THE CURE OF Church-divisions:

OR,

Directions for weak Christians, to keep them from being Dividers, or Troublers of the Church.

With some Directions to the Pastors, how to deal with such Christians.

By *Richard Baxter*,

Joh. 17. 21. *That they all may be one, as thou, Father art in me and I in thee: that they also may be one in us, that the World may believe that thou hast sent me.* 22. *And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them, that they may be One, even as we are One.* 23. *I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made* Perfect in One; *and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast* Loved them, *as thou hast* loved *me.*

1 Cor. 1. 10. *Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you: but that ye be perfectly joyned together in the same mind, and in the same judgment.*

1 Cor. 3. 3. *For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying and strife and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?*

London, Printed for *Nevil Symmons* at the three Crowns over against *Holborn-Conduit*, 1670.

The Authors I. *Purpose*, II. *Reasons and* III. *Prognosticks of this Book.*

I. IT is none of the business of this Book to single out any one Party in the world, & to tell you by Application how far they are under the guilt of Schism: I meddle with the *Cause*, and leave each person to make application to himself. It is SIMPLE CATHOLICK CHRISTIANITY which I plead for, and the *Love* and *Unity* and *Concord* which are its Ligaments and Essential parts. And it is a SECT as a SECT, and a FACTION as a faction, and not this or that *Sect* or Faction, which I detect and blame. Yet I doubt not but as in the same City there are the *wise* and the *foolish*, the *sound* and the *sick*, and in the same Army there are *valiant* men, and Cowards, so in the same Churches there are Christians of various degrees of *Wisdom*, *Integrity* and *strength*: And all men should earnestly desire to be of the *wisest*, the *Holiest* and the most *fruitful* sort, and not of

the more *erroneous*, *impure*, or *ſcandalous* and unprofitable. And if the *ſick* will make themſelves a *Party*, and call the *ſound*, the *Aaverſe Party*, I will endeavour to be one of a *Party* in that ſenſe; and to *obey* God as exactly as I am able, and to *worſhip* him as *ſpiritually* and *holily* as I can, and to Love him with all my *Mind*, and *Heart*, and *Strength*, and lament that I can reach no higher, and do no more: And if any will call this by the name of Hereſie or Schiſm, they ſhall ſee that I can avoid Hereſie and Schiſm at as dear a rate, as enduring the Name and Imputation of that which I avoid. It is not the Name of a Schiſmatick that I am writing againſt, but the *Thing*, by whatever *Name* it is called. It is UNITY, LOVE and PEACE which I am pleading for: And it is DIVISIONS, HATRED and CONTENTION which I plead againſt: And it is the *Hypocriſie* of men which I detect, who betray *Love*, *Unity* and *Peace* by a *Judas* kiſs; and will not, or dare not openly renounce them, and defie them, but kill them with diſſembling kindneſs: who cry them up, while they tread them down and *follow peace* with all men, that are not of their *party*, as the Dog followeth the Hare, to tear it in pieces and deſtroy it: Who fight for LOVE by making others ſeem *odious* and *unlovely*; By evil ſurmiſings, proud under valuing the worth of others, buſie and groundleſs cenſuring of men, whoſe caſe they know not; aggravating frailties; ſtigmatizing the perſons, the actions, the worſhip and religious performances of diſſenters, with ſuch odious terrible names, and Characters, as their pride and faction do ſuggeſt; And all this to ſtrengthen the intereſt of their *ſide* and *party*, and to make themſelves and their conſenters to ſeem *Wiſe* and *Good*, by making others ſeem *fooliſh* and *bad*: Though they thereby proclaim themſelves to be ſo much the worſt, by how much they are moſt void of *Love*. They are all for *Concord*, but it is only on their narrow factious terms; They are for *Peace*; but it is not of the whole *ſtreet*, but of *their houſe* alone; or not of the whole *City*, but of their *ſtreet* alone; or not of the whole *Kingdom*, but of their *City* alone. O what a bleſſed thing were *peace*, if all would derive it from *their Wills*, and terminate it in their *intereſt*; and they might be the *Center* of *Unity* to the world! that is, that they might be *Gods* or *Chriſts*! ſuch excellent Architects are they that they can build Chriſts houſe by pulling it in pieces; and ſuch excellent Chirurgeons, that they will heal Chriſts body by

ſeparating the members, and can make as many *Bodies* as there are ſeparated parts.

2. Nor is it any or much of the buſineſs of this book, to ſpeak to thoſe that I think are deepeſt guilty of the Schiſms of the Chriſtian world: For they are out of hearing, and will not read or regard my writings. It is the *Roman* Head and Center of Unity which hath done moſt to divide the Church. And it is the contending of *Rome* and *Conſtantinople* for the Supremacy which hath made the greateſt Schiſms that the Chriſtian world hath known: And the *Regiment* of ſuch Lords muſt be anſwerable to their *Power*, and Greatneſs; and the ſimple terms of Chriſtian Unity left us by Chriſt and his Apoſtles, muſt be turned into a Religion large as the Decrees of all the Councels, and (ſay half of them) and the Popes Decretals alſo. And that there may be no way out of this wilderneſs, but the *Confeſſors preſent will*, you muſt not in all theſe ſo much as diſtinguiſh *fundamentals* from the reſt; but ſo much *material belief* is *neceſſary to Salvation*, as each mans opportunities and helps obliged him to receive; that is; The faith which is neceſſary to Salvation (materially or objectively) is as various as the number of perſons in the world; To one more is neceſſary, to another leſs, to ſome none at all of the Chriſtian faith). And you muſt ſuppoſe that the Prieſt is well acquainted with the internal capacity of every mans Soul, and with all the inſtructions, opportunities, and ſuggeſtions of his whole life, and can tell what meaſure of belief he hath, and whether it be proportionable to his helps; and ſo can tell him whether he be capable of Salvation, though neither Pope nor Councel have given any Standard by which to judge. And though no man can be aſſured of his own Salvation; and though another man could not be ſaved by the faith that ſaveth *him*. So much are we miſtaken to think that it is the Pope that hath the Keys of Heaven, when it is every Prieſt, who is the onely judge of the meaſures of the perſons faith. Theſe new made multiplyed Articles of Religion, theſe Additions to Chriſtianity, this proud Church-tyranny, I doubt not is the great cauſe of Schiſm in the world: And when I have had opportunity to write againſt it, I have born my teſtimony againſt it, as is yet legible. But it is not that ſort of men that I am here moſt to ſpeak to: but to them that profeſs to be more teachable and willing to know the truth.

3. And yet I add though this Book be written principally to save the darker sort of honest Christians, from the sin and misery of Church divisions, I write it not principally for them to read; For I know their prejudice, weakness and incapacity, aftermentioned: But I write it to remember the Teachers of the Churches, what principles they have to Preach and strengthen, and what principles to confute and to destroy, if ever they mean to save the people from this state of sin, and the Churches from the sad effects. And if Ministers neglect the faithful discharge of so great and necessary a duty, let them remember that they were warned, if they find themselves overwhelmed in the ruines.

II. The *Reasons* moving me to this work are these.

First, It is my calling to help to save people from their sins; and Church division is a heap of sins.

2. The more I love them that I hope are tender Conscienced, and dare not sin, when they are convinced of it; the more I am bound to endeavour their conviction, remembring who hath said, *Thou shalt not hate thy Brother in thy heart, thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy Neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him.* Lev. 19. 17.

3. LOVE

3. LOVE is not an appurtenance of my Religion, but my Religion it self. *God is Love, and he that dwelleth in Love, dwelleth in God, and God in him:* (who can speak a higher word of any thing in all the world?) Love is the end of faith, and faith is but the Bellows to kindle Love: Love is the fulfilling of all the Law; the end of the Gospel; the nature and mark of Christs Disciples; the divine nature; the sum of holiness to the Lord; the proper note by which to know, what is the man, and what his state, and how far any of his other acts are acceptable unto God: without which if we had all knowledge and belief, all gifts of utterance and highest profession, we were but as sounding Brass, and as a tinkling Cymbal. And if all our goods were given to the poor, and our bodies to the fire, it would profit nothing. Love is our foretast of Heaven, and the perfection of it is Heaven it self, even the state and work of Angels and of Saints in glory. And he that is angry with me, for calling men to Love, is angry for calling them to *Holiness* to God and *Heaven*. *Holiness* which is against *Love* is a contradiction: It is a deceitful *Name*, which Satan putteth upon *unholiness*. All Church principles which are against Universal *Love*, are against *God*, and *Holiness*, and

3. And yet I add though this Book be written principally to save the darker sort of honest Christians, from the sin and misery of Church divisions, I write it not principally for them to read; For I know their prejudice, weakness and incapacity, aftermentioned: But I write it to remember the Teachers of the Churches, what principles they have to Preach and strengthen, and what principles to confute and to destroy, if ever they mean to save the people from this state of sin, and the Churches from the sad effects. And if Ministers neglect the faithful discharge of so great and necessary a duty, let them remember that they were warned, if they find themselves overwhelmed in the ruines.

II. The *Reasons* moving me to this work are these.

First, It is my calling to help to save people from their sins; and Church division is a heap of sins.

2. The more I love them that I hope are tender Conscienced, and dare not sin, when they are convinced of it; the more I am bound to endeavour their conviction, remembring who hath said, *Thou shalt not hate thy Brother in thy heart, thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy Neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him.* Lev. 19. 17.

3. LOVE

3. LOVE is not an appurtenance of my Religion, but my Religion it self. *God is Love, and he that dwelleth in Love, dwelleth in God, and God in him:* (who can speak a higher word of any thing in all the world?) Love is the end of faith, and faith is but the Bellows to kindle Love: Love is the fulfilling of all the Law; the end of the Gospel; the nature and mark of Christs Disciples; the divine nature; the sum of holiness to the Lord; the proper note by which to know, what is the man, and what his state, and how far any of his other acts are acceptable unto God: without which if we had all knowledge and belief, all gifts of utterance and highest profession, we were but as sounding Brass, and as a tinkling Cymbal. And if all our goods were given to the poor, and our bodies to the fire, it would profit nothing. Love is our foretast of Heaven, and the perfection of it is Heaven it self, even the state and work of Angels and of Saints in glory. And he that is angry with me, for calling men to Love, is angry for calling them to *Holiness* to God and *Heaven*. *Holiness* which is against *Love* is a contradiction: It is a deceitful *Name*, which Satan putteth upon *unholiness*. All Church principles which are against Universal *Love*, are against *God*, and *Holiness*,

and

and the Churches *life*. And he that ſaith, he loveth God, and hateth his Brother is a Lyar. To be *holy* without *Love*, is to *ſee* without *light*, to *live* without *life*. He that ſaid, *The wiſdom from above is firſt pure, then peaceable, gentle*, &c. did no more dream of ſeparating them, then of dividing the *head* of a man from his *heart*, to ſave his life: *Jam.* 3. 17. Nor no more than he that ſaid, *Follow Peace with all men, and Holineſs*: *Heb.* 12. 14. No neceſſity can juſtifie ſuch a diviſion: *Holineſs* and *Love* to God, are but two names for one thing. *Love to God* and to *man*, are like *Soul* and *Body*, that are ſeparated no way but by death. *Love* and *Peaceableneſs*, differ but as *Reaſon* and *Reaſoning*: Love may be without *Paſſive Peace* (from others to us,) but never without *Active Peace* (from us to others.)

4. I have had ſo great opportunity in my time, to ſee the working of the myſterie of iniquity, againſt Chriſtian Love, and to ſee in what manner Chriſts Houſe and Kingdome is edified by diviſions, that if I be ignorant after ſuch ſad experience, I muſt be utterly unexcuſable, and of a ſeared Conſcience, and a heart that ſeemeth hardened to perdition. God knoweth how hardly ſin is known in its ſecret root, till men have taſted the bitterneſs of the fruit: Therefore

Therefore he hath permitted the *two Extreams* to ſhew themſelves openly to the world in the effects: And *one* muſt be noted and hated and avoided, as well as the *other*. I thought once that all that talk againſt *Schiſm* and *Sects*, did but vent their malice againſt the beſt Chriſtians, under thoſe names: But ſince then I have ſeen what Love-killing principles have done! I have long ſtood by while Churches have been divided, and ſub-divided; one Congregation of the diviſion labouring to make the other contemptible and odious; and this called, the *Preaching of truth, and the purer worſhiping of God*: I have ſeen this grow up to the height of *Ranters* in horrid Blaſphemies, and then of *Quakers*, in diſdainful pride and ſurlineſs; and into the way of *Seekers*, that were to ſeek for a Miniſtry, a Church, a Scripture, and conſequently a Chriſt. I have many a time heard it break out into more horrid revilings of the beſt Miniſtry and Godlieſt people, than ever I heard from the moſt malignant Drunkard: I have lived to ſee it put to the Queſtion in that which they called, the *little Parliament*, whether all the Miniſters of the Pariſhes of *England* ſhould be put down at once. When *Love* was firſt killed in their own breaſts, by theſe ſame

ſame principles, which I here detect, I have ſeen how confidently the killing of the King, the Rebellious demoliſhing of the Government of the Land, the killing of many Thouſands of their Brethren, the turnings and overturnings of all kinds of Rule, even that which they themſelves ſet up, have been committed, and juſtified, and prophanely fathered upon God. Theſe with much more ſuch fruits of Love-killing principles, and diviſions I have ſeen. And I have ſeen what fierce, cenſorious, proud, unchriſtian tempers they have cauſed or ſignified; In a word, I have long ſeen that *envious wiſdom* (whatever it pretend) *is not from above, but is earthly ſenſual and deviliſh*; and that *where envy and ſtrife is* upon pretence of Religious precedency of wiſdom there is *confuſion and every evil work*, Jam. 3. 15, 16. And if after ſo long, ſo ſad, ſo notorious experience, you would have me ſtill to be tender of the brood of Hell, I mean theſe *Love-deſtroying wayes*, and to ſhew any countenance to that which really hath done all this, you would have me as blind as the *Sodomites*, and as obdurate as *Pharaoh* and his *Egyptians*, and utterly reſolved never to learn the will of God, or to regard either good or evil in the world.

5. The

5. The ſame ſins are continued in without repentance. The ſame *pride* and *ignorance* is ſtill keeping open our diviſions: And if after ſuch warnings, as the world ſcarce ever had the like, we ſhall be ſtill impenitent; if we ſhall ſin our ſelves into ſuffering, and ſin in our ſuffering as we did before, even the very ſame ſin of *Diviſions* which brought us to it; how heinous is our Crime, and how dreadful the Prognoſtick of our greater ruine? And how guilty are thoſe Miniſters of the blood of Souls, that will not tell men of the ſin and danger.

6. I know that *Dividing Principles* and *Diſpoſitions*, do tend directly to the ruine and damnation of thoſe in whom they do prevail. That which killeth *Love*, killeth all grace and holineſs, and killeth Souls: That which quencheth Love, quencheth the Spirit (a thouſand fold more then the reſtraining of our gifts of utterance doth:) That which baniſheth Love, baniſheth God. That which is againſt *Love* is againſt the deſign of Chriſt in our Redemption, and therefore may well be called Antichriſtian: And if the Roman *Kingdom* (for ſo it is rather to be called than *a Church*) had not ſuch *Moral* marks of Antichriſtianity, (which Dr. *More* hath notably opened

in

in his Mysterie of iniquity;) If they were not the Engineers for the *Division* of the Christian world; by a false *Cement*, and by impossible terms of Unity, and by the engine of *tearing dividing impositions*; If among them were not found the blood of the Saints and the Martyrs of Jesus, I should in charity, fear to suspect them of Antichristianity, notwithstanding all the Prophetical passages which seem otherwise to point them out; because I should still suspect my understanding of those Prophecies, when the Law of *Loving my neighbour as my self*, is plain to all.

They are dangerously mistaken that think that Satan hath but one way to mens damnation. There are as many wayes to Hell, as there be to the extinguishing of *Love*. And all tendeth unto this, which tendeth to hide or deny the *Lovelinesse*, that is, the *Goodnesse*, of them whom I must Love: much more that which representeth them as *odious*. And there are many pretenses and wayes to make my Neighbour seem unlovely to me: One doth it as effectually by unjust or unproved accusations of *ungodlinesse*, or saying, Their worship is Antichristian, formal, ridiculous, vain; as another doth by unjust and unproved accusations of Schism, Disobedience or Sedition. And they that love Godlinesse, may be tempted to cast off their love of their Neighbours, yea of the truly Godly, when they once believe that they are ungodly. And the white Devil is a Love-killer as well as the black. He is as mortal an enemy to Love, who backbiteth another, and saith, he is Prophane, or he is an empty formalist, or he is a lukewarm temporizing complying manpleaser] as he that saith [He is a pievish factious Hypocrite.] I am sure he was no Malignant, nor intended to gird at Godlinesse, nor to grieve good men, who told us that it is Satans way to transform himself into an Angel of Light (that is, one that pretendeth to make higher motions for Light and for Religious strictnesse, than Christ himself doth;) and that his Ministers are sent forth by him as *Ministers* of *Righteousnesse*, 2 *Cor.* 11. 14,15,16. who will seem more Righteous, than the Preachers of truth. Satan will pretend to any sort of strictnesse, by which he can but mortifie Love. If you can devise any such strictnesse of opinions, or exactnesse in Church orders, or strictnesse in worship, as will but help to *kill mens love*, and set the Churches in divisions, Satan will be your helper, and will be the strictest and exactest of you all: He will reprove Christ

Christ as a Sabbath-breaker, and as a glutto-nous person, and a Wine-bibber, and a friend (or Companion) of Publicans and Sinners, and as an enemy to *Cæsar*, too.) We are not altogether *ignorant of his wiles*, as young unexperienced Christians are. You think when a wrathful envious heat is kindled in you against men for their faults, that it is certainly a zeal of Gods exciting: But mark whether it have not more *wrath* than *Love* in it: and whether it tend not more to *disgrace* your brother than to *cure* him, or to *make parties* and *divisions*, than to *heal* them: If it be so, if St. *James* be not deceived, you are deceived as to the author of your zeal, *Jam.* 3. 15, 16. and it hath a worse Original than you suspect. It is one of the greatest reasons which maketh me hate Romish Church tyranny, and Religious cruelties against dissenters, because as they come from want of Love, so I am sure that they tend to destroy the Love of those on whom they are inflicted, and to do more hurt to their Souls than to their Bodies. The Devil is not so silly an Angler as to fish with the bare Hook; nor such a Fool as when he would damn men, to intreat them openly to be damned; nor when he would kill mens Love, to intreat them plainly, not to Love but hate their neighbours:

neighbours: But he doth it by making you believe that there is just and necessary cause for it; and that it is your duty, and that you should be lukewarm in the cause of God, of truth, of Godliness; if you did not do it: that so you may go on without scruple, and do so again, and not repent. Even they that killed Christs Apostles, did it as a *duty*, and a part of the service of God, *Joh.* 16. 2. And *Paul* himself did once think *verily that he ought to do many things* which he did, against the *Name* and Cause and Servants of Jesus, *Act.* 26. 9. And as he did, so he was done by; and as he measured to others, it was measured to him again; For they that *bound themselves in an Oath* to *kill him* did deeply interesse *God* and *Conscience* in the cruelty. But believe it, it is Apostacy to fall from Love: your souls dye, when Love dyeth. The opinions, the Church Principles, the sidings, the Practises, which destroy your *love*, destroy your *graces* and your *souls*. You *dye* while you have a name to *live*, and think that you grow apace in Religion. Therefore better understand the Tempter, and when backbiters are deriding or vilifying your neighbours, take it to signifie in plain English [I pray you love not these men, but hate them.] And I have told

you in this Treatise, that when one saith unjustly [*Kill them, banish them*] and another saith [*Have no Communion with them*] it is too often the same inward affection which both express, but in various wayes: They are agreed in the assumption, that their neighbour is *unlovely*.

And when Love is dead, and yet Religion seemeth to survive and to be increased by it, it is lamentable to think what a degenerate, scandalous, hypocritical Religion that will be, and how odious and dishonourable to God. To preach without Love, and to hear without Love, and to pray without Love, and to communicate without Love, to any that differ from your Sect, O what a loathsome Sacrifice is it, to the God of Love? If we must leave our guift at the Altar, till we are reconciled to one offended brother, what a gift is theirs, who are unreconciled to almost all the Churches of Christ? or to multitudes of their Brethren, because they are not of their way? yea, that make their Communion, the very badge and means of their uncharitableness and divisions? Sirs, these are not matters of indifferency, nor to be indulged by any faithful Pastor of the Church.

7. And I know that these principles are as mortal to the *Churches*, as they are to *Souls*. And that if ever the Churches have peace, prosperity or healing, it must be by the means of *Love* and *Concord*, and by destroying the *principles* which would destroy them. One thinketh that it must be by a Spanish Inquisition, and by forcing or killing the dissenters; And another thinketh it must be by Excommunicating them all, and making them odious, and making their own party seem thereby to be better than theirs. But I *know* that it must be by revived *Love*, or it will never be. I *know it*, and whoever is angry with me for it, I cannot choose but know it. When the Papists had murdered so many hundred thousands of the *Albigenses* and *Waldenses*, who would have thought, but they had done their work? When the *French* Massacre had murdered 30000 or 40000, and dispatcht the Leaders of the *Protestant* party, who would have thought that they had but strengthened them? When the Duke *D' Alva* had done so much to drown the Belgick Protestants in blood, he little thought that he was but fortifying them. Queen *Maries* Bishops little thought that their English Bonfires were but to light men to see the mischief of their cause; and like the firing of a Beacon to call all the Land to take them for the Enemies of man-

kind; and that the case would have been so quickly altered. When the Irish had murdered two hundred thousand, they little thought that they had but excited the Survivers to a terrible revenge. I will come no nearer, but you may easily do it your selves. *If we bite and devour one another, we shall be devoured one of another*, Gal. 5.15. The question is, but who shall be *devoured first*, and who reserved for the second course. *If any man have an ear to hear let him hear: He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: He that killeth with the Sword, must be killed with the Sword: Here is the Patience* and *Faith of the Saints.* Rev. 13. 9. 10. God Ruleth the world still when he worketh not miracles! Have we not seen a proud Victorious Army dissolved without a drop of blood? and have we not seen that God approveth not of proud self-exaltation, and violating the Sacred power of our Governours, and usurping their places of Authority: Hath not the drunken world had yet experience enough to teach them, that the Church of God is not to be built up or repaired, by their tumultuous quarrellings and frayes.

How long Lord, must thy Church and Cause, be in the hands of unexperienced furious fools, who know not what Holiness or Healing is, but think that victory over mens Bodies, must be the cure of their Souls, and that hurting them is the way to win their Love! or that a Church is constituted of *Bodies* alone while *Souls* are absent, or no parts! who will make themselves the Rulers of thy Flock in despite of thee and of thy Cause and Servants, without thy call or approbation, and think that the work of a Soldier, is the work of a *Father* and a *Physician*! whose cures are all by amputation; and whose piety consisteth in flying from each other, and esteeming and using their Brethren as their foes; who scatter thy flocks on all the mountains, when Christ hath prayed that they may all be one!

Perhaps, Reader, thou art one of them that thinketh, that the settlement and happiness of the Church, must be won like a game at foot-ball; and therefore scruplest not to toss it in the dirt, and tumultuously to strive with and strike up the heels of all that are against thee, (so that peaceable passengers cannot safely come near your game or pass the streets.) But when you have got the Ball, have you done the work? Are you still so ignorant as not to know, how uncertain still you are to keep it, and that one spurn can take it from you? And

suppose

kind; and that the case would have been so quickly altered. When the Irish had murdered two hundred thousand, they little thought that they had but excited the Survivers to a terrible revenge. I will come no nearer, but you may easily do it your selves. *If we bite and devour one another, we shall be devoured one of another*, Gal. 5.15. The question is, but who shall be *devoured first*, and who reserved for the second course. *If any man have an ear to hear let him hear: He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: He that killeth with the Sword, must be killed with the Sword: Here is the Patience* and *Faith of the Saints.* Rev. 13. 9. 10. God Ruleth the world still when he worketh not miracles! Have we not seen a proud Victorious Army dissolved without a drop of blood? and have we not seen that God approveth not of proud self-exaltation, and violating the Sacred power of our Governours, and usurping their places of Authority: Hath not the drunken world had yet experience enough to teach them, that the Church of God is not to be built up or repaired, by their tumultuous quarrellings and frayes.

How long Lord, must thy Church and Cause, be in the hands of unexperienced furious fools, who know not what Holiness or Healing is, but think that victory over mens Bodies, must be the cure of their Souls, and that hurting them is the way to win their Love! or that a Church is constituted of *Bodies* alone while *Souls* are absent, or no parts! who will make themselves the Rulers of thy Flock in despite of thee and of thy Cause and Servants, without thy call or approbation, and think that the work of a Soldier, is the work of a *Father* and a *Physician*! whose cures are all by amputation; and whose piety consisteth in flying from each other, and esteeming and using their Brethren as their foes; who scatter thy flocks on all the mountains, when Christ hath prayed that they may all be one!

Perhaps, Reader, thou art one of them that thinketh, that the settlement and happiness of the Church, must be won like a game at foot-ball; and therefore scruplest not to toss it in the dirt, and tumultuously to strive with and strike up the heels of all that are against thee, (so that peaceable passengers cannot safely come near your game or pass the streets.) But when you have got the Ball, have you done the work? Are you still so ignorant as not to know, how uncertain still you are to keep it, and that one spurn can take it from you? And

suppose

ſuppoſe you could ſecure all your conqueſts, are the Churches healed ever the more? Mens *hearts* muſt be conquered before this healing work is done. And therefore the Apoſtle ſaith that *we are more than Conquerours*, when we are killed all the *day long* and *accounted* as Sheep to the *ſlaughter*, Rom. 8. 34, 35. that is, it is more gain and honour to our ſelves, to ſuffer in faith and patience by our enemies, than to conquer them in the field; And it is more profitable alſo unto them, and tendeth to a more deſirable conqueſt of them: Becauſe when Conquerors do but exaſperate them; and if we hurt their bodies, we harden them the more againſt our cauſe, and againſt the means of their own Salvation, our patient Martyrdom and ſuffering by them, may tend at laſt to open their eyes, and turn their hearts, and ſave their ſouls, by ſhewing them the *Truth*, the *Goodneſs* and the *Power* of Chriſt, and of his Word and Spirit. This is the meaning of being more than Conquerours. The *Iriſh* are conquered by us, but not converted: The *Scots* and *Engliſh* were conquered by *Cromwell*, but their *hearts* were not conquered, nor their Religion changed by him. They that think that if they could get and keep the upper ground, and have Diſſenters bodies and eſtats

eſtates at their will, they could ſoon ſettle the Church in Unity and Concord, do tell all the world, how ignorant they are of the nature of Chriſtianity, and of the fear of God, and of the *means* of the *peace* and *Concord* of the Church: Either *you* would give up your *own judgments* and *Conſciences*, or *practice* your ſelves to the will of men, if you were in their power, or not. If *you would not*, why ſhould you think that *others* will? If you would, you do but tell the world, that you are Atheiſts, and have neither a God, nor Conſcience, nor Religion. But it is not evidence enough of your folly, to ſay in your hearts there is no God, and to fear them that can but kill the body, more than Him that can puniſh both body and ſoul in hell; but you muſt alſo ſhew that you know neither God nor Man, by thinking that all others are Atheiſts alſo, and judging of them by your ſelves; as if they ſet their *Souls* and their everlaſting hopes, at as baſe a price as you do yours. I tell you again that a Battel or a Foot-ball ſkuffle will not ſettle, the diſcompoſed and divided Churches; unleſs you think that a heap of Carkaſſes ſlain in the field, poſſeſs the quietneſs, and concord which you deſire: The *Soul* is the man, and *Love* is the Chriſtian Life, and the true Cement of

the Churches unity; And Love must cause Love, as fire causeth fire; And hurtful wrath doth most powerfully quench it, and hath these fifteen hundred years,(but especially these thirteen hundred) been the wolvish Scatterer of the flocks of Christ: And must that be now the way to build it, which hath so long been the way to pull it down. It is *Love* that must be our Union, and Love that must cause it, or we shall never have the Union of a Christian Church. By this shall all men know that you are Christs Disciples,if you have Love one to another. If you believe not this,pretend not to believe in Jesus Christ, who doth affirm it.

I confess I am so far guilty of superstition my self, that if I had been one of the Changers of our ancient Government, I should have been somewhat the more backward for his *Name sake* to the beheading of *Christopher Love*, lest it should be an ill *Omen* both to Church and State, but especially to the *Actors* of it.

8. Another of the Motives of this Discourse is, because I know that times of most temptation, are times of greatest danger, and commonly of greatest sin. And all faithful Pastors must know what are the special Temptations of the Time and Place which they live in. When had we ever greater Temptations to Love-killing principles and practices than now, except in the times of the miserable Wars? I need not name them to you. The harder it is for men to Love them that hate them, that censure them unjustly, that revile them, and reproach them, and make them odious, or that hurt them, the more cause have Ministers and all Christians to set a double watch upon their Love; Lest before they are aware, a *flaming* and consuming zeal, do tell others that *they know not what manner of Spirit they are of*, Luk. 9. 55.

9. Yea it is not only a time of great Temptation to this sin,but of *common guilt*: They are multitudes that are overtaken already with this sin. Is not the Land in a continual *heart war?* Are there not parties against parties, and cause against cause, and heart-risings, and passions, and censurings of Dissenters, to say no worse? And is it not time to bring water when we see the flames?

10. And I perceive *few know* so heinous a sin to be any *sin at all*; But all factions and parties are still justifying their Love-killing wayes, and reproaching those whom they have wronged; As if when they have sinfully withdrawn their Love from them, it were

were no crime to take away next, their good names, and all that they have but power to take away. And when they have caſt their brethren out of their *eſtimation* and *affection*, they think it a piece of commendable zeal or juſtice, to caſt them out of Chriſtian communion, and if they could out of the Land and of the world. And ſhall Miniſters ſtand by, and ſee men take ſuch *ſin* for *duty*, and *ſerve God* by abuſing his *Servants*, and look for a *reward* for *dividing* and *pulling down* his Church, and never tell them what they are doing.

11. And the old Non-conformiſts who wrote ſo much againſt ſeparation, were neither *blind* nor *temporizers*. They ſaw the danger on that ſide. Even *Brightman* on *Rev.* that writeth againſt the Prelacy and Ceremonies, ſeverely reprehendeth the ſeparatiſts. Read but the writings of Mr. *John Paget*, Mr. *John Ball*, Mr. *Hilderſham*, Mr. *Bradſhaw*, Mr. *Baine*, Mr. *Rathband*, and many ſuch others againſt the ſeparatiſts of thoſe times, and you may learn that our Light is not *greater*, but *leſs* than theirs, and that we ſee not further into that cauſe than they did; and that change of times doth not change the truth; nor will warrant us to change our Religion, unleſs we will make our Religion ſubject to the wills and intereſts

reſts of men, and change it as oft as the times ſhall change.

12. Laſtly, if your *friends* tell you not of your *faults* and *errours* in *Love*, thoſe whom you account your *enemies* will do it in *wrath*. And though all ſober Chriſtians ſhould learn by the keeneſt rebukes of their Adverſaries, yet paſſion and prejudice maketh it ſo difficult, that it uſually hardeneth men more in their ſin: And this is another thing, which cauſeth me the more to abhor diviſion, and to long for the reconciling of the minds of all diſſenting Chriſtians; Becauſe while they take each other for adverſaries, nothing that is written or ſaid by any is like to do the Adverſaries any good. Nay I muſt confeſs when I ſee an adverſary tell men of their ſin, eſpecially with furious ſpleen and wrath, mixing together words and ſwords, I am greatly afraid, leſt by that temptation, Satan will draw the reproved to impenitency, and greatly harden them in their ſin, and make them glory in that as a virtue, which ſuch a perſon doth ſo reprove.

But if you will neither hear of your ſin nor duty by adverſaries nor friends, by fair ſpeeches nor by foul, you faſten the guilt upon your ſelves. Remember I pray you, that I am not kindling fires, nor drawing

Swords

Swords againſt you, nor ſtirring up any to do you hurt, but only perſwading all diſſenters to love one another, and to forbear but all that is contrary to love. And if ſuch an exhortation and advice ſeem injurious or intollerable to you, the Lord have mercy on your Souls.

III. And now without a ſpirit of Prophecy; I will foretel what entertainment this Paper muſt expect.

1. Some on the one ſide will ſay, It is ſharper and rounder dealing than all this, that muſt cure the Schiſmes in the Church: And if you would heal our Diviſions, why do you not conform your ſelf, but ſtand out as one of the party that divideth?

2. Some on the other ſide will ſay, that it is an unſeaſonable time, when ſo much anger is breaking forth againſt thoſe that we account *Dividers*, to mention their faults, and ſo to ſtir up more. I will give theſe men no other anſwer, than to bid them read the laſt part of this Book; or elſe do not talk till they know of what.

3. And ſome will ſay that I am doing that which will prove a hurt to my ſelf and others. For if I ſhould draw the People to Communion with the Conformiſts, there would little compaſſion be ſhewed to the Miniſters that cannot conform. But ſelfiſh

ſelfiſh wiſdome muſt be ſhut out of the Council, when we are conſulting about the healing of the Churches, and the good of Souls. And indeed there is little danger of this conſequence, as long as the people are far more averſe to Communion or Concord with the Pariſh-Churches, than the Nonconforming Miniſters are. But ſuppoſe it prove true, ſhould we not do good to Souls, and ſave men from ſin, and heal diviſions, at the deareſt rate? What though it coſt us more than is here mentioned; The reviving of decayed Love, and the cloſure of any of the Churches wounds, is a recompence worth our liberties and lives.

4. And thoſe that are moſt guilty of the Love-killing principles here detected, and are moſt eminent in *ſelf-conceited ignorance*, will do by me and by this book, according to their Principles, and as they uſe to do by others. Before they have ſoberly read it over, they will carry about the Sectarian reports of it from hand to hand; And when one hath ſaid it, the reſt will affirm it, that I have clawed with one party, and have girded at the other, and have ſought to make them odious by bringing them under the reproach of Separation, and of cenſuring and avoiding the ungodly; and that being lukewarm my ſelf, and a complyer with ſin, I

would have all others do so too: And that these Reconcilers are neither flesh nor fish, and attempt impossibilities, even to reconcile Light and darkness, Christ and Belial; And that for the sake of Peace we would sell the Truth, and would let in Church corruptions out of an over-eager desire of Agreement: And when they have all done, neither party will regard them, but they shall fare worse than any others; and will lose both sides, whilest they are for neither.] I know it is the nature of the disease which I am curing, to send forth such breath and scents as these; And I intend not to bestow a word to answer them.

5. And some of the wise and sober Ministers, who mark more the inconveniences of one side, than of the other, and look more to *outward occurrences*, than to the *Rule*, and to the inward state of Souls; especially such as have not seen, the times and things that I have seen, will think that though all this be true, it is unseasonable, and may give advantage to such as love not Reformation. And to them I shall return this answer. 1. That if we stay seven years more for a seasonable time, to oppose the radical sin of uncharitableness, we may be in our graves, and the sinners in their graves, and the sin may be multiplied and rooted past all hope of remedy. And why may you not as well stay seven years more, for a seasonable time, to Preach down all other sins as well as this? Is this the least malignant, or least dangerous sin? 2. There was never a more seasonable time to tell men of their sin, than when the temptation to it is the greatest; when it is most growing and multiplying among us; When God hath been so heinously dishonoured by it; when the world doth ring of it; when many Volumes reproach them for it; And when the sensual and ungodly are hardened by it in their scorn of godliness, to the apparent peril of their damnation: yea more, to turn our complaints from our Law-givers upon our selves. It is *want* of *Love*, and it is *Dividing* principles and practices, that have silenced so many Ministers, and brought us into all the confusions and calamities which we see and undergo.

6. But there are many sincere and considerate Ministers, who knowing this, which I say to be true, will be the more excited by it to lead the younger and passionate sort of Religious people, into the wayes of Love and peace, and to save them from the dangers here detected, and perswade them to the practise of these Directions. And for the use of these I write this Book.

And

And yet, to end as I began, I must add these notices, for your right understanding of it.

1. That this is not my first attempt upon this work; but the progress of what I have been upon these three and twenty years. About fifteen or sixteen years ago, I preacht on the third Chapter of Saint *James*, in a larger and a closer manner on this Subject, than here I write: because the times then called me to it.

2. I perswade no Christian to justifie or own the sins or the least defects of any Church, Minister or People, in their Worship or in their lives, though I perswade you to Communion with the Churches, persons and worship-actions, which have many faults: (For on Earth there is no person, Church, or Worship faultless, and without corruption,) I justifie not the faults of my own daily Prayers, and yet I never pray without them.

3. I am not perswading Ministers to any unwise and unseasonable Preaching, against the dividing Principles of the weak, when the necessities of the Auditory more require other Doctrine; (Much less to exasperating railings and invectives; And least of all to wrathful violence). But only with prudence, in season and with Love and gentleness; to lead men into the truth: If even with Infidels and Hereticks, *the Servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle to all men; apt to teach; patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, if God, peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth*, 2 Tim. 2. 24, 25. How much more must the Children of Gods family be used with Love and tenderness. But if the fierceness of any contradict what I say, I only add, that it is not an unexperienced person that speaketh it, but one who through the mercy of God, hath long kept a numerous flock in Love and unity and peace by such like means; and hath seen the lamentable effects of the contrary way.

4. While I say so much in this Treatise against the *rash censuring of others*, I give you not the rule for mens censuring of *themselves*: They know more by themselves: They may search into the depth of their hearts and intentions, which we cannot do. They are allowed to be more suspicious & censorious of themselves, than of any others: It more concerneth them: And they have more to do with themselves; and may be bolder with themselves. We judg others in order to visible Church-Communion by visible and publick evi-

dence. But in order to their preparation for the judgment of God, we must direct them to judge themselves according to the truth in the inward parts.

5. While I draw you to peace and moderation towards others, I desire not to quench the least degree of Christian zeal. Nay I endeavour to kill that which would kill it. The *purified peculiar people of the Redeemer are zealous*, but *of what?* not to consume and destroy one another, nor to hate and flye from one another, nor to vilifie and backbite one another; but they are *zealous of good works*: And *Paul* will tell you what are *good works*, Gal. 5. 22, 23. *Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance*: Be zealous in Loving all Christians as Christians, and all men as men: Be zealous for *Peace: If it be possible, as much as in you lyeth, live peaceably with all men*, Rom. 12. 18. Be zealously patient, gentle, good, meek, temperate. And the works of the flesh are *hatred, variance, emulation, wrath, strife, sedition, hereſies*: A zeal for these is *earthly sensual* and *devilish*, as *James* telleth you. And remember that the word which is translated there [*Envy*] is [*Zeal*] in the Original: But our translators were afraid, lest the prophane would have mistaken it, if

it they had translated it [*Zeal*] ver. 16. *where zeal and strife is* (that is, a *striving* contentious zeal) *there is confusion and every evil work.*] If you believe this, how dare you blame me for writing to save you from *confusion and every evil work?*

6. I will conclude with the repetition of one thing delivered in this Treatise; that among all the rest, two separating dividing principles will never give peace to the Church where they prevail. The one is, the confounding mens *Title* to *visible Church Membership* and *Communion*, with their Title to Justification and Salvation. The other is, the *Imposing of new terms and titles* of Visible membership and Communion; and rejecting the sufficiency of the *terms* and *title* of *Christs appointment*. Christ hath solemnly and purposely made the *Baptismal Covenanting with him*, to be the *terms* and *title* to Church membership and Communion; And the *owning* of this *same Covenant* is the sufficient Title of the adult. And the Imposers that come after, and require another kind of evidence of Conversion, or Sanctification than this, do confound the Church, and enflame the people, and leave no certain way of tryal, but make as various *terms* and *titles*, as there are various degrees of wisdome and Charity,

rity, and various opinions, in the Paſtors (yea in all the people to whom they allow the judgement of ſuch Cauſes) in the ſeveral Churches. In this point, the ſober Anabaptiſts ſeem to come nearer the truth than they.

I add no more, but Chriſts concluſion, that a houſe or Kingdom divided againſt it ſelf cannot ſtand; The Book it ſelf was written near two years ago; but this Preface, *Feb.* 2. 1669.

AN

ABSTRACT OF THE DIRECTIONS.

1. *FOrget not the difference between the younger ſort of Chriſtians, and the Elder. The peril of the Church from young Chriſtians.*

2. *Obſerve the ſecret workings of ſpiritual pride, and how deep rooted and odious a ſin it is, and what ſpecial temptations to it, the younger and emptier ſort of Chriſtians have.*

3. *Overvalue not the Common gift of utterance, nor a high profeſſion, as if grace were appropriated to ſuch alone, who are to be called Profeſſors.*

4. *Affect not to be made eminent and conſpicuous in holineſs, by ſtanding at a further diſtance from common Chriſtians, than God would have you.*

5. *Underſtand the true difference between the Church as Viſible and as Regenerate or myſtical; and the ſeveral qualifications of the Members. What Scandals were in the primitive Churches, in Scripture times.*

6. *Underſtand well the different Conditions and terms of Communion with the Church as myſtical and as viſible, and the different priviledges of the members: that you may not preſume to impoſe any Conditions*

which God hath not imposed, nor unjustly grudge at the presence of those that are not sincere.

7. Get time and deep apprehensions of the necessity and reasons of Christian Unity and Concord; and of the sin and misery of divisions and discord: what Scripture saith herein.

8. When any thing needeth amendment in the Church, the best Christians must be the forwardest to Reform, and the backwardest to divide on that pretence.

9. Forget not the great difference between the Churches casting out the impenitent, and the Godlyes separating from the Church it self, because the wicked are not cast out. The first is a great duty: the second usually a great sin. Luthers case.

10. Expect not that any one lawfully received into the Church by Baptism, should be cast out of it, or denyed the priviledges of the Church, but according to the rules of Christian discipline, by the power of the Keys; that is, for obstinate impenitency in a gross or scandalous sin, upon proof, and after sufficient private and publick admonition.

11. Understand what the Power of the Keys is, and what the Pastors office is; as they are the Governours of the Church, entrusted by Christ with the power of admission and rejection: that so you may know how far you are to rest in the Pastors judgment, and may not usurp any part of their office to your selves.

12. Study well Christs gracious nature and office; and his great readiness to receive the weakest that come to him; that so you may desire a Church discipline agreeable to the Gospel.

13. Yet lest you run into the worse extream, remember still that the destroying of sin, and the sanctifying of man to God, was the work of our Redeemer: And that Holiness and Peace must go together: And that our own Church-order and discipline, must be subservient to the inward spirituality and prosperity of the Church-regenerate; And no such favour must be shewed to sinners as favoureth sin, and hindereth Holiness.

14. Though your Governours are the Judges, what persons shall be of your publick-Church-Communion; yet it is you that must judge who are fit or unfit for your private familiarity.

15. Understand how much it hath pleased God to lay all mens happiness or misery upon their own choice: And seek not to alter this order of God.

16. Though the profession of Christianity which entitleth men to Church-Communion, must be credible; yet remember that there are various degrees of Credibility: And that every Profession which is not proved false, is credible in such a degree as must be accepted by the Church.

17. Know how far it is that either Grace or Gifts are necessary to a Minister, that you may give to both their due.

18. Understand well the necessity of your Communion with all the Universal Church, and wherein it consisteth; and how far it is to be preferred before your Communion with any particular Church.

19. Engage not your selves too far in any divided Sect, and espouse not the interest of any party of Christians, to the neglect or injury of the universal Church, and the Christian Cause.

20. Be very suspicious of your Religious passions, and carefully distinguish between a sound and sinful zeal; least you father your sin on the Spirit of God, and think

think you please him more when you most offend him.

21. Lend not a patient ear to backbiters; nor hastily believe the most religious people, when they speak ill of others.

22. Make not your selves judges of other mens actions; much less of their state, before you have a Call; or before you have sufficient knowledge of the person and of the Case.

23. Mistake not the nature of the sin of Scandal, as if it were the bare displeasing of another: when it is the laying of a stumbling-block or occasion of sinning before another.

24. Make Conscience of Scandalizing one party as well as another: and those most, who are most in danger by your offence.

25. Be not over tender of your reputation with any sort of men on earth: nor too impatient of their displeasure, censures or contempt. But live above them.

26. Use not your selves (needlesly) to the familiar company of that sort of Christians, who use to censure them that are more sober, Catholick and charitable than themselves: Unless you be as much or more, with the soberer sort, who will shew you the sin and mischief of Love-killing principles and divisions.

27. Take heed of misjudging of the answers of your prayers, and of taking those things to be from God, which are but the effects of your prejudice, passion or weakness of understanding.

28. Do not too much reverence the revelations, impulses or most confident opinions of any others upon the account of their sincerity or holiness; but try all judiciously and soberly by the word of God.

29. Take

29. Take heed least the trouble of your own disquieted doubting minds, do become a snare, to draw you to some unsouth way of Cure; and so make the fancy of some new opinion, sect or practice, to seem your remedy, and give you ease; and so perswade you that it is the certain truth.

30 Keep in the rank of a humble disciple or Learner in Christs Church, till you are fit and called to be Teachers your selves,

31. Grow up in the great substantial practical truths and duties; and grow downwards in the roots of a clearer belief of the Word of God, and the life to come: And neither begin too soon with doubtful opinions, nor ever lay too much upon them.

32. Lay not a greater stress upon your different words and manner of prayer, than God hath laid: And take heed of scorning, reproaching or slighting, the words and manner of other mens worship, when it is such as God accepteth from the sincere. Where the Case about forms of prayer is handled.

33. When you are sure that other mens way of worship is sinful; yet make it not any other, or greater sin, than indeed it is; and speak not evil of so much in it as is good: And slander not God as a hater or rejecter of all mens Services which are mixt with infirmities; or as a partial hater of the infirmities of others, and not yours.

34. Think not that all is unlawfully obeyed which is unlawfully commanded.

35. Think not that you are guilty of all the faults of other mens worship with whom you joyn; no not of the Ministers or Congregations: Nor that you are bound to seperate from all the worship which is faultily performed; For then there must be no Church-Communion

upon

upon Earth. Where is more about extemporary prayer and imposed forms.

36. Yet know what Pastors and Church-Communion you may joyn with, and what not: And think not that I am perswading you to make no difference.

37. In your judging of Discipline, reformation, and any means of the Churches good; be sure your eye be upon the true End; and upon the particular Rule; and rest on either of them alone. Take not that for a means which is either contrary to the Word of God; or is in its nature destructive of the end.

38. Neglect not any truth of God; much less renounce it, or deny it. But yet do not take it for your duty to publish all, which you judge to be truth; nor a sin to silence many lesser truths, when the Churches peace and welfare doth require it.

39. Know which are the Great duties of a Christian life, and wherein the nature of true Religion doth consist: And then pretend not any lesser duty, against these greater; though the least when it is indeed a duty, is not to be denyed or neglected.

40. Labour for a sound judgement to know good from evil, least you trouble your selves and others by mistakes: Forsake not the guidance of a judicious Teacher, nor the Company of the agreeing generality of the Godly.

41. Let not the bare fervour of a Preacher, or the loudness of his voice, or affectionate utterance, draw you too far to admire or follow him, without a proportion of solid understanding and judiciousness.

42. Your belief of the necessary Articles of faith, must be made your own, and not taken meerly on the Authority of any. And in all points of belief or practice, which are necessary to Salvation, you must ever keep company with the Universal Church: For it were not the Church, if it erred in those. And in matters of Peace and Concord the major vote must be your guide. In matters of humane obedience your Governours must be your guides. And in matters of high and difficult speculation, the judgment of one man of extraordinary understanding, is to be preferred before the Rulers, and the major Vote.

43. Reject not a good cause, because it is owned by some bad men: And own not a bad cause for the goodness of the Patrons of it. Judge not of the Cause by the persons, when you should judg of the persons by the Cause.

44. Yea, take the bad examples of religious men, to be one of your most perillous temptations. And therefore labour to discover what are the special sins of professours in the age you live in, that you may be specially fortified against them.

45. Desire the highest degree of holiness, and to be free from the Corruptions of the times: But affect not to be odd and singular from ordinary Christians in lawful things.

46. When you have to do only with stigmatized scandalous ones, to vindicate the honour of Christianity from their Scandal, go as far from them as lawfully you can: But with the Common sort of Sinners, whose Conversion you are bound to seek, go not as far from them as you can, but purposely study to come as near them as lawfully you may, that you may have the better advantage to win them to the truth.

47. Whenever you are avoiding any error forget not that there is a contrary extream to be avoided, of which you are not out of danger.

48. Think more, and talk more, of your faults and failings against others; especially against Princes, Magistrates and Pastors, than of their faults and failings against you.

49. Take

49. *Take notice of all the good in others which appeareth; and talk rather of that behind their backs, than of their faults.*

50. *Study the duty of inſtructing and exhorting, more than of reproof and finding faults.*

51. *The more you ſuffer by Rulers or any men, the more be watchful, leſt you be tempted to diſhonour them; or to withdraw or abate the Love which is their due.*

52. *Make Conſcience of heart-revenge, and tongue-revenge, as well as of hand-revenge.*

53. *When you are exaſperated by the hurt which you feel from Magiſtrates, remember alſo the Good which the Church receiveth by them.*

54. *Learn to ſuffer by good people, and by Miniſters, and not only by ungodly people, or by Magiſtrates.*

55. *When you complain of* violence *and* perſecution *in others; take heed leſt the ſame inward voice work in you, by* Church cruelties, *and* damning cenſures, *againſt them or others. Perſecution and ſeparation often have the ſame Cauſe.*

56. *Keep ſtill in your eye, the State of all Chriſts Churches upon earth; that you may know what a people they are through the world, whom Chriſt hath Communion with: and may not ignorantly ſeparate from almoſt all the Church of Chriſt, while you think that you ſeparate but from thoſe about you. Queres about ſeparation.*

57. *Yet let not any here cheat you by the bare names and titles of Unity, to the papal uſurping head of the Church: nor muſt you dream of any Head and Center of Unity to the univerſal Church, but Chriſt himſelf.*

58. *Take heed of ſuperſtition, indifferent meat hath been the uſual beginner of ſuperſtition: Malignity in that age the ſharpeſt oppoſer, for the Authors ſake: Formality in the next age hath made a Religion of it: And then the zealous, who firſt invented it, have turned moſt againſt it, for the ſake of the laſt owners; And thus the world hath turned round. Inſtances lay'd down of the ſuperſtition of Religious people in this age.*

59. *If through the fault of either ſide, or both, you cannot meet together in the ſame aſſemblies; yet keep that Unity in faith, love and practice, which all neighbour Churches ſhould maintain; And uſe not your different aſſemblies to reviling, and deſtroying Love and Peace.*

60. *When the Love-killing ſpirit, either cruel or dividing, is abroad among Chriſtians; be not idle, nor diſcouraged Spectators; nor betray the Churches peace by lazy wiſhes, But make it a great part of your labour and Religion, to revive Love and Peace, and to deſtroy their contraries. And let no cenſures or contempt of any party take you off: But account it as comfortable to be a* Martyr *for* Love & Peace *by* blind Zealots *or* proud Uſurpers; *as for the* faith *by* Infidels *or* Heathens: *And take the pleaſing of God (whoever is diſpleaſed) for your full reward.*

The Additional Directions to the Paſtors.

1. *Let it be our firſt care to know and do our own duty: And when we ſee the peoples weakneſs and diviſions, let us firſt examine and judge our ſelves, and lament and reform our own neglects. Miniſters are the Cauſe of moſt diviſions.*

2. *It is needful to the peoples Edification and Concord, that their Paſtors much excel them, in knowledge and utterance, and alſo in prudence, holineſs, and heavenly mindedneſs: that the reverence of their callings and perſons may be preſerved; and the people taught by their Examples.* 2. In-

3. *Inculcate still the necessary conjunction of Holiness and Peace; and of the Love of God and Man: And that Love is their Holiness it self, and the sum of their Religion; the End of faith, and the fulfilling of the Law. And that as Love to God uniteth us to Him; so Love to man must unite us to each other. And that all doctrine and practices which are against Love and Unity, are against God, against Christ, against the Spirit, against the Church, and against Mankind.*

4. *If others shew their weakness by unwarrantable singularities or divisions, shew not your greater weakness, by impatience, and uncharitable censures or usage of them: especially when self-interest provoketh you.*

5. *Distinguish between them that separate from the Universal Church, or from all the Orthodox and Reformed parts of it; and those who only turn from the Ministery of some one person or sort of persons, without refusing Communion with the rest.*

6. *Distinguish between them who deny the Being of the Ministry and Church from which they separate: and those who remove only for their own Edification, as from a worse or weaker Ministry, & a Church less pure.*

7. *Distinguish between those who hold it simply unlawful to have Communion with you: and those who only hold it unlawful to prefer your assemblies before such as they think to be more pure.*

8. *Remember Christs interest in the weakest of his Servants; and do nothing against them which Christ will not take well.*

9. *Distinguish between weakness of Gifts and of Graces: and remember that many who are weaker in the understanding of Church-orders, may yet be stronger in grace than you.*

10. *Think on the* Common Calamity *of mankind: what strange* disparity *there is in mens understandings, and will be: And how the Church here is a Hospital of diseased souls; of whom none are perfectly healed in this life.*

11. *Distinguish still between those truths and duties, which are or are not of* necessity: *and between the* tolerable *and the* intolerable *errors. And never think of a* Common Unity *and Concord, but upon the terms of* necessary points; *and of the* primitive simplicity; *and the* forbearance *of dissenters in* tolerable *differences.*

12. *Remember that the Pastoral Government is a work of* Light *and* Love: *And what these cannot do, we cannot do. Our great study therefore must be first to* know more *and to* Love more *than the* people; *and then to convince them by cogent evidence of truth; and to cause the* warmth *of our* Love *to be* felt *by them, in all the parts of our ministration and converse: As the warmth of the Mothers milk is needful to the good nutrition of the Child. The History of Martin.*

13. *When you see many evils which Love and evidence will leave uncured; yet do not reject this way, till you have found one that will better do the work, and with fewer inconveniences.*

14. *When you reprove those weak Christians, who are subject to errors, disorders and divisions; reflect not any disgrace upon piety it self: but be the more careful to proclaim the honour of Godliness, and true Conscientious strictness, lest the ungodly take occasion to despise it, by hearing of the faults of such as are accounted the zealousest professors of it.*

15. *Discourage not the people from so much of Religions exercises, in their families, and with one another, as is meet for them in their private stations.*

16. *Be*

16. *Be not wanting in abilities, watchfulness and diligence, to resist Seducers by the evidence of truth; that there may be no need of other weapons: And quench the sparks among the people, before they break out into flames.*

17. *Be not strange to the poor ones of your flocks; but impartial to all; and the servants of all: Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate.*

18. *Spend and be spent for your peoples good, Do all the good that you are able for their bodies, as well as for their souls. And think nothing that you have too dear to win them, that they may see that you are truely fathers to them; and that their welfare is your chiefest care.*

19. *Keep up the reverence of the ancient and experienced sort of Christians; and teach the younger what honour they owe to them that are their Elders in age and grace: For whilest the Elder who are usually sober and peaceable, are duly reverenced, the heat of rash and giddy youth, will be the better kept in order.*

20. *Neither neglect your interest in the Religious persons of your charge, lest you lose your power to do them good; Nor yet be so tender of it, as to depart from sober principles or wayes to please them: Make them not your Rulers; nor follow them into any exorbitancies, to get their love, or to escape any of their censures.*

21. *Let not the Pastors contend among themselves: especially through envy against any whom the people most esteem. A reproof of ignorant, pievish, backbiting, quarrelsome Ministers.*

22. *Study our great pattern of Love and tenderness, meekness and patience: and all those texts which commend these virtues; till they are digested into a nature in you, that healing virtue may go from you, as wasting fire proceedeth from the incendiaries. The Texts recited.*

DIRECTIONS

FOR

VVeak Christians,

How they may escape the troubling, dividing and endangering of the Church by their Errours in Doctrine, Worship, and Church-Communion.

IF we had never been warned by the History of the Sacred Scripture, or of the former Ages of the Church, yet our experience in this present Age is enough to tell both us and our Posterity, how great perturbations, and calamites may come to the Church of Christ, by the miscarriages of the more zealous Professors of Religion! and how great a hinderance such may prove to the prosperity of the Gospel; to the Love and Unity of Christians; to the Reformation, and holy order of the Congregations, and to all those good ends which are desired by themselves. How great a dishonour they may prove to the *Christian name*, and what occasions of hardening the wicked in their contempt of *Godliness*, to their everlasting ruine, and the sufferings of Believers.

Therefore seeing the peace and welfare of the Church, is much more valuable, than the peace and welfare of an individual soul, as I have Directed you how to escape your *own disturbance* and *undoing*, so I think it as necessary to direct you, how to escape being the Plagues and disturbers of the Church, and the instruments of Satan in resisting the Gospel, and destroying others. And you should be the more willing to hear me in this also, because by hurting others you hurt your selves, and by wronging the Church of God, you cross your own desires and ends (if you are Christians indeed;) and by doing good to others, and furthering the cause of Godliness and Christianity, you do good to your selves and further your own Cosolation and Salvation.

DIRECT. I.

First, observe this General direction; see that *you forget not the great difference between Novices and experienced Christians; between the babes and those at full age; between the weak and the strong in grace*: Level them not in your estimation. It is not for nothing that the Spirit of God in Scripture maketh so great a difference between them, as you may read in *Heb.* 5. 11, 12, 13, 14, & 6. 1, 2. 1 *Tim.* 3. 6. 1 *John* 2. 12, 13, 14. There are *babes*, *strong men*, and *fathers* among Christians. There are some that are *dull of hearing*, and have *need* of *milk*, and *are unskilful* in the *word* of *righteousness*, and must be *taught the principles*; and there are others who can digest *strong meat*, *who by reason* of *use*, *have their senses exercised to discern both good* and *evil*. Novices must not be made Pastors of the Church. It is not for nothing that the *Younger* are so often commanded reverence and submission to the *Elder*; and that the Pastors and Governors of the Church, are usually called by the name of *Elders*; because it was supposed that the *elder sort* were the most experienced and wise, and therefore Pastors and Rulers were to be chosen out of them. And why is it that children must so much honour their fathers and mothers, and must be governed by them? It is not meerly because generation giveth the Parents a propriety in their children: For God would not have *folly* to be the governour of *wisdom*, upon pretense of such propriety: But it is also because that it must ordinarily be supposed that Infants are ignorant, and Parents have understanding, and are fit to be their Teachers, as having had *longer time and helps* to learn, and more *experience* to make their knowledge clear and firm. If the young and unexperienced were ordinarily as wise as the aged or mature, why are not children made governors of their Parents, or at least commanded to instruct and teach them, as ordinarily as Parents must do their children? The Lord Jesus himself would be subject to his mother and reputed father in his Child-hood. *Luke* 2. 51. Can there be a livelier conviction of the arrogancy of those novices, who proudly sleight the judgments of their elders, as presuming groundlesly that they are wiser than they? Yea Christ would not enter upon his publick Ministry or Office, till he was *about thirty years* of age. *Luke* 3. 23. He is blind that perceiveth

ceiveth not in this example, a moſt notorious Condemnation of the pride of thoſe that run with the ſhell on their head into the Miniſtery, or that haſten to be Teachers of others, before they have had time or means to *learn*; and that deride or viliſie the judgments of the aged, who differ from their conceits, before they underſtand the things in which they are ſo confident. It was thought a good anſwer, in *John* 9. 21. [*He is of age, ask him*:] But they that are *under age* now think their words to be the wiſeſt, becauſe they are the boldeſt and the fierceſt. The *old* were wont to *bleſs* the young, and now the young deride the old. It is the character of a truculent people *Deut.*28. 50. that *they regard not the perſon of the old*: that is, They reverence not their age. How many vehement commands are there in *Solomons* Proverbs to the younger ſort, to hearken to the counſel of their Parents? The contrary was the ruine of *Eli's* ſons; and the ſhame of *Samuels*, 1 Sam. 8. 1, 5. Was *Rehoboam* unwiſe in forſaking the counſel of the aged, and harkning to the young and raſh? And are thoſe people wiſe that in the Myſteries of Salvation, will prefer the vehement paſſions of a novice, before the well-ſetled judgment of the experienced aged Miniſters? I know that the old are too oft ignorant, and that wiſdom doth not always increaſe with age: But I know withall, that Children are never fit to be the Teachers of the Church; And that old men *may be fooliſh*, but too young men are never wiſe enough for ſo high a work. We are not now conſidering, what *may* fall out rarely as a wonder, but what is ordinarily to be expected.

Moſt

Moſt of the Churches confuſions and divisions, have been cauſed by the younger ſort of Chriſtians: Who are in the heat of their zeal, and the infancy of underſtanding: Who have *affection* enough to make them drive on, but have not *judgement* enough to know the way. None are ſo fierce and raſh in condemning the things and perſons which they underſtand not, and in raiſing clamours againſt all that are wiſer and ſoberer than they. If they once take a thing to be a ſin which is no ſin, or a duty which is no duty, there is no perſon, no Miniſter, no Magiſtrate, who hath age, or wiſdom or piety enough, to ſave them from the injuries of juvenile temerity, if they do not think and ſpeak and do according to their green and raw conceits.

Remember therefore to be always ſenſible of the great diſadvantages of youth, and to preſerve that reverence for experienced age, which God in *nature* as well as in Scripture hath made their due. If *time* & *labour* were not neceſſary to maturity of knowledge, why do you not truſt another with your health, as well as a ſtudyed experienced Phyſician, and with your Eſtates, as well as a ſtudyed Lawyer? And why do not Sea-men truſt any other, to govern the ſhip, as well as an experienced Pilot? Do you not ſee that all men ordinarily are beſt, at that which by long ſtudy they have made their profeſſion.

I know thoſe that I have now to do with will ſay, that *Divinity is not learnt by labour and mens teaching, as other Sciences and Arts are; but by the teaching of the ſpirit of God: and therefore the youngeſt may have as much of it as the eldeſt.*

Anſw. There is ſome *truth* and ſome *falſhood*, and much *confuſion*, in this objection. It is *true* that the ſaving knowledge of Divinity, muſt be taught by the Spirit of God: But it is falſe that *labour* and *humane teaching* are not the means which muſt be uſed by them, who will have the teaching of the ſpirit. And the objection confoundeth, 1. The *ſpirits teaching* us by *inditing the Scripture*, with the *ſpirits teaching* us the *meaning* of the Scripture. 2 And it confoundeth the *common knowledge* of Divinity, with the *ſaving knowledge* of it. No man commeth to a *common knowledge*, fit for a Teacher of others, without the *ſpirits* teaching us by the *Scripture*: For that was the firſt part of the *ſpirits* teaching us, to inſpire the Prophets and Apoſtles to deliver a *teaching Word* to the Church, by *which* we might *all be taught of God* through all generations. But many men have excellent *common knowledge*, by this word, and by the *common* help of the ſpirit, without that *ſpecial* help which begetteth ſaving knowledge. Many propheſied and workt miracles in Chriſts name, who had no *ſaving* knowledge of him, *Mat.* 7. 22, 23. And *Paul rejoyced* that *Chriſt was preached*, even by them that did it of *ſtrife* and *envy*, *to add affliction to his bonds*: Phil. 1. 15, 16, 17, 18. *ſaving* knowledge muſt have a *ſpecial* help of grace; And they which had but *Solomons* knowledge, may by the ſpirit *have ſaving* knowledge in a *little time*, by bringing it to the heart, and making it clear, and lively and effectual. But that may be a means of ſaving others, which ſaveth not the man that hath it. And all knowledge requireth *time* and *labour*, to obtain it, though the Spirit giveth it, and though it

it may be ſanctifyed to us in a little time.

1. Conſider I pray you, why elſe it is, that God hath ſo multiplied commands, to dig for it as for Silver, and ſearch for it as a hidden treaſure: to cry for Knowledge and lift up our voice for underſtanding: to wait at the poſts of wiſdoms doors: to ſearch the Scriptures and meditate in them day and night: Is not this ſuch ſtudy and labour as men uſe, to get underſtanding in other kind of profeſſions? Are not theſe the plain commands of God? and are they not their deceivers who contradict them.

2. Is it not a blaſpheming of Gods ſpirit, to make it the Patron of mens ſloth and idleneſs, under pretenſe of magnifying grace? When ſo many Texts command us diligence, and ſlothfulneſs is ſo great a ſin? And none are ſo forward to preach as theſe ſame men that cry down mens teaching.

3. Why hath God ſetled a Teaching Office in his Church, and commandeth all to attend and hear and learn; if we are taught by the Spirit without mans help? Why were the Apoſtles ſent out into all the world? And why are they commanded to teach all Nations, and to teach the Church all that Chriſt commanded them? and why doth he promiſe to be with them to the end of the world? but that this is the way of the Spirits teaching, to teach thoſe firſt who are our outward teachers, and then to help us to underſtand them? And thoſe are taught of God, who are taught by thoſe who are ſent of God to be their teachers, and have the inward concurrence of his grace.

4. Advise with the experience of all the world who was the man that ever you knew able to expound one Chapter in the Bible, by the inward teaching of the Spirit alone without any labour of his own, or help from others, by voice or writing? Where dwelleth that man who by meer inspiration, can turn one Chapter out of Hebrew or Greek into the vulgar tongue? The first part of our preaching or publishing the Scriptures is by Translating them into a language which is understood. When *Ezra* in his Pulpit of wood, did read the Law and give the sense, the meaning is, that he read it in the ancient Hebrew tongue in which it was written, and turned it into the language which the Jews then used (who were grown much strangers to their ancient speech.) Where is the man that can solidly unfold any Doctrine of Divinity, which he never read or heard of, or can teach that truth, and defend that Religion, which he was never taught by man? He is a stranger in the world who seeth not, that as in Law and Physick and other professions, though some are ignorant even when they are old, yet commonly all men are wisest and ablest in their own profession, and those know most, who having natural capacities have had best help, and longest time, and hardest studies, the Spirit assisting them by his *common help* to make it *Knowledge*, and by his *special grace* to make it a *sanctifying knowledge*. Therefore remember to give due respect to them that have been *longer* in Christ than you, and to them that have *longer studyed* the Scriptures, and to them that have had greater helps and experience: And do not too easily imagine, that those who are below

low them in all these advantages, are yet above them in sound understanding: Though such a wonder may sometime come to pass.

DIRECT. II.

Observe well the secret and subtil workings of spiritual pride, and how deep-rooted and dangerous a sin it is, and what special temptations to this odious sin, the younger and empty-headed Christians have; that the resistance of them may be your daily care.

PRide is the self-idolizing sin: the great rebel against God: the chief part of the Devils image: that one sin which breaketh every commandment: the Heart of the old man: the root and Parent and summary of all other sin: the Antichristian vice, which is most directly contrary to the life of Christ: the principal object of Gods hatred and disdain, and the mark of those whom he delighteth to tread down; and the certain Prognostick of dejection and abasement, either by humbling repentance, or damnation.

It is called [*Spiritual Pride*] from the Object, when men are proud of *spiritual excellencies*, real or supposed. And this is so much worse than Pride of Beauty, apparel, riches, high places, or high birth, as the abuse of great and excellent things, is worse than the abuse of vanities and trifles: and as things spiritual are in themselves

more

more contrary to the nature of pride, and therefore the sin hath the greater enormity.

The common exercise of this Religious or spiritual Pride is first about our *Knowledge*, and secondly about our *Godliness* or *Goodness*.

1 *Pride* of our *understandings*, worketh thus: First, a man that was formerly in darkness, is much affected with the new-come light, and perceiveth that he knoweth much more than he did before: And then he groweth to a carnal and corrupt estimation of it, valuing it more as *Nature* is *pleased* with it, than as it is sanctified by it: Delighting in *knowledge* for it self, more than for the purity, Love and heavenliness which it should effect. Then he looketh about him on the ignorant sort of people, who know not what he knoweth, and seeth how far they are below him: And he thinketh with himself, what a difference hath God made between *Me* and *Them*: And because *Thankfulness* is a duty, he observeth not how *Pride* doth twist it self with it, and creep in under the protection of its name: And how Thankfulness and Pride have the same expressions, and both of them say, *I thank thee O Father that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to babes: I thank thee O God that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this Publican, Luk.* 18. 11. And then he is so taken up with the things which he knoweth, that he perceiveth not what knowledge yet he wanteth. And the deep *affection* which his knowledge worketh in him, or the tickling *pleasure* which he hath in knowing, joyned with this *ignorance* of his

his *ignorance* in other things, doth make him over-confident of all his apprehensions, as if every thing which he imagineth were an absolute certainty: And so he wanteth that humble suspicion of his own understanding, which a true acquaintance with his ignorance would have caused in him: And thus he groweth to *over-value* all his own conceivings; and to under-value all the opinions and reasonings of others, which are contrary to his own: And thence he proceeds to corrupt his Religion with such mis-apprehensions; and his rash unsuspected understanding entertains one errour first, and then *that* lets in many more; till he have espoused a *self-chosen frame* of doctrine, instead of the sacred truths of God, and method of the Gospel: And from hence he proceedeth to choose his Religious exercises also, according to these mis-apprehensions: These make him *Duties* which are no *Duties*, and *sins* which are no *sins*: And thus he calleth *evil, good*, and *good, evil*; and *putteth darkness for light, and light for darkness; bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter.* And having made him a Religion of his own, he confidently thinketh that it is of God: And next he valueth all men that he hath to do with according as they are *nearer* or *farther off*, from this which he accounteth the way of God: He chooseth his *Church* or *party* whom he will joyn with, by the test of this Religion which his pride hath chosen: He zealously declaimeth against the opposers of his way, as against the adversaries of truth and Godliness, and consequently of God himself. He prayeth up his opinions, and preacheth them up, and contendeth for them; and pray-

prayeth and preacheth and disputeth down all that is against them. He laboureth to strengthen the party that is for them, and to weaken that which is against them: And thus he divideth the kingdom and family of Christ; He destroyeth first, the Love of his brother and neighbour in himself, and then laboureth to destroy it in all others, by speaking against those that are not of his way, with contempt and obloquy to represent them as an unlovely sort of men: And if the interest of his cause and party do require it, perhaps he will next destroy their persons: And yet all this is done in zeal of God, and as an acceptable service to him: And they think all are Neuters and Luke-warm, who prosecute not the Schism as fervently as they, and fight not against Love with as much vehemency: Yea and in all this, they are still confident, that they *Love the Brethren* with a *special Love*, and make it the mark that they are Christs disciples, and that they are passed from death to life, because they love the party and persons, who are of their own opinion and way. And thus PRIDE insensibly, while they perceive it not at all, doth choke their Opinions, their Religions, their Parties, and make their Duties and their sins, and rule their judgments, affections and their actions; which is all but the same thing, which the Scripture in one word calleth HERESY. And all that I have said, you may find said in other words in the third Chapter of *James*.

And there are two things which greatly promote this sin: The one is a conceit that all their apprehensions are the *Spirits dictates*, or the effect of

of its illumination. And the works and teachings of the spirit, are not to be contradicted, or suspected, but to be honoured. Therefore they think that it is a resisting of the spirit, to resist their judgments: And they are perswaded that their apprehensions are caused by the spirit, partly because they had no such thing whilest they lived in wickedness, but it came in either with their change or shortly after: And therefore they think that the same light which shewed them their sinful state, doth shew them also all these principles: And partly because they find themselves as *deeply effected* with these misapprehensions, as with other which are sound and right; therefore they are confident that they come from the same spirit: And specially when these thoughts come in upon the reading of the Scripture, or in meditation, or after earnest prayer to God, to teach them by his spirit and lead them into the truth, and not to suffer them to err; and when they find that they have good ends and meanings, and a desire to know the truth; all this perswadeth them that it is the spirit from whom their thoughts proceed; when yet it may be no such thing.

And another much greater and commoner cause of this *self-conceitedness* is this: All mens understandings are naturally imperfect: Our knowledge about *Natural* things is small and dark, much more about things supernatural: The wisest must say, *We know but in part*: And the variety of mens degrees of knowledge, joyned with the difference of their educations, and advantages and fore-going thoughts, doth make as great

great a diverſity of underſtandings as of complexions: And yet it is very hard to any man, to have a ſufficient diſtidence and ſuſpicion of his miſtaking mind. For what a man *knoweth*, he *knoweth* that he *knoweth*. But no man that erreth doth know that he erreth: For that is a contradiction. If I knew that I erred in judgment, I muſt know that the thing is otherwiſe than I judged it to be: which is impoſſible to the ſame underſtanding at the ſame time: For then *judging* were no *judging* as being contrary to knowledge: When I ſee ſuch a difficulty about a point, as to paſs *no judgment* at all, but remain in meer ſuſpence, then I can eaſily perceive that I am ignorant of it: But when I paſs any judgment, I cannot perceive that my judgment is falſe, except it be in the cure of it, and by the ſame light which changeth it: when I err, I can never know that I err, but *in ſenſu diviſo*, when I ceaſe my error: when I know that I erred, I ſo err no longer. And becauſe every thing which appeareth to us, doth appear in ſome kind of light or other, and appeareth in ſome form, and as clothed with ſome qualities, the underſtanding therefore preſently hath ſome thought or other of it: If we take any notice of it, we ſhall have ſome kind of conception and opinion of it: And few things in the world do appear to us in ſuch equal diverſe ſhapes, as to leave the underſtanding wholly dubious, whether it be this or that. Though of that which hath *no appearance* at all, I am wholly ignorant, and have no conception. And when one part of a thing is ſeen, and many other parts of it are unſeen, we are all apt to conceive of the

the whole according to the part which we ſee, and not allow a juſt ſuſpenſion or ſuſpicion for all the parts which are unſeen. That which I ſee, affecteth me as a thing ſeen: But that which *I ſee not*, is *nothing* to me, and therefore affecteth me not at all. That part which *I* know, *I* know *that it is*, & ſo far, *what it is*: It is in my mind & memory: But that part which I know not, I know not *that it is*, or know not *what it is*: ſo that ſeeing *one part* of things, and not ſeeing *another*, (yea perhaps *many* others,) doth not only cauſe our error in judging of them, but alſo maketh it very hard, to queſtion or diſtruſt our judgments: For we muſt not be *Scepticks* and doubt of *all things*: Nor muſt we deny belief to ſo much as is revealed to us: And therefore however at the preſent we apprehend things, juſt ſuch we are uſually confident that they are. And in this difficulty all error and the lamentable conſequences of it do come in.

But what ſhall a man do in ſo hard a ſtreight? Why this every humble man muſt do. He muſt tread ſafely, and proceed warily, and try the ſpirits, and try the doctrines offered him throughly, and this by all the means which God hath appointed him for that uſe. He muſt not ſtrive againſt the light; but he muſt take heed of taking darkneſs for light, or hearkening to the deceiver, when he transformeth himſelf into an angel of light: (which is not unuſual) what cometh with evidence of truth muſt be received as truth, and held faſt, and not again let go; however ſometimes it may have a ſecond and third tryal. And when you ſee any truth, remember that it is ſtill with a defective ſight, and that you ſee but

but in part: And therefore allow a freedome in your underſtandings, to receive the reſt. You are *certain* that you ſee *not all* that is to be ſeen, of any Doctrine or Science, any more than of any creature: And you are uncertain what influence the unknown parts, would have upon that part which you know, or what alteration it would make upon your apprehenſion, if you ſaw them altogether in their connexion. Therefore be ſure that in your moſt confident apprehenſions, you never forget that there is ſtill much more *unknown* to you than you yet know. And this will preſerve a humility and modeſty in your underſtandings and a capacity and fitneſs to receive more knowledge: When the forgetting of this, will make you proud and arrogant and preſumptuous, and like the fool that *rageth* and *is confident*, even in your ignorance and ſhame; and will ſhut up your minds againſt that knowledg which you want.

But eſpecially if you know that your advantages for knowledge have been leſs than other mens: that you are young, or that it is but a few years ſince you entred upon the ſtudy of the Scriptures, or that you have not any ſtronger natural parts than other men; or that you have not had that meaſure of Learning which might further your knowledge of the holy Scriptures; but that others that differ from you have had much more of all theſe helps and means than you; common reaſon here commandeth you to be modeſt, and not over-confident in your own opinion, nor too much to ſlight the judgements of ſuch others.

Eſpecially if thoſe that differ from you, be not only more Learned, but as truly conſcionable as you,

you, and as like to be unfeigned lovers of truth, and have prayed more, and meditated more, and have had more religious experiences than your ſelves: And yet more, if they are the *greater number* of the *godly* that differ from you, and you are ſingular in your conceits; in this caſe raſh confidence in your own opinions, is too palpable a ſign of a religious pride.

Obj. *But the Learneſt men are not always the wiſeſt, in the matters of Religion.* Anſw. Many men are Learned in the Languages and Sciences, who are not Learned in the Scriptures; becauſe they applyed not their ſtudies that way. And many men are Learned in the Scriptures, and the Sacred tongues, who yet live in ſin, though they are able to teach the truth for others. But thoſe that well underſtand the Scriptures, without Learning the Languages which they are written in, and the Cuſtoms of thoſe times and Countreys, or without much reading and long ſtudy both of the Scriptures themſelves, and the writings of them that better underſtand them, are ſo few, ſo very few, if any at all, that if you will pretend to be one of them, you had need of ſome miracle or ſomething like a miracle, to make your ſelves or others believe that you are not deceived. See what I have ſaid of this at large, in my *Unreaſonableneſs of Infidelity.*

Obj. *The greater number are not always in the right; therefore why ſhould my ſingularity diſcourage me?* Anſw. The greater number through the *world* are not in the right about Chriſtiany, for they are not Chriſtians. And the greater number of vulgar Chriſtians be not in the right perhaps

in many points of Learning, and Scholastick controversies, because they are not Learned in such controversies. But all Godly men and Christians are in the right in all points *essential* to *Godliness* and *Christianity*: And therefore they are in the certain way of life. And if in any *integral* or *accidental* point, you think that you are wiser than the greater part, of men as Learned and as Godly as your self, you must give very good proof of it to your self and others, before it is to be believed. I know that in all ages, God giveth some few men more excellent *natural* parts, than others: and he engageth some in deeper and more laborious studies than others: and he blesseth some mens studies more than others: and therefore there are still *some few* who know more, than the rest of the Countrey or of mankind: and it were well for the rest if they knew these and would learn of them: But these are such as come to their knowledge by *hard and laborious studies and meditation*, though also by the *spirit* blessing their endeavours: And they are such as *give proof* of the knowledge which they pretend to: And they are such as *employ* their knowledge to preserve the *peace* and *concord* of believers, and do not proudly make a stir with it, to set up their own names, though thereby they set the world on fire.

Make therefore no more of these vain defences of your Pride: Let no man think of himself and his own understanding above what is meet. I perswade you not to deny any truth which indeed you know, nor to doubt of any thing which is made truly *certain* to you. But value not your understandings above their worth, and fix not too

too rashly upon your first apprehensions; and go not away with a passionate confidence, in your poor, raw, untryed and defective conceptions. But remember that you know but little, and must have time and labour to grow up to the rest. *Be not wise in your own conceits.* Rom. 12. 16. & 11. 25. Prov. 26. 5. & 28. 11. And this is commonly the sin of the *slothful*, that never were at that pains for knowledge, by which it must be attained. The *sluggard is wiser in his own conceit, than seven men that can render a reason*, Prov. 26. 16. You little think when you are conceited of your knowledge, that you are further from wisdom than a fool. Prov. 26. 12. *Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? There is more hope of a fool, than of him. Be not wise in thy own eyes*, Prov. 3. 3. *Wo to them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight.* Isa. 5. 21. *Be not righteous overmuch, neither make thy self over-wise: why shouldst thou destroy thy self?* The self-conceited must become *fools* in their own esteem, if ever they will be wise, as the worldly wise must own that which is folly in the judgment of the world, if ever *they* will be wise: 1 *Cor.* 3. 18.

2. And there is a *Religious Pride* of *Goodness*, as well as of *Knowledge*, which must yet more carefully be avoided, as being yet worse than the former, as the thing abused is much better. And this worketh as subtilly and secretly as the former. It may not only consist with *many complaints* and *confessions* of *sinfulness*, *weakness* and *unworthyness*, but even with *doubts of sincerity* and so much *dejectedness* as seemeth to draw near to desparation. It is an ordinary thing to hear the same persons

talk in a complaining, doubting and almoſt deſpairing manner of ſpeech, and yet to have *high expectations* of *reſpect* from others, and to be moſt *proudly impatient* of the leaſt *undervaluing* or *neglect*. Yea *Pride* will make an *advantage to it ſelf*, of all theſe *humble confeſſions and complaints*: And it is an old obſervation, that many are proud of their *humility*: For though it be true that *Auſtin* ſaith, that *Grace is a thing which no man can uſe amiſs*; the meaning is only, that Grace *efficiently* can do nothing amiſs: (For if it do amiſs ſo far it is not grace:) Yet *objectively* all Grace may be abuſed, that is, a man may make it the object of his Pride, and the occaſion of many other ſins.

And this *Religious Pride* of *Goodneſs*, doth ordinarily work under the pretext of *Thankfullneſs* to God for his grace, and *Zeal* for *Holyneſs*: But it may be known by this, that it always tendeth to lift us up, and to the diminiſhing of Love to others, and to the contempt of the weak, and the cenſuring of our brethren, and the diviſion and diſturbance of the Church of God. They are lamentable effects which this Pride produceth, in the Church and all Societies where it cometh. It maketh all mens Goodneſs ſeem little, except our own: It cauſeth the people to undervalue their Paſtors, and turneth compaſſion of mens weakneſſes into a ſowr contempt: It ſetteth a man in his own conceit, ſo near to God, that he looketh down on other men, as earthly animals in compariſon of himſelf. It maketh new terms of Church-Communion, and teacheth men to make narrower the door of the Church, than God hath made it: It cauſeth men to deny and vilifie Gods grace, in thoſe that anſwer not their expectations: And to think that the Church is not worthy of their Communion: And to think that none are ſo fit as they, to be the Reformers of the Church and of the world.

I intreat thoſe who are in danger of this pernicious ſin, to think with themſelves. 1. What a heynous crime and folly it is for one that but lately was a child of the Devil, and a ſink of ſin, to be proud ſo quickly of their goodneſs: And for one that ſo lately was groaning and weeping with a broken heart for a ſinful life, to be already puffed up with the conceits of godlyneſs. And for one who daily maketh confeſſion to God, of a ſinful heart, and a faulty life, and of great unworthyneſs, to contradict all this by an over-valuing of his own piety; And how incongruous it is for one, who profeſſeth to hope for juſtification by free grace & mercy only, & to have nothing of his own but what's defiled, and who abhorreth the Doctrine of merit, and talketh ſo much of our emptyneſs and inſufficiency, to be yet puffed up with the conceit of his ſpirituality and worth. And what an odious ſelf-contradiction it is, to make your ſelf like the Devil in pride, becauſe you think you are like God in holineſs.

2. And conſider, that the more you are proud of your *Goodneſs*, the leſs you have to be proud of: If this ſin be predominant, it is certain that you have no ſaving grace at all: And what an odious thing and miſerable caſe is it, to be proud of Holyneſs, when you are unholy; and to be damned both for *want* of it, and for being *proud* of it:

That a man ſhould be proud of that, for want of which he muſt ſuffer the fire of Hell! But if your pride be not predominant, yet it is certain that in what meaſure ſoever you have that vice, in that meaſure you are deſtitute of grace: For true grace and pride are as contrary as life and death.

3. And ſtudy well the meaning of all theſe Scriptures (For you ſhall not ſay that I miſ-interpret them to you.) Why was it that Chriſt mentioneth the Parable of the Pharisee, and the Publican? one thanking God that he was not ſo bad as others, and the other thinking himſelf unworthy to look up to heaven. *Luke* 18. 10, 11. &c. Why did he give us the parable of the prodigal who confeſſeth that he was unworthy to be called a Son; and of his elder brother who ſwelled with envy at his entertainment? Why was it that Chriſt ſeemed not ſtrict enough to the Phariſees, in keeping the Sabbath, nor in his Diet, nor in his Company, but they called him a gluttonous perſon and a wine-bibber, and a friend of Publicans and ſinners? Was it not becauſe *their Pride* and ſuperſtition made them think too highly of their own religiouſneſs? and to make ſins and duties which God never made, and then to condemn the innocent for want of this humane religiouſneſs? What was the ſin condemned in *Iſa.* 65. 5. [Which *ſay, ſtand by thy ſelf; come not near to me; for I am holier than thou.*] What meaneth that command in Phil. 2. 3. *Let nothing be done through ſtrife or vain glory; but in lowlineſs of mind, let each eſteem others better than themſelves*] Read this verſe over upon your knees, and beg of God to

to write it on your hearts: And I would wiſh all Aſſemblies of dividers and unwarrantable Separatiſts, to write it over the doors of their meeting places. And joyn with it *Rom.* 12. 10. *Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love, in honour preferring one another* (that is, *before your ſelves.*) But ſpecially read and ſtudy, *Jam.* 3.

In a word, if God would cure the Church of *Religious pride*, the pride of *wiſdom*, and the *pride* of *Piety* and *Goodneſs*, the Church would have fewer *Hereſies* and *contentions*, and have much more peace, and much more *true wiſdom* and *Goodneſs* it ſelf.

DIRECT. III.

Overvalue not the common guift of utterance, nor a high Profeſſion, as if the preſence or abſence of either of them, did prove the preſence or abſence of true ſaving grace.

YET I ſhall anon tell you, that neither of theſe muſt be *undervalued*, nor accounted needleſs uſeleſs things. But the *overvaluing* them, hath cauſed great diſtempers in the minds and affections, and communion and practiſe, of many very well meaning Chriſtians. When God had firſt brought me from among the more ignorant ſort of people, and when I firſt heard religious perſons pray without forms, and ſpeak affectionately and ſeriouſly of ſpiritual and heavenly things, I thought verily that they were *all undoubted*

undoubted Saints; and the ſudden apprehenſion of the difference of their guifts and ſpeech from others, made me think confidently that the one ſort had the mark of God upon them, and the other had nothing almoſt of God at all: Till ere long of thoſe whom I ſo much honoured, one fell off to *ſenſuality* and to *perſecuting formality*, and another fell to the foulеſt *hereſie*; and another to diſturb the Churches peace by turbulent animoſities and diviſions. But the experience of this Kingdom theſe twenty ſixe yeares, hath done ſo much to convince the world what crimes may ſtand with high profeſſions, that *I* know not that *I* ever met with the man, that would deny it: ſeeing every ſect caſteth it upon all the reſt, however ſome of them would juſtifie themſelves. But *I* greatly fear leſt the generation which is now ſpringing up and knew not thoſe men, nor their miſcarriages, will loſe the benefit of theſe dreadful warnings, and ſcarce believe what high profeſſours did turn the proudeſt overturners of all Government; and reſiſters and deſpiſers of miniſtry and holy order in the Churches and the moſt railing Quakers, and the moſt filthy and blaſpheming Ranters; to warn all the world to take heed of being *Proud of ſuperficial guifts and high profeſſions*; and that he that ſtanneth in his own conceit, ſhould take heed leſt he fall.

When guifts of utterance in prayer or talking are thus overvalued and high profeſſions are taken to have more in them than they have, men preſently model their *affections*, and then the *Church* according to theſe miſ-conceivings: And a talkative perſon (who by company and uſe hath got

got more of theſe guifts, than better Chriſtians, ſhall be extolled and admired, when many a humble upright ſoul, that wanteth ſuch utterance, ſhall be ſaid to be *no profeſſor*, and ſo to be unworthy of the Communion of Saints.

Miſtake me not: I know that though profeſſion may be without ſincerity, yet ſincerity cannot be without ſome profeſſion, when there is opportunity to make it: And I know that Grace is a vital principle, and like fire which will work and ſeek a vent if you would reſtrain it: And that Gifts of utterance are great mercies of God for the Edification of the Church. But here lyeth your unhappy errour in this caſe. 1. You take the *common profeſſion* of *Chriſtianity* to be *no profeſſion* at all, becauſe there is wanting a profeſſion of *greater zeal* and forwardneſs. When as the *common ſort* of people in this Land, do profeſs to ſtand to their baptiſmal Covenant, in which they own the eſſential parts of Godlineſs and Chriſtianity, and all that is of abſolute neceſſity to Salvation. He that truly underſtandeth the baptiſmal Covenant, and Conſenteth to it, doth perform all which is neceſſary to a ſtate of grace: If he profeſs this, he profeſſeth, both true faith and repentance, and ſanctification and mortification, and all that is neceſſary to make a man a Chriſtian. How then can you ſay that theſe are no *Profeſſors*? I tell you (except a few Apoſtates) the common ſort of people in this Land are Profeſſors of true faith and godlineſs! Whether they are *true Profeſſors* without diſſembling is another queſtion; but they are *profeſſors* of the *truth*.

If

If you say, that Their ignorance and ungodly lives doth shew that they either understand not the baptismal Covenant, or Consent not to it. I answer, Mark well what you say your selves: For this doth but shew that they are *Hypocrites*: You cannot say then that they are *no Professors*, but that they are *dissembling professors*. They profess the truth, they do not truly and uprightly profess it. I tell you, all the common sort of the people in *England*, are either Saints or Hypocrites: see how I have moved this to them in my Treatise called *The formal Hypocrite*. They all profess enough to save them if they sincerely professed it. He that is baptized and professeth himself a Christian, and yet is a drunkard, a swearer, a fornicator, or such like, is certainly an Hypocrite as going against his own profession: The very Creed, Lords Prayer and Ten Commandments have enough to condemn him as an hypocrite. And will you now come in, and justifie these men from their *hypocrisie*, by saying that they are no *Professors*? If they were no Professors, they could be no *Hypocrites*, but meer Atheists or Infidels. I know that those are the *highest* sort of *Hypocrites*, who counterfeit the highest zeal and piety, by the highest profession: But this is but a difference in *degree*. Who ever professeth to be a Christian, professeth true Repentance, faith and holiness, and is an Hypocrite if he be not a Saint.

And then Consider, that if you would exclude any of these from the Communion of the Church, it must not be because they are *no professors*, but because they are hypocrites, ignorant or scandalous? And if so, then no man must be shut out, but

but upon *sufficient proof*: An unproved hypocrite or sinner, is *no hypocrite* or *sinner* in the judgment of the Church: and therefore Hypocrites are always a great part of the visible Church. Otherwise Church-Communion would be founded on meer injustice and tyranny, if men shall be called Ignorant, Scandalous and Hypocrites without proof. And therefore to exclude baptized professors, by whole Parishes or Multitudes, without bringing proof against each person one by one, is quite to over-turn Christs rules and order, and Church Constitutions and all Church justice. I confess it is the thing which I have long lamented (and often written of especially in my Treatise of *Confirmation*) that those who are baptized in Infancy, are not called to a more explicite understanding profession of the Covenant then made, and have not a more solemn transition into the number of adult Communicants: And we are not out of hope that this may at last be brought to pass. But in the mean time, the *same persons* though *less regularly* do make *profession* of the same thing both at the *Lords Table*, and in their *publick worship*, and in their common *claim* to the faith and honour of Christianity, so that all such must be rejected as hypocrites upon accusation and *proof* of *Impenitency in some gross sin*, and not in the *lump* as if they were *no professors*. For *professors* certainly they are.

And though I abhor their malignity who would vilifie Religion, by over-hasty accusing of higher Professors; and would flatter the wicked and ignorant, by making an indifferency and tepidity seem sufficient in the things of God; yet God would

would have me bear witneſs to this truth to cure ſome mens contrary extream: that as this age as is ſaid, doth need no proof, how heinouſly *high profeſſors* may miſcarry; ſo in the place where I exerciſed my Miniſtry, I found ſome give me a ſatisfying evidence in their laſt ſickneſs, that they had long lived a truly godly life, who were never noted by their Neighbours, for any extraordinary zeal at all. If you ask me, How can it ſtand with grace to be ſo much hid? I anſwer, They made the *common profeſſion* of *Chriſtianity*: they uſually attended the publick worſhip: they lived blameleſly in their places: but they were of ſilent retired diſpoſitions, and were inferiours who by their ſuperiours were reſtrained from *private meetings* and ſome converſe with more zealous perſons which they deſired. And for ought you know there may be very many ſuch; who muſt not be rejected as *no profeſſors*, nor without a particular accuſation and proof: unleſs you would be uſed in the like kind your ſelves.

DIRECT. IV.

Affect not to be made eminent and Conſpicuous in Holineſs, by ſtanding at a further diſtance from theſe lower Profeſſors, than God would have you.

IT is the loathſome ſcab of the Romiſh Church that they who will be taken for *Religious*, muſt go into a Monaſtery of Fryars and Nuns, and ſeparate

parate themſelves from the reſt of Chriſtians, as worldly ſecular people: that ſo their *Religion* may be a *noted thing*, & they may be ſet up in their ſingularity, as publike ſpectacles, for the world to admire: Though perhaps they come thither but under the gripes of Conſcience, to expiate the guilt of whoredome, murder, or ſome notorious ſins, which the contemned ſeculars never committed. And it is ſomewhat eaſie to proud corrupted nature to enter into a life of greater ſelf-denial, than moſt Monaſticks are put upon, when by it they ſhall be thus ſeparated from the reſt of mankind, as a people of more admired holineſs. To ſet our ſelves up in a ſeparated ſociety, as perſons whom the world muſt account more Religious than the common ſort of Chriſtians, hath ſo much oſtentation in it, as is a great allurement to Pride. For many a one who perceiveth how childiſh a thing it is, to ſet out ones ſelf to be obſerved for *fine cloathes*, or for bodily *comelineſs*, or for *high entertainments*, *curioſities*, houſes, lands or ſuch vanities, doth yet think that it is an excellent thing, to be honoured by men, eſpecially by the wiſeſt and the beſt, as a perſon of *Wiſdome*, and *Piety*, and *Goodneſs*. And indeed it is the trueſt and the higheſt Honour to be *Wiſe* and *Good*: And it is exceeding natural to man to deſire honour: And it is lawful to have a due and moderate ſenſe and regard to our honour: And all this being ſo, how eaſie is it for Pride to take this advantage, and to go a little farther, while we think that we go but this far, and keep within our bounds.

And the root of the errour lyeth in *Atheiſm*, *Self-*

Self-fishness, and *Carnality*. By the first, we neglect the *Honouring* of *God*, which should be our utmost aim, and to which all our *own Honour* should be purely referred, as a means: By the second, we *Idolize* our *selves*, and are sunk into, and centered in our *selves*, and seek that honour to our *selves*, which we should wholly refer to God alone. And by the third, we over-value *Man* and his esteem, and live upon the thoughts and breath of mortals, and seek the honour which is given by one to another more than the honour which is of God: Whereas we should make it our grand care and study, to be pleasing to our Maker, which is the highest honour, and lawful and necessary to be sought; and should be more indifferent as to the esteem and thoughts of man, as being no further regardable, than it conduceth to our divine and ultimate end.

And when Pride hath thus turned the eye of the soul, from God, to our *selves*, and to the *Creature*, it is a *working sin*, and will be alwayes seeking to fetch in fewel for its self to feed on, and to find out wayes to make our selves conspicuous and observed in the world: And to separate our selves into distinct societies, that the *world may see* we are *above Communion* with the colder duller sort of Christians, is one of the most notable means to this self-exalting end.

And many Christians that are more humble do yet so much mis-understand the Scripture principles of Communion, that they think they should corrupt the Church, and sin against God, if they stood not in a *separated state* from those of the colder sort. And this is caused much, by taking

taking those Scriptures to speak of all cold and carnal Christians, which speak only of the Heathen and Infidel world. And this cometh to pass by the happiness of their *birth* and *breeding*: because they are born and bred where there are almost none, but professed Christians, and they see not the swarms of Heathens that worship idols and creatures, or of the Infidels who scorn and persecute the Christian name, therefore they live as if there were no such persons. They know that the world and the *Church* comprehend all mankind; and that the *Church* is gathered out of the *World*: And because they *see* the *Church*, but see not the *world*, out of which it is gathered; therefore they are looking for the *world* in the *Church*, and think that the commoner sort of Christians are the *World*; and the better and more zealous sort only are the *Church*, which therefore must be gathered out of the *World*: And so they gather the *Church* out of the *Church*, while they think that they gather it out of the *World*. And all this is because they know no more than they see, or at least are affected with no more; but live as if *England* or *Europe* were all the world. One years abode in *Asia* or *Africa* might cure this errour.

In 2 *Cor.* 6. 12, 13, *&c.* the Apostle forbiddeth the Christians to marry with Infidels; because *light hath no communion with darkness, nor righteousness with unrighteousness, nor Christ with Belial.* And therefore inferreth, that he that *believeth hath no part with an Infidel, nor the Temple of God any any agreement with Idols.* And for this he citeth the words of the Prophet, *Come*

out

out from among them, and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing. All these words which the Apostle so plainly speaketh only against marrying with Infidels and Idolaters, and having communion with them, either *intimately* or in their *sin*, are by abundance of ignorant Professors abused, as if they had commanded us to separate from the colder and common sort of Christians, and to *come out* of the *Church* whereof they are members. What profaning of Gods word is this? and how gross and palpable a contradicting of its plain expressions? It was a Church of such mixed Christians as our Churches do consist of, to which the Apostle wrote those words; And because he commandeth them to separate from intimacy with *Heathens* and *Infidels* (yet so as when they are once married to them, to continue in it); therefore these men say, that one part of the Church is called to come forth and separate from the rest.

And with the like abuse they apply the command [*Come out of Babylon*] to them that have no communion with *Babylon*; And when *ignorance*, *uncharitableness*, and *passion*, have taught them to call Christs Churches *Babylon*, they add sin to sin, the sin of separation to the sin of slander and reproach; and abuse the Text according to their false exposition of it.

DIRECT.

DIRECT. V.

Understand rightly the true difference between the Mystical and the Visible Church, and the qualification of their Members; and do not confound them, as if it were the same persons only, that must be Members of both.

THE Mystical Church indeed hath none but true Saints. But the *Visible Church* containeth multitudes of *Hypocrites*; who profess themselves to be what they are not: They profess to believe in God, while they neglect him; and to be ruled by God, while they disobey him, and are ruled by their lusts: They profess to love God and forsake the world, whilest they love the world, and God is not in all their thoughts: They profess to love the holy Scriptures, whilest they neglect them and love not the holiness of their precepts. They profess to believe in Jesus Christ, whilest their hearts neglect his grace and government. They profess to believe in the holy Spirit, and to hold the Communion of Saints in the Catholick Church; whilest they resist the Spirit, and love not Saints. All this sheweth that they are *Hypocrites*. But abundance of Hypocrites are in the Visible Church. Nay, God would have no Hypocrites cast out, but those who bewray their hypocrisie by impenitency in proved Heresie or gross sin.

We must not model the Church of Christ according

cording to our private fancies: We are not the Lords of it, nor are we fit or worthy to dispose of it! Look into the Scripture, and take it for the Rule, and see there of what manner of persons the Visible Church hath been constituted in all ages of the world till now. In the first Church in *Adams* family, a *Cain*, was the first born member, and so continued, till he was excommunicated for the murder of his brother. In a Church of eight persons who were saved out of all the world, the Father and Pastor was overtaken with gross drunkenness, and one of his sons was a cursed *Cham*. In a Church of six persons saved from the wickedness of *Sodom*, two of them (*Lot*'s sons in law) perished in the flames among the unbelievers: a third was turned into a pillar of salt: the Father and Pastor was drunk two nights together, after the sight of such a terrible miracle, and after so strange a deliverance to himself: and committed incest twice in his drunkenness: The two that remained (his daughters) caused his drunkenness purposely and committed incest with him. In the Church in *Abrahams* family, there was an *Ishmael*: And in the Church in *Isaacs* family there was an *Esau*: and even *Rebeka* and *Jacob* guilty of deceitful equivocation: And *Abraham* and *Isaac* denied their wives to save themselves in their unbelief. In *Jacob*'s family was a *Simeon* and *Levi*, who murdered multitudes under a pretense of Religion, and under the cover of false deceit: And almost all his sons moved with envy, sold their brother *Joseph* for a slave; and some were hardly kept from murdering him: And his daughter *Dinah* was defiled

filed by desiring to see the company and fashions of the world. In the Church of the *Israelites* in the Wilderness, after all the miracles which they had seen, and the mercies they had received, so great were their sins of unbelief and murmuring, and lust, and whoredomes, and idolatry, and disobedience, that but two of them that came out of *Egypt*, were permitted to enter the promised land: In the times of the Judges they so oft renewed their idolatry, besides all their other sins, that they spent a great part of all those ages in captivity for it. And when the villanies of *Gibeah* had imitated the *Sodomites*, and ravished a woman to death, the Tribe of the *Benjamites* defended it by a war, and that in three battels, till fourty thousand of the innocent *Israelites* were slain, and twenty five thousand of the *Benjamites*. Look through all the Books of *Samuel*, the *Kings*, and *Chronicles*, and the *Prophets*; from the sad story of the sons of *Eli* and of *Samuel*, to all the wicked Kings that followed, who kept up odious Idolatry (even *Solomon* himself) and scarce two or three of the best did put down the high places: And when *Hezekiah* was zealous to reform, the hearts of the subjects were not prepared, but derided or abused the Messengers whom he sent about, to call the people home to God: *Manasseh*'s wickedness is scarcely to be parallel'd: And when God sent his Prophets to call them to repentance, they mocked his Messengers, and despised and abused his Prophets, till the wrath of the Lord arose, and there was no remedy: 2 *Chron.* 36. 15, 16. Read over the Prophets, and see there what a people this *Church*

of God was. The ten Tribes were drawn by *Jeroboam* to sin, by setting up Calves at *Dan* and *Beth-el*, and making Priests of the vilest of the people, and forsaking the Temple and the true worship of God, and the lawful Priests. And these lawful Priests at *Jerusalem*, were ravening Wolves, and greedy Dogs, and careless and cruel Shepherds: The false Prophets who deceived the people were most accepted: The people are accused of cruelty, oppression, whoredom, drunkenness, Idolatry, and hatred of those that would reform them. They were grievous persecutors: *Which of the Prophets did not your fathers kill and persecute?* saith Christ, *Matth.* 23. Yet this was the Church of God, and many think his *only visible Church*: And all these twelve Tribes were not so big as *England*, and were to the bigness of all the Earth, no more than one tree to a large Wood or Forrest.

But doubtless the Gospel Church was both more large and pure. Let us therefore take a view of it: And I beseech you remember, that what I say is not to make sin less odious, nor the Church or Godly less esteemed: but to shew you the frame of the *visible Church* in all Generations, and how it differeth from the *invisible*; lest you should take on you to be wiser than God, and to build his house after a better rule than his Gospel, and the primitive pattern, and marr all by being wise in your own conceits, and by being righteous overmuch. *Eccles.* 7. And I pray you forget not, that the *Primitive Church* was the *most pure*, and the *pattern* of these following; and had *inspired Apostles* to be its *Guides*, and *inspired Pro-*

phets to be its *Helpers*, and abundance of *Miracles* and extraordinary gifts, to *gather* and *edifie* it; to silence its enemies, and to terrifie and restrain offenders, and to bring up the Church to the highest degree of holiness that could be well expected. And withall, the Members were not *driven in by force* by Magistrates, nor *allured* by any *worldly commodities*, but were a *few Volunteers*, who in a time of persecution, professed Christ, to their hazard or suffering in the world. Yet see what they were.

The faultiness of the Teachers.

The Apostles before the death of Christ, though they had so long heard his doctrine, and seen his miracles, understood not that he must die for our sins, and be buried, and rise again, and ascend into Heaven, and there intercede for us, and rule the Church. *Joh.* 12. 16. and 10. 6. *Luk.* 18. 34. and 9. 45. and 24. 43, 44, 45. *Peter* so much perswaded Christ from that suffering by which the world was to be redeemed, that Christ speaketh to him as he did to the Devil. *Matth.* 4. *Get thee behind me Satan; for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.* *Matth.* 16. 22, 23. *James* and his beloved disciple *John* (called sons of thunder, perhaps for this or such like zeal) would have called *for fire from heaven* to destroy the unbelieving adversaries of the Gospel, and knew not of what spirit they were. *Judas* was one that was sent out to preach the Gospel by Christ himself, (who knew his heart,) Many that preached and prophesied, and cast out Devils in his name, were workers of iniquity, whom he never knew with

special approbation. *Matth.* 7. 22, 23. When he came to his sufferings, they all slept when they should have watched and prayed with him one hour in his agony; and this after his admonition. When they should have confessed him in suffering they all *forsook him and fled, Matth.* 26. 56. And *Peter* that seemed to stick closer to him, did with forswearing thrice deny him, after he had promised to die with him, and not to forsake him, though all forsook him: And when he was dead they said, *Luk.* 24. *We trusted this was he that should have delivered Israel*, as if their faith had been extinct. And when he rose and appeared to them they hardly believed what they saw: and *Thomas*, one of them, resolved that he would not believe, unless he might put his fingers into his side. And when they spake with him before his *Ascension*, they dreamed still of an earthly grandure, and askt him, *Whether now he would restore the Kingdome unto* Israel? *Act.* 1. And they understood not the descent of the Holy Ghost.

And when the Holy Ghost was come upon them, one of their first Deacons *Nicholas*, was the original of a Sect whose doctrine Christ did hate. *Paul* and *Barnabas* contended even to parting. *Peter* dissembled by a sinful separation, walking not uprightly, and drew away *Barnabas* into the dissimulation: *Gal.* 2. *Phil.* 1. 15, 16. [*Some preach Christ even of envy, and strife, and some of good will. The one preach Christ of contention not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds.*] Many were made like the heads of Sects, and some were of *Paul*, and some of *Apollo's*, and some of *Cephas* (as the Papists be now.) And some built

built hay and stubble, which must be consumed. 1 *Cor.* 3. 12. Of *Timothy* and the rest *Paul* saith, [*I have no man like-minded; for all seek their own, and not the things which are Jesus Christs.*] 3 Joh. 9. 10. Diotrephes *who loveth to have the preeminence among them receiveth us not, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the Brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the Church.*] As the Apostles themselves before Christs death, were striving which of them should be the greatest; so this vice still followed many of the Pastors; so that *Peter* is fain to exhort them, not to *Lord it over Gods heritage, nor to rule them by constraint, but willingly.* 1 *Pet.* 5. And what an burdance of Sect-masters did arise from among the Ministers of the Gospel in the Apostles own times? Insomuch as *Paul* forewarneth the famous Church of *Ephesus*, not only that *grievous Wolves* (that is, Hereticks) *should enter, that spared not the flocks*, but also that, *of their own selves men should arise, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them. Act.* 20. 30. And in the Apostles dayes, while *one had a Prophesie and another a Psalm, &c.* they brought confusion into the Church-worship, even by abuse of extraordinary gifts: And they so abused the *Love-feasts* at the Lords Supper, that *Paul* was fain to perswade them rather to eat at home. 1 *Cor.* 14. and 1 *Cor.* 11. so much of the true state of the Primitive Teachers and Pastors of the Church.

The faults of the Church of *Rome*.

What Heretical Judaizers were among them, is intimated in *c* 1. & 3. to the *Romans*. And how little

little they understood the doctrine of Justification is intimated in *cap.* 3, & 4, & 5, & 6, & 7, & 8. What dissentions there were about meats, and drinks, and days, the weak judging the strong, and the strong despising the weak, appeareth, *cap.* 14, & 15. And some caused *divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which they had learned, serving not the Lord Jesus but their own bellies, and by good words and fair speeches deceiving the hearts of the simple,* Rom. 16. 16, 17.

The faults of the Church of *Corinth.*

1 Cor. 1. 11, 12. [*There are contentions among you — Every one of you saith, I am of* Paul; *and I of* Apollo's, *and I of* Cephas, *and I of* Christ. Mark the extent of the sin (*every one of you*) that is, very many among you, 1 Cor. 3. 13. *I could not speak to you as spiritual, but as carnal — For ye are yet carnal —* v. 12. *If any build on this foundation, wood, hay, stubble, —* v. 15. *he shall suffer loss.* chap. 4. 18. 21. *Some are puffed up — Shall I come to you with a rod or in love? —* chap. 6. 5, 6, 7, 8. *I speak to your shame, Is there not a wise man among you? Because you go to Law one with another (before Heathens,) Nay you do wrong and defraud, and that your brethren. Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdome of God? —* chap. 11. 17, 18, 19, 20, 21. *I praise you not that you come together, not for the better but for the worse. For first of all, when you come together in the Church. I hear that that there be divisions among you — For there must be also Heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you — When you come together into one place, this is not to eat the Lords Supper: For in eating every one taketh before other, his*

his own supper, and one is hungry, and another is drunken. Vers. 23. 30. *He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lords body — For this cause many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep.* Chap. 14. Reproveth their abuse of unknown tongues, and their disorder in Gods publike worship — Chap. 15. 12, 13, 14, 15. [*If Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you, that there is no resurrection. But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen; And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is vain; yea and we are found false witnesses of God —* v. 17. *and ye are yet in your sins.* 2 Cor. 12. 20, 21. *I fear lest when I come, I shall not finde you such as I would, and that I shall be found to you such as ye would not. Lest there be debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, back-bitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults; and lest my God will humble me among you, and that I shall bewail many that have sinned already, and have not repented of the uncleanness and fornication and lasciviousness which they have committed.*] Besides that *Paul* and his Ministry was slandered and much slighted among them, as by his large and vehement apologies and expostulations doth appear; These were the faults of the Church of the *Corinthians.*

The corruptions of the Churches of *Galatia.*

Gal. 1. 6, 7, 8, 9. *I marvel that you are so soon removed, from him that called you, to the grace of Christ, to another Gospel; which is not another; but there are some that trouble you, and would pervert the Gospel of Christ:* But though *we or an Angel from heaven,*

heaven, preach any other Gospel to you, than that which we have preached to you, let him be accursed— Chap. 3. 1, 2, 3. *O foolish* Galathians! *Who hath bewitched you, that you should not obey the truth? before whose eyes — Are ye so foolish? Having begun in the spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? Have ye suffered so many things in vain* — chap. 4. 9. *How turn ye again to weak and beggarly elements, whereto ye desire again to be in bondage.* verse. 10. 11. *Ye observe dayes, and moneths, and times, and years; I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed on you labour in vain* — v. 16. *Am I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth? Tell me, ye that desire to be under the Law* — v. 29. *As then, he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the spirit, even so it is now* (The Legalists persecuting the Apostles) Chap. 5. 2. *Behold I* Paul *say unto you, that if ye be circumcised Christ shall profit you nothing.* V. 3, 4. *For I testifie again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole Law: Christ is become of no effect to you. Who ever of you are justified by the Law, ye are fallen from grace:* v. 9. *A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.* 12. *I would they were even cut off which trouble you.* Chap. 6. 12. *As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised.*

The corruptions of the Church of *Colosse.*

Col. 2. 20, 21, 22, 23. *If ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances? Touch not, taste not, handle not (which all are to perish with the using) after the Commandements and Doctrines of men? Which things have indeed a shew of wisdome in will-worship.*

The

The corruptions of the Church of *Ephesus.*

Rev. 2. 4, 5. *Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love — Remember from whence thou art fallen, and do thy first works, or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy Candlestick.* Act. 20. 30. *Of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, &c.* as aforesaid.

The corruptions of the Church of *Pergamus.*

Rev. 2. 14, 15, 16. *I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of* Balaam, *who taught* Balac *to cast a stumbling block before the children of* Israel; *to eat things sacrificed to Idols; and to commit fornication: so hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the* Nicolaitans, *which thing I hate — Repent, or else I will* —

The faults of the Church of *Thyatira.*

Rev. 2. 20, 21, 22, *I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest the woman* Jezebel, *which calleth her self a Prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed to Idols.*

The faults of the Church of *Sardis.*

Rev. 3. 1. *Thou hast a name that thou livest and art dead — I have not found thy works perfect before God.* 4 *Thou hast a few names even in* Sardis, *which have not defiled their garments.*

The faults of the Church of *Laodicea.*

Rev. 3. 15, 16, 17. *Thou art neither cold nor hot — I will spue thee out of my mouth — and knowest not that thou art wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked.*

I have been thus large in citing the words of the Text, to make it plain to you, of what kind

of

heaven, preach any other Gospel to you, than that which we have preached to you, let him be accursed. — *Chap. 3. 1, 2, 3. O foolish* Galathians! *Who hath bewitched you, that you should not obey the truth? before whose eyes* — *Are ye so foolish? Having begun in the spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? Have ye suffered so many things in vain* — chap. 4. 9. *How turn ye again to weak and beggarly elements, whereto ye desire again to be in bondage.* verf. 10, 11. *Ye observe dayes, and moneths, and times, and years; I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed on you labour in vain* — v. 16. *Am I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth? Tell me, ye that desire to be under the Law* — v. 29. *As then, he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the spirit, even so it is now* (The Legalists persecuting the Apostles) *Chap. 5. 2. Behold I* Paul *say unto you, that if ye be circumcised Christ shall profit you nothing. V. 3, 4. For I testifie again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole Law. Christ is become of no effect to you. Who ever of you are justified by the Law, ye are fallen from grace. v. 9. A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. 12. I would they were even cut off which trouble you. Chap. 6. 12. As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised.*

The corruptions of the Church of *Colosse.*

Col. 2. 20, 21, 22, 23. *If ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances? Touch not, taste not, handle not (which all are to perish with the using) after the Commandements and Doctrines of men? Which things have indeed a shew of wisdome in will-worship.*

The

The corruptions of the Church of *Ephesus.*

Rev. 2. 4, 5. *Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love — Remember from whence thou art fallen, and do thy first works, or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy Candlestick.* **Act. 20. 30.** *Of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, &c.* as aforesaid.

The corruptions of the Church of *Pergamus.*

Rev. 2. 14, 15, 16. *I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of* Balaam, *who taught* Balac *to cast a stumbling block before the children of* Israel; *to eat things sacrificed to Idols; and to commit fornication: so hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the* Nicolaitans, *which thing I hate — Repent, or else I will —*

The faults of the Church of *Thyatira.*

Rev. 2. 20, 21, 22, *I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest the woman* Jezebel, *which calleth her self a Propheteſs, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed to Idols.*

The faults of the Church of *Sardis.*

Rev. 3. 1. *Thou hast a name that thou livest and art dead — I have not found thy works perfect before God. 4 Thou hast a few names even in* Sardis, *which have not defiled their garments.*

The faults of the Church of *Laodicea.*

Rev. 3. 15, 16, 17. *Thou art neither cold nor hot — I will spue thee out of my mouth — and knowest not that thou art wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked.*

I have been thus large in citing the words of the Text, to make it plain to you, of what kind

of

of Members the Visible Churches were then made up: And to affect their hearts with the sense of their partiality, who can plead for many things as duties, and plead against many things as sin, without one plain word of Scripture on their side; and yet can read all these without either sense or notice.

Yet mark, I pray you, that I am far from saying that God *alloweth* any of these sins, or that any should make light of them: For all must abhor them: Nor do I say, that none of the *Churches ought* to have excommunicated any of these offenders for these sins. Some of them I doubt not, should have been cast out. But these are the uses which I desire you to make of all these Texts.

First, before you judge any Church to be no *Church*, be able to prove it hath worse crimes to nullifie it than any of these had. For none of these were for these faults pronounced *no Churches of Jesus Christ*.

Secondly, observe that no one Member, is in all these Scriptures, or any other, commanded to *come out and separate* from any one of all these Churches, as if their communion in worship were unlawful. And therefore before you *separate* from any as judging communion with them unlawful, be sure that you bring greater reasons for it, than any of these recited were.

DIRECT.

DIRECT. VI.

Understand well the different conditions and terms of Communion with the Church as invisible and as visible; and the different priviledges of the Members; that so you may not presume to impose any conditions which God hath not imposed; nor yet to grudge at the reception of those that are not sanctified and sincere.

ALL Christians are agreed that it belongeth to God only to make the conditions of Church-communion; and therefore it belongeth not to us to invent them, nor to our wit to censure what God hath done, but to search the Scripture till we find it out, and then obey it. This is the great controversie which hath troubled the Church: When men know not who should be Members of the Church and who not, and when they have no certain rule or character to know whom they must receive, it is no wonder if confusion and contention be the complexion and practice of such Churches. And here the Pastors have torn the Church, by running into contrary extreams. Some have thought that the Visible Church must be constituted only of such persons as satisfie the Pastors and the people of the truth of their sanctification, by some special account of their conversion or the work of grace upon their hearts, in a distincter manner than

than the ancient Church required of the baptized: Wherein being agreed of no certain terms, to know anothers ſanctification by, their Churches are diverſified according to the meaſure of the ſtrictneſs or largeneſs, cenſoriouſneſs or charity of the Paſtors & the people; while one thinks that perſon to have true grace, whom another thinks to have none. And ſo they that will be *moſt uncharitable*, do pretend to the reputation of being the *moſt pure*; becauſe they are *moſt ſtrict*: And multitudes are ſhut out whom Chriſt would have to be received, & his *children* are numbred with the *dogs*.

On the other ſide there is one or two of late among us, who think that the Church is but *Chriſts School*, where he *teacheth the way* to true Regeneration; and not a *Society of profeſſed Regenerate ones* or *Saints*: And that all who own Chriſt as the *Teacher* of the Church, and ſubmit to the *Government of the Paſtors*, and are willing to learn how to be regenerate, ſhould be baptized, though they profeſs not any *ſpecial ſaving faith or repentance*. And their reaſons are, becauſe firſt, eſſe all that doubt of their ſincerity muſt *lie*, or be kept out. Secondly, becauſe that in the Church of the Jews, the multitude were ſuch as were *openly ungodly*. And ſome of the Papiſts talk alſo at this rate, though indeed they are themſelves yet utterly unreſolved in this point.

What Church ſoever is conſtituted according to either of theſe *two opinions*, will not be conſtituted according to the mind of Chriſt: But yet with this difference: The firſt Opinion introduceth Church-*tyranny*, and *injuſtice*, and is founded in the want of *Chriſtian charity*, and *knowledge*, and tendeth to endleſs ſeparations and confuſions. But the ſecond opinion inferreth all theſe greater miſchiefs.

Firſt, it confoundeth the *Catechumens* with the *Chriſtians*, and maketh all *Chriſtians* who are but willing to learn to be Chriſtians. Secondly, it maketh the Chriſtian Church to conſiſt of ſuch as *are no Chriſtians*: As that perſon certainly is not, who conſenteth not that Chriſt be his Teacher, Prieſt and King: For to ſuch a one, he is *no Chriſt*; ſeeing theſe are the eſſential parts of his *Mediatory office*. And the new device of diſtinguiſhing *Chriſts Apoſtolike* and *Mediatory offices*; & ſo the *Church congregate* and the *Church regenerate* accordingly, will not ſeem to defend this conceit. For as Chriſt is not *divided*, ſo his office for which he is called *Chriſt* is but *One*, which entirely is called the office of a *Saviour*, or *Redeemer*, or *Mediator*, which are all one; And the eſſential parts of it are, firſt his Prieſtly, ſecond Teaching and Ruling offices or works: And this which is called his *Apoſtleſhip*, is but the ſame which is called his *Teaching* or *Prophetical Office*, and is a part of his *Mediatory* or *ſaving Office*. And he is *no Chriſtian*, nor is that any *Congregated Chriſtian Church*, which profeſſeth not to take Chriſt for his *Mediator* his *Prieſt* and *King*, as well as for an *Apoſtle a Prophet* or *Teacher*. Thirdly, they therefore who hold the aforeſaid doctrine, do introduce a new ſort of Chriſtianity. Fourthly, and a new ſort of Baptiſm, which the Church of Chriſt never knew to this day. And therefore they do ingenuouſly profeſs their diſſent from our form or words in Baptiſm, becauſe we put the baptized to renounce the

the flesh the world and the devil, and to use such covenanting words as must signifie special grace. But through the great mercy of God, Baptism is still the same thing in all the Christian Churches in the world, the Reformed, the *Roman*, the *Greek*, the *Armenian*, yea and the *Ethiopian* too, for all their seeming reiteration of it. And Baptism among them all, is the same now as it hath been in all Generations, from Christs institution of it. So that we fully maintain as well as the *Romans*, that Christianity hath by *this sacred Tradition* been safely delivered down to us to this day. What a Christian is, and what Christianity is, may be most certainly known, by this which is commonly called our *Christening*; In which the profession and covenant which maketh men Christians is so express and unchanged from age to age. Therefore these men who would have our Baptism changed, do speak plainly, but impudently; as if they were raised in the end of the world, to reform the Baptism and Christianity of all ages, and were not only wiser than the universal Church from Christ till now, but also at last must make the Church another thing. I intreat the Reader who would know the judgement of all antiquity about Baptism, as supposing saving grace, to read those numerous citations of Mr. *Gataker* in the Margin of his book against *Davenant*, of Baptism. Fifthly, and by this new doctrine they destroy all that *special Love* which Church-members or visible Christians as such, should bear to one another. For if no *faith* or *consent* must necessarily be professed at Baptism, but that which is *common* to the *ungodly and*

and children of the devil, then *all Church-members as only such*, must be taken to be but ungodly, and no man must love a Church-member as such, with a special love, as a visible Saint; but only as one of the hopefuller sort of the ungodly. Sixthly, and hence it will follow, that either *none* must make *any profession* of *saving Faith* and *Repentance* (and so all appearance of holiness must be driven out of the world) or else the Church must be constituted of two sorts of professions and professours, *tota specie* distinct from one another; yea more distinct than Infidels are from their new sort of Christians. And consequently it must needs be indeed *two Churches* and not one, *viz. One Church* of those who take Christ for their *Teacher only*, and another of those that take him *entirely as Christ*. Seventhly, and by this rule the *Socinians* and *Mahometans*, who confess Christ to be a *great Teacher*, but deny him to be the *Priest* and *sacrifice* for sin, may be *baptized*, and taken for *Christians*. These and many more absurdities follow upon this new conceit. But I must desire the Reader who would see more of it, to peruse my Disputations about *Right to Sacraments*, where it is handled at large.

As to their Objections I answer. First, no man is called to *lie*, nor yet are they *fearful* to be shut out: For as no man is perfectly acquainted with his own heart, so no man is to profess a perfect knowledge of it: But if a man speak as he thinketh upon faithful endeavours to avoid self-deceit, no more can be expected of him. He that can say [Though I am not certain that there is no secret fraud in my heart, yet as far as I can

diſcern it, I am willing to be a Chriſtian upon the terms of Gods Covenant, and to take Chriſt for my Teacher, Prieſt and King] muſt offer himſelf, and muſt be received into the Church.

Secondly, and as to the Jews caſe, I have proved in the fore-mentioned Diſputations, Firſt, that it was no leſs than a profeſſion of ſaving faith, which was made in the Covenant of Circumciſion. Secondly, that men were then to be put to death, for almoſt all thoſe enormous crimes which we now excommunicate men for: And the dead are not members of the Church on earth. Thirdly, that all that in *matter of fact* was found among them contrary to this, was contrary to Gods Law: And to argue againſt the Law from mans breach of the Law, *a facto contra jus*, is very bad arguing. Fourthly, that it is farre ſurer and clearer reaſoning about the Evangelical ſtate and order of the Church, from the *Goſpel*, than from the *Law of Moſes*, much more than from the *violations* of that law. Fifthly, but yet all the corruptions of the Churches, as I have cited and proved them before, do ſhew us the difference between the Church as *viſibly Congregate*, and as *Regenerate*; and ſhew us that the preſence of *ſcandalous ſinners*, will not warrant us to *ſeparate* or to unchurch the Church. And this may ſuffice againſt that errour.

The true conditions of admittance into the Church and ſtate of Chriſtianity are theſe.

Firſt, *A true belief in God the Father, Son and Holy Ghoſt, and a Devoting of our ſelves ſincerely to Him, as our reconciled Father our Saviour, and our Sanctifier, in a reſolved Covenant, or Conſent, renouncing*

renouncing the Devil, the world, and the fleſh, (expreſly or impliedly) is the whole and the only condition of our Communion with the Church myſtical or the living body of Chriſt (which is called *The Church*, in the firſt and moſt famous ſenſe.)

Obj. *If this muſt be wrought in us before we are in the myſtical* Church, *then a ſtate of holineſs may be found in ſuch, as are yet out of the body of Chriſt in the world: But if this be after our entrance into the Church, than leſs may ſufficiently qualifie us for admittance.*

Anſw. It is neither *before* nor *after*: but it is our *change and entrance it ſelf.* To be a *member* of the *Church myſtical*, and to be a *Chriſtian* is all one: And this is *Chriſtianity.* If I ſhould ſay that the *making a man a Rational free agent, is the making him a member of the Rational world*; would you think that this muſt be either antecedent or conſequent to his change, which is nothing elſe but the change it ſelf?

Secondly, *That which maketh a man a member of the Univerſal Church as Viſible, is his Baptiſm. Which is, his profeſſion of the ſame true Faith aforeſaid, and conſent to the Covenant; or his viſible dedication to God the Father, Son and Holy Ghoſt, as his Reconciled Father, his Saviour and Sanctifier, by a Vow and Covenant in Baptiſm.*

Where note that Baptiſm hath two parts: The *Covenant* there made and openly declared between God and Man: And the *Sacramental, obſigning and inveſting ſign*; which is the *waſhing in water.* The *Profeſſion* it ſelf, or *open covenanting with God*, is the thing ſtatedly neceſſary to the *being* of *Viſible*

ſible Chriſtianity: And the *waſhing with water*, is *neceſſary* as a duty where it may be had, and as a *means* to the *orderly* and *regular* entrance; by which the *Church* is commonly to judge who are its admitted members and who not. As *inward conſent* and *outward profeſſion* of *conſent*, and *publike ſolemnization*, are the neceſſaries to a ſtate of marriage; the firſt being as the *ſoul*, the ſecond as the *body*, and the third as the *wedding garments*; ſo is it in this caſe. So that in ſhort, if you take *Baptiſm* aright for the *Covenant* and the *Sign*, there is no other entrance into the Viſible Church, nor any other condition neceſſary to a title to its communion. But if you take Baptiſm improperly, for the *waſhing* alone, there is no *title* to ſuch *waſhing* neceſſary but *Profeſſed faith* and *Covenanting*. So that if you require more, or invent and impoſe any further conditions, and deny *baptized profeſſors of Chriſtianity* to be *viſible members* of the Church, you are ſuperſtitious deviſers of a way of your own, and makers of *will-worſhip*, and not obedient ſubmitters to the way of God.

Profeſſion then of *Belief* and *conſent to the Covenant*, is our *title-condition* to communion with the Univerſal Viſible Church. This profeſſion muſt be ſolemn, and ſolemnized under the hand of a Miniſter of Chriſt, who hath the Keyes of the Church, or Kingdom of heaven; that it may be ſatisfactory to the Church, and valid at its barre. Thoſe that are baptized at age, have preſent Right to communion with the adult. Thoſe that are baptized in Infancy (upon good right) are admitted to ſuch *Infant-communion* as they are capable of. And at years of diſcretion, they themſelves muſt

muſt own the Covenant, which their Parents entered them into. The more ſolemnly this is done (as it was in baptiſm) the better it is: But if it be done but by a profeſſing themſelves to be Chriſtians, and attending Chriſts ordinances with his Church, it is valid; unleſs they forfeit the credit of their profeſſion, by proved Hereſies or crimes in which they live impenitently.

But then it muſt be here obſerved, what a *Profeſſion* of *Chriſtianity* is, which intitleth to Baptiſm and Church-communion. And *objectively*, it muſt be the *whole Baptiſmal Covenant* that muſt be profeſſed: No leſs is to be taken as a *profeſſion of Chriſtianity*: And as *to the Act*, it muſt be firſt, *A ſignification* of the mind, by *word* or *writing*, or ſome intelligible *ſign*. Secondly, it muſt *ſeem* to be *underſtood*: For no man conſenteth to that which he *underſtandeth not*. But herein any intelligible ſign of a *tollerable underſtanding* muſt be accepted, though we find that the perſons conceptions are raw and not ſo diſtinct and clear as they ought, nor the expreſſions ready, orderly or compt. Thirdly, it muſt ſeem to be *ſerious*: For that which is apparently diſſembled or ludicrous is null: Fourthly, It muſt be *de preſenti*, a *preſent giving* up our ſelves to Chriſt, and not *only* a promiſe *de futuro*, that we will hereafter take him for our *Saviour* and *Lord*, and not at preſent. Fifthly, it muſt *ſeem* to be *voluntary*, and not conſtrained: for then it is not ſerious. Sixthly, it muſt *ſeem* to be *deliberate*, and *reſolute*, and *ſetled*, and not only the effect of a mutable paſſion. This goeth to make it a real *Profeſſion* in the common ſenſe of all mankind.

Obj. *But how few among us do ſo much as ſeem to be underſtanding, ſerious, and reſolved in covenanting with Chriſt?*

Anſw. In the *Degree* of theſe *we all* fall ſhort of that which is our *duty*: But if you accuſe any of the want of ſo much as is neceſſary to an *acceptable Profeſſion*; Firſt, you muſt be ſure that you ſpeak not by *uncharitable ſurmiſe* and *hear-ſay*, but upon *certain proof* or *knowledge*. Secondly, and that therefore you ſpeak it not at a venture of *whole Pariſhes* or *families*, but only of *thoſe perſons* by *name*, whom you know to be guilty. Thirdly, and that you remember that it is the *Paſtors office* to *judge*, and that you expect not that every one muſt give an account of their knowledge *to you*: And if there be a miſ-judging, it is the fault of the *Paſtor*, and not *yours* (of which more anon.) Fourthly, that perſons *Baptized* are *already* admitted into the Church, and therefore if they make profeſſion of Chriſtianity, they muſt not be put to bring any other proof of their title; but it lies on you to *diſprove it*, if you will have it queſtioned. And to reject them from communion without a proved accuſation, is *Tyranny* and *Lording* it over the Church of God. Theſe are Gods terms of Church-communion; And if you will needs have ſtricter, you muſt have none of his making but your own.

Obj. But all viſible Chriſtians and Churches, are viſible Saints and Regenerate; and ſo are not ours.

Anſw. To be a *Viſible Saint*, is to *profeſs to be a Saint*: And whoſoever doth *profeſs the Baptiſmal Covenant* profeſſeth to be *a Saint*. Converſion, Regeneration Faith and Repentance, are all contain-

contained, into *taking God the Father, Son and Holy Ghoſt, for our Father, Saviour, and Sanctifier.*

Obj. *But you may teach a Parrot to ſpeak thoſe words.*

Anſw. Its true: And perhaps to ſpeak any words which you uſe your ſelves: But if you will thence conclude that words muſt not be taken as a *Profeſſion*, you groſly err, or abuſively wrangle; or if you infer thence that your neighbour underſtandeth himſelf no more than a Parrot doth, you muſt prove what you ſay to the *Paſtor* of the Church: For God hath not allowed him to *excommunicate* baptized perſons, becauſe you ſay that they are ignorant. And if they are willing to learn it is fitter to teach them than *to excommunicate them.*

And here I muſt lament it, that I have met with many cenſorious Profeſſors, who would not communicate with the Pariſh Churches, becauſe the *people* are *ignorant*, who, when I have examined *themſelves*, have proved *ignorant* of the *very ſubſtance of Chriſtianity*, ſo that I have been much in doubt whether I ought to admit them to the Lords Table or not. They knew not whether Chriſt was *Eternal*, or whether he was *God when he was on earth*, or whether he be *Man now he is in heaven*; nor what *Faith* is, or what *Juſtification* or *Sanctification* is, nor what the *Covenant* of grace is; nor what *Baptiſm* or the *Lords Supper* are; nor could prove the Scripture to be the word of God, or prove mans ſoul to be immortal; but gave falſe or impertinent anſwers about all theſe: And yet could not joyn with the *ignorant Churches.*

And next I deſire you here to obſerve the *different Priviledges*, as well as the different Conditions,

ditions, of *Visible* and *Invisible* Churchmembership.

The members of the Church mystical or Regenerate, have the pardon of all sin, and acceptance with God, and communion with him and with his Church in the spirit, and are the adopted children of God, and heirs of everlasting life, and shall live in heaven with Christ for ever.

The meer *Visible* Members of the Church, that are not regenerate by the *spirit* as well as sacramentally by *water*, have only an *outward Communion* with the Saints, and have only the *Bread and Wine* in the Sacrament, and only a *name to live* when they are dead. And are these such great matters that we should envy them to poor sinners that must have no more? Have *we* the *Kernel*, and do we envy them the *Shell*? Have we the *Spirit*, and do we envy them the *flesh*, or *outward signes* alone?

Yea consider further, that it is more for the sake of the truly faithful, than for their own, that all Hypocrites have their station and priviledges in the Church: God maketh use of their *Gifts* and *Profession* for his elect; to many great services of the Church: And is it not then a foolish ingratitude in us, to murmur at their presence?

Understand well the conditions and Reasons of this visible state of membership, and how far it is below the state of the Regenerate, and it will turn your separating murmuring into a thankful acknowledgment of the wisdom of God.

DIRECT.

DIRECT. VII.

Get right and deep aprehensions of the Necessity and Reasons of Christian Unity and Concord: and of the sin and misery of Divisions and Discord.

WHen we have but *slight apprehensions* of a duty we easily neglect it, and scarce reprove our selves for it, or repent of our omission. And when we have but slight apprehensions of the evil of any sin, a little temptation draweth us to it; & we are hardly brought to through-repentance for it: And there is in many Christians, a strange inequality and partiality in their apprehensions of *good* and *evil*. Some duties they dare not omit, and they judge all ungodly who omit them: when some others as great are past by, as if they were no part of religion. And some sins they fear with very great tenderness, when we can scarce make their consciences take any notice, of others as great.

And usually they let out all their zeal on one side only, while they over-look the other. The Papist seemeth so sensible of the good of *Unity*, and the evil of *Divisions*, that he thinketh usurpation of an Universal Church-Monarchy, and Tyranny and horrid bloud-shed, to be not only lawful, but necessary for the prevention and the cure. But to make him as sensible of the wickedness of these *unlawful means*, and of the good of a *serious spiritual Religiousness*, and of *Christian*

Love

Love and tenderneſs and forbearance, here is the great difficulty.

And on the other ſide, many are very ſenſible of the need of ſpirituality and ſerioufneſs in Religion, and of the evil of hypocritical formality and imagery, and of uſurpation of the prerogatives of Chriſt, and of the plague of perſecuting Pride and cruelty, who yet have little ſenſe at all, of the good of Unity, and of the miſchiefs of diviſions in the Church. Yea many are ſo careful to be found exact in their obedience to God, that they build very much for *duties* and againſt *ſins*, upon dark and very far-fetcht conſequences, and upon a few obſcure and doubtful paſſages in Scripture, when there is no expreſs words, or clear text at all, to bear them out: And doubtleſs the darkeſt intimations of the will of God, muſt not be diſregarded. But on the other ſide, we cannot bring them to lay to heart, ſome duties and ſins, which are over and over, an hundred times, and that with vehemency, expreſt and urged in the plaineſt words.

And becauſe all Chriſtians pretend to ſubmit to the word of God, I will try whether it be not thus with you in the preſent caſe, and will cite many plain expreſſions of Scripture, for Chriſtian *Unity* and *Concord*, that you may either better perceive your duty, or plainly ſhew your great partiality.

Zech. 14. 9. *In that day there ſhall be One Lord and his name One.* Ezek. 34. 23. *And I will ſet up One Shepherd over them.* Ezek. 37. 22. *I will make them One Nation — and One King ſhall be King to them all, and they ſhall be no more two Nations, nor divided*

divided into two Kingdomes any more. 24. *And* David *my ſervant ſhall be King over them, and they ſhall have One ſhepherd.* Jer. 32. 39. *I will give them one heart and one way.* So Ezek. 11. 19. Joh. 21, 22. *That they all may be One; as thou Father art in me, and I in thee; that they alſo may be One in us, that the world may believe that thou haſt ſent me. And the glory which thou gaveſt me, I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one; I in them, and Thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that thou haſt ſent me; and haſt loved them as thou haſt loved me.* Joh. 11. 52. *That he ſhould gather together in One, the children of God that are ſcattered abroad.* Act. 1. 14. *Theſe all continued with one accord, in prayer and ſupplication. And* chap. 2. 1. *They were all with one accord in one place.* Act. 4. 24, 32. *They lift up their voice to God with one accord, and ſaid, Lord, thou art God— And the multitude of them that believed, were of one heart, and of one ſoul.* Act. 5. 12. *They were all with one accord in* Solomons *Porch.* Act. 15. 25. *It ſeemed good to us, being aſſembled with one accord*—2 Cor. 11. 2. *I have eſpouſed you to one huſband* — Eph. 4. 1, &c. *I the priſoner of the Lord beſeech you that ye walk worthy of your vocation wherewith ye are called with all lowlineſs and meekneſs; with long-ſuffering forbearing one another in love: endeavouring to keep the unity of the ſpirit in the bond of peace. There is One body, and One Spirit, Even as ye are called in One hope of your calling. One Lord, One Faith, One Baptiſm, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.*— v. 12, 13. *For the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the Miniſtry, for the edifying*

of

of the body of Christ. Till we all come in the Unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect Man: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness whereby they lye in wait to deceive: But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things who is the Head, Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joyned together, and compacted by that which every joynt supplyeth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body, to the edifying of it self in love.

1 Cor. 12. 3, 12, 13. *No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost — As the Body is One, and hath many Members, and all the members of that One body, being many are One body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit, we are all baptized into One body.*—v. 22, 23. *Nay much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble are necessary: And those members of the body which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour, and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness. For our comely parts have no need; but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part that lacked: that there should be no Schisme in the body, but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all suffer with it, and if one be honoured, all rejoyce* — v. 15. *If the foot say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body, is it therefore not of the body* — (By all this you may see, that even the *lowest, dishonoured, weak* and *uncomely* members, must not be denied to be

be of the Church or body of Christ.)

1 Cor. 13. 4, 5. *Charity suffereth long, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil* — *The greatest is charity*, v. 13.

1 Cor. 1. 10. *Now I beseech you brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you: but that ye be perfectly joyned together in the same mind and in the same judgement.* v. 12, 13. *Every one saith, I am of Paul, and I of Apollo* —*Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized into the name of Paul.* Ch. 3. 15. *If any mans work be burnt, he shall suffer loss; yet he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire.* — Ch. 3. 3, 4. *For ye are yet carnal: For whereas there is among you envying and strife and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? while one saith, I am of Paul, &c.*

Rom. 14. 1. *Him that is weak in the faith receive, but not to doubtful disputations.* v. 3. *Let not him that eateth, despise him that eateth not: and let not him which eateth not judge him which eateth: for God hath received him: who art thou that judgest another mans servant? to his own Master he standeth or falleth. One man esteemeth one day above another: Another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully perswaded in his own mind: He that regardeth a day, regardeth it to the Lord!* v. 10. *But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? we shall all stand before the judgement seat of Christ. Let us not therefore judge one another any more.* v. 13, 14. *I know and am perswaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of it self; but to him that esteemeth any thing unclean, to him it is unclean,* v. 17. *For the Kingdom of God is*

not

not meat and drink, but righteouſneſs and peace and joy in the Holy Ghoſt: For he that in theſe things ſerveth Chriſt is acceptable to God and approved of men: Let us therefore follow after the things that make for peace. v. 22. *Haſt thou faith? Have it to thy ſelf before God.* Ch. 15. 1, 2. *We that are ſtrong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to pleaſe our ſelves. Let us every one pleaſe his neighbour for his good, to edification. For even Chriſt pleaſed not himſelf* — v. 5, 6. *Now the God of patience and conſolation, grant you to be like minded one towards another, according to Chriſt Jeſus: that ye may with ONE MIND, and ONE MOUTH glorifie God.* — *wherefore receive ye one another, as Chriſt received us, to the glory of God.*

Ch. 16. 17, 18. *Now I beſeech you brethren, mark them which cauſe diviſions and offenſes contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned and avoid them. For they that are ſuch, ſerve not our Lord Jeſus, but their own belly, and by good words and fair ſpeeches deceive the hearts of the ſimple.*

Act. 20. 30. *Alſo of your own ſelves ſhall men ariſe, ſpeaking perverſe things, to draw away Diſciples after them.*

Joh. 13. 35. *By this ſhall all men know that ye are my Diſciples, if ye have love one to another.*

1 Cor. 11. 17, 18. *I hear there are diviſions among you: For there muſt be alſo hereſies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifeſt.*

Math. 13. 29, 30. *Nay, leſt while ye gather up the tares, ye root up alſo the wheat with them: Let both grow together till the harveſt* — 41. *The Angels ſhall gather out of his Kingdom, all things that offend, and them which do iniquity, and ſhall caſt them into a furnace of fire* — *Then ſhall the righteous ſhine forth as the Sun, in the Kingdom of their Father.*

V. 47. *The Kingdom of Heaven is like a net, caſt into the Sea; which gathered of every kind: which when it was full, they drew to the ſhore; and ſate down and gathered the good into Veſſels, and the bad they caſt away: ſo ſhall it be at the end of the world.*

Math. 22. 9, 10. *Go into the high ways, and as many as ye find, bid to the marriage* (or as Luk. 14. *Compel them to come in*) *ſo thoſe ſervants went unto the high ways, and gathered all as many as they found both bad and good, and the wedding was furniſhed with gueſts. And the King ſaw there a man that had not on a wedding garment, and ſaid, Friend, How cameſt thou in hither,* &c. (Mark, thus he will condemn wicked hypocrites themſelves, but blameth not the *Miniſters* that compelled them, or that let them in.) Gal. 6. 1. *If a man be overtaken in a fault, ye that are ſpiritual, reſtore ſuch a one in the ſpirit of meekneſs: Conſidering thy ſelf, leſt thou alſo be tempted. Bear ye one anothers burdens, and ſo fulfill the Law of Chriſt, Let every man prove his own work.*

Note, that *Paul* purified himſelf as having a Vow: He circumciſed *Timothy*; He became a Jew to the Jews, and all things to all men, that he might win ſome.

Phil. 1. 15, 16. *Some preach Chriſt of envy,* &c. as aforecited.

Phil. 2. 1, 2, 3. *If there be any conſolation in in Chriſt,* — *fulfill ye my joy, that ye be like minded, having the ſame love, being of one accord and of one mind. Let nothing be done through ſtrife or vain glory;*

glory; but in lowliness of mind, let each esteem other better than themselves —— 14. *Do all things without murmurings and disputings* ——

Ch. 3. 15, 16. *Let as many as are perfect be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. But whereunto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule; let us mind the same things.*

1 Thes. 5. 12, 13. *We beseech you brethren, to know them that labour among you and are over you in the Lord, &c. and be at peace among your selves.*

Tit. 3. 10. *A man that is an heretick, after the first and second admonition avoid. knowing that he that is such is subverted and sinneth, being condemned of himself.*

Jam. 3. 1, 2, 13, &c. *My brethren be not many Masters, knowing that ye shall receive the greater condemnation, For in many things we offend all — who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you, Let him shew out of a good conversation, his works with meekness of wisdom: But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth: This wisdom descendeth not from above; but is earthly, sensual, devilish: For where envying and strife is, there is confusion, and every evil work. The wisdom from above, is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easie to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits; without partiality, without hypocrisie: and the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.*

Mat. 12. 25. *Jesus said, every Kingdom divided against it self, is brought to desolation: and every City or house divided against it self, shall not stand.*

I have cited so many Texts against division and

and for the Unity of the Church and concord of Christians, as one would think by the very hearing of them, without expositions or argumentation, should utterly mortifie all inclination to divisions and hard censures, in all true believers: yea so many Texts as I am perswaded many that most need them, will think it tedious to read them over. And yet I have cause to fear lest many such will *feel* as little of the *sense* and *authority* of them, as if there were no such words in the Scripture, and none of this had been set before them.

Out of all these you may gather, these reasons of the necessity of Unity, and of the evil of schism or division.

First, It is *One God*, *One Head*, *One Saviour*, and *One Holy Spirit*, into whose name we are all baptized. Secondly, It is *One Covenant* which all in Baptism make with this *One God*. Thirdly, It is *One Spirit* by which we are all *regenerated*, and *One new Nature* which is in all the truly sanctified. Fourthly, It is *One Gospel* or holy word of God, which is to us all, the seed of our new birth, the rule of our faith and lives; and the foundation of our *hope*, and must be our daily meditation and delight, and the food on which the children of Gods family must all live. Fifthly, It is *One Body* of Christ, whereof we are all members. As Christ is not divided, so his Body, that is his Church, both as Mystical, and as Visible, is but *One*; however the Members and their *Gifts* and degrees of grace are many. Sixthly, It is *One way* of Faith and Holiness which all must walk in. Seventhly, And it is *One end* and happiness

pineſs which we all expect; and in *One Heaven* that we muſt meet and live for ever (ſo many as are ſincere in the faith which we profeſs): And in Heaven we ſhall have one Mind and Heart, and One employment in the Love and praiſe of our Creator and Redeemer, and one felicitating fruition of his Glory for evermore. Therefore he that ſeeth not the neceſſity of *Unity*, knoweth not the *Nature* of the *Church*, or *Faith*, or true *Religion*.

The *Honours* and *Benefits* of *Unity*, and the *ſhame* and *miſchiefs* of *Diviſions*, may appear to him, that further conſidereth the inſtances which follow.

Firſt, Our *Union* with the *Church*, is a ſign of our proportionable *union* with Chriſt: And our *ſeparation* from the Church, doth ſignifie that we are ſeparated from Chriſt. He that is United but to the *Viſible Church*, is but *viſibly* (by Baptiſm and Profeſſion) united to Chriſt: ſuch a union is ſpoken of in *Joh.* 15.2. *Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh away.* He that is *united* to the *myſtical Church*, of the Regenerate and ſpiritual, is united to Chriſt by *faith* and by the *ſpirit*: For his union to Chriſt is at the ſame inſtant of time, with his union with the Church: but in order of nature goeth before it. He that is divided from this *myſtical Church*, cannot poſſibly (at that time) be a Member of Chriſt in the ſpiritual ſenſe: As the member which is cut off from the *body*, is alſo ſeparated from the Head. And he that himſelf forſaketh the *Viſible Church* as ſuch, forſaketh the *myſtical Church* and *Chriſt* himſelf. For to forſake the *Viſible Church* as

as ſuch, is to ceaſe to be a *Profeſſor* of Chriſtianity. One may be a Member of the *Viſible Church*, and not of the *ſpiritual*; but you cannot be a Member of the *ſpiritual* Church, if you forſake and refuſe the viſible Church as ſuch. For though a man may be *regenerate by the Spirit*, before he make an *open profeſſion* or be baptized (and without baptiſm in ſome few caſes) yet ſo he cannot be, if he refuſe to be a *Profeſſor*. Its poſſible indeed to be a member of the Univerſal Church, both as *Myſtical*, and as *Viſible*; as *ſpiritual* and as *profeſſing*; while we have not opportunity to joyn with any one particular Church, or to *ſeparate* from ſome *particular Church*, without *ſeparating* from the *Univerſal*: But to ſeparate from the *Univerſal Church*, is to ſeparate *from Chriſt*.

But then you muſt underſtand, that the Univerſal Viſible Church is nothing elſe, but *all profeſſing Chriſtians in the world, as viſibly ſubjected to Chriſt as their Head*: And that there is no ſuch thing in being, as the Papiſts call the *Catholick* or *Univerſal Church*; that is, *the univerſality of Chriſtians ſubjected to one Vicar of Chriſt as their Head, either Conſtitutive or Governing*. Such a pretended Head is an Uſurper and no true authorized Vicar of Chriſt; And therefore ſuch a *Church as ſuch*, is nothing but a company of ſeduced Chriſtians, following ſuch a traiterous Uſurper. And to ſeparate from the Pope, is not to ſeparate from Chriſt or from his Church.

Secondly, Conſider alſo, that *Union* is not only an *Accident* of the *Church*, but is part of its very *eſſence*, without which it can be *no Church*,

and without which we can be *no members* of it. It is no Kingdome, no City, no family, and ſo no Church, which doth not conſiſt of *United* members: As it is no houſe which conſiſteth not of united parts. And he is no Member which is not *united* to the *whole*. It is the great courſe of mens boldneſs in dividing ways, that they take *union* to be but ſome *laudable accident*, while it may be had; which yet in ſome caſes we may be without: and think that *ſeparations* are *tollerable* faults, even when they are forced to confeſs them faults: But they do not conſider that *Unity* is neceſſary to the *being* of the *Church*, and to the *being* of our own Chriſtianity. Read 1 *Cor.* 12. *Epheſ.* 4.

Thirdly, Remember alſo that our *Union* is neceſſary to our *Communion*, with *Chriſt* and with *his Church*: and to all the bleſſings and benefits of ſuch communion. *Joh.* 15. 4. *Abide in me, and I in you: As the branch cannot bear fruit of it ſelf, except it abide in the Vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me: for without me, ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is caſt forth as a branch, and is withered, and men gather them, and caſt them into the fire, and they are burned.* And *Col.* 2. 19. *From the Head all the body by joynts and bonds having nouriſhment miniſtred and knit together, increaſeth with the increaſe of God.* The member that is cut off from the body, hath no life or nouriſhment from the head or from the body, but is dead: He that is out of the Church is without the Teaching, the holy worſhip, the prayers, and the diſcipline of the Church, and is out of the way

way where the ſpirit doth come; and out of the Society which Chriſt is ſpecially related to: For he is the Saviour of his body; And if we leave his hoſpital, we cannot expect the preſence and help of the Phyſician: Nor will he be a Pilot to them who forſake his Ship: Nor a Captain to them who ſeparate from his Army: Out of this Ark, there is nothing but a deluge; and no place of reſt or ſafety for a ſoul.

Fourthly, The *Unity* of Chriſtians is their ſecondary *ſtrength*: Their *primary ſtrength* is *Chriſt* and the *Spirit of grace* which quickeneth them: And their *ſecondary* ſtrength is their *Union among themſelves*: *Separation* from *Chriſt* depriveth men of the *firſt*; and *ſeparation* from *one another* depriveth them of the *ſecond*. An *Army* is ſtronger than a *man*: And a *Kingdom* than a *ſingle perſon*: A *flame* will burn more ſtrongly than a *ſpark*: And the *waves* of the Ocean are more forcible than a ſingle *drop*. *A threefold Cord is not eaſily broken.* Therefore it is that weak Commonwealths do ſeek to ſtrengthen themſelves by confederacies with other States. The Church is likened to an Army with Banners; both, for their *Numbers*, their *Concord*, and their *Order*. And therefore Chriſt ſaith that *a Kingdom divided cannot ſtand*. *Union* is the Churches *ſtrength*: And what good ſoever they may pretend, *Dividers* are certainly the weakeners and deſtroyers of the Church: And as thoſe means which beſt corroborate the body, and fortifie the ſpirits, do beſt cure many particular diſeaſes, which no means would cure whilſt nature is debilitated: So are the Churches

diſeaſes beſt cured, by uniting fortifying remedies, which will be increaſed by a *dividing* way of Reformation: *Dividing* is *wounding*, and *uniting* is the *cloſing* of the wound.

There is no good work but *Satan* is a pretender to it, when he purpoſeth to *deſtroy* it: He reſiſteth *Light* as an *Angel of Light*; and his *Miniſters* hinder *Righteouſneſs*, as pretended *Miniſters of Righteouſneſs*: And he will be a *zealous Reformer* when he would *hinder Reformation*. And this is the mark of *Satans way* of Reformation: He doth it by *by dividing the Churches of Chriſt*, and teaching Chriſtians to *avoid each other*: And to that end he zealouſly aggravateth the faults of every party to the reſt; that they may have odious thoughts of one another; and Chriſtian Love may be turned into averſation: As in the Plague time every one is afraid of the breath and company of his neighbour, and they that were wont to aſſemble and converſe with peace and pleaſure, do timerouſly ſhun the preſence of each other; becauſe they know that it is an infectious time, and they are uncertain who is free: even ſo doth Satan break the ſocieties and converſe of Chriſtians, by making them believe that every party hath ſome dangerous infection, which as they love their ſouls, they muſt avoid.

And he deſtroyeth your *Love* to one *another*, by pretending *Love* to *your ſelves*: O how careful will he be for your ſouls! when the Devil would undo you, he will do it as your Saviour: And when his meaning is to ſave you from Heaven, and from Chriſt, and from his ſaving grace, and from Union and Communion with his Church, and from

from the impartial Love of one another, he takes on him that he is ſaving you only from *ſin* and from *Church-corruptions*: Or rather that it is *Chriſt* and not *he* that giveth you counſel: And he can do much in *imitating Chriſt*, in the *manner* of his *ſuggeſtions*, to make you believe that it *is Chriſt indeed*. Perhaps his counſel ſhall come in in the midſt of a *fervent prayer*, or preſently after it, to make you believe that it is an undoubted anſwer of your prayers: And oft times his impulſes are vehement and much affecting, to make you think that it is ſomething above nature: And the *pious pretence* will much perſwade you to think that ſure this can never come from an evil ſpirit: But if you had well ſtudied 2 *Cor.* 11.13,14,15. *Gal.* 1. 8. *Luke* 9.55. 1 *Joh.* 4 1,2. 2 *Theſ.* 2. 2. you might be wiſer and be ſaved from this deceit. I will not recite the words, becauſe I would have you turn to them, and ſeriouſly ſtudy them.

And in this *dividing work*, the Devil doth as make-bates do, who firſt goes to one man and tell him a tale what ſuch a one ſaid againſt him, and what a dangerous perſon he is, and then go to the other and ſay as much of the firſt to him: So the Devil ſaith to the Presbyterian, O take heed of the Independents! and to the Independents, Take heed of theſe Presbyterians; To the Anabaptiſt he ſuggeſteth, Avoid theſe Proteſtants: Take heed of them, for they Baptize infants: And to the Proteſtants he ſaith, Take heed of theſe Anabaptiſts, for they are againſt baptizing any till they come to full age: To one he ſaith, Away from that Church, or think not thoſe perſons to

be religious; for they pray by the book: And to the other he saith, Take heed of those people, as whimsical and proud, and brainsick fanaticks; for they pray *without-book* by the *Spirit*. To one sort he saith, Take heed of those people, for they wear a Surplice, or Kneel at the Sacrament, or answer the Priests in the Responses of the Common-prayer: To the other he saith, Take heed of these disobedient, stubborn, selfconceited people that will sit at the Sacrament, and will not conform to the orders of the Church. I am not now minding whose opinion is right or wrong, among all these parties, or any like them; But how charitable to your souls the Devil is, when he would destroy your *charity* and your *souls*; and how *plausly* and *kindly* he would have you *take heed* when he would lead you to *perdition*: and how great a *Reformer* he will be, if he may but do it by *Dividing*.

It may be the young unexperienced Schismatick (of what sect soever) will distast these words, and think I speak like an adversary to Reformation: And so the Devil would make him think, of all other Christians as well as of me, except his party. But if one should give such counsel for the preservation of his own health and bodily comfort, as the *Dividing* spirit giveth him for the Church and for his soul, he would quickly understand it, according to my present sense. If one should come in kindness to him and bid him, [O take heed of that mouth and belly; for it getteth nothing, but devoureth all that the hands do get by labour: Cut off that hand, for it hath a crooked finger; Cut off that gouty foot that it may not trouble the

the whole body: Rip up those guts which have such filthy excrements, he would not swell against me if I advised him to suspect such kindness.

Fifthly, Remember also, that the *Unity* of Christians is their *peace* and *ease*, as well as their *strength* and *safety*. Psal. 133. 1. *Behold how good and how pleasant it is, for brethren to dwell together in unity!* As the amity and converse with friends is pleasant, and the concord of families is their quietness and ease; so is it as to the amity and concord which is the bond of Church society. And the *divisions* and *discord* of Christians, is their mutual *pain* and *trouble*. Do you not *feel* your *minds disturbed* by it: Do you not *see* the *Church discomposed* by it? The itch of contention, doth ordinarily make it pleasant for the time, to every Sect to scratch by zealous wranglings and disputes, for their several opinions, till the blood be ready to follow: But the smart and scab doth use to convince them of their folly. But if they will go more than *Skin-deep*, they may need a *Surgeon*. *Children* will *claw* themselves; but it is *Madmen* that will *wound* themselves. The hurt which we get in the Christian warfare, by mortifying the flesh, or by the persecution of the malignant enemy is tenderly healed by the hand of Christ, and usually furthereth our inward peace. But if we will hurt and wound and divide our selves, what pity or comfort can we expect.

Sixthly, Consider also that the *Unity* and *Concord* of Believers is their *Honour*, and their *Divisions* and *discord* are their *shame*: And consequently the

the honour or diſhonour of Chriſt and the Goſpel, and Religion is much concerned in it. Agreement among Chriſtians telleth the world, that they have a certainty of the faith which they profeſs, and that it is powerful and not ineffectual, and that it is of a healing nature, and tendeth to the felicity of the world. But Diviſions and diſcords among Chriſtians perſwade unbelievers, that there is no *certainty* in their *belief*: or that it is of a vexatious and deſtructive tendency; or at beſt that all its power is too weak, to overcome the malignity which it pretendeth to reſiſt; where did you ever ſee Chriſtians live in *undivided unity, undiſturbed peace*, and *unfeigned Love*, but the very infidels and ungodly round about them, did reverence both them and their religion for it. And where did you ever ſee Chriſtians *divided, unpeaceable* and bitter againſt each other, but it made them and their profeſſion a ſcorn to the unbelieving and ungodly world? and whilſt they deſpiſe and vilifie one another, they teach the wicked to deſpiſe and vilifie them all?

Seventhly, I may therefore add, that the *Unity* of *Believers*, is one of Gods appointed means for the converſion and ſalvation of *unbelievers*: And their *Diviſions and diſcord* are an ordinary means of hardening men in infidelity and wickedneſs, and hindering their love and obedience to the truth. As a well ordered Army, or a City of uniform comely building, is a pleaſing and inviting ſight to the beholders; when a confuſed rout, or a ruinous heap, doth breed abhorrence: even ſo the very ſight of the concordant ſocieties of Chriſtians, is amiable and alluring to thoſe without

without; when their diſagreements and ſeparations make them ſeem odious and vile. As a muſical inſtrument in tune, or a ſet of muſick, delight the hearer by the pleaſing harmony; when one or more inſtruments out of tune, or uſed by a rude unskilful hand, will weary out the patience of the hearer; ſo is it in this caſe; and the difference is much greater, between concordant and diſconcordant Chriſtians. Who loveth to thruſt himſelf into a fray? And what wiſe man had not rather partake of the friendly converſe, than joyn with drunken men that are fighting in the ſtreets? Peace and Concord are amiable even to nature; And you can ſcarce take a more effectual means, to win the world to the Love of Holineſs, than by ſhewing them that Holineſs doth make you *unfeigned* and *fervent* in the Love of one another. 1 *Pet.* 1. 22. Nor can you deviſe how to drive men more effectually from Chriſt, and to damn their ſouls, than to repreſent Chriſtians to them like a company of mad men, that are tearing out the throats of one another? How can you think that the unbelievers and ungodly ſhould think well of them, that all ſpeak ſo ill of one another? When the Lutheran flyeth from the Calviniſt, and the Epiſcopal from the Puritan, and the Proteſtant from the Anabaptiſt, and the Presbyterian from the Independent, and all the other ſide implacably fly from them, Can you wonder if the Infidel and the Idolater fly further from you all? Mark well the words of Chriſt in his prayer, *Joh.* 17. 20, 21, 22, 23. *For them which ſhall believe on me by their word, that they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they alſo may be one*

in

in us; that the world may believe that thou haſt ſent me: And the glory which thou gaveſt me, I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that thou haſt ſent me, and haſt loved them as thou haſt loved me.

All theſe obſervations are obvious in theſe words. 1. That the unity of Chriſtians muſt be *univerſal*, even of all that believe the Goſpel of Chriſt. 2. That this Union ſhould have ſome low reſemblance to the Union of the Father and the Son. 3. That it is Chriſts great deſire and interceſſion for his Followers, that they may be one. 4. That their glory is for their Unity. 5. That their Unity is their perfection. 6. That the Father and Son are the Head or Center of the Unity. 7. That this Unity is the great means of converting the world to the Chriſtian faith, and convincing Infidels of the truth of Chriſt, as ſent by God. Open but your eyes and you may ſee all theſe great doctrines in this Prayer of Chriſts for his peoples Unity: O that all the Chriſtian Churches would try this means for the worlds Converſion! (Not on the impoſſible terms of Popery, but on the neceſſary terms propoſed by Chriſt.)

8. *External Unity* and peaceable Church-communion doth greatly cheriſh our *Internal unity* of Love: And Church-diviſions do cheriſh wrath and malice and all the works of the fleſh deſcribed by *Paul, Gal.* 5. 21, 22, 23. I pray you conſider how he deſcribeth the fleſhly and the ſpiritual man: *v.* 14, 15. *For all the Law is fulfilled in one word, even in this, Thou ſhalt love thy neighbour as thy ſelf. But if ye bite and devour one another, take*

take heed that ye be not conſumed one of another. I ſay then, walk in the ſpirit, and ye ſhall not fulfill the luſts of the fleſh. For the fleſh luſteth againſt the ſpirit, &c. *Now the works of the fleſh are manifeſt, adultery — enmities or hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, ſtrife, ſeditions,* (or as it may be read *Diviſions* or *factions*) *hereſies, envyings, murders,* &c. *But the fruit of the ſpirit is Love, joy, peace, long-ſuffering, gentleneſs, goodneſs, faith, meekneſs, temperance: Againſt ſuch there is no law. And they that are Chriſts have crucified the fleſh, with the affections and luſts. If we live in the ſpirit, let us alſo walk in the ſpirit. Let us not be deſirous of vain-glory, provoking one another, envying one another.*

Obj. *O but thoſe that I ſeparate from are guilty of this and that and the other fault.*

Anſw. Chap 6. 1. *Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are ſpiritual reſtore ſuch a one, in the ſpirit of meekneſs, conſidering thy ſelf leſt thou alſo be tempted:* Inſtead of cenſorious diſdain and ſeparation, *bear ye one anothers burthen, and ſo fulfil the Law of Chriſt:* which you think you fulfil by your unwarrantable ſeparations, while you are but fulfilling your fleſhly paſſions.

When once parties are engaged by their opinions in Anti-churches and fierce diſputings, the fleſh and ſatan will be working in them againſt all that is *holy, ſweet* and *ſafe*. When united Chriſtians are provoking one another to Love and to good works, and minding each other of their heavenly cohabitation, and harmonious praiſe and are delighting God and man by the melody of their concord; The contentious zealots in their ſeparate Anti-churches, are preaching down

Love

Love and preaching up hatred, and making thoſe that differ from them ſeem an odious people not to be communicated with, by aggravating their different opinions or modes of worſhip, till they ſeem to be no leſs than Hereſie or Idolatry. If many thouſands yet living in *England* or *Ireland*, had not heard this with their ears, yet *James* may be believed, *Chap.* 3. 1, &c. *My Brethren, be not many Teaching-Maſters* (for that is the word) *knowing that we ſhall receive the greater condemnation: For in many things we offend all* (which he addeth becauſe the arrogancy of Sectaries was cauſed by the aggravating of other mens offences.) *If any man offend not in word, the ſame is a perfect man* (that is, If you will ſhew that you are perfecter & better your ſelves than thoſe whom you account ſo bad, ſee that your foul back-biting, reviling, cenſorious contentious tongues, do not prove the contrary) 13. *who is a wiſe man and endued with knowledge among you, Let him ſhew out of a good converſation, his works with meekneſs of wiſedome:* (that is, Let him that would be thought more knowing and religious than his neighbours, be ſo much more blameleſs and meek to all men, and excel them in good works) v. 14. *But if ye have a bitter zeal:* (for ſo is the Greek word) *and ſtrife in your hearts, glory not,* (in ſuch a zeal, or in your greater knowledge) *and lie not againſt the truth.* 15. *This wiſdome deſcendeth not from above* (as you imagine who father it on Gods word and ſpirit) *but is earthly, ſenſual* (or natural) *and devilliſh.* (O doleful miſtake, that the *world*, the *fleſh*, and the *Devil*, ſhould prove the cauſe of that conceited ſpiritual knowledge and excellency, which they thought had been the inſpiration of the ſpirit) v. 16. *For where zeal and ſtrife is* (that is, a *ſtriving* contentious zeal againſt brethren) *there is confuſion* (or *tumult and unquietneſs*) *and every evil work,* O lamentable reformers, that ſet up *every evil work*, while they ſeemed zealous againſt evil!) v. 17. *But the wiſdome that is from above, is firſt pure, then peaceable, gentle, and eaſie to be intreated; full of mercy and good fruits; without partiality* (or wrangling) *and without Hypocriſie. And the fruit of righteouſneſs is ſown in peace, of them that make peace*: when peace-breakers that ſow in diviſions and contention, ſhall reap the fruit of unrighteouſneſs, though they call their way by the moſt religious names.

Thus I have briefly ſhewed you what Vanity and Diviſion are, that wrong apprehenſions draw you not to ſin.

DIRECT. VIII.

When any thing needeth amendment in the Church, remember that the leſt Chriſtian, muſt be the forwardeſt to reformation, and the backwardeſt to Diviſion: and muſt ſearch and try all means of Reforming, which make not againſt the concord of the Church.

I Do not here determine in what caſes you may or may not ſeparate, from any company of faulty Chriſtians. I only ſay that you muſt never ſeparate what God hath conjoyned; the *Holineſs* and

and the *Unity* of believers: If corruptions blemish and dishonour the Congregation; Do not say [Let sin alone; I must not oppose it for fear of division] But be the forwardest to reduce all to the will of God. And yet if you cannot prevail as you desire, be the backwardest to divide and separate; and do it not without a certain warrant, and extream necessity. Resolve with *Austin*, I will not be the chaff, and yet I will not go out of the floor, though the chaff be there. Never give over your just desire and endeavour of Reformation: And yet as long as possibly you can avoid it, forsake not the Church which you desire to reform. As *Paul* said to them that were ready to forsake a sea-wrackt vessel, *If these abide not in the ship, ye cannot be saved*: Many a one by unlawful flying and shifting for his own greater peace and safety, doth much more hazard his own and others.

DIRECT. IX.

Forget not the great difference between casting out the wicked and impenitent from the Church by discipline; and the godlies separating from the Church it self, because the wicked are not cast out. The first is a great duty: The second is ordinarily a great sin.

THe question is not, *Whether the impenitent* should be put away from Church-Communion? Thats not denied. But whether you should separate from the Church because they are permitted: This is it which we call you to beware: Not but that in some cases, a Christian may lawfully remove from one Church to another that hath more light and purity, for the edification of his soul. But before you separate from a faulty Church, *as such as may not lawfully be communicated with*, you must look well about you, and be able to prove that thing which you affirm.

Many weak Christians marking those Texts which bid us *avoid a man that is an Heretick*, and to have *no company* with disorderly walkers, and not to eat with flagitious persons, do not sufficiently mark their sense, but take them as if they call'd us to separate from *the Church* with which these persons do communicate. Whereas if you mark all the Texts in the Gospel, you shall find, that *all* the separation which is commanded in such cases (besides our separation from the Infidels or Idolatrous world, or Antichristian and Heretical confederacies, and no-Churches) is but one of these two sorts. First, either that *the Church* cast out the impenitent sinner by the power of the Keyes. Secondly, or that *private men* avoid all *private familiarity* with them. And both these we would promote, and no way hinder. Thirdly, but that the *private* members should separate from the *Church*, because such persons are not cast out of it, shew me one Text to prove it if you can.

Let us here peruse the Texts that speak of our withdrawing from the wicked. 1 *Cor.* 5. Is expresly written to the whole Church, as obliged *to put away the incestuous person from among them*,

and ſo not to eat with ſuch offenders. So is that in 2 *Theſ.* 3. and that in *Tit.* 3. 10. *A man that is an Heretick after the firſt and ſecond admonition avoid*: Unleſs it be a Heretick that hath already ſeparated himſelf from our communion; And then it can be but private familiarity which we are further to avoid. In brief, there is no other place of Scripture, that I know of, which commandeth any more. I have before ſhewed that abundance of Church corruptions, or of ſcandalous members, were then among them, and yet the Apoſtle never ſpake a ſyllable to any one Chriſtian, to ſeparate from any one of all thoſe Churches: Which we cannot imagine that the Holy Ghoſt would have wholly omitted, if indeed it had been the will of God.

Obj. *But then why did* Luther *and the firſt Proteſtants, ſeparate from the Church of* Rome; *and how will you juſtifie them from Schiſme?*

Anſ. Its pity that ſloth and ſottiſhneſs, ſhould keep any Proteſtant (or Papiſt either) in ſuch ignorance, as to need any help to anſwer ſo eaſie a queſtion at this day! Let not equivocal names deceive us, and the caſe is eaſie. By the word *Church* the Scripture ſtill meaneth; firſt, either the *Univerſal Church* which is the body or Kingdome of Chriſt alone: Secondly, or *particular Congregations* aſſociated for perſonal communion in Gods worſhip: But the Pope hath feigned another kind of thing, and called it *The Church*: That is, *The Univerſality of Chriſtians as headed by himſelf, as the conſtitutive and governing head.* Whereas, firſt, God never inſtituted or allowed ſuch a Church, Secondly, nor did ever the Univerſality of Chriſtians, acknowledge this uſurping Head. Shew me in Scripture, or in Church-Hiſtory, that either there ever was *de facto*, or ought to be *de jure*, ſuch a thing in the world as they call *the Church*, and I profeſs I will immediately turn Papiſt. But if you ask why we ſeparated from the Papal Church? I anſwer, Becauſe, firſt, it was *no Church of Chriſt* (as ſuch.) And ſecondly, It was a *Church of traiterous combination*, againſt the prerogative of Chriſt, and therefore by the Proteſtants called the Antichriſtian Church. We ſeparated not from *Rome* either as the *Univerſal Church* (for that it was not) nor as *part of the Univerſal* Church; (for ſo we hold communion with thoſe that are Chriſtians in it ſtill) Nor as a true worſhipping *Congregation* (for they conſiſt of many thouſand congregations which we had never local communion with: And as true worſhipping congregations in *ſpecie*, we ſtill hold communion with them in mind, ſo far as they are ſuch indeed: But in two ſenſes we ſeparate from them: Firſt, as a *Papal Catholick Church*; becauſe in that ſenſe they are *no Church of Chriſt*, but a pack of rebels: Secondly, as *particular Congregations in ſpecie* which have mixed Gods worſhip with falſe doctrine and Idolatrous bread-worſhip and other unlawful things, which by oaths and practiſe they would force thoſe to be guilty of, who will communicate with them. And thus we diſown them only as *neighbour Churches*, that never were their *lawful ſubjects*, but bear our teſtimony againſt *their ſin.* And our forefathers who were members of their Churches,

departed to save themselves from their iniquity, and because they were refused by themselves, unless they would lie & forswear & be idolaters, and communicate with them in their sin. Nor would they then, nor will they to this day admit any into communion of their particular Churches, as such, who will not first come in to their pretended Universal Church, which is no Church, and worse than none. If this answer seem not plain and full to you, it is because you understand not Christian sense and reason.

DIRECT. X.

Expect not that any one lawfully received by Baptism into the Christian Church, should be cast out of it, or denied the priviledge of members, but according to the rules of Christian discipline, by the power of the Keyes, that is; for obstinate impenitency in a gross or scandalous sin, which the person is proved to be guilty of: and this after private and publick admonition, and tender patient exhortation to Repentance.

HEre are two things which I desire you to observe. First, what is Christs appointed way, for removing members from the Communion of the Church. Secondly, how great a sin it is to remove them by a contrary and arbitrary way of our own presumptuous invention.

First,

First, It is here supposed that the person is not a professed *Apostate*: For there needeth no *casting out* of such. He that turneth *Turk* or *Heathen*, or openly renounceth Christianity, or ceaseth the Profession of it, doth go out of the Church himself, and needeth not to be *cast* out. Unless it be any Tyrant who will come to the Communion in scorn, while he professeth but to shew his lawless will. He that *seeketh* the Communion of the Church in sobriety, thereby professeth himself a Christian. and for such as being Baptized continue this profession, Christs way of rejecting them is plainly described in the Gospel. *Mat.* 18. 15, 16. *If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone. If he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother: But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more; that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established: And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it to the Church: But if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be to thee as a Heathen man, or a Publican.*

Tit. 3. 10. *A man that is an Heretick after the first and second admonition reject.*

1 Cor. 5. *Ye are puffed up and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed, might be taken away from among you: For I verily as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already as though I were present, concerning him, that hath so done this deed; in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together and my spirit; with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ to deliver such a one to Satan.* — V. 7. *Purge out therefore the old leaven* — v. 11, 12, 13. *With such a one no not to eat* — *Do*

not ye judge them that are within? — Therefore put away from among your ſelves that wicked perſon.

By all this it is plain that the Church muſt exerciſe a regular courſe of juſtice, with every perſon that it ſhall reject: He muſt firſt be told *privately* of his fault, and then before two or three; (unleſs, at leaſt, the open notoriety make the private admonition needleſs) And then it muſt be told the Church: And the Church muſt with compaſſion, tenderneſs and patience, and yet with the authority of the Lord Jeſus and the powerful evidence of truth, convince him and perſwade him to repent: And he muſt not be rejected, till after all this, he obſtinately refuſe to hear the Church, that is, to Repent, as they exhort him.

Note here, that no ſin will warrant you to caſt out the ſinner, unleſs it be ſeconded with Impenitency: It is not ſimply as a drunkard, or a fornicator or ſwearer, that any one is to be rejected: but as an *impenitent* drunkard, or *fornicator*, or *ſwearer*, &c.

Alſo that it is not all *impenitency* that will warrant their rejection: But only *impenitency after the Churches admonition.*

Note alſo, that no private perſon may expect, that any offender be caſt out, either becauſe his ſin is known *to him*, or becauſe he is commonly famed to be guilty, till the thing be *proved* by ſufficient witneſs.

Yea that the admonition given him muſt be proved, as well as the fault which he committed.

Yea if all the town do know him to be guilty, and witneſs prove that he hath been privately admoniſhed,

moniſhed, he may not be rejected till he be *heard ſpeak for himſelf*, and till he refuſe alſo the publike admonition.

This is Chriſts order, whoſe *wiſdom*, and *mercy*, and *authority* are ſuch, as may well cauſe us to take his way as beſt. And yet the ignorance or raſhneſs of many profeſſors is ſuch, that they would have all this order of Chriſt overturned: And ſome of them muſt have ſuch a drunkard and ſuch a ſwearer kept away and rejected, before ever they admoniſhed them or exhorted them to Repentance, or prove that any one elſe hath done it; much more before they have told the Church, or proved that he hath neglected the Churches admonition. And ſome go ſo much further, that they muſt have all the Churches taken for no Churches, till they have gathered them a new; and muſt have all the Pariſh at once rejected (till they have gathered out ſome few again) without any ſuch order of proceeding with them, as Chriſt appointeth: It may be a thouſand ſhall be caſt out at once, when never a one of them was thus admoniſhed.

Obj. *They were never members of a true Church; and therefore need no caſting out.*

Anſ. Were they never baptized? or is not baptiſme Chriſts appointed means of admiſſion into his Church.

Obj. *They were baptized in their Infancy, and afterward bred up in ignorance and profaneneſs, & know not what their baptiſme is, nor ever ſoberly owned it.*

Anſw. Either they ſtill profeſs themſelves Chriſtians, and attend Gods ordinances with the Church or not: If not, then they are Apoſtates;

ſtates: If they do, then they do own their Baptiſmal Covenant by a continued *profeſſion*: If you accuſe them of not *underſtanding* this *profeſſion*, or of living contrary to it, you muſt proceed againſt them one by one as Chriſt appointeth; and firſt admoniſh them, and then tell the Church; and not ſay *they* are ignorant and profane, and expect upon your ſaying ſo, they ſhould all be unchurched. Yea if you prove them ignorant, if they be willing to learn, it is fitter preſently to inſtruct them than to excommunicate them: nor do you reade of any excommunicated for meer ignorance. But we confeſs that in groſs ignorance, they may ſhew themſelves uncapable of ſacramental Communion, and may be denied it while they are learning to know what they do. But the mercy of God hath made points abſolutely neceſſary ſo few, that this may be done in a ſhort time, if the Perſons be willing, and the Teachers diligent, and ſufficiently numerous for that work. And though it is to be lamented, that in many great City-Pariſhes, the Miniſters are not enough to catechize the twentieth part of the people, yet for the generality of Pariſhes through the Land, if Catechizing were uſed as it might be, there would not any great numbers be long kept away for meer ignorance. And he that is the cauſe of his Pariſhes ignorance by neglecting Catechizing and perſonal conference, & then unchurcheth them, for the ignorance which he is guilty of, doth take but a prepoſterous courſe, for his own account and comfort, or for the people's good.

Obj. *But they refuſe to learn or be inſtructed.*

Anſ.

Anſ. If that and their groſs ignorance be proved together, as you may delay them for the later, ſo you may reject them for the former; becauſe it ſheweth their impenitence: But this muſt be *proved* of them, and not affirmed without proof.

Obj. *But their Baptiſme made them members only of the Univerſal Church, and not of any particular Church: And therefore will not prove them ſuch.*

Anſw. True: But he that is a member of the Univerſal Church, is fit to be received into a particular Church; And there wanteth no more but mutual conſent: And if he have ſtatedly joyned with a particular Church in ordinary communion, Conſent hath bin manifeſted, and he is a member of that particular Church, and muſt not be rejected by it, but in Chriſts way. And this is the common caſe in *England*. The perſons who were baptized in Infancy, were at once received into the Univerſal Church, and into ſome particular Church, & have held communion at age with both; and have right to that communion till they are publikely proved to have loſt their right.

And if we had no Churches, but particular Churches were to be gathered anew, yet he that is a baptized member of the Univerſal Church, and conſenteth to communion with that particular Church in all the ordinances of Chriſts appointment, doth lay a ſufficient claim to his admiſſion, and cannot lawfully be refuſed, unleſs he ſtand juſtly cenſured by a Church which formerly he was in. Yet this we confeſs, that he can be no member of that particular Church, who ſubjecteth not himſelf to the *particular Paſtors* of it, and to the *neceſſary acts* or *parts* of *their*

Office

Office and Miniſtration: Becauſe he denieth his own conſent.

11. The ſinfulneſs of unchurching Perſons or Pariſhes, without Chriſts way of regular proceſs, conſiſteth in all theſe following parts. 1. It is a caſting off the Laws of the great Law-giver of the Church, and ſo a contempt of his authority, wiſdome and goodneſs; and a making of ourſelves *greater*, or *wiſer*, or *holier* than he. 2. It is groſs *injuſtice*, to deprive men of ſo great Priviledges without any ſufficient proof of their forfeiture! It is worſe than to turn whole Pariſhes out of their Houſes and Poſſeſſions, without any lawful proceſs or proof; upon rumours or private affirmations that they are Delinquents. It is not doing as we would be done by, what if any ſhould ſay of you, that you are Heretical and deny Fundamental Truths? Or what if they ſhould ſay of a ſeparated Church, that they are generally Hereticks or of wicked lives (as the Heathens did of the ancient Chriſtians) and therefore that they are *no Church*, nor to be communicated with; would you not think that they ſhould every one *perſonally* be accuſed, and proof brought againſt them, and that they ſhould ſpeak for themſelves, before they were thus condemned? 3. And it is an aggravated Crime in them, that ſo much cry down *Church-tyranny* in others, to be thus notoriouſly guilty of it themſelves? what greater injuſtice and tyranny can there be, than that all mens Chriſtianity and Church-rights, ſhall be judged Null, upon the cenſures and rumours of ſuſpitious men, without any juſt proof or lawful tryal? That it ſhall be in the power of every one, who

who hath but uncharitableneſs enough to think evil of his neighbours, or to believe reports againſt their innocency to caſt them out of the Family of God, and to unchriſten and unchurch men arbitrarily at their pleaſure? That any man that is but unconſcionable enough to ſay [They are all *ignorant* and *prophane*] ſhall expect to have his neighbours excommunicated. 4. It maketh all Churches to be lubricous and uncertain ſhadows: when a cenſorious perſon may unchurch them at his pleaſure. What you ſay of others, another may ſay of you; and as juſtly expect to be believed. 5. It unavoidably bringeth in uncurable *diviſions*: For there is no certain rule of juſtice with ſuch perſons: and therefore they know not who are to be received to their Communion, and who not: And the ſame man that one thinketh is to be rejected and kept out, another will think is to be received: And who knoweth which of them is to be obeyed. If one ſay that a Pariſh is a Church, and another ſay that they are to be unchurched, who knoweth which of them to believe. 6. It is a reproach to the Church and Chriſtian religion, when we tell the world that, that we have not ſo much *juſtice* and *equity* among us, as Heathens have in their worldly ſocieties. 7. It depriveth the Church of the ſolace of her Communion, when the beſt man is not ſure, but a cenſorious perſon may at his pleaſure turn him out as unworthy. 8. It greatly wrongeth Jeſus Chriſt, who ſo dearly loveth the weakeſt of his flock; and hath purchaſed their priviledges at ſo dear a rate: and whoſe body is maymed, when any of his members are cut off: and who taketh the

the wrong that is done them as done unto himſelf. Theſe are the great virtues of that cenſorious zeal, which unchurches Perſons or Pariſhes without juſt tryal and proof, upon rumours of fame, or their own ſurmiſes.

DIRECT. XI.

Underſtand well what is the power of the Keys, and what the Paſtoral offiae is, as they are the Governours of the Church entruſted by Chriſt with the power of admiſſion and rejection; that ſo you may know how far you are to reſt in the judgement of the Paſtors, and may not attempt to take any part of their office to your ſelves.

THe power of the *Keyes*, is the power of *taking into* the *Church*, and of *Governing* it, and of *caſting* out: Both in reſpect to *preſent Order*, and in reſpect to future happineſs, by a Miniſterial declaration of the ſenſe of the Goſpel, concerning the ſtate of ſuch as they.

The power of *Baptizing*, is the power *of the Keyes* for *reception into* the Church. The private members have not the power of *baptizing*, nor were the Paſtors ever appointed to do it, by their adviſe, conſent or vote. Therefore the private members have not the power of the Keyes for admiſſion, And it is moſt apparent in the Goſpel, that the Keyes for *admiſſion* and for *excluſion* are given

given into the ſame hands, and not one to the Miniſters and another to the Flock: Therefore the people that have not the firſt, have not the later.

For full proof of this obſerve the meaning of theſe Texts. Iſa. 22. 22. *And the Key of the houſe of David will I lay upon his ſhoulder; ſo he ſhall open and none ſhall ſhut: and he ſhall ſhut and none ſhall open.* Iſa. 9. 6. *The Government ſhall be upon his ſhoulder.* Mat. 16. 19. *I will give thee the Keyes of the Kingdome of Heaven; and whatſoever thou ſhalt bind on earth ſhall be bound in heaven,* &c. Mat. 18. 18. *Verily I ſay unto you, whatſoever ye bind on earth ſhall be bound,* &c. Joh. 20. 23. *Whoſe ſoever ſins ye do remit, they are remitted to them; and whoſe ſoever ſins ye retain they are retained.* Math. 28. 19. *Go and teach all Nations baptizing them,* &c. Joh. 20. 21. *As my Father hath ſent me, euen ſo ſend I you.* Acts 1. 16, 17. Judas *was numbred with us, and had obtained part of this Miniſtry.* Acts 20. 28. *Take heed to your ſelves and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghoſt hath made you Overſeers, to feed the Church of God* — Rom. 1. 1. Paul *a Miniſter of Jeſus Chriſt, called an Apoſtle, ſeparated to the Goſpel of God.* 1 Cor. 4. 1. *Let a man ſo eſteem of us as of the Miniſters of Chriſt, and Stewards of the myſteries of God.* Acts 14. 23. *They ordained them Elders in every Church.* Tit. 1. 3. *Ordain Elders in every City, as I appointed thee.* V. 7. *A Biſhop muſt be blameleſs as the Steward of God.* 1 Tim. 3. 5. *For if a man know not how to rule his own houſe, how ſhall he take care of the Church of God?* 1 Tim. 5. 17. *Let the Elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour* — 1 Pet. 5. 2. *Feed the flock of God*

which

which is among you, taking the overſight thereof — Heb. 13. 7, 17, 24. *Remember them which have the rule over you, who have ſpoken to you the word of God* — *Obey them that have the rule over you and ſubmit your ſelves; for they watch for your ſouls* — *ſalute them that have the rule over you* — 1 Theſ. 5. 12, 13. *We beſeech you brethren to know them* (that is, acknowledge their power and labours) *that labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admoniſh you, and to eſteem them very highly in love for their works ſake, and to be at peace among your ſelves.*

Read theſe with judgement, and then believe if you can, that the power of the Keys of Government is in the People. Shew us what text doth give them that power? and where the Scripture calleth them to exerciſe it by Votes? Or where God requireth ability in them for Church-government? or where he calleth them to leave their Callings and attend this work? When thoſe that muſt perform it, he ſeparateth to it as by office, and calleth them to *give themſelves wholly* thereunto. 1 *Tim.* 4. 15, 16. Tell us when the people were authorized to baptize? or to rule the Church, that is, themſelves.

Obj. Mat. 18. 15. *Tell the Church: if he hear not the Church*, &c. *Anſw.* Many Expoſitors think that by the *Church there* is meant the *Miniſters* only, by this reaſon: The Church that muſt *teach* muſt be *heard*: the *Church* that muſt be *heard* muſt be *told*: But that is only the Paſtors and not the People: *Ergo* — But I eaſily grant you, that the word [*Church*] there ſignifieth the whole Congregation (as Dr. *Taylor* in his Second Diſſwaſive

ſwaſive hath well ſhewed) But it is as an Organized body only. And ſo the Office is to be performed only by the Organical part; and not by any of the reſt. When I ſay to a man [*Hear me*] I do not mean that he ſhould hear me with his *eyes*, but only with his *ears*: And when I bid him *See* or *Read*. I bid him not do it with his *ears* but with his *eyes*. Nor do the eyes *receive* this power from the feet or hands, but immediately from the Head: Though if they were ſeparated from the body they could not retain it. So if another Kingdome ſend to *England*, to deſire an Army of Men to help them, they mean the King only as the *Commander* of them, and the people as the executors of his Command. So when you are bid to *tell* the Church, it is *quatenus audita*, that it muſt be told; And when you are bid to *hear* it, it is as *Teaching* that it muſt be heard. So that this talketh not of any Government in the people, either to *uſe* or to *give*.

Obj. 1 *Cor.* 5. *Paul* biddeth all the Church *to put from among them that wicked perſon.*

Anſw. Note; that *Paul* paſſeth the ſentence firſt himſelf [*I have judged as if I were preſent* (not that *you deliver*, but) *to deliver ſuch an one to Satan*: And therefore he doth this in himſelf [*in the name of the Lord Jeſus*] and ſuppoſeth himſelf *among them in ſpirit and power* when they do it [*and my ſpirit with the power of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.*] 2. And I have ſaid, He ſpeaketh to an organized Church, which had two parts, and accordingly two works to do: The *Ruling* part was to *put away the Offender* by *Judgement*, or *Sentence*; And the *people* were all to *put him away*, by actual *ſhunning* his Commu-

Communion, which is but the obeying of that ſentence. If the King ſend to a Corporation to execute any Law, he meaneth not that *all perſons* muſt do it in the like manner; but the Magiſtrates by Command, and the people by obeying them, and executing their Commands. If I deſire a man to tranſcribe me a Book and bring it me; I mean not that every part of him ſhall herein have the ſame office; But that he *read* it only with his *eyes*, and underſtand it with his *reaſon*, and tranſcribe it with his hand, and travel with his feet. The Paſtors only excommunicate by Judgement or Sentence; and the people by obedient execution of it.

Obj. *Who then ſhall caſt out an Heretick or pernicious Paſtor, if he himſelf muſt be rejected?*

Anſw. 1. The Neighbour Paſtors ſhall *renounce Communion* with him, and reject him from their *neighbour Communion*. And they ſhall warn that people to avoid him (by virtue of the common relation which they have to the univerſal Church of Chriſt.) 2. The people (as *Cyprian* determineth) are bound to *forſake him*: not by an act of *Government* over him or themſelves; but by an act of *obedience to God*, and of *ſelf-preſervation*; As Souldiers muſt forſake a trayterous General, or Seamen a perfidious or deſperately unskilful Pilot that would caſt them all away. As the people did always chooſe their Paſtors to Govern them, ſo may they in ſuch a caſe refuſe them, without uſurping any Government themſelves.

Well! Now let us ſee what influence this truth

truth ſhould have upon your Church-Communion.

Do you ſay that your neighbours are not to be accounted members of the Church, nor to be communicated with? Who took them into the Church by Baptiſm? Was it not a Miniſter of Chriſt? If you ſay no, you muſt prove your accuſation. If you grant it, was it not his *Office* ſo to do? Hath not God made his Miniſters Judges whom they are to baptize? And afterward alſo whom to catechiſe and inſtruct and admit to the communion of the Church? There is no doubt of it. If then they are admitted by an entruſted Officer, will you venture to uſurp the place, yea and to do them the wrong to ſay that they are no members? Is it any of your truſt or work? I pray you mark what a mercy it is to you, that the Officers and not the private members are entruſted with this work. Firſt, if it were *your work*, you muſt *ſtudy* and be able to perform it. Secondly, you muſt *watch for it*, and *conſtantly attend* it. If a Heretick pervert the Text of Scripture, you muſt convince him by your skil in the Originals or in the ſenſe. How many hundred or thouſand perſons are there in a Pariſh to be tried? The worſt of them muſt have a hearing and juſt trial at leaſt, before you can refuſe him lawfully: And how accurately muſt this difficult work be done, that the weakeſt be not denied his right, nor the unfit admitted? How long muſt a ſinner be admoniſhed and exhorted to repentance? And are *you able* and *willing* to leave all your callings, to do all this?

If the *Miniſter* that doth it, muſt lay by the

businesse of the world, how think you that you can do the same without laying by your worldly businesse? If *he* must have so many *years learning* and preparation, can *you* do it *without*? Mistake not, if it is not for *Sermons* only that Ministers need all their learning and labour; but also for the *discipline* and *guidance* of the flocks. Thirdly, and if it be *your work*, *you* must be *accountable* for it before God. And do you not fear such a reckoning? And if these busie people had their wish, would they not be in a worse case than the most dumb and lazy Minister?

Consider it well, and you will find that you are not at all bound *to know* what the spiritual state of any man is, as he is to joyn in Church-communion with you, but upon *your Pastors trust* and *word*. Whether their understanding be sufficient at their admittance, you are not any where called to try: but the Pastor is: And if he have admitted them, you are to rest in his judgment (unless you would undertake the office your selves) whether their profession of faith and repentance be serious and credible, you are not called to try and judge: But if your Pastor have admitted them, he hath numbred them with the visible Christians: And it is the *credibility* of the *Pastor* that you have to consider; and by him you must judge of the credibility of the professour, and not immediately by your own trial. Who are the persons that you shall meet at a Sacrament or in publike Communion, you are not at all required to try; And if you never saw them before or heard them speak, you may perform your duty nevertheless: Indeed if as a *neighbour* you are called

called to instruct or counsel or comfort them, you must do it: But there may be five thousand in one Church with you, whose names or faces you are not bound to know; but to rest in the knowledge of them to whom the keyes are committed, who according to their office take them in.

Obj. *But what if they are notoriously wicked? Must I be blind?*

Answ. No: you must do your best by neighbourly watchfulness and help (though not by Pastoral Government) to reform all about you whom you are able to do good to. And if you know them to be so bad, you must privately admonish them, as is proved; and then if they hear not, tell the Church: But if you see a man in the Church at the Sacrament, or a thousand men, who are unreformed, and you know it not, you have no reason to avoid the communion of such: And if there be a thousand in the Church whose case you are strangers to, this may be no sin of yours, and should be no impediment of your communion.

Obj. *But what if carnal negligent Ministers will let in all into the Church by Baptism and give them the Lords Supper? Shall it be thus in their power to corrupt the Church? And must we joyn with them and take no care of it?*

Answ. There is no person in any office or trust, but may too easily abuse it: And the more noble the work and trust is, the greater is the sin and calamity of such abuse. And no doubt but a bad unfaithful Minister is one of the greatest sinners on earth, and one of the most pernicious plagues to the Church. Which could not be, un-

leſs it were in his power to do very much hurt. But it will not follow that therefore you muſt take his place, and become the Church Governours, or try all the peoples fitneſs your ſelves. If a Judge be bad, you may ſay, what an intollerable thing is it, that one man ſhall have power to give away mens eſtates, and take away the lives of the innocent, and to acquit the guilty.] But for all that you muſt not mend it, by ſtepping up into the judgement ſeat your ſelf, and ſaying, that you or the reſt of the people will do it better. Some body muſt be truſted with it. If you are fitteſt, offer your ſelf to the office. The thing that you muſt do is, to do your beſt to deliver the Church from ſo bad a Paſtor; Uſe all your wiſdome and diligence to amend him: And if you cannot do that, uſe all your intereſt to get him out, and get a better: And if you cannot do that, deliver your own ſoul from him, by removing to a better, if you are free; But if as ſervants or children or wives you are under another Government which reſtraineth you, be patient, and uſe ſuch means as God provideth for you. This is the true way of your Church-duty, and not to think that you muſt have a knowledge of the Godlineſs of all that you communicate with; or that you muſt refuſe communion if the Paſtor be remiſs and negligent.

Obj. *But will it not be my ſin if I communicate with ſuch as I know to be notoriouſly wicked? when a little leaven, leaveneth the lump.*

Anſw. It will be your ſin if you obey not Chriſt, *Mat.* 18. 15. in admoniſhing them; and ſo if it be long of you, that they are not removed: or

or if you do not your duty to reform the Paſtor or remove him. But otherwiſe if they be there without your fault, it is no more your ſin to communicate with ſuch men; than it is to live and converſe with fellow ſervants that are wicked; when it is not *you*, but your *Maſter* that hath the choice of them.

And the *leavening* of the *lump* which the Text ſpeaketh of, is the tempting of others to the like ſin; and not that the innocent ſhall be held guilty of it: nor were the words ſpoken to the people to perſwade them to do the Paſtors work, or to ſeparate from the Church; but to the Paſtors to perſwade them to caſt out the ſinner; and to the people to perſwade them to execute their Sentence, (and the Apoſtles in particular.)

It would rule and quiet people, if they knew the truſt and work of the Paſtors, from their own.

DIRECT. XII.

Well ſtudy the gracious Nature and Office of Jeſus Chriſt, and his great readineſs to receive thoſe that come to him, though weak in faith; and his backwardneſs to refuſe ſuch Commers; that ſo you may deſire a Church-diſcipline that is ſuitable to the Nature and Office of Chriſt, and to the deſign and tenor of the Goſpel.

CHriſts *outward Diſcipline* is agreeable to his *inward*. As thoſe that *come to him by faith*, be

he *will in no wise cast out* or reject; so those that come to him by *profession* of faith, he would not have his Ministers in any wise reject. And *coming to Christ* when he was personally on earth, did signifie the following of him in presence, as well as believing in him: Just so far as men will come, so far they shall be received by Christ: If they will come but *towards* him, he will not put them back. If they will come but to his *visible Church*, by a dead profession, he would not have his Ministers repulse them. The outward privileges of the visible Church which they come to, they shall possess. If they will come over to the Church of the regenerate, they shall be saved. But where ever they stop it shall be their own doing. Many came to Christ when he was on earth, whom he never repulsed, though he was marvelled at and grudged at for entertaining them. Some came so far as to own his Name, and did Miracles by it, that yet did not follow him: whom the Apostles would have hindered, but Christ reproved them, *Mar.* 9. 38. *Luk.* 9. 49. Some came only to receive a Cure of their Diseases from him, whom his Disciples sometimes repulsed, but so did not he: when little children were brought to him, his Disciples rebuked those that brought them, as thinking them unfit for his reception: but Christ rebuked them for their forbidding of such guests. When he eat and drank with publicans and sinners, and when he received the kindness of a woman that had bin a great sinner, the Pharisees censured him therefore as ungodly: But yet he would not abate his clemency. Many at this day can scarce digest it, that he sent forth a *Judas* to preach

preach the Gospel, when he knew that he was a thief and an hypocrite, and foreknew that he was a Son of perdition, and would betray him, and that the Devil would enter into him; yea, knew that he was a Devil, *Joh.* 6. 70. & 13. 2. yea, that this *Judas* should be one of the twelve select Apostles, and one of the Family of Christ. Yet Christ repulsed him not; And if he did not partake of the Sacrament at his last Supper, it was not because Christ did turn him out, but because he went away himself. And accordingly the Apostles received 3000 at once into the Church, upon their sudden profession of repentance, even of such as had killed the Lord of life. And though *Simon Magus* would not come out of the gall of bitterness, and bond of iniquity, yet was he not kept out of the visible Church, when he professed to believe and desired baptism.

Indeed if men will not come so far as to the *profession of true faith* and *repentance*, they are not to be received into the Church; Because the Church is a Society of *such Professours*: And if they will not come, they cannot be received. The Church and Sacrament must not be altered, and made another thing than Christ made it, for the receiving of another sort of men. We must not do as some that would have no *profession of saving faith and repentance*, but only a *consent to learn*, required of them that are baptized; and so baptism changed into another sort, which Christ never instituted and the Church never used to this day. But if Christians had well studied the compassions of a Saviour, and the tenour of his Gospel, and his practice upon earth, and instead of a surly flying

he *will in no wise cast out* or reject; so those that come to him by *profession* of faith, he would not have his Ministers in any wise reject. And *coming to Christ* when he was personally on earth, did signifie the following of him in presence, as well as believing in him: Just so far as men will come, so far they shall be received by Christ? If they will come but *towards* him, he will not put them back. If they will come but to his *visible Church*, by a dead profession, he would not have his Ministers repulse them. The outward privileges of the visible Church which they come to, they shall possess. If they will come over to the Church of the regenerate, they shall be saved. But where ever they stop it shall be their own doing. Many came to Christ when he was on earth, whom he never repulsed, though he was marvelled at and grudged at for entertaining them. Some came so far as to own his Name, and did Miracles by it, that yet did not follow him: whom the Apostles would have hindered, but Christ reproved them, *Mar.* 9. 38. *Luk.* 9. 49. Some came only to receive a Cure of their Diseases from him, whom his Disciples sometimes repulsed, but so did not he: when little children were brought to him, his Disciples rebuked those that brought them, as thinking them unfit for his reception: but Christ rebuked them for their forbidding of such guests. When he eat and drank with publicans and sinners, and when he received the kindness of a woman that had bin a great sinner, the Phatisees, censured him therefore as ungodly: But yet he would not abate his clemency. Many at this day can scarce digest it, that he sent forth a *Judas* to preach

preach the Gospel, when he knew that he was a thief and an hypocrite, and foreknew that he was a Son of perdition, and would betray him, and that the Devil would enter into him; yea, knew that he was a Devil, *Joh.* 6. 70. & 13. 2. yet, that this *Judas* should be one of the twelve select Apostles, and one of the Family of Christ. Yet Christ repulsed him not; And if he did not partake of the Sacrament at his last Supper, it was not because Christ did turn him out, but because he went away himself. And accordingly the Apostles received 3000 at once into the Church, upon their sudden profession of repentance, even of such as had killed the Lord of life. And though *Simon Magus* would not come out of the gall of bitterness, and bond of iniquity, yet was he not kept out of the visible Church, when he professed to believe and desired baptism.

Indeed if men will not come so far as to the *profession* of *true faith* and *repentance*, they are not to be received into the Church; Because the Church is a Society of *such Professours*: And if they will not come, they cannot be received. The Church and Sacrament must not be altered, and made another thing than Christ made it, for the receiving of another sort of men. We must not do as some that would have no *profession* of *saving faith and repentance*, but only a *consent to learn*, required of them that are baptized; and so baptism changed into another sort, which Christ never instituted and the Church never used to this day. But if Christians had well studied the compassions of a Saviour, and the tenour of his Gospel, and his practice upon earth, and instead of a surly flying

from their neighbours, and groundless censuring them, were possessed themselves, with that love and tenderness which is the Evangelical temper, and the image of their Lord, it would put an end to many of our divisions, and bring us nearer the truth and one another.

DIRECT. XIII.

Yet, lest you run into the worse extream, remember still that the destroying of sin, and the sanctifying of mans nature and life by recovering us to the obedience and Love of God, was the design and work of the Redeemer: And that Holiness and Peace must go together: And that the outward order and discipline of the visible Church, must be subservient to the inward spirituality and prosperity of the regenerate Church: And no such favour must be shewed to sinners, as favoureth and strengthneth their sin, and hindereth the increase of holiness.

IT is woful work which ungodly Pastors make in the visible Church, under the name and pretense of *Unity*, *Concord*, *Peace* and *Order*; when an enemy to true holiness, hath the managing of these, you may easily imagine how they will be used: But sad experience hath told the *Christian* world, these 1300 years more doleful things than could otherwise have bin imagined. The compassion which Christ shewed to sinners was to convert and

and save them from their sin: But the compassion which carnal Pastors shew them, is to harden them in their sin, and make them believe that repentance and holiness are but hypocrisie or needless things. The *Unity* and *Concord* which Christ intended, was a *Unity* in himself and a *Concord* in holy Obedience to his Lawes: But it is a *Unity* in the will of man and a *Concord* in obeying the Dictates of the proud, which Treacherous Pastors do require. It is a *Peaceable* progress of the Gospel, and an *unanimous* endeavor to convert and sanctifie and save the world, which Christ requireth us to promote: But it is a *Peaceable* enjoyment of their own prosperity, wealth and honour, and a *peaceable* forbearance of a holy life, which Wolvish Pastors do desire. It is an *Orderly* management of holy doctrine, worship and conversation, for the edification of the flock, and the increase of godliness, which Christ commandeth. But it is an absolute obedience to their wills, and an exact observance of their new-made Religions, and needless scandalous inventions, and an adoring of their titles and robes of honour, covering their ignorance, pride and sensuality, which Church-tyrants call the *Order* of the Church. All Christs indulgent tenderness and Discipline, are but to further his Holy designe, of killing sin and sanctifying souls. But the *Images* of Piety, Government, Unity, Peace and Order, which Hypocrites and Pharisees set up, are devised engines to destroy the Life and serious practice of the things themselves, and are set up in enmity against spirituality and holiness, that there might be no other

other Piety, Government, Unity, Peace or Order in the Church, but these lifeless Images.

It is far from the mind of Christ, that no difference should be made between the *Holy* and the *profane*, the precious and the vile: Or that serious piety should be suppressed or discouraged, or faithful preachers hindered from promoting it, or ignorant graceless Ministers countenanced, under pretence of *Peace* or *Order*. The design of Christ was not like *Mahomet's*, to get himself an earthly Kingdom, and numerous followers meerly to cry up his name: And therefore he will not indulge men in their sins, nor abate or alter the conditions of his Covenant, to win disciples: He will have his Ministers deal plainly with all to whom they preach, and let them know that without *self-denial* and *forsaking all* (in estimation and resolution) and a willing exchange of earth for heaven, they cannot be his true Disciples: Nor without a *Profest consent* to thus much, they cannot be his *visible profest* Disciples. But all that will not repent must perish. And therefore in their Baptism they must profess a renunciation of all competitors. His Ministers also must impartially exercise the Keyes which he hath committed to their trust, and must not fear the faces of men, who at most are able but to kill the body. *Luk.* 12. 4. They must discern between the righteous and the wicked; and draw all scandalous sinners to repentance, or else exclude them from the communion of Saints, that the world may see that Christ is no friend to prophane persons, or sensual fleshly brutes. As *Chrysostome* commandeth the *Presbyters* not to give the body and blood of Christ to the unworthy, though he were the greatest Commander or wore a Diadem, and professeth that he would suffer his own blood to be shed, before he would give the blood of Christ to the unworthy: And as blessed *Paul* would become all things to all men to win them, and commandeth us not to please our selves, but to please our neighbours for their good to edification: And yet when it came to the flattering of men in their sins, he saith that if he should so *please men*, he should be no longer the servant of Christ. And as to his *own interest* in mans esteem, he saith, *With me it is a small thing to be judged of you, or of mans judgment.* Rom. 15. 1, 2, 3. 1 Cor. 10. 33. Gal. 1. 10. 2 Tim. 2. 4. 1 Cor. 4. 3. Take heed therefore of pretending Unity, order, peace, or charity, against the strictest obedience of Gods laws, or against the faithful preaching of the Gospel, and exercise of true Church-discipline, or against the necessity of the ancient profession of saving *faith and true-repentance* in all that will be admitted to the communion of the Church: It is not an ungodly unity, peace or order that we plead for.

DIRECT.

DIRECT. XIV.

Though your Governours and not you, must judge what persons shall be of your publike Church-communion, yet it is you that must judge who are fit or unfit for your private company and familiarity. Here therefore exercise your strictness in your own part.

AS it is not *you*, but the King that must judge, who shall be of the *same Kingdome* with you: nor the *servant* but the *Master*, that must choose who shal be in the *family* with him: Nor the *scholler* but the *Schoolmaster* that must choose who shal be of the *same School* with him: So it is not *you*, but your *Pastor* that must judg who shall be of the *same Church* with you. As to the Universal visible Church, this is confest by all: And there is no reason why it should be denied of *particular Churches*, as is proved. But who shall be your *Pastors* or your *Masters*, your husbands or your wives, if you are yet *free*, you your selves must be the choosers: And who shall be your intimate companions, or your bosome friends: Here therefore make as strict a choice as you can. If you meet a prophane person at the *Lords Table*, it is his own fault or the Pastors: But if you keep company needlesly with such, or *marry* such, it is your *own* fault. If the Pastor do not excommunicate them, you may choose not to be *familiar* with them: Though you must meet them at the *Church* and *pray* with them; you need not meet them

them at the *Ale-house* and *drink* with them. Though you may not with a few of the most godly separate from the publike communion of all the rest; yet may you keep a more intimate familiarity with those few than with all the rest. And if you will consider, this is all that is necessary to your own duty, and that which is best for your own edification. Keep thus to a strictness within the bounds of your own place and calling, and God will bless you in such a strictness.

DIRECT. XV.

Understand well how much it hath pleased God, to lay all mens good or evil, happiness or misery, upon their own choice: And observe the reasons of it, that you may not oppose this order of God.

THough God by his grace must change the perverse disposition of mens wills, before they will make a gracious choice; yet it is most certain, that the teachings, commands, exhortations and reproofs of God, are directed to the *will* of man: And that the promises and threatnings, mercies and judgements, are used to move and change the will: And that in the tenor of his Laws and Covenants Christ hath set Life and Death before men, and put their *Happiness* in their own choice; and that no man shall have better or worse than he made choice of: that is, none shall be either happy or miserable, but as they

they did *choose* or *refuse*, the *causes* of happiness or misery. And the reason of this is, because *Natural free-will*, was part of the *Natural Image* of God on *Adam*; and it is as natural to a man to be a *free-agent*, as to be *Reasonable*. And God will govern *Man as Man*, agreeably to his *nature*.

Therefore do not wonder if *Church privilledges* are principally left to mens *own wills* or *choice*, when their *salvation* is left to it.

Indeed God would not have any man admitted into the Church and to its communion, in *his own way*, and *on his own terms*: The *way* and *terms* are of Christs appointment: That they must *Profess Faith and Repentance* is his appointed *condition*: that the *Minister* must be the *publike judge* of this profession; and accordingly receive them solemnly by *Baptism*, and that they must enter under the hand of the *Key-bearers* of the Church; All this is of Christs institution. But whether they will make this profession or not? and whether they will make it in *truth* or in *falshood*; and whether they will live according to it, or play the hypocrites and live contrary to it; These are at their own choice. And good reason; for the *gain* or *loss* must be their own. If any be in the Communion of the Church, who either *never made profession* of Christianity, or who is *proved* before them to have *apostatized* from that profession, or to live *impenitently* in any *gross sin*, after the *Churches admonition*, it is the Pastors fault; and *yours* if it be by the neglect of *your* duty. But if any *other* be there it is their *own fault*, and the loss and hurt must be their own. If any one that professeth

professeth Christianity, ignorantly, unbelievingly, and hypocritically be there: or if they come to the Sacrament whilest they live in secret or open sin, before they have been openly admonished by the Church, it is their own sin; and not you, but they shall bear the blame. God leaveth such matters to their own choice: and as they choose they speed. And for us to grudge at this order of God, is but to quarrel at wisdome and goodness, and to correct Gods order by our disorder. The man that came in without a wedding garment, is blamed, and bound hand and foot, and punished: But the Minister that called him in and admitted him, is not blamed; because he did as he was bidden: He went to the high-ways and hedges and compelled them (by importunity) to come in, that the House might be filled: Nor are any that came in *with him* blamed, for having communion with such: For *they* were in *their places*, and did as they were exhorted to do. And so will it be in the case that is before us.

DIRECT.

DIRECT. XVI.

Though the profession of Christianity which entitleth men to Church-communion, must be credible: yet remember that there are divers Degrees of credibility; and that every Profession which is not proved false is credible in such a degree as must be accepted by the Church.

PRofession of Christianity is every mans Church-title. No man is to prove the sincerity of his own profession; nor may the Church require such proof at his hands; For how can a man prove to *another* the sincerity of his *own heart*? But the *fuller* testimony he giveth of it, the *better* it is: And therefore none should *refuse* to make his own profession, as *fully credible* to the Church as he is able, nor is the Church to be blamed for enquiring after the *fullest credibility*, so be it they do it but *ad melius esse*, and not *ad esse*; not laying his *title* upon it, nor refusing him for want of it. But every *profession as such* is *credible* in some degree, which is *not disproved*. Because men are under God, the only competent judges of their own hearts: And the belief of one another is the ground of humane converse: And it is an injury to any man to account him a lyar, without sufficient proof. He that will disprove a mans profession, must prove first, that he doth not tolerably understand what he saith; secondly, or that he speaketh not seriously, but in jest; or not voluntarily,

luntarily, but in hypocrisie by constraint, or for some by end: Thirdly, or that he contradicteth his own words by some more credible words or deeds. And if you never yet thus disproved mens profession of Christianity before the Pastors of the Church and yet cry out against the Pastors for admitting them, you are not *true Reformers*, but *disorderly Mutineers*, and peevish censurers in the Church of Christ. Christs orders, and mens right, and all Church-justice, must not be trodden down and sacrificed to your humour, and arbitrary way.

DIRECT. XVII.

Know how far either Grace or Gifts are necessary to a Minister; that you may give both Grace and Gifts their due.

THere have been two great questions which long have troubled the Church, whether we may take him for a true Minister of Christ, that is *ungodly*? And what measure of *Gifts* is necessary to the being of the Ministry? I have carefully answered them both in my *Disputation of Ordination* long ago, and shall now only say in brief. First, that no *ungodly man* is *so called* to the Ministry, as to *excuse himself* before God for his usurpation and hypocritical administrations. Secondly, But many an ungodly man is *so far* called to the Ministry as that his administrations are all *valid to the Church*, and the *innocent* (so *it* shall not

have the *loſs*. Thirdly, no people ſhould *chooſe* and *prefer* ſuch an ungodly Miniſter before a better. Fourthly, but they ſhould rather *ſubmit* to ſuch than have *none*, when a better cannot (by them) be had. *Judas* had a *place in the Miniſtry* with the Apoſtles, *Act.* 1. 17. And his miniſtration might be valid to others, though his hypocriſie might turn it into ſin to himſelf. And his miniſtry might have been accepted of the people, though they had known his hypocriſie as Chriſt did: But a *ſincere Apoſtle* was to be *preferred* before him.

And for *Gifts*, Firſt the greateſt degree is beſt; and ſecondly, God maketh ſo great uſe of them, that many an hypocrite wi h excellent gifts, doth edifie the Church more than many good men that are ungifted. Thirdly, but that meaſure of Gifts only is neceſſary to the *Being* of a Miniſter without which the *eſſential parts* of his *office* cannot be performed.

Learn therefore to prefer them that have moſt grace and gifts; but not to take them for *no Miniſters* that want *Grace totally*, or want only a *greater degree of Gifts*. And marvel not that *Gifts* are more neceſſary to the validity of miniſtration than Grace is. He may perform the office of a M niſter to the benefit of the Church, that hath no ſaving grace at all: ſo did *Judas*: ſo did thoſe in *Matth.* 7. 21. that propheſied and caſt out devils in Chriſts name, to whom he will yet ſay, Depart from me ye workers of iniquity, I know you not: For *Grace* is to ſave him that poſſeſſeth it: But Gifts are to teach and profit others. Yet *Grace* is an exceeding furtherance of the right and

and ſucceſsful uſe of gifts: For ordinarily he that ſpeaketh from the heart ſpeaketh to the heart; when an unexperienced hypocrite ſpeaketh without life. But ſometimes a dulneſs and want of utterance in the ſincere, and a natural and affected fervency in the hypocrite, with a voluble tongue, do obſcure this difference; and make the hypocrite the more profitable to the Church.

DIRECT. XVIII.

Underſtand well the neceſsity of your Communion with all the Univerſal Church, and wherein it conſiſteth, and how far to be preferred before your Communion with any particular Church.

With the *Univerſal Church myſtical*, you muſt have communion by the *ſame ſpirit*, the *ſame regeneration*, the *ſame Faith* and *Love*, and the *ſame Laws of God*; and *obedience* thereto.

With the *Univerſal Church viſible*, you muſt have communion, in the *ſame Profeſſion* of faith and repentance, and the ſame *baptiſm*, and the ſame *ſort* of *miniſtry* and *publike worſhip*, ſo far as they are *univerſally determined* of by Chriſt. And though you are abſent in body, you muſt be as preſent in ſpirit by conſent, with all the Churches of Chriſt on earth. You muſt have *ſpiritual communion* with the whole *ſpiritual Church*, and *viſible communion in kind* (in the ſame Rule of faith, and kind of worſhip) with all the *viſible* Church; and

Local-presential communion with that *particular Church* where you are present, and with any other where your presence afterwards may be needful; unless they hinder you by unlawful terms.

So that it is not the same *kind* nor *measure* of Communion which you are obliged to hold with all; But you must have Communion with all *men as a man*; and with *neighbours* as a *neighbour*, and with *relations* according to the relations civil or domestical; and with all *true Christians*, as a *true Christian*; and with all *professed Christians*, as a *professed Christian*; and with the *particular Church* of which you are a part, *as a part* of that Church. And with your bosome Friends and intimate Companions, as a *Friend* and *Companion*.

And yet in all this, you must communicate with no Church or person in their sin it self: and yet not refuse their Communion in good, though mixt with sin. You must own all the *prayers* of all the Churches in the world, so far as they are good, and joyn in spirit by consent, as if you concurred with them in presence, and made all their prayers to be your own (As you do by the prayers of the Church where you are present.) If there be disorders or imperfections or sinful blemishes in their prayers, you must disown all those faults, but not therefore disown any part of all their prayers which are good, but desire to have a part in them and desire the pardon of their failings.

And here you may perceive what a mischief prevish separation is on both sides. It hindereth you from praying aright for others, as the members should do for all the body; And it hindereth

eth you from partaking in the benefit of the prayers of most of the Church of God on earth. Indeed God may hear those prayers for you which you your selves disown: But whether this may be expected, according to the ordinary course of his dealing, is much to be doubted: seeing he hath made every mans *will* or *choice* the ordinary condition of his participation of such benefits, it is hard to conceive, that he that abhorreth the prayers of other men, or taketh them for such as God abhorreth, or will not accept, and in his mind disowneth all participation, and communion in them, should yet have a part against his will. But of this more anon.

As your *Baptism* maketh you Members of the Universal Church, in order of nature before you are members of a particular Church; so your *relation* to the Universal Church is more *noble*, more *necessary*, and more *durable*, than your relation to any particular Church: It is more *noble*, because the Society is more *noble*.

The *whole* is more excellent than a little part: It is more *necessary*; because you cannot be saved and be Christians without being members of the Universal Church: But you may be Christians and be saved, without being a member of any stated particular Church. It is more *durable*, because you can never separate from the Universal Church, or cease to be a member of it, without being separated from Christ: But divers occasions may warrant your removeall from a particular Church. Live not therefore in those narrow and dangerous principles, as if your Congregation or your party were all the Church of Christ; or

as if you had no Christian relation to any other Ministers or People, not owed any duty to them as Members of the same Body. But remember that all Christians, Persons and Congregations, are but the Members of the Kingdom of Christ.

DIRECT. XIX.

Take heed of engaging your selves too far in any divided Sect, or of espousing the interest of any party of Christians, to the neglect or injury of the common interest of the Universal Church, or cause of Christianity.

I Doubt not but among several ranks of Christians, the soundest and most upright are to be best esteemed, and (*ceteris paribus*) their Communion to be preferred, before theirs that are more unsound and scandalous. But it's one thing to prefer the eye or hand, before the foot; a noble member before a more ignoble; and another thing to own a *Sect as such*, or a *party* as they either divide from others, or take up a dividing opposite interest. You are sure that the *Universal Church* of Christ can never erre against the *essentials* of Christianity, nor against any truth or duty necessary to their salvation. For then the Church were no Church, and then Christ were not its Head. And then the body of Christ might perish: And then Christ were not the Saviour of his body. But you cannot say of any *one part*, that you

you are sure *that part* shall never fall away and perish. There may fall out a necessity which may warrant the Body to cut off a hand or leg, to save the rest: But no corporal necessity can warrant you to destroy the whole; nor any one member to forsake the Body, before it is forcibly cut off.

He that seeth not how the espousing of parties and divided interests, doth corrupt most Christians in the world, and lacerate and deface the Church of Christ, doth not understand or not observe the condition of mankind. It is somewhat rare to meet with any serious Christians, who are not so deeply engaged into some *Sect* or *Side* or *party*, as to darken their judgements, and pervert their affections as to all the rest, and to corrupt their converse in the world: How blindly do such look on all that is good in those that differ from them? How partially do they judge of the judgements and practises of others? How small a thing will serve the turn, to excuse the faults of any of their party? And how small and common a good seemeth excellent in them? And how perversly do they aggravate the faults of all that are against their way? As if every infirmity were a crime, and had no excuse? yea, they are oft glad to hear of some miscarriage in them, for which they may speak against them. And very readily take up such reports, and are the willing-tongues of slanderous fame: And in all this their faction maketh them impenitent: For they think it tendeth to the disgrace of the other Party, and so of their Cause, which they account an error; and consequently that God hath use for

their malicious Calumnies to his glory.

What company can you come into of forward Christians, but they are talking against those of other parties? (except a few true entire Christians, who are throughly possessed with the loving compassionate spirit of their Lord, and have received the true impression of the Gospel.) And if you mark the cause you will find it is a *sectarian spirit*, that prevaileth against the *Catholick spirit* of *Christianity*. And in no sect more, than in those that pretend to be the *only Catholicks*, and to do all this against the Sectaries as such! What bitter lies do the Popish sects under the name of Catholicks daily vent not only against *Luther*, *Calvin*, and other Reformers, but any that stand against the peculiar interest of their party. And they that can get the upper hand and by worldly advantages become the domineering sect, do think that thereby, they are exempted from the name and number of sectaries; and that *all* are sectaries that question their authority, and do not absolutely obey them.

In all their discourse the stigmatizing of dissenters is an ordinary part! One side reproacheth the other as Hereticks and Schismaticks; And the other reproacheth them as hypocrites, formalists, and pharisaical persecutors: And every party think that all this is a part of Christian zeal; and if they did it not they should be guilty of lukewarmness and neutrality, and consenting to the sins of others. And thus the Church of Christ is engaged in a war against it self: And when all men should know them to be Christs disciples by loving one another; most men may perceive

perceive that they have too much contrariety to the Christian nature, by their endeavouring to make each other odious. And all because instead of distinguishing the members of the *same Body* by their several offices and degrees, we are grown to make *several Bodies* of them, and to set one part against another. How many a Kingdomes conversion from Infidelity hath been hindered? and how many a faithful Minister silenced or reproached? and how many excellent Christians slandered and vilified? and how many blameless customs, forms, and practises accused? and how many infirmities aggravated as mortal crimes, by a siding factious disposition, and to promote the cause and interest of a Sect. Therefore as you love your integrity and peace, keep up an impartial universal love and honour to all Christians as such, and take heed of a dividing spirit.

DIRECT. XX.

Be very suspicious of your Religious passions; and carefully distinguish between a sound and a sinful zeal; lest you should father your sin on the spirit of holiness, and think that you are most pleasing God, when you offend him.

WE are seldome more mistaken in justifying our selves than in our *Passions*: And when our *Passions* are *Religious* the mistake is both *most easie* and most *perillous*: *Easie*, because we are

apt

apt to be most confident, and not suspect them, the matter seeming so *great* and *good*, about which they are exercised. And *Perilous*, because the *greatness* and *goodness* of the *matter*, doth make the errour the *greater* and the *worse*. I have shewed before how easie it is, to think that our *Religious passions*, are all the works of the spirit of God; For we are apt to estimate them, by the depth and earnestness which we feel. But excellent persons have been here mistaken, as *James* and *John* were. And not only so, but when the passion is up, the judgement it self is seldome to be far trusted; For it inclineth us to err in all things that concern the present business. Therefore still remember the difference between *true zeal* and *false*: And know that he that is upright in the main, and whose zeal for Christianity is sound, may yet have much zeal that is unsound with it.

First, It is an ill sign when your *zeal* is raised about some *singular opinion* which you have owned, and not for the *common salvation* and substance of the Christian faith or practise. Or at least, when your odd opinion hath a *greater proportion* of your zeal, than many more plain and necessary truths.

Secondly, when your zeal is moved by any *personal interest* of your own: By honour or dishonour; By any wrong that is done you, or any reputation of wisdome or goodness, which lieth on the cause. Or at least when your *own interest* hath too large a *proportion* in your zeal.

Thirdly, when your zeal is more for the *interest* of your *party*, than for the Universal Church, and the common cause of Godliness, and Christianity; and can be content that some *detriment* to

to the *whole*, may further the interest of the *party*.

Fourthly, when your zeal tendeth to *hurt* and *cruelty*, and would have God rather to glorifie his *Justice* by some present notable judgement; than his *Mercy* by patience and forgiving: And when your secret desire of *fire from heaven*, or some destruction of the adversaries is greater than your desire and prayer for their conversion. The sure mark of true zeal is, that it is *zealous Love*: It maketh you *love your neighbours and enemies* more *fervently* than others do: But *false zeal* maketh you more inclined to their *suffering*; and to reproach and *hurt* them.

Fifthly, It is an ill signe when your *zeal* is beyond the proportion of your *understanding*: And your *prudence* and *experience* is as much *less* than other mens, as your *zeal* is *greater*. True *zeal* hath some *equality* of *Light* and *Heat*.

Sixthly, It is an ill signwhen it is a zeal which is easily kept alive, and hardly restrained: For that sheweth the flesh and the Devil are too much its friends. The true zeal of the spirit doth need the fuel of all holy means, and the bellows of meditation, and prayer to kindle it; and all is too little to keep it up in the constancy that we desire. But carnal zeal will burn of it self without such endeavours.

Seventhly, It is an ill signe when some *sect* or *false-teacher* was the kindler of it; and not the sober preaching of the truth.

Eighthly, And it is an ill sign when it burneth in the same soul where *lust* and *wrath* and *pride* and *malice* burn; And when it prospereth at the same time

apt to be most confident, and not suspect them, the matter seeming so *great* and *good*, about which they are exercised. And *Perilous*, because the *greatness* and *goodness* of the *matter*, doth make the errour the *greater* and the *worse*. I have shewed before how easie it is, to think that our *Religious passions*, are all the works of the spirit of God; For we are apt to estimate them, by the depth and earnestness which we feel. But excellent persons have been here mistaken, as *James* and *John* were. And not only so, but when the passion is up, the judgement it self is seldome to be far trusted; For it inclineth us to err in all things that concern the present business. Therefore still remember the difference between *true zeal* and *false*: And know that he that is upright in the main, and whose zeal for Christianity is sound, may yet have much zeal that is unsound with it.

First, It is an ill sign when your *zeal* is raised about some *singular opinion* which you have owned, and not for the *common salvation* and substance of the Christian faith or practise. Or at least, when your odd opinion hath a *greater proportion* of your zeal, than many more plain and necessary truths.

Secondly, when your zeal is moved by any *personal interest* of your own: By honour or dishonour; By any wrong that is done you, or any reputation of wisdome or goodness, which lieth on the cause. Or at least when your *own interest* hath too large a *proportion* in your zeal.

Thirdly, when your zeal is more for the *interest* of your *party*, than for the Universal Church, and the common cause of Godliness, and Christianity; and can be content that some *detriment* to

to the *whole*, may further the interest of the *party*.

Fourthly, when your zeal tendeth to *hate* and *cruelty*, and would have God rather to glorifie his *Justice* by some present notable judgement; than his *Mercy* by patience and forgiving: And when your secret desire of *fire from heaven*, or some destruction of the adversaries is greater than your desire and prayer for their conversion. The sure mark of true zeal is, that it is *zealous Love*: It maketh you *love your neighbours and enemies* more *fervently* than others do: But *false zeal* maketh you more inclined to their *suffering*; and to reproach and *hurt* them.

Fifthly, It is an ill signe when your *zeal* is beyond the proportion of your *understanding*: And your *prudence* and *experience* is as much *less* than other mens, as your *zeal* is *greater*. True *zeal* hath some *equality* of *Light* and *Heat*.

Sixthly, It is an ill signwhen it is a zeal which is easily kept alive, and hardly restrained: For that sheweth the flesh and the Devil are too much its friends. The true zeal of the spirit doth need the fuel of all holy means, and the bellows of meditation, and prayer to kindle it: and all is too little to keep it up in the constancy that we desire. But carnal zeal will burn of it self without such endeavours.

Seventhly, It is an ill signe when some *sect* or *false-teacher* was the kindler of it; and not the sober preaching of the truth.

Eighthly, And it is an ill sign when it burneth in the same soul where *lust* and *wrath* and *pride* and *malice* burn; And when it prospereth at the same time

time, when the love of God, and a heavenly mind and life decay, The zeal of a ſenſualiſt, of a proud man, of a covetous man, of a ſelf-conceited empty perſon, can hardly be thought a ſpiritual zeal.

9. And it is an ill ſign when it carrieth you from the *holy rule*; and pretendeth to come from a ſpirit which will not be tryed by the Scripture: Or when it driveth you to uſe means which God forbiddeth in his Word: and putteth you upon ways which the ſealed Law and Teſtimony condemn: It cannot be of God, which is againſt Gods Word.

10. Laſtly, it is a ſuſpicious ſign, when it is contrary to the judgement, experience and zeal of the generality of the moſt wiſe, experienced, tryed, ſober, godly Chriſtians; and ſo to the ordinary working of Gods Spirit in other men, who are as good as you. For Gods Spirit is not contrary to it ſelf.

By all theſe ſigns you may eaſily perceive, how the dividing zeal of a Sect as a ſect, doth differ from the genuine Chriſtian zeal. The one is a zeal for ſome *ſingular opinion*: The other is a zeal for *Godlineſs* and *Chriſtianity*. The one is kindled by ſome *intereſt* of our *own* religious reputation: the other is kindled by the intereſt of the *will* and *glory of God*. The one is for the ſtrengthning of a *Party*: The other is to increaſe the *Church Univerſal*, and promote the common cauſe of Chriſtianity: even when ſome particular truth or duty is the *Matter* of it, yet the *general cauſe* of *godlineſs* is the *end*. The one is a *burning, hurting zeal*, even the ſame which hath made matter for ſo many

many Martyrologies, and frightful Hiſtories, by inquiſitions, torments, priſons, flames, maſſacres and bloody wars: And the ſame which hath ſilenced ſo many faithful Miniſters, and diſturbed ſo many States and Churches: The other is a *zeal of Love*, which maketh men fervent in *doing good* to others: The one cauſeth men to revile and deſpiſe and cenſure and backbite, and zealouſly to make all diſſenters ſeem odious, that the hearers may abate their love to them. The other maketh us value all that is good in others, and to hide their nakedneſs, and to make them better, and to provoke the hearers to love and to good works. The one tendeth to diviſions and ſidings and ſeparations and diſtances from our brethren; and to feed contentions: The other is a zeal for *unity, amity* and *peace*. The one is the complexion of the weak, and childiſh, the proud, and ſelf-conceited, the peeviſh and ſurly ſort of Profeſſours: The other is the zeal of ſolid knowledge, and of the prudent, humble, meek and well grounded ſort of Chriſtians. The one is a zeal which flyeth moſt outward, againſt the ſins of other men, and can live with pride, and covetouſneſs, and ſelfiſhneſs, and ſenſuality at home: ſuch *ſerve not the Lord Jeſus, but their own bellies*, Rom. 16. 16, 17. The other beginneth at home, and conſumeth all theſe vices in the heart; and as zeal increaſeth humility, and meekneſs, and love, and ſelf-denyal, and temperance, and heavenly mindedneſs increaſe. The one is eaſily got and eaſily kept, and hardly kept under! O how eaſie is it to get and keep a contemptuous, cenſorious, backbiting, dividing or perſecuting zeal! But the

the other is not so much befriended by Satan or the flesh, and therefore must be preserved by prayer and meditation, and very great diligence. How *hard* is it to keep up a *zealous love of God and Man?* and a fervour in all our heavenly and spiritual desires? Abate but your *diligence* and this will presently decay: when the fierce, contending, hurting, separating and persecuting zeal doth need no such fuel or labour to maintain it: The one is kindled by the enflaming censures of some rash and passionate Preacher, that knoweth better how to *kill Love* than to *cause* it; or by the singular conceits of some Sectary or Divider; or by the backbitings of some *Doeg*, or malicious Calumniator: The other is kindled by the humble, and heavenly preaching of the Gospel, and by the meditations on Christs example, and a study to imitate him and his Saints in patience, forbearance, forgiving others and doing good. The one is a zeal which carrieth men *from the Scripture*, to pretenses of such revelations, and inspirations, and impulses as have no proof, but the feeling and fancy of the person: or at least, to abuse the Word of God, and plead it for that which it condemneth: It provoketh men to some unlawful practise, under pretense of misinterpreted texts, and of good ends and meanings. The other still putteth you upon good, and striveth against evil, and goeth for tryal of every cause to the Law and to the testimony. Lastly, the one is a zeal which pretendeth the spirit, and yet goeth contrary to the common workings of the spirit, in the most part of the best and wisest Christians. But the other is the common vital heat, which animateth all

all the body of Christ, and actuateth all his living members; and keepeth up love and holiness in the Church; and is the same in all humble heavenly Christians in the world. It will be of great use to you, in order to your own and the Churches peace, to understand and observe the difference between these contrary sorts of religious zeal.

DIRECT. XXI.

Lend not a patient ear to back-biters; much less must you hastily believe them when they speak ill of others: But shew your detestation of that sin, though they should be most religious people that use it, and do it upon a religious pretence.

I Do not say that it is *always* unlawful to speak that which is ill of another behind his back. Sometime wicked men will take occasion to justifie sin it self, by the advantage of a sinners name: And sometime they will magnifie the vertues of some wicked man, or of some of their sect, on purpose to cast reproach on godliness, or to make others odious by the comparison. Yet in such cases we must repress their malignity more by a *defensive* than an *offensive* opposition. But the usual course of back-biting in all sorts of men, is sinful. The back-biter (how great or learned or religious soever) is but the devils minister, to preach

preach down the love of others, and to exhort you to hate your brother, or to abate your charity to him. And he that patiently hearkeneth to ſuch, is a partaker of their ſin. And he that believeth them, hath taken the infection. Moſt of our odious thoughts of others, and our falſe and uncharitable cenſures, do come in this way. For the moſt part, men cenſure and ſeparate and perſecute moſt, where they are acquainted leaſt, but go by hear-ſay, and judge of men by back-biters miſ-reports: And acquaintance and familiarity uſually reconcileth them, and ſheweth them their errour. You think it is a fair excuſe for you, when you either believe or report evil of another, to ſay, that you heard it from very honeſt and religious, or reverend perſons; or you heard it from many, and confidently uttered. But God hath not allowed you to receive back-biters, becauſe they are *godly*, or becauſe they are *many*. This very age and time doth experimentally confute this excuſe: In which it is ſo common a thing, for falſe reports and news to be uttered with confidence, and that by multitudes, and many of them religious, and yet neither truth nor ground at all, for what is ſaid. *Back-biters, and haters of God* are conjoyned *Rom.* 1.30. *He that back-biteth not with his tongue, nor doth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach againſt his neighbour*, is one that hath the mark of a Citizen of *Zion*. Pſal. 15. 3. *An angry countenance muſt drive away a back-biting tongue*. Pro. 25. 23. *Paul* was afraid of that which we all now feel the evil of, even this evil ſpirit which I am now detecting. 2 *Cor.* 12. 20. *Leſt there be debates, envyings,*

ings, wraths, ſtrifes, back-bitings, whiſperings, ſwellings, tumults, and ſo God would humble him among them. Rebuke *back-bitings* and *whiſperings*, or you will hardly avoid the reſt of theſe iniquities. It may be the report which you hear may be all falſe: Or it may be it is ſome little matter made much greater than it is. Or it may be ſome part of the truth is concealed and ſome circumſtance which would make it better underſtood. However, if it be true, when the reporter hath no call to ſpeak it, or when the accuſed is not heard ſpeak for himſelf, and you never heard what he hath to ſay, there is ſin and injuſtice in the back-biter, the believer and reporter.

DIRECT. XXII.

Make not your ſelves judges of other mens actions, much leſs of their ſtate, before you have a call, and before you have ſufficient acquaintance or proof, of the perſon and of the caſe.

VEry common reports and very confident preſumptions, may all prove injurious and falſe. You may hear that ſuch a family is prophane, and that ſuch a perſon hath no religion, that ſuch a one is covetous, & ſuch a one erroneous, &c. and when it comes to the trial, it may all prove falſe. However it muſt be as falſe to you, till you know, or prove it to be true: you may be ignorant of ano-

ther mans faults, without any faultineſs of your own: But you cannot raſhly cenſure another without being your ſelf faulty though the matter ſhould prove true. Juſtice muſt be obſerved as well in *private* as in *publike* judging. As no Judge in any Civil or Eccleſiaſtical Court, muſt condemn any man without ſufficient proof (which made Chriſt ſay *Matth.* 18. 15,16. Take one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witneſſes, every word may be eſtabliſhed) ſo no man in his own *thoughts* muſt condemn his brother, by any raſh or groundleſs ſentence. It is ſafer for you to judge better of another than he is, than it is to judge worſe of him than he is. In many caſes it may be your duty to judge better of him than he is; becauſe you muſt judge according to proof; And if the evidence or proof deceive you, it is none of your fault to be ſo deceived. And yet you are not hereby bound to believe a falſhood: All that you are bound to believe is, that it is *probable* that ſuch a perſon is vertuous, innocent or ſincere: And this is no falſhood: for that may be *probable* or *likely* which is not true.

Few well conſider of the meaning of Chriſts words in *Matth.* 7. 1,2. *Judge not that ye be not judged: For with what judgement ye judge, ye ſhall be judged: and with what meaſure ye mete, it ſhall be meaſured to you again*: I doubt not but part of the ſenſe may be, He that judgeth without mercy of another, ſhall have judgement without mercy from God; as St. *James* expreſſeth it. But that's not all; but the reſt of the ſenſe is [And he that judgeth cruelly raſhly and falſly of his brother, ſhall be ſo judged of by other men himſelf.] Not that

that God will *cauſe it*, but he will *permit it*; and therefore can *foretel* it; and make a righteous puniſhment, of the ſin which he doth but permit. Do you not know that other men will cenſure and backbite you, as boldly and as buſily as you do, cenſure and backbite others. Is it ſuch a pleaſure to you to imitate the Devil, the great accuſer, as that you will be as much accuſed your ſelves, and as hardly thought of, rather than you will give it over.

And ſee here how ſin doth croſs it ſelf. Moſt of the cenſorious, are *proud* perſons, who think others much worſe than themſelves; and therefore ſpeak worſe of their common and more ignorant neighbours, that they may be thought to be no common nor ignorant perſons themſelves; and they are offended with the Paſtor of the Church, for admitting ſuch perſons into communion with ſuch as they: That ſo their piety may be more conſpicuous than their neighbours: when all this while they are but preparing for their own diſhonour; And others will judge as bad of them. When uſually the meek and humble and merciful Chriſtian who judgeth hardly of himſelf and tenderly of all others; is tenderly and lovingly judged of by all. The Prelatiſt ſaith, [what obſtinate perſons are theſe Nonconformiſts, They do all to keep the approbation of their party.] And are they not requited by many of them whom they cenſure, who ſay [What temporizing hypocrites are theſe Formaliſts and Latitudinarians! They would turn Papiſts or any thing to ſave their skins, or get preferment. What perjury or other heinous crime will they not

number with *things* indifferent.] The Papiſt thinks the Proteſtant a Hereſick unworthy to live on earth and therefore thirſteth for his blood; And is he not requited by the cenſures of them that think that he is but a blood-thirſty limb of Antichriſt himſelf? If he think that the Proteſtant cannot be ſaved, becauſe he is not a member of the Pope, or Roman Church; the Proteſtant requiteth him oft times with concluding, that a Papiſt cannot go beyond a reprobate, nor a worſhipper of the Beaſt be ſaved. If the Independent cenſure the Presbyterian as a favourer of looſeneſs and formality, the Presbyterian can requite him, by cenſuring him to be an enemy to order, government & peace, and a turbulent cauſe of all confuſion. The ſame I may ſay of all other ſects: It is not now my purpoſe to take part with any of them, nor to ſpeak againſt any one of them more than the reſt: But to them tell all of their miſtake in their cenſorious way, & how certainly they prepare for the ſame meaſure and judgement which they give to others. *Rom.* 14.4. *Who art thou that judgeſt another mans ſervant? To his own maſter he ſtandeth or falleth: Yea he ſhall be holden up, for God is able to make him ſtand.* — *But why judgeſt thou thy brother, or why doſt thou ſet at nought thy brother? We ſhall all ſtand before the judgement ſeat of Chriſt* — *So then every one of us ſhall give account of himſelf to God.* It is ſtrange that thoſe men that can underſtand a text againſt ſwearing and drunkenneſs, can ſee no light nor feel no power in ſuch words as theſe.

DIRECT.

DIRECT. XXIII.

Miſtake not the nature of the ſin of ſcandal: Think not that it is the bare diſpleaſing or grieving of another; For it is the laying of a ſtumbling block, that is, a temptation, or occaſion of ſinning before another.

INdeed the word [*offend*] hath occaſioned the miſtake of many in this point, to the great enſnaring of themſelves and others. *Offending ſometime* ſignifieth only *Diſpleaſing* or *grieving* another: And this is not the *ſcandal* which the Scripture ſpeaks againſt. But it ſignifieth alſo the laying of a *ſtumbling block* before another, upon which he may be occaſioned to fall into ſin; And this is the *offence* which is called *ſcandal*. Abundance of well meaning people, have thought that they muſt not uſe any form or words or order or action (eſpecially if it be indifferent in it ſelf) which others are diſpleaſed or grieved at: Becauſe they think that is *ſcandal*: Indeed there is a *grieving* others which is ſcandal; that is, when by grieving them we occaſion them *to ſin*. But conſider I beſeech you theſe two things.

Firſt, what a wretched perſon that is, who will ſin againſt God every time that his brother doth not humor him? Durſt theſe perſons profeſs this openly with their tongues? Dare you ſay, Do not you uſe ſuch a form of prayer or ſuch a ceremony for if you do, I will ſin againſt God? What elſe do you mean, when you blame men for ſcandali-

zing you? I hope you do not mean that no body muſt *diſpleaſe you*? If not, you muſt know that this only is true ſcandal, to *occaſion you to ſin*? And is it not a ſhame that you will ſin ſo eaſily?

2. And if bare *diſpleaſing* had been ſcandal, then *previſhneſs* and *ignorance* would have advanced all that had them to be the Governours of the world. For what is it to govern, but to have all others obliged to fulfil your wills? And if no man muſt *diſpleaſe* you then all muſt fulfil your wills: And he is ſcandalous that is not ruled by you. And if this were ſo, the moſt childiſh and womaniſh ſort of Chriſtians, who have the weakeſt judgement and the ſtrongeſt wils, and paſſions, muſt rule all the world: For theſe are hardlieſt pleaſed, and no man muſt diſpleaſe them.

But I beſeech you remember that *ſcandal* lieth in *Pleaſing* men as well as in *diſpleaſing them*, when it may harden them in an errour, or tempt them to any ſin: I will inſtance to you but in two *ſcandalous* acts of *Peter* himſelf. The firſt was to Chriſt in *Matth.* 16. 22, 23. Where he thought to pleaſe Chriſt and ſave him from ſuffering, and would have had him to ſpare or favour himſelf. And Chriſt ſaith, Get thee behind me Satan, thou art an offence to me: the *Greek* word is, *A ſcandal*: that is, Thou wouldſt do as ſatan did, even tempt me to ſin, & neglect the work which I came into the world about. The other was in *Gal.* 2. 12, 13 Where *Peter* did ſcandalize the *Jews* by *pleaſing* them! For fear of offending the weak Judaizing Chriſtians, he ſeparated from familiar communion with the Gentiles. By which he laid a ſtumbling

bling block or temptation before them, to harden them in the ſinful opinion of ſeparation. If it had been done in our dayes many would have been drawn away with *Barnabas*, and thought that *Peter* had not given *ſcandal* to the *Jewiſh Chriſtians*, but only ſeparated for fear of ſcandalizing them. Many a time I have the rather gone to the Common prayers of the publick aſſemblies, for fear of being a ſcandal to thoſe ſame men that called the going to them a ſcandal: that is, for fear of hardening them in a ſinful ſeparation and errour: becauſe I knew that that was not ſcandal which they called ſcandal, that is, *diſpleaſing them* and *croſſing* their *opinions*: but hardening them in an errour or other ſin, is true ſcandalizing. Underſtand this or you will diſpleaſe God under pretence of avoiding ſcandal.

DIRECT. XXIV.

Make conſcience of ſcandalizing one party as well as another: and thoſe moſt who are moſt in danger by your offence.

MAny perſons pretend the *avoiding* of *ſcandal*, only to flatter one party and to preſerve their own reputation and intereſt with that ſide which they are loth eſt to diſpleaſe. And perhaps diſcern not the deceit of their own hearts in all this; but think that it is indeed the ſin of ſcandal which they avoid. But why make you no conſcience of ſcandalizing others, on the contrary

ſide? Who perhaps are more in number, and whoſe ſalvation ſhould be as much deſired by you? The Papiſt perhaps will not deliver the Lords Supper in both kinds, nor will forbear his Image-worſhip, leſt he offend the Roman-Catholicks: But he careth not much that by ſo doing he offendeth the Proteſtants and other Churches; Nor that his Images are a ſcandal to all the *Mahometans*, and keep them from the Chriſtian faith. And thus *every ſect* ſaith; If you do this or that, you will ſcandalize and offend many good people: Meaning their *own ſide*: But they never regard how many others they ſhall really ſcandalize by the contrary: One ſaith, It is ſcandalous to uſe extemporary prayers; And another ſaith, it is ſcandalous to pray by forms and books: And both ſides uſually mean no more, but that their own party will be diſpleaſed and take it for a ſin. But as he is not ſcandalized by me, who only taketh *my action* to be *a ſin*; but he that is enſnared by it in any ſin himſelf; ſo whether it be *diſpleaſing* or *tempting* that you mean, you muſt regard one ſide as well as the other. The heavenly wiſdome is *without partiality* and *without hypocriſie*. Jam. 3. 17.

And uſually they talk moſt againſt ſcandalizing thoſe whom they account to be the *leſt*; And the *beſt* are leaſt in danger of ſinning. And ſo they accuſe them to be the worſt, or elſe they know not what they ſay. For ſuppoſe a ſeparatiſt ſhould ſay, If you hold communion with any Pariſh miniſter or Church in *England*, it will be a ſcandal to many good people! I would ask ſuch a one why call you thoſe *good people* that are eaſily drawn to ſin againſt God?

God? Nay that will ſin becauſe I do my duty? He will ſay; No, they will not ſin, but they will take it to be *your ſin*, and they will be troubled at it? I muſt anſwer him, you talk of *ſcandal*, and know not what *ſcandal is*: *ſcandal* is not *troubling men*, nor making them take *me* for a ſinner; but occaſioning *them to ſin themſelves* by ſome unlawful or needleſs act of mine. Therefore if you know what you ſay, you make the ſeparatiſts almoſt the worſt of men, that will ſin againſt God becauſe another *will not ſin*: yea if they would but ſin, becauſe another *ſinneth* it were bad enough. I would ask you therefore, whether you take not the people of the Pariſh Churches to be more than you? and to be *worſe* than you? If you took them not for much *worſe* than your ſelves, you would not ſeparate from them. And if you do think them worſe, you muſt think that they are more in danger of ſinning, or being turned from the liking of godlineſs and of the Goſpel. And if ſo, then we are bound to be more afraid of giving ſcandal *to them* than unto *you*. Are not men moſt afraid of overthrowing the *children* and the *weak*, rather than thoſe that are *ſtronger* than themſelves? If you are apter to ſin and turn from Chriſt than the people of the Pariſh Churches, we ſhould rather *ſeparate from you* than from them. If not, we muſt more take heed of ſcandalizing them than you.

Obj. *But Chriſt pronounceth a wo to them that offend his little ones.*

Anſw. If by [*offending them*] be meant only *perſecuting* and *hurting* them as many think, then it is nothing to the queſtion in hand. For I hope

comm-

communicating with others is not a *perſecuting you*. And bare [*diſpleaſing them*] it is certain that the text doth not mean at all. But if by [*offending them*] be meant *ſcandalizing* them, that is, laying ſnares before them, whether by fraud or perſecution, to turn them from Chriſt, and draw them to ſins, then it confirmeth all that I ſay: And the term [*little ones*] conteineth the reaſon of the words: Becauſe as *little children* are eaſily overthrown & eaſilier *deceived*, ſo the *young* & *weak* believers of little faith, are moſt in danger of being turned away from Chriſt, or enſnared in any ſin or errour. And therefore if you think the Pariſh Churches to conſiſt of weaker perſons than your ſelves, the woe is to you or us if we *offend them*.

The truth is, *offending* and *giving ſcandal*, is commonly taken in the Goſpel, for any action (which is not our neceſſary duty) by which either Heathens and Infidels and enemies to Chriſt, are like to be drawn to harder thoughts of the Chriſtian faith; or any wicked man is like to be kept from a godly life; or elſe by which the young ungrounded and unſetled ſort of Chriſtians, may be tempted to turn back and forſake the faith which they have profeſſed, or fall into any dangerous ſin. And therefore ſeeing the ſeparatiſts profeſs to be ſetled in the faith already, and many in the Pariſh Churches are weak, and many averſe to ſome duties of Religion, and more in danger of being turned away, we are bound to be much more afraid of giving ſcandal to the Pariſhes, than to the ſeparatiſts.

Obj. *But Chriſt cared not for offending ſuch perverſe*

verſe ones as Herod *or the Phariſees?*

Anſw. Chriſt feared not to diſpleaſe the greateſt, when it would be done by doing good: No more muſt you or they be pleaſed by our neglect of any duty. But Chriſt was againſt laying any trap before either *Herod* or the Phariſees, to make them ſin.

And it is not your cenſure of others that will warrant us to uſe them as Reprobates, forſaken of God. If every man that can be uncharitable enough, to call his neighbours Phariſees or enemies of Chriſt, without proof, ſhall keep us from communion with them, then the worſe any man is, the more he ſhall be Lord of all other mens conſciences.

DIRECT. XXV.

Be not over-tender of your reputation with any ſort of men on earth; nor too impatient of their cenſures, diſpleaſure, or contempt.

THe fangs of the cenſorious are a common ſcandal; and as ſtrong a ſnare or temptation to ſome men, as worldly preferments are to others: When we come among men whom we take for the moſt Religious, and hear them keenly cenſure all for hypocrites, or formaliſts, profane or ſchiſmaticks, who are contrary to them in opinion or practiſe; at the firſt we are in danger of being carried away as *Barnabas* in diſſimulation, and to ſay as they ſay, or at leaſt comply with

with them by our ſilence and practiſe, leſt we ſhould be cenſured by them as others are. Eſpecially Miniſters are greatly in danger of this ſnare. For the prophane hate them for their doctrine and their holy lives; And it is the godly that are the fruit of their labours, and the ſatisfaction which they have for all their ſufferings, and the comfort of their lives: And if theſe forſake them and deſpiſe them, with whom ſhall they find any comfort in the world? Therefore they are very much in danger of complying too far with their errours and weakneſſes, to keep their intereſt in them: And they think it is that they may do them good. And perhaps this was the caſe of *Peter* and *Barnabas*, with the weak Judaizing Chriſtians. For *Paul* telleth us *Rom.* the 14. that it was the uſe of the weak (who thought thoſe things to be duties and ſins which were not ſo) to *judge* the ſtrong, who knew their liberty: And it was the cuſtome of the ſtrong to *deſpiſe* the weak: Juſt as at this day, the miſtaken ſuperſtitious Chriſtian, ſaith, They are prophane that are not againſt all that he is againſt: And thoſe that ſee his errour ſay, what giddy whimſical fanaticks are theſe? So was it then; and ſo it is like to be, till God give the world a better mind. Many a faithful Miniſter I have known, who have freely confeſſed to me, that the cenſures of peeviſh ſelf-conceited Chriſtians, enclined to ſeparation, was a far ſtronger temptation to them to forſake or overrun their own underſtandings, than all the offers of honours, or riches could be on the other ſide. It is a hard thing, when we have ſpent our labour and lives to bring men to Chriſt, and have got them

them into a ſtate of hope and forwardneſs, to be ſhortly after caſt off by them as formaliſts or temporizers or any thing that their ſick fancies will call us. But for all this, it is but one of thoſe trials which God will have his ſervants undergo: And both Miniſters and private perſons muſt be above the praiſe and the diſpraiſe even of ſelf-conceited Religious perſons, before they can be fit to follow Chriſt, as tried and firmly ſetled men. Stand your ground if you are in the right. Truth will bear all your charges at the laſt, and will defend it ſelf and you: If you *pleaſe men* (whoever they be) contrary to God and conſcience, you *are ſervants of men*, and *verily you have your reward. Math.* 6. But you are *no longer the ſervants of Chriſt. Gal.* 1. 10. And you will never be ſetled, but change as the Moon as the parties or opinions of the *cenſurers* change. But if you ſtick to the words of truth and ſoberneſs, at laſt the ſober part of the Religious will be your encouragers, and many of the giddy will come to you by Repentance, when experience hath ſhewed them that which they would not learn of you. That which is vertiginous will at laſt ſettle its reſt on that which is permanent and firm: As boys when they have made themſelves wheel-ſick with turning round, will lay hold on the next poſt, to keep them from falling. Therefore bear the cenſures of the ignorant. Pleaſe them in all things lawful for their good and edification; and become all things to all men in a lawful way: But depart not from the principles or practiſe of *Chriſtian-union*, *Communion*, *Charity*, or *Sobriety*, to pleaſe a dividing hot-brain'd party, nor to eſcape

eſcape their ſharpeſt cenſures. He is unfit to be a Phyſician that cannot bear a mad mans railings, or the harſh expreſſions of his friends, when a phrenſie or feaver makes them brain-ſick. When you have followed them in their violent heats a while to avoid their cenſures, either you muſt come back with ſorrow, or run to the end with them, as many in this age have done to their own, and to the Churches, and the States confuſion; or which is worſt of all, God may juſtly give you up, to be of their minds, and to think that way right and neceſſary at laſt, which at firſt you only yielded to, in compliance with the heats of other men. And when you have ſinned againſt God to avoid their cenſures, and keep an intereſt in them, its two to one, but they will turn on ſtill further and further, till you are forced to let them go, and you ſhall in the end be more cenſured and deſpiſed by them, than if you had never humoured them at all. Theſe things are written in an age of full experience, by one that hath ſeen the proof in multitudes.

For my own part, I will be ſo ingenuous and thankful, to the diſingenuous and unthankful world as to confeſs, that they have uſed me with unuſual moderation and civility; in that they have ſtill mixed too high commendations with their blind unreaſonable Cenſures. But yet I muſt ſay that he is worſe than a fool who would not be taught, by ſo much experience as I have had, of the vanity of the judgings of the vertiginous world, to chooſe a more ſtedfaſt ſeat for his reſt, than a windmills-ſails. The *malicious cenſurers* and railers on one ſide, and the *peeviſh cenſurers*

ſurers on the other ſide, have taught me to ſtand to the judgment of God, and to pity the poor hypocrite, who hath no better a reward, than the thoughts and praiſe of mortal men.

Do I ſpeak according to the moſt common judgment of Divines? The Sectary ſaith, my light is divine: I ſpeak but by rote, and not by true illumination. Do I pretend to add any clearneſs to the methods or points received, or to correct any error which hath got the major Vote of the injudicious? Then I am ſelf-conceited, and a novelliſt; and if not a heretick, its well! And the honour of all the Divines which are of a contrary mind, muſt be engaged to promote the Cenſure. And the fear that ſober Chriſtians have of novelty and errour, muſt be called up to make them abhor any truth which the grave and ignorant cenſurer doth not underſtand. And they that confeſs that they never ſeriouſly read what I have written, on ſuch or ſuch a ſubject, yet have wiſdom and honeſty little enough to ſay behind my back, O take heed of ſuch a mans Books, for they are *tantum non* heretical. Though in *preſence* they are as gentle as Lambs, or as quickly ſilenced (or worſe) as the Owls at the approach of day light: If ſuch a judicious Writer, as *Camero*, or *Davanant*, or *Uſher*, or *Grocius*, or *Bengius*, or *Amyrald*, or *Placeus*, or *Capellus*, or *Teſtardus*, or *Blondel*, or *Dallæus*, or *Le Blanc* (in his late excellent impartial judicious Theſes) or *Junius*, or *Viſſius*, or *Strangius*, &c. do tell any of the unſtudied or injudicious ſort of Divines, any more than they have received from that party of Teachers, who are in greateſt reputation with them; you ſhall

have

have those that never understood them, tell the ignorant (that cannot contradict them) how erroneous they are, and how they contradict themselves: and what inconsistencies and absurdities they speak: And it all goes down with deluded auditors, as if the Speaker were an Oracle; or at least, knew what he said.

And to teach you to despair of the hypocrites reward, let me tell you; that till God make the world another thing than now it is, there is no hope that ever the *honester sort* of *Christians* or *Teachers* (much less the dishonester) should ever come to so high attainments, that the major part should be truly judicious in judging of deep and difficult controversies! And that there is as little hope, that either of them should know how little they know, till their knowledge in the matter it self increase; or that ever the world (whether Christians or Heathens, Pastors or People) should cease to overvalue their own apprehensions; till greater Light and study bring them first to *Doubting*, and lastly to separate the *certainties* from the *uncertainties*, and to *fasten* upon one, and lay by the other. But I have been long upon this instance.

And it is so in almost all things else. Scarce a day or hour that I spend, but I must sin or be censured for it. If I neglect my most publike labours, my conscience and those at a distance censure me. If I do not, those at hand who expect all my time should be spent in private converse with them, censure me, If my publike duty command me away, yet he that expected that hour in conference, thinks that I disdainfully neglect him;

And

And if I should cast off preaching and writing, it is almost all one: For that hour which I have been spending with one, another hath been that while expecting; and censuring me as sharply for his frustration.

If I had a benefit to do or give, which I can give but to one, ten shall censure me, because they have it not, when the one that had it is scarcely thankful. If you would give all that you have to the poor, when all is given, many that had nothing will censure you more then those that had it will be grateful. Expectations with most men are high, and they understand not your inability: And mens necessities are many and great; And every one will say, why I look but for so much; when all set together is ten times more than you have to give.

And as to the *Manner* of our duties, the censures will be as sure and many. If I would cure any hearers of an error, instead of a cure, they make me know they feel the smart; And that they came not to be *taught*, but to be *pleased*. (So dangerous a thing is it for men to come into the School of Christ, as *Judges* and not as *Scholars*, (or Disciples.) Its two to one but there are present many persons of contrary opinions! what shall I do to please them all? shall I first preach for *Separation*, *Anabaptism*, *Antinomianism*, *Popery*, to please those on those sides; and then preach against them all again to please those on the other side? This would displease them all: (and God and Conscience who are more than all.) If I speak on one side, I lose the other. If I meddle with no Controversie,

I muſt meddle with no truth: For one or other controverteth all things; (the Immortality of the Soul, Chriſtianity and the Deity, not excepted.)

If in prayer it ſelf I let fall a confeſſion of the controverted ſin, which any are guilty of who are preſent, they cenſure that Confeſſion, and inſtead of repentance, are ready to ſay they will joyn with ſuch a one no more; And it is the Confeſſion which muſt be the ſin.

But if once we have to do againſt the ſin, of any that are *Great* or *Godly*, that *power* or *piety* is made a patron of the errour; then it may be a ſmarting cenſure indeed, which we may expect: One crieth out, He is a peſtilent fellow, and a mover of ſedition, as they did of *Paul*, though I hate and preach againſt ſedition. Another ſaith, he is bitter and ſpeaketh againſt the Godly, when I ſpend my ſelf to preach up Godlineſs.

But if it be a *party* that is engaged in the errour, you muſt expect the cenſure of all the *party*. And what errour is it that hath not a *party*? or that hath neither *Greatneſs* nor *Godlineſs* for a refuge?

If in doctrinal or practical conſultations of great moment you have to do with injudicious unskilful men, if you contradict their way (be it never ſo modeſtly) you are proud and ſelf-opinionated, and muſt have your own way: If you follow their miſtakes, and contradict them not, you may wound the Church and Cauſe of Chriſt, and be more generally cenſured at the laſt.

In a word, when ſuch a multitude of things are matters of *Controverſie*, as many may be the matters of

of Cenſure. One will cenſure me for praying with a form, or book, and another for praying without it. One for being too long, and another for being too ſhort: one for this geſture, and another for that: One for preaching when I am ſilenced; another for not preaching more. One for being too gentle to diſſenters, and another, for being too ſevere: One for being too narrow in my principles, and communion; and another, for being too large and univerſal.

And if in the ſenſe of the ſin and miſery of ſome Chriſtians Love-killing principles and practiſes, I have ſpent the beſt of twenty years, in writing, preaching (while I had leave) conferring and praying for the Union of Chriſtians and the Churches peace; I have but made a wedge of my bare hand, by putting it into the clift; and both ſides have cloſed upon me to my pain. But I have turned both parties in the fray, which I endeavoured to part, againſt my ſelf; when each ſide had one adverſary, I had two.

Nay this is not the worſt to be expected: But moreover I muſt add, that I was never more accuſed of any thing as a crime, than of that which I did moſt againſt, And even for doing ſo. Never more ſuſpected of Carnal compliance, than when I exerciſed the greateſt ſelf-denial: Never more accuſed of unpeaceableneſs, than for labouring for the Churches peace. Never was I more accuſed of Schiſm, than for ſtriving with all my power, to have united the Miniſters, and healed the Church, or at leaſt prevented further diviſions. Never more accuſed of enmity againſt the true Diſcipline of the Church, than when I

have done moſt (and at the deareſt rates) to ſtabliſh it, and to prevent its fall.

In all this I meddle not with my Civil Superiours, as thinking it meeter patiently to bear, than to aggravate their cenſures, though not all ſo tolerable as private mens.

I might give you as many inſtances of the matters of common Converſe: He that hath much to do in the world, ſhall hardly eſcape the cenſure of many. The buyer will ſay he ſells too dear: The ſeller will ſay, he would buy too cheap. Every one that expecteth a commodity, will cenſure him that hindereth it, and ſteps in before him.

If I have a friend or kinſman unworthy of any office or preferment, he is nevertheleſs peremptory in his deſires and expectations, for being unworthy. If I will not ſpeak for him and further his ſuit, I am cenſured as unnatural and unkind, and turn a friend into an enemy: If I do ſpeak for him, I am falſe to my conſcience and the common good; and I muſt look to be cenſured accordingly by many.

But I will add no more inſtances, leſt what I intend for inſtruction, ſeem to be but a complaint. But to what purpoſe is all this?

It is to let the Reader know, that man is not God, nor his judgement to be reſted in, nor his favour to be over-valued. To call to you, O ceaſe from man whoſe breath is in his noſtrils; whoſe heart is deceitful and deſperately wicked! For wherein is he to be accounted of! Look up to God, and take him for your *God indeed*: Reſt in his Love, and be ſatisfied in his approbation?

Deſpiſe

Deſpiſe not man, nor lay any *ſtumbling blocks* before them; but as to your *own intereſt* in their eſteems (farther than Gods ſervice and *their* benefit requireth it) account it but a ſhadow, and a thing of nought: And ſay of it as *Paul*, *With me it is a very ſmall thing, to be judged of you or of mans day (or judgement) For I have one that judgeth me even the Lord.* 1 Cor. 4. 3.

It is *GOD* (Chriſtians) it is *GOD*, it is only *GOD*, whoſe infallibility, juſtification, and unſpotted *truth* and *goodneſs*, you muſt make your reſt. It is *Heaven*, it is *Heaven*, it is only *Heaven*, where perfect truth, and impartial righteouſneſs, and the full vindication of all the juſt, and the fruition of perfect Love and Concord, is to be expected: and where malice, and lies, and diſcord, and the father of them, are totally and finally ſhut out.

As you would not be uſed as Hypocrites by God, and deprived of the true Reward of faith, O ſeek not after the hepocrites reward! What is the applauſe of mortal man! Can you not bear the cenſure of ſuch a ſhadow? How then would you ſuffer martyrdome for Chriſt? Over-value not the eſteem of High or Low, of the Great or of the Godly, of the many or of the few. Gods approbation is ſufficient to be your reward. See that *you be Godly*, and then be more indifferent though you are *thought ungodly*. See that you *be loyal*, and *peaceable*, and then you may bear it, if you be called the contrary. Abhor all unwarrantable diviſions, and then you may bear to be reputed ſchiſmaticks. Study you to be *good*, and not to be *accounted* good.

And what if I ſhould look further, to hiſtorical fame when I am dead! Away with the overvaluing of that too, as part of the hypocrites reward! I confeſs God uſually bleſſeth the memory of the juſt, and ſets their names above the power of the greateſt tyrants, and cauſeth the names of the wicked to rot: But this is but a temporal and uncertain thing. If one write in my praiſe to the higheſt, and another write a Volume of falſe reproaches, how ſhall poſterity know which is true, who knew neither party nor the cauſe?

But yet the nearer reaſon of all this admonition is, to let you know that as contention comes by pride, ſo over-valuing the eſteem and cenſures of men (though Good or Great) is a dreadful ſnare, and cauſe of ſchiſmes: For then you will be ſtretching your conſciences, and uſing your wits to pleaſe the party whoſe cenſures you muſt eſcape: And you will wound the truth, and be warping to their errours and extreams: And though by this you may think, that ſome preſent neceſſity may be ſatisfied, and ſome inconveniencies avoided, yet at the long running, the wound will be found to be increaſed; and the cure the harder becauſe of the delay. Converſe with all men as thoſe that muſt be finally judged by God: and remember that the Judg is at the door.

DIRECT.

DIRECT. XXVI.

Uſe not your ſelves needleſly to the familiar company of that ſort of Chriſtians, who uſe to reproach and cenſure them, that are more ſober, Catholick and charitable than themſelves: Unleſs you alſo be as much or more with the ſoberer ſort, who will ſhew you the ſin and miſchiefs of uncharitableneſs, cenſoriouſneſs, and diviſions.

NOthing is more experienced, than the power which the converſe of choſen familiars hath upon the minds of the injudicious and unſetled. Which maketh education and the converſe of our youth, to have ſo great a hand in chooſing mens opinions and Religion: And is the cauſe that Religion is as Languages are, diverſified by the territories or bounds of Countries. They that are bred among ſuch as uſe to ſpeak of diſſenters, as odious, as hypocrites, as hereticks, as ſchiſmaticks, as ungodly, as proud fanaticks, are very like to be poſſeſſed themſelves with the ſame ſpirit of malice and detraction. The words of thoſe whom you reſpect, eſpecially when you hear them not confuted, will make you believe that it is ſo indeed, and that the perſons are as mad or as odious as they make them. And thus, the Papiſts think odiouſly of the Proteſtants, and the Lutherans of the Calviniſts; and the Arminians and Anti-Arminians, the Dioceſans and

the Presbyterians, the Pædobaptiſts and Anabaptiſts of one another: becauſe they converſe only with ſuch as paint them in an odious ſhape. And thus if you uſe only or chiefly to converſe with the *cenſorious Separatiſts*, you ſhall hear ſo many invectives againſt them that are truly Catholick, and ſober, as will make you think that Love and Peace and Catholick Communion, are ſome ſinful and miſchievous things. Sometimes they will deride them as ridiculous; and ſometimes they will call them temporizers, formaliſts, or luke-warm hypocrites, who will do any thing in compliance with their own commodities, and for the ſaving of their fleſh. And ſometimes they will thunder out ſome terrible threatnings againſt them and their way, as heinouſly ſinful. And this language will form the belief and affections of ignorant Chriſtians, into its own uncharitable mold; as a neceſſary part of Chriſtian zeal. As it was the common way of the ſucceſs of the Quakers, to come into Chriſtian aſſemblies, and in a prophetical ſtrain, like men commiſſioned from heaven, in the name of the moſt high God to denounce his judgements againſt the faithfulleſt Paſtors and their flocks, and pronounce them condemned enemies of the light; and ſo by the very terrour of their words, they frightened many women and boys into their ſect, before they underſtood at all what it was that they were againſt or for: ſo do the Separatiſts declaim againſt the ſinfulneſs of Pariſh aſſemblies and communion, and of forms of prayer and ſuch like, till they have frightened the ignorant into their miſtaken zeal.

There-

Therefore, though I am not perſwading you to ſeparate from theſe feaveriſh perſons, as they do from others, yet I would adviſe all the younger and unſetled ſort, that love themſelves, not needleſly to chooſe the familiar frequent company of ſuch: Our private company is at our own choice.

And as the company of fierce ſelf-conceited dividers, is ſo very dangerous, ſo on the contrary, the company of grave, experienced, ſober, charitable and judicious Divines and other Chriſtians, is exceeding helpful to ſettle the minds of the younger and weaker ſort: with them they ſhall hear the unity of the Church, and the doctrine of Chriſtian Love and Concord, humility, meekneſs and moderation opened; and the ſinfulneſs and lamentable conſequents, of ſchiſm, ſelf-conceitedneſs, cenſoriouſneſs and diſcord; which among others they ſhould never hear.

And let me leave this warning to the Church of God, that *if ever it may be hoped that Unity, Love and peace ſhall be recovered, it muſt be by the training up of the younger Chriſtians, under the precepts and examples of ſuch grave, judicious, experienced and peaceable guides, inſtead of educating them in the ſmoaky ſcorching chimney, of young, unexperienced, ſelf-conceited teachers, who burn with the ambition of applauſe.* And let the ſober be-think them whether our times and teachers are better and purer than theirs, to whom *Paul* ſaid, *Act.* 20. 30. *Of your own ſelves ſhall men ariſe, ſpeaking perverſe things, to draw away diſciples after them.* And *Eph.* 4. 14. He gave the Church Paſtors and Teachers, for its Unity and perfection [*That we henceforth le*

no

no more children, toſſed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the ſleight of men and cunning craftineſs, whereby they lye in wait to deceive.

DIRECT. XXVII.

Take heed of miſ-judging of the Anſwers of your prayers, and of taking thoſe things to be from God, which are but the effects of your prejudice, paſsion or weakneſs of underſtanding.

THis is a ſin, which I know not whether I may ſay is *more common* with many godly perſons, or more *injurious to God*, or more *pitiful* as to themſelves.

It is ſo common, that it is hard to meet with many women and paſſionate Chriſtians, who are earneſt in prayer, but ſometimes they run into this miſtake, and judge ungroundedly of the anſwer of their prayers, by ſuch feelings and ſtrong apprehenſions of their own, as never came from the ſpirit of God at all.

And it is a great *wrong* to God, to be made the author of mans infirmities and errours, and of that which is contrary to his word.

And yet it is a very *pitiful* caſe as to the offenders; becauſe it is uſually the ſin of perſons that are very upright and honeſt in the main, and that are very ſerious in their prayers to God; and of ſuch as have naturally ſuch weakneſs of reaſon and ſtrength

ſtrength of affection, as that they are leſs *blameable*, though leſs *curable* than others are.

To underſtand this matter the better, I pray you conſider, that Prayer is not to change Gods mind; but to make us the meet receivers of his mercies: And this it doth by exciting and exerciſing thoſe apprehenſions and deſires, which make us fit by valuing them to improve them. Therefore ſuch principles, diſpoſitions and deſiers as are in us, Prayer doth excite and exerciſe: And every man prayeth according to his own judgement, diſpoſition and affection. And that apprehenſion and affection, which is moſt ſtirred up and exerciſed, is moſt *felt*. And that which is moſt *felt*, doth moſt take us up, and is moſt obſerved: And ſo we think that it is the impulſe of Gods ſpirit, and the anſwer of our prayers, when it is but the operation of our own ſpirits, and the ſenſible activity of our former principles.

There are very few that take their impulſes and reſolutions, for the ſpirits anſwer of their prayers, but they had before an underſtanding moſt inclined to that opinion, or elſe a byas upon their affections, bending them that way; or ſomething in themſelves which occaſioned the ſcales to turn that way.

Obj. *But I did bring my mind to a pure impartiality, and prayed to God that he would ſhew me the truth, be it what it would be: and that if this were not right, he would blaſt it and never ſuffer it to go on: And the more I prayed, the more I was confirmed, that this is the right.*

Anſw. All this may be, without any of Gods appro-

approbation of the concluſion which you think is his anſwer to your prayers. For whileſt you prayed that God would turn your mind from it, if it were not right; yet at that time your judgement was inclined to it; or your affections at leaſt: And it is an eaſier thing to ſpeak impartial words in prayer than to get an impartial unprejudiced mind. And when you think that your mind is brought to an impartiality, alas, there may be many deep roots of prejudice which you obſerve not: And there is ſcarce one of a thouſand who thinketh that he prayeth with a pure impartiality, but his opinion, diſpoſition, inclination, intereſt, or ſecret affection, doth byas and ponderate his mind, more to one ſide than to the other.

But if you were never ſo willing to know the truth, yet there are paſſions in you, and corruptions, and ignorance and former errours, which may all do much to hinder you from knowing it, and may breed many falſe apprehenſions in your mind; and yet may cheriſh them with as dear an eſpouſal and affection, as if they were certainly from God.

And moreover, you have been gilty of former ſins: And whether God for any of them, may leave you to run into miſtakes, you know not. Or whether any preſent ſelf-conceitedneſs may occaſion him to leave you to miſtakes.

But the principal part of my anſwer is this God hath no where promiſed to reveal all his truth to you, becauſe you deſire him ſo to do. It is not every prayer of yours, which he hath promiſed to hear and grant; but only thoſe which are agreeable to his will: His will is either his *Decree*,

cree, his *Command*, or his *Promiſe*. Though the firſt be not it that is meant in the text, yet it is certain that your prayers cannot change Gods decrees. The *will* of his command doth more concern the ſenſe of the text; but it is only a negative which may hence be gathered; that is, that if your prayers be contrary to Gods commands, they are your ſins and have no promiſe of his grant. But it will not follow that God will grant all the prayers which are put up in obedience to his laws: But only that you ſhall be no looſers by ſuch obedience; but he will give you that, or ſomething which ſhall be as good for you. It may be Gods command that godly children ſhould pray for the lives of their ſick parents; and that parents pray for the converſion of their ungodly children, and that we pray for all men: And yet it doth not follow that we ſhall have the very thing which we obediently pray for. But it is his *Promiſing will* which is the meaſure of our *hope*, as his *Commanding will* is the rule of our *obedience*. Whatſoever he hath *promiſed*, he will certainly give us. Now God hath no where promiſed in his word, that he will reveal the true meaning of every text of ſcripture, to every godly perſon that asketh it. *Praying* is but one of the means which God hath appointed you to come to knowledge. Diligent reading, hearing, and meditation, and counſel of the wiſeſt is another means. Even to dig for it as for ſilver, and to ſearch for it, as for hidden treaſure, and to continue ſo doing, and wait at the poſts of wiſdoms doors, that knowledge may come into you by degrees in time. God hath not promiſed you

true

true underſtanding, upon your prayers alone, without all the reſt of his appointed means: Nor that you ſhall attain it by thoſe means, as ſoon as you deſire and ſeek it; For then prayer would be a notable pretenſe for lazineſs, and they that would not be at the labour, of ſtudy, meditation, or conference, might ſave all their pains, and go to God and ask wiſdome of him and he would give it them. Even as idle beggars think without working, to get an alms to maintain them in their ſlothfulneſs. If inſtead of all our reading, hearing, and meditation, we could but *pray*, and ſo get all the knowledge which other men ſtudy, labour and wait for, it would be too cheap a way to wiſdome. *Solomon* that got it by prayer extraordinarily, commandeth us very great diligence to get it.

It is very conſiderable, not only that Chriſt increaſed in wiſdome in his youth, but alſo that he would not enter upon his publick Miniſtery (as is aforeſaid) till he was about thirty years of age. When it had been more eaſie for Chriſt to have got all knowledge by two or three earneſt prayers, than for any of us.

Moreover you muſt pray according to Gods *will of precept*, not only in the *matter* but in the manner of your *prayers*. And there may be more ſelfiſhneſs, and many other corruptions in the *manner* of them than you diſcern.

And there are many things which ſubmiſſively you may lawfully pray for, which God hath never promiſed you at all: You may pray for the life of the ſick, and for the converſion and ſalvation of all your relations, and of thouſands of others

others which God will not give you. Otherwiſe all the relations of every true Chriſtian ſhould be ſaved, yea and all his enemies and all the world.

To apply all this, It may be you are in doubt whether this or the other be the meaning of ſuch a text of ſcripture? Or whether you ſhould joyn with ſuch a Church, in the uſe of ſuch preaching and prayers or not? And when you have prayed earneſtly, you are confirmed for one way and againſt the other. And perhaps all this is but to be confirmed in your errour: For firſt, you came with a ſecret prejudice; ſecondly, or you came with diſtempered affections; or with ſuch a *fear* of going one way rather than the other, that the very *fear* doth much to cauſe your apprehenſions. Thirdly, or you come with the guilt of former ſin. Fourthly, or you have ſome partiality on your ſpirit, and a ſecret inclination to one ſide more than to the other; or ſome overvaluing of your own underſtandings, perſons or prayers. Fifthly, Or you are lazy and preſumptuous; and think God muſt teach you that in one hour, and at a wiſh or prayer, which others better than you muſt learn with prayer and twenty years ſtudy, diligence and patience. Sixthly, or you think God muſt needs reſolve you of that which he never promiſed to reſolve you in. Where hath he promiſed upon all your prayers, that ever he will teach you in this life the ſenſe of *every text* of *Scripture*? If ever he *promiſed* this he will perform it. And is it to *One Chriſtian*, or *to every praying Chriſtian* that he hath promiſed it? If to *every one*, why are we not *all of a mind*? Why be not all as wiſe as you? What need we Comments-

true underſtanding, upon your prayers alone, without all the reſt of his appointed means: Nor that you ſhall attain it by thoſe means, as ſoon as you deſire and ſeek it; For then prayer would be a notable pretenſe for lazineſs, and they that would not be at the labour, of ſtudy, meditation, or conference, might ſave all their pains, and go to God and ask wiſdome of him and he would give it them. Even as idle beggars think without working, to get an alms to maintain them in their ſlothfulneſs. If inſtead of all our reading, hearing, and meditation, we could but *pray*, and ſo get all the knowledge which other men ſtudy, labour and wait for, it would be too cheap a way to wiſdome. *Solomon* that got it by prayer extraordinarily, commandeth us very great diligence to get it.

It is very conſiderable, not only that Chriſt increaſed in wiſdome in his youth, but alſo that he would not enter upon his publick Miniſtery (as is aforeſaid) till he was about thirty years of age. When it had been more eaſie for Chriſt to have got all knowledge by two or three earneſt prayers, than for any of us.

Moreover you muſt pray according to Gods *will of precept*, not only in the *matter* but in the manner of your *prayers*. And there may be more ſelfiſhneſs, and many other corruptions in the *manner* of them than you diſcern.

And there are many things which ſubmiſſively you may lawfully pray for, which God hath never promiſed you at all: You may pray for the life of the ſick, and for the converſion and ſalvation of all your relations, and of thouſands of others

others which God will not give you. Otherwiſe all the relations of every true Chriſtian ſhould be ſaved, yea and all his enemies and all the world.

To apply all this, It may be you are in doubt whether this or the other be the meaning of ſuch a text of ſcripture? Or whether you ſhould joyn with ſuch a Church, in the uſe of ſuch preaching and prayers or not? And when you have prayed earneſtly, you are confirmed for one way and againſt the other. And perhaps all this is but to be confirmed in your errour: For firſt, you came with a ſecret prejudice; ſecondly, or you came with diſtempered affections; or with ſuch a *fear* of going one way rather than the other, that the very *fear* doth much to cauſe your apprehenſions. Thirdly, or you come with the gnilt of former ſin. Fonrthly, or you have ſome partiality on your ſpirit, and a ſecret inclination to one ſide more than to the other; or ſome overvaluing of your own underſtandings, perſons or prayers. Fifthly, Or you are lazy and preſumptuous; and think God muſt teach you that in one hour, and at a wiſh or prayer, which others better than you muſt learn with prayer and twenty years ſtudy, diligence and patience. Sixthly, or you think God muſt needs reſolve you of that which he never promiſed to reſolve you in. Where hath he promiſed upon all your prayers, that ever he will teach you in this life the ſenſe of *every text of Scripture*? If ever he *promiſed* this he will perform it. And is it to *One Chriſtian*, or *to every praying Chriſtian* that he hath promiſed it? If to *every one*, why are we not *all of a mind*? Why be not all as wiſe as you? What need we Commenta-

mentaries then? Or what need have others of *your* Revelations: If it be but to *ſome*, who be *thoſe ſome?* And how ſhall we know them? And how know you that you are one of them? And why do not *thoſe ſome*, condeſcend to write an infallible Commentary upon all the Bible, when they themſelves are taught it of God, that ſo we may doubt and differ no more?

But if you ſay that it is not the meaning of *every text* that God hath promiſed to make known to you when you pray, but of *ſome few*, how will you know which *thoſe few* be? And where is the promiſe which maketh this difference? Except only that to all true Chriſtians, he hath promiſed to reveal ſo much as is neceſſary to their ſalvation. But if you will pray for more, your belief of your ſucceſs muſt not go beyond the promiſe. If you will promiſe to your ſelves, you muſt perform for your ſelves?

Obj. *But hath not God bid us believe that we ſhall receive what ever we ask, and promiſed to believers that they ſhall receive it?*

Anſw. He hath firſt made a Law to command you prayer, and then made a *promiſe* to grant what you pray for, according to his *will*, that is, according to his *command and promiſe*, and hath made your *believing* of this *promiſe*, one of the conditions of his fulfilling it to you. So that if you believe not his power and promiſe you ſhall not have right immediately to the thing promiſed. But if you *pray* and *believe* and withall uſe thoſe other means with diligence and patience which God hath appointed you, you ſhall know in that meaſure as is ſuitable to your ſtate (For God hath not

not promiſed the ſame meaſure of *knowledg* to all true believers.) So that this is all that the promiſe giveth you, and not that you ſhall know all that you pray to know, and that immediately.

Obj. *But then you leave us at utter uncertainty, whether we have the anſwer of our prayers or not?*

Anſw. Not ſo. But the anſwer of your prayers muſt not be tried by *your* conceits but by Gods rule. If you pray for that which you have neither a *command* nor *promiſe* for, your prayer is ſin, and your anſwer can be nothing but Gods rebuke, or your own deluſion. But if you pray for that which you have a *command* for, but no *particular promiſe*, then you have only the *General promiſe* that your prayer ſhall not be loſt, but ſhall bring down either the thing you pray for, or ſomething elſe which the wiſdome of God ſeeth to be beſt for you and others; and to his ends. And this is all that you can warrantably *believe*. But if you pray for that which hath both a *command* and a particular *promiſe* (as the pardon of ſin, and neceſſary grace and life eternal to a believer) you may be ſure that this prayer ſhall be granted in kind. So that you are not to judge of the anſwer of prayers, by your *feelings* and *paſſions* and *impulſes*, but by the *promiſe* of God, which you muſt *believe* will be fulfilled what ever you *feel*: *Faith* and not *feeling* muſt tell you whether your prayer be accepted.

Nay if you ſhould *receive* health or wealth or gifts for your ſelves or others, when you have prayed for them; you cannot tell whether it be

a *merciful* answer to your prayer, or a *judgement*, unless you try it by *faith* according to the *promise*. I have nothing now to say of the case of miracles, but this: If God *promise a miracle*, you may *believe* it because it is *promised*: If he perform it without a promise, then either you must not believe it till it is done, or else your faith must be a *miracle* also; And then the faith it self is its own justification. But miracles are now so rare, that all sober Christians will take heed how they expect them, or over-hastily believe them; and especially how they take their *own belief* for a *miracle*. All the talk that some men make of a *particular faith*, may be tried by what I have here said.

To conclude, the warning which I give you in this case, is from long and sad experience. I have known too many very honest hearted Christians, especially *melancholly* persons and *women*, who have been in great doubt about the opinions of the Millenaries, the Separatists, the Anabaptists, the Seekers, and such like, and after earnest prayer to God, they have been strongly resolved for the way of errour, and confident by the strong impression, that it was the spirits answer to their prayers, and thereupon they have set them into a course of sin. If you say, How know you that they were mistaken? I will tell you how. First, Because they have been resolved contrary to the word of God. And I know, that Gods spirit did first make a standing Rule, to try all after-impulses by; And what ever impulse is contrary to that Rule, is contrary to Gods spirit. The Law and the testimony are now sealed, and all spirits to

to be tried by them. *Isa.* 8. 20. Secondly, Because I have found their impulses contrary to one another. One hath been resolved for Infant baptism, and another against it: One hath had a revealation for a prelacy, like the order of *Aaron*, and the Priests, and another against all Prelacy.

One hath been confident of an answer of prayers for Antinomianism, and another against it for Arminianism: One for publike Communion, and another to detest it: And both came in, in the same way. And Gods spirit is not contrary to it self. Thirdly, Because I have seen abundance of prophesies of things to come, which people have this way received with the greatest confidence to prove all false. Fourthly, Because I have staid till many of the persons have found by experience that they were deceived, and have confessed it with lamentation. And fifthly, because perhaps I know more of the nature of prejudice, affection, melancholy, feminine weakness, and self-conceit, and of tempting God in the way of prayer, and of satans transforming himself into an Angel of light, than every Reader will know till they have paid for their learning.

DIRECT. XXVIII.

Do not too much reverence the impulses or revelations or most confident opinions of any others, upon the account of their sincerity or holiness: but try all judiciously and soberly by the Word of God.

MAny that have no such impulses themselves, are yet so much taken with the reverence of others, that they are very apt to be seduced by their confidence. When so great a man as *Tertullian* was deceived by *Montanus* and his prophetess: when such a one as *Hacket* could deceive not only *Coppinger* and *Arthington*, but abundance more, some taking him for the Messiah, and some by his breathing on them thinking that they received the Holy Ghost! When *David George* in *Holland*, and *John* of *Leyden* in *Munster*, and *Behmen Stiefelius* and so many more pretended Prophets in *Germany* could deceive so many persons as they did? When the pretended revelations of the Ranters first, and the Quakers after could so marvellously transport many thousand professours of religion in this land; I think we have fair warning to take the counsel of St. *John*, *Believe not every spirit; but try the spirits whether they be of God.* It is a pitiful instance of the good old learned *Comenius*, who so easily believed the propheſies of *Daubritius* and the rest which he hath published: Yea when he saw the propheſies fail, yet when he adjured the prophet to speak truth, and got

got him to swear as before the Lord that it was truth; this seemed enough to confirm his belief of him: whereas if he had been as well acquainted with the nature of Melancholy and Historical passions as many others are, he would have known that as strange things as that he recordeth of the man or women, may be done without any Divine inspirations: and that it is no wonder if that person swear that his words are true, who is first deceived himself before he deceive others. For a crackt brain'd person to believe his delusions to be real verities, is little wonder.

I have many a time my self conversed with persons of great honesty and piety (though of no great judgment) who have some of them affirmed that they had angelical revelations, and some of them thought that the Spirit of God did bring this Scripture or that Scripture to their mind in answer to their prayers; and were so very confident that what they affirmed was the certain truth or voice of God, that I have been stricken with a reverence to their professions, and with a fear lest I should resist God in resisting them. But resolving to take none on earth for the master of my faith, but to try the Spirits whether they be of God, by going to the Law and Testimony, I was constrained to turn my reverence into pity. For I found that their seeming revelations were some of them *Scripture-doctrine*, and some of them *contrary* to the Scripture: As for that which is already in the Scripture, what need I further revelation for it? Is it not there sufficiently revealed? Can their words add any authority to the Word of God? And have I not Gods own Ministers and

means to help me to the knowledge of his word? And as for that which is *contrary* to Scripture, I am sure that it is contrary to the will of God: And if an Angel from Heaven should preach another Gospel to me, I must hold him accursed: *Gal.* 1.7,8. so that if these persons should have the appearance & voice of an Angel speaking to them, I would despise it as well as the words of a mortal man, if they be against the recorded word of God.

But by what I have seen and heard, I know that it is a great temptation to some weak Christians to hear one that is much in prayer, say, *Take heed what you do: Have no Communion with this sort of men, nor in this or that way of worship; nor in this or that opinion; for I am sure it is against the mind of God: I once thought as you do, but God hath better made known his mind unto me.*

But saving the due respect to the honesty of such persons, ask them, How shall I know that you are in the right? If they say, *I will not reason the case with you, but I know it to be the mind of God*; Tell them, that God hath made you reasonable creatures, and will accept no unreasonable service of you; and you have but one Master of your Faith, even Christ: Therefore if they believe that themselves, which they can give you no reason to believe, they must be content to keep their belief to themselves, and not, for shame, perswade any other to it, without proof! If they say that God hath revealed it to them, Tell them, that he hath not revealed it to you, and therefore thats nothing to you, till they prove their divine revelation: If God reveal it to them but *for themselves* they must keep it to themselves. If he reveal

reveal to them *for others*, he will enable them to make some proof of their revelations, that others may be sure that they sin not in believing them. If they say, that the Scripture is their ground, Tell them that the Scripture is already revealed to all; And if indeed what they speak be there, you are ready to believe it. But if they pervert the Scripture by false interpretation, or abuse it and misapply it, none of this is the work of the Spirit of God.

If they say that the spirit hath told them the meaning of the Scripture, say as before, that is not told for you, which is not proved to you? The Scripture is written in such words as men use, of purpose that they might understand it; and is to be understood by all men that hear it, though they have no revelation: God hath set Pastors in his Church to teach it; If therefore revelations be still necessary to the understanding of the Scripture revelations, then the Scriptures seem to be in vain; and these last revelations must again have new revelations to the right understanding of them also.

The truth is, it is very ordinary with poor fanciful women and melancholy persons, to take all their deep apprehensions for revelations. And if a text of Scripture come into their minds, they say, *This text was brought to my mind, and that text was set upon my spirit*; As if nothing could bring a text to their thoughts, but some extraordinary motion of God? And as if this bringing it to their mind, would warrant their false exposition of it.

To conclude, Decry not the necessity of the ordinary sanctifying work of the spirit, to bless

the Scripture to your true illumination and sanctification: And if any pretend to any other revelations or inspirations, or expositions of the Scripture which they cannot *prove* to you, *despise them not*, but modestly leave them to themselves: But take heed that the reverence of any ones holiness, tempt you not to depart from the certain sufficient word of God and draw you not into any Sect, Heresie, or Separation, or Opinion contrary to Gods standing Law.

DIRECT. XXIX.

Take heed lest the trouble of your own disquieted doubting minds do become a snare, to draw you to some uncouth way of cure, and so make the fancy of some new Opinion, Sect or Practise, to seem your Remedy, and give you ease, and thereby perswade you that it is the certain truth.

THis is the pitiful Case of the ignorant, and ungrounded, and troubled sort of religious persons; that they are looking every way for ease and comfort: And having not wisdom enough to fetch true grounded satisfaction from the Scriptures, and from the solid truth, in the use of Gods appointed means, they hearken to any one that will promise them comfort and salvation, by what means soever. Like ignorant people in their sickness; some of them know not an able Physician, and some of them will not be at the cost; and some of them will not take such unpleasing Medicines; and most of them have not patience to stay for a Cure, unless the Medicine at twice or thrice taking do give them ease, they will not believe that it will do them any good: And so in their fooliſh ignorance, and the weariness of their pain, they will go to any ignorant woman or unskilful fellow, who will take cheapest of them, and be boldest in his undertakings: And those that die by it, are out of sight, and forgotten by the living: And those that by the strength of nature do recover, do magnifie their ignorant Physician as if there were none such, and so entice others to their Graves.

Thus many troubled unquiet souls, either *know not* found Doctrine and Teachers from deceit, or else will not be at the *pains* or *patience*, to wait on God in the use of the right means; or most commonly spoil the Remedy offered them, by their own misapplications; and then for ease they hearken to any ignorant Sectary, that will fiercely cry out against sound Teachers, and revile all that are wiser than himself, as if he knew more than all the Ministers in the Country. O saith the deceiving Papist, you will never have setled comfort while you follow these Ministers, and till you come to us, who are the true Church — Saith the Anabaptist, you will never be well setled while you follow these Preachers: They have not the Spirit, but speak only by the book: Come to us and be baptized, and you will have peace. And thus saith the Quaker, the Familist, and other Sects.

I have known ſome that have lived long in doubts and fears of damnation, who have turned Anabaptiſts, and ſuddenly had comfort: And yet in a ſhort time they forſook that Sect and turned to another. I have known thoſe alſo that have lived many years in timerous complaints, and fears of Hell; and they have turned to the Antinomians, and ſuddenly been comforted: And others have turned Arminians, which is clean contrary, and been comforted: And others have but heard of the Doctrine of *perfection in this life*, and ſuddenly been paſt their fears, as if hearing of perfection had made them perfect: And from thence they have turned *Familiſts*, and at laſt ſhew'd their perfection by *fornication* and *licentiouſneſs* and meer Apoſtaſie; who yet liv'd very conſcionably and blameleſly, as long as they lived in their fears and troubles.

The reaſon of all this is plain to any judicious Obſerver. 1. The perſons are ignorant and never had the right knowledge and skilful improvement, of the ſound doctrine which at firſt they ſeemed to embrace. And 2. the power of conceit and fancy brought them comfort or quietneſs in their change. For they thought before, that if they had not ſomewhat extraordinary they could have no aſſurance of ſalvation: And while they held that ſound Doctrine which all about them held as well as they, and found no *extraordinary* power of it on their hearts, they perceived no difference between themſelves and others: But when they had entertained new opinions, and entered into a new Sect, which confidently told them, that they only were in the right, they had then

then *ſomething extraordinary* to truſt their ſouls on. And the novelty of the matter, and greatneſs of the change with the conceited excellency of the opinions and party, did make them think that they were now grown very acceptable to God.

To this may be added, that as a life of holineſs hath far more oppoſition from the Devil, the world and the fleſh, than the changing of an opinion or joyning with a party hath; ſo it muſt be harder to get and keep that comfort which is got and kept by faith and holineſs, than that which is got by ſuch an eaſie change.

We ſee among us what abundance of perſons can live like beaſts in moſt odious whoredomes, drunkenneſs and rage; or like devils in bloody cruelty againſt the good, and yet be comforted, becauſe they are of the Church of *Rome*, which they think is the true Church. As if God ſaved men for being of ſuch a ſide or party! And why may not Separatiſts, Anabaptiſts and others eaſily take ſuch kind of comfort?

O therefore labour for well-grounded faith and ſolid knowledge; that you may attain the true Evangelical comforts, and your ignorance may not prepare you for deceit? and you may not be like children toſs'd to and fro and carried up and down with every wind of doctrine by deceived and deceitful men. Nor may not have need to go to the devil to be your comforter, nor to ſteal a little unlawful peace from parties and opinions, as if there were not enough to be had in Chriſt and holineſs and eternal life.

DIRECT.

DIRECT. XXX.

Keep in the rank of a humble Disciple or learner in the Church of Christ, till you are fit and called to be your self a Teacher.

CHrist owneth no Disciples which are not in one of these two ranks; either *Teachers* by office upon a lawful call, or *Learners* who submit to be taught by others. When his Ministers have made men his *Disciples*, they must afterward *Teach them to observe all things whatsoever he hath commanded them. Matth.* 28. 19, 20. And a *Learner* must hear and read and discourse in a *learning* way, by humble asking the resolution of his doubts, acknowledging the weakness of his own understanding, and the superiority of his Teachers. This is the common ruine of raw professours, that they presently grow proud of a poor ignorant head, as if it were full of knowledge and spirituality: and while they continue Hearers, they continue not *Disciples* or *Learners*, but come with a proud and carping humour, to quarrel with their Teachers as poor ignorant men, in comparison of them; And therefore choose them a *heap of Teachers* according to their own opinions: And all this while they have such list to be some body and to vent their seeming wisdome, that they can hardly stay from being Teachers themselves, till they have any thing like a lawful call. Whereas if they would have kept in the rank of humble Learners till they had grown

grown wiser, they might have preserved the Churches peace and their own.

DIRECT. XXXI.

Grow up in the great substantial practical truths and duties, and grow downwards in the roots of a clearer belief of the word of God and the life to come; And neither begin too soon with doubtful opinions, nor ever lay too much upon them.

HE that taketh this course will have all these advantages. First, He will be himself a solid Christian, and will make sure of the main, which is his own salvation. Secondly, He will have so fast hold of the necessary points, that no controversies or opinions, will shake his faith or destroy his love to God or man. Thirdly, He will honour God by *upright practise*, and shew forth the power and excellency of religion in the true success upon the heart and life: His Religion which begins in solid faith, will grow up into sincere Love and good works. Fourthly, He will be without *partiality*, a Lover of all the servants of Christ, and therefore escape temptations to faction and division, because his Religion consisteth in those common truths and duties, which all profess. Fifthly, he will not only safely receive all further truths from these principles, but all his knowledge and disputes will be sanctified, as being all subservient to faith and love and holiness. Where-

Whereas he that taketh the contrary course, and presently falleth to the study of by-opinions, and layeth too much upon them, will prove too like a superficial hypocrite, and a deceiver of himself, by thinking that he is something when he is nothing. *Gal.* 6. 3, 6. And he will make a pudder in the world for nothing; as children do in the house about their babies and their bawbles: He will make but an engine of his by-opinions, to destroy true Piety and Christian Love in himself first, and then in all that will believe him. He will first make himself, and then many others, believe that Religion is nothing but proud self-conceit and faction; And he will be the shame of his profession, and the hardener of the wicked in their sin and misery; by perswading them that the Religious are but a few ignorant whimsical fanaticks. These are too sad experienced truths.

DIRECT. XXXII.

Lay not a greater stress upon your different words or manner of prayer, than God hath laid: And take heed either of scorning, reproaching or slighting, the words and manner of other mens worship, when it is such as God accepteth from the sincere.

IT is an easie thing to turn the native heat of Religion, into a feaverish out-side zeal about *words*, or *circumstances* or ceremonies, whether it be

be *for them* or *against them*. O what a wonder is it, that by so palpable a trick as this, the Devil should deceive so many, and make such a stir and disturbance in the Church. I know that one party will cry up *Order*, & the other will cry up *Spirituality*, and both will say that God maketh not light of the smallest matters in religion, nor no more must we: And in this general position there is some truth. But if *nothing* could be said for both their errours, they would then be no deceits, nor be capable of doing any mischief. Some things that you contend about, God hath left wholly undetermined and indifferent; And some things in which your brother erreth, his errour is so small a fault, as not at all to hinder his acceptance with God, nor with any man that judgeth as God doth. Had you ever understood, *Rom.* 14 & 15. you would have understood all this.

It would make a knowing Christian weep between indignation and compassion, to see in these times, what censures and worse are used on both sides, about the *wording* of our prayers to God! How vile and unsufferable some account them, that will pray in any words which are *not written down for them*? And how unlawful others account it to pray in their *imposed forms*: some because they are *forms*, and some because they are *such forms*; and some because that *Papists* have used them, and some because they are *imposed*! when God hath given them no command, but to pray in faith and fervency, according to the state of themselves, and others, and in such order as is agreeable to the matter, and in such method as he hath given them a Rule and Pattern of. But of all

quarels

quarrels about *forms* and *words*, he hath never made any of their particular determinations, no more than whether I ſhall preach by the help of Notes, or ſtudy the words, or ſpeak thoſe which another ſtudied for me.

It is a wonder how they that believe the Scriptures, came firſt to make themſelves believe, that God maketh ſuch a matter as they do, of their ſeveral words and forms of prayer: That he loveth only *extemporary* prayer as ſome think, and hateth all preſcribed forms: Or that he loveth only *preſcribed Forms* as others think, and hateth all extemporary prayers by habit? Certainly in Chriſts time both Liturgies by *forms*, and alſo prayers by habit were uſed? And yet Chriſt never interpoſed in the Controverſie, ſo as to condemn the one or the other. He condemneth the Phariſees for making *long prayers* to cover their *devouring widdows houſes*, and for their *praying to be ſeen of men*: But whether their prayers were a *Liturgy* and *ſet forme*, or whether they were *extemporary*, he taketh no notice, as telling us that he condemned neither! (And its like the Phariſees long Liturgy, was in many things worſe than ours, though the Pſalms were a great part of it: And yet Chriſt and his Apoſtles oft joyned with them, and never condemned them.)

Nay as far as I can find, the Phariſees and other Jews were not in this ſo blind and quarrelſome as we; nor never made a controverſie of it, nor ever preſumed to condemn either Liturgies or Prayers by habit.

I ſhall now paſs by their errour who are utterly againſt publike prayers from a habit, as having

ing ſpoken of it at large elſewhere when I had opportunity. I ſhall now only anſwer the contrary extreme.

Obj. *Where hath God given any men power to preſcribe and impoſe forms for others? or commanded others to obey them?*

Anſw. Firſt, where ever he hath given any power to *teach* their *inferiours* to *pray*, who cannot do it in a *better way*. He hath given *Parents* this power where he hath bid them, *Bring up* their *Children in the nurture, and admonition of the Lord*: Is it not by the Law of nature, the Parents duty to teach their children to pray? And is not the learning of the *words* firſt, profitable to their learning of the ſenſe? May they not teach their Children the *Lords Prayer* or a *Pſalm*, though it be a Form? And why not then *other words* which are agreeable to their State? And he that taught his own Diſciples a Form and Rule of Prayer, and telleth us that ſo *John taught his Diſciples*, and ſaith to his Apoſtles, *As my Father ſent me, ſo ſend I you*; by making them *Teachers* to his Church, did allow them to teach either by *forms* or *without*, as the cauſe required. All the Scripture is now to Preachers, a *form of Teaching*: And when we read a Chapter, we read a *preſcribed form of Doctrine*: And it hath many *forms of prayer* and *praiſe*, and forms of *Baptizing* & *adminiſtring* the *Lords Supper*.

If you ſay, that the Apoſtles had an infallible ſpirit, I anſwer, True: And that proveth that that their Doctrine was *more infallible* than other mens: but not that *they only* and not other men may teach by the way of *forms*. All the Books of Sermons now written are ſo many *preſcribed words*

or forms of teaching: And if we may uſe *forms* of *Teaching* as well as the Apoſtles, why not alſo forms of *praying*.

If you ſay that the Apoſtles preſcribed the Church no Liturgy, I anſwer, That only proveth that no one is *univerſally neceſſary*, nor to be *univerſally impoſed*? but not that therefore no uſe of *forms* of *prayer* are *lawful*; May we not now uſe the *Lords Prayer*, or pray in ſome other *Scripture form*?

Obj. *But the Apoſtles compelled none to uſe them.*

Anſw. Chriſt and his Apoſtles aſſumed not the civil Sword, and therefore ſo compelled men to nothing: But yet their authority bound the conſcience; when Chriſt ſaid, *when ye pray, ſay, Our Father*, &c. he bound them in duty to do as he bid them, though he forced them not.

But Secondly, tell me if you can where God *forbiddeth* you to uſe good and lawful words in prayer, meerly becauſe the Magiſtrate or Paſtor bids you uſe them. Is this the meaning of all the Precepts of honouring and obeying your Superiors [Do nothing which they bid you do, though otherwiſe lawful.] O ſtrange expoſition of the Fifth Commandment? If you command your Child to learn a Catechiſm or Form of Prayer before his meat, or for other times, will you teach him to ſay Father or Mother, it had been lawful for me to uſe this Form, if neither you nor any body had bid me; But becauſe you bid me, now it is unlawful. | O whither will not partiality lead men!

Obj. *But though it be lawful to impoſe forms on children, yet not upon aged Chriſtians.*

Anſw. Aged perſons have too many of them as much need of ſuch forms as children. Age maketh not the difference: We are fain to teach many aged perſons *forms of Catechiſm* as well as children; Why not therefore forms of prayer?

Obj. *But it is not lawful to impoſe forms publikely on whole Congregations of Believers.*

Anſw. All ſects in the world do it. I never heard any Separatiſt or Anabaptiſt or any other publike Miniſter, but he *impoſed a form* of prayer upon all the Congregation. He is void of common ſenſe that thinketh that his extemporary prayer is not as truly a *form* to all the people, as if it had been written in a book. The *order* and *words* are not of your *own invention*, but invented by *another* to your hand; and *impoſed* upon you to uſe: For I hope you come together to *pray*, and not to *hear a prayer* only. But the difference is, Firſt, that one *impoſeth* every day a *new form* on you, and the other impoſeth every day the ſame: Secondly, And that one telleth you not what words you ſhall pray in, before you hear them; and the other writeth them down for you to know before hand. For my part I wonder why written or unwritten, long-premeditated or ſuddenly expreſſed prayers ſhould be taken for unlawful. But however do not think the difference to lie where it doth not: For doubtleſs to the *people*, they are both *formes*, and both *impoſed*, though not *impoſed* by the ſame perſons and authority.

Obj. *But at leaſt you have no proof for impoſing*

forms in the Miniſters themſelves.

Anſ. Firſt, I know no man that queſtioneth but ſome form of prayer and praiſe were impoſed by God himſelf, on the *Jewiſh Miniſters*; And *one* was taught by Chriſt to his Apoſtles: And a *form* of *Profeſſion* of *faith*, and of *Baptiſm* and the *Lords ſupper* is impoſed on all the Miniſters of the Church. And *Joel* 2. 17. a form of prayer is taught the Prieſts: Secondly, But we are not now pleading for the needleſs impoſing of any forms, nor the cauſleſs reſtraint of extemporary prayers. I have fully born my teſtimony againſt that in due ſeaſon: But many things are lawfully and neceſſarily obeyed, which are not lawfully commanded, as I ſhall ſhew you more anon. I could heartily wiſh that we could ſay that all Miniſters (of any party) were ſuch as were wholly above the *need* of forms. Or at leaſt ſuch whoſe own compoſures were better for the Church, than any that could be offered them by others (If it were not a contradiction)

But all that I now expect from the Objectors is, that they tell me or themſelves, what proof they have that it is a ſin for a *Miniſter only* to uſe an *impoſed form*, when *all the Congregation* elſe may uſe it? Anſwer this well before you go.

And I pray let all the people note here, that it *is not*, nor *cannot* be *denied*, but that a form (even a new one every day) may be lawfully be *impoſed upon all them*; and that the queſtion is only of the *Miniſters* uſe of impoſed forms.

Obj. *But our Miniſters do not impoſe their prayers by force.*

Anſw.

Anſw. Do you think that there is no impoſition but by force? Your Paſtor is your guide in the worſhip of God; and God hath impoſed it on you to to follow him, and joyn with him in lawful prayer. And what the *words ſhall be*, and what the *matter* and *order* choſen for that time time the Speaker *chooſeth* for you! And ſo he, bindeth you by his Miniſterial authority (which is a true and lawful impoſing) though he compel you not by the ſword or force.

Obj. *But Chriſt hath given gifts to all his Miniſters and commanded them to uſe them. And they uſe them not when they uſe impoſed formes: Therefore we muſt not obey men againſt Chriſt.*

Anſw. No doubt but all that are lawful Miniſters, have ſuch gifts as are neceſſary to the *eſſential works* of their office. But the *degrees* of their gifts have very great variety, as *Paul* fully ſheweth in 1 *Cor.* 12. and oft elſewhere.

And the neceſſary *gift* for hearty acceptable prayer, is *true Deſire* excited by the ſpirit of ſupplication, which ſometime venteth it ſelf but by *ſighes* and *groans*, *Rom.* 8. 16, 26.

But the *Miniſterial gift* of *prayer* is *Knowledge* and *Utterance*; by which a Miniſter may be able to expreſs the deſires and wants of the people unto God: which includeth *memory* in ſome degree. Even as *Knowledge* and *Utterance* are his *Gift* of *preaching*.

And ſome have *more Knowledge* and *worſer Utterance*; And ſome have *better Utterance* and *leſs Knowledge*; And ſome through want of *memory* are defective in both.

The loweſt rank of lawful Miniſters, may be ſo defective in their *own gifts*, both of *Knowledge*, *Memory* and *Utterance*, as to have need of the help of the gifts of others, who much excel them.

As a Miniſter who hath *tollerable Gifts* for *preaching*, may yet need the writings of other men before hand; and may bring both their *Matter* and *Method* into the Pulpit, yea and oft times their *words*; ſo that though he have *Gifts*, yet being *weak*, he may uſe the gifts of others. I have been counſelled ſince I was ſilenced, to compoſe Sermons my ſelf, and give them in writing to ſome weak Miniſter, that hath an excellent Voice and utterance, and to let him preach them. And really if I had not known that ſuch have good books enough at hand for ſuch a uſe, I think I ſhould have done it: And who can prove that this had been his ſin? And yet this was a uſing of another mans gifts inſtead of his own. And I have heard men that are much againſt Pariſh Churches and Liturgies wiſh that ſome unlearned men of good utterance, might read ſome excellent Sermon books to the people, in ignorant places that can get no better: And who can prove the reading of a Homily unlawful.

Moreover, Chriſt hath given to *all his members* ſuch gifts as are ſuitable to *their places*, as well as to *Miniſters* ſuch gifts as are ſuitable to *theirs*, And the place of a Maſter of a family requireth the gift of Catechiſing and inſtructing the family? And they are as truly obliged to uſe *their gifts*, as Miniſters are *theirs*. And yet who doubteth but it is lawful for Parents to teach and catechize their children, by ſuch books and forms of Catechiſms as are compoſed by the gifts of abler men?

Moreover *Prayer* is the duty of every one, and ſpecially of the heads of families: And therefore every true Chriſtian hath gifts procured by Chriſt, for ſo much as is his duty. And he is bound to uſe his gifts. And yet thoſe gifts are ſo low in *many*, that I fear not to call that man effectively an enemy to families, ſouls and prayer, who forbiddeth *all ſuch*, to uſe ſuch forms of prayer as are compoſed by the gifts of others.

The famouſeſt Divines in the Church of God, even *Luther*, *Zwinglius*, *Melanchthon*, *Calvin*, *Perkins*, *Sibbs*, and abundance of Nonconformiſts of greateſt name in *England*, did ordinarily uſe a form of prayer of their own, before their Sermons in the Pulpit, and ſome of them in their families too. Now theſe men did it not through idleneſs or through temporizing, but becauſe ſome of them found it beſt for the people, to have oft the ſame words: and ſome of them found ſuch a weakneſs of memory, that they judged it the beſt improvement of their own gifts. Now beſides the *firſt compoſure* of theſe prayers, (which perhaps was done 20 years before) none of theſe men did uſe their own gifts, any more than if they had uſed a form compoſed by another. For the memory & utterance is the ſame of both.

Theſe all were famous worthy men, whom no wiſe man judgeth to be inſufficient for the Miniſtry for want of gifts. But if ſuch as theſe may ſo many years forbear the exerciſe of their gift of extemporary prayer, much more may far weaker

Miniſters do it. Abundance of young Miniſters are trained up under aged experienced Divines, what if one of theſe ſhould ſometimes make uſe of the ſame words of prayer, which the aged Miniſter uſed the day before, as finding them fitter than any that he could deviſe himſelf. Muſt he forbear to *do better*, becauſe he cannot do ſo well, by the uſe of his own gifts alone?

And in ſome Ordinances as Baptiſm and the Lords ſupper, &c. the ſame *things* muſt be daily prayed for: And he that thinketh he muſt not frequently ſpeak the ſame things, will quite corrupt the Ordinance of Chriſt. And he that will *imagine* that he muſt have always *new words*, will at laſt have *new things*, or worſe than nothing. If then it be meet to uſe often the *ſame words*, why may not a weak Miniſter uſe the *better words* of others, when he hath none meerly of his own that are ſo fit?

Nay is it not the *Duty* of ſuch to do it? Every man is bound to do Gods ſervice in the beſt manner that he can: (Curſed be the *deceiver that hath a better in his flock, and bringeth that which is corrupt*) But to utter prayers and praiſe to God, in a full, methodicall and congruous manner, and in words ſuitable to the Majeſty of the worſhip of God, is *better* (to the people and to the honour of Religion) then to do it in a more *confuſed, diſorderly, broken* manner, with barrenneſs and incongruity of ſpeech. But this *leſt* is the *beſt* that *many* honeſt Miniſters can do by their *own gifts*, when they may do it in the *former better manner*, by making uſe of the *words* and *gifts* of *others*. Therefore it is *a duty* for *ſuch men ſo far* to uſe others

thers *gifts of inventing words*, before their own.

And among us there is no man forbidden in the Pulpit to uſe his *own gifts* to the *utmoſt*, and pray without any ſet form of his own or other mens.

And I would at laſt deſire any of the Objectors but to name that text of Scripture which directly or indirectly commandeth every Miniſter, to uſe his gift of inventing words and method, or his gift of extemporary prayer, every time that he prayeth to God: Or which forbiddeth to uſe the gifts of others, though better than his own.

Obj. *But what if the forms impoſed be worſe than the exerciſe of our own gifts?*

Anſw. Firſt, That may be *below* one mans *own invention*, which is *above* anothers. Secondly, And that may be more defective than your own invention could reach to, which yet may be more deſirable for other advantages. As if all the Churches for ſome good ends, ſhould agree to to uſe one mode or method or form, (as now we do in ſinging Pſalms) the benefit of that concord might do more to the Churches ſervice than my ſingular better form or words could do. And if the lawful Rulers commanded me that which perhaps I could ſomewhat exceed my ſelf, I ſhould do much in obedience to their command: Or if the people had a greater *averſeneſs* or *unfitneſs* for my more congruous words than for others more fective, I ſhould take that for the beſt food or phyſick, which is moſt agreeable to the ſtomack and diſeaſe. But eſpecially if I am reſtrained from the publick preaching of the Goſpel, or exerciſe of any of my Miniſtry, unleſs I will uſe a more diſor-

disordered or defective form, I shall take it for my duty then to use it. Because it is more to the Churches edification.

In a word, God hath bound all his Ministers to use all their gifts to the Churches greatest edification: But to use a more *defective form*, with liberty to use my *best gifts also*, and to exercise my Ministry *publickly to all*, is more to the Churches *edification*, than to use my *own gifts* only a *few days* in a *corner*, and then to lie in prison and use them no more. Though no man must of *choise prefer* the less congruous before the more congruous, when he is free; (which I confess is a sin) yet it is a *duty* to prefer a *less congruous* order before *none*, or before a better for a day, with a restraint of that and all our Ministery hereafter.

For my part I have often truly professed, that I look at many Liturgies which I have read as I do at the prayers of some honest men, who use little method, nor very meet words and often toss Gods name through weakness; who put that last which should be first, & that first which *should* be last, but yet the *matter* is honest & good. I would not *prefer* such a man in a *Congregation*, before an abler man, who will speak more composedly & agreeable to the matter: But yet I would not be so peevish, as utterly to refuse to joyn with such a one. But as God doth not reject his prayers notwithstanding all his weakness, no more would I. And I had rather have such prayers, than none at all.

O that men would discern what is the true worth of prayer? and how little God is taken with the Oratory of them, in comparison of the faith

faith and love and desire which is the soul of prayer. And O that men would lay no greater stress on their *peculiar modes and words* than God doth; and condemn no mens prayers further than they are condemned by God; nor separate from any further then God rejecteth them or commandeth our separation.

I cannot forbear telling you the aggravation of this kind of sin. It seemeth to me a kind of blasphemy against God. As if you would make the world believe that God is so much for your *mode* and *words*, that he overlooketh all the desires of the Spirit; and all his promises, and all mens interest in Christ, and forgetteth all his love to his people: so that Christ shal not intercede for them, or shal not prevail, unless they pray to God in the *words* and *mode* which you have fancied to be best, whether with a Book or without, in *these* words or in *those*. Me thinks you are renewing the old controversie, whether in this Mount or at *Jerusalem* men ought to worship? and knew not that the time is come that God will neither accept men for worshipping at this Mount or at *Jerusalem*, here or there, with a book or without book; but the true worshippers whom he chooseth, do worship him as a Spirit, in Spirit and in truth, as well with Forms as without them.

And yet some are more wicked than barely to *condemn* their brethrens prayers, because they be not cloathed just as their own. They will also *break jests and scorns* at them, and take this for the ingenuity of their piety. Like men of several Countreys who think the fashions of all Countryes save their own, to be ridiculous, and laugh at

at ſtrangers as if they were cloathed in fools Coats. So many do by the cloathing of other mens devotions. Some ſcorn at *extemporary* prayers, and ſome ſcorn at *Forms* and *Liturgies*: And the Litany they call *conjuring*, and the Reſponſes they take for a formal jocular playing with holy things; when in all theſe, the humble heavenly Chriſtian, is lifting up his ſoul to God.

By this petulant carnal kind of zeal, I remember our diviſions were here raiſed at the firſt: To *deride* the *Common prayer*, and deride them that uſed it, was too common with ſome kind of religious people: And they excuſed it by *Elias* his example, As if *Idolaters*, and the true *worſhippers* of *God*, that differ from us in a *Form*, or Ceremony were all one.

I remember how ſome of the contrary mind were inflamed to indignation by ſuch ſcorns, when they were going into the Churches in *London*, and heard ſome Separatiſts that lookt in at the Church door, ſay, [*The Devil choke thee, art thou not out of thy pottage yet?*] becauſe the Common Prayer was not ended. So little did men know what ſpirit they were of. But wiſe and holy Mr. *Hilderſham*, Mr. *John Ball*, Mr. *Bradſhaw*, Mr. *John Paget*, and other learned Non-conformiſts of old, did foreſee and greatly fear this Spirit.

It is a dangerous thing to ſcorn and jeſt at any thing that is done about Gods worſhip, though it ſhould be it ſelf unwarrantable; while you ſcorn at one anothers worſhip of God, you raiſe a bold unreverence and contempt of holy things in the *hearers*, and perhaps before you are aware in *your ſelves* too. And you will teach the Atheiſt to ſcorn

ſcorn you all; unleſs it be the worſhip of a Baal, where the very object is to be derided, as being no God, you ſhould be very ſuſpicious of this way. I am afraid of making a mock of the groſſeſt erroneous worſhip of the true God. It is fitter to confute it in a way that more expreſſeth our reverence to the Object, God himſelf, & our reſpect to that pious affection which may be engag'd in it. I have ſeldom ſeen the beſt tempered people inclined to this way of jeſting at other mens manner of worſhip? nor have I obſerved much good come by it: But I have oft ſeen that it is the way by which young proud ſelf-conceited perſons do kindle a carnal dividing zeal, and a contempt of their brethren, and quench all holy ſober zeal and love together.

DIRECT. XXXIII.

When you are ſure that other mens way of worſhip is ſinful, yet make it not any other or greater ſin, than indeed it is: and ſpeak not evil of that much in it, which is Good; And accuſe not God to be a hater or rejecter of all mens ſervice which is mixed with infirmities.

AS St. *James* ſaith, 3. 2. *In many things we offend all; but he that offendeth not with his tongue is the perfect man.* So we may here ſay in the ſame ſenſe, *In many particulars of our prayers and other worſhip we all offend God: But he that* bridleth

not

not his *tongue* from the reproaching of his brothers different way of worſhip, may prove the greateſt Offendor of all. It would move a charitable underſtanding hearer to grief and pity, to read and hear one party call all prayer by habit, no better than *crudities*, *whinings*, *bold talking to God* and *nonſence*; and whatſoever bitter ſcorn can ſpeak: And to read and hear many on the other extreme, to call the *Liturgy*, no leſs than *Idolatry*! I deſire the Reader to peruſe a judicious Treatiſe of Mr. *Tombes* in anſwer to one of this language: As much as he and I have written againſt each others opinion about Infant Baptiſme, our concerning admonition to you ſhould ſo much the rather be accepted in this.

And what pitiful arguments have they to prove this charge of *Idolatry*? *Falſe worſhip of the true God is idolatry as well as worſhipping a falſe God: But ſuch is the Liturgy: Ergo* —

This is all that theſe raſh preachers muſt trouble the Church, and ſeduce men into a hating factious zeal with. But what mean theſe men by *falſe worſhip*? Do they mean *worſhip contrary to Gods word*? That is, which is *ſinful*? And do they mean *All ſuch ſinful worſhip or ſome only*? If they mean *all ſuch ſinful* worſhip, than *theſe words* of theirs are *Idolatry*; For they are part of their *preaching*, which is part of *Gods worſhip*, in their own ſenſe: And it is *falſe doctrine*, and tendeth to mens perdition. And ſo they and all falſe Teachers ſhould be idolaters. By this they would turn *all* ſins in worſhip into *one*: It is *all Idolatry*. Is not every *confuſed* prayer *ſinful*, which hath unmeet expreſſions and diſordered, and hath wandering

dering thoughts and dull affections? Is there any of theſe *Love-killers* that dare ſay they pray without ſin? And muſt we not ſeparate from them then as *Idolaters*? Yea and every man from himſelf; that is, He muſt give over praying becauſe its all *Idolatry*?

But perhaps they will ſay; *This ſin is but in the manner and not in the matter.*

Anſw. Very good; It ſeems then that ſin in the manner of worſhip is not *Idolatry*. And how prove you that the faults of the Liturgy are not as far from the *Matter* of the worſhip, as your *own* are? Will you find *ſome words* which you can call *falſe* in the *matter*? Suppoſe it were ſo? When an Antinomian, an Anabaptiſt, a Separatiſt, or any one that erreth doth drop ſome of his errours in his prayers, (as I think none will deny that they uſe to do) muſt we needs believe that his prayer is *Idolatry* therefore, as being *falſe worſhip*? And is it unlawful to joyn with ſuch? Then we ſhall have more ſeparation than you yet plead for, or practiſe your ſelves. No two men in the world muſt joyn together if all *ſinful worſhip*, or worſhip *falſe* ſometime in the very *matter* doth neceſſitate a ſeparation: At leaſt where no one knoweth before hand what another will ſay with his tongue, when I know that every man hath ſome falſe opinion in his mind.

But where did theſe men learn to call their brethrens worſhip *falſe* any more than their *own*, upon the account that God hath not commanded the *manner* of it; when he hath neither commanded us to *uſe a form*, nor to *forbear* it; but by general precepts of doing all to edification?

not his *tongue* from the reproaching of his brothers different way of worſhip, may prove the greateſt Offendor of all. It would move a charitable underſtanding hearer to grief and pity, to read and hear one party call all prayer by habit, no better than *crudities*, *whinings*, *bold talking to God* and *nonſence*; and whatſoever bitter ſcorn can ſpeak: And to read and hear many on the other extreme, to call the *Liturgy*, no leſs than *Idolatry*! I deſire the Reader to peruſe a judicious Treatiſe of Mr. *Tombes* in anſwer to one of this language: As much as he and I have written againſt each others opinion about Infant Baptiſme, our concenting admonition to you ſhould ſo much the rather be accepted in this.

And what pitiful argûments have they to prove this charge of *Idolatry*? *Falſe worſhip of the true God is idolatry as well as worſhipping a falſe God: But ſuch is the Liturgy: Ergo* —

This is all that theſe raſh preachers muſt trouble the Church, and ſeduce men into a hating factious zeal with. But what mean theſe men by *falſe worſhip*? Do they mean *worſhip contrary* to *Gods word*? That is, which is *ſinful*? And do they mean *All ſuch ſinful worſhip or ſome only*? If they mean *all ſuch ſinful* worſhip, than *theſe words* of theirs are *Idolatry*; For they are part of their *preaching*, which is part of *Gods worſhip*, in their own ſenſe: And it is *falſe doctrine*, and tendeth to mens perdition. And ſo they and all falſe Teachers ſhould be idolaters. By this they would turn *all* ſins in worſhip into *one*: It is *all Idolatry*. Is not every *confuſed* prayer *ſinful*, which hath unmeet expreſſions and diſordered, and hath wandering

dering thoughts and dull affections? Is there any of theſe *Love-killers* that dare ſay they pray without ſin? And muſt we not ſeparate from them then as *Idolaters*? Yea and every man from himſelf; that is, He muſt give over praying becauſe its all *Idolatry*?

But perhaps they will ſay; *This ſin is but in the manner and not in the matter.*

Anſw. Very good; It ſeems then that ſin in the manner of worſhip is not *Idolatry*. And how prove you that the faults of the Liturgy are not as far from the *Matter* of the worſhip, as your *own* are? Will you find *ſome words* which you can call *falſe* in the *matter*? Suppoſe it were ſo? When an Antinomian, an Anabaptiſt, a Separatiſt, or any one that erreth doth drop ſome of his errours in his prayers, (as I think none will deny that they uſe to do) muſt we needs believe that his prayer is *Idolatry* therefore, as being *falſe worſhip*? And is it unlawful to joyn with ſuch? Then we ſhall have more ſeparation than you yet plead for, or practiſe your ſelves. No two men in the world muſt joyn together if all *ſinful worſhip*, or worſhip *falſe* ſometime in the very *matter* doth neceſſitate a ſeparation: At leaſt where no one knoweth before hand what another will ſay with his tongue, when I know that every man hath ſome falſe opinion in his mind.

But where did theſe men learn to call their brethrens worſhip *falſe* any more than their *own*, upon the account that God hath not commanded the *manner* of it; when he hath neither commanded us to *uſe a form*, nor to *forbear* it; but by general precepts of doing all to edification?

on; If one man preach in one method and another in another; One by written Notes to help his memory, and another without; one by his own gifts only, and another by the help of others; which of these is the false prophet, the false worshipper or Idolater? Hath God said *you shall use Notes in preaching?* No more hath he said, *you shall preach without Notes:* yet hath he commanded both, to severall persons where *edification* variously requireth it. Is he an Idolater that useth Meeters, Tunes, Versions, Translations, Directories, Pulpits, Cups, Table Cloaths, Fonts, Basins, &c. which God commandeth not. O Lord pity thy poor Church, whose Pastors themselves are so peevish in their ignorance, and tempt other men by their follies, to justifie all their severities against them and others.

But what Text of Scripture is it that ever told these men that *all false worship is Idolatry*? what text do they name, but such as if they did it on purpose, to shew their boldness in adding to Gods Word? The second Commandment is the chief which they insist on. But what ever Expositions they may forge, there is no such word nor sense in the Commandment. We all hold that as the *gross direct Idolatry*, is the worshipping of a *false God*, against the first Commandment; so to make any *such false representation* of the *true God*, by *words* or *deeds*, as maketh him *like an Idol*, and contradicteth his *nature*, and *so to worship him*, this is also a *secondary* kind of *Idolatry*: Because God is *none such* as they represent him, and therefore it is not God indeed, but an Idol which they worship. And because God is not like to any thing corporeal

real in heaven or earth; therefore he that maketh an image of any thing in Heaven or earth as like to God, or to represent him, he maketh an idol of God by blasphemy. *To what will you liken me, that I should be like unto it, saith the Holy one?* This is the idolatry forbidden in the Second Commandment: It is not *all false worship*, but *one sort of false worship*, which is idolatry: what else that Commandment forbiddeth, is neither called *Idolatry*, nor can so be proved.

It is an odious sound, to hear an ignorant, rash, self-conceited person, especially a Preacher, to cry out, *Idolatry, Idolatry*, against his brethrens prayers to God, because they have something in them to be amended; while perhaps his own prayers have so much false doctrine in them, or false fire of carnal passions and uncharitableness, as maketh it a much harder question, whether it be lawful to joyn with such as he is, while he abhorreth so much to joyn with others. All that know me know that it is not my own case and interest, that I fit this reprehension to. It is twenty times harder to me to remember a Form of words, than to express what is in my mind without them. But we must not fit our opinions of all our brethrens prayers, to our own temperament.

DIRECT. XXXIV.

Think not that all is unlawful to be obeyed, which is unlawfully commanded.

MAny a Ruler sinneth in his Commands, when it is no sin but a duty of the inferior to obey them. He that hath but a *bad end*, or bad circumstances may sin in commanding: As if a Magistrate command Religious Duties in meer Policy for his own Advantage, or if he enforce a lawful Command with unlawful Penalties: And yet it will be the Subjects Duty to obey. Yea, as to the *matter* it self, it may be unlawful for a Ruler to command a thing that will do no good, (because it is a vain Command, and maketh men spend that time in vain:) and yet it may be the Subjects Duty to do it.

If the Magistrate choose an inconvenient place for publike worship, or an unfit hour, or if the Pastor choose a less fit translation, meeter or tune, or other circumstances of worship, it may be their sin to do so, and yet the peoples duty to obey them. If a Father bid his Child but carry a straw from one place to another, it is his fault so to imploy his time in vain; but the Child is not faulty in obeying. Indeed if the thing commanded be such as is simply evil, and forbidden us by God, in all cases whatsoever, than no ones commands can make it lawful. But if it be a thing that is only inconvenient, or unlawful by some lesser accident, then the command of authority

rity may preponderate as a more weighty accident. If it be lawful to give a Thief my purse, to save my life, which is not lawful for him to demand or take; Then sure it is lawful to obey a King, a Parent, a Master or a Pastor, in things not evil in themselves, though they unlawfully command them. I say not that we must do so in *all things* which are evil but by accident: For *some* accidents may make it so great an evil, as no mans command can preponderate and make it lawful: But in *some cases* it is so, though not in all.

Therefore remember that you do not prove it sinful in you to do such things, by proving it a sin in the imposer, unless you have some better reason, and can shew a Law of God forbidding you.

DIRECT. XXXV.

Think not that you are guilty of all the Faults of other mens worship with whom you joyn; no not of the Ministers or Congregations; Nor that you are bound to separate from them in worship; because of all the faults in their performance.

THis Errour is a common cause of separations; but such as will suffer no two men to joyn together, but will turn all Churches into confusion, and crumble them to dust, if it be fully practised. For there is no man alive that worshippeth God without some sin, as I said be-

fore. Do you ever pray your ſelves in ſecret or in your families without ſin? Muſt all ſeparate from you for this? Or may not you bear anothers failings as patiently as your own? Your own you are ſtill guilty of, becauſe they are your *own*: but not of another mans which you cannot help. If I believed that I were partaker of the guilt of all the falſe doctrine, or faulty preaching, or prayer which was uſed in the Church where I am, I would flye from all the Churches in the world: But whither to go *I* could not tell.

Obj. *But if I joyn with them that worſhip God amiſs, do I not approve of their ſin or ſignifie my conſent to it?*

Anſw. Approving and *conſenting* are acts of your own mind: and whether you do ſo or not, is beſt known to your ſelf: But it is a *Profeſſion* of conſent that we have now to ſpeak of. And I ſay that our preſence at the prayers of the Church, is *no profeſſion* of *conſent* to all that is faulty in thoſe prayers. Why do you not offer to *prove* it to be ſo, but barely affirm it without any proof? I never heard a word of proof for this bare aſſertion to this day. But its eaſily diſproved.

Firſt, no man can in reaſon and juſtice take that for my *Profeſſion*, which I never *made* by word nor deed, according to the common ſenſe of words and actions: But according to this common ſenſe I never did by word or deed profeſs that I conſent to all which is uttered by the Paſtor in the publike prayers.

Secondly, When the profeſſion which we make by our Church-communion is publikely declared to

to be another thing, totally diſtinct from this, no man may juſtly interpret it to be this which is quite different: But it is another thing which we profeſs by our Church-communion; That is, I profeſs my ſelf only to be a *Chriſtian*, in my Baptiſm when I enter into the Church, and in my daily communion with it: And I profeſs to be a member of a Chriſtian Society, and to hold Communion with them in Faith and Love and in worſhipping God according to his word: And I profeſs ſubjection to the particular Paſtors of that Church, as Chriſtian Paſtors, who are to teach the people that word of God, and guide them in worſhip and diſcipline according to that word. This is every mans profeſſion in his Church-communion and no more; unleſs he make ſome ſome further particular expreſſion of more, as every ſect uſeth to do, in profeſſing the opinions of their party. Why then ſhould any lyar charge me to make a profeſſion which I never made, when my profeſſion in my Chriſtian communion is deſcribed by Chriſt himſelf who inſtituted it? And why ſhould I turn lyar againſt my ſelf, and ſay that my preſence is a profeſſion of that conſent which I never made the leaſt profeſſion of?

Thirdly, The wording of the publike prayers, is the Paſtors work and none of mine: It is part of his office, as the wording and methodizing of his Sermons is: And if he do it well the praiſe is not mine but his: And if he do it ill the diſpraiſe is not mine but his. Why ſhould any hold me guilty of another mans fault, which I neither can help, nor belongeth to any office of mine to help, any further than to admoniſh him.

Fourthly, I do not profess an approbation and consent to all the faults of *my own* secret or family prayers: Much less to another mans, who is not in my power. I have disorders, and defects and incongruities and other faults in all my prayers; And if my very *speaking* and *committing* them signifie not my *approbation* of them, how much less is it signified where it is not I but *another man* that speaketh and committeth them.

Fifthly, And as I have said, This opinion would make it unlawful to joyn with *any* Pastor or Church *on earth*, because no *sin* must be *approved* of and *consented* to: and every one mixeth sin with their prayers.

Obj. But (say those on the one extream) *if I joyn with one that is known to be a Separatist, an Anabaptist, an Antinomian, an Arminian, &c. his own profession doth before hand bid me to expect not only that the manner but the matter of his prayer be erroneous.*

Answ. First, it is granted that no man may in his choise, prefer an erring person or mode of worship before a better. Secondly, But when the question is not, whom you should *prefer* but whom you may *joyn with*, it is not *his* errours *that* are *yours*, nor his profession that is *yours*. I come to joyn with him as a *Christian Pastor* whose office is to preach the Gospel: And while men are the agents I know that all that they do will be imperfect and faulty: And it is not *my knowing* their faults that makes them *mine*, but rather may preserve me from them.

Obj. *But for ought I know he may put heresie or blasphemy into his prayers, when I know not*

not what he will say, before I hear it.

Answ. For ought *you know your Physician*, or *your Cook*, may give you poison, and your Nurse may poison your child: But though that should make you careful whom you trust, yet somebody must be trusted for all that. You go not upon certainty in any case where man is to be trusted, but upon *probability*. Men are not to be distrusted in their own profession, if they be lawfully called to it, by cautelous and able triers, till they have forfeited their trust: And as he would not mend the matter who should make a Law, that no Physician shall give any medicine but one and the same to all in such diseases, and that fetcht from the Kings Apothecary; And no Cook shall sell any meat but what is drest by the Kings Cooks; for fear lest they should poison men; so he that would say, No Pastor shall preach or pray but in prescribed words, lest he should speak heresie or blasphemy, would but destroy the Pastoral office, for fear lest it should be abused.

But here you have no great temptation to this errour; Because though a man may poison your bodies against your wills, yet no one can poyson your souls but by your own consent. If he speak words of heresie or blasphemie, if you disown them in your minds, and consent not to them, they are none of yours, nor can do you hurt: They may be your temptation and your grief, but they are not your sin.

And yet I shall tell you in the next direction, how far they are to be avoided.

Obj. *But* (say those on the other extream)

Fourthly, I do not profeſs an approbation and conſent to all the faults of *my own* ſecret or family prayers: Much leſs to another mans, who is not in my power. I have d ſorders, and defects and incongruities and other faults in all my prayers; And if my very *ſpeaking* and *committing* them ſignifie not my *approbation* of them, how much leſs is it ſignified where it is not I but *another man* that ſpeaketh and committeth them.

Fifthly, And as I have ſaid, This opinion would make it unlawful to joyn with *any* Paſtor or Church *on earth*, becauſe no *ſin* muſt be *approved* of and *conſented* to: and every one mixeth ſin with their prayers.

Obj. But (ſay thoſe on the one extream) *if I joyn with one that is known to be a Separatiſt, an Anabaptiſt, an Antinomian, an Arminian, &c. his own profeſſion doth before hand bid me to expect not only that the manner but the matter of his prayer be erroneous.*

Anſw. Firſt, it is granted that no man may in his choiſe, prefer an erring perſon or mode of worſhip before a better. Secondly, But when the queſtion is not, whom you ſhould *prefer* but whom you may *joyn with*, it is not *his* errours *that* are *yours*, nor his profeſſion that is *yours*. I come to joyn with him as a *Chriſtian Paſtor* whoſe office is to preach the Goſpel: And while men are the agents I know that all that they do will be imperfect and faulty: And it is not *my knowing* their faults that makes them *mine*, but rather may preſerve me from them.

Obj. *But for ought I know he may put hereſie or blaſphemy into his prayers, when I know not*

not what he will ſay, before I hear it.

Anſw. For ought *you know your Phyſician*, or *your Cook*, may give you poiſon, and your Nurſe may poiſon your child: But though that ſhould make you careful whom you truſt, yet ſomebody muſt be truſted for all that. You go not upon certainty in any caſe where man is to be truſted, but upon *probability*. Men are not to be diſtruſted in their own profeſſion, if they be lawfully called to it, by cautelous and able triers, till they have forfeited their truſt: And as he would not mend the matter who ſhould make a Law, that no Phyſician ſhall give any medicine but one and the ſame to all in ſuch diſeaſes, and that fetcht from the Kings Apothecary; And no Cook ſhall ſell any meat but what is dreſt by the Kings Cooks; for fear leſt they ſhould poiſon men; ſo he that would ſay, No Paſtor ſhall preach or pray but in preſcribed words, leſt he ſhould ſpeak hereſie or blaſphemy, would but deſtroy the Paſtoral office, for fear leſt it ſhould be abuſed.

But here you have no great temptation to this errour; Becauſe though a man may poiſon your bodies againſt your wills, yet no one can poyſon your ſouls but by your own conſent. If he ſpeak words of hereſie or blaſphemie, if you diſown them in your minds, and conſent not to them, they are none of yours, nor can do you hurt: They may be your temptation and your grief, but they are not your ſin.

And yet I ſhall tell you in the next direction, how far they are to be avoided.

Obj. *But* (ſay thoſe on the other extream)

When I know before hand by their Common-Prayer-Book, what their errour in worſhip is, and yet joyn in it, do I not ſeem to approve it?

Anſw. Do not barely *affirm*, but *prove*, that all *fore-known faults* of the Paſtors words in prayer are *mine*, if I ſeparate not: How doth fore-knowing them make them mine. Take heed that thus you make not God the greateſt ſinner and the worſt being in all the world.

For God *fore-knoweth* all mens ſins; and God is *preſent* when they commit them; and he giveth them all that life and time and ſtrength and breath, by which they do them: and he hath communion with all the prayers of the faithful in the world, what faults ſoever be in the *words* or *forms*: he doth not reject them for any ſuch failings. Will you ſay therefore that God *approveth* or *conſenteth* to all theſe ſins?

I know before hand (as is ſaid before) that every man will ſin that prayeth (either by defect of deſire, love, faith or fervency, or by wandering thoughts, or diſordered words, *&c.*) And I know that every erroneous perſon (commonly) doth uſe to put his errours into his prayers and preaching. But how doth all this make it mine? I am bound to hold communion with all Gods people on earth as I have occaſion; not *as* they are *ſinners*, but as they are *Saints*: And I come as to the Communion of Saints: And though both they and I do bring our ſins to that communion, and I fore-know them; yet *I* lament both theirs and mine; and ſo far am *I* from conſenting to them, that they are my grief, and *I* beg forgiveneſs both for them and me.

Obj.

Obj. *But you ſaid that it belonged to the Paſtors office to word his own Sermons and Prayers: Therefore preſcribed forms deſtroy the Paſtors office: And I may not conſent to ſuch uſurpations by tyrannical men.*

Anſw. Firſt, the Paſtor is the mouth of God to the people, & of the people to God: And he doth word his own Sermons and Prayers; or elſe his voice could not conduct you. But if he that is conſcions of his own infirmity, do take the help of others in wording them, that doth not deſtroy his office, but help him in the exerciſe of it. If a weak Miniſter learn a prayer out of the writings of ſome abler Divine and uſe it in the Pulpit, this is no deſtroying of his office.

Secondly, and if they that fear the effect of Miniſters weakneſs ſhall force them to uſe the words of others, the ſpeaker ſtill maketh them his *own words* before you joyn with him. And if it did hinder the *free exerciſe* of all his office, it doth not *deſtroy* it.

Obj. *But he doth it voluntarily, whereas the weakneſs of conceived prayer is involuntary.*

Anſw. It is with more probability ſaid, that a man is *involuntary*, in doing that which another compelleth him to do, than that which no man but himſelf only is the author of: It is ſaid to him that readeth the Liturgy [Do this, or *nothing*] But no body ſaith to an erring, weak, confuſed Miniſter, [*Put in your errours into your prayers, or pray diſorderly or you ſhall be puniſhed.*] Every Separatiſt, Anabaptiſt and Antinomian doth *too willingly* put his errours into his prayers.

Obj. *But the Liturgy is impoſed on the ableſt as*

as well as on the weakeſt Miniſters.

Anſw. Whether it be well or ill impoſed, is none of the queſtion now in hand: No nor whether it be lawfully uſed by the Speaker: But whether *you* may lawfully *joyn* in it. And however it be impoſed, till the Miniſter conſent to uſe it, you ſhall not be put to joyn with him in it. And when he doth conſent, he maketh it his own words, and (for reaſons which ſeem good to him) he doth chooſe thoſe expreſſions rather than others: (Even becauſe he muſt uſe thoſe or none) ſo that he is ſtill in the exerciſe of his office; And it is his perſonal fault, if it be a fault, to uſe thoſe words, and none of yours: Whether he do it willingly as the beſt, or do it with a half will as of neceſſity, or whether there be tyranny in the impoſing them or not; you are not guilty of any of this, by joyning with a Chriſtian Church that uſeth them.

DIRECT. XXXVI.

Yet know what Paſtors you may own, and what not, and what Church-communion you may remove from or forbear: And think not that I am perſwading you to make no difference.

THis is a point that I have more largely handled elſewhere, and can give you now but theſe brief hints, leſt *I* be too tedious.

Firſt, He that is not *at all able* to do the eſſential works of the Miniſtry, that is, to teach the people the Chriſtian faith, and a holy life, and to pray and praiſe God with them, and adminiſter the Sacraments, and in ſome meaſure overſee the manners of the flock, is no Miniſter, nor to be owned: For he wanteth the eſſential qualifications: As an illiterate man can be no Schoolmaſter, nor he a Phyſician, a Pilot, an Architect, who is utterly ignorant of their work.

Secondly, he that preacheth Hereſie, that is, denieth any eſſential point of Chriſtianity or Godlineſs, after the firſt and ſecond admonition is to be avoided.

Thirdly, he that in his application, endeavoureth to diſgrace a Godly life, and to diſſwade the people from it, on falſe pretenſes, and encourage them to a life of wickedneſs, is a traytor to Chriſt, and not to be owned in the Miniſtery. In a word, *Any one whoſe Miniſtery is ſuch, as tendeth to deſtruction more than to edification and to do more harm then good.* But then remember, that it is not partiality and paſſion that muſt here be judge: Nor is every one an oppoſer of Godlineſs, who oppoſeth the errours of a party, or the faults or follies of godly men.

Fourthly, that Paſtor or Church who will not let you have communion with them, unleſs you will ſay or ſubſcribe ſome falſhood, or commit any ſin of wilful choice, doth drive you from their communion by their unlawful terms; and it is not you that are the Separatiſts, but they.

Fifthly, When you are to chooſe what Miniſter or Church you will ſtatedly have your ordinary communion with, you ſhould not prefer a leſs

leſs reformed Church or a leſs worthy Paſtor, or one that is erroneous, before a better, but chooſe that which is moſt to your true edification.

Sixthly, If you live under a worſe and unreformed Church, or unprofitable Miniſter, if neceſſity hinder not, you may remove your dwelling to a better.

Seventhly, and where Churches are near and there is no great hurt or diſorder will follow it, you may joyn with another Church without removing your dwelling: But this you may not do, when the hurt to the publick is like to be greater than the good to you.

Eighthly, and you muſt not conclude that the more faulty Church and Miniſter *may not lawfully be communicated with* though for your benefit you chooſe a better, for this is the true crime of ſinful ſeparation.

But ſurely a mans ſoul is ſo precious, that all men ſhould prefer the greateſt helps for their ſalvation before the leſs; and think no juſt means too dear to purchaſe them.

DIRECT.

DIRECT. XXXVII.

In your judging of Diſcipline, Reformation, and any means of the Churches good, be ſure your Eye be both upon the true End, and upon the particular Rule, and not on either of them alone: Take not that for a means, which is either contrary to the word of God, or is in its nature deſtructive of the End.

THere are great miſcarriages come for want of the true obſervation of this rule. Firſt, If a thing ſeem to you very *needful* to a good *end*, and yet the *word be againſt it*, avoid it: For God knoweth better than we, what means is fitteſt, and what he will bleſs. As for inſtance, ſome think, that many ſelf-deviſed ways of worſhip, contrary to *Col.* 2. 21, 23. would be very profitable to the Church: And ſome think that ſtriking with the ſword as *Peter* did, is the way to reſcue Chriſt or the Goſpel: But both are bad, becauſe the Scripture is againſt them.

Secondly, and if you think that the Scripture commandeth you this or that poſitive means, if Nature and true Reaſon aſſure you that it is againſt the End, and is like to do much more harm than good, be aſſured that you miſtake that Scripture. For firſt, God telleth us in general that the *means as ſuch* are *for the End*, and therefore are *no means* when they are *againſt it*! The Miniſtery

is for edification and not for deſtruction. The Sabbath is for man and not man for the Sabbath. Secondly, God hath told us, that no poſitive duty is a duty at all times. To pray when I ſhould be ſaving my neighbours life, is a ſin and not a duty, though we are commanded to pray continually. So is it to be preaching; or hearing on the Lords day, when I ſhould be quenching a fire in the town, or doing neceſſary works of mercy: Wherefore the Diſciples Sabbath-breaking was juſtified by Chriſt; and he giveth us all a charge to learn what this meaneth, I will have mercy and not ſacrifice; which muſt needs import, I prefer mercy before ſacrifice and would have no ſacrifice which hindereth mercy. Therefore if a Sermon were to be preached ſo unſeaſonably or in ſuch unſuitable circumſtances, as that according to Gods ordinary way of working, it were like to do more hurt than good; it were no duty at that time. Diſcipline is an Ordinance of Chriſt: But if ſound reaſon tell me, that if I publickly call this man to Repentance, or excommunicate him, it is like to do much hurt to the Church and no good to him, it would be at that time no duty but a ſin. As Phyſick muſt be forborn where the Diſeaſe will but be exaſperated by it. Therefore Chriſt boundeth our very preaching and reproof, with a [*Shake off the duſt off your feet as a teſtimony againſt them. And give not that which is holy to dogs*, &c. *When treading under foot, and turning again and rending us, is likeſt to be the ſucceſs*, the wiſdome of Chriſt, and not that of the fleſh only, requireth us to take it for no duty. This is to be obſerved by them that think that Admonitions, and excommunications, and

and excluſion from the Sacrament, muſt be uſed in all places and at all times alike, without reſpect to the End, come of it what will: Or that will tempt God by preſuming that he will certainly either bleſs or at leaſt juſtifie, their unſeaſonable and imprudent actions, as if they were a duty at all times. To be either againſt the *Scripture*, or againſt the *End*, is a certain proof that an action is no duty, becauſe no means.

DIRECT. XXXVIII.

Neglect not any truth of God, much leſs renounce it or deny it: For lying and contempt of Sacred truth is always ſinful: But yet do not take it for your duty to publiſh all which you judge to be truth, nor a ſin to ſilence many leſſer truths, when the Churches peace and welfare doth require it.

TO ſpeak or ſubſcribe againſt any truth, is not to be done on any pretenſe whatſoever: For lying is a ſin at all times. But it is the opinion of injudicious furious ſpirits, that no truth is to be ſilenced for peace. Truth is not to be ſold for carnal proſperity, but it is to be forborn for ſpiritual advantage, and true neceſſity.

First, if the publiſhing of all truths were at all times a duty, then all men live every moment in ten thouſand ſins of omiſſion, becauſe there are

are more than to many truths which I am not publishing: Nay which I never shall publish whileſt I live.

Secondly, Positives bind not always and to all times.

Thirdly, while you are preaching that opinion which your zeal is so much for, you are omitting far greater and more necessary Truths. And is it not as great a sin to omit them as the lesser.

Fourthly, Mercy is to be preferred before sacrifice: What if the present uttering some truth would cost many thousand mens lives? Were not that an untimely and unmerciful word? And is it not as bad if (but accidentally) it tend to the ruine of the Church, and the hurt of souls? It were easie to instance in unseasonable and imprudent words of truth spoken to Princes, which have raised persecutions of long continuance, and ruined Churches, silenced Ministers, and caused the death of multitudes of men.

Fifthly, And where is there any word of God which commandeth us to speak all that we know, and which forbiddeth us to forbear the utterance of any one truth.

Sixthly, And for the most part those men, who are most pregnant and impatient of holding in their opinions on the pretense of the pretiousness of truth, do but proudly esteem their own understandings precious, and do vend some raw undigested notions, vain janglings or errors, under the name of that truth which must by no means be concealed, though the vending of it tend to envy and strife, and to confusion and every evil work. When those that have the Truth indeed, have

have more wisdome and goodness to know how to use it.

It is not *Truth* but *Goodness* which is the ultimate object of the soul. And God who is infinite *Goodness* it self, hath revealed his *Truths* to the world to do men *Good*, and not to *hurt* them. And the Devil, who is the Destroyer, so he may but do men *hurt*, will be content to make use even of *Truth* to do it; Though usually he only pretendeth *Truth* to cover his *lies*: And this angel of Light, hath his ministers of Light and Righteousness; who are known by their fruits; whileſt the pretenses of Light and Righteousness are used to Satans ends and not to Christs, to hurt and destroy and to hinder Christs Kingdome, and not to save and to do good: As the Wolf is known by his bloody jaws, even in his sheeps cloathing.

DIRECT. XXXIX.

Know which are the great duties of a Christian life, and wherein the nature of true Religion doth consist; And then pretend not any lesser duty, against those greater; though the least when it is indeed a duty, is not to be denied or neglected.

HEaven-work and *Heart-work*, are the chiefest parts of Christian duty. Christ often giveth us his summaries of the Law, and inculcateth his great Command; *Joh.* 13. 35. *Matth.* 22.

37, 38, 39. *Luk.* 10, 27. And so doth the Apostle *Rom.* 13. 10. 1 *Pet.* 1. 22. 1 *John.* 3. 11, 14, 23. & 4. 7, 11, 12, 20. 2 *Joh.* 5. And the fruits of the spirit are manifest *Gal.* 5. 22, 23. *James* saith, that *pure Religion and undefiled before God even the father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in adversity, and to keep our selves unspotted of the world*, Jam. 1. 27. *Paul* saith, 1 *Tim.* 1. 5. *The end of the Commandement is Charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience and of faith unfeigned*: And then addeth, *From which some having swarved, have turned aside to vain janglings* ——

In a word [*The effectual belief of pardon and eternal Glory given through Christ, and the Love of God and man, with the denial of our selves, and fleshly desires, and contempt of all things in the world, which are competitors with God and our salvation, with a humble patient enduring of all which must be suffered for these ends*] is the nature and sum of the Christian Religion.

Do nothing therefore as a duty which is a hinderance to any of this. Contentious preachings, and factious tidings which weaken *Love*, are not of God. *The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle to all men*, 2 *Tim.* 2. 24. When you come into a family and find that their Religion consisteth in promoting some odd opinion, and pleading for a party, and vilifying others, be sure that this is a Religious way of serving the devil, being contrary to the great and certain duties of a godly life. When you fall into company, which filleth all talk of Heaven, and all *Heart-searching* and *Heart-humbling conference*, by pleading for this or that opinion, be sure that it is but one way

way of enmity to Holiness, though not so gross as scorning and persecuting it. That which I said before of *Truth*, is applyable to this of Duty.

It is one of the most important things in the world, for the resolving of a thousand cases of conscience, and the directing of a Christian life, to know which *Duties* are the *Greater* and which are the *lesser*, and so which is to be preferred in competition; For that which is a duty at another time, is a sin, when it is done instead of a greater! as Christ hath resolved in the case of the Sabbath. If *Good* must be loved as Good, then the Greatest Good must be most loved and sought. Sacrifice instead of mercy is a sin: Our gift must be left at the altar, while we go to be reconciled to our brother. *Math.* 5. Never hearken to those men who would set up their controverted duties, or any positives and lesser things, against the duties of nature it self, or the great substantial parts of godliness.

DIRECT. XL.

Labour for a ſound judgement to know good from evil, leſt you trouble your ſelves and others by miſtakes: And till you grow ſo judicious, forſake not the guidance of a judicious Teacher, nor the company of the agreeing generality of the Godly.

ALmoſt all our contentions and diviſions are cauſed by the ignorance and injudiciouſneſs of Chriſtians; eſpecially the moſt ſelf-conceited. They are for the moſt as children, that yet need to be taught the very principles of the divine Oracles, and to be fed with milk, when they think themſelves fit to be teachers of others, *Heb.* 5. 11, 12. And therefore as children they are toſſed to and fro, and caried about with every wind of doctrine, *Eph.* 4. 14. And when they have many years together been crying up an opinion, and vilifying diſſenters, at laſt they turn to ſome other opinion, and confeſs that they did all this upon miſtake. And was it not a pitiful life that they lived that while? and a pitiful zeal which did ſet them on? and a pitiful kind of worſhip which they thus offered to God? Alas to hear a man pray and preach up Antinomianiſm one year, and Arminianiſm the next, and Socinianiſm the next! To hear a man make Separation and Anabaptiſtry a great part of his buſineſs to men in preaching and to God in prayer for ſeven

ſeven and ſeven years together; and at laſt confeſs that all this was his errour and his ſin: (Or if he confeſs it not, it is ſo much the worſe.) Is it not ſad that ignorance and haſty raſhneſs, ſhould ſo much injure the Church and mens ſouls that ſo many well meaning people, ſhould put evil for good and good for evil, darkneſs for light and light for darkneſs, *Iſa.* 5. 20.

But becauſe there is no hope that moſt ſhould be judicious, there is no other remedy for ſuch but this of Chriſts preſcript which I have here ſet down.

First, Happy is he that chooſeth a judicious faithful Guide and learneth of him till his own underſtanding be better illuminated; And that eſcapeth the conduct of ignorant, erroneous, ſelf-ſeeking, proud, dividing Teachers.

Secondly, Continue in the Communion of the *generality* of *agreeing* Chriſtians: The generality of the godly are more unlikely to be forſaken of Chriſt, than a few odd ſelf-conceited ſingular profeſſours. This is the way of peace to your ſelves and to the Church of Chriſt.

DIRECT. XLI.

Let not the bare Fervour of a Preacher, or the Lowdneſs of his voice, or affectionate manner of utterance, draw you too far to admire or follow him; without a proportionable degree of ſolid underſtanding and judiciouſneſs.

IT is pity that any wiſe and judicious Miniſter ſhould want that fervour and ſeriouſneſs of ſpeech, which the weight of ſo great a buſineſs doth require. And it is greater pity, that any ſerious affectionate Miniſter, ſhould be ignorant and injudicious: And it is yet greater pity that in any good men, too much of their fervour ſhould be meerly affected, and ſeem to be what it is not; or at leaſt be raiſed by a ſelfiſh deſire to advance our ſelves in the hearers thoughts, and to exerciſe our parts upon their affections. But it is moſt pitiful that the Church hath any hypocrites who have no other but ſuch affected diſſembled fervency. And it is not the leaſt pity that ſo many good people, eſpecially youths and women, ſhould be ſo weak, as to value an affectionate tone of ſpeech, above a judicious opening of the Goſpel. I confeſs there is ſomething in an affectionate expreſſion, which will move the wiſeſt: And as light and *judgement* tend to generate *judgement*, ſo *heat* of affection tendeth to beget *affection*. And I never loved a ſenſeleſs delivery of matters of eternal conſequence; As if

if we were aſleep our ſelves, or would make the hearers to be ſo: Or would have them think by our cold expreſſions, that we believe not our ſelves, when we ſet forth the great ineſtimable things of the life to come. But yet it grieveth my very ſoul to think, what pitiful, raw, and ignorant kind of preaching, is crowded moſt after in many places, for the meer affectionate manner of expreſſion, and lowdneſs of the Preachers voice! How oft have I known the ableſt Preachers undervalued, and an ignorant man by crouds applauded, when I that have been acquainted with the Preacher *ab incunabulis*, have known him to be unable well to anſwer moſt queſtions in the common Catechiſm. And I durſt not tell them of his great inſufficiency and ignorance, for fear of hindering the ſucceſs of his labours, and being thought envious at other mens acceptance. I have known poor tradeſmens boys have a great mind of the Miniſtry; and we that were the Miniſters of the Countrey, contributed to maintain them while they got ſome learning and knowledge: But they had not patience to keep out of the Pulpit till they competently underſtood their buſineſs there: And yet many of the religious people valued theſe as the only men: And ſome of them ſhortly after turned to ſome whimſical Sect or other, and contemned the Miniſters that inſtructed and maintained them: And all this while, underſtood not half ſo much as many of our ſober Auditors underſtood. This prepareth the poor people to be hurried into any diſorder or diviſion, when they no better know how to chooſe their Guides.

DIRECT. XLII.

Your belief of the necessary Articles of Faith, must be made your own, and not taken meerly upon the Authority of any: And in all points of Belief or Practice which are of necessity to Salvation, you must ever keep company with the Universal Church: for it were not the Church if it erred in these: And in matters of peace and concord, the greater part must be your guide; In matters of humane obedience, your Governours must be your Guides: And in matters of high and difficult speculation, the judgment of one man of extraordinary understanding and clearness is to be preferred before both the Rulers and the major Vote.

IN several sorts of Controversies and Cases, you must prefer several sorts of Guides or Judges: It is a grand pernicious Errour to think that the same mens judgments must be most followed in every Case. And it is of grand importance to know how to value and vary our Guides, as the Cases vary. And for the most part, every man is more to be regarded in his own way of study and profession, than wiser men in other matters, of other studies and professions: As a Lawyer is to be valued in the Law more than the ablest and most illuminated Divine: And a Philosopher

losopher in Philosophy, and a Linguist in the Tongues, and a Physician in Physick, *&c.* For instance,

First, Suppose it were a Controversie whether Christ be God, or whether there be a life to come, or a resurrection, *&c.* Here no man must be Judge, because if you are Christians indeed, it is past controversie with you: And you believe this upon the evidences of truth, which have convinced you: And herein the universal Church are your associates.

Secondly, Suppose it be made a Controversie whether you shall use this Translation or version in publick, or another, or whether you shall meet at this hour or that; at this place or that; what words of prayer shall be used in publick; what persons you shall communicate with in publick, and what not, *&c.* In all such, your lawful Pastors and Rulers are the Judges, and their judgments must be preferred before more learned men that are not related to you.

Thirdly, Suppose the question be among many associated Churches, whether *this Church* or *Pastor* be to be disowned as *Heretical*, or owned by the rest as orthodox Christians. Here the judgement of the Pastors of those associated Churches in Councels, is to be preferred as of the proper Judges.

Fourthly, Suppose the question were among a *free people*, that want a Pastor, whether this man or that or the other (being all sufficient) shall be the Pastor of that Church: Here the major Vote of the people of that Church should be preferred.

Fifthly,

Fifthly, Suppose the question be, whether 1 *John* 5. 7. *e. g.* be Canonical Scripture; or the Doxology after the the Lords Prayer, *&c.* here a few learned Antiquaries, are to be believed before a major Vote or Councel, unskilled in those things, who contradict them.

Sixthly, Suppose the question were of the Object of predestination, of the nature of the wills liberty, of the concourse of God, and determining way of grace, of the definition of justification, faith, *&c.* Here a few well studied judicious Divines must be preferred before Authority and majority of Votes: As one clear-sighted man seeth further and better than a thousand that have darker sight: So that you must in such vary your guides, according to their several capacities and the Case. *Obedience* hearkneth most to *Authority*; *Unity* and *Concord* must depend most on some majority of Votes; *Hard questions* must be decided by the best *studied Persons*, and the quickest cleerest sights, and not by bare Commands or Votes.

DIRECT.

DIRECT. XLIII.

Take heed lest you be tempted to reject a good Cause, because it is owned by some bad persons; or to like a bad cause when it is owned by men that are otherwise good: And that you judge not of the faith and cause by the persons, when you should judge of the persons rather by the faith and cause.

I Confess when we have no other reason to encline us to one opinion or to another, but only the reputation of them that hold it, *cæteris paribus*, in matters of meer godliness, the judgment of *godly men* is much to be preferred before theirs that are *ungodly*, and they are much liker to be in the right. But when God hath given us *other means* to know the truth, we must impartially make use of them.

It too oft falleth out that honest people are like straying sheep: If one leap over the hedge, the rest will croud and strive to follow him: And therefore errours are like Languages and Fashions, that follow the Country where they are bred. The religious people in *Sweden* and *Denmark* have one sort of errour; In *Holland* and *Helvetia* perhaps they have another: In *France*, and *Spain*, and *Italy* they have others: In *Greece*, and *Armenia*, and *Ethiopia* they have others. And it is an easie matter before we are aware, to fall into the common epidemical disease; and to think, This is best, because the best and strictest people

are

are of this mind. And indeed sin doth seldome get so great an advantage in the world, as when it hath won the major vote among the most religious sort of people: If but a *Peter* separate, *Barnabas* and many more will follow.

And on the other side, sometimes the worser sort of men may hold fast the truth, and many ignorant persons are apt to reject it, because it is owned by men so bad. But if Truth be the Religion of their King and Countrey, or of their Ancestors in which they were brought up; or if their reputation or peace of conscience lie upon it; or if the defence of it shew their wit or learning; or if they can take an advantage by it, against better men, who erre in that one point: It is no wonder in all these Cases, if the worser sort of men defend the truth.

For instance; If any Sect should rise in *England*, who should deny Christ, or the Scripture, or the Resurrection, or the Life to come, or the Lords day (for all that they cannot keep it holy, yet) the worser sort of the people would all rise up against such errours. Shall we therefore think that the people are in the wrong? So if any better persons deny *Infant Baptisme*, or the use of the *Lords Prayer*, &c. the worser sort of people would be all against them; and yet be in the right.

And yet how many do take a form of prayer or Liturgy to be unlawful, meerly because the most of the worser sort are for it! As a Pharisee can gratifie his hypocrisie by *long Prayers*, which yet are good in themselves; so can an ungodly person gratifie his hypocrisie and sloth by Forms and

and Liturgies: which yet doth not prove them to be unlawful.

DIRECT. XLIV.

Ye take the bad example of religious men, to be one of your most pestilous temptations: And therefore labour to discover especially what are the sins of Professours in the age that you live in, that you may especially watch and fortifie your souls against them.

SOmetimes the strictest sort run in a gang after one opinion, and sometimes after another: sometimes to overvalue free will with the *Pelagians*: sometimes to abuse the name and notion of free grace: sometimes they are drawn with *Peter* to lay about them with a private unwarranted Sword; or by Politicians tempted into unlawful tumults: sometimes they run together into unlawful Compliances and Conformities to escape some censure or danger to the flesh: And most commonly they are hurried by Passion to follow some erroneous Leader into Schisme and Divisions, which are contrary to Unity, Love, and Peace.

Study well what is the common errour of the *religious party* in the times and places where you live, that you may take a special care to escape them, (For some such or others it is too probable they have.) Like not their fault for their Religi-

ous

ons ſake: But ſpecially take heed leſt the Devil draw you, to diſlike their Religion for their faults. Joyn with them heartily in the one, but not in the other.

DIRECT. XLV.

Deſire the higheſt degree of Holineſs, and to be free from the corruptions of the times: But affect not to be odd and ſingular, from ordinary Chriſtians in lawful things.

AN affectation of *ſingularity* in indifferent things, doth either come from ſuch ignorance as thoſe were guilty of in *Rom.* 14. or moſt commonly from Pride, though you perceive it not your ſelves. If it be to go in a meaner garb than others, and as the Quakers, not to put off the hat; or with the Fryars, to go barefoot, or in a diſtinguiſhing habit, that all men may ſee and ſay, This is a ſingular perſon in Religion, it is eaſie to ſee how this gratifieth pride. Humility deſireth not to be ſpecially taken notice of: And therefore in all things lawful, to do as others do, doth gratifie humility very much. It's ſtrange to obſerve how much ſtreſs ſome perſons lay upon their ſingular habits, geſtures, expreſſions and actions, when they have once taken them up? and how ſharp they are againſt all that are contrary? For as the Maſters of every Sect of Monks among the Papiſts had their ſeveral Rules of ſingularity in things indifferent; and yet preſently deſired to get diſciples to take their names, and follow their rules; ſo is it with moſt that begin in ſingularity: They would have all follow them, that it might grow common.

DIRECT. XLVI.

When you have to do only with ſtigmatized ſcandalous ones, to vindicate the honour of of Chriſtianity from their ſcandal, go as far from them as lawfully you can: But with the common ſort of ſinners, whoſe converſion you are bound to ſeek, go not as far from them as you can, but purpoſely ſtudy to come as near them, as lawfully you may, that you may have the better advantage to win them to the truth.

WHen it is our *work* to avoid perſons that they may be aſhamed, or that we may ſhew our deteſtation of their wickedneſs, then *going from* them is our duty, and we muſt do it; (To the excommunicate in publick, and to the notoriouſly wicked and impenitent after admonition, in our private way of life.) But with moſt men, our duty is to labour their converſion, and in hope to ſeek the ſaving of their ſouls, till they prove as dogs and ſwine to their exhorters. It is a common queſtion whether we ſhould go as far as

as we may from wicked men; or come as near them as we may. And it is very great ignorance to say either the one or the other, without distinguishing of wicked men. Seeing our duty lyeth the clean contrary way, towards one sort of them and towards another.

And there is much difference also to be made of the *matter* in which our joyning with them, or going from them doth consist. For there are some things which though they are no sin, yet are so like sin, that our doing them is most like to be a snare, and to hinder mens repentance, and not to further it: And in this we must not come too near them. But there are other things in which our going too far from them is like to hinder their repentance.

The injudicious zeal of many young Christians, doth often carry them into this extream. Any fashion of apparel which the common people use, they will avoid as far as modesty will permit them. And any lawfull recreation which they use, they will fly the further from because they use it: And they think it a scandal, to shoot or bowl or use any such game which bad men use. And any form or *manner* of speech which is lawful in it self they think they must avoid because such use it. But especially any way of worshipping God, or any controvertible opinion in Religion, which is owned by bad men, they flye as far from as they can; By which means all this evil is committed.

First, Their own faith and practise is corrupted: For many an errour is taken up, by going too far from other mens faults. Many a one turneth

neth Pelagian, by flying indiscreetly from Antinomianism. And many a one turneth Antinomian by avoiding Pelagianism. Many a one turneth Papist to shew his detestation of multitudes of sects: And many a one turneth to the giddiest sects, to avoid the things which are held and practised by the Papists; and are so zealous in avoiding the Papists ceremonies and forms and holidays too far, that at last they renounce their Ordination and their Baptism, and some at last deny the Scriptures, the Creed, and the Christ, which the Papists own. Many a one turneth Separatist and Anabaptist and Quaker, to get far enough from Bishops and Liturgies: And many a one is ready to over-run his consideration, and abuse his conscience in the extent of his compliance with all impositions, through the indignation or contempt against the unreasonable humours of the Sectaries. And thus mens *own* judgement and practise is depraved, while they think more *from whence* to go, than whither.

Secondly, you lose your advantage of doing good to those you flye from: And therein disobey the will of God, and have a hand in the loss of the souls of men: *Paul* became a Jew to the Jews, and all things to all men to save some. 1 *Cor.* 9. 19, 20, 21, 22. I pray you mark his words: It had been no strange thing, if he had become *wise* to gain the *foolish*, and shewed himself *strong* to win the *weak*, &c. But to become a *Jew* (as when he circumcised *Timothy*, and shaved his head because he had a vow, *&c.*) and to be as under the Law to them that are under Law; and as without Law to them that are without

out Law; and to become as *weak* to them that are *weak*, to gain the weak, and to be *made all things to all men, to save some*, this is far from the religion of the Separatists. What abundance of things do many now blame, and cenſure others for as temporizers, which they have nothing againſt (that may be called *Reaſon*) but only that their neighbours uſe them? If a man ſtand up at the profeſſion of the Belief; or if he ſtand up when the Pſalms and Hymns of Praiſe to God are uttered, they ſay, he conformeth to the geſtures of the Congregation: and make that his diſpraiſe which is his praiſe. And what! Is not *ſtanding* a fit geſture to profeſs our Faith in? and a fit geſture *to praiſe God* in? Or is it praiſe-worthy to be *odd* and *ſingular* in the Church? and not to do as the reſt of the Church doth? *Auſtin* profeſſed his reſolution, in all ſuch geſtures and lawful orders to do as the Church doth where he is: And *Paul* would have us with one *mouth* as well as with *one mind* to glorifie God. I entreat theſe men to mark whether it was Chriſt or the Phariſees that came neareſt to their way, and whom they now imitate? Was it for going too far from ſinners that the Phariſees did cenſure Chriſt? Or was it not for eating and drinking with Publicans and ſinners (though he did it not to harden them in their ſin, but as a Phyſician converſing with the ſick to heal them) was it not for Sabbath-breaking and not being ſtrict enough in ſuch matters, that they were offended with Chriſt and his diſciples? The caſe is plain: But corrupted nature more favoureth the *ſeparating* zeal of the *Phariſees*, than the *Loving winning* zeal of *Chriſt*;

And

And will eaſilier ſuffer us to be imitators of the Phariſees than of Chriſt.

Thirdly, This going too far from thoſe whom we ſhould win, doth not only loſe our advantage to do them good, but greatly tendeth to harden them in all their prejudices againſt a religious life; and to hinder their converſion and to undo their ſouls. When they hear and ſee us place any of our Religion, in avoiding a lawful recreation, or a lawful uſe of words, or a lawful faſhion of apparel, or a lawful geſture or circumſtance in Gods worſhip, they will judge of the reſt of our Religion by that part: And this is one thing that hath hardened thouſands (eſpecially of the rich who are enclined to exceſſes) in a ſcornful contempt of ſtrictneſs in Religion, under the name of Puritans and Bigots and Preciſians, and ſuch like: They think they are but an ignorant humorous ſort of people, who are almoſt mad with a pride of their ſingularity in Religion; And think that when you tell them of a Converſion, you would have them become ſuch whimſical fanaticks: And that the difference between their Religion and yours is but, whether ſuch a form of prayer, or ſuch a geſture, or ſuch a faſhion of apparel, or ſuch muſick or other recreation, be lawful, or unlawful; In which they are confident that they are in the right? And what greater cruelty can you ſhew to ſouls, than thus to harden them in their ſin and miſery? Little do ſuch perſons think, how many be in Hell, through theſe ſcandals and ſnares which they have ſet before them? And yet they take on them, that is becauſe they would not encourage men in

ſin, that they thus flye from them. When they do their worſt to make all the world believe that ſtrict religiouſneſs, is but the whimſie of a giddy ſort of people, who are almoſt out of their wits with pride. And what greater injury can men do to Chriſt and to Religion than this? To make it the ſcorn and contempt of the world?

I know they will ſay that *Religion was ever ſcorned by the wicked, and ever will be?* But if it be *ſcorned* for its genuine nature, its heavenly wiſdome, purity and goodneſs, this is the diſgrace only of them that ſcorn it: Or if they maliciouſly and cauſelefly call *wiſedome, folly*, or call *good*, evil, this will redound to the ſpeakers ſhame, where true Reaſon hath but leave to work. But if you will therefore do as the Jews did, and cloath Chriſt in a fools Coat, and put a Reed in his hand for a Scepter, to expoſe him to the laughter and ſcorn of the beholders, it is you that will be found his deriders and crucifiers! If *you blind-fold him*, and others ſmite him, and ſay, Read who ſmote thee; his buffetting will prove to be cauſed by *you*: If you will *paint a ſaint* in the garb of a *mad man*, the countries hatred and abuſe of ſaints will be imputed unto you.

Fourthly, yea I may add, that you are the great cauſe of the *perſecutions* of the *godly*, and of the damnation of the perſecutors. While godly people appear in their own likeneſs, in wiſdome and love and humility and meekneſs and ſobriety, the world doth uſually bear *ſome* reverence to *them*, though it hate them. But when you have made men believe that thoſe that call themſelves *Godly people*, are but a company of ſuperſtitious Phariſees,

ſees, that cry, *Touch not, taſt not, handle not*; or a ſort of melancholly humoriſts, who muſt ſit becauſe their neighbours ſtand, or muſt go out of the way, becauſe their neighbours go in it; This maketh them juſtifie all their cruelties, to you and others, and think perſecution to be their duty: and to ſay that, *the whip is for the fools back, and wanton children muſt be made wiſe by the rod*; and that it is no wrong to a mad man to lie in Bedlam.

If you ſay, that *Godlineſs hath been alwayes perſecuted*, I anſwer, But if you are the *cauſers* of it, though it muſt needs be that ſcandal or offence come, yet wo to him by whom it cometh. *Matth.* 18. 7. *Luk.* 17. 1, 2.

The way of heavenly wiſdome is pure, but peaceable and gentle and eaſie to be entreated: The way that Chriſt and his Apoſtles have led us, is to draw as near to ſinners as we can, by Love and all the offices of Love, neither following them in any ſin, nor flying from them in any thing that is *lawful*; that they may be convinced that it is not *humour* and *diſdain* and *pride*, but true *neceſſity* and *Gods command*, which maketh us differ from them as we do. And that we may not be diſabled by any contrary errours of our own from evincing and oppugning theirs.

DIRECT. XLVII.

When ever you are avoiding any errour or ſin, forget not that there is a contrary extream to be avoided, of which you are in danger as well as of that which you are oppoſing.

THe minds of moſt men are ſo narrow, that they cannot look many wayes at once. If they be intent on one thing, they forget another. But it is a narrow bridge betwixt dangerous gulfs, which Chriſtian *faith* and *obedience* muſt paſs over: And he that looketh on the one ſide, with the greateſt fear and caution, is undone, if he look not alſo on the other.

The common way of avoiding any errour or vice, is to run into the contrary. And on thoſe terms ſatan himſelf will be Orthodox, and a reformer, and an enemy to vice. I gave you ſome inſtances even now. He is a rare perſon, that is ſo wiſe and happy, as to flye from every errour and ſin, with an impartial awakened fear of the contrary. And thence it is that the *moſt judicious old experienced* Chriſtians are uſually in controverſies for a *middle way*; and in the croud of contentious ſects, they commonly are the *reconcilers*: Not only becauſe they are more calm and moderate, and peaceable than others; but eſpecially becauſe they have ſeen the errour on both extreams, when others ſee only the errour on one ſide. Only in our *inclination* to our *ultimate end*, that is, in *our Love to God*, we never need to fear over-doing. But all the *means* may be perverted and turned into ſin by extreams.

Many that obſerve the pollution of the Church by the great neglect of holy Diſcipline, avoid this errour by turning to a ſinful ſeparation: And many that are offended at ſeparation avoid it; by a groſs neglect of Chriſtian diſcipline, and taking it for a needleſs thing.

Many who obſerve how heartleſly and hypocritically preſcribed forms of prayer are uſed by too many, do avoid it by denying the lawfulneſs of all forms: And many who ſee the errour of this opinion, do eſcape it by turning to meer formality, and deriding all prayer which is not written in a book, or preſcribed by another.

If any who ſee how thoſe that were baptized in Infancy, are admitted to adult Communion without ever underſtanding or ſeriouſly owning the Covenant into which they were then entered; and ſeeing how the Church is corrupted hereby; do avoid this errour by denying the baptiſm of Infants. And many that ſee the errour of the Anabaptiſts, do avoid it by countenancing the aforeſaid Church-corruption: and if Infants be but baptized, they never care whether they be called at years of diſcretion, to the ſolemn renewing and owning of their Covenant.

And many that ſee both theſe extreams do plead for *Confirmation*, as the middle way: But they turn it into a meer Ceremony, and defeat the ends of it, and never bring the baptized to a ſolemn renewall of their holy Vow. And many

who see the Papists abuse of Confirmation, do wholly cast it off, and deny the healing use foresaid.

Many who see the effects of Papal tyranny, dislike all *General Ministery*, which taketh the care of many Churches. And many who see the incoherence of Independent Churches, and the calamity of sects, do incline to Papal Usurpation.

Many who see the evils of Indepency in respect of *Council and Concord*, are inclined to a *Regimental dependency* and *subordination* of one Church to another, as of Divine appointment. And many who see that there is no proof that God ever appointed such a *Regimental dependency*, do turn to Independency in point of *Council* and *Concord*.

Many who observe the grosness of their error, who would have the people have the power of the Keys, and govern the Church by the major Vote, do deny the people the liberty of chooſing their Pastors, and being guided in spirituals as Volunteers. And many who see this errour of denying the people liberty, do give them the fore-said power of the Keyes, and make them Governours of themselves by Vote.

Many who hear the Papists talk so much of merits and of good works, do deny our own Faith, and Love, and Repentance, the place that God hath assigned them in order to pardon and salvation, in subordination to Christ: And many who hear the presumptuous boast of being Righteous by Christs imputed Righteousness, without any fulfilling of the Conditions of the Covenant of Grace

Grace on their parts, do make as a jest of *imputed Righteousness* (as it is taken in a sound and warrantable sense) and do ascribe too much to the works of man.

Many who hear the Socinians make *faith* and *obedience* to be all one, do deny that the faith by which we are justified, is a giving up the soul in Covenant to Christ intirely in all his office, even as our Redeemer and Lord, and so an engagement to obedience by subjection. And many that hear men say, that faith justifieth us only as an instrument, apprehending Christs satisfaction and meritorious righteousness as their own, do confound our faith and obedience; and forget that the faith by which we are justified, is [*our becoming Christians*, or, *Assent and Consent to the Covenant which we make in Baptisme* (nothing more or less;) and not our *living as Christians* in *after obedience*, which is the fruit or effect of faith.

And, even in *civil things*, many who observe how Turkish, Tartarian, Japonian, China's, and other Heathenish and Infidel Tyranny, is the chief Resister of the Gospel, and Suppresser of Christianity to the damnation of millions of souls; And how Papal tyranny, and Muscovian, and Spanish cruelties, are the chief Maintainers of ignorance and unreformedness in the Churches, are ready hereupon to think dishonourably of Monarchy it self, and to murmure at the power of Christian Princes, and to rush into seditions and rebellions. And many that see the mischiefs of seditions, conspiracies and rebellions, are ready to forget the grand and heynous sin of Tyranny, and the calamity of Souls, and Churches, and King-

Kingdoms thereby: (As *Campanella* ſaith, *The abuſe of the Poteſtative Primality*, is *Tyranny*, *the abuſe of the Intellective Primality* is *Hereſie*, and *the abuſe of the Volitive Primality* is *Hypocriſie*: Though indeed he ſhould have mentioned both extreams).

In a word, woe be to the Reformer, who feareth not running into the Extream, which is contrary to the Errour and Sin which he would reform.

DIRECT. XLVIII.

Think more and talk more of your faults and failings againſt others; eſpecially againſt Princes, Magiſtrates, and Miniſters, than of their faults and failings againſt you.

THe Reaſon of this Counſel is very obvious and paſt contradiction. Another mans ſin as ſuch is not yours: No mans ſin ſhall damn you. but your own; no nor bring any proper penalty on you. Our ſuffering by *other mens* ſin, is the common way to Heaven, by which Chriſt and his Apoſtles went: But our own ſin is that which muſt have the blood and ſpirit of a Saviour for its cure, or it will undo us. He came to deſtroy the works of the Devil, and to ſave his people from their ſins: *Math.* 1. 21. 1 *Joh.* 3. 8. But not to keep us from being perſecuted by ſinners: *Math.* 5. 10, 11. without eſcaping perſecution we

we may be ſaved, (for every one that will live godly in Chriſt Jeſus muſt ſuffer perſecution, 2 *Tim.* 3. 12.) But except we Repent of our own ſin we ſhall periſh, *Luk.* 13. 3, 5. we muſt mourn for the ſins of others (*Ezek.* 9. 4.) but we properly *Repent* of none but our own.

Should we not moſt *fear* that which we are moſt in *danger* of? And moſt *lament* that, which we are moſt *guilty* of? And moſt *talk againſt* that which moſt concerneth us? And all this is not *other mens* faults, no not *Magiſtrates* or *Miniſters* (though much to be bewailed) but our own.

Every one will confeſs, that the true ſpirit of Chriſtianity is agreeable to what I ſay. And yet how contrary is the practiſe of no ſmall number of the Religious? In all companies how forward are they to talk of the ſins of Princes and Parliaments? of Courtiers and Nobility, and Gentry? eſpecially of Miniſters; And not only of the ſcandalous that are guilty indeed, but of the *innocent* that are not of their way; whoſe *faults* they rather *make* than *find*? But how ſeldome do you hear them tell any how bad they are themſelves? (unleſs it be in formality to ſeem humble perſons) yea, how impatient are they with any other that find fault with them? It would be much more acceptable to God and wiſe men, to hear you talk of your own infirmities, than of the Rulers or Miniſters, or Neighbours? The one is a work of Repentance; and the other of detraction and backbiting. The one is a work which you are commanded by God (to judge your ſelves, and confeſs your faults one to another:) But the other is a work which you have ſeldomer a call from

from God to do. One tendeth to your pardon; the other to your guilt: Therefore if you fall into the company of backbiters, that are dishonouring their Rulers or their Pastors, or telling how bad their neighbours are; labour to purifie these stinking waters, or turn the stream: say to them, O friends how bad are we our selves! what pride is in our hearts! what ignorance in our minds! so wanting are we even in the lowest grace, Humility, that we have scarce enough to make us take patiently, such censures as now we are giving out upon others? so *selfish* as dishonoureth our profession with the brand of *contractedness*, and *partiality*; so weak that all our *duties* are liable to greater censures than we can bear: And our inward graces weaker than our outward duties. Of such ungoverned thoughts, that *confusion* and *tumult* instead of *order*, and *fruitful improvement*, are the dayly temper and employment of our imaginations: so passionate, impatient, and corrupt, that we are a trouble to our selves and others, and a dishonour to the Gospel, and a hinderance to the conversion of those whom our holy exemplary lives should win to God: so strange to Heaven, as if we had never well believed it: And to say all in one, so empty of Love to our dear Redeemer and the God of Love, that our Hearts lie vacant to entertain the love of worldly vanities; and draw back from the serious thoughts of God, which should be our daily work and pleasure; and flie from the face of Death, as if we should be worst, when we are nearest to our God. And when we are our selves no better, should we not rather complain of the sore that is so near us? and

and marvel that our neighbours vilifie not us, and that the Church doth not judge us unworthy of its Communion! Nature teacheth or constraineth all men, to be more sensible of their own diseases, than of their neighbours; and to complain of them most as loving themselves best: Is it then because you love your neighbours better than your selves, that you speak more of their faults and infirmities than of your own? If not, take heed lest it prove not to be the voice of love! and then I need not tell you how bad it signifieth! God is Love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. The Devil is the *Love-killer*: And what way can you imagine so powerful to *kill love* to any others, as to make men think them to be very *bad*? Doth any man *love evil* that *knoweth* it to be evil? certainly therefore these speakings evil of others, are *love-killing* words (though to his face to make him know himself, they might be medicinal:) And therefore they are the service of the *love-killing* spirit.]

DIRECT. XLIX.

Take notice of all the good in others which appeareth, and rather talk of that behind their backs, than of their faults.

IF there were no *God* in others, they were not to be *loved*: For it is contrary to mans nature, to will or love any thing, but *sub ratione boni*, as

as ſuppoſed to be good. The *good* of *nature*, is lovely in all men as *men*, even in the wicked and our enemies (And therefore let them that think they can never ſpeak bad enough of nature take heed leſt they run into exceſs:) And the *capacity* of the *good* of *holineſs* and *happineſs*, is part of the good of *nature*. The *good* of *gifts* and of a common Profeſſion, with the poſſibility or probability of ſincerity, is lovely in all the viſible members of the Church. And truly the excellent gifts of Learning, judgment, utterance and memory, with the virtues of meekneſs, humility, patience, contentedneſs, and a loving diſpoſition inclined to do good to all, are ſo amiable in ſome, who yet are too ſtrange to a heavenly life, that he muſt be worſe than a man who will not love them.

To vilifie all theſe gifts in others, ſavoureth of a malignant contempt of the gifts of the Spirit of God. And ſo it doth, to talk all of their faults, and ſay little or nothing of their gifts and virtues: yea, ſome have ſo unloving and unlovely a kind of Religiouſneſs, that they backbite that *man* as a *defender* of the *prophane*, and a *commender* of the *ungodly*, who doth but contradict or reprehend their backbitings: And are ever gain-ſaying all the commendations which they hear of any whom they think ill of.

But if you would when you talk of others (eſpecially them who differ from you in opinions) be more in commendation of all the good, which indeed is in them. 1. You would ſhew your ſelves much liker to God who is Love, and unliker to Satan the accuſer. 2. You would ſhew

ſhew an honeſt impartial ingenuity, which honoureth virtue where ever it is found. 3. You would ſhew a humble ſenſe of your own frailty, who dare not proudly contemn your brethren. 4. You would ſhew more love to God himſelf, when you love all of God whenſoever you diſcern it; and cannot abide to hear his gifts and mercies undervalued. 5. You would increaſe the grace of love to others, in your ſelves, by the daily exerciſe of it; when backbiting and detraction will increaſe the malignity from which they ſpring. 6. You would increaſe *Love* alſo in the *hearers*; which is the fulfilling of the Law; when detraction will breed or increaſe malice. 7. You will do much to the winning and converſion of them whom you commend, if they be unconverted. For when they are told that you ſpeak lovingly of them behind their backs, it will much reconcile them to your perſons, and conſequently prepare them to hearken to the counſel which they need. But when they are told that you did backbite them, it will fill them with hatred of you, and violent prejudice againſt your counſel and profeſſion.

Yet miſtake me not: It is none of my meaning all this while, that you ſhould ſpeak any *falſehood* in commendation of others; nor make people believe, that a careleſs carnal ſort of perſons, are as good as thoſe that are careful of their ſouls, or that their way is ſufficient for ſalvation; Nor to commend ungodly men in ſuch a manner, as tendeth to keep either them or their hearers from repentance; Nor to call evil, good, or put darkneſs for light, nor honour the works of the devil.

vil. But to shew Love and impartiality to all; and to be much more in speaking of all the good which is in them, than of the evil: Especially if they be your *enemies*, or differ from you in opinions of Religion: *Tit.* 3. 1. *Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers; to obey Magistrates, to be ready to every good work, to speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers but gentle, shewing all meekness to all men. For we our selves were sometime foolish*, &c. *Grace is clean contrary to this detracting vice.*

DIRECT. L

Study the Duty of instructing and exhorting, more than Reproof and finding fault.

I Deny not but that it is duty to tell a *brother* of his *fault*, and to reprove and that with plainness too. *Math.* 18. 15. *Lev.* 19. 17. And it is but few that do this rightly, of many that will backbite and censure. But yet I have long observed, that many Christians are enquiring, How they must manage the duty of Reproof, who never enquire how to perform the duty of *Christian exhortation* or instructing of the ignorant. When as this later is much more usually a duty than the former; And you are bound to *exhort* a multitude whom you are not bound to *reprove*. And *exhortation* to good is a duty which the hearer is usually less offended at; It doth not so much gall and exasperate his mind: It shameth him

him not so much, and yet is the greater part of our duty to him; as the positives of Religion are before the negatives. Exhortation (rightly used) is the plain direct expression of Love, and an earnest desire of anothers good: When Reproof doth savour of a mixture of Love and displeasure; and the wrath doth often cloud the love.

And I must say, that I find many surly proud Professors, much proner to Reproof, than to Exhortation: Their pride and self-conceitedness makes them too forward to reprove their Governours, and the ignorant people are ready enough to reprove their Teachers, and the servant to reprove the Master or the Mistris; but not to be reproved by them. Ministers must be wise and cautelous how they set such people on *reproving* and finding fault with others, when their own pride and passion and fond self-opinion, is ready to put them on too far.

DIRECT. LI.

The more you suffer by your Rulers (or any men) the more be watchful lest your sufferings tempt you to dishonour them. And the more you are wronged by your equals, the more be afraid lest you should be tempted to withdraw the Love which is their due.

THe Honouring of our superiours, is a Moral or Natural duty (of the fifth Commandement) which sufferings will not excuse us from: And so is the Love of all men, even of our enemies. And *selfishness* and *Passion* are things so powerful, that it is wonderful hard to escape their deceit: They will blind the mind, and change the judgement, and corrupt the affections, before you are aware, or believe that you are at all perverted.

Every man must watch most where his temptation is strongest. Do you not think that you have a far stronger temptation, to dishonour a persecuting Magistrate than a good one? And to hate an enemy than a friend? Therefore arm your selves, and one another against this snare. And when others are aggravating the fault and injury, do you in company remember each other, in what danger you are now of losing your innocency, and of doing your selves more hurt by that, than any powers or enemies can do you. It is an easie thing to Love one that loveth you, and to

to honour a Magistrate that doth good to you and all. But as the Apostle saith of servants, 1 *Pet.* 2. 18, 19, 20. (*Be subject — Not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward: For this is thank-worthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully: For what glory is it, if when ye be buffeted for your faults you take it patiently? But if when ye do well and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.*

DIRECT. LII.

Make conscience of heart-revenge, and tongue-revenge, as well as of hand-revenge.

IT is so notorious that Revenge is a usurpation of Gods prerogative, & a heinous sin, that Professors could not so frequently & easily commit it, if they did not first deceive themselves, and take that to be no revenge which is. To do any *open hurt* to another, they take notice of as sinful revenge. But is there no *secret wish* in your heart, that some evil may befal another? Nor no secret gladness that some evil hath befain him? You will say, It is not in revenge, but in hope he may repent: But take heed what is in your heart. Its one thing to *Repent* of his *injury to you as such*, and to make you amends and repair your honour: And its another thing to repent of it as a sin against God, to the saving of his own soul. Is it not the former that you more desire than the later?

And are not your *Tongues* employed too often in revenge? What are all your secret reflections, and endeavours to dishonour those that have wronged you, but *revengeful speeches*? Railing, and backbiting, and nibling at anothers honour and good name may be acts of revenge as truly as the actions of the hand.

DIRECT. LIII

When you are exasperated at the hurt which you feel from Magistrates, remember the good which the Church receiveth by them, as well as the hurt.

IF you look all at the *evil* in *any man*, and overlook the good, you cannot choose but hate him: And if you think only of what *you suffer* by Magistrates, you may easily know what the effect must be. And the *sin* is so great, that it should not be made light of, by a tender conscience. The good of the Office and of the person is *of God*; and the evil is of Satan: And should you so look at *Satans* part, as to pass by all *Gods part*? What ingratitude is it, to take notice so deeply of your suffering, and to take no notice of your mercies. There are few *Heathen Magistrates*, from whom those Christians who live under them, receive not much more good than hurt. Much more *Christian Magistrates* are a blessing to believers. For if they *persecute some*, yet they usually *protect more*, from the fury of the vulgar

vulgar rabble, who would quickly devour them, if Rulers did not restrain them. And the countenancing of the Christian Religion in the essentials, and defending Christian assemblies for Gods worship is an unvaluable mercy. If *Paul* said to the Romans [*Rulers are not a terrour to good works, but to evil — Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: for he is the Minister of God to thee for good*] *Rom.* 13.3,4. How much more may those say so who have Christian Magistrates! Or if some particular persons do suffer more under some such, than *Paul* or the Christians did under Heathens (*Acts* 28. *last*) yet o very true Christian, must more regard the *publick* interest than his *own*: and must rejoyce that the Gospel hath any protection and furtherance, and the souls of the people any benefit, whatever his personal suffering be. Read *Phil.* 1. 12, to the 20.

DIRECT. LIV.

Learn to suffer by Ministers and Good people, and not only by Magistrates, nor only by the ungodly.

I Confess it is a thing most unnatural for one true Christian to afflict another; and especially for a Minister, who is the *father* of the flock, to be a hurter of them, and to do like an enemy; and to fleece them and devour them. But yet it

is a thing which ſometimes muſt be born. I have obſerved that Religious people when a *Magiſtrate* (though a nſurper) perſecuteth them, they can in ſome ſort undergo it, as no ſtrange thing. And they are not ſo forward to caſt off the *office* and abhor the *perſons* by whom they ſuffer. But if they ſuffer never ſo little by a *Miniſter*, they flye away from him, and are uncapable of comfortable communion with him, and the breach is hardly ever made up. I confeſs there is ſome more colour for this impatiency; (to be mentioned in another place.) But yet Gods ſervants have been tryed by this kind of ſuffering alſo, and therefore you muſt not be ſo tender of it, nor be driven by it into ſinful ſeparations, or into a contempt of the Miniſters of the Goſpel, as too many ſects in theſe times have been. Read what at large is ſaid of the afflicting Shepherds, *Ezek.* 34. *&* *Zech.* 10. *&* 11. And you will ſee that it is not a thing to be wondered at, to have *Shepherds which fleece and deſtroy the flocks, and tread down their paſture and muddy their waters, and feed themſelves and not the flocks, and gather not that which goeth aſtray: Nay their own Shepherds pitied them not.* *Zech.* 11. 5, I know that it is the *Magiſtrates* that are often meant by *Shepherds* in the Prophets: but the Prieſts alſo are uſually meant *with them*, and ſometime diſtinctly by the ſame word. And their falſhood and cruelty oft expreſſed, as in *Jer.* 2. 8, 26. *&* 5. 31. *and* 26. 7, 8, 11. *&* 32. 32. *Ezek.* 22. 26. *Hoſ.* 6. 9. *Mich.* 3. 11. *Zeph.* 3. 4. *Mal.* 1. 6, *&* 2. 1. *&c.* And remember that all the wickedneſs of theſe Prieſts, and their abuſe of the people, did not warrant the people

people to forſake the Jewiſh Church: Though the Ark was taken by the Philiſtines for the wickedneſs and violence of *Eli's* ſons; and the people tempted to deſire a King, by the ſins of the ſons of *Samuel*, yet none of their miſ-doings did warrant a ſeparation from that Church. Yea Chriſt who was perſecuted by the Prieſts, did yet bid the cleanſed Leper go ſhew himſelf to the Prieſt, and offer according to the Law.

Therefore a true Chriſtian muſt learn (though not to favour any mans ſin, nor to be indifferent what Miniſtery he liveth under, yet) patiently to ſuffer much abuſe and perſecution, ſometimes from Miniſters themſelves; and to ſee that it drive them not in peeviſh impatiency into any extream, or to any unlawful ſect or ſeparation, nor to a diſdain of the ſacred office which they abuſe, nor to loſe the benefit of it, or be unthankful for it.

And though it be ſad that true Chriſtians ſhould abuſe each other, yet this alſo muſt be born. Many can bear the ſcorn and cruelties of the openly profane, who can ſcarce bear to be neglected or ſet light by, much leſs to be hardly cenſured by the Religious. But obſerve firſt, that your *Pride* may notably appear in this: and it is no great ſign of *humility* to ſuffer only from the *worſt*. For you look on them as perſons of *no honour*, and therefore not capable of *diſhonouring you*: For a *dog* to bark at you, you take for no diſgrace: Nay you take it for your honour to ſuffer by ſuch perſons, as ſuppoſing it a mark of Chriſts diſciples. But the Religious you more reverence, and think their contempt is a great diſhonour to you; and

fore your pride will not ſuffer you to bear it patiently.

Secondly, And remember that different *opinions* and *intereſts* may poſſibly ſo far exaſperate ſome that are otherwiſe religious, as to make them afflicters, or more plainly, *perſecutors* of one another, though Godlineſs it ſelf be applauded by them all. The experience of *England*, *Scotland* and *Ireland* within theſe 25 years doth ſadly tell us and the world, how far men can go in perſecuting each other for different intereſts and opinions, who all profeſs a zeal for godlineſs.

And let it have your ſpecial remark, that one *reaſon why all men as Chriſtians and Godly do more eaſily and commonly love one another, is becauſe as Chriſtians and Godly, they do not hurt or wrong each other: But as they are of various ſects they hate and envy one another, becauſe as they are ſectaries they hurt and injure one another.* For the *ſpirit* and *zeal* of a ſect as ſuch is cenſorious, hurtful, unpeaceable and dividing: But the ſpirit and zeal of Godlineſs and Chriſtianity, is kind and gentle and inclineth to do good to all.

Remember that you have never learnt the Chriſtian art of ſuffering aright, till you can ſuffer not only by bad men, but by men that otherwiſe are good; nor only by enemies but by friends, nor only by them that hear the ſword, but alſo by ſome who preach the word; and will not by oppreſſion be made mad, nor driven from your innocency.

DIRECT.

DIRECT. LV.

When you complain of violence and perſecution in others, take heed leſt you ſhew the ſame inward ſin, by Church-perſecution and cruelty againſt them, or any others.

But becauſe I know that guilt cauſeth impatience, and paſſion diſpoſeth men to miſtakes and falſe reports, before I proceed, I muſt here foretell you, 1. That I mean not by *Separatiſts* all that are ſo called by intereſſed injudicious perſons: But thoſe 1. that account *true Churches* of Chriſt to be *no Churches*, 2. or that account it *unlawful* to *hold Communion* with thoſe Churches, whoſe communion is not *unlawful*; becauſe they are *faulty*, or becauſe they *differ from them* in ſome *opinions* or circumſtances of worſhip: 3. eſpecially if they practiſe, and perſwade others to practiſe according to theſe two opinions; of which the firſt is the higher ſort of ſeparation, and the ſecond the lower.

And ſecondly, That by *Church-dividers*, I mean both theſe and all ſuch whoſe principles and practiſes are againſt that love of a Chriſtian as a Chriſtian, and that forbearance of diſſenters, which ſhould be exerciſed to all the members of Chriſt; and who fly from the ancient ſimplicity and primitive terms of Church-communion, and adde (as the Papiſts do) their own little novelties as neceſſary things.

And thoſe that do *cauſleſly ſeparate* from their own

own *lawfully called Pastors*; For *ubi Episcopus, ibi Ecclesia*; *where the true Pastor is, there the Church* is (what ever place it be that they assemble in) (as *Cyprian* once said.)

And lastly, those that are of uncharitable, humorous, peevish, contentious and fiery spirits, and will stir up mutinies and sidings, and causeless divisions in any Church where they come. And truly they that think of the present state of *Hartford* and some other Churcheses in *New England*, (which I will not here make a Narrative of) me thinks should fear Separations, Schismes or Divisions, from one in the Churches called Independent, as much as those of a different Discipline do as to theirs: (if not somewhat more, on several accounts.)

Thirdly, And remember that I am not here speaking of any mens former faults, by way of uncharitable bitterness, insulting or reproach; but verily brethren, if we are not impartially willing to know the truth of every side, and of our own selves as well as others, we *choose* deceit, and resist the light, and provoke God to forsake our understandings. Do we not yet know where *Judgment* hath begun, after such plagues and flames, and Church convulsions? And do we not yet know where Repentance must begin? Enquire for good news whence you will, I will enquire whether we are awakened to a true *Repentance*; and by that I will fetch my prognosticks of our future state? Not whether you cry out against other mens sins, but against your own, and that particularly with all their aggravations; and whether Professours of Religiousness do as heartily

tily lament their own notorious publick scandals, as they expect that drunkards and fornicators, and the friends of loosness, should lament theirs! Till we see this, what promise have we of the pardon of our dreadful temporal penalties? (to say nothing of the greater.)

Woe to the Land and People that can multiply sin and cannot Repent! And wo to them that pretend Repentance, and love to be flattered in their sin, and cannot endure to be admonished, but take all the discoveries of their sin to be injurious reproach? among the prophane we take this to be a deadly sign of impenitency? And is it so bad in them, and good in us? It is part of my office to cry with holy *Bradford*, *REPENT O ENGLAND*; and to say after Christ, [*Except ye Repent, ye shall all Perish,*] And can I call men to Repent, when I must not dare to tell them of what? Nor to mention the sin which is most to be repented of? I use all this preface because I know that Guilt and Impenitency are touchy and tender, and galled, and querulous, and such will bestow the time in backbiting their Monitor, which they should bestow in lamenting their sin. But shall I therefore forbear, and betray their souls, and betray the Land through cowardly silence? Must I shew that I have Professours by not admonishing them, (*Lev.* 19. 17.) when I must shew that I love the looser sort by my sharp reproofs? Must I not fear them that can kill the body? and must I fear to *displease* a professed Christian, by calling him to Repentance in a time of Judgments.

Lord, hide not my own miscarriages from my sight!

ſight ! and ſuffer me not to take any ſin that I have committed to have been my innocency or duty, leſt I ſhould dare to father ſin on God, and leſt I ſhould live and die without Repentance, and leſt I ſhould be one that continueth judgments and danger to the Land ? ſtir up ſome faithful friend to tell me, with convincing evidence, where it is that I have miſcarried, that Contrition may prepare me for the peace of remiſſion? O ſave me from the plague of an impenitent heart, that cannot endure to be told of ſin! & from that ungodly folly, which taketh the ſhame that Repentance caſteth upon ſin, to be caſt upon God and Religion, which bind us to Repentance and Confeſſion !

Nay in this place, I am not mentioning things paſt, ſo much to humble you, as neceſſarily to inform you, of the groundleſneſs of your preſent arguings, that you may ſee the truth.

Fourthly, Note alſo that I lay not any miſcarriages on any whole parties, (Anabaptiſts or others.) For I have found that all parties of Chriſtians indeed have ſome good, experienced, ſober, charitable perſons, and ſome ſelf-conceited and contentious novices, (1 *Tim.* 3. 6.) But I ſpeak only of the *perſons* that were guilty and no more.

Fifthly, Laſtly, remember that while I ſeem to compare the faults of one ſort of perſons, with anothers, it is none of my intent to *equal* them; much leſs to equal the ſtate of the ſeveral ſorts of Offenders as to the reſt of their lives: But only to mention ſo much of the ſimilitude, as is neceſſary to repreſent things truly and impartially to your view.

Read

Read on now with theſe *Memento's* in your eye: And if after ſo plain a premonition you will venture to charge me with that which I diſclaim, do it at your own peril; I ſtand or fall to the judgment of God, and look for a better reward than the hypocrites, which is to have the good opinion of men, be they profeſſours of piety, or profane. And with me, by Gods grace, it ſhall hereafter be accounted a ſmall thing (to the hindering of my fidelity to Chriſt and mens ſouls) to be judged of men, 1 *Cor.* 4. 3.

And if there ſhould be any Paſtors of the Churches, who inſtead of concurring, to heal the flocks of theſe dividing principles, ſhall rather joyn with backbiters, and encourage them in their miſreports and ſlanders, becauſe it tendeth to the ſuppoſed intereſt of their party or themſelves. Let them prepare to anſwer ſuch unfaithfulneſs to their conſciences which will ſhortly be awakened, and to the great Shepherd of the Flock who is at the door, and who told even the Devils agents, that a Houſe or Kingdom divided againſt it ſelf, cannot ſtand, but is brought to nought! *Math.* 12. (If alas, alas, experience hath not yet, not yet, not yet, done enough to teach them this!)

For my part I have had humane applauſe enough: I'le value that Vanity as dying men do. And temptations to man pleaſing from covetouſneſs I have none: For I have nothing of worldly gain or expectations which I ſhould fear to loſe, to tempt me to betray my conſcience or the truth by ſilence.

But (mark and remember brethren, what I ſay

to

to you,) *whoſoever is of your mind at preſent, Poſterity will ſay as I have told you:* And though *wrong ways* ſeem fit or neceſſary for ſome *preſent exigence*, or *jobb*, yet nothing but *Truth*, and *Integrity*, and *Charity* and *Concord*, will do the main work, and hold out to the laſt.

The foreſight of impatient guilt, & cenſure having cauſed me here to give you this premonition (beſides what is in the Epiſtle) now Reader, go on.

O the deceitfulneſs of the heart of man! Little do many real Separatiſts, who cry out againſt the ſpirit of perſecution, ſuſpect that the *ſame ſpirit* is in them! whence is *perſecution*, but from *thinking* ill of others, & abhorring them, or not loving them? And do not you do ſo by thoſe whom you cauſleſly ſeparate from? you will ſay, that *though you think them not to be true Chriſtians, yet you love them as men, and wiſh their good*: And ſo will *thoſe* ſay by you, whom you call your *Perſecutors*: Though they *think* you to be proud and humerous, and diſobedient; yet they ſay they love you *as men*, and do but correct you to cure your ſelf-willedneſs and humour, and to do you good, and to preſerve the publick peace. They *think you* to be *bad*, and therefore *impriſon* you: you *think* them to be *bad*, and therefore *avoid Communion* with them. They *think* you ſo bad as to be unworthy of *civil liberty*, and *priviledges*: you think them ſo bad as to be unworthy of *Church priviledges* and *liberties*. They think you unworthy to be ſuffered in the *land* perhaps. And you think them unworthy to be ſuffered in the *Churches*. They cry againſt you, Away with them they are ſchiſmatical or heretical: you cry againſt them, Away

Away with them, they are prophane!

Obj. *But they who would not give us our bodily liberties, do more againſt us, than we would do againſt them.*

Anſw. I pray you think on that again. Firſt, Is not the priviledge of the Church, better than the priviledges of the Commonwealth? as the ſoul is better than the body? Secondly, Is it not a deeper accuſation to charge one to be *ungodly* and *prophane*, than to charge him only to be ſchiſmatical?

Obj. *But charity muſt not be blind: They are prophane: I charge them truly: But I am not ſchiſmatical or heretical; but they accuſe me falſly.*

Anſw. You ſay ſo, and they ſay the ſame of you. They ſay that *you are ſchiſmatical, but they are not prophane.* Now how ſhall a ſtander by know which of you is in the right? Doubtleſs by the witneſſes and evicences: They *try* you in ſome *Court* or before ſome Magiſtrate before they puniſh *you*. You never *try* them, nor *hear* them ſpeak for themſelves, nor examine any witneſs publickly againſt them, nor allow them any Church-juſtice, but avoid their Communion upon reports or pretenſe of private knowledge. They judge you *perſonally one by one*: You condemn *whole Pariſhes* in the *lump*, *inherent*: They condemn you as for a *juſtive crime*: But you condemn them without charging any crime upon them, becauſe they have not yet given you a ſatisfying proof of their godlineſs; They ſay, *we prove you guilty*: You ſay, you have not ſufficiently *proved your ſelves innocent*. If a man were tried

on

on the high way, and you and another were both charged with the robbery; and to the other it is ſaid, *I prove by witneſs that thou didſt rob me*; And to you it is ſaid, *Do thou bring ſufficient proof that thou didſt not rob me*? Would you not think that you had the more injuſtice?

Obj. *But of all men living no man can think that a perſecutor is godly and fit for Church-communion.*

Anſw. Either of theſe anſwers may ſtop your mouths, Firſt, What is that to the *whole Pariſhes* whoſe communion you avoid, who never perſecuted you? Did all the Miniſters and common people perſecute you?

Secondly, Was it no perſecution when many Anabaptiſts and Separatiſts made ſuch work in *England*, *Scotland* and *Ireland* in *Cromwels* time and after as they did? When ſo many were turned out of the *Univerſities* for *not engaging*? and ſo many out of the *Miniſtry*? and ſo many out of the *Magiſtracy* & *Corporation priviledges*? And when an *Ordinance* was made to caſt out *all Miniſters* who would *not pray for the ſucceſs of their Wars againſt Scotland*, or that would not *give God thanks* for their *Victories*. When I have heard them profeſs that they believed that there were many thouſand godly men, that were killed at *Dunbar* (to inſtance in no other;) and yet *we* were all by *their Ordinance* to be *caſt out*, that would not give God thanks for this? And the *execution* of it was much *threatned*, though they did it not. And what more harſh kind of perſecution could there be, than to force men to go hypocritically to God againſt their conſciences, and take on them to beg for the ſucceſs of a war which they judged unlawful,

lawful; and to return him a publick counterfeit thanks for blood-ſhed; yea for the blood of thouſands; and the blood of confeſſed godly men: When the crime which they would have forced us to (had we been ſo ductile as to obey them) was no leſs than *publick hypocriſie* and *owning* ſuch *blood-guiltineſs*; and the penalty no leſs than *ſeparation* from *our flocks* and *publick maintenance* (though not *ſilencing*.)

I ſpeak not any of this to trample upon thoſe whom God in juſtice hath caſt down. (A thing which I ſo abhorred that I have avoided it to the great diſpleaſure of others) But if you are of the mind, either that Gods juſtice ſhould not be obſerved or juſtified; or that you ſhould not be called to repentance; or that you ſhould be ſuffered quietly to forget your ſin, and die impenitently; or that the nation ſhould forget the effects of religious pride and faction, and ſo loſe the warning which they have had from God at ſo dear a rate, and be tempted again into the ſame ſin and calamity, for fear of offending the ears of the guilty; I am in all this as far from your minds, as I was in the acting of theſe crimes: And can no more conſent to you, than I ſhould have done to have had all the Iſraelites murmurings, idolatry and unbelief; and the ſins of *Noah*, *Lot*, *David*, *Solomon*, *Peter*, &c. forgotten, and the hiſtory of them never mentioned in the Bible.

But (I pray you mark it) *the way of God is to ſhame the ſinner, how good ſoever in other reſpects that the ſin may have the greater ſhame, and Religion may not be ſhamed as if it allowed men to ſin, nor God the Author of Religion be diſhonoured; nor others be with-*

out the warning. But the way of the devil is, *To hide or juſtifie the ſin, as if it were for fear of diſparaging the goodneſs of the perſons that committed it; that ſo he may thereby diſhonour Religion and Godlineſs it ſelf, and make men believe that it is but a cover for any wickedneſs*, and as conſiſtent with it as a looſer life is; and that he may keep the ſinner from repenting, and blot out the memory of that warning which ſhould have preſerved after-ages from the like falls.

Scripture ſhameth the *Profeſſours* (though a *David*, *Solomon*, *Peter*, *Noah*, or *Lot*) that the *Religion profeſſed* may *not be ſhamed* but vindicated. Satan would preſerve the *honour* of the *Profeſſours*, that the Religion profeſſed may bear the ſhame; and ſo it may fall on God himſelf. When God turneth *Lots* wife into a *Pillar of Salt*, Satan is willing to ſeem ſo tender of the honour of the godly, as to *take it down*, that it may be forgotten. God ſaith to the *Iſraelites*, that when thoſe that paſs by ſhall ask why hath God done all this great evil againſt this people, the poſterity ſhall recount their anceſtors ſins, and ſay, Becauſe they ſinned againſt the Lord their God, *&c.* But Satan could find in his heart to pretend more tenderneſs of the names and honour of the Church, ſo he might but undo the preſent age by impeniteney, and after ages by taking Gods publick warnings from before their eyes. On theſe terms he will be all for the honour of profeſſours.

But God will make men more tender of *his honour* and leſs tender of *our own*, and more willing openly to take ſhame to *our ſelves* to vindicate the honour of *Religion*, before he will give us a full diſcharge.

It

It is the nature of true Repentance, to cry out as publickly as we can to all the world, and be glad to leave it upon record [*It was not God or Religion that ever encouraged me to theſe ſins; but it was my own doing: Religion is clear but I am guilty.*] Pardon this long excurſion on this ſubject. And if you cannot bear it, I cannot help that. *I made not* the *ſore*, nor *galled place* which is ſo *tender*. I only mind you, in anſwer to your objection, that *Faction* and *opinions* will raiſe *perſecutions*, and have done, even by ſuch as you, yet do not ſeparate from. I know none of you that ſeparate from the Anabaptiſts and Separatiſts who were the authors of theſe aforeſaid perſecutions, nor do I urge you to it. Therefore do but impartially judge of the ſin.

Obj. *But it is one thing to perſecute for particular opinions and intereſts (as almoſt all parties have ſometimes done) and another thing to perſecute for Godlineſs it ſelfe.*

Anſw. I confeſs it is, and the difference between theſe two is very great. But I pray you conſider, firſt, that they are *but few*, perhaps *not one*, of all that you ſeparate from, that ever perſecuted you any way at all: Nor can you prove that ever they ſo much as *allowed* of it.

Secondly, That they whom *you and I do ſuffer* by, do not *believe* that they *perſecute us for Godlineſs*, but think that here the caſe is more defenſible than *ours* was. For you had *no juſt authority over us*: When the Anabaptiſts did pull down the *Miniſters* they pull'd down the *Magiſtrates* too; And therefore it was a *perſecution of equals*, without *authority*; But thoſe that *we Miniſters*

ſuffer by now are our *lawful Rulers*, who have *made Laws* to require us to *ſubſcribe*, and *ſay* and *ſwear* and *do* the things which we do not? And therefore *they think* that we ſuffer but for a *different opinion* joyned with diſobedience. It is not *all men* whom they forbid to preach, but *ſuch* who diſſent and do not obey them: It is not *all men that are godly* whom they *impriſon*; but *thoſe* that meet to worſhip God in a place and manner differing from theirs, and forbidden by them. So that how can you ſay that this is not for *differing opinions*.

Obj. *But we forbid not them to hold their own Church-communion, though we ſeparate from them, we never denied them the liberty of their conſciences.*

Anſw. Some of your judgement denied many of them much of that liberty which conſiſteth in worſhipping of God in their own way, when you were in power. But ſuppoſe they had not, it is but *another way* of *uncharitableneſs*: The *vice expreſſed* ſeemeth to be the ſame. For you condemn them as unfit for *Chriſtian-Communion*, and therefore you *exclude* them from yours: And you take their Church-communion among themſelvs, to be but a prophanation of holy things: which maketh them the more impious, and therefore the more odious: And you tolerate it in them as you tolerate mens folly and madneſs, or leproſie or plague, becauſe you cannot cure it. And I pray you judge whether there be any more *Chriſtian Love* in this kind of dealing, than there is in that which you call perſecution? Or at leaſt, whether it proceed not from the ſame uncharitableneſs? I ſuppoſe you to be ſpiritual and not carnal perſons, at leaſt in profeſſion and therefore that you are not ſo tender of the fleſh, as to take its ſuffering to be any great matter to you, in compariſon of any of the ſufferings of the ſoul. When you refuſe Communion with men, as judging them unfit for fellowſhip with the viſible Churches of Chriſt, you judge them the viſible members of the devil, and condemn them to the loſs of the greateſt priviledges on earth, and to be left out with the dogs, with Publicans and Heathens: Though you think that you have no more to do your ſelves in the execution of this ſentence, but to ſeparate from them, yet you declare that you think that all others ſhould do the ſame: So that your tolerating their Communion among themſelves, is no great ſignification of your charity.

The ſum of all that I ſay to you is this: It is but one and the ſame ſin in the *Perſecutor* and the *Divider* or *Separatiſt*, which cauſeth the *one* to *ſmite* their brethren, and the other to *excommunicate them*: the one to caſt them into *priſons* as *Schiſmaticks*, and the other to caſt them *out of the Church* as *prophane*: the one to account them *intollerable in the land*, and the other to account them *intollerable in the Church*: the one to ſay, Away with them they are contumacious; and the other to ſay, Away with them they are ungodly. The inward thoughts of both is the ſame, that thoſe whom they *ſmite* or *ſeparate* from, are *bad* and *unlovely* and unfit for any better uſage. When *Love* which thinketh no evil till it is neceſſitated, and believeth all things which are at all credible, and hopeth all things which are not

deſperate, and covereth ſins inſtead of condemning without proof, would equally cure them both.

And let me yet conclude with this double proteſtation againſt the carping ſlanderer who uſeth to falſifie mens words. Firſt, That I intend not in all this any flattery of the ungodly, or making them better than they are, or forbearing plain reproof or Church-diſcipline, nor any unlawful communion with the wicked, nor countenancing them in any of their ſins, nor neglecting to call them to repentance.

Secondly, That while I here name *perſecution*, my purpoſe is not to mark out any perſons or party above others, or determine who they be that are the perſecutors: But only to detect the deceitfulneſs of our hearts when we moſt complain of it; and to ſhew that wherever that ſin is indeed, it cometh but from the ſame principle as ſinful ſeparation doth: even from the death of Love to others.

Thirdly, and I add, that though I here aggravate the perſecution of unjuſt excommunications or ſeparations, as robbing men of the priviledge of Chriſtians, yet leaving them the common liberties of men and ſubjects; it is none of my purpoſe to equal this abſolutely with that deſtroying cruelty, which leaveth them neither; and will not ſuffer them to enjoy ſo much liberty, as Heathens and Infidels may enjoy, or as *Paul* had under ſuch. *Act.* 28. *ult.*

DIRECT.

DIRECT. LVI.

Keep ſtill in your thoughts, the ſtate of all Chriſts Churches upon Earth: that you may know what a people they are through the world, whom Chriſt hath communion with; and may not be deceived by ignorance, to ſeparate from allmoſt all Chriſts Churches, while you think that you ſeparate from none, but the few that are about you.

THouſands of well meaning people live as if *England* were almoſt all the world. And do boldly ſeparate from their Neighbours here, which they durſt not do, if they ſoberly conſidered that almoſt all the Chriſtian world are worſe than they. But narrow minds who can look but little further with their *Reaſon* than with their eye-ſight, do keep out at once both *Truth* and Love. It is a point that I have often had occaſion to repeat, and yet will not forbear to repeat it here again; It is but about one ſixth part of the known world who make any profeſſion of Chriſtianity and are baptized: (beſides how much peopled the unknown part of the world may be, we know not.) Of this ſixth part the Ethiopians, Egyptians, Syrians, Armenians, the Greek Churches, the Muſcovites, and all the Papiſts, are ſo great a body, that all the Proteſtants, or Reformed Churches are little more than a ſixth part of this ſixth: (The Papiſts being about a fourth or fifth part; and the other

Christians making up the rest) And of these Protestants, Sweden, Denmark, Saxony, and many other parts of Germany, making up the greatest part, are such as are called Lutherans! And of the other half, which are supposed to be more Reformed, there is scarce any of so Reformed lives as these in *England* and *Scotland*: And among these, how great a number are they that you separate from? If you look to the Papists, their worship is by the Mass: If you look to the Muscovians, they have a Liturgy much more blameable than ours, and have a few Homilies instead of preaching? If you look to the Greek Church, to the Armenians, the Abassines, and all the Eastern and the Southern Churches, in *Asia* and *Africa*, they also worship God by Liturgies, much more lyable to blame than ours, and have but little preaching among them, besides Homilies; and the Members of their Churches are commonly far more ignorant than the worst of ours, even than the rudest part of *Wales*. If you look to the Lutherans, they have Liturgies, and Ceremonies, and Images in their Churches, though not adored; and have far worse Preachers, and of worse lives, and more unprofitable preaching than is usually found with us; and the people more ignorant and vicious. If you look to the remnant, called the *more Reformed Churches*, in *Holland*, *France*, *Helvetia*, *Germany*, though they have much less of Liturgy, or Ceremonies, yet are their Church-members usually as ignorant as ours, and more addicted to intemperance, and there is no less scandal in their lives, than among ours. Now this being the true state of the world, and though we

we daily pray that it may be better, yet it is no better, I would only intreat you but to think of it as it is, and that to answer me deliberately these few Questions.

Quest. 1. Do you believe that all baptized professed Christians, (not denying any essential part of Christianity) are Christs Universal Visible Church?

Qu. 2. Do you not believe that this Church is only *One*; and that every particular Church, and every Christian is a part of it?

Qu. 3. Do you not believe that it is unlawful in any case whatsoever to separate from it? And that to separate from the Universal Visible Church, is visibly to separate from Christ?

Qu. 4. Do you not believe that to give a Bill of Divorce to the Universal Church, or to many hundred parts of it, or to any one part, and to declare that they are none of the Church of Christ, is not great arrogancy, and injury to men, and unto Christ himself?

Qu. 5. Dare you say before God, Let me have no part in any of the prayers of all these Churches on earth who use a Liturgy as culpable as ours? because I will have no Communion with them? Do you set so light by your part in their prayers?

Q. 6. If you travelled or lived in *Abassia*, *Armenia*, *Greece*, or any Christian Country, (where their worship is not Idolatry nor substantially wicked, nor they force not the worshippers to any false Oaths, subscriptions or other actual sin) would you refuse all communion with them, and all publick worshipping of God? Or would

would you not rather joyn with them, than with no Church at all?

Qu. 7. When you remember on the Lords days, that now all the Christian world are congregate, and are calling upon God and praising him, in the name of one Christ, and in the profession of one Faith, dare you think of being a Body separated from them all? And can you think that Christ disowneth them all, save you?

Qu. 8. Can you think it agreeable to the gracious nature, design and office of Jesus Christ, to cast off and condemn so many hundred parts of the Church-universal, and to accept that one part only which you joyn with? Judge by his actions and expressions in the Scriptures.

Qu. 9. If there were but ten persons of your mind in all the world, would you believe that God would save none but those ten, or accept the worship of no more, or that it were lawful to have communion with none but those ten? If not, how can you think so in a case so neer it?

Qu. 10. Can you prove that Christ doth separate from all the Christians of the world which you separate from? or that they have no visible Communion with him? or that he taketh them for no Churches, and disowneth the administration of all the Ministers in the world whom you disown? or yet that it is safe, to separate where Christ doth not separate, and to be gone from his House while he there abideth? and to condemn those whom he condemneth not? nor yet commandeth you to forsake or to condemn?

Obj.

Obj. *The Church of Christ is a little flock, and not to be estimated by number: And if he confine his grace to never so few, I will confine my Communion to as few.*

Answ. First, Grace is not visible to you, but the *Profession* of it only: Therefore your Communion must be extended according to *mens profession*, and not according to sincerity which you know not? when the question is, *who hath grace, and who hath not*, God hath not made you a heart-searching Judge, but hath made *profession* the sign which you must judge by. And he that *professeth Christianity, professeth* all that is of necessity to salvation.

Secondly, If Christs flock was little when he spake those words, it is much greater now. And if it be *little still* (as it is in comparison of the world of Heathens, Infidels, and Hypocrites) will he give them thanks that will make it less, yea a thousand times less than it is indeed? Hath he so few? and will you take from him almost all those few? If you had but a hundred sheep when your neighbour had a thousand, would you thank him that would rob you of all save one?

Thirdly, So far as God hath revealed the fewness of the saved, we reverence his Counsels, and believe his word: But if you will make it so much less a number, while you *falsifie* Gods word, you will tempt your selves at last, not to *believe* it, because you have *made it false* and *incredible* by making it *your own*. Brethren, I beseech you be not angry with us while we pity you, and would save your souls from your own snares and delusions. You know not how fast you are hastening

to

to *infidelity*, and to the renouncing of Christ himself? you little suspect that your extraordinary strictness, for the purity of the Church doth tend to your turning *heathens*, and denying the *whole Church*? But remember, that the nature of God is so *infinitely God*, as well as *Just*, and the *Gospel* is such *glad tydings to all the world*, and Christ called, the *Saviour of the world*, and God is said *so to love the world in giving him*, Joh. 3. 16. that if you should say God would save but *one man* in the world, or *ten*, or a *thousand*, and damn all the rest, if you did in your bravado believe your selves *this year*, by the *next* you might be like enough to believe that the Gospel is but a fable. I have much adoe to forbear naming some high Professours (known lately at *Worcester*, *Exeter* and other parts) who died Apostate-infidels, deriding Christianity and the immortality of the soul, who once were Separatists. And I must profess to you that for my own part, if I did believe that Christs Church were no more numerous than all the Separatists on earth, it would make the work of faith more difficult: For as he is no King that hath no Kingdom; so he is next to no King, whose Kingdom is next to none: He that would prove that our King is only King of *Islington*, or *Hackney* and no more, would by deriding him to day, prepare for the deposing him to morrow. They are glorious things that are spoken of the Kingdom of Christ; even that the Kingdoms of the world are become his Kingdoms. And if you will take from him all save two or three Cottages, I mean the separated Churches only, it is but a little addition to your treason to take the rest,

rest, and to Crucifie Christ afresh and write over him in derision, the title of a King. You do not discern the design of Satan. He that cannot entice an Apple from a Child, if he can get him to let him eat all the rest till it come to a little of the Core, will then easily get him to throw away that worthless relict. If to day you will needs believe that Christ will reject all the world, and all the Churches, save only a few persons who have pride enough to condemn all the rest, by to morrow or ere long you are like enough to add one other degree to your derision, and to deny him to be Christ.

Obj. *But we are more than were in the Ark of Noah.*

Answ. First, You never yet proved that all that were out of the Ark were damned, and no more saved from Hell, than were saved from the Deluge. Secondly, If you had; yet the Scripture speaketh such great things of the Universal Gospel Church, as that which maketh up to the former diminutions and losses, and helpeth Faith against such difficulties.

DIRECT.

DIRECT. LVII.

Yet let not any here cheat you by overdoing, nor meer names and titles of Unity deceive you inſtead of the thing it ſelf: Nor muſt you ever dream of any Head and Center of the Unity of the Catholick Church, but Chriſt himſelf.

There is no part of Religion which Satan doth not endeavour to *deſtroy*, under pretenſe of promoting it: And his way is to overgo Chriſt and his Apoſtles, and to ſeem more zealous than ever they were, and to mend their work by doing it better or doing more. Chriſt was not ſtrict enough for the Phariſees, in keeping the Sabbath, nor in his company, nor in his diet. Satan hath always two ways to deſtroy both *truth and duty*; The firſt is by direct oppoſing it; But when that will not do, the next is by overdoing and pretending to defend it. If he cannot deſtroy *zeal*, by ſcorning it, and quenching it; he will try to do it by overheating and diſtempering it. If he cannot deſtroy *knowledge*, by the way of groſs *ignorance*, he will try to ſpin it out into the finer threds of vain and innumerable queſtions and ſpeculations, and to crumble it into ſuch inviſible atomes, that it ſhall be reduced to ſcepticiſme or nothing. If he cannot deſtroy faith by open *infidelity*, he will try to make men believe too much, by making the objects of their own belief and calling that a *particular faith*, & altering God's word

word, and caſting away the Reaſons and evidences of *faith*, to ſhew the *ſtrength* and nobleneſs of *their faith*, which needeth no ſuch helps as theſe; till by over-doing they have raiſed their edifice in the ayr, and rejected their foundations, and put out their eys in honour of the ſun, and of their Phyſician, leſt either of them ſhould be accuſed as inſufficient.

Even ſo when Satan findeth that he cannot directly deſtroy the *Unity* of the Church, and bring diviſion into credit, he will be more zealous for unity than Chriſt himſelf: He will then endure no diſagreement among Chriſtians, no not in an opinion, nor a form, or ceremony; not in meats or drinks or keeping of days, or in judging of things lawful or unlawful, which are not of neceſſity to the Churches concord. He is either for Tolerating all propagation of Hereſie and practiſe of wickedneſs, or elſe he is ſo much for *Unity*, that no difference almoſt is to be tolerated. For he well knoweth that while men are imperfect ſuch differences *will ſtill* be: And then if he can but perſwade the world, that for Concord ſake they muſt not be endured, what followeth but that the diſſenters muſt be fined, impriſoned or baniſhed to bring them (or the reſt) *to unity*. And ſo he will ſet all the world together by the ears, in cruelties and blood-ſhed, and in hating one another, and all under pretenſe of making them one. You may think that till mankind be all turned Bedlams, they can never be ſo cheated by ſuch a groſs deceit, nor ever guilty of ſo mad a work. But what will you ſay if this be the common caſe, of the far greateſt part of the Chriſtian world? And what will you

ſay

ſay further, if after above a thouſand years univerſal experience of the unhappy ſucceſs, they continue it ſtill as the only way to unity and peace? Look but about you with opened eyes, and ſee whether it be not ſo.

Were not he a gracious promoter of Unity in the world, that would ſay [Unity is ſo excellent a thing, that it is meet we ſhould be all of one complexion, or at leaſt that the world ſhould ſpeak but one language; and therefore no other but one ſhould be tolerated] And here how eaſie is it to dilate of the great inconveniences of many languages: I could write a Volume in folio of it my ſelf; and all true and evident. Methinks I ſee hereupon how theſe Books are ſcattered and read, and how thoſe called Learned men and politicians applaud them, and ſhake their heads and gnaſh their teeth at thoſe that would have ſo great a miſchief tolerated: And hereupon they ſet about the buſineſs, and deſire a Law that upon pain of impriſonment and baniſhment (I know not whither) no one in the world ſhall ſpeak any other language but one. And now I hope Unity will be promoted indeed; when all the world is thus engaged in a war to perfect nature and make men one.

But me thinks I hear one man that is awake thus beſpeak the promoters of this Concord [*Unity* and *Concord* in thoſe points where God hath made them neceſſary, cannot be over-valued: But yet it is viſible that there is a marvellous diverſity which nature is delighted in: when of all faces and of all voices, and of all the ſorts of animals and plants; there is ſo diſcernable a difference:

ence: yea of all the millions of ſtones in the field, no two is perfectly like each other. And where greater Unity is moſt deſirable, it muſt firſt be conſidered how much of it is poſſible, or to be hoped for, and next, what are the proper means to attain it. For firſt, the medicining of an incurable diſeaſe, eſpecially with violent Phyſick, is not the way to make it better, but to exaſperate it and haſten death, when a palliate and patience might do better. It is very deſirable, that all the Kings ſubjects were *ſtrong*, and *beautiful* and ingenuous and Learned; but it is not to be hoped: But that they may be all *Loyal, and honeſt* in their dealing with others, may be well endeavoured. And ſecondly, a wrong kind of medicine will much more haſten and aſcertain death, than to let the diſeaſe alone to nature: It is deſirbale that all the Kings ſubjects be as is ſaid, both *wiſe* and *Learned*, yea and *perfect in honeſty* and *piety* without fault: But if you make a Law that for the honour of *Unity*, all that are not *Learned* and *perfect in vertue* ſhall be *fined, impriſoned* or *baniſhed*, the King nor his ſubjects will be but little beholden to you for their Unity. So *one Language* is very deſirable to the world: But firſt it is not attainable, and ſecondly a Law to puniſh all that ſpeak *another* Language is not the *way to procure it*; but to ſet them together by the ears: You muſt appoint *Parents* and *Schoolmaſters* to *teach* them all one language by degrees, and keep them to their duties, and remove impediments, and thus ſtay the time; and what cannot this way be attained muſt not be expected in this world.]

The ſpeech being ended the hearers derided it, and made a Law for Unity to deſtroy it, and ſet every man on hating and fighting againſt his neighbour, to make all one.

It is very deſirable that all Chriſtians were perfect in *knowledge*, *gifts* and *graces*, and conſequently that there were no different opinions, nor no different forms or modes of worſhip; but that all were equal to the wiſeſt, and to the moſt ſober, pious, zealous and ſincere. But if a Law be made that none ſhall be endured in any Kingdom, that are not of this temperament and ſtature, the ſubjects of all Princes may ſoon be numbered. Set *Parents, Schoolmaſters and Miniſters at work, to make men wiſer, and drive them on to diligence in their duty, and reſtrain men from hindering them, and from intollerable wickedneſs and ſin, and patiently expect the ſucceſs of this: And what this will not do expect not.*

And I intreat the Separatiſts who will think this doctrine of forbearance gratifieth them, to obſerve that I ſpeak all this to them as well as to Magiſtrates. I told you that there is a *Church-perſecution* and a *Church-forbearance*, as well as a *Civil*. If Chriſt will have *Magiſtrates forbear the weak*, he will have *you forbear them*: and not ſay, *We will have no Communion with thoſe that pray by ſuch Forms and Liturgies, or that uſe ſuch a Ceremony, or are not of our own opinions*: Read *Rom.* 14. and 15. and you will ſee that it was a *Church-forbearance* towards one another, and a *Receiving diſſenters* to Chriſtian communion (even as Chriſt receiveth us for all our weakneſſes) which *Paul* there pleadeth for, and not only a forbearance of

of *ſmiting* them with the ſword. What a wonder and what a lamentation is it, that thoſe men that cry out ſo much for forbearance to the Magiſtrate, ſhould themſelves be as rigid and more by *Church-ſeverities*, and leſs *forbear* diſſenters, even in a form or ceremony, as to communion, and yet never ſee the ſame ſin in themſelves, which they ſo much complain of.

And here my principal buſineſs is to warn you of the Papal way of *Unity*: They are ſo great enemies to diviſions and ſects, that they muſt have all the Chriſtian world, united not only in one *Chriſt*, by one profeſſion & baptiſm, but alſo in one *mortal Monarch* as his Vicar, that men may know at the Antipodes when they underſtand not the Scripture, or differ in opinions, who to ſtep to for the ending of their controverſies, and to give them an infallible commentary on the Bible, and to tell them with whom they muſt hold communion. And all their differences may thus have a ſpeedy diſpatch: If it be doubted whether one in *Abaſſia* or much further off, be a Heretick, or an impenitent ſinner and to be excommunicated or not; and the Church where he liveth is divided about it, if the matter be but referred to the Pope, as the ſupream Judg, it is but going to *Rome*, and ſending thither all the parties and witneſſes on both ſides, and the Pope can decide it much more judiciouſly than thoſe that are on the place and know the perſons and all the circumſtances. And all this may be done in three years time or leſs, if wind and weather and all things ſerve: And if all the perſons die by the way, the controverſie is ended: If one part only die, let

the longer liver have the better, and be justified. Or if the Pope will rather send Governours to the place to decide the controversie, whether the next Lords day you shall hold communion with such a man, or not, and so forward, its like in a few years time some of them may live to come thither. And if you must still appeal to the Pope himself for fear lest a Priest be not the infallible or final Judg (and can do no better than other folks Priests,) you may after all, have the liberty of the voyage: And if you cannot in that age get the case dispatched, yet you must believe that you have appeared to the only center of Unity.

This cheating noise and name of *Unity*, hath been the great divider of the Christian world. And under pretense of suppressing Heresie and Schism, and bringing a blessed peace and harmony amongst all Christians, the Churches have been set all together by the ears, condemning and unchurching one another, and millions have been murthered in the flames, inquisition and other kinds of death, and those are Martyrs with the one part, who are burnt as Hereticks by the other: And more millions have been murdered by wars. And *hatred* and *confusion* is become the mark and temperament of those, who have most lowdly cried up *Unity*, and *Concord*, *Order* and *Peace*.

It is a common way to set up a sect or faction, by crying down schism, sects and factions. And a common way to destroy both *Unity* and *Peace*, by crying up *Unity* and *Peace*. Therefore let not bare *Names* deceive you.

Remem-

Remember that one of the old sects or factions of carnal Christians, cried up *Cephas*, that is, *Peter*, and said we are of *Cephas*; which I know not how they could be blamed for, if he was the Churches *Constitutive* or *Governing* Head. 1 *Cor.* 1.12. and 3.22. And remember that the Church is not the *body of any Apostle*, but of *Christ*, and that all the Apostles are but the nobler sort of members, and none of them the Head. 1 *Cor.* 12.27, 28. *Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular: and God hath set some in the Church, first Apostles, secondarily Prophets, thirdly Teachers*, &c. But *Bellarmine* (aware of this) hath devised this shift, that the Pope succeedeth *Peter*, in more than his Apostle-ship, even his Head-ship: But when he hath proved *Peter* more than an Apostle, and the Pope his successor, he will do the business: Till then we must say, that if the Pope were but a good Priest or Bishop, below an Apostle, we should give him more honour, than his treasonable usurpation of Christs prerogatives is like to procure him. For he that will needs have all, shall have none, and he that exalteth himself, shall be brought low; and he that will be more than a man shall be less than a man.

DIRECT. LVIII.

Take heed of Superstition, and observe well the circular course of zealous superstition, malignity, formality, and peevish singularity and schism, that you may not be misled by respect of persons. I mean, that First, Indiscreet zeal and devotion hath been the usual beginner of Superstition; Secondly, Malignity in that age hath opposed it for the Authors sake; Thirdly, In the next age the same kind of men have adored the Authors and made themselves a Religion, of the formal part of that superstition, and persecuted those that would not own it. Fourthly, And then the same kind of men that first made it, do oppose it in enmity to those who impose and own it, and suffer and divide the Church in dislike of that which was their own invention.

IT is marvellous to observe this partial dance: But Church-History may convince the understanding Reader, that so it hath been, and so it is; First, the zeal of some holy persons doth at first break forth in some *lawful*, and in some *indiscreet* and *unwarrantable* expressions. Secondly, the *malignant* enemies of Godliness, hate and oppose these *expressions*, for the sake of the persons and the zeal expresst. 3. When they are dead, God performing

forming his promise, *that the memory of the just shall be blessed*, Prov. 10. 7. The *carnal party* of that age as well as others, do honour those whom their fore-fathers hated and murthered. *Math.* 23. 29, 30. *Woe to you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites: because ye build the tombs of the Prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, and say, If we had been in the dayes of our Fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the Prophets: Wherefore ye be witnesses to your selves, that ye are the children of them which killed the Prophets: Fill you up then the measure of your fathers.* The wicked of one generation kill Gods servants, and the wicked of the next Generation do honour their names, and celebrate their memorial: The reason is because, it is the *Life of Godliness*, which the sinner is troubled with and hateth: And therefore it is the *living saint* whom he abhorreth. But the *name* and *form* of *Godliness* is less troublesome to him, yea and may be *useful* to make him a Religion of, to quiet his conscience in his sin: And therefore the *name* of *dead saints* he can honour, and the *form* of their worship, and *corps* of piety he can own. And having become so *Religious*, both his former enmity to *living holiness*; and his carnal zeal for his *Image* of Religion, engage him to make a stir for it; and persecute those that are not of his way. And when the *zealous* and devout people of that age see this; they loath that carkass or Image which the formalist contendeth for, and many flye from it with too great abhorrence for the persons sake who now esteems it; forgetting its original, and that it was *such as they*, that set it up, and were the first inventers.

For inſtance: The moſt of the perſons whom the Papiſts now keep holy dayes for, were very religious godly people: And the zealous Religious people of that age, did think that the honouring of the memories of the Martyrs, was a great means to invite the infidels to Chriſtianity, and to encourage the weak to ſtick to Chriſt: And therefore they kept the dayes of their martyrdome, in thankſgiving to God, and in honour of them. The wicked of that age hated and perſecuted both the Martyrs and them that honoured them. In the next age Religion being uppermoſt in the world, the wicked did turn Hypocrites, and *keep Holy dayes for the honour of their names* whom their fore-fathers murthered. At laſt when it was obſerved that *the Papiſts who burned the living* Saints, were the greateſt honourers of the dead, the moſt religious people turned quite to diſlike and reject thoſe very dayes, which their predeceſſors had ſet up in thankſgiving to God, for the doctrine, example and conſtancy of the Martyrs.

The ſame all along I may ſay about the Reliks of Martyrs, and pilgrimages to their ſhrines, which the Religious ſort *begun* at firſt, and *loathe* at laſt.

So alſo thoſe *forms* of Liturgy which now are moſt diſtaſted, were brought in by the moſt zealous religious people at the firſt: The many ſhort invocations, verſicles and reſponſes which the people uſe, were brought in when the ſouls of the faithful did abound with zeal, and in holy fervours break out into ſuch expreſſions, and could not well endure to be bare auditors, and not vocally

cally to bear their part in the praiſes of God, and prayers of the Church. And in time thoſe very words which ſignified their raptures, were uſed by formal hypocrites without their zeal who firſt expreſt them; and ſo being mortified, and made dead Images and uſed but by rote, in a ſenſeleſs canting among the Papiſts, and alſo forced upon others; it is now become a point of *zeal* to *avoid* them, and take them as *unlawful*, and it is a great reaſon, becauſe they are in the Maſs-book: when the Maſs-book received them from the predeceſſors of many of *thoſe men* that now refuſe them: But though indeed the higheſt expreſſions of zeal and rapture, are moſt lothſome when they are counterfeited and turned into a meer lifeleſs form: Yet it is the privation of life which is the fault of the Image, and not the thing as in it ſelf. Reſtore the ſame ſpirit to thoſe words, and they will be as good as they were at the beginning.

I might inſtance in moſt of the Popiſh ſuperſtitions, and ſhew you, that for the moſt part, it was the godlieſt ſort of people of that age, who at firſt did either ſet them up, or that which did occaſion them; and that the hypocrite after made them his Religion, taking up the form without the life, and that upon this the godly of after ages did abhor them.

But what is my inference from all this? Why firſt, I would adviſe you, to look more to the *nature* of the things themſelves, and leſs to the *perſons*; and regard the honour of humanity, if you regard not the honour of Religion; and make not the Infidel world deride you, while they ſee you

you alter your opinions and practise in meer opposition to one another; and to take up and lay down as the two ends of the ballance move, which must be contrary to each other. Secondly, that you truly understand what interest such zealous persons as your selves had in those opinions, forms and practises at the first, that if you will avoid them for *some mens* sake, you may think the better of them for *other* mens: so far as to bring you to some impartiality. Thirdly that you suspect that zeal in your selves, which you think so much miscarried in your ancestors.

I do not take all that I have mentioned for *superstition*, but I shew you the circulation which *zeal*, and *formality* and *malignity* make, both in things warrantable and unwarrantable.

But especially take heed of that which is true *superstition* indeed: By which here I mean, *the making of any new parts of Religion to our selves, and fathering them upon God*, who never made them. Of this there are two sorts, *Positive* and *Negative*: When we falsly say, *This is a Duty commanded by God*; or when we falsly say, *This is a sin forbidden by God*. Take heed of both. I do not speak here of *doing* or *not-doing* the same things upon any other account (as humane duties, or meer conveniences or the like) but as they are falsly pretended to be *Divine*.

For first, this is properly a *belying* of God, and that *adding* to his word (whether *precepts* or *prohibitions*) which he hath so strictly forbidden us. *Jer.* 5. 12. *Deut.* 12. 32.

Secondly, it *debaseth* Religion objectively considered as mixture of base mettals debaseth the Kings coyn: To joyn things humane with things *divine*, and say they are *Divine* when they are not, is putting of dung into the treasuries of God. Nothing will be found fit for Divine reverence and honour, which is not Divine indeed.

Thirdly, it corrupteth Religion in the *minds of men*; and causeth them to fear where no fear is, and to be devout erroneously: As if one should mistake the person of the King, and give his honour to another who is like him: or should run into a play-house to do his devotion, and think that he is in the Church. *Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship. Joh.* 4. 22.

Fourthly, This *superstition* tendeth to *destroy* true Religion, by gratifying and increasing aversation and opposition; by making it seem an unlovely tiresome thing. All that is truly of God is *Rational* and *amiable*, and wisely contrived for our good: And the enemies of Godliness, have not a word of solid Reason, to say against it: But that which is brought in by *corrupters* may be confuted: And *unnecessary* things become a *burden*, *Act.* 15. 28. What a toilsome task doth Popery contain? of positives and negatives? ceremonies, and austerities, and useless labours? And then they that take their pilgrimages, and penances, and night-risings, and multiplied formalities to be a *burden*, and hear them called by the name of *Religion*, do account *Religion it self* a burden, as taking this to be a part of it: And when Religion is not *loved* it is *lost*. To make it seem *bad* and *unlovely*, is the way by which the devil destroyeth it in the world.

Fifthly,

Fifthly, *Superſtition* is the great dividing engine, which ſatan uſeth to cut the Churches of Chriſt into Sects and pieces; and conſequently to ſtir up party againſt party, to the hating and perſecuting of one another: For while ſome take that for Religion which is none; others will ſee their errour and avoid it: And thus the diviſion will lay the foundation of diſputes and quarrels, of enmity and oppoſition. For who can think that all the Churches ſhould ever be ſo blind and ſlaviſh, as to take up that as a part of Religion, and a divine inſtitution, which was forged by the private ſpirit of ſome erroneous perſon of an overheated brain.

Sixthly, Laſtly, *Superſtition* much diſpleaſeth God; and maketh us *ſinners*, even in that, in which we think eſpecially to honour him. *Math.* 15.9. *In vain do they worſhip me, teaching for doctrines the commandements of men*: Though God in mercy can diſtinguiſh between his own and ours, and doth not count *the whole* worſhip to be *in vain*, where *any degree* of ſuperſtition is mixed (For then moſt zealous perſons were undone;) yet the *ſuperſtitious part* of worſhip is alwayes *in vain*; and all the reſt is made as vain, where that is the predominant and denominating part. Thus *overdoing* is *undoing*, and thus the ſuperſtitious are (materially) *righteous overmuch*. And not only much coſt and pains is loſt, but the ſoul corrupted, the Church divided, Religion debaſed and endangered and God diſpleaſed, by ignorant zeal.

Here note to prevent miſtakes; Firſt, that as God is related to our actions, either as the *efficient commanding*, or as the *final* cauſe; ſo there is a double ſuperſtition; One (which is the greateſt as comprehending the other) when that which God never commanded or forbade, is feigned to be commanded or forbidden by him: The other when we feign him *finally* to be *pleaſed* with a Religious worſhip of our own invention, though we confeſs it to have no higher an original than our ſelves.

Secondly, That the *matter* of this later ſort of ſuperſtition is either that which God *forbiddeth* and ſo is *diſpleaſed with*; or that which he hath made and holdeth *indifferent*; and ſo is neither pleaſed or diſpleaſed with, in any moral conſideration, in it ſelf conſidered. He that offereth God a *ſacrifice* of *ſin* (or things prohibited) or of a worthleſs and indifferent thing, and taketh God to be *pleaſed* with the later, or *not diſpleaſed* with the former, doth indeed diſpleaſe him by either of theſe conceits. And the *general prohibition* of not *adding* or *diminiſhing*, rightly underſtood, may notifie things as under the former head.

Thirdly, But it is no ſuperſtition to hold a good thing to be good; a bad thing to be bad; or an indifferent thing to be indifferent.

Fourthly, Nor yet to determine of thoſe circumſtances of worſhip which God hath left to humane determination; being made neceſſary *in genere* by nature or ſcripture: Nor yet to judge that God is pleaſed with ſuch a prudent determination.

Fifthly, it is not ſuperſtition to do the ſame material thing, which another doth ſuperſtitiouſly;

ouſly ; if we have not the ſame ſuperſtitious conceit of it as he hath. If a Papiſt ſhould anoint the ſick, as a Sacrament, and a Proteſtant do it as a medicine, the former is ſuperſtition, and not the later. And ſo in other things.

Sixthly, Whether that indifferent thing remain indifferent to our uſe, which others uſe to ſuperſtition, is a caſe which a judicious collation of circumſtances muſt determine. His ſuperſtitious uſe doth not make it ſimply a ſin in any other, who hath none of his falſe conceits and ends: (elſe ſome ſuperſtitious perſons ſo abuſing meat and drink and cloaths, and all things in the world might make all things become unlawful to us: or at leaſt deprive us of all our liberty in things indifferent.)

Seventhly, If we avoid *anothers uperſtition* as to the *form* or *intention* which maketh it ſuperſtition, and this as a ſin, we do well: If we avoid the *matter* it ſelf which he uſeth ſuperſtitiouſly, becauſe it is by him made *ſcandalous*, we do our duty, when it is *ſcandalous indeed*, & no contrary greater accident maketh it *our duty*. But if we take it to be *ſimply ſuperſtition* or *ſin*, to do materially the ſame action, which a ſuperſtitious perſon doth, we are *ſuperſtitious* in avoiding his *ſuperſtitious* act.

For inſtance, a Papiſt viſiteth the Lady of *Lauretto* as a divine duty: This is ſuperſtition: A Proteſtant goeth thither upon lawful and neceſſary buſineſs: This is no ſuperſtition: Another Proteſtant who hath no neceſſary buſineſs there, avoideth it that he may not be *ſcandalous* and encourage others to it. This is well done. A Sectary thinketh it *ſuperſtition* or other ſin, ſimply to go

go thither what ever his *neceſſity* or *intention* be: This is ſuperſtition: Or a feigning God to forbid that which he forbiddeth not.

A Papiſt faſteth on Friday, or avoideth fleſh in Lent as a *Divine duty: ſuperſtitiouſly:* A Proteſtant faſteth the ſame day, becauſe an Act of Parliament commandeth it, which renounceth the Papiſts religious end; Or becauſe his Phyſician preſcribeth it as neceſſary for his health. This is not ſuperſtition. Another Proteſtant avoideth it through neceſſity for his health: And another in Popiſh Countries avoideth it only as *ſcandalous*: Neither of theſe are ſuperſtitious. Another faſteth on a Friday for his own neceſſity or conveuience, as a time which he may lawfully chooſe. And another faſteth on a Friday; becauſe the Maſter of the family, or the Paſtors of the Church, have appointed a faſt on that day. This is no ſuperſtition. A Sectary thinketh that it is ſuperſtition or ſome other ſin to faſt the ſame day that the Papiſts do, becauſe the Papiſts do it ſuperſtitiouſly. This is ſuperſtition (unleſs in the caſe of ſcandal as aforeſaid.)

The multitudes of ſuperſtitions by which the *Papiſts* or *any others*, have corrupted and debaſed the *Chriſtian Religion*, I ſhall not now digreſs to mention; But only touch upon a few inſtances, of the *ſuperſtitions* of *theſe godly perſons* of *this age*, to whom I am now writing: To ſhew them, that it is the *Religious ſort*, that are the common beginners of ſuperſtition, by *over-doing*, out of a miſtaken zeal, or fear of ſinning.

I refer the Reader to *Biſſon* for full proof.

But here again I muſt firſt crave the patience of

of those that love not errour better than information; and desire them not to be too angry with me for telling them what I confidently hold, though it differ from the opinions of many whom I greatly reverence and honour; while I profess withall that I do it not in a Magisterial imposing way, nor as slighting the persons from whom I differ, but as offering my brethren that Light which I think needful to their own and to the Churches cure: And I will thank them if they will do the like by me, if I be guilty of any superstitious errour.

First, the Scripture telleth us of no *Church-Elders* but what were *ordained*; and of none but such as were of the same *Office* with the preaching Pastors or Elders: of none that had not authority to baptize and administer the Lords supper: Nor doth Church-history tell us of any other as a Divine office. But when one Assembly had many Elders or Pastors, those that were best gifted for publike Sermons did preach; and the rest did help to rule the Church, and to catechize, and instruct and visit particular families and persons, and other parts of the office, as there was cause. But now we have concluded that there is a *distinct office* of Ruling-Elders, who need *not be ordained*, and who have no *power to baptize* or to administer the *Lords Supper*. This I think is a *superstition*: For we feign God to have made a *Church-office* which he never made. And though we must *honour* and *hold Communion* with the Churches which have this blemish; yet still it cannot be freed from *superstition*.

Secondly, God hath required nothing but *profession*

fession of the Baptismal Covenant, to prove a mans title to his enterance and priviledges in the *universal Church*: And a *consent* to our *Relation* to the *particular Churches*, to our membership in *them*. But mistaking-zeal hath accounted this too loose a way, and hath devised stricter terms: Many must have other proofs of Godliness, besides the *understanding*, *voluntary assent and consent to the Baptismal Covenant*: Yea of those that are in the *universal Church already*; before they can be admitted to its priviledges, or to a *particular* Church. And which is worse, they here give the Church no *certain rule*, instead of Christs rule, which they cast by: But one man requireth one account, and another requireth another; and the rule and test doth vary as the charity or prudence of men do vary. This is a *superstition*, which hath already torn the Churches in pieces, and is going on still to do worse: And its raised by mistaking-zeal.

Thirdly, that none that at the same time or before are not entered members of some *particular* Church, may by *Baptism* be entered into the *Universal Church*; is a *superstition*, which some good men have taken up.

Fourthly, that he who is a member only of the *Universal* Church, may not *in transitu* be admitted to communion with *particular Churches*, unless he bring a Certificate from a *particular Church* of which he sometime was a Member.

Fifthly, that the Pastor may not lawfully receive any member into a particular Church without the consent of the *Major Vote* of the people.

Sixthly, that a Minister of Christ may not by *Baptism* receive any into the *Universal Church*, but by the *consent* of the *Major Vote* of some *particular Church*.

Seventhly, that no man is a Minister or Commissioned Officer of Christ, for the discipling and baptizing of those *without* the Church, unless he be also the Pastor of some particular Church (or at least have been such.)

Eighthly, that the people do not only *chuse* the persons who shall be *their Pastors*, but also give them their *office* or *power*.

Ninthly, that the people have the power of the Keyes, or of Church-Government, by Vote.

Tenthly, that the *people* of a *particular Church*, do give authority to men to be *Ministers* in the *Universal Church*, and to *preach and baptize* among those that are *without*.

Eleventhly, that he that is a member of *one Church*, may not *communicate* with *any other*, but by the consent of the *Pastor and people* of *that one*.

Twelfthly, That he that is a member of a Church may not *remove* his *relation* to another Church, (when his occasions and personal benefit require it, and the publick good of many is not hurt by it) without the consent of the Pastor and people of that Church.

Thirteenthly, that it is simply unlawful to use a form of prayer, or to read a prayer on a book.

Fourteenthly, That if a School-master *impose* a form upon a schollar, or a parent on a child, it maketh it become unlawful.

Fifteenth-

Fifteenth, that our *presence* maketh us guilty of all the errours or unmeet expressions of the Minister in publick worship: At least if we before know of them. And therefore that we must joyn with none whose errours or mis-expressions, we know of before.

Sixteenth, that as oft as a Minister is removed from his particular flock, he becometh but a private man, and is no longer a Minister and Officer of Christ.

Seventeenth, that we are guilty of the sins of all unworthy or scandalous Communicants if we communicate with them: Though their admission is not by our fault.

Eighteenth, that he whose judgement is against a *Diocesan Church*, may not lawfully joyn with a *Parish Church*; if the Minister be but subject to the *Diocesan*.

Nineteenth, that whatsoever is unlawfully commanded is not lawful to be obeyed.

Twenty, that it is unlawful to do any thing in the worship of God which is imposed by men, and is not commanded it self in the Scripture (As what Translation of the Scripture shall be read; what meetre and what Tune of Psalms shall be in use; what hour and at what place the Church shall meet; Pulpits, Tables, Fonts, *&c.* Printing the Bible, *&c.* dividing it into Chapters, verses, *&c.*)

These and more such as these are *superstitions* which some religious people have brought up.

And among those who are of another opinion, & wil speak against all the fore-mentioned super-

stitions, there are too many introduced, which they are as fond of, because they are their own.

☞ As that all the Pastors of the Protestant Churches abroad, who had only the election of the people and the ordination of Parochial Pastours, and not of Diocesan Bishops, are no true Ministers of Christ, but Lay-men.

That therefore those Churches are no true Churches (in a political sense, and as organized.)

That therefore their Baptism is unlawful, and a nullity, and all those nations are no baptized Christians. (Though the Papists who hold the validity of Lay-mens baptizing, do here censure more easily.)

That it is not lawful to communicate in such Churches, and receive the Sacrament of the Lords supper from such Ministers.

That those Countries which are baptized by such, should be rebaptized.

That those Ministers who are ordained by such, should be re-ordained.

That it is unlawful to joyn with those Churches, where the Minister prayeth only from a *Habit* of of prayer (called *extemporary*) without a foreknown form; because they know not but he may put somewhat unlawful into his prayers; and because the mind cannot so readily try and approve and consent to words, which are hastily uttered, and not known to the hearers before.

These and abundance other superstitions some men would introduce on the other side. And by all such inventions fathered upon God, and made a part of Religion, the minds of men are corrupted

ted and disquieted, and the Churches disturbed and divided; by departing from primitive simplicity.

I shall only now propose this to the consideration of those of the first sort.

Whether they are sure that these superstitions of theirs may not run the round as other superstitions have done before them? Or some of them at least? What if the next age should turn them into a dead formality? And what if the next age after that should make Laws to enforce them? And then Godly people first scruple them, and then flye from them as discerned superstition? And then the worst men be glad of that advantage to persecute those that would not submit to them? By this circulation, if the same men who invented *Synon-ordained Elders, new and needless Church-Covenants, &c.* could but live two or 300 years, they might come to be among the number of those who cry out of them as *superstitious*, and suffer persecution because they will not use them.

Yea there are among you now many things of a lower nature, which some dare scarce plainly say, God commandeth or forbiddeth, and yet they are censorious enough about them: As heretofore many were against wearing the hair of any considerable length; Against wearing cuffs upon a day of humiliation: Against dressing meat or feasting at least, on the Lords day (which is a day of Thanksgiving of divine institution) and held, That it is necessary to feast twice at least, upon a day of Thanksgiving (of mans appointment:) That a Minister should not lift up his eyes, much less kneel down to signifie his

private prayer, when he goeth into the Pulpit. Nor any other when they enter into the Church: That no prayer may be uſed, and no Pſalm ſung in our common mixt Aſſemblies, which have any expreſſions, which all both good and bad may not fitly uſe as for themſelves: That no Miniſter may uſe notes in preaching to help his memory. That the ſacramental bread and wine muſt not (ſay ſome) or muſt (ſay others) be delivered by the Miniſter into each mans hand. That no geſture but ſitting is lawful at the ſacrament. That it is unlawful to wear a Gown in divine worſhip, if it be commanded: That it is unlawful to keep any anniverſary day of humiliation or thankſgiving of mans appointment: That juſt ſuch and ſuch hours for family worſhip muſt be obſerved by all: Or as others ſay, that no ſet times or number of family prayers are to be obſerved. That it is not lawful to preach or hear a ſermon upon a humane holiday. With abundance more ſuch, (about phraſes, and geſtures, and faſhions of apparel, and cuſtomes, *&c.* I am not at all now accuſing theſe opinions of ſuperſtition, nor telling you whether I take them to be right or wrong: Much leſs would I perſwade any to make no conſcience how they order theſe or any other the ſmalleſt circumſtances of their *lives*: Obedience muſt extend to the ſmalleſt parts of the lawes of God. But I am ſhewing you the circular courſe of many religious people in the world. Suppoſe now that the next age ſhould make ſtrict lawes for every one of your own opinions, in all theſe points. And that the Religious people ſhould then ſcruple them, becauſe they are impo-

impoſed: And that the Rulers then ſhould make their Lawes more ſtrict, and that all the common people ſhould take up theſe opinions, and all that ſort of men that firſt were zealous for them, ſhould turn againſt them, becauſe the common people are for them; and ſhould call them Popiſh ſuperſtitions, and ſhould ſuffer impriſonment rather than conform to them; I pray you tell me if you fore-ſaw all this, what is it you would adviſe a ſober Chriſtian to do, in ſuch a time and caſe as that? Would you have the ſame men that now are for theſe opinions, cry out againſt them, and cenſure all as ſuperſtitious who are for them: and ſeparate from them; and rejoyce in their ſufferings on that account? Why I tell you that many of the cuſtomes and practiſes in the Church, which you now thus avoid as ſuperſtition, were brought in at the firſt thus, by the moſt Religious ſort of people: And yet it is now accounted by many, a neceſſary part of Religion to avoid them: And all becauſe that men take up their opinions of ſuch matters in Religion, from the eſtimation of the perſons that are for them; and avoid thoſe things with prejudice and ſcrupuloſity, which are liked, or practiſed or commanded by thoſe, whom they think ill of, and take for the adverſaries of Religion.

DIRECT. LIX.

If through the faults of either side or both, you cannot meet together in the same particular Church or place, yet preserve that unity in Faith, Love and practise, which all neighbour Churches should maintain with one another, and use not your different Assemblies to revile each other, and kill your Love.

ALL distances are undesirable and tend to more: But yet our *Unity* lyeth not so much in *meeting in one place*, as in being of one *Mind*, and *Heart* and *Life*: Many occasions may warrant our corporal distance; but *Heart-divisions* should be most avoided. It is the *principles* and *motives* upon which you withdraw, which are more considerable than the local distance.

Therefore on one side let us take heed how we *unchurch* and *unchristen* any with whom we do not corporally joyn: And on the other side, let us take heed how we revile them all as Sectaries and Separatists, who do not joyn with our assemblies: But let us know the reason of their practise before we peremptorily judge them.

1. Perhaps you think that such or such a Church-government, or Forms, or Ceremonies, are unwarrantable, and such and such oaths and subscriptions are unlawful, and therefore you cannot have local communion with the Churches that impose them. If it were so, yet take heed of accounting these no Churches of Christ, or pretending

tending that Christ disowneth and rejecteth them. If they cast out you by imposing any thing which you think is sin, yet take heed that you excommunicate not them. If there be a difference between a weak and culpable Christian, and no-Christian, there is a difference between a weak and culpable Church, and no-Church; And as there are innumerable degrees of good or evil, strength or weakness in particular Christians, so there is in Churches also.

You may perhaps find that another Minister is more profitable to you, and another Churches principles more pleasing to you, and their discipline better in your account: And therefore you think that you are bound, to choose the best for your personal Communion. Be it so: There is yet some modesty in these terms: But do not therefore conclude that Communion with that Church which you turn from is *simply unlawful*; or that *another* may not use it who can have no better! Or that you your selves should not rather joyn with that than with *none*? Or that you may not occasionally sometimes communicate with them, though your more ordinary communion be elsewhere. Nor do not disown all *spiritual* communion with them, though in body you are absent. But when ever you pray to God, go to him as a member of the Universal Church, and and not of a Sect only: Pray for the whole Church, and desire a part in the prayers of the whole. Own them and their worship so far as Christ owneth them. While you disown their errours and failings, yet own their faith, and all that is sound in their prayers and worship; And

see

ſee that you love them as members of Chriſt, who if weak are yet Chriſtians, and perhaps in other reſpects better than you. (To ſay nothing whether it be they or you that are in the right.) You like not all that is done in the *Lutherans* Churches, much leſs in the *Greek* and *Ethiopian*: And yet I hope you diſown not their ſpiritual communion as Churches though faulty, and as members of the ſame body. But if you are not content to chooſe an ordinary communion moſt ſuitable to your ſelf, but you muſt conclude that ſuch are no Miniſters or no Churches of Chriſt: their worſhip is not accepted by him, it is not lawful to have communion with them, but rather to joyn with no Church, than with them; and will accordingly contemn them and irritate and alienate mens minds againſt them; Be ſure that you prove well what you ſay, or wonder not if all wiſe and ſober men do take this for downright odious ſchiſm, and one of the worſt of the works of the fleſh. *Gal.* 5. 20, 21. 1 *Cor.* 3. 1, 2, 3, 4.

II. On the other ſide if any withdraw from our Communion, let us not too haſtily accuſe them of ſchiſm: And when we do, let us well diſtinguiſh of ſchiſm, and not go further from them than they have gone from us, and to be our ſelves the Schiſmaticks while we oppoſe it.

There are many caſes in which *local ſeparation* may be lawful. Firſt, As if our callings juſtly remove us to another place or Country. Secondly, If our ſpiritual advantage bind us to remove to a better Miniſter and more ſuitable ſociety

ciety when we are free. Thirdly, if our lawful Paſtors be turned out of the place, and we follow them, and turn away but from Uſurpers. Fourthly, If the Paſtors turn Hereticks or Wolves. Fifthly, If the publick good of the Churches require my removal. Sixthly, If any ſin be impoſed on me, and I be refuſed by the Church unleſs I will commit it. In theſe and ſome other ſuch caſes a remove is lawful.

And when it is *not lawful*, yet it may be but ſuch a blemiſh in the departers, as the departers find in the Church which they depart from; which will on neither ſide diſ-oblige them from Chriſtian Love, and ſuch Communion as is due with neighbour Churches.

There is a ſchiſm *from* the *Church*, and a ſchiſm *in* the Church: There is a ſchiſm from *almoſt all* the Churches in the world, and a ſchiſm from *ſome one* or *few* particular Churches. There is a ſeparation upon *deſperate intollerable principles* and *reaſons*, and a ſeparation upon ſome *weak* but *tollerable* ones. Theſe muſt not be confounded. The Novatians were tolerated and loved by the ſober Catholicks, Emperours and others; when many others were otherwiſe dealt with.

If any good Chriſtians in zeal againſt ſin, do erroneouſly think that an undiſciplin'd Church ſhould be forſaken, that they may exerciſe the diſcipline among themſelves which Chriſt hath appointed; It is the duty of that Church to take this warning to repent of her neglect of diſcipline, and then to *love* and *honour* thoſe th t have (though upon miſtake perhaps) withdrawn. But if when they have occaſioned the withdrawing by their

their corruption, they will proſecute the perſons with hatred, reviling, ſlanders, contempt or perſecution, and continue impenitent in their own corruption, they will be the far greater Schiſmaticks, and err a more pernicious errour.

DIRECT. LX.

When the Love-killing ſpirit, either cruel or Dividing is abroad among Chriſtians, be not idle nor diſcouraged ſpectators, nor betray the Churches Peace by a few lazy wiſhes; but make it a great part of your labour and Religion, to revive Love and peace, and to deſtroy their contraries: And let no cenſures or contempt of any Sect or party take you off: But account it an honour to be a Martyr for Love and Peace, as well as for the Faith.

OF all parts of Religion, (I know not how unhappily it comes to paſs) men think that *Negatives* are ſufficient for the ſervice of *Peace*: If a man live *not unpeaceably* and do no man wrong, nor provoke any to wrath, this is thought a ſufficient friend to peace. And therefore it is no wonder that *Love and Peace* ſo little proſper. When Satan and his inſtruments do all that they can by fraud and force againſt it, and we think it enough to ſtand by and do no harm. It is the *Peace-makers* that Chriſt pronounceth *bleſſed, for theirs*

theirs is the kingdome of heaven, Math. 5.9. Here he that is not with Chriſt and the Church is againſt it. Why ſhould we think that ſo much actual diligence, in hearing, reading, praying, *&c.* is neceſſary to the promoting of other parts of holineſs, and nothing neceſſary to Love and Peace, but to do no hurt, but be quiet patients! Is it not *worthy* of our labour? And is not our labour as *needful* here as any where? Judge by the multitude and quality of the adverſaries: and by their power and ſucceſs. Is it a mark of hypocriſie to go no further in duties of *Godlineſs*, than the ſafety of our reputation will give us leave? And is it not ſo in the duties of *Love* and *Peace*? If the Kingdome of God be in Righteouſneſs and *Peace*, then what we would do to promote Gods Kingdome, we muſt do for them. *Rom.* 14. 17. And if dividing Chriſts Kingdome is the way to deſtroy it (and Satan himſelf is wiſer than to divide his own Kingdome, *Math.* 12.) then what ever we would do to ſave the Kingdom of Chriſt, all that we muſt do to preſerve and reſtore the peace of it, and to heal its wounds.

I know if you ſet your ſelves in good earneſt to this work, both parties who are guilty will fall upon you, with their cenſures at leaſt: One ſide will ſay of you that you are a favorer of the Schiſmaticks, and Sectaries, becauſe you oppoſe them not with their unhappy weapons, & love them not as little as they. (As they ſay of *Socrates* and *Sozomen* the Hiſtorians, that they were Novatians becauſe they ſpake truth of them & called them honeſt men: And as they ſaid of *Martyn*, and *Sulpitius Severus*, that they were favourers of unlearned

Fana-

Fanaticks, and of the Priſcilian Gnoſticks, becauſe they were not as hot againſt them as *Ithacius* and *Idacius*, but refuſed to be of their Councels or communicate with them, for inviting the Emperour to the way of blood and corporal violence.)

And the other ſide will ſay that you are a temporizer, and a man of too large principles, becauſe you ſeparate not as they do; And perhaps that you are wiſe in your own eyes, becauſe you fall in with neither Sect of the extreams: But theſe are ſmall things to be undergone for ſo great a duty. And he that will not be a peace-maker upon harder terms than theſe, I fear will ſcarce be meet for the reward. I again repeat *Jam.* 3. 17. *The wiſdome from above is firſt pure and then Peaceable, gentle and eaſie to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, without hypocriſie: and the fruit of righteouſneſs is ſown in peace of them that make peace.*

Rom. 12. 18. *If it be poſſible, as much as in you lyeth live peaceably with all men.* Heb. 12. 14. *Follow peace with all men, and holineſs.*

Obj. *But is it not as good ſit ſtill as labour to no purpoſe. What good have ever any peace-makers done among differing Divines.*

Anſw. A grievous charge upon Divines and Chriſtians: Are they the only Bedlams or drunken men in the world? If *Princes* fall out, or if *neighbours* fall out, arbitrators and peace-makers labour not alwayes in vain: But I anſwer you, It is not in vain: Peace-breakers would have yet prevailed more and made the Church unhappier than it is, if ſome Peace-makers had not hindered them

them. The minds of thouſands are ſeaſoned with the Love of Peace, and kept from cruelties and Schiſms, by the wholeſome inſtructions and examples of Peace-makers. And it is worth our labour to honour ſo holy and ſweet a thing as Love and Peace; and to bear our teſtimony for it in the world. And Gods promiſe of reward doth tell you that you labour not in vain. Is that in vain which *Heaven* is promiſed to?

Queſt. *But what is it that you would have us do for Love and Peace, and againſt the contraries?*

Anſw. Firſt, *Preach* and *write*, if it be your calling.

Secondly, Let the cauſe of Love and Peace, be much in your ſecret and open prayers to God.

Thirdly, Inſtruct all that learn of you with principles of Love and Peace, and labour to plant them deep in their minds, and make them as ſenſible of the evil of the contraries, as they are of any other ſin. Unleſs Divines and Parents do take the way to bring up the people, and children under this kind of doctrine, that Love and peace may become their Religion, the Church is never like to be recovered.

Fourthly, In all your conference, labour (ſeaſonably and prudently) to inculcate theſe matters on the hearers minds, and to bear your teſtimony againſt *cruelty* and *diviſion*.

Fifthly, Put ſuch books into peoples hands as plead beſt the cauſe of Love and Peace. Among others get men to read theſe: Biſhop *Uſher's* Sermon on *Eph.* 4. 3. at *Wanſted* before King *James*, Biſhop *Hall's* Peace-maker: Mr. *Jeremiah*

miah Burroughs of Heart-diviſions; and Mr. *Stillingfleet's Irenicon*; and all Mr. *Duries*.

Sixthly, Diſgrace not your Doctrine by the badneſs of your own lives; but be as much more *Holy* than them as you are more *Peaceable*, that they may ſee that it is not *a carnal unholy Peace* that you deſire. But theſe things belong to the following Directions.

Finally, Brethren, farewel, Be perfect; be of good comfort: Be of one mind: Live in Peace: And the God of Love and Peace ſhall be with you. 1 Cor. 13. 11. Phil. 4. 9. 1 Theſ. 5. 23. *And the God of Peace ſhall bruiſe Satan under your feet ſhortly.* Rom. 16. 20. *Now the God of Peace be with you all. Amen.* Rom. 15. 33.

Martyrdome for Love and Peace is as honourable and gainful, as Martyrdome for the Faith.

PART

Part. II.

DIRECTIONS TO THE PASTORS,

HOW TO *Eſteem and uſe Chriſts Flock*,

EVEN

The weak ones and the quarrelſome Children: And what muſt be done by themſelves in the firſt place, both to prevent and heal *DIVISIONS.*

THe Practiſe of which, the Author doth humbly and earneſtly beg of them, as with tears upon his knees, for the ſake of Chriſt, that purchaſed the weakeſt with his blood; for the ſake of thoſe that muſt live in peace with Chriſt for ever; for the ſake of thoſe who are in danger of turning to Popery or contemning Godlineſs, through the ſcandal of our Diviſions, to

their own damnation: for the sake of these poor distracted Churches; for the sake of the King, that he may have the comfort of Governing a quiet and united people: and for their own sakes, that they may give up their account with joy, to the chief Shepherd and Bishop of our souls, and not with terrour, for the consuming and scattering of his flock.

And (that he may both begin and end with Divine Authority) the Author humbly beggeth of them all, that *England* may but *SEE* and *FEEL*, that the *PASTORS* do *UNDERSTAND*, *BELIEVE*, *CONSIDER* and *OBEY* that will of God, which these following Texts of Scripture do express.

Psal. 15. 4. *In whose eyes a vile person is contemned, but he honoureth them, that fear the Lord.*

Math. 25. 40, 45. *Verily I say unto you, in as much as ye did it not, to one of the least of these (my Brethren) ye did it not to me.*

Math. 18. 6, 10. *But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the Sea — Take heed that ye Despise not one of these little ones: for I say unto you, that in Heaven their Angels do alwayes behold the face of my father which is in heaven.* ¶ *For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost.*

2 Cor. 4. 3. *But if our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost.*

1 Cor. 9. 16. *For necessity is laid upon me, yea*

wo is unto me if I preach not the Gospel.

Act. 20. 20, 24, 28, 33. *I have taught you publickly and from house to house — But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus — Take heed therefore to your selves and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood — I have coveted no mans silver or gold or apparel —*

1 Pet. 5. 2, 3. *Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; nor for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being Lords over Gods heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear ye shall receive a Crown of Glory, that fadeth not away.*

Luk. 22. 24, 25. *And there was a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the Greatest: And he said unto them; The Kings of the Gentiles exercise Lordship over them, and they that exercise authority upon them are called Benefactors; But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve — I am among you as he that serveth.*

1 Thes. 5. 12, 13. *Know them which LABOUR AMONG you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you, and esteem them very highly in Love, for their WORK sake, and be at peace among your selves.*

1 Tim. 5. 17. *Let the Elders that Rule well be coun-*

ted worthy of double honour; Especially, they who labour in the WORD and DOCTRINE.

Phil. 1. 15, 16, 17, 18. *Some indeed preach Christ even of envy & strife, and some also of good will: The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds: What then! Notwithstanding every way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is preached, and I do therein rejoyce, yea and will rejoyce.*

Act. 28. 30, 31. *And* Paul *dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him; preaching the Kingdome of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him.*

Rom. 14. 1, 2, 3, 4. *Him that is weak in the faith receive ye; but not to doubtful disputations: For one believeth that he may eat all things: Another who is weak, eateth herbs: Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; And let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: For God hath received him: Who art thou that judgest another mans servant? To his own Master he standeth or falleth: yea he shall be holden up: For God is able to make him stand. One man esteemeth one day above another: Another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully perswaded in his own mind.*

Rom. 15. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. *We then that are strong, ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please our selves: Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification. For even Christ pleased not himself — Now the God of Patience, and Consolation grant you to be like minded one towards another, according to Christ Jesus: That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorifie God — Wherefore RECEIVE ye one another, as Christ also received us to the Glory of God.*

Rom. 14. 17, 18, 19, 20. *For the Kingdome of God is not meat and drink, but* Righteousness *and PEACE and Joy in the Holy Ghost: For he that in THESE THINGS serveth Christ, is* Acceptable to God, *and* APPROVED *of MEN. Let us therefore follow after the things which make for PEACE, and things wherewith one may* Edifie *another — For meat destroy not the work of God — Happy is he that condemneth not himself, in the thing which he alloweth (that is acknowledgeth to be indifferent or lawful.) And he that doubteth is damned if he eat.*

The rest, and some of the same again you shall have in the Conclusion, and I shall not accuse my self of vain repetition; but account my self and *England* happy if twice or ten times warning you of your undoubted duty, in the plain words of God which you cannot without professed Infidelity deny; will but perswade you to heal our grievous wounds, at so cheap a rate, as the doing of that good and blessed work, which NONE may so EASILY do as YOU, and none are more OBLIGED to do, nor shall suffer more everlastingly for *not doing* it, if no Scripture, no reasons, no experience, no petitions, no groans and tears of the distressed Church of Christ can intreat you to it.

But alas,

Rom. 3. 16, 17, 18. *Destruction and misery are in their wayes: The way of PEACE they have not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes.*—

Eccles. 7. 7. *SURELY OPPRESSION MAKETH A WISE MAN MAD.*

Rev. 6. 10. *QUAMDIU DOMINE, SANCTE, VERAX.*

Psal. 120. 6. *DIU HABITAVIT ANIMA MEA, INTER OSORES PACIS.*

The

The Preface.

THE *Reason why I think it needful, to adjoyn these few Directions to the Pastors, are: First, Because I think that the rest will do but little good without them. Though the people are more inclined to separations than the Pastors, yet are the Pastors the greater causes of most of the Divisions in the Church; And therefore must be the chiefest in the Cure: Because the advantage of their parts and place, doth make them most significant in both: (And their office obligeth them to be the most* skilful *and* forward *in the Cure.)*

Secondly, Because I should be chargeable with such partiality as beseemeth not a Minister of Christ; if I should fall upon the miscrariages of the people only, and say nothing to my self and brethren, who are as deeply concerned in the matter in hand.

Yet I must here premise, that as I have done this part with greater brevity, so also with submissive tenderness and respect: And that I do not at all intend any of the Directions following, as a Magisterial Dictator to those in authority; nor any of the admonitions, as factious reflections upon superiors or inferiors; or as pleading for or against any party now among us.

To the reasons after given for tenderness to Religious dissenters, though too much inclined to separations, I shall here only add First, That the general weakness, even of the Pastors through most of the Churches upon earth, should make us rather pity the weakness of

the people, than angrily revile them: And to think of Christs words, Let him that is without sin cast the first stone. Alas, our preaching, our praying, our conference, our living, tell all the world too loudly that we *are* weak! *How few are there that be not either* ignorant, *or* injudicious, *or* imprudent, *or* dull *and* liveless, *or* dry *and* barren, *or of a* stammering *tongue, in our Ministerial work? And in so high a business, any one of these is a lothsome blemish. If we are put to defend our Religion, or any necessary part thereof, how weakly and injudiciously is it usually done? In a word, Our* great divisions *among our selves, with our* censures *and* usage *of one another, do tell all the world not only that we are* weak, *but that too many of us account one another to be* worse *than* weak, *even* intollerable, *and unworthy of our sacred office. And shall* we *by our weakness and faultiness become the peoples scandal, and tempt them to undue separations; and when we have done be impatient with their weakness, while we overlook our own?*

Secondly, Let us be so impartial as to remember, how far some have spoken to their sense, who have been of most veneration in the Church. I instance but in two: First, The wise and ancient Britain, Gildas, *who saith no less, than,* Apparet ergo eum qui vos sacerdotes sciens ex corde dicit, non esse eximium Christianum: Sane quod sentio proferam — O inimici Dei & non sacerdotes! O licitatores malorum, & non pontifices! traditores, & non sanctorum Apostolorum successores! impugnatores, & non Christi ministri! — Sed quomodo vos aliquid solvetis, ut sit solutum & in cœlis, a cœlo ob scelera adempti, & immanium

um peccatorum funibus compediti? &c. *If the Author of these words be* Venerable, *account not the speakers of such like now, to be utterly intollerable.*

The second is St. Martin, *whose story out of* Sulpitius Severus, *I have afterwards abbreviated. If a Sainted Bishop most famous for myracles, pretend to Angelical Revelation for so much as is there mentioned; let us be* charitable *and* patient *to those tender conscionable Christians, who mistakingly go in such like wayes.*

I am my self so sensible of the evil and danger of Dividing separating principles and wayes, that it is much of my labour to cure them with all! And therefore I have written what I have here done, though I am sure I shall displease the guilty. But overdoing *and* illdoing *will prove but* undoing.

The Lord give more Wisdome, Holiness *and* Love, *to Pastors and people; and open our ears to healing counsels, before we are incurable!*

Amen.

Dire-

Directions to Paſtors how to deal with thoſe weak Chriſtians who are inclined to Diviſions.

WHen the young and ungrounded ſort of Chriſtians, do by their errors, pride or paſſions diſturb the Churches peace & orde , it is the *Paſtors* uſually that are firſt and moſt aſſaulted by their abuſes, and therefore are moſt impatient and exaſperated againſt them: And it were well if we were ſo innocent our ſelves, as that our conſciences need not call us to enquire; whether all this be not partly the fruit of our own miſcariages. However ſeeing that both the eminency of our *grace*, and the nature of our *office*, ſhould make us more ſenſible of the Churches dangers, and more ſolicitous of its ſafety, than the private members are; I think that the *chief* part of the *Duty* is incumbent *upon us*, which muſt be done in order to the *prevention* of theſe maladies, and to the *cure*. And therefore I think that the principal work of a Director or Counſellor in this caſe, muſt be with the Miniſters of Chriſt themſelves; The Churches peace lieth moſt upon our hands: And if we miſcarry, and will not underſtand inſtruction, nor bear admonition, nor do our parts, how little hope will be left of our tranquility? The body muſt needs languiſh, when the Phyſician is as bad as the diſeaſe.

DIRECT.

DIRECT. I.

Let it be our firſt care to know and do our own duty, for the ſtrengthening and uniting of the people: And when we ſee their weakneſs and diviſions, let us firſt examine and judge our ſelves, and lament and reform our own neglects.

THat the ſtate of the flocks doth uſually follow the ſtate of the Paſtors, is known by the experience of all the Churches, in all ages and places of the world. Where there is a *holy, faithful, able, diligent, concordant* Miniſtry, there is uſually a reformed and agreeing people. And where there is an ignorant, lazy, formal, ungodly and contentious Miniſtery, there is either a people divided, or elſe agreeing in ignorance, formality and ungodlineſs. At leaſt if ſuch a Miniſtry have been long among them.

And we need no other proof of this, and of the chief cauſe of the peoples diviſions and miſtakes, than the accuſations and charges of the Miniſters againſt each other. On every ſide it is the Paſtors of the flocks that are accuſed, by thoſe of the adverſe party, as the chief offenders. One ſide ſaith, It is you that teach the people errours, and put ſcruples into their minds, and lead them into contempt of order and authority! And the other ſide ſaith, It is you that proudly

uſurp

uſurp authority which Chriſt never gave you, and lord it over Gods heritage, and by your own inventions lay ſnares before the people to divide them, and will not ſuffer them to unite in their proper center, and agree in the primitive ſimplicity. And that bring the Miniſtery into hatred and contempt by your cruelty and vicious lives.] And whileſt each ſide is thus accuſed by the other, they have all the greater cauſe to ſuſpect themſelves: Becauſe it ſeemeth to be agreed on all hands, that it is the Paſtors who are principally in the fault, though it be not agreed what the fault is, nor which party of the Paſtors muſt bear the blame.

And indeed where are there any ſects or factions, but there are *Miniſters* that *head* them, and that *cauſed* them at firſt, and keep them up? Is it not the Biſhops that have cauſed the long diviſion, between the Greek and Latin Churches? Was it not principally a contention for their intereſts, which of them ſhould be the greateſt (ſo little doth Chriſts own deciſion of that controverſie among his Apoſtles, ſignifie with thoſe men, who are contending about a ſucceſſive infallible Judge.) Is it not their Councils and their contentious writings and practiſes, which have been the grand cauſes of this woful ſchiſm? And are not the dividing ſnares, which cauſe moſt of the reſt of the ſchiſms of Chriſtendome, the meer uſurpations, and impoſitions of the Roman Prelates? It was the Biſhops of each party, with their Presbyters, who headed the diviſion in the ſecond Council of *Epheſus*, and in the Council of *Ariminum*, and many others: And by

by them the Hereſies of the Arrians, the Neſtorians, the Eutychians, *&c.* with the ſchiſms of the Novatians, Donatiſts and moſt others, have been maintained. And among our ſelves, moſt parties have their *Leaders*, who firſt made the *breach*, and ſtill *keep it* open. It is therefore but reaſonable that we all ſuſpect and ſearch our ſelves: And perhaps the lot may find out that *Achan* who is thought moſt innocent, and *Jonah* who is not the worſt in the ſhip, may be the man; and he may be the *Judas* who is laſt in asking, Maſter is it I? And it is ten to one but the leaders of every party will be found blame-worthy in part, though not in equality.

Beſides all that ſhall be intimated in the following Directions, theſe cauſes of the peoples *weakneſs* and *Diviſions* are ſo openly manifeſt in too many Paſtors, that they cannot be concealed or excuſed.

Firſt, There is ſo much *Ignorance* in many that they are not able judiciouſly to ediſie the flocks; nor to teach ſound principles in a ſuitable manner and method to their hearers. Who can teach others that which they never learned themſelves?

Secondly, Too many are ſtrangers to the people whom they teach, and know not the weakneſſes of the vulgar, and therefore neither juſtly reſolve their doubts, nor anſwer their objections, nor indeed ſpeak that language which the people underſtand. They have been bred from their childhood in the Univerſities among Schollars, and have little converſed with Plow-men and poor people and ignorant perſons, who have

quite

quite other conceptions and expreſſions than ſchollars have. Their accurate ſtiles and well-couched words, and elegant phraſes, are moſt of them like an unknown tongue, to the greateſt number of their auditors. And that which they uſe as congruous to the matter, is ſo incongruous to their hearers, that its little to their benefit.

Thirdly, And ſome in avoiding this exream, do fall into the contrary; and never go beyond the preſent underſtanding of the people, and teach them nothing but what they know already; And hereby they bring themſelves into contempt entiſing the hearers to think that their Teachers, are as ignorant as they, and know no more than they teach; And they tempt the people to be puffed up, and think themſelves worthy to be preachers, becauſe they can do as much and as well as their teachers uſe to do.

Fourthly, And how cold and unskilful are many in the application of that doctrine which they have tolerably opened? And ſpeak the truths of the living God, without any affecting reverence or gravity. And talk as drowſily of the evil of ſin, the need of grace, the love of God in Jeſus Chriſt, yea of death and judgement, Heaven and Hell, as if it were their deſign to rock the auditors aſleep, or to make them believe that it is but an hiſtrionical fiction which they act, and that nothing which they ſay is to be believed! There is no need of any more forcible means to entice men to ſin, than to hear it preacht againſt ſo coldly: Nor is there need of any more to teach men to ſet light by Chriſt and Grace and Heaven it ſelf, than to hear them ſo heartleſſly commend

commended; We ſpeak a few good words to the people in a reading tone, like a child that is ſaying his leſſon, as if we believed not our ſelves; and then we blame the people for their being no more edified by us; and we look they ſhould be much affected with that which never much affected the ſpeakers. If Chriſt himſelf who preached with authority, and uſed to awaken them, with an [*He that hath ears to hear let him hear*] did yet convert no more than he did, what can we expect upon our drowſie and dry diſcourſes, but drowſineſs in the hearers, if not contempt.

Fifthly, And alas the *private work* of the Miniſtery is done as poorly by too many who do pretty well in publick, as if they knew not that it is any conſiderable part of their employment; or as if indeed they believed not the immortality and preciouſneſs of ſouls! And if the praiſe of men conſtrained them not, to do the publick part ſomewhat better, they would become contemptible burthens of the Church.

Sixthly, the great duty of Catechizing is ſo much neglected, that few of the people underſtand the great fundamental truths; and few are inſtructed in the true method of the Chriſtian doctrines, who know ſomewhat of the matter of them. And ſuch defects and languor in the Vital parts, will one time or other appear in the externals.

Seventhly, Formality and imagery choaketh or excludeth the ſenſe, life and power of the moſt neceſſary truths. They that teach youth the *words* of the Catechiſm, do oft content themſelves

ſelves with that much, as if they had made them underſtanding Chriſtians; and leave them as ignorant & ſenſleſs of the importance of thoſe words, as they were before ever they learnt them. The foreſaid unacquaintedneſs with the people and their weakneſſes, doth make many teachers loſe their labour; while they meaſure the common people by themſelves, and think that they can underſtand ſuch words as they themſelves can underſtand: When they little know how utterly ignorant abundance are of the *matter*, when they have learned to ſpeak all the *words* by rote. Therefore experience hath oft conſtrained me to ſay, that after all their ſtudy and learning in the Univerſities, ſuch Paſtors as did never familiarly converſe with the poor and vulgar of the flocks, and try the exerciſe of perſonal inſtruction and exhortation upon them, are no more to be regarded in many controverſies about the Paſtoral work and diſcipline, than an unexperienced Phyſician, or Chyrurgeon, or Soldier or Pilot in many caſes of their profeſſions: Which maketh many learned ſelf-conceiced Doctors, become the plagues, while they think themſelves the pillars of the Church.

There are no parents or maſters but find it preſently in their children, how quickly they will learn a Catechiſm, and therein the Creed, Lords Prayer and Decalogue, while they ſcarce underſtand the ſenſe and matter of any of the plainneſt words which they have uttered: And we find it is juſt ſo with too many of the aged alſo. And therefore if by other queſtions and explications, you put them out of their rode, and teach

teach them not to fix their thoughts upon the *matter*, as well as on the words, it will all prove but as the teaching of a Parrot, and not of a true believer.

And what I have ſaid of Catechiſing, is true alſo of *Prayer* & Confeſſion and every other part of worſhip: In which the Hypocrites part is eaſie; even the out-ſide *form* and *lifeleſs image*; But it is the *inward Life*, the *ſpirit* and *truth*, which is the excellent, heavenly and difficult part.

Eighthly, And ſome make a formality and a ſnare of the gift of extemporary expreſſion; And by a prepoſterous care to avoid all forms, they teach them not theſe Catechiſm forms, with that diligence as the matter doth require: But leave their minds void of thoſe orderly well-ſetled ſecond notions, which ſhould help the firſt: And thus while ſome neglect the *ſoul or ſpirit* of Chriſtianity, and others neglect the *form* or *body* of it; betwixt them both it is too much neglected by almoſt all.

Ninthly, Too many are meer wordlings, and ungodly ſelf-ſeekers, and enter upon the Miniſtery but as a trade to live by, and never had that humble holy mind themſelves, which they expect in the people; But as riches, and preferment and honour and eaſe, are the things which they moſt ſeek, ſo they do proportion and chooſe the means accordingly; And when they have thus made themſelves contemptible, and alienated the hearts of the people from them, they then call them all that paſſion can ſuggeſt, not for their ſin againſt God, but for croſſing their carnal ends and intereſt.

Tenthly, And under all this ignorance, negligence and vice, pride maketh too many of them to be enemies to repentance, and to all that would bring them to it: so that they are not so much offended with the people for their own faults, as for disliking theirs: scarce a drunkard a swearer in all the parish is so impatient of hearing of their sins, as many of these high minded impenitent Ministers. Nay so far are they from enduring to be accounted of as they are, that they expect applause and great veneration, when they deserve not pardon: And they think they are neglected or treated unreverently, if their ignorance be not called wisdome, and their hypocrisie go not for the only piety, and their carnal discourse and conversation, (for which God threatneth their damnation, *Rom.* 8. 5, 6, 7, 8, 13.) be not cloathed with some fair and honourable names. And when they have thus set the people so pernicious an example, they storm against them for not being more obedient to them, than they themselves will be to God; and for rejecting the precepts and reproofs of that Scripture which they have rejected and despised before their faces.

I humbly propound it therefore to my Brethren, that if they have a people who despise their Ministery, and turn away from them, and speak against them, and seek after other teachers; that they would first impartially ask their consciences, [have we given them no cause or occasion of all this? Is it not long of us? Have we so preached, so privately overseen and taught them, and so lived, as that all this confusion will not be justly laid at our doors?] When we have first truly cleared

cleared things at home, we are the fitter then to expostulate with our people; And when we have pulled out the beam of selfishness, carnality, negligence, and pride out of our own eyes, we may the better see to cast the motes of childish peevishness, and discontent out of the peoples eyes.

DIRECT. II.

It is needful to the peoples edification and concord, that their Pastors much excel them in knowledge and utterance, and also in prudence, holiness and heavenliness of mind and life: that so both the reverence of their calling and persons may be preserved, and the people instructed by their examples.

I Doubt not but the ministrations of a weak and of an ungodly Minister, are *valid* and may be *effectual* to the flock; And that the innocent people forfeit not their priviledges in *acceptable worship* and *effectual Sacraments*, though a *wicked Pastor* may forfeit his *own acceptance* and *reward* with God. But yet because there are none of us *so innocent*, whose consciences may not justly tell us that we have deserved to be afflicted in that kind, and because God useth to work by means, and vary the success according to the quality of the means and instruments, we may well con-

clude that the *Gifts* and *Holineſs* of the Paſtors is a very excellent and needful help, to the peoples ſetled *Piety* and *Peace*: And that where this help is wanting, that ordinary means is wanting, by which God uſeth to convey this bleſſing.

I have met with many who are either inſufficient or ungodly themſelves, or are guilty of bringing ſuch into the Churches, who uſe to make very light of this, and ſay, God is not tied to mens goodneſs or abilities in diſtributing his graces: which is true, but nothing to the purpoſe: He is not tied by any *force* or *neceſſity*; nor is he ſo tied as that he *cannot* do otherwiſe: But yet this is his ordinary way of working: which hath made it a maxime, that as to means, *Infuſed graces are obtained in the ſame way as acquired gifts*: And let the contrary minded anſwer me theſe queſtions.

Firſt, If it be only the *Office* of the Miniſtery, and not the *Gifts* and *Graces* that are ordinarily needful to their ſucceſs, why doth Religion decay and periſh in all parts of the world, where the Gifts and Graces of the Miniſters decay? Why are almoſt all the Greek Churches, the Armenians, the Ruſſians, the Abaſſians, ſo lamentably ignorant? and moſt of them as vicious as ignorant; inſo much that the notorious wickedneſs of their lives, and contemptibleneſs of their underſtandings, doth keep Chriſtianity out of moſt of the Heathen and Infidel Nations of the world, that are acquainted with them? and keepeth up the reputation of Mahometaniſm and Heatheniſm. Is not the experience of all the Chriſtian world a ſufficient proof? The Greeks and

and other ſuch corrupted Churches, have a truly ordained Miniſtery as well as we, if that were enough to ſerve the turn.

Secondly, What is more evident among our ſelves than that Pariſhes do much vary in piety and concord as their Paſtors vary in ability, piety, diligence and fidelity.

Thirdly, Though Parents have all equal authority to inſtruct and rule their children and families, is any thing more notorious, than that notorious ignorance and impiety prevaileth in moſt families where the Rulers are ignorant and impious? Yet they have as true a power from God to do their duty, as the Paſtor hath to do his: yea and promiſes from God for the ſucceſs.

Fourthly, What is the *Office*, but an *Authority* and *Obligation* to do the Miniſterial *work*? And will *work* ſucceed well that is not *done*? Or will it be done by bare *Authority* and *Obligation* to do it? Will it ſerve to the building of your houſe, to the conduct of an Army, to the healing of your ſores or ſickneſſes, that you have an Architect, a Captain, a Chyrurgeon, and Phyſician, whoſe office is to do theſe works?

Fifthly, What need men ſtudy or beſtow ſo many years at the Univerſity, if *Ordination* and *Office* be enough?

Sixthly, Interpreting the Original Text is one part of the Miniſterial work: If the bare *Office* without the Tongues, did never make any of you a good Tranſlator and Expoſitor, why ſhould the bare office ſerve turn for other parts of the work, without proportionable abilities?

Seventhly, Why do you lay ſo much blame on the Miniſters who diſſent from you, or that are the teachers of the diſſenting people, as if all the diviſions were cauſed by them, if the difference of teachers make no difference in the work and flocks.

Eighthly, Why is it that in moſt ages of the the world, the Paſtors of one mind have deſired the ſilencing or depoſing of thoſe that were againſt them, as being injurious to the flocks, if all Miniſters be alike to them, what need there ſo much ſilencing, impriſoning and baniſhing as the world hath ſeen, if the Office alone do make ſufficient Paſtors?

Ninthly, Why alſo is there ſo much difference between the Paſtors reputations and their labours when they are dead? Why is the name and works of an *Auguſtine*, a *Hierome*, a *Baſil*, a *Nazianzen*, more honourable than of any other Paſtor, who had as true ordination and office as they?

Tenthly, Why ſhould the Kingdome be at ſo much coſt upon the Miniſtery? And why ſhould one have more maintainance than another? If the Office alone be all thats neceſſary, one *Abuna* may ſerve for ordination in all the Empire of *Abaſſia*, and a few Prieſts may be had for ten pounds a year, who have the ſame ordination as the ableſt men. But having ſufficiently ſhamed this errour I diſmiſs it.

If the reverence due to the *Office* be once loſt, the labours of *all* the Miniſtery will be obſtructed: And if only the *Perſon* loſe the reverence of his place, his own labours will be hindered: The con-

contempt of the *Office*, and ſo the *whole* Miniſtery tendeth to *Infidelity* or Atheiſm: And the contempt of *particular* Miniſters, tendeth to *Schiſm*, and to the ignorance and corruption of their flocks. And though the contempt of the *perſon* is bad enough of it ſelf, yet if it fall on *many*, and there remain not a conſiderable number who preſerve their neceſſary reputation, it turneth to the contempt of the Office it ſelf, and conſequently of the Goſpel.

And it muſt be *apparent worth*, that muſt preſerve the *perſons* honour. The ſilver lace did make the Apprentices in *Apelles* ſhop to reverence a fooliſh gallant a while; but when he began to *talk*, they all fell on laughing at him. Our grave attire will go but a little way, to keep up our reputation, without ſome better teſtimony of our worth. An empty head, a ſtumbling and heſitant tongue, dry and dull and diſorderly preaching; and ſenſleſs, cold or confuſed praying, a vain and frothy kind of talk; a common and carnal converſation; all theſe or any one of theſe, will more abate the reverence of our perſons, than the title of Doctors, or the length of our clothing, or the enlarging of the philacteries, will advance it. *Math.* 23. 5. *Mark.* 12. 40. *Luk.* 20. 47. It is their double meaſure of the ſpirit, of wiſdome, and Goodneſs, which muſt procure a double meaſure of honour to the Miniſtery.

And if we excel them never ſo much in *Learning*, it will not ſuffice unleſs we excel them in our proper Miniſterial gifts of preaching exhortation and prayer, which are the works of our

Office, it will neither preserve the honour of our *Office*, nor attain its ends. When many of the people can open the case of their souls in prayer, in more orderly, clear and congruous expressions than the Pastor can, it tendeth to bring down the honour of the Pastor, in the peoples esteem. Some think to repair this, by casting out all prayer except that which is read out of a book, or recited by memory alone; that so there may be no observable difference of mens abilities: But this is so far from curing the peoples disease, that it increaseth it: And they still say, all this is no more than we can do our selves, or then a child of ten years old can do. And if you extend the case to all other parts of the Ministery, where the reason is the same, they will say [what reverence is due to such? or why should we maintain and honour men, for doing no more than our children can do?]

And the Popish devise, to make a disparity, by keeping the people in ignorance, is the basest and most pernicious plot of all. When the Pastors instead of excelling the people, would keep down the people from increasing in their knowledge and expression, this is so notorious a discovery of *envy*, *pride* and *malignity* conjunct, that the people presently flye from such Pastors, as supposing them to be ministers of the Devil, because they see them bear his image. What do we teach them for, if we would not have them learn and profit? What greater honour can a Teacher have, than to make his Scholars as wise and able as himself? Every one who is a child of Light, and believeth in him who is the Light of the world, will suspect that man to be a Minister

ster of the Prince of darkness, who is a malicious adversary of Light. This is that brand of the *Roman* iniquity, the hindering men from the reading of the Scriptures, and magnifying ignorance, which maketh men so commonly think them to be the *Ecclesia malignantium* and the Antichristian brood. Thus Cardinal *Wolsey* declaimed against the Art of Printing, as that which would take down the honour and profit of the Priesthood, by making the people as wise as they. It is not by keeping *them down*, or *envying* their *abilities*, that we must keep our distance from the people; but by *rising higher* our selves, and excelling them in all ministerial gifts. Else why should we be thought any fitter to be their Teachers and Guides, than they to be ours?

Yea though we excel them in all these abilities, it will not serve turn to the ends of our Ministery, unless we also excel them in holiness and every Christian vertue. The Devil *knoweth* more than Ministers: Anp if he have a tongue to speak he wanteth not utterance. He is the most excellent and honourable, who is likest to God, and hath most of his image. And God hath more proposed himself to mans imitation in *Goodness*, than in *Greatness*: He hath not said, *Be Great, for the Lord your God is Great*: but [*walk in the Light, as he is in the Light*, 1 *Joh.* 1. 7. and *Be holy for the Lord your God is holy*. 1 *Pet.* 1. 16. *Lev.* 20. 7. *&* 19. 2. *&* 21. 8. To be *Great* and *Bad* is to be *able* to do mischief: To be Learned ingenious and Bad, is to be *wise* to do *evil*, and a *crafty* and *subtle* instrument of the devil, *Jer.* 4. 22. It was no laudable description

of

of *Elymas*, *Act.* 13. 8, 10. [*O full of ſubtlety and all miſchiefs, thou child of the devil and enemy of all righteouſneſs, wilt thou not ceaſe to pervert the right wayes of the Lord?* Satan would never transform himſelf into an Angel of *Light*, nor his miniſters into the Miniſters of *Righteouſneſs*; nor would Phariſees and hypocrites cover oppreſſion by *long prayers*, if *Light*, *Righteouſneſs*, and *long prayers*, were not laudable in themſelves, and neceſſary in the preachers of the word of God, and had not a goodneſs in them capable of being a cloak to their iniquity. 2 *Cor.* 11. 14, 15. *Mat.* 23. 14. *God is Light.* 1 *Joh.* 1. 5. And *God is Holy*: If therefore Satan or any hypocrite would credit their falſhood and wickedneſs, they muſt pretend to *Light* and *Holineſs*: And he that will keep up the true honour of his Miniſtery, and be accepted with God, and reverenced by good men; muſt do it by *real Light* and *Holineſs*. An ungodly Miniſter hath a radicated enmity to the holy doctrine which he preacheth, and to the holy duties and life which he exhorteth the people to: And how well, how ſincerely, how readily, how faithfully, they are like to do the work which they are enemies to, you may eaſily judge. *The carnal mind is enmity to God: for it is not ſubject to his law, nor indeed can be.* Rom. 8. 6, 7, 8. I know that they are not enemies to the *honour* nor to the *maintenance*: and therefore may force themſelves to do much of the outſide of the work: But where there is an inward enmity to the *life* and *ends* of it, we can expect but a formal, unwilling, and unconſtant diſcharge of ſuch unpleaſing duty. *Truth* is for *Goodneſs*: The *Know-*

Knowledge which maketh you not *Good* is loſt, and hath miſt its end. If therefore your Love to God and man, your mortification and unblameableneſs of life, your heavenly mindedneſs, be no greater than the peoples (or perhaps much leſs) do not wonder if you loſe your honour with them, and if you grow contemptible in their eyes. *Mal.* 1. 10. 14. *I have no pleaſure in you ſaith the Lord — Curſed be the deceiver which hath in his flock a male and voweth and ſacrificeth to the Lord a corrupt thing.* Mal. 2. *And now O ye Prieſts, this commandement is for you: If ye will not hear, and if ye will not lay it to heart, to give glory to my name, I will ſend a curſe upon you — The Law of truth was in Levi's mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: He walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn away many from iniquity! For the Prieſts lips ſhould keep knowledge, and they ſhould ſeek the law at his mouth; for he is the meſſenger of the Lord of Hoſts: But ye are departed out of the way; ye have cauſed many to ſtumble at the Law, ye have corrupted the Covenant of Levi, ſaith the Lord of hoſts: Therefore alſo have I made you contemptible and baſe before all the people, according as ye have not kept my wayes, but have been partial in the Law.*

1 Sam. 2. 17. 24, 30. *The ſin of the young men was very great, before the Lord; for men abhorred the offering of the Lord: — Ye make the Lords people to tranſgreſs — Wherefore kick ye at my ſacrifice, and at my offering, which I have commanded — I ſaid indeed that thy houſe — ſhould walk before me for ever: But now the Lord ſaith, Be it far from me; for them that honour me, I will honour, and they that deſpiſe me ſhall be lightly eſteemed.*

If

If as *Moses* you ſtand nearer to God than the people do, you muſt be ſo much holier than they, and your faces muſt ſhine with the beames of God in the peoples eyes. They that *with open face behold in Chriſt as in a glaſs the glory of the Lord, are changed into the ſame image from glory to glory, as by the ſpirit of the Lord.* 2 Cor. 3.7. 17, 18.

If therefore by your low and common parts, and carnal lives, you make your ſelves contemptible, inſtead of exclaiming againſt the people, cry out againſt your ſelves, and lament your ſins; and the more you have aggravated the crimes of Schiſm and other errors in your flocks, the more penitently bewail your ſin which cauſed it, and remember that you have aggravated your own tranſgreſſion. If you are children in parts and goodneſs your ſelves, you are unfit either to upbraid the people with their childiſh weakneſſes, or to cure them.

DIRE-

DIRECT. III.

In all your publick Doctrine and private Conference, inculcate ſtill the neceſſary conjunction of Holineſs and Peace; and of the Love of God and Man; And make them underſtand that Love is their very Holineſs, and the ſum of their Religion; the end of Faith, the heart of Sanctification, and the fulfilling of the Law: And that as Love to God uniteth us to Him, ſo Love to man, muſt unite us to one another; And that all Doctrine or practice is againſt God and againſt Chriſt and againſt the great work of the Spirit, and is enmity to the Church and to mankind, which is againſt Love and Unity. Preſs theſe things on them all the year, that your hearers may be bred up and nouriſhed with theſe principles from their youth.

IF ever the Church be recovered of its wounds, it muſt be by the peaceable *Diſpoſitions* of the Paſtors and people. And if ever men come to a *peaceable Diſpoſition*, it muſt be by *peaceable Doctrine* and principles: And if ever men come to *peaceable Principles*, it muſt be by the full and frequent explication of the *nature, pre-eminence, neceſſity* and *power* of *Love*: That they may hear of it *ſo much*, and *ſo long*, till *Love* be made their *Religion*,

Religion, and become as the very *Natural Heat* and *Conſtitution* of their ſouls. And if ever men be generally brought to this, it muſt be by daily ſucking it from thoſe breaſts which nouriſh them in the infancy and youth of their Religion, and by learning it betimes as the ſum of *Godlineſs* and *Chriſtianity*. And if ever they come to this, the *Aged experienced* ripe and mellow ſort of Miniſters and private Chriſtians, muſt inſtil it into *Schollars* and into the *younger ſort of Miniſters*, that they may have nothing ſo common in their ears and in their ſtudies, as *Uniting-Love*: That they may be taught to know that *God is Love, and that he that dwelleth in Love dwelleth in God, and God in him.* 1 *Joh.* 4. 16. And that the Love of God, doth ever work towards his image in man: 1 *Joh.* 4. 7, 11, 12, 20. And that *all men as men* have *ſome* of his Image in their *Nature*, as they are *Intellectual, Free Agents exalted above the bruits.* Gen. 9 6. And therefore we muſt Love *men* as *men*, and Love *Saints* as *Saints*; That it is *Love to God* and *man*, which is the true ſtate of *Holineſs*, and the *New creature*, and which Chriſt came to recover lapſed man to, and which the Holy Ghoſt is ſent to work, and all the means of grace are intended and fitted for, and muſt be uſed for, or they are miſuſed. In a word, that *FAITH WORKING BY LOVE*; or *LOVE* and *THE WORKS OF LOVE KINDLED BY THE SPIRIT BY FAITH IN CHRIST*; is the ſum of all the Chriſtian Religion. *Gal.* 5. 6, 13, 22. 1 *Tim.* 1. 5.

He that crieth up *Holineſs* and *Zeal*, without a due commemoration of *Love* and *Peace*, doth firſt deceive

deceive the hearers about that very *Holineſs* and *Zeal* which he commendeth, whileſt he lamely and ſo falſly repreſenteth and deſcribeth it; and doth not make them know how much of Holineſs conſiſteth in *Love*; nor that *true zeal* is *Love it ſelf* in its *fervour* and intenſe degree: And ſo people are enticed to think that *Holineſs* is nothing but the paſſions of *fear* and *grief*, and earneſt expreſſions in preaching and praying, or ſcrupulouſneſs and ſingularity about ſome controverted things, or ſome other thing than indeed it is. And they are tempted to think that Chriſtian *zeal* is rather the violence of partial paſſions, and the fervor of wrath, and the making things ſinful which God forbiddeth not, than the fervors of Love to God and man. And when the mind is thus mocked with a *falſe Image* of Holineſs and Zeal, it is caſt into a ſinful mold, and engaged in the purſuit of an erroneous dangerous courſe of life; And at laſt it cometh to an enmity and contempt of that which is *Holineſs* and *Zeal* indeed: For it accounteth *Love* but a *Moral-vertue* (which they ignorantly take for a diminutive title of the great and primitive duties required by the light and law of nature it ſelf.) And *zealous Love* is accounted by them but a carnal and ſelfiſh compliance and temporizing, and a pleaſing of men inſtead of God; And *zealous* promoting of *Unity* and *Peace*, is taken but for a cowardly neutrality and betraying of ſome truth, which ſhould be earneſtly contended for.

And on the other ſide they that preach up *Love* to man, and *Peace* and *Concord* without putting *firſt* the *Love of God*, and a Holy and Heavenly mind

mind and life, they will cheat the poor ignorant carnal people, by making them believe that God and Heaven may be forgotten, and good neighbourhood to each other is all that is needful to make them happy.

And they will tempt the more religious sort to sin more against Love and *Peace* than before: Because they will think that it is but a confederacy for Satan against Christ, and a submission to the wills of proud usurpers, to strengthen their worldly interest against godliness, which these preachers mean when they plead for peace. And thus as I have known ungodly Preachers by crying down *Schism*, bring *Schism* into request, while it was no such thing as real schism, which they meant in their exclamations (till at last the true eruption of schism with its monstrous effects, made good people see that such an odious sin there is;) Even so I have known that a carnal Preacher, contemning Holiness, and crying up *Love* and *Peace*, hath tempted the people to have too light thoughts of *Love* and *Peace*, (because it was but a confederacy in sin with a neglect of godliness, which the preacher seemed to cry up.) Till riper knowledge better taught good people to perceive, that *Love* and *Peace* are more Divine and excellent things, than carnal preachers or hearers can imagine. The wisedome from above, is first *pure* then *peaceable*: Let it therefore be a true *conjunction* of *Holiness* and *Peace* which you commend.

DIRECT.

DIRECT. IV.

If others shew their weakness by any unwarrantable singularities or divisions, shew not your greater weakness by passions, impatiency or uncharitable censures or usage of them: especially when any self-interest doth provoke you.

NOne usually are so spleenishly impatient at the weakness of Dissenters or Separatists as the Pastors are? And what is the cause? Is it because they abound most in Love to the souls of those who offend, or them who are endangered by them? If so, I have no more to say to such. But when we see that the *Honour* and *Interest* of the Pastors is most deeply concerned in the business, and that they are carried by their *impatiency* into more want of Charity, than the other express by their *separations*; and when we see that they well enough bear with themselves in such sins as this, or in others as great; and that they can bear with as great sins in the people with too much patience, when their own interest concurreth not to raise their passions; in such cases we have reason enough to fear, lest pride and selfishness have too great a part, in much that is said and done against schism in the world.

Is it a greater shame for *children* to cry and wrangle with the Nurse and one another or for the *Nurse* or *Parents* to go to law with them for it, or to hate them, and turn them out of doors?

Is it a fault for *children* to be ſo impatient as to cry and quarrel? And is it not a greater fault in *Parents* that pretend to greater wiſdome, to be impatient with them for it? I know you will ſay that *Parents muſt not be ſo patient with ſin, as to leave their children uncorrected*: But, I anſwer, correction muſt not be the effect of *impatience*, but of *Love* and *Wiſedome* and diſlike of ſin, and muſt be choſen and meaſured in order to the cure of it. Its one thing to be angry for God againſt ſin, and its another thing to be angry for our ſelves againſt the croſſing of our wils and intereſts: And its one thing to correct ſo as tendeth to a cure; And another thing to be revenged or do miſchief, or to caſt out of doors. Are not *you* guilty *of Miniſterial weakneſſes* in preaching and praying, and of many omiſſions in your private overſight? And do you think that it is meet for the people therefore to revile you with odious titles, and ſtir up the Magiſtrate againſt you for your infirmities?

Is it ſeemly for them who are the fathers of the flock and ſhould excel the people in Love and lowlineſs, in patience and gentleneſs and meekneſs, to be ſo proud and paſſionate, as to ſtorm againſt the moſt conſcientious perſons, if they do but *ſet light by us* and caſt off *our* Miniſtery, though perhaps they hear and ſubmit to *others* who are as able and as faithful and more profitable to them than we? When we can rather bear with a ſwearer or drunkard or the families that are prayerleſs and ungodly, than with the moſt religious, if they do not chooſe *our* Miniſtery, but prefer ſome others before us as more edifying? When we can bear with them that have no underſtanding or ſeriouſneſs in Religion at all, but make the world or their luſts their idols, but cannot bear with the weak irregularities of the moſt upright and devout? If they were never ſo irregular in preferring *us* before *others*, and in leaving others to *follow us*, we can eaſily bear with them, and think their diſorders may be well excuſed: And to ſhew the height of our pride, we ſtill are confident (whether we are uppermoſt or undermoſt, whether we have publick liberty or are forbidden to preach) that *we* are the perſons only that are in the *right*, and therefore that all are in the right that follow us, and all are in the wrong that turn away from us; That it *is Unity* and *duty* to follow *us* and adhere to *us*, and all are Schiſmaticks who forſake us and chooſe others. And thus the ſelfiſhneſs and Pride of the Paſtors, making an imprudent and impatient ſtir againſt all who diſlike them, and applauding all how bad ſoever who adhere to them and follow them, is as great a cauſe of the diſorders of the Church, as the weakneſs and errours of the people.

DIRECT. V.

Distinguish between those who separate from the Universal Church, or from all the Orthodox or purest and Reformed parts of it, and those who only forsake the Ministery of some one person, or sort of persons, without refusing Communion with the rest.

AS many occasions may warrant a *removal* from a *particular Church*, but nothing can excuse a *separation* from the *Universal Church*, so he that separateth only from some *particular Churches*, and yet is a member of the *Universal Church*, may also be a member of Christ and be saved. He may be a *Christian* who is no member of *your flock*, yea or of *any* particular Church: But he is *no Christian* who is no member of the *Universal* Church. *Paul* and *Barnabas* may in the heat of a difference part from *one another*, and yet neither of them part *from Christ* or the *Church-Universal*.

I do not excuse the fault of them who sin against any *one Church* or *Pastor*: But I would not have the Pastors therefore sin as much, by making their fault *greater* than it is; nor so suffer their own interest partially to call men Schismaticks or Separatists, in a sense for which they have no ground. If they can learn more by another Minister than by me, what reason have I to be offended at their edification, though perhaps some infirmity

infirmity of judgement may appear in it. A true mother that knoweth her child is like to thrive better by a nurses milk than by her own, will be so far from hatred or envy either at the nurse or child, that she will consent, and be thankful, and pay the nurse. *Solomon* made it the sign of the *false mother*, that could bear the *dividatur*, the hurt of the child for her own commodity; and of the *true mother*, that she had rather lose *her commodity* than the *child* should *suffer*. And *Paul* giveth God thanks that *Christ was preached*, though it was by them that did it in *strife* and *envy*, *to add affliction to his bonds*. *Phil.* 1. He is not worthy of the name of a Physician, who had rather the patients health were deplorate, than that he should be healed by another who is preferred before him. If I knew that man by whom the salvation of my flock were like to be more happily promoted than by me (whatever infirmity of theirs might be the cause) I should think my self a servant of Satan the envious enemy of souls, if I were against it.

DIRECT. VI.

Distinguish between those who deny the Being of the Church or Ministery, from which they separate: and those who remove only for their own edification, as from a weaker or worse Minister, and from a Church more culpable and less pure.

FOr these last are not properly *Separatists* in a full sense: Though they think it *unlawful* to joyn with *you*, as supposing that you impose some sin upon them, or that you deprive them of discipline or some ordinance of God; Whether they be in the right or in the wrong, yet still they hold *Inward Communion* with you, in *faith* and *love* and in the *same species* of *worship*. And this is such a communion as we hold with many forreign Churches, with whom we have no local present communion.

DIRECT.

DIRECT. VII.

Distinguish between those who hold it simply unlawful to have communion with you; and those who only hold it unlawful to prefer your assemblies before those which they judge more pure; but hold it lawful to communicate with you occasionally; yea and statedly when they can have no better.

I Excuse not all such from the guilt of all sin herein. For if they prefer that Church or Ministery which they should not prefer, it is their sin. But it is not *that sin* which of old hath been called *Separation* and *Schism*. While a man is free; if he love himself we cannot wonder if he choose that society and Ministery where he thinketh his salvation may be best furthered and secured: All sober Divines who write of the *Ministery* and of *company*, do declare that the difference between *good* and *bad*, yea *good* and *better*, in both these, is of so great importance, that all wise men should be very careful of their choise. If we may without reproach be allowed to be cautelous what wife we choose, what master or servants, what house, what neighbourhood, what soil, what ayr; Much more may we be allowed to be cautelous what *Church* and *Ministers* we joyn with; And if we are allowed to choose

what Physician we will commit our health and lives to, and are not constrained to use one that we judge to be ignorant or false, surely it would be no heinous schism, if the like liberty be granted and used for our souls. The very Papists give the people liberty to choose their *Confessours*, without removing their dwellings for it: And surely my conscience would tell me at last, that I am very selfish and proud if I thought none so fit to instruct and edifie any of the people as my self? No nor *tolerable* in endeavouring it. Have I not heard many, do I not know many, who preach more convincingly, more plainly and more powerfully than I? And what harm is it then if the people hear them? So Christ be preached, and the people instructed, sanctified and saved, what if it be done by another rather than by me? Have not I liberty to do my best? Shall I be an envier at the Gospel and its success! God forbid that I or any faithful Minister, should ever be guilty of so odious a sin! I speak without respect of persons: It is easie and usual both in publick allowed Churches, and in privater assemblies, to preach *our selves* while we seem to be preaching Christ; and by our *perverse preaching* to *seek disciples* and *esteemers* for *our selves*, when we are preaching up self-denial, and seem to be most zealous for the saving of souls. *Acts* 20. 30. 11.

DIRECT.

DIRECT. VIII.

Remember Christs interest in the weakest of his servants, and do nothing to them which Christ will not take well.

THink well how far he beareth with them, and how far he owneth them, and how tender he is of them in all their weaknesses. If it be a *member* of Christ that you are offended with, though you must never the more love the *fault*, yet remember how you must *use* the *person*. It was not for nothing that he setteth *little children* before his disciples, when he would teach them not only humility, but respect and patience towards each other by his example. *Math.* 18. And how terrible a passage is it *v.* 5, 6. *Who so shall receive one such little child in my name, receiveth me: But who so shall offend one of these little ones, that believe in me, it were far better him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.* And *Math.* 25. *What is done to one of the least of his brethren* (for so he calleth them) Christ judgeth as done unto himself. He will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoaking flax, until he bring forth judgement unto victory. Remember but Christs interest in them and affections to them, and imitate his tenderness and pity.

DIRECT.

DIRECT. IX.

Diſtinguiſh between weakneſs of Gifts and of Grace, and remember that many that are weak in the underſtanding of matters of Church-order, may yet be ſtronger in grace than you.

HE is the ſtrongeſt Chriſtian and the moſt Godly man, who hath the greateſt *Love to God*, and heavenlineſs of mind and life: And this may be the caſe of many a one, who by ſome errour about the circumſtances of diſcipline and worſhip, is yet a trouble to the Church. He that offendeth you by his miſtake and unwarrantable ſingularity, though he be weak in judgement in that point, and perhaps in many other controverſies, may yet be a far ſtronger Chriſtian, than I who ſee his errour: He may have more Love to God and man, more humility and ſelf-denial, more fear of ſinning, and more fitneſs to die, and more heavenly deſires, and patience in tribulation. Let us therefore value men according to the Image of God upon them, and not deſpiſe them as weak in grace, becauſe they are weak in this point of knowledge: Though ſtill their errours are not to be owned.

DIRECT.

DIRECT. X.

Remember the common calamity of the Church and of all mankind: What ſtrange diſparity there is in mens underſtandings! and how the Church on earth is a Hoſpital of diſeaſed ſouls, and no one man perfectly healed in this life.

WHo can ſay I have made my heart clean? *Prov.* 20. 9. He that is kept from *preſumptuous ſins*, and heartily prayeth and *ſtriveth* againſt his *known infirmities*, and is deſirous to know his unknown ſins that he may avoid them, hath attained ſo far as to be juſtified by Chriſt, and loved of thoſe who love as Chriſt doth. *Pſal.* 19. *Job.* 3. 19, 20. *Seneca* could ſay that to carp at this or that fault which was every mans fault, is not to reprove an offender, but to reproach humane nature and all mankind; Chriſtians indeed muſt lament even the vices which are common to depraved nature, but it is with a common lamentation, which falleth on one man no more than on another. Even as we lament mortality, which is the common puniſhment of mankind. But he that would have puniſhment inflicted for a fault which is common to all, would have all men puniſhed or is partial.

If our infirmities are not all the very ſame, yet it is certain that we are all infirm. Yea we are all of imperfect and erroneous underſtandings, though all err not the ſame errour. And

we

we are every man certain in general that we have errours, though no man know in particular which be his own errours! (For it is a contradiction to say that while I err in judgement I know my errour) so that other men know our errours when we know them not our selves, as we know theirs which are unknown to them. For as all have their *common defects*, so most men have their *peculiar* defects and errours, and others excel those persons in some particulars, who excel them in almost all the rest. Therefore if no errour were to be tolerated, no man were to be tolerated: And the wisest in the world must be numbered with the intolerable as well as the rest. And every one that punisheth others, must be conscious of the same intolerable evil in *himself*, and that nothing but *power* exempteth him from the same suffering, and therefore none but the King should escape. *In many things we offend all: Therefore be not many Masters* (too *imperious* or too *censorious* towards *dissenters* and the *infirm*) *lest ye receive the greater condemnation.* Jam. 3. 1, 2.

GOD who is *One*, hath made the creatures MANY and divers: And the further they go from *Him*, the more they run into *multiplicity* and *diversity*: It is admirable in *Nature* to see that among the millions of persons in the world, there are no two that differ not sufficiently to be discernable from each other: And among the bruits and inanimates it is so too: Among horses and oxen and sheep and all creatures, yea though *non ovum ovo similius* be a proverb, yet there are no two that do not differ: No nor among the millions of stones which lye scattered over the surface

face of the earth. There are no two persons in all the world, who are just of the same intellectual complexion and degree, nor no two who are in all things of the same opinions or apprehensions: No nor any one man who is in all things long of the same apprehensions and opinions with himself: Nor is there any man whose *thoughts* and *affections* do perfectly consent with themselves in *matter* and *order*, any two hours in all his life. And if *multiplicity* and *diversity* have so much cause in *nature*, how much more must needs be added by the common *corruption* and *pravity* of nature? When all mankind hath so much *ignorance* of the mysteries of Religion, and so many degrees of enmity and unsuitableness to holy things, a great difference of judgement is an unavoidable consequent of this.

And mens various *educations*, and *converse*, and *employments* must needs cause a great variety of apprehensions: As their *nature* so their *education* may agree in some *generals*: But there are no two persons at age in the world, whose *educations* have been the same in all *particulars*: Though they were children of the same parents, and bred in the same *house* and *time*, yet all that they have *seen* and *heard* and medled with hath not been in all points just the same: the same in matter, and time and order and all circumstances. And we see what great diversity of judgements any one of these doth daily cause. To have parents of several minds and tempers: To be bred in families where there is great diversity of knowledge and practise: To live among company of contrary principles and practise; when one man heareth

heareth *one thing*, talkt of and maintain'd in his daily converse, and another the contrary: When one hath a teacher of one opinion and another of another: Or one hith a *teacher* that is cold, and another one that is fervent; one a judicious one, and another a rash and intemperate one; what diversity of apprehensions may arise from any one of these?

And so there may from variety of *passions* of the mind, through a diversity of bodily temperatures: One that is naturally *fearful* is apt to apprehend a thousand things as *terrible*, and consequently to be filled with scruples, and to run away from *doctrines* and practises as *dangerous*, where another doth apprehend no danger. And one that is dark, or incredulous, or rash or stupid, or hardened by any sinful course, is apt to conceive that he is safe in every dangerous way, and to sleep quietly at the brink of death and hell, and to laught at them that tell him of his peril: As men sit under the same instructions with variety of affections, of fear or hope, of Love or hatred, of joy or sorrow, so variously are they disposed to apprehend what they hear, seeing *recipitur ad modum recipientis.*

And variety of Gods disposing providences must needs also have some such effect. While one is rich and another is poor; one hath crosses of divers sorts, and another hath prosperity; one is full and another is hungry; one is observed, admired and honoured, and another is taken little notice of, or is vilified and despised; One hath many friends and another many enemies: One hath friends that are kind and constant, and the

the other such as are unkind and mutable; One is preferred by Rulers, and the other is ruined or oppressed; All these will occasion variety of apprehensions: As it was with the Lady who coming in very cold, in a frosty day, pitied the naked beggars at the door; but when she was well warmed chid them away: We all find that our apprehensions are very apt to vary in sickness from what they were in health; and in poverty from what they were in plenty; and when we are angred, displeased or abused, from what they were when we were pleased: Yea when we have but read a lively book, or heard a lively Sermon, from what they were before our affections were so excited.

Also variety of *Temptations* may occasion great variety of apprehensions: When one mans temptations are all alluring, to lust or gaming or stage-playes, or Romances, or drunkenness, or gluttony, or pastime; and anothers temptations are all to melancholy, and inordinate austerities and despair; When one man is tempted to errours of one kind, and another to the contrary. Even he that overcometh in the main, yet seldome so far conquereth as to receive no misimpression upon his mind.

Moreover variety of *Callings*, *studies* and *employments* occasioneth variety of apprehensions: A mans mind is much wrought upon by the business and objects which he is daily conversant about: And therefore we find that usually the Courtier, the Souldier, the Sea-man, the Citizen and the Country-man much differ in their apprehensions. And usually (though not every

indivi-

heareth *one thing*, talkt of and maintain'd in his daily converse, and another the contrary: When one hath a teacher of one opinion and another of another: Or one hath a *teacher* that is cold, and another one that is fervent; one a judicious one, and another a rash and intemperate one; what diversity of apprehensions may arise from any one of these?

And so there may from variety of *passions* of the mind, through a diversity of bodily temperatures: One that is naturally *fearful* is apt to apprehend a thousand things as *terrible*, and consequently to be filled with scruples, and to run away from *doctrines* and practises as *dangerous*, where another doth apprehend no danger. And one that is dark, or incredulous, or rash or stupid, or hardened by any sinful course, is apt to conceive that he is safe in every dangerous way, and to sleep quietly at the brink of death and hell, and to laught at them that tell him of his peril: As men sit under the same instructions with variety of affections, of fear or hope, of Love or hatred, of joy or sorrow, so variously are they disposed to apprehend what they hear, seeing *recipitur ad modum recipientis.*

And variety of Gods disposing providences must needs also have some such effect. While one is rich and another is poor; one hath crosses of divers sorts, and another hath prosperity; one is full and another is hungry; one is observed, admired and honoured, and another is taken little notice of, or is vilified and despised; One hath many friends and another many enemies: One hath friends that are kind and constant, and the other such as are unkind and mutable; One is preferred by Rulers, and the other is ruined or oppressed; All these will occasion variety of apprehensions: As it was with the Lady who coming in very cold, in a frosty day, pitied the naked beggars at the door; but when she was well warmed chid them away: We all find that our apprehensions are very apt to vary in sickness from what they were in health; and in poverty from what they were in plenty; and when we are angred, displeased or abused, from what they were when we were pleased: Yea when we have but read a lively book, or heard a lively Sermon, from what they were before our affections were so excited.

Also variety of *Temptations* may occasion great variety of apprehensions: When one mans temptations are all alluring, to lust or gaming or stage-playes, or Romances, or drunkenness, or gluttony, or pastime; and anothers temptations are all to melancholy, and inordinate austerities and despair; When one man is tempted to errours of one kind, and another to the contrary. Even he that overcometh in the main, yet seldome so far conquereth as to receive no mis-impression upon his mind.

Moreover variety of *Callings*, *studies* and *employments* occasioneth variety of apprehensions: A mans mind is much wrought upon by the business and objects which he is daily conversant about: And therefore we find that usually the Courtier, the Souldier, the Sea-man, the Citizen and the Country-man much differ in their apprehensions. And usually (though not every indivi-

individual yet) as to the *most part*, all men are *wisest* in their *own professions*: Lawyers are wisest in matters of Law and Divines in matters of Divinity. Opportunities of *study* and *instruction* make exceeding great differences in the world. The Lawyer and Physician perhaps may on the by, have bestowed a few years time in Divinity, in the midst of other interrupting studies: When the *Divine* hath studied almost all his life, and drawn out his meditations in one uninterrupted thred. And so we discern that Lawyers and Physicians have oft different apprehensions, of matters of doctrine, worship and discipline, from those of the best Divines.

And diversity of *Interests* maketh no small difference of apprehensions. And those that are advantaged by their helps and studies may be disadvantaged by their *interests*. And therefore we say the *Magistrate* and the *subject*, the *Lawyer* and the *Divine*, the *Prelate* and the *Presbyter*, the *Papist* and the *Protestant* (both *Princes*, *Prelates* and *People*) so strangely differ in their thoughts; that one *seemeth certain* of that which another seemeth *certain* to be false; and one ventureth his salvation on that, which another ventureth his salvation against. *Interest* worketh *secretly* and too much with the best; but openly and predominantly with the worst.

And then the interest and opinion of the several Kingdomes, Churches, Pastors, parties or Sects which men are related to, or are engaged with, doth strongly tend to different apprehensions in all matters which those interests are concerned in. And many very good men think, that

that *publick interest* may be allowed much power upon their minds, though *private and personal* must be denied. Is it not a wonder to see, not only that almost all *Christians* are incorporated into one sect or *party* or other, but how easily the inconsiderable reasons of their party can prevail with them, and how hardly the better reasons of their adversaries, seem to them of any weight or worth? Not only the parties of Papists and Protestants, Lutherans and Reformed, *&c.* shew this; but in the same Church the Regulars and Seculars, the Bishops and the Jesuits, the Dominicans and Jesuits, the Thomists, Scotists, *&c.* declare it. And the difference made by *natural capacities* is yet more than all this. When one man is born to a duller understanding, and another hath a quick and clear apprehension; All that these men read and hear and meditate on, is like to make different impressions on their minds. And this is the greatest thing of any one, which maketh many controversies endless, and maketh both Divines and people run away from one another as dangerously erroneous: If a few men have clearer understandings than the duller and unstudied sort, they are like to be the minor part: For the dull and slothful (and yet self-conceited) will ever be the greater part, many to one, till the golden age return. And when all the world feeleth the consequents of this difference, can we doubt of it, or so far dote, as to think it possible to cure it?

Yea the various degrees of the *Grace of God*, do certainly also make great variety of apprehensions. When God giveth to some those true

illuminations, those hirsting desires after truth, those heart-experiences, those delightful relishes, those powerful effects and victories, which he giveth not to others, they are made to differ & must needs have different apprehensions of such things. In which sense Christ saith, that he came not to send *peace but division*, that is, to be such an object, and preach so holy a doctrine, and give such *grace*, as would *occasion divisions*, by making his sanctified ones differ from the world, and occasioning the erritation of the worlds malignity.

And indeed the grand difference between the seed of the woman and of the serpent, the holy and the carnal seed, is that which is the root of the greatest and sorest divisions in the world; which will never be reconciled till Christ at the day of judgement shall say to one part, *Come ye blessed*, and to the other *Go ye cursed*: *For the carnal mind is enmity against God, and is not subject to his law, nor indeed can be* (*in sensu composito.*) Rom. 8. 6, 7, 8. It was not for nothing that God permitted that great eruption of it, in the first man that ever was born into the world, against his innocent brothers life, on the bare account of their *religious sacrifices*! And the *Cainites* are still too strong for *Abel*'s successors, and too numerous. And why did he *kill his brother*? But *because his own works were evil* and his *brothers righteous*. Gen. 4. 10, 11. 1 Joh. 3. 12. And as *Paul* saith of the two sons of *Abraham, as he that was born of the flesh, persecuted him that was born after the spirit, even so it is now*. Gal. 4. 29. For the *flesh fighteth against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh,*

flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other. Gal. 5. 17. And that which is *born of the flesh is flesh, & that which is born of the spirit is spirit*. Joh. 3. 6. And *they that are of the flesh do savour mind or understand the things of the flesh, and they that are after the spirit do mind the things of the spirit*. Rom. 8. 5, 6. Our heavenly teacher told his *disciples*, that if they were of the world the world would love them; but because they are not of the world, but he had chosen them out of the world, the world would hate them (even as it hated him.) *Joh.* 15. 18, 19, 24, 25. *Joh.* 17. 14. And every *one that doth evil hateth the light*. *Joh.* 3. 19, 20. Nothing then can be *surer* or *plainer* to a believer, than that there will be still as great divisions and diversitie of apprehensions as radicated enmity can breed.

And (to prevent many objections) let these three things be noted.

First, That this grand difference which lieth in the greatest matters, in head and heart, must needs have influence upon abundance of inferiour controversies: Both as the *Persons* and *main cause* are concerned in them. Reason and experience have put this past controversie.

Secondly, That this doth not concern only the *visible Church* and the *world*, but the *visible Church within it self*: For all the *Hypocrites* and *carnal* worshippers, have still the *Cainish serpentine nature*: Yea those that by advantages and interest are brought over to the *Orthodox* as well as *Christian* side. And it is a happy Church where the *Hypocrites* are not the *greater part*: And it is neither great Learning, nor degrees, nor the Pa-

ſtoral office, nor the profeſſion of the higheſt zeal, which will ſerve turn to cure the *carnal enmity*, without the ſanctifying ſpirit of grace. So that when controverſies ariſe, we *ſee not* in the *hypocrites* that *carnal mind*, which in the ſtricteſt profeſſion, or greateſt learning, or moſt venerable function, will work againſt the intereſt of holineſs: But we are ſure that *there it is*, though we know not the perſons in whom but by the full effects.

Thirdly, And note alſo that there is a mixture or remnant of this unhappy root and principle even in the *ſanctified themſelves*. And it is hard in a controverſie to perceive in *our ſelves*, much more in *others*, how much our judgements may be moved by this party; and what influence it may have into our concluſions.

So that all this maketh it but too manifeſt, what a certainty there is of perpetual differences in the Church, upon all theſe foreſaid accounts.

Add alſo this great and unavoidable cauſe, that one *errour leadeth in another*: And no man being without ſome; and every one being *generative*, and inferring more, what will it come to when all thoſe alſo ſhall have their *off-ſpring*? and the further they go, the more they will increaſe and multiply?

And as the judgement by *one* is laid open to *another* (even as *truth* inferreth *truth*) ſo the *will* is engaged, and eſpouſeth mens own opinions as their *intereſt*; which maketh them ſtretch their wits in ſtudy to maintain what once they have received and aſſerted: And alas how often have I heard

heard wiſe and reverend perſons cry out againſt this pride and partiality in *others*, who in their next diſcourſe or the ſame, have ſhamefully ſhewed it in themſelves: making much of their own inconſiderable reaſonings, and vilifying cogent evidence againſt them; and being ſo intent on their own inventions and cauſe, that they could ſcarce have patience to hear another ſpeak; And when they have heard him, their firſt words ſhew, that they never well weighed the ſtrength of his arguments, but were all the while thinking what to ſay againſt him, or how to go on as they had begun.

Laſtly (not to run into any more cauſes) there is an univerſal lamentable cauſe of differences, that almoſt all people naturally are apt *to be very confident of all their own apprehenſions*, And very few have any *due ſuſpicion* of their *own* opinions; or an underſtanding ſubmiſſion to wiſer men. Yea boyes (that are once paſt their Tutors dictates) and the weakeſt women, are uſually as confident that they are in the right, as the moſt learned and experienced perſons. Yea none are ſo apt to be too doubtful and diffident of their own underſtandings, as the Learned who are next the higheſt form: For they have knowledge enough to know what can be objected againſt them, and to ſee an hundred difficulties, which the ignorant never ſaw. So that the more *weak* & *worthleſs* and erroneous any ones judgment is, uſually the more furious are they in their proſecution of it, as if all were moſt *certain truth* which they apprehend: Theſe are the boldeſt both in *ſchiſms* and *perſecutions*; as being ſo ſure

that their conceits are right, that they dare *censure* or *separate* or *scorn* or *despise*, or *afflict* dissenters.

It is a common thing to hear religious people *speak* meanly and humbly of their own understandings in the *general*; But when it cometh to *particulars*, it is the rarest part of humility in the world, to find: Very few do shew any competent *modesty* (except the grosly ignorant who have no *pretence* to wisdome): What abundance of good people of the darker sort, have I been fain to rebuke for their *over-valuing me* and *my understanding*; who when I have but croſt *their opinions* about any thing, which most groundlesly, they took for a duty or a sin, have held as fast their vain conceits, and made as much of their most senseless reasonings, and as passionately and confidently rejected the most unquestionable proof which I have offered them, as if they had been *infallible*, and had taken me for an errant fool.

And this is not the case of one or two Sects only; but *naturally* of *almost all men*, till God hath taught them that rare part of humility, to have *Humble Understandings*, and low thoughts of their own judgements, and a due suspicion of their apprehensions.

And their cure is the harder because they know not how to have a humble suspicion of themselves without running into the contrary extream of scepticism, and being cold and unfaithful to the truth; They know not how to hold fast that which *is good*, and to be constant in religion, without holding fast all which they have once *conceited* to be good, and being constant in their errour: Especi-

Especially when *good* or *evil* is voted to them by that party whose piety they most esteem and reverence.

Nor is this a *Religious* distemper only, but it is so natural to mankind, that even in *common matters* neighbours and neighbours, masters and servants, husband and wife, and almost all, have a strange diversity of apprehensions: One thinks that this is the best way, and another that the other is best; and let them reason and wrangle it out never so long, usually each party still holdeth his own, and hardly yieldeth to anothers reasons.

And when they *do yield*, they are so unhappy that they are as like to yield to one more *erroneous* than themselves, and to change into a *worse* opinion, as to yield to the truth. For commonly, *Appearance*, *Advantage*, *Interest*, and a taking tone and voice, do more with them than solid evidence of truth.

Out of all this if you infer a necessity of *Government*, so do I. But if a necessity of *force and rigor*, think on it again, and first hear what I shall further say: And consider what I have said already. Distinguish between the *common frailties* of *mankind*, and *special enormities*: And forget not that you are *men* and live among men: And let not men be cast out for *Original sin*; nor punish a few for that which is common to all the world; Nor condemn not your selves in condemning others. Of which I further add:

DIRECT. XI.

Evermore diſtinguiſh between the neceſſary truths and duties, and thoſe which are not of neceſſity; and between the Tollerable and the intollerable errours: And never think of a Common Unity or Concord, but upon the terms of neceſſary points, and of the primitive ſimplicity of doctrine, diſcipline and worſhip; and the forbearance of diſſenters in tollerable differences.

IF I were to ſpeak but once to the world whileſt I lived, this ſhould be my Theam: And yet (for ought that I can perceive by any viſible effects) I never ſpake of any thing with leſs ſucceſs. One party writeth copiouſly of the miſchiefs which will follow *Tolleration*. And they ſay true, if they mean the tolleration of things *intollerable*: The other write as copiouſly of the neceſſity of *Tolleration* and *Liberty* of Conſcience: And they ſay true, if they mean only the Tolleration of *things tollerable*. But neither of them ſaith true if they mean *univerſally*, and ſpeak in any other ſenſe: There is nothing more plain and ſure, than that the tollerating *of all errours and faults* which conſcience may be pretended for, or *of none at all*, are utterly deſtructive of Chriſtian and humane peace and ſafety. He is ſcarce well in his wits that holdeth either part univerſally and unlimitedly: For the one would have no Government,

ment, and the other would have no ſubjects to be governed. Seeing therefore *bounds and limits* there muſt be, we may reckon them as the third ſort of diſtracted perſons, who think that the bounds are ſo undiſcoverable, that the mention of them is in vain; and therefore either *All* or *None* muſt be tollerated according as Rulers are diſpoſed, or their intereſt ſeemeth to require: And therefore they ſay, *What points be they that are neceſſary, and what unneceſſary? What errours are tollerable, and what are intollerable? Can you name and number them?* Or, *who muſt be the judge?* To which I anſwer.

Firſt, Let it be firſt ſuppoſed that *God hath given us a Law to judge by*; and then we ſhall quickly tell you who ſhall be the Judge (A queſtion which the confuſed world doth further their confuſion by, when they are a thouſand times anſwered paſt all rational contradiction) *Judgement is private or publick*: The *judicium privatum diſcretionis*, which is but the guide of rational acts, belongeth to every private man (which none that is a man did ever yet deny) The *judicium publicum* is either *in foro civili* determining in order to *corporal coaction*, and this belongeth only to the Magiſtrates; Or it is in *foro Eccleſiæ* determining in order to *Church-communion* or *Excommunication*; and this belongeth only to the Church; (but under the coactive Government of the Magiſtrate: the Paſtors being the *Governors*, and the people in part the executioners.) He that requireth more underſtands not this.

Secondly, And what if there be a difficulty what points are neceſſary and what errours are intolle-

intolerable? Yet as long as it is certain that such a *difference there is*, and that accordingly men *must do*; doth it not rather concern both parties to search after it, and practise as far as they can discern, than to cast away Reason, because there is a difficulty in using it aright? Just thus the Papists do with us about the like notion of *fundamentals* or *essentials* of Christianity; They call to us for a just enumeration of the *fundamentals*, and because they find so much difficulty there, as may find words and work for a perverse wrangler, they insult as if they might therefore take either *all things* or *nothing* to be *essentials*, and of necessity: As if Christianity had no constitutive essentiall parts, and so were *nothing*. And when they have all done they are forced themselves in their writings to distinguish the *fundamentals*, *essentials*, and *universally necessary* points from the rest, (as *Davenport*, *Cotterus*, *Bellarmine*, *Holden*, *&c.* do.) And doth it not then concern them as much as us, to know which they be? What if it be a hard thing to enumerate just how many bits a man may eat, and not be a glutton? or how many drops a man may drink and be no drunkard? or just what meats and drinks must be used, to avoid exces in quality? or just what sort of stuffes or silks or cloth or fashions may be used without excess in apparel? will you thence infer that men may eat and drink any thing in quantity and quality, or else *nothing*? or that he may wear *any thing*, or must go *naked*? What if you cannot justly enumerate what herbs or roots or drugs are wholsome and what are unwholsome? which purge

purge too much and which too little? Must therefore *all* be used indifferently or *none*? If I am not able to enumerate just how many faults or weaknesses may be tollerable in my servants? Must I therefore have none, till I have those that are *faultless*? or else must I allow them to do *any thing* that they list? Though just at the *verge* of *evil*, even that which is *good* may be matter of doubt, yet God in *Nature* and *Scripture* hath given us sufficient light for an upright, safe & peaceable life.

Thirdly, And if ever Baptism had been well understood, by these objectors, the essentials of Christianity had been understood. Hath not Christ himself determined who they be that shall be *admitted into the Church* and numbered with Christians, in the very tenor of the Baptismal Covenant? And did not the Church take the *Creed* to be sufficient for its proper use, which was to be the *matter* of the *Christian profession*, as to the Articles of faith to be believed? And yet are we now to seek in the end of the world, what *Christianity* is, and what are the essentials of our faith, and who is to be received as a professor of Christianity.

But this is a subject more largely to be handled if Rulers will permit it: And in the mean time because it is not the Magistrates but the Pastors that I am now speaking to, I shall pretermit the most which is to be said, and only acquaint you in the conclusion, that one of these following wayes must be chosen.

I. Either to tollerate *all men* to do what they wil, which they will make a matter of conscience or religion; And then some, may offer their children

dren in sacrifice to the devil, and some may think they do God service in killing his servants; and some may think it their duty to perswade people that there is no God nor life to come, nor duty, nor sin; but all things are left to our own wills as lawless.

Secondly, Or else you must tollerate *no errour* or *fault* in religion; And then you must advise what *measure* of penalty you will inflict. If but a *little*, then you *tollerate* the errour still: For they that err will err still; and they that conscienciously pray as *Daniel* did, *Dan. 6.* or forbear to obey the King as the three Confessours did. *Dan. 3.* will do *so still*, for all your penalty; And so there is *no cure*, but a *tolleration* still.

But if you inflict upon them, banishment, or death, you must resolve that the King shall dwel alone, and have no subjects, and so be no King; nor have any *servant*, and so be no Masters; nor endure so much as a *wife*, and so be no husband; and if he have children must use them as K. *Philip* of *Spain* did his eldest son Prince *Charles*, and so be no Father. It can be no less than this at last.

Or if you will *imprison them*, *every subject* must be in prison, and then who shall be the Jaylor, and who shall find them food?

Thirdly, Or else you must deal *partially* and unjustly, and condemn *one* while you acquit *another*, for the same fault; or condemn *one sort* of errours, while you allow so tollerate *others as great*: As if all were to be punished who believe *not Christs descent into Hell*, while all are tollerated, who deny the rest of the Articles of the Creed.

Fourth-

Fourthly, Or else you must make sure that all the Kings subjects shall be born under the same Planets, and of the same parents, and have the same temperament and complexion, and the same teachers, and company, and all hear the same words, and all see the same objects, and all have the same callings, employments, interests, passions, temptations, advantages, and the same degree of natural capacity, and of grace: That so there may be no difference or defect in their apprehensions.

Fifthly, or else you must distinguish and say, that *some are tollerable and shall be tollerated*, and *some errours are intollerable* and *shall not be tollerated* (in the *tongue* I mean; for you must tollerate them in the *mind* whether you will or not) And then you will find a necessity of discerning as well as you can, the *tollerable* from the *intollerable*.

And if so, for Christs sake and his Churches sake and your own sake, bethink you whether Christ be not the King of his Church, and whether he hath given his Church no Laws for its *Constitution* and *Administration*? By which we must try who are to be the members of himself and his Church, and to have Communion with himself and one another? and who are to be rejected and avoided? And whether the Holy Ghost is not the Author of the Church-establishment in the Scriptures? And whether we can expect more infallible deciders of such cases, than Christ, and his Spirit and Apostles? And whether the Church be not the same thing now as then, and and its *universal constitution* and *necessary administration* the same? And whether the primitive

Church

Church or ours be the purer and more exemplary? And whether it would do Kings and Kingdomes and the ſouls of men any dangerous hurt, to have all Chriſtians hold their *Union* and *Communion* juſt on the ſame terms as they did under *Peter* and *Paul* and all the Apoſtles? Or at leaſt whether it be worthy all the calamitous diviſions in Chriſtendome, and the blood of the many hundred thouſands that have for conſcience ſake been ſhed, and the enduring of the outcries of the impriſoned and baniſhed, and their prayers to heaven for deliverance from mens hands, and the leaving of ſuch a name on record to poſterity, as is uſually left in Hiſtory on the authors of ſuch ſufferings; beſides the preſent regret of mind, in the calamities of others, and the ſad diviſions and deſtruction of Charity, which cometh hereupon; I ſay whether it be worth the ſuffering of all this (and O how ſmall a part is this) and all to keep our Churches from the primitive ſimplicity, and from the ſame way and Communion which *Peter* and *Paul* and the Churches of their times, eſtabliſhed and practiſed? Shall we ſpeak ſo highly of Chriſt and his Apoſtles and the ſacred Scriptures, and yet think all this blood and miſery, diviſion and diſtraction, worthy to be endured, rather than our Union and Communion ſhould be held on the terms which they did appoint and practiſe? or rather than ſuch terms ſhould be tolerated among us? I know what is ſaid againſt all this; But this is no place to anſwer all that is ſaid by ſuch as cannot ſee how to anſwer themſelves in ſo clear a caſe.

DIRECT.

DIRECT. XII.

Remember that the Paſtoral Government is a Work of LIGHT and LOVE: and what cannot be done by theſe is not at all to be done by you: And therefore you muſt make it your great ſtudy and employment, firſt to Know more than the people, and to Love them more than they Love you or one another; and then to convince them by unreſiſtable evidence of truth, and to cauſe the warmth of your Love to be felt by them, in every word and act of your Miniſtration; As the Milk is warm by the natural heat of the mother, and ſo is fitted for the nouriſhment of the child.

AS the Goſpel is the revelation of the Love of God, and it is a meſſage of Love which we have to bring, and a work of Love which we cooperate to effect; ſo it is a ſpirit of Love which muſt be our principle, and it is an office and work of Love which we are called to; and the *manner* muſt be anſwerable to the work. *Faith* is the *Head*, and *Love* is the *Heart* of the new *Creature*: And as there is no *Light* in our office and work, if there be no *Faith* and evidence of *Truth*, ſo there is no *Life* in it, if there be no *Love*. God himſelf in the great work of our Redemption, & Chriſt in his Incarnation, life and ſuffering, hath taught.

taught the world, that the manifestation of Love is the way to win Love and to cure enmity: And he is not worthy the name of a Minister of Christ, who hath not learned this lesson, and doth not imitate his Lord in this: That as our office participateth subordinately of his office, both *Ruling*, *Teaching* & *Priestly*, so we may participate of that *Spirit of Love*, which was his *Principle* and must be *ours*. If it be not a work of *Love* which we do, it is not the work of a Minster of Christ, and Preacher of the Gospel. Can you well Preach so great *Love* of Christ to men without *Love*? if you shew not *Love* to them, you can never expect to win their *Love* to your selves. And when you overmuch desire to be loved your selves (as which of you doth not,) you pretend that it is, to make your endeavours more successful, when you perswade them to the love of Christ. And doubtless a just Love to the person of the Preacher is a good advantge to this success. And in good sadness, can you believe that any thing is so likely to win Love as Love, or did experience ever teach you, that reproach, or contempt, or hurting men, was the effectual way to make them Love you? This way hath been long tried by the Mountebanks in *Italy*, *Spain* and many other Countries, but alas with what success? Indeed *solitudinem faciunt & pacem vocant*, as *Tertullian* saith: When they have killed those that they had first oppressed, they affrighted the rest to *say they loved them*, and *really* won the Love of their surviving blood-thirsty enemies: but that was all. If the new knack of transfusion of blood cannot do this feat, by letting in the blood of a Spaniel (who

(who loveth him that beateth him) when you let out their own, phlebotomy will never do it.

Account then that Sermon, that converse, that reproof, that discipline in which Love is not apparently predominant, to be but a lifeless useless thing, as to the winning of a sinners heart to Christ. Though I deny not but when the case of the sinner appeareth desperate, the severity of Discipline in casting him off, may express more of another affection as to him: But that is because in so doing you must shew greater Love to the *Church* which must be saved from the infection.

But perhaps you'l say, *They despise me, and injure me, and follow others and admire them, who deserve not so well of them as I do.*

Answ. First, we are most of us too partial to be competent Judges of our own deserts. Selfishness too often maketh us think better of our selves, our preaching and our lives, than there is cause: And it too often filleth men with envy against those, whose greater worth and better labours cause them to be preferred by the hearers: And envy usually breeds detraction. I know that many giddy persons heap up Teachers to them selves and follow seducers, & contemn the faithfullest servants of the Lord. But I know withall, that there is usually a convincing power in the preaching of able experienced Ministers, which is not to be found in the cold & formal discourses of an hypocrite. And that there is a suitable principle in true spiritual *experienced* Christians, which causeth them to relish this spiritual expe-

rimental preaching much more than the more-adorned carkasles of formality: And seriousness is still acceptable to serious Christians: Yea even to common natural men, unless the malicious possess them by slanders with prejudice against it. Now if this should be the cause that others are preferred before you, O how heynous were your sin? As if it were not enough for you to *neglect* your duty, and to do the work of God deceitfully, and injure the souls of men in a cause of such importance, but you must also impenitently justifie such a crime, and also maligne those that have more of the grace and gifts of God than you, and that do more to help to save mens souls!

Secondly, But suppose that your deserts be as great as you conceive, and their love to you as little; I would further ask you: First, is it for *their own* sake who thus hinder their own edification by it, that you are troubled at them? or is it for *your selves*, because you have not the respect which is your due. If it be the later, I need not tell you what it is for Ministers of Christ thus to seek themselves, and overvalue their own esteem: If it be the *former*, 2 Why doth it not please you then that they are edified by *others*, though not by you. Do you think that it is not the *same Gospel* which others preach to them. And may not that Gospel edifie and save them, by the Preaching of another as well as by yours. And if their dis-esteem of you, be a *sign* or *means*, that they are not edified by you, is not their great esteem of others who are as faithful a *sign* and means that they are or may be edified by them. Third-

Thirdly, And why are you not much more troubled at the state of all those who are not converted or edified by you, though they do not slight you or forsake you. How many be there that seem to love and honour you, and yet do not love and honour God? but despise religion and their own Salvation? If it be for *their* sakes and not your *own* that you are offended, you will grieve most for them that are most ungodly, though they honour you never so much; and you will be *glad* for them that are *faithful* and *Godly*, whose Ministery soever it be that they most esteem.

Fourthly, But suppose them yet so foolish and faulty, as to run from you to their own perdition; The question is, *What is the way to cure them?* Is *Love* caused by hard words or it ripes? Will you say to them, *Love me, or you shall be fined or imprisoned?* Christ doth not teach you, to use such arguments when you speak for *him*, but to *beseech men in his name and stead tobe reconciled to God*, 2 *Cor.* 5. 19, 20. But your *own work* will be done in your own way.

Obj. *But Christ threatneth Hell to the impenitent, and* Paul *pronounceth him Anathematized that loveth not the Lord Jesus: and he talketh to his hearers of coming with a rod.*

Answ. No doubt but the corrupted mind of man, hath need not *only of Love* to draw them home to God, and work the cure, but of *Threatnings* to *drive them* and to *help on* the cure! And though it be *Love* that causeth *Love*, which is their *Holiness*, yet *Fear* removeth many impediments: But still remember that it is *Love* which

is predominant, and *fear* is but ſubſervient; And that the fear which is contrary to Love is a *vice*, and hindereth their ſalvation: And remember that *Fear* and *Love* towards God, will better ſtand together, than *Fear* and *Love to you* will: For men know Gods *Soveraignty* and *Juſtice*; and know that he is not to be queſtioned or reſiſted: But if they ſuffer by *you*, it will not be ſo digeſted, nor will it ſo conſiſt with love. A patient will not bear to be whipt by his Phyſician to force him to take his medicines, though a child will bear it from his parents, whoſe Love and Power are more unqueſtionable to him. I deſire you but to mark your *own experience*, and let *your Love* be *predominant* in all your miniſtrations, and uſe no *force* or *hurting* courſe which will really abate their Love to you, and then I ſhall leave you in the reſt to your diſcretion. Secondly, Yet ſtill we grant that Chriſts threatnings may be preached by you, and muſt be; Thirdly, And that the rod of diſcipline muſt be uſed: But this muſt be done only on the ſcandalous and ſuch as more diſhonour Chriſt than you: And it muſt be ſo done, that it may appear to be *Chriſts own work*, and done by you upon *his intereſt* and at *his command*, and not either arbitrarily or for your ſelves.

And I ſhall be bold with confidence to add that in thoſe caſes where violent *reſtraint* or *coaction* is neceſſary, the *Paſtor* is the unmeeteſt perſon to meddle in it. It is the *Magiſtrates* work to *drive* and *force* (where it muſt be done) and the *Paſtors* to perſwade and draw. The flock of Chriſt

Chriſt is led by himſelf the Lamb of God, and his Miniſters muſt *go before with him*, and attend him in the *conduct*; and the *Magiſtrate* muſt *come behind* and *drive*; and it is the *hindermoſt*, and not thoſe *before* that muſt be *driven*. Paſtors ſhould be ſo far from calling out for the help of violence (unleſs it be to keep the peace) that they ſhould rather ſhew their love and tenderneſs, by ſeeking as far as they may to mitigate it: And they ſhould deſire that no ſuch ungrateful work be at all impoſed upon them, as to ſeem the afflicters of their flocks: becauſe when once they have loſt their love, they have loſt their opportunity and advantage of edifying them.

And it is not *Pilate*'s hypocritical waſhing of his hands, that will excuſe him: Nor the Romiſh Clergies diſclaiming to meddle in a judgement of blood, which will reconcile the minds of ſufferers to them, as long as they are Maſters of the Inquiſition, or deliver them up to the ſecular power, and excommunicate and depoſe the temporal Lords who will not do ſuch execution as they require.

Though I have ſome where elſe mentioned it, I will again requeſt the Reverend Paſtors of the Church, to peruſe the ſtory of *Idacius* and *Martin* in *Sulpitius Severus*. The ſum of it is this. *Priſcillian* and many others (ſome Biſhops and ſome Presbyters and ſome private perſons) were zealous in religion, but heretical (Gnoſticks ſaith *Sulpitius*:) *Ithacius* and *Idacius* were two Orthodox Biſhops who were very hot againſt theſe heroticks: Both of them men of raſh and haughty ſpirits, and one of them at leaſt (ſaith

Sulpitius) an injurious person that scarce cared what he said or did by others (see what persons a good cause may be defended by.) These Bishops drew in the Bishops of the neighboring Churches, & in their Synods first condemned the Priscillianists; and next provoked the Emperour against them. The Priscillianists found that if that were the way, an Emperours Court was not so Orthodox or constant, but there might be as good hopes for them: And therefore they got a powerful friend in Court to undertake their business, and got the better of the Bishops: The Bishops being born down for a time, at last *Maximus* was proclaimed Emperour, and came over with power and victory into *Germany* (such another as *Cromwel*, who by the Bishops was accounted a very Religious Christian, but usurped the Empire, and fought against and killed one of the Emperours, and pretended that the souldiers made him Emperour against his will.) This *Maximus* (whether sincerely or for his own advantage is unknown) did take part with the Orthodox and greatly honour the Bishops and promote Religion, and got a great deal of love and honour. *Ithacius* and *Idacius* and the rest of the Bishops apply themselves to *Maximus* against the Priscillianists; who hearkened to them, and to please them put *Priscillian* and some others to death, and punished others by other wayes of violence. The more rude ungodly sort of Christians, so far concurred or over-went the Bishops, that they turned their fury against any that seemed more Religious than their neighbours: so that if any one did but fast and pray more, and read the Scriptures

tures more than others, he was reproached as a Heretick and favourer of the Priscillianists: *Martin* Bishop of *Turen* was at that time a man of no great Learning, but so famous for Holiness, Charity, and numerous miracles, as the like is scarce written with credibility of any man since the Apostles (for which he is canonized a Saint.) This *Martin* was grieved partly to hear strictness brought into reproach, and partly to see Magistrates called to the suppression of heresies by the Bishops; and so every heretick taught how to persecute and suppress the truth, who could but get the Emperor on his side: Therfore he petitioned the Emperour for mercy to the Priscillianists, and told him that it was a thing not used by Christians, to propagate sound doctrine or suppress mens errours by the sword: He also avoided the Synods of the Bishops, and refused not only their Councils, but their Communion: Whereupon the Bishops not only despise him as an unlearned man, and one that deceived the people with false miracles; but also suggested to the Emperour that he was a favourer of the hereticks himself: Insomuch that *Martin* hardly escaped suffering with them, through the Bishops calumnies. But the great piety and clemency of the Emperour preserved him; And at last did promise him the saving of the lives of some that were further appointed to suffer, on condition that he himself would communicate with the Bishops. *Martin* saw that there was no other means to save the life of *one* that else was presently t odie, and thinking that Christ who would have mercy and not sacrifice, would in such a case allow

low it, he promiſed to have Communion with the Biſhops, and ſo did communicate with them the next day, and ſaved the mans life. When he had done it he was in great doubt and perplexity about it, whether he had done well or not? and in this trouble went ſecretly out of the City homewards: And by the way in a Wood as he was in heavineſs and doubt, an Angel appeared to him, and rebuked and chaſtened him, for communicating with them, and bid him take warning by this, leſt the next time he hazarded his ſalvation it ſelf by it. And *Martin* profeſſed that long after this, the gift of miracles was denied him; but he communicated with the Synod and Biſhops no more.

This Hiſtory I only recite without determining how far the Reader is to believe it: But I muſt ſay that the reading of it was a temptation to me, to doubt concerning my Communion, the Reader may eaſily know with whom. For though I know how credulous and fabulous many ancient Writers were, yet I conſidered, that this Hiſtorian is one of the moſt ancient, one of the moſt learned, one of the moſt ſtrictly Religious of all the old Hiſtorians of the Church; and that he was himſelf an intimate acquaintance of *Martins*, and had it from his own mouth; and moſt ſolemnly proteſteth or ſweareth that he feigneth nothing, and that the miracles of *Martin* were known to him partly by his own ſight, partly by *Martin*'s own Relation, and partly by many credible witneſſes: And they were ſo believed commonly in that age by good men, that it was the occaſion of his Canonizing. And if ſuch Hiſtory is not to be believed,

believed, I will not mention the conſequences that will hence follow.

And yet on the other ſide I conſidered; Firſt, That it was poſſible that a holy man might be miſtaken by fear and ſcrupuloſity, and take that for an Angels apparition which was but a dream: Secondly, That his avoiding Communion with the Biſhops might be only a prudential act, fitted to that time and place, upon accidental or circumſtantial reaſons which will not ſuit with another time and place: Thirdly, It is dangerous making the actions of any men, upon pretenſe of any Revelations and Miracles, to be inſtead of Scripture, the rule of our faith or duty; much more to prefer them before the Scripture when there is a contrariety between them. Fourthly, And his ſeparation was but temporary, not from the *Order*, nor from any of the *other Paſtors*, or from the *people*; but only from *thoſe individual perſons*, whom he ſuppoſed to be ſcandalous. And theſe conſiderations I judge ſufficient to reſiſt that temptation.

Whoever underſtandeth what a *man* is, and what a *Chriſtian* is, and what the office and work of a *Paſtor* is, will make no doubt, but that his Guidance muſt be *paternal*, and that as *Love* is the *effect* to be produced in the people, ſo *Love* in him muſt be the *means* of cauſing it; & that he muſt expect that the ſucceſs of his preaching & diſcipline ſhould not exceed the meaſure of Love, which is manifeſted therin; further than as God may extraordinarily work beyond the aptitude of the *means*. And when he hath complained of the people as ſharply as he will, he ſhall find that *whatſoever it*

is

is that Love cannot do, in order to their converſion and edification, and which Light or evidence cannot do in order to their conviction, is not by him to be done at all. And if he will be trying with edge tools, he may cut his own fingers ſooner than cure an erring mind; And ſhall find that the people will much worſe endure acts of force and corporal penalty, from a Paſtor, than from a Magiſtrate; and will hardly believe by any cloathing that he is a ſheep, if they once perceive that he hath bloody teeth. Our work is to win the *heart* to Chriſt: And he is unfit to be a Paſtor, that knoweth not how hearts are to be won.

DIRECT. XIII.

When you have thought of all the evils that will be uncured, when Love and evidence have done their part; yet reject not this way till you have found out a better; which will do the work that is to be done, and that with fewer inconveniences.

I Am not now about to ſtate the bounds of Liberty in matters of Religion; (It requireth a full Treatiſe by it ſelf; and many tediouſly diſpute the caſe before they ever truly ſtated it.) Much leſs am I perſwading Magiſtrates, that they muſt permit every deceiver to do his worſt, to draw the people from *God*, or from *Chriſt Jeſus* the Mediator, from *faith* and *godlineſs*, any more than

than from *Loyalty*, *Peace* and *Honeſty*. But I am ſpeaking only againſt that partial, factious, needleſs, dividing and pernicious *violence*; which is pretended to be the *chief*, if not the *only* cure of all the errours or diſagreements in the Churches, by thoſe that know no part of Chyrurgery but amputation.

Some ſpeak much of the many diſorders which will be uncured, if *Violence* do not more than *Teaching* and *Love*: But I humbly ask of them: Firſt, are thoſe diſorders ſuch as *are curable* in this life; or ſuch as are the *unavoidable* miſeries of our corrupt and imperfect ſtate? Secondly, will *force* cure them better than *evidence* of truth, and *Love* will do? Thirdly, will they be ſo cured without a greater miſchief! God telleth the Sabbath-breakers of *Iſrael*, that when they were rooted out, the *land ſhould keep her Sabbaths*: Was that a *mercy* or a *judgement*? Would you *ſo cure* Sabbath-breaking and diſorder? and take a *ſolitude* for *Peace*? Fourthly, is not the work to be done, the ſaving of mens ſouls? And ſhall any be ſaved againſt his will? And then ſhould not all force be meerly ſuch as is ſubſervient to the ends of Love? Fifthly, will ſtripes change the judgement in matters of Religion? Sixthly, is he any better than a Knave or an hypocrite, who will ſay or ſwear or do that through *fear*, which he verily thinketh God forbiddeth him, and is diſpleaſed for, and feareth it may damn his ſoul? Seventhly, Is it the honour and felicity of ſouls to *be ſuch*? or of Church or Kingdome to be compoſed of ſuch? Eighthly, is not a ſcientious fear of ſinning againſt God, a thing well

well pleasing to him, and necessary to mens salvation, and to the Churches welfare, and to the safety of the lives of Kings, and of the Kingdoms peace? And is there not then great cause to cherish it (though not the errours that abuse it.) And should not all care be used to cure the ungodly world, of impiety and searedness of conscience, which makes them make a mock of sin. And if conscience were once debauched and mastered by fear, and the people be brought to prefer their their fleshly interest before their spiritual, and to fear mens punishment more than Gods, would not such debauched consciences have a great advantage, to make such men the masters of the estates and lives of others? And are the lives of Kings, and the estates of neighbours, and the peace of Kingdomes, competently secured, where God is not feared more than fines or corporal penalties? Ninthly, if force be so far followed till it have changed mens judgements or conquered conscience, or exterminated and destroyed all that will not be thus changed or conquered, who differ from superiors in unnecessary things, will it not (all things well considered) prove a dear price for that which might be had at much cheaper rates? Are not the most conscientious, necessary helpers of the Ministery, by their example, to cure the unconscionableness of the rest? And therefore should be countenanced & encouraged? Tenthly, would not the cessation of unnecessary impositions, cast out the most of the scruples of conscientious people, and cease the saddest divisions of the Churches? If *Rome* could have been content with a Religion of no more Articles than the

the Apostles was, and would on those terms have held Communion with other Churches? O what rends and ruines had it prevented in the Christian world? Are not the old Apostolical rules and terms sufficient to the safety and peace of Christians? Were those worthy persons. B. *Usher*, B. *Hall*, B. *Davenant*, B. *Morton*, with the *Bergii*, the *Crocii*, and all the great pacificators deceived, who wrote and preached and cried out to the world that [*so much as all Christians are agreed in, is sufficient matter for their concord; if they would lay it upon no more*] *vid. Ush. serm.* before King *James* at *Wansted*. Or do you think it was their meaning [*Let all Rulers multiply unnecessary scrupled impositions in their own dominions, and for scrupling them, let them silence, imprison and banish at home; And then let them send to their neighbour Churches for Unity, Peace and Concord, and tell them that the subscribing to the Scriptures generally, and to the Creed, Lords Prayer, and Decalogue and Sacraments particularly, are terms sufficient to this end. (Supposing that good order, decency and peace be kept up by suitable discipline both Ecclesiastical and Civil.)* And why would not this serve for all the world? Or why should more scrupled things be called necessary to order and decency than indeed are so? My desire of the Churches peace which caused me to write all the rest, provoketh me to touch this subject briefly, which will scarce endure to be touched.

DIRECT.

DIRECT. XIV.

When you reprove theſe weak Chriſtians, who are ſubject to errours, diſorders or diviſions, reflect not any diſgrace or contempt upon Religion, and conſcientious ſtrictneſs; but be the more careful to proclaim the innocency and honour of ſerious Godlineſs, leſt the prophane and ungodly take occaſion to deſpiſe it, by your opening the faults of ſuch as are taken for the zealous Profeſſours of it.

HOneſt hearers take moſt notice, what is the *main ſcope* which the Preacher aimeth at, and the buſineſs which he driveth on. Some men take occaſion by the errours and faults of ſuch as have ſeemed ſeriouſly religious, to make all *ſeriouſneſs* and *diligence* for our ſalvation, to ſeem to the hearers to be meer hypocriſie, and not only a *needleſs*, but a *hurtful* thing; and to perſwade the people that an ignorant careleſneſs of their ſouls, with good neighbour-hood, quietneſs and mirth, is better than all this ado. Which is no more or leſs than to preach for Atheiſm and Ungodlineſs in practiſe, ſo it be veiled with the hypocritical profeſſion of the Chriſtian faith. And this unhappy ſort of Preachers do ſeldome miſs to fall upon the real and ſuppoſed miſcarriages of men that are or ſeem religious, in ſome part of their ſermons and familiar diſcourſe; which being done to ſo odious an end, as to bring *ſerious Religiouſneſs* it ſelf into diſlike, it maketh the beſt of the hearers abhor ſuch reflections, becauſe they abhor the *ſcope* of them; Believing that Holineſs need not to be preached againſt in the world, till mens hearts are more enclined to it, and till all its enemies abate their oppoſition: And if it were to be done, yet not by a Miniſter of Chriſt: He that preacheth againſt Holineſs (how covertly ſoever) preacheth againſt God. Whereas if a mans deſigne be to *promote Religion*, the ſober hearers (though partly guilty) will bear his reproof of the faults of profeſſours, with much more patience, when they ſee it is for God and godlineſs that he doth it. I ſpeak by experience, and muſt give them this teſtimony, that I have many and many a time poured out my ſoul in earneſt reprehenſions of the errours and diſorders of raſh-*dividing* zeal; and the hearers have taken all with patience: when the ſame perſons could not bear the tenth part ſo much, from ſome preachers whom they imagined to aim in it at the depreſſing of the honour of true and ſerious religion. Therefore be ſure what ſort of men ſoever you are reproving, that you ſay nothing which tendeth to make the ignorant or ungodly ſort of your auditors think, that it is *zeal*, or *ſtrictneſs*, or careful diligence about their ſouls, which you condemn: But ſtill put in ſufficient caution for the neceſſity of a holy heart and life.

DIRECT. XV.

Discourage not the Religious from so much of Religious exercises in their families, or with one another, as is meet for them in their private stations.

BY this means many Pastors have been very great causes of schisms and separations. Some of them are so carnal and selfish, that they make the Ministery but a trade for their benefice and honour: And therefore for fear lest the people should encroach upon their advantages, they drive them as far off as they can, and care not how ignorant they are, so that thereby they may but lock up the mystery of their trade securely for themselves; and keep the people in a blindfold reverence, dependance and obedience: How ordinarily the Roman Clergy practise this iniquity, the nations that are kept in darkness by them, are doleful testimonies. Like the great dog that will not endure the little one to come near his carrion or his bone. And some are so excessively fearful of schism, that they dare not endure the people to pray together, or repeat a sermon, or search the scripture, and exhort one another daily, in that manner which God requireth private men to do, for fear lest they should go further, and grow proud of their own gifts and doings, and despise their Pastors, and set up for themselves! When as this very inordinate jealousie is the likely and the common way

way to bring them, to the evil that is so much feared. While peoples care of their salvation is cherished and stirred up, and the Pastors do provoke them to pray and search the scriptures and help each other in the way to heaven, they are honoured and loved by the faithful of their flocks, as men that indeed are true to their great trust, and have a love and care for the peoples souls: And then those Pastors who further the people in such religious exercises, may usually as fathers rule them in it, and keep them from usurping any thing that is proper to the officers of Christ, and from errours, and factions and divisions; and may easily suppress any arrogancie when it appeareth. And that honest desire which religious persons have to do good to others, is thus satisfied by such sober exercises as belong to them: And so Pastor and people do peaceably, lovingly and successfully concur to carry on the work of Christ, whilest each one moveth in his proper place. I speak this, through the great mercy of God, from very great and long experience: having still kept up such lawful meetings and sober exercises as are not unfit for private Christians, and thereby kept out all heresies, factions, schisms, and arrogancies from the flock; with the great increase of their knowledge, humility, piety, and just observance of their guides.

Whereas when the foresaid inordinate jealousie doth restrain people, or discourage them from any of that which is their proper work; First, they grow into distaste of such Pastors, and take them for enemies to godliness and to their souls:

Secondly, they grow next as jealous of all the Pastors *doctrine*, as he is of them; and think it no fault to draw off further from him themselves, and then to disaffect others to him: Thirdly, their appetite to religious exercises, when it is restrained groweth inordinate, and affecteth that which belongeth not to them. Fourthly, they conceit that there is some necessity of their turning *teachers*, to do that which the Teachers will not do. Fifthly, they next keep their meetings *by themselves*, from under the eye and inspection of their Teachers. Sixthly, then they take liberty to vent what cometh in their minds, whilest there is none to regulate and contradict them. Seventhly, and at last they set up for themselves, and the chief speakers among them become Pastors to the rest, and so too often speak perverse things to draw away disciples after them. *Act.* 20. 30.

Wisedome and Love may prevent all this: Envy not the gifts or graces of your people? Is it not the end of all your studies and labours to promote them? Are they not the fruits of Gods mercies and your own endeavours: Will you grudge at your own successes? Instead of restraining them, let none so earnestly drive them on, to such religious exercises that belong to them, as your selves; and help them and oversee them in the performance; And then you shall have advantage to restrain them from that which belongeth not to them: And you shall have them the great assisters of your Ministery, who will more uphold your honours, than all the prophane and ignorant will do: yea they will be your glory,

ry, crown and joy at the appearing of Jesus Christ. 1 *Thes.* 2. 19, 20.

DIRECT. XVI.

Be not wanting in abilities, watchfulness, or diligence, to resist seducers by the evidence of truth; that there may be no need of other weapons: And quench such sparks among your people before they break out into flames.

THe clamours and wayes of violence used by many Pastors, are oft but an unhappy means to supply the defect of their own abilities and duties: And those who are conscious of an insufficiency in themselves to do their parts, do most intemperately call out to the Magistrates to help them, and do most unmannerly censure them, if they answer not their expectations: And indeed if the sword of the Magistrate be such an universal remedy, and may serve instead of the ability and labour of the Minister, let it also serve to cure the sick, instead of the skill and labour of the Physician; and let all other callings as needless be put down, and let us have none but Magistrates alone.

First, Some Ministers are so *ignorant*, that if one of their people do but turn Antinomian, Anabaptist or Separatist, they are *not able* to confute them: Much less if one that is *learned* and well-studied introduce these errours: If the

Sectary challenge them to diſpute, its two to one but errour will triumph, through the inſufficiency of him that ſhould defend the truth. And then this inſufficient Miniſter, will turn to railing, or call out to the Magiſtrate for his help, to declare to all that he is too weak: which will harden and encreaſe the ſeduced party, and make them think that it is the *weakneſs* of his *cauſe*.

Secondly, And too many Miniſters, who ſeem more able, are Lordly and lazy, and carry themſelves ſtrangely and at a diſtance from the people, and are ſeldome familiar with them in private: And ſo they give advantage to ſuch ſeducers as creep into houſes, to ſow their tares; and for the weaker ſort to vend their errours, when there is none to contradict them: Theſe Paſtors take their proper work, to which they are called, for a *ſlavery* or a *toil*. They are ſo *proud* and *idle*, that for them to watch over all the flock, and to teach them publickly and from houſe to houſe, night and day with tears as *Paul* did, and to watch where any ſpark appeareth, and preſently to quench it, doth ſeem to them ſuch a drudgery and burden, that God were unmerciful if he ſhould impoſe it on them: That is, They think God unmerciful if he will not rather let the patient die, than put the Chyrurgeon to the trouble of dreſſing his ſores: If he will not let the people be damned rather than put Miniſters to ſo much labour to inſtruct and ſave them. If it were but to take their tythes and honour, and to be reverenced by the people, and to preach once or twice a week, a ſermon which tendeth to their applauſe, they could ſubmit to this

this much: But *Paul*'s exhortation *Act.* 20. ſeemeth intollerable preciſeneſs. But ſouls will not be informed or reformed at ſo cheap a rate. *Sin* hath corrupted them more than ſo. If we will ſleep, the envious man will not ſleep: but when we awake, we ſhall find that he hath ſowed his tares. Sometimes *grievous Wolves will enter, not ſparing the flock*: and ſometimes *of our own ſelves will men ariſe, ſpeaking perverſe things, to draw away diſciples after them*: *Therefore watch.* Study hard and *meditate on theſe things, and give your ſelves wholly to them, that your profiting may be known to all*: that you may be able *to ſtop the mouths* of gainſayers; and to edifie and eſtabliſh all the flock; that they *be not as children toſſed to and fro, and carried up and down by every wind of doctrine, by the canning ſlight and ſubtilty of men, by which they lie in wait to deceive.* For to this end did Chriſt give offices and gifts: Study therefore to ſhew your ſelves workmen that need not be aſhamed, rightly dividing, methodizing, opening, and ſo defending the word of truth. *Act.* 20.20,28,29,30. *Eph.* 3. 12,14. 1 *Tim.* 4. 15,16. 2 *Tim.* 2. 2,15.

DIRECT. XVII.

Be not ſtrange to the poor ones of your flock: but impartial to all; and the ſervants of all; mind not high things, but condeſcend to men of low eſtate. Rom. 12. 16.

ALL ſouls are equally precious unto Chriſt; whether rich or poor. O ſet the ſtrange example of Chriſts condeſcenſion ſtill before your eyes. Was it the *high* or the *low* that were his familiars? Did he live in *fulneſs*, and ride in *pomp*, and aſſociate only with the *rich* and *great*? O ſee him waſhing his diſciples feet? And hear him teaching them by that example, what they ought to do for one another. *He came not to be miniſtred unto but to miniſter*: How ſharply did he rebuke his diſciples when they *ſtrove who ſhould be greateſt*? And ſetting a little child before them, hath taught us what muſt be our ambition: And that he *that will be the greateſt muſt be the ſervant of all*: Our greatneſs lieth in the greateſt of our *humility* and uſefulneſs: *Math.* 18. 1, 2, 3, 4. & 23. 11. *Luk.* 22. 24, 25, 26. *Math.* 20. 28.

It is lawful and meet that men in power ſhould be honoured by us, and alſo that the people be taught to honour them: and that you keep ſuch intereſt in them as is needful to the publick good: and therfore all converſe with them is not unlawfull: But when Miniſters *only attend* on the *rich*, and are *ſtrange* and *ſeldome* among the poor, it makes them accounted carnal worldly men; and is

is unſuitable to their Lords example, and to the work of their calling. The *poor* are far more *numerous* than the rich; and therefore *our work* is *more among them*. And death will quickly level all. And when we have all done, we ſhall find, that the poor receive the glad tidings of the Goſpel; and the poor of the world may be rich in faith, and heirs of the Kingdome, which God hath prepared for them that love him. *Mat.* 11. 5. *Jam.* 2. 5, 6. And that the rich do hardly enter into the Kingdome of heaven. *Jam.* 2. 6, 7. *But ye have deſpiſed the poor: Do not the rich men oppreſs you, and draw you before the judgement ſeats?* It is the poor that muſt be the chief crown and comfort of your labours: Therefore be not ſtrangers to them; if you would not have them account you lordly, worldly and ſelf-ſeeking men: If you will leave them to themſelves, and think your ſelves too good to be their companions, or to come into their ſmoaky Cottages, and then think that a lordly command or rebuke, ſhould ſerve the turn to keep them from errour and ſchiſm and diſorder, you may find your errour to the Churches coſt, when it is too late. And it will be but a pitiful excuſe for your pride or lazineſs, to cry out of ſeducers for *creeping into ſuch houſes*, which you diſdained to come into your ſelves: what do you by avoiding them, but invite any others thither that will come, and leave them as it were ſwept and garniſhed for ſuch evil ſpirits?

DIRECT. XVIII.

Spend and be ſpent for your peoples good; and do all the good that poſsibly you can for their bodies as well as for their ſouls: and think nothing that you have too dear to win them: that they may ſee that you are truly Fathers to them, and that their well-fare is your chiefeſt care and buſineſs.

ALl men love themſelvs; and naturally and neceſſarily love thoſe that they know do greatly love them. And all men are ſenſible of their bodily concernments, and conſequently of that good that is done to their bodies: He that ſetteth himſelf to relieve the poor, and to put on others to relieve them, to viſit the ſick, and help thoſe that are in trouble, and to comfort the afflicted, to do what good he can to all, and hurt to none, ſhall find that their ears will be open to his doctrine, and that they will follow him towards heaven with much leſs reſiſtance, than otherwiſe he muſt expect. Few ſuch Miniſters do ever want ſucceſs of their labours. And the covetous, cloſe handed, ſelf-ſeeking and cruel, are alwayes hated. And let his ntony periſh with him, who thinketh it better than the ſouls of men, and the work of God.

DIRECT. XIX.

Keep up the Reverence of the ancient and experienced ſort of Chriſtians, and teach the younger what honour they owe to thoſe that are their elders in age and grace: For whileſt the elder who are uſually ſober and peacaable, are duly reverenced, the heat of raſh and giddy youth will be kept in order.

USually where the elder bear the ſway, the Church hath peace (Though I know ſome deceivers grow worſe and worſe:) And it is where the young and raſh are become the predominant moſt eſteemed party, that ſchiſm and diſorders do prevail. And though ſome tell the people, what honour they owe their *Elders by office*; yet few acquaint them what honour youths owe both to the Elder in age and in experience and grace. It will therefore be much of the prudence of the Paſtors, to keep up the honour of the Elders of the people, and to preſerve in the younger a due eſteem and reverence towards them.

DIRECT. XVIII.

Spend and be ſpent for your peoples good; and do all the good that poſsibly you can for their bodies as well as for their ſouls: and think nothing that you have too dear to win them: that they may ſee that you are truly Fathers to them, and that their well-fare is your chiefeſt care and buſineſs.

ALl men love themſelvs; and naturally and neceſſarily love thoſe that they know do greatly love them. And all men are ſenſible of their bodily concernments, and conſequently of that good that is done to their bodies: He that ſetteth himſelf to relieve the poor, and to put on others to relieve them, to viſit the ſick, and help thoſe that are in trouble, and to comfort the afflicted, to do what good he can to all, and hurt to none, ſhall find that their ears will be open to his doctrine, and that they will follow him towards heaven with much leſs reſiſtance, than otherwiſe he muſt expect. Few ſuch Miniſters do ever want ſucceſs of their labours. And the covetous, cloſe handed, ſelf-ſeeking and cruel, are alwayes hated. And let his ntony periſh with him, who thinketh it better than the ſouls of men, and the work of God.

DIRECT. XIX.

Keep up the Reverence of the ancient and experienced ſort of Chriſtians, and teach the younger what honour they owe to thoſe that are their elders in age and grace: For whileſt the elder who are uſually ſober and peacaable, are duly reverenced, the heat of raſh and giddy youth will be kept in order.

USually where the elder bear the ſway, the Church hath peace (Though I know ſome deceivers grow worſe and worſe:) And it is where the young and raſh are become the predominant moſt eſteemed party, that ſchiſm and diſorders do prevail. And though ſome tell the people, what honour they owe their *Elders by office*; yet few acquaint them what honour youths owe both to the Elder in age and in experience and grace. It will therefore be much of the prudence of the Paſtors, to keep up the honour of the Elders of the people, and to preſerve in the younger a due eſteem and reverence towards them.

DIRECT. XX.

The Paſtors who will preſerve the Churches Peace, muſt neither neglect to preſerve their intereſt in the Religious perſons of their charge; nor yet be ſo tender of it as to depart from ſober principles or wayes to pleaſe them, nor to make them their rulers, nor follow them into any exorbitancies to avoid their cenſures.

BOth theſe extreams will tend to confuſion: First, They that care not at all what men think of them, do but deſpiſe their advantages to do good, whileſt they think that they only deſpiſe the praiſe or diſpraiſe of men. We are commanded *not to pleaſe our ſelves, but to pleaſe all men for their good to edification.* Rom. 15. 1, 2, 3. Our power over them is upon their *minds* and *wills*, and not like Magiſtrates upon their bodies or eſtates: Therefore when we have loſt their hearts, we have loſt our power to do them good: They will not eaſily hear him that is deſpiſed or abhorred by them. Therefore a prudent care muſt be taken, that we be not prodigal of our intereſt in them, leſt it prove to be cruelty to their ſouls.

Secondly, And yet if we give up our ſelves to their conceits and humours, and forſake the way of truth or peace to keep their favour, it will prove the more dangerous extream. I have before noted the peril of Miniſters and the Church by this temptation. The raweſt and the raſheſt profeſſours are commonly the moſt violent and cenſorious; And ſo ready to ſcorn and vilifie the graveſt wiſeſt Paſtors, who croſs their opinions, that many honeſt Miniſters have been overcome by the temptation; to forſake their own judgement, and to comply with the violent to eſcape their cenſures and contempt: But this is not the way to the Churches peace. It may prove a palliate cure for a time, to put by at the preſent ſome ſudden inconvenience: But it preſareth for after troubles and confuſions. First, it will make the raſheſt and indiſcreeteſt people (which is uſually the women and young men) to be the Governours of the Church: Whileſt all their Teachers muſt *humour them* leſt they *diſpleaſe* them. Secondly, When you have followed them a little way, and think there to ſtop, you muſt follow them ſtill further, and never can foreſee the end: For that weakneſs and paſſion of theirs which crieth up one errour to day, is pregnant with innumerable more; and may cry up more to morrow, and ſo on. And one errour commonly draweth on more, and one miſcarriage engageth them to another: And the laſt are uſually the worſt: And the ſame ends and reaſons which made you go out of the way to pleaſe them, will make you ſtill follow them, how far ſoever they go, unleſs you repent. Thirdly, And if you repent and leave them, it muſt coſt you dearer than prevention would have done: And you might have at much cheaper rates, forſaken them juſt there where they forſook the way

way of truth and peace. Fourthly, And you will by following the conduct of giddiness and passion, disadvantage your Ministry as to all the less zealous, and all the more sober and peaceable of the godly; And you will bring your selves into contempt with these, for your levity injudiciousness and instability: And so you will lose much more than you will get. Fifthly, And in the mean time you will be made but the vulgars instrument to do hurt: you will be used by them but to confirm themselves in their errours, and to further dividing and unpeaceable designes. Sixthly, And when all is done, and your consciences are wounded, and you are made the heads or leaders of factions, at last those of themselves that God sheweth mercy to, will see their errour, and when they repent, they will give you little thanks for your compliance. A sinful humouring of rash professours, is as great a temptation to godly Ministers, as a sinful compliance with the Great ones of the world: I mean it is a sin, which our station and disposition afford us as great temptations to. For though to a worldling, wealth and honour be stronger temptations; yet to a godly man the applause or censure of those whom we account most wise and godly may tempt much stronglier. And alas how ordinarily doth the fire of Church and state, which flameth about our own ears, convince us of our errour, in following those whom we should lead! O how many doleful instances of it doth Church history afford us! There are not many of the tumults that have cost the lives of thousands about Religion, but were kindled by the young injudicious professours, who drew in their Teachers to humour them in countenancing too much of their disorders. Historians tell us that when King *Francis* of France had forbid the reproaching of the Papists way of worship, and silenced the Ministers for not obeying him; many of the hot brain'd people, took up the way of provoking them by scornful pictures & libels; hanging up and down in the streets such ridiculous and reproachful rhimes and images: But this (which was none of the way of God) began that persecution (by provoking the King) which cost many thousands, if not hundred thousand lives before it ended. And the Synod at *Rochel* which refused the grave counsel of *Du Plessis*, *Du Moulin* and many such others, was stirred up by the peoples zeal; and ended in the blood of many score thousands, and the ruine of the power of the Protestants in *France*. Abundance of such sad instances might be given, if *England* need to go any whether else for matter of warning than to it self. He that after the experiences of this age, will think it fit to follow the conduct of injudicious zealots, is left as unexcusable as almost any man, that never had a sight of hell. The dreadful ruine of *Jerusalem* according to Christs prediction (such as the world hath scarce seen besides) was just in the like manner brought about, by those furious ones whom *Josephus* calleth the zealots.

But if you will do all things *good* and *lawful* to win men, and offend them by no *unnecessary thing*; and yet stand your ground, and stir not an inch from *truth* or *soberness*, *piety* or *peace*, to please any people in the world. This way shall do your work

work at last: Men will at last perceive the worth of sober principles and wayes: At least when Mountebanks have killed most of their patients, the rest will repent, and wish that they had hearkened to the counsellers of peace. They that run round, when they find themselves giddy and ready to fall, will lay hold upon somewhat which is firm and stable. Compliance with one of the contentious parties, may make you cried up by *that party* for a time: But the contrary faction will as much cry you down; and your estimation is but like an Almanack for a year: And they themselves that needed your sinful help for some present job, will be like enough ere long to cast you off (as is aforesaid:) And if they do not, you are objects of pity to sober standers by: And in the next age, the name of a *Melancthon*, a *Bucer*, a *Bergius*, a *Crocius*, an *Usher*, and other such Peace-makers, will be pretious to posterity, when the memory of fiery dividers will be dishonourable. Keep your standing, and stick closer to truth and justice and peace, than to any party, and resolvedly give up your selves to please God, and you will be no loosers by it; And its two to one but at last some of the contenders, will desire you to be the arbitrators of their controversies, when they are weary of contending, and will give you the honour of healing the wounds, which their rash injudicious zeal hath made.

DIRECT.

DIRECT. XXI.

The Pastors who will preserve the peace of the people, must not contend among themselves: Especially they must take heed, that they engage not in any needless enmity, against any of those Divines, who for their learning or piety are most highly reverenced in the Church.

FIrst, When Pastors fall into parties, they alwayes draw the people with them: some will take one part, and some another. If the Officers divide, the souldiers will certainly be divided. And though one of the dividing parties may get the advantage of the sword, and suppress the other, they are nevertheless in the way to increase the schism, while the people will think never the worse of the party which is afflicted and trodden down. Schismes are most commonly begun or at least formed among the Pastors: And among them the cure must be begun, and principally performed. And when the wound is made, it must not be despised; but the threatned issues must be foreseen; and the necessity of a cure apprehended: and scarce any pains or cost must be thought too great to quench the fire. The proud and carnal person, who thinks all is well, if he can but secure his interest, and by spurning at dissenters, make them seem contemptible; doth cast oil upon the flames, and may him-

himself feel the greatest heat at last. And he that can stand by as unconcerned, and deny his service to Love and Peace, and to the wounded Church, lest it cost him too dear, may soon find that he hath lost, even that which he hath thought to save. O that the Peace-makers would cry aloud, and sound the retreat to contending Pastors, and O that God would rebuke that *pride* and *carnality*, self-conceitedness and love of worldly things, which will not suffer them yet to hear!

Secondly, And especially when those that are most reverenced and valued by the zealousest Christians, are envied, or afflicted by the rest, it ever tendeth to divisions in the Church. For the sufferings of such will never abate their esteem, with those who honour them. And if fear should stop their mouths for a time, the fire will still burn within, and be too ready to break out into more open schisms when opportunity serveth them. Yea the Churches of old have found great cause to be very tender how they used such reverenced valued Pastors, though they should fall into any errour; and sometimes to connive or bear with much, lest they should occasion a far worse disease, by the imprudent curing of a lesser.

And I dare be bold to proclaim to the contentious Pastors, of all the Churches whersoever, that *True Piety, Love, Humility* and *Prudence, can happily heal a great many of dissentions, which to the carnal, uncharitable, proud and imprudent, seem uncurable, and by their malignant medicines are still exasperated and made worse.*

But

But alas this quarrelsome distemper in Ministers, hath had such pernicious effects upon the Church, and is still going on to more confusion, that it deserveth and calleth for our common lamentation. And if we must lament it with despair, as an uncurable disease, I fear we must with equal despair lament the Churches ruines, and the consumption of Religion. For how can we expect that the people should hear, if the Pastors be obdurate and remediless? And who shall cure them, if their Physicians themselves be they that do infect them?

I speak not against the necessary defence of Truth, so be it that it be truth indeed which we defend, and that the *defence* be *indeed necessary*; and that the *manner* be suited to the *end*, and to the nature and rule of Christianity. But the itch which caused the Churches scab, is of a different description. For first, it proceedeth from a salt acrimonious humour in the blood: Not that there is no blood in our veins which hath better principles and qualities: But alas it is tainted with this corroding salt, which hath bred our leprosie: As if Christ had made us the salt of the earth, not to preserve the world from putrefaction, but to bite and fret all that we have any thing to do with (yea and those that we have nothing to do with) and by the salt Catarrhs of our back-bitings and peevish censures and reproaches, to bring the Church of Christ into a consumption. There is in many of us a love and zeal for Truth in the general (and no wonder if we are but men.) But when we meet it we know it not; but revile it, and scratch it by the face: As the Jews did long

for the coming of the Meſſiah, but when he came, they knew him not, but crucified him as a deceiver and blaſphemer; their prejudice fixing them in the dungeon of unbelief. *Mal.* 3.1,2,3. *The Lord whom ye ſeek ſhall ſuddenly come to his Temple; even the Meſſenger of the Covenant whom ye delight in — But who may abide the day of his coming, and who ſhall ſtand when he appeareth. For he is like a refiners fire, and like fullers ſope: and he ſhall ſit as a refiner, and purifier of ſilver, and he ſhall purifie the ſons of Levi* — What abundance of the zealous Mourners of *Truth* are daily employed in reviling and contradicting it? As they do by *Peace*, even proſecute it to the death, by the moſt perverſe oppoſitions, and unpeaceable principles and practiſes, while they cry up nothing more than Peace? And do they deal any better by *Holineſs* it ſelf. He that is for a *Holineſs*, which conſiſteth not in *Love to God and man*, (to *God* for *himſelf* and to *Man* for *his ſake*) is like the Heathens who are zealous for a God; but he muſt be made of ſomething unlikeſt to him that is God indeed: Or like the Mahometans, who are zealous Muſſelmans or believers; but it is in the moſt groſs deceiver. And he that will promote *Love* by ſnarling and barking at all that are ſtrangers to him, and not of his own houſe, ſhall at laſt partake of the fruits of ſuch Love as he promoted: And he may as wiſely hope at laſt to bring the Church to *Peace* alſo, by worrying it, by ſplenetick cenſures and diviſions, in deſpight of the experience of our preſent age, and of all the world. What ever is done againſt LOVE is done againſt *Holineſs* and againſt God, and againſt the

the *Life* of the Church: And therefore if any Love-killer do call himſelf, a ſervant of Chriſt and a friend to *Holineſs* or to the *Church*, he muſt firſt prove that *murdering* it is an act of *friendſhip*, and a ſervice acceptable to Chriſt: One would think by their practiſe, that ſome men took *Abrahams trial* for their *Law*, and accounted it the work of *juſtifying faith*, to *kill the Church*, and offer it up in ſacrifice to Chriſt: But before they bring us to believe that ſuch a ſacrifice is acceptable to him, who offered himſelf a ſacrifice for the Church, and who calleth for a *living acceptable ſacrifice*, *Rom.* 12. 1. They have need to make a better proof of their authority, than *Kelley* did of his Revelation, when he brought Doctor *Dee* to conſent to adultery by the ſame pretended warrant: God who is Love accepteth not ſuch a ſacrifice at the hands of Love-killers and Church-deſtroyers.

But eſpecially when beſides this acrimony of mind, there ſhall other more pernicious diſeaſes be contracted, and foment theſe *cenſures* & *reproaches* of their brethren; the malignity of the diſeaſe is a ſad prognoſtick. Two ſuch *cauſes* of it Paul layeth open, one *Act.* 20. 30. the other *Rom.* 16. 17, 18. One is the deviliſh ſin of pride; and a deſire to have many diſciples to be our applauders [*They ſhall ſpeak perverſe things to draw away diſciples after them:*] The other *ſelfiſhneſs*, *carnality and coveteouſneſs* [*They ſerve not the Lord Jeſus, but their own bellies.*] And ſo 2 *Pet.* 2. 3. *Through Coveteouſneſs they ſhall with feigned words make Merchandiſe of you*: They buy and ſell mens ſouls for gain: Theſe are *Gainſayers* in a double ſenſe: Their *craft bringeth them*

in no small gain, and lest it *should be set at nought*, for *gain* they do *gain-say* the truth, and raise up tumults against the best of the servants of Christ; as *Act.* 19. 24, 27. It is for *gain* and worldly glory, that they *say* what they say against those that are *wiser* and *sincerer* than themselves.

The sum of all this (and most that followeth) is in 1 *Tim.* 6. 3, 4, 5. *If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to the wholesome words, the words of our Lord Jesus Christ* (mark, it is not to the words of any new *faith-makers* devising, *and to the doctrine which is according to Godliness, he is proud* (though he may cry down pride) *knowing nothing* (though he may cry down ignorance) *but doting about questions* (though he may seem to be wise and of high attainments) *and strifes of words* while he seemeth to plead for the life of Religion) *whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings* (while they pretend to no less necessary a work, than the saving of Truth and the peoples souls): *Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds* (the impatient scratchings of those whose corrupt blood must needs have vent, and therefore causeth this itch of quarrelling) and *destitute of the truth* (whilest they think they are saving the life of truth) *supposing that gain is godliness* (being so blinded by the love of gain that they make themselves believe, that is the cause of *truth* and *Godliness* which maketh for their gain; and that the raising of them, is the raising of the Church; and that all tendeth to the interest of religion, which tendeth to make them great and rich) *From such turn away* (that is; own them not in hypocritical wranglings, but turn your backs upon them, as men unworthy to be disputed with in their way. Answer not the fool according to his folly, *i. e.* word it not with him in his foolish way; lest you make him think himself worthy to be disputed with. Talk not with him at his rates; And yet answer him according to his folly; by such conviction and rebukes as is meet for fooles, and as may make him understand his folly, lest he be wise in his own eyes, and think that none can stand before him.

Secondly, And it is commonly the most *ignorant* sort of Ministers, who are the liberallest of their supercilious contempt of those, whose understandings and worth are above their censures. If a controversie be started, which they either never studied, or have only turned over the pages of a few books, to number the sheets, and never spent one year in the deep and serious search of the truth which is in question; Or if they have clumsie wits, that cannot feel so fine a thred, nor are capable of mastering the difficulties; None then are (usually) so ready to shoot their bolt, and pass a Magisterial sentence, and gravely and ignorantly tell the ignorant, what errours such or such a one maintaineth, as these that talk of that which they never understood. For as I have known many unlearned sots, that had no artifice to keep up the reputation of their learning, than in all companies to cry down such and such (who were wiser than themselves) for no schollars, but unlearned men; so many that are or should be conscious of the dulness and ignorance of their fumbling and unfurnished brains, have no way to keep up the reputation of

of their wisedome, with their simple followers, but to tell them, O such a one hath dangerous errours, and such a book is a dangerous book; and they hold this, and they hold that; and so to make odious the opinions or practises of others, which they understand not: And this doth their business with these silly souls, who hear not what can be said against them, as well as if they were the words of truth and soberness.

As for the younger and emptier sort of Ministers, it is no wonder, if they understand not that which they had never opportunity to study, or have taken but a superficial taste of: But it were to be wished that they were so humble as to confess that they are yet but beardless; and that time and long study is needful to make them as wise as those (who with equal wit and grace) have had many more years of serious study, and greater opportunities to know the truth: and that they have not their wisdome by special inspiration or revelation; nor so far excel the rest of mankind in a miraculous wit, as to know that by a few years lazy study, which others know not by the laborious humble searches of a far longer time. One would think that a little humility might serve the turn for thus much.

But if ignorance get possession of the ancient and grey headed, it triumpheth then, and defieth little *David*, and saith, Give me a man that I may dispute with him? Or rather, Away with that thing that is not worthy to be disputed with. For wisedome groweth not with years: Many a younger wit may be poaring forty or fifty years, after that which another may sooner understand.

derstand. Much time and study is necessary to great wisedome: But much *time* and *study* may consist with very mean attainments; and doth not alwayes reach the wisedome which is sought. And in such a case, the ancient and grey-headed think that veneration is their due; and that if they gravely sentence such or such to be erroneous, they are injured if they are not believed. They have not wisdome enough to make their age honourable; and therefore they expect that their age should make their wisdome honourable.

Thirdly, and because they are not able to endure the light, nor to stand before the power of open truth, they find it necessary to do almost all their work by *back-biting*: When they are out of the hearing of those whom they back-bite, among such as are as little sensible of this hateful sin as they; then they have this man and that man; this party and that party to reproach.

Fourthly, And (as Mr. *Robert Bolton* well noteth) to hide the malignity of their sin, and to cheat the hearers and their own consciences) they will first seem to praise him, and to confess that he is in other respects a very worthy, a learned or a pious man, and then bring in their back-biting with a [but.] And that which must sanctifie all this sin, and turns it into a work of zeal, is the seeming interest of God, and of religion. They do all out of a *zeal of God* (I cannot say, *A zeal for God*) though it be not according to knowledge. If it was an untruth which they spake it was for religion: If they did *back-bite* it was to

to preserve the hearers from errour and danger: If they revile that which they never understood, it was to keep the Church from the infection: If they tear the Church, and use their reputation to murder Love, and to make others odious who are wiser than they, all this is but for the defence of truth: And if it be non-sense or envy which they vent, they never repent of it (thats the mischief) because they think that the *Lord* and *the Church*, and the *hearers have need of it*. And so all those Texts are to them *Apocripha*, which condemn their sin. *Psal.* 15. 3. 2 *Cor.* 12. 20. *Rom.* 1. 30. *Prov.* 25. 23. And sin is so befriended in mans corrupted nature, that they meet but with few *angry countenances to drive away* such reverend *back-biting tongues*.

Nay that they may abuse Gods word and name, against God, to the devils service, they arm themselves (as the Tempter did *Matth.* 4.) with Gods authority and scripture, and will charge those with sin who would reprove their sin, and bring them to repentance: And as Master *Herbert* noteth, how the Pope under the reverend garb of Christs Vicar, doth do the like things to the suppressing of the Church and Truth, as Turks and Heathens do under the name of open enemies: so these men find that the names of *Ministers* and *Christians*, with the *words of God abused*, are among the well-meaning, a more effectual means to do that work which God abhorreth. I have long used to resist this sin of *backbiting*; and (not to justifie the faults of any, but) to convince the *back-biter* of his sin. And I seldome do it, but they report of me that I am a *defender*

defender of such and such corruptions: One backbiteth men as Prelatists and formalists; another the Presbyterians; another the Independents; and another the Anabaptists; and say *such a one is of such a sect*, and ever with epithetes of reproach: And when I tell them that the way to do them good, is to convince them of their errour to their faces, and not to talk of them behind their backs, they report me presently to be a patron of the sect, because I was a reprover of their unchristian vice.

And many of them having not so far digested their Religion, as to see the evidences of it in themselves, are fain to take it upon trust from others: And they choose that party to cast this great trust upon, which they think to be most venerable. The Papist chooseth for number and worldly pomp and order: The carnal self-seeker chooseth the party, which may most further his preferment and honour in the world: The honester sectaries do choose the party, which seemeth to them to be the most *illuminated* or most *strict*: And some have the wit, to look most at those, that set as many of these together as may be hoped for. But among whomsoever they cast their lot, their way to preserve the reputation of Orthodoxness, and the peace of that conscience which made the choice, is to be liberal in reproaching those that differ in any thing from the sect which they have chosen. (For how much of the Christian world is now in sects, is a thing which requireth more lamentation, than proof.) As the Dominicans when they have written far much more than *Calvin* about Predetermination, they have

have no way to keep their honour with their sect (the Papists) but to rail at the Calvinists and belye them, and charge them with that which they abhor, that so they may seem sufficiently to differ from them.

But the greatest reason of this contentious back-biting quarrelling humour, is Ignorance it self; which will not give them leave so much as to see the *difficulty* of the points which they oppose; much less the truth of that which they have not been used to. The way which is *spoken against*, they think they may also boldly speak against.

And hypocrisie (though mixed with sincerity) hath too great a hand in this with many. The less men are *taken* up in that true religion which consisteth in Heaven-work and Heart-work, in the Love of God and man, and the mortification of their selfishness and pride; the more they are addicted to make it up with a contentious zeal for their several wayes, opinions and modes of worship, that they may not seem to be cold or neutral in religion. They never understood the third Chapter of *James*, nor many other such texts of scripture.

O that the Ministers of Christ were once sensible, not here only but through all the Christian world, what a plague the conjunction of their ignorance and contentiousness, and their dividing selfish zeal hath been to the Churches of Christ? And what they have done against the souls of men, by *violence*, and by *heading parties*, and by laying Heaven and Hell upon the opinions, which they never understood! and by departing from the

the primitive *simplicity* and *charity*! And how odious a practise it is, of ignorant Ministers, to keep up the reverence of their *wisedome*, or *Orthodoxness* or *piety*, by the secret *back-bitings* and reproaches of others, whose persons perhaps they never saw; or whom they never once soberly discoursed with face to face; or whose writings perhaps they never read, or thought it not worth their time and labour to understand them; and yet take it to be their piety to revile by hear-say and blind surmises, and judge in a cause which they never impartially heard and understood.

There is none of those Ministers of Christ whom you reproach, but is to be serviceable to his master for the saving of mens souls: And you are satans instruments to block up their way, and to turn away the hearts of people from their doctrine. If every Minister (especially your selves) who hath as great an errour, should be made odious for it to their hearers; you might all put up your pipes, and find that your artifice hath first silenced your selves, by the righteous law, — *Nec enim lex justior ulla est: Quam necis artifices arte perire sua.* Or in the words of Christ; *With what measure you mete, it shall be measured to you again.*

Did you see the uglinesse of Ignorant peevish contentious zeal, as contrary to holy *Light* and *Love*, you would think you saw a devil, spitting out fire and brimstone, and would never more take it for your honour, nor for a mark of a child of God.

And if you knew how every word of obloquy especially by *back-biting* against your brethren, doth

doth tend to infect the hearers with the same vices and kill their Love, and lead them into divisions, you would take heed for the sake of others. (Unless you are of those who are foolisher than the devil, and would build Christs house and Kingdome by dividing it. *Matth.* 12.) One raileth at *Luther*, and another at *Calvin*, and another at *Arminius*, and another at this man, and another at that, for matters which are above their reach; and the people are taught to rail at all; and to make it also their talk behind mens backs, to prate against this man and that man and the other; and in time to shew it, by breaking into sects: In a word such carnal courses of their Teachers, do make or harden carnal professors, to be one for *Paul*, and another for *Apollo*, and another for *Cephas*, but few sincerely and prudently for Christ: so that instead of Holiness, Love and Concord, we have in almost all company little but ignorant censorious wrangling, at the opinions of those that they never were acquainted with, or at the controverted practises, or circumstances of worship, which are not suitable to their prejudice and custom, and of which they never desired to be the impartial hearers of a just account.

If ever God will shew mercy to his Church, he will give them Pastors after his heart, who shall abound in *Light* and *Love*, and lead the people into Concord upon the ancient terms; and make it their work, to bring this Love-killing spirit into hatred; whether it work by the way of reviving-disputes, or dividing principles or practises, or by reproaching others: by corporal

ral cruelty, or by a Religious censorious cruelty, which doth not *strike men*, but *unchurch* and *damn them*, and *separate* from them as men unfit for christian communion. And whilest the Pastors take another course, we must patiently wait and pity the Church, and fore-see our further misery in this prognostick; though the guilty being puffed up with the conceits of their preciousness to God, do promise themselves the desires of their hearts.

Are not the sons of *Levi* yet refined? when they have been in so many furnaces and so long? When wisedom, holiness and humility are their nature, and selfish pride and worldliness are cured, this wrinkled malignant ENVY will then cease; and an honest emulation to excel one another in wisdome and Love and all good works, will then take place. And then we shall not, like drunken men, one day fight and wound each other; and the next day cry out of our wounds; and yet go on in our drunken fits, to make them wider.

DIRECT.

DIRECT. XXII.

Laſtly, Let all the Miniſters of Chriſt, ſo deeply ſtudy their wonderfull pattern of Love and tenderneſs, meekneſs and patience, and all thoſe paſſages of Holy Scripture, which ſtill commend thoſe vertues to his ſervants, till their ſouls are caſt into this ſacred mould, and habituated to this Image and imitation of their Lord: And then Vertue will go from them, and they will be healing among all where-ever they ſhall come; As fire goeth out from the flinty contenders by their colliſions, which maketh them ſtill incendiaries and conſumers of the Churches Peace.

I Will therefore end theſe Directions with the bare repetition of ſome more of thoſe ſacred words, (beſides thoſe forecited) which may be fit to breed ſuch a gracious habit, in thoſe that will faithfully ſtudy and receive them.

Iſa. 9. 6, 7. The government ſhall be laid upon his ſhoulder, and his name ſhall be called Wonderful, Counſellor, the mighty God, the everlaſting father, the Prince of Peace: Of the increaſe of his Government and Peace there ſhall be no end.

Iſa. 40. 11. He ſhall feed his flock like a ſhepherd; he ſhall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his boſome, and ſhall gently lead thoſe that are with young.

Iſa. 42. 1, 2, 3, 4. Behold my ſervant whom I uphold: mine elect in whom my ſoul delighteth: I have put my ſpirit upon him; he ſhall bring forth judgement to the Gentiles: He ſhall not cry, nor lift up, nor cauſe his voice to be heard in the ſtreet: A bruiſed reed ſhall he not break; and the ſmoking flax ſhall he not quench: he ſhall bring forth judgement unto truth: He ſhall not fail nor be diſcouraged, till he have ſet judgement in the earth; and the iſles ſhall wait for his law.

Iſa. 44. 3, 4, 5. I will pour water upon him that is thirſty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my ſpirit on thy ſeed and my bleſſing on thy off-ſpring: And they ſhall ſpring up as among the graſs, as willows by the water-courſes: One ſhall ſay, I am the *Lords*, and another ſhall call himſelf by the name of *Jacob*: and another ſhall ſubſcribe with his hand unto the Lord, and ſurname himſelf by the name of *Iſrael*.

Pſal. 110. 2, 3. Rule thou in the midſt of thine enemies: Thy people ſhall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holineſs.

Ezek. 34. 2, 3, 4, 5. Wo to the ſhepherds of Iſrael that feed themſelves; ſhould not the ſhepherds feed the flocks? Ye eate the fat and cloath you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed, but ye feed not the flock: The diſeaſed have ye not ſtrengthened; neither have ye healed that which was ſick; neither have ye bound up that which was broken; neither have ye brought again that which

which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; But with *Force* and with *Cruelty* have ye ruled them; and they were scattered because there is no shepherd — Read the rest of that Chapter.

Isa. 11. And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of *Jesse*, and a branch shall grow out of his roots: And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisedome and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord: and shall make him of quick understanding, in the fear of the Lord, and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, nor reprove after the hearing of his ears; but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked — The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid: and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them: And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the oxe; and the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice den. They shall *not hurt, nor destroy* in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. See also *cap.* 65. 25.

Isa. 2. 2, 3, 4, 5. And it shall come to pass in the last dayes, that the mountain of the Lords house shall be established in the top of the mountains,

tains, and shall be exalted above the hils, and all nations shall flow unto it: And many people shall go and say, Come ye and let us go up to the Mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of *Jacob*, and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: For out of *Zion* shall go forth the Law, and the word of the Lord from *Jerusalem*: And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: And they shall beat their swords into plow-shares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn warr any more. O house of *Jacob*, come ye and let us walk in the light of the Lord.

Mal. 2. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. My covenant was with (*Levi*) of *life* and *peace*; and I gave them to him for the fear wherewith he feared me, — The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: He walked with me in Peace and Equity; and did turn many from iniquity: For the Priests lips should keep knowledge and they should seek the Law at his mouth: for he is the Messenger of the Lord of hosts. But ye are departed out of the way: ye have caused many to stumble at the Law: ye have corrupted the Covenant of *Levi*; — Therefore have I also made you contemptible and base before all the people, according as ye have not kept my wayes, but have been partial in the Law.

Zech. 9. 9. Behold thy King cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation; lowly and riding on an ass — He shall speak peace to the heathen, and his dominion shall be from sea to sea —

Matth. 11. 29. Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

Luke 4. 18. He hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor, he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted — 43 I must preach the Kingdome of God to other Cities also, for therefore am I sent.

Mark. 3. 20, 21. The multitude cometh together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread. And when his friends heard of it, they went out to lay hold on him; for they said, He is beside himself.

Joh. 4. 32, 34. I have meat to eat that ye know not of — My meat is to do the will of him that sent me and to finish his work.

Joh. 9. 4. I must work the works of him that sent me while it is day: the night cometh when no man can work.

Luk. 22. 24. And there was a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest. *Matth.* 20. 25, 26, 27. But Jesus called them to him and said, ye know that the Princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you let him be your Minister; and whosoever will be chief among you let him be your servant: Even as the son of man came not to be ministred to, but to minister and to give his life a ransome for many.

Joh. 18. 36. My Kingdome is not of this world — Else would my servants fight.

Luk. 12. 14. Who made me a judge or a divider over you?

1 *Pet.* 5. 2, 3, 4. Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the over-sight thereof; not by constraint but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind: Neither as being Lords over (or, Over-ruling) Gods heritage, but be-ensamples to the flock: And when the chief shepheard shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of Glory.

2 *Cor.* 1. 24. Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy.

Matth. 23. 8. Be not ye called Rabbi; for one is your Master Christ: and all ye are brethren.

1 *Cor.* 4. 1, 2. Let a man so account of us as of the Ministers of Christ, and Stewards of the mysteries of God.

2 *Cor.* 10. 8. & 13. 8, 10. For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth; according to the power, which the Lord hath given me to edification, and not to destruction.

Act. 20. 18, 19. Ye know after what manner I have been with you at all seasons: serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, — 20 And have taught you publickly and from house to house — In every City bonds and afflictions abide me; but none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto my self, that I might finish my course with joy; and the ministery which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testifie to you the grace of God. — 29, 30, 31. Grievous wolves shall enter — And

of your own selves men shall arise, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them: Therefore watch, and remember that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.

33, 34. I have coveted no mans silver or gold or apparel: yea your selves know that these hands have ministred to my necessities, and to them that were with me: I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak —

2 Cor. 12. 5. Of my self I will not glory but in my infirmities. So 9, 10. I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christs sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

2 Tim. 2. 23, 24, 25. But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes: And the servant of the Lord must not strive but be gentle to all men; apt to teach, patient in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.

1 Tim. 3. 2, 3. A Bishop must be blameless, apt to teach — no striker, nor greedy of filthy lucre, but patient —

Tit. 1. 7, 8, 9, 10. A Bishop must be blameless as the Steward of God, not *self-willed* (or self-pleasing, or stiffe in his own conceit) not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre, but a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate, holding fast the faithful word, as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound Doctrine, both

both to exhort & to convince the gain-sayers, for there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, whose mouths must be stopped —

2 Cor. 10. 3, 4, 5. For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty through God, to the pulling down of strong holds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth it self against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

Rom. 14. 1. Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations — Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; nor him that eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him — To him that esteemeth any thing unclean, to him it is unclean. But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably: destroy not him with thy meat for whom Christ died — For the kingdome of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost: For he that in these things serveth Christ, is acceptable to God, and approved of men. Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edifie another — He that doubteth is damned if he eat —

Rom. 15. 1, 2, 3. We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please our selves. Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification: For even Christ pleased not himself. Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like minded one towards another, according to Christ Jesus,

Jesus, that ye may with one mind and one mouth glorifie God — Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ received us to the glory of God.

Phil. 3. 15, 16. Let us as many as be perfect be thus minded, and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. Nevertheless whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same things.

Eph. 4. 2, 3. With all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering forbearing one another in love: endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace — 15. Speaking the truth in love — 16. Edifying in love.

Phil. 2. 3. Let nothing be done through strife or vain-glory, but in lowliness of mind, let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus — that made himself of no reputation — 14. Do all things without murmurings and disputings.

Jam. 3. 17. The wisdome from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easie to be intreated, full of mercy, *&c.*

1 *Thes.* 2. 5, 6, 7. Neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloak of coyetousness, God is witness: Nor of men sought we glory, neither of you nor yet of others, when we might have been burthensome (or used authority) as the Apostles of Christ: But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children. So being affectionately desirous

rous of you, we were willing to have imparted to you, not the Gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us.

Gal. 5. 22. The fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness —

2 *Cor.* 10. 1. I *Paul* beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ —

Gal. 6. 1. Brethren if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye that are spiritual restore such a one in the spirit of meekness — Bear ye one anothers burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ.

Col. 3. 12, 13. Put on as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, *&c.*

1 *Tim.* 6. 11. Follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.

Tit. 3. 2. To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, shewing all meekness to all men —

1 *Pet.* 3. 4. The ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, in the sight of God is of great price.

Lev. 19. 18. Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self.

Rom. 12. 9, 10. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love, in honour preferring one another.

Rom. 13. 10. Owe nothing to any man but Love — Love worketh no ill to his neighbour — Love is the fulfilling of the Law.

Joh. 13. 35. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

Joh. 13. 34. & 15. 12, 17. This is my commandement that ye love one another — As I have loved you — A new commandement —

Gal. 5. 14. The Law is fulfilled in this, Thou ſhalt love thy neighbour as thy ſelf.

1 *Theſ.* 4. 9. Ye are taught of God to love one another.

1 *Pet.* 1. 22. Love one another with a pure heart fervently.

1 *Pet.* 3. 8 9. Be all of one mind; having compaſſion one on another; love as brethren; be pitiful, be courteous: Not rendring evil for evil, or railing for railing; but contrariwiſe bleſſing, knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye ſhould inherit a bleſſing.

Pet. 2. 23. Who when he was reviled, reviled not again: when he ſuffered he threatned not.

Math. 5. 44, 45. Love your enemies; bleſs them that curſe you, do good to them that hate you; and pray for them which deſpitefully uſe you and perſecute you; that you may be the children of your father, which is in heaven — For if ye love them that love you, what reward have you? do not even the publicans the ſame? And if ye ſalute your brethren only, what do you more than others? do not even the publicans the ſame?

Math. 6. 14. For if ye forgive men their treſpaſſes, your heavenly father will alſo forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their treſpaſſes, neither will your father forgive your treſpaſſes.

Math. 5. 39, 40, 41. I ſay unto you that ye reſiſt not evil: but whoſoever ſhal ſmite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other alſo: And

And if any man will ſue thee at Law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak alſo —

1 *Theſ.* 5. 12, 13, 14. We beſeech you brethren to know them which *LABOUR AMONG YOU*, and are over you in the Lord, and admoniſh you, and to eſteem them very highly in love for *THEIR WORK SAKE*, and be at peace among your ſelves: Now we exhort you brethren warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble minded, ſupport the weak, be patient toward all men: ſee that none render evil for evil to any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among your ſelves and to all men.

1 *Cor.* 9. 19. Though I be free from all men, yet have I made my ſelf ſervant unto all, that I might gain the more. And unto the Jews I became as a Jew that I might gain the Jews: to them that are under the Law, as under the Law, that I might gain them that are under the Law: To them that are without law as without law (being not without law to God, but under the law to Chriſt) that I might gain them that are without law: To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means ſave ſome: and this I do for the Goſpels ſake.

1 *Cor.* 8. 1. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth: & if any man think he knoweth any thing he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know: But if any man love God, the ſame is known of him. *v.* 4. But take heed leſt by any means this liberty of yours become a ſtumbling block to thoſe that are weak: 12. But when ye ſin againſt the brethren and wound their weak conſcience, ye ſin againſt

againſt Chriſt. 13. Wherefore if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no fleſh while the world ſtandeth, leſt I make my brother to offend.

Joh. 13. 3. Jeſus knowing that the father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God and went to God, he riſeth from ſupper and laid aſide his garments, and took a towel and girded himſelf; After that he poureth water into a baſon, and began to waſh the diſciples feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded. 12, 13. So after he had waſhed their feet and had taken his garments, and was ſet down again he ſaid unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me *Maſter* and *Lord*, and ye ſay well, for ſo I am: If I then your Lord and Maſter have waſhed your feet, ye alſo ought to waſh one anothers feet: "For I have given you an example, that ye ſhould "do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I "ſay unto you that the ſervant is not greater than "his Lord, neither he that is ſent greater than he "that ſent him. If ye know theſe things, happy "are ye if ye do them.

Q. *To what purpoſe do you ſet together all theſe words of Scripture, without any expoſition, or telling us what you conclude from them?*

Anſw. I purpoſely avoid gloſſes and collections, that you may not ſay that I obtrude any thing on you of my own, which is not the mind of your Lord himſelf. And I ſet them together that they that overlook them, may have a deeper apprehenſion than they have had. Firſt, What is the true ſpirit of a Chriſtian, and nature of Chriſtianity?

ſtianity? Secondly, What is the office and work of the Miniſtery, and which way they are to win ſouls, and convince or ſilence gain-ſayers and extirpate errours, and prevent or cure ſchiſmes, and ſecure the Churches peace? And as for them that can ſeriouſly peruſe all theſe words of the ſpirit of God, and yet can find in them no matter of correction or inſtruction without a Commentary and argumentation, I have no more to ſay to them at this time; but to add Chriſts next words *Joh.* 13. 18. *I ſpeak not of you all! I know whom I have choſen.*] And I ſhall annex a few texts which characterize the contrary ſpirit; Contrary I ſay, to *CHRISTIANITY* and the faithful *MINISTERY*, and with them I ſhall conclude.

1 *Joh.* 3. 12, 13. Not as *Cain* who was of that *Wicked One*, and ſlew his brother. And wherefore ſlew he him? Becauſe his own works were evil and his brothers righteous (*Heb.* 11. 4. By faith *Abel* offered to God a more excellent ſacrifice than *Cain*) *v.* 13. Marvel not my brethren if the world hate you — Whoſoever hateth his brother is a murderer: And ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. (We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.)

Joh. 8. 44. Ye are of your father the devil, and the luſts of your father ye will do: he was a murderer from the beginning —

1 *Sam.* 25. 25. 17. As his name is ſo is he: *Nabal* is his name, and folly is with him — He is ſuch a ſon of *Belial* that a man cannot ſpeak to him.

Read the ſtory of *Doeg*, 1 *Sam.* 22.

Read

Read alſo *Ezra* 4. 13, 14, 15, 17.

Eſth. 3. 8. *Haman* ſaid to the King — There is a certain people ſcattered abroad, and diſperſed among the people, in all the Provinces of thy Kingdome; and their Laws are divers from all people, neither keep they the Kings laws: therefore it is not for the Kings profit to ſuffer them.

Dan. 3. 12. There are certain Jews — that O King have not regarded thee; they ſerve not thy Gods, nor worſhip the golden Image which thou haſt ſet up —

Dan. 6. 5. We ſhall not find any occaſion againſt this *Daniel*, except we find it againſt him concerning the Law of his God—7. All the Preſidents of the Kingdome, the Governours and Princes, the Counſellors and Captains have conſulted togeather to eſtabliſh a royal ſtatute, and to make a firm decree, that whoſoever ſhall ask a petition of any God or man for 30 dayes, ſave of thee O King he ſhall be caſt into the den of Lions. *v.* 11. Theſe men aſſembled and found *Daniel* praying and making ſupplication before his God (which he did three times a day as aforetime) — 13 They ſaid, that *Daniel* that is of the captivity, regardeth not thee O King, nor the Decree that thou haſt ſigned, but maketh his prayers three times a day—

Amos 7. 12, 13. *Amaziah* ſaid to *Amos*, O thou Seer, go flee thee away into the Land of Juda, and there eat bread and propheſie there: But propheſie not again any more at Bethel: for it is the Kings Chappel, and it is the Kings Court.

Math. 23. 29, 30, 31. Wo unto you Scribes, Phariſees, Hypocrites, becauſe ye build the tombs of the Prophets, and garniſh the ſepulchres of

the righteous, and ſay, If we had been in the dayes of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the Prophets. Wherefore ye be witneſſes to your ſelves that ye are the children of them which killed the Prophets: Fill ye up then the meaſure of your fathers —

Joh. 11. 48. If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him, and the Romans ſhall come and take away both our place and nation.

Act. 4. 1, 2. And as they ſpake to the people, the Prieſts and the Captain of the Temple, and the Sadduces came upon them, being grieved that they taught the people — And they laid hands on them and put them in hold — *v.* 17. That it ſpread no further among the people, let us ſtraitly threaten them that they ſpeak henceforth no more in this name. 18. And they called them and commanded them not to ſpeak at all, nor teach in the name of Jeſus.

Gal. 4. 29. But as then he that was born after the fleſh, perſecuted him that was born after the ſpirit, even ſo it is now —

3 *Joh.* 9. 10, 11. I wrote to the Church, but *Diotrephes* who loveth to have the pre-eminence among them receiveth us not — and not content therewith neither doth he himſelf receive the Brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and caſteth them out of the Church. Beloved follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that *DOTH GOOD*, is of God; but he that doth evil hath not ſeen God.

1 *Theſ.* 2. 14, 15. For ye alſo have ſuffered like things of your own Countrymen, even as they have

have of the Jews: who both killed the Lord Jesus and their own Prophets; and have persecuted us: and they please not God, and are contrary to all men; forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved; to fill up their sin alway: for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.

Luk. 9. 54, 55. Lord wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as *Elias* did? But he turned and rebuked them and said, ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of: for the son of man is not come to destroy mens lives, but to save them.

I conclude as I began: that the consciousness of our own ordinary and lamentable infirmities, and the greatness of the Churches sufferings thereby, in all fore-going ages and in this, will condemn us of impudent self-ignorance, if Ministers be not compassionate and tender towards the weaknesses of the people, who cannot be expected to equal them in knowledg. Alas, Brethren, what are we (even after so many years study & preparation) that we should be supercilious and cruel to the infirm! what difficulties puzzle us? what a loss are we at in our ordinary studies? How weakly do we preach and pray and write? How easily do we see this in one another, as our mutual censures and severities shew? Who troubled *Paul* and the first Churches, but erroneous Teachers? Who prated malitiously against *John*, and cast out the brethren, but a *Diotrephes*? Who brought in the errours of the *Millenaries*, the corporeity of Angels, the errours of the *Arrians*, *Eunomians*, *Nestorians*, *Eutychians*, *Macedonians*, and almost all the rable in *Epiphanius*, *Augustine* and *Philastrius*, but Bishops or Presbyters? Who have caused and kept open the wounds of the Churches of the East and West so long? Who introduced all the errours (about praying for & to the dead, *&c.*) that are in most of the Liturgies of the Churches in East and West? And all the errours that are found in so many Councils and Confessions of Churches; and in so many Volumes of Controversie as are extant? Who set up the *Roman* Usurpation and Tyranny? Who set up the Papal power above Princes; and determined in the *Laterane* Council for their power to depose them and alienate their dominions? Who set up Usurpers and raised wars against Emperors and Kings upon these grounds? Who brought in Transubstantiation with the rest of the *Roman* absurdities? Who have been the Masters of the bloody Inquisitions? And who hindereth the preaching of the pure doctrine of the Gospel in all the *Romanists* dominions? Is it not an erroneous Clergy?

You'l say, *Those are Papists and so are not we?*

Ans. No, God forbid we should! But they are a mistaken *Clergy*; which sheweth us that the *Clergy* are as liable to be dividers and troublers of the Church as the Laity are; and have done much more.

If any hence would infer, that the Pastors must be vilified or deprived of their just liberties and power, I would more largely tell such a one, that it is also the Clergy that have opposed all these Heresies and sins; and that have maintained obedience to Princes; and that have preserved the Scrip-

Scriptures and the Christian faith; and that have been the salt and lights of the world, without whom Christianity never long continued in any nation; And that have been the chief instruments of bringing all the souls to Heaven that have passed thither from the militant Church. (But I have done this in two sheets for the Ministery long ago.) So that our faults consist with the honour of our function, and of our necessary labours, and with the praise of the more blameless.

And even so, though the peoples weakness, and inclinableness to unwarrantable separations and schisms, be blameworthy, as a fruit of their infirmity and injudiciousness: Yet must we remember that they are the members of Christ, and we must not deny his interest in them; nor judge or use them hardlier than Christ himself hath done, or alloweth us to do: But study his Love and tenderness and forbearance, that we may follow him in serving him; and not follow our uncharitable passions, and call it, a serving of him; who liketh no such hurtful service. He that loveth Christ in none of his Infants or weaker members, but in the strong and more prudent sort alone, doth love him in so few, that he may question whether he loveth him indeed at all; And whether ever he shall hear, *Inasmuch as ye did it to the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me.*

April 14. 1668.

The

The way of Division by Violence.	*The way of Peace by Love and Humility.*	*The way of Division by Separation.*
I.	I.	I.
Depart from the Apostolical primitive simplicity; and make things un-necessary, seem necessary in Doctrine, Worship, Discipline and Conversation.	Adhere to the ancient simple Christianity, and make nothing necessary to your Concord and Communion, which is not necessary.	Depart from the Apostolical Primitive simplicity; on pretence of strict observing it; And make New Duties and new sins, which scripture makes not such.
II.	II.	II.
Endure no man that is not of your mind and way; But force all to concord upon these terms of yours, what ever it cost.	Love your neighbors as your selves; Receive those that Christ receiveth, and that *hold the necessaries of Communion*; be they Episcopal, Presbyterian, Independants, Anabaptists, Arminians, Calvinists, *&c.* so they be not proved *Heretical* or *wicked.*	Account all those ungodly that use set prayers, or worship not God in the same manner as you do.

III.

and all D[issenters] with the[ir] busnam of matricks, retricks, or itious Re[formers]; that they becom[e] eful to high d low.

IV.

When thi[s] th greatly creased their ffection to , accuse eir *Religio* f all the ex ressions of hat disaffecti- n, to make i dious also.

V.

Take thos[e] or your ene- nies that ar[e] heir friends, &

III.

Speak evil of no man, and especially of Dignities & Rulers: Revile not when you are reviled: speak most of the good that is in Dissenters; and do them all the Good you can.

IV.

If any wrong you, be the *more* watchful over your *passions*, & *opinions*, and *tongues*: least Passion carry you into extreams: Love your enemies; bless them that curse you; do good to *them* that hate you; and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you: And do not evil, that good may come of it.

V.

Impartially judge of men by Gods interest in them, and not your *own* or your *parties*.

III.

Brand all *Dissenters* with the odious names of *grace-less formalists*. That you may make them all seem unlovely to others.

IV.

When this hath stirr'd them up to wrath, call them *wicked persecutors*, and have no communion with them.

V.

Backbite and reproach all those as *Complyers* with sin, or such as strengthen the hands of the *wicked* and the *persecutors*: who would recal you to Love and Humility: And cherish all sects

those for your friends which are their enemies? And cherish those be they never so bad that will be against them, and help you to root them out.

But remember that for all this you must come to judgement.

And read these following words of Mr. *R. Hookers*, which he useth of some part of the History, which out of *Sulpitius* I before mentioned: *Eccles. Pol. Epist. Dedic.*

parties. Reprove the wayes of *Love-killers* and *Backbiters*; and let not the fear of their *Wrath* or *Censures* carry you into a compliance with them, or cause you by silence to encourage them: But rejoyce if you should be Martyrs for *Love* and *Peace*: For—

Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are the Peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for Righteousnes sake; for theirs is the Kingdome of heaven.

be they never so erroneous or Passionate that will take your part, and speak against them: But First, when the Wrath which you thus kindled hath consumed you; Secondly, or your Divisions crumbled you all to dust: Thirdly, and your scandals hardened men to scorn Religion to their damnation; remember, *Wo to the world because of offences, and wo to him by whom offence cometh.*

Read *Act.* 20. 30. 1 *Cor.* 1. 10. 13. & 3. 3. *Rom.* 16. 17, 18. *Jam.* 3. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17. Study these on your knees.

I deny not but that our Antagonists in these Controversies, may peradventure have met with some not like to *Ithacius*, who mightily bending himself by all means against the Heresie of *Priscillian*, (the hatred of which *one evil* was *all the vertue he had*) became so wise in the end, that every man carefull of vertuous conversation, studious of the Scripture, and given to any abstinence in diet, was set down in his Kalender for suspected *Priscillianists*: For whom it should be expedient to approve their soundness of faith, by a more licentious and loose behaviour? Such Proctors and Patrons the truth might want. Yet is not their grossness so intolerable as on the contrary side, the scurrilous and more than satyrical impudency of *Martinisme*: whereof the published schedules whereof being brought to the hands of a grave and very honourable Knight, with signification given that the Book would refresh his spirits, he took it, saw what the title was, read over an unsavoury sentence or two, and delivered back the Libel with this answer; *I am sorry you are of the mind to be solaced with these sports, and sorrier you have herein thought my affection like your own.*

FINIS.

Errata.

Pref. p. a. l. 23. for q. read not, p. 3. *penult.* l. 27. for *enslame* r. *enslave*. *Concents* p. 1. l. 14. *desse table*, p. 2. l. 3. for *liuer. true*, p. 3. l. 3. for *own Church* read *outward Church*, p. 6. l. 28. for *so-mans knowledge* r. *common knowledge*, p. 7. l. 13. for *their* r. *then*, p. 17. l. 32. r. *christianity*, p. 26. l. 11. for *moved* r. *proved*, p. 41. l. 9. for *seem* r. *serve*, p. 49. l. 27. for *they* read *the*, p. 129. l. 26. *dele in*, p. 132. l. 32. *read rail shamefully*, p. 144. l. 12. for *ever* r. *never*, p. 162. l. 26. for *them* r. *themselves*, p. 165. l. 4. for *Historical* read *Historicall*, p. 162. l. 31. read *reveal*, p. 168. l. *penult.* for *is* read *in*, p. 180. l. 30. *dele be*, p. 181. l. 1. *dele time*, p. 183. l. 20. read *20 years*, p. 185. l. 30. read *defective*, p. 218. l. 15. read *such cases*, p. 221. l. 5. read *defective*, p. 238. l. 10. read *Independency*, p. 270. l. 13. read *taken*, p. 298. l. 27. for *be*, read *become*. *appealed*, p. 298. l. 27. for *be*, read *become*.

A Catalogue of Books written and publiſhed by the ſame Author.

1. THE Aphoriſms,

2. The Saints Everlaſting reſt, in *quarto.*

3. Plain Scripture proof of Infant Church-membership and Baptiſm, in *quarto.*

4. The right Method for a ſetled Peace of Conſcience and Spiritual Comforts, in thirty two Directions, in *octavo.*

5. Chriſtian Concord: or the Agreement of the Aſſociated Paſtors and Churches of *Worceſterſhire*, in *quarto.*

6. True Chriſtianity, or Chriſts Abſolute Dominion, *&c.* in two Aſſize Sermons preacht at *Worceſter*, in *twelves.*

7. A Sermon of Judgement preacht at *Pauls*, *London*, *Decemb.* 17. 1654. & now enlarged. 12°.

8. Making light of Chriſt and ſalvation too oft the iſſue of Goſpel-Invitations, manifeſted in a Sermon preached at *Lawrence Jury*, in *London*, in *octavo.*

9. The Agreement of divers Miniſters of Chriſt in the County of *Worceſter*, for Catechizing, or Perſonal Inſtructing all in their ſeveral Pariſhes that will conſent thereunto; containing 1. The Articles of our Agreement. 2. An Exhortation to the People to ſubmit to this neceſſary work. 3. The Profeſſion of Faith and Catechiſm, in *octavo.*

Census Salvianus, The Reverend Pastor shewing the nature of the Pastoral work, especially in private Instruction and Catechizing; in *octavo*.

11. Certain Disputations of Right to Sacraments, and the true nature of visible Christianity, in *quarto*.

12. Of Justification: four Disputations clearing and amicably defending the Truth, against the unnecessary Oppositions of divers Learned and Reverend Brethren, in *quarto*.

13. A Treatise of Conversion, preached and now published for the use of those that are strangers to a true Conversion, *&c.* in *quarto*.

14. One sheet for the Ministery against the Malignants of all sorts.

15. A winding-sheet for Popery.

16. One sheet against the Quakers.

17. A second sheet for the Ministery, *&c.*

18. Directions to Justices of Peace, especially in Corporations, to the discharge of their duty to God, *&c.*

19. The crucifying of the World by the Cross of Christ, *&c.* in *quarto*.

20. A call to the Unconverted to Turn and Live, and accept of mercy, while mercy may be had, as ever they would find mercy in the day of their extremity: From the Living God: To be read in Families where any are unconverted, *&c.*

21. Of saving Faith: That it is not only gradually, but specifically distinct from all Common Faith. The Agreement of *Richard Baxter* with that very Learned consenting Adversary, that hath maintained his Assertion by a pretended Confuta-

tion in the end of Serjeant *Shepheard*'s Book of *Sincerity and Hypocrisie*, in *quarto*.

22. Directions and Persuasions to a sound Conversion, *&c.* in *octavo*.

23. The Grotian Religion discovered, at the invitation of Mr. *Thomas Pierce*, in his Vindication: With a Preface, vindicating the Synod of Dort from the calumnies of the new *Tilenus*; and *David Peters*, *&c.* and the Puritans, and Sequestrations, *&c.* from the censures of Mr. *Pierce*, in *&c.*

24. Confirmation and Restauration, the necessary means of Reformation and Reconciliation, *&c.* in *octavo*.

25. Five Disputations of Church-Government, in *quarto*.

26. A Key for Catholicks, to open the juggling of the Jesuites, and satisfie all that are but truly willing to understand, whether the cause of *Roman* or *Reformed* Churches be of God: and to leave the Reader utterly unexcusable that after this will be a Papist, in *quarto*.

27. A Treatise of Self-denial, in *quarto*.

28. His Apology against the Exceptions of Mr. *Blake*, *Kendal*, *Crandon*, *Eires*, *L. Maulins*, in *quarto*.

29. The unreasonableness of Infidelity, in four parts, *&c.* in *octavo*.

30. The *Worcester-shire* Petition for a Parliament, for the Ministery of *England*, defended, *&c.* in *quarto*.

31. Holy Commonwealth, or Political Aphorisms, opening the true principles of Government, *&c.* in *quarto*.

32. His Confession of Faith, *&c.* in *quarto*.

33.

33. His humble Advice; or the heads of those things which were offered to many honourable Members of Parliament, in *quarto*.

34. The Quakers Catechism; or the Quakers questioned, in *quarto*.

35. An account of his present Thoughts concerning the Controversies about the perseverance of the Saints, in *quarto*.

36. His Letter to Mr. *Drury* for Pacification, in *quarto*.

37. The safe Religion; or three Disputations for the Reformed Catholick Religion, against Popery, &c. in *octavo*.

38. Catholick Unity; or, the only way to bring us all to be of one Religion, &c. in *twelves*.

39. The true Catholick and Catholick Church described, in *twelves*, &c.

40. The successive *visibility* of the *Church* of which Protestants are the soundest members, &c. in *octav.*

41. The Sermon of Repentance.

42. Of Right Rejoycing.

43. Sermon of Faith before the King.

44. Treatise of Death.

45. The Vain Religion of the Formal Hypocrite, &c. in several Sermons preached at the Abbey in *Westminster*, in *twelves*.

46. Two sheets for Poor Families, &c.

47. Short instructions for the sick; a Sheet.

48. A Saint or a Brute, &c. in *quarto*.

49. The mischief of Self-ignorance, and benefit of Self-acquaintance, in *octavo*.

50. Universal Concord, &c. in *octavo*.

51. The last work of a Believer, &c. in *twelves*.

52. The Divine Life in three Treatises: The first of the Knowledge of God: The second, of Walking with God: The third, of Conversing with God in Solitude, in *quarto*.

53. The Reasons of the Christian Religion, &c.

54. Directions for weak distempered Christians, to grow up into a confirmed state of grace, &c. 2. The Characters of a sound confirmed Christian written to imprint on mens minds the true Idea or Conception of Godliness and Christianity, in *octavo*.

55. Now or never, in *twelves*.

56. The Life of Faith, in 3 parts, in *quarto*.

These Books following are also printed for Nevil Simmons, *at the three Crowns near* Holborn Conduit.

THE Novelty of Popery opposed to the Antiquity of true Christianity. By *Peter Du-moulin*, D. D. in *folio*.

A Commentary or Exposition upon the five Books of *Moses* together with the following Books; *Joshua*, *Judges*, *Ruth*; first and second of *Samuel*; first and second of *Kings*; and first and second of *Chronicles*, in *folio*.

The Beauty of Magistracy, in an Exposition on *Psal.* 82. By *Thomas Hall*, B. D.

The Souls Looking-glass; wherein a man may discern what estate his soul stands in towards God, and what evidences he hath for Heaven, &c. By *Edward Bury*, late Minister of great *Bolas* in *Shropshire*, in *octavo*.

The

The Profit of Godliness, set forth in 5 Sermons, on 1 *Tim.* 4. 8. The unprofitableness of worldly Gain, in four Sermons on *Mark* 8. 36, 37. The Parable of the barren Fig-tree, in seven Sermons, on *Luk.* 13. 6, 7, 8, 9. Victorious Violence, in two Sermons, on *Mat.* 11. 12. By *Tho. Brindal*, late Minister of *Walshal* in *Staffordshire*, in *octavo*.

The Girdle of Holy Resolution, in two Sermons, on 1 *Pet.* 1. 13. By *William Gearing*, Minister of the Gospel, in *quarto*.

The Love-sick Spouse, in 4 Sermons on *Cant.* 2. 5. By *Wil. Gearing*, Minister of the Gospel, in *quart.*

A Discourse on Prodigeous Abstinence, occasioned by the twelve months fasting of *Martha Taylor*. By *John Reynolds*, in *quarto*.

The Dead Pastor yet speaking, in two Sermons, preached on *Bartholomew* day, *Aug.* 24. 1662. in *Bendly* Chappel. By *Henry Osland*, then Minister there, in *octavo*.

The Christians daily Walk, a *sheet*. By the same Author.

A Sinners Justification on the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord our Righteousness; in several Sermons. By *Obadiah Grew*, D. D. late Minister in *Coventry*, in *octavo*.

The Repenting Sinner pardoned, being a brief Relation of the wicked life and penitent death of *James Wilson* of *Wolverhampton* in *Staffordsh.* in 8.

The English School; or the readiest way to teach children, or elder persons, to read, spell and rightly pronounce English; fitted to the use of common English Schools, illustrated with five brass Cuts. By *Tobias Ellis*, in *octavo*.

D. *Bryan's* eight Sermons, in *octavo*.

FINIS.