

Mr. *BAXTER*'s 5  
**VINDICATION**  
OF THE  
CHURCH of *ENGLAND*  
In her Rites and Ceremonies, Discipline,  
AND  
**CHURCH-ORDERS.**

As faithfully taken out of his own Writings, without  
either false Citation, or fraudulent Alteration.

To which is prefixed :

His *Epistle* to the *Non-conformists* : being a just and true Abstract  
of his Book, Entitled, *A Defence of the Principles of Love.*

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*Schismatics* are they who unwarrantably separate from those Churches  
in which they ought to abide, that they may gather new Congrega-  
tions after their mind. Mr. *Baxter*'s Reasons of the Chri-  
stian Religion, p.472.

No Christian must pretend Holiness against Unity and Peace, and  
every tender Conscience should be as tender of Church-division and  
real Schisms, as of Drunkenness, Whoredom, or such other enormous  
sins. Mr. *Baxter*'s Reasons of the Christian Religion, p.485.

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L O N D O N.

Printed for *Walter Kettilby* at the *Bishops-head* in *St. Pauls*  
Church-yard. 1682.

(313) 761-4700

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Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106

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# TO THE READER.



**D**T being evidently apparent, as in most other cases, so in our Church-divisions, that a resolved prostration to the Authority, and a confident adhæſion to the opinion of reputed-good men, doth commonly seduce the Populace, first into Prejudice, then into Parties, and so to a tenacious obstinacy in Error. Hereupon one probable way of Rescue and Remedy is, to propose to the wandring People the Documents of one whose Authority is great among them ; Therefore have I  
A 2            thought

*To the Reader.*

thought on the Oracle Mr. *Baxter*, who in this Book (*His Defence of the Principles of Love*) is not more *Antesignanus* than *Eirenarches*, prescribing very well for Peace and Church-union, as the ensuing Treatise, especially the Epistle, shews. And to anticipate that prejudice and mistakes which a thing of this nature is very liable to, let no man think it my design to accuse Mr. *Baxter* of Self-contradiction, Inconsistency, &c. but that it is merely for the conviction of those whom that learned Author calls *Honest erroneous Christians*: and to let the World see that Mr. *B.* and other Non-conformist Ministers, do not believe that intrinsick evil and sinfulness to be in Conformity, which their unwary Followers are induced, or rather seduced to believe; and that there is more extrinsick danger and heinous sinfulness in their separation, than his honest er-

roneous

*To the Reader.*

roneous Christians do imagine, that the difference between Conformists and Non-conformists is very small, and (as Mr. *Baxter* tells Mr. *Bagshaw* in his Defence) that Non-conformists do injure Conformists and make the Case (of Conformity) more odious than it is. And to obviate Objections, let it be noted,

2. That if here be found any small alteration in words, it is merely for the sake of brevity and ease in reading, and no other than what doth fairly consist with, and not at all, pervert the sense and meaning of the first Author.

And since the renouncing of the Covenant, (which Non-conformists call the *great Mountain in the way*) is now removed, if the more peaceable Non-conformists have a mind to come into the conforming Churches, here is that in this small Treatise will help a little to justify and encourage their

pra-

*To the Reader.*

practice in so doing. What acceptance this poor thing will have, I am ignorant, but not solicitous, since the testimony of my Conscience is, that it is in vindication of Truth, and defence of a good Cause; nor would I fear the success much more than I do the acceptance, would the honest erroneous Christian read it, with as little partiality and prejudice, as he would if coming from the first Authors hand.

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Mr.

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Mr. BAXTER's  
**EPISTLE**  
TO THE  
**Non-Conformists.**

*Being a just and true Abstract of his Defence of the Principles of Love.*

BRETHREN,

**I**T grieves me to the heart that neither Party, Conformable or Non-conformable, is more sensible of the sin and danger of our distance (though I know that in both Parties there are many wise and holy persons, who, I suppose, lament it more than I do.) It layeth my soul in daily lamentations to see how we run further from each other, to the apparent danger of the Protestant Cause, and of the Kingdoms welfare, and of all the hopes of our Posterity.

Our

Page 18.

Part. 1. pag. 49.

Our narrow Judgment draws many to think that it is the Interest of Religion now in *England* to have the Parish-Churches brought low in reputation, and deserted, and God's publick worship which they would have all religious People use, to be onely that of tolerated, or more private Churches, by which they little know what they wish against the Interest of the Christian and Protestant Religion in this Land, and what hurt they would do, if in this they had their wills.

Part. 1. pag. 36.

The Interest of the Christian Protestant Religion must be kept up, by keeping up as much Truth, Piety, and Reputation, as may be, in the Parish-Churches.

Part. 1. pag. 56.

The publick to be preferred before the private: and come to the beginning of Common-Prayer.

I am very glad that the pious Lectures of Mr. *Hildersham*, Mr. *Rogers*, and such other old Non-conformists, are in so good esteem among good people, where they will read them urging the people, not onely against Separation, but to come to the very beginning of the publick Worship, and preferring it before their private duties. And I need not tell those that have read the Writings of the good old Non-conformists, *Ames*, *Parker*, *Bains*, *Fox*, *Dearing*, *Greenham*, &c. that these did some of them read the Common Prayer, and most of them judged it lawful to join in it, or else Mr. *Hil-*

*dersham*,

*dersham Rogers*, &c. would not write so earnestly to men to come to the beginning, and prefer it before all private duties.

When I think what learned, holy, incomparable men, abundance of the old Conformists were, my heart riseth against the thoughts of separating from them; If I had come to their Churches when they read the Common-prayer and administred the Sacrament, could I have departed and said, *It is not lawful for a Christian here to communicate with you.* What! Such men as Mr. *Bolton*, Mr. *Whateley*, Mr. *Fenner*, Mr. *Crook*, Mr. *Dent*, Mr. *Dike*, Mr. *Stock*, Mr. *Smith*, Dr. *Preston*, Dr. *Sibbs*, Dr. *Taylor*, and abundance other such; yea, such as Bishop *Jewell*, Bishop *Grindall*, Bishop *Hall*, Bishop *Potter*, Bishop *Davenant*, Bishop *Carleton*, &c. yea, and the Martyrs too, as *Cranmer*, *Ridley*, *Hooper*, *Farrar*, *Bradford*, *Philpot*, *Sanders*, &c. I think not my self worthy to be compared with Mr. *Bolton*, *Whateley*, *Fenner*, *Preston*, *Sibbs*, *White*, *Field*, *Usher*, *Jewell*, and abundance other old Conformists; and you might forgive me, if I tell you again, that if they were all alive, and used now the same Liturgy and Ceremonies as they did then, I could not find in my heart to think their communion in Prayer and Sacrament unlawful, nor to censure that man

part. 1. p. 57.  
The heinous-  
ness of Sepa-  
ration, in con-  
sideration of  
those excel-  
lent persons  
that they se-  
parated from  
1. the old  
Conformists,  
2. the preter-  
Conformists.

Part. 1. p. 12.  
13.

as injurious to the Church, who should write to persuade others not to separate from them on that supposition, I am sure the Assembly of Divines that sate heretofore at *Westminster*, were so conformable when they went thither, that I never heard of five Non-conformists among them, except the five dissenting Brethren; their Judgment was (as Mr. *Sprints*) that Conformity was lawful in case of necessity, rather than to be deprived of Liberty to preach the Gospel.

Part. 1. p. 10,  
11, 12.

Part. 1. p. 40.  
Mr. Baxter  
dares not go  
against his  
Conscience in  
not taking the  
Sacrament at  
his Parish  
Church.

Part. 1. p. 15,  
68, 69.

And as for the present Conformists, I know those of them, whom I think as godly and humble Ministers [*N.B.*] as most of the Non-conformists, whom I know--- and as my acquaintance increaseth I know more and more; --- And I tell you again, that I believe there are many hundred godly Ministers in the Parish Churches of *England*, and that their Churches are true Churches. And for my part I forbore communion with the Parish Churches in the Sacrament a long time, yet at last I saw that the reasons seemed to me to cease, and I durst not go against my Conscience, for I knew not what.

But O that you would yet consider how much defect of love and patience there is in you as well as others. How easily can we ag-

gravate

gravate the faults of others, and how hardly can we aggravate or see our own! The defects of the Liturgy, and the faults of those by whom we suffer, are easily heightened even beyond desert, but when many of us vend untruths and slanders against our Brethren about the Land, who aggravates this, or repents of it? But above all I entreat the dividing Brethren, if they can so long lay by their partiality, to judge by this of the reasons of their separation from those Churches private or parochial, that they differ from in tolerable things. You think it a sin to communicate in a Church where the Liturgy is used, and where Discipline is not so strictly exercised against some Offenders, as you and I desire. But publick multiplied untruths in mens mouths, do never make you scruple their communion. I intreat you do but study an answer to one that would separate from you all upon such grounds as these. First for the Sin, consider of these Texts, *Exod. 23. 1. Thou shalt not raise a false report, &c. Eph. 4. 31. Let evil speaking be put away from you. James 4. 11. Speak not evil one of another, &c. Tit. 3. 1, 2. Prov. 25. 23. Pet. 1. 2, 1. &c.* Have you more or plainer Texts of Scripture against the Common-prayer than these are against Slandering, &c.

The Separatists that are so scrupulous about Church communion, make no conscience of greater sins.

B 2 Now

Now suppose one should say that a People of such sin as this, should not be communicated with, what answer will you give to this, which will not confute your own objections against communion with many Parish-Churches in this Land. God hates every disorder in extemporat Prayer, and yet he more hates that censoriousness and curiosity which would draw men to forsake the substantials of Worship or Christian love and communion on that pretence. If Christians should plead Gods jealousie about his Worship, as censoriously against their own prayers, as they do against other mens, and Churches in this case, they would turn prayer into the fuel of despair and torment.

If *Paul* thought his *Galatians* foolish and bewitched, and his Corinthian-Christians to be Babes, yea carnal, and not spiritual, because there were among them *ἔρις καὶ διχοστασία*, envyings, strife, and divisions, or as the words signifie, zeal, or æmulation, strife and separation, factions and dividings in several Parties; while one saith I am of *Paul*, another I am of *Apollo*, what wonder if we are no better now. I will not pretend Conscience for the defiling of my Conscience, and the forsaking the sacred life of love. Do not you your selves condemn

a carnal state? Remember then that they are carnal, who are contentious dividers in the Churches: 1 *Cor.* 1, 2, 3. You will join with me in disallowing a fleshly life; Remember then that the works of the flesh are these, as Adultery, Fornication, &c. so also Hatred (or Enmities) Variance, Emulations, Wrath, Strife, Seditions, (*διχοστασία* dividing into Parties) &c. I know you will confess, that if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his, *Rom.* 8.9. Remember then that the Spirit of Christ is the Spirit of Love, that the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, &c. *Gal.* 5.20.

Old Mr. *Wilson* Pastor of *Boston*, being desired by the Elders of the Churches, assembled at his house, that (on his dying-bed) he would declare solemnly to them, what he conceived to be those sins which provoked the displeasure of God against the Countrey, told them, that he had long feared these sins following, as chief among others, which God was greatly provoked by, 1. *Separation*, 2. *Anabaptistry*, 3. *Koraism*, when People rise up, as *Korah*, against their Ministers and Elders, as if they took too much upon them, when indeed they do but rule for Christ, and according to Christ: and so for the Magistrates being *Gallio*-like, not caring

Part. 2. p. 155.  
Separation  
and Koraism  
provoking  
sins.

The evil of  
separation.  
Part 1. p. 2, 3.

Mr. Baxter  
counts Sepa-  
ratists no bet-  
ter than foo-  
ls and be-  
witched  
babes, carnal  
and not spiri-  
tual.

# Mr. Baxter's Epistle

ring for these things, or not using their power and authority for the maintenance of the Truth, and Gospel, and Ordinances, &c.

Alas (dear Brother) that after so many years silencing and affliction, after Flames and Plagues, and dreadful Judgments, after twenty years practice of the sin it self, and when we are buried in the very ruines which it caused, we should not yet know that our own uncharitable divisions, alienations, and Separations, are a crying sin, yea the crying as well as the uncharitableness and hurtfulness of others. Alas, will God leave Us, even Us also to the obdurateness of *Pharaoh*? Is there not crying sin with Us? What have we done to Christs Kingdom, to this Kingdom, to our Friends, to our selves, and (alas) to our enemies, by our Divisions? and do we not feel it, do we not know it? Wo to us! into what hard-heartedness have we sinned our selves?

*Irenaeus, Epiphanius, Augustine, Theodoret*, beside the rest, do sadly tell us in their Catalogues and Controversies, how lamentably these Dividers then hindered the Gospel, and distressed and dishonoured the Church: And the sad stories of *Holland, Munster*, and others in *Germany, Poland*, and especially these twenty years past in *England*, do bring all closer to our sense.

The

Here he speaks particularly to Mr. Bagshaw. Part 2, p. 6, 7.

Part 1, p. 60. The sad effects of Church-divisions.

to the Non-conformists.

The dissolution of the separated Churches of the English in the Low-Countries, by their own divisions, is a thing too well known to be concealed.

Brethren---I know that our division gratifieth the Papists, and greatly hazardeth the Protestant Religion, and that more than the most of you seem to believe or regard. I know that our division advantageth Profaneness, and greatly hinders the success on both sides. I know that it greatly pleaseth Satan, and buildeth up his Kingdom, and weakeneth the Kingdom of our Lord; his own mouth hath told us so. I foresaw, that while we worried and weakened one another, Papists were like to be the principal gainers: and they would be ready to offer their service to strengthen one of the Parties against the other, and would be glad to take up the reproaches against the most religious people, that were by angry Adversaries brought unto their hands. And that when we had made our selves the common scorn by our manifold divisions, and by our biting and devouring one another, they would plead this as their shame, to draw People to themselves, as the onely stable and consistent Church; and would make us giddy, that we may rest on them, as our Supporters, and when they saw

Part 1, p. 17. The present separation a promoting cause of Popery, and greatly hazards the Protestant Religion, advantageth profaneness, &c.

Part 1, p. 32.



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us weak, would be ready to devour us all.

Three ways especially will Popery grow out of our divisions:

1. By the odium and scorn of our disagreements, inconsistency and multiplied Sects; they will persuade people, that we must either come for unity to them, or else all run mad, and crumble into dust and individuals. Thousands have been drawn into Popery and confirmed in it already by this Argument, and I am persuaded that all the Arguments in *Bellarmino*, and all other Books that ever were written, have not done so much to make Papists in *England*, as the multitude of Sects among us: Yea some Professors of religious strictness, of great esteem for godliness, have turned Papists themselves when they were giddy and weary with turnings, and when they had run from Sect to Sect and found no consistency in any: And,

2. Who knows not how fair a Game the Papists have to play by the means of our divisions. Methinks I hear them hissing on each Party, and saying to one side, Lay more upon them, and bate them nothing, and to the other, Stand it out, and yield to nothing. And who is so blind then, as not to see their double game and hopes (*viz.*) that either our divisions and alterations

## to the Non-conformists.

alterations will carry men to such distances and practices, as shall make us accounted seditious, rebellious, and dangerous to the publick Peace; and so they (*i.e.* Papists) pass for better Subjects than we; or else that when so many Parties under sufferings are constrained to beg for Liberty, the Papists may not be shut out alone, but have toleration with the rest. And shall they use our hands to do their work? We have already unspeakably served them in this.

And 3. It is not the least of our danger, (nor which doth least affect me) lest by our follies, extremities, and rigours, we should so exasperate the common People, as to make them readier to join with the Papists than with us, in case of any competitions, or their invasions, or insurrections against the King and Kingdoms peace.--- Let us do nothing by unlawful alienations and singularities, or fierce and disobedient oppositions, which tend to make the People think better of Papists than of us.

'In the Year 1634. Mr. Roger Williams Assistant to Mr. Ralph Smith Pastor of *Plimouth*, removed from thence to *Salem*, where in one years time he filled the place with principles

The present Separation promoteth Anabaptistry, Quakerism, &c.

## Mr. Baxter's Epistle

' of rigid Separation, and tending to Anabapti-  
 ' stry. The prudent Magistrates of the *Massachu-*  
 ' *sets* jurisdiction, sent to the Church of *Salem*, de-  
 ' siring them to forbear calling him to Office;  
 ' which they not hearkening to, he proceeded  
 ' more vigorously to vent many dangerous opi-  
 ' nions, as, that the Magistrate had nothing  
 ' to do in matters of the First Table, but onely  
 ' the Second, and that there should be a gene-  
 ' ral and unlimited toleration of all Reli-  
 ' gions; and for any man to be punished for  
 ' any matters of his Conscience, was persecu-  
 ' tion: That if the Church of *Salem* would  
 ' not separate, not onely from the Churches  
 ' of *England*, but of *New-England* too, he would  
 ' separate from them. The more prudent  
 ' part of the Church being amazed at his way,  
 ' would not yield to him; whereupon he ne-  
 ' ver came to the Church-Assembly more,  
 ' professing separation from them as Antichri-  
 ' stian. Divers of the weaker sort of Church-  
 ' members did by degrees fall off to him, inso-  
 ' much that he kept a meeting in his own  
 ' house, unto which a numerous company did  
 ' resort,—Whereupon he was banished the  
 ' *Massachusetts* Colonie, and came to a place cal-  
 ' led *Providence*, was followed by many of the  
 ' Church of *Salem*, who zealously adhered to  
 ' him

## to the Non-conformists.

' him, and cried out of the persecution that  
 ' was against them; others resorted to them  
 ' from other places. They had not been there  
 ' long, but from rigid Separation, they tell  
 ' to Anabaptistry, [*N.B.*] renouncing their Ba-  
 ' ptism received in Infancy, and taking up  
 ' another Baptism, and so began a Church in  
 ' that way. But *Mr. Williams* stopt not there  
 ' long, for after some time he told the people  
 ' that followed him, that he was out of the  
 ' way himself, and had misled them; for he  
 ' did not find that there were any upon Earth  
 ' that could administer Baptism, and there-  
 ' fore their last Baptism was a nullity as well  
 ' as their first; and therefore they must lay  
 ' down all, and look for the coming of new  
 ' Apostles; and so they dissolved themselves  
 ' and turned Seekers.

To which I add, that this man was one of the greatest Instruments, after all this, of subli-  
 mating the English Separation to the same height, and gratifying the Papists by raising up the Sect of Seekers.

Mr. Baxter's ad-  
dition to this  
History.

And sad, sad indeed was the case of the *Part 2, p. 175*  
*Bermuda's*, when in so disciplined a Plantation,  
 one Minister turned away the greater part  
 from

*Mr. Baxter's Epistle*

from Church-communion, till they became Aliens---- and the rest whom he gathered as the onely worthy persons, so many turned Quakers, Seekers, and such like.

Part I. p. 50.

The case of three or four Churches in *New-England* grieves my heart, but the case of the Summer-Islands, as related to me by Mr. *Vaughan*, a worthy Minister, lately discouraged and come from thence, would make a Christian heart to bleed, to hear how strict, and regular, and hopeful that Plantation once was, and how one godly Minister by Separation, selecting a few to be his Church, and rejecting all the rest from the Sacrament, the rejected Party are grown to doleful estrangedness in Religion, and the selected Party much turned Quakers, and between both, how wofull are the Fruits!

But the case of *England*, *Scotland*, and *Ireland* (which I foretold in my Book of *Infant-Baptism*) is yet a more lamentable proof, what Separation hath done against Religion, so full a proof, that it is my wonder that any good man can overlook it.

Part I. p. 49.

Yea, before our eyes, the most pernicious Heresies, even that of Quakers, are still not onely continued, but increased; and we see men that to day condemn communion with the

*to the Non-conformists.*

the Parish-Churches, and then with the Presbyterians, do shortly fly from communion with the Independents too —. It's commonly known how many of late have turned Quakers, and shall we stand by and see such work and neither lament their sins that drive men to this, nor warn them of the passions and principles that lead to it. Separation will ruine the separated Churches themselves at last, it will admit of no consistency; Parties will rise in the separated Churches, and separate again from them, till they are dissolved. I beseech my dear Brethren that are otherwise minded, to open their eyes so far as to regard experience.

I am not able to bear the thoughts of Separating from almost all Christs Churches upon Earth; but he that separateth from one, or many upon a reason common to almost all, doth virtually separate from almost all; and he that separateth from all among us upon the account of the unlawfulness of our Liturgy, and the badness of all our Ministry, doth separate from them upon a reason common to almost all, or the far greatest part (as I conceive.). Therefore pray we;

Mr.

## Mr. Baxters Prayer.

Part 2. p. 150.

**O** That the God of love would pity and undeceive the selfish and passionate sort of professed Christians, and teach them to know what manner of spirits they are of! O that he would rebuke the evil spirits that are gone forth; the Spirit of Covetousness and Pride; the Spirit of Hypocrisy and religious Imagery, of Self-conceitedness, of Malice and Wrath, of Back-bitings and False-accusing, before that both Christianity and Humanity be turned into Devillism, and before Earth be more conformable to Hell! O that the Spirit of Light would make us of one mind, and the Spirit of Love would mortifie both mens malignant and religious passions, contentiousness and malice; and cause us to love our Neighbours as our selves! That as the Envious and striving Wisdom from beneath hath caused Confusion, and every evil work; so the Wisdom from above, which is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easie to be intreated, might bring forth mercy and good fruits, without partiality or hypocrisie, that we might edifie the body of Christ in love, Eph. 4. 16. and frustrate the hopes of the enemies of our peace, who wait for our total dissolution

lution, and triumph already in our Divisions, (when it is their own Mill which grindeth us to Powder) but God can make their Oven to bake us into a more Christian and salubrious consistency, (that I may use Ignatius's Allegory) but it must be first by fermenting us with unfeigned love, and then we shall be lovely in his sight, and the God of love and peace will be with us. Amen.

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Mr.

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Mr. *BAXTER*'s  
**VINDICATION**  
 OF THE  
 CHURCH of *ENGLAND*  
 In her Rites, and Ceremonies, Discipline,  
 AND  
 CHURCH-ORDERS.

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1. Standing up at the Creed and  
 the Antiphones.

*Mr. Baxter's Scripture-Proof of Infant-Church-membership. Part.II.cap.6.p.121.*

**I** Humbly propound (meaning to the Assembly of Divines) that the Custom of standing up at the Creed, may be reduced to its Primitive nature and vigour [*i.e. as 'tis now in use in the Church of England*; it being then quite out of use.) And in the next Page he reckons this among one of those five plain Duties, which he says must not  
 D be

## Mr. Baxter's Vindication

be wiped out, lest the Directory be found more defective than the Common-Prayer-Book.

In his *Sacrilegious Desertion of the Ministry Rebuked*,] he says, that the Conformists in standing up at the Antiphones, (viz. *Gloria Patri, Te Deum, Jubilate, &c.*) do better than the Non-conformists in not standing up.

## 2. Episcopal Confirmation.

*Scripture-Proof of Infant-Church-membership.*  
Part. II. cap. 6. p. 120.

I humbly propound (says Mr. Baxter) that the ancient practice of Confirmation may be reduced to its primitive nature (i.e. as 'tis now used in the Church of England) as plainly appears by his calling it (in the same page) *The old Order of Confirmation by Bishops*: For this he cites Calvin as earnestly desiring it, *Instit.* l. 4. cap. 19.

In the 122. page, he intimates Confirmation also to be one of those plain Duties not to be wiped out, lest the Directory be found more defective than the Common-Prayer-Book, and lest the World be made believe that 'tis such things (i.e. such plain Duties) as these that we find fault with. He adds, that since there are so many learned and judicious opposers, (meaning the Episcopal Divines) observing the alterations, therefore (says he) 'tis but modest and rational to desire, either the establishment of the fore-mentioned particulars, viz. Confirmation, Standing up at the Creed, &c. or the publication of satisfactory Reasons against them.

And in his *Political Acherisims*, Theſ. 236. Let Ministers.

## of the Church of England.

sters (says he) be restrained by Law, from admitting the uncatechised and *unconfirmed* to Communion, (intimating very well, that he would have them looked upon as excommunicate persons that refuse to be catechised and *confirmed* :) to which he prefixeth, that if Magistrates force not the grossly ignorant to hear and learn, and submit to catechising, and such means of instruction, till they are confirmed, their Baptism will but let in corruption and confusion into the Churches. He hath in his *Treatise of Confirmation*, p. 206, 207, 208. &c. alibi, soundly asserted the cause of *Conformity* in this point, which his deluded Followers do so profanely and scornfully, not onely neglect, but contemn and deride. Nor can I find that ever Mr. Baxter found much fault with the manner of its Administration, as now in the Church of England. If he would have every Parish-Minister invested with the power of Confirming, 'tis no more than what the Canons of the Church allow, if the Bishop think fit, (the Bishop or Suffragan, says the 60. Canon.) Every Parish-Minister may be made a Suffragan, if the Bishop so please.

## 3. Church-Musick by Organs, or such like Instruments.

*In his Christian Directory, Ecclesiastical Cases. Q. 86.*

Mr. Baxter renders these five Reasons for the Use and Lawfulness thereof.

1. God set it up long after Moses's Ceremonial Law, by David, Solomon, &c.

2. It is not merely an instituted Ceremony, but a natural help to the Minds alacrity; and 'tis a duty,

### Mr. Baxter's Vindication

and not a sin to use the helps of Nature and lawful Art: As it is lawful (says he) to use Spectacles in reading the Bible, so it is to use Musick (speaking of Church-Musick) to exhilarate the Soul.

3. Jesus Christ joined with the Jews that used it.

4. No Scripture forbids it, therefore it is not unlawful.

5. Nothing can be against it, that I know of, but what may be said against Tunes and Melody; for whereas they say, 'tis humane invention, so are our Tunes (Metre and Version:) nay, it is not a humane invention, as the last Psalm, and many others shew, which call us to praise the Lord with Instruments of Musick.

The last Book he hath printed (that I know of) viz. *Poetical Fragments* hath in its Preface more to the same purpose.

### 4. Godfathers and Godmothers.

*Infant-Church-membership*, p. preliminary to the Epistle.

Mr. Baxter there tells us, that the currant consent of Historians assures us of the use of Godfathers and Godmothers at the Baptizing of Infants in *Hyginus's* time, who lived (as he alledgeth from *Nicephorus, Paresus, Prideaux*, and others) within about 40 Years of *S. John* the Apostle, and conversed with the Disciples and Familiars of the Apostles; and therefore (says he) could not be ignorant of the practice of the Apostles in Baptizing Infants. Thus hath he well proved the use of Godfathers and Godmothers, in all probability to be Apostolical, at least, ἀποστολική, and be-

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beyond all reach of scruple, to be of greatest antiquity in the Church, viz. forty years within the Apostles times.\*

\* Yet this is that some of the Non-conformists have called one of the hardest points in Conformity.

### 5. The Antiphones, or the Peoples bearing a Part with the Minister in Divine Service.

*Christian Direct. Cases Ecclesiast.* Q. 83.

1. Says Mr. Baxter, the Scripture no where forbids this.

2. If the People may do this in the Psalms in Metre, there can be no reason given, but they may lawfully do it in Prose.

3. The Primitive Christians, (says he) were so full of the zeal and love of Christ, that they would have taken it for an injury, or quenching of the Spirit, to have been wholly restrained from bearing a Part in the Praises of the Church.

4. The use of the Tongue keeps awake the mind, and stirs up God's Graces in his Servants.

5. It was the decay of Zeal in the People that first shut out Responses: while they kept up the ancient zeal, they were inclined to take their part vocally in the worship. Thus Mr. Baxter, with more to the same purpose in the place above cited.

6. Bow-

## 6. Bowing at the Name of J E S U S.

*Christian Directory Cases Ecclesiastical. Q. 86.*

That we may lawfully express our reverence by bowing when the Names [G O D, J E H O V A H, J E S U S, &c.] are uttered, I have met with few Christians that deny, nor know I any reason to deny it; 'tis true, he speaks of it as equally lawful in it self to bow to the Name J E H O V A H, G O D, &c. as well as J E S U S, but nothing at all against the lawfulness of bowing at the name of J E S U S.

## 7. It is certain from God's Word, that the Child so Baptized, dying before it commit actual sin, is undoubtedly saved.

Mr. Baxter in his *Pleasant Peace* makes angry exception against this in the Rubrick after Baptism, as one of those things which it is sinful to assent to; though whoever reads his Scripture-proof of Infants Church-membership, will find it none of his *ἀναξ δεσποτα*, that Children (indefinitely, and in materia necessaria, as will appear by and by) are holy by stated separation to God; and that all Children of Believers, (whether sincere or hypocrites, if they are Believers professedly) are undoubtedly saved, and we baptize the Children of no others than of Believers, professedly at least. For this see in his

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*Scripture-proof of Infants Church-membership: His Animadversions on Mr. Bedford's Treatise of Baptismal Regeneration.*

P. 315. Speaking of Baptism, he hath these words; <sup>The third Edition.</sup> For the pardon of Original Sin, and other relative Grace, I affirm that we are to judge it probably given to the Child of every Believer, and if any will say, it is certainly given to every such Child, even the Non-Elect, I will not gainsay him. There are his words *ipssime*, which fully and plainly import that the Children of Non-Elect Believers, (i. e. Believers in profession onely,) do by Baptism receive remission of Original sin, and other relative Grace; whether it be on the account of the Faith of the Church in which he is baptized, or of the bare profession of the Parents Faith, is excentrick to my business to dispute. To proceed; In the same page last cited, saith Mr. Baxter, God hath clearly made the Parents Faith the condition of Infants pardon and salvation. What Faith, and what Parents? Why, professedly-believing Parents, and the bare profession of Faith. For which see his *Infant Church-membership*, Part. 1. cap. 29. p. 94. Profession (says he) is a probable sign, and a Professor is probably a true Believer; and whether he be so or no, we are bound to admit him among Believers; and p. 92. it is sufficient that the Parent be virtually and dispositively a Believer, (in contradiction to his being actually such,) and in his Letter to Mr. Cranford, Is it not a large comfort to Parents (says he) that God doth pardon Infants their Original sin, and put them in *statum salutis*; but what I first quoted of him, is *instar omnium*, viz. that the Children



dren even of the Non-Elect, have pardon of sin, and other relative grace by Baptism.

## 8. Kneeling at the Sacrament.

*Christian Directory, Cases Ecclesiastical.* 98.

Had I my choice, says Mr. Baxter, I would receive the Lords Supper sitting, but where I have not my choice, I will use the gesture which the Church useth. *There speaks an Oracle; good Reader, mark him; What could be said more Orthodox and honest? And because he speaks so home in this one place, I'll forbear citing those in his Cure of Church-divisions; and in his Reasons of the Christian Religion, where in the one place he calls Kneeling an inoffensive harmless Ceremony; in the other, he teacheth that Vesture, Gesture, Time, Place, &c. are all at the determination of the lawful Magistrate.*

## 9. Episcopacy is Apostolical, and of Divine Institution.

*Christian Directory, Cases Ecclesiastical.* Q. 56. p. 127.

*Having proved the particular Orders of Presbyters and Deacons, he gives his Reasons for a larger Episcopacy, as the Margin shews;*

Besides this, says he, in the Apostles days there were under Christ in the universal Church many general Officers, that had the care of governing and overseeing

ing Churches up and down, and were fixed by stated relation, to none. Such were the Apostles, Evangelists, and many of their Helpers in their days. And most Christian Churches think, that though the Apostolical, extraordinary Gifts, Privileges, and Offices cease, yet Government being an ordinary part of their work, the same Forms of Government which Christ and the Holy Ghost did settle in the first Age, were settled for all following Ages, though not with the same extraordinary Gifts and Adjuncts.

Because 1. We read of the settling of that Form, viz. General Officers as well as Particular, but we never read of any abolition, discharge, or cessation of the Institution.

2. If we affirm a Cessation without proof, we seem to accuse God of mutability, as settling one Form of Government for one Age only, and no longer.

3. We leave room for audacious Wits to question other Gospel-Institutions, as Pastors, Sacraments, &c. and to say, that they were but for an Age only.

4. It was general Officers that Christ promised to be with to the end of the World, *Matth. 28. 20.* Now, says he, this will hold good, or not; if not, then this General Ministry is to be numbred among humane additions, to be next treated of. If it do, then there is \* another part of the Form of Government (i. e. distinct from that of Presbyters and Deacons) proved to be of *Divine Institution*. I say not another Church, but another part of the Government of both Churches universal and particular, because such general Officers are so in the universal, as to have a general oversight of the particular. As an Army headed onely by the General himself, and a Regiment by the Colonel, and a Troop by the Captain; but the general

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Officers

\* Diocesan  
Episcopacy.

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Officers of the Army, as the Lieutenants General, and Majors General, &c. are under the Lord General, in and over the Army, and have a general oversight over the particular Bodies, (Regiments and Troops.)

Now if this be the instituted Form of Christ's Church-Government, that he himself rule absolutely as General, and that he have some general Officers under him, (not any one having the charge of the whole, but in the whole *unfixedly*, or as they voluntarily part their Provinces) and that each particular Church have their own proper Pastor, one or more; then who can say that no Form of Church-Government is of Divine Appointment or Command.

Thus Mr. Baxter *κατὰ λόγον*, solidly proving the Divine Institution of Diocesan Episcopacy, and sufficiently confuting all that he hath so passionately wrote against the Order of Bishops, and the Constitution of National Churches.

### 10. The Oath of Priests and Deacons for Canonical Obedience to their Diocesan.

*Christian Directory, Cases Ecclesiastical. Q. 122.*

The old Non-conformists, says he, who thought the English Prelacy an unlawful Office, yet maintained that it is lawful to take the Oath of Canonical Obedience, because they thought it was imposed by the King and Laws; and that we swore to them not as Officers,

### of the Church of England.

Officers, claiming a divine right in the Spiritual Government, but as Ordinaries or Officers made by the King, to exercise so much Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction under him, as he can delegate. — And if Prelacy were proved never so unlawful, no doubt but by the Kings command we may swear, or perform formal Obedience to a Prelate, as he is the King's Officer. Thus Mr. Baxter; *though in Plea this is in the enumeration of those things which he says it is sinful to conform to. And here note that this concession of Mr. Baxter speaks it lawful to swear Obedience, not onely to the Bishop, but also to the Chancellor, to the Bishops Officials, &c. because they are the Kings Officers: though the Oath of Canonical Obedience requires no such thing, but to the Bishop onely and his chief Ministers.*

### 11. The Surplice.

*His Five Disputations, p. 409.*

Some decent Habit is necessary, the Magistrate, Ministers, or associated Pastors must determine what, — If they tie all to one habit (and suppose it were an indecent habit) yet this is but an imprudent use of power, it is a thing within the Magistrates reach, he doth not an alien, but his own work amiss: And therefore the thing in it self being lawful, I would obey him, and use that Garment, if I could not be dispensed with; yea though secondarily the whiteness be to signifie purity, and so be made a teaching sign, yet would I obey.

## 12. The Cross at Baptism.

*Christian Directory, Cases Ecclesiastical, Q. 113.*

Mr. Baxter doth there allow of the Sign of the Cross to be used out of Baptism, before a Heathen, which shews that he doth not believe the use of the Cross to be simply and of it self unlawful.

That which Non-conformists urge for the unlawfulness of it, is its being forbidden in the second Commandment, as a transient Image, and its being made a Sacrament of the Covenant of Grace; whereas if it were either of these, it would be so at other times as well as after Baptism; for the time or place wherein it is used, cannot alter the nature of the thing. So that from Mr. Baxter's own concession may be reasonably inferred the lawfulness of its use; but in his 123. p. he is more positive.

*Quest.* May one offer his Child to be baptized with the sign of the Cross, or the use of Chrism, the white garment, &c?

*Ans.* When he cannot lawfully have better, he may and must offer his Child to them that will so baptize him, rather than to do worse, or not at all; because Baptism is God's Ordinance and the Childs Priviledge, and the Sin the Ministers and not his.

Mr. Baxter hath a frequent distinction of Conformity into an Old and New. By the Old Conformity he means those points of Conformity which were in being, and were taken for Conformity-points, before the last Act for Uniformity was made, and were there no more required now than Conformity to those points, he says, many of the Non-conformists would conform. The New Conformity, which he

he seems to say most stick at, is differenced from the old in the accession of these two points in chief, Reordination and Renouncing the Covenant, of both which Mr. Baxter hath sufficiently asserted the lawfulness.

## 13. Reordination.

*Christian Directory, Cases Ecclesiastical. Q. 21.*

Mr. Baxter there grants, that the outward part of Ordination may be repeated: Which I take to be a full and plain concession of the whole, for in Reordination there is nothing repeated but the outward part, or Ceremony of Investiture.

## 14. Renouncing the Covenant.

*Plea for Peace. p. 213.*

It is not in the Subjects power, by Vows to withdraw themselves from obedience to Authority.

*Directory, Sect. 43.* A Vow is as null, says Mr. Baxter, when the matter is morally or civilly out of our power; as if a Child or Servant vow a thing which he cannot do lawfully without the consent of Parent or Master, though the thing it self be lawful: For God having bound me to obey my Superiours in all lawful things, I cannot oblige my self by my own Vows. *Sect. 79. of his Directory.*

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## 15. The defects and faults of the Liturgy.

*When Mr. Baxter in his Plea for Peace excepts against the whole Liturgy, all the Common-Prayer-Book-Forms in gross, as faulty and defective: In the same place he confesseth the faults to be no other, than what with them the Forms of Prayers may be used by a godly man either in obedience to Authority or for Unity, or when better cannot be had.*

## 16. The Errour of demanding a Scripture-text, or rule, for Ceremonies and Circumstances of Gods Worship.

*Mr. Baxters Defence of the Principles of Love,  
Part 1. p.97,98,99,100,101,102.*

There are men otherwise very honest, and truly godly, who think that the Scripture is intended by God, not onely as a general, but a particular Law, or Rule, for all the very circumstances of Worship; and that the second commandment in particular, condemns all that is the invention of men, in or about the Worship of God; and that to deny this, is to deny the perfection of Scripture—I hope the number is but small that are of this opinion. We are obliged to take heed of countenancing this Errour—For if it prevail, what abundance of hurt will it do?

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1.—2. It draweth men into the dangerous guilt of adding to the Word of God, under *pretence* of strict expounding it, and defending its perfection and extent.

3.—4. It altereth the very definition of the the holy Scripture, and maketh it another thing. That which God made to be the Record of his holy Covenant, and the Law and Rule of Faith and Holiness, and the general Law for outward modes and circumstances, which are but accidents of Worship, is pretended by men to be a particular Law, for that which it never particularly medleth with.

5. It forely prepares men for Infidelity, and to deny the divine authority of the Scripture, and utterly to undo all, by over-doing. If Satan could but once make men believe, that the Scripture is a rule for those things which are not to be found in it, and which God never made it to be a rule for. He will next argue against it, as a delusory and imperfect thing-- he that believes it to be given as such a particular rule, and then finds that it is silent, or utterly insufficient to that use, is like next to cast it away as a delusion, and turn an Infidel, or Antiscrypturist.

6. This mistake tends to cast all rational Worship out of the Church and the World.

7. This opinion will bring in all confusion, instead of pure reasonable Worship, while every man is left to find that in Scripture, which never was there, and that, as the onely rule of his actions, one will think that he finds one thing there, and another another thing, for it must be reality and verity which must be the term of Unity, men cannot agree in that which is not.

8. It will let in Impiety and Errour, for when men are sent to seek and find that which is not there; every

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ry man will think that he findeth that which his own corrupted mind brings thither.

9. And hereby all possibility of Union among Christians and Churches must perish, till this error perish; for if we must unite onely in that which is not in being, we must not unite at all.

10. Hereby is laid a Snare to tempt men into odious censures of each other; (of which see my Author excellently at large.)

11. Hereby Christian love will be quenched, when every man must account his Brother an Idolater, that cannot shew a Scripture for the hour, the place of Worship, &c.

12. And hereby back-biting, slandering, and railing must go currant as no sin, while every *Calvin, Cartwright, Hilderham, Perkins, Sibbs, &c.* that used a Form of Prayer, yea, all the Christians in the World must be accused of Idolatry, as if it were a true and righteous charge: And

13. All our sins will be fathered on God, as if the second Commandment, and the Scripture-perfection required all this, and taught Children to disobey their Parents and Masters, and say your Prayers and Catechisms are Images and Idols, &c.

14. It will rack and perplex the Consciences of all Christians, when I must take my self for an Idolater, till I can find a particular Law in Scripture for every Tune, Metre, Translation, Method, Vesture, Gesture, &c. that I use in the worshipping of God; when Conscience must build onely in the Air, and rest only on a word which never was.

15. It will have a confounding influence into all the affairs and business of our lives.

Lastly, It will fright poor people from Scripture and Religion, and make Us, our Doctrine and Worship

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ship ridiculous in the sight of all the World.

These are the consequences (which Mr. *Baxter* shews very well at large) of that impracticable and erroneous doctrine of demanding a particular Text of Scripture for the Ceremonies and Circumstances of Gods worship.

17. The Church of *England* not guilty of any kind of False-worship.

*Defence of the Principles of Love.* Part 2. p. 3, 4.

Mr. *Baxter* having recited the seven several kinds of false Worship, acquits the Church of *England* from all, and proves at large (in the Pages here cited) that it is not guilty of false Worship in any kind or any acceptance whatsoever, any more than Mr. *Bagshaw* (whom he there speaks particularly to) or the rest of the *Non-conformists* are in their extemperate Prayers.

18. A general Vindication of the Liturgy and Ceremonies.

*Defence of the Principles of Love.* Part 1. 90, 91.

To do it (*i.e.* to use, as he calls it, an unreformed Liturgy) out of choice, is one thing; to do it as a duty put upon us by Gods providence and our Governours, when we can do no better, is another thing: it is God that hath pulled down our liberty and opportunity to serve him better, and we must obey him. It is no

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faulty mutability to change our practice, when God by changing our condition doth change our duty; no more than it was in *Augustine*, who professeth that he would worship God, as to Forms and Ceremonies, according as the Church did with which he joined, where-ever he came.

## 19. The soundness of the Doctrine of the Church of *England*.

*Defence of the Principles of Love.* Part 2. p. 3.

The Doctrine of the Church of *England* is so sound, that the Independents and Presbyterians have still offered to subscribe to it, in the 39. Articles.

Thus hath Mr. *Baxter* copiously vindicated the Church of *England* in almost every point of Conformity which is any thing material; which shews that Non-conformists themselves do not really believe what they have suggested to, and imposed upon the belief of their Followers concerning the sinfulness of Conformity.

And that what they except against in Conformity, is not upon the account of its Sinfulness, but Inexpediency onely; which neither the Law of God, Nature nor Nations did ever allow the People to be Judges of, but the Rulers

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lers onely: and therefore ought in point of Christianity and right Religion, to be submitted to, for the sake of those great Christian duties, Peace, Unity and Obedience to Magistrates; for the conviction of our religious Enemies, for the good and prosperity of the Church, for the safety, honour, and welfare of the King and three Kingdoms, for the credit of Christianity, and for the glory of God, to whom be glory for ever and ever.

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*FINIS.*

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