

Unum Necessarium :
OR,
CHRIST's Justification
OF
MARY'S CHOICE ;
AND OF HIS
S E R V A N T S

Wrongfully Accused :

CONTAINING

A Resolution of many weighty Cases of Conscience. *Viz.* Indifferent Things, Obedience to the Higher Powers, &c. With some Reflections on Popery, and a brief Account of the many Cruelties committed by the Papists.

By Richard Baxter.

L O N D O N,

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THE PREFACE.

I*T is not a needless Subject which I here offer about needless or less needful things. Little do most men think how much of their Wisdom or Folly lyeth in their right or wrong valuing and using things lawful, and that have an inferiour sort of Goodness; and how much their Salvation or Damnation is herein concerned. Men are condemned for an Evil Love, but not for the*

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Love of Evil as Evil: Nature is against that. To love a lesser Good too much, and a greater too little; to love the End but as the Means, and the Means as the End, is an evil Love; Non malum volumus, sed malè: It is the Act that is evil when the Object is good, either indeed, or in the Apprehension of the Lover. He may will Hurt, as Hurt to another; but it is as conceited to be some good to himself. Apprehension of Good or Evil, that is, practical Judgment ruleth the Wills and Actions of the World; of how great Moment then is it to have a truly informed Judgment, and to have Teachers that will thus truly inform us; not about matter of meer Talk and Dispute, that

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that little concerneth us, but about that which is good or evil to ourselves, and to know indifferent things to be indifferent: It is the pernicious enmity of the fleshly Appetite to the Soul, that it byasseth the practical Judgment and Will to take things indifferent to be good and desirable, and almost necessary; and a small sensible good to be a great one, and a great good which displeaseth Sense and Appetite, to be small, if not a hurtful Evil.

And indeed the Holy Ghost hath told us, Rom. 8. 5, 6, 7, 8. That this is the difference between the truly godly and ungodly, That one is spiritually minded, and the other carnally; that is, one savoureth things spiritual, and judgeth of things according

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cording to spiritual Reason and Interest, and loveth and chooseth them for spiritual goodness; but the Carnal have no such Gust, Judgment or Love, but value things as the Appetite and Interest of the Flesh inclineth them. Be they both of the same Calling, Education and Profession; if both were Pastors of the same Churches, and Preachers of the same Doctrine, yet this difference is at the Hearts of spiritual and carnal Men; and it usually appeareth so others in their Lives: If they be publick Persons, they will shew men what things they value, and what gain it is that they pursue. The Flesh loveth not Mortification, nor the Cross; it is always against spiritual Laws and Life, and spiritual

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tual Worship and Persons, so far as they cross their carnal Interest. He that will worship God that is a Spirit, in Spirit and Truth, must have a Judgment that most valueth spiritual things, and place his Love and Hope on spiritual Delights and Happiness. A carnal Mind that savoureth only carnal things, and neither is, nor can be subject to God's spiritual Law, will hardly relish spiritual Worship, or a spiritual kind of Life.

One of the greatest signs of an Hypocrite is, making a great matter of little (wordly and fleshly) things, and making a little matter of great things. All the things of the Flesh and World are things indifferent in themselves, or almost indif-

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indifferent, further than their Relation to spiritual good doth make them become good or evil; good if they further it, and evil if they hinder it. But the Hypocrite is never indifferent toward them; he feeleth no great need of spiritual thoughts, spiritual Counsel, or Discourse, or Preaching, or Books, or Company: Perhaps he can bear them, but he can be without them; and doth neither much desire them or delight in them. A History, or Romance, or merry Jest, or Game, is pleasanter to him. But his Thoughts are serious for his carnal Commodity, Pleasure and Reputation; what he shall eat and Drink, and wherewith he shall be cloathed. If his House, his Maintenance, his Meat.

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and Drink be not such as the Flesh desireth, especially if it be put to Streights and Sufferings; his Sense of it is as quick, and his Complaint as serious as if he were half undone, or it were some great matter at least that he complaineth of. The Complaints and Tears of many that are in some Streights or Sufferings, should cause wiser Tears from serious Believers, to see men so miserably carnal, like Children that cry for a Pin or a Feather, as if they had lost their greatest good.

Seriousness is it that sheweth what is next to a man's Heart. It is Seriousness and Earnestness about fleshly Vanity, and want of Seriousness about things Spiritual and Eternal, which is the Tem-

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Temperament and Character of the Hypocrite.

And here I would intreat some that I hope are godly, to forbear so suspicious and disgraceful a course, as they are openly guilty of; I mean, when they talk so concernedly and eagerly about their Meat, and Drink, and Cloaths, and every fleshly thing, as if their Hearts were set upon it. Passion and chiding if all be not as their Fancies or Appetite would have it, doth shew that they are dangerously diseased at least. This Meat is not well drest, and the other is too little or too much; and that Sawce is not rightly made, and something or other is still amiss: And all these are talkt of as seriously, as if the fleshly Appetite were the

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the Man. In a word; the more serious any man is about great things, the more indifferent he will be about things indifferent: And the more indifferent a man is about the greatest things, the more earnest and serious will he be about things indifferent; and vice versâ, the more serious he is about things indifferent, the more indifferent he will be about the One Thing Necessary. Taking great things for small, and small things for great; necessary things for indifferent, and indifferent or smaller things for necessary, is the Folly, and the Sin, and the Damnation of the Ungodly. And because all men will do as they are, it is also the Corrupter, Troubler and Divider of the Christian Societies,
in

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in Doctrine, Worship, Discipline and Conversation; and the Conformer of the World: Of which Faith and serious Godliness is the Remedy, which valueth and useth all things as they are.

Septemb. 29.
1684.

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THE
One Thing Necessary :
OR,
MARY'S Choice Justified.

LUK. 10. 41.

*Jesus answered and said unto her,
Martha, Martha, thou art carefull
and troubled about many things;
but one thing is needfull.*

HAVING long ago published some Sermons on the *One thing needful*, in a Treatise called, *A Saint or a Bruit*, I find by more experience than I had then, that it is more necessary to say something on the former part of the Text than I thought it was: I then lived among poor labouring honest People, who had indeed some
B tempta-

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temptations from *outward wants*, but little from *wealth* and *superfluities*, nor had leisure to waste time upon so many trifles, as I see rich and idle Persons think they have.

It is here very considerable, 1. That the *Author* of this Reproof, was one who was not to be suspected to mistake through *ignorance* or *want of love* to *Martha*: And though he lived in a *low manner*, and not as the *rich*, yet it was not because he *wanted* such things, that he blameth the minding of *unnecessary things*. For he was *Lord of all*; and for our *sakes* he became poor, yet suffered as *rich men* that are supposed to be usually the greatest sinners. *He made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death.* Isa. 53. 9.

2. And that his Reproof was very Serious and Compassionate, repeating her Name, *Martha, Martha*.

3. The Person Reproved, was not a wicked, fleshly, worldly Person, but one that was beloved by him, and a religious Believer.

4. The matter which she is reproved for, is partly positive expressed (*being carefull and troubled about many things,*) and

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and partly implied as *privative*; not preferring the one thing needfull at that time so much as she should have done: Which implyeth, 1. That the *many things* were *needless*, or *less needful things*. 2. That they took up both her *unseasonable time*, and the cares of her mind, unto her trouble.

I need no more words to convince you, that Christ here teacheth us this Lesson, viz.

That Care and Trouble about many needless or less needful things, hindering them from the due minding of the one thing needfull, is a sin which Christ reproved in Martha, and therefore blameth in all others who are guilty of it.

Here, I. Let us consider what *Martha's* sin in particular was. II. Whether we are not like to be more guilty of the like. III. In what kind this sin is usually committed. IV. What are the excuses for it. V. What is the evil of it, which deserveth such Reproof. VI. What use we should make of Christ's Reproof.

I. *Martha's* Sin (already mentioned) was over-much Care and Trouble about her

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her *Table* for Christs Entertainment,
while *Mary* sat hearing his holy Dis-
course; which shewed that she had *less*
Appetite than *Mary* to the Holy Doctrine
of Christ, that could easly be with-
out it. 2. And that she over-valued the
lower part, his bodily entertainment.

Yet there were these extenuations of
it, 1. It was not doing any *sinful* work
in it self.

2. It was not *needless* in its time and
measure.

We are allowed to pray for our dai-
ly Bread; and here is no mention of
any superfluities or excess: And so wor-
thy a Guest deserved the best Provisi-
ons; and it's probable that *Martha* was
the chief House-keeper, to whom it
most belonged. And no doubt it was
a work of *Love and Honour* to Christ:
Yet though it was for his *own Person*,
and had such excuses, Christ would not
take part with it, or forbear to blame
it.

And indeed one half of her fault lay
in *blaming her Sister* that was wiser, and
chose better than her self; and Christ
spake this as much to justifie *Mary*, as
to blame *Martha*, as the following words
shew.

II. And

II. And if we judge but by her quali-
ty and case, and ours, we are far li-
ker to be thus culpable than *Martha*
was. For, 1. That Countrey was poor
in comparison of ours, and had not half
the Temptations to many needless things,
as we have by our Riches and their ef-
fects.

2. Christ would not have endured
such Vanities and Excesses as we are usu-
ally guilty of.

3. It's like *Martha* that was so Fa-
miliar with Christ, was less addicted
to Vanities than we now are.

4. Our Common Vanities, for which
few of the better sort blame themselves,
have no such extenuations or excuses as
the Case of *Martha* had.

III. But we need no more to convince
us, than to name some of the many in-
stances, in which our sin is far, yea,
very far worse than *Martha's*.

1. How much of most mens thoughts
and time, is taken up with the *needless*
cares to grow richer, and be better pro-
vided in the world? from one end of
the year to the other, how great a pro-

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portion is thus laid out? Cannot we serve Gods Providence, and labour in our Callings, and do our Duty without such a measure of *Care* and *Trouble*? Into how narrow a compass do worldly cares and troubles cast Gods Service, and mens cares and thoughts of their endless state in the hearts and houses of most men! These thorns and briars are so rank and plentiful, that they choak much of the Seed of the Gospel, and make true Godliness and Heavenly Delight to wither away and come to little.

2. How many needless *Cares* and *Troubles* have most, about *Gods part and Providence*, which belongs not to them; fearing what may befall them, lest they should be poor, or oppressed, or suffer by others; when they should spend those thoughts in caring for *their Duty*, and trusting the Love and Faithfulness of God? And no other care will avoid their suffering.

3. How much needless, yea and brutish thoughts and works, have many to please and gratifie their Appetites? What a base and yet costly service have they that serve a greedy throat, and a beastly fantasy?

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Had God taken away many mens Health and Appetite, that meat and drink had been loathsome to them, it had been a Mercy to many such; who by the Pleasure that they have in these, are made slaves to the flesh, and sinks of shamefull sin, and the foot-ball of temptations, and live under continual wounds of Conscience, and when the Cup is absent, they are sinning in their imaginations and desires, and are contriving how the next meal or day to gratifie their Appetites again: I speak not of the *reeling besfooled Drunkard*, or the spewing Glutton, but of them whose *Care* is for Throat and Belly, that make a *great matter* of the pleasing or displeasing of their Appetites, and think and talk of it so seriously, as if it were some needfull or important thing; that are *displeased in mind* if their *throats be not pleased*, and they fare not sumptuously or deliciously every day: When the poor *Israelites* had not tasted Bread or Flesh for many years in a Wilderness, nor so much as the *Egyptian Onions*, but only Manna, they are killed by Gods Justice because they murmured; and when they asked Flesh, its said,

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8 *The One Thing Necessary, or, They asked Meat for their Lusts, Psal. 78.* That is, *For their meer Appetites*, without necessity, for life or health : but how much further do most go now, exceeding even the Princes or great men in *Israel* in the matter and manner of their dyet, (as I believe the most in *England* do) and yet never blame or suspect themselves ! *Turks* can forbear Wine at *Mahomets* Command, and the *Rechabites* because their Father bid them ; and if the Physician forbid Strong drink or Wine to the Sick, they can forbear ; but sensual sinners will rebel against God for their desired bait, and their heart and thoughts are set upon it.

4. How much also of many vain Peoples thoughts and care is spent about *needless Ornaments of Apparel* ? Do we need any other Proof than the opening of our eyes in the Streets, yea, in the holy Assemblies, as well as in places of evil fame : *Dives* is noted by Christ to wear Purple and Silk, or as we translate it, fine Linnen ; and then those that were gorgeously Apparelled, were in *Kings Houses* ; but how few here of the vulgar, yea of Servants, affect it not now, that can but procure it ! If the

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the highest do but take it up, inferiours quickly strive to immitate them : In my short time, the Garb of *England* is so changed, that but fifty years ago, men would have gazed at such as painted *Indians* or outlandish Strangers, or ugly *Ruffians*, that had gone as most civil and religious People do in this City now. *Paul* would have forborn *Wine and Flesh* while he had lived, rather than his liberty should hurt his weak Brothers Soul : But if the Scandal of our Pride or Gawdery do make many weak Persons turn Quakers to fly from it, how few for to avoid this, would avoid the most gawdy and effeminate, or ruffianly fashion of Cloaths or Hair ? And instead of receiving Reproof from such Quakers, they are hardened the more, because of the weakness of their reprovers. I am loth to name those gawds with which especially the Female Sex do openly shew their Vanity, which tell all beholders what *needless trifles* take up much of their time, and cost, and care : And, alas for mens stupid Folly ; All this is while thousands want Food and Rayment ; while whole Countreys are impoverished by cruel

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Wars, when dreadful Flames have consumed our Wealth, and rebuked our Pride, and humbling Diseases have shewed us what flesh is, and when our daily *feeling* tells us it is perishing, and while we are going to a loathsome Grave, and see the Dust and bones of those whom we are following; and the plain warnings of *Peter*, 1 *Pet.* 3. 3, 4, 5, 6. and many such stand in the Bible as cyphers to them.

5. How many needless things take up the rich, about their *Houses, Furniture, Retinue and Entertainments*? especially those that are most *Proud*, and most *Curious* and *Vain*. *Convenience* must be a pretence for sinfull cost and labour; *Handsomness* or *Decency* must be a pretence for needless charge in furniture, while the Poor goe almost naked; *Cleanliness* must be a pretence for their Servants spending much of the day and year in needless Vanities, which might be much better spent: Not to be accounted *Careless* or *Uncleanly* by others of the like Vanity, seemeth excuse enough for a multitude of *needless Curiosities*: To find poor People work doth pass for an excuse, for employ-
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ing Servants and Tradesmen in making and providing all these *Need-nots*, as if they might not have been better employed for the common good, and encouraged to learn some better Trades; as if they knew not how narrow a Coffin, and little furniture must shortly serve them: The report of good *House-keeping* and *Entertainments* must justify the Excesses and chargeable needless superfluities of the rich.

6. What *needless Cares and business* have many to avoid the contempt or hard thoughts of others! How near goeth it to a proud Heart what is *thought and spoken* of them! And their *avoiding of contempt* must be the reason of most of the fore-mentioned Vanities, in their Dress, their Houses, their Retinue, and the rest; when alas they have another kind of Judgment to prepare for, and they and those whose thoughts they so much regard, are almost dead and Dust already.

7. What a deal of some mens *Cares and Thoughts* are spent in needless contrivances for Power and Greatness in the World! what works find some *Achitophels* and *Hamans* for their minds! As
if

if it were needfull for a man to fall at last from a higher place than the rest about him; or to have his will fulfilled by all others; or to have the Souls or Lives of many to answer for; or to be stronglier allured to the damning Love of this World than other men; or to be envied by many; or to be a Ruler of others, before one knoweth how to be Obedient to God, and to rule himself: And O what worse than needless troubles, even horrible wickedness doth this Ambition lead many to! even to be the Plagues of the Earth, and incarnate Devils, by bloody Wars and cruel Oppressions, Desolations and Persecutions.

8. Yea some of lower rank have such imperious idol Wills, that nothing *must* cross them, or be said or done by any about them, but as they would have it: And yet it's two to one but so *many persons and things will cross them*, and go quite contrary to their wills, as that their disease will be their *continual torment*: And they will be like one in Winter that cannot bear the cold, and yet *must* bear it, or like a poor man that is a Servant to his Appetite, and hath
not

not wherewith to please it: or like one that dwelleth by the Sea, and cannot bear the sight of the Waters, or in a Wood and, cannot bear the shaking of a Leaf. Such worse than needless troubles doth an *Idol Will* produce.

9. And how much time is lost in vain and needless talk; about things not justly pleasing, and no way profiting ourselves and others! A vain Tongue being the Index of a vain Mind, as if Mind and Tongue had no higher or better Subjects or Imployment.

10. And in this City it is not a little time that is taken up with *needless Sports and Recreations*: I will not honour the *Gamesters* trade with so soft a Name as *Needless Work*; Nor the *Play-houses*, nor the houses of excess and lust: But if Cards, Dice, and Stage-plays had never been branded and condemned by the Ancient Canons of the Christian Churches, and did not notoriously bear the marks of Temptation and much gross folly and sin, yet *Vanity* and *Needlesness* should be enough to make men, that believe another World and the shortness of this Life, to abhor them, and better spend their time. There is a sort of Pleasure
and

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and Recreation that is needful: That which fits us best for our necessary works and duty, preserving by *motion* the *health of the body*, or refreshing the weary Spirits of hard Students. But God hath left no man in such a penury of Recreation, but that he may find more useful, profitable, manly, time-saving and safe ones, than Gaming, or Stage-Plays, or Romances, and such ensnaring befooling unprofitable Time-wasters are.

11. And among all the needless deceitful vanities, *unprofitable Studies* and Arts are not the least: When *Cornelius Agrippa* had streined his Brain to such Curiosities that he passed for a Conjuror, and had written a Commentary upon *Lullius* his Arts after many others; he concludeth all with an honest and Christian like Treatise, *De Vanitate Scientiarum*, commending the Study and Practice of Gods Word as the only true Wisdom: And though I have marvelled at the *Carthage* Council, which forbade the reading of Heathens Books, I never wondered that mens *Excess* herein should be rebuked, nor that *Paul* called men to beware lest they were deceived by *vain Philosophy*, and to avoid *op-
position*.

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*posi-
tion of Sciences, falsely so called: Lan-
guages, Logick, Metaphysicks, Physicks,
Mathematicks, &c. have their use; But
he is a Learned man indeed who right-
ly applyeth them to that use, and se-
parateth the needfull from the needless
part, the certain from the uncertain,
truth from falshood and presumptuous
Conceits; the plausibleness of the thing
inviteth many to waste their time in
unprofitable Studies, who durst not have
spent it in Play-houses and Gaming;
and yet I doubt to many it will prove
no better.*

*Qu. But the doubt is, What are these
needless sinfull things; That seemeth needless
to one that is not so indeed, or to another? Cy-
nicks call Decencies, and Ornaments, and
Conveniencies, and Pleasure, needless.*

*Ans. 1. That is needless which doth no
good.*

*2. Those things that do more hurt than
good.*

*3. Those things which answer not the
cost and labour which is bestowed for
them.*

*4. Those things that are good, but
hinder and deprive us of a greater good,
which*

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which we may well spare, but are hindrances to the one thing necessary, which we cannot spare; all these are certainly needless, if not worse.

But because vain Persons are hardly Convinced, 'till God by Light or Fire do convince them, I will help them by these few questions following.

Qu. 1. Is that act which you plead for, a thing which God doth any way *Command* you, directly or indirectly? If not, how can it be *needfull* to you? you will say, Are there not some things *Indifferent* and *lawfull*, which are *no duties*?

Ans. 1. There are *natural* things which are not *moral*; (either Virtue or Vice) as your Health or Sickness, and such things as are Gods works and not yours; of these I speak not. 2. There are *Actions* of *your own* which are *meerly natural*, neither commanded nor forbidden, and that is all those which are no matter for *Rational choosing or refusing*, such as have no moral use; as winking with the eye, which foot I shall first put forward; which of two equal things, in meat, drink, Apparel, &c. I shall *take*, (not *choose*;) when it is needfull that I do one, but it's perfectly indifferent.

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rent which: But the things which I am speaking of are of no such nature, but such as belong to Rational choice, and are accordingly chosen by you.

Qu. 2. Would your Consciences trouble you for it as any sin, if you omitted the thing which I call needless? I suppose not.

Qu. 3. Is it to please God as an act of Obedience that you do them? Is your Curiosity, and your vain Attire, and the rest forementioned chosen to *please God*, or to *please your fleshly Sense* and Phantasie, or the World?

Qu. 4. Will it be any *hurt* to you, or real *loss*, if they be omitted, or be denied you?

Qu. 5. Have you got any thing by them already, or not lost more than you have gotten.

Qu. 6. Are they things that the *better*, or the *worser* sort of Persons more mind and plead for? whose Delights are Cards and Dice, and Plays, and vain Fashions? Is it the most *Heavenly*, or the most *Fleshly* Persons that are most eager of them, and most use them?

Qu. 7. Do you find that they more help

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help or hinder you in Prayer and other
holy Exercises? especially your hea-
venly Delights?

Qu. 8. How do they relish with you
when you think of Death' and Judg-
ment? Are they a comfortable part of
your Preparation? Had you rather then
review and answer for your time spent
in these, than in greater things?

If you will but set Conscience to an-
swer these Questions, methinks you
should soon perceive your selves, what
things they be that are needless, and
therefore not to be chosen, and conse-
quently unlawfull.

But that you may see that I drive you
not to any extreams, I shall negative-
ly add,

1. I do not number all our thoughts,
care and labour for our Bodies, Chil-
dren or others, about things need-
full and convenient, to be these *needless*
things.

2. Nor is our diligent labour in a
constant Calling needless; he that will
not labour, *St. Paul* saith, *should not eat*;
This is a part of our Obedience to
God, *Six dayes shalt thou labour.*

3. Nor is it needless to labour for
more

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more than we need our selves, that we
may *have to give to him that needeth*, and
to do good to others.

4. Nor is it needless to do our best
for our bodily health, to fit our Bodies
to be able and chearfull servants to our
Souls: That Food, that Recreation and
Pleasure, which is necessary to fit Body
or Mind for Service, and the work of a
Christian Life, is not vain.

5. All men are not called to the same
kind of Labour and employment; that
is needfull to one, which is not to a-
nother.

6. The lowest things which we do
in Obedience to God, if it were but
sweeping the Streets or Chimneys, is
not to be numbred with the needless
things, but rather a comfortable exer-
cise of Humility and Obedience.

But every man must prefer the great-
est thing.

IV. *What are the common excuses of
this Sin?*

Obj. 1. Some say, that it is but few
Persons, at least not all, that are fitted
for, and called to great employments;
they that cannot do greater matters,
must do lesser.

Ans.

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Ans. All are not called to Govern Kingdoms, nor to be Teachers and Pastors of the Church; but all have some Talent, which they must use and answer for; and all may do somewhat which tendeth to the common good; the Servant or Labourer that Ploweth, Soweth and Reapeth, doth serve the Common-wealth; and if his Master live idly, and spend his time in Gaming, Plays, or other vanity, can he excuse it by pleading a greater incapacity than his Servant had? A Mason, a Carpenter, a Tailor, a Sweep-chimney, do that which is needfull to be done; and shall rich men live idly, and do no good, because they are rich?

Obj. 2. *I was not bred up to labour, they that were bred up to it, must use it.*

Ans. If you were not bred up to some Calling or Employment, profitable to your self and others, you were bred in sin, and then it's time to break it off; Idleness, with Pride and Fulness, are noted to have been Sodoms sins; and will you not amend, because you were bred in sin? can you bear the doom of the unprofitable, slothful Servant, *Math.* 25? Or will it excuse you because you have

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have been slothfull from your youth?

Obj. 3. *God doth not require toil and labour from those that are rich, and need it not.*

Ans. God doth not require the same kind of labour from all; but if he give you more than the poor, he requireth not less but more from you; that is, your constant diligence in more profitable work; else you may as well say, That God is the Governour of none but the Poor, or that he looketh for least Service, where he giveth most wages.

Your labour is not only to supply your own needs, but to profit others, and for the common good.

And the more you do in way of Duty, the more you receive and profit your selves. Idleness is your own loss to Soul and Body.

Obj. 4. *Men need Recreation and Relaxation.*

Ans. What do you need it for? Is it not for your work, and your health, to enable you to work? Use no more than furthereth your health and work, and that shall not be called needles.

Obj. 5. *Little things are usefull in their places; Christ saith of some such, These ought*

22 *The One Thing Necessary, or,*
ought ye to have done, and not to leave the
other undone.

Ans. No doubt but there are things
good and needfull of several degrees;
all are not of the *most needfull* kind:
But what's this to that which is *not*
needfull? or that hindereth more need-
full things, as afore described?

Obj. 6. *Old men are incompetent Judges*
of the case of Youth, as not having
their inclinations to Sports and Pleasures;
and all men, especially Divines and Law-
yers, and such like grave men, who are
themselves taken up with greater matters,
are incompetent Judges of the affairs of Wo-
men, their Cloaths, their Furniture, their
Expences and their Employments, and are
apt to call all needless, which is below their
work.

Ans. Yet Christ thought himself meet
to judge of the choice of *Martha and*
Mary, and *Solomon* to give directions to
Women, and so did *St. Peter* and *St.*
Paul: Old men were once young, and
know what youthfull inclinations are,
and grave men that live among Women,
see their business, and know their rea-
sons: And if all sorts of persons shall
judge *Ministers, Lawyers* and *Judges* in-
competent

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competent to judge of their Tradings,
Actions and Affairs, and so appropri-
ate the judgment of them to them-
selves alone, then all persons will by
their own judgments be alwaies in the
right, and none will be capable of a-
mendment; the Proverb is, *A stander by*
may see more than a Player; but it is con-
fessed that a just Judge must hear and
consider the whole case.

Obj. 7. *We shall be derided if we are*
singular.

Ans. Will God deride you for obey-
ing him? hath not he said, *Be not con-*
formed to this world? You will be deri-
ded and persecuted too by wicked men,
if you will be true to Christ, to God-
liness, Sobriety and Honesty, and is
that a good reason why you should be
sensual, worldly and ungodly?

V. But what is the sin here Repro-
ved, &c? What harm is it to be thus
carefull and troubled about many things,
that are not comparatively needfull?

Ans. 1. To prefer little things be-
fore greater, and thus to imploy our
selves, is a wilfull debasing of our Souls,
which should be exercised about that
which

24 *The One Thing Necessary, or,*

which is answerable to the dignity of their natures; as it is a debasing of a Prince to use him as Beggars, or in fordid work; and as it were below a wise man to talk at the rate of Fools and Children; so is it a debasing of a Soul that is made for things of endless consequence, to imploy it upon needless trifles. Pride maketh men think well of themselves, and look high in the world, and disdain to be set low in mens thoughts, words or employments; and yet when God commandeth them to look higher, they choose a low and fordid life.

2. It is a wilfull contempt of the most excellent things: God and our Redeemer, Grace and Glory are before us, and should be remembred and sought in the first place; and it is a contempt of them, needlessly to turn from them our minds and time to vanity: The mind of man is not infinite, but narrow, and cannot be employed on many things at once; if it be taken up with trifles, it cannot choose but neglect greater things: And for God, and Christ, and Heaven to be set by, while we play with toyes, is profane Contempt.

Obj

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25

Obj. *We cannot be alwaies thinking of God and Heaven.*

Ans. But you must alwaies be serving God in one kind or other, and alwaies doing that which tends to Heaven; as you are not all day meditating of the Light, but you are all day using it.

3. This taking up our minds and time with needless things, is a great injury to our selves, by neglect of our own greatest benefit and necessities: Did but men know what they have to mind and seek, it would be their speedy cure. Alas, we are all behind hand in our great and necessary business; and these Triflers usually are more behind hand than others: They have more to do of unspeakable consequence, than all their time and diligence will serve for, as it deserveth, (having lost so much already) and yet have they so much to spare for trifles?

O that these Loyterers knew their necessity and their work. 1. You have God to know, of whom you are too ignorant; you have his Word and Will to know, which you are yet much unacquainted with. 2. Do you know what

C

it

26 *The One Thing Necessary, or,*

it is to get, keep, use and strengthen a lively belief of the Word of God, and the unseen World? 3. Do you know what it is to get assurance that God is your reconciled Father, that Christ and Salvation are yours? that you are truly sanctified, and shall live in Heaven for ever? 4. Do you know what it is to get the Heart in Love with God, and to long after Communion with him in Glory? 5. Do you know what it is to get down all the lusts of the flesh, and watch against all the snares of sense and vain imagination, and to escape the love of these alluring pleasures, and the danger of particular sins of sensuality? 6. Do you know what it is to subdue all your carnal affections and passions, and to get in their stead a zeal for God, and to be fervent in his Service? 7. Do you know what it is to get above the love of Riches, and to escape all the snares of Covetous desires? 8. Do you know what it is to keep a holy government of your thoughts, and to employ them in their proper work? 9. Do you know what it is to rule your tongues, in forbearing evil, and using them for
that

Mary's Choice Justified.

27

that which they are made for? 10. And do you know what the spiritual, sincere and constant use of all Gods Worship is, Word, Prayer, Sacraments, &c? 11. Do you know what it is to renew Repentance for our renewed sins? 12. And to keep down all Pride, and to walk humbly before God and man? 13. Do you know what it is to love others as your selves; to do as much good to all mens Souls and Bodies as you can? 14. And what it is to discharge all the duties of your several relations, to all your superiours, inferiours and equals? 15. And what it is to find out the corruptions and deceitfulness of your own hearts, and well to understand your selves? 16. And what it is to understand the nature and danger of all Satans temptations, and to escape or overcome them? 17. And what it is to obey all the motions of Gods Spirit? 18. And to use all our daily Mercies well? 19. And to bear Afflictions patiently and profitably? 20. And to be above the love of this body and life, and ready to dye? 21. And to live in the joy and comfort which becometh the Children of God, the members
C 2

28 *The One Thing Necessary, or,*
bers of Christ that wait in hope of endless glory? Do but understand what all, or half this is, and conscionably do it, and then spend the rest of your time in Cards, Dice, Playes, vain Adornings, Curiosities and other trifles.

4. Consider also that Time and Life are very short and very uncertain, and therefore not to be spent on needless things by one that standeth at the door of eternity.

5: The experience of other men should move us: All right repenting men, and most dying men, wish that their time had not been so wasted, but spent on that which was necessary to the great ends of life.

6. Conscience telleth most that have not feared it, that at Death and Judgment we are like to wish that needfull things had taken up all our time.

7. It is a wrong to our great Creator and Preserver, that we should thus waste our time while he maintaineth us, as if he gave us Life and Mercy for such Vanity.

8. The Example of Christ and his Saints, is a reproof of all such Vanity; we find not that they thus spent their thoughts and time.

VI. The

VI. The Uses we should make of this, are these:

I. Parents may hence learn, for what imployment they should Educate their Children in the World, what they should teach them, and to what Trades and Callings they should set them; not to such as will spend their Lives in Vanities; but such in which they may be most usefull to themselves and others in the world: Not that all can be of the best or highest Callings, but all should be educated for the most use and service, and all employed in the best which they are fit for: It is a debasing of your Children to intend them for no better than to live at ease to get money; a Heathen would tell you, that usefulness to the Common-wealth is more to be regarded, and a Christian knoweth that the serving of God in the greatest profiting of our selves and others, must be preferred.

II. Let us all review our lives, and see here how much we have to repent of; and let us see also what cause of lamentation we have for the common

C 3

guilt

30 *The One Thing Necessary, or,*
guilt of all sorts, against these and such
like words of Christ.

But to prevent your misunderstanding
of me, I first profess that I intend
not to make you Cynicks, or Supersti-
tious, nor to perswade you that it is
necessary to your Salvation to live nasti-
ly and undecently, nor that it is any
part of your holiness or perfection to
be singularly fordid, and to avoid things
comely and convenient, as some old
Hermits and Anchorites, and divers
Popish Saints seemed to think: I am
not drawing you to imitate that present
Sect among us, that set up at first with
a holiness which consisted much in for-
bearing Cuffs, and Bands, and Hatbands,
and Ribbans, and saying *Thou* instead
of *You*, and withall in open reviling
the most faithfull Ministers. It is not
a superstitious *Touch not, Taste not, Han-
dle not*, Col. 2. 20, 21. I am commend-
ing to you: But I fear lest the con-
trary common extream be much more
dangerous: I would not speak against
your smallest convenience, so far as it
became not a time-wasting Snare, and
hindred not your Heads, Hearts and
Lives from greater necessary things. I
know

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know that when St *Paul* speaketh of-
ten for providing things *honest*, and liv-
ing honestly, he meaneth things decent
and of good report; to expose ones
self, purposely to be laughed at, as St.
Francis and such others are said to have
done, is no just exercise of Piety or
Humility.

But alas what a doleful Spectacle is
it, to one that believeth whither we
are going, to see what it is that most
men are doing, and what it is that
they leave undone! I am not now
speaking of the time that is spent in
direct evil; but little do men know how
dangerously they sin in spending too
much in things that have *some good*,
and in preferring *Conveniencies* and
small bodily Pleasures and Commodi-
ties, before the *great and needfull things*;
who can doubt but it was a decent
and good thing for *Martha* to make
Provision for Christ, and to attend and
serve him? Are not most of your un-
seasonable Cares and Troubles, about
much smaller matters than this? but
at the time when greater things should
be done, even these are culpable Cares
and Troubles; much more *those* many
C 4. little.

32 *The One Thing Necessary, or,*

little trifles, which only Pride and Folly calleth needfull: And verily we have all so much of this *necessary work* to do, that leaveth us little room or time to spare for things which most men spend much of their Lives in; so great and urgent are our main concerns, as should make every wise man study diligently to put by as many of the less diverting matters as he can: He that had Money to lay out for his ranfome, or for his life or necessary livelyhood, would spend little on small matters, till he were sure he had enough to spare. Harken but wisely to God and Conscience; foresee whither you are going, and what you have to do, and of what inconceivable importance, and then consider whether you have room and time for all or any of those diverting trifles which are the chiefest care and business of the unbelieving carnal world.

This needless business plainly sheweth that you have low and little Souls: As Children playing in the Sand shew their difference from men that apply themselves to manly business, so your over-business about your Ornaments, Dresses,

Mary's Choice Justified.

33

Dresses, Complements, Rooms, and many such trifles, doth tell others (whether you will know it your selves or not) that you have both Childish understandings (and worse because you are at age) that set too much by little things, and that you have too much carnality of affection, when you have so much mind of trifling Need-nots: And worst of all it plainly sheweth that you greatly want a sounder belief and deeper Sense of your great business and interest in the world, and live not in the sense of the nearness of Death and things Eternal, as wise Believers should still do.

I am not saying, that you should always have the sinful fears and sadness, which the Sentence of Death doth bring on most: I had rather you were quite above these to the last: Nor do I say that you should always have just the same kind of passions, or do all things just in the same manner, as you ought to have and do, if you were sure to dye to Morrow. But I must say, that you should have the same Wisdom, and the same esteem of God, and of the World, of Soul and Body, of Heaven

C 5

and

34 *The One Thing Necessary, or,*
 and Earth, of Eternity and Time, of
 Duty and Sin, of Necessaries and Tri-
 fles, as you will then have; and the same
 holy affections, and diligence, and pra-
 ctice of Life, which this Wisdom will
 then teach you to wish that you had
 sooner had. O let there not be too great
 and shameful a difference between your
 Living and your Dying Thoughts. If your
 Father, or Child, or Husband, or Wife,
 were on their Death-bed or going to
 Execution, would not all be ashamed of
 you, that should hear you talk to them
 about Cards, or Plays, or fine Cloaths,
 or Laces, or greater worldly Toyes
 than these. Yea, if you were taken up
 your selves about your own Ornaments,
 Dressings, Curiosities, and troublesome
 Triflings, who would not say that you
 were disgracefully senceless of your own
 and your dying Friends Condition? O
 Promise not your selves more time than
 God hath promised you: Dream not
 that you dwell further from the Grave
 than you do: You know not what it is
 to live as Christians or as Men, if you
 know not that all our Life should be
 spent in our best preparation for Death.
 Though you must do much which you
 would

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 would not be just found doing, you must
 do nothing but what you can then Com-
 fortably review, nor spend a moment
 in that, which then you must wish that
 you had not spent it in. And whether
 time-wasting trifles and Need-nots, will
 be comfortably remembred then, by one
 that hath Reason and Faith, and had
 so little time, and so much to do with
 it, methinks it might be easie to fore-
 see.

Verily, if you spent your time in no
 greater matters, than in getting Gold and
 worldly Glory, Crowns and Kingdoms,
 meerly for your Flesh, and the greatest
 Pleasures of a carnal transitory Life,
 you will in the Everlasting review, be
 confounded and tormented in remem-
 bring your self-abasing folly. And are
 your many little trifles then of more
 worth to make you a just excuse? Gen-
 tlemen, Ladies and Gentlewomen; do
 not only bear with me, but be willing
 and thankful that I deal plainly with
 you, when it is not for me, but for your
 selves: It is such as you that are most
 ordinarily and excusably guilty of this
 Sin and Folly: The poor Labouring
 Countrey-man and Tradesman indeed
 is,

36. *The One Thing Necessary, or,*
is unexcusable that will be diverted from
the care of his Everlasting state, even
by his most lawful and necessary La-
bours: But usually their guilt is less
far than yours, in all these following
respects.

1. That which they do is profitable
to the Common-wealth; and so is good,
and part of their duty in it self con-
sidered. To Plow, and Sow, and Reap,
and make you Bread and Drink, and
Cloaths, &c. But what good cometh
to the Common-wealth by your Curi-
osities, and Vanities, and Plays, and
Complements, though decency, and
cleanliness, and handfomeness, and a-
voiding contempt and reproach be vain-
ly pretended for them. They *gather*,
and you *waste*: They are the *Bees*, and
you are the *Drones*: They *labour*, and
you *consume it* on your Lusts and Fan-
cies. God bid them *labour six daies*, but
he never bad you make such a stir for
meer unnecessary vanities.

2. *Necessity* is some reason for what
they do, though it be no good excuse
for leaving undone greater things.
They must maintain themselves and Fa-
milies, and pay you your Rents: But
what

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what necessity have you to waste thoughts
and times about your many unprofita-
ble Toyes? *Martha* had some excuse,
but you have none.

3. God giveth you more *Wages*, and
therefore doth expect more *Work*: You
are Stewards of more trust, and there-
fore have more to give up an account
of.

4. They can say, [Christ and his A-
postles and all good men have laboured
and done such things as we do;] and
it is part of his Law, that if we will
not work we shall not eat; and *Solo-
mons* Mother, a Queen, and he the wi-
sest King by her teaching, describeth
the Virtuous Woman to be one that
worketh willingly with her hands on
Wooll and Flax, that riseth before day
to look to her household, and her Can-
dle goeth not out by night; and eat-
eth not the Bread of Idleness;] (when
too many of the Rich do eat no other.)
The labours of your Tenants have
such Presidents as these. But have you
any such for your needless formalities
and toyes? Did Christ or his Apostles
spend their time in Prating of unpro-
fitable things, or in Idleness, or Plays,
or

38 *The One Thing Necessary, or,*

or Gaming, or in Childish neatifying their Bodies, or such like? was St. Peter of your mind when he wrote to Christian Women, 1 Pet. 3. 3. That *their adorning be not outward, of Plaiting the Hair, and of wearing Gold, or of putting on of apparel, but the hidden man of the Heart; in that which is not corruptible, even of a meek and quiet Spirit, which is in Gods sight of great price?* That is, regard that which is precious, and adorneth you in the sight of God, and affect not neatness or costlyness, to make you seem either Rich or Comely in the sight of Man, but cloath your corruptible flesh with cheap and easie plainness, as befeemeth those that are going to the Grave. It is not *Apparel*, but *Ornaments* that he forbids, and a vain desire by our Apparel to seem somewhat higher or handsomer than we are to men.

Perhaps you will say, that Christ and his Apostles were poor men, and therefore neither Patterns or fit Judges for you: *Ans.* But yet they shall judge you, whether you will or not; And they who tell men by their lives, that they take not *their Doctrine* or

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or *example* for their Rule, or *Christ* for their *Governour*, shall find that unbelief and rebellion are not the way to their Justification. But though they that are gorgeously cloathed then dwelt in Kings houses, do you but read the 31. Chapter of the Proverbs, and take there the Counsel and Pattern of a Queen and King, and I will reprove you no more.

And you that are so regardful of the thoughts and eyes of men, and whose Pride maketh so great a matter of your reputation, that all about you be *sightly* and lyable to no contempt, why do you not most regard your reputation with the *wisest* and the *best*: St. Peter before told you what are the precious Ornaments in the sight of God: And wise men and good men come nearest to God in all their estimations. Who will bestow much cost or time, or hire Servants, to trim themselves, or their Houses, for Children or *Bedlams* to look on and admire? None but such as your selves do think ever the better of you for all your costly or troublesome curiosities; Wise men look at you as at Players, or Morice-dancers, some with

40 *The One Thing Necessary, or,*
with Laughter, and all with pity; and
think, what empty Souls are these that
mind such little Childish things?

And seeing common reason tells you,
that a mans dignity or baseness lyeth
in the dignity or baseness of the things
which he mindeth, hopeth for and
seeketh, and of the work in which his
Life is spent, why will you set your
selves so far below your poor Tenants
and labouring Servants, as to choose
employments so far baser than theirs?
That is basest which is most vain and
of little benefit to your selves or o-
thers: Your Plowman, your Baker,
your Brewer, your Cook, yea your
Chimney-sweeper live upon more use-
ful employments, than some rich-vain-
curious-idle persons.

And as all sin blindeth and befooleth
sinners, it's two to one but these self-
abasing persons will distaste what I
say, as thinking that it is against them.
When common reason might tell them
that all this that I speak is *for them*,
even for their Honour, their Commo-
dity, their Conscience, and their Sal-
vation. Should I perswade one that
felleth Pins and Points, or the Scavin-
gers.

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gers that carry out Dust and Dung,
to become Merchants that trade for
Gold and enriching Merchandize, few
of them would be so sottish as to think
I speak against them, to their dishonour
or their loss.

And still I confess that many little
things are needful in their place and
season: We should miss Pins and Points
if we were without them. Dirt and
uncleanness must be swept and washt
away: Garments should be warm and
comely: Rooms that are convenient
are desirable; comely and stately build-
ings and furniture for Princes and Ru-
lers are a due Ornament to Magistra-
cy, and splendid Cities and Temples
are an honest imitation of the great
and glorious works of God: Sweet
harmony and melody exhilarate the
Spirits for and in Gods Holy Praise.
All his Mercies should be used to fit
us, to serve him with gladness, and
joyfulness of heart. It is not a Cy-
nical Life that I plead for, but a base
and childish life that I am dispraising.
When comeliness and decency, and
cleanliness and reputation is made a
pretence for such trifling away your
own.

42 *The One Thing Necessary, or,*
own and your Servants time, and setting up such toyish trades and employments, as nothing but your own sinful disease and folly could keep you from being ashamed of, and your Consciences from accusing you for. I am ashamed to name over the trifles within doors and without which I mean.

But Satan is subtil as well as malicious, and knoweth that all fish bite not at the same bait: Crowns and enlarged Dominions are the diversions of some, who think their designs are high and honourable, while they go to damnation with more applause than worldly Peasants: Brave Speculations and pleasing Knowledge of things unnecessary are the bait of others, that scorn to neglect God and cast away their Salvation, for such low and little things, as the Wanton and the Glutton, or Drunkard do. Yet these that are pleased in satisfying their Appetites, think that they make a wiser bargain, and have somewhat more instead of Heaven, than sick brained Childish Women, that have no better in exchange than things and businesses which I am ashamed to name.

O

Mary's Choice Justified. 43

O that God would awaken all our Reason by a lively Faith, to see where we stand, and what is before us, and with whom we have to do, and how little transitory things of the flesh do signifie to a sound understanding. We should then see that Time and Life are of greater use, than to be plaid and fool'd away. Every moment of it would then appear to be very precious, and of great use. Whereas that is vile, which is good for nothing but vile employments: That hour which is useful for no greater work, than your trifling Need-nots, is of no greater worth than the work which it is for. Had you no more to do with it, how undesirable were life: Surely the gain or pleasure of an idle or a trifling life, will never compensate the cares and troubles and sufferings which we must all undergo. Were a Prince, Judge or Doctor set up as a Picture only to adorn a Room, or as a Mawkin to frighten away Crows from the Corn or Garden; this were not useless, yea it were better than many of your time-wasting vanities: But sure it would be a great debasing of such persons, as
scarce

44 *The One Thing Necessary, or,*
scarce worth the cost and trouble of
living.

The Scripture tells us indeed, that
Man walketh in a vain shew, and that
Verily every man at his best estate is Vanity; yea, all under the Sun is *Vanity*
and vexation of Spirit: But all this is
said only of man as seeking a Felicity
in this world, and of all that he is
and doth, with no higher respect than
to the present Prosperity and pleasure
of the Flesh: But there are greater
things offered us which are not Vanity,
even the pleasing of God, and the
fruition of his Love and Glory for ever;
and were our life and time devoted to
these high and noble Ends, were our
waking and sleeping, our eating and
drinking, our health and sickness, our
labours, yea and our needful recreations,
employed for these, and measured
accordingly as means hereto, they would
be holy and comfortable, and the lowest
things would be thus honoured and
precious: They that are stedfast and
unmoveable, alwaies abounding in the
work of the Lord, do find their labour
not in vain, 1 Cor. 15. 58. The
same House, Goods, Money, Food, Ray-
ment,

Mary's Choice Justified. 45

ment, Time, as used by holy Believers and
by carnal Worldlings, &c. differ more
than we can now conceive; *HOLINESS*
TO THE LORD is the name of the
one, and *VANITY, VEXATION* and
SIN of the other.

But alas, man who as a shadow passeth
away, doth set his heart on transitory
shadows, and dreaming, and seeming,
and Stage-employments and enjoyments
make up his hypocritical life and comforts:
His Religion is naturally ('till Grace amend him)
but *Shew* and *Ceremony*; his heart-work,
and house-work, and publick-work is little
but *Shadow* and *Ceremony*; Time is
spent, and Money spent, and Talk spent,
and Thoughts spent upon *Shadow* and
Ceremony; Servants are employed too
often also in wasting their time, to
serve their Masters Fancies in meer
Shadow and *Ceremony*: You can see and
hear but little that is better, or of
greater use in many rich persons daily
conversations, in their retinue, in
their splendid houses and curious adorned
rooms, or any thing even of that which
commandeth their hearts and time, and
in which they place their dignity and
plea-

46 *The One Thing Necessary, or,*
pleasure ; 'till either Grace happily, or
Death miserably awake their wit, and
then they cry out, *All is Vanity and*
Vexation ; O that we had better spent
our time ! *This their way is their folly,*
and yet their posterity approve their say-
ings, Psal. 49. 11, 12, 13. And still others
rise up that tread in their unhallowed
steps ; and Satans Kingdom can truly
boast of an *uninterrupted Succession*, even
from the daies of *Cain*, 'till now.

I shall end with some *Directions how*
to judge of Needless things. 2. *And an*
answer to some Cases of Conscience.

I. 1. All things are culpably need-
less which answer not the cost, and la-
bour, and time which is laid out up-
on them : You may judge by the good
which they are like to do.

2. Those things are culpably need-
less, which are but to serve a *desire or*
humour, which we have no *need to please* ;
if the *Lust* or *Fancie* be vain, the *Means*
that serve it can be no better ; whether
it be the lust of the flesh, the lust of
the eyes, or pride of life, which are
not of the Father, but of the World.
Men say, We *delight* in this or that,
in curiosity, in costly or time-wasting
sports,

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sports, or such as profit not their bo-
dily health, in gawdy dresles or such
like ; and why may we not gratifie our
delight ? why it is supposed to be a
needless unprofitable delight, proceeding
from a vain *Fancy*, which should rather
be cured than pleased.

3. All things are much more culpably
needless, which proceed from a *Vicious*
sinful humour, desire or lust ; *Make no pro-*
vision for the flesh, to satisfy the lust there-
of, Rom. 13. 13, 14. To *mind* the things
of the flesh, is *enmity to God*, and to the
minding of spiritual things, Rom. 8. 6,
7. Unnecessary sensual delights corrupt
the Soul, and strongly turn down the
mind from God and holy Pleasures ;
and the mortifying of such fleshly Lusts
or Pleasures, is no small part of our
Religion.

4. All those are culpably needless and
worse, which are preferred before truly
needful things ; and which are against
them, and shut them out, or take up that
same time and room which they should
have ; if you have any thing of greater
moment, which should be done at that
same time, whatever hindereth it is va-
nity and worse ; and therefore there is

no

48 *The One Thing Necessary, or,*

no cure for vanity of mind and life, till men come to know their great necessities, and important business which they have for all their thoughts and time, even the regard of their end and all the means, the duties of their spiritual and temporal Callings, and see that they have no time to spare.

II. Qu. *Is it lawful to be of a Trade which serveth the Humours of vain Persons; as to make Cards, or Dice, or Stage-Playes; or vain Attire, as Ribbons, Periwigs, and such like?*

Ans. 1. These things are of very different Natures: Some of them, as Stage-Playes, Cards and Dice, (though Instances may be devised in which it is possible to use them lawfully) are so ordinarily used sinfully, and so seldom well; that the Trade that maintaineth them may well be supposed to be a Trade of maintaining Sin: And, had I a Son, I had rather he begg'd his Bread, than have such a Trade. But Laces, and Ribbons, and fine Cloaths, and Feathers, and divers such things, have (among some that they are fit for) a more ordinary lawful use; and therefore I cannot say, that such Trades are sinful. 2. But yet be-
cause

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cause they are of so little benefit to the Common-wealth, and so very frequently used to serve a vain and sinful Lust and Fancy: I take it to be a Sin for any one to prefer such a Trade before one that is more blameless and profitable, though the Person might get more Money by it. 3. And they that will use such a Trade without Sin, must necessarily be so careful in distinguishing of Customers, and not promiscuously sell to all who they perceive will serve their Sin by it; that it will much diminish their Gain. The Case is much like an Ale-seller's or Vintner's, which is lawful in it self, but must be used with so much distinguishing care, as I doubt few practise, lest their Gain be hindered: And therefore a safer Trade is much to be prefer'd, which is not a continual Temptation.

Qu. 2. *May a Servant dwell with and obey such a Master, or Lady, or Mistress, as will command them to spend much of their time in Trifles and Vanities, that are but to please a proud or curious Fancy?*

Ans. 1. It must be supposed, that many times Servants, through Sloth or Education, misjudge those things to be need-

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less or evil, which are not such; and think that their Superiours should command them no other labour than what they like themselves: In this case their Errour will not justifie their Neglect. Persons of Honour and Dignity may lawfully go much further in employing their Servants in Dressings, and Adornings, and Attendance, and in washing and rubbing Rooms, and such smaller things, than lower Persons, from whom it is not expected, and to whom the marks of Wealth agree not, though none must be inordinate.

2. In meer doubtful Cases Servants are not the Judges of their Governour's Commands and Business; and where they are no Judges, and know no Sin, they must submit.

3. Sometimes that which is sinfully commanded, may be lawfully and dutifully obey'd. As it is a Sin in a sick Man to be peevish and hardly pleased, and to command many needless things to a Servant in that peevish humor; when yet (they being lawful things to be done) the Servant may be bound to obey them. A Patient may sinfully be humorous in his Expectations when a Physitian may yet lawfully please

his

his Humours for his Health. A Child may faultily cry for something, when the Nurse may without fault give him that which he cryeth for, to quiet him. All is not forbidden the Servant to do, which is forbidden the Governour to command.

4. But all that is *Sin in the Doer* must be forborn; and to serve and cherish the Sin of others when we may choose, is sinful.

5. Therefore in such Cases, though it be lawful for a Servant to do many needless things (not forbidden him by God) when commanded, it is unlawful to choose such a Service, in which he shall be so employed, to spend his time in Vanity, to satisfy a Ruler's Pride and Humour, unless it be in case of true Necessity, or probably to attain a greater good, which will compensate all the Inconvenience. As if a Pirate or Tyrant command me to say some *idle Words*, or do some *needless Action*, or else my Friend or I should be murdered; in this case they are not *idle*, or *needless*, or *unlawful*, but a *Duty*; which voluntarily chosen, would be a Sin.

Obj. By this you will make it a Duty to obey Papal Commands of idle Ceremonies, if

52 *The One Thing Necessary, or,*
we doubt, or if they be not things forbidden
us.

Ans. 1. God hath not left us to so much liberty how to worship him, as he hath left us about our Houses, and Dresses, and common things.

2. The Pope and his Ministers are unlawful Governours, as setting up an unlawful Church Policy, even a universal humane Ecclesiastical Monarchy (or Aristocracy, as the Conciliar Party hold) and therefore we owe them no Obedience even in lawful things, and it is a Sin to become their Subjects.

3. Doubting whether *real Sin* be Sin, will not make it no Sin, nor change the Law of God. Should Men be uncertain whether Rebellion, Schism, Fornication, Perjury or Lying be Sin, they may not therefore do it, though it were commanded them; for no one hath true Authority to command them.

4. But if really the thing be *lawful* to be done, we *must* do it, if commanded by such as have true Authority to do it, though they mistake and sin in the *Reasons, Ends* and *Manner* of their Command.

5. If a lawful Magistrate or Ruler sinfully

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fully command [Say such or such a needless word, or do such a vain Action, or wear such a vain Habit (not forbidden us by God) or else you shall be silenced, banished, imprisoned] it ceaseth to be vain in the User, when it's made necessary to such ends, though it be sinfully commanded. But what God forbiddeth must never be done.

Qu. 3. *May the Husband and Master bear with sinful Vanities in his Wife and Servants, in his House? Seeing he is the Ruler, is it not his Sin to tolerate them?*

Ans. 1. It is undoubtedly his Sin to consent, or not to remedy it, if he can do it by lawful means. 2. It oft falls out that not only needless Toyes and Vanities, but some downright great Sins, cannot be hindred effectually without so great Inconveniences and Mischiefs, as that such hindering becometh an *unlawful means*. If a Man have a Wife so passionate or unquiet, as that no means would restrain her Tongue or Hands, but turning her away; or using such Violence as is unsuitable to a Conjugal Relation; he must patiently endure her Sin.

If he have a Wife that will fall into some dangerous Disease, or grow distra-

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cted, if she may not Please her Pride in Apparel, or sinfully waste much in vain Expences, or may not use an unruly Tongue to sin; or at least, if the restraint would cost the Husband so dear, as would by unquietness unfit him to serve God in his place; in this case it is no sinful Toleration to endure it: He is far from consenting to it; he only restraineth not that which he cannot restrain: For what a Man cannot do by *lawful means*, and without doing more hurt than good, it must be said, that he cannot *do it at all*. And so much as a Man may *lawfully give* to purchase his own Peace and Quietness, or to cure his Wife of such a Disease or Distraction; so much he may lawfully suffer her to spend (though sinfully) to prevent it, as long as he disowneth the Sin, and would remedy it, if he could by lawful means.

Obj. If you tell Women this, some will give their Husbands no Quietness, and some will waste their Estates in Sin, or vain Expences, to satisfy their Lusts.

Ans. 1. We must use no false Doctrine for the preventing of such persons Sin: If it be true, some Men have need to know it. 2. It's possible that some Rates

of

of *Expence* or *Suffering*, may be greater than the preventing of the Wives Calamity and its Consequents are worth; and in such cases it cannot be so prevented. 3. And I hope the Case is so rare, that most Women's Pride, Exorbitancy and Passion, and the Sins thence proceeding, may be restrained by other means, at easier rates.

Obj. 2. But by this you would inferr, that Evils may also be tolerated in the Church, if so far in the Family.

Ans. Consenting to any Sin, is sin, and so is doing that by promoting or tolerating, which signifieth Consent; but not to hinder that which we cannot hinder by lawful means, and without doing greater hurt than good, is no Consenting, or sinful Toleration. Papists that are for burning and banishing Dissenters, yet confess this, that they must tolerate them, when else they should more hurt the Church by what is done against them.

It is no Sin to bear with the greatest Sin in the World which we cannot remedy; much less with humane common frailties, in which all mortal men must bear with one another, or else forsake all Love and Peace.

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And

56 *The One Thing Necessary, or,*

And this Objection mindeth me humbly but earnestly (though almost hopelessly) to desire all Governours to take notice, that the Pastoral Government of Christs Church (being exercised under him, who calleth it his Spouse and Body) is very like the *Government of a Husband over his Wife*, which must be done by *no means* inconsistent with *Love* and *Conjugal offices* and *Communion to the last*. And therefore if men must bear with so many and great offences and inconveniences, yea and sufferings in and from a Wife for their household peace and quietness, let them consider whether for *Church-Peace* much evil is not to be endured when it cannot be lawfully hindered.

And if humane frailty and darkness be such, as that few persons living have the same apprehensions of many or most things, and Husband and Wife about their ordinary affairs, will daily manifest such difference of opinions and humours, as must be born (or they must bear much worse,) let Pastors consider, while we agree in all things necessary to Salvation and the common peace, how much *diversity of*
sence,

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sence, and consequently of *practice*, must be endured in the numerous difficulties of Religion, by them that know the way of Peace: And whether they that will not bear a little, are not preparing to bear much. And perhaps if the *Roman* Clergy had not been so much against Priests Marriage, the experience of their Families, and what differing apprehensions and actions must there be born by Conjugal Love, might have better taught them how far to bear with differing opinions and practices in Religion, instead of their unchristian, inhumane Laws and Practices, of burning, exterminating, and ruining all such as their Judgments shall Stigmatize as Hereticks.

Qu. 4. *What are to be taken for sinful needless Studies, which Scholars should avoid?*

Ans. 1. There is great cause to put this question, considering how many years are this way lost, and how little it is repented of, and how much is still owned and applauded by men of greatest reputation.

The Case may be resolved by the
D. 5. same

58 *The One Thing Necessary, or,*
 same Rules before given. 1. All Learning and Studies which are not worth the cost and labour. 2. All that do but serve that vain desire of Knowledge, which first tempted *Eve* to Sin. 3. Much more all that which is but to serve mens sinful Pride and worldly designs; And it were well with many Students if their Learning (or Science falsely so called, saith *Paul*) became not more plentiful and dangerous matter of Pride and self-deceit, than fine cloaths and trifles do to Women.

4. All that is worse than vain, which keepeth out greater and necessary things, and turneth the mind from Holiness and Heaven.

But the same Knowledge in its proper place, and used in due subordination to the greatest things, and as a true means to the true end, is good and holy, which otherwise placed and used is doting vanity, and delusory dreaming; as too many ungodly Students will find to their cost when it is too late. Therefore a sound Judgement and Holy will, by right intention of the end and true discerning the aptitude of means, must resolve this case, and
 most

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most of such cases through all our lives. Happy is he that is wise in things spiritual and of everlasting consequence to God, and to Salvation, though the World should deride him as unlearned or a fool. And woe to him that is honoured for wit and policy, for many Languages and a rolling Tongue, for the prudence of *Achitophel*, or the Learning of *Aristotle*, and hath not Wisdom to live to God, to resist temptation, to escape damning sin, and to save his Soul: It will do him no more good in Hell, that he was cryed up for a Learned, or Wise or Reverend man on earth, than it will do to *Dives*, (*Luk. 16.*) that he was cloath- in Purple and Silk, and fared sumptuously every day, and had his Portion and good things where *Lazarus* had Sorrow and Contempt. More than one of the most famous Schollars, have at last cryed out, that All Learning is Vanity, save the Knowledge of God in Christ, our duties, and our spiritual and endless benefits and hopes.

I have told you of many evils that come by the preference of unnecessary or
 less

60. *The One Thing Necessary, or,*
less necessary things, but one remain-
eth to be noted, which the Text ex-
presseth in *Martha's* instance: while she
is over-careful and troubled about ma-
ny things, which were then' less neces-
sary, she thinks her Sister should have
been of the same mind, and done as she
did, and grudgeth at her and accuseth
her to Christ, as if *Mary's* work had
been less necessary than hers: which
sheweth us,

Observ. That they that choose unneces-
sary or less necessary employments, are apt
to account Religious exercises less necessary,
and to censure those that choose them.

The wrong censuring of *Mary's*
choice and work, was as much of
Martha's fault as her own worst choice
and needless trouble. Those that sin
against Knowledge, and confess that they
do ill, are often desirous that their
Children and Friends should do better:
But they that think their Sin is their
Duty, will censure those that sin not
with them, as if it were Sin to fear
Sin and avoid it. And no wonder:
For, 1. That which is true to one, is
true

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true to another; and that which is best
to one, as a common duty, is best to another:
and it is natural to us to desire that
our Friends should know what we know,
and choose that common good which
we choose, and avoid the errour, Sin
and Misery which we avoid: Our Love
to Truth and goodness will make us
desire that they may be common: And
our Love to our Friends will make us
desire that they may be happy by choo-
sing what is best: And the Love of
our selves maketh men desire that o-
thers may be of their Mind and way:
As God first loveth himself, and next
that which is most like himself, so na-
turally doth a selfish man: Though a
holy man as such first loveth God, and
then that which is likest God; yet when
he erreth, he thinketh that to be like
God which is not. And then even the
Love of God also will be abused to
the promoting of errour, and the an-
gry censuring of Truth and Duty.
No doubt but *Martha's* Love to Christ
himself was abused by her errour, to
censure her Sister that did not serve
him in the way that she thought then
most necessary.

2. And

62 *The One Thing Necessary, or,*

2. And when several things are *contrary* or *inconsistent*, the over valuing of the *one*, must needs cause the under-valuing and rejecting of the *other*; the weighing down of one end of the balance will lift up the other: As all men that are *earthly minded* are so much the less *spiritual and heavenly*, and he that loveth the world hath the *less* love to God, so they that over-value *unnecessary* things, will naturally grow into a greater disesteem of things truly *necessary*; contrary things cannot be both at once *preferred* (in the same respect) when *unnecessary* things seem *necessary*, inconsistent *necessary* things will seem *unnecessary*.

All this we see verified constantly in our *experience*, in mens judging both for *themselves* and *others*.

1. Mark any that grow more in loving and caring for *Unnecessary, Worldly, Fleishly things*, and you shall find that they grow more indifferent to *Prayer*, and to all holy exercises that employ the mind; a *little* of this will serve their turns: Mark them that over-mind their *Ornaments*, their *Conveniencies*, their *Appetites* or their *Worldly gain*, and you shall

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shall see how heartless and dead they grow towards God, and Holiness, and Heaven; when shadows seem substances, the substance goeth but for a shadow: A little of God will serve them, when a little of the World will not serve them; and spiritual things lose all their sweetness, when fleshly Pleasures and Hopes grow too sweet.

2. And you shall see that such Persons do judge accordingly of others: Their love of Vanity maketh serious Religion seem a vanity to them: When they are over eager for the Flesh or World, they judge Gods Servants to be over earnest in Religion; when we wonder what they can find in an empty world to take up all their thoughts and hearts, their talk, labour and time, they wonder what we find in Religion to take up ours; as we say to them, what needs all this adoe for Vanity? cannot you have Food and a Grave without this over-much care and trouble? so they say to us, [*What needs all this adoe in Religion, cannot a man be saved without so much violence and stir? is God so ill natured that no less will please him?*] Thus God must be thought to be like them,

64 *The One Thing Necessary, or,*

them, *Psal. 50.* and to leave his holiness when they leave theirs, (or never had it) and to grow indifferent and reconcileable to sin when once they love it.

And when serious Godliness is thus rejected by themselves, it first seemeth in others to be but a *needless honest Superstition*, the effect of a weak Judgment, and a timorous and trembling heart; and afterward they grow on to call it *foolishness*, and entitle it as Christ did *Martha's Case*, *A care and trouble about many unnecessary things*: And from thence many grow to think it *evil*; and from thence to think it the *most insufferable evil*, and to take serious Conscience of our duty to God to be the *greatest rebel* against *Kings*, and the *greatest troubler* of the *Land*, the *greatest Schismatick*, and the most dangerous *Enemy*, and most intolerable *Plague*; and so they proceed to *hellish malignity* and cruel Persecution: This is the natural Progress of over-valuing and over-minding *needless* things.

3. And alas, not only the history of thirteen hundred years, but the notice of our own age hath told us, that even in the Churches the *same Cause* hath produced the *same Effect*; when many
needless

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needless and *troublesome* things are over-valued and thought *necessary*; *Mary* is accused, and her hearing so much *Preaching*, is taken for the effect of *Idleness* or *itching Ears*: In the Church of *Rome*, where things first called *indifferent* have been preferred, *true Knowledge*, *explicite Faith*, *spiritual Worship*, and a *holy Life*, are taken to be necessary only to some *few Votaries*, or *Saints* that are to be Canonized as wonders, and not to all that will be saved; and a mass of Ceremonies hath shut out mostly serious *Preaching*, *Praying* and *Holy Living*; their Tree beareth sometimes only *Leaves*, and at other times the *Pricks* of *Thorns* and *Thistles*. Images pretended to be for the honour of departed *Saints*, are cherished where *Saints* and sanctity are hated; as their Forefathers the *Pharisees*, *Mat. 23.* They build the *Scpulchers* of the *Prophets* and *righteous men*, and condemn those that nurthured them, and keep *holy-dayes* in honour of them, and go on implacably to kill those that imitate them, and to do as their Forefathers did that Persecuted them. Ceremony is become the *Substance* of too many mens Religion, and an
Image

66 *The One Thing Necessary, or,*

Image and Shadow of Faith and Godliness, Justice and Charity hath taken place of Life and Substance. Too many Churches are filled with Statues and Carcasses instead of real Saints: The Shell which is but to keep the Kernel, is valued in its stead, and the Kernel cast away instead of the Shell. The Letter which is for the signification of the sense, is first taken up as enough without it; and then turned as an enemy against it; and the oft repeated names of Jesus, and Mary, and Saints are used, first instead of holy love to Jesus and Saints, and then to cherish a malignant murderous hatred of them that are Saints indeed within their reach. It was St. Dominick and such other of their holy men, that promoted the murder of real Saints, even of many thousands, if not hundred thousands; Do but call them Hereticks, Waldenses, Albigenes, Lutherans, Zuinglians, Calvinists, Hugonots, Bigots, Lollards, Whigs, Puritans, and then Conscience is as loose and free to hate, revile, imprison, silence or murder them, as if they were so many Robbers or Rebels, or as bad as their Accusers and Persecutors feign them.

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them. *Paul doth foretell that in the last daies some shall be haters of those that are good, and Sacerdotes, Devils, which we translate false Accusers, and yet have a form of Godliness, while they deny the Power. Diabolism begins in false Accusation, and proceedeth to the cruelest Persecution; what on earth can be liker a Devil, than first to Print such horrid lies of the Servants of Christ, as they have done of Luther, Zuinglius, Bucer, Calvin, Beza, and the reformed Churches, and then to torture and burn such as Hereticks, and to make it a Law and part of their Religion to compell Princes to do the like in all generations to come, and even to burn the Bones of the Dead, as they did by Bucer, Phagius and Wickliff; yea, to murder them by thousands, as in France, and by hundred thousands, as in Ireland; and all this began with the overvaluing unnecessary things, worldly Pomp, and Power, and Wealth, and Pleasure, and Images, Ceremonies and Formalites? What dreadful work was made about Images, against the Eastern Emperours! how many Councils of Bishops were the Authors of Schism and Rebellion for them! and at last for*

for them did the Pope rebelliously cast off his Sovereign, and cut off the Western Empire from him, and give it (as if it had been his own) to the French: To this day, do but speak against their *deified Waser*, or their Mass of Ceremonies, or their adoring Images, or their false Doctrine, or their Papal or Prelatical Tyranny and Usurpation, and you presently deserve to be painted with the Picture of Devils, and after the torment of the Inquisition to be Cursed from Christ, and Burned to Ashes; and all this as for Christ, the Church and Faith.

And the *German Interim* told the World whither the overvaluing of things called *Indifferent* doth tend, when the Churches were deserted, the Ministers silenced and persecuted, and sadly divided among themselves, and the Reformation almost overthrown; and all because the Pastors refused to conform to a Book compiled by the Emperour's Command, by a few self-conceited Bishops, pretending to be moderate Reconcilers, obtruding divers of the *Romish* Formalities as the means of the Peace and Concord of the Churches. It would grieve ones Heart to read what

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Confusions this imposed Book, called the *Interim*, did cause.

But alas, *they* are not the only Instances of the calamitous Effects of the overvaluing and obtruding unnecessary things. As the *Ruines of Troy* long told Spectators what a War for one *Helena*, a beautiful Whore did cost that part of the World, (which became the Subjects of the famous Poems of divers Ages;) even so the Ruines of the *Eastern Churches*, sometime the most great and famous in the World, and now the Habitation of Owls and Serpents, deluded *Mahometans*, with some ignorant, sad, oppressed Christians, proclaim to all that read, hear, or see them, what are the fruits of striving about unnecessary things, even about worldly Pre-eminence and Wealth; which Patriark should be greatest, and which Bishop should sit highest, and go first, and have his Will, and pass for the most Orthodox, or have most Followers; and about ambiguous words, who it was that spake wisest, and who should make the words of other Mens Creeds and Professions; (for the Trade of making *Liturgies* which whole Nations or Provinces must be confined to, was not set up till after

after

after that of *making Creeds*:) In a word, *Church-Wars*; 1. About the *Jurisdiction of Prelates*; especially, whether *Rome* or *Constantinople* should be the Chief; 2. And about *hard* and *doubtful words*; 3. And about *Images* and *Ceremonies*; have laid *East* and *West* in the Condition of Apostasy, Desolation, Shame and Slavery, in which with Amazement we see them at this day.

And what are all the religious Wars, Murthers and Cruelties exercised for, by the Papal Party, but that *one Prelate* and his *Confederates* may be the *Masters* of all the *Christian World*, and may have *their Wills* in all religious Matters directly, and in all *Civil Matters* in order to the Religious; and that all their *Laws* may be obeyed, their *Formalities* used, and their *Words* believed? Killing, burning, tormenting, confounding, seem not too dear to accomplish this. Behold how great a matter a little Fire kindleth! Who would think, that never before saw it, that a little Gunpowder should blow up Houses, as it doth? And who would have thought that so many Churches, Kingdoms, Lives and Souls should have been blown up, or ruined, as they have been, for the un-

unnecessary Domination, Wealth, Formalities and Ceremonies of the Clergy.

I have often, too often heard *Preachers themselves*, instead of a *Sermon*, pour out *Scorns* against those that preached and lived more seriously, strictly and holily than themselves: And I have too oft heard the *Common Rabble* revile them that were most careful and diligent for Salvation, as a company of *Precisians*, *Puritans* and *Hypocrites*: And I have thought with my self; *Have these Men found better and greater things to lay out their own Care, Time and Labour for?* And alas, I perceived that instead of God, and Christ, and Holiness, and Heaven, they had nothing to take them up, but Vanity and Vexation; their Bellies, and their Purfes, and their Walls, and their Titles, and their Pride, and Lust, and selfish Wills; and are these more necessary than *Mary's Choice*? Mark what those Persons are saying and doing every day, who think *Serious Godliness* to be over-doing; and you shall see, that instead of it, some are doing *nothing*, and some worse than *nothing*; wasting their short time, deceiving and destroying themselves and others.

And

And indeed it is not possible that any one that is a serious Christian himself, and hath tryed truly a holy Life, should think it needless, or make it a matter of Reproach to others. But we grant, that particular Duties may be misplaced, and Prudence is necessary to know their time, and length, and manner; and it's possible, both that a *Mary* may sometime here imprudently over-do, and that a *Martha* may by mistake be quarrelsome, and accuse the Innocent, that yet is not against serious Piety it self. Therefore I think meet to annex these two Cautions to the Hearers in this Case.

I. Do not presently take your selves to be truly godly, because some others accuse you of over-doing, or of being religious over-much. Every one is not a Saint that is derided for Sanctity; every one doth not sincerely preach, hear, pray, or practise, that is derided for these things: If you have no better Evidence of Grace, than that some call you Puritans, Precisians, or such like, it will be an insufficient Evidence. 1. *Bad Men* will deride those that seem holy, though they are not so. 2. And *good Men* in their faulty weakness, may mis-

misjudge of the Circumstances of your Duty, and *unjustly blame you*, and yet you may not be sincere in the main. 3. And you *may actually mistake* in Circumstances your selves, and *deserve* the blame that is cast upon you. The *Pharisees* were over-strict for the Sabbath, and in avoiding Publicans and Sinners, and thought Christ too loose: *Judas* pretendeth more Charity to the Poor than Christ had. That is not rightest which seemeth strictest, but that which is most agreeable to the Law of God. Though some misapply *Solomon's* words, *Eccles. 7. 16. Be not righteous over-much, neither make thy self over-wise*; as if it had been written against serious diligent Obedience to God, and true proper *Righteousness* and *Wisdom*; yet we must know, that it was written by the Holy Ghost, and not in vain. A Pharisaical Superstitious sort of Religion, and Observation of vain Traditions, and a *zealous Strictness* which God never commanded, is a *Righteousness* equivocally so called, and it is *over-much*: Such is much of the Popish *Righteousness*, and such is the affected Austerity of several Sects, old and new. *Touch not, Taste not, Handle*

74 *The One Thing Necessary, or,*
de not, are oft a humane counterfeit
Righteousness, which God doth neither
 require, nor accept. As God liketh not
 a *Popish Charity*, that *killeth or tormenteth*
 Men in love to God and Religion; so nei-
 ther doth he like those *Superstitious An-*
sterities which destroy our own *Bodies*,
 and disable us from chearful Thankful-
 ness and Obedience; which maketh So-
 lom^{on} say, *Why shouldst thou be desolate,*
(or destroy thy self?) That is good which
 is fitted to do good. All Grace and Du-
 ty is for Edification.

II. And as every one is not *truly*
Godly who is *derided as Godly* by the
 prophane, or blamed for some super-
 stitious strictness, so you must not take
 every one for malignant or ungodly, who
 speaketh against such strictness, as either
 is real superstition, or seemeth so or
 worse to him.

For, 1. If you are guilty of supersti-
 tion, it is a friendly office to shew
 you your mistake: 2. And if you are
 in the right, and another that is in the
 wrong misaccuseth you, in many Cases
 his error may stand with Love to
 Truth and Holiness in the main: Every
 one is not ungodly who misreproacheth

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 as with the *Anabaptists* for Baptizing
 Infants: Or with the *Aninomians* as
 setting up the *abrogated Law*; and so
 of many others. As men differ in
 judgment about Gods Law, they will
 accuse each others differing Practice:
 But opposing Serious Godliness as such, is
 another thing.

And indeed it is usual with malig-
 nant enemies of a holy Life, to make
 themselves a Religion of Formalities,
 and Imagery and shadows, to quiet their
 Consciences while they resist the Truth,
 that it may not seem to be an act of
 impiety and malignity which they do,
 but an opposition to the faults of
 others.

But the Use which you should make
 of this Lesson, is this: Take heed lest
 you be tempted to an over-valuing of
 any unnecessary or less needful things,
 whether it be Wealth, and Honour and
 Fleishly Interest; or else any formaliti-
 es, or things indifferent about Reli-
 gion, lest before you are aware (as
 Imagery stole away the Hearts of the
 old Idolaters from God, so) these
 should secretly consume your holy zeal,
 and turn your Hearts from the Life

and serious exercise of Religion, and worshipping God in *Spirit and Truth*; and afterwards draw you to condemn that zeal and diligence in others which you want your selves. We have Bodies as well as Souls, and must have a just regard to bodily necessities; and a care that our Bodies do their duty: But let the Body and it's Interest keep their place: Remember how far it is below the Soul, and use it, and all it's interests accordingly. The *least* things that are *good* are not to be *despised*: But alas what work is made by *preferring little things*! The *Traditions* of their Fathers, their *Tithing Mint and Annise*, their *Washings*, their *building the Sepulchers of the Prophets*, their *Domination, Pomp and Ceremonies*, did pass with the *Pharisees* instead of the *great things of the Law*, and *Sacrifice* went before *Mercy, Truth and Judgment*; yea and became a Cloak for devouring Widows houses, and for Persecuting and Silencing the Preachers of the Gospel, and for Slandering and Murdering Christ himself.

What Ruins this hath made in Souls, Churches and Kingdoms, I have
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already told you: Know therefore wherein Gods Kingdom doth consist, Rom. 14. 17, 18. And what and whom God bindeth you to approve, and learn what this *meaneth*, *I will have Mercy and not Sacrifice*, that you may not deceive your selves or condemn the guiltless. Even *Martha* will murmur at her dear Sister and accuse her, if she be her self but tainted with this ill disease.

But whose part doth Christ take, and which of them doth he justify? The Defendant *Mary*, and that 1. With a *Compassionate reproof of Martha*, 2. With the *Reason of Mary's Justification*, 3. And with a *Sentence of Blessing added to her defence*: Whence we learn,

Doct. 2. *That when wiser Christians and their better Choice and work, are accused by them that preferred less needful things, Christ will be the Advocate and Judge, and will defend and justify the wrongfully accused.* He will in this Case take the accused's part.

Martha accuseth her Sister to Christ, she expecteth that he should blame her as neglecting her duty, and leaving all the trouble and care on *Martha*. But Christ doth not answer her Expectation, but justifieth the Wise and Innocent.

Reas. 1. For it is his Office to be both the Advocate and the Judge: And he will do it in perfection, without error or injustice. He well knoweth who is in the right, and none can deceive him by false Accusations or false Witnesses.

2. He is so nearly related and deeply obliged to defend the Innocent or Just, that he will never fail them. They are his Members, and his Love engageth him: He spared not his *Life* and *Blood* for them, and will he not *speak* for them? They are his *purchase*, and *interest*, his peculiar redeemed ones, and will he forsake his *Interest*, and his *Own*?

3. Indeed in *plain Justice* he is bound to justify them against such injurious Accusations: For it is he that command-

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eth them to do what they are accused of: It is for *obeying him*: If it were a *fault*, it would be his that bid them do it. Nay how much hath he done to bring his Servants to that Holy Choice and Faithful Duty, which in the world they are commonly accused for! Alas we were not forward to it of our selves. It was *not we* that made the *Law*, which so strictly forbiddeth Sin, and commandeth Duty: The Bible is not of our making: It is *not we* that made the *Law*, to *Love God with all our Heart, and Soul, and might, and our Neighbour as our selves; not to take his Name in Vain, to worship God in Spirit and in Truth, &c.* And it was a higher cause than our own power, which taught us and inclined our Hearts to obey these: Many a Message did Christ send us, by his Bible, Ministers and Spirit, before we were heartily drawn to yield: Many a daies Patience did he use, and many a threatening to drive us to it, and many a Mercy and Promise to draw us, and many a Book and Teacher to instruct us, yea and many an Affliction to Correct us; And will he not justify us for that which

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he so earnestly commandeth us, and with so much ado doth bring us to obey? Did he come into the world, and live and dye, to save his People from their Sins, and purifie to himself a peculiar People zealous of good Works, (*Tit. 2. 14.*) and will he forsake them when they are accused for obeying him? Where shall we meet with a *man* of any common honesty, that would do thus by his poorest Servant? And shall not the Judge of all the Earth do righteously. For our parts, if we are accused for Serious Piety, or any duty which Christ commandeth us, it is his command that was our reason and obligation, and which we have to alledge for our defence. If that have not *Authority* and *Truth* enough to justifie us, we have no other Justification. Indeed Christ should forsake himself if he thus deserted us: He should take the blame upon his own Laws, yea and on all the works of his Grace and Spirit, and all that he hath done to bring us to that which the world and our flesh was so much against.

4. He defendeth his Disciples against the

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the *Pharisees* Accusations on Earth, and will he afterward forsake them?

5. He hath appointed the great day to judge the World in Righteousness, even the secrets of men, and to bring all things open into the manifesting light, even all Truth and Falshood, and all the hidden works of Darkness; Therefore undoubtedly all Truth, all Righteousness, and all that is of God, shall be fully Justified, and Gods Truth in all, when false Accusers shall be all found Lyars.

Use. This being then so plain and sure, I would commend the Consideration of it to several Sorts, and in several Instances. I. To the Accusers of the Godly for their Duty to God. II. To the Accused. III. To those that are yet in doubt what Cause to choose.

I. The unjust Accusers of Just Men are of divers degrees or sorts.

1. Some there be that only accuse them

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them in *their Thoughts*, and take them
to be guilty when they are not.

2. Others go further, and too *easily* believe *false Reports* from others; and then think that they are allowed to tell what they have heard, and so to vend such false Reports. And if they can but say, either that it was a *great Man*, or a *Learned Man*, or a *Minister*, or a *Religious Man* that said it, they think that their Calumny or Back-biting is no Sin: But much more, if *many* such report it; and yet more, if they heard none contradict it.

3. Others there be, that because it serveth their Interest or Design, or *pleaseth* their malignant Minds, do make it part of *their business* purposely to carry about such Reports, and perswade as many as they can to believe them, and plead down those that contradict them.

4. Others go further, and are the first Devisers, or the malicious Increasers of the slanderous Reports themselves; not only the Spreaders or Carryers, but the Fathers of the Lies which they send about by others.

5. Yet some go further, and studiously

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ously and maliciously publish them in Pulpits, or in Print, to draw the World and Posterity to believe them; yea and this as for God, and as for the Church and Truth; as if it were but the detecting of Heresies or Lies, or dangerous Faults or Practices of others.

6. And yet further, some in most Ages and Countries, in Offices and places of Judicature, who should be the Pillars of Justice; do pass false Sentences against the Just, and pronounce them *guilty*, and persecute and oppress them by their unrighteous Punishments.

7. And yet worse; some slander not only the Persons, but the Cause of Truth, Piety, and Righteousness it self, and make false *Laws* and *Canons*, calling good evil, and decreeing the common slandering of the Truth, and the punishing of the Innocent, because they will not break the *Laws* of God, and please proud mistaking Men before him.

To all these Sorts of Accusers of the Just, I would give (would they hear me) this following Advice.

1. I advise you to stay, and think well of the matter; and be sure that you have thoroughly tryed it, before
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you venture to pass your Judgment. It is not so small a matter as you think to wrong the Just, and say, I was mistaken. And especially will you be first sure what side Christ will take, and whether he will be of the Accuser's mind.

And Christ hath so fully told us his mind already in his Word, that we may certainly foreknow what Judgment he will pass.

1. Do you accuse Men for pretending to the Spirit, and to be holy? Why Christ hath said, that, *Except a man be born of Water, and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*, Joh. 3. 6. And, *Without Holiness none shall see God*, Heb. 12. 14. And, *If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, the same is none of his*, Rom. 8. 9.

2. Do you accuse godly Men for Singularity, and for differing from others in their Religious Diligence and Zeal? If they differ from the Common Faith of Christians, or single themselves from the Communion of Saints, or from the Love and Concord of Believers; Christ will not justify them in this: For he hath said; *A man that is an Heretick after the first and second Admonition, avoid*, Tit. 3. 10. And,

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10. And, *By this shall all men know that you are my Disciples, if ye have Love one to another*, Joh. 13. 34, 35. And, *Mark those that cause Divisions and offences contrary to the Doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them*, Rom. 16. 17.

But if it be differing from Unbelievers, or ungodly Men, or formal Hypocrites, by a holy Resolution to live wholly to God, and obey his Laws, whoever be against it; if this be the Singularity you mean, Christ is engaged to bear them out: For it is he that hath commanded this, and said; *Ye are my Friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you*, Joh. 15. 14. *If ye keep my Commandments, ye shall abide in my Love*, v. 10. *Except your Righteousness exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*, Mat. 5. 20. Mat. 5. 47. *What do you more than others? He purifieth to himself a peculiar People, zealous of good works*, Tit. 2. 14. Lot differed from Sodom, and Noah differed from all the old World. The wise differ from the foolish, and the righteous from the wicked; or else there would not be hereafter so great a difference as of Heaven and

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and Hell. What is a Physician good for, if he make not his Patients to differ from the sick? And what came Christ to do, or how is he a Saviour, if he make not his Disciples differ from the ungodly World? Even a Philosopher would not set up a School, but to make his Scholars to differ from the unlearned.

3. Is it for so much *Preaching and Hearing*, that you accuse Men? It is possible indeed to do a Duty *unseasonably*, and to over-do in one thing, when it causeth the Omission of other Duties. But certainly Christ that so strictly commandeth his Ministers to Preach, and as *they love him, to feed his Flock*, will justify them for so doing. *How shall they believe without a Preacher? and how shall they preach unless they are sent?* Rom. 10. And he that said, *He that heareth you, heareth me*, and that here justifieth Mary's Hearing, will justify all others in the like case: For he hath bid us (by Solomon) to get *Wisdom as the principal thing*, Prov. 4. 5, 7. *To incline the Ear, and apply the Heart to it; to cry after Knowledge, and lift up the voice for Understanding; as for her as Silver, and search for her as for hidden Treasure.*

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Prov. 22. 3, 4. *Hear Instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not. Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my Gates, waiting at the Posts of my Doors. For who-so findeth me findeth Life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord;* Prov. 8. 33, 34, 35, 36.

4. Is it for much *Praying* that you accuse Men? Why Christ bid his Disciples *Pray alwayes, and not faint*, Luk. 18. 1, 2. And, *Pray continually*, 1 Thes. 5. 17.

5. Is it for so much a-do in their Families, in the Religious Education of their Children, and reading the Scriptures, that you accuse men? Why it is God that hath said, *Deut. 6. 7, 8, 9, 10. and Deut. 11. 18, 19, 20. These Words which I command thee this day, shall be in thy Heart, and thou shalt teach them diligently to thy Children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy House, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up, &c.* An Angel was sent from Heaven unto Cornelius when he was fasting and praying in his House, to signify Gods acceptance, and tell him further how to be saved. Daniel would rather be cast to

Lyons,

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Lyons, than forbear Praying in his House for certain dayes, when the King and Laws forbad him. You may easily know then which side Christ will take.

6. Is it for *scrupling things which others scruple not, and taking that for sin, which others say is none, and so not doing as others do, that you accuse Men?*

If they mistake, and think that to be Sin which is not; Christ will justifie their desire to please him, and their fear of sinning, but he will not justifie their mistake. But if it be *Sin indeed*, whatever Men call it, he will justifie our avoiding and abhorring it. He that dyed for Sin, would not have us love it, nor run into the consuming fire from which he came to save us: *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.* The Accuser may call it *Folly*, and *precise Scrupulosity*; But God saith to Man; *Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding,* Job 28. 28. If we sin with others, we must suffer with them.

7. But perhaps it is for not keeping their Faith and Religion to themselves, but making so much a-do to propa-
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gate them, that you accuse Men.

Indeed *Paul*, speaking of the knowledge and belief of the Lawfulness of law-
ful unnecessary things, saith, Hast thou Faith? have it to thy self before God; Rom. 14. 21. That is, enjoy thy own Knowledge and Liberty, but use it not so as to tempt and ruine others. But surely it is Christ that hath said; *Ye are the Lights of the World, that must not be put under a Bushel, Mat. 5.* And, *He that gathereth not with us, scattereth abroad, Mat. 12. 30.* And, *Whoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess before my Father, &c. Mat. 10. 32.* And, *With the Heart Man believeth unto Righteousness, and with the Mouth Confession is made unto Salvation, Rom. 10. 10.* We must love our Neighbours as our selves, and therefore desire and seek their Salvation: *He that seeth his Brother have need, (for his Body) and shutteth up the Bowels of his Compassion from him; how dwelleth the Love of God in him? much less if he have no pity for Souls.* While we have opportunity, we must do good to all men, Gal. 6. 10. The slothful Servant that hid his Talent, is condemned to utter darkness, Mat. 25. What do
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we in the World but to receive good, and do good? And how little Goodness is in that which tendeth not to men's Salvation? What are we made, redeemed, and preserved for, but to serve God, and seek the good of our selves and others? You accuse not men for giving *Money* to the poor and needy; and is not Holiness much better? If *Money* be better than *Grace*, not only *Simon Magus* was excusable, but *Cæsar* might be a greater Benefactor than Christ. Do you believe a Heaven, and do you accuse men for seeking to help men to attain it. Unthankful miserable Sinners, that accuse men for endeavouring to save them from Sin and endless Misery! were they drowning, they would not accuse men for labouring to save their Lives. None but mad men strive against those that would heal or help them: But it is here no wonder, when the Saviour of the World was as madly and unthankfully used by such Sinners: How can we expect that he will accept our help, who despiseth or refuseth Gods?

8. But perhaps it is their Zeal and Earnestness in Religion that you accuse; and think that they should be, as you call

call it, more moderate; that is, indifferent and cold.

Indeed imprudent passionate Rashness, and erroneous Zeal, and factious Violence, which is more for Self-Interest and Self-Conceit, than for the Truth and Cause of Christ, is a thing which he will never justify: If *James* and *John* have such a feverish Zeal, he will tell them, *You know not what manner of Spirit ye are of*: Where an envious, striving, masterly Zeal is, he tells them it is not from above, but the wisdom which it pretendeth to is earthly, sensual and devilish, tending to Confusion and every evil work. Christ is no Patron of Popish, Tyrannical, Persecuting, Destroying, Hurtful Zeal; but surely he will justify the Zeal of Love, and of good Works: Not zealous flandering, railing, and false censuring; but zealous Preaching, Praying, and Praising God, and a zealous Diligence in all that he commandeth, and a zealous care to mortifie fleshly Lusts, and avoid Sin, and escape Damnation, and to glorifie God. It is a base Contempt, and dishonouring of God, and Christ, and Holiness, and Heaven,

ven; to think or speak of them, or seek them, with a cold indifferency, as if they were but common needless things!

How eagerly do worldlings seek the world, and proud men strive to climb to some Honour, before they fall into the Grave and Hell! How violently do many earthly Rulers strive to enlarge their Dominions and have their Wills, though by the ruine of Countreys, and the blood of many thousand Innocents! How hot are all these worldly men, (even Popes and Prelates, that say they believe a better World) against all how wise and holy soever, that are against their worldly Interest! How fervently did they cry against Christ himself, *Away with him, Crucifie him!* How furiously did they *gnash their Teeth* at Stephen, and stone him! and *cryed out against Paul, Away with such a fellow from the Earth, it is not fit that he should live!* The Devil is earnest to destroy us: The zeal of Infidels, Papists and Church-Tyrants is burning hot, and no reason, no worth or innocency of the just, will serve to quench it. And is it only Gods service and our Salva-

Salvation, that must be coldly managed and sought? Is it only that which we are born for, and live for, that must be thrust behind the door, or done as if we did it not? Is it Heaven and Hell that must be jested with? and Souls that must be ventured for a little wealth or lust, or our endless hope cast away for nothing? Idols that have eyes and see not, deserve no better service than the Hypocrites imagery, and stage Religion: But do you think the God of Love and Glory can be loved, honoured or obeyed too much? None but the Atheistical fool can think so! How quickly, how certainly will you all wish, that God and your Salvation had been loved and sought with all your Hearts, and Strength, and Time, and that he that is All had had your All, and that you had been as Holy as the holiest of Men! O Hypocrites, that daily pray that *Gods Name may be hallowed, his Kingdom come, and his will done on Earth as it is done in Heaven;* and yet accuse those as doing too much, that alas fall far short of the lowest of all the heavenly inhabitants!

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9. But perhaps they are accused for not serving God just as men command them, and not being of the Religion of those that are uppermost.

This hath indeed been the common accusation. But 1. God is uppermost, and will be: Therefore they are resolved to be as near as they can of his mind that is uppermost, and will prevail.

2. Christ went against the Rulers of his time: and commanded his Apostles so to do, and so did they, and so did the Church for three hundred years, and in much of the World ever since.

3. Must we have as many Religions as Princes have? And must we change our Religion as oft as we change our Countrey? Must a man be a *Heathen* under *Heathens*, and a *Mahometan* under *Turks* and *Persians*? and a *Papist* under *Papists*, and a *Socinian* under *Socinians*? and so on. If not, how shall we know which Princes Religion it is that we must be of, and which we must refuse, but by the Word of God, which we must ourselves discern, (using the best helps of Teachers that we

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we can get?) We thank God that we have Rulers that so far own Truth and Righteousness as they do; but even the Apostle saith, They were not *Lords*, nor had *Dominion* over their Faith, but were their *Helpers*, 2 Cor. 1. 24. 1 Pet. 5. 2, 3. As *Stewards* of the mysteries of God.

4. Why do you honour the *Martyrs*, and keep Holy-daies in remembrance of their sufferings, who dyed rather than they would obey man against God, if you think we must alwaies be of the Rulers Religion? Did the three Witnesses so? Dan. 3. or Daniel himself? c. 6. The common case is much like *Daniels*, Dan. 6. 5. [We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the Law of his God]; Which they did, for Praying when the Law forbade him. They could find no fault with Christ and his Apostles, but for not observing their Traditions, and for worshipping God contrary to the Law, and doing contrary to the decrees of Caesar, Act. 18. 13. & 17. 5. Mat. 15. Gods Law is perfect: Mens are not so: Though we cannot our selves attain perfection in understanding or practice

Etice, yet we will choose and set before us a *perfect Rule*, even the perfect Law of the perfect Ruler of the World. If we must be all of the Princes or States Religion, where one Countrey hath the true Religion, many will have a false one: And when we are right in one point, we may be wrong in another, our Copy being so.

10. *But perhaps it is Errour, Sin, Sedition, Sects, Schism, Scandal, that you accuse Men of*: If that be it, if you do it truly, and do not slander them; certainly Christ will not justifie them in these.

1. If you accuse them falsely, he will justifie them.

2. If they have sinned, and truly believe, and repent, and amend, he will pardon them through his meritorious Righteousness and Sacrifice, and will make them and pronounce them just.

3. And he will justifie in them all that is his own and good, notwithstanding their pardonable Infirmities, and will not make their faults greater than they are, but will see the *willingness of the Spirit when the Flesh is weak*. If malignant Men will see the Mote of a Ceremonious

monious Errour or frailty in their Brothers eye, and call it a *Beam*, because a Beam is in their own; Christ will not joyn with them in their Malignity and Injustice, but will bid him cast the first Stone that is without Sin; *Joh. 8. 7.*

4. And yet he will not justifie the least sinful Thought, or Word, or Deed, nor the least faulty imperfection in their Faith, Love or Obedience: For no man hateth any of these so much as Christ doth, in whomsoever they are found. Do you cry out against *Errour, Sedition, Rebellion, Disobedience, Schism, Divisions*? So doth Christ, and so do all his true Disciples: We all agree with you in this. But if the Question be either, *Who they are that are herein guilty?* or, *In whom any Sin is reigning, wilful and unpardoned?* here see that you go not beyond proof: For Christ will not own the Condemners of the Just, nor confirm any mans unrighteous and malicious Censure.

2. And as I advise you before you accuse any, to know whether Christ
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be of your mind, and will be against them, or will take their parts; so next I advise you, as you love yourselves, to think well how great a Sin malignant and false accusing is.

1. It sheweth much of the Devil in your Hearts, whether you see it or not, it is no better: He is malicious, a Murderer, a Lyar, and the Accuser of the Just, and Slanderers are called by his Name, *διαβολοι*, as aforesaid.

2. If it be for Christ's Cause, for Truth or Righteousness, or done in Malice, against Godliness or Faith, Christ taketh it all as done against himself, *Mat. 25*: For it is not only against his Servants, but also for their obeying and serving him: It is he that commanded them, as is aforesaid.

3. You set your self against the Office also of Christ; He is the Advocate of his Servants, He hath undertaken their Defence, and do you think to overcome him? it is he that justifieth us, (for all that Faith, and Zeal, and Holiness, for which we are accused and persecuted by the world) and who then shall condemn us? It is he that is for us, who then is he that will be against

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against us? shall we not be more than Conquerors through him whose power hath conquered for us, and whose victorious Love will not forsake us? *Rom. 8. 34, &c.* Remember in what a manner he said, *Act. 9. Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? it is hard for thee to kick against the Pricks*: And to him that offendeth one of those little despised ones that believe in him, that it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the Sea.

And it is not only to the gross Persecuting *Accusers* of the just that I give this Advice, but I beseech you all to take heed of any rash *Accusing* of the Just; for the wrong is most to God himself, and the hurt to you, and Christ will be against you.

1. Some there are, that when they have by Ignorance, or a stretching Conscience, for worldly interest consented to some sinful practices, are led by that same unhappy interest, to justify first what they do themselves, and then to accuse all those as Erroneous, Precise, or Schismatical, that are against their choice and practice: Most men

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 that live in sin for interest, do think
 that they must be secured from the
 accusations of Conscience, and the dis-
 grace of sinning, by justifying their sin,
 and accusing those as the sinners that
 are against it, and dare not sin as much
 as they ; but how sad a defence will
 this prove at last, which so much add-
 eth to their Crime !

2. There are some on the contrary,
 that in ignorance having taken a *Duty*
 or a *lawful Practice* for a *Sin*, (as Bap-
 tizing Infants, Singing *David's Psalms*,
 Praying constantly in Families, Observ-
 ing the Lords day, Praying oft in the
 same words, Communicating with some
 faulty Churches, or such as these men
 condemn, and such like) they hereup-
 on become the rash and false accusers
 of those that be not as erroneous as
 themselves ; thus did the *Pharisees* by
 Christ and his Apostles ; thus did the
 Jewish Teachers, *Act. 15.* that said,
Except ye be Circumcised and keep the Law
of Moses, ye cannot be saved : Thus did
 the Jewish Christians against *Peter*, *Act.*
11. 23. *They contended with him, saying,*
Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and
didst eat with them : And after his mi-
 racu-

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raculous Conviction by this censori-
 ousness, they drew him to that Separation
 which *Paul* doth blame him for,
Gal. 2. 12, 13, 14. and *Barnabas* and o-
 thers dissembled with him, for fear of
 the censures of these erroneous men ;
 for it is not the least mischievous effect
 of these false Accusations and Censures,
 that they frighten many weak Christi-
 ans from duty and into sin, while they
 hear that this or that is no duty, or is
 some heinous sin, and have not the un-
 derstanding to try and judge, they are
 carryed away with the name and noise ;
 and some such as *Peter* and *Barnabas*
 walk not uprightly, but step out of
 the way for fear of displeasing them,
 or being accused by them as others are ;
 and it is not a little shame, guilt and
 suffering that this course hath brought
 upon the Ministers themselves.

3. And there are some that here
 more hainously offend, *Familists*, *Rant-*
ers, *Seekers*, *Quakers*, and too many
 more ; that while they are guilty them-
 selves of lamentable errors, fear not
 to accuse almost all the Churches of
 Christ on earth, as if they were not
 his Churches at all, and had no true

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Religion, Ministry, Ordinances, and were
not to be communicated with. The Pa-
pists that burn men as Hereticks for
the Truth, I think accuse not so ma-
ny of Christs Ministers and Church-
es, nor so deeply as some of these Sects
do; yea and father this malignity on
the Spirit of God: But Christ will de-
fend and justify his Churches against
all these false Accusers.

O little do either Papists or any o-
ther Sectaries know how heinous a
crime Christ will take it, to accuse the
greatest part of Christians on earth, as
being Hereticks, Schismaticks, or no
true Churches, or having no true Re-
ligion, or part in Christ or in his Spi-
rit; and for a worldly Faction on one
side, or a sick-brained, self-conceited
Sect on the other side to appropriate
the title of the Church or Saints to
themselves alone, and say to most of
the Members of Christ, *You are none of
his!* If to accuse falsely *one man* when
his estate only is concerned in it, and
that before a single Judicature, be so
great a Crime as Scripture maketh it,
what is it openly before God and the
World, rashly or falsely to accuse whole
Churches

Churches and Countreys of Christians,
yea the faithfulest of Christs Ministers,
with bitter scorns, as many of the a-
foresaid Sectaries do; yea, almost all
the Church of Christ, in this and al-
most all former ages! For my part,
(though some censure me for it) I am
afraid of *too bold Censuring* even of Pa-
pists, or of honest Heathens, such as
were *Antonine, Cicero*, and such others
that never heard the Gospel of Christ.

II. My next advice is to those that
are thus accused by others, about Reli-
gion, or of Sin.

1. Do not presently justify your
selves, because you love not to be
blamed; rash self-justifying may be
more hurtful to you, than other mens
rash accusing you. Errour and sin is
not so rare a thing, even among
good men, that it should be taken for
hard measure to be judged erroneous;
or sinners: Who knoweth his secret
faults? *Psal. 19.* We must daily Pray,
Forgive us our Trespases! Little do most
know how great a number of falsehoods
F 4 are

are received into the minds of most good Christians in the world, yea of the best, much more of the more ignorant sort; and therefore we have great cause to be still cautiously suspicious of our selves; and it is a mercy to have notice of our sins and errors, from whomsoever, Friends or Foes.

Trie therefore, lest it should prove an error or sin that you are accused of; confess it not to be such, because another calleth it such; but yet let him know that you are willing of his help for your information and Conviction.

It is supposed that none of us love error as error, or sin as sin, or any evil as such; it is no *evil* that is the object of a sinners *will* and *choice*, but a *misplaced good*, even a *lesser good* set against or *instead* of a greater; (as the Creature instead of the Creator, and Corporal instead of Spiritual, &c.) We do not *love* and *will malum*, *sed male*, not evil, but evilly: It is not the *thing* loved that is *evil* *it self*, but the *act* of *Loving* it, (or doing it:) The *Fruit* that *Adam* did eat was not evil, but *eating* it was; Meat, Drink, Pleasurable

able Objects, Beauty, Money, Lands, Honours, are all good, but the inordinate Love and Use of them is the evil.

Our nature therefore giveth this advantage to our Monitors; we would all be delivered from *evil* *as evil*, and therefore thankfully accept their help.

Humanum est errare; how little doth that man know himself, or what man is, who taketh it for an injury to be supposed to have *Errours*: But to deny *necessary saving Verities*, or to be *unwilling* to see our *Errors* by finding out the *Truth*, or *proudly* to defend them, because we have once owned them, and to be rash and confident propagators of such errors, and to rage against wiser men that are against our folly, and ignorantly to cry them down as ignorant, and to charge all this on the Spirit of God, this is an unchristian and inhumane sort of erring. Try therefore with a due suspicion of your selves, lest your accusation should be true, and you be found in the mistake.

The same I say when you are accused of any *Sin*: Alas, *Sin* is not so rare

a thing with any of us, but that we may well fear and try the case, lest we should be guilty.

2. My next Advice is, *Take heed lest you go about to interests Christ in any of your Sins or Errours, or lest you expect that he should justify them.* It is a greater Sin which many erring men are guilty of in this kind, than is commonly perceived. It is well that men would do that which God owneth if they knew it; but it is dangerous to say, that he owneth what he abhorreth: To father Falshood on the God of Truth, and Sin on the God of Holiness, is a fearful Crime. God that would not endure false Fire, Lev. 10. or to be worshipped like an Idol, no nor to have holy things prophaned, will much less endure to be made the Father of Lies and Wickedness.

1. Consider, that this is to set him against himself who is the God of Truth and Holiness.

2. This is to use his Name against his Word, which is the Word of Truth and Holiness.

3. This is to put him in the place of Satan, and to father on him the Devils

vils works, who is a Lyar, and the Father of it.

4. This is it which the false Prophets are so heavily threatned for in Scripture.

5. This is to fight against God's Kingdom, and the Grace of Christ, and the work of the Spirit in his own Name.

6. This is the direct Breach of the third Commandment, *Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain:* A Lie, and Vanity oft signifie the same thing in Scripture. This Sin is of the nature of Perjury, which is appealing to God, as owning and approving a Falshood; and do not they so that falsely say, *God saith this, and that, and the other thing in the Scripture, and by his Spirit in me,* which he never said, yea, which no one so much abhorreth as he; and will you father on God that one thing which he hateth? God tells you that he will not hold him guiltless (that is, he will notably condemn and punish such) as thus prophanely and audaciously take his Name in vain, or use it to patronize a Lie.

I am often near trembling, to hear some of our Tremblers, yea and some others,

others; abuse abundance of plain Texts of Scripture, and expound them with palpable falshood, and deny the Articles of the Christian Faith, about Christs Person, his Intercession, his Coming again, his Laws, his Kingdom, his Judgment, and pouring out many heathenish and gross Errours, and fathering all this with raging Confidence on God himself, and saying, *I am sure this is true; the Spirit infallibly tells me so; God speaketh it in me; I no more doubt of it, than whether I live; He that doubteth is damned; the light within me assureth me that this is true, and the meaning of the Scripture.* O patient God! O sinful Man! O subtle Serpent! O dark unhappy World!

O pitiful Professors of Faith, that will be changed or shaken by such heinous Sin, as if they heard an Oracle of God. Our God is *Love*, and yet he is a *Consuming Fire*: Take heed what you say of him, and what you father on him: If Pride, Blindness and Deceit do carry you to blaspheme him, your Confidence will not make Christ justify it.

3. But:

3. But I further advise you: If indeed it be *Truth and Duty* which men accuse you for, even such as Christ in the sacred Scriptures did prescribe, doubt not but he will justify you against all Accusers; and let this satisfy you however you are slandered, against all. As, if your Sins were few and small, there would be less use of a Saviour to forgive them; so, if your Slanders by malignant Lyars be few and small, you will have the less use for Christ to justify you. If it be, *All men that revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely (or lying) for Christ's sake; Blessed are ye, saith Christ, Mat. 5. 11.* And if you believe him, you may rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your Reward in Heaven; and so persecuted they the Prophets before you. How many things are here to be observed? It is supposed to be *Lyes* that are reported of you; and this not of one sort only, but *all manner of Evil*; as if you were impious against God, uncharitable and unjust towards men, Hereticks against Truth, Schismatics against Unity, Rebels and diso-

disobedient against Authority, and all the rest: And of all these have the Just been ordinarily accused; and this is not by some one exasperated Person in a Corner, whom few believe, but by *all men*, that is the common voice of de-
belying, but *reviling*, yea and *persecuting*; yet must you not only be patient, but *joyful and exceeding glad*, because it is for *Christ*, and he will *justify you*, and give you a *great Reward in Heaven*. Here is a noble work for Faith, to learn and practise this Lesson of Cross-bearing, Hope and Joy. The Judge is at the Door, who seeth us, and all our Case, and is more concerned in it than we are: Be not too hasty for a full Vindication! Cannot you stay till the Assizes? Were it not that Slanderers hurt *others and themselves*, how small a matter were their thoughts and words to you? Will a malignant thought of a dying worm de-
 ject you from any real Honour or Felicity? Is it in the power of a lying Tongue, or of many, how high, or how credible soever esteemed, to deprive you of your Innocency, or the approbation of God, or your Adoption, or Christ's
 Ju-

Justification, or your everlasting Glory and Reward? Do you trust Christ for your Souls, and cannot you trust him with your Names? Is God your God, and is not his Approbation enough for you? Is Man nothing to you, who is posting to Dust and Judgment, and yet cannot you bear his lying words or thoughts? How will you bear the Cross of Martyrdom, which is to die for well-doing, under the reputation of Malefactors, if you cannot bear false words or thoughts? If you say, *It is the Truth that is dishonoured through my Dishonour*: I answer,

1. God is sufficient to vindicate his Truth: Every slanderous mouth shall soon be stopped, and God will be proved true, and all men Lyars; *Rom. 3.*
2. And he hath promised to *bring forth your Righteousness as the Light*, your Names shall rise as the Morning-Sun, when the most malignant Darkness seemed to bury them. Christ is not in Heaven reputed a Blasphemer, nor a Rebel against *Caesar*; nor is *Paul* there taken for a pestilent Fellow, or a mover of Sedition among the people; nor the Cross of Christ for Foolishness or a Stumbling-

112 *The One Thing Necessary, or,*
bling-block, nor are true Christians
there reproached, or excommunicated
as Hereticks or Evil-doers. Of how
small regard is the Judgment of Man
to him that fully trusteth to Christ's
Justification! which you may be sure
of, so far as the Scriptures truly under-
stood do justify you.

III. My next Counsel is, to those that
are unresolved which Cause or side is
right, and to be chosen, whilst most men
are Accusers of each other: One talk-
eth against this thing, and another a-
gainst that, one against this Doctrine,
and practice, and another against that,
and so many Parties accuse all the rest,
that it distracteth ignorant Persons.

Either the things which they differ
about are such as Christ hath told us his
mind of in the Scripture, or not; if not,
then pity and bear with the Contenders
on both sides; interpose not your Judg-
ment rashly, but let every one enjoy
his own: *Paul* and *Barnabas*, as well as
Martha and *Mary*, may differ about
Persons and Circumstances of Duty;
But if Christ have already decided the
Case, let that determine you: What
need

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need you more? Is the Controversie
whether God or Man should be first
obeyed? whether Heaven or Earth,
Christ or the Pleasures of Sin should
be preferred? whether we should live
after the Flesh, or the Spirit? In all
such cases it is easie to know what
Christ doth judge. I hope you do not
think that he will take part with
the sensual, or the covetous, or the
malignant Enemies of a godly Life;
nor that he will turn to the Oppres-
sors or Persecutors of the Just; nor
that he will renounce his own Word,
because any men, how great or Reve-
rend soever, misapply it, or contra-
dict it; nor that he will call Drunken-
ness, Gluttony, Worldliness, Idleness,
Filthiness or Pride, by gentle, extenu-
ating, deceitful Names, though the
guilty and impenitent do so.

Some would perswade you that Christ
and his Spirit could not speak so much
sense as to become intelligible: And
though every Friend can intelligibly
write you his mind, yet Christ could
not, or would not; and that you may
understand Poets and Orators, *Virgil*,
Horace, *Cicero*, *Seneca*; and Philosophers,
Law-

114 *The One Thing Necessary, or,*
 Lawyers, Physicians, Historians, yea
 the voluminous Statutes of Lawgivers,
 and Canons of the Church; but the Holy
 Scriptures you cannot understand: But it
 is not reproaching Christ that is the way
 to have him justify your Cause or you.
 Though ambiguity of words make
 Scripture, as all other Writings, so far
 difficult as to need some Skill in those
 words to him that will understand them;
 and though a carnal blinded mind cannot
 (savingly in love and lively sense) receive the
 spiritual things of God, yet men shall
 shortly be convinced, that the *Light of the
 World was not invisible*, though the
Darkness comprehend it not, and that the
 Wisdom of God hath spoken intelligibly,
 and in all necessary things you may
 certainly know which part Christ taketh.

But alas, Christ is unseen, and therefore
 little regarded by multitudes who customarily
 honour his Name. As among the *Turks*,
 we blame not him that rather asketh
 what the Emperour or Bashaw commandeth,
 than what *Mahomet* commandeth; so these
 that honour Christ but as the *Turks* honour
Mahomet, do

Mary's Choice Justified. 115
 do far more regard which side their
Landlord takes, or which side such a
Lord, or Bishop, or Prince is for, than
 which part Christ is for. O Sirs! You
 would all fain have Christ to be your
 Advocate at last: As ever you would
 have him be for you then, be now for
 that which he is for, and hath foretold
 you he will justify.

O that you were all but truly willing
 to know what it is that Christ is for,
 (whether for a holy, or a worldly or
 fleshly Mind and Life); and that you
 were but resolved to be for that which
 Christ is for, as far as by diligent
 search you can know it. I should hope
 then that he would not leave you to
 damnable mistake, but help you to
 understand his will for your Salvation.

Use. And here you may see, that it is
 false Doctrine which some men confidently
 preach, that *There is no such thing as
 Christs justifying his People against
 false accusations*; As when we tell

116 *The One Thing Necessary, or,*
 tell them, that against the accusation
 of being finally *Impenitent, Unbelievers,*
Unconverted, Unholy, they must be ju-
 stified by their own personal *Repentance,*
Faith, Conversion and *Holiness,* or not
 at all; they have no shift against the
 plain Truth, but to tell us, that we
have need of no such Justification: The
Devil will have something else to do, than
falsly to accuse us. But on the con-
 trary,

1. Is not the Devil the *Accuser* of
 the Brethren? and is he not the Father
 of lies. Is not his Name *Diabolus,* a
false accuser?

2. Doth he not set the wicked on
 his work in this Life, falsly to accuse
 the faithful, and their Faith and Du-
 ty, that it may reflect on God him-
 self? Yea, through the remnant of ig-
 norance and Sin, Christs Servants too
 oft falsly accuse one another, as un-
 sound, Erroneous, Heretical, &c. Yea
 darkness causeth good mens Conscien-
 ces too often falsly to accuse them-
 selves. And is it not Christs Office to
 be the *advocate of the just?* and in ju-
 stifying them to justify himself, and his
 Cause and Truth; Rom. 3. 4, 26. And
 is

is it not much of the work of that
 glorious day, to bring all hidden things
 to light, and to justify his cause, and
 Servants against all the false accusati-
 ons that ever were brought against
 them? and thus to shame all falshood
 and unrighteousness, and to judge the
 World in truth?

3. Was it not a false accusation that
 Satan brought against Job? and did not
 God very solemnly justify him against
 it? Is not Satans Kingdom upheld in
 the World, by making men in all Na-
 tions believe, that *Believers* are *decei-*
ved, false Believers, and that Christs Ser-
 vants are wicked, Hypocrites, the
 Plagues and Troublers of the Earth?
 And is there not a day to justify
 them against all this?

4. If we are not justified against
 false accusation, we are justified a-
 gainst none at all: For Christ will not
 justify us against the Truth. It is Ju-
 stification by *Plea* and Sentence that
 we are now speaking of: Justification
 sometime signifieth *making us just,* and
 sometime *Judging* and *maintaining* us
 to be just. The first doth *make* an
unrighteous and *ungodly* man just, by
 con-

118 *The One Thing Necessary, or,*
converting him, and giving him Repentance toward God, and Faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ, and pardoning his Sins, and giving him right to the Heavenly Inheritance: This is our first Constitutive Justification. But when God hath thus made us just by the merits of Christs Righteousness,

1. He *virtually* by the Law of Grace doth pronounce us just, and this against the curse of the condemning Law of innocency.

2. And in Judgment Christ as our Advocate will maintain us just.

3. And Christ our Judge, will judge us just, against all that can be brought against us: But how far just? Not such as never sinned; nor such as by imputation of his Righteousness are by God accounted never to have sinned; nor such as never deserved death: But such as are not to be condemned to pain of sense or loss, but have right to the free gift of Life Eternal, because Christ for them satisfied Justice, and fulfilled all Righteousness, and merited all this for them, even Forgiveness, Grace and Glory, and they being penitent Believers have part

Mary's Choice Justified. 119
in him, and sincerely obeyed him to the Death.

And if it were never so true, that no actual false accusation would be urged against believers, yet is it true that we shall be justified against even a virtual and possible accusation: And where there is not so much as this, there needeth no Justification by Plea, by Witness, or by Sentence.

And if we are accused to have been Sinners, it is not to be denied; If it be said that our Sin deserved death, it must be granted: But if it be said,

1. That we were finally impenitent unbelievers.

2. Or have no part in Christ.

3. Or had no pardon of Sin.

4. Or had no right to Life Eternal.

5. And therefore are to be condemned; all this being false, Christ will justify us against it; and against all other false accusation of Men or Devils.

Doct. Last. Christ doth not only plead his own Righteousness for Mary's Justification, but justify her choice of the better part,

120 *The One Thing Necessary, or,*
part, and decree that it shall not be taken
from her.

I. Indeed all the good that we have is his own as the giver, though some be also *ours* as the *actors* and *possessors*: And Christ will justify all that is of himself: Nothing but good cometh from Infinite good, or him that came to destroy the works of the Devil. They that accuse our Grace or Duty, accuse Christ, his Spirit and his Law: And will he not justify himself? (But of this before.)

II. He that *praiseth* his Servants Holiness and Duty, and will praise them in Judgment, doth so far justify them. *Mat. 25. Well done, good and faithful Servant!* Yea, he that calleth *Eternal Glory, their Reward, and the Crown of Righteousness given by God the righteous Judge, to such as have fought a good fight, and finished their course, and love the appearing of Christ*; and he that is the Author of Eternal Salvation to all them that obey him, and will judge all men according to their works, and pronounceth them Blessed that do his Commandments, that they may have right
to

Mary's Choice Justified. 121

to the Tree of Life, (2 Tim. 4. 8, 9. Heb. 5. 9. Rev. 22. 14, &c.) doth surely so far justify this personal obedience and righteousness of theirs.

But he justifieth only against false accusations; and not against the charge of culpable imperfection. And do they therefore talk wisely that say, It is no Righteousness, and no Justification, because it is *imperfect*? Doth any wise man pretend to personal perfect Righteousness? And doth not God many hundred times in Scripture call that *Righteousness* and equivalent which is imperfect? And will he justify or save any that hath no such Righteousness? Christ was perfectly righteous for us, to merit the pardon and Salvation of Believers, and the acceptance of their imperfect Righteousness; and not to bring any to Heaven that hath no inherent personal Righteousness.

There are some that seem by their arguing to think that so much honour as we give to our Holiness and Duty, so much we take from Christ, and to praise his Saints is to dishonour him: (And yet these men love and look for praise.) But wise men will not believe
G that

122 *The One Thing Necessary, or,*
 that the greatness of the Gift is a dishonour to the Giver, or the excellency of the House or Work a dishonour to the Builder or Work-man, or the recovered Health of the Patient a dishonour to the Physician; else what a dishonour will our Salvation be to Christ, when we are perfectly holy, without Spot or wrinkle, and have no Sin! It will be then by the *Communication* of his Holiness; as Motion, Light and Heat is from the Sun; and so it is now though we are imperfect: God accepteth, praiseth, and *in tantum* proportionably justifieth our imperfect Righteousness for the sake and merits of his that was perfect.

I never met with any of this mind, but if one accuse them of less than Infidelity, Impenitence, Impiety and Hypocrisie, they will seek to justify themselves: And why will they justify themselves in that which God will not justify them in? What Friend of Christ will not justify the Generation of the Just, when Malignants call them all *deluded Hypocrites*? and I know no sober man but expecteth that every Judge should justify the wrongfully accused and their Cause.

Obj.

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Obj. To justify a good Cause is not to justify the Person.

Ans. Untrue. It is not to justify him in all Respects, but it is to justify him as to that Cause.

Obj. This is but before men.

Ans. God doth more hate the condemning of the Just than any man doth.

Obj. This is but as to a particular Cause, and not an universal Justification.

Ans. And the justifying of a Believer and penitent obedient Saint by his Faith, and Repentance, and Obedience, is but the justifying him in that particular Cause, which is the *medium* of his part in Christ; the merit of whose Righteousness and Sacrifice procureth the pardon of all his Sins, and his right to the free Gift of Life eternally, and so far justifieth him against the guilt of his Sin, and the Condemnation of the Law.

He that is not first made a penitent Believer, and justified against chargable Infidelity, Impenitence and Hypocrisie, shall never be justified by Christ's Merits and Sentence against the Curse and Penalty of the Law.

II. But Christ doth not only justify Mary and her Choice, but decree that it

G 2

ball

124 *The One Thing Necessary, or,*
shall not be taken from her. For,

1. He hath by his Covenant given the best and greatest things, and that for ever to every one that will but thankfully accept and choose them.

2. And what he offereth and promi-
seth he decreeth.

3. And what he decreeth and promi-
seth he performeth.

For, who is it that should take it from her, or from any Believer? Or, *who shall separate us from the Love of God?*

1. *Not the Malice of Satan*; else no Believer should be saved. If the Devil could deprive us of the Gospel, or of Grace, it should be surely done: If he could have kept the World from being redeemed by Christ, it had never been redeemed; if he could keep men unconvinced, unconverted, and unpardoned, he would surely do it.

2. *Not any of his malignant Instruments*, for God will not give them power to make a godly man ungodly, and the Devil hath no such power to give them.

3. *Not the Envy of erroneous Zealots, or uncharitable Hypocrites.* The Prodigal shall not be turned out of Doors, because his elder Brother envieth his Entertain-
ment.

Mary's Choice Justified. 125

ment. The Envy of the Jews shall not hinder the Blessing of the *Gentiles*. Resolvedly choose the best, and you shall have it.

Use 1. O that all men would take this sure and necessary direction of Christ for the choice of their Comforts, Hopes and Happiness: All men had rather be happy for ever, than for a little while; and what else but Holiness and Heaven, Christ, Grace and Glory will be such a durable Felicity? Will you choose the favour of great men, and hopes of Preferment and worldly Honours; and can you say, that this shall not be taken from you? Will you choose Lands and Money, and the Prospering of your Endeavours in growing rich; and can you say that these shall not be taken from you? Will you choose Mirth and Sport, and fleshly Lust, and the pleasing of your Appetites and Fancies; and can you say that these shall not be taken from you? Must not Life it self be shortly taken from you, and therefore all the Pleasures of this Life? If these things be your Choice,

G 43

Christ

126 *The One Thing Necessary, or,*
 Christ hath already foretold you what
 you may expect, *Luk. 12. 19, 20.*
Thou Fool, this night shall thy Soul be re-
quired of thee, and then whose shall all these
things be which thou hast provided? So is he
that layeth up Treasure for himself, and is
not rich towards God. And, Luk. 16. 25.
Son, remember that thou in thy life time re-
ceivedst thy good things, and Lazarus
evil things; but now he is comforted, and
thou art tormented? Wherefore then do you
spend money for that which is not Bread; and
your labour for that which satisfieth not?
Hearken diligently to Christ, and eat that
which is good, and let your Soul delight it
self in fatness: Incline your Ear, and come
unto him; hear, and your Soul shall live; and
he will make an everlasting Covenant of sure
mercies with you, Isa. 55. 2, 3. Labour not
for the Food which perisheth, but for that
which endureth to everlasting Life, which
Christ will give you; Joh. 6. 27. Lay
not up for your selves Treasures on Earth,
where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where
Thieves break through and steal; but lay up
for your selves Treasure in Heaven; where
neither moth nor rust do corrupt, nor Thieves
break through and steal; Mat. 6. 19, 20.
The time is short, therefore weep and rejoyce;
buy

Mary's Choice Justified. 127
buy and possess, and use the World as though
you did it not; for the fashion of this World
passeth away, 1 Cor. 7. 29, 30, 31. O be not
as the wicked who have their portion in
this life, in the treasure of their Bellies,
Psal. 17. 14. For their hopes soon perish as
the Rush that groweth but in the mire, and as
the Spider's web, and as the giving up of the
Ghost. Flesh will fail you, and the World
will fail you; But God will be a never-
failing Portion to all that do but sincerely
choose him; Psal. 73. 25, 26. If you drink
here, you shall thirst again, and if you
eat here, you shall hunger again; but if
Christ and his Spirit be your meat and
drink, you shall hunger and thirst no more
for ever. Blessed are they that hunger and
thirst after Righteousness, for they shall be
satisfied. O do not prophanelly sell such
a Birth-right for a Morfel; you shall have
no better than you choose; shew not your
selves unworthy of eternal life, by pre-
ferring known vanity before it. If you
lost Heaven because you could not have
it, and would have a Christ and Holiness,
but could not, your Case would not be
all so bad, as to be the wilful refusers of
your own Salvation, and lose it because
you would not have it. Do not say, We
would

128 *The One Thing Necessary, or,*

would be saved, if you would not be saved from your Sin, and have that Holiness and Communion with God which is your Salvation; and do not say, we would have God and Christ, and Holiness, if the Pleasures of Sin seem better to you, and you choose it first: You may as well say plainly, We will have no God, no Christ, no Heaven, as say, We had rather have the Pleasures of Sin; and you may as well say so, as choose so, and do so. There are some deceived Libertines that think that every good desire is the mark of a justified Soul, especially, if it be accompanied with a willingness that Christ's Righteousness should justify them, and a belief that it will do so, though they love sinful pleasure, profit and honour, better than God and Holiness, and Heaven, and had rather have the Felicity of an Epicure, than of a Saint.

But Christ himself hath judged contrarily: He saith, He cannot be his Disciple that loveth anything more than him, Mat. 10. Luk. 14.26.23. And he that will have this Pearl of greatest price, must think nothing too dear, but sell all that he hath to buy it; Mat. 13.46. To be Lovers of Pleasure more than Lovers of God, is the brand of the worst times

Mary's Choice Justified.

129

times and persons; 2 Tim. 3.4. Let any man that can shew us one Promise of God for the saving of any that seek not first God's Kingdom, and its Righteousness, Mat. 6. 33. and labour not chiefly for the food that perisheth not; and loveth not God above the World, and Holiness more than the Pleasures of Sin.

If this be not so, where can you fix the difference between the justified and them that perish. Would God make such a difference in the World to come, if there were none here? Doth Christ and his Spirit do no more noble a work in sanctifying Souls than so? If one may be justified that loveth one sinful Pleasure better than God, and Grace, and Glory, why not he that loveth another, and another, and all? If Fornication, why not Gluttony? If Gluttony, why not Drunkenness? If Drunkenness, why not Covetousness, and Ambition, and all evil? But Paul saith, Eph. 5. 6. Let no man deceive you with vain words; for because of these things cometh the wrath of God on the Children of Disobedience. And, Without Holiness none shall see God, Heb. 12. 14. Not every one that saith, Lord, Lord, shall enter into Heaven; no, not those Believers

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lievers that prophesied, and did wonders, and cast out Devils in Christ's Name, but only they that do the Will of God: To the rest he will say, *Depart from me, ye workers of Iniquity, I know you not.*

How oft is it said, that all shall be judged according to their works? and Christ so describeth his own Judgment, *Mat. 25. Can any Man believe? Jam. 2. and 1 Joh. 3. and 4. Rom. 8. 1, to 14. Rom. 2. and a multitude such Texts, and yet believe that a bare belief that Christ's Righteousness is imputed to us, will prove any one justified who loveth his Sin better than God, Grace and Glory; and consequently, that Christ's Members differ but imputatively from the Children of the Devil; for wherein is a wicked man worse than the godly, but in this? *He that loveth the World (more than God) the Love of the Father is not in him!* Why, may not Life or Pleasure separate us from the Love of God if we love them better? *Rom. 8. 38, 39.* Nay, he loveth not God at all in a proper sense, who loveth him not as God; and he loveth him not at all as God, who loveth him not as better than the pleasure of Sin, but only as a lesser good.*

Obj. *To love God above all sinful pleasure*

is

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is the fruit and ripeness of Grace, but the seed doth not reach so high.

Ans. It's true, if you call preparatory Grace that seed; but such are in no justified state; but it is not true if you mean by the seed any thing proper to a justified man, as all the Texts fore-cited shew.

Obj. *What can the strongest Christian do more than love God above all?*

Ans. Among those that love God above all, and Holiness more than Sin, there may be an hundred different degrees; one may love him so much as to long after him and delight in him, and condemn all vanities, and overcome temptations much more easily and effectually than others; and another may do these more faintly, hardly, and with less delight.

Obj. *Doth David, Peter, and the Disciples that all forsook Christ and fled, love him better than life at such a time.*

Ans. 1. We must distinguish between the rational Will, or Love, and sensitive Passion. 2. Between the Habit and the Act. 3. Between the ordinary course of Action, and a particular extraordinary Action.

The weakest true justified Christian loveth God above the Creature, and perfect

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perfect Holiness above sinful pleasure.

1. As to the fixed Inclination and habit of the Soul (which is the Divine Nature.)

2. And in the ordinary Act or exercise of his Rational Love, and deliberate choice, and the seeking endeavour of his Life.

3. But not alwayes with the most passionate sensitive Love.

4. And passion (of fear or creature-Love) may in an extraordinary act both weaken the activity of Rational Spiritual Love, and bear down the executive power into outward contrary sinful acts: But the predominancy of the holy nature will shew it self, in raising the Soul from such a fall, and causing it the more to hate and fear the Sin. There is difference between a swoone and death, and between an Infant and an Image: And so there was between the falls of *David*, *Lot*, *Peter*; and a wicked man, that had rather keep his Sin than leave it, and loveth such pleasure more than God.

Use. 2. Be thankful then, Christians, for that Grace of Christ which caused
you

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you to make the wisest choice; even of that which is the real durable felicity, and shall never be taken from you.

Had you chosen Houses they might have been burnt: Had you chosen wealth or worldly honours, they might all have been taken from you; yea all would certainly have left you in distress. Men might have taken away your Estates, your Liberties, your Lives, but not your God, your Christ, your Heaven! They may take away your Bibles, and other Books; but they cannot take away your Grace: They may shut you out of the Synagogues, but not out of the love of God: They may imprison you, banish you, cut out your Tongues that you can neither Preach nor Speak; but still your Souls may have Communion with God: A *Tertullus* may call us Pestilent Fellows and Seditious; Schismatics may call us the Schismatics, and Hereticks may call us the Hereticks, and Hypocrites may call us Hypocrites; but none of them can *make us* what they call us. They may with some (by Gods Permission) take away the *Reputation* of your Innocency, but not your *Innocency* it self. When a mans food is but on his Table
it

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it may be taken from him; if it be but in his Stomack, he may cast it up: But it is safer when it is digested and turned into his substance. So may your Teachers, and Bibles, and Churches be taken from you, but not the Law and Gospel which is written in your Hearts, and become a spiritual nature in you: What Triumphant challenges doth St. Paul make, *Rom. 8. 37, 38, &c. Who shall be against us? Who shall condemn us? What shall separate us from the Love of God.* The power of Men and Devils cannot do it. Death it self the last enemy shall not do it. He will dissolve this frame, and lay our Flesh in dust and darkness, and take away from us all the pleasure and possession of this World, but none of our chief good! Tyrants may deprive us of such things as they choose themselves; but not of that which we have chosen! If the Devil had said truly, *Mat. 4. and Luk. 3. 6, 7. All this power will I give thee and the Glory of them, for that is delivered to me, and to whom I will I give it: he might have said also, From whom I will I take it away?* But sure he is no giver of Grace or Glory, and therefore cannot forcibly take them from us. Nay,
by

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by taking Life and all from us, men shall but hasten our perfect fruition of what we choose. Malice may snarl, and rail and slander; but cannot abate the Love of the Father, the Grace of the Son, the Communion of the Spirit, or deprive us of expected Glory.

Let not then worldly fury think that it hath undone us by taking away worldly things. They were none of our choice, nor our Trust, nor Treasure. If we are true Believers, our Treasure, Heart and Conversation are in Heaven: Let Thieves get in and Steal it thence if they can. Papal Usurpers may pretend *Peters Keys* to shut out all that obey not their Domination; But while God is our choice, and we shut not out our selves from Heaven, they talk more to their own hurt than ours, and can never take our chosen Treasure from us.

Use. 3. But if none can take it from us, Let us not cast it away our selves. All that Men and Devils can do against us, is but by allurements, or fear or other temptations, to deceive us into self-destruction, and to cast away that our selves which none can take from us. Great disputes

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disputes we have about *free-will* and *perseverance*; whether it be possible to fall away? But it is past dispute with men that believe the Word of God, that we have such Freedom, as that Christ, and Grace and Glory are freely offered to our accepting choice; and that he that truly chooseth them shall have them, and that all that choose them not before that pleasure of Sin which is set in competition against them, shall never have them; and that it's just so far possible or impossible to fall from Grace, as it is possible or impossible for the Will of one that hath Grace to change: So far as your serious choice continueth, you persevere; and so far as you change it, you lose your Grace. While you plead for the impossibility of the ill changing of your own wills, confute not your selves by your actual change: But when you feel them again *pleased* with the forbidden things of the Flesh and World, and your appetite to holy pleasure groweth dull and cold, me thinks you should perceive that *in your selves* there is no impossibility of a change: If there be any, it is out of you, in God: And no doubt but a change of his decree and will.

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will is impossible. All the doubt is, whether he have decreed that no Gracious will shall change. It is certain that being so very mutable in our selves, that we could not persevere were we left to our selves, we are all under many and great obligations, to *keep our selves in the Love of God*, Jude 21. and to *continue in the Love of Christ*, Joh. 15. 9. And we have need of Commands to *abide in Christ*, and he in us, Joh. 15. 4. And need of threatnings of destruction if we fall away, Joh. 15. 6. *If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and his withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned;* 1 Cor. 10. 12. *Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.* Heb. 4. 1. *Let us fear lest a promise being left of entering into his rest, and of you should seem to come short of it.* And all Gods threatnings are the objects of our belief and fear, Heb. 10. 26, 27, 29, 38. *If we sin wilfully after the knowledge of the Truth, there remaineth no more Sacrifice for Sins, but a certain fearful expectation of Judgment, and fiery indignation which devoureth the adversaries:* Of how much sorer punishment suppose ye shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden.

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trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the Covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and done despite to the Spirit of Grace. — If any draw back, my Soul shall have no pleasure in him: Which is the same with Ezek. 33. 18. When the Righteous turneth from his Righteousness he shall die, & 18. 24.

Yea, God seeth it meet to give us the Comforts of the faithful still conditionally; Rev. 2. & 3. To him that overcometh, &c. He that endureth to the end shall be saved. Col. 1. 21, 22, 23. If ye continue in the Faith, and be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel.

All this tells us, that notwithstanding Gods unchangeable decree, the care and diligent labour to persevere, is our duty, and that falling away must be our fear, and that there is no such impossibility as excludeth this care and fear: And that so far as it is impossible to fall away, so far it is impossible not to fear falling away, with a preserving watchful fear: And how far a known impossibility is the object of due fear, I leave to further consideration.

God hath put us into the hands of Christ, in whose care and trust is our chief

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chief security: But he hath also trusted us, or put our perseverance and Salvation more in our own hands than in any others, and so far that if we do not undo our selves by wilful and final neglect or refusal of offered Grace and Mercy, we are safe. Choose Christ as Christ, and God as God, choose Grace and Glory before all the Vanities of the World, and before all the pleasures of Sin for a season, and stand to this choice unto the end, expressing it in faithful victorious endeavours, and then neither Men nor Devils, Life or Death, shall take your chosen Treasure from you.

Obj. I can easily keep up a resolved choice of God, and Holiness and Heaven, but I cannot so constantly keep up the rejection of fleshly pleasures, and Profit and Honour, which would be for the time preferred.

Ans. The worst man would have God and Heaven so far as to give him the desires of his Flesh, and keep him from all pain and misery: But is it not a plain contradiction, to say in proper speech, I would have God as God, that is, as Best, but I would have pleasant Vanity as better? I can easily love my Wife as a Wife, but I cannot forbear loving Harlots better?

better? I can resolve for temperance, but I cannot resolve against Gluttony and Drunkenness? I am resolved for Truth, but not against Lying. Just such is that, to resolve for God and Holiness, but not against the Pleasures of Sin which alienate the Heart from God.

Obj. But how doth a man choose God and Holiness in the hour of his Sin, when he is choosing forbidden pleasure?

Ans. The act of Sin is not a choosing God and Holiness, but somewhat that is contrary: But every act of the will which is against God and Holiness, is not a rejecting of them, or a retracting of our choice, nor inconsistent with it; but perhaps only an interruption of the exercise and an abatement of the degree; Play-fellows may draw a Child to disobey a Father for love of play, and then, when yet he doth not forsake his Father, nor love them better; but only forgets him, or abateth desire through the diversion of the Sport.

Qu. What is it that is our Duty in order to the unchangeableness of our own Wills and Choice?

Ans. 1. Trust not your selves too far: The will goeth not against the minds apprehensions;

and a mans mind is a very dark, weak, mutable thing: What a Temptation, or a subtil Wrangler or Argument, or a new thought may do upon us, we do not well know. Presumption seldom escapeth danger. A wise man feareth and departeth from evil: Confidence in your own understanding, goodness and stability, is the prognostick of backsliding.

2. Away from the Temptations which do most strongly allure the flesh: To be over-pleased with things temporal and sensible, turneth the Heart from things Spiritual and Eternal. To desire a more pleasing condition to the flesh, is to desire stronger Temptations, and greater danger to the Soul.

3. Think much and seriously on the great and certain things which first converted and resolved your Wills: They are the same, and as good now as they were then, and you should know them better. A man that loveth and chooseth rationally, knoweth why he doth it: And the fixing and renewing of your knowledge and belief, is it that must fix your Love and Choice. The greatest things forgotten do not affect us.

4. Flat

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4. Flatter not your selves with the hope of living long on Earth, and look not at Death and the following Life as a great way off. The power of tempting Vanities lyeth in mens hopes of long enjoying them: To a man under the sentence of present death, they have little power. And the best things that seem far off, do not much and powerfully affect us. Live therefore as dying men, and you will have the mind and choice of dying men.

5. See that your Meditations and Belief be practical, and brought close to the Heart: And take not bare *thinking* of God and Heaven as enough, but know that holy thoughts fall short of their use and end, if they come not to the Heart and Life. It is not the Speculative disputing Christian that hath the fixed Will and Choice, unless he be also a hearty practising experienced Christian: He that hath a heavenly heart and conversation, and hath felt the power and sweetness of things spiritual, will hold them fast; when bare hear-say and opinion will let them go.

6. Depend in the constant exercise of Faith and Prayer, upon the Love of the Father,

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Father, the Grace of the Son, and the Communion of the Holy Spirit, and seek to please God as your greatest pleasure, and so live by the Faith of the Son of God, that you may say it is Christ that liveth in you, *Gal. 2. 19, 20.* And then none can take you out of his hands, nor separate you from the love of God, *Rom. 8. 38, 39.* nor take your chosen portion from you,

In a word, that your choice may be unchangable, you must firmly trust to the unchangable promise of the unchangable God, for the unchangable Kingdom, as purchased by Christ, and our title sealed by his Spirit: The World and the Flesh must be crucified, dead and buried to you by the virtue of his Cross believed, and you must be risen with him to a heavenly mind, and hope, and conversation: Every weight must be laid by, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, *Heb. 12. 1.* And we must not look back to the forsaken world behind us, but press forward for the prize unto the Mark, *Phil. 3.* Looking still to Jesus the Author and finisher of our Faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross and despised the shame, and is set down at

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at the right hand of the Throne of God:
We must consider him that endured such
contradiction of Sinners, lest we be wea-
ry and faint: We must count nothing
dear to us that we may finish our course
with joy; and must know by faith *that*
our labour is not in vain in the Lord, if we
would be stedfast and unmoveable, alwaies
abounding in the work of the Lord, 1 Cor.
15. 58. We must serve God acceptably, with
reverence and godly fear; as for a Kingdom
which cannot be moved; and all this in
dependance on the Grace of Christ, Heb.
12. 28. Considerate men know by sense
and experience that this world is Vani-
ty and Vexation: If we know also by a
living constant Faith, that a better world
of holy joy is the near and certain por-
tion of the faithful, it will fix the will in
a resolved choice, and we shall not be
like prophane Esau that sold his Birth-
right for one morsel; and the Living
Eternal God will be eternally our Life
and Joy, to whom all the Blessed with
Christ shall give Glory and Praise for ever.
Amen.

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John T. Smith

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