one hath a good event, and a

good one bad success; nor by the good meaning, for *Peter* meant well, when he drew his Sword to defend his Master: but by a lawful call they had to undertake it. Now, who made those private persons judges or avengers in such cases? Or how can they be sure that Anarchy and Confusion will not follow upon such attempts? Which if it do, they have sacrificed their lives to the ruine of their Country. There ought to be none but lawful courses taken to redress unlawful grievances: but Rebellion is judged an unlawful course both by the Law of God, and the Law of the Land. Again, grant it but lawful in any one case to rebel, and you give Rebels an Inch, which they will soon make an Ell: And every small grievance shall be made that very case, or cousin-german to it. As men we ought to consider humane frailty even in Governours, and bear with small faults; considering what great benefits we still enjoy by their Government. I have read of a Nation, that upon the death of

of their King would permit by a Law made to that effect, that every body might do what was right in his own eyes for three days; but the murtherings, and plunderings, and outrages in so short a time were usually so many: that the next King needed not so much his own virtues as the remembrance of the *interregnum* Vices to endear his Government to his People; even Tyranny it self is not so bad as Anarchy. There is a mean between Rebellion and losing our Liberty, even when it is intrencht upon, namely, a patient waiting until a redress may legally be had, and Reason and Law be heard in cold blood to speak: untill we give away our Liberties, or give up our Laws, we have still a birthright to them even under oppression. And if we repent of our sins, which caused God to set such a Governour over us, he can change the Governour's heart, for it is in his hands to turn whether he pleases: or he can change the Governour for another, provided we change first. One way or other, we may

may hope deliverance will come, for God doth not willingly grieve the Children of men? but, until it do come, we must patiently bear Gods scourge in this kind, as we do sickness, ill weather at Sea, or Land, Pestilence, Famine, or the like. This is Christian Doctrine of the Church of *England*; witness the first part of the Homily against Rebellion; where having said, God gives a People such Kings usually as they deserve: it subjoyns for Subjects to deserve for their sins to have an evil Prince set over them, and then rebel against him, were double and treble evil: Nay, let us either deserve to have a good Prince, or let us patiently suffer and obey such as we deserve. If People rebel, one of these three things must happen, Either the King must conquer, and then the Subjects have fairly mended the matter, have they not? If it were a Rod in his hands before, they may justly now expect a Scorpion: Or else they must conquer, if so, who shall keep them from tyrannizing over the King, and their

their fellow Subjects? Or, who shall keep from Factions, and Change of Government every month? I hope we have had too late experience in both these kinds to trust to any fair pretence again in haste. Or, thirdly, there will be an Accommodation: if so, yet many dear lives are like first to be lost, and then we are at best but where we are now; for at last somebody must be trusted with the Supremacy upon their honesty. So that to Rebel seems to me a remedy worse than the disease at all times; for Rebels always go without a Commission; and therefore whatever they do cannot be said to go beyond it; many times they complain without a just cause, or upon a very slender one, not worthy of such a decision as the Sword. It is usually said of the *English* man, that he never knows when a thing is well; insomuch, that being over-curious, intending still to amend his work, he often mars all, or at leastwise makes it worse. Certainly, our *English* Constitution of Government is well

well enough in all reason. We are at this day, blessed be God, and our gracious King, at least, as free as any Nation in the known world; let us not screw the strings so high till they break, and all the Harmony be spoiled; there remains nothing to make us happy under this Government, but to think our selves happy in it, to bless God for it, and to pay our duties unto it. Some of which are these that follow: First, To live quietly under it. God and the Law hath given the King the Sword, and whoever else takes it, is an Usurper of another mans right, and deserves to perish by it. *Hazael* was confident he should never do so wickedly with his power as the Prophet told him he would. Why, those that usurp the Sword, as little know their own hearts as he, and therefore are as little to be trusted. For Argument sake, let us suppose it just in the beginning, yet to alter or change a Government, men must be forc'd to take such violent courses, as would render their actions unjust in the end, though

though just at first: But to resist thus the lawful power, is *to do evil that good may come on it*; and I am sure that is neither good nor just, first or last. Secondly, To honour the King as the Father of our Country. Suppose then any weakness in a Father, should a Son discover any nakedness? *Cham* was cursed for it; it is a part of that honour we owe to a King to cover it whenever we find it, not to curse him in our bed-chamber, but always to speak honourably of him; the taking away a Kings honour and esteem amongst his Subjects, is but a preparative to the taking away of his life. Thirdly, To pray for him both in Publick, and in Private; it is a weighty matter to govern so, as to serve so many interests, and if any be not served they will be angry and waspish. *Moses* complained, he was not able to bear the burthen of Government, and yet he was well-spirited for it by Almighty God. He hath need enough of our Prayers, and we have need enough to pray for him, if but for our

our own sakes, for in his peace we shall have peace, and in his trouble we shall have trouble enough. If God commanded the Jews to pray for the life of the King of *Babylon*, and to seek the peace of that City whether they were carried Captive: How much more should we pray for our own King, and seek the peace of our Native Country? Fourthly, To pay Tribute without murmuring proportionably to our Estates; most men mistake the Liberty of the Subject, which is the true cause of complaining in this point. 'Tis not in having such a property in our goods, as to exclude our Sovereign by Parliament from laying a Tax for our own defence, but only in excluding any Foreign Power, or any fellow-Subject from invading our rights; Should it consist in the former, the Kingdom might sink for want of necessary support. 'Tis not enough for a man to labour to build his house, but he must do something to defend his labours: Now in regard a private man cannot defend himself

himself against some mighty *Nimrods*, he must be content to pay Tribute to those that can. *Render therefore to all their dues, tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, &c.* Fifthly, To obey him and his good Laws; where Laws are good, passive obedience is not enough; for such as will not obey for Conscience sake, but only for wrath, bring an evil report upon his good Government, for by suffering they shew what an opinion they have of his Laws, and what they would have others think of them, namely, that they are not good, and that godly men cannot live without persecution under his Government; This must needs tend much to the dishonour of the King. Some others will obey the King, only provided he be a godly King, that is, (in their sense of godliness) one of their own Church; But Temporal right to Dominion is not founded in grace. The Scripture makes no such distinction of Kings, but commands obedience to them, whether *Saul* be King, or *David* King.



48 *Vulgar Errors concerning*  
 King, whether Nero be Emperour; or  
*Constantine Emperour. O King live*  
*for ever*, said *Daniel* to *Darius* who  
 cast him into the Lions Den. If any  
 thing be amiss in the Chief Magistrate,  
 Advice, Prayers, and Patience are the  
 most Christian remedies, for all Judges  
 under him are but his Deputies, and  
 all the power his Lieutenants have of  
 the Sword is the Kings, and it can ne-  
 ver stand with reason that his Autho-  
 rity should be used to depose his Per-  
 son. Nothing can bring tyranny sooner  
 into a Kingdom than the taking of an  
 ungodly course to keep it out. *Solo-*  
*mon* says, *Against a King there is no*  
*rising up*. It objected, It was so in-  
 deed in *Israel*, but the Politick Laws  
 of *England* differ from those of *Israel*.  
 My answer is, We are not for that Ar-  
 bitrary Government of a King; men-  
 tioned in the eighth Chapter of the  
 first Book of *Samuel*, but where the  
 Laws of *England* command and pre-  
 scribe obedience, there we may safely  
 urge it upon the Conscience, and there  
 every Subject of *England* ought to  
 yield

*Kingly Government removed.* 49  
 yield obedience to it. When the Law  
 of the Land says, *It is not lawful upon*  
*any pretence whatsoever to take up*  
*Arms against the King*; then we urge  
 that of the Apostle, *Be subject to*  
*every Ordinance of man for the Lords*  
*sake, whether to the King as Supream*;  
 and that of St. Paul, *Whosoever resi-*  
*steth the Power, resisteth the Ordinance*  
*of God*: For although men set the  
 bounds; yet God curses those that  
 remove the Land-marks; and invade  
 anothers rights, And blessed be God  
 that he hath, even in our days, over-  
 turned, overturned, all Rebels and  
 Usurpers of Government till he came  
 whose right it was to govern us, and  
 he hath given it him. Now what re-  
 mains, but that we bless God that  
 there is a King again in *England*,  
 and that every one doth not what  
 is right in his own eyes; that *Asbur-*  
*a* stranger is not our King, but a per-  
 fect Englishman lineally descended  
 of so many famous Ancestors; a  
 nursing Father of the Church, and  
 a Defender of the Laws and Liberties  
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50 *Vulgar Errors concerning*  
of his People, one that looks on us,  
as *David* on the Tribe of *Judah*, to  
be his own bone and his own flesh;  
and that we earnestly pray, that God  
would still long continue his gracious  
Reign over us; that we may lead quiet  
and peaceable lives in all godliness and  
honesty.

*Vulgar*

# Vulgar Errors

CONCERNING

Gods House and his Worship in it  
Removed.



Almighty God, who according to his nature, is infinite and incomprehensible, dwells not in Temples made with hands, as it is written, *Heaven is my Throne, and Earth is my footstool*, yet this infinite God is pleased to condescend so low, as to behold the things which are in Heaven, and in Earth, and to dwell with the Children of men: and though he hath given us all that we have, and all that we are: yet he accepts of any thing we shall in way of gratitude give back

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again

52 *Vulgar Errors concerning*  
again to him, to honour his Holy Name, and to make his praise to be glorious. *Jacob* knowing this, vowed a Vow, when sent away by his Parents for fear of his Brother *Esau*, Gen. 28. 20. Saying, if God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again unto my Fathers house in peace, then shall the Lord be my God; and this stone which I have set for a Pillar shall be Gods house, and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee. We read of several Altars before, but here is the first mention in the Scripture of any House to be built to the honour of Gods Name. Afterwards God bid *Moses* and *Aaron* build him an Ark, and told them it should be the Covenant and Pledge that he would go along with them, and that they should have his presence amongst them, and so it was performed accordingly: When the *Philistines* had taken it, it plagued them, their God *Dagon* fell before it, then they returned it; and when *Obed-*  
*Edom*

*Gods House and his Worship removed.* 53  
*Edom* had it, the Lord blessed the house of *Obed-Edom* the *Gittite*, and all that appertained to him, because of the Ark of God. After this, *David* seriously considered with himself that he dwelt in an house of Cedar, but the Ark of God was only under a Tent, and he vowed a Vow unto the Lord that he would prepare a place for it. The very instinct of nature told him, it was a shame that his own house should be handsomer than the Publick place of Gods Worship; and so it should teach us at this day. He prepares with all his might a stupendious quantity of materials for the House of God, 1 Chron. 29. 4. Three thousand Talents of Gold, of the Gold of *Ophir*, and seven thousand Talents of refined Silver to over-lay the Walls of the House withal, and Brass and Iron without weight, and Marble stones, and other Materials without number; for he considered that the House was not for man, but for God. Peaceful *Solomon* builds this House and consecrates it, and God accepts of it, and heard  
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the Prayers of his People that were put up in it against Plague, Famine, Mildew, blasting, or when the Enemy afflicted them within the Gates; when *Nebuchadnezzar* burnt this house, and carried away all the goodly Vessels belonging to it to *Babylon*, *Nehemiah* rebuilds it, and God stirreth up the spirit of *Cyrus* the *Persian* to send back again to this Temple five thousand four hundred Vessels of Gold and Silver, which *Nebuchadnezzar* had taken away, and put them in the House of his Gods; so the Temple was built, and beautified, and revered as Gods Sanctuary, as it ought to be. But in our Saviour's time men were grown to that height of prophaneness, that they brought Sheep and Oxen into that holy place to be sold, they made a Market place of it to sell Doves, and to change Money; but the zeal of Gods House did even eat our Saviour up; that is, made him seem to forget his mild and gentle nature, and use a Rod instead of the spirit of meekness; he with a Scourge drove out the Oxen,

Oxen, overthrew the Tables of the Money changers, and said to them that sold Doves, Take these things hence, and would not suffer any to carry a Vessel through the Temple, because it was an holy place, and left a lasting Lesson to us highly to esteem of places dedicated to Gods Worship. But here three Questions may arise; 1. How comes one place to be more holy than another? 2. What kind of holiness is a place capable of? 3. Whether if it be granted that a place was so under the Law, it be so still under the Gospel? To the first I answer, a place comes to be holy by being separated from common use, and dedicated to the service of God, *Exod. 13. 12.* *Thou shalt set apart all that openeth the Matrix unto the Lord.* Now *St. Luke*, speaking of the same thing in *Chap. 2. 23.* renders it thus, *Every Male that openeth the womb shall be called holy unto the Lord*: So that if a thing be set apart for the Lord, upon that setting it apart it becomes holy. The Israelites were called a holy

people because God *separated them from all other Nations to be his own peculiar*, 1 Kings 8.53. And when he would consecrate the *Levites* to his service from among all the Children of *Israel*, He says thus to *Moses*, *Thou shalt separate the Levites from among the Children of Israel, and the Levites shall be mine*, Num. 8.14. so that when a place is separated from common use, and dedicated to the service of God, that place is a Sanctuary, a holy place; and till the relation it hath to God for his service is abolished, it is to be accounted Sacred: So that the notion of Holiness consists in this, in being separated and set apart for God. The Religious person, whilst he is separated from sin and sinners, from the allurements of a wicked world, and the sinful lusts of the flesh, he makes his Soul and Body a Temple for the Holy Ghost. 2. If demanded what kind of holiness a place is capable of? I answer, a place is not capable of any inherent holiness as mans Soul is, but only of a Relative holiness;

*Gods House and his Worship removed.* 57 holiness; and if you will shew so much reverence to a Prince as to be uncovered in his Presence Chamber, certainly you ought to shew as much to God to be uncovered in his Sanctuary. If it be said, true, under the Law we grant things had a Relative holiness, but how do you prove they have so under the Gospel. I answer, Time and Place are receptive of holiness alike. We know that all times are his: for he makes all our days, all things are his, for *the Earth is the Lords and the fulness thereof*. But now, if under the Gospel some time may be more peculiarly his than as all time is his: and some things may be more peculiarly his, than as all things are his; then those things which are so peculiarly his may have a Relative holiness in them under the Gospel as well as under the Law; for the Relative holiness consists in this peculiar separation to Almighty God. Now that some Times may be peculiarly his is plain by *St. John's* calling the first day of the Week *the Lords Day*, Rev. 1. 10. that is

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is, set apart for his service by the Apostles and the Church instead of the Jewish Sabbath: and some Things may be peculiarly his as doth appear by St. Peters speech to *Ananias*, *Whilst it remained was it not thine own?* &c. Acts 5. 4. but to keep back what was dedicated to God was a robbing of God; *A lying unto God, and not unto men*; so that you see God may have a peculiarity in things under the Gospel as well as under the Law. And if it be in a Day, ye ought to keep it holy; if in a House, God would have you *keep your foot when you enter into the house of the Lord*. We have a Generation amongst us that cry up the holiness of the Sabbath, and the strict observance of it, as if in its minute Appendages it bound us almost as much as it did the Jew, and yet these very men will cry down the holiness of the Sanctuary, and account themselves very holy in so doing: Whereas, in *Lev. 19. 30.* God joyns them both together, saying, *Ie shall keep my Sabbaths, and reverence my Sanctuary.*

If

*Gods House and his Worship removed.* 59

If the fourth Commandment of the Decalogue bind us now according to the Letter as they contend, why doth their practice in kindling their fire, in dressing their food, contradict their opinion? Have they never read, that when it was in force, according to the Letter, a man was stoned for gathering sticks on the Sabbath day? But if the Equity only of that Law be in force at this day, why are we accounted as Transgressors by them, whilst we keep it according to the Moral Equity and the Precepts of the Church? The truth is, they are superstitious in the one, and prophane in the other. Can these men see that a Day may be holy because set apart for the service of God, and can they not see that a Place likewise may be holy which is consecrated to his Worship? Even the light of nature taught the Heathen, if once a Thing was dedicated to God, if it were a gift, to devour that gift was Sacrilege, and brought a Curse with it, witness their Proverb concerning the Gold of *Tholoss*: if it were a Place, to prophane

prophane that place was sinful; *Procul hinc, procul este prophani Conclamat vates*; and that they think so still, I call the *Morocco* Embassadour to witness. If it be said, those times for Publick Worship are appointed by Gods immediate command as Moral, and so are not publick places, and in that respect we honour one more than the other: I answer, it is one thing to say it, and another thing solidly to prove it; for the set times appointed by God in the fourth Commandment were the seventh days from the Creation, which on all hands is confest we keep not. Again, in what time soever the Church began to omit the last day of the Week, and keep only the first, that Week there was no seventh day Sabbath, which could not lawfully have been done if one day of seven be moral, and of perpetual Equity; for what is Moral is unchangeable. The truth is, the fourth Commandment enjoyns us to set convenient times apart for Gods Service, and that is a moral duty, but our Lords Day is

*Gods House and his Worship removed.* 61  
is not appointed by that, but by the Traditions of the Apostles, and the Precepts of the Church. Now we have not only the Precepts of the Church to esteem reverently of Gods House, but the Precepts of the Apostles to *do all things in Gods service decently and in order*; and when they did not, St. Paul chides them thus, *What, have you not houses to eat and drink in?* If any man hunger let him eat at home. The dishonour that is done to Gods House, reflects upon God himself. When *Jehu* destroyed *Baal* out of *Israel*, they brake down the house of *Baal*, and made it a draught-house: And so it must needs tend to the dishonour of Almighty God when we dishonour the place dedicated to his publick Worship. Learned Mr. *Mead* did believe, the instinct of nature taught the very Heathen, that the Worship was dignified by the peculiarness of the place, and the Magnificence of the Temple appointed for it. It is likewise a Vulgar Error that possesseth the minds of  
many

many, that to hear Preaching is the chief end of coming to God's House, whereas joyning together in Prayer is to be preferred before it, that which carries the denomination of a house, is certainly the chief thing that is to be done in that house. Now Gods House is not called the house of Preaching in Scripture, but *the house of Prayer*. I confess, Preaching is a great Ordinance, yet Prayer is a greater, how meanly soever it is esteemed by many. If there were nothing but Preaching, they would come; but if nothing but Praying, they will not come. But blessed *Hannah* was not of their mind; she never refused to come to the Temple when there were Prayers there. Surely, the Error in this point is very great, and one main cause I conceive is this, people are lazy in the duties of Christianity, and will not strive to enter in at the streight Gate; now to hear a Sermon puts them to no great labour; Nay, happily the novelty of the Matter, the variety of the Phrase, may deceive that

that little toil of sitting and listening to it: But Prayer is a lifting up of the Soul to God, and our Souls are naturally tending downwards, so that we may find it a weighty matter to lift them up long together, and we are quickly weary of that work. A righteous mans Prayer doth not avail much, unless it be fervent; now fervency cannot be unless our *Hearts pant after God as the Hart after the Rivers of waters*. And to bring our hearts to this, will cost us some pain, unless we sigh and groan, and so Gods Spirit helps us to do; unless we mourn and weep, so *David* often; unless we wrestle with God as *Jacob*, who wept and made his supplications unto him: which things since they are so, no marvel though a carnal heart had rather come to Preaching than to Praying: 'tis a great deal the easier duty; take heed the Devil don't perswade you 'tis in a manner the only duty, lest he keep you with a form of Godliness without the power of it all your days. When *Joseph* brought his



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his two Sons to Jacob to be blest'd, he thought his Father had been mistaken, in preferring Ephraim before Manasses: and he went to remove his Fathers hands, saying, *Not so my Father, this is the Elder, lay thy right hand upon his head: but he answered and said, I know it my Son, I know it, he shall be great, but truly his Brother shall be greater.* While some people think we are mistaken in preferring Praying before Preaching, they are mistaken themselves, and we may answer them, We know not what we affirm, we know it; Preaching shall be accounted a great Ecclesiastical Ordinance, but truly Prayer shall be a greater. And as Publick Prayer hath a more especial promise to be heard than Private, so likewise Prayers put up in Gods House, have a more peculiar promise than if put up elsewhere, *Exod. 20. 24. In all places where I record my name I will come unto thee, and will bless thee.* All Objections to the contrary are but like those made against the waters of Jordan by Naaman, *Are not Abana,*  
and

*Kingly Government removed.* 65

and Pharpar, Rivers of Damascus better than all the waters of Israel, may I not wash in them and be clean? No: the Promise is made to the waters of Jordan, and not to those. Now, as the waters cleansed not the Leprosie by any Physical operation, but by way of blessing; so neither do our Prayers prevail for their worthiness, but are heard for his Promise sake, and his gracious goodness. The Jews when they prayed at home, were wont still to spread forth their hands towards the Temple, 1 Kings 8. 38. So Daniel, his Windows being open towards Jerusalem, he kneeled on his knees three times a day and prayed, Dan. 6. 10. Neither are people less mistaken concerning their Praises, than concerning their Prayers in Gods House; whilst they cry out of the Organ, the Lute, or the Harp, as if it were sinfully ceremonious to sing Praises after that manner. The Ceremonial Law was given by Moses, but this was not given by Moses, therefore no part of the Ceremonial Law. Indeed, in the  
F Levi-

Levitical Law the Jew was commanded to blow with Trumpets on the Sabbath and New Moons: But you never read *Moses* commanded to sing Praises with Strings and Pipe. Again, the Ceremonies were shadows of things to come, and most of them referred unto Christ, but this kind of service is no ways typical of the Messiah, and therefore not Ceremonial. Neither is it sinful, for it was first taught us by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost; see *2 Chron. 29. 25. Hezekiah set the Levites in the House of the Lord with Cymbals, Psalteries, and Harps, according to the commandment of David, and Gad the Kings Seer, and Nathan the Prophet, for so was the Commandment of the Lord by his Prophets.* So that to praise God with Instruments of Musick in his House is so far from being sinful, that it was instituted first of all at the command of God himself by his Prophets. If it be farther objected, although it was appointed of God, yet it was appointed under the Old Law, before

*Gods House and his Worship removed. 67*  
 before Christ came, therefore ought now to vanish. My answer is; so were the Ten Commandments, yet they ought always to stand in force; we must not look so much to the time when a Command is given, as to the intrinsic nature of a Command, if we would know whether it be always to stand in force or no: For if the Law have in it a Moral equity, though given under the Law, it may oblige us under the Gospel. Now, that the great and glorious God should be praised with Psalms, and Hymns, and spiritual Songs, sung after the best and skilfullest manner, to make his Service more solemn, must needs be most equal; and having in it a moral equity, cannot be displeasing to Almighty God still to be kept up by us. Instruments of Musick have great influence into the Affections of men, we use the Trumpet to stir up the courage of men in War: Why should we not use these to stir up our Affections to Gods Service, to make us sing lustily, and with a good courage?

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If it be said, it will hinder our devotion by carrying away the mind to the Musick; I answer, this is not essential to it, but only accidental: So may a pleasant Voice; but we must not take away the use of a thing because it may be abused. Watch therefore more narrowly thine own Heart, and think these Wings were added to thy soul, to make her fly the swifter up to Heaven, and not to flutter here below. God loves no lukewarm drouzie service; that therefore that will heighten our zeal, and take away our drouziness, will be a help and not an hindrance to our devotion. To this end *David prepared two hundred fourscore and eight skilful Singers to praise God, being instructed in the Songs of the Lord, as we read in 1 Chron. 25. 7.* And he made four thousand Instruments to praise God withal, 1 Chron. 23. 5. Thus he took order, that with Trumpets and Shawmes, they should shew themselves joyfull before the Lord their King. The infirmities of our nature, and the weakneses of flesh and

*Gods House and his Worship removed. 69*  
and bloud are much relieved by Musick. We read of a strange effect that Musick had upon *Saul*, 1 Sam. 16. 14. *Saul had forsaken God, and now Gods Spirit forsakes him, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him, and it came to pass, when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took a Harp and played with his hand, so Saul was refreshed, and well, and the evil spirit departed from him.* If it had been the Spirit of God that had been expell'd by Musick, no question but this place would have been brought by some against us: But seeing it was the evil spirit, that was constantly chased away by it, why should it not make for us? For whether it were a deep melancholy only, or a Devil possessing him, and stirring and carrying that melancholy passion further than naturally it would have gone; Expositors do doubt. But be it which it will, you see *Saul* was miserably out of tune with it, till *David*s Harp composed his affections, and made him sedate, and quiet, and fit for the

Society of men again. If Musick be known to heighten our joy at a feast; Why may it not heighten our joy in the Lord, whilst we make a chearful noise unto the God of *Jacob*? If we are commanded, when merry to sing Psalms: Surely, to make the tune more melodious with Harp or Organ can be no offence. If to hear a Psalm sung out of tune hinders our devotion, and is apt to move scorn and laughter, then by the rule of contraries, to be brought to good time and tune by an Organ, must needs make the Service of God more solemn, more devout, and more acceptable both to God and man.

**Vulgar**

# Vulgar Errors

## CONCERNING

# The W I L L

### Removed.



Although Faith and Hope be Gods gifts, and called Gods Armour, yet we must put this Armour on. We must cooperate with the grace of God, or else his grace will be offered us in vain. The Greek Proverb says, *A man must defend his Weapons, if he would have his Weapons defend him.* And St. Augustine says truly, *He that made thee without thee will not save thee without thee.* But how far, and after what manner the Will of man

F 4 concurs

concurr with the grace of God in things pertaining to Salvation, is much controverted by the Learned; which that you may the better understand I shall first explain the terms unto you:

1. Telling you what the Will is.
  2. What the grace of God is, and then shall consider of their manner of concurrence in all gracious acts.
1. The Will is the rational appetite, or a free power of choosing, or refusing of a thing, or of preferring one thing before another, when divers things conduce to the same end. 2. Grace is strength and assistance from God, to do something above nature. *Without me*, says Christ, *ye can do nothing*; we are not able of our selves so much as to think a good thought. 'Tis said *Pelagius* taught, that the Will of man needed nothing of grace, but only to be enlightened by the Word of God to know his Will, and the danger of not doing it, and the reward of performing it, and then it was able by its own natural powers to perform it; grounding his opinion on such

such Texts as these, *If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin.* Now ye say we see, therefore *your sin remaineth.* Some on the other side, think the Will is subject to the special motion of God in the act of Conversion, or any other gracious act, so that the grace of God is irresistably powerful, and what mixture men bring from the vertue of the Will to grace is only the corruption of it; they ground their opinion on such Texts as these; *You hath he quickned who were dead in trespasses and sins.* And again, *We are created in Christ Jesus unto good works*; from whence they infer, That as a dead man doth nothing to the raising of himself, no more do we that are spiritually dead. As God put forth an Almighty power at the Creation of the world, so an irresistible power at our Conversion, which is called the new Creation. Now the truth is in the middle, we need Gods grace as well to assist the Will in goodness, as at first to excite to good-

goodness, and it is very reasonable to think, that as the Devil is dayly and hourly suggesting evil motions to us, so God or his good Angel is dayly and hourly inspiring and assisting us to what is good; according to that of the Apostle, *Phil. 1.6. Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it; that is, will assist you to perform it, unto the day of Jesus Christ.* So that it is plain against *Pelagius*, that God doth not only assist to will, but also to do, what is good of his good pleasure. Neither is it less plain against the other, that grace is not so efficaciously inspired into the Soul, that is not in the power of the Will to refuse it: for this would quite destroy the nature of the Will; for as he said well, He that cannot chuse but chuse, doth chuse because he cannot chuse, which is a palpable and thick contradiction. Secondly, it appears from our Saviours words, *How oft would I, and ye would not*, that grace is not so irresistibly put to the Will,

Will, that it is not in the power of the Will to refuse it, seeing he blames them for so often forsaking their own mercy. So that they not only had a power to resist his grace, but brought that power into act in judging themselves unworthy of everlasting life.

The truth I told you was in the middle way, and it hath been the ancient opinion of the Church of God for above a thousand years ago, that the Will is not destroyed by grace, but only repaired. A dislocated joynt when it is well set again, doth not lose the nature of a joynt, but rather is restored to its former use and comeliness; so the grace of God healing the Will, doth not take away the nature of the Will, but only makes it able to obey Gods Will. So that when Grace cooperates with the Will, man is left in the hand of his own Counsel to turn, or not to turn to the Lord; God sets life and death before him, and bids him reach out his hand to whether he will. This is apparent from *Isa. 5.4. What could have been*

been done more to my Vineyard that I have not done in it? wherefore when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild Grapes? under the Parable of a Vineyard the whole House of Israel is shadowed out: unto whom God was not wanting in the least measure of gracious dispensations to make them good, yet they remained unreformed, and were wanting to themselves. I shall briefly shew you the meaning of those Scriptures which these men mistaking, the one attributes too much, the other too little to the Will in Conversion, and so proceed. Where it is said, *Now they have no cloak for their sin*; because Christ came, and spake to them; by coming and speaking is not only meant, barely enlightning them, but, as appears by the Context, he by Miracles so convinced them, that resisting those Convictions, our Saviour says, *They hated both him and his Father*, Joh. 15. 24. And as for the other Text urged by Pelagius, *If ye were blind*, &c. it doth not from thence

thence follow, that the Will enlightned needs no other assistance, but only thus, sins against knowledge are not so easily forgiven as sins of ignorance, but deserve more stripes. And as for those Texts, which are urged on the other hand where it is said, *We are dead in trespasses and sins*, and *Created in Christ Jesus unto good works*, &c. These speeches are meerly Metaphorical, and figurative, which they so squeeze till they bring bloud and not milk out of the breasts of the Scripture. They are Similitudes only, and they would have them run on four feet, as if all things that agree to a dead man, did agree to a man in the state of nature: whereas the one is capable of preventing grace, the other is not; the one may be raised by means, the other can be raised only by miracles. Neither sin, nor grace take away the natural power of the Will; but only thus it is: Sin hurts and weakens it, especially ill habits, grace heals and strengthens it, and brings it near to its primitive goodness.

ness. An old heart, and a new heart differ only as an Instrument in tune, and the same Instrument out of tune; there are the same strings still, but not the same ordering of them. So the same Understanding, Will, and Affections a man had before only now placed on God, and delighting in goodness, which before delighted in sin; which they not minding, make a man meerly as a Tool in the hand of a Workman, or a Pen in the hand of a Writer, meerly passive to any good action. A man before any Grace be offered, hath a Free Will to natural acts, and a remote one to supernatural; that is, a power to embrace Grace, and work in the strength of it, in case it be offered. The man which lay at the Pool of *Bethesda* had not lost his Limbs, only the use of them. When Christ strengthened those palsie members, he arose, took up his Bed, and went unto his house. Thus the weak Will is strengthened by the grace of Christ, but being strengthened is able to do what is good:

good. God doth perswade the Will, by extrinsical helps as well as intrinsical inspirations. Those providential acts of *Abigail* meeting *David*, or of *Saul's* sleeping in the Trench, when *David* took away his Spear from his Bolster, were of grace not only to *David*, but also to *Saul*, and turned his heart from pursuing *David*. Efficacious Grace to use their own term, is nothing but perswasion, which doth not determine the Will, but only is so congruously and seasonably put, that it is not rejected of the Will. Extraordinary gifts are wrought immediately by Gods holy Spirit without mans cooperation, *Saul's* Propheying was without his assent to it; if every act of grace were thus given, what difference would there be between his manner of giving ordinary and extraordinary gifts? The Spirit of God is said to help our infirmities in our Prayers in stirring up ardency of devotion in us; the original word for Help is a double compound, and is Metaphorically put; for



for it hath relation to one that helps to bear part of anothers burthen for him, taking it off in part from his shoulders, and putting it on his own; or else helping him to lift it up. Now he that is holpen in bearing or lifting a burthen, doth something sure himself towards the bearing or lifting of it; And so did St. Paul cooperate with the grace of God, for he saith, *I laboured more than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God with me.* The Scripture calls us, Workers in Gods Vineyard, not Tools and Instruments. *Call the Labourers, and give them their hire.* And again, *We shall all receive a reward according to our works,* Mark 16. 20. *They went forth and preached every where, the Lord working with them,* 2 Cor. 6. 1. *We then as workers together with him beseech you that ye receive not the grace of God in vain;* But in vain they would receive it, if they would not cooperate with it. If St. Paul, whom St. Chrysostome calls the best child of grace, thought it no disparagement to the grace of God,

to

to say he was a worker together with God towards their Conversion: how can it be a disparagement to the grace of God to say, we together with God work out our own Salvation. It were in vain to persuade us to do, what God alone solely and wholly doth in us. Now how many persuasions in Scripture do we meet withal, *To make you a new heart, to put off the old man, and to put on the new.* These plainly prove a liberty of Will; and that we must work out our own Salvation, or else safety it self will not save us. How pathetically doth God wish the Conversion of sinners, *Jer. 13. 27. O Jerusalem; wilt thou not be made clean! when shall it once be? Oh that my people would have hearkned unto me, for if Israel had walked in my ways, &c.* Who reading such Texts can imagine, that God did not expect mens co-operation? or that the cause of their ruine was only because Grace was so slenderly offered by God, that it proved ineffectual unto them, when God says, *Jer. 51. 9. We would have healed*

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Baby.

*Babylon, but she is not healed, forsake her.* The judgment inflicted plainly shews, God was not wanting to her, but she was wanting to her self. All Comminations and threatnings were in vain, if the Will did not, or could not cooperate with the grace of God: How could men fall from grace if God leave us not to the mutability of the Will? It would be in vain to exhort such to do their first works, and threaten them if they did not, if they were meerly passive, in every act of saving grace; nay, certainly if God withdraw his grace, it is meerly because we walk unworthy of it, for *to him that hath shall be given, and he shall have more abundance, but from him that hath not, that is, hath not well improved it, shall be taken away, even that which he hath.* Some men think they can never exalt the grace of God enough, unless they debase the powers and light of Nature far more than *Adam* debased them by his Fall. But the Law of Nature written in the heart is no less the Law of God, than those

those Laws of God, which are written in the Scripture, else Murther and Adultery in the Heathen should not be sins, for where there is no Law, there is no Transgression, *Rom. 2. 14.* *The Gentiles which have not the Law, and do by nature the things contained in the Law, shall judge the Circumcised which transgress the Law;* which place doth plainly shew unto us, that the light of Nature is good, as being the Candle of the Lord, and that it is not wholly extinguished in us, but only darkened by *Adams* Transgression. I come now to answer those Arguments which are brought against this truth. And first, it is objected, that Christ is said *to fill all in all*, *Ephes. 1. ult.* My answer is, These words are not to be so taken, as if we were to do nothing at all towards our own Salvation: for they are spoken figuratively, where by a Synecdoche, the chief part is put for the whole. As suppose a man should say, Towards a mans maintenance Money is all in all; not but that Food and Rayment do

maintain him more immediately, but because these cannot usually be procured without Money, that answering all things, the saying is usual, and none except against it. Their second Argument is taken from *verse 19. of that Chapter*, where the Apostle says, *We believe according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead.* Whence they infer, the grace of Faith is wrought by an infinite power in the heart: but we can contribute nothing to an infinite power, therefore, nothing towards our own Faith. My answer is, *St. Pauls Faith*, and so of the Primitive Christians, was not wrought only by means, as ours now adays is, but also by Miracles; *The Apostles preached, and the Lord confirmed the Word with signs following.* Mark 16.20. which signs and wonders when the people saw, they believed; according to the working of this mighty power. But our Faith now is not so wrought; but only by hearing, without seeing such an

an Almighty power to confirm the Doctrine: yet are we never the less blessed, but rather the more. *Thomas because thou hast seen thou hast believed, blessed are they which have not seen, and yet have believed.* Thirdly, it is objected, If the Will of man have power to assent, or not assent to grace offered, man shall do more towards his own Conversion than God, for the act is more perfect than a meer power to act. I answer, although in a Metaphysical sense, the act is more perfect than a meer power to act, as the end of a thing is preferred before the means tending to it, yet in a Moral sense it is not always so: neither doth man by accepting do more than God by offering his grace. God gives us power to get Wealth; say we get it, are we more beholden now to ourselves therefore than to God for our riches? I trow not. The case is the same in the point of grace, when we have accepted of his goodness, we ought to say, *Not unto us Lord, not unto us, but to thy name give the praise.*

*praise.* If a Benefactor give an indigent person a considerable sum of money, and he accept it, is he more beholden to himself for his acceptance, than to the Donor for his kindness? If so: then their Argument is of force, but not else. Fourthly, it is objected, If the Will of man hath power to assent to grace offered, and he do assent; another hath the same grace offered, and he doth not assent, all the difference must needs come from mans Will; and so he that believes and assents makes himself to differ from him that assents not, contrary to that of the Apostle, *1 Cor. 4. 7.* I confess this Argument hath stumbled many learned men; as if the Apostle had spoken these words, concerning the act of Conversion, or of receiving sanctifying grace: but it is spoken only concerning receiving Ministerial Offices in the Church. See the first verse else, *Let a man so account of us, as of the Ministers of Christ, and Stewards of the Mysteries of God.*

he taxes, as St. Ambrose well observes,

observes, the pride and arrogance of some Teachers, who did insinuate into the people that Baptism from their hands was more effectual, or any other Ordinance from their hands was better than from the hands of another Minister; and so the People thought more highly of one than of another, and were puffed up for one Minister against another, as appears at *verse 6.* whereupon at *verse 7.* he subjoyns, *Who maketh thee to differ?* At *verse 8.* he taxes them for boasting, even over himself, *Ye have reigned as Kings without us, &c.* to whom he thus speaks, *You, O boasting Teachers, that do so magnifie your selves above me, or suffer the people to do so, what have you ye have not received by my Ministry? For I was your first spiritual Father, and if you did receive it, why do ye so boast over me, as if ye had not received it from me? Who sees not that the Context stands wholly affected to this Interpretation? To tax the pride of the seduced Party both Pastors and People amongst them?*

And therefore to urge these words, *Who made thee to differ?* as if the Apostle meant them concerning the act of Conversion is to wrest the Scripture to a sense, which will nothing comport with the matter in hand, nor fall in with the subject of that Chapter. If a Prisoner at the Bar should find fault with the Judge on the Bench, as acting contrary to Gods Word, because it is written, *Judge not, that ye be not judged;* and again, *Why dost thou judge thy brother?* Ought not the Context to clear the scruple? Yes surely. Even so it ought in this point; for he that will not mind what goes before and what follows after a saying in Scripture, may easily pervert the sense of the Holy Ghost. From what hath been said I hope it is apparent, that the Apostle doth not tax any man of pride, in this place, that shall accept of Gods grace, and say he made himself to differ from him that refuseth the like grace in all respects; as is contended for. If when *Eve* was fallen *Adam* had stood in innocency, who had

had made the difference between their two estates? Had not *Adams* Will? You will say he might have boasted then; I answer nay; for he had but done what was his duty to do, for to this end God gave him a righteous Will to stand. If said, God is not bound to give us such a Will since the Fall. I grant he is bound to nothing but what his good pleasure binds him to; but *St. Peter* doth assure us *he hath given us all things which appertain to life and godliness,* 2 *Pet.* 1. 3. and therefore must needs give us the principal thing, without which no man is godly, namely Grace sufficient to heal the Will. God makes the Sun to shine, and the rain to fall on the field of the slothful man, which is overgrown with bryars and thorns, as well as on the diligent, which stands so thick with corn, that it laughs and sings: Is it any boasting against God for the good husband to say, my industry was the cause why God blessed me more than the slug-gard? I trow not. No more is it arrogance

arrogance to say, I have not forsaken my God as the wicked doth: and therefore he hath not forsaken me; for he hath revealed himself after this manner, 1 Sam. 2. 30. *I said indeed that thy house, and the house of thy father should walk before me for ever, but now, saith the Lord, be it far from me, for them that honour me I will honour, &c.* Thus ye see the Lord will be no longer for us than we are for him: and therefore David thus cautioneth his Son Solomon, not to bear himself high upon any privilege of being *Abrahams* Seed, or *Dauids* Son; but says thus unto him, *And thou Solomon my Son, fear thou the Lord God of thy Fathers, and serve him with a willing mind, if thou seek him he will be found of thee, but if thou forsake him he will cast thee off for ever,* 1 Chron. 28. 9. If these words of David have any force in them, either as an Exhortation, or Commination, it must needs be granted that he thought Solomon had power, either to cooperate with  
the

the grace of God offered, or to refuse it as he pleased. Fifthly, it is objected, if grace put us only in the equipoize, and man upon deliberation turn the Scale to Virtue and not to Vice, all the difference between a virtuous and vicious man should come from Nature, and not from Grace. To that I answer, If Nature alone could turn the Scale without being put gold-weight by Grace, it were true, but seeing it could not raise the Scale to this equipoize without the assistance of Grace, it is false. Secondly, Gods Grace did cooperate with mans Will in turning the Scale, and had the chiefest stroak in it. Thirdly, mans nature at first was endowed with a power from God to do good, and if he had done so, instead of doing evil, it had not a whit derogated from the glory of God: but it had rather been to his praise, although his obedience had come from the strength of Nature: even so if God by adventitious Grace cure the Moral impotency of Nature that it be able to  
refuse

refuse the evil and chuse the good, the praise of that obedience is chiefly due to that auxiliary grace, without which it could have done but little good, but being thus relieved, although this new Nature put forth the act of obedience, for Nature is not destroyed by Grace, yet it nothing derogates from the Grace of God, but rather shews forth Gods glory in the cure of such a corrupted nature. But if it be said, seeing God is a most merciful Creator, had it not been a more merciful act to have created man determined to happiness, from which he could not have fallen, rather than to leave him thus in the equipoize to the mutability, or determination of his own Will? My answer is, This had been to have unmann'd him; to have brought him down to the level of inferior Creatures which cannot alter, or suspend their actions; but are by Nature determined to one constant course. Now God hath set us a sphere above them, in giving us reason for a Moderatrix, without which no actions could

could be virtuous, and consequently not capable of that reward which he hath laid up in heaven for us. The noblest way of being happy is to have it for being holy. As God is not mocked, so neither is he a mocker of men, which their opinion under debate would make him; to offer a blind man Money on condition he will look on it, and tell you whose Image and Supercription it bears, is certainly to mock him: but if a man should proceed so far as to rail upon him for refusing an Alms upon such easie terms, instead of relieving his misery he might justly be thought to intend only to add to his affliction. So if God offer Grace to those whose Wills can concur to the reception of it only subjectively, but nothing causally, and then not only chide them for refusing it, but also lay it to their charge that it was not efficacious as it might have been, if they had actively concurred and cooperated with it, he should not only be a mocker of men, but also under colour of kindness, make a way

way to his wrath and indignation, which is far from the candor and nature of God, who is always merciful and serious in his offers of Grace. If it be said he doth not mock us, but justly challenge from us that lost power which he once gave us, as a Creditor may justly challenge from a Prodigal that money he hath spent, and hath not now to pay. Some are of opinion, that it is not the Prodigals fault now, that he doth not pay, if he be willing to pay, and hath it not; but his fault was only this; that he brought himself into that condition. And so it is not a fault, that he which cannot receive grace doth not receive it, but a sad consequence only of his former sin which brought this impotency upon him; for which he ought to be pitied, not upbraided, if he desire to receive it. Others answer, it befits the goodness of God in the New Covenant of Grace made with mankind to allow sufficient strength of grace to perform the conditions of that Covenant in such a measure as he  
for

for Christs sake would accept. Or else 1. The Covenant of Works would be more gracious than the Covenant of Grace; for under that, mankind had strength allowed him. *Adam* did not fall for want of power to stand. Or else 2. The New Covenant should leave a man in a worse condition than it found him, for the abounding of grace would make his sin abound, being sure to be always refused: But Christ is the Mediator of a better Covenant, every way considered a more gracious than that of Works, and Gods primary intent in giving it was, not to make sin, but to make grace abound. I only ask a question, if *Zeleucus* put out both the eyes of an Adulterer for Adultery, and then offer him his Book to read, and hang him because he cannot read; was the offer of the Psalm of mercy a mercy to him, or a mockery? So if God first justly blind our understanding, and harden our hearts as a punishment of our sin in *Adam*, and then make us a tender of grace in Christ, but never open our  
under-



understandings to see it, nor soften our hearts so far, that if we will we may embrace it, but all his offers are upon impossible terms to be accepted, whether the case be not alike and Parallel? 6. Lastly, it is objected, that *it is God that worketh in us both to will, and to do of his good pleasure*, Phil. 2. 13. Where you see, say they, St. Paul attributes both the will and the deed to the grace of God. I answer, the meaning of the Apostle is, that God gives us a power to will, and still assists us with his grace till we bring that power into Act, and so a man works out his own Salvation, and he ought to do it with fear and trembling; that is, he ought with reverence and godly fear stand in awe: lest when God enables him to work, he be wanting to himself, and to the grace of God; lest he grieve and quench the Spirit, and cause him to depart. But if a man concur only subjectively and passively to pious works, as they would have it, then it must be said, or may truly be said at least, that God

in us believes, repents of sin, and doth all other gracious Acts, which how absurd and blasphemous it would be, I leave the world to judge. It is said, our Saviour marvelled at their unbelief; but if it be as they say, I marvel why he should marvel; for he knew before-hand they could do nothing; and he was resolved, not to do all things alone, to bring them to the Faith. But certainly, he had good cause to marvel; that when he afforded them such a measure of Grace as would have converted Tyre and Sidon, and would have made Nineveh repent in Sackcloth and ashes, they should be so wilful and obdurate that it made no kindly impression upon them. If any thing had been wanting on his part, to have brought them to the Faith, he would not have upbraided them with their unbelief; or have shamed them by the very Heathen; nor have denounced a more intolerable measure of damnation against them, if there had

98 *Vulgar Errors concerning*  
not been offered . them superabun-  
dant advantages of Grace. I con-  
clude therefore with the Father,  
*Sola voluntas ardet in gehennâ*, which  
I will English thus: *Wilful men will*  
*want no woe.*

Vulgar

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# Vulgar Errors

## CONCERNING

## REDEMPTION

Removed.



Aint Paul, comparing the  
First and Second *Adam*  
together, shews us the  
hurt we received by the  
disobedience of the First, and the be-  
nefits we receive by the obedience of  
the Second. For *Adam* and Christ  
are to be considered as two roots, as  
we proceed from the one, we are of  
the wild Olive; but as we are en-  
grafted into the other, we contrary to  
our natures partake of the good Olive.  
Now look what loss Mankind did

H 2 receive

receive by the one, it was the good  
 pleasure of our good God, that the  
 same benefit Mankind should recover  
 by the other. "When the Apostle  
 "says many dead by *Adam*, he says  
 "many made alive by Christ. When  
 "men condemned by *Adam*, he says  
 "all justified by Christ; now what  
 "he thus makes equal, for men to dis-  
 "equalize to such a degree, as not one  
 "of many to be redeemed, though all  
 "in *Adam* were lost, is not to make a  
 "much more on Christs side, but a  
 "much less. Contrary to the Apo-  
 "stle, who all along puts the redim-  
 "dancy on Christs part, that where  
 "sin abounded grace superabounded,  
 "that as sin reigned unto death, so  
 "grace did reign unto eternal life,  
 "through Jesus Christ our Lord. Now  
 "sin did reign over all men without  
 "exception unto death, therefore  
 "grace must have a proportionable  
 "reign unto life. Christ must fulfil  
 on his part, what appertained to the  
 procuring the Salvation of all; or else  
 the Salve is not so broad as the Sore;  
 which

which yet the Apostle hath been  
 proving at large in the fifth Chapter  
 to the *Romans*. Our Church, rightly  
 grounding her Faith upon the Scri-  
 ptures, teaches most truly that Christ  
 died for all men; in her Catechism she  
 teaches the Child to answer, *I believe*  
*in God the Son, who redeemed me, and*  
*all mankind*; and in her Collect for  
 Good Friday, prays for all Jews,  
 Turks, and Infidels, that God would  
 bring them home to his Flock, that  
 there may be one Fold under one  
 Shepherd. Suppose God to hear the  
 Prayers of his Church, and to bring  
 these to the knowledge of Christ;  
 I demand, Hath Christ any salvation  
 in him for these men or no? If he hath,  
 sure I am he purchased it with his  
 blood, and so died for them. If not:  
 our Church is mistaken in praying  
 such may be brought to Christ for  
 salvation who hath no salvation in him  
 for such, or ever laid down his life  
 a ransom for them. But certainly, he  
 is able to *save to the uttermost all that*  
*come to God by him. For as by the*  
 H 3 *offence*

*offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation: So by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men to justification of life. "If*  
*"Christ did not redeem all, it was,*  
*"either because he was not able, or*  
*"because he was not willing to do it:*  
*"If you say he was not able, you*  
*"blaspheme the power and vertue of*  
*"his death, for St. John tells us, If*  
*"any man sin we have an Advocate with*  
*"the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous,*  
*"and he is the Propitiation not only for*  
*"ours, but for the sins of the whole*  
*"world. If you say, not willing, you*  
*"blaspheme his goodness, who would*  
*"have all men sav'd, and is not willing*  
*"that any should perish, 2 Pet. 3. 9.*  
 If any part of Mankind left unredeemed, Christ must needs be willing that part of mankind should perish, else he would have redeemed them, without which he saw they must perish. Nothing could hinder but his Will, for he might have redeemed all at the same rate, but he was not willing any should perish, therefore it  
 roundly

roundly follows he left none unredeemed. When we urge those Scriptures which assert universal Redemption; their answers are so weak, that it would make a man pity the strength of a wrong byassed education that will not let them see that their answers are mere frivolous evasions. When we urge that of the Apostle, 2 Pet. 2. 1. *Some deny the Lord that bought them*; they answer, he bought them for Slaves, and not for Children. Now I would fain know what slavish work Christ hath to do for his redeemed ones, whose service is perfect freedom? When we urge that place, Heb. 2. 9. *That by the grace of God Christ should taste death for every man.* They answer, *Voluntate signi, non beneplaciti*, that is, he signifies so, but he means not so. If he means not so when he says so, how shall we then know at any time by his words what he means? When we urge, *God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son into the world, that whosoever believes in him might not perish.* They

H 4 answer,

answer, by the world is meant only the Elect chosen out of the world. That by the world in Scripture is often meant that Party of men in the world which is contrary to the Saints, many places may be brought, as *the whole world stands in wickedness; these are not of the world, even as I am not of the world, &c.* but that in this place God so loved the world, by the world should be meant only the Elect. I have not faith enough to believe, and I am still to seek for that place of Scripture, where the Holy Ghost by the world meaneth only the Elect. In a word, what Scriptures soever we bring to prove that Christ paid a price for all mankind; they reply to us, that Christ paid a price for all sufficiently, but not intentionally. Now I appeal to the universal reason of all Mankind, whether if *Titius* and *Sempronius* be in slavery, he that paid nothing for *Titius* can be said to pay for him what was sufficient to bring him out of Captivity, because he paid more for *Sempronius* ransom than

than would have bought it; and which Sum, if he had designed it so, might have redeemed *Titius* also? That such weak answers as they bring should satisfy any rational men, must be imputed meerly to the strength of prejudice, and prepossession. If Christ died for all, says St. Paul, then were all dead, 2 Cor. 5.14. By all, say they, were meant only all the Elect: Then, say I, by vertue of the Antithesis, only the Elect were dead; but in *Adam* Elect and Reprobate are alike dead; therefore the Apostles meaning cannot be, that Christ died only for the Elect, for all were dead, both Elect and Non-elect, and he died for all that were dead. Christ in no wise took upon him the nature of Angels, but the Seed of *Abraham*; to shew that he came not to redeem the lost Angels, but Mankind that was lost. Now if any of Mankind were left out of this Redemption, Christ should tender their Salvation no more than the Salvation of the Devil and his Angels: but he doth not leave the most  
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of men in as hopeles and helpless a condition as he left the Devil and his Angels, whose nature he never took upon him. It shall never be laid to the charge of a wicked Angel that he did not believe in Christ, but it shall be laid to the charge of a wicked man that he did not believe in Christ; which plainly shews he did more to redeem a wicked man than a wicked Angel. It should not be a sin in a wicked man to refuse Christ as his Saviour: if he be not his Saviour unless he thought him so to be, and yet refused him; but it must necessarily be always a sin to refuse Christ; whether a wicked refuser of him think him a Saviour or no; because in deed and truth he is the Redeemer of all mankind. *He came to seek and to save that which was lost*, but all mankind was lost, therefore he came to seek and to save all Mankind, *Mar. 16. 15.* Christ bids his Disciples *preach the Gospel to every Creature*; that is, offer life and salvation to all: in case Christ should offer it to all when he hath

hath purchased it but for a few, there would be matter of disparagement in it. For what makes us despise Mountebanks (as one says well) but that they promise more than they are able to perform. Therefore seeing he bids us preach the Gospel to every Creature, the glad tidings of the Gospel belongs to every Creature; and we are to exhort every man to believe in Christ, and promise him life and salvation if he do: which thing we could not truly do, if he laid down his life but for a few, and paid no ransom for the most of mankind. This Doctrine of our Church, that Christ redeemed all mankind, hath no malignant influence in it at all; which makes me admire why men are so bitter against it. If it were not true, yet methinks even for humanity sake we should wish it were true; and not to be so narrow hearted as to desire salvation only for our selves. That must needs be the best good which is most diffusive, and wherein most may partake. If *Moses* was so affectionate to

to the Souls of a provoking people as to pray after this manner for them, *O Lord forgive their sin, and if not blot me out of the book which thou hast written*; as if his own happiness could not please him, unless it might be accompanied with the happiness of his people: how can we chuse but be enlarged with love and gratitude unto God, that he hath *reconciled the world unto himself*; and how chearfully should we publish that glad tidings. If *St. Paul* was so diffusive of his charity as to wish himself accursed from Christ, on condition it might do his brethren good to salvation; why should we be such envious and churlish Creatures as to shut up the bowels of Christ against the greatest part of mankind, which he was pleased to open to every man in the world that would receive him? If this Doctrine did shut them out of Christ, or from being partakers of the benefits of his Death and Passion, well might their zeal be kindled against it: but seeing that it debars no man from their right,

right; declares Gods abundant love, sets forth Christs diffusive charity to the whole race of Mankind; what just cause of so much heat and passion against it? Wherefore if any come unto you bringing this Doctrine, that Christ died only for one of a City, or two of a Tribe, (of which two he is always one in his own opinion you may be sure) pity his ignorance, and bid him not Godspeed. Pray unto God to open his eyes to see the wonderful things of his Law, to take away the spirit of pride from him, which makes him put himself amongst the number of them Christ died for, and shut out his Brethren. I come now to answer those Arguments which they bring to establish this uncomfortable Doctrine; that Christ died for all men, is a comfortable Doctrine to every man; and every man upon hearing and believing of it can infer, then certainly he died for me. But if he died but for a few, there is just cause of doubting for every man, whether he be amongst the number of the

the few; and unless God give a particular assurance it cannot certainly be known. The Arguments which are brought against this truth are these: The first is taken out of *John 17. 9. I pray for them, I pray not for the world*; whence they argue thus: Those that Christ would not pray for, surely he would not die for: but he prayed only for the Elect, therefore he died only for the Elect. I answer, This was a peculiar Prayer, which Christ made in behalf only of the Apostles, as will appear by the Contents of the Chapter; read the Contents and you will see it is so. Christ prayeth to the Father that he will glorify him, that's the Contents to the sixth verse; to preserve his Apostles in unity and truth, that's the Contents to the twentieth verse; and therefore to apply it as it is applied in the Argument is to wrest the Scripture to a sense it never intended. These words, *I pray for them, I pray not for the world, &c.* are meant only of the Disciples; and not of all the Elect, in opposition to the wicked

wicked of the world, as may appear by the Context, verse the sixth, *I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world, ver. 12. Those which thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost but the son of perdition.* It is impossible that the former words should signify all the Elect in opposition to the wicked; for all the Elect had not yet heard of Christ; or that the latter ought to be so taken, seeing he says one of them is lost, which it is impossible that any of the Elect should be. Verse 18. *As thou hast sent me into the world, viz. to preach the Gospel, so have I sent them into the world*; This cannot be meant of all the Elect, for are all Apostles? all Preachers of the Gospel? And lastly, if at the ninth verse he prayed for all the Elect of the world, in opposition to the wicked of the world, as is contended for: how comes he to say at the twentieth verse, *Neither pray I for these alone*? Nay, the following words shew apparently that at the ninth verse he meant the Apostles



Apostles only; for he adds, *But for them also that shall believe through their word.* A second Scripture is this, *I am the good shepherd, a good shepherd lays down his life for his sheep.* Mark, say they, he doth not say he lays down his life for the Goats, but for the Sheep. I answer, That Christ laid down his life for the Elect this place doth prove indeed, but it doth not prove that he laid down his life for none but the Elect; surely it doth, may some say, because none else are mentioned. I grant none else mentioned in that place, but they are in other places of Scripture; but if that were a good way of arguing, I will prove he died for none but for the wicked, *Rom. 5. 6. In due time Christ died for the ungodly.* I pray who resemble the ungodly most, Sheep or Goats? Certainly the Goats; why, he died for the ungodly, therefore for Goats, and not for the Sheep, according to their way of arguing. Thirdly they object, the Apostle in *Rom. 5. 15.* says, *The gift by grace,*  
*which*

*which is by one man, Jesus Christ hath abounded unto many:* he doth not say to all. I answer, "Many in that place signifies all, as will appear by the Antithesis, or opposition, *By the offence of one many, he says, are dead,* "many there is the same with all, for "it were absurd to say; some as coming out of *Adams Loyns* are not "dead; and if it signifie all in one "place, it must do so too in the other; "or the Antithesis would be defective, "and you would spoil the Grammar "of the place. If in any other place, many signifie not all, but part only, as it may where it is said, *My righteous servant shall justifie many,* it is not because he did not die for them, but because they would not believe in him; *He came to his own, but his own received him not; but as many as received him, to them he gave power to become the Sons of God.* Fourthly, it is objected, Christ fore-knew they would not be saved by him: now what wise man will pay a price for a Captive, when he knows before-hand  
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the Captive will not accept of it, or will come out of slavery; but will be bored because he loves his Master? To that I answer, *My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor my ways your ways, saith the Lord.* They may as well question Gods wisdom, why he would be at such pains to send his Prophets of old rising up early and sending them, to those he knew before-hand would not hear them, *Ezek. 3.4.* God told *Ezekiel* before-hand they would not hear, yet saith God, they shall know that a Prophet hath been amongst them. So God will one day make the wicked know that he sent his Son to redeem them, both from wrath, and their vain Conversation; and they judged themselves unworthy of everlasting life. God in his wisdom saw it good to send light into the world, even to the wicked of the world, although he foresaw they would love darkness more than light, because their deeds were evil. And so have I done with their Arguments, grounded meerly upon mistakes. To conclude, By the Parable

Parable of the King making a great Supper, and inviting Guests that would not come, it appears God provides all things requisite to save men, but they will not be saved. So the year of Jubilee was a true Type of our deliverance by Christ, whosoever was in bondage might then go out free; wherefore I conclude, as sure as we are lost by the first *Adam*, so sure we are redeemed by the second *Adam*. So sure as we are created by God the Father, so sure we are redeemed by God the Son; and *Whoever will believe in him shall not perish, but shall have everlasting life.*

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# Vulgar Errors

## CONCERNING

### Praying by the S P I R I T

### Removed.



Here hath nothing of late years been more mistaken, than those Scriptures which speak of praying by the Spirit, or the Spirit helping our Infirmities, and God's pouring out the Spirit of Prayer and Supplications upon his People. Which places have been wrested against a set Form of Prayer, as if it were nothing but cold breathings, and Lip-labour, (to use their own words) and a man in praying such a Prayer could not be

I 3      assisted

assisted by the Spirit of God. Their first mistake lieth in this, that they do not distinguish between the gift of Prayer, and the Spirit of Prayer. Many men have a very good gift of Prayer, and a very fluent Tongue, who yet may be very formal as to their hearts: not every one that hath the best gift of Eloquence prays most by the Spirit, nor he that hath the meanest gift of Elocution prays least with the Spirit. We may instance in *Moses* and *Aaron*: the one of a stammering tongue, the other God gives him this testimony that he could speak well. Yet in the famous fight between *Israel* and *Ameleck*, God makes not choice of Eloquent *Aaron*, but of slow-spoken *Moses* to get the victory by Prayer. Though *Aaron* speak better than *Moses*, yet certainly he could not pray better than he. Prayer is a great part of Gods Service and Worship; and our blessed Saviour tells us, *God is a Spirit, and must be worshipp'd in Spirit*. Yet when the Apostles desired him to teach them to pray, he

did

did not teach them to pray by the Spirit in their sense: who think speaking *extempore* without premeditation whatever comes into their mind on a sudden is the only praying by the Spirit: but he prescribes them a set Form, saying, *When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, &c.* So that a set Form certainly may be prayed by the Spirit, else it had never been commanded to be used, by our Saviour Christ. If it be said, the Lords Prayer is a pattern to frame our Prayers by, rather than a Prayer it self. My answer is, As some Weights and Measures, which are so exact in their kind, being kept as Standards to make other Weights and Measures by, do not lose the nature of Weights and Measures upon that account, but rather are warranted in their kind. So the Lords Prayer by being made a pattern for our Prayers doth not lose the nature of a Prayer, but rather is thereby commended to us to be the most absolute Form of Prayer in the world. In *Numb. 6. 23*. God bids *Moses speak*

unto Aaron and his Sons, saying on this wise, ye shall bless the people, the Lord bless thee, and keep thee, the Lord make his face shine favourably upon thee, &c. If any able of themselves to conceive a Prayer; we may well suppose it should be the Priest whose Lips should preserve knowledge, yet they are prescribed a set Form of blessing the People. If it had been prescribed for the simple and ignorant sort it might have been objected, They that have not gifts of their own are permitted to make use of other mens gifts; but seeing it is prescribed the Priest himself, nay, even for Aaron the Eloquent High-Priest, it strongly concludes for a set Form of Prayer and Benediction to be used in publick by the most able and eloquent Divine. Moses a great Prophet, who prayed so earnestly that God said, *Let me alone*, as if he tied Gods hands, yet did he use one set Form of Prayer when the Ark set forward, and when it rested, Numb. 10. 35. *When it set forward*, he said, *Arise, O God, let thine enemies be*  
*scatte-*

scattered, let them also that hate thee flee before thee; and when it rested he said constantly, *Return O Lord to the many thousands of Israel*. Let us not seek to seem better than he, in new Forms every day, whose gifts without question were unspeakably greater than ours. The 92. Psalm was usually sung in the Church of the Jews every Sabbath day; it was penned for that purpose as appeareth by the Title of it. Seeing therefore a set Form of Prayer and Praise have been the practice of the ancient Church of God, among the Jews, and of Christian Churches to this very day, let us give them the right hand of fellowship, to have a Unity and Uniformity in Publick Worship. Our blessed Saviour, of whom it was said truly, never man spake as he spake, yet he useth three times together the same words, in his Agony. *Father if it be possible, let this Cup pass from me*. He wanted no variety of words, yet he confines himself to the same words the Prophet Joel prescribes the Prayer for the Priest,

Priest, and bids them say, *Spare thy people good Lord, &c.* St. Paul, the great Doctor of the Gentiles, used the same Salutation in the beginning of most of his Epistles, *Grace, mercy, and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ*; and the same Prayer at the end of them; *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost be with you all, Amen.* These examples plainly refute the error of those that are against the Liturgy, or set Form of Prayer in the Church, it is a ridiculous thing to think, that as a nice and squeamish stomach is delighted with change of Dishes, so God is delighted with variety of words, and novelty of matter and method, and that unless we have a new stile, or a new trope, or a new figure, or a new flourish every time more than other, we have not the Spirit of Prayer, nor shall be accepted. Every good Christian is not able to conceive a Prayer, many have weak Capacities to conceive them, want Order and Method to compose them,

them, yet even these, if they meet with a Prayer framed to their hand, can pray fervently, and heartily. A set Form must needs be a great help to those that are weak, and yet willing to pray; nay, even they that are strong ought not to despise them, for Prayers in publick are bounded by authority. To pass over those bounds then, must needs be offensive to that Authority that prescribed those bounds. If any do, they foment, as it were, a Worship distinct, and apart from what is authorized by the Church, but more reason that the spirit of a Minister should be regulated by the spirit of the Church representative, than the spirits of the whole Congregation by the spirit of the Minister. If he that was sick of the Palsie that was born of four could have walked to Christ on his own feet, what could he have more desired than to be healed? So if we come with our own invention or expression in Prayer, we can expect nothing more than to be heard, which God the searcher

searcher of the heart will as soon do when we draw nigh to him with words of the Churches composing, as if they were of our own framing, if the Heart be not wanting. Yea, but methinks I hear some say, the Heart must needs be wanting, for praying is one thing, and reading is another. I grant they are two several things, but yet they are compatible, and may well stand together. When we read the Lords Prayer in the sixth Chapter of St, *Matthew*, and our intention is only to inform our selves of the Will of God set down in his Word, we acknowledge we do not pray; but when we read the Lords Prayer in the Liturgy, and we lift up our hearts to God in every of the Petitions, then we affirm that we do pray. So then, when we read, and our intention is only to receive knowledge into the soul, we do not pray in reading; but when in reading we also pour out the requests of our hearts, then such reading may truly be called praying. Secondly, it is objected, reading set Prayers out of a Book is a

stinting

stinting of the Spirit, but we ought not to stint or quench the Spirit, therefore we ought not to read Prayers out of a Book. I answer, 1. If he that prays a set Form stints the Spirit, then he that prays an *extempore* Prayer out of the Pulpit stints the spirits of all those that joyn with him, for they that hear him and joyn with him, are limited by his words, and his sense, and so it is as bad as a set Form to them; for if their minds go along with him, they pray the same Prayer that he doth, and neither more nor less. Now why should the People be tied to the Prayers of the Minister, and not the Minister to the Prayers of the Church? If it be sinful in one to stint the Spirit, it is sinful also in the other, and so no publick Prayer, where many joyn together, could be offered up to God without sin in this respect, because the Spirit must be bound up and stunted in all but in him that speaks it. But if the meaning of the Objection be, that *extempore* Prayers stint not the Spirit, because then a man speaks as the Spirit

gives

gives utterance, which cannot be in set Forms, then this absurdity would follow. If to those men which pray *extempore* the Spirit of God doth dictate those words unto them, then those Prayers would be as good Canonical Scripture, if written by the Pen of a ready Writer, as any of the *Psalms* of David, or *Asaph*, or any of the holy men of old recorded in Scripture; which because it would be blasphemy to affirm it roundly follows, such Prayers are not spoken as the Spirit gives utterance, but are the effects of their own Art and Industry; and therefore the turning of that practice into a set Form, doth not stint, nor quench the Spirit of God in Prayer. That those sudden Conceptions are not dictated by the Spirit of God appears plainly by this, men of divers opinions pray quite contrary things; as for instance, a Presbyterian Minister takes a Text, sounding as he thinks towards the establishing of Presbytery, such as that in 1 Pet. 5.1. *The Elders that are among you I exhort, who also am an Elder.* From whence

whence he delivers the Presbyterian Government is the Government Christ establish'd in the Church. After his Sermon, he prays over again the chief Heads of what he delivered, and says, Good Lord settle those truths which to day thou hast shewn us concerning Church Government, upon our hearts. An Independent he comes and he takes a Text, which he wrests likewise, but it is to Independency, and he bids them *stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made them free, and be not entangled with the yoke of bondage*; from which words he delivers for Doctrine that Independency is the only way that Christ hath left for his Church. And after Sermon he prays likewise, that the People may not receive his Doctrine as the word of a man, but as the Will and Word of God. Call ye this praying by the Spirit? To say so is in deed and truth a blaspheming of the Spirit; for the Spirit of God cannot speak contradictions, as these men do in their Pulpit Conceptions; And yet they would father all upon the incomes of



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of the Spirit, which assisted them in  
carrying on the work of the day. Their  
Sermons being contradictory one to  
the other, and their Prayers sutable to  
their Sermons, their Prayers must  
needs include contradictions also. One  
prays God to establish Presbytery, the  
other Independency in the Church;  
now how can both these be dictated by  
one and the same Spirit? To pray with  
the Spirit signifies in Scripture three  
things, 1. To pray by immediate inspira-  
tion, so as to make no use of our own  
judgment, or reason, either in devising  
the matter, or chusing the words: but  
to speak only what the Spirit doth sug-  
gest. Thus those that penned the  
Scriptures were inspired, and spake not  
their own private mind or meaning,  
but as they were carried forth out of  
themselves, and moved by the Holy  
Ghost. And so St. Paul is to be un-  
derstood when he saith, *I will pray with*  
*the Spirit, and with the understanding*  
*also*; that is, I will use any language  
which the Spirit shall dictate unto me,  
but I will interpret it, that the People  
may

*praying by the Spirit.* 129  
may understand it, and say Amen unto  
it, for while the Apostles lived there  
was in the Church an extraordinary gift  
of Prayer, which supplied the place of set  
Forms, but it was as miraculous as the  
gift of Tongues. When this gift and the  
gift of Miracles ceased, they used stated  
Forms in Publick, and the Council of  
*Carthage* ordered that no other Prayers  
should be put up in their Assemblies  
but what were approved of by wise  
and prudent men in the Synod; lest  
something through ignorance or inad-  
vertency might be uttered contrary to  
the Faith and Doctrine of Christ. Se-  
condly, By praying with the Spirit is  
meant to pray by the direction of Gods  
holy Spirit, *Jude 20. But ye beloved,*  
*building up your selves in your most holy*  
*faith, praying in the Holy Ghost.* The  
Spirit helps in directing us what is fit  
for us to ask of God, and what God  
sees fit to bestow upon man: And this  
direction is given us in his holy Word,  
where we are taught what to pray for,  
so as not to ask amiss, else we should  
*not know what to pray for as we ought,*  
K *Rom. 8. 26.*

*Rom. 8. 26.* He that prescribes the model of an house, and provides materials, and sets men on work, may be truly said to build that house, although it be builded by other mens hands; So the Holy Ghost prescribing us Forms in the Word, and inciting us to pray by promise of reward, and the like, may be intituled to our Prayers. Thirdly, He assisting us with inward motions, carrying forth our affections with zeal and fervency, further than naturally they would tend: may in this sense be stiled the Author of our Prayers. As wicked men, giving place to the Devil, Satan carries forth their malice into murder, and raises storms of passions in their Souls, even as the Wind raises the Waves of the Sea, even so on the contrary, a man applying his heart to seek the Lord, and call upon his Name, the Holy Ghost aids him by his grace to make powerful Supplications with sighs and groans which cannot be uttered. Now every adopted child of God the Apostle witnesses, *Gal. 4. 6.* hath these aids and assistances

of

of the Holy Ghost in their Prayers, stirring up their hearts to cry *Abba Father*, thus, and thus only they that are the Sons of God pray by the Spirit of God. Now seeing the Spirit of Prayer and Supplication consists chiefly in a fervent application of the mind, to the thing that is desired, and to Almighty God of whom it is desired. It necessarily follows, that words that are known and fitted to mens understandings are soonest received into their hearts, and aptest to carry along with them judicious and fervent affections. But it is objected, That a set Form of Prayer makes an ignorant Ministry, a School-boy may read a Prayer out of a Book. To that I answer, experience proves it hath not done so: for the gravest and learnedest Scholars are for it. There are other Offices for the Minister which require his diligence and his study; First, his diligence to Catechize the Children, visit the Sick. Secondly, His study to divide the Word of truth aright, comfort the weak, stop the mouths of gain-sayers;

K 2

sayers, so that he hath matter enough to exercise his parts about, although he strive not to attain to that *extempore* way of uttering any thing before God, which wise *Solomon* never admired. And as for what you say concerning the School-boy, the same objection might have been brought against Gods Priests in the Old Law: that a Butcher might have kill'd a Lamb or a Sheep for Sacrifice as well as they: But was that any disparagement to the Priest? No more is this to Gods Minister that another can read Prayers as well as he, seeing it is his Office and not theirs to do it. But it is objected, A set Form is superfluous, for Nature will teach any man to shew his grief, and a Lazer need not read out of a Book, pray heal my Arm, or my Leg, no more needs a man that is sensible of the plague of his own heart a set Form of Prayer in a Book. To that my answer is twofold; First, Even poor Lazer people to move others to pity and compassion will study patheticall Expressions, and use humble deportment,

ment, and great importunity, and yet find all little enough to move compassion. Will they do this for their Bodies, and shall not we be more earnest for our Souls? Secondly, There is a vast difference betwixt a Private Prayer and a Publick Prayer; a Private Prayer points to the sore of a mans own heart in this or that particular, whereof perhaps, all circumstances considered, not one of many is guilty: but a Publick Prayer ought to be so composed that it may concern all the Congregation, and all the People may say *Amen* to it. Now for a man to pray out of the sense of his own wants only, may be a good Prayer for his private devotion: but it cannot be so proper or so profitable for the Publick as a set Form, wherein the Composers consider the usual wants of all Mankind. If a man were to prefer a Petition to his Prince, would he speak *extempore*? Why, what thou wouldst not offer to him, thou oughtest not to offer to God, *Mal. i. 8.* the reason is full of moral equity, God is a greater King than

than he. If you would be ashamed or afraid to bring indigested stuff to the one, much more should you be so affected to bring abortive Conceptions before the other. We may as well pray a set Prayer by the Spirit as sing a set Psalm by the Spirit. Now even their own practice bearing witness these men can sing a set Psalm by the Spirit. I mean after a gracious manner; so that nothing but inadvertency to their own custom makes them grant the one, and deny the other. Indeed they do well in singing *David's* Psalms, and they follow the example of *Hezekiah* therein, who commanded to sing praises with the words of *David* and *Asaph*. I could wish for the future that their Prayers were of the same nature with their Praises, for these few Reasons, with which I will conclude this discourse. First, A man may as well know before-hand with what words to pray as to what sense. Secondly, They that pray not the same words do use mostly to pray for the same things in other words: As that God would forgive

forgive their sins, avert his judgments, strengthen their weak graces, weaken their strong corruptions, and the like. Thirdly, Because these are most for the edification of the People, who by often hearing of the same Prayer can commit it to memory, and used to the same Liturgy, can joyn and answer in many pathetical Responsals. Now all things in Publick ought to be done to Edification. Fourthly, An *extempore* Prayer may likewise hinder the devotion of the Minister, as well as of the People: for his understanding may be so taken up in thinking what to say next, that he may be very formal as to his heart, and many times will be forced to be so for fear he should be out. Fifthly, Our experience hath shewed us, that their Method hath been confused, their Tautologies many, their Truifisms absurd, their Sense none of the best, their Passions vented, and the Dreadful Name of God so lightly, so frequently, and so unnecessarily used in them, that many understanding men because of them, have been

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been ready to abhor the Sacrifice of  
the Lord, and could seldom or never  
say *Amen* to them. Whereas in a set  
Form we are sure before-hand there is  
nothing put up in Petition but what is  
fit for Man to ask, or God to give, and  
therefore we can heartily without any  
hesitancy say *Amen* to it.

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FINIS.

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