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THE WORKS OF Thomas Goodwin, D.D.

SOMETIME

PRESIDENT of *Magdalen*-College in *Oxford.*

The Fourth Volume,

CONTAINING

DISCOURSES,

I. Of the Object and Acts of Justifying Faith. In Three Parts.

II. Of the Constitution, Order, and Discipline of the Churches of Christ.

III. The Government and Discipline of the Churches of Christ, propos'd familiarly by way of *Question* and *Answer.*

IV. Some Letters which pass'd between the Author and others concerning Church-Government.

LONDON,

Printed by *J. Darby*, *T. Snowden*, and *J. Astwood*, for *T. G.* and are to be sold by *Jonathan Robinson* at the Golden Lion in St. *Paul's* Church-yard. MDCXCVII.

A PREFACE TO THE READER.

AS *in this fourth Volume of the Author's Works, which by the generous Encouragement of some few worthy Gentlemen, who in a noble Zeal to promote the Doctrines of the Gospel, ingag'd to take off the whole Impression, there are great and important Truths discours'd with the same Life and Spirit which shin'd in the former; so I doubt not but it will find the same grateful Acceptance. After the Discourse of the Person and Mediation of our Blessed Lord Jesus, which you had in the Third Volume, it naturally follows in Order to have the Knowledg of the genuine Nature of that Faith, which looks to the Mediator; and comes to him for an Interest in his Person, Sacrifice, Blood and Righteousness. You have first the Infinite Mercies of God's Nature display'd as far as Man's Thoughts and Words can reach them, propos'd as the great Object which a Believer regards, as the Spring of all those Acts of Grace exerted in saving a Sinner, and in which he trusts and hopes. You have then the Promises, which are nothing but the Mercies of the Divine Nature, and his gracious Purposes proclaim'd to us, and so are absolute as they themselves are, propos'd as another Object which the Soul considers in Believing. You have then Jesus Christ set forth as the great Object of Faith in his Person God-man; and it is indeed a sufficient Argument to prove his Divinity, that we are commanded to believe on him; nor could we have a certain and undoubted Faith in him, if he were not God: for what assured Confidence and Hope could we have in a Creature, whose Goodness, Wisdom, and Power in the highest Excellence of them are imperfect and defective? The Author therefore insists on it, that the true Believer who heartily comes to Christ for Life and Salvation, regards him as the Son of God, and looks to, and considers the spiritual Excellencies of his Person. He is the Object of Faith too in respect of what he hath done and suffered for our Salvation, and of what he at present doth. He is the Object of Faith propos'd to us in his Death, Resurrection, and Intercession: and therefore I once had Thoughts to have drawn into this Discourse of the* Object and Acts of Faith, *as into their proper Place, those Treatises of the* Triumph of Faith *in Christ's Death, Resurrection, and Intercession, which were many Years ago printed in* Quarto *by my Dear Father himself. But when I considered that that excellent Book is in so many Hands, and perhaps the most of them, who will have this Volume, have that already, I apprehended it would look like a Wrong, and an imposing upon them, to reprint it again, to make them pay for what they had already. Therefore the Reader is to take notice, that the latter end of the Title of the second Book in this First Part of the* Object of Faith, *directs him to those Discourses of the* Triumph of Faith *which are in the* Quarto *Volume.*

The Second Part of this Treatise is concerning the Acts of Faith, *in which that Chapter about Joy in the Holy Ghost was his* Concio ad Clerum, *which the Author made when he commenc'd* Batchelor of Divinity *in* Cambridg: *but finding in his Papers that he design'd it to be a Part of this Discourse, and not finding that he had done it into English himself, I translated it that it might be suitable to the other Parts, tho my English doth not reach the Eloquence of his Latin.*

The Third Part treats of the Properties of Faith, *and in it you have Discouragements removed, and the Arminian Objections answer'd. They reproach us, that by depriving Man unregenerate of Power to believe, and by ascribing the Work of Faith entirely to Grace, we make Mens Endeavours to believe impossible, and all their Attempts of this nature frivolous and vain. The Author with great Strength of Thought, and Clearness of Expression, baffles these unreasonable Cavils, and shews how the prevailing and always victorious Grace of God, and our Endeavours, may very well be consistent together.*

In the Discourse of the Order and Government of the Churches of Christ, *tho the Author hath thrown down those Forms which have been erected by Men, and fashion'd to sute with the Political Regiment of Kingdoms, and hath in the room of it asserted that Order which is of Christ's own Institution; which tho it doth not dazle and take Mens vain Minds with any Appearance of Greatness and State, yet sufficiently recommends it self by its own plain native Beauty. Tho it is not pompous, yet it is handsome; tho it is not fram'd according to the admir'd Rules of Humane Policy, yet it is orderly, and so perfectly suted by the Wisdom of the Great King of Saints, to the Cases, Circumstances, and Necessities of them his Subjects in all Ages, so fitted to prevent Corruption both of Doctrine and Manners, to promote Holiness, and to attain all the Ends of Religion, that as there never hath been any need, so there never will be, to add any thing to his Orders. It is this Institution of Christ which the Author asserts, but maintains it with that Candor as well as Strength of Mind, that they who differ from him in Judgment cannot be angry. Here is no Pride nor Arrogance, which is insufferable in any Man, much more in a Minister of the Gospel: Here are no Reproaches, no base and sly Insinuations, no invidious Reflections with which Controversies are usually manag'd; but here are sober Thoughts, calm Reasonings, and the Truth shewing it self in such a mild and lovely Aspect as may create Inclinations to it in the Souls of all Persons whom Passion or Interest hath not too much prejudic'd.*

Thus I have endeavour'd to set before thee at one view the General Design of the Book; and that thou mayst see that thou hast all the MSS. *which I promised printed in it, I have annexed a Catalogue of them, directing in what Part of the Book thou mayst find any of them.*

I am

Thy hearty Servant

in our Lord Jesus,

Tho. Goodwin.

The CATALOGUE *of the Discourses of the* Object and Acts of Justifying Faith, *and of* the nineteen Discourses of Church-Government.

A CATALOGUE of the MSS. concerning *the Object and Acts of Justifying Faith.*	*Direction in what Parts of the Book the several MSS. are printed.*
DISCOURSE I. That the infinite Mercies in God's Nature, as proclaim'd in Scripture, are the Object of Faith. On *Exod.* 34. 6, 7.	Book I. Part I. *Of the Object*, &c. *of Faith.*
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DISCOURSE III. That Absolute Declarations of God, and Christ, and of the Free Grace of God, and absolute Promises of Salvation, are the proper Object of that Act of Application of Faith, which Divines call Faith of Recumbence, or Adherence.	Book III. *ibid.*
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DISCOURSE X. Of the Errors which Men run into in the way of believing.	Book I. Part II. *ch.* 7. *ibid.*
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DISCOURSE XIV. The Difficulty of the Work of Faith.	Book II. Part III. *ch.* 1, 2, 3, & 5. *ibid.*
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DISCOURSE XVII. Of the Excellency of Faith, and the general Influence which it hath on all our Graces.	Book I. Part III. *ch.* 1 & 3. *ibid.*
DISCOURSE XVIII. That the Reason why God hath chosen Faith to be the Grace by which we are saved, is because it gives all the Honour to God and Christ.	Book I. Part III. *ch.* 2. *ibid.*

is contained in

A CATALOGUE of *the Nineteen Discourses concerning Church-Order and Government.*

A CATALOGUE directing in what Part of this Volume they are printed.

DISCOURSE I. Of the Divine Institution of Congregational Churches.	Book I, II, & III. *of the Discourse concerning Church-Government.*
DISCOURSE II. Of Appeals and Synods.	Book V. *ch.* 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. *ibid.*
DISCOURSE III. Of a particular Congregational Church.	Book VI. *ibid.*
DISCOURSE IV. The Doctrine of the Church, by way of *Questions* and *Answers.*	*The Discourse of the Government and Discipline of the Churches of Christ by way of* Question *and* Answer. *Printed distinctly from the other.*
DISCOURSE V. Of Communion of Churches.	Book V. *ch.* 8, 9, 10, 11, & 12.
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OF

OF THE OBJECT AND ACTS OF Juſtifying FAITH.

PART I.
Of the Object of FAITH.

By

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OF THE OBJECT and ACTS OF Justifying Faith.

PART I.
Of the Object of Faith.

BOOK I.
The Mercies in God's Nature the Object, and Support, and Encouragement of Faith. How we are to act Faith thereon.

CHAP. I.

The words of the Text opened. That the MERCIES *in God's* HEART *and Nature, are a Fundamental Object and Support of Faith. Presumption thereon beaten off.*

PSAL. 130. 7.

Let Israel *hope in the Lord, for with the Lord there is Mercy; and with him is plenteous Redemption.*

THE *Work of Faith* whereby a Sinner's Heart is first won, then strengthened and supported to trust and stay it self on God, for its eternal Salvation, is in general experience, found to be a Matter of greatest *Difficulty*, Exercise and Conflict. There is need therefore of all sorts of *Encouragements* and Suggests, that can possibly be raised out of the Holy Scriptures, with the largest dilatings on them; which may either serve to bring humbled and broken Hearts and God together at first, or afterwards to hearten *them to hold fast the beginning of their Confidence firm and stedfast to the End*; and all little enough: Such, and so great, and so manifold are the Discouragements, which *Unbelief within us* doth foment, and which *Satan* doth indiscernably cast in. Now above all other inducers, and supporters unto Faith, the consideration of the *Mercies in God's Heart and Nature*, is the strongest, the most winning and obliging. Unto *throughly humbled and broken Hearts, it is I write this*: As for others who were never *heavy laden with Sin*, look as Sin sits light upon their Hearts, so they set as light by the *Mercies* of God; and a confused slight apprehension that *God is merciful* (which yet is their common Plea) serves their turn, and is a Salve sufficient for their Sore: Which indeed is but proportionable unto that like confused apprehension of their sinfulness, which in like manner they use to wrap up, *that we are all Sinners*. Ay, but take a Soul that hath been unhinged from off the Opinion of his being

John 6. 29.

Heb. 3. 6, 14.

Part I. ing in a good Estate, (which is so natural to us, and our Souls do turn themselves upon) and who also is made throughly sensible of the abounding *sinfulness of Sin*, as *Sin*, the least; and then hath taken in the dismal Prospect of the hainous Guilt of his bold Presumptions and crying Rebellions *against Knowledg*; and especially hath been amazed with that *numberless account*, of the innumerable Multitude and variety of Sinnings, which he is to give unto God the Judg of all Men; and together herewith hath been struck as with Lightning and a Thunderbolt, with the *dreadfulness* of that *Wrath* of the great God that is due thereunto; (all which *apprehensions* do yet *prepare* Mens Souls for *Faith justifying*, and dispose them the more readily to attend to, and take in these *encouragements* unto *Faith* that follow) and to work some apprehensions of these, and to set forth these, hath been the *drift* of those the Subjects of the foregoing Treatises. Unto such a Soul, (I say) filled with the Apprehensions of these things, the most enlarged, full discovery that can any way be made of the *riches* of the *Mercies* that are in the Heart and Nature of God, and of the *fulness of Merit* that is in Christ's *Righteousness* and *Redemption*, do all prove little enough effective, either to beget a sound and saving Faith, (when upon this Conviction it is anew to be wrought in such a Soul); or when some beginnings of that Faith are in some degree raised, to keep it up, nourish and sustain it, in a comfortable Rest and Confidence unto the end. Which Difficulty doth not arise from any Want or Scantness in the *Objects* themselves, which are so over-rich and super-abundant for the Pardon of Sinners; but from the deep incredulity, and vast Fears, Jealousies, and Misgivings, which our Souls (when the hideous *apparitions* of *Sin* and *Wrath* are *raised* up once in Mens Consciences) do create and harbour in themselves in Matters of so infinite Moment, as Salvation and Damnation appear then to be at such times. The truth of these things (besides daily experience) we may readily perceive by the Pulse of his Heart that penned this *Psalm*, and the beatings thereof therein: who being sunk into the greatest Depths [*Out of the Depths have I cried*, &c.] which *Depths* (when we fathom them) we find to be his Sins, both in the *Multitude* and *Heinousness* of them, as the following verse, *ver.* 3. tells us; [*If thou Lord shouldst mark Iniquities* (therein lay the bottom of his Distress) *O Lord who shall stand?*] In which Conflict and sad Condition, what hath his Faith its next and immediate recourse unto of all other things, which the Word of God (for *that*, as the 5*th verse* says, he consulted) did afford; and which he commends unto all the *Israel of God*, ver. 7. as the mainest prop and support unto his and their Faith? Even this, WITH THE LORD THERE IS MERCY, *and with him there is* PLENTEOUS REDEMPTION, *v.* 7. And then again, WITH THEE THERE IS FORGIVENESS, *verse* 4. as the Fruit both of *Mercy* and *Redemption*: and therefore it is *that my Soul doth wait for the Lord*, verse 7. *And therefore let* Israel *hope in the Lord. And he shall redeem* Israel *from all his Iniquities*, ver. 7 and 8. this is the summary effect of this *Psalm*. Nor yet *herein* do we find this poor humbled Soul to pitch his Hope and Confidence upon any gracious Works had been wrought, or were in or with himself; he is altogether silent as to any mention of such: but wholly and absolutely his Affiance is upon *what* was *with God*, *and in God*, *Mercy* is with *him*, &c. (says he.) And this is it was the Foundation and bottom of his Hope; this was all he had (now) to say: and yet opposeth this alone unto all the *Sins* and Iniquities which came up before his view, whether in their *Greatness* or *Multitude*. *There is Mercy with God*, enough to pardon them, yea and more than enough, [*plenteous*] *Redemption*, overflowing Redemption, and of Mercies together with it. Again, whether all these Mercies were as yet *his* own in particular or no, he speaks not *that* neither; not whether God were the *God of his Mercies* (as *David*, when stablish'd in Assurance elsewhere speaks, *Psal.* 89. 10.) but only utters this for the present, (and that he was sure of) *that Mercy was with God*, *and in God*; *Forgiveness was with him*, there it was to be had for such Sinners as he was, and for the *Israel of God*, and therefore he personally puts in for a share in them, that was all *his* Hope. Yea, and thereupon he quietly *waits* (as he there professeth to do) till the Lord should give forth some farther special word of Comfort to his doleful and desolate Soul.

I. *Three* things are here said, to be [*with God:*] which phrase [*with God*] he again and again chooseth to express the Grounds of his Hope in God by. He applies it, 1. To *Mercy*, the Original and Womb of all; *Mercy is with him.* When a Quality

Quality is in one as a *Disposition*, or his *Nature*, we find it said, that [it is with him] of *Nabal*, *Folly is* [with him] *as is his Name, so is he*, 1 Sam.25.25. 2. To *Redemption*, which I understand to be the Mediation and Satisfaction of the *Messiah*, (which was in those times in the *Psalmist* and other Believers Eyes) *the procuring Cause* of all. 3. To *Forgiveness*, as the Fruit and Effect of both; Forgiveness (also) is *with thee*. Book I.

Yet II. These three are said to be [with him] in a *differing* Sense or *Respect*.

1. *Mercy* is *with God*, that is, it is in him as his *Nature*, and is all one as if he had said, he is of himself, and of his own inclination a most *gracious* and *merciful God*, mercifully disposed to forgive; *ready to forgive*, as the 85*th Psalm* expresseth it: It is his *Name*, it is his *Nature*, and in this Sense it is said to be *with him*; it is also in his Purposes and Resolutions of his Will, yea, it is the *Delight of his* Soul.

2. *Redemption* is in *that* Sense said to be *with God*, as his *Treasures* are elsewhere said to be *with him*, that is, laid up with him or by him, *Deut.* 32. 34. And thus Christ's Redemption or Righteousness was then *with him*, in the Virtue of Christ's Bond and Covenant given to God to perform it; and as truly *with God* then, as since that Christ hath actually paid it; *Christ being the Lamb slain from the beginning of the World.* And God did accordingly *then* under the Old Testament, pardon Sinners upon the Intuition and Security thereof, as *Rom.* 3. 25, 26. shews; which Place plainly speaks forth this Truth, as also *Acts* 15. 11. the same: in *Job* you have a Term equivalent unto the Psalmist's word *Redemption*, Job 33. 24. *Deliver* him, (saith God of an humbled Sinner) *I have found a* RANSOM or Atonement.

III. In the Virtue and Intuition of these *two*, it is that *David* says, *Forgiveness is also with him*, that is, it is laid up *ready* by him on purpose to be had from him: As Money coined lies ready by a rich Man, as a rich Man lays up ready Money designed for such a special Use; so is Forgiveness *laid up* as on purpose. *He is ready to forgive*, Psal. 86. 5. And God hath minted his *Mercies* forth from out of his *Purposes* into *Promises*, where they lie exposed, and to be given forth to every one that will come in for Grace, and take them from Mercies Hands, *even Redemption from all Iniquity*, whereof there is this undoubted Evidence given in the *Psalm*, that God would have the Sons of Men thereupon, and for that Cause to *fear* him, that is, to *worship* him and *come* to him; which if Forgiveness were not [*with him*] and to be had from him, for them, they would never do. You find moreover a special Encomium of [*plenteous*] given to one of those *three*, in saying [*plenteous Redemption*] which is placed in the *midst of the three*, on purpose to shew that the Glory of this Epithet is to be transfused to both those other; and so what is given to that one, is in like manner to be attributed to the other *two*, but especially unto the *first*, *viz.* [*Mercy*] which hath in other Scriptures eminently the Glory of *Riches or Plenteousness* ascribed unto it; *that* being the Original both of *Redemption* and *Forgiveness*, and they but *Derivatives* from it: And so it is all one as if he had plainly said, that [*plenteous*] *Mercy* also is with him. And indeed elsewhere *David* gives the very same attribute unto *Mercy*, *Psal.* 103. 8. *The Lord is plenteous in Mercy*; and for that other of *Forgiveness*, (the Effect of both) it is impliedly all one, as if he had said of *that* also, that *plenteous Forgiveness is with him*, which very stile God himself doth in Terms equivalent elsewhere use of it, *Isa.* 55. 7. I will *abundantly pardon*. So then *Plenteousness* and *Riches* were intended, and are to be attributed to *them all*, but above all unto *Mercy*, of which you so often read, the same to be spoken, as *abundant Mercy*, 1 Pet. 1. 2. *the exceeding Riches of his Grace*, Eph. 2. 8.

The Heart and Drift of the *Psalmist* being thus laid open, I begin with the MERCIES of *God*, these being the Original, the Matrix, the *Primo primum*, the first causes of our Salvation, and that other of Christ's *Righteousness* (or *Redemption*) but a *Primo ortum*, or that which sprang or rose up from thence; this therefore of the *Mercies* in God's Heart ought to have the Priority, as having deservedly the Preheminence in the thing *it self*, and as being most *Fundamental*, and accordingly procreative of Faith.

The OBSERVATION for our Practice which comes forth and meets us out of the whole, is, That *it is a most behoveful and advantagious way for humbled Sinners, in their treaties with God for Forgiveness, to take the most ample view of the infinite Mercies that are in the Heart and Nature of God, together with Promises of Forgiveness indefinitely delivered, and so to plead them unto God. Which to do, will prove the great-* *Observ.*

Part I. *eſt Support and Strength to their Souls for believing.* This, I confeſs to be in view ſo plain a Point, and ſo obvious in the very propoſal of it unto every common Underſtanding in Chriſtianity, that it will perhaps be wondred at that I ſhould ſo largely inſiſt upon it; yet this I will aforehand ſay, that the true and real ſpiritual Exerciſe and Practice of it, as it is not commonly enough and experimentally underſtood, but very greatly diſuſed; ſo the Uſe and Benefit that follows thereupon, is exceeding great, and not ſufficiently known. And unto Souls humbled and broken (as aforeſaid) that this Courſe ſhould be taken by them, is ſo remote from ſtrengthning *Preſumption* in them, that on the contrary (through the Efficacy of the ſame Mercy) it proves moſt operative to make the Soul holy and obedient unto God; according unto that true antient and frequent Character given of Saints under the Old Teſtament, where we find theſe two joined, as impoſſible to be ever ſeparated, (when they are in Truth either of them) *One that feareth God* (whereby his Obedience is expreſſed) *and that hopes in his Mercy,* (whereby his Faith is expreſſed) as *Pſal.* 33.18. *Behold the Eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his Mercy:* And Pſal. 147. 11. *The Lord taketh pleaſure in them that fear him, in thoſe that hope in his Mercy.* And as you find theſe two diſtinctly thus mentioned, and theſe two alone mentioned, to ſpeak the whole Sum of all true practical Religion; ſo of the two you find the ſpecial Indigitation to be ſet over, and put on that latter of theſe Characters in both places [*UPON THEM*] *that hope in his Mercy:* thoſe, and *thoſe* eſpecially, that are eminent in that Grace, it is, that *his Eyes are upon,* and whom he hath pleaſure in. And let this be ſufficient once for all, to ſtrike off the preſumptuouſneſs of impenitent Sinners, that reſolve to go on in Sin, from laying on its impure Hands upon theſe Holy *Mercies* (as the *Mercies of Chriſt* are ſtiled by the Apoſtle, *Acts* 13. 34. out of *Iſa.* 55. 3. ſee the Margent of your Bibles). And finally to roll the fatal Stone upon the Sepulchre of ſuch Sinners as ſhall thus preſume on Mercy, take but that one Scripture, *Deut.* 29. 18, 19, 20. *If any Man or Woman hearing the words of this Curſe,* (which is there pronounced upon one's turning away from the Lord, after the tender of the Covenant of Grace, publiſhed in that and the following *Chapter*, as *Rom.* 10. ſhews) *ſhall bleſs himſelf in his Heart, ſaying, I ſhall have Peace though I walk in the imagination of mine Heart: The anger of the Lord ſhall ſmoke againſt that Man, and all the Curſes that are written in this Book, ſhall lie upon him, and the Lord ſhall blot out his Name from under Heaven.* And this to be ſure is load enough to preſs down ſuch Sinners above any other, to the very bottom of Hell, who bearing themſelves upon that Grace made known, and tendred them, ſhall wilfully go on in Sin without Repentance and turning unto God.

CHAP. II.

An Explication how this Aſſertion *is to be underſtood:* 1. *On the* Negative. *Not as if alone conſidered, the Mercies in God* (as they are abſtractly in God's Nature) *were a ſole Foundation for Faith; but as being joined with an* indefinite declaration *of his* Good-will *to us Men: and in that conjuncture, all the Mercies that are in God do flow in to ſupport our Faith.* This Negative part of this Explication *confirmed from the inſtance of the Devils, and of our firſt Parents, until God's Revelation of his Good-will to Mankind made to them.* 2. *The poſitive Ground of Faith laid open; and the Reaſon why a Declaration of his Will is neceſſary. Two premiſory* Cautions *more added, for the underſtanding the* Aſſertion.

ERE I come to the Proof of the ASSERTION, it is neceſſary to ſtate and explain it to prevent miſtakes.

And firſt on the *Negative,* it is not, as if the Knowledg of the Mercies in God's Nature were alone a ſingle adequate Ground of Faith, though we could attain unto never ſo inlarged apprehenſions thereof. This Negative is evident,

1. Becauſe

1. Because *where* and *whom* God hath absolutely and peremptorily, and for ever, by a special Bar and Proviso, declared, and excepted from Mercy and Pardon; *There* and unto *those*, all the Mercies that are in God's Nature, though known by them, can no way be drawn in, or ever become an Object or Ground for their Faith, such as shall any way benefit those Persons declared against. This is the Case of the Devils, who are shut out from Mercy: and this not only by that single Bolt of the Law, *Cursed be every one that continues not*, &c. (for that doth alike *shut* us Men *up*, *until Faith* (that is the Gospel) be revealed) but they have *that*, and a farther and stronger Bolt and Bar, never to be shut back, or rather (as the Apostle metaphors it) *everlasting Chains*, of God's making, (never to be broken or knock'd off) that hold them fast under *Darkness*. Which Chains are super-added to that single Sentence or *Curse* which merely the Law pronounceth against them, (for that alone might have been annulled, through a Grace of Pardon, as well as to us Men it is) but God did further declare irrecoverably against them, and each of them, personally, on the *Negative*, that he will never be merciful to them: *He spared them not*, says the Apostle, *but cast them down to Hell, and delivered them into Chains of Darkness, to be reserved unto Judgment*; he gave them no Quarter. And thereupon some Divines have said (which I will not dispute) that *Despair* of *Mercy*, taken abstractly, for this single Apprehension in their Understandings, that *God will have no Mercy on them*; and that Apprehension also as it is accompanied simply with *no Hope of Mercy*, that this alone would *be no Sin in them*, seeing it is but conformed unto what is the Truth, which God hath revealed to them, concerning themselves: only the Consequences hereof in them, are the Sins, as *Blasphemy*, *and the like*. Book I.

2. But however, Secondly, I may more safely assert, whatsoever the *Devils* do *believe*, or may be supposed to believe of the Mercies that are in God's *Nature*, that yet, however, their Faith thereof doth no way capacitate them to lay hold upon them for Pardon, but cause them the *more* to *tremble* at the Thoughts that they are for ever utterly excluded, whilst they revolve within themselves, that such Riches of Mercy are in God, but in no wise do concern them, and withal to think (which hath the Sting in it) that all those Mercies should be *kept* and intirely *reserved* (as God's Expression in the second Commandment is) for the Sinners of the Sons of Men, while themselves on the contrary are *kept* and *reserved* under those *Chains unto Judgment*, (as the Words of two Apostles are, 2 *Pet.* 2. 4. *Jude* 6.) But, that these Apprehensions should inrage and provoke them, unto that resolved and *obstinate Malice and Revenge*, which they bear against God; *these all* I am sure (without any Debate) are *Sins*; yea, the highest kinds of Sinnings, and yet are but the *Consequents* of that Despair forementioned, which in it self alone would be no Sin.

3. Nor yet, Thirdly, would the *single Knowledg* of all the Mercies that *are in the Nature of God*, have been a full and sole Ground of *actual positive Faith*, unto us Sinners of the Sons of Men, had not God upon the Fall first unbosomed himself, and declared his *Purposes of Mercy* towards us in his Messiah. Our first Parents, during that doleful *Space* or *Interim* (*Suspension* shall I call it) between their Fall, and *that* (ever to be blessed) *Declaration* let fall by God, of his *good Will to Men*, in the Promise of the blessed Seed *of the Woman*, &c. until *then* I say, although they were not utterly *debarred*, upon their Sinning, as the Devils were upon theirs, yet they had not any Ground or Footing, for a *positive* Act of Faith, for Forgiveness: notwithstanding we should or might suppose them to have known, and (after their Fall) to have retained, and continued to have known or remembred *that infinite Goodness* (which is the *Spring* of *Mercies* in God) to have been in the Divine Nature, as well as any other *divine Perfections*; and that possibly *that Goodness* might be dissolved and melted into *Mercy* and *Forgiveness* unto Sinners, such as now themselves were become. But yet still *the Curse of the Law*, *Thou shalt die the Death*, standing in full Force, and full *Butt* (as we say) against them; and that being the whole of the Mind and Will of God, which at that present was revealed to them; therefore they had no *Door* of *Faith* and *Hope* any way *open* before them, but were, as to their own Apprehension, utterly *shut* up, unless some *Word of Faith* should be further made known to them. God had not let fall the least Intimation of Mercy, neither by proclaiming his *Nature to be merciful*; nor as yet had he said, *I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious*; nor was there any Instance or Example of any one of

Part I. of the Sons of Men (for alas there were but those two extant) whom he had *de facto* pardoned, which might give them any Encouragement, or Dawn of Hope.

But notwithstanding perhaps it might be proposed as a *Question* that would require a just Debate, Whether *an utter Despair* (such as we speak of, to be in the Devils) singly considered, and cut off from the cursed Consequents forementioned, had not yet in them been properly a Sin during that Interval, which in the Devils simply and alone it is not. And the Ground of the Demur is this apparent Difference between the Devils Condition and theirs, during that Space: that God had not *negatively* pronounced of them, I will *never be merciful*, as of the Devils he had from the first of their Sinning. Yet still this must be said, that they had not the smallest Twig for a *positive* Act of Faith, to *set foot upon*: (I allude to that in *Noah*'s Flood) but in *that* Condition of theirs, nothing in sight did appear, but an over-flowing Deluge of Wrath, which did environ and over-spread them, and their Posterity *in* and *with* them, through the first Curse, not as yet taken off, nor mitigated by any new Declaration of God. This for the *Negative* State of the Assertion.

II. For the *positive Ground of Faith*. *Blessed, yea for ever blessed be our God*, who hath not only by *that Promise* to *them*, but with Millions of other Promises and Declarations since made to us, thrown open all the *Windows* of *Heaven*, and freely exposed all the Mercies in his Heart and Nature, unto us the sinful Sons of Men, *Peace on Earth, good Will towards Men*, &c. (not *in Hell*, nor *to the Devils*:) And withal hath given an *Invitation*, nay a *Command*, to hope in them; and hath taught us to know *him by this* of *his Mercy*, (above all his Perfections) yea and pronounced of *our Knowledg* and Faith thereon, that he esteems it to be *our Glory*, yea his own greatest Glory, that we should *know him* to be a *God that exerciseth Loving-kindness, Righteousness and Judgment in the Earth*; (on *Earth still*, not *in Hell*) and *that therein he doth delight*, Jer. 9. 24. Moreover, in that he hath not, by any express *Proviso* or Exception, declared against any sort of Sinners, or any individual Person of the Sons of Men; so as to say of any *such*, or *such*, I will never be *merciful* to, nor *pardon them* (as against the Devils he did) that sort only excepted that sin against the *Holy Ghost*; thereby it comes to pass, that not any one can say, I am debarr'd or excluded. And hence a wide *Door* for *Hope* and *Faith* stands open, for any one to come in at. Nay, he further *commands every Man every where to repent*, upon the Hopes of Mercy, through the *indefinite* Promulgation of it; adding withal, *whosoever believeth and repenteth, he shall be saved*, laying at the Gage for the Performance thereof, *all the Mercies in his Nature*, which we, thorow these Declarations, have free Access unto, and full Liberty to plead them all afore him, and urge him with them. The *Product* or Issue of all which is, that the Revelation of the Mercies of his Nature thus joined with the Declarations of his gracious Willingness to shew Mercy to us Men, is *now* become a just and meet *Ground* and *Object* for a Sinner's Faith: Whereas otherwise, like as Breasts never so full, if there were not a Teat, and a Vent fitted to the Child's Mouth, they would never afford any Succour to a perishing Infant; so here in this Case. And it is not an Allusion foreign to the Scriptures, to compare God's *Mercies* and Promises unto *Breasts of Consolation*. And the *Reason* of this Conclusion is, because God's *shewing* or his *actual* exercising of *Mercy* dependeth upon *an Act of his Will*, and is not a mere, sole, single Effect of his *Nature*. For if it were solely an Act of his Nature, it would have been, and would still be necessary for him to shew Mercy on the Devils: and therefore look as God's actual shewing Mercy, dependeth upon an Act of his Will, *I will be merciful to whom I will*, &c. so some *Revelation* or *Manifestation* of his *good Will*, (at least *indefinite* to Mankind) is necessary *to our Faith*, and not merely the Knowledg of the Mercy in his Nature; and as both concur to the effecting the *thing*, so also the *Apprehension* of both should do unto our *believing*. And otherwise, *Who hath known the Mind of the Lord, or who hath been his Counsellor?* Rom. 11. 34. And it is notorious, that the Apostle utters *that* Maxim upon this very Point of God's *Will*, in *shewing Mercy*, for which compare *ver.* 30, 31, 32.

I add unto these things concerning the *stating of this Assertion*, these *two Premises* more, for the *practical* understanding of it.

1. I must *not* be understood, *as if that every time the Soul doth exercise an Act of Faith, he must of absolute Necessity take into his Thoughts such an ample Review of*

these

these Mercies: And that otherwise it were not Faith: No. For it often falls out, that in the exercising of Believing, such things as are *most fundamental* to *Faith*, and were at first *explicitely* taken in and considered by Believers, are afterwards but as things taken for *granted* and supposed: and yet notwithstanding, all those *subsequent after-Acts* of Faith are put forth in the *Strength* of them. We may know, that *general Principles* of *Knowledg* in any kind being once inlaid and pre-conceived, do yet *virtually work*, and the Force of them conduces to the making of every *Conclusion*, when yet we do not explicitely think of those Principles. And in like manner it comes to pass, that our Souls do many times *really* act true Faith, upon particular Promises of Forgiveness, or the like Promises, when yet we did not *aforehand*, or *together therewith*, revolve in our Minds at large the Thoughts of these *Mercies*, which yet are to be always supposed the bottom of those Promises, and fundamental to our Faith. And notwithstanding this, yet the Belief of them doth *secretly* and *really* work and accompany such a Faith: even as *Principles of Knowledg*, innate and taken for granted, are wont to do our *Improvements of Knowledg* from them, whilst those Principles lie dormant as to our thinking, and yet those Improvements grow up in the Virtue and Strength of them. We may see this in that *one most fundamental* Principle of Faith of all other, [*That there is a God*] which being inlaid in the bottom of the Heart of every Believer, works in all particular Acts of Faith whatever: and they are all founded and born up upon the Strength and Weight thereof, when it self, in the way of a formed Proposition, is not discerned, nor brought forth into an *explicite* Act or Thought. And thus it falls out in the Faith of Forgiveness, it is always put forth in the Force of the Belief of those Mercies, when yet the Conceptions thereof lay *hidden* deep in the Soul. Which to be *so*, may appear by *this* Experiment; that *all our Faith for Forgiveness, may, at any time, be readily and finally resolved into the Mercies of God*, as the *ultimum Objectum in quod*, as the *ultimate Object* or Foundation. This will be found if the Heart will at any time call for the bottom-ground of its Faith, or of its Recourse unto God for Forgiveness, and but *ask of it self the Reason why it so believes.* Yet,

Book I.

2. It still stands good (and is even sufficiently inferred from that which was last said) *that the more ample diffused Prospect, View and Contemplation of these Mercies, which upon all great Occasions (especially in Conflicts of Believing) we can possibly make, or attain to, is the most conducible expedite way, to give an abundant Evidence unto Faith*, and doth wonderfully hearten a broken-hearted Sinner to lay hold upon any particular Promise, especially of Forgiveness: which otherwise comes but barely clad, in comparison of what it appears to be, when the *Riches* of Mercy (being apprehended with it) do environ and array it, which super-add wonderful Allurements to our Faith. And this Assertion, as I said, is inferred even from what was spoken afore, *viz.* that if the *tacite* hidden *Belief* of *fundamental* Principles (such this is) do *virtually*, yet *strongly* influence all *subsequent Acts* of *Faith*, then *much more* if there be an *extensive revolving* of them in our Thoughts, they will come to have, according to the Proportion of that Inlargement, (through the Spirit's accompanying of them) answerable Effects, in an Inlargement and *Increase* of *Faith in us.*

CHAP. III.

The Proofs *of this Assertion:* 1. *By* Scripture; *and afterwards by* Reasons: *One* Scripture *above all other singled forth, and that alone;* Exod. 34. 6, 7. *This made a* new Text *for the subsequent Discourse:* The grand Assertion resolved unto two Heads; *both of them* distinctly *drawn out, and proposed to be proved out of the Text: The Eminency of this one* Scripture *is commended thereby to all our Faiths: Old Testament Faith, and New, one and the same.*

I Come to the *Confirmation* of the *Assertion*, as thus stated and explained, which proceeds,

1. By *Scripture.*
2. By *the true and innate* REASONS *thereof, drawn from the* NATURE OF FAITH;

Part I. *FAITH; and the WONDERFUL SUTEDNESS that the Mercies in God's Heart hold, by way of Object* with *and* unto *that Principle of Faith in our Hearts, so as to attract and draw forth* Faith, *in* all *the* Acts *of it.*

1. By Scripture I single out only *that renowned Original* God himself immediately published unto *Moses*, concerning his pardoning Mercies to him and us all: For unto him it was, though on our Behalf also, that they were proclaimed, *Exod.* 34. Two *grand Deeds* there were, which *Old Testament-Faith* held all upon. The *first* of the *Promised Messiah*, given to *Eve* and *Adam*, at *first* by *God himself*, the *immediate* Revealer; and *after* renewed to *Abraham*, *David*, and so on. The *second*, *this glorious Display of pardoning Mercies*, which was as *immediately*, but far more *solemnly* proclaimed, *Regio more*, by *God himself*: And these two were as the *two Pillars*, *Boaz* and *Jachim* in the House of God; and are in *Psal.* 130. set out as *two known Cities of Refuge*, for broken Hearts to fly unto. I shall make the *latter* of these the *Stage* or *Substratum* of all throughout this Treatise; the *Grace* and *Mercy* in God being the *Originale originans*, the *Womb* or *Original* even of the *Promise of Christ* himself, and bears up an answerable Pre-eminence of Order and Stress in the Foundation of our Faith. And this Scripture, *Exod.* 34. 6, 7. holds forth the amplest and largest Display of Mercy any other affords. And therefore I have, most deservedly, made choice of this one, to sustain henceforth the whole Weight of all that follows; and shall accordingly found all upon it as upon a new Text.

EXOD. XXXIV. 6, 7.

And the Lord passed before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in Goodness and Truth;

Keeping Mercy for thousands, forgiving Iniquity, Transgression, and Sin; and that will by no means clear the guilty: visiting the Iniquity of the Fathers upon the Children, and upon the Childrens Children, unto the third and to the fourth Generation.

I Shall not yet handle it in such an orderly and continued way, as is usual to compleat the Exposition of a *Text*; but do reserve that when I come to the Merits of it afterwards. In the mean while, I shall only make *Observation* of such things *about* and *out of* it, as do directly tend to prove that general Subject I affixed as the Title to the whole Discourse, in the Front, upon the Entrance unto it. The Substance of which is resolved into two Propositions and Heads. 1. That the *Mercies in God's Heart* and *Nature* are a *prime Object* and *Support* of Faith, as it hath been stated. 2. That *Mercy* and *Grace in God* are truly and properly *Properties of the Divine Nature and Being*; or, *that God is of a merciful Nature*; and that his *Heart* and Purposes are to shew Mercy, as the Effects of that *Mercy* in his Nature: which two will make the Demonstration compleat. And my Design is to alledg the *Heads* of no *other Proofs* for *either*, than what *these Words*, and the *Coherence* of them, and Circumstances about them, or Citations of them elsewhere, do afford Ground for: and shall call in no other Scriptures, but reductive only, for Aid; and but such as of themselves will come about this, to back and confirm those Proofs first, so grounded on the Words. The Grounds for the first *Head* are two. 1*st*. Some special Observations made upon this *Proclamation* it self, of Mercy; which contains the *Occasion*, *Circumstances*, *End*, and Purpose of it; and the Issue and Use made of it by *Moses*, at that instant Time. All which, as they do wonderfully enhance the Grace and Mercy of God proclaimed in it, so do mightily also commend these Words unto our Faith. 2*dly*. *That these very Words* (as to before the Substance of them) *were ever after made use of, as the common Refuge and Asylum* (and therefore the Object) *of the Faith of the Saints of the old Testament*; as to which they ordinarily had Recourse for their Support, in point of Forgiveness, and upon other Occasions, in which they stood in need of Mercy. The Evidence of both which, when they shall be spread before us, and punctually exemplified in so many *Instances* of the best and greatest of Saints, and their Practice, this rich Parcel of Scripture will come *concredited* and *recommended* to *our Faith*; with a mighty *Testimonial*, under the Hands of so many renowned *Witnesses*, that *lived and died in the Faith*: As the Apostle speaks of those Saints, *Heb.* 11. throughout that Chapter, and in *Chap.* 12. And as the Apostle there exhorts those *Hebrews* of the New Testament, *to live by Faith*,

Faith, from the *Instances* of such *a Cloud of Witnesses*, under the Old Testament, of whom he gives the Catalogue; so may I, upon as just a Ground, invite all Believers, heedfully to attend this Scripture; as being also the Spring of all other Scriptures, about God's Mercies, that after followed, which are but as lesser Streams from a Fountain. And I may withal invite them to study the Mercies of God, as they are set forth therein; and to have it much in their Meditations, Treaties, and Pleadings with God, and in all their Exercises of Believing; because in this small Compass of Words God hath *met with*, and *by it* supported so many of his precious *ones* of old. And we that are Believers under the New Testament, *we having the same Spirit of Faith; according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken, we also believe, and therefore speak*, 2 Cor. 4. 13. (as the great Apostle, citing *David*'s Old-Testament-Faith, to express his own New-Testament-Faith by) and we professing with all the Apostles and Primitive Saints, *to believe that we shall be saved by the same Grace of Christ*, (and Mercy of God) that they under the Old Testament were saved by, (which great Maxim is expresly utter'd in the Name of the Apostles, and of all the Christians of the New, *Acts* 15. 11.) may well be induc'd to make a like Improvement and Valuation of this Old Testament-Carkenet, bestudded with so many Jewels. Book I.

CHAP. IV.

That the Mercies of God's Heart and Nature *are the prime Object of Faith. The* first Proof *drawn from some special Observations upon this Proclamation of Mercy*, Exod. 34. 6, 7. *and upon the* Story, *Occasion, Occurrences, Circumstances, End and Purpose of it by God. The Issue and Effect of it, and the Use* Moses *made of it; which, as they exceedingly exalt the Grace and Mercy proclaimed, so do greatly commend it to our Faith, for the* Support *of it.*

THAT this Proclamation of Grace was fully intended by God, for a Foundation to our Faith, and that it tendeth directly to prove the *Assertion*, the following Observations will, I hope, when taken along and put together, sufficiently possess us of. 'Tis true that these *Observations* themselves are but about *Circumstantials* of the proclaiming it, in comparison unto the gracious *Matter* and *Merits* themselves contained in the Proclamation it self; and these concern but the Occasion, Season, &c. which God took for this first publishing of it: yet such they are as the *Consideration* of them doth greatly tend to the exalting of God's Grace, which is proclaimed therein; and the two last of them will end in a punctual Proof of this first Head.

That 'twas God himself who immediately published this. Wise Princes, if Matters of *extraordinary Grace* be to be declared or manifested, choose to do it themselves, and not by others, though Favourites. And if ever there were *Words of Grace* spoken, then are these such: They are *suavissima Concio* (as one stiles them) *the sweetest Sermon that ever was preached.* And *God himself* was the *Preacher*, and for the *Reason* forementioned would be the Proclaimer of them. Obs. 1. Osiander.

The *Vulgar Translation* and the *Romanists* addicted thereunto, do put the Honour of proclaiming it upon *Moses* (forsooth) and that it should be *he* who said, *Jehovah merciful*, &c. to the great obscuring of the Greatness, yea Majesty of God, given Demonstration of, herein.

'Tis true those Words in *ver.* 5. translated [*he proclaimed the Name of Jehovah*] are elsewhere rendred [*called on the Name of Jehovah*]: And indeed the very same Words, *in the Hebrew*, are used of *Jacob*, Gen. 12. 8. that *he called upon the Name of the Lord.* And so if the Coherence here had not apparently contradicted it, it might have been so understood here, and attributed to *Moses.* But to be sure those Words, *ver.* 6. And the Lord passed by *before him*, and *proclaimed, The Lord merciful*, &c. this must necessarily be referred to God himself, not to *Moses.* For,

1. He that *passed by* was he who proclaimed this; *and that was God.*
2. We find God himself, in *chap.* 33. to have given it out to *Moses*, and to have before-

before-hand promised that himself would be the *Proclaimer*. *I will proclaim the Name of the Lord*, (saith he) and so not *dictate* it only for *Moses* to proclaim it; and accordingly we see that here in *chap.* 34. he performs it, *ver.* 5, 6. *The Lord descended in the Cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the Name of the Lord; and the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord God, merciful*, &c.

Part I.

3. *Moses*'s true Time and first beginning to speak was but at the 8*th* and 10*th* Verses: *And* Moses *made haste and bowed his head, and worshipped, and he said*, &c. namely, after that God had done speaking: And thereupon it was, that he began to speak in all great haste, and to urge what God himself had said. So as indeed it is plain, that both Speeches, both that in *ver.* 5. as well as that in *ver.* 6. are to be understood not of invocating the *Name of the Lord*, but of *proclaiming* the Lord, as our Translators have rendred them both, and both alike to be wholly referred to God as the *Proclaimer*. And that it should be twice said, he *proclaimed*, was to put a Notoriety upon it, and to shew of what Moment it was for us to know that the great God proclaimed thus his own Name and Glory; and the Stream of the Hebrew Text runs thus, *ver.* 5. And the *Lord descended in the Cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the Name of the Lord.* He that descended and stood with *Moses*, he it was that proclaimed it, and that to be sure was God.

But we find *Moses*, in *Numb.* 14. expressly urging these Words as *God*'s own Words upon him, so to put the more Force into his Plea; *ver.* 17. *And now I beseech thee, let the Power of my Lord be great, according as thou hast spoken, SAYING, (Quemadmodum pronunciasti dicendo* [even *AS THOU HAST PRONOUNCED*] (O God) *in saying) The Lord is long-suffering*, &c.

Junius and Tremel.

Obs. 2. *It is further said, that God descended to proclaim this in* ver. 5. *which still speaks the more Grace.* I know it is historically meant of God's visible descending in the Cloud; yet give me leave from that Shadow or Type thereof, to decipher the Impresses of Grace signified thereby. For,

1*st.* That God should shew Mercy to Sinners, hath the greatest Condescension in it, but much more to come down and proclaim it: *He humbleth himself to behold things in Heaven*, (even to behold his Angels that never sinned) *Psal.* 113. 6. but for him not only to *behold*, but withal to deign to cast an Eye of Grace and Mercy upon Sinners, the *things* on *Earth*, yea and himself to descend unto Earth to proclaim it, this is *condescending indeed* in the *high* and *lofty* One. And further,

2*dly.* For the great God to shut up the emblazoning his incomprehensible simple Nature into the narrow Compass of a few Words and Form of Speech, and those Words importing several distinct things; and so as it were to pourtray forth himself by Piece-meals and brokenly, by an imperfect Delineation (for such these Epithets are) to the end to bring himself down to our low Capacities and Conceits; this was a farther condescending indeed; it is a speaking to us of himself in the Image of our own puerile Understandings. But,

3*dly.* This his visible descending in the View of all the People, to proclaim this Grace by Words, was a most certain Pledg given, that he who was the Jehovah, *God blessed for ever, would one day break the Heavens, and come down and take our Nature, and dwell among us*, and put this *Proclamation* into full Force and Virtue, which in the mean while, until he should do this, had yet its Efficacy upon the Saints of the Old Testament; and upon that descending to be sure we shall have Cause to say, as in the same Chapter, *That the Law came by* Moses, *but Grace and Truth by Jesus Christ*; which are the great Materials of this great Proclamation, and of which the second Person, the Son of God, was indeed the *Proclaimer*.

Obs. 3. *The Subject Matter of this Proclamation consists chiefly of Grace and Mercy.* 'Tis true, Matter of Justice comes in and hath a Place in it, but how? Afterwards: but *Mercy* excels, exceeds, and is the prevailing Argument.

1. In the *Number* of the *Particulars* here recited, there are thirteen Titles (say the Jewish Writers) given to God here; others reckon fewer, some but eleven, (that's the least) whereof the three first are counted by them to be the proper Names of God, *Jehovah, Jehovah, El*, translated the Lord, the Lord, God. All which three do yet sute with, and impliedly intend *Mercy*. The other *nine* (which are Attributes) even *seven* of them speak altogether God's gracious Affections towards repentant and believing Sinners, as is evident in the very reading and counting of them.

2. If

2. If all the first three be taken for the proper Names of God, yet of those Attributes that follow, *Mercy*, &c. have the first Place and Rank, yea and all the *seven* (the whole set for Mercy) are placed together first, and so claim to have the chief Place in point of Order and Precedence before all. Book I.

3. In God's own foreshown Declaration of what his Mind was to be therein, (*chap.* 33. 19. (which explains this) where, when he promiseth, *I will proclaim the Name of the Lord before thee*, he adds, *I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will shew Mercy to whom I will shew Mercy*) Why are these latter so nearly and immediately subjoined to his proclaiming his Name? but that his great Name, which he then and here intended to proclaim, consisted most in his being *merciful* and *gracious*, &c. Himself before-hand professeth it; yea and the other, the first Words before these, in the same Verse, refer most properly thereunto. *I will cause all my Goodness to pass before thee*: and Goodness is the *Genus* that comprehends *Mercy, Grace, Long-suffering, Kindness, Truth*, &c. in it, as Branches from that as the Root. Quod potissimum in misericordia consistit. *Oliver.*

4. The Quotations that *David* so often, and the Prophets, make of the Words, do confirm this, they rehearsing no other but only those that belong to Mercy; *Psal.* 86. 15. *Psal.* 103. 8. *Psal.* 145. 8. Non est pars ultima gratiæ quod res ad se traho. Blandiris allicit Deus. *Cal.* in. Ps. 145. 8.

The two latter indeed; 1. That will not *clearing clear* the Guilty; 2. Visiting the Iniquities *of the Fathers upon the Children*, to *the third and fourth Generation*; These two are commonly referred to *punitive Justice*, as importing *Acts* and *Resolutions* in God thereof; the first being rendred, that will by *no means clear the Impenitent*. And yet,

1*st*. About this Meaning there is a very great Controversy among Interpreters; some very Judicious casting this very Clause in among God's Mercies, in chastising but not destroying, in taking Vengeance on their Inventions, and yet forgiving them, as in *Psal.* 99. 8. of which Interpretation afterwards. And if so, then *Justice* hath but one left, and Mercy may challenge eight of the nine to belong to it; but however Mercy may triumph, and say, if *Justice* be avenged two-fold, *Mercy is gracious seven-fold*, it carries it clear. Psal. 99. 8.

2*dly*. This Rehearsal of his Mercy and Grace doth come in directly and absolutely, and for themselves, and the Current of them hath its Spring purely from the Heart of God, and runs with a streight direct natural Stream; but these of Justice, mentioned, come in but accidentally, and indeed but as occasioned by God's having gone so far in declaring so much Mercy, and having poured forth so much Grace, (from his whole Heart) to the View of Sinners of all sorts and sizes. Because he knew how much and how deeply this Root of *Bitterness* was seated in Mens Hearts, to say in their Hearts, *I shall have Peace though I walk in the Imagination of my Heart*, &c. *Deut.* 29. 19. and how apt they are to turn all this *Grace into Wantonness*; therefore it is that at last, and but at last, he brings this high Threatning in, That will by no means *clear the Impenitent*. And so as the Apostle says of the Law, that it was added *because of Transgression*, so is this a mere occasioned Additional, (though most necessary by reason of Man's Corruption) because of obstinate Sinners continuing in Sin against Light, and indeed but to vindicate and turn the Glory of his Mercy (which he is pleased to account his highest Glory) from the impure Claim and profane Hands of presumptuous Sinners laying hold thereon, when resolved to continue in their Sins. And look, as Mercy it self in him is from and of it self not moved by any thing in the Creature, but on the contrary, Justice, (tho it is as essential to him as Mercy) yet makes and puts forth it self but only upon Man's Sin; just so doth the mention of it come in but in relation and for the prevention of Man's Sin, and abusing of his Mercy.

3*dly*. Again unto those Acts of Justice specified there are Bounds and Limits set, *visiting the Iniquities*, &c. to the *fourth Generation*, and further: And after that is passed and gone, leaving the Door for Mercy wide open: And it is for them that *hate him*, which is the second Commandment's Addition; and those that hate him love Death. Yea, in that very Decalogue, the Law, (which, if any part of Scripture, was designed to speak Justice and Wrath) the Comparison between the *shewing* Mercy exceeds by *thousands*, so as it is not the Proportion of one *thousand* to three or four, but of *thousands*; and to how many *thousands* he limits not that neither, but leaves room for to set down Millions of Millions of *Thousands*, and yet this is in the Quia Dei clementia judicium exuperat. *Calvin.* in verba.

Part I. Law. But here in this Gospel-Declaration he plainly sets no Number either of Thousands or Millions of Thousands, none at all; for of his Mercy *there is no end.* And at this very time, whilst God renewed that Law, and those Words in it, with his own Hand, he utters with his own Mouth this Proclamation of Grace so far excelling, professing to pardon all sorts of Iniquities, Transgressions and Sins, which he knew and foresaw the Sons of Men would commit against that Law.

Notandũ est Deum iræ suæ terminum ponere, misericordiæ nullũ. Ricatus in verba.

The Season which God was pleased to take the Advantage of, is most observable: 'Twas this; This People had immediately before committed that greatly heightned Sin in all manner of Circumstances of it, of making and worshipping the Golden Calf; the Story of this you find to be the Subject of *Chap.* 32. throughout; by which high Transgression they had utterly, on their Parts, broken the Covenant, as *Moses* his breaking the Tables of Stone did shew. The Sense of the high Heinousness of which Sin the Jews bare upon their Spirits unto this Day, it being usual with them, when any eminent Punishment befals their Nation, to say, that an Ounce of the Golden Calf is in it. In which Chapter you also have the deep Resentment which God took thereat, and a most eager Zeal to have been avenged was breaking forth: *Let me alone,* (says he to *Moses,* that was about to intercede for them) *that my Wrath may wax hot against them to consume them,* ver. 10. which tho in sound of words seems to express an high Indignation conceived, and to check *Moses* (as it were) for praying for them; yet in Reality did tacitely insinuate an Inclinableness to Mercy upon *Moses*'s farther Intreaty; and indeed to invite him the more earnestly to put himself forth in interceding for them; importing, that he was not absolutely or wholly resolved, but overcomeable by Entreaties; which *Moses* took the Advantage of, and followed his Suit, and upon the Assault God began to relent of the Severity he had threatned: And yet still God did not reveal this to *Moses,* but kept it to himself; for *v.* 30. *Moses,* as it were, speaks of it uncertainly to the People, *Peradventure I shall make an Atonement for your Sin.* But God carried it still to him as if it still stuck with him, so as to be avenged, as by the hard Conflict *Moses* had with God, carried Dialogue-wise between them, and God's quick Reply unto his Prayer, *ver.* 31, to the end of the Chapter, appears. And again, *chap.* 33. to *ver.* 4. the Tidings hereof the People hearing, though they mourned and humbled themselves, *ver.* 4. yet still God carries it reservedly and aloof off to them, as unto what he would do with them, (as those Words shew, *That I may know what to do unto thee,* ver. 5.) whether pardon or destroy them. But *Moses* thereupon farther speaking with God, the Lord was so *familiar* with him above all times ever before, either with himself, or ever with any other Man, that *Moses* was bold to plead for farther Favour to that People, and for a special high Privilege to himself; *Shew me thy Glory.* All which Transactions were the most lively Representations and Types of Christ's Intercession and Prevalency for us, in and by whom God was to manifest all his Glory, specially of *Grace and Mercy,* to his chosen Children; *John* 1. 17 and 18 compared. And hereupon God sets him a Time, which was the *next Day early*; and at his Time set comes down to him, (which was in view of all the People) and then comes off like the Great God himself; proclaiming all those his Mercies to him of pardoning *Iniquity, Transgression and Sin.* And tho this was done in his Hearing alone, yet for the Peoples sake, and on their Behalf; for whom he had so vehemently interceded, whose Concernment this was as well as his own, as that Clause, *keeping Mercy for thousands,* shews. And having done this, he restores and estates them into the same Favour they were in before, he renews his Covenant with them, which they had broke; *ver.* 10. *Behold I make a Covenant before all thy People, I will do Marvels, such as have not been done in all the Earth, nor in any Nation: and all the People amongst which thou art, shall see the Work of the Lord.*

Deodate.

Obs. 5. Observe *the HASTE God made to do this, after that this Treatment between himself and* Moses *was come to its full Issue, he makes no Delay, his Heart was so full of it,* ver. 2. *BE READY* (says God to *Moses*) *in the Morning.* And it could be appointed no sooner; for the Solemnity which the Lord was pleased to make and observe in the doing it, which was to have all the People forewarned, *ver.* 3. put in expectation, *&c.* and then himself to descend in their View, *ver.* 5. And according to God's Command *Moses* rose *up early in the Morning,* (and 'tis added) *as the Lord had commanded him,* (so that God had appointed the very earliest of the Morning too)

and

and all speed was used that could be, and God made him not stay for him a *Moment*; after *Moses* was come *the Lord descended in the Cloud, and stood with him there*, and then the *Lord passed by* before him, and *proclaimed*, &c. And what he performed to *Moses* and the People in this respect, he also doth to us, for how often do you read of his hearing us in the *Morning*, as in *Psal.* 5. 3. *and of his causing us to hear of his Loving kindness in the Morning*; as *Psal.* 143. 7, 8. *Hear me speedily O Lord! cause me to hear thy Loving-kindness in the Morning.* And *Psal.* 90. 14. *O satisfy us early with thy Mercy.* Look, as *Moses* hasted, *ver.* 8. (as is said) to put up his Suit and Petition upon it, and that we are bidden to seek *God early*, so God was *as early* with him: which was intended for a Precedent for us that shall for ever need this Grace and Mercy which he here proclaims. Nay, sometimes God prevents us before we call, but is always *ready to forgive*, (as the Psalmist's Word is) and to be sure comes down *to help in time of need*, Heb. 4. 16. O the *Riches of his Grace!* and the Depth of *the Riches of the Wisdom* and *Knowledg of God*, Rom. 11. 33. that thus contrived and took the fairest Season and Opportunity for Advantage for his expressing his Grace and Heart to us, magnifying thereby his Mercy and Goodness to the utmost. I said, there were two grand Pillars in the Old Testament, one God's Promise of Christ, and the other this *Manifesto* of God's gracious Nature: and lo, the Advantage God took for both, upon the Commission of the most heinous Sins; the one upon Occasion of the first and greatest Sin, and of the largest Extent of Mischief in the Consequence, that ever was committed, *viz.* our first Parents Fall, by which all Mankind were undone; and it was upon that Occasion he let fall that Promise of Christ, which was the first Foundation of Old Testament-Faith, and continues such to the end: and now again upon the first greatest Sin this People did commit after their having received the Law, and heard God's Voice, it was that he publisheth this other. And he pardoned each of these their Sins whilst he was a speaking and uttering of these Promises; and this latter of his *Mercy* was the Original of that other of the Messiah himself, considered as he is our Saviour, and the Overcomer of Satan for us. We may well therefore hereupon glorifying him say, as that the Lord is *gracious* and full *of Bowels*, (with the Apostle *James*) so in respect to the Opportunity God took, that he *waiteth to be gracious*, (with the Prophet *Isaiah*) that is, to manifest it in the fittest Season; for he is a God of *Judgment*, Isa. 30. 18. What Heart guilty of the most heinous Sins, that is now humbled for them, should not this move and encourage to come in unto such a God!

Book I.

Talibus blandiciis allicit ad se nos Deus. *Calvin.*

Moses *having heard what God had spoken, God then speaks anew inwardly to* Moses's *Heart, and* Moses *instantly puts it into practice and suit.* Now as this shews most effectually what God's Intention had been in uttering his Meaning, *Isa.* 55. 10, 11. so it doth most exemplarily instruct us what Use this Publication of Mercy is to be put out unto by us: That we should lay hold on it by Faith, and turn, and put it into Prayer, but especially in the Case of Pardon of Sins. For so of *Moses* it is said, *ver.* 8. *that* (when God had done speaking, and was passing apace by him) *Moses made haste, and bowed his Head towards the Earth, and worshipped:* Even as one that is an humble Suppliant to a King as he passeth by him, follows him, and humbly presents his Petition in haste, lest he should be gone out of sight: So here.

Obs. 6.

If it be said, might he not at leisure have, at any time afterwards, put up the same Petition upon the same Ground? The Answer is, That when God *is near* and greatly *present to the Soul*, (as he was here to *Moses*) that is the most *acceptable time of praying* for all or any thing a believing Soul desires. Let them take that Opportunity, and though such a special *Nearness* should not fall out till towards the end of one's Prayer, yet let them then take the Advantage of that *Time* and *Tide*, to pray over again afresh, and put in all they desire to pray for, or would have God do for them, for God is with them.

Now what was *Moses*'s Petition? it follows, *ver.* 9. *And he said, Now if I have found Grace in thy sight, O Lord, let my Lord, I pray thee, go amongst us, (for it is a stiff-necked People) and pardon our Iniquities and our Sin, and take us for thine Inheritance.* In which (as I said) he puts into Use and Practice (laying hold on the Words now spoken by God) himself to speak a good Word from thence for that People. The Effect of which Prayer is, that although they were indeed a *stiff-necked People*, as any in the World, (*this* he first confessed) that yet God for *this* his Name's sake would not *leave* them, but pardon their Iniquities, and mine own too,

Part I. too, Lord, (says he) for the Expression is, *pardon our Iniquities*. Which for God to do was the plain Intent of his declaring it. And it is implied, that God would do this, not for the present only, but to continue to do it. He prays for the future as well as for the present, when he says, *pardon our Iniquities*, &c. This the Words foregoing, [*for it is a stiff-necked People*, i. e. they will ever and anon be sinning against thee] and also the Words that follow do shew, *Take us for thine Inheritance*, (says *Moses*) which Words *Calvin* renders, *ut possideas nos, that thou mayst possess us for thine Inheritance*. As if he had said, (says he) " God cannot come to enjoy and " possess his Chosen as his Inheritance, otherwise than by pardoning their Sins con- " tinually: for Man's Frailty is such, that they would, after his receiving Pardon, " fall from that Grace, if they be not continually reconciled to him; which con- " cerns us Gentiles as well as them then. God must not only *take* us to *be his*, but *keep us* to be his, and continue to be merciful to us, according to this his great Name, or we shall be utterly *lost* and *undone*.

CHAP. V.

That the Mercies of God's Nature, as they are proclaimed in Exod. 34. *are a prime Object and Support of Faith. That this Name of God,* Exod. 34. 6, 7. *was an* Asylum *or strong Tower, unto which the Faith of the most eminent Saints of the Old Testament had Recourse, especially for Forgiveness: And the Evidence hereof carried through the Times of the Old Testament, from* Moses, *by a Cloud of Witnesses, as* Moses, David, Nehemiah, *and the Prophets.*

THIS *Proclamation of Grace* being a *Magna Charta* of the Old Testament, was so highly valued by the Prophets and Saints of those times, that ever after it had been proclaimed to *Moses*, they had, throughout all Ages, * frequent Recourse thereto; and their wont was to make Rehearsals of it upon several Occasions; as either when particular Mercies were to be obtain'd, or Exhortations made to bring Men in to God, or Thanksgiving and Praise offer'd; their manner was, upon such Occasions, to rehearse these Words, but especially in the point of *Forgiveness*. Besides that Use that *Moses* made of it, instantly upon the Place, when God had done proclaiming it, he putting it presently in Suit in all haste, in the behalf of that People, the same *Moses* in more cool Blood, makes the same Improvement of it, in after times. And the Occasion was another most heinous Sin of *Murmuring*, committed by this People, and then he again urgeth God with these his own Words, for a Forgiveness of them; *Numb.* 14. 17, 18, 19. *And now I beseech thee, let the Power of my Lord be great, according as thou hast spoken, saying, The Lord is long-suffering, and of great Mercy, forgiving Iniquity and Transgression, and by no means clearing the Impenitent*, or (perhaps rather as others) *clearing I will not clear*, (that is, although he forgive, yet he will chastise, and not altogether leave unpunished) *visiting the Iniquities of the Fathers upon the Children, unto the third and fourth Generation.*

Next comes *David*, who although he had over and above this Proclamation of Mercy common to him with all the Saints, a *personal Covenant* of sure *Mercies*, particularly made and renewed to himself; yet however, he had an usual Recourse unto this more general Refuge: Of such Use and Valuation was it with him, and ought to be with us. Thus in *Psal.* 86. twice, in *ver.* 5, and 15. by way of Prayer: *Thou O Lord, art a God full of Compassions, Long-suffering, plenteous in Mercy and Truth; O have Mercy upon me, and save me*, ver. 16. And then again, in another Psalm, *viz.* 145. he brings in *all the Saints*, with their Hearts and Mouths full of it,

* Nec mirum est Davidem sumpsisse hæc Elogia ex celebri illo Mosis loco, *Exod.* 34. 6. quum prophetis visionem, quæ illic refertur, summo illis in pretio fuisse: quia, nusquam clarius, vel familiarius, exprimitur Dei natura. *Calvin.* in *Psal.* 145. *ver.* 8.

Mollerus *upon the* 86th *Psalm, (where this Description of Mercy is twice rehearsed) hath these Words:* Sumptus est hic versus ex Mose, & quia tanquam in signis quædam gemma inter cæteras promissiones elucet, crebrò repetitur in scripturâ. *Mollerus* in *ver.* 15. *Psal.* 86.

it, pouring forth in a way of Praise, (for in that Channel the Stream of that Psalm runs) the very same Words; having first said, *ver.* 7. *They utter the Memory of thy great Goodness, and sing of thy Righteousness:* Then in the next follows, (as being their universal joint Outcry, and the Burden of their Singing) *the Lord is gracious, full of Compassion, slow to anger, and of great Mercy:* So as this was the *general Vogue* of the Saints of those times, to cry this Scripture up. Book I.

In *Psal.* 103. we have a reference to these Words; yea, an express Quotation of them. *David* repeats these very Words of *Moses* in *ver.* 8. *The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in Mercy.* In which Rehearsal there is not only a *videtur alludere ad illud Mosis*, an Allusion, *&c.* (as *Calvin*) but a plain citing or quoting of the Words, as having been spoken to *Moses* by Name, and as punctually alledging them out of him in such a manner, as we use to quote *Jeremiah, Isaiah,* or any other of the Prophets Writings, when we have occasion: For in the very Words before, *ver.* 7. he says, *He made known his Ways unto* Moses, *his Acts unto the Children of* Israel.

The Coherence of which Words, *ver.* 7. Interpreters have wholly drawn up, and exhale into *ver.* 6. as if these Words, [*He made known his Ways to* Moses] were intended only for a particular Instance of God's delivering the Oppressed, (as he had done the Israelites) because in the Verse before (*ver.* 5.) say they, he had spoken of God's Vindication of such as were oppressed: But some later Criticks have to a more ample Scope drawn those Words of *ver.* 7. down to a Coherence with the next, *ver.* 8. *The Lord is merciful,* &c. the very Words of God to *Moses:* and to justify this Coherence rather than the former, those Writers do pertinently compare the Words which *Moses* had first spoken to God, *ch.* 33. 13. with these of God's unto *Moses*, in this *chap.* 24. which (say they) were spoken by God, as in answer unto what *Moses* had there said. Now in the foregoing Chapter, *Exod.* 33. 13. *Moses* had said, *I pray thee, if I have found Grace in thy sight, I pray thee shew me thy way,* (or thy ways, as *Junius*, and *Drusius*, and others render it) *that I may know thee*; that is, say they, know thee by what thy Inclination and Disposition is, and Dealings shall be towards this People: For in the following Words he had presented before him the Case of this People; *Consider* (says he) *that this Nation is thy People*; and thereupon was further bold to ask, *Shew me thy Glory.* Upon which Request on *Moses*'s part it was, that God promiseth there to *proclaim his Name.* Now the Jewish Writers † usually understand by [*thy Ways*] *the Properties of God,* his *Inclination* and *Disposition*; by which, or from which, being *inwardly in his Nature moved,* he *outwardly* goeth forth to dispense unto his People. And so by [*Ways*] in this Speech of *Moses* are complexly understood both the Attributes of *God's Nature,* as the *Root* and the *Principles* in his Heart, or the *Original Cause,* and his *Dealings,* proceeding from thence, as the Effects. And to know what these Ways were, was that thing which *Moses* desired of God, that he would fully reveal to him, that so *he might know him,* both for his own Comfort, but especially in reference to what was, or how his Mind stood towards this People. And God in answer hereto, did punctually, according to these two Requests, first promise to do this for him; chap. 33. 19. *I will cause my Goodness to pass before thee*; *and I will proclaim the Name of the Lord before thee:* and then did perform it, in the Words of my Text; *chap.* 34. 6. *Proclaiming the Name of the Lord, The Lord God, merciful,* &c. Hereupon these Interpreters comparing all these things together, are bold (and that rightly) to understand this Passage in *Psal.* 103. [*He made known his Ways to* Moses] to be meant both of that his *Name* and *Properties*, proclaimed by God in *Exodus* unto *Moses: What Ways?* (says *Drusius* on *Exod.* 33. 13.) or *what Properties?* He is passionate for this Explication of *Moses*; and that by *Ways God's Purposes*, innate Dispositions, *Mores* or *Ingenium* should be meant: And before him *Genebrard*, out of the Jewish Writers, doth the like on *Psal.* 103. Dr. *Hammond*, on *Psal.* 103. 7, 8. vehemently contends for the same Coherence: " The Place (says he) evidently refers to " *Exod.* 33. where *Moses* petitions God: 1. *Shew me thy Way*; Then *ver.* 18. *Shew* " *me thy Glory:* By his Way and Glory, meaning his Nature; and his Ways of deal-
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† [Vias suas] hoc est, qualiter se gerat erga suos: *Muis.* Apud Hebræos plerunque via significat rationem, & institutum vitæ, mores, negotia, &c. & scire viam tuam, id est, rationem agendi quâ uteris erga tuos, vel simpliciter quomodo cum piis agas: *Mollerus* in *Psal.* 86. 11.

Part I. " ing with Men. *And God said, I will make all my Goodness pass before thee, and pro-* " *claim the Name of the Lord:* by which his Nature is signified: and what that " Name is, is set down by the Enumerations of his Attributes, *chap.* 34. 6. He " proclaimed the Lord *merciful, gracious,* &c. just as here (says he) in the Psalm, " in the next Verse; *the Lord is merciful,* &c. Only Dr. *Hammond* differs from the other in this, that he interprets by [*Ways*] *made known to* Moses, *God's manner of* his *Dealings*; or, his Actions to be meant; and the following Words, his [*Acts*], *to the Children of* Israel, the word translated his [*Acts*] he would have to import his *Nature* and Attributes that follow, according to his understanding the Hebrew Phrase, *&c.* but he and they all agree in that Scope I alledg this Place for. And indeed the Psalmist teacheth us, that God's Ways mean his inward Dispositions; *Psal.* 103. for after he had said, [*He made his Ways known to* Moses] he subjoins, *The Lord is merciful, and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in Mercy.* God thereby declaring at once to *Moses*, that these were the Dispositions in his *Nature*, and that according unto these they should find his Proceedings should be, not with this People only, but with all his Children for ever in the World; as also with wicked Men impenitent: so as *Moses* might certainly know him thereby, (as he requested) and know where to have him, (as we use to say) which was the main Intent of what he had desired to know. And accordingly the rest of the Psalm that follows, is a Verification in so many Experiments of what God's Ways in Mercy had been to that People from *Moses*'s time downwards, drawn into Maxims or Propositions, according unto what he had here declared to *Moses* so long before.

And that his *Ways* should more particularly and eminently note out his *Mercies* in pardoning Sins, *&c.* (which is one of *David*'s Applications and Interpretations of *Moses* here) that Passage in *Isa.* 55. confirms. For speaking of God's having *Mercy*, and *abundantly pardoning*, ver. 7. he adds, *ver.* 8, 9. *For my Thoughts are not your Thoughts, neither are your Ways* [*my Ways*] *saith the Lord:* for *as the Heavens are higher than the Earth, so are* [*my Ways*] *higher than* [*your Ways*], *and my Thoughts than your Thoughts.* The like many other Scriptures express. I conclude; What is all this other than that *David* in this famous Psalm of Mercy, (as in which he makes a Celebration of the Mercies of God to himself, from *ver.* 1, to 7. and from thence towards others of his Children, in sundry Particulars) doth first professedly take these Words of *Moses* for his Text, (even as we are wont to do some Portion of Scripture, and make a Sermon upon it) that is, that Part of them that concerned *Mercy*; and then plainly writes a Comment upon it, in the Rehearsal of sundry particular gracious Dealings? All which are but Explanations (confirmed from Experience) of these several Properties of Grace, Mercy, Long-suffering, *&c.* more briefly summ'd up by God himself, in *Moses.* And this might, though not in the same Order, be exactly shewn, if Prolixity here forbad it not.

But we meet not with these Words only in *David*, upon these Occasions specified, but as frequently also at least with some Pieces of them in the Prophets, unto the same or other like Purposes. As *Jeremy*, in that solemn Prayer for the Church, in the Condition it was in his times; *Jer.* 32. 18. Then again, in the Prophet *Joel*, he lays it as a Foundation and Corner-stone of Faith and Hope, to perswade the People to come in, and turn to God, *Joel* 2. 12, 13. *Turn ye to me* (says God himself by him) *with all your Heart, with Fasting, and Weeping,* &c. *and turn unto the Lord your God, for he is gracious, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great Kindness,* &c. These are still God's Words in *Moses* anew repeated.

Yea, *Jonah* points as plainly unto these Words, as those, the Remembrance whereof moved God to be merciful *in pardoning the Ninevites*, upon their serious and solemn *Repentance.* He attributes that his sparing them, unto the Substance of these Words, which *Jonah* had learn'd from *Moses*, as the Cause of God's pardoning them; and was certainly led to do it by the Holy Ghost that penn'd that Prophecy; although he utter'd it whilst he was expostulating the Matter with God for his having spared them, that when he had sent him with so precise a Message, to fore-
Jonah 4. 2. tel them of their utter Destruction within so many Days; *I knew* (says he) *that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great Kindness, and repentest of the Evil.* And his saying, *I knew*, prompts evidently that the Knowledg he had of God, had been taken from these Words in *Moses*, as that which from his Writings was the familiar, wonted, and common Notion; which both he, and that People that

that knew the Law, were nourished up in: And that when Matter of threat[illegible] Judgment was apprehended, (which excited to Repentance) the Thoughts of this Book. Scripture was at hand, and rose up in their Minds, as here it did in his, although to a worse purpose, as in his Thought. Yea and *Jonah* tells God there plainly, that from the Knowledg of that very *Declaration* of *Mercy*, and God's wont in pardoning, he had suspected that this might or would prove to be the Issue: And that the Remembrance of Mercy, as he had declared it to *Moses*, would overcome him, and prevail with him haply to give Repentance to those Ninevites, and thereupon to save them, even against the peremptory Message of their Destruction: wherein God shewed he loved *the Glory of his Mercy*, more than of his Justice, or his own declared Threatning, and his own Prophet's Credit.

And which is yet more to be wondred at, and God to be adored in it, is, that although the Prophet knew this afore-hand from this Scripture in *Moses*, yet the poor Ninevites knew not thereof, having not seen as then *Moses*'s Writings; nor had ever heard one Tittle of this Proclamation of Mercy: nor can we think that *Jonah* had revealed it to them; for a Denunciation of Destruction was precisely all of his Commission; but it was God's own holy Spirit, who alone prompted these poor ignorant Souls with this Suggestion, *To cry mightily unto God, and to turn every one from his evil way; who can tell if God will repent, and turn away from his fierce Anger, that we perish not?* chap. 3. 8, 9. And they had to do with God, who to be sure knew, and was privy to himself, what he had set forth himself by, as that which was in his Heart and *Nature*; and he *could not deny himself*, and his own Declaration of it, though these poor Souls could not have challenged him by it.

I only add this comfortable Observation, (comfortable indeed to us *Gentiles*) from *Jonah*'s Allegation of these Words, even that *Jehovah, gracious and merciful*, &c. as in *Moses* it was proclaimed, that this Proclamation concerned not only the *Jews*, or was a Measure for God to go by towards that People, but was intended by God, even at the first Delivery, for us Gentiles also. For he proceeded according to the Tenor of it with those Ninevites, who were an *Handsel* of the *Gentiles Conversion* to come. And therefore let us *Gentiles*, from the Apostle's Instruction, adore and *glorify God* for his *Mercy*, and exercise our Faith much upon these blessed Words, *Jehovah, gracious, merciful, long-suffering, abundant in Kindness and Truth*, as having been proclaimed and written, *that we might have as much Hope* as the Jews had therein, and so turn to the Lord, as these Ninevites did: This for *Jonah*. Rom. 15. 9, 10, 11.

Next the Prophet *Micah* brings in a piece of it, *chap.* 7. 18. by way of Wonderment at such and so gracious a God: *Jehovah, Jehovah God*, pardoning Iniquity and Sin: Thus God speaks to *Moses*; *Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth Iniquity, and passeth by the Transgression of the Remnant of his Heritage?* So the Prophet there.

Hezekiah also (that *holy King*) writing to his Brethren of *the ten Tribes*, inviting them to *return to God*, from forth of that long and great Apostacy and Revolt from God and his Worship which they had made, assuring them that God would notwithstanding pardon and receive them again upon their Repentance: He assures, and he perswades them of it by God's own Words, the Words of this Proclamation, so commonly known amongst all *Israel*; 2 Chron. 30. 9. *For the Lord your God is gracious and merciful, and therefore will not turn away his Face from you, if you return unto him.*

Lastly, good *Nehemiah*, almost a thousand Years after *Moses*, doth make mention of these Words; *Neh.* 9. 17. *Thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great Kindness, and forsookest them not.* Mark the whole drift of that which follows in that Chapter, and you will find it to be; *First*, to ascribe all the Mercies and Forgivenesses of that People, both in the Wilderness, and in after-Ages that followed, upon and after most grievous Backslidings, (which he there all along reciteth) unto that Declaration of Mercies, first uttered to *Moses*, as the Cause of all; and as *that* which had been verified over and over, in so many Experiments, thorow so many Ages. And, *Secondly*, his Scope was to put Force into his present Prayer and Plea for Mercy and Restauration for the future, to this (then) so sinful and broken a People; which he pursues as his main drift in that Chapter; concluding his Prayer thus; *Thou art a merciful and a gracious God*, ver. 13. Now [*Therefore*] *our God, the great, the mighty, and the terrible God, who keepest Covenant and Mercy*, &c. Now that word of his [*therefore*] draws into this his conclusive

Part I. Prayer the Strength of all he had alledged, both of that Proclamation recited, *ver.* 17. and of all God's merciful Dealings with that People in former Ages, according to the Tenour thereof; and that [*therefore*] God would please to manifest and magnify, and put forth the same Grace now to them. Yea, and to that end he repeats and revives again the Memorial of the same Words, (for it is a blessed Memorial to all Generations) as our Translators have observed, in referring us unto *Exod.* 34. 6,7.

And *Nehemiah*'s Times being *with the last of those*, (I do not say the last) wherewith *Scripture-Records* of the *Old Testament* do end; and he in that *9th* Chapter, having gone over all Times that had been past from *Moses*'s time, and having devolved all God's merciful Dispensations during all those times, into the Mercy of God, then published as the Well-head of them all; and he still continuing to plead the same for the whole time to come, from those times of his: From hence I may well conclude, that *this Publication of Mercy was accounted the Basis or Foundation of Old Testament-Mercies, on God's part; and Faith on theirs, in all the after-Ages of it.*

You see I have traversed this from *Moses* to the last of Scripture-Records: And though a thousand other Promises had been given between, yet still *this* is above all rehearsed, as the Original of all other. So as I may well conclude it to have been a main *Article* of the *Old Testament-CREED.*

CHAP. VI.

What is imported by the Name Jehovah, *made use of in this Proclamation of Mercy,* Exod. 34. 6, 7. *That as it signifies God's Infinite Essence, it denotes the Subject of all those Mercies which are in him. That this Name of God,* Jehovah, *doth best suite, and is most fitly joined with those Epithets* merciful *and* gracious. *What Supports of Faith may be derived from these two,* Jehovah *and* merciful, *join'd together.*

HAving thus shew'd that the Mercies of God's Nature, as proclaimed in *Exod.* 34. are the great Object and Support of Faith, I now come to the Description it self in this his Proclamation, and which is God's Picture drawn by his own Pencil, as far as Words could render it: the smaller Models whereof *David* and the Prophets drew, (as I have shewn) and wore next their Hearts, as Men wear precious Medals of their Friends upon their Breasts.

Osiander. It is *suavissima Concio*, as one stiles it, the sweetest Sermon that ever was preached, and preached by God himself upon the highest Subject; and therefore the *richest Text* the whole Bible affords. It is *maxime insignis naturæ Dei descriptio*, the most renowned and signal Description of the Nature of God.

Calvin in Psal. 86.

In his Sermon of Love, from p. 35 to 44. Dr. *Preston* hath singularly displayed the Glory of God set out in this Delineation, as altogether most *lovely*, but his Scope was to win the Souls of Men to love him, (which the Reader may consult as he thinks meet) but my Design in this *Explication* which follows, is to consider it, as it is a *Ground* for and *Support* of *Faith* to draw Men to believe, which was God's original and primary Purpose in this his first Delivery of it, though it as fully conduceth to that other end also.

And we have Example for disposing it to either of these *Purposes*; the Prophet *David* having penn'd two Psalms, more eminently appropriated by him *to himself* as his own; the one enstiled *David*'s *Prayer*, (though many other Psalms are Prayers) it is *Psal.* 86. the other *David*'s *Praise*, Psal. 145. no Psalms else in their Titles bearing these Ensigns of Honour but these two, the first his *Tephilla*, the latter his *Tehilla*; in each of these he makes a solemn Rehearsal of these very Words in *Moses.* In the *First*, Psal. 86. he brings them in as they were a Support unto his *Faith* in his Distresses from Sins and Miseries, to which Use he puts them, *ver.* 3, 4, 6, and 7. And again, *ver.* 16, 17. he makes a Plea of these Words by way of Prayer (which is exercising Faith) in that distressed Condition. In the *Second*, Psal. 145. he brings them in as they are an *Elogium* or Celebration of the glorious *Nature* and Excellencies of God to excite the Sons of Men to *love* and *praise* him. And upon the like Design he doth again resume them in a Rehearsal in *Psal.* 103. Now as that

that *worthy Man* fore-mentioned made this latter his Design; so I shall take the first for mine. And yet as *David*, in those Places specified, culls out and takes only what of God's Words concerned his Mercies, leaving out the threatning Part, as that *of visiting the Iniquities of the Fathers on their Children*: So shall I insist only on the *Mercies* of God therein promulged, that being the sole Subject of my Pursuance. Book I

The Materials of this Description I reduce to two *Parts*, which of themselves the Words fall into.

1. *Quis sit*, who he is, and what *proper Name* or Names of his it is, of which and under which he makes this Proclamation of himself: It is *Jehovah*, *Jehovah*, twice repeated, translated the *Lord*, the *Lord*: to which is added [*El*] the *strong God*.

2. *Qualis est*, what a God he is. This is expressed in those several Perfections that follow, attributed to him, which we usually call *Properties* and *Attributes*; as that he is *strong*, *merciful*, and *gracious*, &c. Or if you will,

1*st*. That Name *Jehovah* notes his *infinite Essence*, as the *Substratum* of those Attributes.

2*dly*. The other that follow set out those *Perfections* of that *Essence*, as *merciful*, &c.

I. Who? *JEHOVAH*.

There are of those proper Names of God which signify (and we so translate them) *God* or *Lord*, three that are most eminent, and all three revealed to *Moses*.

1. *Ehije*; *I am*: first mentioned, *Exod.* 3. 14.

2. *Jehovah*, Exod. 6. 3.

3. The Abridgment of *Jehovah*, *Jah*, Exod. 15. 2. *Jah* is my Strength, *first* there used.

And these are the chiefest Names of God, and for Substance signified one and the same thing. 1. And all of them, *Jehovah* especially, are the chiefest Names proper to God alone, and never given, or to be given (as other Names are) to any Creature; *Psal.* 83. *ult. That Men may know, that thou whose Name alone is* Jehovah, *art the most high over all the Earth.* And of *Jah* it is said, it is that Name by which God will especially be exalted; *Psal.* 68. 4. *Sing unto God, sing Praises to his Name; extol him that rideth upon the Heavens by his Name* Jah. 2. They all *three* of them signify that God is Being, *Being* Fulness of *Being*, the Original of all *Being*. They all speak absolute Essence and Existence *alone*, and of *himself*. From יהוה.

Jehovah therefore is of all other Names placed here *designedly*, as the Seat and Subject of these Attributes that follow: for as this Name speaks him to be the whole of *Being*, so these Attributes speak the *Excellencies* and *Perfections* of that Divine *Being*; and are but particular *Explications* and *Decipherings* of what a God he is that entitleth himself *Jehovah*, or [*I am*].

But, 2. (which is more to my purpose) the first Revelation of it with God's own Comment made upon it, was to betoken, and be a Sign of Mercy, and in a more especial Design. And *Primum* being *mensura reliquorum*, the first, the *Pattern* or Measure of what follows it, therefore *Jehovah*, of all other Names, doth best suite and join with *merciful* and *gracious*. Now that it was first given and revealed as a Token and Signal of Grace and Mercy, is evident thus.

When God first appeared to *Moses* in the burning Bush, *Exod.* 3. and had thus told him, *v.* 7——11. *And the Lord said, I have surely seen the Affliction of my People which are in* Egypt, *and have heard their Cry, by reason of their Task-masters; for I know their Sorrows; and I am come down to deliver them out of the Hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that Land, unto a good Land, and a large, unto a Land flowing with Milk and Honey; and to the Place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites. Now therefore behold, the Cry of the Children of* Israel *is come unto me: and I have also seen the Oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them. Come now therefore, I will send thee unto* Pharaoh, *that thou mayst bring forth my People the Children of* Israel *out of* Egypt. *Moses* thereupon, to obtain a farther Information and Confirmation from God of his Intentions of Grace to that People, particularly desires to know *by what Name* he should represent him unto them, *ver.* 13, 14, 15. *And* Moses *said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the Children of* Israel, *and shall say unto them; The God of our Fa-*

Part I. *thers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his Name? What shall I say unto them? And God said unto* Moses, *I am that I am: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the Children of* Israel, *I AM hath sent me unto you. And God said moreover unto* Moses, *Thus shalt thou say unto the Children of* Israel, *the Lord God of our Fathers, the God of* Abraham, *the God of* Isaac, *and the God of* Jacob, *hath sent me unto you: this is my Name for ever, and this is my Memorial unto all Generations. Ainsworth* penetrating into the Mystery of this Question and Petition, conceives *Moses*'s drift therein, to be to draw forth from God more fully and explicitely, whether he sent him upon a Message of *Mercy*, (pure Mercy) or for *Judgment*; (as in the Issue it might prove) and that he would signify so much by some special *Name* he would please to assume to testify so much thereby. And in answer unto *Moses*, God first there tells him his Name was *Ehijeh*, &c. [*I am that I am*] ver. 14. And this was his first Answer unto *Moses*'s Request. Now this *Ehije* is in Signification for Substance the same with this of *Jehovah*.

Therefore again, when a second time God was pleased to renew his Instructions to this his Embassador, (the most Extraordinary of any other until Christ came) in *Exod.* 6. still in farther Answer thereunto, God says, *ver.* 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. *And* Jehovah *said unto* Moses, *Now shalt thou see what I will do unto* Pharaoh; *for by a strong Hand shall he send them away, and by a strong Hand shall he drive them out of his Land. And GOD spake unto* Moses, *and said unto him, I am* Jehovah. *And I appeared unto* Abraham, *unto* Isaac, *and unto* Jacob, *by (the Name of) God Almighty: but by my Name* Jehovah *was I not known to them. And also I establish'd my Covenant with them, to give unto them the Land of* Canaan, *the Land of their Sojournings, in the which they sojourned. And also I have heard the groaning of the Sons of* Israel, *whom the Egyptians keep in Servitude, and I have remembred my Covenant. Therefore say thou unto the Sons of* Israel, *I am* Jehovah, *and I will bring you out from under the Burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their Servitude, and I will redeem you with a stretched-out Arm, and with great Judgments. And I will take you to me for a People, and I will be to you a God, and ye shall know that I am* Jehovah *your God, which bringeth you out from under the Burdens of the Egyptians.* God in this Declaration puts over the whole of that Covenant, and these Mercies thereof, and his Purposes therein unto the Import and Memorial of his Name *Jehovah*, to signify so much to them, and doth farther lay that as his *Gage*, to inform them thus at the Close of all, ver. 8. *And I will bring you in unto the Land which I did lift up my Hand to give it to* Abraham, *to* Isaac, *and to* Jacob; *and I will give it to you for an Heritage; I am Jehovah.* This last Clause [*I am Jehovah*] I look upon to be put in at last, as one useth to do his *Name* and *Seal* unto a Covenant or Deed (such as this is) for Performance; so God he subscribes unto all, I am *Jehovah*; all hath this Seal, as the Apostle elsewhere speaks.

Now the Ground upon which *Ainsworth* affixeth this Meaning upon that Question of *Moses*, chap. 3. 13. (besides that God himself, in the *7th* Verse of that Chapter, hath solemnly assured us, that he did electively give, and designed himself this Name unto these graceful Ends and Purposes) his Ground I say is this, (as in his Note on the *13th* Verse of that *3d* Chapter he declares) " That *Moses* understood " that God by Names might, or was wont to manifest his Works. So the Hebrews " teach upon this Place (says he) that when God judgeth his Creatures, he is called " *Elohim* (God), *Sabaoth* (Lord of Hosts); when he doth *Mercy* unto the World " he is called *Jehovah*, as in *Exod.* 34. 6. *Jehovah, Jehovah, God merciful and gra-* " *cious.*

You see the Sense which the Jews themselves do put upon it, and how that they refer us to this very Text, *Jehovah, merciful, gracious*, &c. And surely if God himself did so expressly assume this Name as a Sign and Seal of his gracious Covenant, and the Mercies thereof, *&c.* then that in this new Proclamation of Grace and Gospel-Mercies he should to a greater Emphasis double it, *Jehovah, Jehovah, gracious*, &c. surely 'twas electively and designedly done, to shew that this Name (of all other) should bear the Flag and Colours of Mercy.

And let us farther join to all these this one Remark, that in that Deliverance specified in those Chapters, *Exod.* 3, and 6. their Redemption out of *Egypt* (which was the Occasion of God's first Revelation and Application of that Name to the Mercy of that Deliverance, put afterwards into the Commandments) God had therein

therein an higher Aim unto that Mercy promised their Fathers to be performed by Christ, of whom as *Moses* was the Type, so this Deliverance was of that Redemption performed by Christ. And *I am Jehovah*, is the Gage to the Performance of both, the latter as well as the former. We may see Reason then why that when God cometh to *proclaim* his Gospel-Mercies more illustriously (as here he doth, if anywhere in the Old Testament, yea in the whole Scripture) he should make his Proclamation of them under his great and chiefest Name *Jehovah*, as the great Standard-bearer of those transcendent Mercies.

Book I. Luke 1. 72.

2. And what if in the New Testament you find (conform to what is here) this his Name *Jehovah* expresly assigned as the Fountain of the whole of his Grace, as the Spring likewise of *Peace*, which is the whole of spiritual, yea all Blessings? And yet thus we do expresly find it; and in the last Book of the New Testament, which puts the farther Weight upon this Notion. *Grace* and *Peace* had been often wished in other Epistles of the New Testament, from God, as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, *&c.* but in *Rev.* 1. 4. *Grace* and *Peace* is prayed for from him *who [is], and which [was], and which [is to come]*. This directly points us unto these very Places in *Exod.* 3*d* and 6*th* Chapters, where the Name *Jehovah* is used, and which we have explain'd, as the most judicious Interpreters do generally observe, and our worthy Translators have in their marginal Citations referred us *. And as his Name *Jah* is the brief of [*Jehovah*], so he that *is*, he that *was*, and he that is *to come*, is, in Words at length, the undeciphering of the same Name [*Jehovah*], of which afterwards. Now from God as such, that is, as *Jehovah*, is the whole of Gospel-Grace at once wished and prayed for, this Name being the Ground and Original of the Gospel it self, and of all the Mercies of it.

Use. And e're we go any farther, let us here stand and wonder at the Thought that this Name of all other Names, this great and terrible *Name*, by which he chooseth to be exalted, *(Psal.* 68. 4.*)* that this great Name (as *Jer.* 44. 26.) which is so terrible and so holy (as *Psal.* 99. 3. he meaneth this Name there, for it is that Name which was made known to *Moses* and *Aaron*, as it follows there, *ver.* 6. whereby we are referred to those very Passages in *Exod.* 3*d* and 6*th* Chapters) that Name so terrible to the Jews for these many hundreds of Years, that they have not dared to pronounce it, and is called his *dreadful Name* among the Heathens †, *Mal.* 1. 14. that this should be made the *Basis*, the *Subject*, the *Signal* of so much *Grace*: This must needs (in the very Entrance) afford us strong Consolation, in that out of the *Strong* should come forth *Sweetness*. And the Reason hereof doth hold forth this, that God accounts Mercy to be his greatest Attribute, (at least in the Name *Jah*) as *Jehovah* his greatest Name, which he hath chosen to be the special Subject of *Mercy* and *Grace*, as the *Predicate*.

Judg. 14. 14.

The Enquiry next will be, what special particular Affinities there are between this great Name *Jehovah* and the *Mercies* of God, or rather (as being more close to our Purpose) *what special Supports of Faith* (the Aim of my *Subject*) may be fetched from the blessed and intimate Conjunction of these two, *Jehovah* and *Merciful* put together? I answer, much every way; I shall instance but in some few, leaving it to others to enlarge unto more on this Argument.

I. This great Name wholly and abstractly speaks *Being* it self; *I am Jehovah*, that is, I have Fulness of Being, I am an immense Sea of Being, and am all, and in whole very Being it self. That then God should put *Jehovah*, and *Merciful*, and *Gracious* together; What is the Result hereof? and what would God have us to understand thereby, but that his Mercies have *Being it self* for their Root and Foundation; not only that Mercies are *with him*, but that they have a very *Being* it self to rely upon, whilst we rely upon them? So as look what *Wisdom*, or *Christ*, (who is *Jehovah*) in the *Proverbs*, says of himself, *I cause those that love me to inherit Substance*: Prov. 8. 21.

* *And otherwise this is strange and uncouth Language to Grecian Ears, to say,* ἀπὸ τοῦ ὁ ὤν, *and so of the rest, and not* ἀπὸ τοῦ εἶναι, &c. *But the Reason is this, his great Name* Jehovah *stands as inflexible and indeclinable as his Nature is immutable; it keeps its State, and will not be subject to the Laws and Rules of Grammar, as in other Languages.*

† *That the Heathens knew him to be the God of the Jews under this Name* Jah, *or* Ἰαῶ *as the Grecians wrote it, and that they called their chief God* Jove, *is well known. See* Aug. de Consens. Religionis, c. 22. Diodor. Siculus, lib. 2. c. 5. Macrobius, lib. 1. Saturni, c. 18. *and* Grotius *his* Animadvers. de verit. Relig.

Part I. *stance:* the same (God thus inviting us to believe on *Jehovah, merciful*) may we as confidently say, that we believe upon what is *Substance*, upon substantial *Mercies:* And hence it is that even our Faith, when pitch'd on God, is alone dignified (and no other kind of Knowledg is so) with the Title of ὑπόστασις, Subsistence or Reality, *Heb.* 11. 1. and said to be our *Rest.* For why God himself is the ultimate Object of it, and *Basis* of its Reliance, as also his Son Christ, they being Subsistence and Reality. And to this Purpose you find these his Names, *Jah, Jehovah,* (which is indeed *Jehovah* doubled or repeated twice as here) to be put under the Feet of our Faith as a firm Rock of *Being* to stand upon; *Jer.* 55. 4. *Trust in the Lord for ever: for in* Jah Jehovah *is the Rock of Ages:* So in the Original, and the Translators have here signally, on set purpose, put *Jehovah* in Capital Letters; they might have done so by *Jah* also, which they translate the Lord, for it is not singly *Jehovah,* but accompanied with *Jah,* which is *Being,* and *Being it self.* And he fetcheth this out of these two Names, that he is therefore a *Rock,* and *a Rock of Ages,* whom we may therefore perfectly trust on; for in the relation he speaks this in the Verse before, *Thou wilt keep him in perfect Peace whose Mind is stayed on thee*; unto which perfectly answers that of the Apostle, 1 *Pet.* 1. 13. *Trust perfectly on the Grace revealed*; (so in the Margin also.) And why? because in trusting on that Grace you have *Being* it self for the Foundation, *Jehovah, gracious,* who is the first Being, and therefore the lowest Foundation on which all that is built stands firm.

1 Pet. 1. 22.

II. *Jehovah* imports that God *only* [*is*] or *alone* hath true Being in him. For why else doth he appropriate this Name *Jehovah* to himself alone as incommunicable unto Creatures, since all his Creatures are but *æquivocè entia,* Shadows or Pictures of Being, not true *Being it self,* as a Man's Picture is called a Man equivocally, and not in a true Sense. And as their Being is but a Shadow of Being, such are all the Mercies in them but equivocally Mercies in comparison unto the Mercies that are in God, who is *Jehovah, merciful,* in whom his Mercies have *Being,* or rather are himself. So that it must be said, that *God alone is merciful and gracious,* as truly as Christ says, *that God alone is good,* for Mercy is but a Branch of Goodness. That *Jehovah* is merciful as God, not as Creatures; I shall have occasion afterwards to pursue this more fully.

If therefore we at any time think we may have any degree of Confidence upon the Mercies and Pities that are in Creatures, even such as are in nearest and dearest relation to us, as Fathers, *&c.* of whom Christ says, *Though evil, they yet know how to give good things to their Children*; and so likewise to pity them: Then how much more may we be encouraged to rely on God, who is an heavenly Father to us, the only true and loving Father, as he only is the true and living God, and is withal stiled the *Father of Mercies?* 2 Cor. 1. 3. And his Mercies are *true* and *living* Mercies, as *himself* is. That Passage in *Psal.* 86. 10. *Thou art God alone,* will be found eminently to be spoken as a magnifying of him, in relation to his Mercy, (if the 5*th* and 15*th* Verses be compared with it) and indeed it is the main Current of that whole Psalm, of which hereafter. So as we may say he is merciful *alone.* And if Sins come to be pardoned, there God's Mercies solely and alone can stand us in any stead, not only because that God alone can pardon Sins committed against himself, the great Sovereign Being, nor can any Creature have any Influence thereinto, none can forgive Sins but God, *Luke* 5. 21. But besides, for this, that he alone hath Mercy great enough in him to do it. The Creatures have not Mercy sufficient enough in them; great Sins they could not find in their Hearts to pardon, so great an Iniquity, if to themselves, as Sin is against God, they cannot forgive: *Who is a God like unto our God, pardoning Iniquity?* &c.

The Inference and Direction to our Faith from hence is, as to trust perfectly on him, (as before) so only and alone upon him: *My Soul, wait thou* [*only*] *upon God, for my Expectation is from him; he* [*only*] *is my Rock:* all one as to say, he only hath Firmness of Being, *whom my Soul can build upon*; and therefore he is my Salvation. If any Creature had all the Goodness and Clemency, Mercy and Grace that is diffused throughout the whole of intelligent Natures, Angels and Men, it were not to be relied upon, but being laid in the Ballance with God, he were *altogether lighter than Vanity,* as it follows there, *vet.* 9. And the Reason is correspondent, if in their *Being* they are Vanity, (Isa. 14. 17. *All Nations before him are as nothing, and they*

Ps. 62. 5, 6.

they are counted to him less than nothing and Vanity) then in their Goodness much more. And as God only is *Being*, so only to be relied on as *merciful*. Yea, if your own Graces that are in your own Hearts, though wrought by God's Spirit, even that Mercy and Kindness which you have for your selves, whom you love so much, yet are no way to be trusted in, but are as to such a purpose *lighter than Vanity*, and would fail but for his Mercy, the Maintainer of them, then much more all that is in all Creatures else whatever. Book I.

I shall after have occasion to shew, that the Ground for all this Exhortation, thus only to trust in God, is, in the latter end of this very Psalm, centred upon, and referr'd to the Words of this Proclamation, my Text, in *ver.* 11, 12.

III. *Jehovah* imports, that his Being is of himself, αὐτοῦ αὐτεφυὴς, and such is *Jehovah* as merciful, or his saving Mercies; and indeed all his Mercies whatsoever, they flow and proceed wholly from himself, having no Motive but from what is in himself, either as to the Persons to *whom*, or as to the *things* and Mercies bestowed. For although to be merciful is his Nature, yet the Dispensation or giving forth of Mercy is from his Will; and that which his Will is guided by, is the good Pleasure of his Will, *Ephes.* 1. 5. and according as he is pleased *to purpose within himself*, *ver.* 9. you may observe is this, *I will be merciful to whom I will be merciful.* This is the Royal Preface and Effort unto this Proclamation of his Nature, in which he speaks but himself to be *Jehovah, merciful*, or the Possessor of all *Being*: and that looking as *Jehovah*, he is Lord of Being it self, so the Lord of all his *Mercies* themselves; and that as his Being is of himself, so that his shewing Mercy is from himself. And all Reason is there for it; for his Mercies, whence these Acts of Mercy flow, are himself, and also where and to whom his saving Mercies go, himself goes with them. He bestows his whole self on whomsoever he bestoweth them. This you expressly find, *Isa.* 43. 25. [*I*] even [*I*] *am he that blotteth out thy Transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy Sins: i. e.* [I] that *am* what [I] *am*, [*Jehovah*], am he that doth it, and I do it of my self; he resolves it wholly into *himself*, and as moved by nothing but himself, so as he assumes this thing to himself, and takes it wholly on himself. The Prophet *Ezekiel*, chap. 36. ver. 22. thus expresseth it, *I do not this for your sakes, but for my own holy Name's sake.* And again, lest they should not take in the Weight of this sufficiently at once saying, he repeats it, and withal leaves a smart and round *Memento* behind him for them to think on, why they should consider it, *ver.* 32. not for your sakes do I [*this*], *be it known to you.* And [*this*] there spoken of was the *cleansing* them from *their Sins*, ver. 25. and giving them a *new Heart*, and saving Repentance, *ver.* 26, 31. Mercies to Salvation all of them. And that Clause at the Close of all, [*its being known to them*] rounds them in with a witness. And by a good Token of the clean contrary in your selves do you *remember*, (says he) *ver.* 31. *Then shall ye remember your own evil Ways, and your Doings that were not good, and shall loath your selves in your own sight, for your Iniquities and for your Abominations.* Thus Mercy comes over them with a Triumph, as Sinners confounded even with their being pardoned; as elsewhere it is said, that Mercy rejoiceth against *Judgment*.

Compare Exod. 33d & 34th ch.

IV. *Jehovah* imports him in general to be the Fountain of all Being to all things else that have Being, and him to be the Original Being; other things but derivative: So the best and noblest, highest Sort or Rank of Beings, do derive their Original, and hold their Dependance entirely upon *Jehovah*, as he is *gracious* and *merciful*. And therefore *Jehovah merciful* are well joined together, seeing it is Grace and Mercy that gives *Being* to the most transcendent Works of God.

Those of our Redemption, the first sort of Beings, that hold their Copies of him, are the Works of his first Creation, of which himself thus speaks, *Isa.* 66. 1, 2. *All these things have my Hand made*, pointing to Heaven, and Earth, this visible World, and all therein; and all *those things have been*, (says he) that is, by this same Hand of mine all these things exist, and have a Being; as you also have it, *Acts* 17. 25, 28. or all these things *continue in Being*, as elsewhere the Word is used. And this is *dictum Jehovæ*, the saying of *Jehovah*; and it is as if he had said, You all that have Being and Existence, hold of me *in capite* as I am *Jehovah*. But there is another, an higher Rank of Beings, that holds of him as he is *Jehovah, gracious and merciful*; and

Part I. and such a superiour kind of Beings God himself there intimates, in saying, with Difference from those other *Makes* or *Beings*, *To him will I look* (or *but to those will I look*) that is of poor and contrite Spirit, and trembles at my Word; that is, who hath a gracious Heart, of which, and all that belong to it, *Jehovah* as merciful is the Founder. And the dilating on this being full and pertinent to the Notion in hand, and tending so much to the Glory of our *Jehovah*, and the Mercy of him, I shall enlarge upon this Division of these two Ranks, as taking up and dividing between them the whole Breadth of Beings, as both the Scriptures and the Schoolmen abundantly shew.

1*st*. The Schoolmen reduced all things derivative from God as the Fountain, unto two Orders. The first is *Ordo Naturæ*, the Order of things in Nature, which are those by the first Creation, which are continued in Existence by common Providence, whereof God in the Prophet there first speaks. Secondly, *Ordo Gratiæ*, the Order of things in Grace, which are wholly supernatural, which also the Prophet there insinuates with distinction of one from the other.

2*dly*. The Scripture also it self speaks the Difference of their Productions, as when it speaks of some things *not made with Hands, and not of this building*, Heb. 9. 11. that is, not of this ordinary Make, by the first Creation or common Providence, of which God also so slightly and undervaluingly had spoken in that of *Isaiah*, *These things my Hand have made*; *but*, &c.

1. For the Proof of this I will instance in the highest of that Rank, in the Order of Grace, and things supernatural, the Head of them all, *viz*. Christ's humane Nature, in its Advancement by personal Union with the Son of God; ay, and Christ's Body too, as having been conceived by the Holy Ghost, *Heb*. 9. 11. where it is said, that hereby he became an High Priest by a greater and more perfect Tabernacle, not made with Hands, that is to say, not of this building. Also as to the Work of Grace wrought by a new Creation in the Heart of a Sinner, (which is the Image of Christ with Difference from that of *Adam*) as it is said to be *a new Creature*, so the way of producing it is said to be *a new Creation made without Hands*, *Col*. 2. 11. And this new Creature, with the whole System of things belonging to it, is call'd another *new World*, or *Beings* of another kind. And,

2. All those things appertaining to this Order of Grace, have the Name and Nature of Being, as truly as those other; of him (that is, of God) you are in Christ Jesus, 1 *Cor*. 1. 30. *i. e.* you have another Being founded in Christ *(de novo)* anew; you have your Existence in him: God declares himself there the Founder of a new Creation, and Christ to be the Head of it. And these things that are by this new Creation, he sets in opposition to all else of the old Creation, and that are the highest Perfections of them; in saying, he brings to nought things that are, by things that are not, which he nameth anew to be *of him*.

3. And these things of the new Creation are an higher and more transcendent kind of Beings, (not only a differing Being) and are so in God's Esteem; for in that Place of *Isaiah* he speaks of the greatest things of the first Creation, pointing to them undervaluingly, *All these things have my Hand made*; but unto him will I look, and have Respect, and my Eye is upon, that is of my new Creation. And of Christ's humane Nature, (in that *Heb*. 9. 11.) though it be made of the same Stuff we are all made of, yet because it was brought forth by this new way of Creation, he terms it *a greater and more perfect Tabernacle, not made with Hands*.

4. All things of the new Creation hold their Existence of *Jehovah* upon this Title of *Jehovah, gracious*. *Of him ye are in Christ Jesus*, says the Apostle; but of him as *Jehovah, gracious* and *merciful*, says the Prophet: for the Apostle refers us for the Proof of this unto *Jer*. 9. 23, 24. *Thus saith* Jehovah, *Let not the wise Man glory in his Wisdom*, &c. *but let him that glories, glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am* Jehovah *which exercise Loving-kindness, and Judgment, and Righteousness in the Earth; for in these things I delight, says* Jehovah. To this Place the Apostle refers us, as appears by his next Verse, *v*. 31. *That according as it is written*, says he, *he that glories, let him glory in the Lord*. He hath *Jehovah* and *Jehovah* over and again, and him as exercising Loving-kindness, and so as merciful (in which he delights) as the Foundation of this new Being in Christ; *Of him ye are in Christ Jesus*, whereof this he brings as the Proof.

And

And this is the Accompt given why he assumes the Name *Jehovah* as if he had never been known by that Name before: Tho we find it in *Moses* from the very 2d of *Genesis*, and so on, often used, yet our most judicious Commentators say, that it was to signify, he came to give Being to his Promises; he had made Promises before, made a Covenant, promised that good Land, which he had done under other Names; but now (says he) I come to shew my self *Jehovah*, in giving Being to those Promises, and that Covenant, to give Existence to them. Which is all founded on this, that his Name *Jehovah* is not only to shew, that he hath Being in himself, but to give Being to all things else, but especially to his Covenant of Mercy and Grace, whereof those things were the Types. Book I.

In the New Testament this is the Founder of this new Rank of Beings in Grace, as *Jehovah merciful* is set out by that blessed Title more sutable to the Expression of the New Testament, of his being *the Father of Mercies*, that is, the *Conditor* or Author *novæ Ordinis*: 2 Cor. 1. 3. *Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Mercies, the God of all Comforts.* His being Father of all Gospel-Mercies is set next to his being the Father of Christ, because of him we are in Christ Jesus what we are in Grace. This his Title of Father of Mercies bears two Senses:

1. That he is a merciful Father, it being an Hebraism, (say some) as when he is called the *Father of Glory*, &c. that is, a glorious Father. And in that he says of Mercies in the Plural, this intends or augments the Emphasis of it. It is as if he had said, he is *summè misericors*, he is a most merciful Father in the highest degree. Thus *Beza*, *Grotius*, and others.

2. He becomes the Author and Original of all Gospel-Mercies that are founded in Christ, having taken on him first the Relation of a Father to us in Christ, Mercies of Mercies being here taken for the Effects of Mercy, as often in Scripture the word *Mercies* is used for merciful Effects or Benefits. And the word οἰκτιρμῶν, in Latin *miserationes*, doth properly signify the gracious Effects flowing from Mercy in God, which are called his Mercies, and so do differ from ἔλεως, which signify the Mercy that is seated in the Heart of God himself. And Mercies being thus understood, when it is said, *he is the Father of Mercies*, it implies he is a Father that gives Being to those Mercies, as a Father doth to his Child. And they are the Mercies of the Gospel, and all the Mercies of the Gospel in Christ, which here he especially and apart intends; for he speaks of such Mercies, which he bestows as he is the Father of Christ, as well as he is the Father of Mercies, as the Words following imply, *The God of all Comfort*, and therefore likewise the Father of all Mercies. Vid. Drusium in 2 Cor. 1 3.

Now of these Mercies or Benefits of this new Rank of Beings, which God as *Jehovah merciful* is the Father of, there are two sorts:

1*st*. Such as impress something on us, work some real new Being in us, which we call a physical Change.

2*dly*. There are Privileges granted us, which work a mighty Change in us in our State and Condition before the Lord. The first are such as when he makes us holy, and the like, and such were most of the Benefits of the first Creation, when we were framed and formed first out of nothing. But the greatest Benefits in Grace do impress nothing upon us, make no physical Change, (tho such a Change is the Consequent of them) and yet are things of the greatest Make, and have the greatest Reality in them, and the Title of *Creation* given to them. The first sort are like unto that, that he will at *the Resurrection change our vile Bodies into the Likeness of his glorious Body*, in *Phil.* 3. 21. which is done according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things to himself: But the latter are ἐξουσίαι, they are Privileges; as in *John* 1. it is said, he gave us ἐξουσίαν, Power, or Right, or Privilege, (as it is in the Margin) to become the Sons of God: And answerably (to explicate this) there is a twofold Power in God. First, That which we call *Potentia*, whereby he is the Author of all those Works which flow from mere Power and Force, whereby he made the World. But, Secondly, There is *Potestas*, Dominion or Sovereignty: and the Acts of this kind of Power or Sovereignty, by which he makes things that are not to be, of the two are the greater, far greater than the other. The greatest Works in the Order of Grace are of Sovereignty's Make; you may see it by that in Kings, who have no more physical Power than other Men, by their own Hands they can work no more than another Man, yet they can do strange Acts

Part I. of another kind which flow from their Sovereignty; they can make Knights, create Noble Men, set up Favourites, which are call'd their Creatures; which Actings of theirs are not by any internal Workings on the Person, but by external Works as to the Person, that resides in their own Breast, and then express'd and put forth; and yet they are as real Effects in their kind as any other.

You may see these two different Works in that 1 *Cor.* 1. 30. where Christ is said to be made Righteousness to us, and Sanctification to us. Righteousness of Justification is a Work of God upon us, but Sanctification is a working Holiness in us; and yet each of these have the Title of *Being* given to them, *Of him ye ARE in Christ Jesus, who is made both these to you.* I shall only inlarge upon the latter of these two, namely, that these outward Privileges have yet the most real Being in them; which will also appear by the Consequents that follow.

Thus in Scripture-Phrase God's advancing to an Office or Dignity, is said to be a making or constituting; thus *Exod.* 7. 1. *The Lord said to* Moses, *See I have made thee a God to* Pharaoh, *and* Aaron *thy Brother shall be thy Prophet.* And 1 *Sam.* 12. 6. *The Lord advanced* (that is, made) *Moses* and *Aaron*, and set them up in those Offices, furnishing them with Gifts suitable. Thus *Mark* 3. 14. it is said, *Christ ordained twelve* (Apostles namely) the word is, *made them.* He prefers them to that Office out of Grace; for in *Rom.* 1. 5. it is called Grace and Apostleship. These were Acts of Grace, making of them, or constituting of them in an outward Office, the Consequence whereof was inabling them with such and such Gifts, but the Office was but an external Privilege with Authority. Now there are many of the greatest Blessings or Benefits we receive in Christ that are an external preferring us unto a Dignity, an high Privilege in which the Benefit mainly consists, but hath for its Concomitant and its Consequence the most real Effects of any other. And the Privilege it self hath a transcendent Being in it self, and they are bestow'd upon us by way of a Creation, or God's making or calling us so to be, according to what is said, *Rom.* 4. 17. *God calls those things that are not, as though they were,* and gives them Being. From this General I give particular Instances.

First; That we should be the People of God. His calling us to be so, is his making us so, by way of Privilege, from the contrary State wherein we were, of not being his People, till he is pleased to call us so; and this is answerable unto a new Creation by Mercy; 1 *Pet.* 2. 10. *Who in times past were not a People, but are now the People of God, which had not obtained Mercy, but now have obtained Mercy.* This was done by Calling, *ver.* 9. Here is a Change wrought in our State and Condition analogous to that political Change which a King makes in a Man when he prefers him; and this wholly the Effect of Mercy, who have obtained Mercy: and hereof the Scripture uses the same Phrase of *making* us his People, as truly as it is used of the old Creation; *Psal.* 100. 3. *Know ye that the Lord he is God; it is he that made us, and not we our selves, his People*; that is, made us his People. He speaks in distinction from the first *Make*, and it is founded on this, that he gives us this new Being as he is *Jehovah*, as he is God, and this is done by way of Preferment or Exaltation. That in *Deut.* 32. 6. *Is not God thy Father? hath he not made thee, and established thee?* in *Acts* 13. 17. is thus express'd, *The God of his People* Israel *chose our Fathers, and exalted the People.*

Secondly; He hath call'd us to be the Sons of God; it is but a Title and Privilege in it self, as out of *John* 1. 12. I shew'd. He gave them ἐξουσίαν to become the Sons of God as a Privilege by Patent; as also to be Heirs and Coheirs with Christ, as in *Rom.* 8. 17. But this in the Consequents of it appears to have the greatest Being to follow upon it; it hath so in it self, but I say, it doth appear, it will appear one day to have so; 1 *John* 3. 1. *Behold what manner of Love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the Sons of God. Beloved, now we are the Sons of God, and it does not yet appear what we shall be.* What will be the Consequent of it? but *we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.* And it is but the Father's calling us to be his Sons. What is that? It is but giving us that Relation upon his own saying, we shall be so: It is calling us what we were not, to be now what we are; and his saying, *we shall be his Sons*, it is but an Act external upon us; and yet this hath the greatest Reality of Being flowing from it, and contained in it.

Thirdly;

Thirdly; It is thus also in Justification. It is but calling us from what we are not, yea from the contrary, to be righteous in his Righteousness by the Power and Dominion of him that is *Jehovah*, the Fountain of Being, who says to an ungodly Person, Thou art righteous, and in saying it, makes him such; *Rom.* 5. 19. *By the Obedience of one many shall be made* (or *constituted*) *righteous.* This is a Matter of the greatest Reality, and hath the firmest Being in it, and yet is but an Act external upon us; the Soul in it self hath no Being as to this Righteousness, for God justifies it as ungodly; it hath no such Being, but God gives it, and gives it by an Act that is external to us, answering to that forensical Act of pronouncing a Man innocent at the Bar. Book I.

The second sort of Beings or Blessings of Grace are such as do impress something upon us, and their Beings consist wholly in such an Impression. As when God comes to a Soul that is nothing but Sin, and gives it a new Heart, and a new Spirit, and it becomes a Workmanship created to good Works; this he does by working this new Creature in it, by internal changing our corrupt Hearts, as one Day he will do our vile Bodies. These, and all such Effects, are but the Fruits of *Jehovah merciful.*

3dly. There is a third sort of this Rank of Mercies which are imminent in the Heart of God, which are call'd his Thoughts of Peace and Mercy, *Isa.* 55. 7, 8. which in *Psal.* 40. 5. Christ says, are infinite for Multitude towards us, being continued, fixed in him from everlasting; *Jer.* 29. 11. *I know the Thoughts that I think towards you.* And these I call imminent in himself according to that, *Ephes.* 1. 9, 11. *which he purposed in himself.*

There are also a middle between his Purposes in himself, and the Execution of them upon us, all which are call'd Mercies. There are also Promises which are his Promises of Mercy, a middle between both, and unto all these he gives a Being as he is *Jehovah merciful. All the Promises of God are Yea and Amen*, 1 Cor. 1. 20. And that these in Christ are said to be *Amen*, it imports they have a real Being and Existence: For what is *Amen* but *so be it*; so that he sets to his Promises answerably, *let it be so*, (which was the Word at the first Creation, and it was so) and so shall these Promises one day be.

But what do I treating of these little Makes of Grace, Mercy in and upon, and towards us, that shew *Jehovah gracious and merciful*, in giving a Being to them all, while I am to give Instances of a far greater Make and Being, that flow from *Jehovah gracious*, to be sure? for it is the Grace of Union we now speak of.

1. What say you to Jesus Christ that new thing? *Jer.* 31. 22. Jehovah *created a new thing in the Earth, a Woman shall compass a Man*; that Man of Men, that strong Man Jesus conceived in the Womb of that Virgin in *Nazareth*, a City of the ten Tribes, whom therefore he exhorts to return. Now take Jesus Christ as God-Man and Mediator, and all of him from top to toe, and all he was made of, it is all of God, out of Grace, I will not say of Mercy. That the Son of God should take that Flesh, was a new thing, which I need not insist on.

2. As his Person, so all his Offices were all made things by *Jehovah gracious.* Acts 2. 36. that all the House of *Israel* may assuredly know, that he hath made that same Jesus both Lord and Christ. He made him a King; *Psal.* 89. 27. *I will make him my first-born, higher than the Kings of the Earth.* He was made a Surety and Mediator; *Heb.* 7. 22. He was made a Priest after, *&c. By so much was Jesus made a Surety of a better Testament: made an high Priest*, Heb. 3. 2. so the Margin hath it; all out of Grace and Prerogative. Thus in himself.

3. To be sure whatever he made to us to be, that is of *Jehovah merciful* to us; 1 Cor. 1. 30. *Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made to us Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption.*

4. Then how was he made these to us?

He made him Sin, 2 *Cor.* 5. 21. as strange a Work for God to make his Son to be, as any of the former. *He made him Sin, that knew no Sin:* Will you have it further? *He made him a Curse*, Gal. 3. 13. And these were real Makings, for his Soul felt the Effects of them, though in themselves they were but external Imputations. But he felt the Effects of them, as we do the Benefits of his being made such. And thus as to his Person and Offices, and what he is made to us, all are new Beings of *Jehovah gracious* to him, and *merciful* to us.

Part I. 3*dly*. He is *Jehovah merciful*; he is the Father of all the Mercies that are in the Heart of Christ himself, thorow whose Heart all God's Mercies run and flow to us. *Jehovah merciful* gave Being to them, God commanded him to love us, and put into his Heart, as Man, that *Love which passeth Knowledg*, Ephes. 3. 12. All those sure Mercies of *David*, that is, of Christ, (*Acts* 13. 55. and *Isa.* 55. 3.) that are either in his Heart towards us, or are the Benefits he purchased and bestows upon us, *Jehovah merciful* is the Father of them all: That he is a merciful High Priest, *Heb.* 2. 17. That he does pity us according to the measure of our Needs, *Heb.* 5. 2. That he hath Mercies in his Soul wherewith to do it: All this is what God bestows upon his Heart to make him such. As God gave him a Body fitted, he gave him an Heart fitted; *Psal.* 89. 24. speaking of Christ under the Type of *David*, (says he) *My Faithfulness and my Mercy shall be with him*, and he speaks it as in relation unto his Government and Dispensation of things to us, even as of *David* in the Type it is there spoken in relation to his Government. My Mercy shall be with him (says God) to execute all for me, and to dispense all the Mercies out of Mercifulness in himself, which I my self would dispense, God having given up all into his Hand; God's Mercies and Faithfulness are with him in the execution.

Lastly; It would be too poor a thing for me now to tell you, that *Jehovah merciful* gives Being to all the Mercies in the Hearts of Fathers, Mothers, Friends, or whomever you know to be pitiful. Read over all Stories, and put all the Mercies you can read of, or hear of, into one Heart; if a Father had all the Mercies that all Fathers ever had, how pitiful would he be. But who is the Father of these, and gives Being to them? It is *Jehovah merciful*, and shall not he that made the Eye see? and shall not he that put these Mercies into all the Hearts of all the Creatures, yea into the Hearts of them that are evil, (for such are Parents, both Fathers and Mothers) be himself merciful? And shall it be said, How can a Mother forget her Child? And shall not this, in a more infinite transcendent manner, be attributed to God? I have told you he is the Father of Christ, and of all the Mercies in Christ, and that is beyond all. Remember that *he* is *Jehovah merciful* that gives Being to all, in *whom* your Souls do trust.

V. The Name *Jehovah*, by which God makes himself known in this Proclamation of Mercy, *Exod.* 34. 6. imports him also to be the first and the last in *Being*, and so his giving *Being* to all things from the first unto the last, and that they all wholly and all along depend upon him for Being; which is in a great part the Mind of that Speech, *Isa.* 44. 6. *I am the first, and I am the last*. And in another Place of the same Prophet, *ch.* 41. 4. *Who hath wrought and done it, calling the Generations from the beginning? I the Lord the first, and with the last, I am he.* He speaks it in relation unto all created Beings, from the first Creation throughout all Generations. Wherein observe how he is absolutely in both Places said to be the *first*, but not *with the last*, which is only in the latter Text, for time was when there was no Creature *with him* from all Eternity, and then he was first *only* and *alone*. But in this second Text he is said to be with *the last*, and yet nevertheless he is said to be *the last* in that other. The Reason of which I take up thus, That for time to come God hath ordained some sort of Creatures to exist to Eternity, like as himself doth, and so in that respect he is said to be *with the last* even of them: But yet take in this with it, that nevertheless he is also the *last*, as truly as *the first*, ch. 44. 6. as also *Rev.* 1. 11. This is to be understood in respect (say I) of their total and absolute, and continual Dependency upon him: And it is all one as if he had said, although they do continue to Eternity, yet it is thorow me and from me, for *I am the last* however; because it is I uphold them in *Being so to do: For I only have Immortality of Being*, 1 *Tim.* 6. 15. and they but by Participation from me, and so in Truth, and *de jure*, of Right, *I am the last*.

Now what the Prophet speaks, as in respect to those first *Beings* of the Creation, the Apostle in his *Revelation* applies unto Grace and Salvation, the things of the second sort of *Beings*. For in respect thereto it is the Apostle utters the same Saying, as by comparing *Revel.* 1. 4*th* and 8*th* Verses appears. In the 4*th* Verse he *wisheth Grace and Peace from him, which is, and which was, and which is to come*. And from

Jesus

Jesus Christ, ver. 5. who, *ver.* 8. says of himself, *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending (saith the Lord) which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.* And this his Title, I am the *Beginning and the Ending*, is spoken in relation unto Grace and Salvation; for upon this Title it is that Grace is wished from him as well as from the Father: And also they are the very Benefits of Salvation which he had there spoken of, *ver.* 5, 6. Thus then in Grace he is the *first* and *the last*, as well as in the Prophet he is said to be so in relation unto *the Beings* of the first Creation. Book I.

And his being *the first* and *the last*, notes forth not only the two Extreams of *Grace* and *Salvation*, that is, of the first *Beginning* and last *Ending* or Accomplishment of our Salvation, as if he were the Author only of these: But this Expression of his being the first and last, encloseth and taketh in the whole Line and Series of Benefits of Grace and Salvation, whatsoever continued all along between that first and last; even as in respect of natural Beings (as Life and Motion) his being the first and last takes in all whatsoever of them from *first to last*.

Only I observe, that his being *Alpha* and *Omega*, in this respect, is resolved into his being *Jehovah*, for both in *ver.* 4, & 8. it runs thus, *From him that was, and is, and is to come:* Which is the decyphering of *Jehovah*, and thereby he is apparently made, and is declared the Fountain of all and every whit of Grace, both *past, present*, and *to come*; and not only at first, or at the last alone, but all along in the Intervals of Time *between.* 1. *From him that was:* And so he is the eternal Spring of that Grace which was from everlasting, and is shewn at Conversion. 2. *Which is:* that is, he at present continues to dispense all Grace to us. 3. *Who is to come.* So he is the Author of all Grace, *for everlasting*, unto the last.

And yet I will not restrain these his Titles only unto Matters of Grace and Salvation, for they comprehensively relate unto all other Works which Christ doth for his Church, or towards others, or that are prophesied of in this Book, as by the Repetition of them, *ch.* 22. 13. at the end of this Book, and as after all the Works of his Kingdom perfected, it appears. I am *Alpha* and *Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last*; yet still so as here at the beginning of the Book, wherein *Grace* and *Peace* is wished, it must be allowed to have a special relation to *Grace* and the Works thereof. Thus God is the immediate Forger of every Link of that golden Chain, whereof the first is rivetted in his own Heart, and the last Ends in him also. Thus it is in *his loving us*, and thus it is in his *saving us*; he is the first and last in both.

1. In loving us (which is the Foundation of all Grace to us, for Love is the Ground of all Mercy, *Ephes.* 2. 4. and so of all Benefits of Salvation) he is the first. So it is said expresly, 1 *John* 4. 19. *We love him because he first loved us; and not we him*, ver. 10. And he is *the last* in loving also; *whom he loved he loved to the end*, *John* 13. 1. and we should not love him to the end, if he did not continue to love us to the end. Thus it is in the Foundation of Mercy.

2. In the *Works of Salvation* he is the *first* and *the last*, Heb. 12. 2. He is the *Author* of *our Faith*; and so the first, and the *Finisher*, and so the last. Thus he is at Death too, when we receive *the end of our Faith the Salvation of our Souls*, 1 Pet. 1. 9. And after that he is thus to us at the Day of Judgment, 2 Tim. 1. 18. *The Lord grant he may find Mercy at that Day.* It is *then* we have need of Mercy, and he is the Giver of it: And as at the first and last, so all along between, he is thus the Fountain of all Mercy and Grace to us. *It is by the Grace of God I am that I am*, (says the Apostle, 1 *Cor.* 15. 10.) *And it is not I, but the Grace of God that is with me*; *i. e.* which is all along with me in every Act and Step. We are therefore continually to *look for*, and depend upon the *Mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ*, even all along unto eternal Life, *Jude* 23.

It is not as the Papists say, who acknowledg God to be the *first* in the Benefits of Salvation, as that at the *first* Mercy doth all in Justification, (and they call it therefore the first Justification) which they ascribe to God's Grace wholly; but then they feign a second Justification, as that which saves us, and makes us Heirs of eternal Life, through the Merits of Works. O but *Jehovah merciful* and *gracious* is the *first* and the *last*, and all and every thing of Grace depends upon him, and it is wholly Grace and Mercy from *first to last*.

Yea,

Part I. Yea, and he is *Jehovah gracious with the last*, (as you heard the Prophet *Isaiah* speak, *ch.* 41. 4.) for eternal Glory is as much from his Grace as Conversion it self at first. *It is the Gift of God*, Rom. 6. 23. and *Grace reigns* even in Heaven to Eternity, *Rom.* 5. 21. as much as ever it did in this Life, and more, and it is Grace then that entertains us in Heaven; *Ephes.* 2. 5, 6, 7. *Who hath quickned us and saved us*, (so in this Life, as he had said in the Verses before) *that he in Ages to come might shew the exceeding Riches of his Grace in his Kindness towards us thorow Christ Jesus.* This is to be done in Heaven. We have Grace here but by driblets, and but imperfect *Holiness*, and a defective *Communion with God*, &c. there it is he profusely spends and pours forth his Riches reserved to that time, and then the Vessels of Mercy possess the whole of *the Riches of Glory*, Rom. 9. 23. the Well-head whereof is Mercy, as there is express'd.

VI. This Name of God *Jehovah* imports also his Being from *everlasting* to *everlasting*: and as his Name [*El*] that follows, translated [*God*] notes forth his Power, so *Jehovah* and *Ehije* his *Eternity*, as *Calvin* and others observe. But we have a surer Word of Prophecy, that the Import of it is *Eternity*, from the before-cited Apostle's own Paraphrase upon it, *Rev.* 1. 4. (which many of our Divines upon that Place have observed) *Him which is, which was, and which is to come*, which is the unciphering of the very Name *Jehovah*, and the true Reason why he saith not ἀπὸ τοῦ ὄντος, but ἀπὸ τοῦ ὁ ὤν, was, which is (as *Calvin* and *Beza* have observed) to point as with the Finger unto this very Name *Jehovah*, *I am*, Exod. 3*d* and 6*th* Chapters. " Yea, the Form of the Hebrew word *Jehovah* (says *Ainsworth*) implies so much, [*Je*] being a Sign of the time to come, and so [*Jehovah* he will be]: " [*Ho*] of the time present, [*Hovah*] *he that is*, and [*Vah*] of the time past; [*Havah*] he was. And again elsewhere the same Author observes *, that *Jehovah* " cometh of [*Havah*] he was, and by the first Letter [*J*] it signifies *he will be*, and " by [*Ho*] it signifies *he is* †; and this the Hebrew Doctors (says he) acknowledg " in saying that the three times *past*, *present*, and to *come*, are comprehended in " this proper Name [*Jehovah*], as it is known to all, say they. Thus *Ainsworth* on *Gen.* 2. 4. out of them.

Now as his *Being*, so these his *Mercies* are from everlasting; for both *Jehovah* and *merciful* are still correspondent: *Psal.* 25. 6. *Remember, O Lord, thy tender Mercies, and thy Loving-kindnesses, which have been ever of old.* They are Mercies as to *time past*, which the word *remember* insinuates; and they are his special Mercies to his Elect, which with Difference he stileth his *tender Mercies*; and they are his *Loving-kindnesses*, which word imports his entirest Love, as *Psal.* 18. 2. The same word signifies to *love heartily* in the midst of the *Bowels*. And these have been *ever of old*, and that not only as of a time of an *old Date*, and so the word is elsewhere used; but these have been for *ever of old*; it is that Oldness of Eternity, they are as old as *Jehovah* himself, the *Antient of Days* is. And why? Because they are the Mercies of him that is *Jehovah*: And thus we find his everlasting Love stated in Difference from what is of old; *Jer.* 31. 3. The Lord hath *appeared to me of old*: this the Church says, that is, in *antient times*, in former times; *Ah but appears not now to me.* In answer thereto, says God, Dost thou speak of times of old? yea *I have loved thee with an everlasting Love*, &c. and so of an elder Date than that old time thou speakest of, in which I should have appeared to thee. And thus here our Translators have emphatically translated the words *for ever of old.*

But what, are they everlasting only from time past? No, but as *Jehovah* imports his Being to everlasting also, so his Mercies are; *Psal.* 100. 5. *The Lord is good, his Mercy is everlasting, and his Truth endureth to all Generations.* And the Eternity in this Place is that part of it for *time to come*; for it is from *Generation* to Generation. And as we find the Everlastingness of them either way thus singly and apart set out in these Psalms mentioned, so we find them in *Psal.* 103. 17. to be conjoined; *The Mercy of the Lord is from everlasting upon them that fear him.* So then *Jehovah* that *was*, that *is*, and that *is to come*, is merciful and gracious.

And

* Ainsworth *on* Psal. 83. 18. *which is with a special Observation cited by Dr.* Jackson, *of the Divine Essence and Attributes.*

† Phrasis est quæ occurrit apud Judæos quâ Deum significare volunt, & æternitatem παραφρασικῶς exprimi *Capellus in Apoc. ch.* 1. *v.* 4.

And this speaks more than what is in the former Assertion; for by this he is not simply the *first* in Grace, and so in *Mercy* to us: That might have been, though he had begun to have loved, but then when he first wrought on us, or as having purposed it from some very antient *Date*: But this imports his having ever loved us since he was God, and had Being, or shall have Being, both his own Nature inclining him together with his Purposes of Mercy taken up by his own Will towards us. For he would have his Mercies unto his Children to bear the Resemblance of his very Being *Jehovah*, and so answer to his Name *in* being as eternal as himself: Isa. 54. 7, 8, 10. *For a small Moment have I forsaken thee, but with great Mercies will I gather thee. In a little Wrath I hid my Face from thee, for a Moment, but with everlasting Kindness will I have Mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer. For the Mountains shall depart, and the Hills be removed, but my Kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the Covenant of my Peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath Mercy on thee.* Book I.

Use. The Use of which is this, *To trust on him at all Times and Seasons.* You heard before, out of *Psal.* 62. you should trust in *Jehovah* solely and *alone*, so *v.* 5. but *v.* 8. you have that added, *Trust in him at all times*; for he that was, is, and is to come, is your *Jehovah merciful.* The worst times are those when you have sinned against him, yet come to him with Faith at such time. You are not to imagine that indeed when we have walked holily, and only then, we may come with expectation of Mercy and Pardon from him: No, but trust in him at *all times*, only come humbling your selves and turning unto him; draw near to him and he will draw near to you. God is not as Man, to be *merciful by fits*, when the good Humour comes on him: but consider, he is merciful as *Jehovah*, and therefore with a Constancy, and continually, which in express Words you have, *Psal.* 71. 3. *Be thou my strong Habitation whereunto I may continually resort: thou hast given Commandment to save me: for thou art my Rock and my Fortress.* Ver. 14. *But I will hope continually, and will yet praise thee more and more.*

VII. The Name *Jehovah* also imports *Immutability*, Unchangeableness of *Being*; Mal. 3. 6. *I am* Jehovah, *I change not*; so in the Original. It is as if he should say, My Name *Jehovah* speaks my Being to be unchangeable. His Name, [*I am*] in short, imports, that he is always one and the same in Being; which Christ, as being God, assumes when he said, *Before* Abraham *was I am*, John 8. 66. And the Apostle says also of him, *Christ, the same to day, yesterday, and for ever*, Heb. 13. 8. And therein also you have interpreted what is spoken of Christ, *Rev.* 1. 8. *He that was, that is, and is to come*, (the Paraphrase of *Jehovah*) to be meant of Unchangeableness; *semper idem*, always one and the same. And as God is thus in his Being unchangeable, so in his Mercies; the Mercies of this *David* are *sure Mercies*, Isa. 55. 3. *Acts* 13. 34. These his special Mercies to his Chosen have the Similitude of his *Being*. It is *Jehovah* that is merciful; and as *Jehovah* signifies Firmitude of Being, and is therefore compar'd to a *Rock*, &c. so these his Mercies are likened to things of longest *Duration*, to those things which to us Men are such in our Account. Thus he compares them to the *Mountains*, which cannot be removed, yea Mountains of Brass, *Zech.* 6. 1. *Isa.* 54. 10. For *the Mountains shall depart, and the Hills be removed, but my Kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the Covenant of my Peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath Mercy on thee.* Also in *Psal.* 89. the *Perpetuity of Mercy* is one eminent Piece of that Psalm: For with that he begins, ver. 2. *For I have said, Mercy shall be built up for ever: thy Faithfulness shalt thou establish in the very Heaven.* And they are the *sure Mercies* of our spiritual *David*, (Christ) he means. Now to set forth the Perpetuity hereof, he first useth Words that express *Firmitude*, as *established, built up for ever*, ver. 2, 4. Then he useth such Similitudes as are taken from things which are held most firm and inviolable amongst Men, as *ver.* 4. *fœdus incidi*, I have cut or engraven my Covenant, (so in the Hebrew) alluding unto what was then in use, when Covenants were mutually to be made, such as they intended to be inviolate, and never to be broken; to signify so much, they did engrave and cut them into the most durable lasting Matter, as Marble, or Brass, or the like. You may see this to have been the way of writing in use, as what was to last for ever; as *Job* 19. 24. *O that my Words were graven with*

Part I.

with an iron Pen and Lead, in the Rock for ever! And what is that Rock or Marble here? No other than the Heart it ſelf of our gracious and moſt merciful *Jehovah*, and his moſt unalterable and immoveable Purpoſes, Truth and Faithfulneſs. This is that Foundation in the Heavens, whereon Mercy is built up for ever; as *ver.* 2. which (as the Apoſtle ſays) *remains for ever*; and ſo they become *the ſure Mercies of David*, Iſa. 55. 3. Again, ſolemn Oaths amongſt Men ſerve to ratify and make things ſworn to perpetual. This alſo is there ſpecified as having been taken by God, *Once have I ſworn by my Holineſs*, &c. and ſworn by him that cannot lie, and ſworn to that end, *to ſhew the Immutability of his Counſel*, Heb. 6. 17. And not only is the Immutability of his Mercy illuſtrated by theſe things taken from what is firm on Earth, but he aſcends up to the Heavens, and firſt unto the very higheſt Heavens; ver. 2. *For I have ſaid, Mercy ſhall be built up for ever: thy Faithfulneſs ſhalt thou eſtabliſh in the very Heaven*: comparing them to an Houſe built not on Earth, or upon a Foundation of Earth, which Thieves break through, and Violence deſtroys, but in Heaven, whither they cannot reach. And there is good Reaſon for it, for theſe Mercies have a *ſure Foundation* laid in God's Heart, *The Lord knows who are his*. And then they are founded alſo on that *Corner-ſtone*, elect and precious, Chriſt: And which having been begun to be laid in the Heart once of every one that is regenerate, (though but t'other day converted) yet will never ceaſe to be built up even to Eternity. We are apt to think, how little of Mercy have I yet had ſhewn forth upon me! Conſider, God hath but begun with thee, he laid in thy Heart at Converſion a ſmall Spark and Seed of Grace; and therewith, as the Foundation, the Pardon of all thy Sins, which, as to all that is to follow, is but as a Foundation buried under Ground: But Mercy hath not done with thee; for it is in infinite glorious Works that follow to be *built up for ever*, continually to be added unto, both in Grace and Glory. For God's Diſpenſations in Heaven are but a Continuation of Mercy to Eternity, and a laying forth Riches of Grace and Kindneſs on this Structure, *Epheſ.* 2. 7. The Prophet adds in that Verſe, *Thy Faithfulneſs ſhalt thou eſtabliſh in the very Heavens*. Some ſay, *cum Cœlis*, with the Heavens; that is, it is a Mercy as ſtable as Heaven it ſelf, meaning the viſible ones. But I take it to be a ſupernatural ſuper-Creation Phraſe, to expreſs a Grace and Mercy above all that is or was earthly in our firſt Creation-Condition, and above all Compariſons to be made therewith, conſiſting altogether of Bleſſings *heavenly*; yea, ſuper-celeſtial, as the word is in *Epheſ.* 1. 4. And thus much the Expreſſion [*in the Heavens*] doth import: As in *Luke* 10. 20. *Rejoice that your Names are written in Heaven*. And *Heb.* 12. 23. *The firſt-born whoſe Names are written in Heaven*. And in ſaying here that theſe Mercies are *eſtabliſhed in the Heavens*, I underſtand them to be ſuch ſuper-celeſtial Mercies ſpoken of: The Heavens is the Place they came from, and where they are eſtabliſh'd and fix'd, and unto which they tend, riſing up to their Original, and where they are finiſhed and compleated. They are eſtabliſh'd in the *Heavens*, in the higheſt Heavens, where the Angels and Saints are, *ver.* 2, 5, 6, 7. compared. And therefore they are as ſure and ſafe, as Treaſure there laid up is, as Chriſt ſays. This Houſe of *Mercy* is as eternal and undemoliſhable as that *our Houſe in* thoſe higheſt *Heavens* is, 2 *Cor.* 5. 1.

Marmor hic nihil aliud eſt quam immotiſſima Dei fides, veritas, &c. *Mollius.*

Cœli non viſibiles, ſed qui mundi architecturam ſuperant. *Calvin.*

And becauſe we ſee not thoſe higheſt Heavens, (but only by Faith) he farther points us to the Heavens we ſee; *Ver.* 28, 29. *My Mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my Covenant ſhall ſtand faſt with him. His Seed alſo will I make to endure for ever, and his Throne as the Days of Heaven*; which in *ver.* 36, 37. is more punctually amplified; *His Seed ſhall endure for ever, and his Throne as the Sun before me: it ſhall be eſtabliſhed for ever, as the Moon; and as a faithful Witneſs in Heaven. Selah.* And he introduceth theſe not as Examples only, to which his Mercies for their *Unchangeableneſs* may be likened, but he propoſeth them as God's *faithful Witneſſes thereof*. As the Rain-bow is ſet forth as a Witneſs that God will deſtroy the World with Waters no more: Thus the Continuation of the Heavens, and of the Sun and Moon, are propoſed as Witneſſes of the Perpetuity and Unchangeableneſs of theſe Mercies; and this not for Duration only, but Immoveableneſs and Fixedneſs. For though the Sun ſets, and leaves Darkneſs behind him for half the time of his Courſe, yet this *Father of Lights* is without ſo much *as Shadow of turning* in his Mercies towards us, as the Apoſtle's Compariſon is, *Jam.* 1. 17. and elſewhere: He hath *pawned* the Covenant of Day and Night; *Jer.* 31. 35, 36. *This ſaith the Lord, which giveth*

Non ſolum proponit ea ut exempla, ſed ut teſtes: Quarum rerum? earum ſcilicet quas Davidi promiſit.

giveth the Sun for a Light by Day, and the Ordinances of the Moon and of the Stars for a Light by Night, which divideth the Sea when the Waves thereof roar, the Lord of Hosts is his Name. If those Ordinances depart from before me, saith the Lord, then the Seed of Israel *also shall cease from being a Nation before me for ever.* The like is in *Jer.* 33. 20. *Thus saith the Lord, If you can break my Covenant of the Day, and my Covenant of the Night; and that there should not be Day and Night in their Season; then may also my Covenant be broken,* &c. Yea, and that Covenant of the Waters of *Noah* (we spake of) to which the Rain-bow is appointed as a faithful Witness, is also appealed unto, and called in by God as a Witness of this his Mercy's Covenant; Isa. 54. 9, 10. *For this is as the Waters of* Noah *unto me: for as I have sworn that the Waters of* Noah *should no more go over the Earth, so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee: For the Mountains shall depart, and the Hills be removed, but my Kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the Covenant of my Peace be removed, saith the Lord, [that hath Mercy on thee]* — —.

Book I.

Now this Unchangeableness of Mercy is put upon the Account of his being *Jehovah*, as was observed out of *Mal.* 3. 6. *I* Jehovah *change not, therefore you Sons of* Jacob *are not consumed.* Unto which bring that of *Lam.* 3. 22. and then you have what it is in *Jehovah* which is the Cause that we are not consumed: *It is the Lord's Mercy we are not consumed*; which is all one as to say, it is *of the Lord's Mercy*, as the Cause why we are not consumed. So then the evident Inference or Conclusion from both is, you are not consumed, because my Mercies, who am *Jehovah*, change not, which the Words that follow do more expressly shew to be the Cause or Reason of this, [*Because his Compassions fail not*] which still carries this before them, that we are not consumed, because his Mercies consume not, because God, that is, *Jehovah*, consumes not, fails not, changeth not. *Job* 14. 11. *The Waters fail from the Sea, and the Flood decayeth and drieth up*; but these his special Mercies fail not, nor are ever drawn dry, because *Jehovah*, or *inexhaustable Being*, is the inexhaustable Fountain of those Mercies.

I have given the Reason why the Name *Jehovah merciful* is used; but farther, the Duplication of it here is to be consider'd, *Exod.* 34. 6. *Jehovah, Jehovah.* The Reason hereof, which Interpreters ordinarily give, riseth but to this, that it was to stir up *Moses* his and our Attention the more unto the Matter that follows. I should rather and further say,

1. It is to shew an infinite *Vehemency* and *Heartiness* of Affection to have been in the Heart of God when he utter'd this, and it manifests how much his Soul was in what his Voice proclaimed. Such Duplications have (as it were) a double Strength in them, to heighten and enforce those things they are prefixed unto, according to the Nature of the Matter unto which they are prefixed. Thus if the Matter be an *Affirmation*, the *Reiteration* affixed intends and makes it an *Asseveration* far the stronger. Thus when the two Tribes and an half made an Appeal to God in the case of their Altar, to the intent to express the Truth and Sincerity of their Souls therein, in the highest manner, say they, *The God of Gods* Jehovah, *the God of Gods* Jehovah, *he knoweth*, &c. *Josh.* 22. 22. In this Appeal to God as a Witness (for such it is) they rehearse no less than three Names of God, (say some) *El, Elohim, Jehovah*; or, as others interpret it, *God of Gods, Jehovah.* But whatever Meaning we take, it is certain that they are repeated twice over, which must needs have the greatest Emphasis that could be given, and all was to give the greatest Confirmation to the Matter affirmed by them. Again, if it be set unto Matter of *Prayer* or *Praise*, the Repetition of *Lord, Lord*, or of *Jehovah* (as of the *Person* invocated or praised) or the doubling the *Matter* petitioned for, as *be merciful, be merciful*, Psal. 57. 1. likewise when the *Seal* to either is put at the Close of either, as of *Amen, and Amen*, Psal. 72. 19. such doubled Rehearsements do manifest a redoubled Vehemency and Intention in the Invocators. Now according to this general Rule: Psa. 72. 18.

2. In this Duplication of the Name of *Jehovah* here must be allowed the like intended Emphaticalness, according to the kind of the Matter it is prefixed unto. Now that which it is prefixed unto, is a Description of God, or a lively Character of him; even as when we would notify the Character given of a Man to be most proper, genuine and expressive of what the Man is, we use before or after it to make a double Indigitation of his Name, which carries this Import or Signification;

Part I. [*This is the Man, this is he*]. To the same purpose is it that God's Name is doubled here. And it is as if in Words he had more plainly said, *This is your God, This am I:* or if you would know, *what a God I am*, look upon this Description of me, upon this my Portraicture drawn to the Life, such *a God am I*, [*Jehovah, Jehovah merciful*].

Cant. 5. 9, 10. When the Watchmen in the *Canticles* saw the Spouse keep such ado, and to make so anxious an Inquisition after her Beloved, *What is thy Beloved, said they, more than another Beloved? What, says she?* She then describes him in all his Beauties from Head to Foot: And at the Close, having said, *he is altogether lovely*, she adds, *this is my Beloved, and this is my Friend.* She doubles it there; and with the same Efficacy doth God in his setting forth himself double this his Name here; *Jehovah, Jehovah*, &c. as if he should say, *This, this am I.*

Nay, yet further here in this Proclamation in my Text there is not a Duplication only, but a *Triplication* of the Subject, that is, the Name of God is not only *twice* repeated, but *thrice*, אל יהוה יהוה, translated *the Lord, Lord, God.* And what is or can be the Mind or Intent hereof other than this, that God, *the whole that is in God, is merciful and gracious?* &c.

CHAP. VII.

The other Name of God אל, El, *us'd in this Proclamation of Mercy*, Exod. 34. 6, 7. *This Name imports that all the three Persons are merciful, which is particularly proved concerning the Holy Ghost. This Name* El *also imports an Attribute in God, his Strength and Power, and that it is in conjunction with Mercy. How much this hath an Influence to make Mercy effectually prevailing, and to conquer all Difficulties which lie in the way of its acting.*

I Have consider'd the first Name of God *Jehovah* implied in this Proclamation of Mercy, *Exod.* 34. 6, 7. and have evinc'd that Mercy is an essential Property of his Nature: What remains next to be consider'd is what the other Name of God אל, *El*, here made use of, imports.

There are two Significations of this Name of God. It is sometimes put for an essential Name proper to God, as our Translators have rendred it in this Text, and it is sometimes put for a special Attribute of God, *strong, powerful*, noting Greatness and Dominion, and both are here intended, for it signifies both; and truly *Junius* always translates the word *El* where-ever he finds it, *Deus fortis*, the strong God, and so puts both together.

Now if we translate it as our Translators have done it, God, *Jehova Jehovah, El*, God, (he repeats the Name of God three times) the Import of that is, that the three Persons are herein proclaimed to be merciful and gracious. There must be some great Mystery in the thrice repeating it: If the thrice repeating an Attribute, *Holy, Holy, Holy*; if the thrice repeating, *the Lord, the Lord, the Lord*, Numb. 6. 23, 24, 25, 26. hath the Mystery of all three Persons, then the Repetition of the Name of God, fixed to Mercy and Gracious, hath the like. So *Ainsworth* and others have improved it. So that from this it is evident, that all three Persons incline to be merciful and gracious, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost: and what is this other than what we have, 2 *Cor.* 13. 14. *The Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Love of God, and the Communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.* The Holy Ghost is therefore both gracious and loving as well as the Father and Son, for it is he communicates the Love and Grace of both those Persons. I find not (I confess) a Scripture where the Holy Ghost is call'd *merciful*, but I find Scripture where he is called *good*, which is the Root of Mercy; *Psal.* 145. 10. *Thy Spirit is good.* Neh. 9. 20. *Thou gavest them thy good Spirit.* I find also that Love is ascribed to him, *Rom.* 15. 13. Now what is Mercy? It is but Love and Goodness extended to Creatures in Misery. I find also that Grace and Mercy are the Fountain of all Blessings both spiritual and temporal, *Ephes.* 1. 2, 3. And I find Grace

Grace, and Mercy, and Peace, is wish'd, as from God the Father, and God the Son, so from God the Holy Ghost, *Rev.* 1. 3, 4. So then he is the Fountain of Grace. I will not open that Controversy between Papists and us about seven Spirits: It is but one Spirit, 1 *Cor.* 12. 4. But what I will insist on is, an Answer to that Question, Why the Holy Ghost should bear the Name of אל *El, strong, the strong God*, for it signifies both, an Attribute as well as a Person; *Jehovah* the Father is call'd, and *Jehovah* the Son is call'd, and the Holy Ghost is call'd so too; but why is this Name *El* here [*the strong God*] given unto him rather than *Jehovah?* Book I.

The Answer is; He hath the Execution of all the Mercy that God doth dispense to us, it is committed to him; the Father had the decreeing Part of all Mercy, the Son the purchasing Part, and the Holy Ghost the operative Part, which requires Power and Strength; and therefore you find so often the Holy Ghost to be expressed as *the Power of God*, as Christ's Person in the *Proverbs* is called *the Wisdom of God*. The Holy Ghost is call'd *the Power of God*, Luke 1. 35. *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the Power of the Highest shall overshadow thee.* And in *Luke* 24. 49. he is called *the Promise of the Father.* Who is that Promise? Compare it with *Acts* 1. 4. and you will find it is the Holy Ghost. What is the Holy Ghost called in that Place of the *Acts? Christ being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from* Jerusalem, *but wait for the Promise of the Father.* Where was that Promise? The 5*th* Verse tells us, *You shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.* How is the Meaning of that express'd? *You shall receive Power*, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, *ver.* 8. And in Scripture these things are often joined; *The Gospel came not in Word only, but in the Holy Ghost and Power*, 1 Thess. 1. 5.

The Holy Ghost then is he that shews Mercy, he is ὁ ἐλεῶν. There are five Offices which the Holy Ghost exerciseth in the Churches, mentioned in *Rom.* 12. 8. and the last is called ὁ ἐλεῶν, a Shewer or Executor of Mercy, to supply all Needs and Necessities to the Sick, *&c. Let him that is the Shewer of Mercy do it with Chearfulness, i. e.* whose Office is to be merciful. There are many particular Mercies which the Holy Ghost hath the Office to distribute, as he is the Dispenser of Mercy. For example,

1. Begin with Regeneration, that is, Mercy; *According to his abundant Mercy he hath begotten us*, 1 Pet. 1. 3. Who begets? The Holy Ghost.

2. Who brings home all the sure Mercies of *David*, all that the Father hath decreed, or the Son purchased, *John* 16. 14, 15. He will not leave us as Orphans unprovided for. Therefore,

3. Is it not Mercy to take care of Orphans, Children that are fatherless and motherless, that else would be destitute? *John* 14. 17, 18. The Holy Ghost says, *I will not leave you* Orphans, the word is so in the Original. Is it not Mercy to tend the Sick? Alas! how doth the Holy Ghost attend thy Soul all the time of thy Infirmities and Sicknesses, and to ease thee he bears them, *Rom.* 8. 26.

4. Who is the Advocate to plead for thee, and undertakes all thy Suits for thee, and to obtain all Good? It is the Holy Ghost. Who makes all thy Prayers, *Rom.* 8. 26. draws all the Petitions thou putteſt up? He indites them. Who does bear with the Noisomness that is in thee? It is the Holy Ghost. And is not that Mercy, as it is in a Nurse or Mother to bear the Noisomness of a poor Child? and tho he be grieved, yet he continues his Love and Care, so as no Mother nor Nurse doth the like. Is not this Mercy? Who mourns with thee in Misery like a Dove, (as he is call'd) who keeps thee Company, and brings thee Cordials? It is he who is the Author of all Comfort, *Acts* 9. 31. who fills thee with all Joy and Peace in believing. It is the Holy Ghost, *Rom.* 15. 13. To conclude; Who strengthens thee in all Temptations, and upholds thy feeble Knees and weak Hands? It is the Holy Ghost. And is not that Mercy? *Ephes.* 3. 16. *That you might be strengthned with Might, by his Spirit in the inner Man.* I have done with this word אל *El*, as it signifies a Person, and imports the Mercy of the Holy Ghost. I come now to אל *El* as it is an Attribute (and the most of Translators so render it, *Junius* calls it *Deus fortis, the strong God*) and so the word signifies Strength, Strengthning, Strong in Might; we call it *vis* in Latin, *that Power that subdues all things to it self*, Phil. 3. 21. And so God *is mighty in Strength*, Job 9. 4. Now I am to handle it as an Attribute, I join Greatness with it, for so they are joined, and both with Mercy, as in *Jer.* 32. 17, 18, 19. where he joins *great*, and *mighty*, and *merciful* all together; *magnus ille,*

Part I. *potens ille*, as *Piscator* renders it. I confess I wonder at it, to find it up and down when they make Prayers in Scripture, (as *Jeremiah* does here) that they should put *merciful* and *mighty*, and *terrible* and *great* all together; you shall find it so, *Neh.* 1. 5. *O Lord God of Heaven, the great and terrible God, that keepest Covenant and Mercy*, &c. Here they are joined together. And so when he made his solemn Prayer, Neh. 9. 32. *Our God* (says he) *the great, the mighty, and the terrible God, who keepest Covenant and Mercy*, &c. which is plainly the same that *Moses* expresseth it in *Exodus*. You have it also in *Dan.* 9. 4. in his solemn Prayer, *O Lord* (says he) *the great and dreadful God, keeping the Covenant and Mercy*, &c. Thus *Mercy*, and *great*, and *terrible*, are joined all together, and all refer to this Passage in *Moses*, as the Margin of your Bible shews. Now when he saith, *the terrible God*, truly it imports two things:

1*st*. His being glorious and illustrious, and that he is to be reverenced.

2*dly*. It imports a Dreadfulness; he is terrible in Praises, *Exod.* 15. 11. What doth that imply? That he is magnified, illustrious, great and glorious in Praises, not only doing things that are dreadful, tho so he is said to be terrible in doing to the Sons of Men, and yet he speaks not of Judgment, *Psal.* 66. 5. but wonderful Works of Mercy.

That which I am to give Account of is, that Power and Mercy should be joined together, God the strong, and God the merciful; take in Greatness, (if you will) and take in Terribleness. In *Psal.* 62. 11, 12. says he, *God hath spoken once, twice have I heard this, that Power belongeth unto God. Also to thee, O Lord, belongeth Mercy, for thou rendrest to every Man according to his Works.* I confess it is alledged, I heard it once, and twice, that is, God set it on upon me as a special ground of Comfort; you have the Phrase so used in *Job* 33. 14. *For God speaketh once, yea twice, yet Man perceiveth it not.* I confess I was suspicious it might refer to this Passage of *Moses*: I found first the English Annotators say, that it was a plausible Interpretation to refer it to what God had said upon Mount *Sinai*, where there are two things (say they) said. First, That God was a jealous God. Secondly, Shewing Mercy, *Exod.* 20. 5, 6. I consulted *Hammond*, and he in his Paraphrase refers us to what God had spoken in Mount *Sinai*, but he speaks it indefinitely; but the others refer it to the second Commandment: I stick at this, that *Jealousy* is mentioned in the Commandment, but *Power* is not; but here he says, *Power belongs to thee, O Lord God, and Mercy.* I thought therefore I might go further, and take a step further upon Mount *Sinai*, where the Law and this Declaration was given, as it is express'd, *Exod.* 34. The Psalmist says, *he heard it twice*; he heard it from God's Mouth, *that Power belongs to God*; and he heard it, that Mercy belongs to God; and he heard the same from *Moses*, Numb. 14. 15, 16. *Let the Power of my Lord be great, according as thou hast spoken, saying*, &c. In *Psal.* 103. he expressly quotes God's saying to *Moses*, *The Lord gracious and merciful*: and in *Psal.* 62. he says, he heard it once and twice, again and again, both from God and *Moses*, that Power belongs to him, and Mercy belongs to him.

I come now to that which is the main thing which I shall endeavour to make use of, which is this, why these two are joined together, Power and Mercy, by *Moses*, Numb. 14. by *Daniel*, *Nehemiah* and *Jeremiah*. I will not give you the Heathen Accompt: you know *Tully* says, *Jupiter* is call'd *Optimus maximus*: he reduceth it to this very thing; he is called *Optimus*, the most good God, the most good, or thrice good God (says he); he is for his Benefits, *propter vim vero & potentiam maximus*: for his Force and Power he is called the great God; he knew God to be good, but knew not God to be merciful. But let us follow Scripture.

The Inquisition is this, why he joins Strength, and Greatness, and Dreadfulness, with Mercy: 1. (say I) To set Mercy out the more, to exalt Mercy the more. Certainly it is prefaced to that purpose, *Neh.* 9. 32. *Our God, the great, the mighty, and the terrible God, who keepest Covenant and Mercy*, &c. It was well he could say first, *our God*, before he says, the *great and terrible God*, that so they might be sure that should import no hurt to them. But the Preface is to set forth and aggrandize Mercy the more, that a God so great, so dreadful, should yet be merciful. The Lion in Christ commends the Lamb that is in him, as *Rev.* 5. 5, 6. that he that is so great, and strong, and terrible, should be a Lamb: It is because *the Name of God is in him* that he is strong, and he is merciful too. Look, as the Unworthiness and

Sin-

Sinfulness of us, whom God loves and shews Mercy to, commends his Love, as you have it in *Rom.* 5. 8. so the Greatness and Terribleness of the Person that loves doth advance and magnify his Goodness and Mercy, that he that is so great and terrible, and hath such Power, should yet be so merciful. *Psal.* 89. It is a Psalm which professeth to sing and set forth the Mercies of God, and the sure Mercies of *David*, *I will sing of the Mercies of the Lord for ever, and Mercy shall be built up for ever*, ver. 5. *The Heavens shall praise thy Wonder, thy Miracle.* He calls Mercy the greatest Miracle that ever was: Wherein lieth it? He tells us in these Words, *Who in the Heavens can be compared to the Lord? God is greatly to be feared in the Assembly of the Saints, and to be had in reverence of all that are round about him: Who is a strong Lord like unto thee?* &c. So that Mercy in the first Verse meets in this God, that in the seventh and eighth Verses is so great a God, so fearful to all that are round about him; and they that are nearest him know him best, they say so of him, that this God should be a God of Mercy: this begets a Stupor, an Amazement, that he that is able to rebuke all, and destroy all with a Nod, should yet have so much Love and Mercy. This exalts, and sets out his Mercy, and makes it a wonder. 2. This Greatness and Power in God conduce to make him (we must not use that word *make* but after the manner of Men) to be merciful and gracious. The multiplying Grace issues from *Jehovah* as he is Almighty. This is the Difference between God and Man: In Man Weakness is the Foundation of Mercy very much; those that are weakest for Age, as Children, will cry bitterly if they see any one in Misery; those that are weakest in Sex, as Women, are most pitiful; those that are of softer Tempers amongst Men, are more merciful, which ariseth from Weakness: but in God Mercy flows from Strength, and Power, and Greatness; *The Lord God, strong, merciful.* You find in Scripture God is merciful, not after the manner of Men; 2 *Sam.* 7. 19. *Is this the manner of Man, O Lord God?* Thus he spake when he considered the Greatness of the Mercy bestowed; as when it is said, *My Thoughts are not your Thoughts, but as the Heavens exceed the Earth, so*, &c. *Isa.* 55. 8, 9. It is also true, God is merciful not after the manner of Men for kind of Mercies, *I am God and not Man, therefore you are not consumed*, Hos. 11. 9. *i. e.* because I am merciful as God. His Mercy then proceeds from his Greatness and his Strength: From his Greatness, as is plain from 2 *Sam.* 7. 19. when he had said, *Is this the manner of Men, O Lord God?* says he, *According to thine own Heart hast thou done all these great things: Wherefore thou art great, O Lord God; for there is none like unto thee, neither is there any God besides thee.* God did it out of his own Heart, as having a great Heart: The Mercies he declares to *David* there, proceed from Strength, as he is *the Lord God, strong and merciful.* So it is also, *Numb.* 14. 17. *Let the Power of my Lord be great, as thou hast spoken.*

I would make it plain, that God's Mercy proceeds from Strength; or that because he is a strong God, able to do all things, because he is Almighty, therefore he is merciful. 1*st.* It fits him to be merciful, his Strength doth so qualify him, as we may speak after the manner of Men: He hath all that qualifies a Person for the Reality of Mercy. He is free from all Misery, hath no Subjection to any kind of Misery whatsoever; hath no Subjection to Potentiality, as the Schoolmen speak in this Point. Why? Because he is a strong God, he is a powerful God, and an Almighty God, and that keeps him off from all Misery, and exempts him from all the Dints and Impressions of Misery.

There is (I say) a blasphemous Question that hath been travers'd up and down by corrupt Divines, Whether God hath Mercy truly in him, and be of a merciful Disposition. And what Reason do they give for it but this? say they, Mercy arises from Sense of Misery, that one lays to Heart others Misery as that which may be ones own, which we cannot suppose to be in God.

Say I, to answer it, Here lies the Question, What it is that is truly Mercy, whether it be that one out of Weakness is condoling you or pitying you, that is unable to help, whether that be truly Mercy or no? or whether a Readiness of Will and a Propensness of Affection, joined with Ability to succour effectually and irresistably, whether this be not Mercy rather? since the first proceeds from Weakness, but this from Strength. I say, here lies the Question, whether yea or no, one that out of Weakness and Passion condoles with you, and hath from that ground Pity in him, that Affection of Pity, of suffering with you, and is sorry you are in Misery, and troubled

Part I. troubled you are so, but yet is unable to help, whether this be Mercy truly or no? or whether one that hath Readiness of Will, his Soul is inclined to help, and he joins Ability to help, which of these two is Mercy? say I, the last, and that is in God, and it is demonstrable thus:

1. If he that is merciful be himself liable to Misery, he is not in that Sense merciful. Why? Because he is so far weak and unable to help. That same King in the Famine could not shew Mercy, because he could not help; 2 *Kings* 6. 26, 27. *O Lord my King, help*, says the poor Woman. If any Body could help, a King could; but says he, *If the Lord helps thee not, I cannot:* I am a poor weak Creature, in plain Words; should I help thee out of the Barn, to give thee Bread; or Winepress, to give thee Drink? I can do neither, saith he. What was the Reason he was thus unable to grant an Aid? He was weak and ready to die, as well as other Men. That is Mercy which in the Issue and Event will prove it self so, that is Mercy indeed and truly.

2. If he be not able to help you efficaciously, he does but increase your Misery, as you see in the Case of this poor Woman and the King. Poor Woman, what ail'd she? he told her he could not help her. The Woman was extremely disturb'd, that she came to a King, and the King could not help her: *What aileth you*, says he? 2 *Kings* 6. 28. Says she, I come not to you for Mercy, but for Justice: Here is a Woman ate my Child yesterday, and I should have eat her Son, but she hath hid him; so she came to the King for Justice. Directly he could not help her in that neither, he could not order the Child to be kill'd, it had been Murder, but he increas'd her Misery by all this. So that now, say I, that which fits for Mercy is, that one is free from all Misery, Impotency and Weakness, and hath a Fulness of Ability to succour, and this is from Strength. Now,

2*dly*. To pardon Sin (which is our Case) is in it self an Act of the greatest Strength in God; and therefore Strength fits him for being merciful. The Pharisees said, *No Man is able to forgive Sins but God*, Mark 2. 9. Says Christ, *I will shew you I am able to forgive Sins*. Why? To the Man sick of the Palsie, says he, *Take up thy Bed and walk*. He did this, to shew that he who had Power and Strength to heal such a Disease, had Power alike to be merciful: and had he not been the Almighty God, he could not have said, *Thy Sins are forgiven thee*.

3*dly*. For a Man to contain his Anger, it is from Strength; *Prov.* 16. 32. *He that is slow to anger, is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his Spirit, than he that taketh a City*. Thus it is the Strength of a Man to overcome his Passion: *Let the Power of my Lord be great, according as thou hast said, The Lord is long-suffering*, *Numb.* 14. 17, 18, 19. There is a good Saying in one of the Collects in the Common-Prayer-Book; O Lord, that shewest thy Omnipotency chiefly in shewing Mercy, in forgiving Sins: wherein it is accounted an high Act of Omnipotency to forgive Sins.

But you will say, Though here is an Ability to succour, and out of Strength to shew Mercy, yet where is the Affection of Mercy, and whence ariseth that?

Answ. The Seat of Mercy is the Will, as appears by that Speech, *I will be merciful to whom I will be merciful*, Exod. 33. 19. Now the Will of God hath Affections in it; for there is Hatred of Sin, which is an Affection that is natural, and Love an Affection of the Will that is natural. Tho these Affections in God are but various Postures of his Will to various Objects, what then is Mercy in his Will? Not a mere Act, but a Propensity, an inward Inclination from out of his Goodness of Will to shew Mercy to them that are in Misery; *Psal.* 86. 5. *He is ready to forgive: The Lord is good and ready to forgive, and plenteous in Mercy*. These are not Metaphors, (as Bowels and the like, used of Mercy) *Psal.* 34. 18. But *the Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken Heart:* Not in respect of Omnipotency merely; so he is to all, but in Readiness of Disposition and Inclination, he is ready and quick to be merciful so soon as he sees their Hearts. If any say that God willeth Mercy, and it is his Will to shew Mercy, let them but add and acknowledg that there is a Propensenes in his Will thereunto, unto such merciful Acts; and then they must say too, that Mercy (as to the Affection of it) is a Property in God.

But doth his Power and Strength move and stir that Affection in him, and render his Will propense unto Mercy?

Answ.

Answ. Yes: And to prove that it moves, I take that of *Moses* for my Ground, *Numb.* 14. 17, 18, 19. when pleading for Forgiveness, he says, *Let the Power of my Lord be great. Pardon I beseech thee this People, as thou hast forgiven them hitherto.* He woes God with that very Consideration, and presents it to him. Now it is a sure Maxim, that what *Moses* was taught by God to move God with, that God himself is certainly moved withal. Book I.

If you say unto me, But in what manner is he moved with it thereunto?

Answ. Because he hath Power lying by him *to help in time of need*, and he can put it forth as easily and readily as we think a Thought, or speak a Word.

There is a Saying in 1 *John* 3. 17. *If a Man hath this World's Goods, and seeth his Brother hath need, and shutteth up his Bowels of Compassion from him, how dwelleth the Love of God in him?* Truly God hath Love dwelling in him, yea *God is Love*, 1 *John* 4. 16. and he hath Power to help them whom he loves, and he sets himself to love his Children. Why then, thinks he with himself, have I Power to help them I love, and do I see them in Misery, and shall my Power lie by, and not shew it self? I may say, that if he thus sees them whom he loves to abide in Misery, and yet shut up his Affection of Mercy towards them, how doth Love dwell in God? how is he Love to such? So that this is my Conclusion. Mercy implies in it self a Non-subjection to Misery, and also an Ability and Fulness of Strength to help; and a Will, which tho it hath not Passions in it, yet hath Love and Propensenes to Goodness. There is a Readiness to forgive, there is an Affection which is the Foundation of shewing Mercy. So that he only is truly merciful. It is a Bastard-Mercy that is in Creatures, for that is true Mercy that is able to help with a Propensenes to do so, which alone is in God, who is *the Lord God strong, and the Lord God merciful.* It's then but a bastardly spurious Mercy that is in Creatures, and only God is merciful upon this respect, that God only is God.

Use 1. Is God's Power and Strength join'd with Mercy? Is it that which fits him for Mercy? O bless him that you find so dreadful an Attribute as Power join'd with Mercy: Why? you find them divided elsewhere, when they are to be exercised on others than the Elect: *Rom.* 9. 22. *What if God willing to shew his Wrath, and make his Power known, indured with much Long-suffering the Vessels of Wrath fitted for Destruction.* There is Power join'd with Wrath; let us therefore adore this God that hath in this Proclamation of Mercy, *Exod.* 34. put the God strong and merciful together.

Use 2. Do we find Mercy and Power joined together and paired elsewhere, as in *Psal.* 62. 11, 12. then as it is in that Psalm, *Go, trust him in all times:* for upon these two grounds he bids us, *ver.* 8. to *trust in him at all times.* But there are some times in your Lives that you are in such a Case and Condition that you have no kind of Hope or Possibility of Thought that such a thing should come to pass: but *trust in him at all times.* Why? Because Power belongeth to him, and Mercy; these two put together will effect any thing: what is too difficult for God the strong, and God merciful? Now I draw this Use out of *Jer.* 32. 17, 18. (which I cited before) *I prayed unto the Lord, saying, Ah Lord God, behold thou hast made the Heaven and the Earth by thy great Power, and stretched-out Arm; and there is nothing too hard for thee: Thou shewest Loving-kindness unto thousands, and recompensest the Iniquity of the Fathers into the Bosom of their Children after them: The great, the mighty God, the Lord of Hosts is his Name.* The Case stood thus; The Prophet *Jeremiah* was bid to buy a Purchase of Land, as you read in the forepart of the Chapter; it was at a time when the City was destroyed by the Sword, Famine and Pestilence, as at *ver.* 24. and the City given into the Hands of the Chaldeans, and they were by Prophecy to be seventy Years. The thing that was signified by this was, as God told him, *Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, Houses and Fields shall be possess'd again in this Land.* The poor Man's Spirit was extremely exercised about it; not for the Loss of his Money, but Strangeness of the thing, (as you will see it a strange thing, but he saw more) and it was the strangest thing could fall out, and the greatest Mercy to the People of God that could fall out: Because the manner of Conquerors was to remove all the People; as when they conquered *Judea* they took all the People and removed them, and planted them in other Countries, and brought People out of those Countries and planted them in *Judea.* They did so with the ten Tribes, they took the ten Tribes out of their own Land, and carried them into *Media*, and plant-

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Part I. ed in the room of them the Natives of those Countries where themselves were planted. The Land of *Judea* was a fruitful Place, and that there should be brought into that Land Strangers to possess it, and that there should be seventy Years time before they should return, this was the greatest Wonder in the World they should return. Yet notwithstanding the Lord intended that the Land should not be inhabited but by a Company of poor Jews that were left: But the Land was made desolate: 2 *Chron.* 36. 21. it's said, the Land enjoyed its Sabbaths: There was a Law, that the Land every seventh Year should not be digg'd; and accordingly God says, 2 Chron. 36. 21. *Your Land shall enjoy its Sabbaths, it shall be desolate.* But all this tended to make good that, which was so strange a thing to be done. There was the Babylonian Monarchy to be destroyed: Of them it is said, *The Children of* Israel, *and the Children of* Judah, *were oppressed together, and all that took them Captives held them fast, they refused to let them go: but their Redeemer is strong, the Lord of Hosts is his Name,* Jer. 50. 33. When they were destroyed, that they should possess every one their own Land again, what a wonderful thing is this. The Turk does not thus, yet they were as barbarous as the Turks; *Neh.* 5. 12. Nay, the Priests were free from Taxations upon their Land, *Jeremiah*'s Land stood free, *Ezra* 7. 24, 25. Was not that a strange Word that there should be buying and selling of Land again, it was not done for any Nation else; that in *Psal.* 126. 2. the Heathens among themselves said, *The Lord hath done great things for them.* Now *Jeremiah* received the Revelation of this in *ver.* 15. that there should be Houses, and Fields, and Vineyards possess'd again in the Land: He goes to God to strengthen his Faith therein, ver. 17. *Thou art the great and potent God, thou shewest Loving-kindness unto thousands.* He urges these two Attributes upon God; (you may see what it is to urge two such Attributes upon God, and have Faith to do it) when he had urged these (I shall shew you the Issue of it) directly God makes this gracious Promise upon this Prayer of his, to restore them to their own Land, and restores him not only his Money but Land too. Read what God did in answer from the *36th* Verse to the end of the Chapter. This good Prayer of his, urging in this difficult Case these two great things, the Power and Mercy of God, you see what it drew out from God, and what great things God did for his Mercy's sake, and by his Power, for these poor People. Therefore let us in all Straits and Difficulties make use of it, and remember to do likewise. God is the strong and merciful; *Is any thing too hard for me?* says God, in the same Chapter. No, Mercy sets God on work, and causes him to exert his Power, which effects every thing.

Use 3. Let us glorify him according to the Greatness of this Mercy and Greatness join'd together. Men, the more great they are, do degenerate into Rigour, and Severity, and Cruelty. Your great Kings have but the Name of Gracious, says Christ, by a Reflection on them; *Luke* 22. 25. *The Kings of the Gentiles exercise Lordship over them, and they that exercise Authority upon them are called Benefactors.* I take his Meaning to be this, You call them Benefactors, you are fain to call them so gracious, and so clement, and just and gracious, and you call them Benefactors for all their Greatness and Exercise of Lordship over you, though they rule you according to their Lusts. But our God that is the strong God, is the merciful God, and he that is the great King, whose Name is terrible, *Mal.* 1. 14. is also a good God, a merciful God, a gracious God. He is so merciful a God as all the Angels adore him, and worship him, while they consider the Miracles and Wonders of his Mercy. Let us therefore adore him, since the Angels do it. Consider *Psal.* 89. where the sure Mercies of *David* are set out, and the Angels celebrate the Miracles of his Mercy, those Angels to whom he is so dreadful and fearful in their Assemblies, *ver.* 6, 7, 8. O how much more (if they magnify the Conjunction of Power and Mercy in God) should we whom God shews Mercy to, who are the Objects of Mercy, and Subjects of Mercy, which the Angels are not.

Use 4. Is Mercy thus join'd with Power and Greatness? See, poor Wretch, what need thou hast of his Power and Mercy every day, need of his Strength, need of all Mercies to thy Soul. As for Sanctification, and Holiness, and Faith, and helping us to believe, they are from Strength, and depend upon the Strength of God; *Psal.* 86. 15, 16. *But thou, O Lord God, art a God full of Compassion and gracious, long-suffering and plenteous in Mercy and Truth.* Thou O Lord *Adonai* art a God; *El* the strong God, full of Compassion, the same Words as *Moses* useth. Instead

stead of *Jehovah*, *Adonai* is used, O Lord; but then *El*, strong God, is the same Word. The meaning is, Let all the Strength and Power thou the *strong God* hast in thee, be for my Advantage. Now is it not a bold Request to say, Lord, wilt thou give me all thy Strength to help me? A very bold Request indeed, but his Mercy moves him to grant it. Thus then petition him, *Thou art a God merciful and gracious, give thy Strength to me. Thou, O God, givest all thy Attributes up to thy Children to serve their Advantage as well as to serve thy own Glory, give me thy Strength.* Dost not thou need Strength (poor Wretch!) How oft is thy Heart apt to sink, and thou canst not believe but so long as God helps thee to do it? How apt to swoon in thy Despondencies and Doubts? Dost thou find Strength come in to help thee to believe? It is the strong God helps thee, *Psal.* 138. 3. *He strengthned me with Strength in my Soul* (says he) *when my Soul is sinking.* Thou hast a Heart weak to Duty, feeble Hands, weak Knees; who strengthens thee in the inner Man? He does it according to the Riches of his Glory, that is, of his Mercy, (which is eminently call'd his Glory) he strengthens us in the inward Man, *Ephes.* 3. 16. *Lastly*; Is God strong and merciful? *Psal.* 31. 24. Be of good Courage all you that hope in the Lord, and he shall strengthen your Heart; for he is your strong God, and he is your merciful God. Indeed if we had Faith and Hearts to improve and put together these two things, what might we not obtain from the Hands of God, where there is Power to enable, and Mercy to make willing, what cannot be done? *Jeremiah* putting together these two things, *Jer.* 32. 17, 18. says God, in answer to *Jeremiah*'s Prayer, *There is nothing too hard for me*; I have Power to do it, and Heart to do it: Improve all to the Good of your own Souls. Go and say unto God, *O thou God, plenteous in Mercy, and full of Compassion, give me thy Strength, I am a poor weak Creature.* A little Cordial you see what Strength it gives; so a little of the Strength of God, how doth it strengthen the Soul? make use of his Strength, *He is the Glory of your Strength*, Psal. 89. 16.

Use 5. If Power be thus joined to Mercy, then make use of it for Pardon of Sin. Though Sins be great, yet in such Cases, let the Soul go to God with these Words, *Let the Power of the Lord be great to pardon*, and to forgive, as you see *Moses* pleads it. That Strength that concurs to do all things else, it doth conduce to pardon Sin. Is it easier to say, *Take up thy Bed and walk*; or to say, *Thy Sins are forgiven thee?* saith our Saviour Christ. It is twice said in *Jer.* 32. *Nothing is too hard for me*: God speaks it once at *ver.* 27. and *Jeremiah* says it at *ver.* 17. He speaks it of Matters of Providence; apply it to Sin, there is no Sin too hard for him, for merciful Power, or powerful Mercy to pardon. God is as strong in forgiving Sin, and in the Power that forgives, as he is in his providential working Power: and as God's Power is good at making Worlds, nay at making his Heavens, wherein he dwells, the High and Holy Place, so his Power is as good at pardoning Sins, and the one is as great a Work as the other. In such Cases, let thy Faith bring it to this, God is able to pardon thee; and do but think with thy self, He that was able to make a World, is able to pardon me: He can find that in his Heart as is sufficient to pardon me. It is a great Step of Faith when Men see, and are convinc'd of their Sinfulness, to go to God and say, Thou art able to make me clean, thou art able to pardon my Sin.

Use 6. Doth Power thus yoak with Mercy; nay, is it the *Ratio* of Mercy? (I mean of that Phrase) then take God's Counsel, to lay hold on his Strength. *Isa.* 27. 5. *Fury is not in me.* He speaks as to his Vineyard, his Church, Fury is not in me against my Church, I can do that no hurt; but my Fury is against Briars and Thorns, as *ver.* 4. Who would set the Briars and Thorns against God in Battel? He would go thorow them, and would burn them together. Well, Is there no Remedy if they be Briars and Thorns? Yes, even for them there is a Remedy: What is that? *ver.* 5. *Let them take hold on my Strength. Of my Strength*; what is that? It is an Allusion to *Jacob*'s Story that had Power with God, *Gen.* 32. 28. The meaning is, Humble your selves. Suppose a Child or Servant should see one coming to strike him, they fall down in the humblest manner, and lay hold upon their Hands. Lay hold (says God) upon my Mercy, and Strength joined with Mercy, and I am charm'd, you may rule me; Mercy says it twice before Power's Face, you may make Peace with me, and you shall make Peace with me.

Part I.

CHAP. VIII.

The next word in this Proclamation of Exod. 34. 6,7. *explain'd* [Merciful]; *from whence Mercy arifeth in God.*

I Come now to the next Attribute exprefs'd in this Proclamation, *MERCIFUL*: *The Lord, the Lord, God, ftrong, gracious, merciful, abundant in Goodnefs and Truth, keeping Mercy for thoufands, forgiving Iniquity, Tranfgreffion and Sin,* Exod. 34. 6, 7. Things attributed to God here are of three forts.

1. The inward Difpofition, or Inclination, or Aptitude and Readinefs to Mercy, that is in the four firft Attributes, Merciful, Gracious, Long-fuffering, much in Goodnefs; and Truth is added.

2. There are his Purpofes and Refolutions of Mercy, keeping Mercy for thoufands; and they are immanent Acts in God, kept and laid up in God's own Breaft.

3. There are extrinfical Acts of Mercy iffuing from both, *pardoning Iniquity, Tranfgreffion and Sin.*

The meaning plainly is; Firft, God is merciful as he is *Jehovah*, that is his Nature. Secondly, He fully refolves to fhew Mercy; there is his Heart. Thirdly, He hath done it, and doth it every Day; in pardoning Sin, there is his Wont and Practice. So that God is every way merciful, in his Nature, in his Purpofes, and in his Deeds and Performances. Thefe four, Merciful, Gracious, Long-fuffering, much in Goodnefs, are all of Mercy's Kindred and Alliance; and it is very obfervable, that when in *Pfal.* 103. 8. the Pfalmift doth quote *Mofes*'s Words, he only quotes thefe four Attributes, and leaves out Truth, for it was not a-kin to Mercy; it was not congenial to it, and was not recited there. Though it fell in with Mercy, yet it is not of Mercy's Pedigree. Thefe four are therefore Attributes of pure Mercy, which yet have their Diftinguifhment, which I fhall after fhew.

Obf. That which I obferve is, That to defcribe the merciful Defigns of Mercy, and Grace, and Long-fuffering, is to define the Nature of God. Of which I fhall fay two things:

1. That all God's being merciful, it is refolv'd into God's Nature, of being merciful, becaufe if being merciful be the Caufe of merciful Effects, then Mercy muft have an Exiftence before; and where, but in him? Merciful Effects fuppofe his being merciful as the Root and Principle in himfelf; fo that merciful Effects, and pardoning Sin, *&c.* are attributed to him as the Caufe: *Pfal.* 78. 38. *But he being full of Compaffion, forgave their Iniquity, and deftroyed them not.* It is plain, forgiving their Iniquity is refolved into this his being full of Mercy, as the Caufe. Saith *Calvin*, the Caufe is afcribed to Mercy, which is naturally in him: In *Pfal.* 86. he implores merciful, gracious Effects towards himfelf; *ver.* 1, 2, 3, 4. *Bow down thine Ear, O Lord hear me, for I am poor and needy; preferve my Soul, for I am holy, O thou my God, fave thy Servant that trufteth in thee: Be merciful unto me, O Lord, for I cry unto thee daily: Rejoice the Soul of thy Servant, for unto thee O Lord do I lift up my Soul.* Thefe Mercies he implores in thefe Verfes upon this Ground, becaufe God himfelf is merciful, it is his Nature. And fo too, *Neh.* 9. 31. *Thou didft not utterly confume them, nor forfake them, for thou art a gracious and merciful God.* Here thefe merciful Effects of not confuming them is afcribed to Mercy, as the Caufe. *Jer.* 3. 12. *Return, and I will not caufe mine Anger to fall upon you, for I am merciful, faith the Lord.* Still it runs in the caufal Particle: Therefore they are infinitely out that fay, he is faid to be merciful, becaufe he does merciful Effects, whereas the Scripture fays he does merciful Effects, for he is merciful.

2. The fecond thing I would fay to fhew he is merciful is, that he fays, *Jehovah, Jehovah*, God; and then Merciful, Gracious, Long-fuffering. This thrice repeating the fubftantial Name of God, hath not only a Myftery in it of the Trinity, but refers alfo to thofe Attributes that follow, to fignify what *Jehovah* is; he gives him his fubftantial Names, and then his other Properties four times, which declare in Reality, that *Jehovah, Jehovah*, God, are one and the fame with *merciful* and *long-fuffering*, as I have fhewed you largely before. And to this end too the Name

Name of God is joined with Faithfulness; *Deut.* 7. 9. *Know therefore that the Lord thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth Covenant and Mercy with them that love him, and keep his Commandments, to a thousand Generations.* Here is first a vehement Indigitation of God's being God, *Know ye therefore,* (says he) *know that the Lord thy God, he is God.* And to the end they might thus know him, he adds, that *he was the faithful God.* Faithfulness is his Truth. That he insists thus on the Name of God first, and then the Faithfulness of God, it is to bring over the Godhead into Faithfulness, that so they might trust to his Faithfulness as his Godhead. And indeed you find it expressly call'd himself; 2 *Tim.* 2. 13. *He abideth faithful, he cannot deny himself.* Faithfulness is himself, *Tit.* 1. 2. *God that cannot lie:* Why? Because he is God, it is his Godhead to be true and faithful. Where-ever he hath ingaged his Word, there his Godhead is ingaged to make it good, for he is the faithful God; and where-ever his Mercy is ingaged, there is his Godhead ingaged, and laid at stake to Eternity, to shew Mercy to that Soul. Now read over that, *Deut.* 7. 9. once more, *Know therefore that the Lord thy God he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth Covenant and Mercy with them that love him, and keep his Commandments, to a thousand Generations.* Then read these Words in the Text of *Exod.* 34. *Jehovah, Jehovah, God merciful, gracious.* What *faithful* is there, *merciful* is here.

Let us now consider why *merciful* is in order plac'd first: The Truth is, in order of Nature Grace is before Mercy, and I could give many Scriptures where Grace is first named: but the Reason why he here put merciful first, is, because he is to speak to Sinners. He presents himself to Sinners; and if to them he had said at first dash, God is good, or God is gracious, or God is Love, Sinners would have said, This speaks short to us, and why? Because he is good to all his Creatures that never sinned, he is gracious to Angels that never sinned: Ay, but merciful, with that proper Effect, pardoning Iniquity, Transgression and Sin, that is a welcome Saying to Sinners, and speaks home to their Case.

I now shall consider what is the Rise of Mercy, which doth involve the Godhead it self; that one Attribute should be *Ratio alterius,* as to our Apprehension, is allow'd by them that did most exquisitely argue about God and his Attributes. Now then I shall shew you what it is makes him merciful, (it will help our Faith to consider it) not how all Attributes fall in, as Holiness, *&c.* do, but what is the special Genealogy and Descent of Mercy, (we speak after the manner of Men, and yet the Scripture speaks the same) what is the *Ratio misericordiæ.* Mercy fetcheth its Pedigree,

1. From his Blessedness, God comes to be merciful by Descent, from his having all Fulness of Perfection compleatly in him, and being happy in himself, and having no need of any thing, *Acts* 17. 25. He is the blessed God, and all-sufficient God, and so all-sufficient, that he is above all Misery, that Misery cannot reach him, and this makes and inclines him to be merciful. God having all within himself transcendently and compleatly, that he need not any thing that is out of himself, he is therefore able and hath Power to make others blessed; and being merciful, therefore he can pardon, though Sinners sin against him: For why, their Sins do not hurt him, he is full of all Enjoyments, and is equally happy, whether the Creatures be or not be; and as equally happy, whether the Creature sin or not sin against him, for they no way reach to hurt his Enjoyment: *Job* 35. 6, 7. *If thou sinnest, what dost thou against him? or if thy Transgressions be multiplied, what dost thou unto him? If thou be righteous, what givest thou to him, or what receiveth he of thine Hand?* Neither the one nor the other can any way hurt him, or benefit him; he is not benefited by the Righteousness of any Creature. Nay, Christ himself says, *Psal.* 16. 16. *My Righteousness extends not to thee,* thou art never the better by it, thou art so perfect a God. Nor is he hurt by Sin, therefore he can easily pardon. All are not alike to him as to his external Glory, but as to his inward essential Happiness, they are all alike, as to any Prejudice they can do it.

What made *Paul* that he could forgive Injuries? it was that he got good by them, he was not injured at all, *Gal.* 4. 12. And so the Blessedness of God, and his being above all, so high, and above the Reach of all, is a Ground of his being merciful. I observe in *Luke* 1. 72. that Mercy is there said to be promised; *To perform the Mercy promised to our Fathers, and to remember his holy Covenant.* Among these it was to *Abraham* God made himself known by Name, and it was to strengthen his Faith in the Promise of Mercy. And the first Name by which he manifests himself

Part I. is this, *I am* (says he) *God all-sufficient*, Gen. 17. 1. and the word signifies, I am full of Paps, I am all-sufficient of my self, and therefore I am a God that can afford what is in me unto others; I have a Breast full for others, as well as Happiness in my self. And thus, God of Comfort, and Father of Mercies, are well joined together, 2 *Cor.* 1. 3. that is, he that is so blessed in himself is merciful in himself. *Abraham*, to whom God thus proclaimed himself all-sufficient, is the Standard-Instance of being justified, and the Father of the Faithful; and that Maxim is drawn from his Example, *Rom.* 4. 5. Now it was All-sufficiency that *Abraham* heard of, which encouraged him to believe.

There was also another Name of God, and that was אל עליון *El Helyon*, God most High, brought up by *Melchisedeck*, when he came to *Abraham*, Gen. 14. 19. It is four times used there, and that is the first Use of it upon *Abraham*'s Occasion. What is the Meaning of this, *the most High God?* It is, that he is above all, out of the Reach of all. Now you find the Scripture calls it, *the Mercy of the most High*, *Psal.* 21. 7. Nay, it is observable, that ὁ ἐλεῶν in Greek, and in the Hebrew *ho eleon* is the word for *merciful*. The most high, and the merciful God, are well then joined together. The Schoolmen ordinarily say, true Mercy is only in God: Why? Because he only is above all Misery, and therefore able to help his People out of it. The Scripture says, it is the Mercy of the most High; *Luke* 6. 34, 35. *Be ye merciful as your heavenly Father is merciful:* That is the Exhortation, Imitate your Father; and, says he, *You shall be the Children of the Highest:* You shall be like him that is highest; therefore *be merciful as your heavenly Father is merciful.*

2. Mercy is in God *ad modum virtutis*, as a Perfection, which you know is after the way of being a Vertue. All Perfections are in God, and there are these three sorts of Perfections in him. First, Such as we call metaphysical transcendent Excellencies in himself, as Majesty, Glory, Unchangeableness, Infiniteness, Eternity. Secondly, We say there are Perfections of Faculties, of Understanding, (which the Scripture says is infinite) and of his Will. But, Thirdly, There is also in him *Perfectiones morales*, moral Perfections: We are forc'd, and God himself is forc'd to speak of himself in this manner that we may understand. It is a good Saying of the Schoolmen, It becomes God to be most perfect, not only in his absolute Being, and the Excellencies thereof, but also in Vertue. If you would have Scripture, see 1 Pet. 2. 9. *Shew forth the Praises of him who hath called you.* We translate it *Praises*, but in the Margin it is Vertues. Whom doth he speak of? Not of Christ only, but of God the Father: *Now you are the People of God*, ver. 10. *As he which hath called you is holy*, (there is one Vertue) *so be ye holy in all manner of Conversation*, 1 Pet. 1. 15. And answerably hereto shew forth the Vertues of him which hath called you. Now Mercy is one Vertue eminently intended in *Peter*, for it followeth, *which in time past were not a People, but are now the People of God; which had not obtained Mercy, but now have obtained Mercy*, from God, by calling you, and therefore shew forth that Vertue. Now Holiness is a Vertue we all acknowledg: *As he which hath called you is holy; so be ye holy in all manner of Conversation.* And what? Is not this parallel to that Scripture, *Be you merciful as your heavenly Father is merciful*, Luke 6. 35. As Holiness then is a Vertue in him, so Mercifulness is a Vertue in him. If you yet doubt of it, consider further what is said, *Be you perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect*, Mat. 5. 48. He speaks it of Mercy, for it refers to *ver.* 44, 45. *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, that ye may be the Children of your Father which is in Heaven.* Now then that Mercy whereby God is perfect, must needs be himself, his Essence, nothing can perfect God but himself, he should otherwise be beholden to an Accident, and Quality, and Creature, if any thing perfect him but himself. Now to shew the Descent of Mercy for strengthning our Faith, consider,

1. The Blessedness of God is the Rise of Goodness in him (still we speak after the manner of Men). Now there is his Goodness of Being, Entity of Goodness; and there is his Goodness by which he communicates himself, and that is an Attribute, which is all one with his Being, only it inclines him to communicate: *Psal.* 119. 68. *Thou art good, and doest good.* The Nature of Goodness is to communicate it self, and to be sure Goodness in God is his Nature. But how doth it rise from Blessedness? says our Saviour Christ, (there is but one saying of his that is not in the Evangelists) Acts 20. 35. *It is more blessed to give than to receive.* Is he a blessed God? He will give

give then, he will communicate himself. In *Exod.* 33. 19. which is the Preface to this Text, *Exod.* 34. 6, 7. says God to *Moses, I will cause all my Goodness to pass before thee, and I will proclaim the Name of the Lord before thee, and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew Mercy on whom I will shew Mercy.* Doth God proclaim all his Goodness here? No, there be many Attributes he doth not proclaim. The best Interpretation I have is, that which is his Goodness communicative for us, (as for his essential Goodness it is himself) such as Mercy, and Grace, and Truth, these are those he proclaims, so that his Goodness is the Ground of his being merciful and gracious, *Psal.* 25. 6, 7. *David* there praying earnestly for Forgiveness, *Remember* (says he) *O Lord, thy tender Mercies, and thy Loving-kindnesses, for they have been ever of old. Remember not the Sins of my Youth, nor my Transgressions: according to thy Mercy remember thou me, for thy Goodness sake, O Lord.* He centers upon this, that God was good, and Goodness it self, because he knew that Mercy centred in Goodness. *Psal.* 86. 5. *Thou Lord art good,* that's the first; *then ready to forgive, and plenteous in Mercy.* And this is the first Burden of many Psalms, *the Lord is good, and his Mercy endures for ever.* And it was that they sung in the Temple, as you may read in the *Chronicles.* You see then there is Blessedness first, and Goodness ariseth from Blessedness.

Book I.

2. The next thing in God is Love, and that ariseth from Goodness. The Goodness that is in God inclines him to love, and to be the most profuse Lover. You read in 1 *John* 4. 7, 8. God is Love. The Question is, whether this Speech doth not import, that he is Love in himself, as well as that he shows Love. There are these Reasons why it imports what he is in himself, when he says, God is Love. Says he, *ver.* 7. *Every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God,* that is the Affirmative; and *ver.* 8. *He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is Love:* that is, he knows not God in what is most proper to him, as to what doth most abound in him, for God is Love. We ordinarily say of a Man that is of such a Disposition, I know him, he is so and so; so the Believer knows God to be Love. Thus the Apostle says positively, *He that is born of God knows God, for God is Love.* I take the meaning thus; When a Man hath tasted that the Lord is gracious, the Truth is, it is not only an *Act* of Love that he tastes, but he tastes God, he sucks *in dietatem,* he sucks in this, that there is a Principle in God to maintain his Love to Eternity: And so God being Love, he knows him to be so. Again, he says, *All Love is of God, for God is Love.* What is the meaning of that? That if God be the Author of all Love, then certainly there is Love in him; *He that made the Eye, shall not he see?* But that which most convinceth me is, that he saith, *ver.* 12. *No Man hath seen God at any time.* He speaks it of his Love, which none sees but as manifest by Effects; but God is Love essentially. Says *Aquinas,* Whoever hath a Will, hath a Proneness to Love. Says *Musculus,* As every one is in Goodness, so in Love. If God then hath a Will inclined to any thing, it is to Love; he hath Hatred in him to Sin, he hath the opposite: He hath a Love also to something, only it is guided by his Will towards Creatures.

3. Love and Grace are the Roots of Mercy. Where he sets his Love, if there be Misery, there Love is drawn out to Pity and Mercy. The Schoolmen say, It is but *extensio amoris,* but an extending of Love to the Creature when in Misery. And indeed the Hebrew word for Mercy חסד signifies also Love or good Will. Our Translators oft render it, merciful Loving-kindness; *Psal.* 117. 2. *His merciful Kindness is great towards us.* And it is Mercy he speaks of, for it is quoted in *Rom.* 15. 9. *The Gentiles shall glorify God for his Mercy.* And *Psal.* 119. 76. *Let thy merciful Loving kindness be for my Comfort*; or thy Loving-kindness be stretch'd out into Mercy where there is need. Where there is Love, there is a Design of Good to the Party loved; then Desires follow: where there is Love, there is a rejoicing over the Person; when he prospers, then there is Joy: If he be in Misery, there is a drawing out that Love into Pity. If you say, *the Lord is gracious,* you go not beyond *merciful*; for that is Grace and Love drawn out to the full length, as far as Grace and Love can reach. What Phrase the Schoolmen express it by, the Scripture doth the like; *Psal.* 36. 10. *O continue thy Loving-kindness:* Draw out at length thy Loving-kindness (so in the Margin). And it speaks of Mercy, for he magnifies Mercy; Ver. 5. *Thy Mercy O Lord is in the Heavens.* In that Scripture too which is famous amongst us, *Jer.* 31. 3. *I have loved thee with an everlasting Love, therefore with Loving-*

ving-kindness have I drawn thee; that last Clause hath two Significations, (it is
Part I. varied in the Margin) I have extended Loving-kindness to thee, I have stretched out Loving-kindness to thee; so *Piscator* reads it. Now hence it comes to pass, that in shewing Mercy God makes the Foundation of it to be Love; *Ephes.* 2. 4, 5. *But God who is rich in Mercy, for his great Love wherewith he loved us.* Rom. 5. 8. *God commendeth his Love towards us, in that while we were yet Sinners, Christ died for us.* Mercy is there called Love; and it is indeed but a commending or extending of Love towards Sinners, when we were Sinners Christ died. *Tit.* 3. 4. *The Kindness and Love of God our Saviour towards Man appeared, not by Works of Righteousness which we have done, but according to his Mercy he saved us.* When the Kindness and Love of God appears, Mercy follows; According to his Mercy (being Sinners) he saveth us.

Use 1. Is Mercy the Nature of God, and is Mercy himself? Then consider, Look how great God is, so great is his Mercy: Our Translation reads it, As is his Greatness, so is his Mercy: Why? Because it is God's. Where he pitcheth Mercy by his Will, there the whole Godhead is engaged, *Jehovah*, *Jehovah*, God gracious and merciful; he brings over all the whole Godhead when he will be merciful.

Use 2. We do treat with the Will of God every day: He that is a Believer treats with the Will of God, that he would but be merciful to him. Now those that treat with the Will of God, either in a way of Assurance, or in throwing themselves upon him, and hoping in his Mercy, what have they to plead? All the Mercies in the Nature of God, to be a ground of Plea before him, to tell him what a God he is in Mercy: O that we would but inure our Hearts to this Practice, it would be a mighty Advantage! In *Numb.* 14. *Moses* having first urg'd the Mercies that were in God himself, that he is a God, long-suffering, great in Mercy; then he prays, *According to thy great Mercy do thou pardon.* What Mercy? The Mercy he mentioned, which is in God himself; *Deal* (says he) *according to this Mercy in thee which thou hast spoken of.* As if one were to supplicate a merciful Man, he implores the Mercy and Ingenuity of his Nature, which upon all Occasions he had shewn. *Moses* was the first that brought up this happy Expression, *According to thy Mercy*, (I know not where it is used by any other Man) that is, according to the infinite Mercy in thy Heart and Nature. *David* did next use it, *Psal.* 25. And in the great Case of his Sin of Adultery, *Psal.* 51. 1. *That he would be merciful to him according to the Multitude of his Mercies.* And as he needed all the Mercies in God, so he confess'd the Sin of his Nature, and hath Recourse to the Mercies in God's Nature. But it is *Psal.* 25. 7. I pitch on: There he doth not content himself only with this Expression, *According to thy Mercy*, but he adds another Phrase, *For thy Mercy sake, and Goodness sake.* *Muis* observes in this Coherence, *Good and upright is the Lord*, that he centers in his Nature. Thou hast a merciful Nature, deal with me according to that, and for the sake of that, according to thy Mercy for thy Goodness sake. The Meditation of that Attribute was the Foundation of his Faith and Prayer herein. When he hath done, he referreth himself to *Moses*, ver. 11. *For thy Name's sake, O Lord, pardon my Iniquity, for it is great.* He refers to that Name proclaimed before *Moses*, Exod. 34. 6, 7. But you will say, How do these Expressions, *for thy Name sake, for thy Goodness sake, for thy Mercy sake*, imply the same as *for himself, for his own sake*, how do they involve the Godhead? Look to *Isa.* 43. 25. *I, even I am he that blotteth out thy Transgressions for mine own sake*, that is, for my self: *Isa.* 48. 11. *For mine own sake, even for mine own sake will I do it.* You have it twice in one Verse; and that which is *for Mercy sake* in one place, is *for mine own sake* in another: And behold it is I, I am he, as I am God who doth it. What is this but *Jehovah*, *Jehovah*, *God merciful?* We may learn from Old Testament-Phrases that which we do not so much consider. They have taught us in their Prayers from *Moses*'s Example, how to pray and urge the Mercies of God; *Dan.* 9. 18, 19. He had said, *For thy Mercy sake do this.* And at *ver.* 19. *For thine own sake do this:* He puts them both together. To me this is a great thing, that when we go to pray, we have the liberty to urge God to shew us Mercy for his own sake; that altho it is we who have the Benefit of the Mercies, yet we may urge him, Thou shalt have the Glory of it, thou shalt have the Glory of thy Grace by it, and the Glory of thy Mercy by it. It is yet again a greater Advantage in praying, that we have all the Mercies in God before us to spread before him; Mercies in his Word might be limited,

mited, but in his Nature they cannot. What may we not obtain at the hand of God, if we could improve this Notion, to go to God to be merciful to us, as God, and according to the Mercies that are in his Nature, and for the sake of them? Book I.

CHAP. IX.

The other part of the Proclamation of the Mercies of God's Nature in Exod. 34. *explained. The Meaning of those Words,* Jehovah, pardoning Iniquity, Transgression, and Sin, *shewed, by the Explication of another Text,* Psal. 89. 30, *to* 37. *That the Covenant of Grace in Christ is the substantial Scope and Design of the Psalm. That the Promises of God's pardoning Mercies do concern, and are made unto Christ's spiritual Seed. That there is such an Amplification of Grace in them, as to extend to the worst Cases they can possibly be supposed to be in. That they are strengthned by the firmest Engagements.*

PSAL. LXXXIX. 30, *&c.*

If his Children forsake my Law, and walk not in my Judgments: 31 *If they break my Statutes, and keep not my Commandments:* 32 *Then will I visit their Transgression with the Rod, and their Iniquity with Stripes.* 33 *Nevertheless my Loving kindness will I not utterly take from him; nor suffer my Faithfulness to fail.* 34 *My Covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my Lips.* 35 *Once have I sworn by my Holiness, that I will not lie unto* David. 36 *His Seed shall endure for ever, and his Throne as the Sun before me.* 37 *It shall be established for ever as the Moon, and as a faithful Witness in Heaven. Selah.*

I Shall center in the 89*th* Psalm for the illustrating that great Attribute of *Jehovah merciful,* Exod. 34. *Pardoning Iniquity, Transgression and Sin,* &c. Altho first I must necessarily premise some few things concerning the main drift of the Psalm.

I shall first remark the Occasion of making this Psalm. 'Tis certain the Penman of it lived in such times wherein great and sad Disasters did befal the House and *Throne of* David, as appears by what so bitterly he complains of from *ver.* 38, to the end. But the Question lies, what times this should belong unto, which ariseth from hence, that *Ethan* the *Ezraite* is the Author of it, of whom we read, 1 *Kings* 4. 31. that he lived in *Solomon*'s time, and therefore most Interpreters assign this Calamity unto the times of *Rehoboam*'s Reign, until when that this *Ethan* should live, is no wonder: For *Rehoboam* succeeded *Solomon,* and it was in the beginning of his Reign that the ten Tribes were deplorably cut off from *David*'s House, and given to *Jeroboam*, and never did return again.

Now *Piscator* and others object, that in *ver.* 40. 'tis said, *Thou hast broken down all his Hedges, thou hast brought his strong Holds to Ruine*; which cannot (says he) belong to any other times but those of the Captivity. The Answer given by some is, that within the first five Years of *Rehoboam*'s Reign, *Sishack* King of *Egypt* took also the Cities of *Judah*, and the Strong-holds, 1 *Chron.* 12. 4. yea he came to *Jerusalem* it self, and *spoiled the Temple,* 1 Kings 14. 25. by all which *David*'s Throne lost its Virgin Primitive Glory: As likewise by this *Rehoboam* himself, the King and his Kingdom, Servants, *&c.* were made Tributaries to *Egypt*, 2 Chron. 12. 2. This Event those Interpreters judg a full and sufficient ground for the Prophet to utter his fore-mentioned Complaint upon. And indeed it may be said, that in this great Change there was an initial Performance then, and a Beginning of those final Disasters upon *David*'s Throne and Family, though it had a more full Accomplishment in the *Captivity of* Babylon, unto which *Piscator* and others do rather refer this Psalm. But there is this Difficulty attends that Interpretation of theirs, that there must have been another *Ethan*, and he an Ezraite too, living at the Captivity, which though it possibly might fall out, those of the same kindred giving to their Posterity the same Names of their famed Ancestors, yet this not being extant, I should,

Part I. should, to compound all, rather think that this *Ethan* of *Solomon*'s time seeing that this dismal Calamity began in *Rehoboam*'s time, did further, by the Spirit of Prophecy, foresee how an after total Eclipse would in the Issue fall out from this unhappy Beginning, it fore-boding that final Ruine which followed; this being a laying the Ax to the Root of the Tree; and so he wraps up both in one. But be it either the one or the other, however he that wrote it did upon these fatal Events begin deeply to consider what that Covenant made with *David* should mean and intend, especially as touching that Clause of the *Perpetuity* thereof; the Promise being, that it was established for ever, as at the first Promulgation of it was declared, 2 *Sam.* 7. 13. whenas this Prophet by these Occurrences foresaw that *David*'s successive outward Kingdom would one day cease. And that at the Captivity it had a fatal Period, *Ezekiel* did pronounce, *ch.* 21. 25, 26, 27. *And thou profane wicked Prince of* Israel, *whose day is come, when Iniquity shall have an end, thus saith the Lord God, Remove the Diadem, and take off the Crown: this shall not be the same: exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high.* With which compare this *Psal.* 89. 39. *Thou hast profaned his Crown by casting it to the Ground.* And as he had begun, so he threatens to go on: *I will overturn, overturn, overturn it, and it shall be no more until he come whose Right it is, and I will give it him:* that is, until the *true David* shall come, who was intended by the Type of *David*'s temporary Kingdom. And by the Consideration of these things our Psalmist was by the Spirit led into the clear Understanding of the Mystery of the Covenant of Grace founded on *Christ* the spiritual *David*, to set forth which is the intimate Scope of the Psalm. And by this it was that he comforts and relieves himself (as he well might) against those sad Overthrows that fell upon that external successive Kingdom and shadowy Covenant of *David*'s House over *Israel*, which was temporary. And those Words, (which I understand to be the Prophet's own) *ver.* 23. *I have said, Mercy shall be built up for ever, thy Faithfulness shalt thou establish in the very Heaven; for I have made a Covenant with my Chosen, I have sworn unto* David *my Servant,* do express so much. And it is as if he had said, I have, notwithstanding the Wreck I have seen hath and shall fall out to *David*'s Family, set down with my self as a fixed Conclusion, that there are sure stable Mercies of *David* signified, that shall *be built up for ever.* And this he was resolved and assured of, (and his Words at last do argue as much) that notwithstanding those doleful Miseries befallen *David*'s Family, and the Jews, related from *ver.* 39, *&c.* that he should yet be in the Faith and Confidence of those spiritual Mercies. And accordingly he concludes the last Verse, *Blessed be the Lord for evermore. Amen, and Amen.*

This he according to this Scope proposeth at the Beginning; *ver.* 1. *I will sing of the Mercies of the Lord for ever: with my Mouth will I make known thy Faithfulness to all Generations.* And these Mercies (as was said) are those of the Covenant of Grace, (which afterwards are in this Psalm set forth) and summarily *they are the Mercies promised unto Christ and his Seed, whom* David *typified, as they are formed up into a Covenant of Grace:* Of which he professeth to sing throughout this Psalm: And therefore the most Particulars therein are to be understood to relate thereunto. This Summary or Breviate of all he declares in the 3*d* and 4*th* Verses expressly, as the Words of God himself, whom he introduceth to speak in the midst of his own Discourse in these Words; *I have made a Covenant with my Chosen; I have sworn unto* David *my Servant, Thy Seed will I establish for ever; and build up thy Throne to all Generations. Selah.*

Regnum Christi vocatur Regnum Davidis, quia adumbratum fuit Regno Davidis, &c. Sic *Theophilactus* inter Græcos, *Bernardus* inter Latinos. *Lucas Brugensis* in locum.

That the Covenant of *Grace in Christ* is the substantial Scope of this Psalm, all Christian Interpreters do agree, and the Arguments are invincible which *Musculus* and *Calvin* have urged to perswade this, as not only that our Saviour hath the very Name of *David* their King given him by the Prophets, *Jer.* 30. 9. *Ezek.* 34. 23. *Amos* 9. 11. and by the Apostle, *Acts* 13. 34. as in relation to these sure Mercies; who is therefore intended as the Substance of this Shadow; but because the Promises in this Psalm are not fulfilled, if not in him. For not only *David*'s Seed, but his Kingdom and Throne are said to continue *for ever.* And if the fleshly Seed of *David* can be supposed to continue still on Earth, yet to be sure his Kingdom hath not, whereas the Promise is of his Kingdom's Continuance *for ever* as well as of his *Seed.* And if God hath failed in point of his successive Kingdom, who will believe that other of his *Seed,* unless as both were accomplished in our *Jesus?* And this the Angels

gels at his Conception do expresly assert; *Luke* 1. 32, 33. *He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the highest; and the Lord shall give unto him the Throne of his Father* David. *And he shall reign over the House of* Jacob *for ever, and of his Kingdom there shall be no end.* Which was taken from *Isa.* 9. 6. *For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the Government shall be upon his Shoulder; his Name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.* Book I.

Christ's Kingdom is said to be the *Throne of* David, because shadowed out by that of *David*; himself professeth that *his Kingdom was not of this World*, John 18. 36. which *David*'s Kingdom was, after the Mode and Splendor of other earthly Kings, which hitherto Christ's hath no way been. And in this Psalm those great Promises of Pardon of Sin, from *ver.* 30. appertain to that spiritual Kingdom which Christ did found. And answerably, the *Seed* of this *David* are *a spiritual Seed*, which by his Word and Spirit he begets, who are therefore named *Israel*, even the very Gentiles, *Isa.* 44. 5. (who are the surrogate *Israel*) and their Conversion (as well as of the Jews) the Apostle expresly terms *the building again the Tabernacle of* David; *Acts* 15. 16, 17. *After this I will return, and will build again the Tabernacle of* David, *which is fallen down: and I will build again the Ruines thereof, and I will set it up; that the Residue of Men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles upon whom my Name is called, saith the Lord, who doth all these things.* In which Speech is also confirmed, that *David*'s outward successive Kingdom was utterly brought to Ruine, (as to be sure in *Herod*'s time, wherein Christ was born, it was) and that now it was wholly to be raised up a-new by Christ into a spiritual Kingdom, then begun over both Jew and Gentile, they becoming one Fold, and *David* their King becoming one Shepherd over them; as the Prophet hath it, *Ezek.* 34. 23.

Dicitur Messiæ Imperiũ Davidis solũ, quod Davidis solio adumbrabatur. Et sic locum 2 *Sam.* 7. 13. explicat Isaac Ben. Arama. *Grotius* in locum.

These Covenant-Mercies then being the declared *Ditto* of his Song, and the most eminent Mercies in that Covenant being God's *pardoning Mercies* to those under this Covenant, he therefore particularly singles forth those, and they have a special and large Room in this Psalm, from *ver.* 30, *&c.* But before I come to discourse of the Greatness of these Mercies in pardoning Sin, I cannot pass over that Praise and Celebration which the Psalmist breaks forth into, of our great God, who is the Father and Founder of this Mercy and Covenant, in the 5*th* Verse, which is as a Preludium to his Song; *And the Heavens shall praise thy Wonders, O Lord, thy Faithfulness also in the Congregation of thy Saints.*

Herein to provoke us Men to sing and set forth these Mercies, he sets before us the Example of the glorious Angels in Heaven, who tho never having sinned, and so never needed the pardoning Mercies of this Covenant, do yet praise God for it, and on our behalf; then how much more are we obliged?

The Heavens do praise thy Wonders, O Lord. These Wonders are those wonderful Mercies last mentioned, (for he continues to speak punctually to this his Subject he had thus proposed to sing and celebrate) and so they are not chiefly to be understood of God's *Wonders* at large; tho that is a Truth also, that the Angels celebrate God for them.

That the Angels are express'd by the Heavens, sundry Places do shew; *Job* 15. 15. *Behold, he putteth no Trust in his Saints; yea [the Heavens] are not clean in his sight:* compared with *ch.* 4. 18. *Behold, he puts no Trust in his Servants; his Angels he charged with Folly.* See also *Psal.* 50. 4, 6. And that the Angels are meant in this Place by the Psalmist, all Interpreters, from the Force of the Coherence before and after, do agree. For it follows immediately in the same 5*th* Verse, *Thy Faithfulness also in the Congregation of the Saints*; that is, is also praised among them; which being a Continuation of the same Sentence and Matter, must be understood of the same kind of Praise, tho indeed by another Order of Praises. That it is not meant of the material Heavens is clear, it being the Praise of the Wonders of his Mercy and Faithfulness, as was said. And such Praises are Subjects of that super-celestial Nature, which the material Heavens are not capable to set forth the Praise of: Nay, they have not the least material Impress or Stamp upon them to hold them forth unto us Men. They declare indeed the Glory of God in his Works of Creation, Providence, *&c.* but not these of Grace. And if any where it be applied thereto, it is but merely allusively, as out of *Psal.* 19. The Apostle doth, in *Rom.* 10. apply the Psalmist's Words of the Heavens, *Psal.* 19. 1. and indeed but as by way of parallel Type, shadowing forth the Apostle's preaching throughout the

The Eastern Translations, Syriack, &c. do concur with this.

Part I. Earth. And besides, would he set (think we) and join the material Heavens, inanimate Creatures, and the Congregation of the Saints, in one Quire together, in their praising God; as in like manner in singing forth these like Praises of Covenant-Mercies and Faithfulness, especially when the Heavens spoken of are brought in as the Precentors, or chief and first Singers in this sacred Consort? The *Heavens* therefore here are the Inhabitants of Heaven, as *Earth* is often put for the Inhabitants of the Earth; you have both in one Place, *Psal.* 50. 4.

His Wonders. The word in the Original is the singular Number; *mirabile tuum*, [*thy Wonder*] the eminent Wonder above all Wonders, the Sum of Wonders, which are the Contents of the Covenant of Grace. The Contrivements and Dispensations of it are all Wonders, nothing but Wonder, both in the whole of it, and every the least part of it, and all make up but one Wonder of Wonders, above and beyond all Wonders; and therefore by way of transcendent Eminency it is thus stiled. The Head of this Covenant also, Christ our spiritual *David*, his *Name is Wonderful*, *Isa.* 9. 6. Again, God's pardoning *Iniquity*, *Transgression and Sin*, (to celebrate which so many Verses in this Psalm are spent) is a Wonder of Wonders, *Who is a God like unto thee, that pardonest Iniquity?* &c. *Mich.* 7. 18.

It follows in the Psalmist, in the same Verse, *Thy Faithfulness also in the Congregation of the Saints:* namely of the Saints on Earth, who have the most Reason to magnify God for his Mercy in it, as *Rom.* 15. And from whom also it is, by what is published in their Assemblies, that the Angels do learn much of these Wonders, as that Scripture shews, (which is a Place greatly parallel to this here) *Ephes.* 3. 10. *To the intent that now unto the Principalities and Powers in heavenly Places, might be known by the Church the manifold Wisdom of God.* I say, parallel to this: for as there the *Angels* and the *Church* (on Earth) so here the *Heavens*, and the *Congregation of the Saints* on Earth, are joined in their Adoration of these Mysteries.

I only shall observe, that the Angels principal Part in this Celebration is distinct from that of us Men, it is to praise the *Wonders* of this Covenant; or *as it is a Wonder*, so it is most proper to them to admire and adore God for it. Well, but the *Mercy* it self, and the *Faithfulness* of God therein, that you see is ascribed and allotted to the *Congregations of the Saints*, or Men on Earth, as their Theme, and to praise, that is our part. For why? that's an Interest peculiar and proper to us, the top and height of our Joy and Comfort lies herein. But the Angels they fall down chiefly to the Wonders and Excellencies of Wisdom and Glory that are discovered in it, which they are therefore (as out of Curiosity) said to *pry* into, 1 *Pet.* 1. 12. And it is upon the Account hereof they worship; *Rev.* 7. 11, 12. *And all the Angels stood round the Throne, and about the Elders, and the four Beasts, and fell before the Throne on their Faces and worshipped God, saying, Amen: Blessing, and Glory, and Wisdom, and Thanksgiving, and Honour, and Power, and Might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.* Which Place, tho at first it shews that they heartily rejoice in what concerns the Salvation of us Men contained therein, in that they first say *Amen* unto a Song which the Sons of Men had in Praise of God begun before them to sing, *ver.* 10. *Salvation* (that is, the Glory of our Salvation) *be unto God, and the Lamb.* And unto this the Angels say *Amen* first, e're they begin their own, of blessing him for his Glory, Wisdom, *&c.* The Salvation then, and so the Mercy and Faithfulness of God therein, is the eminent Argument of our Song: But the Wisdom and Power shewn therein (tho we chant forth the Glory of them also) is principally the Matter of theirs.

The grand Mercies and Faithfulness promised unto Christ our *David*, (the Subject of this Song) I reduce unto three Heads, according to what we find summarily put together in *ver.* 3, 4. where you have,

1. The Promise of a Throne and Kingdom to be establish'd.

2. The Choice and Designation of the Person (Christ) the true *David*, under the Type and Shadow of King *David*.

3. The Promise of Mercy to the Seed of Christ under the same Type. As for the Perpetuity of these Mercies, it runs along through the whole of all.

1. As touching the *Throne* promised, you have a magnifick Description of a Kingdom, which begins at the *7th* Verse, and reacheth to the *15th*, which Kingdom indeed, (as there described) is that which God the Father promiseth unto his Son Christ, our *David*. And it is a Matter worthy our Enquiry, why the Kingdom which

which God the Father did hold and visibly execute in the Old Testament, should be set out here when he promiseth his Son a Throne, *&c.* The true Mystery and Resolve of which is, that it is the same Throne and Kingdom for Substance and Oeconomy which himself held, which he promiseth to his Son, and that therefore he sets forth his own herein, for indeed it is all one. We know how Christ himself says, that God the Father *had committed all Judgment* to him, because he was the Son of Man, *John* 5. 22, 27. And that the Father visibly judgeth no Man, but hath given up all to his Son; and this to that end, *that all Men might honour the Son as they honour the Father*, ver. 23. And therefore it is he is said *to come in the Glory of the Father, and to sit on the Father's Throne*, Rev. 3. 21. Yea, and it is called *the Throne of God and of the Lamb*, Rev. 22. 3. Hence therefore it is that the Prophet being to declare what a Throne it was which God here intended and promiseth to give to him, makes so ample a Description of God's own Kingdom (altho much in the Old Testament-Language) as that which he meant to estate this his Son into, who yet because he was to come of *David* in the Flesh, and *David* was his Type, this Kingdom is stiled *the Throne of* David in the Shadow, but in Reality and in the Substance is indeed the Kingdom of God the Father. And this to be the true Air or Scope of those Verses seems to me most genuine and accommodate, and the best Account that perhaps will be given of those Verses. This for the Kingdom, express'd in the first Part of the Psalm.

Book I.

There is inserted between this and the other Parts that follow, a most comfortable Application, directed (as in the midst of this Discourse) to those that are under this Covenant, and are the blessed Objects of this Grace and Mercy of so great a God their King, who either live under the continual Sound thereof, and have their Hearts stirred and awakened with the Sound thereof, so as by Faith to pursue after the Enjoyment of it, or especially those that have arrived unto a solid Assurance of their Share and Interest therein. Or, if you will, the following Words are a Congratulation of their infinite Happiness, as elsewhere it is express'd, *Blessed are the People whose God is the Lord*, Psal. 33. 12. The Blessedness of the People instated in this Covenant is displayed in this *Psal.* 89. 15, 16, 17, 18. *Blessed is the People that know the joyful Sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the Light of thy Countenance. In thy Name shall they rejoice all the day: and in thy Righteousness shall they be exalted. For thou art the Glory of their Strength: and in thy Favour our Horn shall be exalted. For the Lord is our Defence: and the holy One of* Israel *is our King.*

2. The Choice, and Advancement, and Dignity of the Person who was to be estated in this Throne, even of Christ, is described under the Shadow of *David.* This Christ he dignifies with the highest Titles of Honour, *his holy One, his mighty One*, upon whom God laid Help for us all; *his chosen, his exalted One*, ver. 19. *his Servant*, his Christ and Messiah, with God's *own holy Oil* anointed by God himself, *ver.* 20. in whom should rest all the Power of God (which before in *ver.* 8, 10, 13. you heard of) to establish and strengthen this his Christ, and beat down his Enemies, and wherewith to over-rule all, *ver.* 21, 22, 23. And compare but the Expressions in *ver.* 8, 13. with these *ver.* 21, 22, 23. likewise *ver.* 9. and *ver.* 25. in like manner *ver.* 10. with *ver.* 22, 23, 24. in which latter he says, their *Mercy* also and *Faithfulness* (which the Prophet had said did support God's Throne, and did go before him to execute all the Administrations of his Kingdom, *ver.* 8, *&* 14.) is promised unto this his King, *ver.* 24. *My Mercy and my Faithfulness* (says God) *shall be with him*, that is, in the whole of his Government towards my Church, to perform all with as much Mercy and Faithfulness as I my self would. If you will farther have it, God committed all the Mercies that ever he had promised, or meant to bestow upon any or all his Children, into the Hands of his Christ, to give forth to them, and constituted him to be his own *Executor*, and hath given him an Heart of Mercy of equal Largeness thereunto, and Faithfulness to perform it unto every Tittle, as himself hath: So as he that shall compare all those Descriptions of God's Kingdom in the foregone Verses, with the Expressions of Christ's Kingdom here, will readily acknowledg that God's Spirit in this Psalmist did on purpose set forth the former Representation of God's Kingdom, to the end, to show that the like Glory, yea the same Kingdom for Substance, he hath devolved upon his Son, and put into his Hands: which was the genuine Drift and Scope of so large a Description of God's Kingdom therein made. In the Conclusion he proclaims, among other of

the Royal Titles which God bestows upon his Christ, that of being *God's Son*: Part I. He shall cry unto me, *Thou art my Father, my God, and the Rock of my Salvation*: Which in how transcendent a manner it is true of Christ, you may read, *Ephes.* 1. 3. 1 *Pet.* 1. 3. and of all Sons, his first-born is higher than *the Kings of the Earth*, ver. 26, 27 of this 89*th* Psalm, with which comports that of *Rev.* 1. 5. *The Prince of the Kings of the Earth.* These Titles of Christ you find from *ver.* 19, to 28.

3. The other part of *Psal.* 89. is that which I have chosen as my Text, from *ver.* 28, to 37. and this Part principally concerns the Seed, the spiritual Seed of Christ, as the former does his Kingdom and personal Dignities. You may remember how 'twas said, that the Mercies of this Covenant were prophesied by the Psalmist as the eminent Subject of his Song; *I will sing* (says he) *of the Mercies of the Lord for ever*, &c. that is, *which are for ever.* And in this special Part of the Song we find Mercy's Voice elevated to the highest Note, or to the highest *Ela*, which can be supposed it should reach unto. For as the Height and Top of Mercy's Glory is put forth and seen in pardoning of Sins, (that is the most proper Seat or Subject wherein and whereupon the Mercies of God are manifested and spent) so in this Paragraph (if any where in all the Scriptures) pardoning Mercies are ascendent, and in their supremest Elevation.

Two things are to be farther cleared towards a Foundation unto that setting forth the Greatness of God's pardoning Mercies to his Children, as here they are held forth. The first, that by *David*'s Children here, the spiritual Seed of Christ are intended, as by *David* Christ himself is, (as hath been shown) and so the Parallel runs thus: 1. *David*'s Person is the Shadow of *Christ's* Person. 2. *David*'s temporal Throne of Christ's Throne, who was his eminent Seed after the Flesh. 3. That as *David* had other Children after the Flesh in a Succession, so Christ a spiritual Seed in their several Generations. And of this spiritual Seed or Children of Christ, and of God's pardoning Mercies unto them, is this Paragraph to be understood. 1. That Christ hath a spiritual Seed, unto whom he is the Father, as *David* was a Father to his other successive Seed: And that *David* bore the Shadow thereof, there are many Passages in this and other Scriptures which do confirm it. It is observable, that in the 9*th* of *Isaiah* (before-cited) when the Promise of the Throne of *David* is again more expressly (than here) repeated, that withal, *ver.* 6. one eminent Title amongst those other is, of his being *the everlasting Father*, which Title doth necessarily relate to a Seed, unto whom he that is said to sit upon *David*'s Throne is also a Father. And answerably we see both the Promise of Christ's Throne, and these Promises to his Seed and Children, to be nearly conjoined in several Passages in this Psalm, as being inseparably riveted and involved both of them in this one and the same Covenant, and as the alike substantial Parts thereof, and involved in the same Oath. Thus *ver.* 28, 29, 30. *My Mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my Covenant shall stand fast with him. His Seed also will I make to endure for ever; and his Throne as the Days of Heaven. If his Children forsake my Law, and walk not in my Judgments*, &c. At the Entrance of my Text, and again at the Conclusion, *ver.* 35, 36. *Once have I sworn by my Holiness, that I will not lie unto* David. *His Seed shall endure for ever, and his Throne as the Sun before me.* For he possesseth his Throne upon such Terms as that his Children also should be effectually saved. And what Reason there should be that any should sever these two, which God hath so closely joined together, I understand not. We cannot conceive that the Promise of the Throne which is unto Christ's Person, should be the sole and alone Subject of the Oath, but the Promise concerning the other Seed and Children should be without Oath, and limited to *David*'s other fleshly Children in their Successions, as unto temporal Respects, and not to take in the spiritual Seed of Christ, or those of *David*'s Seed who were such, especially seeing in other Scriptures true Believers on Christ, whether Jews or Gentiles, are so frequently termed the *Seed* and Children of Christ, (our *David*) *Lo here am I, and the Children which thou hast given me*, *Heb.* 2. 13. And in *Psal.* 22. which so lively sets forth Christ as he was hanging on the very Cross, the Issue and Product of his Crucifying is in the Close said to be, *That a Seed should serve him, and it shall be counted to the Lord for a Generation.* Parallel unto which is that *Isa.* 53. in which Christ Jesus is as evidently also held forth as crucified; the Fruit whereof is there declared to be, *that he shall see his Seed*, and

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see *the Travail of his Soul, and be satisfied in them*, and their effectual Salvation by him, *ver.* 10, 11. for nothing else will satisfy Christ about them.

And to this purpose it may be farther observed, that in these Promises in my Text, made in *David*'s Name, as in behalf of his Children, there is this strange Difference apparently made between *David* the Father and his Children; that the Holy Ghost says not on his part, *If he forsake my Law, I will visit him with Rods*, &c. but only, if his Children do, *ver.* 30, 31. whenas yet we all know, take *David* personally, he did foully forsake God's Law, yea despise the Commandment, as the Prophet *Nathan* challenged him, and was sharply visited with Rods. Yet there is no mention of any of his Sins, nor so much as of an [*if*] about any such Matter, but all of him is passed over in Silence. And to what other mystical Purpose should this be, but that as *Melchisedeck*'s Genealogy is omitted to make up a Likeness to the Son of God, to the like intent there is omitted the mention of *David*'s Sins in this Place, that *David* hereby might bear the Type and Shadow of Christ's Person, and withal be a perfect Type of him in his relation unto his Children, who was in his own Person not only without Sin, but above the least Supposition of it. But if his Children should sin, and some of them might be left unto great Sins, yet for the Mercy promised him they should be pardoned. And under this Representation *David* comes to personate Christ, as he was to bear the Relation of Father unto his spiritual Children, as for whose sake those Promises were made. And in this manner, upon Christ as such a Father and our *David*, and those Promises to his Seed, did that Oath rest, as well as for the Throne. If we also take the Succession of *David*'s fleshly Seed, good and bad, the Mercies and Forbearance of God towards them (taking the Circumstances of their Sinnings, *&c.*) were greater towards them than unto any other Succession of Men that have been on Earth. And we find it often in the Story of the *Kings* and *Chronicles* put literally upon this Reason, that is, for *David my Servant's sake*. And these Dispensations of temporal Mercies to those his Children, were but the Shadows of those sure Mercies, of pardoning Mercies, promised to the spiritual Seed of Christ. And for a farther Confirmation of this, the spiritual Children or Seed of Christ are also termed *David*'s Seed and Children here in the Text, by the same just Reason that the Faithful are termed the *Sons of Abraham*. For the Foundation of *Abraham*'s Title to his being the Father of all the Faithful stood thus; that because a Covenant and Oath was promulged personally and particularly unto him, how that in Christ, who was to be his Seed after the Flesh, all the Nations of the Earth *should be blessed*; and that Seed out of all Nations being Christ's Seed first, therefore he had the Honour to be stiled *the Father of all the Faithful*, whether Jews or Gentiles, and the Representer of Christ therein. Yea, and that Oath and Covenant involved the spiritual Seed, as made unto them as well as unto himself, who laid hold upon it by Faith, or as unto Christ, or rather with Christ for them, for so it is expressly interpreted to be, *Heb.* 6. 16, 17. *For Men verily swear by the greater, and an Oath for Confirmation is to them an end of all Strife; wherein God willing to shew unto the Heirs of Promise the Immutability of his Counsel, confirmed it by an Oath.* Now the very same Covenant and Oath being in more ample and plain Terms renewed unto *David*, the Analogy holds between *David* and *Abraham*, and this Psalm is an Evidence of it. If then Christ, and the spiritual Seed in *Abraham*'s case, are not to be separated, then not in the case of *David*, wherein both are more distinctly and expressly mentioned, and included in one and the same Covenant, than in *Abraham*'s they were. Only *David* being a King set up so immediately by God, therefore the Promise of the Throne unto Christ his Successor is more eminently indeed spoken of, yet not so as that it should be the sole *Object* of that Oath, but that God's Faithfulness unto the Children of Christ, or Heirs of Salvation, is taken in as in *Abraham*'s case it was, though far more obscurely.

And that the spiritual Seed of Christ are reckoned as *David*'s House and Children, that Place alone may perhaps be sufficient to prove, in which the Conversion of the Gentiles is termed, *the building up the Tabernacle of* David, *Acts* 15. 15, 16, 17. *Unto this agree the Words of the Prophets; as it is written, After this I will return, and will build again the Tabernacle of* David, *which is fall'n down: and I will build again the Ruines thereof, and I will set it up; that the residue of Men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles upon whom my Name is called, saith the Lord, who doth all*

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Part I.

these things. Among the Hebrews * a Tabernacle was put for one's House; and that House signifies Children, is well known, *Luke* 1. 33. *He shall reign over the House of* Jacob *for ever:* By which is meant the spiritual Seed, whether of Jew or Gentile, as before opened.

* Hebræis omne habitaculum σκηνὴ dicitur, quia ea habitatio vetustissima. *Grotius* in loc.

Having thus clear'd and evinc'd it, that by *David*'s Children here in this *Psal.* 89. 30. is intended the spiritual Seed of Christ, I come now to shew how in *ver.* 30*th*, 31*st*, 32*d*, 33*d*, 34*th*, 35*th*, 36*th*, 37*th*, the Glories of *Jehovah*, pardoning Iniquity, Transgression and Sin, are most signally display'd in this 89*th* Psalm, from *ver.* 30, to *v.* 38. *If his Children forsake my Law, and walk not in my Judgments: If they break my Statutes, and keep not my Commandments: Then will I visit their Transgression with the Rod, and their Iniquity with Stripes. Nevertheless, my Loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him: nor suffer my Faithfulness to fail. My Covenant will I not break: nor alter the thing that is gone out of my Lips. Once have I sworn by my Holiness, that I will not lie unto* David. *His Seed shall endure for ever; and his Throne as the Sun before me. It shall be established for ever as the Moon: and as a faithful Witness in Heaven. Selah. But thou hast cast off and abhorred: thou hast been wroth with thine Anointed.* That God will pardon your Sins of ordinary Infirmities that you commit, that you think easily the Covenant of Grace doth reach and extend to; ay but here is a *Proviso* (you call them so in Acts and Wills) which is an Ampliation of the Covenant of Grace upon the Supposition of the worst of Cases, of the worst of those who are under the Covenant of Grace: *If his Children forsake my Law, and walk not in my Judgments*, &c. You see the Amplitude of the Covenant of Grace, (what hath God to do to run out to this) and you shall see the Largeness of the Covenant of Grace, how far it extends.

1. I begin with the word *IF*; it implies, that it is a Case may fall out, God hath not said *temere* rashly, or used all these Words in vain: It is a Case may sometimes fall out.

2. What is the Reason of this *if*, if they shall do so and so? It is not so much (as *Musculus* says) to shew what Man will do, but it is to shew what God will do: If Men do so and so, (and make a Supposition to the utmost) if they do so and so, yet I will do so and so (says God) as far, nay beyond what the Imagination of Man can reach, as Christ is a Saviour to the utmost.

3. He useth the word *IF*, not that what is supposed does oft fall out, for there are Millions of Saints go to Heaven, and not come within the Compass of this Place, and therefore it is what seldom happens; Ay but sometimes it does, for God would not in vain use so many Words. It's hard to say what Sins God pardons after Regeneration: In some God exalts his justifying Grace more, in some his sanctifying. If one of ninety nine be gone, he leaves all the other for those few's sake; he hath made *Provisoes* in this Covenant of Grace, he hath put this *IF* in.

4. He repeats it, and indigitates it over and over; for (as *Calvin* says) it is the hardest thing in the World to believe it, and whoever lives in great Sins, it is the hardest thing in the World to believe that God will pardon him.

But doth he speak of the Members of Christ, is it of those that are actual Members of Christ that he speaks this? Is it not of their Sins before Conversion rather? Nay, but it is after, *If his Sons forsake my Law*, says the 30*th* Verse. Those that are his Sons and Children are actually in the State of Grace; at the day of Judgment, says he, *Heb.* 2. 13. *Lo, I, and the Children which God hath given me:* and he is called an *Everlasting Father*, Isa. 9. 6.

Another Observation is concerning his Seed, that the greatest of their Sins may come under this *IF*, under this *Proviso:* So *Calvin* and *Musculus* observe. *David* did not commit a Sin of Infirmity when he despised the Commandment of the Lord, but his Sin extended to the most heinous Guilt. And he speaks of such Sins as may not be call'd mere Infirmities. Observe how he sets out their Sins supposeable.

1. He reckons up all sorts of Laws broken, *ver.* 30, 31. there is my *Laws, Judgments, Statutes and Commandments:* and Interpreters fetch out all the judicial Laws in Rites and Statutes, and moral Laws in Commandments.

2. Then observe how he expresseth it, for the Act, *ver.* 30. *If they forsake my Law, and walk not in my Judgments:* Ver. 31. *If they break my Statutes, and keep not my Commandments:* (here is a worse than all) *If they profane my Statutes:* It is translated,

stated, *If they break my Statutes*; but in the Hebrew, and so in the Margin it is, *If they profane my Statutes.* Now for a Saint to be a profane Person, as *Esau* was, *Heb.* 12. how hainous is the Guilt! Book I.

3. Take the Title of their Sins; he calls them *Transgressions* and *Iniquities*, ver. 32. *Pardoning Iniquity, Transgression, and Sin.* One of the Words signify Falsenes, Treachery of Sin. Thus he sets out the Greatnes of those Sins which it is supposed Saints may fall into, after they are Children.

4. Here are Sins of Omission and Commission. Of Omission; *If they walk not in my Judgments*, ver. 30. Of Commission; *If they forsake my Law, and break my Statutes, or profane them*, ver. 31. I will not say, that it is not to be said how far Men may sin: As it cannot be said how far Men may go and not be sincere, so neither how far a Man may sin. Tho it is certain there was a Seed of God remained, yet that Person that was excommunicated, is called the wicked Person. And you know the Story of the Apostle *John*'s young Thief, recorded by *Eusebius*, which was an amazing Instance of a Man's falling into Sin. Water may be so heated, that any body that puts his Hand into it may say, Here is no Cold in it, but yet tho it scalds, let it stand a while and all the Heat will be gone. Let Men in a State of Grace be inflamed with Lusts, that one would think there is nothing of Grace, yet there is a Principle of Grace which will reduce them at last. Thus much for the Greatnes of their Sin.

5. God promiseth Chastisements in such Cases. He does not bring great Chastisements for ordinary Infirmities, but for such Sins as these are, that they may not be judged of the World; 1 *Pet.* 1. 17. *If ye call on the Father, who without respect of Persons judgeth according to every Man's Work, pass the time of your sojourning here in Fear.* Tho he be a Father, yet therefore be afraid of him. It is not for Men to say, Let Men live as they list, they shall be saved; no, says God, I will put a stop to you by chastising you. See what these Chastisements are in these Cases, and how he speaks of them; (you may see the Covenant of Grace to shine in all still) First he says, *He will visit them with Rods and with Stripes.* He calls them *Rods*, 2 *Sam.* 7. 14. when the Promise was first made to *David*, (this very Promise) *I will be his Father, and he shall be my Son: If he commit Iniquity, I will chasten him with the Rod of Men, and with the Stripes of the Children of Men.* It is a Moderation of the Correction, I will not whip him so hard as to kill him, says God, but as you whip Men: I will not chasten with Sorenes of my Displeasure, but deal with them as Men. The Truth is, God whips with Rushes, in comparison to his Vengeance in the other World: It is with the Rod of Men, which Men may bear. He hath a sweet Word, *I will visit their Transgressions with Rods.* He says not, I will strike; no, it is a fatherly Word, I will visit them as you do sick Folks, to help them: It is a Word full of Tenderness. Again, he says, *I will visit their Iniquities*: It is a sweet Word; he does not say, I will visit them; no, I love them, I have no Anger at them, and Wrath for them, but I have at their Transgressions, *Isa.* 26. This is all the Fruit of my chastising, to take away the Sin.

6. Consider the Promises he makes to this Case, (the Promises of Chastisements you heard) but consider the other part of the Promises that are here mentioned, and it will extremely affect your Hearts.

1*st.* Says he, I will be kind for all this, I will not make my Kindness void, (so it is in the Hebrew) *ver.* 33. *Nevertheless, my Loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my Faithfulness to fail.* My Kindness shall never fail in *pardoning Iniquity, Transgression and Sin*, I will ever be abundant in Kindness and Truth, *Exod.* 34. 7. Well, go then, count the Number of Promises he makes of this kind, they are just the Number of what he says of their Sins. He had said four things of their Sins; *If his Children forsake my Law, and walk not in my Judgments: If they break my Statutes, and keep not my Commandments*: and there are four several Expressions which relate to his pardoning them. *Notwithstanding my Loving-kindness will I not make void, nor suffer my Faithfulness to lie: My Covenant will I not profane, nor alter the thing gone out of my Lips.* So that here is four to four.

2*dly.* Consider how he sutes these Expressions in Correspondency to their Sins.

1st. *If they keep not my Commandments*, ver. 31. *My Mercy will I keep for him for evermore*, ver. 28.

2dly.

Part I. 2dly. *If they forsake my Law*, ver. 30. *I will not alter the thing gone out of my Lips*, ver. 34.

3dly. *If they profane my Statutes*, ver. 31. *I will not profane my Covenant*, ver. 34. It is a mighty Speech; as if God had said, I should run into Profaneness, and be as profane as you, if I should break Covenant: As if God were in danger of this, if he fail'd Christ's Seed in this case, of being a profane God, and an unholy God, and a lying God to *David*, which can never be.

7. He binds all this with an Oath; *Once have I sworn by my Holiness, that I will not lie unto* David. I have sworn absolutely. Now consider;

1st. An Oath is the highest Confirmation of all other, *Heb. 6. 6.*

2dly. He tells you, it is an Oath but once taken: Why but once? To shew that all is irrevocable, both Oath and thing sworn to.

3dly. Tho it be sworn but once, to shew it is irrevocable, yet notwithstanding we hear of it twice in this Psalm; *ver. 3. I have sworn unto* David *my Servant*. And again, *ver. 35.* he took the Oath but once, but we hear of it twice. He took an Oath to his Son, that he would make him a King, and set up his Throne, that the 3*d* Verse shews: And he takes an Oath for his Seed, and his Seed in this case of sinning, and it is as sacred to him concerning his Children, as it is to Christ to oblige himself to give him a Throne and Kingdom.

4thly. Consider what he swears by. Of all things else this amazeth me, he swears by his Holiness; *Once have I sworn by my Holiness.* Now bring all your Consciences to God, and what is it you do dread in God? His Holiness. What is it provokes him? It is laid in the Foundation of Justice and Wrath; and because he is a God so pure, that his Eyes can indure no Iniquity. Now then that his Holiness, which is the most against Sin, should be brought in to be sworn to pardon Sin, what can you have more? *Calvin* says, to swear by his Holiness, is more than to swear by himself; for he swears by that thing which is like to be your greatest Enemy, to condemn and destroy you.

5thly. Lastly, He swears by that which is most eminent in his Holiness, and must be profane and lie, if he doth not perform.

8. Consider that all this is founded upon Christ, tho the Mercies are in the Heart of God. It is a mighty Expression when he says, *If his Children forsake my Law, I will visit their Transgressions.* He speaks to them, If they do so and so; but when he comes to make his Promise, *Notwithstanding my Loving-kindness shall not be void from him. FROM HIM*, ver. 28. i. e. *from Christ.* What, does Jesus Christ need any Mercy? Ay, it is well for us, he doth not for himself. But thus, as he is the Head of all Saints, and he and they make one Body, the Covenant of Grace and Mercy was made with him, and so they are called *the sure Mercies of* David, *Psal.* 51. All the Mercies God bestows are for his sake; and it is well now that God hath sworn, that he will not take his Mercies from Christ, in relation to us; and that Jesus Christ can go to God and plead, Lord, I have no need of Mercy, but thou hast given me all thy Mercies, for those who are mine, Lord fulfil them to them. There is one Use which *Calvin* makes, Live upon the Covenant of Grace, you need no more; and if you be guilty of great Sins, you had need live upon it. But let me commend one Use, which *David* makes in the midst of the Psalm, *ver.* 15, 16, 17, 18. *Blessed is the People that know the joyful Sound*, &c. He speaks in relation to the Covenant of Grace, to all them that are under it. He sets it in the midst as an Use of Application to the Persons under it. But what kind of Persons are they that are under it? They *that know the joyful Sound.* All Interpreters acknowledg it is an allusion to the sounding the Trumpets, which you read of, *Numb.* 10. 4,10. *Lev.* 23. 23. This I find by *Ainsworth* and others, that *joyful Sound* here imports (what was typified by the sounding their Trumpets and Cornets) the spiritual Joy the People of God should have in the Favour of God, and Meeting with God, and Communion with God in his Covenant of Grace. This is plainly the Meaning, for (says he) *they shall walk in the Light of thy Countenance.* When did they sound Trumpets? They sounded Trumpets for War, for Feasts, upon extraordinary Occasions of great Joy, as at the Dedication of the Temple, *Ezra* 3. 11, 12. when the People returned from Captivity, 1 *Chron.* 5. 12, 13. when the Foundation of the Temple was laid, *Ezek.* 3. 10. and at its Dedication, *Nehem.* 12. 35. and every New Year they had Trumpets and Cornets sounded; the one was made of Rams Horns,

Horns, which they call'd a Cornet; the other of Silver; the one had a loud Sound, the other a shrill, *Psal.* 98. 6. There is both Trumpets and Sound of Cornets, with these they made a joyful Noise. Now what is the Meaning of this, but to tell us, O blessed are those People into whose Ears God blows Joy, and Peace, and Salvation? Says the Apostle, *If the Trumpet gives an uncertain Sound*, who knows what is meant, 1 *Cor.* 14. 7, 8. But when God comes and speaks to a Man's Soul all this that I have said of the Covenant of Grace, and tells him, that he is his Salvation, and blows this with his own immediate Voice, *O blessed is that Man that hears this joyful Sound*: This Man may walk in the Light of God's Countenance. Consider what he says of it, *They shall walk in the Light of thy Countenance, and in thy Name shall they rejoice, and in thy Faithfulness shall they be exalted: Thou art the Glory of their Strength*, &c. Such as have had this Trumpet sounding in their Souls, are made to walk triumphingly, and are prepared for War. They sounded the Trumpet for War: We are in War *more than Conquerors*; *O Grave, where is thy Victory!* O seek to the Lord that he would blow and make this blessed Sound in your Souls, that you may have God to rejoice in, and God himself alone. The Angels may wonder at the Wonders of the Covenant, but you rejoice in them as yours, and you may do it all the day long; and in doing so you will be taken off from all that is in your selves. *In thy Name shall they rejoice: They glory in this, that they know thee that exercisest Loving-kindness in the Earth, and their Joy shall none take from them*, Psal. 89. 16. Book I.

CHAP. X.

Of the Mercies of God's Heart and Nature. *That* Mercy *and* Grace *are true Essential Properties in the Divine Being. That there are some that deny this. This Head discoursed in three* Branches. 1. *An Explication.* 2. *The Proofs out of the Text.* 3. *Answers to the principal* Objections. 1. *The* Explanation. 1st. How it is to be understood, that Mercy or any other Attribute, *is the Nature of God.* 2dly. *Of the Difference between those mere similitudinary Attributes borrowed from Man, as Sorrow, Repenting, &c. and those substantial Attributes in God, the Likeness whereof are communicated to Man, and so attributed both to God, and also to Man: such as* Holiness, Goodness, Mercy. *The State I put the Question into, for the Proofs of the Assertion.*

IT may be greatly wondred at, that it should ever so much as have entred into the Thoughts of any of the *Sons of Men*, [*sinful Men*] (who therefore need an *Infinity of Mercy* from the great God, to save and pardon them) to affirm that *all the Mercy* which God himself so magnifies in this Scripture, and for which other Scriptures do so highly extol him, *should be ascribed to God only* è similitudine effectus; that is, because he *doth*, and *exerciseth Loving-kindness*; and only because that his outward *Dispensations* are such, as Men who are mercifully disposed use to exercise, out of a pitiful Nature. But *God*, say they, without any inherent *Disposition* or *Affections*, (which should properly have *the Name of Mercy*) or which as such, should be the *Root* and *inward Principle* of such *merciful Acts*, doth exert them. They answerably affirm Mercy to be an *Attribute* of that Rank which are usually termed *after the manner of Man*: As when God is said to *grieve* and *repent*, which are merely ascribed to him, because he doth such things towards us, as we Men are wont to do when we *grieve* or *repent*; but God doth them without any inward Principle of Grief or Repentance: And 'tis so here in the case of Mercy, say they. But their questioning this great Truth, is not the Occasion of my speaking to this Point in this Place; but my Method and Subject necessarily lead me to it: without

It need not stumble any that such an Opinion is vented by the same Persons that speak at the same rate of the Sacrifice which Christ made by offering up himself for the Sins of us Men; denying that also to be a Price or Ransom properly to redeem us, and would make it to be but metaphorical. And truly when these two grand Pillars of Faith are thus enervated, and made weak, by taking from them what gives the Strength and Substance unto them; what remains there of Solidity sufficient for the Heart of a Sinner, loaden with that infinite Weight of his Sins, to sustain and bear it up, and him to stay himself upon?

Quoad actus secundos; non quoad actus primos: quoad effectum, non affectum: objectivè, *shewing Mercy to us*; *not* subjectivè, *as from Mercy in himself*: κατ' ἀνθρωποπάθειαν.

out the Demonstration of which added to the former, my grand *Assertion*, which
Part I. bears the Title of my Subject, would be imperfect, and of less Power and Force upon Believers Minds: And being thereby obliged to prove it out of the Text, I saw some necessity first to premise that general Explication that follows, to prevent Mistakes out of vulgar Apprehensions.

I offer then an *Explication*, how it is to be understood that any of God's Attributes are of the Nature of God, or may be said to be the Nature of God.

This Explication of this I shall absolve by these two explanatory Propositions. *1st.* The Scriptures say, *that he is God by Nature*, Gal. 4. 8. *in difference from those that are but called Gods; and so we may affirm that what God is, he is by Nature, that is, by his being himself God; and so the Perfections of his Being are himself*, and termed his *Godhead*, Col. 2 9.

1. *These* divina nomina, (as the Antients call them) that is, *these Names attributed to God, such as Wise, Powerful, Holy, Good, Merciful, are said to be his Nature, because there is that in his Divine Nature or Godhead, which truly answers to what is intended to be signified by these Names, and he is by Nature THAT which these Attributes do express him to be.*

2. *It were absurd to think or understand that any Attributes whatsoever, as they are Words and outward Characters or Expressions, should be the Nature of God; but yet the things signified by these outwara Words and Characters are truly and inwardly in the Nature of God, and he is such a God by Nature; and that these outward Words and Names do* proprio & primario significatu (as the Schools speak of them) *in their primary and proper Signification convey to our Minds what is really in God's Nature.*

3. *Nor yet are those glorious inward Conceptions and Apprehensions that are conveyed to, and begotten in our Minds by these significant Characters, begotten by the Spirit in us; nor are these the Nature of God, although they be the inward bright Rays and Shinings thereof.* Both which is evident from that Speech, 2 *Cor.* 4. 6. *God that commanded* (by Creation namely) *Light to shine out of Darkness, hath shined in our Hearts, to give the Light of the Knowledg of the Glory of God, in the Face of Jesus Christ.* Where first it is the *Glory of God* himself that is said to be known. And yet, 2*dly*. The most illustrious Light that was in the Minds of the Apostles themselves, whereby they knew him, was but a created Resemblance of that Glory of God made in and through the Face and Person of Jesus Christ, who is a far more glorious Representation of the Godhead than what those attributed Names can any way render to us.

4. *It remains to be proved, that yet the things themselves conceived of by us, and expressed by these Names, are substantially and by Nature in God; or that there are those Perfections in his Nature and Godhead as do really answer to what these outward significant Characters of Attributes, and those inward Beams of himself in our Conceptions do represent his Nature to be.* And the Evidence for this may be drawn from the lesser to the greater, from that lower Representation of God and his Godhead made to the Heathens by the Works of God's Providence and Creation. And surely look what those Representations or Manifestations of God made to them are termed, or what is spoken of them, we are warranted to speak the same, yea much more of these Attributes of God's own Choice to set forth himself by. Now it is expressly said, *Rom.* 1. 20. *That the invisible things of him from the Creation of the World are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal Power and Godhead.* Where, 1*st.* [*those invisible things of God*] are his *Properties*, such as are essential to him, and particularly *Power* and *Eternity* are there instanced in. Which, 2*dly*. are *invisible* in themselves to us as his *Godhead* is, and but known of us as God is pleased to make *shew* of them unto us; as *ver.* 19. *Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them, for God hath shewed it unto them.* And, 3*dly*. That those invisible Things or Properties of God are *essentially* and by Nature in him; there is this Evidence in that Text, that what of them is manifested, is said to have been in God himself before he made, yea although he had never made the World, (which is the Manifestation of them there specified) or had any of these Names given him; and he gives for Instance those two essential Attributes, Eternity and Power. And in that he says [Eternal], he proclaims the Reality of that Attribute which we call

Power.

Power, to have been substantially in him *from Eternity*, like as *Eternity* it self also, before ever these attributed Names were given him, or before any such Works or Effects of his were extant, by which these are made manifest. The things were in him before. Book I.

Yea he riseth up higher, and expressly stiles *that* which was signified and represented by these Works, *&c.* to be his Godhead, in adding his *eternal Power and Godhead*; which let Criticks interpret how they please either to be his Divinity, as *Beza*; or Godhead, as our Translators; yet either both do and must centre in this Conclusion that it is stiled either of these, because there is that in his *Godhead* and Divine *Being* which in an Excess of Fulness doth in Truth answer unto that Manifestation of him. And so the Argument becomes strong and prevalent for the Point before me, That if those ruder and obscurer Impresses made of himself by the Works of Creation. *ver.* 20. and those imperfect Medals of himself stamp'd upon the Souls of those Heathens thereby, of which, *ver.* 19. he speaks, *(for God hath shewed it to them)* be called his Godhead: Then how much more do these Names or Attributes which God in his Word by his own Institution hath appointed, and in infinite Wisdom himself invented and revealed, being accompanied and brought home by the Power, supernatural Light, and Blessing of his Spirit, to the Souls of his Saints through his Word, (as out of 2 *Cor.* 4. 6. was observed) how much more (I say) shall these be stiled his *Godhead* in the Sense and for the Reason above-said, even because they do in their proper, direct and absolute Signification shew what his *Godhead* is? And there is that in God that corresponds to, and to an Infinity doth make good what is spoken of him by these, as we call the Representation of a Man's Face in Water, the Man's Face which it represents; because, as *Solomon* says, it answers *as Face to Face*; and so it is here. And the Representations by these are but as those of a Man's Face or whole Person in broken Pieces of a Looking-glass sever'd one from the other, whereby it comes to pass that not the whole in any is entirely seen, but one Lineament or Cast of the Countenance is represented in one; another Part, as an Eye, in another Piece of that Glass, and so of the rest. And therefore in the plural it is here said, [The invisible things of God] are clearly seen, *&c.* in relation unto our multiplied Conceptions of them in and by his Works or Attributes severally. For whilst by one Act we take into our Conception that he is *Wise*, we then do not so much as think of his Power or Goodness. We see an *Eye* in a distinct Attribute sever'd as 'twere from the rest, but actually see not an *Hand* at that Instant, and so of the rest. God hath cast the Apprehensions of himself into lesser Moulds, to fit the narrow Bore of our Understandings. And if any Man apprehending some one or more, as those in the Text, should say, there are no more, he should greatly dere-gate from the *Godhead*. But notwithstanding the Multiplicity of the Representations of these Attributes, or of our Conceptions thereby, yet still there are all those Perfections in the *Godhead*, which do *in omnimodâ & unitissimâ simplicitate*, in an undivided Unity and Simplicity in the Godhead, answer unto all these. And look as we call the broken scattered diffused Beams of the Sun upon disturbed or surging Waters *the Sun*, although they represent it but by piece-meal; this Beam in one Wave in one Part, and that Beam in another Wave another piece of it, because tho it be thus scatteredly and brokenly done, yet there is that in the Light and Body of the Sun that answereth unto all these: So it is here. And were it not thus, we could not be said to *know him that is the true God*, as *John* 17. 3. nor to know *the Truth of God as it is in God*; and so the Heathen had not been without Excuse, *in that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God.* Only we are to correct these our imperfect Conceptions by this Rule, that whilst we make a Composition of all these, to the end that thereby we might come to understand what God in the whole is, (which is but a *Multiplicity* in our imperfect Contemplations of him) that yet still in the close of all we sit down with the Faith of this, that in him all these Perfections are inseparably *one indivisible Being*, and all of them himself, and withall comforting and relieving our selves against this present Deficiency, that God

I leave it to the Schools to dispute: the Scotists on the one side, other Schoolmen on the other; Quid sit Fundamentum distinctionis Attributorum in Deo, num in re an in ratione ratiocinante. *This I am sure of, that what of the things of God are multiplied in our Conceptions, are but* one in *God, and* one *God.* Sicut si quæratur an potentia sensitiva coloris & odoris sint idem, an distinguantur? Respondendum, in sensib. externis quidem distingui, in sensu interno esse realitèr idem. Raphael Aversa de Sanseverino in Part. primam, Quæst. 3. Sect. 4.

hath reserved a Time in the other World, in which with one *intuitive Act of Know-*
Part I. *ledg*, or *entire View at once*, we shall see all those Perfections of his to be but *one simple Nature* and Fulness of the Godhead, which is a seeing God *Face to Face*. And then we shall find also, that these Attributes in this Life did yet truly and really represent what was really and truly in himself.

And thus much for the first *explaining Narrative or Account*, (as I call it, because it consists of so many Branches) which though it contains but what is common to other Attributes, yet was necessary to be premised both for the better understanding of the Proofs, and for the preventing Mistakes perhaps in some vulgar Understandings, as also conducing to the bringing forth something towards the *State* of this Question, as it particularly concerneth *Mercy*, *viz.* this,

That this Attribute of Merciful *is said to be NATURAL to GOD, or the Nature of God; because it directly signifies what is in God's Nature, truly answerable thereunto: And that God's Intent in proclaiming himself Merciful*, &c. *is to declare what properly himself is, and his Godhead is.*

II. The second explanatory Proposition is, *That there are two Ranks of these Attributes, as our Divines, and the Attributes themselves (as in the Scriptures they are related) speak them to be.*

1. The first is of such as are *utterly incommunicable unto us Creatures*, nor have they any Respect unto the Creatures; such are God's *Infinity*, *Simplicity*, *Immensity*.

2. There are those that are *communicable* to us, that is, in the Shadow and Likeness of them, as *Wisdom*, *Holiness*, *Truth*, *Goodness*, *Mercy*; and such as have a Respect unto the Creature, as *Power*, which is seen in creating and governing the Creatures; and *Goodness* likewise, which respects a Communication of Good unto the Creature, whereof Grace and Mercy are eminent Branches, and to be sure do respect the Creature only; for God is not merciful to himself. *The Lord is good, and his Mercy endureth for ever*, was the solemn set Song in the Temple, wherewith to praise the Lord. And this Communicableness of some that are God's essential Properties, is evinc'd by that Speech, *He makes us Partakers of his Holiness*, Heb. 12. 10. And in like manner it holds of his *Wisdom*, *Truth*, *Goodness*, *Mercy*, *Kindness*, *Long-suffering*, &c. in that these are stiled the *Image of God*, that is, *of what is in God*, as the original Pattern, πρωτότυπον. Now because the Attributes of this latter Rank are in a Shadow communicable to the Creature, and have a Respect unto the Creature, *&c.* therefore these Men do confound these kind of Attributes, at least some of them, (as they please to except) with those that are but metaphorically attributed to God, and are apparently but borrowed from what is really in the Creatures, and attributed unto God. And they do utterly deny these are first really and essentially in God, but only the Image and Shadow of them communicated to us, as hath been said, whilst yet they acknowledg those of the first Rank to be essentially in God. But for the Confirmation that the second Rank communicated, *&c.* are no less essentially his Divine Nature than the first, I shall alledg but two Arguments.

1*st*. The first is out of 2 *Pet.* 1. 4. where we are said *to be Partakers of the Divine Nature*: whereby either, 1. The Divine Nature or Godhead it self is intended: And so we are said to be Partakers of it in this just Sense, *by way of Communion with the Godhead in the three Persons*, who becoming *our God*, gives up himself, and all the Perfections that are in him unto us, to be enjoyed by us; and so either here or
Ephes. 3. hereafter *we are to be filled with all the Fulness of God*; not bodily, (or by personal Union, as Christ, *Col.* 2. 9.) but in the objective Communications thereof, for our eternal Happiness. And if this be understood, (as many do understand it) we have his Godhead directly and immediately termed *his Divine Nature*, which yields an additional Confirmation to what was affirmed in the former Explication. Or, 2. By *Divine Nature* there is meant, that *Dei formitas*, (as the Antients call'd it) that is, the Image of God, or a Conformity unto God in us, which is the more common Opinion, and so understood, it falls in to be a Proof of the *Assertion* of this second *Explication*: for therein three things are necessarily imported; 1. That there are in God such Perfections, as whereof we in the Likeness of them are Participants; and so that *that* whole Set and Sort of *communicable* Perfections in God are intended, and are expressly termed the [*Divine Nature*], because they are first and originally in

in him, and then in us. Again, 2. The *Image* of those Perfections are stiled the *Divine Nature* in us, as being the Imitation of his; and that not only in respect of the Resemblance or Likeness which the Graces communicated have to his Perfections, as those we have inherent in us bear the Semblance of those in him. But further, 3. In respect that they become a new and *divine Nature* in us, in our Mind, even as his Perfections (thus communicated) are a Nature in him, even a *blessed and divine Nature.* And for their Resemblance unto him in that very respect, they are in common called a *divine Nature* in both him and us; being first *true* of him, and then in us; as the Apostle *John* in case of *Love* speaks of Christ and us. And for that they are a Nature in him as well as in us, therefore the Conclusion is, that these communicable Attributes are truly his Divine Nature, as well as the incommunicable. But, 4. There is this Difference betwixt these Perfections *in God*, and those communicated *to us*, That *in us* they are but inherent Qualities, which are termed *a Nature*, because they become as natural in us as any inbred and innate Qualities can be said to be; whereas in God, look as he himself *is the most high God*, (*Gen.* 14. 22. and elsewhere, *God most High*) so these Perfections are accordingly in him, after a most high and transcendently supreme surpassing manner incomprehensible by us; whereof the following Argument is an invincible Evidence.

Book I.

1 John 4.

Arg. 2. These communicable Attributes of *Wisdom*, *Holiness*, *Truth*, *Goodness*, *Power*, *&c.* are so attributed to him, as such as are in him *alone:* Notwithstanding that we Men do partake of these, and the Angels also do far excel us Men in all these; thus *as wise as an Angel of God* is the Expression, 2 *Sam.* 14. 17. and they are stiled *the holy Angels, and that excel in Strength*, Psal. 103. 20. far above us Men in this Life. Yet God alone retains and challenges the Honour of being *only wise*, Rom. 16. 27. *only holy*, Rev. 15. 4. *only good*, Mat. 19. 17. *the only true God*, Rom. 3. 4. Which Attributions with an *only* must and do necessarily import, 1. That this *Wisdom, Holiness, Goodness, Truth and Strength, are in God as God*; and that they are of his Divine Essence and Nature, which we Creatures are in no wise capable of. Our Souls are one thing, namely, Substances; our Graces another, namely Accidents; but the Essence of God, and his Divine Properties, are but one and the same; of which more afterwards. And hence it is that although these are communicated to us, yet indeed are but *equivocè* attributed to the Creatures, and are in them but in a Semblance, even as the Picture of a Man is called a Man. And though because Men assumed and imposed these Names first, and applied them to Men; and seeing such and such Qualities in them, they thereupon gave them the Names of *wise* and *merciful*, to signify those things in a Man, which according to Man, is Wisdom and Mercy, (and 'twas they that gave these Denominations to Men like themselves, because Men are next and first in our View) yet in Truth and Reality the sole Honour and Glory of these Names, thus invented by Men, and applied to Men, are due to God alone. For the true Reality and Substance of these in the Creature is in God, and Men had the Gifts and Qualifications of them derived from God. And Men having given such and such several Names unto those Excellencies that are in Men and Angels, calling Man for that little Wisdom in him, Wise; for Holiness, Holy; yet these falling out to be the Likeness and Resemblance of what is in God substantially, therefore God in speaking of himself unto Men, useth the same Terms and Style, to set out those Glories in himself; and this Account the Schoolmen have wisely given. Seeing then that these Attributes that are communicated to the Creatures are as they are in God his Nature, as well as the incommunicable, there are these Consectaries from thence.

Ista nomina per prius dicuntur de Deo, quam de Creaturis: sed quantum ad impositionem per prius à natis imponuntur Creaturis: (quas prius cognoscimus.) Aquinas 1 parte, Quæst. 13. articulo 6. in fine.

The first is to shew the apparent and yet infinitely vast Difference that is between those *Attributes* which are said to be ascribed to God *after the manner of Man*, which have been specified again and again; and those we call *communicable* to Men, and are in common ascribed to us, and to God. The Difference is manifest; that those after the *manner of Man*, (as when God is said *to grieve, be troubled, his Repentings*, *&c.* of which sort those Men would perswade us the Mercies in God to be, and would reduce and bring Mercy in God thereto) are such as are truly, and properly, and originally in the Creature first, and then borrowed from the Creature by way of Similitude only, God condescending in that Language to speak of himself after our Manner,

Gen. 6. Jer. 31. 20. Hos. 11. 8.

Manner, and Weakneſſes, and Paſſions; ſo to make a ſmart and ſenſible Impreſſion upon our dull Souls. But on the clean contrary, theſe communicable Attributes, whereof Mercy is one, are firſt and originally in God, and derived from his Fulneſs; which God vouchſafes to expreſs to us by thoſe Names, which we Men give to the Semblance of them, in us Men, as hath been explained.

Part I.

Hence, 2. We may likewiſe diſcern how eaſily Men may err from the Right in this Matter: Becauſe Mercy in us Men, in the Sound of it, ſpeaks Weakneſs, and an affectionate Paſſion, as the Conjunct of it; and when ſpoken of God, is expreſs'd by the Sounding of Bowels, *&c.* and by God's being troubled for us, which is acknowledged to be indeed ſpoken of him, but it is to be underſtood after the manner of Men, becauſe he doth that which merciful Men are wont to do, when their Bowels yearn within them. But yet ſtill Mercy it ſelf, that is the Root of all as it is in God, is another thing: We muſt cut off all ſuch Imperfections, whilſt yet we are helped by them, as we are Men, to conceive how tender his Mercies are towards us. We poor Creatures are apt to drench our Conceptions in what Mercy in the Creature is, and thorow the Tincture and Apprehenſion we have thereof, taken from the Creature, do we look upon the Mercies in God, and ſo conceive of them as if God had borrowed the Denomination of them from us, to expreſs himſelf to us by; and ſo we are apt to think Mercy to be a mere metaphorical Attribute in God. We grant Mercy in us to be analogous to what is in God, but that Mercy in God to be the original Idea, and not metaphorical or ſimilitudinary.

Hence, 3. Let us in our Thoughts about theſe Mercies in God form and caſt our Conceptions in the Mould of this Rule; that though they be in God, yet after an unconceivable manner to us; and that they are in God for the Kind and Being of them, with an infinite Difference; as being in God as God, and in the Creature but as a Creature. And therefore that as far as God's Eſſence and Being tranſcends ours, for kind of Being, ſo far doth *Holineſs* and Mercy in him exceed the Mercies that are in us, even for kind alſo; as Chriſt in the very Point of Mercy informs us, in ſaying, *So ſhall you be the Children of the moſt High,* Luke 6. 35, 36. And ſo much higher in Mercy is God than we, for our Comfort, *as the Heavens are higher than the Earth,* as God himſelf ſpeaks of himſelf, *Iſa.* 55. 9.

Theſe things forelaid, the true Meaſure of the Deciſion of this Queſtion (if any will dare to make a Queſtion of it) is,

Whether that theſe Attributes, Merciful and Gracious, &c. *although in common attributed unto Man, do not yet ſerve, and be not intended by God, as really and fully to expreſs and ſet out to our Faith what a God he is in himſelf, and what his very Nature and inward Diſpoſition, and Inclinations of Soul are, and Affections of Heart, a Root and Principle of merciful Effects; as when he is ſaid to be Holy, Good, Wiſe, True, Strong, Powerful, or the like: which are all communicated to Man, and yet not aſcribed to God after the manner of Men only: as when he is ſaid to be grieved, and pricked at the Heart.*

And if any will deny theſe, and ſuch like, to be eſſential Attributes, or expreſſive of the true Nature of God, they muſt affirm that no Attributes, whereof Men partake the Name, are at all ſuch, and that all do ſerve to expreſs but outward Effects merely, and no way inward Diſpoſitions, as the Principle of thoſe Effects in him: And thus propoſed, I ſhall make this one main Argument of the Aſſertion, *viz.* that Mercy is a parallel Attribute with thoſe other. None dare ſay that he is Holy in his Works, or in reſpect he doth Holy Works, but that he is Holy in his Being, as he is God. The like is to be underſtood of his being Good, Wiſe, Merciful, *&c.*

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

That Mercy and Grace in God are Properties of his Divine Being and Glory. No other Proof alledged but from the Text, Exod. 34. 6, 7.

I Come now to the farther Proofs of this Assertion, that Mercy and Grace are Properties of the Divine Nature: And I profess to alledg no other (that I may shew this Text to be a compleat Abundary of all God's Mercies) than what the Text, either in the Words themselves, or the Aspect of them upon what went before, do afford the Heads of, and Foundations for: and I shall then call in the Help but of such other Scriptures, which as Volunteers willingly offer themselves to assist in this Cause, and verify and confirm each hereof, when first extracted out of the Word.

The Point to be proved is, *That Mercy and Grace are glorious Properties of the Divine Being or Nature.*

Arg. 1. The first Argument is drawn from the true Reference and strict Correspondency this Proclamation of God, Merciful, *&c.* holds with the foregone Transactions in the Chapter before, *Exod.* 33. which lead on to it, which were *Moses*'s Request, God's Answer and Promise unto his Request; and here in my Text, God's Performance according to his Promise. These three are correspondent one to the other. Observe we then, *1st.* What it was *Moses* desired of God. And, *2dly.* What God promised to gratify him in. And, *3dly.* The thing which God did punctually perform. And in my beginning with this first, I shall but keep to that Method generally observed for the opening of a Text, in discovering its Occasion, Coherence; and yet withal prove my Assertion at once. In the 33*d* Chapter *Moses* had desired of God, that he would shew him his *Face* and *Glory*; that is, *his divine Essence* immediately, or his essential Glory as it is in himself. This *Moses* aspired unto, *ver.* 18. *I beseech thee, shew me thy Glory:* but God tells him, that this seeing his Face, or the immediate Vision of his *Essence* or Being, none is capable of, *and live*, ver. 20. which yet leaves a Room for Hope, that the Frailties of this Life being removed, a Man may see God's Face in that other Life. But yet in lieu thereof, God, to gratify him, professes his gracious Resolution to grant the Privilege as far as was possible for any mere Man to partake of it and live; and to manifest his foresaid *Face and Glory*, and his being God, as far as was expressible, and might be represented unto Man, and he live, in these Words: *ver.* 19. *And he said, I will make all my Goodness pass before thee; and I will proclaim the Name of the Lord before thee: and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew Mercy on whom I will shew Mercy.* And the best Interpretation of this is that which I find in *Oleaster*, who paraphrasing those Words of God's, [*all my Good*] that is *my self*, (says he) in whom is all that is good or excellent, or a Perfection shall pass before thee, and be made known by Voice signifying it; *I will proclaim my Name*, &c. or by a Vision of his, *ver.* 23. *Thou shalt see my Back-parts*, representing it. And you heard how the Names or Attributes of God do signify truly and properly what is really the Nature of God. So then God's essential Divine Perfections are intended and promised by God, to be seen and proclaimed by such Characters of Words; or a Name and Attributes, as far as was possible, those Perfections in himself to be *by Words* express'd; yet so, as still these Words should be such as should represent what was in himself, or the Divine Nature, in Truth and Reality answering thereunto, as in my *Explication* premised, *chap.* 6. I have shewn.

Ego transire faciam omne meum bonum, id est, meipsum; in quo sunt omnia bona quæ coram te explicabuntur voce: Clamabo nomen Domini. *Oleaster* in verba.

From whence I argue, that if these first and chief Attributes proclaimed, *viz. Jehovah, merciful, gracious, long-suffering, much in Goodness and Truth*, had not served to signify that essential Goodness which was in himself; or if there had not been that Glory essentially in himself, which these Names were intended to signify, then God had neither gratified *Moses* to the utmost he was capacitated for, nor answered his Desire to see his Glory, as far as he was capable to see it, and live. For that there are some such other Names and Attributes of his in Scripture, which do express his Nature and Essence, all do, and must acknowledg, as *Wisdom, Holiness*, &c. which are not here expressed. And therefore if he doth it not in these here,

Part I. the Efficient Cause, *For thou art a gracious and merciful God.* 2. There's the Effects of that *Mercy*, *Thou therefore forsookest them not.* And, 3. There is the same Mercy in his Nature, and set out as the final Cause moving him thereunto, *for thy great Mercies sake.*

By *David*'s Application of the words of my Text, I shewed in the fore-going Chapter how *David* rehearsing first these four Attributes (appertaining to Mercy) word for word, hath likewise by Name cited *Moses*, as out of whose Writings he had them; and his Method there is accordingly the same with this we have shewn was that of *Moses*: First abstractly to recite those Attributes as the Principles in him and the Cause, *Psal.* 103. 8. *The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to Anger and plenteous in Mercy:* And then to bring in many of the outward Effects of that Mercy, *ver.* 9, 10. *He will not always chide, neither will he keep his Anger for ever.* Ver. 10. *He hath not dealt with us after our Sins; nor rewarded us according to our Iniquities.* And amongst others he introduceth that of *pardoning Iniquity*, &c. ver. 12. *As far as the East is from the West, so far hath he removed our Transgressions from us.*

Elsewhere and in other Scriptures we find the same; and indeed other Scriptures that speak about the Mercies of God speak but according to God's Intent in these words, they being Derivatives all from this. Now when in *Psal.* 78. 38. 'tis said, *he being full of Compassion forgave their Iniquities*, he plainly assigns the Mercifulness in God to have been the Cause of his forgiving them, and therefore Mercy is most properly ascribed to God, and is in God: And this Speech of his there is but explicatory of these words here in the Text. In like manner in *Psal.* 86. after he had so earnestly sought for Mercy at God's Hands, (as *preserve my Soul, save thy Servant*, v. 2. *be merciful to me*, v. 3.) he foundeth all his Petitions on this, *For thou art good and ready to forgive; plenteous in Mercy unto all them that call upon thee.* He supplicates his good and merciful Nature to move himself to put forth these Acts of Mercy towards him. Likewise *Nehemiah*, Chap. 9. 31. giving an account of God's gracious dealings with that People notwithstanding their Sins, *Nevertheless* (saith he) *thou didst not forsake them, for thou art a gracious and merciful God.* That Particle [*for*] in this and those other places, doth undeniably testify that God being himself truly and properly merciful, from thence and according thereunto it is that he acteth graciously and compassionately towards us, as moved by and from a true Principle and Disposition in himself. O how perfectly contrary are these professed Dictates of the Holy Ghost unto what some would elevate and dilute this Attribute unto, *viz. That he is only said to be gracious and merciful*, &c. for or because he *doth merciful things*; whereas the Scripture-Stile all along (you see) is, he doth merciful Works, [for] he *is gracious and merciful.*

Causa attribuitur eius misericordia, quæ naturaliter in ipso est. Calvin. ver. 14.

Yea further, to confirm this, it is so remote that God should be stiled merciful in relation to his Works of Mercy, that his Works of Mercy have their Denomination or *Name* of *Mercies* (as frequently they have in the Scriptures, and in common use of Speech) given them from that proper special Relation they owe and bear unto the Mercy that is in God, from whence they do proceed. And so they are not stiled Mercies because they respect *us*, or our Needs, the Objects of them, but in respect to the merciful God who is the original Subject in whom Mercy is, and he the *Father* and *Fountain* of them. And as the Effect ordinarily bears the Name of its proper Cause, as the *Child of the Father*; so those Mercies bear their Name of and from his Mercy, who is more eminently stiled the Father of them than of any other his Works wrought by other Attributes. And that which confirms this Notion is, that in the case of other Attributes, their proper Works or Effects have their Denomination from that Attribute which is their Cause, wherefore so in this. Thus *Psal.* 119. 137, 138. *Righteous art thou, O Lord, and upright are thy Judgments. Thy Testimonies that thou hast commanded, are righteous and very faithful.* There they are term'd righteous and faithful Judgments, as proceeding from his being a righteous and faithful God, and as from whose Righteousness they proceed. In like manner also the Works of *his Grace* in us are term'd *Grace*, Grace freely given, being the free Impressions and Fruits of the Grace that is in himself. And indeed in that *Elogium* of him that he is the *Father of Mercies*, 2 Cor. 1. 3. look as the word [*of Mercies*] οἰκτιρμῶν, doth import *Mercies bestowed*, so Father *of those Mercies* is spoken of God to a like purpose; as when the Sun is said to be the Father *of Lights* (for unto

As in that Speech, (to name but one Instance) I am less (says Jacob) than the least of all thy Mercies. Less in worth than this Staff, or any other Mercy bestowed.

See Drusius in locum.

unto the Sun is that Allusion of God in the Apostle, *Jam.* 1. 17.) the meaning is, that the Sun hath first all Light originally seated in it self, and so communicates all those Lights and Glory with which the Moon, Stars, and Air are enlightned. Looking-glasses are array'd and do borrow from that Sun, and yet themselves are called *Lights*, but how? only by Participation from it the original Light. And in the same respect is God the Father of Mercies, as he is also entitled the *Father of Glory*, in *Ephes.* 1. 17. which in like manner notes, *1st.* That he is a glorious God in himself: *The God of Glory*, Acts 7. 2. having an essential Glory abiding in him as Light doth in the Sun. And then, *2dly.* That he dispersetb Glory to his Saints and Angels, as the *Father* of all their Glory. And in and for the same reason he is magnified to be the *Fountain of Life*, Psal. 36. 10. 1. Because he is the *Living God*, and hath Life in himself, as a Fountain hath Water first in it self: And, 2. That from thence he derives Life to others in lesser Streams, and answerably in the words of the Apostle *Paul*, 2 *Cor.* 1. 3. he is stiled Merciful, and the Father of Mercies; these being the Off-spring of his Mercy, do bear the Name of Mercy from God the Father of them.

Book I.

It hath been sufficiently by all those foregoing Passages of Scripture proved, that all outward Effects of Mercy are ascribed unto *Mercy*, an Attribute of God, as their Cause and Principle. I shall shut up this Argument with a further Proof of this Inference, *That therefore there is an inward Principle of Mercy in God himself, which is that Cause.*

1. First in Reason: If the Mercies of God be the Cause, they must have a real Being and Existence afore all outward Effects of Mercy, and a greater than the Effects, for it produceth them: And in whom or in what can that Mercy have an Existence or *Being* but in God himself, *whose* Mercy alone and greatness of Mercy too it is said to be? It is the *Mercy of God* to which those Effects are attributed, and therefore it's in *God*. And certainly did those merciful Effects proceed from other Principles in *God* more eminently than from *Mercy*, he would never give the Honour away from them, and cry up his Mercy so much as the principal Cause: He would not give the Honour to it, if it were but a made Attribute, and not real and genuine. And if that which I before laid at the entrance be true, (as it is) *viz.* that genuine Attributes have their proper Effects attributed to them, in relation to which they are distinguished one from another as to our Conceptions of them: It must then hold, that if all merciful Effects are set over by the Scriptures *unto the Mercy of God* as their proper Cause (as hath been shewed); then Mercy it self also is and must be as genuine and essential an Attribute as any of the other. I hope the same Plea for other Attributes in this Cause will be admitted and allowed in *Mercy's behalf*; as for instance, when it is said, the *Lord is good, and doth good*, Psal. 119. 68. here *doing good*, being the Effect of his *being good*, and attributed thereunto as its proper Cause, doth invincibly argue his being good to be an *essential Attribute* in him, *&c.* Thus in like manner when it is said, *God being merciful forgave their Iniquities* (which is the highest Act of Mercy) and divers others like to this that have been alledged, doth it not as aloud speak that God being first merciful in himself, doth out of that merciful Disposition pardon and forgive Sins? Again, when it is said, *The Righteous Lord loveth Righteousness*, Psal. 11. 7. hereby is imported that God first is himself righteous, which Righteousness in this place, is that Integrity, Rectitude, and Uprightness of his Nature, whereby he is wholly addicted, and disposed, and inclined unto Holiness and Righteousness, and then thence a sutable *Affection flows*, he loveth *Righteousness*. Then surely on this other hand, when it is said, *God is merciful, and delighteth in Mercy*; that Affection of Delight ought to be interpreted to arise from an innate Propitiousness unto merciful Acts, as proceeding from a merciful Inclination and Disposition of Heart, unto which to shew Mercy is so naturally agreeable, as he *delights in it*; and therefore it is said, that *above* all he is *known by it*, that is, known how merciful in himself he is, even as when 'tis said he is known to be *a just God* by the Judgments that he executes, *Psal.* 9. 16.

And indeed those and such like Speeches up and down the Scriptures, *Shew us thy Mercy, O Lord*, Psal. 85. 7. [*thy Mercy*] that is, which is *in thee*, in thy Heart and Nature, lying of it self hid, and latent there, unless and until thou putteſt it forth in Mercies towards us. And in *Psal.* 17. 7. *Shew thy wonderful Loving-kindness*; or, as others read it, *mirifica misericordiam tuam, make wonderful thy Mercy*: [*Thy Mercy*]

Part I. which is so wonderful in it self, and as it is in *Thee*; therefore shew it and give Demonstration of it by wonderful Effects: To which corresponds that of *Psal.* 111. 3, 4. *His Work is honourable and glorious; and his Righteousness endureth for ever. He hath made his wonderful Works to be remembred: the Lord is gracious and full of Compassion.* As also that in *Ephes.* 2. 7. to *shew outwardly the exceeding Riches of his Grace,* (namely within himself): And many the like Phrases (I say) do evidence the Point in hand. For so in the case of other Attributes it is acknowledged, that to prove them to be essential such Expressions do serve; as when of God's *Truth and Uprightness* it is said, *Psal.* 92. 15. *To shew the Lord is upright, and there is no Righteousness in him.* So of his *Power*, to make his *Power* known, *Rom.* 9. 22. *To shew himself strong*, 2 Chron. 16. 9. And this for the third Argument fetch'd from the *relation* of Mercy *in God* as the *Cause*, and *Mercies* as the *Effects*.

Arg. 4. That which gives a farther *Addition* of Strength unto the *foregoing Argument*, and will withal grow up to a *new* one, is, *That God hath placed and ranked this of MERCIFUL amongst other Attributes, which must be acknowledged to be of his Essence, and to express what his Nature is.* And *Merciful* being seated on this Royal Throne together with them, without any Character of difference from them, yea with the *first* of them, and with an *height* of greater *Eminency in some respects*; how shall we otherwise understand it then, that it is an Attribute of the *same kind*, of equal *Rank* and *Dignity*, and of as high an *Alliance* to the *Divine* Nature as they are of?

Here are in the *Text two* Attributes especially, or indeed *four*, which God hath seated on this *high Bench*; and hath set *Merciful* in *equal Royal State* with them, next Himself, Jehovah, God. *First*, The *two*; the one sitting on the *Right-hand*, the other *on the Left* of *Merciful* plac'd in the midst, as on the Throne between them. 1. STRENGTH, or *Power*, to assist and strengthen the Hands of it; אל *El* indifferently signifies either *strong*, or *God*; (as is well known) I take both, as *Junius* throughout the whole Old Testament doth, every where translating it, the *strong God*. 2. There is on the Left *Grace*, to quicken Mercy in all *its* Actings; so read the words thus, *God, the Strong, Merciful, Gracious.* 3. Unto which *two* are added *Goodness* or *Kindness*. And, 4. *Truth*. I might reckon in *Long-suffering* as a *fifth*; but it is so apparently a *Sprig* of *Mercy*, or rather indeed, *but Mercy it self stretch'd out at length, or continued*, (as *Waiting* is but *Faith continued*) that therefore I shut up *that* into *Mercy*, and mention it not here as distinct.

Note, That some translate that word *Goodness*, others *Kindness*.

But I do take in the other two, *abundant in Goodness*, and *Truth*, as distinct, and as importing inherent Principles in God of *Goodness* and *Truth*, as in which his *Nature* doth *abound*: and altho in our English the word *abundant* would seem to carry the *sound* or report more toward *actual Kindness*, and to God's *Performance* of *Truth*; yet the original word it self, and as it is by others translated, signifies as well *MUCH*, *Ample*, *Large*, *PLENTEOUS in Goodness* and *Truth*; and is by our own Translators, in *Psal.* 103. 9. render'd *plenteous* in *Mercy*: And these words *much, plenteous*, &c. do in their *Connotation* strike deeper, and reach unto the bottom, and express the Mind and *Treasury* in God's *Heart* and *Nature*, as it is stored with a *Plenteousness* in all *Goodness* and *Truth*: And how out of that infinite *Riches* it is, that in the *outward Dispensation* he so abounds in *Goodness* and *Truth*. And that it is thus intended is undeniable; for, as the *Lord* is first good in himself, and out of that Goodness doth good, as in *Psal.* 119. 68. And like as he is *essential Truth* first, *who cannot lie*, Tit. 1. 2. *i. e.* his Nature is Truth; and then from out of that Nature it is that having spoken once the word, he performeth *Truth*; *so* for the same reason the *Ground* why he is so much and so abundant in *Goodness* and *Truth* dispensatorily or in actual Execution, must be, that he is much in Goodness and Truth first in himself *essentially*: That such exceeding *Abundance* in the one, is from the *Superabundancy* of the other; and the reason is, because the Degrees of much *Kindness* and *Goodness* in outward *Effects*, do as much depend and hold on the Plenteousness of each of them in his Nature, as simply his doing good in the least degree, doth upon his being good, or no good at all would be done. The abounding therefore of *Goodness* and Truth in his *Nature*, must fundamentally be here understood as the Spring, the overflowing of which causeth those high Floods of each in his Actings and Dispensations. And *Goodness* and *Kindness* in any one (who is such) do most genuinely express Nature in him, and what is *natural* to him, since by way of Eminency we give such Dispositions the *Stile* of *good Nature*. And so seeing

Verus in naturâ, verax in sermone: *so in respect of* Strength, *it is* ἰσχυρὸς ὑπερβολικῶς, καὶ ὑπερβολικῶς.

Goodness

Goodness and *Kindness* are thus attributed to God, they speak *Nature* in him a[illegible] or if you will the Goodness of his *Nature*, (as with Reverence I may speak) the most of any Attributes.

Upon these fore-mentioned accounts I may justly reckon upon *four Compeers* which Mercy here hath, and is every way equal with them, and with each of which I might vie on Mercy's side, and plead it to be as natural as any of them. I reason from them now as they are placed all together as fixed Stars, all of them in this one glorious *Constellation*, declaring the Glory of God, and of the like Brightness and equal Magnitude; they are all merciful, and all alike formed up and cast in one and the same Mould, that is, one and the same uniform kind of *Speech*, and *under that* attributed alike to God, *viz.* such a Form as was in the foregone Argument, said to be denoting *inward innate inherent Dispositions*, which the *four* here for certain do (under such a form) denote, and are all four in themselves such. And it is very hard to think and judg, that *one alone* of *Merciful* uttered in the same Tenor, should be otherwise; that *that* alone should be *adventitious*. God is said to be *good*, and *true*, and the *strong* God, from that *innate Strength*, *Goodness* and *Truth* that is in himself, and not only from his *doing good*, &c. And why ought we not as well conceive him to be *merciful* (as it is here placed amongst these other) from an inherent inward *merciful* Disposition in himself, and not in relation only to the merciful Effects he doth, and every day brings forth? And God himself (who best knows himself, and how to speak of himself) having put no Character of Difference, who shall dare to make a *Difference?* So vast a Difference, as to affirm, that *merciful* is but a *made*, *artificial* Attribute, raised up meerly from his *outward Works* of Mercy, as his Stile of being the *Creator* is from the *Works* of his *Creation*, without which he had not had the actual Glory of that Title; whenas those other that sit round about it here, have the Honour (*de jure*, and *of right*) to be acknowledged *absolutely*, and *de se*, to be and to have been in him, whether he had ever acted according to them yea or not. Psal. 19.

And further, there may be added unto this *that* which I inserted, that *merciful* holds this its rank and place amongst them, *with so great an Eminency*. Search *this* and *other* Scriptures; first, *here* in *this* it is placed with the *first*; and by *Moses* made the *great Dominator*, together with *Power*, which two he alone supplicates whilst he alledgeth these words, *Numb.* 14. 17, 18, 19. they two being as eminently set up in the words. And, 2. *Elsewhere* the Scripture gives and bestows a *richer* and *larger Coat of Arms* upon Mercy, than on *any other* Attribute that is not akin to this. One word usually serves to express any other Attribute; but what a *multiplication* and *heaping up* of words frequently is there to *emblason* the *Glory* of this? In the *Text* here, there is *merciful*, *gracious*, *long-suffering*, *plenteous in Goodness*; which are in a manner all but various Characters of Mercy, and are much the same with Mercy. However (as we say) they are of nearest Kindred to it, and are therefore singled out and sever'd from all the rest of the words that follow in the Text, by the Psalmist, *Psal.* 103. 9.

Lastly, the Scripture loads *Mercy* in God with *Titles* of *Honour*, and superadded Epithets of *Greatness*, *Riches*, *Glory*, *Plenteousness*, *Fulness*, *Abundance*, *Multitude*, *Variety*, *Manifold*, *Eternity*, *Everlastingness*, *Unchangeableness*, and what not? The like super-Attributions might be observ'd given to the outward Effects of it, above what to the Effects of other Attributes. It would be therefore yet more *strange*, and beyond a possibility of Imagination, that this so magnified an Attribute extolled (as we say) to the Heavens, yea above the Heavens, yea great above, and so *far* above the *Heavens*, should in the end be but a similitudinary Metaphorical Attribute, *ex similitudine effectus*, and after the manner of Men only, and so to have in comparison but the shadow of an Attribute; but in reality and truth infinitely below all other. Psal. 108. 4.

But there is in other Scriptures that which brings in yet new and farther Confirmation to this fourth Argument, in that we find Mercy not only naturally growing up in one Bunch or Cluster thus with these four, (as in this one place) but that traversing the large Garden of the Scriptures, we may besides frequently meet with each of those and Mercy apart, and yet sometimes join'd and sprouting fourth, as two Flowers growing upon one Sprig; that is, you may up and down espy *Mercy* and

and *Power*, and they two alone joined together in one Stalk, then *Grace* and *Mercy* singly and alone on another: The like may be observ'd of *Mercy* and *Goodness*, as also of *Mercy* and *Truth* in other Scriptures, and thus *Mercy* and they are Σύμφυτοι; so that if we acknowledg *any* of these *four*, especially if we own *all* of them to be *natural* Attributes in the Godhead, we cannot but own *Mercy* to be so too; for we find both altogether with *Mercy* (as here), and each (elsewhere) to grow alike as a natural Branch together with another, which to be sure is natural, that it must be too hard to think that in so multiplied a Variation Mercy should still be but as an Ingrafture by Art, and should not naturally grow out of one and the same Stock of the Divine Nature.

Part I.

In this Argument it holds that both *juncta & singula juvant*; we have argued in general from the Conjunction of all together, and now we shall argue particularly from the singular and apart Constellation of each with Mercy: And as the Conjunction of all, so the singular Constellation of each with Mercy so often will evidence it to be a fixed Star indeed in this Firmament.

1. *Mercy and Power*, (the two first in the Text) are singly paired by *Moses* when he hath occasion to alledg these, God's own words, *Numb.* 14. *Let the Power of my Lord be great*, v. 17. and Pardon join'd with it also, *The Lord great in Mercy, pardon according to the greatness of thy Mercy.* He pairs these two and that for *Greatness* alike equally, then are they Pairs in Kind and Eminency, which is the Particular we are arguing: Yea, and of the two he greatens Mercy, for Mercy hath the Epithet *great* twice given it; the *Lord of great Mercy*, v. 18. and again, *according to the Greatness of thy Mercy*, v. 19. and Greatness in the latter is in the Abstract given, but to Power this Title is given but once. The Prophet *David* also sets these two alone together as most eminent in God, *Psal.* 62. 11, 12. *Power belongs to God: Also unto thee, O God, belongeth Mercy.* Look how *Power* is God's (as some read it) or belongs to him, and is with him; so and in like respects *Mercy is God's*, and is with him; there is no difference at all put, and that's enough, for *Power is God's* in that transcendent manner that it essentially belongs to him. And whereas *Power* to be such in him might discourage, he therefore (for his own Comfort, and of God's People) adds, *To thee* [also] *Mercy belongeth*, so to poise and ballance it; which if Mercy were not every way equal to it, it would no ways poise his Power, and so not have relieved Souls that tremble at the Power *of the great and mighty dreadful God*, as *Nehem.* 9. where Merciful is also join'd. And this is not the first time they have been thus paired as by *David*; for *David* himself adds, *For God hath spoken once, and twice have I heard THIS*: It is *David*'s Preface to those former words. And what will you say if this Citation of his refers us, and brings us back again to those very words first of God to *Moses* in my Text, and then of *Moses* to God in this *Numb.* 14. as that which from both he had heard of twice? Sure I am I find no reference to any other, or any sense given by Interpreters more probable, or so proper. Now that POWER is an essential Attribute of the Divine Being, there was none that ever yet denied it, it being so expresly entitled his *eternal Power and Godhead*, Rom. 1. 20. and therefore no less must its *Compeer* Mercy be.

A second pair is *Mercy and Grace*, here placed next to *merciful* [gracious]: you find these two alone singled out, and paired as the two great Letters of his Name are, tho many more are in it. First, when God promised to *Moses* to proclaim this his Name, he specifies but these *two* only, *Exod.* 33. 19. *I will proclaim the Name of the Lord before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew Mercy on whom I will shew Mercy.* And how often elsewhere do you meet with these two in like single Couples? I need not abound in Instances they are so many, *Psal.* 145. 8. *The Lord is gracious and great in Mercy*; moreover, *Psal.* 116. 5. before cited. Likewise *Neh.* 9. 31. *Nevertheless for thy great Mercy's sake, thou didst not utterly consume them, nor forsake them; for thou art a gracious and merciful God.*

Now besides that as to the things themselves, Grace and Mercy are substantially one, (for Grace considered in its Distinction from Mercy, what is it but Love or Favour simply considered with a Connotation of *freeness* in God, as not being obliged by any worth in the Creature why he should be gracious?) the very Definition of Grace given by God himself, is a Love that's free, and that loveth freely. Thus *Hos.* 14. *Receive us graciously*, prays the Church, *ver.* 2. (and 'twas God that put those words into her Mouth, as in the same Verse) and God answers, *I will*

love

love them freely, v. 4. so explaining it. And that *Love* in God is the Root and Ground of Mercy, and Mercy but Love ampliated, or stretched out and enlarged to those he loves when they be in Misery, I shall have a fairer occasion to demonstrate: And therefore that if *Love* and *Grace* be an essential Principle in God, then Mercy must needs be also. Besides this way of Proof (which I now wave) I insist only upon this at present, as that which is proper to what is now afore me, *viz.* that Grace and Mercy are Compeers and Equals in every respect; and that therefore if *gracious* be an essential Attribute, then *merciful*. Now that Grace is such, I urge this one Argument, *That God accounts his being gracious as the height and top of his Glory*, yea and his being merciful to be so too; give me leave to put a weight upon it. When in general it is said of God (as often) that he is *a glorious* God, that which this carries to every Understanding is, that an Infinity of surpassing Glory is in himself, and proper to him as God, and essential to him, which Glory it is required of us to glorify. In like manner when in particular it is said of any Attribute, that it is his Glory, and which we are also called upon to glorify him for in the Manifestation of it to us; there is necessarily withal imported therein an essential Glory which is the Root whence that Manifestation proceedeth, and which is therefore to be glorified by us, the proper Glory of that particular Attribute being the end of that Manifestation: As when either in special it is said of Grace, (as *Ephes.* 1. 6.) *To the Praise of the Glory of his Grace*; it is no less nor no other than when in general it is said, *That we should be to the Praise of his Glory.* Surely as in the latter Speech, *v.* 12. *To the Praise of his Glory*; by his Glory to be praised is meant all the Attributes, as Power, Wisdom, *&c.* the Result and Crown of all which is his Glory, that are the Causes of, and are manifested in our Salvation, all which, both the Attributes and this Glory of them, must be acknowledged to be essential, and that answerably there is an essential Glory of them in himself, which was and had been in him altho he had never made any outward Manifestation at all thereof. So in the former Speech, *v.* 6. his particular Instance [the Glory of his Grace] must necessarily be understood, that his Grace is glorious with the same kind of essential Glory proper to it as the other; and to import this it is stiled the *Glory of his Grace.* Some would have it, that by the Glory of his Grace to be praised, should immediately and directly be meant the glorious Manifestation of his Grace, yet still there must be imported therewith and thereby an essential Glory that is the Glory manifested: And it must needs be so, for all Manifestation is but of what is and hath being as the Object of that Manifestation, so as still we must resolve all into an essential Glory that is at the bottom, and is the Foundation: Yea and that intrinsical Glory of any Attribute is that which is the ultimate Object of our *Praise* when we are called upon to glorify it, the farthest Mark, the *Terminus* which we transmit our glorifying of God in that respect unto, as that which we aim to praise and glorify, as indeed it is here expressed, *To the Praise of the Glory of his Grace.* The Aspirements, and holy Aims and Reachings of Godly Souls in their giving Glory to God, rest not in praising or in giving Glory to the Manifestation of his Glory altho that be never so glorious, but by means and upon occasion thereof are carried out to, and terminate in his essential Glory it self, as that which is in their Aims to give Glory to. And indeed thereby only it is fulfilled, *That he that glorieth, glorieth in the Lord*, as the Apostle and Prophet calls us to do, whilst both speak of Mercy manifested. 1 *Cor.* 1. 31. *Jer.* 9. 24. And indeed either none of those Attributes of Wisdom, Power, *&c.* shewn in our Salvation, that wear and have the Title of his Glory stampt upon them, are essential to him, or this of Grace also must be so which is stiled his Glory, κατ' ἐξοχὴν, by way of Eminency and Singularity. The truth of these things that one place, *Rom.* 9. 22. declares, *That he might make known the Riches of his Glory on the Vessels of Mercy.* Here is at first a Manifestation of Glory in those words, *make known*, and withal *a Riches* of his Glory which is manifest, whereby it is evident that Glory must needs be understood to be different from that Manifestation, be it never so glorious; for it is the thing that is manifested, and what can that be other than those *Riches of Glory* which he possesseth in himself, and makes known by Communications and Manifestations thereof on his Saints, as it follows there; like as in that Speech in the Verse afore, *v.* 22. which in Coherence is parallel to and yokes with this, God willing to make *his Power known*: that is, his Power being an intrinsical essential Attribute in himself, he manifests it, and makes

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Part I. makes it known: the like holds of his Glory ſpoken of here. And the cloſe of this is, that thoſe *Riches of Glory* there do prove to be the Glory of his *Grace* and *Mercy* in a ſpecial manner intended, and ſo bear the Name of Glory by way of Eminency. This *Æſtius* and others have obſerv'd, and my Ground why ſpecially *Mercy* is intended, is, becauſe the Saints, who are the Veſſels or Receptacles or Subjects unto whom theſe *Riches*, &c. are to be communicated and manifeſted in them, are in reſpect unto this ſtiled *Veſſels of Mercy*. The Riches of the Glory of Mercy then are thoſe which are the principal Contributors, altho the Glory of all other Attributes do likewiſe empty their Streams into the ſame Veſſels to fill them with Glory. So then Mercy ſtands every way equal with *Grace* (an eſſential Attribute) and that in *Glory*, yea in *Riches* of Glory, and therefore is of as high an Alliance to God as that is: They are every way rated alike in God's Books, the Scriptures; and God who is an equal Prizer and Valuer, doth not ſet a deeper Eſtimation or Value than the real Worth doth bear. As then I ſhewed afore Mercy and Power were paired as equal for Greatneſs, ſo Mercy and Grace we find to be Equals: Theſe two are for Eſtate and *Riches* equal, and are as *Peers* for Glory and Honour too, and they are both alike God's Riches and Glory, by the Valuation of which God ſhews what a rich and glorious God he is in himſelf. I conclude this, as I did the former, who then ſhall dare to ſay to *rich Mercy*, to Mercy which God accounts his *Glory*, (when withal he ſhall ſee it placed by God himſelf immediately, and bidden to ſit there by him on the ſame Throne with equal Royalty with other ſo high-born eſſential Attributes of mine) who then ſhall bid and ſay——Thou *rich* and *great* and glorious *Mercy*, come off the Seat thou ſitteſt on, as too high for thee, and ſit thou at the foot-ſtool of all theſe other?

For thoſe other two Attributes *Goodneſs* and *Truth*, ſo much having been ſaid of the former two, it is not neceſſary to enlarge on theſe; yet, to compleat this Confirmation, I ſhall add ſome things as to both.

A third Pair is *Mercy* and *Goodneſs*, merciful, and much or *plenteous* in *Goodneſs*, ſays the Text: where whether Goodneſs imports (as in the general Notion of it) a Communicativeneſs of good things; *The Lord is good and doth good*, Pſal. 119. 68. it being the innate Property of Goodneſs to be communicative: or whether more ſpecially *Kindneſs*, *Bounty*, *Benignity* be intended, as many tranſlate the word here and elſewhere; however it be taken, it is ſingly paired with Mercy.

1. As to GOODNESS, how many Pſalms do begin with, and ſome alſo do begin and end with *The Lord is good, his Mercy endures for ever*. I inſtance only in *Pſal.* 118. whereof both the firſt and laſt Verſes have thoſe words. It was the uſual form of praiſing the Lord, to ſing, the *Lord is good, his Mercy endures for ever*, Jer. 33. 11. and had been preſcribed unto the Levites, 1 *Chron.* 16. 41. And tho he is *good to all his Creatures*, Pſal. 145. yet here 'tis that Goodneſs that extends it ſelf to his *Iſrael*, as *Pſal.* 73. 1. which draws forth the Goodneſs in his Nature in the Communications of it to its full length: And that is ſpecially intended in this Text, for 'tis that Goodneſs which brings forth Pardon of Sins, ſaving Mercies which the Text ſpeaks of; which two the Pſalmiſt puts together, *Pſal.* 86. 5. *For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in Mercy unto all that call upon thee.*

χρηστότης. 2. And as his *Goodneſs* and *Mercy* are paired, ſo *Kindneſs* and *Mercy*, Titus 3. 4. *After that the Kindneſs and Love of God our Saviour toward Man appeared.* And Mercy is not far off them, for *v.* 5. *According to his Mercy hath he ſaved us*; for indeed they are all but one. And again, *Luke* 6. 35, 36. *He is kind unto the unthankful, and to the evil. Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father alſo is merciful.* And to ſhut up this, you have both Kindneſs and Goodneſs join'd and pair'd with Mercy in *Pſal.* 25. 6, 7. *Remember, O Lord, thy tender Mercies, and thy* Loving-kindneſſes, *for they have been ever* of old. *Remember not the Sins of my Youth, nor my Tranſgreſſions; according to thy* Mercy *remember thou me for thy* Goodneſs *ſake, O Lord.* Theſe two import not barely his affording outward Favours, which we call *Kindneſs*, nor barely a doing Kindneſs, as we uſe to ſay, or God's being good to us in Benefits communicated; but they connotate withal a Root that is in God's Nature, from whence thoſe outward Kindneſſes proceed. The Lord is firſt good in himſelf, and thence and therefore doth good; and in like manner he is of a kind Heart and Nature in himſelf firſt, and thence and therefore is kind to others, even to the evil and unthankful, as *Luke* 6. 35. and the abundancy of his *Goodneſs* and *Kindneſs* in Effects is from the Amplitude

and

and Largeness of the Goodness and Kindness in his own Heart and Nature, shewed in the beginning of this *second* Confirmation, and as is evident from the 8th Verse of that 25th Psalm now cited, it immediately following, *the Lord is good* and upright; which as an essential Principle in God, and the Root of that Mercy and Kindness which he sued for, he resolveth ultimately his Faith into, as *Muis* hath observed. And among Men we use by way of Eminency to express Goodness in a Person by good Nature; and one that is kind in his outward Deportment, we term him one of a kind Heart and Nature. And indeed Kindness denotes an inward kind Disposition more principally, and in the first Place; even as when the Scripture denominates a Man, *a liberal Man*, it doth it principally from that noble, free and large Disposition of *Liberality* in his Spirit, whence liberal Actions proceed, as *Isa.* 32. 8. *A liberal Man* (such in himself) *deviseth liberal things:* Thus it is in Kindness also. And in God to whom these are thus attributed, it holds much more, Goodness is so essential to him as he *alone* is to be called Good, as also that *he alone is Holy*, Rev. 15. which evidently imports he as God hath such and such an Holiness and Goodness in him as is proper to him alone, and transcendeth that Goodness that is in Creatures, that theirs is no Goodness in comparison. And as he was essential Holiness, and should have been so for ever, although he never had produced a Work, (who yet is holy in all his Works he doth produce): So he was and had been essentially good, altho he never had communicated a good thing to any Creature. And if it be the Nature of Goodness to communicate it self, then it is the common Voice of all Mankind, as the common Voice of the Scriptures too, that Goodness is the *Nature* of God. Now *Mercy* is not only paired therewith, but it is indeed essentially all one with it. Mercy is but *Bonitas summè extensa*, as the School speaks, it is but Goodness *extendible*, an Aptness or Readiness in his Goodness to extend it self to Sinners, as well as to communicate good things to others that had not, nor have not sinned, which by the Creation God did. Mercy is but a Promptitude to communicate so much further, *viz.* to Sinners. Mercy is but *Goodness* with a *nevertheless*, that is, though they are Sinners, as *Neh.* 9. 31. And indeed as in the Schoolmens right Apprehensions they are but one and the same in God, so in the Sense of the Scriptures also. Thus his Mercy to *Sinners* is expressly stiled his *Goodness*, Rom. 11. 22. *Towards thee Goodness*, &c. which along after in the Chapter doth bear the Name of Mercy, *ver.* 30, 31, 32. and *chap.* 12. 1. And again, his Mercy to Sinners is in like manner termed *Kindness*, as expressly, *Luke* 6. 35. *He is kind to the evil and unthankful.* Ver. 36. *Be ye therefore merciful as your Father also is merciful.* To conclude this, *Mercy*, *Goodness*, *Kindness*, are so near a-kin, and of one Stock, that if one be essential to God, then must the other be also.

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The last Pair are *Truth* and *Mercy*: These two are alone thus yoked, one under the Names either of *Truth* or of *Faithfulness*, the other of *Mercy* or *Loving-kindness*. And thus you meet with them so frequently in so many Psalms as I scarce need particularize any, but might refer it either to the Reader's Remembrance, or adventure upon his Advertency thereof, at his but turning over a few Leaves, soon to find enough. I will instance but in one or two, *Is God to be praised?* The Height of Praises is for his *Mercy* and *Truth*, Psal. 108. 3, 4, 5. *I will praise thee, O Lord, among the People: and I will sing Praises unto thee among the Nations. For thy Mercy is great above the Heavens: and thy Truth reacheth unto the Clouds. Be thou exalted, O God, above the Heavens, and thy Glory above all the Earth.* And you have these Words over and over in two several Psalms, *Psal.* 57. 9—11. In *Psal.* 108. his Mercy is magnified not only to the Heavens, but as great, *above the Heavens*: that is, to an Infinity, as that which the Heaven of Heavens do not, cannot contain, as they do not God himself. And so it is an extolling of Mercy by this, that it is an Infinite, as God himself, in whom it is. And that which is translated *the Clouds*, which his *Truth* is said to be exalted unto, are indeed the Heavens, as two learned Criticks have with Vehemency contended for. And the 138th Psalm hath not only joined them together for Praise, (ver. 2. *I will praise thy Name for thy Loving-kindness and thy Truth*) but adds, *for thou hast magnified thy Word* (namely, as it sets forth those two Attributes) above all thy Name. The greatest part of his Word is

See Piscator *on* Psal. 57. ver. ult. *and on* Psal. 36. 6. *and* Dr. Hammond *on* Ps. 57. 10. *See* Dr. Hammond Annot. *on the 2d Verse of the 138th Psalm*, His Word being here annex'd to *Loving-kindness* and *Truth*, must needs be that Part of his Word to which these two are applicable: 1. His *Promise*: The Matter whereof is *Loving-kindness*. 2. In the *Performance* of which is *Truth* and *Fidelity*.

taken up either with Promises which *Loving-kindness* or *Mercy* made, or of the Per-
Part I. formance of them which Truth effecteth: so then these two are to be magnified above all his other Properties whatever; which two to celebrate all Nations are specially called upon to praise him for, *Psal.* 117. 1, 2. which is interpreted to mean both Jews and Gentiles when converted; as the Summary of the Gospel, *Rom.* 15. 8, 9. imports, and as Christ's Ministry in the 40*th* Psalm (a Psalm made for Christ, if any other, see *ver.* 6, 7, 8.) was foretold, *ver.* 10. *I have not concealed thy Loving-kindness, and thy Truth, from the great Congregation.* Or is God to be prayed unto for any kind of saving Mercies, and the Continuance of them? it follows, *ver.* 11 of that Psalm, *Withhold not thou thy tender Mercies from me, O Lord: let thy Loving-kindness and thy Truth continually preserve me.* I need mention no more, paired we see they are equally: and of the two, if either be greater, it is his Mercy, as to whomever, that will attentively consult those Scriptures, it will appear.

Now that his Truth is an essential Attribute, none can deny that will read that Scripture, 2 *Tim.* 2. 13. *He is faithful, and cannot deny himself:* It is himself, he is true in such a transcendent manner, as no Creatures can ever come to be Partakers of. Which Difference between him and them, in respect of Truth, I take to be the adequate Meaning of that, *Rom.* 3. 4. *Let God be true, and every Man a Liar.* It is a vehement Asseveration on God's Behalf, (as if he should say) Although all Men should be Liars, yet God is Truth, that is, there is a Possibility for the most faithful plain-hearted Man that ever was yet, to become a Liar, (*Adam* and the Angels that fell were created *true* and *holy, but abode not in the Truth*): But of God it is
Heb. 6. pronounced, that he is *true* in such unchangeable a manner, that it is *impossible for him to lie,* for his Truth is his Godhead, and himself, and so is Mercy.

Quicquid est in Deo Deus est. *Arg.* 5. *It is a common professed Maxim among Divines, that whatever is in God, is God himself.* This in the utmost Latitude of it I argue not now, for all internal Acts are not God's. But when we speak of such as are *Attributes* abstractly given him, whereby to describe him; that these should express his being God, yea his very Godhead, this is generally, and must be adhered unto by us. And how this is to be understood and cautioned, I hope to shew afterward.

That this should hold true of *Mercy, Long-suffering,* &c. in a more eminent way of Evidence, that which I shall now further observe out of this Text, may, I hope, for the present serve to evince, which, if gained, doth afford a 5*th* strong Argument, and meet to be brought the last for the shutting up of all.

I have much considered and dilated within my self, what should be the Mystery of so vehement a triple or thrice Recital of the *substantial Names* of God, by themselves alone first, as *Jehovah, Jehovah,* God, before these four or five *attributed abstract* Names, *Merciful, Gracious,* &c. which then do as entirely by themselves follow. I cannot but apprehend that some more than ordinary Mystery must be in it; the like not being ordinary that I know of.

I know that it is put over to the importing the Mystery of the three Persons, *Father, Son,* and *Holy Ghost,* to shew, they all are *merciful, long-suffering,* &c. and equally or alike such: And that is a great Mystery indeed, and greatly for our Faith and Comfort. But then withal reflecting, that these *merciful three* do possess and subsist in that one Godhead and simple Divine Essence; and that the Attributes they have in common, are the Attributes of the Godhead, or of God himself as God; and so are theirs, because each of them is God: I came to this farther Enquiry, *Why should not this triple Rehearsal of the Names of God be intended to declare that God, as God, is merciful, long-suffering,* &c. or that *merciful,* &c. are himself in the same, and in as true a Sense as any other Attribute is said to be in Scripture. In the *substantial Names, Jehovah,* &c. he proclaims *who,* in the attributed Names or Properties he declares *what* that *Jehovah* is, as in which his Godhead and his being *Jehovah* consisteth, namely, in *merciful, gracious,* &c. so as *Jehovah, Jehovah,* is these Attributes, and reciprocally these Attributes are *Jehovah, Jehovah.* In those his substantial Names he speaks himself as at once by the great; in these *attributed* Names or Properties he unfolds himself, and explicates himself by Parcels, for the letting in of himself into our Understandings; the Bore of which is not large enough to take in the whole at once. Thus elsewhere we also find such conjoined to the Being of God, tho not with this triple mention of his Name: *O Lord, the great and terrible God, that keepeth Covenant and Mercy,* &c. *Neh.* 1. 4. And *Solomon* before him

him thus speaks, *Lord God, there is no God like thee, who keepest Covenant and Mercy,* 1 *Kings* 8. 23. And so for pardoning, *Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth Iniquity?* &c. *Mic.* 7. 18. And tho these being Acts are not *God* or *God himself*, yet you see they are attributed as proper and peculiar to him as he is God, and do argue him to be God alone, and are such as if he were not God, could not be acted by him; concerning which this Rule is to be held, that therefore they necessarily proceed from the Godhead it self; and farther must be ascribed unto those Properties of the Godhead of the first sort, which in the Scriptures are held forth as the proper Causes of such Acts or Effects, and so *reductive*, (as we say) must be resolv'd unto those Attributes in God, their Causes, which are the very Godhead. And in this Sense here *Jehovah keeping Mercy, and pardoning Iniquity*, as Acts proper to *Jehovah*, are to be ascribed to *Jehovah*, (as here) *Jehovah merciful and gracious*, (that goes before) as Divine Properties in him, that are Causes thereof, and as those that do immediately express his Godhead, and are himself, as this Triplication of the Name of God prefixed imports. And thus considered and stated, both sorts do indeed come all to one. So then we may call them essential Attributes, that import his being God, and without which he were not God. Book I.

Nor need it here to stumble any, that *pardoning Sin*, &c. *keeping Mercy for thousands*, are also here attributed to him, but of them it must not be said, that they are God; if he shall withal consider, that there is this vast Difference between those first abstract Attributes immediately coming next to *Jehovah*, *Jehovah*, and those other that follow, they being apparently Acts in God, and from God, as his Works and Practices, whereof those five of the first Rank are the Causes, as was at large shewn in the Argument. And yet even those Acts speak him to be God too in this respect, that they do necessarily suppose and involve his being God as God, as proper to him above, as he is God, or they would never proceed from him.

I begin with the first, that *merciful*, &c. are one with *Jehovah*. And now I must call in the Help of other parallel Scriptures, both to confirm the thing it self, *viz. that as other true and real Attributes are one with* Jehovah *himself*, or are himself, so Mercy is, and that upon the same Grounds: as also by way of Parallel, to justify that Construction and Collection I have made of this *thrice Repetition*; and which I make the Rise of this Argument out of the Text.

1. One Attribute which is undeniably evident to be essential to and with *Jehovah*, is *Truth* and *Faithfulness*, which is his Godhead and Himself: *Tit.* 1. 2. *God that cannot lie*, that is, because *he is God*, or that *Truth is his Godhead*, and *his Godhead is Truth*; he were not God else: and he must cease, if otherwise, to be God: whereof the one *can* no more be than the other: Yea, and *in terminis* it is stiled *HIMSELF*, 2 Tim. 2. 13. *If we believe not, yet he abideth FAITHFUL*: He cannot *deny himself*. Why? for Faithfulness is himself.

Now let us bring a parallel Scripture speaking this very thing of *God's being faithful as God*; and expressing this in the like, yea well-nigh the same Equipage of Language with this in *Exod.* 34. proclaiming *Jehovah*, God, *merciful God*: And the Language being the same, and that being the Intent of it there, it must be the same here. That Scripture is *Deut.* 7. 9. *Know that the Lord thy God he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth Covenant and Mercy with them that love him.* Here is first a vehement Indigitation of his being GOD, *the Lord thy God he is God*, to the end that they might *know* that he was the faithful God, as *God*: He that is God, the Lord thy God, is faithful, that is, Faithfulness is essential with *his Godhead*, that therefore they might surely build upon it as upon his *Godhead it self*. For why? Faithfulness was he *himself*, and 'tis to the Intent they might know him. Now do we not hear God proclaiming himself in a like strain, *Jehovah*, *Jehovah*, *God merciful*, &c. and this to the same Intent, that they might know him, and know what a God he is in and by these; yea, and *Truth* or *Faithfulness* being one of those very Attributes that follow *much in Truth*, as you have heard? This Place then in *Deut.* 7. 9. must refer unto that uttered before it, in *Exod.* 34. and therefore may well serve to illustrate it, which this also confirms, that *keeping Mercy for thousands*, here in *Exodus*, very well accords with *he keepeth Mercy*, &c. in *Deuteronomy*. Now then after you have read over once more, a second time, that Passage in *Deuteronomy*, *Know that the Lord*, &c. and then that Preface joined to *the faithful God*, to shew,

Part I. that he is faithful as he is God, with those other said Places pre-confirmed, then bring this of *Exodus* to it, *Jehovah, Jehovah, God merciful*, and the same Construction and Purpose will arise up out of it; that this God, as God, is a merciful, gracious God, in the same Sense and Intendment that *the faithful God* comes in in *Deut* and after comes in here, *much in Truth*; and thus utter'd to the same full Intent and Purpose, that we might know what a God God is.

And if the Parallel of these two be not sufficient to evince the same, then take another Passage in *Psal.* 86. 15. *But thou, O Lord, art a God full of Compassion, and gracious; long-suffering, and plenteous in Mercy and Truth.* He says not simply, Thou Lord art full of Compassion, but manageth it with this Reduplication, *Thou Lord art a God full of Compassion*; and so speaks no less than that as he is God, so he is merciful, *&c.* and that his Godhead is the substantial Root and Subject of his *Mercy*: And that which adds farther Confirmation is, that plenteous *in Truth* comes in, and is coupled with Mercy. They are Pairs then, and Pairs alike in this, that they are his Being, and God himself both. This for the First; which at once gives Strength to our Argument, and Illustration to this Place.

2. *Holiness* is argued to be *God himself.* And why? Because whereas in one Place it is said, he swore *by himself, having no greater to swear by*, Heb. 6. 13. (God will swear by no less than himself never) in another Place it is, *He swore by his Holiness*, Psal. 89. 35. And these two Oaths were, as to the Matter of them, of a kind, being set as Seals to the *Covenant of Grace and Mercy* both. The first was given to *Abraham, to perform the Mercy promised*, Luke 1. 72, 73. The second to *David*, (and in his Name and Type unto Christ) to ascertain *the sure Mercies* given him. And the like Instance of the same Forms of Swearing is given in the case of verifying God's Threatnings; *Amos* 4. 2. *The Lord sware by his Holiness:* And in chap. 6. 8. *The Lord hath sworn by himself:* So then *his Holiness is the Lord himself.* And we may add this Reason, because he can swear by nothing less than himself, as the Apostle affirms: And therefore swearing by his Holiness, his Holiness must be himself. The Evidence on Mercy's side, that it is himself, is equivalent. For whereas in some Places it is said, *Remember not the Sins of my Youth, according to thy Mercies, and for thy Goodness sake*, Psal. 25. 7. And *Neh.* 9. 31. *Nevertheless, for thy great Mercies sake, thou didst not consume them*, &c. when God speaking the same in *Isa.* 44. 25. *I, even I, am He* (that is, that *Jehovah merciful*) *that blotteth out thy Transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy Sins.* What in the one is *for his Goodness sake*, and *for thy great Mercy sake*, is *for his own sake* in the other. So then *Goodness*, (as all must confess) yea and *Mercy*, are *himself.* You have it again in *Daniel*'s Prayer, *chap.* 9. and there both these conjoined are brought in together, as explicatory the one of the other. In *ver.* 18, 19. *We do not present our Supplications before thee for our Righteousness, but FOR THY GREAT MERCIES. O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive, FOR THINE OWN SAKE, O my God!* What in the very Words before is *for thy great Mercies*, which is plainly *for thy Mercies sake*, is in the next Petition *for thine own sake*; and you have these two pick'd out as scatter'd, one in one Place, the other in another, and so brought together, and argued from.

I come now to a third Proof. It is certain when we hear such and such Effects, as involve his being God, and which could not be done unless he were God, and do argue him God alone, that then those Effects must proceed from the Godhead itself. And farther, unto what in the Godhead can we ascribe them, but such Properties in the Godhead, as in the Scriptures are held forth as proper to produce such or such Effects? And whilst we say such or such a Property in God did effect such or such a thing, we may warrantably also say, that his Godhead did it. The Creation of the World is a mighty Product of the Godhead, and argues him God alone: as Isa. 44. 24. *I am the Lord that maketh all things.* And we must say, that the Godhead did effect it, for *he made them by himself.* Yet further, we find the making of them attributed peculiarly unto *Power* and *Wisdom*, as proper Causes of such Effects. And withal, that *Power* of his to be stiled *his Godhead*, Rom. 1. 20. So his *Wisdom* also we find to be stiled *Infinite*, Psal. 147. 10. which is equivalent as to say, it is his *Godhead*, for that alone is *infinite* and without Bounds. Now in Correspondency unto these we find the Effects of pardoning Sin, *&c.* to involve his being God, as that which could never be done if he were not God; *Mich.* 7. 18. *Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth Iniquity*, &c. *because he delighteth in Mercy?* That Speech,

Speech, *Who is a God like unto thee?* is still used to shew he is God alone: And that as the Great God he doth such and such Works; which if he were not God he could not do; *Psal.* 77. 8. *Among the Gods there is none like unto thee, O Lord; neither are there any Works like unto thy Works.* And *ver.* 10. *For thou art great, and dost wondrous things, thou art God alone.* Now Pardon of Sin is a Work of such Wonder and Greatness, as none ever more. And you see in that Prophet how they stand agast and wondring at him, as a God so great, as God alone, none like him, in that he can pardon Sin. And if he were not so infinite a God, he could not do it; for Sin and Sins are infinite. It is his *Godhead pardons Sins*, as well as his Godhead made the World. 'Tis a Truth, though ill intended by those that spake it; *Mark* 2. 7. *Who can forgive Sins but God?* And had not Christ been God as well as Man, he could not have done it then. Now as other Works of God have some special Attribute in God, as their more proper Cause, and unto which those Works are ascribed for the Honour of that Attribute; and from thence we rightly argue, that they are his Godhead (as all those *invisible things of God* the Apostle terms his *Godhead*, Rom. 1. 20.) so as the Godhead pardons Sins: so read the Scriptures, and you find Pardon attributed specially *to Mercy in God*, as its proper Cause (I need cite no Places). And this is done *for the Glory of his Mercy and Grace.* And certainly he would not instruct us to give this Honour due to his Godhead, and in which he *as God* is so highly concerned, if *Mercy* were not his *Godhead*, as well as any other Attribute is. He will not give his Glory to what is not *himself.* We may as warrantably then say, *his Mercy and Godhead*, as the Apostle doth *his Power and Godhead.* And this as intending to make both one and the same: yea, and add *his eternal Mercy* too, for that Epithet is given to it, *Psal.* 25.

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Ps. 35. 1. as in Micah in pardoning, in deliver- ing.

And when it is pleaded to God, that he would *pardon Sins for his Mercies sake*, *Neh.* 9. 31. the plain Meaning and Resolution is this, *for thy great Mercies sake, which are thy self*, or which *are in thy self.* And there is this farther Reason to back this, and as strong as that before-mention'd was for the former, that *for his Mercy sake*, or *for the glorifying of thy Mercy.* This denotes God's utmost and most proper End for which he pardons and shews Mercy: And withal, the highest Motive by which he is moved to forgive, *&c.* And it is urged by these in their Petitions, as the most prevailing Plea they could move God withal. Now that can be no less than *himself*, whose highest and supremest End is *himself*; and he is moved to Acts of Grace and Pardon by nothing but what he is moved with *in* and *from* himself. And therefore in that 44*th* of *Isaiah*, he holds up himself to their View, *and himself alone*; *I, even I, am HE that blots out thy Transgression FOR MINE OWN SAKE:* and we are sure it is *Mercy for which* and *by which* he only is moved thereto *within himself*, and is himself. And truly doth not his thrice repeating there *(I) (I) (He)* answer to his thrice repeating *Jehovah, Jehovah, God merciful?* &c. *Exod.* 34. 6.

Arg. 6. The four first Attributes we meet with at the Entrance in this Divine Proclamation, *Exod.* 34. 6. do, in what is common to them all, prompt us with a sixth Argument, That Mercy and Grace are essential Properties of the Divine Nature.

1. The four Attributes are, *Merciful, Gracious, Long-suffering, Abundant in Goodness and Truth.* But I reckon not that of *Truth* in this Enumeration, as likewise the Psalmist doth not in his Rehearsal of the Words of this Proclamation, *Psal.* 103. 9. which is word for word the same as to these first four. They are in the Original in both Places, tho our Translators have varied their Translations of them there from what is here, yet without any material Difference, for what there they have rendred *plentcous in Mercy*, (which they have varied too in the Margin, *great in Mercy*, according to the Hebrew) here they render *abundant in Goodness.* But the Psalmist omitteth the mention of [*and in Truth*]: And the Reason of that Omission may be the same that mine is in stopping there, namely, because he takes those Attributes that purely concern Mercy, and are Branches of it; whereas *Truth* or Faithfulness comes in here, not as being any way a Branch of *Mercy*, but as *Mercy's Supervisor*, or *Mercy's Remembrancer*, to see to it, that Mercy does perform what God out of Grace hath promised and declared; according to that *Memorandum* of old *Zacharias*, deduced out of the three Names of himself, his Son *John*, and *Elizabeth*, Luke 1. 72. To perform the *Mercy* promised, and to remember his Holy *Covenant*, the Oath, *&c.*

2. That

2. That which I call *common* to all these four, from which I would deduce my Part I. Argument, are two things. First, That the *Form of Speech* they are atttributed to God in, is *Nouns*, not *Participles*, which denotes them to be *inherent Dispositions*, or *Properties* in God, which set him forth *ab intra*, or by what *are in him*, the Inwards of himself. The second is, that for the *special kind* of them, they are of those which Divines stile *the Vertues of the Divine Nature*.

3. The Argument from these, or either of them, riseth thus: 1*st*. That inherent Dispositions in God are to be accounted his Nature. 2*dly*. And specially *vertuous* Dispositions are so to be esteemed; and such Mercy and Grace are, and therefore are truly his Nature.

There are two things then to be performed by me in handling this Argument, which consists of two Branches. (1.) To establish the Proof of this one Proposition, that these four Names are attributed in such a Form of Speech as denotes them to be *inherent Dispositions*, intrinsical Properties, that are truly *in him*. (2.) That for the special kind of them, they are among the *Vertues*, or *vertuous Dispositions* of the Divine Nature of God. This Proposition hath, as you see, two Branches.

2*dly*. The second thing to be proved is the Consequence inferred from them, *viz.* 1. That if they be inherent Properties, that then they are in, and of the Divine Nature. 2. That if they be properly to be reckoned among the *Vertues* of God; and so to be esteemed, that then much more they are in and of his Divine Nature. But all these being in their Order joined and put together, will make the Argument compleat.

My Method shall be to handle the two Branches of the Proposition, and the Proof of them first, and then the two *Consequences* and the Proofs of them, whereof the first is a step to the Proof of the latter, and both center in one and the same Reason of either.

1. As for the first Branch of the Proposition or Hypothesis, it is the *Animadversion* of that learned Critick and literal Expositor, *Genebrard*, commenting upon the 8*th* or 9*th* Verse of *Psal.* 103. which I even now cited, to shew, that these *four first Attributes* that set forth *Mercy*, are word for word in the Original, the same with these four here. He beginning to expound this first word [*Merciful*] speaks on this wise of it, and the like of the rest; *It is a Noun* (says he) *not a Participle, as also those that follow; because thereby is declared, not the ACTS of God, but as it were an IMMOVEABLE QUALITY*, or that which is *perpetual in God*. And then of the other *three* that follow, for the same Reason he pronounceth the same of them: *For these are Properties* (says he) *that are innate in God: nor are they assumed by him contingently, according as Circumstances are, and give occasion*. Thus he. Wherein his Argument lies not simply in this, that for the *Form* or Manner of Speech they are *Nouns*, for there are Attributes that are Nouns, which are not Qualities, as *great*, *immense*; but taken conjunctly therewith, that *the matter of the things attributed* are *Qualities*. And whereas *Genebrard* says, that *merciful* denotes as it were *an immoveable Quality* in God; his *quasi* is but to allay and qualify our Apprehensions, that we should conceive of them with an infinite Disproportion, as they are in God, and in us Men. In us they are mere *Qualities*, differing from the *Essence* of us, as Accidents are from the Subject they are in; but in the Divine Nature there are no Accidents: And yet he is fain to make use of an Assimilation to these of Qualities, to convey their *Inherency*, as of Qualities, to our Apprehensions, as the nearest Notion to do it by: And that *however they are* [*immoveable*] Principles in the Divine Nature, as inherent Qualities use to be. This he absolutely affirms to be signified thereby; and so that Mercy is and was permanently in his Nature, whether he had ever *purposed* or shewn any Act of Mercy, yea or no; and not contingently attributed, for that he acteth mercifully. And this Difference he observed to be between such Attributes that are expressed of God by way of *Nouns* and *Qualitywise*, (which these are) and such as denote *Acts* by *Participles*.

And this being thus explained, the Foundation of the Argument proceeds from the common Use of Speech, that when Qualities are simply and absolutely attributed unto a Person, in the Form of *Nouns*, as that he is *liberal*, *holy*, *devout*, *courageous*, *bold*, and the like, that then in the wonted Acception of Speech Men commonly understand, and readily conceive, and apprehend that he is a Person of a *liberal Spirit*, an *holy* and devotional Soul, and so *addicted* inwardly, so or so disposed, inclined and affected

affected within himself; of such a Temper, Frame and Constitution of Spirit, or a Man of such inherent Principles of Heart inwardly moving him, swaying him to *liberal* and *holy Actions*: And that these are his *Indoles, Ingenium, his Spirit*, as the Scripture-Word is. And in like manner, God's Intention (who makes use of our wonted Language to make himself known unto us by, as in other his Attributes is apparent) here analogously should be to *describe* himself in such Attributions of Speech as we use when we would set forth a Person, *who* and *what he is*, and paint him forth by such Qualities and Dispositions as we know are in him. Thus God here, thereby signifying what Properties are truly and really in himself, as far as possibly they are by Words expressible to us. And as we, when we have set out a Man by such Qualities, (Good or Evil) we use to say, *that's the Man*; so we may say, *this is our God*: And indeed God himself here doth say *in terminis*, fully as much as this of himself, thrice over; *Jehovah, Jehovah, El*, God, God, God, *merciful, gracious*, &c. as if he had said, *this is your God.* And as for those other Attributions given to God, *purely after the manner of Man*, which the Opposers would choak this Truth with, they are express'd by Words that denote *Acts* only, and those but occasionally express'd; as that it *grieved him, it repented him*, and the like, as it is obvious to observe in these Scriptures where they are used. But these are solemn *Names* and *Denominations*, whereby God purposely makes a Description of himself, *what a God he is*: and accordingly they do fully answer to his Question, whenever it be demanded, *Qualis Deus sit, ac quis? who* and *what a God is he?* as plainly, and directly, and absolutely, and in the like strain of Speech, as any other of their fellow-Attributes do: as when it is said, *he is wise*, and *good*, and *Almighty*, these Words are justly judged and acknowledged to signify what a God he is in his Essence; and in like manner, these here to be a *Description* of his Nature: and that even *such a God* he is, set out by such Characters as are given him *ab intra*, as our Divines speak, that is, such as do declare what a God he is inwardly, that shew his very Inwards to us. And those Characters do express in reality *THAT* to be in his Divine Being, which answers to all these, (as I have opened it in the Explication I premitted) it being a commonly received Maxim among Divines of all sorts; *Deus dicitur quis, ac qualis est, ab eo quod natura est.*

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And for the Close of this Point, we may affirm, that this his Title of *merciful, gracious*, doth as roundly give and return an absolute Answer to any such Enquiry, what a God is he? as any other Attribute whatsoever: *Psal.* 116. 5. *Gracious is the Lord, and righteous, yea our God is merciful*: This is the Saints Vogue and Saying of him, as here he speaks *these of himself*; and it is form'd up so, as it may serve to be an Answer, (as the Apostle's Word is) an Account in Readiness to be given to any Stranger to Religion who knows not God. If an Heathen, suppose such as were in those times, or are now, should be inquisitive, and demand, *What a God is your God?* Say this to him, *Our God is merciful*, [*YEA*] *our God is merciful*, with an Emphasis. And it is as if they had said, If any would know *what our God is*, let him know him *by this*, That if he have any *internal Perfection*, (who is all Perfections, *good, holy, wise, gracious*) he is as *perfectly merciful* as any of these: And (say I) if any such an one be not satisfied with the Saints plain Verdict, given in upon their own Knowledg, let them then hear and attend to what *God himself* says of himself; and take from his own Mouth *what he is*; *Jehovah, Jehovah, God merciful and gracious.* He multiplies his substantial *Names thrice*, as well as his Attribute of Mercy four times: And why? but because if God, as God, be to be known by any thing, it is by these. The Psalmist seems to vie with all other Attributes whatsoever; yea, as it were outvies all other with this of his being *merciful*, whilst he so vehemently speaks it, [*yea*] *our God is merciful*; he sets the Crown upon the Head thereof.

There was an additional Branch in the Supposition, that these Attributes are the Characters of Vertues in the Divine Nature, or vertuous Dispositions in God, which superadds unto the former, and is a farther step towards the Proof of the Consequences therefrom, which are to follow, *viz.* that therefore they are in and of *his Divine Nature.*

All Perfections are in God, in all kinds of Perfection whatsoever. The Attributes of God are usually reduced by Schoolmen, as well as our Divines, to three Heads.

1. Such

Part I.

1. Such as are utterly incommunicable to us Creatures, as Unchangeableness, Infinity, Eternity, Ubiquity, or to be every where, and his Divine Glory. These are the absolute and metaphysical Excellencies (as I may call them) of his Divine Entity.

2. There are also all super-excelling Habilities that belong to, and are found in intelligent Creatures; as Faculties of *Understanding*, which the Psalmist says is *Infinite, knowing all things*, &c. So of a sovereign Will, which doth whatever he pleaseth in the Earth, and in the Heavens.

3. All sorts of Vertues belonging to either of these, *Perfectiones morales*; all such as are not founded upon Imperfection, (as Humility, Self-denial, *&c.* are) and when I call them Vertues, I mean *all the Excellencies of Goodness*; such as are Holiness, Righteousness, and Mercy, and Grace there; and Truth also, which is mentioned here. God ought to be every way most perfect, (say the Schoolmen) not only in the Perfections of Entity, or of natural Being, but in the Eminency of Goodness and Vertue, in that kind of Being also. Hence his Royal Titles among the Heathens were, *Deus optimus maximus*; a God that is *most great* in Power, and the Absoluteness of Being, and a God *most good*. And the Goodness therein meant was that vertuous Goodness we speak of, whereby he is towardly, and of himself, ready to do good to his Creatures, according to that of the Psalmist, *The Lord is good, and doth Good*. Of which Goodness, Mercy, and Grace, are the eminent Branches, according to that of the Psalmist, *The Lord is good, and his Mercy endureth for ever*. And therefore I rightly said, that the Vertuousness of Mercy in Scripture-Language is the Excellency of his Goodness.

And let no Man boggle at the word *Vertue*, or deem it as a lowering of the Godhead, to say he excels in Vertues; for the Scriptures ascribe this to him *in terminis*; 1 *Pet.* 2. 9. where the Apostle exhorts *to shew forth the Vertues* (so in the Original) *of him that called you*. Observe, they are the Vertues of him that calleth us, not our Vertues that are in us that are called.

And by him that called us, is meant not Christ only, and his Vertues as Man, but God the Father chiefly, to whom our Calling is there ascribed: as also in *chap.* 1. 15. it had been by the same Apostle, with the like Exhortation; for there he says, *As he that hath called you is holy, so be you holy*, &c. *as Children of your Father*. Thus in like manner, though in other Phrase, but in Substance the same, he entered his Exhortation to all sorts of Goodness, wherein we are to imitate him, and be like him, shew forth the Vertues of him that hath called you, that is, says *Gerard*, those Attributes of God, which in calling you he shewed forth: and particularly and to be sure the most eminent is that which the Apostle specially instanceth in, and in this, and in no other else: so in the following Verse, *which have now obtained Mercy*. So as in effect this Exhortation is all one with *Be ye merciful*, because your God that called you is merciful; even as in the former Exhortation he had said, *Be holy, for I am holy*: Holiness in God being the Foundation of all those Vertues in God, as well as in us; which the comparing of those Verses shews: and the Apostle also there enforceth from this, that we must be like our Father.

Su Gerard in locum.

These Vertues are to us poor Creatures, the especial Attribute we praise God for; insomuch as the Holy Ghost records it for the Title and Name of Praises, the word ἀρετὰς there used signifying at once both *Vertues* and *Praises*, as 'tis there translated: or else let those that boggle at the word *Vertues*, say of them, that in God they are the Patterns, and Samples, or Ideas of what are called *Vertues* in us; and 'tis enough to my purpose. And the Reason why that is to be acknowledged, is, There is not nor can be any Perfection which the Creature partaketh of a Likeness to God in, but it is and must be found after an infinitely more excelling manner in God, and the Nature of God, than it is in the Creature. Only take this in, that they are found in God after the manner of God, in us Creatures after the Mode or Manner of Creatures, with an infinite Difference.

Non tam virtutes quam ideæ virtutum in Deo sunt: *Keckerman Syst. Theol. c.* 4.

Observe how in the forming this Argument I put in this Limitation: There is no Perfection in Man, *in which he partaketh of a Likeness to God*; but the Perfection thereof is in God. And the Reason of this my Limitation is, because there are two sorts of gracious Perfections in us, whereof some indeed are not in God, though in Christ they are found; as Humility, Lowliness of Heart, Submission of our Wills. These are not by way of Likeness to the like which correspond in God, but by way of

of Applyings of the Soul unto God, or by way of Subjection of the Creature to such other Attributes in God as are incommunicable; as his Soveraignty, Greatness, absolute Will, *&c.* And in that respect it is they are reckoned Parts of the Divine Nature, because they give the greatest Glory to the Divine Nature, in the way now specified. But as for such Perfections as are said to bear a Likeness with what is like unto what is attributed unto God; of them all we may and must say, that there is no Perfection of such in the Creature, but it is much more in God, which is the *major* or first Proposition. And this doth in a more special manner hold true in such Vertues, or such spiritual Graces, in which we are said to be like him; and wherein he is expressly made our Pattern in the Scriptures. And of those it must be acknowledged, that if they be properly in the Creature, then they are more properly in God; of all which the Holiness and Purity of God's Nature is the Root, as being in himself first, and so becomes the first Rule and Measure of such Vertues in us.

And that this is particularly true of this Vertue of *Mercy*, (the thing in hand) those Speeches of Christ (who came out of the Bosom of the Father, and hath declared him both in his Nature and in his Will) do uncontroulably evince: *Luke* 6. 27, 28. *Love your Enemies, do good to them that hate you.* And *ver.* 35. *Love your Enemies, and ye shall be the Children of the Highest; for he is kind to the Evil and the Unthankful.* And in the Close of all, *ver.* 36. *Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful:* [*As*,] that is, after the Image of God; as *Col.* 3. 10. *Put on the new Man, after the Image of him that created him:* Whereof Mercy and Love are in the 12*th* Verse following mentioned to be an eminent Piece; *Put on therefore (as the Elect of God, holy and beloved) Bowels of Mercies, Kindness, Humbleness of Mind, Meekness, Long-suffering:* and then add those other Speeches of our Lord in *Mat.* 5. which correspond with those recited out of *Luke* 6. Mat. 5. *ult. Be you perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect.* He speaks of the Perfection of Vertues, and specially of that of *Mercy:* for unto Works of Mercy unto Enemies, *&c.* he had particularly exhorted, *ver.* 44. *But I say unto you, 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.* And this he exhorts to by the Instance of God's Mercy to the worst Sinners; *ver.* 45. *That ye may be the Children of your Father which is in Heaven; for he maketh his Sun to rise on the Evil, and on the Good; and sendeth Rain on the Just, and on the Unjust:* and thereupon exhorts us to be perfect in that Grace, upon this very Ground; because it is a Perfection in God first, and originally in him; and that we have thereby the Likeness of the Perfection of our Father. This for the Proof of the two Branches of the Proposition.

2. I come to the Proof of the Consequence in the second Place proposed, from both, *viz.* That if these Attributes do denote inherent Dispositions, Properties, or permanent Qualities, and not Acts only, especially such Qualities as are *Vertues* in God, that then they are of the Divine Nature it self. I put both into one, because the Reason of either centers much in one, altho the Reason of the latter greatly adds Force to the other.

And that Reason will at once serve both for a Proof of the Consequence, and also for a Caution in this Case, that whilst we are forced to use the term of *Qualities* to express them by, to relieve our Apprehensions of them, (whereas indeed they are not such Qualities as are in the Creature, and yet denoting Inherency and Permanency of like Properties in God, and not of Acts only) they can be no other but his Divine Nature.

And the Reason is founded on this, That in God there are no Accidents (and such those in us Creatures are) *inherent* or *permanent* in him: And therefore these Attributes denoting Properties, like to Qualities in us that are inherent and permanent, they therefore can be no other than the Divine Nature it self; which is confirmed by the infinite Difference that is and must be acknowledged to be between the Creatures and God blessed for ever, in this respect: That the inherent Qualities in us Men or Angels, be they never so excellent, yet they differ from the Substance or Being of the Persons in whom they are, as Accidents do from their Subject; and they are said to be added to perfect and adorn the Subjects in which they reside. And altho the most eminent of Creature-Qualifications do vastly differ from the Substances or Essences they are in, yet there are some of them that so immediately flow from

 their

Part I. their Substances, and are so proper and specifically peculiar to them, that if we should suppose they could be separate from that Subject or Person, the very Nature and proper Being of that Subject would withal cease to be what it was. 'Tis an assured Maxim, *Proprietatum negatio est naturarum deletio*; as to deny the Faculty of Reason it self, to be in one of Mankind, is to degrade a Man as a Man, and blot him quite out of the Catalogue or Roll of Men, and to set him down a Brute: Of which 'tis said, *Psal.* 32. *They want Understanding.* So that commonly we allow the term of *Natural* unto such *Properties*, and call them essential, or belonging to the Essence, although not the Essence it self; but yet they rise to no higher Dignities than of Faculties and qualifying Abilities, which are at best but Accidents, tho of another kind than ordinary Accidents are of, and therefore called Natural, because they are inbred, inlaid, and blended with the inward Constitution and Temper of the Substance it self. But on the contrary, when we speak of God, and say, that Mercy is a Property, and of his Nature, our Intentions, and God's also in so speaking, reach infinitely higher, and intend thereby that it is his very Divine Nature, as far as it is by Words expressed to us; even as Eternity and Power are said to be his Godhead, *Rom.* 1. And the Reason thereof is, because God and the essential Nature of God, is perfected by nothing but himself, and so not by any thing differing from his own Being: for then his *Godhead*, as he is God, should be imperfect, and needed something besides himself to add Perfection and Ability unto it, which the Scripture utterly denies of him; *Acts* 17. that *he needeth not any thing*: And therefore all such Attributes, and this of *merciful* being in Tenor of Speech given to him, after the manner of the Attribution of inherent *Qualities*, for our Conception sake, are to be understood to be his Divine Nature, in a transcendent manner, unconceivable by us.

Moreover, take in this for a second Caution also, That when we call both these, or any like Qualities, in Men or Angels, as also these Attributes in God, *Natural*, or *Nature* in either, the word *Nature* or *Natural* must be taken and understood with an infinitely vast differing respect in the one and in the other: For these Qualifications (thus said to be natural to us Angels and Men) are but at the best the *Shadow* of what is substantially *natural* in God: and accordingly *that Mercifulness* which is in Man, is but the *imperfect Shim* of that *essential Mercy* which is in the Divine Being. And hence it is so far remote from God's being called *merciful, righteous, after the manner of Man*, (as those other Attributes, the opposite Instances, which are stiled but *ad similitudinem effectus*) that to the contrary, these inherent Qualities in Man, (take them in their Perfection) are said to be *after God*, Ephes. 3. 24. And therefore they are *propriissimè, most properly in God first*: yea and in *Truth* only in God (as Goodness is said to be) and but similitudinarily, and by way of Semblance in Man. And this by way of Caution also.

But, *2dly.* I urge this Reason further, upon and from the Account of that Additional, *viz. That Mercy and Grace are to be reckoned among the highest Vertues that are in God.* Now true and perfect Vertues are *inherent* in that Person that deserves the Stile of *Vertuous*: And if they be true, they are *permanent*, and constantly abiding in him: yea, and the *Perfection* of them lies in the inward Disposition and Addictment of the Mind, as the Root of the Actings, or performing vertuous Things: tho they, as being the Fruits thereof, have the Name of Mercy, and their due Valuation: but still that inward Principle of those Actings much more and above all, so far as they have been inbred, and by Nature found in any Person, that is the Height of their Perfection. And therefore in God, if they be true and perfect Vertues indeed, as they must be supposed to be, they must be all these; both inward Dispositions, strong Inclinations, Propensions unto merciful Acts, and seated in his Nature, and to be his Nature. And to be sure God is not *perfected* (as Man) or grows up in Vertue by *Acquisition*, or by the Increase of Habits that use to be acquired by Use, Practice, and Exercise: This were to lower him infinitely yet more, so to affirm. And therefore if Vertues be at all in him, and these Vertues, (as we have proved them to be) then they must be acknowledged his Divine Nature, and his Perfections by Nature.

I shall cast in a *Coronis* to all, and which will without Contradiction confirm all that I have hitherto said in this third Argument: It is those Words which our Lord hath made the Conclusion of his Exhortation unto us, to be merciful, in that

that 5th of *Matthew*, last Verse; *Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect.* Book I.

1. You see here is a *Perfection* attributed to God, which Man is exhorted to imitate: *Be ye perfect, as your Father in Heaven is perfect.* God's Perfection is the original Pattern, and Man's Imitation that is to be the Copy to that Pattern; and God's Perfection is to be understood after the manner wherein God is, or ought to be understood to be perfect, as a God; or as the Evangelist *Luke* upon that Occasion entitles him, *the Highest*; and Men, as Men in their kind, as *Children of the Highest*; so in *ver.* 35. And he therefore speaks it of such a Perfection in God, as is of the highest kind of Perfection proper and essential unto God. And to be sure, there are some Attributes of his that are the essential Perfections of his Divine Nature, and then *this* spoken of by Christ's own arguing, is among them that are of the highest Rank.

And, 2. It proves to be *this* so rich and precious Attribute of *Mercy*, which Christ intended here; as appears both by the Interpretation, that by comparing Christ's Discourse about this of our being merciful, in those two Evangelists, is apparently given of it. For whereas the one says, *Mat.* 5. *ult. Be you perfect, as your Father in Heaven is perfect:* The other says, *Luke* 6. 36. *Be ye merciful, as your heavenly Father is merciful.* And each come in as the last Close and Conclusion of Christ's Exhortation unto Mercy in either Place. So then Mercy is one of the highest Perfections that perfect him that is *the Highest*, or the most perfect in all Perfections.

3. This Perfection of Mercy must necessarily be understood to be intrinsical to him, and so his Nature. For nothing extrinsical or outward to God, can add any Perfection to him. *His own Works*, be they of Mercy, and never so excelling, add nothing to him: he was as perfect a God before he made the Worlds, as since: And what is it can be his Perfection but what is and was then in himself, and of himself? who of himself is the Fulness of all Being: and if any thing added the least Perfection to him, he must be said to be of himself, and in himself, imperfect: And Mercy being so plainly, expressly, in particular, thus stiled his *Perfection*, it must be a Property in himself, and of himself; and without which he would not be so perfect as he is said to be: Yea, we may upon this Ground further say, *that without it he were not God.* Let the Opposites bring all their Distinctions and wonted Pleas to make void this so great a Truth, and you will see them all melt before this Speech, as Wax when it comes unto the Fire, and be confuted in every Part thereof.

1*st.* They distinguish and say, God is merciful *quoad effectus*; in and for his doing Works of Mercy, and not because he is of a merciful Nature, and inward Disposition of Mercy.

(1.) Consider, that Man is here exhorted to be merciful, as God is: and tho he in his Exhortation mainly instanceth in Works of Mercy, which Man should perform, yet I demand, Doth not the Exhortation chiefly intend, that Men should be moved by an inward Principle of Mercy, (compared therefore to *Bowels*, which are called the *Inwards*) that should move the Heart to Works of Mercy? *Col.* 3. 12. *Put on therefore (as the Elect of God, holy and beloved) Bowels of Mercies, Kindness, Humbleness of Mind, Meekness, Long-suffering.* And when Christ pronounceth that Blessing upon their Souls, *Mat.* 5. *Blessed are the Merciful*, &c. doth not the word ἐλεήμονες import *inward Mercy* and *Pity* more than *outward?* as *Spanhem* hath observed upon it. And if God were not in like manner filled with merciful Dispositions moving thereto in his shewing Mercy, why is his Mercy set before them as the excellent Pattern, when yet according to them it reacheth not to this, to be *a Pattern of inward Mercy?*

(2.) If God were not thus merciful *ab intra*, his Inwards moving him thereto, do not they that affirm this make Man more merciful than they would have God to be; seeing Man is merciful with an inward Affection of Bowels, besides his Works of Mercy; but God should be merciful only *quoad effectus*, only because he doth Acts of Mercy without the Affection or inward Principle of Mercy?

And, 2*dly.* Whereas they say, Mercy is spoken of God, after the manner of Man, or in like Sense only as that God is said to grieve, repent, *&c.* But, 1. Here in Christ's Exhortation on the contrary, Man is called upon to be merciful after *the manner of God*; *Be ye merciful as your Father is merciful.* And, 2. If it were otherwise according to that Opinion they have of God, Man should only be exhorted here

Part I. here to exercise and put forth outward Acts and Effects of Mercy; for God, say they, doth only so. Again, 3. That Mercy which is there exhorted to, is that which is the Perfection of Mercy: And certainly to be merciful inwardly, and of a merciful Nature, is that which is the Life, the Height, the Perfection of Mercy.

I finally close up all with this summary Argument; *That Grace and Vertue*, that in Man is a Perfection, and a piece of the Divine Nature in him, and Likeness to what is in God, (he being *created after the Image of God in Truth*, as the Apostle's Words are) and *which same* is likewise attributed to God, as a *Perfection* of him, and a Pattern to us of the same; *that* must be acknowledged to be in God, as his Divine Nature and Being. But such this Grace or Vertue of Mercy is; it is in Man a piece of his Divine Nature, created after the Image of God in Truth; and it is ascribed unto God, as a Perfection of his Godhead, and made the Pattern of our Perfection: Therefore as it is attributed to God, it must be his Divine Nature.

CHAP. XII.

Some of the principal Objections, why Mercy should not be a natural *Attribute of the Divine Nature, answered out of the Proofs and Parallels in the foregone Chapter.*

THE Proofs in the foregone Chapters, especially the paralleling of *Power* with *Mercy*, and then of those other Attributes, *Grace*, &c. as they confirm the *thing*, so they will most aptly serve to answer the greatest Objections that are alledged against it.

Object. 1. The first *Objection* lies thus, That is not natural wherein God is arbitrary and free in working any Effects thereof, or in the using of it, and puttings of it forth: but such is Mercy, as even in these very Passages unto *Moses* which are alledged; *I will be merciful to whom I will be merciful*; which is adjoined to this Proclamation. Compare *Exod.* 33. 19. *I will proclaim the Name of the Lord before thee, and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew Mercy on whom I will shew Mercy.* In brief, That they say is not natural, the Working and Operation of which depends upon God's free Will.

Deus non utitur naturalibus, *say they.*

Answ. The Answer is ready, and clear, and home, as it may be taken from the Instance of *God's Power*; for according to this Rule and Measure, Power it self in God should not be a natural Attribute; for *all things* (which he worketh by his Power) *he worketh after the Counsel of his own Will*, Ephes. 1. 11. (and therefore it is he doth not all he can do, *Mat.* 3. 9. *ch.* 26. 53.) which is the same with the Exercise of his *Mercy*; of which it is in like manner said, they are *according to the good Pleasure of his Will*, again and again, *Ephes.* 1. 5. His Will keeps the Operations both of *Mercy* and *Power*, as it were under Lock and Key, and lets them out as God himself pleaseth. Yea, and further, you have both of these at once put together: and, as you have heard, Mercy and Power *in themselves* parallel'd, they are so in *their Operations* too, as being like Instances of this very thing, as appears in the Apostle's Allegation, and putting into one those two Speeches of God; *Rom.* 9. 17, 18. *For this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my* [*POWER*] *in thee, and that my Name might be declared throughout the Earth: Therefore hath he Mercy on whom he will have Mercy, and whom he will he hardneth.* So then both are said to depend, and to be guided in their Actings by his Will alike. Again, look, that although the Acting and Effect of Power is but voluntary, yet still that Effect proceeds from that *Vis*, Force, Strength, or Power, that is natural to God, and which in God is infinite; which Power sets it self to the effecting every thing, only his Will still orders that putting forth of it, where, and when, and the Measure of it. And therefore it is all one to say, *Who hath resisted his Will?* as the Apostle; as to say, *Who hath hardned himself against his Power?* as in *Job* 9. 4. for his natural Power immediately is that in him which exerts it self in every such Act of his Will, and without that nothing would be done, or hath been done. And in parallel unto this, the Manifestation of Mercy, in all the Works of our Salvation, depends upon his

good

good Pleasure, and yet in and unto the effecting or endowing us with any and every Benefit or saving Work thereof, the whole of the Riches of his Grace that is intrinsical to him, doth immediately put forth themselves; and without a Mercy so infinite and natural to God, none of them would be bestowed or effected. Moreover, look, as if you should deny Power to be in God essentially, because it is put forth by his Will and Pleasure, and affirm it to be but a metaphorical Attribute, you should thereby make him no God at all; for a weak God is no God: So if you take Mercy from him, denying it in the Reality and Principle of it to be in him, you despoil and rob him of his greatest Riches, and make but a poor God of him to all that shall call upon him, and so in effect no God at all, either to be feared or worshipped.

The Mistake of the Argument proceeds on this, that because *Acts* or shewing of Mercy do hold of his Will, therefore his very being merciful, the Principle of those *Acts*, must do so too. We grant his acting graciously to be arbitrary in him, and from his Will, but not his being *merciful* and *gracious*, that depends not on his Will, though with his Will; that depends not upon an *Act* of his Will, *though it be with Will.*

But the true Resolve of all is, that indeed his *Will* (take it for the Power of willing, or that whereby he willeth) is the very immediate Subject of Mercy, which Mercy, as it is in his Will, is but a Propensenes, a strong and ready Inclination in his Will, that moves and sways him to those merciful *Actings*, which is not from an *Act*, but an inherent Disposition in his Will, and natural to it, that it should be readily so disposed.

Object. 2. A second Objection is, that Mercy imports and ariseth from the Weakness and Deficiency in Man's *Nature*, as from an Apprehension that Men themselves being subject to the like Miseries, shew Mercy to the miserable, and so Mercy is always joined with a *Passion*, (which we call *Compassion*) *Trouble* or *Grief*, in the Heart of a Man that is merciful; all which Infirmities and Passions Man only, not God, is said to be subject to with difference from God, *Acts* 14. 15.

Misericordia est compassio super alienâ miseriâ, & in tantũ miseretur in quantũ dolet. Aquinas 22. q. 30. Act. 2d.

Answ. This is utterly an heathenish Imagination, and had its Original from them. *Aristotle* says, that ‖ *it is untouth, not agreeing to, or becoming the Being of God, to say he loves.* He thought it stood not with his Greatness, nor was compatible with it. And *Epicurus* before him said, *The Divine Nature was not penetrable by Mercy or Pity, because these find no Entrance into the Hearts of Men, but through some Defect or Want.* I may say of them in this Point, (as Christ of the Saddu e denying the Resurrection) *They erred, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the Power of God.* For whereas they would that *Mercy and Pity* should spring out of Weakness and Deficiency, as in Man it doth since his Fall, or at least is always accompanied with it; such as *Grief* and *Trouble*, and the like Passions: On the perfect contrary in God it ariseth from and is accompanied with his infinite *Power*, *All-sufficiency*, and *Blessedness*. And by how much he is above all and utterly uncapable of any Defect, the more able he is to succour and relieve us in Misery, and also by so much the more his glorious Will is the more disposed and propense to Mercy. Kings who live in an higher Region, and are not subjicible to the common Gusts of innumerable Miseries, which their Subjects in the lower Regions are yet out of the Greatness and Generosity of their Spirits are often-times mercifully disposed, and forbearing unto those that apply themselves to them under such Miseries which themselves never had, and of which they have not the least Apprehension that they shall fall under them. The Lion's Strength and Courage makes him sometimes to spare a poor Lamb's Life that lies prostrate at his Feet; which holds a Semblance of what is in Kings, and in God more transcendently, tho both these indeed are but imperfect *Shims* and *Glimmerings* of what to an Infinity is supereminently in God. I betake my self, for the Proof of this, to *Moses* his unfolding the Mystery of God's joining Power and Mercy: *Let the Power of my Lord be great as that thou hast spoken, The Lord is long-suffering and of great Mercy, forgiving Iniquity and Transgression: Forgive,* I beseech thee, *this People*; which is as to say, Let thy Mercy which is thy *Power*, or which proceeds from and is strengthned by the Almighty *Power* that is in thee, be shown in pardoning: or, *thou, O God, which declarest thy Almighty Power chiefly in shewing Mercy and Pity, forgive thy People.*

‖ ἄτοπον γὰρ οὐ ἐν ἔτι τῆς φαίνεται λόγῳ διὰ. Aristot. mag. Moral. lib. 2. cap. 11. Tom. 3. oper. Edit. *Du Val*, Paris 1629.

But

Part I. But be it so, that Want, and Weakness, and Passion, as in Man, are Furtherances unto and Companions of, yea and the very rise of Mercy in Man; yet that the same must hold in God so as he cannot be inwardly in his Soul merciful, unless he be merciful from the same Principle that Man is, must be denied. How oft is it said, that *God is not merciful as Man is*, but infinitely beyond all that the Thoughts and Apprehensions of Man can reach to, either in his own Mercies he thinks himself to shew, yea or that he is not able to think what Mercy is, or what it should be in God, they are of such an infinite Extent beyond his possible Imaginations, *as Heaven is above the Earth?* Shall then Man's Mercies, or the Imperfections and Passions of them be made the measure of what *Mercy* it self is in God? God forbid. Man loveth not without a Passion, and therefore shall not God who is Love (because he loves not as Man doth) be said properly to love his Creatures out of a pure and perfect Principle of Love in himself, as truly as to love himself or his Son? It is said, *the Weakness of God is stronger than Man:* and shall the Weakness of Man be the measure to him that is the God and *Strength of* Israel, which in 1 *Sam.* 15. 29. is so highly protested against? *The Strength of* Israel *is not as Man*, &c. O that ever the Weakness of the Creature should have been thought to have been a Rule for the *Strength of* Israel!

Again, in what doth the true Substance and Reality of Mercy lie and consist? Not in an Apprehension of ones own self to be subject or exposed to the like Distresses, or in being *troubled* and *grieved*, as the Consequents of that Apprehension, especially if he cannot help. These are but accidental unto Mercy, and but as it is in such or such a Subject that is subjected unto Infirmities, as in a Man it is who alone is capable of those forementionʼd Passions: For Mercy, and that more truly, is in Christ *glorified*, yea in the *Angels and Spirits of just Men made perfect*; and therefore perfect in this Vertue, but without any of these Passions and Disturbances as Requisites to move them to be merciful. In what doth the Substance, yea the Height of Mercy lie and consist, but in a Readiness and Promptness of *Affection in the Will of God to relieve and succour those that are in Misery whom he loves*, joined with *Fulness of Power to relieve them?* Which latter Clause [*with Fulness of Power*] doth especially render him most truly and highly merciful.

I shall further proceed to shew how the Parallel of those other Attributes, *Grace*, *Goodness* and *Truth*, as well as with Mercy, will abundantly put to Silence another Objection.

Object. 3. How can that (say they) be an essential Attribute in God's Nature, which if Man had never been miserable, had not been in God? For Mercy speaks a relation unto Sin and Misery; and if it depend on such a Condition of ours, or the Creatures being first miserable, then it must be in God but contingently and occasionally, and not naturally.

Answ. The Answer is from what the Parallel of those four Attributes afford, as likewise many other Attributes which might be instanced in.

1. *Power or Might in God* relateth unto external Effects, as unto the Creation of this Frame of Heaven and Earth, *&c.* Rom. 1. 20. Now before God ever made any of them, or suppose he never had made any, shall we say he had not essential *Power* inherent in him, whereby he was able to make them, and in respect thereunto was truly a God Almighty?

2. Again, his Power relates unto all he is still able to make or effect, and not to be confined unto what he hath done. There are an Infinity of things *possible* to be done by him, which his Power will never produce, but shall remain in a State of mere *Possibility*; and yet his being stiled Almighty, includes a Power to be in him, in respect to those, as when 'tis said, *God is able to raise up out of these Stones Children to* Abraham, *Mat.* 26. 53. *Luke* 19. 40. *Mark* 14. 36. His Divine *Ability* is expresly said to extend to these, and shall we affirm he had no such radical Power in respect to these, because he will never put it forth in bringing them to Existence? nay it must be said, that things thus possible are only and merely called such in respect of the Power of his Nature, but things which he causeth actually do respect his Will and good Pleasure joining with the Power of his Nature; *Psal.* 115. 3. *But our God is in the Heavens, he hath done whatsoever he pleased.*

3. In like manner the Parallel of *Grace* and *Goodness* evinceth the same. Had not God been good, (who is Goodness it self, both as he is God, and in respect of a communicative

municative Disposition in himself, who is the Fountain of Goodness) altho yet he had never made a Creature to communicate any good things to? Surely yes. Then likewise he is *gracious*, tho his Pleasure had been never to have had one Angel or Man existed whom he would be gracious unto. The Root *of this Matter had been in him*, tho never no Effect or Fruit of it had appeared above ground. His Grace must be acknowledged to respect the Creature only, for he is no way gracious to himself; and would not he thus have been, though no Creature had been? Must he of necessity have made Creatures, if he would be truly gracious? A Man is to be acknowledged one of a liberal Disposition, who is so in his natural Temper, tho he lives alone in a desolate Wilderness uninhabited, where there are no Poor, nor any one Person to bestow his Alms, or communicate his Riches to. The great Element of Fire is Fire, and ready to burn, tho it never yet had any Fuel to prey upon. The like is to be said of Truth, *God cannot lie*, Tit. 1. 2. and 'tis impossible, *Heb.* 6. 8. 'tis contrary to his Nature, and therefore *Truth* (the contrary thereto) is his Nature; and this had been so eternally, altho he had never given forth one Word of Promise or Threatning, or the like, for the Performance of which he might have been stiled True. Now yet it is apparent it was purely at his *Will* and *Pleasure*, whether to have given forth any such Word or not. And thus God also was truly and really *merciful*, and ready to forgive, altho he never had pardoned one Sin, nor ever had promised Pardon to any one Sinner. What need we say more?

Object. 4. If any further object that word [*merciful*] (רחם *Racham*) here used is a Metaphor taken from *Bowels*; but God hath no Bowels, and therefore it is but a metaphorical Attribute. I answer;

Answ. 1. That some, as *Polanus*, render the word רחם *Racham*, *diligere, to love*, to be the Root of it; and to be sure *Love in God* is no metaphorical Attribute.

Answ. 2. According to the measure of this Argument, because this Almighty Power or Strength in God is expressed by an *Arm*, as *Psal.* 103. 13. *Luke* 1. 51. or that his *all-seeing Knowledg* is set forth by an *Eye*, and Eyes that run thorow the Earth, 2 *Chron.* 16. 9. *that behold the Nations*, Psal. 66. 7. yea, *behold all things in Heaven and Earth*, Psal. 113. 6. Doth this put any Prejudice that *Power* and Knowledg in him signified thereby should not be essential? No more doth the ascribing *Bowels* to him exclude *Mercy* from being such. God speaks to us hereby in our own *puerilis*, in our own childish Language, so to affect us the more, yet so as there is substantial Reality in his Heart answering to, yea transcending what Metaphors can express. And should he speak these heavenly *things* in their own Language, we could not receive them, as Christ tells us, *John* 3. 12.

And certainly the Psalmist's Argument is so convincing, that as himself prefaceth of it, none of the most brutish *among the Heathens* should be able to gainsay it, *Psal.* 94. 9. namely, why God as God must have an Omniscience or an All-knowing Power within himself, which the Scripture expresses by an Ear, or an Eye: *He that planted the Ear, shall not he hear? He that framed the Eye, shall not he see? He that teacheth Man Knowledg, shall not he understand?* This as certainly holds undeniable in this Point of Mercy; *Shall* not he that planted the Inwards of us Men, and Bowels of Mercy and Pity in them, a natural *Storge* in Parents to their Children, and hath *taught us to love*, 1 Thess. 4. 9. and be good, and kind, and merciful to one another after his own Example: *Col.* 3. 12, 13. *Put on (as the Elect of God) Bowels of Mercies, Kindness, Humbleness of Mind, Meekness, Long-suffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another*, &c. Shall not he have eminently and transcendently the Perfections of all these towards them he intends to love and make his Children? *Like as a Father pitieth his Children, so doth the Lord them that fear him*, Psal. 103. 13. The Foundation of the Psalmist's Reasoning lies in this, that it is impossible any Excellency should be in the Creature, of which God is and must be the Author, but the same must be virtually and in an higher Reality in God himself. 'Tis true indeed, that God hath neither Eyes nor Bowels of Flesh, as *Job* says of him, and to him; *Hast thou Eyes of Flesh, or seest thou as Man sees?* that is, by the means of such Organs or Instruments of that Sense; *Job* 10. 4. So say I, *Hath he Bowels of Flesh?* that is, such dolorous painful Pangs of Grief and Trouble as we frail Men clothed with Flesh use to have, when moved with Pity? or is he *merciful only* as Man is? *Wo were then to us. I am God and not Man*, says he, *Hos.* 11. 9. and he speaks it upon occasion of his being moved to Mercy, as *ver.* 8. and

yet

Part I. yet he professeth himself moved to Mercy as God, tho not *as Man*; and yet as infinitely beyond us as the Godhead; from whence he argues his transcending Mercy exceedeth what is in Man as that Speech insinuates. So as whilst in *ver.* 8. he speaks of himself after the manner of Men, as of his *Heart* and *Bowels being turned within him*; yet there in the *9th* he avoweth of himself, that he is moved hereunto *as God*, and not as Man is; in so high sublime a way as is proper to him alone as God, and yet with a Mercy (represented by Bowels and Heart) which is as infinite as his Godhead is, yea it is his very Godhead. For so that Speech that he assumes to himself, and this which I have brought forth by way of Answer to an Objection, I might have improved into two strong Arguments for the thing in hand, that Mercy is substantially and properly in him.

Answ. 3. That *Bowels*, tho a Metaphor, yet in its Analogy is peculiarly fitted and adapted singularly to express what the inward natural Disposition of any one is. For,

Ratium, quasi visceratus, misericordiâ, scil. naturali amore & affectu prosequens. Genebrard upon the word in Ps. 103. 13.

1*st*. It imports a *natural Affection*, for it is put to express that which we call Storge, or the natural Affection that is in Parents.

And, 2*dly*. With all the most Inwardness and Depth of that *Affection*. The *Eye* that served to express God's *Omniscience*, the *Arm* his *Omnipotence*; these are *outward* Parts: but the *Bowels* are of all most *inward*, and therefore of all other speak what is most inward in God himself, and imports a Principle of being merciful moved from within himself.

CHAP. XIII.

That in every Object there is some special Attractive to affect the Faculties and Principles in Man's Heart, to excite them to act on it. That this General Maxim holds true, as to all the main Acts of Faith, for Forgiveness: And that the Mercies of God have the most proper Influence into the Faith of Forgiveness of Sins, of all other Attributes in God. This Assertion carried thorow, and made good, in all the eminent Acts of Faith.

WE all know and acknowledg, that in the Nature of the thing the whole Being and Subsistence of all sorts of *Mercies* vouchsafed to us, hold of those *Mercies* that are in God; so as were it not that Mercy is with him, our Faith would be in vain, and we should have no such things or Subject-matter at all for us to believe. But that which I endeavour to demonstrate is, that take all sorts of Mercies with the particular Promises made of them, as they come to be made Objects of our Faith, and in that respect the original Mercies in God's Nature are the great Fundamental which doth give and contribute an *esse credibile*, a *Credibility*, or a *Believeableness* unto all the Promises of Mercies, and a Hopefulness to obtain them: So as not only an Apprehension that God who is faithful in his Nature, hath made such Promises, and useth to bestow such Mercies, but the Thought that there are such Riches of Mercy in his Heart and Nature plentifully and naturally to afford them, wonderfully addeth to the *Credibility* and *Believeableness* (as I call it) of those Promises and particular Mercies, to be derived from that Fountain which we need or desire. For as all particular Mercies promised have their Dependance upon the Mercies of God's Nature, *in esse rei*, in the Nature of the thing, (for they have their Being thence, as from the *Father* of them); so further, our Knowledg and Apprehensions, that such a Treasure of Grace is in his Nature, mightily strengtheneth, and encourageth, and enhanceth Faith in us. There is that in all other *Objects*, whether of Sense or Knowledg, which Philosophers term *Motivum objectum, viz.* that *thing* or Consideration in the Object proposed or apprehended, which is apt, and fitted most properly to move, affect, and make Impression upon that Faculty, Principle or Habit, that God hath made for it, and suted to it; as that beautiful Colours should affect the Sight or Fancy. The like by Analogy holds in the Objects of Divine Faith. And what those Naturalists term *the objective Motive*, or that which in the *Object moveth*, that in Divine Objects proposed to Faith, the Holy

Quod constituit objecta divina in esse credibile: nam credibile, ut credibile, est ratio objectiva. Suarez de fide.

Ghost

Ghost (as we shall see) using the same Language, stiles *Persuasivum fidei*, the Persuasives of Faith. There are some special things in these Objects that chiefly persuade the Soul unto believing them, or bringing the Heart over to believe, and so to embrace them accordingly. We find in Scripture the great Act of believing to be from our being first *perswaded*; as *Heb.* 11. 13. *Having seen the Promises afar of*, (there's the Object) *they were perswaded* ('tis said) *and embraced them.* And again, the same word is used of *Abraham*'s Faith; *Being perswaded*, &c. *Rom.* 4. 21. The Schoolmen do therefore accurately enquire, what in Divine Objects principally it is that constitutes them *in esse credibile*, or that gives their Being of Credibility to them. Book I.

To bring this down to our purpose: From hence it follows, That what thing or things in Divine Objects revealed, are found to be the most fit and powerful in the way of Object, to make a Perswasion in the Heart to a believing or Embracement of them, when they are proposed to us; that thing or those things we must acknowledg to give unto them their *esse credibile*, or their Being of Believeableness. Let us therefore now consider if that the View of the Sight, and Light of the *Mercies* in God's Nature, let into the Soul, and shining upon the Promises of Mercy, like as the Light upon Colours, do not superadd a Lustre and Life upon them, and impregnate them, as the Sun doth the Plants, and all things below that have either Life, Spirit, or Virtue in them. Let us try if the Thoughts of these Mercies in God will not put Life into, and quicken the Soul of him that views them together with those Promises; yea, and contribute so much to *perswade* to the Faith of them, altho the Promises be but *indefinite Promises* or Declarations of God's Will touching the Forgiveness of Sins, altho these Promises be indefinite (I say) as to Persons, not naming who, nor excluding any; yet let us, if the Thoughts of God's Mercies do not contribute and bring with the Consideration of them the most of what is or may be supposed *Motivum*, or *Persuasivum fidei*, *that which may perswade or draw out a Faith* on such Promises. The Truth of this will best appear by a Survey made of what are the most eminent Acts of Faith. There are three more eminent Acts of this Faith for Forgiveness, and all other spiritual Blessings.

1. There is a Sight of the things promised, or to be believed, but then that Sight must be such a Sight as hath an ὑπόστασις or Subsistence of the things promised, made, and given to the Heart of a Believer, together with the Proposal of them.

2. There is a discerning of a Goodness in them, to allure the Will and Affections to embrace them, and cleave to them.

3. There is a trusting on God, and a relying on him, for the Performance of them.

I need not quote Scriptures that these are the Acts of Faith. Two of them, *viz. Sight* and *Embracing* them, you have seen in the forementioned *Heb.* 11. 13. The other of *Trusting* you meet with every where almost where Faith is spoken of. I shall carry the Reasons of the present Assertion thorow each of these three Acts, and shew how it holds good in each of them.

1st. The first Act of Faith is a Sight of the things believed, with a real *Subsistence* given to them in the Soul until the time of Performance. Now the Mercies in God apprehended, do give the most real Subsistence unto Forgiveness, and all other Benefits whatsoever.

The Nature of Faith requires that its Object be presented to it, not with bare Knowledg thereof only, but with a *Subsistence* and Reality given to it in the Heart of a Believer; for Faith is defined to be the ὑπόστασις, *the Substance* or Subsistence *of things hoped for*, Heb. 11. 1. and likewise *the Evidence or Sight of things* tho *not seen.* For which compare *Heb.* 11. *v.* 1. *v.* 19, 27. God in the mean while, during the Space and Time that comes between the Promise and the Performance it self, is pleased to vouchsafe an afore-hand Image and substantial Impress or ὑπόστασις, to the end to support the Heart. Look, as the Son of God, the second Person, being at last actually to be made Flesh, it was meet and proper for him in the mean time, while he was but in the Promise, that he above any other of the Persons should be the Person who should vouchsafe these precursory forehand Apparitions unto the Fathers of the Old Testament, which gave an ὑπόστασις unto their Faith, until the great Promise of his Coming in the Flesh, personally united, should be performed: So in some Analogy it is in the Matter before us. I have alledged this but by way of Illustration only of God's gracious Dispensation to his People in respect of a Subsistence

Part I. vouchsafed to their Sense, which bears some Resemblance unto that Subsistence vouchsafed to Faith inwardly, whereby the things as yet remaining in the Promise are set before the Soul. Which things therefore when believed, must be some way made real and subsistent, otherwise indeed it is not a true *Sight* or spiritual Faith, but vanisheth with its Object proposed into an empty Notion and Speculation. It is therefore that thing in God, the Revelation of which gives a Subsistence to the Object of Faith, that doth put it into an *esse credibile*, *a Being of Believeableness*.

I now proceed then to demonstrate that our first real believing the Mercies in God do give a Subsistence unto Forgiveness in the Promises.

The Subsistence that any Divine Object hath, is from a real and true Knowledg of God himself made subsistent, first to the Soul, and then explicitely or implicitely it concurreth to every true Act of Faith of any other particular Object. Our Saviour therefore instructing them in particular Acts of Faith, *Mark* 11. 23, 24. first proposeth this general Rule to them requisite to all true Faith; *ver.* 22. *Have Faith in God*, or have the Faith of God, because into that Faith of him, or something in him, (as his Power or Truth, *&c.*) is the Subsistence of every particular thing promised, resolved. *He that comes to God must believe that he is*, &c. *Heb.* 11. 6. This is general to all true Faith, but more particularly that Attribute or Relation in God which is the most proper and direct Cause of the thing promised, *in esse rei*, in the Being thereof; that very same Attribute being viewed by Faith, together with the Promise, is of all other fitted most properly to give this Subsistence to our Faith. Thus when *Abraham* found that his *Body was dead*, and *Sarah*'s Womb dead *as to Procreation*, *Rom.* 4. 19. and that yet God had promised him a Son; that Attribute in God, on which this thing promised did most directly and proximately depend, that Attribute accordingly was with the Promise presented to *Abraham*'s Faith, and *he was perswaded* that *what he had promised, he was able to perform, and so became strong in Faith, giving Glory to God*, Rom. 4. 20, 21. Where we see *that Perswasion* the Apostle speaks of, the most proper *Ratio credendi*, or ultimate ground of Believing, and perswasive of his Faith in that very particular thing, was that special Attribute that in God was the most proper Cause of the thing promised; and the same was it which gave the Subsistence to the thing, and to his Faith.

Now therefore, to come home to the thing in hand: It is hence to be observed by this general Rule or Maxim, that whensoever the Heart of a Sinner shall attempt to believe the Forgiveness of Sin, there is nothing can be supposed to be in God, or concerning God, revealed, that should give a greater *Reality*, and *Subsistence*, and *Certainty* of the Promises in and to the Heart of a Believer, than the Consideration of those Mercies in God, which are the most eminent Cause of that Forgiveness, which is the thing promised. When the Soul considers, that he who is so great a God, and so greatly merciful and gracious, is the same God who hath promised it, and hath means in him to make it good; what other thing (I say) can be so great a Perswasive to believe as the Light hereof? And the greater the Light thereof is, which is brought down into such a Promise, and with the Promise shines into the Heart, the more, and in the greatest degree, doth the Light of the true Subsistence of Forgiveness shine with it, and becomes realized to the Soul, and appears clothed with such an Evidence and Subsistence as will efficaciously strike, move, and draw out real Faith, that being the Principle which is properly and specially suted to that Object. And seeing it is the Light of God himself shining in some Attribute or other, either habitually or actually, implicitely or explicitely, immediately or remotely, that must be the Bottom of Faith, and accompany Faith always, and in every Promise give that *Subsistence* spoken of unto Faith, (whether it be his *Truth*, *Faithfulness*, *Goodness*, or the like;) then certainly that which of all other must needs be most effectual and genuine, in this case of Forgiveness, is this Light and Faith into God's Mercies; for they are those which move God most to forgive, and therefore move us most to believe in God for it.

And the Reason of this further is, that although all Benefits whatever are the Effects of Mercy, and so stiled, (as the Call of the *Gentiles* is, *Rom.* 15. 9. and the *Gentiles* glorify God for his Mercy, and the Splendor of the whole of their Salvation from Conversion downwards, as *a People that had not obtained Mercy, but now have obtained Mercy*, 1 Pet. 2. 10.) yet Forgiveness of Sins doth of all other most purely, immediately, and directly, depend upon Mercies. Forgiveness is a pure

pure Act of and from *Grace*; as old *Zachary* speaks in his Song; *Luke* 1. 77, 78. *To give the Knowledg of Salvation by the Remission of Sins, through the tender Mercies* (or Bowels) *of our God.* To give other things, or to do for us in another kind, may require the calling in the Help of some other Attribute immediately to effect it; as the *Resurrection of our Bodies*, and glorifying of us, which (though it be a Work of infinite Mercy) requires the Aid of Power to effect it, even that Power whereby *he is able to subdue all things to himself*, Phil. 3. 21. But Forgiveness and Pardon of Sin peculiarly and immediately hold of Mercy, and own and adore Mercy for their immediate Founder and Benefactor. Pardon and Forgiveness are a pure Emanation from Grace, and issue in the Glory thereof, above all other in God; *Ephes.* 1. 7. In Christ we have the Forgiveness of Sins according to the Riches of his Grace; *Exod.* 34. 7. *The Lord God, gracious and merciful*; and then, *pardoning Iniquity, Transgression and Sin.* This is a Stream that springs and flows out immediately from that Fountain; *Psal.* 86. 5. *The Lord is good, and ready to forgive; plenteous in Mercy.* His being ready to forgive, flows gushing forth from his Goodness, and his being plenteous in Mercy. *God is the Father of Mercies*, all Mercies bestowed being the most natural and immediate Children of Mercy in himself; and he thereout giving Existence and Being to them, as a Father doth to his Children. And from hence the Heart of an humble Sinner, when it is to seek any Mercies at the hand of God, or hath received any, may and will readily know and acknowledg mere Mercy, infinite Mercy, to be the Father of them. But above all other, Pardon (when either we come to seek it, or to be thankful for it, this Forgiveness of Sins being the first-born of Benefits in our Calling) will own and know its Father, the Father of Mercies, and cause the Heart to fall upon its Knees, and ask Blessing for it.

Book I.

The Truth of that general Maxim holds in any other Attribute, as touching that particular Dependency which its proper Effects have upon it; as when God is stiled *the Father of Lights*, in relation unto Wisdom to be asked and given; and when he is called *the Lord of Hope*, when Joy and Peace in believing are spoken of; and the God of all Comforts, and *Father of Glory*, when Comfort and Glory are to be bestowed. But there is a farther *Reason* why this or that Attribute in God, that gives the Subsistence to the Performance, should above all other most properly conduce to give the Subsistence to the Faith of a Believer, (although the Subsistence of the Performance is differing from the Subsistence given to Faith in the mean time) because that hereby Faith doth see all along (even until the Performance of the promised Blessings) the Existence of them in what are their native Roots and direct immediate Causes. Thus it is said, *Heb.* 11. 13. *They saw the Promises afar off, and were perswaded.* That Phrase *AFAR OFF*, refers not wholly or altogether to an importing the distance of time to come e're performed, (tho take that in also) but also to the Words that went before, *they saw them afar off:* that is, tho the Mercies were at a distance as to their individual Existence, which was afar off, and remote out of sight; yet however this Act of their Faith was a Sight, for they *saw them* really subsisting, or else their Faith had not been worthy the Name of *Sight.* So then they were presented as if really subsisting afar of. Now wherein or whereby should it be that they saw them thus subsisting afore-hand, when the things had not any actual Existence? There certainly was a seeing them in God, and in God by viewing those Attributes especially that were to be the most direct and native Causes of them. The Knowledg of Philosophy holds some Resemblance, or like kind of Existence with this. Philosophy instructs us, that tho Roses in Winter have no Existence, and tho Tulips have no Flower nor Stalks above Ground for the greatest part of the Year, and so they have not an actual Existence for so long time, yet that in a true Sense they may be said to have a real Being and Existence in Nature, the Mother and Womb of all things. If vulgar Apprehensions might be Judges of this, they will say, where is it? they are not, for we see no such things extant. But a Philosopher, or a wise Gardener, will tell you, that they have a Being in their Roots; yea, and that each and every kind of those Flowers have a several Being in their several Roots proper to their kind; in which, as in their Causes, they have a latent hidden Existence and *Being*, which *Reason* assures them to be true. And therefore a Gardener doth (before Summer comes) put a high Value upon such Roots, as those that will bring forth such Flowers. He sees them afar

off in those Roots, as their Causes, many Months before, and expects their growing up in their Seasons: Even thus, and more satisfyingly doth Faith see in God a Subsistence of the Promises, whilst it views them in those Attributes which are the proper Originals of them, according to their kind.

Part I.

I shall now consider the second Act of *Faith*, which is, *Embrace the Promise*; and I shall demonstrate, that an enlarged Consideration of the *Mercies* of God's Nature do wonderfully *perswade* the Heart to embrace the Promises of *Forgiveness*. The Promises do thus perswade by Mercy's superadding a real Taste of transcendent Goodness and Sweetness, an overcoming Sweetness, unto this grand Benefit of *Forgiveness*, and the Promises thereof, by which the Will and Affections are demulced, and effectually drawn to embrace them. That these *Benefits of Salvation* are in themselves good, and must needs be most *welcome*, or (as the Apostle expresseth it, 1 *Tim.* 1. 15.) *worthy of all Acceptation* by a Sinner sensible of its own sinful Misery, we may very well and readily conceive, for they are suted unto all Self-love in such a Soul. But farther, that unto a truly broken humbled Sinner, the Mercies that *are in God* (out of which he pardons) should have (as needs they must) infinitely more of Goodness and Sweetness in them than *Pardon*, or all things else that are in the Promises, or apprehended with them, is that which a Soul, that hath tasted how *good the Lord is*, will instantly acknowledg. A Promise of Life to a condemned Man is sweet; for Life *is sweet*, (as we say) but thy *Loving-kindness* (said *David*, who had tasted how good the Lord is) *is better than Life*, and infinitely sweeter, *Psal.* 63. 3. And again, says *David*, *Because thy Mercy is good, deliver thou me*, *Psal.* 109. 21. Deliverance was good; yea, but the Mercy in God apprehended therewith, was infinitely more good to him, which was the greatest Inducement to him to seek Deliverance. And indeed God's Mercy doth eminently bear the Stile of *Goodness*. Thus God himself says to *Moses*, (*Exod.* 33. 18, 30. compared) *I will make all my Goodness pass before thee: I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious.* And *David* in this Psalm first laid hold on the *Goodness* that is in the Mercy of God, and then prays and pleads, *Deliver me*. The same again you have, *Psal.* 69. 16. *Hear me, for thy Loving-kindness is good:* that is, it is sweet, 'tis pleasant. And when the thing sought for comes to be granted and obtained, a Believer rejoiceth more in the Mercy and Loving-kindness he finds to be in God's Heart towards him, than in the Benefit vouchsafed, and that is it which takes his Heart; *Psal.* 31. 7. *I will be glad and rejoice in thy Mercy: for thou hast considered my Trouble, thou hast known my Soul in Adversities.* That God's Mercy and Kindness should own his Soul at such a time, was more than the Deliverance. And as the Mercy of God stirs up the Soul thus to a rejoicing at the Performance, so it pleasantly allures and obligeth the Soul to trust on the Promise in hope of Performance; as those Words (1 *Pet.* 2. 3.) imply, *If so be you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.* As we find them in the Apostle they do refer unto the Psalmist's Speech, (Psal. 34. 8. *O taste and see that the Lord is good!*) for his Grace and Mercy are his Goodness; for so the Apostle renders it, *If you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.* The Vulgar Translation, whenever the Psalmist says *God is good*, do still render it *suavis est Dominus*, *the Lord is sweet*; and his Mercies indeed are the *primum dulce*, the original Sweetness of all other which diffuse Deliciousness both into the Promises and the Benefits vouchsafed, and make them to be as *Honey* to the *Taste*; and it is that Taste of his Graciousness which causeth us joyfully to receive and embrace them, and then to trust in him, (which is the next Act) for it follows in the next Words of that Verse of that Psalm, *Blessed is the Man that trusteth in him.* The Apostle in that Place mentioned instanceth in those that were and are but new-born Babes in Christianity; of whom yet he says, if so be *you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.* What is it especially that Christians, whilst Babes, do from the first of their Faith seek out in the first and chief Place for? It is the *Forgiveness of their Sins*, and that Benefit it is which God first vouchsafes them as to their Sense: And therefore most suitably to that State of theirs the Apostle speaks thus to them, with difference from others grown up; *I write unto you Babes, because your Sins are forgiven you*, 1 John 2. 12. He writes it as the most welcome News to them, and as that which whilst Babes they are in the most eager pursuance of, and thence they seek out in the Word for Promises that speak Forgiveness, and those they suck and lie tugging at, even as Infants use to do the Breast for the Milk that is in it, and this from the first of their

Ficator in locum.

Birth

Birth next after Crying. And if they could come at Variety of Breasts, they would and do affect the sweetest Milk: and hereto they are led by a Taste of that Sweetness. And the Apostle's Allusion is unto this, whilst *he exhorts us as new-born Babes, to desire the sincere Milk of the Word*; and subjoins, *if so be you have tasted that the Lord is gracious*, namely, in his having forgiven you all your Trespasses which so earnestly you then sought. And he joins these two together; for whilst we are seeking or sucking of Forgiveness out of particular Promises of Forgiveness, we find God come at last, and his *Mercy* and *Grace* that forgive we meet with therein, and feel them to flow in with the Promise, for they are the Fountain of Forgiveness, and of the Promises also. It is God you see who is said to be *tasted*, and the Sweetness of his Mercies. It is not said so much that the Sweetness of Pardon, or that Salvation, or the Promise, are tasted: but over and above all it is God's Grace that is tasted in and with them all, and that is it which makes us so greedy and desirous to suck Comfort out of those Breasts of *Consolation*. For that Desire the Apostle says flows from Taste, and this our sucking and tasting are thorow Faith, and in the Exercise of that we taste the Grace that is in God's and Christ's Heart towards us, whereof that Grace in God's Nature is the Spring or Ocean rather, and we find that to be the most delicious of all other. My Advice therefore to those that seek to believe, is to put in all of this Sugar they can gather and grasp out of the original Cane it self, as in the Scriptures they find it sprouting up, and therewith to sweeten all the Promises they do or would lay hold on, as that which will most overcomingly perswade their Wills to embrace them.

We will now consider the third Act of Faith, which is *Trust in God*, and will prove that the View and Intuition of the Mercies in God doth mightily strengthen the Heart to trust and *stay* it self upon God for *Forgiveness*. And I shall shew how this is done, by perswading the Heart even of the very *Truth* and *Faithfulness* of God in the Promises, and of the assured Performance of them: and how they give the most real Evidence; 1*st*. Of God's real *Intention*: And, 2*dly*. Of *Ability* in the Event to fulfil them. Which two are the main Causes of *Trust* on the Truth of any Promise. And God's Mercies do sufficiently alone assure us of all these, tho we had no other Evidence thereof.

It is needless to insist, that *Trust* is an Act of Faith, and an eminent Act thereof, and how a Saint is characterized to be one that *hopes in God's Mercy*, Psal. 33. 18. *Psal.* 147. 11. and one that *trusteth in his Mercy*, Psal. 13. 5. and *Psal.* 52. 8. *I trust in the Mercy of God for ever and ever*. That which is especially incumbent on me is to give *Demonstration* that the ample Meditation of God's Mercies will prove most *effective* to cause (as *David*'s Word is, *Psal.* 119. 49.) the Heart *to trust in God* over and above the Consideration of the Promises alone.

It may be thought, that God having once given forth Promises of Forgiveness in his Word, we should need the Consideration of his Mercies no more; for out of Mercy it is that the Promises are given, and of Mercy it is they speak, and carry it in the Mouth of them. Of what Use then can it be to have a distinct View of these Mercies, (whereof we treat) in order to draw forth Trust on them, since the Ground of that is the Truth of God? If therefore our Faith needed an Establishment in those Promises, it may have Recourse rather unto the Truth of God, or unto the Assurance that God is true in his Word, and faithful in his Promises; and as for Mercy, that is sufficiently supposed in his Promises themselves.

I acknowledg that these other Attributes of Truth and Faithfulness have their share, and a great share too, in influencing the Support of our Faith. We cannot want the Knowledg of any of his Attributes, but our Faith will be the weaker for it. We cannot be without the knowledg of Truth especially, which is therefore so frequently mentioned with *Mercy*. But yet still our Hearts being too *slow* to *believe*, (as Christ hath told us) when deeply humbled once, do foment and harbour so many *Jealousies* of God, and are as full of dark Cells of Fears, Doubts, Suspicions of God, as full of Unbelief, carnal Reasonings against it self, as the Earth is of Damps, stifling Vapours contain'd in vast Caverns within the Womb of it: Our Hearts (I say) do therefore stand in need of the most spiritual Cordials, (as those that dig in Mines, and work in the Earth's *Caverns*, are wont ever and anon to take) which Cordials, the most Sovereign to such a fainting Soul apt to Sinkings, are the rich Mercies in the Heart of God, which like to a Box of the most costly Ointment, do, when

when opened, fill the whole House (the Heart) with the Savour thereof; a Savour
Part I. (if any) of *Life unto Life*, as the Apostle speaks, 2 *Cor.* 2. 16. But over and above what Spirit of Life and Consolation God's Mercies in themselves immediately afford, my Undertaking farther is to shew, that an ample View of these infinite Mercies entertained by us doth by Inference or Consequence wonderfully conduce to our very Belief of the *Truth*, and *Faithfulness*, and *Willingness* of God manifested in those Promises to forgive and pardon us, upon that Account. And I shall also still continue the prosecution of my began-Exhortation, to press and urge this Practice and Course upon the Spirits of Believers, or Souls *endeavouring to believe*, viz. to fill and possess their Souls with the most comprehensive Apprehensions of the Mercies of God, as to the drawing forth of Trust or Affiance on the Promises of Forgiveness, to be the most behoveful of all other. It is certain that in all Trust and Confidence upon another, whether in humane Matters on Man, or divine on God, the Knowledg of the Person whom *we trust*, and the inward Qualifications, and Dispositions, and Habilities that are in that Person, are a greater *Basis* and Ground for Trust than all or any sorts of Declarations of that Person, or any Obligations by *Promises*, *Oaths*, &c. can be supposed to be; 2 *Tim.* 1. 12. *I know whom I have believed*, or *trusted*, as it is varied in the Margin. His perfect Knowledg of the Person, *viz.* of *God*, did weigh above all with him, unto which fully accordeth that of the Psalmist, *Psal.* 9. 10. *They that know thy Name, will trust in thee.* And tho Promises are the Means by which we believe, yet it is the Promiser that is the Basis or the Foundation on whom our Hearts ultimately and quietly rest for the Performance. All our Confidence is therefore resolved into the *Person*, and what *he is*. Indeed the Greatness of the Sum or Thing promised, and the Security given (whether it be by Bond or the like) do greatly conduce to chear the Heart of one that trusts; but still all these are in the Virtue of what we apprehend the Promiser to be in his inward and innate Disposition and Habilities.

There are two things especially that give the real Truth to any *Promise* made, and chiefly beget the Adherence thereto in the Soul of any that confide thereon.

1. The *Honesty* of the Promiser in respect of a real Intention in him, when he made the Promise, and still continuing in him to perform it.

2. That in the Event it will assuredly *de facto* be performed.

The Reason why I add the latter to the first, and join both together, is, that *the Truth* of a Promise notes a Respect and Relation unto an actual Performance, as that without which the Promise cannot be said to be, or at least will not prove true in the Reality of the thing, though it should be never so faithfully intended by him that promised. Hence then he that doth believe the Truth of the Promises of *Forgiveness*, must necessarily be assured of the latter as well as the first; and indeed of both those two things forementioned.

I shall speak to each particularly, and shew *how much our Faith on these two is confirmed, even by our Belief of this, that so great and infinite Mercies are in the Heart and Nature of God.*

1. As to the *Truth* and Faithfulness of God's *Intention* in these *Promises*, that (say I) is as abundantly, if not more confirmed to us by our firm Belief of the Mercies in God, than by any other Arguments whatsoever; for it was Mercy in God that wholly made *those Promises*, and was the Founder of them, and God had no other *Motive* to make them than his Mercies, and could have no other or greater Design in the making, but firmly to resolve to perform them to the glorifying of his Mercy, which is the *Alpha* and *Omega*, the beginning and ending of all therein. And therefore the Belief of his Mercies must needs have as great an Influence into our Belief of the Truth of the Promises, as any other thing whatever.

1*st.* *Mercy*, pure *Mercy*, Tenderness of Mercy, made the Promises, and caused him first thus to declare of himself, *I will be merciful*, as *Rom.* 9. *Exod.* 33. Yea, and his Mercy was utterly free in his doing this. The *Grace* we are saved by is the *freest Principle* in God's Nature. He might have chosen whether ever or no he would have let fall'n a Word of Mercy to any of Mankind, and yet to choose he did it. And it was Mercy, pure Mercy, that was the Head of, and Leader on of all the rest of the Attributes to concur in this Design.

Nor, 2*dly.* Had he any other End to attain upon the Sons of Men, which he should have aimed at, or would obtain by his giving and uttering those Promises, but

but that truly and really he should *forgive*, must be all and the whole of his Intent, and utmost of the *Design*. Forgiveness of our Sins is wholly ascribed unto Mercy, as being from the Riches of his Grace, *Ephes.* 1. 7. Book I.

Nor indeed, *3dly*. Could he have any other Design but this, it could not be to gain or bring us unto himself under the Pretensions of Offers of Mercy, and the Overtures thereof; for himself knew and foreknew that we all were and would be such wretched rechless Creatures in our selves, that all the Promulgations and Offers that should or could be made, would not stir or move our Hearts a jot unto the least Attempt of nearer Access unto God, unless himself first moved us thereunto. *Mercy it self* must work with the Promises, or we should sit still and move not; Ephes. 2. 4, 5. *But God who is rich in Mercy, for his great Love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in Sins, hath quickned us together with Christ, (by Grace ye are saved) and hath raised us up together*, &c. And Faith it is *the Gift of God, and not of our selves*, as there it follows. And therefore it had been in vain to have made Pretensions of Promises in hopes or expectation of our being willing, or of our coming in, if God himself were not really resolved; no, the Apostle hath resolved us, it must be *God himself* must shew us that *Mercy* to cause us to *will and run*, Rom. 9. 16. Therefore as Mercy was the first and sole Mover, so it must it self be the Performer, or all is in vain.

4thly. Besides this, let us weigh that our great God did long before he put forth those Promises, both know and perfectly consider with himself what Riches of Grace and Mercy lay by him, whereby he found his own Sufficiency over and overabundantly to perform such Promises, (which to perform is more easy for him than for us to think or speak a word; *I say unto thee*, (says Christ, ὁ λόγος, *the Word*) *thy Sins are forgiven thee*, Mat. 9. 5. 'twas but a Word of *his Mouth*.) The All-sufficiency of his own Heart told him how merciful he could for ever find in his Heart to be, (as our Phrase is of our selves) and he first reckoned with himself, and told over *what his Riches in Mercy* were, and to what an infinite Sum they arose, and found by the Largeness of his Heart therein, that he could never be disenabled or impoverished in the Expence of them, nor his Heart grow narrower or scantier in process of time afterwards, when Men should have acted and perpetrated their Sins, than now it was when he made the Promise before they had sinned. *I know my Thoughts towards you, Thoughts of Peace*, &c. *Jer.* 29. 11. And thereupon and withal there declares how in the End and Event (as I have phrased it) the thing will assuredly be fulfilled which he had promised: so it follows, *to give you an expected End*: For *I know my Thoughts towards you*, (says he) I have summ'd and cast up all. I know what I have resolved, I am able to do, and therefore wait you, and expect the Issue: And likewise he found in himself, that he had for ever the absolute and full Power of his *own Will*. And upon this and such Fore-thoughts within himself, it was that he both took up those Purposes of Forgiveness, and issued out from thence those Promises adequate thereunto. When the Covenant of Grace and Mercy, *the sure Mercies*, were given forth to *David* under the Type of him and his House, but signifying his Seed Christ, and those that were to be of him; *David, in totum*, and in the whole, resolveth all those Promises into God's own *Greatness* and All-sufficiency within himself, as that from which alone, together with the Consideration of his Christ, he was moved to make those Promises; 2 *Sam.* 7. 21. *For thy Word's sake* (which I would interpret of Christ, ὁ λόγος, the Word) *and according to thine own Heart hast thou done all these great things*. And the great things he speaks of done by God were his uttering those Promises by *Nathan*, ver. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16. which *David* indigitates, *v.* 19. But *thou hast spoken*, &c. all which was in the Reality intended of Christ, and those *Children* whom God gives him, (as the Apostle calls them) so *Psal.* 89. 38, 39. *Isa.* 55. And the Consideration that God made these Promises so freely, and out of *his own Heart*, was that great Foundation which confirmed *David*'s Heart in the Faith of those Promises, and may abundantly strengthen ours. Yea, the Promises themselves that were made being so high and illustriously great, this became an invincible Argument to *David*'s Faith, that God that made them was the true God, and he alone: So *ver.* 22. *Wherefore thou art great, O Lord God: for there is none like thee, neither is there any God besides thee*: For he considered with himself, that it could not enter into the Hearts of Men, or of any mere Creature, to make such Promises, of so large and ample Extent, of such and

Compare with it Psal. 89. 28, 29. Jer. 55.

Compare Dan. 9. 17. *For the Lord's sake*, that is, *for Christ's*, & ver. 19. *for thine own sake*.

Part I. and so great Mercies and Forgiveness; *Is this the manner of Men, O Lord God?* *ver.* 19. And therefore if there were no other Evidence, this alone sufficiently testified to him the Greatness of God; *Thou art God alone:* And his Heart being thus filled and enlarged with the Mercies of God, and the Greatness of God in them, he thereupon readily gave up his Faith to the Belief of the Truth of them. And no wonder if we find in that first Proclamation, *Exod.* 34. 7. *The Lord God gracious, merciful, abundant in Goodness* or *Kindness*, set first, and then to follow *abundant in Truth* also: For the Abundancy and Overflowing of that *Kindness* and *Mercy* that God in those Declarations professeth to be in himself, is that which assures us of the Truth and Reality of God's Heart in the whole of it, as also of those Promises which next do follow, of *pardoning Iniquity, Transgression and Sin.* His Truth in his Promises doth spring, and hath its Rise from that Fountain, his Super-abundancy of Mercy. And as the Promises are said to be *true in Christ*, 1 Cor. 1. 18, 20. because he purchased them; so upon the like Ground they may also be said to be true in God, because Mercy is the Founder and Maintainer of them. And from hence it follows, that as God's own knowing his own Heart, and Riches, and All-sufficiency, to perform what he should promise, caused him to engage his Truth at first in making these Promises; so answerably it is operative in the Soul of a Believer, the more it comes to believe the Truth of those Promises, as there is a good Reason it should do so. For this is a sure and undeniable Rule, that what most moves God's Heart to do a thing, that when declared and revealed by God, must needs be most efficacious to cause the Heart of a Sinner to believe that he will do it.

The 2*d* thing I proposed, as that which goes to make up the Truth of a Promise, is the assured Reality of the Performance of it in the Event, or as the Prophet speaks, that *tho it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry*, Hab. 2. 3. that is, that it will certainly, in the Issue, be fulfilled, for otherwise the Promise is not *re ipsa* true, as to the thing it self, and so not such as he that is to confide in it, may build upon it. And the Reason of this is not only that the Substantialness and Essentiality of a Promise relates to the actual Execution of it, but farther likewise, because often it falls out that the Person promising may have honestly and faithfully intended it, and promised it, and yet in the Issue prove unable to perform, as we see amongst Men it often falls out; and then in that case and respect the Promise doth in Reality fall short of its eventual Truth. Hence therefore to constitute a Promise true, there must be added unto the Sincerity of the Intention of the Promiser, the Reality of making the Promise good; and that as necessarily doth farther depend upon a full and sufficient *Ability* in the Promiser to perform it, as it doth upon the Honesty of his Intention. Hence therefore in like manner it must be acknowledged, that in and to the full Confidence of Faith of him that depends upon the Promise of another, there must necessarily also be a Perswasion of *the full and perfect* Ability of the Promiser in the Issue certainly to perform it; so that on his part it shall not, nor can any way be hindred. And this Belief of the Ability of the Promiser to accomplish, is as great an Ingredient into Trust as any. This we may see in the Apostle's Faith; 2 *Tim.* 1. 12. *I know whom I have trusted, that he is able*, &c. Thus that wherein God's greatest Sufficiency and Ability *de facto* or actually to forgive our Sins doth lie, the Apprehension and Belief thereof must needs be judged the strongest Inducer of us to trust on God for the Forgiveness. Now it is evident that his All-sufficiency and Ability to forgive, doth properly and peculiarly consist in his being merciful. Not to cite many Scriptures, this 34*th* of *Exodus* may suffice, *The Lord strong, merciful and gracious, pardoning Iniquity, Transgression and Sin.* Likewise *Psal.* 86. 5. (which is an Extract from this) *For thou Lord, art good, and ready to forgive, and plenteous in Mercy, unto all them that call upon thee.* You see here that his Readiness to forgive, flows from his Goodness and his *being plenteous in Mercy.* And in analogous Reason this may be seen in its Shadow, the Mercy that is in Man. What is it that enables a Man to forgive? merely the Goodness and Mercy that is in him, so as a weak Woman, or the poorest, and otherwise most impotent Man (if they abound in Bowels of Mercy, and be of tender Hearts and Natures) are able to forgive an Injury, when yet they are utterly unable to do any other good thing, especially not any great thing for the Party whom they forgive: But the Mercy that is in them alone sufficiently impowreth them unto *Forgiveness*, when to nothing else. So then if a firm Belief of the Ability of the Person be

be the strongest Perswasive unto Trust and Confidence, joined with that of his Honest Intention, further to confirm us of the certain real Performance it sels; then although from other Topicks we may come to believe that God is true in those his Promises of Forgiveness, yet more abundantly (as the Apostle says in a like case) this Belief springs from the Intuition of the Abundancy of the Mercies that are in God, than from any other whatsoever; and the firm Belief of the Ability to perform, is that which most of all causeth Trust. Thus it was in the Faith of *Abraham*, that he staggered not at the Truth of the Promise, as to the real Performance, because he chiefly believed God's All-sufficiency to make it good; *Rom.* 4. 20, 21. *He staggered not at the Promise of God thorow Unbelief, but was strong in Faith, giving Glory to God, and being fully perswaded that what he had promised he was able to perform:* And so was assured thereby that the Event would be accordingly. If a great Person that had promised to give such or so vast a Sum of Money as is necessary to furnish a private Man's House with Houshold-stuff and Utensils, Wares and Provisions of all kinds, and to stock the Man's Ground, and had given his Word and Truth for the Performance of all these; but together therewith had led that poor indigent Person into all his Treasures, and shewn him his Riches, and where it was that all those kinds of such Furniture do lie; and then had carried him into his Fields, Barns and Warehouses, where he should also see stock for Cattel, Corn, and Wares of all sorts lie piled up; how would this hearten that Man, or any of you, to believe that great Person, the Promiser in his Word and Promise given! so 'tis here. Now consider those great Riches of God which the Scriptures predicate so much, and out of which he pardons, they properly consist in his *Mercies*; these are they that are his Substance, and give him Ability to forgive: He is *plenteous in Mercy, and ready to forgive*, Psal. 86. 5. It is *Mercy* that is even the principal Obligee in the Promise or Bond, and *Truth* and other Attributes come in but secondarily, (as to this Business of Forgiveness) and rather but as Witnesses to confirm what Mercy had declared and signed before them.

Book I.

CHAP. XIV.

The Uses of the Doctrine. That the Thoughts of the Mercies in God's Nature should encourage us to come to him for Salvation and Life. That the Consideration of them should cause any Soul to hope that God will pardon him in particular.

Use 1. LET the Thoughts of these Treasures of Mercies (which have been described and demonstrated to be in God's Nature) encourage us to come to him. Let us consider that there is no other Use of all these Riches of Mercy in God, but to be given all forth unto Sinners for his Glory: Whereas all his other Attributes are to himself, and for himself. Thus his Wisdom is the Perfection of his own Being: his Love is that whereby he loves himself: his All-sufficience is that which makes himself blessed: but his Mercies redound not in this manner unto or upon himself, (for he is not merciful unto himself, or for himself) but the sole Improvement and Glory of them consists in extending them to others, so as otherwise they would lie useless by him. Now then as a Man's having a great Estate lying by him, is the greatest Provocation that can be to him to make him willing to lay it forth unto an Improvement; so these vast Treasures of Mercies which God possesseth, are a Motive unto him to expend them upon Sinners. Full Breasts love to be suck'd and drawn, their Fulness otherwise becomes a Pain. It is the greatest Vanity to have Riches, and not to know on whom to bestow them. Do but possess thy Heart then with the Thoughts, that there is this Fulness of Grace, these great Riches of Mercy in God, and it will make thy Soul easy of Belief, that there is a Willingness in God to bestow them, and that he is resolved to give them out to thee whenever thou comest to him, especially since himself hath set them forth, and proclaim'd them on purpose to us; as we find in the Scriptures, that where God doth set himself to perswade Sinners to come to him, he thinks it sufficient to give Promises of Mercy and Pardon.

Part I. When convinced Sinners come to have the Prospect of their Hearts, and of their Lives past, and of their Sins therein, in the great Aggravations of them, set in order before them, when the Account of their ten thousand Talents comes in; then, unless the superabounding Mercies in God which should pardon them, arise up to their Faith, and are *in solido* told out before their Eyes, and their Faith prevails to assure them in good earnest that there are such infinite Mercies in God, they cannot entertain a thought of Hope or Comfort. Till they see how the Mercies of God are superaboundingly able to forgive all these there hainous and aggravated Sins, and to remove those heaps upon heaps of them, they will not be brought to believe: But as *Jacob*'s Heart fainted, and he believed not till he saw the Waggons which *Joseph* had sent to carry him, and then his Spirit reviv'd, *Gen.* 45. 26, 27. So neither will these Sinners believe till they see the Mercies which God hath sent forth to carry them to Heaven. Till then they are apt to cry out (as *Cain* did, *Gen.* 4. 13.) *My Sin is greater than I can bear*: or as those in *Jer.* 18. who, when God had invited them to turn from their evil Ways, say at the *12th* Verse, *There is no hope*, or our Case is desperate: And so they forsook their own Mercies, (as *Jonah* expresseth it) and left the everlasting and never-failing Spring thereof, *ver.* 14. and forgot the Lord, *ver.* 15. and betook themselves to lying Vanities to give them Comfort and Ease. And other Souls who are preserv'd from Despair, yet think within themselves, and say, O! where are the Mercies to be found that should pardon all those Sins? Is it possible, that God should find in his Heart to do it? Is it possible that God should find in his Heart Mercy and Grace enough to pardon such, and so great a sum of Sins committed against Grace it self? And in this lies the Stop and Obstruction of Faith, as it did in like manner with them in the Wilderness, who said, *Can God furnish a Table in the Wilderness?* Psal. 78. 19. Their doubt (when Matters came to a stress) was more of his Power and Ability, than of his Will. The Question is, Can God? They do not say God will not. And truly there is as much Unbelief in Mens Hearts about his Mercy, when it comes to a pinch, as about his Power; tho Men ordinarily say that they question neither, and indeed till they are put to a Distress, they question neither, but take them in an overly way for granted. But still there is the same reason of Mens questioning the All-sufficiency of God's Mercy, as there was in those Jews (and is in us upon any the like occasion) of questioning his Power. Accordingly we find these two in like manner expresly join'd as parallel, and as Points of like difficulty to be believ'd, *Psal.* 62. 8, 11, 12. and indeed in doubting one we question the other, especially when we hear that God's Ability to forgive lieth in his Mercy; for then to limit his Power is as to this Particular all one as to limit his Mercy. And when Mens Consciences are throughly awakened to see their Sins, then Unbelief on the other hand awakens Thoughts in them to limit God's Mercies, which is another Phrase used *Psal.* 78. 41. For Mens narrow Spirits, if not enlarged by Faith, do much measure God's Heart by their own, and so think God to be like themselves, *Psal.* 50. 21. They cannot imagine how a Person so high, so great, and so grievously provok'd, should be able to forgive, and therefore apprehend that he cannot be willing; and hence a thousand Jealousies of God do arise in Mens Souls, which are as full of dark Cells of Unbelief as the Earth is of vast Caverns within the Womb of it. We may judg that the Disease lies here by the Remedy and Application the Scriptures make, which, to satisfy Mens Souls in these very Scruples, do set forth God in the Greatness and prerogative Power of his Mercies as the Mercies of so great a God, and proportionable to his Greatness. As Mens Hearts rise not up to glorify God as God, *Rom.* 1. 21. so nor to believe Mercies to be in him *as a God* so *great* and infinite, proportionable to his Greatness. God hath therefore in the Scriptures taken several ways, and at sundry times hath set forth his Mercies to persuade Men: Sometimes they are set out by way of Admiration and Wonderment, *Mic.* 7. 18, 19. *Who is a God like our God, pardoning Iniquity, and passing by the Transgression of the Remnant of his Inheritance, and that delighteth in Mercy?* Sometimes they are displayed by comparing his Thoughts and Heart in pardoning, with what may be supposed to be in the Thoughts of the largest and most tender-hearted Parent, Father or Mother, and with the Bowels which all Men put together may be suppos'd to have in them: and God's Heart is declar'd to exceed them all in Mercies and Thoughts of Forgiveness, as much as the Heaven exceeds the Earth; *Isa.* 55. 7. *Let the Wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous Man his Thoughts; and return unto the*

the Lord, and he will abundantly pardon. Yea, but the Sinner will say, my *thoughts* of sinning have for time past already been infinite, *only evil* and *continually, evil from my Infancy,* and *my Ways* have been continually *perverse* and *froward,* ungracious and opposite to God and his Mercies that should pardon me. Humbled Sinners Thoughts will go on so far in a Belief that God may pardon them, tho they have gone out so far in sinning, as to think that if they had only at such a time of their Lives sinned so and so against him, and been false to him, and not continued to sin out of the Presumption of that Grace that now should pardon them, then they might have hope of Mercy. But they think that because they have so long provok'd him, that now he may have sworn against them in his Wrath, and that he cannot find in his Heart to forgive such a Wretch, tho he may otherwise pardon as much as all Men and Angels putting their stock of Mercies together, and making up one great Purse of Mercy, as would be sufficient to extend to forgive and discharge great Debts. O but, says God, measure not my Thoughts in pardoning, either by the Evil in your Thoughts, or by your ways in sinning; nor yet measure them by what the Thoughts and Ways of your selves, Men or Angels, have or can have to forgive withal! *For my Thoughts are not your Thoughts, neither are my Ways your Ways, saith the Lord. As the Heavens be higher than the Earth, so are my Ways higher than your Ways.* My Ways of Mercy are both above your Ways of sinning, and they also exceed all the thoughts of Mercy which the best natur'd of you can have in pardoning others. My Ways and Designs that I have upon you, and Dealings I purpose towards you, transcend them all in opposite Goodness, Graciousness and Forgiveness, as much as the Heavens do the Earth. And also (says God) *my Thoughts* are not *as your Thoughts,* he speaks all this of his exceeding them all in pardoning. Nay further, it rises higher to this, meaning that the Mercies of God do not only exceed Mens Thoughts in what any, or all of them could find in their Hearts in their proportion to pardon, but that also if you extend the Compasses of your Thoughts, that you or any Believers have had of what Mercies of God, and what Thoughts of Grace have been exercised in pardoning themselves or other Sinners; yet the merciful Thoughts of God in reality do exceed, and are above all such Apprehensions that you or any can take up, as much as the Heavens are above the Earth, and are still higher also, since his Mercies are *above the Heavens:* For lo! *these are but parts of his Ways, but how little a Portion is heard of him,* or apprehended by us Men, or that can be spoken by himself, unto what is in himself? *Job* 26. 14.

I have enlarged upon these *Reasons* not so much for Conviction (which in so plain a Point needed not) as to stir up Believers to the frequent Exercise of this so useful an Experiment, wherein when Faith is versed it will find an abundant entrance into every Promise that belongeth unto Mercy in any kind, as well as in the Point of Forgiveness; and yet this Practice is neglected by Christians, for the want of which their Faith continues weak and narrow, and their Joy and Comfort in believing kept low and small, and God himself bereft of much of the Glory would arise unto his Mercy, if together with the Promises laid hold on, they would have recourse unto the Spring and Fountain, the Mercies of God. But the narrowness of their Spirits in believing causeth them to content themselves with a single and bare view of the things promised, and of the Promises of them under the Notion of being the Word of God, but they enlarge not in considering the rich Mercies of God that moved him to make those Promises. They have the Consideration of the Truth of God in them to perform, but expatiate not to the Mercies that both gave the Promises, and is the Cause of all the Causes of the Performance.

My Advice to Believers is, to meditate much upon, and to study the infinite Riches of God's Mercies, as the Scriptures so frequently (and therefore call for the like frequency of thoughts upon them in our Hearts) have set them forth unto us. Let us still join them all together upon any great and solemn occasion of exercising Faith on Promises; and as in the Point of Thanksgiving after Mercies received, we have many Precedents *of Saints recounting the Loving-kindness of the Lord according to all he hath bestowed on them, according to his Mercies, and according to the multitude of his Loving-kindnesses,* Isa. 63. 7. so in like manner our Faith should in its pursuit to obtain Mercies, collect and make the like Catalogue, as we have been even now abundantly instructed: For hereby we shall greatly honour God, and strengthen our own Hearts.

Part I.

1. We shall honour God greatly, (to give Glory unto whom in the most ample manner, is the most proper use of Faith, *Rom.* 4. 20.) for thereby we acknowledge and do Homage to his Mercies as the universal Cause of all: for this is an undoubted Maxim, that what is first in any kind, is the universal Cause of all that kind. Consider then in God all that is Mercy in any kind, and he being originally and only merciful as well as only good, all else of Mercy must hold its Tenour of that Mercy that is in him. This I understand to be the full of that Title given him by the Apostle, 2 *Cor.* 1. 3. *The Father of Mercies*, i. e. he being a Fulness of Mercy in himself first, he became *the Father of all Mercies*, of what kind soever. He is the first in that kind; Mercy it self is his Nature, and all Mercies purposed, promised, performed, held forth, or applied to Faith, are all his immediate Children, and not one of them have any Existence but from him, and that considered as he is merciful
Jam. 1. 17. too. Thus in another respect he is stiled *the Father of Lights*, in respect of Heavenly Gifts from above, they holding in chief of him as such in that kind of Effects: like as the Sun (to which the Allusion manifestly there is) may be called *the Father*, or first Original of all Heavenly Light that comes down upon the World from it self, or from Stars that have their Light from it.

2. And also this course of meditating on the Riches of God's Mercies will prove most comfortable to us, for 2 *Cor* 1. 3. now cited, where he propounds him to our Faith as the Father of Mercies, he adds this other immediately, *the God of all Comforts*: for in exercising our Faith on him *as a Father of Mercies*, we shall find him to be a God of Comfort to us, whilst we are but Expectants and Waiters on him by Faith all along until the Performance.

3. And by virtue of his Mercies being the universal, supream and soveraign Cause of all Mercies, Promises, *&c.* it holds good that our Faith may have a free, ample and immediate Recourse unto them in all Cases, or Occasions whatsoever. For the Law or Privilege that accompanies his being the first Cause in other kind of Effects, doth by Analogy hold in this. Take him as he is *primus Motor*, the first and universal Cause of all Being and Motion, and it is a Maxim universally consented to by all Divines, That altho there be a Chain of Second Causes subordinate one to another, that have a Power each to bring forth their proper Effects, (as the Sun brings forth Light, and that Light Heat and Warmth, and that Warmth quickens and enlivens the Seeds and Roots in the Earth, and they bring forth Herbs, which Herbs and Flowers have divers Colours and Qualities they are adorned withal) yet God, who is the first and universal Cause, hath an immediate *Influence* and *Concurrence* into all and each, (as immediately into the very last as into the first) and *that a far greater* than they have all or severally into their Effects; so as God not only works *by them*, but with them, and he as immediately causeth the Light to quicken Plants, as to send out Light, and as immediately he causeth the Plants to bring forth Flowers, yea and that last Effect too, those Orient Colours with which the Lilies (that are our Tulips) are array'd above *Solomon* in all his Royalty; yet these Particulars are immediately attributed unto God more than unto their Second Causes, *If God* (says our Saviour) *so clothe the Grass of the Field*, Mat. 6. 28, 30. Luke 12. 17, 28. and indeed *he works all in all*, 1 Cor. 12. 6. I need not insist on it further, being it is but for Illustration; be you only exhorted to hold this Golden Chain and Descent of Mercies let down to your Faith to lay hold upon: See his Thoughts and Purposes to have Mercy immediately flowing from the essential Mercies of his Nature, and then regard his Promises of bestowing such, and Mercies, as another Link let down from his Purposes. And tho the Faith of a Believer lays hold on these Promises as on what are next it, yet those first and essential Mercies (so celebrated in his Word) do immediately touch, influence and reach unto all and each of these, unto the last as well as the first, to give Subsistence to them, and to make all good to the Faith of a Sinner. And hence the Faith of Believers, whilst it clasps it self into the Promise of Forgiveness, or any other Promise in the Word, may not only remotely depend on God's Mercies, (as a Man that hangs his whole Weight upon the lowest Link of a Chain, may be said to hang also upon the uppermost, to which all are in Subordination fastened) but he may in and with the Promise have an immediate recourse to the top and supream Mercies themselves, for they are ready and present with the Declaration of his Word, to make them good and real to the Faith of a Sinner, for whose sake and comfort they are and were written. He may bring down

down the Consideration of all these Mercies into every such Promise, *&c.* to strengthen his Heart in believing, and in treating with God for Forgiveness, for they are the original Cause of those Promises, and all Promises of Mercy are immediately conjunct unto, and dependent on the Mercies in God's Nature; even as all particular Rivers depend upon the universal Ocean from which they all come, and into which they run, as *Solomon* tells us, *Eccles.* 1. 7. and each of them have the whole Sea to maintain and feed them: And as they flow also into the Sea, and every Vessel small or great that floats in any of those particular Rivers hath an open Passage into the Main, keeping to the course of that River; so is it here between the Mercies of God, the Ocean, and the Current of Promises of Salvation, and the Faith of a Believer. And in this case there is that Privilege which often falls not out in such as we have alluded to, *viz.* that the smallest Rivolet of Salvation running in the Promises may bear up a Vessel of *Mercy*, and may be for his Supply, if he thinks or finds he wants Water, and sticks in the deeps of Mire and Quicksand. The Believer's Faith hath the freedom and liberty to suck and draw in the Ocean of God's Mercies, to draw (if it were possible) the whole of the Sea it self to make a full Stream for its Support, and to help it off a ground, and to help its being born aloft above all Mire of Temptations. Nor are there any Stints set how much or how little it may let in; and to confirm this, why should not Faith as well have this immediate recourse (in and with the Promises whilst yet unperformed) unto these essential Mercies afore-hand, to bestow and give forth the things promised, as well as after in thanksgiving (when we have received the Mercies as performed unto us) we bless God for them, and we celebrate all those essential Mercies in God as the original and immediate Causes of them? Thus *Nehemiah* did, *Neh.* 9. 17, 18, 19, 20, *&c.* The great return which the *Gentiles*, and all the Nations in the World are said to bring into God (when converted by the Gospel) as the richest Present of Thankfulness, is set out by this, *to glorify God for his Mercy*, Rom. 15. 9. Now there is the same reason for one as for the other, and we shall find that in the Exercise hereof, and treating with God thereby, there will flow in upon our Souls an abundance of Strength and Consolation, even Spring-Tides of them, to fill the Channels of the Promises, and also of our Hearts that give themselves up to them.

Use 2. I shall yet farther, by way of Use and Application, enlarge this Head, by adding, that this Comprehension or Intuition of the Mercies in God's Nature, will also prove a great Perswasive and Encouragement to a bringing on *an Hope* in Mens Souls, an Hope of God's Willingness to pardon themselves in particular. And this is a matter of great moment, it being found in ordinary and common Experience, that whilst humbled Souls are helped so far on in their way of believing, as to acknowledg the truth of God's Intentions in the Promises of Forgiveness, and the reality of the Performance to some or other, yet still they stick or waver, whether *God be willing to pardon them in particular.* Now whatever other Encouragements unto such a Soul others will alledg, whereof there may be many, yet I shall insist on this one, and that alone, it lying in my way, and being sutable to the Design of my Discourse; That if God but possesses and fill thy Soul with an ample and enlarged Apprehension of the Mercies that are in himself, this will create withal an Encouragement to thee, that he intends good to thy Soul in particular. As the Flood when it rose higher and higher, did lift up together with it self the Ark; so an inuring thy Soul to those Comprehensions will insensibly elevate and raise up thy Soul to a Confidence, that God doth intend all Good to thee. Look as if one that is timorous and unused to travel in great Waters, should be set in never so safe a Vessel in the midst of the Sea, or great Over-flow, where he saw himself environed about with nothing but Waves, he would fear his being drowned and cast away; so on the contrary, if you set the most weak and fearful Soul in the full view and prospect of God's Mercies, and the vast Ocean thereof, that he sees neither Shore nor Bottom, this poor, but otherwise tumbled Soul, will soon take Heart and Courage to it self. For,

1. The full and clear Revelation of any Divine Truth in a way of Subsistence to a Man's Soul, doth leave some Application of it self to a Man's Soul. And if a Discovery be made of good things, the Manifestation thereof doth usually leave an Encouragement in the Heart, that they belong and appertain unto ones self. The very Manifestation that God makes of them (when God makes it) carries so much engraven

engraven in it. As this is found true in Experience, so that Definition of Faith, Part I. *Heb.* 11. 1, 2. confirms it, even that the main of Faith lies in a Conviction of the Substance of the things themselves, which when it is made in the abundancy of the Object revealed, the very sight and presence thereof is that which mainly draws in the Heart to apply it, and cleave and adhere unto it for its ease in particular. The truth of this might be abundantly made out, and it holds good in the particular Point before me in a more especial manner, by how much the infinite Sweetness of God's Mercy hath a Magnetick or a Loadstone-Virtue in it, by alluring (as *Hosea*'s Phrase is, *Hos.* 2. 14.) to attract and draw in the Heart unto them, and cause Men to think that they may come to have a part and portion in them. Whilst they deeply consider that there is such an height and depth of Mercy, a bottomless Gulf in God's Heart, it induceth the Soul to cast Anchor within the Vail, as Mariners do their Anchors in the bottom of the Sea blindfold: Which Anchor is an hope of Mercy for a Man's self upon what he clearly as yet sees not to belong unto him.

2. For the Confirmation hereof (besides this general Ground) I observe, that when God himself doth set himself to draw Men unto him, to turn to him, and to to believe and lay hold on his Mercy, and would perswade them thereunto, the most efficacious course he takes is, in the most ample manner that may be in the first and chief place, to possess the Hearts of those he addresseth his Invitations unto of those infinite Riches of Grace that are in his Heart and Nature, only in a general Declaration of them only, whilst yet in applying of them and of the Promises to the Persons, he is pleased to give but imperfect Intimations and suspensive Discourses of what he will do for them in particular. That one Instance in *Joel* 2. 13, 14. may sufficiently serve for many others; for the thing he there instantly exhorts unto is this, *Therefore also now, saith the Lord, turn unto me with all your Heart*, &c. But what are the Encouragements or Invitations by which he would induce them to it? What Grounds doth he propose unto their Faith? They are two. The first and great one is, the Royal Declaration of the Mercies that are in the Nature of God barely proposed, and it is the same in the very words with that of his old and first Proclamation so often repeated throughout all Ages (which he will for ever abide by) *Exod.* 34. for so he begins, *For he is gracious and merciful, slow to Anger, and of great Kindness, and repenteth him of the Evil.* 2. There are and use to be in the Word more particular Promises, wherein he far more utters what his Will and Resolution is for shewing Mercy unto those whom he speaks to. Now indeed you will find that some Promises are also annexed hereunto in this his Exhortation, and both intended to provoke them to believe and turn to God; but I beseech you to observe the vast and strange difference, that is, the manner of his declaring the first and the latter.

The first, *viz.* magnifick Description of his Nature, he utters in the fullest and most enlarged, absolute, assertory way that possibly might be. He proclaims that with open Mouth, and speaks plainly without Reservation or Hesitation: That Magnifick Description of himself he utters with open Mouth in the fullest and amplest manner that possible might be: But the second, *viz.* the Promise made to the Persons, and the Things promised, he is pleased but to mutter, (as I may so speak) and concerning this he says no more but, *Who knows if God will repent and leave a Blessing behind him?* He is sparing and reserved (you see) in this way of the Declaration of his Will: yea, and elsewhere, the hope he gives as to this part is yet more slender; for but to an *It may be*, *Amos* 5. 15. *Zeph.* 2. 3. yea, but to an *If there may be hope*, Lament. 3. 29. To say that *there is hope*, gives us a sight but a far off: but to say, *If there may be hope*, gives a far more uncertain Sound; yet this is what God doth in this sort of Declaration concerning what his Will in Promises to these Persons lets fall to them.

By all which we may clearly see, that it is the certain and clear Conviction and Evidence of the Grace in God, tho joined but with such Promises that speak but indefinitely, and contain but imperfect obscure Hints and Intimations, and that give but a slender hope (as one would give of good-will to a Man in his particular) that it is this Conviction which hath the Strength and attractive Influence in it, and is sufficient with those Promises to draw in the Soul to cast it self upon God, and to hope in his Mercy. And this Inference from that fore-mentioned Passage in *Joel* is strong and clear, for it must not be denied, that God in those Treaties and Proposals to Men, did apply himself to work Faith in them, and accordingly gave forth

forth what was most effective, at least sufficient, to beget Faith in Mens Hearts, and to bring them in to him. And further, it must be own'd, that the great God (the Proposer here) knowing our Frame, and what it is wherein the Unbelief in Mens Hearts doth mostly lie; did therefore apply himself, and frame his Exhortations up of such things as would be most effective of Faith in us, and best able to remove the contrary Obstruction of Unbelief. Now we plainly see, that in these Passages he spreads the Plaister thickest and deepest with that Medicinal Salve, *viz.* of the Display of the Mercies of God's Nature, and but thinly with that other of suspensive Intimations of his good Will to the Persons in the Promises annexed. And therefore that which is the most hardned Core of Unbelief in us, must be understood to consist chiefly in the doubting of the Plenteousness and Fulness of Mercies that are in him to pardon us. This is the great and deep *Sore* of *Mens Hearts*, if Men would but know it in themselves, as *Solomon* speaks; and the Virtue and Influence of this sovereign Plaister mentioned, is it which doth dissolve that Core and Work of the Devil; and in our believing of these things of our God it is that the main stress of Faith doth lie, (though Men discover it not) and in that Point their Faith needs most to be strengthned and relieved, rather than in the other. And this one thing apprehended once, tho but with slender half Promises of that Mercy to us, which are but Intimations rather than Promises, will yet be abundantly effective to perswade the Heart, and beget in it a good Hope through Grace, of Mercy for it self, and thereupon to come in and turn unto God, who thereupon will reveal himself in other Promises more fully to his Soul.

Book I.

1 Kings 8.

CHAP. XV.

That God, consider'd as justifying the Ungodly, is the Object of Faith. How we may be said to be justified from Eternity. In what Sense it is to be understood that we were justify'd upon the Resurrection of Christ. How we are said to be justified when we believe.

ROM. viii. 33.

Who shall lay any thing to the Charge of God's Elect? It is God that justifieth.

IN seeking Justification our Faith must have Recourse to God, as justifying also. Thus in the Words of the Text it is express'd; *It is God that justifies.* And on this the Apostle builds his Confidence, as well as upon *that*, that Christ died: [illegible]fore we find, that as Christ dying, so God as justifying is made the Object of [illegible] *Rom* 4. 5. *That believeth on him that justifieth the Ungodly: i. e.* who be[illegible] God the Father, imputing Christ's Righteousness to Persons ungodly. [illegible] you shall find that the Righteousness we are justified by, is called as [illegible] *Righteousness of God*, as of Christ. Thus *Rom.* 1. 17. *The Righteousness* [illegible] *revealed from Faith to Faith.* For as Faith looks at this Righteousness as [illegible] by Christ, so appointed by God, and bestowed by him, and imputed by [illegible] 2 *Cor.* 5. 21. *For he hath made him to be Sin for us, who knew no Sin, that we* [illegible] *be made the Righteousness of God in him.* We see Christ there to be the meri[illegible]ous Cause of that Righteousness, for his Soul paid for it: but his Father was the original Cause of all, for he made him Sin for us, and he makes his Righteousness ours: It is call'd *the Righteousness of Christ*, as he is the Worker of it, but the Righteousness of God as he is the Appointer and Imputer of it. So *Rom.* 3. 25, 26. it is called *the Righteousness of God*, for a double Reason; because God sent forth and appointed Christ, *ver.* 25. and because he is the Justifier by it, *ver.* 26. It is called *the Righteousness of Faith*, as the Apprehender of it; *Rom.* 4. 13. It is call'd *Man's Righteousness*, (Job 13. 26. *He will render to Man his Righteousness*) because it was extended to him, and paid for him. Yea, let me add this farther, that God justifying is the main and ultimate Object of your Faith. Christ, though he is the first and next to you, yet God is the ultimate, in whom Faith rests. Therefore Believers (1 *Pet.* 1. 21.) are said *by him to believe in God*, that their Faith and Hope might

Part I.

might be in God. Thus as the Promise brings you to Christ, so Christ brings you to God. The Reason of this is, because God hath as great a hand in justifying you as Christ; yea he is the principal in it; 2 *Cor.* 5. 18. *And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the Ministry of Reconciliation.* Therefore in the Matter of Justification (*Isa.* 53. 11.) God calls him his Servant; *My Servant shall justify many.* It was God against whom principally our Sins are committed, and unto whom the Satisfaction of Christ was paid, and by whom it was ordained, and by virtue of whose Decree it hath Power to justify. As the Value of it to justify us depends on the Worth that is in Christ, so the Acceptation of it for us depends upon God's Will. *By which Will ye are sanctified through the offering of the Body of Jesus,* Heb. 10. 10. It is the Will of God spoken of before, which Christ came to accomplish. It was God that appointed the Persons for whom Christ died, and Christ as Mediator put not in a Man but whom his Father gave him; and then the great Blessing of Pardon comes to be bestowed; God guides and directs, and orders the bestowing of it, and sets his Hand to the Act of Grace, e're Pardon comes down. Christ's Merits have their Efficacy to justify us *ex compacto,* from Agreement between the Father and the Son. For tho the Merits are in themselves superabundant, ὑπερεκπερισσεύσε, 1 *Tim.* 1. 14. the Apostle therefore shewing how the Righteousness of Christ is more to us than *Adam*'s Sin, tells us also, that Free Grace must put in before it can be accepted for us, *Rom.* 5. 17.

There are two things in Justification.

1. The Righteousness imputed, and that is Christ's, and to him we go for it.
2. The Act of Imputation; the accounting it mine or thine, and that is the Act of God primarily.

Justification is attributed as much to free Grace as to Christ's Righteousness; for both are joined; *Rom.* 3. 24, 25. *Being justified freely by his Grace, through the Redemption that is in Jesus Christ: Whom God hath set forth to be a Propitiation, through Faith in his Blood, to declare his Righteousness for the remission of Sins that are past, through the Forbearance of God.* Therefore Faith looks as much to free Grace ordaining and imputing, as to Christ performing. In a word, God's free Grace is the Original; Christ's Righteousness is instrumental to the Manifestation of Free Grace; and Faith is the Instrument of apprehending all, and yet God still is in all, 2 *Cor.* 5. 18. and Christ is all in all, *Col.* 3. 11. And Faith as it is our Act, is nothing at all in our Justification but only as it apprehends all.

Now for a Direction concerning God justifying as the Object of your Faith, you are to consider all the Acts and Ways of God justifying, and to direct you to a right conceiving of God as justifying, you must know that there are *tria momenta,* or *three Stages of Motion* in this way: I do not say that there are three Parts of Justification it self; which, as it is applied to us, is *actus individuus,* an individual Act; but three several Steps, three Paces and Progresses of God, (as I may call them) tho in respect of the Materials which Justification consisteth of, it is *actus totalis,* an entire Act, a compleat Discharge from all Sin, and a perfect Investiture with the whole Righteousness of Christ. God pardons not the Debt by halves, nor bestows Christ's Righteousness by parcels, but entitles us to the whole in every of those Moments of Justification: yet in regard of our Investiture into this, there are several Pauses, or several Iterations of this Act; as in passing over an Estate in Land when the Deeds are drawn, written and sealed, there is a Title or Interest given in to the whole Estate; and then again when Possession is further given, it is not an Interest into any new Parcel, but both convey the whole Estate, yet they may be called several Acts of Conveyance, and of Title and Admission into it; and such several Acts of Investiture of us into this whole Grace of Justification, were performed towards us by God, which go to the Accomplishment of it. This also answers to the distinct Works of the three Persons, who as they have a distinct Hand in the whole Work of Redemption, so also in this main Point of our Justification.

1. The first Progress or Step was at the first Covenant-making and striking of the Bargain from all Eternity. We may say of all spiritual Blessings in *Christ,* what is said of *Christ,* that *their Goings forth are from everlasting.* Justified then we were when first elected, though not in our own Persons, yet in our Head, as he had our Persons then given him, and we came to have a Being and Interest in him. *You are in Christ,* (saith the Apostle) and so we had the Promise made of all spiritual Blessings

Blessings in him, and he took all the Deeds of all in our Name; so that in Christ we were blessed *with all spiritual Blessings*, Ephes. 1. 3. as we are blessed with all other, so with this also, that we were justified then in Christ. To this purpose is that Place, *Rom.* 8. 30. where he speaks of all those Blessings which are applied to us after Redemption, as Calling, Justification, Glorification, as of things already past and done, even then when he did predestinate us; *Whom he hath predestinated, them he hath called, them he hath justified, them he hath glorified.* He speaks it as in the time past; neither speaks he thus of these Blessings, as past simply in regard of that Presence, in which all things stand before him from Eternity, all things both past, present and to come, being to him as present. Nor doth he speak it only in regard of a Resolution or Purpose taken up to call and justify, he *calling things that are not as if they were*, Rom. 4. 17. For thus it may be said of all his other Works towards the Creatures in common, that he hath created and preserved them from everlasting; but in a more special Relation are these Blessings decreed said to have been bestowed, because tho they existed not in themselves, yet they existed really in a Head that represented them and us, who was by, to answer for them, and to undertake for them, which other Creatures could not do; and there was an actual Donation and receiving of all these for us, (as truly as a Feoffee in Trust may take Lands for one unborn) by virtue of a Covenant made with Christ, whereby Christ had all our Sins imputed unto him, and so taken off from us, Christ having then covenanted to take all our Sins upon him, when he took our Persons to be his, and God having covenanted not to impute Sin unto us, but to look at him for the Payment of all, and at us as discharged. Of this seems that Place, 1 *Cor.* 5. 19. evidently to speak, as importing that everlasting Transaction, (as I have shewn) *God was in Christ reconciling the World unto himself, not imputing their Trespasses unto them: i. e.* not imputing them then when he was reconciling us unto himself in Christ. So as then God told Christ as it were, (for it was a real Covenant) that he would look for his Debt and Satisfaction of him, and that he did let the Sinners go free; and so they are in this respect justified from all Eternity. And indeed if the Promise of Life was then given us, (as the Apostle *Paul* speaks, *Tit.* 1. 2.) then also Justification of Life, without which we could not come to Life. Yet this is but the Inchoation, tho it be an estating us into the whole Tenure of Life.

In his Discourse of Christ the Mediator, Book 1. chap. 1. in Vol. 3. of his Works.

2. There is a farther Act of justifying us, which passeth from God towards us in Christ, upon the Payment and Performance by Christ at his Resurrection: for Jesus Christ, (who as he was one with us by Stipulation before, so then by Representation) at the time, the Fulness of the time of Payment appointed, (which the Apostle therefore calls the *due time*, Rom. 5. 6.) came into the World as our Surety, and as representing our Persons, as *Adam* once did; and at several Payments for three and thirty Years and upwards, at last finished all at his Death, and laid down the last Payment when he laid down his Life and his Body in the Grave, Sin and the Curse all the while holding him in Bands as a Debtor: but at that Instant when he arose, God then performed a farther Act of Justification towards *him*, and *us in him*, admitting him as our Advocate, into the *actual Possession of Justification of Life*, acquitting him from all those Sins which he had charged upon him. Therefore we read, that as Christ was made Sin in his Life and Death, so that he was justified also, 1 *Tim.* 3. 6. After he had said, that *he was manifested in the Flesh, i. e.* the Likeness of sinful Flesh, he says, he was *justified in the Spirit*, when by the Power of that eternal Spirit he was quickned, and so declared to be that righteous one with Power; at which time as he vindicated himself before Men, of all those Imputations laid on him by Men, as being an Impostor, (which when he was under the Curse, he lay under, but now was justified to all the World) so also before and by his Father he was discharged, and justified also from all those Debts he had before charged him with, as now having fully paid the utmost Farthing, and so received him up into Glory, as it follows in that Text. I say then, in the same Sense that God made him Sin, in the same Sense he is said to have justified him; and therefore *Heb.* 9. 28. it is said, he shall at the latter day appear without Sin; implying, that when he appeared here, he appeared with Sin: therefore there was a time when these Sins were taken off, and the first Moment of it was when he rose from under that State of *Humiliation*, (whereof the last Part was his lying in the Grave) and when he began to enter upon a glorified State, which was at his Resurrection. And

Part I. that he ſhould be thus juſtified, is not ſpoken of him abſtractly conſidered in himſelf, but as he hath us conjoined in him, and as he connotates us; this new Title to Life, and of being righteous, he entred not upon for himſelf alone, but he was an Attorney, took Poſſeſſion, and was admitted for us, and we by him as our Advocate: which I take to be the Meaning of that Place, *Rom.* 4. 25. *He died for our Sins, and roſe again for our Juſtification.* When he died then he paid our Debts, and God received from him the Price, and therefore the Matter of *Juſtification* is indeed the Merit of his Obedience and Death; but at his Riſing then the formal Act and Deed of Diſcharge was delivered to him by God, and that for our Juſtification: *He roſe for our Juſtification.* And our Juſtification is attributed to his Reſurrection, not only becauſe he roſe again to apply it, but principally in this reſpect, becauſe at his riſing he received it for us, for he being juſtified then, we were juſtified in him: and therefore as Juſtification in reſpect of the Matter imputed is attributed to his Death and Blood, (we were juſtified by his Blood) ſo the formal Imputation of it to us may be aſcribed to his Reſurrection, when the Diſcharge of all was reckoned to Chriſt. And in this reſpect, when the Apoſtle would ſhew them the Benefit and Neceſſity of Chriſt's Reſurrection in reſpect of themſelves, he ſays, 1 *Cor.* 15. 17. *If Chriſt be not riſen, your Faith is in vain, ye are yet in your Sins: i. e.* that altho Chriſt died for your Sins, and you had Faith in that his Death to be juſtified from your Sins, yet this Faith would be in vain, and neither it nor Chriſt's Death would juſtify you; and your Title to Juſtification were nothing worth, if Chriſt be not riſen: for tho you did believe, and could ſay the Money was paid for you, if Chriſt had not riſen to take Delivery and Seiſin of the Eſtate in your Names, your Plea would have been made void, the Formality of *Juſtification* being wanting. Now all this argues that our Juſtification hath a farther Dependance upon his Reſurrection than merely as to working Faith, and that he roſe not only to give us Faith, but that ſuppoſing we could have Faith in his Death, yet without his Reſurrection it had been in vain. For indeed this preſent State of our Juſtification by Faith depends upon that fore-paſſed Juſtification of his in our ſtead then: and as when he aſcended we aſcended with him, (and therefore we are ſaid now *to ſit together with him in heavenly Places*, Eph. 2. 6.) ſo when he was juſtified we were juſtified alſo in him; and as it may be ſaid, *Adam* condemned us all, and corrupted us all, when he fell, ſo did Chriſt then perfect us all, and God juſtified us all, when he died and roſe again.

But theſe two Acts of *Juſtification* are wholly out of us, immanent Acts in God; and tho they concern us, and are *towards us*, yet are not Acts of God *upon us*, they being performed towards us, not as actually exiſting in our ſelves, but only as exiſting in our Head, who covenanted for us, and repreſented us: So as tho by theſe Acts we are eſtated into a right Title to *Juſtification*, yet the Benefit and the Poſſeſſion of that Eſtate we have not without a farther Act to be paſſed upon us, whereby we have not as exiſting in our Head only (as a Feoffee in Truſt for us, as Children under Age) this excellent Grace given us, but are to be in our own Perſons, tho ſtill through Chriſt, poſſeſſed of it, and to have all the Deeds and Evidences committed to the Cuſtody and Apprehenſion of our Faith. We are in our own Perſons made true Owners and Enjoyers of it, which is then done at that Inſtant when we firſt believe; which Act is the Completion and Accompliſhment of the former, and is that great and famous *Juſtification* by Faith which the Scripture ſo much inculcates, and almoſt only mentioneth; yea, and ſo ſpeaks of it, as if we were not juſtified at all till then: So 1 *Cor.* 6. 9. *Such were ſome of you, but now ye are ſanctified, now ye are juſtified:* which before they were not; and therefore the Apoſtle ſpeaks of a *now* of *Juſtification*, being *now juſtified*, Rom. 5. 9. that is, *now we believe*, ver. 1. and ſo *ver.* 11. *By whom we have now received the Atonement*, becauſe tho it was given in Chriſt afore for us, yet then only we receive it; and therefore before Faith the Scripture pronounceth the very Elect, even thoſe whom Chriſt died for, *Children of Wrath as well as others*, till they believe, *Epheſ.* 2. 3. So as when we are ſaid to be *juſtified by Faith*, it is not only becauſe then Faith apprehends that *Juſtification* which was in God's Breaſt before, and that then we are juſtified merely *foro conſcientiæ*, tho before we were ſo in *foro Dei*, as much as ever (as ſome expreſs it); but further it muſt be ſaid, that even in *foro Dei*, in God's Court, and according to the Judgment of that open Court which God hath ſet up in his Word, and

and according to the Proceedings of his Word, (which is the Rule he professeth to judg Men by, and therein he keeps to the Rules of his Word, as Christ says, *I judg no Man, but the Word I speak shall judg you*, John 12. 47, 48.) God doth judg, and pronounceth his Elect ungodly and unjustified, till they believe; yea and by the Spirit of Bondage he testifies to their Consciences, that before Faith they are ungodly, unjustified, and Children of Wrath. If it were not a real Truth, the Spirit of Truth would not evidence this to them: so therefore when we are said to be *justified by Faith*, it implies more than a *Justification* in our Consciences, and causing us to apprehend our *Justification*, for upon believing there is an Act passeth from God which makes a real Change in our Estates, from a State of Ungodliness to an Estate of *Justification*; which is a real moral Change, as truly and as really as Sanctification is a physical Change, and that not only in our Apprehension and judging of our selves, but in the Course of God's Proceedings of Judgment upon us; that whereas before he by the Rules of his Word which he keeps to, would and must have proceeded with us as Persons ungodly, out of *Christ*, now according to those Rules he doth pronounce us just, and we come actually to have a real Claim, Title and Interest, according to Course of Law, (as we say) in *Justification*, which till now we were debarred of. Book I.

But the Question may be put, How could they be said to be justified afore, both from Eternity, and in Christ, if they may be truly said even in God's Judgment to be justified but *now*, and that they were till *now* unjustified?

The Answer is, That these seeming Contradictions, in diverse respects, are both true.

1. That before God, according to the Rules of his Word, (which are the Rules of his Proceedings before Men, being God's revealed Will) they are as yet unjustified; but according to those secret Passages of his secret Will transacted *with Christ*, and to which he is privy, they are justified Persons before him.

2. Tho the Person abstractly considered is always justified before God, yet the Person concretely taken, as invested with, and remaining in an Estate of Unbelief, is in relation to that Estate, according to the Rules of his Word, unjustified: So as the Change is first, and primarily in regard of the State of the Person from Unbelief to Faith, and then it looks towards the Person himself.

3. Their Justification before Faith, *coram Deo, in the sight of God*, is of them not as actually existing in themselves, but only as they were represented in their Head; for their Persons, as considered as represented in Christ, did in him, as their Head, receive *Justification*, and all Blessings else, but not in themselves do they receive them actually as existing until Faith; as we are said then to be condemned and corrupted in the first *Adam*, when he sinned, as representing us, but we are in our own Persons not actually corrupted till we exist and are born from him. So as to conclude this, they are said before Faith to be justified in Christ by Representation only, and not as in themselves: They are said to be in themselves actually justified through Christ after Faith, but they cannot be said to be justified of themselves without Christ neither, before nor after Faith. As the Closure of these three Advancements and Passings forth of our Justification, take these two Observations concerning them all.

Obs. 1. That each of these being in and through *Jesus Christ*, who is our *Righteousness*, and so they all depend upon him, therefore these three Progresses of God going on to justify us, depend upon three several Acts of Jesus Christ, which as he puts forth, so doth God also answerably put forth a new Step in this Work.

1. When Christ did but undertake for us, and took by Covenant our Sins off from us, and indented with and entred into Bond to God for our Debts, God then discharged us in his secret Purpose; and knowing Christ able and faithful, expected all from him.

2. When in the Fulness of Time he had performed what he undertook, as Christ did a new Act, so did God also therein justify both him and us.

3. When Christ by his Spirit knits us to him, and works Faith in us, to look towards that Satisfaction and Justification wrought for us, then doth God put forth another Act, (and it is the last Act, and the Accomplishment of all) and pronounceth us righteous in our selves through him.

Part I. *Obs.* 2. All these Acts of *Justification*, as they depend upon Christ, so upon our being one with Christ; and look what kind of Union there is, answerable is the Act of Justification past forthwith. From all Eternity we were one with Christ by Stipulation, he by a secret Covenant undertaking for us, and answerably that Act of God's justifying us was but as we were considered in his Undertaking. When Christ died and rose again, we were in him by Representation, as performing it for us, and no otherwise; but as so considered we were justified. But now when we come in our Persons, by our own Consent, to be made one with him actually, then we come in our Persons through him to be personally and in our selves justified, and receive the Atonement by Faith.

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OF THE OBJECT and ACTS OF Justifying Faith.

PART I.
Of the Object of Faith.

BOOK II.

The Second Object of Faith, Jesus Christ. Of our being drawn to him by the Father, and our treating with him for an Interest in his Person and Salvation by him. That Christ as God-man in one Person, is the Object of our Faith. That as a spiritual Messiah and Saviour he is propounded to our Faith. That not only Christ in his Person, but in all that he hath done and suffer'd for our Salvation, and now doth for us in Heaven, is the Object of our Faith.

CHAP. I.

That the Mercies in God's Nature are not the Object of our Faith, but as they are considered together with Christ. That God's Mercies, and Jesus Christ, are accordingly propounded jointly to our Faith.

THERE are two grand Objects our Faith doth act upon; God the Father, and Jesus Christ; the Holy Spirit being the Person who anoints us, generally teaching us all things. Our Saviour Christ therefore, *John* 17. 3. having spoken of giving eternal Life to them that believe, superadds, *This is eternal Life, to know thee* (the Father) *the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent:* Thereby setting forth them two as the Objects which our Faith and Knowledg are carried out unto for eternal Life; which eternal Life is begun in this World, by the Knowledg of Faith, and perfected by the Knowledg of Sight, in the World to come.

That which in the Father our Faith doth especially act upon, are the Riches of his Grace: And Free Grace is indeed, and in Reality, but the Love of God in Election, tho uttered in absolute Promises and Declarations, yet expressed indefinitely as to Persons. God indeed absolutely declareth in the Promises and Covenant of Grace, what his Heart was, and is, unto an Elect Company, but conceals the Persons, (which Promises I therefore term indefinite) thereby ascertaining us, that there are some of Mankind he so loves resolvedly and unchangeably, whom he intends

Part I. tends therein; which Promises shall infallibly take hold on them: And that Covenant, and those Promises I call absolute, because they promise to give the very Conditions required to Salvation in that Covenant. The other Object of our Faith is Jesus Christ, both in his Person, and his Suffering, Death, Resurrection, Intercession; and likewise the Benefits that are the Fruits of all these. And our Faith is to aim at the having Fellowship with him in all these, as the Object of Faith, as well as the Free Grace of God the Father. In all which Benefits which our Faith seeks from these two, I might quote many Scriptures, wherein Christ and the Free Grace of the Father are still joined, and go hand in hand. I Instance particularly in Justification for all the rest, in which there is both the Grace of the Father, and the Righteousness of the Son, that concur both thereunto; and our Faith is distinctly to exercise it self upon both these, for obtaining Justification. This Conjunction you see in *Rom.* 3. 24. *Being justified freely by his Grace, through the Redemption that is in Christ Jesus.* You have it also in *Rom.* 5. 15. *The Grace of God*, that is, of God the Father, and *the Gift by Grace*, (the Gift of Righteousness and Justification thereby) *which is by one Man Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.* And again he says at *ver.* 17. *They which receive abundance of Grace, and of the Gift of Righteousness*, &c. *A Righteousness by which we are made righteous*, ver. 19. There is both the Grace of God in the Heart of the Father; and there is the Gift of Righteousness by Grace, *which is by one Man Jesus Christ*, as by whose Righteousness we are made righteous; and these concur to our *Justification of Life*, as it is termed in *ver.* 18. Now there being these two grand Objects of the Faith of all Believers for the first Benefit they are brought to seek at first, all Converts under the Gospel are therefore brought to a distinct Communion and Fellowship, (through Faith) both with the Father, and also with the Son, to obtain both Grace and Righteousness from both, and afterwards in the Course of their Lives they enjoy a distinct Fellowship with both Father and Son; 1 *John* 1. 3. *These things I write to you, that you may have Fellowship with us; and truly our Fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ:* With these two objectively is our Fellowship transacted. The Holy Ghost is he who (1 *John* 2. 20.) is stiled *the Anointing of us and our Eyes*, to converse with these; and by whom we *know all things*; but our Fellowship is objectively with the Father, and with his Son. In the Old Covenant there were two grand Utensils placed at the uppermost End of the Holy of Holies, (which the believing Jews had their Eyes upon, whilst they *look'd towards the Holy Temple*) the *Ark*, and the *Mercy-Seat:* The *Ark* was the Type of Christ's Person; the *Mercy-Seat*, as the Apostle denominates it, *Heb.* 7. was the Type of God's Grace joined with Christ's Person, as atoned and made propitious by Jesus Christ: for the word in the Hebrew signifies *Expiation*, which alone was made by Christ, but imports therewith *pardoning Mercy* through his Expiation; and so it respected at once both the Grace in God atoned, and also Christ; who is therefore, *Rom.* 3. 25. stiled *the Propitiation for our Sins.* And yet withal that *Propitiatory* hath the Name of *Mercy-Seat* given it by the Apostle himself, *Heb.* 9. 5. by which Name our Translators have therefore, in *Exod.* 25. 17. rendred the Hebrew. Thus 'twas in the Type; and the thing signified thereby is that *Throne of Grace* whereat Christ officiates; as the same Apostle in Substance stiles it, *Heb.* 4. I cite it to shew, that these two, *Ark* and *Mercy-Seat*, were immediately and inseparably conjoined together, and the one set upon the other; as if you should set two plain Chests one on the top of the other immediately, and nothing between. The *Mercy-Seat* was uppermost on the top of *the Ark*, as you read *Exod.* 25. 21. this being imported thereby, that all the Grace in God's Heart flowing to us is through Christ, and as supported by Christ, and his Mediation and Expiation, so as it is God's Grace and Mercy as in Christ. And unto these two the Eyes of the believing Jews were cast, and had their Expectation fixed for Grace and Mercy, as appears by the Instance of that humbled Publican, *Lord be merciful to me a Sinner:* Whose Coming to the Temple to worship, as it doth shew him to be a Jew or Jewish Proselyte, so the word wherein Christ forms that his Petition is Old Testament-Language; as of one who looking towards the *Propitiatory*, or Mercy-Seat, prays to God to this effect; *Lord, be mercifully propitious to me, from thy Mercy-Seat*; which in Gospel-Language is *from thy Throne of Grace.* And furthermore observe, that these two were both of a like Size and Proportion, *as long, as broad, as deep*, the one as t'other, (*Exod.* 25. 10, 17. compared) to

to shew that however the essential Grace and Mercy in God's Nature is essentially infinite; yet his dispensatory Mercy, and Grace laid up for us, and intended towards us Sinners of the Sons of Men, are of the same Extent and Commensuration with Christ, and *his Merits and Righteousness*, &c. because all that Grace which God hath intended to bestow upon us, for the Matter, Manner, or Measure, is but commensurable, and of like Extent with all that Christ purchased and procured, and is no more nor no less: As also because that these two must never be separated; for God hath conjoined them thus closely and immediately one to the other, only God's Grace is uppermost, and the Fountain of us, and Christ, and all; and the Glory of it is the supreme End of all, *Ephes.* 1. 5, 6. Some Converts indeed more distinctly, and withal amply and abundantly, have their Hearts run out sometimes to God the Father, and pursue after the Attainment of his Love and Grace; and have their Hearts drawn and set more largely to treat with the Father, and his Grace, and to seek the obtaining more frequently the Manifestations of his Grace, and have their Hearts more intent upon what his Work for their Salvation in his Heart is. They consider that it was he who first decreed Christ, and our Salvation through him, and called Christ to die for us, and gave us to Christ, *&c.* and with a peremptory and unchangeable Love ordained the Salvation of some through Faith and Holiness: And accordingly they desire to have the Manifestations of his Grace made forth upon their Souls. But others have the Lord Jesus Christ in their Eye, and treat with him through his Death, Redemption, and the Works which he performed towards it, in a more large and abundant manner. But tho his Heart goes out thus more amply to Jesus Christ, and hath Communion with him and his Righteousness, yet he believeth also on God the Father, that ordained and sent his Son out of his Grace, and believes on him as the Pardoner of his Sin, *& è contra.* He that hath Communion with God the Father in seeking his Love, he doth it in Christ impliedly, as through whose Mediation he hath Access unto the Father. But still the Eyes of either may be more setly and wistly set, and fixed upon one of them, as on Christ, or the Father more explicitly, than on the other. It is what the Apostle intimates, 1 *John* 2. 13. (I cite it to this very purpose, to shew that sometimes the Heart of one Christian runs out more to the Father, and at other times more to the Son) *I write unto you Fathers, because you have known him that is from the Beginning.* (Who is that? Jesus Christ; *cap.* 1. 1. *That which was from the Beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our Eyes, which we have looked upon, and our Hands have handled of the Word of Life:* that is apparently Jesus Christ.) Then again says he, *I write unto you little Children, because ye have known the Father.* Here the Spirits of the one run out at differing Seasons, sometimes more to God the Father, sometimes more to Jesus Christ. I will not stand to explain whom he means by *Fathers*, and whom by *Babes*, (nor need I do it as to my purpose) it's enough for the present that it is ascribed to the same sort of Persons at different times, that when they were Babes, they knew the Father; when Fathers, they knew Christ more intently. The Reason of which different Intentions of our Spirits is, that our Souls are narrow Vessels, and use not to be intent on two so eminent Objects at once, which therefore take their turns in our Hearts, that we take in sometimes the one, and sometimes the other.

Book 2.

There must also be allowed a great Variety of God's Method herein. The Apostles, tho living under Christ's Ministry, yet their Faith had acted a long while *on God*, far more than unto *Christ*, of whom then they had but the Old Testament-Notion and Conceptions, tho they believed he was *he, the Messiah* already come; John 14. 1. *Ye believe on God, believe also on me.* And so it is now with many Christians, who at first have Recourse to Old Testament-Promises, which speak of Grace and Mercy in God for Pardon of Sin, through a promised *Messiah*, and so treat with God for their Salvation: and tho they do it with an intermingled Knowledg of Christ, yet not so much applying themselves to him. And the Reason is, because it is *God* in whose Name the Arraignment for the Guilt of all our Sins is in Scripture drawn: And therefore the Nature of the thing when we are convinc'd of Sin, calls for it, that we apply our selves to him, whose Grace and Mercy is to forgive us: And Repentance being that Grace, which in a special manner is called for towards God, *Acts* 20. 21. hence therefore (tho with imperfect Actings of Faith, and Hopes of Mercy from God) it is taken for granted, that it is in and through Christ, in

Part I. in whom God alone is merciful. Tho according unto *John* the Baptist's Ministry, (who directed to believe on Christ, in the Close and Issue of it) we come to Christ at last, yet at first we attend far more unto Repentance towards God; but God leaving us unto a Failure of Comfort from the Evidences thereof, (as to our discerning them) the Father sets our Hearts a going unto Jesus Christ amain, as sensible how much we had neglected him, and his Interest in our Salvation: and he sets us a work to seek and look for Justification from him with might and main; and then to come to God himself again for Mercy. But there are others who at first dash to believe, and fasten on Christ, at the Work of Humiliation; as the Jailor (in *Act.* 16. 31. where his first Conversion is recorded) comes to *Paul* trembling, being struck with a Sight of, and Terror for Sin, and cries out, *What shall I do to be saved?* The Apostle puts him upon Jesus Christ at very first: *Believe* (says he) *on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved.* The Apostle took the shortest Course with him, and thereupon his Heart entertained the Lord Jesus. But then read on the Story at *ver.* 34. and you will find that his believing on Christ brought him to God; for 'tis said, *He rejoiced, believing in God, with all his House:* whereby was answerably fulfilled that of 1 *Pet.* 1. 21. *Who by him* (namely Christ) *do believe in God, who raised him up from the dead, and gave him Glory, that your Faith and Hope might be in God.* And *Rom.* 5. shewing the Fruits of Faith, how that *being justified by Faith, we have Peace with God, thorow our Lord Jesus Christ,* ver. 1. And going on to other Effects of Faith, the last Fruit he mentions is in *ver.* 11. *Not only so* (says he) *but we also joy in God, thorow our Lord Jesus Christ.*

CHAP. II.

That when we come to Christ, and believe on him, there is a Concurrence and Consent of all the three Persons in the Godhead unto that great Work.

JOHN vi. 44 & 65 Verses compared.

No Man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no Man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.

I Design to prove from these Words, that as Christ is the Object of Faith, so when any Soul is converted, and drawn to believe on him, there is the Concurrence of all the three Persons in the Trinity to that Work, and that they all put forth conjointly a renewed Act of Agreement in it. I confess in this Text there is mention only of the Father, and his Consent in it, (for indeed it is hard for me to take a Text that will hold forth all three Persons together) but in this Chapter you have all three. You have the Father's Consent here in these Words; *No Man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him.* You have the Son's Consent; ver. 37. *Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.* And you have (as some interpret it) the Holy Ghost's also at the 33*d* Verse; *It is the Spirit that quickneth, the Flesh profiteth nothing; the Words that I speak unto you they are Spirit, and they are Life.* Tho I think by Spirit is there rather meant the Godhead quickning the humane Nature of Christ. This is a Subject of great and weighty Moment, and will be of use to you many ways, to quicken your Hearts: I will first open and prove it to you, and then make use of it.

When God doth convert and draw our Souls on to believe, we use to look upon the Work it self as a great Work wrought in our selves; and it is true (as I shall after shew) but there is more done for us in Heaven, than is done in our Hearts at that time. At that great Union which is made between Christ and the Soul, and the drawing on of the Heart to close with Christ, there is a special Council called; there is a Concurrence, a Consent, a joint Meeting of all three Persons to this great Work, and that in a special manner. Tho they concur in all Works, yet where a

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Council of them all is professedly call'd, there is a plain Note and Character of a more special and remarkable Concurrence. Thus at the making of Man especially they are all nam'd, as you read in *Gen.* 1. 26. that when God made Man, he called a Council; *Let us make Man*, (saith he) and all the three Persons did concur and join in that great Work. Now at the making of the New Man there is the like Council held, there is the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The Father draweth, the Son accepteth, and the Holy Ghost is the Instrument of both, and quickneth and enlivneth the Heart. Such a great Conjunction is a Matter of infinite Wonder; if you look into the Heavens you shall not see great Conjunctions of Planets every day. There hath been but seven since the Creation it self, and the Creation it self began with one of them. But here is a greater Conjunction in the Heaven of Heavens, when there is an Influence of all the three Persons into a Soul at its first turning to God. Book 2.

There are four great Conjunctions (as I may so speak) of these three Persons.

1. The one was from everlasting, at our Election, in which both Father, Son, and Holy Ghost had a hand.

2. The other was at our Redemption, when Jesus Christ himself was sealed up to be the Son of God; and at his Baptism the Father from Heaven appears and owns him, and the Holy Ghost descendeth like a Dove, and lighteth upon him. And there was the Son of God, the second Person, dwelling in the humane Nature. Thus did all these three meet together at that time. And upon the Cross likewise they did the like, for the Father's Hand bruised him: therefore he cries out to him, *My God, my God*, &c. but all that while the Holy Ghost supported and upheld him, and he was filled with the Spirit beyond measure for Strength to stand under the Weight of the Father's Wrath, for no created Strength could have done it. And he himself also, through the eternal Spirit, the Godhead dwelling in him, offered up himself as a Sacrifice to his Father, *Heb.* 9. 14.

3. The third Conjunction of them is, when Faith is wrought, when the Sinner is called to Christ, which I am now to speak of.

4. The last Conjunction is in Heaven, when God and all the three Persons shall be all in all for evermore; which is the great Conjunction indeed, and to which all the rest tend, and where they all center.

I remember, in *Acts* 14. 2. Faith is called *the Door of Faith.* Truly there are three Keys to open this Door, and they are severally in the Hands of those three Persons of the Trinity, and they all concur and bring their Keys with them when the Heart is opened, and the Soul is drawn to Christ.

Tho I dare not say that Faith on our Parts is always explicitely a Marriage-Act, or that the Soul did at first take Christ under the Nature and Consideration of a Husband explicitely so considered; yet the thing in it self, in the Nature of it, is a Marriage, and it is the Solemnization of the greatest Marriage that ever was but one, and that was when the humane Nature and the Son of God were married together, whereby that Man Christ Jesus became the natural Son of God. Now at this Marriage all the Trinity are present; and altho Christ is offered to the Soul at other times in the preaching of the Word, yet now he is actually given and bestowed. The Souls of all Believers were given to Jesus Christ from everlasting, *John* 17. 6. and Jesus Christ was given for thee upon the Cross; but when thou comest to believe, and God cometh to reveal Christ in thee and for thee, then he is actually given to thee even by the Father.

That I may express it to you, and tell you what great things are done in Heaven for you when your Hearts are drawn to believe, and then make it out when I have done:

1. Let me tell you, that when your Souls are first turned to God, and when you believe, tho perhaps you know neither the time nor the thing I now speak of, yet notwithstanding even at that time, first God the Father riseth up in Heaven, (as I may so express it;) and as Jesus Christ said to his Mother when he hung upon the Cross, *Woman, behold thy Son*; so saith God the Father, Son, yonder is a Soul which I gave thee from everlasting, which thou diedst for upon the Cross, and now is the Fulness of time come for to have Mercy upon that Soul, go take him, and own him for thine, and actually now possess him. This you have here in *John* 6. 37. *All that the Father gives me, shall come to me.* Here is, you see, a Giving before our Coming,

Part I. and it is a giving *de præsenti, at present*, to distinguish it from that of everlasting; a Deed of Gift made, and that by the Father; an actual Delivery and Seizin, whereby the Soul is put into the Hands of Jesus Christ. And the Father likewise he whispers to the Heart of the Sinner, wooes the Soul to come to Christ; and therefore the 43*d* Verse saith here, that *they shall be all taught of God*, that is, *the Father*: and that *no Man can come unto Christ, except the Father draw him*, ver. 44. It may be thou art at Church, or in the Assembly of the Saints, and there thou heareſt the Word preached, and perhaps standest in the Crowd mingled among many others; or it may be thou art at home, and there art weeping and bewailing thy lost Condition: saith God the Father unto Jesus Christ, Son, behold thy Spouse, behold yonder Soul that stands in such a Place, I'll marry you two before such time as this Soul stirs out of the Place. It is as if a King, when his Son comes into an Assembly, should rise up from his Royal Throne, having spied out a Beggar all in Rags, standing in the midst of the Crowd, and should say, Son, yonder is your Wife, go and take her and marry her here presently before me. So it is here, for there is none comes to Christ but those to whom he is thus given. And then Jesus Christ is glad that the Hour is come, This is the joyful Day (saith he) that I have long expected; and so he goes and embraces that Soul, tho perhaps the Soul knows not this.

2. Our Lord and Saviour Christ knows all his by Name, *John* 10. 14, 15. which Place indeed is very emphatical; for he saith, that look as the Father knows him, and as he knows the Father, so he knows his Sheep, and is known of them, (for known of them he shall be in the end) and he knows them all by Name. And when the Father hath thus commended and actually given a Soul unto him, Jesus Christ looks upon that Soul, and thinketh with himself, yonder Soul I should know, that is the Soul that my Father presented unto me in all that Beauty from everlasting, which I now am to be the Author of, and must bestow upon it. Ay, but doth Christ know the Soul in all her Sins? Yes, and by a good Token (saith he) I should know that Soul tho in her Sins, for I remember she was brought to me in all her Sins, when I hung upon the Cross to die for her; and together with her was the Catalogue of these very Sins presented to me, when I was in the Garden, and when I hung upon the Tree. And what doth Christ now do? He apprehends this Soul, (as the Apostle saith, *Phil.* 3. 12.) takes it, and takes it as commended unto him actually by the Father: *That I may apprehend* (saith *Paul* there) *that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.* He had spoken before of a Race which he was to run; now saith he, Jesus Christ took me by the Hand when I entred into this Race. It may have an Allusion to that, or it may allude to the Mother's apprehending the Child in the Womb, which she doth, tho the Child apprehends not her. However this is certain, that he speaks of Conversion and Entrance into the Race of Christianity; and that before we apprehend Jesus Christ he apprehends us, and takes us upon the Gift of his Father, as his: even as we love God, because he loved us first; so we apprehend Christ, because he apprehends us first. And Jesus Christ doth this with the greatest Gladness that can be: for as he longed to die for all our Souls, *(now is my Soul troubled*, saith he, *John* 12. 27. and *for this Cause came I unto this Hour)* so when the Fulness of Time is come that the Father hath appointed for him to receive a Soul, how glad is he of *that Hour!* If he sits in Heaven, expecting when his Enemies shall be made his Footstool, much more doth he expect when a Soul which he hath loved and paid so dear for, shall be brought unto him.

3. And then when the Son hath thus owned and acknowledged this Soul anew, the Holy Ghost, who is the third Person, and who is privy to God's Election, and to the Heart of Jesus Christ when he died, and knows for whom he died, and had a Hand in all, he is sent down from Heaven by Jesus Christ; *Gal.* 4. 6. *Because you are Sons* (Sons by Election) *God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your Hearts, crying, Abba, Father.* And as there was a Fulness of Time, and when that Fulness of Time was come, (as it is Verse the 4*th*) *God sent forth his Son made of a Woman, made under the Law:* And as the Holy Ghost did come and overshadow the Virgin *Mary*, (as you have it in *Luke*) and did unite that Man, that Beginning of an Infant, (how shall I express it? for Jesus Christ was in the Womb as we are, as small and as little as we) as there was a Fulness of Time in which that Nature was formed by

by the Holy Ghost, and was united to the Son of God; so there is a Fulness of Time whenas the Holy Ghost thus sent by Jesus Christ having taken and apprehended the Soul, cometh down into the Heart. In *Isa.* 53. 11. the Holy Ghost is called *the Arm of the Lord*: and why is he called so? but because he is the Arm of the Son of God by whom he takes hold of the Soul. Now this Spirit, when he comes down thus into the Heart, works Eyes, and Feet, and Hands, and all, for to look upon Christ, and to come to Christ, and to lay hold upon Christ; for Faith is expressed by all these, by seeing of him, and coming to him, and receiving him, and laying hold of him: And Faith is Eyes, and Hands, and Feet, yea and Mouth, and Stomach, and all; for we eat his Flesh, and drink his Blood by Faith. It is compared to all the Members, for the New Man is originally nothing but Faith. Thus now as Jesus Christ takes hold of us, so by the Work of the Holy Ghost we come to take hold of him, and *we embrace him*, as the Phrase is in *Heb.* 11. and *we embrace him gladly*, as it is in *Acts* 2. 41.

Book

And all three Persons having thus severally and apart agreed together in it between themselves, the Father beginning the Business in commending us to the Son, and the Son sending his Spirit into the Soul, and the Holy Ghost working Grace in us, he leads us from one Person to the other back again. And therefore in our Coming unto God you have all the three Persons mention'd together; *Eph.* 2. 18. *Thorow him we have Access by one Spirit unto the Father*: Here is Christ, Father, Spirit. The word there which we translate *Access*, in the Original it is a Conduct, a Leading us by the hand, προσαγωγην: for as Jesus Christ took us, and took us by the hand as it were, and led us into that Race, and took hold of us by his Spirit, so what doth the Spirit do? He leads us by Christ to the Father, for we come to God by and through Christ, being led in the Hand of the Spirit. Thus the Soul comes to have Communion with all the three Persons, Fellowship with the Father, and with the Son, and with the Holy Ghost, till this Fellowship is perfected in Heaven. And tho you see not these things, tho you see not what the blessed Trinity do for you then at that time when you believe, as that the Father thus gives you to Christ, and that Christ himself apprehends you, and that the Holy Ghost is sent down into your Hearts, and takes you by the hand thus, and carries you back again through Christ to the Father; yet all these things are done, and they are done for you; and when God causeth your Souls to close with the Lord Jesus, they are thus transacted in Heaven for you.

I will give you some Instances of this in the Conversions of Men in the New Testament, and I'll take *Paul*'s first: and altho his Story has this extraordinary in it, (which indeed is all the Privilege he had in this above us) that Jesus Christ appeared visibly from Heaven unto him, and the Holy Ghost likewise in a visible manner fell down upon him; and the Story tells us distinctly, that Christ and the Holy Ghost did thus and thus appear in it, and in that I say the Story is extraordinary; yet notwithstanding whatsoever was done at his Conversion by God the Father, and by Jesus Christ, and by the Holy Ghost visibly, the like is done by the three Persons between themselves invisibly at the Conversion of every Soul that is drawn to believe in Christ. For in matter of Redemption, and of Salvation, and of Conversion, and of Faith, and the like, the Apostles themselves had no Privilege which we have not. Now see how all three Persons met at his Conversion. First, in *Gal.* 1. 15. you have the Father; he had appointed a Time when he meant to give *Paul* to Christ, and to reveal Christ unto *Paul*. Mark the Phrase, *WHEN it pleased God*, (that is, when the Time was come) *who separated me from my Mother's Womb, and called me by his Grace, to reveal his Son in me.* When it pleased God, (saith he) *i. e.* God the Father, (for he saith, it pleased God to reveal his Son in him) so that it was he who appointed the Time, and who at that Time began anew to act for him. And tho God had *Paul* in his Eye from his Mother's Womb, yet there was a Time appointed to call *Paul* in, and *until then* (saith he in the Verses before) *I lived as other Jews*: but then when it pleased God, namely God the Father, to reveal his Son in me, then it was thus and thus with me: Here now is God the Father. You shall see likewise the second Person, Jesus Christ, coming in. When *Paul* was journying towards *Damascus*, (*Acts* 9. 6.) Christ from Heaven appears to him, and thus speaks to him, *I am Jesus whom thou persecutest, arise and go into the City, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.* And as Jesus Christ himself speaks to *Paul*, so like-

Part I. likewise Christ goes and speaks to *Ananias*, ver. 11. *The LORD said unto him in a Vision*, Ananias, *Arise, and go into the Street which is called straight, and enquire for one called* Saul *of* Tarsus. You see both that Christ knew *Paul* fully, and took notice of him, and knew him by Name, and so he doth every Soul that is turned to him. And he names the House too, he vouchsafeth to do so; *Go* (saith he) *and enquire in the House of* Judas. This was to shew what notice he takes of all Circumstances when a Soul is converted to him. And he tells *Ananias* likewise what *Paul* is doing, *Behold* (saith he) *he prayeth*, he is mourning and bewailing his Condition. And he takes notice too of his Election, and under that Notion sends *Ananias* to him; *He is* (saith he, *ver.* 15.) *a chosen Vessel unto me:* You see how withal he orders every Circumstance. Thus now you have first the Father appointing the time, and at that time putting forth his Act, *(when it pleased the Father to reveal his Son in me)* and you have the Son likewise appearing from Heaven to *Paul*, telling him, that he would send *Ananias* to him; (so *ver.* 12.) and appearing to *Ananias* likewise, and telling him that he must go to *Paul*. Now at the 17*th* Verse you have the Holy Ghost, the third Person, for he in a visible manner falls upon *Paul* when *Ananias* came to him, and had laid his Hands on him. Here then in this Instance of *Paul*'s you have all three Persons concurring in this great Work. Now that which was thus acted in this extraordinary and visible manner towards *Paul* in his Conversion, (I mean visibly by the Son, and by the Holy Ghost) the like is done invisibly, that is, undiscernably to thee. *Paul*'s Conversion had a Pattern in it, and it is a Pattern of the extraordinary Conversion of the Jews his Countrymen, who 'tis thought shall be called after the same manner, and it is most likely they shall be so. But yet notwithstanding, if you take that in this Conversion of *Paul*'s, which is the Privilege of all Believers, namely, to have then the joint Consent of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, so far his Conversion is a Pattern of all Conversions, and of the Work of Faith in all God's People to the end of the World. And do but mark it, that which was done here visibly, in the Conversion of *Paul*, and by express Direction from Heaven, is in effect oftentimes done as plainly in ordinary Conversions here below. You shall find a Soul guided by a secret Providence to go to such a Church to hear such a Man: Tho it's true indeed he is not directed by an extraordinary Revelation, as *Paul* was to *Ananias*, yet moved and guided he is to go to such a Place, and there he goes, he knows not why; and when he is there, God directs the Minister to speak that to the Soul which shall most nearly concern it, even as in a Vision he directed *Ananias* to speak to *Paul* what concerned him. Now when he hath brought the Heart and the Word thus together by his Providence, (for what he did then visibly, he doth now by his Providence) the Holy Ghost falls upon the Heart, and draws it to Jesus Christ. You shall find the like in the Story of *Cornelius*, Acts 10. which likewise is an Instance of the same thing, while *Peter* was speaking those Words, (namely, preaching of Christ to him, for saith he, ver. 43. *To him give all the Prophets witness, that through his Name whosoever believeth in him, shall receive Remission of Sins*) while *Peter* yet spake these Words, (saith the Text) *the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the Word.* And you have the same Story repeated again by *Peter* himself, *Acts* 11. 15. *As I began to speak*, (saith he) *the Holy Ghost fell on them.* And as the Spirit fell on them thus in their hearing the Word, so Christ himself bad *Peter* go, for he had a Vision from Heaven, and *the Lord* spake to him to that purpose. Here now is both the Son and the Holy Ghost visibly concurring in the working of Faith, yea of that distinct degree of Faith which *Cornelius* had to believe evangelically, tho he had a Faith before in the Messias to come. Now look what extraordinarily the three Persons did thus in Heaven, and from Heaven by Revelation then, the same thing, tho in an ordinary and in a secret invisible way doth the Holy Ghost, and the Son, and God the Father, now do for all Souls that are turned to Christ. They do by a secret Providence guide thee, and cast thee to live in such a Family, and there thou receivest this and that Instruction; or they guide thee to such a Ministry, or to such a Passage of Scripture, and then the Holy Ghost falls on thee. Jesus Christ hath as much hand in this, and the Holy Ghost as strong a hand, and it is as great and strong a Fruit of the eternal Decree of God, as it was to *Paul* and to *Ananias*. Tho many do not know the time of their Conversion, yet by the Story of it you shall have as strange and as extraordinary Providences of God, in bringing them to the Means of Comfort,

sort, and the Means of Comfort to them, and in bringing them to the Means of Faith, and setting it on upon their Hearts; and you shall herein have as strong a Providence as this was of speaking visibly from Heaven to *Paul* and *Ananias*. And the Reason of it is plain; for what is our Calling and Believing? It is but the acting, or rather fulfilling of Election; and accordingly it hath the Name of Election given to it oftentimes in the Scripture. Now what the three Persons did at thy Election, the same is done when thy Soul is called and believeth; tho perhaps thou hast not the Knowledg of the time when, much less of the thing, yet all this is done for thee, and that in Heaven, when God doth draw thy Heart first to believe. Book 2.

CHAP. III.

The Uses of the Doctrine. We should consider Faith on the Lord Jesus, as a Matter of the greatest Importance, since all the Persons of the Godhead concern themselves in it. We should not neglect this great Business of Believing. We should glorify all the three Persons for the great things which they do for us at the time of our believing.

THE Doctrine which I have explain'd and prov'd in the former Chapter, affords us these great and useful Inferences.

1. You see that Salvation is no slight thing, and that believing and turning to God is no slight Matter, when all the three Persons do thus concur in it. The converting and drawing of a Soul to believe, is a Business of infinite Moment, and why? Because all Heaven, and all Hell, and oftentimes Earth, or much on Earth, are stirred about it, even as they use to be at great Transactions. What a stir there is in the Spirits of Men, when a great Transaction falls out in State-Affairs? There is much more in this. All in Heaven are stirr'd; for you have seen that the three Persons move in it; and Christ tells us, there is Joy in Heaven even amongst the Angels, when a Soul is turned to God. And all in Hell are stirr'd about it too, for all the Devils rage and come forth, and are all in Arms. The strong Man when he is bound and cast out, is in a Rage, and therefore pours forth all the Floods of Persecutions, and Disgraces, and Temptations, and Violence upon the Soul. And Earth is stirred about it too, for you shall have carnal Friends and Companions, and this World, stand amazed at it, and think it strange, as the Apostle saith. Herein the Soul is conformed to the Image of Christ himself. When Christ was born, they were all stirr'd at it. Heaven was stirred at it, for the Father sent the Holy Ghost down; and the Angels came and sung the News of it, and the Shepherds come and bring the News of it; and *Herod was troubled, and all* Jerusalem *with him*, Mat. 2. 3. *Luke* 2. It is a great Business, and God gives Evidence of it, that it is a great Business; for all Heaven, (I say) and Earth, and Hell, are stirred when God doth thus bring a Soul home to Christ.

2. We therefore should not neglect the great Business of Salvation, nor the time of God's stirring of us. Tho God offers Christ at all times in the Ministry of the Word, yet you never come actually to believe till all three Persons thus concur in it, and till they join in a special Concurrence together for your Turning and Conversion. Consider with your selves, you that think you can believe and repent when you will, can you call this great Council together in Heaven? Can you appoint God the time when it shall be done? No. *It pleased the Father* (saith the Apostle) *to reveal his Son in me.* It is the Father draweth, and it is the Son that must take hold of you, and it is the Holy Ghost that must come down into your Hearts: And it is not in Man's Power to call this great Assembly together, thus to join Votes together. Is it in the Power of Subjects to call the three Estates, of King, and both the other Estates when they please? No. So neither is it in the Power of any Creature to call together this great Council of Heaven; you may as well order the Conjunction of the Stars, and call the Planets together when you will, which is impossible, *Job* 38. 31. He speaks under the very Allusion that I now mention it for; *Canst thou bring forth* Mazaroth *in his Season? or canst thou guide* Arcturus *with his*

Part I. *his Sons?* He meaneth Stars which have these several Names given them. *Knowest thou the Ordinances of Heaven? Canst thou set the Dominion thereof in the Earth?* that is, Canst thou appoint when the Stars shall meet, and by their Conjunction have great Influences upon Men? Can you go and set that Clock? No, saith he, you must wait upon God at his time to do it. When therefore the Spirit of God moves you, then think, now I will follow, and now it may be is the time that God will reveal his Son to me; and because thou knowest not the time, therefore I say wait upon God at all times. Tho God in the Ministry of the Word offers at all times, and stands ready to bestow (if thou couldst come) Faith upon thee, and to draw thy Heart, and actually to bestow Christ upon thee, yet for this there is a Fulness of time, a special time which thou must wait for, even as the World waited for the Fulness of time when God should send his Son in the Flesh. This Conjunction is not towards the Elect at all times, it is but then when the Fulness of time comes in which God means to turn them. And this is the Reason why the Elect, tho they are moved often before-hand, and have many Motions in their Hearts, yet there is not an effectual Faith wrought till such a time appointed by the Father. And this should make no Man neglect, but stir him up rather, because Salvation is so great a Business, and the time is not in our own hands. Canst thou move God to give his Son to thee actually, when thou wilt? Or canst thou move Jesus Christ to come and take Possession of thee when thou wilt? Or canst thou move the Spirit of God to come and give thee Faith when thou wilt? No, all these are in the Gift of the three Persons, and no Man receiveth any thing except it be given him from above, *John* 3. 27. Therefore you should wait upon the Lord, and observe his time, and that with Fear and Trembling, (if I may so express it by the contrary.) They that serve the Devil, as Conjurers and Witches, wait for the falling of Fern-Seed, as they call it, Night after Night, when it is told them it is in the Possession of such and such Angels; which when they have got, they think they can do great Wonders by it. Are they in this Dependance upon their Head, Satan, that damneth and undoeth them? How should we then wait upon God for the Droppings and Influences of Heaven, and for the sending of the Holy Ghost into us to work Faith in us?

3. Thou that art a Believer, do but look back upon the Work of thy Conversion and turning to God; tho perhaps thou canst not tell the time when it was done, yet it may be thou canst tell when it was not done. Do but think with thy self (I say) what great Matters were done for thee in Heaven when thou wast first brought to Jesus Christ, which it may be thou never takest notice of. Perhaps thou hast been searching into the Work of God within thee, and thou hast done well so to do: and it may be thou hast seen and took notice of the great Difficulty of that Work, and what a great many Lifts were put to thy Heart, and a great many Knocks, before such time as it was driven home to the Lord Jesus. But hast thou withal considered that there was as great things actually done for thee then in Heaven, as when thou wast first chosen, or as when Jesus Christ hung upon the Cross? The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, were all set on work to make up the Marriage between thy Soul and Christ, and they all set Providences on work to that purpose. If a Condemned Man were not to have a Pardon till three Kings met, and there were no more but three Kings in the World, and these must all concur together for the sealing and signing of it, how would he value that Pardon? Thou lookest it may be on the Difficulty of the Work in thine own Heart only, and how thou wentest from one Ordinance to another, and what rubs there were in the way, and thou hast Considerations what was done upon Earth in thy own Heart: but look up higher, and consider what was done in Heaven as the Original of all, and let that be the thing for which thou praisest and blessest God. Go home, and down upon thy Knees, and thank these three Persons that have done all this for thee, tho thou sawest it not when thy Heart was first drawn to Christ. For God doth give thee Assurance, that all the three Persons concur, 1 *John* 5. 7, 8. there is the Father from Heaven, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and all these give a Testimony: and the truth is, a Testimony is to be had distinctly from all these apart; for the Apostle would never have mentioned them there, unless the Witness both of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, was to be given apart: even as Water, and Spirit, and Blood, are distinct, tho they all concur, so are the Witness of all these three Persons in giving Assurance.

I have known them who when they have been turned to God, have looked back upon the Greatness of the Work to be such, as that for ten hundred thousand Worlds they would not have it to be done again, Why? for fear it should not be wrought. I would not have you to do so, for that God who did work it out of his eternal Love, he repents not, and therefore he would do it again if it were not done, or if it were to do again, so well he loveth you. Only in this imitate them, to set an high Price and Value on it, and consider, that e're this Match was made, the Father said *Amen* in Heaven, and the Son said *Amen*, and the Holy Ghost said *Amen*, before ever thy Heart said *Amen*: And withal consider, that all the three Persons are likewise engaged, and will everlastingly carry on this Work. Book 2.

4. You see the reason why, tho the Gospel is preached, and sets forth Christ the great Object of Faith, yet all do not believe: Our Saviour resolves it even into this, that the three Persons do not concur in the doing of it, as you may observe it here in *Joh.* 6. *v.* 36, 37. *I said unto you* (saith he) *that ye also have seen me, and believe*: What is the reason? look the next words, *All that the Father giveth me, shall come unto me*: and the reason why you do not come is, because my Father hath not bestowed you upon me: And therefore he goes on in like manner, *ver.* 44. *No Man can come to me, except the Father draw him*; which he brings in to answer the murmuring of the Jews (for *ver.* 41. it is said they murmured amongst themselves) and to shew the Reason why they did not believe; *No Man can come to me* (saith he) *except the Father draw him*. And so likewise afterward, *ver.* 64. he gives the reason why, when he had twelve Disciples, yet one of them believed not; *For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no Man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.* You shall see it evident (saith he) among your selves, all among your selves do not believe; Why? because those only believe that are drawn by the Father, and are given to me by the Father, and to whom the Father doth give Power to believe.

5. Therefore by this also mangnify the free Grace of God in calling you, and in working Faith in your Hearts. Do not only consider that you had the three Persons thus concurring, but likewise that they have called you out, and not others; and that tho the same Gospel is preached to others that is preached to you, who come and hear the same Sermons which you do, yea and it may be their Hearts are mightily moved by the Holy Ghost; yet thou hast Faith wrought effectually in thee, which is not in them. What is the reason? because that was done in Heaven for thee by all three Persons which was not done for them; and they were not given to Jesus Christ by the Father, and therefore he did not give his Spirit effectually to dwell in their Hearts. By this Consideration also magnify the free Grace of God.

CHAP. IV.

Of a Believer's being drawn unto Christ by the Father. The Reasons why it is the proper Work of the Father to draw the Soul unto Christ.

JOHN vi. 44.

No Man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last Day.

THE Subject I have next afore me, is, a Believer's being *drawn to Christ*, and that by *the Father*, and the Soul's treating with Christ for its Salvation. My Assertion is, That Christians are to make it one great Exercise of their Faith, distinctly to treat with the Person of Christ for their Salvation, as well as with God the Father through Christ: And this, as at their first Conversion to obtain Salvation, so afterwards all along in their Lives, to maintain Fellowship both with the Father and the Son. But I shall first discourse how it is the *Father* who teacheth us to know Christ, and *draws* us to him; and also shall shew *how* the Father *teacheth*.

Part I.

1. I speak not of the working the *Principles* and *Habits of Faith*, the *hearing Ear*, and *the understanding Heart*; but of the *Actings* of Faith, which the Father draws out in the Soul towards Christ.

2. I limit it not unto the *Actings of Faith at first Conversion*, but I mean those which are *continued all a Man's Life long*, which are all ascribed to the Father, as well as those at ones first Conversion, as in *Mat.*11.25,26,27. you find it, where *all that is revealed of the Son, is ascribed unto the Father.* And indeed at our first Conversion, our treating with Christ is eminently for pardon of Sin, and Justification, which are the usual Inducements of our first coming to him: But that's too narrow, for Christ in the whole Latitude of him, in his Person, and in whatever belongs to him, is that which the Father goeth on to teach us all our Lives long.

3. I yet limit it to the Attainments by *Faith* of *Recumbence*, (a sort of Faith which is common to all Christians) and my reason is, because in the Text 'tis *that Faith* whereof he speaks, which all shall be taught: And so in *Isa.* 54.13. and in *Jer.* 31. 34. (which two are the *Prophets* which our Saviour here refers to, speaking in the plural) the Promise runs, *They shall be all taught from the least to the greatest.* I shall not therefore speak of that *Faith* which only some particular Christians arrive to, as Faith of *Personal Assurance*, accompanied with *Joy unspeakable and full of Glory*, for that's the Spirit's Work as he is the *Comforter*: But I shall discourse of that Faith which is common to *all the Children*, as in *Isa.* 54.13. they are called; and as Salvation is called the *common Salvation*, Jude 1. so that Act of Faith is the *Act* that is common to all Christians in all States, whereby the Soul casts it self on Christ to be saved and justified; and such is the Apostle's Faith said at first to have been, *Gal.* 2.16. It is a believing in Christ, that *we may be justified*; *we believed in Christ* (says he) *that we might be justified*: So they began thus to treat with Christ, to have Salvation from him. This is the Faith which I intend, whereby I come to Christ, (tho I know not I am the Person design'd by him in his dying) my Heart being drawn from its being taken with what it knows of *Christ* in order to its Salvation; all which I plead to move him to receive me; and to plead which my Heart is strengthned, trusting on him to obtain it.

4. I animadvert here about this Faith of *Recumbency*, that there may be many Attainments in the course of this sort of Faith, which every such Believer arrives not at. So as my meaning is not, that unless *all* and every one hath experimented in themselves all and every such Actings, that they should not have a true Faith of Recumbence; but my intent is to mention no other Acts than what such a State and Elevation of believing is capable of, and so may be attained by all, tho their Faith for their Salvation rises not up to Personal Assurance, which much tends to the Comfort of such Believers, and serves to provoke them to seek those Attainments.

5. I animadvert, that I aim not to set down in a method these Workings, and Actings of Faith on Christ in such an Order as to say, this is first wrought, then follows that, and so a third: For God himself in his Workings doth not always use one and the same Method, but according to his good Pleasure. God's ways of wooing us to his Son, and Christ's winning of our Hearts to himself, are as the way of a Man with a Maid (as *Solomon* speaks of their Wooings) various; and as occasions lead on to their Discovery, Temptations being divers, the Discoveries which answer them are various. So as what I for my Method's sake may handle first, God may have wrought last in thy Soul; and what I shall mention last, or in the middle of this Discourse, God may have wrought first in thee. But first and last such Dealings of his as follow use to be transacted with us, and in us, in the way of believing.

6. When I limit it thus to Faith of *Recumbency* upon Christ, where may fall out many Experiments I shall mention, which every particular Person hath not yet attained to, who yet is a true Believer; for they are the Experiments of a Man's whole Life in this way of Treaty which I aim at; yet some or other of these Experiments will sute the lowest of all, in that lower Form. But however, tho a Man should continue all his days but a Recumbent, he is yet capable of them at one time or another.

7. Into this drawing of our Souls to Christ by the Father, I shall not draw in the handling of the preparatory Works: As the work of Humiliation for Sin, Contrition, Self-emptiness, Regeneration, and the like, which yet the Father in drawing us unto Christ maketh use of; but the Work it self is properly the Spirit's, to whom

whom our first Regeneration is attributed: *That which is born of the Spirit is Spirit*, *John* 3. 6. This is also the Effect of *John Baptist's* Ministry, who baptized with the Spirit, as with Water, which Spirit did regenerate: *Luke* 1. 16. *Many of the Children of* Israel *shall he turn to the Lord their God.* And in *Isai.* 40. (in which Chapter his Ministry is prophesied of) the Effects of it on Mens Hearts are expresly attributed to the Spirit; *ver.* 7. *The Spirit of the Lord blows upon it*; blasting through the sight of Sin all the Excellencies that Men glory in. And this Ministry, as preparative to the Actings of Faith, must last to the end of the World. For as Christ himself preached it, *Mark* 1. 15. *to repent*, in order to receiving the Gospel; so when he sent his Apostles out, he gave this Commission, that *Repentance and Remission of Sins should be preached in his Name among all Nations*, Luke 24. 47. that is, Repentance in order to receiving Remission of Sins by Faith. But the making the Acts of believing, and to teach and instruct Souls to come to Christ, this is the Work of God the Father, and is my Subject.

Obs. *That to teach and instruct Souls to come to Christ, and to draw them to Christ, is the Father's Work; even as to make known the Father in his Love and Grace, so as to draw us to believe on him, is the Work of Christ the Son.* It is the Honour our Saviour Christ hath given his Father in this Text, *John* 6. 44. interpreting that great Promise made to the Church of the New Testament, (*Isa.* 64. 13. that *they shall be all taught of God*) to mean, that it is God the Father who teacheth, and calleth Souls to come to Christ himself: And he repeats it again, *ver.* 65. of this Chapter, that *none do come, unless it be given them of the Father.* We all know that all three Persons do concur in every outward Work; but yet so as some one Work is more eminently attributed to one Person, and another to another. And this of revealing Christ, and drawing to Christ, is more properly attributed to the Father; as to reveal the Father is attributed to the Son; and to reveal both Father and Son in the way of personal Assurance, is attributed to the Spirit, who is therefore called *the Comforter.* I shall give a Scripture or two to prove it; *Mat.* 11. 27. *All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no Man knoweth the Son but the Father; neither knoweth any Man the Father, save the Son; and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.* And whereas you may object, that it is not there affirmed, *none knows the Son but the Father, and he to whom the Father shall reveal him*; and that this last Clause is not added in Christ's Speech: The Answer is, That there being that Addition concerning the Son's knowing the Father, *that none knows the Father but to whom the Son reveals him*, it doth by the Law of Parallels imply, that the like is also to be added to that of the Father's knowing the Son. But the second Answer is, it is expresly affirmed before, and was the Occasion of this his Speech; for he had said, *Father, I thank thee that thou hast revealed these things to Babes.* And the things revealed were himself, and Faith to lay hold upon himself: for he doth upbraid the City, that they had not entertained his Ministry in his preaching the Gospel; the Substance of which was his preaching himself; and to believe on him; which those Babes had received. And the Apostle ascribes it expresly to the Father that had revealed it to him; *Gal.* 1. 15, 16. *When it pleased God who separated me from my Mother's Womb, and called me by his Grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the Heathen.* He speaks eminently of God the Father's revealing his Son at his first Call; which also the Father continued to do; and went on further and further to do all his Life long; for it was to this end, that he might preach him among the Gentiles, which the Apostle went on to do, and accordingly grew in Knowledg, and in the Revelation of Christ all his Life long, that he might so preach him. You have the same, 1 *Cor.* 1. 9. where the calling of us to Fellowship with his Son is eminently attributed to the Father: *God is faithful, by whom we were called unto the Fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.* And his Calling there is not only by Commission, as when a Man is called to an Office; but operatively; and it is unto the whole Fellowship of Christ, from first to last, that we enjoy. And it is the Father who is meant in both Places, for he calls Christ his Son.

There is a great Harmony in Theological Reason, why this working of Faith in the Soul to Christ, why this wooing Work should belong to the Father.

1. The Father was he that chose our Persons for his Son; *Thine they were, and thou gavest them me*, says Christ, *John* 17. 6. It was the Father that commended

Part I. us to his Son at first, and presented us to his Son in all the Glory of which Jesus Christ, if he would but take us and own us to be his, should be the Author. He did it to allure him, he did speak to his Heart to die for us, as you have it, *Psal.* 40. 6, 7. 8. which is quoted in *Heb.* 10. 7. *Lo, I come to do thy Will, O God.* It is added in the Psalm, *Thy Law is in my Heart.* It was God the Father commanded him; also it was he moved him to it, and drew him to it, (to speak in the Words of the Text) and did write the very Law of it in his Heart, for the Law written in his Heart hath reference to his dying for us, and being Mediator for us. He wooed him, and told him, he would love him, if he would die for us; *John* 10 17. *Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my Life.* Now then who so fit a Person as the Father to woo us, when we are to be won, and our Hearts to be brought to Christ? and to whom is it more proper to woo for his Son than the same Father that commends his Son to us? And who is fitter also than the Father to move the Matter to us, to teach us and instruct us, and commend his Son to us, and to draw us to take him, and to write this Law in our Hearts, as the greatest Obedience we can perform to him? I speak not of the Ministry of Humiliation in that Work going before, but of the wooing Part, which is proper to God the Father.

2. Our believing is a receiving Christ, it is a giving our selves up to him as to our Lord and Husband, and it is proper for the Father to woo for him, because all other Fathers have the Power of bestowing their Sons or Daughters, and therefore God hath it much more. *Hagar*, tho but a Woman, yet had a Right, and exercised the Power of getting a Wife for her Son. To give in Marriage is oft spoken of in Scripture to be by Parents, and thus it is here in *Psal.* 45. (where Christ is represented as the Husband, and the Church his Wife) Who is it that speaks to the Church, to love her Husband, to worship her Husband, and to forsake all for him? It's God the Father, *ver.* 10. *Harken O Daughter, and consider, and incline thine Ear*, &c. This is God the Father speaking of Christ unto his Church. But you will say, this is not found amongst other Fathers, that they should condescend to woo the Wife for their Sons, but it is enough for them to give their Consents, and leave it to their Sons to gain the Heart themselves. Thus it is amongst Men, and the Reasons for it amongst Men are plain, which will not hold as to God.

1*st.* Fathers are Strangers to the Person whom the Son is to woo, and so leave it to his liking, it is enough for him to give his Consent and Leave to get the Person's Heart. But the Case here is otherwise, for every elect Soul is the Daughter of God, even in Election, before Conversion; and as he knows his Son, so he knows the Soul, he knows his Daughter too, not only as made his Daughter by Marriage to his Son, but as originally chosen by him. As *Eve* is said to be the Daughter of God by Creation, as *Adam* was the Son of God by Creation, (*Luke* 3. 38.) so it is here. Therefore he leaves it not to his Son only to speak for himself, and gain her, but he out of the same fatherly Interest which he hath in the Soul, as well as in his Son, (tho he hath Interest in her as his Daughter, which is a lower Interest than what he hath in his Son) wooes her.

2*dly.* Marriages amongst Men stand upon equal Terms, and Persons of a like Rank use to marry together; and the Father will not condescend in that case to woo for the Son; no, it were uncouth if he should, and not proper. But the Church, and every poor Soul, is the unworthiest Creature to be match'd so gloriously to Christ that ever was. Nay, it was an Enemy before, an utter Enemy, utterly averse; so that it becomes a Matter not only of Love, but of Grace and Mercy, for to have this Soul gained and brought in to Christ. And it is Fulness of Mercy and Grace to woo such a Soul, and an infinite Condescension so to do, and none greater but that of God's giving his Son to die. And since it thus belongs to Grace, the Father will have the Honour of it as well as the Son, for you read of the Grace of the Lord Jesus, and of the Father, and sometimes both put together, 2 *Thess.* 1. 12. Is it a Matter of infinite Grace, the Person being so low and unworthy? In that case saith the Father, I'll be your Spokesman, for it is Matter of Grace. It is not matter of pure Affection as a Husband hath to a Wife, but it is a matter of Grace which I have to such a Soul; I will therefore shew it in this my wooing such a Soul. O! this is infinite Condescension in the great God.

3*dly.* The Father doth ingage to woo us to come to Christ, because he promised his Son when he wooed him to die for us, and gave us to him; and he promised that

that when we came to be converted, he would give us, and would draw us to his Son; *John* 6. 37. *All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.* Our Saviour Christ doth not speak like a Wooer there, for all he saith is, I will not refuse them if they come. He hath indeed an hand in drawing the Soul; *When I am lifted up* (says he) *I will draw all Men after me,* *John* 12. 32. but he doth it secretly, and those thou hast given. But what is the Meaning of those Words, *John* 6. 37? It is resolv'd into this, That his Father in giving them promised they should come to him, and therefore the Father draws them; and it is therefore the Work of the Father. In *Psal.* 110. the Father speaks to Christ, and he promiseth there, that they shall be a willing People to him, *ver.* 1. *The Lord said unto my Lord,* (*i. e.* God the Father said to his Son, the great God *Jehovah* said to his Son) *Sit thou at my right Hand until I make thine Enemies thy Footstool*; and I will destroy thine Enemies for thee. And *ver.* 3. God the Father makes this Promise to him, *Thy People shall be willing in the day of thy Power.* It is the Father's Promise; I will bring the Will and Heart of thy People off to thee, and thy People shall be willing in the day of thy Power, when the Gospel comes. Book 2.

Use 1. Let us then encourage our selves in the Hope, that the Match is like to go on, if God the Father thus strikes in, and God the Son also. Hath God begun with thy Soul to represent Christ to thee, to take thy Heart? Dost thou set thy self to seek him, to have him? thou hast not only thy Husband Christ to draw thee, but thou hast his Father to draw thee; and he is thy Father too; and that Match will thrive, and must go on.

Use 2. Wouldst thou see and know who it is that is at work in thy Heart? (thou poor Soul that lay at God day and night to give thee Christ, and have thy Heart inflamed towards the Lord Jesus) dost thou know who it is that is at work in thy Heart all this while? who? It is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Perhaps we have had little Knowledg of this, to return the Thanks to our God, and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, whereas indeed it is he does it. Thou hast not one degree of Fellowship with the Son, but God the Father draws thee to it. Not that any Man (saith Christ, *John* 6. 46.) hath seen the Father: None seeth the Father while he is doing of it, for he doth it secretly, and doth not tell you, I the Father am drawing of you. No, but still he holds up Christ to you, and Christ will come and tell you of his Love afterwards. The Father does not come in to me here as an Object of Faith in his Work. When he works, he doth not say, I am he that works it: He doth not come with Authority and tell thee, I thy Father draw thee, but he is the Efficient that draws, tho he propose not himself objectively nor authoritatively. As Christ said to *Peter* when he wash'd his Feet, *What I do to thee, thou shalt know hereafter:* So God the Father comforts himself (if I may so speak) with this, or reserves this Glory to himself, that we shall know one day what he is doing. *In that day* (says Christ, *John* 16. 25.) *I will shew you plainly of the Father.* The Father had wrought all this while, but secretly, and had not discovered himself; and tho Jesus Christ in his Doctrine had taught the Apostles, and instructed them about the Father, yet alas poor Creatures, they did not understand it! they did not take it in; it was but as a speaking to them in Proverbs; *But in that day* (after his Ascension) *I shall shew you* (says he) *plainly of the Father,* ver. 25. What do I quote this for? To shew that tho these poor Disciples had heard say, It was the Father that drew them to believe, and they found the Work upon them to be powerful and effectual: Yet it was obscure to them, that it was he that did it, but he tells them, that the Time cometh (which Time must be after his Ascension) when he would tell them plainly, It was the Father did it. It was the Father (tho now unseen, and spoken of in Parables and Proverbs) that drew thy Soul in Morning by Morning; and thou wilt give all the Glory to the Father one day. *O what manner of Love is it* (*viz.* of the Father) *that we should be call'd the Sons of God!* 1 John 3. 1. O what manner of Love is it, that the Father should woo us to be his Children, and to receive his Son, and so to be his Sons; for herein he *gives us Power to become the Sons of God,* John 1. 12. It is enough for other Fathers to give Consent, and leave it to their Sons; but here in this case, as Jesus Christ came down from Heaven to redeem and purchase his Church and Spouse, so God the Father comes down into the Hearts of Men, and draws them, and does it immediately. I do not say he doth it by his Spirit, as if himself did it not. 'Tis true, the Spirit doth join in it,

Part I. and so doth the Son, but the Father does this himself immediately. Is it not a mighty thing that the Father should teach us to woo his Son, and become a Tutor to us, and an Instructor of us. What Condescension would it be in Kings to tutor their Children. Poor Creatures! we are no more able to woo Jesus Christ, than the meanest Country Creature, one that walks up and down the Streets in all Rags and Poverty, is able to woo a King. But the Father comes and teaches us to woo Jesus Christ, and makes Representations of Christ to us. He made the Match with *Adam* and *Eve*; and as *Adam* was his Son, and *Eve* his Daughter, he wooed her Heart for him. And he who created her Body and Soul, and made her a Woman, and gave *Adam* her Heart, gives the Heart of every Christian to his Son. You then that know the Lord Jesus, magnify the Father for ever, that hath called us to Fellowship with his Son.

CHAP. V.

That the Father teacheth us to know Christ as the great Object of our Faith. That he instructs us that eternal Life is to be found, and obtain'd only in Christ his Son. That he teacheth us to seek this Life only in him. That he teacheth us to look to the Person of Christ, and to seek and desire an Interest in himself, as well as Salvation by him. How God the Father teacheth us to know Christ his Son, and what are the Effects which his Instructions have upon us.

I Come to the other Part of my Subject; as I told you it was the Father drew you to Christ, so the other Part of the Subject is this, That the Father teacheth us to know Christ as the Matter of his teaching, and instructs us in what concerns him that may woo us, and teach us to come to Christ. As he draws us, so he useth Variety of Cords, or Motives, or Perswasions, to draw.

I shall first shew what it is materially that the Father teacheth us, and then I shall shew you the Manner how he teacheth. It were infinite to run over all the Particulars concerning Christ that the Father teacheth. There is a great Variety herein, and something takes hold on one Man's Heart, and something on another, as they are scatter'd up and down. All the Doctrines which Christ delivered that we read of in the Gospel of *John*, and which perswade to come to himself, are all of them the Words of the Father. *The Word which you hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me*, John 14. 24. And those Words doth the Father himself speak inwardly to the Soul of a Man. It is a large Field to shew you what he teacheth concerning his Son Christ: I think it therefore the best way to give you what is said in one Scripture, which expresly sets down what is the Father's Record, 1 *John* 5. 11, 12. *This is the Record that God hath given us eternal Life; and this Life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath Life: and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not Life.* This is the great Record of God the Father concerning his Son: And he that believes not the Record God gives of his Son, makes God a Liar. Here is the great doctrinal Record summ'd up to you, and it is short and brief. But you may ask me, Was this Record given to draw Men to believe? Is it so intended? I answer, that tho it intends Assurance, yet it intends also the Matter which God hath recorded to cause Faith, and to bring Men on to believe. This is plain from *v.* 13. *These things have I written to you that believe on the Name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal Life, and that ye may believe on the Name of the Son of God.* There is Assurance, but suppose you want Assurance, yet there is what may draw you to believe, *that you may believe on the Name of his Son.* It is to bring Men on to believe, and therefore in the Words before he saith, *He that believes not makes God a Liar, because he believeth not the Record God gave of his Son.* That which causeth them that believe further to believe, causeth one that doth not believe to come in to believe. It is not design'd for them that have Assurance: How is that prov'd? Because the Apostle saith, *He that hath not the Son, hath not Life:* and therefore what he speaks is to draw Men on to believe. Let us see what things they are

are God hath recorded of his Son for to believe concerning him, that we who do believe may believe further. Book 2.

1. The first Record is, that the Father hath given us eternal Life. By *US* here is not meant only *US* that believe already, but it is as well intended to induce others to believe. He hath given *US*, i. e. *US* Men: He hath given amongst us (give me leave so to express it) eternal Life. As if a Man goes to a College, they of the College tell him, such a Founder hath given us such a Fellowship or Exhibition, tho every one is not capable of that Fellowship or Exhibition, but yet it is given to the College, and they all can say, it is given to *US*, *i. e.* to that Body amongst us for such Uses. Thus to give is taken plainly, *John* 6. 32. *My Father giveth you the true Bread from Heaven.* He speaks to them that never did believe; Yet (saith he) my Father gives to you eternal Life; to you the Sons of Men, that Grace, that Mercy is given *before the World began*, 2 Tim. 1. 9. It is made known to all the Sons of Men to whom the Gospel is preached, as that which is given amongst them; and there are those among them which hear this Grace of the Gospel to whom it shall be given effectually, and therefore it may well be indefinitely expressed, that God intends eternal Life to the Sons of Men. This is a great thing in the Heart of God, which God the Father doth reveal to a poor Soul, that his whole Purpose, Intention, and Resolution, which he will never be frustrated of, is to give eternal Life unto the Sons of Men. This is his Heart, his whole Heart, and thus much of his Heart he doth reveal of himself, that his Purpose is in and thorow Jesus Christ to give eternal Life, *John* 3. 16. He hath given eternal Life with the most serious Purposes and unchangeable Resolutions to the Sons of Men. Tho he doth not tell you the Names of the Persons, and so declare who they are, yet he declares that he gives it to them that believe; therefore you that hear it, believe and come in.

2. He says, I have given eternal Life, but how must you have it? This Life is conveyed to Men in my Son, (saith God) and by my Son, and there is no means else whereby you may have eternal Life. Jesus Christ is the common Receptacle of Life eternal, for God hath made Jesus Christ his Son to be the Fountain of Life, to be the Bread of God that should give Life to the World; *John* 6. 39. *I am the Bread of Life that came down from Heaven, and giveth Life unto the World.* This Life is only to be had in his Son; and if you will have Life, you must go to him, for it is in him. God the Father did never vocally preach the Gospel in the New Testament but once or twice, and then he spake from Heaven himself, and not his spirit: and what said he? *Mat.* 17. 5. *This is my beloved Son, hear him*; *i. e.* take him, receive him, go to him. Well, tho God doth not speak vocally now with an outward Voice, but secretly in the Souls of poor Sinners; yet he says, *This Life is in my Son, there I have laid it; you cannot have it from me, but him: He gives his Flesh for the Life of the World, and there is not any thing else in Heaven or Earth will give you Life: Nay, I can give you Life no other way* (*i. e.* according to his own Appointment in the New Testament) *but by having my Son.* The Soul sees its not having Grace, as Humiliation, Contrition, but it must have the Son if it have Life. I have sometimes thought that if I had the Life of Grace in me, I had the Son; but it is contrary here, you must have the Son if you have Life. You must not go to God for the Righteousness of Christ only, and not go to the Son himself. You must do more, you must go to Christ for Life; *This Life is in my Son*, says God. You must not go to God for Christ's sake only, but you must go to Christ. I do not say that you have no Grace else, for you may have gone to him for his Son's Righteousness, and for his Favour; but yet you must take his Person in too; *John* 6. 53. *Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his Blood, ye have no Life in you.* The Father causeth Souls to see a necessity of coming to his Son at last. If you could suppose you could give your Body to be burnt, and had all Faith, and knew all Mysteries, all would be in vain; if you have not the Son you have not Life: *Except you eat my Flesh* (says Christ) *you have no Life in you.* The Father puts Souls upon a necessity of going to Christ.

3. I observe, that the Father doth allow in his Record, that a Man should, out of Love to himself, seek Life in Christ, and Salvation in Christ. He allows thee to go to him to be saved, for it is what God bids thee do, and prompts thee to it. His Record doth declare it to thee; nay, it is the first thing he mentions: for before he tells you, *Life is in my Son*, he tells you, *eternal Life is given amongst you*; and bids

bids you seek it. That Aim of going to Christ for Salvation, is an allowed Aim by
Part I. God the Father in the Record concerning his Son: Nay he threatens you, that you shall not have Life if you do not go to him; *You will not come to me* (says Christ to the Pharisees) *that ye might have Life*; Joh. 5. 40. Every Soul that comes to Jesus Christ, comes at first for Life; *We believed in Jesus Christ* (says the Apostle, *Gal.* 2. 16.) *that we might be justified:* it was a self-aim in them, *You will not come to me to be saved*; this the Father sets on in a Conviction to the Heart, and he puts Men on a necessity to come to Christ, and allows self-love in coming. The Argument is invincible, God in ordaining your Salvation did ordain it chiefly for his own Glory, and yet he had infinite Love to you: and doth this Love of God to you stand with God's Glory? then certainly your aiming out of Self-love at your own Salvation stands with the Glory of God in saving of you, and this is in order to believing. But withal he tells Men this, *This Life is in my Son.* If you ask, where doth it lie? it lies in my Son (says God) and in having him you have Life, for Eternal Life lies not in any thing out of the Son of God; no, it lies in himself: Therefore there is no danger in any Man's seeking Jesus Christ for his own Salvation, for he seeks it in Christ himself: For if thou seekest Happiness in the Son of God, and Life in him, thou mayst make Self-love thy Aim as much as thou wilt, he is your Life, *Col.* 3. 2,3. and Christ lives in you, *Gal.* 2. 20. People desire Heaven, do you know what Heaven is? it is to live in God and with God for ever, and you place in God glorified above your selves that Happiness you seek.

4. He puts you upon seeking his Son, and puts you on coming for his Son as that which above all concerns your selves. How is that proved? *He that hath the Son*, (saith he) it is a powerful Phrase, it is a Marriage Phrase: To have him, to enjoy his Person, (says a poor Virgin that truly loves him) is more than all. I desire to have him to save me, to have him that I may have Eternal Life, but I principally desire to have himself. This is the Record which God the Father gives concerning his Son, to draw Men on to believe.

5. God the Father directs us to seek to have Christ as the Son of God, as well as a Saviour. *He that hath the Son* (saith he) *hath Life*; we must then come to him as the Son, and give up our selves to him as the Son, as well as regard him as the Author of Life and Means of Salvation to us: It is not having the Redeemer only, but it is having the Son; as he lives by the Father, so we live by him; and as Christ says, *My Father is mine, and I am his:* So the Soul comes to be Christ's, and Christ becomes its Salvation and Life. Observe what the Apostle says, *Gal.* 2. 20. the Life I lead in the Flesh it is by Faith of two things, or of Christ considered in two Notions, *as Son of God*, and as *Redeemer*, *who loved me, and gave himself for me.* If you rightly examine the Story of the Disciples believing in Christ, recorded in the *1st*, *2d* and *3d* Chapters of *John*, you will find that sometimes they say, they had found the Saviour of the World, sometimes they would say they had found the Son of God, and sometimes the Son and Saviour: You are therefore to have him as Son of God, and to believe in him, and to love him as God loves him. What doth God love him for? What, only because he died for you? No, he loves him above all because he is his Son. Now you are to have the Image of God's Heart in your Hearts, you must have an Heart after God's Heart toward the Lord Jesus. You love him because you come to him to be saved by him; but if you love him as God doth, you must come to him as the Son, and love him as the Son, the Glory of whose Person is infinite. This is the Record God gives of him, that you must not only look at Christ as an Ordinance to save you, but as the Son. I do not say all this is done for a poor Soul at first Conversion, but this is the Record God teaches you and will bring you to, *viz.* not only to seek his Redemption, but to have his Son, and to have your Hearts flaming in Love after his Son.

Secondly, I come now to shew how God doth teach these things concerning his Son. Will you know how the Father teacheth, and when it is his Teaching? His Teaching is not to teach you the Doctrinals of Salvation and of the Son, for he leaves that to Ministers, and to the Bible, to teach you the Doctrinals only in a doctrinal way. But God the Father's Teaching,

1. Is to bring the Knowledg you have of Christ home to your Souls, to say to your Souls, *Psal.* 35. 3. to speak to your Hearts, *Hos.* 2. 14. They all heard Christ's Sermons, but *those come to me* (says he) *that have heard and learned of the Father*, Joh.

Joh. 6. 45. The Father doth not speak to us of his Son vocally, as I told you he spake of his Son to *Adam*, (the giving of the Ten Commandments was by the Ministration of Angels) but he teacheth your Hearts. What is the meaning of that? Among all the Notions which you have of Christ as the Object of Faith, if there is but one Notion of Christ set home upon the Soul, (I call it an intuitive Beam of Light of the Knowledg of Christ) that is the Notion the Father teaches; and all the Knowledg thou hast otherwise is not the teaching of the Father, nor will save thee: No, it is what he teaches thy Soul, what he opens thy Heart to receive, that is saving. If you would go to Christ with all the Knowledg that notionally you have, and spread it before him, and woo him, it would not take effect; but if thou feel such a Light brought into thy Soul concerning Christ that comes to thy Heart, go to Jesus Christ with that one Notion, and he knows his Father's Voice in thy Heart, and he accepts thee, and listens to thee. When a Man comes to die that hath a great deal of Knowledg, 'tis one little Promise, one Beam of Light that comforts him, and he hath that Instruction sealed to him, *Isa.* 50. 4. *He wakeneth Morning by Morning; he wakeneth my Ear to hear as the learned.* It is a Prophecy how God the Father taught Jesus Christ, he did not know every thing at once, but Morning by Morning he knew something still of himself: Thus the Father comes and awakens thine Ear, and causeth thy Soul to be attentive, and brings home something to thy Soul: Thou mayst read the Bible all the day afterward, and not understand so much as to have it brought thus home, and thy Heart awakened. Book 2.

2. A second thing he teacheth; he doth take thy Heart with what he saith thus to thee, by an intuitive Beam. I compare this to the Beams of the Sun in a Burning-glass, as they burn the thing they fall upon, so this Beam from God takes and inflames the Heart. The poor Disciples (*Luke* 24. 32.) talked with Christ, and knew not that it was Christ, till *he opened their Understandings*, v. 45. and then (say they) *Did not our Hearts burn within us?* &c. There is an Inflammation of the Spirit, a taking of the Heart that accompanieth such Teachings as the Father teacheth. A Father's teaching imports Affection, which doth draw, 1 *Cor.* 8. 3. *If any Man love God, the same is known of him*; *i. e.* is made to know God, (so *Beza* and *Austin* read it) whom God hath made to know; so that still when God teacheth, there goeth Affection with it. As there he speaks of Love, I speak of believing; when the Father comes and teacheth, and brings in the Light of Christ, then the Affections, the Will, the whole Heart follow, there is longing, thirsting, eager Desires.

3. The manner of his teaching is expressed, *Eph.* 4. 20, 21. *If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the Truth is in Jesus.* He speaks of such a teaching as all Christians have, for he speaks it of such a teaching as makes them holy. It is spoken of Christ himself, of Christ properly, therefore he saith, *as the Truth is in Jesus.* The words are a plain distinction of a double Knowledg: There is a Knowledg which is not as the Truth is in Jesus; but if you have been taught the Truth as it is in Jesus, *that* is the Father's teaching, and *that* is his Son's teaching. Truly, if the Gospel of *John* had been written before *Paul* writ this Epistle, I would have said *Paul* had alluded to those words of *John*, for he hath all three words, *Heard, Read, Learned of the Father.*

But you will say, is it a false Knowledg which Carnal Men have of Christ, who are not taught of the Father? Truly, I say, it is not a true Knowledg, it is false in regard it is not as the Truth is in Jesus: It is not a Fantastical Knowledg, but it is a Fantasmatical Knowledg. Now what is it to be taught Christ as the Truth is in Jesus? It is a real Knowledg, 1 *John* 5. 20. *He hath given us an Understanding to know him that is true:* He speaks it of the Father, but it follows of Christ too, to know the true Christ: There is a Parelion of Christ, you call it a false Sun, but the true Sun always out-shines it, and the other is but a Shadow; but this is to know Jesus Christ in the Substance of himself. If you see the Picture of a Man, it is a knowing the Man, but it is not a knowing the true Man indeed whose Person it represents. As God the Father did beget his own Son from Eternity, so he begets that real Idea of the Lord Jesus Christ in a poor Believer that never entred into the Heart of any other Man: So that the Believer can say, I have been with Christ to day, as one said, Jesus Christ and I have been together this day, I saw him this Morning. He who sees the Son and believes on him hath Life, *John* 6. 40. it is a real, solid, substantial Sight, so that we have an Understanding given anew to know the

Part I. the true Christ: It is not the *Phantasma*, but it is something let in from the Person himself, that begets that Idea that is taken from the Person himself. This is hard to express it, yet our ordinary Comparison thus illustrates it. When a Man is asleep, we call them Phantasms which in a Dream represent Images of Fathers and Mothers, and Persons that are dead; but if you see the Person himself, you say, Man, I am sure that this is he, this is not a Dream, as the poor blind Man said, *Behold, I see*; therefore this is put in by Christ and his Apostles themselves, *We know assuredly that thou art the Son of God*, and that thou cameſt from God. Thus the Father's teaching shews you the true Christ, whom the Apostles have seen, heard, and felt, 1 *John* 1. 1, 2. When Christ rose again, said he to his Disciples, *Feel, here is Flesh and Bones, a Spirit hath them not*; a *Spectrum* hath them not. When Christ is represented to the Soul by the Father, the Soul is not deceived, tho it hath not Assurance personal of its own Interest: his Presence is real, and it is called the real Presence of the Lord Jesus; and this is to teach the Truth, as the Truth is in Jesus.

2. It is so to teach you, as to persuade you that all you know of him is for his Glory, that all tends to the glorifying of him. Look what Particulars the Father teacheth you concerning Christ, there goes along with and accompanies that Light, that which tends to glorify the Son; and if you cannot believe that he is yours, there will be secret Veins and Strains of holy Affections accompanying your glorifying him in your Hearts, 2 *Thess.* 1. 12. *That the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the Grace of our God, and the Lord Jesus Christ.* Therefore if the Father teach you any thing about his Son, his Person, Sufferings, Justification, or the like, there is something in the Heart doth rise up to the glorifying this Jesus, 2 *Cor.* 3. 18. *We behold the Glory of the Lord*, which is meant of Christ. Thus when *Thomas* would not believe, (*John* 20.) our Saviour, as a means to make him believe, shews him his Hands and Feet; his Heart falls down, tho his Knees did not, and he cries out, *My Lord, and my God.* You read in the Evangelists of many that receiv'd Cure from him, came to him and worshipped him with their Bodies and Souls too, as 'tis commanded *Psal.* 45. 11. *He is thy Lord, worship thou him*, says the Father to his Church. O when there comes in but a Beam of the Excellency of Christ's Person, that makes the Believer to glorify him: O how precious is this Lord Jesus! and the Soul doth sanctify him in his Heart, in his Will and Affections, and the Soul comes to him for his Blood, and the Father hath taught it so to do. O how precious is that Blood, saith the poor Soul, if I might have a part in it, that can make Sinners righteous, that can bring in Everlasting Righteousness, that Sin shall never undo me, that can justify me from all my Sins in a moment! Perhaps the Soul cannot say, I have a Portion in it, but yet it can say, I come to him to have it so. 1 *Pet.* 2. 7. No Cordial so precious as this Blood of Christ to justify the Soul; and tho the Soul cannot say, I have part in this Righteousness, yet it doth say, if I had all the Righteousness of Men and Angels, I would account it Dogs-meat, fling it away that I might have his Righteousness. The Soul falls down agast at this Righteousness in an Admiration, O how glorious is this Righteousness! So that altho the Soul knows not its Interest in it, but remains in Doubts, yet it hath the highest Value of it, and stands adoring, as *John* did when he said, *Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the Sins of the World!* Joh. 1. 29. In seeing this Jesus that hath Sufficiency to take away Sin, the Soul stands agast, and worships him; and tho it doth not fall down on its Knees, yet adores him in its Heart. These are the Teachings of the Father, which have such Effects; and thus you have seen how he teacheth. He brings home the light of the Knowledg of God and Jesus Christ to the Soul, he induceth a special Light, he wakens the Soul Morning by Morning, affects the Heart, takes the Soul, represents all in the Truth, in the Reality, as the Truth is in Jesus, and teacheth the Soul so to know Christ, as to give Glory to him. For when Christ is represented as he is a Jesus, there is a Glory that accompanies that Representation, a Glory which so raiseth the Soul above it self, that it stands amaz'd at him, and falls down before him, and glorifies him.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Christ our Saviour typified by Noah's *Ark.* *As* Noah *was instructed by God to enter into the Ark for his Safety, so God in the Covenant of Grace teacheth us to know Christ, and to come to him for Salvation. That our Faith looks both to the Free Grace of God bringing us to Christ, as well as to Christ. Without Christ the Grace of God doth not, nor can save us; and therefore it is necessary that we explicitely act Faith on him for Salvation.*

ISA. 54. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13.

For this is as the Waters of Noah *unto me: for as I have sworn that the Waters of* Noah *should no more go over the Earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee.*

For the Mountains shall depart, and the Hills be removed, but my Kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the Covenant of my Peace be removed, saith the Lord, that hath Mercy on thee.

O thou Afflicted, tossed with Tempest, and not comforted: behold, I will lay thy Stones with fair Colours, and lay thy Foundations with Saphires.

And I will make thy Windows of Agates, and thy Gates of Carbuncles, and all thy Borders of pleasant Stones.

And all thy Children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the Peace of thy Children.

I Have in a Discourse on this Scripture shew'd the Parallel betwixt *Noah*'s Covenant about his Entrance into the Ark to be saved from the Flood, and the Covenant of Grace: I came to an Use, which hath been this, That the Example of *Noah* in his Entrance into the Ark, and making of the Ark, and the like, was a Figure of the Saving-work that God effects upon the Hearts of his People, in bringing them under the Covenant of Grace, and within the safe Bounds of it. I shall accordingly consider the Work of Faith wrought in *Noah*, he being made Heir of the Righteousness of Faith. *Noah* was instructed by God in two things as Objects of his Faith: The first was the Grace of God; *Thou hast found Grace in my sight.* The other was the necessity of his Entrance into the Ark, which was to him the Type of Christ: hence correspondently to answer the Type we have what is said in ver. 13. *They shall be all taught of God.* The Covenant of Grace did undertake, (*Jer.* 31. 34.) that God would teach them to know him, and that they should not need any other to teach them. The Grace under the Covenant of the Gospel teaches us to know two things. The first is, to know God in his Grace; *Jer.* 9. 24. *Let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me*; As to what? It follows, *That I am the Lord that exercise th Loving-kindness, Judgment and Righteousness in the Earth, for in these things do I delight.* To know God in his Loving-kindness, this is what God doth instruct his People in, and teacheth them to exercise Faith about it. The second thing which the Covenant of Grace teaches us, is, to know Christ who is our Ark; *John* 6. 45. *It is written in the Prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every Man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.* So then these two things before me are naturally deduced from the Text and Example of *Noah.* God teaches his People to know him in his Free Grace, and he teaches them to know him in his Christ, and instructs them in the Nature of Faith in him. From God's instructing *Noah* to enter into the Ark, we may infer, that God doth also in the Covenant of Grace (which this is a Prophecy of) instruct us to know his Son Christ, and to come unto him. When the Ark was prepared, God invites *Noah* into the Ark; *Gen.* 7. 1. *And the Lord said unto* Noah, *Come thou and all thy House into the Ark.* Which Words I shall by and by translate into pure Gospel; and I will shew you that the very same Language is used concerning our believing in Christ only. I must first shew you this thing, that

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that the Ark was the Type of Christ, for that is the first thing I must turn into
Part I. Gospel, the Ark into Christ. The antient Writers of the Church, the Fathers, (as they call them) say, that by Ark is meant the Church. Now it is true that one and the same Type often signifieth two or three things: As for example, the Temple signified the Body of Christ, *'destroy this Temple*, saith Christ; it signified the Church universal, the Body of Christ mystical; it signified every particular Soul; *Ye are the Temple of the Holy Ghost*, 1 Cor. 6. 19. But this let me say, When you shall find a Parallel made between the thing, and the thing signified, and in particular applied to one thing, you must only understand it so, and there you must not understand it as a Type of the other. In 1 *Pet.* 1. 21. you have *Noah*'s Ark made a Type of Christ, as he is administred to us in Baptism. *The like Figure whereunto*, (having spoken of the Ark) *wherein few, that is, eight Persons, were saved through Water.* The like Figure is Baptism, whereby we are saved: but here Baptism, signified by the Ark, bears not the Figure of the Church, and that plainly for this Reason, because the Ark is the Figure of that wherein we are saved *(wherein few were saved, eight Persons).* Now the eight were the Persons saved, and saved in the Ark, and they bare the Resemblance of the Church in being saved; but it is the Ark that bears the Resemblance of that wherein we are saved, who is Jesus Christ the Saviour of the World, signified and applied to us in Baptism. You will say it is Baptism that saves us; but how doth it so? Because we are baptized into Christ, *Rom.* 6. 3. and it is said to be therefore by the Resurrection of Christ that it saves; altho he mentions the Resurrection as signified in Baptism, he means his Death too, for he puts that Part, *the Resurrection*, for the whole. Baptism unto the Person baptized under the Water, (whether by pouring it upon it, or dipping under it, it is all one, for Baptism is called Sprinkling) implies a covering under the Water, and rising again. How doth Christ save? *He died for our Sins, and rose again for our Justification*, Rom. 4. 25. And we are said to be *baptized into his Death*, as well as into Christ and his Resurrection, *Rom.* 6. 3. It is the most lively Example that ever was; we are baptized into Christ, and into his Death, and into his Resurrection, as ye have it there expressed. This Baptism thus representing Christ is said to be figured out by the Ark. As for the Ark, *Ainsworth*, that holy Man, well observes concerning it; *Every Christian* (saith he) *is baptized with Christ; and as* Noah *was in the Ark, so we were all in Christ representatively, when he hung on the Cross, and when he rose.* And so we were in the Ark; when that was under Water, we were under Water; when the Ark got up, we rose up upon the Water. It was impossible for the Ark to be overwhelmed, because God took care of it: So it was with Christ, God upheld him; and Death, altho he was laid in his Grave, could not have Dominion over him. It was impossible for Death to hold him. The Ark too kept *Noah* and the Church, the Ark bare off all, (I need not stand to inlarge upon it) there is no Example or Figure (as I know) so lively. *Moses*'s being baptized in the Cloud, and the Red Sea of Baptism, (because it was the Figure of it) is nothing so lively as this. Now the Ark being thus prov'd to be a Type of Christ, wherein we are saved, we shall next consider God's Invitation of *Noah* to come into the Ark; *Gen.* 7. 1. *Come thou, enter into the Ark.* I shall decipher this out into Gospel-Language, and give you plain Words for every tittle of it. *Come thou and thy House, and enter into the Ark.* Here is,

1. An Invitation to come into the Ark, like to Christ's inviting Sinners to come to him; *Mat.* 11. 28,29. *Come to me* (saith Christ) *all ye that are weary and heavy laden.* And *Rev.* 22. 17. *The Bride saith, Come; and the Spirit saith, Come, and take of the Water of Life freely.*

2. What is this Coming? It is that which is applied to Christ; *John* 6. 33. *He that comes to me shall never thirst.* Coming is believing, for to believe is to come to Christ to be saved. *You will not come to me* (saith Christ) *that you may have Life*, *John* 5. 40.

3. The Words of God's Invitation to *Noah* are, *Come and enter.* The Expression is answerable concerning Faith; *Heb.* 11. 3. *Through Faith we understand that the Worlds were framed by the Word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.* Thus it is likewise express'd, *Mat.* 11. 28. *Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you Rest.* By coming to Christ, and believing in him, we enter both into him, and also into Rest.

4. We

4. We are said to enter into Christ only by coming and believing, whereas we were out of Christ before: *He was* (saith the Apostle, *Rom.* 16. 7.) *in Christ before me.* When he did believe, he entred into Christ, he came to be in Christ, as *Noah* was in the Ark, and so was saved. Sutable hereunto is also that Text in Rom. 8. 1. *There is no Condemnation to them that are in Christ,* no more than there was Destruction unto them that were in the Ark, for they were brought safe to Land. As we thus enter into Christ by Faith, so we dwell in Christ, and continue in Christ; 1 *John* 2. 23, 24. Book 2.

5. Yet it falls well, as God invited *Noah* to come into the Ark, so he invited his Family too; *Come thou and thy House.* The Gospel-Invitation runs thus in these very Words, *Acts* 16. 11. when the poor Jailor came, and knows not what to do to be saved, *Believe thou on the Lord Jesus* (says the Apostle): Do but come into the Ark, and *thou shalt be saved and thy House.* Thus the Gospel was preached, (as might apparently be shewed at large) so that I have demonstrated unto you, that *Gen.* 7. 1. is plain Gospel, and the word about believing answers it. Christ is your Ark, and Faith is your Coming, and by Faith you enter into Christ, and continue in him (answerably as *Noah* did in the Ark) till thou arrivest safe to Land, *thou and thy House.* Thus you see that still the Parallel holds on about *Noah* in his Covenant, and the Work of Faith. I shall now proceed to shew in some proportion, that God teaches us to believe upon Christ, as he taught *Noah* to enter into the Ark.

1*st.* I shall first answer a Case or two: I told you, that Christ is the Object of your Faith, distinct from Free Grace, or that we are to believe on Christ, and treat with him as well as with God's Free Grace. Now the Case to be resolv'd is this: Many Souls (some such Souls I am sure I have known) have been mightily carried out to treat with God the Father and his Free Grace, and they have found an open Door if they will go in at that Room. If they will go to the Father, they find all the Love in his Heart in giving Men to Christ, and commanding him to die for them; and they find all this Love to be free and unchangeable, and they find the Thoughts of it to be a Support of Faith; and altho they have not found Assurance, yet they are so much assured of the Will of God, as to know that he is resolv'd to save Sinners, and they know that Salvation must flow from it, and that makes them seek God, and apply themselves to Free Grace; and they can turn all other Considerations of Christ into Motives and Pleas, and so lay themselves at the Feet of God: Yet while they do this, they take it for granted, that all God's Love is through Christ, and that he was God in Christ reconciling the World to himself, or that he had never done it else: and so tho Jesus Christ is implicitely honoured by them apart and distinctly, yet they do not explicitely apply themselves in a distinct manner to the Lord Jesus. They do not make use of Christ so distinctly, altho they go to God through Christ. The Answer to this Case is useful and profitable.

1. I say, that here are two Objects of Faith, and they are equal Objects of Faith at least, and equally necessary: But I say too, that where the Father is, there is the Son; *John* 14. 10, 11. *I am in the Father, and the Father in me, and I in you:* And you shall know this one day; *and my Father and I am one, and we agree in one,* John 10. 30. Their Hearts are not divided: So that if thou canst find the Heart of God open to thee, and that there is a full Door open, and that thy Heart is strengthned to go in at it, then for certain thou hast also a Sense of the Love of Christ, and thou takest it for granted, that all that thou hast is through Christ, and is from the Heart of Christ; and so far thou givest him the Honour of it. Thou mayst be sure of it by this Token, that Christ himself hath to do with his Father in saving us more than with himself. He eyes his Will, and regards what he hath said to him about our Salvation, and the undertaking of it, and the carrying of it through; *John* 6. 37. *I came down from above, not to do my own Will, but the Will of him that sent me;* (thus saith Jesus Christ himself) *and this is my Father's Will, that he hath sent me, and that of all that he hath given me I should lose none.* Now canst thou go unto the Heart of the Father, and regard him as the Fountain of all that Christ hath done; and look on him as giving to Christ them that he would have saved? Dost thou see that Christ hath undertaken to him for thee, and that he hath such and such a Love in his Heart to save thee, and that thou hast a Declaration of it, and the indefinite Promise of it in the Gospel? and do these Thoughts take thy Heart, and dost thou thus treat with the Father, and his Will, and Free Grace for Salvation? Thou here-

Part I. in honoureſt Chriſt, for it is no queſtion but Chriſt that came to do his Father's Will agrees to it, and hath it always in his View. He tells us, that he doth his Father's Will, as to the Perſons who are to be ſaved; *John* 6. 37. *All that the Father giveth me ſhall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will not caſt out, for I came not to do my Will, but the Will of him that ſent me, i. e.* to ſave the Perſons that God the Father gave me. Doſt thou go to God, altho he doth not tell thee immediately that he loves thee? This is the Will of the Father, and Chriſt came to do the Will of the Father unto Perſons, and therefore to thoſe Perſons whoſe Hearts are taken with his Grace: And this is a ſign Jeſus Chriſt hath ſatisfied for thee, and makes Application to the Father for thee, *Joh.* 5. 24. *Verily, verily I ſay unto you, he that heareth my Word, and believeth on him that ſent me, hath everlaſting Life, and ſhall not come into Condemnation; but is paſſed from Death to Life.* You muſt know this, that one great End of Chriſt's Preaching was to diſcover the Father, and to ſhew how much the Father's Heart was engag'd in ſaving Man by him, and in ſending him into the World. Now ſuppoſe that in his Preaching, a good Soul had been taken with this Love of God the Father that gave his Son, and that this Soul was drawn out upon that to apply it ſelf to the Father; it herein heard Chriſt, and applied it ſelf to him alſo. He that heareth my words (ſaith Chriſt while he is magnifying God the Father, *Joh.* 5. 24.) and underſtandeth, and believeth on him that ſent me (*i. e.* believes upon him as having ſent me) that Man (ſaith he) hath Everlaſting Life, altho eminently thus his Heart is carried unto the Father that ſent him.

2. The Soul of Man is apt to be intent upon one Object, and ſo to be more flat in another: this is undeniable matter of Experience. O! that I were humbled, ſays the Soul ſometimes, when the Heart goes out to be abaſed for Sin; at another time the Heart is as much drawn out for Chriſt and for his Grace; and while it is drawn out that way, a zealous Love for Holineſs comes in, and then it runs out to that. We cannot be intent upon many Objects with Intenſeneſs of Thought, through a Narrowneſs of Mind. Sometimes all about the Father and his free Grace takes up our Thoughts, and the Soul runs out that way; and ſometimes the Son and ſometimes the Spirit employ all our Thoughts, as indeed we muſt adore every Perſon in his Office: Sometimes we are carried to Communion with the Father, and ſometimes to enjoy it with the Son, and ſometimes to have it with the Holy Ghoſt. Now all this ariſeth from the Narrowneſs of our Minds, and therefore Father, Son and Holy Ghoſt are feign to take their turns, and to be entertain'd by Viciſſitudes.

3. Is the Father diſcovered to thee in his free Grace to draw thy Heart into Communion, while Chriſt is not ſo free to thee when thou attempteſt to go to him? Know this for a truth, that whatever is diſcovered of the Father's Heart, it is done by Chriſt; and whatever is diſcovered of the Son's Heart in dying and riſing, it is done by the Father: therefore thou may ſt be ſure that the Father is with thee when thy Heart is drawn to Chriſt, for that drawing is from the Father; and if thou haſt thy Heart drawn to the Father, it is effected by Chriſt, *Mat.* 11.27. How is it that thy Heart is drawn unto the Son, and thy Heart is all ſet upon Chriſt? it is the Father that doth it, and he doth it ſecretly in the Word he doth teach thee; yet no Man hath ſeen him, he doth it, and doth it ſecretly; and ſo likewiſe no Man cometh to the Father but by Chriſt; thou art no ſooner with Chriſt, and haſt put forth a few Acts of Faith, but he ſends thee to the Father, or thou couldſt not come to him, as thou couldſt not come to Chriſt but by the Father, and as the Father diſcovers him: And therefore be aſſured, that he who hath the Father hath the Son, and he that hath the Son hath him by the Father.

4. It is beſt to have the Heart both drawn out to the free Grace that is in the Father's Heart, and to have the Heart drawn out to Jeſus Chriſt and his Fulneſs. It is beſt for thee to have thy Heart from the beginning (as ſome have had) to know both the Father and the Son, and to continue thy Addreſſes to either. O that is beſt! I will give you a great many Scriptures for it: Thus it was with *Paul* from his firſt Converſion, 1 *Tim.* 1. 14. *The Grace of our Lord was abundant, with Faith, and Love, which is in Jeſus Chriſt.* By *our Lord* there is meant the Father, for he is made diſtinct from Jeſus Chriſt in the next words: *Paul* had an abundant entrance both to God the Father in his free Grace at his Converſion, and he had abundant entrance unto Jeſus Chriſt with Faith and Love drawn out unto him. To the ſame purpoſe is 1 *John* 2. 13. *I write unto you, Fathers, becauſe ye have known him that is from*

from the beginning. I write unto you, young Men, because you have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, little Children, because ye have known the Father. Let that therefore abide in you which you have heard from the beginning, let it remain in you, and you shall continue in the Son and in the Father. You knew the Father at first, and believ'd on him and Christ, and if you will cleave unto your first Works, to what you have heard and had from the beginning, to what you have known of God the Father, and of the Son, you will continue in both, and there lies your Comfort; and if you cast it off, as those Hereticks did, (who knew the Father, but not the Son) thou hast not the Father nor the Son. Thy Case indeed may be such, that tho thou knowest both, yet thy Heart is not so taken with the one as the other; but yet while thou goest unto Christ, it is because the Father hath sent him, and it's his Will that thou believe on him. If thou dost go unto the Father, it is because Jesus Christ hath died, and they both agree in one: It is best to join both, *Rom.* 3. 24. *Being justified freely by his Grace, through the Redemption that is in Jesus Christ.* It is best to join the Grace of God and Faith on the Blood of Christ, and to have our Hearts equally carried to the one and the other, altho the Father must have the Prehemi-nence. This is the truest and righteest Frame of a Christian.

Book 2.

But you will say, is not the Knowledg of the Father and his Grace alone sufficient, altho I have not the other? Is not the saving Knowledg of the Mercy and Grace of God sufficient, altho I do not know Christ nor believe on him, and so on the contrary?

1. I answer, No; Grace alone would not save you without a Christ, for he is to satisfy the Justice of God, that so Grace may save thee, and that God might be just, and the Justifier of those that believe. I will not enter into *that* Discourse, that through the whole Old Testament there was a glimmering of Christ, that it began in *Adam* (that Christ should destroy the Works of the Devil) and in *Enoch*'s Ministry, and in *Noah*'s Ministry, who as he was Heir of Righteousness by Faith, so he was the Preacher of it, and is said to preach Jesus Christ in his day. *Peter*, speaking of the Jews how they were saved, saith, *Acts* 15. 11. *There was a Yoke that neither we nor our Fathers could bear: yet if we believe in the Lord Jesus, we shall be saved, as they were*; and how? by the Grace of Christ, and by believing on him, and having an Eye to Christ. They knew not the way how Christ would save them, they did not dream it should be by dying, but they had an Eye to him as shewed in the Type: There was the Temple, and they looked towards it, and the Mercy-seat, *&c.* The Ark was Christ, and the Mercy-seat was the Favour of God, and the Mercy-seat and the Ark were equal. Thus look what purpose of Grace he hath to save, the Ark which is Jesus Christ, is as large: You have the Mercy-seat, the Favour of God; and the Purchase of Christ, who is the Ark, is equal to it.

2. The Necessity of coming to Christ was more clearly insisted on after the time of Christ's Ascension, and the Publication of the Gospel to all Nations. They are required to believe on Christ distinctly, and to treat with him distinctly, as well as with the Father; and sooner or later the Elect shall do it, and have some Glances to Christ. Christ answerably prays, *Joh.* 17. *I pray not for these only, but for all that shall believe on me through their Word*; we all believe through their Word to this day. How doth Jesus Christ characterize his Church that was to come? he doth it by this mark that they should believe on him, and (saith he) *I pray not for the World.* Can you think then that any Man since should have Knowledg to grow up to Salvation from a Principle of Nature without Jesus Christ? No, they are left out in Jesus Christ's Prayer. Thus likewise Christ saith, *John* 8. 21. *If you do not believe that I am he, if you do not come to me that ye may have Life, that ye may be saved, you will die in your Sins.* There must be an absolute treating with Jesus Christ, a flashy Faith is not sufficient; nor is it enough that you have purposed such an Act, but you must come to Christ, and treat with him, and continue to do so to the end. In *Noah*'s Covenant (for I follow the Figure, and I have shewed in another Discourse how it was a Type of the Covenant of Grace unto the Church in the New Testament) it was necessary for *Noah* and his Family to come and enter into the Ark if he would be saved; and so it is as necessary for us to come and enter into Christ by Faith to be saved: as *Noah* entred into that Ark to be saved from the Waters, so we into this Ark to be saved from the Wrath of God. All that Grace which *Noah* found in God would not have saved him by way of his Ordination, but in

in and by the Ark. I have ſav'd you and you. Tho he was acknowledged by God
Part I. to be a righteous Man, and tho he had been a Preacher of Righteouſneſs, yet all this Righteouſneſs, and all the good Sermons which he had made would not ſave him from theſe Waters, but he muſt have drowned with the reſt had he not entred into the Ark. Thus tho thou wert as righteous as *Noah*, yet if thou art ſaved, it muſt be by coming into the Ark. Say what you will of your ſelves, being puffed up with vain Hopes, you muſt be ſaved by Jeſus Chriſt alone. And therefore it is ſaid that *Noah* and his Houſe entred into the Ark. If you take the Church in general there is no Salvation out of the Church (ſo ſome have applied this Figure of the Ark): Ay but I ſay there is no other Name by which we can be ſaved, but that of Jeſus, and no other Benefit but Faith, *nulla ſalus extra Chriſtum, no Salvation out of Chriſt.* If thou art without God and without Chriſt, thou art in a deſperate caſe.

My Deſign is to ſhew the neceſſity of Faith on Chriſt, by going over the Story of the Progreſs of the Goſpel from the firſt and earlieſt beginning of it, when the Goſpel began. When *John* the *Baptiſt* began it before Chriſt preached, his Work was to point and direct Men to believe on Chriſt. You find that the Goſpel began with *John*, Luke 16. 16. *The Law and the Prophets were until* John: when he baptized Men, he ſaid to the People, I baptize you, but ſaith he, believe on Chriſt. *John* verily baptized Men with the Baptiſm of Repentance and Humiliation: tho he taught them Repentance, he yet enjoins them to believe on Chriſt, *Acts* 19. 4. he did join Faith with Repentance; he pointed Men to Chriſt, and told the Phariſees there was ſuch a one among them, whoſe Shoe-latchet he was not worthy to unlooſe; and ſets forth the Fame of Chriſt's Miniſtry. He baptized, to make Chriſt manifeſt unto the People of *Iſrael*, *Joh.* 1. 38, 39, 40, 41. and his Diſciples *Simon* and *Andrew* fell to Chriſt. It is alſo ſet down in the very beginning of the Goſpel, that Faith on Chriſt is the only way of Life, *Joh.* 3. 36. *He that believeth on the Son, hath everlaſting Life: and he that believeth not the Son, ſhall not ſee Life; but the Wrath of God abideth on him.* When the Goſpel began, this was ſtill put into it, that we muſt believe on Chriſt. It is evidenced alſo by the Care that our Lord and Saviour is at to make himſelf known to poor Souls, that they may believe on him, altho he preach the Father's Love too. The poor blind Man had his Eye-ſight given him, but he knew not who did it, yet there was ſomething within him that did defend Chriſt againſt the Phariſees, and Jeſus Chriſt takes occaſion to meet him again, and tho even then he did not know him, yet afterwards he did make himſelf manifeſt. There were ſome that did know him, as *Nathanael*, but they did not believe diſtinctly on him; but Chriſt takes care that this poor blind Man ſhould. There is a poor Woman alſo, *Joh.* 4. 26. to whom Chriſt reveals himſelf, *I am he, I am the Chriſt that ſpeaks to thee* (ſaith he); and then there were others too who did believe on him, as ye read there. He would go out of the Nation of the Jews, to a place where an elect Woman was, on purpoſe to reveal himſelf to her. When the time was come for the Canaanitiſh Woman to believe on him, he went out to the Coaſts of *Tyre* and *Sidon*: And ſo he never went out but once to the Coaſts of the *Gaderens*, and then he came to that poor Woman to diſcover himſelf to her: and yet how averſe was ſhe at firſt, but at laſt ſhe followed him, and found that he was the *Meſſiah*, and Chriſt did approve and own her Faith. The Eunuch (*Acts* 8. 37.) came to *Jeruſalem* to worſhip, and believed on Chriſt to come, but did not know that he was come; yet what Care doth Chriſt take that he ſhould know him? He was devoutly reading in the Scriptures in his Chariot, (he imploys his time well) and he reads that full Text of the Old Teſtament concerning Chriſt. Providence ſo orders it that *Philip* is going the ſame way, and is commanded to join himſelf to him to do that work of inſtructing him, and he preacheth Chriſt to him, and the Eunuch's Heart is taken, and ſtraitway he believeth. As Chriſt calls poor Fiſher-men, and they ſtraitway left their Nets and followed him; ſo this Man ſtraitway believed on Jeſus Chriſt, and goes home and rejoiceth.

What is the reaſon that after Chriſt's Suffering, and that the Goſpel was thus preached, God would have us, in order to Salvation, to know Chriſt, and come to him?

1. It is that all may *honour the Son, as they honour the Father*; Joh. 5. 23. In honouring Chriſt, they honour the Father and his Grace: In looking to the Grace of God

God that was in his Heart to save, they honoured the Father, they believed on him, and so honoured him; but you must believe also on the Son and honour him, and how is that but by believing? *Joh.* 5. 23. Christ having spoken of believing, brings the other in, *God will have all Men to honour the Son, by believing on him, as well as on the Father.* Salvation runs on in the Knowledg of God the Father and the Son, *Joh.* 17. 2, 3. 2 *Pet.* 1. 2. Book 2.

2. Another Reason is, because now God had fully manifested his Son unto the Apostles who preached him; whoever therefore upon their preaching did not believe on Christ, it was a sign the God of this World had blinded their Minds. For God now had sent his Son, *he hath in these last days spoken to us by his Son,* (Heb. 1. 1.) immediately after his taking Flesh, and therefore he would have the Knowledg of his Son to take place. *Joh.* 6. 37. Christ speaks to the same purpose, *Him that comes to me I will not cast out; and all that the Father hath given me shall come to me, for my Father sent me.* And he sent Christ on purpose that he might be known and manifest unto all the World. He therefore that doth not now believe on the Son, doth frustrate the end of God's sending him, for he did it with an Intention that those Souls that are saved should believe on him.

3. It is the Ordination of God, it is the Will of God that it should be so, *Joh.* 6. 36, 37, 38. our Saviour Christ doth use a very sweet Argument and Parallel. The reason (saith he) that I must receive all that come unto me, is because the Father sent me, and gave me them before I came into the World, and I was sent to do his Will answerably. That you should come to me, this is the Father's Will, because he hath sent me on purpose to be made known to all that shall be saved, *Joh.* 6. 40. *All that the Father hath given me, shall come to me.* The Text doth plainly shew this, that God himself that gave his Son, doth not save Men unless they come to his Son; and therefore if he will have them (whom he did give unto Christ) to be saved, he is feign to draw them to come to him. In Marriage you have the Father usually to give the Daughter unto the Husband, but if she doth not give her Consent, it is not the Father's giving that makes it a Marriage: thus it is not our Father's Gift, but our Consent unto Christ, that makes a Match with our Souls. All the Scriptures, and all in the Scriptures will not save you, if you have not Faith in Jesus Christ. If you should suppose that you had all the Scripture in your Mind and Heart, it would not save you, 2 *Tim.* 3. 15. Tho thou art a *Timothy*, brought up from a Child to read the Scriptures as he did, and knowest them, yet they are able to make thee wise unto Salvation, only through Faith which is in Jesus Christ: If thou hast not Faith in Jesus Christ, all that Wisdom in the Scriptures will not save thee, nor have Power to save thee: If they save thee, it is through Faith on Christ revealed in them. *Search the Scriptures,* (says Christ, *Joh.* 5. 39.) *for you think therein ye have Salvation*; but search them, for they speak of me more than of any thing else, and ye ought to know me, or ye shall die in your Sins. But you will say, May not a Man have Love to God the Father upon the thoughts of his free Grace alone, and may he not then repent for Sin? I say, No; you cannot repent unless you believe on his Son Christ, *Rom.* 1. 5. Love to God, and turning to God will not save you, if you swerve from the means of Grace, and the way of Faith. What says Christ? *Joh.* 5. 42, 43. *But I know you, that ye have not the Love of God in you. I am come in my Father's Name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own Name, him ye will receive.* I know that you have not the Love of God in you; why? because you want Faith in me. Love to God springs from Faith in Christ, and therefore never talk of Love to God, if you have not treated concerning Salvation by Faith in Jesus Christ. *Acts* 26. 17, 18, 19. what saith Christ himself from Heaven when he gave *Paul* his Commission? *I send thee* (saith he) *to open the Eyes of the Gentiles, to turn them from Darkness to Light, and from the Power of Satan unto God, that they may receive Forgiveness of Sin, and an Inheritance among them that are sanctified.* Will not all this do? Will not turning unto God from Self-love, and loving God, and being sanctified serve to save us under the Gospel? No, read the next words, it must all be (says Christ) *through Faith that is in me:* Christ saith it from Heaven, this is his Commission, and he declares it that under the Gospel, Remission of Sins and turning to God, Forgiveness of Sin and Sanctification were all through Faith in him. Be convinced then, that if ever you be saved, there is a necessity that God teach you to come to the Son. You think it is an easy thing to come to Christ, and

Part I. and to look to him and to his Name for Pardon, and to go to him for Forgiveness and Sanctification: But let this be preached to you, and inculcated to you, to go to Christ; let it all be urged upon you, yet you will not come to Christ that you may have Life, and you will die in your Sins, unless God the Father draws you to him. Our Lord Jesus Christ gives a great Instance of this, *John* 6. 63, 64. *It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the Flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are Life. But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning, who they were that believed not, and who should betray him.* He doth give the greatest Instance in the World, that let Men live under the highest Preaching of the Gospel, and the powerfulest Ministry that ever spake, even the Preaching of Christ himself, yet a Man will not come to Christ. Whom doth Christ pitch upon for an Instance but upon *Judas*, that had been with him from the Beginning, and had heard him preach all his Sermons, and heard his Parables, and yet he is a Devil for all this? *For he knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him: Therefore I said,* (says he) *that no Man can come to me except it were given unto him of the Father,* ver. 65. Therefore there must be a Teaching from God, and none but those that are taught by a secret Work beyond what any powerful Minister in the World can make, will believe. A Man otherwise will never do it, he will never give up himself to God and Christ, but *there will be a Heart departing from the living God,* Heb. 3. 12. that is, from Christ, as the Coherence of the Words shew. So that it is a plain case, that those that live in Gospel-times, must all of them be taught of God, if they ever come to Christ. They that live under never so powerful Means, if God doth not touch their Hearts, they will never come. O bless the Lord that hath taught you to know his Free Grace, and to believe on his Son, which is *the great Work of God,* as Christ calls it, *John* 6. 29. It is instead of all else to believe on God, and him whom he hath sent. To him to whom the Gathering must be, to him you must come as Members to a Head, and as lost Creatures to a Saviour: Do not come to this and that Sign, and think you have none of Christ, because you cannot find them; but come to him, and dwell with him, and remain with him Day and Night.

CHAP. VII.

That Jesus is propos'd to our Faith as a spiritual Christ and Saviour. That unless he was the Son of God, he could not be a quickning Spirit to us.

IN the *6th* Chapter of *John* our Lord makes it the set Subject of his Discourse, to draw his Hearers unto a true spiritual Faith upon himself: And to that end proposeth himself altogether (as indeed he was) a spiritual Messiah, and inculcates it over and over. The Occasion which he took was the falling short of this spiritual Faith, in that Faith which these of *Capernaum* had of him. They acknowledged him indeed upon the Miracle of the Loaves, (ver. 14. *This is of a truth that Prophet that should come into the World)* a Prophet, and a far greater Prophet than *Moses*, who had given their Fathers Bread from Heaven in the Wilderness, *ver.* 31. But Christ speaking of a living Bread which his Father would give, and which himself would give, *ver.* 27, and 32. and that it was the *true Bread* typified by *Moses* his Manna, and which endured to eternal Life; they had upon that Speech a farther Advance of Faith concerning him, *viz.* That he was able, by his Interest in God his Father, to procure a Bread whereby their Bodies might live for ever; as *Adam*'s should have done by eating of the Tree of Life; *ver.* 34. *Then said they, Lord, evermore give us this Bread:* Thus far they went in believing on him. But when they heard him say that he himself was that living Bread that came down from Heaven, and that he who eateth that Bread should live for ever; yea, and that it was his Flesh, as he was Son of Man, which they must eat, and that which he would give for the Life of the World; there they stopp'd and left him, and were offended, (*ver.* 61, and 66.) as at Sayings which were too hard to bear, *ver.* 60. That glorious Sermon wherein he makes this very Argument his Subject, you may read

read from *ver.* 27, to the very end of the Chapter. At *ver.* 63. he opens and unriddles all, and discovers the Mystery to them to lie in this: *It is the Spirit that quickneth, the Flesh profiteth nothing: The Words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are Life*: thereby explaining, how and whence it was that he was living Bread, and what made his very Flesh or humane Nature to be eternal Life; and gives a perfect Reason why those who do eat it, and receive it, and himself therewith, (in that manner as he and his Father intended in the giving of it, and agreeably to the Nature of it) should live. The Words are the Key to all that Sermon foregoing, and unto what follows after: And it is as if he had said, You must all know that my very Person, whom you do not yet truly understand, and fully believe in as you ought; for you see and behold me but as a Man who works these Wonders; (as *ver.* 36. *Ye have also seen me, and believe not)* you must yet know, that this my Person consists of more than a mere Man consisting of Body and Soul, (which you only look at, and whom you suppose God is present with, more than ever with any Man that hath been in the World) but know, I am God in my Person as well as Man; and it is that Spirit or Godhead, which is that which gives the Life that I speak of; *It is the Spirit that quickens*, which elevates and advanceth my Flesh or Humanity to that high State of Life, as to give Life to Men, in that I who am God united unto that Flesh in one Person, and giving and offering it as a Sacrifice to my Father, for *the Life of the World*, (they being Sinners) as his words are, *ver.* 51. *And the Bread that I will give is my Flesh, which I will give for the Life of the World.* I who am God have sublimated and spirited this sacrificed Flesh (by Reason of this Union) to be a spiritual Food to your Spirits and Souls; which Flesh alone, if it had been never so often given and offered, if it had been separated from, and not thus united to this Spirit, would *have profited nothing*, as to giving that Life I have been speaking of; and therefore you must understand all my former Words I have been speaking about eating my Flesh, *&c.* spiritually, and of a spiritual eating, for so the Nature of the thing requires; for I am a spiritual Christ, and a spiritual Saviour, and not a fleshly. And hence it is that *my Words* which I have uttered *are Spirit and Life*, and do become such to any of you that hear and understand me aright: (and there were some present, who at that time, and in that manner, understood those Words, and found him and these his Words to be spiritual Life unto them, as *ver.* 67, 68. shews) And as my Flesh is by virtue hereof the Procurer of Life unto you as Sinners; so my Person consisting of God-man, is eternal Life in it self to them who, as Sinners, do eat my Flesh by Faith. And they have not only eternal Life from me, but I am in my Person eternal Life unto them in their Communion with me.

This Passage, as thus interpreted of his Godhead and humane Nature, is the Center into which all the Lines of that Sermon do run, and will approve it self to be the true and genuine Meaning; as wherein he doth at once not simply give an *Explanation* of what his Scope and Meaning was, namely, that this eating his Flesh, *&c.* was in a spiritual way to be understood by Faith, and not of a carnal eating, (which his last Words of that Verse do import, *My Words they are Spirit and Life)* but chiefly beyond that, it is to give the Account and Ground *why it was so*, in those first Words; *It is the Spirit that quickens*, &c. which putting Life into the humane Nature, and offering it up to God, to give us Life, made his Flesh and himself to be altogether a spiritual Food, (tho the most real of Foods, *Meat indeed*, as *ver.* 55.) unto the Souls of Men: And also, because thereby he answers all their Cavils, Queries, and Exceptions, they had before made. And the View of all these have confirmed me in the foresaid Interpretation of his Godhead to be meant by Spirit, and by Flesh his humane Nature, which was the Sense of the Antients. And I have wondred that the most of our latest Interpreters have diverted from it, and betaken themselves wholly to expound this Scripture to design the *manner of eating* to be spiritual, (as *Beza*, and after him divers) and have rested solely in that Sense as full and adequate; whereas this other Interpretation I have given, not only takes in that of theirs, but beyond it gives the Reason of it, why it can be no other than a spiritual eating; for the Life the Godhead gives cannot be corporeally eaten. And then the Concurrence of other Scriptures, using the same Words to express the Godhead's dwelling in his humane Nature personally, doth further confirm me in it. And lastly, the Disciples Words which they return in answer to this

Part I. Discourse of Christ's, (which shews how they understood it) doth put me out of all doubt that this was indeed his Meaning: and I am more confirm'd in it by the Concurrence of other Scriptures.

1. We have the Concurrence of *Rom.* 1. 3, 4. *Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was made of the Seed of* David *according to the Flesh; and declared to be the Son of God with Power, according to THE SPIRIT OF HOLINESS, by the Resurrection from the Dead.* Where, as his Flesh is his Humanity, so that *Spirit of Holiness* is the *Godhead* of him, as he is the Son of God, and termed here the *Spirit of Holiness*, as *(Heb.* 9. 14.*)* it is called the *eternal Spirit*, the Son of God being the Fulness of the Godhead dwelling in that Flesh; which (as he adds) he *was declared to be, by the Resurrection from the Dead*, that *Spirit* or *Godhead* of his raising him up again by his own Power. For which Cause he is also said *to be quickned in the Spirit*, or *by the Spirit, having been put to Death in the Flesh*, 1 Pet. 3. 18. and likewise *justified in the Spirit*, 1 Tim. 3. 16. namely, to be God as well as Man, as himself had declared himself to be. But would you have this of the first Chapter to the *Romans* more plainly deciphered? the same Apostle doth it in plainer Words in the same Epistle. That Parallel in the same Epistle, *Rom.* 9. 5. relates to what hath been said; *Whose are the Fathers; and of whom, as concerning the Flesh, Christ came, who is God over all, blessed for ever. Amen.* As in that first Chapter he had distinguished about his Person, saying, *as concerning the Flesh*, that is, his humane Nature received from *David* his Forefather, as his Seed. So in this *chap.* 9. he useth the same again; *Of whom* (*viz.* the Fathers) *as concerning the Flesh, Christ came.* And in his so cautious distinguishing in both Places, *as concerning the Flesh*, doth evidently import he had somewhat else, some other Thing, or Nature besides, which his Person (the Christ) consisted of: And what that other Nature should be, required a farther Declaration, and might be expected he should say it; which the Apostle doth with the highest Solemnity and Adoration of him, when he addeth, *Who is God blessed for ever, Amen:* Which Godhead acknowledged in the *9th* Chapter, he had stiled *Spirit* in *chap.* 1. and which you find also in *John* 6. in Christ's Speech; *It is the Spirit that quickens, the Flesh profiteth nothing*, that is, of it self alone. And this Spirit or Godhead thus united into one Person, is said to be made a quickning Spirit to us, *(*1 *Cor.* 15. 45, 46.) in Similitude to *Adam* his being a living Soul; that is, a Person consisting of a reasonable Soul, united to a Body which it dwelleth in, and inspireth; and then by Generation propagateth us the like unto him therein: so here in Christ typified by him, his Godhead or Spirit dwelleth bodily in his Flesh or humane Nature, and thereby doth first quicken and spirit that Flesh even by the Inhabitation of that Spirit in it, and raiseth up thereby that humane Nature to a Spiritualness and Heavenliness above all that is communicated to mere Creatures: and therefore he is himself there stiled a *spiritual and heavenly Man*, who in the virtue hereof is then made by a Regeneration both of our Souls and Bodies, *a quickning Spirit* to us. And tho this there spoken of him (as to us) is particularly in relation to his quickning and raising our Bodies, yet his so doing must first and more specially be understood, that he is *a quickning Spirit* to the Souls of those in this Life, whose Bodies he raiseth at the Resurrection; as *Ephes.* 2. 1. the Phrase is used.

2. This Interpretation doth alone solve all the Riddles and Quarrels which had been rais'd before by the Capernaites; and this Sense therefore containing a sufficient Answer unto all and each of them, must needs have been intended and directed as an Answer to them, whereas that other narrowed Sense mention'd falls short of this Scope. They murmured, *ver.* 41, 42. because he said, *I am the Bread which came down from Heaven: And they said, Is not this Jesus the Son of* Joseph, *whose Father and Mother we know? How is it then that he saith, I came down from Heaven?* Now this one Speech of his, *It is the Spirit that quickneth*, is a sufficient Account how both might stand: *I am God*, (says he) *the Son of God*, and the Godhead (which he calls Spirit, and is the Spirit of that Son) is in me, and it was *that* which came *down from Heaven*; but my *Flesh*, my humane Nature, that indeed I had from my Mother, whom you knew: And yet let me withal further tell you, (says he) that this *Son of Man*, whom you think only to be a mere earthly Man, should, by the Right of natural Inheritance had from his being united into one Person with the Godhead and Son of God, have been in Heaven at the first Instant of that Union, and by due never have lived upon Earth in frail Flesh, but only to that end, to redeem

deem you by giving his Life for the World, *ver.* 51. and this Christ tells them in the very Words before; *ver.* 61, 62. *When Jesus knew they murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this also offend you? What and if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up where he was before? i. e.* in his due Right: And accordingly in 1 *Cor.* 15. it is from this very Ground of his Union with that Spirit, the quickning Spirit, his Godhead, *ver.* 45. that *he*, the *Man*, is said to be the Lord from Heaven; *ver.* 47. *The first Man is of the Earth, earthy; the second MAN is the Lord from Heaven*; and an heavenly Man, *ver.* 48. for in the Right of that Union he was to have been *in Heaven*; and in that respect he is said to be *from Heaven*, here in *John* 6. as also in this to the *Corinthians*, 1 Cor. 15. because that his due was to have been there before ever he came on Earth. They had also quarrell'd with him, how he being but a mere Man, could be the *living Bread* that came down from Heaven, as he had said, *ver.* 41, & 52. and that he that *eateth of that Bread shall live for ever*, ver. 58. Now this word *quickning Spirit*, resolves the Difficulty, for it was his Godhead united to that Flesh, that was the Principle of that eternal Life which we partake of from him: *therefore he that eateth me*, (saith he) *even he shall live by me*, ver. 57. and yet so as it was that his Manhood and Flesh, as it was united to the Godhead, which made him to become Bread and Food to us, without which his Godhead alone, simply, would not have been fit Meat either for Soul or Body: nor would his Flesh alone, if it had been separated from the Godhead, *have profited any thing*. And thus the personal Union between both Natures is not only asserted, but made the Ground of all he had spoken of himself.

Book 2.

3. Again, that Question, *ver.* 52. *How can this Man give us his Flesh to eat?* is by this Mystery unfolded, even that he is in his Person Spirit united to Flesh. And 'tis the Spirit that gives the Life; and therefore it was that his Flesh must be understood to be a spiritual Food, made to be such by the Spirit in him: And this also shews his Speeches to have been so intended, that thence and therefore answerably their eating must be a spiritual eating of the Soul or Spirit by Faith; and that any one hearing and understanding those his Words which he had uttered concerning it, and receiving them by Faith, their Souls should find them to be Spirit and Life to them, by conveying himself (who is eternal Life) to them through Faith on him, who as a quickning Spirit is their Life: And thus their Cavil *(how can this be?)* is solved; for thus it might and could well be, according to spiritual Principles rationally suted to and corresponding one with another. And moreover, it further appears, that he meant it not at all of a corporeal eating, (as our Bodies do our ordinary Food) by that Saying he subjoineth, *ver.* 56. *He that eateth my Flesh, and drinketh my Blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him*: for no Man is said to dwell in his Meat, tho for a while, till concocted, his Meat may be said to be in his Body: But says he, *He that eateth my Flesh dwells in me, and lives in and by me, even as I live in the living Father*, as it follows, *ver.* 57. Thus this Interpretation answers all their Exceptions.

4. That Confession which his Disciples hereupon made, (which is the last Part of the Chapter) is indeed but a short Sum of all this; even a brief Exposition and Confirmation of Christ's whole Sermon, but especially of this, *ver.* 63. The Print and Impression on their Souls who had savingly believed, punctually answered to this his Doctrine: For when our Saviour saw that his new Disciples of *Capernaum* had so soon left him, (ver. 66. *From that time many of his Disciples went back, and walked no more with him)* he turneth himself to his old Disciples, *Peter*, and the rest of them that had stood by, and heard all the Discourse; thus speaking to them, *v.* 67. *Then said Jesus to the twelve, Will ye also go away?* And now hear them speak according to their experimental Sense; *ver.* 58, 59. *Then* Simon Peter (in the Name of the rest) *answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the Words of eternal Life; and we believe, and are sure, that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.* They had by blessed Experience found him to be a Fountain of spiritual Life to their Souls, because he was God's Son: They had found, they had felt him to be their Life, because *that Flesh*, that is, *that Man*, whom they saw with their Eyes, whom they had convers'd with, and had heard so many Words and Sermons from, (and this among the rest) was indeed in his Person, the Son of God, and united to the Son of God personally; and that the Spirit or Godhead in him the Son, had quickned their Souls full many a time: for they had found that his Words he had spoken

concerning himself, in declaring that he was the Son of God, and GOD, had been Part I. Eternal Life to them. They therefore cry out as Men that should be undone, if they should ever come once to leave him; *Whither shall we go?* (say they) *thou hast the words of Eternal Life:* And this Life he had in his very Person, and in his being God's Son, which therefore *Simon, v.* 69. superadds, *And we believe, and are sure, that thou art that Christ, the Son of the Living God.* If therefore there should be a parting of us and Thee, farewel Eternal Life, and let go our Souls, and all, for thou art the Soul of our Souls, the Life of our Lives; which Life he withal affirms to be conveyed to them, and maintained in them, by and through their believing on him, as the Son of God.

And now observe the full and express Correspondency which the words of this their Confession holds, in reference unto Christ's words, specially those in *v.* 63. Our Lord had in the 57*th* Verse ascended higher in setting open the Fountain, and original Source, or Cause of his own blessed and eternal Life; to the end that carrying their Thoughts to the Well-head of all Life, they might know to whom ultimately to attribute the Glory of this Life, together with himself; and might discern the Blessedness of that Life it self derived to them, and the Descent and Derivation of it: His words are, *As the living Father hath sent me, amd I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, shall live by me:* It is as if he had said, The Father is the *primum vivens, the original Principle of all Spiritual Life*; being a Spirit (as *Joh.*4.24.) the Fountain of that Life which is in me, and from me let down to you: whence it is that the Life with which I quicken you, and other Believers, is a Communication of the Life that is in my Father himself through me; and the Foundation of my own Life in my self, and of being Life unto you, or any Believers, lies in this, that I am his Son: The Son of God having the same, the very same Life essentially in me who am God, that is in my Father; so as there is the same Spirit, and Godhead in both. I am the Living Son of this Living God, who, as such, is my Father, and have Life in my self, tho from him; and he sent me who am this Life, down from Heaven in this Flesh, which you behold with your bodily Eyes, to give Life to the World: And therefore I am able through and by means of this my Flesh, who is one Person with me, to derive and let down *this Life* to you, and *the Life* which my Father himself hath, even Eternal Life; for he is the Eternal God, and therefore I am Eternal Life also: And therefore it is that the Life I can and do communicate from him to you, is Eternal Life likewise. And again, as my Father is a Spirit (as *John* 4. 24.) so am I; and therefore it is a spiritual Life which I make Souls Partakers of, which is conveyed to those Souls by a spiritual means, wrought on purpose by my Father in their Hearts, unto whom he hath appointed to give this Life; which Means is believing on me with their whole Hearts, and by that Faith entertaining my Words, which I speak of my self, who am Life to them.

Now let us come to their short and summary Confession fore-mentioned, *ver.* 69. *We believe and are sure, thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.* This they alledg as the Ground and Reason why they found that he was *Eternal Life* to them. Concerning which Confession, I note three things, answering to what had gone afore in Christ's Speeches.

1. That he is *God*; which is evident they acknowledg, by saying, *the Son of the living God, the natural Son of the living Father*, as he had said before, *ver.* 57. Creatures that are living themselves, Animals, (as we call them) do beget living Creatures too, endowed with a Life like their own, and they beget in their Kind, as a Lion begets a Lion, and a Man begets a Man: Thus God begetting this Son, (and he is his only begotten Son) he begets him like himself, *a God:* And therefore to say he is the Son of the Living God, imports that he is God, and that Living God.

2. Observe, (which in substance is the very same) he had said of himself in *ver.* 63. *It is the Spirit*, or the Godhead in me, *that quickeneth.*

3. Observe, that it was by Faith on him, and his Word, that they had Life eternal derived unto their Souls from him. We believe (say they) which is in return unto all that Christ had spoken of believing, and eating his Flesh, to be that spiritual eating by Faith, throughout that Sermon, from *ver.* 14.

4. And

4. And let me cast in this to this Confession of theirs. One of those Apostles that then stood by (the Apostle *John*, who survived, and wrote his first Epistle after all the rest of them were dead) reviveth this very same Confession of theirs (here made) in his own Name, and in the Names of them all (as *Peter* here) tho dead, and alledgeth *that their general Sense* and Experience they had of the same of which they here spoke. Thus in 1 *Joh.* 1. 2. *That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our Eyes, which we have looked upon, and our Hands have handled of the Word of Life: For the Life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear Witness, and shew unto you that Eternal Life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us. We*, by which he means these his Fellow-Apostles that had been, not himself only, nor other Fellow-Christians then alive; for he speaks of those who had seen, heard, and handled of the Word of Life, *viz.* the true Christ; and how they had all found that he was that *Word of Life*, and *Eternal Life* that was with the Father, afore the World was; whom after often in that Epistle he stiles his Son, and God, and concludes the Epistle with the same, (even as he had begun) *This is the true God, and Eternal Life.* Book 2.

Thus we have seen the truth of all this justified by Wisdom's Children, and sealed to by their Experience.

Now in the last place, take notice, (and it is to our purpose) that in the midst of this Sermon it is that Christ lets fall the words of my grand Text, (for a part of this Sermon it is;) and that for this Cause, and on this occasion it was that because he is so spiritual a *Messias*, that therefore it is necessary, that every one that believes in Christ, so as to have Life, must be *taught*, and have *learned from the Father*, that grand Teacher of his Son: And that all this is put upon this very ground, because they are to know and receive him spiritually, (spiritually I say, in both those respects fore-mentioned at the entrance) for he is a spiritual Christ, (who is the Object) and the Faith he is to be received withal (in the Subject) must be spiritual, suited unto the true Spiritualness that is in this Object; his Person, as God-man, or a quickning Spirit in Flesh, and as he is a Saviour, giving his Flesh for the Life of the World (both which he treats of in that Sermon) in the real savoury eating whereof, and in whom Eternal Life consists, and is deriv'd; neither of which no Man can do, unless first taught by the Father to know him, and then drawn by God to him, as to a spiritual Saviour. And for Confirmation of this, you may again observe, how that presently after he had uttered these words, *ver.* 63. from the Doctrine thereof he infers, *ver.* 65. *Therefore said I unto you, that no Man can come unto me, except it were given to him of my Father.* Which Speech and Particle [*Therefore*] plainly refers unto the words of *v.* 63. we have been upon, and is as if he had said, Because I am to be believed on as a Spirit, or God, dwelling in this Flesh, to be the Quickner of all that believe, *Therefore*, or for that Reason it is, that no Man can come to me for Life, unless *taught* by the Father *spiritually*: For to believe on me in a sutable manner, (that is spiritually) sutably unto what I am in my Person; and also in my Salvation, and Life (that I do give to others, and in both which I am a *Spirit quickning*) and correspondently to believe on me, and on the Godhead dwelling in my Flesh personally, this is above the reach of Nature, or of *Flesh and Blood*, and therefore this must be given by my Father, who seeks such Professors and Disciples of me as believe on me in Spirit and Truth.

From all which we may conclude, that to know Christ spiritually, both in himself, 1. As he is a Spiritual Christ: And, 2. A Saviour in the true Spiritualness of him: And, 3. In a *spiritual manner* to understand him in both, and come to him, under the true Representation thereof, is that teaching of the Father meant, as the Truth is in Jesus; and for want of which, or falling short of which, it is that Men perish. This therefore must be accounted a Point of greatest moment to us to know, and to be searched into.

CHAP.

Part I.

CHAP. VIII.

That Christ represented as a Quickning Spirit, is a proper Object of our Faith.

MY next work therefore shall be to shew, that Christ as represented a Quickning Spirit, in that latitude of Sense which the Scriptures in that Notion of him intend, and revealed by the Father as the Truth thereof is in him, and taken in and understood by us accordingly, doth become and prove as proper and full an Object for our Faith to exercise it self upon, as any other Notion whatsoever wherein he is represented.

I have in this large Title comprehended the main Materials that follow; and in laying open the Spiritualness of our Christ, (the Object, which in Scripture is expreſt by Spirit that quickens) the Spiritualness of the Faith and Heart of a true Believer, with difference from common Faith in a Carnal Heart, will all along appear, and appear by this, that when the Spiritualness that is in the Object is spiritually discovered, if the Actings of the Soul be really, and in Verity conformable, and answerable thereto, then it is spiritual Faith in us also. For it is a certain Rule, that the Spiritualness of the Subject, *viz.* the Soul, lieth in a suitableness unto, and closing with the Spirituality of its Objects, as represented in their bare and naked true Spiritualness, abstracting from other Respects, for then they attinge and affect that Object as it is in it self. So here in this case, when the true Spiritualness of Christ is presented, and apprehended as the Truth is in Jesus, the Spiritualness, or Fleshlinesſ of the Heart will be discovered thereby, as the Heart shall be found to fall in with, or bear off from what is in that Object purely spiritual. I shall not then need to discourse any more, than to discover to you what a Christ you have, and how spiritual, and then if you lay your Hearts to the naked Apprehension thereof, and see how your Hearts agree with him, and are affected accordingly towards him; and what it is in him causeth you to *desire him* (as the Prophet speaks) as such a Christ, comparing Spiritual Hearts with Spiritual Christ, see how they agree and like each other.

Other Ways and Modes out of Scriptures are and have been taken by others, unto a great success in their Discoveries of Christ, and the truth of saving Faith thereby, and for Substance they are the same with this of mine that follows. But I chose this, as that which my Saviour's Sermon in this sixth Chapter of *John*, hath led me to, and which hath fallen into my own Heart, and hath animated my Pursuances after Christ in a more special manner than any other Apprehension of him whatsoever. I limit my self unto what this Notion, *viz. a Quickning Spirit*, will afford herein. For it is made a kind of Definition of him (if I may so speak) or the most proper Description, whether in his Person, or of what he is made to us, in two words, *a Quickning Spirit*, 1 *Cor.* 15. 45. Christ's Speech, *God is a Spirit*, (*Joh.* 4. 24.) is as proper a Definition of God as can be given (for he passeth our Logick) it expressing the *kind* of his Being, as his Name *Jehovah*, that he is *Fulness of Being*. And this Definition of Christ is like it given first by Christ himself in this *6th* of *John*, and then by the Apostle, *The Lord is that Spirit*, 2 Cor. 3. 17. and again, *a Quickning Spirit*, 1 Cor. 15. 45. and I call it a Definition of him, or rather the *exactest Description* of him, because it is used to illustrate both his Person and his Work as a Saviour, 1 *Cor.* 15. 45, to 50. *The first Man* Adam *was made a living Soul, the last* Adam *was made a quickening Spirit. Howbeit, that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural, and afterwards that which is spiritual. The first Man is of the Earth, earthy, the second Man is the Lord from Heaven.* I think I may, without the hazard of being confuted, undertake to say, that this is a more perfect Definition, or at least an exacter Character of *Adam* the first Man, given him by God himself, from and upon his very Creation, than ever any Philosopher gave of Man, whilst they went about to make a Definition of him: And I may answerably affirm the like of this Definition of Christ, that he is a *Quickening Spirit*: It denotes his Person to be God, *The Lord from Heaven*, and withal a Man in one Person with God, the second MAN. That the word *Spirit* in the New Testament is often

often set to express his Godhead, as his Humanity Flesh, is so well known (*Rom.* 1. 3. 1 *Tim.* 3. *ult.* 1 *Pet.* 3. 18, 19. *Heb.* 9. 14.) as it needs not be insisted on. The Parallel then between our Christ, and the first *Adam*, by way of supereminent Comparative on Christ's Part, will run thus: Look, as *Adam* the first Man was in his *own Person* first and originally made a *living Soul*, having that animal rational Soul, the *Breath of Lives*, infused by God into a Body organized for that Soul to act and enliven, as our Souls do our Bodies, and so make up one Person with it; so the Godhead of the second Person, united into one Person, was thereby made a *quickning Spirit* unto that Flesh of his assumed: Only we must here abate of the Parallel, (for it is but a Type, and so holds not in all things) that the Godhead in Christ is not the Soul of his Body, for he hath a Soul which makes up with his Body an entire humane Nature, but his Godhead is that which makes up one Person with that humane Nature, and infinitely enliveneth and spiriteth it above what our Souls do, or can do our Bodies. And he useth the word *Quickning* to express that supercelestial *Life* by: not that Christ's humane Nature was *dead* before, but that it was called up to, and raised from what it was not, (and God's calling things that are not as if they were, the Apostle parallels with a Resurrection, *Rom.* 4.) nor never would have been, if he had been but a mere Man, tho made by a new Creation, bestowing never so excelling a Soul and Body, above the Soul and Body which the first Man *Adam* consisted of. But here the Spirit or Godhead elevated that Soul and Body of Christ's humane Nature into a State of Life, of an higher Kind and Rank, infinitely surpassing the Life which any Soul or Body, if but mere Creatures, could have been capable of; or than even God's Power (without making a personal Union thereof with the Godhead) could have raised such a mere Creature unto. It is a divine and supercelestial Life, above all that of Angels in Heaven, peculiar to him through that Union by Inheritance, as being now become by Inheritance the Lord of Heaven, and in taking Flesh, the Lord from Heaven; which to have been was his Right at the first Instant that he was Man. The Apostle therefore, being to express that Life, which by the Godhead the second *Adam* was raised unto, doth it by a term of Superexcellency, in a way of comparison unto the first Man's being but a *living Soul*, but calls this, and gives it an higher term of *quickning*, denoting this high and transcending Elevation of it above *what* by mere Creation could have been communicated. And he useth the word *Spirit* in the way of Supereminency unto that of *Soul*: That look, as the Godhead in Christ's Person excels the Soul or Spirit in Man, so proportionably doth that Life, flowing from that Spirit or Godhead in Christ, excel the Life that was in *Adam* by Creation, or that could have been in any mere Creature. And because it is a raising it up unto a Life, (that was not, nor never would have been in any mere Creature, but is wholly a supercreation Life) he therefore deservedly calls it a *quickning* even of the humane Nature of Christ. And whereas it is said, *he was made a quickning Spirit*: The Meaning is not, nor can be, that the Spirit or Godhead it self in him was made: No, far be it from me so to interpret it; but the Meaning is, That by that Union of the Godhead with that humane Nature, the Godhead was *made a quickning Spirit* thereunto. And so the Parallel, as to Christ's Person, runs no further than to this, that as *Adam*'s Soul breathed into his Body, and becoming one Person with it, did inspire and impregnate it, and he became a *living Soul*: so the Godhead inspirited this his humane Nature with a divine Life, sutable to the Glory of that Godhead which dwelt in him. And the Reason why this Parallel, as in respect to Christ's own Person, is intended to extend no further, is, because this of *Adam*'s State is alledged but as a Type and Shadow, and therefore not in all things holding a Likeness unto the Substance typified out thereby. Thus it is true first of the Person of Christ, that his Person as God-man is constituted or made up of a quickning Spirit; and certainly as the first Man *Adam* is in his Person intended first in this, of being a *living Soul*, so Christ's Person in that of *quickning Spirit*.

Book 2.

But, 2. As *Adam* is said to be made a *living Soul* also in respect of conveying a like Life and Image unto us Men his Sons, as the next Verses do plainly express the Scope to be: so the Parallel of Christ's being made a *quickning Spirit*, aims to signify also what he is made (by virtue of that his personal Union) to be unto us; of which there can be no doubt. From this Notion of his being a *quickning Spirit*, (as it hath been explained) the Spiritualness of this our great Christ, as he is made and

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Part I.

CHAP. VIII.

That Christ represented as a Quickning Spirit, is a proper Object of our Faith.

MY next work therefore shall be to shew, that Christ as represented a Quickning Spirit, in that latitude of Sense which the Scriptures in that Notion of him intend, and revealed by the Father as the Truth thereof is in him, and taken in and understood by us accordingly, doth become and prove as proper and full an Object for our Faith to exercise it self upon, as any other Notion whatsoever wherein he is represented.

I have in this large Title comprehended the main Materials that follow; and in laying open the Spiritualness of our Christ, (the Object, which in Scripture is expresst by Spirit that quickens) the Spiritualness of the Faith and Heart of a true Believer, with difference from common Faith in a Carnal Heart, will all along appear, and appear by this, that when the Spiritualness that is in the Object is spiritually discovered, if the Actings of the Soul be really, and in Verity conformable, and answerable thereto, then it is spiritual Faith in us also. For it is a certain Rule, that the Spiritualness of the Subject, *viz.* the Soul, lieth in a suitableness unto, and closing with the Spirituality of its Objects, as represented in their bare and naked true Spiritualness, abstracting from other Respects, for then they attinge and affect that Object as it is in it self. So here in this case, when the true Spiritualness of Christ is presented, and apprehended as the Truth is in Jesus, the Spiritualness, or Fleshliness of the Heart will be discovered thereby, as the Heart shall be found to fall in with, or bear off from what is in that Object purely spiritual. I shall not then need to discourse any more, than to discover to you what a Christ you have, and how spiritual, and then do you lay your Hearts to the naked Apprehension thereof, and see how your Hearts agree with him, and are affected accordingly towards him; and what it is in him causeth you to *desire him* (as the Prophet speaks) as such a Christ, comparing Spiritual Hearts with Spiritual Christ, see how they agree and like each other.

Other Ways and Modes out of Scriptures are and have been taken by others, unto a great success in their Discoveries of Christ, and the truth of saving Faith thereby, and for Substance they are the same with this of mine that follows. But I chose this, as that which my Saviour's Sermon in this sixth Chapter of *John*, hath led me to, and which hath fallen into my own Heart, and hath animated my Pursuances after Christ in a more special manner than any other Apprehension of him whatsoever. I limit my self unto what this Notion, *viz. a Quickning Spirit*, will afford herein. For it is made a kind of Definition of him (if I may so speak) or the most proper Description, whether in his Person, or of what he is made to us, in two words, *a Quickning Spirit*, 1 *Cor.* 15. 45. Christ's Speech, *God is a Spirit*, (*Joh.* 4. 24.) is as proper a Definition of God as can be given (for he passeth our Logick) it expressing the *kind* of his Being, as his Name *Jehovah*, that he is *Fulness of Being*. And this Definition of Christ is like it given first by Christ himself in this *6th* of *John*, and then by the Apostle, *The Lord is that Spirit*, 2 Cor. 3. 17. and again, *a Quickning Spirit*, 1 Cor. 15. 45. and I call it a Definition of him, or rather the *exactest Description* of him, because it is used to illustrate both his Person and his Work as a Saviour, 1 *Cor.* 15. 45, to 50. *The first Man* Adam *was made a living Soul, the last* Adam *was made a quickening Spirit. Howbeit, that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural, and afterwards that which is spiritual. The first Man is of the Earth, earthy, the second Man is the Lord from Heaven.* I think I may, without the hazard of being confuted, undertake to say, that this is a more perfect Definition, or at least an exacter Character of *Adam* the first Man, given him by God himself, from and upon his very Creation, than ever any Philosopher gave of Man, whilst they went about to make a Definition of him: And I may answerably affirm the like of this Definition of Christ, that he is a *Quickening Spirit*: It denotes his Person to be God, *The Lord from Heaven*, and withal a Man in one Person with God, the second MAN. That the word *Spirit* in the New Testament is often

often set to express his Godhead, as his Humanity Flesh, is so well known (*Rom.* 1. 3. 1 *Tim.* 3. *ult.* 1 *Pet.* 3. 18, 19. *Heb.* 9. 14.) as it needs not be insisted on. The Parallel then between our Christ, and the first *Adam*, by way of supereminent Comparative on Christ's Part, will run thus: Look, as *Adam* the first Man was in his *own Person* first and originally made a *living Soul*, having that animal rational Soul, the *Breath of Lives*, infused by God into a Body organized for that Soul to act and enliven, as our Souls do our Bodies, and so make up one Person with it; so the Godhead of the second Person, united into one Person, was thereby made a *quickning Spirit* unto that Flesh of his assumed: Only we must here abate of the Parallel, (for it is but a Type, and so holds not in all things) that the Godhead in Christ is not the Soul of his Body, for he hath a Soul which makes up with his Body an entire humane Nature, but his Godhead is that which makes up one Person with that humane Nature, and infinitely enliveneth and spiriteth it above what our Souls do, or can do our Bodies. And he useth the word *Quickning* to express that superceleſtial *Life* by: not that Christ's humane Nature was *dead* before, but that it was called up to, and raised from what it was not, (and God's calling things that are not as if they were, the Apostle parallels with a Resurrection, *Rom.* 4.) nor never would have been, if he had been but a mere Man, tho made by a new Creation, bestowing never so excelling a Soul and Body, above the Soul and Body which the first Man *Adam* consisted of. But here the Spirit or Godhead elevated that Soul and Body of Christ's humane Nature into a State of Life, of an higher Kind and Rank, infinitely surpassing the Life which any Soul or Body, if but mere Creatures, could have been capable of; or than even God's Power (without making a personal Union thereof with the Godhead) could have raised such a mere Creature unto. It is a divine and superceleſtial Life, above all that of Angels in Heaven, peculiar to him through that Union by Inheritance, as being now become by Inheritance the Lord of Heaven, and in taking Flesh, the Lord from Heaven; which to have been was his Right at the first Instant that he was Man. The Apostle therefore, being to express that Life, which by the Godhead the second *Adam* was raised unto, doth it by a term of Superexcellency, in a way of comparison unto the first Man's being but a *living Soul*, but calls this, and gives it an higher term of *quickning*, denoting this high and transcending Elevation of it above *what* by mere Creation could have been communicated. And he useth the word *Spirit* in the way of Supereminency unto that of *Soul*: That look, as the Godhead in Christ's Person excels the Soul or Spirit in Man, so proportionably doth that Life, flowing from that Spirit or Godhead in Christ, excel the Life that was in *Adam* by Creation, or that could have been in any mere Creature. And because it is a raising it up unto a Life, (that was not, nor never would have been in any mere Creature, but is wholly a supercreation Life) he therefore deservedly calls it a *quickning* even of the humane Nature of Christ. And whereas it is said, *he was made a quickning Spirit*: The Meaning is not, nor can be, that the Spirit or Godhead it self in him was made: No, far be it from me so to interpret it; but the Meaning is, That by that Union of the Godhead with that humane Nature, the Godhead was *made a quickning Spirit* thereunto. And so the Parallel, as to Christ's Person, runs no further than to this, that as *Adam*'s Soul breathed into his Body, and becoming one Person with it, did inspire and impregnate it, and he became a *living Soul*: so the Godhead inspirited this his humane Nature with a divine Life, sutable to the Glory of that Godhead which dwelt in him. And the Reason why this Parallel, as in respect to Christ's own Person, is intended to extend no further, is, because this of *Adam*'s State is alledged but as a Type and Shadow, and therefore not in all things holding a Likeness unto the Substance typified out thereby. Thus it is true first of the Person of Christ, that his Person as God-man is constituted or made up of a quickning Spirit; and certainly as the first Man *Adam* is in his Person intended first in this, of being a *living Soul*, so Christ's Person in that of *quickning Spirit*.

But, 2. As *Adam* is said to be made a *living Soul* also in respect of conveying a like Life and Image unto us Men his Sons, as the next Verses do plainly express the Scope to be: so the Parallel of Christ's being made a *quickning Spirit*, aims to signify also what he is made (by virtue of that his personal Union) to be unto us; of which there can be no doubt. From this Notion of his being a *quickning Spirit*, (as it hath been explained) the Spiritualness of this our great Christ, as he is made and

Book 2.

set

Part I. set forth the spiritual Object of our Faith, and accordingly taught by the Father, as the Truth is in Jesus, to all Believers, hath these two Branches in it: In the handling of which distinctly I shall accomplish this Task I have undertaken.

1. You have the Spiritualness that is in his Person, as *the Word was made Flesh*; or what he is in himself, Son of God, and God dwelling in our Nature personally, and quickning thereof.

2. The Spiritualness of him as *a Saviour*, or in what he is and hath done for us as Sinners, that were dead in Sins and Trespasses. And altho the particular Occasion of the Apostles introducing these Words was what he is to us in the Resurrection of our Bodies; yet it in general reacheth to all that he is to our Souls, for our eternal Salvation. I divide this Argument into these two Heads; for these two were the two eminent Titles or Descriptions given him, as he was *the CHRIST*, by the Disciples that first believed on him, from the Beginning of his Manifestation to *Israel*. *John the Baptist* (from whom Christ's other Disciples learned him to be the Messias or Christ) in a Sermon to his Disciples, recorded by the Evangelist *John*, *chap.* 1. first represents him to their Faith, as a Saviour for Sinners: *Behold*, says he, *the Lamb of God that takes away the Sins of the World*; so at the Beginning of it, *ver.* 29. but in the Close of it, *ver.* 34. *And I saw, and bare Record, that this is the Son of God*; and the Son of God consisting of two Natures: As a Man he was conceived after the Baptist himself; (as by the Story, *Luke* 1. appears) but he had another Nature, in respect of which he says he was *afore him*; that is, as God, and Son of God: Thus *ver.* 30. *This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a Man which is preferred before me: for he was before me.* So then Christ as God-man, the Son of God, and Saviour from Sin, is set forth to a Believer's Faith, and this from the first by *John*. And sometimes some of those first Disciples utter their Faith on him as *Son of God*; sometimes others speak their Faith on him as *Saviour* of the World. 1*st*. Some express their Faith on him as Son of God: so *Nathaniel* upon his very first seeing and hearing of him; *John* 1. 49. Nathaniel *answered and said unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of* Israel. The Faith of the Samaritan Disciples, *chap.* 4. is thus expressed, *John* 4. 42. *Now we believe, for we have heard him our selves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the World.* And *Peter*, in the Name of the Disciples, expresseth the same, *Mat.* 16. 16. *Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God:* just as here in *John* 6. 69. you find. And the Revelation of this, in that spiritual manner that you have heard, was that which caused them to cleave to him, and say, *Whither shall we go?* &c. And it was from the Father teaching, *ver.* 17. *Blessed art thou* Simon, *for Flesh and Blood hath not revealed it unto thee; but my Father which is in Heaven.* It was the Father had taught him so to believe on his own Son; *and upon this Rock*, saith Christ, *ver* 18. *I will build my Church:* for all the Saints of the New Testament did all come to the Unity of Faith, and Knowledg of the Son of God, *Ephes.* 4. 13. And in their believing he was the Son of God, they believed that he was such a Son of God as was God, or that Son of God who was God, which their confessing him the Son of the living God imported, as was observed. And therefore Christ in his arguing with the Jews (who quarrell'd with him, that he being a Man should make himself God) makes the Conclusion of an Argument, wherein he proves he was God, to run thus; *John* 10. 33, 34, 35, 36. *The Jews answered him, saying, For a good Work we stone thee not, but for Blasphemy, and because that thou being a Man, makest thy self God. Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your Law, I said, Ye are Gods? If he called them Gods, unto whom the Word of God came, and the Scripture cannot be broken: Say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the World, Thou blasphemest, because I said, I am the Son of God?* that is, such a Son as was true God: for the thing wherein they had said he blasphemed, *ver.* 32. was, that he said he was God; yet he concludes that he was the Son of God: so that to believe he was the Son of God, was all one as to believe he was God. And hence it also was, that in other Scriptures, to believe on him as God, and on him as Saviour, are also joined in the Apostle's Confession by the same *Peter*, 2 *Pet.* 1. 1. Simon Peter, *a Servant and an Apostle of Jesus Christ; to them that have obtained like precious Faith with us, through the Righteousness of God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ.* And they are also by *Paul* joined together, *Tit.* 2. 13. *The great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ.*

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

That Christ's Person, as Son of God, in one Person with the Man Jesus, is the prime Object of Faith, and taught by the Father, as the Truth is in Jesus.

TO evidence that Christ's Person, as the Son of God in one Person with the Man Jesus, is the great Object of our Faith, two things are to be consider'd.

1. That the Spirits of the first Believers on Christ were generally taught by God, and carried out to him, to receive, obtain, close with him as such, that is, under the Apprehension of his Person, Son of God, and God-man, (which properly is called his Person) not God simply in his Divine Nature singly considered, but God manifest in Flesh, or the Son of God made Flesh. You heard before the Baptist's Confession, who was the Leader on unto this distinct Faith on him in this Particular: as also the Confession of the Apostles, even long before Christ's Ascension.

Other particular Instances may be given; as you find this to have been at the bottom of *Martha*'s Faith, when Christ himself ransack'd and search'd into it, *John* 11. Christ puts her Faith to it by way of Question, *ver.* 25, 26. *Jesus said unto her, I am the Resurrection and the Life; he that believeth in me, tho he were dead, yet shall he live. And whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never die: believest thou this?* But she answers not *in terminis* and directly; *ver.* 27. *She saith unto him, Yea, Lord! I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the World.* She brings forth the very bottom of her Faith, and Ground of all; the chief, the primary thing which she believed about him, which carried all the rest. She utters what lay most near her Heart. Thus also unbelieving *Thomas*, when his Faith had obtained a Resurrection, upon occasion of Christ's being risen from the dead, (whereby he was declared to be the Son of God, and God, *Rom.* 1. 3, 4.) whither runs his Faith thereupon? *My Lord, and my God*, John 20. 28. The Eunuch heard *Philip* expound to him the 53*d* Chapter of *Isaiah*, which treats of Christ's being a Saviour, and bearing our Sins; *Acts* 8. 32, 33. *The Place of Scripture which he read was this; He was led as a Sheep to the Slaughter, and like a Lamb dumb before his Shearer, so opened he not his Mouth. In his Humiliation his Judgment was taken away; and who shall declare his Generation? for his Life is taken from the Earth.* This Text must needs lead *Philip* to preach Jesus to him, as a Saviour for Sinners; but he beginning (as 'tis there said) but with that Scripture, proceeded to add many more; ver. 35. *Then* Philip *opened his Mouth, and began at the same Scripture, and preached unto him Jesus.* And whereas there was but one Passage in *that* which he read that gave occasion to preach him to be the Son of God, *viz. Who shall declare his Generation?* or whose Son he was? yet that necessarily fell in, and deciphered who the Person was that was to be the Saviour. Now observe how the Eunuch's Faith took hold of that above all other; for when *Philip* told him, *ver.* 37. *If thou believest with all thine Heart, thou mayst be baptized:* The Eunuch's Heart tells us what 'twas above all other which his whole Soul closed in with; and that was, *I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.* And yet we may well suppose that *Philip*'s Discourse had run mainly upon his being a Saviour, and his bearing our Sin, for 'twas the main Argument of the Text (which the Eunuch gave him to expound, and sure he kept to it) *He was led as a Sheep to the Slaughter, and as a Lamb dumb before the Shearer*; which the Baptist referred to in his, *Behold the Lamb of God, that takes away the Sins of the World*, John 1. 29. But the Spirit of God (did we see) set that other Character of his Person, which the Baptist also gave him, *Jesus Christ the Son of God.*

But to give over the Pursuit of any more single Instances, let us see the universal Effects of this Doctrine, both in the Baptist's Ministry, and of the Apostles, upon the whole Lump, Body, and Generality of Believers. What the Effect of *John Baptist's* Ministry was, is prophesied of, *Isa.* 40. 3. *The Voice of him that crieth in the Wilderness, Prepare ye the Way of the Lord; make streight in the Desart a High-way for our God:* which is undeniably applied by three Evangelists to mean, that *that Lord* and *God*, (to make way for whom in Mens Hearts that Preparation was) is evidently our Lord Christ, as appears in the same Evangelists. And what was the Issue and Consequent of it, that Christ coming and preaching after *John*, *The Glory*

Part 1. *of the Lord* (Christ) *was revealed, and all Flesh*, (that is, believing Flesh, whose Eyes Satan had not blinded) *saw it together:* that is, they all entertained him by Faith, as their Lord and their God, (as *Thomas* profess'd him) when he began to manifest his Glory, *John* 2. 11.

Then again, what was the Effect of the Apostles Ministry, who after Christ's Ascension were sent forth to preach him? It follows in the same Prophecy, *Isa.* 40. 9. *O* Zion, *that bringest good Tidings, get thee up into the high Mountain: O* Jerusalem, *that bringest good Tidings, lift up thy Voice with Strength; lift it up, be not afraid: say unto the Cities of* Judah, *Behold your God.* This Gospel-Message was, *Behold your God!* that is, your Christ, who is your God, Son of God in his Person, the Ruler, the Rewarder, in whom is Eternal Life; and the Shepherd of his People, *v.* 10, 11. *Behold, the Lord God will come with strong Hand, and his Arm shall rule for him: behold, his Reward is with him, and his Work before him. He shall feed his Flock like a Shepherd: He shall gather the Lambs with his Arm, and carry them in his Bosom: and shall gently lead those that are with young.* The Voice of the Crier, the Baptist, had cried him up; *Behold, the Lamb of God!* the Son of God; and the eminentest Message which the Apostles delivered, was, *Behold your God!* that is, we preach a Saviour unto you, who is God: So they preach'd, and so they believed that heard them, 2 Cor. 4. 5, 6. *For we preach not our selves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and our selves your Servants for Jesus sake. For God who commanded the Light to shine out of Darkness, hath shined in our Hearts, to give the Light of the Knowledg of the Glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ:* In the Face, that is, in the Person of Jesus Christ, who is God, and the Image of God, *v.* 4. And when the Vail was taken off from all Nations, and specially when it shall be taken off from the Jew, (which in the third Chapter, *v.* 15, 16. afore, he had applied the Prophecy of *Isaiah* unto) O how will they stand astonish'd at the Faith and Revelation of this very thing, that the Person of their *Messias*, they so long waited for, proves to be their God, *Isa.* 25. 7. When the Vail shall be taken off from all Nations, *&c.* then *v.* 9. *It shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God, we have waited for him.* O wonderful (will they say) this *Messiah* we waited so for, is *our God*, he is so in his Person, *he will save us*; he is our Saviour also, and his Name is *Jesus*, that saves his People from their Sins: this is the Lord, and he will save us. God and Saviour, you see again, Son of God, and Saviour joined, and this is the Faith of Believers, this is he they believe upon, and this *universally.* What one Saint is there distrusting it, or questioning it? For it found the most general Acceptation in the Hearts of Believers, when he wrote to *Timothy*, 1 Tim. 3. 16. *And without Controversy,* (saith he, or with one Consent) *great is the Mystery of Godliness: God was manifest in the Flesh*, or made Flesh; *justified in the Spirit: i. e.* His Godhead manifested in the Resurrection; *preached to the Gentiles, and believed on in the World.* This last is that which proves that Christ is God-Man, Son of God in the Flesh, and was, as such, the prime grand Object of all the Believers Faith that were in that Age of the World, and he is the great Mystery and Foundation of all Christian Religion; and therefore under that Notion and Apprehension of him, made lively and real to our Souls, it is that we must come to him. I have not alledged these places singly to prove that Christ is God, tho they serve for it, but that as such he is the primary Foundation of a Believer's Faith.

2. The second thing is, (which I carry with me still along) that to teach and reveal to Souls, that Christ is the Son of God, is the Work of the Father, which he doth in such a manner, as no Human Understanding doth arrive at, nor can attain unto, without his teaching: this is express and recognized by our Saviour, as his Seal of Approbation, set to that Confession of *Peter*'s; *Thou art Christ, the Son of the Living God*; Matth. 16. 16. *And Jesus answered*, ver. 17. *and said unto him, Blessed art thou* Simon Bar-jona; *for Flesh and Blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in Heaven.* It was a Revelation which made him blessed, and such as was peculiar to them that are saved, and which all that are saved were to have, and it had not been taught him by Man, and by Education alone, *&c.* not from his own natural Understanding (by which Men that live under the Knowledg of Divine Truths, come to profess them, but without the special Revelation of the Father they cannot attain to the Blessedness of true Faith) but wholly it was to be ascribed to the Father's Revelation, which is there opposed to Flesh, or fleshly ways

ways of Discovery. And lastly, it is the Father of Christ, his Son; *My Father* (saith Christ) hath revealed this to thee, to whom principally this belongs, to reveal this Point of all other, that I am his Son, for he begat me, and he discovers me to them whom he means to bless. *He is thy Lord, worship thou him*, Psal. 45. 11. The Point the Father instructs her in is, that Christ is her Lord, and means her God withal, (*My Lord and my God*, says *Thomas*, instructed by the same Hand) as the following Words, *Worship thou him*, evince; for it is God alone whom we are to worship. Book 2.

CHAP. X.

The Uses of the foregoing Doctrine. How we are to exercise Faith on the Person of Christ God-man.

Use 1. ONE End of mine in enlarging upon this Head, is to direct your Faith, in your Approaches and Addresses to Christ, *viz.* to pitch your Souls upon his Person of being God-man: and under the Notion and Apprehension thereof, taken in and formed up in your Minds, still to act all the other several Exercises of your Faith upon him. I do not say you have no true Faith, unless you have explicite Thoughts hereof in all such Actings: for Foundations (as this is one) firmly laid in the Soul, do implicitely work, when they are not *in actu exercito*, or *explicitely* thought upon, but an habitual Apprehension thereof carried along in the Soul may have a true and real Efficacy in it: yet the more you have of explicite, enlarged Conceptions thereof, and Reflections thereupon, and the oftner they are renewed, you will find them the more powerful and working: For it being so great a Truth, that in the Reality of the thing it self, his Person in being God and God-man, is that which gives the Ground and Foundation, Influence and Virtue into all we believe upon him for; then the explicite Acting of Faith hereon (and thorow the Faith of it) upon all else he doth for us, must needs have a proportionable Effect in all. You all know and profess, as touching his Person, that he is God, Son of God, *&c.* and volant or flying Thoughts thereof run thorow your Minds at times; but do your Hearts dwell upon the Meditation of it, as that which puts Life into your Hearts, in all you believe concerning him? For this his Person is not only eternal Life (taken abstractedly, as it shall be possessed in Heaven) in the Sequel alone, but it is the Life of your Faith exercised on his Death for Forgiveness of Sins for saving from Wrath. Many in their Judgments think that the Doctrine of the Trinity, and the Doctrine that Christ is God, is but a Matter of Speculation and Contemplation; and tho it is a Truth, yet it is such as they think one might let lie by him, as that which will do them no Hurt nor Good: And most Men in the Practice of their Faith make little more Use of it than this comes to; whereas it is such a Truth as thy Life lies in it, even eternal Life. And such the Apostles and those Believers accounted it, and did cleave to Christ accordingly thorow the Faith of it, and of him under the Contemplation of it. Christ having said he was the Bread of Life that came down from Heaven, and 'twas his Godhead made him to be that living Bread, (*John* 6. 56.) useth this Phrase, *He that eateth my Flesh*, &c. *dwelleth in me, and I in him.* As a Man first chews with Delight, and then takes down his Meat, and by its abiding, its dwelling in him, and his digesting it, it turns into his own Body, and so gives Life and Strength to him; so must it be with our Knowledg of Christ; he must dwell in us by Faith, and we in him, and this will quicken you to purpose. Hath the Father thus taught and instructed thee, to live upon him, and to come to him for Life, as such? It is his Participation of Life from the Father, and so his being Son of the Living God, that gives him Life; and so thorow him thou comest to have that Life of the Father in thee, by dwelling in him, as the next Verse, *ver.* 57. shews; *As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, shall live by me.*

Part 1. *Use* 2. The next Use is for Information of the right State of this Assertion I have been upon; That the Person of Christ as God-man is the principal Object of Faith. You'l ask me; Do all that truly believe on him come to him under that Apprehension, simply for his Person's sake, as moved thereunto by the Consideration simply of his Person? This is a spiritual Pitch indeed: but do all Believers at first come to him under this Apprehension, and cleave to him for it?

I answer, That there are two Scopes or Purposes that I drive at, in my having pressed this, that Christ's Person is the Object of Faith.

1*st*. That the Faith on his Person as God-man is the Foundation of all else we believe upon him for, as he is our Saviour: And as that is it which makes him able to take Sins away, and to give us a Righteousness to justify us, and which puts that Power in Force which his Death hath, to kill Sin, and which himself hath to quicken us; so all that we have to deal with him for, and all that our Faith is carried out to him, and to God through him for, is all in the Virtue and Force of this Faith first begotten in you, that he is God-man, the Son of God; 1 *John* 5. 5. *Who is he that overcometh the World, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?* And so in the Force, and Virtue, and Strength of this, that Jesus is the Son of God, it is, that we have Victory over the World. It is remarkable, that when Christ had uttered these faithful Sayings about himself (*John* 11. 25, 26.) unto *Martha*, *I am the Resurrection and the Life: He that believeth on me, tho he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die: Believest thou this?* He then puts her Faith strictly to it to answer to these Particulars, (as one puts a Catechist to answer Catechetical Questions.) Now we see that she doth not answer, as one would have thought she should, directly and distinctly unto these particular Points of Faith in question put unto her, but seems to divert unto another Head, unto the great Article of Faith: She saith unto him, *ver*. 27. *Yea Lord, I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the World.* This Answer she utters in full, and upon the whole Matter, unto the Question he had put; and tho it was *in express terms*, not *in terminis*, nor in the Particulars; but yet fundamentally it was a comprehensive Answer, and most direct: for therein she shews she believed, that *that* was the Foundation of all these Particulars, and of many more things that she believed of him; and indeed of whatever else that Christ might ask her. I believe (says she) that thou art the Son of God; and this she conceived, and most rightly, to be a full Answer unto these Particulars; for she saith, Yea Lord, I believe them all, I believe all that thou hast asked me, by believing this one thing of thee, that thou art the Christ, the Son of God; and so art the Cause of all these, and of whatever else is attributed unto him that is the Christ, in the Prophecies of him, that he should come into the World. In the Virtue and Strength of this she believed he was the Resurrection of Souls dead in Sins and Trespasses, and of Souls that had begun to believe on him; and then of their Bodies at the Resurrection, and that he was eternal Life, so as they that believe on him shall never perish, and their Souls shall never die, whatever their Bodies for a while did. And she believ'd all in the Strength of this, that he was the Son of God; so that the believing of this is fundamentally necessary for every Christian to know.

Only I add this, that Foundations, tho they bear up the whole Building, yet oftentimes lie hid under ground, after they have been first laid: And so it is in our Faith of Principles and Foundations: Tho they remain in the Heart, and bear up all of our Faith else, about what we do believe, yet they are not always drawn out in our Thoughts, into formed-up Propositions, tho at first they were inlaid as such. They bear the Weight of all, and to have the Faith of them is common to all Believers, and is universally assented to as a Foundation; 1 *Tim*. 3. 16. *This is the great Mystery of Godliness*, (that is, the great Ground of all Godliness, the Pith of it) *God manifested in the Flesh, believed on in the World.* And *Ephes*. 4. 13. *They all come to the Unity of the Faith* that shall be saved through all Ages; all that either are now converted, (saith the Apostle) or that are to be converted, (take the lowest Christian)

stian) and have these things in their Faith about Christ's Person, that he is God, and the Son of God.

So that, 1. in coming to him for that which will save them, they come to his Person in so doing. They would not have his Righteousness and Blood, and the Fruits of either, Pardon of Sin, *&c.* without having himself also: and so it is his Person they believe on for their Salvation.

Yet, 2. They may be at present moved rather with that in his Person which will save them, than with his Person himself.

And yet withal, 3. Even that also, to come to his Person for it self, as the principal Motive wherewith to close, is *in radice, in semine*, in the Bud, but not in the Blossom. There is that in the Heart (if drawn out) which is prepared to it, disposed to it, and suted to it.

2dly. A second End and Purpose for which God first inlays in the Heart the Knowledg of Christ's Person, and the Fulness of the Godhead dwelling personally in our Nature, and for which end also I have pressed it, is, That first or last it should become the greatest Motive and Inducement of our coming to Christ, and to close with him, and cleave to him as such, rather than as a Saviour: That the Thought of it should be above that of Saviour; yea, and abstracted in the Consideration of it from that of Saviour; and this explicitely, the Heart being drawn to him upon that account, and accompanied with Affection answerable.

Those that will urge, that either this is the first Inducement, or the more common Inducement to come to him, principally to have his Person, considered in it self, and for it self, do press too hard upon weak Believers, and urge that to be at first which they are growing up to all their Days, and perhaps attain it not in this Life. Alas! at first our Hearts are taken up with the Thoughts of Sin, and with Christ as the Remedy and Saviour from Sin. *John*'s Ministry began there in the Hearts of his Disciples, and he called upon them to *behold the Lamb of God that took away the Sins of the World:* And the great Apostle pronounceth this to be the *most faithful Saying, and worthy of all Acceptation, that Christ came into the World to save Sinners.* And I am induced to think that in his proposing of it in that Place, (where he speaks of his own Conversion) he had an Intent to insinuate that himself had that Sentence in his Eye at first Conversion chiefly or mainly. Dr. *Preston*'s Similitude is the best to express this by, (I mention him, for I think he was the first that used it of any other) That as when a Marriage is proposed unto a Woman, that which may move her at first to listen to it may be the Hear-say of an Estate, and paying her Debts with which she is incumbred; these may perswade her to view and see the Person, and to entertain a Visit from him. and to acquaint her self with him; but after some long Converse her Heart is so taken with his Person, that if he had nothing she could beg with him all the World over, for she is satisfied with his Person alone. And thus it is between our Souls and Christ: We come to Christ at first, as the Lamb of God that takes away our Sins, that will save us from Wrath, and pay our Debts: (And the truth is, we must always come so to him, to cleanse us from Sin every Day) But thorow *acquainting our* selves with him, (as the Phrase in *Job* is) there often appears that to us in his Person which takes our Hearts more than his being a Saviour to us. *Est aliquid in Christo formosius Salvatore*; There is something in Christ more beautiful than a Saviour: and our Hearts in time may rise up to this. The best Composition of this Matter is that in the Prophet *Isaiah*, which takes in both, which speaks the Hearts of Converts from whom the Vail was taken off, *ch.* 25. 7. who thereupon (in that *ver.* 9.) are brought in saying and uttering the bottom of their Hearts; *Lo, this is our God, we have waited for him, and he will save us.* They looked at Christ, and received him both as *God*, and as *their Saviour*: (for of Christ it is spoken; compare 2 *Cor.* 3. 16, 17, 18.) and it follows, *We will rejoice in his Salvation.* God allows us we should aim at, and hope for, and rejoice in our Salvation by Christ, and come to him upon that Account, as well as on the Account of his being our God, and Son of God. God and Christ love us so well, as they love we should love our selves in coming to the Son, and therefore would have us come to him as a Saviour, as well as for his Person; yea, and to be glad,

glad, and rejoice in his Salvation. And truly there is good Reason that we should
Part 1. do so, both on our Part, and on his also; for it cost Christ's Person something to save us, for he humbled his Person, and gave away himself, for he gave away the present Glory of his Person due to him, that he might save and redeem us, and no less would have done it. And he hath no Reason to have his Love herein lost or forgotten, or swallowed up only in his Person.

Nay further, let me add; You being Sinners, cannot come to rejoice in his Person, or to think with your selves what a Husband you have of him in himself, till you believe on him for Pardon of your Sins, and the Salvation of your Souls; (and therefore Faith for Justification is in that Epistle to the *Romans* pressed first) and after you have seen your selves lost by reason of Sin, then you are directed to come to Christ as a Propitiation for Sin: This he doth discourse in *ch.* 3. from *ver.* 21. and in *ch.* 4. and we must have Peace with God as Sinners, being justified by Faith, (*Rom.* 5. 1.) e're we can rejoice in God. But then to rejoice in God is made a further Attainment and Fruit of this Faith in the Issue, in these words, *ver.* 11. *But we joy in God thorow our Lord Jesus Christ.* Yet still take this along with you, that if you come to him as to a Saviour, you may and must come to him as God, and the Son of God, and believe on him as the Person who as such is your Saviour, and is the Foundation of your whole Faith on him for your Salvation: yea, and tho you come as moved chiefly because he is Saviour, as that for which you come at first; and in doing so are accepted of God, and justified and pardoned; yet let me tell you, you will be more accepted by God, after your Faith riseth up to take his Person, as in it self, and as moved to love him from what you see in his Person alone, or chiefly considered. God the Father loves it more, that you should love the Person of Christ in and for himself; *John* 16. 27. *The Father loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God:* which is all one as to say, You have believed on and loved me, because I am his dearly and only beloved Son; than which nothing can endear you more unto him, nor be a higher Exercise of Faith in you. Some Strains of such Thoughts and Affections as these, tho but in the bud, have (as was said) some Puttings forth intermingled in weaker Believers, that are drawn to him by the Faith and Hopes of his being their Saviour. Such Spirits may run in the Veins of your Hearts, whilst yet you are most eager to seek Salvation; but then they are but as in the Bud, they are not fully blossom'd. A Soul may find he hath some such things offering to rise, and mix themselves with his Faith and Hopes for Salvation; and this will make your Prayers accepted wonderfully, as the Words before speak in that *John* 16. 26, 27. *At that Day ye shall ask in my Name; and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you; for the Father himself loveth you, because you have loved me.* And this will more obtain with God than your Faith that your Sins are pardoned, and that Christ died for you; yea far above it. I use to say, Christ's Love in suffering is more to be valued by you than his Suffering, or the Fruits of it; but his Person more than all of them. You must know, that 'tis his Person you must ultimately abide by; for in the Enjoyment of him in his Person will be the Top and Height of your eternal Life, and so consequently you have to do with him for evermore; and therefore to have him so revealed to you, as to have your Hearts taken therewith at present, in some lesser Tastes and Glimpses, is the most spiritual teaching by the Father of all other. And this is attainable in this Life, for it is in Grace as in the Root, and will be drawn out and ripened by the Father. And surely the Disciples had the Seeds of such Dispositions in their Hearts, that did look forth sometimes into actual Exercises, as appears in that Speech that Christ useth of them, *The Father loveth you because you have loved me.* And sure some such thing was in *Peter*'s Heart, when he said, *Lord thou knowest that I love thee:* and that because he was the Son of God; for that is the main thing they expressed why they cleaved to him, as was said before. And the Imperfection of this, and that it abounded no more in them, made Christ complain, that they should mourn for themselves, because of his Departure from them to Heaven; whereas (says he) if you had loved me (that is, my Person it self, as the next Words shew) you would rejoice because I go to my Father. I put this Gloss upon that Text: for it is all one as if he had said; If you loved my Person for it self, you would love my per-

personal Good and Happiness more than your own, and so have rejoiced more for this, than have mourned for your own supposed Loss, and want of present Comfort in me. And many of those primitive Christians had such Goings forth of Spirit towards the Person of Christ, as those had whom *Peter* wrote to, 1 *Pet.* 1. 8. *On whom believing, tho you see him not, ye rejoice with Joy unspeakable, and full of Glory.* This must be chiefly in and for his Person; for his Person it is whom we shall one Day see, and rejoice in Glory with him: and 'tis Faith in the mean time rising to such a pitch as supplies the room of the Sight of him, with a Joy springing from something which is answerable to that Sight. And sure *Paul* had it, who above all, and in the first place, expresseth his Desires to be to win Christ, that is, Christ himself, his Person, and to be found in him; and then to have his Righteousness, and the Power of his Death, &c. And I have been induced to think, that some such strain of Heart was somewhat more prevalent in that Eunuch, *Acts* 8. The Man was truly godly before, and therefore he came to worship; and you read his devout Employing of himself whilst he was a travelling. He had the 53*d* of *Isaiah* preached over to him by *Philip*, for the Words of the Chapter he gave *Philip* for his Text to preach on. And in that Chapter we read how that God *laid upon Christ the Iniquity of us all, and made his Soul an Offering for Sin*; and *that he was led as a Sheep to the Slaughter, to take our Sins away*, as the Baptist had interpreted it. And to *Philip* preaching to him *Jesus*, (as the Text hath it) it lay in his way principally to set out Jesus Christ as a Sacrifice for Sins; and surely *Philip* did keep to his Text. There is but one Passage in the Chapter, and in the Words which the Eunuch read, that gave occasion to him to preach his Person to be the Son of God, and that is those Words, *Who shall declare his Generation?* Yet we read, that when he desired to be baptized, and *Philip* said to him, *If thou believest with thy whole Heart*, &c. (as if he had said, what is there in thy Heart which thy Heart most closeth with, concerning this Christ that I preached to thee?) The Eunuch says, *I believe that Jesus is the Son of God:* So as he preacheth upon that as that which his Heart was most on. And tho he closeth with him as a Saviour, according to *Philip*'s Preaching, yet *that* is not mentioned by him; but *this*, that he was the Son of God: and so 'tis said he went away rejoicing, being baptized into Jesus Christ, upon that Account.

But tho this is attainable, yet Christians are a growing up to it ordinarily, but by degrees, for poor Creatures as we are, we learn Christ by piece and piece, as when we look upon the Moon through a Tellescope, it appears so big, and vastly great, beyond what we can take in at once, that we must travel over it with our Eyes, first taking a view of one Part, and then removing the Glass to another, and see perhaps but a quarter of it at once. And thus it is with our knowing Christ; that is, with such a Knowledg as affects us, and draws our Hearts to him; with such a Knowledg we know one thing of him in one Year, and another in another. For one Stage of our Lives our Hearts run after him for his Blood to wash away our Sins, and for his Righteousness to cover us in the Presence of God: In another Stage we pursue after Holiness to be had from him, for the subduing Corruption through the Power of his Death, and quickning our Hearts with his Life: And in another way we pursue after him for the Loveliness of his Person; and it is that we should make the top of our Desires, why we should desire him (as the Prophet *Isaiah* speaks unto Believers) we are perhaps a growing up to this all our Life long, and attain it not till we come to the being of a more perfect Man, and to the Fulness of our Stature in Christ, which we shall have in this Life in the Knowledg of him as the Son of God; whereof the Apostle there speaks, *Ephes.* 4. 13. Yet let me add, that Faith of Recumbence may be capable of this, and yet remain in the Course of a Faith of Recumbence; that is, want settled Assurance that Sins are pardoned. And they may remain such to whom Christ hath not yet said, *Your Sins are forgiven*; and thou art the Person that I died for: and so they have not an Assurance that he is their Saviour, tho they continually exercise Faith on him to be saved through his Death, yet their Souls in this Posture or Dispensation are capable of being raised up under this Faith, to cleave to him, and follow after him for his Person, more than as a Saviour. And the Reason is, not only because God often

works

works one way, and discovers one thing more to take the Heart than he doth another, according to his good Pleasure, and so he may give a Beam of the Knowledge of Christ in his Promise (2 *Cor.* 4. 6.) more bright, to inflame their Hearts towards him, than the Apprehension that he is a Saviour. There is not only this Reason of it, but God also deals thus with them, that such may be assured with a clear and certain Light that his Person is thus amiable, and glorious, and lovely in himself, which causeth them to cleave to him so as they would not part with him, no nor with his Person, for ten thousand Worlds; when yet, whether he died for their Sins, or will pardon them, is doubtful to them. But the other Truth they may have no doubt of, but a Discovery of it, and the Notion of it lieth more open to such a Spirit than the Attainment of the Assurance of the Pardon of his Sins.

Part 1.

OF THE OBJECT and ACTS OF Justifying Faith.

PART I.
Of the Object of Faith.

BOOK III.

The Free Grace of God as declar'd and propos'd in the Covenant, is the Object of Faith. Of the Soul's applying it ſelf unto the Free Grace of God, and treating with it for its Salvation. That the abſolute Declarations of this Free Grace, or the abſolute Promiſes of the Goſpel, are the Object of Faith of Recumbence, or Adherence. That Election-Grace, and the Immutability of God's Counſel as indefinitely propos'd in the Promiſes, are alſo the Object of Faith. How the believing Soul may conſider and regard God's abſolute Decree of Election.

CHAP. I.

How the Soul may for its Salvation treat with the Free Grace of God as declar'd in the Covenant.

I Shall firſt diſcourſe of a Soul's treating with the Free Grace of God as it is propoſed to us in the Covenant of Grace, before I conſider what kind of Promiſes they are which are the Object of our Faith. There is a great crying up of Free Grace, as that which in the way of Believing Mens Souls rely upon: But hey who have travers'd the Paths of it, ſo as to arrive at a free and familiar Interourſe therewith, find it exceeding difficult, until God guides them into it by a reight and direct Line. And there are many dangerous Miſtakes in the Applicaion of our Souls unto it in the ſeeking of it: I ſhall therefore treat of it in a way of iving Directions about it. (1.) We muſt lay hold on Free Grace according as it is t forth in the Covenant of Grace. The Covenant you have at large in *Jer.* 31. nd in *Ezek.* 36. cited in *Heb.* 8. Now the Covenant of Grace is but the pure Reolutions of Grace in the Heart of God put into written Promiſes. It is a tranſlating f the pure Grace in the Heart of God and Purpoſes thereof into Promiſes, into inefinite Promiſes, not naming the Perſons to whom they are deſign'd: They are Exreſſions of Purpoſes as they lay in his Heart. Men think it an eaſy thing to deal vith the Grace of God for Salvation, and that they need no Directions and Teach-

Part 1. ings, for God (say they) is merciful in his Nature, he is a merciful God, and it is but going to him for Mercy, *&c.* But the Free Grace of the Purposes of God, as it is set forth in the Covenant, is a further thing than a Declaration that God is merciful in his Nature; and a Man needs teaching how to treat with Free Grace, as it is in God's Heart set forth in the Promises, in the immediate and absolute Promises; 2 Thess. 3. 5. *The Lord direct your Hearts into the Love of God.* He speaks of that Love which is in the Heart of God himself towards us: Rightly to go to, and close with, and lay hold on that Grace, needs Direction, and that from God. *The Lord* (says he) *direct your Hearts into the Love of God.* He speaks to those that already had been in some measure acquainted with that Love. All of you whom God saves, one piece of the Indenture of his Covenant is, that he will teach you to know him; to know him in what? To know him in the Pardon of your Sins, and how to obtain it at his Hands; for so it follows, *I will forgive their Sins, and their Iniquities will I remember no more:* And to know how to deal with the Grace of God for Pardon of Sin upon Grace's own terms; for this Mens Souls need Direction in. The Lord direct your Hearts into the Love of God.

I shall shew you some of God's Teachings: *You shall be all* (says he) *taught of God*; taught of God in his Free Grace. When Free Grace comes to teach the Heart to treat with Grace, it teacheth it,

1. To renounce all Self, or else Free Grace will have nothing to do with you. From the very first Purpose Free Grace had to save Man, it laid that for a Foundation, that the Salvation should not be of Works, but according to the Purpose of his Grace given us before the World was, 2 *Tim.* 1. 9. There you have it purely set down as it was in God's Heart. And the Holy Apostle when he speaks of Grace, and of our being saved by Grace, he still puts in this Negative, *not of Words*, as the opposite of Grace, *Rom.* 11. 5, 6, 7. And whereas Faith is required wherewith to close with that Grace, (Ephes. 2. 8. *By Faith you are saved, through Grace, it is the Gift of God*) a Man must renounce all Power in himself to believe, and all Helps to believe, but what are drawn from the pure Grace of God. *Hos.* 14. 2. See there God's Instructions, *Take with you Words*, (says he) *and turn to the Lord, and say to him, Take away all Iniquity, and receive us graciously*, &c. Here you have Free Grace (as Free Grace) instructing and teaching Men that would turn to God, how to apply themselves unto it. It is a Treaty of Free Grace's here that is recorded, *Receive us graciously.*

I will love them (says he) *freely*, ver. 5. Now he teacheth you upon his own Terms how you must deal with his Grace. And that it is upon his own terms, it is clear by this; for he bids them take these Words in their Mouth. So that 'tis a sure way to know how to treat with the Free Grace of God. It must be done with a Renunciation of all that is opposite to it, and which will spoil the Treaty, and enervate and make it void. Accordingly they say, Ashur *shall not save us, we will not ride upon Horses*, &c. Ashur *shall not save us.* He expresseth it in Old-Testament-Language under the Figure of a temporal Deliverance. We will not (say they) call in the Help of *Ashur*, nor think to ride upon Horses. You must be helpless, you must not think to deal with Free Grace on Horseback, for you shall not prevail so; no nor on Foot neither, for it is not in him that willeth, or that runneth, but in God that sheweth Mercy, *Rom.* 9. 16. And so the Close is here, It is not our Hands in which we trust, we will not say, the Work of our Hands shall save us; but how then? *With thee the Fatherless find Mercy:* As if he had said, The strengthless, the helpless, the utterly desolate of all Helps by Means, but only the Free Grace of God and Christ, the Fatherless shall find Mercy. For the Soul to give up it self to the Graciousness of Grace to accept it, to receive it graciously, to give up it self to the Efficacy and Power of Free Grace to work what it will with Renunciation of all else; this is the first Lesson Free Grace teacheth, when a Man will come to have Salvation by it. I will not meddle with you else, (says God) lay that for the Foundation of your Treaty, or my Grace shall not treat with you at all. What is Free Grace? God tells you in these Words, *I will love them freely.* What is Grace? It is Love; *I will love them freely*, (says God) and all their Backslidings shall be no Discouragement to me. Now you see God bids you take Words, he hath put the Substance and Efficacy of those Words into your Mouths, and they are his own terms. I have oft said, If a Soul would but go and take the very Words (understanding them) as they

they are recorded where the Covenant of Grace was penn'd, (*Jer.* 31. 33, 34. and the like in *Ezek.* 36. *I will give a new Heart:* and in *Jer.* 32. *I will put my Fear into your Hearts, and you shall not depart from me:* This is pure absolute Grace.) If a Man should take these Words that God hath put into his Mouth and use them, or the Effect of them to God, saying, Lord I present them to thee, and beseech thee to make them good to my poor Soul, and should seek God Day and Night, the Lord would own and accept that poor Soul. Book 2.

2. God teacheth the Soul to treat with the Grace of God in the free Sovereignty of it. There is the Grace of God's Nature which you read of in *Exod.* 34. *The Lord God gracious and merciful,* &c. The 33*d* Chapter was a Preface unto what follows in the 34*th* Chapter concerning the proclaiming his Name; and saith God, *I will proclaim my Name before thee, and I will be merciful to whom I will be merciful, and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious.* This is a plain Declaration that *that Grace* of Salvation he would not shew to any body. It is a Limitation, *I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, I will be merciful,* &c. I will have Freedom and exercise Dominion in doing of it. Are you to treat with Grace? you are to treat with this same Declaration, *I will be gracious,* &c. *and I will be merciful to,* &c. and you are to apply your selves to the Sovereignty of it. This is to treat Free Grace upon its own terms. When a poor Soul sees it self lost and comes to God, to the Free Grace of God, he doth not come on Horseback, nor on Foot neither, but he falls flat down at that Throne and Sovereignty of God, *He will be gracious to whom he will be gracious,* &c. He hath to do with this same Will of the great God, and the Soul acknowledgeth that he is absolutely free, and that he may choose whether to do it to me or any such poor unworthy Wretch as I am; he may if he please not shew me any Mercy; *Whom he will he hardens,* as the Apostle saith, *Rom.* 9. And I am a poor Creature, (says he) and I lay down my self at thy Feet, if thou wilt be merciful here I am; I throw my self upon thee, thou mayst give me up to Hardness. If Souls come thus nakedly to him, he then hath a Dominion to cast them off as fully as to accept them: If thou comest thus nakedly to him, thou hast nothing to ingratiate his Grace but his own Grace, which he shews to whom he will, and that *Will* hath a *Will, I will be gracious because I will be gracious.* Because Mercy pleaseth him, and Mercy and Grace hath taken thy Heart, poor Creature, thou comest to him to cast it that way. The absolute Freeness and Dominion of Grace is the Glory of it, and God will have our Hearts brought to seek it, as it lies in his Heart; God loves to have it acknowledged, at one time or other, by every Soul he saves. Tho I dare not say, that there is an absolute Necessity of such a Disposition of Soul, yet to be sure when the Soul thus applys it self in treating with Grace, there is true Faith and Dependance on God. There is not only an acknowledging that God may refuse me if he please, but the Soul says, If thou hast no Pleasure in me, here I am; My Will is made subject as well as my Understanding; it must be thine own Pleasure purely must cast it on me: this is Faith of Submission. And yet withal thinks the Soul, who knows but he may be merciful, and merciful to me, and that keeps it at the Throne of Grace, and will not let it go away.

3. Free Grace loves to be treated according to the Fulness of its own Freeness, and the Extent of its own Freeness. The Meaning is, it is absolutely as free to God to save any sort of Sinner, one as another, it is as indifferent to him to save out of any Condition. So that put what Case you will, put what Condition you will, Free Grace hath a Freedom to extend it self to it. It is not only said, *I will be merciful to whom I will be merciful,* as for the Person, but there is a Nobleness of Liberality, so that there is no sort of Sin (the Sin against the Holy Ghost excepted) but may be pardon'd; no sort of Condition, be it poor, weak, contemptible, what you will, but a Man may be sav'd in it. Now when the Soul sees this, he honours Free Grace mightily: he comes not to be accepted, because he hath fewer Sins, that were to derogate from Grace; nor is he discouraged because of the abundance of Sin; no, for there is an Amplitude in this Grace; *Rom.* 3. 22, 23, 24. As to the Point of being saved by Grace, Grace knows no Difference: So for thy outward Condition, be it what it will, there is no Condition any one is in, but one or other have been in it, and saved; for God is no Accepter of Persons, but is rich to all that call upon him. Now to have a Soul possess'd with the Thoughts of the Freeness of his Grace, and to treat with God accordingly, this honours his Grace, and this God loves, and this he delights in.

Part 1. 4. We must treat with this Grace as that which is absolute, unchangeable, irreversible, where it is once pitch'd. If I in seeking God can find this Grace of God to own me and imbrace me while I seek it, then what do I come to? To a State of irreversible Grace, of Grace that will carry on the Work, that will undertake all for me, that is faithful, and will do it. What says God? *Psal.* 89. 28, 29. *Tho they break my Laws, I will visit their Transgressions with the Rod, and their Iniquities with Stripes; nevertheless my Loving-kindness will I not utterly take from them, nor suffer my Faithfulness to fail.* You have it also in *Isa.* 54. 10. *With everlasting Kindness will I have Mercy on thee: The Mountains shall depart, and the Hills be removed, but my Kindness shall not depart from thee.* *Noah*'s Waters may as soon overflow to cover the Earth, as thy Sins overflow thy Heart. When the Soul shall thus have the Amplitude of Grace, of Grace past, present, and to come, before it, and turns it full round about, and sees no end, O says the Soul, that my Heart may be the Subject of this Grace! that I may come under the Dominion and Protection of this Grace! for this Grace will do the Business, it will do it throughly; it answers all my Objections, makes Provisos for them, it satisfies all the Desires that I have or can have. Now suppose that God yet carries it concealed towards thee, yet thou art happy if he fires thy Heart with this Grace, and causeth thy Soul to seek after it, and teacheth thy Heart to come to God, and to spread all these Properties of his Grace before him, whereby he saves Men, and thy Heart is strengthned to plead, that God would cast them upon thy self, and thou canst by the Hour relate between him and thee, how by this Grace thou desirest to be saved, and by no other; tho thou hearest of other Ways, of Free-Will Grace, where God moves, but leaves thee to will, yet if thou hadst ten thousand Souls thou wouldst not venture one that way. Dost thou heartily say to God, Lord, I had rather go upon this way of Free Grace than upon that way of Free-Will-Grace, tho offered to all? O save me this way! Lord, I have nothing to return, but I shall render the Calves of my Lips, I shall adore thee and bless thee: O that there should be such Purposes of Grace, and that they should thus take my Heart, I am resolv'd to be sav'd no way, if not saved this way, and by this Grace. To be thus taught and instructed, you had need have the Lord *direct your Hearts*, 2 Thess. 3. 5. In the Original it is to direct by a right Line; it is an emphatical Expression to signify such a Direction as that they shall not go about, but go streight and immediately into the Heart of God, and Love of God.

What do Men do? They come with their Conditions to ingratiate themselves with God when they come to treat with Grace, which is to bring to Grace what should ingratiate their Souls to it. We use to say, God's Grace is a preventing Grace, preventing what is in Man; but by this way Men would prevent the Grace of God, and be aforehand with it. Do not go round about, but go by a right Line, and venture thy self tho thou knowest not whether thou beest the Person or no, and lie at God's Feet. To bring Conditions whereby thy Faith should be raised to Free Grace, is not agreeable to the Mind of Grace. The truth is, you will find Free Grace will say to your Souls, I will not be thus dealt withal.

Object. *Would you have us use no Endeavours, Means?* &c.

Answ. This I said is so remote from it as nothing is more. In *Noah*'s Instance, tho God said to him, *Thou hast found Grace in my sight, yet he prepared an Ark.* And in *Phil.* 2. 12, 13. we are commanded *to work out our Salvation; for it is God that worketh,* &c. But how work out our own Salvation? We are to use those Endeavours which we find we have Power to use in Subordination to the Grace of God that works the Will and Deed; and we are to wait in the Use of Means, renouncing all we do, as to any Purpose of ingratiating our selves with God, yet we are to use these Means in Subordination to God that works the Will and the Deed.

Object. *But would you have a Man treat Free Grace thus, and leave out Holiness?*

Answ. God forbid: for if you seek the Grace of God in truth, and as it is in it self, and in the Heart of God; then if your Heart know the Grace of God in truth, it will teach you to be holy, and to make gracious Returns to God again; 2 *Tit.* 11. 12. *The Grace of God hath appeared,* &c. *teaching us to deny all Ungodliness,* &c. It is spoken of the Gospel and Doctrine of it, which thus teacheth you. But if God the Father do instruct your Heart, and make known to you his Free Grace as it is in his Heart, and draws you to depend upon it, wholly upon it, if so be you have learnt from the Father, what it is for God to be gracious, and how he is gracious to

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a poor Soul, (or as it is in *John* 6. 45. *If you have learnt of the Father*) you will be taught to be holy, yea it is part of your Indenture when you come to plead the Covenant of Grace. The Grace of God is the greatest Teacher of Holiness that ever was: says God in that Covenant of Grace, *Jer.* 31. *I will write my Law in their Heart.* Of all Laws else he will write the supreme Law which Free Grace hath to write: What is that? To have the Grace in God answered with Grace in you; to have your Hearts ingenuously wrought upon to comply with his Grace, and not to abuse it; *Col.* 1. 6. *If you have known the Grace of God in Truth*, &c. There is a true Knowledg of the Grace of God; and there is a counterfeit one: but if it be true, it teacheth all Holiness, it stamps a Frame of Heart upon you, it teacheth you how to apply your selves to Grace in its kind, and therefore to return Grace for Grace, and Love for Love. It is the Law of the Thing, it is the Law of Nature to love those that love you, and on whose Love you depend. It is the Law of pure Nature, and it is the pure Law of Grace; 1 *John* 2. 4. *He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his Commandments, is a Liar*, that is, doth not know God. Not know him! in what? Doth not know him in his Love, *ver.* 13, 15. For it is the Love of the Father he speaks of. I tell you, no Man seeks Grace in this manner I speak of, but he professeth to God and his own Soul that he would not be saved by that Grace unless it wrought Holiness in him. It is part of the Indenture he draws with God. I acknowledg that to be made holy simply upon the sight of the pure Grace of God, it is a high and spiritual thing, and our Hearts are carnal. The Law is holy and spiritual, the Terms of Free Grace are holy and spiritual, and we poor Wretches are carnal and sold under Sin, and cannot come off to the Motives thereof, to be acted by it continually. It is true; but yet when the Soul lay at God's Feet to obtain it, and humbled it self, that Soul thereby kept on a Plea for Holiness, as well as for Grace, and doth obtain it, and hath it wrought in his Soul. He that hath the Love of this World, hath not the Father's; 1 *John* 2. 15. A Man whose Heart is taken with the Grace of God to be saved by it, if he loves the World inordinately, or more than God, the Love of the Father is not in him, he knows it not: But of a gracious Soul the Apostle saith, (*Rom.* 6. 14.) *Sin shall not have Dominion*, for Grace will break the Dominion of Sin. Those cursed Men (*Jude* 4.) turn'd the Grace of God into Wantonness, (they were *Simon Magus*'s Followers, and the Devil was his Master) and what did they profess, that a Man was saved wholly by Grace, do what he would, and that that was the Grace of the Father? O how doth the Apostle fly out against these Men, and follow them with all the Curses that God brought upon wicked Men in the Old Testament, and upon the Angels that fell! Men that have nothing but Self-righteousness in them to be wrought upon, they wonder to hear that the Grace of God should work a Man above himself, to love God above himself; that a Man should be taken with Free Grace, and not abuse it; for the Nature of Self-love is to run away with Free Grace, and be unthankful. But what is the Grace we speak of as it is in the Heart of a Christian? If Self-love only, it were the worst Direction ever was given to teach Self-love to serve its turn, and to run away with Salvation, and let Self do as it pleaseth. But the Doctrine of Free Grace which we profess to Salvation, is a Principle of Love to God above a Man's self; there is that at the bottom. If it be so, then the more pure and clear you can bring this Grace in the Heart of God towards a poor Soul, you move that Man so much the more, you boil up Grace to a height. If there be Love and Grace in the Soul, and that Grace be prevailing, it will work answerably, it will make the Grace of God its greatest Interest, because it is God's. We profess this is the Principle of Grace, and therefore to teach Men thus to follow the Grace of God, is to teach them that Principle that must be put into them by the Holy Ghost.

Book 2.

CHAP.

Part 1.

CHAP. II.

What high Regards the Faith of the Apostle Paul *had to the Free Grace of God the Father as the Object of it. How he magnifies and celebrates this Free Grace discover'd to his Apprehensions and Thoughts.*

1 TIM. 1. 13, 14.

I obtained Mercy, because I did it ignorantly, in Unbelief: And the Grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant, with Faith and Love which is in Christ Jesus.

THE Holy Ghost hath declared *Paul a Pattern in his Conversion to those that are after to believe,* (1 Tim. 1. 16.) and as a Pattern of Encouragement and Hopes to the greatest of Sinners that were to come after him to believe. And so likewise in the very Work of Conversion he is propos'd as an Example also unto them, altho he indeed at first attained unto that Perfection therein, which other Converts are growing up unto in their whole Lives. But yet the Seeds of the whole being sown, and Foundations laid in their first Work, they are springing up to a full Growth throughout their whole Lives. As every Child that comes into the World by ordinary Generation hath the same Parts essential to Mankind, both of the Inwards of Bowels and Ventricles of the Head, in a less Size and Proportion than *Adam* had, who was made a Man of full Stature by an extraordinary way of Creation, and therefore had all in the full Proportions of a Man grown up to Perfection, and also each part acting in their full Vigour and Activity from the first: So is it here, Every Convert receives all the same Principles of Faith and Love at first, only the Actings and Increase thereof do in many things grow up into an actual Energy, and yet so as at the first those Principles do necessarily so far act in all Converts, as is requisite to put them into a State of Life and Salvation. And this in the Point of the Actings of Faith upon God and Christ for Justification and Salvation, is in a special manner seen, some Mens Spirits being more intensely carried out unto God the Father for Grace and Mercy, others more unto Christ Jesus for his Righteousness, altho whilst they act Faith more upon the one or the other, they yet implicitly take in the other; whilst they look more on God's Grace and Mercy, yet so as they regard it in and through Christ, and *è contra.*

But our great Convert here in this Narration of his Conversion is propounded unto us as an high Example of Faith drawn forth in an intense manner unto each, both the Grace of God and Christ, in the most abounding Workings of it. In the Book of the *Acts* we find an *historical Relation* of the *outward Circumstances* and manner of his Conversion, twice related by himself: In this Epistle to *Timothy* he acquaints us with the most intimate working Impressions and Sentiments of his Spirit, and what principally his Heart was taken up about at the Time thereof: The Sense whereof he retained unto that day, and these especially he utters in *ver.* 14. *And the Grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant, with Faith, and Love, which is in Christ Jesus.* He had begun to give solemn Thanks to Christ, (the great Doner and Endower of all Gifts unto Men, *Ephes.* 4.) *ver.* 12. for putting him into that Office and Dignity of the Apostleship, and this from the Time of his Conversion. *And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord,* (says he) *who hath inabled me; for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the Ministry:* which Blessing he greatneth from the Consideration of his having formerly been so great a Blasphemer of Christ, and a Persecutor of his new created Christian Church, and Professors of him; *ver.* 13. *Who* (says he) *was before a Blasphemer, a Persecutor, and injurious.* But then in the middle of that *ver.* 14 he proceeds more particularly to magnify the Mercy and Grace of his Conversion for the Salvation of his own Soul, without which tho the Grace of Apostleship might have saved others, yet himself had proved a Cast-away, as was the Case of *Judas:* That therefore is the *great Mercy* which he centers in in the following Verses: and therein first (as I take it, and humbly submit it, together with this my Analysis of the whole Paragraph to *ver.* 18.) he predicates the Grace and Mercy of God the

the Father shewn to him in and through Jesus Christ: *But I was bemercied*, (says he) or *was endowed with Mercy, because I did it ignorantly, in Unbelief: And the Grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant, with Faith, and Love, which is in Christ Jesus.* Then, Secondly, he magnifieth Jesus Christ for his Mercy also in coming into the World to save him the chief of Sinners: *ver.* 15, 16. *This is a faithful Saying, and worthy of all Acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the World to save Sinners, of whom I am chief: Howbeit for this Cause I obtain'd Mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all Long-suffering, for a Pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to Life everlasting.* And then, lastly, he shuts up the whole with this solemn Doxology, or giving Glory to God the Father; *ver.* 17. *Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be Honour and Glory for ever and ever. Amen.* Book 3.

And when he enters upon this Narrative of his Conversion, he at first useth a word somewhat uncouth, whereby to express the Mercy of it: a word whereof in the English Tongue we cannot give the full and proper Force in one word, (which the Greek it self is) I was *bemercied*, (if we may so speak) *misericordia donatus*, endowed with Mercy, encompassed with Mercy. It is a like word unto that spoken to the blessed Virgin, *Luke* 1. 28. κεχαριτωμένη, *gratioused*, or one whom God's singular Grace owned, embraced, and so here says the Apostle, *I was mercified, endowed with Mercy*, I had nothing but Mercy, and was all over Mercy. There was not only nothing of Merit, but no Fitness or any Disposition in me towards it, to make way for it, but the contrary; only there was a Capacity, a Possibility left of having Mercy bestowed on me, (that was all) *because I did it ignorantly*, says he, *and in Unbelief*: which imports that if he had pursued those Injuriousnesses, and persecuted Christ and his Saints, having first had a Conviction of Sight that accompany those Actings, they had been that unpardonable Sin, and would have rendred him incapable of all Grace and Mercy. And he useth this word this first time (for 'tis after also) in relation to God the Father's Mercy then vouchsafed him *in calling him by Grace*, (as he elsewhere says, *Gal.* 1. 17. speaking of the Father) which proceeded from his electing Love, Grace and Mercy towards him, which there, *Gal.* 1. you have also expressed in those Words, *When it pleased God who had separated me from the Womb*: [That that is an Election-Phrase see *Æstius* on the Words, and others.] And this Separation of him had ordered all things all along from the Womb about him, and in his Course of Life before his Conversion had taken care to keep and prevent from falling into that unpardonable Sin, upon the very Brink of the Pit whereof he had (at last) walked. And then *called me by his Grace*, (says he there) the wonderful Mercy of which he (here also narrating his Conversion) celebrates; and indeed our first Calling, as it is the breaking forth of Election-Grace and Mercy, so it bears the Image and Pattern of it. I was then bemercied, (says he) drench'd, and covered all over with the abundant Mercies thereof. It was poured forth upon my Soul by whole-sale, and on the sudden, and at once. This was the Execution of Election, and this first mention of this word I in my Interpretation refer to God the Father's Grace, to whom both *Calling* and *Election* are every where peculiarly attributed.

See Beza's *Reason against the ordinary Translation.*

Now observe how he again repeats the same Word, (for he useth it twice on this Occasion and in this Place, for he delighted in it, and in the very thinking of it) and inserts it, when Christ's Part at his Conversion comes to be related; *ver.* 15, 16. *This is a faithful Saying, and worthy of all Acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the World to save Sinners, of whom I am chief: Howbeit for this Cause I obtained Mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all Long-suffering, for a Pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to Life everlasting.*

Now in this *ver.* 14. he proceeds to magnify this Grace of God the Father (discovered at and in his Conversion) with the highest Elogy and Epithets that could be given it, *(and the Grace of our Lord* (says he) *was superabundant)* and together therewith to acquaint us with the principal inward Workings of his Heart, and most intimate Exercises and Actings of his own Spirit towards that superabundant Grace that shined on him at his first Conversion; and to declare with what Entertainment or Acceptation (as his word is *ver.* 15.) he received that, and took in that Grace then discovered, he adds these Words, *With Faith and Love, which is in Jesus Christ*, which are the two Graces that answer (by way of Return and Reception) unto the Grace of God when discovered, and are exercised about, and act there-

thereupon. He speaks not here of the Work of his first *Humiliation for Sin*, which
Part 1. is the first Work in all true Conversions, (tho he hints that he had deep and the[illegible]
Impressions that way, in saying, *ver.* 15. *Me the chiefest of Sinners*) but here he
omits it, and mentions only the Work of Faith and Love, the principal Objects directly acted upon, being the Free Grace of God. And to set forth these Actings of his Soul thereupon, I take to be his principal Scope in this Verse. The chief Question about this Interpretation is my referring those Words, *and the Grace of our Lord*, unto God the Father, because the Title *our Lord* is more frequently given to Christ in distinction from the Father, and is given unto Christ in *ver.* 12. afore, and also *Christ* is only mentioned in *ver.* 15, 16. afterward. I find some Interpreters, as *Calvin* and others, on this 14th Verse, call it *the Grace of God*, without the
Calvin. Estius. Lapidus. mention of Christ here: and some others say, *Gratia Dei in Christo*, the Grace of God in Christ, which still denotes the Grace of God, tho in and through Christ. And many of those that carry the Words to Christ, yet ever and anon put in also *the Grace of God*, and (as it were) could not forbear but to do it. But the Reasons of my Interpretation (which will also serve to solve the Objection) are,

1. Because *Grace* is most frequently ascribed to *the Father* in the Point of Justification and Salvation, (which is the thing he speaks of here, as *ver.* 15. shews) and that in distinction from Christ, as out of *Rom.* 5. and *ch.* 3. may be observed. Tho also it is sometimes given to Christ, yet most usually I say unto the Father: (as as the Title of *our Lord* is sometimes given the Father, tho more commonly to Christ, which solveth part of the Objection.) But besides, to speak more close to the Point, those other Places wherein *Paul* gives the Account of his Conversion, (which I call Parallels to this, and therefore argue from them as such) he still entitles the Grace thereof unto the Father. Thus *Gal.* 1. 15, 16. *But when it pleased God, separated me from my Mother's Womb, and called me by his Grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the Heathen.* And the very same you find, 1 Cor. 15. 9, 10. *For I am the least of the Apostles, that am not meet to be called an Apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God: But by the Grace of God I am what I am; and his Grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain: but I laboured more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the Grace of God which was with me.*

2. There did always rise up to me in the reading of this Scripture, a Distinction implied in the Verse itself, of *Jesus Christ*, from him whom he calls *our Lord*, to whom the *Grace* is ascribed: *The Grace of our Lord* (says he) *was exceeding abundant, with Faith, and Love, which is in Christ Jesus.* That last Clause, *and Love which is in Jesus Christ*, speaks of Christ as of another Person from our Lord spoken of afore: He says not, *and Love unto Jesus Christ*, but *in Jesus Christ*, noting that Love of his to have been born to some other Person, in and through Christ: And if so, then unto whom more properly than unto that Person of whom he had immediately before spoken, and whose Grace (he says) had been so abounding to him? which Person must be the Father, if a Person distinct from Christ; and so he speaks of a Love returned unto him in and through Christ, for his Grace shewn him in Christ, as all the Father's Grace is said to be, who hath chosen us in Christ.

3. Tho he from thence runs the rest of his Discourse upon Jesus Christ, (in the two following Verses 15, 16.) magnifying him for his Hand, and Mercy shewn in his Conversion, yet in the Conclusion he issues all in giving Glory to God the Father, (*ver.* 17.) and as one not having Words to set forth that Grace any further, he chooseth to break off, and falls to adoring God the Father: *Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be Honour and Glory for ever and ever. Amen.* Wherein he speaks in the usual Stile of Doxologies given to God the Father upon such solemn Occasions. Thus in the same Epistle we have it, *ch.* 6. 15, 16. *Who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords; who only hath Immortality, dwelling in the Light which no Man can approach unto; whom no Man hath seen, or can see: to whom be Honour and Power everlasting. Amen.* Wherein this Honour and Praise is given to God the Father distinct from Christ, as by the comparing the last Words of the Verse afore it appears. Now this Glory thus solemnly given in this first Chapter, all acknowledg to refer to the Grace of his Conversion before related, and so to signify him to have been the Person, whose infinitely abounding Grace had done all this for him. He had begun to *thank Jesus Christ*, ver. 12. but he ends *with Glory to the Father*: and in reason that being the grand

grand and solemn Conclusion of this his Narrative, it may well be thought that an express mention of the Father his Grace therein should be found somewhere in the Premises, and where else if not in these Words of *ver.* 14. for all the rest did run wholly upon Christ. Yea and if it be not there, then that of the Mercy of God the Father is wholly left out, unless argued by way of Inference in this Narrative of the greatest Conversion that ever was in the World; and also that when he sets himself to celebrate the Grace towards him shewn therein in Words so high, as superabundant, *&c.* the like to which are not any where else to be found, unless in that *Rom.* 5. 20. ὑπερεπερίσσευσεν ἡ χάρις, and there it is apparently spoken of the Grace of the Father in distinction from, tho in conjunction with Christ and his Righteousness, as Verse the last, and those afore shew. *The Grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant*, ὑπερεπλεόνασε, it flowed over, or issued forth with an abundancy, yea Overplus; so in *Rom.* 5. it *overfill'd Paul*, and ran over and over, as more than enough. He compares himself to a Vessel, (and we are stiled *Vessels of Mercy and Grace*) into which on a sudden were poured forth from above Spouts and Floods by whole-sale, that not only fill'd it brim-full, but to a running over on every side. Yea, he speaks as if the Windows of Heaven, the Floodgates thereof, even of the Heart of God, fill'd with that infinite Treasury of Love and Grace towards him, had been set open, and had poured down the Streams thereof into his Soul. Book 3. Rom. 9.

The next Inquiry may be in what manner it is he intends that this Grace of God had so superabounded, whether in the way of Effects, that is, in so stupendous a *Work of converting* so prodigious a Sinner unto God, in implanting in his Soul the Principles of Faith and Love, and of the whole new Creature, in one so confirmed and hardned in Unbelief, and so resolute in such a violent Fury against Christ and his Saints: So that the abundance of that Grace was demonstrated in so mighty and wonderful Effects, (which is all, or the main that Interpreters here take notice of, as wherein this superabounding Grace was seen) or whether withal he intends not to speak *apprehensivè*, that is, in respect of the Discovery of that Grace it self, as it was, and had been born towards him in the Heart of God, and now broke forth upon his Soul in and to his own Apprehensions. To this Query I answer;

1*st.* That it is true, that the Superabundancy of God's Grace must needs have been discovered to him in so great and wonderful a Change and *Work* wrought upon him, for it was unparallel'd Grace to work it, and there was a just Ground for him to adore it as he doth. Yet,

2*dly.* In the Knowledg of it barely by such Effects, the *Cause it self* remains hidden, and might still not have been known in it self no otherwise than in what is different from it self, (for so the Effects are from their Causes) and such a Knowledg is but *secondary*. And,

3*dly.* It would not have been said that *the Grace of the Lord had been over-full*, or more than enough, in respect of the Works of Faith and Love; for the Works thereof themselves were yet imperfect in him: but we may say of the Grace as it is in God's Heart, and as it is apprehended and laid hold on by us, by immediate Faith, that so indeed it superabounds, both as to what it hath wrought, and in all which it hath undertaken to work for us: And this is infinite, and stretcheth it self, and extendeth to all Eternity. And this Grace thus taken in as it was by *Paul* (that *chosen Vessel*, Acts 9.) might well be deemed to be infinitely more than he could take in, and so to overflow, as hath been said.

But further we may know that there is a flowing of the Grace and Love that is in God himself to Mens Souls in manifestation made by it self, and of it self: which the Apostle calls a *shedding abroad the Love of God into the Heart by the Spirit*, Rom. 5. and it is one after-Fruit of Faith which many attain to. There is a Taste of the pure unmixed Sweetness in and of the Grace of God, as it comes from out of his own Heart, and is immediately conveyed thorow those *Breasts of Consolation*, the *absolute Promises*, whereof even new-born Babes do oft partake; 1 *Pet.* 2. 3. *As new born Babes desire the sincere Milk*, &c. *If so be you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.* Which surely this our Apostle (if ever any) had at this his very Infancy of Regeneration: And that was it, and the Experience thereof was it that drew him here to declare, that the Grace of our Lord was superabundant; not *re ipsa* only, as it resides in God's Heart unknown to us; nor as demonstrated only by those gracious Effects it had wrought in him, but *apprehensivè*, or in his own *Apprehensions* and

Part 1. *Sentiments of it*; and in that sense it is he especially utters this here. He saw and laid hold of, and took in that Fulness of the Grace of God born towards him, and as it now was and had been from everlasting; a Grace which was over-full, as his word is, that is, as to his own Thoughts and Comprehensions. What he prayed for the Ephesians, that they *might comprehend with all Saints, the Height, the Breadth, Length and Depth of God's Grace towards them, and know the Love of Christ which passeth Knowledg*; the same himself found in his measure, in the glorious Sight, Sense, and Taste of this super-abounding Grace, which he found was not only *sufficient*, (as 2 *Cor.* 12.) but more than enough for his turn; and to be sure more than enough for his Soul to take in. It came upon his Spirit as a mighty Sea, which had neither Shore nor Bottom: He saw there was an Infinity of it, which he was no more able to take in into his Comprehension, no more than a narrow Vessel is able to take into it self the main Ocean: and in this respect it is he terms it such abundant Grace. To conclude, in a word, it is *objectivè* spoken, as to the Grace it self, as it was presented unto him for the Object of his Faith, but *apprehensivè* as to *his Soul*; and not *efficienter* only, that is, as an efficient Cause of that Work of Faith God had wrought upon his Heart; unto which most would needs narrow it. It was not a mere Reflection upon the Operation of the Grace of Faith and Love, as in his Heart, but a far more enlarged Contemplation and Admiration of the Height and Depth of the Grace it self, as it was in God's Heart, now manifesting it self unto him, how superabundantly and how *greatly he was beloved*, (as the Angel says of *Daniel*) or how abundantly he was graciously accepted by God in his Beloved, as in *Ephes.* 1. 6. And the Grace in God himself was its own Reporter of it. *Paul* first had seen how Sin had abounded in himself the chiefest of Sinners, (*ver.* 15.) and then that *that Grace* born in God's Heart to pardon, love and accept him, had abounded much more for the Pardon of it. And Grace as justifying him without any thing in himself, was the Object his Heart was now taken up withal at his Conversion.

CHAP. III.

That Absolute *Declarations about GOD and Christ, and Absolute Promises of Salvation, are the most proper and only Objects of that Act of* Application *of Faith, we call Faith of* Recumbency *or Adherence.*

BY *Absolute* Declarations, *&c.* I mean such as are not made unto Conditions or Qualifications, which first should be viewed by the Soul to be in it self as a Ground to believe upon God and Christ for Justification.

Ger. de Justif. §. 134. *Gerard* in his Controversy with *Bellarmine* puts this Meaning upon the terms *absolute Promises* and *conditional.* "The Promises (says he, speaking of the Gospel-Promises) "may be called Absolute as in opposition unto our Works and Merit, "and yet Conditional in that God requireth Faith, and so no Works being requir'd "to Justification, they are in that respect not conditional. But granting as well as he, that Faith is requisite, and Faith alone, I do withal affirm that there are Promises that are absolute, holding forth no Condition, as they are the Object of Faith. And Faith viewing merely what is in those Promises, (which specify no Condition of Faith it self) lays hold on God's Grace and Christ as therein manifested. And thus absolute Promises stand in a full Opposition unto all conditional Promises, as those absolute Promises may be supposed, and objected first unto Faith's View, and as they are the Raisers up of it thereupon, so as upon the Sight thereof the Soul is brought to apply the Salvation made known in such Promises. Now the Promises are such as these; *Jer.* 31. 33. *This shall be the Covenant that I will make with the House of* Israel *after those Days, saith the Lord, I will put my Law in their inward Parts, and I will write it in their Hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my People.* Which being immediately made to the Elect, and being an absolute Undertaking on God's part, to perform the Conditions themselves, I therefore call them most absolute. That Declaration also is absolute in *John* 6. 37. *All that the Father*

Father hath given me shall come to me. Likewise *Heb.* 4. 6. *Some must enter in,* whereunto God hath bound himself with an Oath (as there) to perform it. Now as for the Persons concerning whom these Promises are made, they are only known to God: *The Lord knoweth who are his*, 2 Tim. 2. 19. Some detract from the Absoluteness of these Promises, in saying they are made upon other fore supposed lower and subordinate prerequisite Conditions to be perform'd first by Men, as to improve natural Helps well, *&c.* But this were to embase the Covenant of Grace by subjecting it to the Covenant of Works, as that which must take its Rise from former Actings of ours, predisposing to the Gifts of Grace. From all which Works in that very Place in *Jeremy* the Prophet distinguisheth those Promises of that Covenant of Grace. Book 3.

Thus Absolute Promises in the Controversies with the Remonstrants are on all sides understood: *Quæ non habent annexam Conditionem*, which have not a Condition annexed: As upon the sight of which our Faith on those conditional Promises should any way depend.

I join unto *Promises of Salvation* the *Absolute Declarations* in the Word, because there are many such Manifestations of God and Christ delivered in the *Word*, as they are the *Objects* of our Faith, which yet we do not ordinarily term *Promises*, tho they are tantamount thereunto, as they are objected to our Faith. And indeed all such Truths and Declarations may be taken for, and turned into absolute Promises, and absolute Promises into such naked *Declarations*. such Declarations I mean as these, That *Christ came into the World to save Sinners*, &c. which is delivered in way of a Saying, *This is a faithful Saying*, or grand Assertion of the Gospel, rather than in a direct promissory way: And in terming these *Declarations* rather I conform to the Language of the Holy Ghost, who when he most fully proposed God and Christ as the Objects of our Faith, useth that Expression to do it by; *Rom.* 3. 25 *Whom* (*i. e.* Christ) *God hath set forth to be a Propitiation through Faith in his Blood, to declare his Righteousness*, &c. Then again, *ver.* 26. *To declare, I say, at this time his Righteousness, that he might be just, and a Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.* It is used you see both of God and Christ, as in relation to our Faith. You have the like also, 1 *Tim.* 2. 5, 6. *For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and Men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a Ransom for all to be testified in due time.* And 2 *Tim.* 1. 9, 10. the like. *Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy Calling, not according to our Works, but according to his own Purpose and Grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the World began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished Death, and brought Life and Immortality to light through the Gospel.* Where not only God and Christ as Saviour, &c. but the very eternal Purposes and Grace of God and Christ of Saving, (as they are properly and only to be limited to the Elect) are said to be the Matter of the Gospel. And the Manifestation and naked Declaration of this according to its plain Intent and Purpose, is the Gospel in its Height and Eminency, and the Seed and Head of all the Promises of Salvation, from which they are all derived and flow, and into which they all do again run, as Rivers into the Sea: And therefore by absolute Declarations I intend all in the Word wherein those Purposes of Grace are indefinitely reveal'd; I say *indefinitely*, because there is no naming the Persons of the Sons of Men to whom they are intended, and yet they are in that manner revealed, and with that Intent, to draw Men in to believe for their particular Salvation, as well as any other Promises whatever. And this I hope will appear plainly in this Discourse, but especially in that which follows it, unto which this is but introductory, the professed Subject thereof being to shew, how Faith of Adherence may make use of the absolute Revelation of *electing Grace*, tho wanting Assurance thereof: Which I have long since in Print promis'd to publish. *In my Preface unto* Christ set forth, *in 4o.*

Mr. *Bulkely* in that New-*England*-Controversy seems to be an Opposer of this Opinion, that *absolute Promises* are the Means and primary Object of full Assurance of Faith, through an immediate Testimony of the Spirit, without conditional Promises; "*By which only*, says he, *in the ordinary Course, if we will have any Trial of our* "*Estates by the Word, we must have it by the conditional Promises; yet would I not* "(says he further) *make the Absolute Promises useless.* I acknowledg they are of "singular Use; 1*st*. In that they shew us the only Cause of our Salvation, even "*Free Grace* and no other. 2*dly*. They are a Foundation for the Faith of *Adherence* "or *Dependance* to stay upon. There be two Acts of Faith, saith he, one of Adhe- *Discourse of the Covenant*, p. 149.

Part I. " rence or Dependance, another of Assurance: There be also two kinds of Promises, " Absolute and Conditional: mark now how these do fit and answer one another, " the absolute Promises to the Faith of Adherence, the conditional to the Faith of " Assurance; for example, God comes and says, For mine own sake will I do thus " and thus unto you in an absolute Promise: Here is a Ground for the Faith of Ad- " herence to cleave unto, tho I be most unworthy, yet I will hang upon this Pro- " mise, because it is for his own sake that the Lord will perform this Mercy, that " he may be glorified. There be also conditional Promises, *(He that believeth shall* " *be saved)* by means of which (we have the Experience and Feeling of such Grace " in our selves) we grow to an Assurance that we are of those that he will shew the " Free Grace upon. And thus the absolute Promises are laid before us as the Foun- " dation of our Salvation, (which is wrought in the adhering to the Promise) and " the conditional as the Foundation of our Assurance. And tho I do not wholly fall in with this latter part of his Conclusion, as if conditional Promises served only for a Foundation of Assurance, yet with the former Part, that absolute Promises are suted and fitted unto Faith of Adherence, or of the Act of Justifying Faith, properly and truly such, I fully close with, and do add, that it is *they* that are the most proper Objects for such a Faith, and not conditional Promises: And I shall endeavour to demonstrate this, in the case of one who is now a beginning first to believe: For as every thing must have a beginning, so must a Man's Believing; and of that case is I now specially treat, tho I do withal judg that the true Act of Faith as Justifying, doth throughout the whole of a Man's Life, even of him that hath Assurance, lie not in an Assurance I am *justified*, but in that of *Adherence* only, as I have elsewhere shewn.

Part II. Book 2. Ch. 1. *of this Discourse.*

It is not unknown, that besides those Believers who have through Grace attained unto a full Assurance of Faith, there are two Ranks of other true Believers whose Faith doth fall short of Assurance: 1. Such as are now a beginning to believe, as the Jailor, *Acts* 16. And, 2. Such as have had for some long time true Faith already wrought, and many Fruits thereof in the Course of their Lives, and yet walkers *Darkness, and have no Light*, and are fain to betake themselves to live by a pure and bare Faith of *Recumbency*, or of mere *casting themselves* on God and Christ, renewed afresh (even as they did at first) for their Salvation. And so they do as good as continually begin to believe, as if they had never believed before; and this they do altho they have some Glimpses of good Hope at times, which yet not rising up to over-power and silence Doubts, they return to make that kind of Faith their sole Life. And altho there may be found some Difference between these two, yet I put them both into one Bag, (as we say) and range them together in my ensuing Discourse, which I shall prosecute in the Person of one who is now but a beginning to believe. Concerning whose Case there is the most Difficulty, how to instruct such an one, to make use of such absolute Promises and Declarations, and how he should come to close with them, and with what Faith. And so whilst I shall speak to this Case of the one, I shall but speak to the Case of the other. That which we enquire after is, what Object he that is first to believe may find to set his Foot first upon, and which may become a Ground to him of that special Act of Faith whereby he lays hold on Christ for his own Salvation.

I suppose him humbled for Sin, and convinced that unless he have a Ground for his being saved from something else than what is in, or from himself, he must perish. I suppose him looking about him into the World, and crying out thereupon, (as they in *Acts* 2. and the Jailor) *What shall I do to be saved?* I suppose him also to see and apprehend his way to be to believe, and cast himself on God and Christ, looking about him for a Ground or Foundation in the Word, unto that his Faith.

Now then I shall proceed:

And here I shall proceed both Negatively and Positively.

1. Negatively, I shall shew, that no Qualification in a Man already wrought can be a Ground and Object for his first Act of Faith, so that in the sight of it he should be certainly and personally perswaded to act that Faith on God and Christ.

1*st*. It is not his *Humiliation or Sight* of his Sin, or of his being in a lost Condition, wherein if he remains he must perish. For the Sight of that but leaves him where he was, and it is Faith by which his Condition must be altered. The Sight of Sin and Misery may and doth indeed put a Necessity upon his Soul to look out for Sal-

Salvation, and that is it which makes him cry out, *What shall I do to be sav'd?* And it is such a Work, as without it he would never seek out for Christ, nor go to him to save him. But for him to build on that Sight as that which he having had wrought in him, he may with Confidence believe in Christ, is all one as to say, that a Malefactor's being convicted, and cast, and condemned at the Bar by a Judg, and his own Conscience, should be a Ground for his Hopes of Pardon and Salvation, whereas the Procedure so far with him is clean contrary, tho it be indeed a Preparation to quicken him to seek for a Pardon, yea and makes him capable of it in this respect, that as by our Law none is capable of a legal Pardon, until he be legally condemned, so nor is such a Man of a Gospel-Pardon till he is thus convicted. The proper Work or Effect of such a Humiliation is wholly and altogether to possess the Soul with the Apprehensions of no other Objects than what belonged to his unregenerate and unjustified Estate, and which would argue him still to be in that Estate; and the Prospect of this fills his Mind, having nothing else in his Eye: and tho there is and may be somewhat of what is spiritual in that Sight of his; yet as Christ said to him, (*John* 13. 7.) *What I do* (to thee) *thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter*; so we may say of the present Work that is upon such a Man, that after some Light and Dawn of Faith is broken in upon his Spirit, he may afterwards come to see what God was then a doing with him, but not at that present when nothing but Darkness is upon the Face of that Earth. Book 3.

It's true also that those Words of Christ's, *Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you Rest*, do contain a particular Invitement to such, rather than any other Sinners, who also doth invite all others: and it is a special Condescension in Christ to speak thus particularly to those that are heavy laden, because of all others they are apt to be discouraged: yet still that Wearisomness is not a Ground or Foundation for that Act of his first believing to build it self upon it for his being saved. He that will rest in the sight of that, and not come to Christ, will sit down short of Salvation, nor is this a Ground of his Faith, or of his coming to Christ. But when such do come to Christ out of a sight and sense of their Burden, yet it is not upon the sight thereof as a spiritual Qualification which should render them more acceptable, but it is the sight of their Sins with which they are burden'd, and the sense of the Load thereof, and thereupon of their need of Ease that drives them to come upon Christ's so gracious Invitation. They poor Creatures look at nothing but themselves, and their Sins, and Loads, and are taken up wholly therewith, and with desire of Ease.

That great Maxim of the Apostle (*Rom.* 4. 5. *But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the Ungodly, his Faith is counted for Righteousness*) doth confirm all this, and withal doth exclude the sight of any other Work wrought, or Qualification whatsoever, that may put in to be a Ground to any Man's Faith. Under these Words [*to him that worketh not*] I understand all *Qualifications*, and *Holy Dispositions*, and *Actions*, for they are included under the Name of Works, as in opposition to Faith, and so in Scripture-language inward Works as well as outward. And the Root or Principle inherent in the Soul of either, are accordingly here excluded from having to do either as Ingredients into Justification it self, or into a Man's Faith or Believing for Justification.

Also, 2*dly*. By *him that worketh not* is there meant, not he that worketh not at all really, but who when he comes to be justified, looks at no Work of his, or any thing in or from himself, but singly believes on him that justifies *the Ungodly*.

And so, 3*dly*. Instead of looking to any Good in himself, he views nothing but the contrary, Ungodliness, as in himself consider'd, at that time, and the present Business he is taken up about, namely, to be justified, and to believe that he may be so. And altho this is spoken of them that are in their State godly and holy, for this is a Maxim fetch'd from *Abraham*'s Example after he was converted many Years; even *Abraham* when he came to be justified, in that Point look'd upon himself as ungodly, and viewed no Works at all in himself, and was in his own Eyes as if he had had none: Yet this Maxim doth much more punctually sute one that is now coming forth of his natural State, and hath nothing but Ungodliness to view. And unto the sense of those things a Man's Humiliation brings such a Man, and therein doth the proper Work of it lie; and our Supposition being of one that begins to believe, it cannot be otherwise with him.

2. We

Part 1. 2. We are now to consider what positive Grounds, or *Motiva Fidei*, what Motives of Faith, or what Drawings forth of Faith are here; or wherein doth the Hope concerning this thing (as the Scripture speaks) lie? My Assertion is this, that it must be some absolute Declaration or Promise (which are tantamount) about what is simply in God and Christ as touching our Salvation, the Light of which coming into the Soul is and must be the *Objectum motivum*, the moving Object, the Perswader (as *Heb.* 11. speaks) of a Man's Faith to draw in his Soul thus at first to cleave to God and Christ for a Man's personal Salvation in particular, and hereon his Faith is built. And the Reason is evident from what is foregone; for if no present or precedent Qualification in such a Soul can prove an effectual Perswasive or Encourager in part or whole, as a Condition or Qualification in the Person, then it must remain that what is absolutely declared to be in God and Christ, without respect to such Conditions as first wrought, must be the Ground and *Objectum motivum* of his Faith.

Object. But some will here say, *A Promise that mentions the Condition of Faith itself is a sufficient and obvious Ground to draw on Faith at first, which is usually set forth in this Syllogism*, Whosoever believeth on him (meaning Christ) shall never perish: *But I believe*, saith the Soul, *therefore I shall not perish. And is not this a conditional Promise* (will they say) *which a Man may at first close with? and thus to close with such a Promise in the former way of such a Syllogism Men usually are taught.*

Answ. An Answer unto this I return, first in general, that when I exclude conditional Promises from having an Influence into our first Act of Believing, my Intention is not, nor can it so be understood as to exclude our believing it self from being a necessary requisite Qualification, Condition, (call it what you will) for I have already supposed it absolutely necessary to our being estated into the actual and personal Possession of those good things in those Promises or Declarations which I call Absolute. Yea, my very Question, and the State thereof, as I have proposed it, presupposes so much, and takes it for granted, for it is queried with what Faith a Soul is to close with such a Promise? So as my Inquisition runs after this, whether such absolute Promises be not a proper Object of Faith which indeed is required necessarily to our instating into Salvation? And whether those Promises be not proposed with an Intention in the Scriptures as such? My Search is after an Object of Faith, what it is, and on what Inducement a Man doth so believe, or what is the Object of that Faith: every Act must have an Object, and so justifying Faith must have so too, and what that must be is my Inquest. And my Affirmation is, that absolute Declarations of God and Christ, (in the Promises and otherwise) as Saviour and Justifier, are the proper Object of such a Faith. And therefore when I exclude all conditional Promises, my Exclusion in this Argument only is of a conditional Promise that should be the Object of that first Faith, as that which the Soul first viewing to be in it self already wrought, should thereby be heartned and perswaded to begin to believe on God and Christ for its personal Salvation. The meaning of that Promise, Whoever believeth on him shall be saved, is but to shew that an Act of Believing is absolutely and necessarily required to be put forth by him that will come to be Partaker of that Salvation. But still this will remain firm and indubitate, that it is those absolute Promises or Declarations that are the Objects or Foundation, and sole Ground of that Act of Believing; and so absolute Promises are the Objects of Faith, as the conditional Act whereby we are to be estated into the Possession of those Promises: So as this Objection is no Prejudice to my Assertion, it touches it not. More summarily take my Assertion, thus it is: Not that those absolute Promises (objectively such) require not Faith in us e're we be Partakers of the Salvation in them, for that were to say that God saves his Elect absolutely without requiring any thing to be wrought in them, which Sense we have before abhorr'd; but the meaning is, that they require not any intervening Condition unto Faith it self, upon the sight of which as a Ground-work Faith should come to lay hold upon them, but they are exposed barely and nakedly unto Faith as Objects to be laid hold upon (that is, God and Christ in them) for our Salvation, so as tho those Promises *(whoever believes*, &c.*)* and the like, in which Faith is mention'd, are but conditionally in this Sense that they hold forth an Act on our Part to be put forth as that without which no Man shall obtain Salvation, yea, by which he is instated into it; yet let the whole Scripture be searched, and there is not, nor can there be any

any Instance brought of Promises that do mention the Condition of Believing, wherein a preceding Condition is first mention'd as that which must first be seen and viewed by the Person (who is to believe) to be in himself, and which he should build his first Act of Believing upon: And in the Argument we have in hand, as hath been stated, that only can be call'd a Condition which is a Condition to Believing it self, and which is supposed to be propounded to that end, that Faith seeing such and such Qualifications wrought in the Soul, should thereupon be induced to believe, so as that Condition should be an Evidence to him to take or challenge that Promise as his own, and thereby belonging to him, as if he had been personally named. Such Qualifications I find set out indeed in Promises for the Faith of Assurance, after a Soul's first having believed, as being Signs of a Man's being in the Faith, and of his being justified by his Faith foregone. But no such Qualifications can be or ought to be built upon by one that comes first to Christ, or ought to be Ingredients to his first Act of Justifying Faith, nor indeed to any Act of true pure Justifying Faith as such: for that were to make what is in our selves after Faith to be the Foundation of it, and to mingle with it, and to make the first Act of Faith to be assurance that I am in the State of Grace already, and thereupon I do believe that I am saved and justified.

Book 3.

This Assertion our later and more knowing Divines have more generally declined, which yet the Papists would impose upon us Protestants, as an Absurdity generally maintained by us, whenas 'tis the Lutherans only that do at this day affirm the Act of Justifying Faith to be an assured Persuasion that our Sins are pardoned.

I have often therefore reflected upon the Application of such like Promises, *Whosoever believes, shall be saved*; as it is ordinarily formed up into this Syllogism, *Whoever believeth hath*, &c. but I believe, therefore I have eternal Life. I have often reflected upon it, as fearing lest that this Assumption, *but I believe*, out of which they fetch a Conclusion of Assurance, *therefore I have eternal Life*, be not so well understood, but mistaken by many to be the first Act of Justifying Faith.

I would therefore in the second Place examine into what Act of Faith or Belief that Application of Faith in the Assumption, in the Syllogism *but I believe*, is to be resolved into.

1. First the most Judicious do take the meaning of that, *but I believe*, to be only this; I seeing and finding by Experience with my self that I have a true Faith wrought in me, and such a Faith as the Scripture describes to be true and unfeigned, therefore I apply that Promise, *whoever believes*, &c. with an Assurance to my self, which is the Conclusion. And this indeed I take to be the most proper Sense and Mind hereof, as it comes in that Syllogism, that can be given of it, and, so understood, it is not to be disallowed. And I find it in that Sense to be interpreted by our greatest Divines; but then let me give this Animadversion upon it, that so understood, it cannot be that first Act of Justifying which an humbled Sinner doth put forth, (which is the Point we seek for) nor can this be the genuine Act whereby the Sinner is justified, and so not the Act of Justifying Faith it self; and the Reason is undeniable, because this Believing is indeed but the Sight and Experience of a former, foregone, or forepassed Act of Faith, which the Soul must have first put forth. It is that which in this Sense given, is the Object of his Assumption, *but I believe*. and so we are still to seek as much as at first, and put to a new Inquiry what that first formal Act of Believing was, and what it should be; for to be sure this, *but I believe*, is and must needs be another Act than that first was, yea and of another kind. First, it is another Act, for it is an Act of Faith after another, namely a former; nor is it a mere repeating or renewal of the first Act, but a sight of that other which was the first Act thereby expressed, yea and is founded upon the Intuition of the first, in the Strength of which Intuition the Soul says, *but I believe*. It's a secondary and after-Act arising upon a first. Secondly, it is another kind of Act, for it is a reflex Act of the Mind upon its own Act, but justifying Faith is a direct Act on Christ. And again, it is an Act of another kind, for my *seeing I believe* is an Act of Experience, which hath Sight and Sense in it of what is in a Man's self; whereas the first Act of Faith must be a mere pure Act of Faith, and not of Sight. And so, Thirdly, they differ in their Objects; for the Object of my *seeing I believe* is my own Believing; but the Object of my Faith at first, when I began to believe, was and must be God and Christ as the Objects, *John* 3. 16. *Whoever believes on him hath everlasting Life.*

2. Others

Part 1.

2. Others have apprehended the meaning of this, *I believe*, to be a present Act of Assurance that *I am justified*, (as supposing that Faith of Assurance hath for its Object, *I am justified*) and so that very first Act to be the Condition of the Covenant. This Opinion differs from the former, for in the Syllogism before, it is the Act of Assurance that *I am saved*, which made the Conclusion and the Sense that *I believe* is *seeing* and finding I put forth such an Act. But this second Sense cannot stand.

For, 1*st*. In such a Syllogism, *Whoever believes, shall be saved*; but *I believe*, therefore I shall be saved: This *but I believe*, if it be understood of Assurance, doth make the *minor* Proposition all one with the Conclusion it self.

2*dly*. That actual Justification which a Sinner hath on God's part through Justifying Faith, is a Consequence of that Faith, or follows or ensues upon that special Act of Faith, which is properly stiled Justifying Faith put forth on our part. And that God endows a Soul with his Justification upon that Act, and not after this, the Scriptures do expressly affirm; *Acts* 10. 43. *To him gave all the Prophets witness, that through his Name whosoever believeth in him shall receive Remission of Sins.* This receiving Remission of Sin is made the End or Issue of our Believing. Thus also, Acts 16. 30, 31. *What shall we do to be saved?* or, *put into a State of Salvation? Believe on the Lord Jesus* (says the Apostle) *and thou shalt be saved.* Which at present thou art not, until thou dost believe, nor until thou believest shalt be; but on the contrary, without Believing, a Man remains in a State of Condemnation, according to what our Saviour had declared; *He that believeth not, is condemn'd already.* The like you have in *John* 8. 24. All which Places, and many other, might be alledged to speak, that as an actual Justification there is obtained and received, so to be bestowed upon Believing with such a Faith, which the Scripture therefore calls Justifying, and a Man is therefore required thus to believe, to that end that he may obtain and receive it. This being an assured Truth, it will then follow, that not only Faith of Assurance that my Sins are forgiven, is not an essential specifical Act of Justifying Faith as such, but that it is impossible it should be such; yea, and that it is a Contradiction, that that Act of Faith whereby we believe our selves justified, should be one and the same individual Act with that which is called Justifying Faith, but especially it is a Contradiction that this should be one and the same Faith with the first Act of Faith. And, First, the Impossibility of it appears in this, that that Faith whereby a Man is really and actually justified, is in order of Nature first, and must be supposed first before a Man be justified, because thereupon or therewith it is that God doth justify him, and endow him with that Benefit, *Rom.* 5. And this is our Justification, which is according to the Rule of the Word which we have by Faith, and which God will proceed by at the last Day, and without which he will not own any Man to be justified and saved. But that other Act of Faith of Assurance, whereby I believe, or apprehend that I am justified, must necessarily first suppose this Act of Justification on God's part, according to the Rules of his Word, to have been first passed upon a Man, and therefore must suppose also that he hath believed already; and by a former Act of Faith hath obtained Justification, which till then he had not, but remained in a State of Condemnation. Which first Act of Believing must therefore be such a Believing with an Aim and End that I may be saved and justified, and that my Sins may be remitted in such a manner as hitherto they have not been remitted, and without which Faith I must die in my Sins, perish eternally, for so the Word of God which God will proceed by every where tells me. And therefore it is that a Sinner that first believes (as ever after also) doth apprehend such a Necessity of Believing, as was said, and doth at first therefore necessarily look on, and hath in his Eye that Justification that is according to the Rules of his Word, and which he aims at as upon a thing to be obtained, and which he is to receive, and so to be a thing to come upon his Believing; which was evidently the Case of the Jailor, and upon those terms required of him by the Apostle. Whereas in the other Act of Faith of Assurance, whereby a Man believes and apprehends that his Sins are forgiven, he within that Act doth suppose and look upon his Justification as a thing obtained, and therefore it is impossible that the first Act of Believing, (whereby a Man is justified, and whereof Justification is a Consequence) and that *I am justified*, should be one and the same individual Act, but they are necessarily two, not only in Order of Nature, but in Time, one before the other. Yea, it would be a vain Confidence, nay a Falshood, for any Man to believe with his first

first Act of Faith which he puts forth that he is justified; for he cannot truly and justly believe it until he be justified. A thing must first be and actually exist e're it can be apprehended, or else it is but Fancy to him that believes it, unless by way of Prophecy. Book 3.

(2.) Upon the same or the like Ground it is no less than an apparent Contradiction, that I should by my first Act of Faith believe that I may be justified, and withal to be first justified thereby, and by the same individual Act believe I am justified from the same Sins, for that would make one and the same Act, and one and the same Object of that Act, to be at once an Antecedent and a Consequent of it self, to go before it self, and to follow after it self, which to me are a Contradiction.

1. The Object, namely, Justification, should according to this Opinion be bestowed upon a Man before he can believe he hath it; and must actually exist, when yet Justifying Faith is declared to be that Act upon which, and by which Justification is bestowed upon us, and first comes to be existent, which is a Contradiction in one and the same Object.

2. The Act of Faith if it should be exercis'd and have a Tendency upon both these Objects at once, must be before and also after it self: for all Acts are diversified by their Objects, and their Tendency thereunto. Now then to affirm the first (or indeed any) Act of Faith justifying, to be a Belief that a Man is justified, is to make Justification the Antecedent to such a Faith; for a thing must be before we believe it to be. And then on the other hand, that the first Act should be the Act whereby a Man is justified, necessarily makes Justification the Consequent of its Faith, and therefore these two would be a Contradiction, and cannot consist together.

But it may be objected, *That there is a Justification in God's Heart and Intention from all Eternity, and in Christ representatively dying and rising as a common Person, before a Man believes; and so Faith is but to believe that which is already extant, and a Man's Justification by Faith is but a Justification* in foro Conscientiæ.

Answ. It's sufficient to say, Let that Justification or Salvation after a Man believes be what it will, yet to be sure it benefits no Man without that Justification of Application to his Person, as I may call it: for that which brings a Person into a State of Justification, according to the Rules of the Word, is done by God upon Believing, and until then a Man remains under Condemnation, and may truly say, God will not, nor cannot own him to be a justified Person, no not in his Court, the open Court which he will keep and proceed by at latter Day, according to the Rules of which he will then reckon a Man to be under Condemnation whilst he was an Unbeliever. And if a Man had died in that Unbelief, he must have condemned him, as he doth all other Unbelievers that shall then appear before him; *For shall not the Judg of all the World do right?* Gen. 18. God will not look upon him as justified from all Eternity, but as one that remains under Unbelief, as the Apostle speaks. He will not alledg of any that he had justified him from Eternity, and therefore save him, for his own declared Word (which is the Rule he judges by) would interpose and cause him so to pronounce and condemn that Person that is under Unbelief: And Christ hath sufficiently informed us in what he says, *John* 12.48. *The Word that I have spoken, the same shall judg you at latter Day.* And he speaks it upon occasion of the very thing in hand; *ver.* 46. *Whosoever believes in me, shall not abide in Darkness.* Thus he speaks affirmatively; *And he that believes not on me, there is one that judgeth him,* ver. 47, 48. Thus he speaks negatively: And who is that that will judg him? God. And by what will he judg him? Even by this very Word that Christ had spoken, *ver.* 48. And indeed that Justification, according to the Rules of God's Word, is that which is the Aim and Drift of a humbled Sinner, which he makes after, for it is that which he hears and understands, God calling upon him in his Word for to seek it; *Believe, and thou shalt be saved.* In answer hereunto the Soul says, *Lord, I believe that I may be saved:* and it is God according to his Word that he hath to deal withal herein.

It is in vain to say, I am justified by Faith only in respect to the Court of mine own Conscience. It is in vain to say that a Man's Apprehension and Faith that he was justified from Eternity, is all that Justification which the Scripture so constantly speaks of to be by and upon Believing: for according to that Opinion a Man was as much justified before he believed as after, and his Faith would add nothing new to

Part I. his State but only his own Apprehension of it; whereas the Scripture speaks of a Man's Justification by Faith as of a real thing, and as a thing done anew: for being justified by Faith first we have then Peace with God, and Peace with God is that Justification which is in a Man's own Conscience, which there is made a Fruit of Justification by Faith first, and whereof Faith is also first the Instrument. And we have Access by Faith into this Grace wherein we stand; so that we are actually put into the State of Grace before God, considered as he is the Judg of all Men, and thereupon we come to rejoice in hope of the Glory of God. But yet how far a Believer wanting Assurance, or one that begins to believe, may make use of God's eternal Purposes as they are declared in the Word, that he will justify Sinners of the Sons of Men; and how far such a one may urge and plead this as a Motive which God hath declared to have been in his own Heart, upon which he is moved to justify us *in time*; and how far a Soul may plead, that therefore God would be pleased accordingly thereunto to exert and put forth this Justification of Application, or indeed now actually to give it, which such a Soul seeks for as yet to come, and cometh unto God for to obtain it: How far I say the Consideration of these Decrees or Purposes indefinitely made will promote and help forward such a one's Faith, this is matter of another Discussion; but in the mean while what hath been at the present said may serve for an Answer to the aforesaid Objection.

These things having been thus on the Negative cleared, both in shewing that no prerequisite Condition in us is the Object or Ground for the first Act of Faith, as also that that Act is not nor cannot be an Assurance of our being justified: It comes next to be treated of Affirmatively, what that first Act of Faith Justifying should then be, both as to the Object of it, as also for the kind of the Act, *&c.* and then after that I shall shew, that this Act of Faith is and may be suted to the first sort of Promises of Salvation which I have termed absolute, and how it may and is to apply it self unto them, which is the designed Issue I drive all unto.

I shall therefore propose and pursue the Sense, which may rightly be and is the Mind of one that doth now first set himself to believe: but I must give this Caution concerning it, that it is not to be understood as any part of that forementioned Syllogism, nor to be made the *minor* of it in those terms, *but I believe*; and yet is a true Application of those Promises foremention'd, *Whoever believes shall be saved*: For there is this Difference between this Sense and the two former, and the Drift of the foremention'd Syllogism formed up by Divines on the behalf of Christians that have already believed, which is made for, and serves to express their Assurance in which it ends; for the Soul thereupon infers, therefore *I shall be saved.* But this Expression, *I believe*, expresses what he doth, and what he attempts to do, and doth not at last terminate it self upon its own Act of Believing as the other did, but spends its Intention wholly upon God and Christ, who are to be the Justifiers of him, to whom he therefore hath recourse for his Justification. This first Act of Believing then is not a studying of, or Reflection upon its own Act, as *seeing that he believes*; but it is a doing the thing in a direct manner. He believes he doth the thing by a direct Act, and carries the Soul forth of it self unto those who are his Judges, and to be the Justifiers of him, and doth this in a Correspondency and an immediate Answer or Obedience unto that Faith the Promises call for, which directs him to, and requires of him to believe. Now then affirmatively to set forth this direct Act of Justifying Faith as properly such, in order to clear how absolute Declarations or Promises about Salvation do sute it, and it reciprocally suteth them, let us fully examine and consider these three things about it.

1. What is the proper Object of such an Act.
2. What kind of Act it is that he then may put forth.
3. What is the Aim and Drift of him in his Faith's acting upon that or these Objects.

Which three do comprehend, as I take it, all that belongs to the Substance of that Act of Believing: for as to the Adjuncts of it, that it be unfeigned Faith, spiritual Faith, and that all these are in a spiritual manner to be put forth, all these are supposed in all true Faith; but it is the Substantialness of the Act which we now inquire into.

The Object of such a Faith is God and Christ, according to what they have declared themselves to be, consider'd as in relation to their saving and justifying of the Sons

Sons of Men; God consider'd as declared to be Justifier of Sinners, and Christ as a Saviour; these two, or either of them believed as such, come all to one, as to our obtaining of Salvation on either: which I observe as from many other Instances, so in that of the Jailor, *Acts* 16. (which I have had and shall have occasion often to have recourse unto) for here, as the Apostle had at first propounded Jesus Christ to him as a Saviour, (*Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved*, ver. 34.) yet when actual Believing unto Salvation comes to be spoken of, (*ver.* 36.) it is only mention'd that he believed in God: For whilst we believe on the one in a more distinct manner, we know the Interest that either have in our Salvation, and it is interpreted that we believe in both; and the Believing on the one in so explicite a manner is so far from excluding the other implied by it, as *in concesso* it involves both, and the Soul knowing the Interest of both, his Faith may be really resolved into a Faith of both, or either of them. Book 3.

I shall therefore give Instances of God and Christ apart, being set forth in the Promises to our Faith.

1. Christ under the simple and absolute Consideration of being a Saviour, is represented to us in the Promises as the Object of our Faith; *Isa.* 45. 22. *Look unto me, and be ye saved all the ends of the Earth: for I am God, and there is none else.* Christ is there spoken of, as appears from what follows in *ver.* 23. He is set forth as the only Saviour. *There is no God else besides me*, (says he) *a just God and a Saviour.* And we see him as such nakedly propos'd to our Faith, as these Words shew, *Look unto me*, &c. We have a Place parallel to this in the New Testament; *John* 6. 40. *And this is the Will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting Life: and I will raise him up at the last day.* He that seeth the Son, *i. e.* with a spiritual Light, so as to believe on him. These are Acts purely acting upon him as he is the Christ and a Saviour: and the believing on that Object requires no Conditions first to be look'd at by him that is to believe. And Christ had proposed himself before in like manner, as lift up on the Cross and crucified, (and thereby being become a Saviour) as the naked Object for Faith to look at; John 3. 14, 15. *And as* Moses *lifted up the Serpent in the Wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal Life.* We have another Instance of his being declar'd and set forth as a Saviour, 1 *Tim.* 1. 15. *This is a faithful Saying, and worthy of all Acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the World to save Sinners, of whom I am chief.* The Words are a bare Proposal of him, wherein he is set forth as the immediate Object to a Sinner's Faith. His being a Saviour, and his Intent to save Sinners of this World, (not Devils) is nakedly declar'd simply so consider'd. He terms the Manifestation of Christ ὁ πιστὸς λόγος, *a faithful Saying*, speaking of that Faithfulness upon which Faith may build; for unto Faith doth Faithfulness relate as an Object fitted for it, holding on this Christ as a sure Foundation for Faith; 1 *Pet.* 2. 6. *Wherefore also it is contained in the Scripture, Behold, I lay in* Sion *a chief Corner-stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him, shall not be confounded.* And the Apostle *Paul* in that Text (1 *Tim.* 1. 15.) asserts this *faithful Saying to be worthy of all Acceptation.* He means that it deserves hearty Entertainment, and receiving by Faith. And of this Faith on Christ the Apostle had proposed himself an Example in the preceding *ver.* 14. so that this faithful Saying had been the Ground of his own Faith.

2. God the Father as a Justifier of Men ungodly, is declar'd and set forth as the Object of a Sinner's Faith; *Rom.* 4. 5. *But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the Ungodly, his Faith is counted for Righteousness.* It is a bare and absolute Declaration of him what a God he is in and of himself in justifying, and he is proposed as absolute as absolute can be, in opposition unto all or any prerequisite Qualification which the Person to be justified should view in himself, collaterally to induce him to believe.

1*st.* The justified Person, or the Subject, is the Ungodly; and God is set forth by this Attribution, that he is a God who justifies the Ungodly.

2*dly.* Therefore the Man is ungodly in the Person's Eye who justifies. God looks on him as ungodly, as one without any Work, or Disposition, or Qualification, which he respects in justifying.

3*dly.* The Person who comes to be justified is ungodly in his own Thoughts and Apprehensions of himself, as the foregoing Words, *viz. he that worketh not, but believeth,*

Part I. *lieveth*, &c. do shew. The meaning is, he is such an one who looks at no Work in himself, on the account of which he should be justified, or for which, and upon which he might believe that he shall be justified. Yea he is one who views nothing but the contrary, *viz.* mere Ungodliness in himself, for which he should be condemned. It is true indeed that an Act of Believing is requir'd of him, but that is but now a putting forth by him, and therefore he builds not upon any former Act of Faith, for all in himself is in view nothing but Ungodliness, and so there is an utter want even of Faith it self as any way seen by him to induce him to believe on God. Hence then it is that he believes on God nakedly, as viewed to be a Justifier of Men ungodly, and it is under that Consideration he believes on him. And this is the Faith which is imputed for Righteousness, that noble and heroick pure Faith which gives Glory to God. And herein his Heart in Believing answers unto God's Heart in Saving. For look as God doth not chuse him unto Salvation upon Faith foreseen, or good Works foreseen: so nor doth the Soul believe in God upon Works foreseen, or Faith foreseen. Such a first Choice of us by God upon the Foresight of our Faith and Working would derogate from the Freeness of that Grace which is in his Heart; *Rom.* 11. 6. *And if by Grace, then is it no more of Works: otherwise Grace is no more Grace. But if it be of Works, then is it no more Grace: otherwise Work is no more Work.* That it is spoken of Election appears by *ver.* 5. *Even so then at this present time also there is a Remnant according to the Election of Grace.* God then looks into his own Heart only for that which should move him to do this. And yet withal it must be said, that he actually saves no Man without Faith. As God thus looks in Election at no Faith or Works in us; so the Soul's first Act of believing knows not, nor looks at any in his own Heart to move or induce him to believe on God, but the Soul only looks at what is in God's Heart as declar'd in the Promises, and at his sole Free Grace in Justifying: and yet he knows withal that Faith is requisite that he may be justified, and that without it all the Grace which is in God's Heart would never justify nor save him, whilst yet he hath nothing in his Eye view'd in himself either directly or collaterally to move him to believe. He hath nothing which either with a direct or squint Eye he should consider, but only and merely God as justifying.

We have in the Old Testament a Parallel to this *Rom.* 4. 5. of God's being a Justifier of the Ungodly purely consider'd; *Isa.* 43. 25, 26. *I, even I am he that blotteth out thy Transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy Sins. Put me in remembrance: let us plead together: declare thou, that thou mayst be justified.* This Promise Mr. *Bulkly* acknowledgeth to be an absolute Promise, as such are those wherein God says I will do thus or thus *for mine own sake.* And that it is parallel to this Text, *Rom.* 4. 5. is evident:

1. Because it is spoken of God as a Justifier both in *ver.* 25. where he says, *I am he who blotteth out Transgressions*, and in *ver.* 26. where Justification is expresly mention'd.

2. He instructs the Persons who are to be justified to apprehend their own utter Ungodliness; *ver.* 22, 23, 24. *But thou hast not called upon me,* O Jacob, *but thou hast been weary of me,* O Israel. *Thou hast not brought me the small Cattel of thy Burnt-offerings, neither hast thou honoured me with thy Sacrifices; I have not caused thee to serve with an Offering, nor wearied thee with Incense. Thou hast bought me no sweet Cane with Money, neither hast thou filled me with the Fat of thy Sacrifices, but thou hast made me to serve with thy Sins, thou hast wearied me with thine Iniquities.*

3. Which when God had said he sets forth himself barely, nakedly, and absolutely, and as alone consider'd in what is in himself, as the Justifier of them. For this is imported by those Words, *ver.* 25. *I, even I am he that blotteth out thy Transgressions.* Whereby he emphatically calls in all the Thoughts and Intentions of their Minds to be first on himself, as he is in himself and of himself a God pardoning Sins, and justifying their Persons, as the Apostle with the like Emphasis expresseth it, when he speaks of him as justifying the Ungodly.

4. God tells us, that he blots out Transgressions for his own Name's sake, and for that alone, and that he doth it upon no other Motives or Ground but only what is in his own Heart. That he doth it only for the sake of that great Name of his, utter'd and proclaim'd on purpose (*Exod.* 34.) to shew what inwardly moves him to be a God pardoning Iniquity, Transgression and Sin. *I, even I* (says God) *who am Je-*

hovah

hovah *gracious, merciful, abundant in Kindness and Truth, pardoning Iniquity*, &c. *do blot out your Transgressions for this mine own Name's sake.* Book 3.

I remember that *Zanchy* says, that *that Text*, Exod. 34. 7. is also spoken of Christ who is *God with God*, and the Justifier of us also for his own sake, and Righteousness sake. However, according to my former Rule given, that God in Christ is always to be understood, Christ must be taken in, as the Person in whom, and in whose Righteousness God justifies. So that when I say that God, and what is in God alone represented in the Promises, is the Object of Faith, it is to be understood only in opposition unto what is in us, and not as opposed to Christ, who is Copartner with God in this his Glory, and who also was his Counsellor: and in like manner, God is not excluded when we speak of Faith in Christ alone.

Lastly; To fix their Hearts on himself alone when they would seek to be justified, he adds in that *Isa* 43. 26. *Put me in remembrance: let us plead together: declare thou, that thou mayst be justified.* As if he should say, if you can think of any other way of being justified than only me, tell me of it, but indeed there is none.

And these and such I call, 1. Declarations and Promises, for these two in this Matter come all to one as to our Purpose. And we use *that Expression* of God and Christ's being declar'd and set forth as the Objects of Faith, because it agrees with those Phrases used by the Apostle to the same purpose, (as was observ'd) *Rom.* 3. 24. *Being justified freely by his Grace, through the Redemption that is in Jesus Christ.* Here both God and Christ are mention'd as the Causes of our Justification. He first speaks of Christ, *ver.* 25. *Whom God hath set forth*, (says he) *viz.* as an Object of our Faith as Justifying, to be a Propitiation through Faith in his Blood. And then he speaks of God the Father in those Words; *To declare his Righteousness for the Remission of Sins that are past, through the Forbearance of God.* He means the Righteousness of God justifying, which he again repeats, *ver.* 26. *To declare, I say, at this time his Righteousness; that he might be just, and the Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.*

2. I call them absolute Declarations and Promises, because as they are the propounded Objects of Faith in this matter of Justification, so they are simply and absolutely to be viewed by us, and no Conditions or Qualifications are to be consider'd in us, as upon the Intuition of which we should come to believe in them.

And now give me leave to cast in my Thoughts concerning that great Convert *Saul*: for which if you will not take what follows as Proofs, yet admit them as Conjectures.

(1.) His first saving Faith on Christ was but a bare Act of Recumbency at his first Conversion. So that tho he saw Christ in Heaven appearing to him, yet this Sight at that Instant wrought not a saving Act of Faith: but Christ left that for his Spirit to work. The Vision stunn'd him indeed, and put a stop to his Career, and convinced him (as great Miracles did others) that he was the Messiah whom he had persecuted. But the true and thorow Work was done within his own Soul, when he was retir'd alone with God and Christ. And my Reason why he had not by that Vision a true saving Faith, is, because he makes his having known Christ visibly with his bodily Eyes to be a not knowing him, if compar'd with the Knowledg which is the Effect of the new Creature; 2 *Cor.* 5. 16, 17. *Wherefore henceforth know we no Man after the Flesh: yea, tho we have known Christ after the Flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more. Therefore if any Man be in Christ, he is a new Creature: old things are past away, behold, all things are become new.* Which Scripture some Interpreters have applied to this very thing. And the same is evident also by this chief Reason, inasmuch as he had that Conviction (which first astonish'd him) by the Law, which was preparative to an Act of saving Faith wrought in him after, for so himself gives the Account, *Rom.* 7. 7. where he says that he had not known Sin but by the Law. The Pharisees Principle was, that Lust was no Sin, and therefore he says, (*ver.* 9.) *I was alive without the Law once, viz.* before my Conversion, while a Pharisee; but when the Commandment came in the true Light of it, Sin reviv'd in my Conscience, (says he) and I died. He then saw himself in a State of Death, which wrought a Death in the Apprehension of his Soul; *Rom.* 7. 10. *And the Commandment which was ordained to Life, I found to be unto Death.* His meaning is, that *that Law* which he verily thought he should live by, was found by him unto his utter Confusion to be unto Death. And this Apostle then in the beginnings

ginnings of his Conversion lying under such Apprehensions with that great Account of Sins coming in withal, may very well be thought to have no mind to eat or drink, but to spend his time in humbling himself under the mighty Hand of God. And then if we bring it to that Account which he gives of the Work of Faith in him, (*Gal.* 2. 15, 16.) he there including himself with the rest of the Christian Jews, yea and with his Fellow-Apostles, it shews that they altogether with him had come in but with such a Faith. And it is certain that those Converts during *John* the Baptist's and our Saviour's time, had but a Faith of Recumbence, for they receiv'd not the Holy Ghost as a Comforter, and as an Assurer till after the Ascension. And it was they who were the Poor, the Meek, the Captives, *&c.* to whom Christ at first preach'd; *Mat.* 5. 1, 2, 3, 4. and who were the weary, and heavy laden, *Mat.* 11. 28, 29. and who were wrought upon by *John* the Baptist's Ministry, *ver.* 12. and then they cleaved to Christ: *Whither shall we go?* (said they) *with thee are the Words of eternal Life*, John 6. 68. They had Assurance that he was the Messiah. And the Faith that *Paul* and the other Apostles were justified by, was their believing on Christ that they might be justified, (the Words in *Gal.* 2. 15, 16. are express) and not a believing that they were justified already, and therefore it was not an Act of Assurance.

(2.) My 2*d* Reason is from the Narrative of his Conversion, *Acts* 9. It is first said that he did not eat nor drink for three Days, *ver.* 9. Now that he was fasting all that while, and neither ate nor drank, shews his humbled Condition, and that his Sins came in upon him all that time. And that Conviction you read him mention of himself, (*Gal* 2.) that by the Works of the Law he could not be justified, which Conviction in him was, as it is in us now, preparatory to Faith in Christ.

(3.) And yet that Christ should say of him, *Behold he prayeth*, (*ver.* 11.) doth as clearly argue that he had true justifying Faith begun, such, *viz.* as (*Gal.* 2. 16.) he mentions. The first Part exactly agrees with his Relation, *Rom.* 7. And withal the Proofs that he had saving Faith then is, that he pray'd, and so pray'd, as Christ gives an eminent signal Approbation, and so an Acceptation of it with a *behold* to it, *Behold, he prayeth.* And how shall they call on him on whom they have not believed? says himself afterward, *Rom.* 10. 14. and yet both his Faith and Prayer in Faith seems not to have been an Assurance, for it had not risen up unto that yet, and my Reasons for it are:

1*st.* That he had not receiv'd the Spirit as a Comforter till *Ananias* was sent to him to put his Hands upon him, and to tell him he was a chosen Vessel unto Christ, *ver.* 15. and therefore *Ananias* as it would seem breaking in upon him, calls him Brother at first dash, *ver.* 17.

2*dly.* Had he had Assurance of Faith before the Coming of *Ananias*, he would not have continued without eating and drinking so long, but would have receiv'd Food to strengthen him, as he did upon his receiving the Holy Ghost, *ver.* 19.

(4.) A Distinction of this double Work of Faith of Recumbency first, and of personal Assurance after, you may observe in *Gal.* 2. and that both were in our Apostle, that of Recumbency first, and then that of Assurance express'd afterward, will appear by comparing *ver.* 16, *&* 20. together.

1. He had a Faith that he might be justified, and a Faith it was upon a Work of Conviction in the first place, for it was wrought first, and was common to them all.

2. There was Faith of Assurance; *ver.* 20. *I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the Life which I now live in the Flesh, I live by the Faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.*

The last Observation is, that it was the indefinite Declaration that *Jesus Christ* came into the World to save Sinners, and so was the Messiah which was revealed to him as the Ground of that his first Faith of Recumbency, that he might be justified, and it was that drew him in. And my Conjecture for it is, (if you will not allow it to be a Proof) that after he had propos'd his Example, (1 *Tim.* 1. 15.) he commends that faithful Saying, that Christ came to save Sinners, after the Story of his Conversion that went before, in which he at once propounds his own Example or Pattern of obtaining Mercy, and also the very Ground of *that his Faith* to all that should afterwards believe, as it follows, *ver.* 16.

Object. But you may say, that his Expression, *whereof I am chief*, argues his Faith to have been Assurance. Book 3.

Answ. 1. I answer, 'tis true that he had now Assurance, and so could add it, that Christ came actually and personally to save him.

2. Yet his end in doing it was not so much to express his Faith as his Sinfulness, and thereby to prevent and remove a great Discouragement that keeps Souls off from Believing, *viz.* the Greatness of Sins, which in my Example you may see (says he) is taken away, and so is no hindrance at all to Believing. For that the Scope of that Addition centers in that Scripture, 1 *Tim.* 1. 16. shews: *Howbeit, for this Cause I obtained Mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all Long-suffering, for a Pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to Life everlasting.* And therefore still it may remain firm that the Object of his and all Believers Faith at first is this Saying or the Substance of it, *as worthy of all Acceptation, that Christ came into the World to save Sinners*: which, say I, is clearly an absolute indefinite Declaration in the very Sound of it.

The Corollaries from this Instance of *Paul* are these:

(1.) That both the Work of Humiliation and of Faith wrought in him, were for the Acts and Objects conformable to the Work of Faith in all other Believers, tho the outward Means and other Circumstances were extraordinary.

(2.) By a Faith of bare Recumbency that we might be justified, founded upon an indefinite Promise or Declaration, we may likewise pray in Faith for Pardon acceptably before Assurance obtain'd. Our Faith and Prayer both may be grounded upon no other than an indefinite Promise, Declaration and Example; yea and we may from thence be able to plead for the Pardon of the greatest Sins.

CHAP. IV.

What Act of Faith it is which those that want Assurance may exercise upon such absolute Declarations and Promises, and of the Sutableness between that Act and such Objects.

ALL Acts do receive their Specification or Kind from their Objects and their Tendency thereunto; and so we must next discern the kind of the Actings of those Mens Faith from that (with difference from that other personal Assurance) by their Sutableness unto those their Objects, *viz.* these absolute Promises. In such absolute Declarations and Promises for Salvation there are eminently *two* things to be attended.

1. The Matter of them, or things contained in them, and absolutely promised or declared, and that are exposed to be the Object and Aim of Faith.
2. The *Tenor* of them as they respect Persons.

1*st.* The Matter of them promised is either Salvation it self, which is expressed in those Promises of God's pardoning a Man's Sins for his Name's sake, and of God's being our God, and writing his Law in our Hearts; and his saying, *I am a Saviour, and there is none besides me*, and many the like. Or there are the Causes thereof which do express the Motives moving God thereunto, such as are the Declarations of the Riches of his Mercy and Grace, his free Love, the good Pleasure of his Will for his Name sake, *&c.* Altho these in the *Matter of them* are thus absolutely declared or promised, yet the Tenor of them to Persons is not universal, as if God intended all and every Man in such Promises, (as was said) but they are indefinite only and promiscuous, yet are to be promulged or made known to all. This may suffice as to the Object.

Again, 2*dly.* There being two Faculties in the Soul, the Understanding and the Will, each of these have a proper Acting and Exercise of Faith towards God and Christ, as they have revealed themselves in these Declarations and Promises, that so a Soul may obtain the things therein. And we must allow even in them that first believe, as well as in any other that want Assurance, Actings of Faith both in the Understanding, and also in the Will. For every Man that believes must believe *with his*

his whole Heart, as the Eunuch, (*Acts* 10.) and *with the Heart Man believeth to Sal-*
Part 1. *vation*, (Rom. 10.) and that with respect towards these absolute Promises.

(1.) And in the first place it must be granted that there is both an Assurance of Faith in the Understanding, and in the Will a firm adhering to the things revealed in the Promises. In the Understanding there must be an Act of Assurance, but how? and of what? namely of and about that first thing we noted in the Promises, *viz.* the Matter or Things contained in them. And as in respect thereunto look as the Promises and Declarations are absolute, *Yea and Amen*: so every Believer must have as absolute an Assurance of Faith thereof. As for instance, a Soul must be assured concerning Christ, that he is a Saviour, and that there is none besides him, and that he came into this World with a most absolute Purpose to save Sinners of Mankind, (for they are only the Dwellers in this World to which he came) which Elogy or Saying the Apostle doth therefore propose and commend to the Faith of Men as the most sure and faithful Saying that ever was uttered, 1 *Tim.* 1. 15. *This is a faithful Saying, and worthy of all Acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the World to save Sinners, of whom I am chief.* I say, he proposeth it to be entertained with all Acceptation of Faith, and Assent by them, and to be absolutely believed by them without wavering or doubting. And Christ himself imposeth the Faith thereof as essentially necessary to Salvation; *John* 8 24. *If ye believe not that I am he*, the Messiah, or Saviour of the World, (as I have often declar'd my self to be) *you shall die in your Sins.* Thus likewise concerning God we must absolutely believe that he is a God of Mercies, pardoning Iniquity, Transgression and Sin, a Justifier of the Ungodly, a God of Pardons, *Neh.* 9. 17. (so it is in the Hebrew.) These things must be as verily and indubitably believ'd with full Assurance of Understanding, (as it is termed, *Col.* 2. 2.) as that we believe there is a God. For by the same Necessity that he that comes to God must believe that he is, by the same parallel of Necessity he that cometh to God or Christ to be saved and justified, must as absolutely believe that he is a Justifier of the Ungodly. There must be fixed likewise in every believing Soul a firm Perswasion of the full Resolvedness of God's and Christ's Will, Purposes and Intentions to save some of the Sons of Men effectually, concerning which there are likewise so many Testimonies and absolute Declarations in the Word.

Exod. 34. 6. Rom. 4. 5.

Lastly, There is necessary a Belief of the infinite Riches of Mercy that are in the Divine Nature, which are as the Sea that feeds and maintains the Springs of those his Purposes and Intentions, and the Streams issuing from those Springs in overflowing Promises with abundant Kindness and Truth. And the more the Soul comes to be perswaded and possessed of all these things, in the assurance of Understanding, the deeper Foundation is laid, and the stronger Hold and Obligation there is upon his Will to draw it to trust on God for a Man's particular Salvation.

(2.) In the Will there is to be in every Believer a firm and fixed Adherence or cleaving unto God and Christ, and unto the good things promised by them; *Psal.* 63. 8. *My Soul cleaveth unto thee*; (so the Hebrew word is, it being the same that is used, *Deut.* 10. 20. and *chap.* 13. 4.) it is further added, *my Soul cleaveth to thee* behind. The Meaning is, that when God seemed to turn away from him, and to leave him, yet the Soul will not part so with him, but takes hold of him tho behind, when yet it cannot see his Face and Favour. A Soul that hath Assurance, and sees the Face and Favour of God to stand towards him, may be said to *cleave unto God* before; but when God turns away his Face, that Soul cleaves to him behind, that is, it both will and doth lay hold on him through Adherence of Faith, as it resolves never to leave and forsake him, however he should seem to deal with it. Thus *Ruth* is said to cleave to *Naomi*, Ruth 1. 14. which Act of Cleaving to her, when *Naomi* bid her return, *Ruth* thus expresseth, *ver.* 16. *Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee, for whither thou goest I will go; and where thou lodgest I will lodg: thy People shall be my People, and thy God my God.* And *ver.* 17. *Where thou diest I will die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if ought but Death part thee and me.* Which Cleaving, *ver.* 18. is further termed *a being stedfastly minded to go with her*, analogically unto which this Cleaving of the Soul by Faith to God is termed a Cleaving with Purpose of Heart, that is, a stedfast fixed Resolution of Heart not to part with him, *Acts* 11. 23. And thus doth the Will of a Believer cleave firmly and stedfastly unto God, when yet God makes as if he would shake

For this reading of the Words, see Piscator, *Dutch Annotat.* Genebrard, Muis.

shake it off, and to depart therefrom. And whereas *Ruth* said, *Nought but Death shall part thee and me*; *Job* he says, *Tho thou kill me, I will trust in thee*; that is, Death it self shall not part me from thee, will this Soul say unto God in his ultimate Resolves. Nay the Soul says to God, Hell shall not part thee and me; for thou art there, and I will cleave to thee if thou throwest me thither. Thou shalt never be rid of me, for that is my Resolution. The Reason of this Fixedness of the Will is from that spiritual Sight and Assurance that (as we said) is in the understanding of the things themselves contained in the Promises, the Understanding being thereby invincibly possessed of those Riches of Mercy and Goodness which are in God, of that Mercy and Forgiveness that is with him, and that is there to be had, and of that abundance of Grace and Righteousness which is in Christ, and plenteous Redemption for the Salvation of Sinners, (*Psal.* 130.) and all these shining in those absolute Declarations and Promises, and through them into the Soul. Faith in the Understanding lets down into the Will the absolute and compleat Goodness of the Salvation promised, and that in the Causes of it; and the Will is drawn thereby with as invincible a Resolution to cleave unto God for the Obtainment thereof. And then again, another Reason of this its Cleaving is, that God, tho he hide his particular Favour and Grace from this Soul, and holds it yet in suspence as to that, yea, and turns away, as was said; yet in the mean time he secretly by his right Hand upholds that Soul, and draws it by that his efficacious Power to cleave to him, and that also follows in the next Words of that Verse in that Psalm fore-cited; *Thy right Hand* (that is thy Power) *upholdeth me*, and causeth me thus to hang upon thee, tho it be but behind: and if he seems to go away, yet then the Soul is carried to follow hard after him the more, as our Translators have render'd it, *My Soul follows hard after thee.* And hence it is that tho God should defer him long, yet he continues to seek him. And thus you see as to the Matter of those absolute Promises, there is both an Assurance in the Understanding, and a Firmness of Adherency in the Will, even in him that at present wants Sight and Assurance of the Face and Favour of God, which was the Case of the Psalmist at that time, and therefore the same may be in any that wants that Assurance.

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And these two Acts are (tho in a greater or lesser degree) common unto all Believers.

But, *2dly.* There is further the Tenor of those Absolute Promises, which comes to be considered as they respect Persons, and from thence it is that so great a Difference is between the Faith of him that hath a personal Assurance of his Interest therein, and the Faith of these other Believers that want it. As also from hence it is that Difficulty ariseth, *how such Souls wanting personal Assurance, may yet come to lay hold on such absolute Promises for their own Persons, and with what kind of Faith.*

1. What is the Difference between that Act of Faith, (which the Apostle to the *Hebrews* calls *full Assurance of Faith*, (Heb. 10.) as comprehending not only an Assurance of the Things and Matter of the Promises, as *that God's absolute Will is to save Sinners*, &c.) but together therewith an Assurance that *I am* the very individual Person whom God means to save, *&c.* Between this Faith, I say, and the Faith of single and simple *Adherence*, the Difference lies herein; inasmuch as Faith in the Understanding of him that is an *Adherent* only comes short in this, that he doth not as yet firmly and prevailingly over his Doubts believe that himself is the individual Person intended by God in the Promises, concerning which the other is fully satisfied, and accordingly can and doth with Assurance apply those Promises to himself, that they are his, *&c.* So as indeed the former hath a whole or compleat Assurance both of *the Matter*, and also of his own *personal Interest*; but this other poor Soul hath but an half Assurance, namely, of the Matter, *&c.* but not of the second, *viz.* his personal Interest therein: touching which God is as yet pleased not to reveal that to him.

2. As to the Difficulty mentioned, *viz.* how such Souls may yet have Recourse to such absolute Promises, and with what *kind* or rather *degree* of Faith: For answer hereto I still take that Rule along with me, that Faith is to be some way or other answering and conformable to what is in the Promise, or it is not Faith; and that if it comes up to the Tenor of it, (as we see it hath done to the Matter thereof) it must needs be true Faith. And my grand Assertion here about it is, *that there is and may be Place for Actings of true Faith both in the Understanding and the Will*

Part 1. *of such an one answering and conformable unto the Tenor of these Promises*, as we heard there was in each of those Faculties towards the Matter of them. And this Correspondency must be distinguish'd by its Tendency towards that Tenor of them. Now this Sutableness and Conformity between this Faith wanting personal Assurance, and the Tenor of these Promises (which I call Absolute) lies thus.

1. On the part of the Promises the Tenor of them is indefinite to Persons, and not universal to all Men. 'Tis true those second sort of Promises foremention'd, which express a Condition whereunto Salvation is annexed, are universal, that is, to all and every one that hath the Qualifications in them. And in that strain they run, *Whosoever believeth shall be saved*: And more emphatically (*Rom.* 3. 22.) the Apostle speaks of the Righteousness of God, which is by Faith of Jesus Christ unto all, and upon all them that believe, where he ingeminates the Universality to all, and upon all them that believe, but not to all Men absolutely: *Promissiones Evangelii universales sunt, non absolutè, sed respectu credentium*, says *Paraus* very well in his Commentary on that Text: *The Promises of the Gospel are universal, not absolutely, but with respect to Believers.* But in absolute Promises it is not so, for they mention no such Qualifications already wrought.

In this very Tenor of them which thus respecteth Persons, we must consider that they have yet something of Absoluteness, or of Certainty, concerning *Persons*, which is as certainly to be believed, and yet something that is but indefinite; both which I shall specify, to the end that I may by and by shew the punctual Conformity of Faith wanting personal Assurance unto the Tenor of those Promises.

1*st*. That which is absolutely or certainly declared in those Promises *concerning Persons*, for all Faith as of a Certainty to build on is this.

(1.) It is most certain and absolutely declared in such Promises concerning Persons, that some shall have those Promises fulfill'd on them; *Heb.* 4. 6. *It remaineth therefore that some must enter in.* Which Declaration made thus under the Gospel, speaks the true Intent of all absolute Promises, as to Persons, shewing they are understood but only of some, and yet certainly and absolutely of some. The Expression is, *they must enter in*, for which also the Apostle there alledgeth an Oath of God, than which nothing could make the Promise more absolute. Likewise those Passages of Christ's evidence the same thing; *John* 10. 16. *Other Sheep I have which are not of this Fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my Voice*, &c.

(2.) It is absolutely certain also in those Promises, that these Persons are, (1.) Of all sorts of Sinners, and *all manner of Iniquity shall be forgiven*, except that against the Holy Ghost, (says Christ) to some or other. (2.) Of Persons in all Ages or Successions of Times. (3.) In all Nations, and of all Places. *Look unto me all the Ends of the Earth, and be saved.* And *thou hast redeemed us out of all Nations, Tongues and Kindreds*, &c. *Rev.* 5. 9. (4.) Out of all Ranks and Conditions, *bond* and *free*, *poor* and *rich*, *Kings*, *and all in Authority*. By all Men, all sorts of Men are intended.

2*dly*. Yet these Promises are withal still indefinitely uttered as to Persons: For if some, and but some (that I may win some, says the greatest Converter of Souls) are saved, then still not all; if out of all Nations, then not all in or of a Nation. And truly in their saying, *thou hast redeemed us out of all Nations, Tongues and Kindreds*, he makes the very Redemption of Christ to be but of some in all, and they that speak this, speak it not of themselves, as they had been justified, called and sanctified. No, they say not, thou hast called us out of all Nations, *&c.* but plainly thou hast redeemed us with thy Blood out of all Nations, so limiting it to Redemption. They speak of those namely on whom Christ in shedding his Blood for them (they speaking it to Christ) had his redeeming Eye, which he had not in redeeming unto the rest of those Nations, which are therefore distinguished from these even by a Redemption of them which is not of those other. And there is a vast Difference between saying, Thou hast redeemed all Nations, as the Universalists say, and, Thou hast redeemed us a select Company out of all Nations, as they speak here. There is no such Universality the Promises are made unto, tho these Promises are to be promulged to the Universality of all Mankind. And the Promises are then to be stiled *Indefinite*, whilst they *absolutely* and *certainly* declare that some *must and shall enter in*; and that all shall not, and yet do no way signify who they are, either by any discernable Mark or Character of Difference, or by naming those Persons, (God re-

reserving that to himself, and leaving it in suspence) until the Qualification of Faith and such other Graces are wrought in them. And those Promises which are made unto such Qualifications we call conditional Promises, which are in their Tenor universal, but not so these absolute of this sort which we speak of, for they can bear no other Title (as they respect Persons) but of *Indefiniteness*, tho they be otherwise never so *Absolute*. If we will take an impartial Survey of all absolute Declarations and Promises of Salvation, they will be found thus indefinite as in respect to Persons, as they are proposed for Objects unto our Faith. Thus it is in that grand Proclamation which was made on purpose as the Foundation of Old Testament-Faith, (wherein the Riches of the Mercy in the Divine Nature are discovered and exposed) *The Lord gracious, merciful*, &c. *Deut.* 34. 6. This, as it respects Persons, to whom God means to be gracious, have this professed Restriction premised thereto by God himself the Promulger, *I will be merciful to whom I will be merciful*, Ch. 33. v. 19. *I will proclaim the Name of the Lord before thee, and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew Mercy on whom I will shew Mercy.* The Import of which, what is it other than that he will absolutely be merciful unto some, even those whom he will, but not to all? And who those are to whom he will be merciful, he reserves within himself, and yet professeth to proclaim this, that all the People might know it; and accordingly *Moses* published it to all. And this was of all other the first most solemn Promulgation of Mercy publickly made that ever was made before, and so the Tenor of it is *mensura reliquorum, the Measure of the rest.* That God also will blot out (or pardon) Transgressions for his Name's sake, (*Isa.* 43. 25.) is an absolute Promise fitted to the Faith of any one that hath a Will to believe. It speaks to no Condition or Qualification but the contrary, *v.* 22, 23, 24. *But thou hast not called upon me, O* Jacob; *but thou hast been weary of me, O* Israel. *Thou hast not brought me the small Cattle of thy Burnt-offerings, neither hast thou honoured me with thy Sacrifieces; I have not caused thee to serve with an Offering, nor wearied thee with Incense. Thou hast bought me no sweet Cane with Money, neither hast thou filled me with the Fat of thy Sacrifices; but thou hast made me to serve with thy Sins, thou hast wearied me with thine Iniquities.* He names no Person but *Jacob*, that is, his People elect, as elsewhere he calls them; yea and there also, (*ver.* 21.) *The People he had formed for himself to shew forth his Praise:* who are in other Scriptures termed before their Calling *Children of God*, John 11. 52. *His People*, Acts 15. 14. and *Acts* 18. 10. But who these are till they believe none knows. Yea, and he limits this Pardon unto them; *Micah* 7. 18, 19. *Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth Iniquity, and passeth by the Transgression of the Remnant of his Heritage? He retaineth not his Anger for ever, because he delighteth in Mercy. He will turn again, he will have Compassion upon us; he will subdue our Iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their Sins into the Depths of the Sea.* The Words are purely what are in *Exod.* 33, & 34. and they whom they concern are but the *Remnant* whom he hath chosen for his Heritage, which who knows but he? The like we have also in that Declaration concerning Christ's Intention of Coming into the World to save Sinners, commended for such a faithful Saying, for all our Faith to receive and accept; 1 *Tim.* 1. 15. *This is a faithful Saying, and worthy of all Acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the World to save Sinners, of whom I am chief.* 'Tis *Sinners* in the World indefinitely, he says not *all*, not all universally, which the very Sound and Tenor of the Speech shews. And it is of great Force to confirm it to be so, that he speaks of *that* Redemption by Christ, and that sort of Purpose therein to save these Sinners, to be every way one and the same with that which he had of saving the Apostle himself, which the Apostle came then to find and discern, when Christ had by such an Overflow of Love and Almighty Power wrought Faith in him: *ver.* 14. *And the Grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with Faith and Love, which is in Christ Jesus.* And therefore he was now able with Assurance to put in his own Name in saying, *Of whom I am chief.* And in saying so he puts himself (we evidently see) into the same Rank and Number, Sort and Heap, of all the Sinners that were redeem'd, and all of them redeem'd with the same Grace and Intention that *Paul* himself had been redeem'd with, and made the Subject of in Christ's Heart. He himself was redeem'd with no other Aim than they all were. That which did put the Difference was, that he was the chief of that rank in Sinning. And surely Christ's Aim and Eye at him in dying for him was out of a special Grace and Love, whereby he died not only to

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Part 1. make him salvable, as some would dilute Christ's Intention in dying for the non-elect, affirming, that Christ died for all Men thus far, barely to make this Proposition true of all Men, That if they would believe they should be saved. It is certain that he died for *Paul* with a further Intention of Love than so, even efficaciously to give him Faith, and invincibly save him. For that Grace in converting him effectually, it is he there so predicates, *ver.* 14. *The Grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with Faith and Love*, &c. and magnifies Christ for having come into the World to bestow it on him. Christ did not die with one Intention for *Paul*, and another Intention for others, for he ranks the other Sinners for whom Christ died in common with himself, together in one Rank with his own Person. He puts himself and them in the same Rank. Now Christ died for him as a chosen Vessel to himself, &c. as Christ himself that died for him, from Heaven speaks of him, *Acts* 9. 15. and in dying bore the same *Love* to the rest of those Sinners he died for, that he did to *Paul*; he dying for him and them consider'd in one Body, (*Ephes.* 2.) whereof *Paul* was but a Member. And therefore *Paul* propounds himself as a *Pattern* of this Grace unto all that should by virtue of Christ's dying come to believe; ver. 16. *For this Cause I obtained Mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all Long-suffering*, [*for a Pattern*] *to them that should hereafter believe on him to Life everlasting.* And withal commends this faithful Saying thus indefinitely utter'd, *that Christ came into the World to save Sinners*, as the most accommodate Object to their Faith, (upon which they should embrace and lay hold on Christ) as it had been so to him, when in his Humiliation he had seen himself to be the chiefest of Sinners. To conclude this, I will say, that after all the wringing, and writhing, and turning things this way and that, and when Men have said all that they can, it will be found that *the World* which is the adequate Object of Christ's Aim in dying, (which he is elsewhere said to have come to save, and is thereupon proclaim'd to be the Saviour of the World, *John* 4. 42.) is no otherwise to be understood than of Men in the World indefinitely taken. Yea, and that other Phrase *of all Men*, of whom likewise he is said the Saviour, will after all Agitations issue in and come to its being but an *indefinite Expression*, (as we have explained it) noting out *Men in all Nations*, of all Ranks, Ages, Conditions and Sorts of Sinners over all the World. And so it imports an Indefiniteness, and not an Universality of Persons to have been intended in it; and so all these Declarations and Promises of Salvation which are absolute, are to be understood.

I come now to demonstrate the Suitableness of the Faith of one that knows not of a Certainty of himself to be intended unto the Tenor of the Promises, as it respects Persons. Let us see then what Actings of Faith there may be in such an one for his own personal Salvation, altho he is not assured of his personal Interest, and view withal, (which I mainly intend) the *Correspondency* which Faith in such an one doth hold with the Tenour of such Promises (as it hath been opened) which will at once evince that such a Faith is saving, (for if Faith answers the Promise, it is certainly true Saving Faith) as also make way to instruct us how in such a case we may apply our selves unto absolute Promises, which is the Point I ultimately drive at.

I shall, as I have done before, (when I shewed the Correspondency of such a Man's Faith to the Matter of the Promises) go over the Actings of the Soul towards *the Tenor* of them, and that as to both the Understanding and Will.

I. These absolute Promises do in the Tenor afford and lay before Faith in the Understanding of such an one, these great Truths that follow, which are productive of Faith in his Will, and do draw on this Will to close with God and Christ, with Acts therein suitable to the Tenor of the Promises for his particular Salvation. They present to Faith in his Understanding; *1st.* That there are some (And those not a few) Persons whom God certainly and undoubtedly intends to save, and whom he will effectually give Faith unto. And tho the Man may yet be suspensive whether his own Person or no be included, yet in the mean while Faith may and doth meet with and come up to this part of the Promise, *In that he fully believes that some shall be sav'd.* And he may and doth believe this piece of the Tenor of it, (notwithstanding his wavering as to his own Person) even as absolutely as the Promises themselves, *viz.* that God is absolutely (that is, certainly) resolved to save some with a free and efficacious Grace. *There are that shall come to me*, says Christ, *John* 6. 37. And again, *There are those that are the Children of God*, (in God's purpose) *who shall hear*

hear my Voice, John 11. 41. And the Belief of this at once gives *Hope as concerning this thing*. For if the Example of that one Person *Paul* is proposed by himself, and the Holy Ghost speaking in him as a Pattern and Flag of Mercy, held out to toll and invite others in, who were after to believe, (as in that 1 *Tim.* 1. we may read) then much more are we encourag'd when we hear that there are a many for whom Christ came into the World with an absolute Intention to save them. Thus Christ speaks; *My Blood* (said he) *that is shed for many for the Remission of Sins*, when now he was to die, *Mat.* 26. 28. And when they shall come together in that last great general Assembly, it is said of them, *Rev.* 7. 9. *Lo, a great Multitude which no Man could number, of all Nations, and Kindreds, and People, and Tongues, stood before the Throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white Robes, and Palms in their Hands.* And likewise the Belief of thus much concerning Persons in a Matter of so near and great Concernment as a Man's Salvation is, will, through the Spirit's drawing, quicken and stir up the Will to put in for it for a Man's self, (altho he knows not certainly that he is the Person intended) and accordingly to indeavour after the obtaining of it. This we manifestly may find in the Coherence of the *6th* and *11th* Verses of *Heb.* 4. *Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, (namely, that Rest) and they to whom it was first preached, entered not in, because of Unbelief*; (the Confirmation of which he prosecutes in the following Verses:) In the *11th* Verse he draws forth this Inference from that his former, *Let us labour therefore to enter into that Rest*, (says he in *ver.* 11.) *lest any Man fall after the same Example of Unbelief*. Which punctually answers in the way of *Exhortation* unto both Parts of his foregoing *Doctrine* in that *ver.* 6. And the true Reason of such an Inference may be seen in the ordinary Practice of Men. For if when Men know aforehand that *one*, yea *but one* shall in running a Race obtain a Crown, yet *all* (that are habilitated for a Race) will venture their Ability and Skill to run for it, and this when it is but for a *corruptible Crown*, (as the Apostle enforceth his Exhortation, 1 *Cor.* 9. 24,25.) Then how much more when we know that not one only, but many, and so great a Multitude shall obtain; and that the Gage or Price at stake is not a corruptible but *an incorruptible Crown*, as the Apostle (*ver.* 25.) further heightens and raiseth his Motive and Argumentation to this our very purpose in hand.

Book 3.

2. These absolute Promises and Declarations do lay before the Understanding of such an one, that these *some* or *many* are of all sorts (as was said) out of all Nations, Ages both of Succession of Times, and Ages of Persons, and also of all Sinners of all sorts, in all the Degrees, and Sizes, and Proportions of Sinnings, even the *chiefest*, as the Apostle's Vision shews, *Acts* 9. 12. *All manner of Beasts, wild and creeping things*, from the basest Worms to the most loathed and monstrous Beasts, were involved in that Sheet, which was the Figure of the Church Catholick, represented unto *Peter*, as those that were to be called and converted out of all sorts of Sinners, even the vilest. These Declarations in like manner hold forth that it is God's very Design to comprehend and take in of all these, whatever their Sins, their Ranks, their Conditions be. He would have some of all Kindreds, Families, Callings; that he might be said to extend his *rich free Grace* unto an [*all*], all in some respect. And this opens the Door of Hope to the Soul (we are speaking of) yet far wider. For he now looking upon himself round about in all Circumstances whatsoever, and viewing himself all over, may see, that whatever Rank, Condition, or Sinfulness we can suppose him to be in, or he finds himself to be in, yet he finds that his own Condition is not only not to be excluded, but taken in in that indefinite way mention'd in the Promise. The very same Condition and Degree of Sinfulness that he stands in, is to be found in the Persons of some or other, whom in the Promise God intends, and so comes to be comprehended in the Promises. And further, he may thereby see, in such absolute Declarations all Objections of all kinds that can any way be made by carnal Reason, (which is so jealous of God) or that can be alledged either from his Sins, or Circumstances, or Conjectures, wholly to be removed and answered. And all this these absolute Promises do suggest and prompt him with. And tho still he demurs whether his Person singly and particularly considered, be certainly the Man whom God will own still further, yet even as to that Point, namely his Person singly considered, he hath this to say, that seeing God hath no where, nor by any fatal Mark or Brand, as upon *Cain*, set him out for Destruction; why then (may he not well think thereupon) shall I exclude my self?

There

Part 1. *There is no Difference*, (saith the Apostle) *for all have sinned*, being therefore all alike, whoever they be that have sinned, they are capable alike of being *freely justified by his Grace, through the Redemption that is in Jesus Christ*, Rom. 3. 22, 23, 24. The meaning is, that there is no Difference of Sins, small or great (as to the point of God's Free Grace to justify a Man) which is any Bar that shuts any Man out. He finds likewise, that as there is nothing of Good in him that should move God to be merciful to him; so nor on the contrary, nothing of Evil that will be of Power to divert God from his declared Resolution to pardon all manner of Sin *de facto*, (but that one against the Holy Ghost) as Christ that bore our Sins, and paid the Price for us, tells us. So as his single individual Person stands free of all Incumbrances, of all *quare impedits*, of all that should prejudg him, and let him. He stands as free for *free Grace*, as freely to accept and receive him, as ever any Man did whom it hath accepted, any thing in the whole Word of God notwithstanding. It is not that such or such Sins, or manner of Sinnings after Illumination, *&c.* shall be a Cross-bar, or Spoke, or Hindrance against a Man, no more than Sins before. For whenever a Man cometh to God to be justified, whether after Calling or before, he comes and sues it *sub formâ Impii*, as looking upon himself as an ungodly Person, whilst he is a suing for Justification, and appears in that Court. He is not to consider his being already godly; there is no Difference, no not in that respect neither. He may see that it is pure free Grace in God's Heart he hath to deal withal and to treat with God by, and to try what quarter it will give; and it is the Glory thereof that moves God to be merciful where he will be merciful; and where he proves to be gracious he is to an ὑπερεπλεόναμα, he is to an overflowing super-abounding Fulness gracious to them. Those that run in a Race, or strive for Masteries, have the Confidence of their own Skill or Strength, or Use, and accustomed Agility for their Confidence, and do venture thereupon; but this Soul hath the absolute Grace of God before him to rely upon, and so ventures upon what it shall be willing to do for him.

Interrogo nunc credisne O peccator Christo? dicis, Credo. Quid credis? Gratis universa peccata tibi per ipsum [*poss. remitti.*] Habes quod credisti. *Aug. Gerard. de Just.* p. 1050.

3. These absolute Promises do, together with all these Considerations, hint to him an *it may be*, that is, that *he may be one God will be merciful unto.* If it must be some body's *Lot*, (in that Language the Apostle speaks, *Ephes.* 1.) then, says he, why not mine? So prompts the Holy Ghost often such Souls; and this, tho but afar off, Apprehension hath brought many a Soul near, and drawn and encouraged them to come to God for their particular Salvation. The People of *Nineveh believed God* in his Threatnings, *Jonah* 3. 5. And this Thought withal fell into them by the Suggestion of the Spirit; *ver.* 6, 9. *Who can tell if God will return and repent, and turn away from his fierce Anger, that we perish not?* And says the Prophet, *Joel* 2. 14, 15. *The Lord your God is gracious and merciful, slow to Anger, and of great Kindness, and repenteth him of the Evil: Who knows if he will return and repent, and leave a Blessing behind him?* In the Case of the Child *David* sought the Lord; for, says he, I said, (that is, I had this Saying or Apprehension of Faith in my Mind) *Who can tell whether God will be gracious to me?* 2 Sam. 12. 22. in sparing his Life; and yet the Prophet had told him it should die; but *David* thought it might be but of the nature of a conditional Threatning, which by Prayer might have been diverted. And in other Scriptures Promises are uttered in the slender Stile of an *it may be*, as *Zeph.* 2. 3. *It may be ye shall be hid in the Day of the Lord's Anger.* Some of these were Promises and Apprehensions in case of temporal Deliverances; others of eternal Salvation connex'd with them. However my Argument is strong from either, for these so indefinite Expressions utter'd in temporal Promises with but an *it may be*, and *who can tell but that God*, &c. did yet however draw them in to seek God with a true Faith for the obtaining the things promised, (the Faith in them answering to the Utterance and Tenor of the Promise from God) then much more in the case of eternal Salvation, if the Promises thereof speak or whisper rather, but an *it may be*, and *who knows*, should we be drawn to believe. And so much (for certain) these absolute Promises do speak of Hope to such a Soul before us, yea or any Soul whatever that hears and observes them. And if they leave but such a Hint or Impression upon the Soul as *David* had and spake of, *(I said, who can tell but God will be gracious to me?)* that so such a Soul comes but once to say *within it self, Who can tell but God will be gracious to me, in pardoning and saving of me?*

This

This *it may be* in the Soul's Apprehension may and will have, through the Spirit's assisting, and God the Father's drawing, (without which never so certain and direct Promises made to all universally, or particularly to any one by Name, would not have any drawing Virtue in them to work Faith) I say these *it may be's*, or *I may be the Person*, may have as much Power and Force in them to win the Heart to believe, and by Faith to put in for them, and to pray to obtain them, as in temporal Salvations they had. For the Reason is the same in both, yea and the Weight far the more on this side of Salvation eternal, by how much a Man's Salvation (the Subject-matter of such spiritual Promises) is infinitely nearer to such a Man's Soul to move and stir him, than all or any temporal Salvation is or can be supposed to be to any. This the Apostle hath instructed us in, as touching the very Point before us; *They strive for a corruptible Crown*, (says he) *we for an incorruptible*: 'Tis an Inference from the less to the infinitely greater. And a Soul once made apprehensive to purpose (as we say) of the Weight of Salvation, the massy Import and Concernments thereof joining all their Forces with these so weak *it may bees*, will yet, as smaller and more weak Cords twisted with greater and stronger, have together a mighty Power in them to draw the Soul, when withal God shall be at the end of these Ropes and draw with them. And how slender these Hopes, and however contemptible some may and do account them, which these *it may be's* do afford, yet they are from God, who is pleased to speak in that Stile to us Men; and the Weakness of God when he comes to work upon Souls by them, is stronger than the greatest Power of Men. He can draw a mighty Whale to shore with a twine Thread. He can hold fast the greatest Ship in the most tempestuous Storm, by the Cable of a slight Straw.

Book 3.

Now behold the Correspondency and Conformity of such an Apprehension of Faith in such a Soul unto the Indefiniteness of these Promises in the Word; just as God speaks, so they believe. God is a gracious and merciful God, (that's absolute) and it may be God will be gracious to you, and who can tell? So says the Promise on God's part, as it is spoken unto us, that is, it is but indefinitely spoken. And then says the Soul, who can tell but he will be gracious to me? (as *David* said, *It may be God will bless me for* Shimei's *Cursing to day*) so speaks the Heart as it were in an Echo to the other Voice in the Promise.

4. There is a fourth Act of Faith may be in the Understanding of one that is not yet assured of his present personal Salvation, and it may be an Act of Assurance too, as for the future, namely, that if that Faith which in his Will he is now a putting forth (of which next) prove true spiritual Faith, and that he hold fast the beginning of his Confidence unto the end, then it is an absolute Certainty that he shall be saved. And this is a great Addition that crowneth all the former Considerations with a further Hope; and who is there that is at the very brink of Believing would not, upon this and the other Considerations, cast himself in upon God's Mercy? *He that ploweth, should plow in Hope: and he that thresheth in Hope, should be Partaker of his Hope*, 1 Cor. 9. 10. The Apostle speaks it to another Business, but I may thus far apply it to this in hand, that as it is a comfortable Incouragement to a Plowman to plow and to cast in his Seeds into the Ground, because he is in an ordinary way hopefully assur'd he shall (if his Corn take root) have an expected and desired Crop, and with that Hope he plows, and in the Hope of it doth at the present throw away his Seed: Do Men take Pains to plow, and venture to sow their Corn in Hope, then how much more should we? *We endeavour* (as the Apostle's word is) and take Pains to believe, knowing that if our Seed that is cast come to have a Root, (as Christ in opposition to the thorny Ground insinuates) it will bring forth Fruit unto Perfection, and *in due time we shall reap if we faint not*. And this is a sowing far more certain for the Hopes of it than that other, and yet we see Men ordinarily venture both their Labour and Seed-Corn. Yea, this *venture to believe* (for so I call it as to the Soul's own Apprehension) upon these *it may be's* of Salvation, are far more sure and certain than our exercising Faith, and spending Prayers upon those (*it may be's*) it may be's of temporal Promises for things outward. For Faith (altho it be true Faith) doth often prove uncertain and issueless as to the obtaining of the particular thing we aimed at in such Promises for outward things, (which was *David*'s Case in that Instance mentioned) but this Adventure of Faith, and of our Souls on these *it may be's* for Salvation, (if it prove true Faith in the end, tho in the lowest degree) will never be unsuccessful as to that Salvation we seek for.

For

For Christ hath said, *He that seeks* (continues so to do) *shall find, and to him that*
Part 1. *knocks, it shall be opened.*

2. I shall now consider the Acts of Faith in the Will in such a Believer, and how conformable those also are to the indefinite Tenor of absolute Promises. Let us next consider what Acts of Faith in the Will (that are true Acts of Faith) such a Soul may put forth, and which may stand with these indefinite Apprehensions, when very far short of an Assurance that he is the Person for which the pure absolute Promises afford him no further Ground.

(1.) There may be a coming unto God and Christ. That Act of *Coming* which is so often used to express Believing both on God and Christ, (as Christ himself expresseth it in his Sermons, and we read of Coming unto God through Christ, *Heb.* 7.) is an Act of *the Will*; (as Rev. 22. 17. *Let him that is athirst come, and let him that will*, &c.) And the saving Act of Faith is expressed by it; *John* 7. 35. *If any Man thirst, let him come unto me and drink* : and it follows, (as explaining what he meant by coming) *He that believeth me*, &c. And the Aim, End, or Errand of such a Soul in its Coming, and for which it comes, is said to be that *it may be saved*, that is its Business it comes unto God and Christ for. Now such an Act may well stand with the forementioned indefinite Apprehension as concerning his own Person, and with that suspensive Uncertainty, (as I may term it) for in that respect he may yet come to have it given and made good to him, altho he knows not that he hath, or certainly shall have a share in it. And therefore undeniably the saving Act in the Will may be put forth without such a personal Assurance. That Phrase of *Coming* is taken from what is ordinary with Men, and is on purpose chosen out to express the Aim of such a Faith in such a Condition. For a Man useth to come to another for a thing that is in that Man's Power to bestow whom he comes to, when yet he utterly hath no Assurance from him that he shall obtain it, and yet ventures to come. Nothing is more ordinary in common Practice than this, and therefore the Act of Faith which is without Assurance is most aptly set forth thereby. And truly that Speech of Christ's, *Him that cometh unto me I will in no ways cast out*, (John 6. 36.) was spoken as on purpose to the Heart of many an one that comes, (especially at first) to hearten him against, and obviate this very Fear of being rejected; and who therefore so comes as in his own Thoughts, he may remain suspensive in himself, whether he shall be received as to Salvation, which is his Errand, yea or no, especially in the Case of him who but now first comes, seeing that until he hath come and put forth such an Act, he cannot come to know whether it will be a true and spiritual Act of Faith, or coming with a true Heart, yea or no. Yet however at his first Coming the Intent of his Soul in Coming is, that he may be receiv'd. And come he must first in a direct Line to Christ, e're he can reflect upon his Coming, whether it be with a true Heart, (as *Heb.* 10. 'tis explained) nor will he know his Welcome unto Christ until he actually comes, or hath come.

And that the Aim of such an Act of Coming to God or Christ, or God in Christ, is purely that he *may be justified*; and that this is that genuine Act whereupon a Man is indeed justified; the Example and Instance of the Apostles themselves, as it is alledged by one of the greatest of them in the Name of himself, and all the rest of them, doth manifestly declare; *Gal.* 2. 16. *We knowing that a Man is not justified by the Works of the Law, but by the Faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the Faith of Christ, and not by the Works of the Law.* In which Words he tells us plainly, that by such a Faith having such an Aim or Tendency in it, *that they might be justified*, it was that they came to Christ. And it is spoken of their having renounced Works for Justification, (which the Jewish Principles did lead unto) and their betaking themselves unto Faith, that they might be justified, from the first of their Conversion unto Christ. Those Words, *even we*, do point unto the other Apostles, together with himself; *even we* that were the first Fruits of Christianity, and eminentest among Believers, had yet but the same like Faith at first, which all Believers else have, *viz.* that which was pitch'd upon, *the Righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ*, (as *Peter*, 2 Pet. 1. 1. speaks) which he stiles *like precious Faith*, which was then and is to be for ever common to all Believers, both small and great, at first; which Faith (as by comparing this in the *Galatians* appears) was not a believing at the first dash, that *they were justified*, but a believing *that they might be justified*, and so a Coming unto Christ with

with this Aim and Errand, *that I may be justified*, as to the future. And if any would question, whether it were spoken of all the Apostles or no, yet however to be sure, it was *Paul* speaks it of himself, and *Peter* of himself, who was the Chief of the Apostles; and of *Peter*, who professed his Faith in the Name of all the Apostles, *Mat.* 16. For, if you observe, it is the Continuation of a Speech he had began to make unto *Peter* personally; *ver.* 14. *I said unto* Peter, *&c.* and this is part of what he said to him, *We who are Jews by Nature, and not Sinners of the Gentiles, knowing that a Man is not justified by the Works of the Law, but by the Faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the Faith of Christ, and not by the Works of the Law; for by the Works of the Law shall no Flesh be justified.* In which he proceeds to confute and reprove *Peter*, who by Judaism had exposed no less than the great Point of Justification by Faith. But *Paul* appealeth to his own Experience at and from his first Conversion, and often after, by what a Faith he had lived to be justified by it, and presseth it on him *before all* that were present, (as he relateth it in *ver.* 14.) as a commonly received Principle amongst Believers, yea and even amongst us too (says he) that are *Jews*, and not *Gentiles*. And that the Act of Coming to Christ (whereby Faith is expressed) includes this as the End and Intent of that Coming, and is indeed in the Form of it, *viz. that I may be saved*, or *that I might be justified*, that Speech of Christ's shews, (altho spoken to Pharisees, and yet spoken of the contrary Act of Unbelief in them, and so as the contrary illustrates, wherein the Spirit of true Faith lies) *Ye will not come to me that ye might have Life*, John 5. 40. that is, you will not believe, which is a Coming to me with that Intention, to have Life from me; which all those whom I save do put forth and exercise towards me, and do come unto me for; but these proud Justiciaries did scorn to do it, and would not thus come. That Particle ἵνα, *that*, denotes out the End or Aim which he is to take up, who would come to Christ, or believe on him savingly; and imports not only what is the Event or Consequent upon Believing. And as the sole Aim of a Soul in Believing is, that he may be saved; so likewise God's Will and Intention in requiring Faith is declared to be, that he that believes *may have Life*, (John 6.) God's Aim answering that of the Believers. And again, that this is the Aim and Business of the Soul in Coming, Christ's Invitation to come shews, *Mat.* 11. 28, &c. *Come to me ye that are heavy loaden, and I will give you Rest.* Which Promise in the last Words doth at once speak to what their Souls were burthened for the want of, and most of all desire, namely, Rest; and also guides and directs those Souls with what they should intend and design in coming to obtain from him, even *Rest: And you shall find Rest to your Souls.* Now as this Act of Coming with this Intention, *that I may have Rest*, doth and may well stand with a suspensive Uncertainty, that I am the Person; so it may and doth answer to the indefinite Apprehension the Understanding of such an one hath. The Understanding tells him from the Promise, that he may be the Person whom God may justify; then in Correspondency, says the Will, I do believe, or come to God and Christ, that I may be justified, and so he exactly comports with the Indefiniteness of the Promise, as to his Person; for as *that* holds forth an *it may be God will*, &c. so the Aim of his Coming is, that he may be saved. And it is certain in experience, that with such a poor and slender *it may be* at the first, many a Soul hath cast Anchor within the Vail blindfold, (as Seamen cast their Anchors when yet they see not the Earth at the bottom of the Sea, or know that their Anchor will take hold, nor yet know how to trail it or apply it certainly to that Earth, so as to be able to say, it shall without peradventure fasten and take sure hold thereon, but a long time perhaps comes back to them again) and yet have in the end found a firm and sure hold-fast in the Heart of God, and Grace of Christ, to hang upon with the whole Weight of their Souls, the Weight of their Sins hanging upon them also, with all the *Pondus* of them.

Book 3.

ἵνα [ut] significat *finem*, non solum consequentiam. *Brugensis* in verba.

Part 1.

CHAP. V.

That Election-Grace, and the Immutability of God's Counsel indefinitely propos'd in the Promises, is the Object of Faith.

HEB. 6. 13——20.

For when God made Promise to Abraham, *because he could swear by no greater, he swore by Himself,*
Saying, Surely, blessing, I will bless thee, and multiplying, I will multiply thee.
And so after he had patiently endured, he obtained the Promise.
For Men verily swear by the greater: and an Oath for Confirmation is to them an end of all Strife.
Wherein God willing more abundantly to shew unto the Heirs of Promise the Immutability of his Counsel, confirmed it by an Oath:
That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong Consolation, who have fled for Refuge to lay hold upon the Hope set before us:
Which Hope we have as an Anchor of the Soul both sure and stedfast, and which entreth into that within the Vail.
Whither the Forerunner is for us entred, even Jesus, made an high Priest for ever after the Order of Melchisedec.

THE 11*th* Verse begins an Exhortation, whereof all that follows is the Prosecution. The Words of that Verse are these; *We desire that every one of you do shew the same Diligence, to the full Assurance of Hope unto the end.* Here are two things distinct: 1*st*. An Exercise, and Diligence. 2*dly*. This is directed towards the Attainment of full Assurance of Hope unto the end; which is somewhat parallel to that of *Peter*, 2*d* Epist. 1. 10. *Brethren, give Diligence to make your Calling and Election sure.* To exhort them to all Diligence, he lays before them the Examples of the eminent Saints that they had known in their times; *ver.* 12. *That ye be not slothful*; and that refers unto using that Diligence he speaks of: *Be Followers of them who through Faith and Patience inherit the Promises*, that is, that have got Possession, and obtained and have arrived unto eternal Glory. And by Patience he doth not only mean Patience in suffering, but Constancy in well-doing, especially waiting by Faith for the Attainment of the Promise, as Patience is taken in *Rom.* 2. 7. *Who by patient Continuance in well-doing, seek for Glory and Immortality.* As for that other part, *the full Assurance of Hope unto the end*; he begins at *ver.* 13. to propound the Example of *Abraham* more particularly and eminently; and shews how God, to assure him in his Hope, did give him a *Promise* and an *Oath*, both which you have in *ver.* 13. that is, he arrived at the end of his Days at the Enjoyment and fulfilling of the Promises, as those other Saints he spake of, *ver.* 12. are said to have *inherited the Promises.* Some refer his obtaining the Promise to what was in this Life, in having *Isaac* given him, *&c.* and by having the Comfort of it ever after while he lived. But he had obtained the Promise of *Isaac* before this Oath was given, and therefore 'tis rather to be understood to mean it after that Oath given, upon his offering up *Isaac*, he having patiently endured to the end of his Days as his Exhortation, (*ver.* 11.) had said, that then he attained the full Possession of it.

The Assurance which was given to *Abraham* was the greatest that Heaven could afford, a Promise and an Oath. I say the greatest, as, 1*st*. The Apostle himself argues, *ver.* 16. If amongst Men an Oath, when they swear by God that is greater than themselves, is of such Authority, as it ends all Strife, tho Men be Liars, and may be supposed even in Swearing to lie; yet an Oath taken by God, or by their Gods, whoever they be, is accounted so sacred, and of such Authority, as all Men rest in it, and there is an end of Strife: much more when God shall take an Oath. This you have, *ver.* 16. *For Men verily swear by the greater, and an Oath for Confirmation is to them an end of all Strife.* For that God himself should swear, the Apostle says, *ver.* 18. that *'twas impossible for God to lie therein.* It cannot be supposed of him, tho of Men it may; so *ver.* 18. But, 2*dly*. Whom did God swear by? He

He ſware by himſelf; *ver.* 13. *Becauſe he could ſwear by no greater he ſware by himſelf:* he ſtaked himſelf; as if he had ſaid, I will ceaſe to be God if I do not perform this. Book 3.

The thing he ſware to was, to bleſs *Abraham* with all Bleſſings, and that unto the end; *Surely bleſſing I will bleſs thee.* And if he ſware by himſelf to perform this, then all the Power in God, and Long-ſuffering of God towards *Abraham*, were engaged to the uttermoſt to work upon *Abraham*'s Soul, and to bear with him effectually to attain this. And whereas thoſe that ſhould read but hitherto what *Paul* ſaid of the Oath to *Abraham*, would expect of *Paul* he ſhould declare how this Oath did concern thoſe whom he exhorted, or otherwiſe it had been in vain, and an Example not applicable to his purpoſe, which was to exhort them to the *full Aſſurance of Hope unto the end*, ſuch as *Abraham* had: And whereas becauſe it was a Voice from Heaven, they might think that this was ſingular and proper to *Abraham* alone, he therefore proceeds in the 17*th* and 18*th* Verſes to apply it to them to whom he wrote, to all the *Heirs of Promiſe and Salvation*, and together therewith expounds what was the Matter intended in the Oath and Promiſe. Thus he applies it in theſe Words; *ver.* 17. *Wherein God willing more abundantly to ſhew unto the Heirs of Promiſe the Immutability of his Counſel, confirmed it by an Oath.* (1.) Obſerve that word, *ver.* 17. *wherein God willing*, &c. Wherein, or in which Oath and Promiſe he had ſpoken of before. (2.) It is made to the *Heirs of Promiſe*, and therefore to all that are *Heirs* with him, which all that are Chriſt's are ſaid to be; *Gal.* 3. 29. *And if ye be Chriſt's, then are you* Abraham's *Seed, and Heirs according to the Promiſe.* (3.) In *ver.* 18. he ſhews the Intent of the Oath to be, that we all do believe that have the Faith of *Abraham*; which Faith he doth deſcribe by ſuch Acts and Terms as might include the weakeſt of Believers, unto that end that all ſuch might have ſtrong Conſolation. So as we are to look upon *Abraham* in this manner of Diſpenſation (tho it was ſo ſingular an Example in him) to him perſonally, as that he therein was (*Rom.* 4. 16.) *the Father of us all.* As in the caſe of Imputation of Righteouſneſs by Faith, it is ſaid in the ſame *Rom.* 4. 22, 23, 24. *It was imputed to him for Righteouſneſs*, ver. 22. *Now it was not written for his ſake alone that it was imputed to him*, ver. 23. *But for us all to whom it ſhall be imputed*, &c. *ver.* 24. And indeed this is held forth in the very Promiſe which was then given him, and which the Oath confirmed. The Promiſe is in *Heb.* 6. 14. *Surely bleſſing I will bleſs thee.* Now in *Gal.* 3. 14. the ſame Bleſſing that was given to *Abraham*, is *to come on the Gentiles that were after to believe*; and ſo in bleſſing *Abraham*, he bleſſed us all that are *Heirs of Promiſe*; and we have the ſame Promiſe with him and them. For in the latter part of the Promiſe, *in multiplying I will multiply thee*, all the ſpiritual Seed are included. *In multiplying I will multiply thy Seed*, or all Seed to thee, (ſays God, *Gen.* 22.) which were the ſpiritual Seed, *Heirs of Promiſe of Salvation with him, and Children of the Promiſe with his* Iſaac, *Rom.* 9. 7, 8.

Let us next conſider what is the Matter of that Promiſe and Oath. 1*ſt.* In the Letter of it, 'tis to bleſs him and us with all *ſpiritual Bleſſings in heavenly things*, imported in this doubling the Words; *In bleſſing I will bleſs thee*; and ſo thy Seed. I will bleſs thee with Faith, with Holineſs, with Perſeverance to the end, and Salvation at the end. But, 2*dly.* The Apoſtle brings forth a deeper and higher Matter that this Oath and Promiſe did intend, and that is the Immutability of his Counſel confirming the Promiſe by an Oath; ſo then his own Counſels about *Abraham*'s Salvation, and of us all, are the ſame kind of Decrees for the Salvation of us all that was for *Abraham*'s.

1. If you ask what is meant by his Counſel here: I anſwer, It is his everlaſting Decrees and Purpoſes taken up within himſelf concerning *Abraham*'s Salvation, and of us all; and it is the ſame kind of Decrees for the Salvation of us all that was for *Abraham*'s. *

1*ſt.* I ſay God's Decrees and reſolute Determinations concerning our Salvation, are imported by the word *Counſel.* Concerning Jeſus Chriſt to be crucified, the Apoſtle utters himſelf thus; *Acts* 4. 28. that the Jews did but *whatſoever God's Hand and Counſel determined before to be done.* His Counſels then are his Determinations and Purpoſes.

* Jacobus Capellus *doth analiſe the Matter of theſe* 17 *and* 18 *Verſes.* Cujus duo ſunt præcipua capita. 1. *Quæ*-

And,

ram electionis: oſtendere *hæredibus ſalutis*, ii ſunt electi. *Immutabilitatem*, quam ſit firmum & immutabile ſuum prædeſtinationis decretum, *Conſilii ſui* ſecundum electionem ſcilicet. *Capellus* in verba.

Part 1. And, 2*dly*. They are his Purposes within himself, and so differ from a Promise. A Promise made, is God's outward Declaration to do so and so for us, but his Counsel are his Purposes within himself, decreeing so and so, as in *Ephes*. 1. 9. and *v*. 11. compared.

3*dly*. His Counsel imports these his Purposes which have been from everlasting; Acts 4. 28. *What thy Counsel determined to be done aforehand*. And so it imports the same that Fore-knowledg doth, which in matter of our Salvation is said to have been before the World began. And what other is this Counsel of his in matter of *Abraham*'s and our Salvation, but the very same we find, *Ephes*. 1. 3, 4, 9, and *ver*. 11? *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual Blessings in heavenly Places in Christ Jesus, according as he hath chosen us in him before the Foundation of the World, in whom also we have obtained an Inheritance, being predestinated according to the Purpose of him who worketh all things after the Counsel of his own Will*. What is the Counsel of God here, is Election and Predestination there.

2. As his Counsel shews it to be his electing Love and Purposes, so the Oath shews these to be immutably fix'd and pitch'd, and that to shew forth the Immutability of the Promise the Oath was given, as *ver*. 17. of my Text imports. God's Oath shews an Unchangeableness, not a Peremptorineſs only, but an Irreversibleness, and that the Matter sworn to shall never be recall'd. Therefore in *Psal*. 89. when God mentions his Oath to *David*, the Type of Christ, and to his spiritual Seed, (the same that was here made to *Abraham*'s Seed) says God there in the 35*th* and 36*th* Verses, *Once have I sworn by my Holiness, that I will not lie unto* David, *his Seed shall endure for ever*. Ver. 34. *My Covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my Lips*; it having been thus confirmed by an Oath. Our Divines have generally owned this Notion, and from thence in the case of our Redemption by Christ, that he should suffer in our stead, have observed, that all God's Threatnings of the Law (as the Law it self also) was given without an Oath added, and that so God might dispense with any Commination or Exchange of the Persons threatned, and put Christ in their stead, for all those Threatnings were without an Oath. For if they had had an Oath annexed to them, we had been everlastingly undone and lost, and Christ's Redemption would not have saved us. But now the Gospel coming, and Promises thereof, because God intended them with an Immutability, he hath therefore confirmed them by an Oath, *Heb*. 7. 21. Those Priests, *viz*. of the Law (*ver*. 19.) were made without an Oath, and therefore were changeable: as (*ver*. 12.) he says, both Law and Priesthood were to be changed, because made and given without an Oath, but this with an Oath, and an Oath irreversible *by him that said unto him*, (unto Christ namely) *The Lord swore and will not repent, thou art a Priest for ever*. Where he gives an Oath, he will never repent, nor make Alteration of it, *viz*. of what he hath sworn unto.

3. I add, that such an Oath is absolute; and tho there are Qualifications that God will work, which are necessary to our Salvation, and unto the compleat Performance of the Oath, yet these Conditions God supposes and includes in the Oath, and by the Oath undertakes to work them, and effect them in us. When therefore God took this Oath concerning *Abraham*'s Blessing, *I blessing will bless thee*, &c. (which also takes in the Salvation of all the spiritual Seed) God did absolutely swear and undertake to perform and accomplish it, and to that end withal to give all these Qualifications requisite to the full Performance. God doth not swear by halves in it, but to do the whole as to *Abraham* and our Salvations. Why now I appeal unto all sober Spirits that will consider things, whether they will or dare say, that God should make an Oath for *Abraham*'s Salvation, when yet according to the Principles of Free-Will-Grace, as they state it, the Performance of this Oath must depend upon *Abraham*'s Will, and to the end of his Days, and his Will must cast the Issue of it, and God would only have been to give him such Assistance as he should have a Power to do so and so. It was *Abraham*'s Will that must have cast the Event, which is so mutable and changeable as any of ours is, or can be supposed to be. Can we think that God in Swearing that he would save *Abraham*, and bring him to obtain the Blessing, as the Phrase is here, should depend upon the Mutability of such a Man's Will? He was to live many Days after this; and if God in his Oath had not undertaken to carry on his Will effectually and invincibly, as well as to save him in the end,

end, if he went on to will, there is a Supposition and a Possibility that his Oath might have failed, and that God should have taken his own Name in vain. I might say the like concerning *Isaac*, who was included in the Oath, who was a young Man at this time, he being the first of the Seed, the Pattern of the rest. He was included in the Seed absolutely, and God's Promise was absolute as to give him *Isaac*, so to continue *Isaac*, that his Covenant might continue with him for ever as it was. And do we think that God would betrust an Oath, such an Oath, as to cease to be God, if it were not performed upon any Creature's Will? What tho they suppose he should foreknow certainly their Wills would hold out unto the end, yet would God honour a Creature's Will, so mutable a thing as they say 'tis, as to venture and pawn an Oath upon it, and swear for their Salvation in this manner, so as to say if *Abraham* be not faithful *Abraham* to the end, I will not be God. Do you think that God would debase himself so much, if that the keeping *Abraham* and *Isaac*, and by consequence us all unto the end, had not depended upon his Will so as to overcome and carry on theirs and ours infallibly unto the end? If God swaré by himself, then certainly he swaré by all himself, and will therefore put forth all in himself to the utmost, whereby to make good his Oath, and therefore his Will and Power to the utmost whereby to make good his own Word, nay to make good himself. Their Principles put God upon these Straits, that tho God will vouchsafe such Means and Helps as by the Laws of Free-Will-Grace they say he doth use; yet if the Will of *Abraham* in the Freedom of it, or of any or of all the Saints, shall be deficient on its part, then God cannot save him, for he hath tied himself up unto the Principles of the Liberty in the Will, to act or not to act according to its innate Liberty, and so according to this Principle he should swear by his Holy self to work what he is not able to work, nor can undertake to work. It may be objected, that something in *Abraham* was made the Cause of that Oath, *ver.* 16. *By my self have I sworn, saith the Lord; for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not with-held thy Son, thy only Son, that in blessing I will bless thee.* And therefore it was not an irrespective or an absolute Oath, but founded upon an Act of *Abraham*'s. 1*st*. I answer in general, The Papists (as *Pererius*) would draw this Particle *because*, (set before the Promise and Oath, *ver.* 17. and then again repeated, *v.* 18. and put after the Oath) to favour their Merits. And truly the Force of those Particles will as soon, yea rather make for their Merits than for God's having in his Decrees had a simple Fore-respect unto this famous Act of *Abraham*'s Obedience as foreseen, and upon the Foresight of which he should have thus immutably resolved, and taken up such a purpose in his Decrees: but it will serve the turn of neither.

Book 3.

Cum sit causale, & denotat causam meritoriam, non obscurè significatur. Abrahamum egregio illo facto, *meruisse* ut sibi tales promissiones à Deo darent. *Pererius* in verba.

1. Because the Promise or Matter sworn unto was given to *Abraham* long before this his high Act of Obedience, and therefore it cannot be the Merit of this Obedience, nor yet could the Foresight of this Obedience after to come, any way be the Ground of making that Promise; for it is the Promise that contains the Matter of the Oath sworn to. Now God long before this Oath gave the same Promise to *Abraham* without an Oath, which here he confirms with an Oath; *Gen.* 12. 2. *I will bless thee, and thou shalt be a Blessing, and in thee* (that is, in thy Seed, as here, *Gen.* 22.) *shall all the Families of the Earth be blessed*; (as here in *Heb.* 6. it is said, *all the Nations*, &c.) and the same again is in *Gen.* 18. 17, 18. And the Apostle also (*Heb.* 6.) affirms the same, by saying that the Promise had testified the same thing that this Oath did, and that the Oath was but a Confirmation thereof. If indeed the Promise had been but now first given upon his Obedience, there might have been some Colour for Merit, or a respective Decree, but so it was not. And it is inconsistent to think a Promise declar'd a long time before, should be in respect unto an Act that was to come after; for it must be something that had at that present been performed by *Abraham*, upon which, as foreseen, (if any thing foreseen had been the Ground of it) the Promise should have been declared. For it being so that at the giving of the Promise he was actually and indubitately estated thereinto, and possessed of it, it therefore must have been some present or former Act of Obedience, upon the respect of which (if any such Respect had been) the Promise should have begun to be uttered to him. Now in that *Gen.* 12. those Promises are said to have been given him at, and together with God's first Command and Invitement of him to go out of his own Country, and as antecedent to any Act of Obedience first put forth by him.

Thus

Part 1. Thus we have the Account in *ver.* 1, 2, 3. *Now the Lord had said unto* Abraham, *Get thee out of thy Country, and from thy Kindred, and from thy Father's House, unto a Land that I will shew thee. And I will make of thee a great Nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy Name great; and thou shalt be a Blessing. And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all the Families of the Earth be blessed.* There you have the Promises and the Date of them; and then his Obedience follows after as the Effect of those Promises uttered to him, and moving his Heart thereunto. Thus expressly (*ver.* 4.) it follows, *So* Abraham *departed as the Lord had spoken to him, &c.* So that of the two it must be said, that *Abraham* had rather an Eye and Respect unto the Promises first given absolutely unto him, than that God had a Respect unto *Abraham*'s Obedience foreseen, and that he did thereupon declare them. And it will remain that God's eternal Counsels had first resolved to do such and such things for *Abraham* out of mere Grace, and from thence put them into Promises, and utter'd them to *Abraham* without mention of respective Conditions, upon which he should give forth these Promises as foreseeing *Abraham* would do so or so, and those Promises drew his Heart to that Obedience upon the Manifestation of them.

But, 2. Altho we grant that these Promises and this Oath after them might have been given with a respect unto some former or present Act of Obedience, yet still the Decree or Counsel that determined to give those things promised, might still be, yea and was, absolute, that is, without respect to those Acts. Even as a Father may and doth often absolutely resolve within himself to give such and such good things to his Child, and yet defers giving the Promise of them to him until such or such an Act or Acts of Obedience are performed by him, and then in giving the Promise of them professeth an high Approbation of that Obedience, and as a Gratification or Remuneration of it to him, makes the Promise, altho the Counsel and Determination of it in his Heart had been absolute. And so indeed in Substance and Effect the Apostle speaks here, that both the Promise and Oath were but to shew or declare the Immutability of his Counsel and absolute Determination taken up before, so as still the Decree and the Immutability of it was fixed first, and God did but by these utter and declare it. It was not his Oath made his Counsel for the future immutable, but his Counsel being immutable, he did by his Oath shew it, and gave Demonstration thereof.

3. That singular Obedience was the Occasion of the Oath, as *Rivet* speaks. *By my self have I sworn it*, (says God) *because thou hast done this, and hast not withheld*, &c. But it was the Immutability of his Counsel that was the supreme Cause why *Abraham Did* that thing. It was that which was the Cause of that Obedience in *Abraham*, and of the Oath and all; and if he had not been greatly strengthned by the Promise before-given, which had absolutely declared and shewn what his Counsel was, *Abraham* had never arrived at so high an Act of gracious Obedience as this was.

Nor, 4. Would God for one singular Act of Obedience have sworn then his perpetual Perseverance, which was to consist in so many other Acts of Grace to succeed for so many Years yet to come till after *Abraham*'s Death, had not his own Grace immutably decreed it first, and therefore it was that he did not stick to make Declaration of it by an Oath irreversibly, which if it had been left to *Abraham*'s Will, only assisted with Power to persevere or not to persevere, (as 'tis said of all other Believers by the Arminians, that so they are left) God would never have ventured an Oath thus.

But, 5. What he sware to *Abraham* here, therein did God in Person swear to all *Abraham*'s Seed, the Heirs of Promise with him, whosoever they be, and therefore their Salvation and Perseverance is as sure as *Abraham*'s, tho they never do or did perform any such an high Act of Self-denial as *Abraham* here did. And therefore this must wholly flow from the Immutability of God's Counsel both towards *Abraham* and them all alike, or else *Abraham* had this promised him upon more hard and higher, yea unnatural Terms, than the rest have.

The Corollary which I infer from hence is, That the Promises of *Abraham*'s Salvation and ours are but Extracts, Transcripts of God's everlasting Decrees concerning Man's Salvation. His Counsels within himself are the Original, and those are the Types. The Matter of the Promises are the Decrees of Election. Promises are

are but God's inward Counsels put into Words and into Writing: As when a Man makes his Will which he had contrived within himself, he sets it down, and seals or swears to it before Witnesses. Or Promises are but the Expressions of Election but concerning Persons and things only. There is this differing Case between the Case of *Abraham* and *Isaac* in this Particular, that the Person of *Abraham* by Name was expressed in the Promise made of them. But the Promises made of the rest of the Seed are as to Persons made indefinitely, concerning whom the Persons are not named, but yet intending them very Persons, and them only, and therefore they are called Children of Promise as well and as much as *Isaac* was. And in that Place *Isaac* is called a Child of Promise, as he was an elect Child of God, and declared by Promise so to be, to prove Election, which is the Subject of that Chapter; and first *Isaac*, then *Jacob*'s Instance brought for the Proof of it. Book 3.

It is next to be consider'd, how doth this Oath, as to the Matter of it, belong to us?

1*st*. It doth, *re ipsa, in the Nature of the thing*, belong to us as well as to *Abraham*, and our Salvation is sworn to as well as *Abraham*'s, and therefore it is made sure whether we have attained the Assurance of it or no, if we be true Believers. And indeed I desire my Salvation to be no surer than *Abraham*'s was, and it is as sure by this Oath as his was.

2. Yet it tends to the same end that it was made for to *Abraham*, which was for the Confirmation of him in his Faith, and to us to give Assurance of Hope, *Heb.* 6. 11. for that is the Head of this Discourse, and he carries it along in his Eye, (*ver.* 17.) to give a strong Consolation, even as it served to give *Abraham* Assurance, so it serves to give us.

As for Observations upon this Oath, as it relates to us, and *Abraham*'s Example therein in the Tendency of it, to give us Assurance, I would consider this Oath two ways.

(1.) In the Matter of it, as it is to be made use of by all Believers as a Ground for them to attain Assurance by.

(2.) In the Circumstances of it, as by the Story it appears it was personal and singly given to *Abraham*, and God's Dealings with him in doing of it, are to be consider'd, which are not common to all Believers, but yet hold some parallel with God's Dispensations to some eminent Saints in the New Testament, as in relation to his giving Assurance to them, as he gave to *Abraham*.

My Observation upon the Oath in the Matter of it, as 'tis common to all is this, That the Immutability of God's Counsel in his electing Grace doth in the whole of it lie as a fit Object to all Believers, even the weakest, so as it is not only warrantable for them to have Recourse to it, and apply it to themselves, but it is their Duty. I shall prove and explain this by Parts.

1. That it belongs to all Believers, we have shewed before from *ver.* 17, & 18. But,

2. That which I observe for this purpose is, That his Scope was to relieve even the weakest. Do but observe how (*ver.* 18.) when he describes Believers, his Description of them is such as includes the weakest, and such as have not attained a Faith of Assurance but of Recumbency, altho the Faith of those that have Assurance may be included in that Description. Yea, in the general it may be observed in that Verse, that he speaks of Consolation, and strong Consolation, as of a thing which yet might be obtained as distinct from the Faith which he doth describe, for so the Words run. He speaks of their Consolation as of a thing which they might have for the future. But the Faith which he describes is *that* which in the time past all those had already attained, and might now attain to this strong Consolation, so that their strong Consolation is a distinct thing from their first Faith exercised at Conversion; and he chuseth to decipher all Believers by the Acts that were at first, tho continued still, that so he might be sure to include all the Seed. But let us examine every Word whereby he doth describe their Faith, and it will be found to be such as I have said, and which the weakest, even they that want Assurance, have.

1*st*. His first Expression, *We that have fled for Refuge*: This speaks the very Heart and Condition of one who at first begun to believe, and doth not necessarily import Assurance that he is saved, or that he shall certainly be saved. For it speaks

but

but his running and flying for Refuge and Shelter to be saved. And, as I said, it
Part 1. speaks the very Heart and Condition of such a Man at that time, and in his first Act of Believing, (tho he exerciseth it all his Life, whether with Assurance or without it) but his Condition at first is that which this holds forth. (1.) He hath a Sense of present Danger, and *that* the extremest, as a Man in danger of Death by reason of his own Sins that come upon him, together with an Apprehension that the Wrath of God abideth on him in the Estate he hath thereunto continued in. And so, (2.) Flies out of, and from that Condition, (and that word imports a *terminus à quo*) or, if you will, he flies *à Deo irato*, from an angry God, (or from out of that Dominion wherein there remains nothing but Wrath to him, if he continue therein) unto a God of Grace, and his Dominion of Grace in and through Christ, as the Scripture expresseth it, *Rom.* 5, & 6. And this his then Condition, and this Act of flying for Refuge thereupon, doth not necessarily contain in it Assurance of being saved, *&c.* but only a Hope that he may be saved from the Wrath to come, even as Coming to Christ imports a Believing on Christ, that we may be saved, (as Christ speaks when he says, *Come unto me that ye may have Life*) as also a Believing on Christ that we may be justified, as the Apostle's Speech is, which imports not a Knowledg that we are justified, or that we have Life. And thus much the Metaphor here barely insinuates, whether it be taken for one that is in danger of his Life, and seeks to save it by flying to another Dominion, or to a Privilege-place, as the Murderer fled to the City of Refuge, *Numb.* 35. not as then knowing he should be able to arrive thither, or whether the Gates would be set open to him, or whether it be taken for such a Flight as that of *Joab* to the Horns of the Altar. And all we Believers may from our Experience well know that the first Acts of Faith at Conversion, and perhaps for a long while after, were but such as these: And yet we can all say, we (seeing our lost Condition) have fled for Refuge all of us.

2dly. If we consider what it is to lay hold on the Hope set before us, the Question here may be about the word *Hope*, whether the thing hoped for should be that intended, or the Hope which out of the Gospel offers it self to, and riseth up in and to a Man's own Heart and Apprehensions, from what is in and out of the Revelation of Grace made therein. And thus we may take Hope for the Grounds thereof set before the Soul in the Gospel, together with the Hopes which they beget in Mens Hearts upon the Revelation of them, that the Salvation spoken of may be theirs, and he or they may be the Person that shall obtain it. This I find to be the Sense of *Calvin*, and of the most considerative late Interpreters, and my main Reason (as theirs also seems to be) is, that in the next Verse he says, *which Hope we have as an Anchor*, &c. Now the Hope there compared to the Anchor of the Soul must be the Hope which a Man hath in his own Heart for himself to obtain it, and it cannot agree to the Object of Hope or thing hoped for, since the things hoped for are such, for which this Anchor is cast into within the Vail.

Certè in vocabulo spei est metonymia, effectus pro causa accipitur: Ego promissionem intelligo cui spes innititur; neque enim iis assentior qui spem accipiunt pro re sperata. *Calvin.* in verba. *Thus also* Cameron, Jacobus Capellus, Gomarus.

And I add not simply the Act of Hope in our Hearts, but withal the Grounds of that Hope, as arising from out of the Revelation of the Gospel: Or as *Calvin* doth most aptly express it, *confidendi materiam, the Matter of Hoping*, there being in the word *Hope*, as he says, a Metonymy of the Effect for the Cause, and so the Promise on which Hope bears up it self and is grounded, is connotated in that word *Hope*. So then I expound the Words thus, That to a Man truly a working upon by the Spirit of God, the same Spirit (as he is a Spirit of Faith to him) doth begin to raise up in his Heart a Hope from some Declarations or other in the Gospel, about the Grace of God, and the Intent of Christ coming into the World, and the Tenor of such Promises laying forth this before him, *that there is an Hope* for him that he may be saved, notwithstanding his sinful Condition; as 'tis said, *There is Hope in* Israel *concerning this thing*. And he is said to *lay hold on this Hope*, which the Spirit of God hath thus raised up to him and in him, as a Man is said to lay hold on the Hopes of such a Preferment, which the Intimations of the Person in whose Power it is, set before him, and he resolves not to let slip the Opportunity of it, but to put in and seek it with all his Might. So here, this Believer lays hold fast upon the Hopes that have been begotten in him, and the Grounds thereof, and will not cast them away, but holds them fast, and that strongly too (as the word signifies) with all his Might, and he will not at any hand *forsake those Mercies* which he hopes may be *his* own.

Hope

Hope is taken here, as *Cameron* would have it, in opposition to an utter Despondency, whereby a Man doth cast away all Hope, and lets all go; as they in the Prophet, who said, *there is no Hope.* Now then this also does not necessarily speak full Assurance, but a Faith rather that wants it. For, Book 3.

1. Because that 'tis barely and simply called *Hope*, with distinction from full *Assurance of Hope*, in *ver.* 11. here is the Hope of the Recumbent expressed, but there the Hope of one fully ascertained and ensured. And again, this Hope is distinct from *Consolation* in the same *ver.* 18. And Hope thus singly taken in this Distinction, (*ver.* 11.) speaks a lower Matter than Assurance: and we use in ordinary Phrase to say of a Matter we are not fully certain of, *I hope well.* Under the Old Testament, when Assurance was so rare a thing, for they were generally under Bondage, their Faith was expressed by this, *those that hope in his Mercy.* I observe there is Hope, as it is in us sometimes single and simply said, and there is a good Hope, which is rising up to some Degrees of Assurance. And in all Languages when we would express Hopes that are exceeding promising, we call them good Hopes, when yet we are not sure; and this word we have, 2 *Thess.* 2. 16. *Now our Lord Jesus Christ, and God even our Father, which hath loved and given us everlasting Consolation, and given us good Hopes through Grace, comfort your Hearts*; that is, more and more with further Degrees. And that Consolation which is already vouchsafed but under good Hopes, is yet called *Everlasting*, because it is such as will not (finally) be taken from us, tho suffering many Interruptions at present. The Consolation under such good Hope is everlasting Consolation, but it riseth not up to strong Consolation, which the Apostle says they may here attain, and which those that have an Anchor that holds fast may yet want.

2. This Hope is said to be set before them to lay hold on, because the Groundwork and Foundation is in the Promises, and the Things declared in the Gospel, which give the Heart this Hope for its own Salvation. As for example, the Promise being indefinitely expressed concerning some; and that there is a Seed shall be made Partakers of it; and that Christ died for Sinners; by such Promises as these indefinitely expressed doth the Spirit of God work a Hope in the Heart of the weakest Believer, and causes the Heart to think with it self, why may not *I* be the Man that shall obtain? And from such Expressions set before us, the Heart doth gather it self up into Hope, and by the Power of God lays hold on them in such Gospel-Manifestations that may give it Hope. As to *Benhadad*'s Servants, a Word, tho afar off, did give them Hope concerning the Life of their Master, and they laid hold upon it: and says the Soul, take away this Hope and you take away my Life. The Devil comes and perswades a Man to cast it away; but says the Soul, I have laid hold on it, and I will never let it go; I will hold it and keep it, and hold to it: And tho neither of these Words either of laying hold, or that it is said to be *set before us*, do express that we have possession of it, or Apprehensions that it is ours already, but that we view it before us; and likewise the word *to lay hold*, or to retain so fast as I will not let it go, is short from being a Perswasion that it is already mine, but argues indeed that I would have it mine, and therefore lay hold upon it, and seek it that it may be mine, and that I would keep it for mine, yet with Hopes it shall never be taken away.

3. That Similitude of an Anchor, tho it would seem to express an Assurance of Hope, in that it's called *sure and stedfast*, is more enclining to express the Hope of a Recumbent, than Assurance of Hope: for he that casts Anchor, casts Anchor in the dark, blindfold as it were in the bottom of the Sea. It expresses a pure Act of Faith, joined with Hope of what a Man sees not, and it is usually cast in Extremities, just as when a Man fears he may be cast away, knows not but he may; and when he casts it, he knows not whether it will take hold of the Ground or no; and sometimes it comes back again. And whereas 'tis said, 'tis an Anchor sure and stedfast, it follows not that he speaks in respect of a Man's own Apprehension, but 'tis so *re ipsa*, in the nature of the thing it self, through God that secretly strengthens it. That weak Hope which a poor Believer hath doth stay it, and but stay it, as a Ship in a Storm, that it shall not split upon Rocks of Despair. God makes a mere *it may be*, and who knows but that God will be merciful to a Man, which is as slender a Hope as may be, and as a weak Straw for holding the Heart in a great Extremity of Temptation, and yet God makes it as strong to hold the Heart that it shall

Part 1. not sink or be cast away, as the strongest Cable that is. It is sure, because it breaks not, snaps not asunder as the Ropes of the Anchor use to do; and it is stedfast, because where it hath took hold, there it sticks, and holds the Will as firm to cleave to God, that he will not let him go till he bless him and assure him, when the Assurance in the understanding of the Party, that God will certainly save him, may be fluctuating, and in that respect his Soul be cast up and down, and ready to sink, and that in the Storms of Doubtings to the contrary. Therefore it doth not necessarily imply Fulness of Assurance.

CHAP. VI.

How absolute Election and absolute Promises are the Ground of Faith of Recumbency.

THE Ground of all Faith is an Expression of God in his Word, which is either a Command or a Promise. Now the Grounds of Justifying Faith are accordingly the Promises of Justification and Salvation by Christ contained in the Word, and the Command of God to rest on them for their Salvation. Now that which I would establish is this, that indefinite Promises may be and are sufficient Ground to draw the Heart in to believe. By indefinite Promises I understand such as are not made universally to all Men, as some would have the Promises run, as that God hath loved all, and Christ died for all; nor such as particularly design out the Persons that shall be saved, or are intended, (as conditional Promises do, and the Promise first made to *Abraham* personally did design out himself as intended): but they are called Indefinite, because they mention that only some of the Sons of Men are intended by God, not all; and that without mentioning particularly or personally who those Persons are. So as they are not indefinite as leaving the thing promised uncertain, for Salvation is absolutely pronounced unto some of the Sons of Men, but only because they design not the Persons who are certainly intended. Such are those Promises, *Christ came into the World to save Sinners*; *God was in Christ reconciling the World*; which is made the Matter of the Gospel's Ministry. And tho the Promulgation of this be made to all Men, *(Preach the Gospel to every Creature)* yet this is not the Gospel to be preached that God hath promised to save every Creature, tho upon this Promulgation of them it becomes the Duty of every one to come to Christ, and a Command is laid on Men to do it. Now a Soul that is newly humbled looks out for a Promise upon which he may come to Christ. He cannot rest on Promises conditional, for he sees no Qualifications of Faith or any Grace in himself. 'Tis true, says that Soul, *He that believeth shall be saved*, but I am now to begin to believe, and have not Faith yet; and what Ground will you give me of Believing? For this there is no Answer, but to lay such Promises before him; *God so loved the World, that he gave his only Son*; *Christ came into the World to save Sinners*, &c. But how (will the Soul say) should I know I am one? That, I say, all the World cannot yet assure thee of; no Promise is so general as certainly to include thee, none so certain as to design thee. How then, says the Soul? Say I, they are all indefinite, and exclude thee not, they leave thee with an *it may be thou mayst be the Man*; and it is certain some shall be saved, and there is nothing in thee shuts thee out, for God hath and will save such as thou art, and he may intend thee. As therefore there is in such Promises a Certainty of the thing promised, that it shall be made good to some, so there is an Indefiniteness to whom, with a full Liberty that it may be to thee. Now if the Heart answer but the Promise, two things are begotten in it.

1. An Assurance of the thing promised, that the Promise is as true as that God is, which is the Assurance *James* requires, *ch.* 1.

2. But then concerning the Party's own Interest that is to believe, the Soul is not assured, nor can be, that he is one intended, till he hath indeed believed; but the Indefiniteness of the Promise begets only an Hopefulness that he may be intended, and that is all that can be required of such a Soul, and enough to draw forth (if his Assent be spiritual) true Acts of Justifying Faith, of trusting, waiting, coming to Christ,

Christ, &c. which when the Command shall also back and urge him in particular unto it, and make it a necessary Duty to him, (tho yet he knows not certainly he shall be accepted) all this serves to draw him on to Faith through the Power of the Spirit accompanying both. Book 3.

Now that such indefinite Promises back'd with the Command, are Grounds sufficient enough to draw on such Acts of Faith, there are these Proofs.

1. We have the first in *Heb.* 4. 11. *Let us labour therefore to enter into that Rest, lest any Man fall after the Example of Unbelief.* By *entring into Rest* there, he means Faith; *ver.* 3. *We who have believed do enter into Rest.* It appears also from the Opposition when he says, *Lest any fall after the Example of Unbelief*; so as he evidently exhorts unto Faith. Now this Exhortation, *Let us therefore endeavour to enter in, or truly to believe*, and so take heed of a false Faith, is an Inference of some thing said before. Now what was it the Apostle had mainly driven at in all his Discourse before? even this, that there was a Promise of Rest, (*ver.* 1.) and of a Rest that remains for the People of God, *ver.* 9. More particularly if you examine what Promise this is upon which he exhorts to Faith, it is expressed plainly in the *6th* Verse; *Seeing it remains that some must enter into Rest, let us therefore endeavour*, &c. This was not an universal Promise that all Men might enter in and be saved, nay it is the contrary, for this Promise was fetch'd by the Apostle out of an Oath God had made against some that they should not enter in, for so it is in the *5th* Verse, *If they shall enter into my Rest.* It is such a Promise as shews that some are excluded with an Oath, it is a Promise that in the Letter of it hath Swearing in it that some shall not enter, and is but by Implication or Illation a Promise that some shall. It is indefinite, for he says, that only some must enter in, not naming who, but only speaks of some, and so leaves it, yet with a Certainty of the thing promised unto some, in saying some must enter in. There is a *must* put upon it, that some shall and must: In the *9th* Verse he calls those, for whom the Rest remains, *the People of God, the Elect*, and yet upon this indefinite Promise he exhorts every one. He says not only, *Let us (viz.* all) *endeavour to enter in*; but (*ver.* 1.) he says more expressly, *Let us fear lest a Promise being left*, (or forsaken of us) *any of you should come short of it*: So as tho it is but an indefinite Declaration of God's Mind to save some, yet every one is bound to put in for it, and to take heed that not any one fall short.

2. I shall prove this by Reason. *1st.* If the Indefiniteness of God's Mind declared concerning his Intent of saving but some be not sufficient Ground to Faith, then all those Divines whose Judgments having been for particular Election and Reprobation, and so they must needs understand the Mind of God's Promises not to be universal, could never have come to have believed savingly, which would be too hard a Censure. Since therefore the Indefiniteness of the Promise was the Ground of their believing, this also may be Ground sufficient to any Man's Faith.

2dly. Faith in us is to be but answering unto, and conforming to the Promise in the Word; and if it be, it may be true Faith: Now there are Promises in the Word that speak but indefinitely, that speak *but it may be's.* Thus *Moses* propounds the Promise to the People when they had sinned, *I will go to the Lord*, (says he) *peradventure I shall make an Atonement for you.* Thus the Ninevites reason too, *Jonah* 3. 10. *Who knows but the Lord may be merciful?* And yet this wrought Repentance, as Christ tell us. So likewise speaks *Joel*, ch. 2. 13, 14. *Turn unto the Lord, for he is gracious and merciful, and repenteth him of the Evil; who knows if he will return and repent?*

3dly. In temporal Promises Believers exercise true Acts of Faith, and it is required of them to believe about them; and yet these Promises are but indefinite, not absolute to their Persons, tho it is certain that God will perform them to some: Now wherefore why may it not be as well thus in matter of Salvation?

4thly. Answerably the Acts of Faith themselves required of us, are sutable to such Promises. Trusting, and waiting, and coming to Christ, and casting ones self upon him, are the Acts of Application in our Faith. Now these are indefinite Acts of the Soul, *i. e.* which are and may be performed when we know not certainly that the thing shall be ours, or that we shall obtain it. They are often performed by Men in other cases with the greatest Venture that may be, as in *Benhadad*'s Servants that put Ropes about their Necks, and Sackcloth on their Loins, *Peradventure* (say they) *he will save our Lives.* Thus Men come to Christ, *John* 6. 37. when they

Part 1. know not but they may be caſt out. Yea, ſuch a Submiſſion is an Act of Faith, and hath its chief Exerciſe in caſe of not knowing that a Man is certainly intended.

5thly. Where there is but a true Hopefulneſs, there may be Faith; 1 *Pet.* 1. 21. *That your Faith and Hope might be in God.* And to beget an Hope, the indefinite Promiſes do ſerve ſufficiently. This Saying, *that Chriſt died to ſave Sinners,* I not knowing but I may be one, may breed Hope. If you had no Promiſe, then indeed you were *without Hope*; Epheſ. 2. 12. *Without Hope, without Promiſe:* But where there is but a Promiſe indefinitely revealed, there may Hope be begotten; and where Hope is, there may and ought Endeavours to be, and ſo an endeavouring to enter in and to believe: when thou canſt not ſay to the contrary, then there is Hope concerning this thing, *Ezra* 10. 2. And if there be ſo, then there may be Faith of Recumbency, or truſting on Chriſt to perform it to me.

6thly. Where Love may be begotten, there may Faith or Truſt alſo, for Faith works by Love; but Love may be begotten when there is not a Certainty that we ſhall obtain. How many fall in love that are taken with a Perſon's Excellency and Beauty, and Sutableneſs to them, tho they have but little Hope, no Aſſurance they ſhall obtain the Party's good Will? This we ſee daily in humane Experience, and why may it not be ſo in this Caſe? Yes, we ſee it to be in many that love God for his being good to Sinners, *&c.* tho they apprehend not certainly that he will be ſo to themſelves. And if Love to God is thus produc'd, why may not Faith or Truſt be ſo begotten? Yea, is not the pureſt and greateſt Truſt ſhewn in putting ones ſelf into the Hands of a Spirit whom we know to be noble, tho we certainly know not how he will deal with us?

7thly. The main thing that is in Faith, and which draws on the Heart to cleave to the Goodneſs of the Promiſe, is the Sight of the things promiſed in their Reality. Thus it appears through the whole 11*th* Chapter of the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews,* that Faith being the Evidence of things not ſeen, they ſaw and were perſwaded of them, and embraced the Promiſes. Now therefore if there be but a ſpiritual Sight, and Aſſurance, and Perſwaſion of the Exiſtence, and Worth, and Excellency of the Things promiſed, (as Chriſt's Righteouſneſs, Juſtification, *&c.*) tho the Aſſurance of the Intereſt be wanting and be left but indefinite, this will cauſe the Heart to venture all for them, and to rely on God, and come unto Chriſt, and this is enough. On the other ſide, if it were a Truth that God intended and had promiſed to ſave all, and this were preached and believed, yet if Men ſaw not the Excellency of things promiſed, the Perſwaſion of their Intereſt would not move them.

8thly. It is plain Peeviſhneſs not to come in to Chriſt upon ſuch indefinite Promiſes. It is ſuch an obſtinate Temper as was in them who would not believe unleſs he would come off the Croſs. Thus Men will not come to him unleſs he will aſſure them by a general Promiſe that all may be ſaved, and are intended, and ſo themſelves particularly. 'Tis as if Men ſhould ſay, We will not go to Church, for there is not room for all; and unleſs a Church be built into which all may come, we will not ſtir. You do not ſo in caſe of Advantage or Preferment: Men uſe all Endeavours for a Place or a Living which many put in for, and but one can obtain it. *Tho all run,* ſays the Apoſtle, *yet but one obtains*; and yet the Worth and Glory of the thing moves, becauſe it is a Crown, 1 *Cor.* 9. 25. So why ſhould it not be here? Yea, if you be affected with the things themſelves, you will be glad to venture.

9thly. Upon ſuch indefinite Promiſes it becomes a Duty to come to Chriſt for Life, and God may back ſuch Promiſes with a Command juſtly, and therefore Faith may be wrought, and Men are to come in upon ſuch Promiſes. Many Duties are commanded upon mere Uncertainties: Thus the believing Wife is commanded to ſtay with her Husband; *For what knoweſt thou* (ſays the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 7. 16.) *but thou mayſt ſave thy Husband?* In like manner doth God command thee to go to Chriſt for Salvation, altho his Promiſe holds forth but a *what knowſt thou but thou mayſt ſave thy Soul,* and wilt thou not go to him? So then altho the Promiſe were but uncertain in reſpect of its Performance to thee, yet it is certain that God commands thee upon this to go to Chriſt and truſt on him, and give thy Soul up to him; and this Command is not indefinite but univerſal, and therefore a Soul eying both, hath full Ground to come in.

But

But yet let me add this, that together with the indefinite Promise to save, God, where he works Faith, conveys a secret hint to the Soul whom he draws to believe, of his Mind, and good Will, and Inclination towards it. Christ doth some way or other break his Mind to it, and God gives the Heart a special Ticket of Favour from himself over and above that indefinite Revelation in the Word e're the Soul will come at him, which is part of that teaching of the Father, meant *John* 6. 45, 46. *He that hath heard and learnt of the Father, comes unto me.* God whispers in a Man's Ear that which doth specially incourage him, and so Christ also doth by his Spirit. Thus it is said, (*John* 10. 3.) that Christ *calleth his own Sheep by Name, and they hear his Voice.* The meaning is, that whereas there is a general Invitation goes to Mens Ears to come to Christ, and a general indefinite Proclamation, which all Men living in the Church do hear or may hear; and this is the Voice of us Ministers, and God's Voice in and by us; yet there is conveyed with this a secret Voice, and private Ticket, and Impress on their Hearts whom God means to save, of special Mercy towards them: which Voice only his own Sheep hear, whom also he is said to call by Name, to shew it is thus particular, it being a special Intimation, as if a Man were called by Name, as *Cyrus* was call'd by Name: and as of *Moses*, God says, that he knew him by Name, *i. e.* took special notice of him; so doth Christ of those whom he calls by Name, and that makes them follow him. And the want of this is given as the Reason (*John* 10. 26, 27.) why the Jews believed not; for Christ says, *They were not his Sheep:* and therefore in the dispensing the Promises he did not thus speak to their Hearts as to Believers he did, for he adds, *My Sheep hear my Voice,* (the Voice before-mentioned) *and I know them, and they follow me.* He brings this as the Reason why he dispensed not that Voice to them, and the want of that he assigns to be the Cause why they believed not. And if you consider *ver.* 16. it will appear that the Reason they are not called his Sheep, is not because they believe not already: for there he calls those his Sheep whom he had not yet brought in, whom yet I must bring in, (says he) and how will he bring them in? *They shall hear my Voice*; he will call them by Name too, as he had done others. And therefore (says he) this is the Reason why you, being not of my Sheep, believe not, for if you were, I would speak to your Hearts, and cause you to hear my Voice, and to come in; which because I vouchsafe not to you, therefore it is ye believe not.

Now concerning this secret Hint or Ticket given, which I make to be in Faith, let me add this to prevent mistakes. I do not mean that it is always so loud a Voice as shall quell and prevail against Doubts in a Man's Sense, so as to triumph with Assurance that Christ is his: no, that is not the Extent of it; for we should condemn a Generation of righteous Men, if I, or any other should teach so; but it is such a special Intimation as really gains the Heart, and incourageth it to come to Christ, and carries it on against Discouragements, and it doth the Deed so prevalently, as that they follow Christ where-ever he goes, and will never leave him. To explain my meaning further, you must consider, that in the speaking of a Spirit in and to our Spirit, tho the Voice be entertained, yet it is not always distinctly discerned to be from another. Satan when he works effectually on the Children of Disobedience, (2 *Thess.* 2. 9, 10.) so as he makes them believe the Lie of Popery, yet their Souls perceive not a Voice of Satan distinct from their own Thoughts, for then they would not believe the Error, but their Hearts close with the Suggestions of the Devil; and as soon as cast in, they are entertained as their own Thoughts, yet upon Satan's effectual working. Thus when the Spirit of Christ from Christ speaks the Mind of Christ to the Soul to cause it to believe in him that is true, it follows not it should discern that Voice distinct from its own Thoughts in its own Sense, but his own Thoughts from it effectually entertain such an Apprehension so as to carry him on to Christ. And the Reason is, because every Thought in a Spirit, such as the Soul is, is a kind of Speech, it is called λόγος, and therefore the very Speeches of the Spirit cast in are often not discerned from the Man's own. Thus if a Man's Ear did form Sounds in it self, and Voices in it self, then a secret Whisper would not be discerned from its own Noises, as a loud Voice would be. There is a loud Voice of the Holy Ghost coming as a Witness to assure, and then he speaks so loud and so distinctly as a Man discerns it to be distinct from his own Spirit, and infallibly to be the Voice of God; and it is as if a Voice from Heaven should say, *Thy Sins are forgiven:* but this first Voice of Christ in the Extent of it being to carry the

Part 1. the Heart on to Christ, and not to assure it; therefore it is not always discerned as distinct, yet so as the Heart is taught effectually this Lesson to go to Christ; and that other Voice is therefore call'd a Witness, because it hath relation to this Hint given to put it out of question. It is like the secret Scent a Blood-hound hath gotten of the Hart that is struck, when the Master hath bad it *go seek*, which tho he see not the Hart, yet it carries him on till he find him out: So this secret Voice of the Spirit, tho it prevails not against Doubts in a Man's Sense, yet it carries him on against Discouragements, there being an Impression of Christ's special Inclinableness to it, which cannot be worn out by any Temptation.

Now if this be in Faith, (as you see it is) then it is not an easy Work; for you see Christ vouchsafes not this to all to whom the Gospel is preach'd, he did not vouchsafe it to those Jews who heard the outward Voice of his Mouth as a Minister of Circumcision, and who believed not because they heard not his special Voice, which he did not vouchsafe because they were not his own Sheep. Can all the Angels in Heaven, or Ministers on Earth, procure this Voice to you? or bring you News of it? No, and yet without it the Heart makes not out after Christ; and therefore *Paul* makes this to be the great Difficulty to bring a natural Man in to believe, because all his Understanding cannot know God's Mind in the Word unless the Spirit reveal it; *Who knows the Mind of a Man but the Spirit that is in him? so nor doth any know the deep things of God but his Spirit*, who is a Privy-Counsellor, and is in his Bosom: And therefore he concludes to shut Nature out herein; *Who hath known the Mind of the Lord? but we have the Mind of Christ*, 1 Cor. 2. 16.

CHAP. VII.

How the Faith of a Believer should depend on Electing Grace for Salvation.

THO a Believer views God's electing Love, and depends on it for his Salvation, yet he doth not so commit his Soul to that one single Act of God's chusing Persons, as so to rely on it, that God having chosen Mens Persons on his part, they themselves should care to do nothing as on their Parts. No, this is the highest degree of Profaneness and Contempt, and a perverting of our whole Christian Religion, and to bring in that of *Simon Magus*, and indeed the *Devil's Divinity*, for he was the most famous Sorcerer in the World; *Acts* 8. 9, 10, 11. It was DEPTHS, as they themselves termed their Doctrine; but the Holy Ghost, who penn'd the Epistle, animadverts upon it, and calls them *Depths*, Rev. 2. 20, 25. The *Gnosticks* took no other part of the Christian Profession but that, *By Grace ye are saved*; and so left Men unto a licentious Liberty, which *Peter* speaks of, 2 *Pet.* 2. 19. *Whilst they promise them* (*i. e.* their Disciples) *LIBERTY, they themselves are the Servants of Corruption:* That was the latter part of their Doctrine; and *Jude* supplies the forepart in saying, (*ver.* 4.) that they *turn'd the Grace of our God unto Lasciviousness:* And yet even this hath been affixed as a Calumny upon them that profess the Doctrine of *irrespective Election.* I will therefore explain in these following Particulars the true Dependance of a believing Soul upon electing Love for Salvation.

1. A Soul who hath begun to be wrought upon by *tasting how good the Lord is* in his Electing Grace, or (as the Apostle speaks, *Col.* 1. 6.) *since the Day he first heard of it, and knew the Grace of God in Truth*, hath been affected with it, casts himself upon it to be saved. And so quick and speedy, and operative was the Power of God in the Ministry of those first times; and to such a height did their *Convert-hearers* ascend, as to apply themselves unto a Dependance on *that Grace* for their Salvation. Where God hath thus begun it in us (and we cannot begin any good thing unless God himself begins) we may look toward his electing Love: Nor is any Man fit to look towards the *Grace of God in Election*, till God awaken him with the gracious Knowledg of it, no more than a Sinner not yet convinced of his Sin by Nature, and his being under the Wrath of God for Sin, will ever *look after Christ* as a Saviour.

2. It is not my Design to consider whether all Saints, from their first Conversion, know this *Grace of God* in Election, as that Grace upon which Salvation doth depend; but whether sooner or later (as God pleaseth to dispense greater Discoveries of

of Grace to him) and whenever his Soul begins to take in the Sense and Savour of this Grace, he should follow on with might and main in his Inquest after it. Let him *follow on to know the Lord* and his Grace, and *God will rain down Righteousness upon him*, as the Prophet speaks in the Psalmist's Words. Let him *follow hard after him*, where the Words in the Original are, *follow him behind, i. e.* If thou shouldst lose that sight of his Face, and the *Taste that he is good* begins to grow less and less in thy Heart; yea, and he to try thee, turns away his Face from thee; yea, and turns his Back on thee, as offering to go away, then down on thy Knees, and like an *importunate* Beggar *follow him behind*, and with the most vehement Earnestness desire him to give thee his Grace, and that Manifestation of his Face again, that overcame and took thy Heart at the first, and then thou shalt be saved. Book 3.

3. Let such a Soul be sure to look at and take all along with him, the *whole Complex* of God's *Methods and holy Purposes and Decrees of Grace* belonging to the Doctrine of Election. Now there are *two sorts of Decrees*, the *first* is an Act of *Absolute Election of the Persons* that are elected unto Salvation; the *other* is of the MEANS *by* which and *through* which God brings Men unto Salvation, who are in that manner elected. And both these are decreed with the *same Peremptoriness*, as to the decreeing of each, and with like Absoluteness indispensably: so as no Man ever was or will be saved, without his diligent Attendance to the Decree of the *Means*, as well as to that of his *Salvation*, which is the *Decree of the End*, as we call it. And the putting these two together doth pave *the way of seeking God according to Election*, compleat. These two sorts of Decrees we find distinguished and stated to our Hands; 2 *Thess.* 2. 13. *God hath from the beginning chosen you* (*viz.* your Persons) *to Salvation.* With that he begins, and this is that *Election* first mentioned, *Ephes.* 1. 4. And it is our Foundation, that is, of our *Persons elected*, and also of *all things* else, (the Means) decreed in order to our Salvation: and these two Decrees are alike fixed, and made absolutely necessary to be attended to; but the latter as *subordinate*, or rather *subservient* to the other, and ordained to accomplish and bring unto *effect* that first *Original Act*, the Election of our Persons, by bringing us to *that Salvation* which was ordained to us. And this *Decree* of the *Means* the Apostle subjoins in those Words, *Through Sanctification of the Spirit, and Belief of the Truth*, that is, *of the Gospel*, which in New-Testament-Speech has that Title, *the Truth*, by way of Eminency. Which two *Means* are indeed no other than a *true saving justifying Faith, and Holiness of Heart, and new Obedience.* And these two, as they are the decreed *Means* to bring us to that *end* of Salvation, so they are *Parts* or *Pieces* of that *Salvation it self*, which we were chosen unto by the first Decree, and which God has ordained, not as *Conditions* of that *original Act*, of which he had said before, *He had chosen us from the beginning unto Salvation.* Conditions they are not, in any Sense, either of the *Arminians*, who would have a Man acknowledg when he has truly believed that then he is actually elected, and not before: (Now according to our Doctrine, God chuses no Man *for* his Faith, but *unto* Faith, and *through* Faith;) Or of those other Divines that orthodoxly do hold Election of Persons, who do call them *quasi* Conditions, but *as it were* Conditions, no more than a Pepper-corn, if it be required, as an Acknowledgment of a Rent-Farm, which is the lowest diminutive Term. But I am afraid to give it, lest it should diminish from the Praise of the Glory of God's Free Grace, and lest he should not brook it.

There are two Points which God is especially tender of; that of Justification is the one, and his Free Grace in Election is the other. But God is especially tender in point of Election; for that Act is wholly within himself, wherein he has no Creature to look on, but the Ideas of us which himself hath formed, and represents us to himself by. In which first Act also within himself, his Grace, the highest Principle in him, assumes to himself the most sovereign absolute Freedom. If you come to that Point with him, (and it is of that Point he speaks it) God in his Sovereignty proclaims, (*Rom.* 11. 35.) *Whoever hath first given him, he shall be recompensed*, be it but a Pepper-corn. I am afraid to diminish an Hair from God, in speaking what will have the Sound or Preference of the least such appearance in the point of Justification. It is not the proud Notion of MERIT only, (tho the Primitive Fathers used the Word in a good Sense, but our Protestants have generally avoided it) but of Works too must be exploded. God loves not Faith as a Work, tho

Part 1. tho it saves his Children whom he loves, much less will he admit it to be consider'd in Election, which is a purely pure Act of himself within himself. Besides, I cannot see that what is a part of Salvation it self (at least the beginning of it) should have put upon it the Nature of a Condition. If a Father should say, Marry my Daughter, upon a Condition that you marry her, I should think he at least speaks not so properly; for to marry her is to have the Person her self, and not the Condition of having her. And whereas the Scripture says, *Look unto me all the Ends of the Earth, and be ye saved:* Looking (there) unto him, is not the Condition of being saved, but that whereby we are saved, and so *he that believes hath eternal Life.* Marrying a Man's Daughter (in the case mentioned) is not a Condition, but an essential Ingredient into the constitutive Nature of the thing, and the Means of enjoying her Person.

Both the Decree of, and *Production* of the Means decreed, is in Scripture-Expression termed *the FRUITS* which flow from his original Decree of the Election of the Persons, in the virtue of which God bestows them; and God's Choice of the Person is the Cause of our performing them, according to that of the Psalmist, (Psal. 65.) *Blessed is the Man whom thou chusest,* (there is the first Decree, and then follows) *and CAUSEST to approach unto thee.* So as the bestowing of these *Means* which we are to observe and perform, are seminally contained in the Choice of the Person, and in the Love out of which he is chosen. Yea, the Love that God bears to the Person chosen, is that which moveth God's Heart to appoint the Means, and then to work the Means in the Heart. Yea further, this Love moves God to the Act of Election it self, and is therefore the original Grace of all Grace, even as that we call Original Sin is the Cause and Matrix of all Sin. Let no Man therefore (this being the Order of God's Decrees) separate what God hath inseparably and unalterably joined.

5. Hence, and above all, the principal Object which I propose to your Eye and Pursuance, is this Love and Grace which was and is in God's Heart, and is *that* Love which is the Cause of all, but especially of working Faith, and quickning at the first, and ever after, according to *Ephes.* 2. 3, 4, 5. Yea, this Love and Grace is the Cause of Election it self, and of all the Fruits of it; *Ephes.* 2. 3, 4, 5. *But God who is rich in Mercy, for his great Love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in Sins, hath quickned us together with Christ, (by Grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly Places in Christ Jesus.* It hath been even his Love from everlasting which hath done it, according to that in *Jeremy,* ch. 31. *I have loved thee with an everlasting Love.* Let the Soul then infinitely admire that Love, and possess his Heart with all the royal and glorious Properties of it, as that it is Free, Absolute, Unchangeable, Everlasting, *&c.* as follows in those Royal Titles in which the Scriptures do array and present it to the Sons of Men; and let him admire and adore, that the Great God should love so well his mere Creatures; out of which Love that absolute Decree of Election did then flow, and all those Purposes concerning the Means, which that Love all along continued unto a Man's Conversion, and doth *then* work, and put them in execution, unto Salvation it self: (for this Love is *Actus continuus,* as the eternal Generation of his *Son* is, and yet from everlasting, *both:*) So as at and before (yea, unto the very Moment before) a Man's Conversion, it is one and the same Love, for the Substance of it, that at any time was or shall be, and it is the same Love which wrought Conversion it self, and which works every good Work in us that belongs unto Salvation; tho according to the *general Rules of his own Word* he hath obliged himself from discovering it any way, no, not to the Men themselves, until that *Fulness of time* be come, appointed by *his secret Will,* for every elect Man's first Conversion and Calling. And therefore this *Love* is the Principal, Principle, and Object, which is to be addressed unto and pleaded, and God plied with the utmost Intensness of a Man's Soul and earnest Diligence, both for the Manifestation of it self after Conversion, and also to convert a Man who is as yet to be converted. And this I eminently propose to be noted in this *seeking of God in the way of Election*; and my Proposal of it is for two Uses or Improvements of it, in the matter of Election.

1*st.* That the Soul may implore this *Love* and the *Grace* of it, *to manifest and discover it self unto the Soul of the Person* by an intuitive Light of the Spirit, joined with

with a Word of Promise, with an overpowering Efficacy, as when in Prayer God sometimes answers, *Thou art a Person so beloved!* Book 3.

2dly. That the Soul may also wait with the most vehement Expectations and Longings, (with a *Neck stretched out*, as the Apostle's Word is) how the Work of God goes on in him, and how the Discoveries of God's Grace do rise and spring up in him unto a more perfect Day.

3dly. That the Soul may humbly beseech that pure Free Love, both to fulfil all and each of those designed Graces and Blessings decreed together with that Act of Election; to fetch and dig out every Grace thou wanteſt, or art deficient in, in the Exercise thereof, and to draw it forth out of that full and inexhaustible Mine of Glory which is in God's Grace; *Phil.* 4. 19. *God shall supply all your need according to the Riches of his Glory by Jesus Christ.* And the Soul is to regard all and each of these *consequential Fruits* that spring from such a Love, and were as peremptorily decreed to be in a Subordination, as Fruits of that great Act of the Election of Persons.

For a Conclusion, let me but lay open the Heart of one Scripture; *Col.* 1. 5, 6. *Whereof ye heard before in the Word of the Truth of the Gospel, which is come unto you as it is in all the World, and bringeth forth FRUIT as it doth also in YOU, since the Day ye heard of it, and knew the Grace of God in Truth.* The Grace of God principally meant (*ver.* 6.) is the *Grace of elective Love*, which is properly in God's Heart toward us. But what should be meant by the *Grace of God* made known by preaching by their faithful Minister, and which being *known* by them in *Truth*, wrought forth Faith and Love in them from the Day they *heard it?* The *Grace of God*, as it stands in this Coherence, must be either the *Grace* which was by the Gospel made known to be in *God's Heart* toward *Sinners* to move them to come in to God, and so to work Faith in them, whereby to be reconciled to God, or else it is the laying open what the *Grace* of God required to be wrought *in them*; and so to direct them how they should turn to God, or else both of these, which is the Truth. It is not what the Grace of God requir'd to be wrought in them that only or chiefly should be intended by Grace; because *that Grace of God* intended is that Grace (if you observe the Series of the Words) which after it is known, brings forth *that Fruit* spoken of, *Fruit in YOU*, says the Apostle. Now that cannot be understood chiefly or only of inherent Holiness or Faith, for that Grace it self is *the thing* that is the very *Fruit* it self, said to be brought forth, and that in them (as the Phrase there is). And therefore it is not the Grace, or the *knowing* of that Grace begun experimentally to be in them, that is wholly or chiefly meant. There must therefore be another *Grace of God* that was the *Cause* of that Grace or Fruit in themselves, which could be no other than *the Grace* in God's Heart towards them, taught and discovered to those Colossians by the preaching of the *Truths of the Gospel*, ver. 5. which Gospel itself is therefore stiled *the Grace of God which bringeth Salvation*, that is, the blessed News to sinful Men, of Salvation by the sole Grace that is in God's Heart towards them, *Tit.* 2. 11. And this doth most properly and principally bear the Name of *Grace*, and of the *Grace of God*, and is *in God himself*, who is the *God of all Grace*, 1 *Pet.* 5. and is the Cause of all *Grace in us*, and that by its appearing, being made *known* to us *in Truth.* This is *gratia gratians, the Grace that makes us gracious.*

But now, the Inquisition will be, What Grace of God born to us Men should be here meant, whether *to all Men* alike in common, a Love of God alike to all Men; or the *Grace of Election* exerted at Election of *some Men* chosen out by God out of the rest of Mankind, designing particularly Salvation to their Persons, but promulged and proclaimed to all Men, so as his Love to Mankind hath appeared to all Men, but is not intended to all Men. That this Grace should be intended here, there are these Reasons which prove it.

(1.) Because the Truth and Reality of God's Grace indeed is but to a *Remnant*, Rom. 11. 5. *Even so then, at this present time*, (when the Apostle wrote) *there is a Remnant, according to the Election of GRACE*, ver. 5. Whose very Persons (God's Choice carries the sway in it) are stiled *the Election, The Election hath obtained, and the rest that are not elected were blinded*, ver. 7. And this *Election* is but of a *Remnant* whom God had reserved to *himself*, or they had all gone alike to the Fire, and been as *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, if they had been left to their own Free Wills.

Part 1.

(2.) I find Election it self expressed by *finding Grace in God's sight*, whilst others of the Sons of Men are not vouchsafed it. Thus *Moses* his Election is express'd Exod. 33. 16. *Wherein* (pleads *Moses* to God) *shall it be known that I* (*Moses* myself) *and this People, have found Grace in thy sight?* The Phrase is used to express the being *God's own chosen People.* And as for *Moses*, God owns it, and expresseth it to himself; *ver.* 17. *I will do as thou hast spoken, for thou hast found Grace in my sight.* And he speaks more expresly for Election yet, *And I know thee by Name.* And as for the People of the Jews, (*Jer.* 31. 2, 3.) the chosen Elect among that People are said to have *found Grace in the Wilderness*, the rest being cut off by the Sword; and thereby their being an Elect People is also expressed, for there it follows, *I have loved thee with an everlasting Love*, and that I am sure you will say imports their Election. And as for *Moses*, whereas he grew bold upon that Encouragement, *I know thee by Name*, to ask of God to see his Face and his Glory; God gave him this Answer, *I will make all my Goodness to pass before thee*, and will proclaim the Name of the Lord before thee, *The Lord, the Lord God, gracious and merciful*, &c. *viz.* all the Attributes of his *gracious Nature.* But to whom should the Attributes be applied for their Salvation? God there makes a Reserve of the ELECT only to be the Persons who should have the Benefit of these Attributes for their particular Salvation; and therefore adds, *I will be gracious to WHOM I will be gracious, and I will be merciful to WHOM I will shew Mercy.* As if he had said, I have indeed proclaimed all the Attributes of Grace and Mercy that are in my Nature, in common to all the People, but with this Reserve to my self, that as to my WILL which governs the Management of those Attributes unto Persons for their Salvatian, this I keep the Counsel of it unto my self, *according to the Counsel of my own Will*, Ephes. 1. 11. And so answerably it is in *Exod.* 34. *I will be merciful to whom I will be merciful.* And the Apostle Paul alledgeth these very Words, *I will*, &c. to prove the Point of Election to be by special Grace, and the good Pleasure of his Will, in the case of *Moses* his Election, and in the case of hardening *Pharaoh.* And that Phrase, *they found Grace*, doth not import a Grace inherent or discover'd *in them*, but a Grace from God *without them*, or dwelling in God's Heart towards them, and coming from without *upon them*, not in them. And it is to be observ'd, that *that* is the Phrase God himself in expressing his shewing Mercy to the Persons whom he there chuseth, (as hath been opened, *Exod.* 33. 19.) *I will be merciful ON WHOM I will be merciful.* And to bring this home yet nearer to these Colossians, and what is spoken of their receiving the Grace of God without them, which was the Cause of their so quick Conversion, as I observed; this was truly the Grace of God *inventa & non quæsita*, in *Isaiah*'s Words, *I am found of them that sought me not*, as he promised. And of whom and what sort of Men did he prophesy it? Expresly of those Heathen Gentiles that had been Heathens to the time of their Conversion; *Isa.* 65. 1. it follows in that Verse, *And I said, Behold me, Behold me, unto a Nation that was not called by my Name*: which was punctually fulfilled in this City of *Colos*, who were Heathens, till the day they heard the Gospel of the *Grace of God*, but from that time brought forth Fruit, and the like was in all the World. We poor Ministers in these times stand picking the Lock, which asketh often much time, but the Apostles and Primitive Ministers broke open the *Door of Faith*, as 'tis called.

The End of the First Part.

OF THE OBJECT AND ACTS OF Justifying FAITH.

PART II.
Of the Acts of FAITH.

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OF THE OBJECT and ACTS OF Justifying Faith.

PART II.
Of the Acts of Faith.

BOOK I.

The Acts of Faith in the Understanding is a Sight of Christ, a Discerning and Knowledge of his Excellencies, and a hearty Assent to the Truths of the Gospel concerning Him. That this meer Assurance of the Object, or a General Assent to the Truth of the Promises, is not the Act of Faith justifying, but an Application is Necessary. What the Acts of the Will are, which are exercis'd on Christ in Believing.

CHAP. I.

That Faith in the Understanding is a spiritual Sight and Knowledge of Christ. That it is a Sight distinct from Bodily Sense, and from Reason, and other ways of Knowledge. That this Sight hath the greatest Certainty in it, and calizeth to the Mind the Things believ'd. That the true Believer sees the Spiritual excellency and Glory that is in Christ, so as to have his Heart affected with it: That he sees an Alsufficiency of Righteousness in Christ: That he is persuaded of Christ's readiness to save sinners, with some secret intimation that there is Mercy for himself, tho a sinner.

JOHN VI. 40.

And this is the Will of him that sent me, that every one that seeth the Son, and believeth on him, might have Everlasting Life.

THE Subject I intend to Treat of, is to set forth to you those special Acts of Justifying Faith exercised upon and towards our Lord Jesus Christ. And (that I may be distinctly understood) when I say the Acts of Faith, I do limit my self simply and meerly to those Acts which are of Faith as justifying. There are the Offices of Faith, (as you call them) which are many and divers, each whereof have several Acts; as for example, It is the Office of Faith to justifie, it is the Office of Faith to sanctifie, it is the Office of Faith to enable you to live in Communion with God and with

Part II. Christ in all your Ways, &c. in all Conditions. Now I single out one of those Offices of Faith, and that is, as it Justifies, as it treats with Christ about Justification: And I shall consider the Acts that it performs as such. There are likewise several Degrees in Faith, in which every one of those Offices is performed: There is weak Faith and strong Faith, there is Faith of assurance, and Faith of recumbency. Now in discoursing of the Acts of Faith, my Scope is not to speak of the high Degrees, but those that are more essential, and are Ingredients in the lowest degrees of Faith of recumbency, wherein a Sinner treats with Christ about Justification. There are also the Effects of Faith, as it purifies, and sanctifies, and conformeth the Soul to Christ, and bringeth Joy and Peace, and worketh Love, and the like: My Scope is not to handle none of these now. And thus by showing you what my Scope is not, I do thereby open to you particularly what it is that I pitch upon. Now there is no one Scripture that puts all the Acts of Faith, as it treateth with Christ about Justification, together; neither shall I be able it may be to speak of all, but purpose to follow the Method that is here in this Text: And I begin first with the of seeing, *He that seeth the Son*, &c.

I purpose in a brief way to lay open those Acts of Faith (as it justifies a Sinner) whereby the Soul doth pitch upon Jesus Christ as the Object thereof. There is no one Scripture that mentions all, neither shall I be able to mention all to you, yet those that are more eminent, and may come under what is here in the Text I shall go over with as much brevity as I can.

In these Words, compared likewise with the 37*th. Verse* of this Chapter, we have three several sorts of Acts of Faith:

1. Seeing the Son: *Every one that seeth the Son.*
2. A coming unto him; so *Verse* 37. (for you may take that Verse in like wise) *Him that cometh unto me.*
3. A Believing on him: *and believeth on him.*

Now it is to be remark'd, that *that Faith* by which we are saved, (which the Apostle calls *believing to the saving of the Soul*) is seated in the whole Heart, so you have it in *Act.* 8. 37. *If thou believe with thy whole Heart*: And indeed every Faculty, and every Power of the Soul in believing doth put forth a several Spring a several *Fibra* into Jesus Christ: As you see in the Roots that are in the Earth, every root shoots a small string into that by which the Tree and the Root is united thereunto: Thus are we rooted in Christ, and grounded in him, as the Expression is in *Colos.* 2. 7. which is then when the Faculties do thus shoot forth several Acts, suitable to themselves, into our Lord Christ, and then the Soul believeth on him.

I will begin first with the first Act of Faith here, and that is *Seeing*; which Notes out that Act of Faith which is in the Understanding, which we call the act of Knowledge. Hence we find that in Scripture our being justified by Christ is ascribed to the Knowledge which we have of him; you have it in *Isa.* 53. 11. *By his Knowledge shall my righteous servant justifie many*: When he saith *by his Knowledge*, he doth not mean that we are justified by the Knowledge that is in Christ, (though perhaps in some sense that might be said) but it is by the Knowledge we have of him. The Word *His* there is taken objectively: It is called you see here a seeing the Son: Here is the Act, and here is the Object: The Act it is Seeing, the Object is the Son. In this Sight of Christ there are four things which I would speak to:

1. It is a Spiritual Sight or Knowledge of him.
2. It is a Sight in distinction to Bodily Sight, and in distinction from Reason, and other ways of Knowledge.
3. It hath a Certainty in it.
4. It hath a Reality in it.

It is 1. A Spiritual Sight, which doth distinguish it from all Knowledge of Christ after the Flesh: For there is indeed a sight of Christ, and a real sight of Christ which is contra-distinct to Faith, a sight of the Bodily Presence of Christ, and this the Apostle speaks of in 1 *Pet.* 1. 8. *In whom, though ye see him not, yet ye believe*: And the truth is, our Faith shall end in such a sight, for we shall one day see him as he is; and to be believing in the mean time, having not seen, is that

Blessedness

Blessedness which is pronounced *Joh.* 20. 21, 29. When *Paul* was Converted he saw Christ, his Eyes were elevated to see Christ, whether as in Heaven or in the Air I will not dispute, as some do; but certain it is that he saw him, and yet that was not a sight of Faith. Now in 2 *Cor.* 5. 16, 17. he prefers that Knowing of Christ after the New-creature, by that spiritual sight the New-creature hath of him, to all the Knowledge of Christ after the Flesh, in any such visible manner. Thus wicked men shall see him at the latter day, and be never the better for the sight of him; but it is a spiritual sight of Christ by the Eye of Faith that saveth a Man. In 1 *Cor.* 2. 14. the Apostle tells us, that Spiritual things are not known by the Natural Man, because they are spiritually discerned, so that the Knowledge of a Spiritual Man is a Spiritual Knowledge: The meaning is this, It is such a Knowledge and Sight of Christ as is suitable to the spiritualness that is in him, it takes in a genuine Notion of him. Spiritual things may be set out by words to the Reason, and to the Fancies of Men, so as to take with them, but we do not know them, nor see them, till we see them *purely* and *nakedly*, by an impression the Holy Ghost makes upon us; that conveys the proper, and native, and natural Image to us. As for Example, Go take a Song in Musick, that is set, or written, or prickt upon a Book, a Man may be taught the Art of Musick, so that he may know the proportions and harmony, according to the Rules of Art, that are in this Lesson, as it is set, or prickt upon the Book; this artificial Harmony of it he may know, but yet notwithstanding, the real, natural harmony, the Ear only taketh in when this Lesson is sung: Why? because the Ear is that sense which is suited to take in the harmony and sound of Musick. Thus, as God hath given us an Understanding to know spiritual things thereby, the Reason that is in them, the rational Excellencies of them, so far forth as they may be set out by words, all this the Natural Man takes in, but still there is that which is natural and proper to the things themselves, which he understands not.

2. It is in the second place called a Sight, to distinguish it from Reason and other Knowledge: So Faith is expressed, *He that seeth the Son*; and in *Heb.* 11. *They saw the Promise afar off*; and *Abraham saw Christ's day*, Joh. 8. 56. And though Christ is now come, and exhibited, and is taken again out of our view, yet it is the sight of him that saveth us. It is not meerly knowing him, but it is knowing him in a way of sight; for we may know him in a way of Reason, we may gather one thing out of another, and so have the knowledge of him, and yet not have that which is Faith about him; though whatsoever a Man doth believe he hath reason for it, Reason subserveth and comes in to confirm it, yet the act of Faith lyes in a Sight, rather than in a Knowledge that is made up out of Reason.

The Holy Ghost still when he speaks of Faith, expresseth it to us by the Knowledge of the Senses: *Phil.* 1. 9. Spiritual Knowledge is there called Sense; the word is so, if you read your Margent, and it is so in the Original, *That your Love may abound in Knowledge, and in all Sense*; so the word is. It's true indeed, that Faith is said to be of things not seen, *Heb.* 11. 1. but yet it self is said to be a Sight: The things themselves are not seen, that is, to Reason, and to the bodily Senses they are not seen, but the Mind hath a New Sense as it were put into it, by which it sees them otherwise than either Reason or Sense could present them to a Man.

The Holy Ghost (to make this a little out to you) when he doth work Faith in us, and reveal Christ and Spiritual things to us, doth two things:

First, He doth first give us a New Understanding, a New Eye as it were, on purpose, that is as truly suited to behold Spiritual things as the Natural Eye is to behold Colours, 1 *Joh.* 5. 20. *He hath given us an Understanding to know him that is true*; that is, a New Eye to see Christ with; he puts a Spiritualness into the Understanding: He doth not create a New Faculty, but endues this with a New Activity, which is as much as if he gave us a New Understanding.

Secondly, When he hath done so, himself comes with a Light upon this New Understanding, which Light conveys the Image of Spiritual things in a spiritual way to the Mind, such an Image of the things as is taken off from the things themselves, such as no form of words, no reasoning, not all the Wit and Parts of a Man, no Discourses about Christ and Spiritual things would ever form in him. The Angels, who have seen Jesus Christ in Heaven, in his Glory, if they should all come down, and use all their Art, all their Rhetorique, come with all their

Part II. their Pencils to paint and set out Jesus Christ to us in the most lively manner that can be, yet all they could do, or could say, would not beget (without the Power of the Holy Ghost, without his art joined with it) such a sight of Christ as Faith gives us: If they should all set themselves to beget an Image of Jesus Christ in our Minds and Understandings, it would be but a *Parelion*, as they call a false Sun. As we cannot see the Sun but by his own light, so we cannot see Jesus Christ but by his own light, and by the light of the Holy Ghost.

There is a seeing of spiritual things meerly by the Effects, and there is a Faith wrought thereby; for the Devils they have a Sense, and they have a Knowledge, and a real Knowledge too, (so far forth as Effects go) that there is a God, for they feel the lashes of his Wrath upon their Spirits, yet notwithstanding this is not Faith, this is not that Faith which is the Spiritual Faith, which is the Faith or sight, which here this Text and the Scripture speaks of. So that now it is a Spiritual Sight of him which is in the Nature of Faith: And the Truth is, it is such an Image of Christ framed in the Heart; (and when I say an Image, I mean not the Image of Christ in Holiness, but the Image of Knowledge of him; for a Man knoweth nothing, but there is an Image of it framed in his Mind;) such a sight of him by which we know him, as all the Creatures, and all the Knowledge, and all the description of him in the World, would never work: As you have it in 1 *Cor.* 2. 9. *Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, nor hath it entered into the Heart of Man, the things that God hath prepared for them that love him.* He speaks there of the things of the Gospel, (and so of Jesus Christ eminently above the rest, and of the Knowledge of them: There are such Images of these things created there by a peculiar Artifice of the Holy Ghost, as never entered into the Heart of Carnal Men: It is his peculiar Art, (that's the truth of it) which is in no Knowledge else, that is thus in Faith. It is not that which we shall have in Heaven, for that is seeing him face to face; it is not such a Knowledge only as we have of other things here below, which yet we believe really, though we never saw them; but I say, there is a peculiarity in it, which the Holy Ghost works in the Hearts of the People of God, which is the sight of Faith. It is therefore called in 1 *Cor.* 2. 4. *The demonstration of the Spirit.* There are two Principles in Scripture which all Knowledge, even of Spiritual Things, is reduced unto: The one is called the *Revelation of flesh and blood*, Mat. 16. 17. the other is called the *Demonstration of the Spirit*, 1 Cor. 2. 4. *Flesh and Blood* (saith Christ to *Peter*) *hath not revealed these things to thee:* Implying that there was a Knowledge which flesh and blood works in us, which is the way of Man's Nature. But then there is another Knowledge which ariseth from the demonstration of the Spirit: It is light (as the Apostle tells us in *Eph.* 5. 13.) that makes all things manifest. How comes your Eye to see Colours, or to see any thing else? Why there is a light comes, and that light takes of the Image of the Colours, and of the things you see, and brings them to your Eye. Now Spiritual things are all nothing else but light, now God himself and Jesus Christ is nothing else but light, and so is Heaven, it is called the Inheritance of the Saints in light. Now the Holy Ghost comes with the Beams of this Light, and every one of those Beams doth bring the Image, the natural, native Image of the thing to the Eye, to the Understanding; and therefore the apprehension of it is called sight, and we are therefore said by the *Psalmist* to see *Light in his Light*, Psal. 36. 9. the Beams of the Sun you know convey every of them an image of the Sun, and such an image of the Sun whereby you see the Sun so as nothing else can represent the Sun to you; and so the Holy Ghost he doth cause the Beams of God, and of Christ, (who as I said is nothing else but light) for to shine into our Hearts, and all those beams which he letteth and bringeth in, they convey the image of God and of Christ to us, and so we see him. In 1 *Pet.* 2. 9. *We are said to be translated into his marvellous light:* It is called marvellous because it is above Reason, or the Natural Knowledge of a Man; and it is called *His light*, not only because Christ works it, as in *Eph.* 5. 14. it is said, *Christ shall give thee light*; but because it is the light of himself, it conveys the Image of himself to the Heart.

Yea, let me tell you this, the sight of Faith is so genuine a Knowledge, that tho' it differ in degrees, yet the very same Knowledge that Christ's Humane Nature hath of himself, the same Knowledge in its degreee doth the Holy Ghost work

work of him in the Heart of a Christian. This is a great speech, but it is true, The Knowledge whereby Jesus Christ knows and sees himself, you must needs say is a natural knowledge of himself; that is, he sees himself as he is in himself, not by hear-say. Now look what Spiritual Representations Jesus Christ hath of God, and of himself, and of his own Righteousness, in his Mind, the Holy Ghost coming fresh from the Heart of Christ, stampeth the very same upon the Heart of a Christian in his Measure. You will say, How prove you that? the Text is clear for it, in 1 *Cor.* 2. 16. *We have the mind of Christ*: He speaks there of spiritual Knowledge; that whereas other Men have the letter, the litteral knowledge, yet they have not these thoughts, have not that Mind stamped upon their minds which is in Christ himself: But such we have, (saith he) we have the Mind of Christ, we have those spiritual thoughts as it were from his heart, because we have the Spirit which works in us, impresseth upon us the same thoughts of him that are in his own Heart of himself. All other Enlightnings that Men have, they are from Christ indeed, he is said, *John* 1. 9. to be *the Light that enlightneth every Man that comes into the World* with all sorts of common knowledge. As now go take the light of the Night, all the light you see in the Night by the Moon, it is all the light of the Sun, but yet it is not that light whereby the Sun conveys its beams to the Eye when it riseth, and when a Man beholds it. So Men that are not regenerated, that have but a temporary Faith, they have a light from Christ, such as is the light of the Sun shining in the Moon; they have a light, as from the Effects; they have a light also which the Letter of the Scripture, and the Spirit shining upon it, begets in them; but still it is not a sight of the thing it self, it is not *Seeing the Son*, it is not such as when the image of the Son himself is conveyed into the Mind and Understanding by the Holy Ghost. We may know there is a Sun by what light we see in the Moon, but it is another thing to have a beam of the Sun it self shine into a Man's Eye, whereby the very Image of the Sun is conveyed into his eye. And therefore this sight of Faith it is called sight, because it is thus elevated above all rational knowledge of Christ whatsoever; it is a further thing, though joined with it; it is (I say) superadded to reason, let it be elevated and enlightned never so much by the Holy Ghost in a rational way. Go take a Temporary Believer, it's true he sees those things by the help of the light of the Spirit which Nature would never help him to see, and yet it is but by natural Understanding, remaining natural, and reason elevated, and reason improved, and reason enlarged and convinced. But Faith goes higher than all this, Faith is more than a Man's having an Optique Glass set before his Eye, to see that which else he could not see, because it is so far off; the Eye of it self is capable of it, if it stood nigh it. There is more than all this in Faith, it is as it were a new Eye, to see those things in such a manner as all the Optique Glasses in the World would never help a dim Eye to see at a distance. Therefore now Faith (as I said afore) is called the demonstration of the Spirit, all other knowledge is but by derived Images of the things of Christ, by hear-say; so much of Christ as may be conveyed to us by words, and by rational Discourses, the Holy Ghost enlightning them: In all this there are but secondary Images conveyed to the hearts of Carnal Men, more or less, as they are more or less enlightned; but to see the Son as he is in himself, as here the Text holds it forth, this is proper to Believers. So that take any Man that hath been never so much enlightned in the knowledge of spiritual things, and not savingly enlightned, when that Man comes to turn to God, and to believe in earnest, he will say he never saw these things before, he will say, he doth now see Christ so as he never saw him before, and that he sees God in that manner as he never saw him before. And though he knew never so much before, yet now after he is turned unto God, he sees *That old things are past away, and all things are become new*; as the Apostle says in 2 *Cor.* 5. 17. and he speaks it in respect of Knowledge. Let now a Carnal Man speak of Christ, and let a Holy Man who savingly believes, speak of the same Christ, and of spiritual things, they shall both speak of the same things, yet the knowledge, that is, the sight which the Believer hath of Christ, and of spiritual things, is clearly differing from that of the other. I shall open but one Scripture to you to express this, it is in *Joh.* 3. 12. Our Saviour Christ had been discoursing with *Nicodemus*

Part II. *codemus*, about the point of Regeneration, which is a thing belonging to the Kingdom of Heaven; *Now* (saith he) *if I have told you earthly things, and you believe not, how shall you believe if I tell you of heavenly things?* What is his Meaning there of having told him of Earthly Things? He had spoken of Heavenly Things, and why doth he call them Earthly? Because he had express'd them under Earthly Words, and he had not given light, he had not gone forth with what he spake in a Spirit of Irradiation to *Nicodemus* his Heart; hence therefore *Nicodemus* clean mistakes Christ. But now when Jesus Christ doth enlighten a Man, whilst he or the Ministers of his Word speak Earthly Things, he stamps the Impress and Image of the Heavenly themselves upon the Heart, and then a Man believes; he conveys them in their Heavenly Hew, conveys them in that Notion and Apprehension that his own Heart hath of them, and therefore *John* 3. 11. (saith he) *We speak that we know, and testifie that we have seen:* And *We* too who are Believers *have the mind of Christ*, 1 Cor. 2. 16. So that a Believer hath such a kind of knowledge of Heavenly things as Jesus Christ himself hath, such a knowledge of the Son as Jesus Christ hath of himself, in his measure; it differs indeed in degrees, but it is of the same kind.

Hence it is that a Believer is said when he believeth, to witness to the truth of God, *To set to his seal that God is true*, John 3. 33. What is the Reason? Because he knows the truths of God, the great truth especially about Christ, which is the thing eminently he witnesseth unto, and he knows it not by reason, but by sense, by sight, and therefore he is a Witness. For you know, if any Man give a Testimony meerly by hear-say, we account it as no Witness in comparison; but if a Man speak by sense and by sight, then he speaks like a Witness. Now because a Believer takes in spiritual things by a spiritual sense, by a spiritual sight, therefore he is said to Witness when he doth believe.

And the sight of Faith, though it is joined with reason, yet it is intuitive. We do not gather the knowledge of Christ out of other things, but it is a sight of himself, in 1 *Cor.* 13. 12. We are now said to see thorough a Glass, darkly, yet we are said to see. Rational Knowledge is to gather one thing out of another, but the knowledge of Faith, so far as it is a knowledge of Faith, is to see a thing in it self, to see Jesus Christ in himself.

That I may demonstrate this yet further, you shall find that the knowledge of Faith in the souls of Men, is not proportioned to the compass of their Natural Understanding; Why? Because it is a way of Knowledge above what the Understanding naturally hath, or can be improved, or raised up unto, remaining natural; it is therefore a way beyond it, it is by way of sight. What is the reason that God hath chosen Fools, rather than the Wise Men of the World? *You see your calling*, (saith the Apostle) *how that not many wise men after the flesh*, &c. 1 Cor. 1. 26. If God had meant to convey the knowledge of spiritual things only to those that know him here in a rational way, and by reason, elevated by the Holy Ghost, certainly He would have chosen the Wise Men of the World, because they by knowledge would have glorified him more in such a way of knowledge: No, but he chose the Fools of the World, because he hath a way of conveying himself to their Understandings beyond the way of Reason, and that is by way of sight. Therefore you shall observe, Men who are ignorant in a rational way, that cannot make out a rational discourse of spiritual things, that cannot lay before you a rational Connexion of one truth with another, and when they speak of them (though they have otherwise much Grace and Holiness) they will speak incoherently of them in their Expressions, and yet it is apparent that yet these Men, as being godly, have as strong and deep a knowledge of Heavenly things as those who have infinitely more strength of natural reason: Why? because Faith goes by way of sight, it goes in a way beyond and above Reason, and the knowledge of God and of Christ in a rational way. When we come to Heaven, will God then proportion to you a knowledge of himself (and degrees of Happiness depend upon greater degrees of knowledge of him) according to Men's Parts and Understandings which they had in this rational way here? No, but he lets in a light of himself, a light of Vision, which he that hath the lowest Parts, if God let in no more light to him, shall know more of him than these of far greater Parts, into whom he hath not

not let in so much light. And so doth God here, because that Faith is sight, and is the Prelibation, the Beginning of Heaven. Book I.

This is clearly (as to me) also the difference between that way of knowing God which Believers have now, and that which *Adam* had in Innocency; if *Adam* had stood, he amongst his Children that had the most parts (those parts being all carried in a rational way) should have known more of God than he that it may be was more holy, and had lower parts. But it is not so in the second *Adam*, because he hath a way of letting things into the Mind beyond the way of Reason, by the way of sight and spiritual light, conveying Beams of himself to us, which conveyeth those Images of himself and of spiritual things to us, which neither Eye hath seen, nor Ear heard, nor ever entered into the Heart of Man remaining natural.

I will only give you a Caution, that I may not be misunderstood; for as this is a great truth, so I would clear it from Mistakes: The Light of Faith doth not destroy Reason, but makes use of it, subordinates Reason to it self, restoreth, rectifies it, and then useth it; even as Reason maks use of Sense, though the Acts of Reason, the thoughts of a Man in a rational Soul are clean differing to what he hath in the sensitive Soul, yet Reason makes use of Sense. And thus the Holy Ghost makes use of all the Rational Discourses and Descriptions of Christ in the Word, makes use of the Letter of the Word, but by them conveys those spiritual Thoughts of Christ, which all that Letter cannot hold forth to a Man: And as I said afore, if the Angels from Heaven should come and preach Jesus Christ to us, should with all their Pencils go and paint out what Knowledge they have of Jesus Christ, they could not beget one such sight of Christ in the Heart as the Holy Ghost doth when he comes to work Faith. And yet the Apostle tells us it comes by hearing, and in hearing; the more rationally the Preacher discourseth out of the Word, and lays open the Meaning thereof in a rational way, so much the better, because it is suited to the Minds of Men; yet where the Holy Ghost works Faith, he conveys a light beyond all that Reason, though he makes use of that Reason too; this Word of God hath an Harmony of Reason in it, and if a Man would open a Place of Scripture, he should do it rationally, he should go and consider the Words before, and the Words after; but yet still if the Holy Ghost comes not with a further sight than all this rational opening of the Word affords, a Man will never believe, for Faith is a sight beyond it; the Holy Ghost useth Motives to move you to Holy Duties, but then he comes with a Power join'd with those Motives, beyond the moral force of them; he useth signs out of your own Hearts to comfort you, but he comes with a light over and above those signs; for if you should stick there, you would never have comfort; so he useth Reason; he destroyeth it not, but subordinateth it.

The Apostle saith, that the Scripture is not of any private Interpretation, 1 *Pet.* 1. 20. If the Scripture might be known by the light of Reason, (it's written rationally, and suiting to Reason, I acknowledge) but if the Scriptures might alone be known, and the meaning of the Holy Ghost therein, by the light of Reason, they were of Private Interpretation, for Mans reason is but a Private Interpreter in comparison of the Holy Ghost the Author; yet notwithstanding he useth Reason to interpret it: But when he hath done, he himself comes and seals up to a Mans spirit that this is the meaning of the Holy Ghost in it, or else a Man never believes. So that it is the light of the Holy Ghost now that casteth the Ballance, and he doth this not only in the Principles of Religion, but in deductions of Principles too; for though a Man gather by reason one thing from another, yet if he have not the light of the Spirit to seal up those Deductions, he doth not believe in a spiritual way, therefore it is called in *Job* 33. 15. *Sealing of Instruction.* If the Holy Ghost do not go, and by a supernatural light reveal the truth to a Man, all the Reason in the World will never work spiritual Faith in his Heart. Hence now you see why it is called sight.

The End why I have insisted so long upon this, is as to open it, so to take you off of your selves, and all your own Knowledge, that you may therefore seek out to the Holy Ghost to make spiritual things evident to you by their

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Part II. own light, in their own hew, that you may not rest in rational knowledge, and in notional knowledge of the things of the Word, for you may go to Hell with all that, unless you have a spiritual sight of the things themselves.

Thirdly, As Faith is a spiritual knowledge, and as it is a sight beyond that of Reason, though of spiritual things, which yet are suited to Reason, so the knowledge of Faith is a certain Knowledge: So you have it in *Heb.* 11. 13. *They saw the promises afar off, and were perswaded of them*: That is, they had a knowledge of Assurance of the things they did believe. I say, the Knowledge of Faith it is a certain knowledge; and why? Because it is a knowledge of sight; what a Man sees, it is certain that he sees it, when he sees it; what's the Reason? Because, *Sensus non fallitur circa propriam objectum, Sense is never Deceived about its proper object*; therefore if it be a spiritual sight and a spiritual sense, it hath a certainty join'd with it: The knowledge of Faith it is called Assurance, in *Heb.* 10. 22. but in *Col.* 2. 2. as *you do increase in it*, you are said *to increase in all Riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the Mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ*. It is very emphatical, he tells us in the following Words, that there *are hidden in Christ all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge*; and his Scope is to prefer the Knowledge of the Gospel, and of Christ therein, to all other knowledge: Nay, saith he, it doth not only excel all other Knowledge in regard of the Object of it, but it is a Knowledge that when it is genuine, when it is saving, it excelleth as to the Riches of Assurance in the Knowledge it self: It is such an assurance, and so rich, as you cannot have from your senses, or any thing else. The Apostle heaps up Expressions, he calls it Assurance, he calls it Full Assurance, he calls it Full Assurance of Understanding, he calls it Riches of full Assurance, and he calls it an Acknowledgment; words enough one would think to make Knowledge sure.

But let me here add a Caution too: My Meaning is not, that every Man that is a true Believer hath an assurance that Jesus Christ is his, or that he hath the assurance of his own Salvation; No, many Believers have not that, neither is that essential to Faith, or to the act of Application. This doth not lye in Believing that Christ is mine, for if it did, God would give it unto every Saint; but the act of Application is real Application, giving my self up unto Christ that he may be mine, and I his: But now though there is not an act of Assurance of my own Interest, yet there is an act of Assurance of the thing I believe on; I do never truly believe, unless there be an assured Perswasion of the truth of the things on which I believe, and which I believe. Thus you must understand those Scriptures where you have Mention of the Assurance of Faith, as in *Heb.* 10. 22. *Let us draw near with a true heart, in full Assurance of Faith*: And so in *Jam.* 1. 6. *If any man pray, let him ask in faith, without wavering, for he that wavereth is like a wave of the Sea, driven with the Wind and tossed.* Of which place many have mistook the Meaning; for is the Meaning this, that when a Man comes to ask a Promise at the hands of God, he must believe without wavering that he shall have it? No, if this were the Faith that *James* here meant, when he saith, *If any man pray, let him ask in Faith, without wavering*; who almost is there (unless in some special manifestations of God to him) that doth thus ask in Prayer, or can ask temporal Promises with such a Faith, without wavering? But yet there is a Faith which is without wavering, that is, there is an assured Belief of the Truth of those Promises, that God made them, and that he is faithful to perform them, according to the Intention of them: Here now is a Perswasion of the thing, and an asking in Faith without wavering; and saith the Apostle, *He that wavereth is as a wave of the Sea, driven with the wind and tossed*; *a double minded Man is unstable* (saith he) *in all his ways*: What is the Reason that Carnal Men are unstable, and that they do not walk fully up in the Ways of Religion? it is because that their Faith in the things do not rise up to a stableness, it hath a wavering in the Belief of the Principles themselves, so far forth as they are Principles of Practice. Whereas now if these things were spiritually and prevailingly rooted in their Hearts, above the Natural Darkness of Unbelief, that there is a God, who is a Rewarder of those that seek him, and that Jesus Christ is the Saviour of the World, and that he hath made these and these Promises, and is thus gracious and willing to receive those that come unto him; if these things, I say, were believed in a real and spiritual manner, and that the

Hearts

Hearts of Men were without wavering perswaded of them, without Question it would draw Mens Hearts, and cause them to walk answerably, and keep them from being driven with the Wind and tossed. So that this is the Apostles Meaning, (which is the thing I drive at) that in all Faith there is a fixedness, an assuredness, a Perswasion, namely, of the things that I do believe, but it doth not follow that it should be an assured Perswasion of my own Interest in the things themselves, for so who asketh in Faith? Many poor Souls that even ask Salvation at the Hands of God, they do not ask it as fully believing, and being assured that they shall be saved, and yet in the mean time they fully believe that Salvation that God hath made known to them, and with which their Hearts are taken, and that is the Perswasion and Assurance of Faith. I shall give you some Scriptures, that this Faith is a Knowledge that riseth up to a Perswasion, to an Assurance, *Joh. 6. 68.* *Peter* there in the Name of all the Apostles confesseth his Faith, and the Faith of all the Apostles; *We believe*, (saith he) *and are sure*; of what? that we shall be saved? No, but *That thou art that Christ the Son of the living God.* Of this a Man must be sure, or it is not Faith, and so likewise he must be sure of all other things that are fundamental unto Faith; the things which he lays hold on, and which his Soul pursues after, he must believe with a certainty that they are. When Jesus Christ was to go out of the World, what was it that he thanks his Father for? and why? *I can* (saith he) *comfortably leave the World, and leave these Disciples in the World, for I have given unto them the Words which thou gavest me, and they have received them,* Joh. 17. 8. Wherein now lay their receiving them, and their believing them? (for that is the Meaning of receiving; *They have recieved them,* (saith he) *and have known surely that I came out from thee:*) He had begotten in them that Faith which rises up to Assurance, and he distinguisheth them thus from the World, *I pray for them,* (saith he in the very next verse) *I pray not for the world*; for indeed the World do not surely know, or are perswaded of the things that are in the Word; for if they were, certainly that Perswasion would alter the frame of their Lives, and would make them walk answerably, and cause them to be holy. If a Man be unstable in his ways, it is because he is unstable in the belief of the Principles he professeth to walk by, and so indeed hereby Christ distinguisheth the Faith of the World, and the Faith of those that were his Disciples, whom he had wrought upon; *They have surely known* (saith he) *that I came out from thee, and for these* (saith he) *I pray, but I pray not for the World.* And the Truth is, this full Perswasion, or Assurance of the thing, it is an effect of the former property I mentioned, *viz.* of spiritual sight; for if I see a thing, and see it really, (which is another property of the Knowledge of Faith, and which I shall speak to by and by) it always begets a certain Perswasion in me that the thing is: Perhaps I may not reflect upon my own Knowledge, yet notwithstanding an Assurance, and a full Perswasion doth always and most necessarily follow a real sight of a thing. Take a Man that is awake, he can and doth say with himself, and say it by way of difference and distinction from one being asleep, I know assuredly such a Man is before me, I know assuredly that the Sun shines; why? because he sees the Man, and he sees the Sun; whereas if a Man be asleep, and in a Dream, it may be he thinks he doth the same, but still there is no certainty in it: But now look where there is a reality of sight, there is also always accompanying it so far a full Perswasion and Assurance, and the Man is able to say, that that Knowledge he hath is different from all other Knowledge. So that, I say, this is the third thing in this sight of Christ which a Believer hath, he hath an Assurance of the thing; this even the poorest and manest Believer hath, take him out of those Temptations and Doubts which the Devil may suggest to him; take him when he is himself, he hath an assurance, that is of the things themselves; and the reason is clearly this, because he sees spiritual things by their own light, and the ground of Faith, the very *Formalis Ratio* is the light and demonstration of the Spirit. Now that is more infallible than all that a Man knows by his outward Senses, or by reason, by how much the Witness of the Spirit is above the Witness of Nature, and the Light of the Spirit above the Light of Nature; as an Oath hath more certainty in it than a Promise, so the Light and Demonstration of the Spirit

Part II. hath more certainty in it than all the rational apprehensions a Man hath of Christ. In a word, the Heart of a Believer by the light of the Spirit sees more reason to believe that these things are so and so which the Word saith, that there is such a Christ, so glorious, and so good; he hath, I say, more reason to believe it, than he could have by all the demonstrations that sense or reason can afford. As when a Man sees the Sun by its own light, it hath riches of evidence in it, hath it not? so when a Man sees Christ by his own light, it produceth riches of assurance, namely that the thing is; I say not that it carries with it riches of assurance that Christ is mine, or that I shall be saved, for that's another thing; all the Torches in the World cannot give that Light which the Sun it self gives, no more can all the rational Apprehensions a Man hath, give him such a sight of Christ as a Believer hath by the demonstration of the Spirit.

Fourthly, This Knowledge of Faith is a real Knowledge, a real sight of Christ and of Spiritual Things. I do not speak of Visions and Revelations extraordinary, but it is such a Knowledge as doth give a Man a real Possession of the things, and doth make the things themselves really subsisting to a Mans Spirit, and he feeleth really that there is such Glory, and Excellency, and Sweetness in Jesus Christ as the Word holds forth, and indeed as is in Jesus Christ himself; for now the Spirit of Christ is present, and joineth with his Spirit, for always sight hath as a certainty so a reality joined with it. A Man may have by way of Reason a Conviction that things are, he may know that things do exist, as now a Man may know by the Light of the Moon, and by the Light of the Stars that there is a Sun, which shines upon them, and that this Sun existeth; but when a Man sees the Sun it self, here is a Knowledge *sub esse præsenti*, here is a presence of that Sun to him, which makes it really existing to him; such is the Knowledge of Faith, and therefore in *Heb.* 11. Faith is called ὑπόστασις, the Evidence, that which gives a Subsistance to the things not seen; that is, by the outward senses, or by the light and dictates of Reason. Now suppose that there were an artificial Instrument made, by which things that we never saw or never took in with our Bodily Eyes might be really coveyed into our Minds and Fancies, such (if it were possible) as might stamp the Image of them upon our Fancies, we would say this were a very strange kind of Instrument. Optick Glasses they do not so much, they indeed will present a thing to you which you glimmeringly discern afar off, but you must first discern it with your bodily eye; but now if there were an Engine as could present a thing afar off, which your bodily eye never beheld, and stamp it upon your Fancy, this you would say were strange. Now the Holy Ghost hath an Art to do this, and he doth do it, though he useth the Word, and the description of Christ in the Word, and useth the Promises, yet that Image of Christ and of Heavenly Things which he works in the Heart of a Believer is by a peculiar Art of his own which he useth, and it is far beyond, infinitely beyond what we can take in by our Fancies or Senses, or any thing else, and therefore because the Knowledge of Faith hath this reality in it, you shall find that there is almost no sence but in the Scripture Faith is compared to it, and this is meerly, I say, because it is such a Knowledge as hath a reality of the things known convey'd to a Man's Soul, though they be absent: It is compared to hearing, *Joh.* 10. 16. *My sheep hear my voice*; and they hear it so as to discern it from the voice of a stranger: It is compared to eating, *Joh.* 6. 54. *Whoso eateth my Flesh*, &c. And elsewhere it is compared to tasting, *Psal.* 34. 8. *Taste how good the Lord is*; hence in *Joh.* 6. 55. Christ saith, *His flesh is meat indeed, and his blood is drink indeed*: That is, the Soul finds a reality in it, and it is not as when a Man dreams he eats, but Christ and the Promises, and the things that the Soul feeds upon, they have a reality in them, they are meat indeed, and drink indeed, and the Soul finds them so. They that are temporary Believers have a shew of this, both of a sight, and of a reality of sight, and they are said to taste of the Powers of the World to come; but yet let me say this to distinguish it from this other.

1. They do not see Spiritual things in their Spiritual Nature, as they are in themselves, tho' they may see an accidental goodness in them, and so be taken with them, and so may taste of the Sawce of that flesh of Christ which it is sawced

sawced up in, as I may express it; that is, that accidental goodness which it is presented to us in, with those benefits that accompany it, as freedom from Hell, and the like; but the spiritual, the genuine, the native Excellency that is in Jesus Christ himself, this they do not see, nor is it made real to them. Now to see a thing, or to know a thing in the Effects, or in the Accidental Goodness of it, is not to see or to know the thing properly and truly; but to see a thing in its own true genuine Notion, to see the spiritual Excellency that is in Jesus Christ, and so to have the Heart taken with him, considered in all his spiritual Excellencies, this is spiritual sight, and indeed this is only to know the things themselves, which the other doth not.

2. And then again, though there be a seeming reality in the Knowledge and Impression that is made upon the Heart of a Temporary Believer, yet it is but as the Knowledge one hath that is asleep, and dreams that he sees and converseth with a Man, which sight then seems to be exceeding real, and indeed is more real than the Picture of a Man is, because in his fancy he seems to have the reality of the Man presented to him with whom he converseth, and his Image seems as it were to be stamped upon his Fancy; but yet it is but a Phantasmatical Knowledge, it is not that Knowledge and Sight of a Man which Men have that are awake, that giveth a Subsistance, as the Knowledge and Sight of Faith doth, which is such a Knowledge as is suited to the things themselves, a Spiritual Knowledge, and a real Knowledge also. I told you before, that the Knowledge of a Believer is to have such thoughts, in his Measure and Degree, as are in the Heart of Christ himself; now those things which yet are not, (as the day of Judgment is not yet) yet are present to the Heart of Christ, and therefore it is said, *God calleth things that are not as if they were*, Rom. 4. 17. If now I have the Mind of Christ, if I have that spiritual Notion of things to come, of Heaven that is to come, stamped upon my Heart, that is in the Heart of Christ, that I know them in that manner he knows them, in my degree and proportion, then it is present to my Heart as it is to his. Jesus Christ doth not only know things, but they have a Subsistance, they are present to him, *All things are present and naked with him with whom we have to do*, Heb. 4. 13. So much Faith then, so much openess and nakedness, and so much presence of the things we believe. You shall find in 1 Cor. 2. 9. *That the things of God are said to enter into our hearts:* It is not only that we know the Images and Notions of things, but we have the Presence of the things themselves, therefore in *Heb.* 11. 13. Believers there are said to *Embrace the Promises:* What is the reason they are said to embrace them? Because they so saw them as having a reality in them, they did not embrace a cloud, but they felt a Presence, a Subsistance in the things promised, in God, and in Christ, on whom they believed, though Christ was not then incarnate. And in *Joh.* 6. 47, 51, & 54. When a Man is said to believe, he is said *to eat the Flesh of Christ, and to drink his Blood*; as truly as a Man eats Meat, or drinks Wine, and he feels a Presence, even as a Man feels the presence of the Wine he drinks to strengthen his Spirits: He doth not only know that there is Wine, and sees it, but he feels a Power and Virtue joining with his Body, and with his Spirits; so a Man knows and feels the presence of Christ, and of Heavenly Things in his Spirit, while he believes, and finds a reality in them; *My flesh is meat indeed*, (saith he;) to shew that Faith feels as true a reality in the things believed, as a Man doth in the Meat he eats. And indeed what is the reason that Carnal Men leave Christ for the Pleasures of the World? Because the Pleasures of the World are real things to them, therefore unless God make the things of another World real too, a Man will never leave Realities for Notions: All that Reason or Notions can represent of Christ, will never take a Mans Heart off from the real things he sees here below; and therefore God comes, and he weighs down the reality of the things of this World by the reality of the things of the other World. And so much now for this first thing in Faith, *viz.* that it is a sight; *He that seeth the Son*; saith he, and so you have the Act Seeing, with the kind and properties thereof.

I come now to the Acts of Faith in the Understanding, as terminated on the Great Object of Faith. I shall confine my self to Christ, because he is the Great Object of our Faith; and for that I shall say these few things to you.

First,

Part II. *First*, The Soul that God doth give Faith to, sees the Spiritual Excellency and Glory that is in Jesus Christ, and the Heart is taken with it; in 2 *Cor.* 3. 18. saith the Apostle, speaking of the beholding of Christ, *We see as in a Glass the Glory of the Lord.* I mention it for this, that it is called a Seeing of his Glory; that is, that surpassing Excellency, even to a Glory, that is in Jesus Christ. Every one whom God draws in to believe, he doth sooner or later cause some Glympse of the Glory of Christ in a spiritual and real way to pass before him, which takes the Spirit, so that he is like one that is fallen in Love with one at first sight, when the Party is past by, but there is a sight, a glympse that has taken the Heart; so though that Glympse of Jesus Christ seems to be gone, yet there is that impression upon the Soul, and upon the Heart, that other Beauties and Glories are but as Shadows in comparison of that which is in Jesus Christ: And such a sight of the thing, though it be but *in transitu*, takes the Heart for ever; the Church in *Cant.* 5. 9. had such a sight of Christ, for see how mightily she magnified him; and though that sight was vanished, yet she was so taken with it as she seeks all the World over for him, in so much as others stand wondring at her; *What is thy Beloved*, (say they) *more than another Beloved?* They saw no such Beauty in him: O, (saith she) *my Beloved is such a Beloved as thus and thus*; and so she falls a setting out of his Glories and Excellencies. It is such a sight as doth put out a Mans Eyes to all things else for ever doting upon them as formerly he did. Even as they that go on Pilgrimage to *Mahomet*'s Tomb, after they have been there they use to burn out their Eyes, that after that sacred sight they may never behold Creatures more. Such a thing now is really wrought in the Heart of a Christian, in some measure; as Christ saith, *He that drinketh of this water shall never thirst any more*, Joh. 4. 13. So he that hath thus seen Jesus Christ, he never sees any thing more as he saw it before; he may have his Heart taken with Folly and Vanity, yet not so as before, because he hath seen the Lord Jesus, there is that impression made by that sight of the Glory and Excellency which is in him; you have this in 2 *Cor.* 5. 17. *If I have known things after the flesh*, (saith he) *henceforth know I them no more*; that is, I can never value carnal things at that rate I have done, I see through them all, saith he, I do not value them now by a fleshly Sight and Consideration; if I have seen them so, I see them now so no more; why? Because I have seen Jesus Christ by the knowledge of the New-Creature, and now old things are past away, and all things are become new. Even as God has moulded Fancies to Faces, so he hath framed and moulded the knowledge of Christ to Christ, and even as the Eye is framed to Colours, so is the New Understanding suited to Jesus Christ, it is a spiritual Understanding, and so suited to a spiritual Christ; that having taken in the Image of Jesus Christ in the real and spiritual Notion of him, the Heart is moulded into it, and that Heart can never be taken with any other Beauty or Carnal Thing of what kind soever that is here below, 1 *Joh.* 5. 20. *He hath given us an Understanding, that we may know him that is true.*

Secondly, When God draws the Heart to believe, it sees also an All-sufficiency of Righteousness in Jesus Christ, and in his Satisfaction, *Psal.* 130. 7. *With him is plenteous Redemption*; and in *Rom.* 5. 17. it is said, *They receive abundance of Grace, and of the Gift of Grace*; you have the like in *Phil.* 3. 8. *I count all things* (saith he) *but loss and dung for the Excellency of the Knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord*; and next to the knowledge of Christ, what is most valued by him? The Righteousness of Christ; and therefore saith he in the next verse, *That I may be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, but that which is through the faith of Christ.* Now a Man sees that satisfaction, and that worth and fullness in the Righteousness of the Lord Jesus, that if he might have the Righteousness of *Adam*, or the Righteousness of the Angels, or as great a Righteousness made his, to be his, and be inherent in him, and he to be justified by it, he would throw it all away as Dross and Dung in comparison of the Righteousness of the Lord Jesus, which he sees held forth to him.

The *Third* Thing that the Soul sees, and is perswaded of, when God draws the Heart to him, it is the graciousness that is in the Lord Jesus Christ: And that in two things,

First, In the general: In his readiness to recieve sinners. Whatsoever thoughts

a Man had before of Christ, (as when a Man is first humbled, he is apt to have hard and sower thoughts of Christ) yet when he comes to know *the mind of Christ*, as the Apostle saith, 1 *Cor.* 2. 16. that is, to know his gracious inclination, God doth make an impression and stamp of the gracious Heart and Inclination that is in Jesus Christ to receive sinners, and sets it as it were upon the Heart, and he perswades them better things of Christ than either what they naturally, or when they are first humbled think of him.

Secondly, There is stamped upon the Heart of a Christian some secret hint or whisper of Mercy to him: I do not say it riseth to assurance, for then it would quel all Doubtings, but in every one that God takes to himself, as he lets him see the readiness that is in Christ to receive sinners indefinitely, so there is some secret kind of wisper of Mercy and Grace to him, a secret hint, as I use to call it. In *Joh.* 10. 3. it is said, that *Christ calls his sheep by name*, even as he called *Moses* by name, and *Cyrus*, which implys a special intimation: And Christ he doth distinguish, and saith, the reason why others that were not his sheep do not come, is because they do not hear his Voice. Now that you may not mistake me, though it be a whisper, yet it is but a whisper, and a hint, which the Soul often-times in it self doth not so discern as to reflect upon it; but yet it is full enough to carry the Heart after Christ, and never to leave him. I use to compare it to the scent of a Blood-hound, when he is sent to seek, though he finds not, yet having once had the scent he never leaves, but hunts up and down till he finds it; and though he knows not where it is, yet it is enough to carry him on. So the Soul, when it hath wound Jesus Christ, as we may so speak, this hint, this whisper is enough to carry on to Christ, so as never to leave him, and that with some Encouragement, though it doth not rise up to Assurance, and prevail over Doubtings: I distinguish it thus, Assurance is when the Spirit of God so speaks to a Man that he speaks as a Witness, when he comes in and evideneth to a Man the truth of his Estate, and that Jesus Christ is his; and when he speaks as a Witness, he will speak so loud as to prevail over all Temptations, and over all Doubts, or else he will lose his End; for a Witness must so speak as to put the thing out of doubt, or else he is no Witness. But now in this secret whisper of Faith he doth not so, he doth not come then to speak as a Witness, but he comes to speak then as one that would work the Heart into Jesus Christ, and carry on the Heart to Jesus Christ, and in this case a secret whisper (which he himself doth really back) is enough to carry on the Heart, though it is not enough to quel all Doubts and Temptations. Insomuch now as when a Man is humbled, and sees his Misery, and the like, and when he is walking alone, or is in Prayer, he thinketh in himself, Well, I may find Mercy from God, Jesus Christ may pardon me, *&c.* This he may take for his own thoughts, because it doth not rise to that height as when the Holy Ghost speaks it as a Witness, in such a distinct manner from his own thoughts, as that he should rest satisfied in it. Nay, a Man is apt to take such thoughts, and to fling them away, and discerns them not from other thoughts put into his Mind about other things; yet for all that, the Holy Ghost that puts them in, leaves them not, but carries them on in a way of Encouragement and Hopefulness, and never leaveth him till they have boil'd up either to the Vision of Christ, or to the Assurance of Jesus Christ's being his.

CHAP. II.

That the meer Assurance of the Object, or a general Assent to the Truth of the Promises, is not the Act of Faith justifying, but Application is necessary: This proved by several Reasons.

AS I have explained the Nature of the Act of Faith in the Understanding, so now I will shew that true Justifying Faith includes more in it, or that it is not a bare general Assent to the Truth of the Promises, though never so spiritual; for still in Scripture the Act of Faith that justifies is call'd *Believing on him*, so *Rom.* 4. 5. and every where almost we find it thus,

Part II. thus, *He that believes on him that justifies the ungodly*; it is not he that believes only that God will justifie the ungodly. It is an ancient received Maxime of Divines, *Aliud est credere Deum, & in Deum*; for to believe *on him* implys a Particular Application. Those that are for general assent, urge those Scriptures most, *Rom.* 10. 9. *If thou believe with thine heart that God raised up Christ from the dead, thou shalt be saved*; and that in 1 Joh. 5. 5. *He overcometh the world that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God*; and ver. 10. *He that believeth not the Record God hath given of his Son, makes God a Lyar.* But it is observable, that in both places *Believing on him* (which is an Act of Application) is added, as that which makes this general assent a compleat Act of Faith: Thus *Rom.* 10. 11. he confirms his saying by the Scripture, (which withall interprets his meaning) *For the Scripture saith, he that believeth on him shall not be ashamed*; and so in 1 *Joh.* 5. 10. *He that believeth on the Son of God*: He leaves it not therefore in a general assent. I shall now give the Reasons of my Assertion.

Reason 1. Faith doth not consist meerly in Assent, because a Man in believing comes not in simply as a Witness to a Truth, for so the Angels do believe and testifie the Truth, and might be said to have Faith justifying, *Rev.* 19. 10. They are said to *have the Testimony of Jesus*, they testifie that God is true in his Promises. But when Men believe, they come not in barely as Witnesses to the New Testament, but as *Legatees* for a Portion in it, they therefore rest on it for themselves, and so their Faith makes an Application of it. When some have reasoned against general Assent to be Faith, in that the Devils believe, as *James* says, it hath been answered, that the Devils assent though it is operative to cause Terrour, yet it is not a Spiritual Assent and Sight of it, such as a Believer in the general hath of the things he believes; and they say true, for there is a difference in a regenerate Man's believing there is a God, and it is another sight than Devils have. But yet still the Argument will hold, if fetch'd from the good Angels, for they do in as spiritual a manner as the Saints believe the Truth of the Promises, and assent to their Goodness, and see the Excellencies of Christ, and adore them, and yet do not believe with a justifying Faith: And why? because these Promises not concerning their Salvation, they trust not in them, they come not in as *Legatees*, but as Witnesses and Admirers. Now then if an act of general assent spiritual be common to them with Believers, surely God hath not put the act of justifying upon what is common to both, (when as it is in them, it justifies them not) but rather upon such an act as is proper to Man, and not in them, and that is trusting, relying on the Promises, and on that Christ whom they believe to be the Son of God, for their Salvation.

Reason 2. Justifying Faith is seated in the whole Heart, as he said in *Act.* 8. 37. *If thou believest with thy whole heart, thou shalt be saved*: Yea, and so it is in this, *Rom.* 10. 9. *If thou shalt beleive with thy heart, that God hath raised up Jesus*, &c. Now if only a general assent (though never so spiritual) in the understanding (which is but one faculty in the Heart) were that act that justified, then the Will should be excluded, which if Faith be with the whole Heart it is not. And now if the Will come in to put forth an act, then an Act of Application must be also added to that general assent, such as indeed is to trust in Christ, to cast my self on him, to wait upon him, which are all acts of the Will; tis true indeed that in the Understanding-part there is no other act of Faith required absolutely unto Justification than a spiritual sight of, and assent to the Truth and Goodness of the things believed: This is all God exacts of the Understanding, (for an assent or assurance that these things are mine is not of the essence of Faith) but there are acts of the Will besides that go to make up Faith, therefore *Heb.* 11. 13. there are three things attributed to Faith: *First*, A real sight of the Promises; *They saw them. Secondly*, A Perswasion or Assurance of their Truth and Goodness; *They were perswaded of them*; and these two make up a spiritual general assent in the Understanding. But then *Thirdly* is added their embracing them; *They embraced them*; which is an act of the Will, or an act of Application, so *Rom.* 4. 5. *To believe that God justifies the ungodly*, is the act of general assent, but to *Belive on him that justifies the ungodly*, is an act of Application; it is an act of the Will, resting on him for a Man's own particular Salvation.

Reason

Reason 3. Yea, by this act of the Will is the Union on our parts compleated between Christ and us, and we are thereby made ultimately one with him. Now one main end of Faith is to make an Union with Christ on our Parts, and that as it is done without assurance that Christ is mine, so it is not chiefly made by a general Assent; and to the Union made on Christ's part, it is not necessary I should then apprehend it when Christ first doth it, because it is a secret Work done by his Spirit, who doth *First apprehend us e're we apprehend him*; as he first loves us e're we love him, *Phil.* 3. 12. But for the making a real Union with him (so far as on our part it is made) it lyes not primarily in believing Christ is mine, or that Christ is, but in joining my self to his Person, in the shooting in of my Will into him, in taking him, and consenting to be his; to believe he is mine is indeed to apprehend that Union, and to believe spiritually he draws in the Heart to it, but to have my Will drawn to him, to rest in him, to cleave to him as the Fountain of Life, *Deut.* 30. 20. 'tis that makes the real Union: As in Marriage, Consent makes the Match, so the Consent of the Will to have Christ as my Lord, King, Head, Husband, makes the union; for the main Subject by which we are united to Christ is the Will, for by the Will we cleave to those things we apprehend good, and shoot our Souls into them. But if that which united on our parts were such Apprehensions whereby we perceive we are made one with Christ, it should be in the Understanding most, and so that which makes the Union should be *Assensus de Deo*, a believing something of God, not a cleaving to God, and that which I am united to should mainly be a Proposition. Indeed when I apprehend my self united unto Christ, then my Will cleaves more to him, is drawn out more to him, as those that are new married, when a Man can say, *I am my beloved's, and he is mine*; but he must be my Beloved afore. As he that lusts after a Woman commits Adultry, and so is made before God one flesh with her, though not afore Men, so he whose Heart is taken with the Beauty of Christ, and cleaves to him, hangs on him, is united to him, for a Marriage glance makes afore God a Union with Christ: Such acts of Faith make the Union, and therefore upon such acts of Recumbency Christ sheds Grace and Life into the Soul, having recourse to him as the only fountain of Life; but when assurance comes, then a Man can plead this Union to fetch strength from Christ by vertue of it, and so then a Man discerns the Connection between Christ and his Grace, how it flows from him, but it flow'd before.

CHAP. III.

What the Nature is of this Special Faith of Application. That besides a Spiritual Faith or Wisdom to know all other Divine Truths savingly, there is a Special Faith on Christ and God's Free Grace for Justification: Or, that God in Christ as a Saviour and Justifyer is the Object of that Special Faith which is justifying.

2 TIM. III. 15.

That from a Child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto Salvation, through Faith which is in Christ Jesus.

IT is of Justifying or Saving Faith that I profess to Discourse: It consisteth of two Words: 1. Justifying, or Saving. 2. Faith. And so it calls for two things to be handled by him that will handle it throughly, as distinct common place Heads. The *First* is the Doctrine of Justification through Faith, as it is an act of God upon us, upon, or through our believing. And, *Secondly*,

Part II. There is the Doctrine of the Nature of that Faith it ſelf, and which of theſe two a Man begins to handle firſt (we living under the Sun-ſhine of the Goſpel) it is not much material.

Under that Head of the Doctrine of Juſtification it ſelf by Faith, there are theſe things:

1. Whether upon a Man's Believing there is an act of Juſtification paſſeth from God, ſo as in a true ſenſe a Man may be ſaid to be then juſtified, ſo as not before? And how that this may ſtand with God's juſtifying of us with Chriſt when he roſe, and with God's juſtifying of us in Chriſt from everlaſting? or if you will, Whether that Faith be only for the manifeſtation of a Man's Juſtification to himſelf, or, it be not alſo for the alteration of a Man's Condition before God?

2. That nothing but Faith in Man is that Principle which God hath ordained to receive this Bleſſing, and Faith only, and Faith without Works.

3. Under this Head of Juſtification comes the treating alſo of this, How it, that Faith is ſaid to juſtifie, or how God looks at it, whether as an Habit, or an Act, or an Inſtrument, or a Condition, or what.

4. There are the Objects of this Faith, both Jeſus Chriſt as the matter of Juſtification, (which I have at large diſcours'd of in thoſe Treatiſes long ſince publiſhed to the World.) And, *Secondly*, There is *God, as juſtifying* for the Soul *believes on him that juſtifieth the ungodly*: So that as Jeſus Chriſt is the Author, and Cauſe, and Matter of Juſtification in his Death, and Reſurrection, and Aſcenſion, and Interceſſion, *&c.* ſo God in his Grace and Mercy and in all his Acts therein, is alſo the Object of Faith; and a glorious Juſtification it is, wherewith God juſtifies us: How great, how free, how unlimited is it, and ſuch as no ſins can hinder! A Juſtification total at once, and eternal for ever. Theſe things I have diſcourſed of before in the laſt Part.

Now concerning Faith it ſelf, by which we are juſtified, (I taking it at preſent for granted that we are juſtified through Faith, which is the language of the Scripture) that which now we are to do, it is to make the Enquiry, What this Faith is?

The firſt thing in the general which I pitch upon towards the Enquiry, about the true Nature and Notion of Faith, is this, *That the Faith by which we are ſaved and juſtified is a Special Faith, pitched upon God's Free-grace, and Chriſt as mater of Juſtification to us as its ſpecial Object*; as you ſhall ſee out of this Scripture and many others alſo in the proof of it.

The proof of this great Truth I might have founded upon many Scriptures, as you ſhall ſee anon, but I did chooſe out this, becauſe it clearly diſtinguiſheth a ſpecial Faith from a general Faith, and diſtinctly puts the Buſineſs of Salvation upon that Special Faith. If you mark it here, he tells us, (*ver.* 16.) *That all Scripture is given by inſpiration, and is profitable for Doctrine*, &c. And that all the things revealed in the Scripture, be they what they will, are all of them able to make a Man wiſe unto Salvation, and ſo to beget in him a *Wiſdom*, which indeed is nothing elſe *but Faith*. Take it in the general Notion of Aſſent, what Prudence is to all Virtues, that Faith is to all Graces, it is Wiſdom to Salvation. But yet there is in it *a Special Faith*, without which all the Knowledge a Man hath, yea, all the Knowledge that is unto Salvation, would not be unto Salvation, were it not for this; and that is, (as the Text hath it) *Faith in Jeſus Chriſt, which is able to make thee wiſe unto Salvation*, (ſaith he) *through Faith which is in Jeſus Chriſt*. So that theſe Words which I have now read, they hold forth to us a twofold Faith or Wiſdom, as you may call it, for the Scripture calls Faith Wiſdom ſometimes, and Wiſdom Faith.

There is *Firſt* of all a *General Faith*, reſpecting all Divine Objects, which is here called Wiſdom, and *Wiſdom unto Salvation*; (in that ſenſe unto Salvation as Repentance is unto Salvation, and as other Graces are ſaid to be unto Salvation) which is a Belief and Knowledge of the Scriptures, and all things revealed in them, and a having a Man's Heart ſuitably affected with the things, according

according to the Nature of them; as to believe a God, and all the Attributes of God, all the Promises, and all the Threatnings, or whatsoever else is contained in the Book of God, which being taken by Faith into the Soul and Heart of a Believer, makes him wise unto Salvation: This, I say, is properly called general Faith. Faith (as I said before) is often called by the Name of Wisdom in the Scripture, as in *Luk.* 1. 17. it is said, that *John Baptist should go before him in the Spirit and Power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the Fathers to the Children, and the disobedient to the Wisdom of the just*; that is, he should bring them to the Faith of their Fathers, to the same Knowledge, joined with Wisdom, to the same Creed (for the Materials of it) which the Prophets and Fathers held, and were saved by, and the Doctrine of which the *Jews* in those times had generally corrupted. All these spiritual things are taken into the Soul, and apprehended by such a Principle of Wisdom in Heavenly Affairs as Humane Wisdom serves to in Earthly Affairs; Faith is therefore rightly called Wisdom, because it superadds unto Notional Knowledge in things spiritual, as Wisdom in Men superadds unto Knowledge Notional in Worldly Businesses. That Knowledge which constitutes a Man a Wise Man, as such, in worldly matters, beyond a Man simply knowing, is such a degreee or kind of Knowledge as over and above the Notion affects and strikes the Spirit of a Man to act accordingly, and puts him on to practice; whereas the like knowledge in others (tho' it may be more clear and distinct for the Notion) is overly, and affects not the Man, nor is strong enough to overcome his affections to the contrary. Now look what difference there is in this twofold Knowledge about Temporal things, the like there is as to Spiritual, there is an Enlightning of the Holy Ghost, which clears up the Notion of all things Spiritual to be known, unto which Faith is a farther Special Gift, superadded to affect and strike the Heart with them, as the Gift of Wisdom added to Knowledge useth to affect in outward affairs. Take then Faith as it hath thus all the Scriptures, and all in them for its Object, and as it thus strongly makes an Impression on the Heart to act accordingly, and it is a Wisdom unto Salvation.

But yet *Secondly*, There is a Peculiar, or a Special Faith, without which the other is not, nor would be of its self alone effectual unto Salvation, and that you see is Faith in *Jesus Christ*, a Faith of the Promise of Grace and Salvation in and thorough Jesus Christ, as it is several ways exprest in the New Testament.

Now you see the Apostle doth not only hold forth this Distinction, but he doth withall shew, that all the Faith, and Knowledge, and Wisdom we have, though never so spiritual, (for even of such he speaks) will not *make us wise unto Salvation*, but only *through Faith which is in Jesus Christ*.

So that the Observation to the Scope in hand which I raise out of these Words, and purpose to discourse of, is this, *That that Faith which doth save*, (the other may be unto Salvation, as all Graces are) *that which truly saveth and putteth me into the state of Salvation, or upon which I am put into that state, is a special Faith, which here is said to have Jesus Christ for its Object*, or (which is all one) *that hath the Grace of God in Christ to rely upon*. Faith on the Promises of Salvation and Justification thorough Christ, and thorough the Free-grace of God in him, is that special Faith without which all the true Wisdom, the spiritual Wisdom, spiritual Faith, believing all things else whatsoever, would not otherwise be unto Salvation. This, I say, is clearly the Scope of the Words, that besides that Faith whereby we believe, and believe spiritually (yea, and unto Salvation too) all the things revealed in the Word of God, there is a Special Faith by which we are saved, and by means of which all the rest of our Faith in all other things is Wisdom unto Salvation; *Is able to make thee wise unto Salvation*, (saith he) *through the Faith which is in Jesus Christ*.

Now in the Opening and Treating of this Point I shall do these things:

1. Give you some Explication of it.

2. I shall deliver some Concessions, some things that may and must be yielded unto, and granted, concerning this general Faith, and the difference between it and special Faith.

3. I shall offer some Proofs of Scripture for to make the Point good.

Part II.

4. I shall urge some Reasons, why that God hath not ordained to save any Man by the most spiritual Faith of all things in the Word. If a Man could be supposed to have it without this other special Faith of Application; if a Man, I say, did believe all the Scriptures, and all things in them, and that with an affection answerable, and suitable to such Objects themselves thereon revealed, yet that Man would never be saved without a special Faith, which hath Jesus *Christ* and the *Grace of God* in him for its *Object*.

You shall find in your Protestant Writers a great deal to do about this Faith. I would open to you that which I concieve to be the Nature of it, and the sence wherein I would press it upon you. And,

1. To begin with the Explication of it: I do not call it a Special Faith, because it hath a special Root and Principle, created on purpose in the Hearts of Men to be the Root of it, so as that that general Faith we speak of should have one Root, and this special Faith another: No, but the same Faith, for the Root and Principle of it, in the Spirits of Men, whereby I believe all things else, the Word of God, the Power of God, the Justice of God, or whatever else, that Wisdom whereby a Man knows savingly all things in the Scripture, all Truths whatsoever, and the goodness of them; that Faith whereby I truly and spiritually believe that there is a God, is also the Root of that Faith whereby I am possest of Salvation, or whereby I am justified; with the same Principle of Faith whereby I believe all things else unto Salvation, with the same Principle also I believe on Jesus Christ, and on God as justifying. It is clearly the Scope of *Heb.* 11. I will not stand now to open it: You know the ordinary Sense that is given, it was the same Eye by which the *Israelites* beheld all the things in the Wilderness, and wherewith they did behold also the Brazen Serpent, and yet notwithstanding they were cured by beholding the Brazen Serpent, and nothing else. I confess this Similitude will not in all things hold, but yet it is that by which it is illustrated; I only speak now by way of clearing of this Term, Special Faith, and not by way of Confirmation: *Abraham* by the same Faith whereby he did believe in the promised Messias, *In the Seed in whom all the Nations of the Earth shall be blessed*, (Rom. 4. 21.) by the same Faith he is said to have believed the Power of God, that he was able to give him a Child.

Secondly, It is not called Special in this sence, that only a Faith on Christ, and on Gods Free-grace, is proper to the Elect, but that Wicked Men and Devils, and Men that shall be damned, may have a true general Faith upon all Objects else whatsoever: It is not, I say, meant in that sense neither, it is not meant subjectively special; there are they who say, that as for the belief of all things in the general in the Word of God, that is common to Devils, because in *James* it is said, *They believe there is a God, and tremble*, Jam. 2. 19. But say they, to have a special Faith to believe in Jesus Christ, this is proper to the Elect: But it is evident, that in every man that shall be saved, the Faith whereby he believeth all things in the Word of God is a new kind of Faith, and all things become new to him. The spiritual man judgeth all things spiritually, knoweth them spiritually, and so believeth them spiritually, as you have it in 1 *Cor.* 2. 14, 15. And as the Devils know there is a God, and believe that, so they know and believe that Jesus Christ is a Saviour, *Mar.* 1. 24. *I know who thou art*, (saith the Devil) *even the Holy One of God*; yet he did not know this spiritually, as a true Believer.

Thirdly, It is not called Special, in respect of any special act that is proper to it, and it alone, that is not the specialness neither which I intend: Some by Special Faith mean that special act of Assurance of a Man's Salvation, and make that to justifie. The Truth is, there are many Protestant Writers, and Holy and Godly Men, that have in all their Oppositions against the Papists urged a special Faith in this sense. But not to insist on a long Confutation, the Faith of the Apostles at first was not a Faith of Assurance; *They believed, that they might be justified*, Gal. 2. 16. Others by Special Faith understand that other act of Trust or Confidence, and going out of a Man's self, and they say, that therein lyes this same specialness of Faith: Now I grant indeed, that an act of Trust, and Confidence, and Reliance, is required to Faith, it is that which I would rather call the act of Particular Application, as hereafter may be

be shewn: And they contend for this as that special Faith, in Opposition to those which hold that the General Faith, the belief of the things themselves, as that Christ is the Son of God, and the Saviour of the World, and that God justifies the ungodly, being spiritually believed, is that act upon which God justifies us. But I would not make the specialness of Faith to lye in respect of any act which this Faith hath proper to it, since there are none such, but what we find common to our Faith on other Objects: For if it be said, that the act of saving Faith is a *Trusting* upon this Object, *viz.* the Grace of God, for Salvation; why this act of Trusting is not proper and peculiar only to Faith justifying, nor hath only the Grace of God justifying for its Object, but it is common to this Faith to pitch upon other Attributes of God: I rely upon God for all spiritual things else besides Salvation and Justification, I rely upon him for his Spirit; I go out unto Christ for Holiness, and Strength against Sin, and for Duty; I rely on him, and trust on him, and come unto him for Temporal Things; I trust him for to sanctifie me; in a word, all the Promises of good things are the Object of that act of Trust on God. The like may be said of Assurance, I may have assurance from God of other things as well as of my Justification: So as special Faith, whereby we are saved or justified, which the Apostle here speaks of, is not so called, because it hath a peculiar act appropriated to it.

Fourthly and *Lastly* therefore, That I call (and I think it ought to be called, and only ought to be called so) a Special Faith, whereby we are justified, which hath 1. An Eminent Special Object, proper and peculiar, appropriated to it; which hath 2. A Special Aim. And, 3. Which hath a Special Effect, or a Special Consequent rather, or if you will Concomitant, or that which doth accompany it.

First, I say, It is to be called Special Faith, in respect that God hath framed on purpose a peculiar and special Object for it: Whether the act be believing the thing or object it self, in the truth and goodness of it, or relying upon it, or call it what you will for the act of it, now that is clear in the Text to be *Faith in Jesus Christ*. Look over all the Scriptures, and all the Divine and Spiritual Truths in them, the belief of those things is not Special Faith, though they may sanctifie the Heart, though the Heart may be answerably affected thereto, *Till it come to Faith in Jesus Christ*, or to trust in the special *Mercy and Grace in God for pardon and justification*: I will put both these together: It is either, I say, the Free-grace of God, who is our Justifyer, (for God as justifying is as much the Object of Faith as Christ himself, and more) which is the Object of this Special Faith, or else Jesus Christ and his Righteousness, as the matter of our Justification and Salvation, and Faith as it respects these two as they are Objects, and that for Justification, that I call, I say, Special Faith. I will not stand much to shew you, as I might do, that what in the Old Testament is called trusting in the Mercy of God, and believing on the Mercy of God, that in the New is called believing on Christ, and how that both come to one. If therefore you will have the Language of the New Testament, the special act of justifying Faith is to believe upon God as justifying, *To believe on him that justifieth the ungodly*, so *Rom.* 4. 14. and to believe on the Righteousness, or on the Blood and Satisfaction of Christ, or on Jesus Christ as for Righteousness; so the Text speaks here, *Thorough Faith in Jesus Christ*. These two make up the special Object of Faith.

And *Secondly*, The believing these, and on these, as for Salvation, and having that special aim and intent, so considered also, is called, and ought to be called Special Faith. It is not coming unto God, or to Christ, for any thing else temporal and spiritual, but as coming for Salvation and Pardon of Sin, *Believing that a Man may be justified*, as it is exprest *Gal.* 2. 16. This, I say, is the peculiar aim of Special Faith, and in that respect it ought to be called special, as it comes to God for Justification.

And therefore *Thirdly*, There is a special Consequent, or Concomitant, which doth accompany or follow upon it, and that is, it doth in a special manner justifie and save a Man, which no Faith else, though never so spiritual, upon any other Object is said to do: In *Rom.* 3. and in *Rom.* 4. this is clearly made out; the Apostle speaks there, as you all know, of Faith as it doth justifie, and that

Faith

Part II. Faith alone justifies without Works; and as Faith doth thus justifie, what doth he make there to be the Object of it? *First, Jesus*; so *Chap.* 3. 22. *The Righteousness of God*, (saith he) *which is by the Faith of Jesus unto all, and upon all them that do believe*; Namely, on Jesus: And *ver.* 26. *He* is said to be *the Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus*: And *ver.* 28. he *concludeth*, that by *such a Faith*, and no other, a Man is justified. And as he makes Jesus thus to be the Object of it, so God as justifying too, so *Chap.* 4 *v.* 5. *To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly*; Namely, on God, who is the Justifier, whose Righteousness it is; and so call'd, because he is the Bestower, the Imputer of that Righteousness, as you may read in the 21*st.* & 22*d. Verses* of the 3*d.* Chapter; *The Righteousness of God which is by the Faith of Jesus*, (saith he) *whom God hath set forth* (ver. 25.) *to be a propitiation thorough Faith in his Blood, to declare his righteousness*, &c. And therefore this Denomination of Special Faith (say I) it ought to have from these three things: 1. Because it hath a special Object made and appointed for it, *viz. The grace of God justifying and saving*, and our *Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*, and his *Righteousness* the matter of our Salvation and Justification. And, 2. In respect of the Aim the Heart hath in believing, that it comes to these as for Salvation and Justification. And, 3. That upon thus coming God is said to justifie, as Faith genuinely and spiritually pitcheth on these Objects: You have all these in that one place, *Gal.* 2. 16. *Knowing this, that a man is not justified by the works of the Law, but by the Faith of Jesus Christ; even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the Faith of Christ, and not by the Works of the Law; for by the Works of the Law shall no flesh be justified.* Here is *First*, you see, Faith described by a special Object, and therefore called *The Faith of Jesus Christ*, the *Faith in Jesus Christ*, and again, the *Faith of Christ*; it is three times so mentioned, in relation to this special peculiar Object, so that the Faith which justifies us is a Special Faith in respect of the Object. *Secondly*, It is a Faith which hath a peculiar Aim, which believeth in Jesus that the Soul may be justified; *We believed in Jesus, that we might be justified*, saith he: To come to Jesus Christ for any thing else then for Salvation, and for Justification, is not a special Faith. And then *Thirdly*, There is a special Concomitant, or that which doth accompany it, a special Effect, or call it what you will, and that is, that we are justified though not by the act of believing, yet upon believing, which is evident by this, for how else did they believe *That they might be justified?* And it follows after, *By the Works of the Law shall no flesh be justified*; but oppositely by and upon believing a Man is. And it is this Special Relation to its Object which makes this Faith (to speak in the Scripture Language, and if you will you may call it by that Name instead of Special Faith, to be called *Precious Faith*: What is it that makes it so more precious than the belief of all things else whatsoever? either of the Truth, or Power or Faithfulness of God, or be the thing what it will be, what is it that makes it excel all such Faith of any kind? It is the Object of it; so you have it in 2 *Pet.* 1. 1. He writes to them (because none else are true Christians) *That have obtained like precious Faith with us*: We translate it thorough the Righteousness, it is ἐν, in, or on the Righteousness of God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Faith as it is pitched upon this as its special Object, hath a special Excellency, and is precious Faith; and in this respect every Man's Faith is as precious as that of the Apostles themselves was, though they might excel in degree, yet its preciousness is not from its own degree of acting, but from the Object that it is pitched upon, even because it is Faith in God, and in our Saviour Jesus Christ.

And let me add this too, it is not only Special as we say of Remedies of a Disease, that there are many Remedies for such a Disease, Oh, but this is a special one, not only a Soveraign one above all the rest, but it is the only special Remedy; for Faith only as it is pitcht upon the Righteousness of Christ, and the Free-grace of God in him, so it only justifieth.

So now I have expressed to you by way of Explication what I mean by Special Faith, in that sense wherein it doth differ from some who would have it called Special in other respects: Now the Consideration of this point is of exceed-

exceeding great moment, both to direct your Hearts what Faith especially continually to exercise, as will appear in the use of it, and also especially to clear the Doctrine of Saving Justifying Faith. The Papists and Popish Spirits, what have they done? they say that there is a General Faith; that is, that Faith which a Man hath of all the Scriptures, and the Things revealed in them, which they call *Fides Catholica*, Catholique Faith, and this they affirm to be the Faith that justifies: They say, That Faith saveth and justifieth, or God doth save and justifie me upon my believing that he is true, that he is Omniscient, that he is All powerful, as well as upon believing on his Grace and Mercy, and upon God as justifying: They say, That Faith doth justifie and save as well when it looks to the Law, when it believes that God created the World, when it doth believe the first *Adam*, as well as when it believes the Second *Adam*. They say, That to believe truly the Justice of God condemning, is saving and justifying Faith, as well as to believe the Mercy and Grace of God pardoning and saving. The Truth is, according to their Doctrine, to believe the Devil to be an Accuser, is a part of Justifying Faith, as truly as to believe that Christ is an Intercessor and a Saviour; to believe that of *Moses*, *That cursed is every one that continueth not in all that is written in the Book of the Law to do it*, is part of Justifying Faith, as truly as to believe that Jesus Christ was made a Curse; and indeed to hold this, is consonant to all their Principles: For how do they assert that Faith justifies? Say they, Faith doth not justifie us in relation to its Object, but either as it is a Disposition, and so to believe the Threatnings of the Law, disposeth, say they, to Faith, or else it justifies as all other Graces do: Now Love to Man they say justifieth, as well as Love to God: So the belief of all the Stories in the Bible, they say, that justifies a Man, as well as to believe in God that justifies, or in Jesus Christ that dyed. It agrees, I say, with the Principles of their Doctrine, they make all to be parts of Righteousness alike; the whole Wisdom whereby *Timothy* did know the Scriptures (as they say) saved him, as well as Faith in Jesus Christ; whereas here the Text is clear, that all the other were made Wisdom to him unto Salvation, but *Through Faith which is in Christ Jesus*; that had he known all the rest never so much, or never so spiritually, they would not have saved him, had he not had Special Faith in Jesus Christ. In a word, That Faith that sanctifies also justifies with them: Now the belief of all things in the Scripture is a means of sanctifying, (as must be acknowledged) but that which doth justifie us is a special Faith, pitcht upon the Grace of God justifying, and upon our Lord Jesus Christ. So much now for the Explication of this Thing.

I come next, for the further Explication of it, to some Concessions, as I call them, or Grants, some Things that may and must be yielded to, as concerning Faith upon these Objects.

1. That all other spiritual Faith, pitched upon any other Object besides God as justifying, and Christ as for Righteousness and Salvation, is a saving Faith in a large sense. I say, that Spiritual Faith which hath all the Scriptures, and all things in the Scriptures for its Object, may be called a saving Faith in this sense, that it is unto Salvation; so the Text is clear, *The Scriptures, they are able to make thee wise unto Salvation.* All things delivered in the Scriptures being believed, the Faith and the belief of them is unto Salvation, it tends unto Salvation; but how? As all things else are said to be unto Salvation that are true Graces in a Man, so it is called Repentance unto Salvation, Repentance unto Life: Unto Life it's true, without which God saveth no Man, and which are in order to it; but Special Faith pitcht upon Jesus Christ, and upon the Grace of God, is saving in a higher sense than so; for if you mark it, those other are said to be unto Salvation, only because and by reason of Special Faith; they would not be unto Salvation, but only because joined with, or subservient to, or springing from Faith in Jesus Christ: *They are able to make thee wise unto Salvation*, (saith he) *through Faith which is in Jesus Christ.* It is called Wisdom unto Salvation, but yet in a more peculiar manner this Special Faith is the Faith which saveth us; for the other is called only Wisdom unto Salvation, even thorough this Faith. Now if that the other be unto Salvation, as thorough the Faith in Jesus Christ, then the Faith in Jesus Christ must be in a special man-

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Part II.

In Eph. 2. 8. in the 1st. Vol. of his Works.

ner saving: Now how is that in a special manner saving, but because there is nothing else in Man that doth receive Salvation, and the right to Salvation, as I have shewn elsewhere? All other General Faith, that is, Faith upon all other things else spiritually and truly apprehended, is a Wisdom unto Salvation, but it is not peculiarly said to be saving, or to be that which saveth us; we are only saved thorough Faith on Christ and his Righteousness. To clear by the way likewise another thing, you shall find that the Apostle doth apply that place (*Hab.* 2. 4. *The just shall live by Faith*) both unto that Special Faith in Man which lays hold on the Righteousness of Christ for Justification and Salvation, and likewise to that General Faith, whereby we believe all things else in the Word of God: He applyes it first unto Justifying Faith clearly in *Rom.* 1. 17. where speaking of the Gospel, he saith, *It is the power of God unto Salvation, to every one that believeth, for* (saith he) *therein is the Righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith, as it is written, the just shall live by faith.* Now in *Heb.* 10. 38. he likewise saith, *The just shall live by Faith*; but the Faith he there means is a General Faith, as believing that there is a God, and all spiritual Objects else, as he opens it throughout that Chapter, which in the General Notion of it he calls *The Substance of things hoped for, and the Evidence of things not seen*, in the following Chapter *Heb.* 11. 1. So that if, in a large sense, it may be said that all Graces as well as this are unto Salvation. In a large sense we may be said to live by that general Faith, (as I may so call it) to live by the belief of any thing else in the Word of God, with affections suited to that Knowledge, and that Faith. It helps us to mortifie Lusts, it helps us to quicken many Graces in us; whatsoever God sanctifies by, that Faith takes it in, and so in a sense it may be called a Life of Faith in Temporal Temptations it upholds us by many Temporal Promises, a thousand Considerations there are in the Word which are not the Objects of Special Faith; but now the Faith by which we live the Life of Justification and of Salvation, the Faith by which we live in God's sight (as the Scriptures Expression is) is only a special Faith, which in *Rom.* 5. 18. is called Justification of Life; and indeed this very Distinction and Difference doth salve a great Objection of the Papists, and doth reconcile those two places *Rom.* 1. 17. and the whole Eleventh Chapter of the *Hebrews*.

2. The *Second* Concession, or Grant, or Caution, (call it what you will) which also is a great Truth) is this, that it is the same Principle of Faith by which we believe all things in the Scripture thus savingly, and unto Salvation, and by which we believe on Jesus Christ too: It is the same Principle, or Seed, or Habit of Faith, by which we believe that Christ is the Son of God, and by which we believe on him for Righteousness; it is the same Principle of Faith by which we believe that God is, (as the Apostle saith *Heb.* 11. 6.) and by which we believe on him for Justification. You have an instance in *Abraham*, by the same Faith whereby he believed, and looked at the promised Messiah, in whom all the Nations of the Earth should be blessed, whereby he was justified, and which was accounted unto him for Righteousness; by the same Faith he believed the Power of God, *That God was able*, as the Expression is in *Rom.* 4. 21. And this answers another Objection also, a great one, which is used to be made; for, say they, saving Faith is commended to us in the Scripture by other acts than by the act of justifying, it is said to overcome Kingdoms in *Heb.* 11. 33. and to have done all those great acts which were done in the Old Testament, which yet were not acts of justifying Faith; and the Apostle doth make justifying Faith, and the Faith that did all those great acts, to proceed from one and the same Root. We answer, indeed it is true, that justifying Faith is commended to us by other acts which it hath done, besides that of saving Men; and the Apostles Scope in *Heb.* 11. is to set out that Faith whereby we are justified, by all things else which it doth, thereby to commend it the more as justifying us, as indeed it must needs do. Just as the Scripture doth, it sets out Jesus Christ not only as a Saviour, but it sets him out also in a World of Excelencies else, as that in him and by him all things were created also, and that he is the Judge of all the World, and of all Mankind, that he is the Head of all Principalities and Powers, of all the

the Angels, and by a thousand Excellencies besides, and all these are to commend him so much the more to us as a Saviour: So the Apostle sets out Faith in this *Heb.* 11. (and you shall find it likewise in other Scriptures) that the Faith that justifies us is said to do a World of Exploits for us besides justifying. But yet it doth not justifie us as doing any of those things; as Christ he doth not save us as he is a Head of all Principalities and Powers, or as all things were created in him, and by him, but he saves us as dying upon the Cross, only it is the same Saviour that doth the one and the other, and therein lies his Excellency. So it is here as to Faith, and that answers what the Apostle's Scope is in that *Heb.* 11. It is not so much to treat of Faith as justifying, as to shew forth the Excellency of that Faith which doth justifie in other things, which it continually doth for them it justifies.

3. There is this also to be granted, That Special Faith it is not true in any Man, and therefore saveth no Man, if joined with Unbelief, and deny all of many other things besides believing on Christ for Righteousness. There are, I say, many things, which if a Man should deny, and not believe, besides believing on Christ and on God that justifieth, he would not be saved, nor could he believe savingly with this Special Faith I now mention, unless he believed them: In 2 *Tim.* 2. 18. the Apostle saith, that denying of the Resurrection *did overthrow the Faith of some*; *for*, saith he in 1 *Cor.* 15. 13. *If there be no Resurrection, then is Christ not risen, and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your Faith is also vain, and ye are yet in your Sins*, and so you overturn the Faith in Christ for the pardon of sin: So that now a Man cannot have a right saving justifying Faith upon God as justifying, or upon the Righteousness of Christ, if he deny many other things. There are those that say they believe on Christ as a Saviour, believe on him as an Intercessor and Mediator, and yet notwithstanding deny him to be God: Now although we are not saved by believing that Jesus Christ is God, but by believing on his Righteousness, and on his Satisfaction and Obedience, as the Scripture expresseth it, yet notwithstanding we cannot savingly believe the one if we deny the other. And the Truth is, those that deny Jesus Christ to be God, they do clearly (be they who they will be) take away the Gospel, and the Foundation thereof, and the Satisfaction of the Wrath of God for sin made by Jesus Christ, which the Gospel holds forth, and which is the Object of our Faith. That place in 2 *Pet.* 1. 1. which I quoted before to another purpose, is a place that affordeth abundance in it to the present purpose; *To them* (saith he) *that have obtained like precious Faith with us, in, or on the Righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ*: Here you see he describeth the Faith of the Primitive Christians, that special peculiar Faith (which yet was common to all them that were true Believers) it was upon the Righteousness of our God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. Now here is the Question, Whether that our God, and our Saviour, be two distinct Persons, or whether it be meant only of Jesus Christ? for in the Original it is, and so *Beza* reads it, Our God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ. To decide this, it is clearly meant one Person, *viz.* Christ. For, *First*, The Article τοῦ clearly carries it; it is not said twice, as it would have been if two Persons had been intended; it is not said of our God, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ, but of our God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. And then *Secondly*, You shall find that this is the stile of the New Testament, That when it speaks of God the Father, he is called God and the Father, and when it speaks of Christ, he is called God and our Saviour: As for Example, speaking of God the Father in *Eph.* 1. 3. saith he, *the God and Father*; God and Father there are one person, and he speaks not of two, but of one; for (which also confirms the first Reason) the Article ὁ it is put before God, but not before Father, it is not the God, and the Father, but the God and Father, speaking of one; the like you have in 1 *Cor.* 15. 24. and in *Col.* 2. 2. This (I say) is the proper style of the New Testament concerning God the Father. Answerably, when the Scripture speaks of Jesus Christ, he is called God and our Saviour; so you have it expressly in *Tit.* 2. 13. *Looking for the appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ*: As by God and the Father is meant God the Father, so by God and our Saviour is meant Jesus Christ. Here now is the Faith, the Common Faith of the Primitive Christians, it is Faith on the Righteousness of him who

Part II. is our God, and our Saviour, and Men can never truly believe upon his Righteousness unto Salvation, unless they believe that he is a God as well as a Saviour, for he had never else been a Saviour had he not been God, and his Righteousness had never been the Righteousness of a Saviour had it not been the Righteousness of God; and therefore to deny him to be God, is to deny his Satisfaction, and he that denies the one denies the other; *Denying the Lord that bought them*, saith he in 2 *Pet.* 2. 1. Now then though Special Faith hath for its Object Jesus Christ as a Saviour, and his Righteousness as that of a Saviour, yet a Man must believe other things too concerning Jesus Christ, as here he must believe that he is God also. There are many other things a Man must believe, and believe them strongly too, which fall under the nature of General Faith, which yet are necessary to Special Faith, so that he who denies them cannot have true Special Faith. Take away Christ as being God, and you even take away the Saviour too, for they go both together, and accordingly it was the general Faith of all those Primitive Christians to believe in the Righteousness of Jesus Christ as God, and as our Saviour.

4. The *Fourth* Concession or Grant which I shall mention (which though it seems to be all one with the other before, yet hath a Difference) is this, That to this Special Faith on Christ, and on the Grace of God, there is the Faith of other things requisite, either implicitely or explicitely. It is not only that he who denys some things which are believed with a general Faith cannot have a true Special Faith, since the denial of the one cannot stand with the truth of the other, (which was the meaning of the foregoing Concession) but that unless a man believe many things, which yet are but the objects of a General Faith, either implicitely, or explicitely, he can never come to have true Special Faith: We may see this in the instance of the Eunuch in the Confession of his Faith, *Acts* 8. 37. He says no more, but that he believed *Jesus to be the Son of God*, but yet withall his Faith was pitch'd upon Christ as a Saviour dying for sinners; for the occasion of his believing was *Philip*'s interpreting to him the 53*d*. Chapter of *Isaiah*, which openly mentions Christ's being wounded for our sins; and the Eunuch adds in his Confession, that he believed Jesus to be that Person who was intended, and he believed too that this Person was the Son of God, as that which alone made his Death and offering himself for sinners satisfactory unto God, for he accordingly desires to be baptized for remission of sins as obtain'd by Christ: His believing him to be the Son of God is indeed only mention'd, because this was the great thing necessary in order to his believing on him as a Saviour, but yet this last is as strongly implied and intended. To the same purpose we have another Scripture, *Heb.* 11. 6. *He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek him*: He that cometh to God is he that cometh to believe on him, cometh to him for Salvation, for Faith is often so exprest, tho' Special Faith lies in coming to God for Mercy, believing upon his Grace, believing on him that justifieth the ungodly, yet a Man must believe first that God is, and that spiritually, and he must be wise in that Point savingly too; a Man must believe also that God is just, and the Justifier of him that believeth in Jesus; that he is true and faithful in his Promises, therefore a Man is said when he believeth to set to his Seal that God is true: Yet, to believe the Truth of God, to believe the Justice of God, to believe that God is, all these belong to general Faith, to the same Faith wherewith I believe a thousand things else in the Scripture. Only let me say this, it is not necessary that a Man should believe all these explicitely, that is, in distinct Propositions, especially not in a Method and Order, first this, and then that; as to say, first I came to believe that God was, and then I came to believe that God was true: But when God comes to reveal himself as a Justifier, then, as when the Sun in one Beam sheweth the whole Sun to the Eye, so it is here, that often at once when God reveals himself as a Justifier of the ungodly, to be believed on, he also with that Beam enlightens the Soul with the Knowledge of what other Perfections are in him, which may conduce to represent him to us as a Justifier of the Ungodly. To illustrate this by the Instance of *Adam*'s first sin, as in that there were many sins concurred, but that one sin which the Scripture reckoneth, that one Disobedience by which we all fell, was, Eating the forbidden fruit; so it is here, tho' there are

are many Acts of believing, yet the one Act which justifies is that which regards Christ, and his Blood and Righteousness. When *Abraham* was to believe in the promised Messiah, in the promised Seed, *In whom all the Nations of the Earth should be blessed*, he believed in the power of God too, as I said even now out of *Rom.* 4. 21. and it was absolutely necessary for him so to do; for he knew, according to the Promise, that the Messiah could not come unless he had *Isaac*. Now though his Faith looked at Christ especially, yet to support this Faith that the Messiah should come, he believed in the Power of God to give him *Isaac*; his Special Faith was supported by his belief on the Power of God, and yet his belief on the Power of God, that God was able to do thus and thus, was not that which justified him, for it was but a general Faith, and yet I say it supported his Special Faith. You have the like in *Heb.* 11. 19. when he thought to offer up *Isaac*, his Eye was then upon Christ, whom God would raise from the dead, but yet he believed that God was able to raise up *Isaac*, without which he should never have Christ, nor Christ should never have come. *Abraham*'s Faith was twice put to it, in believing on the power of God concerning *Isaac*, the one was for his being conceived and born, and the other was when he offered him up; you have the one in *Rom.* 4. 19. and the other in *Heb.* 11. 18.

So that now Faith in the general of these Truths, that the Word of God, or the Promises of God are true, that God is faithful, that he is just, that he is powerful, all these they are the Supports of Special Faith, but yet still that Special Faith which I am justified by, is only that whereby I believe upon the Grace of Christ, and upon the Grace of God as justifying. Therefore that which Divines do say to clear the Point of Faith justifying alone, may be applied here, Faith (say they) doth not justifie alone, as if it were unaccompanied with other Graces, as the Eye though it sees alone, yet if it were alone, if it were out of the Head, it would not see: Now the same do I say of this Special Faith, it would never come to justifie us, if it were not supported with Acts of general Faith. A great many of such Nerves meet in this Eye of Special Faith upon the Grace and Mercy of God, and concur therewith, and tho' they are before that Act, yet are in order unto Justification. When Men are humbled for sin, upon the sight of sin as sin, they could never be thus spiritually humbled for sin, if they did not know God spiritually, and the Goodness of God: I mean, take Goodness in the general sense, as God is good, and Sin is evil, they could not see sin to be the greatest evil, except they saw God to be the chiefest good; (for as God knows sin by knowing himself, (as the School men speak) so we know the evil of sin in that light whereby we know the Goodness of that God against whom we have sinned, and from whom sin hath drawn us) but now a thousand of these Acts, if you could suppose so many to preceed, are not those whereby we are justified, but they are in order to Justification. A Man is never justified till he be wrought upon to a special throwing of himself upon Christ and his Righteousness, and upon God as justifying.

CHAP. IV.

That a Special Act of Faith on the Free-Grace of God as justifying Sinners, and on the Blood and Righteousness of Christ, is the only true Justifying Faith: This prov'd by several Arguments. What are the Reasons why God hath singled out this Special Faith to be that Faith upon which he justifies. The Uses.

HAving explain'd the Nature of Special Justifying Faith, and what Acts conduce to it, I come now to demonstrate, that it is only by this Special Faith that we obtain an Interest in Christ and his Righteousness unto Salvation and Justification.

1. You know that there is a special part of God's Word, which is the Gospel

Part II.

ſpel, even as Chriſt the grand Subject of it is called eminently ὁ λόγος, *the Word*, Joh. 1. 1. Now what is the Goſpel? Truly it is nothing elſe (take it ſtrictly in the ſpecial ſenſe and meaning of it) but that Doctrine which holds forth the Grace of God juſtifying, pardoning, and ſaving Sinners, and which holds forth Jeſus Chriſt made Righteouſneſs to us. Now then this Goſpel it is call'd in a peculiar reſpect *The Word of Faith*; and for what reſpect but this? becauſe it is a ſpecial Object of a Special Faith which God ſaveth us by: The Apoſtle in *Rom.* 10. 8. ſpeaking of the Goſpel, in diſtinction from the Law, and from all elſe in the Scripture, ſaith, *This is the Word of Faith which we preach*. What is that ſame ſpecial Word of Faith? He tells us, *ver.* 9. *That* (ſo we read it, but ſome tranſlate it *Nempe*, or,) *Namely this, if thou ſhalt confeſs with thy mouth the Lord Jeſus, and believe with thy Heart, thou ſhalt be ſaved*; and the Scripture ſaith, (*ver.* 11.) *Whoſoever believeth on him ſhall not be aſhamed*: This is called the Word of Faith, which holdeth forth this ſpecial Object of the Special Faith of a Believer. And then again in *Gal.* 3. 1, 2. the Goſpel it is called the *Hearing of Faith*, having ſpoken of Chriſt being crucified before their Eyes in the Words before; ſo alſo in 1 *Tim.* 3. 9. it is called *The Myſtery of Faith*. Now as the Goſpel is called in a ſpecial manner the Word of Faith, ſo in us that Faith is called Special Faith which relateth to this Word, and the reſt is rather called *Wiſdom to Salvation*, whereby we know all things elſe in the Scripture, but this carries the name of Faith, and is called *Faith in Jeſus Chriſt*, and therefore it is called *Faith of the Truth*, 2 Theſ. 2. 13. that is, of the Goſpel; it is not only Faith of Truth, take it in general any Truth revealed in the Word, but *Faith of that Truth*; *God hath choſen you to Salvation* (ſaith he) *through Faith of the Truth*. As the Goſpel is called the Word of Faith, ſo on the other ſide Faith is called *The Faith of the Goſpel*, Phil. 1. 27. Thus it is a Special Faith, becauſe it hath this Special Object.

2. Then again add this to it, That tho' the Apoſtles were to Preach all the Word of God, yet they had a ſpecial Miniſtry; *The word of Faith which we preach*, ſaith *Paul* in *Rom.* 10. 8. Now the Faith that is to be in Chriſtians, it is to be ſuited to their Miniſtry; *So we preach, and ſo ye believed*, 1 Cor. 15. 11. Now then if that Preaching of Remiſſion of Sins in the Name of Chriſt, if Preaching the Righteouſneſs of God through Faith, the Righteouſneſs of Faith which is in the Son of God, if this were the ſpecial proper Miniſtry of the Apoſtles, then that is the Special Faith of a Chriſtian which is ſuited to this Miniſtry: Now it is evident that this was the ſpecial thing that they preached in *Acts* 20. 24. thus ſaith the Apoſtle, *So that I might finiſh my Courſe with Joy, and the Miniſtry which I have received of the Lord Jeſus*: What was that? *To teſtifie the Goſpel of the Grace of God*. Take the Goſpel as it holds forth the Grace of God, that is, that ſpecial Grace of God, his Free-grace in pardoning, ſaving, and juſtifying ſinners, this is the ſpecial Miniſtry (ſaith he) which I received of Jeſus Chriſt. You have it likewiſe elſewhere often profeſſed by the Apoſtle.

When Jeſus Chriſt began to Preach, he began with this, *Mar.* 1. 15. *Repent, and believe the Goſpel*; *the Goſpel of Grace, and the Goſpel that holds forth Chriſt*. And as he began, ſo he ended with it, *Mar.* 16. 15. *Go and preach the Goſpel, and he that believeth ſhall be ſaved*: And when he was in Heaven, what was the Commiſſion he gave to *Paul*? *Paul* ſaid, in the place I cited even now, that his Miniſtry was to *Teſtifie the Goſpel of the Grace of God*: Now what was *Paul's* Commiſſion given him by Chriſt from Heaven? ſee *Acts* 26. 18. *I ſend thee to the Gentiles, to open their Eyes, and to turn them from Darkneſs to Light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveneſs of ſins, and an inheritance among them which are ſanctified by Faith that is in me*.

3. Conſider this likewiſe, That when any of the People came to Chriſt, or came to the Apoſtles, to know what to do to be ſaved, ſtill they directed them to Faith upon a ſpecial Object for Salvation. What ſaith *Paul* to the poor Jailor in *Acts* 16. 31. when he asked what he ſhould do to be ſaved? He gives him the moſt ſoveraign, ſpecial, only Remedy, *Believe on the Lord Jeſus, and thou ſhalt be ſaved*: He doth not bid him believe on God ſimply, and believe that God is powerful, juſt, *&c.* but he points his Faith to that which is the Special Object of it, *Believe on the Lord Jeſus*, ſaith he. You may have in the Scrip-

Scripture, and in the New Testament, Descriptions of one that shall be saved by Faith on other things besides believing on Jesus Christ, but you shall never have a Direction (when a Man comes to ask what he shall do to be saved) unto any thing else: So in *Joh.* 6. 29. Christ himself, when they asked him, what they should do, that they might work the Works of God? He directs them to this, *Believe on him whom he hath sent.*

4. Consider, That all the Saints from the beginning of the World, especially under the New Testament, do profess their trusting upon the special Grace and Mercy of God, as the special Object of their Faith. You have them brought both together, both the Saints in the Old and in the New Testament, in *Acts* 15. 11. and they both meet in this Center, in this special Faith. The Apostle there had in the very Words before spoken of their Fathers under the Old Testament, and he had said, that the Law was a Yoke, which neither we nor our Fathers were able to bear; how shall we be saved now? and how were they saved then? Mark what follows, *But we believe that thorough the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ* (I take it, that by the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ is not meant the Grace personally in Jesus Christ, but that Grace which God beareth us thorough Jesus Christ) *we shall be saved, even as they*, or, (as the Word is in the *Greek*) *after the manner they were*; and all by believing, and that for Salvation, having that special aim, and acting our Faith upon the Grace of God in Jesus Christ. This (as I said before) was the Special Faith of all the Primitive Christians, 2 *Pet.* 1. 1. *To all them*, saith he, (for none else are true Christians but those) *that have obtained like Faith* (even this special Faith) *on the Righteousness of God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ*; and in 1 *Pet.* 1. 21. there you shall see what manner of Christians they were, and what their Faith was upon, *Who by him do believe in God that raised him from the dead, and gave him glory, that your Faith and Hope might be in God.* This is the Description of the Primitive Believers, they believed in God thorough Jesus Christ, in God justifying thorough Jesus Christ; and this was the Faith of the Apostles themselves, *Gal.* 2. 16. *We* (saith he, speaking of the Apostles) *have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified*; and there [*in him, and the Faith of Jesus*] is three times mentioned, as being that which only we are justified by; and in *Rev.* 14. 12. you have all the Saints described by this, that they keep the Faith of Jesus; they are described by this special Faith.

Lastly, It appeareth that it is thorough this Special Faith that we are thus saved, having this Special Object, because it is not said only, that all that do believe shall be saved thorough him, which you have in *Acts* 13. 39. *By him* (saith he) *all that believe shall be justified, and receive forgiveness of sins.* But whereas some might say, (and truly it might be objected) suppose I believe, tho' it be on something else, yet I may be saved by Christ, and for Christ's sake meritoriously; therefore to obviate this there are two Places more, which if you do but add, you will see that it is not only *All that believe shall be saved thorough him*, but, *Through him all shall be saved, that believe on him also*; that is, as none but Believers, and such as have Faith, are saved, and saved through Faith, so their Faith must be on him too by which they are saved, for so it is expressly said in *Acts* 10. 43. *Thorough his Name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.* The like you have in *Acts* 26. 18. *By Faith which is in me:* And therefore now here is the thing wherein the strength of the Argument lies, the Scripture doth not only say, *He that believeth shall be saved*; for so it saith too, *He that repenteth shall be saved*, and Faith is not only said to be unto Salvation, for so Repentance is said to be unto Salvation; but it is plainly expressed, *He that believeth is saved by believing on him*; *Qui credit & credendo quidam salvatur*; *Who believes, and is indeed sav'd by believing.* And this is yet more express, *Rom.* 3. 22. *This* (says he) *is it that is witnessed by the Law and all the Prophets, even the Righteousness of God which is by Faith of Jesus Christ to all, and upon all that believe:* He contents not himself to have said *On them that believe*, but more emphatically also adds, *by Faith*; so as this Righteousness is not only said to be on them that believe, for 'tis on them that repent too, but it is also express'd that it is by believing; *It is the Righteousness of God, which is by Faith on them that believe*; and this Faith is the Faith of Christ. Add to this that

place

Part II. place in *Gal.* 3. 22. where there is the like Duplication, *The Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the Promise by the Faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe:* It is given, and by believing on Christ: And all argues, that as Salvation is by Faith alone, so that it is by Faith upon this special Object, upon Jesus Christ.

But you will ask me, What is it in Christ that is the Special Object of this Special Faith?

I shall give you an Answer out of the Scripture in a Word or two: You shall find it to be Faith in his Blood, and Faith in his Righteousness, or in his Obedience: Faith in his Blood you have in *Rom.* 3. 15. and Faith in his Righteousness you have in that Place I have so often quoted, 2 *Pet.* 1. 1. These are the matter of our Justification, which the Soul hath recourse unto, to be accepted for, and to have them imputed to it.

If you ask answerably to both these, For what it is that the Soul comes to Christ, believeth on his Blood, believeth on his Righteousness, to obtain what?

I Answer, It is to obtain two things, the one answering his Blood, and the other answering his Righteousness, *viz. Remission of sins, and an inheritance among them that are sanctified,* (these being the two Legacies which the Soul comes for) and both by *Faith,* that is, *in me,* saith Christ, in *Acts* 26. 18. So that indeed there is the whole Obedience of Christ, active and passive, Blood and Righteousness, for remission of sins, and for an inheritance, as thus you have them singly mention'd in several Scriptures; and to give you them both in one Scripture, *Rom.* 5. first at the *9th.* verse, saith he, *Being now justified by his Blood,* and what doth his Blood serve to justifie us from more peculiarly? *From Wrath: Being justified by his Blood,* (saith he) *we shall be saved from Wrath through him:* and elsewhere we are said to be justified from Sin and from Wrath; and then *ver.* 18, 19. of that Chapter, *As by the Disobedience of one many were made sinners,* (*viz.* That Act of *Adam*'s Disobedience imputed to them) *so by the obedience of one many are made righteous,* (so the Word is) *they are constituted righteous* by that Righteousness and Obedience: He had spoken of his Blood before, *ver.* 9. he now speaks of his Righteousness, for he opposeth it to that actual Disobedience of the Law which *Adam* committed, which consisted of one Act, but this is abundance of Grace, and of the Gift of Righteousness. My Brethren, we are not made righteous by the act of Believing, No, we are constituted and made righteous by that Obedience of Christ on which we believe; the Text is express for it. Now observe it, as [justified by his Blood] takes away Wrath, as you have it *ver.* 9. so our being made righteous by his Obedience is for *Justification of Life:* Read the very Words of the 18*th. verse,* where speaking of Justification of Life, which is distinct from remission of sins, and freedom from Wrath, he saith, it is by having the Righteousness of Christ made ours, we being made righteous by his Obedience. So that, I say, this is the special Object of Faith, and this was the Faith of the Primitive Times.

I now come to shew the Reasons (which have the greatest Harmony in them with all other Truths, and have as much Conviction in them, being added unto Scripture, as any) to make this thing good, Why that God should single out this Act of Faith, as having in a special manner his Grace, and Christ's Righteousness for Salvation in its Eye; Why God, I say, should single out this Act of Faith, as that upon which he is said to justifie; so that let a Man have never so much Faith concerning God himself, under all other consideration, be it a Belief of the Power, Justice, Truth, or whatsoever it be that doth glorifie God never so much, if it be not (if we could suppose them severed) Faith towards God as merciful, saving, justifying, *&c.* it is not justifying: Or, let a Man believe never so much of Jesus Christ, and that spiritually too, if he do not believe in Christ as a Saviour, for Righteousness and Pardon, on his Blood for Justification, and on his Righteousness to be saved by it, all the other Faith will do him no good, neither is any other Faith said to save or to justifie. Now the Reasons why God hath singled out this special Act of Faith in such a peculiar manner, as that which should be peculiarly saving, and upon which he saveth Men, they are these:

1. Con-

1. Consider what is the End of Faith? It must needs be this, to bring us o God, that we may come to him, and close with him, and so may fear him, bey him, or whatever else you will put upon it: Without this all the World nust yield that the End of Faith is not attained, therefore in the Scripture hat Faith that saveth us is every where exprest by a *Coming to God*, and a *oming to Jesus Christ*: You have the Expression frequently in *Joh.* 5. & *Joh.* 6. s on the contrary Unbelief in those that have the Gospel preached to them is xprest by *Not coming to Jesus Christ*, and *by departing from the living God*; so ou have it in *John* 5. 40. & *Heb.* 3. 12. Now none will come to God unless pon a special ground of Confidence in God justifying and accepting. To believe l of God else, to believe that God is true in his Word, in all his Promises, nd not to have the Substance of that Promise in the Eye, *viz.* That God is Justifier and a Saviour, will be ineffectual: All other Promises, and believing n God under all other Notions, will never bring a Man to God, or make him ome unto him, *Heb.* 11. 6. *None cometh to God but he that believeth that there a God, and that he is a Rewarder of them that seek him*: Special Faith is here xprest by *Seeking of God.* You have the like in *Isa.* 11. 10. the which if you ompare with *Rom.* 15. 10. they both will open to you that in *Heb.* 11. 6. in *a.* 10. 11. saith the Prophet, *In that day* (speaking of Christ) *there shall be a oot of Jesse, which shall stand for an Ensign to the People, and to him shall the Gentiles seek*: Mark the Expression, [seek] and now compare with this *Rom.* 15. o. and see there what the Apostle renders and translates the Prophets seeking to: *And again* (saith he, quoting this place in *Isaiah*) *Esaias saith, There shall e a Root of Jesse, and he shall rise to reign over the Gentiles, and in him shall the entiles trust*: Mark it, Seeking and Trusting they are put all for one; I alledge t for this, that the Notion of Seeking in that *Heb* 11. 6. is believing on God, nd exprest both by Seeking and by Coming to him: Now saith the Apostle *Heb.* 11. 6. there must be a twofold Apprehension in a Man for the ground f his Coming to God. 1. An Apprehension, and a Spiritual Belief that God is. That he is the Rewarder *of them that seek him*, or, (if you will in the Apoles Language elsewhere) *of them that trust in him, or believe in him.* It is not herefore simply the Belief of all things concerning God that will bring a Man's oul to seek to him, or to come to him, unless God be considered as he prohiseth himself a Reward, as he did to *Abraham*: The Blessing of *Abraham* in forgiving his sins, and giving him Heaven, whereby was it exprest? *I will be thy Reward*, saith God in *Gen.* 17. 1. or it may have relation to that in *Psal.* 9. 10. *hey that know thy Name will put their Trust in thee, for thou hast not forgotten hem that seek thee*: Thou art a God that dost regard, and hast a special regard o them that seek thee, and do trust in thee; for seeking and trusting are put both or one in that Psalm likewise. Now what was the Name of God in the Old Testament which did draw in the Hearts of all his People to trust in him, and o seek him? It was, *The Lord God gracious and merciful, pardoning Iniquity, Transgression and Sin*, Exod. 34. 6. This was his Name, and those that new it and believed it spiritually, they trusted in him, and looked upon him as one that was a Rewarder, and not *forgetful* (which is all one, for a Diminutive Expression implies more than it expresseth) *of them that seek him.* So that now if a Man would come to God, and be brought to him, it is not ll the General Faith about God that the Soul of Man can take in, let him know never so much of it, that will do it, unless he withal know him in his pecial Promise of favour, and of being a Reward to them that trust in him: Otherwise Men are driven away from God, Men will never come to him, if t were not for a Promise of special Mercy, pardoning them, accepting them, and rewarding them; *There is mercy with thee that thou mayest be feared*, saith he Psalmist in *Psal.* 130. 4, 7. No Man would fear God, would come to him, would seek to him, or worship him, or meddle with him, let him have never o much Faith in all things else, if it were not that there is *Mercy with him, and plenteous Redemption*, as it follows there. Men would not seek God, nor come to God, but under the Notion of a God promising Reconciliation in Christ, promising to be a Reward in Christ, and to be favourable in Christ.

The Papists (that I may shew you the Deceits and Mistakes of Men all along as

Part II. as I go in this great Point) they tell us that it is General Faith, Faith to believe all things else of God, as well as to believe upon God giving of himself out to us in Special Promises, that is justifying Faith; and therefore they do find fault with *Calvin*, and blame him and others of our Protestant Writers, for saying that the School-men erred in making God (simply considered) the Object of Faith; and for saying that God in Christ, God as justifying, God as rewarding, and pardoning sin, as he is thus, is the Special Object of Faith: And they seem to argue strongly for their Opinion. I shall mention their Argument, and Answer it in a word. Say they, The primary Object of Faith must needs be God himself, simply considered in all his Attributes, and not in any special manner, God in Christ, or God in respect of Grace and Mercy; because, take God as justifying, and God revealed in Christ, that's but a secondary thing to God himself, it is but *Attributum secundarium*, an Attribute at second hand, by reason of his own purpose tooken up to shew Mercy to Sinners; therefore, say they that which is not the primary thing in God, cannot be the primary Object of our Faith. And then farther they argue thus too, Vision in Heaven succeeds Faith, but to know God in himself, or God to be all in all, to know God in his Excellencies, this, say they, is the Perfection of Heaven, therefore God considered must needs be a more Perfect Object of Faith, than to consider God as justifying us, or God revealed in Christ: For, say they, Faith and Vision have the same Object, only with this variation, that God is revealed obscurely to our Faith here in this life, but clearly in the World to come.

For Answer to this, and so to clear this first Reason that I have mentioned before I go off of it, I say, God himself, simply considered in himself, is not the primary Object of our Faith; for Faith cannot see God as in himself, none can see God and live, that is appointed indeed for Vision in the World to come. We must therefore make that the primary Object of our Faith which is suited to us, and suited to the way of believing by God's Ordination, and to a Man's Mind and Spirit here in this life, as we are in our way to Heaven; and therefore now to go and throw off Christ, and Faith in him, and make Communion with God as God all in all, immediately in himself to be justifying Faith, though there is such a Communion with him in the World to come, when God shall be all in all, yet this is not suited to what we are here in this Life; therefore we must take that to be the primary Object of Faith which is ordained to be so unto us while we are here. Now God is revealed to us here in this Life two ways, either by such Words or Names which he hath given himself as do express his Attributes, which are his back-parts, as that he is called just, and faithful, and true, and gracious, and merciful, and knowing all things, *&c.* Or else, God is to be considered as he is revealed to us in Jesus Christ, in the Word of the Gospel which is Preached to us; for what is Jesus Christ but God manifested in the flesh? Now then, of the two, which do you think is the chief Object of our Faith? Whether God revealed in his Attributes, or God revealed in Christ? Certainly God revealed in Christ. I yield you, that God known in himself is beyond both these, for both these are but means to know him by; but of the two I say, God in Christ is the Special Object of our Faith, the other is but a secondary thing in comparison of this: Why? Because it was the Knowledge of God which they had in the *Old Testament*; and the truth is, *that* aboundeth with such a Knowledge of God, in words expressing his Attributes; and if that had been the more perfect, then all that addition that Jesus Christ hath brought by the revelation of himself had been in vain. Now if our minds could arrive at God immediately, we needed neither the one nor the other.

So that the summe of the Answer is this, That it is true, that the Knowledge of God simply considered, in his Nature, in his Being, in all his Excellencies, when he is so known, is most excellent: But the Question is of that way of knowing him which God hath appointed us in this Life, and so, I say, the Knowledge of God in Christ is the most excellent, and Jesus Christ is he that makes all the Attributes of God (which is another way of knowing him in this life) more conspicuous than they were in the Old Testament, therefore Christ, and God revealed in Christ, pardoning, justifying, saving, and all that Jesus Christ hath done to that end, is to us the primary Object of Faith.

2. Another

2. Another Reason why God hath appointed such a special Faith to be justifying, is, because Men that are sinners (for in that consideration the strength of the Reason lies, or at least there is thereby a further strength added to the former) can never come to close with God, they can never come to seek him, but under the Representation of God in Christ, and of God pardoning, and God justifying. This is certain, that the more strongly a sinner believes all things that are in God, all his Excellencies, his Holiness, his Power, his Justice, take all the Attributes that are in God, the more strongly, I say, he believes these, if he should not withal apprehend this God as one that not only hath Mercy in his Nature, but that holds forth Mercy in his Promises, and in Christ for the Pardon of Sin, and for Salvation, the more it will drive a sinner off from God, unless the special Grace or Mercy of God, as it is held forth in the Promise, be revealed to that Man's Soul; and then indeed the more strongly he believes all the Excellencies that are in God, the more such a Belief will strengthen his Heart to come to God, and to believe in him, when once he hath closed with him under the Notion of merciful, and justifying, and pardoning, in and thorough Christ; otherwise, I say, it puts Men off from God; so it did *Cain*, so it did *Adam*, who ran away from God. And what is the Reason that the Devils believe and tremble? It is, because all that they know and apprehend of God, hath no special Promise of Mercy to them as sinners from that God: They know, that God is merciful, but because there is not a Declaration of God's Will to be merciful to such as are in their Condition, because they know that his Mercy is limited to Men, that Good-will is to Men on Earth, as the Angels sung, *Luke* 2. 14. and not unto Devils in Hell, that no Name is given unto Men by which they can be sav'd, but only the Name of Christ, and not to Devils; therefore, the more, I say, that they know of God, the more they tremble, and the more they go off from God; but it is God apprehended under that special Notion, as one that hath a Name of being merciful, put out in his Promises to such sinners as we are, that draws Sinners to him.

So that let Papists and Popish Spirits, that would have a general Faith to save us, dispute what they will, that God considered in himself is the chief Object of Faith, yet still clearly take us as sinners, God as a Justifier of sinners, but of his infinite Mercy and Grace is the chief Object of Faith unto us; you have it plainly in *Rom.* 4. 5. *To him that believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly is Faith accounted for Righteousness:* Go take a Man that is ungodly, and how will this Man ever come to believe in God, unless under this Notion, that he is one that justifies the ungodly? And therefore that's the Faith that is accounted for Righteousness. It is not believing that God is true, or holy, or just, simply considered in himself, (if a Man believe these never so strongly) that will justifie him; but to believe on God under this Notion, that he is a Justifier of the ungodly, this is a Man's Faith which is accounted to him for Righteousness. Without this it is certain sinners would have no Heart to come unto God; you have an excellent Expression to this purpose in *Eph.* 3. 12. where speaking of Jesus Christ, and so of God, considered as in Christ revealed, he saith, *In whom* (having spoken of Christ in the very Words before) *we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him:* Here is the special Faith express'd, which is pitched either upon God as justifying in Christ, or upon Christ, thorough whom God justifieth. Now go take a Sinner, he would never have any boldness, never have any Confidence so much as to come to God, he would have no Heart to do it, he would be driven off from him, if he did not first look on God as in Christ; for mark it, he mentions Christ twice, *In whom we have boldness by the Faith of him:* The meaning is this, that take the reality of the thing it self, the access, the leave that God giveth for sinners to come to him, it is in and by Christ, *In whom* (saith he) God really admitteth Men to him, or else would not do it. And as thus for the reality of the thing, it is in Christ, and without him there would be no access to God, so it is only that Man who apprehendeth Christ, and cometh to God thorough Christ, that hath this access with Confidence, and therefore that is added, *By the faith of him:* For this is a true Rule, which will never decieve us, that look what it is that moveth God to accept us, the Apprehension of that in God strengtheneth our

Part II. Hearts to come unto him to be accepted: Now if God did not look upon us in Jesus Christ, there were no acceptation of us on God's part; and if we on the other side did not by Faith look upon God thorough Jesus Christ, there would be no Confidence, no Boldness, but the Heart would go back; therefore he puts in both, *In whom*, (saith he) *thorough the Faith of whom we have boldness, and confidence, and access to God.* If there were a Glass (to make such a supposition) thorough and by which the Sun did shine upon the World, and take that Glass away and the Sun did not shine; and on the other side, if that the Eyes of Men and other Creatures were so weak that they could not behold the Sun but thorough that Glass; if both these were true, what a great Necessity were there that the means of the sight of the Sun should be still as thorough that Glass. So it is here, God himself out of Christ shineth not upon sinners, neither can the fore, the weak Eye of a sinner dare to behold that God which is a consuming fire, but as looking thorough this Glass; and therefore, I say, tho' Man in his Primitive Innocent State had another way and means of coming to God, as *Adam* had, yet notwithstanding now, as sinners, we have not. And let me tell you this too, that take *Adam*'s Condition, there was a special kind of Faith even in him too; he must have believed and known (at least if not by Faith by some other ways, whether it was by the Law of Natural Righteousness in his Heart I dispute not) that this God did accept him to Life, and that he was in his favour. It's true indeed, he had this Knowledge by the Intervention of his own Good Works, otherwise tho' *Adam* had known God to be omniscient, to be holy, to be just, to be true, and to be happy, and perfect, and blessed, if that he had not taken all these Attributes of God in at this little hole, the Beams shining in at this hole, *That this God justifieth me, approveth me upon my Obedience*; (he had the sight of this through his Works and Holiness, because the Law between *Adam* and God stood as between a Creator and a Creature) all the other knowledge would not have comforted *Adam*'s Heart, had not he, I say, apprehended God to justifie him; though then indeed the way of Justification was on the account of *Adam*'s Holiness, and thorough his Works. Hence now therefore, God as justifying and approving of *Adam*, as a Person in his favour, and God as his God, was the primary Notion under which *Adam* looked upon God; and to him all the other were but as secondary in comparison of this, much more is it so to a poor sinner. And therefore now let us consider God justifying us out of Grace (for otherwise if we consider our selves under the first Covenant, all the Attributes of God come in upon us with Terrour) and then all his Attributes shining but thorough this one Consideration, that God is a God that justifies sinners, come in sweetly upon us. And therefore let Popish Spirits say what they will, yet still unto us as sinners it is God as gracious, God as justifying, it is God as in Christ revealed, which is the proper and special Object of Justifying Faith. For, consider, when a sinner doth turn to God, and come to believe in good earnest, what is the chief thing he hath in his Eye, in the knowledge of himself? He hath the guilt of sin, Poor Soul, I am (saith he) obnoxious to the Wrath of the great God; this is the chief, the first thing he hath then in his Eye; therefore, now answerably in his seeking unto God, what hath his Faith recourse unto? to that God who justifies the ungodly, and to that Christ through whom he doth it; and therefore he hath recourse to them for Justification first, and Sanctification afterwards; and why? because the Power of Sin is not first in his Eye, but the Guilt of Sin, therefore answerably Justification, (take him as he is a Sinner) and God as Justifying, and Christ as justifying, must needs be in his Eye first, and then afterward Christ as sanctifying. *Adam*, he might have leave to study all the Attributes of God, one after another, by Pieces and Parcels, and pick and choose which he would think of first, even as Scholars do pieces of Divinity; and God might draw out an Act of Faith and Knowledge of, or to himself, under this Attribute, or that Attribute, as he pleased: But this Poor Soul that is a Sinner, when he comes to God, he hath not the leisure to look over all things else in God; or if he hath, he is terrified with them; but, (saith he) I am lost; and what is the first Question he asketh? *What shall I do to be saved?* That's the first Question in order of Nature, therefore, now

now if you will answer this Poor Souls Question, you must tell him of God in Christ, and of God saving and justifying Sinners in Christ.

3. A Third Reason why God hath appropriated our Salvation to such a special Faith on Christ, is, Because it is unto that Faith the Object of which only pacifieth the Heart against Condemnation that God only doth annex Justification. If to any at all, it must needs be to that Faith, the Object of which alone pacifieth the Heart against Guilt and Condemnation; but now, only the Faith that is in Jesus Christ and his Righteousness, and upon God as justifying, hath that for its Object which alone is able to quiet and pacifie the Heart against Condemnation, therefore God hath annexed alone to this Faith our being justified: Yea, it is this which first puts in the chief Life into the Soul, *Rom.* 1. 17. *The Righteousness of God is revealed from Faith to Faith*; and it follows, *The just shall live by Faith.* The greatest Death is in the guilt of sin, so that if we could suppose that a general Faith could act against the Power of Sin, yet it could not raise the Soul from Death in the guilt of it, until the Righteousness of God which acquits it be revealed, *Col.* 2. 12, 13. to this also accord those places which express, *That he who seeth the Son hath Life*, and that *He who believeth on the Son hath Life*, Joh. 3. 26. 1 Joh. 5. 11. Gal. 2. 20. But will you first, before I proceed to prove this, mark how I express my self; I say, that Faith, the Object of which serveth to pacifie; I do not say, that Faith the Act of which always pacifieth, but whose Object alone I must have peace from. Look what Thing, what Consideration, what Apprehension alone must give that Soul Peace and Quiet against Condemnation, certainly Faith upon that Object is it which God hath annexed Justification unto. Always the Act of Faith upon Christ, and upon Grace, doth not bring Peace, but there is that in the thing believed, or that will do it in the Event. Now the Reason of the Consequence of this is clear, for Justification you know is opposed to Condemnation, therefore that Object of Faith, and that of Faith which serveth to pacifie the Heart only against Condemnation, the Belief on that thing certainly only justifieth. Now there is nothing but God as justifying, and our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and his Righteousness, thorough whom God justifieth, that is able to pacifie and quiet the Heart of a Sinner; nothing else will do it. We use the like Argument against the Papists, that therefore we are justified by Faith alone.

I will give you clearly a Scripture for this, and so pass from it, in *Rom.* 3. and *Rom.* 4. the Apostle discourseth of Faith as justifying, and he makes the Object of that Faith in *Chap.* 3. to be Jesus Christ; he calleth it *The Faith of Jesus*, ver. 26. *&c.* he also makes God as justifying the ungodly the Object of Faith, in *Chap.* 4. *ver.* 5. and he doth shew that we are justified alone by Faith as acted upon those two Objects, and not by the Works of the Law: Now how doth he conclude in *Chap.* 5. *ver.* 1. *Being justified by Faith*, saith he, (that is, by this Faith on God justifying, and on Jesus Christ, which is the Faith only by which he had proved we are justified in the Words before) *we have peace with God thorough Jesus Christ*: That is, this is the only Faith that pacifieth the Heart; Faith only as pitch'd upon these Objects nakedly, and barely, and singly, will quiet the Heart, and bring Peace with God, nothing else will do it. Now I appeal to the Experience of all Believers, and in this Case I may very well do it, I appeal to all your Consciences, you that have been exercised in the Conflicts of Faith and Believing, what hath ever quieted your Hearts? All that you knew of God, or of Jesus Christ, would not do it, till you came to lay hold upon the Grace of God as justifying ungodly Wretches, meerly for his own Names sake, and till you laid hold on the Lord Jesus Christ, thorough whom you are justified; nothing else but God nakedly and simply considered, without any thing in your selves, hath ever quieted the Heart of you Sinners. As the Apostle argues from Experience in a like case, so do I argue from Experience in this Case too: The Apostle in *Gal.* 3. 2. when he would prove that it is the Gospel only that conveys the Spirit; saith he, This only would I learn of you, you that are so much for the Law, I pray tell me your Experience, I appeal to your own Experience, (and Experience in this case is a sure Rule) *Recieved you the Spirit by the Works of the Law, or by the hearing of Faith?* What doth he mean by the Spirit? He means the Spirit of God, sealing up Salvation to them, as

Part II. in *Ephes.* 1. 13. *You were sealed by the Spirit of Promise, and we have received the Spirit, the annointing*, 1 Cor. 2. 12. Of this Spirit he speaks, for afterwards he speaks of the common Gifts of the Spirit, *ver.* 5. Now I appeal to you, saith he, what was it that did bring this Spirit down into your hearts, thus sealing up Salvation to you? Was it all the Works of the Law that ever you did? No, It was by the hearing of Faith, saith he. Now the thing I cite this for, is to shew that in a Case and Argument of this Nature, the Apostle appeals to the very Experience of Christians. What is the Reason that the Experience of Christians must needs decide such a Case as this is? Because that God's Dispensations are alway suited to his own Appointments or Ordinances; that is, you will find that God will only bless his own way, and his own means. Now then (saith the Apostle) if Works of the Law had been a way and a means through which God conveyed his Spirit, some of you would have had the Spirit convey'd to you by works of the Law; I appeal to you if ever you had? But on the contrary, you have found it, and generally found it, that the Spirit was conveyed to you by the Hearing of Faith. Certainly then this is the truth: Why? Because Experience would not second this unless it were God's own Appointment and Ordination, that the hearing of Faith conveyeth the Spirit, for that which God sanctifieth to be effectual, hath always the Substance of his own Ordination in it. Now then in the like manner do I here argue, that Faith whose Object only quieteth the Heart against Condemnation, is certainly that, as pitch'd on that Object alone upon which God doth justifie us; now nothing can, or ever did, or will quiet the Heart, (I appeal to all Experience) but this Special Faith, pitch'd upon the Grace of God justifying immediately and freely, and upon the Lord Jesus Christ made Justification to us.

4. The Soul can lay hold upon no Promise that God hath made, (it cannot only neither come to him, nor treat with him, but can lay hold upon no Promise etc.) neither by way of Assurance, nor by way of Recumbency; it cannot with any Heart cast it self upon God or Christ for the Performance of any Promise, further than as it hath pitch'd (either by way of Assurance or casting it self) upon the Special Mercy of God to Pardon, or accept it in Jesus Christ, and therefore this must needs be the first and principal Act of Faith. I do not say, that no Man can cast himself upon God for any other Promise, till he be assured that God doth justifie him; but till he hath dealt with God for Justification as a God that justifieth the ungodly, and as a God thus merciful, and till he hath dealt with Jesus Christ, and come to him for Salvation, this Soul can never come to him for any other Promise with any chearful Heart. It is most certain, you cannot have recourse to God for other Promises with any Boldness and Heartiness, further then your Hearts are in a proportion strengthned to rest upon, and to have recourse unto the Grace of God to justifie, and unto our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, through whom we are justified; it is a thing which you may make a use of now by the way. Take this for a Rule, that your way when you would deal with God for any Temporal Promise, it is to renew your Faith for your Justification and Salvation; I will give you an instance or two for it, in *Joh.* 11. 26, 27, *&c.* there was the Sister of *Lazarus*, *Martha*, who was to deal with Jesus Christ, and he with her, concerning the raising of her Brother; Christ he tells her that her Brother shall rise again, *ver.* 23. *Yea*, saith she, *I know that he shall rise again in the Resurrection at the last day*: Christ now he was to bring her Heart off to this, that he should rise sooner, that he would raise him up now, which she was very backward to believe; What doth Jesus Christ do therefore? He puts her first upon this, to renew her Faith upon him for Salvation, so you have it clearly, *ver.* 25. Jesus said unto her, *I am the Resurrection and the Life, he that believeth in me, though he were dead yet shall he live, and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never dye*: Here you see he draws her on to believe in him for Salvation, and to renew that Faith. There are a great many Observations which may be made out of these Words: As first this, You see the Special Faith of the Gospel, which Christ would have us put into our Creed. You know there is a Creed, which we call the Apostles Creed, but here is one main Article of a Creed which Christ hath made; Believest thou this, saith he? He doth Catechetically instruct her in this main Point, namely, that he is, the Resur-

Resurrection and the Life, and that whosoever liveth and believeth in him shall never dye. To believe therefore with a Special Faith on Christ for Salvation, and against Condemnation, this is the great thing of the Gospel, and Christ he doth urge it upon her, that he might bring her Faith first off to this, and then it would be easie for her, more easie for her, having renewed that Faith upon Christ for Salvation, and not dying, to believe that he would raise her Brother, which was a Temporal Mercy which she was then treating with him about, and which he was rather bringing her off to be perswaded of. Hence therefore I conclude, That if you would have any Temporal Mercy, or believe in any Promise else, first believe in him for Salvation and against Condemnation, believe on him for Pardon of Sin, renew such Acts of Faith. Another thing I observe by the way out of those Words, is this, Her Answer is, *Yea Lord, I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God:* Hence some say, that to believe that Christ is the Son of God, is true Faith, and Faith enough: But you must join Christ's Words and her Answer together, for Christ doth not call her to believe that he is the Son of God, but to believe on him, that she might not dye, and therefore I say put her Answer and Christ's Words together, and the Meaning is clearly this, she believed him to be the Son of God, and she believed in him also that she should not dye; and having brought her Heart off to this, it was more easie for her now to believe that Christ would raise up *Lazarus* her Brother, then which she desired nothing more of a Temporal Mercy. You shall find likewise, that when Men and Women came to be healed, as for instance the Man sick of the Palsie, *Mat.* 9. 2. when he was brought to Christ to be healed of his Palsie, what doth Christ first say to the poor Man when he came to him? He said unto him, *Son be of Good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee:* They brought him to be healed of his Palsie, you see Christ afore ever he heals his Palsie, speaks first to the Man, *Son, be of good comfort, thy sins be forgiven thee.* What do I argue out of these Words? *First,* That Jesus Christ, the good Physitian, he knew the Sore of the Man's Heart; poor Man, he would fain be heal'd of his Palsie, but the desire of forgiveness stuck in his Spirit, and his Faith stuck most at that; for Christ here he speaks *ad Cor,* to the Heart, and therefore afore he would heal his Palsie, he first speaks to that which was most in his Eye, and which the Man most wanted, and which he came for; *Be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven:* The Words argue, that the Man was exercised about this, how his sins should be pardoned thorough Jesus Christ that was the Saviour of the World, therefore Christ first tells him, thy sins be forgiven: For the Man thought with himself, alas, the curing of my sickness will do me no good, if that my sins remain; What doth Christ therefore? He answereth according to the Man's thoughts, *Thy sins,* saith he, *are forgiven thee.* Again, thought the poor Man, this Temporal Mercy will not be granted, unless he forgive my sins too; my sins brought this Disease upon me, and it will not be taken away unless my sins be forgiven: Therefore Christ speaking to the poor Man's Heart, tells him first that his sins are forgiven. Hence, I say, I argue, that the Man's Soul was more exercised about the forgiveness of his sins than about his Palsie; therefore, I say, any of you too cannot come with Comfort to believe any other Temporal Promise, or any thing else, unless you come first either by Assurance to believe your sins are forgiven, or to deal with God about forgiveness, as this poor Soul did. I might give you the like instances in many others that were healed, and I might exemplifie this to you in the business of *Abraham:* The Lord did make a Promise to *Abraham* (which seems to be but an outward Promise, and take the Letter of it and it was but an outward Promise) concerning the multiplying of his Seed: And it is a thing that *Bellarmine* objecteth; You talk (saith he) that your Faith that justifies is pitch'd only upon God as justifying, and upon Jesus Christ. The Faith that *Abraham* was justified by, was, believing the multiplying of his Seed as the Stars of Heaven. In *Rom.* 4. 3. it is said, *The Scripture saith, Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for Righteousness:* Now where is it said that *Abraham*'s Faith was counted unto him for Righteousness? You have it in *Gen.* 15. 6. And upon what Occasion was it spoken, that his Faith was counted to him for Righteousness? It was believing of that Promise, that God would make his Seed like

Part II. like the ſtars of Heaven. Now, ſaith the great Objector, here is your Juſtifyſying Faith, it is meerly Faith upon a Temporal Promiſe. But you ſhall ſee how this Man is miſtaken, for read but the firſt verſe of that *Gen.* 15. and mark what God ſaith afore he makes him that Temporal Promiſe, (if you will make it ſuch, though if I had time I could ſhew you it is more, but take it ſo) ſaith God there firſt, *Fear not, Abraham, I am thy ſhield, and thy exceeding great reward*: There God makes a ſpecial Promiſe of Mercy and Bleſſedneſs unto *Abraham*, and having made this, he makes him a Promiſe of multiplying his Seed, *ver.* 5. *And he believed in the Lord*, (ver. 6.) *and he counted it to him for righteouſneſs:* That is, his Faith was exerciſed upon the Special Promiſe, by reaſon of which, and by vertue of which God did beſtow upon him this other Promiſe of making his Seed as the Stars of Heaven. I could give you another Anſwer to it, but I only alledge it for this purpoſe, that Temporal Promiſes are believed in, but in the ſtrength of having firſt cloſed with God, and with Jeſus Chriſt, under Special Promiſes of Mercy, Pardon and Forgiveneſs, and of receiving of Happineſs and of Bleſſedneſs in and thorough Chriſt. There is no treating with God for any Promiſe, till that Faith hath thus pitch'd it ſelf upon his free Favour in Chriſt, either by way of Aſſurance, or by way of caſting a Man's ſelf upon him to be juſtified; for a Man treateth with God before as an Enemy, and will a Man come to an Enemy for any thing when as his Heart is not with him? Therefore further, when the Soul doth come to God, having ſome Promiſe out of God's Heart, that he is a Juſtifier of ſuch as he is, and ſo reſteth upon him to be juſtified by him, he will then have recourſe to him for any thing elſe too: And the Truth is, a Man hath no Heart to treat with God till then about any thing, therefore in 2 *Pet.* 1. 3, & 4 *ver.* compared, he ſaith, that *Through the Knowledge of him* (that is, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, for he had ſpoken in the Verſe before of believing in the Righteouſneſs of God and our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt) *are given unto us exceeding great and precious Promiſes.*

The laſt ſort of Reaſons which I ſhall give you for the confirmation of this, *viz.* Why that God hath ſingled out Special Faith thus to juſtifie us upon, and why he doth not juſtifie us upon general Faith, be it never ſo good? and why, tho' we believe other things never ſo ſpiritually, and let them have never ſo ſpiritual effects upon our Hearts, yet it is only believing upon God as juſtifying and ſaving which is the right Faith? I ſay, the laſt ſort of Reaſons to evince it are theſe; Becauſe it ſuiteth every way, and agreeth with all the Principles that are held forth in the Doctrine of Faith and Juſtification, and the contrary Opinion doth diſagree with all true, Orthodox, ſound Principles, held forth about it.

1. In the firſt place, (for this contains ſome two or three particulars in it) It was a meet thing, and well ſuited together, that God ſhould beſtow all Benefits upon us (if he will beſtow them thorough Faith) thorough that Faith that is ſuited peculiarly to, and is pitched upon the Benefits which he doth beſtow. It is a Rule which Chriſt hath, and he hath it twice; He hath it in *Mat.* 8. 13. and He hath it in *Mat.* 9. 29, 30. The Rule is this, *Be it unto thee according to thy Faith*, (ſaith he;) ſo it is in *Mat.* 9. 29. when the poor blind man did come unto him to be heal'd: He hath the very ſame expreſſion in *Mat.* 8. 13. *Go thy way, and as thou haſt believed ſo be it done unto thee:* That is, Look what is the proper Aim of your Faith, that by God's Ordination doth God upon believing beſtow upon you. Now if a Man had the Faith of working Miracles, and if he would work a Miracle, why according to his Faith it would be unto him. If a Man came to Jeſus Chriſt to be heal'd, it was to him according to that Faith. Therefore now according to this Rule then doth God give forth Juſtification, when a Man's Soul comes to him to be juſtified, believes on him as a Juſtifyer, when he comes to Jeſus Chriſt for that Righteouſneſs which ſhould juſtifie, when he believeth on Jeſus that he may be juſtified, as it is in *Gal.* 2. 16. Saith the Apoſtle in *Rom.* 4. 5. *He that believeth on him that juſtifieth the ungodly, his Faith is counted for righteouſneſs:* That Faith, and no other, for that is his meaning. To believe on Chriſt, or upon God, under any other Notion, though it may make a Man Holy, yet it will not juſtifie a Man: You may ſee the Truth of this in the outward Elements of the Sacraments, as Bread and Wine in the Lord's Supper, and Water in Baptiſm; look what it is that they are ordained by God to ſignifie,

nifie, that they seal up to us; they signifie the Blood of Christ, and the Death of the Lord Jesus, and our being one with him therein; and as they signifie these by God's Ordination, so they do seal up these to us in a more eminent manner. So it is here, look what it is that the Heart comes to God for, that is it that God returns again to the Spirit; therefore he returns not Justification to a Man till he come to him to be justified, therefore it is that special Act upon which this great Benefit is given forth. I do not say, that every Man that comes to Christ hath the exact Notion of the word, Justified by Christ: Alas, the Ancient Language of the Fathers was, of being saved by Christ, for they were not acquainted with this Word justified. Our Divines of the Reformation speak more distinctly than they, but they meant the same thing: Only I should add this Caution, that Benefits of a kind, if a Man come to God for any one, God gives him all the rest; all Benefits which are out of us, as Adoption, Sonship, Pardon of Sin, which are all Acts without us: If a Man come to God for one, suppose Son-ship, he gives him all the rest; and according to the kind of the Faith is the Benefit bestowed.

2. Again, That God justifies us by a Special Faith, it agrees with this Principle also, *viz.* with the way of God's justifying us; and what is that? It is not that God doth justifie us by Faith, as it is an Act put forth by us, an Act of ours, or a Quality in us, but he doth justifie us by reason of the Objects laid hold upon by Faith, the Free-grace of God, and of Jesus Christ; so that not so much Faith as these are said to justifie, being apprehended by Faith: I might be exceeding large in manifestation of this. It is a received Principle amongst all our Orthodox Divines, I will only mention that in *Gal.* 3. 8. *The Scripture foreseeing that God would justifie the Heathen by Faith, preached the Gospel, saying, in thee* (speaking of *Abraham* personating Christ) *shall all Nations be blessed:* By Blessing here he means Justification clearly, for he speaks of taking away the Curse in the following Verses; the thing I cite it for is this, to observe that this Expression, *In thee shall all Nations be blessed,* serves wholly to take off all from a Man's self, when you come to the Business of Justification; *In thee,* (saith he) that is, in Christ, *in that seed they shall be blessed,* for so the Apostle explains it, *ver.* 16. *Not seeds,* (saith he) *but seed, namely, Christ.* It is not therefore being blessed in believing, or blessed by Faith, or thorough Faith, as it is an Act, but it is through Faith as laying hold upon Christ; it is *in Christ, in in* Christ, and *in in* only him. Now mark how this Truth suiteth others; if we are justified thus, by Jesus Christ as the Object of our Faith, and by God as he is the Object of our Faith, (because he is the Justifier, and Christ's Righteousness is the matter whereby we are justified, and in that respect we are said to be justified by Faith, because Faith lays hold upon these Objects) then assuredly it is only Faith as pitch'd upon these Objects, by which, and upon which we are justified: This necessarily and clearly follows, if (I say) by God as justifying us, (out of our selves) and by his Grace, and by Christ's Righteousness, (which is out of our selves in him) and by Faith, not as a Quality or Act, but only as apprehending these; if in this sence we are only said to be justified by Faith, then it is evident that Faith by apprehending these, and by no other act, is said to justifie us.

Therefore, do but see the Mystery of other Opinions; What is the Reason that the Papists say, that Faith alone in Christ doth not justifie? This is the true Mystery of it, they do not hold that the Grace of God is the Justifier of us, nor the Righteousness of Christ the matter of our Justification, therefore Faith doth not justifie in respect of its Object with them, but it justifieth us only as a righteous Quality in us, and a righteous Act performed by us; and therefore with them the Belief of any Truth, whatsoever it be, justifies as well as the believing on Christ, or on God that justifies the ungodly; and therefore they say, Faith justifies as a Disposition; that is, as any other Grace or Disposition in us, and not *per modum apprehensionis, as laying hold on Christ and his Righteousness*; and their πρῶτον ψεῦδος consists in this, that they assert Faith to be only an Assent, (and so it may be pitch'd on any other Truth as well as Christ dying) and not a Fiducial Apprehension of Christ; this agrees with their Principles, and the other agrees with ours.

And

Part II. And what is the Reason, that others who hold that Faith justifies as an Act, lean to this, and say, that General Faith is that which justifies? Because if it justifie us meerly but as an Act, pitch it upon any other Object as well as this it will be to us for Righteousness, and indeed it may as well.

But we are justified by Christ, and through Faith, even as you would say an House is enlightned by the Sun, and enlightned by opening the Window, it comes all to one, for the House is enlightned by opening of the Window, because opening of the Window lets in the Sun that enlightneth it; so it is here, for therefore Faith is said to justifie, because it lays hold upon, and lets in Christ, and God as justifying, into the Heart of a Sinner.

3. Again, in the third Place, If a Man were justified upon any other Act of believing of any Divine Truth, though believed never so spiritually and truly, and not on this special Act of believing on Christ, and on God as justifying, he were plainly and clearly justified by sanctification: As for Instance, if I believe that God is holy, (this I call part of a General Faith) and believe it spiritually and rightly, it makes me holy as he is holy, in my Affections. Here now the Belief of God's Holiness, if it be a true Belief, with the whole Heart serveth only to frame the Heart to Holiness answerably: Now then, if I should be justified by believing that God is holy, I should clearly be justified by being sanctified. To give you another Instance, I believe that God is just, and therefore I fear him: *Noah* (the Text saith) *moved with fear, prepared an Ark*, Heb. 11. 7. He believed that God was just and true in his Threatnings, and so feared God; if *Noah* now had been justified by this Faith of his, he had clearly been justified by Faith sanctifying, or if you will, by sanctification; for what is Holiness and Sanctification but a right knowledge of God in the Mind, with suitable affections framed in the Heart accordingly. If therefore a Man were justified by any other Faith than by Faith throwing himself upon Christ for Justification, he should be justified by Sanctification. So again, I believe that God is thus and thus excellent in himself, thus and thus happy and blessed, that he hath all these Perfections in him, here now is Faith in my Understanding; therefore I love God, here now is the Work of that Faith upon my Heart, answerable to the Faith I have of him in my Understanding: if now I were justified by that Faith which knows God to be thus excellent, I should be justified by sanctifying Faith, by Faith as it is Sanctification; or if you will, by Sanctification it self: For, I say, Sanctification is nothing else but Faith in the Mind, having suitable Affections thereunto in the whole Heart. Therefore, though Justifying Faith sanctifies most of all Faith else, and all other Faith, though never so spiritual, would not sanctifie without it, because it alone lets Christ and God into the Heart, that doth sanctifie me, and justifie me too; yet still, I say, Faith no way doth justifie but as it lays hold upon God as justifying, and Jesus Christ, whose Righteousness is Justification to us. Add to this to confirm it, that in *Adam* Acts of Trust in God were required, as well as Acts of Love, (which whether they had a supernatural Revelation for their rise or no is not material to this Point) but yet *Adam*'s Faith had not Justification by Grace, and by Imputation for its Object: He indeed was justified by such Acts of Faith (as being acts of the Image of God in him) as well as by acts of Love, and *e contra*, (as the Papists speak;) but to have such an act singled out, in respect and relation to such an Object, this is proper and peculiar to, and is the very pith and marrow of the Covenant of Grace, namely, Grace justifying us by Imputation, and this was the way to make it a distinct Covenant from that of *Adam*'s; whereas, if by General Faith on other Objects, or upon any other Grounds or Promises, we were justified, it would have been the same way, and the same Faith for Act and Object that *Adam* was justified by.

I should add one Reason more, and that is this, It agrees with the Nature of Faith, which is a trusting; but I will not enlarge further upon this, but only give you a Use or two.

USE 1. By this you may have a very great Light to distinguish things: It is an excellent thing to consider the several ways of Conversion, as Popish Spirits

Spirits do lay it forth, and as the Divines who are of the Reformed Churches, ppofite to them, do lay it out. Read a Popifh Divine, and fee how he will elcribe Converfion, and the Work of God in faving a Man; he will tell you, hat he faw his finfulnefs, that he was contrite under it, humbled under the ght of it, that he feareth God, hateth fin, upon the fight of the evil of it, nd begins to have good purpofes. There are feven Difpofitions the Papifts ave, (the very Council of *Trent* hath them) which they make Converfion to con ift in; and then what do they fay when a Man hath all thefe Difpofitions in him? Thorough their general Faith, believing the Threatnings of God, believing the Goodnefs of God, and the Evil of Sin, *&c.* then a Man hath Holinefs infufed nto him by the Sacrament, when he goes to it, being thus prepared by his own Difpofitions, and fo here is the Man converted; thus they tell the Story of it, ut they leave clearly out Special Faith in Jefus Chrift, and upon God for Juification, and upon his Free-grace, and fo all their Juftification is meerly by hat is wrought in themfelves. And, my Brethren, here is much of the ordiary Converfion of Proteftants defcrib'd in this: Many Men that profefs the Lord efus Chrift, if you go down into their Hearts, you fhall find no treating with od in the way of his Free grace, or with the Lord Jefus Chrift, as the matr of their Righteoufnefs, to be juftified through his Blood, and to apprehend through Special Faith.

USE 2. It doth teach us what we fhould efpecially live by, by what ith, and upon what Object we fhould efpecially live: We fhould live upon at Faith which is exercifed upon the Free Grace of God, which is ordained be the Special Object of our Faith, and upon the Lord Jefus Chrift, and upn his Righteoufnefs; every Man, you know, hath three Lives in him; he hath e Life of Reafon, which the reafonable Soul liveth; and he hath the Life of nfe, which is the Life that a Beaft liveth; and he hath the Life of a Plant, I may make comparifon, as the Life of Reafon is the Eminent Life of a Man, hich a Man as a Man leadeth; and if you exhort a Man to live as a Man, u would exhort him to live the Life of Reafon in a more Eminent Manner, ough he exercife other acts of Life too. So it is here, the Eminent Act of ith is to live upon the Free Grace of God in Chrift, to live upon the Righteifnefs of God revealed in the Gofpel, revealed from Faith to Faith, for by ith the juft do live, *Rom.* 1. 17. Now though to live upon all other Truths fe, and to act them, and digeft them, is alfo a living by Faith; fo the Apoftle eaks in *Heb.* 10. 39. Yet notwithftanding comparatively, this Life is but as if Man fhould ceafe to live the Life of Reafon, which is proper to a Man as a an, and live only the Life which is common to other Creatures. The Life a Chriftian lieth efpecially in living by Faith on Chrift; *By the Faith which on him*, as the Scripture calls it; that is, the noblenefs of his Spirit as he is a hriftian; and if there were no more Ends of it but only this, that it is the oft precious Life, it fhould draw up your Hearts to live this Life of Special ith: In 2 *Pet.* 1. 1. faith the Apoftle, *To them that have obtained like precious ith with us, in the Righteoufnefs of our Saviour Jefus Chrift.* What is the Rean that the Faith of all Believers is called alike precious? Becaufe it is pitch'd on the Righteoufnefs of Jefus Chrift, which Righteoufnefs being poffeffed by weak Believer, and made his own by believing, he hath the fame precious ith the Apoftles had, the precioufnefs of it lying in this Object. Hence, I y, all Faith is alike precious; but if you come to other Faith, whereby you beve other Truths, here indeed it is not alike precious Faith. He that hath the ongeft Faith on the Power of God, fimply fo confidered, he hath a more ecious Faith than he that hath a weaker Faith in that Power: I alledge it r this, that the precioufnefs of Juftifying Faith lies as it is exercifed upon this ecious Object, Chrift; and therefore if you would live that Life of Faith which moft precious, moft fo in God's Efteem, moft Excellent in it felf, live upon is Chrift.

USE 3. I might enlarge upon that by way of Ufe which I hinted before, mely this, that you cannot believe heartily and ftrongly on any thing elfe, t as your Faith on this Chrift and his Righteoufnefs receiveth increafe. You nnot believe on God for Temporal Things, no, not for Spiritual Things, not

Part II. for Sanctification, and making of you holy, further than your Faith receiveth Increases, and attaineth to more degrees in this thing, that it is more and more exercised upon Jesus Christ, and upon God as justifying. But you will say, alas, I believed that long ago, I am already assured that God doth justifie me, and shall I now go and live upon that Faith, as the great Faith by which I must especially live? Yes certainly, for *Abraham* did so; you have that great place in *Rom.* 4. 3. for an instance of it, *Abraham (*saith he*) believed God, and it was counted to him for Righteousness:* The Words are taken out of *Gen.* 15. 6. *Abraham* had been assured of his Justification long before; in *Gen.* 12. 1, 2, *&c.* you shall see there God had blessed him, and he upon the Faith of it had left his Countrey, and God had assured him of his Justification, given him as much assurance of it (for he spake to him personally face to face) as Christ did to the Man, to whom he said, *Thy sins are forgiven thee*; and yet *Abraham* he hath the Promise often renewed to him, and his Faith often renewed in it; and that place which the Apostle citeth to prove that he was justified by Faith, was not the first act of Faith he put forth, but a Faith he had many years afore, and this is the Faith *Abraham* lived upon: When he had *Canaan* promised him, he had recourse to that God that justifieth, and then laid hold upon the Promise of *Canaan*: When *Isaac* was promised, he had recourse to that Promise in which it was said, *In thy seed shall all the Nations of the Earth be blessed*, Gen. 12. 3. Still he renewed his Faith upon the Special Mercy of God, and upon Jesus Christ; and he did this again and again, and it was his Element, his Orb, his Sphere in which he mov'd; and when any Temporal Promise was propounded to him, he renewed his Faith on this, and so believed that Temporal Promise. This should be that Life of Faith which we should live, for our justification by God and by Christ; it is the eminent thing of the Gospel, which of all other God will have glorified, and therefore would have us live upon it.

USE 4. And we may learn likewise from hence, how to seek and obtain all other things: *First seek the Kingdom of God*, saith Christ. What doth the Kingdom of God consist in? *In righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*, saith the Apostle *Rom.* 14. 17. that is, the Righteousness of Jesus Christ, whence peace ariseth, and joy in the Holy Ghost; seek after this, saith he, exercise Faith upon this, and then all other Promises will come in upon you. *Paul* though he had his Belief for Justification in Christ many years before, *Yet*, saith he, *I account all things but loss and dung*: He inured himself to cast away his own Righteousness, and to wrap himself in Christ, he would still exercise a Special Faith; *I have (*saith he in *Phil.* 3. 8, 9.) *accounted all things loss, and do account them so, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, but the righteousness which is of God by Faith*: So that (I say) he still renewed a special Faith upon Christ, and upon the Righteousness of Christ. If a Man would have any other Promise made good to him, this is the way to have it. You see how Christ taught *Martha* to do it, to believe on him that she should not dye, and then she would easily believe that her Brother should be raised from the dead. It is Special Faith, and therefore we should in a Special Manner exercise it. So much for this Subject, which I have with as much Brevity and Clearness as I could, opened; consider it now, as a Truth of very great Moment, and which confuteth many Errours that run abroad in the World, not only in the Hearts of Popish Divines, but Protestants also.

CHAP

CHAP. V.

The Acts of Faith in the Will. The Believing Soul trusts in Christ alone for Help. That this Confiding in Christ is the Act of Faith which justifies. The Nature and Properties of a True Confidence in Christ.

HAving displayed to you the Knowledge of Faith, as it is expreſt to us by Sight in the Underſtanding, and having proved that a bare Aſſent to, or a meer Belief of the Truths apprehended by us, is not ſaving and juſtifying Faith, but that a Special Act of Faith on the Mercies and Free-Grace of God, and on Chriſt as a Saviour, is neceſſary, I will proceed on to those other Acts of Faith which are in the Will, (which is the next Faculty) and which the Heart puts forth toward Jeſus Chriſt therein.

1. As the Soul ſees the Spiritual Excellency, and the Glory that is in Jeſus Chriſt, ſo the Will doth let the higheſt Value and Eſteem upon that Excellency that is in him, a Value and Eſteem far above what a Man hath for all other things whatſoever; and this is to believe: This you ſhall find in 1 *Pet.* 2. 4, 5, & 7th. *verſes* compared, *To whom coming as unto a living ſtone, diſallowed indeed of Men, but choſen of God and precious: Wherefore it is contained in the Scripture, Behold I lay in Sion a chief Corner-ſtone, elect and precious, and he that believeth on him ſhall not be confounded; unto you therefore which believe, he is precious.* It is clear that the Apoſtle here ſpeaks of Faith, and he makes the Foundation of our believing on him to be ſeeing his preciouſneſs, and therefore in *Iſa.* 28. 16. which the Apoſtle here quoteth, you have this Stone's being a precious Stone, and believing on him, both joined together; *To him coming* (ſaith he ver. 4.) *as to a living ſtone, choſen of God and precious:* That is, you believe on him under that Notion of ſeeing his Excellency, and his Preciouſneſs, and therefore the Cloſure of all in the *7th. verſe* is, *Unto you which believe, he is precious*; that is, you eſteem him *precious*; and it is ſpoken not as a conſequent of Faith, but as that which goes before Faith, or is joined with it, and is requiſite to it, for therefore the Soul comes unto him, becauſe he is precious, as the *4th. verſe* hath it, even under that Notion. There are four Things under the Apprehenſion of which a Man comes to Chriſt, as theſe Words hold him forth. 1. As he is a Stone that hath a Foundation which the Soul may build upon. 2. As he is a living Stone, and a Fountain of Life unto all that believe on him. 3. As he is the only appointed means by the Father; *Choſen of God.* 4. As he is precious, which is the thing I cite it for, both precious in himſelf and in all that he brings with him. In *Mat.* 13. 45, 46. you have a Believer compared to a Merchant-man ſeeking goodly Pearls, his Mind is ſet (as all Mens Minds are) to find precious Stones, that is, to attain to that which he accounteth precious. Thus when the Soul is firſt humbled for ſin, it is taken off from ſeeing any thing in the World that can help it, and therefore it ſeeks after ſomewhat elſe: And what will it ſeek it after? After that which is precious, after Pearls, after Graces, (for ſuch our Graces are, which our Souls are ſaid to ſeek after) that will beautifie him, and make him acceptable unto God, theſe indeed are Pearls, and goodly Pearls. Yea, but ſaith the Text, He found one Pearl of great price, ſo *ver.* 46. a Pearl that was more excellent than all, and he went and ſold all that he had, ſold away all his Graces, (for that is the meaning) he accounted all, even Grace it ſelf, to be loſs and dung; he put no value or price upon theſe Pearls; but if his Graces may ſerve to honour this one Pearl, and that this may be ſet ſo in them all, that they all may be obſcured, he cares not, ſo precious is Chriſt unto him. So you have it likewiſe in *Paul*, in *Phil.* 3. 8. *I have accounted all things loſs for the excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt; yea,* (ſaith he) *and I do account them dung:* I have done ſo heretofore, when I was firſt turned to God, and I am of the very ſame Mind to this day, I do account them ſo to this very hour. This is the firſt thing in believing on Chriſt, which is an Act of the Will: He that believeth on him, unto him Chriſt is precious.

2. He that believeth on Chriſt, God ſtampeth upon that Man's Will, upon

Part II. his Heart, an Instinct after Jesus Christ, and after Mystical Union with him, so as he can never be quiet without him: This you have in *Joh.* 6. 44, 45. *No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: It is written in the Prophets, that they shall be all taught of God; every Man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me*; that is, believeth on me: Now what is the teaching, the effectual teaching that the Father exerts upon the Spirit of a Man, when he draws him to Christ Jesus, and sets him on work upon coming to him, and seeking of him? Why it is this, God doth plant in that Man an Impression, an Instinct (what shall I call it) after Jesus Christ, so that nothing will satisfie him but Christ. That which is here called Teaching, is elsewhere put for a Natural Instinct, such an instinct as a Man hath after a thing which he can never be quiet without, such as Parents have to their Children: This Teaching that the Holy Ghost (I will not say only aims at, but) eminently aims at here, I interpret by that in 1 *Thes.* 4. 9. *As touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you*: It is not a Teaching from Words to love one another, *for* (saith he) *ye your selves are taught of God to love one another*; it is an Impression stamped upon one Saint to love another Saint, there is as it were a Natural Instinct upon their Spirits to do so: So saith Christ, *All that come to me, they are taught of God*, i. e. their coming to Christ is from another thing than meerly a Teaching of them by way of Knowledge, it is putting an impression and stamp upon their Will, that they can never be quiet till they come to Christ, and this is called a *Drawing of the Father*. It is such an Instinct as God put into the Beasts that came to the Ark, for what guided these poor Creatures to the Ark, that they should come running by couples thither? Why, the Lord made an Impression upon their Fancies, and upon that which is answerable to our Affections, that they were never quiet till they came thither, and thither the poor Creatures must come for refuge. Such an Instinct doth God put upon the Heart of a Believer, a Marriage Affection, call it what you will, an Instinct of Mystical Union with Christ. The Angels they know Christ, and they see his Excellency, and they value him, but they have not this Marriage Affection to him that the Soul of a Believer hath; they have an Affection of Love, and of Fear of him as a Lord, but they have not that affection to him as to a Husband: Such an Instinct as this doth the Holy Ghost put into the Heart of all those whom he doth work upon: We see it in other Creatures: That I may express it by way of Similitude, Take a Dog when he is sick, there is a Grass he runs to, and he doth it by an Instinct, this is that which must cure me, saith he, not that he doth of himself make such Inference, but there is an Impression stamped upon the Nature of that Creature by God, whereby he is taught of God to do so: And so the Hart, (as some say) when it is struck, it presently runs to the Herb called *Dictamnus*, and is never quiet till it do so; it is taught of God to do it: So is a Man taught of God to go to Jesus Christ. Certainly it is the main Meaning, (I will not exclude others) and the most eminent of that place, *That he that believeth on Jesus Christ, he is thus taught of God*. The Angels they are taken with the Glory of Christ, and are affected with it, but a Believer hath an Affection after Mystical Union with him.

3. The Soul that hath thus an Instinct after Christ, and so cometh to him, looks up to him for Help with a Confinement to him alone, I will have it from you, saith the Soul, or from none else: This you have in *Isa.* 45. 21, 22. *There is no God else besides me, a just God and a Saviour; look unto me, and be ye saved all the ends of the Earth, for I am God, and there is none else*: Who is this God here? What Person? It is clearly the Son of God, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; for if you look into *Rom.* 14. 11. and *Phil.* 2. 10. you shall find there this place quoted, to prove that Jesus Christ is Lord both of quick and dead, and that he shall come to Judgment: And it is evident too to be Jesus Christ by this, because he speaks of all the Ends of the Earth looking unto him; for when Christ came, he brought Salvation, and the Gospel to be preached to all the Ends of the Earth. The *Jews* they looked upon God the Father, but when Christ came he drew the eyes of all the Ends of the Earth unto him; Now, saith he, *Look unto me*. What is Faith? Faith is a casting up of the Eye unto Jesus Christ for Help, as they did upon the Brazen Serpent; they saw other things besides, but

but with another Eye, when as they looked upon that as the only remedy: So when the Soul hath seen Christ, seen his Excellency, and hath an Instinct after him, and doth but open his Eye, nay, his Eye-lids, towards Christ, the meaning of that Look is, I will have help from you, and only from you, and here is a Glance or Cast of Faith. And as it is a looking unto Christ, so it is a looking with a Confinement to him alone; this is clear out of the Text, *I am a Saviour*, (saith he) *and there is none besides me*; therefore so look unto me as to confine your selves to me alone. The Soul of Man would seek an hundred ways, when it is humbled for sin, to relieve it self; but now to have all these Holes that a Man would run unto stopped, and to be confined alone unto one, when God hath wrought this in the Heart too; there is a great step and proceeding on in the Work of Faith. As in taking of God to be a Man's God, he takes him so to be his chiefest good as he is divorced from all things else, with a Confinement of all his Expectations of Happiness only from him; *Whom have I in Heaven but thee*, (saith *David*) Psal. 73. 25. So in taking Jesus Christ to be our Saviour, as *Paul* resolved to know nothing else but Jesus Christ, and him crucified, so the Heart resolveth too, when it goes about to believe in earnest, and it is stopt up from all ways of Relief else. When *Paul* (that I may make the Comparison) was surrounded with his Lusts, in *Rom.* 7. 24. (saith he) *O wretched Man that I am! who shall deliver me?* When he spake that Speech, he was as a Man that looked round about him, and saw no help, and so he cryes out, *Who shall deliver me?* at last he spies out Jesus Christ, *I thank God thorough Jesus Christ my Lord*, (saith he.) And so doth the Soul, as in Sanctification, so in Justification, it looks about it, sees help in nothing, and betakes it self alone unto the Lord Jesus.

Jesus Christ he is more, far more jealous of your Faith than of your Love, he will give you leave to love subordinately other things besides himself, and with himself, but he will not give you leave to believe on any, to look for help from any but from him; this Faith is reserv'd for him alone. The Eye of a Man that believeth is shut up to all things either in his own Heart, or whatsoever else there is that may help him, and his Eyes are only upon Christ, as the Phrase is in 2 *Chron.* 20. 12. When a Man comes to be saved by Christ, he doth Christ this Honour, that he resolves to have Peace and Quietness, and Satisfaction, and Salvation, and all only in, and from, and by Christ: As a Man when he would honour a Physitian whom he trusteth, (saith he) I will take Physick of none else but of you, I will dye rather; so saith the Soul to honour Christ, *You alone shall save me*; *Ashur shall not save us*, as it is *Hos.* 14. 3. *And truly in vain is Salvation hoped for from the Hills, and from the multitude of Mountains*, Jer. 3. 23. They used to worship upon their Mountains, therefore now to look to the Mountains for help was to look to their Duties, to their Worship, to their Sacrifices for help: But now they renounced all this, and fixed on God alone, *In whom the fatherless find Mercy.* The Soul when it is helpless, when it is graceless, when it is fatherless, then it resolves to look to none else but unto Jesus Christ for help. This, I say, is a great proceeding in Faith also, to resolve thus to have help from none else, and to confine it self only to Christ, for the Soul to say, I will so throw my self upon him, and upon that Free Love in him, that if he will not save me, I will be lost for ever: Thus the Heart of a Believer doth look to him as the only Saviour, and as such an one that *There is none else besides him.* And this is the third Act of the Will.

4. As a Man thus looks to Jesus Christ for help, and confines himself unto him alone, so he then comes to him; this you have here in this *Joh. 6. ver.* 37. *All that the Father giveth unto me shall come to me, and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out:* The Soul goes out of it self Naked, a Naked Soul, to Naked Christ, empty and stript of all things, and comes unto Christ, and deals and treats with him about everlasting Salvation. You have Faith also exprest under this Notion in *Heb.* 7. 25. *He is able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by him:* And the like is in 1 *Pet.* 2. 3. *Unto whom coming as unto a living stone.* The Holy Ghost hath on purpose in a gracious manner variously exprest Faith to us, because the Apprehensions that Souls have of their own way of believing is various. Some Souls cannot say they have received Christ

Part II. Christ, but they can say they have looked up to him, and confined all their Expectations to him, and they have come to him, *&c.* Now when the Soul comes to Christ, what is the Business and Errand that the Soul hath? for one comes to none but he hath some Business, some Errand with him: See how Christ himself expresseth the Errand and Aim of the Soul in coming to him, *Joh.* 5. 40. *Ye will not come to me that ye might have life:* This is the Errand of the Soul, it comes to Christ that it may have Life from him. He doth not only express there what is the Consequent of the Souls coming to him, (namely, that it might have Life, as the Consequent of its coming, as that which he will bestow) but that which is the Aim, the Errand and Business that Faith hath with Jesus Christ, therefore *Heb.* 6. 18. we are said to have fled unto him, fled to him as unto a City of Refuge: Now what was the Aim, and Business, and Errand that a poor Murtherer had, that fled to the City of Refuge? He came thither with all might and main to be let in there, that he might have Succour and Help, and that he might be safe; and when the High-Priest dyed, he was delivered; so the Soul comes unto Christ for Refuge, comes unto him that he may have Life. We have it to the same purpose express'd, *Gal.* 2. 16. speaking there of the Faith of all the Apostles, (saith he) *Even we who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, we Apostles knowing that a Man is not justified by the Works of the Law, but by the Faith of Jesus Christ; even we* (saith he) *have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the Faith of Christ:* How doth he express Faith? He expresseth it by this, a coming unto, or a believing in Jesus Christ, that we may be justified, that we might have Life; this being the Aim, and Errand, and Business the Soul hath with Christ in its coming to him: Here now lies that act of Faith (if it be a spiritual act, if it be joyn'd with that spiritual sight I mention'd before) it is not that we believe that Jesus Christ did justifie us, and had justified us, but we believe that he may justifie us. When the Apostles first believed, this was not the Act of Faith they put forth, that they were justified, *But we have believed,* (saith he) *that we might be justified:* So that the Aim, and Errand the Soul hath with Christ in coming to him, is that it might have Life, and accordingly it comes unto him.

5. The Souls coming unto Jesus Christ, and treating for Salvation with him, doth grow up to a believing on him, to a resting on him, to a trusting in him for it: I shall not need to give you many Scriptures to prove that this Act of Trust is the great and eminent Act that is in Faith, and that upon which God doth rather pronounce and pass the Sentence of Justification upon a Man than any other; the Text hath it here, and you shall find it almost every where, that it is called *Believing on him.* Some would place that great Act of Faith whereby we are justified, in believing the thing, in believing him to be the Son of God, and a Saviour. I confess it is a great Act of Faith, but that is only the Act of the Understanding, whereby we see and know him, (which I have opened before) but the eminent and the principal Act of the Will of a Man (and he must believe with his whole Heart) is Trust, is *Believing on him,* 1 Pet. 2. 6. *Behold I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, he that believeth on him shall not be ashamed:* And you have the like again in *Rom.* 9. 33. You shall hardly have a place which usually Men alledge to prove that all the Act of Faith as justifying lyes in believing the thing, but immediately after follows this Phrase, *Believing on him;* on purpose to shew, that the bare belief of the thing is not the only Act of Faith, as some would have it to be: As for instance, in 1 *John.* 5. 4. this is made the great Act of Faith there, *This is the victory that overcometh the World, even our Faith:* And what is the Faith? *He that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God.* One would think now that the Apostle would make all believing to lye in believing the thing, in believing that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and accordingly is this place cited by some; but mark what he saith at the 10*th.* verse, *He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself*; there is believing on him too mention'd. Another place that is cited is in *Rom.* 10. 9. *If thou believe in thy Heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved:* Here now the Faith that saveth us is called believing the thing, namely, *That God hath raised Christ from the dead*; but if you read a little on, you shall find that

that *Believing on him* cometh in the 11*th. verse*, *The Scripture saith, whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed* : So that indeed the Eminent Act of Faith in the Will is this trusting, is this believing on him : It is called rolling of a Man's self upon him, leaving, committing, or betaking a Man's self to him, as *Psal.* 10. 14. It is the Old Testament Expression, but it rightly expresseth the Nature of Faith.

There have been some that would make the Act of Faith in the Will to be a cleaving unto Christ for his Excellencies. The Truth is, that is nothing but Love, it is not Faith ; but that Act of the Will which is properly Faith, answers unto Christ as a Saviour, and as a Means of Salvation appointed by God. Now go take Jesus Christ as a Saviour, and as a Means of Salvation appointed by God, it is not Love answereth to that in Christ, but it is a trust and believing on him : It is not a cleaving unto Jesus Christ for his Excellencies, that is that proper Act of Faith which we call justifying, but it is that Act of the Will which hath relation unto him as a Saviour, and as the Means of Salvation ; and the proper act that answereth to that is Trust and Confidence. Assuredly, God hath singled out that to be the eminent act of Justifying Faith, which is proper to the elect of Mankind, in whom he works Faith in ; now to cleave unto Jesus Christ for the Excellencies that are in him, to see him spiritually, and to love Christ upon the sight of him, and to value him, and to prize and esteem him, (all these that I have named before) are all in the good Angels, that yet have not Faith; they believe that Jesus Christ is, for they see him every day, and they see the Grace that is in him more than we do, and are taken with it more than we are, they likewise hear us preach, and attend our Sermons, and pry into the things delivered, and they know all the Truths about Christ as well as we : If God therefore should have made these to be those proper Acts of Faith, they would have been such acts as are common to the good Angels, and therefore he hath singled out rather that to be the act of Faith justifying, which is proper and peculiar to the Elect Sons of God ; and what is that ? It is, *Believing on him.* The Angels they do not believe *On him* as a Saviour and Redeemer, they have not this act of Trust and Confidence, they do not come unto him, or rely on him for Salvation, therefore, I say, God hath singled out this believing *On him* as the eminent act of Faith justifying ; *He that seeth the Son, and believeth on him*, saith Christ, *John* 6. 40. and in *John* 14. 1. *If you believe in God, believe also in me* : And so in a multitude of places else. And there is a great deal of Reason that this act of Faith should be pitch'd upon, to be the eminent act upon which God justifies us. For,

1. It is an Act that is competent to all Estates of a Christian, while he is here below : When the Soul is in Temptation, when a Man comes to dye, when he first believes, let him be in what Condition he will, this act of trusting in God is that act which is common to all Believers, in all Estates. It is most reason and fit therefore, that this Act of Faith should be pitch'd upon, as the Eminent Act in our Justification. If assurance that Jesus Christ is mine had been to be it, though many of the Saints have it, yet they have it not always ; when they first began to believe, even the Apostles themselves came unto Christ, that they might be justified, and so it was not believing that they were justified : But now, let the Saints be in the heaviest Desertion that can be, let them be in never so much Darkness, in never so great Temptation, either when they first believe, or when they come to dye, or at any Time in all their Lives, still whether they have assurance of the Love of God, or not assurance, yet (as the *Psalmist* saith, *Psal.* 62. 8.) *They trust in God at all times* ; and the Soul still comes to Christ, and relies on him : Therefore, I say, there was the greatest reason in the World, that of all acts else this should be pitch'd upon. The first act of Faith cannot be assurance, for the thing must be made mine, before I can believe it is mine ; and afterward Temptation comes, and overthrows a Man's assurance, but it never overthrows a Man's believing on Christ ; since this is that Anchor that tides it out all a Man's Life, that Cable that bears the stress in all Storms, as well as in the fair weather, it is reason that to it the act of Justification should be attributed : Now let the Ship be in what storm it will, it is this that holds it, this is the Cable, this act of our believ-

Part II. believing *On him*. You shall find, that you can bottom your Heart on God, and on Christ, when you cannot believe that he is your God, and your Saviour.

2. Of all Acts of Faith, this of pure trust doth honour God most, and hath indeed more of Faith in it: The purer the Trust is, the greater the Trust is; and the greater the Trust is, the greater the Faith is; and the greater the Faith, the greater Honour comes unto God. The End why God hath ordained Faith, is, that his Free Grace might be glorified; now his Free-grace is glorified by no act of Faith more than by this of pure trusting in him. In *Rom.* 4. 20. where *Abraham*'s Faith is set out to us, it is set out by this, *That he gave glory to God*. You do not honour God so much with your Love, you do not honour him so much by being assured of his Love, as you do by trusting in his Love. It magnifies the Soveraignty of God, which God aims at to magnifie in our Salvation, it leaves the Soul at God's Feet, for that is the posture of the Soul, when it says, Here I am, and I will trust in thee alone; it magnifies the Faithfulness and Fidelity of God, and Faithfulness is that Attribute, which in one that makes a Promise, is the chief thing he aims at: Now Faith takes hold of Christ through a Promise, therefore it is a Grace suited, and fitted to magnifie the Faithfulness of God in making this Promise; and so there is nothing that doth glorifie the Faithfulness of God more than believing on him. If a Man have Assurance, he doth glorifie God in a way of Rejoycing, in a way of Triumphing, in a way of Thankfulness, but pure Trust doth another way glorifie God, it glorifies God in a way of Obedience. I do shew as much admiration and esteem of a Man, if I am sueing to him for his Friendship, and depend upon him, and do all acts I do in such dependance, as I do by acts of Requital and Thankfulness when I am assured he is my Friend: And so it is here, and therefore now hath God chosen out this act of Trust and Confidence, *Believing on him*, as *John* 6 40. *He that seeth the Son, and believeth on him*. I shall now assign a Property or two of this Trust and Confidence, that I may the more fully explain it. And,

1. This Confidence in God is to trust perfectly upon him, that is, wholly and entirely. I use the Scripture Phrase, which you have in 1 *Pet.* 1. 13. and I shall thereby open a Scripture to you, which (as I take it) our Translation hath not rightly rendered, and I find very Learned Interpreters of the same Judgment; he exhorts them there to trust perfectly in the Grace that hath been brought to them, thorough the Revelation of Jesus Christ: We read it, *Hope to the end*; look in your Margents, the *Greek* is, *Hope perfectly*; *Hope perfectly* (saith he) *on the Grace that is brought*; for so it is in the Original, ἐπὶ τὴν, and not, that is to be brought, as we translate it. Hope and Trust in the Scripture are usually put for one and the same, as *Job* 13. 15. *Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him*; it is, I will hope in him: And many other places might be given. Now, saith the Apostle *Peter*, *Trust perfectly, or entirely, on the Grace that is brought in the revelation of Jesus Christ*: It is not only said to be the Revelation of Christ, which shall be at latter day, but it is a Revelation of Christ which we have now under the Gospel. The Gospel is said to be the revelation of Jesus Christ, and in the revelation of the Gospel, and of Christ, is the Grace of God made known to us. I shall not need to heap up places, to shew you, that by the revelation of Jesus Christ is meant the Gospel; in *Rom.* 16. 25. you have the word so used, *The preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the Revelation of the Mystery*, &c. You have the like in *Gal.* 1. 12. where *Paul* speaking of his knowing of the Gospel, he useth the very same Phrase; *I was taught it* (saith he) *by the Revelation of Jesus Christ*; and ver. 16. *It pleased God to reveal his Son in me*; and so in other places. That which I cited the Text in 1 *Pet.* 1. 13. for, is, that he saith, *Trust perfectly upon this Grace, which is brought or tendered to us*: (And to trust upon Free-Grace, and Christ, is all one, the Gospel reveals nothing for matter of Confidence to us, but the Free-Grace of God, and Christ himself.) Now when he saith, *Trust perfectly upon it*, what is his meaning? it is this, he would have you to do it entirely, both for Subject and Object, as I may so express it; he would have all in you to put this Trust and Confidence in him, ato believe on him with the whole Heart, and

and he urgeth this Exhortation, because the Soul hath a great deal within it self, that doth not come forth to trust in Christ: For though all in a Man believes in this sense, that there is never a Faculty but goes out to Jesus Christ, especially the Will, yet there is a great deal of Infidelity still remaining, and so a Man cannot trust perfectly in this life; as for Subject, take the Subject of Confidence, that is, all that is in a Man doth not trust perfectly and entirely without doubting, in the Grace brought by Jesus Christ; but take the Object, and so even the meanest Believer may trust, and doth trust perfectly in that Grace which is brought to light in the Gospel by Jesus Christ; that is, he relies upon nothing else, he entirely, and wholly, and fully, and with the whole Will, doth lean upon our Lord and Saviour Christ, and upon nothing else; upon nothing in himself, and upon nothing in the World else, but upon that which revealeth Grace, and Jesus Christ, unto him: No, he relies not upon the Promises, further than they have the Grace of God, and Jesus Christ, as the Subject of them; and this is the Property of all true Faith, that it doth trust perfectly in that Grace that is in God, and in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. As now, when the Soul doth magnifie and glorifie God, as the great God, it doth do it perfectly and entirely in this sense, that it sees how great a God he is, and that there is none besides him so to be honoured and glorified. It falls short indeed of honouring him perfectly, as for the Subject, that is, all in a Man cannot do it; but yet, saith he, I see that in God that requires all that is in me to glorifie him, therefore I will glorifie him alone, and thus entirely glorifies the Object; and so in this sense doth the Soul trust perfectly in the Grace that is revealed in the Gospel.

2. The Soul doth trust Jesus Christ with all, and for all: I will put them both together; with all it hath, or ever shall have, and for all it ever looks for: It doth trust Jesus Christ with all, even as in *Gen.* 39. 6. we read that *Potiphar* trusted *Joseph*; (I bring it but for an allusion, to shew what Confidence he had in *Joseph*, and what ours should be in Christ) the Text saith, *That he left all that he had in Joseph's hand, and he knew not ought he had, save the Bread which he did eat.* Now if you come to believe on Christ, you must thus put your trust in him, thus believe on him, thus leave your selves, and all you have and are, with him, and at his disposal, and at his service; even as if you should out your selves of your Estate, and put it all into another Man's Hands, and be at his finding for ever: So *Paul* in 2 *Tim.* 1. 12. *For the which cause* (saith he) *I suffer these things, nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day.* What did *Paul* do when he came to believe? saith he, I had a little Righteousness, and I flung it all away, I resolved that I would never trust in it; I had Learning, and Knowledge, and Parts, and I threw it all away, I gave it all up to Christ, to be at his Dispose; he took Jesus Christ upon those Terms, to give up all to him; and (saith he) for the which cause I suffer these things, I do trust him before-hand, I have committed to him all I am and have, I have not my Reward yet, but I trust him, and he goes upon trust with me; he before-hand hath put me upon a great many sufferings, and for this cause I suffer all these things, because I know whom I have believed. If Christ now should fail, *Paul* he had been the most besool'd Man that ever was, he had mist of all the Happiness he should have in this World; for usually they that believe in Christ, they are of all Men most miserable, in respect of the World; but mark it, *Nevertheless,* (saith he) *I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have trusted.* When a Man believes, he puts off all to Christ, and betakes himself to him, and to what he shall do for him, and if Christ should fail this Man of his Trust, the poor Creature would be the verieſt fool that ever was: But I know I shall not be ashamed, saith *Paul*; and in relation to this doth the Scripture often use this Word, *He that believeth, shall not be ashamed, Isa.* 28. 16. Oftentimes a Man trusteth God for the Salvation of his Soul, and goes on so to do, and doth not of a long while know that God hath received him; he hath not received an earnest-penny a long while, not of what he trusteth God for; (for joy in the Holy Ghost is the reward of Faith;) now to stand thus out of purse for many years, before a Man receives a penny, this is a great and a mighty

 trust,

Part II. truſt, yet thus often-times the Soul doth, to be ſure at firſt it doth ſo: A Man parts with all, leaves all with Jeſus Chriſt, betakes himſelf clearly and entirely to him, and whatſoever he is or can be in this World, he leaves it with him, and to be diſpoſed of according to the Directions that he ſhall give to his Spirit and Conſcience for evermore: I expreſt it before by that of *Potiphar* to *Joſeph*, but there is a more lively Expreſſion of it, and that in a way of Faith, though not upon Chriſt as juſtifying, yet it was drawn out of that Faith which alſo doth juſtifie; the Inſtance is in that poor Widdow of *Zarephath*, in 1 *Kings* 17. you know ſhe had but ſo much Meal in a Barrel, and Oyl in a Cruſe, as would make a Cake for her ſelf and her Child, and behold (ſaith ſhe, ver. 12.) *I am gathering two ſticks, that I may go in and dreſs it for me and my Son, that we may eat it and dye:* What ſaith *Elijah* to her? *Fear not, go and do as thou haſt ſaid, but make me thereof a little cake firſt, and bring it unto me:* Alas, it would make but a little Cake in all, for it was but a handful of Meal, and a little Oyl in a Cruſe, even little enough all of it to ſerve *Elijah* himſelf; yea, but ſaith he, make me a Cake firſt; this Woman had need have a great deal of confidence in the Prophets Words, that there ſhould be Meal and Oyl multiplied for her and her Son, after *Elijah* had done; ſhe might have thought that the Prophet, as a Man half ſtarved, had come to put a trick upon her, to get away that little Proviſion ſhe had; let me be ſerved firſt, (ſaith he;) ſhe went and did according to the ſaying of *Elijah*, and made a Cake for him firſt, and then you ſee the Oyl and Meal encreas'd, but firſt God would have her truſt the Prophet. Even thus doth God and Jeſus Chriſt deal with us, when we come to believe on him, he will have us to truſt him firſt, and put over all to him, and for to do ſo is to truſt perfectly.

God himſelf did betruſt us all with Jeſus Chriſt, and he was faithful to us, and Jeſus Chriſt truſted all with God: How many millions of Souls were to ſave after Chriſt dyed! how many thouſands are to come yet under the New-Teſtament! Chriſt dyed afore theſe are ſaved, he truſted his Father with them, and God the Father truſted him too, for he ſaved I know not how many thouſand Souls afore Chriſt dyed: The like he requires of us, *Make me the Cake firſt*, (ſaith he;) and ſo the Soul doth put over all nakedly and entirely unto Jeſus Chriſt, when it comes to truſt upon him; it is to throw a Man's ſelf out of all poſſibilities of what he may be in this World. Indeed a Man muſt do ſo, if he take up Jeſus Chriſt in earneſt, for he knows not what Chriſt will call him unto, or what truth he will have him hold forth; now for the Soul to come nakedly thus, and to give it ſelf up to Jeſus Chriſt, and to do this before-hand oftentimes, when he doth not know whether Chriſt will ſave him or no; to do this firſt, as the poor Widdow did to the Prophet, this is a great matter. For a Man to venture to Sea, without either Sail, or Oar, or Maſt, or any thing of his own, and to be wafted by Free-grace, and Jeſus Chriſt, to commit himſelf to thoſe Winds that ſhall blow from him, and from that Promiſe he makes, this is the great truſt, and this the Soul doth when it comes to Chriſt.

And as it truſts him with all, ſo it truſts him for all; and all the Happineſs it looks for, is to be at Chriſts finding for evermore: Nay, to be ſo at his finding, that not only its Comfort ſhall be from him, but all its ſtrength to perform any duty ſhall be all from him, ſo as not to do a Duty without him, no not to Eternity, to receive all Happineſs from him, and all Comfort from him. Nature, pure Nature was never brought up to this, it did not know what it meant: *Adam* was not called in this way to truſt on God, he had a ſtock of Grace communicated to him, which lay in the uſe and exerciſe of his own Free-will: Now, ſaith Nature, therefore I will ſee a ſtock before I truſt, give me my portion of Goods, (as the Prodigal ſaid) I will ſee ſomething in my ſelf, by which I may be able to do this, or to do that, I will ſee the Money in my Purſe, before I ſet a work upon this or that; this naturally the Soul doth. But now when the Soul comes to truſt on Chriſt, it doth not ſo, it truſts him for all, for all Grace here, and Glory hereafter; it believes now upon him, and truſts him, and knows not whether it ſhall be able to do it the next hour; *The Life which I now live*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *I live by the Faith of the Son of God; and it is not I that live, but Chriſt that liveth in me:* Gal. 2. 20. And to do this quietly too, is an Act of entire Truſt; for when

when Faith doth grow up a little, though it doth not grow up to assurance, yet it will grow up to the quieting of the Heart thus, and that beforehand; and when a Man is able to say, whether I shall be saved by Christ I know not, yet I find abundance of Ease and Quietness by resting and trusting on him, this is a perfect Confidence; thus Faith is expressed in *Psal.* 37. 7. (Now as it is a Trust in Promises, so it is much more in Jesus Christ) *Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him, and he that trusteth in me is at perfect peace:* And as it is in *Lam.* 3. 29. *Put our mouths in the dust if so be there may be hope.* Yea, a great act of this Trust is to believe against hope, as it is said that *Abraham* did in *Rom.* 4. 18. For the Soul to cast away it self upon God, in such a pure trust as this is, that let God at any time throw it into any Distress, so that he knows not what will become of himself, yet to be content, and to submit to it, and quietly to leave himself with God, and with Christ, this though it is hard, yet when Faith doth get a little Heart and Strength, it doth this, being enabled by the Power of God to do it.

Sixthly, As the Soul thus comes to Christ, and believeth on him, trusteth him with all, and for all, so it abides by him, and will not stir away from him, in respect of waiting on him in his own way, both for the Manifestation of his Grace, and Love, and Salvation, with Submission and Quietness. I shall not say, that every Soul that believes, finds distinctly all and every one of these things in him, I do not urge that, but I shall yet mention those that are in the heart of Believers, some one or other of them: And as this is as main a thing as any other, I shall open all the Particulars of it.

1. The Soul abides by Christ, and there lies as the Man did at the Pool of *Bethesda*, or as he did that did fly to the City of Refuge, who durst not stir from thence for his Life, for if he should be found out of that City of Refuge, he was a dead Man, and therefore he went thither to take up his dwelling there, and this (as I said before) the Apostle alludes to in *Heb.* 6. 18. when he speaks of Faith; *Having* (saith he) *fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us*; in *Acts* 11. 23. it is said, that when *Barnabas came to Antioch, and had seen the Grace of God, he exhorted them all, that with purpose of Heart they would* προσμένειν, *cleave unto the Lord:* That as they had come to him, and given up their Souls to him, so they would abide by him, remain and continue with him, and not go away; therefore you shall find in the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, that the Apostle opposeth to Faith, departing from God: You have it first in *Chap.* 3. *ver.* 12. & 14. where he alludeth to the *Israelites* departing in their Hearts and Spirits from the Guidance of that Angel in the Wilderness, (which Angel was Christ, as he shews in 1 *Cor.* 10.) *Take heed,* (saith he *ver.* 12.) *lest there be in any of you an evil heart of Unbelief, in departing from the living God:* Do not you err in your Hearts through Unbelief, as they did; that Angel from whom they departed, is the living God, is Jesus Christ himself: And saith he, *ver.* 14. (in which Expression of his there is very much) *we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our Confidence stedfast unto the end:* It is clear that he speaks of Faith; the Word ὑπόστασις, which we translate Confidence, is the same word that is used in *Heb.* 11. 1. *Faith is the evidence, or the subsistance of things not seen:* Now when he saith, *We should hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end*, his meaning is, that as they came nakedly unto Christ for Salvation, from him, and in him alone, (for when a Man's Soul first cometh to Christ, it is certain he doth so, for he is emptied of himself) so they should continue waiting upon him, that *They may be made partakers of him*; he mentions that, because the thing the Soul aims at in believing, is to be made Partaker of Christ; seeing you did so at first, (saith he) did you at first come nakedly unto him? continue to do so still, and to wait nakedly upon him; and he gives this reason why they should do it, *For* (saith he) *he is the Living God*; if you wait upon Men, and wait long upon them, you think with your selves, they are but Men, whose Breath is in their Nostrils, therefore I may loose all my Labour, if I wait long before they answer me in what I desire; but, saith the Apostle, wait upon Jesus Christ, for he is the living God; if you should wait never so long upon him, he liveth in the end to answer you; and this indeed in *Heb.* 10. 38. is called living by Faith, in which place also the Apostle opposeth unto Faith

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Part II. departing from God; *If any man* (saith he there) *draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him; but we are of them that believe to the saving of the Soul:* Believing there you see is opposed to withdrawing from God.

2. I added likewise, that Believing is waiting on him, in his own way: Even as at the first we came nakedly unto Jesus Christ, at the first looking to nothing in ourselves, (for so we did, if we believed) and when the Soul hath begun thus to close with Christ, and with him alone, it finds that Jesus Christ long defers before he manifesteth himself; and it is apt thereupon, if not to depart, yet to desert from him, and to ease and help it self some other way, than by waiting and believing on him: Now the Apostle would have us still to exercise such Acts of Faith as we did at the beginning; *Hold the beginning of your confidence stedfast*, (saith he) and still continue to wait on him, and to cleave to him, and to believe on him. The *Galathians*, you know, were soon diverted (as the Apostle tells them, *Chap.* 1. *ver.* 6.) from the Gospel they had received, unto another Gospel; they had begun to believe in Christ, and in him alone, but afterwards they were diverted to Works, and to what was in themselves, as the Soul is apt to do too much: *You did run well,* (saith he *Chap.* 5. *ver.* 7.) *who did hinder you? This Perswasion* (saith he ver. 8.) *cometh not of him that calleth you.* I desire you (saith he) to consider, when you were called, how you were drawn to believe on the Lord Jesus; remember but the first work of Faith, how nakedly without Works, or any thing in your selves, you came unto Jesus Christ; you are now diverted, and fallen away from the Grace of Christ, that is, from seeking Salvation in a way of Free-grace; do but now remember (as he said in another case, *Remember thy first Love*) your first Faith: Certainly this your New Perswasion is not of him that called you: If this New way that you have taken up, which diverts you from Christ, had been the way, surely he that called you would have perswaded you so at first, when he drew your hearts to him. The Apostle speaks clearly of the point of waiting; for, saith he, speaking of himself and other Believers that profest Faith in Christ, and kept it up in the Integrity of it, *We through the Spirit wait for the hope of Righteousness by Faith,* Gal. 5. 5. you began to do so too, (saith he) but you would not wait as you began, but you would needs divert to ease your selves, to Works, and to something in your selves: But, saith he, I have confidence in you thorough the Lord, that you did close with Christ at first, you will be brought about again, for God will never let you rest in your selves; so he saith, *ver.* 10. *I have confidence in you thorough the Lord, that ye will be no otherwise minded in the end:* So that now to continue to wait thus upon the Lord Jesus, to wait though a Mans eyes fail, (for so *David* saith he waited, *Psal.* 69. 3.) is a special act of Faith, it is a very great subjection of the Creature for to wait nakedly upon God, and not to know (as oftentimes it falls out with many Poor Souls) what God will do with them. The business of Salvation it is so great, and self-love is such a strong Principle in a Man, that a Man had need have such a Principle of Faith to quiet him in the mean time; for Self-love is impatient in matters of great moment, and would be put out of doubt presently, and so the heart is apt to turn to it self, and to Works; and it is apt also out of Peevishness to say, as he did out of Wickedness in 2 *Kings* 6. 33. *What should I wait for the Lord any longer?* The Prophet *Habbakkuk* speaking of Faith (for though he speaks it in the case of the *Babylonish* Captivity, yet the Apostle citing that saying, applies it to the matter of Justification and Salvation, whereof the deliverance from the Babilonish Captivity was a Type) saith, *Chap.* 2. 3. *The vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak,* and speak home to the Heart, and be accomplished, and not lie, though it tarry, and therefore wait for it; *Because it will surely come, it will not tarry: Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him, but the just shall live by his Faith,* ver. 4. This Text the Apostle cites in *Heb.* 10. 35. *Cast not away your Confidence,* (saith he) *for yet a little while and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry, now the just shall live by faith:* It is an allusion to these very words of the Prophet.

3. I mentioned also, That the Soul waits thus upon Jesus Christ with Submission and Quietness: A Man doth not know how his Soul may be put to it, and sometimes it is put to it with manifold Temptations, and often times those

those Temptations are answered with nothing but Submissions. Certainly, Submission unto God is the clearest answer of all other unto Doubts or Disquietness of Spirit, and whensoever a Man arriveth there, he is always upon Ground, and will cease floating. Such Acts of Faith as these doth God enable his Servants sometimes to put forth, for I do not mention only those that are simply and absolutely necessary to Salvation, but those acts that the Soul puts forth towards Christ, in its treaty with him for salvation, in some instance or other; in *Lam.* 3. 26, 29. the place I cited even now, where the Prophet speaks of waiting, (saith he) *It is good that a man should both hope, and quietly wait for the Salvation of the Lord; he sitteth alone, and keepeth silence, because he hath born it upon him; he putteth his mouth in the dust, if so be there may be hope.* In those Eastern Countries, the manner of those that did profess an absolute subjection to another, was, to fall down at their feet, and to kiss the dust; as amongst the *Turks*, they do to their Emperours at this day: Now (saith he) thus should the Soul wait upon God, put his Mouth in the dust, if so be there may be Hope; not only wait when there is Hope, but if there may be any hope; if there may be any supposition of Hope, he is to wait upon God with putting his Mouth in the dust. Faith it is ordain'd to glorifie God his own way, and in glorifying of him to cause the Heart to apply it self to him in the great business of salvation. It is said of *Abraham*, in *Rom.* 4. 20. *That he believed, and gave glory to God:* Faith it is the great Instrument of giving glory to God. Now in the matter of Salvation, what is most eminent in God? what is the flower of his Glory, in the way of justifying and saving a Man? It is the Freedom of his Grace: If it be Grace, then it will be free; *I will have mercy, because I will have mercy, and I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy*, Rom. 9. 15. Faith then it is also an Instrument of glorifying even Grace in all the ways of its freedom, according to all the Advantages that Free-grace hath over us to glorifie it self upon us, as it is free to accept us, or free to refuse us. For a Man now to wait upon the Lord in the time of Distress, and apply himself thus to the Freedom of his Grace by Faith, with submission, this (I say) is the highest way of Faith's glorifying that which is highest in God in the point of Salvation, for a Man to cast away himself thus into the freedom of the Grace of God. Absolute Submission God requires of no Man; that is, that Men should be content to be damned, or the like; but hypothetical Submission in supposed cases, is what God enableth his Servants to perform to him, that is, submission with If's; *If the Lord* (saith *David* in 2 Sam. 15. 26.) *say thus, I have no delight in thee; behold, here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him:* He spake it indeed in the Point of a Temporal Business, or a Business which concerned the service of God; had it been in the case of his own Salvation, it had been the highest acting of Faith in the World. What he saith in that case, the Soul too saith with an If; *Here I am, let the Lord do to me as seemeth good unto him.* You know that saying of *Job*, Chap. 13. 15. *Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.* In this case, this same venture for salvation thus with submission, glorifies the freedom of the Grace of God, and the freeness of the Grace of Christ: However, a Man looseth not his end, for usually when a Man begins to have such submissions appear in his Spirit, God hath instantly done, and all Doubts and Temptations are by this answered, and so the Heart is quieted, and indeed there is no Objection beyond it.

Seventhly, True Genuine Faith, in its coming to Christ for Justification and Pardon, Righteousness, or whatever else, applies and fashions the Heart to the Law of Faith: I use that Phrase here, that Christ enableth the Heart to apply it self in coming to Christ for all these, according *to the Law of Faith*, for you have the same in *Rom.* 3. 26. in another case, but it is applicable to this; there you shall find that the Apostle speaks of the Law of Faith, by which he saith Works are excluded; and he argues thus; If a Man believe in Christ for salvation at all, Works must wholly be excluded, according to the Law of Faith, that is, according to the Nature of Faith; if it be true Faith, and genuine, it is impossible, saith he, that Works should have any mixture with it. It is such a Phrase, as we say, the Laws of Friendship, that is, which a Man must keep to, and which are essential to him, if he will be a true Friend, and not feigned; so saith the Apostle, If Works be mingled with Faith, it is against the Law of Faith, it overthrows

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Part II. the Nature of Faith. As a Man ſaith, ſuch a thing is againſt the Law of Arms, that is, when a Man doth things contrary to the Principle of Arms; as when a Man is treating, to uſe acts of Hoſtility; ſo it is againſt the Law of Faith to mingle Works with it: When he ſaith, therefore Works are excluded, he ſaith it is by the Law of Faith, by the Law of the Nature of Faith, as I may expreſs it: Even as elſewere, *Rom.* 11. 6. he ſaith, *If it be of works, it is no more of Grace*; for it is the Law of Grace to be Grace only, and it will admit no Works amongſt it, and ſo it is the Law of Faith, or elſe it is no Faith at all, if you come to Chriſt for Salvation to renounce Works. Now what the Apoſtle ſaith of the Law of Faith, in that ſence I ſhall make uſe of to the purpoſe that I have in hand, namely this, that if it be true and genuine Faith which a Man comes with to Chriſt for ſalvation, then it will apply it ſelf towards Chriſt, according to the neceſſary Laws and Nature of Faith, and according to what by believing he ſeeks for at Chriſt's Hands: Now do but conſider, when the Soul comes to Jeſus Chriſt to believe, what is it that according to the Law of Nature in Faith is neceſſary, that if you will believe, and believe in earneſt, and believe honeſtly, the Heart muſt do? It is this, that whatſoever I would have from Chriſt, my Heart doth apply it ſelf ſuitably and anſwerably to Chriſt again, as a Creature ſhould do; whatſoever I would have Chriſt be to me, in my proportion I deſire anſwerably and ſuitably to be to Chriſt again: As for Example, if I come to a Man, and deſire him to be my Friend, and I come on purpoſe to him for Friendſhip, why now the Law of Friendſhip requireth Friendſhip from me again, it is neceſſary, according to the Law of Friendſhip, that that ſhould be the purpoſe and frame of the Spirit of a Man in ſo coming; ſo ſaith *Solomon*, Prov. 18. 24. *A man that hath freinds muſt ſhew himſelf friendly.* You read in Scripture (that I may yet explain this further) of a Faith unfeigned, as in 1 *Theſ.* 1. 5. *Unfeigned, without Hypocriſie, without Guile.* You read likewiſe in *Heb.* 10. 22. of drawing nigh unto God with aſſurance of Faith; you read likewiſe there of a true Heart, *Let us draw nigh with a true heart, in full aſſurance of Faith:* Now it is not that Truth of Heart is it ſelf that which God doth juſtifie a Man for, or that *that* hath any Ingrediency (as not Faith it ſelf, not as a Work) to Juſtification; yet notwithſtanding it is that which doth naturally flow from believing: If a Man believe truly, and in earneſt, and is ſo conjunct with it, as it is an eſſential Ingredient, even to Faith its being an unfeigned Faith, Faith without Hypocriſie, without Guile. I obſerve, that when the Scripture ſpeaks of believing for Juſtification, it doth not only ſpeak of an uprightneſs of Sanctification, but of an Honeſty, and Uprightneſs, and Unfeignedneſs in the act of Faith it ſelf: You have it in *Hab.* 2. 4. where he ſpeaks of living by Faith, he ſpeaks of an upright Soul; another Man, ſaith he, that doth not believe, *His ſoul is not upright in him*; and ſo in *Pſal.* 32. 1, 2. *Bleſſed is he whoſe tranſgreſſion is forgiven, whoſe Sin is covered: Bleſſed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not Iniquity, and in whoſe ſpirit there is no guile:* This very place of the Pſalmiſt the Apoſtle quoteth in *Rom.* 4. 7, 8. to hold forth this great truth, that our Juſtification before God doth lye and conſiſt meerly in God's not imputing ſin to us, but the Righteouſneſs of the Lord Jeſus, and ſo conſiſts in nothing in us: And therefore if you obſerve it, you ſhall find that he leaves out this ſentence, *And the man in whoſe ſpirit there is no guile*; why? becauſe it is not uprightneſs, or any thing in us that is any Ingredient in our Juſtification; and yet the Prophet *David* hath it of the Man that believeth thus for Juſtification, he is a Man, ſaith he, in whoſe ſpirit there is no guile; that is, he is ſincere in the very point of believing for Juſtification and Bleſſedneſs, of which he there ſpeaks, and it anſwers to thoſe other Phraſes of *Faith unfeigned*, or *Fatith without guile*, and of *drawing nigh with a true heart, in full aſſurance of Faith.*

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

That where there is true and unfeigned Faith, the Soul is prevailed on to consent to give it self to Christ in all Services and Obedience: That yet this choosing of Christ to be our King and Lord, and submitting to him accordingly, is not that act of Faith which justifies a Man.

I Will now Explain what it is for a Man to believe unfeignedly, or according to the very Law and Nature of Faith: And I shall open it to you briefly.

Thou comest to believe in Jesus Christ; let me ask thee this Question, What is it thou aimest at in thy coming to him? What would'st thou have from him? What would'st thou have with him? What is thy Intent, thy Business with him? The Soul will say, I would have Pardon of sin, and I believe on him for the forgiveness of my sins; *For blessed is the Man whose sin is forgiven*; and forgiveness lies only in him. Why now according to the Law of Faith, according to that Ingenuity and Unfeignedness of Faith, what will be the Issue of it? Thou wilt let fall all the Weapons that are in thy hand against God presently. It floweth, I say, naturally, from the very Law of believing: As for Example, If a Traytor, having been a Rebel against his Prince, should come to him for his sovereign Grace and Favour, to pardon and forgive him, he comes to seek pardon of his Prince, who may choose whether he will pardon him or no; and then certainly the very Law of his coming to him for Grace, requireth (and requireth it naturally, and it cannot be otherwise) that this Man should come nakedly, and come upon his knees, and lay aside all his hostility, and his Weapons which he hath used against him: So it is likewise with the Soul that comes to Jesus Christ for the pardon of sin, it is against the Law of Faith to do otherwise, as truly as it is against the Law of Arms for a Man in a Treaty for Peace to come and practice any Act of Hostility. This you shall find in the Scripture to be natural unto Faith, and to flow from it as naturally as any thing can do, *Hos.* 14. 2. There the Prophet sets them a work to seek by way of Faith, Mercy at the Hands of God; *Take with you words*, (saith he) *and turn to the Lord; say unto him*, (this now is the voice of Faith) *Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously*; and *Verse* 3. they coming thus unto God, say, *Ashur shall not save us*, (i. e. no Creature shall help us) *for in thee the Fatherless findeth Mercy*: We look for help from thee alone, and we come to thee for Grace, take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously: What follows upon this? what follows as a natural and necessary consequent upon it? read the 8*th.* verse, *Ephraim shall say, what have I to do any more with Idols?* God doth not come in here, and say, *Ephraim*, you must leave your Idols; but *Ephraim* saith it himself, and he saith it as finding it inconsistent with what he is seeking for; I am seeking for Grace at the Hands of God, and to have all iniquity taken away, what have I therefore to do any more with Idols? this is the Voice of Faith, and the Law of Faith. So again, when you come to believe, let me ask you, What do you come for? Do you come for Pardon? What is it in God that should move him to give you Pardon? O his Free grace, his infinite Love! What kind of Love is it you seek for, as that which only must pardon you? a Love unchangeable, such a Love as is not bestowed upon the rest of the World, which Millions of Nobles, and Great Ones in the World have no Interest in, a Love that continueth to everlasting, a Love that freely accepts you for nothing in your self: This indeed and in truth is the aim of your Faith, for you can have Pardon from no other Principle in God, but from such a Love as this. If that Faith now aims to have from God such a Love, out of which, and out of no other a Man can be pardoned, and casteth himself upon God for this, and without this is never quiet; if Faith come to God for this, if it be Faith unfeigned, if it keep to the Law of Faith, if it be Faith without guile, if there be a true Heart in this Faith, if there be an honest Heart, (for that is another Expression that *Luke* hath, *Luke* 8. 15. and he means not honest only in respect to Commands, and the like, but in relation to the Word of the Gospel, holding forth Christ to us, to believe on him) if, I say, a Man have

Part II. have an honesty of Faith, and an ingenuity of Faith, and cometh unto God for such a Love, it must needs frame and fashion in a natural way the Heart to a suitable Disposition unto God. I find in *Acts* 11. 26. where *Barnabas* bids them by Faith to abide by the Lord, it is said, he exhorted them with purpose of Heart to do it: There is a purpose of Heart that is always the ingredient in the Nature and Being of Faith, for Faith you must know is seated in the whole Man, hath its effect upon the whole Heart, therefore it draws out all in a Man, that as the Will doth trust in Christ, so there is a cleaving to him with a genuine purpose of Heart. Whatever now Faith would have from God, and comes to God for, it comes to God upon the terms of the Law and Nature of the thing, to return in its proportion that to God again; the Heart behaves it self accordingly, and must needs do so when it comes to believe. *Abraham* when he believed upon God for to have his Son Jesus Christ, (for he saw his day, and knew that he was to be put to death, or at least that he was to be saved by him) would he have God's Son from God? doth he believe this in earnest? and doth he come to God for Salvation thorough his Son to be given for him? this Faith now being honest Faith, Faith unfeigned, genuine Faith, saith he, God shall have my Son again; and though *Abraham* had not that distinct thought when he first believed, yet there was that seminally in his heart, when God called him to give up his Son to God, you have it there in *James* 2. 22. Further, when the Soul comes to Jesus Christ for Pardon, I ask thee again, (and do but consider it) What is it that thou dost come to Christ to be pardoned thorough? I come to him to be pardoned thorough his Blood, and thorough his Sufferings, his having born the Wrath of God, (which is the only all-sufficient Sacrifice of himself, offered up to God when he bore our sins upon the Cross;) Dost thou so? The very Law and Nature of Faith, if it be genuine, hath this Seed and Principle in it, (which I say is naturally and essentially an Ingredient in it) that it will make thee to say (as the Apostle himself crys out in *Rom.* 6. 2, 3, *&c.*) How shall I then live in that which Jesus Christ died for? Do I come for every part of Christ's Obedience to be counted mine? Certainly then the very Law of Faith frames the Heart to this, to conform my self to that Obedience of his, to apply my self thereto. The Law of Faith seminally doth all this, and it is not only in the case of Assurance of the Love of God, but in the case of depending upon the Love of God; not only in the case of Assurance that Christ died for me, but in depending upon this, that Christ died for me. Thus Faith hath a thousand ways whereby it sanctifies the Heart, by going to Christ for Virtue, by looking to the Example of Christ, by looking to its oneness with Christ, and the like; but the Truth is this, that that which we call Sanctification, (or call it what you will) is contained seminally in the very Law of Faith, when it is actually drawn out and exercised. You call it Repentance, and Sanctification, and the like, but seminally it lies in believing, and in the very Law of believing; if it be Faith unfeigned, if it be a true and genuine Act of Faith, which I take it is the reason why all is ascribed to believing. It is not as if the Soul when it comes to believe, and sees it self lost without Christ, *&c.* concludes, I must repent to perform a Condition of my Justification; No, but the very Nature of Faith, if I believe, and believe honestly, will draw all this after it: I say, the very Nature of the thing doth it; for if a Man come to God otherwise, he may be answered as *Isaac* answered *Abimelech*, Gen. 26. 27. *Wherefore come ye to me, seeing you hate me, and have sent me away from you?* Or, as *Jepthah* said to the Elders of *Gilead*, Judges 10. 7. *Did not you hate me, and expel me from my Fathers House? and why are ye come unto me now, when ye are in distress?* If any Man comes thus to God, can he think he shall be accepted? So that, I say, Repentance and Sanctification, take the Acts of it, they are all seminally included in Faith, and flow from it; if it be Faith unfeigned, and without guile, if it be Faith that resteth upon Christ for the blessedness of having our sins covered. But let me add this for Caution-sake, though this is what the Law of Faith, when the Soul comes to treat with Christ for Justification, requireth, yet it is not that upon which, and that Act for which God doth justifie us; but rather, I say, whatever God respecteth in Faith, trusting on him, is certainly that Act which he hath singled out for the purpose of our Justification.

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6. The Soul in treating with Jesus Christ for Justification, according to this Law of Faith mentioned, doth apply itself to all, and the whole that is in Christ, or of Christ, or belonging to Christ, and doth give up the whole Soul to God, and to Jesus Christ. If a Man do believe with Faith unfeigned, this is withall included in the very Nature of it: Although indeed when I come to Jesus Christ as a Justifier, for that is my particular business with him, I believe on him that justifieth the Ungodly; yet being come, Faith corresponds or applies it self to all that is in Christ, or of Christ, or belonging to him any way. I shall endeavour to explain and prove this: You have often heard it, and I find it in some Discourses urg'd, that Faith is not only a believing on Christ, but a taking and a receiving of Christ, and that therein also lies the Act of Justifying: But I do not urge it so, for I take it, that the formal act of Justification is when the Soul resteth and believeth on the Lord Jesus; and the Scripture carries it so throughout. Yet withall notwithstanding, this taking of Christ, this applying the whole Soul to whole Christ, and all that is of him, or in him, or belonging to him, is essential to this Faith, it is included in it, even in the very Nature of the Faith it self, if it be unfeigned Faith, if it be honest Faith, if it be Faith that is faithful, as I may so express it. I shall endeavour to explain this by degrees.

1. I lay this down for a most certain Truth and Principle, That God hath ordained the Spirit of Faith to be that great Principle in the Soul till it come to Heaven, whereby the Soul shall immediately treat with Jesus Christ, or God in Christ, all those ways whereby he is to be treated withal by the Soul; so that all sorts of Transactions between God and Christ pass through the Cognizance of Faith, and are let first into the Soul by Faith. So that as Jesus Christ himself is a Mediatour between God and us, in bringing us to God, so the Spirit of Faith in the Soul is that whereby the Soul doth treat with Christ, is both the Spirit of Faith which the Holy Ghost who acts the Soul in the ways of believing, and the Principle of Faith in the Soul it self. When you come to deal with Jesus Christ, or with God through Christ, all things else are shut out of doors, and there is none that appears, or are seen together, but God and Christ, and the Spirit of Faith in the Soul, and the Soul acting Faith towards God thereby; so that whatever Excellency is in Christ's Person, (besides his being a Saviour, or the Object of Justification) whatever relation besides God hath put upon him to bear towards the Soul, and ordained him to be unto it, (as there are multitudes of them, as an Head, an Husband, a Prophet, Lord and King) all these that Faith which doth justifie is also ordained to take in, and unto these all doth the Soul that comes to Christ for Justification suitably apply and demean it self, it being, as was said, the only eminent Principle that is ordained to treat with Christ; so as although the consequent of believing may be Love, and mourning for sin, *&c.* yet that which transacts all with Christ, as he is a King, as he is a Priest, as he is a Prophet, as he is excellent and glorious in himself, is Faith, and it is Faith that transacts all these first and primarily, nakedly and immediately with Christ, and then Love and all other things arise. Hence therefore Faith that comes to Christ for Justification, is such as is fitted to take in, and apply it self to all that is put upon Jesus Christ in his relation to us, and all that Faith shall be instructed in, it apprehends it, and closeth with it. For otherwise, there should be something in Christ ordained by God to be to the Soul, which the Soul should not have a Principle to take in or apprehend; for whatsoever Christ is ordained to be to the Soul, the Soul apprehends it only by Faith. Yet,

2. Although all such Applications of the Soul to Christ by Faith, as of consenting to be Christ's, the taking the Person of Christ to be mine, *&c.* are the proper, peculiar acts of Faith, yet are they not that formal act of Faith as Justifying: But the Scripture puts this upon what is here mentioned, *Seeing and believing on him*; and although the Soul is thereby married to Christ as an Husband, as *Rom.* 7. 3. *To bring forth fruit to God*; yet to take him under that Notion as an Husband, is a Conjugal Act, whereas Justification is a forensical act in God, and believing upon him is answerable. And then again, to take him upon Consideration of his Excellencies, as an Husband, is an act of

Part II. Love, and so if this was the justifying Act, Love would go before Faith, where as Love ariseth from the Acts of Faith. Yet,

3. Although thus to take Christ, and to receive Christ as a Lord, and as a King, and a Husband, and apply the Soul accordingly to him, be not that formal act of Faith as justifying, yet all such acts do flow from, and are contained in the very Nature of that act of Faith that seeketh Justification from Christ, and this according to the Law of Faith beforemention'd, so as if it be Faith unfeign'd, faithful Faith; that Soul who comes to Christ for Justification, if it comes truly to him as such, doth withall necessarily take him as a Lord, as a King, as a Husband, in all his relations, and accordingly applies the Soul wholly to him: You shall find therefore in *John* 1. 12. that which is elsewhere called believing on his Name, is there called receiving of him; *As many as received him, to them he gave Power to be the Sons of God, even to as many as believe on his Name*: He that doth believe on the Son, he also receiveth him; and how receiveth him? he receives him as he is a Lord as well as he is a Saviour; that's clear and evident from what is the Occasion of this Speech in the verse before, for that which others are blam'd for in that 11*th*. verse, is because they received him not as such; *He came unto his own*; that is, he came unto his own house, as a Lord and Master over his own House, (for so indeed the Phrase implies, the Phrase εἰς τὰ ἴδια, *To his own*, as it is elsewhere translated; so in *John* 19. 27. *John* is said to have receiv'd *Mary*, Christ's Mother, εἰς τὰ ἴδια, to his own Home or House; the like you have *Acts* 21. 6. *And his own received him not*: They did not receive him as one that came as a Lord, and that was to be the Lord *Over his own House*, Heb. 3. 6. as we are said to receive a King, when we acknowledge him, and are subject to him as such. Now then you see he explains the one by the other, *Believing on his Name* by *receiving* of him, and *receiving of him* by *believing on his Name*: Now from hence I infer, that whosoever believes on the Name of Jesus Christ for Salvation, it is in the Nature of that Act to *receive* him also as a Head, as a Lord, as a Husband, as a King, *&c*. And that which further explains this, is, *Col*. 2. 6. *As you have received Christ Jesus the Lord*, (Mark the Words) *so walk ye in him*. All Obedience is but walking in Christ, as Faith is receiving of Christ, and that as Jesus the Lord: Now what is said of receiving Jesus as a Lord, it is true of recieving him under any other relation he bears towards us, wherein the Word doth manifest him as a Husband, as a Head, as a Prophet, as a King, *&c*.

The next thing I add to explain this, is, That yet it may be, that at the first when a Man comes to believe on Christ for Salvation, he hath not those distinct thoughts of taking Jesus Christ as a King, and as a Husband, and the like, though still it is included in the very Nature of that act of Faith that comes to him for Justification, (if that Faith be genuine) so as the Heart doth virtually and implicitly do all this in the very coming to Christ for Justification. And as to this first, Christ is pleas'd to deal with some Men in their coming to him so distinctly, as haply to propound all of Christ at first, and to carry on the Soul in that way and manner in the whole Treaty with him: Thus it was with *Paul* from the first, who sought Christ's Person first, and then his Righteousness; *Lord*, (saith he) *what wilt thou have me to do?* Acts 9. 6. and Phil. 3. 8. *I count all things but loss and dung, that I may win Christ: I have*, (says he) *and do* so at present too: He had done so from the very first, and what was the order and design of his Faith? *That I may win Christ*, (says he;) he mentions that first, that he may have his Person first, and that being found in *him* he might have *his* Righteousness, and not his own. And I my self have known some, that when they have seen their lost Condition, have come unto Jesus Christ, and looking about for a Warrant for them in particular for this, they have found this ground, that God hath commanded them to believe, and so authorized them to go to the Lord Jesus, of which being assured, and then going to Jesus Christ, he told them that he could not deny them his Righteousness, because he is his Fathers Servant: And 'tis true they had his Warrant, and so he must give it them. As if I have a Ticket from the King, to have so much Money from the Lord Treasurer, he being but a Servant, and I having the King's Warrant, he cannot deny to pay it to me; but withall, the Soul thus

thus coming to Christ, authorized by the Command of God so to do, Christ hath yet dealt thus with that Soul: It's true, (saith he) I cannot deny you that Righteousness which you come to me for, for I am appointed by my Father to give it unto all that come to me for it; but know withall, that my Father hath appointed me to be as a King to you, to be as a Lord, to be as a Head to you. I say, thus distinctly hath the thing been driven, and the Treaty been made. But,

2. All Souls are not thus distinctly dealt withall, but they have this virtually and implicitely: For, *First*, Many poor Souls, when they first come to Jesus Christ, their Minds are swallowed up so much about Pardon of Sin, that their present thoughts did then only in an explicite way look upon Christ as a Saviour, though that act of Faith in coming to him only as a Saviour, being such a Faith as is genuine, and true, and in earnest, and ingenuous, (at the same time that the Soul seeks Salvation by him) it includes a Disposition to be any thing Christ would have it to be towards him, or a Submission to Christ in any thing which he is ordain'd by God to be unto the Soul; yet so, as that they have not such explicite thoughts at that moment drawn forth, they do not make such an explicite consent of taking him to be their King, and their Head, and the like, to make a Marriage with him; I say, they have not these distinct thoughts drawn out in their first coming to Christ, whether it be in respect to the taking and receiving him as a Lord, and Husband, or whether in respect to the taking Christ himself the Saviour, many cannot say, that the Revelation of Christ to them, was under the consideration of God's offering, or giving Christ unto them, and that so they did receive Christ, and take him; but they can say, they have come to him, and yet in their very coming (as the truth of it is) they do take him; but because taking of him implies a looking at him as given, yea, the Phrase to take him, implies an apprehension in them, that he is given to them, as theirs; for a Man is to take only what is his own, and so in common understanding it would seem to imply, that the Faith of a Believer hath for its ground a thought, that God hath given Christ for him in particular, which many truly believing Souls cannot find; they must therefore come to him as given by God for sinners, *&c.*

3. Neither doth God so drive on this Treaty about Justification, that he should keep off and suspend to justifie the Soul coming to Christ for Salvation, 'till the Soul first doth distinctly apprehend that it must have his Person, before it can have his Righteousness, and that he is to be to it a Lord and King, as well as a Saviour. We cannot conceive that God should forbear to justifie the Soul, 'till it comes to have such distinct thoughts, for such distinct apprehensions of Christ many poor Souls cannot tell how to make out at the first, neither doth Christ drive on the Treaty of the Soul with him in such distinct terms: But as was said, this is in the very Nature of the Act; and though they come to Christ only for Justification, yet if it be a coming unto him in good earnest, they do by that very act take whole Christ, and all that is in him, and all that he is ordained to be to the Soul. For as it is in Marriage, though a Woman marries one that is rich, that all her Debts may be paid, yet she marries him, and takes him as an Husband, to all other ends and purposes else: Or I may illustrate it by a comparison of the contrary, which your Ears may well bear, for we use to illustrate one contrary by another; those that are properly Conjurers, they never make a distinct and explicite Contract with the Devil, but by going to him to do such and such things for them, they take the Devil to be their Head, and they give their Souls up to him by an implicite Covenant, even by their very going to him: So doth the Soul by going to Jesus Christ in earnest, to be justified by him; and that according to the Law of believing, though it comes to him at first for nothing but Justification, yet because the Law of believing doth require a Man to take whole Christ, the Soul doth it, and doth apply it self to that Law, that whatsoever the Word doth reveal concerning Christ, the Soul corresponds with it: And if Faith be genuine and ingenuous, it naturally includes this in it, If I seek Salvation from him, who being all Excellency and Glory became nothing, and emptied himself of all for those who are saved by him, who gave his whole self to purchase that Salvation which I seek, the Law of Faith

Part II. then requires that I ſhould ſubmit, and apply my whole ſelf to him, and to all in him: But yet ſo it is, that the Soul is drawn out to do all this, as upon coming to Chriſt he is reveal'd to the Soul, and it is inſtructed in him. In *John* 1. 12. he having ſaid, *As many as receiv'd him*, then (as it were) thinking that this needed an Explanation, he mentions by way of Interpretation, *Even as many as believed on his Name*; and this Explication is on purpoſe to relieve many a poor Soul, who thinks with it ſelf, Alas, I cannot remember that I did thus diſtinctly receive him as my Lord and Head, or that I ſaw God the Father giving of him to me, to be ſuch unto me: Ay, but haſt thou believed on him? then thou haſt received him; *As many as received him, even thoſe that believe on his Name*: The like you have in *Luke* 14. 26. compared with *Mat.* 10. 37. *He that hateth not Father and Mother, is not worthy to be my Diſciple*; ſo it is in *Luke*: But in *Mat.* 10. 37. *He that loveth Father and Mother more than me, is not worthy of me*: Becauſe, whoſoever comes unto Jeſus Chriſt, and gives up himſelf to be a Diſciple to him, the very Nature of the thing is to come to him for himſelf, and upon his ſo doing he hath Chriſt himſelf: It is, you ſee, made all one. Now, I ſay, it is all virtually contained in our coming to him for Juſtification, becauſe that the Soul when it comes to him in earneſt, comes with that Truth, and with that Unfeignedneſs, that ſtill according as Chriſt is revealed, what he is ordained to be to the Soul, ſo it doth and would apply it ſelf to him; and this is evident alſo by this, that theſe poor Souls that come thus to Chriſt diſtinctly for Juſtification, though they cannot ſay, I remember when I was married to Jeſus Chriſt, I cannot remember when I took him as my Lord, and King, and Head, *&c.* under ſuch diſtinct Ideas, or that the Treaty was ſo driven on, yet they do all to him that a Wife ſhould do to a Husband, they ſeek to pleaſe him, and content him; they do all to him as Servants ſhould do to a Maſter, and this by reaſon of coming to him for Juſtification, and dependance upon him thereon, though it may be they had not in their firſt cloſing with him ſuch diſtinct thoughts, that they came to him as a Husband, and as a Maſter; and tho' they cannot ſay, that they have put forth an Act of taking Chriſt as an Husband or Lord, under that diſtinct Notion, and that ſuch a formal Contract hath paſs'd; yet ſuch a ſeminal, virtual diſpoſition of their Souls, they expreſs abundantly in ſuppoſition, and tendency of their deſires towards him; wiſhing, Oh that he would be a Husband to me! and how infinitely ſhould I rejoyce, if I might be ſo happy in him! And tho' I cannot ſay, that I have taken him under this thought, yet my Soul renounceth all other Lords, according to that in *Iſa.* 26. 13.

Again, the Truth is, that Faith as to our Perception is a confuſed thing at firſt, it is like the *Chaos*, but yet like to that it hath the ſeeds of all things in it towards Jeſus Chriſt; and even as in making the World, God brought forth one thing after another out of that confuſed Lump, (firſt he ſaid, *Let there be Light*, and then Light ſtarted up, *&c.* and he was ſix days in perfecting of the World:) So it is in Faith, It is, I ſay, a confuſed Lump at firſt, but there is the Subſtance in it of all that ever the Soul ſhall be to Chriſt, or that Chriſt ſhall be to the Soul; and in drawing forth theſe, God doth not tye or keep himſelf to any conſtant Method, he doth not make every Soul to ſay diſtinctly, I will firſt take Chriſt, and then take his Righteouſneſs; No, but many a poor Soul (it may be) comes to Jeſus Chriſt firſt for his Righteouſneſs, and by coming to him for his Righteouſneſs the truth is he takes Jeſus Chriſt himſelf; and yet in the natural way of Method, and in the dependance of the things, a Man hath firſt Chriſt, and then his Righteouſneſs. And beſides, the order of theſe actings in the Soul is as the Miniſtry is under which a Man liveth, for there is that Obediential Principle in Faith, that whatſoever the Word God of ſhall call for at your Hands, Faith is ready to apply it ſelf to Chriſt accordingly. There is many a poor Soul cannot ſay, I have taken Chriſt to be my Husband, and yet it will ſhew Conjugal Diſpoſitions; it will ſay, Oh that he were my Husband! and if he were my Husband, how infinitely ſhould I rejoyce! It cannot ſay, I have taken Chriſt for my Lord, when I began firſt to believe: But this it can ſay, Other Lords beſides him have ruled over me, but I have renounced them all, I will make mention only of his Name. So that the truth is, this taking

Chriſt

Christ as a Lord, is virtually and seminally in every Soul that comes to Jesus Christ for Salvation; for it takes whole Christ; and as it relies only upon him, so it receives all that is in him, and all that belongs unto him, and God who judgeth righteous judgment, according to the real substance of the thing, and stands not upon formal Thoughts, and explicite Contracts, or distinct Apprehensions in the Person believing, as if the want of them should make void what is substantial, justifies a Man upon that Faith which God sees, and knows to have such a true genuine Principle in it.

Having thus explain'd my Meaning as clearly as I could, I shall now prove the Substance of this Truth from the Scripture: The Covenant of Grace under the Law directed Believers to look on God as their God, and to avouch him to be such: *David* calls him Lord, *Psal.* 110. 1. And in so doing, the very Nature and Law of Faith requires, and causeth the Heart according to this Principle, to apply it self to Christ, as to a Father, and as to a Lord, which the Prophet refers to, and interprets it *Mal.* 1. 6. *If I be a Father, where is my Honour? and if I be a Master, where is my Fear?* It is impossible the Heart should come to God to be a Father, (if it come to him in earnest) or come to Jesus Christ to be a Saviour, but it will turn to him, as it is in *Jer.* 3. 19. *Thou shalt call me Father, and not turn away from me.* And Jesus Christ he expresseth this to be the Believers Case all along in his Preaching, as in that place quoted even now, *Mat.* 10. 38. *He that loveth Father and Mother better than me, he is not worthy of me:* That Phrase doth necessarily imply, that he that comes to Jesus Christ, takes Christ, and he hath Christ, whole Christ; it is the very Nature of the Act to do so, for why else doth he speak of that Man as possessing himself, for he doth not say, *He is not worthy of my Righteousness,* but he is not worthy of me; so that it is there implyed, that the Soul takes Christ himself under all relations: Why? because he parts with all other Relations for him, he hates Father and Mother in comparison of Christ, and it is because he comes to Jesus Christ to be all these to him; and this Christ argues from the Nature of the thing it self, as is imported in that Phrase, *He is not worthy of me*; i. e. He deals unworthily, and unsuitably to what he came to me for. And hence it comes to be made inconsistent with Faith, and against the Nature of the Act, for a Man believing to go on in any sin, *John* 5. 44. *How can ye believe, which receive Honour one of another?* And when Christ speaks of the Souls coming to him for rest, *Mat.* 11. 28. he mentions his Yoke, (as elsewhere taking up his Cross;) and in *Luke* 19. 14. he expresseth their Unbelief by this, that they would not have him to reign over them. Our Lord and Saviour Christ, he was a mean Man in view, and all the World contemn'd him, and the Gang of the World was against him, and he that would keep his Correspondency with the World, and hold in with the World, and have Honour from the World, he would never believe on him; for if he did believe on him in earnest, he would let go all his correspondency with the World, and take Jesus Christ *ipso facto*, as his Lord, and as his Master.

And the Apostles preach'd accordingly, as you shall find in *Acts* 2. 36. *Let all the House of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ:* He would have them know this, and know this assuredly, that God had made him as Christ, the Messiah to save them, so he had made him Lord; and in *Acts* 5. 31. you have the like, *Him hath God exalted with his right hand, to be a Prince and a Saviour:* Whoever therefore comes unto him as to a Saviour, if he come in earnest to him for Salvation, if it be faithful Faith, if it keep to the Law of Faith, he doth also necessarily apply himself to Christ as to a Prince: For, Mark it, for what end doth the Apostle quote this? they had said, *ver.* 29. *We ought to obey God rather than Men*; and then they give this reason for it, Because *He is exalted to be a Prince*, (say they) therefore we ought to obey him; and upon those terms we and others also have believed on him: In like manner they add, *ver.* 32. *We are his witnesses of these things, and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him*; that is, That have received Jesus Christ as a Prince as well as a Saviour, giving that as a true Description of Believers. Hence therefore Faith is not only opposed to doubting, but it is opposed to

Dis-

Part II. Disobedience; you have an express place for it in 1 *Pet.* 2. 7. *Unto you which believe he is precious, but unto them which be disobedient, a stone of stumbling*, &c. Unbelief, you see, and Unbelievers, are expressed by being disobedient: Why? because virtually and seminally taking Jesus Christ as a Lord, and a King, in all things to obey him, is contained in the very Nature of Faith. You have it in your very Creed, *I believe in Jesus Christ the Lord*; and the same is imported too in that Text, tho' it be not the whole meaning of it) *Eph.* 3. 17. *That Christ may dwell in your Hearts by Faith*: This Phrase imports an having receiv'd him into the Heart by Faith, as a Lord into his own House, and so it answers to that in *John* 1. 11. *He came to his own*, &c. εἰς τὰ ἴδια, to his own House, as Lord over it. There is in a believing Soul a Door of Faith open'd, (*Acts* 14. 27.) to receive the King of Glory; thus the Heart sets open all its Doors, as you have the Expression, *Psal.* 24. 9. *Lift up your Heads, O ye Gates! and lift them up ye everlasting Doors, and the King of Glory shall come in*;) and gives up all the Keys unto Jesus Christ, and sets him up a Throne, there to dwell and rule; and that's the Reason why, though Heaven is his Throne, and Earth his Foot-stool, yet he delights to dwell in a broken and humble Spirit, and in a believing Heart, because he can rule there, and he may do what he will in that Heart; and accordingly we are said to receive him when we do believe. Hence therefore you shall find in Scripture, that all the Profession of Faith and of Christianity is exprest to us by this very thing, calling of Jesus Christ Lord; you have it in 1 *Cor.* 12. 3. *No Man can say, that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost*. He was speaking of their being converted to the Faith, and he expresseth it by calling Jesus the Lord. To the same purpose is the Apostle's Exhortation, *Heb.* 3. 1, 2. *Let us look to Jesus, the Apostle of our Profession*, to guide us, as well as to him our High Priest, to save us; and answerably he speaks, *Heb.* 5. 9. *That he becomes the Author of Eternal Salvation to them that obey him*: And it is such Salvation as is eternal in the Issue. In 2 *Cor.* 5. 15. you shall see it is made the very Law of believing; *The Love of Christ constrains us, because we thus judge, that if one dyed for all, then were all dead*; *and* (saith he) *he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live to themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.* You see it is included in the very Nature of the thing: Do I believe that Jesus Christ died for me? Or, do I come to Jesus Christ to be saved by his Death, and by his Resurrection, I my self being a dead Creature without him? Thy Heart then cannot but judge that it is the very Law of the thing, that therefore I should live to him that died for me, and rose again. Compare this now with *Rom.* 14. 7. *None of us* (saith he) *liveth to himself*; that is, none of us that are true Believers; for *to this end* (ver. 9.) *Christ both died and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living*: Do I come to Jesus Christ now to be justified by his Death, and by his Resurrection? why, he that died and rose again, both died and rose again that he might be Lord both of the dead and living: Hence therefore, saith he, none of us liveth to himself; the natural and necessary Law of the thing requires that we should live unto Christ. So that I say, if it be faithful Faith, if it be Faith that is genuine, and that keeps to the Law of believing, according to the Nature of the Object, when it comes to Jesus Christ, to be justified by his Death, and by his Resurrection, by the like reason it gives it self up to Jesus Christ, as to a Lord and King, and all the Relations that God hath set forth in his Word that Jesus Christ is; therefore in 2 *Cor.* 8. 5. you have an Expression of the Souls resigning it self up perfectly unto Jesus Christ, that it giveth up it self and all that is in it unto the Lord, and applies it self to him as to a Lord and King; *This they did*, (saith he) *first they gave their own selves to the Lord, and then unto us, by the will of God*; that is, unto us the Apostles to guide them and direct them, but they gave their own selves up first to him: For Faith causeth the Heart to apply it self to the Law of believing, and to all that is revealed concerning Christ in the Word: It takes whole Christ, and gives up the whole Soul, and that is included in the very Nature of Faith, so that a Man cannot believe indeed and in truth, unless he doth thus. Therefore now, why should we make Repentance and Sanctification, and such things, Conditions of the Covenant of Grace, (as many do) whereas they are all seminally included in Faith,

Faith, and it is impossible for a Man to believe but all these things must follow. God shall not need to stand treating with sinners in such a manner as this, *You come to me for salvation, therefore thus and thus I expect you should do*: God need not insist on such things as Conditions, for if the Soul doth come to him for Salvation, all this is included in Faith it self, and they are part of Salvation it self; and when God bids me do all these things, he doth but bid me be saved. If a Prince should say to one, I will give thee my Daughter in Marriage, if thou wilt but marry her, and take her for thy Wife; will a Man now say, that this is a Condition? No, it is that without which he cannot come to enjoy her, without which she cannot be his Wife, or he have communion with her, the very Law and Nature of the thing requires it: So it is here, and therefore is Faith made the sole Condition, (if I may call it a Condition, for there is no need to call it so much) because it virtually includeth all these. He that believeth truly, according to the Law of Faith, he takes whole Jesus Christ, and gives up his whole Soul to him, to be ruled and disposed by him for ever: As for instance, 1. Dost thou come to Jesus Christ to be justified? and dost thou do it in earnest? thou dost take Jesus Christ to be the fountain of Grace to thee for evermore, thou dost come to him with a Resolution to be nothing in thy own Account to Eternity, and that Jesus Christ shall be all in all to thee, and do all in thee, and for thee, and thou reckonest thy self to be a Cypher, and that for evermore. 2. Dost thou come to Jesus Christ, to be saved and justified by him in earnest? Thou comest to take Jesus Christ, with all the Life of Christ, and all that belongs unto him. As when one takes a Husband, she casts her Fortune with him, as we say, to live with him; so dost thou in receiving Christ. This is *Paul*'s Phrase, in 2 *Cor.* 4. 10. *That the life of Jesus may be made manifest in our body*: He speaks it when he was persecuted, and what Life was that? It was a Life of Persecution, to which he chearfully submitted. Thus thou dost subject thy self unto a conformity to all that did accompany the Life of Christ personally here upon Earth; thou say'st as *Ruth* to *Naomi*, Ruth 1. 16. *Intreat me not to return from following of thee, for whither thou goest I will go, and where thou lodgest I will lodge; thy People shall be my People, and thy God my God.* Thou takest Jesus Christ to follow him all the World over, with all the Disgrace that shall accompany him; thou takest Jesus Christ with Losses, and with Crosses, with all Inconveniencies, with his Crown of Thorns as well as with his Crown of Glory, as oftentimes hath been exprest: And Christ need not make a Bargain with thee to do so, it is contained in the thing it self, if thou come to him in earnest. Thou takest Jesus Christ with all his Graces, the Meekness of Christ to subdue thy Pride, *&c.* For there is nothing in thee naturally but is contrary to Christ; thou takest him to have every thought brought in subjection to him. Thou takest him with all his Offices; thou takest him as thy Prophet, that is, whatsoever Truth Jesus Christ shall reveal to thee, (and thou knowest not what Truths he may reveal to thee in this World, afore thou goest out of it, for which thou may'st suffer, and be called even to lay down thy Blood) thou receivest it, yea, and thou wilt watch and observe where Truth is, and where the Spirit of God stirs abroad in the Hearts of his People, so as a Child may lead thee, as the Prophet says, *Isa.* 11. 6. thou wilt take the least hint of Light, the least Beam, and neglectest nothing that riseth up in the Church to consider it; and so thou takest him as a King also to rule thee, and to be under no Scepter but under his, and under no Government but under his, *Isa.* 26. 13. *Other Lords have ruled over us, but we will make mention only of thy Name.* Dost thou come to Jesus Christ in earnest for Justification? thou art pleased with him in all things, with all the Counsels of Jesus Christ, all his Decrees and Purposes, all the ways of his Providence, all that is contained in this whole Book, that is his Will and Mind. Thy Soul, because it is well pleased with Jesus Christ, is well pleased with all that is his, and thy Heart will say, I wish nothing wanting either in Christ, or in what belongs to him, and this is all included in the very Nature of Faith: If I belive in earnest, if that my Faith be suited to the Object that Faith believes upon, though God may draw these things out of the Lump, out of the Matter or *Chaos* of Faith, by degrees, one thing after another, yet it is all there, even when the Soul first comes

to

Part II. to lay hold upon Christ, therefore we are said to *Go on from Faith to Faith*, and that the *Righteousness of God is revealed from Faith to Faith*, Rom. 1. 17.

CHAP. VII.

What the Errors are to which Men are obnoxious in Believing. How the Fatal Mistakes are to be Rectified.

HEB. III. 10.

They do always Err in their Hearts.

THE Apostle's Scope in quoting this Psalm, was to exhort them not to harden their Hearts against Christ, or against the Messiah's Voice; and the Psalmist's, even as the Apostle's Design here, was to press this Exhortation by the Example of their Fore-fathers, (who in this were Types of them) that they should take heed of dealing with the Messiah, as their Fore-Fathers had done with *Moses*, which he enforceth from the fearful Issue and Event that befel them in so hardening their Hearts against *Moses*, that God sware against them in his Wrath, that they should not enter into his Rest in *Canaan*, which was therein a Type of Heaven, into which Christ's Ministry propounds an Entrance by Faith: And this Oath was a most binding one; for the form of it (*If they shall enter in*) is an abrupt breaking off in a vehemency of Spirit, and imports the highest Resolution that they shall not enter in: It is an usal Form of Oath, elsewhere used by God, as *Psalm* 89. 36. *If I fail David*; it expresseth with the greatest Vehemency that God would not fail him: So *Mat.* 8. 12. *If a sign shall be given to this Generation*, (for so it is in the *Greek*) which is explained by another Evangelist, *Mat.* 12. 39. *A sign shall not be given them*: And it is such a kind of Oath, as wherein is expressed most Peremptorinesss and Resolution, according to our usual way of speaking, (*Which if I do!*) and it is a most binding comprehensive Oath, for it may have all things put in for to sware by: It is as much as if he had said, If so, then I am not God, not true, not just, *&c.* What one will, may be put in to bind it, so as it is swearing by all things in God. Now the Sin for which he sware against the *Jews* in the Wilderness was Unbelief, which is expressed here by not knowing his Ways or Proceedings, and by erring in their Hearts; they are both but Expressions of their Unbelief; for *ver.* 12. he explains it, bidding these *Take heed that there be not an evil heart of Unbelief*: And so *ver.* 18. he again explains it, *To whom swear he, they should not enter into rest? those that believe not, so as they entred not in because of Unbelief*, ver. 19. which we find to have been their sin: *Psalm* 78. 19. *Can God furnish a Table?* and ver. 22. *God's anger waxed hot, because they believed not on God, nor trusted in his salvation.* And so now under the Gospel, this is the sin for which God will swear against Men. There are three sins, of which this Unbelief consists, mentioned here:

1. Ignorance of God's ways; for the Mercies of God in pardoning are called his ways, *Isa.* 55. 9. *My ways are not as their ways*: 'Tis spoken of Pardoning, which Men not knowing, depart from God.

2. An Erring in Heart, not going the Right Way, but taking Wrong Ways.

3. An hardness of Heart, not receiving in, or entertaining the Word with Dispositions and Impressions suitable to the Word, and such as it requires, with a Soft Heart.

Now the Thing I mean only to insist upon, is, concerning the Erring in Heart; that is, in Unbelief.

Observe

Observ. *That Men by Nature are exceeding apt to err in the way of Faith, and Believing on Christ.*

The Point is Natural from the Words, as also from *Rom.* 10. and *Rom.* 9. 32. where he shews, how the *Jews* could never be brought to this way of believing, but being *Ignorant of Gods Righteousness*, (that is this, of the righteousness by Faith) went still about to set up their own; they turn'd the Ceremonial Law (which was Gospel in the Type, and taught them to go out of themselves unto the Messiah by Faith, as their true High Priest offering himself a Sacrifice, and his own Blood for them) into a way of Works, and thought that for these Sacrifices, as they came from them, they should be accepted, of which *David* saw the Vanity, *Psal.* 51. 16. This I take to be the Apostle's Meaning in his Expression, *They sought it as it were by Works*, and not by Faith exercised on Christ, as shaddowed out by those Ceremonies. If God would give them any other Laws, Ceremonial, Judicial, or Moral, they would receive them; *Whatever* (cry they out) *the Lord says, we will do*, Deut. 5. 27. and the Grave, and Wise, Religious and Devout Spirits among them, would set themselves to live thereby, but the way of Faith they could never endure. The Reason of it is, because this way of Faith, and of being saved by Christ, is a new way, whereof there are no foot-steps in Nature, neither corrupt Nature, nor pure Nature; therefore *Heb.* 10. 20. Christ is called the *New Way*, whereas the Old Way to be saved by something in our selves Nature hath gone in, and Conscience though blindly puts us upon it, (for some foot-steps there are in corrupt Nature left) but here is no Tract, no Foot-step, no Guide to lead us to Christ, but the Holy Ghost who alone must guide our feet into these ways of Peace; thus the Apostle speaks, *Gal.* 5. 5. *We through the Spirit wait for the Righteousness of Faith:* This he spake to the *Galathians*, who having once receiv'd Christ, and clearly committed themselves to him, did yet recede to Works; and as *Abraham* after he had receiv'd the Promise, turn'd unto *Hagar*, (who was the Type of the Covenant of Works) hoping to have *Ishmael*, (the Typical Issue of that Covenant) to live in God's sight, so did these *Galathians* turn to a Covenant of Works, hoping to live thereby; they turn'd from Christ to the Law, becanse this is the way of Nature, and Nature will ever return to it self, and its own ways: *But we*, (says the Apostle) *through the Spirit, wait for the Righteousness of Faith:* This is above the way of Nature, and therefore it is what the Spirit must teach us; and he doth (saith *Paul*) teach us. Faith also is call'd the *Way by which we have access unto God*, Eph. 3. 12. and *Acts* 14. 27. it is called *The door of Faith:* Now Men are naturally blind, as the Men of *Sodom*, and cannot find it, and as Shepherds do, come in at the wrong Door, *John* 10. 1. so Sheep also; for *ver.* 9. he speaks it of Salvation, and believing on him, as well as of False Teaching.

Let us then desire God above all things to guide our Hearts aright in the way of believing, or (to transfer the Apostles Speech 2 *Thes.* 3. 5.) *To direct our hearts in believing on*, and waiting for Christ, as his Phrase there is, *even to guide our hearts into the ways of Peace:* For it is a secret hidden Tract, and being a way clean out of a Man's self, a Path which even pure Nature never trod, must needs be hard to find. Many seek Righteousness, but not in a way of Faith at all, as the Pharisees and Papists, and those who have no more than a Principle of Morality amongst us, *Rom.* 9. 32. And even those that pretend Faith, and to go that way to Heaven, do yet bewilder themselves, and go out of their way e're they are aware of it. And indeed this way of Faith is a way that few find, *Mat.* 7. 14. and let us Ministers give never so plain and express Directions, which the Natural Man's Head carries away with him, yet without a peculiar Teaching and Leading of the Spirit, his Heart will go wrong. As our Life is hid with God in Christ, so the way to come unto it is hid; the Holy Spirit must take us by the Hand, and lead us in unto God and Christ: It is like going up to some high Lanthorn, or Mynster, by a Way and an Ascent which a Man never went before; he sees several stairs, and is apt to take this way, and that way, if left alone, and to mistake dange-

 rously

Part II. rously too, for if a Man lets but a step wrong, he may fall and ruine himself.

My Purpose is not to go over the differences of false Faith and true, but only the Mistakes in the way of Faith, and of believing; and those not all, but a few by way of Instance. Nor do I intend to speak of the Hindrances, or Impediments, and Pull-backs in believing; of the stumbling blocks that lye in the way, and do hinder poor Souls, (such as are the Discouragements from the greatness of their sins, not being humbled enough, *&c.*) but only of the Errours and Mistakes in the way of believing. Nor shall I Discourse of the Errours about Faith in the Doctrine of it, or the Opinions about it, but of the Practical Errours in Mens Hearts, for of these the Text *Heb.* 3. 10. speaks, *They err in their hearts*, &c. And,

I shall consider the Errours of Common and Ordinary Professours of Christ, of Common Protestants, as you call them, who yet are sound in their Opinions about the Doctrine of Faith. Now their Errours are,

1. When knowing the things that Christ hath done and suffered, they rest in a general Assent to these, as that Christ came into the World, and that what is said in the Word of him is all true, and the Promises true, and think this is to believe, and so rest in this without any special Application, as those Professours did *Jam.* 2. 19. whom therefore *James* confutes, by telling them, that the Devils believe thus as well as they. If indeed a Man were only to be a Witness to the Truth of the Gospel, and to the Legacies God hath given and bequeathed therein, and that Faith were no more but to give in Testimony, (as I acknowlege that in part it is such an Act) then this might be good Faith: But alas, there may be Witnesses to a Covenant, and who may assent to the truth of all the Promises, who yet are nothing concerned in them. Witnesses give Evidence in things wherein they have no Title, and so the Angels are said to have the Testimony of Jesus, *Rev.* 19. 10. and the Devils also bare Witness to him; but a Man is to believe as a Legatee, that is, as one that hath an Estate bequeathed in God's Will, and therefore Appropriation is necessary for him. You shall no where almost in Scripture find, where the General Assent to the Gospel is made and acknowledged to be Faith, but that in the same Scripture not far off an act of Application comes in, and is mentioned, as that which makes up compleat that act of General Assent; so *Rom.* 10. 9. *If thou confess with thy Mouth, and believe with thy Heart, that God hath raised up Jesus from the dead, thou shalt be saved:* Here is all put upon an Act of General Assent; well, but *ver.* 11. this Act is expressed with an act of Application joined to it, *For the Scripture says, whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed*; so it follows: Now to believe on Christ is more than an act of General Assent, it is to give up my Soul to him to save it, and thus to trust my self with him, to commit my self to him; and to renounce all things else is an act of the Will, and not barely of the Understanding in General Assent, as you may observe 1 *John* 5. 5, 10. compared together.

2. A Second Errour of these common Professours is, that when they endeavour to add Application to Faith, yet they take a Not Doubting for that Application, and exercise not their Souls at all unto positive acts of believing: Their Faith is a meer want of Doubts, not an application of Christ with Comfort. As they never doubt but that Christ is theirs, so they never have many thoughts about him as theirs, but do take it for granted, as a thing they never call in question, and yet it was never proved to them; but *Rom.* 4. 20. it is not only said, *That Abraham staggered not at the Promise*, but also, that *He gave glory to God by believing:* Not only by not questioning God's Power, by a careless kind of taking it for granted, but by exercising daily acts and thoughts of Faith on the Promise, he daily glorified God by acts of believing, which thoughts do glorifie God more than any thoughts else.

A Man possesseth not Christ by Faith as he doth Money in his Cupboard, or Evidences of Land that lye by him, which he takes for granted he hath, and yet perhaps never looks on them once in twelve a Month: No, Christ is as Meat that a Man feeds upon, chews, digests, and his Stomach works upon continually, and the Man lives upon him every day, and that is the Application of Faith, *John* 6. 53. and if other Bread be our daily food, then surely

urely Christ much more; and therefore answerably it is called *The life of Faith, The life I live is by the Faith on the Son of God*, Gal. 2. 20. Now Life is a Continuation of Action and Motion; and as the Heart is the Principle of Life, and always beats, and if it lies still a Man dies, such is Faith, it is not a sleeping thing, a not doubting simply that Christ is mine, but a continual active whetting my thoughts upon Christ as mine, or casting my self upon him to be mine, a living on him, and in him; but these Men live in a good Opinion of themselves, and of Christ's being theirs, and they are not sued nor troubled in it by Satan's Tentations, and no Doubts come to put them out of possession, and this they account Faith, and take it for granted they shall never be cast out.

3. Many in their Practise do make this Application of Faith to be a believing, and a Perswasion only, that there Estates are good, and so make Faith only a good Perswasion and Opinion of their present Condition; so as the Object, the *Terminus* of their Faith, is their own Estate, and not Christ and his Love; their Faith is not a good Opinion of him, or founded upon the daily thoughts they have of his Merit, Satisfaction, Mercy, Grace, Righteousness, *&c.* But their Faith is a good Opinion of themselves, arising out of the Self-flattery of their own Hearts, so as they honour not Christ in their thoughts so much as themselves; this is a judgment of Charity to themselves rather than Faith on Christ. I call it that Charitable Opinion which one Christian is bound to have of others, that they are the Children of God, and that their Estates are good, and that they are in Christ; now such a Charitable Opinion of themselves (whereby, as the Apostle says of the *Hebrews*, they are perswaded good things of themselves) is the only Faith of a great many Persons, but this is not to believe on Christ, but on themselves. And that their own Estates is indeed the Object thus of their Faith, is evident by this, That if any Man go about to discover their present Natural Condition (whilst they are without true Faith) not to be good, they presently fly out, and say, you would bring me to Unbelief and Dispair, (for an apprehension that their present Estates is good, is that, and all that which they account Faith) when as indeed those that seek their Good would but bring them from a false Belief of their Estates, and of themselves, to a good and a true belief in Christ, and upon God's Free grace, which are the prime Objects of Faith.

4. Some Men, if they can but get daily into their Hearts such kind of thoughts about Christ as they hear Believers are said to have, then they think they apply Christ indeed, when yet indeed they bring in as true a formality in the matter of believing as they do in matters of Duties, without real apprehensions of Christ, or without the Power of them on their Hearts, and without framing their Affections suitably to the things which they believe. They do but mumble over a few set Thoughts of Faith, as they do their Prayers, without communion with God; if they think over such and such thoughts of Faith towards Christ every day, (as *Papists* use to say over such and such Prayers every day) and can but force their guilty Hearts with any quietness to entertain such thoughts, and to let them have passage through them; and if they can but keep down Doubts, that they may not arise to interrupt them in such thoughts, then they verily think that they believe, when as yet these thoughts pass through them but as Drink doth throw Men in a Dropsie, they digest it not into Nourishment and Substance, but it runs through them, and leaves no strength, no vigour behind. Whereas to apply Christ, is not simply to take him into thy thoughts only, and think thus and thus barely of him, but to strike forth a Sprig or Fibre from every Faculty into him, to be rooted in him, to draw Nourishment from him, to digest him, to give up thy Soul to him, and to be one with him, *John* 6. 56.

5. A Fifth Error in the Faith of this kind of common Protestants is, That though they put some Trust and Confidence in Christ, and in their Opinions and Sayings, profess that they renounce all but Christ, yet still secretly their own Righteousness is the ground even of that their very Trust on Christ, and so they make themselves the Rock of that their trusting upon that only truly Rock Christ: Thus they use to think, that Christ will rather save them for the smallness of their sins, and good Dispositions, and so that in that respect they

Part II. are nearer to Christ than others. The young Man that came to Christ, came indeed, but encouraged by his having kept the Commandments from his youth. These Men stand as it were on two boughs, whereof the one is a rotten one, and so must needs fall and perish: One foot they have on Christ, but another upon themselves, on their own good Works, which though they trust not in under the Notion of *Merit*, (as the *Papists* hold) yet in a lower way they trust in them, as those which their Souls in their confidence put their weight most upon, and as those which commend them to God, and make them rather accepted by God; and so *They trust not perfectly on the Grace revealed by Christ*, 1 Pet. 1. 13. These use Christ and his Righteousness as many Ministers that are in suit for Livings do the King's Title, they procure that also to strengthen their own Title, which they have otherwise from their Patrons, but rely not chiefly on the King's, but to make all sure do take it in. Such is the case of these Men, their Souls have secretly recourse to their own goodness natural, more than unto Christ, although in the mean time they are found in their Opinions about Justification by Faith, and by Christ only: For look, as all Men by Nature are *Atheists* in Heart, *saying* therein, that *There is no God*, when yet their Opinions about God are right and good, so these Justitiaries are *Papists* in their hearts, and therein they practise this Popery, whilst they are Protestants in Judgment and Opinion in the point of Justification by Christ alone.

All these have had all this Application and Thoughts of Faith, without being humbled and emptied of themselves, so as it is but the Natural Opinion of themselves, which out of self (which was never yet thrust out of them) Men use to have of themselves; so as the Mind is full of it self, and Christ doth but swim upon the top of their Thoughts; they build Christ upon Sand, and digged not first into themselves to let him in as a Foundation, as he that built upon a Rock did, *Luke* 6. 48. he cast out all false Earth, and did let in a foundation: But Men though they build upon Christ, yet they lay him upon their own Earth undigged up at all, and so the Waves do easily come between their thoughts and Christ, and Temptations part them in the Issue, and overthrow all.

Secondly, I shall give some further Instances of Men something humbled for sin, and of the Mistakes that such are apt to fall into in the way of believing.

1. If Men come to be a little humbled, then they are apt to apply Christ too soon: If the Earth be scarr'd and raised a little, they let in Christ as a Foundation presently, when yet *all* the false Earth is not cast out: Self flattery helps them to receive the Word with Joy immediately, as the stony-ground did; or if they be prick'd a little, they apply the Plaister when the corrupt Matter is not let out, nor the Sore launch'd to the bottom, and so a slight apprehension of Christ skins over the Sore again, and the Core in it, and in the end it breaks out worse than ever. The Law is a School-Master to drive to Christ, but some run away from School too soon, and so want the grounds of Learning, and so come to nothing; when in the University, as I may allude, they never throughly parsed their former Estate by Nature, nor saw all the faults in it, and therefore all the Duties and Exercises they perform anew are false and improper; therefore he in *Luke 6.* is said not only to have digged, but to have *digged deep*: Now by this digging deep, or being humbled, I do not mean deep Terrors, (for it is not necessary that all Earth should be digged out with Pick-axes, God useth such Tools unto none but only hard Earth, but small Shovels and Spades may empty some) but so as Men must be throughly emptied by a spiritual Insight into their former Estates, and see to the bottom of the naughtiness of it, and their own unability to help themselves, e're the Rock Christ be laid.

2. A Second Errror of such, is, that the Ground of their applying and taking Christ, is an Encouragement from this, that they are not such great Sinners: And so though as they are sinners, they see that they have need of Christ, yet because they have not been so great sinners, they think they shall the sooner be received by him, and thus they are encouraged to believe: They think, because

because that they have fewer Debts, they shall the sooner be forgiven; whereas it is all one with God and Christ to justifie a small sinner and a great; and as the greatness of any Man's Sins averts not God a whit the more from justifying that Man, so the smallness of a Man's sins moves him not a whit the more to pardon a Man. Free-grace as it respects no good to allure it, (for it is free) so nor no evil to put it off from us, nor less Evil to incline it towards us. In this matter of Justification (it being freely by the Grace of God, *Rom.* 3. 23, 24.) *All* (says he) *come short and are alike*, there *is no difference* in this respect. As the distance between the Heavens and the Earth is such as Hills are not considerably nearer to the Heavens than Mole-hills, and the distance is so vast above both as the difference of Hills and Mole-hills holds no proportion, but is nothing, so it is in this case; for any Man therefore to think, that because he is a smaller sinner then others, he shall be the sooner accepted of God, is to derogate from Free-grace, and to build something on himself. But,

Thirdly, I shall give Instances in Men that have been more throughly humbled, and of the Errors they are liable unto.

1. When Men have been humbled, and terrified for sin by God's Wrath, and filled full of Disquietment, (which is counted by some the only deep Humiliation) then they rest in this, because they have been thus humbled, and so build not upon Christ, but upon their own sight of Sin and Misery: If indeed Man's Heart had this Rock in the Womb of it, (as the Earth hath other Rocks, so as it were but digging 'till you come at a Rock that is buried in it) if Men's Hearts had Christ under that false Earth, which were to be digged out, then indeed it were but digging, and so then afterwards building; but there is this difference, that as Christ must be laid into the Heart, and this after a digging out the false Earth, so the end of this emptying us by Humiliation is but to make room for Christ, the Heart being full afore of it self: So that after all, this *Rock must be brought in, and laid* (de Novo) *anew*, 1 Cor. 3. 11. Christ as a Foundation is said to be laid, not as growing there, and therefore after Men have digged, if then they let all alone, and say, they have been troubled for sin, and know the smart of it, and therefore Christ will save them, they build on Emptiness: This is as if Men should think the ground must needs be good, and seed must needs be sown in it, because it hath been broke up and plowed, when as many fallow Grounds are plowed. Because they have been under the School-master's Hand, therefore they think they are come to Christ, and must needs have Learning; when as many come up to the highest form at School, that are never sent to the University, or admitted into a Colledge, and many are soundly lashed, and yet get no Learning. Though none can be pardoned 'till they be condemned by the Law, yet many are condemned, and put into Stocks and Irons, that are never pardoned; these have a Promise, *Come to me ye that are weary and heavy laden*, and they make use of it as of a Promise speaking Ease to their very being weary, whereas it is but a Promise of Invitation unto such to come to Christ, so as without coming they shall never be eased. Ease lies not in being weary, but in coming to Christ, and yet many are heavy laden that come not to him, but would get Ease and Rest in and from this very thing, that they were once heavy laden.

2. If Men escape this Error, and do not rest in being humbled, but begin to build and fill up the Hole they digged, yet they lay not in the first place Christ as their Foundation, they lay not in Christ nor God's rich Mercy in him as the first thing to fill up their own Emptiness, but they fill up the Hole they have digged with New Earth of their own New Obedience and Reformation, Duties and Performances, and build upon them, what in Humiliation was discovered amiss, that they endeavour to reform, and do begin to turn over a new leaf; the Sins which were set upon their Consciences they turn from, and mourn for, and then build their Faith on these Reformations, so leaving Christ out, and not laying the strong Rock, the everlasting Foundation of God's rich Mercy in him alone, so as their Humiliation hath set them a work to get Grace and Reformation, but not to get Christ, and to make him their aim, and him in the first and chief place, which yet was *Paul's* Aim, *Phil.* 3. 8. (which place

Part II. I delight often to urge) *That I may win Christ*; where Christ is made the aim, (as you see) and God's free Mercy in him the aim of Faith. And this is another Error and Out-let at which Men leave the way of Faith quite, which Error some that have Faith begun are apt to run into: And though at first they were set in the right way, yet go out, and leave aiming at Christ, and exercising Faith on him, and fall a resting in reforming. These, as the *Colossians*, are diverted from Christ to the Rudiments of their own Hearts. This is the way of Reason indeed, which thinks doing the contrary sufficient to make amends for the former Miscarriages: But this is not a way of Faith, and this is as rank Popery (though finer) as any is at *Rome*, and yet secretly practised in Mens Hearts.

3. When Men hear of Christ as a Mark set up, and that him they must have: And so now they have set Christ up as their aim, and look to the having him alone, because they hear this is Necessary to Salvation; yet then this Error is apt to fall on them, and prevent them of true Faith, if Christ rectifie it not, that they think to *Get him by their own Endeavours*; and that secret Conceit carrying them on in all, undermines Faith as well as the former; for they think to make out Christ, and work out a Faith out of themselves, by their own Endeavours for time to come. The former were diverted from Christ unto their own New acquired Righteousness and Obedience, and fell a doting upon that, but these have Christ in their Eye, and do pursue after *him*, but yet their Hearts secretly make account to attain him through their own Endeavours. But the Soul must be emptied as well of all Conceits of its own Ability for time to come as of all Opinion of its own Righteousness past or present, or Christ doth not become all in all. As Men do derogate from Christ, and Free-grace that bestows him as a Gift, if they have an Eye to their own Graces and Obedience instead of him, so also if they have an Eye, or secret Confidence of their own Endeavours, thereby to attain him, Christ is not set up as yet, so as he must be in such a Heart. It is true, Men may and must endeavour after Faith, as *Heb.* 4. 11. *Let us endeavour to enter into that rest*; entring into rest being there put for believing, as appears *ver.* 3. yet we must use Endeavours but as Means, wherein Christ gives the Heart strength to believe, and conveys power to believe, and so to endeavour in a waiting wholly on Christ to have Faith given. So as Men must come to see their own utter unability to believe, and that as God finds them Christ, so he must give them Hands to take and receive him by. In *Rom.* 10. 6, 7. we have a Caveat against this Error; for speaking of the way of believing, and that Christ is to be believed, and confessed to be the only Saviour, yet since the Heart will be apt to say, *Who shall ascend up to Heaven*, to bring Christ down to me, therefore he there says, *Say not in thy Heart who shall ascend?* &c. The Heart is apt to be setting up Ladders of its own making, and to say in its self, I will go pray, and seek Christ, and so get him, but thou must to *Christ as near thee*, to give thee power.

4. When the Heart is humbled, and emptied of all Righteousness past, of all Reformations and Righteousness, and Endeavours to come, and knows that Christ bestows himself for none of those, but is wholly and absolutely free in it, yet when the Soul is thus left stript and naked, and no Righteousness, no Abilities of its own do encourage it, yet still the meer self-flattery in ones Spirit that springeth immediately from Self love, will be apt to step in, and help one to think, *That rather I than another shall have mercy*; that although God shews Mercy freely without respect to any thing within us, yet *I* (will the Heart be apt to think) *rather than another* shall find it, and God will have pitty on (me) rather than another: This same *self* will flatter one too much; which thought, though not seconded by any respect to any Righteousness, or any thing of a Man's own, you will find will arise from that very self-flattery in a Man, from which it is natural to a Man's Spirit to think well, and hope well of a Man's self; even as *Peter* in another case said, *Though all others, yet not I.* There is a Natural Self-confidence arising out of that great Love which we bear to our selves, that will offer its help to form up our Faith for us. As *Haman* thought, *I am the man the King will honour*; so the Heart is apt to think, *I am the man God will save*; and this not so much

much from any Encouragement or drawing of the Heart by God, but out of the natural forwardness to think well of our selves. Labour therefore to find your Encouragement to believe to come from the consideration of what is in Christ, from his All-sufficiency, Free-grace and Love alluring you, and not from your own Hearts perswasion meerly; listen not to what self-flattery will say, but what Christ will speak in a Promise; and acknowledge in believing not only *The freeness of Grace*, (that it respects no Qualification in any, and shews mercy for no Righteousness, Ability, *&c.*) but also the *Soveraignty of that Grace* shewn too towards those Persons whom it accepteth; see how that when all Persons are stript of all Qualifications, and are presented naked before God, and as devested of all Considerations of good or ill in them, that should move him for or against them; that besides this freedom in accepting without respect to such considerations, he sheweth a Soveraignty in his Gracious Will, in accepting this Man rather than that, and which he exerciseth in his accepting you. And he thoughts that this depends thus upon the mere Soveraignty of God, will keep down and poise this same (self,) which else will be apt to encourage ones Heart above what it should; the thought of that Soveraignty will lay thee yet lower, and dash all self-flattering Conceits that would strike in to make out a Faith, and give a Hope: It will make thee to see, that any one is as fair for it as thou, and that God out of a Soveraignty accepteth or refuseth, and that so it falleth as his Will pitcheth; only withall thou may'st think, that thou art as fair for it as any other, even in that respect, and so there is no cause of Discouragement. Do but only make the Scales even in thy Apprehensions and Hopes for Mercy, and let no Qualifications in thy self, nor no self-flattering Conceits of thy self cast the Ballance, but reduce thy Faith to a pure absolute dependance upon God's Will for thy acceptation, and so shalt thou find God from himself in the end secretly swaying thy Heart to rest on his Love, and to quiet thy Heart in so doing, and then shall thy Faith give him the whole, full and entire Honour, in accepting thee, and derogate nothing from him.

5. Many make a Promise the sole ground of their Faith, and look no farther than the Letter of it; and so as the *Jews* were deceived with the Letter of the of the Law, and saw not into the bottom of *Moses*'s Ministry, so some are deceived with the Letter of the Promises, and look not to Christ in them; they see not that he is the Jewel in the Casket, but rest upon the Superscription without, and look not to what is within; they have got some Promise or other, but they never regarded to believe on Christ in and by that Promise, who is the great Promise that is conveyed in every Promise; *In whom all the Promises are Yea and Amen*: They stick in the Letter, take the whole shell, but crack it not, whereas it is the Kernel within that is the Food of Faith. A Child hath more Wit than these Men, give him a Nut, and he will desire you to crack it, for there is a Kernel in it that he desires, or else he will bid you take it again: So says Faith, when it comes to a Promise, give me Christ in it, or I will have nothing.

6. Men seeking Christ, and finding some sweetness, their Faith rests in that, and looks not out still for Christ himself and Union and Communion with his Person; a Present is sent, they rejoyce in that, and they let the Man that it came from go, *Rom.* 5. 1. One fruit of Faith is having Peace with God; *And not only so, but to joy in God through Christ*, ver. 11. Mark it, it is not only a *Joy from God*, but *in God through Christ*. Take heed then of resting in Joy infused, when God and Christ are not the immediate Object of thy Joy, and Communion with them in believing the chief thing desired by thee.

7. Men hearing that it is Christ's Righteousness imputed by Faith must save us, they seek for the Righteousness of Christ as it were severed from himself, and the aim of their Faith is carried forth after his Righteousness, without seeking him first or chiefly, but seeking his Righteousness primarily, to be theirs at God's hand; as if the suing for the Money which this Surety of ours paid for us, and that God should accept it for us, were all: No, the Surety himself must be ours first, and that is the right way of Faith, to seek Christ first, and then to apply his Righteousness for Pardon. That was *Paul*'s Method, first to be found in him, then his next thought was of not having his own Righteousness, but his, *Phil.* 3. 8, 9.

Though

Part II. Though this I muſt add, that it is not Chriſt ſimply or abſtractly, but Chriſt concretely conſidered, with his Righteouſneſs, as he is a Saviour and Mediatour, and as given for the remiſſion of Sins, who is the Object of Faith, and which the Believer hath in his Eye: For he is firſt egg'd forward on to lay hold on Chriſt by the ſight of ſin, and as ſeeing Righteouſneſs in Chriſt that will pardon, yet ſo as he is to believe *On him* to that end, that *In his Name he may receive remiſſion of Sins*, Acts 10. 43. and ſo as to believe upon himſelf firſt, and in believing to cloſe with his Perſon firſt.

8. Many Men take Chriſt with his Benefits, but yet chiefly for his Benefits, and that is as bad as the former: This is to marry him for his Portion. As you are not to ſever it from himſelf, ſo nor to deſire him only for it, for you hear both muſt go together, firſt him, then his Righteouſneſs: That is *Paul's* Method, *Phil.* 3. 8, 9. *That I may win Chriſt*, him firſt; then follows, *Not having mine own Righteouſneſs, but the Righteouſneſs of God by Faith*; that is, Chriſt's Righteouſneſs imputed by God unto Faith.

OF THE

OBJECT and ACTS OF Justifying Faith.

PART II.

Of the Acts of Faith.

BOOK II.

Of Faith of Assurance. That all Justifying Faith is not Assurance of our Personal Interest in Christ. That yet Assurance of Salvation may be obtained. How Assurance is caus'd by Three Witnesses in Heaven, and Three on Earth, and of the Difference of their Testimony. The Discoveries and Manifestations which Christ makes of himself to the Soul. Of Joy in the Holy Ghost. Directions unto the Faith of such who want Assurance how to take in, and to make use of God's Eternal, Electing Love, in believing with Comfort.

CHAP. I.

That Justifying Faith is not Assurance of our Personal Interest in Christ, though it be an Assurance of the truth of the Promise.

1 JOHN V. 12.

He that hath the Son hath Life, and he that hath not the Son hath not Life.

THE First Conclusion we will begin with and premise as a Foundation to what follows, is, that that Act of Faith which justifies a Sinner, is distinct from knowing he hath Eternal Life, and may therefore be without it, because it doth not necessarily contain prevailing Assurance in it. By prevailing Assurance I mean, such an Assurance as overpowereth Doubts and Sense to the contrary, so as in the Believer's Knowledge he is able to say, Christ is is mine, and my Sins are forgiven; such an Assurance whereby a Man is a Conqueror, as *Paul* speaks, *Rom.* 8. 37.

Part II. 8. 37. when he expresseth such strong Assurance. And this I first lay down not only for more clear and orderly proceeding in this Point, but also thereby to allay the Cavils and Exceptions which Men have against the Doctrine of Assurance. When it is affirmed, that none are in the Estate of Grace, and true Believers, but only those who are, or have been undoubtedly assured by an overpowering Light of the Spirit in their own sense, that Christ is theirs, and that their sins are forgiven them; when it is asserted, that then, and not till then they did begin to believe, by such an Assertion the Generation of many just ones is condemned, whose Faith either thorough weakness never came to such a growth of Perswasion, or thorough Temptations and Prevalence of Fears and Doubts are interrupted in it, who yet cleave to Christ with full purpose of Heart, and walk obediently towards him in all their Ways. And indeed, if that were the meaning when Assurance is spoken for, that it were made the Essential Act of Faith whereby a Believer is justified, there were just cause for many and great Exceptions. And yet my Scope further herein is, not to encourage any to rest in such a Faith, without such Assurance, and content themselves with it, as many do, making a bad use of such a Doctrine, and so neglect seeking for a further Work of Assurance to be super-added: No, the next Conclusions shall manifest the contrary; but the intent of this present Conclusion is, to keep such as have their Hearts drawn to Christ, and upheld to believe, (though without such prevailing Assurance) from such discouraging thoughts, as therefore to think their Estates accursed, and that they cannot be in the Estate of Grace, because they want such a Work: For if Faith may be without it, then such Souls that do entertain such thoughts do entertain an Untruth, and that against their own Souls, and the Work of God in them, and make him a Lyar. And also my End is to keep off those that have assurance super-added to Faith, from censuring the present Condition of many of their Brethren, as if they were without Grace, because they want such Assurance.

First, I will therefore first prove, That true Faith may be without such Assurance.

1. Because Justification and Blessedness hath been pronounced to such a Condition as hath wanted this Assurance, and this by Christ himself, who is to judge at the latter day who are in the Estate of Grace and who are not: Thus *Mat.* 5. 3. (in the first Sermon, whereof we have the Notes of Blessed Persons recorded) he pronounceth a blessedness to the poor in Spirit, to the meek, to those that mourn, to those that hunger and thirst after Righteousness, all which Estates want assurance: Now Christ's Scope was not to draw those in which such Dispositions were, to begin now to believe, for that were to found Faith upon Conditions; but his Scope is to shew that such have true Faith begun. Poverty of Spirit is when they apprehend themselves poor and empty, it is not being spiritually poor, (for then they could not be pronounced blessed) but an apprehension of their Condition as such, (opposite to the apprehension the Church of *Laodicea* had of themselves, who thought themselves rich, and that they had need of nothing) and so implys want of Assurance. So mourning under the sense of their Sin and Misery implys wanting Comfort, as the Promise that they shall be comforted implys, which Comfort assurance brings always with it, and is indeed the thing promised to these, afterwards to be given them: So hungring after Righteousness implys emptiness, and the thing promised is fullness, so as all these want assurance, and all these Christ pronounceth blessed, and none are or can be called blessed, but such whose sins are at the present forgiven; as *Paul* after him defines the blessedness the Scripture speaks of to consist in this, *Rom.* 4. 6, 7. *David describeth the blessedness of the Man unto whom God imputeth Righteousness*; he gives a Description, a Definition of it, that it lyes in this, *Blessed are those whose Iniquities are forgiven, whose Sins are covered*: If blessedness then lies herein, then surely the Estate of those Persons was such as their sins were forgiven, and yet they wanted assurance, and yet not Faith, for a Man is justified only thereby, *Rom.* 4. 5. *To him that believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his Faith is counted for Righteousness*: Therefore these that were poor spirit, that mourned, that hungred and thirsted after Righteousness, had Faith lay at the bottom, as is necessarily to be supposed. For a Man never comes to be truly

uly poor in spirit, till he sees the Riches that are in Christ and in Free grace; or it is Christ's fullness, and the sight of it, that empties a Man more than all he legal sight of his Insufficiency and Misery; and yet the Believer in the sight of all this fullness still thinks himself therefore deeply poor, (wanting Assurance) or tho' he admires that there should be such Riches, yet he hath no share in them in his sense yet, and no power to lay hold on them. Faith in its first act discovers at once with one Eye a Man to be poor and ungodly, and with the other looks up to Christ's Riches, and to him that justifies the ungodly, *Rom.* 4. 5. So hungering and thirsting after Christ's Righteousness (to instance in no more) both imply Faith as the bottom of it; for none can so hunger truly, but he that sees the true worth and preciousness of Christ; *Unto them that believe only Christ is precious*, 1 Pet. 2. 7. and Christ is precious not out of Self-love only, but out of an Apprehension of the suitableness and fitness of all that is in him for them, for true hunger also implys that: What makes the Stomach hunger after things but suitableness? Thus the Soul hath an instinct to Christ as is Meat and Nourishment, and that supposeth Faith also, (though Assurance be the eating of him with Comfort and filling Contentment) and as hunger goes afore eating, so Faith goes afore Assurance. Now if such Souls Christ pronounced blessed here, surely if they should dye in this condition, at the latter day he would not go back from his Word, but he would say, *Come ye blessed also.* Neither is their Blessedness pronounced to a future Condition to come, which these Dispositions made way for, for (besides what is before said) Christ in the very Words tells us, he speaks it of their present condition, *Theirs is the Kingdom of God:* This he spake to such as *John*'s Ministry had converted, and that truly, who (as it is in *Acts* 19. 4.) did teach the People not Humiliation only, but Faith also, saying to the People, that *They should believe on Jesus Christ.* And Christ he comes after to preach assurance to such, and to tell them, that their sins were forgiven them. As a farther Confirmation, I will add to this an instance or two.

1. Let us look on the poor *Publican*, and let us consider his Estate, which Christ there approves, and we shall find it to have Faith in it, and yet not Assurance, *Luke* 18. the Pharisee he had an assurance that his Estate was good, built upon himself; for *ver.* 9. Christ's Scope was to discover their presumption that trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and to this end tells them of a poor Publican that indeed comes into God's Presence, but it is at a distance; *He stood afar off:* Had he had assurance, it would have encouraged him to have drawn near with boldness, *Heb.* 10. 22. *Let us draw near with full assurance of Faith.* But on the contrary, he was so much cast down with shame, that he could not lift up his Eyes to Heaven, and yet he lifts up an eye of Faith; *Lord be merciful to me a sinner:* He flies out of himself, and hath recourse to God's Mercy, which (by all his Carriage, and the Opposition made) he had no assurance of. The presumptuous Pharisee could do nothing but give thanks, his assurance was so great. This Man in an humble Prayer beggs that Mercy that he yet wanted in his own sense, and yet Christ pronounceth the state of this Man justified, *ver.* 14. *I tell you*, (saith Christ) (and I promise you I will believe him) *that this Man went to his House justified, rather than the other:* He was then certainly justified; and therefore out of his Example he makes this Promise to such as are truly in his Condition, *That they shall be exalted*, in the same verse.

2. That also of the Woman of *Canaan*, to whom Christ would give no outward Word of Encouragement, who yet had true Faith, which Christ extraordinarily commends, *Mat.* 15. 22, to 26.

Besides these Instances, I will give you Demonstrations of it, and then the Reasons and Grounds of it.

1. The first Demonstration is drawn from the state of Desertion, wherein a true Believer may want Assurance, when yet he continues to believe; *For the just live by faith*, Hab. 2. 4. Therefore as when the Heart ceaseth beating, the Man dies for it, so when Faith ceaseth exercising it self, the Believer would dye. And again, That which is a true act of Faith to continue our Union with Christ, may be a true act to begin that Union: Now it is not Assurance con-

Part II. tinues our Union and being in the estate of Grace, therefore it doth not necessarily begin it. And now then if in the course of a Christian's Life he be brought to live by Faith without Assurance, then much more may he begin to live by it, for at the beginning it may be suposed weakest; as a Man that hath had Experience he hath lived may be brought into a swound, when he doth not perceive himself to live, or into a Frenzy, so as he doth think himself dead, and to live amongst Ghosts, (as some have done) so much more may a Child that is in the Womb live and not know it. Thus *Heman* likewise as to his spiritual state thought himself (thorough a Frenzy) a Man dead, and to be free among the dead, and to be one whom God had cut off, and remembered no more, *Psal.* 88. 5. and from whom God did not only hide his Face in regard of the light of his Countenance, (which some have said is the only desertion can befall a Christian, in which still he retains his Assurance, and doubts not but that God still is his God, though he hides his face) but had cast him off, ver. 14. he says, he was one cut off by his Hand; and yet when *Heman* had such desperate thoughts prevailing over Assurance, he had Faith, and expresseth it in ver. 1. *O Lord God of my Salvation, I have cryed night and day afore thee*: Mark it, and you will find that it is just the voice of Faith, wanting Assurance: He cannot call him his God; he says not, *My God, my God*, as Christ could, when he wanted the light of God's Countenance, (assurance of Faith remaining in him when the Comfort of Faith was wanting) but yet *Heman* doth look upon God as the God of his Salvation, that is, as that God who must save him, and in whom his Salvation (if ever he be saved) lies, from whom he looks for Salvation, and to whom he hath recourse for it, tho' he could not say, God is my Salvation: Yea, and thus it had been with him from his youth, ver. 15. either he had once Assurance, and now had lost it, or from his youth and first beginning had ever wanted it; and if it was either of the two, the Argument holds good to prove Faith not to be Assurance, for still he hath recourse to God by Faith in Prayer, and so had Faith in his Heart, when yet he was under Terrours and Appprehensions of God's casting him off. Why should I instance in *Job*, *David*, *Jonah*, and many more? I will only give that Direction in *Isa.* 50. 10. the Prophet having in the verses immediately afore expressed that triumphing assurance, *It is God that justifies me, who shall condemn?* Now, (saith he) if a Soul that fears God wants such a Light as comfortably enableth his Soul to say so, yet *Let him trust in the Name of the Lord.* You see then that he might exercise Faith in that condition: And to say the case of this Man the Prophet speaks off was not a State of Justification, is a gross absurdity; for the Prophet calls *God his God*; though the dejected Soul could not say so, yet the Prophet says so for him.

As for those that will say, that Faith is a triumphing, a prevailing Assurance, I would refer them but to ten or twenty years Experience, which may (if they be not the more wary) lamentably confute them; for they may fall into this Darkness as well as *Job* did, and then if they do so, what is the Faith they live by? It is that of *Heman*'s, a casting themselves upon the God of their Salvation, and cleaving to him; it is that of the Church in the like distress, *Lament.* 3. 24. *The Lord is my portion, says my Soul, therefore will I hope in him*: God did not aloud say to her Soul that he was her God, but he enabled her Soul to say that he was her Portion; that is, to pitch on him, and choose him, and rest in him, and betake her self to him, as all the Good and Portion she ever looks for, which act of Recumbency afforded Hope as the consequent of it. Faith notes out a betaking a Man's self to God, a choice of him as a Man's portion, as one all the Good I look for lyes in, and therefore I will hope in him, for Help is to be had only in him, and from him, and I will do any thing that there may be hope for me. Now if sometimes those who have Assurance are brought to this Faith, then surely it is good Faith; and if it be good Faith after assurance, then it may be so before; and yet to this one that hath had assurance may be brought.

2. That there may be true Faith without Assurance, is evident from this, that if Doubting be a Corruption, as you will easily grant it is, then as all other Corruptions may prevail against the Spirit, and other Graces, so may doubting prevail

prevail against assurance of Faith, and there is no more Priviledge of Freedom promised from the one than the other. If *David* may fall into a gross sin, and Murther and Adultery may prevail, I know not but that Doubting may prevail too: For Believers are perfectly freed from the prevailing of no sin but that against the Holy Ghost; and if the power of sin may prevail against Grace in other Faculties, I know not but the guilt of Sin may prevail against Assurance in the Conscience also. And further, I am sure, that though the Holy Ghost, *the Witness*, be God, yet the Light he witnesseth by is but a *Creature*, a *Beam*, a *Voice*, a *Saying* to a Man's Soul, *Thy sins are forgiven*; and therefore as other prevailing workings may be interrupted, so may that also, and then what Faith have Men recourse unto but such as is a casting a Man's self on Free-grace, that Faith which stood them in stead at first? It is not the remembrance of his former Assurance will uphold a Man, for he may grow blind, and forget he was purged from his old sins, 2 *Pet.* 1. 9. He speaks of Assurance in that and the following verses. Assurance depends on strict and holy walking, and so may be interrupted by our Remissness and Negligence.

3. That true Faith may be where prevailing Assurance is not, appears by this, That the Sense of Belief of General Principles and Foundations of Faith may be over-clouded and prevailed against by Temptations to the contrary, and by the Atheism of a Man's Heart, so that a poor Believer shall say, I Doubt whether there be a God or no, whether the Scriptures be true or no, I cannot find I believe the Truth of the Promises. Thus the Natural Atheism of the Heart may overflow, and seem to conquer this Faith, that there is a God, and yet then the Soul believes strongly at the same time that there is a God, and it appears in its Actions, though not in its Sense and Light, for the Soul fears this God in all its Ways and Walks, as believing this Truth. Hence I argue, that if Faith in the General may be overpowred in Sense and inward Light, when yet a Man truly believes, then much more may the particular Perswasion of a Man's being in the Estate of Grace (which is but a deduction out of those general Principles) be in a Man's sense prevailed against by doubting, when yet secretly he doth most truly believe. The Apostles, when Christ was dead and crucified, did almost begin to call in question the general Principles of Faith; they were much staggered in them, as appears from that Speech, *Luke* 24. 21. *We trusted*, (said they) *it had been he should have redeemed Israel, and it is now the third day when he promised to rise, and yet we see him not.* His Sufferings staggered their Faith, and therefore *ver.* 25. he calls them *Slow of heart to believe what the Prophets had written*; and yet then they did secretly believe, and had recourse to the Sepulchre, and an Eye what should become of him. Thus *Thomas* also would not believe the Resurrection of Christ, (a main Article) unless he saw him. Now if the Faith in the Principles may be in the Heart, and yet be prevailed against by Doubting, then much more the particular Conclusions derived thence to our selves, which are at no time so fully assented to as the other, and yet Faith must then be in the Heart, for a Man dies else. If the main Root and Stock may seem dead, much more the Branches and the Buds.

4. Wicked Men are not immediately bound to have Assurance, and therefore it is not the Essential Act wherein Faith consists: They are condemned, you know, for not believing, now if the first act of Faith commanded were to believe that Christ is mine, and that my sins are forgiven, how could a Man in the state of Nature be bound to it? For such an assurance of Christ's being his, is not a Truth in the state wherein he stands, but yet he is every hour bound to come to Christ as the Fountain of Life, and to cast himself on him for his Pardon, and to choose him as that means appointed by God for remission; for Christ blames the *Pharisees* that they did not do so, *John* 5. 40. *Ye will not come to me, that ye might have Life.* Therein therefore lies the Act of Faith which justifies.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

The Reasons why there may be true Justifying Faith in a Man, and yet he want Assurance.

AS I have given Arguments to prove that all true Faith is not Assurance, I shall now give the Reasons, Why there may be true Faith in a Man who yet wants such Assurance.

1. Those Essential Acts that are attributed to Faith, and whereby it is expressed, fall short of expressing assurance in a Believer's sense. Faith is expressed by seeing Christ, and his Worth and Excellency, *John* 6. 40. by looking on him as they in the Wilderness did on the Brazen Serpent: Not as that which had already healed them, but looking on it as the means appointed to Cure them, and that only. So also Faith is express'd by coming to him, which implies not so much a Perswasion that a Man's Sins are forgiven by God, as having recourse to him to forgive them, as a flying to him that is gracious, and chosen by God on purpose; *As a coming unto him as unto a lively stone, chosen of God*, 1 Pet. 2. 4. and so *John* 5. 40. they are blamed for not coming to him that they might have Life; and because such may truly come, who yet in their own sense may fear whether he will receive them, and do them good, therefore Christ assures such, *John* 6. 37. *He that comes to me I will in no wise cast out.* Christ speaks it to assure such as do come, who though they come, yet wanted this Perswasion in their own sense. To go up to Christ for help is to trust or believe on him, as to go down to *Egypt* for help is called a trusting on that Nation, *Isa.* 31. 1. This coming argues a choosing him, a betaking a Man's self to him. Again, that act of trusting on him (as there in *Isa.* 50. 10. trusting on the Name of the Lord is commanded, when Light is wanting) doth not necessarily imply or require a prevailing assurance that God is my God, and that my Sins are pardoned by him, but there may appear a great trust in the want of the Sense of this: As for Example, then a Traytor trusts a King, when upon a Proclamation of Pardon indefinite he comes in, and lays down his Weapons, and refers himself to him; when he leaves all his hopes among the Rebels, and puts his Life, his Service, and all into his hands; *If there may be any hope*; as the Church in the *Lamentations* says, *Lam.* 3. 29. such a trust was in *Job*; *I will trust him though he kill me*, Job 13. 15. when yet God fought as an Enemy against him. For trusting hath two several significations with it, the one intimates a quiet security that the Party that is trusted will do such or such a thing, as when a Man says, I trust and am perswaded he will do such a thing for me; the other Signification intimates, that upon an high Esteem of a Man's Goodness, Faithfulness, Ingenuity, and Indefinite Expression of himself, and Carriage to others, a Man puts over all to him, and commits himself, his cause, and all upon his good Will and Grace, to obtain his Suit, and this relyance is then accounted the greatest trust, when the Man cannot say he hath a particlar assurance from him in whom he confides: Thus says the Psalmist, *Psa.* 10. *The poor leaves himself with thee*; Psal. 10. 14. he rolls himself on God, *Psa.* 37. 7. which in *verse* 3. is expressed by trusting.

Again, Waiting is another act of Faith, which implys a looking for help from Christ, a waiting for Pardon from him, not an assurance of Pardon already attained. Waiting is an act of Faith, whereby a Man renounceth all vain hopes and helps, and betakes himself wholly to Christ, and continues to look for help from him, and none else; and this act doth not reach so far as to Assurance in Sense, for Assurance is the thing waited for, and yet this waiting is Faith. He that made the 130*th. Psalm* was a Believer, being a Pen-man of Holy Writ, and it is likely to be *David* himself, but whosoever he was, he was then in a sense of the want of forgiveness, *ver.* 1. he says, he was in *Depths*; and what Depths? it appears by the 3d. and 4th. *verses*, that it was the want of forgiveness that troubled him; for he pleads, *If thou markest iniquity, who shall stand?* and, *There is forgiveness with thee*: In this case he could not say his sins were forgiven him; Nay, he felt in sense that God retained them, and marked them, and set them on up-

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on his Conscience, and therefore that which in this Case he builds his Faith upon is this, *Forgiveness is with thee*; it is there to be had, and answerably an act of waiting suitable to that Estate is put forth, a waiting for the Lord, *ver.* 5. and, *In his Word* (that general Promise of pardoning Sinners) *do I hope.* Book I.

2. We have another Reason why Faith may be without assurance, if we consider the main Object of Faith, which first, and primarily, and adequately in the first act of it is here in the Name of Christ, *John* 1. 12. that is, himself, his Person. The Object of Faith is not so much this Proposition, *That Christ is mine*, (that is an axiome) but Christ himself, and therefore Faith is still expressed by believing on him, and receiving him, *John* 1. 12. and the Reason is, because Faith is that which compleats the Union betwixt Christ and me: Now the things united are his Person and my Soul, and that which makes the Union is my cleaving to him as my chiefest good, and giving my self up to him, and joining my self to him, consenting to be his, and taking him to be mine, and not this Proposition, that my Sins are forgiven, though I acknowledge forgiveness of sins is that which my Faith also aims at in him. But further consider,

First, That Christ, and Christ alone, is the first Promise, and the great Promise that Faith looks at, and that Justification and Salvation, and the Promises of all a Man's priviledges he hath, or is to have by Christ, are secondary, and therefore to be believed in the second place, and are made in Christ, and not to Men 'till they are in Christ, for all Promises are Yea and Amen in him, and is made all in all to us. So as e're any Man can believe his sins are forgiven, or look upon any Priviledge which is to be had by Christ as his own, he must first be united to Christ, and Christ must be made his; there must be an act of Faith closing with his Person, consenting to be his, and receiving him as indefinitely offered, to be his, (if he will take him) and then, and not before, can any Man come to believe he hath the pardon of his Sins, or that he shall have Glory, and be saved. These Secondary Promises they are the Object for Assurance to work upon, but the Person of Christ is the Object of Faith, which Faith fixeth on, and the Believer first comes unto Christ, and takes him, and therefore assurance of Justification and Salvation must necessarily come in after believing on the Person of Christ. Now Christ who is the great Promise is but indefinitely offered, (though that Offer indefinite is made known to all) therefore answerably 'tis not required that the act of Faith should be assurance; but the Promise of Justification and Glory, *&c.* are determined, and made definite to them that are Believers, *&c.* (and accordingly they still run in that strain) and therefore to believe them requires assurance. And then,

Secondly, The Assurance that Christ's Person is mine, is not the first Object of the first act of Faith, for he is not mine 'till I have taken him, then he becomes mine, according to the Rules of the Word: This indeed the Heart may have (and hath) a secret hint of, of especial Good will in God and Christ, in the offer of himself to a poor Soul, conveyed thorough the indefinite Promise: The Believing Soul doth think that God means Christ for him, and designs Christ to him, but this is not assurance, for he cannot say that Christ is his 'till he hath taken him; it is the taking a Gift makes it the Man's who takes it, and not the offer of it: So that till out of such a hint conveyed thorough the indefinite Promise a Man hath taken Christ, there is no room for triumphing Assurance, for a Man to say that Christ is his. Again,

Thirdly, If we consider in what Faculty Faith is said principly to reside, it will appear, that the main act of Faith is not Assurance: It principally is seated in the Will, for the Consent of that, and the knitting of that to Christ makes the Union, as consent in Marriage doth; therefore believing is called receiving him, *John* 12. 1. and coming to Christ, and being drawn to him, is the Phrase by which it is expressed, and that principally is of the Will. Now if the main act of Faith were an assenting to an over-powring Light that Christ is mine, and a setting it down that my Sins are pardoned, then the main act that made the Union were in the Understanding; but now, that first Work upon the Understanding is expressed by seeing him, but not by seeing him at first to be

mine,

Part II. mine; so Babes are said to know the Father, 1 *John* 2. 13. but not to know that he is their Father. When Men assent not to the worth that is in Christ, (tho' Ignorance whereof is the ground of Mens refusal of him) then it is that they make God a Lyar: But to close with Christ's Person as tendred to me, that is the main act of Faith. And it should be granted, that by drawing, *John* 6. 44. is meant a drawing my Understanding to assent that Christ is mine, yet a drawing of the Will is mainly intended.

Fourthly, Hence therefore I argue in the fourth place, That Assurance comes in but to confirm and seal to what pure Faith hath done, and therefore follows upon Faith, and so all Expressions that express assurance imply: As when it is called establishing or confirming, sealing and giving an Earnest, and a Witnessing, all these suppose an act of Faith already passed, which estates us into Christ and Salvation, to which assurance comes in as a confirmation: For an Earnest supposeth first a Bargain made, which that confirms, and a Witness supposeth some Act passed, a Deed made, and then there is place for a Witness, and so a Seal comes in after the Deed is drawn and concluded, to add a confirmation, so that the first act of Faith doth not include prevaling assurance in it, but after Men believe then comes in sealing, *Eph.* 1. 13. *After ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of Promise:* And therefore the Sacraments of the Lords-Supper and Baptism, which are Seals and Instruments of assurance, are to be administred after a Man hath Faith, or is supposed to be in the state of Grace; *Let a Man examine himself, and so let him eat*, 1 Cor. 11. 28. They are not to begin Grace, but to confirm it; whereas were Faith Assurance they might begin it.

Add to this, *Fifthly*, That Assurance comes in as a Reward of Faith, as a Light superadded to Faith, that when a Man hath trusted God upon his bare Word, and a secret hint of a Promise, and hereby hath set to his Seal that God is true, and born the stress of many over-powering Doubts and Temptations, and yet cleaves to Christ, though not fully knowing in his sense Christ is his, then God sets to his Seal; therefore, says Christ, *Rev.* 2. 17. *To him that overcomes I will give to eat of the hidden Manna.* A Man's Faith must fight first, and have a Conquest, and then assurance is the Crown, the Triumph of Faith; but Faith must be tryed first, and what tries Faith more than Temptations, and Fears, and Doubts, and Reasonings against a Man's Estate? That triumphing assurance (*Rom.* 8. 37, 38. *We are more than Conquerors; and I am persuaded that nothing shall separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus*) comes after a Tryal, as none are crowned till they have striven, and therefore Establishment comes after Suffering, so 1 *Pet.* 5. 10. *After ye have suffer'd a while, establish, strengthen, settle you:* This putting into joint and rooting is after suffering; if they should have had it before, he would have prayed absolutely for it; and this the Apostle also imports in 1 *Pet.* 1. 7, 8. in speaking of the joy of believing, (believing in Christ ye rejoyce with joy unspeakable and glorious, receiving the end of your Faith, the salvation of of your Souls;) the Context argues, that this joy unspeakable and glorious, which thus accompanieth triumphing assurance, is called receiving Salvation, and the end of Faith, and the reward of Faith, which is tryed with manifold Temptations, *ver.* 7. and therefore 'tis called the earnest of Heaven, and God therefore dispenseth it voluntarily and freely.

Add to this, *Sixthly*, That that Light which causeth assurance of Faith is a distinct thing, and superadded to Faith; and the Scripture speaks of it as a thing distinct from Faith, (though it doth coalesce with it, and they both make one) and may be separately considered, and is called sense as so considered: For either it is by a reflex act upon Graces in a Man, and then 'tis Experience (as the Apostle calls it) which breeds this Hope, or by an immediate discovery of the Spirit with joy unspeakable, which hath Sense and Sight in it; and therefore *Job* though he believed afore, yet when this Light broke in afresh, *I heard of thee* (says he) *by the hearing of the Ear, but now mine Eyes have seen thee*, Job 42. 5. and therefore too *Isa.* 50. 18. Assurance (when it is spoken of in the distinction it hath from Faith) is called Light, and the want of it Darkness; in which Darkness yet the Light of Faith shines, but so as comparatively with that Light which comes in with Assurance the Soul is said to be in Darkness; and to walk by Faith,

Faith, and not by Sight: Though I confess even the light of Assurance is not sight compared with the sight in Heaven, when we shall see Christ as he is, 1 *Pet.* 1. 8. compared with 1 *John* 3. 2. yet comparatively to naked Faith, and the ordinary Light that Faith hath, it may be called sight and sense; so as I may say to one that believes, having strong Sights and Lights of God daily, as Christ said unto *Thomas*, *Thou hast seen and believed*, John 20. 29. but the other believes though he sees not. Book II.

I will now shew how in such acts of Faith as these, all the main Ends of Faith are and may be attained and accomplish'd, by indefinite acts of Recumbency and Trusting on God, though wanting Assurance: As for Instance,

First, The first main End of Faith is to glorifie God's free and rich Grace, and Christ, and to attribute all to them in point of Justification and Salvation, and to magnifie and set them up alone in my Heart; that is it for which *Abraham*'s Faith is commended, *Rom.* 4. 20. *He was strong in Faith, and gave Glory to God*: Now I acknowledge that when Assurance comes, it enableth the Heart many ways to glorifie God more than meer naked Faith, or casting a Man's self upon Christ doth; for it hath all the other hath, and more; and besides, it causeth the heart to be more thankfull, and more fruitfully and chearfully obedient; it perfects Love, opens and gives vent to a new stream of Godly Sorrow, adds new Motives, enlargeth and encourageth the Heart in Prayer, winds up all Graces to a new and higher Key and Strain, causeth a Spring-tide of all; yet so as God is, and may be as truly, and in as right a way glorified by those acts of Faith in a state of meer Recumbency as by the other; though I do not say so amply, and with so large a Revenue as when Assurance comes. Now a Man doth rightly glorifie God's rich Grace, and Christ, by two things: *First*, When the Heart attributes all that wholly and fully unto Christ, and God's Grace, which God in the Scripture ascribes to them in point of Salvation: And, *Secondly*, When the Heart is bowed in all the Carriages, and Dealings, and Practices of it, to demean it self accordingly, *viz.* In a word, to give unto God that which is God's, as Christ says in another case: Now both these a Soul that is as yet but hung upon Christ doth and may do, for that Soul in a spiritual manner sees the Riches, the fullness of Grace in Christ, adores, admires it, renounceth all vain hopes in all things else, resolves to have help no way else, robs and detracts nothing from Christ in the secret practices of the Heart, for it deals with nothing else but Christ for Salvation; the Soul hath, for what it apprehends to be in him, left all its own Righteousness, Parts, Abilities, Comfort in all Creatures, and accordingly walks every day: Only the Soul wants this prevailing Light, that this Grace and Christ is his, which when it comes, though it adds to his Comfort indeed, and so causeth him in a way of particular Thankfulness to glorifie this Grace in relation to himself, yet the Faith of Recumbence attributes as much to the Grace it self as the other of Assurance doth by way of praising, glorifying, and admiring it. And this Faith of Recumbence expresseth thus much by resting on Christ, parting with all for him, as well as the other glorifies him in other acts of rejoycing in him, &c. The Grace of Christ is as truly glorified by the one as by the other, only in a several way; the one honours it by acts of dependance upon it to be obtained, the other by way of thankfulness for it as already enjoyed. As the Saints under the Old Testament believed as truly on Christ, though yet to come, as we now on him though already come, and it was but a differing circumstance of Christ to come, and already come, made the difference, (and yet such a difference as thereby we receive more Grace and Comfort than they had;) so the Saints that want assurance of Christ being yet theirs, or his Benefits theirs, by depending on him that he may be theirs, and all his Benefits theirs, they glorifie him as truly as they that believe all his Benefits are theirs, and in present possession, (only I confess there is a new Edition of many Graces in a Man by the coming in of Assurance, there is much Grace and Comfort that follows;) as a Man may shew his true Love in admiration of the Worth, and Parts, and Faithfulness of one to whom he sues to be his Friend, and honours him as much

Part II. by acts of Observance to gain his Friendship, as he may do by acts of Requital when he is assured of his Love to him. It will I confess add much to the chearfulness of all he doth go about for him, when he knows him to be his Friend, but he honours him no less truly in the one than in the other; and these acts of Recumbency do change and purifie the Heart as truly as acts of assurance, and carry it on to Obedience; for not only the beholding Christ in his glorious Excellencies do change the Heart, 2 *Cor.* 3. 18. but the Expectation and Dependancy the Soul is put into, works an Holy Ingenuity: For God's Love, and so great a Favour out of free good-will in God being the aim, the Expectation of the Soul, that God would pardon his sin out of as great a Love as if Christ were yet to be given, how can he look for such Love at God's Hands, (and without it the Soul reckons it self undone) without answering God again with all the Love in his Heart? How can a Man profess that he expects such kindness at God's Hands, and be unkind to him? how can the Heart be able to *look God in the Face*, if it be so disingenuous? Can the Soul come to Christ to pardon sin through his Death, and live in it? Why Christ may and will say, how would you have me to pardon these Sins? Through thy death, Lord, thinks the Soul, and so expecteth; and how then canst thou find in thine heart to live in them? Now, though all these Effects are in a more direct way wrought by Faith of Assurance, yet they are as truly all wrought by Faith of Recumbency or Expectation, when it is in earnest. And let me add this, that in two respects the Soul in such a state honours God's Grace more:

See my Sermons on Friendship with God, out of *Jam.* 2. 23. the first Reason of the Doctrine. M. S.

1. It honours that Property and Attribute of Grace that it is free; for a Man in trusting God, when he knows not in his own sense that Grace is his, yet refers himself to it, and devolves himself on it, and doth all in dependance upon it, as much as one that is assured doth; and herein he gives a real acknowledgement of, and magnifies the Prerogative and Freedom of this Grace. And,

2. Though all the acts of Grace (as they are of themselves) are less and weaker that accompany such an Estate, than those that flow from assurance, which like the early and latter rain make the heart more fruitful, yet if you put upon these acts of recumbent Faith the relation of being trials, so they glorifie God more, and are more acceptable; for it is not simply acts of Faith, but the tryal of Faith which is found to *Honour and Glory*, 1 Pet. 1. 7. that is, to the Honour both of that Grace, and also of Christ who is the Object of it. Faith when it is tryed glorifieth God most in some regard: Now therefore to leave all Hopes and Comforts, and rest wholly on Christ for Life and Comfort, and to obey him, *&c.* when I know not that he is mine, though the acts of Grace be fewer, yet the trial is greater; as Mercies draw out Love more, yet Afflictions do try Love more, and therefore make it exceeding acceptable; so assurance draws Love out more, makes a Spring-tide of it, but a state of Recumbency tries it. A Servant that is in Health may do more work than one that is sick, and yet what a sick Servant doth is as much accepted, because it is a trial of his Faithfulness, though it be less.

Secondly, The second main End that Faith serves for, is to put Men into the Estate of Grace and Justification before God: It is that act upon which God pronounceth a Man justified, therefore we are said to be justified by Faith, and to have access into this Grace wherein we stand, *Rom.* 5. 1, 2. for though God loves a Man from all Eternity, yet he cannot save a Man, and pronounce his sins forgiven, according to his Rules in his Word, till an act of Faith hath passed, so as by reason of that act I am before God according to his revealed will in that Estate I was not in before; and so according to the Rules of his Word, (which is the Rule he will judge by) he can after that act pronounce a Man's sins forgiven, which before he could not, if he keeps to his Rules; as all other Estates are conveyed by some mutual act, so is the Estate of Grace. The main Intent then of this act of Faith being that God may justifie me, and that I may be saved, it is not therefore absolutely necessary to such an act that I should know I certainly do perform it, but it may suffice to do the deed, that God knows it; for real Justification, and to be in the state of Grace, and so accounted by God, is the main End of it.: And therefore

fore the Apostles though they knew the Father, and believed on him, *John* 14. 1, 7. yet they knew not that they did know the Father, *ver.* 8. It was necessary they should know the Father, and honour his Free-grace by believing on it, or they could not have been justified; but it was not necessary they should know this, for then they had not indeed been justified. That I should know I am justified is not necessary to God's justifying of me, but the intent of it is for my Comfort, that I may have Peace with God in my Conscience; *Therefore being justified by Faith,* (which is the prime act) *we have peace with God,* as the fruit of it, *Rom.* 5. 1. it tends to my Joy in believing, and that I may have strong Consolation. Now to the having a thing, it is not necessary that I know I have it, for a Man may have a thing and think he hath lost it; and a Man's Hand may be so numbed with holding a thing that he may not know that he holds it. As to a being in the Devil it is not necessary to know it, so nor to a being in Christ; God then hath chosen out such an act to justifie a Sinner as shall be common to all ages of Christians, that the least may not be excluded, such an act as is common to all Times and all Estates, this act is Faith of Recumbence; but Faith of assurance, knowing my self to be in Christ, and to be justified, could not have been such a common and constant act that justifies, unless we will say it cannot be prevailed upon by Doubts. Yea, I must be first justified by an act of Faith, resting on Christ for Justification, e're I can come to have assurance I am justified; for Faith at first looks at my Estate not as in God's Decree of Election, but as it is laid down in the rules of the Word, and according to the rules of the Word I am not in a state of Justification 'till I have believed on Christ for Justification, and on him that justifies the ungodly: And therefore in Scripture Men are said to believe that they may be justified, *Gal.* 2. 16. in that Text the Apostles themselves are said to do so. So then the first act of Faith is casting my self on Christ for Justification, and not believing that I am justified.

I come now to answer the Objections, the Answers to which afford New Reasons of the thing.

Object. 1. *If Faith be not an apprehension that Christ is mine, wherein then lies that special application and appropriation of Christ, and the promise which is made to be in Faith, and urged upon Believers?*

Answ. 1. I answer: *First,* We urge a special application as absolutely necessary, in opposition to the Papists Faith, who teach their Followers, that to believe only the general Truths, that there is a God, and that Christ hath died, and to believe as the Church believes, is true Faith; which we say may be in Devils, as *James* also affirms, *Jam.* 2. 19. But we say moreover, unless there be a further application, it is a vain Faith; but then understand rightly what that particular application is, namely, when my Heart is by the belief of the generals drawn in to Christ in particular, to rest on him for my own Salvation; when I assent not only as a Witness to a Will, but come in as a Party, as a Legatee, put in for a share, that Christ and all his Benefits may be mine, and so give my self up to him; when Special Mercy to me is the aim of my Faith: Here now is a true application and appropriation, for I rest not in a general assent, but my Faith joins my Heart to Christ, consents to take him as mine, and to be his, and the Scope of my cleaving to him is, that he may be mine. And this as it is more then *Papists* Faith, and is indeed the Life of Faith, so also is it less than assurance, which is rather a verbal challenging him as mine than a real appropriation. I apply Christ when I believe on him that I may be saved, as well as when I believe he is mine, and I shall be saved. In the Instance of the Man in the Gospel, that sold all he had to buy the Pearl, that Bargain of his made the Pearl his, and did appropriate it to him, for thereby he bought it; and it was not a Perswasion of its being his made it first his, but a selling all that it might be his, though that Perswasion came in afterwards.

Answ. 2. *Secondly,* For further clearing of this, I answer: You must know that there is a twofold Application, The one is real, which makes a thing mine; The other is axiomatical, whereby I say it is mine: Or, if you will, the one

Part II. is an apprehension of the Understanding, when I judge and discern, and can challenge this as mine: The other is in the Will, when I choose it for my Portion, cleave to it as mine, take it to be mine. Now the main and first act of Application of Faith lyes in the Will, for that is the Faculty that is drawn to Christ, whereby I come in particular to Christ, and join my self to him: It is therefore called receiving Christ, *John* 1. 12. and therefore Christ puts it upon their Will, *John* 5. 40. *Ye will not come to me that ye might have life.* As for Example, There is a double appropriation of Meat or Apparel, the one a challenging a lawful right, when I can say this Meat is mine, I have right to it, but the other is eating it, digesting it, and making it one flesh with me, and that is the true real application that appropriates it; and so for Cloaths, it may be insignificant to say they are mine, and belong to me, they may do so, and I never wear them, but the true appropriation of them is to put them on, and wear them: So in Medicines, to apply them to the Soar for Cure, to bring the Salves and the Flesh together, that is the real proper application of them. Thus it is in Faith also, the cleaving to Christ in my Will, the hungering after him, and digesting him, the putting him on, the laying my Soul to him, this is the proper real application of him, this is an act of the Will; but to apprehend he is mine, and so to challenge a right in him, that is but an axiomatical application, an act of the Understanding, though where it is in truth it encreaseth that real application, and draws the Will more unto Christ. Now if the main application of Faith lay in believing that Christ is mine, then it were mainly an act of the Understanding, and a Proposition were the chief Object of it, and not Christ's Person; and that drawing spoken of *John* 6. 44. were specially drawing the Understanding to assent, whereas it lyes mainly in drawing my Will to him, to choose him to be mine.

Object. 2. *But you will say, I must believe Christ is mine e're my Will can thus apply him, as I must believe Meat is mine e're I eat it, and that Cloaths are mine e're I put them on.*

Answ. I answer, If the Condition of making Meat mine be to eat it, and if a Father offers a Child a Suit, saying, it shall be his if he will wear it, then he must eat that Meat first, and put those Cloaths on, that they may become his, and so it is here.

CHAP. III.

That Assurance of Salvation may be obtained.

1 JOHN V. 13.

These things have I written unto you that believe on the Name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have Eternal Life, and that ye may believe on the Name of the Son of God.

THE Doctrine of Assurance is that which of all other Civil Men and Popish Spirits do gainsay and calumniate; which they do out of Ignorance, as *Men are apt to speak evil of that they know not*, Jude 10. Now Assurance of Salvation such Men never had Experience of, as Christ (speaking of the Spirit as a Comforter, *John* 14. 17.) says, *The World cannot receive him, for it knows him not:* Neither are such Men solicitous about it, for assurance of Earth here contents them, and makes them think themselves happy enough. They oppose this Doctrine of Assurance also out of Envy, because

cause they think much that so great a Priviledge should be bestowed upon any, which themselves want; and therefore envying that others should exceed them in so great a happiness, (as this must needs be acknowledged, which indeed is able to outvie all other) they deny it, and would make it a thing impossible, and a Fancy in them that have it. And the Devil bears a great part in it also, who when he cannot hinder the Salvation of Christians in the Event, would hinder their Comfort; and as he knows how much this Assurance-Office encreaseth Spiritual Traffique, and raiseth the Customs of God's Glory and Revenues of Grace double, by encouraging Christians to trade more in all manner of Holiness, so his spite therefore is exceedingly at it to put it down; and indeed if he could get the Opinion to prevail, that no such thing is to be attained, Christians would give over looking after it: And then too all our Hearts naturally being fruitful of Doubtings and Distrust, are apt to join in with our Enemies, and to be glad to hear of a Doctrine of Doubtings; and then also that presumptuous Security which stills the Hearts of many is at the best but blind careless Hope, and that too countercheck'd with a World of real Guilt, so as in their own sense they cannot call it a Certainty or Infallibility; and then such Persons labouring after assurance, (as in their Opinions having thought it attainable) in the real pursuit of it find it so difficult that they are apt to give over, and to think it like that of the Philosophers Stone, a devised Invention, good indeed if it could be procured, but not to be had; and then those also who have attained it cannot demonstrate it to others, especially not to those who have not Experience of it, for it is *Hidden Manna, a White Stone which none knows but he that receives it*, Revel. 2. 17. *A Stranger doth not meddle with his Joy*, Prov. 14. 10. that is, it is a Business he is not skilled in, as the opposition shews; for the Words afore are, *The Heart knows the bitterness of his Soul*; that is, Terrours of Conscience are best known to him that hath them. Carnal People will not believe there are any such troubles for sin, and when Men are troubled they ascribe it to any other cause; much less then will they believe their Joys and Assurance, which are more remote from their reason than the other: So as it is no wonder if that thing be denied which the most are ignorant of, and do envy at, as the greatest happiness in others, and which the Devil opposeth, and which is so hard to attain, and which is not demonstrable or obvious to Sense.

Now my Purpose is both to establish and vindicate this Work and Doctrine of Assurance, it being both a Work which furthers and advanceth the Power of Godliness in their Hearts who enjoy it, (as shall be shewn) and also it being a Branch and Appendix of Faith, an Addition or Complement to Faith, and therefore is called the assurance of Faith, *Heb.* 10. 22. it therefore lies next in my way. Now this Text 1 *John* 5. 13. doth not only assure us that assurance of Salvation may be obtained by Believers, but further refers us to this whole Epistle for the proof thereof; *These things* (saith he) *have I written unto you that believe on the Name of the Son of God, that ye may know ye have Eternal Life.*

I shall speak something of the Coherence of the Words, though indeed the Words are the Close and Argument of the whole. In the 7*th.* and 8*th.* verses he tells us of six Witnesses to confirm Believers Faith, for of Faith he had spoken *ver.* 5, 6. and in *ver.* 10, 11. he tells us of the Record or Testimony which these Witnesses give in their Evidence of, which contains the Summ of the Gospel, and the Object that Faith is exercised about. 1. That Eternal Life is to be had alone in Christ. 2. That this Eternal Life he hath given to all Believers; *That God hath given us*, that is, *Believers*, (for to them he writes and intends his Epistle) *Eternal Life.* Both these would God have to be believed and embraced, and for the Confirmation of both serve those six Witnesses. *First*, He would have Men believe and rest in, and take his Son as the only Fountain of Life, which Proposition the Witnesses in Heaven do especially confirm, which is call'd *Believing on him.* And then, *Secondly*, He would have these Believers that have taken his Son, and believed in him, know and believe that they shall certainly be saved, because they have his Son, and Life in him; for, *He that hath the Son hath Life, and he partakes of Eternal Life*; and to that end God hath appointed the three Witnesses on Earth in a Believers own Conscience, *ver.* 10. And to these two Heads, especially the latter, is it that all this Epistle of

John

Part II. *John* drives at; that whereas there are many Souls that do entertain that first Record, that Christ is the Fountain of Life, and so depend on him, and rest in him alone, but yet are backward to entertain the other, namely, that they have the Son, and that they belong to Christ, and that they believe on him aright, therefore for such did he intend this Epistle, that they may come to the assurance of Faith concerning their own particular Estates: *These things have I written to you* (saith he) *that have believed on the Name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have the Son, and that ye have Eternal Life:* And yet not for these only doth he write, but also that *they* which have some Knowledge of this begun may know it yet more, that so they may go from one degree of Faith to another, and further believe on his Name. And because this Text refers us to what is written in this Epistle, I will content my self with what may thence be gather'd as touching both, (it being a point the Text calls for) *viz.* That not only Believers may know they have Eternal Life, but that these things were written to assure them of it.

First, Therefore let us argue from the Scope of the whole Epistle: Those Arguments which the Holy Ghost spends whole Books upon, are certainly both of necessary and of common use. As when *Solomon* writ a Book on purpose to shew the Vanity of the Creatures, when *Paul* writes an whole Epistle to prove Justification by Faith, as that to the *Galathians*; and another Epistle to shew the Natures and Offices of Christ, as that to the *Hebrews*, these must be regarded as very considerable. Now *John* wrote his Gospel to prove Christ to be the Son of God, thereby to draw Men to believe on him, that they might have Eternal Life, *John* 20. 31. *These things are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have Life thorough his Name*; and therefore he endeavours thorough the whole to give all the Characters and Demonstrations that he was God, as Divines observe: So likewise he wrote this his Epistle to teach them who believe how they may know that they do believe, and that they have Eternal Life; and to that end gives all the Evidences and Means that may tend to this: He not only demonstrates that Eternal Life is given to Believers, but gives Evidence that they might particularly know their Interest; the Signs given in this Epistle tend to this purpose. And farther to assure you that this is his Scope, the beginning of the Epistle doth answer to this his Conclusion, for he puts in the Argument of the whole, 1 *John* 1. 4. *These things we write unto you, that your Joy may be full:* Joy ariseth only out of some Good we know, and know too to be ours. Men in a vulgar Sense and Phrase of Speech may be said to be happy, though they do not know it, as a King that is asleep, and a Believer in a Temptation, but rejoyce in that their Happiness they cannot, unless they know it; or at least, it cannot be full Joy else, not so full for parts as Christians are here capable of. Full Joy ariseth only out of the Possession of the chiefest Good, and the Knowledge of it, and that is Eternal Life, and Christ in whom it is. Let the Happiness be never so great, if the Persons know not that it is theirs, their Joy is diminished and detracted, and can in no sense be said to be full Joy; and therefore the Apostle says not only that *He wrote these things that they might have Eternal Life*, the chiefest good, but that *They might know it, that so their Joy might be full.* Moral Philosophers disputing against *Plotinus*, who said the happiest condition might be without Knowledge, bring this very Argument against him, and argues truly, that Reflection or Knowledge of a Man's happiness is necessarily required to it, for otherwise it is lessened. Reflection is a part of the perfection of a perfect action, and a Man should see but imperfectly, he should but half see, who did not observe he saw; but especially a Reflection is essentially required to joy, (which is the Companion of Happiness) and to full joy.

Secondly, He wrote these things that *They might have fellowship and communion with God and Christ:* A Soul may have real Union, and the Marriage Knot which can never be untied, that is knit by Faith, and by casting a Man's self on Christ, but yet mutual Fellowship and Communion, and a mutual Expression of Love, and walking as Friends may be wanting: But now the Comfort of Friendship lyes in the mutual Knowledge and Sense of each others Dearness and Love. A Man can have no hearty Fellowship with one he thinks (for

for all that he knows) to be his Enemy; such Suspitions are the Bane of friendship. These things therefore the Apostle wrote that we might have fellowship with Christ, as he had; now the Fellowship that he had with God, he says, was this, *Chap.* 4. 16. *We have known and believed the Love of God to us*: This Fellowship lyes not in God's bearing us good will simply, but in knowing and believing it, and that in such a manner as God hath it, that as he certainly doth bear Love to us, so we certainly know it, and this Fellowship he calls *Dwelling in Love*, for the Soul walks in the assurance of it, and works in it, and lyes down in it, as a Man doth in his House, and he possesseth God's Love, and knows it is his own, as he knows his House is his own.

Therefore, *Thirdly*, He calls upon Believers to behold and consider God's Love, as it is in a special manner set upon themselves in making them Sons; *Behold* (says he) *what manner of Love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the Sons of God*, 1 John 3. 1. Of all things in God or Men Love desires to have self considered and taken notice of, as much as Wisdom, and Power, or any other thing whatever, and therefore he calls on them to behold God's Love; and above all Love desires notice to be taken of the Party beloved, whom it is in special directed unto more than of any other, for the Emphasis lies in the Specialty of it; therefore he would not have them run out in general thoughts of admiring God's Love to Mankind, and his giving his Son, but as having bestowed him on us: For when this great benefit is thus specially apprehended, it doubles our admiration of it, and then it takes and affects us. And to this purpose he bids them view their present Condition into which they were put, *viz.* the Estate of Grace, to look on this more than God's Love in giving Christ to dye, and offering Heaven, *&c.* they were to regard their being put into the present possession of it; *That we are called* (says he) *to be his Sons*; and he bids them view it again and again, what now at present they were; *Beloved, now we are the Sons of God*, says he, *ver.* 2. He exhorts not only to blind hopes of Heaven, and indefinite considerations of God's Love to some, but to a joyfull Perswasion of their present particular happiness, in that now they were Sons; and though the World knows us not to be such Men, yet to our Comfort we may know it, for to that end he brings in the World slighting us, as not knowing us, because it appears not what we are and shall be; *But we know* (says he) *that when he appears we shall be like him*; and let the World think of us what they will, we know what they are, and what our selves are, *Chap.* 5. 19. *We know we are of God, and that the whole World lies in wickedness*: So that his Scope is evident. Now would the Holy Ghost lose all this Labour, as if none could attain this assurance he should? hath he not said, his Word shall not return empty?

And again, *Fourthly*, He shews the blessed Effects that would follow upon this assurance.

1. The more Assurance a Man hath of being now at present the Son of God, the more true Hope he hath of what is to come in Heaven; and the more true Hope a Man hath, the more will he purifie himself as Christ is pure, *Chap.* 3. *ver.* 8. Carnal Men calumniate this Doctrine, as that which makes Men secure, and more bold to sin, for if they were sure of Heaven then they might think to live as they please, as being sure to get thither: No, it works a clean contrary Effect, it makes a Man purifie himself. This Doctrine he goes on at large to prove in the following verses, shewing that assurance is so far from making Men unrighteous, that he whom it works not thus with, to make him more holy, hath no true assurance in him, but is manifestly the Child of the Devil, so *ver.* 10. so *Chap.* 2. *ver.* 6, 9. Nay, there is not a greater means to keep from sin than assurance; therefore, (says he) as my end of writing is, that you may know you have Eternal Life, so also, *That ye sin not*, Chap. 2. *ver.* 1. Now if there were danger of Loosenes in Assurance, he could never have made these two ends meet in one Epistle together, had not the one been a means to the other. Yea, and says he, when a Man hath sinned, there is no spedier way to recover that Man again, and reclaim him from his sin, than assurance; therefore, says he, in the same Chapter, *If any Man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, who is the propitiation for our sins*: He bids them consider and believe this, and maintain the assurance of it, to raise them again. Then *David*'s Heart began to gush, and bleed, and break, when the

Part II. the Prophet told him his sins were forgiven; and therefore the Apostle he uses *that* as a Motive to the confession of sins, *viz.* the *Assurance* that God will pardon them, *Chap.* 1. *ver.* 9. when a Man knows not but out of his own Mouth he may be condemned, he is loth to confess; but when a Pardon comes, he cares not what he lays open. And then,

2. Assurance perfects our Love to God, *Chap.* 4. 16, 17. *Herein is our Love made perfect*, ver. 17. *Herein*, that is, *Hereby, that we know and believe God's Love to us*, ver. 16. As we cannot love one heartily whom we apprehend to be an irreconcileable Enemy, so we cannot love one perfectly whom we do not know to be a Friend: Therefore as full joy ariseth out of assurance of God's Love, so perfect Love ariseth only thence. Men may love God afore as one who may be reconciled to them, but now their Love is perfected; Men may believe afore, but now their Faith is perfected, and what is wanting supplied. And this perfect Love, which ariseth out of assurance of God's Love, doth cast out fear and jealousies, and suspitions, and a servile slavish temper; it throws out such fear as hath torment joined with it, as apprehending God a Judge, and our selves under bondage: This Fear the assurance of God's Love frees us from, and casts out, much of which remains in many Souls that have Faith, and some Love to God begun; therefore, when assurance comes, their Love is said to be made perfect, there is that degree added which frees them from their Fears, and which completes their Love begun. Now God would have all his Children serve him without this fear, he would have this Child of bondage cast out, (that I may allude to the casting out of *Hagar*) yea, and that he would have us so freed from such fears he hath took an Oath, *Luke* 1. 34. *That we should worship him without fear*; and we shall serve him the better, though Men have nothing but Self-love in them, think that Fears and Doubtings are the only means to keep Men in awe. And,

3. As this Assurance will breed full Joy, perfect Love, and cast out Fear, so also Confidence in God, and a certainty that our Prayers are heard, which the Apostle brings in as another Motive to get this Assurance, *Chap.* 3. *ver.* 19, 21, 22. and so in the verse after my Text, *ver.* 14. *This is the confidence that is in him, that if we ask any thing according to his Will, he hears us:* He brings it in as an Effect of knowing we have eternal Life; for doubting that our Persons are accepted, makes us doubt whether our Prayers be; and 'till then we shoot at Rovers as it were, and know not when our Prayers will take or hit the White, whether they will come weeping home or granted: But, when God hath given a Man assurance of his Love unto Salvation, he useth often to give him the like special assurance for many special Mercies, *ver.* 15. so as he knows he hath the Petitions that he desired of him, knows it even then when he asks them, as by the Context appears. This will encourage a Man to pray, for then it is a Man hath access to God with Boldness, Freedom of Speech and Confidence, *Eph.* 3. 12. And,

4. As Love, so Faith is made more perfect also; so as Assurance helps Faith also, and till then there is something wanting in Faith: And therefore in the Text, (if you mark it) says he, *These things I write to you that believe, that ye may know ye have Eternal Life, and may believe on the Name of the Son of God:* For when Assurance comes in Faith is encreased, for it receives a new degree, whereas before there is something lacking in Faith; as Philosophers say, to see and not to observe is but an imperfect action, so to believe and not to know it is but half your Faith; and therefore *Heb.* 10. 22. he exhorts to assurance of Faith; and therefore *Mat.* 9. 2. the word translated, *Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee*, is θάρσει, that is, *Confide, Believe*, and *be Confident*; and therefore *Eph.* 3. 12. we are said *To have confidence in the Faith of him*; and therefore he urgeth it on them as their Duty, as well to believe that God hath given them Eternal Life, as to begin to believe that Life is in Christ, and so to fly to him: And, (says he) *Ye make God a Lyar* in not believing the one as well as in not believing the other, *ver.* 10. for the believing not God in that 10*th.* verse, whereby Men make God a Lyar, is spoken to Believers, and hath reference to this Record, *That God hath given us Eternal Life*, ver. 11. and therefore as they make God a Lyar that will not believe in Christ as the Fountain of Life, and as such a sub-

fficient Saviour as God presents him to be, (and the main ground Men believe Book II.
t, lies therein) for they thereby proclaim they believe not Christ to be as God
ys he is, so they that have believed (having that Witness in themselves, *ver.* 10.
hich would assure them of the goodness of their Estates, would they listen to
and cherish it) if they give way and Ear to the Doubts of their own Hearts,
ey give God the lye, and will not receive his Testimony, which is greater
an any Mans, *ver.* 9.

CHAP. IV.

The Objections against Assurance answered.

NOw I proceed to answer Cavils and Objections which are most Specious, and I shall answer them out of this Epistle, which is a sufficient Abundary to establish this Doctrine : Only I Premise, at I will name no more of them but what may hence be confuted, nor dd any further Confirmation of those Confutations than what the Epistle ords.

Object. 1. The first Evasion is this, *It is pretended, that the Persons to whom is great Priviledge is vouchsafed, were Men of extraordinary Grace, as Apostles ; d some few such it may be attainable by, but every ordinary Man cannot, nor must w look for this Priviledge.*

Answ. I answer, As the Scope of St. *John* is to assure all Believers, so he says in eneral that he writes it to them that believe ; not to Apostles only, but to you that elieve, says St. *John*, one of the Apostles ; yea, he writes to all Believers, for it was ver yet deemed a Catholick General Epistle, as the Title of it is. Yea, and if e Apostles, and St. *John* himself had Assurance, (and if any of them had, I ould think that this Disciple that Christ loved, and who lay in his Bosom, nd who knew his Heart, and whom the Disciples employed to get out Christ's ecrets, had Assurance) then other Believers may have it too : He speaks to this urpose, 1 *John* 4. 14, 16. *We who saw Christ do testifie these things, we know and have lieved the Love that God hath to us :* He tells them his Scope was, that they Bevers might have Fellowship with us ; *You Believers with us Apostles* ; that , that they might have the same Fellowship ; *and our Fellowship* (saith he) *with God the Father, and God the Son,* 1 John 1. 3. Yea, Christ told his postles, *John* 15. 9, 10, 11. *That as his Father loved him, so he loved them* ; nd he had said as much afore in that Sermon, and all this was to assure them hat they should undoubtedly be saved, and greater assurance could not be given : *hese things have I spoken to you,* (says he) *that your Joy might be full,* ver. 11. e. *That my Joy might remain in you :* Christ's meaning is, that his joy might be in hem. Now Christ's joy arose out of assurance that the Father loved him, nd he would have them enjoy the same joy, not for measure, for that is impossible, but for truth, to arise out of the same cause, and from the same grounds ; *hat so your joy might be full.* Now the same joy that Christ wisheth to them, he same doth St. *John* to all Believers ; and as Christ says, that he spake those hings that *Their joy might be full,* so St. *John* says, that he wrote these things hat their joy might be full also. So that (to wind up this) as Christ had ssurance, and joy thence arising, so he endeavoured to raise in his Disciples the ame, that they might have his joy, and full joy, and the Apostles endeavoured oo to beget the same joy in Believers that was in themselves ; that *Ye may have ellowship with us, and that your joy may be full,* 1 John 1. 3, 4. Now wherein were he Apostles to rejoice but in this, that their Names were written in Heaven ; o Christ says *Luke* 10. 20. that as in matter of Holiness *Paul* and the Apostles ropounded Christ as a Pattern, and themselves as an Example, as they followed Christ, (*Be ye followers of us, as we are of Christ,*) so in point of Assurance, Christ ropounds his joy as the Pattern for the Apostles, and they theirs for Believers, and therefore this Priviledge is not to be look'd for only in them, but in Believers.

Object. 2. The Second Evasion is this, *It is Objected, That though Assurance may be*

vouch-

Part II. *vouchsafed to some of lower rank than Apostles, yet it is to such as are of long standing in Christianity, who after long Experience have Hope and Assurance begotten in them.*

Answ. I grant it, that many not till then have had it, yet it is attainable for others also; for all sorts of ages in Christ, for *Babes, Young-men, Old-men*, 1 John 2. 12, 14. *I write to you Babes*, ver. 12. *for your sins are forgiven you*. He tells them so, because it is that thing he goes about to perswade them of; it is Pardon which is the great thing they have in their Eye when they are young, and that is the grand mercy they are in pursuit of, and which they most pray for, and are most solicitous about: And though they are but Babes, and so have but little Faith, yet he says, their Sins are forgiven; *To you Babes and Infants it is given to know, this which is hid from the wise and prudent.* Christ therefore tells many New Converts on the first day, that their Sins were forgiven, and he tells this to those of ordinary rank, not Disciples and Apostles only; so he told that Palsey-man, *Mat.* 9. 2. so he said to *Mary*, who was lately a Sinner, a known Sinner, *Luke* 7. 37, 39. (and the Pharisees thought her so still;) he tells her, *ver.* 48. *Thy sins are forgiven thee*; and to another, saith he, *Thy faith hath made thee whole.* And seeing your sins are forgiven you, though you be but of a days standing, therefore you may take the Comfort of it as well as others. And the Apostle *John* gives this Reason of his Writing to them, *Children, because* (says he) *you have known the Father. Aristotle* observes it, and Experience finds it true, that one of the first acts of Reason in Children is, to call upon their Fathers and Mothers, for they are apt to know them sooner of any thing, and therefore the first Words they speak are *Mam* and *Dad*, &c. So as to Babes in Christianity, one of the first fruits of the Spirit in them often is, to call upon God as a Father, to own God as a Father, to express Child-like affection to him as to a Father, and to seek his Fatherly Love; and though all Babes cannot say he is their Father, yet they come to him as Children to a Father. Now this Knowledge and Instinct after God as a Father being in all Babes, the Apostle endeavours to raise it, and to teach them to know their Father more: But the Church of *Rome* teacheth her Children to know their Mother, but to doubt of their Father, which is a Sign they are Bastards, and she a Strumpet.

Object. 3. The third Evasion is, *To object concerning the manner of Assurance, though indeed they will grant that by an extraordinary Revelation and Certificate from Heaven, Men may be assured, as* Paul *was, who was wrapt up into the third Heaven, and as those were by Christ when he was upon the Earth; yet they deny that in the ordinary way of God's dealing with Men such Assurance is attain'd.*

Answ. But St. *John* here gives ordinary Directions, how Men may come to be assured, for he writes an whole Epistle on purpose, which if Men believe not, neither would they believe if one from the dead, or an Angel from Heaven should assure them: And he tells us, that there are not only Witnesses in Heaven, but also Witnesses on Earth, in a Believers own Breast; a Believer hath the Witness in himself, and carries a work of Faith and Sanctification in him, to which if he give ear he may come to be assured, 1 *John* 5. 8, 10. and to this end the Apostle gives many Signs of the Work of Grace in a Man.

Object. 4. Yea, but they Object, *Fourthly, That let these signs be never so infallible in themselves, so as he that hath them in him shall surely be saved, yet the Word names no man in particular; it says not that thou* John *or* Thomas *hast these things in thee.*

Answ. In answer to this *John* tells us two things: *First*, That *Every one who believeth, hath the witness in himself*, a work of the Spirit in him, whence this Testimony may be fetch'd, *Chap.* 5. 10. And, *Secondly*, That *He hath given us his Spirit also*, Chap. 3. 24. to witness and testifie with the Word, and with the Work in a Man's Heart, and make Application, *Chap.* 5. *ver.* 6. As therefore when they ask how we know that the Scripture is the Word of God? for, say they, it is no where written that it is the Word: We answer, that it is an authentical Proof of it self, it carries its own Testimony with it: So is Grace, and the Word written in the Heart of a Believer; that Word engrafted, and the Law written in the Heart, is an authentick Evidence of it self; and as God's Spirit accompanies his Word with a Divine Light and Authority, so he

e doth his own Work in the Heart; there is but this Difference, that the ne is the Word written with Ink, the other delineated with the Spirit of the ving God: And if the Apostle says of the *Corinthians*, that they were so fair an Epistle of Christ, that it might be known and read of all Men, much more then s this true of themselves.

Object. 5. *Fifthly*, they say, *Yea, but our Hearts are deceitful, and who can know hem? and many are deceived.*

Answ. I answer, That it is true, that the natural frame of it is such, and yet he Apostle in this Epistle refers Men to the judgment of their own Hearts, as a Witness in this Point. 1. As for matter of Condemnation, therein the Testimony of a Man's own Heart may be right, and give in a right Verdict, though t be thus deceitful, for in a Man's own Cause a deceitful Person will take part with himself; therefore if such an One condems himself, his Witness is so much the more authentick; and therefore, says he, *ver.* 20. of the 3*d.* Chapter, *If our Hearts condemn us, God is greater than our Hearts, and condemns us much more.* And, 2. As the Testimony of our deceitful Hearts, though deceitful, may be taken for Condemnation, so the Testimony of our renewed Hearts may be admitted for the justification of a Man's Estate: Therefore he adds, *ver.* 21. *If our Hearts condemn us not, then we have Confidence towards God.* 3. Though it be true, that our Hearts as Natural are deceitful, yet *Chap.* 5. *ver.* 20. he says, that the *Son of God hath given us a mind that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true:* So that though our Spirits are deceitful, yet that New Understanding is given on purpose to know the truth, and to discern of it. And, 4. Though our own Hearts are deceitful, if left naked, yet he hath not left us without another Witness to guide this new Mind, and that is his Spirit, *Chap.* 2. *ver.* 20, 27. *You have received an Unction, which teacheth you all things:* And that Spirit is one of the Witnesses, *Chap.* 5. *ver.* 6, 8.

Object. 6. Yea, but they Object, *Sixthly, That there are many Enthusiasms, and Satan joins with Hypocrites hearts, and deludes them, and so a Man shall not be able to know the Spirits witness from that of this great Deciever.*

Answ. The Apostle tells us, *Chap.* 5. *ver.* 6. *It is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth:* That is, did he not give an infallible Testimony, he were not fit to be reckoned a Witness; and if he is a Witness, then he is so as to perswade Men to whom he gives witness, for why else is he said to witness? and this Record too is the Record of God, which is greater than Man's, and therefore infallible, Chap. 2. ver. 27. *This annointing* (says he) *teacheth you all things, and is truth, and is no Lye*; that is, doth not, cannot deceive you. A Man may see a thing with false Lights, and be decieved, but if I see a thing with the Light of the Sun, I see it with a true Light, and am not decieved.

Object. 7. They Object yet *Seventhly, That it is true, man may have such a Knowledge, as is joined with some probable hope, and a good and a happy Conjecture, which often doth not decieve in the end, but yet not such but there wants an Infallibility, so as there may* falsum subesse, *be a mistake at the bottom.*

Answ. I answer, How often doth *John* inculcate, *by this we know*, and *we know*, &c. and more expresly, *Chap.* 2. *ver.* 3. *Hereby we know we know him:* We know him was too little, he therefore adds, *But we know we know him*; and Chap. 3. *verse* 19. *We know we are of the Truth,* (how can this be without infallibity?) *and shall assure our hearts afore him.* If they themselves were to put words of Assurance into any Testimony, or into any Bond, they could not say more, or put in more Expressions to put all out of Doubt.

Object. 8. True, say some, in the *Eighth* Place, *They may know at the present that they are the Sons of God*; Now we are the Sons of God, 1 *John* 3. 2. *but what will become of us hereafter? whether we shall continue so, we know not.*

Answ. The Apostle answers them in that 3*d.* *Chap. ver.* 2, 3. that indeed what the great Glory of that Estate hereafter will be, they knew not, nor the World knows not; and in outward appearance they are now (though for the present the Sons of God) of all Men most miserable, and therefore in regard of their outward Garb and Splendour it doth not appear what they shall be, as it doth not appear what Wicked Men shall be; but yet for the certainty of our future Condition, as now we are the Sons of God, so *We know, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him.*

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Object. 9. Yea, but *Ninthly, It will be said, There are many that seemed as good as your selves, whom you thought good Christians, and they thought themselves such, and yet they have turned Apostates; and will not their falling away dash a Believers Assurance?*

Answ. He answers *ver.* 19. of the second Chapter, that they were never true; *They went out from us because they were not of us, if they had been of us they would no doubt have continued with us, but they went out that they might be made manifest that they were not at all of us.*

Object. 10. Yea, but yet *Tenthly, In that there are such among Professors, who are a great while not manifested to themselves or others, may not this however disparage and bring all to an Uncertainty in the best, seeing they know not but they may prove such?*

Answ. No, (says the Apostle, *ver.* 20.) *But ye have an Unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things:* He speaks by way of difference, and to answer the Cavil; and *ver.* 27. *That same anointing teacheth you all things, and is truth, and is no lye, and therefore by his teaching you are not decieved:* And among other things he hath taught you the Truth of your Estates, even as it hath taught you that you shall abide in him; and *Chap.* 3. 19. *Hereby we know we are of the truth.*

Object. 11. But, Eleventhly, *It will be Objected, Will not this Assurance make Men licentious, and secure, and more careless?*

Answ. No, says the Apostle, however Presumption in carnal Hearts may work, yet in those who are truly godly it hath the contrary Effect: For he that hath this particular Hope for himself, hereafter to be like Christ, and to be at present the Child of God, this Hope conforms him to Christ here, to whom he must be conformed hereafter: *He purifies himself as he is pure:* It works out Corruption; and therefore *ver.* 1. of the 2*d. Chapter*, he says, *He wrote these things that they might not sin.*

Object. 12. But poor Believers they object, *Twelfthly, That they fall into sin, and then all their Assurance is clean dashed and eclipsed.*

Answ. As in the 3*d.* Chapter there is a Seed mention'd which remains in them unshaken out, so they may if they, sin go with a confidence to God thorough Christ, and recover themselves: *If any man sin,* (says he, 1 *John* 2. 1.) *we have an advocate with the Father,* &c. *An Advocate* that never pleaded bad Cause, or was cast in his Suit, and who pleads with a Father and not with a Judge, and who is *Jesus Christ the righteous*; whose Righteousness is eternal, and which no sin can outvie, and which is made ours; so as if we confess our sins, *Chap.* 1. 9. he is a just God in nothing else but to forgive them, and to cleanse us also from all Unrighteousness, and hath bound himself to both by Promise. And hence, and hence only ariseth full Joy and perfect Charity, *ver.* 4. of the first Chapter, and *ver.* 17. of the fourth Chapter. Love can never be perfect when a Man is possessed with jealousies of Enmity that may be for time to come; therefore *True love casts out such fear,* ver. 18. of that fourth Chapter; *Amare tanquam aliquando osurum venenum est amicitiæ; To love as one who afterwards will hate, is the Poyson of Friendship.* So that no joy can be full, though in the greatest Good, the Enjoyment of which for time to come is uncertain.

CHAP. V.

How Assurance is produced in the Heart of a Believer, by Three Witnesses in Heaven, and Three Witnesses on Earth: The Different Nature of the Testimony which they give.

1 JOHN V. 7, 8.

For there are three that bear Record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one.

And there are three that bear Witness in Earth, the Spirit, and the Water, and the Blood, and these three agree in one.

AS we have seen the Apostle's Scope in this Epistle to have been chiefly, *First*, To Assure God's People: And, *Secondly*, To shew the fruits of such Assurance, as Motives to it; so in the next place let us consider what he hath written that may help a Believer to this Assurance; what Directions, what Helps, what Evidence he hath describ'd, whereby he may come to be assured; this will both demonstrate that this is in the Scope of this Epistle, as likewise shew that Assurance may be had, by shewing from what Grounds and Proofs it is deriv'd. He directs them to two Trinity of Witnesses, whereof three are in Heaven, and three on Earth: For I take it that all these six Witnesses have their Evidence set to one and the same Record, both that Christ is the Fountain of Life, and that God hath given to a Believer Eternal Life. These Witnesses do not part or divide their Witness, (as if the three in Heaven should witness to the one part, and those on the Earth to the other) but as each Classis of these agree among themselves in one, so they both agree in the same Testimony unto both; and therefore as the Witnesses on Earth do witness to a Believer that he hath Eternal Life, so those in Heaven do join singly in this very Testimony also. And because in all things we would have proof of, the greatest furtherance any one can do, is to produce and direct us to such as are the only true faithful Witnesses, that can speak infallibly in the cause, therefore *John* to help a poor Believer in this great point of Assurance, points out to him the sole infallible Witnesses that can give in Evidence, which if he do attend unto, and examine, and seek unto for their Witness, he may get Evidence sufficient. And in this point he brings plenty out of both Courts, both of Heaven and on Earth, three in either; that as none were condemned but under the mouth of two or three Witnesses, so none are assured of Salvation but by as many. These Witnesses serve, as I said, to confirm two Records; the one, that Jesus was that Christ, and the Son of God; the other, that we are Sons in him, and Heirs of Life: We have the same, and as many as Jesus Christ hath. Now we are to consider them as they are Witnesses to our Title and Adoption.

Of those three in Heaven, and who are meant by them, there is no difficulty among Interpreters. The Being of the three Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and how they have given Testimony to this part of the Record, that Jesus is the Son of God, is evident in the story of the Gospel; the Father from Heaven, saying, *This is my well-beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear him*; and Christ himself, who came from Heaven, witnessed of himself, as often in the Gospel of *John* is evident; for Instance, *John* 4. 26. And the Holy Ghost witnessed this by descending upon him, *Mat.* 3. 16, 17. *Acts* 5. 32.

But how these three witness Salvation to a Believer is a difficulty, and a thing not ordinarily observed. As also again, What should be meant by Blood, Water and Spirit, this hath puzled Interpreters. I accord with those who

First, By Blood understand the Work of Justification on a poor Sinner, and by

Part II. by a *Synechdoche* and *Metonimy* all that which goes to his Justification. By Blood then here is to be understood both that which is the Object of Faith as justifying, which in Christ you know is chiefly his Blood, (which is call'd *The blood of the New Testament, shed for the Remission of sins*; that is, that Blood which ratifies all the Promises of the New Testament, his Blood being put for all his Obedience) as also that rich Grace in God which sprinkles or applies this Blood to poor Sinners, and which Faith in his Blood looks unto, *Rom.* 3. 24, 25. *Being justified by his Grace, thorough the Redemption that is in Christ, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation thorough Faith in his Blood.* All these Synechdochically are comprehended in Blood, in this Place of *John*, even Christ's Blood shed, and Free-grace sprinkling it, and the Promises ratified by it, which are the Object of Faith. And by a *Metonimy* the work of Faith it self is also meant, which lays hold on this Blood, (the Object connotating the act it self) Blood, that is, Faith in his Blood. In a word, the whole Work of Justification, and whatever goes to it, is meant by Blood.

Secondly, By Water I understand Sanctification, both in the habits and fruits of it: For whom Christ's Blood justifies, it also doth cleanse and sanctifie, and washeth away the filth of Sin; thus it is express'd *John* 3. 5. *A Man being regenerated, and born again of Water, and the Holy Ghost*; that is, of the Holy Ghost working as Water, purifying and cleansing. So says the Apostle too, *Eph.* 5. 26. *Christ gave himself for his Church, that he might sanctifie and cleanse it with the washing of Water by the Word.* And as habitual Regeneration or Sanctification, so actual cleansing a Man's self daily, is signified to us by Water: Thus in *Isa.* 1. 16. *Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings, cease to do evil, learn to do well.* Especially purifying the Heart is denoted by it, which is done by Faith, and follows upon believing; thus *Jer.* 4. 14. *Wash thy Heart from wickedness; how long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?* It makes the Heart fruitful unto every good work, and every Grace to grow up in a Man, *Psal.* 1.

And that these two witness that Christ is the Son of God, may easily be conceived: As, *First*, That his Blood is able to take away the guilt of Sin, (which nothing else could do) this argues it to be the Blood of God, *Acts* 20. 26. The force of it lies in this, that it was *Offered by the Eternal Spirit*, Heb. 3. 14. so likewise Water witnesseth it, in that it should be able to subdue sin, wash away the power of it, change the Heart, make a Man a New Creature, all this argues him to be the Saviour of the World, *Acts* 5. 31. and that these do also join to give in Testimony to assurance, that *God hath given a man Eternal Life*, is also evident by that in *Heb.* 10. 22. *Let us draw near with full assurance of Faith*: And what conduceth to effect that Assurance, and to help it forward? both these here mentioned: First, *Having our hearts sprinkled from an Evil Conscience*; and by what is that done? by this Blood here meant; see *Heb.* 9. 14. *How much more shall the Blood of Christ, who through the Eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your Consciences from dead works?* This Blood sprinkled on the Conscience by Faith, helps forward assurance of Faith. The Second is also mentioned, *Having our Bodies washed with pure water*; that is, Our whole Man sanctified and cleansed. He writing to the *Hebrews*, speaks in the Language of the Levitical Law, (which he explains to them in all that Epistle) in which there was the sprinkling of the Blood of Goats by Hysop, which signified Justification, or the Sprinkling of Christ's Blood upon the Conscience, *Heb.* 9. 13, 14. and also they washed their Bodies with Water when they went to sacrifice, and were unclean; which signified the Sanctification of the whole Man, Body being put for the whole, as *Rom.* 12. 1. *Offer up your Bodies a reasonable sacrifice to God*; that is, your whole Man; which Phrase he useth when he alludes to the Sacrifices of the Law, as there he doth.

Now then the third Witness, the Spirit, is the Holy Ghost, who comes down from Heaven, and dwells here on Earth in the Heart of a Believer, and so takes part with him, and joins his Witness to these other two, his Testimony being the greatest, the clearest of all the rest: And his witness we may find *Rom.* 8. 16. *The Spirit it self beareth witness with our Spirits, that we are the Sons of God*: He joins his Testimony to the other two, and puts all out of Question. Now both these two Testimonies of Blood, that is, the work of Justification and Faith, and Water, that is Sanctification, *Paul* shuts up in one, namely, *Our Spirit*; not our Spirit as naked in it self, our natural Spirit, which is full of Deceit, but as framed

framed and renewed to the *Obedience of Faith* and *true Holiness*, and as enlightned and irradiated by the Spirit, and so fitted to witness the Truth; and both those Testimonies he calls the witness of our Spirits, because our apprehending Justification and believing, as also that of Sanctification, are Works seated in and of our Spirits. The Testimony of both those is fetch'd and produced out of the Records that are written in our own Bosoms, from those gracious Acts and Dispositions, and Dealings of God with our Spirits, in drawing us to Faith, and justifying, and also sanctifying of us; and they are call'd our Spirits, to distinguish both those from that other Testimony of the Spirit which is fetch'd out of the Records in God's own Breast, and quoteth not, nor referreth us not to any dealing of God with us, or work in us, but is an immediate Voice of God's Spirit: And this *John* himself intimates unto us, (to accord *John* and *Paul*) that by some of these Witnesses he means the Work of God in our selves, (which *Paul* calls our Spirits) when he adds, *He that believeth, hath the witness in himself*; whereby he declares, that some of those Witnesses, both the Work of Faith and Sanctification, are works of and in himself, and that they may give him some Evidence. The meaning is, he carries in his own Bosom written the matter of a good Testimony, if produced, and viewed, and examined.

Having found out what the Witnesses are *John* directs us unto, let us see how they witness.

First, The work of Faith in Christ's Blood, and the Blood of Christ sprinkled by Faith, have a Testimony in them, if examined: That is, when first a Man sees he was brought in, and his Heart won to believe, according to the true Tenour and right Course of the Spirit in the work of Faith, and upon the right Grounds, Motives, and Terms, and Reasons the Word chalks out, and according to the right aim, and intent, and purpose of God in the Gospel, which is in Justification to set up Christ's Blood, and his rich Grace: When he sees he came in at the right Door of Faith, as *Acts* 4. 27. when he sees that God's Spirit opened to him, and guided him in at the right Door: In brief, when he hath seen the guilt of his sins as the greatest evil, an emptiness and unsufficiency of help in himself, or any thing in him for time past, present, or to come, and in all Creatures and Means whatever, and then hath had the Fountain of Christ's Blood opened to him, as *Hagar* had that Well by the Angel which she saw not: When he spies Christ out, and his Blood as the only means to help him, and sees the al-sufficiency of Redemption in it to wash him, justifie him; and prizeth it accordingly, and thirsts after a draught of it, and hungers after nothing but his Righteousness, so as nothing can down with him else, and he eyes nothing but it, and resolves to have help from nothing but him: And when bethinking himself how to close with Christ, and to get an Interest in that Blood, he finds God graciously opening the riches, the freeness of his Grace, that imputeth, sprinkleth it, and is enabled to see Grace so free, so rich, that nothing in himself can hinder it, as nothing in himself can further it: And not only so, but when he finds God's Spirit secretly still dealing with him to take it, to take God at his Offer of it, as being faithful, serious in it, as being also the richest purchase that ever the World had; when he finds God's Spirit reasoning with him in private, answering and taking away his Scruples and Objections that lye betwixt him and the taking of it, urging him, pressing him, laying afore him God's Command to believe, his Threatnings, his Invitations, his Willingness, and he sees how welcome he shall be; when he finds God's Spirit drawing and winding in his Heart to close with Christ and his Blood, (and he knows not how) over-perswading him to rest in Christ, and to cast himself on him, causing him to trust in him, which else he should never have done; and so he takes Christ with all his Offices, to give himself up to him, to rest in him, to go no further, no whither else for help: When he finds he can with some secret Establishment of Spirit emplead the Arguments of Faith, wield Faith's Weapons, and finds his Spirit strengthened thereby against carnal Reasons and Guilt, so as he comes away from the Bar and Throne of Grace with a kind of Victory over the Pleadings and Condemnings of his Heart, and he is not non-pluss'd, but sees in Free-Grace and Christ's Blood sufficient matter suggested to answer to all, and so he rests: When he finds that as out of self-flattery he is not encouraged to believe,

but

Part II. but out of the Importunity of God's Spirit that follows him with such thoughts, that God will have it so, so also that his heart is raised above self-love in it, to God's aim and end in justifying, namely, to admire the Riches of his Grace, to adore the all-sufficiency of this Blood, to ascribe all to it. And then, as the work of Faith in Christ's Blood, so the Effect of his Blood thus apprehended, em. pleaded, evidenceth it to him; for still when Guilt ariseth, he can oppose Christ's Blood to it, and bathes his Soul in thoughts of Faith about it, and so finds the Guilt quelled, allayed, his Conscience pacified, stilled and quieted by it, when no Duties, nor nothing else will give him ease: This (if a Man observe these things) may be an Evidence to him, that Christ's Blood is sprinkled on him. This is the Testimony of Blood, as *Heb.* 12. 24. it is said, *The Blood of Christ speaks better things than the Blood of Abel*: This same speaking comfortable things in the Conscience of a Man, and easing a Man of his Load, purging, pacifying, stilling, allaying the Conscience, when nothing but his Blood doth it, not Du. ties, not vain Hopes; this is the Witness of Blood, though bloody Iniquities cries loud, as the blood of *Abel* in *Cain*'s Conscience, yet this Blood speaks bet. ter things; and a Man still in Distress can have, with some support, recourse to this Blood, when to nothing else, and finds the Faith in it secretly suppor. ing him. This is the first Witness, when a Man observes this; for though Faith is not Assurance, yet upon believing a Man may have some evidence from the work of it, and the Effect of Christ's Blood in his Conscience apprehended by Faith, and therefore the Scripture points us to the Work of Faith, as that which may be known, and which gives in Evidence; so in the first verse of this Chapter he says, *He that believes is born of God*: And therefore Christ said to that poor Man, *If thou canst believe*; *Lord*, (says he) *I believe! help my Unbelief!* Mark 9. 24. He could not have answered so, unless he could have discerned the Work of Faith in himself: So that new Convert, *Acts* 8. 37. *If thou believest with thy whole Heart, thou may'st be baptized.* Baptism was the Ordinance to Men newly converted, which conveyed the Spirit as sealing, Baptism being the Seal of Righteousness, and this Man before thus sealed by Baptism could tell he believed, for he answers, *I do believe that Jesus is the Son of God.*

The Second Witness is the work and workings of Sanctification, Water. The Believer finds that closing thus with Christ changeth him, renews him, washeth him from the Power of sin, puts a new Spirit and Principle into him, clean opposite to sin, so as he cannot sin; he finds a new Spring of gracious Dispositions in him, still bubling naturally up, and cleansing, and working out Corruptions, *John* 4. 14. he finds many several streams of it, of Love to God and Christ, and that for themselves, a stream of Hatred of sin, running against a stream of Love to it: Every Grace is a stream in him, and all his Graces do testifie also, if they be observed. Read this Epistle of *John*, you will find he cuts this water into many Rills and Signs, in every of which as so many Signs Believers may see and have some Evidence of their Estates: And he says, not only that such Dispositions are in God's Children, but he presents them to them as Signs whence they might know they have Eternal Life, it being his Scope to help Believers this way. One Sign that he gives, is a bent of Heart to keep all God's Commandements, Chap. 2. ver. 3. *Hereby we do know we know him, if we keep his Commandements*; and *ver.* 5. *Hereby we know we are in him, especially then, when the Commandements are not grievous*; and Chap. 5. ver. 3. *This* (says he) *is the Love of God, that we keep his Commandements*; that is, this is the certain sign and fruit of it: So *Chap.* 2. *ver.* 29. *Ye know* (says he) *that every one that doth righteousness is born of him.* So purging a Man's self from sin upon the hope and assurance of Heaven, is another sign describ'd by him, *Chap.* 3. *ver.* 3. *Every one that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.* So having a Seed in a Man contrary to sin, that he cannot sin, is another sign which he displays, *ver.* 9. *Whosoever is born of God, doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.* So Love to the Brethren is another distinguishing Character, *ver.* 14. *We know we are passed from death to life, when we love the Brethren*; when it is such Love as we could lay down our Lives, our Estates and Goods, for the Church, *ver.* 16, 17. and this Love is in deed and in truth, hearty, real, *ver.* 18. then hereby we know we are of the truth, *ver.* 20. and then find-

finding the Spirit dwelling in us, is another Mark of our good state, *ver.* 24. *Hereby we know he abideth in us, by the Spirit he hath given us*: And then he gives Signs suitable to those times, and to hinder their being mischief'd by the false Teachers among them, *Chap.* 4. And also he gives Reasons still why such signs are infallible, this you may observe if you read this Epistle, as when he shews that if we love God it is certain God loves us, *Chap.* 4. *ver.* 10. proving it by this strong reason, because his Love is the cause of ours, *ver.* 19. so he shews why Love to the Brethren is an infallible sign, *Chap.* 4. *ver.* 7. and *Chap.* 5. *ver.* 1. because Love is of God, and he is the fountain of it, and he that loves the Begetter, loves the begotten, and so on the contrary: And also he proves sometimes one sign by another, *Chap.* 5. *ver.* 2. *By this we know that we love the Children of God, because we love God, and keep his Commandements*: So that when one sign is not so evident, yet a Man may have recourse to another; and then also, when a Man's Heart is raised by Faith to overcome this World, to despise the good things of it, and endure all the evil, when he is tried in both, and overcomes both through Faith, *Chap.* 5. *ver.* 14. he makes it a sign of being born of God. And you shall observe withall, that he doth this by way of Difference, giving the contrary as infallible signs of wicked Men; *He that walks in any sin, hates his Brother*, such an *One is in Darkness*, Chap. 2. *knows not God*, Chap. 3. ver. 6. *but is of the Devil*, ver. 8. *And he that loves not the Saints, abides in death, and is a Murtherer, and hath not Eternal Life in him*, ver. 14. I shall name no more, but return to this Testimony of Water, and add this, That as that of Blood is a Testimony drawn from quelling the guilt of Sin, and opposite thereto, so this of Water is a Testimony drawn from subduing the power of sin, and putting in contrary Principles. Now as the power of sin when it prevails, strengthens the guilt of sin against us, and raiseth doubts, so when the cleansing power of Grace prevails, it helps to strengthen Faith in Christ's Blood. Faith having once rightly and alone closed with Christ's Blood to justifie the Believer, and having ascribed all to it, then Water may come in as a Witness to justifie that Faith. Now the ordinary Errour is, that Men neglect the Blood of Christ, and the work of Faith, and the sprinkling of it on their Consciences for Justification, and the Evidence thereof, and betake themselves wholly to Water, e're they have closed with this Blood: They would see themselves sanctified e're they have closed with Justification. But if a Man hath been guided once aright in the work of Faith, and his heart pitch'd right for Justification, to seek it alone in Blood, then Water comes fitly in as a Witness, and is to be listned unto; but till then, the danger is, lest Men should have that recourse to Water which they should have to the Blood of Christ, and rest therein for Justification.

The third Witness is that of the Spirit, whereby is meant an immediate Testimony of the Holy Ghost, superadded to all these: The Testimony of Faith finding ease in Christ's Blood, as rested in alone for Salvation, is often prevail'd against by the guilt of Sin, and counter-checked, and that Testimony of Water is worn out, and oblitterated by the power of Sin, which also strengthens that guilt; so as tho' the Soul hath an assurance, depending on the prevalency of the fruits of Grace in it self, which when the prevalency of that Grace and Faith is in the Soul may give a certainty, yet it is such as even then the Soul lingers after, and waits for a further discovery, and is taught to do so: There is therefore a third Testimony, and that is of the Holy Ghost himself, which is immediate; that is, though it backs and confirms what the other two said, yet quotes them not, builds not his Testimony on them, but raiseth the Heart up to see its Adoption and Sonship, by an immediate discovery of God's mind to it, and what Love he hath born to it; which is not argued from what is wrought in it self, but God says unto a Man's Soul, (as *David* desires) *I am thy salvation*, Psal. 35. 3. and as Christ said upon Earth to some few, *Thy sins are forgiven thee*; so from Heaven it is spoken by his Spirit, (which yet dwells in the Heart afore) that a Man's sins are forgiven, and he is owned by the whole Trinity to be God's Child: And this Testimony was that which the Apostles received, when they received the Holy Ghost after Christ's Ascension as a Comforter, whom yet they had before already, and knew by the Fruits and Effects of him, both Water and Blood, Faith

Part II. and Holineſs, that he was in them, but yet not ſo as afterward, *John* 14. 16, 17, 18, 19, 20. they now knew the Spirit, and he dwelt in them, *ver.* 17. they knew before that they had Grace; and that they believed; ſo *Peter* ſays, *I believe that thou art the Son of God*: And after his Death, afore the Holy Ghoſt was given, when Chriſt asked if he loved him? *Peter* ſays he did, *Thou knoweſt I love thee*, John 21. 16. They had the Teſtimony of Water and Blood both, but they had not yet the Spirit as a Comforter immediately ſealing up all; *I will ſend you the Comforter*, (ſays Chriſt, *John* 14. 16, 20.) *and at that day you ſhall know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you*: Thus he promiſes that he would further manifeſt himſelf to them, that whereas they knew afore dimly, then they ſhould know to purpoſe; and this likewiſe we find the *Epheſians* did receive after they believed, and had been ſanctified, *Eph.* 1. 13. *In whom after ye believed ye were ſealed with the ſpirit of Promiſe*: As Seals are for Confirmation, ſo they were ſealed with Grace and Holineſs, and the Image of God before, (for that follows upon Faith) and they had truſted on Chriſt, had cloſed with Chriſt, and the Word of Truth, and Goſpel of Salvation: But now when they by ſheer Faith had honoured God, by ſealing to his Word, then God comforts them by ſealing them with his Spirit, and this Witneſs is immediate, that is, it builds not its Teſtimony on any thing in us; it is not a Teſtimony fetch'd out of a Man's ſelf, or the Work of the Spirit; in Man, as the others were; for the Spirit ſpeaks not by his Effects, but ſpeaks from himſelf, and confirms the other, and therefore is ſaid to witneſs with the other, that is, comes in to ſtrengthen their Witneſs; and though the Holy Ghoſt joined with Water and Blood in their Teſtimony, (for Grace without him cannot evidence, as it cannot work without him) yet ſo his Teſtimony lay hid in theirs, as they are ſaid to witneſs, and his Teſtimony is conceal'd, though he alledgeth them, and clears them up to a Man, and therefore a Man ſhall find the ſame ſigns ſometimes evidence to him, and ſometimes not, as the Spirit irradiates them; and yet this Teſtimony of his is over and above theirs, diſtinct from theirs, and ſevered from theirs, and therefore is ſaid to make a third Witneſs, which as witneſſing in the other he could not be ſaid to be: But though this Teſtimony of the Spirit be beyond the witneſs of Faith or Water, and above what the Word in any ſound or ſyllables carries with it, yet it is always in and with the Word, and according to it, and therefore they are ſaid *To be ſealed with the Spirit of Promiſe*, Eph. 1. 13. It calls up ſome word that ecchoes to it, and goes with it. The Spirit opens God's mind in ſome words, and alſo though it may come in from an Evidence received and entertained from the former Witneſſes, Blood and Water, (and therefore is ſaid to witneſs with the other, as coming to back what they ſaid; yet ſo as their Teſtimony then comes to be conſidered, but as the occaſion upon which this of the Spirit is let in, and as the hint given; but it raiſeth the Soul up higher, and the other Teſtimony as it were falls down, and God's immediate Mind and Acceptation out of the Riches of his Grace, entertains a Man's Soul and Thoughts: For as Chriſt received no Teſtimony from Man, though he ſays *John* gave Teſtimony of him; and as in ſome Colledges when the Colledge-Seal is put to, there needs no Hands, no Witneſſes; or as when the Broad-Seal is put to by a King, he writes *Teſte meipſo*, ſo doth the Spirit ſpeak in the Language of a King, *Teſte meipſo, Witneſs my ſelf*; and receives and borrows no Witneſs from what is in us, but makes his own abundantly ſatisfie. And this Witneſs though it is placed firſt, (after the manner of the *Hebrews* and other Scriptures) yet comes in as the laſt of the three, as being the greateſt, and that which puts all out of Queſtion, which the other did not ſo fully, and therefore he is ſaid to witneſs with our Spirits, becauſe their Teſtimony is uſually given in firſt; this of the Spirit backs and confirms what they ſaid, as Seals come after a Man's Hand is ſet, as the greater witneſs; or as an Oath comes in after a Promiſe, to put all out of doubt, and to end the Controverſie, *Heb.* 6. 15, 16, 17, 18. there it is ſaid, that God makes a Promiſe, and though that might aſſure, yet we have doubting Hearts, and therefore he adds an Oath to end all ſtrife: And that he might more abundantly ſhew to the Heirs of Promiſe the immutability of his Counſels, he confirms them with an Oath. So herein I may ſay, that though the Witneſs of Blood and Water might aſſure, if Men were watchful, and could obſerve their Hearts, yet becauſe that Teſtimony ends not the ſtrife ſo fully, therefore he being willing more abundantly to ſhew

shew to the Heirs of Salvation their Adoption, seals them with his Spirit, which is to them an end of strife, and for the present conquers all Doubts: And as when he swears, he useth no Name but his own, for none is greater than himself, so when he thus witnesseth, he useth the Help of no Witness but his own, and upon this Witness follows Joy unspeakable and glorious, it being the Earnest of Heaven; for it is a seeing my Estate of Grace and Adoption, not in the effects or Love-tokens, but in God's breast, as they in Heaven do. Now such joy follows not the other two Witnesses, though Peace and Quiet may.

Having consider'd the Witnesses on Earth, let us consider the Witnesses that are in Heaven, since also these concur in giving Assurance: And besides, what this place says, (which to me is clear) let us see what Evidence in other Scriptures may be for this distinct Witness in *Rev.* 1 4, 5. *John* (who had Experience of this work, and had gone thorough these three forms) wisheth to all Believers *Grace* and *Peace*, not from the Trinity in common only, but from each apart; *First*, From the Father, *From him who is, was, and is to come*; that is, from *Jehovah*, God the Father, the style of the whole being attributed to him who is *Fons Deitatis, the Fountain of the Godhead*: It is meant of the Father, because the other two are afterward distinctly mentioned, and then afterwards the Apostle wisheth Peace to them *From the seven Spirits which are before the Throne*: By which he means the Holy Ghost, who is the Author of all spiritual Graces, and who in his Gifts is various, and yet but one Spirit, as the Apostle says, 1 *Cor.* 12. the Effect is by him put for the Cause; and that he means the Holy Ghost is plain, because Grace can be wish'd from none but God, and therefore he must mean the Holy Ghost, the third Person of the Trinity. Then at last the Apostle wisheth them *Peace from Christ Jesus, who is the Faithful Witness*: Grace is the Original of that Love and Favour these three have in their Hearts to a Believer, and Peace is the Copy, the Assurance of it in his own. He wisheth them Peace from all these, from the Father, from the Son, and from the Holy Ghost; you see he names them not only together, but as it were apart, *From the Father, and from the Spirit, and from the Lord Jesus*; that Peace might be spoken from all these three Witnesses. That Promise made by Christ to his Apostles, when he promiseth them to send the Comforter, *John* 14. is a farther proof of this thing; they then had an implicite Knowledge of the three Persons Love to them, but he calls them to a more distinct bottoming, and pitching their thoughts on them all; *Ye believe in God*, (says he) ver. 1. *believe also in me*: They could not have believed in the one but the other must be supposed, for none comes to the Father but by the Son, *ver.* 6. The thoughts of Believers under the Old Testament ran much, and were drawn out more distinctly to God the Father, *John* 5. 32. *All men honoured the Father*; and says he, *ver.* 9. *He that knows me, knows the Father*; and *ver.* 17. he says, *That they knew the Spirit*: But all this was but implicitely, therefore he promiseth a more distinct Manifestation of these, and their Love to them with a witness after the Comforter should come, which he says he will send, *ver.* 16. and then they should know *He was in the Father, and the Father in him, and they in him*, ver. 20. To clear this, Consider,

First, That all three Persons have each a peculiar proper Hand in our Salvation, God the Father in electing, Christ in redeeming, the Holy Ghost in sanctifying, as many places of Scripture shew: For God's intent in the Gospel is as well to set up and magnifie the three Persons in a Believer's Heart, as his Attributes, and the Riches of his Grace and Mercy in common; therefore in *Eph.* 3. 3, 4, 5. *Paul* speaking of the Knowledge he had in the Mystery of the Gospel, refers us to what he had writ afore in few words, (not in another Epistle, but in this, namely the first Chapter) wherein he presents to them, *First*, What in a more particular manner God the Father had done for them, from *ver.* 1, to *ver.* 6. that he had appointed and set out all the Blessings they were to enjoy, elected Christ, and them in Christ, designed the Persons who should enjoy them, to the Praise of the Glory of his Grace: Then *Secondly*, He presents them with what God the Son had done, *ver.* 7, 8, 9. *Redemption through his Blood, and the purchase of all the Blessings God appointed to us*; both remission of sins, and the making known the Gospel, and the obtaining Heaven by his Blood: Then he shews them what the Holy Ghost had done, how he had *Sealed them*, and became *the*

Part II. *Earnest of their Inheritance*, ver. 13, 14. Now it being a principal Scope of the Gospel, as to draw Men to Salvation, and to magnifie the Riches of God's Grace in common to all the three Persons, so also to make known, and have Men take notice of, those three distinct hands these three Persons have in our Salvation. Therefore,

Secondly, Each of these three Persons will have their Love distinctly considered, and their several work, which manifests their Love, distinctly viewed, and studied, and taken notice of by Believers: And though when one Person is honoured, they are all jointly honoured in that one, and he that knows the one, knows the other, (*He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father*, John 14. 9.) yet they will have their Love considered so distinctly, that (as Christ says, *John* 5. 23.) *They may honour the Son as they honour the Father*, and so the Holy Ghost also; and take notice, and acknowledge what they have done for them, and that they may believe on the Son as well as on the Father, *John* 14. 1. *Ye believe in God, believe also in me.*; he draws their thoughts to himself more distinctly than yet they were: And therefore,

Thirdly, As in point of believing we are to exercise Faith on all three, so in point of Assurance we may have an Evidence from all three, and therefore as they are the Object of an act of Recumbency, so of Assurance too, as Witnesses. God draws out a Believer's thoughts sometimes more distinctly and clearly, to consider and admire God the Father's Love in electing him, in laying out all the blessings he should have in Christ, in choosing, appointing, and calling Christ to dye for him, in giving Christ to him, and him to Christ, in putting Christ to death himself, and becoming the Executioner, in imputing that his Death to him, *&c.* And then God carries the Soul more clearly to consider Christ's Love also in his Work, in giving himself, and that so willingly, in having an Eye to it when he hung on the Cross, in bearing its Name written in his Heart, when he was crucified, and in taking all its sins on his back, which made his Soul heavy unto the Death; and then God carries the Soul on to a more especial taking notice of God the Holy Ghost's Love, which is not considered ordinarily by Believers: He brings Souls to consider, it is the Holy Ghost sanctifies them, who begat them, and formed the New Creature in them, and who takes the pains to foster it, as a Nurse its little one, day and night, and who endures with much grief their Corruptions, which yet he cleanseth them from when they have defiled themselves, and who bears with them though they rebel and resist his Motions, and who watcheth them, and attends them when they wake, to suggests good thoughts to them, and when they shall go to the Ordinances is ready to assist them: God makes them consider, that all assistance in Duties is from the supply of the Spirit, that all the Comforts they have had *Is joy in the Holy Ghost*; that he *Helps their Infirmities*, indites their Prayers, makes Intercession in their Hearts, leads them and guides them, and carries them in his arms as Children; that he keeps them for Heaven, and hath took up their Hearts as his Temple, for ever to dwell there; that he seals them up for Heaven, and is the Earnest of that Inheritance, and he testifies that not only this is done, but that he doth it, and that it is his part, as you have them branched out, *Rom.* 8. and *Eph.* 1. and by this distinct Discovery of the Love of all the three Persons in their several workings, and contributing to the work of our Salvation, they bear a several witness to a poor Believer, so as he is carried on from Witness to Witness; and as a Man that is to have a Testimonial, goes to every Man apart for his Hand, so is the Soul carried from one Person to another.

I shall only answer an Objection, and add a Caution or two.

Object. The Objection is this, *How the Holy Ghost is said to be a distinct Witness on Earth, and also in Heaven, and to have also a distinct Testimony, as one of the three in Heaven, from that of the three on Earth?*

Answ. To answer this, Consider, That it is the Holy Ghost who is the Reporter and Recorder of all these six Testimonies, and therefore is named in both, for Blood could not testifie without him, nor Water: As Grace cannot work, so nor Comfort without him, unless he irradiates it, and opens the Mouth of it to witness, This I think to be the most genuine intent of that place, *Rom.* 8. 16. when he is

is said *To witness with our Spirits*, for Grace in us could not witness if he joined not with it; yet he is said to have a distinct witness from theirs, because he hath a Testimony beyond and without theirs; and so it is the Holy Ghost also that is the Reporter of the Father's Love, and of Christ's, and of his own; for as Christ says, *John* 16. 14. *He shall glorifie me, and receive of mine, and shew it to you:* He it is that witnesseth Christ's Love, and so the Father's also, they do all by him, and nothing immediately apart, and therefore when Christ says, he will manifest himself, in that place of *John* 14. before quoted, he first promises the Comforter, as the Manifester of him and of the Father: But yet they are said to be three, and their Testimony apart several, because their Love and Work is distinctly revealed, and witnessed by that Spirit, and his own also: And the Soul is drawn to consider, that the Person of the Father shews his Love more especially in electing, the Son in redeeming, and he himself in comforting, *&c.* So that though he witnesseth all, yet it is in their Name, and they are the Persons concerning whom the witness is given, and his witness as he is one of the three on Earth, is distinct from that as he is one of the three in Heaven: For as he is a Witness on Earth, the matter of his Testimony is in general, the Blessings themselves bestowed, Justification, Adoption, *&c.* and the whole work of the three Persons, as it is in common for Salvation, is the thing witnessed, as it is also by *Water* and *Blood*. But now as he is a Witness in Heaven, the Persons that have done these come in to be more nighly considered, and his witness is of himself, and of what he hath done towards the Believer's Salvation: He opens the Believer's heart to have Fellowship with himself, and to see that he it is that hath sanctified, comforted him, *&c.* so that he witnesseth his own part in this Salvation: In the other Testimony he witnesseth that the Person is *sanctified, elected*, &c. but now he makes him take notice in an especial manner of the Person sanctifying and sealing him, *&c.* and of the Father as electing, *&c.* And therefore he influenceth the Man to walk so as not to grieve him, to bear a respect to him that doth all this in that relation; Upon which Ground is that Exhortation of the Apostle founded, *Grieve not the Holy Spirit, wherewith you are sealed*, Eph. 4. 30. For when a Believer takes notice that the Spirit hath done all this for him, wrought all the Grace he hath, and brought in all his Comfort, he will have a respect to him, and have a distinct tenderness to him in that relation, as well as to Christ and to the Father. In the one the Spirit is as the common Broad-Seal of the whole Trinity, and of all the blessings bestowed upon us: In the other he is a Seal of himself in a more distinct manner, and so of the other two. As in Seals of Offices that a Bishop or Arch-deacon give out, there is the Seal of the Office, and often they will set their own private Seals on the back side also, so doth the Spirit, who as he is reckoned among the Witnesses on Earth, is the Seal of the Office in common, (the things sealed being the Blessings and Works of the whole Trinity in common) but in the other their Private Seals are set to, and his among the other, which makes him a distinct Witness.

Only now these Cautions must be added.

First, That this distinct Testimony of these Witnesses in Heaven is a thing many Christians have not observed in themselves, nor may happily never come to have a full Experience of: God doth not deal with all in this manner; many come not to have Assurance at all, much less this; the People of God under the Old Testament had it not, for the three Persons were not so distinctly known in their several works in their Salvation to them; and therefore when the Apostle had discovered this Mystery, *Eph.* 5. how the Father elects, the Son redeems, and the Spirit seals, in the third *Chapter*, ver. 4, and 5. he says, that in other ages this Mystery in this distinct manner was not made known to the Sons of Men, not as it is now revealed. And the Apostles also then had it not, *John* 14. 1. that is, not so distinctly, and in that manner I have spoken of it. It is a thing many know not the meaning of, that yet have Grace, for their Hearts are wholly drawn out to Christ, and they but implicitely apprehend, or seldom consider or think, what God the Father, or the Spirit hath done.

And then *Secondly*, This Caution must be put also in, that for the order of this distinct Testimony in those that have it, or of taking notice of Christ's Love,

Part II. or the Fathers, no Rule can be set down. Christ's Love breaks in upon many first, and then the Father's. What hath been said, is to shew such a Work is in some, and may be had, and is to be aimed at, being now made known to you.

Neither *Thirdly* is my meaning, As if Believers could apprehend the Father's Love thus apart from Christ's, or Christ's from the Fathers; or as if the one could be without the other, for the one is not to be severed from the other; and if any thinks the Father loves him e're he hath had Faith in Christ, and rested on him, it is a *Turkish, Jewish* Faith.: But yet things that are not in themselves, nor in our supposition severed, may in our thoughts be more distinctly viewed, and apart sealed to us.

And *Fourthly*, Though Believers know and acknowledge what the three Persons have done for them, yet that is not the work meant by the Testimony of these Witnesses: As long as this Knowledge is deduc'd but by way of Consequence, that is, when they consider, that because they are sanctified therefore they are justified, and because they are justified therefore they are elected, redeemed, *&c.* this is to know it by way of Deduction: But it is an Intuitive Knowledge that I mean, to see it, and to have the Heart affected, and the Love of each distinctly brought home to them, and their hearts to dwell on the direct consideration of the Work and Love of each Person, so as to come to have also Fellowship with them all in Prayer and Walking from day to day.

The *Fifth* Caution is, That to direct poor Souls humbled to Faith, the way is not to direct them first to God the Father's Love, but to cast themselves on Christ, who leads to the Father, *Eph.* 2. 18. and *John* 14. 6. For at first Men apprehend God according to the Rules of the Word, as an angry Judge, and Christ as he that pacifies him, *Col.* 1. 21. but when they are come to God, and cast themselves on him through Christ, then they are brought to see God the Father (whom before they look'd on as a Judge) to be pacified by Christ, and to have as willing a heart to save them as Christ himself hath. It was suitably the Speech of a godly Person, *As Christ makes Intercession for me, so God loves to have it so.*

CHAP. VI.

That since Assurance is attainable, it is our Duty earnestly to desire and endeavour the attainment of it.

SInce then (as we have seen) Assurance of our Salvation may be attain'd, Let us not rest and content our selves in abiding in this Wilderness of Faith of Relyance only, though it be that which brought us out of *Egypt*, and will lead us to *Canaan*, and is that by which God translateth us from Death to Life: Say of that State, this is not my rest, though I have much rest and quietness of Heart in it and by it.

It is the Duty of every one that doth believe to grow up to Assurance, and it is his sin not to make out for it, it is his sin to sit down on this side of it. There is this Difference between a Believer and one in an Unregenerate Condition, that a Man who doth not yet believe, and is not immediately (in that state) obliged to Acts of Assurance, yet is obliged immediately to believe on the Name of the Son of God: But to be assured, cannot be the first act required of one that doth not yet believe. But now when once a Man hath believed on the Name of the Son of God, then the next and great duty that lies upon him, is to endeavour to know that he hath Eternal Life, and by all ways and means to seek after the Knowledge of it. There are many Duties which a Man is bound to, but not bound to immediately: Every Man in the World that hears of the Gospel, is bound indeed to receive the Sacraments, as Baptism first, and then the Lords Supper, *&c.* but he is not bound to these immediately; but he is bound to be in the state of Grace first, to be in Christ first; he is bound to repent, and to turn to God, and to believe on the Name of the Son

on of God: But when once he is in the state of Grace, all these things lye pon him then as Duties. The Apostle (1 *John* 5. 10.) urgeth it as a Duty, or a Man that already believeth, to seek after the Knowledge that he hath Eternal Life; saith he, *ver.* 10. *He that believeth on the Son of God*, (if he have but hat Faith of Relyance) *hath the witness in himself*; the Meaning whereof is ot, that he hath the prevailing act of witnessing, for then if that were the meaning, every man that believes on the Son of God should have an Act of Assurance; ut the meaning is, he hath the matter of it in himself; he hath the Spirit of Adoption within him, and he hath the Blood of Christ sprinkled upon his Conscience; and herefore having the matter of Assurance in himself, if he do not grow up unto it, it is through his own Default; it is because he neglects, or turns a deaf ear to the continual Whisperings and secret Suggests of the Holy Ghost concerning his Condition, and rather willingly listens to Sathan, and saith of all he Spirits Impressions, that they are but the Voice and Sayings of his own Heart, nd doth not listen to the Voice of the Blood of Christ, which speaks (tho' vith a still voice) better things than his Conscience doth, or can do, whenever e hath recourse to it by Faith; for he never goes to Christ, and throws, and athes himself in his Blood, but still there is a secret Witness comes off with , (1 *John* 5. 8.) more or less to the quieting of his heart. Now when Men re as negligent in cherishing the Dictates of the Spirit, as they are in complying with his Motions to good, when they regard not the voice behind them, ut tho' God speaks once or twice, (as *Job* says in another case) yet they ever mind it; when they who have the matter of the Witness in themselves, us go and throw it all off, and are in Love with the contrary despairing nd doubting thoughts, they are guilty of a great sin which the Apostle says before hem. He who doth this makes *God a Lyar*: For as in that other part of od's Record, wherein God hath set forth his Son Jesus Christ as a sufficient Saviour, and hath given that record of him, that he is his Son, and that him is Life, and that there is a propitiation in his Blood, every Man ow that is in his Natural Estate, that hears this, and comes not in and beeveth, that receiveth not this record, he makes God a Lyar, he openly contradicts God's Testimony, and proclaims that he believeth not that Christ is ch a Christ as God hath testified he is: So on the other side, in a Man that in the state of Grace, that hath Faith, and so hath the Son and Eternal Life, l the Fears and Doubts that Man hath to the contrary, do in like manner ake God a Lyar. The Apostle *John* speaks that of not receiving God's ecord upon occasion of both, for as the six Witnesses serve to shew us that hrist is the Son of God, so that we are the Sons of God, and have Eternal Life hen we do believe; and therefore that Speech of his, *He that believeth not the ecord God gave of his Son, makes God a Lyar*; it holdeth as well of a Believers not believing he hath Eternal Life after he hath believed, as of his not beeving on the Son of God. So that as it is the Duty of every Man to beeve on Christ for Salvation, and to believe this Record that God hath gien of his Son, and it is the great damning sin not to believe this, (*John* 3. 8. and *John* 16. 8, 9.) and by not doing it Men do make God a Lyar; so also it the Duty of every one that believeth, having the Witness in himself, to grow unto Assurance; and if they encourage all Fears and Doubts to the contrary, far they do in their measure and proportion make God a Liar, in this respect that ey believe not the Record that God hath given concerning Believers, as well his Son Jesus; for *The not believing God*, ver, 10. hath reference *To this rerd, that God hath given us Eternal Life*, ver. 11. So that the Apostle upon the very me ground (in the 10*th.* and 11*th.* verses of this Chapter) urgeth those in hom God hath wrought Faith, and to whom he hath given his Spirit, to grow to Assurance, and to know they have Eternal Life, that he urgeth those at are not Believers to believe on the Son of God, he urgeth this common ound to both of them, of making God a Lyar.

Object. But here will one thing be said, *Are the Meanest Christians obliged to is? and may the Lowest Christians attain to this?*

Answ. Yes, all sorts may, for you see *John* here writeth his Epistle to all sorts, *John* 2. 14. *I write unto you Babes*, as well as unto you *Young Men* and *Fathers*, *because*

Part II. *because your sins are forgiven you, for his Names sake, and because ye have known the Father:* And (saith he) your sins being forgiven you, I write these things even unto you, that you may grow up to the Knowledge of this, and that you may know that you have Eternal Life; and though it be true, (as I said) that the first act of Faith which those that are newly converted do put forth, cannot be Assurance, yet it may be the very next Act. Our Saviour Christ pronounceth to the poor palsey Man even at the first, that his sins were forgiven him, *Mat.* 9. 2. and so to *Mary*, Luke 7. 37, 48. when she was newly converted, (ye she had believed first, which occasioned her coming to him) that her sins were forgiven; so that even Babes in Christianity are capable of it. There are many things we attain not, because we do not set them up as our Mark, but we rest below them, as in the case of Perfection; as many (saith the Apostle) as are thus minded, let them aim at that Mark that I aim at. Mark are their Endeavours, and as their Mark and Aims are: Now then go home, and set this up for your Mark and Aim from this time forth, say with your selves, I do see it is my Duty to grow up to Assurance that I have Eternal Life, it is my great sin to do otherwise; I see that it will improve all Graces in me, it will help me to Confidence in Prayer, it will perfect my love unto God, it will make me serve him without Fear, it will make me more holy, besides all the Comfort it will bring in to me; this therefore I will set up as my Mark, I will never pray but I will seek this in a more eminent manner, I will never receive the Lords Supper, but I will put this in, that the Lord would come in to bestow it on me; I will listen to all the Witnesses I find whispering to my Heart by the Spirit, or by the promises suggested to me, and that is the of what it is that Assurance may be attained in this Life, as far as this Epistle of *John* holds it forth. Let me first give this as a Premise to all that follows, that you may understand my Meaning more distinctly, That though a Man's assured of all implicitely at once, yet the Holy Ghost oftentimes doth distinctly set on first one thing, and then another: You have Experience of it in all your whole Converse with God, that one Truth is set on at one time, and another at another; so it is with the Object matters of Assurance.

First, He hath assurance of all those Benefits which God hath bestowed, and all the Priviledges which a Man enjoys in Christ; as to know the pardon of his sins, and that I am justified, that I have right in Eternal Life, that I am a Son; this you see the Text holds forth, *That you may know* (saith he) *that you have Eternal Life:* So Chap. 3. *ver.* 1, 2. *Now are we the Sons of God.* To see the Priviledges of a Man's Sonship, and to be assured of it, this is the first degree of Assurance, or at least the lowest actings of it.

Now to come to know that my Sins are forgiven me, and that I have Eternal Life, *&c.* What is this? It is but implicitely the Assurance of the Priviledges which I have in Christ, which, I say, is the lowest degree of Assurance: Why? because this is it which more suiteth self love; all this while the Soul may not have explicite sence so much of the Love of God shed abroad in the Heart, but explicitely or distinctly in his own consideration, his thoughts are taken up rather with view of the Priviledges which he hath in Christ, and he triumpheth therein. Now as to love Christ for his Benefits is the lowest degree of Love, though there may be true Love in it, so to have assurance of the Benefits we have by Christ, is the lowest Degree of Assurance.

Secondly, Besides Assurance of my Interest in all the Benefits and Priviledges of a Man who is in Christ, there is explicite assurance of the Love of God in Christ; and this assurance *John* also holds forth in this Epistle, when he says, *We have known and believed the Love that God hath to us*, John 4. 16. It is not only a knowing and believing that I have Eternal Life, and that I am the Son of God, *&c.* but withall explicitely to know also and believe the Love that God hath to me, and to have my Heart taken and swallowed up with that, which in the next words he calls *Dwelling in Love*, so as a Man walks in it, works in it, lies down in it, shelters himself in it, as a Man doth in his House. Now the Love of God is brought home to the Heart in and by two things, (which also *John* here holds forth, for I confine my self to what he saith,) 1. In those Benefits which the Lord out of Love hath bestowed upon me, and given me

ne the Assurance of, and over and above this, his Love with them. And, 2. Also in those Works that God hath done to procure those Benefits and Priviledges to me.

1. There is Assurance of God's Love in the Benefits themselves; *Behold* (saith he) *what manner of Love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God*, 1 John 3. 1. He calls upon Believers to *behold*, to consider it again and again, not to admire the Love of God indefinitely: He calleth them not to an indefinite consideration of the Love of God unto some, or what may be their Lot, (which indeed may draw in Faith of Recumbency, or Reliance upon God for his Love) but to a consideration of a Determinate Special Love, which God at the present bore to themselves in particular, and had settled on them, and had bestowed upon them, and is now at present estated on them; *Now* (saith he) *we are the Sons of God*: And he calls them to consider the infinite greatness of this Love; *Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the Sons of God.* Here is not only the Priviledge of Sonship, and the Glory of it, set on upon the Heart with Assurance, but here is an admiration of that Love set on more than the Benefits themselves.

2. We ought especially to regard the Works and Actings of God for us, and to rejoice in the Assurance of his Love seen herein, and to have this Love shed abroad in our Hearts; this you have 1 *John* 4. 9, 10. where he speaks of the Love both of the Father and the Son, in what they have done for us; *Herein is love*, (saith he, on the Fathers part in Election) *that he loved us first*, v. 9. and also, *That he sent his only begotten Son into the World to dye for us, and to be the propitiation for our sins*, v. 9, 10. and herein is Love on the Son's part, (as in these common to him with the Father) in giving himself so willingly for us; hereby we perceive *The Love of God, because he laid down his life for us*: It is the Son's Love (whose Life it was) he speaks of. Now for the Heart to be taken with this Love of God, in what he hath done for us, and to have the Heart steeped and dipped in that Love, so as to taste and relish the love more than what is purchased by it, this is a further thing than the former, it is an higher degree of Assurance, this is called (*Rom.* 5. 5.) *The shedding of the love of God abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost*, which is another thing then by way of consequence to apprehend this Love, and the greatness of it, from the Benefits bestowed when we have them: This is when all the Powers do taste that Love as in it self diffused and brought home by the Holy Ghost, which all the Arguments in the World and rational Discourses can never do. When I have an Assurance that my sins are forgiven, and that I am a Son, *&c.* tho' if the Holy Ghost spake no more, yet I might by way of Argument argue what a Love this is; but to have the Love it self brought home, and shed abroad in my Heart, this is more, for the Love is more than all the Benefits, or than all that God hath done for us.

Thirdly, That which the Apostle holds forth here, and intends in this Epistle, is not only an Assurance of the Benefits, that they are ours, that we are Sons, and have Eternal Life; it is not only the Assurance of the Love of God shewn in these Benefits, and in what he hath done for us, and what Love he hath born to us, but it is a Fellowship with God the Father, and God the Son; so he tells you 1 *John* 1. 3, 4. *These things we write unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.* Now to have Fellowship with God and with Jesus Christ, is more than simply to know and believe the Love that God hath to us: It is when all the Excellencies of God and of Christ are made known to us, and our Interest therein, and all in an appearance of Love. It is not only when God manifesteth his Love in the Benefits he hath bestowed on us, and in that which he hath done for us, but when all that is in God, and all the Beauty and Glory in him, appears to us cloathed and apparelled with Love, as he saith, 1 *John* 4. 16. *God is Love*; We know and believe, saith he, *The love that God hath to us*; in what he hath done, that's one thing; but then it follows, *God is love*; himself, and all in himself, is thus manifested to us, this is another. There is, 1. The Love that God hath to us. And then, 2. God himself is said to be Love, and God is so to be apprehended by us, and so we ought to have fellowship with him, and to have an Interest in all the Excellencies and Glory that are in him, and then

Part II. the Heart dwelleth in God, (as it follows there) and God dwelleth in him. It is not a burning up of the flesh, as some speak, or that the Creature ceaseth to be a Creature, and is one with the Creator, God with God ; No, that is an higher Union than Jesus Christ himself had in the flesh, by whom our Redemption was purchased, and by vertue of which it was called the Blood of God, and the Righteousness of God, (which can be said of no Man in the World ;) but tho' the Man Christ Jesus was one Person with the Son of God, and so all his Obedience was the Obedience of God, yet he had a Distinct Being, and he had a Distinct Will from that of the Father, a Will of his own ; *Not my will be done*, (saith he, *Mat.* 26. 39.) *but thine :* Whereas now that other Notion is of a higher Union than the Union that Christ had, and if Men were raised up to such a Union, then they might by their Death *redeem sinners, as Christ himself did* : I therefore mean only, that the Glory of God objectively, and all that is in God, in a way of Love presented to the Soul, filleth it, dwelleth in it ; as if the Sun should come down into a House, and dwell in it, instead of dwelling in Heaven, and yet still the House remain what it was before ; so it is here, God dwells in the Heart, and the Heart dwells in God, and yet still the Heart remains what it was ; that this is a further thing than that I spake of afore, and that it is more than for a Man to know the Love of God in what he hath bestowed on him, and done for him, is evident by that place in *John* 14. 21. *He that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest my self to him :* And the Apostle speaks of this too, *Eph.* 3. 18, 19. where besides knowing *The love of Christ, which passeth knowledge*, there is a Phrase *of being filled with all the fullness of God*; that is, whenas all the fulness that is in God, is presented to a Man in a way of Love; not that he is swallowed up into God, but God filleth him ; he dwelleth in God, and God dwelleth in him, yet he remaining still what he was, and God remaining what he is too. It is not the fulness of God dwelling in us bodily, or personally, as it dwelt in the Man Christ Jesus ; No, that is proper to Christ by distinction (Col. 2. 16.) from God's dwelling in us ; *In him* (saith he) *dwelt the fulness of the Godhead bodily* : Now by Body there is meant Person, as they that understand the Idiom of the *Greek Tongue* know, as Soul in the *Hebrew* is put for Person, so *many souls* are said to come out of *Jacob's Loyns*, (Exod. 1. 5.) so bodily in the Greek is taken personally. There is, I say, a personal union between the fulness of the Godhead dwelling in Jesus Christ and himself, and therefore in the same place, it is said to dwell in him, as the Head of all Principalities and Powers ; and all that is in God filleth him as our Head, and dwelleth personally in him, which Phrase, I say, is used by way of distinction from the Creature. And yet all this while that the Godhead dwelt bodily or personally in him, he remained in the flesh, whereas the union that is now cryed up is higher than this of Christ's, and while Men seek to be spiritual, they detract from God, and run into Blasphemy against God and Christ. But this Communication of which I speak, is objectively, when all that is in God is presented to the Soul in a way of Love, and when the Soul hath Fellowship and Communion with him, all that is in God is his, and he sees himself an Heir of God, (*Rom.* 8. 16, 17.) and he hath all that is in God to delight in ; and God manifesteth the Beauty and Glory that is in himself unto him in love, and so the Soul dwells in God, and God in him, and all in Love.

Fourthly, Add this to it, That there is Communion and Fellowship with all the Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and their Love severally and distinctly. This is that Communion that *John* held forth, and which the Comforter promised unto the Apostles brought them into, and which the Apostle here would wind us up to, and put us upon the seeking after. Now there is an implicite Communion with all these Persons, so that if my Heart be affected with the Love of one, I may know the Love of all the rest implicitely, as appears from *John* 14. 7, 9. *If ye had known me, you should have known my Father also* ; but this is but implicitely, and therefore he saith afterwards, *At that day ye shall know both me and my Father, and that I am in the Father, and you in me, and I in you: Shew us the Father,* (saith *Philip*) *and it sufficeth us :* The poor Man spake he knew not what, spake ignorantly, as oftentimes they did ; but Christ here promiseth more, *I will give you the Spirit,* (saith he) *and he shall be in you, and I will love you, and my*

y Father shall love you, and we will make our abode with you: Do not then stint your elves here, that it sufficeth that you know the Father; No, Christ putteth you pon labouring after a distinct Knowing of, and Communion with all three ersons; and the Apostle *John* also speaks in the same strain, 1 *John* 1. 3. *That e may have fellowship with the Father, and with the Son*; not only with the Father y having Fellowship with the Son, and by having fellowship with the Son o to have Fellowship with the Father, and so to have Fellowship with the one n the other implicitely, but distinctly with the one and with the other, and istinctly with the one as with the other, and so to be acquainted with all, nd to view the Love of one as well as of the other; as Christ saith, *John* 14. 1. *Ye believe in God, believe also in me*; so have Communion with God, and have Communion also with me. There is also an implicite Knowledge of the Holy Ghost; *You know him*, saith Christ to his Disciples, *John* 14. 17. that is, they new him in his Work, but they knew him not in his Love distinctly, and they ad not acquaintance with his Person, and they had not the Love of the Holy Ghost rought home to them. Now we are distinctly to have Communion both with he Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as he saith in that place, *John* 14. 23. *I will ove him, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode ith him.* As the three Angels that came to *Abraham* were all entertained by him, o for a Man to converse with, and entertain into his Heart, or rather be enterained by all three Persons, and to have the love of them all distinctly brought ome to his Heart, and to view the love of them all apart, this is the Communion that *John* here would raise up our Hearts unto: And this *John* here in his Chapter, *ver.* 7, 8. tells us, that there are three Witnesses in Heaven, who as hey witness that Christ is the Son of God, so they witness to us that we are the ons of God, and that we have Eternal Life in his Son; *There are three that bear ecord in Heaven*, (saith he) and these are three Persons in the Divive Nature, nd not three Manifestations only; for if so, then there would be as many Persons as Manifestations; and when Christ saith, *John* 14. 21. *I will manifest my self unto ou*, if Christ were but only the Manifestation of God, then there would be a nanifestation of a manifestation: No, he is a Person, *I will manifest my self*, (saith he) *and my Father he will manifest himself unto you*; and so when it is said, (1 *Cor.* 12. 7.) *That the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal*, if he Spirit himself were but a manifestation, there were a manifestation of a manifestation. No, the Spirit is a Person, and manifesteth himself, as Jesus Christ is a Person, and therefore speaks of manifesting himself; and as the Father is a Person, and therefore saith he will manifest himself, they are three Persons, and not Manifestations only. Neither are they as the Attributes in God, for if so, here would be then more than Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; there would be s many as Attributes, Wisdom is an Attribute, and Power is an Attribute, and Truth and Justice, and Holiness; and therefore if all in God were thus varied, here were more than three. It holds forth therefore Persons, Jesus Christ speaks as a Person, *John* 14. 1. *Ye believe in God, believe also in me*: And the Holy Ghost speaks as a Person, speaks in the Language of a Person, *Acts* 13. 2. *Separate ME Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them*: You have he like in *Acts* 10. 19, 20. *The Spirit said unto Peter, behold, three men seeek thee, rise therefore and get thee down, and go with them, doubting nothing, for I have sent them*: Still, I say, the Holy Ghost speaks as a Person. Now as these three are one in Nature, so they become three distinct Witnesses, and their very being three Witnesses argue them three Persons, (let me also cast that in by the by) there s a notable place for it in *John* 8. 13, 14. the *Jews* there excepted against the Testimony of Christ, and they said, that he bore Record of himself, and therefore his Record was not true: Why, saith he, I am not alone, but there is the Father that witnesseth with me, and it is written in your Law, that the Testimony of two Men is true; and, saith he, I am one that bear witness of my self, and the Father that sent me, beareth witness of me; so that in witnessing he joins himself with his Father, as equal with him therein; and makes himself and his Father two Witnesses, (you see how he stands upon it in that place) and himself as authentique a Witness as his Father: Now as the Father and the Son thus witness, so saith the Apostle in 1 *Joh.* 5. 7. the Holy Ghost also is a Witness; *There are three* (saith he) *that bear re-*

Part II.

cord in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: Now the Witness that they bear, is, 1. That Christ is the Son of God. And, 2. That we are the Sons of God, and that we have eternal Life. When Christ was baptized, all three Persons witnessed that he was the Son of God, and they all owned that Nature that was baptized: The Father from Heaven said, *This is my beloved Son*; he speaks distinctly; the Holy Ghost he comes down from Heaven, and with Joy answerably, *Like a Dove descended upon him*; and you heard even now of Christ his witnessing of himself, *John* 8. 13, 14. *I bear witness of my self*, (saith he) *Teste meipso*; he speaks like God, like one that was as good a Witness as the Father. Now what was done to Christ, the same is a Believer capable of, (for that is *John*'s Scope) capable to receive as distinct a Witness, though not in a visible way, and by a Voice from Heaven, for God speaks not now so to the Spirits of Men, but yet in as distinct a manner. For the three Persons as they loved us distinctly, (as might be shewn at large) so they bring home their Love distinctly and apart to the Soul, and the Communion that *John* would raise us up unto is with all three Persons distinctly, to view their Love severally, and have it all severally brought home to our Hearts, all of them manifesting their Love unto the Soul. Besides, the three Witnesses that are on Earth, the Water, and Blood, and immediate Testimony of the Spirit in common, there are these three Witnesses of the Persons in Heaven; and therefore hast thou had the Love of the Father brought home to thee, rest not in that, get the Love of the Son brought home to thee too, and then rest not untill all three Persons manifest their Love to thee.

As in believing sometimes a Man's Heart is drawn out to believe in God the Father; that is, look what is said of God the Father's Love, and concerning his giving Christ, and choosing Men to life, and in this his Election regarding neither sin in them nor good, (for Free Grace is properly the Fathers) a Man hath Support from all such Considerations, and he believeth in God; but whilst he doth so, his Heart it may be is not so distinctly drawn out to Jesus Christ at that time. So it is in Assurance, sometimes a Man's Communion and Converse is with the one, sometimes with the other; sometimes with the Father, then with the Son, and then with the Holy Ghost; sometimes his Heart is drawn out to consider the Father's Love in choosing, and then the Love of Christ in redeeming, and so the Love of the Holy Ghost that searcheth the deep things of God, and revealeth them to us, and taketh all the pains with us; and so a Man goes from one Witness to another distinctly; which, I say, is the Communion that *John* would have us to have: And therefore *Grace and Peace* (Grace is that love that is in the Nature of God, and Peace is that Joy that flows from the assurance of it) are wished from *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost:* Ordinarily you have it from the Father and the Son, but *John* (and he alone) pronounceth it from all three, (*Rev.* 1. 4, 5.) witnessing as the Love of God, so the love of themselves distinctly; as the Grace of God the Father is brought home with peace, so the Grace of God the Son, and of God the Holy Ghost; and therefore as our Fellowship is with the Father and the Son, as he saith, 1 *John* 1. 3. so also with the Holy Ghost, 1 *John* 4. 13. and this they in the Old Testament wanted. And this Assurance it is not a Knowledge by way of Argument or Deduction, whereby we infer that if one loveth me, then the other loveth me, but it is intuitively, as I may so express it, and we should never be satisfied till we have attained it, and till all three Persons lye level in us, and all make their abode with us, and we sit as it were in the middest of them, while they all manifest their love unto us; this is *John*'s Communion, and this is the highest that ever Christ promised in this life, (in his last Sermon, *John* 14.) and you must know that this Epistle of *John* it answers to that Sermon; *At that day*, (saith Christ, *ver.* 20.) namely, when he would send the Comforter, *You shall know that I am in the Father, and you in me, and I in you:* That Union and Communion with the Father immediately, (which is the whole of some Mens Religion) whilst it pretends to more spiritualness, (for what more spiritual then for Creatures to be swallowed up into God) it runs into the highest derogation to God and to Christ that can be. But that which Christ promiseth, is, that they should know their Union with the Father, but he leaves not out the Son. Poor *Philip* he ignorantly said, Shew us the Father, and it sufficeth; No, saith Christ, the Comforter shall shew you your Union

on with the Father, and with me too; for you must never betake your selves to the Father only, and leave me out. Therefore now to talk of such a Communion, wherein Men betake themselves to the Father, and go to him immediately, this is not the Communion which *John* had; and he that denies the Son, and Communion with him, denies the Father also. The Communion which the Apostle exhorts to, is with all the three Witnesses in Heaven, which a Man shall find when he comes there, and your Communion for ever will lye in them; the fulness of the Godhead dwelling then in you by Vision, which now you take in by Faith, and all three Persons will be enjoyed and possest by Vision: It is by a more high and elevated way, but it is of the same Nature, and hath still the same Object. Book II.

CHAP. VII.

Christ's Discovery of himself to the Soul, instanc'd in the Example of Christ's manifesting himself to Mary Magdalen, *after his Resurrection, as a Pattern of his like Dealings with Believing Souls, seeking him now after his Ascension into Heaven.*

JOHN XX. 16, 17.

Jesus saith unto her, Mary; she turned her self, and saith unto him, Rabboni, which is to say, Master.

Jesus saith unto her, touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: But go to my Brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father, and to my God, and your God.

WE are married to an Husband risen from the dead, (as you have it in express words, *Rom.* 7. 4.) there is nothing can be supposed therefore more welcome then to hear authentick Stories of his Deportment and Converse (after his Advancement, and so great an Alteration) with any that were his Familiars before, and espoused to him, as we all are: And in this Chapter (wherein you find his first flight after his being risen again) you have two Eminent such Instances, The one in his Demeanour towards a poor mean Woman, and the other towards his Apostles, who were as mean Creatures as her self.

It seems to me evident, that the most eminent Scope of these Stories left to *John*, after all the rest, to record, is to hold forth this Sweet and Pleasant Disposition of Christ our Lord to such Souls as love him, and the Ground and Intent of this Relation is to shew how his Spiritual Dealings, and all Discoveries of himself to poor Souls, now he is in Heaven, do hold proportion and Analogy with these bodily Appearances and Converses, accompanied with suitable spiritual Impressions unto this Woman.

And as a ground for this, I take in its Coherence that Promise, *John* 14. 21. he had promised to his Apostles to comfort them personally; not by his Spirit only, but by his own personal seeing and conversing with them again after his Resurrection, *ver.* 18, 19, 20. *Yet a little while*, (says he) *and the world seeth me no more*; (for after his Resurrection he appear'd not to one carnal man, but only to his own) *but you shall see me*, and that alive, risen from the dead, *and because I live, you shall live also*; *and in that day*, (as also by my Spirit after my Ascension) *you shall know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you*: Now least others in after ages should think that they being born out of time, are therefore deprived of this Priviledge of Christ's appearings, such as he made unto the Apostles and others in that

Age

Part II. Age upon his Resurrection, he adds that promise, *ver.* 21. So then these his Bodily Apparitions, with Spiritual Impressions, as they were to these his Disciples, were Proofs and Pledges of like Spiritual Manifestations of himself to our Faith unto the End of the World.

Observ. 1. *That Christ by a strong and strange Providence singleth out some special Persons to make them partakers of Special Priviledges and Discoveries from himself.* And it was a great Priviledge Christ vouchsaf'd to this Woman, in manifesting himself to her after his Resurrection: It gladded his Fathers Heart to see his Son risen again, as he utters it rejoicingly, (*Psal.* 2. 7.) *This day have I begotten thee*, speaking of the Resurrection, as appears from *Acts* 13. 33. As *Solomon's* Mothers Heart rejoiced at the day of his Coronation, so God's Heart is glad at the Coronation of his Son, of whom *Solomon* was a Type. It must needs also proportionably rejoice the Heart of a poor Soul, who so dearly loved Christ, to be the first that should see him alive again, and in his New Robes and Dress; and that *Mary* had this first sight of him was not casual, nor fell out indifferently, but electively, and as done out of Choice by Christ, he had a set design to take and find her alone, and so to honour her more eminently with this Discovery, and his Providences were answerably strong to accomplish it, (as you may observe in the History) that it might appear he intended to put a differing respect upon her from the rest. *Mary Magdalen*, and *Joanna*, and *Mary* the Mother of *James*, with other Women, had visited his Sepulchre, and after them also *Peter* and *John*, Luke 24. But still our Lord withholds himself, and comes not out of his Invisibility; and *Mary Magdalen* her self, for whom this favour was design'd, was depriv'd of the sight of her Lord at present, because they were in her Company: But when they were gone home, and *Mary* stood without at the Sepulchre, (*John* 20. 10.) and was now severed from the rest, Christ had her alone, and then breaks forth from out of his Obscurity; and that it was a design'd Favour to her, the Holy Ghost remarks, and puts a Note upon it, *Mark* 16. 9. *That he appeared first to Mary Magdalen, out of whom he had cast seven Devils.*

Are there not some of you here present, towards whom in eminent Discoveries of himself, or in some other Prviledges, God hath held the like course, and hath made a manifest Difference between you and others? he hath shown thee perhaps more Mercy than all thy Kindred, or than others of thine own Rank, Sex, Society and Countrey, wherein thou hast lived: Hast thou not perceived how God hath revealed his Secrets to thee a Babe, when he hath industriously hid them from the wise and prudent? Christ thanks God for this on his Disciples behalf, (*Mat.* 11. 25.) and wilt not thou thank him on thine own behalf? Kings and Prophets have desired to see and hear the things which you see and hear. We should learn to observe and study out such peculiarities of Mercies, by considering what God hath done for us comparatively to others.

Another thing to be consider'd, is, Who was this *Mary* to whom Christ vouchsaf'd this first discovery of himself? I insist not on it that she was a Woman, to whom Christ revealed himself, in his Person, in such a manner as he vouchsafed not to a whole Colledge of Apostles; however they excelled her in the Discovery of the deep Misteries of the Gospel, (which was their Glory, 1 *Cor.* 2) yet in the personal Discovery or Manifestation of the Person of Christ himself, she is preferred before them: I therefore limit it to the Revelation of his Person, because there is a Spirit of Revelation in the Knowledge of him, which consists in personal Communion with him; as well as there is a way of Notional Wisdom and Prudence vouchsafed to ordinary Christians, *Eph.* 1. 17. and many a poor Soul is therein preferr'd to the Holy, Learned Ones of the World, the Reason of which is evident, because the Promise of that Manifestation is made to them who love him most, *John* 14. 21. which weak ones, Women, and unnotional Souls often most do, and of this intuitive Knowledge such Souls are as immediately capable as the learnedest.

But there is another Consideration beyond this, upon which the Scripture it self hath put the Notoriety and greatest Observation, and that is this, That she had been the greatest of Sinners: We have this from the Holy Ghost himself, who would have us to observe it, and therefore upon this very occurence he hath recorded it, there where he mentioneth this her Priviledge, *Mark* 16. 9. It is all one as

as if he had said, he appeared first to *Mary*, who had been of the highest Rank of Sinners; so then as her sins hindred her not from being converted to Christ, but he shewed his power therein the more, so they hindred him not from vouchsafing to her the highest and choicest favour of manifesting himself: Take her fellow Paralel in this, the Apostle *Paul*; *Not only to me the greatest of sinners, he shewed mercy first in my Conversion*, 1 *Tim.* 1. 13. but after Conversion he had that sight of Christ which exceeded this of *Mary Magdalen*'s, and that of all other Apostles. Fore-past sins then hinder not, but other pre-dispositions concurring invite Christ rather to the highest manifestations of himself: Neither doth this hold true only of great sins before Conversion, but after it also, for who shall set the limits to the Dispensations of Free-Grace? But what was it which was considered in this *Mary Magdalen*, which drew forth to her this peculiar favour of manifestation from Christ? you read formerly of her Love, *Luke* 7. 47. but you find her Heart here more full of it, even to a running over, than were the Hearts of all the rest of the Apostles: It was full Sea with her when it was a low Ebb with the rest, and it was that which took Christ's Heart; do but compare the present springings and beatings of her Heart and Spirit with those of the Apostles: But *Mary* (says the Text, *John* 20. 11.) *stood weeping without*, &c. that *but* is a Note of singular Commendation put upon her for her affection, in comparison with the carriage of their Spirits; they after a little search carelessly went home, *ver.* 10. but *Mary* yet was solicitous, and remain'd in a weeping posture at the Sepulchre. Observe in her all sorts of Characters of a prevailing passion of Love in the midst of Fears, Despairs, and Unbelief, *she stood*, she would not go away when they did; and as she was not discourag'd by their Example, so all the Halberts of the Guards about her affrighted her not, she fear'd no Colours, but Love made perfect had cast out Fear, and had fixed her with an unmoved Courage at the Grave, and a secret Instinct of the Spirit arrested her, that she could not stir out of the Circle, and then she weeps, which shew'd that she could not bear the Absence of him whom she lov'd, whereas the rest were gone away with dry Eyes; and as she wept, she stoop'd down, looking into the Sepulchre, tho' *Peter* and *John* had told her, and she her self had seen, that Christ was not there, yet for all this she looks, and looks again, and cannot content her self. It is the Nature of vehement Love and Desire after what we want and Value, to look, and search for it where we know it is not; so violent was her Love and Desire, that she would not trust her own Eyes: Yea, she was so overcome with these Affections to her Lord, that tho' she saw two Angels in white, who began to comfort her, (*ver.* 12.) yet Love and Desire after Christ had so transported her, that she minds them not, nor all their Comforts; and out of restlesness and impatience of Spirit, that suffered her not to continue in one place or posture long, (as is the nature of violent affections) she turns her self back from them, as refusing to be comforted by them, and espied Christ, and thought him to be the Gardener, and Christ discovers himself to her, and calls her familiarly by her Name; *Jesus saith unto her, Mary*, ver. 16. Now I shall make some Observations concerning Christ's thus discovering himself to her, and I shall make an Analogy between this his Bodily Appearing in this case to *Mary*, and his Spiritual manifestation unto such Souls which seek him.

Observ. 1. *That the persons unto whom Christ delights to manifest himself, are such who are impetuously and passionately fond of him*: They are such who can no way be satisfied but by seeing him, and enjoying Communion with him; and when Christ stirs such a Spirit unto an unconquerable desire after him, he answers it, and corresponds with it. As Jesus Christ knows what it is to love, so he doth love and value a Souls fondness of himself, and delights in nothing more: And as he knows that without manifestations of his Love, the Spirit which he hath made would fail before him, (*Isa.* 57. 16.) so he answerably takes care, that to be sure no Soul shall dye for love of him; it is his own Promise, *John* 14. 21. and this gives the full reason of this his Dealing with *Mary*. Faith carries it in the point of Justification from all other Graces, but Love carries from all other Graces as to Christ's manifestation of himself to the Soul; and *Mary* you see loved much, and there is no reward for such pure quintessential Love as is fixed

Part II. fixed on the person of Christ, but Love again manifested, and the Enjoyment of his Person, nor else will, or indeed can recompense the loving Soul.

Observ. 2. *That Christ makes early discoveries of himself unto those Believers who are vehement in Affections and Desires after him, when he defers the manifestations of his Love to others, who tho' holy, and having well-settled affections, yet have them not so vehement and flaming:* For let us but consider the different course which Christ held towards this *Mary Magdalen*, and the other Disciples, according to that different Temper of Spirit which was in her and them: We have two sorts of Christians exemplified in them and her: In the Apostles we have an Instance of Judicious, Wise, Discreet Professors, (yet holy) that have true and solid affections to Christ, tho' not so flaming; who while they think to live by a solid and rational Faith, and content themselves with it, are apt to think any extraordinary assurance, or special manifestation of Christ, to be idle Tales, and will not hearken to them; or if they think there is any thing in them, they come (as *John* and *Peter* did to the Sepulchre) and see the Grave Cloaths of Christ, and rest in inferior discoveries of Graces as signs in themselves which satisfie them, whereas these are but the Grave cloaths of Christ, and severed from his Person, (afford but little hearty comfort) and they go again about their business, (as *Peter* and *John* did) and think it a folly to look any further; but others are, as *Mary*, more affectionate, passionate Christians, that have great Impressions made on their Wills and Affections, they know not how or why, that come to the Throne of Grace to seek Christ, and have his Love from himself manifested, as *Mary* did, and find little (as she did not at her first coming to the Sepulchre) the first time, that look, and look again, and see nothing appear, and yet will not go away: Now tho' the first sort are loved by Christ, yet he defers his appearing to them all day long, until night, until the evening of their days, (as he did to his Apostles) but the other sort of Believers being impatient after him, and lying down at his feet, and not stirring till they are blest with a sight of him, are favour'd with the appearance of him to them in the morning early, as *Mary* was, for it was early in the morning when this manifestation was made to her, and therefore perhaps it not being fully light she took him for the Gardener.

Observ. 3. *That the time and season of Christ's Discovery of himself to the Soul, is, when it hath run through the use of all means, and ventur'd difficulties for it:* We see that Christ stayed from manifesting himself to *Mary*, (who lov'd him so much) till she had been twice at the Sepulchre, for she thought that he must be thereabouts, or no where, and would not go away, but stay'd there, look'd in, enquir'd for him of Angels, ay, and of Christ himself too; but then after the full use of means, tho' they in themselves were vain, and ineffectual, Christ stays not a jot longer, but unexpectedly appear'd, *John* 20. 14. she had said all her poor Soul could say to express affection, and had done her due in the use of all means, and all in vain, and when Christ had left her to the extremity of Mistakes and Distresses about what she desir'd, then at last he who had stood behind the Curtain all that while, and under a Disguise, steps out, and manifests himself to her. And thus it often falls out (that the Analogy may be observ'd) in the Inquisition of poor Souls after Christ in their own hearts, and in the manifestation of himself to them, He both useth gradual means in that discovery, and yet all along leaves them to Doubts and Distress, till himself breaks forth and appears: They would know whether Christ be risen in them, or to them, or not; they run to the Ordinances, and first this Angel, this Minister, then another Minister gives them encouragement, and sometimes reproves them for not believing; yea, they are bidden to remember the days of old, and God's dealings with them then, and they have Promises brought home to their hearts in a seasonable manner, yea, and Impressions and Suggestions, sometimes in Whispers, sometimes in loud Testimonies to their Hearts in Prayer, but then they go abroad, and talk with Christians stronger than themselves, and find them to have such a Work upon them which they want, and find them to speak of such Discoveries to which they are Strangers; and then such and such Corruptions break forth and overpower them, to think that Christ is stolen out of their Hearts, (as *Mary* says here, *John* 20. 13.) and then all which they had

had received of Christ before seems as idle Tales to them, and so they are possessed (as she was) with a fixed imagination, that either he was never in their Hearts, but that all hath been a counterfeit work, or that he hath been driven away by their Lusts, or stolen away by Sathan; and yet in the midst of this Distress their Love works, (as *Marys* did) and they inquire all over the City for him, (as the Church in the Canticles, *Cant.* 3. 1, 2.) then Christ sends Angels, Ministers, and good Friends, one of a thousand, to comfort them; and they ask, why the Soul weeps? and tell it that is in a mistake; but the Soul is so far prepossess'd with prejudice, that it turns away from all Comfort, (as *Mary* did) and refuseth to be comforted, *Psal.* 77. 2. then Christ himself begins again to appear, tho' *Luce dubiâ, in some more doubtful light*, (as to *Mary* here) which yet is truly from himself, in impressions of ravishing Joy, or the like; but they presently question this too, and discern not Christ in the business, but take him for another, as *Mary* mistook him for the Gardiner; they are ready to think, that Sathan having stolen Christ from them, endeavours to delude them with false Joys, and so they turn away from Christ, as *Mary* did, *John* 20. 14, 15, 16. but when Christ had drawn out their affections toward himself to the utmost, in this dark way, wherein Doubtings are mingled with their Faith, which yet doth whet their Love and Desires after his presence, (as it had such an effect on *Mary*) then at last he breaks forth in discovering himself to them, as *Joseph* did to his Brethren; and his Bowels burning within him, he can hold no longer, but appears as the Sun out of a cloud, as Christ risen from the dead indeed, he appears like himself glorious to their Souls: He appears to be such indeed as they look'd not for; they, like *Mary*, sought for a dead Christ, (as Christ is no other in our imaginations, till we see him to be what he really is, when he thus appears to us) but they find a living, quickning Christ, bringing Heaven and Glory into their Hearts. The Reason of this dispensation of Christ, is, that he may take their Hearts the more when he doth appear, and that he may come to them with a greater evidence: *Nihil tam certum, quam quod ex dubio certum; There is nothing more certain than that whose certainty is cleared out of doubts:* And nothing proves more certain when made manifest, than what before was most doubted. And besides, he renders himself doubly welcome, when he comes not only unexpected, but at that time when we have had all our Thoughts, Desires, and Hopes, seemingly baffled and frustrated with mistakes. Tho' Christ is now risen, and in Heaven, yet he deals with us *more nostro*, in *a way suited to our state*, after an humane way, and plays with us in *Præludiums*, discovers himself, and withdraws. He appears first in such a dress as we shall not know him: Thus *Moses* contriv'd the discovery of himself, and of his Love to his Brethren, in such a taking way, and suffer'd their Hearts to be prepar'd by all such Circumstances, that when he should discover himself, a way might be open'd to fill their Hearts with a greater Joy and Astonishment, he laid a Train for their affections, to blow them up at once. I need not tell you, that Man hath such a Principle in him, that is apt to be ever taken with such a story, when told, (whether it be true or feign'd) as relates the Congress and Meeting of two absent Friends, or Lovers, who ran through many difficulties and mistakes about each other e're they met. We all find the powerful influence of such Relations: Who almost when a Child, hath not been mov'd to weep, in reading the story of old *Jacob* the Father, and of *Joseph* and his Brethren, and of his discovery to them? Christ our elder Brother, tho' in Heaven, yet plays with Christians, as those who are under age. If you would frame a Romance, it could not be more full of variety than is this manifestation of Christ to *Mary*; thus he dealt with his Disciples going to *Emaus*, he mingleth himself with their Company, talks as a Stranger, makes as if he would have gone farther, warms their Hearts, breaks Bread, and vanisheth. Have there been any such transactions between Christ and thee? they all have proceeded from the same Love and pleasant kindness as these did towards *Mary Magdalen*, and are of the same kind, and shall be told as largely at the latter day as this concerning her is recorded here.

Ludit in humanis divina potentia rebus.

Observ. 4. From the manner of Christ's discovering himself, Observe, *That nothing*

Part II. *thing can give full Joy, or throughly settle the heart in believing, and overpower all doubts, till Christ himself comes, and manifests himself to the Soul:* If the Vision of Angels, and comfort spoken by them, could not have this effect on *Mary*, what then can do it? Though they simpathize with us in our distress, and in some cases suggest comfort to us, yet they cannot comfort us without Christ's appearance to our Souls.

Observ. 5. *When Christ himself comes on purpose to manifest himself, you then need no other Witness:* What cared *Mary Magdalen* for Angels, or Grave-cloaths, *&c.* when she had Christ himself before her. As you need not light a Candle by which to see the Sun, so when Christ witnesseth immediately to our hearts, it is enough; as when he swears by himself, there needs no other Oath to confirm what he says.

Observ. 6. *When Christ is pleas'd to direct one word, it sufficeth: Mary*, says he to this Woman, and no more, *John* 20. 16. Thus when *Joseph* said to his Brethren, *I am Joseph*, it was enough: She was before in the depth of distress, and ready to faint away, and one word from that mouth who speaks from Heaven, not only wipes away all tears, but fetcheth and revives her again. If a Soul be never so far shot into despair, one glance of Christ's eye in Prayer, and one beam from him shoots it back again. Be not therefore discouraged in thy deepest desertions, since one word from Christ in a moment will revive thee.

Observ. 7. *When he is pleas'd to appear, and speak to any soul, he doth it as punctually and effectually as if he call'd it by Name:* He is the good Shepherd who knoweth his Sheep by Name, and they know his Voice, *John* 10. 3, 4. We are the Stars in his right hand, *Rev.* 1. 20. and he calleth all the Stars by their names, *Psal.* 147. 4. and well he may, for as hanging on the Cross, our Names, and the Bills of our sins were brought to him, so now he is in Heaven, as our High-Priest, he bears the Names of the Tribes on his Breast-plate, and hath our Names to present to his Father; and when he speaks Comfort, tho' he doth not vocally name us, as here he calls *Mary*, yet he speaks this Comfort as punctually as if he nam'd us. Thus in the manifestation of himself unto *Moses*, (*Exod.* 33. 17.) says he, *Thee have I known by Name*, i. e. I discover my self to thee as one that speaks to such an one by name. Doth he write any Love-Letters from Heaven to thee? he punctually directs them to thy Heart, as if he had wrote thy Name.

Observ. 8. *Christ must, when he appears, own us, before we can own him:* He begins first, and calls *Mary*, then she answers, *Rabboni, Master.* As he loves us first before we love him, so he must manifest himself first before we know him, or rather are known of him.

Thus we have seen Christ's manifestation of himself to *Mary Magdalen*, let us now consider her Carriage and Behaviour.

Ver. 16. *She turned her self, and saith unto him, Rabboni, which is to say, Master:* She calleth him *Rabboni*, too low a Word, and not full enough of Reverence for Christ, considering that state he was now in; *Thomas* afterward riseth higher, and saith, *My Lord, and my God*; but she here plainly, *Rabboni*, which was the usual Title given to those who were Teachers among the *Jews*, and the old Name which she us'd to give Christ before. Ver. 17. *Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father:* It was a loving Familiarity that she was entring into, she would fain have been touching of him, and embracing of his feet, as we read the Women did, *Mat.* 28. 9. the Greek Word (here in *John* 20. 17. translated touch) ἅπτου, signifies to hang about one, to cleave to one: It was a loving familiarity, such as she had used to *Lazarus*, her Brother, when risen, she thought to have enjoy'd him as a Friend, and as a Friend on Earth, with such a Love answerable: It was this same Woman that formerly fell at his feet, and wash'd them with her Tears, and wip'd them with her Hair, and after that poured Oyntment upon his Head, and she thought that she might use her wonted respect in such a familiarity, which became not that state wherein Christ was now: 'Tis certain, that she us'd no Gesture uncomely for a Woman to use to a Man, her Friend, supposed to be in an Earthly State, for then she should have had some special Reproof for it from Christ, nei-

ither indeed was her Spirit at this time capable of any such thing; but the unseetness of it lay with respect to the present condition of Christ, which she nsider'd not, and that was, that he being now risen, and so in that state herein he was changed from an Earthly to an Heavenly Man, (1 *Cor.* 15. 44, 5.) that kind of Converse which was once suitable was not so now; as if Friend should be made a King, embracing or familiar speaking would not e so proper as bowing to him. It was then some Familiar Converse with him hich she desir'd, such as she was wont to have, proceeding from her Love unto him, nd therefore he only saith unto her, *Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my ather.* The truth is, (and you shall find it true in Experience) when Souls e admitted into near fellowship with Christ, there is an aptness in them to e too familiar, as here we see *Mary* was; and therefore it is a good Lesson hat is given to the Church in *Psal.* 45. who being advanced to be a Queen, and o sit at the right hand of Christ her Lord, hath this Counsel given her by od, *He is thy Lord, worship thou him*, ver. 11. the King saith he shall greatly esire thy Beauty, and so be familiar with thee, but withall remember, that *He thy Lord, therefore worship thou him.* It is such a familiarity as still must be oined with the greatest observance; or it may be, this poor Woman being in kind of amazement, forgot her self, she knew not what she did, even as *Peter* hen he was with Christ transfigured in the Mount, the Text saith, *He knew ot what he said*, no more did she now well know what she did. But why did Christ orbid her to touch him? it is evident that he did suffer men to touch him after is Resurrection; he suffered the Disciples here in this Chapter, *He shewed them is Hands and his Feet*, and bids *Thomas* to handle him; and in *Luke* likewise e bids the Apostles feel whether a Spirit had Flesh and Bones; and the Women in *Mat.* 28. to whom he did appear, they embraced his feet; what should e the reason then that Christ would not have this Woman to touch him? Some ay the reason was, because Christ was now about to send her upon a Message o his Disciples, whom he knew were in great need of Comfort, and therefore hough for her to have communion with Christ had been exceeding sweet, yet, aith Christ, do not you stand staying here with me, to shew your love to me as formerly you have done, do not hang about me, I have other work for you to do, go and comfort those poor Souls which are weeping at home; go tell my Brethren hat I am risen again; as for conversing with me there will be time enough hereafter for that, *I am not yet ascended to my Father:* This indeed is a very probable nd good Meaning, and shews that our Lord and Saviour Christ took a great eal of care of his poor Brethren, that seeing now he was risen, and had begun to declare it, they likewise should have the News of it, that they might be comforted. But I rather think the reason of the difference to be this, that he permitted his Disciples thus to handle him, and touch him, and forbiddeth her to do it, was ecause that they might be witnesses that he was truly risen again with a true Body, and that so they might be fully satisfied of his Resurrection; but now his Woman she was already by this appearance of his fully satisfied in it, and herefore as her Aim was not to touch him for any such end, so there was no need she should touch him for any such end for which the rest of the Apostles did indeed handle him; her aim only being to have some familiarity with him, therefore though Christ appeared to his Disciples, and suffered himself to be touched by them, yet it was in order to beget Faith, it was not in a way of familiarity; but now that Faith that he was risen again being begotten in *Mary*, he forbids her that familiarity with him that she was entring into: And observe the reason he himself gives, *For* (saith he) *I am not yet ascended to my Father*; the meaning whereof is this, that he forbids her this Familiarity in this Earthly State wherein she was, and forbids it also to all such: But in that state of the World to come, when he and she both glorifi'd should meet, then she should have a full familiarity with him; *I am not yet ascended*, (saith he) nor you with me, but one day we shall meet, tho' not in bodily embraces, (for they profit nothing) yet in bodily substance, and what is answerable and analogical hereunto: And it is as if he had said, When you and I shall be in Heaven together, with all my Saints and Children, you shall have Familiarity enough with me, but now (saith he) this kind of Familiarity is not ordain'd

Part II. to you, nor is it the time appointed; I am not in a state to be familiar in that way I was before, but when I am ascended, and when you shall be risen again and ascended, and shall have glorified Bodies with me, then we shall be familiar. As one thing is forbidden to her, so to quiet her another thing is promis'd, and it is implied, that when he is ascended, and his Children with him, when they shall have Bodies taken up thither, and be where he is, (*John* 17. 24.) that then he will be familiar with them: If you mark it, he doth not say, Touch me not, for I am risen, as if he had only intended to shew that his present state allowed it not, or as if he meant to say, tho' you were familiar with me before my Death, yet now you must not be so, for I am risen; No, it is a higher reason, *For* (saith he) *I am not yet ascended*; which clearly holds this forth, that indeed there is a time after his Ascension in which he and his People shall be familiar, when he and they are in Heaven together; stay but till then, (saith he) and in the mean time, between me and you though there be a spiritual familiarity by Faith now I am risen, and shall be when I am ascended, yet this kind of familiarity which you would now have with me, is reserved to the Life to come; and when I am ascended, and so you are with me, then we shall be familiar; and therefore he addeth afterward, *I ascend to my Father, and your Father*, we shall all be together one day, and then we shall be familiar. This I take to be the meaning, and I know not how otherwise to resolve it; other senses are put upon it, but to me this is most natural and genuine, and indeed most for our Comfort: I will strengthen it with one instance, which I have often thought of, to this very purpose, and it is of our Saviour Christ's appearing in his transfiguration, when he carried up *James*, *Peter* and *John*, into the Mount, and was transfigured before them: Now all the Evangelists have this as a Preface to that story, that Christ said, *There are some standing here that shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man in his Kingdom*: So that that transfiguration was a Glimpse or an Entrance into that Glory of his Kingdom, which with his Saints and Children he is and shall be possest of. Now in that Kingdom to shew that Familiarity that shall be between his Members and himself, you have *Moses* and *Elias* both (one having had his Body in Heaven afore, and the other through the power of God assuming his Body, and being risen again) talking and familiarly conversing with him: Thus it will be in the Kingdom of Heaven, and this, I say, Christ implies in this Speech of his to *Mary*, *Touch me not*, (saith he) *for I am not yet ascended*; forbear this Familiarity with me till we be in Heaven together, for then we shall be familiar enough. He meaneth not, that there shall be embracing of him, as here she would have done, but Metaphorically, that there shall be an intercourse of Familiarity between him and his Children. It is a Parallel Phrase of Speech with that in *Mat.* 2. 29. (and indeed the one interprets the other) *I will not drink of this fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new with you in my Fathers Kingdom*: It is not that Christ will then drink Wine, but he Metaphorically expresseth the mutual Joys which he in and with the Saints, and they in and with him, shall have by the Spiritual Entainment in Heaven. Look then what Familiarity there is amongst Men at Table, when they eat and drink together, such a kind of enjoyment in a familiar way shall the Saints have with Jesus Christ in Heaven, whereof there is some earnest here, *Rev.* 3. 20. as that there is but a Metaphorical Expression, so this of touching him here is, then in Heaven they shall touch him, that is, they shall be familiar with him: He expresseth it in one place by that familiarity we have one with another at a Supper, and in this place by her touching of him, or embracing him. It is certain, that much of our happiness in Heaven will lye in a blessed Familiarity with Jesus Christ. Christ is a perfect Husband, and all other Husbands are but Shadows of him, and there shall be the utmost familiarity then between us; not that kind that is between Man and Wife here, but what transcends it, our Bodies shall be made spiritual, 1 *Cor.* 15. as his also is, and yet as Bodies earthly are suited each to other in converse earthly, *They two are one flesh*, so Christ's Spiritual Body and ours in an Heavenly way; yet I say, that all such near Converses here are but the Shadows of it, because it will be transcendantly more intimate, for we shall be one Spirit with Christ, therefore in that 1 *Cor.* 6. where the Apostle saith, that the *Body is not for fornication, but for the Lord, and the Lord*

for

for the Body, he addeth, *ver.* 14. *God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power*; that is, God hath appointed the very Bodies of the Saints (take them as glorifi'd) for Christ to take pleasure in them, and for them to take pleasure in Christ; and as he hath suited the Eye to Beauty here, so he hath suited those spiritual senses there to that Glory which is in Christ.

Observ. 1. *In the mean time Christ being now risen and ascended, we may learn this, not to know him after the flesh: Mary* here would have been familiar with him in a kind of humane Familiarity, our Saviour Christ refuseth this, to teach her, that though he would one day be thus familiar with her, yet for the present that Familiarity she was to have with him was by Faith; *Henceforth* (saith *Paul*, 2 Cor. 5. 16.) *I know no man after the flesh, yea, though I have known Christ after the flesh, I know him no more:* Though the Apostles had the earthly Image of Christ in their Fancies, yet when they prayed to him, they did not set before them such a Christ as they had seen, but a spiritual Christ, as glorified, as ascended, as risen again; and under these Considerations did they put forth their Faith to him, and unto this doth he call *Mary* here, *Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended*; if you will have any converse with me by Faith, so it is; as for that Familiarity to which we are ordained hereafter, that becometh not us now: So that indeed the least knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Christ in a spiritual way by Faith, it is worth all the Bodily Knowledge we can have of him, though he should appear to us all a thousand times, and be never so much otherwise familiar with us, it were nothing in comparison of what we may have by Faith; *Though I have seen Christ after the flesh*, (saith *Paul*) which expression of his I think may rise to this, though I was enabled by the Eye of my Body to behold him in Heaven glorifi'd, (for so he did when he was converted, and so wicked Men shall see him at latter day) yet that sight I have by the New Creature, by Faith, is worth more than all the other. That sight that the poorest Believer hath of Jesus Christ by Faith, is a higher one than that which *Paul* had of him by his bodily Eyes; it was a means indeed of converting *Paul*, and it may be of the *Jews*, but else had not Christ wrought in him a touching of him by Faith, a sight of him by Faith, and by the New Creature, that other would have done him no good, for it will do wicked Men no good at latter day. Therefore now if you will deal with Jesus Christ, you must deal with him by Faith, you must touch him that way; there is no other, till such time as you come up to Heaven, and be ascended with him, then indeed you shall see him face to face, and have familiarity enough with him; *Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father; but go and tell my Brethren*, &c.

Observ. 2. *You see our Lord and Saviour Christ was not only careful to dye for us, but to apply comfort to us:* You shall read in the Story of the Evangelists, that the Disciples were got into a Corner, and there they were weeping and mourning; saith Christ unto *Mary*, What do you stand staying here with me, go your ways, saith he, and tell my Brethren, poor Souls they have need of Comfort. Such are his dealings with poor Souls now he is in Heaven, he seeth such an one weeping and mourning after him; what doth he? why he doth in his Providence order such a Speech in a Sermon, though he doth not tell the Preacher so much, yet his Spirit doth secretly guide him; Go, saith he, and tell such a one such a truth as shall comfort his Heart. Jesus Christ knows all your Distresses, and as he sent *Mary* to his Disciples, so he sendeth a word providentially, either publickly or privately, or he sendeth indeed his own Spirit (a better Messenger than *Mary* was) down into your hearts, to be a Messenger of Comfort to you, when you go up and down mourning, and want Comfort. You may see, I say, how careful our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is, of those that are in Distress, in want of him, how he takes care to have them comforted, therefore he dispatcheth away this good Woman to his Disciples. That's one Observation.

Observ. 3. Another Observation is this, *That for us to be means of performing of Duty to others, to comfort them, and to bring others to Faith and to believing, and to go about Errands, and to do businesses that Christ sets us about, is much better in its season than enjoying Communion with Christ*: The thing is clear from this, *Mary* though she had not been

Part II. been thus familiar with Christ, yet what a great deal of Happinesse would it have been to her Soul, what comfort to have but staid by him a while: No, saith Christ, I have better work for you to do than this, (for certainly he did not send her to her Loss) Go, saith he, as fast as you can, and tell my Brethren, do that Work and Business, and refer the other till hereafter: And this was better for her, and she should have a greater reward than to have staid there to behold him, and personally to have Communion with him. To be employed in Works for the Glory of Christ and good of his Churches, when he calleth us thereunto, is more acceptable than private Communion with him in Prayer, &c. Why? for we shall have familiarity enough with him in Heaven: So he saith here, Go and do that Work I appoint you, and then fear not Familiarity when you and I am ascended; do you that I send you about, and believe me, we will find a time for the other, we will meet in Heaven; in the mean time go and tell these poor Souls that are mourning, and sadned for the want of me. This may hearten us in the Work of our Callings, to do what our Hands find to do: Spiritual-self must be sometimes denied to do Carnal Business, Christ denied glorious self when he left Communion with his Father to come into the World, and to work out our Salvation in it.

Observ. 4. *Another Observation from hence is this, That God doth oftentimes use means, very weak means, to reveal the greatest Truths to his Children, yea, to the greatest of his Children.* Here is the great point of the Resurrection; yea, here is the great point of the Ascension, which was higher than the Resurrection, whom doth he employ to break it first, but a poor Woman, and employs her to the greatest Apostles. It is not Ministers only that do always bring forth a Truth, God oftentimes blesseth the meanest in a Church to do it, Angels teach the Women, they the Apostles; he would honour, and he did honour *Mary*, to bring the first News of the Resurrection to the Apostles; therefore we should not streighten truths only in respect of Persons, but as the Holy Ghost saith, *A Child shall lead us*, Isa. 11. 6. I mean in respect of Truths.

Observ. 5. Again we may Note this, *That if we do know any thing of God, and of Christ, if any special thing be told us for the good of others, we ought to tell it, and not to keep it close:* So soon as ever Christ had told *Mary*, *Go tell my Brethren*, saith he.

It's the first time he called them Brethren, he called them Disciples and Apostles when he sent them forth to preach, and when he took his Farewel of them to dye, he called them Friends, but now he is risen again he calleth them *Brethren*; not only to fulfill what was plainly foretold of him in Psal. 22. 3. (which Psalm in the former part of it is a Prophecy of the Crucifying of Christ) that as he made use when he was upon the Cross of that Saying, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Nay, God had in his Providence put into the Pharisees Mouths to speak the very Words that he had foretold in this Psalm, so now being risen again he useth that compellation which was prophesied that he should use, *I will declare thy Name unto my Brethren*; therefore saith he here, *Go tell my Brethren*; not only, I say, for this Reason doth he call them *Brethren*, but also hereby the more to break their Hearts, for they were guilty of more sin against him now than they had been in all their Converse with him; some of them, namely *Peter*, had denied him, and they had all forsaken him, yet when he riseth from the dead, the first Word he speaks of them he calleth *Brethren*, thereby to assure them how his Heart and Mind stood toward them, notwithstanding their Sin and Unbelief.

Observ. 6. *Our Lord and Saviour Christ in the manifestation of himself still riseth higher and higher:* He had called them Servants a long [illegible] they had called him Master, when he was to take his Leave of [illegible] led them Friends, now he is risen he calleth them *Brethren*, a Rel[illegible] more sweetness, a higher stile than any of the former. The longer yo[illegible] Christ, the longer you live with him, the more sweetness you [illegible] the more nearer and intimate Passages of his Love, and of [illegible] Relations you shall find to increase and grow upon you. H[illegible] sweet in one Relation? hast thou found sweetness in such a Promise? he hath some further thing reserved to reveal of himself to thy Soul: hath Christ called

[illegible] and [illegible] called [illegible] hath [illegible] erse with [illegible] and in him, [illegible] weetness of his [illegible] ou found God [illegible] he hath [illegible] called [illegible] the

hee Friend? wait but a while, and he will rise higher, he will call thee Bro-her. You see here after his Resurection he speaks more kindly than he did efore his Death; *Go tell my Brethren*, saith he; and now being ascended, and n Heaven, his Expressions are yet more sweet, he professeth himself to be a Husband, and they to be his Spouse. The longer thou knowest Christ, the nore Love thou shalt still find in him, he will still rise higher, and encrease in is Expressions.

But what is the Message he would have his Brethren told? *Tell them*, (saith e) *that I ascend unto my Father, and your Father, to my God, and your God.*

Here you see he doth not only satisfie this poor Woman, that he was risen gain, but he tells her a greater matter than his Resurrection at the very first ord, he breaks open to her the great Article of his Ascension. When Christ nce begins to reveal himself to a Soul, he goes still on to reveal greater and greater hings. *Mary* here she would have contented her self with his dead Body, she ems to desire no more; *Tell me where thou hast laid him*, saith she, *and I ill take him away:* Poor Woman, she had been unable to have born away dead Body, but her affections goes beyond her strength, and now she hath ot only Christ's Body dead, but Christ's Body risen; and not only so, but she ath News of his Ascension; *I ascend*, saith he. Still our Lord and Saviour Jesus hrist will exceed our Expectations in the manifestation of himself; you look r him risen, you shall find him ascending, (I speak in allusion to the Text) e will still be better than you can imagine, he hath still reserves beyond whatver your Hearts can think; *I ascend*, (saith he): As soon as he was risen, his eart was presently upon ascending into Heaven. The truth is, it was his ue to have ascended into Heaven when he first rose, therefore he speaks in the resent tense, *I ascend*, I am going thither, though he was to stay a long while, rty days upon Earth; but, I say, as soon as he was risen his Heart was above, was in Heaven, all his mind was upon ascending; he was held here indeed elow, to do that Service to his Disciples and Saints, to teach his Apostles e Mysteries of his Kingdom, and of his Resurrection, yet his heart was upon is Ascension, so should every Soul be: What saith the Apostle, *Are ye risen with hrist?* what's the next step? Heaven: Ascend, saith he. Do we profess our selves isen with Christ? let us not set our affection on things on the Earth, let us scend to Heaven, let us seek those things which are above. Christ was up in is affections sooner than in his Body; *I ascend*, saith he.

What's the Reason that Christ would have *Mary* to tell his Disciples at the rst dash, that as he was risen, so he would ascend, and ascend presently, ascend oon?

This is the Reason, among others, they did dream, and their thoughts ran pon nothing but a Temporal Kingdom, and such a kind of Messiah as should estore again the Kingdom unto *Israel:* Nay, the truth is, that even when he as ascending they could not be kept off, but still this ran in their minds, *Wilt thou at this time* (say they) *restore the Kingdom unto Israel?* for the Apostles ou must know were ignorant in many things, and though it was necessary hat they should know infallibly, yet it was not necessary that they should know ll things at all times. *John* did not know his Revelation a long time after he was n Apostle. Now to break off their thoughts from this carnal Conceit, the first News he sends them word of, was, that he was to ascend; he would not let hem lye in an Error so long; how careful is our Lord and Saviour Christ, hat as his People should not lye long uncomforted, so that they should not ye long in Error; the very first News you see that he sends his Disciples, afore e speaks with them himself, (to drive that Error out of their Hearts) is, *I ascend*, (saith he) *I ascend to my Father, and your Father, to my God, and your God:* You shall find that Christ when he had spoken of his Ascension before, he usually said, *I go to my Father, and I go to him that sent me*, &c. so *John* 15. 6, 10, 28. but now he puts their Names in too; *I ascend to my Father, and your Father*; or still (as I said) he reserves Comforts for them: It became Christ when he was risen from the dead to speak higher things than he had done before. Now he Scope and End principally of it is this, he had told *Mary*, that he was not yet ascended, and that therefore she should forbear her familiarity with him;

Ay,

Part II. Ay, but, ſaith he, know, and tell my Diſciples too, that *I aſcend to my Father, and your Father*, and therefore where I am you ſhall be alſo; I aſcend to Heaven, you ſhall aſcend thither too; for what's the reaſon that I go to Heaven, but becauſe my Father is there? I muſt go to my Father's Houſe; why he is your Father too, and therefore you ſhall aſcend too, and that by virtue of my Aſcenſion. We go to Heaven by virtue of our Sonſhip, or Adoption, therefore ſaith the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 8. 17. *If Sons, then Heirs, and Heirs of God.*

Chriſt doth not ſay, I aſcend to Heaven; No, he ſpeaks higher, *I aſcend to my God, and to my Father*; for God conſidered as a Father is Heaven, and therefore in that *Rom.* 8. we are ſaid to be Heirs of God, not Heirs of Heaven, for indeed God is Heaven.

I aſcend to my Father: He ſhews here the reaſon why he was riſen, and why he did aſcend, and ſo why the Saints ſhall riſe and aſcend; becauſe God is his Father, and God is their Father. What's the reaſon that *Abraham* ſhall riſe one day? becauſe he is the God of *Abraham*; ſo Chriſt himſelf argues from that very thing in *Mat.* 22. 32. ſo here he ſhews them the true ground why he was thus riſen, and why he was to aſcend, becauſe, ſaith he, God is my God, and my Father; and he plainly intimates, that they ſhall go to Heaven too, and riſe again, as he had done; for what God is to me, ſaith he, the ſame he is unto you; Is he my Father? he is your Father too; what the conſequent was of his being my God, and my Father, ſhall be the conſeqent of his being your God, and your Father; the conſequent of his being my God and Father, is, that I roſe again, and am now going to Heaven; ſo the conſequent of his being your God, and your Father, ſhall be, that you ſhall riſe again, and go to Heaven too. This is clearly the Scope of Chriſt, *Go tell my Brethren this*, (ſaith he) *that I aſcend to my God*, &c.

I might ſhew here, How he is the God of Chriſt, and the Father of Chriſt, and that in him what he is to Chriſt he is likewiſe to us: But I will not ſtand upon that now.

Obſerv. 7. Only Obſerve this, *That the Tenour of the Covenant is alter'd; it was the God of Abraham, of Iſaac, and Jacob, and ſo the God of the Jews; but now it is the God of Chriſt, and ſo our God: Becauſe he that Abraham typified out is come: Abraham, with whom the Covenant was made, was but a ſhadow, Chriſt is the Subſtance.* And ſo I proceed to the 18*th.* verſe.

Ver. 18. *Mary Magdalen came, and told the Diſciples that ſhe had ſeen the Lord, and that he had ſpoken theſe things unto her.* There is little I ſhall Obſerve out of theſe Words, but only that which before I did; *Mary* ſhe goes, and doeth her Duty, ſhe leaves communion with Chriſt, and goes to perform that which Chriſt had enjoined her, as indeed we ſhould. Though Communion with Chriſt may be ſweeter to us, as it is with a Child to be with his Mother all day, yet it is his Duty to go to School all day, and then he ſhall come home to his Mother at night; ſo it is our Duty to be converſant in our Callings, to be doing thoſe things Chriſt ſets us about, and it is more acceptable to God then to have communion with him all day long: You ſee *Mary* counts it ſo here, ſhe leaves Chriſt, and goes and tells the Diſciples what he had ſpoken to her.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

of Joy in the Holy Ghost: That it springs from our Communion with God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

1 JOHN I. 4.

And these Things write we unto you, that your Joy may be full.

THis Apostle *John* was the Love and Delight of Christ, when he liv'd upon the Earth, nor had he less Familiar Converse with his Lord Jesus after his Ascension, and Investiture with Glory in Heaven: Hence the Apostle makes this Preface to his Epistle, 1 *John* 1. 3. *That which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you, that you also may have fellowship with us, and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.*

The only begotten Son of God coming out of the Bosom of the Father, was of the Father and his Love; and indeed, he only could do it, *John* 1. 3. in like manner *John*, that Bosom Apostle, who lay in the Bosom of Christ, opens to us those Breasts of Consolation which himself had suck'd; and as they were full Breasts, so he writes these things that our Joys may be full.

What therefore this Epistle aims at, we may guess by the Frontispiece, to which also relates, and comes almost to the same thing, what he repeats at the end, and which is near the Close of the Epistle, 1 *John* 5. 13. *These things have I written unto you, that believe on the Name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have Eternal Life, and that ye may believe on the Name of the Son of God:* For however Believers may be happy by having an Interest in this life, yet then only they gladly rejoice when they know themselves to have it, and exult with a full Joy, when they know the Life which they have to be eternal. Hence then there arises two things, more distinctly to be treated of: 1. That it is the chief Aim of the Apostle to fortifie the way for Believers to attain Communion with God, and to ascertain themselves concerning Eternal Life. 2. That thence only a fulness of Joy doth redound, *That your Joy* (saith he) *may be full.* The *Papists*, who have made Shipwrack of Faith and a good Conscience, to endanger others too would deprive the Church of Christ of Assurance, of Salvation, which is the trusty Rudder to steer her in a Storm, and so put her out to Sea, not a calm Sea, but unquiet and troubled, (as *Isaiah* speaks, *Isa.* 57. 20.) and there leave her to be driven about with the Whirlpools of a fluctuating Conscience, or to be toss'd with the Hurricanes of Tentations, and at last to suffer Shipwrack.

If in no other respect, in this at least, they are Enemies of the Christian Peace, of that which is the best Peace, *Peace of Conscience:* To overthrow them all I oppose this single Apostle *John* alone against them.

But they will say, that it is granted indeed that to the Prophets, and Apostles, and to Christians of the first magnitude, this extraordinary Priviledge of Assurance is vouchsaf'd, and manifested to them by extraordinary Revelation; but that it is not discover'd to the common sort of Christians by any Revelation founded on the Word: But, says the Apostle, I have wrote these things (and indeed he wrote them on purpose) to that end, that they who believe may know that they have Eternal Life. What need is there of any Heavenly Messenger, to tell them? they have *John*, let them hear him. It is not only to the Apostles, that *John*, who was was one of them writes this, but to all who

Par II. believe, 1 *John* 1. 3. *That which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us, and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ:* His meaning is, that you Believers may have communion with us Apostles, in the same fellowship with Jesus Christ which we have. He directed this Epistle to all who believe on Christ, and to Persons of all Ages among them, 1 *John* 2. 12, 13, 14. *I write unto you, little Children, because your sins are forgiven you for his Names sake: I write unto you, Fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning: I write unto you, young Men, because ye have overcome the wicked one: I write unto you, little Children, because ye have known the Father: I have written unto you, Fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning: I have written unto you, young Men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.* He doth not therefore speak of Assurance, and Joy in the Holy Ghost, as a Privilege peculiar to grown Believers, of the largest and strongest size, or to young Men establish'd in the Faith, but to Children themselves, to whom it is given (as our Saviour speaks, *Mat.* 13. 11.) more often given to know this Mystery of Joy in the Holy Ghost.

If we read over the whole Epistle, we shall find that there are as many right and infallible Marks, and certain Signs given, whereby we may know our Adoption, as there are verses in it; such are, walking in the Light, 1 *Joh.* 1. 6, 7. Confession of our sins, *v.* 9. Observance of God's Precepts, 1 *Joh.* 2. 3, 5. Observance especially of that Precept of Christ, which is the Test of his Disciples, *To love the Brethren*, v. 10. Then he tells us, (1 *John* 3. 3.) that the greater our Hope is, the more it will purifie us; and that whoever is born of God, doth not commit sin, *v.* 9. and that he hath given us the Spirit, *v.* 24.

Object. *But the* Papists *reply, That they freely grant that all these are certain signs of Salvation, in the general, but that the Apostle* John *doth not name, or so much as intimate any person to be assur'd of his Salvation in particular: Whence therefore can any one promise himself that these signs are in him?*

Answ. The Apostle himself furnisheth us with an Answer to this, 1 *Joh.* 5. 10. *He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself; he that believeth not God, hath made him a Lyar, because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son: In himself*, that is, in his Heart, assenting and agreeing to these signs; for as the Word of God, which we have in our hands, and which is divinely inspir'd, hath the inward Testimony of the Spirit in it self, and is the Evidence and Judge of it self; by like reason also ὁ ἐμφυτος, that word which you bear written in your hearts, hath annexed to it a most credible and authentick Evidence of it self; *He who believes* (says the Apostle) *hath the witness in himself*, and that Witness is, that God hath given to us Eternal Life, *v.* 11. and the same Apostle exhibits to us three Witnesses, (*v.* 8.) who use on Earth to confirm and seal to the Consciences of Believers their proper particular Salvation. As there are three in Heaven, who before had accomplish'd their Salvation establish'd in the greatest reality, (*v.* 7.) *so there are three that bear witness on Earth, the Spirit, and the Water, and the Blood, and these three agree in one*, *v.* 8. There is the Spirit of Adoption, *Rom.* 8. 16. the Water of Sanctification, *Heb.* 10. 22. and the Blood of Christ and Justification, *Heb.* 9. 14. Now in the Mouth of two or three Witnesses every word shall be establish'd, 2 *Cor.* 13. 1

Object. *But the* Papists *again Object, That the Heart of man it self is deceitful, who can know it*, Jer. 17. 9. *And we experience daily many to be deceived, and to be deluded with a false Hope.*

Answ. Be it so, yet to us who truly believe Christ hath given an Understanding, that we may know him, 1 *John* 5. 20. he hath put into us that true new Heart, that renewed Understanding which judgeth all things, 1 *Cor.* 2. 15. and besides, he hath given us the Spirit, which is a Spirit of Truth, and knoweth all things, and teacheth us all things, 1 *John* 2. 20, 21, 27. for all these signs of Salvation, which the Spirit hath inserted in the Scriptures, he hath written in the Hearts of Believers, and hath taught them to read them in themselves, as well as in this Epistle, so that that there is no need that any man should teach us, *v.* 27.

To

To which this also may be added, that since all Knowledge chiefly owes the certainty of its Evidence, which is in it self, to the reality which is in the Object, Faith therefore which is ἔλεγχος, *an Evident Demonstration*, and ὑπόστασις, *a real subsistence* of the things which are believ'd, doth claim to its self the highest certainty and infallibity: For if the sense is not deceiv'd about its proper Object, nor the Understanding about its proper Object, (which since it is a sublimer and more abstracted power of the Soul, often corrects the sence) much less can Faith (in which the Image of God chiefly shines forth) be deceived about its proper Object, since it is more noble than Reason, and rais'd above it, and often convinceth Reason of Errors and Mistakes. For it is the ὑπόστασις, *the subsistence* of things believ'd, and the ἔλεγχος, *the evident demonstration* of them, and therefore challengeth to it self the highest certainty: And indeed the Certainty and Infallibility of Knowledge chiefly ariseth from, and owing to, both the reality which is in the Object, and to the evidence which is in the Knowledge it self. Therefore, Tho' Hypocrites deceive themselves, and being deluded with false appearances, dream that they believe, yet they who are sincere Believers, who are awake in the broad day light of clear and bright Faith, see and embrace the things themselves really subsisting. But the *Papists* when they are so reduc'd that they cannot defend their Errour in the grossest sense, in denial of all Assurance of Salvation, begin to soften their Opinion, and to smooth it with some little Distinction, and pretend to acknowledge that a Man may have a conjectural and probable Opinion of his Salvation, but not a certain and infallible knowledge, this they stiffly deny: But they shall not so evade the Cogency of this Apostles reasoning, who not only often inculcates these and the like Expressions, *from this we know*, and *by this we know*, but speaks more plainly, 1 *John* 2. 3. *Hereby do we know that we know him*; and 1 *John* 3. 19. *Hereby we know that we are of the Truth, and shall assure our Hearts before him*: Ay, say the cavilling *Papists*, this Doctrine both render men secure indeed, too secure; this your assurance makes them careless, profligate, and loos'd to all Wickedness. The Apostle as foreseeing and aware of this Cavil, meets with it, and prevents it at the first Entrance of this second Chapter, 1 *John* 2. 1. *These things* (says he) *write I unto you, that ye sin not*: To which also agrees what he says 1 *John* 3. 3. *And every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself even as he is pure.* This Assurance of Faith when it is genuine, begets an ingenuous Spirit in the Heart of the Believer, *Psal.* 51. 14, 15. There is not a stronger Bridle to restrain sin, or a quicker Spur to Holiness than this Hope, and Assurance, and Joy in the Holy Ghost.

But what tho' the Believer falls into great Sins, as the greatest Lights have their Eclipses, yet the certainty of Faith is not utterly lost, for as the Seed of Faith remains in him, not as yet shaken out, (1 *John* 3. 9.) so the firm Establishment of Faith abides also unshaken, 1 *John* 2. 1. *My little Children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not: And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous*: We have Assurance in this, that Christ being a righteous Advocate, he will never be the Patron of a bad cause, and therefore since he pleads ours, we may be sure to prosper in it. And he is not only a righteous Advocate, but his own very Righteousness pleads for us, and pleads not before a Judge, but a Father, who in this shews himself just to us his Children, *That if we confess our sins, he is righteous to forgive*, 1 John 1. 9.

Object. *But it is Objected by others than the* Papists, *many fall by sinning so as wholly to fall way: Tho' therefore it should be granted that Believers may have assurance at present, yet how shall they be ascertain'd of the future?*

Answ. But notwithstanding all, the Foundation of God and Faith stands sure; for what says the Apostle of these who thus totally fall away, 1 *John* 2. 19. *They went out from us but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us; but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.* But of those who are true Brethren indeed, what says he? 1 *John* 3. 1. *Behold, what manner of Love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the Sons of God; therefore the World*

Part II. *knoweth us not, because it knew him not:* Ay, but they will Object, that he says indeed rightly, *That now we are the Sons of God*, v. 2. but leaves it uncertain whether we shall be so for the future. The Apostle to obviate this Objection goes on, and says, *That tho' it doth not yet appear what we shall be, yet we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him*; for as he says 1 *John* 5. 11, 12. *And this is the Record, that God hath given to us Eternal Life, and this Life is in his Son: He that hath the Son hath Life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not Life:* God hath now given us this Eternal Life, whose Gifts are ἀμεταμέλητα, without Repentance, *Rom.* 11. 29. and the Life which he gives is eternal, and so it is impossible that ever it should be cut off by any Fate or Death. And as it is given to us, and to be enjoyed by us, so it it is deposited in Christ to be kept for us, and he is so powerful and so faithful as to preserve what is committed to his Charge; *And these things have I written to you*, (says he, 1 *John* 5. 13.) *that you may know that you have eternal Life.*

From this alone, perfect Love and full Joy result: For there cannot be perfect Love in the Heart of any Believer which nourisheth a fear of any future Hatred or Enmity which God may have against him, nor can there be a full Joy where the Mind is *obnoxious* to the least Suspicion of a Change in its happy state: For any one so to love, as that hereafter he will hate, is the Poyson and Bane of Friendship; and thus for us to enjoy God the chiefest good, in so uncertain a manner, as that afterwards we shall loose him, would afford more bitter than sweet Reflections to our thoughts; but the Apostle wrote all in this his Epistle, *That our joy may be full*, 1 John 1. 4.

Having thus surmounted the chiefest Rocks of those Objections and Doubts, with which the *Papists* endeavour to obstruct the Entrance (of which *Peter* speaks, 2 *Pet.* 1. 11.) into the Kingdom of God, let us now with full Sails (that I may use *Paul*'s word πληροφορίαν, *Heb.* 6. 11.) strive to enter into the Harbour it self of joy in the Holy Ghost, a Joy so great, a Joy so full, that we may rather be said to enter into it, than that to enter into us; but we shall better understand how full and deep this Joy is, if we consider the fountain from which it springs: For as Water will rise as high as its Spring-head, so this joy doth too: Nor is there any need for us to search for the fountain afar off, for it is near to us (as that in *Gen.* 20. was to *Hagar*) since the verse preceeding my Text opens this Spring to us, 1 *John* 1. 3, 4. *That which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us, and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ: And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.* This Communion with Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, is the blessed Spring from whence these clear, lively and refreshing Waters come, bubling up unto Eternal Life, *John* 4. 14. All joy (which God as the most excellent and wise Worker hath inserted into the actions of Creatures, to sharpen, excite and animate them) doth either accompany or follow vital Actions and Operations, and a full, compleat Joy, doth only attend such an action of our Souls, as is most vital, and most perfect, and to such an Operation there are these three things requisite:

1. That it should have for its Subject, the most vivacious and lively Power, or Faculty of our Souls.

2. The Object, about which it is exercis'd must be the most Noble of all other.

3. The Power or Faculty must be join'd to this its Object with the most intimate Union: Even *Aristotle*'s Philosophical School teacheth us thus much, but that great Dictator of Nature could never find out what this most perfect and vital Operation was, but the Apostle *John* hath unlock'd and open'd this Mystery out of Christ's School, and his most secret Counsels: Communion with God and his Christ is this most vital and perfect Operation of our Souls above all other, and let us see how all the forementioned Particulars do exactly square with this Communion, and are found in it alone.

1. For this Operation, *viz.* Communion with God and Christ, is most vital, *John* 17. 3. *And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent:* And indeed this Communion is the only vital action; for those *Who live in carnal pleasures, are dead while they live*

1 Tim.

1 *Tim.* 5. 6. And as the Apostle denies that such live, so *Austin* deny'd that they had any joy, for as good is the sole Object of the Will, so of true joy likewise: Wicked Men as they only lust, not love, so they wanton, not rejoice.

2. This blessed Communion hath for its Seat both the Understanding and Will, which are called the Quintessence, the very Spirits of the Mind, *Eph.* 4. 22. these are the Subjects and Receptacles of this Communion, and of this full joy, according to that Song of *Mary*, Luke 1. 47. *And my Spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour*; and this part of the Mind, the Spirit, is more sublime, purer, and more lively than any other, and form'd for infinitely greater pleasures then all our External Senses and Appetites: These are vastly deep, and most capacious Gulphs, which can at one Draught take in and drink more of Pleasures and Joys then all the other lower Powers of the Soul, (which are only subservient to these, as Purveyors of Pleasures for them) and they are able also to collect, to treasure, and heap up these joys unto Eternity: But the Gates of the Senses are too narrow to admit an Entrance of this full joy; *Therefore lift up your heads you everlasting Gates*, (that I may speak in the *Psalmist*'s Phrase) you Gates of Eternity, *viz.* you higher powers of the rational Soul, which only is immortal, *that the King of Glory may come in*, attended with this retinue, *Psal.* 24. 7. whom yet to receive even these Passages of the Soul, are too narrow, tho' they are never so much enlarg'd. As the Eye too small and unequal to the Light of the Sun spread far and wide, cannot with one look behold and comprehend all its Beams diffus'd through the whole Compass of Nature, *The peace of God* doth not only surpass all our Senses, but our Understanding too, *Phil.* 4. 7.

3. This Communion, as the most noble Operation, hath the most perfect Object: For our Communion is with God, and with his Son Jesus Christ; our Communion is with God, who as the Father of Spirits, is the Fountain and Centre of our Souls, and they cannot have any Rest or complacent Satisfaction, but in the Bosome of this their Father: Our Communion is with that God who is the *Alpha* and *Omega*, *the Beginning and the End of all things*, who can do all things, who fills all things with himself, and who is *all in all*, 1 Cor. 15. 28. in whom alone we feast upon that abundant heap of Bliss and Pleasure, which he hath but sparingly scatter'd in other things besides himself: All those Delights which we like Bees do but lightly touch in other things, we in a super-eminent manner do find and taste in God, who alone can fill and satisfie the various Desires of our Minds, and he doth indeed fill them; the enjoyment of him is the fullest and most satisfactory blessedness of our Souls, for this Enjoyment of himself is alone full, and sufficient to his own happiness from all Eternity: It is full, for it fills all the Godhead, the possessor of it, and yet doth not empty it self; it is sufficient, for it hath a present and constant supply from him who is all in all, and therefore it must be full and most satisfying to us; *I will be his God*, (says God, *Rev.* 21. 7.) and *he shall inherit and possess all things.*

Our Communion is also with Christ, *In whom all fulness dwells*, Col. 1. 19. Col. 2. 9. who as he is *full of Grace and Truth*, (John 1. 14.) with Grace he delight our Wills, and with Truth gratifies our Understandings.

Then also the Union, on which this our Communion is founded, is of all other the closest, which by the help of Faith in the Understanding, and of Love in the Will, joins God and the Soul into one Spirit: For there are two Arms of the Soul wherewith we embrace God, the Understanding and Will, and there are also two hands in Believers, adjoin'd to those Arms, Faith and Love, by which we lay hold on God, and embrace him.

1. Faith as it always unites us unto Christ, so sometimes it is strengthen'd, and elevated by a Light flowing from above, and makes us to rejoice with joy unspeakable, 1 *Pet.* 1. 8. *Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom tho' now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of Glory: David* also speaks to the same purpose, *Psal.* 4. 6. *There be many that say, who will shew us any good? Lord, lift thou up the Light of thy Countenance upon us.* The greatness of this Blessedness he illustrates, *v.* 7. *Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their Corn and their Wine increased*: To this farther

Part II. tartner Light is also added from that place in *Psal.* 36. 9, 10. *For with thee is the fountain of Life, in thy light shall we see light: O continue thy loving kindness unto them that know thee, and thy righteousness to the upright in heart!* This Heavenly Light with which Faith sometimes shines is not a dry Light, but drops with Honey, and bedews the Soul with the most delicious sweetness: What doth *Philip* pray for? *John* 14. 8. *Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us*; it was sufficient to satisfie him, what Christ promis'd, *v.* 21. *He that hath my Commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me, and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest my self to him:* Which he often performs, and sometimes illuminates the mind with Light, which doth not only shew him conspicuous to be seen, but which doth exhibit him present to the Soul in the most real and intimate presence, whence ariseth the most real and closest Union and Communion, and also the highest and most glorious joy: But if we consider the Union which the Senses and the Understanding produce between themselves and other things, how superficial and meerly outward is it? and how weak and empty is that intercourse which they have with those things? Now the joys which arise hence are of the same kind, they are not solid, but only plated or guilded over, for the substance of the things remain without, and only the Shadowy and vanishing Images of them enter in by the Windows of the Senses, and walk through the Soul, and being deceiv'd with a thin Cloud, we do not embrace the things themselves. What thin and airy pleasures therefore doth the trifling Enjoyment of all these things afford us? The mind is only lightly touch'd with Air, but doth not feed on true Nourishing Joy: These meer Shadows of things leave the Mind (which is form'd to be sustain'd by firmer and more solid Food) unquiet and hungring after the things themselves: But Faith by an admirable Art (which is peculiar to it self, and is unknown to reason) gives a reality to all things which it represents: Faith is the ὑπόστασις, *the substance of things hoped for*, (Heb. 12. 1.) and affords to the things which it believes a real subsistence and presence of them before the Mind, and doth not transmit its Objects by the Shadows of *Species* only, which supply the place of the things themselves: And hence likewise the greatest, and highest, the most real and solid, the truest and fullest, and most serene joy, is predominant in the satisfied mind.

I now come to consider the Second Bond of this Communion, and the other cause *of this Joy in the Holy Ghost*, which is the conjugal Union of the will to God in in the Bonds of Love: For as soon as that threefold most blessed and kind Aspect of the Trinity, (of which we have spoken) hath shin'd on the Soul, she kindles with an Heavenly Flame, and a reciprocal Love to God arises in her; for the Love of God manifested to her, doth as with a Fan make this Flame of Divine Love to break forth: And hence the Holy Soul doth triumph, and is sweetly delighted, for that great conjunction of these two Loves, both of that which flows from God to us, and that which is in us infused, never falls out, but it brings jointly with it an August and Solemn *Jubilee* in the Heart.

Hence the Apostle *Peter* hath join'd these three most intimately together, 1 *Pet.* 1. 8. *Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of Glory.*

1. *You believing*, (faith he) *love:* The Apostle *John* speaks answerably, 1 *John* 4. 16, 19. *And we have known and believed the Love God that hath to us, God is Love, and he that dwelleth in Love dwelleth in God, and God in him: We love him, because he first loved us:* His Meaning is, that whilst Faith more clearly views all those infinite Perfections, and all those infinite lovely things which are in God alone, the first infinite, and the first lovely Being, and sees all these things mingled and seasoned with Love, whilst Faith savours and discerns all God to be entirely Love, and whilst the Soul sees God to be such an Husband who looks for no other Dowry in his Spouse than only a return of Love for his Love, and whilst the Soul also knows that all those are blessed with Love, who thus place their Love, the ingenuous Soul conquer'd and over-power'd with Love, flows into this vast Ocean, with a reciprocal Tide of Love, and pours it self wholly into it.

2. *You*

2. *You loving*, (says the Apostle) *rejoice with joy unspeakble*: It is not easie to conceive, much less to speak, how much this Intercourse and sweet strife of Love doth delight the Soul: For,

1. A Love that is yet single and divided, a Probationary Love, hath I know not what self-sufficiency in it, and applauds it self in its own Bosom, is a price and Reward to it self, and nourisheth it self; and to love one who yet loves not again, yields most abundant fruits, for Love is the relish of all things, and doth sweeten the most bitter Circumstances of Life: But these Considerations are very mean, and small, and only little Gleanings, in comparison to that Harvest of joy which springs from the mutual Concourse of two Loves, and a fasten'd Union of Souls. It is sweet to love and to beloved again, *Prov.* 27. 9. *Ointment and Perfume rejoice the heart, so doth the sweetness of a man's Friend by hearty counsel*: To which answers that Saying of *David*, mourning for the death of his *Jonathan*, 2 *Sam.* 1. 26. *I am distressed for thee, my Brother Jonathan, very pleasant hast thou been unto me; thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of Women.*

3. To all this we may moreover add, That the beginning of this Love is from him who loves without beginning, and without end; without measures, and without any preceeding merit, and who receives nothing from any other, but it is from himself only that he hath it, that he loves freely, and *Therefore he loves the more vehemently, because he hath not love in him so much as himself is Love*: As *Bernard* sweetly says, whose Love we taste not only to be stronger than death, (*Cant.* 8. 6. since Christ laid down his Soul as a pledge of his Love, *John* 15.) but better than life, as *David* found it to be, *Psal.* 63. 3. As God rests satisfied in the love of himself, so the Soul rests satisfied in the love of God, and so in God himself, whom therefore *David* calls his Rest, *Psal.* 116. 7.

4. Nor is the Joy of a Christian yet in its Height and Splendour, for the Soul doth not only perceive that she is lov'd again by her Beloved, but that she is most closely united with him, and that she enjoys her beloved, which union Christ himself makes; and as the enjoyment of him is the blessed fruit of that Union, so he is the efficient of it too.

1. The Soul is united to Christ, for being allur'd by the sight of the Divine Excellencies, and powerfully drawn by his Love, as with a magnetick force, she goes out of her self, and most earnestly desires Union with God; this she breaths after with so great a vehemence, as she doth not only desire to be united to Christ, but to be melted, to be transform'd into him, as much as his being at present her absent Bridegroom will admit; she reposeth and layeth close her self in the most inward bowels of his Love, for whoever loves God is said to abide, and to dwell in God, 1 *John* 4. 15, 16.

2. And behold now how good and pleasant it is, for God and the Soul (as Husband and Wife) to dwell together in unity; and not only to cohabit, but to rejoice in one another, *Isa.* 62. 5. *For as a young man marrieth a Virgin, so shall thy Sons marry thee; and as the Bridegroom rejoiceth over the Bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee*: Cant. 1. 2. *Let him kiss me with the Kisses of his Mouth, for thy Love is better than Wine*: And behold how Christ dismisseth his Spouse filled with himself, and full of joy; for what Vertue and Efficacy must there be in the Kisses of his Mouth, whose Lips breath Life, (*Gen.* 2. 7.) Souls, Angels, and all the Heavenly Spirits, are the breath of God; and not only so, but he breaths the Holy Ghost himself, *John* 20. 22. *These Kisses of his mouth* are better known by the Impressions which they make upon us, than they can be by any of our Expressions; we may experience the joy, but are not able to speak what it is; we may more easily obtain its possession, than learn perfectly the Nature of it. Nor doth Christ only give the Kisses of his Mouth, but the entire possession of himself, so that the Soul takes hold on, and possesseth whole God, wholly as her own, so as 'tis free for her to enjoy all the sweetness of God, (if it were possible to an infinity) and to draw out and taste all the pleasures which can be drawn from Christ, even to Eternity.

Quisquis itaque curiosus indagar volunt, non aurem, sed mentem paret, non audiendo, sed videndo gustatur Manna hic absconditum. Bernard.

But this joy which is already so full is yet more full, and abundant, and flows to a greater exuberancy, so that I may use *Job*'s Words, *Job* 26. 14. *How little*

Part II. *little a portion is heard of him*; and Believers do more profusely and exuberantly rejoice that all these Excellencies and Perfections (which afford so much joy and delight to them) are in God, than if they were in themselves; for Love (whose off-spring is joy, a bright clear Spark, and resembling its original) with a pure disinterested flame, loves God for himself, (as God loves himself) and therefore loves all those Perfections, which it sees to be infinite in God, and flowing from his Essence, and with which his Nature being crown'd and adorn'd shines with incomparable brightness. And besides, this sincere affection of the Will doth wish and pray, that God may have all the Revenues of his Glory, arising from the present dispensation of things, and offers all these to him; and as this Love is thus ingenuous, so this joy too is not less ingenuous and illustrious, for both of them are of the same nature and kind, therefore the Believer doth congratulate and rejoice at all that Beauty, Glory, Goodness and Sweetness, which he believes to abound most affluently in God, and he doth more sweetly rejoice (infinitely more) that God doth possess all these perfections in an infinite manner, and incommunicable (as to their Essence) to other things, nay, to Believers themselves, then he rejoiceth in his own felicity: So that this Joy is a Joy of Friendship, as the fore-mentioned Love is also a Love of Friendship, which our Lord Jesus, the fountain of Love, taught us, when he reproved his Disciples ingratefully mourning for his Departure from them, *John* 14. 28. *Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you; if ye loved me, ye would rejoyce, because I said I go unto the Father, for my Father is greater than I:* Which Glory and Honour of his Person his Fore-runner *John* the Baptist declar'd, when he liv'd upon Earth, *John* 1. 29, 30. The Apostle *Paul* boasts in the Hope of Glory, (*Rom.* 5. 2.) and the Believer made an Heir with Christ may deservedly do so too; for he knows, *that joy*, (which the Apostle sometime enjoy'd) tho' inexpressible, and he takes in some little drops descending from that River, which waters and makes glad the City of God; and the time will come that he shall be more throughly and deeply plunged into the fountain of the Deity, where one flood of joy will continually follow another, without any interruption: We rejoice therefore in hope of the thing, and we rejoice in the thing it self; we rejoice in the Possession, and also in the Promise; in the present Exhibition, and in the future Expectation; and as if all this joy were too little, (which indeed is exceeding great) and not noble enough, the Apostle subjoins, (*Rom.* 5. 2, 3.) *And not only so*, (he speaks in a Rhetorical Figure called *Climax*) *but we also glory in tribulations*, &c. 'till at last we come to glory in God himself, *or in his love shed abroad in our Hearts*, v. 5. The Apostle fixeth here the highest top of all, (than which there is nothing more sublime or more divine) that we do not only rejoice in those perfections of God, with which he is blessed, but that the joy too, is in some manner the same; to which also that Speech of Christ hath a reference, *John* 15. 11. *These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full*; he doth not only say, that my joy may be concerning you, but that it may be and abide in you, *viz.* that very same joy with which Christ doth rejoice; and therefore we are said *To enter at last into the joy of our Lord*; not into that joy only with which Saints and Angels do rejoice, but with which God himself rejoiceth: This is a wonderful fastening of Love, which is the cause that as one mind is in the Persons loving, so likewise one joy, not mutually only, but individually, and joining into one flame, and this is the ἄκμη, the compleat strength, and fullest encrease of joy; it is (as I may so speak) the *plenilunium*, the *full moon of it*, than which nothing is fuller; for since the joy of Christ, the Fountain of Light, remains in us, that joy which we borrow from him must be also full. I will speak in a word what is the Sum of all, and what is the highest top of this joy, the joy of a Believer is in God, and on the account of God, their joy is God himself, and the joy of God himself, who himself is the God of Peace, and of Joy, and of all Consolation. What says God of all the Pleasures and Imaginary Joys of the Wicked? *Isa.* 57. 21. *There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.* But on the contrary, Believers, tho' sometimes they seem sorrowful, yet they are always rejoycing, 2 *Cor.* 6. 10. *As sorrowful, yet always rejoycing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing all things:* Tho'

Tho' the Expression is *as sorrowful*, yet of their joy it is not said *as rejoycing*, but *always rejoycing*. The happiness of the World may have an *as if put to it all*, and as the World, so all it's felicity passeth away, (though an *as if* cannot be said of the punishment of the ungodly, which is real, and endures for ever) but the joy of the Godly is not with an *as if*, but is solid and permanent; the very Tears of praying Believers are sweeter than the Songs and Applauses of Theatres: You may believe the Apostle, who says, (*Gal.* 5. 22.) that true joy is *The fruit of the Holy Ghost*, and that it grows not on any other stock, whereas the joys of the Wicked are the meer Rinds and Shells of the Fruits of Paradise; and as *Tantalus* his Apples deceive any one who endeavours to taste them, and vanish into Vapour and Air, they are nothing but the *Spectrums* and Apparitions of Pleasures and Joys, they are like *Jonah*'s Gourd, which wither in a moment; they are like the crackling of thorns under a pot, which is soon at an end, *Eccles.* 7. 6. It makes a loud noise, a great blaze, but as it ariseth, and encreaseth on a sudden, so the Substance of it is thin and vanid, it is a short-liv'd flame, and leaves nothing remaining; they are deceitful joys, which allure, but do not satisfie us, which under a shew of Kindness hurt us, which emasculate our minds, and which in all respects have a greater mixture of troubles and misery than delight, *Prov.* 14. 13. but on the contrary, the joys of a Believer are pure, without any mixture of a baser allay, they are the drops and dews of Heaven, and clear streams flowing from God the Fountain of all Pleasures; they are joys clear'd from all filth and dreggs, *Isa.* 25. 6. *And in this mountain shall the Lord of Hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined.* They are joys connatural to the mind, which both heal it, and restore it to its right genuine taste of things; they are joys which when once the Soul hath drunk and taken in, it will never thirst more to Eternity, (*John* 4. 14.) for it will be abundantly satiated with them, *Jer.* 31. 14. *And I will satiate the soul of the Priests with fatness, and my people shall be satisfied with my Goodness, saith the Lord.* They are joys which encrease with their own growth, and in their agitation ferment to a greater quantity; they are joys which never fail, being full and sufficient to themselves, they are the Breasts of Consolation, *Isa.* 66. 11. they are such joys which disarm all evils, and pulls the sting out of all sorrows, and sweetens the most bitter Calamities, even death it self, the very remembrance of which how bitter is it to us: They are joys which infuse into us a true and invincible strength of Mind, *Neh.* 8. 10. so that we glory and triumph in the midst of Afflictions, *Rom.* 5. and tho' Storms and Thunder bolts may fall upon us, yet they are like Hail falling on the House-top and shatter'd to pieces, and do not break us, but are themselves broken. The Heavens and Earth may fall into ruines, as Christ hath told us, that they shall so pass away, when not an *Iota*, not a Tittle of this word and of this joy shall be diminish'd. And when the Believer shall see this World declining to the extreamest age, and long since condemn'd to the punishment of an old Witch, (2 *Pet* 3. 7. *The Heavens and Earth which now are, are reserv'd unto Fire*) at last all in flames, he will not only be in safety, but will stand erect and joyful upon the Ashes and Ruines of the World; and not having the least part of his Happiness lessen'd by this universal Desolation, he will cry with a great and chearful voice, *I have lost nothing.*

CHAP. IX.

Directions unto the Faith of such as want Assurance, how to take in and make use of God's Eternal, Electing Love, in Believing with Comfort.

THe applying Acts of Faith (as I have shew'd) are two, the one of Assurance, the other of Recumbency, for in both I apply Justification and Christ to my self; only the one is an Application *axiomatical*, that he is mine, the other *real*. Now to direct a Soul that hath triumphing Assurance added to his Faith, and a right perswasion of his justification, over ballancing all Doubts to the contrary, there is no great difficulty, for his thoughts may in the particular application of all these to himself follow God's ways in justifying him in particular step by step, without any Error, (as *Paul* here doth) and take God's proceedings directly as they lye, to mould his thoughts of application thereby; his thoughts may climbe up to Eternity, and from thence with comfort view himself written in God's Heart, and in the Book of Life, and then given unto and made one with Christ, and in him discharged from all his Sins, justified by an Eternal and Unchangeable Covenant made by Christ undertaking for him, and he may drink in all these with comfort, and utter this with triumph, *Who shall condemn? God hath justified*; and then he may come down from thence, and see Christ's day, as *Abraham* did, and rejoice with *Abraham*, knowing as assuredly that Christ did represent his Person, as that he took our Nature: He may *behold the Lamb of God* (as the Baptist says) carrying and bearing his sins all the while he was on the Earth, and on his Body upon the Tree, and he may see himself then representatively in Christ fulfilling the Law, undergoing the Curse, dying on the Cross, as truly as we all believe that we sinned in *Adam*, and were in the Garden with him: And he may say to the comforting of his own Soul, I was justified in Christ when he arose, and discharged of all my sins, as truly as Christ was dead and is alive; and as Christ dyed unto sin once, and dyeth now no more, so likewise he may reckon himself (as the Apostle says) *To live unto God for ever*; he may look back upon himself when enwrapt in his Blood, and in the pursuit of his bold and bloody transgressions in his former Estate, that though his Estate was then accursed, yet that his Person in Christ considered, was really beloved of God; and though he was not under the Communication and Dispensation of Love and Mercy, (God being debarr'd by his Rule from shewing it) yet he was under the affection of Love and Good Will: But now the partition wall being beaten down, and that which did let being removed, and his Estate by Faith altered, he finds God's favour flowing in amain upon him, and when he looks into the written revealed Word, he may write his own Name into every particular Promise, and read in them all the Sentence of his own justification pronounced.

But all the difficulty lyes in directing the other sort of Believers, or beginners to believe, how they should take in, or make use of a right application of Christ's dying for us, and of God's thus justifying us, as hath been spoken: The Difficulty lyes in this, that they must have recourse to Christ's dying, (because from thence their Faith must fetch Justification for themselves) who yet in dying (they believe) aimed but at some particular persons, who were then also justified by God, as also from all Eternity, and they alone. Now so to have recourse to this Death of Christ, as with Assurance to apply it, and so as to apprehend that their Names then were in that Bill, this is it they want, and such an act of Application they cannot put forth; and what other act of Application is there to be put forth towards Christ dying, or God justifying, to cast themselves upon Christ and God? to what end should they do it? What! to trust to Christ to dye for their Sins! that is done already: What occasion then is there, or what suitable Object is there for such an act towards Christ as dying, or God as justifying, for both is done already, or not at all, and therefore to what end should they cast themselves on either? To assoil

oil this difficulty there have been many ways thought of by some of ze.

Some make the Sole and Proper Act of Justifying Faith to be an Evidence and over-powering Perswasion of our Eternal Justification, and of Christ's having born all our sins as one with us, and that this Perswasion is wrought by an immediate revelation of the Spirit; and therefore seem exclude all acts of bare recumbency, and casting a Man's self on Christ from e Canon of Faith, as unuseful; yea, condemn the Exercise of such acts, teaching Men so to wait for such a Revelation, as till then not to entertain a thought at they have Faith: Which is an Errour against the Generation of many elievers, against Scripture and Experience.

Secondly, Others assert, That Men are not to look at all to God's ways of justification from Eternity, but only to the indefinite Promise, when they exercise n act of taking Christ, and casting themselves on him; even as when a Sinner is yet to be humbled for sin, the promise is not to be considered by him, ll he be humbled by the Law; and so they judge men are not to trouble emselves with the thoughts of the other, supposing them to be an hinderance nd a discouragement; but when Men after believing have also Assurance given them, that they have now obtained that Justification which the promise olds forth, then indeed the consideration of God's antient justification from ternity, and of Christ's dying for particular men, will come comfortably and ealonably in; and only then, and until then they are not to look to it at all: o as the indefinite promises are given to Recumbents, and the Revelation of he other is for them that have Assurance only.

Thirdly, Others say, That though there be but a special Intention for some, et it is so as to make all salvable, if they would believe; which Errour makes Supposal of another justification promised than what is the fruit of an Eternal Love, and satisfies not Souls, which will rest in nothing but Eternal Love, nd Effectual Intention of God and Christ, and prize it more than his Death.

A *Fourth* Opinion asserts, That seeing there is wrought a condition of Humiliation, particular to God's Elect, they seeing it to be wrought under it, cast hemselves upon a promise, which intimates something in us as the ground fFaith, and of all the former this is the most false. That which I shall say, will oth confute these, and open a

Fifth Way: And for our proceeding herein, we resolve this Difficulty into hese Questions:

Quest. 1. The first is more general, *viz. What should be the Occasion and Object of the Aim of a Believers Faith, in an act of Recumbency?* The Answer is made y these several Propositions.

Answ. 1. Let him consider, that howsoever those who shall be saved were ustified from Eternity in God's secret will, (and therefore it were in vain to ave that in their Eye, so as to cast themselves upon God for the beginning f such a justification, as if it were now to be begun, which is already past) et there is a true and real act of justification, which is begun to be performed hen a Man first believes, and which is an act to be passed according to the Rules of God's revealed Will, and which in relation to God's proceedings hereby is an act now begun to be performed, when a man shall believe, nd not before. This is the justification which the Promises of the Gospel holds forth, as an act for time to come, that God is yet to do; and the erformance hereof may be the object and aim of such an act of Faith; hus (*Gal.* 2. 16.) *the Apostles at first believed, that they might be justified*; and so (*Rom.* 9. 30.) the believing *Gentiles* are said *To have attained to Righteousness, having sought it by Faith*; so as justification may be, and is to be look'd upon, nd entertained not only by Assurance that it is already past, but also, and that irst, by seeking and believing for the attaining of it for time to come, and y having it in our Eye as a thing to be actually given and bestowed: So as hey are in a great mistake, who would have Faith to be a particular Evidence, and Apprehension of God's having already justified us, both from Eternity, and in Christ's bearing our sins: And the foundation of their Errour lies n this, that they imagine that there are no other acts of God's justifying us,

Part II. but those two, and that before God we were as actually justified afore Faith as after. And also their Errour lies, in imagining that all the use and end of Faith is but to clear up this to us, and to cause us to apprehend it; whereas there is a true real new act of justification begun upon a sinner, which doth not only alter the apprehension of his Estate, but also his Estate it self, from a state of Sin and Wrath, to a state of Righteousness and Favour, and this according to the Rules of God's revealed Will; so as Faith serves not only to give Men the Knowledge of their Eternal Justification, but actually to possess them of *that* in themselves personally which they had before only representatively in another, and this by a further act of God upon the Sinner; which act being to be performed, since it is for the future promised, a sinner that either begins to believe, or that cannot put forth an act of Assurance, may and ought to exercise an act of casting himself upon Christ to be justified, and thereby seek to attain the Righteousness that is of Faith. And to this end,

2. Because all acts of God's justifying us depend upon Union with Christ (we having him, and being in him first, and then thereby having right to his Righteousness) therefore as the aim of a Soul casting it self on Christ is to have justification from him, so to have Union with him also; and then it may and ought to cast it self upon God and Christ, to be made one with him. And there is the like reason and occasion for such an act as for the former, it being a priviledge now to be anew obtained as well as the other: For though we were one in Christ before God in representation from all Eternity, and when he was upon the Cross, and by a Covenant secretly made between God and him, yet there is an actual implanting and engrafting us into Christ, upon believing to be obtained, and not till then, which the Apostle calls *Baptizing, and planting into Christ, and being in Christ*, Rom. 6. 2 Cor. 5. 17. *Gal* 3. 27. until which time even those who were elect afore are said to be without Christ in the World, *Eph.* 2. 12. So as he may and ought at first to look at Christ as yet to be obtained, and so to seek after that union with him which is yet to be wrought, upon which this justification yet to be attained depends; so *Paul* (*Phil.* 3. 8.) says, *We accounted all loss, that we might win Christ*, and obtain an Interest and a Share in him; so as if there be both an union with Christ, and a justification depending thereupon yet to be obtained, there is a just ground and occasion given for the casting a Man's self upon Christ to obtain this; yea, and this very casting a Man's self upon Christ out of Spiritual apprehensions and affections, is the very act which both makes this Union, and estates us into justification; and therefore the seeing of Christ, and coming to him, are made the acts of justifying Faith, *John* 6. 35, & 40. And further, to this End,

3. Though those acts of justifying us from Eternity in his secret Will, were distinctly fixt, and set upon such and such particular Persons by Name, and not left at random, (as that thus he would justifie some) yet God in his revealed Will (out of which our Faith is to expect that our justification now in time is to be applied, and according to which God proceeds to the last act of justification) hath folded and summed up those fore-passed Ways and Passages of justifying such and such particular distinct Persons there named, in his secret Will, and hath gathered and expressed them in indefinite promises of justification to some Sinners indefinitely, and Believers generally; which Promises are the Abstract, Contents and Argument (as I may so call them) of the Book of Life, and of his secret and distinct purpose concerning some particular Persons; and thus he hath done, both to fit the Faith of poor Souls with Objects proportional, and suitable to such an act of Recumbency, as also that he might have these to come between their Faith and his Decrees, and that they might take in those his Eternal Transactions first, as represented through the indefiniteness of these Promises, and so cast themselves upon such Promises for that their particular justification, which is promised now to be performed: Therefore one that would believe, is bound first to have in his eye that last way of justification that is to be performed the last of the three, according as it is held forth and promised in the revealed Will of God, and from thence

nce to ascend up to the other: His Faith is not to climbe up to the top the Ladder at the first, he is not to make it his first Business to be assur'd ether he in particular were intended, e're ever he will exercise any act Recumbency, or look after any Promise, or seek out for the justification t is to come: This proves a real hindrance to many, for it is to enquire in- God's secret Will to me, as the sole Ground of my Faith; whereas I am learn it out of his revealed Will; and I am to begin at the last step, and m thence to ascend to the other; and in relation to that third act of ju- fication (which the indefinite Promises hold forth, and presents the Person th, and which a Believer sees is yet to be performed) it is that a Believer doth ercise an act of Recumbency, and comes to Christ, and trusts in Christ to justified *de futuro, for the future*; and the Promises of that justification which upon Faith to be performed upon the Sinner being thus indefinite, they do tably require, and are fitted to draw forth an act of Recumbency, to cast self upon God and Christ for justification, seeing those his Promises run definitely, that he will save some Sinners, and justifie all Believers: And ac- rdingly as the promises thus framed out of those his particular transactions e indefinite, so the first acts of Faith which he requires are but such acts are suitable to their indefiniteness; namely, to cast a Man's self upon them, at Christ and Justification may be his: Not at first to believe they are his, that Christ hath done this for him, thus *David* did, *Psal.* 130. and thus e Apostle would draw in the *Hebrews* to such an act of Faith, and endea- urs by Faith to enter into his Rest, (*Heb.* 4. 11.) upon this ground, be- use the Promise is, that some must enter in. And again, as he hath fitted e Promises of that justification which is upon believing to be performed, to ch an act of Faith, so also he hath represented and offered Christ also, who to be made one with us for our justification, as a Saviour for sinners inde- itely, as one that came into the World to save Sinners indefinitely, that d bear the sins of the World indefinitely for all sorts of Sinners, that to this presentation of his Son might draw on the Heart of a poor Believer to take m, and come to him, and cast himself upon him, that he might be his, and e with him, by that Union which is yet to be accomplished upon be- ving. Now the indefiniteness of the Promise which fits it thus for Faith, d in which the secret transactions of God are included, consists but in three ings, which make them to differ from the other, *i. e.* there are three things the Promise which make it indefinite.

1. There is the concealing of the Persons, that whereas in God's Decree and ransaction with Christ the Persons are named, here in the Promise they are ncealed: And it is said indefinitely to be for some, to that end that none might y he is excluded, and that is one thing makes the Promises indefinite.

2. Whereas Men might notwithstanding think, that yet those some might e limited but to some certain Conditions of Men, or but to some kind of nners, as not to great Sinners, *&c.* And so Men might think, that for their ondition and Sins they might be excluded; therefore *Secondly*, the indefi- teness of the Promise lies in this, that it speaks indefinitely of all kind of nners and Conditions, be the case what it will, and the sin what it will, for to me in those Conditions, and guilty of those sins, the promise is made.

3. The indefiniteness of the Promise lies in this, that it names a qualifica- on of Faith, and so makes it general, that whosoever believeth shall be sav'd, as a sinner may further see, that there is but a want of a true act of Faith tween him and justification.

And these indefinite Promises do yet truly agree with those particular In- ntions of God, and not cross them at all: For, *First*, Although God's justi- ing from Eternity was fixt only on particular Persons, whom he look'd on in Christ, and also that Christ in his Death represented only their Persons, and d bear their particular sins, yet the promise of that justification to come which is the fruit of those Transactions) might thus indefinitely be pro- ounded; and say it may, that Salvation is for some, and name none; and God ight so express his purpose, as might put all men that hear it in expecta- on and dependance, concealing the particulars; for there is an indefinite truth,

which

Part II. *mercy* (says God) *I will not take from him.* And such a Covenant promised to be made to everlasting, cannot but be pre-supposed as the proper fruit of that justification which hath been from everlasting, and is no other, and therefore may be lookt at as the ground of it. If indeed there were any other justification in any of the Promises besides that, which is the proper effect of that as the cause, then all those former Intentions of God to Sinners might be laid aside, and needed not to be considered; but there is not any such: For the blessings held forth in the promise are but the former blessings bestowed upon particular persons in Christ, folded up and made up in an indefinite promise, and therefore the one doth mutually argue the other; for if a Soul can challenge an interest in the justification promised, he may comfort himself with his Interest in the former, and that he was one *with Christ, dying and rising.* And again, When it is said that Christ dyed, it must be thought he had either an unresolved aim, or a resolved: An unresolved aim would be unbecoming of him; and if it was resolv'd, then he dyed designing the particular persons for whom his Death was meant. And again, All the Knowledge hereof a Recumbent in the way of his Faith may make use of, as well as one that hath assurance; it is but turning the Key another way, as the same arguments are used in Logick and Rhetorique; so *Eph.* 1. 9, 10. that which brought in the *Ephesians* to trust in Christ, (*v.* 12.) was the opening of the Mystery of God's Will and Purpose together in his Elect in Christ, according to the good pleasure which he purposed in himself.

But still all this doth but in general shew, that these fore-passed ways of Election, and Christ's Death may be taken in. A third *Question* therefore will be, *How, and in what manner, and what order, and to what end and purpose an incumbent Believer is to take into his thoughts these fore passed passages, so as to make it a help to such an act? (when as yet his Faith can perform no other) How he is to draw them in, and make them ingredients, and how they are to have an influence into his Faith, to be helpful to him?* For this, I say, take these Directions out of the former Grounds laid. But before I give them I must premise a Caution, which also makes way for a right understanding of what follows.

The *Caution* is, That the Believer is not to take into his thoughts these fore-passed fixed acts of justification, to that end as to make it his only and full Work and Business, to enquire whether he was thus justified or no; so as until he is resolved thereof, he will sit still, and exercise no act of Faith at all, nor look after any promise; for it doth prove a real hinderance to many, when that is the fruit of this their Knowledge. Though indeed we are not to rest, or quiet our selves in any acts of Faith, till such an assurance is obtained, but to wait for it in all, yet we are not to do it so as to cast off the exercise of this other act of Faith, and seeking justification to come, till we have particular evidence of that which is past. This is a wrong use made of God's ways, so to enquire after his secret Will, concerning our particular, as to neglect his revealed; whereas we are so to look to what is past, as to quicken us unto, and not to keep us from, seeking that justification to come. So as we say that the Knowledge of this fixed and eternal justification is then a help to an act of Recumbency, when the believing indefinitely and in general, that this God did towards some, doth quicken our Faith of Recumbency: Which that it may do, take these Directions,

1. The Believer may take in the consideration of these ways of God's justifying, and Christ's dying for certain Men, who were one with him: This in the general he may do, to the end to pitch and point the Aim and Scope of his Faith aright, so as to aim at his casting himself upon God in Christ, for such a justification as only is the proper effect of the former, so as distinctly he may make it the Desire and Aim of his Faith, that he may obtain such a justification as doth only proceed from an Eternal Love, and as is the sole Fruit of a former Eternal Justification, and of Christ's particularly dying for his sins. And the Reason why in this way he may take it in, is, because though he looks upon that of God's Love which is passed, as not now anew to be obtained, yet as to that part of it which is to come, and to be manifested now in the actual bestowing of all the Blessings of it, is, he may cast himself upon

upon God now to obtain it, (it being yet to come) and to have it performed to him in the strength and virtue of the former; apprehending and knowing, that no other but such a justification is meant in the promise by God, nor can be obtained by any: But so, that still the aim of his Faith and Prayers may be, to be justified with the justification of God's Chosen, and to be justified out of that Love with which he justifies those whose sins Christ bore upon the Tree. Thus *David* often in many particular Blessings frames his Prayers, which are but the aims and meaning of Faith, expressed and folded up into Desires, *Psal.* 106. 4. *Remember me with that Favour thou bearest to thy People, and Oh visit me with thy salvation!* that is, that Salvation which proceeds from such a special Favour, *Psal.* 119. 132. *Look upon me, and be merciful to me, as thou usest to do to those that love thy Name:* Thus he dealt also in matter of justification when he came to dye, and to express his Faith at last; *This is all my desire*, (says he) *and all the salvation I look for:* What kind of Salvation was in his desire and expectation? that which proceeded from the sure Covenant, ordered and sure. And thus God's Spirit doth point the aim of the poorest Believer's Faith, so that the meaning of his Faith (if he could express it) is, that he might be justified with the justification of God's Chosen, with that justification which is the sole fruit of Christ's having born his Sins in particular.

2. He may consider what is already done by God and Christ towards the justification of some Sinners thus indefinitely, as the cause of that justification which is promised. He may consider this, to that end to quicken him to seek such a justification (as that must needs be) which is the fruit and effect of such Transactions and Intentions in God justifying, and Christ dying thus for particular Men and Sins; and he will thereby both strengthen and quicken the act of his Faith, of casting himself upon God for the obtaining of it: For as one that hath assurance by his Faith receives and turns all such Considerations into Comforts, believing they are true concerning him, so the other that wants assurance, may turn them all into Motives to quicken, and to strengthen his Heart the more eagerly to seek it, and cast himself with the stronger and faster act of dependency and cleaving to God, to obtain it; there is all the difference, and these Considerations will further the one as well as the other. And the Consideration thereof may serve and be turned into a double Motive, to quicken and set an edge upon their Faith.

First, By considering these proceedings of God, in justifying thus from everlasting, *&c.* to be the cause of the Justification which is in the Promise, (and which he is seeking) his Heart will be the more inflamed to seek such a justification as that must needs be, which is the effect and stream of such special Love both in God and Christ: And the more spiritual insight into, and conviction of those Proceedings a Soul hath, the more he will come to see the Freeness, the Fulness, the Absoluteness, the Unchangeableness, the Greatness of that Justification which he is putting in for, and so his Heart will be fired with it. For when a Man shall hear, and consider, that God hath out of an infinite, unchangeable Love, been a justifying some Men from Eternity, and hath done it so resolvedly, as tho' knowing and making account what their Sins would be before, yet he resolved they should be no bar, nor no hinderance, and that no estate, no condition should alter or interrupt his purpose towards such: And when he shall also consider that further, God hath took such special Order concerning them, that he hath given them to his Son, and reckoned to him their sins, and looked at them as one in him; and withall considers, that the justification which is offer'd in the Promise, is such as is the fruit, and proceeds from these; why, thinks he, this is such a justification as if I obtain, it will fully answer all my Fears, and Wants, and Doubts, and Scruples; and it is such as none can be like to it, such as my Heart may securely rest in; such, as if a poor Sinner would himself have drawn his own Pardon, he could not have drawn it more fully, nor can desire a better. And by these considerations will his Heart be taken with a longing after such a justification as this, Oh Lord, (will the Soul say) justifie me with the justication of thy Chosen Ones! And Oh that it may be, that I might be the Subject of it! and it may prove so, thinks he; and if I were to choose, I had rather be one of a thou-

 sand

Part II. sand of those who are in possibility of being justified out of such a Love, than any other: And why? because this is such as if I obtain it, and it prove mine, a Sea of Eternal Love will come with it, and fill my Heart, and I shall be out of the Gun-shot of all cases that can fall out, it being such a justification as shall have all the unchangeable Love of the great God, and the Efficacy of Christ's Death to feed it, and maintain it and us in the state of it. And thus he may consider all those passages, to enflame his Heart toward this Love, and to draw it in, and this e're he can say it is his. The Souls of Believers are usually taken with this way and proceedings of God and Christ in justifying, and it so likes them, and takes hold of their Hearts, that they can never let go seeking of it. Thus God propounds the consideration of the unchangeableness, and of the everlastingness of the Covenant, to allure the Hearts of Believers, *Isa.* 55. for the consideration hereof doth quicken the Heart to come in; says God, *ver.* 3. *Encline your Ear, and come to me, and I will make an everlasting Covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David*; that is, I will justifie you out of the same Love I justified *David* with; yea, the Mercies of Christ, who is that Spiritual *David*, shall be yours.

Secondly, By the consideration thereof he may strengthen his Faith in the Perswasion of the Certainty, that such a justification shall be settled, and estated assuredly upon some, and that therefore it is to be obtained; which if believed, will exceedingly help a Man's Faith, to cast himself with the more boldness and confidence on Christ to obtain it. When Men look upon God as one that contents himself with this, that he hath done his part to save them, and that however it falls out, yet he contents himself, for he shall have Glory out of them, this will and doth work a carelessness in Men; but when Men shall be possessed with this thought, that God is resolved upon it, to save some, and that Christ hath took sure order for them, and that therefore there is a certainty in the thing, so as it is to be had and worn by some, and that God is most serious in it, for he hath been a justifying from Eternity, and Christ hath dyed for particular Sinners; when this perswasion of the certainty of the thing it self is fixed upon Mens Hearts, so that together with the greatness of it, they are also perswaded that such a thing there is resolved on in God's Breast to bestow, it will draw Mens Hearts into a dependance upon God for it. When Men believe that Christ shall undoubtedly justifie many, because he hath born their sins, (*Isa.* 53.) and that there is a rest, into which some must enter in, (*Heb.* 4. 6.) this will quicken them to labour to obtain it, as knowing it is to be had: For to that end those Considerations are there brought in; and the chief hinderance of Faith lyes in not believing the thing, and the certainty of God's purpose in it, that there is Mercy with him, and plenteous Redemption. The assurance of this, tho' but towards an *Israel*, yet the certainty that *Israel* should be redeemed, caused him to wait, *Psal.* 130. If Men have no Heart to the thing, tho' God meant to save never so many, they would never be saved; and if they have, they shall be saved, though never so few are intended. Now there is nothing more effectual to perswade the Heart of the certainty of the thing, than the Consideration of God's Eternal Justification, and Christ's special Intention.

Thirdly, In the third Place, These Eternal Ways of Justification may be considered, as the cause of that justification in the Promise, to that end, to quiet and settle most of all those Carnal Objections, Fears, and Scruples in Mens Hearts, which are most dangerous, and the greatest hinderances of Faith. And indeed the consideration of it will serve to quell all of them, but only one, which of all the rest is least dangerous: For when a Man shall consider, that the justification which only is to be obtained is such, as is the fruit of an Eternal, Unchangeable Love, *&c.* all the Objections taken from the greatness of his sins will be scattered, for God's Eternal Thoughts in pardoning are beyond all Imaginations; and that Love also regarded neither Sins nor Goodness, but pitch'd upon persons freely; and that when he knew what their Sins would be when he chose them, and also all fears of being rejected for often back-slidings will vanish, because the justification to be obtained is to be the fruit of a Love that is unchangeable; and all his fears likewise of provoking God to

to cast him off, and of falling away, and that he may one day fall by the hand of *Saul*, will dissolve, when he considers the blessings of Eternal Love to be the sure Mercies of *David*, out of which God justifies: And though he hears and reads, that after such a sin God took advantage of *Saul*, *Esau*, &c. and swore in his Wrath against those in the Wilderness, yet the justification he is seeking of, and hath in his Eye, is such, as if obtained, he may be assured of it, never failing; as flowing out of an antient peculiar Love, and therefore proceeds not in shewing mercy by Rules, or Examples of dealing of others, and which knows no bounds nor bottom, but God excepts, and says, though I make a full end of *them*, yet not of thee; and he says also, I will have mercy because I will, and where I will, though I harden others. Now the Believer knowing the Justification (which he now seeks) by reason of these former transactions to be thus full, it quiets all such Fears, and resolves all into one, whether he shall obtain it no? That is all his Care, his Heart is eased of all other, and this is a good care, unless in case of utter despair, for this quickens him the more to seek at Gods Hands to reveal himself to him, and it keeps him in dependance; and when once his Spirit is truly won, and taken with the way of Salvation, he will never let go his dependance, but like a burr, the more he is shook off, the more he will cleave on. Yea, and against that one Scruple, whether it be for him? he hath in such a way of Dependance many things to upheld him, that his Soul can quietly wait, and by reason of a hint given, doth secretly more encline in his constant thoughts towards hopes than otherwise. Now take all other ways of justification, which are not conceived to be backt thus with an Eternal Justification, and an Eternal Love, but wherein God proceeds as he sees cause, and let a Man be supposed in his own apprehension to be estated into it, and that Cloud cleared, yet if he knows his own heart, he must needs be filled with sad, and dark, and dangerous fears: Sometimes the greatness of his sins past must needs amaze him, and his often back-slidings and falls after enlightning, if none of these damp his hopes, or if none of these disquiet him, yet having no security of his own Heart, he fears for time to come, and the Doubts which arise about the thing it self, and the way of Salvation he depends upon, will be greater, and of worse consequence, and make his Heart set more loose towards God than when on the contrary his Heart is resolved, that the Justification it self which he depends on doth answer all Fears and Scruples about his whole Estate and Condition, and all the Query is only about his Person, and this is a doubt which when all others are resolved into it, God can easily answer when he will; and if at any time the Spirit be ready to fail, he breaks in, and resolves it; it is a doubt which the Security his Heart hath from the way it self, about all other things that can be objected, doth countervail.

Quest. 4. As there yet remains in his Heart that one Scruple unresolved, Whether his Person shall obtain that justification to come? he knowing that it depends upon what is past already, the Question is, *What acts of Faith, and of the application of Faith, he should put forth towards both the justification that is to come, and likewise towards that which is past, for his own particular?*

Answ. 1. 'Tis true, there are two acts of Faith which he cannot put forth: 1. He cannot exert an act of Application with Assurance, he cannot put that forth towards either; and indeed if he could do it towards either, he might towards both. If then the sole application of Faith that justifies lay in assurance, he would have no Faith, and therefore it is well for him that it doth not. 2. To cast himself to obtain justification past, is a contradiction, and absurdity, therefore that is not the act of application in his Faith neither, tho' it may well be exercised towards what is to come.

Answ. 2. This I must suppose as a Foundation for all, that there is yet an Impression and Hint wrought in the Heart of the poorest Believer, of special mercy towards him, which is it that hangs his Heart upon what is past, and causeth him to depend upon what is to come. This I mention first, because this is the principle of all those acts that I shall after mention, and this is like the first Principles which are indemonstrable, but the Conclusions from thence are and may be demonstrated. So about this I cannot give you any Direction, for that Spirit that works the mind, and searcheth the deep things of God,

Part II. must work it in you. It is the Principle of Faith, and is indemonstrable; only what acts of Faith this principle may be drawn forth into, as Conclusions from that principle, this I will direct you unto.

This therefore being given by God to the Heart, and supposed by us, such an one may be directed, and enabled before he hath Assurance, to put forth these acts of application for his particular.

1. He may put forth an act of renuntiation of Salvation by all other ways of justification supposable, then such as is by Christ's special Intention in dying, and justification from Eternity: And this he is to do, not in his Opinion only, when the Query is about Truth or Falshood, but he may and can, and is to be directed to do this for his own particular Salvation, when he is consulting on what way to pitch, as for his own Salvation; and that not of necessity only, because there is no other way, but out of choice: For when once in general he hath viewed the certainty, the stability of this way of Salvation, in the whole progress of it; and how when obtained and declared it secures the Heart, and so his Heart fully approves it, and sees also how it magnifies God's Love, and the Riches of his Grace, and Christ's Love also, and withal his Heart hath had that undiscerned hint of Intention towards him, he so approves it, not only as best and truest in it self, but as best for him also, and doth constantly venture, and resolves constantly to venture his particular Interest upon this way of Salvation alone; and betakes himself to it, to deal and trade in his thoughts with it for his own Salvation. He ventures not only his own Interest upon the truth of it, but upon the performance of it to him, and all other ways that can be supposed or presented to him as possible, he utterly renounceth: He betakes himself to this rather, and chooseth to venture to be saved by virtue of these eternal past transactions of God and Christ than any other. And though this hint is not boiled and raised up unto assurance, and he cannot yet say, that he was justified from Eternity, and that Christ had a special eye to him, yet he is content fully to hang expectation upon it, for his own particular; and as *David* said of the Law, *I hate all false ways, but thy Law do I love*, so says he of this way of the Gospel, of these ways of God, which are yet past finding out, that this way of Salvation he loves: And though for ought he knows, there may prove a venture in it to him, yet he had rather venture to be saved this way than saved the other way; and had rather be one of a hundred that should have a draw for this, than one of two for another.

2. He may put forth an act of Dependance upon God for the obtaining that justification to come, with submission to, and with reference, and by virtue of that which is past.

1. It is an Errour that Men imagine that there can be no room for dependance, but only when all is yet to be resolved on by him on whom we depend: For though I suppose the foundation of all their Salvation that shall be saved laid in God's Heart, and in Christ's Heart, and the thing resolved on, yet if the actual Performance and Execution be yet to be accomplish'd, (as it is) there is room for a dependance: As if it were known that a Prince had resolved to bestow an Office on some particular Man, but not declared who it is, every Man capable might live in dependance for the actual bestowing it upon himself in particular, as well as if they knew he were not resolved, but might dispose of it this way or that way. Men therefore falsly conceive that if God and Christ were yet to make their Will, then they would seek to them with dependance, because they hope that they might gain their hearts towards them, (by obedience and dependance) to dispose of Christ's Death and the Riches of it towards them; but when their Will is made, and sealed up from Eternity, they think there is no room for dependance, when yet there is the greatest of all other.

2. For there may be a dependance with submission, which *Jeremiah* calls waiting quietly, and putting the mouth in the dust, *Lam.* 3. 26, 29. The Top and Flower of God's Glory in the ways of justification is his freedom therein, and therefore as it is called Grace, *A being justified freely by his Grace*, so Free-Grace too; which freedom is shewn most in justifying some, and condemning others, and in directing the course and progress of these his ways as he pleaseth. Now Faith is appointed the Instrument in us, that should glo

glorifie God's Grace in all the Prerogatives of it, to glorifie it as God glorifies it; and therefore among other things, Faith ought to glorifie the freedom of it, as well as the Riches of it in pardoning; and this it cannot do more, than by submitting its own Salvation to this free, disposing, ordering Grace of God, and to let God have his Liberty in it. Faith frames the Heart, and turns and applies it to the freedom of God, and glorifies him according to all the advantages his Grace hath over Men, whereof this is one of the greatest, viz. his Freedom: It casts away it self in the glorifying of it, it ventures upon it with submission, because it is free, and if it falls out that the Soul attains it, he glorifies that freedom, acknowledging that it was Gods free mercy which saved him. If he thinks it may be otherwise, (tho' in this case it cannot, however he may think so) yet withal he thinks that there is an instance of God's freedom that will be glorified, and he commits and submits himself, not to the sufficiency of God's and Christ's Grace, but to the Freedom of it, and launcheth himself into it, without either Oar or Stern, and commits himself to those vast Waves, and the current and stream of God's mind towards him, to save or drown him: Thus *David* in a particular case exerciseth his Faith, and if he had no other acts in matter of his Salvation, this act of Faith would have saved him: What says he? he submits himself to God's own thoughts towards them, 2 *Sam.* 15. 25, 26. *If I shall find favour in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again, and shew me his Habitation; but if he say, I have no delight in thee, behold, here I am, let him do to me as seemeth good to him:* He refers himself to God's thoughts wholly, with an holy dependance and submission. And thus Faith may exercise acts of submission and dependance towards what is past, as well as for the obtaining of what is to come; or rather Faith, may act for the obtaining of what is to come, by virtue of what is past already, and so it honours God in both.

3. And Faith may act, not with a bare and naked submission only, but with a reference also to be justified by virtue of what was done then, which I may do, though I cannot tell whether I was then justified or no: This I know, that some men were justified then, and that what is to come hath an inseparable Connexion thereupon, therefore in casting my self upon what is to come, I may refer to what was done then, and I may have recourse to be justified now by virtue of that justification then performed by virtue of Christ's Intention towards me: For as a Man may refer to that he knows not the event and purpose of, so I may hang all my Expectation upon what was done then, and I may refer to God's Heart, and Christ's Heart towards me then, not only with a bare act of submission, but with hopeful expectation, which is the greatest trust in the World. For if the matter were now to be begun to be cast, the support of a man's dependance might be a confidence in himself, that he might do something, which in the end might encline God, and then a Man's trust were in his own heart; but when I refer to what was past before I was, I refer meerly to God's heart towards me; I then refer with dependance on the bare free thoughts of God and Christ, which is the most naked, purest trust in the World: Now this is not only nakedly to submit, but it is to exercise Faith in this manner; as if the Soul should say, *Lord, by virtue of what Christ did, and thou didst from all Eternity towards me, now justifie me.* As a Man may and ought to exercise the thoughts of Faith which God works in him, though he thinks they are but his own thoughts; as a Man is to pray, though when he prays he knows not whether he prays aright, so a Believer is to refer to God's thoughts towards him, altho' he know them not, and to cast Anchor in the dark; he ought to make tryal what God's Heart is to him, and to cast Anchor upon it, though he cannot fathom it: And whilst his Faith appeals thus to God's Heart, and Christ's Heart towards him, God doth the thing, he hitting right. And again, Men may and ought to take in thus by way of reference what is past; because, they must be justified (if ever they be so) by virtue of what is past, and therefore their casting themselves upon God for justification may be with this reference, that it should now be performed to them by virtue of what is past. God and Christ did mutually trust each other about our Salvation: God trusted Christ (e're he dyed) for saving many thousands, upon Christ's bare word, and Christ trusted

God

Part II. God to see the fruit of his Death in many thousands yet to come, and he sees his seed, and is satisfied; and if they trust one another, shall not we?

3. A Soul thus referring to what is past by God and Christ, for him to obtain justification by virtue thereof now, may yet be bolder in the exercise of his Faith: For all these thoughts of what God and Christ hath done he may turn into Pleas to God, and plead before God the ancient passages of that his Transaction with Christ about him, and try how they will take upon his Heart, and see what God says to them: Thus *Habbakuk* in the Name and Person of poor Believers puts God to it, to draw out his thoughts towards them in his Prayer which he makes, *Hab.* 1. 12. *Oh Lord,* (says he) *art not thou from everlasting, my God and mine Holy One?* He puts him to it, and reminds him of his ancient thoughts; and he puts the Question to God, to see what he would say to it; and what doth God answer again? E're he goes any further, he hath a gracious perswasion, an Eccho of God's Heart towards them; *We shall live.* So do thou, go and turn all that thou knoweſt about God's Eternal Transactions with Christ towards Sinners, and Christ's Undertakings and Undergoings for Sinners, go and turn them all into Holy Pleas and Queries with God daily in thy Prayers, as touching thine own particular: Ask him, *art thou not mine, Holy One, from everlasting? Lord, look on me again, doſt thou not know me?* Desire him to look into his own heart, and view the *Idea* he had of thee, and the thoughts he had towards thee from everlasting; boldly ask him, if he did not then commend thee to his Son, and write thy Name in his Heart himself? Mind him of all those secret Passages, go over them all, and turn them into Queries, *which* another Soul which hath assurance would do into Comfort and Thanksgiving: Go down from thence, and spread all that Christ hath done before the face of God, tell over all the Story of his being in the Garden, on the Cross, and say, *Lord, did not Christ do all this for me, a vile Wretch, by thine own appointment? Had not Christ me in his heart, when he hung on the Cross? and hadſt thou not me in thine eye, as one with him, when he suffered? and art not thou then unbeknown to me, charge these and these particular sins upon him,* &c. Thus turn all into such Queries about thy self, put God to it, see what he says to these things. How often is God so put to it that he cannot deny it, but plainly confesseth all this was true while the Soul is a speaking? However, whilst the Soul is thus pleading, he finds thereby his load taken off, his Mind eased; and why? because he hits God's very mind, speaks the botom of Christ's Heart, and so finds the Blood of Christ speaking better things than the Blood of *Abel*: He shall find in these pleadings God's Eternal Love, and Christ's Death, to be as a plank to a Man a sinking, to have a reality in them, to bear his Heart aloft: He shall find, whilst he is pleading thus blindfold, (as I may so say) and casting Anchor in the dark, that his Pleas take hold, and establisheth, and settleth his Heart in the midst of all tossings. Thus as a bold Man will by putting Questions draw out anothers Secrets, so by such Pleas and Queries doth the Heart often in a holy Cunning draw out God's mind. However, thereby doth the Soul find a Support, and he shall find them to take with his Heart, and to take with God; that as in Preaching God's mind, if a Son of Peace be present, it takes with him, and his Heart closeth with it, and is won, so in pleading over God's Mind, and questioning thus with him, a Man being a Son of Peace, and hitting right, God owns him, and all he says to be true.

4. Under such an Act of referring himself to God's Heart and former Proceedings, and in such a way of pleading, he may improve every Promise, and all the fulness that is in Christ. Is there any benefit that God's Love ever intended to bestow, or that the merits of Christ's Death purchased, or can help a Man unto? In the same way he refers to and pleads Christ's Death for his justification, he may refer to it for all blessings else, for that way of Salvation he depends upon will help him, and be improveable for all: If a man be sick, he can plead, *Lord, did not Christ bear our sicknesses and infirmities? Was not his Soul made a Curse to redeem me from all miseries? Lord, I refer to his Death for my recovery, as well as for my salvation, by virtue of it heal me:* And he may have upon these pleadings of his all things done for him, and by vertue of Christ's Death, and his Faith may make use of it, and have recourse to it or all, and recieve all from it, as well as he that hath assurance. Indeed hap-

apply he may want the discerning of seeing all done by virtue of Christ's Death, as he that hath assurance hath, but it may be as truly done upon these Acts of Faith for him, as upon acts of assurance.

6. Since God when he justifies now, doth it out of the same frame of Heart, and Free Love renewed, or rather continued, out of which he chose and elected, I may (without looking back to that Love as electing) cast my self upon him, to bear such a Love now to me as he did bear to his Elect, and out of it to justifie me, and so contract all that is said of eternal Love in Electing, down to a present Love to be set on me, to justifie me: For, as out of that Love he elected, so out of such a Love afresh taken up he justifies, and that is yet to come, and so I rest not on Love, or Free-grace, as electing, but on such a Grace or Love as out of which he elected me, to justifie me; a Love that shall have all the Attributes of God freely, unchangeably exercis'd in it, (all but from Eternity) that Electing Love had, and is differing but in order to a different act of Election, than of justification now, and so Free-grace and Electing Love are for Substance the same; and in so doing I do draw but a Model, Map, or Description of what a Love I desire God may bear to me, alluding to the pattern of that Love I hear he bare Men, in electing them in the Mount of Eternity.

OF

OF THE OBJECT and ACTS OF Justifying Faith.

PART. II.

Of the Acts of Faith.

BOOK III.

Of the Actings of Faith in Prayer. That we are not bound to Pray with Assurance of obtaining the very particular Blessing which we ask: That God, neither in the Revelation of himself and of his Attributes, nor in his Promises, hath oblig'd himself to give us the very particular Blessing which we ask: That the Essential Acts of Faith in Praying do not necessarily require, that we should have such a certain particular Perswasion. How we are in Prayer to act Faith upon Temporal Promises, and how upon Spiritual.

CHAP. I.

That God hath not by any Revelation of himself or Attributes, engag'd himself to give us the very particular Blessing which we ask, and therefore we are not bound to pray with Faith of Assurance of obtaining it.

JAMES I. Ver. 6, 7, 8.

But let him ask in Faith, nothing wavering, for he that wavereth is like a wave of the Sea, driven of the wind and tossed.
For let not that Man think he shall receive any thing of the Lord.
A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.

THE absolute Necessity of Faith in Prayer he doth vehemently and peremptorily express.

1. *Vehemently:* He doth not say, he shall obtain no great or large Gifts or Favours, but *nothing*, not *any thing*, without this.

2. *Peremptorily: Let not that Man think:* Let him not entertain so much as a *thought*, that God will hear him; *Let him not think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.*

Part II.

The Apostle binds up our Faith in Prayer strictly unto such a Belief as hath *A not doubting*, or *not wavering*, accompanying it, and under that resolute manner presseth it, as that on which the stress of all asking in Faith in Prayer should lye: He instanceth in one particular of *Wisdom* for all other, but thereupon gives the same common Rule for praying for any thing else which we may *think* or *make account* to obtain. Thus extensive is his Caution, reaching to any thing, as those Words shew, *v. 7. Let not that man*, namely, *that wavereth, think he shall recieve any thing of the Lord:* He cannot regularly, or according to God's ordinary course which is set about praying, receive any thing. God may hear us afore we ask, but if we think to receive any thing by Prayer, it must be by praying in Faith, *without wavering*: So as this is proposed as a general Rule, holding in all Prayers, that whatsoever we pray for, *We pray in Faith, nothing doubting*. But then here comes the difficulty, the last Words immediately foregoing having been, *Let him ask, and it shall be given him*, and these Words coming next, *But let him ask in Faith, nothing doubting*; the Coherence whereof would seem to carry it thus, *Let him ask in the faith and confidence of this, that he shall receive the thing it self he prays for*, when and whilst he prays, nothing doubting but that he shall receive it, and *otherwise* he shall not obtain it.

The Text thus understood hath been a mighty stound and plunge to many poor Souls, that have lived in a lower Region and way of Believing: *If this be the case*, (will some say) *then I never yet have prayed one faithful prayer in all my Life: Nay, I have not prevailing Assurance, (that is, a Faith with a nothing doubting) No, not for my own Salvation, but am full of doubtings and sinkings of Heart about that great point: I have not obtained so much in and by all the Prayers I have hitherto made, and how much more may I say as to particular Requests of what I stand in need of, that I never yet had this happiness, to be able through Faith to say, I shall receive them, afore I did receive them.* Yea, those Christians that have Assurance of their Salvation, do find in Experience very few of their Petitions for particular Mercies answered, wherein they have had a full fore-hand perswasion that they should recieve the very particular.

It must therefore be look'd upon as a case of very great Moment and Usefulness to resolve, and which requires a through discussion to satisfie the many Scruples about it.

The Case I propound thus:

Whether it be a Necessary, requisite unto praying in Faith, for the obtaining any, or every particular thing a Christian prays for, that he should pray in or with such a special Faith and Perswasion, as amounts to a not doubting that he shall certainly receive it, so as if he fall short of this perswasion of Faith in Prayer, he must not think to receive it?

First, I lay down this Assertion:

That there is a true spiritual and effectual praying in Faith, which doth obtain and prevail with the Lord, that yet is short of, and rises not up unto this special perswasion of Faith without doubting, that I shall certainly receive the very particular I seek of the Lord.

Many pregnant Instances and Examples in Scripture might be alledged to prove this Assertion, which I omit, because they may pertinently fall in, and will well mingle with several pieces of the Discourse. I know also it is a common place Head in our modern Divines, to handle, *What it is to pray in Faith*, by the measure of which I might proceed to demonstrate this Assertion, but this I decline now, for it will fall in with my following Method: But I choose rather for the clearer demonstration of it, (for I know no better, or more conducing and fairer way) to take a Survey of the most essential things unto Faith in Prayer; and chiefly, because in so doing it will not only prove, but withal discover the very Foundation and Intrinsical Grounds, how and whereupon it comes to pass, that such a special Perswasion of Faith in Prayer is not of absolute necessity to obtain the Blessing desired. Now these essential things, *&c.* are two.

1. The

1. The Principal Object of Faith, which Faith in Praying eyes, and acts upon, to move God to bestow what we ask.

2. The proper genuine Acts of Faith in praying, which yet fall short of being assured I shall receive the particular mercy prayed for.

And my demonstration for both these is founded on this great Truth, common to them both, that they do admit of a Latitude: *First*, Unto our Faith in praying: And, *Secondly*, Unto God in answering; so that it is not necessary either that Faith in its acting upon these Objects should rise up to that assured perswasion that you shall receive, or that God should grant you the very particular: But God and Faith both have room, and Line enough left them: God to answer the Prayer in some other thing, and *Faith* to ask the Blessing without such an assurance.

I begin my Demonstration with the *primary Objects* of Faith in Prayer, (as our Divines call them) which are *these things* in God which our Faith in Prayer treats with God upon, which Faith presents to God, and pleads with God, and urgeth upon God, that it may obtain: Or, which are the principal Supports unto Faith, that do strengthen it to continue to pray, and hearten it that it shall obtain. And my diligent Enquiry shall be, whether an acting on these in our Prayers doth necessarily require and exact such a particular perswasion, *&c.*

Now the prime and principal Objects of Faith, by which it thus deals with God in Prayer, are three.

1. *Some special Attributes of God*, as his Wisdom, Power, Mercy, which Faith applies it self unto, and treats with God by.

2. The *Promises*; General or Particular; of such or such good things, which Faith lays hold upon, and urgeth unto God to be fulfilled, by vertue of those Attributes.

3. The *Name of Christ*, in which under the New Testament we are explicitely to put up all our Prayers, as for which, and whose sake, God will bestow all he hath promised.

Now if there be a due application of the Soul unto God, in and through all these, according as the Nature of these may require, then it is certain there is true Faith, and a due acting of Faith in Prayer: For what is, or can Faith be, other than a suitableness in its acting upon its proper Object, for the glorifying of God thereby? All Acts do receive their distinguishing Kind and Genuineness from their tendency and conformity to their Objects, and so must Faith; and it is true, genuine, unfeigned Faith, when it puts forth such and such Acts as its true and proper Object doth require: And it is as certain, that to pray in and with such a Faith, so levell'd towards these Objects, must needs be a praying in Faith, and so must obtain.

Now the most bottom Ground why a Faith duely acting in Prayer upon these Objects, and pleading these Motives, may yet fall short of a certain perswasion *I shall receive the very particular*, &c. lies in this one Proposition.

Prop. *That God hath not in the revelation of himself through these Objects to our Faith, so bound up himself in, or by vertue of any, or all of these, tho' duely implored in Prayer, that he will certainly give the very particular we shall ask in true faith on these, the Nature of these things not absolutely or necessarily requiring it, as they are to us revealed.*

And the Inferences from hence will be,

1. That if God be not certainly bound up by any one, nor all of these, therefore mentioned, then by nothing else, for these are *those*, and *such as for which* he is pleased and moved to grant all that he doth grant to us by Prayer.

2. And hence it will follow, that if God be not necessarily bound up by these to give the very particular, that then *Our Faith in Prayer is not bound up to* a certain Perswasion, I shall receive that very particular; for *Our receiving* must be from *God's giving*, and his declarared Intention in giving some way answerable thereto: And therefore, if God professeth not to be bound up to give, *&c.* our Faith cannot be bound up absolutely to think we shall re-

Part II. receive. And again, that must needs be acknowled *right Faith*, that treats with God in all, and each of these, according to God's own Intention, in his Revelation of all and each of them; for then God is truly sought to, when according to the Tenour of his own Will and Revelation of himself.

And take Notice, that the materials of the Demonstration of this Assertion proposed, (which I shall carry through all these three Places mentioned) will serve also to direct and instruct us, how to form and level our Prayers aright, and teach us how to apply our Faith to God's Attributes and Promises.

1. I affirm, *That the Attributes of God, to which Faith is to apply it self in Prayer, have reserved to themselves a latitude, or a liberty left unto God, in what particular to answer our Prayers, as shall be most for the Glory of any of those his Attributes which we implore.* That *God* as represented to us by his attributes, and so his attributes are the grand Object of Faith in Prayer, appears by the *Prefaces* unto all the eminent Prayers recorded in the Old and New Testament, the Saints therein taking into their Prayers such or such particular attributes, as had nighest conjunction with, and affinity unto the particular things they pray for, as being the next and immediate cause of them, and so strengthen their Faith for the obtaining that particular.

Before I fall into the particular Instances of Attributes, to demonstrate my foresaid assertion, I shall again renew the Memory of this, That it's the Nature and Property of Faith, and that which God ordained it for, to apply and turn it self every way, to each and every attribute, according to the kind and nature of each, and according to that way and manner of dispensing and giving forth things to us, which each attribute doth hold forth; and in doing *so*, it honours and glorifies that, or those attributes, *according to the Nature and Kind of each Attribute and way, in their affecting things for us:* And hence it comes to pass that Faith in Prayer is such a *Latitudinarian*, that it is not bound up to a certain persuasion or belief, that it shall receive this or that very particular which it asks, and is bound to ask, and which particular Promises, according to a Man's sense of need, direct Faith unto. And the Reason is clear, Because the kind or nature of these attributes, and the way and the manner of the dispensation of them, doth admit of a latitude in God's Intention (in his Engagement of those attributes) for the performance of the Promises prayed for; and God for the Glory of them hath, as became him, necessarily reserved a Liberty how, and in what particular to answer our prayers, as shall be most and best agreeable to the nature of the attributes, and for the manifestation of the Glory of them. And hence, if Faith applies it self (as so it ought) to God, in pleading his engagement of any of those attributes, according to their kind, it must be with a reserve on Faith's part, leaving God's performance unto his own latitude reserved. I only except what may and doth fall out sometimes, that God is pleased to give a special persuasion and assurance, (as sometimes especially in spiritual things he doth) otherwise in the ordinary way and course Faith must leave all to God, with submission to want the mercy sought, when it shall be most for the Glory of that attribute it hath or had recourse unto in Prayer; for God's Will disposeth it self in giving unto us, according as he intendeth the Glory of such and such his attributes, and this (which is a sure ground in it self) gives measure to our Prayers, and Faith therein, and is a main foundation to decide this Case.

1. We ought to apply our selves unto God's Alsufficience and Power, with a firm Assurance in it; But tho' as to his Power he requires that we should confide in it, to obtain the thing prayed for, yet he exacts not as to his Will, for us to *believe* that he will certainly effect it, but left that part rather unto an humble submission, whether he would do it, yea or no; for he would have that left to him: Thus when the two blind Men came to him, (*Mat.* 9.) who prayed vehemently to him, (*v.* 27.) *Two blind men follow'd him, crying, and saying, thou Son of David, have mercy on us*; all the Question that Christ askt them, was this, *Jesus saith unto them, believe ye that I am able to do this?* v. 28. He says not, believe ye that *I will do this*, but only that I am able to do this; and doth your Petition, that I would do this for you, proceed from a faith on my Power, that I am able? *They say unto him, yea, Lord*; and they spake their Heart as far as their Faith went, and as far as Christ's Question

ion reacht. And look as Christ did not ask them, whether they did believe e would cure them, so neither did they express that they believed any such ing; he loaded their Faith with no more but that of his Power, and as to e belief of that, Christ was absolute to require it; but as to the belief of s particular Will, for that particular thing, there is not a word spoken: And t Christ in answer to their Faith in praying, approved their Faith, by saying, e *it to you according to your Faith*, v. 29. for it came up to his demand, and the erformance testified thereunto, that it was such a Faith as he required, for ereupon their Eyes were opened; and these were all the Transactions that ssed betwixt Christ and the Men in that particular, and yet they obtained hat they prayed for thereupon: Now that which was Faith sufficient in em to obtain by Prayer, will also be in us. And further, Suppose this Faith d not been put forth in the way of Prayer, (that is, if we suppose they d not prayed, but only believed this) yet it must be acknowledg'd that the same ith put into a Prayer must needs be good, be as good Faith to obtain: or, look what is true Faith out of Prayer, that Faith if it be formed up into Prayer, doth according to the measure of it; make *Prayer in Faith*, and so all comes to this Summ, that it is as if these blind Men had explicitely said, *ord, we come to thee to be cured, and believe thou art able, which makes us me; and though yet we know not whether thou wilt, yet we come, and we leave that thee*: Now would not this have been praying in Faith? and will not the rcumstances of those transactions justifie it to be so? yes, without Question; d yet I need not say, how much it fell short of assurance that they should ve the thing. Another Instance, more express than this, is in *Mat.* 8. 2. *Beold there came a Leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst ake me clean*: This Faith of his was put forth in Praying, for its said he *worpped*; the other Evangelist says, he fell *on his face*; it was an adoration, with pplication to be cured. He acknowledges him to be Lord of all Diseases, on as that Centurion had, who said, *Si voles res acta est, If thou wilt, the thing done*; thus says the Leper, *Thou canst make me clean*; and in this latter he *Positive, nothing wavering*; but as to Christ's Will, he puts an *if* to that, *f thou wilt*, &c. Where, *First*, he manifests his Desire and Request, that he ould cure him. Yet, *Secondly*, speaks as one not assured that Christ would o it. And, *Thirdly*, As one that resigned up himself to his Will, and left to him, to do as he pleased, having made first *His Request known*, with Faith on his Power; and though he believes absolutely that he could heal m, yet he prays not absolutely that he would, but with a reference and subission to his Will, *If thou wilt*: Now Observe, how abundantly Jesus Christ pproved this Faith, as thus put forth in Praying; *I will*, (says he) *be thou clean*; t is the imperative) he had askt, *If thou wilt*, with an *if* to that, but Christ nswers him positively and absolutely, *I will*, says he; *Thou canst*, (says the oor man) he speaks that absolutely of his Power, and Christ speaks as absotely of his obtaining, *The thing is done*, (says he) *be thou clean*. And the ason of this Difference of believing on his *Power* and on his *Will*, (that the ne must be *absolute*, the other needs be but indefinite) is, because if we do ot believe his Power absolutely, that he is able to do the thing, we do not beeve he is God, nor do we come to him, and glorifie God as God; but to *beeve he will*, or that he *will not* do a thing, or may not, this detracts nothing at ll from his being God, but on the contrary exalts him in the acknowledgment of the Liberty, Dominion and Soveraignty of his Will. And it is evient, that our Saviour Christ puts the great pillar of Faith upon believing his ower, *Mat.* 9. 22. *Jesus says* unto the Father of that Child possess'd with the Devil, *If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth*; and the ather cryed out, and said with tears, *Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief*; for even elief of his Power is not so full without all wavering, but it may have an nperfection accompanying it: But I cite it for this, that Faith is said to be mnipotent, as God's Power is; Faith on his Power can do all that God can o, and this even in the point of pardoning sin. *Moses* hath recourse to the ower of God, (*Numb.* 14.) so that to believe that he is able to pardon, lyng at the feet of his Will, is good Faith.

Fides quam Christus laudat est de potentiâ ipsius, non de potentia ipsius exercione. Brug. in Verbo.

Judicio & voluntati Christi resignat quicquid sit magis utile, idq; scit Deus nescit Homo. Alapid. in Verbo.

Object.

Part II.

Object. *But you will say, Power is but one Attribute only, and will our believing on one Attribute thus obtain?*

Answ. A Believers dealing with, and applying himself to any Attributes of God, that is effective of the thing, with a spiritual Faith exercised upon it, is a prevailing Faith in praying; and the reason is, because it engages all the Attributes, while it applies it self to one; although I do not explicitely think of the rest, even as to touch Jesus Christ any where by Faith, but the hem conveys all Christ, and all of him: If I deal by spiritual Faith with him to be justified, and no more, yet Adoption, Sanctification, and all follows; and as the Apostle says, (*Rom.* 6.) *If we be planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be likewise in the likeness of his Resurrection*; v. 5. *If we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him:* If we have one Benefit, then all.

2. We have to do with God's Mercy in praying in Faith: I need not enlarge upon that, for it is our constant plea, *Rom.* 10. 12. *He is rich in mercy to all that call upon him:* It is spoken especially to what he is to Men, in or upon their Prayers, for it is to them that call upon him: Now directly Mercy will be acknowledged Mercy in the Glory of it, and that is to be *free*; that Attribute therefore deserves a greater latitude, yet as to the particulars, wherein he will shew mercy, and is in that respect more regulated by his Will than any Attribute whatsover. Mercy will be exalted as Mercy, (*Isa.* 30 18.) and therefore in its Freedom, which is the top Glory of it; and therefore in that place where he himself gives himself the most full, absolute declaration of Mercy, and the Characters of his Nature, (*Exod.* 34.) yet in the 33*d.* Chapter he prefaces thereunto, *I will be merciful to whom I will*; if he is free to be merciful as to the Persons, then much more in the things wherein to be merciful: For of any thing he hath to bestow, Mercy is most his own, it is his *Riches*, and he hath enough of them, and shall he *not do what he will with his own?* and having such abundance and variety of them, if he doth not gratifie us in one thing, he hath to do it in another, and hereby Mercy is exalted, as you hear'd the Prophet speak. And if it be thus, then that Attribute which our hope is most in, yet it doth not require a certain belief that we shall receive the thing we ask, but God himself reserves a liberty to himself, and leaves thereby a latitude to our Faith.

3. *God's Wisdom* also reserves a Liberty to it self, and gives Line to Faith, *Isa.* 30. 18. *The Lord will wait, that he may be gracious to you, and therefore will he be exalted that hath mercy on you, for the Lord is a God of Righteousness, blessed are all they that wait for him:* The meaning is, he is a God of Wisdom, a wise God, he knows what is every way best, and therefore waits to be gracious in the best way, that his Mercy may be most exalted; he waits not only the fittest season wherein to be merciful, but in what particular things most to gratifie us, and will find out a time wherein it is best for us. Tho' a Believer therefore coming to God, hath all the Promises of God before him, and his own Judgment is, that he hath more special need of such or such a Promise, yet God's Wisdom (who is a God of judgment, and also made all the promises) having much more all those promises afore it self, also considers for its own Glory, and its own good, in what, or by which promises to answer us; and as it is for the Glory of his Wisdom to order the passages of his Providence, so as to be past finding out, so also his dispensations to his people in answer to their prayers are, have much of the like variety, that he should not always do it one way. It is true, God hath promised that he will with-hold no good thing, but what that good thing is that shall be good for us, that he only is judge of, who as he is a Father, is termed also to be a heavenly Father, whilst he sits in Heaven, considering what to give us that is good for us, *Luke* 11. 13. *If ye then being evil, know how to give good things to your Children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father*, &c. Thou askest of him some earthly thing, as thou thinkest it best for thy need, but he answers thee as a Heavenly Father, *Mat.* 6. 32. *Your heavenly Father knows that you have need of all these things:* Earthly Fathers know but what are earthly good things, and of them they give to their Children, such things as they judge best; but God judges as a Heavenly Father, and so of what is best as in relation to Heaven, and thy coming thither,

hither, and his thoughts are herein as far above Earthly Fathers as Heaven is above Earth. He hath also declared, that all things shall work together for thy good, but what particular dispensation shall work for good to thee, and how, this he says not, nor doest thou know: It may be the contrary to what thou desirest shall work for good, and that lyes in his Wisdom only to judge and dispose of, upon the glorifying of which in his own way thou must wait: so that Wisdom reserves to it self a latitude, and it is meet it should, for the Glory of it self, for there the Glory of it lyes. Hence therefore if Faith applies it self as it ought unto God's Wisdom, according to the kind and way of dispensation of it, why then Faith also must be left to a latitude too, and not be bound up to the particular that thou suest to him for, but must wait also on him for what his Wisdom will judge best, and so indeed it is added, *Isa.* 30. 18. that *because he is thus a God of judgment, and waits thus to be gracious his own way, therefore blessed are those that wait on him*, i. e. that wait on him as such a God, a God of Judgment; for waiting is but an act of Faith continued.

4. A fourth thing about which it hath to deal with God in Prayer, is, *The Glory of God*, and so it is to frame its Petitions, not only for what shall stand with the Glory of God, but what shall be most for his Glory. The Apostle shews, that Faith of all other eyes God's Glory, and treats with it, *Rom.* 4. 21. *Abraham was strong in Faith, and gave Glory to God:* And as it is the Object of Faith in common, so of Faith in particular, as it is put forth in Prayer, and which Faith applies it self unto in praying: This we have in the Lords Prayer, in the close, *For thine is the Kingdom, Power and Glory*; and in the first Petition, *Hallowed be thy Name*, which is the measure of all that follows; and we are hereby taught to enforce all our Prayers with this, as with which God is principally moved to grant us our Requests, and which the Soul in praying, if it prays aright, maketh use of as Pleas unto God to grant those Requests; and it is the highest Plea, and most effectual way to obtain that Faith hath, or can have, in praying.

Now it's certain, that what that particular should be, which as concerning my particular Condition should be most for the Glory of God, that only is known to him, who as he knows our concernments and interests, so his own above all: We pray indeed for what we jugde would be most for his Glory, as concerning us, and make a great plea of it, and God highly accepts it from us, because it is what is best in our view and judgments, but he performs according to the Riches of his own Glory, according to his own destines and vast purposes of Glory to himself, so as a Man may pray in the highest Faith, and in the sublimest way, according to what he judges, and yet still not know certainly that he shall receive; for what is most for God's Glory, God only himself knows. It is true indeed, that all the Promises, which are the declarations of his Will, are for his Glory, 2 *Cor.* 1. 20. *All the promises of God in him*, namely, Christ, *are in him Yea, and in him Amen, unto the Glory of God by us*; there is none but doth tend to his Glory more or less, but the performance of which of them to my particular will be most for his Glory, that still is reserved to himself. And this Attribute of his Glory hath a mighty compass and room to answer thee in, by some Promise or other, tho' yet it doth not give thee the particular thou desirest, according to that one particular Promise which thou hast singled out to urge. Yea, as this gives a greater latitude to him than any of the former Attributes, singly considered, and so therefore an answerable allowance must be given unto Faith, in respect unto this Attribute above all other; for what is and will be most for his Glory, he alone is the sovereign judge of: *Therefore*, says the Apostle, (*Rom.* 11. 36.) *of him, and through him, and to him are all things, to whom be glory for ever.* That other Royalty also of his Kingdom, or of his being King, is appropriate and essential to him as he is God, (*Psal.* 93. 2. *Psal.* 74. 12.) which *David*'s Faith so often lays his foundation on in praying, and therefore is so aptly conjoyn'd in the Lord's Prayer with his Glory; and therefore every Son of his, that comes to him as to his King, (as *David* often did, when he says, *My God and my King*,) as he hath great encouragement, because he is his *King*, who

Part II. who can do any thing, so he must consider, that his Kingdom is of a vast extent, and that he hath many Dominions, and an infinity of Designs and Ends towards Persons of all sorts in those Dominions, that he hath many Irons in the Fire, many Concernments and Ends of a greater breadth than what thy narrow Desires or Concernments are, especially as they are comprehended in the shallownesse of thy Understanding, for they are of a greater breadth than any one particular Promise can or doth contain. In the administration of a KINGDOM, a Favourite very near to his Prince, comes with a Request to be gratified; he has had many large Promises of all sorts given him, and his particular Request in his View is but a small one, as the Life of a Friend that hath run into Treason, or the like, and he thinks the Grant of it will not be a prejudice to any of his Prince's affairs; but that King having a large Dominion, and many persons, yea, perhaps Parties and Interests to deal with, this Business and Request of his may fall crosse unto, and interfere with some very great interest of his own, which this Favourite knows not of, and so he denies him his particular Request, but yet takes care to gratifie him in another, that shall be best for his particular: And as he hath a Kingdom to administer, so he deals in Politicks, and hath more general ends than a Subject can think of, or imagine, and knows that which none of them can do; he hath a vast extent of affairs in that Kingdom, and his Honour is interested to see to all things, as they shall tend to his more general Ends. And thus it is much more with God, who is the King of Kings, and the greatest that ever were are but as petty Constables to him: He hath designs upon particular times, wherein the Saints do live, which are part of the administrations of his Kingdom, and he hath such designs in those times, as according to his ordinary providence he cannot do that for his people that live in this age, at this time, which he can and doth in another for them. General Providences, or at least more general than thy particular, do crosse often particular requests, whereof in the end we come to see a Reason: This some understand (and I believe rightly) to have been *Baruk*'s case, *Jer.* 45. poor man, he was miserably discomposed for the common Calamity which *Jeremy* had threatned, *Thou didst say, woe is me now*, (says God to him, *v.* 3.) *for the Lord hath added grief to my sorrow, I fainted in my sighing, and found no rest:* And he had besought God much for the averting of that Calamity, the thoughts of which lay so heavy upon him, and pressed him down; but especially, he had sought for a quiet condition for himself, in these turbulent times to come, *v.* 5. *Seekest thou great things for thy self, seek them not:* What were the great things? what preferment, or honour, or riches? He was a Man too godly to be so ambitious and worldly: No, he only desir'd to live in the Land quietly, that he might have such a particular priviledge, and he sought it for himself; it was a thing he sought for himself, as the Text saith, He sought only *Quietem in communi inquietudine, Quiet and Ease amidst the common disturbance*; and great things these were to seek, in respect of God's common providence at the time he lived in, *Ardua & difficilia*, things hard and difficult to be done: Therefore God tells him, (*v.* 4.) *That which I have built will I break down, and that which I have planted will I break up, even this whole Land, and seekest thou great things, and hard things for thy self? It's contrary to the general design I have, and therefore too great, or too hard for thee to obtain:* Yet thus far God gratifies him, as far as ordinary providence would reach and extend, *I have given thee* (says God) *thy life for a prey in all other Countries, but I cannot gratifie thee in this*; altho' he had a Promise sufficient to have asked this upon, *viz.* *Honour thy Father and thy Mother, that the days may be long in the Land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee.*

Castellio in locum.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

That God hath not in his Promises obliged himself to give us the very particular Blessing which we pray for, and therefore we cannot pray with Assurance of obtaining it.

I Shall now carry on the same Demonstration touching Promises, the second Object of Faith, *viz.* That the manner of God's Declaration of them is such, as God hath not bound himself to up, but that there is *this Liberty* reserved, in what particular promise he thinks best for us to answer our prayers, and as shall be most for his own Glory; especially, considering how promises are taken in by us into our prayers.

I come then to Promises, the second Object of Faith before-mentioned; and herein to consider, Whether the promulgation of them, as God hath been pleased to make it, doth not reserve the like liberty to God, as hath been shewed of his Attributes, and so by consequence the same latitude to Faith in Prayer, which is a putting of Promises in suit; so as that notwithstanding that God hath engag'd himself in promises, we may pray in Faith, altho' short of such a Perswasion, that we shall receive the very particulars we ask for. I shall discuss this point under a General Consideration of Promises: And indeed the General Consideration had of them, will much conduce further to discover and lay open the very bottom ground or root, why a Faith short of such a perswasion may be prevailing to obtain, and will withall stub up by the roots such Objections as may be made against it.

The Objection may be framed up of these particulars, That there being one Attribute not hitherto mentioned, *viz.* God's Will, which hath drawn in those other forementioned Attributes into a confederacy with it self, to assist and perform what that Will determines; and this Will being revealed in particular promises, his Will hath thereby put out of its own hands all Liberty to answer or not to answer our Prayers. These Promises also now serving wholly as Directions and Sea-Marks, to guide how to steer the course of our prayers; and God having moreover made super-added Promises to hear our prayers, and further his purposes and contrivances about his Church, being known to him from the beginning, (as all his works are, *Acts* 15.) and that being the purest part of his Providence, and therefore eminently called Foreknowledge; and he having before ever he made any promise considered all, and cast and given forth his promises according to the Idea of those his purposes, as his purpose is to grant upon their prayers, therefore there should and ought to be a special perswasion of Faith in our prayers, that we shall receive the very particular.

Now for assoiling this Objection, and for the better clearing the bottom reason of what I am pursuing, I have cast this General Consideration of Promises into these three Heads:

First, As touching the matter of them, or things promised.

Secondly, The Tenor they are delivered in, as in relation to Persons. These two as they lye in the Words abstractly consider'd. But,

Thirdly, A distinct Consideration must be and a part had of them, as they are taken by us into our Prayers, and therein urged unto God.

First, Touching the matter of them there are these Assertions:

1. God hath so framed and suited his declared Promises to his secret purposes and designs, of what he means to bestow upon his Children, that there is extant some either Promise, or Instance, or Declaration, (which always implies a promise in them) for all and every good thing he means to bestow: He hath so drawn out his Purposes into Promises, as the Sea into Rivulets, that I may safely say, there is no particular good thing he hath purposed to bestow, but there is a declaration of his Will, either by Instance or Promise for it. God's Will is open and manifest in this, that we have the whole of

Part II. his Secret Will (as it concerns us, touching good things to be bestowed) in his revealed Will; and as his Children are Children of Promise, *Heb.* 6. 17. and Heirs of Blessing, 1 *Pet.* 3. 9. (which are of equal extent, because Promises and Blessings are of like equal extent) so in like manner there is no Blessing but is a Blessing of Promise some way or other; and like as God blessing us in Christ, blesseth us in nothing out of him, so whatever he blesses his Children withall, it is by, and not out of a Promise: Whatsoever is given, is given by a Word, and there is nothing we need, or can desire, but there is some Promise or other for it, as the matter of it.

2. It's also further true, That whatsoever God actually performs, there is a Word for it; this Assertion is a consequence of the former: He rules the World by his Word, or if Judgments be on the World, or particular Persons, they are shewn in some Threatning, or some instance of the like in the Word, and they are all but executing the Judgments written, *Psal.* 149. 8. and therefore God's dispensing Judgments upon Men is synonimously call'd his taking hold of them, *Zach.* 1. 6. *But my words and my statutes, which I commanded my Servants the Prophets, did they not take hold of your Fathers? and they returned, and said, like as the Lord of Hosts thought to do unto us, according to our ways, and according to our doings, so hath he dealt with us:* In which place you have, 1. God's thoughts, what he *meant* to do, which is his secret Will. 2. You have God's thoughts put into words, suited unto his Will. 3. You have the performance, *They took hold of them*, so that they are suited to both the Threatnings and Purposes, which are in this respect parallel. It's said, not a word fell to the ground, 1 *Sam.* 3. 19. 1 *Kings* 8. Again, performances and promises are adequate.

2. The Tenor of Promises is to be considered apart from the *matter* of them, and it lies in this, *How the Declaration of these Promises doth intend and respect particular Persons:* And as to that there are these Assertions;

1. Tho' there is no good thing but is in some Promise or other, as hath been said, yet God's secret Will was never to perform or bestow all, and every good thing in *Specie*, (which he hath promised) to all and every one of his Children personally; nor is it declared any where in the Word that he will do so: This is apparent in temporal Promises of Temporal things; he hath not given Riches to all Saints, nor Wisdom, nor Honours; there are not many rich, wise, or noble, though some are so; and yet because he will bestow of all these upon some, therefore there are promises that do particularize all these. The like may be said of many promises in spiritual priviledges, Gifts, Degrees of Grace, *&c.* The Sence of this assertion you may take up and conceive of thus, That our God, the God of all Grace, and the God of all Comforts, having the whole Body of his Elect before him, and all parcels of good things in prospect and intuition, his Will was to give all and every good thing in *specie* among them, and in his secret purposes he dispersed and ordered them amongst them.

Gerard upon those Words, Joh. 14. Whatsoever ye shall ask, I will do. Though he peremptorily determines there is no Prayer but God answers, yet in his giving an account why so many Prayers come short, one of them is, *Deus nusquam in verbo suo dedit ejusmodi promissionem, quod in temporalibus velit dare nobis omnia quæ desideramus.*

2. Every good thing that every one of them hath, he hath it by Promise, yea, and to that very end it was that God made such manifold promises, particularizing every good thing in one of them or other, because he would bestow nothing without or besides a promise in his Word.

3. Take the Declaration of promises, as they respect persons, and so when God made and gave forth all these promises of his revealed Will, he had in his eye whom he meant to bestow these particularities of things promised, in their several kinds upon, and so made these promises with a special intent unto them, and *de facto* bestows them upon them individually, altho' in his Word he named not those particular persons, but keeps and reserveth that in his own Breast, both what good *things*, and *whom* he would bestow them upon.

4. The Declaration of God's Will, and his intent in such promises is, for the most part not universal, to all and every Saint: Some promises indeed are universal, but then they run in the strain as that doth, *Whoever believes shall not perish*, (John 3. 16.) but many other are but indefinite, and so to be understood by us: This indefinite Tenor of Promises is clear in the case of the Promise

mises to work Miracles, which may illustrate what I mean about these other: These promises we have *John* 14. 12. *He that believes on me, the works that I do he shall do also, and greater works*: Mark 16. 17. *And these signs shall follow them that believe in my Name, they shall cast out Devils, they shall speak with New Tongues*, &c. These Speeches are but indefinite, and yet run in this strain, *He that believes on me*, &c. but are not made to whoever believes; No, not in those times, 1 *Cor.* 12. 10. *To another is given the Gift of working Miracles*, &c. But if you hear of such a promise, *He who believes shall be saved*, (as *Mark* 16. 16. Christ had said,) you must understand it universally of all that believe: For in that Tenor of Universality it runs, *John* 3. 16. *Whoever believes*, &c. But there are absolute Promises of Salvation which are the Object of Faith, which are not universal to all Men; the promulgation of them is indeed to be made to all, but the Promises themselves are not intended to all, and we see it in the performance, which falls out accordingly, both which Promises and Performances are yet adequate as to Gods' secret Intent, he in his secret Intent having those individual persons in his eye, whom he would bestow such and such particular things upon, and made those promises with an eye to them, but still not nameing those particular persons in his Word; there was a Reserve in his Breast on whom he would bestow them: And so because his Will and Intent was to perform them to some, therefore he hath given forth all sorts of particular promises in that Tenor mentioned, *He that* &c. and yet because his Will was to perform each but to some, therefore these promises run in an indefinite strain and tenor. I call them indefinite, because the Declaration made in them respecteth not all persons, but some, and those not declared who they are.

Object. *But you will say, That all and every Christian hath a Right to every Promise.*

Answ. What greater Instance is there than that of Christ himself? and yet although all things are Christ's, and the promises of all things are made in him to us, as the Great Founder of them, (2 *Cor.* 1. 10. *In him all the Promises are Yea and Amen*;) he never had the performance of all and each of the good things of this World promised in *Specie*, but less thereof, and more of the contrary than any of his Children: And what of them he hath in the other World is *per modum eminentiæ, in a way of Eminence*, as the Holy Apostle (that was but a small draught of him) says of himself, that though he had all things, *viz.* in the right, yet he was *possessing nothing*.

5. Promises being thus indefinite, it is sufficient for any to obtain them that their Faith on them be but an indefinite act, and so a Faith answering to the Tenor of the promise. An indefinite Act from us is rightly and duely suited to an Object that is but indefinitely proposed by God to us, and to such an indefinite act is suited: I mean, that as the promises declare not individually whom the things promised are intended unto, so the Faith tho' in the understanding part not certainly knowing that I am the Person, yet in the Will puts forth indefinite acts, answerably to that suspence in the understanding; so that I cast my self upon God to obtain that thing promised, by vertue of that Promise which must and shall be made good to some, and what do I know but unto me. And these indefinite acts of Faith are good Faith, for they are answerable to the Mind and Tenor of many Promises that run in the Stile of a bare *it may be*, which you meet with so oft in Scripture, both concerning spiritual and temporal things; and who knows but God may intend it to me, says the Soul, and therefore I do put in for it, and am bound so to do, both in respect of my own needs, and God's promulgation of it to me as well as to any other. From hence there ariseth these three Corollaries:

1. As Faith is good Faith, because it answers the Tenor of the Promise, so it is a praying in Faith when my Prayers answer to such a Faith, without a certain knowledge that I shall undoubtedly obtain.

2. Such promises as are declared by God being in the respect before-mention'd but indefinite, hence this Attribute, the Will of God, stands in great freedom (which he hath reserved within himself) how to perform these Promises, notwithstanding they are the declarations of his Will, and he hath on purpose

Part II. pole (that he might retain this Liberty within himself) in that manner utter'd them. And by this it will appear that as great a latitude is left to his Will, notwithstanding the Promises given forth, as to any other Attribute whatsoever before specified; which latitude lyes in which and what Promises he will be pleased, and is pleased to gratifie such and such persons, doing it to some in one thing, to others in another; and it is according to his Will in all, as it is said of bestowing his Gifts, *It's according to his Will*, 1 Cor. 10.

3. Again on our part hence it comes to pass, that his ways and judgments, which are the performances of his Promises and Threatnings, are past finding out; and accordingly his Will in dispensing this or that to particular persons is past finding out, notwithstanding the declaration of all sorts of Threatnings and Promises particularly made in his Word. If a Man would go about to make a Collection from the Word, of all such Threatnings or Promises, together with all the variety of Instances (which are interpreters of his Mind in either wherein either are set forth as performed, (as that when Men have lived to such a degree of Sinnings the threatning hath been executed, as several instances do set out) and will thereupon say, that upon such a Sinner God will certainly bring such a Judgment, because I find he did bring it upon such and such Sinners, in such a case, which we have instances for, and those suited according to the Threatnings: In the end he will find a great latitude and variety of Judgments, of several sizes and proportions, in those various instances which the Word holds forth, and some instances of the same kind, in the highest measure, on whom God forbore to bring the execution of such punishments, whilst he hath brought upon the smallest Sinners of that kind the same. If he shall besides also consider, those many intermediate instances, of higher and lower sizes, between either of these two exreams of greatest and smallest, that have or have not been punished *ad libitum*, as God thought meet, that Man will conclude from all such Collections, that no Man can make a certain Judgment what God will do, from such instances of such Judgments joyned together. And thus it is in Promises, and the instances belonging to them, for God's faithfulness and truth are as well engaged in his Threatnings as his Promises, and there is so great a variety of degrees of Qualifications of the Persons that the Promises are thereby made unto, as there will appear that God hath bestowed and fulfilled such and such a particular Promise to one, that had less of that Qualification; as in giving Riches to some, when yet he hath passed by another, that hath had more of that Grace or Qualification that the Promise is made unto, and yet he leaves him in deep Poverty, as he doth many of his precious ones, notwithstanding his Promises and their Prayers; and therefore no absolute Judgment can be made, which is the Point in hand.

3. The *Third* Consideration of the Promises is, *As they come under our Prayers, or are put into suit by us in Prayer.* The former Considerations shewed what latitude is left to God for the performance, and to our Faith in believing, as to the Promises, considered in the matter of good things promised, and the Tenor as to the Persons: Next follows the Consideration of them, as any of them are upon occasion singled out by us, and taken into our Prayers: For God hath not made Promises, or doth bestow good things promised, altogether as they lye abstractly in his Word, but hath made special Promises besides unto our Prayers about them, or when we ask them, or supplicate about them; *Ask, and it shall be given; ask Wisdom of God, and it shall be given:* And this may seem such an Obligation on God's part, that although the Promises of the good things themselves, abstractly taken, and sever'd from our Prayers, may not assure us of obtaining, yet when the Addition is made of God's Promise to bestow them, when they shall be prayed for, that makes such double Obligation on God's part as may afford a certainty to our Faith, that we shall obtain the very particular we pray for. But concerning Promises as thus considered and proposed, I offer these Assertions or Proposals.

1. The Promises we do put in suit for good things we pray for, are but a few, in comparison of the many that God hath made in his Word. The Promises in our prayers are but like the gleanings, in comparison of a Great Harvest; what through our Negligence in prayer, straitness of Comprehensions to glean and

and gather them, I may say of them as the Apostle doth of the Earth, that it stands in the Water, and out of the Water; so do the Promises stand out of our prayers, an Ocean of them, as well as some are taken in: For what the *Psalmist* says of the Law, *that it is exceeding broad, and that there is no end of its perfection*; the like we may say of Promises, if we take them in all particulars of them; and for multitude, they are such as we cannot number them, for our understandings are narrow as they are broad. So as God hath, besides what we put in suit, a multitude of other Promises that lye afore his Understanding, and which he intends to his Children; and hence it comes to pass, that he hath a mighty Compass and Roomth, by reason of the breadth of the Promises, to answer us in, besides what we pray for.

2. Consider those few Promises that we single forth, and take down in our prayers, and then put up to God, or consider the good things promised, which you request in prayer, and you will find that they are but as they are first taken in by our apprehension, and according to what we judge of them to be best for us: For prayers are form'd by us, and so put up to God as they lye before our Understandings; and alas, poor Creatures, as we are said to know nothing as we ought, in general, so nor particularly what to pray for as we ought; No, not as to the matter we are to pray for: The Apostle hath told us so, and that in relation to our prayers, *Rom.* 8. And though there is so great a choice of promises that lye exposed before us, with so great variety and multitude for us to pick and choose, yet we know not what is most expedient in our condition, and which to single forth and pitch upon: But as *Calvin* observes, "We are blind and ignorant in seeking God; yea, and "although we know our own Evils, the Sores of our Hearts, our Needs and "Wants, yet our Minds are more confused, and clouded, and tangled, then "to know what rightly to pitch upon, or what is most meet and expedient "as to our present need. So that there falls out a great variation of the Compass by our steering aside, between what the needs of our prayers point to, and what God's Intentions are oftentimes towards us.

3. Hence we are attentively to consider the infinitely wide difference between promises, as they lye before God's Understanding and Intentions of his Good Will towards us, (as in *Jeremiah* the Prophet himself hath expressed it, *I know the thoughts that I have towards you*; and yet even those thoughts lye in some promise or other in the Word, as it is afore him) and what we are apt to pitch upon by reason of our clung Understandings and confused Apprehensions, when his Promises lye afore us, and are chosen by us. The Corollaries which arise from hence are these,

1. We may see the reason why God gives, and that by vertue of Promises, so many and so great good things, besides, and without, and above our Prayers. 1. He doth this besides and without our Prayers, *I am found* (says God) *of those that sought me not*; and he gives things that enter not into our Thoughs and Heart. And, 2. He doth it above and beyond our prayers, more than *All we are able to ask or to think*, as the Apostle saith; for why? the reason hath been told us, even because Promises are of infinite breadth, and the Declarations of his Will, as they lye before his Understanding, and his Word, which is in his Eye, are exceeding large. And we may truly say, that for God to do according to what is let in, or comes into our Minds, is not the main part of what he intends, he is so abundant in kindness and truth, above all we can sue for. God is greater than our Hearts in this respect, and knows his thoughts and intentions towards us, infinitely beyond those short Ideas we shape forth to our selves, for our selves, out of his Promises. Miserable, at least imperfect should we be, if God should answer us but according to those imperfect Models, Draughts and Proposals of our Petitions: We should have been infinitely disadvantaged, if God should have bound himself up to our Prayers, and have given nothing else.

2. We may also hence see how it comes to pass, that God's Will may still retain that great freedom and latitude as to performance of Promises, notwithstanding his Promise is to hear our Prayers, and that he may still be executing his Will, according to some Promise or other, as they lye before his Divine Understanding and Will, therein performing as he judgeth most expedient; as

Christ

Part II. Christ saith, *It is expedient for you I go away*; when yet at present that word brake all their Hearts, to think of his Departure. But by the taking in of those forementioned things, we may with satisfaction discern how both these things may stand together, *That God may still deal with us according to his declared Will in Promises, and yet deny us that individual we seek in Prayers, notwithstanding his Promises to hear our Prayers.*

CHAP. III.

That the Essential Acts of Faith in Prayer are such as do not necessarily require a certain Perswasion of obtaining the very particular Blessing for which we pray.

I Come to enquire into the *Principal and most Essential Acts of Faith in praying*, and shall still carry on the same Demonstration founded on this, That the Essential Acts of Faith do admit of the like former latitude, and are such as do not necessarily require, that in praying we should have such a *particular Perswasion* of obtaining the particular Blessing which we ask.

1. The first and main Act of Faith in praying is, a firm belief and perswasion of the fore-mentioned grand and fundamental Objects of Faith, as of God and his Attributes, and the Truth and Faithfulness of his Promises; and hereof our *Assertion* is, *That there must be an Assurance of Faith, or a certain, firm and fixed perswasion, without wavering, of the fundamental Objects of Faith.* This Assurance of Faith, excepting in times of great Tentations and over-flowings of Unbelief, we must always retain, and by vertue of a firm Faith in these we must always pray, or we must not indeed think to obtain any thing of the Lord. And this, as it is a great truth, so it will prove to be the main Intention of our Apostle, when he says, *But let him pray in Faith, nothing wavering.* The Apostle in his Epistle to the *Hebrews* lays and makes this fundamental necessary unto both Faith and Prayer, *He that cometh unto God* (says he, *Heb.* 11. 6.) *must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him:* And thus to do, being of the *Substance of Faith*, (v. 1.) must be firmly believed, without wavering; and as our Apostle here (*Jas.* 1. 6.) exhorts to pray in Faith, so in *v.* 5. you may observe how he had first set forth God, as a God that giveth liberally, *&c.* and thereupon his Exhortation is, to pray in the Faith of God, as such a God that giveth liberally; and also our Saviour Christ doth, as an introduction to his Exhortation unto Faith in prayer, (*Mark* 11. 23, 25.) preface this, *v.* 22. *Have Faith in God*, says he, speaking of Faith in praying to God in Christ's Name, of the prevalency of whose Name with God an assurance also is required under the New Testament, *Mat.* 16. 22. *Whatsoever you ask the Father in my Name, he will give it you.*

Object. You will here say to me, *This is but a general Faith, what profit is there in praying with a Faith that is such?*

Answ. *I Answer*, That there is much advantage every way, if the general Faith you pray in be the same with that in *Heb.* 11. if it be a Faith which is there said to be a *Sight of him that is invisible*, (v. 27.) that is, a seeing God in himself and Attributes, by a spiritual Light and Sight of Faith, which doth render and present God and Christ subsistent, and really present too, and with the Soul in prayer: This very sight and presence of him, when we come to pray, will in some good degree cause us to pray in Faith.

If you ask how, or wherein? I answer, By operating and working in the Soul two eminent things in prayer, that have a great tendency to obtain the desired Blessing.

1. This Sight of God and Christ, with this foresaid Assurance of Faith, will humble the Soul deeply in the presence of this great God. And,

2. This Sight of him presents us with that in God which will encourage us to pray, and to ask the things we would have; and these are good steps unto praying in Faith.

3. There

1. There is an humbling *Act of Faith* put forth in prayer: Others stile it *praying in humility*, give me leave to stile it *praying in Faith: In Faith*, which sets the Soul in the presence of that *mighty God*, and by the Sight of *him* (which Faith gives us) it is that we see *our own Vileness, Sinfulness*, and abhor our selves, and profess our selves *unworthy of any*, much less of *these Mercies* we are to seek him for. Thus the sight of God had wrought in the Prophet, *Isa.* 6. 5. *Then said I, woe is me, for I am undone, because I am a Man of unclean lips, and I dwell amongst a people of unclean lips, for mine Eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts:* And holy *Job* speaks thus, *Job* 42. 5, 6. *Now mine eye seeth thee, wherefore I abhor my self, and repent in dust and ashes.* This is as great a *Requisite* to prayer as any *other Act*; I may say of it alone, as the Apostle here, that without it we shall receive nothing from the hands of God. GOD loves to fill empty Vessels, he *looks to broken Hearts.* In the Psalms how often do we read that God hears the prayers of the humble, which always involves and includes Faith in it, *Psal.* 9. 12. *He forgetteth not the cry of the humble*, and *Psal.* 10. 17. *Lord, thou hast heard the desire of the humble, thou wilt prepare their heart, thou wilt cause thine ear to hear.* To be deeply humbled, is to have the Heart prepared and fitted for God to hear the prayer, and therefore you find the Psalmist pleading *sub formâ pauperis*, often repeating, *I am poor and needy:* And this prevents our thinking much, if God do not grant the particular thing we do desire. Thus also Christ himself, in his great distress, (*Psal.* 22.) doth treat GOD, *v.* 2. *O my God, I cry in the day time, but thou hearest not; and in the night-season am not silent; our Fathers trusted in thee, they cryed unto thee, and were delivered; but I am a worm, and no man, reproached of men, and despised of the people, v.* 6. and he was *heard* in the end, *in what he feared:* And these deep humblings of our selves being joyned with vehement implorations upon the Mercy of God to obtain, is reckoned into the account of *praying by Faith*, both by GOD and Christ, *Mat.* 8. There comes to him a poor man, to heal his Servant, *Beseeching him*, says the Text, which (the Man believing that he was God, and the Son of GOD, as *v.* 9.) is to be interpreted to have been a Supplication or *Prayer* put up unto him: He came not to him as one Friend useth to do to another, that intreats a Favour from his Friend as such, but as to one that was God; *There came to him a Centurion, beseeching him*, says the 5*th.* ver. He beseecheth him for his Servant that lay at home sick, and he tells him his Case; saith Christ at the 7*th.* ver. *I will come and heal him*, ver. 8. The Centurion answered and said, *Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof:* This being joyned with that Faith the 9*th.* verse speaks of, Jesus Christ thereupon pronounceth, *I have not found so great a Faith, No, not in Israel*; and his coming and praying in that deep humility, is to be reckoned in unto his Faith, which did obtain. Thus Faith in Prayer lays its Foundation.

2. To come to God with such an assurance of Faith, *That he is*, &c. *Heb.* 11. 6. (as hath been forementioned) doth many ways encourage the Soul in Prayer, and raiseth hopes to be heard, and so excites him further to pray, more than that general Faith as I may call it.

1. For when God doth *Sistere se presentem, make himself thus present to Faith*, this will mightily encourage the Heart with a hope that he hears the Prayer: If the Soul but knows it hath *Communed with God*, (as it is said of *Abraham*, Gen. 18. 33.) and God with it, a Man doth from thence carry away a *secret persuasion*, (even this at least) *that God hears him*, and that his prayer is accepted, and will you say this is no great matter? If Christ but says, *It is I*, Mark 6. 50. then *Be not afraid, or be of good courage, Bono animo sitis* will follow thereupon. His real presence doth scatter Fears and Misgivings of Heart, as the Sun doth Clouds, and works a perswasion of acceptation, both of a Mans person and Prayer. If the Soul can but say, I have seen God to day, (as *Job*, or as an Holy Man once said, I am sure Christ is alive, *I saw him* ('twas in prayer) *this morning*) if God presents himself as *the living God*, this will hearten the Soul to believe on him, and pray to him for any thing whatever.

2. If the Soul believes with Assurance of Faith, that God is a *Rewarder of them*

Part II. *them that seek him*, (as it is in the forecited *Heb.* 11. 6.) this also leaves a *persuasion* that a Man's prayers shall not return empty, that he *doth not seek him in vain*, (Isaiah 45. 19.) but that he shall have a Reward and Return of his prayer one way or other. *David* makes this very Attribute of his being a God *hearing prayer* as a foundation of his Faith in prayer, *Psal.* 65. 2. *O thou which hearest prayer, unto thee all flesh* (that is, Man) *shall come!* and therefore do I come among the rest; and this is in the substance of it a parallel Speech unto that in *Heb.* 11. *That he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him*; as also of our Apostle, *That he giveth liberally to them that ask*: And *Calvin*'s outcry and inference from thence is, *That we do never seek God in vain*; and *Nunquam irritas fore preces* he hath up an hundred times in his Commentaries on the *Psalms*. Yea, this very Faith on God, as hearing prayer, in the substance of it, helped *David* against the grandest Objection which the Heart can have to discourage it from believing, that his prayer shall be heard, *viz.* prevailing iniquities in point of guilt, and the Conscience of Sins that have in a godly Man's practice for a while prevailed: But here upon this, that God is a God hearing prayers, *David*'s Confidence riseth, that these should not hinder a Man's hope of being heard, (and these if anything would:) But notwithstanding them *David* is still resolved to pray, and would have others do so too, because *God is a God hearing prayers*, which he will never be if he hears not sinners; and so it follows, *v.* 3. *Iniquities prevail against me; as for our transgressions, thou shalt purge them away.*

But though this Faith in God, That he is a God hearing prayer, makes something towards *an hopefulness* that I may obtain the very thing, and towards a *Certain Confidence* that God will some way or other answer me, yet still whether certainly or no in the very thing I ask, this Scripture speaks not; and so still it may fall out, I may pray in Faith, when not necessarily with a confidence I shall have the thing: And yet this I may say hereof, that this Faith hath obtained a *good degree* of praying in Faith, when put up in Christ's Name, which the Gospel doth require.

The particulars of such like principles, fundamental unto our Faith in prayer, are divers others, besides this, of all which there must be a firm belief without wavering, as of, and about several Attributes of God, and also the Truth and Faithfulness of God in all his promises: Likewise there must be a belief of the Name and Interest that Christ hath with his Father, in whose Name I come; and the Necessity of a stedfast Faith of these is founded on the same reason that the Faith *That there is a God*, already instanced in, is founded upon; and the same Fruits and Consequents to encourage the Heart in prayer doth follow the Faith of them, as we have seen doth the Faith of that other, *That there is a God*: There must be an *Hypostasis*, a Subsistence of all these Fundamentals in a Man's Heart, and he must fixedly believe them, and that with Spiritual Faith, as that there is a God, and he a Rewarder, so that he is able to help and succour me in any distress. Also I must fixedly believe that he is a God merciful and gracious, and willing to help, and gives liberally, *&c.* there ought not to be a doubting here. *Martha* firmly believed the Resurrection, and doubted not; she believed the thing, when yet she wavered about the application of it to that particular, whether her Brother should be raised up then or no, before the general Resurrection. And indeed you find the belief *of these things* in (*Heb.* 11.) to be the *Basis fulchrum Substantia*, *The Foundation and Support* that bears up all; and therefore to pray in the faith of such as these principles, without doubting, is required; and it is the belief of these doth make a Man continue in prayer: Yea, and when all is said to the contrary, the Faith of these is the main of Faith, and the Faith of these causes us to cleave to God, and to follow after him, and not to take any denyal, because we believe those things are in him, and such promises made by him: Only it is a spiritual faith that doth this, a faith which makes God real, and all his Attributes real, it is a Faith in earnest. Now when I say he believes these things, which are the foundations, without wavering or doubting, my Meaning is not, that a true and firm Believer may not have many Injections cast in to the contrary by Satan, and many Reasonings of his own speculative Understanding, and great

great degrees of Unbelief mixed with the faith of them, as hath been the case of many poor Souls, that have been exercised long with this Temptation, that there is no God, and reasonings to the contrary, yet so as still the belief of those things remaineth firm in his practical Understanding, which carries him unto Obedience and all Duties, and in like manner to cleave to God in Prayer: Such a one prays, and behaves himself as verily believing there is a God, to purpose; and his cleaving to God, and following after God, clearly shews that he believes there is a God in earnest. My meaning also is not, as if God did not grant many Requests upon Prayer, when Men are very weak in Faith of those things. There came a poor Man to Christ about his Child vexed with the Devil, and says to him, *But if thou canst do any thing, have compassion upon us, and help us*: Christ discern'd his Faith was very weak in the great business of his Power, that he should put an *If* to it: *And Jesus saith unto him, if thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth*; and the Man crys out with Tears, *Lord, I believe, help my Unbelief*: He began to gather up a Faith upon the power of Christ, he plucked up an Heart to believe through the power of the Spirit, yet discerning a great deal of Unbelief, and Darkness, and Deficiency, even to this very point; for it was the power of Christ therein which was the thing spoken about, as appears both by Christ's Speech and his. As a Cannon discharged makes a recoil, until it comes to that which firmly holds it, so it is with many a poor Soul his Faith in prayer.

Ames well distinguisheth, That Dubitatio minuens, *tantum assensum consistere potest cum fide infirmâ, sed non illa* dubitatio *quæ* tollit *assensum*: And for that he quoteth this very place, *Jam.* 1. 6, 7, 8. Medulla *l.* 2. *c.* 5. *de fide*, Thes. 44.

But my further Design is to shew, That such a Faith as this, which is without wavering, and a praying in such a Faith, is that which well suiteth with the Scope of the Apostle here in this place.

1. The Persons that he gives this Caution to, about asking in Faith nothing doubting, were certainly Temporary Professors of Religion, or as we usually call them, *Hypocrites*, that in the end waver in their Faith about Religion itself, and the spiritual principles of it; and when they come to a stress of Persecution, which was the case of those times, the wavering that is in their Hearts appears in their prayers, and in their irresolutions and readiness to fall of, and in making them to close with any shifts or pretensions that may colour their deserting those principles which the persecution is directed against. And my reason why he points to, and levels the dint of this Caution against such, is, because (*v.* 8.) he doth expressly say, speaking of those Men, *A double minded man is unstable in all his ways*: As he is wavering in his prayers, so in his mind, which makes him unstable in his whole Course, which proceeds from his not having spiritual prevalent convictions of the principles of Faith which he doth profess; and this loosness or shockyness is seen in their prayers between God and them, but especially when they come to be in any stress. I have compared it thus, there are two pins in a wall, the one is loose, and yet hath a room in the Wall, and seems firm, and there is another pin that is riveted, so that it is fixed indeed; the difference of these two pins you will see when you hang any weight upon them, and put them to a stress: When you come to hang any thing upon that which is loose, and not fixed, it self and all will tumble down with it. And thus it is in times of Temptation, that the wavering of their Faith is seen in such Apostates.

2. The very word here used διακρινόμενος, translated *wavering*, or *doubting*, is used in Scripture elsewhere to express the opposite to that Faith which is fixed as to the principles to be believed, and unto them applied.

1. I find it used of *Abraham*'s Faith, whereby he believed the *Power of God*, that God was able, *Rom.* 4. 20 *He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully perswaded that what he had promised he was able to perform*, &c. The word translated he *staggered not*, is the same that is used here, translated *not wavering*: And this Commendation of his Faith is not, that he stagger'd not in the belief of the Will of God, for he had a personal Promise from God, that God would do it, and therefore no wonder if it be not said, he doubted not of that; but that which his Faith is commended for, was that he staggered not at the power of God, but was fully perswaded God was able.

2. The same word is used in *Matthew* 21. 21. when he speaks of Faith in Prayer,

 If

Part II. *If you have Faith, and doubt not, you shall say unto this Mountain, be thou removed*; καὶ μὴ διακριθῆτε; if you do not stand disputing or wavering, whether it is possible for God to do this, or not to do it: If you think in respect of the power of God it be too hard or difficult a thing, this is to doubt in Christ's Intention, so as indeed it is the believing, or doubting about his power, that the word is there pitch'd upon, consonantly unto that of *that too often confident Apostle*, (*Matthew* 14.) who walking upon the waters, and his Faith sinking together with himself, Christ reproved him, and said unto him, *O thou of little Faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?* His doubting was not of Jesus Christ's Will, for Christ had resolved him of that in bidding him come to him; but when he saw the wind boisterous, he began to doubt of his power.

Multi enim, quia putant id quod petunt esse arduum et difficile hinc diffidunt, se à DEO id impetraturos, ideoq; non impetrant.

3. The word διακρινόμενος signifies disputing, or a disceptation against a thing, *Acts* 11. 2. *When Peter was come to Hierusalem, they of the circumcision contended with him*; it is the same word that is used here: So those Men of whom the Apostle speaks are διακρινόμενος, *disputing, wavering and reasoning* against things in Religion, Principles in Religion, (which they had profess'd) upon occasion of Persecution. The Hearts of such use to begin to cavil against Religion, and call in question this or that which they have profest, as willing to be rid of it. Now Prayer is to be put forth with a Faith opposite to such a reasoning, or (as it is translated) such a wavering, and as being fully satisfied of the truth of those things, they should never have so much as a thought to desert them; and therefore we find, 1 *Tim.* 2. 8. that as we should be without wrath, so χωὶς διαλογισμῶν, without reasoning, disputing against: We must pray with a heart fixed in the Principles of Faith.

4. Even here in the Text it is an Attribute of God that is proposed to the Faith of a Man that prays, and to believe the truth of it fixedly, which attribute is this, That God gives liberally and upbraids not; and to doubt of this goodness and readiness of God to hear prayers, and return answer to them, is the principal thing which the Apostle had in his Eye, whilst he says, *But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering*: So then the Faith he intends is about the reality of the truth of this, and other the like Attributes given to God.

2. A Second Act of Faith is of *Adherence*, or *Cleaving* unto God, for the good things promised, and of *Recumbency*, coming to, and casting ones self on God to obtain it, with trusting on God, and waiting on him: And these may strongly be exercised and put forth in prayer, effectually to obtain, when yet a particular personal perswasion, that a Man shall obtain the very thing he asketh, is wanting. The truth of this assertion, concerning such acts of Faith as these, although deficient in special assurance, might be carried through the whole Bible in many particular instances, as of *David* for his Child, *Hezekiah* for his Life, *&c.* But I shall content my self with this only, and fix and center upon this one Argument for it; That there may be a true Exercise of these kind of acts of Faith, and effectually put forth in prayer, for the great and grand business of a Man's own Salvation, who yet may want personal assurance of his Salvation: From whence ariseth an invincible demonstration, that there may be a true Faith, and praying in Faith, for all other things whatsoever, short of such an Assurance. For the truth of the Antecedent, I need not much insist upon it, it being so frequently true in Experience, and now so generally entertained and acknowledged by our Divines; and few or none of Protestant Divines, holding that Faith of Assurance, or a particular perswasion of a Man's own Salvation, is that essential act of Faith by which we are justified and saved. That the first act of justifying Faith in him that begins to believe, is not an act of assurance that he is justified, is most clear; for that were to say, that a Man should first believe he is justified, that he might be justified by that act, which is a Contradiction. The aim of the first act, yea, of the true justifying act of Faith, as justifying, is always, and all along a believing on God, that a Man *may be justified*, Gal. 2. 16. *Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law, but by the Faith of Jesus Christ; even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the Law; for by the works of the Law shall no flesh be justified*: It Notes forth both the aim of the Soul, when it puts forth Faith for Justification, as also,

also, that Justification follows upon believing; unto which agrees that Speech of Christ, (tho' spoken to the contrary, and to Unbelievers, and shewing what Unbelief is) *Ye will not come me, that ye might have life*; that is, ye will not believe, (which elsewhere is expressed by a coming to Christ) with that intent to have life from me, which all those whom I save do come unto me for. That Particle [*That*] *ye might have life*, denotes out the end or aim which he is to take up, who truely comes to Christ, or believes upon him; and it signifies not only what is the Event or Consequent that would follow upon believing.

Or, [*Ut*] *significat* finem *non solum consequentiam*. Brugensis *in verba*.

And yet a Faith on some Promises or Declarations or other for Salvation the Man must have: For Faith and Promises, *&c.* in the Word are Relatives, and on Promises made unto Conditions or Qualifications, not wrought as yet in him, (we speaking now of a first act of Faith justifying put forth) he cannot then in the first act of his believing lay hold, both because he hath no such Qualifications as are certain and proper Characters of a Person already in the state of Justification; nor would he discern any such in himself, if we could suppose he had them; for the true and genuine work of Humiliation doth altogether devest a Man of all, and presents him to himself as empty of all good, and lays him naked afore God, as an *ungodly person*, (Rom. 4. 5.) and he sees and views nothing but sin in himself, and Faith being that which first puts him into a state of Justification, (*Rom.* 5. 1.) he therefore can neither lay hold on any Promise made to *Believing* it self, (for he is supposed now to begin to believe, and never to have done it before) and therefore he is wholly left unto absolute Promises and Declarations, and to throw and cast himself upon God and Christ in them, as a Man that is in a Ship that is sinking under him, doth cast himself upon a Rock that is afore him, and that immediately with his whole weight, without the help of Plank or Board, or any thing to convey him to it; so here is the Rock Christ, and the Soul now flung upon it, it having nothing else to set his foot upon.

This Condition is much the same with that of a person that after long Conflictings with various Doubts and Tentations about his spiritual Estate, is ever and anon turn'd out of all within himself, as in his own Apprehensions, that should give him so much as ease in his hold on Christ; and so he wanteth prevailing Assurance, though perhaps his Faith from some Experiences, *&c.* is a growing up towards it: In this case this Man may and doth find it the safest, easiest and shortest way for his Faith, to have an immediate recourse unto absolute Promises, and to use such Pleas in Prayer as may be fetched from, and pick'd up out of them, and taken up from them; for they usually contain in them naked Discoveries, and layings open of the Causes and Original of Man's Salvation; and those very things which move God and Christ to save us, as there is the Motive in that Promise, *For my Names sake I will blot out thy Transgressions*: The manner of such Souls is, to turn them into Pleas from out of those Promises, and to return them upon God as Motives to him to save their Souls in particular.

The Corolary from this will prove to be an invincible demonstration for that *Grand Assertion* which is my general Subject: For if Justifying Faith, and praying with Faith for Justification, doth not at first, nor often times long after, rise up to Assurance of Faith, or a certain perswasion that I am justified, or that I shall be justified, and remains but an adherence or coming to Christ that I may be justified; unto which Faith yet the promise of being justified is made, and the Prayers from out of that Faith are heard, and shall be answered, tho' the Soul as yet apprehend it not: The Corolary from thence is, that then certainly such a Faith wherewith a Believer comes to God to obtain such or such a particular Mercy promised, (which is far less than Salvation) and prays in such a like Faith, tho' far short of a certain perswasion of obtaining it, must needs be of Prevalency with God to obtain, tho' he hath not assurance. The Reason of the Consequence is, *à majori ad minus*; *from the greater to the lesser*; Justification is the greater, if not the greatest spiritual Blessing by far, (however to be sure Salvation is) and is absolutely necessary, as without which a Man cannot be saved, but many other spiritual Blessings, (as those Promises about such degrees of

Part II. Grace, &c. the like also of such or such Temporal Mercies and Promises) are infinitely of less Necessity and Moment to us, and in no respect absolutely necessary; and therefore if Faith of recumbency prevails to obtain the greater, then much more the less. It would be strange, that such a Faith of recumbency and adherence, wanting personal assurance, and praying therewith, should obtain the greater, and that the same kind of Faith for other Mercies should not obtain the less; or that God should ordinarily part with the grand Blessing, the Blessing of Blessings, upon so low and cheap a rate of Believing, (as this seems to be for the degree of it, in comparison with that of assurance) and yet hold all other Mercies at a higher price and rate, and hold them harder and faster, so as none should obtain them, unless they be first assured they shall have the very particular they ask. Who would not think, that if Faith of recumbency be good Faith for Salvation it self, it should not be for all things that are less than Salvation it self? yea, that are comprehended in it, and go with it, and have all the Promises annexed to it: I may say, as the Apostle says of God's giving Christ, *If he hath given his Son, how shall he not with him give us all things?* So here, if he hath committed the Keys of Life and Salvation into the hands of Faith of Recumbency, to open this his great Mass of Treasure, shall he shut up all his lesser Cabinets from all Capacity of opening them? I may boldly say, how shall he not give us all things, with the same Faith, and give power unto it over all other Blessings whatever.

2. Neither can any account be given, why that the same Person should be obliged unto so hard and high a Condition of believing, (as Faith of Assurance is, and which is a further special Gift of GOD super-added unto Faith of Recumbency) or else he shall not receive Mercies of any inferiour rank and kind; when yet if he prays for the transcendant Mercy of the whole of his Salvation, but with a Faith of recumbency only, without assurance, he shall receive it, when yet not the other without that highest degree of Faith, as the contrary assertion doth and must suppose.

3. Let this Consideration be added, That it is hard to suppose, *That this same Believer should be obliged to pray for all other things with a Faith of Assurance, whilst yet he wants assurance of the main*; *viz.* Of his own Salvation, (which is as the grand Lease, upon which the Promises of all other Mercies, as lesser Causes, do depend): Yea, and whilst he conflicts daily with, and is under doubtings of his personal Interest in Salvation, his real Interest in which must give him Interest in all other Promises. And in this case, who will not readily see that assurance of his Interest in the Love and Favour of God, that is the Fountain of all other Blessings; and of his Interest in Christ, the Purchaser and Channel of all Blessings, must be had first, as that which must in any ordinary way be the foundation of his assurance, that he hath, or shall have any of the smaller Rivulets or Streams that flow therefrom: He must in reason be assured of the grand Lease, e're he can claim, or with assurance sue for particular demeasnes belonging to it. What more absurd, than to think that we must be bound to ask all other things else in the Name of Christ, as being our Christ, to be given us out of God's special Grace and Love, and all this with an assurance we shall receive them thence, whilst yet we are in doubt, or at least do not certainly know that Christ is ours, or that God certainly loves us: This were to put Mens Faith upon Contradictions. I deny not, but in the case of the faith of Miracles, those that wrought them were perswaded and assured God would work such a Miracle by them, e're they would declare that they would attempt it, or did attempt to work it. And also I grant, that many of those that had such a Faith, were not yet Believers with a saving Faith. But the case is far otherwise here, for in and unto them the working of Miracles did not depend upon that special Love of God which he beareth to his Children, but in the fate in hand. All Blessings given to any true Believers, after Justification, comes out of the same Love that Salvation it self doth; and therefore if this Believer suppose faith of assurance that he shall receive them, it must withall be an assurance that God out of that special Favour will bestow them on him, for otherwise his supposed Faith of Assurance terminates it self in God's bestowing the things, without

perswasion of God's Love to give them: And if so, then he prayeth but with such Faith of Assurance as was common to Men unregenerate, that did work Miracles, who barely had a Faith God would do the thing by them, but without a respect of a Love born to their Persons therein. And so it would be a contradiction, to say the same person should want Faith of assurance of God's special Love for his Salvation, and that yet he should pray for particular Blessings out of a Faith of assurance, that God out of such a Love would give him them. At least it would be a Faith of Miracles, to have such an assurance for particular Blessings, when a Man wants assurance of God's Love.

4. Yea and *Lastly*, He should be obliged to this assurance, (if such a Tenet were true) about things which are not so certainly proposed, *viz.* The Promises of degrees of Grace, *&c.* as also temporal things, which are not with an absolute certainty proposed in the Promises of them.

CHAP. IV.

How we are in Prayer to act Faith upon Temporal Promises.

THe next Object of Faith, on which it acts in praying, is the Promises. Faith in Prayer treats with God by his Promises; and tho' it treats with God, and with God only, through Christ, yet it deals with Promises. Prayer is a putting Promises into suit, as you do Bonds and Bills, which are your Specialties. I reckoned up five Attributes before, which did not bind you up to believe you should have the particular thing which you ask: I add two more, the Will of God, and the Faithfulness of God; and when you come to Promises, you have to do with these: 1. You have to do with the Will of God, for Promises and Declarations of his Will. And, 2. With the Faithfulness of God, that he will perform that which he hath promised. Now mark it, put but these five things together, in appearance they would seem to answer any Distrust which you may have, concerning receiving the particular Mercy requested.

1. Promises are a Declaration of God's Will.

2. When I am in present need of any thing, I find a Promise, and then it is Faiths duty to lay hold on that promise, and to put it in suit, and to urge it to God.

3. When I come to pray, I am moved hugely to urge that Promise, and this by the Spirit of God.

4. God's Faithfulness lyes at stake to perform it; for you will say, he cannot deny himself.

5. I come and pray in Christ's Name, which hath great efficacy with God.

Now put these things together, and what should hinder but that I should obtain? but tho' you put other things together, and put all these things together, yet it will be found, that Faith may not rise up to an assurance, nor is it bound so to do.

To assoil this particular, The main thing to be done, is to shew what latitude God's Will in his promises do allow to Faith, that it shall not bind it up, that I must be necessitated to believe that I shall have the particular thing. If we will know the true meaning and intent of God in his promises, we must search into the Nature, and Kind, and Tenure of the Promises, and thereby we shall find that God in making these Promises hath not bound us up to any particular perswasion, that I must believe I shall receive the very particular mercy which I ask. This must be granted, that look what God promiseth, so Faith ought to believe: This we must stick to, and bide by. Look what is the true Intent and Meaning of God in making Promises, that Faith must be perswaded of: But take any promises, and there is not such a declaration of the Will of God in them, as shall bind me up to such a perswasion of assurance, that I shall receive the particular Blessing. The Promises are of three sorts:

1. Personal Promises, made to particular Persons; as the promise of a Son

Isaac

Part II. *Isaac* made to *Abraham*, which in it self was a temporal promise, but there was added *Abraham*'s Salvation in the Seed of *Isaac*, of whom Christ should come. *David* likewise had the temporal promise of a Kingdom, and he had the promise of Salvation through his Seed, namely, Christ: Now this must be said that they were bound up to a special Faith, and to a persuasion that God would do this thing for them, for the promises were made to them personally, and to both of them with an Oath: But these cannot be drawn to an Example to us, to bind us to believe we shall have the like.

2. The second sort of Promises are promiscuous Promises, Promises in common, as it is call'd the common Salvation, and therein is not put in *me*, or *thee*, or *you*, but they are made in common and at large. Now take the Promises that are in common, and promiscuously, and they are distinguish'd according to the Subject matter of them, and also the Tenure of them: The matter of them varies the kind of them, and so will vary our Case in hand to speak to it, and the Tenure of them depends upon what is the matter of them.

1. Some Promises are of temporal things, that is the matter of them.

2. Other Promises are about things eternal: The Apostle hath made this distinction to our hand, 1 *Tim.* 4. 8. *Godliness hath the promise of the Life that now is, and of that which is to come:* Now you see there are differing matters promised, either temporal things, or things belonging to Salvation; this makes a very great variation in the promise, and accordingly they differ in their Tenure, or manner of promulging. God hath framed the Tenure and Form of promulging them according to the matter of them; and as we say, that he works contingently in contingent things, necessarily in necessary; so he hath delivered promises of temporal things one way, and promises of eternal things another way.

I begin with Temporal Promises to God's People, and concerng them I have this Maxim or Assertion:

1. For the Tenure of them: They are but indefinite, not universal to all the People of God. The People of God have indeed all the promises before them, but take any temporal particular promise, and it is not universal to all the People of God, but is in God's intention indefinite, and design'd but to some of them: God's intent in making them was never to perform them to all godly Men in all things. There is no good thing temporal (be it Deliverance, Riches, Honours, *&c.*) but God hath given a promise of it; for whatever good he doth any of his Children, he doth it by a Word, a Promise, and there is no distress or want any of us are in, but there is a Promise suitable for it, if we could find it: But yet I affirm, that God never intended to give all these outward things to all his Saints, for not many of them are rich, not many noble, *&c.* from this is clear, that he did not mean such promises for them all. But the case stands thus, God had the whole Body of the Elect afore him, and he gives all among them, and disperseth all among them; and whatever good thing any Man hath, he hath it by a Promise, and through Prayer on that Promise. Hence it necessarily ariseth, that it is impossible that every man that prays should have every temporal promise for which he prays performed to him, for God never intended it. I seek such a mercy which God hath promised, and God takes liberty to answer my Prayer another way, and yet still performs the design of his promise.

Object. *But have not I right to all the Promises, as I am a Christian? and therefore doth not God intend them all to me?*

Answ. Had Jesus Christ right to all the Promises? you will say, Yes; and you say rightly, for in him were all the Promises, both of this Life and that other, *Amen.* Yet you know and find, that our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ had but few of them fulfill'd to him in *Specie*, or in kind; he that was the Founder of all the Promises, and for our sakes became poor, had not the promise of Riches fulfill'd: For our sakes he was despised, and his face more marr'd than any Mans, and so he had not the Honours of this World, tho' he had the right to all: How then were the Promises fulfilled? Vertually he had all; and now he hath all Riches and Honour, and all to dispose of, as the Angels Song in the Revelations shews: Now it is said, (*Rom.* 8. 32.) if God gives

gives Christ, how shall he not with him give all things? What Saint in the World ever had all things in kind? None: How is it then he hath all things vertually? how is that, he hath as good as all things? I give you *Paul*'s instance, 2 *Cor.* 6. 10. *As sorrowful, yet always rejoycing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing all things:* In *solido*, vertually, eminently he had all, while he had God and Christ: As Christ had all while he was in the World, when yet he had nothing; for he had not a hole to hide his Head in. That the Promises must needs be indefinite, and not universal, is evident also by this, that in the Old Testament they were not universal, for they were never performed universally, (this very point was the Quarrel between *Job* and his Friends; they insisted on it, that all godly Men had outward prosperity, and *Job* says the contrary) yet in the Old Testament they were in their prime, in their *Auge*, in their Dominion, for there was a constellation of outward promises then, yet not performed to all Saints: Why else doth *Jeremiah* complain, saying, *Thou art an Enemy to me?* And why doth *David* make such complaints, *Psal.* 73.

When thou comest to pray for such a good particular temporal thing, and hast it not, thou mayest as well say, *Thou hast not Christ*, as say that God doth not answer thee: Why? because with Christ thou should'st have all things, (as the Apostle tells us) but not all things in *Specie*, in the kind; No, God never meant it.

Now then what kind of Faith ought we to have about Temporal Promises? The promises are not made universal to all Godly Men, for they are but indefinite: Hence your Faith that applys to God, must be suitable to the promise, and so if the promise be indefinite, your Faith must be indefinite. And what is that? the Scripture prompts it every where, and it is this thought of thy Heart, *It may be God will be gracious to me in this thing, and this (it may be) makes me pray, and urge this promise, being in need, to put in for it; but whether I shall receive it or no, I am not certain, but I throw my self entirely upon God.*

2. Temporal Promises for the Tenure of them are Conditional; that is, they are made to such and such Qualifications in Men, which if they do fall short of, God is not obliged to bestow them, or to perform them, though they pray for them; though they are declarations of his Will, yet they are declarations of his Will upon Condition, *viz.* to them that fear God, and pray to God. I make an Argument from Threatnings, which are declarations of God's Will as well as Promises: You shall have some Threatnings uttered, which seem very peremptory Declarations of God's Will, yet there seems to be a Condition of God's Will, why God does not perform them: Such was that Threatning denounc'd to *Hezekiah*, for God came upon him by a Prophet, with the same assurance by which God inspir'd Scripture, *Isa.* 38. 1, 2, 3. *Hezekiah was sick unto death, and Isaiah the Prophet said unto him, Thus saith the Lord, set thy House in order, for thou shalt dye, and not live: Then Hezekiah turned his face toward the Wall, and prayed unto the Lord, and said, Remember now, O Lord, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight; and Hezekiah wept sore:* Here is no Condition mentioned, but it is with the same light spoken by the Prophet with which he wrote his Prophecy; yet notwithstanding there was a tacite Condition, it being but about a temporal thing, and *Hezekiah* understood this, and therefore he turn'd his Face to the Wall, and prayed: Here he did set himself to perform that Condition which might prevent this Threatning, for the Threatning was upon such a Condition, *If he did not pray, and thus humble himself.* On the other hand (that you may see God's Liberty) we find, (2 *Sam.* 12.) that the Prophet expresly tells *David*, that the Child which he had by his Wife *Bathsheba* shall surely dye: What doth *David* do? thought he, this is but a Conditional Threatning, I may get it off if I humble my self, *Ver.* 16. *David therefore besought God for the Child, and David fasted, and went in and lay all night upon the earth:* Here he performed that Condition upon which Threatnings used to be diverted, but God took his liberty for all that, and the Child dyed; yet, says *David*, (ver. 22.) *While the Child was yet alive, I fasted*

and

Part II.

and wept, for I said, who can tell whether God will be gracious to me, that the Child may live; he had reason to do as he did, to fast and pray, for *Who could tell*, &c. Here are clear instances on both hands, *David* pray'd against the Prophets words on the one hand, and *Hezekiah* pray'd, and God revers'd his Threatning. Now Promises are conditional as Threatnings are, and being so, consider what an uncertainty (let me say it) there is in point of conditional promises, (such as temporal promises are) and therefore ordinarily there is not required a certain perswasion that they shall be granted.

Object. *But I have (saith the Believer) some evidence I am a godly man, and here is a promise to them that are righteous and fear God, I put this in suit, and shall not I have it?*

Answ. 1. Let me first tell thee, that God doth not always perform the promise to him that hath the Qualification, for God takes a great liberty, as by comparing these Instances in *David* and *Hezekiah* plainly doth appear.

Answ. 2. I would say this to thee, the Promises of Temporal things to Conditions, are made yet to particular Conditions of Righteousness and fearing God, and they are not made to every righteous man fearing God; for example, take *Psal.* 41. 1, 2, 3. *Blessed is he that considers the poor, the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble: The Lord will preserve him and keep him alive, and he shall be blessed upon the earth, and thou wilt not deliver him to the will of his Enemies: The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing, thou wilt make all his beds in his sickness:* These promises are not made to all sorts of righteousness, but they are made to that part of righteousness which any man is eminent in, *viz.* the laying to heart the miseries of others, and considering the poor, which many a Saint dear to God doth not do. Thus take also what *David* says, *I have been young, and now am old, yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread*, Psal. 37. 25. Is this made to righteous men in general? No, it is limited, (*v.* 26.) *He is ever merciful and lendeth, and his seed is blessed:* A Man that abounds in that kind of righteousness of doing good, and being liberal, (says he) God will remember it, and his seed shall be blessed.

3. I answer again concerning Conditional Promises, that the truth is, It is at the pleasure of God, upon what degree of that Qualification he will be pleased to bestow and perform the thing promised. It's evident that promises temporal in every kind, nay, in any kind, are not performed to all that are righteous, or fear God; No, he does not do it to them that are qualified in the highest degree for the promise, not to them who in the highest degree have been merciful; lesser Saints that truly fear God will have more of such promises, and Saints that are more exactly holy shall be most afflicted, and truly the nature of Communion with God calls for this. I will hold Communion with that Soul, (says God) and that Soul shall have much Communion with me, and therefore I will afflict that Soul for every little going aside: God will take that at the hand of a lesser Saint, which he will not take at the hands of a higher Saint.

4. God takes advantage to put off or not perform a temporal promise, which a man hath prayed for: He takes a small occasion, according to his liberty, to put it off, and not to perform it. It is a strange thing to consider the liberty God takes in performing promises. You shall have a Man break the Conditions over and over, and yet notwithstanding the Lord fulfills the thing to him: So in *Hezekiah*'s case, fifteen years was granted him, and notwithstanding the pride of his Heart still God goes on to perform his promise, for he liv'd his fifteen years. Now that God takes occasion on the other hand for a small matter in comparison to put off a temporal promise, the instance of *Moses* and *Aaron* is a very great proof: When *Moses* and all the people of God came out of *Egypt*, truly the promise was without any clog to carry him and the people into *Canaan*, and of all Men *Moses* had the most reason to expect that he should carry them into *Canaan*, for he was their Leader, and had brought them out of *Egypt*, and had endured that people in their murmurings, and suffer'd more than ever any Man did in governing them: *Moses* under-

understood this Promise, and it was that which made him pray so hardly about it, and God did deny him upon the most small occasion that could be, *Deut.* 3. 22, 23, 24, 25. *I besought the Lord, saying, O Lord God, thou hast begun to shew thy servant thy greatness, and thy mighty hand, and I pray thee let me go over, and see the good Land that is beyond Jordan, that goodly Mountain, and Lebanon:* But in the 26*th.* he says, *The Lord was wroth with me for your sakes, and would not hear me, and said, let it suffice thee, speak no more unto me of this matter.* Now consider with your selves this Instance; this poor Man was the meekest man in the World, and had never been angry but in God's cause, unless in this business, and then he was rash with his mouth, and did not sanctifie God afore them, as God challeng'd him for it, *Numb.* 27. 14. Would not God pardon such a Man as this, that had been humble, and sought God? Nay, there was more than all this that made the denyal of the going into *Canaan* the harder to him, because it was a priviledge the Patriarchs had to be buried in *Canaan*, Deut. 34. Therefore you that think to have promises temporal upon conditions, you depend upon very great uncertainties, for God upon the least trip may take occasion to cut you short of them. It was the case of God's people, *Numb.* 14. 34. he had promised they should go into *Canaan*, but you fail first, and break your word with me, (says God) I will justifie my self, that I did not perform the promise to you, *But you shall know my breach of promise, i. e.* You shall know that I do not fail in my Word, but you are wanting in your Performance.

5. If you take temporal promises, they that live by Free-grace are heartless to urge the condition of the promises: They are loth to say, I have such a condition, Lord therefore do such a thing for me. The People of God that live upon Free grace under the Gospel, run rather out to self-humblings; and if it be truly examined, it will be found that *David*'s pleading his righteousness up and down, was his pleading against his Enemies. There is indeed one passage which appears otherwise, *Psal.* 86. where *He desires God to be merciful to him, for* (says he) *I am holy:* In truth the meaning is, I am thy Favourite, I am an ingratiated Saint with thee, (and you have it so in the Margent) I am one whom thou favoureft, (as in the Salutation of the Angel it is, *Hail Mary, thou art full of Grace:* So the Papists make it, but it is, *Whom God hath grace unto*) and the frame of *David*'s Spirit was to plead Free grace thereupon, *Ver.* 5.

Object. *But would you have us to leave off eyeing all Conditions, and make no use of them that way?*

Answ. 1. God often doth perform the Promises according to the Conditions performed.

Answ. 2. God made them to this end, that all that plead the Promise should look to it, that they have performed the Condition; and tho' Saints under the New Testament are heartless to plead such things, yet they should make sure to have the condition, not *as that for which*, nor *as that unto which*, but *as that without which* God will not fulfill such things, for he doth not fulfill them to his Children without them. Now suppose thou followest such a promise, and seest such a condition in it, and thou dealest with thine own heart and the power of God to have the thing promised, and God disappoints thee after all, what then? Thou art made more holy, there is the Answer; and if thou art made more holy by seeking the condition, there is no hurt done thee.

3. Temporal promises in the performances of them are to be understood disjunctively; that is, God will either give thee this blessing, or a better, either the one or the other. God promised *Abraham*, that he would give him the Land of *Canaan* for a possession; the promise was made personally to himself, *Acts* 7. 5. tho' he gave him no inheritance in it; No, not so much as a spot of Ground to set his foot on, and yet God had promised that he would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him. Here is a promise made, and truly the Lord comes off in it, *Heb.* 11. 14, 15, 16. God gave him a better Countrey, and indeed all the Patriarchs lived as strangers in the Land God gave them, expecting a better Countrey. *Abraham* had no hurt done him, that he had not the Land in possession which was promised to him, for he was taken to a better Countrey. Thus God also dealt with *Aaron*, when he said

Part II. said to him, *Go up that Mountain and dye*; *Aaron* was shrewdly hurt, for he was carried to Heaven. God does commute promises, (as the Law word is) doth transfer them, interchange them one for another. *Moses* look'd for that promise of *Canaan*, and as you heard, he dyed and went to Heaven so much the sooner: Nay, you heard how his Body must not go into *Canaan*, it went to Heaven: For who appeared in the transfiguration but *Moses* and *Elias*? Insomuch as *Moses* hath been in Heaven so many thousand years before other Saints shall have it. Well then, if thou dost ask Riches, and repairs in thy Estate, and God gives self-sufficiency, that is, Content, here whilest thou seekest a temporal blessing, God recompenceth thee with a spiririual blessing. As one said to another, What shall I give to take thee a box on the Ear? says he, give me an Helmet, and strike as hard as thou wilt; so God brings thee into Afflictions, and gives thee patience and consolations to bear them, and this is Security and Defence enough for thee. *James* pronounceth it a blessed thing to endure, and that we should count it all Joy to undergo Tryals, if they bring forth patience, *Jam.* 1. 2, 3. To the same purpose the Psalmist speaks, *Psal.* 138. this Psalm was made upon occasion of his having been in the midst of Troubles, (as *v.* 7. shews) Hazards and Dangers from Enemies; now what doth he say? *Ver.* 3. *In the day when I cryed, thou answeredst me*; and how did he answer him? he was in distress, and God strengthned him with strength in his Soul, in his inward Man, and therein performed his promise much better.

4. That which makes a further uncertainty yet to Faith, and a greater latitude on God's part to perform these temporal promises, is the alteration made concerning them under the New Testament, in comparison of what was under the Old. The largeness of performance of temporal promises was predominant under the Old Testament, (when that Constellation reign'd conspicuously) for they were helps to their Faith, as pledges of spiritual things: Nay, their degrees of Holiness had signs from their prospering in outward things; thus I understand that *Psal.* 112. 1, 2, 3. *Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord, that delighteth greatly in his Commandments*; *his seed shall be mighty upon the Earth, the Generation of the upright shall be blessed*; *Wealth and Riches shall be in his House, and his righteousness endureth for ever*: It speaks not only of a Man that fears God, and delights in him, but of one who doth so greatly, that Man according to the Dispensation of those times should be blessed, so as that his Seed should be mighty upon Earth, *&c.* But Jesus Christ being become an High Priest of good things yet to come in the other world, (*Heb.* 9. 11.) *And he having obtained a more excellent Ministry, by how much also he is the Mediator of a better Covenant, which was established upon better promises*, (Heb. 8. 6.) as his coming wrought alteration in the Law, (*Heb.* 7. 12.) so it wrought an alteration in the dispensation of promises, and in the performance of them. Good things yet to come began to be the eminent promises, because Jesus Christ is now come, who is the Heavenly Man, 1 *Cor.* 15. Read the Old Testament, and there you find, *Blessed shall you be in your Basket and Store, Blessed in the field*, &c. But read *Ephes.* 1. you shall find, that when Christ is come, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly things, the blessing now is communion with God, increase of Faith, larger measures of the Spirit: These are the blessings above board, and promises of temporal things are subservient to carry us thorough the World, and for our living in the World to get more Grace: What did they serve Jesus Christ for, but to carry him thorough the World? To this end do the promises of outward things serve, and it is enough if we have Meat, and Drink, and Raiment, let us be therewith content, saith the Apostle. They are not now so much as pledges to our Faith, as they were to Believers under the Old Testament: No, the best use of them is, that they are means to raise our Hearts to serve God more chearfully, 2 *Cor.* 4. Now then you see the dispensation is plainly altered, and therefore now temporal promises are mightily diminished, and impaired, and abated, and check'd.

2. But yet *Secondly*, They are further check'd by the promise of the Cross and Persecution. What is the meaning of that saying, *Mark* 10. 29. 30. *You shall have an hundred-fold in this life*? How? with persecution: Instead of promising

ng temporal things, he proposeth leaving all, and instead of all you shall ve persecution. You shall have an hundred-fold; not of the things, for they are ken from them: How then is it? In having Spirituals, which God makes to them.

3. Yet further under the Gospel it falls usually out, That to whom God eans to do most good in a Gospel-way, he brings things clearly and perfectly ontrary to temporal promises upon them; this you shall find in the Apostle aul, 1 Cor. 4. 8. The *Corinthians* had less Grace; *You are full*; (says he) *ye are ch, ye have reigned as Kings without us: We that are the Leaders of you, the ainent Christians to this present hour, are both hungry and thirsty, and are naked, d buffeted, and have no certain dwelling place; and labour, working with our own nds*, &c. *v.* 11, 12. How many temporal promises was poor *Paul*'s Faith deprived ? Under the Old Testament, as a Man was more righteous, God ordinarily rospered him, but now according as a Man is more holy, God ordinarily afflicts im: Therefore now as to praying in Faith about Temporal things, and with a ertainty, you see how many ways it is cut off.

I shall make two Conclusions, from what hath been said about this alteation under the New Testament.

1. God on his part finds, and thinks himself in greater Liberty, and takes reater latitude for performing temporal promises now, than he did under e Law, and he indeed herein deals with us as he pleaseth: If he took such liberty in the Old Testament, (as *Psal.* 37. expresseth he did) that when the Vicked prospered, the Godly went down the Wind; if he took such a Liberty *Jeremiah*'s time, that *Jeremiah* complains of it, much more may we think at he will do it under Gospel-dispensations: Only a little to relieve ou, consider that God seems more peremptory to undertake for Necessaries this Life: It is a thing he hath declared, (1 *Tim.* 6. 8.) *Having food and iment, let us be therewith content:* He propounds no other terms but so; and e reason is, because we cannot live without them, we cannot serve him ithout them, and so he does undertake for these things. That promise which enforc'd by five Affirmations, and indigitated by four Negatives, (*Heb.* 13. .) *I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee*; that promise absolutely comes about providing for Families, for such as are married, and have Children, s the Coherence shews. Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ seems (*Mat.* 6.) put us off from any vehement seeking for these things; No, not by Prayer, for e tells us, *Your Father knows you need these things*, therefore do not spend thoughts n them, do not seek them vehemently, for you have one who takes care f you, and knows your needs; (if one should say so to a Child, it would make im careless) he knows you need all these things. *All these things*; that is a ood word, but consider it is not all you wish for that you need, *v.* 31. If we live, od will provide necessaries, and if we dye, if we should dye for him, for e Lord, that is a Priviledge and Advantage beyond all temporal promises, eyond all advantages of living in the World, and enjoying all promised temoral blessings.

I might shew you how precious our Lives are to him, and that he will not cast s away: The World lives upon Meat and Drink, but we live upon God's ove and Care. What saith the Apostle, 2 *Cor.* 4. 11, 13. *For we which live e always delivered unto Death for Jesus sake, that the Life also of Jesus might be ade manifest in our mortal flesh; we having the same spirit of Faith, according as is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak:* What a long while did *Peter* and *Paul* live? a Man would wonder that en that liv'd in continual jeopardy, should live forty years preaching, as ey did, (for they dyed within two years of the Destruction of *Jerusalem*) nd they lived by the power of the Resurrection of Christ. *Precious in the ght of the Lord is the death of his Saints.* Who knows how he disposeth of eir Lives? Now as on God's part he takes a liberty about performing tempoal promises to us, yet with that Caution to give Necessaries, so our Faith, ouching outward things, should be answerable; our Faith should be at less certainty obtain outward things than they had in the Old Testament, yet our Prayers

Part II. should be earnestly and vehemently for our Lives, that we may live to serve God. The alteration of God's dispensation on God's part, must needs alter our Faith.

CHAP. V.

Concerning Praying, and Faith in Prayer, for performance of Promises purely spiritual. A Division of Spiritual Promises into three sorts. A Discussion concerning absolute Promises. How this Maxime is to be understood, That absolute Promises are to be absolutely sought by us: With what manner of Faith in Prayer any Soul may deal with God for the performance of those Promises.

PRomises purely spiritual are such as purely concern our Salvation. There are three sorts of Promises that concern Salvation.

1. Such as are *absolutely absolute*; *Absolutissimæ*; that are absolute indeed, *Primo Primæ*; such are all those immediate declarations of God's purposes to save, and all such promises as hold forth so much of the Covenant of Grace, *Jer.* 31. 33. *I will write my Law in their Hearts*: Which Promises God makes without respect had to any pre-requisites at all in Men, as unto which he should have respect in his making those promises; which God is so far from, that in those promises he undertakes to perform the Conditions.

2. A Second sort of promises are absolute in this sence, that they express a *certainty* of performance of them, but yet do suppose pre-requisite Qualifications first wrought by God, and a continuation thereof; and though not *for which*, yet *as upon which*, and not *without which first* wrought they are ever performed to any. The Qualifications are such as *Faith and Repentance*, &c. which do at first put a Man into a state of Grace, according to that of the Apostle, speaking of Faith, *Whereby we have access into the Grace wherein we stand*, Rom. 5. 2. They are such promises as these, *Whosoever believeth hath Eternal Life, and shall never perish*, John 3. 16. and John 18. 36. *He that believeth shall never dye*, John 11. *They shall never enter into Condemnation*, John 5. 24. Unto this sort belong all promises of *Perseverance*, and of giving the possession of Salvation in the latter end of our Lives; and these (because of the certainty of the performance, though made unto such and such Qualifications) I do call *secondarily absolute*

3. There is a third sort of Promises belonging to Salvation, which I call *Additional* Promises, as those that are made of giving more or less degrees of Grace, and of preserving a Man through his whole course from falling into gross sins, and of giving joy and peace in believing, *Joy unspeakable and full of Glory*, and peace which passeth understanding: These I call additional to Salvation, because they belong but to the *Bene esse, to the better being* of a Christian, and yet have Salvation in them, as the Apostle's word is, *i. e.* they belong to Salvation, but not absolutely to the *esse* or *being* of a Believer, as such, or as *without which* he is not a Believer, and shall not be saved, whereas those two former are essential to Salvation it self, without which none is or can be saved.

According to this Division of Promises, I shall first shape this general division of Answers to the point in hand, *viz.* How we are to act Faith about each of these Promises, and to manage our Prayers about any of them.

1. As to that *Third* and last sort of additional things and promises of Salvation, they are those that are the occasions and matters of the greatest complaints amongst Christians. We pray indeed for such and such Graces and holy Dispositions, *&c.* but we find no more performance of them than we do in temporals; and this causeth a great Discouragement, Scruple and Sadness, rising even unto this, that God therefore answereth not our Prayers at all, and that therefore we pray not in Faith.

2. As

2. As to the second sort of Promises, which I call *secondarily absolute*, they ing of the Essence of Salvation, and the final possession thereof being an-xed unto the Qualifications of Faith, *&c.* first wrought: A Believer that es, and spiritually perceives the Qualifications wrought in himself, may fur-er by a Faith of Certainty believe and pray for the performance thereof. He ithall must diligently attend unto a continuing in that Faith and Morti-cation of Lusts, *&c.* which are to be the consequents of the first Faith wrought, the end to obtain such promises: For even such Promises are utter'd with an ; thus it is said, *That we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our onfidence to the end*, Heb. 3. 14. and such is that promise of Christ, *He that endures to e end shall be saved*; and such is the contrary Threatning of the Apostle, *If ye live ter the flesh, ye shall dye, but if ye through the spirit do mortifie the deeds of the body, ye all live*, Rom. 8. 13. So as hypothetically it may be said, that if those that ave true Faith once, should not continue and exercise to do those things through-ut the future course of their Lives, they would certainly perish: But yet be-ause God hath absolutely undertaken, without *Ifs* or *Ands*, to keep and to reserve them out of his Faithfulness, and to sanctifie them ὁλοτελῆς, which word imports *finally* and *totally*, (as his promise is 1 *Thes.* 5. 23.) therefore Be-evers may pray *absolutely*; that is, with a belief of certainty for the perfor-ance of those promises, and God's continuing to preserve them to the nd.

3. But, *Thirdly*, As to that *first sort* of *absolute Promises* and *Declarations*, which call *most absolute*, there is in Experience found (as well may be thought) ome difficulty in the thing it self, how a Man may apply his Faith thereto, hether in an *absolute way*, or how? and consequently, how he may make use ven of such Promises in praying, and wind them into his prayers, and pleas r his Salvation, by vertue of them.

There is a Trite and Common Maxim passeth up and down, (but I fear not so well understood by all) *viz.* that spiritual *promises* and *things* being *bsolute*, therefore all Men are bound to *pray absolutely*, or with a Faith of *ertainty* about them: And the supposed Grounds for this are;

1. That Faith in us being to be answerable to the matter and nature of e promise, and the *things* therein promised, therefore if the *Promise be abso-te*, then the Faith ought to be absolute, and then *as absolute a praying* for them such a Faith ought to be also; and that absoluteness of Faith required of ll in praying for them, is understood to be a Faith of *Certainty*, or assurance hat they shall absolutely, that is, certainly obtain them.

2. A Second supposed Ground is, That this is a commonly received difference etween *Temporal* promises and *Spiritual*; that the temporal are to be prayed r *conditionally*, &c. and so with an *It may be*, therefore oppositively all spiri-ual promises, and the performance of them, are to be pray'd for *absolutely*, ithout any *If*, or *It may be*. And hence Men think, that every Man is bound o seek for these with such an absolute Faith as is certainly perswaded they hall obtain, although a Man cannot assure himself the like of Temporals. Here judge it conducible to the point afore us, to consider how that common Maxim is to be understood, as in relation unto our Prayers about absolute pro-nises.

1. Let no Man deceive himself, that these are called *absolute promises*, as if God would save Men without those Qualifications mentioned wrought in them. Let not any Man imagine that he should seek for Salvation absolutely, thinking that hough he should want those Qualifications, yet he should obtain it: No, for some f those very promises instanc'd in, are to work the very conditions themselves, nd are thereby differenced from the *Covenant of Works*. I may *absolutely* say, s the Apostle doth in my Text, without those Qualifications *Let no man think o receive any thing of Salvation from the Lord*; for without true Faith and Ho-nesS (which are a part of writing the Law in our Hearts) no Man shall ee, or be accepted of God, *Heb.* 12.

2. The matter in those absolute promises, which is Salvation it self, and he Qualifications promised to be wrought, are *absolute* indeed in this Sence, hat they are things of an *absolute Necessity*, as *to Man* on *his part*; (Mark that) both

Part II. Both the *things themselves* are Necessary, and that *every Man should seek* after them for himself also is Necessary.

1. *The things* are of absolute Necessity: Christ calls them (as most interpret that Speech) that *One thing Necessary*; and in this sense indeed, in respect of the kind of absolute Necessity of them, these *Spiritual* Promises are rightly distinguisht from *Temporals*, which do not contain Matters of absolute Necessity. It's not Necessary to have Honours, Riches, Pleasures, (which yet are the Materials of many Promises) but *to be Saved* is, for the Man is destroyed else: So as the *things* are of absolute Necessity to every Man.

2. Thereupon it is of as absolute Necessity, for every Man to seek for the accomplishment of them to himself, for it is his own Salvation: *Work out your own Salvation*, Phil. 2. 13. of which *working* there spoken of in the general, *this* of a Man's seeking to God by Prayer is one great part. It is an Argument of sufficient cogency that is couched in that Clause, *your own Salvation*: And thus, and in this sense, *in respect to Man*, these things I confess are absolutely Necessary.

3. But then *Thirdly*, We must take in God's part too, whose Mind in such Promises is, that although the *Matter* of these Promises be most absolute every way, yet as to the *Tenor* of them, that is, the Declaration of them, as to the Persons to whom he intends them, so they are utterly *Indefinite*; that is, are intended but for some, and not *to all* Men universally: Which is manifest in this, that God doth not write his Law in the Hearts of all Men, as we see in common Experience, and which the Apostle would have us observe, in saying, *All Men have not Faith*. Hence therefore it comes to pass, that though all Men ought out of their own Necessity to put in for a Share and Interest in the things therein promised, yet as Necessarily (I say) it doth fall out, that in the first puttings forth of Faith towards such Promises, none can or must think to set out with a full Perswasion, or an *Absolute Faith*, (as in this Argument, and upon this Occasion I term it) that they shall obtain, as if they were infallibly certain that their individual Persons were *Absolutely* intended by God in those Promises. No; And the Reason is, Because evidently they are not Universal Promises, and therefore Men cannot, nor must not at first dash, or at their first entrance into Faith, believe that they are Elected, or be assured of their Personal Interest in such Promises. No, But all they are capacitated to do in point of believing at first, is, to comply with the Indefiniteness of the Promise, by a Faith that is suitably indefinite as to their Persons, whereby though not knowing of a certainty they are the Persons, they yet cast themselves upon God and Christ, to be made partakers of the Salvation promised therein. The Promises being made to some, (and who knows, or can tell, but God may be Gracious to me, as I have elsewhere shewn) they wait on him to find the accomplishment.

And then indeed after a Soul hath exercised these indefinite Acts of Faith, turning therewith and thereupon unto God with its whole Heart, then indeed Believers may come to be assured, with a Faith answering to, and corresponding with that *certainty* which is found in that second sort of Promises, which I have termed *secundarily Absolute*: They *endeavouring* to believe, or to enter into that Rest, (as the Apostle speaks, *Hebr.* 4.) if they find that in doing so they arrive at true Spiritual Faith and sound Repentance, and that in the Event these actings of both prove to be such, then indeed they may be assured of their personal Interest in, and God's intendments of their particular Persons therein; because then they find that God hath wrought the Qualifications in them, according to his Promises and Declarations in those first sort of Promises made, unto which Qualifications Salvation is absolutely, that is certainly annexed; and by those Qualifications thus wrought, their Persons are set forth and declared to be those whom God in the first sort of Promises had indeed intended. But until these Qualifications be wrought, or whilst they are but in the working, and a Man's Heart under the Anvil, or but in hammering thereunto; or whilst they are not discerned by themselves to be in them, they can but apply themselves with a Faith suitable to that *Tenor* in which God hath on his part utter'd (as in respect to Persons) in those his most absolute promises, which as to persons are but indefinite. And to be sure, if we will deal with God,

God, we must treat with him according to his own way and manner of Revelation: For it is from him we are to have our Salvation made over to us, and therefore this application of Faith must be suited to the Tenor of the Promises; it must be even an *indefinite* Faith, (as I may call it) in respect unto a Man's own personal Interest, yet with a firm cleaving unto God, and to the good things promised, to obtain them through a casting our selves upon him, though we be not assured we are the Persons who shall infallibly obtain, (for the Event must shew that) and yet we are, as in respect of our pursuance after the Salvation promised, to seek for it, out of the same necessity that a Man condemned to dye doth seek for his Life. And the Paralel between the case of such a one, and of this other, holds very much alike: For if a King should declare his absolute Purpose and Intentions to be, to pardon *some* in such or such a Rebellion, but says not whom, though he declares withall he will be sought unto, in such an humble and submissive manner (as he himself will be the Judge of) by them that shall obtain that pardon: In this case those that sue for it, not knowing whom he intends personally, nor whom he will judge to seek it in that manner he desires, they in their seeking cannot be absolutely, that is, certainly assured, they shall find Grace; and yet they pursue it out of an absolute necessity as to themselves. And so the case falls out to be oftentimes in Souls that seek for Salvation, (I judge some difference may be found in these two cases, yet in this main they are alike) for many Believers tho' true, yet do not, nor cannot a long while judge or discern in themselves, whether they seek and apply themselves to God with such an unfeigned Faith as the Word describes, and God requires; so as they are enforced, and yet enabled by God to seek him by such a Faith, as the Event must prove whether it be true or no; and yet they make a venture of a Believing, and of a turning unto God, (as the consequent of that Faith) submitting unto God, and leaving it for him to judge of, and to give them the Spirit whereby to discern the truth of it.

Lastly, To move and stir up all Men to come to God with such an indefinite act of Faith, God makes an universal promulgation of these promises, tho' they shall be accomplished but in some Persons, that Men may be assured that they shall be most certainly fullfilled unto some, that thus lay hold on them, and so they are universally made known. He would have the promulgation of them to be universal, to the intent that every Man that hears them, finding himself no where excluded, and withall not knowing but he may be one of those *some* who shall have those things promised fulfilled in him, and upon him, may thereupon (and he ought to do so) apply himself to God by acts of believing, and to prayer for his particular attainment.

2. We shall now consider, with *What manner of Faith*, and level of such Faith in Prayer, any sort of Soul may treat with God for the performance of those absolute promises? To the end I may assign to every one their right, and due elevation of Faith in Prayer, about absolute Promises, I must necessarily set out the several Climates that all or any Believers are brought into, or do live in, and according to the elevation of their Faith, must their applications in Prayer necessarily be supposed, and accordingly measured forth to be.

The several Elevations of Believers are these:

1. The first Elevation is of such as are *In ipso articulo, vel apice Conversionis, Upon the point of believing in God and Christ for Salvation*, and who through that Faith are turning to God, and have been humbled for sin, *&c.* without which no Man will come to Christ: I plainly mean, those that are now to put forth a first act of saving Faith, having never done it before; which was the case of the Jaylor, *Acts* 16. *What shall I do to be saved?* said he; *Believe on the Lord Jesus*, said the Apostle: And as every thing must have a beginning, so every one that is saved must have a first beginning to believe.

2. The second sort are such as have had (and that perhaps for some time) a true Faith already wrought in them, and some fruits thereof in the course of their Lives: They are such as have truly come to God through Christ for Salvation, and from the first putting forth of Faith have also continued to pray, and to seek for salvation at the hands of God; and yet through God's dispensation towards them, are kept under, without prevailing assurance, that they

are

Part II. are or shall be saved, although withal there be some lesser degrees of Hopes growing up towards assurance, that are added to, and do accompany their Faith more or less.

3. The *Third* sort is of those that have Triumphant Assurance of Salvation, whether obtained by Experience of their own Graces, and manifold gracious dealings of God with them, or further by a super-added immediate Testimony of the Spirit, by whom the Love of God is shed abroad in their hearts immediately beyond all those Experiences: You have both in *Rom.* 5. where it is first said, Experience breeds Hope, that is, an Assurance, (in which sense the word Hope is there used in 1 *John* 3. 2, 8.) and then further, that the Love of God (which is shed over and above immediately into the Heart by the Holy Ghost) breeds a *Hope* or Assurance, beyond what Experience gives, which he there calls a Hope which maketh not ashamed; No, not in respect of the continuance of that assurance in our Hearts.

Now as touching this last sort, of such as have personal Assurance of Faith; there is, not can be no difficulty, how either their Faith should come to close with such absolute promises mentioned, or how they may take such promises into their prayers. And as touching the first and second sort, there is often found small difference in the Attainments of that Faith, they being fain to live mostly upon a meer act of Adherence and Recumbency, without additional Comfort. I shall therefore speak to both in a Notion common to both, which is the Consideration of Men wanting prevailing Assurance.

1. There is this General Rule, That whatever degrees or actings of Faith in any of these mentioned, are to be allowed unto true Faith, the Prayers also that are put up in such a Faith must be allowed to be a praying in Faith to all Intents and Purposes, which therefore shall be accepted of God, and shall obtain, and have power with God, (as the Phrase used of *Jacob* is) for what the Man prays for. And the Reason is clear; for if the Faith be such as whereunto God is well pleased, as the Apostle's Aphorism of it is, then certainly the Prayer put up, though but according to the proportion and elevation of that Faith, must be accepted as a praying in Faith also. And the proof of this is from what the Apostle says in treating of saving Faith, *Rom.* 10. 15. where he so nearly links Faith and Prayer together, and makes them of so like an extent, in regard of obtaining Salvation it self, as evidently shews the truth of this Maxim; and to that end he brings together two things sometimes far remote in place one from the other: Speaking of each singly, *First*, He speaks for Faith, *Whoever believes on him shall not be ashamed*, v. 11. *Secondly*, He speaks for Prayer, *Whosoever shall call upon the Name of the Lord shall be saved*: And this conjunction of each one with the other, and his prescribing the same influence for Salvation unto each, doth plainly hold forth there *three* things.

1. That true Faith from the first sets a man upon Prayer for what his Faith aims at, which was his own case during the first three days of his Conversion; *Behold he prays*, says Christ, *Acts* 9. 11. for now he had begun to believe.

2. Such Prayers out of that Faith do obtain Salvation, which is the matter there spoken, and is the great aim of Faith at first.

3. He speaking this of Faith in Prayer in general, and so of all the degrees thereof, and accordingly of all praying out of all, or any such degrees of Faith as a Man hath attained, therefore all such praying out of that Faith which he hath, is accepted to obtain. And my Ground for this is, that the Apostle utters those Speeches of Faith and Prayer in the general, *Whoever believes*, v. 10. and *Whoever shall call on the Name of the Lord*, &c. and therefore means that all, and any of them that believe, and do call upon the Name of the Lord, with whatever degree of true Faith, shall be accepted according to the degree of Faith in Prayer. And in v. 11. (which is the middle between them two Sayings) you have this reason of it given, *For the same Lord over all, is rich unto all that call upon him*: Whether out of a strong or weak Faith, whether out of a Faith of Recumbency to obtain, or Assurance that they shall obtain, which accords with what our Apostle says, *He giveth liberally to every one that prayeth in Faith*, (I add by way of Explication of both) be the Faith of what Degree and Elevation whatever.

2. A Second Maxim or Rule is this, Upon these, and such like general Dictates of the Holy Ghost, I may warrantably conclude, that so as a Man's Faith in all these three several Conditions fore-mention'd doth rise, so far a Man's praying in those Degrees of his Faith, or his putting forth Faith in Prayer will rise also. The stream never riseth higher than the Fountain, but so far it will. A Man can but pray with that Faith which he hath, and his Prayer shall be accepted according to what he hath, agreeable to that Assertion of the Apostle, 2 *Cor.* 8. 12. *It shall be accepted according to what a Man hath, and not according to what a man hath not.* So that as the Apostle speaks of God's judging men at latter day, that those that are without Law shall be judged by what Light and Power they had without the Law, and those that have sinned living under the Law, shall be judged by the Law, and the Light and Power they had therefrom, (and in like manner they by the Gospel that had the Light of it, and all in their due proportions) so I may say of praying in Faith, he that prays in Faith of bare Recumbency without Assurance, shall by that Faith obtain what he prays for without assurance; and he that prays with some hopeful trust of obtaining, though not rising up to full assurance, (which is sometimes the case of the second Condition) he shall obtain according to the measure of his Faith, altho' short of full assurance. In short, I may say of them all, as Christ did, *Be it unto you according to your Faith.*

FINIS.

OF THE OBJECT AND ACTS OF Justifying FAITH.

PART III.
Of the Properties of FAITH.

By

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OF THE OBJECT and ACTS OF Justifying Faith.

PART III.
Of the Properties of Faith.

BOOK I.

Of the Excellence and Use of Faith. That good Works are not slighted by exalting Faith. Of the Excellence of Faith, in that it gives all Honour to God and Christ; and that for this Reason God hath appointed it to be the Grace by which we are saved. Of the Excellency of Faith, as it hath a general Influence on all our Graces.

CHAP. I.

The Excellency of Faith display'd in several Particulars.

IN discoursing of the Properties of Faith, First I will begin to shew the Excellency that is in Faith above all Obedience else: But before I come to demonstrate the Excellency of Faith, I will first premise these few Considerations to all that I shall speak of Faith's Excellency, because Men think Faith too much magnified, and Works slighted.

1. Faith in it self is of all Graces the meanest and the lowest, a poorer and a more beggarly Grace than to love, by far: for in loving God we return something to him, Love for his Love; we give as well as we take; but in believing we receive all from God: so *Gal.* 3. 22. *The Promise is said to be given to them that believe*; and *ver.* 14. to be *received by Faith.* We lay but hold upon what he offers, Christ and the Grace that is revealed through him. Now as *præstantius est dare quam accipere*, so to love and obey is in it self better than to believe, it is more honourable for us. Believing is Passion rather than Action, for indeed God puts Christ upon us, and into our Hands, or we would not take him: We do but sit still as it were when we believe, and see what God will do in us and for us; and therefore God the rather chose to advance this Grace which is the Weakling to all the rest. God chose to shew his Power in this Grace; and that which is the most foolish in the Eyes of Reason, hath God chosen to be his Agent.

2. Therefore it is not Faith as it is a Quality or an Act simply in it self, that we shall or do commend it to you; it is not for any Worth in it self, but as it is an Instrument singled out by God to do all by in us. As *Peter* said of himself, having healed the Cripple, *Acts* 3. 12. *Why marvel ye, or look ye so earnestly on us, as if by our own Power or Holiness we had done this?* No, be it known to you, that we are but the Instruments: So may Faith say, It is not any Excellency or Holiness in me

Part 3. above other Graces that doth any thing more than they, I am but an Instrument of Conveyance. Thus a Seal of Wax is of it self of far less worth than a Pearl or Piece of Gold, and yet it may ratify a Covenant which a Piece of Gold doth not do: *Now he that believes, hath set to his Seal that God is true*, John 3. 33. and so the Covenant is struck up betwixt God and him; and therefore it is more precious than any Grace else, yet but as an Instrument, not in it self.

3. It is such an Instrument as in all that is attributed to it, Christ, who is the Object of it, and God who is the Worker by it, are magnified and glorified when it is commended: So that in commending Faith, and desiring you so earnestly and above all to believe, we do desire you but to set up Christ in your Hearts above Works, and above Obedience, and to let him be all in all. We desire you but to magnify God's Free Grace above your own Merits, and what you can earn, and to magnify God's Power above your own. If God had used any other Grace, some Honour would have reflected upon it, and so much have been taken away from God: But *by Grace ye are saved*, and *through Faith*, (as the Instrument) *Ephes.* 2. 8. and why is it of Faith, and not of any Works or Disposition in us else? *Lest any Man should boast*, ver. 9. for *(Rom.* 3. 27.) *Boasting is clean excluded by the Law of Faith*: that is, an ascribing any thing to a Man's self, or to any thing in a Man, is excluded, for that is meant by Boasting. Did not Faith do all, or if Works did any thing, a Man would boast, for whatever Faith is said to do, Christ is still as fully said to do as if he did it without the Help of Faith; for Faith is but the bare fetching it from Christ, or receiving it from him, or suffering Christ to do all in me: And therefore what is said to be done by Faith, is all one in Scripture-Phrase, and in God's Account, and in the Believer's Esteem, as to say, that Christ doth it; so that Christ is no whit afraid you should attribute too much to Faith.

1st. In Scripture-Phrase therefore, to be justified by Faith, and to be justified by Christ, is all one; to be in Christ, and to be in the Faith, is all one and the same; for Faith doth all by going to Christ. Memorable is that Place, *Acts* 3. 16. when *Peter* speaks of healing the Cripple, he says, *Christ's Name through Faith in his Name had made the Man whole.* What he attributes to Faith is wholly attributed to his Name, and to Faith but as in his Name, and his Name manifested through it, and so his Blood through Faith in his Blood justifies; and therefore it is promiscuously called *the Righteousness of Faith*, and *the Righteousness of Christ*; for it is all one: Faith robs not Christ a whit; and so to live by Faith, and to have Christ live in me, is all one, *Gal.* 2. 20.

2dly. And thus it is in a Believer's Account also, for it is the very Instinct of Faith, the Form of it, to attribute all to Christ, it is not Faith else, it is the Property of it to do so; *I live by Faith*, (says *Paul*, Gal. 2. 20.) *yet not I, but Christ lives in me*: Faith still comes in with *yet not I.*

And, *3dly.* Thus it is in God's Account; and therefore Christ cares not how much he attributes to Faith, for he doth but closely herein attribute all to himself: when he says, *All things are possible to Faith*, (Mark 9. 21, 22.) he derogates nothing from himself, he doth not put Faith into Commission with himself, but it is all one as to say, all things are possible to my Power, which Faith makes use of. Christ, when he had done a Miracle, or pardoned a Man, would seem to put off all from himself, in saying, *Thy Faith hath saved thee, and thy Faith hath made thee whole:* which was enough to have made any Man proud of his Faith; and had it been any other Grace, it would have done so; but he knew that *that Faith* which was in their Hearts whom he saved and healed, said within them, Lord, thou alone hast made me whole. Thus Faith doth trust Christ, and Christ doth trust Faith: So as when we attribute so much to Faith, we do but attribute it to Christ, and desire you but to honour him.

Secondly, We will shew you the Prerogatives and Excellencies of Faith, which (as the Apostle says in another case) are much every way.

1. You shall see what it doth, that Works do not.

2. You shall see that all which Works do, it doth, and much more also; and therefore we commend it to you above all, and more than all.

1st. It

1st. It is in a primary Sense the sole Instrument in the Covenant of Grace, and Works and Obedience are but subservient, and as a Consequent annexed to it, tho as necessarily annexed as the other. Our great Business in the Covenant of Grace is Faith, as the Form of the Covenant of Works lay in doing. Therefore still the two Covenants, and the Righteousness conveyed by both, are differenced, by doing and believing only; *Rom.* 10. 5, 6. and *Gal.* 3. 11, 12, 13, &c. *Acts* 16. 30, 31. and the Reason is couched in three Words, in *Rom.* 4. 16. *Therefore it is of Faith, that it might be of Grace, and that the Promise might be sure.* Book I.

1. That it might be of Grace, given freely, requiring nothing, but receiving: If God had required giving again any thing from us as the Condition, then it had not been of Grace, that is, not every way of Grace, *(Rom.* 11. 6.*)* if it had been by any Works as the Condition, then Grace had been no Grace.

2. Therefore it is of Faith, because this Covenant is a Promise: So it is called, as in that Place, so in *Gal.* 3. 14, 17, 18, 19, 20. Thus he calls the Covenant of the Gospel throughout in that Chapter, and therefore mentions Faith only as the Instrument to lay hold of it, as answering thereunto; for what is there should answer to it but Faith? For tho it contains Commands, yet Power to do what is commanded is also promised, to give a new Heart, *&c.* And therefore Faith is that which alone answers to it, to lay hold on those Promises.

3. Therefore it is of Faith, *that it might be sure*; therefore it was both necessary to be by way of Promise from God to give all and do all, and to require nothing but receiving and believing the Promise from him, that the Covenant might not depend on us, but on God and his Promise, and upon nothing in us but receiving and believing the Promise. God in the Covenant of Works had to do with pure Nature; betwixt which and God, till there came a Breach, there could be no Cause of Suspicion of God's Love to Man; and therefore Love was required, and not Faith primarily: But in the Covenant of Grace God hath to do with terrified Consciences; which, if any thing else than Faith should have been required, could not have been raised to any Perswasion of God's Love and Favour. But now a poor Soul, tho humbled, and seeing no worth in himself, and a Soul in Desertion that sees no Righteousness of its own, yet may come to the Promise to have Salvation sure to it self by Faith, tho for the present it hath nothing to bring to the Covenant. God requires Humiliation indeed afore, because Men will not believe else; and he requires Obedience after, as that which necessarily follows upon Faith, so as a Man cannot truly believe but it will follow as Heat follows Light, yet upon believing the Bargain is struck up; and tho Faith be the great Instrument, yet we say withal, that Works are necessary to be in the Person justified, yet not to justify. Thus Heat is as necessarily in the Sun as Light; yet it makes not Day by its Heat, but by its Light. Works of new Obedience are required as necessary to the Possession of Salvation, but Faith is that alone which puts us into a Condition of having the Title and Right to it, by the Blood and Righteousness of Christ. Obedience is necessarily required in all that are made Sons, and so cry *Abba, Father*; for if he be a Father, where is his Honour? but it is Faith alone that makes us Sons, *Gal.* 3. 26. And tho we are as necessarily ordained to Sanctification, as to Faith and to Salvation through both, 2 *Thess.* 2. 13. by which as the necessary way we come and are brought to Salvation as the Goal, yet it is by Faith alone that we are put into that Estate; *Ephes.* 2. 8, 9. *By Grace ye are saved through Faith, and that not of Works,* &c. Then might some say, Works are not required; yes, says the Apostle, as a necessary Means you are ordained to come to Salvation by, which is the End of your Faith, and which are a necessary Condition of that Estate, tho Faith alone puts us into it; for he adds, *ver.* 10. *We are his Workmanship created to good Works, which God hath ordained we should walk in.* They are the Condition of the Subject that shall be saved, who must be made meet, not the Condition of the Promise of Salvation it self. They are the Condition of Faith, or of the Person believing: but as Sight is that which saves us in Heaven, by which we have all our Happiness communicated to us; so is it Faith that saves us here.

2dly. Accordingly Faith doth all in us, till it hath brought us to Salvation. It carries along this great Venture of a Man's Soul safe to Heaven, and leaves it not till it hath put it into Christ's Hands in Heaven, till it self ends in Sight. It begins and it ends with us, and stands by us, when else all would fail.

(1.) It

Part 3.

(1.) It begins, for it gives us the first Ken of Christ and Happiness: When the Soul is battered and tossed in the Waves of Humiliation at first, it is Faith climbs up to the Top of the Mast, and spies Christ out to get on board him, when all was in Despair, and thought to be cast away: *By Faith we have Access into this Grace*, Rom. 5. 2. And,

(2.) When we are in the State of Salvation, Faith doth all: for whenas all Graces else would soon be overcome and cast out again by Lusts, and would soon be tripp'd up from off their standing, Faith is able to keep its Legs and Standing, *Rom.* 5. 2. Therefore (1 *Pet.* 1. 5.) we are said to be *kept through Faith unto Salvation.* If we were in any other Grace's keeping, we were undone, for how soon would all our Love be non-plust if that were the Condition of the Covenant? How soon did all Graces fail in *Adam*? But Faith is never non-plust, it still trusts in God; and therefore above all Armour else Faith is commended (*Eph.* 6. 16.) as that which stands us in stead when all else fail: *Above all take the Shield of Faith.* When a Man's Headpiece is crack'd, his Shield will hold, and he will safely lie under it when all Weapons else are taken from him. Let Lusts, Devil, Hell, do what they will, the Believer is secure, if Lusts rage; whereas other Graces left to themselves would say, *Who shall deliver us?* Faith raiseth up it self; *I thank* (saith the Apostle, *Rom.* 7. 25.) *my God through Jesus Christ*, &c. Let Satan roar and cast in fiery Darts, Faith quencheth them, *Ephes.* 6. 16. *We resist him being stedfast in Faith*, 1 Pet. 5. 9. Let God frown and terrify us, and do what he will, Faith can look upon him and trust him, *Job* 13. 15. Thus Faith fights it out against all Opposition. When a Man comes to die, it is Faith that resigns and delivers a Man's Soul into Christ's Hands: *These all died in Faith*, Heb. 11. 13. and Salvation is therefore called *the End of our Faith*, 1 Pet. 1. 9.

2. All the Works in the World cannot unite you to Christ, and enable you to lay hold on him and Justification by him; this is Faith's Work alone: That ties the Marriage-knot betwixt Christ and you, as nothing makes Man and Wife but Consent; tho there be Love and Kindness, yet that makes the Match: so doth Faith; Hos. 2. 20. *I will betroth thee to me in Faithfulness, and thou shalt know the Lord*, that is, believe in him; as *Isa.* 53. 11. *By his Knowledg he shall justify many.* Faith on our Parts makes the Match; therefore (*John* 6. 47. compared with all the following Verses) Christ calls Believing, *eating his Flesh, and drinking his Blood*; whereby we are as nearly join'd to Christ as to the Meat we eat. Now tho all the Members in you serve to many good Purposes, yet you can make Meat only yours by eating it, and you have but one Mouth to do it with, and no Member else can let it down into your Body to nourish it: So is there no Grace can receive Christ but Faith, no Duty, no Performance can help thee to him. 'Tis true indeed, the Union on Christ's Part is in order of Nature first made by the Spirit: therefore *Phil.* 3. 12. he is said first *to comprehend us e're we can comprehend him*: Yet that which makes the Union on our Part is Faith, whereby we embrace and cleave to him, and come to have any Communion with him, and it is Faith alone that doth it. Love indeed makes us cleave to him also, but yet Faith first; for Faith works Love; and we cannot love him till we believe he loves us, 1 *John* 4. 10, 16. And tho Love may cleave to him as to a lovely Object in general, yet our Union to him, as to a Head and Husband, offered to be ours, Faith makes. Faith brings Christ into the Heart, and then Love clings to him, which else it could not do. We are united not only to Christ as good for us, but as given to us: now Faith makes that Union of receiving him as given, tho Love makes the other. All Communion too that is between Christ and us is by Faith; by it we draw near to him, *Heb.* 10. 22. by it he reveals himself to us: All our Fellowship with him is transacted by it; it is as the Priest between Christ and us that deals between us and him for us.

3. Faith makes things it believes real and present, and to subsist to the Heart (and therefore it is called *the Subsistence of things hoped for*, Heb. 11. 1.) and so causeth us to have a real Communion and Fellowship with the Person of Christ daily; insomuch as Christ is said *to dwell in our Hearts by Faith*, Eph. 3. 27. where as tho a Man loves many that are absent, yet Love cannot make them present to talk with when he would, tho it may make Pictures of them, and so please it self in them, but Faith makes Christ present.

4. Faith

4. Faith is that Mother-Grace which begets Children on all Graces, and stirs them up, and sets them a-work. I will not say that the first Act of Faith begets the Habits of all Graces first; *for he that believeth is born of God*, 1 John 5. 1. and it self is a Part of that Image in Righteousness begun. The Opinion that the first Habits of all Graces should arise from Faith, hath risen out of the Experience godly Men have had, that Faith did first open the Sluce, and set the Wheel a going, and stirr'd up their Graces, which we attribute to Faith most gladly. It is that Grace that begins all the Acts that are begotten on other Graces, therefore it is said *to work by Love*, Gal. 5. 6. I am sure it causeth the first Love to God and Christ, for we cannot love him till he loves us; and as to all that Obedience to God which Love works in us, it is not Love so much as Faith that works by it; and in this Sense it is said, *Jam.* 2. 22. *That Faith worketh with Works.* (1.) Faith lets in all the Strength we do all with: *The Life I lead*, (says the Apostle, *Gal.* 2. 20.) *it is by Faith in the Son of God.* (2.) All the Motives which influence us to work, Faith sets on: *That I should live to him* (says the Apostle) *who gave himself for me*, 2 Cor. 5. 15. *Gal.* 2. 20. And 2 *Cor.* 5. 14, 15. says he, *The Love of Christ constrains us*: but how? because we thus judg (by Faith namely) that Christ died for us. (3.) All Acceptation of our Works when we have done them, are through Faith that stamps Christ's Acceptation on them, mints them, and makes them current: *Heb.* 11. 6. *Without Faith it is impossible to please God*: as Faith justifies our Persons, so our Works. (4.) When Love, which is the fulfilling of the Law, falls short, then Faith hath recourse to a Righteousness, which makes it up; therefore *Rom.* 8. 3. *The Righteousness of the Law is said to be fulfilled in us.* How? *Rom.* 10. 4. *Christ is the End of the Law to every one that believeth.*

5. Whatever Works doth or can do, Faith doth it much more. It may say as Paul said, in regard of the rest of the Apostles, *Are they Apostles?* So am I, in Labours more abundant; and yet says Faith, I am nothing, tho I do all. Doth a Man in Working obey God? In believing he doth much more; *Rom.* 1. 5. *Acts* 6, 7. Doth Works please him? Faith much more; for it makes all accepted: therefore in the Gospel Christ is taken with nothing but their Faith still; he still speaks of that, and in one Place wonders and cries, *Great is thy Faith.* Do Works encrease Sanctification? *Rom.* 6. 22. *Having your Fruit in Holiness*, &c. Faith doth it much more; it is the Instrument by which the Heart is purified, and Faith doth it in a more nimble way, by going to Christ, *Acts* 15. Therefore when the Apostle would exhort them to grow in all Grace, he exhorts them to grow in Faith. Do Works glorify God? *Let your Works so shine before Men, that they may glorify your heavenly Father*: Faith doth it much more; *Rom.* 4. 20. Abraham *was strong in Faith, giving glory to God.* It sets up all his Attributes, but especially Free Grace, (for *that* Faith only doth) which God ordained most to be admired; *Ephes.* 1. And as only Faith glorifies that Attribute, so Faith only honours and magnifies Christ, and is treated on purpose to do it. A few Thoughts of Faith glorify God more than a thousand Acts of Obedience. Yea, the greatest Glory our Obedience doth reflect upon God ariseth from this, that it proceeds out of Faith that we should trust God so far as to venture all our Obedience before-hand; 1 *Tim.* 4. 10. *Therefore we both labour and suffer Reproach, because we trust in the living God.*

Book 1.

CHAP.

Part 3.

CHAP. II.

The Excellency of Faith shew'd in farther Instances. That it is ordain'd to give all the Glory to God, and therefore God puts the greatest Honour upon that above any other Grace.

1 PET. 1. 7.

That the Trial of your Faith being much more precious than of Gold that perisheth, tho it be tried with Fire, might be found unto Praise, and Honour, and Glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

THE Scope of the Apostle (from the third Verse) lies especially in three things. The *1st* is to comfort them against Afflictions; which is the General, which runs through all. And, *2dly*. He doth that by setting out the Greatness of Salvation, which God hath appointed as the End of their Faith, *v.* 11. *3dly*. His Design is to commend and set out to them (that they might live by it) the Excellency of that Grace of Faith, both as that which should *keep* them (as he saith, *v.* 5. *They are kept by the Power of God through Faith unto Salvation)* unto that Salvation he had spoken of before, as likewise being that Grace which bears the shock of all the Trials and Tentations which they run through in this World, and overcomes them all; which Grace therefore, eminently above all else, shall be found unto Praise, and Honour, and Glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

It is Faith here he means that shall be found unto Praise, and Honour, and Glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ; for altho he saith, *The Trial of your Faith might be found unto Praise*, &c. yet either first it is an Hebraism, Trial of Faith, that is, *Faith tried:* or otherwise if you take it (as some) for the Afflictions themselves that do try our Faith, if they be so precious, much more precious than Gold, then Faith itself that is tried must needs be much more: If the fining Pot and the Furnace (as *Solomon* saith in the *Proverbs*) which doth try the Gold and Silver, and which is cast away when the Gold is tried, be of such Worth and Excellency, then the Gold and Silver it self much more. But it is not Afflictions or Tentations that shall be found unto Praise, and Honour, and Glory, at the latter day; but it is Faith being tried by all those, that shall then be found unto Praise, and Honour, and Glory, and that shall be crowned by God, as of all Graces the most glorious and the most eminent also. And because that this Grace is a hidden Grace, and the Glory of its Transactions are not seen, (as an Anchor under Water) therefore he saith, *It shall be found unto Praise, and Honour, and Glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ.*

Jesus Christ is the chief Object of Faith, and Faith honoured him when he was not seen, as the Text hath it here; *ver.* 8. *Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, tho now ye see him not, yet ye believe.* Because that Faith honoured and trusted him thus when it saw him not, therefore will Jesus Christ, when he shall appear, honour this Grace, that is, he will acknowledg an Honour to be in it, and give the Crown of all that is in us, unto Faith: *It shall be found* (saith he) *unto Praise, and Honour, and Glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ.* And altho that Faith shall cease then, (as the Apostle elsewhere tells us) as the Pillar of the Cloud, and the Pillar of Fire ceased when the People came out of the Wilderness into *Canaan*: Yet notwithstanding the Glory of Faith, and the Fruit of Faith, and the End of Faith, and the Crown that shall be given to Faith, begins but then. It shall be found, *viz.* for its past Service, *unto Praise, and Honour, and Glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ.* Now then, having to my self and to you also proposed the handling of the Doctrine of Faith in all those Particulars which are useful, I have shewn you some of the Acts of Faith, and also the Author of it, and what is done for you when you believe, I shall in the next Place come to shew you the Excellency of this Grace, and what a great deal of Honour and Glory there is in it, and shall be put upon it at the latter day. To manifest this unto you, let me lay this for a Foundation before I speak of that Honour that God hath put upon it; That of all Graces else, Faith is

the meanest and lowest, it is the poorest and the most nothing: But God always kes things that are not, and he filleth the Hungry, and sends the Rich empty way: he hath Respect unto the low Estate of this Grace. It is in it self I say the oorest and the most beggarly Grace of all other, if you compare it but with Love, with any else. It was Love whereby *Adam* was united unto God, and not ith, which was answerable to that Covenant: and Love hath something whereof boast, but Faith hath not; for in loving we return something unto God, for we turn Love to him, we give him Love for his Love, altho he loveth us first: We, I y, do return something unto him again; we give as well as we take: but in beeving we do nothing but receive from God. The Promises are said to be *given to them that believe*, Gal. 3. 22. and *ver.* 14. *to be received by Faith.* Now you now what Christ himself said, (it is a Speech of his recorded in *Acts* 20. 35.) *It is ore blessed to give than to receive:* So it is more honourable in it self to love God, d to obey him, than merely to believe and to receive from him. But because od will not be beholden to the Creature, and it shall never be said that any Creare gave first to him, and was not recompensed again; hence therefore he hath ken Faith, which of all Graces else is the most empty, (it is indeed nothing else t an open Mouth for God to fill) and hath chosen to put Glory upon it: *Go ye* ys Christ, *Mat.* 9. 13.) *and learn what that meaneth, I will have Mercy and not Sacrifice.* I find by Christ's own alledging it, that this Saying is used in a double nse, or a double Meaning, as indeed many Scriptures are so intended by the Holy host: Either that God doth prefer Mercy shewn by a Man to himself, or by one an to another before Sacrifice to himself, (and so it is urged, *Mat.* 12. 7. upon an casion of the Pharisees murmuring at the Disciples plucking the Ears of Corn on e Sabbath-day) or else Christ meant (which indeed is the Scope of *Mat.* 9. 13. mparing it with *Hos.* 6. 6. out of which Christ quotes it) to shew that God deghts in his own shewing Mercy more than in all our Sacrifices, and that he delights ore in our knowing him to be merciful and to be gracious, (which indeed is seen our believing on him) than in all our Obedience which we perform to him. And at this is Christ's Meaning is plain, for he speaks in the Verse before of his own ving that which is lost, and of being a Physician to them that are sick: *They that whole* (saith he, *ver.* 12.) *need not a Physician, but they that are sick.* And then he esently adds, *But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have Mercy and not Sacri-*: that is, I that am the Son of the great God, that am the Messiah, delight rater in being a Physician, in healing, in shewing Mercy to poor Souls, than in all bedience as from you. And in *Hos.* 6. 6. this is also added, *I desire the Knowledg God more than Burnt-offerings.* What is it in us that in us answers to Mercy and ace in God? It is Faith, it is the Knowledg of him. You must know that the d Testament useth much the Phrase of knowing for believing; as in *Isa.* 53. *By Knowledg shall he justify many.* And *Jer.* 9. 23. *Let him glory in this, that he oweth me which exercise Loving-kindness in the Earth.* Now then here is the Sum this Text, that God is more pleased, infinitely more pleased, thus in giving, in uring forth his Grace upon us, in shewing Mercy to us, than he is with all our crifices, or whatever else we offer to him; and therefore answerably he is more eased with our knowing of him to be gracious and merciful, and so in believing on m, (for this Knowledg doth in the Law of it always contain sutable Affections to d, and is the Principle of all in us) than with all Burnt-offerings. The least ing that God could have required of you, the meanest Act upon his being merci- to you, is this; Do but know that I am merciful, do but believe it, do but rely on it. The Apostle in 1 *Cor.* 1. 30. saith, *That God made Jesus Christ unto us to Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption:* To what end? at according as it is written, (saith he) *He that glorieth, let him glory in the rd.* Now where is this written? It is in *Jer.* 9. 24. *Let him that glorieth, glory this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise Lovingdness in the Earth* (which brings us to the Point in hand;) and it is as if he had d, I'll give you leave to glory in your Faith if you will: Why? Because your ith it is merely knowing how good I am; so that when you glory in your Faith, your knowing of me, which exercise Loving-kindness in the Earth, the Truth you glory in the Lord, for so you see the Apostle interprets it. It is but as if d should say this, I am thus great and glorious, a God that exercise Loving-kind-

 ness,

Part 3. nesſ, and delight more in ſhewing Mercy than in all I receive from you, only I de-
ſire to have this Mercy apprehended and believed by you. And when the Creature
comes to apprehend God to be thus merciful, it excludes all Boaſting, the very Law
of this Knowledg doth, becauſe it is ſuted to its Object; it gives all Honour to that
God whom it knows to be thus gracious, it admires and adores him for it. Faith,
my Brethren, it is a Paſſion, it is not an Action, therefore it is compared to ſeeing
the Son: now take the Senſe of Seeing; and *fit intramittendo, non extramittendo*;
It is done by receiving ſomething in, not by ſending any thing out. The Eye ſees by
receiving, by taking in the Beams of the Light, or by taking in the Image of the
Colours from the Object, irradiated by the Light, and not by ſending forth a Light
of it ſelf: And ſo indeed is Faith. Therefore it is that God hath choſen Faith, be-
cauſe it is (if I may ſo expreſs it) a mere paſſive Grace. We ſhall know God by Vi-
ſion hereafter, and we know God by Faith here, and both are parallel in this: that
as Heaven, is but knowing God as we are known, it is but ſeeing his Glory, and ſo
being glorified thereby, as it is in *John* 17. 24. ſo Faith is but a knowing of God,
and a giving Glory to him, according to that Knowledg of him, drawing on the
whole Heart anſwerably to live unto him. Saith *Paul*, in *Gal.* 4. 9. *You have*
known God, or rather are known of God. Mark how he diminiſheth and draws down
even Faith it ſelf as low as poſſible: He ſeem'd as if he would have put ſomething
upon our Knowledg of God when he had ſaid, *You have known God*; but he takes
away what he gives, *You are rather known of God*, ſaith he. So that our knowing
God hath nothing to commend it ſelf at all, for it is a mere receiving, it hath no-
thing to glory in it ſelf, no not as it is Knowledg, but from its Object; for the
thing it labours to apprehend, it is to be *known of God.* The Honour and Glory of
this Grace I ſhall ſhew you, by demonſtrating two things.

1. The Honour which this Grace is ordained to give to God.
2. The Uſe and Hand it hath in our Salvation. God honours it for both; for
God hath a reſpect to both theſe.

1*ſt*. To demonſtrate the Honour which this Grace is ordained to give to God, I
ſhall premiſe, that whatſoever honours God moſt, certainly God will honour that
moſt. It is the Rule that God himſelf gives in 1 *Sam.* 2. 30. Therefore if that this
Grace ſhall be found unto Honour and Glory at the appearing of Chriſt, it muſt be
upon this Ground, becauſe it hath given moſt Honour and Glory unto God; for
ſaith he, *Them that honour me, I will honour.*

(1.) Take Faith in the general Nature of it; God hath appointed this Grace to
be the univerſal Receiver (as I may ſo expreſs it) of all the Revelation of his Glo-
ry which he diſpenſeth unto Mankind in this World. Look what the Eye and
Light is to this whole Creation, this viſible Frame of Heaven and Earth, and all
the Glories that God hath ſtamped upon it, that is the Light of the Spirit and
Faith in the Heart of a Believer to all thoſe glorious things in the new Creation, in
that new World which God hath revealed in the Goſpel, which the Goſpel is the
Map of. All thoſe things which are there revealed, they are all taken in univer-
ſally, and apprehended by this Grace of Faith. God having made this glorious
Frame of Heaven and Earth, if he had not made alſo an Eye to have ſeen all this,
all that he had done had been in a manner loſt, in reſpect of his End in it. So is it
in this new World, which *Pſal.* 8. ſpeaks of; ſaith the Pſalmiſt there (ſpeaking in-
deed of the Goſpel, and of the things of the Goſpel, and of Chriſt, as the Apo-
ſtle interprets it in *Heb.* 2.) in alluſion unto Man's contemplating the Heavens, the
Moon, and the Stars, and the like; *When I conſider thy Heavens, the Work of thy*
Fingers, the Moon and the Stars which thou haſt ordained. How comes he to conſider
all theſe? Becauſe he hath an Eye to ſee all theſe, which doth let in the Knowledg
of all theſe into his Mind. If a Man's Body had not had this ſmall Member, the
Eye, he could not take into his Conſideration at all the Heavens, or the Moon and
Stars, *&c.* So it is here, God hath made a new World, whereof Jeſus Chriſt
the Sun, and he hath made a whole new Creation, *a new Creature*, and revealed
world of glorious Truths, which have infinitely more Harmony in them than there
is in the old Creation, and the Law thereof. Now this little Eye of Faith which
God creates in the Soul, and the Light thereof, is that which takes in all theſe, with-
out which the Glory of all theſe would be loſt. Therefore we are ſaid *to behold the*
Glory of the Lord, in 2 *Cor.* 3. 9. And as the Eye is a mighty large Senſe, of a mo-

large Comprehension; you see it can run up to Heaven presently, it can go from East to West, and take in half the Heavens at once: So is Faith in the Soul, it doth draw in God and all his Beams, draws in Christ and all his Glory through a narrow Cranney. Faith is a strange Grace, for it doth in this partake of Divinity it self: For wherein lies the Excellency of God's Knowledg? His Omniscience lies in this, that all things past, present, and to come, are present to him. Faith doth this too; it doth not only take them all in, but makes them all present. Abraham *saw my day, and rejoiced,* saith Christ in *John* 8. 56. And *Heb.* 2. 9. *We see Jesus crowned with Glory and Honour.* Faith makes all God's Decrees from everlasting, and the Day of Judgment, and Life to come, present to the Soul; it makes Christ hanging upon the Cross present. This is that Grace which hath therefore a kind of a Participation of Divinity and Omniscience in it. It is the universal Receiver of all that Glory which God himself revealeth unto Mankind.

Book I.

(2.) I might shew you, that God hath made this Grace an adequate Instrument to honour and glorify his Free Grace by all the Ways he would have it glorified; and to honour and glorify Jesus Christ in all Ways that he would be glorified. Free Grace in God himself, and in Jesus Christ, who is God's Servant, and Faith in us, these three are a measure adequate one to another, and in God's Ordination ordained to glorify each other. As Jesus Christ did fully glorify Free Grace, and all the Attributes of God besides, and served Free Grace in its own way; so hath God appointed Faith such a Principle in the Soul, as to apply it self to glorify Free Grace and Christ, to their full Satisfaction, and to detract nothing from them.

(3.) Hence it is that God is not regardful, is not shy to put this Grace in Commission with Christ and with himself, and with all his own Attributes. He glorifies it so much, because indeed it glorifieth him. It sets all the Attributes of God on work, and it is said to do all that those Attributes do, and all that God himself doth. It sets the Power of God on work, and then it glorifies his Power. It is said of *Abraham,* (Rom. 4. 20, 21.) that *he being strong in Faith, gave Glory to God:* And what was it he gave God the Glory of? *He was fully perswaded that what he had promised, he was able also to perform.* It was a Perswasion which gave this Glory to him, and it was a Perswasion of the Power of God in God for the raising up of *Isaac:* Hereby now he gave Glory to God; yea hence, because without Faith God should lose his Glory, therefore the want of it puts a stop to his Attributes in their working. As Faith sets all the Attributes of God on work, so it doth give them Scope, Vent, and Time, as we say, that without it they will not work, they will do nothing. It is said, *Mat.* 13. 58. that when Christ came to *Nazareth, he did not many mighty Works there, because of their Unbelief.* Faith holds the Arm of God's Wrath, and of his Justice, and it lets loose the Arm of his Power, and wieldeth and manageth all that is in God: and God he is not shy to attribute all to Faith that he himself doth. You shall find this in many Instances in Scripture. Take that memorable Place in *Acts* 3. 16. see how strangely he speaks there; *Know* (saith he) *that his Name, through Faith in his Name, hath made this Man strong, whom you see and know.* You see here that he putteth his Name, and Faith in his Name, both into Commission together for the making this Man strong; and his Name is all his Attributes, his Mercy, and his Goodness, and his Power, and whatsoever else was employed in doing that great Miracle to this poor Man. And here now is the Reason also couched why that God is not jealous to put Faith into Commission with his own Name, because that Faith gives all to his Name again, it gives all to God. Faith, if it be genuine, will not rob Christ a whit: therefore in the Scripture you shall find, that what Faith is said to do, Christ is said to do, to save, and to justify, and to sanctify, *&c.*

The Scripture calls the Righteousness of Christ the Righteousness of Faith, and the Reason is this, because it is all one in respect of the Soul's Account, which truly believeth, and it is all one in God's Account. It is all one in the Soul's Account to say, that God doth it, and Christ doth it, and Faith doth it, because the Law of Faith, the Genius of Faith, the Form of Faith, lies in this, in attributing all to God, and all to Christ, and nothing to it self. While God doth all upon Believing, Faith attributes all to him, it is not Faith else, for it is the genuine Property of Faith so to do; *Gal.* 2. 20. *The Life which I now live in the Flesh, I live by the Faith of the Son of God.* But mark how he diminisheth it: *Nevertheless I live, yet not I,*

Part 3. *but Christ liveth in me.* Faith still comes in with, *It's not I*, even then when all is attributed unto it. It is its essential Property so to do, and to give all unto God. This it doth in the Soul's Account. And thereupon in God's Account it is all one too. You shall find that Christ seems careless what he attributes to Faith. The truth is, this Grace trusteth Christ, and Christ trusts this Grace with all; for he knew that when he attributed any thing to Faith, he closely attributed it altogether to himself. It were a strange thing to hear that Faith should be made Omnipotent, that you should make another God of it as it were, (as I told you even now it was made Omniscient, because it maketh all things present to it) which is only attributed to God, *Mat.* 19. 26. *That with him all things are possible*; and Christ (*Mark* 14. 36.) makes it a Property of God only; *Father*, (saith he) *all things are possible unto thee.* Were it not Blasphemy now to say of any Creature, or of any Man, that all things are possible to him? When Christ, in like manner, took on him to forgive Sins, in *Mat.* 9. 3. they quarrell'd with him, *This Man blasphemeth*, (say they): *who can forgive Sins but God only?* But now you shall find in plain Words in Scripture, (even of Christ himself, who hath said it, *Mark* 9. 23.) that *all things are possible to him that believeth*: It is, you see, the very same Phrase that is used concerning God himself. I need not to tell you, that you are saved by Faith, and that you live by Faith, and are justified by Faith: no, what is said of God is said also of Faith. And when Christ saith, that all things are possible to him that believeth, it is as if he had said, All things are possible to me, because the Grace he ascribes all this to, gives all unto God again, it only apprehends the Power of God, is but perswaded that God is able, and so resteth upon it; this is Faith. Christ, when he had done a Miracle, when he had saved a Man's Soul, when he himself was present in it, yet he would seem to put it off from himself, and to put it upon the Man's Faith; *Thy Faith hath saved thee*, and *thy Faith hath made thee whole*, and the like. Had these Speeches been spoken to any other Grace, had he said it to Humility it self, it would have made it proud: but because he speaks it to Faith, which still comes in with its *not I*, and that God doth all; and tho I live by Faith, yet it is the Son of God that liveth in me, and doth but merely know God, and take in what is in God, and what is in Christ, and sets all these a-work, so long Faith is still nothing: Tho as *Paul* said of himself, that he did more than all the Apostles; so tho this Grace doth more than all Graces else, more than the Angels in Heaven; yet notwithstanding, I am nothing, saith the poor Soul, I have done nothing, *it is not I, but the Grace of God that is in me.* And because that Faith doth thus glorify God in this high and transcendent manner, by giving all to him, hence it is that God puts so much Honour and Glory upon it, and it will be found even thus high unto Praise, and Honour, and Glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ. And therefore when we exhort you to believe, what do we exhort you to? To set up Jesus Christ in your Hearts, to set him up a Throne there, to ascribe all to him, and to go out to him for all, and to set up God in your Hearts, and to attribute all to him, to make him and Jesus Christ all in all. This is that is done when we exhort you to believe. So that there is no Danger in commending this thing to you; for the very Nature, the very Law of the Grace it self, if right and true Faith, is to empty the Creature of all, and to give all unto God.

CHAP. III.

The Excellence of Faith in that it is most active, and hath the greatest Influence in the whole Course of our Salvation from first to last.

THIS Grace will be found of all other unto Honour and Glory at the appearing of Christ, if we respect Man's Salvation. This I shall make forth to you by running over some Particulars. I will not stand to shew you the Excellency of Faith in this respect, that if there be any Condition of the Covenant of Grace, Faith alone is it, (as our Divines speak) and it is that alone that God requires; but I say I will not stand upon that; only this is it that I will hold forth to you, that this Grace is that which carries the Soul on from first to last, and never ceaseth till

l it hath brought it to Salvation. In this little poor brittle Vessel God hath ven-red the Blood of Christ, ventured in it the Souls of his Redeemed, the Dwelling of s Holy Spirit, and all the Works of the Spirit; they are all in this brittle Vessel thrô e Power of the Holy Ghost acting the Soul by it, to set the Soul safe on shore in the her World: and it ceaseth not I say till it hath carried the Soul to Christ, and put it mediately into his Hands. It begins all, and it endeth all, manageth all till the Soul mes to Heaven. I say in this Life, my Brethren, there are two Principles of ife to Mankind, as there is of Life and Nourishment to the Sons of Men: The e is in the Womb by the Navel-string, by which it takes in all its Nourishment en. But no sooner is it out of the Womb, and cometh into the World, but it th another Principle to take in Nourishment by, and then the other is cut off, d is of no use. So it is here; There are two Principles we are to live by for ever-ore; there is Faith, which is a seeing of Christ absent; and there is Vision, which seeing of him present in Heaven. We are here in this World as Children in the omb, in comparison of the other, and the Glory of the other differs from that we ve here, as much as the Glory of the King upon his Throne, from what he was the Womb. Now all the while we are here, it is this Principle of Faith that we e by, which is as the Navel-string to convey Nourishment to us; but when Faith th performed all its Offices, and we are grown up unto a perfect Man, unto the easure of the Stature of the Fulness of Christ which is for Heaven, then the Soul carried into the other eternal World, and then indeed Faith ceaseth, and the Soul es by Vision. Faith is both Nurse, and Midwife, and all to the Soul, both for e beginning and carrying on, and doing all, till you come to the other World. hall run over some Particulars to manifest this to you.

1. It is Faith that prepares the Soul for Christ. A Man's Conscience may be first a-work in the sight of Sin, set upon by all, and they may humble him, and ing him down very low; but that which strikes the great Stroke in preparing you Christ, is the taking you off for ever from all Abilities, and from whatsoever is your selves, and out of that Emptiness to gò to Jesus Christ. Now it is Faith ly that doth this; that only is the emptying Grace which is the filling Grace of hrist. Tho the Spirit begins upon a Man's Conscience first, yet it is Faith that rfects that Work of making you nothing, and then it comes and raiseth you up to things in Christ. Now as it is a Rule both in the Law of Nature and of Com-onwealths, that it is the same Power must make void a Law that makes a Law, e same Power that creates must annihilate and bring to nothing: So it is the same ith that brings the Soul to nothing, and empties it of it self, and of all things else, d that brings it unto Jesus Christ, and fills it with the Fulness that is in him. It all but Faith digging downward, and working upward. In *John* 16. 8. it is d, *The Spirit shall convince the World of Sin and of Righteousness.* The thing I ote it for is this, the word there that is translated *convince*, is the same that is ed in the Definition of Faith in *Heb.* 11. 2. You know Faith there is called *the vidence of things not seen:* the word is ἔλεγχος, Conviction; the same that Christ eth here when he saith, *The Spirit shall convince the World of Sin:* that is, he all work Faith in them to see their lost Condition ultimately: The same Spirit of ith and Conviction that convinceth me of Righteousness, convinceth me of my ft Condition; and therefore he adds, if you mark it, *Because ye believe not on me:* that is the ultimate Conviction that prepares a Man for Christ. To take a Man of his own bottom, to make him see that he hath no Ability to believe in Christ himself, this Faith doth; and having done thus, convinces a Man of his lost Con-ion ultimately. What is the Reason the first Promise is made to Poverty of Spirit Christ, in *Mat.* 5. 3? Certainly in Poverty of Spirit there he includes Faith, d Christ would not have pronounced a Blessedness but upon Forgiveness of Sins, d that is upon believing; yet it is eminently denominated Poverty, because it is Work of Faith, as making the Soul poor. It is Faith only that makes a Man fling ay his own Righteousness, and to count it Dross and Dung, (as you have it in *il.* 3.) and to lay hold upon the Righteousness of the Lord Jesus. It is Faith that imately strikes that great Stroke in Preparation so much spoken of; and truly her Preparation will not drive a Man to Christ.

2. And then when the Soul is thus ultimately emptied by Faith, and is lost, it is ith that first spies out Christ, as that all-sufficient Satisfaction received by God the Father.

Part 3. Father. When the Soul is in a Storm, and is even cast away in his own Apprehension, when it hath thrown over-board all his own Goods, all his own Righteousness, all his own Hopes, all his own Abilities, or whatever it be; and if God should leave the Soul in that Condition, the Wrath of God, like mighty Waves, would break in upon it, and swallow it up: What doth Faith now? It climbs up to the top of the Mast; O there is Christ, I have spied out the Lord Jesus, and it makes out to him instantly, gets aboard of him presently. Therefore now the Entrance into the State of Grace is attributed unto Faith: in *Rom.* 5. 2. *We have Access by Faith into this Grace wherein we stand.*

3. Then again, tho there is a radical Union that we have with Jesus Christ, without all Preparation, for he takes us before we take him; yet notwithstanding all the Communion we have with Jesus Christ is transacted by Faith. The Union on our Part is mainly and primarily by Faith, it is that which on our Part ties the Marriage-knot; it is not Love but Consent that makes Man and Wife: It is the Heart's coming off to be Christ's, and going unto Christ to be his, and to be Righteousness for him, and to be a Head and a Saviour to him, this is it which makes Union, and this is done by Faith. There are but two things that do marry us unto Christ, as *Hos.* 2. 19. clearly holds forth; *I will betroth thee unto me in Faithfulness and in Loving-kindness*; that's now on God's Part: but what is on our Part? It follows, *And thou shalt know the Lord.* There are but these two things make the Match. Here is the Faithfulness and Loving-kindness of God on his Part; and then here is on our Part, *You shall know the Lord*: I opened that before out of *Jer.* 9. I need not stand to repeat it, for in the Old Testament you shall find that Faith is express'd as there, by our knowing of God, who exerciseth Loving-kindness in the Earth. Now tho that Love doth unite too, for the Soul is united to what it loves by Love, yet it is Faith that brings Jesus Christ into the Heart, and reveals him to the Soul in all his Excellencies and his Glory. We apprehend his Love first, or his Excellencies first, how lovely he is, even before Love unites the Soul to him. So that Faith is first, and tho that Love may unite us to him, as for the Excellencies in his Person, yet take him as he is a mystical Head, and as a Husband, and a Husband given, so it is Faith that goes out to him as such, and goes out to him with an instinct after mystical Union with him.

4. And then, all Fellowship and Communion with him to be sure is by Faith. Unto all Communion and Fellowship with another there are two things required. The first is, to make that Person real and present. And the second is, to have a familiar bold Access. Now it is Faith only that doth both these things to us, and therefore it is Faith that lays the Foundation for all the Fellowship and Communion that we have with the Father, and with the Son, the which the Apostle John so much commendeth; First, it is Faith only that makes God and Christ present, that so we may have Fellowship with them, for we only have Fellowship with those that are some way or other present to our Spirits. It is not Love that makes another present, it may set the Fancy on work to make Pictures of the Party absent, but it is Divine Faith alone that hath the Art to make God and Jesus Christ present. It sees God that is invisible, *&c.* causeth God to dwell in the Heart, and bringeth Christ down from Heaven, and causeth him to dwell in the Heart. There is no more of God to my Soul than that which by Faith it takes in of him: therefore wicked Men are said to be without God and without Christ in the World, for so far is God and Christ got into a Man's Soul, as he by Faith sees him and takes in the Knowledg of him, and takes him in so really, as Love could not make that Reality; it may set the Fancy on work, as I said, to make Pictures in the Fancy, and to talk of him, but the Party is not there present so as Faith makes God and Christ to be to the Soul. And then again, it is Faith that makes us familiar with God, all our Access with Boldness it is by the Faith of him, as *Ephes.* 3. 12. hath it: Beholding him with open Face, we come to him with open Face, with Confidence and Boldness. The Communion we have by Faith with Christ, is often compared unto Eating and Drinking, as in *John* 6. 46. It is so for the Reality of it, *My Flesh is Meat indeed*, saith he. Now a Man hath many Members in his Body, but he hath Communion with his Meat no way but by his Mouth and Stomach, and indeed he can have it no way else; the Hand takes it, the Eye sees it, and the like, but unless the Mouth and Stomach receive it, the Man starves still.

Faith

Faith alone is that which takes Jesus Christ to fetch Nourishment from him, makes a Man find the Sweetness that is in him, and draws Virtue from him, makes my Soul in this respect one with him, and he with me. Book 1.

5. And then all the Joy we have in Jesus Christ, it is through believing; *Rom.* 15. 13. that you may be *filled with all Joy and Peace through Believing.* In *John* 5. 38. Unto him that believeth there is promised a Fountain of Living-Water, springing up in his own Heart, which Faith is indeed the Fountain of, for you see it is to him that believeth. He that believeth hath the Witness in himself, hath the Fountain of all Joy in himself; so the next Words to the Text, *In whom believing ye rejoice with Joy unspeakable and full of Glory.*

And thus as it brings us into Communion with Christ, so it brings the Spirit also down into the Heart. I acknowledg that the Holy Ghost comes down without all Preparation upon a Man's Heart, for how else is a Man prepared but by the Holy Ghost when he comes to convert a Man? Yet there is a Coming of the Holy Ghost down upon a Man's Soul upon Believing. The great Promise of the Holy Ghost which the New Testament so much speaks of, to seal a Man up to Salvation, to give a Man Fellowship with the Father, and with the Son, which was the great Coming down of the Holy Ghost you read of in the primitive times in respect of Grace; he came upon Men in respect of Gifts, but that is nothing to Salvation; but that great Promise of sending down the Holy Ghost to seal up a Man's Salvation, and to give him Communion with God the Father, and with Jesus Christ, and to fill him with the Fulness of God; the Coming of the Holy Ghost to this Purpose we receive by Faith. The Text is express for it, *Gal.* 3. 14. *That we might receive the Promise of the Spirit through Faith.* And that is the Reason I take it, that in *John* 14. 17. Christ speaking of that Coming of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles, he tells them, that they had him already, they had him so far as to enable them to believe; *He dwelleth with you*, saith he: but there was a farther having of him as a Comforter. Now he tells them there, that the World cannot receive that Spirit, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him. I take it, the Meaning may be this, that the World cannot receive the Holy Ghost to come thus as a Comforter, as a Sealer, (which is the thing promised there to the Disciples) till such time as a Man knows and sees, that is, believes. For otherwise if this were true, that no Man could receive the Holy Ghost till he knoweth him and seeth him, I would ask, how comes a Man unconverted (as all once are) to know him and see him, and to see Christ? By Faith, that must be acknowledged: and who works this Faith? The Holy Ghost certainly. Therefore there is a receiving of the Holy Ghost as a Comforter, and as a Sealer upon Believing.

And then I might likewise shew you, that all our standing in Grace is by Faith; Rom. 5. 2. *By whom we have Access by Faith into the Grace wherein we stand*; and stand by Faith; for as we have Access into the Grace by Faith, so we stand by it too. And in the Words a little before the Text we are said to be *kept by the Power of God through Faith unto Salvation.* Mark it, Faith is joined there in Commission with the Power of God: Doth the Power of God keep you? Faith keepeth you too; and as I said before, God is not shy of attributing that to Faith which is proper only to himself, because Faith attributes all to the Power of God, and gives that the Honour. But I say, we are kept through Faith; for, my Brethren, if the way of our being kept were by other Graces, we were in a miserable Case, we should be at a loss ever and anon, but Faith is never nonplust. *Adam* did not live by Faith, and what then? He had no Access into the Grace in which he stood; no, in which he fell rather: but *by Faith we have Access into the Grace wherein we stand.* Faith it stands, and stands out all Storms, (as I may express it to you;) whenas Waves are ready to overwhelm the Soul, what doth Faith? It leads a Man to the Rock that is higher than he, as the Psalmist hath it, *Psal.* 61. 2. All a Man's other Graces are but like Quick-sands; if he stand upon them, he is soon swallowed up. It is Faith that carries the Soul to Christ, who is the Rock, and upon whom, when the Soul hath set its Footing, it standeth sure. If the Soul be in any Disquietness, what recovers it? It is Faith: *Why art thou cast down, O my Soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Trust thou in God*, Psal. 42. 12. there is the Remedy. Be you in any great Lentation, if you can but get to believe, and to see God and Christ, so as that by Faith he become but present to your Spirits, and that you can see that in him that

draws

Part 3. draws your Hearts to rest upon him, your Tentation is gone presently; it is impossible that any Man can be miserable if he believe. *Thou wilt keep him in perfect Peace whose Mind is stayed on thee:* It is a famous Place that in *Isa.* 26. 3. And how is the Mind stay'd on God? By Faith. If a Man be fallen, what reduceth him again? It is Faith. If you let go your Faith when you fall into Sin, you will fall down to the bottom; as when a Man is going up a Ladder, if his Foot slip, and he let go his Hands, what can hinder him from falling to the Ground? When Christ foresaw that *Peter* would sin against him, what said he? *I have prayed that thy Faith fail not.* If thy Faith fail not, that will recover all again. *If any Man sin,* (saith the Apostle) *we have an Advocate with the Father:* Let him go to Jesus Christ, and begin to recover himself by Faith, and then let him mourn for Sin, &c. Renew thy Faith and thou reneweſt all. It is Faith that bears the brunt of all Tentations. When all other Graces are under Hatches, and dare not look out, Faith will be above board, and steer the Ship still. Above all take *the Shield of Faith,* saith the Apostle. A Shield you know stands a Man in stead when his Sword is gone, and when his Helmet is crack'd; and when all his other Armour is gone, he may lie safely under his Shield, for that used to cover the whole Man. It is Faith that can deal with the Wrath and Anger of God, and with all the fiery Darts of Satan, and makes a Man, when he hath done all, to stand; so the Expression in *Ephes.* 6. Other Graces in such a Case, poor things, they will all stand trembling, and cry out, *Who shall deliver us?* But Faith says, I thank my God, through Jesus Christ, he is he that will deliver me. And it quencheth all the fiery Darts of Sin too. We may in this case speak of Faith, as the Scripture speaks of God in *Isa* 63. 5. *He saw that there was no Man, and wondred that there was no Intercessor, therefore his Arm brought Salvation.* Indeed Faith is the Arm of the Lord, and that brings Salvation to us when all other Graces are at a loss. It is Faith which can bear our Conflicts with God himself. This was it that bore out Christ upon the Cross, and enabled him to say, *My God, my God,* when God had forsaken him. And when God seems to be a Man's Enemy, and to fight against him, he secretly upholds Faith within him to stand it out: *Tho he kill me,* saith *Job, yet will I TRUST in him,* Job 13. And when God who is greater than our Heart, and is able to condemn us, and when Conscience that hath so much Guilt laid up in it, is against us, then can Faith have Access with Boldness unto the Throne of Grace; or at leastwise the Soul thereby is enabled to trust in God.

I should shew you here likewise, that Faith is the Mother of all Graces: And when I say so, my Meaning is not, as some have said, that all Habits of Sanctification, and of all Graces, they are wrought upon us after Faith, and after the Act of Believing. No, *he that believeth, he is born of God,* 1 John 5. 3. And Faith in itself is a Part of the new Creature, which God works in us. But tho it be not the Mother of all the Habits of Grace in us, which are all wrought in the whole Lump at first; and tho God draws Faith out first, yet it is that Grace that sets all other Graces a-work, that sets all Wheels a going. When God hath drawn out Faith to lay hold upon Christ, then it works by Love, it is Faith that then goes out for Strength in Christ, that manageth all Motives to move to Obedience, and to live to him that died for me. It is Faith that fetcheth all Acceptation for every Work we do; *without Faith it is impossible to please God.* As Faith justifieth the Person, so it justifieth, and (as *Luther* was wont to say) it fulfils the whole Law in Christ. Why? Because I have Recourse to Christ, which hath a Righteousness beyond mine, and it throws away its own Righteousness: therefore it is called *the End of the Law unto him that believeth,* Rom. 10. that is, the *PERFECTION* of the Law.

I might shew you also, that it overcomes the World, it overcomes all the Good of the World, and all the Evil of the World; and likewise how it sweetneth all Crosses. It overcomes all the good things of the World. So *Heb.* 11. 13. *Moses* by Faith seeing him that was invisible, forsook *Egypt,* and *refused to be called the Son of* Pharaoh's *Daughter.* It brings in Objects so strong, so vigorous, so transcendently glorious into the Soul, that it mastereth Reason, and Sense, and Lusts, and all. It overcomes the Evil of the World; *Heb.* 11. 35. *Through Faith they subdued Kingdoms, stopped the Mouths of Lions, quenched the Violence of Fire, escaped the Edge of the Sword,* &c. 2 Tim. 1. 12. *Therefore I also suffer these things; for I know whom I have believed, and am perswaded he is able to keep that I have committed to him.*

And

And when you come to die, (let me but add that) it must be by Faith: Faith as begins all, so it ends all. It is that which must stand you in stead when that King Terrors environs you. It is not your own Graces that will help you; but if thy oul hath been familiar with God by Faith, (for there is a Familiarity grows upon od by exercising Acts of Faith towards God) Faith will resign up the Soul immeately into the Hands of God and Christ with Boldness: *Lord*, (saith he) *into thy ands I commend my Spirit*: That very Speech was the Voice of Faith, and it was e greatest Trust that ever was. *These all died in Faith*, saith he in *Heb.* 11. and erefore Salvation is called *the End of our Faith*, in this Epistle, *ch.* 1. *v.* 9. Book 1.

I shall in a word make a Use of it, and so conclude: And the Use is but plainly is, To pitch your Hearts upon seeking that at the Hands of God and of Jesus hrist, and upon exercising that especially which will most be found unto the Glory God in you, and most to Honour and Glory unto you also, at the appearing of sus Christ, and that is this Grace of Faith. There is no Grace glorifies God so uch as this, a few Thoughts of Believing glorify him much more than a great al of Obedience: This will be found at the latter Day. If you find that this Grace th not sprung up in you, or abounded in you, seek unto God that this Grace of all aces else may abound: And to that end I have set out the Excellency of Faith to ou. It is the great Work of God; so Christ said when they asked him, what ey should do that they might work the Works of God? *This* (saith he) *is the ork of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.* Our Saviour Christ, when e Apostles said unto him, *Lord increase our Faith*, Luke 17. 5 he did presently purpose fall on the commending it yet more to them, and setting out the Excelcy of Faith, and told them what great things it could and would do, to the end might make them enflamed yet more after Believing, and that their Hearts ight be set yet more upon endeavouring after it. You say well, saith he, to say, *ord increase our Faith*; for of all Graces else it is good to seek the Increase of that, cause it is such a Grace as can do all things, that can set on work all that is in od, and set a work likewise all other Graces.

CHAP. IV.

ow good Works are not slighted by exalting Faith alone to have an Interest in our Justification.

THE second thing which I propounded was to invalidate a false Corollary, that corrupt Minds are apt to deduce from our putting so much of the Pow- of Godliness to Faith, and attributing so much to it, as that it should be the sole strument of Justification, of Union on our Parts, and Communion with Christ, d more to be look'd out for than all Works else. Hence Men take occasion to ink, that inherent Holiness and Obedience issuing thence, are hereby slighted, d that this tends to have Works of Holiness neglected. But for Answer;

1. As for slighting of Works and inward Holiness, we are bold to profess, that ke Faith when it beholds with open face the Glory of Christ, (who is the Desire d Delight of Faith's Eye) and when it is a viewing over the Beauty of Christ om top to toe, and every Part of his Righteousness wrought for it, and imputed it; and then when it casts its Eye upon its own inherent Holiness wrought in it lf, and all the good Works of Holiness wrought by it self, which to Eternity it all be enabled to do, it will think meanly of them all. Yea, if the rich and glori- s Righteousness of all the Angels in Heaven should offer to present it self to a Be- ver's Thoughts with a supposed imagined Offer of Exchange, it will and doth ght them all in comparison of this of Christ's, which Faith hath in its Eye. As e Sun puts out the lesser Stars, so doth the Righteousness of this Sun put out the lory of the Obedience of all the Morning-stars, Saints and Angels. What says *aul*, Phil. 3. 8, 9. when Faith was broad awake, and the Sun of Righteousness isen on him? then he accounts all the Righteousness and Conformity to the Law ut as Dung and Dross, which our Divines interpret rightly of his Righteousness d Works done after Conversion as well as before. *But what* (says *Bellarmine*) *doth*

Part 3. *doth he account the Fruits of the Spirit which are for God's Relish, and pleasing to him, doth he call these Dogs-meat? It is a Blasphemy to do so, if that be his Meaning.* But take these two things with you, and you will not say so: 1*st*. That it is but comparative Contempt, not simply; he slights indeed his own Righteousness, but how? for the super-excellent Knowledg of Christ Jesus my Lord, and in comparison of winning Christ, and being found in him, which Faith can only bring you to. And he not only slights but also renounceth his own Righteousness for the Righteousness of Faith, that is, the Righteousness that Faith hath in his Eye and Keeping, not his own. And in this manner (comparatively, namely) we find *Paul* seeming to slight the Law. It would stumble a Man to hear how he speaks of it, as when he calls it, *a Schoolmaster and a Prison*, Gal. 3. 23, 24. and *beggarly weak Elements*, Gal. 4. 9. *The Ministry of Death, and engendring to Bondage*, Gal. 4. 24. But these were spoken but comparatively to the glorious things that are revealed in the Gospel, not simply, for otherwise he commends *the Law as holy and good*, Rom. 7. 12. as *ordained for Life*, ver. 10. *The Law is good*, says he, *if a Man use it lawfully*, 1 Tim. 1. 8. But if they would set it in Competition with the Gospel, then 'tis *Paul* slights it; and tho he says that in it self it is glorious, 2 Cor. 3. 7. yet says he, in comparison with the Gospel, the Ministration of Righteousness, it loseth its Lustre, and hath no Glory in this respect, by reason of this Glory that excelleth, *ver*. 10. And, 2*dly*. This is only in the Point of Justification, and in relation thereunto. If the Statute-Law offers to be brought into that Court, or Works be impleaded there, then Faith calls them out with Indignation. If they will stand at the Bar, and give in Witness, they may be heard, and their Witness is not slighted; but if they would have a hand in the Sentence of Justification, then they are cried down, and bidden to stand by, and hear Faith alone to plead a Man's Case.

2. Then a thing is slighted when the Respect that is due to it is not given it; but when more than is due is denied, it is not slighted. A Man slights not an inferior Magistrate if he gives him not the Honour due unto a King, nor a King if he gives him not the spiritual Honour due to a Minister: As the Priests slighted not the King when they drove him out of the Temple, and denied him to offer Sacrifice; so we slight not Works nor inward Holiness, if we attribute not that to them which God is pleased to attribute to Faith, or to Christ rather, (for Faith is but Christ's Instrument to glorify himself by) if we say they cannot help to justify or unite to Christ; nay, if when they will presume to do Faith's Office, we slight them not if we drive them out of the Court, for all Honour that is due to these in their Places we give to them. Indeed because Love had once the Honour to unite us to God as the primary and immediate Tie of Union, and Works had the Prerogative of Justifying, *Do this, and thou shalt live*; therefore they are apt to look for the same Respect still: but Sin broke the Covenant of Works, and made void that Covenant, and then God put these out of Commission, and out of these great Offices, and substituted Faith; and if they will be content with their Places, and give Christ and Free Grace the Throne, they shall have Honour enough under him. We will acknowledg the New Creature to be worth all the Creatures else; and tho the Soul be more worth than a World, yet inward Holiness in the Soul is worth all Mens Souls devoid of it, tho but an Accident: and so tho a Logician would reckon it less worth than the meanest Substance, yet a poor Soul and a Believer esteems it more worth than Millions of Worlds, and thinks a Dram of Grace, a Shread of this, in value above all Rubies, as *Solomon* speaks. Yea, and if they could be severed (as yet in Imagination and Supposition they may) Grace is of more Worth than superadded Glory, and a Christian prizeth it, values it more than simply Happiness. Glory is the Embroidery of Grace, and the Stuff is of more worth than this Embroidery if they could be severed; yea indeed, Grace it self is Glory, 2 *Cor*. 3. 18. It is the Image of Christ, and called Glory, and makes the Church all glorious within. As Sin is worse than Hell, so Grace is more worth than Heaven, take Heaven only for our Joy and Happiness there. *Paul* was content to part with Heaven for ever, (if you take Heaven for a comfortable Communion with Christ) but no Offer could have been so great as to have bought of him one Dram of Grace and inward Holiness, and of the Love which he had to Christ in his Heart, or of one good Work that he had done for him. It was the Saying of an holy Man, That he would willingly

gly of the two rather have more Grace here, and exchange it for and abate of de-
ees of Glory hereafter: *But yet hereby* (says *Paul*) *I am not justified.* Yea, tho Book 1.
d justifies us not for inward Holiness, yet he prizeth us the more for it, and eve-
degree of Holiness added makes us more lovely in the Sight of God, and more
iable, 1 *Pet.* 3. 4. A meek and quiet Spirit is before God of great Price, it is
t which makes our Persons beautiful in his Eyes, and makes him greatly desire us,
d to have Communion with us, and to delight in us; *So shall the King greatly de-*
thy Beauty, Psal. 45. 11. That God delights in one more than another, is, be-
se he hath bestowed more Holiness, more Beauty on them. It is not indeed
t which caused him to set his Love on us, but it is that which draws it out;
nt. 4. 9. *Thou hast ravished my Heart, my Sister, my Spouse,* says Christ of the
aces in his Church. 'Tis true, we are accepted in the Beloved, in Christ through
e Grace, *Ephes.* 1. 6. and it is Faith makes the Match, yet inward Holiness
h cause him to delight in us, and to take more Pleasure in us. And so as to eve-
Act of Obedience we acknowledg a great deal of Worth in it, as that it is a Fruit
the Spirit, a Child begotten by Christ, (*Rom.* 7. 4, 5.) and therefore if the Soul
zeth Christ, it must needs prize the Begotten by him, (as *John* says, 1 *John* 5. 1.
case of loving our Brother) and the Soul will desire still to have more Children
him. And likewise as it is Fruit by Christ to the Glory of God, it glorifies him
o it justifies not us: and what is Grace but making God's Glory our End? and
so, then a Man desires to be filled with Works; and that being his End, his De-
e of Holiness is infinite, as the Desires of a Man's End are to be. And likewise
prizeth it as a rich Treasure for himself laid up in store against that Day, (1 *Tim.*
19.) when he shall receive Bills of Exchange in Heaven; therefore a Man is said
be rich in good Works there, as well as rich in Faith elsewhere, *Jam.* 2. 5.
3. Neither may any thing we attribute to Faith cause a Neglect of Holiness and
edience. 1*st.* Indeed it is true, if we attributed all this to an idle Faith, to a
ith that had no Efficacy to change a Man's Heart and Life, and thought that true
ith might be without other Graces, as the Papists do, and that it might stand
th a reigning Sin, and then made such a Faith the Instrument of our Union with
rist, *&c.* then this Calumny might justly be laid upon our Doctrine, and that
hich we profess: But on the contrary, we profess that so much Faith as there is,
much Holiness and Obedience too, and that it doth as necessarily follow upon it as
ght doth from the Sun. When we say, (as the Apostle doth) *that in Christ no-*
ing availeth any thing but Faith, we add withal, *which worketh by Love,* (Gal. 5. 6.)
d that *that Faith* which is without Holiness is dead, (as *James* says) as you say,
t is, a dead Drug that works not. If we made Faith an idle Hand to receive
rdon only, then it were something, but we make Faith a labouring and a work-
Hand also, *Remembring* (says the Apostle) *your Work of Faith,* 1 Thess. 1. 3.
n 6. 28, 29. It is full of Works, as *Chrysostom* says; it hath all good Works in
Belly of it; and therefore *Col.* 2. 7. the *being established in Faith,* hath *abounding*
Thanksgiving joined with it; for Fulness of Faith makes the Heart full of Thanks,
d therefore full of Obedience. We profess that he that lies in any known Sin or
eglect of any Duty, doth deny the Faith, (1 *Tim.* 5. 8.) that is, denies really
at in Words he affirms, and he shews he wants Faith, and Grace and all. Yea,
say that the way to encrease in Holiness, is to encrease in Faith; 2 *Pet.* 3. 18.
ow in Grace, and in the Knowledg of Jesus Christ: This is the Root; water that,
d you will be fruitful. The more Faith there is, the more Love there is too; and
more Love, the more a Man is constrained to love God again, and that Love is la-
ious and desirous to please him, so as Works do necessarily follow Faith, not *ne-*
tate Infallibilitatis, only as Fruit doth from a good Tree, and these are Fruits of
Spirit, but in a sweet manner, *necessitate coactionis,* for *Love constrains.* And
the Grace revealed teacheth the Understanding by a logical Illation to deny Un-
dliness, *Tit.* 2. 12. so it teacheth the Heart by a physical Instinct to love God
en believed, and to mortify Sin, and to put off Corruption. *If you have learned*
been taught the Truth as it is in Jesus, you will put off the Old Man, for if you
ow Christ as in Truth he is to be known, that will follow, *Ephes.* 4. 21, 22.
d indeed not Christ only, but Christ apprehended by Faith, doth it, and must
ds do it when he is beheld by Faith. As the Sun heats through a Burning-glass,
doth Christ, when he is let in to the Heart by Faith, change it; and therefore

Part 3. (2 *Cor.* 3. 18.) we are ſaid to be changed into his Image by beholding his Glory, by the Spirit that is in him. And that is one Reaſon among others why we make Faith to be the primary Grace, becauſe it virtually contains all the other in it. As Love is ſaid to be the fulfilling of the Law, (*Rom.* 13. 8) and ſo contains all the Commandments; *Thou ſhalt not kill, Thou ſhalt not ſteal*, &c. (and if there be any other Commandment, it is comprehended in this word, *Thou ſhalt love thy Neighbour*, (as the Apoſtle ſays) it is recapitulated, reduced to thoſe as to the Head, the Sum of all, that virtually contains all) ſo I ſay of Believing, that it alone is the fulfilling of the Goſpel, and it virtually contains Love and all Works elſe: For the Object of Faith is Chriſt as he is preſented to us in the Goſpel: now he is preſented not as Juſtification only, but as Sanctification alſo; therefore he that takes Chriſt as he is given, takes Chriſt for both, and Chriſt is made both, and he doth turn to him as well as believe in him in that very taking him. Therefore Faith is receiving Chriſt as a Lord, and Repentance is walking in him, *Col.* 2. 7. and therefore Repentance is call'd *a turning to Chriſt*, 1 Pet. 2. 25. As when a Man takes a Place on him, it is ſuppoſed he ſubjects himſelf to the Conditions and Work required in it: As when a Man marries a Wife, it is ſuppoſed he will love her; ſo when a Man receives Chriſt as the Truth is in him, it is ſuppoſed he is to obey him; therefore it is call'd *the Obedience of Faith*, for all Obedience is ſpoken in that one word, *John* 6. 38. when they ask'd what they ſhould do to work the Works of God, Chriſt tells them, This is the Work of God, to believe; they meant all Works: and he anſwers the Queſtion by pointing to this one Work, as containing all Works elſe in it.

OF THE OBJECT and ACTS OF Justifying Faith.

PART III.
Of the Properties of Faith.

BOOK II.

The Difficulty of Faith. That it is above all the Powers and Faculties in Man. That all which is in Man is so far from enabling him to believe, that it doth withstand his Believing. That Faith is the Work of the alone Mighty Power of God.

CHAP. I.

Of the Difficulty of Faith; how hard it is to attain to believe.

NOW that I have shewn you the Use and Excellency of this Grace of Faith, I will discover to you the Difficulty to attain it; and this is useful to be done both to make Men the more to seek out for it, as also to go out of themselves to God to work it. And it is indeed necessary, because else Men will rest in an easy slight Faith, which is always a false Faith; for naturally Men do imagine it the easiest of all things else required in us to Salvation, that it is the easiest thing of all the rest to believe, and they wonder that any should make any Difficulty in it. Men think if they could but do other things as well as believe, they should do well enough: To pray, and to keep the Sabbath, and to part with Lusts and beloved Sins, these things indeed are hard and difficult, and to a Man impossible; but to believe in Christ for Salvation, this they make nothing of; and whatever they do, they will surely believe and never despair; and if they come to a poor Soul that is any whit troubled, they rate him, and use to say, Thou art a Fool indeed, canst not believe? And hence of all Works else Men mind this of Faith the least. They make a Business of it to be humbled, and to have Strength to perform Duties; but to believe, they think that would easily follow, if they could but do other things that God requires. And hence also Men do wonder so at such poor Souls as are humbled and cut off from carnal Hopes, that they should keep such a do and such a toil to get Christ, who is the Object of Faith, and to lay hold upon Christ, which is the main Act of Faith; that they should run up and down from this Ordinance to that in such a restless manner, turmoil themselves about obtaining him, as if there were any question to be made of having him at any time, or any difficulty in it. What need then is there (say they) of so many Complaints of the want of Christ? of so many Heart-breakings and Pantings after him? of such troubling of Ministers how to obtain him? Men wonder at this because they know not, and assent not to the Power and Greatness of the Work of Faith.

Now

Part 3. Now this Difficulty of the Work of Faith might in the general, by many ways, be made good. As,

1. From setting forth to you the Excellency, and Preciousness, and Glory of this Grace, which are two Epithets: *Peter* gives it, 1 *Pet.* 1. 7. and *Difficilia pulchra, the most excellent things are difficult to compass.*

2. From the wonderful Effects of it, and Privileges we obtain by it. It is that Grace which God alone hath put in trust to give Livery, and Seisin, and Possession of Christ and Heaven, and all things else. It is that Elixir, the least Dram whereof turns the Heart of Stone into a Heart of Flesh, brings Christ down from Heaven to the Heart, makes use of all the Grace, Power, Vertue, that is in him; which only can command it, and doth do it; which can do all that God's Attributes can do, having all God's Attributes, Wisdom, Power, Mercy, *&c.* to use, and manage, and set awork for its own and the Churches Good. Faith of Miracles did cast out Devils, removed Mountains, brought down Fire from Heaven, healed Diseases; but justifying Faith doth more. It is the greatest Wonder-worker in the World; it resists Satan, quencheth all his Darts, bears the stress of all Temptations, overcomes the World, and therefore it self must needs be difficult.

3. I might demonstrate this to you by comparing Faith with all other Works to be wrought as necessary to Salvation. We will only set it by that which of all other is the easiest, and that is to humble Men, and pull down their Plumes and proud Thoughts. When Men think themselves to be rich, and to have need of nothing, then to see themselves poor, and blind, and miserable, and naked, how hard is it? What Towers doth Self-Righteousness erect? What high Thoughts are elevated by Self-flattery? and how strongly doth carnal Reason fortify all these? How many Weapons of Warfare hath God prepared, and doth he use to batter down these? And how many Shifts, and Shelters, and Burroughs, hath the Heart to fly unto? Until all these be stopp'd the Heart is not taken, and to stop all these is out of the Power, Wisdom and Foresight of any Man, and it must be the Spirit must do it. Now if this be so difficult, then to bring Men to believe must be much more; for besides, all this forementioned is but to prepare for believing. And if all this must be done to prepare the Way for Christ, what Difficulty is it to bring Christ into the Heart? And indeed if then it were easy, and Christ would come alone, yet inasmuch as the Work that makes way for it is so difficult, in that respect, if in no other, Faith might be said to be difficult also. Yet besides, all this is but destroying and pulling down; and we see in the Works of Art which Men are able to do, it is easier to destroy than to build up, to wound than to heal, to cut and break off from the old Stock than to ingraft into the new, to slay than to make alive and bring a new Soul in; and yet such is the Work of Faith in comparison of the other. And moreover, thus to humble Men, there is much Assistance in a Man's own Heart to further it. There is a Conscience in him not capable only, but ready to convince him if he would but hear it speak. There is Matter enough might be pick'd and alledged out of his Heart and Life to condemn him, and perswade him that his Estate is miserable and damnable, if but produced; and therefore at the day of Death it is so easy to perswade Men to such Thoughts, and at the day of Judgment they will be easily convinc'd. And this State of Sin and Wrath is the common Condition of all Men, and was surely every Man's once; so as it is a wonder it should be so hard to convince Men of it, for to pull down this House should seem to be a Matter of no great Difficulty, for it is ruinous, and apt to fall of itself; nay, would fall but for false Supports put under it to hold it up. But to bring Men to believe, there is no Principle in Men that hath any Power to give Assistance to it, but it must be wrought anew, there is nothing to be raised out of what is in a Man's self that can give any ground for it, for it is founded upon nothing in a Man's self: And it is the Condition but of a few to obtain Christ and this precious Faith; for all Men have not Faith, nor never had, nor never shall, because it is the Faith of God's Elect.

4. To empty out of a Man's Heart his false Faith, and to convince him he is an Unbeliever, how hard is it? *The Spirit must convince the World of Unbelief,* John 16. 9. The Law, as it required not Faith, so it discovers not Unbelief: as it is a Sin against the Gospel, so the Gospel discovers it; and it is a still Sin that lurks and makes no Noise, for it shews not it self in positive Acts, as Envy, Uncleanness, *&c.* but

but in a privative way, and so goes still on, steals the Heart away from God and Christ, and by a bare doing nothing doth all, and gives way to the reign and stirring of all Lusts, which therefore are perceived, but not it. If therefore to convince the Heart of Unbelief be so difficult, which yet is in the Heart already, then to bring in Faith, to make Faith anew in the Heart, must be much more difficult; and if to cause the Heart to see Faith when it is wrought cost so many Years Search in many poor Souls, what is it to work it? Book 2.

But to let such as these and many other Demonstrations go, we will reduce the main Grounds that may demonstrate this Difficulty of effecting Faith in the Heart to these two Heads:

1. Let us consider what is done by God for a Man in Heaven without him, when Faith is wrought.

2. What Unability, yea and Obstacles, there are to the Work of Faith within a Man.

1st. If the Difficulty lay only in regard of what was to be wrought in us, it were enough, (as the second Head will abundantly discover) but besides this, at the bestowing Faith, and at the Celebration of this great Union by Faith between Christ and us, there must be a special Consent and Concurrence, and Joint-meeting of all three Persons in the Trinity when this Match is made. As God called a Council when he made Man, (*Let us make Man*, says he, *Gen.* 1.) so there is as solemn a Council called of all the three Persons when this new Man is made, and especially at the Work of Faith, for then Christ is bestowed. Conjunctions of Sun and Moon are not every day, especially not in one Climate, especially not great Conjunctions of the Planets. Now it is at a great Conjunction of the whole Trinity, and when their special Consent is that Christ shall be bestowed upon such a Soul, it is then only, and at such a time that Faith is wrought, and in such a Soul only. Tho Christ be offered at other times by us Ministers with Warrant from God, yet at that time when Faith is wrought he must be actually given to thee, and not for thee only. He was given for thee from the beginning of the World, and upon the Cross, but now he is actually given to thee, and thou to him. The Father as a Father stands by, and says in Heaven, Son, I give this Soul to thee, to wed and betroth to thy self for ever, take him and own him as thy own from everlasting; and therefore says Christ, *John* 6. 37. *All that the Father giveth me shall come to me.* A Deed of Gift, and a Delivery, is past by God the Father of the Soul into Christ's Hands, and of Christ to the Soul by him also; Take (says God) this Christ my Son for thine, with all that he and I am worth. There is a giving of Christ before the Soul receives him, and a giving *de præsenti*, in the present time, as distinguishing it from that which was from everlasting. And Jesus Christ, as a loving Husband, bestows himself, and embraceth the poor Soul as his, which he had formerly redeemed by his Blood, but hitherto had lived without him. He apprehends or embraceth the Soul first e're we apprehend him, *Phil.* 3. 12. As he loved us first e're we love him, so he must apprehend us first e're we can apprehend him; and therefore our apprehension of him by Faith is to apprehend that for which we are apprehended; we give up our selves to Christ, because he gives himself first to us. And then furthermore, Christ puts forth his Arm from Heaven, *viz.* the Holy Ghost, as the joiner together of both, and who is called the *Arm of God* in working Faith, *Isa.* 53. 1. He is sent into the Heart, *Gal.* 4. 6. and he creates Hands in us to comprehend Christ again, who apprehends us, and to embrace him in the Promise who hath now embraced us, *Heb.* 11. 13. and gladly to embrace him, and not to let him go; and having him now hand in hand, we have Manuduction, we are led by the hand by Christ to the Father through the Spirit, *Ephes.* 2. 18. who therefore joined our Hands together. Now to get all the three Persons thus joined at once effectually and actually to bestow Christ and the Spirit of Faith upon a Man, is not within any Man's Command. God indeed stands ready to do it at all times when the Word is preached and Christ offered; but actually thus to do it, this is rare. It is not compliish'd to the Elect at all times, not till the Fulness of Time of Calling comes, or to any other but them. Faith is a receiving Christ, and until the Time comes that the Father actually bestows Christ on thee, thou canst not receive him; yea, and he must put his Hand into thy Hands too; *John* 3. 27. *A Man can receive nothing unless it be given him from Heaven*: and that thou dost receive him, and hast a

Heart

Part 3. Heart to do it, that must be given thee. And however Men may think the least Obstacle of Faith to lie in this, because God is ready to do all this to every Man when the Gospel is preached, yet when Christ gives the Reason why some believed not and others did, he resolves it into this, *John* 6. 36, 37. *I said to you, that you have seen me, and believe not:* Why? *All that the Father giveth me shall come to me:* and *ver.* 64. giving the Reason why *Judas* believed not, *therefore it was* (saith he) *I spake to you of this giving of the Father*, both of you to me, and me to you, and of Faith to you to come unto me. And this is the Reason why the Elect have not Faith at all times wrought. There is a Fulness of Time for drawing and knitting a Soul to Christ, as there was for Christ to take Flesh: And canst thou appoint the Time of this their Meeting? Canst thou send forth, and hast thou Power of calling this great general Council together when thou wilt? Canst thou move God to give his Son at this time to thee, or Christ now to take Possession of thee? No, all is a Gift, and actually then bestowed (tho given afore) when Faith is wrought. This Match must be concluded in Heaven e're in thy Heart, and the Father must say Amen to it, the Son Amen to it, and the Holy Ghost Amen to it, e're thy Heart can say Amen to it; and therefore think not that it is an easy Matter to believe.

2dly. If you consider what Unability, yea what Obstacles are in the Heart it self savingly to believe, you will grant it is difficult.

1. There is nothing in the Heart to help towards it.

2. There is all in the Heart, and without the Heart, against it.

(1.) There is nothing in the Heart that induceth it to believe. There is no Principle to promote it and help it forwards.

1st. To clear this, consider, that it is true (as all grant) that we have a *posse remotum*, *a remote Capability*; we have Faculties wherein this Faith may be engrafted, so that God shall not need to add a new Faculty into the Soul: but this Will and Understanding of ours which was apprehensive of, and conformable to the Law, is the same which is to apprehend Christ, and to be made conformable to the Obedience of Faith; and the same natural Faculties are the Subjects of both. There need not a new Finger to be added to the Hand to apprehend Christ withal; and there are no more Faculties in the Soul when it is regenerated, than when it was in Unbelief, only they are endued with new Powers and Abilities.

2dly. But yet some affirm, and those such as are godly and judicious, great Divines, that tho new Faculties are not added, yet the Understanding and Will of *Adam*, in the State even of pure Nature, wanted that Habit or Principle whereby Believers are enabled to believe in Christ. To believe and put Trust in God as a faithful Creator, he had Power to do, but not in Christ as a Mediator. So that as the way of Salvation by Christ is new, and contrary to that whereby *Adam* was to attain to Life, so there must be a new Principle to attain it, a new Spring which might turn the Stream of all the Faculties from looking to be saved by doing, to which they naturally tend, and which might direct a Man to glorify God by believing. It is a new Instinct to carry the Soul of it self to Christ, as before it was carried out to Works. As the Law of Faith, and the Law of Works are different, *Rom.* 3. 27. and this Law of Faith is a new Law, so it was not written in *Adam's* Heart. This Assertion I confess, if it could be clearly proved, would argue Faith to be exceeding difficult indeed, as being not only out of the Reach and Power of corrupt Nature, but of pure Nature also. But this I list not now to dispute.

3dly. However, whether it was in *Adam*'s Power to believe, or not, yet sure I am, that the Objects propounded to be believed are of a higher Difficulty, infinitely higher than any which that State was capable of. *Adam* in Innocency could not have been set so hard and sublime a Task and Exercise as to believe in Christ is; and all his other Lessons given him to learn were easy in comparison of this. So that suppose we have no other Principles than what we had afore in *Adam*, yet this Faith is a difficulter piece of Service than he was set about: for example; for *Adam* to believe that God made him and the World, (which was a point of Faith to him as well as to us, tho the World was not six Days standing, for the making of it was not a thing to him seen, and therefore it is reckoned as an Act of Faith, *Heb.* 11. 3.) this was easy in comparison of our believing God himself to be made Man, and to come down into the World clothed with our Frailties. This would have put all the Faith in

him to a stand, and made him stretch his Eye-strings, for the Angels themselves put out their Necks to behold it. So to believe that the Soul that sins shall die, and that on that day he did eat of the forbidden Fruit he must die the Death, was easy for him, for if by doing he lived, he might well believe that by transgressing he should die; and yet his Faith was easily overturn'd in this, he believed it not long, and therefore fell. But to believe that God would give, or hath given his Son to Death, and that God would *make him Sin who knew no Sin*, this would have staggered and amazed his Faith. So for him to believe that whilst he pleased God in all things he should continue in his Favour, and live by doing so, and be justified by it, was easy; for his own Sense of God's Love brought into his Heart, and maintained by Obedience, might perswade him to it, and he had a Sacrament of the Tree of Life to confirm him in it, and God's remunerative Justice might assure it to him: but to believe that God will and doth justify an ungodly Person, and account him as righteous as the Angels, would well nigh have posed, if not non-plust his Faith. And further, to believe that when that ungodly Person to be justified hath not one Dram of Power to please God with, yet he ought to live in another, and to have a Principle of Life and Grace out of himself, and to have his Life and Abilities hid in another, fetch'd from another who lives in him, and all to be fetch'd by believing, this would have been a Paradox in *Adam*'s Divinity, and would well-nigh have overthrown it, for it crossed and contradicted the Faith which he had in that his Estate, which was maintained by a stock of Grace in himself committed to his own Hands to dispose of: As the Psalmist said, *I thought to understand this, and it was too high for me*; so may I say, when he should have attempted to believe this, he would have found Load enough to charge his Faith with, if it had not been too high for him. When our Saviour Christ (*John* 3.) conferred with *Nicodemus* about the easy and most familiar things which concerned Salvation, the Truth of which even earthly Light might convince him of, as that *what is born of the Flesh is Flesh*; and therefore corrupt Man's Nature is so: Nature and Sense might have instructed him in all this, and in a farther Truth also, *viz.* that therefore if ever this Nature enters Heaven, it must be changed and born again; and that Image which at first was lost must be restored. He that heard of the State of Innocency, would have easily assented unto this, that the same Image must be renewed e're God accepts us, and yet this sets *Nicodemus* his Mind in an uproar, *John* 3. 12. and yet these things Christ tells him were but earthly in comparison, *and if ye believe not these*, (saith he) *how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things*? Now what were those heavenly things but the Truths of the Gospel which are necessary to be believed, which Christ brought down from Heaven, because they had never grown in *Adam*'s Garden, who was a Man of the Earth, earthly? And he instanceth in some of them in the following Verses; he instanceth in the humane and divine Nature of Christ, and their Union, and the Doctrine of Faith, and in being cured by believing on him, as they in the Wilderness were by the brazen Serpent; he instanceth in that amazing thing also, that God should so love the World as to give his only begotten Son, that whoever believeth on him should not perish. Now to believe these and the like things, must be by a Power derived from Heaven.

Book I.

4*thly*. But sure I am, that whether *Adam* had such a Power, yea or no, then, yet now in corrupt Nature it is utterly lost and gone: For besides the general Reason that the whole Image of God is lost, there was a special Reason why he should lose this of Faith above any other Part, for he fell by Unbelief, and therefore all the Ruines fell upon that Arm, and broke it all to pieces. The special Guilt of that Sin shattered that part of God's Image all to shivers. *We are shut up under Unbelief*, Rom. 11. 32. and Faith is the way out of that miserable Condition we are in, when the Door is lock'd and barr'd by Unbelief, and we cannot open it, nor shoot nor break open the Lock. To believe but the Law of *Moses*, how hard is it? and tho Men have a Conscience in which the Law is written by Nature, yet Christ tells the Pharisees, *John* 5. 47. that they did not truly believe *Moses*. How hardly are Men brought to believe the Threatnings, especially with Application, when yet they are thundred out against all, and there is a Guilt tells us that we deserve Death who do such things, *Rom.* 1. 32. much more hardly are Men brought to believe the Promises which belong but to a few; *If ye believe not* Moses's *Writings*, (says Christ) *how shall ye believe my Words?* John 5. 47. He argues *à minori*

Part 3. *ad majus, from the less to the greater.* Did I say to believe the Law? I may say, that to do the whole Law exactly is as easy as to believe savingly in Christ. This is a received Maxim among all Divines, and despairing *Spira* set his Seal to it out of woful Experience, when he spoke these Words, *You command me to believe, I say I cannot; your Command is as impossible to me as to keep the moral Law.*

5*thly.* All the Principles left in Man will help nothing towards the attaining of it.

1. All the Parts of Wit and Wisdom in the World will not help us to believe, 1 *Cor.* 2. 5. Faith stands not in the Wisdom of Men, but in the Power of God; the Wisdom of other Men cannot beget it, nor the Wisdom of a Man's own Heart cannot attain it, or give the least Inclination to it, but the alone Power of God, for of that likewise he speaks, and therefore says he, *ver.* 6, 7, 8. *The Wisdom of the Princes of this World, that were the wisest, came to nought, and could not reach it: Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, neither have entred into the Heart of Man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.*

2. Natural Conscience cannot arrive to Faith, it will set you a doing indeed, but not a believing; it will discover other Sins to you, but not this; for the Spirit must convince of Unbelief. The Law of Works is written in Conscience, but not the Law of Faith; and therefore Men that make Conscience of private Prayer, and of keeping the Sabbath, and of avoiding Uncleanness and Adultery, and dare not omit or commit any of these, yet make no Conscience of believing, nor are struck with a Sense of Unbelief. Nay, therefore Believers themselves that take thought about other things are often careless of believing, look not at this as the main Duty, the great Command, the highest Obedience.

3. All the Duties thou canst perform cannot beget one jot of Faith; *Rom.* 9. 16. *It is not in him that wills nor runs, but in God that sheweth Mercy.* Tho *Paul* was as exact in keeping the Law as ever Man was, yet (1 *Tim.* 1. 17.) he was an Unbeliever. If a Man should go and make Money (as I may so say) of all he is or hath, and put all into one Stock; if he should call in all his Strength which is put out, and is in the Hands of Learning, Riches, Honours, *&c.* and convert and turn every Thought for every Moment's time he is to live, upon nothing but Believing, and trade with all that he can make, for nothing but for Faith, he could not compass one Dram. Let him take his flinty Heart in one hand, and all the Promises in the Word of God in another, and strike his Heart and them together to Eternity, he would not strike out so much as one Spark of Saving Faith.

4. All external Means cannot work Faith. Christ preach'd and preach'd as powerfully as ever Man did, he spake as never no Man spake, (John 6. 63. *The Words I speak to you are Spirit and Life*) yet the Jews remained Unbelievers; and *Judas* that heard all his Sermons, and missed not one, yet remain'd an Unbeliever: for it follows, *ver.* 64, 65. *There are some of you believe not, for Jesus knew who should betray him; and therefore I said to you, that no Man can come to me except it be given him of my Father.* And tho he preach'd plainly as well as powerfully, (*John* 10. 24, 25.) yet still they doubt, as they themselves say there: nay, says Christ, *My Works bear witness of me*, ver. 25. *But yet ye believe not:* there is something else in it; *it is because ye are not of my Sheep*, ver. 26. and *ver.* 37. *If I do not the Works of my Father, believe me not*; (yea, *John* 15. 24. *He did Works which none other did) and if ye believe not me, yet believe the Works.* But tho such Works as were never done before were added to such Words as were never spoken by any but him, yet these admirable Works and Words did not effect Faith in their Hearts; *John* 12. 37. *Tho he had done so many Miracles, yet they believed not on him.*

5. As there is nothing to help to work Faith within or without a Man, so all in him is against it. As,

(1.) All thy Sins, both the Power of thy Sins, and the Guilt of thy Sins, oppose thy believing.

1*st.* The Power of thy Sins is opposite to Faith; for till the Heart be divorced from every Lust, thou canst not give Christ and Faith Entertainment. It will forbid the Banes of Matrimony between Christ and thee. Thou canst no more take Christ for thy Salvation and Portion, and set him up in thy Heart, than thou canst at once look up to Heaven, and down upon the Earth: *How can ye believe* (says Christ) *whilst ye receive Honour one from another?* John 5. 44.

2*dly.*

2dly. The Guilt of thy Sins causes thee to depart from God, and bids Christ to depart from thee: *Depart from me* (says *Peter*) *for I am a sinful Man*, Luke 5. 8. Guilt of Wrong and Enmity is always suspicious, and makes a Man look upon God as an Enemy, and therefore he dares not trust him. Men will rarely trust a reconciled Enemy, nor will Men be brought to venture themselves upon a God reconciling himself through Christ. *Judas* runs to the Pharisees when he had betrayed Christ, but he durst not come at Christ, his Guilt would not suffer him. Sins will tell thee, and defiled Conscience will tell thee, that thou must look for no Mercy, and that there is no Hope, *Jer.* 2. 25. and when we would look for Salvation, yet it is far off; for because our Sins testify against us, and we know them, therefore the Guilt of them ariseth and puts off such Thoughts of Mercy, and discourageth the Heart. As presumptuous Men think they shall be saved because their Sins are so small, so poor humbled Souls when they see their Sins once, surmize that they shall never have Mercy, because they are so great: What? I a Blasphemer, a Contemner of Mercy, shall I obtain Mercy? The Soul cannot believe this. Tho Sin when slighted furthers Presumption, yet when discovered it hinders Faith. Book 2.

(2.) All the Righteousness that is in a Man for time past, and Endeavours for time to come, also hinder the Work of Faith.

1. Righteousness for time past is a Hindrance to it, for Men cannot have any Righteousness in and of themselves but Self will be conceited of it, and a Conceit of their own Merit hinders them from seeing their need of, and looking out for Christ's. The Pharisees that thought themselves righteous, were so far from Faith or coming to Christ, that Christ says he came not to call such. *The Jews going about to establish their own Rigteousness, submitted not to the Righteousness of God by Faith*, *Rom.* 9. 31, 32. and *Rom.* 10. 3. As the Law was not given for a righteous Man, that is truly such, so nor the Gospel is not given for him that hath any conceited Righteousness of his own. Faith is that *whereby we believe in him that justifies the Ungodly*. As *Laodicea* that thought her self rich, was thereby kept off from coming to Christ by Faith, to buy Gold of him; so the more Goods have been increased, and the richer a Man hath thought himself, the lother he is to break and become a Bankrupt, and to suffer so much Loss, and to stand at the Courtesy of Free Grace, and put off his Robes and come as a Beggar, and lie naked at Christ's Door. And,

2. Endeavours for the time to come also hinder and spoil Faith. A Man when he sees his former Sinfulness and Want of Faith, and hath suffered the wrack of all his former Estate, is apt to begin of his own Cost to build a new Ship to set to Sea in, and lades it upon a new Stock with new Wares of Duties he never did afore, and launceth it into Profession, and thinks by his own rowing, and tugging, and haling, in the end to arrive at Christ, who goes as fast from him as he makes after him, whilst he thus goes out in his own Strength: But if he would tie his Cockboat to the Ship of God's Free Grace, and commit himself to Sea with it, and suffer the Stream of it, and the Gales of the Spirit to carry him on in the Use of Means, he might attain to Faith, and to the Righteousness of God. *Rom.* 9. 32. the Jews sought it but as a by-Faith, but as it were by the Works of the Law; and I may in this case allude to it, a Man must seek Christ and Faith, but it must be in a way of Faith, else tho the Duties be Evangelical which they endeavour to perform, yet they are as it were *the Works of the Law*, as the Apostle's Phrase is, and will be accounted as legal. A Man may seek the Righteousness of Faith, and yet not by Faith, or in a way of Faith and Sense of a Man's own Unability, and so seek after the Faith it self, *as if it were a Work of the Law*; and then (as *Paul* says) as a Man condemns himself in what he allows, so he undoes himself in what he endeavours, and goes to Hell by striving to go to Heaven. The People of *Israel*, if they would have gone into *Canaan* by the way of Faith in God alone, who offered to cast out their Enemies before them, they might have done it, but that way they rejected through Unbelief, and then set to it by their own Strength; but they were beaten back by their Enemies, and God commanded them to go back again even to the brink of the Red Sea: so doth God deal with Souls that have gone far into the Wilderness, and are nigh believing and laying hold, yet subject not their Souls to God's way of working Faith, but attempt it by their own Strength, and this casts them behind-hand, and they are to begin the Work a-new, and so they are brought thereby as far off as at first, and have need to be humbled of those their new Endeavours,

Part 3. and then they are fit to enter. God hath said, that *no Man shall prevail with his own Strength*, 1 Sam. 2. 6. And thus to endeavour after Faith with our own Strength is like the scrabling and striving of one that cannot swim, which sinks him the sooner and the more, and is opposite to the way of Faith; for Faith fetcheth Strength from another, since *that* is essential to that Grace, and is one Rule in the Law of Faith, as the Apostle calls it, and therefore Strivings for Faith out of our own Strength are most opposite to the Law of Faith. A Man's own Strength prevents and supplants Supply by Faith, which is passive, and a receiving borrowing Grace. And therefore Christ tells us plainly, that *many shall strive to enter, and shall not be able*, like a Man that would open the Floodgate of a Sluce; one who attempts to break open the Door of Unbelief, which is shut against all the World, is like to a Man who would open the Flood-gate of a Sluce, the more he pulls to open it, the more he keeps it shut, whilst he doth it out of his own Strength, whereas if he would go on the other side of the Stream, and commit himself to it, the Stream would do it alone, and carry him thorow it.

3. All Parts of natural Wisdom and Reason are against Faith also.

1*st*. For besides that some rest in Knowledg, (*Rom*. 2. 17, 18, 19, 20.) Knowledg and Gifts also puff up, 1 *Cor*. 8. 4. but he whose Heart is lift up, believes not, *Hab*. 2. 4. They are opposed; nothing opposeth Faith more than Pride, nothing makes proud more than Knowledg; and therefore to confound the Pride of the World he chose out this Grace of Faith, which by making a Man become a Fool, saves him, (1 *Cor*. 1. 19, 20, 21.) and confounds all Mens admired Wisdom by saving them that believe.

2*dly*. And again, carnal Reason keeps Men from Faith, because that is the Form of a Man as a Man, and will be listned to. The Philosophers defined a Man to be *Animal rationale, a rational Animal*; now Faith hath a reach beyond all this, and therefore when a Man ties himself to Reason, and consults with it, he is kept from believing; and when he would believe he must not consider what Reason says to the contrary: So *Abraham* (*Rom*. 4. 19.) being not weak in Faith, considered not his own Body; that whereas Reason and Consideration, out of Wisdom and Reason, would have raised many an Objection up, he consults not with it. And therefore God hath chose this Grace of Faith as that which Fools are as capable of as wise Men, yea and more, for they are apt to be credulous, and out of a Sense of their want of Wisdom to resolve their Judgment into another's. Yea and therefore God hath chosen the poor and foolish things of the World, because Faith in them is more easily wrought; *Have any of the Rulers believed in him?* (John 7. 48, 49.) *but this People that know not the Law are accursed.*

3*dly*. The more Reason a Man hath, the stronger Objections he will raise up against Believing: therefore in Temptations the more Knowledg a Man hath, the stronger he pleads against himself, and his Wit serves to make his Indictment the more full, and to dispute against his own Salvation the more shrewdly; as *Spira* did, to the Amazement of the Standers by, invent such Objections as another would not have dreamt of. And thus it hinders afore and in the working of Faith: Afore, what is it keeps Men from being humbled? Their carnal Reasonings, their Strongholds. Now all that Reason which before a Man was humbled, shewed its Strength in maintaining the Goodness of his Estate when he is humbled, turns Head, and pleads against a Man's Estate, and against his having any Interest in Mercy; and indeed whilst a Man will go in a way of Reasoning, and consider his dead Soul, he will never believe. A Man must believe above and against all Reason; as *Abraham* considered not his dead Body, so nor must he consider his dead Soul. And hence it is that we have more ado with carnal Reason after Men are humbled than before. Self-flattery, when that was general, used and commanded all the Reason in a Man to fight for a good Opinion of his Estate; and when Self-flattery is slain, and that good Opinion of a Man's self with it, then Unbelief turns all the same Force and Weapons another way, and all the Reason in a Man is imployed to fight to keep a Man in it.

4*thly*. *Self* in a Man is against it also, and the greatest Enemy to it, and therefore in Faith there is the greatest Self-denial that is in any other Grace. To deny a Man's Reason, and subject all his Thoughts to the Authority and Wisdom of another, and to give God leave to take away all Reason and Wisdom from me, and to resolve

ſolve my Thoughts into his Words, and to think as he thinks, whatever my own Thoughts are; all this is hard. And ſo to be content to be nothing of my ſelf for ver, and to do nothing of my ſelf, to throw my ſelf away, to loſe, to forget my lf, to be loſt to my ſelf, dead to my ſelf, (as *Paul* was, *Gal.* 2. 20. and 2 *Cor.* 12. 1. who thought he did more than all, yet ſays he was nothing, in thoſe Words, *t I, but Chriſt*, &c.) and to take Chriſt into my Heart not only to rule all, but to o all, to have the Glory of all, both the Grace and the Glory I have; to have no eaſon, no Will, no Power, no Life of my own in my ſelf, but Chriſt to be all, is is to believe, and this is a farther Self-denial than was in pure Nature in *Adam*. his Self is brought to by loſing and forfeiting it ſelf, and this only in point of aith. *Adam* though he had Grace from God, yet he had it in himſelf, and of himlf could work, and could ſay, This have I done, and this is my Righteouſneſs my own weaving, and this is my Happineſs of my own keeping; and it was alwed him to ſay ſo: but now cut off *that ſame I*, away with that Self, make it a ypher to Eternity; tho it be ſomething as a Creature, and have a Name in the atalogue of Beings, and is advanced to the higheſt Eſtate of Happineſs, yet let it nothing in doing, nothing in Righteouſneſs, nothing in glorifying or making it lf happy, and let Chriſt be all. *Adam* was as much in his Aims and Deſigns to ny himſelf (as we now) in point of Sanctification, he was herein to aim at God much as we, and to reſpect himſelf as little; but in point of believing we fall wer, for that empties us, annihilates Self, fetcheth Righteouſneſs, Power, Life, from another, as well as it works to another. And this is therefore difficult, cauſe it is a higher ſtrain of glorifying God than *Adam* knew, or than the Heart either in pure or corrupt Nature acquainted with. Self reſts in it ſelf, and ould not go out of it ſelf, this is natural to it, and it was uſed to do ſo when it was the beſt, and therefore this way of believing is a way which Self would never ke, but it will fall a doing and performing Duties, and keeping the Law, and ourning for Sin; and if you have any Work for it to do in it ſelf within doors, will ſit to it, but to go abroad and beg all of Chriſt, to live upon Alms, to ſtand the Courteſy of Chriſt and Grace, and to do this for Eternity, Self was never ought up to it. It would live of it ſelf, of its own Lands and Revenues, though ſer and meaner, rather than be in Dependance, tho to enjoy a Kingdom. And o going to Chriſt be a ſhort Cut, yet it had rather go about, make a new way of orks, than go to Chriſt, and by Chriſt, who is the Way and the Life; *Ye will not e to me* (ſays Chriſt, *John* 5. 40.) *that ye might have Life*; no, they will untake to fulfil the Law rather. The Phariſees and the Jews did ſo, they would her appeal to it that was their Condemner, to *Moſes* who accuſed them, (as riſt ſays, *ver.* 45.) than come to Chriſt who offered to ſave them: They would her go to the Law that was the Miniſtry of Condemnation. The Galatians, t they might be eaſed a little in point of believing, would be in Bondage to the remonial Law, which they nor their Fathers were able to bear: And Papiſts ll rather give over Kingdoms, and put themſelves into Monaſteries, lie in Hair, e upon the Alms of others, whip and rend their Bodies, keep ſtrictly to their Canical Hours, than go to Chriſt, than caſt off Works, and betake themſelves to ith. And the ſame you may ſee in poor humbled Souls, they run to every Duty, never dream of Faith that that muſt eaſe them: Thus Chriſt's Sheep will hang n every Briar er'e they come to him.

4. If there were nothing in us againſt it, yet the Devil oppoſeth it more than any ng. He oppoſed not the moral Vertues of the Heathen, nor doth he oppoſe a uded Chriſtian in Performance of Duties; but when he comes to lay hands on riſt, when he will go that way, then he muſters up all the Forces he can. *The of this World blinds the Eyes of them that believe not, leſt the Light of the glori- Goſpel ſhould ſhine to them*, 2 Cor. 4. 4. This is the Point he would keep them nd in, *viz.* the Knowledg of Chriſt by Faith; and hither tend all his Deluſions Oppoſitions, that our Faith might fail.

CHAP.

Part 3.

CHAP. II.

That all the Faculties and Powers in Man do not afford him Abilities to believe. That all humane Wisdom is so far from promoting Faith, that it sets it self against it.

EPHES. II. 8.

By Grace ye are saved through Faith; and that not of your selves, it is the Gift of God.

I Shall proceed on still in opening of that Faith which saveth us, of that Faith which justifieth us, and ceaseth not till it hath put us into the Hands of Christ. I shall now proceed farther to shew you the Greatness of it in respect of the working of it in our Hearts, and the Disproportion that is between our Hearts in which it is wrought, and this Grace it self. I will shew how hardly it is attained unto that 'tis fetch'd out of the Rocks (as I may so speak) by an Almighty Power. And to that end I have chosen this Text, and especially this Particle here, *and that not of your selves, it is the Gift of God*; which I intend not so much to discourse of by way of Exposition, for that I have done before, as to lay open the thing to you in a common-place way, only in general take the Scope of the Apostle before in this Chapter. His Scope is to magnify the Free Grace of God, as the sole Author of our Salvation; which he magnifies in two respects:

I. His Exposition on Ephes. 2. in Vol. 1. of his Works.

1. By shewing the Misery that a Man lay in when God first set his Heart upon him, *dead in Trespasses and Sins*, deserving a thousand Deaths, *Children of Wrath*, &c. *ver.* 1, 2, 3.

2. By laying open the way of God's bringing us unto Salvation; and he tells us this, that seeing Free Grace was the Contriver of our Salvation, and its end was to magnify it self, therefore it having the making of its own Laws, it would be sure to order our Salvation so, that though of necessity something was to be wrought in us, or we could not be saved, yet it would pitch upon such things as should have as little an Ingredient into our Salvation as possibly the thing it self would bear; *For by Grace ye are saved* (saith he) *through Faith, and that not of your selves, it is the Gift of God; not of Works*, &c.

There are but two things required of us, Faith and Works. The Apostle puts a Difference betwixt these two clearly: and he tells us, that Faith is taken up into Commission as it were, when Works are not, *By Grace ye are saved through Faith, not of Works*; no by no means. Tho Works are as much required as Faith, yet God doth by no means own them, doth not so much as look upon them in the matter of Salvation: For indeed Faith is that Grace that doth so glorify God, and his Free Grace, that he is not jealous as it were to put it into Commission even with himself and with Jesus Christ. But now when God had therefore required of us as little as could be in the matter of Salvation, when he had required only that we should know this Grace of his, and lay hold upon it, (without doing of which his Grace would be lost) and that in laying hold upon it, Faith should give all the Glory unto Free Grace, here Man might step in, and say, I have Faith in my self, or I contribute something to the getting of Faith, and to the attaining thereof. Nay, saith the Apostle, we will cut you short there (that still Free Grace may be magnified). It's true ye are saved through Faith, but that Faith is not of your selves, it is the Gift of God. This now is enough for the opening of the Words, and shewing you the Apostle's Scope. The thing then that at this time I intend to discourse of is this, to manifest unto you that saving Faith is not of your selves. That is my Theam, put what Title you will upon it: To shew you, I say, that there is no thing in your selves that contributeth to the working of Faith in you; and in doing of this I have this aim, namely, that when you see that All in your selves, or all that you can do, can no way help you to the Attainment of Faith, you may come to understand both the several false Ways that Men do take in the matter of Believing, and also may the more clearly see (in the Negative) what the right way of

of Believing is, and what the Nature of justifying Faith is: and likewise, that by seeing your Inability to attain it, you may come to prize it the more, and that you may be emptied of your selves, not only in respect of the Grace you believe on, (for you believe only on Free Grace) but in respect of this also, that you must come to Free Grace it self even to work this Faith, to believe upon it. For what can lay a Man more low in himself than this, that when he sees himself lost, and that God hath provided a Remedy, and requires nothing but Faith, honest Faith, faithful Faith (as I use to call it) that yet the Man of himself is unable to attain to this Faith? And further, I have also this end in it, that you that have your Hearts taken off by God, and have been taught and led in the right way of believing, and enabled to do it, may be thankful to God, and go on in a way of Dependance upon him for the perfecting of the Work of Faith in you: for every Story, every Garnish in this Building, as well as the Foundation, is not of your selves. And likewise further, that those that think that Faith is so easy to be had, may indeed be convinced that they have no Faith: *Faith* (saith he) *it is not of your selves, it is the Gift of God.* I shall not go about to shew you in the general the Greatness of the Work of Conversion, and that that is not of a Man's self; and how that to change the Heart, and to create new Faculties, to turn a Man from Darkness to Light, and from Satan to God, and the like, is a great Work, and requires an Almighty Power. No, I shall keep strictly to the point of Believing, and in that not speak so much of the Habit of Faith, as of bringing the Soul to the Acts of Faith, clearly and plainly to close with Jesus Christ, and to trust upon Free Grace, and in nothing in a Man's self. I shall particularly demonstrate these two things:

Book 2.

1*st*. That all that is in Man, or all that is from Man, can no way help him unto this Faith. Yea,

2*dly*. That all that is in Man, and all that is from Man, is against it. And therefore certainly Faith is not of our selves, it is the Gift of God.

(1.) I shall only premise this in the general, which I will but briefly touch upon, that if we take pure Nature, that is, Nature in Innocency, in *Adam* afore he fell, it was far above it to believe those things which we do now believe. I will not stand to dispute that Point, whether *Adam* yea or no had that Principle of Faith we have: Only this is what I say, that if *Adam* had the same Principle of Faith that we have, yet to believe those things, which when we believe to Salvation we do believe, was infinitely if not above the Proportion of his Faith, yea above what it was put to believe. If the Wheels be the same, yet there is a new Spring put in, which doth turn all the Wheels, and the Stream and Course of them, another way. And that is, Whereas *Adam* sought Salvation from God by doing, and by Obedience of the Faith he had, (which indeed sets all the Wheels in him a going) here comes a new Spring into the Heart, which turns all the Wheels quite another way, and sets the Heart a-work to seek Salvation out of it self in another. There is a new Instinct, a new Genius therefore, carrying the Heart unto another, unto Christ, to be saved, differing from what the Genius, and Spring, and Instinct of *Adam*'s Faith carried him unto. The Truth is, the Law of Faith (as the Expression is in Rom. 3. 23.) which is written in our Hearts, is differing from that Law of Works that was in his Heart, and was written there. So that I say, Suppose that he had the Principle of Faith, such as we have, yet he was never put to believe that which we are, yea certainly it was far above the Proportion of it so to do. I shall but give you an Instance or two.

1. He believed that God made him, and that God made the World, (I will not dispute whether his Faith might be resolved into sanctified Reason or no) it was an easy thing for him to believe also this, that God when he made him had a Consultation, express'd in *Gen. 1. 26. Let us make Man*, and *let us make a World.* But was he put upon it to believe that *that God* who made the World would himself be made Man? If he had the same Principle of Faith we have, yet I believe it was so dim as could hardly have seen so far without new Spectacles, but it would have stretch'd his Eye-strings, have put his Eyes to it to have discerned this, even as it puts the Angels Necks to it, (as *Peter* speaks, 1 *Pet.* 1. 12.) to stoop down to behold this.

2. *Adam* believed that the Soul that sinned should die, and that on that day he did eat of the forbidden Fruit he should begin to die. There was Reason for him to believe this, because he found that by doing the Will of God he lived, therefore he

Part 3. he might very well on the contrary believe, that if he transgressed the Will of God he must die; and yet you see how easy his Faith in this thing was overthrown. The Devil came with a Suggestion of a Doubt, *Gen.* 3. 2. *Yea, hath God said that you shall die the Death that day you eat?* and how easily did the Tempter hereby prevail against his Faith? But what if God had said to *Adam*, that God himself shall die, and that God himself should be made Sin that knew no Sin, and be made a Curse? If such a thing as this should have been propounded to his Faith, and if the Devil had come with such a Suggestion, *Yea, hath God said?* he would have put his Faith to it.

3. For *Adam* to believe that whilst he pleased God in all things, he should continue in his Favour, and should be justified in so doing, it was easy, why? Because he had a Principle of Conscience in him, which was still to give him Peace by doing, and to give a Testimony of the Favour of God towards him. He had a Principle adequate to this in his own Bosom, and it was natural unto him, for he had the Notion of the remunerative Justice of God, whereof he had the Image also in his own Bosom that might assure him of it. But to come to believe that God will justify the Ungodly, and to apprehend my self to be ungodly, and then to believe that God will justify me; and to believe that God will and doth account an ungodly Person as righteous in his sight as all the Angels in Heaven are, in point of Justification, this would have posed, have non-plust *Adam*'s Faith. And further, when that ungodly Person, tho justified perfectly, should continue still imperfectly holy, and not have a Dram of Power and Ability in himself to please God, but he must turn himself out of doors, go and live in another, must fetch a Principle of Life and Grace from Christ, (as Christ tells us we must do, *John* 15. 5. *Without me ye can do nothing*: and as the Apostle's Faith was, *Gal.* 2. 20. *I now live, I live by the Faith of the Son of God; and it is not I, but Christ that liveth in me)* all these would have been Parables, Solecisms in *Adam*'s Opinion. Faith therefore, by which we are saved, may well be said not to be of our selves, for it is indeed above this pure Nature, this pure Self.

(2.) But besides, a second Consideration in the general about it, may be this. If *Adam* had Power to believe all these things, (which I will not dispute nor utterly deny) yet now it is above self, for he utterly lost it, and we all have lost it, and so lost it, that of all things else which we are able to do, we are weakned in the Point of Believing. Besides the general Reason which is common to the Loss of all Grace else, (*viz.* If that Faith had been a Part of the Image of God, the whole being lost, it had also been lost with the rest) I say, besides that general Reason, there is this special one to evince this, that in losing that Faith he had we are utterly disenabled of our selves to believe. For, do but consider, where was it that the Temptation entred in? Certainly it was in a way of Unbelief. We will not dispute whether that Faith he had might be resolved into spiritual Reason or no: Yet a Faith it might be called, and so answerably his first Sin may be called Unbelief. *Yea, hath God said?* saith the Devil to *Eve*; and at that she stagger'd, became dizzy, reel'd and fell, and fell upon that Arm, and broke it all to pieces. If a Man be kill'd with a Shot in his Eye, we know that Shot piercing the Eye, and carrying that away with it, kills the whole Man; and the Man being kill'd, it must be an Almighty Power that must go to the raising of that Man presently again; but now it were a farther thing to raise that Eye beyond and besides raising the whole Man, because the whole Body remains, but this Eye must be made a-new, so it is here. In *Rom.* 11. 32. we are said (and it is an emphatical Expression) both Jew and Gentile, *to be shut all up together in Unbelief*, (so you have it in your Margins) *that God might have Mercy upon all.* Do but mark what he compares Unbelief unto, (that I may fit it to that thing we have in hand, namely, that in the Matter of Believing we are of all the rest most disenabled) he compares it to a Prison or Bonds. Suppose now that a Man had Life in him, yet if he be shut up, if he be manacled in Fetters, (as likewise the word signifies) he is utterly disenabled: And it imports first, that God in a special manner hath shut up all in Unbelief. Other Sins (if I may so speak) are they for which God imprisons Men; but to the end they may be surely imprisoned, he makes Unbelief the Jailor, and we are all as it were shut up in a Dungeon, with a Door of Unbelief fast lock'd upon us. Therefore now the Apostle makes the Greatness of the Mercy of God to lie in giving Faith, as appears by

by the Context, *God* (saith he) *hath shut them up altogether in Unbelief*, over and above their other Sins, that when they were all thus cock-sure the Prisoners of Death, *he might have Mercy upon them.* In *Gal.* 3. 22. you have the like Phrase; *The Scripture* (saith he there) *hath concluded all under Sin*, (the word is a Compound, συνέκλεισεν, of the same Root κλαίω) hath shut up all under Sin. There are, as I may so speak, outward Prisons of all a Man's Sins else in which he is shut; but in *Rom.* 11. he makes Unbelief to be as it were the inner Prison. So that God now shews a farther Mercy in giving of Faith: And notwithstanding all a Man's Sins, the Promises which are by Faith in Jesus Christ given to them that believe, (as it follows there in *Gal.* 3. 22.) may come and knock at the Prison door, and tell this poor Man, We have broke up all your other Prison-doors, and have past through all those Prisons, and if now you will but believe, do but come out of this Dungeon you are in, and you shall be delivered. Alas! saith the poor Soul, tho all the other Prison-doors be set open, and there be a free Access unto Grace notwithstanding all my Sinfulness, yet I cannot believe. No more indeed I cannot, for he is shut up under Unbelief. Therefore now what saith the Text in *Gal.* 3. 22? *The Promise is given to them that believe*; and as the Promise is *given to them that believe*, so *Ephes.* 2. 8. tells us, that *Faith is the Gift of God*: for a Man being shut up under Unbelief, lock'd up in that inner Prison, the Promises may come and knock a thousand Years at the Prison-doors, and all to no purpose, unless God (as the Expression is, *Acts* 14. 27.) open a Door of Faith unto him. So that we are in a special manner in this corrupt Estate shut up under Unbelief, over and above all the Loss we sustained by *Adam*. But these are yet but general Demonstrations. I shall now come to the Particulars, and by the Grace of Christ manifest this to you.

1. That there is nothing in a Man (in the Condition we lie in by Nature) that can help forward, or is any way conducing to the working of saving Faith in the Heart; and that unless God come by an Almighty Power to work it, he can never believe. And,

2. That all that is in a Man, and all that comes from him, Duties or Endeavours, or what else you will, are all against it. To make manifest the first of these I shall go over all that is in you, take you all in pieces, your Understanding, your Will, your Affections, your Conscience, and shew you in all these Particulars that Faith is not of your selves, it is the Gift of God.

1*st*. I will begin with the Understanding. All the Parts of Wit and of Wisdom that all the wise Men of the World have had since the Creation, or shall have to the end of the World, if they had met in any one Man's Heart or Head, could not help him in the least to believe on Christ in a saving manner. The thing is demonstrable abundantly. What says the Apostle, 1 *Cor.* 2. 5. *That your Faith should not stand in the Wisdom of Men, but in the Power of God.* It cuts the Throat of Man's Free Will directly. Therefore he tells us in *ver.* 6, 7, 8. that the Wisdom of the Princes of this World came to nothing, as to the matter of Believing. Nay, in 1 *Cor.* 1. 18, 19. he tells us, (and he prosecuteth the same all along almost to the end of the third Chapter) that God had a Design by setting up Faith in the Hearts of his People, to save them, thereby to confound the Wisdom of all the wise Men in the World; *The Preaching of the Cross* (saith he) *is to them that perish Foolishness, but unto us which are saved it is the Power of God: for it is written, I will destroy the Wisdom of the Wise, and bring to nothing the Understanding of the Prudent.* And ver. 21. *After that the World by Wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the Foolishness of Preaching to save them that believe.* This poor thing Faith, to save Men by, he sets up as a Principle in the Hearts of his People who are saved, to confound that proud Principle of Wisdom, Parts, Wit and Understanding, that the wise Men of the World boast themselves so much of. And as God in Man's Redemption had an Eye to confound the Devil, (as appears by the Curse in *Genesis*) so he chooseth out that which is the most excellent thing in Man, as that which in the way of saving Man he would most confound. I'll do it, saith he, by the foolishest Object, Christ crucified; by the foolishest Instrument, Preaching; and by the foolishest Means within a Man, mere Faith; and by this I will accomplish that Good and Salvation which all the wise Men in the World by their Wisdom shall never attain. He doth not say, he will confound the wise Men, for he saved many wise Men,

Part 3. (not many wise Men indeed, (so *ver.* 26.) in comparison of the other, but some wise Men) therefore he says not that he will confound the wise Men of the World, but *the Wisdom*, in the Abstract; for they must lay their Wisdom aside when they come to believe, and become Fools. The Apostle there useth two or three Words very observable. In the 19*th* Verse he saith, that God reprobateth, maketh no use of the Wisdom of the World in point of Salvation. And *ver.* 20. he saith that God hath made it Foolish, he hath put a Scorn, an Affront upon it: And he shewes wise Men are the greatest Fools in the World, whilst poor Souls scrabble up to Heaven by Believing.

And then again, if you will know the Reason why God doth it, and the Reason likewise why Wisdom in a Man cannot attain to it: The Reason why God doth it is, that he may confound that which is in Man his chiefest Excellency, as Wisdom is, and that it may be in his Power (mark it) to save whom he will, and that it might be in his Power only to raise Men up to what degrees of Grace and Faith, and so of Glory to come, he pleaseth. And this he doth whilst he makes no use at all of Wisdom in this Point, but makes use of Faith. Why? Because he can make the foolishest People that are, believe as much as the wisest Men in the World. Nay, he can raise up a Principle of Faith unto an higher degree in a simple Man, if he pleaseth, than the wisest and learnedst Man in the World can attain to by all natural Learning. He therefore pitcht upon this Grace of Faith to confound the Wisdom that is in Man, so that all his Parts and Wisdom cannot help him one whit. This might be insisted upon largely, but it needs not.

And not only doth the natural Wisdom in Man fall short in it, but it is in it self a Hindrance to it.

1. For Reason, which is also joined with Wisdom, is utterly against the Way of Faith. *I thought* (saith he in *Psal.* 73. 16.) *to comprehend this*; he thought to do it by his own Wisdom, and that Thought spoiled him. So saith Wisdom, (for it is a put up Principle) I think by my own Brains and Wit to attain this which a foolish Soul cannot do. Pride of all things else is most opposite unto Faith; *The just shall live by Faith*, (saith he in *Hab.* 2. 4.) and he opposeth living by Faith to him whose Heart is lifted up in him; and Wisdom and Knowledg puffeth up, as the Apostle saith in 1 *Cor.* 8. 7. It is therefore in it self the greatest Enemy unto Faith. When the wisest Man in the World comes to see his natural Condition, and comes to believe, it lays that Man as low as the poorest and simplest Creature in the World: I would not care (says he) if I were a Fool, if of a King I were a Beggar, so I had but one Dram of Faith to interest me in Jesus Christ. So that now he that is a rich Man, when he comes to believe, he rejoiceth (as *James* saith) that he is brought low, *&c.*

2. And then again, Reason, which is the Form that constituteth Man as he is Man, and is the highest thing in Man till Faith comes, is utterly against it. For when Faith comes, it deposeth Reason, which before ruled as King, it subdueth it, even as Reason it self subdueth Sense. Reason therefore riseth up against it; for when Reason comes to be put from its Kingly Power and Regency, which it hath retained in a Man all his days, when a Stranger shall come, and tell Reason of strange things in another World, which it never heard of, never took in before, and upon the news of this though it sees not one jot of Reason in it, yet it must lay it self down at the foot of this Stranger Faith, and receive the Law at his Mouth: Reason that hath been the supream Principle, and the King and Dominator in the Heart of Man, will never do this, but it will stir and raise up all the force it can against it to resist it. When Faith shall come and say, I will have all these Counsellors of yours, all your carnal Reasonings put away from you; Reason flies upon the height still, still consults with Flesh and Blood, and will never yield of it self. In *Rom.* 4. when *Abraham* came to believe, Reason would have been putting in many Objections; do but consider your Body, being now dead, (saith Reason) and consider the Deadness of *Sarah*'s Womb: but what saith the Text? *Abraham being not weak in Faith, he considered not his own Body being now dead, when he was about an hundred Years old, neither yet the Deadness of* Sarah's *Womb; he staggered not at the Promise of God through Unbelief, but was strong in Faith, giving Glory to God,* Rom. 4. 19, 20. He gave himself up unto Faith.

3. And

3. And, thirdly, the more and stronger Reason a Man hath in him when he comes to believe, he will find the harder Pull of it, and have the stronger Objections. Book 2. Men that are in distress of Conscience, the larger their Knowledg is, the deeper their Distress; because the more Knowledg a Man hath, the more Arguments he ends out against himself; and all the Reason a Man hath will but serve to make his indictment the fuller against himself, and enable him the better to dispute, and the more shrewdly to argue against himself. As *Spira*, being a Man of a strong Reason, you know how he reasoned against himself to the Amazement of all Men.

4. Carnal Reason (if you would know how it is a Hindrance) hinders both before Faith and after. Before Faith it is an Hindrance, for you will never believe till you see your natural Condition: Now what is it that hinders Men from seeing that? All Men are ready to acknowledg themselves Sinners, but they will not acknowledg themselves to be lost and undone. Why carnal Reason useth all the strength it hath to build up high Towers, and plausible Shifts and Pretences to make Man think he is in a good Condition. All the Reason a Man hath is mainly exercised in maintaining the Dispute of this against his Conscience, or the Grumbling in his Heart about the Goodness of his Estate. Again, on the other side, when once a Man comes to be humbled, and then should come to believe, all this Reason turns head again, and useth as much Strength of Objection against himself, why he should not have Mercy, and tells him he must have this and this Qualification before he comes to Jesus Christ. I say it useth as much Strength in this Case too, and turns the Weapons it used afore quite another way. And let me tell you this, never any Man comes to believe if he will go the Way of Reason, while he stands considering his dead Soul; as *Abraham*, if he had considered his own dead Body, had never believed. The Self-flattery that is in every Man, while he is in his natural Estate, is the General of all the Forces of Reason in him, it leads on an Army of Reasons to fight for this, that he is in a good Estate; and though his Conscience, and the Word of God tell him the contrary, yet he will maintain this stifly; for he must lose such an Opinion of himself if ever Self-flattery should yield to the contrary. Now when God hath kill'd this General Self-flattery, and then Faith comes to lead up all the Forces in a Man too; then doth Unbelief, then doth Despair come and turn all the same Forces another way: So that there is as much to do, and more, yea infinitely more, to raise Men up, to bottom their Hearts in a way of Faith, and rightly to rest upon Christ and Free Grace; and to have Peace with God being justified by Faith, than to shew them their natural Condition. You see now that Wisdom and Reason in Man conduceth nothing to Believing, but that it is all against it.

CHAP. III.

That all the Workings of a Natural Conscience will not help a Man to believe; but that on the contrary, they withstand Faith.

YOU have another Principle in you, (and there is a great deal of Hope from that, for it is a good Principle) and that is your Conscience; which is indeed the first Principle in a Man, for it doth instigate a Man to good, and hath a moral goodness in it. But let me tell you this, that take natural Conscience (for we speak now of what is in Nature) though never so much enlightned, and let it remain still in that State which by Nature a Man was in at first, and it conduceth nothing to Believing; nay it is the greatest Enemy to it that the Heart of Man hath: Therefore still *Faith is not of your selves, it is the Gift of God.*

1. I confess it is a good Principle in a Man; it tells him of his Sinfulness, but alas it will never help him a whit in Believing. Come to Conscience, and consult with it; it sets you a doing indeed, but it will not direct you one whit in the Way of Faith, but rather serteth you out of the Way clean contrary. It is capable of what the Law saith, for it self is but the Law written in the Heart naturally; and it hath an Ear to hear what the Law saith to a Man under the Law; but it is deaf to what the Gospel saith, and understandeth not a Word of it. If you speak to natural

Part 3. Conscience concerning a Saviour, and urge it to believe on him, its Answer will be like to that of the Jews, (and it was this Principle of Conscience which made them so speak) *John* 9. 29. *As for* Moses *we know that God spake unto him, but this Fellow we know not whence he is*: Just so saith Conscience; *Moses* I know, and if you talk to me of the Law, and what I ought to do, I can hear it; but as for the Gospel, the truth is I know not the thing, it is a Stranger to me.

2. Nay, which is more, Conscience enlightned will help to discover all sort of Sins, and tell a Man roundly of them; but Conscience alone will never discover Unbelief to you, in the bottom of it, and will never tell you of that; but it must be a spiritual Light in the Mind and Judgment that doth it. In *John* 16. 8. Christ saith that it is the Spirit (and he speaks of the Holy Ghost's coming as a Comforter) that must convince of the great Sin of Unbelief. There are two Sins which are out of the Jurisdiction of Conscience to set them home upon the Heart ordinarily: One is the Guilt of *Adam*'s first Sin, (a Man's Conscience may help him through spiritual Discerning to see the Corruption of Nature, but not the Guilt of *Adam*'s Sin ordinarily:) And the other is, want of Faith in Christ; for a Man to see that to be the great Sin, and to have it set home upon the Heart, it is the Spirit of the Gospel that must do this. What comes within the compass of the Law written in the Heart, that Conscience will tell a Man of; but this is the Law of Faith. Come to Men troubled in Conscience, that make Conscience of all sort of things; the truth is they make no Conscience of the Matter of Believing, as if there were no such Command; nay they think they do well to argue against themselves, and that they do well to refuse the Promises, and they please themselves in so doing. Men will wrangle and cavil against the Command of Faith, and against themselves; whereas yet all other Sins stare them in the face. Now to have the Heart discern Unbelief as the great Sin, and to have it set home upon the Soul, and to look upon Faith as the great Work of God, and that this I must attain to, or else I am undone, Conscience will never help a Man to this; it is the Holy Ghost in your Hearts, and the Gospel that must do it.

3. Let me tell you also, that Conscience not subordinated unto Faith (as in natural Men it is not) is the greatest Hindrance to Believing that can be.

1. It is the greatest Hindrance of it, first, in respect of the Guilt of Sin: For what is the great Hindrance in Believing? The Greatness of your Sins, your Hearts clearly misgiving you in that. Now it is Conscience that is the Subject of them; and it is the Conscience raiseth and conjures them up, (as I may so express it against thee;) for all the Sins that lie in that dark Cell thy Heart, are made by Conscience to appear and stare in thy Face, therefore it is called an evil Conscience; for though to represent a Man's Sins is good, yet it is called an evil Conscience, because the State of a Man is evil, and it is his Conscience is the Representation of the Man's State, and tells him so, it being the Subject, the Drain, the Sink of all a Man's Sins, where they lie till such time as God stir that Sink. Now what is it that keeps Men from believing? The Greatness of their Sins; when their Conscience is awakened it continually presents to them their Sins; and all the Discouragements they have, as from their Sinfulness, are from a Conscience unsprinkled with the Blood of Christ, unsubdued unto Faith. Conscience hath not learned its Lesson from Faith, it hath not gone and dipt it self in the Blood of Christ by Faith; for if it had, it would be quiet, and not always suggesting to a Man what his Sins are, so as to discourage and hinder him from believing. This the Scripture tells us, *Heb.* 10. 22. *Let us draw near with a true Heart in full assurance of Faith, having our Hearts sprinkled from an evil Conscience.* What is it that sprinkles the Conscience? It is the Holy Ghost in the Soul, that by Faith takes the Blood of Christ and sprinkles it upon the Conscience, so you have it in *Heb.* 9. 14. *How much more shall the Blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without Spot to God, purge your Conscience from dead Works, to serve the living God?* There is nothing then that can satisfy the Conscience in respect of the Guilt of Sin, but the Blood and Death, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. When a poor Soul looks upon it self as thus sinful, and upon Christ as so holy, he saith as *Peter* did unto Christ, *Depart from me, for I am a sinful Man, O Lord,* Luk. 5. 8. And therefore your Consciences, by stirring up the Guilt of Sin, do hinder you from believing; and whilst that Conscience shall be suffered to speak louder than Faith, it will cry Faith down, till that Faith comes and brings in the Blood

Blood of Christ; and then that cries louder, as the Apostle's Comparison is in *Heb.* 12. 24. Otherwise, I say, unless the Conscience be sprinkled by the Blood of Christ through the Spirit of Faith, the Guilt of Sin in the Conscience will cry down Faith in a Man's Heart, and the Voice of Sin there will be louder than the Voice of the Blood of Christ. In *Isa.* 59. 11, 12. they say, *Salvation is far off from us*; they thought there was no hope: Why? Their Sins did fly in their Faces, and discourag'd their Hearts; for (say they) *our Transgressions are multiplied before thee, and our Sins testify against us, for our Transgressions are with us, and as for our Iniquities we know them.* Slight Thoughts of Sin further Presumption, but Sin discovered, as 'tis in it self, hinders Faith: that I who am a Blasphemer, Injurious, &c. that I should have Mercy, is this possible, saith the Soul? I need not insist upon this, for you all feel it.

4. Conscience hinders Faith if it be not subordinated to it; for Conscience is a secret Enemy, and the closest Enemy that can be of any other thing that is in Man unto the way of believing, and hinders the Work of Faith more closely and secretly than any thing else, till Jesus Christ and his Spirit hath subdued and subordinated it to be a Servant unto Faith. To express my Meaning, and to convince you of this, you will all yield that know any thing of God, that there is nothing so opposite to the Gospel as the Law is, unless it be subordinated to the Gospel: It must have in a manner all the Formality of it destroyed, though the Materiality remain. If any Man seek for Salvation in a legal Way, he must needs acknowledg he crosses the Way of the Gospel, and the Law of Faith, as *Paul* expresses it in *Rom.* 3. and 9. 32, 35. and the whole Epistle to the *Galatians* is evident for it. Now if that the Law be thus in it self, as it is a Covenant of Works, opposite unto the Gospel, then likewise is natural Conscience, (though never so much enlightned, if it remain still a natural Conscience, as it doth till Faith hath got the Victory of it) also an Enemy unto Faith, and must needs be so. And the Reason of it is this, because that natural Conscience, and the Light it takes in by the Spirit, or however otherwise, is the Vice-gerent for the Law; for it is that Principle in a Man which God hath set up for to make a Man apprehensive of all that the Law shall say. It doth keep (as I may so express it) the Law's Court in a Man's Heart. Now on the other side, this great Principle of Faith, and the Holy Ghost acting of it, and acting the Soul in a way of Faith, is that which keeps the Gospel's Court; that is, all its Proceedings concerning a Man's Condemnation, Justification, Salvation, Absolution, they are all dispatched by Faith, and that in the Way of an Evangelical Covenant.

Now (my Brethren) this is a certain Truth likewise, that all Men in their natural Condition, they are under the Law. Let them be never so much enlightned with the Knowledg of the Gospel, yet notwithstanding for certain the Law is the predominate Principle in them. As on the contrary, he that is brought into the State of Salvation, he is under Grace, (it is the Apostle's Distinction in *Rom.* 6. 14.) And being under Grace, under the Free Grace of God in Christ, under the Gospel, he is under Faith as the supream Principle in his Heart. As the Strength of Sin is the Law, so the Strengh of Conscience is the Law; but the Strength of Faith it is the Gospel, and the Grace of God in Christ. The Apostle in that *Rom.* 6. compares the Law and Grace to two Soveraigns, two Kings, which do sway the Heart and Spirit in their several ways: that is, if the Person of the Man be still under the Law, then the Law sways the Heart in a legal Way; if he be under Grace, then doth the Free Grace of God in Christ sway the Heart in a Gospel Way; and the one doth this by Reason and the Means of Conscience, and the other by Means of the Spirit of Faith. Now then, go take a Man, in whom hitherto the highest and supremest Principle to him hath been the Conscience remaining in its natural Defilement, though never so much enlightned, it will be true to its Master, true to the Law, and will never subject to this new Stranger Faith, that will bring the Free Grace of God in Christ as a supream Soveraign over the other. It will stand for it to the Death, it will (I say) be faithful to him whose Vice-gerent it is; it will strive, and especially in the Point of Justification. If it have not the face to do it plainly and directly, it will do it secretly, and it will turn the very Gospel into a Legal Way. If it will comply with the Knowledg of the Gospel, and the Knowledg of Faith exceeding far, yet still it will seek to undermine it; it will carry on the Heart in a way of Works, yea it will turn the Duties of the Gospel themselves into Works, and under-hand seek to be justified by Faith.

5. Con-

Part 3. 5. Conscience, if it did proceed aright, so as to help Faith, yet it should do no more than what the Law is to do: And what is the Law's Office? To shew a Man his Sinfulness, and his Inability to help himself to do any thing; to discover corrupt Nature to a Man, and send him with a new Petition to the Court of Free Grace, and (as I may so express it, to follow the Allusion taken *Gal.* 3. 24.) to whip the Soul thither, and to be a School-master hereby to Faith. This, I say, is that which Conscience should do if it proceed aright: It should lay open all a Man's Sinfulness to him, send him with a Petition to the Throne of Grace, (as in *Heb.* 4. you have it;) where Grace sits as King, and thereto own Grace as a Soveraign, and to take the Law from its Mouth, Conscience it self professing that it finds the Heart so corrupt, and such an utter Inability in it, that it can never attain to God's Favour by it self, or any Course which Conscience can prosecute. Thus Conscience should accompany Faith to Christ, and deal with Christ nakedly and immediately both for Justification, and likewise for Sanctification and Glory, and what-ever he is to receive. Now Conscience should wait to receive a new Commission from the Throne of Grace, and from Faith, for to subserve Faith in this to direct the Soul meerly in what is to be done, but lets Faith take its Course for to supply Strength to the Soul to do all that it doth, for to live out of it self in another, and still to have recourse for Acceptation and Justification alone in that Redeemer. And when the Soul hath been dealing with Christ, Conscience will sometimes come in to confirm as a Witness that a Man lives as a justified Person should do when he hath thus acted Faith upon Christ, then Conscience still is subordinate unto Faith, and receiveth its Commission and Power from it. But this you shall find by eternal Experience, and it shall be found at later day in the Hearts of all Men that have not saving Faith, that let there be never so much Enlightning, their Consciences will still work in a legal Way, and within the Tenour of their Proceedings take a clean contrary Course; and whilst Conscience holds its Commission from the Law, it will direct and sway the Heart legally, and undermine Faith in the Power of it. It will still set the Heart a-work to seek the Favour of God by Doing, though it be by doing things that the Gospel it self commandeth. It will still, I say, proceed according to that legal Tenour, though it will diminish it much. And therefore you shall find this to be true, that whenas Conscience hath subdued the Heart in a way of Humiliation, to see a Man's own Sinfulness, and hath brought the Heart under, (and then Conscience is upon the Throne again, then it hath the Sway of the Heart) then it will listen (natural Conscience will do so, though thus enlightned) to hear all that the Heart ought to do, and look what Sinfulness it sees in it self, it will set it self to practise the contrary, and put the Heart upon doing of it; and will whip the Heart as a Run-away Home to his Master, but how? To serve out his Years, and to make up the Time that is lost, and by such Ways to get and obtain the Favour of God, yea to get Faith it self, and then upon conforming to what it hears the Word say, whether out of the Law or out of the Gospel, it will take upon it to pronounce a Peace, and a Justification and an Absolution; (for the natural Office of Conscience in the old Covenant, is to accuse, and so to excuse, and to give Peace when a Man doth well.) And thus instead of being a Witness, it will become a Judg; it will take upon it to pronounce upon the Heart the Sentence of Absolution. Yea, and if that a Man is enlightned thus far as to be convinced, that by the Works of the Law no Flesh shall be justified, what will Conscience do? It will go and turn all the Duties of the Gospel, Faith and Repentance, and Mourning for Sin, and all things else, into Duties of the Law; that is, the Heart shall have that resting upon them which natural Conscience had upon the Duties of the Law. In *Rom.* 9. 32. there is an excellent Expression of the Apostle's, speaking of the Jews that had the Ceremonial Law, (for much Light of the Gospel they had) he saith, *They sought not Righteousness by Faith but as it were by the Works of the Law.* Mark his Phrase, *as it were by the Works of the Law.* Some of them that were more enlightned, and saw their own Sinfulness, knew that their own Righteousness alone would not stand them in stead; and they sought after Evangelical Graces, as Love unto God, and the like. You may read of one of them, a Scribe, that came unto Christ, in *Mark* 12. 34. I know (saith he to Christ) that though the rest of the Jews and Pharisees trust in all these Sacrifices, meer Works of the Law, yet a Man must have an inward Work, he must love God with all the Heart, and with all the Understanding, and with all the Soul, and with

ll the Strength; and this (saith he) is more than all whole Burnt-offerings and Sa- Book 2.
rifices. And our Saviour Christ tells him upon this, that he was not far from the
ingdom of God. But what doth he do now? Tho that which he pitched upon
as that which is required by virtue of the Evangelical Covenant, yet his legal
pirit turned this as it were into a Work of the Law; he sought Salvation as it were
y the Works of the Law; and so did the Jews, tho they were very much enlight-
ed many of them. And in *Rom.* 10. 2. (saith the Apostle) *I bear them Record, that
ey have a Zeal of God, but not according to Knowledg.* That Zeal there which he
peaks of is a Zeal arising from Conscience; a conscientious Zeal, as we use to call
whereby they set themselves to aim at the Glory of God, yet it was still as it
ere a Work of the Law. I do not say that any Man doth attain to true Love of
od, or truly to aim at the Glory of God above a Man's self; I do not say that any
an attains to that who is not in the State of Salvation, I believe the contrary plain-
But this some of them pitch'd upon, and did think thereby to obtain Salvation,
en as well as by outward Works of the Law. Therefore saith the Apostle, they
e utterly mistaken, their conscientious Zeal utterly misleads them, for it is not ac-
rding to that Knowledg of Faith which the Apostle clearly meaneth, which
acheth us to fling away all in our selves, and to submit unto the Righteousness of
od, as it follows there, *ver.* 3.

6. And therefore now, when Conscience hath once gone and got up into the
hrone, that is, when it hath subdued the Heart to legal Humblings, the Soul is
a in most Danger of being misled in the way of Believing when it comes just to
e Point; why? Because that Conscience having got the Dominion (so as it never
before so fully till now) it will seek to hold it, and to sway the Heart its own
y, and if Gospel-light comes in, Conscience still will turn it as it were into the
ght, and Tenour, and Way of the Law, to seek Salvation still by Works. But
hen Faith, and when the Holy Ghost comes, he sets up (as I said afore) Grace
on the Throne, and natural Conscience must then take its Commission from
ith to direct a Man in serving the Living God, as it is *Heb.* 9. 14. For the Truth
this, and I ought to say it, that still there is a Use, and a great Use of Consci-
ce; and therefore you find that Oedience is made to *spring from Love and a good
nscience, and Faith unfeigned,* (1 Tim. 1. 5.) and those are the Principles that
ul reckons up; and he saith of some, (*ver.* 19.) that they *had made Shipwrack of
ith and a good Conscience.* For still Conscience remains in a Man as a Guide when
is sanctified and purged by Faith, that he may serve the Living God; but then I
y it must be indoctrinated by Faith, and purified by Faith; for it is Faith it self
at fetcheth out this legal strain that is natural to the Conscience, and subdues, as
the rest of the whole Heart, unto Faith, so Conscience also. Now in all natural
en (the Truth is) Conscience runs into a *Præmunire,* goes beyond its Commissi-
takes upon it to absolve, to justify, to give Peace, and to do it in a predominate
y to Faith; it does it from doing, and from what a Man sees in himself, and not
m the Law of Believing.

You may by this see the true and clear Reason why that in all natural Men by
ature, tho never so much enlightned, their Spirits are acted in a legal way; the
ason is clear, because that Conseience is the highest Principle in Nature.
nscience is a Principle in a Man that believes, and it ought to be so when it is
ified, and made more quick, and enlightned with a more spiritual Light to
de him in the way of serving God; but it is not the supreme Principle; no, it
ut an under-Principle unto Faith: for if the Matter of the Law be an under-
ng to the Gospel, certainly Conscience is so to Faith. Now therefore whilst
t Conscience remains the supremest Principle of all things else, it must be a
dly Enemy unto Faith, and still sway the Heart its own way, and it must needs
so till the Holy Ghost hath subdued the whole Heart to a way of believing in the
rd Jesus. By what I have now said you may see then and understand, from the
per Principle that is in all Mens Hearts, what is the Reason why they are thus
led in a way of doing, and that they *seek Righteousness not by Faith, but as it
e by the Works of the Law.* And so I pass from this Principle of Conscience, and
m shewing how that that is an Enemy unto Faith, and I come to the Will.

CHAP.

Part 3.

CHAP. IV.

That all the Powers of a Man's Will cannot enable him to believe. That Faith therefore is an Effect of the Infinite Power of God alone.

I Now come to demonstrate that the Power and Faculty of Will in a Man doth not help him to believe, but is against Faith.

1. Take the Will of a Man in his natural Condition, let that Will remain but still natural, and let it be excited and stirred up never so much by Light, or by Conscience, or any how otherwise, yet till that Almighty Power comes that puts a new Life into it, there is both first an Inability in it to help a Man in Believing; yea, there are Principles in it that are all contrary unto Faith and to Believing. First, To make it out to you, that a Man's Will is thus disenabled to believe, yea that nothing is more unable than the Will is, to give up the whole Man unto Free Grace, and to God's own way of Salvation by Jesus Christ. Consider how this Truth is sadly confirmed to us by manifold Experiences, and by the Scripture also.

If we come to many Men that are upon their Death-beds, or in Distress and under the Fears of Hell and of the Wrath of God, having their Consciences enlightened, and God having struck Sparks of Hell-fire into them, which have taken hold of all the Gunpowder there, we shall find that the Will in such Distress, when it comes to the Point of Believing, sinks into a Discouragement under Thoughts of an Impossibility. For ask them then if they will be saved? Yea, they would give ten thousand Worlds to be saved: Will you but then throw your selves upon Jesus Christ and upon Free Grace, and let your Hearts be quieted in so doing? (for to have the Will brought to a Quietness, this is the proper Effect of Faith there, to have this Storm allayed, and the Winds still, by rolling a Man's self, and committing this little Cock-boat to those Waves of Free Grace to save him) it comes to this Point, you shall find that the Will sticks at nothing more, and these poor Souls will then tell you, that of all things else they cannot do it, and they will profess they cannot, and you shall see they cannot do it. Now if there were any Ability in the Will of a Man to close with the Lord Jesus Christ intirely and wholly, certainly a Man would then do it, whenas he himself professeth he desires Salvation more than Millions of Worlds. I remember in the Story of *Spira*, (who yet I believe was a Believer, and is in Heaven) that he being left to the Nakedness of his own Spirit, and divested of the Holy Ghost to strengthen his Heart in Believing, to join with his Will, (for so the Holy Ghost doth when a Man is enabled to believe and to rest himself quietly upon God) when all Objections were answered, and all the Promises of the Gospel laid before him, (as they were abundantly by many that came to him, and that pitied him with the greatest Tenderness that can be) he still complained of this, *I have a Wound in my Will, and I cannot do it, I cannot believe*: as once one said, being exhorted to lay hold upon Jesus Christ, *Bid me* (saith he, pointing up to Heaven) *lay hold upon yonder Star.*

Besides the manifold Experience that we have of the Truth of this Point, I shall give you a Scripture or two for it. In *John* 1. 13. the Evangelist speaking at the latter end of the 12*th* Verse of them that believe, he adds, *ver.* 13. *Which were born not of Blood*; for say not, you have *Abraham* to your Father; *nor of the Will of the Flesh.* Take the natural Will that every Man hath, and it will not help him to believe; no, he that believeth truly he is *born of God*, (so saith the Text in 1 *John* 5. 1.) *He that believeth on the Son of God*, (as *ver.* 10. hath it, for you must take both together) and doth do this truly, *he is born of God*; and his being born of God so as to believe, is not of the Will of the Flesh. Compare these two Places together, and they clear this Point fully. And in this *Ephes.* 2. what is the eminent thing that the Apostle in the Series of his Discourse doth hold forth as the Reason why Faith is not of a Man's self? He had said afore, *ver.* 1. and *ver.* 4. *that we were dead in Sins and Trespasses*; and that *Faith is a new Life*, ver. 5. And where lies the Death most? Truly you will find in *ver.* 3. that it is in the Will; *Fulfilling*, saith he, *the Wills of the Flesh*; so it is in the Original. As the chief Subject of Death is the Heart, so the chief Subject of this spiritual Death is the Will of a Man

an: And (saith he) know this, That you being dead in Sins and Trespasses, and d in your Wills especially, ye are saved by Grace through Faith, and that not of ur selves, it is the Gift of God. It is the Will, *i. e.* the Heart especially, that is Seat of Faith; with the Heart a Man believeth to Salvation, *Rom.* 10. 10. To brace Mercy and Grace offered according to the Word, to close with it upon d's own Terms, to bring the Will off to this, this is a great Point indeed; for he ust be born of God that believes truly, because it is not through the Will of the esh, for that is a dead Will, utterly unable to believe. And because I have fallen on that Place in *Rom.* 10. give me leave to speak a little out of it. The Apostle re doth shew you (that you may see what a hard thing it is for the Soul to be-ve thus) what Plunges the Hearts of Men are put to when they are emptied of emselves, and of their own Righteousness. He had shewn in the former Part of t Chapter, and in the latter end of the *9th* Chapter, that it was the great Error d Fault of the Jews, that they sought Righteousness *as it were by the Works of the w*, as I said even now. Now whenas a Jew (in whose case the Apostle puts it, he had discoursed of the Jews all along) should come to be convinced that he uld have no Righteousness by doing, see but what Plunges that Man's Heart will put to: *The Righteousness which is of Faith* (saith he, *ver.* 6.) *speaks on this wise; not in thine Heart, Who shall ascend into Heaven, that is, to bring Christ down m above? Or, who shall descend into the Deep, that is, to bring up Christ again from Dead?* Here you see the Law of Faith, when it comes to direct a Man, doth in to empty out of him abundance of Sayings that the Heart is apt to run into. not in thy Heart, saith he; the Holy Ghost goes to the bottom of the Heart, d fetcheth up those despairing Thoughts that arise out of the Fainting, and Suc-mbency, and Despondency of the Will; and he pitcheth upon those Sayings that Heart in that case is apt to form up against it self when a Man is emptied of his n Righteousness. I will open this Place of the Apostle a little; *Say not in thine art*, &c. The Heart when once it hath lost a bottom in it self, and is cast off from t legal way, is apt amongst other things to run into all sort of Thoughts of Im-ssibilities of ever attaining unto Life. He expresseth the case as in the instance of ew, living under the Old Law, that had heard in the Abstract that there should a Messiah, and that God must be satisfied by that Messiah. Now how would t Jew reason with himself in this case? He would say, Who shall climb up into aven to bring down a Messiah from thence, for he that must be my Messiah, d must save me, must come down from thence? *Quis, quis*, (saith he) *who, who* go up to Heaven and climb up thither? No Man hath a Ladder to do this; and the Angels go thither, can all the Angels in Heaven perswade the Messiah to me down from Heaven and die for me, and do thus and thus for me, that I may saved? He speaks I say in the case of a Jew that is put off from the Law, and under Terrors of Conscience, and hath heard of a Messiah, and that God for part is willing to save Men if the Messiah will do thus and thus. Such Sayings these, and such Thoughts of Impossibilities, will rise up in the Man's Heart; *o shall ascend into Heaven to bring Christ down from above? Or when he is brought n from Heaven here upon Earth in the Nature of a Man, who shall perswade him to dergo the Wrath of God for my Sins, and to satisfy for them, or they must never be isfied for? Or if he be willing to do it, who shall support him in undergoing this? Or o shall go down into the Deep, into the Abyss, to bring up this Christ again from the ad? for he must rise again, or else he can never satisfy for my Sins, and so I shall ne-be saved: O who can do all this?* A Jew now would have all these Thoughts, d have tired himself in these Impossibilities concerning his Salvation, if once he he cannot have it by the Law which hitherto he hath gone by. And these Words ich the Apostle here useth, he quoteth out of *Deut.* 30. 11. Now you must ow this, that tho *Moses* had most of all preached the Law, and given it at *Mount ai*, and had hid the Gospel under the Types and Shadows of legal Ceremonies, t now when he was to die, he doth, through the Holy Ghost coming upon him, each the Gospel, and deliver the Covenant thereof clearly and plainly to the ws; for you may read in *Deut.* 29. 1. that he calls it, *the Words of the Covenant ich the Lord commanded* Moses *to make with the Children of* Israel *in the Land of oab, beside the Covenant which he made with them in* Horeb. It is another Cove-nt; and therefore the Apostle pertinently quotes the Words of this last great Ser-

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mon of *Moses*, to distinguish the Covenant of Works and the Covenant of Grace.
Part 3. Now then he propounds this Covenant unto them, and when the Soul comes to enter into that Covenant, being left naked by the Law, *Moses* sheweth the Averseness that is in the Heart thereunto, and how apt the Spirits of Men are to turn aside into all sort of Thoughts of Impossibilities in the way of that Covenant. When the Law was given in *Horeb*, Exod. 19. 8. when that other Covenant was given, O then they were very forward, as if they would have undertaken to have fulfilled the whole Law; *All that the Lord hath spoken* (say they) *that will we do*: But when *Moses* comes to preach this other Covenant, besides that which he had taught them before, he knew well enough (as the 11*th* Verse of that *Deut.* 30. hath it) that they would say in their Hearts, *O this is hid from us. But this Commandment* (saith he) *which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off; It is not in Heaven, that thou shouldst say, Who shall go up for us to Heaven, and bring it unto us that we may hear it and do it?* (You may see that they made a greater Difficulty of this Covenant than they did of fulfilling the Law delivered in *Horeb*) *Neither is it beyond the Sea, that thou shouldst say, Who shall go over the Sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it and do it?* They were apt to say that this Covenant was hidden from them: and the word there used for *hidden* is used by *Moses* also for what is too hard, for what is impossible, as in *Gen.* 18. 11. the Angel tells *Sarai* when the Promise was made of *Isaac*, *Is any thing too hard for the Lord?* Now if you look into *Luke* 1. 37. you shall find, that unto *Mary* the Mother of our Lord Christ, that unto her (being in the same Unbelief, in some degree of it) the Angel useth the same Expression, only changeth the word *too hard* into *impossible*; *Is any thing impossible for the Lord?* That which is here, *hidden*, is all one with *hard*, and that is all one with *impossible*. So that this is his Meaning, (when he saith) *Say not the Commandment is hidden from thee*; that is, *say not that it is impossible for thee to attain it*. And by the way, let me give you this Note upon those two Places last quoted: *Isaac* you know was the Type of Christ, eminently made so in *Rom.* 4. and also in *Heb.* 11. Now it is observable, that the Angel used the same word to *Sarai* the Mother of *Isaac* when his Birth was promised, that the Angel useth to *Mary*, whenas the Incarnation of Christ (typified out by *Isaac*) was promised also. Now the Instances which *Moses* gives *of climbing up to Heaven, and going over the Sea*, were to the Jews the Language of Impossibilities. They were ready to say, You may as well bid me go climb up to Heaven; and where shall we have Ladders to do that? You may as well bid us go over the World, and fathom the great Gulf, the great Sea, and fetch things from far, (which in those days, because they wanted the Load-stone, and therefore could not lanch out into the vast Ocean, but were fain to creep along by the Coasts, was thought a thing impossible) you may as well bid us do these things as bid us believe in this Word, and join with this Covenant you now give us. This their Hearts were apt to say. Now the Apostle alluding to this Place, and giving the Interpretation of it, speaks in the Language of a Jew that is to believe on Christ as to come, and as coming to die for him; which Jew, when he shall hear that he is a Sinner, and that the Law cannot help him, nor all his Sacrifices and Oblations, but that there must be a Mediator that must satisfy God for his Sins, and this Mediator must come from Heaven to do it, and he must go to Hell too, and be fetched up again from thence, will presently say within himself: Who shall go up to Heaven to perswade the Messiah to come down and die for me? Alas, it is impossible I should be saved if this be the way of Salvation. And when the Messiah is here, and is to undergo the Wrath of God, and to die upon the Cross, who shall support him? This the Soul of a Jew would be apt to speak, as sinking under the desperate Impossibilities of this way of Salvation. Now these Impossibilities which the Heart of a Jew would forge, and did forge unto themselves, the same under the Gospel do the Spirits of Men, if the Holy Ghost leaves them but little unto themselves. Tho they hear what God hath done, that he hath gone and sent Jesus Christ from Heaven for them, and hath fetch'd him again from the Deep (for what *Moses* calleth the Sea, the Gulf, that the Apostle interprets Hell, at least by way of Allusion) and that God requires nothing in the World of them but to believe this, so saith *ver.* 9. of *Rom.* 10. *If thou shalt believe in thine Heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved*; yet notwithstanding tho a Christian knows all this, and tho the Gospel and the way of Believing is most clearly and naked

nakedly preached; the Soul when it forecasteth with it self all his own Sinfulness and Unworthiness, and Discouragements, will sink under the same Thoughts of the Impossibility of his Salvation that the Jew had, he will still be saying, Who shall climb up to Heaven to bring Christ down to this Heart of mine? or where shall I have a Ladder to reach up to close with Jesus Christ? or if I be sinking down to Hell, who can go and get Christ to put forth his Arm to pull me out again? This I say is the manner of the Spirits of Men even under the Gospel. The Scope of the Apostle there is to hold forth two Contradictions, namely, that of all things else it is the most easy to believe; and that of all things else it is the most impossible, so taking in all that the sinful Heart of Man is apt to say of it self. It is easy (a Man will say) for it is no more but this; there is Christ, and there is the Word, God hath done all for you; he hath sent Christ down from Heaven to die for you, and all is ready, and God requires nothing of you (when the news is brought to your Hearts) but closing with it. So that take the Act in it self, and it is the easiest thing in the World that God requires, the smallest Matter that could be required of the Sons of Men. But yet when a Man is divested of his own Righteousness, he will have Thoughts of a thousand Impossibilities, as this despairing Jew had; and he will still have such Sayings in his Heart, Who shall bring this Christ down hither? and who shall move this Christ to pull me up from the Deep when I am sinking thither? Is it possible that God should ever do thus for me? Is there any Hope that he should regard my Soul so from Everlasting as to perswade his Son to come and die for me that am thus and thus a Sinner? Is it possible that ever Salvation and I should meet? That though God hath sent Christ down from Heaven, and he is come up again from the Deep, is it likely that Christ should do this for me? I may as well think to climb up to Heaven and take hold of Christ there, and go down into the Deep and come up with Christ there in my Heart, as to believe this. The Heart, I say, is apt to fall into these Thoughts of Impossiblities. I have been the longer upon this, because it gives Light to that Scripture which is exceeding difficult to understand. I know there is another Meaning of the Words, namely, that when the Soul is emptied of it self, and hears that there is a Christ, it thinks to get him by Endeavours, What though I have nothing in my self, yet I hope to climb up to Heaven, *&c.* But the Text clearly holds forth likewise, those despairing sinful Thoughts which the Soul is apt to have when it comes to believe; therefore what saith the Apostle in the following Verses of that Chapter, though God requires no more of Men but that they believe that God hath raised Christ from the dead, and that all those Impossibilities which the Jew might plead are taken away, and that God looks for nothing more than that the Heart and the Word meet; yet how doth the Apostle complain, that although they have heard, yet *who hath believed our Report?* ver. 16. For a Man so to believe it as to give up his Soul unto it, who hath done it? Few do it; so that though Jesus Christ be thus nakedly and plainly taught, and Men need not frame the Jews Impossibilities of moving Christ to come down from Heaven and die, and of supporting him under his Father's Wrath, and bringing him up again from the Grave; yet to perswade them to rest quietly in this Christ, and to have their Hearts and Wills quiet in so doing, how hard a Business is it? When the Soul is humbled for Sin, and stript of it self, it is the greatest Impossibility as to his own Power, to believe; *who hath believed our Report?* And why? Because the Arm of the Lord is not revealed; it must be the Arm of the Lord, an Almighty Power that must do it.

Book 2.

I shall end this thing only with giving you the Reason of it, why it is thus hard, and why the Heart fancies all these Impossibilities in Faith, that though God hath done so much, yet to believe that God should have done this so for me as that I may come and rest upon it, and to have my Heart quieted in so doing, is of all things in the World the hardest, and the most impossible.

This is a Rule which I believe will be found true, that look what Power God puts forth in doing any thing, the same Power is required to draw the Heart in to believe that God is able, or that God hath done that thing; I mean to believe the thing in earnest, so as to venture all my Soul for ever upon it. This is partly the Scope of that Place in *Eph.* 1. 18, 19. where the Apostle saith, that *the same Power that went to raise up Christ from the dead, goes to the working of Faith in them that believe.* The Jew now in his Despair (because Christ was not as yet come) must needs conclude

Part 3. that it must be an Almighty Power and Engagement that must draw Christ from Heaven, and support him under the Wrath of God, and bring him from Hell to be a Saviour unto him. But now after all this is done, there must yet go as great a Power to cause a Man to believe that Christ hath done all this for him, as there did to make Christ do this. The Place is express in that *Eph.* 1. 19. where the Apostle plainly saith that the same Greatness of Power which wrought in Christ when he was raised from the dead, works in those that believe, in causing the Soul to rest quietly upon this Christ for Justification and Salvation. So that although God now requires nothing of us under the Gospel but to believe the thing is done, (in the manner I have spoken) yet there must be as much Power go to work that Faith in the Soul, as to bring Christ from Heaven, and to raise him up again, which was the thing the Jew in his Despairings stuck at. This is a great Truth, (and I shall give you a farther Ground for it) that it is all one for God to do a thing, and to make a Man believe it, and that the same Power is required to the one as much as the other. In *Mark* 9. 22, 23. the Father of the possessed Child comes to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and what saith the poor Man in the Doubtings of his Spirit, and Misgivings of his Heart? *Lord* (saith he) *if thou canst do any thing, have Compassion on us and help us:* There he questions Christ and his Power. What Answer doth Christ give him again, who had more Reason to question him than he had to question Christ? *Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.* Here Christ and the Man do as it were stand looking one at another; *If thou canst help me* (saith the Man), *if thou canst believe* (saith Christ), all things are possible. I observe this from it, that Jesus Christ makes it the greatest Matter to believe; when the poor Man asked him if he could do that which required an Omnipotent Power, saith he, canst thou believe? As the Man thought it hard for Christ to do this, so Christ knew it was hard for the Man to believe it, therefore saith he, canst thou believe? And he gives the Reason of the Hardness of it, because he that believes aright, that Man's Faith doth invest it self as it were, and doth join issue with the Omnipotent Power of God; and he that believeth the one, *viz.* that an Infinite Power that can do thus and thus, his Faith is stretched to a kind of Infiniteness; therefore saith Christ in the next Words, *All things are possible unto him that believeth.* Now for a Man when he is convinced of his Sinfulness, to believe that God is able to pardon him, or to believe any thing else in the Matter of Salvation, there must be as great a Power come from God to make a Man do this in earnest, to work this in a Man's Heart that this is possible to be done, as there is Power in God to do it; God can as easily do it as he can do the thing it self, and he can as easily do the thing it self, as make the Man believe it. As there is a Hand of Omnipotency stretched out to do things of Omnipotency, so there must be an Eye created by the Omnipotent Power of God to elevate the Soul of a Man to see it, and the Will quietly to rest upon it and to leave all else, and to betake it self to this Power of God, to this Will of God, this Grace of God, and Mercy of God. I say, comparing these two Places together, Christ speaks as if the Working of a Man to believe, were a Matter of as great Power as to do the thing. So far as any thing is impossible to any one's Thoughts, so far it is incredible; so far as it is possible, so far it is credible: And therefore if a Man believes that this thing is possible to be done which requires an Infinite Power to do it, he must believe in that Infinite Power; and it must be Infinite Power that must stretch the Soul to believe this, and to rest quietly in it. Therefore to draw the Heart to believe is all one as to bring the Messiah down from Heaven, and up from the Grave again, though the thing it self on our parts seems a poor Matter to it; yet take the Act it self, the same Power goes to the one as to the other, and the Heart of a Man under the Gospel will be as apt to object Impossibilities, and doth object, as the Jew himself did before the Messiah came.

CHAP

CHAP. V.

That all in Man's Will is opposite to Faith, and withstands his Believing.

AS there is thus an Inability in the Will to the way of Believing, so there is an Averseness; not only is there nothing in the Will which can help a Man, but there is a Resistance in the Will to the Work of Faith and to Believing. I shall give you one Scripture for it, which is *Joh.* 5. 40. saith Christ there, *You will not come to me that ye might have Life.* The Place is full to the point in hand. Our Saviour Christ speaks complainingly, and wondring at it, as you shall see by his Discourse. I and my Father, (saith he) I profess to you require nothing of you but that you would have a Will to come unto me, that your Wills be but brought off to close with me according to my Worth; that you would be but a willing People, as it is in *Psal.* 110. and as he saith in *Rev.* 22. 17. *He that is a willing Man* (so the word is in the Original) *let him take of the Water of Life freely.* Thus speaks he here, I require nothing else but that you have a Will to come unto me; and as he said at the 6th Verse of *John* 5. to the Man that had an Infirmity thirty eight Years, Wilt thou be made whole? (that is, hast thou a Will to be made whole by me, by leaving all things else, and giving thy self up unto me and my Power? I require nothing else of thee) so saith he to these Jews, I require no more of Men to be saved, but that they will come unto me; yet, saith he, (and he speaks wondring at it) *you will not come to me that ye might have Life.* It is certain of the Pharisees, whom he spake to, and so of all Men else, that their Wills pitch upon this, that they would be saved. It is clear these Pharisees did so; you think (saith he) to have eternal Life in *Moses* his Writings, I know there is one *Moses* in whom ye trust, *ver.* 45. But mark it, and see the infinite Stubbornes and Averseness of the Will of Man in his natural Condition by this Instance; you would fain have eternal Life, (saith he) and you think to have it by the Scriptures and *Moses*'s Law, and so you choose rather to venture your Salvations upon doing all that *Moses* hath said, and you will rather go and trust in *Moses* as a Lawgiver, as one that hath presented God as a Judg to you, who hath cursed you if you continue not in every thing the Law requires to do, and so venture upon that Curse, rather than you will be brought off to come to me for everlasting Life. This is clearly his Scope. In reading the Scriptures (saith he) you will make such Interpretations of them as shall fit your cursed Opinions, of attaining Salvation in a legal Way, rather than you will go search the Scriptures a little more to see how *Moses* prophesied of me. *Search the Scriptures,* (saith he) *for they are they which testify of me*; but you will not come to me that ye might have Life, you will trust in *Moses* rather, yea in *Moses* that accuseth you, for in your Consciences you cannot but find that *Moses* doth accuse you. I come as a Saviour, and require nothing of you but a Will to come unto me, and you will not do it; you will go venture your selves upon a killing Letter, upon a Ministry of Condemnation, and not upon the Law of Free Grace. Nay Christ aggravates the Sin of Man's Will by this, *ver.* 43. *If a Man come in his own Name, him you will receive.* These cursed Jews (give me leave to call them so, for the Wrath of God came on them to the uttermost) did and would trust upon I know not how many false Christs, that in those Days, and after Christ's Ascension, told them they were Messiahs. They came in their own Names, meerly in their own Power, without any Miracles; but, with Christ, I am come in my Father's Name, and not in my own Name, and I am come with all Power and Miracles, and yet you do not receive me, you will not believe me, no not for my Work's sake. What can be clearer than this, that in the Wills of Men there is that inbred in them, that of all things they will take any course rather than clearly and nakedly, and entirely give up themselves to Jesus Christ to have eternal Life in his way?

The Reasons of this Averseness in the Will of Man to the Way of Believing, are chiefly these:

1. The Will of Man is set, if it will be saved, to be saved in its own way. It is natural to Men if they be not saved that way that they themselves would, for the Will to grow sturdy. If God will save them in their own way, then indeed they

are

Part 3. are willing to be saved, but they will not be saved in God's way. Look what way the Heart of a Man naturally fancieth to it self to be saved in, (as it doth the way of Doing and the like) that way the Will sticks to; and you may move the Earth off of its Center as soon as move the Heart off of that way it is set upon. A Man is apt to be in a Chafe if he cannot have a thing in his own way: As in that Instance of *Naaman* in 2 *Kings* 5.11,12. *I thought* (saith he in a Pet and in a Chafe) *that he would surely have come out to me, and do so and so; doth he bid me go and wash in* Jordan? *I could have washed at home in better Waters than all the Waters of* Israel. So that because the Way for his Cure, which was designed by the Prophet, was so contrary to the Way that his Fancy and Mind pitched upon, hence therefore he would have none of it. So is it with the sturdy Spirits of Men to this day. The way that pure Nature went was a way of doing; and the Will of Man sticks to that way still, and never will be brought over but by an Almighty Power; for you may as soon throw the Earth off the Hinges of it, as stir and remove the Will from its obstinate Posture. If you have any Work for me to do, saith the Will or Conscience, I will be doing, but to believe, I am resolved against it.

I will give you an Instance of it in the *Galatians*. It is evident the Apostle thought they had true Grace many of them; it is clear in *Gal.* 5.8. *This Perswasion cometh not of him that calleth you*; and I am confident, saith he, that God will bring you off again. But yet notwithstanding see the Madness of it, (as he himself calls it, and truly it is a strange thing, but that Nature will have its Course in the Hearts of Men, otherwise I say it is the strangest thing in the World) that these Galatians, so that they might ease themselves a little of waiting through the Spirit for the Righteousness of Faith, would choose to be in Bondage to the whole Ceremonial Law: Nay, which makes the Wonder yet more, the Gentiles (such as these Galatians were) never had the Ceremonial Law given them; and therefore though the Apostle did permit the Jews to continue in the Ceremonial Law after the Ascension though they were Believers, yet *Paul* flies in the Face of the Gentiles if they offered it; for (saith he) you were never under it: yet (I say) these Galatians would rather put themselves under a Yoke which they were free of, which God never at any time put upon them, than through the Spirit wait for the Hope of Righteousness by Faith. So prevalent is this Strain of Spirit which is in the Consciences and Wills of Men, and such an Averseness to the Matter of Believing; not an Averseness to Salvation, for all Men desire that, but to the way of Salvation, which is by Faith in Jesus Christ, that Men would rather do any thing than believe. The great Contest between God and the Hearts of Men, is practically, though Men know and discern that God will have them saved in his Way, yet they will be saved in their own Way and upon their own Terms; and rather than they will believe in Christ (which is God's way of Salvation) they will put themselves under the hardest Bondage that can be. You may see it verified in the Papists, (and truly there is a world of this Popery in the Hearts of all Men) they would rather go and give over their Kingdoms, put themselves into Monasteries, lie in Hair, live upon the Alms of others, tire out themselves by saying the whole Book of Psalms over once every Twenty four Hours, and to that end rise twice or thrice in the Night, break their Sleeps, whip and rend their Bodies, do all this rather than betake themselves to Faith; for indeed there is nothing they jear more and contemn, than the way of Justification by Faith. And many of Christ's Sheep themselves hang in these Briars, and do not come home clearly and fully to this Way of God; they will sit down in Humiliation I know not how many Years before they will stir a foot to Jesus Christ, and the Free Grace of God; they will go and spend all their Time and Thoughts in proving the old Work (which hath it may be been true and sound in it self) rather than stir immediately unto Jesus Christ and Free Grace, to begin a new or a farther Work upon them. Experience shews how true this is in the Souls of Men; and the Reason is this, because Man sticks in this, to be saved in his own Way, and will not be saved in God's Way; even just as *Naaman* the Syrian acted in the Instance before mentioned.

2. The second Reason, or rather the second and chief Thing in the Will of Man that makes it thus averse, is that Self (as I may so call it) that is in every Man. That which we call Self, or sticking to a Man's Self, and pleasing of a Man's Self this same Self is strongest in the Will above all other Powers in a Man. The Wi

is the Throne and Seat of Self, even as the Heart is the Seat of Spirits: And *Self* will always rest in it Self, as the Earth doth upon its Center, and will never be removed till that Jesus Christ flings it off of its own Hinges. Now as the Will is the chief Seat of Self, so the chiefest of Self-denial lies in the Will in the way of Believing: as when a Man comes to believe, there is a great deal of Self-denial in the Understanding; but the great Self-denial lies in the Will. There is a great deal of Self-denial in the Understanding, *Prov.* 3. 15. *Trust in the Lord with all thine Heart, and lean not unto thine own Understanding.* There are no things more opposite than Faith, and leaning unto a Man's own Understanding; therefore I say there is a great Self-denial there, to give up all my Thoughts for ever to the Wisdom and Authority of another, to give God leave to take out both my Eyes, and only to take me by the Hand, and lead me and guide me whither he will, and to strengthen me and teach me the way whither I should go, to bring every Thought into the Obedience of Christ, this is great Self-denial. But the Will is more put to it. You shall find in *Rom.* 10. that *Paul* doth resolve the Reason of Mens not believing into the Wills of Men, and into the Want of Self-denial there. He begins to tell them a strange thing at the latter end of the *9th* Chapter; *What shall we say?* saith he, *ver.* 30. *I'll tell you a strange thing, which you will all wonder at, and know not what to say to*; yet I must say it: and what is that? It is this, (saith he) *The Gentiles which followed not after Righteousness, have attained to Righteousness.* This is a Contradiction, that those that did not follow nor pursue after Righteousness at all, should attain it; especially you will think so when you hear the rest; *But* Israel *which followed after the Law of Righteousness, hath not attained to the Law of Righteousness*, or, *the Righteousness of the Law.* There must be some great Reason of this. He tells you the Reason of it. First, he saith that the Righteousness which the Gentiles attained *was the Righteousness which is of Faith*: So *ver.* 30. *But* Israel (saith he) *hath not attained to the Law of Righteousness*: Why? *Because they sought it not by Faith, but as it were by the Works of the Law*, so *ver.* 32. And God (saith he) hath made these two so contradictory one to another, that he that doth seek Righteousness as it were by Works, though he may mince the Matter much, yet he shall never attain to it; for the Holy Ghost hath pronounced it in *Gal.* 5. 4. *that Christ is of no effect to him that goes that way.* So that these two being incompatible, hence it was that the Jew could not attain to the Righteousness he sought for. But what was it that hindered him? The Apostle satisfies us, *Rom.* 10. *ver.* 3. *They being ignorant of God's Righteousness, and going about to establish their own Righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the Righteousness of God.* He ascribes it first to an Ignorance in them; there now comes in the Understanding, *they being ignorant* (saith he) *of God's Righteousness.* But then the other two Hindrances lie in the Will, and they do lie in the Will where Self hath its principal Seat and Throne. For he saith, *they sought to establish their own Righteousness*; mark that word, *their own Righteousness.* When we are said to be saved, it is according to God's own Purpose and Grace, (as I remember the Expression is in 2 *Thess.* 1. 12.) Here now doth Self come in, and will needs set up its own Righteousness. He brings it in, like to a Design that a Company of Men have in a State; As they would set such a one up King, and all their Courses bend that way; or as a Step-mother would set up her Son to be King against the true Heir, so they sought to establish their own Righteousness; there lies the Reason, you see Self is in it, they sought to establish it because it is their own. And they were zealous in this; for they being ignorant of God's Righteousness, were zealous of their own. And this word *establish* is exceeding emphatical; it is making a thing that is tottering to stand: like setting up a dead Man or a sick Man; if you set him up again he falls; but yet their Design was, that though all their Works of Righteousness did fall before their own Consciences, and their own Hearts misgave them, yet Self was so strong in them as it would needs be still making their own Righteousness to stand; they sought to establish it, as the Apostle saith. As Man is said to seek out many Inventions, so all the Endeavour and Sway of their Heart went that way; which notes out the natural Design and Project, and Drift of their Hearts, that they sought to establish their own Righteousness.

2. But then a second thing in the Will is, a Pride which would not be subject to the Righteousness of God: so the next words are, but *have not submitted themselves* (saith he) *to the Righteousness of God.* They had some Glimmerings of it certainly both

Book 2.

Part 3. both in the Ministry of the Prophets and holy Men amongst them, who did teach in their Synagogues, but still they would not submit, and all that could be done could never bring them to it. It is the same word that is used in *Rom.* 8. 7. where, speaking of the Corruption that is in us, of Flesh, he saith it is Enmity against God, for it is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be. There is a great deal of Enmity naturally in Men against the Law of God, against the Duties and Commands of it; but there is ten thousand times more Enmity in the Wills of Men against the Way of the Gospel. Here the Word likewise is a Passive Word; they would not be subjected, all that could be done would not bring them under. So that clearly and plainly you see, it is not only an Ignorance in the Understanding, and carnal Reasonings there; it is not only a sinking of the Will out of Apprehensions of Impossibilities, and fostering all such Apprehensions, (as it is *ver.* 6. of *Rom.* 10.) but it is also a going about to establish their own Righteousness, and a not submitting, out of Pride of Heart, (a secret Pride of Spirit of Self in a Man) unto the Righteousness of God; that is, that Righteousness which God out of our selves in Christ hath provided for us.

Now let us consider what of Self there is in the Will, and how far the Principle of Self is against Believing, and how far Self is denied in it, and that not in the Consequence of Believing, but in the Acts and Concomitants of it.

And before I shall say what I have to say thereof in the Particulars, let me say this to you first; That of all Corruptions in your Hearts, the Working of Self in the Will of a Man, is the most still, the most secret. It is not drawn forth into Propositions; a Man doth not say distinctly within himself, I will have none of God's Righteousness, but mine own; no, the Workings of Self-love in a Man do seldom come forth into such distinct Thoughts; but it is inlayed, and it works naturally, slily, slowly, and strongly: yet when a Man shall resolve his Actions into Principles, he shall find that *that* is at bottom. So that I say it may be you will not find what I shall now say of this Self, to arise in distinct Thoughts within you; but yet the Principle of Self being in the Will, sways it that way, that it will not submit to the Righteousness of God: It is inlayed (I say) in it, and connatural. The Thoughts of Unbelief are seldom drawn forth into Propositions. Who almost in his Heart doth distinctly and deliberately think there is no God? Yet the Thought that there is no God sways all the Life of a wicked Man; *The Fool hath said in his Heart there is no God*; and that is the Reason of all his Sinfulness. Who is there that saith within himself, I will thus and thus love my self, I am resolved and purposed so to do? It needeth not, it is inlayed in a Man's Heart, and there needs no new Purpose or Resolution so to do.

Now let us consider what Self-denial God requires in the Will when a Man comes to believe. I will not urge that which some have urged, as, That in Believing the Soul must so come to God as to aim more at glorifying God in it, than the saving of himself, and have such a distinct Thought within himself. That this should be the Aim of a Man's Faith when first he comes to God and to Christ, or that this should be the Self-denial that God requires, distinctly so to do, is too hard to put the Truth of Faith upon. You shall observe the Scripture speaks unto Men coming out of their natural Estates, and when they come to believe, and inviteth them upon Principles of Self-love, What shall I do to be saved, saith the poor Heart? *Believe, and thou shalt be saved*, saith the Scripture. Only the Law of Faith is to do so and so for him that died for thee. The Truth is, to say that the Glory of God should be the Aim of a Man's Heart in his first Believing, or else his Heart is not right, is to make the Love of God to be before Faith in a Man. Neither will I urge the Point of Self-denial, which is higher than the former, that a Man must be content to be disposed by God as he pleaseth, be willing to be saved, or to go to Hell, to be disposed any way, so God may be glorified. I wonder that any should make this at least part of Preparation to Faith, which is the highest Act that can be supposed to flow from Believing at any time, and than which nothing is greater. That any should make that to go before Faith, which God seldom or never puts Men to when he hath given them Assurance, and hath given them Communion with himself, so then they are out of the Supposition of it. I say this is hard to me; and certainly is not this Self-denial that is thus the Concomitant of Faith. And I shall say of it through the Grace that is given me, only this, That as in the Sin against the Holy

ly Ghost (for so I use to call it) there is such an Enmity in the Heart of a wick- Man that sins that great Sin, as to desire above all things to be revenged upon d (for that is the Property of that Sin): As that, I say, is the highest Degree of , so this is the highest Disposition of Grace. Now Millions of wicked Men ve never that Spirit of Enmity against God drawn out as they that sin *that Sin* ve: So on the contrary, there is many a Soul that has abundance of Grace and lines, and goes to Heaven with it, that never had *this Disposition* of Self-denial wn forth out of it. It is indeed a Duty, but upon occasion, when the Heart is to it, either in desperate Temptations, or else sometimes in a way of Supposi- n hypothetically, when the Soul enjoys most Communion with God. It is when d begins with his Soveraignty to contend with the Will of a Man, and resolves break it. I will not say but there is that in Grace which will do it, for there is Attribute in God but the Image of God in us hath somewhat to answer and com- withal; therefore if God will shew his Soveraignty in the Salvations of Men, if Sovereignty will put the Heart to it, where the Image of God is there is a Prin- le to comply with that Sovereignty. But this I say, God doth not do it, or but dom, and but to a few: and therefore this is not that Self-denial (which I am w to speak to) which is a Hindrance in the way of Believing. God doth not in- on the Denial of mere Self, but of sinful Self. Now to put a Man upon a be- contented to go to Hell that God may be glorified is the Denial of mere Self, d God doth not always put this upon Men. I confess it is a Forfeit, which be- se we are Sinners God may take of us and make us vail to; but God doth not or- narily put Men to it. Christ indeed in the Gospel puts Men upon the Denial of ful Self, (*How can you believe* (saith he, *John* 5. 44.) *if you love your selves?*) not upon the other. And tho *Paul* did it, and *Moses* did it, yet it was not in rsuit of their own Salvations, and as a Condition of being saved, but in Zeal to d for the Salvation of others. The truth is, God leads Men on in the way of lieving rather by glorifying his Free Grace in saving Men, not only in saving m at last, but in letting them see that his Glory and their Good are joined toge- r, and that this should strengthen their Faith, that in their Salvation God will be finitely glorified: And God loves us so well, as he would have us in seeking Salva- n from him, and in seeking his Glory, therein to love our selves also. But now come to those Self-denials which are in the Will, and which are opposite to the y of Believing in a more ordinary way: There are two Objects of Faith, the is Christ and the Righteousness God placed in him, and of God's Appoint- ent; and there is the Free Grace of God towards us which is in the Heart of God mself, and which is delivered to us in all those indefinite Promises which are in the ripture. Now the Will of a Man is to deal with both these, and is put upon a lf-denial in both these.

1. Indeed tho God did not take that Forfeiture, (namely, to make the Condition Salvation this, that a Man should be content for the Glory of God to go to Hell, ing he deserved it) I say, tho he doth not urge that Forfeiture, yet he will have u saved in and through another Person than your selves, or you shall never be ved; and he will have your Wills come off to it, and this is a just and a necessary rfeiture for God to urge upon the Wills of Men: *The Life that I now live* (saith ul) *it is by Faith in the Son of God*, Gal. 2. 20. And I say, that this Forfeiture th God taken of Men by reason of the Fall: Saith God now, It's true I did trust ur own Wills once with Power and Ability to save your selves, and you had all your own Hands, but you have forfeited your selves to Destruction, and you ve forfeited your own Power for ever, forfeited the having of it in you as you had before; therefore now I will betrust it in the Hands of another, whom you shall e in, whom you shall have Recourse unto for every Penny you receive, and you all have Recourse continually unto him as Beggars, even unto my Son the Lord sus Christ. This Forfeiture I say God takes of us as we are Sinners, and it is ell he did so, and indeed Salvation must come that way, or we could never else be ved. Now then if I must go thus out of my self, and continually live upon ano- er, then Self in me must for ever be laid aside, as it necessarily follows: and God erefore hath made the way of Salvation the most contradictory unto Self, and to e way of Self, that can be; he hath set up not our own, but his Righteousness, d that Righteousness too in another. Now this Self-denial is the hardest Self-

Part 3. denial in the World. To make this forth to you: Is it not a great matter, think you, for the Soul to be content to be nothing in it self, and Christ to be all for ever, to throw away and to forget it self, to be lost to it self, and dead to it self, as Paul said he was, *Gal.* 2. 19, 20. And *I have nothing* (saith he, 2 *Cor.* 12. 1.) *tho I have done more than all the Apostles?* Is it not a great Self-denial not only to take Christ into the Heart to rule all a Man's Passions and Desires, but that he must not only rule all, but do all there; and that he must have the Glory of all that is done? And so to have the Glory, as that all boasting, no not a Thought of it must rise or lift up it self? I say not that Faith doth actually keep down all such Thoughts in a Man, but this is the way of Believing which the Spirit of a Man must subject to. Faith excludeth Boasting, boasting even in Works, and in Works of Righteousness; that's clear in *Ephes.* 2. 9. For a Man to say, I have nothing but the Grace of God in me, this I say is the greatest Self-denial the Creature can be put to, and it is certain that the natural Sway and Bent of the Heart is most opposite to this of any thing. Now this Self hath gotten by forfeiting it self through Sin, that it must be lost thus for ever; but it is well lost, for it is lost in him that saves it with a greater Salvation. And this Forfeiture doth God take of Self in every thing; so that Self as it were loseth the Right of the Creation, that is, that Law which past between the Creature and the Creator about it, which was this, that according to the Law of Creation it had his Righteousness in his own keeping; it could say, This have I done, this is my own Righteousness, of my own getting, tho you gave me the stock to set up withal; this is the Happiness of my own keeping: And it was allowed him to say so. You have it clearly, *Rom.* 4. 2, 3, 4, 5. in the Apostle's distinguishing the two Covenants; *He that is saved by Works, he hath whereof to glory,* (saith he) *as* Adam *had, and the Reward came of Debt, of a natural Due:* But now Self must fall lower. A Man must not only have all this Boasting of Self for ever excluded, but he must reckon himself for ever ungodly, as it follows there in that *Rom.* 4. 5. I must believe on him that *justifies the Ungodly.* Now that a Man should be in himself ungodly, cuts off that same *I*, that same *Self*, makes it a Cypher to Eternity; that tho a Man is a Creature still, yet the Truth is, he is rased out of the Catalogue of Creatures: *Of him ye are in Christ Jesus,* 1 Cor. 1. 30. It is a mighty Expression of the Apostle's. You were something once, but now you are what you are in Christ Jesus. To have Self, I say, thus to be a Cypher in being, nothing in doing, nothing in Righteousness, nothing in making a Man's self happy, yea to be an ungodly Self in a Man's own Account, worse than nothing, (as that Place in the *Romans* shews) and Christ to be all here, is a Self-denial that the Heart is brought to and brought off to, and gladly brought off to when it comes to believe. *Adam* was to aim at God, and to make God his End in all things, as we do, and to respect himself as little, but in the point of Believing we fall lower, for that emptieth and annihilateth us. How should this be done, think you? How shall a Man be brought to this? You may as soon fling the Earth off its Centre, and hang the huge Hills in the Air. If you should see the Earth remove and hang in the Air by virtue of a Load-stone, what a Miracle would this be to us! as hard a thing is it to throw Self off of it self. For the truth is, the other having been the way of Nature, even in pure Nature, Self will never, especially now when corrupted, go out of it self. If you have any Work for it to do within doors, it will do it; yea, and work it self to death, even for Salvation, as many have done; but to go abroad, to live upon Alms, to stand to the Courtesy of another, this is what Self was never brought up to; and therefore like one that had a great Estate in his own Hands, will think much to come down and live upon mere Courtesy and upon Alms, he will rather be content to scrabble up any thing (tho it be much less than what he might have upon Courtesy and upon the Alms of others) to get a living, nay if he can get but Husks, he would rather do it than enjoy the fairest Life in coming under another: so it is here. This is therefore I say the highest Self-denial, and yet this is the Self-denial of Faith, and that in the Will of a Man, in relation unto Jesus Christ, whom God hath appointed us to live by.

2. Faith is likewise to deal with the Free Grace of God. What is the eminent Principle of God's Free Grace? It is his Will; *I will be merciful* (says God, *Exod.* 33. 19. *Rom.* 9. 15.) *to whom I will be merciful:* and *he hath made known to us the Mystery of his Will*; so the Gospel is called, and the Promise of Salvation, *Ephes.* 1. 9.

. 9. Our Wills now must come and deal with this Will of God, and to be sure hat is cross to Self. Now to mention the Self-denials in that respect, I do not say hese things are always drawn into distinct Thoughts, but the Heart doth this by a ew inlaid Principle which God puts into the Spirit of a Man. Book 2.

1st. The first thing herein is this, that though God doth not urge this, that a Man shall so take Christ, that is, that a Man shall be contented to be damned so as God be glorified if he save him: No, the poor Soul doth seek for, and God treats with it for Salvation, therefore why should that be urged as a Condition, or a Qualification, or Preparation before a Man comes to believe? yet if you believe, and believe in earnest, you submit to God to be disposed of in this World, not according to your Wills, but according to his own Will. The Law of believing carries this with it. *When thou wast young thou wentest whither thou wouldest*, (saith Christ to *Peter*, John 21. 18.) that is, when he was first converted; *but when thou shalt be old, another shall carry thee whither thou wouldst not.* It was Christ in his Will that carried him whither his fleshly Will would not. Now this also is a Forfeiture we have brought upon our selves by sinning. The truth is, we brought it upon Jesus Christ himself, for he thus resign'd his whole self to God, *Not my Will, but thy Will be done:* yea, it was to the undergoing of his Father's Wrath, tho he knew it was not for Eternity. But to be in this World as Christ was, to be content to be poor and to be despised, let a Man be never so great, to have all his high Thoughts brought down when the Glory of God in believing is manifested unto him; and for him that is of high degree to rejoice that *he is made low*, Jam. 1. 10. For a Man so to value the Favour of God and Free Grace which he seeks, as to be contented to be disposed of thus, or else he is not worthy of it, as Christ saith, *Mat.* 10. 37, 38. (O let me be as an *hired Servant*, saith the Prodigal, *Luke* 15. 19. so I may be in thy House) For a Man to say, tho I am a Dog, yet let me have some Crums, some Mercy, let me have Salvation: (saith *Paul, If by any means God would save me:*) Here is a Self-denial now that Faith bringeth, and here is a great deal of Load upon the Will, even in this if there were no more. But then again,

2dly. We are brought to this Self-denial likewise, being Sinners, to make a Venture of our Souls (if I may so express it) upon him that is free to save us or to destroy us, to throw away our selves in a Dependency upon such a God as shews Mercy freely, and to venture intirely upon this Free Grace and rich Love of his. Faith is the greatest Venture that ever was made in the World, it is more than to commit a little Cockboat without Oars to the Mercy of Waves and Winds, to be carried to such a Shoar. This God hath fairly obtained by our Sins. He carries it freely, as we must all know, he commands us to believe, to venture our selves thus upon him. All Believers when they come first in, make this Venture more or less; *We believe that we may be justified*, Gal. 2. 16. They did not know that they should be justified certainly, the Apostles themselves did not. Now to venture a Man's self upon a *who can tell*, as I may so express it, and as the Scripture expresseth it in Joel 2. 14. *Who can tell if he will return and repent, and leave a Blessing behind him?* And for the Will in this case to deal with one, that if he be of one mind, *who can turn him?* as it is in *Job* 23. This is a great Self-denial: for mark it, when Self in a Man is awakened, and awakened with Apprehensions of so great a Matter as Salvation and Damnation is to a Man's Soul, when the Soul is awakened to purpose, and a Man comes to God with whom he deals upon Terms of Free Grace, all in Self must needs be infinitely solicitous accordingly. Look how high a Man's Value of Salvation is, look of what moment he apprehends Damnation to be of, so far is Self up in Arms, all up in Arms about it; and what saith Self? O let me be assured presently: As in all points of moment you know what infinite Fears a Man will have if he have not Assurance, because of the Greatness of the thing, for the Greatness of the thing hinders quiet trusting. And when Self is thus awakened, especially corrupt Self, (for we have nothing else in our selves by Nature) what a bustle must this needs make in the Soul of a Man to make this great Venture? how solicitous is he? and how hard to be quieted by a pure Trust in God? In this case, for the Soul to be called so from it self, and from its own standing, to be perswaded to leave its own Footing, and all the carnal Support and the Confidence it once had, in the way that is natural to it, by which it gets Peace, to be perswaded I say to go and throw it self off of this standing; Self is in this case the most wary Principle that can

Part 3. be. Therefore now to go and venture upon this God, and upon the Freedom of his Grace, upon the Promises of God, upon the Commands of God, to stand at God's Arbitriment thus, and to refer a Man's Will to his Will, and to cast a Man's self into those everlasting Arms, (as they are called in *Deut.* 33.) to leave a Man's own standing; it is as if a Man should leave his own standing, and cast himself into the Arms of a mighty Giant that stands upon another Pinacle, one whom he hath also wronged and abused often, and he himself hath no Hands to lay hold upon him neither, but he must depend upon his catching of him: Here is the greatest Venture, the greatest Trust, the greatest Self-denial that can be. Thus the Heart throws itself out of all Possibilities, and submits to the Free Grace of God in Christ, and this is done in believing. And then,

3dly. In the way of Believing Self is yet often-times more put to it: for God makes a Man wait, and makes him wait long; so that tho God doth not put a Man to that Submission that he should be content for his Person to be damned so God may be glorified, yet he puts him to this Submission oftentimes, that he shall wait the time for revealing of his Grace and Love to him: And therein God shews the Freeness of his Grace exceedingly, that altho it is certain that whoever doth venture himself thus, that doth thus throw himself upon the Lord Jesus Christ and God's Free Grace, shall certainly obtain in the Issue; yet for the Manifestation of this I will be free, saith God, I will take my own time. Now in this case, for the Soul still to submit to this Free Grace of God, to wait upon the Manifestation of it, and this when God hides his Face, (as in *Isa.* 8. 17. *I will wait upon the Lord that hides his Face from the House of* Jacob, *and I will look for him*): For the Soul I say to do this, and to do this with any Quietness, in a Matter of so great moment, is the greatest Self-denial that can be. *The Eyes of Men are apt to fail with looking for the Salvation of God*, (as *David* expresseth it in *Psal.* 119. 123.) but to be brought to wait, and for a Man to be glad that he may do so, for it is for his Soul, there is that Pride in the Will that opposeth this, and opposeth nothing more. There is a Pride there is an Impatiency in the Will, when the Soul doth find it self lost, and take off from it self, and hang in the Air as it were, and hang by a Thread; Self in this case apprehending the Danger, must needs be impatient. If God will come and assure it presently, it would be quiet; but to be brought to wait, and still not to be assured, I say this is the hardest thing in the World to do. In this case the Quarrel is not in Mens Understandings, no, there is a Foundation laid enough to draw the Understanding in; a Man sees the Riches of Grace that is in God, he sees the Promise to be indefinite, he hath the universal Command upon that Promise to draw him in, *i. e.* that it is God's Will that he should do so, and so he hath a Warrant to come to God. But I say in this case the Quarrel lies in the Wills of Men, that they can wait no longer: and what doth the Will do? It sends to the Understanding and saith, O look out, Is there any Tidings yet? Do you see any better ground yet of Hope? O I am lost and undone, I can wait no longer! The Wills of Men are apt in this case to say so, in a world of sinking Discouragement. And this I say is the Pride that is in the Will: *His Soul which is lifted up*, (saith he in *Hab.* 2. 4.) which is haughty, that is, which hath that reigning in him, is not *upright*, but *the Just shall live by his Faith.* For a Man to see other poor Souls to have Comfort and that he should not have it, to see how God hath dandled others as it were even from their first turning to him, and shined upon them, and yet still hides his Face from him, this causeth Self to swell, and the bigger a Man's Will is, the more it swells in such a case as this. You have two Principles in your Wills, the one opposite to the other, that is, Self-flattery and Impatiency. If a Man will go and believe in a carnal way, Self-flattery will help him to believe, that is, a Man loves to have a good Opinion of himself; and while he hath but slight Thoughts of his Sinfulness, if God should say, I will have but one Man saved, he would be apt to say as *Haman* when the King asked him, *What shall be done to the Man whom the King delights to honour? Haman* thought in his Heart, To whom would the King delight to do Honour more than to my self? So will a Man be apt to say, I am the Man whom God intends to save. But when that this Self-flattery is kill'd, then despairing impatient Pride riseth up, especially when a Man is not assured for the present; and therefore then to be quiet and still, and quietly to wait upon God, this I say is the greatest Self-denial that can be, and this Self-denial is and lies in the Wills of Men.

4thly

4thly. If God comes in with his Wrath upon a Man's Soul, as sometimes he doth when the Soul goes on thus in a way of waiting on him: If God hide his Face from him, and not only so, but comes in with Terror and Wrath upon him, (tho still God in all such cases doth not put the Heart to this, to be contented to be damned so God may be glorified; yet this he puts the Heart upon, and requires of Self, in such cases, that a Man should take part with God, and this is a just thing laid upon a Sinner that waits upon God for Salvation, namely, that he should acknowledg himself worthy to be destroyed, that he is in the Hand of God as the Clay is in the Hand of the Potter) the Soul is to have no repining and grudging Thoughts allowed for that present Wrath that is upon him, but to judg himself full of his own Fruits, and to say as they in *Micah* 7. 9. *I will bear the Indignation of the Lord because I have sinned:* and the like Expression you have in *Isa.* 39. 9. Such a kind of Submission it is that God requires of a Man in a way of Believing. And take this from the Word of God, there is nothing will quell Murmurings in such cases; Heart-risings against God, which do arise from the Pride of the Will, and Self in the Will, which is the proper Seat of them, (for the Will is the chief Seat of Self) nothing I say allays and quiets them but only Faith. And the Quarrel lies not in want of Understanding so much as in not having a Will to submit, and it is nothing but Faith, waiting quietly upon the Lord, and submitting a Man's self to God that will quiet the Heart in such cases. Now I say not that every Man hath this when he first cometh to believe, but God draws it forth in the Course of a Man, and in his way of Believing as he hath Strength, and there is occasion for it. And unto this the Will must needs be opposite and averse, and therefore still Faith is not of your selves, for this Self that is in the Will is in it self most opposite unto Faith; *By Grace ye are saved, thorow Faith, and that not of your selves, it is the Gift of God.* I shall not need to make Uses, for the things themselves are practical and experimental; and if the Spirit of God go home with them into your Hearts and Spirits, he will make Uses of them for me.

Book 2.

O F

OF THE OBJECT and ACTS OF Justifying Faith.

PART III.
Of the Properties of Faith.

BOOK III.

Tho Faith be a difficult Work, yet we ought to use our Endeavours to believe. What those Endeavours are. Cautions about using them.

CHAP. I.

Tho Faith be a difficult Work, yet we are to use Endeavours to believe. What those Endeavours are.

THAT we are to endeavour to believe, is generally granted; the only Question will be, what kind of Endeavours we mean? We will take the most of them out of the *4th* Chapter of *James*, where he directs Sinners what to do. As,

1. To cleanse their Hands and Hearts, taking heed of Hindrances and Impedi-ents, which may hinder God's working of it, or provoke him to leave off the ork: To refrain all ill Company, which quencheth all good Motions; as all Sins o of what kind soever, which grieve the Spirit. Thus the Apostle, *Heb.* 12. 1. ds us *lay aside every Weight that presseth down, and the Sin that so easily besets us*, ose Sins our Natures are most prone unto; and *Heb.* 3. 12. when he had bidden em in the *12th* Verse *take heed lest there were in them a Heart of Unbelief*, he sub-ins in the *13th* Verse, *lest any of you be hardned through the Deceitfulness of Sin*: as Unbelief keeps off from God, so nourishing any Sin keeps in Unbelief. So *b.* 12. 16, 17. when he exhorts Men *to take heed they fail not of the Grace of God*, adds, *lest any Lust of Uncleanness, as in* Esau, *causeth you to sell your Birth-right Part in Heaven.* The Patient though he cannot give himself Physick, and make work, yet he can abstain from Drink e're he takes it; he can bring an empty Sto-ch. A Woman cannot of her self conceive nor quicken the Fruit of her Body, yet she can take heed of what may destroy it, and hinder Quickning and Con-ption. She may beware of Journies, Dancings, violent Motions which may se it to miscarry; and so much the more careful are they that are to bring forth rince, an Heir of a Kingdom; now such an one is the New Creature which is a ming in the Heart. And though Abstinence from Sin, and Fearfulness to offend, no way further the Work, yet because the contrary may hinder it, we are to eavour it: And to this hath that Text a reference, *Phil.* 2. 13. when he speaks *working out Salvation with Fear*; he means not a doubting Fear, (as the Papists uld have it) but a Fearfulness of displeasing and offending God, upon whom the

Work

Part 3. Work depends, as the Apostle speaks 1 *Cor.* 2. 3. *I was with you* (says *Paul*) *in much fear*, &c. Now this in Consideration of their Dependance upon God, Men are able to do; for in respect of Men whom they depend upon, they can and do forbear their dearest Pleasures, and why not much more for God and the Work of Grace?

2. Men may endeavour to be humbled for their Sins, and take such Considerations into their Hearts as may serve to humble them; which though it is not Faith, nor works Faith, yet it leads to it: Jam. 4. 3. *Be afflicted, and mourn and weep*, (says he giving Counsel to Sinners what to do) *let your Laughter be turned into Mourning*. Men can give over their carnal Mirth, and go alone and consider their Sins, and set themselves to mourn for them, and humble themselves in the Sight of God, and *God* (says he) *shall lift you up*, raise up your Hearts to believe. Though Men do not cast in the Seed, yet they can go about to plow the Ground that fits for it, and break the Clods, *Hos.* 10. 12. And because this is preparatory to Faith, therefore endeavouring after this is endeavouring for Faith, because it is an endeavouring for that which fits for Faith, and is necessarily pre-required. Only this, it is not a Title Humiliation in the World can give them Power to believe, as many think, Oh! I were thus humbled I could believe! but on the contrary, when they are humbled it is a new Work to create Faith, as though the Seed in the Womb be prepared for the Soul, and made fit to receive it, yet it is the Almighty Power of God must send and put a Soul in: But because God never gives Faith to unbroken Hearts, therefore Men are to endeavour after this Work.

3. There are Duties and Ordinances God hath appointed in which to bring our Hearts before him; which I think *James* means when he says, *Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you*, Jam. 4. 8. He means, coming to these Duties wherein God's Presence is seen; as *Corah*, *Dathan* and *Abiram*, being Priests, and conversant in Ordinances, are said to draw nigh to God, *Num.* 16. 9, 10. And this also Men may do; they may come unto God, and present their Souls before him by Prayer, by Hearing the Word, by good Conference, by Reading, *&c.* and look up to him, and say, *Lord, now do thou work*, Luk. 11. 14. He promiseth the Spirit himself, who is the Beginner of all Grace, to them that ask him. When therefore a Man comes to these Means, wherein God dispenseth Faith, and lies at the Pool still, he may be said to endeavour after Faith.

4. There are special Opportunities wherein God draws nigh in his Ordinances. When God stirs a Man's Spirit, and strengthneth it to ask and endeavour, then a Man should bestir himself, and hoist up Sail while the Wind blows, as when the Pool was stirred the Diseased stept in. There are times when God's Bellows blows the Coals, as the Prophet speaks, and then if we be not purged, we are not purged; and *working out our Salvation with trembling*, I think hath reference to it, *Phil.* 2. 12. He means Trembling to foreslow any Opportunity. But now this is the Error of Men, that when God doth draw nigh to encourage their Hearts still to seek and wait on him for Faith, they rest in these as the Work of Faith.

5. But lastly, I conceive that these are not all the Endeavours are to be used after Faith; but further, Souls humbled are to attempt the Exercise of the very Act of Believing; that is, they are to take Promises into their Thoughts, and to bring their Hearts to them, to look up to Christ, and consider his Fulness, and attempt to lay hold upon him: to exercise Thoughts of taking him, and treating the Marriage with him, and consider what is in him, may move them to take him; and what is in the Promise, may be a Ground for their Faith, and to encourage them: And so far as God strengthens a Man's Heart, so far go and try, and try again, and see when and what Thoughts of Faith will take thee. We have an express place for this, Heb. 4. 11. *Let us labour to enter into that Rest, lest any Man fall after the same Example of Unbelief.* In the former part of the Chapter he shews that Men entred not in because of Unbelief, so as Faith is the Means of Entrance; now therefore he exhorts Men to labour to believe; not to knock and ask only, but to put forth Thoughts of Faith, to set their feet in, to endeavour this daily: And therefore, *ver.* 16. he bids Men come to the Throne of Grace, that they may obtain Mercy; those that had not yet obtained it, must come that they may obtain it. But you will say, we cannot come: Why come, says he, to obtain Help it self, in the next words. So *Heb.* 12. 2. he exhorts them to look to Jesus the Beginner and Finisher of Faith, to look to

to him as the Beginner as well as the Finisher. And my Reasons why Men are to endeavour and attempt the immediate Acts of Believing, are: Book 3.

1. Because God commands Men to believe and to come to Christ, 1 *Joh.* 3. 23. And therefore Christ, when any came to him, would still urge Faith on them, *Canst thou believe?* says he, *Mark* 9. 23. And so the Apostle *Paul*, when the Jaylor came trembling, *Believe* (says he *Acts* 16. 31.) *on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved.* Now if we are to endeavour to practise other Commandments to shew our Duty, (as I said before) then to believe also; and my Unability to do it right, hinders not, nor frees me not from attempting to do it, and reaching as far as I can.

2. If Ministers are to present Promises and Motives unto Men, then those Considerations and Motives, and Promises, which the Ministers of the Word are to present to Hearers and humbled Souls, to beget Faith in them, humbled Souls may and ought with Application to consider alone and digest, and exercise Thoughts of Faith about. *The Word was preached* (says the Apostle, *Heb.* 4. 12.) *to the Israelites, Promises preached, but they profited them not, because they mingled them not with Faith*; therefore, (says he) *let us take heed lest a Promise being left us, any of us should seem to come short of it for want of applying those Promises.* And tho it be true that but some shall enter in, yet the Promise is indefinitely made to all, *ver.* 6. and upon that Ground, *ver.* 11. he exhorts all to labour after Faith, to look up to Jesus as the Author of Faith.

3. Men are to inure their Hearts to the same Thoughts of Faith Believers have, so far as Recumbency or Casting a Man's self upon Christ, and bringing their Hearts to Promises goes, because God works on us as upon Creatures reasonable; and the same Considerations and Thoughts, and Objects of Faith which Believers have in their Minds, a Man that is yet to believe may think over and over. They differ only in the Manner, in the *Formale*, not the *Materiale*; and as Fruits, they have the same Form and Shape, they differ but in Relish and Taste: And God doth often engraft true Thoughts of Faith upon the Notions we had being Unbelievers, and changeth them into true Thoughts of Faith whilst we are a thinking them; as the Loaves were encreased in the breaking them, and as the Water was changed into Wine in the pouring of it out. So that Men believe often truly e're they are aware of it, by exercising their Hearts to Thoughts of Faith; and whilst they attempt it, God helps them, as to pray, so to believe. And therefore it is their Error that would have Souls humbled to lie still, and see if God will begin to draw their Hearts to believe, and not to attempt till then. It is indeed a Man's Strength to sit still, but there is a two-fold sitting still; the one is a doing nothing at all, not setting a Foot forward, not a Thought towards Believing, and that is naught; but the other is a quelling all Conceits of Abilities in my self to believe, and not to suffer a Thought to stir upon that ground, yet so as to think Thoughts of Faith with a quiet Dependance upon God. Sitting still is not opposed to using Means, but to trusting in Means. Again; Sitting still is opposed to Turbulency of Thoughts, that a Man's Thoughts should be quiet and sedate for the Event, and yet use the Means. Only I add this Caution; First, that tho a Man attempts to believe, yet he should not expect Power from himself to believe; but in attempting and thinking Thoughts of Faith, expect Power from God, and do it in Subordination to God's Power: A Man is to bring his Heart to the Promise, and then expect Power from the Promise to close with it. Secondly, That a Man's Soul do not rest in his own Endeavours, but still wait for a farther Work.

Part 3.

CHAP. II.

That the Resting in our holy Duties and Endeavours, is an Hindrance unto Faith; but a right Performance of them, is very well consistent with it, and needful.

WHEN we shew that in the Working of Faith, and in Mens coming on to believe, Duties and good Performances, and new Endeavours, become to many the greatest Hindrances to Believing on Christ alone, and do interpose themselves, and come betwixt Christ and the Soul; Men taking up a Rest, and putting Confidence in them e're they come to Christ: When therefore we cry out against this Resting in Duties, and shew the Vanity and Emptiness of all you can do to save you, or obtain Christ and God's Favour, and bid Men, as *Luther*, take heed not of their Sins only, but of their good Works also; then Men are apt to say and think, that we do cry down all good Performances, and speak down-right against good Duties, and do drive Men wholly off from the Performance of them. And not only carnal Men are apt to think so, but this is the Case of poor broken Souls, that when this their Error, and the Emptiness of all their Performances to this end is discovered to them, their Hearts flag, and they sit down discouraged, and their Hands grow feeble in the Performance of them. And we find *Luther* complaining of nothing more than this Mistake and Cavil, which accompanied his Doctrine; the chiefest of whose Thoughts and Breath was spent in this very Point to beat Men off from carnal Confidence in Works, (as the deepest and most bottom Corruption in Man's Nature) and to bottom their Faith immediately upon Christ, wherein he makes the Power and the Truth of Faith to consist; which whilst he endeavoured, this Calumny was still raised, that he spake against good Works and holy Duties: And still this Shadow follows this Truth; and to this Purpose he still professeth, that as it was the hardest thing in the private Exercise of Mens Spirits not to consult with Duties, to lay Works aside, and to cast a Man's Soul out of Duties, and to lay all upon Christ; so it is the difficultest Matter in all the Circle of Theology, to give both their Limits: for whilst Duties are only taught, Faith is lost; and whilst Faith is urged, carnal People dream (says he) that good Works are spoken against. And thus whilst *Paul* taught Justification by Faith without the Works of the Law, (*Rom.* 3. 28.) this Objection was started up, that he made void the Law; which Cavil is therefore there met withal by him, *ver.* 31. *Do we make void the Law? No, we establish it.* So whilst Christ taught that Publicans and Sinners went into Heaven before Scribes and Pharisees, they cast this Aspersion, falsly deduced from that his Doctrine, that therefore he was a Friend to Publicans and Sinners.

Luther *in* Gal. 5.

1. To clear this therefore, first, it might be alledged, and that truly, that our Scope, when we speak thus against their good Works, is chiefly to discover that Works performed in a State of Unbelief by carnal Men, are wholly sinful and abominable: and though if we take them in the Abstract, they are to be pressed upon them as their Duties, tho they spoil them in the Performance of them; yet that in the Concrete as performed by them, we cannot but declaim against them, and discover their Sinfulness to them. Now for wicked Men to argue from the Concrete to the Abstract; and to infer, that because we speak against wicked Mens best Performances, and discover them to be sinful, that therefore we speak against the Duties themselves commanded, or that they are not their Duties; this is an Argument fetch'd out of the Devil's Topicks. We profess that wicked Mens best Works occasionally prove their greatest Sins; as *Luther* says of the evil World, *Tunc est pessimus cum est optimus, They are then worst when they seem best*; and the more holy in Appearance they are, and the more good Works they do, *Eò purius Diabolo servunt, they serve the Devil more purely.* But it follows not that therefore we speak against the Duties themselves.

2. But secondly, I shall propose more pertinent and proper Considerations to the thing in hand: First, by way of Explication, I will premise two or three general Considerations; and then, Secondly, draw up formal and direct Answers to this Cavil and Mistake.

1. The

1. The first thing that I premise by way of Explication is, that when we speak against trusting and resting in Duties, as opposing the Work of Faith, we mean not only resting in them with an Opinion of Merit and satisfying God in the most gross and Popish Sense: For that Opinion may be renounced when yet the Heart practiseth a more refined fine-spun Popery secretly; and that is, that tho' Men expect that it is Christ alone must pardon them, and think that their Performances are not able to satisfy God for their Sins, but Christ's Satisfaction is it which must stand them in stead, yet they look upon their own Performances as those which may compass Christ and an Interest in him, and they look at them as Motives that may prevail with God to give them Christ. Which secret Opinion is not much less derogatory from God's Grace and Christ than the other; for Christ is more than Justification, because he brings Justification, and all with him: If he hath given us his Son, *how shall he not with him give us all things?* Rom. 8. 32. All are less than Christ; and therefore to think, though not to merit, yet to obtain Christ for our own Performances, and so to rest in them, is as bad as the former. It is indeed a new Shift beyond what gross Popery dreamt of: yet as it is in Laws, tho' never so direct and express Cautions be made to prevent all Evasions, yet cunning Heads will invent new to defraud and go beyond the Statute; so tho our Divines have expressed themselves never so fully against Works, yet Men renouncing Merits, their Hearts have yet farther Inventions of resting in Works and Duties, as Motives to move God they think to give them Christ; which yet are as opposite to Faith as the other, and therefore are excluded by the Apostle, *Rom.* 10. 6. *The Righteousness of Faith* (saith he) *speaks on this wise, Say not in thy Heart*, &c. For let us preach Christ never so fully, and let Mens Opinions be never so much convinced, yet their Hearts are apt in their secret Consultations about their own Salvation, to think of a Course of doing; *Who shall ascend up to Heaven to fetch Christ thence?* Tho the way be by Christ, yet they think by doing to get him and procure him. No, says the Apostle, it is by a sheer-way of Faith, closing with him as freely given, and put into your Mouths and Hearts.

2. The second thing I premise is, that as God in giving Christ, and in justifying us by Christ, looks at no Performances either as meriting or as moving him to do either; so Faith, that apprehends and lays hold on Christ as given, and upon Justification in him, whether by an Act of casting a Man's self on Christ for Justification, or otherwise, looks not at Duties, or all that ever a Man hath done either as meriting or moving Causes, that do further him any way in either, or prevail with God to bestow either. So that look as there is an exact Opposition between Grace and Works in God, (*Rom.* 11. 6. that if it be of meer Grace, then all Duties are excluded; and if of Works, then Grace is excluded, so as these two cannot mingle;) so there is as exact an Opposition between Faith and Duties in point of apprehending Christ and Justification by him; for Faith is a Grace chosen on purpose to sute with God's Free Grace, to cause our Thoughts to answer to his in this great business; to take Christ as given, upon the same Considerations that God bestows him, and so his Righteousness too. Therefore to be justified by Grace and by Faith, is all one; and therefore it is of Faith, that it might be by Grace. And when we are said to be justified by Faith without Works, what is the Meaning of it, and why is it attributed to Faith, but because Faith is the sole Instrument of apprehending God's giving me Christ, and justifying of me? as also because in that its Apprehension as God in Justifying, looks not to Works, nor any thing in me, as the moving Cause, or any way conducing to it; so Faith apprehends it, having no eye to Works why it apprehends it, and so is said to justify without Works; that is, to apprehend it having no eye to Works as moving Causes. Yea, as God looks not to Faith it self, as a Work, but only as an Instrument apprehending; so Faith looks not on it self as a Work any way having any Influence into obtaining Christ, and his Righteousness, but only as a Hand receiving it: And therefore God chose this Grace of Faith, knowing that tho when the Believer believes he performs a Work, yet he would not look to that Act as a Work, but look to Christ and his Free Grace; as *Luther* expresseth himself, *When I believe, I use to imagine as if there were no such Quality in me as Faith*, &c. *So as* (says he in another place) *I do not know whether there be any Righteousness else, or Unrighteousness in the World.* Hence then it comes to pass that Faith, when it goes about its proper business of laying hold upon Christ and Justification

Part 3. fication through him, is careful to shut out and exclude Works; it beats all Duties and Graces off with Poles as it were from putting their Hands to this Ark, which it alone is appointed to touch and possess; and it is exceeding jealous of Duties least they should step in and spoil her Virginity, (as *Luther* calls it) which she reserves for Christ, which is tainted and polluted, if Works mingle their help with Faith in this business: For, as I said before, if it were any way of Works, Grace should be no Grace; so if the Soul thought it any way of Duties, it were no Faith. And therefore *Paul* though he had never so many Performances to boast of, and elsewhere to Men he doth boast of them, yet in point of Justification he thinks not of them; *Though I know nothing by my self, yet hereby I am not justified, but it is the Lord that freely* of himself doth without relation to any thing in me. And therefore (1 Pet. 1. 13.) we are exhorted to trust perfectly, to trust and lean fully and wholly on Grace; not so as to stand maimly upon it, and lean to Works, but wholly and upright upon it.

3. The third thing I premise is this, That Man's Nature is exceedingly prone to rest and trust in his own Performances, and not to look out wholly to God's Free Grace and to Christ; *Malum hoc est communissimum*, (as *Luther* calls it) *the most common Evil, and deepliest rooted.* Some of our Divines, as *Chemnitius*, &c. have gone about to shew that from *Cain* and *Abel* to this very day, this hath been the great and standing Controversy in the World, and Difference between the World and Believers, whether we are accepted before God by Works or by Faith? *Cain* thought by Sacrifice to do it, and neglected Faith; but *Abel*, tho he brought Sacrifice also, yet *Heb.* 11. he offered it by Faith, not resting in it, and so by Faith offered a more excellent Sacrifice than *Cain*, by which he obtained witness he was righteous, which the other did not, thinking alone by Sacrifice to do it: the Apostle puts the Difference on purpose, *Heb.* 11. 4. Thus in *Asaph*'s time, God by *Asaph* corrects it as the common Error of that Age, and shews it was not by Works, not by Sacrifice, that they are accepted, *Psal.* 50. 7, 8. Thus it was in *Isaiah*'s time also, *Wherefore have we not fasted, and thou seest not?* Isa. 58. 2. And thus in Christ's time too, *What shall we do to work the Works of God?* John 6. 37. They thought to obtain Righteousness by doing, and therefore Christ, as correcting their Error, points them to Believing. Thus the Pharisees trusted in themselves, says the Text, *that they were righteous*, Luke 18. 9. that is, the Righteousness they trusted unto, it was *that* only in themselves, and out of themselves. In a word, *Paul* says of them all, (Rom. 9. 32, 33. that they sought not Righteousness by Faith, but as it were by the Works of the Law. The Promise of Salvation they hoped for as well as Believers, but (as some expound that Place in *Acts* 26. 7. of the unregenerate Jews) they hoped to come to the Promise by Works; which Promise, tho *Paul* also look'd for by Faith, yet they thought by serving God Day and Night only to attain it; that was their way to attain: but *Paul*, tho he aimed at the same Promise, yet sought it by Faith. And this was the general Error of all the twelve Tribes, as he says there. And this was the reigning Error in Popish Times, that they still trusted in their Works; and tho they knew Christ as a Redeemer, yet they left him, and Faith in him, and sought Justification by the Works of the Law. Now that a Corruption should be so general in all Ages from time to time, and so universal and so irreclaimable, that all Christ and his Apostles did could not work Men off from it; this argues that it is most natural, and that Nature sticks here. As why have Pelagian Controversies been still in the Church started, tho still more refinedly, but because there are *Pelagiana Fibra*, Pelagian Fibres in every Man's Heart, (as he said) Roots, and a Spring of it within. Now the other Error about Works hath been more antient than this, and more lasting, because more natural. Yea, so natural is it, that even Believers that have Faith begun are apt to rest in, and trust too much in Duties. The Apostles could not get rid of all the Grudgings of it, *Mat.* 19. 27. We have forsaken all, what shall we have therefore? and tho he tells them what they should have, yet elsewhere he beats down that. Therefore *Luke* 17. 7, 8, 9. Christ there endeavours to beat down all swelling Conceits of their Performances in them, tells them that when they had done all they could, they must confess themselves unprofitable Servants: And upon what occasion comes it in? Look the *5th* and *6th* Verses, and you will find that it is upon occasion of a Conference about Faith, they desiring the Increase of it, and Christ commending it, and telling them, that a Grain of it was

was more worth than all their Works, and then he comes in with this Assertion, as removing the main Hindrance of it. And therefore the Galatians, a whole Church that had received Christ, yet how soon (says the Apostle) were they removed to another Gospel from the Grace of Christ, *Gal.* 1. 6. That other Gospel was looking partly to Works and partly to Christ, and joining Christ with the Law. And this we all find by Experience to be true, more or less; and the reason is, because Reason hath the Law for its Object, and to be justified by the Works of the Law, and accepted for them; and so when Men hear of Grace and Christ, they think that yet they should go that way too. This most agrees with Reason and the Dictates of a natural Conscience, for it was that way which in Innocency was the way, and so some Sparks of Light that Men should be saved by Works are in every Man's Heart, as well as of the Duties of the Law, the legal way of Salvation; and tho a Man be brought to acknowledg that Christ pardons, yet he will have as much of his own way as he can: So that natural Reason hath some Knowledg of Justification by the Law; but of Justification merely by Grace now Man is fallen, this Reason is ignorant of, and there is no such Spark of Light sown in Man's Heart by Nature: therefore the Apostle (*Rom.* 10. 3.) gives this as the Reason they were ignorant of God's Righteousness, that is, of God's way of Justifying. And therefore it must be revealed, (*Rom.* 1. 17.) and when it is revealed, it is entertained only by Faith; and that not to Faith at first, but from one degree of Faith to another, for Faith only is apprehensive of it; so as if God would make a Man more and more to cast himself upon Christ's Righteousness, and add a farther Insight into it, he must add to a Man's Faith: and look how much carnal Reason there is, and want of Faith, so much relying upon Duties there will be even in the best. And tho Mens Opinions may be set right, yet this being an innate Spark and Principle in the Heart which is rooted out of it only by Faith, therefore the Heart under-hand will have Recourse and Rest in Performances, more or less; for we in the working of our Hearts are not guided by our Notions, but by the rooted Principles of Nature: therefore tho Mens Judgments are convinced that there is a God, and that fully and clearly, yet Atheism is rooted, and a settled Principle in the Heart, and therefore sways in the Workings of a Man's Spirit: and accordingly as the Fool says in his Heart, *there is no God*; so naturally a Man says in his Heart, Duties must help me to Christ. And therefore the Righteousness of Faith is brought in as checking and contradicting such Sayings that are apt to arise in a Man's Heart, which are not wrought out by Opinion, but by a Principle of Faith, and a Divine Light accompanying; *The Righteousness of Faith says, Say not in thy Heart, Who shall ascend into Heaven, to bring Christ down from above?* Rom. 10. 6. And therefore in another place, God carefully meets with those Thoughts of their own Righteousness, *Deut.* 9. 4. *Speak not in thine Heart, that for my Righteousness the Lord hath brought me in to possess this Land*, &c. either as the moving Cause, or the meriting Cause: And *ver.* 6. he comes over it again with a more special Instruction in this Point, when he says, *Understand therefore that the Lord thy God giveth thee not this good Land for thy Righteousness*; for of all else the Heart is most uncapable of this Lesson, to discern the Way of Faith and Works. And as Ignorance and opposite Reason, so also Pride (which is the other Reason there, *Rom.* 10. 2. used by the Apostle) makes Men to trust in their Duties; *They being ignorant of God's Righteousness, and going about to establish their own Righteousness.* He brings both in as Reasons why they submitted not to God's Righteousness of Faith, for they would set up their own. Nature desires to do so; because as Self-love hath set up it self for a Man's God and End, so for a Man's Christ also; there is the same Reason of the one that is of the other, and Pride is seen in both; for we would have wherewithal to boast. Therefore (*Deut.* 8. 14, 17.) he bids them take heed of the lifting up of their Hearts, in saying, *My Might, and the Power of mine Hand hath got me this Wealth.* As it is thus in matters of Wealth, so Pride makes Men think that through their Prayer and their Fasting, they should get Christ: And this Corruption was so rooted, that the main End of the forty Years Troubles in the Wilderness, was to work out this Conceit, and that by humbling them; *ver.* 16. which shews that Pride was the Original of this Corruption.

Book 3.

These things premised, the Answers to that forementioned Cavil and Mistake, are easily framed. As,

1. In

Part 3.

1. In drawing Men on to a right way of Believing, we ſpeak not at all against Duties; but only diſcover, and bid Men beware of this Corruption which ſo naturally accompanies the Performance of them in Mens Hearts; which becauſe it is ſo natural and ſo prevalent, and ſo dangerous, therefore it is as much to be ſpoken against. Now this Corruption is but accidental to the Duties; and therefore the Duties however ought to be performed, and are holy and good. We ſpeak not againſt the things, but the Ground of performing them, with an Eye to them, as any thing that might move God to give you Chriſt, which you are apt unto. And thus as when we ſpeak againſt Merits of Works in our Controverſy with the Papiſts, we ſpeak not againſt Works, but their performing them upon that Ground: Or, as when we ſpeak againſt things lawful, and ſay, that more are damned for things lawful than unlawful, and that they condemn themſelves in what they allow; and, that more are caſt away upon Sands than upon Rocks, *viz.* groſs Sins: We in this ſpeak not againſt the Lawfulneſs of the things, or forbid Men to uſe them; but againſt their Corruption that place ſo much their Happineſs and Reſt in them, that they are kept from God their chiefeſt Good. Now as things lawful ſtep in betwixt God and Men, ſo Duties ſtep in betwixt Chriſt and them, but both through their Corruption; and in this Senſe *Luther* ſaid, *Cavendum eſt a peccatis, imo a bonis operibus.* We are to beware of Sins, ay and of good Works too.

2. When we tell you that the performing of Duties in many does hinder Faith, the Meaning is not that of themſelves they do ſo, for one Command of God doth not hinder another; but it is ſo by reaſon of your Corruption that is apt to reſt in them, ſo they do hinder Men. As the Law ſtirred up Concupiſcence, and was the occaſion of Evil, ſo are Works the occaſion of Oppoſition to Faith; and therefore the Apoſtle ſays (*Rom.* 9. 29, 30.) many that are profane attain to the Righteouſneſs of Faith ſooner than others that follow the Righteouſneſs of the Law, not that the Righteouſneſs of the Law is in it ſelf contrary; no, this is not *Paul*'s Meaning, for (*ver.* 32.) he makes the Queſtion how it came ſo to paſs, *Wherefore? becauſe they ſought it not by Faith:* had they ſought Righteouſneſs in a right way, Duties would not have hindred them. For this you muſt conſider, that Grace and Works, Faith and Works, are oppoſed: But how? Only in point of Juſtification, and attaining of Chriſt; ſo that we ſhould not look to them, or uſe them with an eye to them as Cauſes to move God to beſtow Chriſt on us. Herein they only claſh; and it is Man's corrupt Opinion too that ſets them at odds. It is the Pride of Nature that will bring Duties in to juſtle out Faith, elſe they would not hinder but further each other: Not ſo much Works as Boaſting are *excluded by the Law of Faith*, Rom. 3. 27. Let the Heart lay boaſting aſide, and reſting in them and Faith, and they will do well otherwiſe, and both glorify God; or as *Luther* ſays, when Faith goes to believe and to deal with Chriſt, then ſhe ſhuts Works out, and will be with her Spouſe alone; naked Chriſt with naked Faith, and Works ſtand at the Door as Servants that when Faith will walk abroad, they may attend her.

3. We ſpeak not againſt Duties, but would reduce you to a right Method and Order in attaining to the right Performance of them; and that is, to get Faith firſt as the Cauſe of all Obedience, and which makes all accepted, without which God is not well pleaſed with all you do, and not to look at Duties as the cauſe of Faith. *Bona opera non pariunt fidem, ſed fides parit bona opera. Good Works do not bring forth Faith, but Faith brings forth good Works.* Titus 3. 9. *Theſe things affirm conſtantly that thoſe which have believed may be careful to maintain good Works.* That is the right Method, firſt to exhort Men to believe, then to fall a doing. A Phyſician bids his Patient firſt take Phyſick, and then drink Broth; he forbids him not to drink, but to take Phyſick firſt: ſo we exhort you to take Chriſt, and then fall a working.

4. Whereas you may ask, Are Duties no Helps afore Faith? I anſwer fourthly, Holy Duties may be conſidered both as Duties commanded to be performed by God, and ſo we ſay all ought to perform them. And ſecondly, alſo as Means appointed by God to convey Chriſt, as Conduit-pipes convey Water; or to bring us to Chriſt as Boats convey us over the Water, and ſo they are Back-doors to let us in to Chriſt. And ſo we exhort you to them. But the thing we ſpeak againſt is, that either Men reſt in the Performance of them as Duties only, and look not at them further as Means; or if they do, yet regard them rather as Motives to move God to beſtow Chriſt than ſimply as Means, in the uſe of which God beſtows Salvation. Now

the Heart rests in them, or looks at them in this manner, then we speak against them.

5. When we go about to shew you the Vanity and Emptiness of them, we do it not that simply they are vain in themselves, but vain to that End you use them for, and that is to get Christ for them, or to be justified by them. For tho they serve not to that End, yet they may serve for another, the other Ends above-mentioned. If a Man that is troubled in Conscience would go and take Physick, his taking Physick may be useful to him, and not in vain, for he may other ways have need of it; but yet to the end to cure the Wound of his Conscience, we may say it is in vain, to make him look to a higher Means: And so when we say, the Labours of Chymists going by their Art to get Gold, is vain and ridiculous, we do not mean that it is simply so; for it is many ways useful, yet not to make Gold. So we say of Duties; they are useful, but not to justify you, not as you think by your Art to get and work Christ out of them; no.

6. When we speak against resting in Duties, what is our Scope? To bring Christ and you together, naked Christ and the naked Soul; that you may not embrace Duties but Christ in all; that you may not rest till you have Christ in your Eye beyond all Duties; that you may have the Work of Faith in your Eye above all Works. This is all our Scope, as it was Christ's; who directed them above Works to Believing, as that great Work of God: And as it was *Paul*'s Scope, who directed them to seek it by Faith; *Rom.* 9. 32. We speak not against Duties as Servants to Betrothed Faith, but we would marry you to Christ, and have him to be your Husband, and not Duties your Paramoers.

CHAP. III.

Cautions about using our Endeavours to believe. We must act in Subordination to God's Power, as working in us both the Will and the Deed. We must also renounce all Ability in our selves.

PHIL. 2. 12, 13.

Wherefore my Beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my Presence only, but now much more in my Absence; work out your own Salvation with Fear and Trembling. For it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good Pleasure.

HAving proved that we are to use Endeavours to believe, and that a right and due Performance of Duties is not imcompatible with Faith; my next Business is to add some Cautions to be observed in using our Endeavours, and in attempting to believe, and going forth to believe, and continuing so to do. There are Cautions which it becomes those to have, who are in dependance upon God, and his Free Grace, and his Power, to work Faith in them at pleasure, as the Text hath it: *He works* (saith the Text) *the Will and the Deed according to his good Pleasure.* Now altho the Apostle shews here how the Soul is to manage and behave it self not only in the Point of believing, but in working out our Salvation in all the particular Duties of it; yet what the Apostle saith here is in a more special manner applicable to Believing, because that is what we are saved by; *Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved.* It is the great Work of God.

In the Text you have,

1. A Duty, which is that I am exhorting you to, to work out your own Salvation, which is eminently by Believing; for it is Faith unto Salvation, *Believe, and thou shalt be saved*; and work it out (saith he) to Perfection, as the word signifies.

2. You have here the Manner in which this is to be done, (which is the thing I chose the Text for) it is *with Fear and Trembling.*

3. Here is that which should cause this Fear and Trembling in working out our own Salvation, and that is the Point in hand, *for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do*; therefore saith he, *work it out with Fear and Trembling.* And this now

Part 3. now (the Words being rightly opened and interpreted) doth hold forth how the Soul in all its Endeavours, in a Subordination and Dependance upon the Power of God to make the Faith I put forth true Faith, and to help me both in the Will and the Deed: It shews how the Soul, I say, ought to demean it self to God therein, as in Dependance upon that Power.

I will first open the Words a little, and then proceed: The Papists say, that by Fear and Trembling here, is meant Doubting, (opposing it to all Certainty and Assurance of Salvation) a Doubting whether that God will save you or no; which (say they) keeps the Heart awful: For they go only a legal way, and a way to work upon Self-love only; and I confess if that were the Way of God's working Grace and Faith upon a Man's Heart, if it were to work meerly upon Self-love and in a legal way, their Interpretation would be the best; for it is with a Fear and Trembling whether ever God will work it in me, yea or no; and therefore to have that Awfulness continually upon a Man's Spirit, would be best to rouze Self-love and to provoke that, and work upon that. But this Sense cannot stand, for the Text hath respect to that place in the Old Testament which these Words are taken out of and (as *Austin* observed long ago) these Words are taken out of *Psal.* 2. 11. And the Septuagint there useth the very Words in the Greek, which are used here by the Apostle, and therefore surely the Holy Ghost had an Eye to it. Now saith the Psalmist there, *ver.* 11. *Serve the Lord with Fear*, (speaking of Christ) *and rejoice with Trembling, kiss the Son*, &c. which is indeed especially Believing on him, closing with him. Now if it were meant of that Popish Doubting, it had been the greatest Contradiction in the World to say, Rejoice with Trembling; because for me to rejoice in that Salvation which Christ bringeth to me, and to be doubtful of it, is a Contradiction. Yea, the word here *rejoice* signifies the highest Rejoicing, to rejoice so as to leap for Joy; as high a Rejoicing as rejoicing with Joy unspeakable and glorious, for it is a Rejoicing with Glory. So then he commands at once the highest Assurance, the highest Rejoicing, and yet withal to tremble; he speaks therefore of such a Fear and Trembling not as hath Doubting, but such as may stand with the highest Joy that is; and therefore he doth not mean a Diffidence, a continual Hesitation and Dubitation, or a Consternation of Mind, as they would carry it; for then I say it had been the greatest Contradiction in the World to bid them rejoice with Trembling, if by Trembling had been meant a Consternation and Diffidence of Mind.

But besides this, you shall find if you search the New Testament, that this Phrase of *trembling*, as it is used there, hath plainly another Meaning and Sense than that which the Papists put upon it.

It is opposed first to High-mindedness or Confidence in ones self; *Rom.* 11. 20. *Be not high-minded, but fear.* Fear therefore is opposed to Self-conceitedness, and to trusting in a Man's self, and therefore it notes out a working out of our Salvation with the highest Submission and Dependance upon God, who is the Worker of it. And that this should be the Meaning of the word here in the Text, is clear from what follows; *For it is God* (saith he) *that worketh in you both the Will and the Deed:* and therefore Fear and Trembling is opposed to Conceitedness, and High-mindedness, and Confidence in a Man's self; and it is an Exhortation to Submission, as I might shew you out of *James* 4. 7. where he saith, *Submit your selves to God*, speaking how they should behave themselves for God to give them Grace, (as in opening that Place would appear:) I say then, it is opposed in the New Testament to High-mindedness and Conceitedness, and is put for a Submission to God, to be low and empty in a Man's self, in respect of any Strength in a Man's self.

And then again it is put for a Fear of offending or displeasing one; so the Phrase of *Fear and Trembling* is used again and again in the New Testament. You received *Titus* (saith he, 2 *Cor.* 7. 15.) *with Fear and Trembling*: With Fear and Trembling they received that holy Messenger of God, that was an holy Evangelist; what, were they in a Fear, in a Hesitation and Dubitation that *Titus* would do them Hurt? No, surely that Popish Interpretation of Fear and Trembling cannot be applied to their receiving of *Titus*; but it hath this Meaning, they were afraid of doing any thing which might offend or displease, or be distasteful to a Man so eminently holy and he being an Evangelist, they received him with all Submission to his Doctrine and therefore the word *Obedience* is annexed to it, *remembring the Obedience of you all*

with Fear and trembling you received him. Even as if Christ himself were upon e Earth and a Man should converse with him, how would a Man fear in all his ays left he should do any thing that should not be sutable to so holy and so hea- nly a Spirit as he hath in whom God dwelleth. So that indeed the Meaning of ese words, *Work out your Salvation with Fear and Trembling*, is this, it is as if the postle had said, Seeing you have a Work begun in you by God, (for so he tells em they had, and gives them as much Assurance of it as the Testimony of an postle could do, *ch. 1. v. 6. Being confident of this very thing* (saith he) *that God ho hath begun a good Work in you, will perfect it until the day of Jesus Christ:)* As therefore by his Power hath begun to work in you all at the first, so you must de- nd upon the same Power to continue to work in you the Will and the Deed, and you are to co-work with him, in a continual Subordination to that Power which th begun to work in you; you are so to work out your Salvation as to fear to of- nd that God upon whom your Salvation dependeth, to tremble left you omit any pportunity wherein this God begins to work upon you; for you must be beholden him for Salvation, if ever you have it, and it is he that worketh in you the Will nd the Deed: Work out therefore your Salvation with your own Endeavours, but ith the highest Fear and Trembling, that is, with the greatest Humility and Sub- ission of Mind, and Dependency upon the Power of God, who must do all, with- ut all Self-confidence, or Self-conceitedness, or trusting in your own Power, and ith the greatest Fearfulness to displease that God upon whose good Pleasure the ill and the Deed in perfecting of it dependeth. In a word, this Exhortation of e Apostle is a Caution against Security, and the giving over of the Use of all eans and Ways further to work out our Salvation. It is a Caution against Pride nd Self-conceitedness, and going on out of High-mindedness in our own Strength. teacheth us how to manage our Hearts in the Use of our own Endeavours, name- , so as to fear to offend that God upon whose Power we depend for so great a ork, and also to tremble to omit any Opportunity wherein this God doth work on us. This is the general Scope of the Words. And so you have the Meaning the Phrase. I shall now come to such Particulars, as added to all the former I ve delivered, will perfect and compleat this particular Subject which I have oken of concerning Faith, which you may remember was this, namely, to shew u how to manage and guide our Souls for the manner of our endeavouring after lieving, and in believing: How to manage our Souls, I say, and our Endeavours, er such a manner as that we may co-work with God in a way of Subordination to is Power.

1. Therefore (and I shall keep my self exceeding much to the Sense of these ords, *with Fear and Trembling*) we do work with God in a Subordination to his ower, when we go forth in a Renunciation of all our own Abilities, in a conti- ued Distrust of all our own Abilities. And this is to work it out *with Fear and rembling*, because God works in us the Will and the Deed; *Be not high-minded,* aith he) *but fear*; be not self-conceited, do not stand to go forth upon your own egs. There is no Danger at all for Men to attempt believing, and to attempt it gain and again, whilst still they go forth in doing of it, with a perpetual Renun- ation of their own Strength, We use to tell you, (and we tell you Truth in it) at there is nothing hinders Faith more than a Man's own Endeavours to believe: t how? Endeavouring in his own Strength. And when we say that Self, and in Self, and from Self, is against Faith, the Meaning is this, that Confidence in Man's self, and in his own Endeavours, is that which undoeth Men. The great ischief lies in the rising up of such Thoughts as these, I will go pray, and I will lieve, and I will work out a Faith in Christ, which the Heart is exceeding apt to, and you that have Experience of the spiritual Conflicts and spiritual Attempts nd Exercises of Spirit in the way of Believing, cannot but find it. The Heart, I y, is apt still to be saying, as he in *Psal.* 73. 9. *I thought to know this*, and this is which we speak against; as the Apostle *James* (*ch.* 4. 13, 15.) teacheth Men to eck themselves; *Go to now* (saith he) *ye that say, To Day or to Morrow we will go to such a City, and continue there a Year, and buy and sell, and get Gain*, &c. *hereas you ought to say, If the Lord will, we will do this or that; but now* (saith he) *u rejoice in your Boasting.* What he saith of civil Actions, and of our Dependance pon God therein, holdeth much more, infinitely more of spiritual Actions: Why?

Part 3. Becauſe that an ordinary Providence accompanieth us in civil Actions; the ſame Providence that accompanieth Beaſts in all their Actions, doth accompany Men in an ordinary way, and ſo Men may better ſay of ſuch things, We will go to ſuch a City, and do this, and do that; yet you ſee the Apoſtle checks their Hearts in the midſt of ſuch Thoughts: much more then are we to ſuppreſs all ſuch Thoughts in things that are ſpiritual, in which we depend upon God only, and upon him alone, and upon a good Pleaſure of his in a more immediate manner. We ſhould take our Hearts at it, and do but watch your Hearts and you will take them at it again and again. It may be that ſuch Thoughts will not come into diſtinct Propoſitions in your Hearts and Spirits, but they will lie there taken for granted. We ſhould take our Hearts at it, I ſay; and when you find your Hearts will go out to attempt any ſpiritual thing, or to attempt Believing, and to ſay, I will do this, or I will do that, and ſo go forth upon that Ground, and in your own Strength, aſſiſted by ſuch a Conceit, you ſhould, when your Hearts are ſo doing, check your ſelves: Even as they ſaid in *Jer.* 2. 18. *What haſt thou to do in the way of* Egypt? ſo you ſhould ſay to your Hearts when you find them ſo doing, What haſt thou to do to go out in thy own Strength, in any Confidence in thy ſelf? Men may ſay, and it is ordinary for them to do ſo, That it is God that doth all, and we can do nothing, and yet in the mean time truſt in themſelves, and in their own Strength. The Phariſee himſelf (as the Text ſaith, *Luke* 18. 9.) truſted in himſelf, yet if you read on, you ſhall find him thanking God for all that he had, and that he was not like other Men, as if that God had done all, and he had done nothing; whereas the very Scope of that Parable is to ſpeak againſt thoſe that truſted in themſelves. Let this Point, continual acting Self-renunciation (that is, continually to act a renouncing of your ſelves in your going forth in all things that you do, eſpecially in the Point of Believing) be ſettled on your Hearts. You are as frequently to exerciſe theſe Acts negatively, as to exerciſe Acts affirmative or poſitive, that is, as frequently to renounce your own Strength in the doing of a thing, as to do it. I will not inſiſt upon ſuch Places where when the Saints have done thus and thus, ſtill they cry, *Not unto us, Lord, not unto us*, as *Pſal.* 115. 1. (tho there is the like Reaſon in the doing of a thing, that there is after the doing of it). And ſo in *Iſa.* 26. 12. *Lord, thou haſt wrought all our Works in us and for us*; they are not content only to ſay ſo, to acknowledg that God doth all, but as it follows there, (*ver.* 17, 18.) they add, *We have been with Child and in Pain, and we have as it were brought forth Wind.* Thy Soul it may be hath been humbled and terrified; thou haſt had a world of Conceptions within thee, but ſtill thou haſt brought forth nothing; ſay thou then, Lord, thou haſt wrought all my Works in me and for me. What, I ſay, they do when God had wrought all in them, that do thou ſtill whilſt thou art a co-working with God. So in *Hoſ.* 14. 3. when they were to ſeek Salvation, becauſe ſuch Thoughts of Self-confidence will ariſe, they do prevent and foreſtal them, they do renounce beforehand all carnal Confidence, Aſhur *ſhall not ſave us.* Why do they ſpeak this, but becauſe they knew their Hearts would be apt to run to *Aſhur*, for he ſpeaks there not of temporal Deliverance but of ſpiritual, and alludeth to what they were wont to have Recourſe unto for temporal Deliverance, to expreſs what the Spirits of Men are apt to have Recourſe unto for ſpiritual: Aſhur (ſay they) *ſhall not ſave us*: They lay that for a Concluſion before they begin, We will dam up that Door, there ſhall not a Thought come in of having Recourſe unto any thing, or of having any Confidence in our ſelves, or in any thing in us, or in any thing we can do, but *in thee the Fatherleſs find Mercy.* The Scripture delights much to run upon theſe Negatives. It is not content only to expreſs poſitively that we are to believe, and that we are thus to believe, and upon this to believe; but that we are in the doing of it to renounce whatſoever is in us. To give you ſome Inſtances for it:

1. See how the Apoſtles ſpeak, *Gal.* 2. 16. (for they ſpeak of their own Faith there) *Knowing that a Man is not juſtified by the Works of the Law, but by the Faith of Jeſus Chriſt, even we have believed in Jeſus Chriſt, that we may be juſtified by the Faith of Chriſt.* Here now were two Principles laid in their Hearts; here was firſt a negative one, and that Principle was rivetted in them, they knew they could never be juſtified by any Works of their own, *Knowing* (ſaith he) *that a Man is not juſtified by the Works of the Law.* And he comes in with a Negative again, *That we might be juſtified by the Faith of Chriſt, and not* (ſaith he) *by the Works of the Law.* This

was the first Principle that was inlaid in their Hearts, and then the second is a positive one, *But by the Faith of Jesus Christ.* And as this was the Opinion and Judgment of the Apostles, so their Practice was answerable, for mark the Practice of their Hearts upon this, *We therefore* (saith he) *have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the Faith of Christ, and not by the Works of the Law.* While they believed they excluded the Works of the Law in their own Hearts, and renounced them. There was an Act, I say, of Renunciation, even in the Work of Believing. *Not by the Works of the Law* (saith he) *but by the Faith of Jesus Christ.* Book 3.

2. Where the Apostle expresseth the Doctrine of Faith, *Ephes.* 2. 8. (and Mens Hearts should answer the Doctrine) he comes in with two Negatives there also, *Not of our selves,* (saith he) *and not of Works.* He hath two Negatives to all the Affirmatives that are there: Why? To teach the Hearts of Men, that still in the way of Believing they should shut the Back-door, as I may so express it, that no Thoughts of Self-confidence may come in and mingle themselves with the rest of their Souls when they go to believe. As *Abraham* when he sacrificed had a double Work, one was to kill the Sacrifice, and to lay it on the Fire, and to offer it up; and the other was to drive away the Fowls that came down upon the Carcases: So you have a double Work when you go to believe, if you will go forth in the Power of God. As you are to attempt to believe in a Subordination to the Power of God, so you are to beat off and drive away all Thoughts of Self-confidence and Self-conceitedness, to be ever a renouncing of your selves, as you would be of Lusts that rise up.

3. You have the like Expressions in *Rom.* 9. 16. that so you may see how the Scripture runs still upon Negatives, to teach Mens Hearts what to do. *It is not* (saith he) *of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth.* And the Apostle there brings it in by the by as a Conclusion of what he had spoke concerning the Doctrine of Election. *So then* (saith he) *it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth Mercy.* One would have thought it had been enough to have said, *it is of God that sheweth Mercy:* No, but he would bring in the Negative, he would have Men renounce their own Willing, and their own Running, and to depend upon that God that shews Mercy.

Now, if thou hast had abundant Experience, and liest under a deep Sense of thine own Unability to believe, the many Experiences thou hast found of attempting in vain (as thou thinkest) to believe, are apt to discourage thee. But do thou now mind what the Spirit of God shall direct thee to, and that is this: Do not go turn all the Experiences of the Vanity of thine own Attempts into Discouragements, that because thou hast found it to be in vain, therefore it shall be so for time to come; no, but go turn them all into Self-renunciation; let all this confirm thy Heart that Faith is therefore not of our selves; let it, I say, confirm thee in that more, and inlay that Principle into thy Heart more, so as that thou shouldst maintain that against the next time in all the Attempts thou setst upon in believing. And if thou dost so, thou dost work with Fear and Trembling, thou dost go forth and co-work with God in a Subordination to his Power to glorify that alone. Discharge all thine own Strength continually, discharge it of any Help at all that thou expectest from it. If it would rise up and attempt, disclaim it; yea, because it will rise even whilst thou art setting upon the Work, let it be the first thing thou dost to say, Ashur *shall not save us; Lord, not of my self, not any thing in me, but through thy Power, I throw my self upon thee.* Suppose that the Act thou aimest at be to go out of thy self only to Christ, yet if thou hast but this Thought, I will go out of my self to Christ out of my own Power, or without renouncing of thy self, thou art still in thy self. Such Thoughts hinder God from working: even as Jesus Christ did not work Miracles in his own Country because of their Unbelief; so whilst self thus riseth up and mingleth it self with that Strength which God giveth, God withdraws his Assistance. The Words in *Heb.* 10. quoted out of *Hab.* 2. 4. *His Soul which is lifted up,* signify, as *Pareus* well observeth, *ponens seipsum,* &c. that is, *that Soul that doth make a Bulwark of it self, and trusteth in it self*; for when the Heart betakes it self to its own Strength, and goes out in that, it leaves to trust in God; and it is not Endeavours, but it is Endeavours without renouncing of what is in a Man's self endeavouring, which frustrateth Faith, for God hath said, *In his own Strength shall no Man prevail,* 1 Sam. 2. 9. Men that are convinced of the Ne-

Part 3. ceſſity of Chriſt, and that they muſt get Chriſt, what do they ſay within them-ſelves? *I will pray, and I will faſt, and I will go to Chriſt*: that ſame [*I will*] ſpoils all. They are like to Swimmers that are beginning to ſwim, their very ſcrabling and pawing in the Water of themſelves at firſt, their very Eagerneſs is it which makes them ſink, whereas if they lay but ſtill and committed themſelves to the Stream, even that would carry them. To act out of a Man's own Strength is opposite to the very fundamental Law of God, it doth prevent and ſupplant the Power of God in working with us. That I may expreſs it to you by a Similitude which is more familiar, you know that the Apoſtle expreſſeth Faith by the opening of a Door, in *Acts* 13. Now a Man's Endeavours to this are like as if a Man in the Water ſhould be to paſs through a great Sluce, and he ſhould go on the back-ſide of it and pull and pull, the more that he pulls, and the more he would open it by pulling the worſe he is; whereas now if he would commit himſelf to the Stream, it would open it, and he might paſs through it. So that now that is the firſt thing, *Fear and Trembling* imports a renouncing of all Confidence in a Man's ſelf. And let a Man attempt ſtill with a Renunciation of a Man's ſelf, and all in a Man's ſelf, and act and practiſe this, and then attempting to believe will never hurt him, or put him off from Faith, but he will find that God will co-work with him in the doing of it.

CHAP. IV.

We muſt uſe our Endeavours to believe, being fearful of doing any thing to offend that God upon whoſe Power we depend to work Faith, and all other things in us.

2. FEar and Trembling here in relation to God's working the Will and the Deed in us, is extended alſo to Fearfulneſs of offending, of ſinning againſt that God that muſt work. So that now that Soul that depends upon the Power and good Pleaſure of God for working Faith in him, and would work in a Subordination to this Power of God, the Law of this Dependance lays this Obligation upon him, that in relation hereunto he ſhould be fearful even in this reſpect, of offending or provoking God upon whom he doth depend to work in him both the Will and the Deed. There are, I ſay, many Motives to keep us off from offending God, but eſpecially when the Soul hath this Conſideration in his Eye, his being in a continual Dependance upon God for working of Faith, or for working out his own Salvation. The Apoſtle, *Jam.* 4. 5. doth give ſuch Sinners Direction as indeed were fallen back, and had ſtrong Luſts to which they were ſubjected, how they ſhould demean their Soul towards God for the giving of them more Grace to overcome their Corruptions. *Do ye think that the Scripture ſaith in vain, The Spirit that dwelleth in us, luſteth to Envy?* The Words are taken out of *Gen.* 6. for we have them no where elſe in all the Old Teſtament; *The Imagination of the Thoughts of Man's Heart are evil, and only evil continually.* The Apoſtle here puts in for Evil, Envy, by a Metonymy for all the reſt, for that Sin theſe Jews were moſt guilty of: He therefore inſtances in that peculiarly, as being peculiar to that Nation, and he had ſpoken of Envyings and Strifes which they had amongſt themſelves in the Words before. Now, ſaith he, it is true, this is your Nature, and you have it from the Womb, but there is God that giveth more Grace, and it is his Gift; *But he giveth more Grace*, ſaith he, *ver.* 6. that is, he hath Grace and Power enough to overcome this Spirit of Envy in you, and he hath promiſed to do it. But then let me tell you this, you muſt depend upon this God, and you muſt walk as thoſe that do depend upon God to give more Grace to overcome this Corruption. Now what he ſaith in the general to ſuch is applicable to the point in hand. Now what doth he preſcribe them? He prescribes them Submiſſion to God, and Emptineſs in a Man's ſelf of all Confidence in himſelf; *He reſiſteth the Proud*, (ſaith he) *and giveth Grace to the Humble: ſubmit your ſelves therefore to God; reſiſt the Devil, and he will flee from you*, ver. 7. He bids them firſt ſubmit unto God as he that was the Giver of all this Grace, whereby their Corruptions muſt be overcome; that is, Give your Souls up to him to be wrought upon in his own way; and altho you are to uſe Endeavours, (as afterward he directs them to humble themſelves, *&c.*) yet in all, ſaith he, ſubmit to God and go to him, and tell him, that he is as free to work or not to work as he pleaſeth.

Lord

Lord, (say to him) *I urge not any thing in my self, I put my Mouth in the Dust, I pre-sent my Soul before thee, and submit unto thee.* For that is certainly the Meaning of Boasting, for he speaks not here in respect of Afflictions, but in respect of a Dependance upon God for to give more Grace, if you mark the Coherence. A Man could say, I have prayed and fasted these many Years, and yet God doth not come: *Submit your selves to God,* (saith he) *acknowledg thine own Unworthiness, and your own Vileness, that such is this cursed Nature of thine, as it is pure Grace to give thee any thing, and if it be Grace it is free*; why doft thou complain as if God were obliged to give it thee? No, (saith he) submit to God. That's one thing, but the Manner is proper to the second Particular I mentioned is what follows, *Resist the Devil, and he will flee from you.* Altho this Lust of Envy rise, (saith he) yet it never comes to any Act of Consent, never breaks forth into any Act of Consent, never produceth any gross Effect, but the Devil is in it. Now then, *resist thou the Devil.* What is the Meaning of that? Thou that dependest upon God to subdue this Spirit of Envy in thee that is still arising, resist the Devil. He means this, that the Lusts in a Man put him not upon a gross Act without the Devil; the Devil is in it then, therefore resist, keep thy Will stedfast against this Satan, *resist the Devil, and he will flee from thee.* There is a Compact as it were between God and Satan in such Cases, he doth say to Satan, if that the Soul doth resist thee thou shalt flee: Even as when Christ was tempted, there was this Law of the Temptation, that if Christ did resist, if he stood out from Consent, the Devil was to leave him. So that indeed and in truth, the Effect of this Exhortation, *resist the Devil,* it is this, that tho these Lusts rise again and again, yet they should, in Dependance upon God who gives more Grace, not give up their Will to the Consent, for the Devil can never hurt us without the Consent of our own Wills. It is, I say, to take heed of giving Consent to a gross Sin when we are in Dependance upon the Power of God to give Grace or Faith, or any thing else we would have of his Spirit. And he mentioneth this, to what end and purpose? Not as if these moved God to work, for a Man's Fear to offend God doth not move him to work, but because it is uncomely, it is against the Law of Dependance, against the Obligation of it to do otherwise. When a Man depends upon the Power of God to work more Grace, to work the Will and the Deed, for a Man then to commit gross Sins, is against the Law of Dependance. So you have it in *Heb.* 2. 6, 7. *Take heed lest your Hearts be hardned through the Deceitfulness of Sin.* As he bids them take heed of Unbelief, so of being hardned with the Deceitfulness of Sin, it is all one with resisting the Devil in the Interpretation I have given; for as Unbelief makes a Man depart from God, so Consent to sin keeps Men in Unbelief, and so casteth the Work behind-hand again and again. Now tho a going on in a Dependance upon God with a Fearfulness to offend God upon whom a Man dependeth, doth not move God to do any thing, for what he doth is of Grace, yet notwithstanding by way of removing an Impediment it hath its Place, for there would be a Hindrance otherwise. As a Patient that takes Physick can do nothing to make the Physick work, yet he can abstain from what shall hinder the working of it; he can abstain from drinking, or from eating before it, or whatever else is required: and as a Woman, tho she cannot conceive, yet she may take heed of what is any Hindrance of Conception, of Journies, and violent Motions, and the like: So it is here, tho a Man cannot further his own Salvation by working any thing at all, simply considered, as what himself doth, and tho a Fearfulness to offend move not God simply, yet the contrary would put God off, that is certain; and it is against the Law of Dependance between God and us. Therefore saith the Apostle here, while Christ is forming in your Hearts, take heed of doing any thing that will provoke the great God; and if you will have more Grace, resist the Devil, and you will find this to be true, *he will flee from you.* So that tho this Fearing and Trembling doth not help forward our Salvation, *propriè & per se,* as they say, that is, in it self properly, or as if it did reach the Effect it self, yet it doth it *per accidens, it removeth that which would be destructive*, and would hinder. Tho it doth not move God, yet not to do it may provoke God.

If you ask what Sins a Man should forbear in Dependance upon God, and upon the Power of God in working Faith?

1. I may instance even in this of Envying, because *James* instanceth in it. There are some Sins that are more contrary to a Dependance upon the Power of God to work

Part 3. work in us; as now to think with one's self I have waited thus long upon God, and he doth not answer; I have attempted to believe, and I know not whether I have true Faith in me or no; but others have; such a Soul was wrought upon but the other Day, and he is full of Assurance. Envying at this, and thinking much of this is contrary to dependance upon God; take heed therefore, lest the Devil go and get thy Consent to such Envyings; take heed lest thou nourish and cherish them in thy Heart; resist the Devil in these, that he may flee from thee; for these, I say, are contrary to that Dependance thou hast upon the Power of God: for is not his Power free? *You lust and have not* (saith he, *Jam.* 4. 2.) *because you ask amiss*, and you envy and lust, and have it not while that Disposition is in you; for remember it is Grace which is the thing you ask, and if it be Grace, shall not God do with his own Grace what he will? Therefore if he will give it to another sooner than unto thee, shalt thou envy him? What art thou depending upon? art not thou depending upon the Power of God? and is not that free? Submit thy self to God, and put thy Mouth in the Dust. It was *Cain*'s Sin, that when he was to deal with God for Acceptation, and his Brother's Sacrifice was accepted and not his, he was wroth and full of envy against his Brother, and that spoil'd him, and undid him. It was Esau's Sin, that he envy'd, because *Jacob* was accepted and not he. When thou feel'st others that have attained to much Assurance, and to much Faith, and still thy Spirit is kept under Hatches, under Temptation, and under much Unability to believe, this Example of other younger Christians than thou, that have attained sooner than thy self to much Assurance, because God flows in upon them; the Example of this I say, should rather encourage thee, than cause thee to repine. As Beggars at a Door though they are not served first, yet when they see others served, they do not repine at this, but they are encouraged to see that still others as they come are served; for suppose others are served first, yet God will lift thee up in his due time, as the Apostle saith, *Submit unto God* (saith he, *Jam.* 4. 7.) *and he will lift thee up in his due time* So *Peter* also hath it, 1 *Pet.* 5. 6. God hath a time to lift thee up if thou wilt submit unto him. You know the Example of the Woman of *Canaan* when Christ saith to her, *first let the Children be served*: She answers; *Yea, but Dogs may have Crumbs when the Children are served; let me but have Crumbs while they are eating, or Crumbs after they have done, it will serve my turn.* She was so far from repining that Christ had Children, that he would first give to this, and then to that before her, that she says, *Lord, I confess I am a Dog, give me but the Crumbs when they have done.* Such a Spirit as this, that thus goes forth in a Dependance upon God without repining, and thus submits unto God, with such a Spirit will God co-work. Let it be so far, I say, from causing thee to repine, as let it strike thy Heart with Sense of thy own Unworthiness, and encourage thee to continue in thy dependance.

2. So likewise, Impatience is another Sin; when thou hast waited long, O thou crieest out, *I can wait no longer*, as the Psalmist said. He spake it in respect of evil Doers, and their Prosperity in temporal things. *Fret not thy self because of evil Doers*, as being a thing opposite to Quietness and trusting in the Lord. For Soul to be thus turbulent, and to be up in Arms if God come not presently, this is contrary to Dependance. Remember that God giveth Grace to the Humble Grace to those that put their Mouths in the Dust, *Isa.* 30. 7. *Your Strength is to sit still*: and (as *Lam.* 3. 28. hath it) to *sit alone*. There is a double sitting alone, or sitting still: the one is to do nothing at all, and not to stir to lay hold upon God and upon Christ at all; this is not the sitting still, or sitting alone the Prophet means, but there is a sitting still in respect of Impatiency; of quelling all impatient Thoughts, in opposition to Turbulency of Spirit, which ariseth from Man's self; that if God must not give him what he would have now, he can stay no longer. I say the Heart must be quiet, it must be sedate, it must submit to God, wait upon God, and he will do it in his due time. And so much for the second Direction imported by this Fear and Trembling.

CHA

CHAP. V.

We ought to use our Endeavours to believe, being very watchful not to neglect any gracious Opportunities which God affordeth us.

WE should also tremble for fear of omitting any Opportunity that God giveth. That you have also, *James* 4. it follows there *(v.8.) Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you.* And when God doth draw nigh to you to give more Grace, then especially draw near to him. Now drawing nigh to God is coming to such Duties, or using such Means wherein God doth draw nigh to a Man. Mark the Apostle's Phrase, He doth not only say, Go pray, or go humble your selves, or fast, and the like (altho he exhorts to these afterwards in the Case of Relapsing) but he prefaceth all here with this; First, *Draw nigh to God:* that is, point the Aim of your Souls to be to draw nigh to the Presence of God, and let nothing satisfy you in all you do, but God's drawing nigh to you; which if you do, you will never rest in any Duties you perform. He exhorts you so to draw nigh unto God. I will not insist upon that, but as I take it these Words; and so likewise, *the trembling to omit an Opportunity,* do import, that there are special Times wherein one hath a more special Dependance upon the Power of God, for the working of Faith. There are special Times, I say, in which God doth draw nigh, and a Man should tremble to omit any such Opportunity. It is intimated in the Text here likewise, *Phil.* 2. 12, 13. for it is God (saith he) *that worketh in you the Will and the Deed, according to his good Pleasure.* Mark that Expression; there is a good Pleasure of God (saith he) which exalteth and sheweth it self in this, in helping Men, and working with Men when he will, and how he will, and at such a time as he himself thinks meet. Now then as the diseased Men (you know it is the ordinary Comparison) that lay at the Pool, when the Pool was stirred, presently stept in; so do you join with God, and work out with God, when you find that he begins to work as sometimes he doth, in a more especial manner. You shall find in *Jer.* 31. 18. that when *Ephraim* found that God began with him, having been formerly wild and unaccustomed to the Yoke, when God began to chastise him, and so to work upon his Heart afresh, *Ephraim* says, *thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised; turn thou me, and I shall be turned,* that follows: I take the meaning to be this; it is as if he had said, *Lord, I have gone on like an unruly Heifer unaccustomed to the Yoke, thou hast begun so far as to lay a great Chastisement upon me, and thou hast awakened my Heart: O Lord, take this time to turn me! Now turn me, and I shall be turned: Alas, I cannot do it of my self, I shall be an Heifer again if thou leavest me alone, but thou begunnest to chasten me, and to open my Heart, and it is in order to turning to thee: Lord, now turn me, and I shall be turned.* When you find God doth draw near to you, use all that strength that God doth give you in drawing nigh to you; convert the whole Stock of it to attempts on believing. If a Man have but a little Stock to trade withal, he will employ it in what is absolutely necessary, he will not go and lay it out in every thing which soon it may be spent upon, but what is absolutely necessary and best for him. When God doth draw near to thee, and begins to enlighten thee, do not go and pray after Knowledg, and Gifts, and the like; no, turn thy Strength to Faith, to believe, that is the one thing necessary, and God will be as willing to help thee that way as another, for this is the great Work of God. And let me say this to you likewise, when God doth draw near to your Hearts by Promises, or by Exhortations, attend to them. You read the Word, and you attend upon the Word, and you have Exhortations and Promises delivered to you in the Word; now thou that art a poor Soul, and lieſt at the Pit's Brink of Believing, thou comest and heareſt a Promise that doth nearly concern thy Condition, for it speaks to the very thing, to that which thy Soul hath long desired and sought for, and is a Promise fitted and suted to thy present Condition; or there is an Exhortation made to thee in what thou readest or hearest, that is as fully directed to thee as thou canst desire, to stir thee up to do what which thy Soul saith, this is the thing which thou must do next: Now I say, when God comes thus nigh you, either by suggesting Promises thus, or by what

means

means or ways ſoever it be, (and the more occaſional the better) whether by Ex-
Part 3. hortation, or the like; be not coy now, for God draws near to thee, do thou cloſe in and clap in with that Promiſe, or with that Exhortation, and ſay, Lord now ſet this Exhortation upon my Heart, this Promiſe upon my Heart; this is the thing thou haſt ſpoken of ſo long, now ſet it upon my Heart. *Be not faithleſs but believing*, ſaith Chriſt to *Thomas*, John 20. 27. There is a Coineſs and an Averſeneſs in the Soul to put it off, ſaying, *I ſee not enough to perſwade me*: but *be not faithleſs* (ſaith Chriſt) *but believe*. Chriſt had anſwered *Thomas* to his own Deſire, had fitted him juſt, for ſaith *Thomas*, *Unleſs I ſee the Prints in his Hands and in his Side, I will not believe*. Why, ſaith Chriſt, now have I uſed a means and a way fitted to thy own Deſire, here are my Hands, and here is the Hole in my Side, feel them, and be not faithleſs but believe, ſtrike in now with this to believe. So I ſay to thee, God comes with Promiſes and Exhortations that do fully ſute thy Condition, now do thou look up to God, be not faithleſs but believe.

I ſhall give you ſome ſutable Inſtances, firſt in Promiſes, and then in Exhortations.

1. When any Promiſe comes that is fitly ſpread for thy Sore, (as I may ſo expreſs it) a Plaiſter fit as can be, a Promiſe that is ſuted to the Wants and Indigencies of thy own Eſtate, Lord, ſay thou, do but ſet this Seal upon my Spirit. Still as he offers and brings thee a Promiſe, do thou go and ſpeak to him again; as he ſpeaks to thee in a Promiſe, do thou urge him to fulfil it. Thus I ſay when God doth thus draw near to you, do you draw near to him. I ſhall give you but an Inſtance or two of the Soul's thus drawing near to God.

1*ſt*. The firſt is the Inſtance of the Apoſtle *Paul* in *Rom.* 15. 9—13. he had there in *ver.* 9, 10, 11. begun and heaped up four Promiſes together (I do not know the like in all the Scripture) of the Old Teſtament that did aſſure him that God did intend Mercy to the Gentiles: *That the Gentiles* (ſaith he) *might glorify God for his Mercy, as it is written, I will confeſs to thee among the Gentiles.* And again he ſaith, *Rejoice ye Gentiles with his People*: And again, *Praiſe the Lord all ye Gentiles.* And again *Iſaiah* ſaith, *There ſhall be a Root of* Jeſſe, *and he that ſhall riſe to reign over the Gentiles, in him ſhall the Gentiles truſt.* Here were Promiſes now fully fitted to the Romans who were Gentiles, ſpeaking to their very Condition, to help and to ſtrengthen their Faith. When he had delivered theſe Promiſes that thus nearly did concern them (and the laſt of all the Promiſes he mentioned, was, *In him ſhall the Gentiles truſt*) inſtantly what doth the Apoſtle do? He claps in with a Prayer to God for them, (teaching them what they ſhould do upon the like occaſion) a Prayer that God would make good theſe Promiſes to them. *Now the God of Hope*, ſaith he, (thoſe are the very next Words) *the God of Faith*, (for Faith and Hope are oftentimes taken for one in the Scripture) *fill you with all Joy and Peace in believing.* The Promiſe before was, *In him ſhall the Gentiles truſt*; here comes a Prayer now, O Lord wilt thou make good theſe Promiſes to theſe Gentiles, teaching them by this what they themſelves ſhould do upon all ſuch Occaſions. *The God of Hope* (ſays he) *fill you with all Peace and Joy in believing, that ye may abound in Hope through the Power of the Holy Ghoſt.* The thing exhorted to being above their Power, and lying in God alone to work, to ſhew this Dependance, and what way they were to take upon all ſuch Occaſions, he prays thus for them. And this was the uſual manner of the Apoſtle, for you ſhall find him praying in all his Epiſtles for thoſe to whom he wrote, and he tells them the Words he uſed for them in his Prayer, and his end was, to teach them to pray for the ſame thing. When he would exhort the Epheſians to pray that God would give them Eyes enlightned to know the great things of the Goſpel, how doth he do it? *I alſo* (ſaith he, *Epheſ.* 1. 15, 16.) *after I heard of your Faith in the Lord Jeſus, ceaſe not to give Thanks for you, making mention of you in my Prayers.* Therefore you your ſelves are much more bound to do it. It was but a more artificial way of the Apoſtle's to ſet them on work by his Example, that if he did thus for them, much more they ſhould do it for themſelves. The Text is extreme pertinent to the thing in hand, that when God comes thus to us in a Promiſe, we ſhould preſently clap in with God. When the Apoſtle had ſpoken of Truſt in God, or Hope in God, to which the Gentiles ſhould come, and there was a Promiſe and Prophecy to that purpoſe, he knew that God was only to work it, therefore he goes to him, and goes to him as the God of Hope. And why is he called

called the God of Hope? Because he alone is the God that works Hope in the Heart. His Prayer then is, *Thou hast said, that the Gentiles shall hope in thee; thou that art the God of Hope work it in these Gentiles.* He calls him *the God of Hope* in the same Sense that he had called him *the God of Patience and Consolation*, in *ver.* 5. after having spoken, *ver.* 4. that the Scriptures were written to give us Comfort and Patience: For a Man must have all his Comfort from the Scriptures, for Comfort from them is the true Comfort, and a Man must keep to them: *Thou art the Author of all Comfort*, (says the Apostle) *therefore comfort them*; for that is the Meaning of it. So here he calls him *the God of Hope*, because the thing he desires is Hope in God, and he was the only God to work it. Now as the Promise was that the Gentiles should trust in him, so the thing he prays for is, that they may be fill'd with all Joy and Peace in believing. And when you hear a Promise, do not pray barely and scantily for the thing promised. He had mentioned no more but trusting in Christ, but he prays you see for Joy and Peace, and for abounding in it too, and that through believing: and (let me tell you that too) all Joy and Comfort that is not in the way of believing is no true Joy and Comfort. And then, Thirdly, He adds, *Through the Power of the Holy Ghost.* It is the Power of God must work it. He goes forth in the Sense that it is the Power of God that must do it for them, yet because God had promised to do thus and thus, he doth therefore strike in to move God that was the God of working Faith to do it by the Power of the Holy Ghost. You see the Place is every way pertinent to the thing in hand, for he had spoken of a Promise, and of a Promise to the Gentiles at large, which Promise depends for the fulfilling of it upon the Power of God and of the Holy Ghost; he therefore presently prays that God would make it good to these Gentiles, and thereby he teacheth them that when they hear such Promises they should go to God who is the God of that Promise and of that Work, to work it in them, and that in a Dependance upon the Power of God. God indeed is not much taken or moved of himself by this, for he is moved only by what is in himself, but he takes an occasion to do it when we thus go to him with his own Promise; and therefore let us strike in still as a Promise is brought to us by his Providence, either in the preaching, or reading, or hearing of the Word, or any other way, or occasionally, that suteth our Condition.

Book 3.

2dly. There is another Instance of the Woman of *Canaan*, Mark 7. 27. our Saviour Christ did seem to put her off, but the truth is, he did intimate a Promise to her, (and therefore I quote the Story of it as it is in the Evangelist *Mark*) *Let the Children first be filled*, (saith he) *for it is not meet to take the Childrens Bread and cast it unto Dogs.* He doth not deny the Dogs wholly, mark it, but he was a Minister of the Circumcision to confirm the Promises made unto the Fathers, as you have it *Rom.* 15. 8. He was to serve the Circumcision first: now he doth not say that the Dogs should not have the Leavings, no; but saith he, but let the Children first be filled. This poor Woman catcheth hold of that Word presently, for that Word had a hint in it, therefore thought she, surely the Dogs may have the Leavings, they may have the Crumbs that fall while the Children are eating; and therefore she retorts this upon Christ, that tho the Jews were Children, and she a Gentile being a Dog, yet according to the Analogy of that very Similitude and Metaphor he useth, she might have Crumbs, and when the Children were fill'd she might have what was the Refuse and Overplus. Thus Christ you see gives this secret hint, and there was indeed a great hint in it. Now saith the Text, (this is it I quote it for) Christ said unto her, *For this Saying go thy way.* One Evangelist hath it, *Be it as thou wilt*, thy Will be done as it were, and not mine; thou shalt carry it: but here the Text saith, *For this Saying go thy way, the Devil is gone out of thy Daughter.* Christ in appearance speaks half Popery, that he should thus respect her Faith and her Saying; therefore *Bellarmine* urgeth it for the point of Faith to justify a Man in a formal and in a meritorious way. No, but the Meaning is this, that upon the occasion of her Expression of her Faith thus taking hold of the Promise, and catching hold upon what Christ had said, and retorting it upon him again thus, he spoke thus graciously to her. As she upon occasion of his Words said, *the Dogs may have the Crumbs*, he upon occasion of her Saying is overcome, and yieldeth to her. So say I, when thou takest occasion upon a Promise to strike in, as this poor Woman did, upon occasion of thy striking in, God cometh in to thee; he is taken oftentimes with the retorting of a Man's Spirit to him again with his own Words. You will

Part 3. ſay when you hear Promiſes, O if I knew they belonged to me in particular, I ſhould be incouraged to lay hold on them. Alas! do but think with your ſelves how remote the Inſtances of Promiſes I have given you, both as to the Romans and the Woman, were from determinately pointing at them. The Promiſes the Apoſtle reckons up were made to the Gentiles, and there were Millions of Gentiles beſides theſe Romans, yet the Promiſes being indefinite to the Gentiles, the Apoſtle prays that God would fulfil them to the Romans. How remote was the poor Woman of *Canaan* from the Promiſe: She was a Dog, and there were ten thouſand thouſand Dogs ſuch as ſhe, yet ſhe takes hold of the hint that Chriſt gave her, and her need makes her clap in and ſtrike in with it. Therefore do not ſtand and ſay, That God fit the Promiſe to me, that I ſhall have a full and abſolute Aſſurance that this Promiſe is mine, I will not believe: No, ſtrike in afore; *Paul* did here for the Romans, and you ſee the poor Woman did ſo.

2. The like I may ſay for Exhortations. When God doth come with Exhortations to you to believe, the Promiſe is laid before you, and you are preſſed and urged to lay hold upon them. Conſider now that excellent Saying of *Luther*, *Faith will but ſuffer God to do good to it.* When God I ſay comes and pins Promiſes to you, puts them into your Heart, when he doth come with Exhortations in the Miniſtry of the Word to lay hold, then lay hold, and ſtrike in, for God draws near to you; ſay, Lord ſet this Exhortation upon my Heart, let that which thou exhorteſt me to, work it in me. You ſhall find this, that in the Scripture there are Exhortations to ſuch things as you cannot do, as to make you a new Heart. You have ſuch an Exhortation in *Ezek.* 18. 31. where the Prophet exhorteth us to make us new Hearts. Saith the poor Soul, Alas how can I make my ſelf a new Heart! Lord, thou knoweſt I cannot do it. What doth God beſides? As he makes this Exhortation in *Ezek.* 18. 31. ſo in the ſame *Ezekiel*, ch. 11. 19. he makes Promiſes of giving a new Heart; *I will put a new Spirit within you*, (ſaith he) *and I will take away the ſtony Heart, and give you an Heart of Fleſh.* Here now as in one Place he exhorts them, ſo in another Place he makes a Promiſe to give it. The Apoſtle *James* giveth them this Exhortation, (*James* 4. 8.) *Cleanſe your Hands ye Sinners:* And the ſame you have in *Jer.* 4. 14. *Waſh thine Heart from Wickedneſs.* Now look in *Ezek.* 36. 25, 26, 27. and you ſhall find a Promiſe that God will pour his Spirit upon them, and waſh them from all their Filthineſs. And ſo in *Deut.* 10. 16. he exhorts them to circumciſe their Hearts; you ſhall find in the ſame Book, *ch.* 30. 6. this Promiſe, *I will circumciſe thy Heart, and the Heart of thy Seed.* Well then when you hear Exhortations to any thing, conſider, that God's Promiſes are as large as his Exhortations, as to the Matter of them; that is, there is nothing he exhorteth unto, but there is ſome Promiſe or other for to work it. Now then I ſay, when God comes and exhorts thee to that which thou art next to do, do thou go and urge God with his Promiſe, and ſay to him, Lord, this is that thou now exhorteſt me to, and it is that which I have waited for long, and now thou putſt me upon it afreſh; thou haſt made a Promiſe to work it, Lord work it in me according to thy Promiſe. Thus I ſay, when God comes upon thee with an Exhortation, ſtrike thou in with him; when he draws near to thee, draw thou near to him. And this is another way of working out our Salvation with Fear and Trembling, fearing to omit any Opportunity wherein God comes near us, either by Promiſes that concern our Condition or by Exhortations; and where Exhortations come near thee, there Promiſes are made anſwerable in ſome Place or other, and do thou urge the Promiſe together with the Exhortation; and not only tell him of his Promiſe, that he hath promiſed to give what he exhorts thee to, ſubmitting thy ſelf to him, laying thy ſelf at his Foot; but alſo tell him this, that it is as eaſy for him to ſpeak the Word in thy Heart to do it, as it is for him to ſpeak to thy outward Ear, for he may do the one as well as the other. You ſhall find that God wiſheth that there were ſuch an Heart in his People that they would do thus and thus: Tell him it is as eaſy for him to do it, as it is for him to wiſh it. What ſaith the poor Man in *Mat.* 8. 2? *Lord, if thou wilt, thou canſt make me clean.* The truth is, he had not a Promiſe, he had no thing to have Recourſe to but the Power of God, which now we are dealing with in the point of Faith, ſpeaking to a Soul that is in dependance upon it. This I am ſure of, (ſaith he) it muſt lie in thy Will if thou doſt not do it for me, for it is in thy Power to do it. What ſaith Chriſt in anſwer? *Shall any Soul come to me, and*

say at latter day, that he told me I was able to do that for him which in Faith he ask'd, and would not, or shall challenge me that I did not? No, *I will* (saith he) *be thou clean.* Christ will not have a Soul to be frustrated that comes thus, and acknowledgeth his Power, and submitteth unto it, for so this poor Man did; *Lord* (saith he) *I am unworthy to be healed*; (for it is a modest way of Expression) it lies only upon thy Will, and I subject my self unto it. And so the Ruler whose Daughter was sick, deals just so with his Power; *Mat.* 9. 28. *Speak the word* (saith he) *and she shall live.* He submitteth himself to him. When poor Souls, I say, do thus as it were lie at the catch, and wait for a Word, or for an Incouragement from God, and upon occasion of a Word of Exhortation from God, do go to him and tell him of his Power, that if he will he is able; and when he hath made an Exhortation and a Promise, do urge this upon him, the Lord will hear such a Soul in the end, and he will in the end satisfy his Desire. Nay, suppose thou beest guilty of a great deal of Unbelief and Impatience, and envying of others, and what is said in the Word by way of Reproof comes near thee, and strikes thy very Soul, go thou and take an occasion upon those very Reproofs, to go to God to work the contrary of that in thee which he reproveth thee for. In *Luke* 17. 5. the Apostles said unto the Lord, *Increase our Faith.* The truth is, it doth not cohere with the Words before, and so all Interpreters do generally acknowledg; now then the comparing of one Scripture with another will help us out. What is Christ's Expression in the Words afterward? *If you had Faith as a Grain of Mustard-seed, ye might say unto this Sycamin-tree, Be thou plucked up by the Root, and be thou planted in the Sea, and it should obey you.* Now if you look in *Mat.* 17. 20. there you shall find it thus; *Jesus said unto his Disciples, because of your Unbelief you could not cast him out; for verily I say unto you, if ye had Faith as a Grain of Mustard-seed, ye shall say unto this Mountain, Remove hence to yonder Place, and it shall remove, and nothing shall be unpossible unto you.* Now clearly, by comparing one Place with another, (Christ using the same Expression, *If ye have Faith as a Grain of Mustard-seed*; and speaking in one Place of removing a Sycamin-tree, (for he used both certainly) and in another of removing a Mountain) it is evident that the occasion of the Apostles saying, *Lord increase our Faith*, was, that Christ chid them for their Unbelief, and told them that the Reason why they could not cast the Devil out of the Child was, because they were a faithless Generation. And now upon Christ's chiding them thus for their Unbelief, what do they do? *Lord* (say they) *increase our Faith.* Poor Men! So that now when God meets by a Reproof with what the Heart is in this way guilty of, let that be an occasion to thee, as it was to the Apostles here, for to go to God, and thus to pray to him, Lord, do thou take this away from me, do thou work in me the contrary to that thou reprovest me for. And as that Prayer had an Effect upon Christ to give more Faith to his Apostles, so thou wilt find a sutable Effect of thy Prayer too.

Lastly; Acknowledg still all that God doth do for thee in the way of Believing. I told you in one of the Premises I made, that God doth give Power to one thing when he doth not to another, and that you are to act so far as he gives Power. This Text in *Phil.* 2. 12, 13. hath it, that he works the Will, and he works the Deed; first the Will, and then the Deed it self, and he goes on thus by degrees, and this of his good Pleasure. He will work the Will first one day, and the Deed another; he will produce a Desire after the thing, and then the thing it self afterwards. Now still as God doth work, acknowledg his good Pleasure in it; and so far still as God enables thee to do, to act in the way of believing, so far do thou acknowledg his Grace and good Pleasure in it: *Lord*, (saith the poor Man, *Mark* 9. 24.) *I believe, help thou my Unbelief.* Christ asked him, if he could believe? how far he could go in believing? Lord, (saith he) I can believe a little, help thou out with the rest. He acknowledgeth God in the one, and hath Recourse to him for the other. In *Rom.* 9. 17. saith the Apostle, *It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth Mercy.* His Scope is, that they should be thankful to God, and not ascribe any thing to their own willing, or to their own running, when they had done; and withal to remember, that in depending upon the Power of God, the greatest Dependance of all was upon his Mercy. The thing I say is to that purpose worth your Observation, and you may make a distinct thing of it if you will. When thou art in a Dependance upon God, and practisest these fore-men-

Part 3. tioned Rules, tho weakly, yet thou sinnest against him again and again, and art put off by it; and whereas thou art to work out thy Salvation with Fear and Trembling, thou provokest him oftentimes, and sinnest again and again against him, yea against the very Obligation of that Dependance thou hast in thy Eye for Power from God to work and help forward Faith in thee. To comfort thee in this, observe how these Words come in, they come in as a Corollary from the Testimony of *Moses* in the Verse before; for he saith to *Moses, I will have Mercy on whom I will have Mercy, and I will have Compassion on whom I will have Compassion.* So then saith he, *It is not in him that willeth, nor in him that runneth, but in God that sheweth Mercy.* Why doth he use the word *Mercy* here? Because that Soul that is in Dependance upon God to work the Will and the Deed in Salvation, hath as much to do (if not more) with the Mercy of God as with the Power of God, for it is Mercy sets that Power on work. Suppose thou sinnest against him, and provokest him, yet be not discouraged, remember that in willing and in doing thou hast to deal with God that sheweth Mercy. In waiting on his Power thou wilt sin against him again and again, therefore still remember *it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth Mercy.* So here in the Text it is intimated too, *It is God that works according to his good Pleasure,* that is, the good Pleasure of his everlasting Will, as it is in *Ephes.* 1. 5. Now the Apostle doth not use this Speech to take Men off from running, but to put them in mind, that if in running they do backslide, and do contrary to God's Pleasure, and provoke that God upon whose Power they depend, they should yet remember, that he hath Mercy as well as Power. His Mercy then should incourage thee still to depend upon that Power, tho thou sinnest against that Power, and still thou shouldst have Mercy and Power in thine Eye. The Psalmist puts them both together in *Psal.* 62. 11, 12. *God hath spoken once, twice have I heard this, that Power belongeth unto God; also unto thee, O Lord, belongeth Mercy.* Therefore now if you will go to work out Faith with God, and to work out your own Salvation in a way of believing, as you are to have Recourse to the Power of God, so you must have Recourse to his Mercy; and tho you fail in these Directions, yet remember that *it is not in him that willeth, nor in him that runneth, but in God that sheweth Mercy out of the good Pleasure of his Will.*

OF

OF THE OBJECT and ACTS OF Justifying Faith.

PART III.
Of the Properties of Faith.

BOOK IV.

Tho Faith be a difficult Work above our Power, yet God commands us to use our utmost Endeavours to believe. The Reasons why God commands us so to do, and how the Infinite Power of God in working Faith, and our own Endeavours are very well consistent together. Discouragements remov'd, which may arise either from our own Unability to believe, or from the Sense of our great Sinfulness, or from the Thoughts of an absolute Decree of Election, resolving to save only some particular Persons. Directions to guide us in our Endeavours to believe.

CHAP. I.

Tho Faith be a difficult Work above all our Abilities, yet God commands us to use our utmost Endeavours to believe, and it is our Duty so to do. The Reasons of it assign'd.

HEB. IV. 11.

Let us labour therefore to enter into that Rest, lest any Man fall after the same Example of Unbelief.

WHEN I prov'd before that all our natural Powers are so far from helping us to believe, that in this Matter they disable us, I might likewise have come to the Affections, and it were easy to shew how that they are all against the Work of Faith, and opposite to it, and in this I might be very large. For take all those Affections which we call good, and are raised up in the Hearts and Spirits of Men, while in their natural Condition, as *Zeal for God*, (which Men are capable of) as the Apostle calls it in *Rom.* 10. 2. Zeal you know is the intending of all the Affections: now one would think that in the Heart of those Men where we see a Zeal of God, or a Zeal for God, this Zeal should not be an Enemy unto Faith; yet the Apostle tells us plainly it

In Book 2. of this third Part.

Part 3. it is in that, *Rom.* 10. *I do my Country-men* (saith he) *no wrong:* (ver. 2.) *For I bear them Record they have a Zeal for God, but it is not according to Knowledg*, i. e. it is not according to Faith, for by Knowledg he means Faith there; for *ver.* 3. says he, *They have not submitted themselves unto the Righteousness of God.* I might instance, I say, in all other Affections whatsoever that are good. And as for evil Affections, you will easily believe, that they are Enemies to Faith, as all the Lusts of Men are. You need take but one Scripture for it, *John* 5. 44. Christ speaks there in the Language of Impossibility, of Inconsistency, that Faith should ever be wrought in the Heart whilst Lusts remain, that they and Faith should stand together. *How can ye believe* (says he) *if ye receive Honour one of another, and do not seek that Honour that is of God only?*

I might likewise shew you, that all that comes from us, either take Righteousness that is past, or all Endeavours for time to come, as they cannot help us to the Attainment of Faith, so they are Enemies to the way of Believing. If we consider all the Righteousness that comes from us, let corrupt Nature be never so much advanced, it is an Enemy, it strengthneth the Enmity that is in the Heart against the way of believing. Men cannot have a Righteousness of their own, (as they count it) but they are conceited of it. If Men have any Appearance of Righteousness, O it must needs be Grace, it must needs presently be accepted. And the Conceit of our own Righteousness is that which hinders us from seeing need of, and looking after Christ and Faith. The Pharisees thought themselves righteous, and they were so far from Faith and Coming unto Christ, that Christ professeth *he came not to call such*, Mat. 9. 13. As the Law was not given for a righteous Man, (the Law in the legal Tenour of it) so nor the Gospel neither. Faith, in the fundamental Law of it, (as I have formerly express'd it) is directly opposite to that Conceit of a Man's own Righteousness, which is in every ones Heart by Nature. Herein lies the Pith of Faith, *to believe on him that justifies the Ungodly*, and that in opposition to all in a Man's self; so you have it, *Rom.* 4. 5. You know *Laodicea*, that thought her self rich, was kept off from going to Christ to buy Gold of him: and the richer a Man's Heart and Life is of appearing Goodness, the lother he is to break (as he must do) and become a Bankrupt, that he may have Christ; the lother he is to suffer so much Loss, and to count all things else but as *Dung and Dross*, as the Apostle saith. As a Man's own Righteousness for time past, so some kind of Endeavours for time to come, are a hindrance to Faith. I do not only mean Endeavours of Changes, and Reformations of Heart and Life, and the like, that these undermine Faith; but oftentimes Endeavours after Faith it self (when they are put forth in a Man's own Strength) do hinder and undermine Faith. Endeavours for the time to come, if they be not guided aright, do secretly undermine Faith, and the Work of it. A Man when he sees his former Sinfulness and Want of Christ, and the Necessity of Faith, and hath suffered a Shipwrack of all his own Righteousness, yet he begins to build a Ship anew of his own Cost, and he thinks by haling, and tugging, and rowing, in the end to arrive at Christ; and whilst a Man doth so, Jesus Christ goes as fast from him as he makes after Christ, whilst he doth it out of his own Strength. Whereas if a Man would give up and lay his naked Soul, that little Cock-boat which hath so great a Venture in it, if he would put it into the Ship of God's Free Grace, as I may so express it, and commit it self unto it and unto Christ, and suffer the Streams and Gales of the Spirit in the use of Means, (using of them but as Means) to carry him along, the Soul would attain unto Faith: But Men seek after Faith it self, not in a way of Faith, but as a Work of the Law in their own Strength, which Strength Man under the legal Covenant once had. To beat down this Presumption is the Apostle's Design, *Rom.* 9. 16. *So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that shewet Mercy.* In such a Presumption *a Man condemns himself in what he allows*, (as the same Apostle says in another case) a Man undoes himself in what he endeavoureth and if God be not the more merciful, a Man goes to Hell endeavouring and striving to go to Heaven. This the Apostle clears in this Chapter out of which I have no chosen my Text, which refers unto the Example of the Israelites; for he had propounded the Example of the Israelites and their Unbelief, and their falling short of *Canaan*, as Types of us under the Gospel. Now it was not only their Lusts, the Flesh-pots of *Egypt*, that hindred them from coming into *Canaan*, but it was by cau

cause they sought to go into it, and yet not by a way of Faith. You know God offered to carry them thither, to cast out their Enemies before them, if they would have gone in his Way (even those that perished they might have entred) but that Way they rejected through Unbelief. And then you shall find in *Numb.* 14. 40. that they would enter upon the Work in their own Strength, and rose up early in the Morning to do it; but what doth God do for this? He brings them back again to the very brink of the Red Sea where they were afore. So it is even with poor Souls, that have gone far in the Wilderness, and are nigh Heaven, nigh as it were to believing; and yet not subjecting their Souls and Endeavours unto God's Way of working Faith, but attempting it in their own Strength, they are cast behindhand again, and in their own Sense are as far off as at first: and when God hath humbled them for endeavouring in their own Strength, they are fit to enter. For God hath said in 1 *Sam.* 2. 6. *By his own Strength shall no Man prevail:* but Men seeing no Strength in themselves to save themselves, and being convinced of that, yet think they may go out in their own Strength to get this Christ that shall save them, and so being still in themselves, they never prevail, *for by a Man's own Strength he shall never prevail:* so doth the Holy Ghost speak, he speaks it of all things else, but especially it holds true in the matter of Believing.

Book 4.

You see in this Text, *Heb.* 4. 11. that the Holy Ghost makes an Exhortation to us by Faith, to labour to enter into that Rest: And this Text I shall make no other use of, nor of any thing about it, but meerly so far forth as it may become a Subject to this Common-place we have in hand. And there are two Ends or Purposes which this Text will serve for: The one is to shew you, that notwithstanding what you have heard, that Faith is not of our selves, it is the Gift of God; yet we are to labour to enter into that Rest, and labour to believe. And the second thing it serves for is this, (and it is a great Point) that an indefinite Promise, that is, a Promise that God will save some, not naming who, is a sufficient Ground to draw in any Man's Heart to believe, take whatever Ground of Faith is held forth in the Word. And this is natural to the Text, and to the coherence of it; for he had said, *ver.* 6. *It remains that some must enter into Rest:* and his Inference from that is this, which we have here in the 11*th ver.* *Let us labour therefore to enter into that Rest.* When Men hear that Faith is not of our selves, but that it is the Gift of God, there are these three things do usually arise in the Spirits of Men.

1. Either Men do cavil at this Doctrine, as lying as a Stumbling-block in their Way, that if all that we can do cannot produce Faith, but it is the Gift of God, and that God must do all, then say they, Men were as good sit still and not labour and endeavour at all after it, for God must do all: and these are Cavillers.

2. On the other side, such poor Souls as desire to attain to Faith, and to labour for it under the use of Mans; yet hearing that Faith is not of our selves, yea that a Man's own Endeavours, if they be out of a Man's own Strength, as I have said, cannot obtain Faith, yea, they are Hindrances unto Believing; they are discouraged and disheartned from all Endeavours; they think it cuts the Sinews of all Endeavours, strikes at the Root, and causeth all to wither.

3. There are those that do expresly teach, and have taught this Doctrine, that a Man having seen his lost Condition, is to do nothing else but to stand and wait, whenas God (without any Puttings forth, or Actings towards Faith) will by an Almighty Power overpower his Soul to believe.

Now then, that there may be an Answer and Satisfaction given to all these three, I have taken this Text as the Bottom for that Discourse, that shall be an answer to them all.

After I have opened the Text very briefly, and shewn you how it is a Bottom to what I shall deliver, then I will come to do these three things more especially. I shall answer first the Objection made, as it is a Cavil. I shall secondly answer it as it is a Discouragement to good Souls. And thirdly, shew you what kind of Endeavours they are, and how they are to be managed which God hath appointed to attain unto Faith.

But first I must open the Text, and I shall do that exceeding briefly. You see it is an Exhortation that we should endeavour to enter into that Rest.

1. Let us consider what is meant by entring into Rest, which is to be the Object of our Endeavour. There are two things intended by it.

1. The

Part 3. 1. The first is more general, *viz.* the Possession of Heaven, that we are to make sure of that, that we be not as the foolish Virgins, upon whom the Door was shut, whenas others entred in, *Matth.* 25. 10. Thus entring into Rest, is often taken in Scripture for the full Possession of Heaven. So in the 10*th* Verse of this very Chapter, our Saviour Christ's ascending into Heaven, is called his entring into Rest, as his Work was ended, as God entred into Rest after his Work was ended. (*Mat.* 25. 23.) when Men come to possess Heaven, it is called *entring into their Master's Joy:* As when a Man is said to have a full Possession of an Office given him, he is said to enter upon it. An Heir that was under Age, had a Right and Title to his Inheritance; yet he enters upon his Land and Estate when he comes to Years. So that now if you take it in this Sense, then this is the meaning of it, that we should endeavour to be found in the Number of those that shall enter into that Rest.

But secondly, by entring into Rest, is meant more particularly the Attainment of true saving Faith, whereby we come to have a sure Title to that Rest in Heaven, and to make at present thereby such an Entrance upon it as gives a Right before Possession, which comes afterwards. And this I make plain to you by these two Reasons.

First; By what is said at the third Verse of this very Chapter, *We which have believed do enter into Rest:* So that Faith is clearly and plainly an entring into Rest, in the Apostle's Sense in this Chapter. In having an Estate of Land past, besides the Writings there are two Ceremonies used, there is entring upon some Part of it, and there is a giving of some Piece of the Ground, as a Tuft of Earth, and the like. So it here, we by Faith do enter upon this Rest, and we receive then an Earnest of Joy, the Seal of the Spirit, the first Fruits of Heaven. 2. It is evident also that by entring into Rest is meant Believing, by the very Words that follow my Text, for the very next Words are, *Lest any Man fall through the same Example of Unbelief.* He sets before their Eyes the Example of the Israelites, and of those Israelites that went far towards *Canaan*; and yet (saith he) through Unbelief they never entred in to it: Now let us (saith he) take heed of falling through Unbelief as they did; let us therefore labour to attain to true Faith, by which we enter into Rest, and have such a Right to it as we shall never be dispossest. And so now you see that by entring into Rest is meant Believing.

Secondly; The Word here translated Labour, signifies to study to enter into that Rest, to have all the Powers and Faculties in us intended in attaining to true Faith. He expresseth it by a Word that signifies the Labour of the Mind, which is proper to Scholars and Students, whose Minds are taken up with the greatest Intention and the greatest Labour. Now (saith he) there was never any Scholar studied more to find out what is Truth, giving up his Understanding unto God who is the great Enlightner, never any Philosopher ever gave his Mind more to find out natural Truths, than a Believer doth to attain unto true Faith; *We are to search for it as for Silver:* When he therefore saith, *Let us labour to enter into that Rest,* his meaning is, that we should use the utmost of our Endeavours to attain to it, and to attain, as *to the Rest,* so *to the entring into that Rest.* And so I have done with the Exposition of the Words, and you see how they are a Bottom to that Discourse which I mean to proceed in. I shall come now to those Particulars which I have laid down to discourse of. 1. I am to answer this great Cavil, made either by secure profane Persons, or by those that are opposite to the Doctrine of Free Grace, *viz.* that if Faith be not of our selves, and all that is within us be against it, and that God must do all, then we are not to endeavour. The Apostle you see, speaks point blank against it; and notwithstanding the Israelites (who were Types of temporary Believers under the Gospel, and of such as attain not to true Faith) endeavoured to enter into *Canaan*, and yet fell short: he makes this Use of it, that we should therefore labour for to enter into that Rest. But for the answering of this as it is a Cavil more particularly; 1. I say this, that this Doctrine that it is God which works Faith, and that doth all in us in the Matter of Believing, is attended upon and clogged in this, with a like Cavil that all other Mysteries of the Gospel are. The Mystery of the Gospel lies in this, it is a reconciling of Contradictions; and all your Cavillers take part with one part of the Contradiction to overthrow the other. As now, that God should peremptorily elect Men to Salvation, and yet Man's Will should be free; how can these two stand together, say the Cavillers against free Grace and God's everlasting Love? So likewise when they hear that God works Conversion

in Men unresistibly, say they, how can this be if God work upon the free Will of Man? So now here, when we say that it is God only worketh Faith, and that it is his Gift, and that all our Endeavours are not able to produce it; what do they presently conclude and retort upon us? then we were as good lay all Endeavours aside. But really this is all one with that Deceit which hath damned many a Soul, *viz.* if I be elected, whatever I do I shall be saved. It is all one with that kind of Cavil of the Papists that hath accompanied the Doctrine of Justification by Christ alone, and by Faith in him, and that without Works; for, say they, we were then as good do no good Works at all. So now is it here, if that Faith be not of our selves, but it is the Gift of God; then say they, we were as good sit still and endeavour nothing at all. This is the first thing in the General that I premise; that it is, I say, but a like Cavil to all those that carnal Men have made against all the Truths of God, the Mystery of which lies in reconciling these Contradictions. But,

Book 4.

Secondly, To speak more directly to those that cavil thus, and that say, it is therefore in vain to use Endeavours. Let that Man appear or stand out from all the rest at the Day of Judgment, or now in this World, that is able to say, I used my utmost Endeavours to attain Salvation, and could not attain it, God would not give it me. If he did not use his utmost Endeavours, then God is clear. I will not stand now to dispute, whether *de jure*, as we say, if a Man should use his utmost Endeavours, God infallibly would work Grace in that Man's Heart; but, *de facto*, we may challenge all the Sons of Men. And let me tell you this, that at the latter Day when Men shall come to be condemned (I speak this to clear God) God will not go and say, I therefore condemn you because you did not put forth an Act of saving justifying Faith; no, but he will condemn Men because they did not put forth that utermost, which through that Assistance corrupt Nature had from him they might have put forth. When God comes to judg all Mankind, it is said, *That he will judg them that lived under the Law by the Law; and them that lived without the Law, he will judg without the Law*, Rom.2.12. Now it is true, in rigour, whether Men know the Law or not, God might condemn them upon it as if they knew it, for they knew it once in *Adam*, and are bound to know it: but he will not go that way to work; but if Men have lived without the Law, he will consider them but so far forth as the Light of Nature went, and so far judg them; and if they have lived under the Law, then he will proceed in Judgment so far as the Law went, and that Spirit and Strength that accompanies the Law: and so if they lived under the Gospel, he will condemn them for not using that Assistance, that Spirit and Strength that accompanies the Hearts of Men that live under the Gospel, and leads them on to Faith. He will not condemn Men for Negatives, but rather for what is positive, because they loved Darkness rather than Light, and because they would not believe, but cleave to their Lusts. For if any Man attempted and fell short, the Impediment did lie in his own Will. That Point will never come to be disputed whether he could or no; God will cut off all with this, he would not, *Impii non posse est ejus non velle. The Impotency of a wicked Man is his not willing*; and yet this Inability to will is not meerly a moral, but a natural Impotence. That they cannot, is resolved by Christ into their Lusts as the Reason, *Joh.* 5. 40, 44. *Ye will not come to me that ye might have Life; and how can ye believe*, (and why, where lies the Difficulty?) *that receive* (says he, *v.*44.) *Honour one from another?* The Impediment lies in themselves, in their willing the contrary, in their *loving Darkness more than Light.* If indeed the Impediment were extrinsical wholly, a Door lock'd on thee, or that God held it so fast in his Hand that thou couldest not wring it out, then there were room for complaint; but it being intrinsical, in thy Will, thou hast no cause to complain.

3. For answer to this Cavil, I say, that there is no Man would make this Cavil, or would complain, that endeavoureth in a right Way; and if he endeavoureth not in a right Way, there is reason God should complain rather of him. For I ask, Upon what ground is it that thou thinkest to attain unto Faith? If thou thinkest to obtain it for thy own Endeavours, and by them to compass it, I say this plainly to thee, it is pity thou shouldest ever attain it that way: 1 *Sam.* 2. 9. *He will keep the Feet of his Saints, and the Wicked shall be silent in Darkness, for by Strength shall no Man prevail.* And my Reason is this, because it would be dishonourable unto God, for God never gave it upon those Terms; if he should, he then should lose the Glory of his Grace, and Grace should be no Grace, it would be then of Debt, as the Apostle

 saith

Part 3. faith in *Rom.* 4. 1, 2, 3. Now then if ever God give it, he will give it of Free Grace, or he will not give it at all; *not of Works* (faith he, *Ephes.* 2. 9.) *lest any Man should boast.* On the other side, if any one doth endeavour in a Subordination unto Grace, in a Dependance upon Grace as it is free, that he is content to venture his Endeavours upon the Free Grace of God towards him in Christ, as thinking that nothing he doth moveth or swayeth God any thing at all, but that God is as free after twenty Years Endeavours of his, as the first day; I say, if any one doth endeavour thus, that Man shall be sure to attain it, and he shall have no Cause to complain. And if he should miss, he would not complain, because he sought it upon such Terms, that God was still free, and he depended upon Free Grace, and he endeavoured still in a Subordination thereunto; and so however he had his end, and he would never complain. In a word, either a Man seeks Salvation in Subordination to Free Grace, or not; if not, it is Justice to deny him, because his Endeavours, if they speed, would derogate from God's Grace: If he seeks Salvation subordinately to Free Grace, then however it falls out, he will have his end, for if he obtains, he says not, Unto my Endeavours, but to thy Grace be the Glory, and so he magnifies Free Grace. If he obtains it not, yet Lord (says he) thy Grace is magnified, and the Freeness of it demonstrated in this, that so many Endeavours miss'd, because thou wert free whether thou wouldst save me, or not.

4. Let all such Cavillers consider, that the Scriptures do speak the clean contrary, and those very Places that hold forth that God doth all according to his good Pleasure, do infer from thence that we should therefore endeavour in our Proportion. You have it in *Phil.* 2. 13. *Beloved Brethren* (saith he) *work out your own Salvation with Fear and Trembling, for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good Pleasure.* Here the Apostle lays down this Position as strongly as any Caviller upon Earth can, for he tells us that it is God that not only works the Deed but the very Will in us; and that he doth not only give Power to the Will, and then the Will puts forth the Act, but that he works the very Act of Will, *It is God* (saith he) *that works both the Will and the Deed*; and this he saith he doth of his good Pleasure, he so works it as he will not be obliged to do it to this Man or that Man, or upon this Man's Endeavours, or that Man's Endeavours, but out of his good Pleasure, when and where, and how he will. Here I say, the Objection is made as strong as any Man can make it to raise this Cavil upon it, therefore let us do nothing. But see how the Apostle urgeth it to the quite contrary, *Let us therefore* (saith he) *work out our own Salvation with Fear and Trembling, for it is God that works in us both to will and to do of his good Pleasure.* And again, whereas Men are apt to cavil and say, Many have endeavoured, and they have mist, therefore we had as good sit still; what doth Christ say? He infers likewise the clean contrary from it in *Luke* 13. 24. *Strive to enter in at the strait Gate; for many will seek to enter, and shall not be able:* Not be able through their own Lusts, and through their own Wills that undermine their Endeavours. Observe it, he draws the very clean contrary Inference, that because many do seek to enter, and shall not be able, therefore, saith he, do you do more, he bids them take more Pains, *Do you strive,* (saith he) wrestle it out, even as Wrestlers and Contenders for Masteries use to do, (as the Apostle saith in 1 *Cor.* 9. 24.) endeavouring to put nothing to the venture, or to an Uncertainty, as far as possibly you can; *Thus strive* (saith he) *for many have sought to enter, and have not been able.* So that now these that make this Cavil must needs run point-blank against the Scripture, which you see makes an Inference quite contrary to it. I might add also that of our Saviour Christ in *John* 6. 27. where when they had taken a great deal of Pains to follow him for the Loaves, he diverts their Labour to something else, and he bids them labour or work for the Meat that endures to eternal Life. But they might say, why but it is a thing that is not of our selves, it is the Gift of Christ, and why should we labour after it? yes saith Christ, *Labour not for the Meat which endureth to everlasting Life, which the Son of Man shall give you,* and notwithstanding he is to give it you, yet do you labour for it. But I shall make use of this Place when I come to shew you what Acts we are to put forth, and truly one plainly in a word is this, to believe, for so it is there, (*ver.* 28, 29.) *Upon this say they unto him, what shall we do to work the Works of God?* or, what do you mean by this Labouring? Saith Christ, *This is the Work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.* He puts them upon Believing it self, and the exercising thereof

2dly

2dly. Now to prosecute those three Heads mentioned, I shall shew you, and give a Reason or two why tho Faith is not of our selves, but is the Gift of God, yet notwithstanding he requires Endeavours at our hands as means to attain it; and tho he works both the Will and the Deed of his good Pleasure, yet his good Pleasure is that we should co-work with him. How to manage and guide your Endeavours herein I must speak to in the last Head. In the mean time there are these Reasons why God hath joined both the one and the other. Book 4.

1. That by our labouring and endeavouring we may shew and acknowledg what our Duty is. It is God's Command that we should believe and lay hold upon Jesus Christ, and cast our selves upon him for Salvation, therefore it is our Duty, and we are to labour to attain this, and to labour after it in Truth and in the Spiritualness of it; not so much to shew what we are able to do, but what we ought to do, and what our Duty is to do. It is not requir'd to shew our Ability, but our Readiness. Our Weakness and our Inability doth not cut the Bond of our Duty. We set young Children to School with their Hornbook at their Girdles oftentimes, long before they have Skill, or are capable of Skill to read them; we teach them to take up a Book, to look upon the Letters, to shew them thereby what it is we would have them do, and what it is we intend to bring them up to. So doth God himself with us. And we do like and approve it in little Children that they will sit at School with a Book thus in their hand, rather than be still at home careless, playing with Babies and Rattles, and the like.

2. God requires Mens Endeavours to this very purpose, that Men may see their Unability, which is a great Lesson that furthers Faith. Nature will and doth think it can believe and repent till it makes Trial; and as we use to put conceited Persons upon Services to shew them their Folly and their Weakness upon Trial, so God deals with us. Men if they saw not their own Unability, would be apt to say in their Hearts, as they, *Deut.* 8. 17. *My Power, and the Might of my Hand hath done this:* and they would not see their Disability but by attempting to do something. Thus Christ suffered the Woman that had the bloody Issue to use all Means else e're he cured her, to shew her the Unability and Insufficiency of all Means; and she spent all upon Physicians that could do her no good, that so she might fly to him. And thus God left Nature to use all her Shifts and Inventions to attain to Happiness, and to use all her Wit and Strength e're he sent his Son into the World; 1 *Cor.* 1. 21. *After that in Wisdom Men knew not God,* that is, after Trial made of the Strength of natural Wisdom, but not till then, *it pleased God to save by the Foolishness of Preaching them that believe.*

3. God hath appointed our Endeavours and Means to be used, not as Duties only, but as Testimonies and Evidences that we do wholly depend upon God for to work all our Works in us and for us, seeing in the use of Means and Endeavours of ours God useth to come. Carelessness giveth over the use of Means, but when a Man dependeth upon God for a thing, that Dependance will make him to use those Means whereby to attain it, as a Testimony he doth depend upon God, and so God requires it. In *Luke* 5. 4. when *Peter* had fished all Night and caught nothing, saith Christ unto him, *Launch out into the Deep, and let out your Nets for a Draught*; Simon *answering, said unto him, Master, we have toiled, toiled to Weariness,* (so the word signifies) *and toiled all the Night,* which is the opportune Season for Fishing, *and have caught nothing; nevertheless* (this is it I quote it for) *at thy Word I will let down the Net.* His Meaning is, as if he should have said, altho all the Endeavours we have used hitherto have been frustrate, notwithstanding the fair Opportunities we have had, having had all the Night before us to fish in, and we have took abundance of Toil, cast in the Net again and again, and all to no purpose, *yet at thy Word* (that Phrase implies that he did it merely in a Dependance upon Jesus Christ, and upon his Word) *at thy Word* (saith he) *I will let down the Net,* as an Evidence that he depended upon the Word of Christ, and subjected himself unto it, when he himself had little Hope, as those Words imply, *We have fished all Night and have caught nothing.* When they used Rams-horns seven Days in compassing the City of *Jericho,* they did not use them as a Means that would be effectual in it self to the blowing down of the Walls, but they used them as Signs that they believed his Word, and that they did depend upon him to effect that which they desired, because God had said and appointed that in that Means he would do it. So doth God command and

Part 3. require Endeavours, not so much as Means, tho they have likewise the Nature of Means, but as Signs that we depend upon him who worketh all in all, and hath appointed to work them by those Means.

4. God hath appointed us to use Endeavours, and that we should strive to enter into that Rest, that Salvation may be prized, that the Gift of Faith may be valued. It is not that those Endeavours promote our Salvation so much, but it is that it may cost us somewhat, to the end that we may value it. The Salvation of Men cost God much, it cost him his Son, it cost his Son his Blood, it hath cost the Holy Ghost abundance of Attendance upon us. Now we are the Men to be saved, it is *our own Salvation*: therefore there is a great deal of Reason that it should cost us somewhat too. Those things that come to us very lightly, we do as lightly regard them, it is in the Nature of Man so to do, and God deals with us as with Men. Things, I say, that are easily gotten, are lightly esteemed; we may see it by Experience in those that think they have had Faith ever since they can remember, how slightly do they speak of it, and how lightly do such kind of Souls esteem of it. If we had Salvation and Faith dropt into our Mouths, we would the more lightly regard it, therefore God would not have us slothful for the attaining of Faith, not slothful for the discovering of Faith, not slothful in holding fast the Profession of Faith unto the end; so you have it in *Heb.* 6. 12. *We desire* (saith he) *that every one of you do shew the same Diligence*, (that is, after Conversion, which you had shewn before) *to the full Assurance of Hope unto the end, that ye be not slothful*, &c.

5. Even for this very Reason doth God require us to endeavour, though he himself works all, that when our Endeavours without him have prov'd unsuccessful, his Power in working Faith at last might appear the more. When a Man hath endeavoured and used the Means long, and to no purpose, as he thinks, it is the end God comes in, it magnifies his Free Grace and his Power towards us. As in that Instance before quoted in *Luke* 5. 5. when they had toiled all Night, and took nothing, that then there should be so great a Draught of Fishes taken by casting down the Net once more, this made *Peter* fall down amazed, this made him acknowledg Jesus to be the Lord, and to say to Christ, *Depart from me, for I am a sinful Man*; so struck was he with the Greatness of that Power that appeared in that Work. God doth sometimes hide his Power under Means, and lets Men endeavour that they may see even by Experience their own Inability, which Lesson is hardly otherwise learned. We had scarce ever learned this great Lesson, that it is God that works Faith in us, but by the Experience of our own Inability, and that Experience of our own Inability is taught us from attempting Endeavours according to God's Command. Nature is apt, and will be apt to try if it can work Faith out of it self, it is apt to think I will take the Promises and this Heart of mine, and strike the one against the other till Sparks come out; and till a Man see by his own Experience that nothing comes out, he will never believe himself to be so unable to attain it as he is. We use to put conceited Persons upon hard Services and Businesses to the end they may even by their own Experience see their Folly and Weakness. It is Experience that must teach us the Truth of this Doctrine, or else we are apt to say as they in *Deut.* 8. 17. *My Power, and my Might, and my Hand hath done it.* And therefore Christ suffer'd the poor Woman that had the Issue, first to use all means, to spend all that she had upon Physicians, that when the Inability of all Means etc. should appear, the Cure he was to work on her might the more be magnified.

6. In the last Place, I add this as an Answer unto this Cavil, that in using the Means God hath appointed, and such Endeavours as God requires of us, there is no thing derogated from the Power of God in working when he works Faith, neither doth the Power of God exclude such Endeavours, but both may well stand together. First, I say, the Use of them doth nothing derogate from the Power of God in working, no more than the Clay and the Spittle which Christ used to restore the blind Man to his Sight. They of themselves could conduce nothing to the effecting of it, but in seeming Appearance would rather put ones Eyes out more; yet Christ who might have restored him otherwise, would have this used, and his Power could no less appear in the working of it thus, than if he had wrought it immediately without it: So God may and doth shew as much Power in our using the Means, as in working without them. Did not God, think you, shew as much Power in taking of a Rib from the Man to make the Woman of, and in taking red Earth to make

Body of the Man out of it, as he shew'd in the first Day's Creation, when he made all things out of meer nothing? God even in some Miracles seem'd to use Means which might have some shew and colour of working the Effect wrought, as in healing *Naaman*'s Leprosy, the washing in *Jordan* might seem to have likelihood of a Remedy for a Disease, and God did it to hide his Power. Thus too in such Works as are standing Works, (as the Conversion of Souls is, which is the standing Miracle of the World) God loves to hide and clothe his Power under our Endeavours, and in using Means as well as in working it immediately; and as he is found of those that sought him not, so he is found also of those that seek him; and alike Power and alike Free Grace appears in both. And then again on the other side, the Power of God doth not exclude Mens Endeavours, for tho God doth not work Faith in Men for their Endeavours, as the moving Cause, neither doth he work by them as adjuvant Causes, that reach the Effect, yet as concomitant Instruments he doth. You have that clear in that Expression of the Apostle in 1 *Cor.* 3. 8. at the 7th Verse he had said, *that neither is he that planteth any thing, nor he that watereth, but God that giveth the Increase:* Yet notwithstanding at the 8th Verse he saith, *that we are Co-workers with God, and Labourers together with him.* So that I say, altho Man doth nothing, and it is God that doth all, and Faith is not of our selves, but is the Gift of God, yet there are Endeavours and Means that God hath appointed for the attaining of Faith, and both these may stand together. And so let this be enough, if not too much, for the answering of that Objection as it is a Cavil, namely, that if God work all, and we do nothing in the producing of Faith in us, then Men were as good sit still, and not labour and endeavour at all after it.

Book 4.

CHAP. II.

Discouragements against using our Endeavours to believe, which arise from the Thoughts of the Difficulty of Faith as being above our own Power, consider'd and answer'd.

I Come now to answer the Discouragements of poor Souls, that even lie at the brink of Believing, (as I may so express it) who yet being sensible of their own Inability to believe, and that they are not able to attain Christ without Christ and Faith, are therefore apt to sink into Discouragements, and to think it is in vain to attempt it, to practise or to go about Believing, or to put forth any Act of Faith at all, especially if they have done it, and felt no Comfort in their own Sense, nor felt any Power coming in beyond what in an ordinary way doth assist Men. I say in that case they are apt to be discouraged, and to give it over as in vain, and not to set upon it. Now for their sakes I shall do two things:

1. I shall remove their Discouragements.
2. I shall give what Directions are sutable unto such Souls, which indeed in the Close will be this, (as you shall see afterwards) to put them upon Believing, and upon exercising the Acts of Faith continually, for so Christ did, and so did the Apostles. I will first remove their Discouragements: and to such Souls as are sensible of their own Inability, the first thing I shall say, as in relation to their Discouragement, is this, That to be cast down in the Sense of thine own Unability and Insufficiency to believe, or to act any spiritual Good as of thy self, is a great part of Faith. It is the negative Part, it is the emptying Part, as I may so call it, as the other is the filling Part; it is part of that Poverty of Spirit which Christ makes the Promise to in *Mat.* 5. 3. Now if the Sense of thy own Unability be kept within its own Bounds, and thou carrieſt this Principle continually along with thee in thy Heart, the more thou hast of it the better it is, for still as God digs deeper in discovering this unto thee, the higher he builds in the Work of Faith and Believing, and he will certainly do it; and so far it is but a Foundation of giving all unto God. And let me say this to you, God's end in bringing Men to Salvation that way, *viz.* to take all Power from them of what is in themselves, it was not that any should be discouraged, but that they might go out of themselves unto him for Help: and there-

Part 3. therefore now to maintain a conſtant Senſe thereof is one Direction which I ſhall afterwards give you. But I will now ſpeak to the Diſcouragement it ſelf. When your Souls are brought to this Emptineſs as in your ſelves, for you upon this to be diſcouraged, and to give over the Work, do but conſider the Ground of this, and conſider the Sinfulneſs of this. For a Man to be diſcouraged, and to give over the Work, either becauſe he cannot do it, or becauſe he thinks it will never be done; and therefore he will do nothing, no not *that* which he finds his Heart ſtrengthned to do, becauſe he knows not whether it be the Power of God in it yea or no; for a Man I ſay thus to be diſcouraged, is to deſpair of the Power of God: It is to add to the Senſe of thine own Inability, a Deſpair of the Power of God too. You muſt know it is a Peeviſhneſs if a Man doth not wait upon the Power of God in its way, as it is on the contrary a meek and humble Temper to wait upon the Free Grace of God in the Freedom of it. Yea the truth is, the Ground of this Diſcouragement is the higheſt Pride: for when a Man hears that he can do nothing of himſelf, tho withal he hears that God is able to work Faith, and to work it inſtantly, if therefore he will ſit ſtill and do nothing, the Ground I ſay of this is the higheſt Pride: for the true Reaſon of this Diſcouragement (if you reſolve it into its Cauſes) is indeed this, that Men would have their own Endeavours to be Means to compaſs Grace. This is the way of Nature. Now altho thou ſeeſt thine own Inability, yet thy Nature riſeth up with another Corruption; and becauſe thou canſt not have it by thy ſelf, and becauſe thou canſt not prevail by thy own Strength, when it is once diſcovered, therefore thou wilt do nothing at all. This I ſay is the working of Pride one way, even as to be conceited of a Man's own Strength (till he is ſenſible of his own Inability) is the working of it another way. It is all but Pride working two ſeveral ways, that becauſe a Man findeth that it is not in his own Power to attain unto Faith, to attain the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and that he cannot compaſs it to himſelf in his own way, even as Men do Wealth, therefore he will ſit down in a pet diſcouraged, and fling off all. It is not therefore the Doctrine, that we can do nothing, and that God muſt do all, that diſcourageth, but it is the Pride and the Corruption that is in the Spirits of Men. For would Fleſh reject and renounce uſing Endeavours as in its own way, and uſe them in a way of Subordination unto God and to his Power, a Man would be ſo far (if he come once to this) from being diſcouraged, as there is nothing more will quicken. As when a Man comes to ſubmit unto God, when his Heart is brought to lie down at the Feet of Free Grace, inſtantly he hath Peace: So when the Heart is once brought to renounce ſeeking Salvation in a Man's own Strength; and not only ſo, but to ſet upon the Buſineſs in a Subordination to the Strength and Power of God, the Strength and Power of God falls upon that Man.

2dly. Let me ſpeak to this Diſcouragement by way of Removal or taking of it away. In the way of Believing there are two eminent Diſcouragements; the one is concerning the Will of God, whether he will accept me into Grace and Favour; and this ariſeth from the Doctrine of Election, that ſeeing Salvation and the Free Grace of God is pitched but upon a few, how there can be an Object of Faith propounded to the Sons of Men, and a Ground for them to believe, that do not know whether they be elected yea or no: or how do I know whether this Chriſt is mine or no, whom you bid me to believe upon? and unleſs I be elected, all that I do will be in vain, and all will be fruſtrate. But beſides this, there is another Diſcouragement, and that is concerning the Power of God, that is requiſite to the working of Faith; Becauſe we are unable of our ſelves to believe, (will ſome ſay) and it is God that worketh Faith in us, therefore I will not put forth any Act of Faith until I feel the Power of God in my own Senſe coming upon me, over-powering me, and drawing my Heart to believe. The truth is, that both theſe Objections or Diſcouragements do in a manner come to one, at leaſtwiſe there is a great deal of Parallel betwixt them, and the ſame thing that anſwers the one will anſwer the other. I will afterward anſwer the firſt Objection, by ſhewing, that Election is ſo far from being a Diſcouragement, that it is the greateſt Incouragement to any Soul in the way of Believing that can be. But now I ſhall only make a Parallel of this Objection with the other, and ſo ſhew you how the Diſcouragement may be taken away by the ſame Reaſon or Conſideration in the one, that it is removed and taken away in the other. I ſay both theſe Diſcouragements are alike, and they come all to one; for

for a Soul that doth not know whether it is elected or no, whether God will accept it, doth but venture its Faith, and its going to God, and to Christ in a Subordination to his free Grace upon God's good Pleasure, and the Freedom of his Will: and one that is sensible of his own Insufficiency, doth but venture his Believing, and endeavoureth in a Subordination to the Power of God, so as the thing comes all to one; yea, so far as any Man may have Hope and Ground to think that God may accept of him, (which may be the Ground for Faith notwithstanding Election) so far may that Man have a Hopefulness that the Power of God will accompany him in the exercising of Faith. And the Reason of it is clearly this, because the Power of God is set a-work by his Will, and both these are commensurable and proportionable; and so far as the Will of God goes, so far his Power goes; and so far as I have Hope, and have ground to hope that God may accept me, so far I have ground also to wait upon him, to put forth that Power to accompany me, and to strengthen me, and enable me in believing, and in all the Acts of it. As therefore Men do make a Venture upon the Will of God in casting themselves upon it to save them, and accept them (and it is the best Venture that ever was made) so far Men ought to attempt the Exercise of Faith without Discouragement, in a Way of Subordination unto the Power of God, and to put themselves into the Stream of it. The Truth is, when all is done, God will be trusted in both. Book 4.

3. Join but these two following things together, and do but consider what a great Encouragement this Doctrine is, that it is God only that must work in us, rather than a Discouragement. I say, join but these two things together, which are both true; first, That God doth all, which is the Objection: but secondly, take this in too, That this God who doth all, useth graciously to come and join with Men while they are acting and exercising of Faith, and his Power raiseth them to believing savingly and spiritually: if you consider these two things together, then instead of a Discouragement, it is the greatest Encouragement that ever was or could be supposed to be. Now thus it is; only God will be free, he will take his own time, he will shew his Liberty in the Time as well as in the Person. But when we take the Pen in our Hand, and often attempt to write after the Copy, though of our selves we know not how to write a Letter, yet in Obedience to him, going about to do our Duty, he takes us by the Hand, and strengthens and enables us to do it. The poor impotent Man at the Pool of *Bethesda*, that attempted to go in, and cried out to go in, and could not for thirty Years; yet at last the poor Man having continued thus long lying there, Jesus Christ came and heal'd him; not because he lay there, but to shew that he blessed his waiting on him. In that *Jam.* 4. what says the Apostle, *Jam.* 4. 8. *Draw nigh unto God, and he will draw nigh unto you.* To draw nigh unto God is to draw nigh unto him, as in putting ones self under Ordinances and Means (as of *Korah*, *Dathan* and *Abiram*, it is said they did draw nigh unto God) so by believing. *Let us draw nigh* (saith he) *with full Assurance of Faith*, Heb. 10. 2. And when Men put themselves under such Means where God's Presence useth to be, then doth God use to draw nigh unto them, *Draw nigh unto God* (saith he) *and he will draw nigh unto you.* I could give you a multitude of Places, as *Prov.* 1. 23. *I will pour out my Spirit upon you:* and Mat. 7. 7. *Seek, and you shall find:* and *Luk.* 11. 13. *He will give the Spirit unto them that ask.* Thus God though he doth all, yet he is graciously pleased to join with us (and how I shall shew you by and by) and to act us through his Strength acting of us, and to come in and work that for us which we aim at: And if so, then it is the greatest Encouragement to us which can be that God doth all. If that God should have said to you that are the Sons of Men, I will give you assisting Grace, which yet I leave to the Liberty of your Wills to join withal, or not to join withal; in this Case all the Sons of Men, when it had been thus of themselves and their own Power, would have fallen off from God, and would have turned this Grace into Wantonness. But if God shall say, I will not deal with you according to the Way or the Will of the Creature, but whilst I assist your Will to do thus and thus, I will come in with a farther Power, and I will do all for you and all in you; and so draw the Creature to wait upon an higher Power, and to act in a Subordination thereunto; this way of Salvation is the greatest Encouragement that can be: and why is it so? Because that in this Case God undertakes to do all, and it is better to a wait in way of Uncertainty (if I may so express it, though it is not so) in a Dependance upon the Power of God this way, than to have

gone

Part 3. gone the other way as *Adam* did, and as all legal Christians do: for what saith the Heart? Here is my comfort, that *that God* in Dependance upon whose Power I act still so far as he assisteth, and depend upon his Power to work all in me, he is able, and nothing is too hard for him. I have an hard Heart, a base unbelieving Heart, apt to depart from the living God, but I depend upon the Power of God to overcome this hard Heart, to draw me in to the Lord Jesus, and there is nothing too hard for his Engagement. I say, to depend upon such a Power, whenas you have that Power also that doth engage it self, that when he doth give a Will to use such and such Means, he often and ordinarily comes in; to depend, I say, upon such a Power is the greatest Encouragement that can be.

I shall make a Parallel of it now, with the throwing of a Man's self upon the free Grace of God to save him in the way of Election. Men usually say, that Election is the most discouraging Doctrine in the World; but really whosoever throws himself upon the Riches of the free Grace of God, and depends upon such a Love as God manifesteth to the Elect to save him, will find all Objections are answered, whether they be taken from Unworthiness, or any other Reason, they do all vanish before it, only this one remaineth, whether thou art the Person or no. And for that I say, there is an easy Answer, that the indefinite Promise (as I shall in the Sequel shew you) is the Ground of Faith. So now when you come to depend upon the Power of God, Faith doth as it were make but one Venture, and that is at first; for if once you find that Power of God to be engaged, it is so engaged as that it will for ever do all in you, and carry it on for ever afterward, and that you may be sure of. So that indeed all the Venture you make is at first to get this Faith wrought in you; but if this Power be once engaged, it will go on, it will everlastingly save you; and therefore Christ still makes an Encouragement of it, when he had said (*Mat.* 19. 24.) how hard it is for a rich Man to enter into Heaven, as hard as for a Camel to go in at the Eye of an Needle, the Disciples the Text saith, were discouraged; *What Man then shall be saved?* say they. It was meerly because they did dream of being saved by something in a Man's self. How doth Christ answer? *With Man this is impossible* (saith he) *but with God all things are possible.* He tells them this to raise up their Hearts again; therefore (saith he) do but you venture upon the Power of God, though the Work be thus difficult, and *that* will overcome your Lusts, and *that* will subdue the hardest Heart, and strongest earthly Mind. Christ, I say, in that place, makes it an Encouragement, and indeed it is the greatest.

4. The next thing that I would say for the Encouragement of such is this, that if God do give thee an Heart to labour and to endeavour still to renew thy Faith, and thou dost renew thy Faith continually upon it, God will bestow and doth bestow usually the thing in the end. In *Luk.* 11. there is a Parable exceeding clear to this Purpose; Christ there exhorts them to pray and to continue to pray, and he doth it upon this Ground; by the Parable of a Man's Friend coming to him, whom in the End he heareth, because of his Importunity, *ver.* 8. Now though God doth not hear for thy Importunity, yet when he gives thee a Heart that doth in a way of Importunity and Constancy exercise Acts of Faith, never stand disputing whether they be true Acts of Faith: suppose thou hast not true Faith at present, suppose thou shouldst not have it, suppose thou be but a temporary Believer, if he enable thee to continue thus, he doth usually join with the Believer in the end. And so Christ concludeth that Parable, and bids them seek and they shall find; for, saith he, he giveth the Spirit unto them that ask him, *ver.* 13.

5. Though God doth all, yet he doth it usually in the Use of Means, and in them useth to come. When we have the Pen in our Hands, and offer to write, though we make never a true Letter; yet he often takes a Man by the Hands and guides and strengthens it. The Man that lay at the Pool, when though impotent, he still attempted to go in, though he could not, *Joh.* 5. 7. yet he still lying at the Pool, Christ comes and heals him: yea, though the Principle out of which they use the Means be not spiritual but natural; yet God takes the Advantage of it to work. It was not a right Ground moved *Naaman* to wash in the Waters of *Jordan*, and yet God healed him, using the Means, which else he would not have done.

6. Though some should have failed that have used the Means (as Believers themselves sometimes;) yet this should not discourage men to neglect them. It discourages not in other things, Men forbear not procreating, because it is God puts in a

Soul, and the Dependance is well nigh as great in the first as in the second Birth: Men forbear not to sow because some Years have proved barren: We forbear not to preach, because every Sermon takes not Effect; we are not discouraged, because God hath bidden us wait if at any time he will give Men Repentance, 2 *Tim.* 2. 25. If Preachers wait for the Salvation of others, then Men ought to do so for their own; and so much more should they (whose Salvation it is) be content to venture Endeavours, because says the Apostle, *Phil.* 2. 13. *It is their own Salvation.* Men will venture Journeys for their own Preferment. Book 4.

7. That some have missed, should quicken us the more to the more heed-taking; for they failed because they put not more Strength to the Work, but grew slothful and negligent. Upon this Ground our Saviour Christ provok'd his Disciples; *Luke* 13. 24. *Strive* (saith he) *to enter into the strait Gate, for many shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able.* That which these Men would use as a Discouragement, Christ turns into a Reason: therefore do you strive or wrestle, or put to your utmost strength; for many have striven, and faintly endeavoured, that came short; therefore lose it not for a little more Pains. So the Apostle in 1 *Cor.* 9. 24. *Because many run that miss*, therefore he exhorts them *to endeavour so to run that they may obtain*, to endeavour to make all sure; so do I, (says he) *I therefore so run, not as uncertainly*, that is to say, this Consideration quickens me to use my utmost Care and Endeavour.

8. That God doth all, should so much the more quicken us also: so the Apostle argues, *Phil.* 2. 13. *Work you out your Salvation with Fear and Trembling, for it is God works in you the Will and the Deed, i. e.* Seeing this great Work depends upon God, to work how and when he will of his good Pleasure, let not us think therefore to be idle, but set our selves to the use of those Means with the more Fear and Trembling, which God hath declared his Pleasure is that we should use; as those that wholly depend upon his working all in all, and therefore fear to provoke him and put him off, tremble to neglect any Means or Opportunity he hath appointed.

9. If God give Men a Heart to continue endeavouring, tho he gives it not *therefore*, yet it is a sign he means to bestow Grace on them. It is his Bounty and Mercy to set thy Heart a-work about Salvation, and it is a Mercy which he affords to few; be thankful for what thou hast received, and not discouraged, and God may give thee more. There are but a few in the World that do seek him, and if he should turn away any that do, he would have fewer.

10. The Ground why Men are discouraged is, because they would have their Endeavours a Means to compass Grace, and think by their own Strength to prevail; which when it is discovered to them, that it is bootless to endeavour, then they sit down discouraged, and sit down in a pet, and fling all away, because they cannot have Grace in their way. But if that be the Root of the Discouragement, it is Pride and Corruption, and not the Doctrine *that God doth all*, which discourageth. For would Flesh renounce the Opinion of its own Strength, and its using Endeavours its own way, and use them in Subordination to God as Means appointed by him only, then this Doctrine would discourage no Man but quicken him. So that Endeavours are not spoken against, but this way and ground of Endeavouring, as thinking by what we do to obtain Mercy: and it is not this Doctrine *that God doth all*, which discourageth, but Pride and Corruption, which because it hears it can do nothing, therefore it will do nothing; for there are other Motives enough to perswade a Man to endeavour, as that it is a Man's Duty, *&c.*

Object. But you will say, If I should act Faith upon God and Christ, I should do all in a natural way, it would be a natural Act, and not a spiritual Act; and doth God in such Cases come and join with Men by his Almighty Power, working Faith in them? To that I answer, that sometimes God doth do so. I will give you but an Instance of it, parallel thereunto, it is of *Naaman* the Syrian; he came not out of his own Country in a way of Faith, but he had a providential Hint given him by a Maid that lived with him, that was a Jew, that if he went into the Land of *Israel*, he should be cured by a Prophet that was there. And when he came into *Israel*, and had spoken with the Prophet, he had a Reproof from one of his Servants, that told him it was but a very small Matter he was bid to do, and it was no great business for him to try: Upon this he went and tried, and upon no other ground but this; yet you see God cured him, and cured both his Body and Soul at once.

Part 3. When the Woman of *Samaria* came to the Samaritans, she brought abundance of them unto Christ, and her Speech did beget a kind of Faith in them; but when they came to Christ himself, then say they, *Now we believe, not because of thy Saying, but for his own Word.* So that indeed and in truth tho God begins to act a Man's Spirit, suppose in a natural way first, yet he doth turn it into a spiritual way in the very Act. When thou takest a Pen in thy Hand to write, then God takes thee by the Hand, and writes for thee. It is in this as it is in Prayer; a Man goes to Prayer, puts himself into the Presence of God, and the Holy Ghost falls upon him, and he not knowing how nor what to ask, he teacheth him what to ask with Groans that are unutterable, as the Apostle speaks.

11. Let me say this to you, It is Incouragement enough to you to act and exercise the way of Believing, (as I shall shew you afterwards) it is I say Incouragement enough that God may thus join with you, although neither I nor all the World can give thee any certain Evidence that he will. I dare not say (not for all this World, as some do) that if a Man useth *such Abilities as God giveth him well*, then God will certainly give him Faith, if he go on so to do. To make a Certainty of it, I say I cannot. But it is Incouragement enough, tho there cannot be a Certainty made out, that God oftentimes doth so, and it may be the Ground of a thousand Duties. Thou art a poor Soul, and knowest not whether thou hast Faith or no, yet thy Soul desires to receive the Lord's Supper, and art in question whether thou shouldst or no: Why if there be that Work which thou hast Reason to judg *may be Grace*, it is a Ground for thee to perform that Duty, for otherwise none can go to the Lord's Supper but those that have Assurance. And answerably to this, *What knowest thou* (saith the Apostle *Paul*) *but that thou who art a believing Wife*, staying with thy Husband that is otherwise troublesome to thee, mayst convert him? and upon this, *what knowest thou*, tho thou art not at a Certainty God will, there is a Ground of staying with thy Husband, and of using all Means to bring him unto God, and it is Encouragement enough? Tho then you have acted Faith, and still you find not the Power of God come upon you in your Sense, drawing you to believe so as you aim at, this I say ought not to discourage you; why? Because you ought to do as much for your own Salvation as you would do for anothers, or as Ministers, or as a godly People are to do for the Salvation of another. We forbear not to preach because every Sermon taketh not effect, because in 2 *Tim.* 2. 25. God hath bid us wait if at any time God will give such an one Repentance. Now if that be a Motive and an Incouragement strong enough that God may do it, then it may be Encouragement and Motive strong enough to thee, that God may at last strike in and give thee Power to believe. It is the Apostle's own Words (I quote it as comparing it with what a Man may do for his own Salvation upon the like Ground he is to do for the Salvation of another) in *Phil.* 2. 12. *Work out your own Salvation with Fear and Trembling, for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do.* I put the Emphasis upon the word *your own*. If Men are to wait thus for the Salvation of others, because God may peradventure give them Repentance, much more then, tho God doth all, art thou to wait, and in the mean time to act Faith, and to work out thy *own*; why? because it is *thy own Salvation*. And that others have missed who have endeavoured, is not a Discouragement neither so much as an Incouragement, for there are thousands that have obtained. I have known some Souls that have gone to God, and have taken Jesus Christ tremblingly, and the Word hath stuck in their Teeth whilst they were giving Thanks unto God for giving them Jesus Christ, and God hath fallen upon them, and given them full Assurance of his Love before they had done. I say thousands of Souls have gained this way, as well as some have missed. *We of his Fulness* (saith the Apostle in *John* 1. 13) *have received Grace for Grace.* Therefore as Men coming from a Dole, who have gone there and have obtained, are Examples of Incouragement unto others, so should the Example of all such who have obtained Faith and Salvation encourage thee. Let me say this to you, Faith is the greatest Venture in the World, (so I use to express it) and when all is done, you must make a Venture upon it. You make a Venture upon God's Will when you throw your selves upon it to accept you; and you make a Venture upon his Power when you act Faith with a Subordination thereunto to work Faith upon you. You must resolve to cast away your own Endeavours for the glorifying of his Power, as you must cast away your own Righteousness for the glorifying

ing of his Free Grace, and to be glad to put your Mouths in the Duſt; and yet if there may be any Hope, and if there may be Faith, you ought to work out your Salvation, becauſe he worketh in you both the Will and the Deed. In all things elſe Men do ſo, Husbandmen caſt the Seed into the Ground, and wait for the Increaſe, becauſe it is God that giveth it, and Men do the like for Preferment. In all ſuch natural things I ſay Men do act upon a Dependance and in a Subordination to the Power of God, and ſhould they not do ſo in Matters of Salvation? Book 4.

CHAP. III.

That the Senſe of hainous Sins is another great Hindrance of Faith, which diſhearteins Men from endeavouring to believe. Theſe Diſcouragements anſwer'd, and removed.

THO God commands and encourageth us to believe, yet there are certain Diſcouragements lie in Mens way. As therefore when the Children of *Iſrael* were to return from the Captivity, God bids his Miniſters take away the ſtumbling-Blocks; (Iſa. 57. 14. *Caſt up, caſt up, take away the ſtumbling-Blocks out of the way of my People, that they might not be hindred in their Journey*, ſaith the Lord) ſo when we do exhort you to be reconciled to God, there are certain ſtumbling-Blocks to be removed, there are certain Diſcouragements which we muſt therefore remove; the chiefeſt whereof is the Boundleſneſs and Hainouſneſs of Mens Sins; and when their Eyes are opened to behold them, they are apt to be diſcouraged with the ſight of them, and to think that Reconciliation belongs not unto them. Now then I ſhall diſplay the Riches of God's Mercies in pardoning the greateſt Sins, to take away this Diſcouragement, as it hinders you from coming in to Chriſt. And if Sin be the greateſt of them, that ought not to diſcourage you from coming in for Mercy; for do but conſider the Sins of *Manaſſeh*, as they are ſet down, 2 *Kings* 21. 2 *Chron.* 33. it is ſaid *ver.* 5. that *he did much Wickedneſs in the ſight of the Lord, and provoked him to anger.*

1. His ſinning was much for Continuance, for it is ſaid he was King over *Iſrael* 55 Years, being 12 Years old when he began to reign, and it was towards the latter End of his Days when he humbled himſelf.

2. His Guilt was much in regard of the Sins themſelves, for he made a Covenant with the Devil, gave away his Soul to him, *ver.* 6. he dealt with familiar Spirits. Add to this Murder, and that of the Innocent: for it is ſaid, *he filled the Streets of* Jeruſalem *with Blood, from one end to the other*, ver. 16. So to this Idolatry, a Sin greater than all the other, and it was the worſt ſort of Idolatry, 2 *Chron.* 33. 9. He made them to do worſe than the Heathen whom the Lord had deſtroyed before them. Add to this, that it was a Relapſe, tho not of himſelf, yet of the whole Kingdom: for tho his Father had deſtroyed the Images, broken down the Altars, yet he did build them up again, and ſet up Idolatry in the Houſe of God, and he there ſet up a carved Image, the Idol which he had made; all this he was guilty of, 2 *Chron.* 33. 3——10. And thoſe Sins were not confined only to his own Perſon, but he made *Iſrael* alſo to ſin; and for theſe Sins were the Children of *Iſrael* carried into Captivity, *Jer.* 15. 14. He would not pardon them in regard of a temporal Puniſhment. And *Manaſſeh* did all this againſt Admonition, 2 *Chron.* 33. 10. He ſinned alſo againſt Education, for he had a good Father, and he lived twelve Years under his Government, in which time no doubt but he inſtructed him; and he ſinned alſo againſt the greateſt Mercy that could be, for he was made King of God's own People. Thus you ſee his Sins were very great; and yet for all this the Lord had Mercy on him; 2 *Chron.* 33. 12, 13. *And when he was in Affliction, he beſought the Lord, and humbled himſelf greatly before the God of his Fathers, and prayed unto him, and he was intreated of him, and God heard his Supplication, and brought him again to* Jeruſalem *into his Kingdom.* He humbled himſelf greatly becauſe he had ſinned greatly; for when one hath ſinned greatly, without great Humiliation the Lord will not give Mercy: but when he did ſo, the Lord did hear him, and brought

Part 3. him to his own Kingdom. A greater Sinner than he could not be, and yet see how gracious and merciful the Lord was to him.

Object. *But this was but the Example of one Man, it is not like the Lord will deal thus with me or any other.*

Answ. Look but to that Nation which was Co-partner with him, the People of the Jews; see how they combined with him in the same Sin, *Jer.* 2. 2. (for *Jeremy* lived in those Days, and he made his Prophecy to this People) *Go and cry in the Streets, I remember the Espousals, and the Kindness of thy Youth*, &c. There he shews how they sinned against their Education, when they were brought up in the Wilderness under the Hands of *Moses* and *Aaron*, for then *Israel* was Holiness unto the Lord; *ver.* 21. *Yet I had planted thee a noble Vine, holy and righteous Seed, how then art thou turned a degenerate Plant of a strange Vine unto me?* They sinned also against Deliverances, against Promises of Amendment; *ver.* 20. *Of old time I have broken thy Yoke, and burst thy Bonds, and thou saidst, I will not transgress*, &c. They sinned also against much Mercy; *ver.* 5. *What Iniquity have your Fathers found in me? Have I been a barren Wilderness unto you?* The Lord was not a Wilderness, but a Paradise abounding in infinite Mercies towards them. They sinned also against many Prayers; *Jer.* 3. 4. *Didst thou not cry unto me, Thou art my Father, and the Guide of my Youth?* God doth as it were by way of Mockery lay open their Hypocrisy, and reproacheth them, that when they had sinned then they cry'd out, *Thou art my God, and the Guide of my Youth.* They sinned also against Example; yet now what doth God say unto them; *Jer.* 3. 6, 7, 8. *Behold what* Israel *hath done, she is gone up to every high Mountain, and hath played the Harlot, and I said after all this, Turn you to me, but yet she turned not*, &c. Yet see what the Lord saith, *ver.* 12. *Go and proclaim those Words in the North, Return O backsliding* Israel, *(saith the Lord) and I will not cause my Anger to fall on you.* And whereas they had a Proverb amongst them, *If a Man put away his Wife, and she go from him, and becomes another Man's Wife, shall he return unto her?* No; yet says God, *Tho thou hast plaid the Harlot with many Lovers, return unto me*; only acknowledg thy Fault that thou hast transgressed against me, and I will graciously receive thee. *Jer.* 3. 1, 19. the Lord makes an Objection, (in that *ver.* 19.) saying, *How shall I put thee amongst the Children, and give thee a pleasant Land, a goodly Host of the Heritage of Nations?* They were such a polluted People, that he could not tell how to take them to himself; yet if they would but come and say, *Thou art my Father*, and submit themselves, the Lord would receive them. Thus we see the Lord was not merciful to one Man only, but to a whole Nation. See this Instance farther, *Ezek.* 20. 7. *Cast ye away every one your evil Works, but they rebelled against me.* But saith God, *ver.* 9. *I wrought for my Name's sake*, &c. After he had brought them out of *Egypt*, and gave them his Judgments and Sabbaths, yet there also they rebelled as much as in *Egypt*; (ver. 13. *But the House of* Israel *rebelled against me in the Wilderness*, &c.) what doth follow, *ver.* 14. *Yet I wrought again for my Name sake, that it should not be polluted*, &c. And again, *ver.* 15. *I also lifted up my Hand that I should not bring them into the Land that I promised them*, &c. *Yet*, says God, (*ver.* 17.) *nevertheless I spared them*, &c. Notwithstanding for all this (*ver.* 21.) the Children of *Israel* rebelled yet again, they walked not in God's Statutes, but provok'd his Fury against them; and yet (says God, *ver.* 22.) *I withdrew my Hand, and wrought for my Name's sake*, &c. But (*ver.* 28.) when they came into the Land which God had given them, when they saw every green Tree, and every high Hill, they committed worse Abominations there, they offered their Sacrifices, *&c. Yet* (saith God, *v.* 41.) *I will sanctify you, and accept you, when I bring you out from the People, and I will be sanctified in you before them.* Thus also in *Neh.* 9. there are brought in I know not how many *yets of Sinnings*, and *yets of Mercies*, one after another, as striving which should overcome: Mercy enters first, and begins *ver.* 8, 9, 10. and then comes in their Rebellion, *ver.* 16, 17. and an Aggravation of that their Sinfulness, *ver.* 16. but a *yet of Mercy* follows, *ver.* 19. *Yet in thy manifold Mercies thou forsookest them not.* Tho he had spent manifold Mercies, yet he goes on nevertheless in Acts of Mercy; and tho they persisted in Acts of Sinnings six or seven times, yet God hath the last Word in Mercy, *ver.* 31. And this God hath not done to one Man, but to a whole Nation, therefore Sin should not be a Bar to hinder you from coming in to believe on Christ, and to be reconciled to God.

1*st.* Be-

1st. Because God is merciful. If Men were not Sinners, God would not have had an opportunity to shew Mercy, for Mercy is a helping of those that are in Misery: And if we were not Enemies, there was no need of Reconciliation. All the Saints in Heaven had not had need of Reconciliation, if they had not been Enemies. Book 4.

2dly. He delights in Mercy: If he had not delighted in it, would he have bruised his only Son for it, and have made him an Offering, *Isa.* 53. that so a way might be opened for a Display of Mercy by Satisfaction made unto Justice? And if he had not had Pleasure in Mercy, he would not have delighted to have put his Son to Grief.

3dly. There is very abundant Mercy in God; 1 *Pet.* 1. 3. *who according to his abundant Mercy*, &c. And *Ephes.* 2. 7. it is called *the exceeding Riches of his Mercy*; not only Riches, but exceeding Riches, that will never be drawn dry.

4thly. He may pardon the greatest Sins, because his Mercy is free; and as he doth not look to any Good in the Creature to move him to shew Mercy, so he doth not look at any Sin to dissuade him, and therefore Sin cannot hinder thee from Reconciliation; and thus herein consists the Freeness of Grace. Now this is the Difference between Love, Mercy and Grace; that a Man may love one that never offended him, and Mercy is towards those that are in Misery, but Grace doth what it doth freely, and doth not look at any thing in the Creature. In *Ezek.* 36. 22. it is said, *God wrought for his Name sake*, and therefore because God works for his own Name sake, no Evil can hinder him from shewing Mercy. See then how easy a thing it is for God to shew Mercy. A stomachful Man will say, that he can do any thing but pardon: But God is the Father of Mercies, and so he doth beget Mercies. And as it is natural for the Ear to hear, the Eye to see, so it is natural to God to shew Mercy.

5thly. God will pardon the greatest Sins, because of the end he aimed at in setting up this way of Grace and Mercy: It was for *the Praise of the Glory of his Grace*, (*Ephes.* 1. 6.) that Sin should not hinder; nay the more Sin there is, the more is his Grace glorified: As it is with a Physician that professeth to come merely to shew his Skill; the greater the Disease is, the gladder he is, for he shall shew the greater Skill if he cure it. When to shew Mercy is the Plot of Grace, Sinfulness and Misery is the Subject of that Plot for it to be shewn in. What Contrivances will Mercy have to shew it self in this case; where Sin doth abound, there doth Grace abound much more: and therefore it is that God doth let his People many times run on so far in Sin, because Grace may abound so much the more.

To help you in this do but lay to heart the Examples of such whom God hath pardoned, he hath shewn Mercy to me first, (saith *Paul*, 1 *Tim.* 1. 16.) and do you think that he did begin and end with him? No, he shewed Mercy to me first, (says the Apostle) *that I might be a Pattern to them that should believe to eternal Life.* Think of that which Christ says, *Mat.* 12. 31. *All Blasphemies shall be forgiven but that against the Holy Ghost.* Here you see all manner of Blasphemy, (which is the highest kind of Sin) and that against the Son of Man, and the Means of Grace (which is a higher degree) pardoned. Christ who hath been at the sealing of so many Pardons, saith, that he hath seen all Sin pardoned, except the Sin against the Holy Ghost.

Object. Well, but you will object, *That your Sins have been of long Continuance.*

Answ. I answer, The Mercies of God have been from everlasting; God hath laid up Thoughts of Peace from the Beginning; and therefore tho thy Sin hath been for many Years, yet it hath been but as Yesterday with God; and as long as thou hast not been sinning longer than he hath been thinking of Mercy, cast not off all Hope of Mercy. God's Mercy is like a mighty River that hath run from everlasting: Do but think how long Men did lie in their Sins before the Flood, and yet he forgave them.

Object. *But you will argue the Reiteration of your Sins.*

Answ. I answer, That God doth reiterate his Mercy, *Isa.* 55. 7. he multiplies *Mercies* to pardon, and heaps up Mercy, *&c.* And we do not only read of the Greatness of his Mercy, but also of the Multitude of his Loving-kindnesses; and it is said, that *he doth heal Backslidings*, (and what is a Backsliding but the falling into the same Sin again?) and what is the Reason of this? Because he loves freely; and there-

Part 3. therefore tho he fall into the ſame Sin again, yet do but remember the ſure Covenant of Mercy and Grace that he hath made.

Object. But you will ſay, *I have ſinned ſtubbornly.*

Anſw. I anſwer; God doth pardon that alſo; *Iſa.* 57. 17, 18. *He did go on ſtubbornly, but yet* (ſaith God) *I have ſeen his Ways, and I will heal him; I create the Fruit of the Lips, Peace, Peace to them that are afar off.* The Lord can help tho we be never ſo far off from him.

Uſe. The Uſe of all this is, not to encourage any to ſin againſt God, though the World be ready to practiſe it, and to ſay, Becauſe Grace abounds, therefore Sin may abound much more. But it ſhould not imbolden any to ſin againſt him, for his Anger ſhall ſmoke againſt ſuch an one. But if any Soul is caſt down in the ſight of his Sins, let him look upon the infinite Riches of Mercy and Grace in God, and they will take away that Bar that hinders him from Reconciliation; and tho his Sins be never ſo great, yet if they be not againſt the Holy Ghoſt, they may be pardoned; yea, all Blaſphemy elſe. Chriſt, under whoſe Hands all Pardon goes, doth ſay it. Therefore believe againſt the time of Diſtreſs, take hold of the Mercy of God in Chriſt; but curſed be that Heart that doth make himſelf by this preſumptuous: You may truſt in God as much as you will, only your Hearts muſt be conformable; and if you walk worthy of Reconciliation, you cannot truſt too much.

CHAP. IV.

That Men ſhould not be diſcourag'd from believing by the Doctrine of Election. That the Conſideration of God's having by his electing Decree appointed only ſome few choſen by him unto Salvation and eternal Life, ought to be no Diſcouragement to obſtruct our Endeavours to believe.

THO by the foregoing Conſiderations Men may be brought to acknowledg that the Greatneſs of their Sins ought to be no Bar to their Believing; yet many will ſtill ſtumble at the Doctrine of particular Election, as importing that God deſigns Salvation only to a few. Therefore (ſay they) tho we ſhould come in, and ſeek it never ſo earneſtly, yet we might miſs of it. If indeed we could be certainly aſſur'd of obtaining it, this would give Life and Hope to ſtir for it.

But for Satisfaction of this Scruple we ſhall not need to fetch an Anſwer from the Univerſality of God's Love to all, or of Chriſt's Death extended to all on condition they will: I ſhall therefore rather propound ſuch Conſiderations as may perſwade Men, notwithſtanding the true Doctrine of abſolute Election, to come in and believe, and which may convince them of their Neglect, and of their juſt Damnation if they do not; and to this end I propound theſe enſuing Conſiderations.

1. Unleſs thou didſt undoubtedly know that thou ſhouldſt certainly miſs of Salvation, and unleſs God had declared that thou art none of the Number, there is Hope concerning thy being ſaved: There is an *it may be*, which is as much as we find many Promiſes expreſſed in. Thus, as in *Zeph.* 2. 3. ſo in *Joel* 2. God exhorts them to turn unto him with their whole Heart, for *he is gracious*, &c. *and who knoweth if he will turn and repent, and leave a Bleſſing behind him?* If it be no more, yet God expects that you ſhould have upon this a Hope which may quicken you, and ſtir you, to caſt your ſelves upon his Free Grace; and ſince all is in him, to refer your ſelves to his Mercy, depending upon him in the Uſe of all Means. *Let us turn*, ſay the poor Ninivites, (who therefore will riſe up in Judgment againſt thee) *for who can tell but the Lord may repent of the Evil?* &c. and God did repent, *Jonah* 3. 9, 10. They ſaw there might be a Door of eſcaping, and they were, tho Priſoners, yet of Hope, (*Zech.* 9. 12.) and venture they would for a Pardon, tho they did not know certainly they ſhould obtain it.

2. But further, ſuppoſe it more unlikely than likely, that thou ſhouldſt ſpeed in this Suit, that conſidering it is a caſe of abſolute Neceſſity, to ſeek out for Reconciliation and Peace, there is a ſtrong Ground to move thee to ſeek out for it, and to ſpend the utmoſt of thy Endeavours to attain it, and to think it an infinite Mercy, that

that it is not declared to be absolutely impossible for thee. In case of absolute Necessity we see Men weigh not Improbabilities, but do put themselves and all their Endeavours upon a Venture, tho the Business be very uncertain: As for Example, Men being pressed to the Wars, tho it be certain that some shall die, and those in all probability who fight in the Fore-front, or venture upon some desperate piece of Service, yet it being necessary for them to undertake that Service as commanded them upon pain of Life, and there being some Possibility that they may escape, and that it may fall out so, in this case they are content to hazard and venture themselves. Therefore also why not much more in this case shouldst not thou venture, tho there were more Unlikelihoods that thou shouldst not obtain, than that thou shouldst? But I will give you another Example of the two Lepers, 2 *King*.7.3,4. they reasoned with themselves, *If we enter into the City, then the Famine being in the City, we die there; if we sit here, we die also: Come let us fall into the Camp of the Aramites, if they save our Lives, we shall live; and if they kill us, we are but dead.* Thus in a case of necessity they chose that which tho it had many Improbabilities in it, yet might fall out otherwise than they fear'd. There was an *if it may be* made of saving their Lives, and yet a most unlikely one, for they did not know but that the Aramites might be resolved to cut off all the Jews, and spare not a Man alive; and if they meant to spare any Jews, yet of all others they might well think they would cut off them, because being Lepers they were unfit for Service or Imployment, and might infect the Camp. And now then suppose that this were thy case, that of all others thou wert most likely not to obtain Mercy, that being a Persecutor, a Contemner of Grace, *&c.* shouldst in all probability be cut off, yet there being some Possibility in a case of such Necessity, come in and venture thy self. And the Necessity is greater in thy case; for as to these Lepers there might have been supposed some miraculous way of preserving them, but for thee there is no other way than of Faith, God hath no other: and then the Death which the Lepers should die, both in one way and the other would be alike; but if thou seekest not, thou wilt die a worse Death.

Book 4.

3. But in this case of *Reconciliation* there is (supposing the Doctrine of particular Election) both a Certainty that God intends it for many, and it is of equal and indifferent Likelihood in view, that it is intended for thee as for any other, which besides that great Necessity to enforce thee, may add much Encouragement and Hopes to thee. For thou heardest before, that none of thy Sins are any Bar at all, (and if any thing, they must hinder) no Sin but that against the Holy Ghost. Tho there be many Signs of Election, yet none of absolute Reprobation. But on the contrary, no former Dealings of God with thee, nor no Dealings of thine with him, tho never so base and injurious, no Circumstance of any Sin, either that it hath been so often and so long lain in, and committed after such Mercies, Conviction, Deliberation, can exclude thee from Hopes of Mercy; nay none of these do argue thee further off from Mercy than another that is in the Estate of Nature with thee. There is nothing can be said concerning thee, but it might have been said of some who have Reconciliation with God for their Portion. As no Temptation hath befallen you but what is common to Man, (says *Paul*, 1 *Cor*. 10. 13.) so nothing can be objected against thee but hath been and is common to those who have obtained Mercy. No Leprosy makes thee unfitter or unlikelier to be saved than another. So that lay but these two together; First, that some in all Ages shall find Mercy, and that thou art as fairly capable of it, and as nigh as another, since there is no Qualification in the Statute to exclude thee, no Exception against thy Country, Sex, Age, Parts, *&c.* for God did look to none of all these when he chose Men; *Acts* 10. 34. *He is no Respecter of Persons*: so as thou mayst say, (as they did, *Acts* 15. 11.) *I believe that through the Grace of Christ I may be saved as well as they; for Grace is free, and requires nothing in the Person not in one way nor other, to whom it intendeth Favour; and therefore I seeing nothing against my Hope of having Salvation, as well as nothing why I should deserve it, I am as near it as another, and therefore will stand for it.* In 1 *Kings* 20. 31. when they heard the Kings of *Israel* were merciful Kings, and that they had spared others in the like case that they and *Benhadad* were in, and when they saw nothing in their Condition which had not been pardoned in others, they upon this say, *Let us put Ropes about our Neck, peradventure the King of* Israel *may save thy Life.* It was but a *peradventure*, and a greater one than can be supposed in thy case, for they had heard only in the general of the Kings of *Israel*, but whether this King

Ahab

Ahab were of ſuch a Diſpoſition, they knew not, and yet they ventured upon it to
Part 3. ſeek to him: but thou heareſt that this great God is a God gracious, merciful, &c
and that he hath pardoned thouſands in the like Condition.

4. Thou art not only thus equally capable of it as well as another, but there is a Probability and a Likelihood that God doth intend thee, becauſe thou haſt heard that he is a merciful God, and willing to be reconcil'd by his own Appointment. The News of it is directed to thee by himſelf, and he hath bidden thee to ſtand for it, and to come in for it: For the Word of Reconciliation which we preach is made known but to a few, and thoſe too to whom it comes, it comes as an Act of Mercy, and by God's Direction it comes rather to one Place than another, rather to one Man than another: As why was *Paul* forbidden to go into *Bithynia*, (*Acts* 16. 7.) and called to go into *Macedonia*, and bidden (*Acts* 18. 10.) to ſtay at *Corinth* and preach, but becauſe, as God ſays there, *I have much People in this City*. When the Plague comes to a Place wherein any Man lives, whenas other Places are free, he fears leſt God might intend to take him away by it rather than the others in other Places, and ſtill looks on himſelf if he hath no Token on him: So when the Goſpel comes to the Place wherein thou liveſt, and thou haſt not the Sound of it confuſedly, but the Knowledg diſtinctly of it to thy Ears, thou haſt Cauſe to think it exceedingly probable, that God doth intend thee for Salvation, and that the Kingdom of God is come nigh thee. It is a great Probability of Election, that the Goſpel is come to thee, 1 *Theſſ.* 1. 5. and it is a ſign that God means to ſave thee, and hath choſen thoſe to whom he makes known this Myſtery of his Will of reconciling and gathering Souls to himſelf, *Epheſ.* 1. 9. Thoſe Servants of *Benhadad* had no Intimation of Mercy from *Ahab* himſelf, or by his Direction, but thou haſt from God: For the Myſtery hid from all Ages, and now from moſt of the World, is revealed unto thee, and he hath directed the Goſpel to thee in an eſpecial Providence; and ſince he hath not proclaimed this Pardon to all Perſons, but to a few, therefore thou being among them to whom this Proclamation of Mercy is ſent, haſt Cauſe to put in for it, and much Encouragement alſo to do ſo.

5. Eſpecially this Goſpel offering great Salvation as an Addition to this Peace and Reconciliation made with God, ought to excite and encourage thee to ſeek it. The Lepers thought only to ſave their Lives, and ſo did *Benhadad*, for he was perhaps out of Hope of having his Kingdom again: But thou haſt not only Hope of having thy Life, but of having eternal Life; and this added to the Capableneſs of thy attaining it, and the Probability annexed to it, ſhould exceedingly quicken thee to ſeek out for it. For in caſe of Preferment, when a great Office is void, a Living or a Fellowſhip in a College, which will certainly be beſtowed on ſome, as ſoon as a Man ſhall hear of ſuch a thing, and have a hint of it from the Party that beſtows it, and be told from him that he is as fair for it as any other, that he is as capable, that there is no Clauſe in the Statute to exclude him, and ſhut him out, and that he hath as good Means to make for it as any other, how would he be quickned to uſe his utmoſt Endeavours, to lay out his Money, and to put in for it, when yet he knows that there are many Suitors, and that the Place can be beſtowed but upon one? Now this is the caſe in hand, The Goſpel offereth great Salvation, ſo great as the Apoſtle can no otherwiſe expreſs it, (*Heb.* 2. 3.) but in this Phraſe, *How ſhall we eſcape if we neglect ſo great Salvation?* And this thou art as fair for, and canſt make as good Means for it, if thou comeſt to Jeſus Chriſt, as another. This the Apoſtle intimates, 1 *Cor.* 9. 14. ſpeaking of his endeavour to be Partaker of the Goſpel and the Salvation in it: *Know ye not* (ſaith he) *that they which run in a Race run all, tho but one receives the Prize?* Yes, all will venture, and therefore why not thou? Will not this Practice of Men in caſe of a *corruptible Crown*, as he calls it, tho there be an uncertain Tie in it, condemn the Neglect of ſeeking an incorruptible Crown, (as *ver.* 25.) and ſtop Mens Mouths from pleading, that few can attain, and ſome may miſs it?

6. Conſider God's manner of revealing and making known this Reconciliation to be had, (ſuppoſe but by a few) yet it is indifferently to be propounded unto all, as importing that all ſhould be ſtirr'd up at the Hear-ſay of it, with the Hope of it, to endeavour after it. Chriſt bad them ſay to every Houſe to which they came, (*Luke* 10. 5.) *Peace be to this Houſe*; and God expects that every one to whom this News comes ſhould look out for Peace, as a thing belonging to him, *Luke* 19. 42. Yea

Yea he commands all to whom it comes to stand for it, and to use all Means to attain it, 1 *John* 3. 23. *Acts* 17. 30. and he will condemn Men if they neglect to do so, *Heb.* 2. 3. and not only doth so, but beseecheth you to be reconciled, to come in and seek it at his Hands: and if one that had a great Preferment in his Gift should do so, would it not mightily encourage you with Hopes to attain it, if he should send to thee to stand for it? Book 4.

7. With this News which thou hast heard of Willingness in God to be reconciled, *&c.* thou either art affected and moved to come in, or not affected; for one of these two things must fall out. If thou beest not affected at all to listen after it, thou hast no Cause to complain that thou shalt not obtain it: for can any complain he cannot obtain that which he hath no Heart to, nor Mind to obtain? But if thou beest affected with it, and hast a Heart desirous to obtain it, if thou art set a work to seek out for it, if God hath enamoured thee with his Son, and given thee an high Esteem of Reconciliation with him, and given thee a Heart to seek after it; this may give thee a rational Presumption of Success, for there is more than a Probability that it is intended for thee, and that thou art a Son of Peace: *Luke* 10. 6. for if it be hid, *it is hid to them who are lost: In whom the God of this World hath blinded the Minds of them which believe not*, 2 Cor. 4. 4.

Professors who have a Work of the Spirit upon them, have usually spent their chiefest Thoughts in poring upon that Work, to discern the Truth of it from a temporary Work, and so by way of Signs to apply conditional Promises unto themselves, thereby both diverting from Faith in Christ, and from looking up to him, (and so dishonouring him) and also putting too much upon their own Graces. Now I would have them rather to make this Use of all such Workings, that tho they doubt of the Truth of them, yet they should however look on them as Encouragements in a way of Believing, to facilitate the Work of Faith the more: That tho no such Works can be made a Ground of Faith, yet they may help to remove Stumbling-blocks which lie in the way of it; even in as full a manner as Encouragements from the Promises of the Covenant, as made to Believers and their Seed, may help the Children of Believers more than others when they come to believe. For there are but a few in the World whose Hearts God enlightneth and affecteth with the Powers of the World to come; and half of them whom he doth so stir, are usually such as are elected, and savingly wrought upon: Thus there were as many wise Virgins as foolish among Professors. Now therefore tho thou canst not tell what to make of thy Work in it self, nor art able to say whether it be Grace or no, and so canst not fetch Assurance from it, yet thou mayst from it be encouraged to hope that possibly thou belongest to the Election of Grace, and so it may help thee to go to Christ with more Probability of Success: For now thou art not within an hundred to one of Salvation, but at least within two to one; so that it is but half odds that thou art one to whom God may shew Mercy. And thus encourag'd (using it no farther) thou mayst go to Christ lighten'd of many Fears at which others stick, thou having so fair a Lot for Heaven. But because such are in this respect in the like Probability of Salvation, as the Children of believing Parents, I refer them unto that Consideration, that what Encouragement their being under their Parents Covenant may give them, the same may these strong Workings and Stirrings of the Spirit of God give these.

8. If thou wilt seek Salvation, and dost continue to seek it, there is a Certainty that thou shalt obtain it; and it is a false Slander to say, that there being few elected, therefore my Salvation may prove uncertain, tho I seek it. Now that there is a Certainty promised to seeking, is plain from what *Paul* says, 1 *Cor.* 9. 26. *I therefore so run, not as uncertainly*, that is, I so run that I shall be sure to speed. He had said in *ver.* 24. (as I shewed before) that in the *Olympian* Games many run, but yet but one receives and wins the Crown, and yet many will run, tho it be so uncertain; but, says he, in endeavouring after Salvation in the Gospel, of which he there speaks, if you will but endeavour to run as you ought, with your utmost Might, you shall be sure to obtain: as many as will take Pains to do it, and use all Means, (as he speaks there) shall be successful. Some indeed fall short through lazy running; *but* (says he) *so run that you may obtain*, that is, there is a running and a seeking which will certainly obtain; *I therefore* (says he) *so run*, and so running shall obtain, not as uncertainly, but so as I shall be sure to enjoy the Prize. And so Christ also hath said, *Seek and you shall find, knock and it shall be opened to you*: And he backs

Part 3. this by a ſtrange convincing Demonſtration to aſſure them of it; *Luke* 11. 4, 5. If one come to a Friend at Midnight, and deſires ſome neceſſary thing of him, tho he be one who hath no liſt to riſe, *ver.* 7. nor regardeth the relation of Friendſhip at all in it, *ver.* 8. but ſaith, he hath all his Children already in Bed with him, *ver.* 7. yet for his Importunity ſake he would riſe in the Night: *Now then I ſay unto you* (ſays Chriſt) *knock and it ſhall be opened*: Tho the Door ſeem ſhut againſt thee, tho thou ſhouldſt think God intended not Friendſhip to thee, and had as it were all his Friends about him already, yet he will open to and let thee in, *ver.* 10. He confirms it by Experience, that there was never yet any turn'd away, but every one that asketh receiveth, and that ſeeketh findeth; and there was never any yet that did ſo that was ſent away empty.

CHAP. V.

Some general Conſiderations premiſed to open a way for the following Directions to guide us in our Endeavours to believe.

HAving thus removed the Diſcouragements of Faith, I now come to ſome Directions to guide us in our endeavouring to believe.

I ſhall firſt in general explain to you what I intend, by way of premiſe, that ſo my Scope and Meaning may be apprehended. My Scope is not to give Directions about all Ways, and Means, and Helps outward and inward, to attain Faith, ſuch as you would give to mere carnal Men, (that is, to Men that do lie ſtill in the Profaneneſs of their Hearts, and in the Looſneſs of their Eſtates, unſenſible of any thing) I will not, I ſay, go about to ſhew what ſuch Men ſhould do, and what Endeavours they are to uſe: No, I ſpeak to ſuch as are under Diſcouragement, and that lie under the Senſe of their own Inability to believe, for it is that Objection which occaſioneth what I ſhall ſpeak. I do not mean neither to ſhew you what preparative Works there are to Faith, or to inſiſt upon them; but I ſpeak to a Soul that is brought to the brink of Believing, that is convinced of its poor ruined State, which indeed is the firſt Part of Faith, (for ſo Self-emptineſs is) one that lies at the Pool, (as the Cripple at *Bethesda*) that is made ſenſible of his own Diſability, and lies under that Diſcouragement. I am only, I ſay, now to deal with ſuch an one, and therefore all that I ſhall ſpeak ſhall be pertinent as to the Condition of ſuch a Soul, and I ſhall not meddle with any thing elſe.

Now the Queſtion is this, What ſuch a Soul is to do? Whether, as ſome have ſaid, to lie ſtill, and only to wait (as they in *Acts* 1. 8.) for the Power of the Holy Ghoſt to come upon them? Whether he is not to ſtir till ſuch time as God comes and to his feeling and ſenſe overpowers his Heart to believe? Whether (I ſay) till God comes with ſuch a Power as is infinitely beyond his own, and enables him to believe, and draws his Heart unto it, he is not at all to attempt it till then, not only becauſe it is in vain, but becauſe otherwiſe it will be an Attempt in his own Strength? or whether, yea or no, the Soul ought not (as the Text here hath it) to labour for to enter, and to ſet his Feet into that Reſt by Believing?

I have two things to ſay to this. Firſt, Some Generals are to be premiſed. Secondly, Some Directions are more particularly to be deliver'd. The Generals which I premiſe ſhall be theſe four:

1. That God in working Faith in the Hearts of his Elect, altho he always ſhews an Almighty Power, the ſame that wrought in Jeſus Chriſt when he was raiſed from Death to Life, yet notwithſtanding he doth not always ſo affect the Spirits of thoſe in whom he works Faith, as to make it appear to their Senſe, that it is a Power of that Almighty Proportion. I ſay, God doth not always in the Senſe of the Parties himſelf come with a predominant over-powering Power when he draws the Soul to believe. He doth not always come as he did upon the Prophets, with a ſtrong Hand in a Man's own Senſe, but he oftentimes ſweetly inſinuateth himſelf, and gently ſlideth into a Man's Heart, and mingleth himſelf, and his Spirit, and Power with their Spirits, in a way of a compliance to the Pace (if I may ſo expreſs it) even of the

natural Motions in their Hearts, and in a sweet and still way, yet omnipotently ries them on so to act. God is exceeding free in the working of Faith and Grace the Spirits of Men, and he doth deal variously. In *Job* 33. 29. having described Work upon one that lies on his sick Bed, how he is troubled for his Sins, and then nds for a Messenger, one among a thousand, to shew unto him his Uprightness, *&c.* *ese things* (saith he) *worketh God oftentimes* (mark that word *oftentimes*, not al-ys) *with Man.* God is found of some that sought him not, and others he puts em upon seeking long before they find him. The Power of the Holy Ghost comes on a Man as Wind, but it doth not come always as a rushing mighty Wind, in at predominant over-powering Sense, as that he shall feel it to be a Wind exter-lly that doth thus and thus move him, (as it came upon the Apostles, *Acts* 2.) but ntimes comes like a still Wind, in a still small Voice, as you know it did unto *ijah*, 1 Kings 19. 12. When the Spirit of God came upon the Prophets, sometimes carried them by a *strong Hand*, as the word is; but how doth he deal with *hraim* and the ten Tribes, *Hos.* 11. 3? (and his dealing with them that were his ople then, is a Type of his dealing with his People under the Gospel) he dealt ith *Ephraim* as a Nurse dealeth with her Child when she teacheth him to go. *hen* Ephraim *was a Child* (saith he) *I loved him, I taught him also to go, taking m by the Arms.* This Comparison of a Nurse teaching of a Child to go, and so ining her Strength with the Strength of the Child, would be a full Comparison, that the Nurse did put the inward Strength into the Child, as God doth; but et allowing that Disparity, it holds forth thus much however, and serves thus far illustrate the thing in hand, *viz.* that God in working upon a Man doth apply imself as it were to his natural Pace, and yet works strongly. He doth not say, at God dealt with *Ephraim* as Christ did with the lame Man, make him go and ap and dance as it were presently; no, he doth not let him feel always such an mnipotent Power coming upon him as shall enable him so to do; but he deals ith him as a Nurse deals with her Child when she teacheth him to go. Now a urse you know doth not take and hurry the Child, doth not come with a Power at shall be sensible to it beyond and above its own, and remove it from one Place to other, as she is easily able to do; but first she sets the Child gently down, and hen lets it try if it can feel his Legs, (as you use to say) and then if it can stand up-n the Ground, and then lets it try to set one Foot before another. Just thus as the urse deals with a Child, and applies her self to its weak State and Condition in aching it to go, so doth God unto his Children in teaching them to enter into this est, and to believe, and in guiding all their Steps therein. He first letteth a Man e he cannot stand, letteth him see there is not a Power in himself, then sets his eart upon Christ, and lets him try if he can stay and rest upon him, when yet he annot walk in Christ as he thinketh; and then he taketh him by the Arms, when et it may be he cannot set one Foot before another, and so gives him now a little trength, and then a little Strength, insinuating and sliding in his Power, his sup-orting and assisting Power, according to the Pace of the Motions of a Man's Heart: nd altho in the working of Faith he gives all Power, and Faith is not of our selves, ut is the Gift of God; yet he doth not always come with such an Almighty and ver-ruling Power, (when a Man is sensible of his own Emptiness) as to the Man's ense shall hold proportion with the Power that raised Christ from the Dead. That ame drawing that is spoken of, *John* 6. 44. *No Man cometh unto me except the Fa-her draw him*, you may interpret by *Hos.* 11. 4. *I drew them with Cords of a Man:* hat is, I did not overhale them; but as one Man would perswade another, so I in-nuated my Love and my Power to them, *humano more*, tho there was an Almighty ower went with it. And it is interpreted also by what follows in *John* 6. 44. *They all be all taught of God.* He by his Almighty Power puts an Instinct into the Heart (for that is his Teaching) after Christ and after Free Grace, and causeth the Man o renounce himself, and so sets the Heart earnestly intent upon these things. The Heart would have Christ, and says he, why may not I have Christ? and what is be-ween me and Christ? A thousand such Thoughts God casteth in, and yet it is but ike an Instinct, tho God himself be at the bottom of it. As we are said to be taught of God to love one another, it is not by a sudden shedding, in an instant, into the Heart, abundance of Love unto the Saints; but it is, as I may so express it, by a still and secret Touch of the Heart, whereby it is drawn on to love them, such as

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Part 3. when the Iron is touched with the Load-ſtone. And obſerve, whom doth Chriſt ſpeak this of when he ſaith, (*John* 6. 44.) *No Man can come unto me except the Father draw him?* It appears evidently by what follows at *ver.* 64. of that Chapter, that he ſpeaks of his Diſciples: *There are ſome of you* (ſaith he) *which believe not, therefore ſaid I unto you, that no Man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.* Now had all theſe Apoſtles when Faith was wrought in them, think you, ſeeing themſelves firſt unable to believe, had they the Senſe of an omnipotent Power, that with a ſtrong Hand carried on their Souls to believe, in a ſenſible and diſcernable way? Clearly no; for ſee what is ſaid (*John* 14. 6, 7, 8.) of theſe very Men of whom Chriſt ſaith, they had not come unto him unleſs the Father had drawn them, and unleſs the Father had taught them: See what is there ſaid of theſe very Men, I ſay, whom God had ſhewn ſo much Power in drawing them unto Chriſt: *Whither I go you know,* (ſaith Chriſt) *and the way you know:* Thomas *ſaith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goeſt, and how can we know the way?* Either Chriſt here muſt ſpeak what is falſe, or *Thomas* muſt ſpeak what is falſe, one would think, in appearance. The truth is, *Thomas* he did know, and he did not know; and whereas (*John* 6. 45.) he ſaith, *They ſhall be all taught of God to know him,* here (*John* 14. 7.) he ſaith, *If you had known me, you had known my Father alſo; and from henceforth ye know him, and have ſeen him.* Philip *ſaith unto him, Lord, ſhew us the Father, and it ſufficeth us: Jeſus ſaith unto him, Have I been ſo long time with you, and yet haſt thou not known me,* Philip? *He that hath ſeen me, hath ſeen the Father.* Yet *Philip* was drawn unto God, and drawn unto Chriſt, and was drawn too by being taught of God, and taught of Chriſt. There is no way then to ſolve it but this, that God when he works Faith, doth not always come with ſuch a Power upon the Soul that he ſhall be ſenſible that there is ſuch an omnipotent Power upon him working Faith in him; no, oftentimes, tho a Man doth the thing, and truly believeth, and doth it by the Power of God working on him, yet he ſcarce can diſcern it from his own Power, and from his own Thoughts. This Truth is evident (and whoever he be that denies it, his own Experience ſhall confute him before he die) by the Light that God puts into the Soul concerning the Manifeſtation of himſelf unto us. There is a conſtant Light that a Chriſtian carries about him, that he walks by, ſuch as is in the Day, whether the Sun ſhine or not ſhine, which yet notwithſtanding keeps to the Pace of a Man's own Underſtanding; and there is a Light which ſometimes comes in upon a Man, and is like the Sun breaking through a Cloud, that a Man can look up and ſee the Sun, and can confidently ſay, Now I do ſee the Sun; and yet both theſe Lights are ſupernatural, and both from the Almighty Power of God: and he that hath that ordinary Light of Faith, which keeps Pace with his own Underſtanding, he believes, and he believes truly and ſtrongly too; and when thoſe extraordinary Lights ceaſe, the ordinary one remains, and carries on the Soul to Jeſus Chriſt, and to Faith in him. *Job* all his Life had enjoyed an ordinary Light of Faith. *I have heard of thee* (ſaith he, *Job* 42. 5.) *by the hearing of the Ear, but now mine Eyes have ſeen thee:* There came another Light in then. So I take it, *Paul* when he was under that great Temptation, (2 *Cor.* 12.) he prayed, and he would fain have had his Requeſt, fain have had his Corruption ſubdued, fain have had ſuch a Power manifeſted in his Weakneſs as he might have ſeen Satan trampled under his Feet preſently: *No,* ſaith God, *my Grace is ſufficient for thee.* God inſinuated himſelf ſtrongly to ſupport him, tho *Paul* felt not ſuch a ſenſible Power as might preſently overcome the Temptation. The truth is, it is in the matter of working Faith in the Heart, as it is in the Temptations of Satan. There are Temptations of Satan which a Man cannot diſcern from his own Thoughts; and yet the Devil is ſtrong in ſuch Temptations. And again, there are Temptations in which a Man apparently feels the Devil, and can diſtinguiſh them from his own Thoughts, as in all thoſe helliſh Blaſphemies that are injected and caſt into the Soul. So it is in the Workings of God, he doth ſometimes inſinuate himſelf into the Soul ſo ſtilly and ſecretly, that a Man cannot diſcern thoſe Inſinuations from his own Thoughts, but takes them indeed to be his own, and yet there is the mighty Power of God that acts the Spirit all that while. And then again, there are mighty Workings of God that come with a Noiſe, with a Stupendouſneſs. I ſhall only add one Confirmation of it from *Epheſ.* 1. 19. where the Apoſtle prayeth *that their Eyes may be opened to ſee the Power of God that wrought in them that believe,* and in their

2. The

own Hearts.

2. The second general Premise that I shall add is this, That God in carrying on the Heart to believe, gives Power to one Act and not to another; and he hath appointed that one Act to be a Step and a Degree unto another. In 2 *Thess.* 1. 11. the Apostle prays, *that God would fulfil all the good Pleasure of his Goodness, and the Work of Faith with Power.* The word *fulfil* signifies to perfect and accomplish a thing by Degrees, to be doing of it I know not how long, as a Man is about perfecting some Master-piece of Work, or as a Painter is perfecting of a Picture, which he is fain to go over again and again before he hath fulfill'd that Idea he hath in his Head: So is the very Work of Faith in the Heart, which is what God hath in the Idea of his own good Pleasure and Will, and he is a long while in perfecting it. You read in 1 *Thess.* 3. 10. that *there was something lacking in their Faith, and a great deal lacking too:* And here he prays, *that God would fulfil that Work of Faith*; (and you see he saith it is the Work of Faith with Power) that he would fulfil one Part after another, and so as to make one a Step unto another. *After you believed you were sealed,* says he, *Ephes.* 1. 13. After they had suffered a while they were established, 1 *Pet.* 5. 10. Hence now; Book 4.

3. (Which comes to the point in hand) A Soul that is sensible of his own Inability to do any thing of it self, and is cast down in the Apprehension thereof, may and ought to act in and towards believing, so far as it finds its Spirit strengthned by God, not examining or staying till it knows certainly that this is such a Power and such a Strength as is so from God, as will now at this Instant enable it truly and throughly to believe. Why? Because (as I said before) God doth not always carry on the Work of Faith by such an over-powering Light, especially at first, but applies himself to the Pace of a Man's Understanding and Will; yet notwithstanding, because God doth give Power to one Act and not to another, still so far as a Man finds his Spirit strengthned by God, so far let him join with God, and all in a Subordination to the Power of God to work further; for still there is somewhat lacking to your Faith; and in such a way as this, you will still find that God will come in and shew you greater things than these. In 2 *Cor.* 12. *Paul* would have had a Power instantly to overcome that Temptation; no saith God, *My Grace shall be sufficient for thee,* i. e. that Power that I proportion out to thee shall be sufficient to uphold thee; improve that, and join with that which I ordinarily give thee, and it shall be sufficient to carry thee through, tho thou dost not attain what thou prayest for; for the truth is, *Paul* prayed for more, and all the Answer from God was, *My Grace is sufficient for thee.* In *James* 4. 8. (saith he) *Draw nigh unto God, and he will draw nigh unto you.* Do but mark what that Place holds out; when he saith, *And he will draw nigh unto you,* he doth evidently mean a sensible drawing nigh of God to a Man's Spirit, that the Soul shall be able to say, This is God, and I feel my Heart filled with his Presence. Now in order to this he bids us draw nigh first unto God. If now we should exhort a Man that is cast down thus in the Sense of his own Inability, and should say unto him, *Draw nigh unto God, and he will draw nigh unto you,* what would he say? He would say, God must draw nigh unto me first before I can draw nigh unto him, for I have no Ability to do it; why then do you say, *Draw nigh unto God?* he must first *draw nigh unto me,* even as he must love me first before I can love him. Of necessity therefore the Apostle must suppose an insensible drawing nigh of God unto a Man's Spirit to enable him to draw nigh unto God, that so God may draw nigh unto him sensibly, and apparently, and evidently. So far forth therefore as thou findest by an insensible Power in thee, that thy Heart is strengthned to draw nigh unto God, do thou draw nigh unto him, (still maintaining a Sense of thy own Inability to do any thing of thy self) and if thou wilt draw nigh unto him while he doth thus insensibly draw nigh unto thee, he will draw nigh unto thee manifestatively, so as thou shalt be sensible of his Presence. I quote that Place for this, that God doth give us Strength to do one thing which is in order to some farther thing; he doth give an insensible Strength to draw nigh to him, so that the Heart finds it self enabled to go into the Presence of God, and cast down it self before him: In this case, saith the Apostle, go and draw nigh unto him, join with this Strength you find, and you shall find a farther Strength, for the Promise is there of an apparent drawing nigh, which the other was not. The like is certainly the meaning of *Luke* 11. 13. where Christ saith, *He will give the Spirit unto them that ask him.* Will not a Man be apt to say now, How shall I ask the Spirit if I have not the Spirit?

rit? Therefore without all question this is his meaning, that when a Man doth
Part 3. find that he doth want the Spirit, as he thinketh; yet saith he, so far forth as thou findest thy Heart strengthned to ask, (which is yet the Spirit's working) go and ask. Here is the Spirit working insensibly to ask, as in order to obtaining the Spirit in a sensible way. The like is certainly the meaning of all those Places, *Seek and ye shall find, ask and it shall be given you*, &c. So that this is the thing I drive at, Let every one of you in the way of believing and acting of Faith (seeing God goes thus stilly and yet strongly, seeing likewise that God doth do one thing that is in order to another, step after step, perfects the Work of Faith with Power) so far forth still as you find that your Hearts are strengthned to do any thing that is spiritually good, tho it may be you cannot discern that it is spiritually good in the doing, yet strive to do it. Tho *James* himself had said, *Every perfect Gift is from above*; and that no Man can have Wisdom (if he will have a perfect Gift of it) but he must have it from the Father of Lights; yet saith he, *If any Man lack Wisdom, let him ask it of God*, James 1. Let every Man say that he will go so far as he finds Strength to carry him, for God perfecteth the Work of Faith with Power. When that poor Man came to Christ, (*Mark* 9.) and asked him if he could do any thing? saith Christ, *ver.* 23. yes, *if thou canst believe*. Do but observe that Phrase, *If thou canst believe*: it implies indeed that he could not do it without a Strength and Assistance, therefore the poor Man afterwards saith, *Help thou mine Unbelief*: yet Christ puts him upon this, so far as thou findest thy Heart heartned, (as I may so express it) so far as thou findest thy Heart any ways strengthned, that thou canst say I can thus far believe, try, and put it forth; and so the poor Man did, *Lord* (saith he) *I do believe, help thou mine Unbelief*. So now, there is many a poor Soul that is not able to say, *I have a Heart to take Jesus Christ*; no, on the contrary, *I have not the Boldness to do it; yea when I go about to do it, my Thoughts fail me, and my Heart misgiveth me in doing of it; I have no Strength at all to lay hold upon Jesus Christ*. But canst thou go unto him? *Yes, I find that* (the Soul will say) *I have that Strength put into me, that tho indeed I cannot lay hold of his Person, yet I can go unto him, and I can lay my self down at his Feet*. Still say I, so far forth as thou findest thy Heart strengthned, so far forth still join with that Strength, and *act under* God's Activity upon thee. Say within thy self, Tho I cannot go to him to lay hold upon his Person, yet I can go to him to have Power to lay hold upon him: Go so far with it, put forth so far as thou findest thou canst put forth. The truth is, God takes you as little Children by the Arms, tho his Power go along with you: Now if the Child had but Knowledg when the Nurse first teacheth him to go, what would it say? I cannot set one Foot before another: It's no matter will she say, therefore set your Feet upon the Ground, and try whether you feel them or no: and still so far forth as the Child findeth Strength, still so far it should act and go, being still held by the Arms by the Nurse: So do thou in a Subordination to the Power of God that is working Faith in thee, and fulfilling the Work of it with Power. So far as thou findest thy Heart heartned or strengthned to put forth Acts of Faith, or any thing towards believing, so far still enter.

Those Men that would have a Soul that is sensible of his own Inability lie and wait till God come with a sensible Power to enable it to believe, and not to stir till then, what do these Men do? They exhort that Soul to wait for a Power from above, do they not? Yes, this is all one with what I say, for where hath the Soul that Sense? Certainly from God: And where hath it that Power to wait? Certainly from God: No Man can say, Jesus is the Lord without the Holy Ghost, much more to be sensible of his own Unbelief. Then the meaning must needs be this, that so far forth as God strengthneth the Soul to act, so far forth it should act; or imagine it is in an ordinary way strengthned to wait, say I, if thou findest thy Heart strengthned by God to go further, go further; set one Foot before another, for God doth apply his Power to the Pace of a Man's Will and Understanding, and that not always in a discernable way as it is a Power, but as a Nurse doth to a Child. Even to wait for the Righteousness of Faith and the Power of God, is a Work of the Spirit, and an Almighty Work too; so saith the Apostle, (*Gal.* 5. 5.) *We through the Spirit wait for the Righteousness of Faith*. And therefore as the Apostle saith in another case, *So far as any Man hath attained, so far still let him join with that Power*, that is, so far forth as he finds his Heart strengthned, (and the Holy Ghost still strength-

strengthneth Men when they act any thing) so far let him still put forth. You shall find that *Paul* took the same Course; *Phil.* 3. 12, 13. *I do reach forth* (saith he) *to those things which are before, and I press towards the Mark*, &c. *I do reach forward*, I stretch all my Sinews. The word there is a Metaphor taken from a Man in a Race, or that is running towards the Goal; he doth not only use his Feet, but he runs with his Hands stretched out, that where his Feet may not come, his Hands, if possible, may come; so saith he, I do reach forth, I do follow after it as much as ever I did after persecuting the Church, (for the word is the same) so that still he applied himself to what he had attained, and still so far as he could, so far he reached, and yet all this was the Grace of God in him. So I say, let the Soul of every Man that is thus made sensible of its own Inability, act so far forth as he finderh the Spirit of God strengthning him. Do what thou hast to do with all that Might thou findest by Spirit assisted withal.

Book 4.

4. The fourth and last general Premise which I shall mention, and which indeed doth follow from all the former, is this, That such Souls are not to stay from exercising Acts of Faith till they feel and discern that they are clothed with such a Power as will and doth enable them truly to believe. They are not, I say, to stay until they discern this, that now I have such a Power fall upon me, now I will believe, and this I have waited for, and I must lie waiting for it till I find this Power. I yield this indeed, that you may seek and wait for the Assurance of such a Power that shall over-power your Spirits over and above the ordinary Pace of the natural Motion of your own Hearts, to believe in Christ. Such a thing God vouchsafeth, such a thing the Apostle prays for towards the Ephesians, *ch.* 1. 19. such a thing the Apostles themselves waited for, (*Acts* 1. 4.) till Power from an high came upon them; and the Promise is made unto us for believing and sealing us as well as unto them, *Acts* 2. 41. We may therefore wait for such a Power to perswade our Hearts to believe beyond the Pace, I say, of the Motions of our own Spirits. But yet that which I add withal is this, that you are not to stay from attempting to believe till you feel such a Power come upon you, not to stay till you can say, 'I feel a Divine Power now clothing me, which will enable my Soul to believe. For,

1st. To stay from attempting to believe till you feel such a Power, is perhaps never to stay. Not only because that God oftentimes doth not give it even to those whom he doth give Faith unto truly, but how dost thou know but that there is such a Power now upon thee as if thou dost join with it thou shalt truly believe, which before thou didst not? For that must needs be seen when the thing is done, it is not seen in the Cause, it is not seen in the feeling the Power and the Proportion of that first, but it is seen in the Effect, it is seen in the acting of it, it is seen in the thing a doing. If a Mariner that is to set a Ship over Sea, would say, I will stay till I feel such a Wind blow as I shall be sure will carry me over, and last till I come thither; or a Wind that should take the Ship out of the Port, and go and throw it on the other side, before I'll stir or hoist up Sail, or give up my Vessel to the Wind, for this that now blows is not high enough, it is too still; this Man might stay for ever, and never go over Sea. But what do wise Mariners do? Why when they see a Gale, tho it be but a still Gale, yea tho it be but a side-Wind, if there be a Necessity to go, they will hale and tow out with it; and tho when they are at Sea it begins to turn, yet still they wait, and make use of a side-Wind, and oftentimes meet with that Wind that doth directly carry them over indeed.

2dly. To stay for such a Power first, and wait for it, till thou mayst be able to discern that it will enable thee and overpower thee to believe before thou attempteſt it, is to expect from God (e're thou putteſt forth an Act of Faith) a greater Assurance than of Election. And would you stay till God perswade you that you are elected, before you believe? Will you have that to be the first thing God perswades you of, and to be the bottom of your Faith? In thy desiring such a Power to come upon thee as to thy Sense shall be such, thou desireſt a harder Matter, a greater thing than for God to come upon thee with his Love, and to testify unto thee that thou art elected, and that he hath loved thee from everlasting, because such a Power as shall be such in thy Sense, is the immediate Fruit of that Love and of that Will in him, I mean not the Fruit in thee, but from himself. Nay, it is more than to stay believing till God assure thee and perswade thee that thou art elected, it is to ask a thing yet more hard: and what is the Reason? Because Election is a standing perma-

Part 3. permanent thing, a Foundation always remaining, and is at all times, and if we could apprehend it, might be demonstrated to the Soul: but such a Power as shall rise to that proportion as to thine own Sense, thou shalt think I am now clothed with it, and shall be enabled to believe, that comes when God pleaseth, and is a fleeting thing, and so thou putst thy Believing upon the Evidence of that which is not permanent, but is arbitrary and fleeting, and very difficult to be.

3dly. Wilt thou consider this, that tho indeed it is the Power of God that gives Ability to believe, yet it is not the Sense of the Power of God in my Heart that gives me my Warrant to believe, therefore I am not to forbear till I feel such a Power. It is, I say, indeed the Power of God that gives thee Ability, but it is not that which gives the Warrant or the Ground. It is the Command of God to believe on the Name of his Son, and it is the indefinite Promise that Christ came into the World to save Sinners, indefinitely thus express'd, and the like, that is the Ground of Believing. Therefore now upon the Command thou art to attempt the Duty, and to look up unto God for Power to accompany thee in that Duty, and thou art not to stay and wait first to be clothed with such a Power as a Warrant or Ground for thy Believing, as if else thou shouldst believe in vain. Yea, when thou hast pitch'd upon the right Ground of Believing, and attempted to believe, this Power usually comes in and accompanies it. Thou art to do thy Duty according to the Command, that's the Warrant, to begin and to leave it unto God to enable thee, to assist thee to do it truly, as well as perform any Command else. It's true indeed, no Man doth believe in the Event unless God doth draw him, yet no Man doth first believe upon this Ground, because he feels that God doth draw him. I acknowledg that God may apply himself to such an Error in the Souls of some, as I have found he hath done; for God doth apply himself sometimes even to our Errors rather than he will lose an elect Child of his, which is the Freedom of his Grace, and so he may do in this case. One whose Spirit is possess'd with such an Apprehension of such an Objection and such a Mistake, God may come upon him and draw him to believe by a sensible Almighty Power; but herein God doth in his Infinite Grace and Mercy apply himself to this Error rather than lose his Child. Even as in the first Age of Reformation, when they taught that all Faith was Assurance that a Man's Sins were forgiven, (which is as great an Error as can be, it condemns the Generation of many of the Righteous) and yet God did apply himself unto this Error in the Experience of the most of that Age, and came upon them accordingly.

Lastly; To end this *4th* general Premise; For thee to stay Believing till thou feelest thy self clothed with such a Power, it is indeed all one, and in a manner like to those other Bars which are cried down so much, and many of them justly, and which do keep thousands from Believing. Men think I must have this, or I must have that first e're I believe, and so they are detained from Believing; and if it were not for the infinite Goodness of God to them, *they would be ever learning, and never come to the Knowledg of the Truth,* (as the Apostle saith in another case, 2 *Tim.* 3. 7.) they would ever be in the way of Believing, and yet never believe. One hears that there is such a Course of Humiliation to be run through; and as Men that are to be cured must run through such a Course of Physick, or such things must be taken by way of Preparation for such a Medicine, so they are told that first this Disposition must be wrought in them, and then that, (many of which, the truth is, must have Faith preceding them, or they cannot be wrought, as it may be easily demonstrated) and a Man must go through each of those, in their several degrees, before he must attempt to close with Christ: Whereas now go and take such a Soul that hath run through all those several Methods and Courses, when it comes to believe in the Lord Jesus, it is so far from being helped in his own Apprehension, by having had such things wrought in him, that it is possess'd with the clean contrary Thoughts. In Souls that are most humbled, this is as it were the last thing in their being so humbled, that they see nothing in themselves; and this very Sight of themselves, when they are sufficiently humbled, would be a hindrance of coming and closing with Christ nakedly: for whenas a Man should close with Christ nakedly, and with Christ immediately, to come unto him under the Sight and Sense of such a thing wrought before, would be a Hindrance unto Faith. So, as the Work of Preparation is never a Warrant or a Ground unto any to believe, tho it may really be a Preparation without which a Man would not believe, but it is not so apprehensively

vely to the Party: So it is here, indeed it is the Power of God really that doth enable to believe, but it is not the Power of God apprehensively, *viz.* that I see I am clothed with such a Power, and I wait till I am clothed with such a Power, and so I believe. There are a great many of such Diversions from Jesus Christ. One saith, I must have Christ before I can have Faith: another saith, I cannot take Christ till I find I have Faith; whereas God giveth Faith and Christ and all at once; and thy taking Christ is thy Faith and thy Believing; and upon thy attempting to believe, God gives all these at once. In thy going to him he gives thee Power to come, as Christ saith, in doing of his Will a Man shall know him; so in falling to believe a Man believeth. As in that Question, whether the Soul be first created, and then infused into the Child, or how, we usually answer that it is created and infused, and knit and united to the Body, and all at once; so we may say here. But I say by those things before-mention'd and answer'd, Satan diverts Men from that which the Apostle calls them to labour for, and that is to believe, and to enter into this Rest, *Heb.* 4. 11. And so much now for those Generals which I have mentioned by way of Premise. Book 4.

CHAP. VI.

Directions given to guide us in our endeavouring to believe. That we ought to furnish our Thoughts with all such Considerations as are Motives and Encouragements of Faith, and lay them up in our Hearts, and meditate often upon them. That we should attempt to exercise the very Act of Believing it self. Objections answered.

WHAT remains is to give some Directions to guide us in our Endeavours to believe.

Direct. 1. The first that I shall give is this; To provide and lay up in thy Heart all Considerations that are matter for Faith and Believing: That altho the true Act of Faith be from the working of God alone, yet do thou cast in the Seed, (they are the Materials of Believing) and retain them in thy Soul. As for example now, to go over some Instances, it's true thou canst not see the Excellence of Christ spiritually without an Almighty Power, which thou must wait till God be pleased to enable thee with: Suppose this; yet all those Excellencies materially thou canst lay together, and thou canst furnish thy Heart with the Consideration of them, which are the Materials that are to draw and win thy Heart to Christ. So if we consider all those Promises of Free Grace, *that Christ came into the World to save Sinners*; and, *Look to me all ye ends of the Earth and be saved*; and, *I am thy Saviour, and there is none besides me*, &c. And also if we consider all sorts of Answers to all Objections made of thy Unworthiness and thy Sinfulness, *&c.* all such things thou mayst collect together and furnish thy Heart continually withal, these thou mayst study and chew upon, and revolve them in thy Mind; as they of old that sacrificed, who tho it's true could not bring Fire from Heaven to burn their Sacrifice, yet they could, in Dependance upon God, lay their Sticks together, and fetch the Bullock out from the Stall, and bring it to the Altar, and lay it thereon, and bind the Sacrifice to the Horns of the Altar, and wait till Fire came from Heaven and set all on a Flame. Suppose thou wert thus to wait till the Power of God come sensibly upon thee, yet in the mean time thou mayst go thus far. The word which the Apostle here useth, (*Heb.* 4. 11.) which we translate, *Let us labour*, is, *let us study*; and it signifies the Study of the Mind. *Let us study* (saith he) as a Man whose Head plodeth upon a thing, and gathers together many Notions and Materials for such a Head, so let us study to believe and to enter into that Rest. Saith *Solomon*, Prov. 2. 11. *If thou wilt receive my Words, and hide my Commandments within thee*; (it is Wisdom that speaks it, and by *Commandments* there is not meant only the ten Commandments, but it is a Gospel-Precept, and they are the Promises, the Revelations of God that he means) *If thou wilt do so*, (saith he) *if thou seekest for Wisdom as for Silver, and searchest for her as for hid Treasure, then shalt thou understand the Fear of*

Part 3. *the Lord.* And yet (*ver.* 6.) he saith, *The Lord giveth Wisdom, and out of his Mouth cometh Knowledg and Understanding*; which in the Language of the Old Testament is as much as to say he giveth Faith. But yet (saith he) do thou hide all the Promises and all the Commands within thee, do but thou search for them, and take them out of the Veins where they lie in the Scriptures, and treasure them up in thine Heart, and then God will come and he will mint Faith for thee before thou art aware of it. Thus saith the Prophet, (*Lam.* 3. 19, 20.) *Remembring I remembred* (as it is in the Original) *my Afflictions*; he chewed upon them: So likewise remembring, he remembred what might comfort him, *viz.* all the Materials of it; *This I call to mind*, (saith he, *ver.* 22.) *therefore have I Hope.* In *Isa.* 66. 11. the Promises are called the Breasts of Consolation, which he saith they shall suck and milk out: Now if thou findest thou canst not suck, or if thou suckest and none cometh, yet do as Children do, who oftentimes lie with the Breast and the Teat in their Mouths, so do thou; lie with such Thoughts and Promises as are the Materials of Faith in thy Heart. And whilst thou endeavourest to suck, or perhaps canst not, yet lying so, thou shalt it may be find it flowing in upon thee before thou art aware of it; and whilst thou takest something of this into thy Mouth, somewhat will go down.

I might likewise instance in all such Motives as the Scripture useth to be urg'd unto God to move him to be merciful and favourable to a poor Soul. All such Thoughts also thou mayst live in the midst of, and dwell in, and gather together a bundle of them, and lay them up in thy Heart, and meditate on them continually. This is a certain Rule; look what Motives the Scripture holds forth as those which move God; they, whilst the Heart thinks of them, move it to believe, rather than they move God to be merciful: and the Intention of all the Motives the Scripture useth to move God to be merciful to us by, is rather to strengthen and to beget Faith in us, to move and raise up Faith in our Hearts, that God will be thus merciful to us, and to stir up hopeful Thoughts thereof, rather than to move God himself. Multitudes of these Instances might be given: As *Psal.* 119. 12. when *David* would desire God to teach him his Statutes, who only was able to do it; what saith he? *Blessed art thou, O Lord, teach me thy Statutes.* Here now is a Motive, and a mighty one, it is as if he had said, Lord thou art full of Happiness, and thou art blessed in thy self, and liveest in the midst of Happiness, and knoweest no Sorrow, knoweest not what the Misery of a poor Sinner is (*i. e.* not in Experience) that is ready to perish; thou art blessed, but I am a poor lost thing, without thy Help I perish for ever; O communicate some of that Blessedness unto me, enjoy it not alone, let a Soul ready to perish be blessed by thee. Such things as these move God: why do they move him? Because they are the Thoughts of his own Heart which moved him to communicate himself to Sinners, moved him to choose Men to eternal Life. Now look what doth and hath moved God in his own Nature and in his own Will from everlasting, do thou take such things into thy Thoughts, and urge them unto God, and they will beget Faith in thee before thou art aware. So likewise (*Psal.* 143. 9, 10, 11, 12.) saith the Psalmist, *Teach me, and quicken me*, &c. Why? *For thy Spirit is good.* What moveth God to save a poor Sinner, and to amend a naughty Heart? Because his Spirit is good, and full of Goodness; *Thou art good, and doest good*, saith he. The Psalmist likewise useth the same Motive, *Psal.* 119. 68. And Christ himself puts such Motives as these into our Thoughts, and these beget Faith when the Soul liveth in them: *Your Fathers* (saith he, *Mat.* 7. 11.) *know how to give good things to their Children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Spirit to them that ask?* He speaks to a Soul that thinks he wants the Spirit, yet because this Soul hears indefinitely that God is a Father to some Sinners, and that he is an heavenly Father, who exceeds in Bowels all earthly Fathers; therefore saith Christ, *How much more shall not he give good things, yea give his Spirit to them that ask?* Now I say, whilst we take all such Motives, (and when I say Motives, I mean not Motives to believe, drawn from our own Good, but such Motives as move God, for they are the greatest Support of Faith, and do rather serve to move us and stir our Hearts to believe than to move God, altho they did move God once, for they were the Cause why he did from everlasting purpose Good to us) whilst we take these I say into our Souls, and there let them lie, and think of them, and revolve them again and again, there is a Strength, a Hopefulness begotten in the Soul from

from them, even as the Stomach, by having Meat put into it, is strengthned by the Food's being concocted and digested, and assimilated to it. Book 4.

Now the Reason why such Souls may thus far labour and study to enter into this Rest, why they may take all such things into consideration as are Materials of Believing, is clearly and plainly this: Because if those that are Ministers of the Word, and the Preachers of it, are to present Promises and such Motives to beget Faith in Men, if they may present them to their Judgments, and Understandings, and Thoughts, then those Considerations and Promises, and the like, such Souls ought to digest, to revolve, to think upon, and still to say, Why is not my Portion herein? In this *Heb.* 4. 1, 2. *the Word* (saith he) namely the Gospel, (for so the word signifies in the Original) *it was preached unto them, but it profited not, because it was not mingled with Faith in those that heard it.* He compares Faith there to that digestive Faculty (as the word implies) in the Stomach, which works upon the Meat, and so by degrees doth assimilate the Meat into the Body, and into the Likeness thereof: Now, saith he, that was the Reason the Word profited them not, because they did not mind those Promises, they did not take them into their Thoughts, they did not study them, (as the word here in the Text also signifies) and it is answerable to what he had said, *ver.* 1. *Let us therefore fear, lest a Promise being left us of entring into his Rest, any of you should come short of it:* Come short of it by not revolving those Promises, and exercising your Thoughts upon them.

Direct. 2. But then, Secondly, We are to attempt the Exercise of the Act of Believing. Let me urge that upon you also, for I shall speak to the thing it self fully and punctually. Let Men exercise themselves, I say, to the Act of Believing, in the consideration of such Promises, and of all such Motives as are in Scripture held forth as moving God. And when I say they are to exercise the Act of Believing, my Meaning is concerning going to Christ, and relying on him, and resting on him, and casting themselves upon him. They are not simply to seek to be humbled, or to abstain from Sin, or to practise Holy Duties in expectation of Mercy, tho all these are to be done, but to inure the Heart to familiar and constant Acts of Believing: This is what I direct and exhort unto, and shall give you Grounds for it. Take the very Words of this Text, *Heb.* 4. 11. *Let us labour* or study *to enter into that Rest*, which I told you is Believing. And why is it called *entring into that Rest?* Men think when they come to believe, that they have a great long Journey to go, as the People of *Israel* had in the Wilderness, and that they must go through this and through that first; see this and see that first in themselves, and so perhaps stay in the Wilderness forty Years; whereas the Apostle tells us plainly, it is but going over the Threshold, it is but *entring into that Rest.* Therefore, saith he, do you attempt to do it, do you labour or study to do it, it is but a Step, saith he; you are even at the Door, and what is the Door? It is the Door of Faith; *We that believe have entred into Rest*, saith he, *ver.* 3. Such Souls should make this their daily Task and Study, and indeed all Souls should do so. *All a Man's Labour*, (saith *Solomon*, Eccles. 6. 7.) *it is for his Mouth.* You heard before that Faith was compared to the digestive Faculty in the Stomach, it being that which works upon the Promises as the Stomach doth upon the Meat. *All a Man's Labour*, saith he, *it is for his Mouth:* Indeed of the most Men it is the great Labour, that they may eat, and by eating live. Now all a Man's Labour it should be for this Mouth of Faith, and to furnish it, that he may live, and live by Faith; and as Christ compares it to the eating of his Flesh, and the drinking of his Blood, therefore above all else labour for this, and for all other in order unto this. And that I may put such Souls upon this in an immediate manner, do but consider all these Scriptures which I shall now give. First, that Christ says, (*John* 6. 27, 28, 29.) *Labour not, or work not, for the Meat that perisheth, but for that Meat that endureth to everlasting Life, which the Son of God shall give you, for him hath God the Father sealed. Then say they unto him, What shall we do that we may work the Works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the Work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.* I told you even now, that all the Labour of Man it was for his Mouth; now here Christ makes use of that Similitude, and tho I cannot say he alludeth to it, yet he speaks in that Allusion, and it is a Place that may have an Allusion thereto. *Labour not*, saith he, or work not, *for the Meat which perisheth*, for outward Meat, which is obtained by outward Labour, but labour for that Bread which the Son of God shall give you,

Part 3. that is, himself; for a Man goes to Christ for Christ, and Christ doth give himself to a Sinner coming to believe on him; *ver.* 35. *I am that Bread of Life*, namely, which the Son of God giveth. Now as he alone is that Bread, so it is Believing alone that doth make us Partakers of that Bread; (as that 35*th* Verse sheweth) *I am that Bread of Life, he that cometh unto me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.* Mark now the Coherence of these Words one with another to that which now I aim at. Before our Saviour Christ had said, *Labour* or work *not for the Meat which perisheth, but for that which endureth to everlasting Life.* These Jews they plainly, and nakedly, and simply, and honestly ask Christ, without cavilling, what peculiar thing they should do? (and in that case Jesus Christ always answers plainly:) *What shall we do* (say they) *that we may work the Works of God?* (by Works of God they mean Works acceptable to God). You would have us labour, what Works will you put us upon? They thought now that there was not one special Work only, but many Works, therefore they express it in the plural; and yet they thought there might be some other thing he would teach them than what *Moses*'s Law did. Christ you see both answers at once their Question, and explains what he meant by labouring for that Meat which endures for ever, and the thing he puts them upon is this, *to believe on him whom God hath sent*; and this, saith he, is *the Work of God.* It is as if he had said, You speak of Works, I put you upon this as *the Work.* It is called *the Work of God*, as a broken Heart, *Psal.* 51. is called *the Sacrifice of God*, that is, that which is acceptable unto God, which God delighteth in eminently. And as he puts them upon Believing alone eminently, so he puts them upon it immediately. These Jews whose Hearts (according to their Question, and Christ's Speech before) were so taken off from the Consideration of earthly Bread, come unto Christ thus with a naked simple plain Question, to be instructed by him, as they in the *Acts* did when they asked the Apostles *what they should do to be saved?* You see how Christ answers them, he puts them upon Believing, and thereby explains what he meant by labouring or working for that Meat, in his own Exhortation in the Words before. And as he did here, so upon all Occasions else he did likewise; saith he to the poor Man, (*Mark* 9. 23.) *If thou canst believe*, &c. Come try, let me see, saith he, whether thou canst. The poor Man had said unto Christ, If thou canst do any thing; and Christ saith unto him, Do not doubt of Power in me, for there is Power enough in me, but canst thou believe? come let me see. He puts him you see upon Believing. And so likewise, in another Place, says Christ, *Strive to enter in at the strait Gate:* The Words in the Text here do clearly interpret his Meaning to be to put them upon Believing; you know it is called *the Door of Faith* in the *Acts*, which Christ calleth *the strait Gate*, and bids them *strive to enter in.* *Labour*, saith the Apostle, *to enter into that Rest*; and we that believe have entred into it, saith he, *Heb.* 11. 3. As Christ did thus, so did the Apostles also, they did still put Men upon Believing as well as upon Repenting. When the Jailor in the *Acts* did, in a plain and blunt manner, ask them what he should do to be saved? *Believe in the Lord Jesus*, say they, *and thou shalt be saved, and thy Houshold.* Was the Jailor, think you, to wait and expect till he received a Power to enable him to believe? No, but so far as he found his Heart strengthned, so far he was to attempt it. And as this was the Command, so they always held it forth clearly and nakedly to them. And to clear it more to you, that Souls are thus to make Experiment of Believing continually, consider but this farther. What Course will you take? Will you seek to God by Prayer, (as you are to do) and by the Performance of all other Duties? Or will any Man direct you to Prayer because it is your Duty, and because the Spirit of God may fall upon you in Prayer, as oftentimes he doth upon Men? The same say I also, and there is just the same Reason; do thou fall upon Believing, and tho thou beginnest and attempteſt to do it with a quavering Heart, and layest hold upon Christ with a trembling Hand, yet the Power of God may fall upon thee in the doing of it. You use to stir up your selves to other Duties, and that because they are commanded, (for I suppose now that such a Soul as I speak to resolveth not to do nothing, if you mean to be idle there is an end of it) now if you mean to do any thing, attempt to believe; you have no more Power to do any Duty than you have for Believing, or at least it must be the Almighty Power of God that must help you to perform any Duty spiritually as well as to believe: therefore so far forth as you make Conscience of performing any

any other Duty, make conscience of this. In *Isa.* 64. 7. these two are joined together, *None calleth upon thy Name, and stirreth up himself to take hold of thee.* Here is Prayer, calling upon God, and Believing, both joined together, and stirring up themselves to do it; for what is it to take hold of the Lord? It is the same in *Isa.* 27. 5. *Let him take hold of my Strength*, that is, let him believe, (it is taking hold of the Arm of the Lord) and let him stir up himself to do it, let him reach as far as he can to take hold of it. Book 4.

I shall now in the next Place answer such Objections as oppose my preceding Assertions.

Object. 1. One Objection will be this; *If I have not God's Power to concur, I shall not have true Faith, I shall not put forth a true Act of Believing, and therefore I were as good forbear to exercise or attempt to do it.*

Answ. 1. I answer first; This holds against the Use of all Duties else as well as against Believing: For unless the Power of God doth enable thee, thou canst not think a good Thought, and according to this thy Argument thou shouldst forbear all Thoughts that are materially good, as well as the Act of Believing. If you are not nor ought to be deterred from any other Duty, why should you be from this?

Answ. 2. Secondly, I answer, Do you still try and renew Thoughts and Acts of Faith howsoever: For if in thy attempting to believe God doth accompany thee, and evidence to thee that he doth come in, and fall upon thee, and perhaps manifest his Love unto thee, thou shalt have cause for ever to bless God. If that thou dost attempt and thou fallest short, yet notwithstanding thou wilt then see thy Defect, and thou wilt be humbled in thy own sight, as thou art in the defective Performance of all other Duties, and so wilt be put upon going to God for Power with more Eagerness. But however do not therefore forbear.

Answ. 3. Thirdly, Suppose that thy Attempt to believe be in it self for the kind of it but a natural Act, that is not yet spiritual; yet tho thou sow it a natural Act, (as I may so express it) it may rise up a spiritual one in the very doing; and tho thou sowest it in Weakness, God may make it rise in Power. God oftentimes ingrafts true Acts of Faith upon those literal Notions we have of God and of Christ. It is evident by this, that after a Man believeth savingly, who had much Knowledg of the Gospel before, (and materially his Thoughts now are but the same Thoughts he had before, only they formally differ) God comes now in with a new Light, and *Grace* hath alter'd all into Spirituals. And in the exercising such Thoughts of Faith doth God come in, and changeth them in the very doing. When Christ intended to do that Miracle of turning Water into Wine, he doth not first change the Water into Wine, but he bids them pour it out, and in the pouring of it out the Water was turned into Wine: So is it here: Even as the Loaves multiplied in the breaking and dividing of them. God doth change thy Attempts to believe (they being done in Subordination to his Power) into genuine true Thoughts of Faith whilst thou art a thinking, and thou believest thy self into true Believing through the Power of God before thou art aware of it; and by plunging thy self, and by exercising thy Heart and Thoughts, and by wallowing up and down (how shall I express it?) in that Sea of Blood, thou wilt feel thy Conscience eased, and grow up to a steadier Familiarity in Believing, and that in a way thou knowest not how. You find this in other Duties, that when you go to Prayer deadly and coldly, you meet with Life and Quickness from God even in the Duty. Why may it not be so here?

Answ. 4. Lastly, To such Souls as stick at this Objection, I answer; Would any Man exhort you unto any Means in order unto Faith, as to pray, or to hear, or to think of your Sins, and the like? Why not to Believing, why not to the Acts of Faith together with all these, and above all these? For mark it, If you be put upon Prayer, what is Prayer? This is certain, if thou thinkest with thy self, I shall now make but a natural Prayer, and it will not be a spiritual Prayer, let me tell thee this, let the Prayer thou makest be what it will be, so far forth as thou prayest in any Reality, so far thou hast Faith, proportionably to thy Prayer. Consider what I say; If it be a spiritual Prayer thou makest, and God turns it to be so, then he gives thee spiritual Faith; therefore thou mayst as well concurrently believe as pray, for Prayer is but the venting of Faith. Therefore if thou wilt say, I will forbear the Act of Believing because it may prove a natural Act, an Act of mine own, and not genuine and true, thou mayst upon the same Grounds as well forbear Praying, for so far forth

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as thou haſt an Ability to pray aright in Faith thou haſt to believe, for Prayer is the
Part 3. acting of Faith, take it in its Proportion, that is, whether you conſider it naturally or ſpiritually. Men may exhort you to Means of Faith, but this you will ſtill find, that all thoſe Means are as difficult things as Faith it ſelf: and therefore the Apoſtle (*Rom.* 10.) you ſee directs unto Faith as the moſt eaſy and ſhort Cut of all the reſt; you may forecaſt, ſaith he, this and that, *but the Word is nigh thee, even in thy Mouth and in thy Heart*, that is, *the Word of Faith which we preach*, ver. 8. The Apoſtle ſpeaks juſt thus, as if one ſhould be brought to a Table full of Meat, and he that is brought ſhould ſay, What is it I ſhould do that I may eat of this Meat, and be Partaker of it? Certainly any one would anſwer, The Meat is here on the Table, do thou fall a eating: So doth the Apoſtle ſay, *The Word* (ſaith he) *is nigh thee*; it's next door to thy Mouth, and to thy Heart, and thy Lips, do but digeſt it, (which is the mingling it with Faith, as he ſpeaks in *Heb.* 4.) do but take it in thy Thoughts and Apprehenſion, (and then it is in thy Heart) thou ſtandeſt now at the Threſhold, do but ſtep in; *Enter in*, ſaith he. But will the Man ſay, I muſt have a Stomach to it? Mark what I ſay, If eating and taſting will be the way to beget a Stomach, were it not beſt to fall to? So it is here; *Taſte and ſee how good the Lord is*. If there were Meat that would get a Man a Stomach by eating it, aſſuredly then a Man would firſt fall to and eat: now this Meat (which is Jeſus Chriſt) doth do ſo. If coming into the Sun would give Eyes to a Man, and cauſe the Films to fall off as well as give a Man Light to ſee himſelf with, a Man that is blind would not ſtand complaining of his Blindneſs, and ſay, I will not go abroad, for I cannot ſee this Sun, I will rather ſtay here in this dark Dungeon, in this Priſon, till the Sun force it ſelf through the Walls, or come in at ſome Cranny, and ſo cauſe the Scales to fall off my Eyes. No certainly, he would go abroad into the Air, that ſo the Sun might cure him of his Blindneſs. Jeſus Chriſt is the Sun of Righteouſneſs, and he hath *healing in his Wings*, viz. in his Beams, *Mal.* 4. 2. It is an elegant Metaphor, comparing theſe diffuſive Beams to the ſpreading of the Eagle's Wings over her young ones.

How doth the Iron come to have Virtue to cleave to the Load-ſtone? It is by being brought to the Load-ſtone: So doth the Soul get Power to cleave unto Chriſt by coming unto Chriſt; and the longer the Soul is kept off from exerciſing Thoughts of Faith upon Chriſt, it is like the Iron kept from the Load-ſtone, it grows weaker and weaker.

Object. 2. A ſecond Objection is this; you will ſay, *I may build my ſelf up in a temporary Faith by this Courſe, whereas it were better for me to go and ſearch into the Falſeneſs of that, if it be falſe.*

Anſw. 1. If you take the way of the Scripture, I do not know how any Man ſhall be fully able to anſwer all thoſe Temptations about a Man's being a temporary Believer, but only by believing: I have known many Souls beaten into that way at laſt, and never could have Peace till then. And I find this likewiſe, that take the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, (and there is no Book in the New Teſtament, nor no Paſſages in the New Teſtament that hint more about temporary Believers than that Book doth, for he ſpeaks of Men that fall away through Unbelief, after inlightning, and he ſpeaks extreme ſuſpiciouſly of the Jews, for certainly many of them were ſuch) what Courſe doth the Apoſtle take in this Epiſtle to keep them from falling away? He doth not go about ſo much to diſcover to them that their Faith was a temporary Faith; no, but all the Courſe of that Epiſtle to ſuch kind of Men (ſuppoſing ſuch among them) ſtill runs upon this, to renew Faith, and to take heed of departing from the living God through an evil Heart of Unbelief; and *let us* (ſaith he) *hold the hope of our Confidence unto the end*, Heb. 3. 6, 14. I ſay, the whole Epiſtle doth not lie ſo much in diſcovering this to be genuine, and that to be falſe Faith, as in exhorting them to believe, for God indeed often converts ſuch into true Faith whilſt they exerciſe it. And certainly, let Men go on in a way of Believing, and either their Sins will make them leave off believing, or their believing will make them ſound. And this you will find, that there is no way to cut the Knot of all theſe Temptations, nay there is no way for a Man, of a temporary Believer to become a true Believer, but by exerciſing Faith continually, ſo far forth as God ſtrengthneth his Heart. And then as he ſaid of Prayer, that it will either make a Man leave ſinning, or his ſinning will make him leave praying; ſo believing will either make him leave

leave his Unsoundness, or his Unsoundness will make him leave his Believing. If a Man be a true Believer, and be troubled with that Temptation, it is the only way to end it: And if he be a temporary Believer, and in that State, it is the only way to make him sound: It is that you see which the Apostle directs to. Book 4.

Answ. 2. Thou mayst for ought thou knowest, be but in a Temptation that thou art, or that thou mayst prove a temporary Believer. That Power which hath hitherto assisted thee, may be the same Power which accompanies Workings unto Salvation, and then thou losest time to try it out that way; and to try it out, it is the difficultest Controversy in the World that ever any Soul entred upon; and thou wilt never bring it to a Conclusion or Determination but by Believing. That must still end that Controversy: thou mayst sooner get a new Title by believing afresh, than try out thy old Title: and after that thou hast renewed Acts of Faith, then thou wilt see the Truth of all the Work formerly wrought in thee, and not before.

Answ. 3. On the other side, if thou shouldst be a temporary Believer at the present, which yet thou knowest not, then consider that the way to make thee sound is to put thee upon believing and renewing thy Faith. Mark what I say, it is the way to make thee sound. If indeed that Faith were nothing else but a secure taking for granted that a Man is in the State of Salvation, that might indanger thee. But that is not it that I put thee upon when I put thee upon Believing, but it is to have a constant Recourse, in a sense of thy Wants, unto Jesus Christ, both for Justification and for Sanctification, and to act and exercise Faith upon him, and to whet thy Soul upon him, and to do this continually. Now take this Course, and let all thy Imperfections and Hypocrisies thou seest or suspectest to be in thee, drive thee unto Christ to make thee sincere, let them drive thee unto Christ for Justification, make that Improvement and Use of them, still to put thee upon Believing; if any thing will make thy Heart sound, this will do it. Thus having Recourse unto Christ, thou wilt see farther Light to discern thine own Emptiness and Hypocrisy ten thousand times more than by poring upon and studying out thy own Condition, by comparing that Act and this Act together, and this by-end and that by-end, and the like: For if thou goest thus by Faith unto Jesus Christ, thou dealest with the Fountain of Grace; and by exercising thy self to Faith in him, and so acquainting thy self with him, thy Heart will be changed before thou art aware of it. As *Solomon* saith, *He that walketh with wise Men shall be wise:* So he that acquaints himself thus with the Lord Jesus, constantly renewing Acts of Faith upon him, he shall learn Wisdom, he shall learn Holiness, he shall learn how to go out of himself; he will shed Light into him for to see his Emptiness more, and he will shed Spirit into him for to fill him more.

The Observation which I make upon the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, is to this Purpose and Effect: The Apostle there writes to all the Jews, whether temporary Believers or other, but suppose they were such that did profess the Name of Christ in the Strictness of it, yet he speaks exceeding suspiciously of many of them. The Holy Ghost in no Book holds forth so much the State of a temporary Believer, and the Issue and Terror of it, than in that Epistle, both in the *6th*, *10th*, and *12th* Chapters: and therefore he speaks more distinctly of the Sin against the Holy Ghost, which a temporary Believer is nearer to fall into, and he threatneth and awes them with that: yet notwithstanding, you shall find that there is no Epistle that doth by way of Exhortation (tho the Apostle in other Epistles may commend the Doctrine of Faith, as he doth in the Epistle to the *Romans*, and in other Places) so much exhort Men continually to Believing, all and every Man; *Lest any Man* (saith he) *fail and come short of the Grace of God: and, lest there be found in any Man an evil Heart of Unbelief.* Read the *3d* Chapter, it is the whole Scope of it, and it is the whole Scope in a manner of this *4th* Chapter. He lays before them the Example of those that fell in the Wilderness, and tells them it was Unbelief was the Cause of it, therefore he bids them labour or study to enter into that Rest, and to take heed lest they fall after the same Example of Unbelief: *You are now* (saith he) *of the House of God, if you continue to be so; ye are Partakers of Christ if you hold fast your Confidence.* So that I say, we are not so much to trouble our selves with that great Controversy, whether we be temporary Believers or no, when we find the Holy Ghost stirring in us, but to improve that Strength we have from the Holy Ghost in direct Acts of Faith towards Jesus Christ, going out to him for a Supply of all Imper-

Part 3. Imperfections and Defects: And thus having Recourse unto him, it will make a Man found; and as he said of Praying, that Praying would either make a Man leave his Sinning, or his Sinning would make him leave Praying; so certainly it is in the Matter of Believing.

Answ. 4. The last Answer I shall give to the Objection is this: Thou canst not say thou art a temporary Believer, thou mayst fear it. A true Believer may fear it, but he cannot say he is such: and a temporary Believer, tho there is that in the Word which if it were opened might convince him, and shall do so at latter day, yet usually he cannot say it of himself that he is such an one. Therefore now thou that wilt abstain from putting forth Acts of Faith for fear lest thou mayst build thy self up in a way of temporary Believing, consider this, that tho thou mayst build up a temporary Faith, yet thou mayst not forbear putting forth true Acts of Faith, for thou mayst be a true Believer for ought thou knowest, therefore thou art to go and cast thy self upon Christ, to follow on the Motions of the Holy Ghost and that Assistance he gives thee. For wouldst thou quench the Motions of the New Creature? If thou knewest them to be so, I am assured thou wouldst not; but if thou knowest them not, yet thou oughtest not to do it. I remember what a poor Child about ten Years of Age once said, I am oftentimes (said he) tempted to take Jesus Christ, I see so much Beauty in him, but I fear I shall be a Hypocrite in doing of it. What a pitiful thing was this, that such a Temptation should keep such a Soul (when he is again and again provoked by the Holy Ghost) from laying hold upon Jesus Christ, from taking of him?

Direct. 3. The third Direction is only a farther Exhortation to continue to renew Acts of Faith, and not to cease or faint, or to give over. The very Scope of this 3*d* Chapter of the *Hebrews* is to put them upon renewing Acts of Faith, and holding out to do so continually. He doth both bid them continue to do it, and also he bids them daily to renew Acts of Faith, and expresseth it under both kinds of Expressions. First, he exhorts them to a Constancy of holding out; *ver. 6. To hold fast their Confidence and the Glory of their Hope*, or *the Rejoicing of their Hope*, or their Faith, *unto the end.* And *ver.* 14. *To hold fast the beginning of their Confidence stedfast unto the end*, opposing it there to *departing from the Living God*; and therefore by Faith to abide and stay by God. But that is not all, he exhorts them likewise to renewed Acts of Faith; you shall see his Expressions in the 7*th* Verse, and so in other Verses; *Wherefore as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his Voice*, ver. 7. Hearing his Voice there is Believing; so he interprets it himself in the end of the Chapter. So likewise, *ver.* 13. he bids Christians *to exhort one another daily, while it is called to day*, and therefore answerably to renew their Faith daily; for that is his Scope, and the thing he calls upon them to do in answer to those Exhortations. So ver. 15. *Whilest it is said, To day if ye will hear his Voice, harden not your Hearts: and Unbelief will harden your Hearts*, saith he. I observe this, that he doth speak to these Jews converted; suppose whether some were Temporaries or no, however he speaketh to them all, even as we use to speak to any Soul that is a coming on to Christ, whom we would move to turn to God at a Sermon, telling him, that now is the Day of Grace, now is an acceptable time, and therefore cleave to him, and turn to him. Even such kind of Motives as we would use to such an one doth the Apostle use to them that are already converted or enlightned at least, and had long profess'd the Name of Christ; *Whilest it is called to day*, (saith he); *and take heed lest at any time* (so the word is in the Original, *ver.* 12.) *that you do cease from Believing*, or *lest there be in any of you an evil Heart of Unbelief, in departing, or neglecting it*: but *to day* (saith he) *hear his Voice.* So that indeed and in truth what we would say, or any Man would say unto one that is now to be converted, the same he saith to them; for a Christian's Life it is and ought to be a continual renewing of Faith; and so a Renewal of his Conversion, as you have them put together; *Luke* 22. 32. *I have prayed thy Faith fail not: when thou art converted, strengthen thy Brethren.* And the Apostle contents not himself only to speak in the Language of Words of Constancy, and to bid them to do it daily; *To day*, &c. in a positive way, but he useth Negatives too, *Take heed lest at any time there be in any of you an evil Heart of Unbelief*, ver. 12. Take heed lest you let go your hold, lest you cease to believe; for if you do not renew Acts of Faith, certainly corrupt Nature will renew Acts of Unbelief; and if one be not acted, or if it be intermitted, the other will steal up. And the

the House of God are we (saith he) *if we do thus daily hear and obey his Voice: And, we are made Partakers of Christ, if we hold fast thus the beginning of our Confidence.* I take it his meaning is this; The Doctrine (saith he) which we teach, it is the right way to Heaven, and you need not doubt of that, (saith he) for it is that which will build up the House of God, and will make Men Partakers of Christ: Now (saith he) if ye continue thus to act Faith, and do but practise according to that Doctrine that is taught in the House of God in the Church, you will become his House indeed and in truth, according to the Doctrine taught in the Church. Book 4.

Object. Now there is an Objection will also attend this Direction, which I would meet withal, and that is this: Yea, but will the Soul say, *I have renewed Faith often, and done it long, and I find not yet that Power accompanying my Faith which doth evidence it to be true: And notwithstanding all I have done, I do not yet know whether all the Acts of Faith I have put forth be not in vain; and as they have been, so they may still be, and therefore I had as good give over.*

Answ. I will answer thee, speaking to this Objection, so far as it relateth to the Point in hand, *viz.* the Power of God coworking with us.

1. First of all consider what Christ said to *Peter* when he came to wash his Feet, (*John* 13.) and *Peter* reluctated; *What I do now* (saith Christ) *thou knowest not, but thou shalt know hereafter; and if thou knewest thou wouldst not reluctate.* Christ requires Obedience to that, the meaning whereof he knew not at the present, but should know afterward; and when the Holy Ghost came upon him after Christ's Ascension, he found that Christ thereby had seal'd up to him the washing away of his Sins, for God made that unto them a temporary Sacrament, tho *Peter* knew not the meaning of this at the present; and thus Christ doth many things unto us which we know not the meaning of till afterwards. So say I to thee that sayst, thou hast exercised Acts of Faith a long time, and knowest not whether it be true: Thou mayst know hereafter, (tho thou knowest not now) when the Spirit comes on thee, and brings all things that are past to thy Remembrance, and lets thee see the Truth of all that God hath wrought in thee; when he comes to seal up to thee thy Redemption unto the day of Redemption, there will a Light come that will shew thee that thou hast all this while been a believing, and a believing truly and acceptably unto God, and therefore however continue still doing so.

2. Tho thou hast put forth Acts of Faith never so long, or never so often, and hitherto in vain, (*if in vain*, as the Apostle speaks) yet continue still to do it; and that because *God works it of his good Pleasure*, you know that is the Encouragement. Phil. 2. 14. *Work out your Salvation, for it is God that worketh in you of his good Pleasure.* And in 2 *Tim.* 2. 25. he bids them preach to Men, and to continue in so doing, to see if God *at any time will give them Repentance.* Tho a Man hath preached multitude of Sermons, and Men have heard multitude of Sermons, yet preach still, and go to Sermons still; for tho all the former have been in vain, there may come a time in which God may give Repentance unto Men. And the Apostle, *Heb.* 3. 12. useth the very same word, (tho I confess it is not in our Translation) *Take heed lest at any time there be in you an Heart of Unbelief.* In this case I say, as *Paul* saith in *Heb.* 10. 35. he speaks it indeed in regard of Afflictions or Temptations outward, but all that is there said is applicable to this Temptation, and to Temptations inward; *Cast not away your Confidence*, (saith he) *ver.* 35. And *ver.* 36. *Ye have need of Patience, that after you have done the Will of God ye might receive the Promise; for yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.* Suppose now thou hast acted Faith, and findest as thou thinkest nothing come, yet do not throw away that Confidence, that Faith, that Acting upon Christ, begotten in thee; cast it not away, as Men are apt to do when they cannot attain the thing they seek for presently. I say, in this case to thee, as the Apostle said there, *You have need of Patience*: and what was the Reason he thus spake, *You have need of Patience?* Because the truth is, God will try every Soul that doth believe, he will try their Patience; if not with outward Afflictions, yet with inward; and if not with inward, then with outward. Now I apply this to thee in this case, for if any Soul needeth Patience, then such a Soul as this that makes this Objection needs Patience; he needs it because God puts him to it, and *Patience* there is put for a patient Continuance, as in *Rom.* 2. it is called and interpreted, and so the meaning is, You need a patient Continuance in renewing still your Confidence and Believing, that when you have done

Part 3. the Will of God herein over and over, merely in Submission to him, you may inhe-
rit the Promise. He puts that in to quiet them in the mean time. And so say
to thee that art ready to faint, and to give up all, quiet thy self with this, that it i
the Will of God thou hast done all this while, and that it is his Will thou sh u
rather act Faith upon him, and have Recourse unto him, than to have forbo
and tho thou knowest not whether it be true Faith or no, yet it is the Will o
thou shouldst do it. *You have need of Patience,* (saith he) *that after you ha*
the Will of God, you may receive the Promise: for yet a little while, and he that sh
will come, and will not tarry. Thou wilt find that God in the end will come,
will give thee, to thy own Sense, spiritually and truly to believe. In the m
time, I say, quiet thy self with this, that that which thou art a doing is the Wo
of God; *This is the Work of God,* (saith Christ) *that ye believe on him whom he ha*
sent. And this is the waiting and sitting still that the Scripture speaks of. It sto
to sit still and to do nothing toward Believing, but it is doing the Will of G
continuing still to believe. And then the Apostle adds, *The Just shall live by Fa*
Will a Man deliberate whether he shall put forth Acts of Life or no, whether he
shall breathe or no? Why, there is a necessity for him to breathe, it is that whereo
he liveth; and therefore tho thou fetch thy Breath hardly, yet fetch it still, for tho
diest else. So he saith here, that Faith is our Life, therefore continue to put forth
the Acts of Faith, or else thou diest. In *Rom.* 5. speaking of the Effects of Faith
(for that is the Scope of that Chapter from the beginning towards the middle) he
saith there, that Trials and Afflictions (whereof this is the greatest) breed Pa
ence, and what doth Patience breed? It breedeth Experience: When a Man hath
patiently continued to wait, to exercise Faith, in the end he cometh to experie
that he hath true Faith: (you may apply it unto this as well as unto any oth
Temptation whatsoever) and what is the Issue of Experience in the end? It breed
eth Hope, that is, Assurance; for it is clear it is so meant, because he adds, *Becau*
the Love of God is shed abroad in our Hearts. It produceth, I say, that Effect in th
end. So that still I say to such Souls, they had need of patient Continuance in t
newing their Confidence, and in living by Faith, and in the end he that shall com
will come. And as the Apostle there in *Heb.* 10. adds, *The Just shall live by Fa*
so he adds likewise, *If any Man draw back, my Soul shall have no Pleasure in him.* Th
word is a word used amongst Souldiers, not to recoil, not to give over, being wear
of waiting, or the like. Now as the General hath no Pleasure in such a Souldier, so
saith he, in such an one *my Soul shall have no Pleasure.* And he adds the greatest Mo
tive in the World why Men should continue still thus to act Faith, tho their Pati
ence be thus tried; for, saith he, it is believing to the saving of the Soul, (*ver.* 39)
but this drawing back, this recoiling, and seeking to do it, tendeth to Perdition
We are not of them who draw back unto Perdition, (saith he) *but of them that believe t*
the saving of the Soul, that is, that continue thus to believe: for his Meaning an
his Argument lies thus; you must hold out, saith he, and continue to believe, fo
you cannot be saved else; and if you will forbear to act Faith thus, what will be th
Issue of it? You will draw back, and then God will come to have no Pleasure i
you; and this, saith he, tendeth to Perdition; you hazard Perdition by it, there
fore it is necessary to continue so believing. Now I say, to such a Soul as is weari
ed out with such a Temptation as this is, Whether dost thou mean to be saved, ye
or no? Thou wilt say to me, Yes. Very good; Whether dost thou mean ever t
renew Faith upon Christ again or no? If thou sayst, Never; I have nothing to sa
to thee, but only this; thou drawest back to the certain Perdition of thy Soul. I
ever thou meanest to renew Faith again, or else thou canst not be saved; then
say I, tho thou hast been discouraged a thousand and a thousand times, yet continu
to do it still, for if ever thou comest to Salvation, it must be by having fresh Re
course to Christ, and exercising Acts of Faith upon him. Now by discontinuing t
do it, thou dost not get more Power to believe; if it were so, there were somethin
in it; but thou drawest back, and puttest thy Perdition upon a Hazard, thou put
test thy utter hardning upon a Hazard, therefore cease not, no not for a Momen
And let me say this to thee likewise, Thou art discouraged, because what thou ha
done hitherto is in vain, and therefore thou fearest that what thou shalt do will be i
vain also. When thou comest to thy Death-bed, or to lie under any great Afflictio
or Temptation, thy Discouragement will be greater than now, for then Satan wi
te

ell thee, thou haſt often renewed Acts of Faith, and thou haſt found it to be in ain, and thereupon haſt drawn back from God, and diſcontinued the exerciſing of uch Acts, and therefore thou haſt Cauſe now to fear that God will have no Pleaſure n thee. There is no way therefore, ſay I, but for thee to hold faſt thy Confidence, nd to live by Faith, (thou haſt need of Patience, I confeſs that) and let the Neeſſity of the thing put thee upon it, for it is as neceſſary as the ſaving of thy Soul is, *u believing to the ſaving of the Soul.*

Object. But you will ſay, *I am weary, I have ſo long time exerciſed Faith, and cannot find whether my Faith be true or no, I find no Strength by it, little or no Support by it.* What ſaith the Apoſtle, *Heb.* 12. 12. (for there is no Epiſtle where he ſpeaks to his Point in hand more than this to the *Hebrews*) *Lift up the Hands which hang down, and the feeble Knees.* Tho even all your Strength be gone through Wearineſs, yet the Strength you have; tho theſe Hands hang down through Wearineſs, yet with that Strength you have lift them up once more, yea again and again. It is not this as in other Wearineſs. In other Wearineſs a Man gets more Strength by diſcontinuing to labour; but where this kind of Wearineſs is through long waiting, diſcontinuing thou ſhalt not have more Power againſt the next time. No, but thou wilt lift up the Hands that hang down, thou wilt find that God will help to lift them up too. In *Iſa.* 40. 28. the Prophet there ſpeaks to thoſe that are ready to faint for waiting upon the Lord, and he bids them conſider; *Haſt thou not known,* (ſaith he) *haſt thou not heard, that the everlaſting God, the Lord, the Creator of the Ends of the Earth, fainteth not, neither is weary?* Conſider (ſaith he) that God hath created the Ends of the Earth, and he upholds them every Moment, he hath done ſo from the Beginning of the World; and tho the Earth is continually changing, and the World a moving, yet he fainteth not to hold up all this, as he did not faint at firſt when he created it; and *he giveth Power to the Faint, and to them that have no Might he increaſeth Strength.* When thou thinkeſt, I am even weary, I can believe no longer, yet lift up thoſe Hands that hang down, and ſtrengthen thoſe feeble Knees, what Strength thou haſt put forth; and that God who is the Creator of the Ends of the Earth, that fainteth not, neither is weary, will give Power to the Faint, and increaſe Strength to them that have no Might. Take a poor Soul now that finds a Defect of ſpiritual Strength, O ſaith he, I have no Strength at all. If thou wert a young Man, and wert put to do Acts of Activity, thou wouldſt think thou haſt natural Strength enough to do ſuch things withal: Now the Prophet tells thee, that thou who haſt the Senſe of no ſpiritual Strength in thy ſelf, thy Caſe is more ſure to have Strength continued to thee, waiting upon the Lord, than a young Man that hath never ſo much Strength for youthful Feats; *Even the Youths* (ſaith he) *ſhall faint, and be weary, and the young Men ſhall utterly fall; but they that wait upon the Lord,* tho they have no Strength, *they ſhall renew their Strength, they ſhall mount up with Wings as Eagles, they ſhall run and not be weary, and they ſhall walk and not faint.* Therefore continue, he that ſhall come will come in the end; and in the mean time he that upholds the Ends of the Earth upon nothing, he upholds thy Heart to believe upon nothing. I mean, Faith is a thing depending upon nothing in a Man's ſelf. The Prophet, I ſay, compares the promiſed Supply of ſpiritual Strength with a preſent Stock of natural Strength, which a young Man having, he thinks himſelf able to do any natural Action. Yea, (ſaith he) *they ſhall mount up with Wings as Eagles.* An Eagle when he grows old grows callow, as you call it, that is, all the Feathers come off; but waſhing himſelf in Fountains, his Wings and Feathers come again, and he mounts up anew; *ſo* (ſaith he) *thou ſhalt renew thy Strength*; tho thou art even faint and grown weary, and tho thou thinkeſt thy old Stock of Strength is gone, and thou haſt believed all that Strength out, and that thy Soul is naked, and that there is nothing left, *yet wait upon the Lord, look again to his Holy Temple,* (as *Jonah* ſaith) *and he will renew thy Strength, and bear thee up as with Eagles Wings.*

F I N I S.

OF THE CONSTITUTION, Right, Order, AND GOVERNMENT OF THE CHURCHES OF CHRIST.

By THO. GOODWIN, D.D.

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THE Government of the Churches of Christ.

BOOK I.

Of the Right Institution of the Churches of Christ. That the Order and Government of those Churches, are Established by Divine Institution. What is the Nature of Divine Institutions, and how the Knowledge of them is conveyed to us; that Christ hath setled Ordinances for Worship, and Discipline, which are to continue unto the End of the World; that the Power of Church Censures, and Excommunication hath its Institution in a more especial manner from Christ, as Head of the Church.

CHAP. I.

A Brief Scheme of the several Opinions concerning the Constitution, and Government of the Church of Christ. The Truth Stated, and Vindicated.

IF it were granted that the Churches in the New Testament, were formed and fixed Bodies, yet the question would still remain about the Tenure whereon they hold their Formation and Constitution; of what kind that Tenure is, whether of Divine Institution; and therefore it will be most Seasonable, and Conducing to the Understanding of all that follows, to give a general Prospect of the several Opinions about Church Constitution, that are amongst us, ere we proceed.

There are three eminently differing Opinions, one of which will certainly prove to be the Truth of God, and which soever of them (when all of them are once throughly and fairly examined) shall be found to be the Truth, we shall Rejoyce, though it prove that we do suffer loss in our own.

1. Our Presbyterian Brethren hold the Institution of Church-State, to fall upon the whole universal Church, as one great Body by Institution; and then likewise upon all the parts thereof, according to the Division and Subdivision of the whole into several Subordinations of greater and lesser Bodies, or fixed Assemblies, National, Provincial, Classical, or Congregational; so as the Universal Church on Earth being by Christs Institution, a Body Politick, and a Kingdom in the Total Consideration of it, and being a Similar Body, consisting of Similar or like parts for State and Condition, it becomes throughout such in all parts thereof. Even as every part of water hath the Nature of the whole, so every Integral Church, be it lesser or greater,

Chap. I. National, Provincial, Congregational, &c. as they are all Churches, so in their Proportion, they are all of them Seats of Government by an equal Uniform, general Institution; and the whole being Ordained such, each part, by Association and Consent, doth become such also: For Christ by one great Charter granted to the whole, did at once Authorize and Endow all such particular Subordinations with Ecclesiastical Power; only left the Distribution of this vast and great Common-Wealth and Body Politick, into its parts greater or lesser, to be made by General Rules for Edification and Order, as the Law of Nature and Human Wisdom should see fit. But yet all is ordered with this Law, that the lesser Bodies should be subject to the greater, from top to bottom, and so all to the Church Universal, and the Judicature thereof; so as Judicatory Appeals might be made from the less to the greater, by vertue of this Divine Right granted to the whole. And this is said to have been the Scope of Christ in his first Institution, *Tell the Church*; and by it this kind of Power and Government being wholy given to the Elders of the Church, is to be Transacted by them in their Consistories and Associations, even from Congregational to General Councils, and is therefore only Practicable by the meetings of Elders chosen and sent from the lesser Assemblies to the greater, as Abstracted from, and without the convening of the Saints, whereof they are Elders; for Convention of all the particular Saints, is not only Unpracticable in those greater Bodies, but in Classical Assemblies too. And we do freely give this Testimony of Honour to this Opinion, that of all other grounds unto which the Presbyterian Divines have in these latter Days, when put to prove their Government, had Recourse, this is the most Consistent and Fairest Principle (if it could be proved) to rear up all their Subordinations at once, and to Endow the Constitution of them with a Divine Right, which as the Soul in the Body will be equally Diffused through every part thereof, and which if it prove true, we must all turn Presbyterians.

2. Some other Godly and Reverend Divines, who do with us wholy Reject any such Politick Modell, as an Invention of Man, (which Reareth up a Worldly Frame and Theater for Elders, through several Stairs, to enter upon the Heritage of the Lord) yet agree with our Presbyterian Brethren in this Principle of the Catholick Universal Church, being a Similar Body in the whole, and all the parts thereof. So that as a Congregation is in no further Respect or Consideration a Church, nor to any other End, Use, or Purpose, than is the Universal: So likewise the Warrant for, and the Priviledge of Congregational Churches, being a Seat for Ordinances and Elders, is but from the bare general Grant and Priviledge given to the Church Universal, which is one Day Ordained to meet together in Heaven, and should now on Earth Aspire to the State and Perfection thereof. And by vertue of this Canon-Law and Charter only, Saints gather into particular Churches, and enjoy Ordinances, and all power of Government executed therein. So that the whole Constitution and Order of Congregational Churches, is only by vertue of that General Law of Communion of Saints, without any further Superadded Institution of Christ, either Electively ordaining of all such other Bodies of Saints, to be the Seat of Ordinances, or Endowing them with any further Priviledge or Power of Government, than the whole Body of Saints in the World hath. In a word, the Appointment of Congregational Bodies is according to this Opinion only virtual, and arising from the General grant to the Universal Church, and founded but upon the Common Law of the Communion of Saints. These two Opinions, though thus agreeing in that forementioned General Principle, yet do differ, as two Extreams. The one, as we conceive, diffuseth a pretended Instituted Policy too vastly, engaging all Saints, and particular Churches to Subject their Consciences, under pain of Excommunication, to the Determinations and Decisions of all the Clergy in the World; which is by this Constituted as one Body, Inspired with this Soul of Government in all the Divisions of them, as parts of the whole; and such a Government may possibly issue in the greatest Tyranny. The other whilst they betake themselves to the Common Priviledge of the Church Mystical and Universal, and meerly to that Law of Communion of Saints that is therein, doth hereby shut out and Exclude all Government or Censures, but such as the Common Law of Communion of Saints, and the Law of Nature common to all Societies, will admit, yea, and in the Consequence thereof, takes away all Institutions whatsoever of any such Discipline or Censures, whereof if particular Congregations be found the Seat, those Congregations themselves also must be by Institution.

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3. We profess, (as in other things) so in this to run a middle way, which for ought we yet see, the Scripture chalks out to us.

1. We maintain that Assertion of a Church Universal, as the General Body of all, and that particular Churches are as parts thereof: Yet so as with our own *Amesius* (and others who have been Esteemed Orthodox Divines) we conceive that the notion or consideration of Church, which the Universal Body of Saints stands under, is meerly and purely Mystical, and such also to be the Union and Communion thereof, as with Christ, so of all the Members thereof among themselves. And further we Assert, this Notion or Name of Mystical Church, to be given not only to the Invisible company of the Elect, and Real Members of Christ the Head; but to the visible company of Professors of Christianity, that do walk as Saints, and are esteemed as such by Saints through the World. Unto whom as taken in the Lump and outward view, as Christ is reckoned to be an outward Head to them, as on Earth considered; so upon whom also taken in the lump and outward visibility, as well as upon the invisible company, the Notion of the Church Mystical may be put, it being in this Distinction opposed to a Church instituted, or that which is a politick Body under Christ.

2. We Assert, that untill the Mystical Body of the *Elect* shall meet together in Heaven, God hath appointed and ordained the visible Saints on Earth, being diffused over all the World, and thin Sown therein, to be knit together in particular Bodies, over which he hath appointed, Elders, Pastors, and Teachers, Officers by his Institution; which Bodies consisting of both, should be the Publick Holders forth of his Truth and Worship, and the Subject of the Priviledge of all Ordinances, and Seats, also of a Power and Government, for these Saints to be Subjected to, and Reduced in case of Scandalls; And the Honour of Christ is hereby to be vindicated, and his Ordinances kept pure, although there were no Christian Magistrates in the World, that would take Cognisance of such Scandalls.

3. And further we conceive, that the gathering of Saints into such particular bodies to Christ, thus to be the Seat of such Officers, Ordinances of Worship and Government, is by a General Institution and Endowment of Christ, over and above the Catholick Warrant of Communion of Saints, although including and taking in all the Rules and Laws thereof. And accordingly the measure and proportion and extent of these bodies, and what the limits and bounds thereof were to be, is set forth by Institution; as also the Organization of this body, what kind of Officers or Original Members shall be in it. These are all to be found set out by him, as in his Wisdom he foresaw would best suit those ends which this Institution of such bodies of Saints should serve to, and as should be fitted to the Priviledges these bodies are endowed with; Christ having also (as to his own Institution he doth) made an answerable special blessing (which special promise of blessing doth indeed, if there were no more, make an Institution and Ordinance of that thing to which 'tis made) of being with such Assemblies of his, over and above the blessing which from the Virtual Catholick Relation and Communion between Christians in general, and on occasional ways, would flow.

4. These Instituted bodies of Churches, we humbly conceive to be, for the bounds and proportion, or measure of them, only Congregational, which are the fixed Seat and Subject of all Ordinances of Worship, and who are the Seat of all sorts of Officers or Organical Members, that serve for the use of the whole; and that these also, by and with their Officers, are the sole Seat of that Government, and the Acts thereof, which may more properly be termed Government, *i. e.* that is, judicially to bind the Soul, (which is accompanied with a promise, that such a Soul shall be bound in Heaven) and in Christs Name also to deliver to Satan, *&c.* which is an instituted punishment, over and above the Sphere of that Catholick Communion, and beyond what any company of Angels or Saints as Members of, or by vertue of the Catholick grant, can or ought to take on them, execute and pronounce: And from which rightly Administred, there can be no Appeal; nor of which no Act of Repeal can be made by any Supream Court on Earth; though, if not rightly Administred, it is null, and of no force. And these bodies thus Endowed hath Christ appointed, as under Schools of his Foundation, wherein by the Enjoyment of all his Ordinances, his Saints living therein whilst on Earth, might be Tutored, built up and form'd and fashioned for that great University, when all the Saints shall meet in

Heaven.

Chap. I. Heaven. And thus over and above the general Communion of Saints, there are, and ought to be, by Christs Institution, Political, Ecclesiastical Bodies or Churches, that are the Seat of a Spiritual Government, wherein we joyn with the first Opinion.

5. And yet we further affirm, that out of the Circuit and Bounds of these instituted Priviledged Seats for Worship and Government, taking all these Saints, Elders, and Churches, whether in a City, Province, Nation, yea, the whole World, among them as so considered, that Common Law of the Mystical Communion of Saints, which the Catholick Relation obligeth to, takes place; so that as there is a Law of single Communion and Non-communion, between Saint and Saints, in case of offence, so between Church and Church, or greater or lesser Combinations of Churches, as occasion is, or may be, of intercourse either way. And therein Churches proceed with Churches, not *politicè*, or as Arm'd by Christ with a Judicial Power of giving up to *Satan*; but they proceed and deal each with other, *modo Mystico*, or with a Moral Declarative Power only; which Law of Mystical Communion, yet obligeth them to all the same Duties for Substance, each to other, that that Political Power obligeth them in a Congregation unto. And thus far we also joyn with the second Opinion, Humbly professing, that either to make the Church universal in the whole, and all the parts, to be a Political Instituted Body, Arm'd with Government, as the first Opinion doth; or on the other side, to make the Communion and Power in Congregational Bodies, and the Institution thereof, to be but Virtual, from what is given to the Church Universal, and but similar thereunto, as the second Opinion doth; to be both of them mistaken: apprehending much rather the Truth, to lye in a Communion of Saints here on Earth, compounded and made up (for the kind thereof) of both kinds of constitution; the one a fixed instituted and political Communion, superadded to the obligation of the Mystical Relation of Saints one to another, as such, and this to be in and between the Members of a particular Congregation; the other simply Mystical, and Moral, and Occasional, and that to be between Congregations each with other, and indeed between all the Churches in the World. So as whilst these Saints are knit and united into such particular Churches, for the Enjoyment of Ordinances, with power to preserve them pure, they yet are both, as Saints, and as a Church to hold all sorts of correspondency, and are by Christ obliged to all sorts of Communion, and which accordingly we do profess to hold and maintain with all Saints and Churches, according to the several Degrees of Purity amongst them.

This being a true Scheme, and general prospect of the several Opinions amongst us, the particulars of all which we shall in order pursue in this Discourse, in such a due Method as may conduce most to clear the Truth; I shall now apply my self to consider, whether these particular Churches, or fixed Bodies of Saints and Elders, (whether Congregational or Classical, or what ever else they shall prove to be) are to hold their constitution and formation by any special Divine Institution. For the clearing of which, we shall have occasion first to have to do with that principle forementioned, whether over and above the General Charter of the Church universal, and the Laws and Rules of the Communion of Saints belonging thereunto, there is not a Superadded Institution, for the constitution of particular Churches, and for the endowing them with these Priviledges, which as Churches is found to be bestowed upon them; and then we shall prove, that even the setting forth the bounds and limits of those Bodies, the extensive power of Elders, and measure and proportion of these Churches that are the Seat of Government, must also necessarily be set forth by such a special Divine Institution.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

That the Constitution of a Church, and the Rules of its Order and Government, are Established by a certain Institution of Christ. Some Propositions laid down in order to the Demonstration of this Truth.

THE Church universal, is a Church by an higher ground than by that Institution, it is rather the Object of Gods Decree. And their meeting in Heaven, and making a general Assembly, is not so much by virtue of a command, or by appointment declared in his Revealed Will, as by a Decree of his secret will, and through the Efficacious Power of it, the same that raiseth them, wraps them up in the Clouds and after carries them to Heaven, and presents them together at latter day, as it is said of Christ, *Ps.* 2. As their Worship, there is only natural Worship, not any thing that belongs to the second Command, so, nor is their meeting by virtue of that command. But now if all the Saints on Earth were no more than could meet in one place, yet that these should meet as a Church for such and such Ordinances, which in Heaven they shall not have, this must needs be from an Institution of Christ's, over and above their being the Church in general; as the Ordinances themselves are Established by such an Institution. For they gather together in his Name, and Excommunicate in his Name, as well as they Baptize in his Name; and therefore if Baptism be an Institution, their gathering together must be an Institution also. And indeed if the Government and the Worship be by Institution, the Fact or subject must needs be so. As if the Officers and the Laws of a Colledge or Incorporate Town be by a Law and a Charter, the Colledge or Incorporation it self, the form of it, and warrant to be so, must be much more. Nothing in any Kingdom depends more upon a Charter and the Supream Authority, than the imbodying of Men into societies, and the enabling them to Act in them. And so the constitution of these Spiritual Bodies, the Churches, hath a necessary dependency on this Authority of Christ. Those Bodies to be ruled, they are called the House of God, and the Church of God. *If he Rule not his own House well, how shall he take care of the Church of God?* 1 *Tim.* 3. 5. Why is it called the Church of God, but because of Gods Institution, as the Lords Supper, and the Lords Day, have their Names from the Lords Institution? And it is called the House of God, and the Temple of God; and as the Temple was by Institution, so this Church of Christ too.

And indeed, that to which a promise is, for that there is a command; which is all one with an Institution; and an Institution is conveyed in a promise. In the Old Testament all their Solemn Assemblies, (which were the Types of ours) were by an Institution, both who, and where, and how, as those for Worship in the Temple, the *Synhedrim* for Government; therefore the things Typified much more.

But farther, what the Apostles did teach the Saints to become, for that there is an Institution; for they taught nothing but what Christ commanded them, *Matth.* 28 *ult.* And when they had taught them to become Churches, they wrote to them as such, and the Holy Ghost owneth them as such. And the Holy Ghost did Ordain, by Institution, Pastors and Teachers, and set them as Overseers over each Flock, as an whole Flock, *Acts* 20. 28. Therefore ordained the bounds of their Flocks too.

Again, the Seven Churches are Seven Candlesticks, whereof the Type was the Candlestick of God, made by Gods Appointment. In the Candlestick there were two things, 1. *Matter*, which was Gold, that they should be Saints. 2. *Forme*, which is therefore Christ's Institution, to be cast into such or such a Mould. And for one Candlestick then, there are many Candlesticks now. Seven in, *Rev.* 1. 20. And the Form of these many are now as well from Christ, as the Form of that one then was.

And as it is Gods House, he hath not left it unto Man to Frame his building to what proportion he pleaseth; Christs body Instituted, (which is Resembled unto the Natural body, throughout the Epistles) is to have set Limits of it, a *Maximum quod sit*; and as the Natural body, if it have all the parts that can have communion natural in the same common Acts of Nature together, though it be never so small, is a perfect body, so it hath also a prescription of bigness, and bounds are set it, both for parts, and

Chap. I. a *Maximum quod sit*, for proportion of stature, which none should exceed. Thus Christ hath also constituted his Body the Church, in a due measure and proportion.

But to make a distinct demonstration, that the Form, and Order of Congregational Churches is of Christ's Institution, I shall proceed in this Method.

1. I shall prove that God hath not left the Government of his Church to be ordered by the Laws of Nature, or the Arbitrary Maximes of Humane Reason, but hath prescribed Rules for it by his own Institution.

2. I shall shew what is the nature of a Divine Institution.

3. I shall describe the ways whereby Christ hath derived his Institutions to us, to ascertain us that they are Genuinely his own.

4. I shall demonstrate the Order, and Worship, and Ordinances of the Churches of Christ, to be of a perpetual continuance.

5. I shall prove that Excommunication, being more than Non-communion or casting out of the Church, hath in it a super-added Institution of Christ.

6. I shall at last shew that a Congregational Church, is by Christ's Institution the only Subject, and Seat of Church Government; and the Grand Charter of the Power of the Keys is granted to it alone.

1. To prove that Christ hath not left his Churches destitute of Rules for her Government, but hath established them in his Divine Word of the Scriptures, I shall lay down, and demonstrate these following Propositions.

Propsition I. *That the Right Government of a Church, is a part of Worship under the New Testament*; which is evident;

1. Because all means of Worship are called *The Keys of Heaven*, Mat. 16. 18, 19. And by Excommunication Men Bind and Loose, as well as by Preaching or by Praying. 2. This Act of Government, Excommunication, is parallell'd with Prayer; The Agreement of the Church to cast out is parallell'd with this, *What two shall agree to ask*, Mat. 18. 19. 3. Excommunication is done in the Name of Christ and in the Power of Christ, which is the same thing that makes Baptism a part of Worship? *Baptize them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*, Mat 28. 19. So as the Lord's Supper also is constituted. 4. In *Rom.* 12. all is called λογικὴ λατρεία, reasonable Worship, which referreth to Ruling afterward, as well as Teaching and Exhorting. And 5. If a contribution to uphold the Ministry, and giving to poor Christians, be called a Sacrifice, and a Service done unto God, 2 *Cor.* 9. 12. (the word is λειτουργια) then Church censures also as well may have that name; and therefore must have a rule for them as well as other parts of Worship. And therefore now to determine as who shall Baptize, and who shall Administer the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, depends upon his having a Power to do it; so to determine who shall Excommunicate, there is some Rule to direct us.

Prop. II. *The Law of Nature is not sufficient to set up any thing which is parallel to a Divine Institution.*

As for example. If the Government of Congregations by Elders and Officers be in a particular Congregation set up by Divine Institution; No Law of Nature alone will be ground enough to erect the like Power in any other company of Elders, if they have not that other by Institution. The Laws of Nature may indeed direct us how to manage Ordinances that Christ hath erected, according to the common nature in which those Ordinances partake with other things civil. As if that there be many Prophets in a Church, the Law of Nature will teach that they should not speak many at once, because it is against the end of Prophecying; but the Laws of Nature would not be sufficient to erect an Order of Prophecy in the Church, which Jesus Christ hath not appointed, although Speech is a natural means to persuade by. The Laws of Nature will also teach us to take the benefit of Ordinances, if they be Instituted by Christ. As supposing that Christ had appointed a Superiour Power, a Superiour Court over Churches, having the same Power which the Churches have: The Laws of Nature would have taught me to have made use of this, but would never have warranted the erection of such, armed with the same Power, if Jesus Christ should not be found to have appointed it. The Proposition is evident by these Reasons;

1. Be-

1. Because that Institutions and Ordinances flow from Christ, not as the Author of Nature, but as the Author of Grace, as Lord and King of his Church, and so depend upon his Will; if therefore he by his Will have made one institution, the Laws of Nature cannot make a parallel to it, and parallel it is if it be supposed to have the same power and influence that the other hath which Christ hath instituted. Book I.

2. Nothing can work beyond its own Sphere; And therefore, tho' the Laws of Nature may be sanctified to subserve the institutions of Christ, yet not to raise up any thing anew parallel to an institution of Christ. A Spiritual Court parallel to such a Spiritual Court as Christ hath instituted, is what exceedeth the power of Nature, as truly as that it is not in the power of Nature to produce a Spiritual Act of Grace, parallel to what the Holy Ghost produceth. Natural gifts, and natural parts may be subservient unto Grace that sanctifieth them, but they cannot produce or educe the least Spiritual Act. And thus Christ's Government excludeth not Nature, but will take in the help of it, but exceeding it; Nature cannot be the rise of any part of it.

Prop. III. *That there must be a special Divine Institution for the Government of the Churches of Christ.*

For all Church Power and Government which hath a Spiritual punishment annexed to it, must be by special Institution; and that is in a special manner Government, by a Divine Institution, which hath a Power annexed to it, to inflict a Spiritual punishment beyond what is in the common nature of the act it self to do. And therefore although to withdraw from every brother that walketh inordinately, be from the common Law of Christianity, in all sorts of Arbitrary converse; yea and to throw out of a fixed Body or Society, to have power to do so, be from the common and ordinary nature of all other Societies, if the Laws of those Societies be so and so transgressed; yet that there should be a delivering over to Satan with the Power of the Lord Jesus Christ, that this should be annexed to the casting of a Man out, this is apparently by Special Institution, for no Body of Men by the common Law of Nature could have power so to do. So also although upon all admonitions there is a binding the Sin upon the Conscience, so far forth as the nature of the Sin is laid upon it, which is common to all other reproofs of any kind in other sorts: Yet that there should be a promise that where such and such, rather than others, do bind Sin upon a Man's Conscience on Earth, by their Sentence and Judgment, this Sin is also bound upon them in Heaven, *Mat.* 18. 18. this must be from an Institution superadded. Whether Christ's Will that this should be done by such and such, be apparent to us by an express command in the Letter of it, or is held forth in some example or some promise which do imply it: Yet it is an Institution because it holds forth a supernatural efficacy. For whatsoever is set apart by God Electively, and cull'd out from other things to be the instrument of a supernatural power and efficacy, that is such by Divine Institution; and all such power as is thus supernatural, must be disposed of and executed according to his Mind, by his own instruments, and where he hath placed it. Every man is to admonish his Brother upon that common ground, that he is to love him and not to hate him; this is a common ground belonging to all sorts of Men whatsoever; but that any select company of Men should be peculiarly singled out to have power to admonish a Man, to bind Sin upon him, this is from the Institution of Christ. And that they should have the promise of the power of Jesus Christ to accompany them, that this should be in order to a throwing the Sinner out, and a delivering him up to Satan if he repent not, this is from Christ's Institution. Thus God doth take things that by the common Law of Christianity do serve for such an end, and yet over and above puts an Institution upon them to serve for some special end in such a way, by such and such persons; as in those instances given of reproving and admonishing by any Christian, which serveth to a Spiritual end, he takes it up to be performed in a Church and by Elders in publick, in a more special manner, to have a further efficacy in it, because he hath put a further Institution upon it. Thus also the gifts out of out which Men Preach and Pray, they are common to multitudes of Men, and are given in a providential way, and not by Institution; but yet that Men should exercise these by way of Office, in a constant selected way, and separated hereunto, this is by special Institution. So likewise God doth take such things as have a ground in the Law of Nature, and over and above stamps his Institution upon them

Chap. I. them in a supernatural way further than naturally they serve to. So that Christ's Institutions they do not exclude natural grounds, but comply with them, only elevate them, cause them to exceed their natural power and force, with a peculiar efficacy and blessing, and so fall in with the Rules of Nature. Thus that not two or three should speak at once in a Church, it is in it self a Law of Nature common to all men, that Women should not speak in publick, but be silent, it is the Law of Nature; yet over and above they are delivered as the Commands of God, which he that is Spiritual acknowledgeth as the Apostle saith, 1 *Cor.* 14. It is the Law of Nature that no Man should War upon his own Charges, that the Labourer is worthy of his Hire, *&c.* and the Apostle alledgeth these for Ministers Maintenance, 1 *Cor.* 9. and yet withal addeth, so I ordain in all the Churches, and makes an Institution of it. And for the due companies of Men to meet and assemble themselves together; and no more to assemble than can meet in one place to be edified by Ordinances, agrees with that Law of Nature that is common to it as to other things. But yet this which had but a natural and moral foundation, hath Jesus Christ now made an Institution of, and hath therefore put His own Name upon it, and called it, *A gathering together in his Name*, and he hath enabled them with a power beyond the power of nature in the throwing of a Man out, for it is to give him up to Satan.

So also in the judging of a Man for having committed a sin there is always a kind of censure. In a large sense indeed, *Vita est censura*, and thus a man condemns and censures another by his practice and example, and so a Godly Man doth judge Wicked Men, and they are reproved and judged by all the Saints; but there is also a special judicature out of Authority, and the power of Jesus Christ accompanying of it, namely that spoken of in 1 *Cor.* 5. 12 when he saith, *Do not ye judge those that are within? What have I to do to judge them that are without?* Therefore this is by special Institution. And in this place of the *Corinths* compared with, *Chap.* 6. this differing way of Judgment, one by way of Institution, and the other by way of the common Law of Nature, seems to be held forth by the Apostle himself, for when he comes to speak of judging the incestuous person for his sin, with a spiritual power, the Power of the Lord Jesus, he makes that a setled Government, do not ye judge them that are within? As they were a Body to Christ. But when in *chap.* 6. he speaks of taking up differences about things of this Life, though he would have the Saints do it among themselves by way of Arbitration, and not to carry it out of themselves (for the sake of avoiding scandal) to Heathen Magistrates, yet this latter he doth found only on the Canon Law: It is not an Ordinance though it was Christ's Will and Command it should be in that case. Therefore he doth not bid them go to the Elders to take up differences, or to the whole Church, but he bids them take whom they would, the least Saint, who is able to judge, upon that common ground of ability, whereby one day they shall be able to judge the World. So that this latter was only occasional, and by way of Arbitration, according to the Law of Nature, whereas the other was a constant and setled Government, and that invested with spiritual power supernatural, which the other is not.

All the duties that are performed in a Church they are duties amongst all Christians by the common Law of Christianity; for by the Law of Love, they are to instruct, to pray for, to reprove, to avoid, *&c.* as occasion is: But that all these should be performed in a publick body of Saints, gathered together, not occasionally but fixedly, and that special persons should have the power or part of the power committed to them, separated thereunto, and that it should be done in such and such an order; all this both because of the constancy of it, of the electiveness of it, and the special power and efficacy that doth accompany it over and above what is promised in an ordinary way to the common Law of Christianity; must needs be an Institution.

So that whatsoever be the subject or the instrument in a constant and elective way of a supernatural power, or a supernatural Administration over and above what is common to all Christians, or Societies of Men; that Power must be placed by Institution, whoever hath it, or wherever it is. It is not a supernatural quality indeed, but it is a relative respect, whereby a company of Men are called by God, and enabled unto a supernatural administration, which a special efficacy shall accompany; and so by vertue of God's Promise it is concomitantly a supernatural power, though not inherent.

And

And yet it is not so to be understood, as if that such a power should always, for the effect, have that Efficacy that it is assigned to, for that is as God pleaseth. He works not as natural Agents do, because God's promise to accompany his Ordinances is in a free way; as in Preaching the Word, though it is an Ordinance, yet it had not always the effect, though Christ himself, and the Apostles Preached it: It might always have an issue indeed one way or other, and be a means to condemn Men, because they receive it not; but it had not always that effect, for which it was more principally and directly appointed, as natural Agents have.

And so on the other side, we deny not but that Admonitions and other means which run according to the Law of the New Creature and Christianity, which one Saint is to perform to another, may have the like effects, through Gods Dispensation, that Excommunication hath, to bind sin upon a Mans conscience, give him up to Satan to terrifie him, and the like; even as God also may bless private instructions, yea, the private Example of a private Christian to Convert an Heathen, yea, and that also when his own Ordinance will not do it, 1 *Pet.* 2. 12. But yet still Church Admonition, and Excommunication, is an Ordinance in a special manner, which the other is not. So as because that Gods Power Supernaturally must concur for the effecting of what it is Ordained for, hence therefore it must be seated, where God would have it be, by a special Institution, and not misplaced, or else he will not work in it, and with it. If a Man had stirred the Waters, God would not have wrought; or if Satan had done it, he would not have wrought; but when the Angel did it, he did, *John* 5. 4. All such Supernatural Administrations they are limited; as the power is from God, so in whom this power should be, is also from him, and by his Appointment. Though Magistrates are the Ordinance of God in this General Respect, that it is his Will and Command, that there should be Magistrates; yet the power that God accompanieth Magistrates withal in their Administration, is not Supernatural to those ends for which they are appointed, farther than in this proportion, as in general he hath appointed Magistrates to be his Vicegerents. And hence therefore, what sort of Magistrates to have, whether Monarchical, or Aristocratical, of what extent their Dominions shall be, and the like, is still left to Men; because the power that the Magistrate hath of any kind, it is indeed executively but the power of the People committed to him, and betrusted to him, whose power he acts, so as what he pardons the People pardon, what he punisheth the People punish; the Peoples power is engaged in it; and hence as *Solomon* saith, in *the Word of a King there is power*, *Eccles.* 8. 4. Hence they are called Humane Creations, though an Ordinance of God, 1 *Pet.* 2. 13. *Rom.* 13. 1. But that Supernatural Ecclesiastical power, that Jesus Christ doth appoint, is not simply an Ordinance, that there should be Ministers in the general, that shall have this or that power, leaving it unto Men to appoint what sort of Ministers, whether in a way of Monarchy, or in a way of Aristocracy, whether Popes, or Bishops, *&c.* And so likewise as to the Seat or Relation over which these Officers shall have power, and the extent of it. But these must be all Divine Creations and Institutions, as the sort of Magistrates and extent of Common-wealths is a Humane Creation. If the power that these did manage, were immediately the power of Men, or given to them by the Church, as that of Magistrates is by the Common-wealth, then indeed the several Administrations might be appointed by Men, and the bounds thereof set forth; for the power they have, would be proportioned to the cause or rise of it. Magistrates as they have their power thus from Men by Humane Creation, so the punishments that they inflict are but corporal punishments, which the People that set them up can inflict. Indeed Rebellion against the lawful Magistrate, works Damnation in the Issue, by consequence, because it is a sin against the general Ordinance of God; but yet it is, but as any other sin brings Damnation. But now in Church power, there is a special Supernatural Efficacy of God, immediately accompanying it; and therefore this power, as it can no way be delegated by the Person or Persons that have it, so as they should make any one Vicars or Substitutes to execute it for them, as the Bishops do the Chancellors; so also by the same ground, it cannot be placed or seated, but where Christ would have it by his Commission. For if the persons that already have it from Christ, cannot give it unto another, than to whom Christ hath appointed, or to any other body or society, than Christ hath appointed, and hath by Institution placed it, then assuredly neither Magistrates, nor any company of Men whatsoever, can place it but where he would have it.

 And

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And surely for Excommunication of all other (if for any other Ordinance) there must be an Institution, and by whom it shall be Administred in a certain way defined because of all Ordinances, it is the greatest. If therefore for Preaching, who shall Administer it, and where, there is an Institution; then certainly for this, for this is an Act of meer Authority. To Preach is an Act of gift also, and he that hath gifts may for the materiality of Preaching, perform all that a Minister doth out of gifts; but the Act of delivering to Satan, and the Act of throwing a Man out, are Acts of meer power; do cast him out of all Ordinances, and therefore of all Ordinances they are the greatest: And besides that, it is delivering to Satan with the power of Christ, which who can assume, but those to whom Christ hath committed it: It is to a spiritual end; and it is not therefore enough to say, that if there be nothing in the Word against it, but that these and these may Excommunicate, that then they may do it; no, there must be something in the Word positive for it, and that limiteth it, and here placeth it. It will otherwise be a nullity, for want of commission in the persons that do it.

And if that Excommunication were not so an Institution, as that also the sort of Persons to whom it is to be performed, should be by Institution, and were not a delivering up to Satan also; then the Magistrate could inflict it, as well as the Ministers of the Church, for he can cast Men out of such and such a Society, and keep Men from Ordinances, as well as they.

Hence Excommunication being an Ordinance, depending wholly upon Institution, and that which makes Ecclesiastical Authority to be properly Government and Jurisdiction, lying in a power so to Excommunicate; none may therefore take upon them to Administer this Ordinance, without a special Commission and Institution; And in this lies the knot of the difference in the controversie.

Prop. IV. *Gods Institution must put an Efficacy into all Censures.*

Nothing in Nature hath further perfection in it, than God hath put into it; therefore much more this holds in power Ecclesiastical. Man cannot limit that power of Ministry, which he cannot give. All Church censures they are accompanied with a Supernatural power, as the word of God is, which hath not in it self a power inherent, to work without the Spirit accompany it. There is this difference between Civil power and Ecclesiastical; that though Gods power doth accompany the civil power of the Magistrate, because it is his Ordinance, yet he doth not accompany the Acts thereof Supernaturally; but the power that accompanieth the Magistrates Acts, is the power of the People in whose Name Magistrates execute it; and therefore if the Magistrates be resisted, the whole People are obliged to back and strengthen him. But here now the Ministerial power is ordained to convey a special Supernatural Efficacy from God, and Ministers do work wholly in his power: *The Weapons of our Warfare, are mighty through God, having in us a readiness to revenge all Disobedience*, 2 *Cor.* 10.4,5,6. As therefore if the powers of a Kingdom are ingaged in the sentence of any Court, it must be because they have set it up and confined it, and given commission, and appointed who should execute it, so as if any should exercise a power further then they have appointed, they were not ingaged to back it; so, nor will God also assist with his power further than as he hath placed it, and where he hath placed it.

Prop. V. *That the Constitution of Churches is Uniform, and of one kind and sort.*

All Churches are of a like sort, and, for their Constitution and Government, are uniform:

Or else, 1. There should be a double constitution, one for the one sort, and the other for the other. And therefore a Classicall, and Congregational Church, being two several sorts of Churches, in respect of their end, the one being for Worship, the other for Government; the one a Representative Church (for so the Elders in a *Classis* are) the other of the People, or consisting of People and Elders both; and being all so truly several Forms of Churches in respect of Government, as Oeconomical Government differs from Political, and the like, they cannot both of them be by Divine Institution.

Object.

Object. In the *Jewish* Government, both small Towns, and great had entire power.

Ans. Therefore therein lay their Uniformity; and whilst power was lodged only in the Elders, and they kept Court in the Gate, it might be so, and the same Order be preserved; but it cannot be so here, when the People also are by Institution taken in, and are to be present.

2. When the Apostle saith, *So I Ordain in all the Churches*, 1 *Cor.* 7. 17. there could not be the same Ordination of Government and Constitution, unless there were an uniformity in these Churches.

3. Again; Christ writing to the Churches of *Asia*, in 2 & 3 *chap. Rev.* He not only calls them seven Candlesticks, as being all of the same make, uniform, of the same parts and the like; but what he writes to one, he writes to all that were Churches, concluding all his Epistles thus, *Hear what the Spirit saith to the Churches*, which is all one with what is in, *Revel.* 22. 16. *I sent mine Angel to testifie these things in the Churches.*

4. And it is argued from that common Type of the visible Churches, which is shewn unto *John*, *Revel.* 4. As the Form of the Tabernacle was shewn unto *Moses* in the Mount; where there are 24. Elders, and 4. Beasts; and the Acts they do perform, are principally Worship, and therefore it is the Form of Congregational Churches.

5. Of *Thessalonica* he saith, 1 *Thess.* 2. 14. *That they became followers of the Churches of God, which in* Judea *are in Christ Jesus*; if it had been meant only of following of them in matters of Faith, in receiving of the Gospel in the Doctrine of it, as every particular Christian doth, he needed not have used the Phrase, *Followers of the Churches, but of the Church in* Judea, if it had been spoken in respect, as they were Members of the visible Church, visible professors of Christianity. He speaks it therefore also, in reference to having received the Gospel, and casting themselves, as a Church, into the same form and constitution with those Churches; for by reason of their form and constitution, they are called Churches, as they are Bodies gathered up for Worship and Government.

6. For the confirmation of this, add, that the Institution cannot fall both upon congregational and classical, but one would destroy the other, if it were left arbitrary, to take one or the other.

7. As one Baptism, one Body, one Faith, are in the Church Mystical; so one sort of Body, as well as one Baptism, for kind, is Instituted in the constitution of the Churches of Christ.

CHAP. III.

That Christ hath by his own Institution, Established the Order, Discipline, and Government of his Churches; proved by several Arguments.

AS there is a Distinction commonly made between Discipline, and Worship, and Doctrine of the Church, so such a Distinction hath an Apostolical stamp upon it for its warrant; for materially we find it, though in other Terms, *Colos.* 2. 5. Where by Order among them, he means that which we call Discipline, or ordering the Administration or Government of the Church and Worship: And by Faith, that which we call Doctrine, or the Systeme of Truths to be believed and practised, for so every where the word is used. And so in 1 *Cor.* 11. 34. Having Treated of matters pertaining to Worship and Discipline, the Administration of the Lords Supper, &c. he concludes, *the rest will I set in order when I come.* So 1 *Cor.* 14. 40. *Let all be done Decently*, which respects the outward circumstances; *and according to Order*, which respects those Apostolical commands about matters of Discipline, and ordering, as he calls them, *ver.* 37. such as he had given in that Chapter, and at other times. Therefore, *Tit.* 1. 5. when writing to an *Evangelist* about Rectifying matters in Crete, and ordaining Elders in every City, matters that concern Discipline, he adds, *as I had Ordered thee, or given Order to thee.* The word is the same in all these places. And by Order, he means not simply their having all those principally instituted Ordi-

Chap. I. Ordinances as are Essential, as Preaching the Word, Sacrament, and Censure, and Officers to Administer these; but all such Rules as the Apostles gave for the ordering and administring those Ordinances right; many of which Rules are; more than meer external circumstances; and yet not principal Ordinances, but Directions to manage Ordinances, as even those Directions given about prophecying in that, *1 Cor.* 14. That they should speak by course, and one at once, that the Women should keep silence, &c. which yet are points of that Order, he would have them observe in their Assemblies, *ver.* 40. And so in the Old Testament, there was the like usage. As they had the Ark, so they had direction how to carry it, *1 Chron.* 15. 2. None ought to carry the Ark but the *Levites*, for them hath the Lord chosen; and because they carryed it in a Cart, he tells them they sought not the Lord after the due Order, *v.* 13. Now for the Demonstration of this, that the Order of the Churches of Christ is to be distinguished from their Doctrine and Worship.

1. Consider; that very place it self, even now cited for this Distinction, doth, if viewed, in the context of it, afford Argument for this, the Apostle delighting himself with a rare and worthy sight, worthy an Apostle's Joy, *Col.* 2. 5. *Though I be absent in the Flesh, yet am I present with you in the Spirit, joying and beholding your Order, and the stedfastness of your Faith in Christ.* Where by *Spirit*, if his own mind and heart be meant, then the meaning is, that both those were Established according to his own Heart, as he an Apostle led by the Holy Ghost would have them; therefore he says, he was present with them in his Spirit. Or if the Holy Ghost be meant more immediately, then the meaning is, that in respect of those, the same Spirit of Christ that dwelt in the Apostle, and guided him in setling the Church in both these, was present also with them in both *Faith* and *Order*, both being Established and Setled amomg them according to the Dictates of the Holy Ghost in the Apostle; and therefore he says, he was *present with them in the Spirit, joying in a Spiritual manner to behold both.* So that the *Colossians* had all Ordinances and Officers, and all those Ordinances managed by those Officers amongst them, according to the Directions the Holy Ghost had given. This was their *Order* he rejoyceth in, as well as in their *Faith*, and is in respect of both these present with them in Spirit. And this being their present State in both, he exhorts them to continue herein, in those words, *As ye therefore have received Christ the Lord, so walk ye in him, ver.* 6. He speaks in Relation to both these, for his Scope is to exhort them to persevere in what he had before commended them for, which hitherto they had held on in; which was for their *Order*, as well as *Faith*, which the Particle *therefore* implies, *as ye have therefore received, so walk.* And as in their Faith they had received Christ Jesus for their Saviour, so in submitting to his Orders and Rules for their Church Government, they had received him for their Lord; and to walk on in both as they had begun, he exhorts them. So that all Churches then, as they had received from the Apostles the Doctrine of Faith, so directions for Order too, and it was not left to their power, to their Arbitrement, to innovate or alter in either, but to continue to walk as they had begun.

And this further appears to have been his Scope, because he prefaceth this commendation of their Faith and Order, that he might preserve them from the Errours of some who went about to pervert them in both. Into the Order of their Worship, there were those that would have obtruded *Jewish* Rites and Ceremonies, of abstinence from meats, and of Holy Days, and the *Jewish* Sabbath, *ver.* 16. and so a seeking God after the old Order of the *Jewish* Church. And into the Doctrine of their Faith, there were some that would have introduced things they had not seen, *v.* 18. by which Doctrines they destroyed the foundation of their Faith, not holding the head, *ver.* 19. Now to settle them against these Innovations both in Doctrine and Rites, and against all whatsoever that might arise of the like kind, to the end of the World, he tells them that they were in respect of that Order and Faith they had received Christ in, in him compleat, *ver.* 10. He and his word was a sufficient director to to them in both; and they needed neither to be beholden to Humane Philosophy or Policy, or any Traditions of Men, either to order their Churches for them, otherwise than as Christ by his Apostles had Taught, or to coin new Doctrines. *ver.* 8. And because that take them, *quà Colentes*, as Worshippers in a Church, they were dead with Christ from all Rudiments of the World whatever, *ver.* 20. he wonders that any among them should be so seduced, and *why as though living in the World*

World they would be subject to Ordinances, humane of what kind soever. Where he takes away the fairest pretence for such Innovations as could be; that they, because Men as well as others, lived in the World (the example of which is apt to mould Men much to conform to their practices) and therefore they should take liberty to loose their Orders in their Church affairs, to come the nearer to the Model of Wordly Governments. Ay, but the Apostle tells them that they were Worshippers in a Church that held of Christ as their only Lord, they were of another World, and so ought not to subject themselves to any matters of Order, as well as matters of Faith in their Church Administrations, but what were purely from Christ. And in relation to both these (which he still carries in his Eye) he useth two words, *ver.* 22. *Not to go after the Commandments of Men, in matters of Order; nor the Doctrines of Men, in matters of Faith,* (for still such new invented ways profit not the Soul but perish in the using) *nor be deceived by the vain shew of what Wisdom soever appeared in either.* And although the swervings and aberrations there mentioned from right Order and Faith, were more gross than many of those amongst us, yet the arguments and exhortations the Apostle useth (to prevent any of what sort soever for ever) are such as reach ours and all other digressions from the right Order and Faith, at first delivered by the Apostle, and received by the Apostolick Churches, and we are to reduce all to the Word, we being compleat in Christ for either. The like Exhortation unto this (which further strengtheneth this) we have also *Rom.* 12. 1.

Book I

2. I add to this, that there are in the Books of the New Testament written by the Apostles, manifold particular directions and notes, purposely and professedly written to direct in the Government of Churches, and ordering the Worship of them. Thus in the Book of the *Acts*, which is an Historical Narration, and in the Epistles, there are divers and several passages scattered, which put together will rise up to a Platform, whereas for ordering of Commonwealths there are only general Rules, as *to be subject to the higher Powers*, &c. but neither directions nor examples left or intimated how they are to be governed. Thus in 1 *Tim.* 2. he gives many directions about the publick Prayers of the Church, as for their Order, that they should be first made afore any other, *That first of all, Prayers be made*, ver. 1. So for their kind, all sorts of Prayers, *Supplications, Prayers, Intercessions*, &c. For their subject, for all Men, *Kings, all in Authority*; for the place of Worship, not in places dedicated as Holy with difference from others as the Temple was, but *I will that Prayers be made every where*, &c. *ver.* 8. For the carriage of Women, that in the Publick Assemblies they wear Modest Apparel, and not affect that splendour, and costlinesse as elsewhere, *ver.* 9. and that they keep silence in all administrations whatever, *v.* 10. and that they be not Rulers nor Teachers of the Church, *v.* 11. Then in *chap.* 3. he gives directions about Officers; their Distinction, Bishops and Deacons; their qualifications when to be chosen. And *chap.* 5. he adds many more of the like nature, both about Officers and Church Censures. And what was the scope of all this? Even to shew that the ordering and disposing of all such things, are fixed some where or other in the writings of the Apostles, and left as Rules for us by Apostolick Authority. He accordingly in the conclusion of all this, doth more strongly enforce his former directions, 1 *Tim.* 3. 14, 15. *These things write I unto thee (hoping to come unto thee shortly* (and so not writing all that might be written now) *but if I tarry long that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thy self in the House of God, which is the Church of the Living God.* He puts an Emphasis upon the Subject he was to converse in, *The House of God, and the Church of the Living God*, as if he had said, the House or Family of God, and the ordering of it, requires another manner of skill than the Societies of Men. *Timothy* was an Evangelist, whose Office it was to perfect Discipline and Doctrine in the Churches, which the Apostles first planted, and the Evangelists received extraordinary gifts to that end, and such gifts as made them to exceed, in Spiritual Wisdom and Spirit, all the Bishops, yea all the States in the World, and yet it was not left unto their Wisdom or Arbitrement, to dispose or give such directions as these in Church Affairs and Administrations; but they were tyed to the directions of the Apostles under whom they were Evangelists, and who were guided infallibly by the Spirit, that these Evangelists might be guided by them to mould Churches accordingly. *Timothy*'s Wisdom could not direct him herein, but he was to learn and know from *Paul*, that thou may'st know how to behave thy self, &c. 1 *Tim.* 3. 15. This is a skill then, which depends upon Apostolical Revelation. And the

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the directions were not so loosly given as they might vary from them, for *Paul* says even to *Timothy*, *How thou oughtest to behave thy self*, as a matter of duty. Neither doth *Paul* only give general Rules, which might help humane Wisdom in the ordering of things, for many of the Rules in that Epistle are particular, and as express as may be, not only directing to the substantial parts of Worship, but giving directions for the manner, as the word πῶς, *How*, implies. Yea and he makes these things part of that mystery of Godliness, *ver.* 16. for which Christ was made manifest in the Flesh and Ascended, as well as matters of Doctrine; and so they needed a revelation as well as the greatest truths of Faith. And further he insinuates the reason why he left these things in Writing, because the Spirit foretold that there should be an Apostacy of the Churches to Popery in the latter times, when there should be a perversion, as of the Doctrine, so of the Apostolical Order and Worship set up in the first Churches, he instancing in some particulars for the rest, 1 *Tim.* 4. 1. which *Daniel* (whence he quotes it) instanceth in; *Dan.* 11. 36, 39. And so he writ these things that the Church might in after Ages have a Rule to restore all things to the Primitive condition again.

The like we have delivered by *Paul* to *Titus* another Evangelist, *Tit.* 1. 5. *For this cause* (says he) *left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting*, or as the word in the Original is, ἐπιδιορθώσῃ throughly set straight or reduce to the right, things that were left unset right. And he instanceth in one matter of Discipline for all the rest, *and ordain Elders in every City*: And how was he to order all things? And by what rule? ὡς ἐγώ σοι διεταξάμην, *as I ordered them to thee*, or *gave order*. Evangelists were appointed for Church Discipline as well as Doctrine; so *Timothy* you see was by the directions given him, and so *Titus* was as appears by the following directions, and as the word διατάττω implies, for that signifies the ordering of matters aright. And he was to make an exact or thorough Reformation, and to constitute things fully aright: And all this not according to rules of general Wisdom and Discretion, but according to particular and express order from the Apostle, *as I gave order to thee*. Now if the Apostle gave particular orders for all these things then, and that to abler and wiser Men than ever were to succeed in the Church, and they needed them; then if they have not left in their Writings some where or other all the directions they gave to them by Word of Mouth, there had not been sufficient provision made for us in these days, nor the succeeding Churches in all Ages, who know less how to behave our selves in the Church of God than they did.

3. Add to this that so usually cited place, *Heb.* 3. 1, 2, 3. which comes fitly in to second this reason, and confirms it; As *Moses* is said to be faithful in all God's house, so Christ also both in God's and his own House; as *Moses* was under the Old Testament, so Christ is under the New; *Moses* was concerned in that old visible constituted Church of the *Jews* (for so also, *Acts* 7. 38. it is called, The Church in the Wilderness.) And Christ in the new constituted, Assemblies of the Gospel. Even in the Language of that Epistle to the *Hebrews* as well as in this to *Timothy*, these particular Assemblies are called, with respect to Christ, his House, For *Heb.* 10. 21. The Apostle there shewing that as we have an High Priest now as they had then, so an House of God now as then, *We having an High Priest over the House of God*, he infers from thence, that as we should draw near in Worship as the Priests did, having our Consciences sprinkled, and our Bodies washed with pure Water (following the allusion of the Worship in that old House) so we should go on with other duties of Church Fellowship, as inferences from thence, and among others, he brings in this last, *Not forsaking the Assembling of our selves together*. And his Argument lies thus, As there was an High Priest then, so now; as a Publick Worship then, so now; and as an House of God, and Assemblies then to exercise Publick Worship in, over which the High Priest was placed, so there must be such an House now; which because they are not National but Parochial, therefore he expresseth them by the Synagogues of the *Jews*. Now if such Congregations be God's House appointed for his Publick Worship under the New Testament, we needed particular directions how to behave our selves in this House of God, as much as the *Jews* of old did in that House which God built then for Publick Worship, as that place in *Timothy* shews, *That thou mayest know how to behave thy self in the House of God*, 1 Tim. 3. 15. Yea and Christ also hath been as faithful to God in directing us now, as *Moses* was in ordering all things then, as this place in the Epistle to the *Hebrews* shews. *Moses* was faithful

Μὴ ἐγκαταλείποντες τὴν ἐπισυναγωγὴν ἑαυτῶν, *Heb.* 10. 25.

faithful, as in giving a right Platform of Doctrine to that Church, both of the Law and Gospel; so in giving a perfect Platform of Discipline of the Government of that Church, and ordaining all things in the worship of it (*He made all things according to the Pattern in the Mount, Exod.* 25. 40. *Heb.* 8. 5.) therefore, so hath Christ done also. Faithfullness implies going exactly according to Directions given, and Christ, his Faithfullness lay in giving out those Directions to us his Church. Neither is it only in matters of Faith and manners; for it is spoken of *Building God's House*, under the New Testament, which is done by Ministry, and the Government of the Church also, as well as by Faith and Manners; for the Building and Edification of the Church, is as well by the Ministry and Officers of the Church, *Eph.* 4. *v.*12. and all the Ordinances of it, 2 *Cor.* 10 26. as by the Doctrine of Faith and good Manners. Neither is the comparison of Christ with *Moses*, as to giving Rules for a Common-wealth, (and so this needs not be brought in for a Disproportion) but as to the House of God only, in which Christ only did meddle, and refused to be a Judge in other things: And herein as *Moses* is said to be faithfull Ἐν πάσῃ τῷ οἴκῳ in the whole House; that is, in every particular about it, a compleat director of all things, in every Room of it; so must Christ be also in all sorts of things, that concerned it any way, as an House to God, whether as Mystical, in giving Doctrines to Build it; or visible and constituted, in giving Discipline. He was faithfull to God in the whole House; that is, in every thing therein, we are an House to God. Neither do we fetch an Argument from the particulars of Christ and *Moses*; but further from the very Reasons that the Apostles here suggests. For,

1. In Reason says the Apostle, *Every House is built by some Man, Heb.*3.4. And for the building of it, there must be a Platform, and direction in some Man's Head; a Pattern there was for the Tabernacle, and for *Solomon's* Temple given by *David*, and that by the Spirit, as is warily put in, 1 *Chron.* 28. 12, 13, 14. and the faithfullness of him, that is to build this House, must lye in building it, according to that Pattern. Now this House of God, neither under the Old, or New Testament, could have Man for its builder; for no Man hath either power to do it, nor skill to give the Pattern; therefore, *ver.* 3. he says, That *Moses*, and all the Saints of the Old and New Testament, Apostles and others, were, and are but a part of the House; and so could not give of themselves directions to build it. Therefore as it is the House of God (both now and then) so God must be the Master-builder, as then so now; therefore, *ver.* 3. he both calleth Christ the builder of his House, in those words, he that built the House; and adds, *ver.* 4. That whereas Men build every other House, he that built this House, is God; but he that built all things, is God: Men love to have the contrivance of their Houses, to be drawn by themselves: and are as curious in it, to please themselves, as in any other thing; and so Christ likewise.

2. To build, and give directions for the Building of God's Church, as unto *Moses* was given, he makes a matter of Honour and Prerogative due only to God and Christ, and shall Man Arrogate it? *ver.* 3. *This Man*, (naming Christ) *was counted worthy of more Glory than* Moses *was, in as much as he who hath Builded the House, hath more Honour than the House, ver.* 3. under the word Building, he includes *giving the Pattern*, for *Moses* was but Faithful in doing then according to the Master Builder's Direction. Therefore to give but such kind of Directions for the Building and Ordering God's House under the New Testament, as *Moses* by Direction gave under the Old, about Church Officers, &c. if Men should undertake it, would be to assume the glory of that Wisdom, that is due only to Christ. It was the Masterpiece wherein *Solomon's* Wisdom, (Christ's Type) is said to have been shewn, 2 Chron. 9. 3.4,5. *When the Queen of* Sheba *had seen the Wisdom of* Solomon, *and the House that he had Built, the Meat of his Table, Attendence of his Servants, and so the rest of the ordering of his House*, she professeth she had not heard the *one half of the greatness of his Wisdom.* And certainly in Christ's House which he hath built for his Glory, much more of his Wisdom is expected. And if God who built that old House of the *Jewish* Church, shewed his own Wisdom in the exact particular directions about it; surely in this New House of the New Testament, which in True Glory is to exceed that other, and which is built for the glory of his Wisdom, as well as the former; he hath displayed the like, or else he hath imparted the Honour to Men under the Gospel in the framing this better House, which he accounted part of his glory, and so reserved it to himself under the Old.

Ch. IV. So that to Sum up this. The Apostle doth here at once, exclude both Men's hands and skill from the building of any of God's House; both because it is God's House, and themselves but part of this House. And is it not as absurd for all Men and Angels, to take on them to direct, (otherwise than by direction first given) how any of God's House should be made and built, as it were for any part of the House to give order for the rest? It is as much as for the Clay to say to the Potter, why hast thou made me thus? Is it fit for the whole House, or any part of it, to say, make me this House thus? Who shall give Christ a pattern of any House he hath promised to dwell in? Who hath been his Counsellor? Men love to have the contriving their Houses themselves, and are as curious in it to please themselves, as in any other thing, so is Christ. And the Apostle withal, expresly affirmeth on the contrary, that all things in this House, are to be built by God, for so I understand, τὰ πάντα, he that built [all these things] is God, all those things that belong to this House, which was the thing he was speaking of: So as Christ, not as a Servant as *Mose*, was, but as being God, built this House, and all things in it, and yet according to a pattern in respect of which he is said to be faithful.

We shall annex to these Scriptures, but one reason, for the confirmation hereof, which is this; that if the Scripture hath condescended to set down a multitude of particular directions, either in examples, or in more express Rules about the ordering of Government and Worship, whereof some are in appearance of but small importance, and might seem to be left to discretion, (as that every Man should lay aside, as God had blessed him on the first day of the week, rather than on another day, *&c.* 1 *Cor.* 16. 2.) That then the word hath left a full and compleat direction, as to matters of greater importance. The strength of the Consequence, *viz.* that if the New Testament hath given particular directions for many things, then for all of like nature, appears by this.

1. Because the word of God is perfect in what ever it meddles with. If it had not medled at all with Church matters, but only given in general Rules, then indeed no compleat Pattern could have been pleaded for; but having, to our view, set out so many pieces of this Building; for any Man to say, Christ hath left other things of like nature and use unto general Rule, is to argue the Scriptures to be guilty of Imperfection, whereas *Paul* writing to *Timothy* an Evangelist, about matters of Church Government, (which was one main part of an Evangelist's Office, and one main Argument of his Epistles to him before) says, the word of God was given to make the Man of God perfect, 2 *Tim.* 3. 17.

2. A Divine Wisdom of God being manifest in these Directions, in view thus given, which Man's Wisdom in the like must not presume to imitate or come neer, if God should have given some directions, and left to Man's Wisdom other of the same kind and use, in this, man's Wisdom had been made equal to God's, in matters of this nature.

3. Those many Directions and Appointments God hath given, have a Supernatural Efficacy, and blessing in them; because they are his Institutions over and above what is in the Dictates of nature, or what reason can invent. Now if it were left to Man to add the like out of his own Wisdom, to the like uses in the Government of the Church; then Man must be supposed to have the power or promise from God, to have his Ordinances accompanied with the like Supernatural Efficacy. All God's Institutions have for their object, Mens Souls and Consciences, so the dispensers of Ordinances, the Ministers; and therefore likewise the things dispensed; *Obey them that rule over you, for they watch for your Souls, Heb.* 13. 17. And then for their end, they are to be for the Edification of Mens Souls, and to convey the Spirit, 1 *Cor.* 2. *v.*5,7. And therefore are wholly Supernatural and Spiritual. And the Ministers, which are to be the means to effect those ends, should therefore not be left to the Arbitrament of Natural Reason, or Humane Wisdom, though never so much Elevated, as the ordering of a Family or Common-wealth is, which have for their immediate object, but Mens Bodies and Estates; and for their immediate end, but Mens natural and civil good. But if the end of Church Ordinances be Supernatural in an immediate way, then all the means should be Supernatural also in their Appointment and Institution; for between the end and the means, there must be a proportion, nothing being inabled to a spiritual effect, that hath not a Supernatural and Spiritual Original. We could not tell how to imagine or expect that God would accompany such *Media* or

or Means of what kind or rank so ever, as the wisdom of Man invents; with such a power. And therefore the Apostle speaking of all means Spiritual, (and by a Metaphor calling those things Weapons, which Logicians call Instruments or means) opposeth these two, 1 Cor: 10. 4. *The Weapons of our Warfare are not Carnal,*) or Humane) *but mighty through God*; and by that Negation insinuates, that they must be spiritual in their rise, if mighty in their working. It is as proper to the Holy Ghost to Sanctifie any thing to a spiritual end, as it is for God the Father to Create, or the Son to Redeem; and therefore for Man to appoint any thing to a spiritual end, is as Derogatory to the Holy Ghost in his work, as the like would be to the other persons in theirs.

4. It was expresly forbidden, for Man to go about to make any thing of his Invention like unto God's, not Like-Oyl, not Like-Days, not Like-Posts to Gods; and therefore much more it is prohibited, that Man should frame like Institutions for the Order and Government of the Churches under the Gospel.

CHAP. IV.

What power Spiritual or Ecclesiastical is, of the Nature of a Divine Institution; How the Knowledge of Divine Institutions is derived to us, that we may be assured what are truly, and really such.

Power Spiritual is an impress of, or an investiture with the Authority of Christ, meerly out of his Will, whereby Men are Authorized and Enabled by Commission from Christ, and in his Name to do that which others cannot do; and by virtue of which, what they so do, hath a special Efficacy in it from the power of Christ, seconding and accompanying of it; which also the Conscience acknowledging Subjects it self to, as unto the power of Christ, for the sake of his Will and Institution.

An Institution is that which is meerly founded upon Gods Will, raising up a thing beyond its own Natural or Moral Efficacy, with an Efficacy beyond it. As for Men to humble themselves, is a Moral Duty; but that God should appoint, and set apart a whole day for them, to do it with Fasting, and so have a Blessing therefrom, this is beyond the nature of the thing, and is therefore an Institution. The Trumpets in the Wars, they had a natural Efficacy to Incourage; but that the Priests should blow Trumpets when the People of *Israel* went to War, had a Blessing beyond the natural Efficacy of the thing; therefore those persons were appointed to do it. To hear the Word, it is a Duty we owe to God, as we are Men, whomsoever he shall appoint to Preach it to us, whether he should speak it himself, or by others; but that he should appoint men rather than Angels, or rather than speak himself, that he should single out some men for that Office, and put a special Efficacy upon them, as sent by him; this is to raise up what hath a natural and common Efficacy in it, beyond the nature of the thing; and as it dependeth meerly upon his Will, so it hath a special Institution in it, because of a special Efficacy accompanying it.

Institutions are not only express Commands in the letter of them; for Examples and Promises, Hints, and Implicite intimations, may hold forth the Will of Christ. Neither is every thing that is the Will and Command of Christ an Institution; but it must be judged to be distinguished from other Commands by the matter of it. If any thing be taken out from the course of Nature, from the course of Gods Providence, or from the common Law of Nature; and be peculiarly raised up above other things of its rank, to have a special Force and Efficacy in it; then if the Will of Christ be declared concerning such a thing, it is peculiarly an Institution, although other things be commanded, as well as it. That Bread and Wine should signifie and convey to us the Body and Blood of Christ, this is by special Institution, because it is beyond the Nature of the thing, it depends only upon God's Will; to have chosen these Elements to do it, rather than others; and so they have a special Efficacy in them. But to have the Death of Christ set forth by way of Preaching, that's not an Institution simply as such: But that there should a peculiar blessing go along with the Apostles in Preaching, or with Evangelists, or with the Ministers, this depends upon Gods Will; for he might have chosen others. A Butcher or any

Ch. IV. Man could have killed the Sacrifices, as well as the Priests, or any of the Tribes of *Israel* could have done it; but God singles out the Tribe of *Levi*, separates them to this work. To give Alms to Men as Men, is the command of God, *Do good unto all*, *Gal.* 6. 10. But this is not an Institution, because founded also upon a common ground. To give Alms to Saints, is founded also upon the like ground, analogous to the other, if to Men, as Men, then especially to Saints as Saints; but to make Collections in the Church where God is Worshipped, here it becometh a Sacrifice; and then to make this Collection upon the first day of the Week, rather than upon another; this must needs be an Institution. So that oftentimes God commanded things as are prescribed by the Law of Nature, and such things as are commanded upon other common grounds, and yet annexeth some special and peculiar [illegible] his own Will upon them, as they are done thus and thus, or by such [illegible] Hence is the distinction that our Divines give upon the first and second Commandment; that as there is *Cultus Naturalis* in them, as to fear God, and to love Him, obey Him, to hear His Word, &c. So also there is *Cultus institutus*, which is the substance of the second Commandment. So also there are means of Edification which are providential, and so occasionally will serve; if a Man should walk in a Churchyard, and see a death's Head, it might put him in mind of Death; but for a Man to set up a Death's Head in his Study, continually to do it; this were the imitation of an Institution. If a Man went forth and heard a Lark sing, in this Providential way, it might stir up his mind to think of God or Heaven; or if a Man hears musick, it may do the like; but to keep a Lark in Cage on purpose, that when it sings, my mind should be stirred up, or to have musick on purpose to stir up the mind in a constant setled way; this were to make it as an Institution, as in the Temple it was, when musick was there used. So as the constant setting apart of such a thing, for such an end, (though providentially and occasionally, it may serve for such an end) riseth up to an Institution also.

We come now to consider the ways, whereby Institutions are delivered unto us by Christ, or made known to us. Institutions are but the Will of Christ, declared concerning such things as are exercised above the common nature of them, to a further Spiritual end. Therefore the declaring the Will of God about them, holds in common with the Declaration of Gods Will in other Commands. It doth differ only in the matter; that the matter of institutions are such things as are exercised above the common Nature, to some Spiritual end and Efficacy. In the delivery of these, Jesus Christ is as Faithfull as *Moses* was; though he hath not delivered them in the New Testament, in written Scripture, as in a Body of Laws formed up by themselves, as *Moses* did; with express positive Directions, by way of Command, as the Law of *Moses* is given. There is a double reason of it.

1. Because the *Jews* they needed much more express holdings forth of all their Laws; because they were in the infancy of the Church; Therefore God dealt with them accordingly, in giving *here a line, and there a line*, and it was necessary to that State. And yet even their Systeme of Laws, is in many things obscure. There are many cases, which the *Rabbins* make in the Interpretation of the Ceremonial Law, which have a great deal of Difficulty in them.

2. But the chief Reason is this; because (as was hinted afore) *Moses* his Law, was given to a Church and Nation formed up, and that by writing from the first. But the Apostles did not so; they delivered these Rules to the Churches, by way of Tradition, 1 *Cor.* 11. 1. They Converted Men by Preaching, and formed up Churches, and setled Government, and Order amongst them, as well as Faith. And it was the pleasure and mind of the Holy Ghost, to leave to Posterity, those Rules which the Apostles expresly gave out to Churches, then by word of Mouth, to leave them I say to Posterity in writing, by hinting what practises were in Churches, Recorded in the *Epistles*, and in the *Acts*. * So as what was delivered to them in a way of command positively, is traduced to us by way of Example, how Churches were then governed. Therefore suitably the Apostle saith, *we have no such Custom, nor the Churches of God*, 1 *Cor.* 11. 16. And those customs of the Churches, were Traduced and Derived down to us; and unto this Day, the *Vestigia* of them all hath (though with Superadditions, and Perversions) remained in the Church of *Rome*. So as we have both the hints and practices of the primitive times, and also those footsteps remaining in the Churches to this Day.

* *It were a good project to add in every particular, how that there is no particular that we stand for, but there is a Vestigium of it left in some of those Churches, and to give Instances still all along of all the particulars, and so, as to prove every one first by Scripture, 2. By consonancy to Spiritual Reason, and 3. By the Opinion of the Reformed Churches, &c. so 4. By the Footsteps of them in all Churches.*

1. Now

1. Now such Institutions as those, they are sometimes delivered to us *in* promises; and we may gather them by the promises that are made to things above their Natural Efficacy. And when we find such promises, although we have it not in express Letter, you shall do thus or thus; yet to such things as we find promises made, which are above the Natural Efficacy of them, we may warrantably argue their Institution: As for the Sentence the Church shall give, the promise being, *whose sins you bind on Earth, shall be bound in Heaven, Mat.* 18. 8. *John* 20. 23. which is beyond the Efficacy of the Sentence of Men upon Earth; this evidently argueth a Church, and their Sentence to be by Institution. And so also when Christ saith, *where two or three are gathered together in my Name, I will be in the midst of them, Mat.* 18. 20. This implies, that the gathering together in his Name, is an Institution; for there is a special promise of his being in the midst of them: And this being spoken upon occasion of his mentioning a Church, is evidently therefore the Institution of a Church. Book I.

Object. If you will make every thing a promise is made to, to be an Institution, we shall then have too many Institutions.

Answ. We do not make every thing a promise is made to, an Institution. Promises are made to the People of God; but Institutions are in this case to be distinguished from all things else by the matter. However, promises are the Declaration of Gods Will, be they made to what things soever; and if they fall upon such things as are raised up above natural and common Efficacy, with promise of a Supernatural power to accompany them; then they are Institutions. If that promises be made to any Action, *As to Honour thy Father and Mother, that thy Days may be long, &c.* then that Action is a Duty, although there were no Commandment for it; only it is not an Institution, because there is not a Supernatural Spiritual Efficacy put upon it. So if promises be made to the People of God, the People of God be not an Institution indeed, but it argues that they are the People of God; it doth separate them from the rest of the World. But if it fall [illegible] actions or things, or Persons raising them up to have a Spiritual Efficacy unto [illegible] Natures, then it is an Institution.

2. These Institutions are sometimes declared by Implicite Di[illegible] Apostle saith, do not ye Judge them that are within? 1 *Cor.* 5. 12. [illegible] *you power amongst you?* It is but an Implicite Institution; but if [illegible] there had been an Institution and Commission of power given them [illegible] granted; and so the like should be amongst us. So when he saith [illegible] also; *when ye are gathered together, deliver such an one to Satan,* [illegible] making it their sin, that they did not; it implies, there was therefore a Law that had been given them, or else there had been no Transgression. Thus by the same kind of Arguing, we find a promise in Scripture, to be argued even out of [illegible] ning. So Heb. 4. 5. *If they shall enter into my Rest.* Hence the Apostle Argues, some shall enter in.

3. When there is a Commission of power given; there is a declared Institution. As in those words; *What you bind, shall be bound, go and Teach all Nations.* Therefore there is an Institution of a Church, in *Matth.* 18. 18, 19, 20. For there is a Commission given to bind. And if Apostolical power be an Institution by virtue of that in John 20. 23. *Whose sins ye remit, are remitted,* &c. then here also by virtue of these words; *If thy Brother offend, tell the Church: If thou wilt* Circumcise thy self and thy Seed, I will bless thee; obey them that watch over your Souls, there is an Institution; for it doth not only hold, that every Christian should obey the Minister he is under; but that he should be under his Ministry, and that the Minister should watch over him.

4. There are virtual Institutions, as well as formal; for the consequence which argues Gods Will, be it in one thing, as well as in another, is as truly the Word, as in the express Letter of it. So many points of Doctrine are Demonstrated, as the Case of the Resurrection of Christ the third Day; and Jesus Christ's proof of the Resurrection, by the instance of God's being the God of *Abraham, Isaac,* and *Jacob.* And as one Truth may be gathered out of another, so one Institution may be gathered out of another; for they are both but the Declarations of Gods Will. And if there be a necessary consequence, that if there be such an Institution, there must be likewise this, that it is Gods Will that such a thing must be, then that is to be taken for an Institution also.

When

Ch. IV. When therefore many things that God hath Instituted, being put altogether, do necessarily infer something else, then that also is an Institution. As if that God hath appointed Officers and Overseers, limited to a Flock by a special relation, over whom God hath made them Overseers, then that there should be a Flock, and that that Flock should have its bounds, which they have relation to, must be by Institution also. If when they are gathered together they must deliver to Satan, and they must gather together to excommunicate and deliver to Satan, and this delivering to Satan be by Institution, then their meeting also. As the conclusion is rightly fetched out of a *Major* and *Minor*, so if there be several particulars which put together supposeth some *4th* or *5th* thing, then God hath instituted that thing; if it be such as is not necessarily in nature, but dependeth upon the Institution of his Will. As if he hath commanded Men to assemble and meet, to tarry one for another till they meet, and that if any of them sin they should cast them out, and that their power reacheth to them that are within, this necessarily implies that this company thus meeting are a Church by Institution in relation unto such meetings. If a King did write to a Town to do all such things as an incorporate Town useth to do, if such and such offences fall out amongst them to judge them that are within; would not this be evidently a charter to them, to make them an incorporate Town: as Lords are made Lords being called up by a Writ, so here. Therefore all such directions as we find in the Epistles, as in 1 *Cor.* 5. to do thus and thus, implies them to be incorporate bodies, which Incorporation depends as much upon God's Will as the acts themselves, which they are to do being so incorporated, do.

And perhaps the Synagogues under the Old Testament, though we do not read when they were instituted by express Command or Law, as for making of the Temple and the like there is, yet was derived out of the general Charter, for their meetings in the Temple, and every seventh year to read the Word, as less Leases are by parcels made out of a greater Lease. And so they were by Institution consequentially.

5. Institutions are made known by Prophecies in the Old Testament, concerning the times of the Gospel. As, that upon every Assembly there should be a Cloud; that the day of Christ's Resurrection should be the Christian Sabbath, *This is the day that the Lord hath made*, Psal. 118. 24. or appointed, by Prophesie, he had said to day if you will hear his Voice, in another Psalm, and if not, that they should not enter into his rest, and this in *Heb.* 6. 4. is by the Apostle made an Institution of; He hath appointed, saith the Apostle, another day, in opposition to the seventh day which he had spoken of in the *5th* and *6th* verses. So *Clement* answerably in his Epistle speaking of the Institution of the Offices of Bishops and Deacons, quoteth the Prophesie in *Isa.* 60. 17. out of the Septuagint, as then it was, neither saith he, is this a new institution, but many years afore it was thus written of Bishops and Deacons. * So also in the applying of Types, we may discover what is an Institution of God, but then we must find them so applied, if we find them warrantably applied by the Holy Ghost in the New Testament, or by Prophecy in the Old (for the signification of a Type it is by the Holy Ghost as in *Heb.* 9. 8. the Holy Ghost thus signifying) we may infer an Institution from them. So when it is said in *Isa.* 66. 21. *I will take of them for Priests and for Levites*, it implies that there should be these two ranks and sorts of Officers in the New Testament, answerable to those two in the Old, for ordinary Officers, as indeed there are, *viz.* Bishops and Deacons.

* Καὶ ὅπερ καινῶς ἐκ τοῦ δὴ παλαιοῦ γεγραμμένον ἐγένετο περὶ ἐπισκόπων, καὶ διακόνων. ὅτως γὰρ τοι λέγει ἡ γραφή κατασήσω τοὺς ἐπισκόπους αὐτῶν, ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ καὶ τοὺς διακόνους αὐτῶν ἐν πίστει. *Clem. Epist. ad Corinth.* p. 55. *Edit. Patr. Junii. Oxon.* 1633.

6. We may be assured what is of Divine Institution by parallel reason, between things of a kind, and of a like nature; as for example, God having appointed Baptism a Sacrament, and the Lord's Supper a Sacrament, these being things of a kind, if he hath bidden and appointed Ministers by Institution to Baptise, the reason is good that therefore they should have power to administer the Lord's Supper, although there is no instance in Scripture for it. So if he have given them power to be the Mouth of God in Preaching to the People, then also that they should be the Mouth of the People to God in Prayer, we finding that publick Prayer is appointed as well as Preaching, although we have not one instance in the New Testament that the Officers of the Church did perform publick Prayer. So also God hath appointed Deacons, and he hath appointed Elders, he hath appointed Deacons to be set up by choice, and the Elders to be set up by choice; we find that the People did chuse their Deacons, we warrantably argue therefore they may chuse their Elders. In things that are thus of a like reason, we argue from one to the other in other cases, as for instance

stance, (since to us Christians 'tis not the Judicial, and Ceremonial, but the Moral Law which is obligatory) how do we know, and why do we take the Levitical Law for degrees prohibited in Marriage, *Lev.* 18. Because we find in 1 *Cor.* 5. 1. one of those degrees forbidden in the New Testament, *viz.* for one to have his Father's Wife, and therefore all the rest, although we have no warrant in Scripture for every particular degree. Also in that Law the Letter of it only forbiddeth the Aunt to Marry the Nephew, the Popish Divines have argued, that, yet it is lawful for the Uncle to Marry the Neece; whereas on the contrary, by a parity of reason it is unlawful, for it is all of a like kind, as the same way from *Thebes* to *Athens*, that is from *Athens* to *Thebes*, the one therefore being forbidden to Marry, because they are nigh a kin, since the other is of as nigh a kin, therefore the Law holds in the one as well as in the other. So under the New Testament, we have days of fasting set apart as well as in the Old, for the same Moral grounds, but we have no one instance of a Day of Thanksgiving in the New Testament; but these being parallel Ordinances (for as Thanksgiving and Humbling of a Man's self before God for Sin are parallel duties; so to have a Day of Thanksgiving, and a Day of Fasting are parallel Ordinances; therefore since we find the one in the New Testament, and find both in the Old; we may argue the other from this one. But then that we may argue rightly, the things must be collateral, and of a kind, as the the Lord's Supper and Baptism are both Sacraments; Elders and Deacons are, both Officers of the Church, they are things Co-ordinate, *Ejusdem ordinis*, and so we may argue from one to the other, in things that may be supposed common to both, and is not upon a peculiar reason restrained to one. But otherwise for things that are subordinate as we may call them, and of another kind, there *Par ratio* will not make an Institution, for then it is not *Par ratio*, because it is not *Inter paria* or things co-ordinate. As we can by no means infer that, because God hath set up an office of Elders superiour to that of Deacons, because he hath set up the Office of Pastors and Teachers superiour to that of Ruling Elders, that therefore upon a pretended necessity, we may set up an office over all these Elders, as the Antient Times did a Bishop. And so neither will it follow, that because God hath set up a Court in a particular Church to correct offending Brethren, by delivering up to Satan, that therefore they may set up an higher Court in like manner to correct Churches by Excommunicating them. These are not things of the same order, but they are things of Superiority and Inferiority. Though we may argue in the Judicial Law, that if the Aunt may not Marry the Nephew, likewise the Uncle may not Marry the Neece, because they are things of the same Order, yet we must not now go and make a new Degree forbidden; as is the case betwixt our Brethren and us in the Presbyterian controversie. Reason will help us to apply the same things, in things collateral, but not to institute, and set up things anew.

Concerning the use of Man's Reason in this point about Institutions, we only say this, that Man's Reason may by way of Interpretation find out what God hath set up, but it cannot proceed further. Men mistake in thinking that if God hath set up this, that therefore they may by like reason set up another thing: As because that God hath made Set Forms of Prayer, that therefore Men may; or as because that God did deliver the Scriptures to be read, therefore Men may appoint Sermons to be read. For in so doing Man's Reason becometh a Judge, and takes on him God's Authority, in Inventing and Authorizing this, as God hath done another thing, whereas we should be content with God's means that he hath appointed; but in the other, Man's Reason is only but as a Witness, that applies a thing according to what by reason he gathers God's Mind to be. And there is this difference between Doctrinal Truths and Institutions, that one Truth may be by reason better fetched out of another, and more safely and easily than Institutions. For one Truth begets another, and Truth is infinite in the consequences of it, but so Institutions are not. And the reason of the difference is this, because they depend upon a Promise, and upon the Power, and Will of God, immediately to concur with them, and set them up: They are things that are singled out by the Will of God, to a Spiritual End, with a Spiritual Efficacy.

7. We may be assured what is an Institution of God, by Examples which we meet with in the Scriptures. For one way by which Christ was pleased to convey his Institutions to us, is by way of Examples in the New Testament, without the which, being intended as a rule for us, we acknowledge, that a compleat Rule for all things

Ch. IV. things could not be made forth. We shall therefore endeavour to give reason and demonstration, that the example of the practices of the Primitive Churches are to be taken as Rules to us. 'Tis true indeed, Examples then bind not, when the Story is so Written as there may be a supposition of errour in the example, as the Story of the Lives of the Patriarch's is; And also those examples bind not which we find expressly contradicted by a Law, or which we find blamed, as that of *Peter*'s dissembling, *Gal.* 2. 11: and that of *John*'s Worshipping the Angel, *Rev.* 19. 10. These are not rules. But if an example be written as a Rule, then it will bind, because there is no supposition of errour. But the Apostle's ways in Churches and ordering of them, yea and of the Churches erected by them, are propounded and professed to be recorded as patterns and rules to us. Neither needs there a particular warrant to make every one a rule whilst the general one that propounds all to be such will sanctifie all: I shall first prove my assertion, and then shew the reasonableness of it, that it should be so.

1. My first proof is from comparing the Commission Christ gave his Apostles at his ascending, *Mat.* 28. 20. with the Book of the Acts, the Title and Preface to it, and Matter in it. In *Mat.* 28. 20. This is the Commission he gave to his Apostles considered as common persons, as the last clause argues, *Lo I am with you to the end of the World.* His Commission is, that they should teach those that were Converted to observe whatever he had commanded them. For the matter of the Doctrine of the Gospel, what they should Preach, he had given Commission for that, in the verse afore, *ver.* 19. *Go teach all Nations*, which *Mark* Interprets, *Mark* 16. 15. *Go Preach the Gospel to every Creature*, that is, as to matters of Faith what they are to Believe, for it follows, *ver.* 16. *He that believes shall be saved*, But for matter of Evangelical practices what Christians are to do, and to observe by special command from Christ, that injunction he gives in a distinction from the other, *ver.* 20. he speaks of matters of practice as the word τηρεῖν *observe* implies. And their Commission is precisely limited unto what Christ had commanded; he gives them no authority to impose and cause them to observe any other thing in practice but what he commanded; they went beyond their Commission if they did. For matters of practice and observancy, Apostles are to meddle with nothing else but Christ's Commands; And they are enjoyned to teach Men, to observe all that Christ commanded. Now the story of the Acts relating what was observed and practised by the Churches founded by the Apostles, and so in the Epistles, they giving many hints what were the Observations and Orders of Churches: We finding these and gathering them into a Body together, cannot look otherwise upon them, than as practices taught them by the Apostles, and if so, then no other than what Christ commanded. Observations of Churches recorded, not blamed, we take to be directions from the Apostles and to that end Written; and directions of the Apostles, we may safely take to be Commands of Christ, as well in matters to be done, as to be believed. This gives us a general ground to argue from examples of the Apostolical Churches.

2. But secondly when we find the Book of the Acts to contain many practices in and about Churches, and the Officers of them recorded but by way of story, and hints of examples to shew us what was the order of Churches in the Apostle's times: We may be well assured that these were written on purpose to shew what the Apostle's taught them from Christ to observe; which we gather from all these things laid together.

1. From the professed Title of the Book of the *Acts*, which, as those Titles to the *Psalms*, hath ever been acknowledged part of Canonical Scripture. It is entitled *The Acts*, or πράξεις *Practices* of the Apostles. That Book contains much of their Doctrine, and yet it is not entitled *The Doctrine of the Apostles*, but their *Practices*. And it contains mostly the story of one Apostle, *Paul*, and yet because his ordering and setling Churches (as we shall anon observe) was by the same rule that the other Apostles all went by, it is called *The Acts of the Apostles*, on purpose to consign and give warrant unto those Practices as Apostolical. Yea also though many things are the practices in Churches themselves, and of the Elders and Brethren of them, yet they are called *The Acts of the Apostles*, because even those practices of Churches were guided by the Apostles, and so they are called their Acts; and they taught them but to observe what Christ commanded.

2. Then secondly, after *Luke* had given it this Title, see further what his Preface is,

is, which further declares this to have been the scope and drift of it. He connects it with the Story of Christ in the Gospel, as passing from all that *Jesus began both to do and teach*, ver. 1. from his Example and Doctrine, unto what the Apostles did do, and what they did teach Churches to observe by commandment from Christ; therefore he makes mention of the Commands that Christ by the Spirit had given them unto the day he was taken up, *ver.* 2. All which Commandments, and those especially which pertained to his Kingdom and Government of his Church on Earth, he renewed after his Resurrection, speaking, says he, by the space of forty days of the things of the Kingdom of God, *ver.* 3. The meaning of which both Title and Preface, and connecting it with the story of the Evangelists is evidently this, that these Apostles being thus thoroughly furnished with Commands from Christ, and especially about the things of his Kingdom, in governing his Saints (all which when as he was about to ascend he gave in charge, as the Evangelist *Matthew* tells us) that therefore they should teach those whom they converted to observe them, and that done you have the story, declaring the practises of the Churches they reared, and the ways of the Apostles in them, and both as such as were according to these Commands of Christ given them, which he therefore mentions in the Preface to give a countenance to them as rules. And the Language of it is as if he had said, you shall know what those special Commands pertaining to the Kingdom of God, and which they taught the Churches to observe, were by their ways and practices here recorded, and mentioned as practised in the first Churches. What Reader observing that charge in *Matthew*, given by Christ at his Ascension, with the Title of, and the Preface to this Book, of the *Acts*, but will acknowledge all the story of all the practices here recorded to be Scripture, written for our admonition, and think this to be the scope and intent of them? So that although we have not a particular warrant annexed to every example here to make it a rule, yet we have this general, which if it make out this, that they are written to let us see the Commandments of Christ in the Apostle's practices, it is enough.

3. Then add to this thirdly, That the practices here recorded of the Apostles in the first Churches of *Judea*, were setled generally in other Churches of the *Gentiles* also, who yet varied in Language, in Fashion, and Manners, and Government Civil. They ordain Deacons in the Church of *Hierusalem*, *Acts* 6. and Elders we read mentioned, *chap.* 11. 30. which are mentioned but historically, and yet we read of the same kind of Officers, Deacons and Elders, in other Churches of the *Gentiles*, at *Philippi*, *Phil.* 1. 1. and in many other Churches mentioned in the *Acts*. Yea and we find the same Practices and Officers, *&c.* in the Churches of the *Gentiles* setled by *Paul*, that was Converted and made an Apostle many years after the other, and who learned not the Gospel, nor any part of it from the Apostles or the Churches of *Judea*, but had it by revelation of Jesus Christ, as himself says, *Gal.* 1. 17. *he immediately conferred not with flesh and blood*, that is, with no man, yea *I came not to Hierusalem* (says he) to *them which were Apostles afore me*, ver. 17. *but I went into Arabia, and returned again into Damascus; and then after three years I came again unto Hierusalem to visit Peter*, ver. 18. *and none Apostles saw I save James*, ver. 19. And yet he set up the same practices in Churches that the other Apostles did, *Ordained Elders in every City, and Deacons*, &c. Now that they should so agree in the same practices; that these all here recorded should be intitled the practices of the Apostles; that they should be the same in several Churches, in that first of *Judea*, and the same from several Apostles in those several Churches, and some of these Apostles not consulting each with other; how could this be but as guided by the same Spirit, and as going by the same rule common to all, which was the Commands of Christ?

4. Yea fourthly, As they have thus Christ's Commands (afore the recording these practices) for their warrant, so some of them that are recorded in the *Acts* but as historically done at the first as Acts of the Apostles, yet are in after-times in other Scriptures, given by way of command. Now this further confirms this same, being thus warranted and consigned, for the rest to shew the like reason of all the other. Thus the first mention of the Office of Deacons in the Church, is but historically and by way of example set down with the occasion of it, *Acts* 6. As also of Bishops and Elders in the Acts often, and not at all as recorded therein with any commands from the Apostles, and yet to shew that these examples are recorded for Commands and Rules, *Paul* in his Epistle to *Timothy* writing to him how to behave himself in

Ch. IV. the house of God, mentions these Offices of Deacons and Elders as the Commands of Christ, 1 *Tim.* 3. and on the contrary, that which Christ gave a Precept and an Institution about, *Mat.* 18. namely Church Censure and Excommunication, you have it in a directive example given to the Church of *Corinth*, 1 Cor. 5.

5. And for a Fifth Argument yet further to confirm this, the Apostles do in their Epistles refer Churches and Others to their Example in the Churches, as Rules for their Imitation, and this in matters of Church Order. Thus in 1 *Cor.* 11. *Paul* when he was to Write to the Church of *Corinth*, about ordering matters of Order, as *ver.* 34. shews, and also all the particulars in that chapter do shew it (for they are matters of that nature, as about covering and uncovering, in token of Subjection, and about their Love Feasts breeding Divisions, and Eating in the Assemblies, and the abuse in the Lord's Supper, *&c.*) he makes this the Preface to all these, *Be ye followers of me even as I am of Christ*, ver. 1. commending them in other things of their Church Order (such as these) they had remembred all these things, and kept the Ordinances as he had delivered them, so *ver.* 2. But in these abuses and disorders, he saith he could not but dispraise them, *ver.* 17: Now in all matters of this Nature, as well as matters of Doctrine, he exhorts them to be Followers of his example, and practice in the Churches as he was in Christ: So as about all, for such things Christ gave a command and the Apostles gave order, and by their Doctrine and Practices delivered them. We have no such custom says he, that is, no such practice, and so condemns their disorder, by bringing them to that as the Rule. So also in his Preface to that Discourse of his about Church Censures to be executed upon that Incestuous Member in the Church, which you read of, *chap.* 5. and other particular directions that follow in that Epistle, he tells them *chap.* 4, that though they may have many thousand Instructers, yet he was their Father, *ver.* 15. Telling them, *ver.* 17. that he had sent *Timothy* an Evangelist unto them, which should put them in remembrance of his Ways in Christ, as I Teach every where in every Church, the meaning whereof is plainly this, that he did bind them to no other Rule than what he bound all other Churches to; and that his example or way, whereof *Timothy* could put them in mind, was that Rule he would have them and other Churches follow, he teaching all Churches to follow those his ways, for otherwise *Timothy* could not know what he taught every where in every Church, so as he means not his Doctrine materially, but his ways which he taught every Church to follow as also he requireth them. So in his Writing to the Church of the *Philippians*, his general conclusion in matters of Practice is, *chap.* 4. 9. *Those things which you have both learned and received, and heard, and seen in me, do*, what you have received by hearing and learned by seeing:

1: I observe, his ways and practices in all the Churches were regular and alike in, and all tyed to the same rule, and given by Doctrine and by Example also. Look what his ways were, the same he taught, and this universally in all Churches, teaching them to observe it as Christ charged them.

2. He means his Ways in matters of Discipline and Government of the Church as well as Doctrine, and indeed those matters of Discipline were delivered also by Doctrine to those Churches. For 1. This is a Preface to his Discourse about matters of Discipline, which he enters into, in the following verses and following chapters. 2. Therefore he calleth them *Ways* not *Way*, as being acts and practices of him as an Apostle, things to be done, which matters of Faith are not called. And 3. They were not moral ways of the moral law, for these the Old Testament directed to, and he might refer them unto the Rules there, but Evangelical ways he means, which the Gospel brought in, *Ways in Christ*, given as directions in all Churches. And 4 To that end he sent *Timothy* an Evangelist, whose Office it was to order things in Church Government, as appears by the matter of the Epistle to *Timothy* and *Titus*. Add but this, that if any where he calls on them to imitate him in Discipline, then in these places, matters of Discipline are meant and included, but he doth this in many places, as in 1 *Cor.* 11. and the matters of this first Epistle to the *Corinthians* are much about order, *The rest will I order when I come*, 1 Cor, 11. 34. and so *Timothy* was sent to establish them therein.

Again 3. Writing to *Timothy* an Evangelist on purpose to direct him how to behave himself in the House of God (this being the chief scope of those Epistles as was noted) he calls him to his example as his rule, as one that had known his Doctrine, Manners,

Manners, Life, &c. 2 Tit. 3. 10. *But thou hast fully known my Doctrine, manner of Life, Purpose, Faith, Long-suffering, Charity, Patience.* The word is, παρηκολουθηκας *Juxta sequi, vestigiis insistere,* hast followed it step by step. 1. In Doctrine, 2. ἐν τῇ ἀναγῇ, in Converse or ways in the Churches, as that place, 1 *Cor.* 4. 17. shews in my Platform, or Form, or Leading, or Method, which may very well mean his Institution of Churches, his leading or framing them, and training them up. Book I.

4. Yea, 4. Yet further, to shew that the practices of Churches setled by the Apostles, are Rules unto us; we find him calling upon Churches, then to imitate the Orders of other Churches in those times planted by the Apostles, therefore the practices of Churches Recorded and not blamed, are intended as Rules. The Customs of Churches is now much urged in the World, to bind others to them, because the Apostles refer'd to them; but the Argument fails and differs in this, which is not considered, that the Custom of Churches then were Apostolical; and such Customs in such Churches, so directed infallibly, and Recorded then when the Apostles were present, we may safely account Obligatory, but not Customs meerly Humane. Thus *Paul* Argues from the Custom of all Churches, in that 1 Cor. 10. 16. *We have no such Custom, nor the Churches of the Saints*, that is, thus founded by Apostles. Thus, 1 *Thes.* 2 14. he commends them for having become Followers of the Churches of God in *Judea*, because they being the first Churches planted by the Apostles, were almost exact according to the pattern. Of other Churches he says, *Came the Word of God out from you?* 1 Cor. 14. 36. Now from the Churches of *Judea* it did. And he speaks it generally of all their imitations of them; and that both in matters of Order as well as Faith, they being Constituted and setled in both; for if not in all things, why puts he not the difference?

And to shew that all Churches in such matters, were ordered by the same Rule, one as well as another; and that therefore what we find Recorded of one Church, was in like manner in all, the Apostle sometimes in giving Directions to one Church, adds, *As I Ordain in other Churches of Christ also.* Thus 1 *Cor.* 16. 1. in the ordering of Collections on the first Day of the Week, which is in view but an inferiour Matter, and might have been done any day, yet when he gives instruction about it to the *Corinthians*, though it had been enough, that he an Apostle gave it, yet he puts this in, *as I Ordain in the Churches of* Galatia, *so do ye also.* So in giving those Rules about Prophecying, to speak one by one, and the lesser number of Prophets, to submit to the greater, he inforceth it by this, in 1 Cor. 14. 33. *as we see in all the Churches of the Saints*; and ver. 37. *let him that is Spiritual, acknowledge that these are the Commands of God.* To this doth that old saying agree, *Constabit id esse ab Apostolis traditum quod Ecclesiis, Apostorum fuit sacro sanctum.* That is evident to have been delivered by the Apostles, which hath been Sacredly observ'd by the Churches of the Apostles.

5. Christ calls upon the same Churches, to imitate the first Pattern given them, and wherein they or any swerved. he Reduceth them to what they had at first received and learned from the Apostles, as containing an immutable Rule, not to be swerved from. Now if they had not liberty to swerve from them, then not we, Rev. 3. 3. *Remember how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast and Repent.* Those Epistles to the Seven Churches, do as much concern Discipline, as matters of Doctrine; for the chief fault he doth find with them, still is slackness of Discipline, whereby they suffered Men to Teach or Practice amiss.

Now the general Reason of this, why the Apostle left these things in Example, is first; because this agrees with the Nature of the thing, for matters of Practice and Order, are as well, if not better Represented in Examples than Rules, Men are moved more by Examples, than by Precepts, (as *Seneca* said) as Buildings and their Platform are best set out in Pictures. And 2. Consider the manner of writing Scriptures, the occasion of writing these of the New Testament, both *Acts* and *Epistles*, and it will appear that this way of Example was most suitable. 1. The manner of the Scriptures, even as to matters of Doctrine, is not to write Methods or Harmonies, Truths ordered, but scattered; and often left to us to pick them out, by Intimations and Coherences, and this as to many great Truths. And 2. Let us consider when it was they were written? The Work was not first to write Scriptures, as having Churches Constituted to their Hands. Though *Moses*'s case was otherwise, who

Ch. IV. had a People already gathered, the Nation of the *Jews*, which were in one place, whom he could therefore deliver a Law unto, in Precepts, yet the Apostles Dispersit themselves to several places; and their first Work was to Convert Men in all Nations, and so to build them up into Churches, and so carry their Directions with them in their Breasts. Thus they did first in *Judea*, then among the *Gentiles*; and every one of them, (when apart) was led with an infallible Spirit in so doing, and all with one Spirit, agreeing and conspiring in the same, as by the Churches set up by them doth appear. And many years after this, were the Scriptures written to those Churches, (as occasion was) whom they had first Ordered and Disciplined; and this for the direction of times to come: And so in writing to them, they hint Relations of what was done and constituted among them Histiorcally, (for the Rule was already put in practice, and they were framed and reared:) And so *Luke* writes an Historical Relation, (after the Apostles had set many Churches) of their Acts and Practices; and it was not comely to write a Law to such Churches, to have such and such Officers, *&c.* when already they had them; but rather they maintain their Officers, as existing among them already, and shew their Diversity, by Exhorting them to their several Duties, as *Rom.* 12. and elsewhere; which yet because they were erected by Apostolical direction, is hint enough to us to have the like. If they had written to any company in a place that had not been gathered into Church Fellowship, to, *Ecclesia constituenda*, A Church that was to be Constituted, then it had been meet to have written the Laws and Rules of it, how to order themselves. But the Apostles had already afore, writing the Scripture, cast all Churches into that Order which Christ had appointed, and by Example and Precept, in word of Mouth delivered them, the *Traditions* as the Apostle speaks, 1 *Cor.* 11. 2. And after upon occasion, writing to some of them as Churches already Constituted, he mentioneth matters of Discipline, but either Historically, as already setled among them, or by way of Precept in such particulars as they were amiss in; yet so as Divine Providence, that took care for after times, hath given a Compleat Direction, either in Hints and Records of those Examples, of what was already Constituted in some Churches, or in such those Occasional Precepts.

And further in general, that Examples, Recorded in Scripture,, are intended as Rules, and so are understood by Divines, appears by these Instances.

1. It is evident in the matter of the Sabbath; for which, suppose that we have no positive command given in the New Testament (and the command in the Old, was evidently pitcht on the seventh Day from the Creation, in the Letter of the command) yet because we have mention of it by way of practice, and Administration of Holy meetings on that day; as in that of Collection of Saints, upon the first day of the Week; and *Acts* 20. 7. of breaking Bread on the first day of the Week, *&c.* our Divines have warrantably concluded the alteration of it. And therefore we do alike wonder at those that are for Church ways, that they should be against the Lord's day; and that those that are for the Sabbath, should be against the form of Examples in the New Testament.

2. This is evident also, in matters of contract afore Marriage; but a hint by the by, in a Rule given concerning Adultery, and in the Example of *Joseph* and *Mary*, confirms the obligation of it.

3. The same appears in many particular explications of the Moral Law. All that write upon the Commandments, though for greater things of the Law, these follow the express Rules; yet the lesser explications are but from examples of Holy Men. Now allow but the same liberty in these Evangelical Precepts; that for the great things, there are express Precepts for; as for the Sacraments, for Institution of Churches, *Matth.* 18. for Officers in *Timothy*, and *Rom.* 12. for Censures, *Matth.* 18. but for many Branches; for matter of carriage in these, we must have them out of the examples and hints in the New Testament, and it is all that we ask.

4. We find our Saviour Christ and the Apostles, arguing from examples of first Patterns. Thus, 1. To prove what is lawful, *Mat.* 12. 3. Christ argues from *David's* example, in breaking a Law, in eating when he was Hungry the shew-bread (which was not otherwise lawful for him to eat, *Exod.* 29. 33.) To prove it lawfull to pull Ears of Corn on the Sabbath Day, and eat them. And so from the example of the Priests profaning the Sabbath, and being *blameless*, *Matth.* 12. 5. that is, not found fault with: And though Christ annexeth a ground out of one of the Pro-

Prophets, I *will have Mercy, and not Sacrifice*; yet consider that that Law came long after, and these examples were in force long before this Law; for *Hosea* wrote long after. 2. Examples are urged, not only to prove what is lawful, but also what is a Duty. Thus the Apostle *Peter*, 1 *Pet.* 3. 3, 4. Exhorts Wives, that their *Adorning should not be that of putting on Apparell, but the Ornament of a meek Spirit*, for v. 5. *after this manner in the Old Time, the Holy Women who Trusted in God, Adorned themselves.* Thus also in the matter of Praying twice a Day, Morning and Evening, says *Paul*, 2 Tim. 1. 3. *Whom I serve from my Forefathers without ceasing, having them in remembrance in my Prayers, Day and Night.* This custom to pray so often, was from the Fore-fathers, who in the Temple did so, and in their Houses; and this is argued not so much from an express command, as from their examples. 3. Especially when the first Institution is founded upon an example, then the example is the Great Argument for it; *As Primum in quolibet genere est mensura reliquorum*, the first in every kind is the measure of the rest, so in this case too. Thus the Law of Marriage is founded upon the example of *Adam's* Marriage, and so argued from both, by the Prophet *Malachi*, and by Christ also; both that a Man should have but one Wife, and not put her away. Thus *Malachi* argues from the very Creation, of but one Woman for *Adam*, as a rule for us, *Mal.* 2. 15. and did he not make one? And wherefore one? Yet had he a Residue of Spirit, (namely to have made more) *that he might have a lawfull and godly Seed*; for which cause, Adultery and unlawful Marriages, is not Sanctified from the first Institution. And so our Saviour Christ, *Matth.* 19. 4, 8. *In the beginning it was not so*, argues from the practice then.

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If it be said that there was a Law; *Therefore shall a Man leave his Father and his Mother*, &c. Yet still the Law is founded upon the example of *Adam*, and *Eve*, the first Pattern; that because God made but two at first, therefore no more should be joyned together, as Christ reasoneth, Matth. 19. 4. *Have ye not read, that he that made them one at the first, made them Male and Female?* He argues from that very instance. Yea, and he made the first Woman of *Adam's* Flesh, so as *Adam* said, she is Bone of my Bone, and Flesh of my Flesh; and therefore, or for this cause (as Christ and the Apostle Interprets it) was the Law given; yet so as *Adam's* example is made the Foundation of it; because *Primum in isto genere*, what *Adam* did then by God's appointment, is a Rule for ever.

Only to prevent a mistake, we will add these Cautions as Limitations.

1. That for the great and more Essential parts of Church Order and Worship, we have express and direct Rules. As for the Institution and Constitution of a Church, *Mat.* 18. For the Administration of Censures by Admonition, Excommunication, for the chief Officers thereof; Bishops and Deacons, for the Sacraments, publick Prayers, Preaching, *&c.* The Examples do only mostly concern the Limits, Order, and Administration of all these. And in such things, Scripture Examples should be admitted for Rules; for so it is in Interpreting the Moral Law. The great things of each Commandment, concern the grosser sins, and maineſt general Duties for which you have express Rules and Commands; but for all the particular Branches and Cases about particular Sins and Duties, it will be hard to fetch express Rules to direct Men's Consciences; but Men take the help and benefit of examples unblamed in Scripture, for a Decision of them. Look all Interpreters of the Ten Commandments, and their Quotations, and you will find it so. Now why should not as great a liberty be left us to find out God's politicks, as God's Ethicks, it being as necessary, if not more, that Men should have directions to guide their converse in the House of God, as in their own Houses and private Affairs.

2. We must be carefull that we take such Examples, as are written and not blamed, supposing this to be the Rule, that what is not blamed or contradicted by a Rule doth bind us. Christ arguing from an Example of the Priests, alledgeth that for a Warrant, you read (saith he) *how that the Priests profaned the Sabbath, and are blameless*, Matth. 12. 5. Hence because Apostolical Examples in the converse in Churches are Recorded as Rules; therefore such Examples of theirs as were faulty are blamed, and took notice of, as *Peter's* Example in a Church matter at *Antioch*, Gal. 2. *Paul* reproved him to his Face, and that upon this ground, because his Example being an Apostle, *Compelled Men*, Gal. 2. 14. it had the force of an Argument in it.

3. We must get Characters to distinguish between Extraordinary, and Ordinary Examples, Recorded of Churches and the Apostles. As we do make a Distinction of

Ch. IV. of Christ's own Example; and of *Philip's* Baptizing out of a Church, (he being an *Evangelist*, and carrying Church power about with him, and the Person's Case requiring present departure into a far Country) and of Christians selling their Estates in the first Churches of the *Jews*, when there were many poor; and of the Apostles being maintained, and sent into all the World.

If you ask how we shall Distinguish them? We Answer, even as you do other things that are Extraordinary, promiscuously Recorded with Ordinary, for the things Distinguish themselves; as 1 *Cor.* 12. speaking of Gifts, he promiscuously reckons up Ordinary and Extraordinary, *ver.* 8, 9, 10. *To one is given a word of Wisdom, to another a word of Knowledge, to another the gifts of Healing, and to another working of Miracles, to another divers Tongues*, here is no greater matter of Distinction put for the things, than what themselves afford. The Gifts that remain still in the Church, are Ordinary, they that do not are Extraordinary. So for Officers, *ver.* 28. *God hath set in the Church, First, Apostles, Secondarily, Prophets, Thirdly, Teachers, after that Miracles, then helps in Government.* How can we distinguish here, and know that we have Teachers and Government, and not Apostles, *&c.* but by this, that the necessity of Gifts for Teaching and Government still remains, not the other? And so do we as easily distinguish of Examples, such as were things common, founded upon common and general Respects, these we account Ordinary, and to bind, because they may continue, and the reason of them continue, where it is not so in Extraordinary.

4. The like we say of Examples meerly occasional. The occasion ceasing the thing ceaseth: And therein we judge but as we do of other things under the Law, when yet *Moses* gave direct Rules; as in eating the Passover, that they were commanded to do it with staves in their Hands, and in hast was meerly suited to the occasion of the first Passover, because that Night they were to Travell, and so it did not bind afterward.

If you say, shew me a compleat Systeme of Directions out of the Examples or Rules given, and we will believe you.

To this we Answer. 1. That in the main and substantial matters, we can shew enough to guide the present practices of Churches, in managing the great and necessary Ordinances of Christ. We gave one Instance afore for all the rest, about dispensing the Censures of the Church. And 2. By finding express order taken about small things, (as to Carnal Eyes they may seem to be) we may be directed in greater as how and when to order the Collection for the Saints, on the first day of the week, and to Treasure up by a Man's self weekly, as God hath blessed him, whereas another Set Day in the Week might have served, according to Humane Prudence as well, and to lay up as God hath blest a Man, at the Months end might seem to have been as well in a way of Humane Arbitrary Prudence, and have been left to Men's Directions) and yet the Apostle makes this an Order in *Corinth*, and in the Churches of *Galatia*. Now think we, if God took care and bound up Humane Wisdom, and Interposed his own in matters of such small Moment, as these Circumstances seem to be; we cannot but believe he hath done the like in all things else of a like Nature; and either he would have given Rules about such things, or have left a compleat Rule, if we could find it out. That in Digging, we find such small Meddals as these, here and there, stamped by God's Authority, and bearing the Image of his Wisdom and Soverainty, doth encourage us to Dig, hoping to find that whole Treasure that is hid in Christ, in whom we are compleat, for all Treasures of Knowledge and Wisdom. And this binds up our understandings from daring to Coyn by Humane Wisdom and Authority, and the like Institutions, lest we should set up our posts by God's, and eat out by Humane Prudence, those things which we see God hath used his Wisdom to deliver to us, (as by such Instances evidently appears) wherein we ought to suspect our Ignorance of his Will, rather than his Faithfulness to deliver all of the like Nature. And 3*ly* We are to be carefull in doing what we find a Rule and Examples for, and so whereunto we have Attained, walking. We find that True of Christ, and made good by him unto us, that in doing the Will of God, we know it; and in matters of practice Experience, with Faith waiting for Light, helps to the Knowledge, more than all the Study in the Abstract in the World can do. And therefore though we profess, we know not Rules for every Case, or Query that may be put, yet so far as we have Attained, we walk; suspending where

where we want light till God reveal it, knowing that God will accept this: We finding that in all sorts of humane actions, in all callings and relations there are a thousand cases, wherein men are to seek for direction out of the Word, and yet they do not forbear to walk in all those relations, till they are resolved of every particular case and duty that may fall out. And so in matters of Doctrine, if we should forbear to believe the truths we know and have received, until we have a compleat System of undoubted verity, and *Paul*'s form of wholesome words in all particulars we should be ever learning, and never come to the knowledge of, and assent to any truth.

And therefore our desires is, that the Churches of Christ would in this Age (wherein these things are enquired into, and the Reformation of Discipline yet imperfect) walk by this rule, that so far as they agree, and in common have found out the rule, to walk by it, and be obliged so to do, and wherein they differ or want that light that others have, they might be left to that rule which God hath set up, as the great Peace-maker and Arbiter in his Churches, not to judge one another for these things, but to say with the Apostle, *These that are otherwise minded God shall reveal it to them in his due time*, and in so doing know God will accept us, and we hope men will.

CHAP. V.

That there are Ordinances of Publick Worship established in Churches under the New Testament, which are to continue to the End of the World.

I Design not to discourse here of the Doctrine of Ordinances, as it is stated against the Seekers, who yield the Being of such Ordinances to be of Divine Right, and no deficiency to be in Christ's Institution; and yet assert that as a rose in Winter hath a Being in the World, of right, as well as any other Fruit of the Earth then extant; only there is not a way of means of its actual existence by reason of the Season, so Ordinances have a Right of being in the Church, but Anti-Christ, hath Withered all things, and made an interruption in Ordinances, Ministry, &c. An unhappy Generation of men have risen up, who cry down all Ordinances as Forms, yea and would rank them as Forms equally, with all the Idolatries in Popery, or any other Superstitions, in all which (say they) God was in those appearances served, as well as in those that were once of his own Institution; so making them all one and all forms alike, they pretend to live in the Spirit, and not only without all these, but above them. But besides what the Prophecy of *Jude* and other holy Apostles *Paul* and *Peter* have given in caution concerning these, *Jude* 18, 19, 20, 21, ver. *How that they told you, there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. There be they which separate themselves, sensual, having not the spirit. But ye beloved, building up your selves on your more holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep your selves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.* The separation there is to be interpreted by what as the opposite thereto the Apostle exhorts true Believers unto. *But you beloved building up your selves*, &c. *ver.* 20. What he mentioneth as means of Grace to preserve them to eternal life; from these it was these men separated, pretending to live in Spirit, and therefore with Indignation the holy Apostle saith of them, that they were *Sensual not having the Spirit.* They separated not from other Christians, but from these things, that were means of Grace when influenced by the Spirit. I will not meddle with any of their Evasions, but only positively speak that which concerns the truth of my position, and prove the existency and continuance of Gospel Ordinances, as Baptism, the Lord's Supper, &c. I will begin with that Scripture upon which I have discoursed on another occasion, namely, to shew the danger of living in the practice of prevailing Lusts, under Ordinances. That which now I shall make use of that Scripture for, is to shew both the existence and continuance of Ordinances, of Baptism, and the Lord's Supper, under the New Testament.

1 Cor. 10. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. *Moreover Brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our Fathers were under the Cloud, and all passed through the Sea, and*

Ch. V. *and did all Eat the same Spiritual Meat, and did all Drink the same Spiritual Drink, (for they Drank of that Spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ) But with many of them God was not well pleased: For they were overthrown in the Wilderness. Now these things were our Examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.* Compare it with *ver.* 11. *Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the World are come.*

The general scope is, to shew how for the substance of them, the Fathers enjoyed the same Spiritual Ordinances, which now our Baptism and the Lord's Supper answers to, and which these *Corinthians*, and all Christians generally lived under, only with that difference which that dispensation of the Old had in it from this of the New. As that those were more Shadowy, and in their immediate Ordination but Types, as their Baptism then pointed forth immediately, their total deliverance from *Egypt*, as then Baptized unto *Moses* in the Cloud, and the Sea (but yet under that to us Believers is held forth our Baptism as union into Christ (of whom *Moses* was a Type) and the deliverance of our Souls from Hell and Satan.) Whereas our Ordinances now have that outward Rind shaled off, and Christ only and Baptism unto him, are barely and nakedly held forth, &c. Now I shall but prosecute two observations, which to me seem natural as to this assertion out of the Scripture, concerning these two Ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper here particularly specified, and so consequently concerning all other parts of Instituted Worship under the Gospel.

Obser. I. Observe first, *That these Ordinances were generally received, and practised by the Christians of those times.*

Obser. II. Observe secondly, *That these Ordinances are to continue to the end of the World.*

To prove the first Observation, I remark the Note of Universallity which the Apostle useth. As he says that those *Israelites* were Types of us; and their Ordinances Types of ours, so in making the parallel between us and them, he carefully inserts this, that as all of them were partakers, and lived under those Ordinances then; so all of us Christians do partake, or ought to do, of these Sacraments that answer unto those Types of theirs now. *Of the Fathers* (as he calls them) *in the Wilderness*, he says it no less than five times. *All our Fathers were in the Cloud, and all passed through the Sea, and were all baptized unto Moses in the Cloud, and in the Sea, and did all eat the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same spiritual drink.* And answerably concerning the Christians of those times, he utters it in all their names, and involves himself, *ver.* 17. *We are all Partakers of that one Bread.* And says the same of Baptism, 1 *Cor.* 12.13. *We are all baptised by one Spirit, into one body, and do all drink*, &c. And *Rom.* 6. 3, 4. *Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptised into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death? Therefore are we buried with him by baptism into death* He argues from the known and generally received Profession and Practice of all Christians: *Know ye not that so many of us as were baptised*, that is, that whoever of us that profess Baptism into Christ, profess Baptism into his Death, as the thing intended by it. The *Us* there, is the generality of Christians, distinguished usually by that word from Heathens, as *Rom.* 14.7, 1 *Cor.* 8. 6. *To Us there is but one God*, &c. that is, we Christians profess all, and generally so. And his scope being to shew how Sanctification flows from being in Christ; His argument is drawn from a general principle of the [*Us*] of Christians. As many of us (to a man as we use to say) as have been baptised into Christ, and do profess that part of Religion are all taught, that the import thereof is, to be therewith baptized into his death. So that his expression, as many of us, imports not, as if some were, and some were not baptised (for then his Argument of Sanctification had not been binding to the generality of Christians, which it is evident, it was in his intention) but it imports the contrary, that as many as were Christians, were all Baptized, and were taught this to be the meaning of that great point and principle of Religion, That as they were Baptized into Christ thereby; so also into into his death.

I observe

I obſerve alſo out of this, 1 *Cor.* 10. That it was in Eſteem, yea, and taken for granted, a point of the then Religion, to receive the Lords Supper. For obſerve how he Reaſons againſt their Eating in the Idol's Temple, things Sacrifiſed to Idols, ver. 21. *Ye cannot Drink the Cup of the Lord, and the Cup of Devils: Ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's Table, and of the Table of Devils.* He ſet theſe two, one againſt the other; *To Eat in the Idol's Temple*, as a point of Heathenith Religion, and *to partake of the Lord's Supper*, as a point of our Chriſtian Profeſſion. Now that he might be ſure at once, for ever to knock down that Idolatrous practice, he uſeth this Argument drawn from that, which according to all the then received Principles, could not be denyed. He Argues with them in this manner, a main practice of your Chriſtian profeſſion, which you all take up, and of which you muſt in effect Renounce your Profeſſion, if you Renounce this Practice, is the Lord's Supper, It is the outward Badge of your Chriſtian Religion; and you muſt utterly renounce that, if you will needs alſo practice this other of Eating in the Idol's Temple; for there is a Contradiction between them, *Ye cannot Drink the Cup of the Lord, and the Cup of Devils.* Chriſt cares not for your coming to his Supper, but had rather you ſhould keep away, if you alſo receive the Devil's Sacraments. Thus he plainly works upon this firm ground, in which they knew he muſt not be at a loſs, that they muſt continue to drink of that Cup, that they muſt partake of that Table, ſo he takes that for granted, as Sacred to them; and then infers that other, of not eating in the Idol's Temple. And it is as if he had ſaid, I know I have you faſt here; That you will never forſake Aſſembling your ſelves for the Lord's Supper, or neglect to do it; this I hope you will all ſay preſently, that you will never do: Now then ſaith he I tell you, you cannot partake of the Lord's Cup, and of the Devil's. Chooſe you whether you will give over the one or the other, upon your peril. He holds them hard to it, as this one, whilt he argues from thence againſt the other. Now as to the Opinion of ſome Men in our Days, that profeſs they are not bound to the Lord's Snpper, and think it is no point of any Religion, but that they can live without it, or above it; If the Devil had thought of this, yea, and had put it into the Heads of any in theſe Days; unto ſuch the Apoſtle *Paul's* Argument had no ſtrength or force of Conviction. For if he had ſaid to them, *Ye cannot drink the Cup of the Lord in the Sacrament, &c.* (as *ver.* 16.) they might readily have ſaid, or any one for them; This is no Argument to us, it reacheth not our principles, for we think not our ſelves obliged to drink the Cup of the Lord, nor to eat his Table. And indeed theſe that profeſs this principle, (I except the dark ſcrupled Seekers) can as well partake of the Maſs, as of the Lord's Supper, they are all to them but Forms, the one as well as the other; and a Chriſtian may uſe all, and is above all. This as to the firſt thing I obſerved, concerning theſe Ordinances.

Obſ. The Second Obſervation is; *that there is to be a continuance of theſe Ordinances to after Ages*, which out of the Scope of the Text, I demonſtrate thus; That twice in the *6th Verſe*, and in the *11th verſe*, in making the Reddition or Application of the Story of the *Iſraelites*, both for Ordinances and for like Puniſhment due to the abuſe of them, he ſay's, that in theſe they were τύποι ἡμῶν Types of us, ſo *ver.* 6. (which is their Concluſion as to their Enjoyment of like Ordinances) and ſo *ver.* 11. as to our incurring the ſame puniſhment, he had from the *6th verſe* Diſcourſed of; he Subjoyns, *Theſe things were written for our Admonition, upon whom the ends of the World are come.* So that all Chriſtians, that do live under, or ought to live under theſe Ordinances, partaking of thoſe ſins, are to partake of theſe puniſhments, as well as theſe *Corinthians*. Some of the ſeekers interpreting that place in Matth. 28. 20. *Go Preach and Baptize, I am with you in all things, to the end of the World.* (The words being in the Original, τελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος in the ſingular Number) would have this determine in the firſt Age of the Church. Whereas everywhere in Chriſt's Speeches afore, the very ſame Phraſe in the ſingular alſo, is put to expreſs the end of the World, or as *Paul* ſay's, 1 *Cor.* 11. 26. until Chriſt come. In *Matth.* 13. 40, 49. alſo you have the ſame phraſe where is meant the end of this World, when the Day of Judgment comes, as alſo plainly diſtinguiſht from the end of that Age, wherein *Jeruſalem* was deſtroyed, *Matth.* 24. 3. And Chriſt alſo adds in this place, of *Matthew* 28. 20. the word alway, which means *All the days or times to the end of the World:* And ſo all the Ages between are implyed. Well but further, here

Ch. V. you see that in 1 *Cor.* 10, 11. it is affirmed of the Lord's Supper, as well as Baptism, that they concern all them, upon whom the ends of the World in the plural are come, that is, all the Ages, that succeed each other in this last Scene of the World. So as indeed if any were to be excepted, those rather that lived in that first Age comparatively should. We have lived 1600 years, since *Paul* wrote this, and upon us, rather than upon them, it might be said, that the ends of the World are come: I will but cast in this out of this Scripture more, and I think it is not altogether to be slighted as to his Head. You see he plainly Parallels our Sacraments, and their's as Types, and Anti-Types. Now what should be the Mystery then, that when he speaks of that Sacramental Rock, which was Christ, and says that they drunk thereof, he would needs insert one circumstance concerning it, that is yet not so evident in the story of the Old Testament? *The Rock* (says he) *which followed them*, that is, all along through their Travel in the Wilderness. It is to be supposed the Rock stood in its own place, but *Moses* striking it, and a River of Water springing forth, served them with Water, not only in that place, but followed them in all their Journey in that Desert. Which the Psalmist intimates, Psal. 105. 41. *He opened the Rock, and the waters gushed out, they ran in the dry places like a River.* Surely this is (as here) added to no other purpose, but to make up the Parallel in our Ordinances the Anti-Type, When God had struck Christ the Rock, and opened his side, (and 'twas for us Rebels too, (as *Moses* then called the *Israelites*) that Water and Blood came forth, which are Communicated to us in Baptism, which is a washing by Water, as Blood is held forth in the Lord's Supper.) These Ordinances were as Channels cut out by God, through the Means and Conduct of which, this Rock should follow us; and that whilst the Church is in the Wilderness, and this side *Canaan*, as that did, as a Sacrament to the end of their Journey. And so in this, was the Type fulfilled to them, in the primitive Ages of the Church, and is yet to be fullfilled unto us, upon whom the ends of the World are come.

I shall now by other Arguments farther prove, that there are Ordinances, or Instituted Worship, under the New Testament, to continue unto the end of the World.

1. The New Covenant hath Ordinances of Divine Worship annexed unto it, as well as the Old Covenant had; for which the Coherence of the Eighth, or Ninth Chapters to the *Hebrews*, the latter part of the Ninth, and the beginning of the Tenth, are a clear Evidence. The Scope of that Epistle, is indeed to shew how the Worship, and Ordinances of the Old Testament, were Translated into a Worship under the New, in substance answering to it; and how Christ as an High Priest, was as Faithfull to God in his House, as *Moses* was, *Hebr.* 3. In the eighth Chapter, having Treated of the two Covenants, the Old and New, and by the new understanding that, wherein the promise was, *That they should not need to be Taught*, &c. ver. 10. than presently upon it, *chap.* 9. 1. he goes on thus. *Then verily the first Covenant had also Ordinances of Divine Service*, which was the Tabernacle, and the Worship performed there, so, ver. 2. *to* ver. 7. *For there was a Tabernacle made, the first wherein was the Candlestick and the Table, and the shew Bread; which is called the Sanctuary. And after the second Vail, the Tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all: Which had the Golden Censer, and the Ark of the Covenant, overlaid round about with Gold; wherein was the Golden pot that had* Manna, *and* Aaron's *Rod that budded, and the Tables of the Covenant; and over it, the Cherubims of glory, shadowing the Mercy-Seat, of which we cannot now speak particularly. Now when these things were thus ordained, the Priests went always into the first Tabernacle, accomplishing the Service of God.* I lay hold of the word *also*, as implying, that therefore the New Covenant hath the like Ordinances, and not only so, but observe that in God's intention, our Ordinances were the first of the two, and the chief, though their's first in time. For he say's not, the New Covenant hath also; but the Old had also; for ours were more the Substance, their's more the Type and Shadow; yet so as both must have Ordinances of Divine Worship, the New as well as the Old, whilst it continues. And ver. 10. They *were appointed, but untill the time of the Reformation*, or change of Worship, to be made, not of the Abolition of it; and what those Ordinances are you know.

2. If there be no Instituted Ordinances to continue, then the second Commandment is utterly Obliterated under the Gospel, or under the times of the Gospel, in which these

these Ordinances are supposed to cease. What is the difference between the first Commandment, and the second? The first Commands such Worship to God as is always, and for ever due to him, as he is God, and we Creatures, which is Termed *Cultus Naturalis*, Natural Worship; because due upon the account of our being Creatures, and so Indispensible and Eternal, and continuing in Heaven, as to fear God, love him, &c. The second Commands Instituted Worship, or such means and helps of Worship, as God Sanctifies by his Institution, as helps and means to Worship him by, and convey himself to us, which continues whilst we are on Earth. Now this Commandment hath been, and hath continued in all the States which Men have gone through, or shall go thorough whilst on Earth. And though the Duties have been changed as the Priesthood hath varied, or as God was pleased to signifie his good pleasure, how he meant to be Worship't; yet so as in all States on Earth, there have been some or other such Duties belonging to the Commandment in force; which sufficiently argues, that Command to have been, and to be still in force in all States.

1. In Innocency those two Trees, the Tree of Life, and of the Knowledge of good evil, were two Sacraments Admonishing *Adam*, the one of his mutable condition, the other Sealing up the promise of Life. Under the Law, 'tis evident that a commanded Worship was in force, under the Gospel which began to be Preached by *John*, together therewith was Baptism Instituted, of which Christ, (who represented us) did in the Name of us all, as Head; say, *Thus it becomes* (us) *to fulfill all Righteousness*, and he began an Example unto us therein. And indeed if there were no second Command in force under the Gospel, then there were no such sin as Idolatry, or false Worship of the True God, as far as concerns the means of Worship. There will be no Idolatry but what is Heathenish, or the Worship of a false God. Now the Consequence is good, for the Negative part of the Command; *Thou shalt not make to thy self an Image*, or use false means to Worship the True God, is founded on the existence of a positive part, that there are Means or Institutions of True Worship, appointed by God. But now there is such an Idolatry and Superstition, of Worshipping God by false means, forbidden, under the New Testament. For *Col.* 2. *Paul* bids them to take heed of Will-worship, and voluntary Humility not commanded, ver. 21, 22, 23. *Touch not, Taste not, Handle not: Which all are to perish with the using after the Commandments and Doctrines of Men. Which things have indeed a shew of Wisdom, in Will-worship and Humility, and neglecting of the Body, not in any Honour to the satisfying of the Flesh.* And *John* that lived to the end of that Age, at last still chargeth them to keep themselves from Idols, 1 *Joh.* 5. 21. 'Twas an Admonition not so much against Heathenish Idolatry, which is to Worship outwardly another God, as against *Popish*, which was coming upon the World, (as *Paul* also foretold both to *Timothy*, and in his other Epistles) and for which God brought upon the Christian World, those plagues which have befaln the *Grecian* Churches, *Rev.* 9. 20. and for which *Rome* also is Threatned, *Revel. chap.* 17, & 18.

3. If there were no Ordinances, God should have no provision for his publick worship, and Christ should have no Court on Earth. Two things are the glory of a King, the Laws and Jurisdiction by which he Rules abroad, and the State and Reverence done him in his own House at Home. Christ is the King of Nations, *Rev.* 15. 3. and therefore all are Exhorted to Worship him, *ver.* 4. In *Heb.* 3. 1. Christ is as well Termed our High-Priest, as our Apostle. As our Apostle he hath given forth our Faith in the Doctrine, and we believe it: As our High-Priest, he is the Leader of all the Worship of the New Testament, as the High-Priest was of the Old. The Apostle makes an Inference from this, Heb. 10. ver. 21, 22, 23, 24, 25. *By a new and living way which he had Consecrated for us, through the Vail, that is to say, his Flesh: And having an High-Priest over the House of God: Let us draw near with a True Heart, in full assurance of Faith, having our Hearts sprinkled from an Evil Conscience, and our Bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our Faith without wavering: (for he is Faithfull that promised) and let us consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good Works. Not forsaking the Assembling of our selves together, as the manner of some is, but Exhorting one another; and so much the more, as ye see the Day approaching.* Christ is an High-Priest, therefore he hath an House, a Court on Earth, and therefore Worship, in which you must draw near

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with inward Washings and Sprinklings, (as the Priests of Old in the Type did with Water, &c.) And therefore he must also have Assemblies to be Worshipt in : So *ver.* 25. it follows, *Not forsaking the Assembling of your selves together.* He exhorteth them to meet in Churches, as the *Jews* did in Synagogues, so the word ἐπισυναγωγὴν signifies. And now such Assemblies must have Ordinances to converse with God in, as they accordingly had Preaching and singing of Psalms, 1 *Cor.* 14. 23, 26. and Sacraments of the Lord's Supper, 1 *Cor.* 11. to which all were bound; for they were to tarry one for another, *ver.* 33. And they being the Top Ordinance of the Gospel, their whole Assembling or Meeting was Denominated from it, Acts 20. v. 6. *When the Disciples met to break Bread*, and 1 Cor. 11. 20. *When ye come together into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's Supper.* Thus their Assembling to Worship, and their eating the Lord, are promiscuously put one for the other. So among the Antients, this did bear the Denomination, being Termed *Sacra* σύναξις, and is put for the whole of Gospel Worship in the Prophesy, *from the Rising of the Sun, even unto the going down of the same, my Name shall be great among the* Gentiles, *and in every place Incense shall be offered unto my Name, and a pure offering : For my Name shall be great among the Heathen, saith the Lord of Hosts,* Mal. 1. 11.

See Mr. Joseph Mede, pag. 354. of his works. Edit. Lond. 1677.

But to prove the continuance of these two Ordinances, both of Preaching, and of the Lord's Supper, we need only consider, that Christ hath Adjoyned his promise to them both. Christ's promise is annexed, to that of Preaching, Matth. 28. 20. *Teaching them to do what ever I have Commanded you, and Lo I am with you to the end of the World* ; and as for the Lord's Supper, *Paul* expresly says, *As I received of the Lord, so I deliver to you,* 1 Cor. 11. 23. It is therefore one of these Commands of Christ ; *And do this* (said Christ, Luke 22. 19.) *in Remembrance of me* , which is there expressed as a Command, and implyed by the Apostle, 1 Cor. 11. 2. *I praise you, that you keep the Ordinances, as I delivered them to you* ; whereof this of the Lord's Supper was one, and a great one insisted on throughout that Chapter. And writing to the *Thessalonians*, and giving a warning to them, and to those that should live in the times when Popery should over-spread the World, (of which speaks, 2 *Thess.* 2. 3. to 13.) He Admonisheth a Remedy against these Seducements, ver. 15. *To hold fast the Traditions which you have been taught, whether by Word or by Epistle.* This, though given to the *Thessalonians*, yet must needs more properly concern those that should live in the times, when the perverting of Ordinances should come into the World : For then is the most need of that Exhortation, when there is an Advance of Popish Innovations, then is the proper season for it. And therefore though it concerned those *Thessalonians* in these times, when the Mystery of Iniquity began to work ; yet upon the same ground more fully it concerns us in these times when this Mystery of Iniquity hath prevailed. For their sakes therefore, this was written upon whom these latter ends of the World are come ; and so concerns us and our Forefathers, who Reformed from Popery, to hold firmly to Scriptures and Ordinances, as a preservative against Popery. Yea, *Paul* goes further, 1 Cor. 11. 26. *For* (says he) *as often as ye eat this Bread, and drink this Cup, ye do shew the Lord's Death till he come*, and again, *do this in Remembrance of me.* It is as if he had said, Christ must be absent till the day of Judgment, and the Heaven of Heavens must contain him till then ; and to keep up the Remembrance of that great love of his, in dying, he hath appointed this as the Memorial of him whilst absent, till he come. And what manner of coming that is, which puts the Period to this his absence, the Angels hath resolved us, and also how he will come, Acts 1. 10, 11. *And while they looked stedfastly towards Heaven, as he went up, behold two Men stood by them in white Apparel, which also said, ye Men of* Galilee, *why stand ye gazing up into Heaven ? This same Jesus which is taken up from you into Heaven, shall so come in like manner, as ye have seen him go into Heaven.* If ye say, he is already come in Spirit ; do but consider who was more fill'd with the Spirit, than Christ himself ? and yet he was not only Baptized, but in being Baptized, professeth his observance of it to be this end, to fulfill all Righteousness, and he seems also to speak in the Name of us, *i. e.* of all Believers, and so it becomes us to fulfill, &c. *Matth.* 3. 15. because he, as the Head, gave example to all his succeeding Members. And not only so, but though he thereupon received the Spirit, and was in Spirit in the Wilderness, and that above measure, as *John* Testifies of him,

John

John 3. 34. yet he lived under the Observation of all the *Jewish* Ordinances of Worship, as going to the Feasts, eating the Passover, &c.

CHAP. VI.

That by Excommunication more is meant than bare casting out of the Church. That it is an Ordinance of Christ, to deliver the Excommunicate Person to Satan in his Name and Power. The Rules which Christ hath given for Church Admonitions and Censures.

THO' this Ordinance of Excommunication be described many ways, As 1. *Let him be to the as an Heathen and a Publican*, Mat. 18. 17. And 2. *With such an one no not to eat*, 1 Cor. 5. 11. And 3. It is expressed as a *Casting out of the Church*, John Epist. 3. *ver.* 10. yet over and above all this, it is called a delivering unto Satan, 1 *Cor.* 5. 5. And now that by this phrase more is intended than simply an ejection out of the Church, these following Arguments evince.

1. That word of *delivering to Satan*, imports something positive, distinct from, and including more in it than Ejection out of the Church. It imports a giving up a Person to receive a positive punishment from Satan; therefore is more than a casting out of the Church. This is apparent, for as the Sentence of a Judge (tho' it doth not pitch upon the consequent of the punishment of Death, *viz.* the sending a Man to Hell, nor doth he express the Sentence he judgeth him to by that) imports more than a mere casting the condemned Man out of the World, for the Sentence directly expresseth that punishment which the Judge hath power to inflict, *viz.* The carrying of the Man back to the Gaol from whence he came, and from thence to the place of Execution, and that there he should be hang'd (tho' he doth not put it into the Sentence, in the Name of the King to deliver this Man to the Devil to be Damn'd) so in the Sentence of Excommunication, there is more implied than a casting of the Person out of the Society of Christians; for the Judgment, the Sentence, and that in the Name and Power of Christ is to deliver unto Satan. It is not to leave the Man unto Satan only, but it is to deliver unto Satan, which is an Act of Authority, to give him up unto him, as to give a Man up to the Jaylor or to the Tormentor. Thus when God speaks to Satan of *Job*, he is in thine hand (saith he) I have given him up unto thee, *Job* 1. 12. and *ch.* 2. 6.

But you will say, the bare casting of a Person out of the Church still imports but the consequent of it, *viz.* A delivering him up to Satan, as to deprive of Light is to give up to Darkness. But unto that it's answered, that what the formal Sentence of Excommunication pitches upon, is more than a mere consequent of the Person's being cast out, or is more than accidental: For what the very formal Sentence of Excommunication pitches upon, and which is in the power of Christ, is not barely leaving the Man unto Satan, but a delivering of him unto Satan. Yea this is in the very definition of Excommunication, and therefore is not to be omitted. For that which is the positive form of the Sentence, and by which Excommunication is expressed, containeth the essential terminative object or matter of it; that a Man is so delivered up to the Devil, as in the Name, so in the Power of the Lord Jesus; now this, *viz. The delivering of a Person to Satan in the Name of Christ*, is a distinct character of Excommunication, as that is of Baptism, *I Baptize thee in the Name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.* As in the act of Ordination, when you say, I Ordain thee a Minister or a Pastor, it imports truly what is said, and not only in a Metaphor, but a reality; so in this Act of Excommunication, it is with the Power of the Lord Jesus to deliver such an one unto Satan, therefore when Christ doth give Commission to the Church to do it, in his Name and Power, this being the formal Sentence, his Power concurreth to it. Now this is more than to throw out of the Church, for if there was only a Power to throw the Man out of the Church in the Name of Christ, without a Power to deliver unto Satan, the Church would have no more Prerogative than what is a common thing to all Societies. But now when the Church can give Satan Power over a Man, this is an act of the Power of Jesus Christ indeed, peculiar to a Church of his.

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2. Again, If Excommunication puts a Man into a different state than merely that of being again thrown into the World under Satan, as the World is, that never profest Christ, then it imports some distinct thing from casting out of the Church. But a Person's being Excommunicated, is a differing thing from being in the World or under Satan, as the World is: And it is so not only in this respect, that they that are in the World, and never were of any Church, are so in the World as withal they never were of any Church, as this Man hath been, but it is also different in respect of some special Power that Satan should have over this Excommunicated Person. Which is evident by this, because that Power which Satan hath over a Man Unregenerate in the World, is to carry him on to Sin, to work effectually in the Children of Disobedience, *Eph.* 2. 2. therefore we are said, *Col.* 1. 13. to be Translated out of the Kingdom of Darkness, that is, of Satan, who, as the Strong Man, keepeth all in Peace. But so to be delivered to Satan cannot be the meaning of Excommunicating a Man, for the intent of this is to destroy the flesh, and to save his Spirit, therefore it is not to deliver a Man unto Satan, so as to be a Man of the World out of the Church. Again the difference is evident by this, that this Man's punishment is in other respects, greater than that of a Man Unregenerate in the World, for as the Apostle saith, the Saints may eat with them of the World, but with such a one as is Excommunicate, are *not to eat*, 1 Cor. 5. 11.

3. Excommunication imports a positive punishment, for it is a spiritual Revenge. The *Negative* throwing out of the Church is but that which is common to all Societies; *But the Weapons of our Warfare* (says the Apostle) *are mighty through God, having in a readiness to revenge all Disobedience*, 2 Cor. 10. 4, 3, 6. As will be evident, if we do but lay all these following things together. 1. That Satan is ready to punish the Man in his Spirit by Terrors, , and to set on his sins with horrors, if he have leave from Christ. 2. This Man is by the Power of Christ given up and not left only to him. 3. He is given up to Satan to punish and correct him, 1 *Tim.* 1. 20. *Whom I have delivered to Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme*, that is, that they may learn how horrid a sin it is to blaspheme, by what Satan inflicts, the word translated to Learn is in the *Greek* παιδευθῶσι which is, to be disciplined as a Child is, to learn by Rods, so that being delivered unto Satan to learn how dreadful it is to blaspheme, implies that Satan is to whip them, that they may learn by a suitable punishment what it is to blaspheme, by Satan's casting Hellish Terrors into their Mind.

4. And the Analogy of a Man's sin when he deserveth Excommunication, and the punishment it self seem to be suitable, and that the sin deserves it in a way of proportion. For when a man is obstinate, the frame of his Spirit is such, that he doth not regard the Ordinances, therefore to be cast out of the Communion of Saints would not be a sore punishment to him, neither would that be enough to bring him in, and therefore the only way to bring this man in is, to have Satan set on his back with terrors, as in the work of humiliation at first.

5. Then again, such a man hath grieved the Holy Ghost the Comforter, and therefore he is suitably given up unto Satan as an Accuser and Tormentor: And so the phrase of delivering unto Satan seems to mean a Spiritual punishment opposite unto joy in the Holy Ghost, which is the fruit of obedience; that as the *Kingdom of God is Joy and Righteousness, and Peace*, Rom. 14. 17. *The Peace of God shall guard your hearts through the working of the Holy Ghost*, Phil. 4. 7. So *that estate* this Man is given up to, is an estate of terror and darkness; it is not to be an Unregenerate Man; but it is to be under the bondage of Satan.

6. And then again, Excommunication is called the retaining of Sin, and binding of Sin, a binding of Sin upon the Conscience: Now the question is, *Quo efficiente*, by whom this should be done? This sentence of delivering him unto Satan, implies, that Satan hath power given him to set his Sin on upon his Conscience, and that he is able to set Sin on upon the Conscience is evident from other Scriptures.

7. Again we do find by experience, that where Excommunication is not Administred rightly, there the Saints oftentimes are given up to very great terrors of Conscience, and that from Satan, and left to great Temptations; the Lord sometime working without the Ordinance, that which he doth work by the Ordinance of Excommunication, when it is rightly administred.

8. This fruit doth seem to have been in that *Corinthian*, 2 *Cor.* 2. for the Apostle desires

desires them to forgive him, lest he should be swallowed up with over much sorrow, *ver.* 7. It seems to be more than an humane sorrow, or more than a sorrow which would have been from the Holy Ghost's working, for that would not have swallowed a Man up, It implies therefore that he was in Satan's Power, *We art not ignorant* (saith he) *of his devices*, ver. 11. and that his devices were to keep this poor man in his clutches. And the phrase there, *swallowed up*, answereth to what is said of Satan in other cases, *He goeth up and down seeking whom he may devour*, 1 Pet. 5. 8. *Whom he may drink up*, so the word signifieth, καταπιν.

9. And again, Excommunication may seem to be more than meerly a throwing out of the Church, by that parallel of a greater Excommunication than what is ordinary, that *Anathema Maranatha*, 1 Cor. 16. 22. Which was not only to give a Man up to Satan for a time, but to give him up into an eternal curse, when they saw that a Man which had been a Professor, loved not the Lord Jesus Christ, that is, hated him, as sinning against the Holy Ghost. Now if the Church in that case hath power more than to eject, *viz.* To eject with an eternal curse, never to receive a Man more, which God ratifieth in Heaven, then in the ordinary casting a Man out of the Church, tho' there be hope that he may be recalled again, the way of doing it, is not merely a private punishment, or a throwing him out of the Church, which should work upon him, in a moral way of a sorrowful thought, and sense, that he is cast out from among the People of God, but it is a giving him up to Satan to terrifie him, God sanctifying that, as he doth other Afflictions to bring him in.

10. If Excommunication were nothing else, but a seclusion from the Church, then for the substance of the Act it would be no more than a continued suspension; for if the substance of the act be the same, they do not differ, tho' the one be done out of an Act of Authority, the other not. They will admit him again upon Repentance, if he be Excommunicated, as well as when Suspended, and if he do not Repent, they will not admit him, no more than when he is Excommunicated. And when he is Excommunicated he needs not a new admission, as when he is Suspended and Repents he doth not. So that for the extrinsecal act, they are all one. But Excommunication hath a Spiritual punishment attending it; and therefore answerably when that *Corinthian* was to be received again, 2 *Cor.* 2 They are not simply to pass an Act of Forgiveness, and to Receive him again, but to comfort him also.

If it be Objected, that we do not always see this effect, of a Spiritual punishment following Excommunication.

1. We Reply First; That there have been very few Excommunications in the World, that have been from those that have had the right power of doing of it, And those Excommunications which have been Administred by the Rightful Persons, yet have not been due, because proceeding on too slight Occasions, and such as have not deserved Excommunication.

2. They have, in their Excommunication, trusted more to the power of the Magistrate, when it should have come to a Writ, *de Excommunicato capiendo*, or to horning of a Man as in *Scotland*, Banishing him, or depriving him of his Estate, *&c.* they have confided, I say, in the Magistrate's power, and in his punishment, more than in Excommunication, or else why have they Recourse to it, to make a Man Repent? Whereas if they would wholy leave it unto God, to inflict that which he hath ordained to be the punishment, and that sufficient too, (for all his means are sufficient, as the Apostle say's, *the Weapons of our Warfare, are mighty through God to Revenge all Disobedience*,) 2 Cor. 10. 4. It would prove Efficacious enough to all ends and purposes, and sufficient, for such a Man, would that punishment be. But because they put confidence in an Arm of Flesh to bring him in, as if that were more an effectual means, than the power of God; therefore God makes his Ordinance to be but as an Arm of Flesh, and to have no other effect or fruit, than what the Magistrates punishment hath.

3. It is with this, as with all other Ordinances, which do not alway's attain their end, which they are principally ordained for, because that God works freely by them. Preaching is ordained to Convert, yet there are Millions of Men, to whom the word is preached, upon whom it hath not this effect; for *although they have all heard, yet they have not all believed*, Rom. 10. 18. It is enough, that God hath ordained it to such

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such an end, and it takes place in some, as the Apostle speaks; and so also hath this very Ordinance wrought in that very way, as divers Instances might be shewn.

4. Jesus Christ always fulfils what he hath promised, Mat. 18. 20. *I will be with you, and in the midst of you*, either to bless this my Ordinance, by giving Repentance, or giving up to a Reprobate Sense. So as Excommunication hath usually its effect one way or other, the Man is given up unto Satan, and if it have not that direct effect of Terrifying of him, so as to bring him to Repentance, he is given up to a Reprobate Sense, Satan entring into him, as into *Judas*, so that he turneth a Persecutor, as was frequent in the primitive times, that Men once Excommunicated turned Persecutors. They forsook the Assemblies of the Saints, which was a step to the sin against the Holy Ghost, *Heb.* 10. 25, 26, 27. When they were thrown out, they could come at them no more, and so were given up unto Satan for ever.

Parkerus De polit. Eccles. lib. cap. 5.

Object. In *Matth.* 18. 17. all that is said is only, *let him be to thee, as an Heathen and a Publican.*

Answ. 1. There he speaks in the Language of the *Jews*, and so expresseth Excommunication only, by what casting out of the Synagogues was amongst them as elsewhere, Christ expresseth the Ordinances of the Gospel, under the *Jewish* Phrase, *leave thy Gift at the Altar*, Matt. 5. 24. Now the *Jews* did not know what it was to be delivered unto Satan, and therefore no wonder if Christ did not expressly speak of it in that place of *Matth.* 18. 17.

But 2. One place expounds another, and that which he calleth there, Matth. 18. 17. *Let him be to thee an Heathen and a Publican*, is in 1 *Cor.* 5. called a delivering unto Satan.

Then 3. This delivering unto Satan, was exemplified in the punishment of *Judas*, for after he was gone out, (as it is judged by *Piscator* and others, he did not receive the Lords Supper, but was sent out) presently the Devil entred into him; he was a Branch cast out, *John* 15. 6.

4. Though our Saviour Christ expresseth it to them in the *Jewish* Language, in *Mat.* 18. 17. Yet to the same Apostles, when this Ordinance of Excommunication came to be exercised in a Church, his Spirit expresseth more fully what was the intent of that Ordinance, not simply to throw a Man out, to avoid outward converse with him, and in that Sense to be as an Heathen and a Publican, but to be a delivering unto Satan. So that as the Church of the Gospel in the priviledges of it, exceedeth that of the Law, and that priviledge they had in the Synagogues, so the disprivileding of a Man from the Communion of the Saints under the Gospel, hath an higher punishment, than the Synagogues knew.

5. When Christ said, let him be to thee as an Heathen and a Publican, he expresseth there not so much what the Churche's Censure pitcheth upon, but what the consequent is, *viz.* the manner of their converse afterwards towards, him, therefore he saith, *Let him be to thee*, he saith, not only let him be to the Church, *but to thee.* He expresseth it by what is the consequent, but in 1 *Cor.* 5. 5. He expresseth the formal Sentence, when the Apostle saith, no not with such an one to eat, he expresseth there indeed the consequent of the Sentence, but delivering unto Satan, is put into the Sentence it self.

I shall urge one Argument more, to prove that Excommunication is not meerly an Humane Ejection out of a Society, but an Ordinance in the Church Established by Christ's Institution, because Christ hath given us express Rules by Church Admonitions, and censures; we find as direct Rules chalked out, for the Series and Order of proceedings therein, as any State can take for ordering proceedings in Civil Causes.

1. For the matter of Christ's Censures, what we are to convert in Men, and how we must apply those Censures, we have our Limits and Rules in the word, so as we need no Orders or Canons to be made to make new matter, or the chief matter of Church Censures. For plainly it is told us, that *Sin* only is the Subject of Church-Cognisance, that it is a Transgression of some Law of God, *Them that sin*, (say's *Paul* to *Timothy*, 1 Tim. 5. 20.) *Rebuke*; Now what is sin, and not sin, the word is the sole Judge of, and a perfect Rule of.

And 2. It is Scandalous sin that is the matter of Censure, sin judged so by common

non light, and received Principles; sin that goes afore to Judgment, that you may read afar off, 1 *Tim.* 24. Doubtless Dispensations and sins controverted, are not to be made the Subject of Church Censures; for if the weak are not to be received to such, then neither are they to be cast out for such. Instruction may be used to consciences ignorant, as the phrase is, 1 *Tim.* 25. but Admonition only for sins taken for granted, and professed to be sins by the light of Nature, and the common light of Saints, 1 *Cor.* 5. 1, 8, 3. For how also shall all fear? 1 *Tim.* 5. 20. Book I.

2. For the ways of dealing with such sinners, we have Admonition, Excommunication, and Rejection prescribed.

1. Admonition, *Them that sin Rebuke*, 1 Tim. 5. 20. and that not privately, (if the sin be open) but publickly *afar off*; to the end others may fear.

2. For Excommunication, we have Warrant after Admonition, Tit. 3. 10. *After the first and second Admonition Reject*, which in 1 *Cor.* 5. 5. called *delivering unto Satan*, &c.

3. We have Order given, for the Degrees of proceedings in these, as orderly as any Law can make provision for the Indemnity of Men Innocent and Just, proceeding in any Civil Court in order to amend Men.

1. If the sin be private, so as thou alone knowest it, *that thy Brother sin against thee*, Mat. 11. 15. *Go and tell him his fault, between him and thee alone, if he hear and Repent*, (as 'tis, Luke 17. 3.) *thou shalt forgive him, and it shall go no further.* This provision hath Christ took, to prevent the Reputation of Persons, so to mend them, as not to blaze their faults; and this not for one so sining, but if seven times, that is, never so oft, *Luke* 17. 4.

If 2. He neglect to hear thee, that is, Repents not, then take two or three and tell him of it afore them, and if he denies not the Fact, and yet Repents not, then thou hast two or three Witnesses of his not denying the Fact, and yet of his Obstinacy and Hardness in not Relenting, and of his Impenitency so it follows; That in the Mouth of two or three Witnesses, *every word may be established*, that is brought into publick.

Therefore 3. Now the matter though but private at first, is ripened for Church-cognisance, *If he neglect to hear them, tell it to the Church.* But if it were a sin that is publick, that it is though, privately committed, yet made known, *commonly Reproved*, and so commonly known, as it is, 1 *Cor.* 5. 1. Then the Church is to take immediate notice of it publickly, without telling it in private; and those that can accuse, should impeach, as 1 *Cor.* 5. he shews, and also 1 *Tim.* 5. 20.

But 4. If it be a sin that is suspected, and cannot be proved, (whether commonly reported or private) and that by two or three Witnesses, the Officers are to cast it out of the Church proceeding, and not to receive it, *Receive not an Accusation*, so as to proceed in it, unless it appears evident by two or three Witnesses, This Rule is given about Admonishing Officers, 2 *Tim.* 5. 19: But it regards also every Man else, *Matth.* 18. 16. Then, when any sin is thus made of publick Cognisance, 1. They are to Admonish. 2. To Excommunicate in case of Obstinacy and Impenitence.

To conclude all in a word, if Christ had not setled by his Institution the Order, Discipline and Government of his Churches, if he had not given Established Rules for Church Censures, Admonitions and Excommunication: If a certain Platform of Church-Government, had not been fixed by him, we should have no Warrant to endeavour a Reformation, when the Order and Discipline of the Churches of Christ is impaired, and almost lost. For there would be no Rule to go by in, such a Reformation. And without a Rule of Divine Institution, there could be no setting things right, when amiss, no διόρθωσις, as the Apostle calls it, *Heb.* 9. 10. Nor could we produce any Warrant to Advance the Spiritual Scepter and Kingdom of our Lord Christ, if we did not know, by the Rules and Laws of his own Institution, what it is.

The Government OF THE Churches of Christ.

BOOK. II.

Of the Divine Institution of a Congregational Church. That it is not Secondary, or Consequent upon a Charter given to the Church Universal, as virtually included therein, but is immediate and proper to it. That Christ Instituted such a Church, in *Mat.* 18. and gave the Power of the Key's to it. That such Congregational Churches were Primitive and Apostolical, proved from the Instances of Churches planted by the Apostles. That the Constitution and Order of such Churches, is most fitly suited to the Edification of the Saints, and most exactly accommodated to their various Conditions. That Christ hath not only Instituted a Congregational Church, but hath appointed what the Extent and Limits of it should be.

CHAP. I.

That the Institution of Particular Churches is not virtual only, or Secondary, and Dependent on the Charter given to the Church Universal, but immediate and proper to them, as Particular Churches.

THEY, who assert the General Church to be a Political Body, seem to be divided into those two several ways of explaining it. 1. That it cometh to be a Political Body *Ascendendo*, so making a Congregation to be *Ecclesia prima*, a Church first designed in the Institution, and which the Institution falleth upon; but yet, that by the vertue of the same Commission, that Saints make up a particular Church, many Churches may make up one Church, and more of those Churches may make up a greater Church, for Appeals, &c. And so by the like reason, the Universal Church cometh to be a Political Body, the National, or Provincial Churches, being but *Ecclesiæ ortæ*, removes from, and representations of those that are *Ecclesiæ primæ*, the first Churches which are Congregations. This

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opinion, I shall consider, when I come to discourse of the Nature of Synods, and their Subordination.

2. Others form the Institution to be *descendendo*, as asserting the first principal Charter, to be given to the Church Universal, so as that is by Institution first Church, and particular Congregations have it but by a derived right, as lesser Leases have their's out of a greater Charter. And the reason that is given, is this, that when the Church Universal was but so many (or if it were again reduced to so small a number) as might meet in one place, they met by vertue of being the Church Universal; but that it afterwards was multiplied to so many, as that they must meet in several places, which is the occasion of forming particular Churches, this is accidental and occasional, and so they are to be regarded as one Church still, and so that first fundamental Institution goes on. For number or multiplication of Churches, is not the object of God's Institution; for God ordained not first that Churches should be many. If these many particular Churches are fram'd, it is with *Proviso*, and *Sub conditione*; namely, only when they are so far multiplied. Nor did Christ give such command, that when they did arise to such a number, they should make several Churches, only necessity doth that, which yet still proceeds by vertue of the general grant.

But to refute this, consider, 1. That if there had been a time in which the Universal Church was so small under the New Testament, living also together as they might have met in one place, they had not met by vertue of their being the Universal Church, or being a Mystical body to Christ, as the Church Universal is: For they had been a Church Mystical unto Christ, tho' they had not so met, even as the Church Mystical now is a Body to Christ, though it never doth thus meet. Yea, those Saints who then made this Church Universal, might have Worshipped apart, and singly, and God might have ordered it so; therefore that they should meet, and meet together fixedly for supernatural Ends, and Ordinances, this dependeth over and above, upon a special Will of God superadded to this Universal Church as such. If therefore when the Universal Church was no more than could meet in one place, it must have had for those fixed Meetings, and the privileedges of them, a Divine appointment, and if it met then, it must be by vertue of a special Institution: Then afterward, when it was divided into many Congregations, they must meet by a special Divine Institution too. If the Universal Church was no more than could meet in one, yet they must then have, for those fixed meetings, met by a special Institution and Priviledges, and afterward when they are many, they met by the same special Institution also; and so what at first suited their condition, when they were no more than could meet in one place, suiteth their condition afterward, when they are multiplied.

2. They could not then meet *Qua* Universal Catholick Church, for the Universal Catholick Church, is called such in respect of it's being in all Nations, both Jews and Gentiles. Whereas the Institution of a particular Church is the same, whether there be no more Saints, than can meet in one place at once, or whether there be more. When they are many, those many do set up several Congregations upon the same special ground that the Universal Church did set up a Meeting. And the Universal Church did so meet in a Congregation, by a special superadded ground over and above their being a Church Universal, for it further depended upon God's Will, that they should all meet thus together fixedly, for they might have met but occasionally some times, and they might have met in several companies, or they might have Worshipped privately, and God's Ordinance might only have been so administred; for if they meet for these Ordinances *qua* Church Universal, then in Heaven they should meet for them too. So then that they should meet in one fixed Society for publick Worship, is by Institution. And

2. This Institution of meeting together, was rather made, and suited for the Saints when multiplied, than in respect of their being one body, as an Universal Church.

For 1. Under the New Testament there was never a time (that we know of) after the Jewish Law came to be dissolved, that this Universal Church could meet in one, for although not at *Hierusalem*, yet surely in whole *Judea* there were more scatter'd up and down, than could have met in one place.

2. Under the New Testament, when the Church Universal is multiplied to all Nations, (in respect of which it is called the Church Catholick, by way of distinction

on from the *Jews*) then it is so scattered, as that they cannot meet together, no not by way of Representation. So as indeed this pretended principle, that Institutions should mainly fall upon the Church Universal, is such as was never practised, nor *extant de facto*, neither at first nor at last. Book II

Then 3. We may observe that God did frame the Institution of his Churches, according to what, in the Wisdom of his Counsel, he hath determined, and foresaw would fall out. His Institutions are such, as he in Wisdom knew would best suit the condition of Saints in all Ages to come, under the Gospel. He therefore ordered particular Congregations, as the most commodious Seat of publick Worship, Government, and Order, and as the best, and fittest security to preserve the Saints from Scandal, and also the means of maintaining among them, the most intire kind of Communion, which could be attained.

That particular Congregations do not meet as Assemblies for publick Worship and Ordinances, by vertue of a Charter given first to the Church Universal, is evident from these Reasons.

1. If they do meet by vertue of the general Charter of the Church Universal, and they needed no other Warrant than that: Then if they meet occasionally only, some Saints together at one time, and others at another, and not fixedly, whether for Government or Worship, they do thereby satisfie the Obligation they have, by vertue of the general Warrant. And indeed, to make running Churches, and Societies of Saints, up and down in the World, would more satisfie the obligation of the general Charter, and come up more nearly to it: Therefore for them to have a fixed special Tye to particular Churches in a constant way, when the Churches are many, must needs be by a further special Institution.

2. If they thus meet by vertue of their being the Church Universal, then they met by vertue of it only in all times, and then afore the Law was given; and so the same Government, that is now pleaded for, from the Notion of the Church Universal, should have been then. And then likewise after the Law, the *Jews* should have met by the Law of the Church-Catholick; And if so, there should be now the like meeting for publick Worship of the whole Church, as was then, *viz.* three times a year. Was their meeting by vertue of their Catholick Communion, or as they were a Nation? As they were a Nation surely: For if multitudes out of other Nations had been converted, they had not been, (as the *Ninevites*, and the like, where they had not been bound to the Ceremonial Law, neither were the *Jews* themselves, that lived out of the Land dispersed) bound to come up to the *Synedrim*. And suppose that they had been the Church Universal, yet that they were cast into a National way, was by Institution, over and above that universal consideration, as they were the Seed of *Abraham*.

3. If the Institution of a particular Church, depend on the Charter first given to the Church Universal, then where there are more of Believers, and more of Elders, there would be more of the keys, if they had them by vertue of the Universal Church; for why? there would be more of the Universal Church in such a Body. The Institution therefore must fall primarily upon their being a particular Body to Christ, meeting in his Name, by his special Commission, though the Persons be but two or three, that is a few in number, which argues, that he doth not put his Institution barely upon their Membership, or Station in the Church Universal, but upon the Formality of their being his Body thus united; his Blessing is given to them, as formed up by Institution, whether they be Saints more or fewer, as among the *Jews* also it was in their Cities and Towns, as well as they were a Commonwealth in their Nation.

According to this Asserted Charter of the Church Universal, when as he saith, tell the Church, *Matth.* 18. 19. it should be meant primarily, of the Church Universal, for the Institution and Rule for Church proceedings, would fall first upon it. But he speaks plainly of a particular Church, (and the Christian Church, being as then to be gathered, when he uttered it; if he would have made a Charter to the Universal, then had been the fittest time to have exprest it) for he declareth his Institution there, when he had but a few Disciples about him, and those with him, and yet declareth his Institution for all Ages, to tell it to that next Church, whereof a Man is a Brother. And if the Church Universal had been intended here, then the

Church

Ch. II. Church of the *Jews* had not been intended as the pattern, which would overthrow the main Assertion of our Presbyterian Brethren.

5. The truth is, that the meeting of the Universal, is but occasional, for in all the Ages, that the Church was to run through, it hath seldom been, yea, could never be: And when that which we call General Councils have been, they were rather for matter of Doctrine, than for Government, or for Appeals about persons, and that the Institution could not fall upon. It's true in *Matth.* 16. 18. the word *Church* is taken indefinitely, and for the Church Universal; but yet not as an Institution Political, therefore he doth not say, he will give the keys to it, but unto *Peter*, as Representing both Saints and Ministers, to be divided into several Bodies, as afterwards Christ should appoint it.

CHAP. II.

That the Grand Charter of Church-Government, or the power of the Keys, is granted not to Ministers in particular only, excluding the People, but to the whole Body of Believers.

IF any were to set down the Model of any Government whatsoever, the first and most necessary thing is, to set out first what Common-wealth, Corporation, or Body Politick, should be the *Substratum*, the Seat of that Government, (in and among whom it is exercised;) and to set out the Bounds and Extent thereof by which the Jurisdiction of that Government is limited, and unto which, as the Subject matter thereof, all the particulars of that Government are suited and proportioned, (as the Building is to it's Foundation) and also the Scituation and Measure of the Ground, which they make the Seat thereof. Therefore in the Inquisition after that Order and Frame of Government, which (we conceive) Christ hath instituted for his Church, it is most proper to begin in seeking out what kind of Body or Society it is, which should be that proper Adequate, intire Seat and Subject of this Government, what the Bounds and Extent thereof are, wherein Christ would have his Government exercised, and within which confined. I call the Church *Sedes* or Seat, not in Allusion to that Ancient Phrase used, for the Subject of Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction, (which Phrase yet strengthens this use of it) but in Allusion to that Scripture Phrase, 1 *Tim.* 3. 15. where he calls the Church ἑδραίωμα that is, the *Seat or Ground of Truth*, and as of Truth there, so (say I) of Worship and Government. This therefore as the Foundation, shall be the Subject of my Discourse, and upon the finding the true Abuttments hereof, doth the ending and determining of most of those Suits and Quarrels of this Age, about Church-Government depend. The first Charter granted by the Founder, and the Patterns of those Master Builders the Apostles, and the proportions of those Primitive Churches, must be our guide herein.

Begin we therefore to enquire what is the true purport of the first grand Charter of all the rest, and what help that will contribute hereunto; as we find in *Mat.* 16. 19 *And I will give unto thee the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven: And whatsoever thou shalt bind on Earth, shall be bound in Heaven; whatsoever thou shalt loose on Earth, shall be loosed in Heaven.*

1. Where first, he no sooner mentions, (and it is the first mention) a New Church to be Builded by him under the New Testament, but he, together therewith, makes mention of Keys, both as means of Building it, and of governing it, following the Metaphor of an House therein. And *Peter* having newly made a Confession, that Jesus was the Son of God, he being declared and owned by him as such, Christ utters himself again to him, as the Son of God indeed, speaks of Building, and Contriving anew of his House, as a Prerogative proper to him, as the Son; which, to the same purpose, the Apostle in like manner alledgeth, Heb. 3. 3, 4, 5. *Christ, as the Son over his own House, is the Builder thereof*, which Prerogative he here holds forth, saying, *I will Build my Church*, and *I will give Keys.* The *Church* he intends, is the Church of the New Testament, which (the Son being himself come) was to be moulded and built anew by him, especially after his Ascension. And *the Keys* he

he means, are *the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven*, (as the State of the Church under the Gospel is called ;) which, to shew he is the Son, and hath all power committed to him, he professeth to dispose of anew, (as the Keys themselves were new) to another sort of Persons than before; The Keys of Knowledge and Government having been before in the Hands of High Priests and *Levites*, &c. Now as the Church was to be of a new frame, and the keys were new, so he declares a new disposement of them to other Persons than the former. So that this place strengthens the Assertion, *That Christ as the Son, is the Builder of his Church*, Heb. 3. 3, 6. and the Institutor of all power and means of Building in it ; and also it proves that the Frame and Government of the Church under the Old Testament, delivered by *Moses* to those that sat in his Chair, cannot be a set Rule of the Frame and Form of Government, of the Church under the New. For Christ the Son, being come, shews his Prerogative by declaring the Old to be done away, saying, I will Build, I wil give the Keys, &c. whilst he speaks of a New, the Old is done away, yea, the Persons to whom, and the Extent and Limits of the power are to be set out by him, as well as what those keys shall be, by which he will Build and have his Church governed ; and he therefore says to *Peter*, *I do give to thee*. In that he singles him out electively, it argues his special Designation of the Subject or Persons, (who ever they be) to whom he will bequeath them.

2. That *Peter* here in this promise of the keys for the future to be given, should stand in a Representative Respect, and not meerly Personal, all Writers in all Ages, and all sides, though in *Peter's* Name, laying several claims unto these keys, do universally acknowledge and observe. Some say, the grant is to *Peter* only, considered as a Believer, having made Confession of his Faith, that Christ was the Son of God; and therefore Representing the Church of Believers, as unto whom all Church power should be first given. Others assert, this grant to be made to *Peter* as an Apostle, and so Representing the Apostles and Ministers only. Thirdly, others as the Papists, vindicate a personal priviledge of *Peter's*, above all the other Apostles, yet therein Representing his supposed Successor, the Bishops of *Rome*. Learned *Cameron* almost alone, would have it, that this was a personal priviledge to *Peter*, wherein none others did succeed him. Thus much seems evident to us, that our Saviour Christ speaks unto *Peter*, under a double consideration in these words, *ver.* 19. and the words before. The one was meerly *Personal*, and therein he speaks to him, under his *own proper Name*, Simon *Son of* Bar-Jonas, and so pronounceth him Blessed, for that his Confession, which accordingly expressed his personal priviledge, (which under that Name he had even from Circumcision) of his being Saved, without any mention of the gift of the keys. But then secondly he gives him withal a new Name, and I *also say unto thee*, *Thou art* Peter, or *Rock*, which was a New and Mystical Name, as the word following shew, *upon this Rock*. Πέτρος and πέτρη, answering each to other, as *fides* and *fidelis*. And under this new Name now put upon him, he gives him a further priviledge, I *will give to thee the Keys*, namely as thou art *Peter*. This was not so much in a Personal, as a Mystical consideration, upon which this New Name was given him. And to strengthen this, it may be observed that God in first delivering his promises and grand Charters unto all sorts, singled out some one Man, in whose Name the grand Charter should eminently run. So *Adam* was fixed upon, when God, in his Name, gave the Earth unto the rest of the Sons of Men : So *Abraham* was singled out to Represent the Church, both of the *Jews* and *Gentiles*, but especially to represent the *Jews* who were his Children, to whom God gave the promises of the *Land of Canaan*, as representing all his Seed, and *of the* whole *World*, as representing *all the Saints*, Rom. 4. 13. And accordingly he did upon it change his Name from *Abram*, to *Abraham*, Thus in like manner here doth Christ deal with *Peter*. He first blesseth him personally as *Simon*, then changeth his Name to *Peter*, and so bequeaths this Charter of the keys, in his like representation of others, to whom in him the grant is made, as well as to himself. For *Peter* was still more forward than all the rest, to utter his Faith that Christ was the Son of God. Elsewhere indeed, (as in *John* 6. 69.) he speaks in the person of all the Apostles ; but here where this grant is first uttered, singly in his own ; And on this occasion, Christ Honoreth this Great and Eminent Confessor of him, as that Man in whose Name this great Charter should run, he bearing therein the persons of all sorts, that were to have any portion of power, whether of his

Apostles,

Ch. II. Apoſtles, Extraordinary Officers; or of ordinary Officers, as alſo of the Church of Believers, and even of all to whom ever any portion of the keys was for the future to be given; yet ſo as this Honour was peculiarly his, and he is ſingled out to be this common Repreſenter of all others under the New Teſtament, which Honour he doth bear to this Day in his Name, even as *Abraham* had the like Honour under the Old Teſtament. And to evidence this the more by the event, Chriſt did, in an eſpecial manner, honour *Peter* to be the Founder as it were, and beginner of the New Chriſtian Church, (as *Cameron* hath obſerved out of *Tertullian*) when he converted that Multitude at one Sermon, *Acts* 2.

Neither yet is this to be underſtood, as if thoſe keys were given unto *Peter* to convey the keys unto others Derivatively, but he takes them Repreſentatively, (and therefore it was not neceſſary that all power ſhould be in *Peter's* perſon as an Apoſtle, otherwiſe than Repreſentatively) and that not *Repræſentatione Reali*, as if he received all power for the Church, over her, as a King or a Parliament doth, who Repreſents a Common-wealth, (as the Papiſts and Epiſcopal Divines, and others ſay of the Officers, that they Repreſent the Church) but only *Repræſentatione Typical*, a Typical Repreſentation, (as *Baynes* Diſtinguiſheth) that is, that power which the Church or others that were Officers unto her, ſhould receive in themſelves afterwards, he now received in a Repreſentation both of her and them, as a common Perſon ſtanding for, and ſpoken to for all the reſt. And Chriſt therefore doth not ſay, *I give*, which if he had ſpoken to him only as an Apoſtle, conſtituting him ſuch thereby at preſent, he would have done; but *I will give* for the future, becauſe many of thoſe whom *Peter* Repreſented here, the power was afterwards to be given to, when the Lord ſhould be pleaſed to declare it by himſelf or his Apoſtles.

3. Further as all this is ſpoken of *Peter* here as a Repreſentative Perſon, ſo in an indefinite and general way. And as it is the firſt Great promiſe and Charter, in which all particular portions of power, to whomſoever afterwards diſtributed, are included, ſo likewiſe as the other firſt and great promiſes of God uſe to be, this is as comprehenſive, ſo indefinite alſo, not deſigning at particulars; ſuch was that grant of the Earth to the Sons of Men, whom afterward God divided into ſeveral Nations, to whom by his Providence, ſuited to his Decrees, he ſet out the bounds of their ſeveral Habitations, *Acts* 17. 26. and in *Deut.* 23. 8. The like was, that firſt Charter made of *Canaan* to *Abraham*, which was afterwards particularly deſigned out by *Lot*, to the ſeveral Tribes, *&c.* whoſe Right was yet all indefinitely comprehended, and intended in that firſt grant to *Abraham*. So accordingly all the expreſſions in this promiſe are general, and indiſtinct; and to be taken in an indefinite and comprehenſive way.

1. As firſt, where he ſaith, *He will Build his Church*, it is hard to know how to limit it, for he means all ſorts of Churches: he means the Myſtical Church, for he ſaith, *The Gates of Hell ſhall not prevail againſt it*, which is only true thereof; for they have prevailed againſt particular Churches, and may: And yet again he muſt include particular Churches too, for it is certain that the Myſtical general Church, hath not the power and exerciſe of all the keys; but only as divided into particular Churches, or if it might be ſuppoſed to have the keys of Rule in General Councils, yet not of the Sacraments, not of Preaching the word; for, as for ſuch Ordinances, that Church cannot meet, and therefore exerciſeth them only in ſeveral parts, and diviſions of it ſelf.

2. Thoſe words *the keys*, are a general comprehenſive expreſſion, anſwerable to that of the word *Church*, taking in keys of all ſorts; *viz.* the keys whereby the Univerſal Church, as ſuch, is Built and Reared, that is, thoſe means whereby Men are Converted, and made Members thereof; which God oftentimes bleſſeth in the Hands of others than Miniſters. And they are therefore called *the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven* at large, not the keys of the Church, as reſtraining it to a political Church; and therefore (as *Bellarmine*, though to a wrong purpoſe, urged, namely for the Tranſcendency of the Pope's power above the Church, yet for the thing it ſelf rightly) is larger than that in *Matth.* 18. It is there meant of a Church political, but the keys here in *Matth.* 16. 19. have relation to the opening the Door of Faith, as in *Acts* 14. 27. it is called, and therefore implies all means of converſion. And accordingly the oppoſite thereunto is *the Gates of Hell, which ſhall not prevail*: And yet again on the other ſide, the keys or the power that is given to particular Churches are

are intended, for this is the general grant, afterwards setled in *Matth.* 18. where, *go tell the Church* is mentioned. And the binding and loosing spoken of there, is comprehended under the binding and loosing, which is spoken of here. So as Churches of all sorts, and keys of all sorts, keys given to Churches in a way of Discipline, and to private Persons to build up one another, keys given to Officers of all sorts, Apostles and others, are all here intended. And therefore *Melancton* well saith, *Claves Ecclesiæ datæ sunt, sed juxta electionem a christo institutam.* And it is certain that in *Matth.* 18. He instituteth a Church power, as touching the Persons to whom it belongs, distinct from *Peter's*, and that of the Apostles as such; and yet whatsoever Church-power there mentioned was to be in any, *Peter* receiveth it here. And as when we say all Civil power is in a Kingdom, it is meant, *sensu diviso*, the King hath one part, the Nobles another, the People another; and the several Officers of a Kingdom, they have their part; and so it is here, and all at the first was now given unto *Peter*, as bearing the Person of all these.

4. Whereas the Controversie hath been, whether *Peter* Represented the Apostles and the Ministers only; or whether he Represented the Church also, or whether *Peter* is here personally to be taken, as the sole and single Subject of a personal priviledge? We say all these are here intended by Christ, in this his first promise, uttering it himself in this indefinite way, which was afterwards to be further and more distinctly divided, and set out by himself and his Apostles: So that whether *Peter* had it granted to him as an Apostle, and as an Apostle representing Apostles and other Ministers, we will not contend; but yet that *Peter* had it also Representing the Church it self, and Saints built upon the Rock, the Arguments are as convincing and concluding to prove it, if not more than those that on the other side are framed to prove, the words should be spoken of him as an Apostle, Representing the other Apostles and Elders, and therefore we safely take in all. The main Argument urged to prove that it is spoken to him as an Apostle, is drawn from this, that the Person spoken unto, *viz. Peter*, was an Apostle, and the other Apostles were present, and so intended; and therefore this Grant here, should be Restrained to *Peter*, and them as such. And the Arguments for the other, Namely, that ordinary Believers also should be intended, is taken from the occasion and ground of Christ's Speech, which was a confession of Faith made by *Peter*, and therefore that Christ should take in, and intend other ordinary Believers and Confessors, to have an interest in the keys, as well as Elders and Apostles, and accordingly to have been by *Peter* Represented. So as the pleas of this Suit, (so far as concerns this place) do lie between the sort of Persons spoken to, and that were present; and the qualification of that Person, as a Believer, namely, and the ground of Christ's Speech. And all the Arguments that are brought to prove, they were given him as an Apostle, are not exclusive, that they are not given him also as a Believer. *Austin's* Expression, *non tantum Petro, sed Ecclesiæ*, not to *Peter*, (that is, as an Apostle) only, but *also to the Church*, doth rightly divide the share between both.

The occasion of the promise, was *Peter's* confessing that *Christ was the Son of God*, which holds forth nothing proper unto Ministers only, or himself as an Apostle only; and therefore the priviledge here, must be common unto that sort, that make confession of Faith, as well as to Ministers. It was a common Faith confest, not of what belonged unto Apostles only, but unto Believers; The promise is therefore suited unto the occasion. And this is a stronger inference, than that other, which is brought, that he Represented the other Apostles only, namely, because that they were present, when as *Peter* here did not intend to speak it in their Names, as in *John* 6. 69. he did; but rather he steps out and prevented them, and therefore also Christ speaks first unto him, in his personal condition, *Blessed art thou Simon*, Bar-Jonas; and then in his Representative condition, as representing those whose Faith he had confessed, as well as the Apostles, whom if only or simply, Christ had intended that he should represent, he might have spoken to them all, as well as to *Peter*, they being then present.

And then again, his Name *Petros*, *Peter*, which Christ here anew gives him with the Reason of it, *viz. upon the Rock*, &c. in an Allusion to *Petra*, signifying one built on the Rock, and so of the same nature with the Rock, argues this to have been Christ's Scope, in promising to him the keys. This change of his Name thus into *Peter*, Elegantly served to suit and answer the thing which Christ

Ch. II. was speaking, Namely, the Building his Church on the Rock, whereon *Peter* (thus confessing himself) was built. *Thou art* Peter, that is, *Thou art built on this Rock*, thou art a stone in this Rock, and unto thee as such I speak. And further, he doth not say, *Thou shalt be called* Peter, but *Thou art* Peter, that is, Thou art a stone, thou art built on a Rock; and thus it answereth to his being a Believer, which is all one as to be a Member of the Church so built, and therefore it is spoken of *Peter*, considered in the Person of Believers built with the rest of the Church upon the Rock, as well as the Apostles, whose priviledge alone this was not, and it is farther observable, that of all the Apostles, this *Peter*, here spoken to, should, as if only intended alone, use this very similitude, to this particular purpose, and in effect, apply what is said here of himself, [*Thou art* Peter] to all Believers in 1 Pet. 2. 5. *Ye also as lively stones, are built up a Spiritual House*, &c. As if he had said, It is not I only that am the *Peter*, that Christ intended, it was not spoken to me, but unto you all. And his expression in 2 *Pet.* 2. 1. is all one with this in his first, *To all that have received like precious Faith with us*, *i.e.* with me; as in 1 John 9. *John* saith, *that receiveth not us*, that is, that receiveth not me: And almost all Divines of all sides do thus far yield this, they say the keys are given primarily to the Faithful, only they explain it, and say, they are given *in bonum Ecclesiæ*, *for the good of the Church*, but unto the Officers of it.

Obj. 1, If it be said, that if they be given to *Peter* as a Believer, then unto all Believers, to Women and Children, and the like.

Answ. The Answer is, First, when it is said the keys are given to a Believer, it is to be understood not *Reauplicativè*, as if only, and to all such, all sorts of the keys are given but *Extensivè*, that is, to *Peter*, as Representing Believers also, and not barely as an Apostle; but yet such Believers as after should be more specially determined to have their share in them. For they are given unto Believers, in *Peter*, Representing such, according to Christ's Disposement, after to be declared; it is an indefinite Charter to be formed up by him afterwards, only now declaring that those, of that sort, should have them. And Christ hath afterwards made a peculiar exception of Women not to *speak*, nor to usurp Authority in the Church, 1 *Cor.* 14. 34. which being an Exception, it must be from a Rule, and so *firmat regulam*, argues and confirms that the Rule is, that *Males* have liberty and power to speak and judge in some Cases. And yet Secondly, even they have a sprinkling of the keys in their proportion, if you take keys in that large Sense before explained, for the keys of Conversion and Edification, may be through God's blessing in their Hands: Their Speeches and Instructions in private may, and often do Convert and Edifie the Souls of others. Thus Tit. 2. 4. *That the Aged Women may Teach*, (namely, by private instructions, and the like) *the younger Women to be Sober, to love their Husbands*: And other of them may be Instruments to Convert or Build up, Servants and Children, Friends, &c. in their Families; yea, their *Husbands may be wonwithout the word, by their chast Conversion*, 1 Pet. 3. 2. Yea, and as Members of a Church, they have power to bind sin upon a Man, in private personal Admonition; first, which is a Degree, and in order to that publick, if a Man Repents not; which yet personal Admonitions of others to those, not in Church-fellowship, (as in *England* formerly) are not in order unto. For when a Woman doth tell a Man of his sin, if she makes it out and prove it, she tells it him with this bond upon him, that if he repent not, she bringeth it to the Church; and so she binds him before, and in the Church, which she doth as a fellow Member, though not as a Judge: And the same Sentence that a Woman hath thus pronounced in private against him, the same the Chuach afterward Ratifies, even as what the Church Ratifies, is bound in Heaven. The mistake of the Objection lies in this, to infer that, because Women have not the Authority, the publick power of the keys; that therefore they have no power of the keys committed to them, whereas none hath all that others have, not the Apostles themselves.

Obj. 2. If further it be Objected, that the keys are given to others than Believers, as to Ministers, though not true Believers.

Answ.

Answ. The Answer is; yet so as that they are visibly Believers, or they ought not to be Ministers; so *Judas* was. And so if it be given to Ministers only, and Apostles, it is supposed that they are Faithful, *The things that thou hast heard, commit to Faithful Men, that they may teach others*, 2 Tim. 2. 2. *Just, Sober, Holy*, Tit. 1. 18.

Obj. 3. And if it be said further, That then they are given to Believers singly, and out of Church-fellowship.

Answ. The Answer is; Although they are here given to Believers materially, yet formally but as built up in a Church, according as Christ should after order it. And if we speak of the Judiciary Power, Elders themselves must needs be supposed to be set over a Church, ere those keys are given unto them; and so also what is granted to Saints hereof, those keys must needs fall under the same supposition. But if we speak of the keys in a larger Sense, so they are given to all, and every one singly, whether they be in Church-fellowship or no. Now Christ's grant here being general and indefinite, though it takes in all, yet each according to Christs order; and so if the Judiciary keys are said to be intended, they must be understood to be here given, as Christ afterwards should particularly design, how they should be exercised, and that is, and can be only in Church Society; and whether by Saints or Elders only, as they are rightly form'd up into fixed Bodies.

But for a conclusion, that which from this place we take along with us, towards the finding out the Seat or Subject of Church-power, is this; That the keys were indefinitely and materially here given, as well to Saints, as Elders, in the Person of *Peter*, in their several proportion, and afterwards were particularly determined, and held forth in the Rules and Examples set by the Apostles.

CHAP. III.

That before a company of Believers or Saints, can become the Formal Seat of Government, they must be united into the state, and order of a Church. Reasons given why this is necessary. A Demonstration of it also from the Example of the Primitive Churches, planted by the Apostles.

THis first Charter or Grant of the keys both to the Saints and Officers, being but indefinite, and given unto them but as materially considered, as the command and blessing to multiply, is to Men, *Gen.* 1. Ere these can become the Formal Seat of Government, or Publick Worship, there must be an orderly moulding and casting of this matter, both Saints and Officers, into several Bodies or Societies, for the exercise of these keys; which both the necessity of the thing requires, and also the examples in the New Testament do warrant and confirm unto us.

1. The necessity of the thing requires it.

For first, otherwise there would be no Order, which in the Church of the *Colossians*, the Apostle doth so praise in them. He might have commended the Saints in that City, for their Personal Holiness, the Teachers among them for their Gifts; but he further rejoyceth in their Order. And as Order in any Multitude or Company of Men, primarily respects their Union into a Body, for such ends and purposes among themselves, as thereby they seek to attain; So here in this case, *Quod non est formatum, non est vere unum*, what is not formed, is not truly one: This outward Order is as the Form that gives the Unity. An heap of Stones is not one Body, so properly as an House, although the parts in such a heap be Homogenial, and of one and, the same kind; and the other consists of several materials, Hetrogenial, and of several kinds, as Wood, Stone, Iron, Clay, &c. Yea, and the indefinite Collection of all such Materials into one heap, are not a Building, although they be Squared, and fitted to be joyned each to other; the Beams and Rafters by their Tenants and Mortesses, and the like: But that all these should be Reared, and Artificially erected into one Building; it is that, which makes them one Body, in such a respect as the other are not.

 2. Secondly,

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2. Secondly, There would otherwise be no Government at all. When God gave forth *that Law*, Gen.9.6. *he that sheddeth Man's Blood, by Man shall his Blood be shed*; over and above this indefinite Commission given, it was necessary for the due and orderly execution hereof; that there should be Orderly Societies of Men, which should be the Seat of a Government, by which this punishment should be exercised. God's way in this Law, and so Christ's meaning in that Gift of the keys, *Mat.* 16.19. cannot be like to that which *Cain*, through the Horrour of his Conscience feared, that any Man, or every Man that met him next, might kill him. So neither is it indefinitely and promiscuously in the power of any, the next company of Saints and Elders to judge an offending Brother. And Reason confirms this. For 1. It is this Form and orderly Union of them into a Body, that makes any company the Seat of Government, and to have a power among them; and how can there be true Government, without a Seat of Jurisdiction, in which it must be exercised? And that must be a Body politick, according to the nature or kind of the Government, or politick exercised in it; if Civil, then 'tis a Common-wealth or Corporation, &c. if Ecclesiastical, it is a Church. A politick Body is not made up by a Multitude; for then a company of Men at a Horse-Race were such. Nor is it Local Union in the same place, for so at a Stage-play, a throng or a croud meeting, would be such.

As Forms in Natural Bodies, are necessary to constitute them such, as well as matter; so an Union and Moulding into one, is needful to constitute a Body politick. Yea, a judicial power doth as much depend upon a Formality of Order, as it doth upon a Material qualification of Persons. Take a company of Ministers, or what sort of Persons else, however qualified or denominated, they have not that power (which yet doth belong to Ministers) indefinitely, or as any way met; but as Formed up into Bodies, as a power in a Kingdom is not given to Justices of Peace indefinitely, or promiscuously met; but as met according to Commission in several Circuits, and distinct Bodies from them. Burgesses of Parliament, although lawfully chosen to be such, yet they have not Parliamentary power, but as met in Parliament, according to the Law of the Kingdom; and the Legality of the meeting, doth give us as much Power and Authority, as the qualification of the Persons. The Authority is the Result of Union, and that legally and lawfully made, as well as it is founded in Persons fitly qualified. Power in Civil things, is not so much given to Mayors and Aldermen, as to the Corporation, though the whole Corporation exerciseth it not; yet it is this priviledge, and they have such and such a power amongst them, it is not alone the priviledge of the Magistrates so much: That Heathenish Town-Clark of *Ephesus*, when the Men of that City met in in a promiscuous way: (And perhaps the very same Men of that City, had panegyrical meetings for some Acts of Government, as Election of Magistrates, and the like; yet) because then they met not according to the Order of that City, he says of it, that it was an illegal ἐκκλησία Assembly.

2. Without this Union, and Order of Society, Persons offended, that ought to complain, should not have whither to go to accuse; nor the party offended be obliged to come. Nor would it be known, whose the Care and Duty were, to take on them the cognizance, and judging of it; and whose the sin was, if it were neglected. If these companies of Elders and Saints in a great City, were fluid and promiscuous; and but like such companies as met at sights, or shews, or Ordinances without any Incorporation or Imbodying, so as, all being in an equal liberty, to go one day to this, another to that company, &c. the same Persons never met in one place, unless casually, and providentially; if twelve such Meetings were in one such City, what shall oblige me to any one, more than the rest? If I come to receive in any one; and they upon occasion would proceed judicially to deal with me, I might plead and say, I am no more accountable to you, than the rest; I receive as often with them, as with you, I belong as much to other Assemblies, as to you; and what have you to do to judge me, more than they? And besides it being (in this way) but providential, that the same Persons, the offender is accused unto to day, should meet in one place another day, when all have an indifferent liberty, without any set or fixed Incorporation; at the utmost it is but his forbearing, to Assemble with the company for that time, or in that place any more, and retire unto those other; for he is at his freedom so to do.

Again

Again in this case; all, that any of those companies can inflict upon him, is but for that time to suspend him from Communion with them; but to proceed to Excommunication they cannot, not only because that imports a fixed company, he is cast out of; but also because there is nothing to oblige him to attend that company, to be so often Admonished, as his sin shall become an obstinacy, and fit matter for Excommunication. Or what shall oblige those of this individual company, to whom the complaint first came, that they in relation to, and for his Censure's sake, should meet so often together, as that he may be publickly Admonished by them, so many times as in the end deservedly to be thrown out?

Yea, 3. This Union and Order, must needs hold in such Societies, where the very punishment is to cast out of that Body, they were first within; for to cast out, and to be within, are Correspondent, and answer each to other. Now the punishment to be exercised, is not only a personal withdrawing by every Man apart, (as occasionally they should meet him) by a Sentence publickly agreed on; but the Sentence, then in use in the Primitive Churches, was to cast out of the Church, *ver.* 3. *John* 10. (as to Expel, and cast out of a City or Town, or Family) which unless they were a Body formed up among themselves, and he one within to them, they could not do.

II. As the necessity of the thing, so the Examples of those Primitive Churches, argues them to have been formed and fixed Bodies, that were the Seat of Worship and Government, and do agree with these forementioned principles.

First, The very Denomination of Churches, (as of Churches in *Judea*, *Galatia*, &c.) doth fall in with, and confirm that first Reason, that the Saints and Elders in those Countries were cast into distinct and several Bodies; and diversifyed by several Corporations and Relations. It imports not a Distinction of them, only as Saints materially from the World, (as the Universal Church, whereof they are parts, doth) but a Distinction of them into several companies among themselves; Namely, the Universal and Great Church, parted into several lesser companies and Churches. Nor can those set and fixed Titles, arise from several Promiscuous Acts of meeting of these Saints and Elders providentially; but it inclines, in the Holy Ghost's Language, a setled State, and Incorporation, in order to setled Meetings; as the word Presbytery notes out, not simply a company of Elders, but united into a Body for Government; so the Phrase *Churches* imports, not simply a company of Saints and Elders met, but a stated Society: So as when the Time of their actual meeting is dissolved, they still continue the same; as the Companies in *London* are still so many Companies in State, though not in Act, when every Man is gone to his own House, as well as when met in their Common Hall. They are not only a Body because, or when they actually meet, but they are a Body in order to meeting; and there is a power in their Governours, to call them together again. And this also all the Comparisons of an House to God, &c. (speaking of particular Churches) implies, not simply acts of meeting, but a compacted State.

And that the Churches then in the Primitive Times of Christianity, were such Bodies is evident: For 1 *Cor.* 14. the Apostle calls not only a particular Church, an whole Church, (as likewise elsewhere, *Acts* 20.28. the Church of *Ephesus*, is called the *whole Flock*; and that at *Corinth*, *a whole lump*; 1 *Cor.* 5.6. each therefore making a Distinct Body, an whole and entire Body, bounded within it self, as any other Corporation is) but further, he speaks of that Church, as importing a stated Union, in relation to meeting actually, *if the whole Church*, (says he, *ver.* 23.) *come together*. They were therefore a Church in order to meeting, even when they met not, and are at home, in respect that the Union and Bond to the same Laws and Ordinances, still remained. They were not a Church simply, because they met, or when they met; but they, the same Persons were to meet, because they were a Church in a stated and constant Relation. And suitably to this, he elsewhere says of them; *when you are gathered together, to cast out such an one*, 1 Cor. 5. 4, 5. because they were to meet as a Body, in a constant way. And upon this fixed Relation of each, unto the whole, the Apostle lays, upon this same Church, this as a Duty, as to meet for Worship, so to stay each for other, in 1 *Cor.* 11. 33. and so not to meet in promiscuous several companies, (as Men at Ordinaries) for the Sacrament:

Though it be not ὅλος *in* Acts 20. *yet 'tis so elsewhere in other places.*

There

Ch. III. There was therefore a Set Company, known to each other, obliged to meet in one, in a constant way, and so was an whole Church, in a fixed Relation.

And such were all the Churches the Apostles wrote unto, and gave Ordinances forth unto; *So I ordain in all the Churches*, 1 Cor. 7. 17. *we have no such Custom*, (saith he, 1 Cor. 11. 16.) *nor the Churches of Christ*: Whom he praiseth for, *keeping the Traditions he gave them*, as 1 *Cor*, 11. 2. and rejoyceth in their Order, and whom he blameth for occasion of Divisions, in respect of their publick *MEETINGS*, as *ver*. 18. 17. 21, 22. Now all this argues, that as Churches, these were Bodies and Societies, in a fixt and setled Relation; For his manner of writing is parallel with that, as if a King or his Superior Officers, should write in his Name to all Corporations, Shires, and Bodies politick, giving out Laws and Proclamations, and edicts to be observed by them in their Assemblies; which if they were not fixed and setled Bodies, but only unfixt and uncertain fluid Assemblies, they were not meet Subjects, capable thereof, nor of Orders to Regulate them. This also the State of the Seven Churches of *Asia*, whom Christ directeth those seven Epistles unto, with several Inscriptions to the several Angels of those Churches, it evidently argues, they were fixed Bodies, having each their Elders an Angel, Collectively taken as the use of that Phrase in that Book is) in a special relation; to whom therefore, as to the Mayor or Aldermen in a setled Corporation, the Letters are directed. And he blames them, as Bodies or Societies of Men fixedly incorporate, for sins passed in their publick Transactions, as they were a Body; as suffering *Jezabel* to Teach, *&c*. And further, he threatneth to remove the Candlestick, *Rev*. 2. 5. that is, their Church-State, as they were a standing Seat and Subject, of the Ordinances of the Gospel; as the *Jewish* Condlestick was. For the seven Candlesticks, are the seven Churches, *Rev*. 1. 20. As these Candlesticks were these Churches, distinguished each from other, so these Churches were the Saints and Elders, as Candlesticks cast, and moulded into a set and standing Form; and so thereby made distinct each from other, though all made out of the same lump of the Church Universal; therefore chosen out as standing patterns of the Frame, and Fabrick of other Churches then extant, or to come. And as that and the like threatning, concerns Succession, so it further argues a fixed Combination, that is the Subject of Guilt; for that Combination continuing, though the Persons then alive, should all die: Yet if the same sins continued in Persons that succeed Members of that Combination, that Church or Body, in respect of the fixed State of it continuing, would inherit it. For by reason of such a fixed Union, or stated Society or Corporation, it comes to pass, that not only a company of Men are one Body, when their Assemblings or Meetings are not, though in order to such Meetings, as well as when they are; but farther, that they continue the same Body to Succession, and so each of these the same Church or Candlestick, notwithstanding it may suffer alteration in encrease or lessening, in respect of particular Persons. Yea, though the Matter, the Gold, the Persons that now make up one of these Candlesticks, should all be removed by Death, or otherwise yet the Candlestick continued the same, because the same setled Church-State continued; as in this respect, the Company of *Mercers*, or any Corporation, is the same it was an Hundred years ago, because of this setled Order and Union; and is capable of being threatned to have their Charter taken away, their Corporation removed, or the main priviledges of it some way nullified, though the Original Persons do not still dwell in the same City.

2. And as in respect of publick Worship, so in respect of Judicature; the Churches then were Bodies cast into fixed Relations. This made the Church of *Corinth*, (as 1 *Cor*. 1. 2. 'tis called) a Seat and Subject of Judicature and Government, 1 *Cor*. 5. 12. Do not ye Judge them that are within? And what have I to do to Judge them that are without? Here was first a Set and certain Judicature among themselves, as the word Judging imports: Secondly, a Body within which who ever was, he came under this Judicature. For they Judged them within, as Corporations or Bodies politick, use to do them within themselves. There was something then that made a special Relation, which was the ground of their power to Judge this Person; and brought him within the compass of their Jurisdiction. And it is further expressed with a denial of power, over others that are without; *What have I to do to Judge them that are without?* I that am an Apostle, that have the largest Jurisdiction and Commis-

Commission, what have I to do in it? And his power and theirs did differ; for though he might Judge as occasion was, in any Church where he came; yet he lays it a special peculiar Duty upon them, to have power over them that were within themselves; and that power belonged unto them, as the other belonged unto him. And the Persons that are said to be *within*, to that Church of *Corinth*, to whom he writes, could not be the Church Universal; for then the Church of *Corinth*, should have had power to have judged all or any other Churches of Saints in the World, as well as it self, and so a part had power over the whole. There was thirdly a duty lay upon some Persons among them, to whom this belonged, *Do not ye judge* and a sin that lay upon them for their neglect, which lay not upon another company *Do not ye judge them within*? And have you hitherto neglected it?

3. Thirdly, The special relation of Elders to their Churches, and the Members in particular Churches among themselves, doth evidence, that not any company of Christians, but such as embodied together into, and setled in the Order of a Church, are the Subject and Seat of this Grand Charter of the keys, or the Ecclesiastical power.

1. The Relation of the Members among themselves, doth evidence it, 1 *Cor.* 12. 27. where he descends from the Discourse of Union of the Members, in the Universal Body of Christ, which he calls Christ, *ver.* 12. to a more particular enforcement of the Duties of that special Relation, that was amongst the Members of that Church, as a particular Body to Christ; and so to obliege each to other, not only by that general Law of the Universal Relation; but further by vertue of a more special one, contracted among themselves, being made a distinct and entire Body to Christ in particular, by being one Church. And so the Obligation was not only doubled upon them, but further the proportion of the general Tye, (which was more diffused) was contracted into a narrow and lesser compass; and as holding analogy with it, was so made stronger and more vigorous. Thus we understand those words to be a special Application of that general Doctrine promised in the former part of the Chapter, which Treats of Christ's Body, the Church Universal: *Now ye*, the Church of *Corinth*, *are the Body of Christ*, and *Members in particular*, in a more special Relation; and so owe all those Duties in a special manner, one to another. In this respect also, sometimes when the Apostle hath occasion to mention a Member of a particular Church, he specifies it with a special distinctive Relation, Epaphras, *who is one of you*, Colos. 4. 12. And Rom. 16. 1. Phebe *our Sister*, *who is a Servant of the Church*, *which is at* Cenchrea, is commended to Communion with them, as standing in special relation to that Church. So when he speaks of Elders, a special relation to a particular Church is intimated, which could not be, unless those Churches had been fixed Bodies for State; and not Promiscuous Assemblies, in respect of acts of meeting. Thus the same *Epaphras*, as to his common relation of Membership, in that Church of *Colossians* is mentioned, *who is one of you*, as afore, *chap.* 4 12. and also as to his more special relation, as an Officer of that Church, *who is for you a Faithful Minister*, of whom they had been taught the Gospel, *as ye also learned of* Epaphras, *who is for you a Faithful Minister*; and in a special relation your Minister. He still held his relation of a Minister for them, though for the present occasionally implyed with *Paul*. Thus the Ordinary Elders were set over particular Churches, and so had a special relation to those Churches, as Elders of them; and the Relation was the Rise and Foundation of their call to be Elders: As *Acts* 14. 23. The Apostles who were general Elders in all Churches, by vertue of Apostolical Commission, Ordained ordinary Elders in every Church; and these Elders were specially appropriated εἰς τοὺς *to them*, and were to take care of that whole Flock, which appertained to them, *Acts* 20. 28. and so they were intrusted with the care of them, and to watch over them, as those that were to give an *account to God for their Souls*; and therefore they were their peculiar charge, *Heb.* 13. 17. And in respect of this Relation, the Holy Ghost directs those Epistles mentioned, *Rev. ch.* 2. 2, 3. to the several particular Angels of those Churches in *Asia*, who therefore had their Churches assigned to them; for which they were to give an account, and more accountable for their sins in which they are accordingly blamed.

And these Elders could not have a special setled relation, if these Churches were not cast into a fixt setled State, as Churches under them; for the one, are relations

to

Ch. III. to the other; and therefore the Holy Ghost directs his Epistles to the Churches also, *chap.* 1. as well as to the Angels of these Churches, for in their relations, these two were Commensurable.

4. And Lastly, These Elders and these Churches, were formed up into fixt and setled Presbyteries, so 1 *Tim.* 3. And the Acts of Ordination, were not Attributed simply to an indefinite company of Elders, (as promiscuously, or any way met) but to a Presbytery, which imports not simply an Act of meeting, by a company of Elders; but (as the word is Paraphrased by our Translators, with respect to the Jewish *Syredrim*) *the Estate of Elders*, Act. 19. 5. As if we should say, the Common-Council did ordain so and so, it notes not out simply, a meeting of a company of Wise Men in such a City, but as met in an united Body. And if these Presbyteries were a fixed and united company of Elders, then the Churches must needs be also, to whom they were a Presbytery. And so this is a further Argument than that former, which was drawn from the special relation of Elders, singly or personally, or loosly taken; which was ordinarily fixed, to be a setled Church. But if further, we consider these Elders, as united into a Presbytery, it yet more importeth this. For though it should be granted to be a Truth, which some affirm, that every Elder, were an Elder indefinitely of the Church Universal; yet every Presbytery, is not a Presbytery to the whole Universal, (no more than every Common-Council in each Corporation, is a Common-Council for the Kingdom; though each Burgess met therein must be capable of being a Burgess in Parliament for the whole Kingdom;) but as specificated, such must relate only to some particular Church. If therefore the Government were seated, as our Brethren would have it) in Presbyteries, yet these Bodies must be fixed and incorporated: Or if in Churches with their Elders, (or else no where) yet if their Elders were Presbyteries to their several Churches, (as is evident they must be) then those Churches also were fixed Bodies, over which they were placed. Yea, and the Scripture doth in *Terminis*, in plain Terms, Attribute the Act of Ordination to a Presbytery; that is, a company of Elders united in their Relation, and in that Action; and as much to this their united relation, as to their being Elders. And so the validity and legality of the Act, depends as much upon this, as upon their being Elders met; as if a Man should say, such a thing was done by the Common-Council, certainly he means thereby, that it was done not only by Men that are Councellors promiscuously in that sense, as Lawyers are called to give counsel, as occasion is singly or apart; but it imports, they met as a Common-Council so imbodyed, that the Act hath a Legality, an Authority therefrom. And the Validity as much depends upon that incorporation of theirs, according to a Law, as upon their being Men, and so qualified.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

That Christ in his Institution of Ecclesiastical power, Matth. 18. *hath granted this power of the Keys, only to Saints embodied; and united in the State and Order of a Congregational Church. That though it should be granted, That Christ in this Institution, had a regard to the constitution of the Church of the Jews, yet it would be evident, that he intended a Congregational Church.*

Matth. 18. 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20.

Moreover, 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 unto the Church: But if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee, as an Heathen Man, and a Publican. Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on Earth, shall be bound in Heaven: And whatsoever ye shall loose on Earth, shall be loosed in Heaven. Again, I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on Earth, as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father, which is in Heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my Name, there am I in the midst of them.

THere are three things may be proved out of this place. The first is that Church-power, is by Christ's Institution. Secondly, That a particular Congregation is there meant, and so we have an Institution for it. Then Thirdly, That suppose there were a Subordination of Churches, above particular Churches, that yet the particular Church should finally Excommunicate; and that the supposed Superior Orders of Presbyteries, should not take it out of their Hands.

1. The first is plain, that here is an Institution of Church-power, as is evident by comparing it with, *Matth.* 16. 18, 19. where it is said, *I will Build my Church, and I will give thee the Keys.* He speaks indefinitely That place affordeth this Evidence, that Christ is the only Builder of his Church, (*Every House is Built by some one*, Heb. 3.4.) and of all things about the House; *The Builder of all things is God*, (saith he) Namely Christ, who is God, as he had proved in *chap.* 2. having spoken this indefinitely in, *Matth.* 16. 18, 19. here in *Matth.* 18. 15, 16. he particularly determines the Seat, and Subject of this Ecclesiastical power. Here in *Matth.* 18. 17. Christ uttereth himself definitely, *Tell the Church.* The *Jus proprietatis*, is in *Matth.* 16 19. the Right of propriety is stated in the Right of Administration. The *Jus Executionis*, in *Matth.* 18. 16. He doth not give it to Saints and Officers simply, but as formed up into Bodies. *Matth* 16. Holdeth forth, that they are to be Saints, making Confession as *Peter* did; there is the matter of a Church, to whom the keys is given, but *Matth.* 18. holdeth forth, how that these Saints are to be formed up into several Bodies or Churches, and so to execute this power. Therefore he speaks of them, as being *gathered together in his Name*, Mat. 18. 20. Their being Saints, or Faithful, is not enough; but Order is to be added to Faith, (as in *Colos.* 2. 5. which Order is held forth here, in *Matth.* 18. *ver.* 15. to 20.

2. The words of Christ here in Matth. 18. 18. *Verily I say unto you*, which are institutive; and again I say unto you.

1. That word *Amen*, or *verily*, *Est idem quod firmum & ratum*, shews *the thing to be firm and ratified*, as *Amen* doth also; but set to our Prayers. And here so it is taken, for it is with a promise of power from him, confirming and ratifying of such meetings as he speaks of. And a promise to any thing that is beyond the Law of Nature, implies an Institution: For what is an Institution? But a setting up something with promise, to have a Blessing in it beyond the Efficacy of the thing.

2. *Again I say unto you*, saith he, *ver.* 19. The word again is *Additionis*, *moreover*, a Superadded Expression, as Matth. 4. 7. *again it is written.*

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3. The words, *I say*, are institutive; or commanding with an Efficacy. As they are used in *Luke* 5.24. *I say unto thee arise.* And if they be only Assertory (as some say, they are) yet being spoken by the Son, of his own House, in his Mouth, they are Edificatory, or Institutive of it.

4. Jesus Christ giveth power to a Brother to Admonish; and that in an orderly way, in order to Excommunication. Then bids him take two or three, and then tell the Church. And it is not a matter of indulgency or liberty, or privilege, (as *Cameron* observeth) that his Speech importeth, for that is, when as there is a benefit to ones self by it, which if I will forego, I may; but what is spoken here is, *per modum Imperij, by way of command*, for it is for the gaining of a Brother. And it is in order also to a Court-Sentence, when it is brought to the Church, and the word, *Established*, Matth. 18. 16. that is, *the Sentence shall be firm, and fixed, or ratified*, confirms this to be his design and meaning.

5. To reckon a Brother as an Heathen, if obstinate after this course is taken with him, is an Act of power; which if Christ had not given, should not have absolutely necessitated it.

6. He saith, *where two or three are gathered in my Name*, therefore it is an Ordinance. What makes other things an Ordinance; but that they are done in the Name and Power of Christ? Is Baptizing in his Name, an Ordinance; and so gathering together in his Name also? And in his Name is all one, as in his Power and Authority, by Commission from him; and to such ends and purposes, as he hath appointed, whereof one is to throw out an offending Brother. He speaks as the *Messiah*, that did anew form his Church, and put a new Title upon their gathering together; calls it *Assembled in my Name*, as the *Messiah* is come in the Flesh; And whereas before he did Authorize the whole Nation, and made the Trust unto them, he Reduceth it now to a fewer company, to two or three gathered together in his Name. All Assemblies, if they be not Established by Authority, are unlawful, *Acts* 19.39. Therefore these Assemblies that Christ here speaks of, must be Established by the Law of Christ.

And thus much may suffice to shew in general, that let it be meant in Church-power, what ever it is, it is by Institution.

And when he saith, Go tell the Church, he imports Authority and Power, placed in that company he calls a Church, with which he invests them. The word *Church* in this, is an Authoritative Word; and the Authority, the Church hath, is his, and whom should she have it from, but from him? And therefore in 1 *Cor.* 5. 4. They are *said to be gathered together in his Name, and in his Power.* And by comparing this place and that together, it appears, that his intent is both institutive and directive, only with this difference, that in *Matth.* 18. Jesus Christ speaks by way of directing a Brother what to do, when he is offended; and upon that occasion, mentions what Authority he would give unto his Church, and *Assemblies of his Saints gathered together in his Name*; *But in the* other Text, 1 *Cor.* 5. *Paul* gives forth the direction to the Church it self, calling upon them to perform their Duty, according to the Power and Authority given them by Christ. As an Apostle, he commands them when gathered together, to deliver such an one unto Satan, and (saith he) *do ye not judge them that are within*? That is, have ye not power to do it from Christ, is it not a Duty lies upon you? And he Parallels it with that power himself, had according to proportion. Now the power he had all, I grant to be Institutive, for otherwise, what power could one Man assume over the Churches of Christ? And so likewise without the like Institution, what power could a Church assume to deliver a Man to Satan, which is out of their Natural and Moral power to do?

I shall now Demonstrate, that a particular Congregation is meant in this, *Matth.* 18. and that a particular Congregation is there Instituted, and Instituted too, as having that power of Excommunication.

Now that a particular Congregation is here meant, is proved first out of the place. The Church intended here, is a Church appointed for Worship, as well as for Discipline. Not only because that meeting to Pray, is mentioned as well as to correct Offences; but because if that be a Church which is appointed for Worship, it were strange if Christ should in his first Institution, mention that Church which is only for Discipline, and not that which is for Worship also. 2. Out of Presbyterian Principles.

And 1.

And 1. Out of the place it is apparent, that a particular Congregation is meant, take *Church* to be interpreted by whatsoever you will, that Christ alluded to them in use. Book II.

There were many unformed Sects, that had several companies belonging to them, that were of the same Principles and Regular Order; who although they held a general Communion with the Church of the *Jews*, yet the manner of these Sects, was to have their Synagogues and Schools, (as *Paul* was brought up at the feet of *Gamaliel*; and we read of the School of *Tyrannus*.) And if any of them Transgressed the Principles of their Order and Sect, they were brought (as *Grotius* saith) before the whole; and so they were reproved, ἐνώπιον πάντων, that is. *before all.* And now if this Allusion be to such a Church or Company, then the People are taken in, such as should meet and hear; and so then, Jesus Christ so fixed his Institution, as the People as well as the Officers met, for even those Sects, supposed Guides, who did bring it to the whole company of that Sect, whereto a Man belonged Secondly, if the Allusion were to this, then according to the liberty that was then given, of having Disciples, our Saviour Christ had then a Church upon Earth, which he spoke actually unto. For he had by him twelve Apostles, and Disciples, who after grew unto one Hundred and twenty. And therefore according to the Law of those times, he directs them, that if any offences were among them, after two or three Witnesses taken, they should tell it to this Church. Although *Judas* had sinned, yet he had not so sinned, as to have Witnesses against him, until his betraying of Christ, and then (as our Saviour Christ Prophesied of him, *John* 15. 6.) he was cast out as a withered Branch. And then, 3. That Phrase *of gathering together in my Name*, is an Allusion to that custom in those times; for the manner was then, to call Disciples by the Names of those they followed, and their meetings by their Names, as *Herodians* were so stiled, from the Name of *Herod*. *In my Name* (saith Christ) that is, such as profess me, and set up such Schools in [illegible] Name, are to observe the Rules which I set them, for their Order, and Gover[illegible]t. Christ here expressed how his Churches should, after his Death and Ascension into Heaven, be ordered under the New Testament. As it is said, the *Scripture foreseeing that God would justifie the* Gentiles *through Faith*, (Gal. 3. 8.) made the promise unto *Abraham*: And as God foreseeing, that when the *Israelites* came into *Canaan*, they should live in Cities, and be a Kingdom or a Nation, accordingly Ordered beforehand their Government, and gave Laws aforehand, for that Nation of the *Jews* as such, when they should be in their own Land: So here (the Church of the New Testament, being to be multiplied and scattered, that they could not assemble in one, as that National Church of the *Jews* did) Christ aforehand speaks, what he would, have his Churches under the New Testament to be; and his Institutions are suited to what in his Counsels, and Providence he had Determined, should be; and he knew aforehand would fall out.

2. If Secondly, The Allusion be to the *Jewish* way, that was appointed by God, and had been of Old; then either the *Synedrim* is meant, or the Synagogues with the Officers there. But in the first place, the *Synedrim* is not meant; for (as *Cameron* saith) that is never called *Ecclesia, a Church*, no not by the *Septuagint*. But be it, that this word had been used of it, yet private offences, (of which Christ here speaks) were never brought to the *Synedrim*; but Christ speaks this of private offences; for it is, *if he offend thee, then take two witnesses*, and then tell it to the Church. Whereas there were but four Cases which belonged immediately unto the *Synedrim*, and those were Cases of Difficulty, when the private Judges in the Cities, could not end the controversy, who yet had full power to have done it. And then in the third place, *Cameron's* Reason, why the *Synedrim* is not meant, is good, because the *Evangelists* do still call it πρεσβυτέριον τῆ λάῳ and that now only, Christ should call *Ecclesia, a Church*, when it is no where used by the *Septuagint*, under that Name, would be very strange. Secondly, if his Allusion be to the Government of every Town, this makes for the way of Congregational Churches. For every Village hath their Government entire within themselves, Deut. 16. 18. *in all their Gates*. If it were a small Town, there were three Elders, (to which Christ here Alludeth) and in the Cities one and twenty. And from the Towns to the Cities, there was not an Appeal, but immediately to the *Synedrim*.

3. His Allusion rather is unto the Synagogues in every Town, which were the Ecclesiastical State. The Books of *Moses* were Read in every City, in the Syna-

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gogues, *Acts* 5. 21. For every City had their Synagogue, and so then in this Sense, *to tell the Church*, was to tell that particular Synagogue, (whereof they were Members) both to People and Rulers. Now that Christ alludeth to this appears.

1. Because that Excommunication was exercised in their Synagogues, not in the *Synedrim*. Indeed the *Synedrim* might make a Law as a Rule, according to which Men should be Excommunicated ; but the Synagogues executed it, thereof it is called, *Casting out of the Synagogues*, John 16. 2. And Synagogues were not governed by an Association, but each Synagogue had it's Rulers, *John* 9. 22. and in John 16.2. *They shall cast you out of the Synagogues*. And a Synagogue was a particular Assembly, such as Congregations now, Luke 7. 5. He hath *Built us a Synagogue*, Mar. 1. 21. *Christ entred into the Synagogue and Taught*. And when a Man was cast out of the Synagogue, and would come into the Temple, they used to say to him, when he would offer to enter into the Temple, (although they refused him not to enter thither, for he held Communion still with the Temple) *May he who inhabits this Temple, give thee an Heart to hearken to the words of thy Brethren, that so they may receive thee.*

2. In every one of these Synagogues, there were two or three Officers. They had Rulers, *Acts* 13. 14, 15. *Acts* 18. 7, 17. And therefore Christ alluding unto this, saith, *If two or three agree*. They used to have three at least, that a Major Vote might cast it among the Rulers. And they used to have two or three Admonitions, afore they cast out, and thirty days between every Admonition.

3. In a manner, all other Authority was taken from them ; but what they exercised in their Synagogues thus, or in the *Synedrim*, which dealt only in the great matters of Blasphemy ; whereas this Authority of Synagogues, was for offences of Brethren ; and therefore it is still said, they should bring them into their Synagogues, when they questioned them, as *Luke* 12. 11. The *Romans* took away all other power from them. But here they could inflict punishments, *They shall Scourge you in their Synagogues*, it was the place of their punishment, so *Matth.* 23. 34. they whipt in them, for they had no other Courts left, *Acts* 26. 11. And they had Rulers, for the casting Men out from thence. And perhaps these meetings, in the Synagogues, are those which are called *Synedria*, in *Matth.* 10. 17. And in Luke 12. 11. *when they bring you into the Synagogues*, is mentioned first, and then, *unto Magistrates and Powers*, Namely, the Civil Magistrate, which in *Matth.* 10. 17. is rendred thus ; *They will deliver you up to the Council*, or *Synedrim*, and they will Scourge you in their Synagogues ; and then follows their being brought to the Civil Magistrate in the next verse, *and shall bring you before Kings and Governours.* And some Interpreters say, that the Allusion is here in *Matth.* 18. 17. to that Synagogue Government and Worship, *Ecclesia* and *Synagogus*, being used Promiscuously.

4. These Synagogues were *Oratories*, places of Prayer and Preaching, therefore Christ doth also Subjoyn here, *if two meet together, to ask or to pray*. It is not meant only of praying, when they Administred Discipline ; for it is praying about any business, for they used to Worship and Pray in the Synagogues, as well as to cast out of the Synagogues ; their Worship and their Discipline, there being of equal extent. And the word that is used in this Text, of *Mat.* 18. 19. *συμφώνησιν shall agree*, signifies a meeting, as well as a consent, so *Gen.* 14. 3. And the words also that Christ useth, ver. 19. *Again, or moreover I say unto you*, (having spoken of Discipline afore, and now of Prayer) do hold forth the Scope of this Church, to be as well for Prayer, as for Discipline ; and so to be understood of such a Synagogue, as was both for Discipline, and Worship, or Prayer. And then the Addition of the last words, ver. 20. *For where two or three are gathered together in my Name, I am in the midst of them* ; is the general conclusion to both. So that the meaning is, that whether they meet for Worship or Prayer, (of which he had spoken, *ver.* 19.) or for Discipline, (of which he had spoken, *ver.* 17, 18.) Christ is in the midst of them. Now as our Saviour Christ's allusion was unto that Synagogue, Government, and Worship, then extant, so particular Churches and Congregations under the Gospel, in answer thereunto, are exprest unto us, under the word Synagogue. They have that Name, because unto them did Christ allude ; and they suited his Institution under the New Testament, *Jam.* 22. If one come into your Assembly, it is in the Greek, *εἰς τὴν συναγωγὴν into your Synagogue* ; He speaks of Synagogues for Worship, as

as in *Heb.* 10.25. forsake not the assembling of your selves together. It is there ἐπισυναγωγὴν *meeting in a Synagogue*, which is a particular meeting for Worship, which is therefore called *the House*, that God hath under the New Testament, *ver.* 20. whereof Christ is said to be the High Priest. Book II.

And indeed the analogy between their Synagogues and our Congregations, holdeth exceeding far. They hold two or three Officers, that were Rulers of the Synagogue; and we profess for kind, that there are three sort of Officers, *Pastors, Teachers*, and *Elders*. And the *Jews* in a manner for the substance, use the same expression concerning their Synagogues, they had two Wise Men to Teach, and one to Discern; and therefore Christ saith, *where two or three are gathered together*. And to be an Heathen and a Publican, and to be cast out of the Synagogue, was all one; and the word *Synagogue* and *Ecclesia*, or *Church*, are all one in the Septuagint; and so consequently to be cast out of the Church, corresponds to their Ejection out of the Synagogue.

And to this hath Christ framed the constitution of his Church, under the New Testament, that it should be both for Worship and Government, as the Synagogues were within themselves. And although these Assemblies are called Synagogues as for their extent; yet they are called Temples, as for their priviledge. And this constitution of Christ, suited with the primitive times of the Gospel; for the *Jews* being Dispersed in several Nations, they had Synagogues in all Cities, and an entire Government within those Synagogues. Yea, even in *Judea*, in some one great City, there was but one Synagogue, as in *Capernaum*, Mar. 1.21. Thus at *Antioch* too, the *Jews* had a *Synagogue*, Acts 13. 14, 15. as also at *Thessolanica*, Acts 17. 1. and at *Corinth*, Acts 18. 4. where the *Greeks* and the *Jews* were met in one. Now the Christians being to be called out of all places; and being Dispersst, as these *Jews* were in all Nations, Christ suited a Government to these conditions of the Synagogue-Government, and answerably fixed his Institution of Churches, in imitation of the *Jews* Dispersst, who had Synagogues amongst all the *Gentiles*, in their several Cities. Christ chose not the legal way of a National Church, or of a *Synedrim*, or of going up to one Temple, for a whole Nation, but he fixed on Synagogues, as fitting his turn best; for he chose Churches out of *Nations*; and so did not hold to one National Church of the *Jews*; and therefore we read of *Churches* in *Judea* it self, and not *Church*, Gal. 1.22.

And to strengthen this assertion, it may be observed, that our Saviour Christ did not take nor follow the Institution of the Old Testament, but the Appendixes of it, as for Example; In the Lord's Supper he Instituted the Bread and Wine, answerably to the Bread and Wine which were appendixes of the Passover, and he refuseth the Paschal Lamb, and chooseth the Bread and Wine. So likewise as the *Jews* used to Baptize *Proselites*: So he refuseth Circumcision, and takes that Baptism. Thus also as the Synagogues were, as it were Chappels of ease to the Great Church, the Temple, where Moral Worship only was: he lets the Stately Temple-Worship go, and the glory of a National Government, and chooseth this mean way of a Synagogue, but yet endows it with the priviledge of a Temple; that so whereas, before God was Worshipped in the Mount, and in the Temple, he is now Worshipped as much, and as truly, and as spiritually every where, and in every Synagogue having the same priviledge. And indeed Christ's way in the Ordinances and Institutions of the Gospel was to choose that which in comparison, was before to the *Jews*, and to the World, foolishness; thus he choose the foolishness of Preaching, and in stead of taking the High Priests and Rulers, he takes Fishermen, *&c.*

4. But yet though Christ might speak in the Language of the Old Testament, it is not necessary that his meaning should be, that the Churches in the New Testament, should be formed according as the Old were; but the contrary. Our Saviour Christ had said before in Matth. 16. 18. *I will build my Church*; and as he speaks of New Keys that are to be given, so by that he prepares their minds to a perswasion, that he would have a New Church Distinct from the former. And then afterward, here in *Matth.* 18. 17. he tells them more distinctly, that they should *tell the Church*. And if it be said, that they understand not what he meant by the word Church, or that they could not apprehend, that he meant by it a particular Congregation; and that they knew not too, what he meant by Keys, for certainly they knew not the particular Ordinances, which he intended under that general expression, *The Keys of* Heaven; and so neither knew they what this New Church, in *Matth.* 18. (to which they

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2. Our Saviour Christ had according to the liberty that then was given, unto all several Sects, (though we call not his such) built a Church, he had a little Flock, as he calls it: And as he began to Institute Baptism, and began to Institute the Lord's Supper afore he dyed, so to Institute this Church, he began it as other Ordinances afore his Death, and he did cast *Judas* out of it. And

3. The manner is oftentimes to speak in the Language of the Old Testament, when the same thing is not meant. As when Christ speaks of the Person offending, *Matth.* 5. 22. He expresseth the Degrees of punishment to several sins, under the Names of three Courts amongst the *Jews*, and yet he meaneth Spiritual Degrees of punishment. Thus too, in 1 *Cor.* 9. 13. The whole service of the Sanctuary is called the *Altar*, (*He that serveth at the Altar, must live of the Altar*) yet there is no such Altar erected amongst us, as was amongst the *Jews*. And the Prophets also prophesying of the times of the Gospel, spake of our Ordinances, under the notion of the Old Testament, yet meant other Ordinances, anew to be Instituted; so in Isa. 66. 23. *They shall go from one new Moon, unto another.* Though under the Gospel, we have not Monthly Feasts and Meetings, as they had; yet the Meetings that we have, are exprest thereby. And so now here Christ speaks of a Church, that as the *Jews* had a Church so likewise under the New Testament, there should be a Church, to which Offences should be brought; but that Officers alone should be that Church, (supposing that the Ruling Officers, are called the Church in the Old Testament) it followeth not. For the word *Presbytery*, which was given to the Eldership of the Great *Synedrim*, of the whole Nation of the *Jews*; is now given to the Presbytery of every Congregation. So as though he useth the same word to express the Institution of the New Churches of the Gospel by, yet it follows not, that it is of the same kind with the Old, or that it runneth in the same way. But

4. We are rather to Interpret it by what kind of Churches we read afterwards, that the Apostles Erected. As *Moses* was Interpreted by the Prophets, so is Christ's mind in this to be known by his Apostles; for the Spirit came on them, and did Reveal unto them Christ's Mind and Intention. The Tryal therefore will ly upon this, what Bodies, and consisting of whom, are called a Church in the Acts of the Apostles, and in their Epistles.

What that Church is, upon which the Institution of Christ falleth, is not to be argued meerly out of the Analogy of the Old Testament, for that will not set up an Institution in the New. But when we have found out what manner of Church in the New Testament, Jesus Christ hath Instituted, we are then to consider the Analogy of that Form thereunto, so far forth, as Christ hath applied it.

Now both in the Phrase of the New Testament, Assemblies consisting of Elders and People, and of the Saints, are called Churches, and in the words also of, *Matt.* 18. 20. *where two or three are gathered together in my Name*, Christ tells us his meaning of a Church. And unto this Church say we, doth the Analogy of all the Church under the Old Testament hold, if you take the due proportion; and as the excellent stories and allusions in the Old Testament, are brought into the New, to set forth things that come under the New, in the Book of the *Revelation*, in their several proportions, (therefore speaking of *Rome*, he calleth it Spiritual *Sodom*, and *Egypt* and *Babylon*, &c.) so we find that all the Types of the Old Testament, are applied unto these Assemblies. Thus as to the Temple, which was the Seat of Worship, and the Sacrifices there; Congregational Assemblies, hath carryed away the analogy of

of them by Christ's Institution; for they only are the fixed publick Seats of Worship, where Spiritual Sacrifices are offered. In Congregations the living Stones are built up together, to offer up living Sacrifices acceptable unto God, as in 2 *Pet.* 2.5. *Eph.* 2.22. And unto these Assemblies, are the same promises made, that were made to the whole Nation of the *Jews*, when they were a Church incamped in the Wilderness, *upon all their Assemblies, shall be a Cloud, and a Pillar of Fire*, Prophecying of the Gospel, saith the Prophet *Isa.* Isa. 4. 5. And all the priviledges which that Nation had, as a Church, (take them in a Spiritual Respect) hath every Congregation of Saints now. This therefore is called the House of God, over which Christ is an High Priest, *Heb.* 10. which in *ver.* 25. he Interprets to be the assembling of themselves together; In the compass of such an Assembly, also hath Jesus Christ contracted Appeals sufficient, for first (says he) *tell him of his Fault thy self*, then *take two or three*, and *then go tell the Church*; and then he is bound in Heaven, as the Supreamest Judicature, *Matth.* 18. 15, to 19. And God hath so advanced the State of the New Testament, above that of the Old; that as the Glory of the Second Temple, exceeded the First; so doth the Glory of the Saints now in these Assemblies, excell all former. Every Believer is a Priest now; yea, the Allusion in the company of Saints assembled for Worship, in *Rev.* 4. is unto the Twenty four Priests that were over the Twenty four Companies of Priests And the Officers now are, as the four Beasts in *Ezekiel*, Rev. 4. 8. and are as Angels, rather than Priests, called therefore the Angels of the Churches, *Rev.* 1. 20. The Saints all are a Royal Nation; and the Name of the City of God, is written upon every Assembly. The great Presbytery or *Synedrim* of the People, is the Presbytery of every Congregation. Every Church is a City unto God, it is the City of the Living God; it is the Holy City, and hath a Government within it self, of Elders within its own Gates. Yea, here is the Synagogue-Government also, unto which the Allusion also is; and these Assemblies are so called, as I proved in the foregoing Chapter. Yea, and as God chooseth the mean things of the World under the Gospel, so he chose that Synagogue Frame; because the Worship therein was wholy Spiritual and Moral; it was not the Seat of Ceremonial Worship, as was the Temple. The Government of the Synagogues was natural, to cast any Person out of themselves, as all Bodies have by the Law of Nature, with a punishment suitable annexed, *viz.* to keep such from the esteem of Worshippers; and that they should be accounted as Heathens and Publicans. Thus Christ hath chosen a way more Spiritual, more Natural, suitablable to the Communion of Saints, that hath less Pomp and Glory in it. He hath taken this *Bethlehem*, that was the least, the lowest of the Governments amongst them; and hath made it the greatest, and endowed it with the priviledges of all the rest. It hath both National and Temple priviledges, and *Synedrim* priviledges also, it hath the Spirituality of them all. There they have the Lord's Supper, in stead of the Passover; There they have the Altar, 1 *Cor.* 10. 16, 17, &c. what glorious things are spoken of, in Jer. 3. 14, 15, 16. *You shall say no more, the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord, neither shall it come to mind*, &c. *I will give you Pastors, according to mine own Heart, which shall feed you with Knowledge and Understanding*; and *I will take you, one of a City, and two of a Tribe, call them out, and bring them to* Zion. That *Zion*, is where the Pastors are Teaching, therefore meant of Congregations. He doth not take Nations, but Select out of Nations, out of Cities and Tribes, Saints here and there; and formeth them up into Congregations, because they have Pastors that feed them; and in such Congregations, is the feeding of the Pastors with Knowledge and Understanding. And this succeedeth the Ark of the Covenant, having the priviledges thereof. It is a Prophecy, of the calling of the *Jews* under the Gospel.

And yet if that Judicial Government, (as we may so call it) that was in Jury, were the Pattern, of all Church-Government future, although it would indeed then, by the analogy of it, erect a National Assembly, over the lesser Churches; yet even that would conduce to the Establishment of more, to the Congregational way we contend for; than our Brethren will yield them, and will militate against the Presbyterian Pattern, as it is practised, and that in these particulars. For

1. First, Each Town, as well as each City, had all Government within their Gates, as much as Cities; and the Elders in the Towns, were not to Appeal to the Elders in the Cities; but immediately to the National Assembly. In *Ezra* 10. 14. there

Ch.IV. there were the Rulers of all the Congregation, (which was all the whole Nation) mentioned, and the Elders of every City, and Judges thereof; City according to the *Hebrews*, was every little Town. Thus *Moses is said to be read in every City in the Synagogues*, that is, in every Town; for they had Synagogues in Villages, *Acts* 15. 21. In *Deut.* 16. 18. (saith he) *Judges and Officers shall thou make thee in all thy Gates*, that is, in every Town; and therefore the *Rabbins* do say, that if it were a big City, where there were one Hundred and twenty Families in it, there were twenty three Sat in the Gate, if it were less, then but three; for there was no Court consisted of less.

2. Secondly, Those Towns were not Ruled by a Combination, but had a Government intire within themselves, unless things were too hard for them.

3. Thirdly, The Appeals unto the *Sanhedrim*, was only for the Decision of Law-Causes, in a Doctrinal way, (as if that the Judges of *Westminster-Hall*, should enquire of the Parliament, for the meaning of a Statute; and were bound to pronounce Sentence, according to their Interpretation of the Law) though still the Judgment of the matter of Fact, and to pronounce the Sentence it self, was to be done by Authority and Jurisdiction of each Town, like as we also contend, that all Censures should be by particular Congregations.

Obj. If so, then their Government was not Uniform.

Ans. Yes, only in lesser proportions in the smaller Towns, they had three Rulers, and in their Cities, and greater Towns twenty three. The Law of God not Determining, how many Elders should make up the Judicature, either in the one, or in the other. As also in Congregations, God hath not determined how many, but according to their proportion and necessity, hath left a liberty of choosing a greater, or lesser number.

CHAP. V.

That though it were granted, that the power of the Keys in Christ's Institution, Matth. 18. *was given to the Elders, or Officers; and not to the People: That yet in a greater probability of Reason, the Officers or Elders of a particular Congregational Church are meant. That in all probability too, the Institution of such Churches, was designed by him; because their Conditions and Order, best suits the ends of the Edification of his Saints.*

IF by *Church*, in *Matth.* 18. 17. were meant the Officers, yet still the Officers of a particular Church, for there is a Presbytery in every Church. And the mension of two or three, doth rather carry it to that meaning. So that if by Church, should be meant the Elders, yet question will return what Elders, in relation to what Church? To a particular Church say we. Thus when it is said, in *Jam.* 5. 14. *Send for the Elders of the Church*, it could not be the Elders of a Presbyterian Church. Our Presbyterian Brethren acknowledge, that particular Congregations are Churches; they are the first of the Name in this Institution, and are first intended, and are therefore called *Ecclesiæ primæ, the first Churches*, even by Presbyterians themselves. We are sure also, that particular Churches, have the Name of a whole Church, 1 Cor. 14. 23. *If the whole Church meet in one.* We are sure too, that the first Churches in all places, were but particular Churches, even in *Hierusalem* it self. The Apostles did not forbear making a particular in any place, they did not stay till Christian's Church were multiplied, so as to make many Churches in one place. Now such a particular Church before Churches ever multiplied, had a Government within it self, by virtue of *Matth.* 18. 17. And if so, if here be an Institution, it falleth upon it; and it exercises its Government as a Church, by virtue of its Charter.

1. That a particular Church is meant, in *Matth.* 18. is evident, because it is such a Church that is spoke of, whereof a Man is a Brother; and now he is a Brother first,

first, and more peculiarly of a particular Congregation; that's the Reason, why you Excommunicate him out of the particular Church, when out of none of all the rest. And when you bring the matter at last to an issue, you tell that Church of it, more than any of the rest; for that Congregation being a Church by the Order of Christ, it is to be brought unto that Church first, which the offending Person hath the relation of a Brother unto. Now see who are in the right, our Presbyterian Brethren, or we; they think themselves bound to tell the Church, because he is a Brother of it, but not at first; whereas Christ saith, Tell this Church first, and if he will not hear what that Church says, *let him be an Heathen.* Book II.

2. The method that Christ here prescribeth, evidently argueth it to be a particular Church; for 1. Saith he, do thy self deal with him. 2. *Take two or three Witnesses*; 3. *Tell the Church*; This must needs be that particular Church, that is the next Body, for that particular Church, is a Church, and it is his Church; and it is a Body in ascent next to the two or three Witnesses; and if there be any such thing as a Church Classical, that is a degree beyond it.

3. All that are for Presbyterial Government, do by virtue of this place, in *Matth.* 18. tell it to the Congregational Elders, the Presbytery. And so then, that the particular Congregation is meant in this, *Matth.* 18. both their Practices and Principles do import. For they argue from this place, by way of Analogy. They argue from hence, the power of many Churches over any Church; because, look what power the first Church hath over a Brother, that many Churches hath over a Church: And therefore according to their own Concessions, this first Church is first meant as the measure of the other; and therefore what is said here in *Matth.* 18. must be first meant of the particular Congregation. For they make a Combination of Churches; for to deal with offending or disagreeing Churches, upon this ground, that a particular Church is that, which is here appointed to deal with a Brother. If then the Argument doth run by way of Analogy; then the power of their greater Churches, is fetched from the power that this particular Church hath. And they argue, that therefore they have an intire power over many Churches, because that this hath an intire power over its own Members; and that what power is in a particular Church is in the whole Body of Churches jointly: And therefore by the Presbyterial Concessions and Principles, the Institution must first fall upon this Church Congregational. For if any Man would argue from what power a Corporation hath over its Members, that the like power many Corporations may have over that Corporation, it would imply, that that Corporation hath an intire power over its own Members; and look how much of the intireness of the power, you take away from the particular Corporation, over its Members; so much you weaken the Argument and Analogy, for the power of many.

In a word, all the Arguments of all sides, of Papists, that would have the Pope to be the Church; of the Episcopal party that would have the Bishops to be the Church, all argue from the word Church. And they say, that a Diocesan hath power in a Diocess, because a whole Diocess may be one Church; and so, many Elders may make up a Presbytery, over many Congregations; because many Congregations make one Church. So as all these, and the Presbyterian Government itself, can prove their claim only, as they can make it out, that they are a Church. Now particular Congregations do, and may put first in for it, that they are Churches; therefore as a Church, they must have a power over their own Members, as the other have over Churches, according to their own Principles.

4. The first and primary Institution, must fall upon particular Congregations, as the Seats or Bounds of the first power, whether the Institution be supposed to fall upon them as Churches, or as a Presbytery. If it falls on them as Churches, the greater Churches consisting of many Congregations are but *Ortæ*, or *sprung* of this: If it falls on them as a Presbytery, they are but Compounds, and Decompounds. The Native and first Genuine Church, is the Congregational, the other are but Representative Churches; when as this is more real.

5. As the Institution of a Congregational Church, in *Matth.* 18. most suits with Christs Aim and Design, the Communion of Saints; so it most agrees too with that promise of his Presence, *ver.* 20. what kind of Assembly is most likely to be pitched upon by Christ, to be made his Court on Earth, but that wherein he is Worshipped; and where there is the personal Presence of his Saints, for whose sake he

Ch. V. is present with the Officers of a Church; and not as they are Officers abstracted from the Church or Meeting, without it. And indeed it was for the Honour of the Saints, and was becoming of their State under the Gospel; that not Elders alone, but that Saints gathered together with the Elders, should be those fixed Bodies to which the power should be given; for so the Stile runneth, *the Churches of the Saints*, 1 Cor. 14. 33. And what is the Church, without the presence of Christ? And what is more of a Church, than that to which more of the promise of the presence of Christ is made: Now to the Saints, and also to the Elders, as joyned and united in Bodies with Saints, is the promise made. Those promises, *I will walk among you*, &c. 1 *Cor.* 6. 16. *Ezek.* 37. 26, 37. is made to the Bodies of Saints. So then if we take the State of the Saints under the New Testament, (where every one comparatively, is said more to know the Lord comparatively, unto those of the Old) it is answerably in a way of comparison, more suitable to Reason; that if the Government should be placed upon Bodies formed up, the Institution should fall upon such Bodies, as have both Saints and Elders. And if there were no other reason, yet this might be pleaded for it; that the Officers have, though not formal, power from the People as Officers, yet a virtual power, concurrence and assistance (through the promise of Christ's presence with them) as such from the presence of the Saints, in respect of the execution of their Office, and the blessing thereof, (which they do not carry about them alone) especially in such Acts, wherein they do things as for the People, and which do concern them, as Acts of Jurisdiction do. Although as Elders Dedicated unto Christ, they might have a Blessing in Preaching unto them, and that as Elders, or in Prayer, or the like; yet in all Ministerial Acts of Jurisdiction, that belong to a Church as a Corporation, they have a virtual assistance from the concurrence of the People with them, doing all this in their presence. Thus the Elders among the *Jews*, besides the Blessing of their Calling, as being Elders, and united into a Body over that Nation, in a *Synedrim* or Council, had also a Blessing from the place where they should meet, the place that God should choose, as also their Sacrifices had: And should the same *Synedrim* have met out of that place, they had not had that Assistance, neither could the Acts have been counted Acts of Jurisdiction. This Principle the Papists themselves seem to acknowledge, who make the Assistance that the Pope hath, when he speaks infallibly as a Pope, to be not alone, but in the *Cathedrâ*, in the *Chair*; and so in Council with the Cardinals: And so in a State or Kingdom, though the ultimate concluding and ratifying of Laws, doth lye in the King; yet he doth not do it alone, but having all other Estates of Nobles and Commons present, or else what he doth, is not legal nor binding. Now so under the New Testament, though all Church-power should be supposed to be formally in the Elders; yet not as abstracted from the presence of the Saints, which is in stead of the place that God then chose among the *Jews*, in which they had an especial Blessing and Assistance. Nay, he hath now chose a Letter Temple for Elders to exercise their Jurisdiction in, Temples made of living Stones, that is, Churches consisting of Saints, from the concurrence of whose Spirits, Prayers and Applications, the Acts done by the Elders in a Church, do receive their strength. So Jesus Christ is in the midst of the Elders; because his promise is to be in the midst of the Saints, their Spirits joyn and concur in the Act, and so there is an Efficacy runneth along therewith. And this Honour at least, was meet to be given by Christ, to his Saints under the New Testament. For what tho' the Elders be as the Loadstone; yet as the Virtue and Efficacy of the Loadstone, depends upon its being set in Steel, so the virtual Blessing of the Elder's Actions, in matters of Jurisdiction, (which are the highest Acts of Church-Government) depends upon their being in the midst of Saints, that concur with them. And therefore in *Matth.* 18. 17. it is said, *Tell the Church*, that is, the Elders joyning with, and in presence of the People. Although the Eye is that Member that doth see for the Body; yet it hath the Virtual Efficacy that inableth it to see, from its being placed in the Body; and as the Eye cannot see out of the Body, nor can one Body, being in another Bodie's Eye to see withal; so cannot this power of the Elders, be carryed out of its Seat, nor a Forraign power be brought in. And therefore when the Apostle says, in 1 Cor. 5. 4. *When ye are gathered together with the power of the Lord Jesus*, and so in 2 *Cor.* 6. 16. *I will walk among you*, and in *Mat.* 28. 20. when Christ promised *I will be with you, to the end of the World*, he speaks not only of Ministers, and the Successors of the Apostles; but of those also that believe through

through their word, for so in *John* 17. 20. he interprets it; and likewise in *John* 15. 16. *your Fruit shall remain*, and so be both with Ministers and Saints, as Successors of the Apostles; this being the Honour of the Apostles, not only to have Ministers to Succeed them, but Churches of Believers also, with whom Christ is. And therefore in the *Revelation*, where Jesus Christ's presence in the Church of the New Testament, is presented with Allusion to that of the Old, *chap.* 4. although the vision is of the Church Universal materially considered; yet formally the Representation of it is made, as it is the Seat of publick Worship; and therefore represented under the *Idea*, of a Congregational Assembly, as appeareth, (as Mr. *Brightman* and *Parker*, and others have observed) in that it is set forth in order to Acts of publick Worship, performed therein. Thus there is the Laver to wash in, as in the Temple there was, before they Worshipped; unto which the Apostle makes the Allusion, for meeting in the House of God for Worship, *Heb.* 10. 21, 22, & 25. verses compared; *Let us draw near with a pure Heart, and Bodies washed*, which afterward (*ver.* 25.) he expounds to be Assembling themselves together. And in that, *Rev.* 4. the four Beasts, who are the Leaders and the *Chorus* for Worship, when they fall down, and cast down their Crowns, the Elders do so too. Now those Assemblies, in which Jesus Christ hath thus set his Throne and Temple, they consist of Elders and Beasts, having Eyes, *&c.* that is, Saints and Officers; for such is the Advancement of the Saints, now in comparison of those under the Old Testament, that they themselves are called the Elders; and the four living wights, are those four sorts of Officers of Congregations. The thing we cite it for, is this; that the Throne and Presence of Christ, is with the Beasts, as joyned with the twenty four Elders, and in Assemblies made up of both. And therefore the Officers are said to be set in the Church, 1 *Cor.* 12. 28. and so to work still, as set in the Church, but they are no where called the Church it self.

Book II.

See his Exposition on the 4th *and* 5th *cha.* Revel. *in* vol. 2. *of his Works.*

Yea, and though the Apostles were made immediately by Christ, without a relation to any special or particular Church; and in order principally unto gathering and rearing up Churches, yet the choice of one Apostle was made in a Congregational Church, consisting of Angels and People, *Acts* 1. And *Paul* and *Barnabas*, tho' made Apostles immediately by Christ; yet received their Ordination in such a particular Church, whilst the Elders were Ministring unto the Lord, in the Church of *Antioch*, Acts 13. Yea, and they themselves ordinarily, did not exercise any Acts of Jurisdiction, either of Ordination, or Excommunication, but as still present in a particular Church. They did not set up a Court, unto which Churches were to come; but they rather came themselves, and visited Churches, ordained Elders in every Church with Fasting and Prayer in the Churches; and ordinarily they Excommunicated not, (tho' they might give general Directions) but in a Church. And however, if there might be Cases wherein the Apostles did Excommunicate alone; yet they were very extraordinary, and no way to be imitated, as their Miracles are not. They did not Excommunicate when absent, 2 Cor. 13. 10. *Shall I come with a Rod? And when I come, I shall bewail some of you*, &c. As therefore the Apostles did not set up a Court out of particular Presbyteries, so Presbyteries are not to set up a Court out of particular Churches. Yea, in that only instance of a Synod, which we have in *Acts* 15. the Transactions of the Apostles and Elders were in, and with that Church of *Hierusalem*, where the Brethren also were present. Thus hath God Honoured the Saints of the New Testament, that the promise of the presence of Christ, should be made to them, when gathered together with their Officers; and that he will be with the Officers even as such, for the Peoples sake. You know, (saith the Apostle to the *Thessalonians*) what manner of Men we were among you, for your sakes, 1 *Thess.* 1. 5. They have not only a Ministerial power for them as they are in; but they have a Ministerial power through them, as having it for their sakes, and by vertue of their Communion, God's promise being to be in the midst of them, by vertue of their presence. So as although they have not a power derived to them, *ab Ecclesiâ*, as *from the Church*; yet they have it derived to them in *Ecclesia*, *in the Church*, and also instrumentally, *ab Ecclesiâ*. And although they Act not the power that is in the Church in their stead, and for their ease, doing such Acts, as otherwise the Church should, (as those of the Separation have held) yet the Assistance of the Execution of their power, is virtually in the Church, the promise being made to them as a Church. Neither are they the Church Representative, having a power

Ch. IV.

absent, and abstracted from the People, as is the Nature of all Representations, (for nothing is Represented, that is present) but the Church it self is the *Sedes*, the Virtual Seat, in which this power is exercised, as the Body is of the actions of the principal Members; the Spirit, and Strength, and Vigour of the whole Body, concurring and assisting the Acts of all such Members: And therefore Excommunication, is in the Name of Christ; that is, as some say, *in vocato nomine*, or *of Christ called upon*; and so as having the Prayers of the People of God to assist, to put force and efficacy into it. And so Ordination is done with Fasting and Prayer; and the Prayers of the Saints, the least Saints have as much influence unto the virtual assistance of the Officers in their Acts before them, as the Prayers of the Elders themselves; and therefore the Presbyterial acts that are abstracted thus from the People, have not that efficacy in them as when the Body of Saints and Elders are joyn'd together. So as the Institution falleth not only upon Elders, but upon Elders and People as a Body formed up of both, not only because all acts of Worship and Jurisdiction, are for the Edification of the Saints as well as of the Elders: But it is because that Jesus Christ will have the assistance of their Spirits and of their Prayers, &c. which have as much efficacy in them to prevail with him for a Blessing, as those of the Elders had.

And in this respect the keys (as was said before) are given unto *Peter* both as a Saint and as a Minister, as both respects considered did meet in him, when the keys were given to him, so that the words *to their*, include both. So that at least the keys are so given to the Ministers, as to be exercised before, and in the presence of the Saints, having an assistance from the concurrence of their Spirits and Desires. The Papists would have the keys given to *Peter* alone, simply and absolutely, only they say indeed for the Church, but they do not make the Church the subject to which the keys are given. Others do make the Church the first subject to whom the keys are given, and not only for whom, but then they make the Elders the Representative Church, and so that they are given to Elders only to be exercised instead of the Church. But we say they are given so to the Church, as that if they should not be the formal subject of parted power together with the Elders, yet they are the virtual subject in which the Elders should exercise them. And hence it is that the denomination of Church is from the Saints, and not given to the Officers any where in the New Testament. The Officers are said to be set in the Church, but they are not called the Church. For a Church of Christ must needs be a Body to Christ, that still is the *periphrasis* of a Church. Now as in 1 *Cor.* 12. 12. *A Body is not one Member, but many*, (and from thence it is rightly argued, that a Bishop is not the Church for he is but one) so nor is a Presbytery of Elders although many *the Body* for they bear not the immediate relation of a Body to Christ himself, but are only the representation of his Body. And as Members of all sorts do make a natural body, not only Members that are the Principal and Rule the Body, but also those that are ruled and ordered. So is it here.

And when Christ in *Mat.* 18. saith, *Tell the Church*, having first told the party alone himself, then brought a Brother or two; as the sin of the offending party doth by this increase, and grow more hainous, so the number of those by whom he is now to be rebuked that are called the Church, must be supposed to increase also, and therefore not two or three Elders of a Congregation alone. This last is the last and the highest remedy, and therefore the publickness must not lye only in respect that they are publick Persons, Officers, for if it be told privately only in a Consistory, it is as private as if it were told to two or three of the Brethren before, or it may so be, that the same Elders had been taken to be the Brethren that should admonish him. By the word Church therefore, is meant a greater company, and therefore not the Elders alone, but the Elders before the Church, or rather the Elders in the Church, with whom the Church is to joyn in the Admonitions and Rebukes of him.

If it be said that by making the People thus the Church rather than the Elders, it argues that more Authority is given to the People than the Elders in the Church. The answer is, That that follows not; it only follows that there is more efficacy and vertue by reason of the Church, and the presence of the Elders in the Church, although the Authority should lye in the Elders themselves, as the vertue by which the Eye seeth, lyeth in the Body subjectively and virtually more, though the Eye alone is the Instrument of seeing.

We

We argue also for this Congregational Institution to have been rather appointed than the other, because that the bounds of this are certain, and are natural. God (as *Baines* saith) did never set a Church but he did set certain bounds of it; As when he made the Jewish Church a Nation, he set the bounds of it to be that of the Nation. *Bellarmine* argueth that therefore Bishops are not *Divino Jure* of *Divine Right*, because God did not make Dioceses, and did not set them out by Lot as he did that of the Tribes. And it was therefore a great contention among Bishops of old in those times of the fourth and fifth Century, to whose jurisdiction such and such Villages or Towns should belong. In a word, the Church is God's House, and God hath not left it unto man to frame his building to what proportion he pleaseth. Christ's Body instituted (which is resembled unto the natural body throughout the Epistles) is to have set limits of it, a *maximum quod sic.* and if it have all the parts, that can have communion natural in the same common acts of Nature together, though it be never so small, it is a perfect body; so as it hath a prescription, and bounds are set it both for parts, and a *Maximum quod sic* for degrees of Stature. Now we have natural and set bounds for all instituted Churches. in this way of Congregational Churches. Book V.

1. The same Assembly that doth meet for Worship, is to meet for Discipline, so that Discipline and Worship is of equal extent, as touching the Seat of it. Now the publick Worship is upheld by no other Society, in a constant way, nor can be, but by Congregations, as many as can meet to edifie in one place. And therefore by preserving of fixed Congregations God hath always preserved the Essentials of a Ministerial Church, that although it suffered additionals of corruption in Power, and of Tyranny in Popish Bishops and Popes and the like over them, yet still because the Institution of a Church fell upon Congregations, there were true Ministerial Churches, and a true Baptism and the like in all Ages.

2. The Congregational Government, hath its bounds natural from a sufficiency of Elders, for the sorts and kinds of them; There is no sort appointed on purpose or alone for Presbytrial Government, as for Episcopal it was pretended there was, but even all the sorts that are, the seats of them are Congregational, and where all are, there is a sufficiency of Eldership, as we shall after shew. A Congregational Church had Elders of all sorts appointed to it, as for what belongeth to Worship, Pastors and Teachers, and as for what belongeth to Mens Lives; ruling Elders, and there is no more Elders but of these sorts in the greatest Presbyteries over many Congregations. Yea the Presbyteries themselves of many Congregations, must come furnished of all these sorts out, of their having all these sorts in their particular Congregations: And our Presbyteries cannot say, this Church shall have a Pastor, and this Church shall have a Teacher, and this Church shall have a ruling Elder, and so we will make up a Presbytery out of all these; but every Church is the seat *de jure, by Divine Right*, of all these, and every Church hath need of all these, and Christ hath appointed these to Congregations first.

3. We can derive the Limits of Congregational Churches from the time that is Instituted for Worship, which is the Lord's Day, which God hath fixed, and on which Day no other Churches meet, and so there is no set time for the exercise of a Presbyterial Church. It is *Baines* his argument against the Bishops that God did appoint for all Church-Meetings under the Law a time. And in *Tertullian*'s time we read that the Censures of Excommunication were executed upon the Lord's Day, and Admonition and the like, though things might be prepared upon the Week Days. And the Apostle's words in 1 *Cor.* 5. That *they shall cast him out when they are met together*, (he doth not bid them meet together on purpose) seems to incline to it. We know of no time that God hath appointed for all Ordinances (whereof this is one) in a set way as the fixed season of them, but only this Lord's Day, and upon this Day Presbyterial Churches cannot meet for Government.

4. That the duties which lie upon the relation of Elders to Preach and to Rule, should all be of the same extent (for the subject of them over which they are exercised) all this falleth in naturally with the Institution of Congregations, and Elders over them, and the relation of Elders to them. Men should not govern ordinarily beyond their Preaching. This is evident from what the New Testament holds forth concerning Elders in their relations to their Flocks committed to them, the Exhortations and Charges to them of duties towards those Flocks founded upon that relation: As also the

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the Duties of their Flocks to them: Which is like to be the trueſt meaſure, to find out the extent of their power, and bounds of their Flocks; whether for the ordinary way it be limited to one Congregation, or many. For thoſe Exhortations muſt needs be ſuppoſed ſuited to the boundaries of Churches, and to that Conſtitution and Extent of Relation, wherein the Elders of theſe Primitive Times, were placed over them. And like as in the queſtion about *Polygamy*, what the Scripture hath ſaid, of the Duties of Man and Wife; which were given and ſuited to the Extent of that Relation, as God from the beginning bounded it, manifeſtly evinceth, that one Man cannot have many Wives, but one; ſo it may be argued as to the point in hand.

We have hitherto taken this for an undoubted Maxim, that as a Mutual Relation, is the Fountain of all power, whether *Oeconomical*, *Civil*, or *Eccleſiaſtical*; ſo the extent of all power is commenſurable, with the extent of that Relation. A Maſter, as a Maſter, hath power but over ſuch Servants, of whom he may ſay, *I am your Maſter*; and they of him, *we are your Servants*; *for what hath any Man to do to judge another Man's Servant?* As the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Rom.* 14. 4. And ſo correſpondently here, thoſe Elders that aſſume to be over either one, or many Congregations, muſt have as the Office of Elders, ſo the Relation of Elders unto that one, or thoſe many Congregations, that they may be able to ſay, *we are your Elders*, and *you all our Church*; which two are in Scripture expreſſion, the Relate and Correlate, as King and Kingdom, Magiſtrates and Common-wealth. All which falls in naturally, for the ſet bounds of a Church, to be thoſe of Congregations. Whereas the bounds, that the Presbyterial way goeth by, in all their Subordinations, are uncertain. You have not a certainty of number of Officers, ſome particular Congregations, have as many Officers, as ſome Claſſes have had. Neither is it eſſential to that Government, that there ſhould be many Congregations; for they acknowledge that it may ſo fall out, that there may be but one Congregation, that may have all the Government in it, in caſes of neceſſity. But it is eſſential to upholding Worſhip in all the parts of it, that there be a fixed Congregational Church:

And to make the Juriſdiction of Cities, to be the pattern of Eccleſiaſtical Government, cannot be a certain Rule. For *London*, or Greater Cities, (as ſuppoſe Grand *Cairo* was converted) would vaſtly exceed the leſſer; and ſo the Rule would fall in Diſproportion, if you come in the Country Towns and Villages. And indeed what Reaſon can be given, that God ſhould proportion an Eccleſiaſtical Government to the boundaries of the Civil? What! Becauſe the Cities under the *Roman* Empire, had a Juriſdiction in them, and they *over* their Suburbs, muſt their Churches have ſo too? Hath God thus conformed his Church, unto the Government of this World? And beſides all States, have not the like Government, neither was the Government of all Countries, a City-Government; and ſo there could be no certain Rule for Church-Government, if it were to be chalked out by theſe meaſures.

Neither is the Government of Nations, a certain Rule for that of the Church, for the *Jews* after that rate, when they were two Nations, ſhould have been but one Church. And indeed, to Form the Inſtitution of a Church, to that boundary, had been to do it from what is accidental; for that they ſhould grow up to a Nation, is accidental. God did find the *Jews* a Nation entire, entred into a Covenant with them, and ſo made them a National Church. And if God had deſigned a National Church under the New Teſtament, he would have given Laws aforehand, as he did for the *Jews*, when they ſhould come into Cities; ſo that although they were now in the Wilderneſs, and they were not to come into Cities, till they came into *Canaan* many years after; yet he giveth a Law, for that condition of their being a Nation, and living in Cities.

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That Congregational Churches, were designed in the Institution of Christ, proved from Instances of the Primitive Churches, planted by the Apostles. The first Instance Assigned from the States, and Order of the Church at Corinth.

NOW for the proof of all, or most of the particulars, of which I have Discoursed in the preceding Chapters, I shall bring as the conclusion of all the Instances of the Church of *Corinth*; which is the greatest and surest Pattern, and the most compleat of all other. It is the greatest Pattern, because it answers to the Institution, in *Matth.* 18. (as in the Directions given to that Church in the, 1 *Cor.* 5. and the Phrases, that about Excommunication, are put into it, being compared with that in *Matth.* 18. doth appear) As there, Christ in the promise that he makes to the Church, when it bindeth sin, useth that Phrase; *Where two or three are joyned together, I am in the midst of them*; Mat. 18. 20. So here likewise, in 1 *Cor.* 5. 4. the Apostles Direction runs in the same Phrase, *when you are gathered together:* As there Christ saith, *gather together in my Name*, so here the Apostle saith, *when ye are gathered together in my Name, and with the power of the Lord Jesus.* As Christ there in his promise, he saith, *I will be in the midst of you*, when ye are so gathered; so here speaking of their gathering together, and throwing him out of the Congregation, the Apostle useth the same Phrase, *Take him from the midst of you:* As thereupon his being cast out, he is to be reckoned as an Heathen and a Publican, with whom the *Jews* would not eat; so here, if a Brother be thus, they are not to accompany with him, no, not to eat with him. It is the surest Instance of the ordinary power left in a Church, because it was a Church that was formed up, in which there was that ordinary Government, which was to continue to the end of the World. The Instance of the Church of *Jerusalem*, is an Instance, though of the first Church, yet for the Government of it, hath this extraordinary in it, that it was then Governed by the Apostles; and therefore cannot make a Pattern of the Government of Churches, and the power of Elders therein, which should ordinarily, and for continuance be exercised. But this is an Instance of a Church, whom the Apostle *Paul* leaves to their own power, that is within them, (*Do not ye judge*, &c. 1 *Cor.* 5. 12.) which they had exercised and practised. The Church of *Jerusalem* also had many other things Extraordinary, as that about having their Goods common, *&c.* But the Rules, that he gives to this Church, are such as he gave to all Churches; so when he speaks about laying up, not making their Goods common, as at *Jerusalem*, but the ordinary way that was to be observed concerning Alms, *Let every Man lay up*, (saith he, 1 *Cor.* 16. 3. 2, 3, 4. 1 *Cor.* 7. 17.) *as God hath Blessed him*; *and so I ordain in all the Churches*: So as the Pattern hereof is held forth, as that which held correspondency with the Ordinances in all Churches in the Primitive Times. And therefore is an Argument against the Bishops, when they urged the Instances of *Timothy* and *Titus*, Presbyterian Divines used to answer, that the Instance of their Government, will not hold as a Pattern for Episcopal Government; because that their Government was Extraordinary, and for the present, but that we must take that which was the ordinary Government, that was left in the Church, and make that the Pattern. So we may say of the Church of *Jerusalem*, and the Government thereof at first by the Apostles, whilst they were there, comparatively to this of the Church of *Corinth*, that it is not so great a standing pattern to us. And this of the Church of *Corinth* is the most compleat pattern of all other Churches, for he doth give direction almost about all sort of things concerning Worship and Government, and he utters more rules in his Epistles to this Church than any other. Thus he gives instructions concerning the Sacrament, 1 *Cor.* 11. about Minister's Maintenance, *chap.* 9. about matter of scandal and offence, *chap.* 8. about Collection for the Poor, *chap.* 16. How to order their Meetings, *chap.* 14. About covering and uncovering in their Assemblies, he saith he had left Traditions with them, and wherein they practised according to his Traditions he commendeth them, 1 *Cor.* 11. 2. He speaks also of the power amongst them to judge of Doctrine, *Chap.* 14. And that they were a Church that had power amongst

Ch. VI. amongst them to order things for matter of Worship in a decency, *Let all be done decently and according to order*, 1 Cor. 14. 40. and many things of the like nature. And last of all it is the only instance and example of Excommunication, the highest censure, which the Apostle gives direction about, and tells them they had power to do it, 1 *Cor.* 5.

Now concerning this Church, there are all these things appertaining to a Church, and the Institution, and Power, and Government thereof held forth here; As,

1. Here is a Church. So it is called.

2. Here is the qualifications of the Members, a Church of Saints, 1 *Cor.* 1. 2. conformable to which all other Churches were to be, as to the constitution of their Members also, *chap.* 14. 33. *As in all the Churches of the Saints*; All the Churches consisted of Saints then, that were visibly such, as this of *Corinth* also did.

3. It was a Church formed up into a Body, as all those phrases imply, that they are called a whole lump, *chap.* 5, 6. and a whole Church, *chap.* 14. 23. intire, compleat within it self, which whole lump would be leavened, not only by the way of infection by the Incestuous person, but by way of guilt if he were not cast out.

4. It was a Body which had power to judge them that are within; *Do not ye judge them that are within*? chap. 5. 13. that is, within your own Body and Society and Fellowship, therefore also he saith, *Put away from among your selves*, chap. 5. 13. therefore he useth those phrases, *Fornication is committed among you; that he that did this deed may be taken from among you*, chap. 1. 1, 2. It was a Church formed up that had a jurisdiction over them within, (and to them without it could not reach) and if they had power to cast out they had also power to take in, it was therefore a formed body.

5. It was a fixed Body in respect of the relation of the Members one unto another; why else doth he bid them tarry one for another when they were to Eat the Lord's Supper? *chap.* 11. 33. And that they should not take the Sacrament alone, one Company by themselves, and another company by themselves, which, if such a promiscuous unfixt way was lawful, they might have done, but they were to tarry one for another, that all the Church might as one Body at once receive: Now if they had not been a fixed company, why should they have been obliged thus to have tarried, or who could have known who was absent and who present?

6. It was a Church also that had Elders over them, and those more than one, for speaking of the ordinary Teachers that were Ministers amongst them, some say (saith he) *I am of Paul, and I am of Apollos, and I am of Christ*. 1 Cor. 1. 12. which he in a figure transferred to himself and to *Apollos*, herein speaking in his own person, but it tendeth to represent the Persons of their Teachers, the Ministers to whom they did give Maintenance, and were therefore Officers, 1 *Cor.* 9. 12. *If others be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather*?

7. It was a Church having set bounds, by which they might know who were within, and who not, for when he saith, *Do not ye judge them that are within*? 1 Cor. 5. 13. he doth not mean all Saints in all Churches, but it must be those within themselves. The bounds set by this, that they might be *as many as could meet in one Assembly*, 1 Cor. 14. 23. If the whole Church be come together in one place, &c.

8. It was a particular Congregation. 1. This is evident from their divisions and contentions which he findeth fault withal, as in a whole Church, a whole Body, *That there be no Schism in the Body*, as he himself expresseth, 1 *Cor.* 12. 25. applying it to them, now ye are the Body of Christ and Members in particular; he speaks of these divisions as being among those that did meet in one for Worship, 1 *Cor.* 11. 18. *For first when ye come together in the Church, I hear there be divisions among you, and I partly believe it.* And this Division was in their Meetings in the Church for Worship, 1 *Cor.* 11. 22. And *have ye not Houses to Eat and Drink in, but despise ye the Church of God*, the Assembly of the Saints, as he reproves their divisions and disorders in respect of the Sacrament? To remedy these divisions, he bids them tarry one for another, *ver.* 33. Thus these directions concern them that are one Congregation for Worship, that use to meet in one place; And *chap.* 12. 21. he saith they were Members of one another in particular, in a more special relation: Now that special particular near relation is that between those of the same Congregation, where they meet fixedly for Worship, by the consent, and before the People, of which a Man is therefore cast out, which he is not out of any other Church in the World.

World. 2. In this respect he calleth them a Temple to God, speaking against them that caused Divisions in the Church, 1 *Cor.* 3. 16. *The Temple of God are ye*, and that he that went about to destroy it by Divisions, God would destroy him: He speaks not personally of each Member, as in *chap.* 6. but in respect of their Church state, as they were a Body, in opposition to Divisions: Now the Temple is for all the Ordinances of Worship, therefore called the House of God. 3. He gives directions to them as to a whole Church, *chap.* 14. 23. *If the whole Church be come together in some place.* 4. He speaks of it also as a Church, which was to receive edifying together by the Ordinances Administred, so *chap.* 14. *ver.* 5. *I would that ye all spake with Tongues, but rather that ye Prophesied, for greater is he that Prophesieth than he that speaks with Tongues, that the Church may be Edified*, so ver. 12. *See that ye excell to the Edifying of the Church.* And if the whole Congregation, &c. And *v.* 26. He speaks this in application to them all in respect of their meeting, *How is it then Brethren when ye come together*, &c.

Book II.

As their Assembly for Worship proves them to have been a particular Congregation for Worship. So also the directions given concerning Excommunication evince it, *chap.* 5. For if they had been many Congregations in respect of their Members, 1. He would have Written to that particular Congregation whereof the Man was, as that Congregation (at least the Elders thereof) which should (according to Presbyterial principles) be told first of an offending Member before he is brought to the classical. He would have named that Church he was thus a Member of, and written to it in a peculiar manner, whereas now he names none, but writes to the whole Church. 2. When his directions come to fall upon the execution of the act, he doth not mention the Sentence so much that was to be past (according to our Brethren) in the Presbytery, but the act of execution, the act of delivery to Satan was to be done when they were met together, which being to be done in that particular Church whereof he was a Member, if there had been many Congregations there, he would have named that Church as that in which it should have been done. Especially considering that the Apostle in his Writing pitcheth upon that solemn act of Excommunication, which compleateth the throwing of a Man out, which as all grant is done and performed in the gathering together of that particular Congregation, whereof a Man is a Member. 3. If there had been a classical Church over many Congregations where the Elders meet, and a Congregational Church too, where this person did meet with the Elders of his own Church and the Congregation, if there had been these two several sorts of Church Meetings, it would have been obscure and dark. unto which the Apostle's directions should refer him. So as there would have been need of new distinctions of Meetings as well as of Elders and Churcches, when the Apostle speaks but of one. Yea the Apostle saith, *When met together*, 1 Cor. 5. 4 namely for other Ordinances, upon the Lord's Day, that then they should give this Sentence of Excommunication. He doth not give directions that they should meet together on purpose for that, but as Discipline is to keep Worship pure and subserveth it, so also is it to be performed when the whole meet together for Worship, that the Person also may see out of what a Communion he is cast. 5. Saith he, *Do not ye judge them that are within?* If there had been Congregational Churches, one whereof he had been a Member of (for he could be but a Member of one) and another classical Church, here had been two *Within*, and which of these should the Apostle intend? Our Presbyterian Brethren say, That the Congregations have power to judge things within themselves, so that they must needs have one *Within*, and why should not their *Within* be the *Within* here intended for the ultimate throwing out of this Man?

9. This Church of *Corinth* also had an intire Judicature within it self, not depending upon the advice of any for Sentence, and the like; for he speaks of the whole act, *Do not ye judge them that are within?* He useth the same word that he useth of himself and his power, *Do not ye judge* (saith he) speaking of them, *what have I to do to judge*, speaking of himself. And (saith he) *when ye are gathered together with my Spirit, and the Power of the Lord Jesus to deliver such an one to Satan*; So that they were not dependent upon the Apostle, to come to him for the Sentence, only in their neglect the Apostle Writes to them as an Apostle, with this rule, to Excommunicate such an one if the be party found guilty, which the Apostle did never know but by hearsay, therefore could never pass a judicial sentence, but he finds fault with them, because

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Object. But it is objected by some, that he did it for a trial of their obedience, and therefore their act was but an act of obedience in them, but the power was in him.

Answ. The answer is this, that the power might compleatly rest in them, and yet they obey the Apostle in the act, as an Apostle directing them, when they neglected it: As when a Prophet in the name of God bad the Magistrate to do his duty, though it is an act of Obedience in him to do it thus commanded, yet he hath power as a Magistrate in himself: And as in case a Minister had neglected to Baptize, and the Apostle had sent to him or commanded him to have done it, the power of Baptizing must be said to be in him that Baptizeth.

10. If this Church of *Corinth* had been a Church that might have associated, it would have done it, for it had a neighbour Church near it, the Church of *Cenchrea*, which was a Port Town to *Corinth* as *Leeth* is to *Edenburgh*; and *Cenchrea* was but a small Town, not a City; but he writeth to the Church of *Corinth* as an intire Church distinct of it self.

That the People have an interest in judging, we refer that to the proofs out of this place; only we name it here to shew the compleatness of this pattern, for the forming of Congregational Churches answerable to it.

CHAP. VII.

That the Name of a Church given in the New Testament to Congregational Churches rather than any other (as is proved from several Texts, 1 *Cor.* 11. 18. *Rom.* 16. 1, & 5. 1 *Cor.* 4. 17, &c.) *proves Congregational Churches to have been intended by Christ in his Institution of a Church, they most properly being both in name, and nature such. That a Presbyterian Assembly of Elders cannot properly be called a Church: Evinced by several Arguments.*

TO decide the controversie about the Divine Institution of a Congregational Church, we may put it to the trial, whether single Congregations with their Elders have more the style of Churches in the New Testament, than the Elders of many Congregations as assembled in a Consistory; and let that determine it. Now that those Congregations where God is publickly Worshipped, and the Preaching of the Word, and the Sacraments Administred, are called each of them a Church, is evident.

1. In 1 *Cor.* 11. 18. *When you come together in the Church*: He speaks of their Meeting for the Lord's Supper, *ver.* 20. And in *ver.* 22. he calls it so again. So their meeting for Preaching, and for singing of Psalms, he calls it a Church, *chap.* 14. *ver.* 2, & 19, & *ver.* 23. he calls it a whole Church, meeting for those ends. And there he gives not the name to the Meeting or Assembly but to the state and company, *ver.* 28. for the Rules, he giveth there, are for ordering of Worship. So too in *Rom.* 16. 4. saluting *Aquila* and *Priscilla* (who for his Life would lay down their own necks) he giveth these Congregations the name of Churches, unto whom (saith he) *not only I give thanks, but also all the Churches of the Gentiles*, and ver. 16. *The Churches of Christ salute you.* Were those a company of Elders over many Congregations met? Presbyterial Churches, that did testifie their thanks unto *Aquila* and *Priscilla*? Or were they Congregations of Saints and Strangers also where *Paul* had been? He had related unto them his own danger, and *Aquila's*, and *Priscilla's*, exposing their lives for his, and can it be supposed that the Saints as making several Presbyterial Churches (who are so vast, like unto ours, as the People never meet to do it) did salute the *Romans*, and *Aquila* and *Priscilla*? No rather the several Congregational Churches, might well have opportunity to express the remembrance of them at their Meetings. And the 1. *ver.* and the 5. *ver.* of *Rom.* 16. will easily prompt us what manner of Churches he

he meaneth, when he speaks of all these Churches, that they were such as was at *Cenchrea, the Church which is at Cenchrea* (saith he) which was a small Port seven miles off *Corinth*; and *ver.* 5. (saith he) *Greet ye the Church that is (i. e.* that met) *in Priscilla's House*. Such Churches as these were the Churches of the *Gentiles*, who saluted them. If we come to the Epistle of the *Corinths*, saith the Apostle, 1 *Cor.* 4. 17. *As I teach every where in every Church.* Doth he mean these Presbyterial Churches or Consistories? Or Congregational? Surely the Churches where *Paul* still Preached and Taught must be Congregational; For those Assemblies are the Subjects and Seats of Teaching. Take also the 17*th verse* of the 7*th chapter*, and bring it along unto the 11*th chapter*; *So I ordain in all the Churches*; and, *We have no such custom nor the Churches of God*; What! Presbyterial? Or Congregational? Let but this one consideration decide it. The custom of which he speaks that the contentions were about, was whether Men should be uncovered or covered praying or prophesying. Now all the Meetings for Worship where Men and Women, and where the Angels (whether Celestial or Elders) were present, these Assemblies where these Ordinances were used, he calleth Churches, and he saith they had no such custom. And in these respects of Meeting thus for Worship they are distinguished, Churches, and are made several, Churches in the *Plural*; and the general usages of all these Churches as constituted and ordered by the Apostles every where, he here presseth. If we come to *chap.* 14. He there gives order about Prophecying in these Meetings, into which Strangers came and were converted, *ver.* 25. In which they had Psalms and Doctrines, *ver.* 26. Where Men and Women were present, *ver.* 34, and 35. and therefore Congregational Meetings are meant. And he inforceth these directions he gives, with the examples of all the like Churches in all their Meetings, *God is not the Author of Confusion but of Peace, as in all the Churches of the Saints*, ver 33. These must needs be Congregational Assemblies and Churches that met, for he speaks of the Churches of the Saints in common. Yet still you see when he speaks of Churches, yea and of all Churches, he speaks of them as such. And *ch.* 16. 1. When he Writeth about laying up Contribution for the Saints (the gathering and disposing of which belongeth unto particular Congregations, for the Money to be fore is had from thence) *As I have given order* (says he) *to the Churches of Galatia, so do ye*, he meaneth those Churches of *Galatia* he wrote to, *Gal.* 2. And these must be all Congregational, for to order that collection belongeth to the several Congregations. And *ver.* 19. *The Churches of Asia* (saith he) *salute you.* Now the many Congregations under a Presbytery, they do not meet to give salutes, they were therefore Congregational, for with a Congregational Church in this salute he doth joyn them all, for he addeth, *Aquila* and *Priscilla* saluteth you with the Church that is in their House, and why should we not think that he speaks uniformly in the same verse. This we see is the uniform style of the Apostle when he speaks of Churches and of all Churches.

2. As for the very name *Church* in the New Testament, the place of Congregational Meetings almost in all Languages hath the Name of Church, which name, no places, for General Councils or Presbyterial Meetings over many Congregations, at any time, have had. Not that we think the Place of Meeting to be properly called the Church, but only καταχρηστικῶς, but yet it had originally its name from the Meeting, and the Persons, which were properly called the Church, and from their stated condition to meet in one place, the place was so named. The Clergy indeed hath been called the Church, but not as met, or assembled in any Synod, but in the Indefinite Universal Notion. But the place for the Congregation is called the Church, and the Meeting of the Saints hath the same name, 1 *Cor.* 14. 34. *Let your Women keep silence in the Churches.* And their constant Meeting in a fixed manner, and their state in order thereto is called the Church, *Acts* 11. 26. The Sacrament also was Antiently called σύναξις, i. e. *the Meeting*, their Meetings being said to be to break bread, *Acts* 20. 7. And in the great Bible the word Church is always translated by Congregation. And among the *Grecians*, Ἐκκλησία was never used for a representative Meeting only of Officers, but of the People also, and so it is in *Acts* 19. 39, 41. where the People making a tumult, it is called Ἐκκλησία, although an unlawful one. And although that Christ, *Mat.* 18. used the Hebrew phrase, yet Churches being to be set up among the *Gentiles* under the New Testament, that phrase was used also which was conformed unto what theirs signified.

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Also under the New Testament the Name Church imports the Saints the People, in a more peculiar manner; and therefore the Meetings where Elders are severed from the People, are not called the Church. *Grotius* in *Mat.* 16. 18. And this to the expressions which are used in 2 *Cor.* 6. 16. *Shew ye are the Temples of the Living God, I will dwell in them and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my People.* And in *Acts* 12. 5. *Prayer was made of the Church, i. e.* of the Saints, *to God for Peter.* Yea this word Church is taken for the People of *Israel* under the Old Testament, as *Acts* 7. 38.

3. We desire one place to be given, where the Name Church in all the New Testament is given, to the meeting of the Elders alone. When the Apostle speaks of all the Churches, he gives them this appellation, all the Churches of the Saints, 1 *Cor.* 14. 33. but he no where expresseth the Churches of the Ministers, or Elders, nor of the Apostles neither. Now can we think that Christ in his first Institution (Ch. 16. & *Mat.* 18.) which the Apostles were to Interpret afterward, and to give directions to us about it, meaned the word Church in a signification different from what the Apostles used? This would be a strange procedure indeed. How then can the Elders lay a claim to the things, when they have not a sufficient ground to challenge the name of a Church. As *Parker* replying to Dr. *Billson*'s Assertion of the Keys being given in *Peter*'s Person to the Church of Ministers very well says, *Tho' it may be denied, that the name Church is ever in the Scriptures restrained only to the Priests.* *Clemens Romanus* when he Writes to the Church of *Corinth*, Writes to the Church, and not to the Presbyters (so the Apostles too in their Epistles) and Writes also from the Church at *Rome.* And when all the Apostles were met at *Jerusalem*, yet they alone are not called the Church, being but (as *Moses* is said to be, *Heb.* 3. 2, 5. a part of the House, but no where called the House) a part of it, *Acts* 8. 1. *The Church was scattered except the Apostles.* And indeed if the Elders were the entire Church, then they were the House of God, whereas they are but stewards in it, 1 *Cor.* 4. 1. The Apostles tho' they had the care of all the Churches, and that power in their hands which the Generality of Elders would never claim, yet they were but Officers in the Church, not the Church. Many Churches become one Church to no Officer in the World but Christ, but this pretence of the Elders being the Church, would make many Churches one Church to a company of Elders, that they may Govern them; and in relation to them as representers of the Church, they must be called one Church. What tho' the Old Testament frame, or Language be urged, we grant there was then a Church representative, but the Gospel knows no such now.

Parkerus de Polit. Eccles. Lib. 3. c. 1.

Clemens Epist. ad Corinth. pag. 1.

4. Surely a setled Congregation of Saints deserveth the name of Church more, and suppose places could be found in Scripture, where it is taken both for Elders and the People apart, yet those meetings that have both Elders and People of both sorts, must needs have more of Church in them. We can give instances that the Disciples apart are called the Church in distinction from the Officers. You cannot give one instance where the Officers are called the Church in distinction from the Disciples. Certainly those that have the Power have the Name, and not those only that have the name Equivocally or Metaphorically.

5. A Presbyterial Church is called a Church in relation to the People of those Congregations, by their own confessions when they interpret the Church of *Hierusalem*, the Church of *Ephesus*, to be many Congregations (and the Presbyterial's Argument is built thereon) and that the People of all those Congregations make one Church under that one Eldership. Now it is strange that they should have a Name of Church only as they are the subject or object of Discipline, and yet not so much as meet for that discipline actually neither, for so they cannot in a Presbyterial Church. The poor people of those Churches have no communion of Saints together herein, but such as they hold with all other Churches that are not under the same Presbytery; and yet they are according to Presbyterial principles in their Officers (as representing them) a distinct Church classical from all Churches else. So they make use of the name from the People, when the People enjoy not the thing. The poor Church of *Hierusalem*, *Acts* 8. 1. (when it is said that the Church was scattered) affords you an argument that therefore there was but one Church for Discipline in *Hierusalem*, and in that respect it is called one Church; when yet the scattering was not upon the Presbyterial Church that exercised Discipline, but upon the People. They were not in

in the representative body persecuted, and yet tho' they were scattered as a Church personally, and not representatively, and persecuted as a Church personally, not representatively only, yet according unto the Presbyterian Principles they never met as a Church personally, but only representatively. Book II.

If it be said that the People in Classical Assemblies may meet. Yet it is no otherwise than the People in the next Classes, which if they will may come thither, neither can they all possibly. You lay no more obligation on them to be present than you do upon the People of the next Classes. And therefore in that respect the People of that particular Classes, are no more of that Church than those of other Neighbouring Presbyters.

6. Those Assemblies must have more of Church in them, not only that have both Elders and People, as Congregations have: but that have constant Worship in them as well as government, And our Presbyterians allow some Government to Congregations, *i. e.* to the Elders of Congregations. Worship is the chief end of a Church. The formal notion of a Church is to meet and communicate in worship, and where there can be no Church-fellowship and Communion to the edification of the whole, there cannot be a Church. Which may be illustrated by the natural body, to which all Instituted Churches in Scripture are compared. The Eye, the Hand, the Head, they serve to several uses in the body, yet they are so united as they are all nourished with the same individual nourishment, and from the same Stomach, and therefore this is a several body having all these parts, from another body. So is it here in the Churches instituted, they are such as have a communion in all the common Ordinances, not only in the same kind, but in the same ordinances individually in a constant way. And the Analogy of the Church universal, and the Churches particular will help to illustrate this further, for the Church Universal being one body, is therefore fed by one kind of Ordinances, as there is one Body, so there is one Baptism for kind. But the particular Churches which are instituted, are such bodies as are fed with one and the same individual Baptism, and one and the same individual Lord's Supper, and so are one Bread. In a word, then all can come to those Classical Churches, or they cannot come; if they can, then they are to make one Church for Worship too: If they cannot come, then there cannot be a fellowship for the edification of the whole, and when the Communion of Saints cannot be exercised, how can that be a Church? Every Church is a Temple, *Eph.* 2. 22. 1 *Cor.* 4. 16. *The Temple of God are ye*; Now the Temple did chiefly relate to Worship, and was the subject of all Ordinances, and the place where the *Synedrim* sat too. Answerably under the New Testament, the Preaching of the Gospel is called serving at the Altar, 1 *Cor.* 9. 14. So 1 *Pet.* 2. 5. The Saints *are built up to offer Sacrifices.* God's House is called an House of Prayer. The Church is called a body to Christ, *one Body and one Bread* (as was said afore) 2 *Cor.* 10. 17. because they partake of one Bread. But none of these do belong to a Presbyterial Church, they may pray occasionally, but the Ordinance of Prayer, and constant Worship is not there. Publick Worship lies in a Communion, therefore it is to be only with those that can enjoy Communion together. Yea it is made the very definition of a Church in the Article of the Church of *England*, which Article we hope will never be changed, *Ecclesia est numerus fidelium* (so others also define it) *in cultu Divino & Disciplina Communicantium. The Church is a number of Believers communicating in Divine Worship and Discipline.* which a Presbyterial Church is not. The end of a Church is that God may be publickly Worshipped, he would not have Instituted Churches else, but principally for that, therefore he had Congregations to do it, in which only it is done; and of Discipline superadded, is but to keep that kind of Worship pure, for Government is but casting out of the Body impure Members: And therefore the great Ordinance of Discipline, of Excommunication, is when they are met together, then they are to cast out from amongst them. As the intent of it is but to keep the Worship pure, so answerably it is to be exercised then when they meet to Worship, but Presbyterial Churches meet not for Worship, but Discipline only. Now as the Body is ordained for Meat Principally and Nourishment, and is not ordained for Physick but occasionally, so it is as to the state of the Church, and therefore our Divines make the Essential notes of a Church to be the Word, Sacraments, and Discipline; but in these Presbyterial Churches, the Word, and Sacraments are Wanting, and there is only Government. The General Assembly of the Saints in Heaven, is a Church in relation

Ch. VII. tion unto Worſhip, and tho' there is no Diſcipline there, yet they are never more a Church than when they are there. And the Apoſtle alſo ſpeaking of the Church in the New Teſtament, in *Heb.* 10. ſaith, that *Now there is an Houſe of God, becauſe there is an High Prieſt as well as before*, ver. 21: and therefore (ſaith he) *let us draw near* (he ſpeaks of publick Worſhip) *not forſaking the aſſembling of our ſelves together*, ver. 25. and that in *Synagogues*, for ſo the Word ſignifies. And therefore in *Mat.* 18. as Diſcipline ſo prayer is meant, and unto that is the Promiſe of Chriſt to be in the midſt of them more peculiarly made, and upon occaſion of that. And indeed it were exceeding ſtrange that ſeeing the chief end of Churches, (which are Congregations) is for Worſhip, and that's the great buſineſs for which they are appointed, that if there were many Congregations in thoſe of *Hieruſalem*, and thoſe of *Antioch*, and the like, as is pretended, that there ſhould not be mention of thoſe many Congregations, under the names of Churches, but that Diſcipline only muſt carry away the denomination of their being one Church, though many in relation unto it. If there were one word in any of thoſe inſtances, that there were many Churches among them making one Church, it were ſomething, but there is not.

7 If ſuch a Presbyterial company of Elders were a Church, then Diſcipline muſt merely conſtitute a Church as a Church. And ſo the objection againſt the Epiſcopal Government, *viz.* That for Government alone there was an Order of Prieſthood, namely a Biſhop; will come with greater force here, as being very ſtrange that for Government alone, there ſhould be a Church Inſtituted. And that Diſcipline doth never conſtitute any kind of Church is clear, becauſe that which can *abeſſe le* or not, and *adeſſe le*, without the deſtruction of the ſubject, will never conſtitute it. But ſo all Divines do ſay of Diſcipline, that a Church may be a Church though it be defective in Diſcipline, therefore it is not that which doth conſtitute a Church. And this principle the Church of *England* is concerned to hold up, or elſe they will juſtifie ſeparation from them, as having been hitherto no true Churches. But lo here is a Church, a Presbyterial Church, that is a Church upon no other conſideration but for Diſcipline.

8. And add to this, that ſince Presbyterial Government makes Congregations (which are Churches, having each their Elders over them) to be united for Government unto one Presbyterial Church: Let us but conſider how many ſeveral Churches it makes.

1. For firſt, There is the particular Congregations conſiſting of People and their Elders for Worſhip, they are one ſort of Churches.

2. There is ſecondly the Elderſhip in every one of thoſe Congregations, which according to their principles is the Church, for they interpret *Mat.* 18. to be, Tell that Elderſhip, that is, Tell the Church; there's a ſecond ſort.

3. Then thirdly, There is all theſe Elders met in one for the Government of any of theſe Congregations; There's a third ſort of Churches; for theſe Elders muſt be a Church in a true ſenſe for the People, or they cannot meet: And if they will challenge Government by virtue of *Mat.* 18. they muſt needs challenge to be a Church. Now let it be conſidered, that thoſe are not ſo much ſubordinations, as National and Provincial (which are but ſubordinations of the ſame kind, for the ſame ends) which conſiſts of greater or leſſer number of Elders; but theſe are diverſifications, ſeveral ſorts of bodies going to make up one Church that it might be a compleat both for Worſhip and Government. And that it is a diverſification is clear by this.

1. Becauſe they are Churches for differing purpoſes. The Congregations are Churches for Worſhip, but the particular Elderſhips and Presbyterial Elderſhips, are only for Diſcipline; now ends do diverſifie ſuch bodies.

2. They are not the ſame Churches by way of Accumulation, as many things of the ſame ſort laid together: which is clear by this, becauſe the particular Churches conſiſt of People and Elders, but theſe have Elders of Churches only. And as we urge in our Argument that is drawn from Elders, that this Presbyterial Government would make one Man to be a double ſort of Elders, both a Ruling Elder and a Teaching Elder, a Ruling Elder to ſome Churches, and a Teaching Elder to others, ſo alſo this makes them ſeveral ſorts of Churches.

3. It muſt needs make a diverſification of Churches. For as when many Families unite into a City for Government, there is a new relation and notion; ſo now here, there is the notion of a new Church. And then,

4. Add

4. Add to this (which heighteneth the absurdity of it) that whereas the Presbyterial Church is made the compleat Church, they yet do want those great and main Ordinances, for which principally a Church is said to be a Church, as the Sacraments and the like. So of the two, this greater Church is the less compleat, and therefore is less the Church than a particular Congregation. Book II.

And if you say, they are made compleat Churches by being both, yet you make at least wise two sorts of Churches, as we said before: And you make a whole Church more uncompleat, as it is the whole, than it is in the parts.

If it be said that the Church Universal is one, and yet hath no Ordinances as Church, as Preaching the Word and Sacraments, and yet it is truly a Church. We answer, it is not a Church Instituted in relation unto Ordinances; but a Church Mystical in relation unto Persons and Personal Graces.

This also farther addeth confirmation to us, that the supposition of there being many Congregations, in all, or many of those Cities, under a common Presbyterian Government of many Elders, thus in the general only held forth, leaveth room for, yea is the occasion of a variety of suppositions of several frames and forms of Government, which those Congregations might be cast into, both in relation to their Officers, and to the Members mutually among themselves. 1. As that either they were *Conventus promiscui* (as *Didoclavius* calls them) *promiscuous unfixt Assemblies*, some meeting together at one place or time, some at another time with others, having no fixed relation; Or else that they were fixed meetings in respect of the Members divided into set determinate companies meeting constantly together. 2. Or else otherwise, supposing them set and fixed Congregations in respect of the Members, yet there are other as various and more difficult suppositions may still be made concerning the relation of these Officers and Elders, how they were disposed of to the right performance of their duties, which the command of the Word lays on them toward their Flock. As, whether they were either fixed and appropriated to these several Congregations respectively, some to one, some to another (as it is in most of the Reformed Churches, and is with us, and we suppose will not be altered amongst us) or else unfixt in respect of all the Congregations, so as equally and mutually in their course, these Ministers might Preach and Officiate to them all by turns (as in some Cities in *Holland*.) And then 3 If you suppose them fixedly divided into several Congregations, then another question cometh, what power those Elders that are appropriated to each Congregation should have over the Flock? Whether over all, or none, or some part? Now it is the supposition of their being many Congregations under one Presbytery, that only is the ground of this uncertainty, and bringeth in this variety of suppositions of these several ways, how these things should be cast, whereas the supposing of them to be but several distinct Churches tho' great ones, will make all things fall in naturally. For then there could be but one way of casting and moulding Members, nor could there be but one common relation of Elders, and so all those duties and things that are spoken about the Power and Duties of Elders, and of the Members amongst themselves, and whatsoever is spoken of Churches and Elders, their Dues, and Duties run all but in one Channel. And then consider too (supposing them many Congregations) that the designing out, which of those suppositions was the pattern left by the Apostles, was a matter of as much moment (as touching the point of the right ordering of Congregations) as this common Presbyterial Government can be supposed to be of, in as much as the execution of all mutual duties between People and Pastors, and the administration of all holy things amongst them, appertaining to this particular Government of the several Congregations, and upon the right ordering and settlement of them, and of these Elders relation to them, doth the right Government and Administration of all holy things depend. And yet consider too at the same time, that we do not find the Holy Ghost making so much as a mention of any such distinct subordinated Congregations to a Classis (only the multitudes of Believers are looked upon through multiplying Glasses to argue it) much less giving any hints to discern by, in the History of the Apostles, or in the Epistles, what the frame was of these supposed Churches, and what their particular special relation to Elders in this supposed variety was. There is not any thing to any such purpose extant, in either that instance of *Jerusalem* or any other of those examples of Cities, that are pretended to hold forth this multitude of Congregations making one Church under one Common Presbyterial Government.

Ch. VII. vernment. This hath long and doth still stick in our Consciences because the Holy Ghost is silent, and hath not left us the least footsteps in the Sacred History, to discern in which of these ways (supposing many Congregations thus making a Church for Government) the Apostles did settle the constitution of this Church, and how they did dispose the relation of these Elders and Officers to those several Congregations.

CHAP. VIII.

The Instances of the Churches setled by the Apostles in the Lesser Cities, and Villages, prove a Congregational Church to be according to the Apostolical and Primitive Form.

LET us now go over all the Examples of the Churches in the New Testament (which must Interpret Christ's Speech in *Mat.* 18.) and let us see whether they were Classical or Congregational. For the instance of the Church of *Hierusalem* and the like, we will speak to them under the consideration of the Churches in greater Cities: But let us now go over all the other.

The first Churches we read of in the beginning of the Gospel, are in *Acts* 9. 31. *Then had the Churches rest thoroughout all Judea, and Galilee, and Samaria, and were edified*, &c. These are called Churches in that common notion, whereby Churches constituted by the Apostles were distinguished one from the other. And is this their diversification and title of Churches. like to have been in a Classical respect or Congregational, as here he speaks of them generally? Let the words and circumstances of the story be considered.

1. It was in the beginning of the Gospel, that these Churches had been raised, and the special means we read of whereby they were erected. was *Peter* and *John's* Ministry, of whom we read, *chap.* 8. 25. that *returning to Hierusalem, they preached the Gospel in many Villages of the Samaritans, as also some of the dispersed from Hierusalem had done*, ver. 4. *They went every where* διήλθον, *they went thorough or all about*, namely *Judea* and *Samaria*, as *Philip* in *Samaria*, ver. 5. And as their Preaching had been every where, and in Villages, which is chiefly noted, *ver.* 25. so accordingly the Churches that were constituted out of those converted, are said to have been in all *Judea* and *Samaria*, &c. and therefore in Villages. For that the Holy Ghost should aforehand in the *Acts*, so remarkably relate their Preaching in many Villages of *Samaria*, and then make mention of Churches throughout *Samaria*, argues his intent to have been to shew that these Churches were those in these Villages: And these not as gathered into Cities, but remaining thoroughout *Samaria*, as the Gospel had been Preached in the Villages. Nor needed they now (for they had rest) forbear to hold up their Church-fellowship in the several places of their abode. And therefore when upon this rest, *Peter* took the opportunity to visit them (as in the next verse of that *9th chapter*, it is said *Peter passed thorough all*, namely as 'tis translated, *all quarters* where these Churches were scattered, some here, some there, up and down) all of them whether in Cities or in Villages, are in one uniform respect called *Churches*, for his Speech wherein he involves them all promiscuously is *simular*, and so meant of the same kind of Churches. Now is it imaginable that throughout these Regions or Countreys, the Churches whereof he speaks should all be such Classical Churches as are now amongst us, when at the beginning of the Gospel, but a few Saints and Professours of Christianity can be supposed to be scattered every where up and down. It was well if by reason of their being so thin sown up and down in those Regions they could make up Congregational Churches with Elders to them.

2. When it is said that these Churches had rest and were edified, is it likely he should speak this of these Churches as Classical, as such which meet but in their Elders for exercise of Discipline; Or rather of these Churches as enjoying rest in the Ordinances of Worship on the Lord's Day, publick Prayers, the Word, Sacraments, and all other means of edification and comfort? For the preservation of the purity

purity of which, Discipline doth but subserve. They are the Congregational Churches, and the Communion the Saints have therein, that are the great means of Comfort, Edification, and Multiplication of Churches; and the enjoyment of these, in rest, is that which is the greatest outward Mercy and Priviledge. And therefore when he sets out the condition of those times; *Then had the Churches Rest, and were Edified*, he means, Congregational Churches. And when he says the Churches were multiplied, which if understood, of more and New Churches Erected: Doth he reckon their Multiplication by Presbyterian Churches, that do consist of many Congregations each of them? It is likely a Multitude of many more such Churches were erected? No, rather they were so many fixed Congregations of Believers. Book II.

2. Let us come to the next mention of Churches in that Story, *Acts* 14.23. (slipping over that Church of *Antioch*, *chap.* 13. The Demonstration of which, to have been a Congregational Church, we refer to another place, when we examine the State of Churches in Cities.) *And when they had Ordained them Elders in every Church, and had Prayed with Fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed.* That these were Congregational Churches, will appear in like manner by the like circumstances of the Story. In *Acts* 13. 14. We Read that *Paul* and his Company came to *Antioch* in *Pisidia*, where the *Jews* refusing the Gospel, *Lo we turn to the Gentiles*, said *Paul* and *Barnabas*, ver. 46. *For so the Lord hath commanded us, I have set thee to be a light of the* Gentiles, *that thou shouldest be for Salvation, to the ends of the Earth, and many believed*; and accordingly, ver. 48. and ver. 49. *The word of the Lord was published throughout the Regions.* Then *chap.* 14. *Paul* and *Barnabas* fled to *Derbe* and *Lystra*, Cities of *Lycaonia*; and *unto the Region that lieth round about, and there they Preached the Gospel.* Here again as afore in *Pisidia*, so now in *Lycaonia*, not in Cities only, but in the Regions they Preached. And this is noted, to shew the spreading of the Gospel, (for to what end else, should the Preaching of it be Recorded?) And *ver.* 21. 'tis said, that when at *Derbe* they had Taught ἱκανὸς *a sufficient competent number in that City*; they went again to *Lystra*, *Iconium*, and *Antioch*, the chief Cities of those Countries, *Lycaonia* and *Pisidia*, in the Regions of which they had preached the Gospel, as well as in those Cities. And the Story Relates, that the end and purpose of this second visit of these places, was to confirm the Disciples, *ver.* 22. and to gather them into Churches, and ordain Elders over them, *ver.* 23. whom they had afore Preached unto, and made Disciples. Thus they made fit matter for Churches, by making Disciples, *ver.* 24. and then moulded and formed them up, into a way of order for Worship and Government, by Elders Established, in the several Congregations. For these Churches, they thus Formed and Ordained Elders unto, were surely Congregational. For,

1. If we suppose them to have been only the Disciples in these Cities of *Lystra* and *Derbe*, *Iconium*, and *Antioch*; yet it is not supposable, that in each the number of Disciples should arise to more than one Congregation in a City; now in this beginning of the Gospel, and in so short a time; and yet they were formed up into Churches, and had Elders in every Church. Or

2. Can we suppose, that the Apostles staid gathering them into those Churches with Elders, till their number would arise to many Congregations in each City, sufficient to make Classical Churches; and that they did not till then, constitute them Churches, nor placed Elders over them? Can it be imagined, they would keep Men out of Ordinances so long? Or that themselves, being Apostles, and to sow the Gospel in the World, would still stay so long, till every where such Members did arise? Yea,

3. The 21. *verse* intimates, (in the instance of *Derbe*) their manner to have been, (and as there, so in other places) that when they had Preached the Gospel to that City, and had Taught many, (or as the word is ἱκανοὺς, made a sufficient and competent number of Disciples, and sufficient for what? *ver.* 23. to make up a Church, and whereof some might be fit Persons for Elders therein;) then they used to leave that City, and went to other places, as there 'tis said they did; and so long to stay there, till there were a sufficiency for a Church and Elders, or if before they could accomplish this, they were driven out, then they either returned to Form them into Churches with Elders, (which was their end of coming this second time to *Lystra*, and those Cities, to confirm the Disciples, and ordain them Elders, as now to become a Church) or else afterwards sent *Evangelists* to them.

Ch. VIII. And 4. As those Disciples were in the Regions about, as well as in the Cities; for (afore it was noted in the Story, that in the Regions about both of *Pisidia* and *Lycaonia*, the Gospel was Preached) so it must be supposed, that these Churches were set up in the Countries about, as well as in the Cities. And 'tis hard to think, that all the Christians should leave their Callings and Dwellings they were bred and born in, to come up to the Cities to make Classical Churches, or that they were so many converted in the Villages, as to make Classical Churches there. *Paul* saith, 1 *Cor.* 7. 10. that he ordained in all Churches, that Men should abide in the callings wherein God called or converted them in; and to suppose that Husbandmen in the Countries, should leave their callings of Husbandry, *&c.* and come up to the Cities, where they could not exercise that calling, to leave their Livelihood; and Wives converted to leave their Husbands, Children their Parents, Servants their Masters; and come to dwell in the Cities only, and not rather have Churches made up in the Countries also, is hard to think. But,

5. And Lastly. These could not be Classical Churches here; but Congregational, for it is the first Ordaining of these Elders, to these Churches that is here mentioned, and not an *Associating* of many Congregations into one Eldership; and therefore here is a gathering Congregational Churches, and ordaining Elders thereunto apart, κατ' ἐκκλησίαν And as there must be a sufficient company of Christians, ere a Congregational Church is made up, as a number of Congregations with Elders must be supposed, ere a Classical Church can be framed. This being therefore the first framing them into Churches, and ordaining them Elders, (or else you must suppose Churches, long afore they had Elders) it must be in a Congregational way. And further also, there is this Reason; That these Congregations being then fixt for Officers and Elders, if these Elders were ordained to these Churches, their ordination, as Elders, must be to their several Churches Respectively; and not as the common Eldership made up of them. And such were called Churches, endowed with Elders proper unto them; and so much the word (that is added in that, *Acts* 14. 13.) doth import, *they ordained or chose* αὐτοῖς *to them Elders in every Church*, that is, to every Church they chose their own proper and peculiar Elders, fixed and appointed unto them.

That this was the primitive way of planting the Gospel, may further be confirmed by that Parallel place to this, *Tit.* 1. 5. where there being many Believers already converted, (as many passages in that Epistle do argue) and yet not in most places, formed up into Churches with Elders; the Apostle left *Titus* an *Evangelist*, (whose proper Office it was, as appears by the Epistle; and that to *Timothy* to settle Believers and Churches in their right frame and order, according to the Apostle's directions given) to ordain Elders in every City or Town, (as shall be shewn by and by) where any number of Believers were to make a Church; and where fit and meet Men for Elders might be found, to set over those Churches. And that which *Luke*, in the forecited, *Acts* 14. 23. calleth *Ordaining Elders in every Church*, *Paul* here calleth, *Ordaining Elders in every City*; and the one interprets the other: And the Apostle's, practice there, is here turned into a command or direction, as given to *Titus*, which therefore as it bound him, binds us to the end of the World; And he adds, *as I appointed thee.* Now his meaning is, not that Elders should be ordained in every City simply, as it was a City or Body of Men; for Elders and Church, were Relatives, as Shepherd and Flock, and therefore Elders were not ordained, but to a Church; and therefore to say, he ordained Elders in the City, necessarily supposeth, a Church extant in that City, unto which these Elders were ordained; and therefore the ordination was only in such Cities or Towns, where a Church was, and a competent sufficient number of Believers to make a Church. For that must needs be the reason, why *Paul* himself did not cast and mould these People in *Crete*, converted by him presently into Churches with Elders, as fast as they were converted; because a Church should have a convenient competent number, and fit Men to be Elders unto them, before they be form'd into such a Body. And therefore, he being called away too soon, he left *Titus* behind him, to finish that Work.

The Writers for *Episcopacy*, have made use of this place, to shew, that in the Apostle's times, they planted Churches only in Cities; (and 'tis certain, that they bestowed their pains chiefly therein) So that they make the Apostolical Institution to be, that look how many Believers soever were in a City, and the Villages about it,

it, so many were to make one Church-Diocesan for Government; and therefore to ordain Elders, κατ ἐκκλησίαν in every Church, *Acts* 14. 23. is all one, and to ordain Elders κατα πόλιν in every City as here, *Tit*. 1. 5. and this by the Apostle's own Ordination, *as I appointed thee. i. e.* over these Cities, and so the Churches therein, and the vicinity thereof, he as one Man, was as a Bishop set. And some of those for the Classical Government, do make use of of the same Notion, that all Churches in a City, when multiplied, were by Apostolical Institution, to be but one Church for Government, as well as at first, when they were but one Congregation; and the Elders, at first planted in that first Church, were still to continue, together with all the Elders, that should anew be set over those Churches) as one Eldership, a Presbytery, unto them in that City as one Church. The appearances for this opinion we shall speak to, when Arguments for the Presbyterial Government, come to be discussed. In the mean time as to this place, if we Interpret it by that former, and consider all circumstances, it makes for Congregational Churches and Elderships over them. For, Book II.

1. This Direction was given to *Titus*, now in the first beginning of the Gospel in *Crete*; For *Paul* having newly been there with him, and having converted many up and down in the *Island*, he left *Titus* behind, to ordain them Elders: So as here was the first Erection of Churches and Elders; and therefore 'twas in the beginning of the Gospel, at which time all the Saints, in each great City converted, were but as many as might make but one Church. And it was the Duty of Saints, that all the Saints, in a place cohabiting, should joyn in one, rather than in divers companies for Worship, and all Ordinances; and not divide, both because of Unity, and more presence of the Spirit, and the Solemnity of the Worship; and for all these ever to continue one Church, till absolute necessity, would cause a division into many: Hence in this beginning of the Gospel, he writes to him to ordain Elders in every City, because his ordination was, that Saints cohabiting, should make one Church, and not divide for all ordinances; and that they should have Elders, more than one, set over them, both for Worship and Government; because *de facto*, there were but so many in the greatest Cities, as would make but one Church. And,

2. This being Interpreted by the form, κατ ἐκκλησίαν by κατα πόλιν City, here therefore is not meant literally, the extent of a City; but Metonimically it is put for the Church, then extant in any City; and so doth not necessarily import, that the extent of the Church-Government, should be by God's Ordidination, equal to the extent of the City; as if because there were in a City, so many as would make more Churches, he was to ordain them Elders, κατ ἐκκλησίαν in every Church in those Cities, as the Apostle had done; for they were not to be Elders to that City, as a City, but to the Churches in that City; and as Congregational Churches are meant, in *Acts* 14. so also they here intended.. But,

III. And chiefly, as Church by Church, in *Acts* 14. was not in Cities only, but in Villages, or Market Country Towns, so here also, κατα πόλιν is to be understood: For the word πόλις when indefinitely used, (as here) is taken not for great Cities only, but Country Towns. And accordingly in the New Testament, when the Planting and Propagating the Gospel is mentioned, the business here spoken of, and concerned) we find that when the Commission to Preach the Gospel, is given to the Apostles and Disciples, that the word πόλις is taken for Villages, as well as great Cities, as being those they were sent to preach unto, as indifferently and promiscuously, as to Cities; and therefore when like directions are given to frame Churches, and set up Elderships over them, (as here) it is answerably to be taken. Thus in the Commission given, *Mat.* 10. 11. whereas Christ says, *Into what City or Town ye enter*; the *Evangelist Luke* says, *chap.* 10. *ver.* 8. (uttering the same Commission) *Into what City ye enter*; that word therefore is put for all and both; and therefore he useth a general indefinite word, εἰς ἣν δ' α'ν πόλιν *Into what ever City ye enter*; that is, City of any sort or kind, small or great, as intending Towns, as well as Cities strictly so called. And further, he, in his Speech, useth it as the Contra-distinct Term to *House* or Family, of which he had said before, *into what House ye enter*; so now into what City, and therefore intended to take in all sorts of Towns, consisting of more Families than one. And the practice of the Twelve Apostles, who had received Commission, in *Matth.* 9. interprets it, *ver.* 6. 'tis said, they went *through Towns, Preaching the Gospel*, where the word *Towns* is only used, as including

Ch. VIII. ding Cities, as in *Luke* the word Cities only is used, as including Towns; and so the one promiscuously is put for the other: For in the preceding verse, *ver.* 5. Christ in his Commission given, calls them Cities, *when ye go out of a City* (says he) *where you have Preached, shake off the dust*; and then in the execution of this Commission, they are called Towns, *they went through the Towns Preaching, ver.* 6. And further in *Mat.* 10.23. when Christ teaching them if, they were persecuted where they Preached, to fly; if they persecute you in one City, fly into another; that is, if persecuted in one Town, fly into another: What, were they persecuted only in great Cities? Yes in Towns, for they were whipt in Synagogues, and Synagogues were in Villages, *Mat.* 10. 33. And is the direction given to them, to fly into smaller Towns, if they might be safe there as well as into Cities, or there only were they to have the promise of protection? so *Acts* 14. 6. *Paul* and *Barnabas*, fled to *Derbe* and *Lystra*, and the Regions about, as well as to the Cities; and there had safety, and Preached the Gospel. And Christ further adds in that place, *you shall not have gone over* all the Cities of *Israel, &c*, that is, the Towns, for in Towns they Preached. And so Christ himself Preached in all Cities and Towns, and so did the Apostles, and it was their Commission so to do,

And it seems there was something special in the state and condition of *Crete*, why the word πόλις should be there used, *Crete* is but a small Island, and there are at this day, but three Cities in it. In the Apostle's times, there were four Hundred Cities, for so *Pliny*, (who lived not long after them relates) said to have been in it, which were but small Towns. And therefore *Beza* hath Translated it, *Oppidatim*, Town by Town, as also so understanding it.

Now therefore if the word πόλις, be indefinitely taken for Country Towns, as well as great Cities, when Commission was given to Preach the Gospel; why should it not be taken also in that Sense, when Direction is given to make up Churches, and Ordain Elders to them, in the same place where it hath been Preached? And therefore to ordain Elders, Κατὰ πόλιν is not to be confined to Cities only, (where many Congregations, as is supposed, have been) but in Country Towns, or very small Cities, (when in *Crete* there were so many) where Churches may be supposed to have been; and those to be sure but Congregational, and in both such Cities and Towns only, where Churches and Saints Ἱκανοὶ sufficient to make Churches were found. So there Κατὰ πόλιν and Church, *City by City, Tit.* 1. 5. and Κατὰ Ἐκκλησίαν *Church by Church, Acts* 14. 23. are all one. And if in greater Churches, there were more than one Elder, then their Elders were ordained Κατ' Ἐκκλησίαν, *Church by Church.*

And surely it is a hard Supposition, to suppose that in *Crete* the Apostle *Paul* and *Titus* the *Evangelist*, had Preacht only in the Cities, when the Commission was to Teach all Nations; and therein Towns as well as Cities, as they had occasion. Was God's Elect in Cities only? And were not Country Souls as pretious? And if they be converted unto God, were not they to be Taught to do what Christ commanded, as well as those in Cities? And to become Churches, and to have the priviledge of all Ordinances? Or were they to come up to the Cities for them, and to the Elders there, as the Tribes did for Judgment to *Jerusalem*? These are harder Suppositions, than what the Presbyterians put upon us, as an Absurdity, that the fruit of the Apostle's Preaching, should in great Cities arise to the conversion but of so many, as to make but one Congregation.

And besides, if *City* should here *Tit.* 1. 5. be taken strictly for greater Cities, then here is no Commission to *Titus* to ordain Elders to Churches elsewhere. And so then the Institution of the bounds of a Church, and the extent of the Jurisdiction of Elders, should be cast rather to the mould and extent of great Cities; that if one City, then one Church, one Eldership, though there were never so many Congregations in it; and thus Elders in every City, is to be understood of greater Cities, then not of the Churches in Towns and Villages, where there could rationally be but one Church in a Town. But why the pattern of Church Government should fall upon, and be framed rather to the example of a City, and so conformed to the mould of the Civil Government in Cities especially, and not as well upon the way of Country Towns, when Κατὰ πόλιν will import the one, as well as the other; (and the pattern surely was uniform in both) we see no ground of Reason for difference. Why should we imagine that the Apostle should still so have in his Eye in these Directions to *Titus*, Classical

Classical Presbyteries, (which are but the external Government of the Church) as to take care of the ordaining Elders, as in Relation hereunto, and not much rather for the ordaining Elders in order to the Worship of God in Churches, and for the Establishment of their Relation of Elders to Congregations or Churches. Book II.

Let us go on from these forementioned, to all other that are either called Churches, or where the Saints, written to by the Apostles, may by circumstances be supposed to have been gathered into Churches, under Elders and Officers.

In the Epistles of *James* and *Peter*, written to the scattered *Jews*, we find mention of Elders; and therefore there must be supposed Churches, whereof they were Elders and we find indeed mention of *Elders of the Church*; and let the circumstances be considered, whether those may be more rationally supposed Congregational or Classical. Let us consider their condition.

1. They were *Jews* scattered, and as some probably conceive, were many of them of those scattered, *Acts* 8. And as such, both of these Apostles did write to them; and as scattered up and down throughout vast Regions, whole Countries, *Asia*, *Bythinia*, *Cappadocia*, and therefore not thick sown, (being Strangers) nor in Multitudes, living so near, that they can be supposed to have made Associated Churches.

2. Those scattered Persons, therefore must rationally be supposed to have made up Churches of themselves, as those of the *Dutch* Strangers do in *London*, and the *English* in *Holland*; and not to have promiscuously mingled themselves with those Natives of the Countries, they were scattered into; for they had a differing Language from the *Gentiles*, though turned Christians. And this we find in *Aquila* & *Priscilla*, who being *Jews*, and having had a Church in their House, (namely of *Jews*) in *Rome*, as *chap.* 16. of that Epistle. And afterward the *Jews* being Banished from *Rome* *Acts* 18. 2. *Aquila* and *Priscilla* removed, but kept their Church together still distinct, from the Native *Asiatique* Christians; therefore in 1 *Cor.* 16. we read of the Church at their House in *Asia*, and as some think at *Ephesus*, and there joyned or mentioned with the rest of the Churches of *Asia*, in *Paul's* Salute unto the *Corinthians*, and is mentioned apart from them; because it was a Church of *Jews*, Strangers scattered among them, and kept distinct from them. And yet it was such a kind of Church (though less) that all those Churches in *Asia*, made mention of together with it, were of (both that particular Church, and all the rest, being alike spoken of promiscuously under the name of Church and Churches, as being all like Churches) and it will easily be granted, that that Church in *Aquila* and *priscilla's* House was Congregational, for it is an instance alledged by the *Assembly* at *Westminster* of many Congregational Churches in *Ephesus*, whereof that was one particular. Now look as *Aquila* and *Priscilla*, and their fellow Strangers, kept a distinct Church of their Countrymen, (which is the reason that *Church* is in two Epistles so apart singly mentioned) so in like manner, did these scattered Strangers cast themselves into Churches of themselves, and their own Nation, distinct from the other Gentile Believers in the places where they came. And it was usual then for the *Jews* to have Synagogues for them of their Nation, in several Cities. And therefore both *James* and *Peter* writeth unto them apart as Strangers; and they involve not the mention of any Gentile Christians with them, because they themselves were apart from them. And yet they writ to these thus scattered and kept distinct, as to Churches that had Elders, *The Elders that are among you*, (says *Peter*) 1 *Pet.* 5. *ver.* 1, 2. ἐν ὑμῖν. The phrase is of distinction, that as they writ to these *Jews* apart from the Christian *Gentiles*, so the Elders that are ἐν ὑμῖν, Elders of you *Jews*, peculiar to you, that is, that belong to any of you. And therefore *James*, *James* 5. 14. also exhorts them that were sick among them, or of them to *send for the Elders of the Church*, not as if these had but one Church, for that was impossible, being scattered over so many Countries; therefore he speaks indefinitely, as giving a direction that they should send for the Elders of those Churches where they were; so as they had Churches and Elders. And these Elders must be considered (in that Speech) as Elders of Congregational Churches (as was afore observed) for how can it be imagined, that Men scattered so far off from one another, should be commanded to send (when sick) for the Elders of a Church Classical, and such a Church and Elders, is common to such Churches to be intended? The sick Persons could not send, but for Elders that were ready at hand; and therefore a Congregational

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CHAP. IX.

That the Account which the Scripture gives us of many Churches Established by the Apostles in one City, Demonstrates Congregational Churches to have been by the primitive Institution of Christ.

WE now will go over all other Instances of Congregational Churches, as they appear setled by the Apostles in Cities.

1. The Church of *Colossians* was but one, which is argued by this, 1. That the Apostle Writing to that Church, Writes to them as a whole Church; and also that their Ministers that were over this whole Church, were fixed Ministers unto them; And if so, then that whole Church could be but one Congregation, for he that is a fixed Minister, hath a Relation, for his Teaching, but to one Congregation. Now their chief Minister *Epaphras* was a fixed Minister to that Church, Col. 1. 7. *who is for you a Faithful Minister of Christ*, Col. 4. 12. Epaphras *who is one of you*. If there had been many Congregations, to one of which he had been fixed, he had been more that Congregations Minister, than all the rest; and his special relation had been to them, and therefore his Salutation would have been mentioned, as especially to his own Church, more than to all the rest of the Congregations, as his Labour and Pains, (when constant among them) was more to that particular Congregation, than any other. Since therefore his Salutation is to all the *Colossian* Christians, its evident that they were but one Congregational Church, whose Pastor he was. And again, the Apostle Writes to the whole Church, as those that had learned the Gospel of *Epaphras*, who was *for them* a Faithful Minister: Now if *Epaphras* had been a fixt Elder to one Congregation, and there had been many more there beside, that one Congregation had been the Congregation, who had comparatively learned the Gospel of him, more than all the Congregations besides; and *Paul* would not have Written thus indefinitely, and alike of all, if there had been many. For he had been a full Minister only to that Congregation he was fixt to, and properly theirs as concerning Communion, by way of Learning and Teaching, wherefore the Apostle

Apostle would have singled out that Congregation in his Speech from all the rest, if there had been more than one. And then as to their other Ministers, *Archippas*, *Col.* 4. 17. The Apostle enjoyns them to say to him, *Take heed to the Ministry that thou hast received of the Lord, that thou fulfill it.* Had he been a fixt Minister to one Congregation; and there had been many Congregations there, besides the main of his Ministy lying in his Preaching and personal watching over that one Congregation he was fixt to, (for that which a Minister doth in-ruling in common over all the Congregations, according to the Classical Suppositions, is the least part of his Ministry) the Apostle would have singled out that Congregation, with whom he walked continually, as those that should have said to him, fulfill thy Ministry; because that they who were his constant Hearers, must needs be best, if not only acquainted with what the fulfilling of the main and constant part of his Ministry was, and with what were any neglects or defects therein. Seeing therefore he Writes to them thus indefinitely, in relation to their own Ministers, without any Distinction, it argues that they were but one Church, having these Elders fixt to them for Preaching and Government. And of this Church he saith, that for their Faith and Order, for their Doctrine and Worship and Government, they were compleat, and his Heart was comforted as well in the one, as in the other, *Col.* 2. 2, 5. and he incourageth them to walk in both, according as they had received of Jesus Christ the Lord; and if so, then to keep that Order too, (which already they had) without any alteration, to which he would never have exhorted them, it had been their duty (when multiplied to more Churches) to enter into another different Order and Form of Government. κατ ἐκκλησιαν

2. There is the Church of *Philippi.* The Apostle speaks of them in the beginning of the Gospel as a Church saying (*Phil.* 4. 15.) that *in the beginning of the Gospel, no Church communicated to him by way of giving and receiving*, but only them; and in the beginning of the Gospel, even in the greatest Cities, a Church was no more than could meet together in one. Now look what manner of Church they were at the first, he speaks of them as such still; and useth the same Stile, *No other Church but you*, saith he.

3. The Church of *Antioch*, is another that is to be considered. It was an intire Church, having Government within it self. For if it could have discern'd that controversie in *Acts* 15. and so had been capable of deciding it, it had power to have done it; and need never have sent to *Jerusalem.* They did not therefore as wanting power, appeal thither as to a Court of Judicature, but only sent for Advice and Counsel in a difficult Case, wherein their Opinions disagreed. And the Church at *Antioch Ordained*, that *Paul* and *Barnabas* should go to the Apostles at *Jerusalem*, to consult them about this question; and it was as one Church that they did thus Determine also of *Barnabas* and others, *that for a whole year they Assembled themselves with the Church*, or *in the Church* ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ, *and Taught much People.* And the word ἐκκλησία relateth to Assembling together; so the kind of the Church, must be answerable to the kind of the Assembling; and if the Assembling was for Worship, then the Church in which they met, was a Congregational Church, which is the Seat for Worship; and we believe that none will say that many Churches are ever called one Church in respect of Assembling for Worship. But here that they Assembled of Worship is plain; for they Assembled themselves in the Church, and Taught much People, now the Church in which there is Teaching, is a Congregational Church. And besides that, he saith it was *in the Church* (as the Greek hath it) not only *with the Church.* If there had been several Congregations in this City, where the word had been Taught, speaking of Assembling for Teaching, if ever, or at any time he would have mentioned those many Congregations, surely he would have done it upon this occasion, especially relating to matter of Fact, he would have spoken distributively. For why should he call Congregations Churches upon other occasions (as often he doth) or in any other Relation, and not upon this; whereas the Relation here is purely Congregational, for it is for Teaching the Word and Worship? Again. 2. We read twice of the meetings of that Church together, *Acts* 14. 27. When *Paul* and *Barnabas* came back to give an account to those of *Antioch*, from whom they had been commended to the Grace of God, it is said, *when they were come and had gathered the Church together, they rehearsed all that God had done by them*; did they make the Relation to the Classical Elders only? Did not the Rehearsal concern all the People, as well as every Soul amongst them as any Sermon, it being

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ing to shew how God had opened the Door of Faith to the *Gentiles*, that they might glorifie God. And in *Acts* 15. 30. it is said when they came to *Antioch* to deliver the Epistle from the Church at *Jerusalem*, they gathered the multitude together, and at that time made a Sermon, an Exhortation to them; and he calleth this Multitude Brethren, ver. 32. *They Exhorted the Brethren with many words, and confirmed them.* Thus as the meetings in the Church of *Hierusalem* are, six or seven times mentioned to be in one; and the Church of *Antioch* is here twice so mentioned.

4. We have an account of the Church of *Troas*. A Church they were, for they had Elders, and Elders they had, for they had the Sacrament; and it was at a meeting but in one place, *Acts* 20. 70. And *Paul* staid there seven Days, till they met, *They all met to break Bread*, and all in one; for it was in an upper Room, where *Paul* Preached to them; and if there had been more Congregations than one, he would have Preached to one at one time, and to another at another time.

5. By the Churches of *Galatia* (as they are Stiled 1 *Cor.* 16. 1.) doth he mean Congregational Churches or Classical? Congregational only; for first, when he speaks of them, it is concerning Collection for the Saints, *Even as I have given Order to the Churches of* Galatia, *so do ye*; Now the Order for Collection, for the Saints, concerns Congregational Churches, not Classical; *Let every one of you upon the first day of the Week, lay up in store as God hath* prospered him (*i. e.* lay up in the common Treasury of the Congregation) *that there be no gathering when I come.* And then, 2. If they had a provincial Church, he would certainly have called them so in his Epistle to the *Galatians*, but when (as we see there) those Churches were corrupted with corrupt Doctrine; and he exhorts them to *purge out the Old Leaven*, *Gal.* 5. 9. he then Writes to them as to Churches that were apart, to purge out the Old Leaven, as the Church of *Corinth* did; and each to become a new lump. If they be considered as one lump, yet it was as being leavened by way of infection; but that in 1 *Cor.* 5. is by way of guilt

6. The Church of *Laodicea*, mentioned in the Epistle to the *Colossians*, was also but a Congregational Church, *Colos.* 4. 16. when this Epistle is read among st you, cause it to be read also in the Church of the *Laodiceans*. That Church, wherein reading of the Word is, is a Congregational Church, for reading is a Work of Worship. And if in other places he had ever called a Church, in relation to Government consisting of many Churches; yet here if there had been many Churches, and many Churches for Worship, he would have said so, and have thus expressed himself, *Let it be read in the Churches of* Laodicea. He would have spoke of the Duty, and of the Subject of the Duty in a suitable way. When he speaks of the reading of the Word among the *Jews*, he saith it is read in every Synagogue every Sabbath Day, he speaks distributively, and so he would have done here.

7. I shall now proceed to prove that the Churches of *Asia*, were Congregational Churches.

1. That the Church of *Laodicea*, was a Congregational Church, we refer to what hath been said.

2. Five of these *Asiatick* Churches even *Downam* acknowledgeth, not to have been in great Cities; and such are to be supposed probably to have but one Congregation, those smaller Cities containing but Christians, as made one Church in each of them.

3. The constitution of all those Churches for Worship and Government, was one and the same; and therefore if *Laodicea* and some of the rest, were but Congregational Churches, then all the rest were so too. For they are intended all as Types of all Churches to the end of the World, now if some of them had been Congregational Churches, and others had been Classical, they could not have suited the State and condition of all Churches, both Congregational and Classical, which have a Government and a constitution different. And the Apostle *Rev. chap.* 2, & 3. Writes to the Angels of those Churches, as having an intire Government among themselves; and he Writes to them about matters of Discipline, and therefore regards them as Uniform, for the Matter and Seat of Government. And if that be true, which some Historians have reported, that *Laodicea* was destroyed by an Earthquake in *Nero's* Reign, long afore the time of *John's* Writing the *Revelation*, then it must needs have been intended only as a Type. And that all these Churches were uniform, appears by this also; that in the closure of this Epistle, what he Writes to one Church, he Writes

Tacit. Annal. lib. 14.

Writes to all, *Hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches*, which is all one with the conclusion of the whole Book, in *Revel.* 22. 16. *He sent his Angel to Testifie these things in the Churches.* And if Congregational Churches be acknowledged Churches in the Scripture Phrase, they must be intended in that Speech; and that those should be mainly intended appears by this, because that the Book of the *Revelation*, was only to be read in such Churches. And likewise that they were Congregational Churches appears by this, that he Writes to them, as to the seven Candlesticks, which Christ walked in the midst of; and he threatneth them that he would remove the Candlestick. Now by Candlestick he interprets the Churches, *chap.* 1. 1. And they are Candlesticks especially in relation to Worship. It was an Ordinance of Worship in the Temple: And it is therefore in *Zech.* 4. 2. put for the compleating of all the Temple for Worship, and all the utensils of it; for, though their *Synedrim* for Government might be compleat before, yet the Temple was not then built, in which God was to be Worshipped. And indeed the promise of the presence of Christ is most in respect of Worship, which the Saints are most constant in. And when he threatneth to remove the Candlestick, certainly the chief threatning falls upon their Church State, and the enjoyment of the Ordinances of Worship, such as Preaching, the Sacraments, *&c.* And whereas some would argue many Congregations to have been in every one of these Churches; Bishops have done so, because in the end of each Epistle he concludeth, *Let them hear what the Spirit saith to the Churches*, as having many Churches in each Church of them: We Answer.

Book II.

1. That it is a Speech all one with that in Rev. 22. 16. *I have sent mine Angel to Testifie these things in the Churches*; for as that is the closure of all, and is meant of all Churches, so this is the closure of each Epistle, and is meant by way of example of all Churches in the World, he singling out seven for all the rest.

And 2. It is but such an indefinite Speech, as that in *Rev.* 13. 29. If *any have an Ear, let him hear*, so here the meaning is, let every Church hear.

And 3. If that Notion be true of Mr. *Brightman's*, that they are Types of all Churches to come, to several Nations (as, it is most probable, they are) then it hath a clear other meaning, than that of their being many particular Churches, in each of those Cities.

To conclude, we find that in all those Epistles of *Paul*, when he Writeth to the several Churches of *Philippi*, *Colossus*, *Thessalonica*, &c he Writeth to them most and chiefly, concerning the Duties, which lay upon them, in respect of their particular relation, to that particular Congregation, whereof they are Members, and with whom they have a fixt communion, and do ordinarily converse with, both Officers and People. Now if there had been more Congregational Churches, than one, in each of these Cities, (as is supposed) there is far more reason why he would rather have Written to them under the Stile of several Churches, in such a place (as he doth when he Writes to the *Galatians*) when he urgeth such Duties upon them, rather than to have given them the Title of one Church, in respect of an Association for Government only: If he had Written of matters of Government only, or chiefly to them, then the expression of calling them one Church, had been suitable to the Duties he exhorts them to; but the Duties principally concerning them, as they were Members of distinct Congregations, having a nearer communion both toward their Officers fixed to them, and the People fixt in a near communion with them, he would rather have used the Stile of Churches, than of one Church, if there had been many Churches in those Cities. And farther, since according to this Supposition, the primary relation of Pastors to Churches, being in the several distinct Congregations; but the Relation of these Members one to another, as they are a Classical Church, being but a secondary relation, it were strange, that when the Holy Ghost Writes, and speaks to such and such Churches, in such or such a City (supposing many) he should Write to them only under the Notion of a Classical Church, and mention that only, and not mention their other Church-State, as being several Churches, making one Church, nay, not so much as speak, that they were several Congregations. Since they are Churches Congregational in the Language of the Holy Ghost, and that the main of what is a Church (as hath been shewed) falls upon them as such; how can we think, that this Association, into one Church, which is a secondary thing, should wholly carry away and swallow up the Name, Stile and Title of the

Ch. XI. other. And that, which further strengthens this consideration, is, that when they Write to Churches, in a Nation or in a Province (as in *Galatia*, and in *Asia*, and in *Judea* and the like) if that a politick Association, (such or the like Association to this, whereby it is affirmed, that in one City, many particular Congregations are made one Classical Church for Government) If such a one were intended, then they would as well, and by the same reason (in Writing to such Churches in a Nation or Province) have Written to them under the notion of one Church, as well as when they did Write thus to them in a City. But the Apostle when he Writeth to a whole Province, then he saith Churches (although, according to Presbyterian principles, they are as truly one Church, in the same political respect, that a Classical Church is one, in respect of many Congregations of a City) but on the contrary, when he Writeth to a City, he doth give them the Name of Church, Without the least mention of Churches therein, as making that one Church. And the Reason is strong, that he should have done the one, as well as the other; For if many Churches were called one Church in a City, because that's the greater Association, whereby the lesser Churches were governed; by the same reason he would much rather have called the Churches of *Judea* one Church, because the Association, in a Province and a Nation, is larger and greater than that of many Congregations, in a Classical Church in a City.

And whereas some argue from the Multitude of Believers in a City, as too great to make but one Congregational Church. If the case had been so, it had been then more conducible for the Apostle to have exprest the Multitude in such Cities, by the Name of Churches in a City, than by calling them one Church. And it is strange, that when the Story is told of the Apostles coming to such or such a City (as in the *Acts* it is) it is still said they called the Church together, as when the People were called together in *Antioch*, *Acts* 14 27. For, if they had been many Congregations, and had met in parts by way of Distribution, it had been a much more proper Phrase, to say *they called the Churches*, if there had been more in such a City.

Object. The Apostles still, in Writing unto the Saints in great Cities, calleth them one Church; and it were strange, if that, in the Apostle's times, they should not have multiplied in such great Cities, to more than one Congregation.

Answ. 1. As you say, it is hard to think that there were no Cities, that had but one Congregation; so it is as hard to think, that all the Churches, in other places, Villages and Cities, should not be uniform.

2. There might be some Cities, where there might be more Churches than one, to whom they Wrote, as the City of *Rome* to whom *Paul* Wrote, might have more Churches than one; for he doth not, in all his Epistle, call the Saints there one Church; and though he speaks of a Church in *Aquila* and *Priscilla*'s House, yet his Phrase of Writing otherwise, is only to the Saints at *Rome*.

3. All those, that Write against Episcopacy, both of the *Scottish* Nation and of our own, have with one Mouth affirmed, that it cannot by manifest Argument be made out, that the Churches, mentioned in the New Testament, were more than could meet in one Congregation.

4. The meaning is, that when the Story of the *Acts*, and those Epistles were written, that then there were no more, but not that afterwards there were no more.

5. Although the Apostles did specially Preach to Cities; yet let it be considered, how little time they were forced to stay in Cities, because they were to lay the Foundation of the Gospel in all the World. And though *Paul* staid three years in or about *Ephesus*, yet it doth not appear that he staid so long time in *Ephesus* it self, but as in the 13*th* and 14*th chapter* of the *Acts*, it is said they went into the Countries, so likewise he did.

6. The Apostles did teach the Saints in every City to become one Church, and to hold together so long as possibly they could continue in one Congregation with edification. And how great and large a Synagogue in a City was, we may see by that Instance of *Capernaum*. And the Christians met in the Cities, and built Synagogues for Meeting places, as well as the *Jews* were allowed to do in the Cities of the *Gentiles*.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

The Constitution of a Congregational Church, Evidenced to be by the Wise Appointment of Christ, because it is so exactly accommodated to the various conditions of Saints.

LET us now see, whether of these two should in reason be the Institution of Christ, and which, a Classical or Congregational Church would suit most with the condition of the Saints under the New Testament. God hath still moulded his Institution, and varied it himself according to what was the future condition of his Church Whilst the Church was continued in Families, as under the Old Law, he sorted his Government and Ordinances accordingly. When they grew up to a Nation, he fitted a New Government on purpose for them. When in the Wilderness, a Tabernacle only; when fully setled under a Kingly power, a Temple. Now under the Gospel, the condition of Saints in Nations varying in several Ages, he hath framed his Ordinance of Church-State suitably.

If it be said that therefore when Churches should multiply to a Nation, then the Government is to be suited unto that Nation as such.

We reply, 1. When we see whole Nations truly turn Christian, an answer is to be given.

2. God saw it would fall out otherwise with his Saints in the New Testament, that they would still be Redeemed out of Nations, therefore still suited his Government to his own design.

3. If in his Providence he foresaw that Nations, being turned to him, should have an answerable Government as the *Jews* had, he would have given Rules answerable. As although the Church in the Wilderness was not given up to a Kingdom, and had not a set place for Worship; and was not come to be disposed of in several Cities, (as when they should inherit the Land of *Canaan* they should) yet God, foreseeing what he would bring them to, did not give Laws only that suited their Church-State in the Wilderness for the present, but he told them, that when they should come into *Canaan*, he would choose a place to which they should bring their Offering, that this should be the Law of their King, and also appointed what their Government should be when dispersed into several Cities and Towns. And so answerably if he had intended a National Form of Government, for his Saints under the New Testament, and all things suitable thereunto, (when as yet they were not grown up to National Churches) he would aforehand have prescribed Laws accordingly.

Now 1. This Institution of Congregational Churches, was such as would suit all times of the beginning of the Gospel, and of the continuance of the Gospel. The first Churches were such necessarily as was said afore, and when multiplied, did still continue so, and might govern themselves without Foreign Oppression.

2. It suits all places, Villages as well as Cities; and we must suppose Saints to be as well in Villages, as in Cities. And those Villages had Elders for Worship and Government, and the rights of a Church. And if God were to make one uniform Law, why should the Institution be conformed to Cities, as is pretended, and that made the pattern, and the Jurisdiction of all the rest, rather than that of Villages; for God is the God of the Valleys, as well as the Hills; and there must be the same uniform Rule of both. But now, though the Institution, to have the Saints with their Elders make one Classical Church, might be supposed to suit Cities well enough (for it was but having many Churches in them) yet the lesser Towns it would not suit thus to form them up, under the Government of a Presbytery of many Congregations, especially in those times when they were scattered.

3. This Institution of Congregational Churches, suits also with all conditions of the Church of Christ.

1. With the times of Persecution, as well as the times of Peace. I may say of this Congregational Government as of Faith; it is said of Faith, that it is a standing grace; it is the *Materia prima, the first matter*, out of which all riseth, and into which all resolveth. A Man liveth by it in Prosperity, and if he be in Desertion, all is resolved into it. And so it is of Congregations, it agrees with all Estates, with all times:

Ch. X. And though you suppose other Governments, yet that always existeth, and all begin from thence; therefore these are called *Ecclesiæ primæ*, and the other *Ecclesiæ ortæ*.

2. It suiteth the condition of the Saints, being scattered all the World over. Whole Nations are not Saints fit for Churches, for the Saints are but a company redeemed out of Nations. As therefore among the *Jews*, when they were scattered, their Government was a Synagogue-Government, (therefore some think they began that of Synagogues, when they first went into *Babylon*, which we will not dispute) therefore, as Synagogue-Government, suited with the scattered, the dispersi condition of the *Jews*; so this suits best with the scattered condition of the Saints under the Gospel.

3. The constitution also of Churches was certainly uniform in Cities, and in Villages, or wheresoever, or in what time soever, the Government of them was uniform. When Christ bad them Teach every Nation, to do what he commanded them, he intended that the Rule should be uniform, whatever Government the Nations had, and therefore also the Apostle's Phrase and Stile is still, 1 *Cor.* 17. 17. *So I ordain in all the Churches*; and that which will suit all Churches, all States, all Times, is certainly rather the Pattern than any other. Christ did not make one Form for Cities, and another for Villages; one Form for times of Persecution and another Form for times of Peace; for what suited times of Persecution, would suit times of Peace also: And as the Laws of Men, consider what is best for the generality of Men, so the Institutions of Christ considered, what was best for his Church of the New Testament, throughout all Ages, and all conditions and places whatsoever.

4 It suits best for the condition of Churches in times, whether pure or corrupt, reformed, or to be reformed, when the Churches are generally overgrown with corruptions.

5. By reason of this, that the Institution of Christ doth thus fall upon Congregational Churches, to be those Churches which should be the compleat Seat of Worship and Government; there was a provision made (and in the event hath fallen it out prosperously) that the Truth and the Substance of his Ordinances, and of Church-State, (taking it as it is it self a Ministerial Ordinance) and of the Ministry, might and hath continued in all Ages. For there being a necessity (if there should be any Worship at all) to have Congregations for to continue, and uphold the publick Worship of God; and to that end, to have Ministers over them to perform the Worship, in this Fundamental Institution of his, all that profess the Christian Name throughout the World in all Ages have agreed; and by this means, Jesus Christ hath preserved the Truth of a Church and Ministry, and Substance of Worship in the midst of all those varieties of Government of several sorts of *Patriarchs*, *Archbishops* and *Bishops*, in that *Hierachical way*, as also of *General Councils*, and other Assemblies Subordinate to them; and so whatsoever false Superstructions have been made, or whatever Interruptions; yet still this Fundamental constitution of his hath remained, and could not have been secured to continue in all Ages, (fall out what would) in any other way.

But the great thing, upon which all depends, is to find out what essential thing it is, that Church Institution should fall upon. We say, that the end of Churches is a fixed and immediate Communion of Saints, in all Ordinances; and that the Formal and External part of the Institution, is but suited so as to attain this end; which is, that Saints should be knit together, to meet in one for Ordinances, having their Officers that have relation to them, by whom the Ordinances are externally dispensed. So as it is not an accidental thing, or meer external thing (as that they should meet in one place,) that the Institution falleth upon, but it is the most solid and substantial and essential thing, that can be supposed to be the ground of so great an Institution. We shall gradually make out the meaning of this assertion, by these following considerations; which will make the glory of Christ in this Institution, and the consentaneousness of it to Spiritual Reason, and the highest ends that may be supposed to be aimed at, to appear.

1. Communion of Saints is the adequate end of a Church as such, be it what kind of Church soever; and therefore in the Creed, the Church Catholick, and communion of Saints are joyned together, and do follow one another; for the one is the end of the other; and all particular Churches, are therefore also called the Churches of

of the Saints. And as the Church is framed and formed answerably, such is the communion; and such as the communion is to be, such is the Church to be reckoned, the one being suited to the other. Book II.

The Church Catholick, (as now it is called, in respect it is in all Nations) although it is one Body to Christ; yet the Saints therein cannot have, as Saints, a fixed standing set communion, but occasional; either occasional if outward, or secret and invisible if inward, such as the Church, in one Age, hath with the Church of another Age that went afore, such as the Church now in Heaven, and in Earth may have together: And in that respect, an Ordinance or an Institution, could not so well fall upon it. But meet it was, that besides this kind of communion, there should be on Earth a communion of Saints, suited to the State of the Church whilst on Earth, that should be most entire, and the nearest that can be, and most resembling Heaven, for the publick Worship and Glorifying of God in a common enjoyment of Ordinances.

2. Under the Gospel, the communion of Saints is nearer and more intimate, than was under the Law, as the Church exceeded it, so the communion is to exceed it; and as their Ordinances are more Spiritual, so their communion. There is a greater distance of the Saints of the Church Catholick, in their Habitations under the Gospel, than of the *Jews* under the Law. The *Jews* were nearer as People dwelling in one Land; and so were capable of a nearer communion all together, than the Church Catholick now is capable of; yet because it was a Nation, therefore their communion was ordered in the way of a National polity, as a Government by Representation, and a Representative Worship, wherein the Females, were Represented in the Males; and yet not frequent and often neither, for it was but three times a year. The communion therefore of Saints then was carryed on in a Worldly way, (as the State of Men in Kingdoms, and Common-wealths, and in Civil things is) and therefore it was a Worldly external Frame, and the communion answerable. And that of the Synagogues, was but for the reading the Word and Prayer only, and not for all sorts of Ordinances of Worship. The Catholick Universal Church, cannot attain to so general a communion under the Gospel, as the National Church of the *Jews* did, by reason of the difference of Language, and distance of places, and dispersions into all Nations; and yet they were to attain to a nearer communion, and more intimate, and the entirest that the Saints on Earth are capable of; and so to have Churches framed, as to attain to this.

3. The greatest and intirest communion that Saints are capable of, must therefore be by parts on Earth, to have communion in publick Worship and Ordinances. It is therefore necessary, that the Saints should be cast into such Assemblies, wherein they might partake of one Spirit by *one Bread*, whereby they might partake of one and the same Bread individually; which is therefore called the communion of the Body of Christ, and whereby they are *made one Bread*, as in the 1 *Cor.* 10. 17. And therefore it is, that the Scripture doth express that communion by that word *Meeting*, or *being together* in Ordinances, *Acts* 2. 46. ὁμοθυμαδὸν, *with one Mind or Spirit*, importing that which is the Spirit and Life of publick Worship, which (above all other Actions done by a Multitude) is to have the nearest Union of Spirits, wherein the intire communion of Saints lieth, and whereby God is glorified. And for several Churches to meet in the same manner, or at the same time, for the same kind of Ordinances, herein doth not lie so much communion, as an uniformity between them. But this is the most internal lively communion, to joyn in the same Act, at the same Instant, altogether to God; and is the greatest imitation of Heaven, where one Spirit will run through all, and God will be all in all at once.

4. And to make yet the communion nearer, (for it is to be the nearest) it must be of persons fixed and constant in such a communion; for that is still a more entire nearness, that the same Persons should still in an ordinary way, meet to joyn in their Spirits in the same Ordinances, and so inwardly and joyntly thus to glorifie God, as well as externally. The continuance and the fixedness of the same persons, makes still the union the intirer. And therefore if, for to enjoy the intirest communion of Saints on Earth, it was necessary to part the Saints for publick Worship; then also it is needful to part them into fixed Bodies, which still also is the nearest resemblance to Heaven, which is the perfection of communion.

5. To

Ch. X. 5. To make this communion yet more intire, it is necessary that as they should fixedly join in Ordinances of Worship, so in all other; and that the same persons should enjoy the same Ordinances, and one kind of Ordinances as well as another; that as they are Preached to by the same Elders, so they should join in the same Prayers, have the same breathings of the Spirit from those Prayers, partake of the same Bread, feed at the same Table; As in a Family, the intireness of it lies in this, that they have the same Father and Mother, the same Master and Mistress, partake of the same Bread every way, and of the same Family Duties and Family Comforts, and so now this communion, in a particular Church, both as to Worship and Government, is uniform. Yea and Acts of Government being Worship (which the Souls of Men are edified by, as well as they are by Sermons) are wholly Spiritual. It is not here as in *Israel* whose Government was more carnal; for it was the judging of civil causes (Civil and Ecclesiastical Government, being all one, mixed together, as the Church it self was) it was in such controversies and cases, as now men plead in Civil Bars about Estates; only God was pleased to give Laws himself for ordering of such things. But the Apostle in 1 *Cor.* 5. and 1 *Cor.* 6. severeth the judging of matters in the Church, as a Church by way of Excommunication, *&c.* from their judging of things about this Life. A Church as a Church medleth not now with them, for these affairs of it are wholly Spiritual.

So that for a conclusion, if all the Wits of World should have studied a way to contrive what kind of Church to Erect for the intirest communion of Saints, to attain to that end which is the end of a Church Instituted, they could have pitched upon no other but this; neither could there have been such a way found out of all other as this is. If that the Church Universal, the communion of it had been only occasional, the Saints meeting only by vertue of being Members of the Catholick Church promiscuously and indefinitely, sometimes in one company, sometimes in another, though by this promiscuous and indefinite way, there had been a more extensive communion of Saints indeed, (that is, each Saint might have come to have joined in publick Worship with more numbers of Saints, at several times, with more variety) yet it had not been so intensive, so near and high a communion, as for the same Saints under the same Officers fixedly to meet. And besides, they could not have had an Excommunication out of this communion, unless first knit into fixed bodies, neither could they have chosen Officers, unless such whose Office should cease with the Act, and performance, which indeed is not an Office; for that is a separation of a Man to a continued performance of a Duty. Nor would it have brought that blessing, that a constant dedication of Men to an Office for perpetuity would do, which could not be done in that occasional fluid way.

If that such Congregations and Officers, though bounded within such a compass of a City or so, should have remained unfixed, tho' associated together within such a circuite or compass; yet this would not have made this intireness of Communion of Saints; as by this way of fixed Congregations there is. And also, in this case, the Institution of a Church would have been pitched upon some one part, or particular kind of Communion, and upon something less principal in it, and not upon the adequate and full foundation of it.

For First, In this unfixt way of People and Officers, though bounded in a compass, this number of Saints should have heard this Minister to day, and with other Saints have heard another to Morrow, none meeting one day together, that do another day, in which also all might run to one Officer still where he Preached and leave the other, which would not breed an orderly communion, but rather a confusion. But to have the same Officers to be fixed, and the same persons to enjoy the dispensation of the same Officers, as in a Family, Children and Servants are under the same Governours, this is a nearer and intirer communion.

Secondly, In this classical way, there would indeed be a constant and a fixed communion in Government, of the Elders (namely of such a circuit) who, when matter of Government was to be exercised, should all meet; but they would not permit (in such a way) or let in the Elders of the same Province, to meddle, as often as they would come, no not though occasionally they were present there, or came thither to that end. But now to have the same Elders and People fixed for all acts of Government, and yet to have them unfixed in respect of performing of Worship (when that is the main end both the of communion, and for which Elders are appointed) and not to have the same fixed companies of People that communicate in this company with those Elders,

Elders, as in this unfixed way they have not, this would put too great an inequality, between communion in Government and communion in Worship, and make the unequality on the part of Worship rather, because Government is fixed of the same Persons, People and Elders, and yet Worship, wherein is the nearest communion, is left unfixed. And surely, if communion, and intireness of publick communion, be the end of a Church, the frame, and mould of the Church should rather be cast, and shap'd to that which is the intirest communion, than unto that which is more loose. Now in Worship (as to the Acts, and Duties of it perform'd) there is a capacity of an entirer communion, than in Government, because the Duties thereof are more constant. Book II.

If, Thirdly, The People be fixed for Worship in several Bodies, but the Elders Fluid in a circulatory Preaching, (as it is pleaded) and so they are made one Church, because the same Elders that teach, do also Govern them too and so they have a near communion in Worship too, because they are at times taught by the same Elders: If this (I say) be made a ground of moulding these several Congregations into one Church, yet it is defective. For it makes the Peoples communion, in enjoying the same Elders at times successively, to be the foundation of Church Institution yea, and in this case of, the first Church *proprie dicta*, or properly so called) rather than the communion of Saints, and of the same persons of the Saints, meeting fixedly for Worship. But it is hard to conceive, how the oneness of a Church should be settled, rather on such a temporary communion in Elders, than on a constant communion in Ordinances, whenas the same Elders are enjoy'd by these persons but at times; (which is an interrupted communion also) yea and there are no times neither, wherein as to Acts of Worship they enjoy the same Elders all together. Now that such a relation of Elders, and communion in them, in such a broken way, should carry away the great priviledge of a thing (becoming the ground of the Institution of it) from constant communion, both of the same Saints and Elders, and be preferred thereto in this respect, seems strange. And if it be said, that yet the Saints themselves in this way meet, and have all communion in those Acts of Government, though not in Worship. Yet First; However it cannot be thought, that an occasional communion (as acts of Government comparatively are) should carry away the formation, the shaping and the institution of the first Church. Secondly; The Women (who though they have not the interest of Jurisdiction, yet of communion, and of deprivation, and of Virtual Assistance by their Prayers, &c. they have) are excluded; Unless such Churches be so framed that they also be present.

Fourthly; If we take that other Presbyterial way that is practised, wherein they are fixed for communion in Worship, both Elders and People, but not for Government; yet, even here that fore-mentioned intireness of Government is parted, and the communion of Saints in that one respect divided. And being divided, the ground and foundation of all and either, being (as was said) the communion of Saints, is thereby weakened many ways. For 1. Still this communion is partial, and by that means each stands but upon one single *Basis*, whereas both joyn'd it might stand on two. For now in this case, the communion in Worship (the blessing of which should strengthen that of Censures, which is a casting out of the communion) is the ground of the meetings of each Congregation: But communion in Government in common, is the foundation of another Church over all Congregations. 2. A communion of Elders, rather than of the Saints, is the foundation of this supposed institution of a Church; and the communion of Saints therein is but representative, and at second hand, themselves being absent. It is a communion for them, but not a commnnion of them. Yea, they have no communion, not of presence in the Sentence and in the Execution, but are only Congregations of those Elders, that did make a Church concerned therein. But on the contrary, a communion of Saints, even in Government, is the ground and end of erecting of a Church, and therefore it is called one Church in relation principally unto them.

Now then to wind up all; If there may be such a communion of Saints under the Gospel, so adequate and intire, and Churches so formed, as that the same Saints should join in the same Worship, with a joynt, constant, inward, individual communion therein, and these Saints may have, and do enjoy (as our Brethren grant) fixt Elders, by whose Ministry and Dispensation, they partake with them in the same Worship which

Ch. X. which makes their communion, yet comparatively more intire, (for in the Presbyterial way, there communion is principally by Elders, and therefore in this also, a due consideration is to be had, as adding a farther intireness) and these Elders being a Presbytery, yea and enough to make a Presbytery for all Acts of Government (as we shall after shew a company of Elders in Congregations to be) at all which Acts of Government, which are for the edification of the Saints, they can be present, and have a personal communion, as well as in those of Worship; if also the communion of Saints be the end of Erection of particular Churches, and is the measure fitted; for *finis dat Mensuram Mediis, the end gives Measure to the Means*, and if this end may be adequately and intirely attained this way, why should partial ends be preferred to total and compleat, all ends meeting in one? Yea if communion of Saints in Worship be the chief communion, yea and the communion of Saints be the principal fundamental cause of all Church Institution, Why should not it draw to it self communion in Government also, when there is a sufficiency for the performing the Acts thereof: Why should the communion of Elders be taken off from the communion of the Saints? Why should a Presbytery be erected, that is taken off from a Church and Assembly of Saints; When yet there is a sufficient Presbytery over a Church of Saints, that meet for all acts both of Worship and Government, and when yet these greater Presbyteries would challenge their power from this lesser Presbytery of Churches, rather than from the name Church, and yet take it off from these Churches, they pretend to be a Presbytery unto? Yea, why should any affirm, that, although a particular Congregation had a sufficiency of Elders, yet it is God's Ordinance that they should associate, for whereas the avoiding of Division is pretended, it makes a worse division, dividing Worship from Government, and Elders from the particular Churches of Saints, and so parting from them, that wherein they ought to have the intirest communion. So, as all things considered, the institution of a particular Church, falls most haply, uniformly, and adequately upon a Congregation intirely and alone, and upon no other manner of Assemblies at all.

CHAP. XI.

That the Forming of Saints into Churches, under the Government of Elders, is a matter of that needful order, as requires a Divine Institution for it. That it was also requisite, that the extent of those Churches, and the Limits of the Elders Jurisdiction should be set and determined by Christ.

BUT this being granted, that Churches in the New Testament are formed and fixed Bodies, which are either the Seat of Worship, or of Ecclesiastical Government, and likewise that there is a necessity it should be so, yet the next question will be, whether the setled Form and Order of these Bodies, the extent, bounds and compass thereof, into which the Church Universal should be parted and divided, and which should be the Seat of Government, be set out by Christ's special appointment and institution, or hath been left by him to Men to frame and order, according to the common rules of edification, as matters of circumstantial order use to be. But we humbly conceive this to be a point of such order, and of so much weight and moment, and belonging to the substance of Government, as that, if there were any special institution and designment of other things, belonging to the order of Church Government, then also of this: As appears to us whilst we take estimate and comparison, with any other particular, acknowledged to be the subject of institution, as also established by more direct warrant. For the satisfaction of this Query, we shall give the general demonstration of the ὅτι of it, That it is and must needs be so: whatever the form and extent of these Churches and Bodies, that are the Seat of Government shall prove to be, which whether Congregational, Classical, Provincial, or National, we yet dispute not. What at the present we endeavour to make forth is only this in the general, that whatsoever kind of form or extent they are moulded into, this form and extent must be set out and taken from some institution. The *Quale*, or what sort of Bodies, and what measure thereof Christ hath instituted, is to be afterward discussed.

And

And although the proof hereof will not be full and compleat until the demonstration of the *Quale*, or of what is the particular form or boundary and extent, both of Church and the Elders jurisdiction, and this be shewn to have been instituted, yet we shall for the present endeavour such a demonstration as shall be sufficient for a general foundation to that which follows, and enough to confirm the point as in the General. Book II.

Now for the more distinct proceeding in this, there is a double Seat of Government conceived to be in these Bodies of Saints and Elders, whether according to our Brethren's Principles or our own. According to our Brethrens, all Government is put into a Body of Elders, and so they make the Elders the *subjectum inhæsionis, the inherent subject* of all the Power; and the Church or the company of the Faithful to be *subjectum occupationis*, that is, *the subject committed to them to be governed.* Even as in a Corporation, where tho' the Power and Government is in the Magistrates alone, and so they are the subject of inherency, in whom the power resides; yet a limited extent of Jurisdiction, namely, a Corporation of People, in such a compass or precinct, is the *subjectum occupationis*, the seat, the circuit over whom, and among whom their Government is extended, and within confined. But if according to our principles, the Government is instituted by Christ to be mixt of an Aristocracy of Elders, and a Democracy of the People, yet still the like supposition necessarily ariseth, that there is, and must be, a limited seat or precinct, in which this Ecclesiastical Government is exercised, which we call the Seat of Government; And look, what Authority is in the Body of Elders, as Elders, it is within that seat or compass. That which therefore these following General Arguments and Demonstration did aim at, is, to prove that the extensive Limits, and Bounds of such Ecclesiastical Authority; and accordingly the proportion and measure of those Bodies, or Churches, the Seat thereof, and in which it is exercised, is a matter of that nature, weight, and moment, as to have a special Line of institution, by which it may be measured forth. And to that end the demonstration hereof shall be framed, and fitted to prove these two things.

1. That the forming up of Elders into Bodies, or Presbyteries, and the Limits and Boundaries of the extent of their Power, is a matter of that nature, as must be set out by Institution.

2. That answerably thereunto, the setting out the compass, measure, limits and extent of those Bodies of Saints and Elders making Churches (which are the seat or subject, in which a company of Elders shall have a Jurisdiction, and that company of Saints the priviledge of Government, and unto which the extent of their Jurisdiction is to be limited) must also be set out by a special Institution, and that their priviledge, to become such, depends upon a special Charter also.

We might speak to each, and either of these severally and apart, but that indeed these two, the setting the limits to the extensive power of Elders; and also the setting out the measure of those Bodies unto which their Government (whether joyned with the People, or alone, we yet argue not) shall extend and be confined, are both commensurable each to other, and do mutually argue each other. For all Power and Government in what Company or Body of Rulers soever, that are the subject in whom it resides, must have a seat, compass or precinct of men united in one, in which to exercise their power. And the true measure of their extensive power is from the measure of the extent of that seat, so as the proving of either of them to be necessarily done by Institution, is to prove both, for they mutually argue each other, and the extent of the one is resolved into the other. And therefore if the extent of any one be of Divine Institution, the other must be of Divine Appointment also, as we shall after shew.

Seeing therefore that these two are so conjunct in the nature of the thing, and mutually the demonstrations each of other; we will in discoursing of them, put them together, sometimes giving demonstrations that joyntly concern both, and are common unto both; sometimes such as concern either of them singly, in such a method as may best serve to clear the truth of this Assertion, which to us lays the foundation of deciding this great controversie, as in the sequel will appear.

We shall rank our Arguments under these four heads.

1. That these two forementioned, are substantial points of Order, and therefore are to be fetched from Institution.

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2. That they are matters of such Order, as other things are of, which we do find (and all do so acknowledge) to have been matter of Institution.

3. That the Wisdom, and Prerogative of Christ (who is the Supream Institutor, and Law-giver to his Church) is as much concerned and interested, in the Institution of these, as in any other things he hath Instituted about Officers, and Church-Government.

4. That Spiritual Reason, suited to the Nature of the things themselves, fall in to confirm this.

The touch of the consequence of these three first, is justly founded upon what we have already said of Institution. As that the *Colossians* received their Order from *Jesus* as the *Lord*, as well as their Faith. And besides; That the Substantials of Church Government should be set out by Institution, all sides have acknowledged, and the case therefore must needs be like, in all matters of like Order and Substantialness, for the Wisdom and Prerogative of the Law-giver is alike concerned, to appoint one as well as another; and else too, Church-Government consisting of things of like rank and nature, some of them should yet be Divine, some Humane, and so it would consist some part of Gold, and some of Wood. So as here we need but apply those generals to the confirmation hereof; but yet we shall further endeavour to confirm them all along, in the mention of, and together with those particular proofs, which we shall alledge for the Heads forementioned. And those reasons shall not only or simply be drawn, from parallelling these two points of Order with other things, which are substantial in all Government, and are acknowledged almost by all, especially by our Brethren, to be matter of Divine Institution in, and about Church Officers and Government. We shall not thus only deal by consequence, in the closure of the proofs for the second Head, but also by Scripture, more directly holding forth the truth thereof, and all backt and seconded with an harmony of Spiritual Reasons, according to the nature of the thing falling in, and suiting to it.

Only let this be taken along and remembred, that the scope of these Reasons, in this place, is only to demonstrate this in the general, and in the ὅτι *that it is so*, and and not now to prove the point, by laying out the very particular bounds and limits, set by the Holy Ghost. For that is to be tryed out afterwards, by our Brethren and Us, who of Us can shew the surest and most antient Land-marks hereof, which particulars when they shall come to be delineated, and set out, and confirmed by Scripture and Reason, the proof of this general truth will be found more full and compleat, by whatever either side can shew to be the true and notive characters of the Institution thereof. But till then, we must necessarily here in this place, content our selves with general Arguments, and which are accordingly suited to this scope, and none other.

1. I shall begin with the first Head; That both these are as substantial matters in Church-Government, as any of those other about the Institution of Officers Power, &c. can be supposed to be. To evidence which, what fairer estimate can be taken, whereby to judge of what is substantial in this Government, than from what is in all Mens apprehensions such, in any Government whatever? Now take any Society of Men that are embodied for Government, and if the Officers and Laws of it are defined, the Common-wealth or Body it self, the Bounds and Limits of its Jurisdiction are defined also, and by the same hand, the one at first is constituted, the other is too, and this is true, especially of such bodies, as hold, from a supream power, the Charter for their Government, as all Churches do hold their Order from Christ the Supream Founder. In this case, it is every way as essential to have the Body of People it self formed up into an Unity, and the extent of their Jurisdiction, set by that Supream Power, as to have Officers over it, and Laws by which they are Governed. The first is necessary in it self for the good of those bodies (in relation to orderly Government) and it is as necessary as the setting out the extent of every Man's Lands (which he possesseth, and of which the abutments and limits are as exactly mentioned in their deeds, as any thing else. And thus necessary is setting down the extent of Jurisdiction, of every Incorporate Town, and accordingly set forth in their Charter. Thus *London* is differenced from *Westminster*, which otherwise would be judged but one City, and one Incorporate Body; And this was necessary in their first edition, and to preserve distinction and intireness of Government without confusion and usurpation. 2: For the other particular, it is as necessary to confine those Officers

Officers and their Jurisdiction within the compass of certain seats and bodies politick, as to define and limit the acts of their power, and wherein to judge and intermeddle. Book II. In all civil Bodies, Kingdoms, Common-wealths, &c. their Laws are as exact to set down the limits of Jurisdiction, the extent of power, as the degree, or kind, or sort of acts, of power to be put in execution by those entrusted with it; and all Officers in several Provinces or Bodies Incorporate, that give a Commission of Power, from the Supream Power, have in their Commissions and Charters, as express a mention and definition of the circuit and extent of power, as of their acts of Power, so as a greater nullity ariseth not from any other thing, as from extending power committed beyond the bounds of Jurisdiction; and it is a *Premunire* as well to do an act of Government out of their Jurisdiction, as an undue act within it, as to Arrest and imprison out of their jurisdiction. And that Mayors or Bailiffs shall judge only within such a Town or Borrough, is as express in their Charter (or at least that the limit of their Jurisdiction being determined within the same, their Power without is null and void) as that they shall be Mayors and Bailiffs there. And thus this parallel confirms both parts of the Argument, both that it is alike substantial, and also that therefore it alike depends upon the determining of the Supream Lawgiver. And although this estimation be taken from Man's Law and Civil Government, yet it is in a matter, that is alike common to both. If indeed Church Government could be supposed to be a matter of that nature, that such boundings and determinings of the Seat and Extent of Elders Jurisdiction, in order to Government, were not existent in it, and necessary thereunto as well as to other Government also, but might be transacted promiscuously without any such boundings, then indeed the form of the parallel would not carry it to erect any thing in Church-Government, by a parallell from the Civil. But all that (do or will acknowledge any Ecclesiastical Government, as they do acknowledge fixed Bodies of Saints and Elders (which the former assertion cleared) so withal they must acknowledge such a determination necessarily to be made to bound those Seats of Government, and Extent of Elders Jurisdiction, either by God or Men. Now therefore in this we only argue, that the determination thereof, is of that nature, that it must be set out by the Supream Lawgiver, as well as other things are, that concern this Government. Thus much however is preparatory to what follows, that this Assertion is most rational and coincident with the like principles of reason humane, though of, and about a matter Spiritual. Yet because it will be said it is but an Argument from Men (which yet in the case of Ministers maintenance, as in other things also, the Apostle useth to produce and confirm thereby the rationality of a Divine Ordinance, about this matter, when yet there were other grounds also for it in the Scripture that it is such) therefore we will proceed to the other general head, that the forming Saints into Churches, and setting the bounds thereof, are matters of such order as God and Christ hath Instituted, we shall endeavour to make forth (proceeding by degrees) both by parallelling these with other matters of Order, about Officers and Church-Government which God hath Instituted, and by demonstrating that these are as great points of Order, as those other which Christ as a Lord hath given: And we shall also evidence it, by the addition of such Scripture proofs and instances, as do directly hold forth the truth thereof, and so confirm too, that other parallel reason about them.

Now to prove the parallel between this, and other matters of Order, let this be premised and taken along, that this second sort of reasons, drawn from comparing these, or either of them, with other things that are instituted, and thence proving the Institution of these also (though we insist not only or wholly on them) is in this case just and sure. For we stretch not the argument from parallel or like reason to find out any new thing in Church-Government, whose existency is argued and founded meerly upon parallel reason. That way of reasoning we leave to our Brethren, in rearing up their whole Fabrick upon the parallel reason of a particular Church, *Mat.* 18. to the prejudice of that foundation which these are built on. But the limiting of Elders Jurisdiction, and the seat of their ordinary Government, being a thing that necessarily existeth, and which must be acknowledged to have place already, or else no orderly Government can at all be supposed to be (as both sides do acknowledge) If then the question shall be (which is the thing now before us) whether the setting out those limits, &c. be a matter of that nature, as should be set out by the Institution of Christ, as other matters of parallel nature are? Or whether Christ hath

Ch. XI. left them as things of that inferiour alloy and nature, and of so small moment, as to be determined by the common rules for edification, as other circumstantial matters are? In deciding this Case and Question, and for the general demonstration of it, certainly parallel reason will carry it, that these things are to be set out by God, and not left to Men, especially when there shall be added unto these, Scriptures that directly speak the same thing, that parallel reason doth. This being premised, we shall speak to each singly.

I. We begin first with that of the bounding the extent of the power and jurisdiction of Elders; that this is to be found set out by Institution will appear, for the ὅτι of it in the general, both ways, either, 1. By comparing it with other matters of Order, &c. Or, 2. By what the Scriptures do more directly hold forth, about setting the limits of the extensive power of Officers; Or, 3. By Reason falling in therewith.

1. It is evident by comparing this point of order with other things which our Brethren themselves, according to their principles, do hold to, and acknowledge to be matters of Instituted order, in many of which we also concur with them. Let but an impartial comparison and estimate be taken and made with other things, concerning Church Elders and their Power, which they cleave to, as instituted, even to a nullity for the want of it in other persons and things. They do shew themselves sufficiently tender and jealous of having Institutions, for the exercise of any part of Ecclesiatical Power, and will allow none but persons authorised by an Institution, and in such and such a way, to the exclusion of others for want of Institution. For example, 1. Why else do they exclude the Body of the People from having an interest of suffrage in Excommunication, or casting out of the Church, or ordaining Elders, and confine these Acts, and all other supposed Acts of Government, unto Elders only? 2. Although to Excommunicate, &c. be an Act of Government, that belongs to the Office of Eldership, yet they would allow no one Elder to Excommunicate alone, no not in that Church whereof he is Pastor in a special fixt relation, but it must be Elders united into an Aristrocracy, because it is by Institution so implied, *Tell the Church*, &c. which is always more than one. Yea, they Assert that such an Act of Excommunication is Null and Void if but by one Elder alone. Yea, 3. If any one Pastor though never so eminent, should be set up in a lawful Presbytery to be of the *Quorum* in that Presbytery, wherein he is a Member and an Elder, so as nothing should be done but with, and by his consent, and suffrage, though not without the rest of the Presbytery also, (which was all that Power, that Bishops antiently challenged and exercised) yet this would be, and is denied to any, as a thing beyond that degree of Power given any one Man among the rest. And 4. Those that are acknowledged Elders, namely Ruling Elders, they would strictly debar from Preaching, from Praying in Publick, or Blessing the People, or Administring the Sacrament, because these are Acts of the Preaching Elder's Office by Institution, or else why are they excluded if Christ would not have them so? Yea, 5. Though the substance of the Act of Ordination (which they call *Missio Potestativa*) be an Act of the whole Presbytery, Ruling Elders and others; yet the Right of laying on of hands, which is the lesser, they allow not to Ruling Elders, but appropriate it to Preaching Presbyters in the Presbytery. And 6. Although there may be many Elders in a particular Church, that make up therein an Eldership, who when alone, without Neighbour Churches, did exercise all, and had compleat Power of Excommunication, &c. within themselves (as they grant) yet when Churches came to be Multiplied, or there are Neighbour Churches whom they may associate with, many of our Brethren hold, that in this case they have no longer Warrant or Power (at least not as to the exercise of Government within themselves) but are to joyn in common with those other Elders of Churches for all Acts of Government. And all this must be because Christ hath, by Institution, so fixt the Power of Governing (in respect of the Acts thereof) as they are not, by any other or any otherwise, to be put in execution. Yea, 7. If that the Churches go and chuse, &c. cull out a certain company of their Officers, and all the Churches in a Kingdom should chuse them that should be set apart for Acts of Jurisdiction only, and attend them in a set and constant way, (as the *Synedrim* in *Jerusalem* was chosen) our Brethren would say, that although here were Elders chosen out of all the Churches unto such Acts (as are the Acts of Elders, according to their principles, lawfully thus chosen) and that they make up (according to them) one Body or

Mr. *Rutherford's* Temperate, Peaceable Plea. *p.* 5.

or Corporation representatively of all the rest, as the National Assemblies use to do; yet if these should be thus constantly set apart unto such a work, they would deny this to be lawful; and the unlawfulness must lie in this, that they are not formed up, according to the Institution. So that a little variation, in this kind, must still have a new Institution for it, according unto them. And shall there not be the like for the bounding the exercise of Elders extensive Power, which is of as much, if not far more moment, than many of these things can be supposed to be of? And then lastly; Add to all these an 8th Principle, which singly and alone concludes the general point in hand, but, joyned with those other, brings the forces of them all more strongly up to the conclusion. In the Controversie with the Bishops, there is a distinction of a double Ecclesiastical Power; The one *Potestas Intensiva*; The other *Extensiva*. The one imports a further degree or kind of Power; The other a further extension of power. And in both these respects, they distinguished a Bishop from an ordinary Presbyter. In respect of Power *Intensive*; A Bishop might do some Acts a Presbyter might not do; even as a Presbyter might do Acts a Deacon might not do, which constituted these three several Orders in the Church. A Bishop might Ordain and Excommunicate, not so a Presbyter. And as they made them to differ thus in acts of Order, and Intension of Power, so in respect of Jurisdiction, and in that respect chiefly, that is, that an ordinary Presbyter was set over some particular Flock and Congregation; But a Bishop was for Acts of ordinary Government, set over a whole Diocess, and over many Congregations, to rule them in common, as making one Church. And so an Archbishop, though he was of the same Order with a Bishop; (for they made those two, not to constitute two several Orders) yet, in respect of a larger extent in Territory or Jurisdiction, they were said to differ, in respect of extention of Power. Now our Brethren, and all those, who writ against this further Power of Extension and Jurisdiction in Bishops, called for an Institution for such a further degree and extent of Power, as well as for a new Order of Power, and that not only as to the large pretended power in a Bishop, beyond a Presbyter's, but also of an Archbishop over a Bishop. So do we also require an Institution for that power which our Brethren claim. An usurpation lies not only in an undue form of Government, that Christ hath not instituted; (as to set up one man to rule, when it is in the hands of many, which is to erect a Monarchy when Christ hath ordained an Aristocracy, which is the ground of exception against Episcopal Power) Nor doth it only lie in usurping undue Acts of Power, which Christ never Instituted; But further it lies in a company of Elders taking on them an extent of Power for Territory and Jurisdiction, larger than that extent, which an evidence of Institution can be produced to Warrant. In this case although a company of Elders do in their proceedings take on them to execute none other, but such as are due Acts of Government, for the kind of them, and those regulated according to such Rules as the Word warrants (as in respect to the Sins proceeded against) nor none other acts, but which belong to the Office of Elders. Yea and tho' all this be done by them, as cast and combined into a joint body, (no one Man amongst them assuming more power than the rest) and so this Government be carried in an Aristocratical way; (which is the Right form that Christ, according to them, hath Instituted) yet if they stretch the extent of their power unto a larger line or circuit, than Christ hath made the Territory or Seat of Church Government, this must needs prove an usurpation, let the pretence be never so specious, and the proceedings otherwise never so just. For extensive power must be warranted by Institution, as well as intensive, or the measure or kind of power: Whereas yet we perceive many, that are zealous for Institutions in those other things, would (so far as we can understand) have the boundaries of the extent of power Ecclesiastical, to be left (with other things of less moment) to be ordered only according to the common rules of edification, and of the Law of Nature, as humane Prudence shall think fit to dispose and set them out.

2. Unto which add, Secondly, That God hath, both under the Old Testament, as also the New, made the bounding and setting the extent of Church Officers extensive power the subject of his own institution and designment, which confirms the truth of this point in the general.

1. First, in the Old Testament (which we have not now recourse to, as our Brethren use to have as an Instance, that the same particular extent of Government that was then, should be the Model of Christ's Institution under the New; we shall confute that large-

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Ch. XI. ly afterwards.) This was the matter of Christ's Institution. As therefore under the Old, the several sorts of Officers were appointed, and also their limits of Jurisdiction, so now under the New, as Christ hath Instituted the kind of Officers and Elders, so he should set out the extent of their Jurisdiction: Especially since we suppose such Officers having such a Power (as our Brethren and we suppose) by Institution, it is therefore necessary, that it should be determined either by God or Man, what the extent of their Jurisdiction should be. We do not herein urge the Analogous like reason, of the Old Testament and the New, to raise up the like particular Rule and Institution, for the extent of Elders Power, now as then; but only as a proof of this general Maxime, that when we find the like subject of Institution in the New, the reason will hold, that as there was an Institution set for the bounds of the Intensive Power of Officers among them (as of the Order of Priests above *Levites*, &c.) and their several work accordingly designed, so the bounds of Jurisdiction and of Extensive Power, in the Government of that State and Church, were set out by the same hand also; so in like manner, Christ hath ordered things in the New Gospel Administration. They under the Old Testament had those that were their Elders of Cities and Towns, whose Power was bounded within their several Cities and Territories, and this set out by a Law. They were, in the case of Murther, to measure the Ground, and the Elders of that City unto which the Field a Man was kill'd in, was nearest, were to intermeddle in it. And they had their General Elders for the Nation or People, distinguished from the other, so that the extent of their Jurisdiction was general, proportioned to the extent of the Nation, who are therefore called *the Elders of the People*, in general, *Luke* 22. 66. and which were that *Synedrim*, and state of Elders at *Jerusalem* for the Nation, *Acts* 22. 5. and so distinguished from those they called Elders of a City, *Ruth* 4. 2. *Judg.* 9. 3. 2 *Kin.* 23. 8. And as in these Scriptures singly, so *Ezra* 10. 4. we have both mentioned with their Titles of distinction, *Let the Elders of all the Congregations stand, and with them the Elders of every City, and the Judges thereof.* The one had the whole Body of the Nation for their Jurisdiction; the other had only their several Cities. Thus also the bounds of Extensive Power, as well as Intensive, was set out by the Word of the Lord in the hand of *Moses*. The several charge of four sort of *Levites*, in the things of the Sanctuary, was divided amongst them, to have care of, and the limits of extensive power of Jurisdiction were fixed in the hands of four Men, over each of those Companies and Bodies of those *Levites*, as you have it, *Numb.* 13. 3. which were called Overseers over the rest, *Numb.* 11. 14, 22. The like might be shewn in the Order of Priesthood; There was the intensive power, which was equal among them all; And above the *Levites* (for order of Office) there was by Institution, in the High-Priest (as *Aaron*) a further or intense power of Office, for some services above the rest: Which degree of intense power, was by the special call of God, *Heb.* 5. 4. And as of a power of intention, so of extention or jurisdiction, there was a setled appointment. There were set over several companies of Priests, Chief Priests that were in those several circuits Superiour to them, *Mat.* 2. 4. and 27. 1. *Acts* 19. 4. 2 *Chron.* 36. 14. who were twenty four in number.

Secondly, In the New Testament, we find the several extent of Officers Power and Jurisdiction to have been matter of Institution. Our scope is not here to set out what the particular Limits are, for that belongeth to an after discussion. But all that we shall now produce, is but to confirm the point in the general.

1. We find differing extent of Officers Jurisdiction to have been, not only matter of Institution, but also to have, among other things, put a difference upon Officers, such as in imitation hereof, the Pope and the *Bishops* challenged in difference from ordinary Presbyters. This was one thing made an Apostle differ from an Evangelist, and an Evangelist from ordinary Pastors and Teachers; that an Apostle had the care of all Churches committed to him, whereas an ordinary Elder was designed to an actual care of a Church, as a Governour in a Family is of his House, 1 *Tim.* 3. 5. In the 1 *Cor.* 5. the Apostle strongly intimates the difference by a comparison, of his Power as an Apostle, and their's as *Corinthians*, and that this Power differed in extent; *Do not ye* (says he) *judge them that are within?* Namely, your selves, and within your own body; *What have I to do to judge them that are without?* His main scope is to shew, that in their proportion, they had power to judge all within their jurisdiction, as he had in his; and that as his jurisdiction was in the extent of it, limited to all

all within, that is, all Churches of Christ, in opposition to Heathen, and he had no power, he had nothing to do to judge them without, so theirs was also extended to all within themselves but no further. I that am an Apostle (says he) have a limited Jurisdiction in my kind, and you in yours, and as I am to do my duty in my Jurisdiction, so you in yours. And if the Apostle would not stretch himself beyond his line (as his own phrase is) of jurisdiction set out to him, then ordinary Elders much less are to go beyond their's. Book II.

2. The New Testament is express for it. The Holy Ghost hath appointed the extent of Elders jurisdiction over their own Flocks, and to extend to every Soul therein in particular, even over the whole Flock whereof they are Elders, and that as a whole Flock: Importing an intire body of persons committed to them. Therefore the extent of a like kind of power, any further, or over any other, ought much more to have a special Institution, which so far as it wanteth, and cannot produce and shew the bounds for, from Institution, so far it is a nullity. Now we have an express Scripture concerning the Elders of the Church of *Ephesus* (whether it be Congregational or Presbyterial, or Diocesan, we do not now dispute, but shall afterwards try it out upon which the Institution falls) that they all and every of them had an extent of power by express commission given them, to that whole Flock; and that the Holy Ghost set them over that whole Flock, as in charge commended to them, *Acts* 20. 28. *Take heed to your selves, and to all the Flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you Overseers:* Men had not chalkt out the limits of this Flock, nor set them out this their bounds of power and care over it, but the Holy Ghost made them Overseers, that is, constituted them, as *Heb.* 3. 2. it is said of *Moses.* And when 'tis said the Holy Ghost made them, it is not meant in respect of the personal call of those Elders, for ordinary Elders were not chosen by an immediate revelation of the Holy Ghost, as *Paul*, and *Barnabas* was, *The Holy Ghost said, separate me Paul and Barnabas*, *Acts* 13. 2. But so these Elders were not made here: The constitution, or making, or appointing, and instituting them, must therefore necessarily be meant of the Holy Ghost's appointing that office of Elders, in which they were, and that he specially was the Author by his Institution of that kind of designment of Elders, to an whole Flock as Elders, as their special charge, within which, to take care as Elders of all; and by vertue of which (they undertaking the charge) the Institution and Commission of the Holy Ghost fell upon them. As when a King hath granted a Charter to such or such Towns, to have such and such Rulers over each of those whole Towns, though the King put not in the Officers; yet because the Towns chuse them, as authorised by his special Charter, ordering their choice, and designing their jurisdiction, it may in charge be given to them, that the King hath set them over this whole Town to govern it. And what is attributed to the Holy Ghost thus, respects not a prudential management only, but the Holy Ghost's Office being in a special manner to be the Author of that Word and those directions of Christ, by which the Apostles did give forth the pattern of ordering and framing Churches to these *Ephesians*, and other Churches; therefore it is peculiarly appropriated to him to be the Author of all such constitutions Ecclesiastical, and this by so peculiar a prerogative, as is as proper to him, as to Redeem is to the Son. And therefore Man may no more assume to set up a new kind of Officers, or appoint them the bounds of their jurisdiction in the Church, than he can Redeem us. And therefore as to the Work of the Holy Ghost to the Church herein, mention is made of it, parallel with Christ's Redemption, in those Words, *Take heed to all the Flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you Overseers, to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased by his own blood.* And one special thing, which is attributed to the Holy Ghost (as an Instituter and ordainer of matters in the Church, and for which we cite this place) is, as to constitute the Office of Elders, and the form of Government, that all should take care in common, (for Elders, not Elder, are mentioned) so to fix also, the extent of their care, charge, and commission, to all that Flock, the Church of *Ephesus*, whereof they are said to be Elders, *ver.* 17. It is his Institution that Elders should take care according to the extent of their relation, to a particular Flock, as their whole Flock committed to them: And by vertue of this his ordination, had they the full power of Elders unto this Flock. So as that such an office of Elders, (not one Elder only) that such a flock, as an whole flock, should stand in relation to these Elders in common, as the seat of their care and jurisdiction; all this was the ordination of the Holy Ghost. And if so,

Ch. XI. so, then the extent of jurisdiction over such a flock is instituted, as well as the Office. Therefore if these all or any company of more Elders, will challenge a new and further extent of jurisdiction, than to such a flock as *Ephesus* was, they must shew the like commission for that extent from the Holy Ghost; for it was by a special commission from the Holy Ghost, they had power of jurisdiction to this Flock. And by the same reason that their commission over this flock was by the Holy Ghost, by the same reason they must shew the like new commission, for a larger from the same Holy Ghost. We will only add this, that in cases of this nature a negative argument holds; For when extent of Power depends upon a superiour appointment and designment, no further power, than that affirmatively declares and extends the commission, can be extended but with a nullity, yea, and with the greatest danger; and so unless the Holy Ghost declares affirmatively the extent of Elders power as Elders, in a Body united (as here he doth) over a larger company of Churches, as the seat of their jurisdiction, all the Elders in the World met together cannot, nor may not challenge it. A defect of commission affirmative is exclusive in this case. Yea farther in that he mentions this Flock, as that whole Flock they had commission over, he thereby speaks exclusively of any other, that as Elders in a Body they were to exercise authority in. As in the like case, if a King gave a Charter to a Mayor and Company of Aldermen, to rule such a Company or Body of Men in a Corporation as an whole Body, they were set over, and it manifestly imported, not only that the extent of there power therein, being by his Charter therefore they must not exercise it as such a company out of the confines thereof, without the like Charter renewed; but also on the contrary, he who is the founder of their Power, and of whom they hold it, in his Charter, makes that company committed to them, to be all, or the whole flock committed to their charge. This evidently argues, that his Charter sets bounds to them, restraining them from taking on them to exercise their Juridical Power elsewhere. So far is it from what the Presbyterial Principles hold forth, that in an analogous way, they may make new extentions of Jurisdictions, and in the same form model them.

3. Add to this that the Holy Ghost hath been pleased to set limits and bounds of Power to several ordinary Officers in the same Church, wherein they are, in respect of a continual charge and service, ordinary standing Officers, and where all of them are in a joynt and common commission for the Government thereof. And look what distinction there is in their Offices, and what is proper to each Office by his appointment, his command is answerably, that the one should not, by assuming to exercise the part of another, intrench upon the Office of another; so, that he who is a Ruling Elder, should not take on him to Teach as an ordinary Pastor, no not in the Church where he bears the office of an Elder, *But let him that Teacheth, attend on Teaching, he that Exhorteth, on Exhortation, he that Ruleth, on Ruling*, Rom. 12. 6. Now if Christ hath so set these bounds in the same Church and Body, as for any to usurp the others office, is that ὑπερφρονεῖν, or *taking on him above his proportion*, (which he condemns, *ver.* 3. and prefaceth that general Rule, with special aim to keep each in their due bounds and station) then much more, or at least as much, hath his care extended to set down the bounds of Extensive Power, which they might know, that as in the same Church the Officers might not ὑπερφρονεῖν, so the Elders of other Churches ought not ἀλλοτριοπισκοπεῖν, intermeddle as Bishops in another's Jurisdiction, (to use the Apostle's Allusion) nor stretch themselves beyond their Line, as the Apostle would not. Thus I have proved, that the extent of Elders Jurisdiction is to be fetcht from an Institution.

What is next to be demonstrated is, That the constituting and setting out the measure and extent of *that Church*, which is to be the Seat of Government, is also matter of Divine Order, and so to be fetcht from an Institution.

The Popish and Episcopal Divines, have appropriated that word, *Order*, unto the constituting a Church Officer, and unto his Ministry, whether Bishop or Presbyter, &c. This, in their phrase, they called being in Orders, which in the thing carried this with it, *viz.* Their being of such Orders or Kinds of Offices, as Christ had by his Order appointed. But surely they narrowed the signification of it too much, for it may be extended to all Institutions whatever, and among other, to this of Church-state, and the constitution thereof, according to an Order set by Christ.

For, 1. In that order of the Church of the *Colossians*, in which the Apostle rejoyced, the right constitution and formation of their Church-state must needs be a main part

part intended *Order* (says Bishop *Davenant*) *denotes their coadunation into one Body, namely, such as in an Army useth to be, and so respects the whole Body it self, as united and consenting together, and so made the seat of Order.* Now as the disposement and appointment of the Bulk and Body of the Army it self, and the form, the extent, the Wings thereof, is a matter of as much order, and as essential, as to appoint what Officers shall be over it, or what discipline in it: So 'tis here, and the order of this body of the Church it self, must be by some hand, either Humane or Divine, and sure, it was a Divine Order the Apostle here rejoiced in, as we have before shewed. And this will appear, Book II.

For 1. If we consider the moment of this their Church constitution and formation, we shall find it was meet and necessary, that the Lord Jesus himself should appoint it; For this is the form, which the efficient always gives, as well as the matter. As in natural Bodies, the Form constitutes them, as well as matter, so in all bodies that are the Seat of Government, their orderly frame and form, wherein they are united according to a Law or Fundamental custom, constitutes them such (that is, as they are Politick Bodies) as much as being Men of such a function or qualification and rank. Yea (as was said before) since a judicial Power of Government, depends as much upon a formality of Order, as it doth upon a material qualification of persons, hence therefore it is as necessary (as was shewed by many instances) that Jesus Christ should design out, and constitute, and authorize the form and order, and the bounds of his Church, as that he should determine the qualification of the persons or functions to whom the power is committed. For acts of Government, being to have his Blessing in a peculiar manner, to accompany them with a Spiritual efficacy, as well as Acts of Worship, it is as necessary for him to appoint the Form or Orders of that Body, in which he would accompany them with that efficacy, as it is to assign out the material subject of Persons and Functions that are to execute it; And this our Brethren assent to, making it as necessary for Christ to Institute the form of Government, namely, an Aristocracy of Elders, as to appoint the Function or the Persons, namely, Elders themselves. For it may fall out, and often doth, that for the matter hereof, the Members of a Church, are not such, in respect of their lives and qualifications personal, as should be in the Members of a Church, and yet because they take on them to be a Church, professing the Name of Christ, and Publick Worship, &c. hence Ministerially they are a true Church, as truly as an Ungodly Profane Minister is a true Minister, not in respect of his personal qualifications, but as his office is an Ordinance which he bears, and whence it is that all his Administrations, while in that office, are not null nor to be reiterated. The like is to be said of the Church it self, whereof he is a Minister, it subserves Ministerially as a Church to God, rightly to have Baptism and other Ordinances of Christian Communion Administred in it, so as those Ordinances are not null, though Administred among such as are generally corrupt and not fit matter to be a Church. That therefore these Ordinances come to be rightly and lawfully Administred, in this Church as a Church, must be by vertue of Christ's Institution and Charter, that hath made such and such a company of Men, so and so meeting for such ends and purposes, to be a Ministerial Church to him, and to be that great Ordinance, which is the Seat of all other Ordinances.

2. It is no less than the Seat, the ἐδραίωμα, the grand Repository as of Truth (as 1 *Tim.* 3. 15.) so of Government and Worship, and so it is the next receptive of all the Promises that are made to accompany the Ordinances Administred therein. We say it is the Seat as of Truth, so of Government and Worship; For by comparing the 5*th* and 14*th verses* with that 15*th*, we shall find that the Church of God is the same with that House of God, mentioned *ver.* 14 and likewise *ver.* 5. *If a Man know not how to Rule his own House well, how shall he take care of the Church of God? A Church*, that is *the subject of Government*, as compared to an House, wherein the Governour of a Family Ruleth. And it cannot be intended of the Church Universal, though universally, or rather indefinitely expressed (namely, for any or for all the particular Churches that are by God's appointment, the Subjects of Government, of an Elders Care and Rule, as a Family, (to which it is here set in comparison) is of an Ocumenick or Houshold Government) for the Church there spoken of, is such a Church as ordinary Ministers take an actual special care of, like as he that is a Master of a Family doth of his own House more than all other. And this kind of Church to which the proper Care and Rule of Elders is limited, as it is the

Ch. XI. subject of Government, so it is the Seat of Truth, where by God's Ordinance it is held forth with a promise to preserve it among them, and to provide, that it shall be sown in the Hearts of the People of God, in that great Ordinance of Preaching by Pastors, which are God's own Institution, and accordingly Gifts are preserved and continued. As, if the Officers, the Laws and Statutes by which a Colledge or Town is governed, be by Charter, the Incorporation it self is such much more: So now if the Church be the Seat of Officers, then truly if God Instituteth the Officers themselves to feed the Flock, the Flock, over whom they are set, is appointed and ordained much more, and to it, as to an Ordinance of his setting up, the promise of preserving Truth is made. And if it be the Seat of all Ordinances (As the Apostle says, 1 Cor. 7. 17. *I ordain in all the Churches*) then the Churches themselves which are in this respect the Ordinance of these Ordinances, where he reposeth and betrusts them, and in which he blesseth them, is much more Christ's Ordinance.

Yea, 3. Whereas if either of these two, the bounds of Elders Jurisdiction, or the Churches over which they are Elders, are to be fetcht from Divine Right, it necessarily argues both, yet of the two, the Institution of the bounds doth mainly and principally fall upon Church, primarily upon Church, and but secondarily upon the extent of Presbyteries. That of Church is the more fundamental measure of the division of Jurisdiction, and that of Presbyteries proportioned thereunto. Thus when it is said, *The Apostles ordained Elders*, κατ' ἐκκλησίαν *in every Church*, or *Church by Church*, 'tis not said that Churches were made κατα πρεσβυτέρες according to the mould or cast of Presbyters, but Elders were assign'd according to the mould, measure or latitude of Churches, and so the several bounds of Church power is limited by the distinction of Church. Thus the style of the Scripture runs, and Churches were settled and not Presbyteries; And the distinction was not then taken from the names of Classes and Presbyteries, Provincial and National Assemblies, &c. And in *Rev.* 11. (where *John* takes the measuring Reed in his Hand) what is the subject that Reed is applied to, and whereof the Measure is taken? It is *the Temple, the Church*, and not Presbyteries or Eldership; Therefore also *Mat.* 18. the style runs thus, *Go tell the Church*, which if it should be granted to be meant of the Elders, in our Brethrens sense, yet of Elders in relation to a Church, and in that respect so styled, as they are relatively the representation of some Church, within which their Jurisdiction is bounded. So that if there be any Institution that limits the bounds of their Power, it must necessarily fall upon the bound of Church first. Again, our Brethrens reasonings doth confirm this, for the chief weight of their Arguments for the extent of the Power of Elders over many Churches, in those instances of *Jerusalem*, *Ephesus*, &c. is taken from hence, that many Congregations are called one Church, and so, from the extent of Elderships and Elders, Power is derived, and measured thereby: And the chief Power, that is exercised, is to cast out of the Church, *i. e.* to judge them within their circuit.

To conclude; If either of these, the Jurisdiction of Elders, or the measure of Churches are to be fetcht from Institution, or set thereby, then both are to be so. The reason of this consequence is clear from this (which was but intimated afore) that all power in Governours or any other company of Men what ever, must have a Territory, a Precinct, a seat in which, and among whom to exercise their power, and accordingly the extent or limits of that seat, is the true measure of the extent of these Governours Power and Jurisdiction, the one being resolved into the other. If the one be Divine, the other is also; yea so as although the Holy Ghost should not have expresly and directly set down both, yet having done either, it is sufficient, for the one follows upon the other, and so conquently (as was said) if either be of Divine Institution, they both are so. Now the reason of this consequence is clear, not only from common reason in its parallel of all Jurisdictions else (wherein the measure of the Officers extent of Power, is resolved into the measure of the Bodies of Men knit together in one, to such or such an extent, whether taken from place, or whatever else is made the boundary.) But further it may be particularly demonstrated, that this Ecclesiastical Government is according to the order of the New Testament. For suppose the power of Government, whether in whole or in part, be in a company of Elders, yet it is not given them simply as Elders to their Persons, no nor simply as a Presbytery abstractedly considered (that is, as a company of Elders meerly as such, continuing as they please over these and these Churches, or as few as they will)

will) but what ever Jurisdiction is in them, is given in relation to a Seat; so as the division and partition of Elderships and Presbyteries, *&c.* and their extent and compass, ariseth from the partition and division of Churches, and the extent thereof. And although what these due Limits of either are, is to be afterwards considered; yet these General do argue, that such are to be found set out by the Holy Ghost. Book II.

CHAP. XII.

That it is the Prerogative of Christ's Power and Wisdom, to determine the due limits of Churches, and the boundaries of the Elder's power.

THE Prerogative of Christ, the Institutour, is as much seen in assigning a due extent of power to Elders; and in measuring out the just bounds, wherein their Authority is to be exercised, as in any thing which he hath instituted.

1. Christ useth his great Prerogative in setting out, and in constituting and bounding of the Church, that shall be the Seat of Government, which is his House.

1. In all Civil Government (and if there be a Covernment Spiritual derived from Christ, this Parallel will hold) the Stamp of Royal and Supream Authority (which is the Fountain of Government) is seen and exercised in nothing, more than in the grant of priviledges unto a company of Men, dwelling together to incorporate for Government, as also in setting the Bounds and Limits of such a Jurisdiction; and this is fundamental to all the rest; And answerably speaks the Scriptures. Thus in *Heb.* 3. 3, 4, 5. the Prerogative of Christ, above *Moses*, is argued from this, as the Highest Branch of it, that Christ was he that Built the very House it self; and therefore answerably, this is for the Honour of Christ. If a King had an infinite number of Subjects scattered over all the World, which could not be governed in the whole or lump, but by parts, distinguished and formed up into several Bodies knit together, were it not his Prerogative as much, yea, more, to appoint out the several Provinces or Territories, and the bounds thereof, which he would have Governed exactly, as to appoint the kind of Officers, or Acts of Government? Surely 'tis more. Therefore the Founders and Disposers of the Bounds of Commonwealths at first, have been esteemed Great, and more Renowned, than those that gave Laws, or Established the several kinds of Officers. It cannot be denied, but that there must be a Commission from Christ, to empower a company of Saints (that live in a Neighbourhood together as Saints) to become a Church to Christ, not in a Mystical Relation only (for that they are as Saints, though they become not a Seat of publick Worship, and of an orderly Government here on Earth) but further to become a Subject of publick Worship; and also to injoy a Government among them. As the things themselves thus injoyed are such, as nothing more concerns God's Glory in this World; and the good and benefit of the Saints, so their becoming a Church (which is the foundation of this; and unto which, as such the priviledge of these is vouchsafed) is as great a favour and priviledge, as could be bestowed on them; which therefore must needs hold as much upon a free Gift and Charter of Christ, the Head and Lord of his Church, as any other thing can be supposed to do. A Gift and Favour it is, over and above their being Saints and Members of the Church Mystical, Electively bestowed, for such they might have been, and yet never have been ordered so to meet. As to be a Minister to the Church, it is a favour beyond a Man's being a Saint, or having Gifts, and none is to take that Honour to himself; but he that is called of God, and hath a Charter from him, for the kind of Ministry designed, (and therefore *Paul* makes that great Character of himself, from God's putting him into the Ministry) so for a company of Saints to take on them, the Title and Honour of a Church, and an whole Church (as every particular Seat of Worship and Government doth) which is the Title of the whole Universal Body of Christ, yea, to take on them the Relation of a Body, an whole Body to Christ; this must be by a special Charter and Warrant, what ever company of Men there be that do it. None can give that Title of Church, unless Christ hath given it, as none can take the Title of being a City in a Kingdom, or of being a priviledged place, but by Charter. If none can take on

Ch. XII. him the Dignity of an Earl, or of a Viscount, or of any Officer of State, so no company of People can of themselves, presume to be a City, but by special Charter; much less to be a Seat of Government, whereby they become not simply a company but a Body politick. *Church*, in this Sense, is an Authoritative Word, and such Authority ariseth not from place, or any External Circumstance, no nor from meeting, but from a Charter that adds Authority, and above such considerations, unto such a company.

2. That it should belong to the Prerogative of Christ, to determine the bounds of Elder's Jurisdiction, as much as to appoint the Elders or kinds of Officers themselves, evidently appears by it's Parallel. When any Officers derive their Governing Power, from a Supream State; it concerns the Honour and Prerogative of that State, to define the extent of the Division of their Jurisdiction, as much as the kind of Officers. If therefore it be universally found, to be the Wisdom of all Supream Powers, with one consent to judge and account this bounding as justly to concern their Prerogative; shall we think that Christ hath been less jealous and careful of his Honour herein? Surely either there is no Government at all defined by him, and no sort or kind of Officers set and distinguished by him (but all is alike, left to Humane Prudence, as in Civil Government, all these things alike are) or it must be acknowledged, that the one concerns the Honour and Prerogative of Christ to Determine, as well as the other.

I know it may be said, that though it is necessary; yet it must be safely left to the Law of Nature, and to the Rulers of Prudence, for Men to appoint it; and that yet however the partition or measure of Churche's and Officer's extent is Divine, because God hath appointed that to be the measure; which Men in their Prudence shall think good to appoint. But this is indeed, to make both the extent of Officer's Government, and the measure of the Churches, and the Seat thereof to be both Humane, even as the extent of the Power and Office of Civil Magistrates is; and is called, 1 *Pet.* 2. 13. And Magistracy is called an Ordinance of Man; because the extent of it is left to Men to appoint, as they shall think meet. And yet, if God had either set the bounds and extent of Officers Jurisdiction, or of Commonwealths, (which are both considerable) then had both been of Divine Institution; but since neither of them are so set, they are Humane, although in the General, God hath commanded that Magistrates shall have that measure of power, which Men and Commonwealths shall give them.

I will add one thing more, to strengthen Christ's Prerogative in this case, that Spiritual Reason suited to the Nature of the thing it self, falls in to prove both the bounding the Elder's power; and the bounds of Churches, as the Seat of Government.

1. I argue from the Rise of the call of Elders. For though it were true, as some say, that all Saints as Saints, or as they are Mystical Members of the Church Universal, have a full and immediate right, (without any further Relation of Order and Union to a particular Church) *ipso facto*, to enjoy all Ordinances; yet take Elders or Ministers, and Church Governours as such; and they cannot be supposed to have it simply as Members of the Church Catholick, nor have they it from their having Gifts. The Law of Nature they cannot plead, why they should have that power, rather than other Persons in the Church; and Christ's Charter immediately they have, not as naming their Persons. From whence then must it be, that they have their power as Elders, but from an Instituted Relation? This must be then some other instituted Right and Priviledge given them. They are given to the Church, and so their Rise must be from their Relation to a Church; and by the same Reason, the extent of the Jurisdiction of their Office, must depend upon the like; for what else should give them power over these, or these Churches, and not others? As it is asserted by some, that the power is given to Saints, yet not to Saints, but as formed up into Bodies; so those that will say, it is given to Elders, must at least acknowledge it is given to Elders, as knit into Bodies, and set over such formed Bodies. So as their Jurisdiction doth depend upon a Relation to, and a rise of call, either from that Body, or at least into that Body. Which is more evident upon this further Reason, than that forementioned will reach to. Because God makes not Elders, immediately by his providential converting and working on them, for so he makes Saints; and yet he gives not (say our Brethren) the power to them, but as united into an orderly Body by Institution, in which they exercise each to other. And the case of Elder's power,

power, is more depending upon an Order and Institution; because they are called to be Elders by a Designation of Men. Their being Elders, at least, is in order to relation, and not by a providential immediate working on them, or from God's giving them gifts; or by an immediate call, as the Apostles were chosen, afore God erected his Church, to that end to erect it. There must be formed Bodies, to give a Rule to their call, by designing and accepting them; and there must be a relation to those formed Bodies, which they are set over; which must be set out by Divine Appointment, which alone maketh Elders, and gives them their power; and so the Rule of their call and their jurisdiction, is commensurable. Book II.

2. I argue from the necessity of the thing it self. Necessary it was, that the extensive power of Elders, should be determined (as well as the intensive) either by God or Man. If by God, we have what is desired. If by Man, either by the Civil Magistrates (and they were not Christians, for above Three Hundred years after Christ) or by the Elders themselves, and the Churches, as they should agree it. Now see the inconvenience to leave this part of extensive power, to be determined by Men; especially by the Elders themselves, whilst Christ should take on him to determine only the other. Of all sort of power, Church power is that wherein, when Men have any part, or any pretence to it, they are more apt to be ambitious of extending it, than any other: Witness the Ambition of the Prelates, and the Usurpation of the Pope, &c. And they are as apt to usurp an undue power in the extension of Jurisdiction, as well as unlawful intensive Authority, as we have seen in Popes and Bishops: The latter have assumed an undue extensive power, over whole Dioceses, Archbishops over Provinces, and Primates over Nations; and Popes have Usurped such a power over the Universal Church. This too large power they have all challenged, as well as too much intensive power, by which the Bishops appropriate Ordination to themselves, which Presbyteries (say they) may not do; and the Popes lay claim to Infallibility, &c. Now our Presbyterian Brethren, quarrel at that power in Bishops, and the Bishops oppose that Universal extensive power in the Popes. Now the Pope challengeth this intensive power of Infallibility, but upon this right, that having such Universal Extensive power, as the Apostles had; therefore God hath enabled him (as in that case he did the Apostles) with an Infallibility, suitable to that large extent of power; and therefore he began his Usurpation, with the pretence only at first, to an Universal Power for extent, in his Title of Universal Bishop; and that brought on the other, and crept up with it, and is supported by it, as the Ivy is by the Elm. Thus *Alexander* the Great, being Lord of all the World in his own Opinion, flattered himself into the conceit of Divinity, and of being a God, as annexed to that Crown Universal. So that Men are as apt to err this way, as the other, and as dangerously in the consequence. It was therefore as necessary, that Christ should set bounds to the Usurpation of Men (who were to be trusted with Church-power) as to any thing else, it was necessary to prevent the claim of any one (as of Bishops) to determine the form of Government in the Church, not to be Monarchical; it was necessary to prevent impertinent intermedling in Officers, to set the proper bounds of each several Officer. It was necessary to prevent a Lording over the Flock, by setting down the Acts of Government, proper to Elders. And so that a stretching themselves beyond their Line, and an intermedling Authoritatively in Churches, not in their Jurisdiction might be prevented, it was needful be set down by certain Limits, the Territory of Church Government, seeing as true a Tyranny and Lording, might equally arise over the Church, by an undue extent of Jurisdiction, as by the exercise of unlawful and new invented Acts of Church Power. And all this was the rather necessary, because that if it had been left to common Rules (as other things of outward order are) and by Humane Prudence to be shared and divided, the Clergy themselves, and Elders of Churches, were like to Arrogate the Determination hereof, (as in all Ages, they have done) and if they themselves were to be the allotters of it; they would be sure to look to their share, and that Wisdom (they would have it left to) would be sure to cast it so, and mould the frame of the power of Jurisdiction, into such an Order, as should advance and set up their power over all the Churches. And herein the whole Multitude of Elders and the Clergy, are as apt (yea, more apt) to be tempted, as a few Prelates that usurp it singly, because the Dominion extends to the *totum genus the whole kind* of

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Ch. XII. them Meet therefore it was, that the Lord Jesus himself should fix this, and determine it as much as any thing else that he hath done.

Then 3. As to the bounding the Churches or Bodies of Saints and Elders, that should be the Seat of Church Power, it agrees with all reason, that Christ should keep this to him, as a part of his Prerogative; and that it should depend on his Supream Authority. It cannot be denied, but that (as was said) for a company of Saints to be a distinct fixed Church within themselves, and so to be the Seat of either the Ordinances for Worship or Government, is a superadded priviledge to their being Saints. If Pastors and Teachers be Ordinances, and the gift of Christ, *Ephes.* 4. then to be Churches, and the Priviledges thereof, in and by means of which, the Saints come to have a propriety in these; and a special relation unto these, is a gift also, and so dependeth effectively upon God's Will; and so is the Subject of Institution, as well as any other thing. And these Churches of Saints, are not only the object of Government, and in that respect the Seat of it; but the priviledge of Government, the endowment thereof is in a special manner conferred on the Churches, who are the Seat of it; and thereunto is the power primarily made, and unto them the benefit redounds. Thus in Civil Bodies, that are the Seat of Government, the Priviledge and Charter of having a Government, respects the whole community it self principally, and not the Officers; and therefore it is called the Corporation's, the Town's, or the Citie's Charter; and not the Mayors and Aldermen. As therefore the main Institution or Charter, falls on the Seat it self; and so upon the Officers, and the power in them for them; and indeed on both, by one and the same Appointment: So answerably the Scripture Stile runs still upon the Church, taking in the whole community of Elders and People (*So I ordain in the Churches*, &c. says the Apostle) because that is the Seat, the Subject of the Priviledge; and so of that Institution, that bestows and endows it. Yea, and therefore the promise of Christ's Blessing and Presence, is made to the Church, that is the Seat of Government *I will be present says Christ, in the midst of you*, &c. which if it should be Interpreted of a company of Elders; yet it must be as relating to a Church, that is their Seat; and to which they have a special Relation, and so by vertue of the promise made to the Church it self, Christ walks in the midst of the Candlesticks, which are the Churches. And the efficacy of this Government and Censures therein, depends upon a special blessing; and the promise of a special Blessing, is always the companion of his own Institution. As no Acts of Government, but such as are instituted, have the ordinary promise of Blessing, nor in the Hands of any other than such as Christ hath given the power unto, so all is confined too within that Seat, or extent of Jurisdiction he hath appointed; and upon this ground, he is specially present with those Officers, and those Acts in relation; and in a respect to that Body or Church, whose Elders they are, and to whom the promise is principally made, and upon whom the Priviledge and Institution chiefly falls. In this respect then, it must also as much belong to his Power and Prerogative, to set out some Bounds and Limits of these Churches, as to Institute and Appoint, that there should be Churches that should have such a priviledge. And the reason is, because the Greatness and Worth of the Priviledge, doth more or less depend upon the ordering the extent and bounds of that Church; and will accordingly more or less, redound to the good and benefit of the Saints therein, as these are set and ordered. And therefore it was fit that the Saints should owe this to none but the Wisdom of Christ himself; yea, nothing concerns the substance of the priviledge more; and therefore if the priviledge it self be from Christ, then this also. Take any incorporate Body, if it be a priviledge to any such Body, to have Officers and certain Acts of Government appointed for and over them, then it is as much so too, to have also a circumscription of Jurisdiction among themselves, as they are incorporate. Yea, their priviledge and the benefit of it, depends so much upon it; that according to the ordering thereof, it is rendred greater or lesser, or perhaps made as good as void; so that all depends upon the set Determination of it, and had need therefore to be set out by the Founder, as distinctly as any thing else. The benefit of all priviledges, depends upon bounds of enclosure, which if left common, the priviledge is impaired. The priviledge of such a Body lies, that inclusively they should have such a Government and Officers within themselves; and also exclusively be free in such and such cases, from the Jurisdiction of others, and if there be not something of either of these, there is no benefit or priviledge in having such a Government

vernment or Officers; and yet neither of them can be accomplisht, unless the extent of the Seat of Government it self, and Jurisdiction thereof, be set out and determined. And if so much of the priviledge depends hereon, (as apparently it doth) should not he appoint, and set out the Limits of these Bodies, who is the Author, Giver, and Bestower of the Priviledge it self; to whom these Societies should wholly owe it, and not to the Discretion of others; and who also takes on him as his peculiar, to appoint both the Acts of Government, and Affairs for it, and form of Government they should be Ruled by, the one being of as much consequence, as the other. Thus the proportion of the greatness of the priviledge and benefit of Government, so much depending on it, it is meet, yea, necessary that he that is the Author of this Government, should define and fix it.

4. I shall further add another thing, which depends upon the former, that the Efficacy of all Ecclesiastical Power and Censures, and the Efficacy of them depending on so Supernatural a Blessing, to subject the Conscience unto those Censures (against which Men's Consciences are apt to be as obstinate and rebellious, as to any kind of punishment inflicted by Men) if it was as necessary that Christ himself should set out the bounds of Jurisdiction, within the compass of which, Men were to be subject to those whom he betrusted with the Government, as to appoint any of those other things forementioned. For Men were like to quarrel at nothing more, than the right of power in those that executed it; and nothing was more liable to exception, than is this. They still might say, what have you to do to Judge me; unless you can shew from Christ, I am in the way of your Jurisdiction? Yea, how else also should it be known to whom it belonged, and over whom to execute these Censures; and who were in fault, if they were not Executed? The Apostle therefore stirs up the *Corinthians* to it, as a Duty belonging to them; and convinceth them of their sin (on whom it lay, and on none else) that they neglected to censure that offender, who was within their Jurisdiction, do not ye Judge them that are within? says he, 1 *Cor.* 5. 2 And so far as the Sword of the Spirit is not managed by that Hand, where Christ hath placed it, it will be naked. And if so much of the Blessing depends upon other things of as small moment, as upon the True Form of Government, that Christ hath appointed, that is, to be Administred by the many (as *Paul* speaks) and not by one Man, a Bishop, and by Men in Office, and not the People only, though many (as our Brethren will say, in so much as for want of these, some of them do account the Act Null and Void, and to have been weakned, and as a wodden Dagger) Surely of these Censures, it may as well be imagined, they might receive a proportionable strength from the Addition of the like Institution of the extent of Jurisdiction, over those that should be within the reach of them, these being Acts of the power of Jurisdiction, as they have been commonly called in distinction from those other of Doctrine, and the Sacraments. Sure we are that *Paul* seems to put as much of the promise of the power to accompany it upon this, that the Incestuous *Corinthian*, was within the Jurisdiction of the Church of *Corinth*; and so had the promise of Christ's power, to accompany that ordinance to that Man, as upon any thing else. For Christ still blesseth his own ordinance, when in that right hand he hath placed it, and it may well be thought one, if not the main reason, why the edge of this Sword hath been found so blunt and dull (as *Laurentius Andreas* observes) that there hath been more power in one Excommunication in the Primitive Times, than in all since, though backt with the Civil Sword, because it hath been in them, that have not had the right of Jurisdiction to execute it; that whereas *Tertullian* says, it was in their Congregations, *Tanquam fulmen, as a Thunderbolt*, it hath been, *Brutum fulmen, to us a Thunderbolt of no force, Nulla Major nullitas quam defectus juris, nec Major defectus quam Jurisdictionis; There is no greater Nullity, than a Deficiency of Right, nor a greater Defect, than that of Jurisdiction.*

In the Conclusion of the whole, I infer, from this Assertion are chiefly these Corollaries.

1. That our Brethren of the Presbyterian way, if they would prove and establish

Ch. XII. eſtabliſh their ſeveral Orders and Claſſical, &c. Aſſemblies, they muſt ſhew us Inſtitution for them.

2. And in this Agitation, let thoſe, that can produce out of the New Teſtament, the Trueſt, Genuine, Natural Evidences of the bounds of an Inſtituted Church, as the Seat of Officers and Government, carry it.

3. That an Inſtituted Church, according to the true and lawful Bounds thereof, being the Seat of the Priviledge, all power of Elders and Officers is to be drawn down thereto, in the exerciſe thereof; and in caſe of Defect, Elders are to be choſen to ſuch a Church, and not that Church taken in to other Elders; and alſo all Acts of Juriſdiction, are to be exerciſed therein.

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The Government OF THE Churches of Christ.

BOOK III.

Particular Congregations, having a sufficient number of Elders and Officers, are compleatly enabled for all Acts of Government, and Excommunication it self, within themselves, as well as for Worship.

CHAP. I.

That a Particular Congregation of Saints, having a sufficient number of Elders, is a compleat Subject of Church Power and Government, proved, 1. *From the Power which they have to Examine, and Admit Members.* 2. *From their Power of Suspending from the Sacrament.* 3. *From their being a perfect Political Church.*

THis is agreed upon by all hands that some particular Church is such a Politick Body, as hath intire power to cast out by Excommunication; and a casting out of that particular Body, Is consequently a casting out of all the rest, by the Law of Communion of Churches, whether implicite, (one Church reverencing the judgment of another, till they see apparent cause to the contrary) or explicite by vertue of that their Association. Now the Question is, what particular Body or Church it is, whether a fixed Congregation (whereof a Man is a constant Member) when it hath a sufficiency of Elders over it, or a Presbytery of many Congregations?

Proposition, *One single Congregation of Saints, having a sufficient number of Elders, and Officers, is an intire Seat of all Acts of Government, and of Excommunication it self, as well as of Worship.* The truth of this Proposition will appear, if we consider the following Arguments.

Arg. I. If such a Church with the Elders are sufficient to Try and Examine, and so Admit ordinary Members, without the help of other Churches, then it is sufficient to cast them out. For,

1. The one is an affirmative act, the other a negative act, but both are acts of the Keys only turning several ways, the one opening the other shutting; the one is but judging initial Repentance, the other is a judging of occasional Repentance for a gross Sin. And there is as much reason you should require as evident signs of Repentance from the state of Nature, as you do in case of scandal. For as to men grown up, till they shew Repentance, there is this prejudice against them, that they are Children of Wrath by nature even as well as others.

Chap. I.

2. The not admitting of Men to Church Ordinances, and not receiving them, is an act of as great moment to Men's Persons, as to be cast out. If then Churches be betrusted with the one, why should not they be betrusted with the other?

3. If Excommunication were more to the Man Excommunicated, than a not Receiving by way of Admission, yet Christ's Honour is as much concerned in that Members are taken in and owned for his Body, as in what are cast out.

4. In all Common-wealths, to Enfranchise and to cut off belong to the same Power, yea to Enfranchise doth more appertain to it. For Parliaments only do Enfranchise Strangers, but yet lower Courts do cut Men off by Death, according to the Law. And it holds in all Bodies else, for in Families, they have power to take in Servants, and power to cast out, and in Colledges to Admit and to Expell.

Object. But it will be objected, that to Excommunicate a Man, is to cast him out of all Churches, and therefore it is the greater Act.

Answ. 1. That simply alone doth not make it greater; for a Man is cast out of all Churches, not formally but only consequently, because the Churches have and keep communion one with another. Let the proportion be held between Admission and Excommunication in this, and they will be parallels; For if you will say that all Churches about have an interest, because they are to reject a Man, that is Excommunicated; so they have an interest also in Admission, to Receive him also, if he be admitted, and they cast a reflection up that Church he is of, if they Receive him not by vertue of his Fellowship.

Answ. 2. A Man in being so admitted into a particular Church, by vertue of that Fellowship, he is received occasionally into communion with any other Church.

Arg. II If a single Congregation may Suspend from the Sacrament, without consulting others, then they may Excommunicate. This is evident,

1. From Presbyterial Principles, for those that hold Excommunication to be but a casting one off from Communion with the Church, and not to include a further thing, *viz.* a formal delivering him unto Satan, do make but a very small difference between Suspension and Excommunication. A Man Excommunicated they will admit to Hear, and therefore his being cast out of the communion of the Church, is but a depriving him of the communion of the Lord's Supper, and that is also done by Suspension: Only the one is but a Suspension from a few acts, this from many; but both are till he repents.

If it be said that the consequent of Excommunication, is to avoid civil converse, which is more than Suspension. We reply, that even so it is in Suspension also; for there is to be a withdrawing from a Brother, that walks inordinately before he is Excommunicated, 2 *Thes.* 3. 6 Yea, because a private Brother ought to withdraw converse with such an one, it is made a ground of Suspension from the Lord's Supper by the Church, that the Church should withdraw communion with him, and so Suspend him.

Arg 3. Add to this, That they who are a Politick Church, having a sufficient Presbytery and Eldership, have a power to do all acts of a Church, and therefore to Excommunicate. But such a Congregation is a Politick Church, and have a sufficient Presbytery and Eldership.

1. They are a Politick Church, and the least Church hath thus much power, that he that hears it not, let him be as an Heathen and a Publican, and the greatest hath no more. All the Churches in the World may add Advice in difficult cases, and a reverential Authority, but they cannot add Power, for that Christ hath given to a Church as it is a Church. The Presbyterial Divines themselves do argue the Power of Excommunication in a Presbytery, because it is a Church; only they say a Congregation is an imperfect Church. Whereas there is not one Scripture in the New Testament that doth so much as call a Presbytery, over many Congregations, a Church or if it did, there is then a greater thing to be proved (namely, this distinction which the Scripture hath not made) that a Congregation having an Eldership, is an incompleat Church Politick, and the other compleat. All Churches may be imperfect in respect of Moral Power, in some cases, wherein they need advice, and so a Presbyterial Church may be imperfect, and may run into errour, and so may a Provincial, so may a National, so may a General Council. And if the imperfection of a Church should lie in this, that it is subject to another Church, and accountable thereunto (according to Presbyterial Principles) then also a Provincial and a National Church

Church were imperfect, and by that rule they also should not Excommunicate. But in a word, the imperfection of a Congregational Church must lie, either in respect of what they are as a Church, or in respect of their Eldership. Book III.

1. Their imperfection doth not lie in their being a Church, for they have more of Church than any classical Meeting of Elders hath, because they have both People and Elders also, and so partake of both sorts, which the other doth not. And the Assembly have in their vote acknowledged, *Mat.* 18. to intend a particular Church, and the Eldership thereof to be a Church, although they do not acknowledge it only to be a Church, and our Reformed Writers call Congregations, *Ecclesiæ primæ*, the first Churches

2. Neither doth their imperfection lie in their Eldership, as being insufficient, for if so, then either Elders are not an Eldership unto them for acts of Government; or they are not a sufficient Eldership for all acts of Governments. But

1. They are an Eldership or Presbytery unto them for acts of Government. For where there are more Elders than one united in common, for acts of Government, there they are an Eldership or a Presbytery, but so there are here. This is evident in the instance of *Hierusalem*, brought by the Assembly themselves, for they therefore prove Presbyterial Government, over many Congregations, because those *Elders* met for acts of Government, and that those many Congregations were one Church to those Elders. Now in a particular Congregation, where there are more Elders than one, there is one Church, and there are likewise the Elders thereof, meeting (say we) with that Church for Acts of Government, and that may meet apart (say they) for some Acts of Government. Of a Bishop it is said, (1 *Tim.* 3. 5. *If he do not Rule his own house well, how shall he take care of the Church of God?* That is to rule it, as the answering of one phrase to the other imports. And surely, if, by Bishop there, be meant a particular Elder, having relation unto a particular Congregation, Ruling in that Congregation is there intended, and to suppose that the House of God, that he is to take care of and to rule, is many Congregations, as met in a Classes, is too hard a supposition, especially seeing the Argument is taken from ruling his Family, and he is placed in a Congregation; and if the Congregation should not be meant here, by the House of God, the comparison went *per saltum, by too wide a Leap.*

2. As the Name Church, is applied to the House of Meeting in our Language to this day, so this is an Argument that Congregational Meetings are Churches, and so the Name *Rector*, which imports Ruling, continues also to this day. Presbyters "(saith *Bains*) in antient time were in great difference, or of a double sort, those "who are called, *Proprij Sacerdotes, Rectores, Seniores, Minorum Ecclesiarum præ-* "*positi.* The Bishop had not, nor challenged not that respective power over them, "which he did over those who were numbred among his Clerks, who were helps to "him in the Liturgy, in Chappels and Parishes which did depend on him, as their "proper Teacher, though they could not so ordinarily go out to him. The first sort "had power within their Churches, to Teach, Administer, Excommunicate, and "were counted Brethren to the Bishops, and called *Episcopi* or *Coepiscopi* even of the "Antient; But the Presbyters, which were part of their Clergy, they had this di-"rective power over them, (indeed) the Canons Ecclesiastical allowing the same. "And this power, in their own Congregations, these Rectors had, although they "were *Minorum Ecclesiarum præpositi, Rulers over lesser Churches.* And surely they, "that are fit to Teach their own Congregation, are fit to Govern their own Congre-"gation: The word to *Feed the Flock*, implying, feeding them by Ruling, as "well as by Teaching. They that are Parents to beget, have power of the Rod "betrusted to them; and if they be fit to govern *foro interno*, then much more with "others *foro externo.* It is a more Apostolical Work to beget, and to plant, and to "multiply, than to Govern Men being converted. That those that should be fit to "gather a Church, and to bring it to fulness from small beginnings, should not be fit "to govern it, and to reap the fruit of it, but that the power should be in others "that are extrinsecal to their Congregations, is absurd to think. *Bain's Diocesan tryal, Pag. 66.*

In the classical Government, if they admonish not personally only, *i. e.* each Minister apart, but as a body in common then they meet for Acts of Government, and that in common, as united: And if there be no admonition in common, wherein they all join, as an act of authority of the whole, then such admonitions proceed from the Minister alone, that doth admonish, and the other Elders therein are but as Cyphers. Now therefore when there is Elders, and these Elder

Chap. I. united in acts in common, and those acts are acts of Government, there must needs be an Eldership. And this the Reformed Churches do acknowledge, and the Commissioners of *Scotland*, in ther papers, do own this to be an Eldership. The Reformed Churches, in *France*, call it a Presbytery; and the meeting of the Elders over many Congregations, that they call the *Classis*. And what doth make a Classical Eldership to be a Presbytery; but that materially there are Elders, that have relation to those Congregations, and that formally they are united for Acts in Common?

2. It is as evidently true, that they are a sufficient Presbytery. Its true indeed, (as was said afore, no one *is sufficient for any of these things*? And thus for moral imperfections, power might be taken from the Apostles themselves, who acknowledge this imperfection of themselves; but they have a political sufficiency.

For 1. If it be said that the insufficiency lies in the fewness of the number, and that in a Classical Presbytery, there are more; on answer to that, the Rule saith, *Elders of the Church*, and so speaks of them indefinitely; and our Saviour Christ saith, in Mat. 18. *Where two or three are gathered*, which the Presbyterial Divines do interpret of the Elders. In *Acts* 13. 1. there are three Elders mentioned at *Antioch*, and that they ordained two Apostles, *Barnabas* and *Paul*, who (say our Brethren) acted as ordinary Elders, when joyned together in the same Act, and yet they ordained also, *Acts* 14. 23. Thus the Church of *Colosse*, had two Ministers, *Epaphras* and *Archippus*, and yet that Church was compleat, *Col.* 2. 10. And they were but one Congregation; for they were Pastors to them, *who is a Faithful Minister to you*, (saith he) and that in respect of Teaching; for (he saith) *they had heard it from him*, *Col.* 4. And when the Scripture hath not put the sufficiency upon a number, why, if there be but two, should they be excluded? And then too it may fall out, that as many Elders are in one Congregation, as in some Classes. It will not be denyed by our Brethren, that two Churches may associate, and make a *Classis*; and one Congregation may have as many Elders, as these two smaller ones, that do associate. And assuredly their sufficiency doth not lie, that they have relation unto many Congregations; for that this should have the influence into their sufficiency, is hard to be supposed; besides that this is but a secondary Relation, for the primary Relation is to their own several Churches, insomuch, as it was sometimes affirmed by our Brethren, that they were not Elders to all those several Congregations associated, but an Eldership only. And that is but an extrinsecal relation neither, whereas that relation, they have to their own, is more intrinsecal; because they are chosen by them, and because they personally watch over them, and are fixed amongst them, whereas this is but raised by a meer Association. And therefore this relation that they are Elders over, many Congregations can add nothing to their sufficiency.

2. Or else Secondly, their insufficiency is supposed to lie, in not having all sort of Elders, in this Congregational Eldership, both a Pastor, Teacher, and Ruling Elder. But if so, then a Classical Eldership may be imperfect too; for in some of these, one that hath the Office of a Teacher or a Doctor, may be, is often found wanting; or what if all Ruling Elders were wanting, and only Pastors met, were this an imperfect Eldership? And if all sorts and kinds of Elders, were necessary to make up the sufficiency of an Eldership or Presbytery Classical; then it were first necessary that every Congregation should have all these sorts of Elders; for a *Classis* cannot oblige the Congregations under them, that some should have a Teacher, others a Ruling Elder, others a Pastor, to make up all sorts among them; and besides the first relation of all Officers, being unto particular Congregations, as being primarily ordained for them (for none is an Officer simply, made for a Classical Church) therefore the Seat of *all* these sorts of Officers, is Congregations: And so if that the *Classis* have all, it is because the Congregations have all first; and if the Classes be bound to have all to make theirs sufficient, the Congregations also are bound to have all to make theirs sufficient.

3. Or else thirdly they are supposed Deficient, because they want Ability.

But 1. If they are Elders of the Church Universal (as some of our Brethren affirm) and of all the World; and accordingly fit for any work of Elders, as their Office is, it were strange that a company of them in a Congregation, two or three, or more, should not be fit for all the business in that Congregation.

But 2. Their inability must lie either in want of skill, or want of power. If in want of skill, it must be either skill to discern the proof of the Fact, for which Men

Men are to be excommunicated; and if so, then they are unable to Admonish also; for they should not Admonish, but upon proof of the fact; and to disable a Congregation, People and Elders, to do that, which any Jury of a few Men use to do, ordinarily in point of Life and Death, *is very* hard. Or else their want of skill must lie in discerning, whether the sin be a sin of that Nature, that it deserves Excommunication for the matter of Fact, if it be not repented of; but they cannot be supposed to want skil in that, for then they cannot likewise suspend from the Sacrament, for they are to suspend but for such sins, as, if not repented of, would deserve Excommunication. Or else they must want skill to judge of Repentance, or the want of it; but surely if a Brother may be able to Judge of the Repentance of a Brother, in case of a flagitious sin (which in publick he should be Excommunicated for, if he Repented not) then a Church and these Elders, may be able to Judge of his Repentance of Publick sins. Yea, if a particular Eldership (according to Presbyterial principles) do find that the Man Repenteth upon their Admonition, though the sin be gross and heinous, they may forbear to bring him to the *Classis*, and receive him again, or else their Admonitions are in vain; and all must be brought however to the *Classis*. And if they may Judge of his Repentance, so as to prevent Excommunication, then they may as well judge of his Repentance, or of his Obstinacy, when he is to be Excommunicated.

If it be said that the fault may be so Atrocious, that they cannot so well judge of his Repentance; the Answer is,

1. Then all such sins should be brought immediately to the Classical Presbytery, and not to the particular Eldership at all; for them to Admonish, or to deal with him in order to Repentance.

2. The more Heinous the Fault is, the more apparent it is; and therefore the better they may judge of it, and the easier an Excommunication should be for it.

Or 2. Their Insufficiency must be supposed to lie in want of power.

But 1. If they be a Presbytery in a Church, they must needs have Power and Authority to do all that a Presbytery is ordered for, or is ascribed to it. A Presbytery and Presbyterial Acts, are Relative and Mutual.

2. All Christ's Ordinances and Means, are sufficient unto his end. As a Minister, if he be a True and Lawful Minister, hath sufficiency both of Gifts and Power, to do what belongeth unto him as a Minister; as to Acts of all sorts, and the least, as well as the greatest: So if Christ do Ordain a Presbytery, to Govern as a Presbytery, it is a perfect means for all Presbyterial Acts; for God's Appointments are perfect, and God's means for Government, are as compleat as his other means of Preaching and the Sacraments. A Presbytery, if it be a Presbytery, is as perfect, as a Presbytery, as a particular Minister, is as a Minister. A Minister, is a compleat Minister, not to Preach only, but to Baptize; not to Baptize only, but to Administer the Lord's Supper; not to Preach one part of the Council of God, but all; not to Administer the Bread only, but the Cup; and if he is the Minister of one Sacrament, then also of another; for there are no such Ministers as the Bishops, Deacons. Now look what a Minister is in his kind, that Elders are in their kind, and if they have power to Admonish, then power to Excommunicate.

3. If they be fit for one Act of Government, then for all Acts, of all sorts and kinds (for of them we speak now) we do not say in all cases; for a case may be too difficult for them, and then they seek Advice, but we speak of the kinds. If they be able, they have the power, in one as well as the other, which is proved.

1. Because our Presbyterian Brethren's own Arguments, do run from instances of one part of Government, to all. They cannot give Instances of all Acts of Government done by those, that they suppose to be Classical Churches; but they argue from some few, and those less than Excommunication, as in the instance of the Church of *Jerusalem*, they argue from the less, from having received Alms, that they meant to prevent a Scandal. Yea, they argue that because the Synod in *Acts* 15. might with an Authority Doctrinal declare, that therefore they might Excommunicate. So we argue, if a Congregational Presbytery may do all these, then they may Excommunicate; and it is their right to do it. Our Presbyterian Brethren, can give no instance of any one that did all; and until they have an Instance, that Classical Churches did all these, it may still be said, that Classical Churches be imperfect; and how then shall they or we, know what is a perfect Presbytery, and what is not? To give them power

to

Ch. I. to Admonish, to Suspend from the Sacrament, and not to Excommunicate, is to make them imperfect. If then they are furnisht with power, they must likewise have Ability, for what Christ gives power to do, to that he gives ability sufficient.

If it should be said, that Congregational Elders do but Govern in *foro interno*, I answer 1. That's the same that the Bishops allowed, only unto Pastor of Congregations, affirming themselves had only the external Judicature. Then 2. They rule more than in *foro interno*, for they set up an outward Judicature in a Church of Elders, united in common, even while they Admonish in common, and suspend from the Sacrament in common.

So that to conclude this Argument, to say that they are insufficient for Ability and Power; it is 1. A wrong to Christ, in Reproaching his means, as insufficient to his ends. It is 2. A wrong to the Presbytery it self; it is enough to take away the power from them; but to take away a Man's power and his Estate, and make him a Ward under pretence, that he is not able to manage it, or hath no power to do it, is the greatest wrong that can be. 3. If some Elders and Congregations be found insufficient, then they are insufficient to be Elders, put them out, or let them only be Wards, shall the Law be general for their sakes? 4. If you ask what is a sufficient Eldership? We ask you what is an insufficient? And wherein insufficiency lieth? And let not Churches be kept imperfect (when it is their due to have a sufficient Eldership) that under the pretence of that, the necessity of Presbyterial Government may appear. But as in case of Separation, the Assembly hath affirmed, that if there be a want of officers, or the like, it is required that there be a supply, and that there be not a Separation; so in Congregations, let there be a sufficient Eldership, let there be a supply, let not the power be taken away. For thus the Bishops took away Ruling Elders, and did leave but one Pastor in a Congregation, that so they might have the better pretence to govern, and to do all themselves.

CHAP. II.

The fourth and fifth and sixth Arguments, to prove a single Congregation, to be a compleat Subject of Ecclesiastical power, drawn 1. From being a Body of Christ compleatly ordained, 2. Because Worship and Government are Commensurate. 3. From the Nature of Excommunication.

Arg. 4. THEY, that are a Body organized with all the Members, have all the priviledges of a Body; but a Church having a company of Elders, especially if of all sorts, is a body to Christ, and compleatly organized. The compleatness of the Natural body, lies not in the multitude of Members, but in having all. And that such a body thus compleat, should not have all power that a body can be supposed to have over its Members, is very strange. And again; that power and liberty, which is to be given to every brother in his proportion, is to be given to every compleat body of Christ, in the like proportion as it is a body. Now every brother hath power as a brother (and as it is his Duty) to withdraw from him he doth judge to walk inordinately, 2 *Thess.* 3. 5. And then every body that is rightly organized, must therefore have power as a Body, to a suitable proportion, to cut off any rotten Member; and if it can heal it self, to do it of it self, the Law of Nature will teach it, as it is a Body so to do. That is not a sound Body, that hath not strength to purge out it's own Excrements. All Bodies and Societies of Men, have power still within themselves, to cast out any who are Destructive to the Society, so Families have, (every lump purgeth out its own Leaven) and every particular Company in a Greater City, have that power so far as their own company reacheth.

The power which the Synagogues had and exercised, Congregations surely may have now. The *Synedrim* might give the Law in the Abstract directing, who and what kind of Persons were to be cast out, and for what; but they medled not with the particular Sentence, and applying of it to any Man; nor did the Towns and Cities that judged in their Gates. Neither were the Synagogues bound to advise, but only when the case was difficult, which is clearly by this; that the *Jews* had Synagogues in all the Cities of the *Gentiles*, dispersed up and down the World, and had their several

ural Rulers in them; and they were not bound to come up to *Hierusalem*, to the *Synedrim*. These Synagogues, though they could not cast out of the Temple, yet cast out of themselves they might; and therefore a Man was cast out of the Synagogue.

As we argue in the case of Baptism of Children, that God hath not straitned, but rather inlarged his Grace, and the Liberty and Promises thereof under the Gospel; so we do argue here, that the liberty of such Assemblies, (as the Synagogues were) which Christ hath now Instituted, must have all the priviledges they have, and so much the more, by how much, that the Assemblies of the Saints now are more Noble, than Synagogues were then; they being called a Temple, the House of God, a Holy Nation, and a Royal Priesthood; and upon every Assembly, under the Gospel, God Creating a Cloud and a Pillar of Fire, these have all the promises and priviledges, that the Temple and the Nation of the *Jews* had, therefore surely as much as the Synagogues. The Prophet *Jerem.* 3. 16. makes the priviledge of every Church, under the Gospel, to be as great as that of the Temple at *Hierusalem*, where the Ark was, the place where God did choose for the *Synedrim* to sit in, and to govern that Nation. *In those days*, (saith he, speaking of the times of the Gospel) *they shall say no more the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord* (which therefore must needs be meant of the times of the Gospel; for the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord, was the chiefest priviledge, under the Law, till Christ) neither *shall it come into mind, neither shall they remember it, neither shall they visit it, neither shall that be done any more*; But in stead thereof, he takes one of a City, and one of a Family, and brings them to *Zion*, takes not the Nation, but Selects some out of the Nation; and gives them Pastors according to his own Heart, as a greater priviledge than that of the Ark, and therefore it is meant of Congregational Assemblies; for to them Pastors are fixedly and properly given to feed them with Knowledge and Understanding. And if that every Congregation enjoyeth a greater priviledge than the Ark of the Lord, in having such Pastors; then surely it should also be governed by them, as the Synagogues also were by their Rulers, who were called Rulers of the Synagogue, not of the Synagogues; for each Synagogue had more Rulers than one, for the Government of them, as they were a Synagogue, *Mar.* 5. 22.

Arg. 5. If the Seat of Worship and Government be commensurable, and of equal extent: Then a single Congregation, as it is the Seat of Worship, so of Government. Now for Worship, none else do meet but Congregations; and if the Temple, Altar, and Worshippers, be measured by the same line, *Rev.* 11. the power that is in the Temple, is likewise so measured. If Altar and Judicature, be of like extent also (as they are, since the end of Discipline is to keep Worship pure) then where the constant Worship is, there should be constant Discipline, especially if Excommunication be a part of Worship, as was said afore, as well as Admonitions are: It cannot be otherwise, but that the proceedings of the whole Discipline, Admonitions, and all, should be before the whole Church, which is as well to be edified by it, as by Preaching; and therefore particular Congregations are to be the Seat of it: Thus we shewed before, that the main end of a Church was Worship, and that Discipline was the Appendix thereunto, to keep the Worship pure; and that so Christ under the Gospel, had made the bounds of a Church, to be measured by that of Worship, Rev. 11. 1. *Measure the Temple and the Altar, and the Worshippers*; and so all that belongs unto it. And this Worship and Government for the State of it, are of equal extent, commensurable one to the other, which is made out by this; that all sorts of Churches that ever were, had Worship and Government of equal extent. Before the Law, when there was a Church in the House, and it went in a Family-way, as the Worship was in the Family, so the Discipline was in that Family; and Excommunication was a casting out of that Family; so in *Adam's* Family, it is said of *Cain*, that he fled from the presence of the Lord, that is, from his Father's House. When as God did make a Nation a Church, the Church of the *Jews* (as 'tis called, *Acts* 7.) in the Wilderness, they did set all their Tents about the Tabernacle, and so, as one Church, they saw the Sacrifices. And when they were at *Hierusalem*, they had answerably a National Worship, they had Ordinances, as they were a National Church; therefore the *Synedrim* was to sit in the place that God should choose, to be there for Government, as well as he appointed the Sacrifices to be there. And for that Moral Worship in the Synagogues, so far forth, as they were the Seat of Worship, Prayer, and

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and reading the Word, &c. so they had also casting out of the Synagogues: And although the *Synedrim* might make Laws, for what sins to do it; yet the exercise of it was by the proper Rulers, who are called therefore Rulers of the Synagogues. It is therefore *Bains*, his Argument against *Diocesan* Churches, that there could be no such Churches, because there was no publick Ordinances of Worship, as was in the National Churches of the *Jews*, unto which the Males came. And yet the Episcopal Government kept up this principle, for as they had a Diocesan Government, so they had a Cathedral Worship in the same place, as in a Mother Church, like that Representative Worship of Sacrifices in *Hierusalem*; and they had set meetings at them, to which all came up; and therefore their principles, in this, was better than this of the Presbyteries, for they had a Worship and a Government, that was commensurable.

Bain's Diocesan Trial, pa 69.

Object. 1. The performing of Acts of Worship by a Minister, belongs to the power of Order; but the power of Jurisdiction is a further thing. A Minister may Administer the Sacrament, and perform a work of Order alone; but he cannot Govern alone, but he must be joyned with others; and therefore Worship and Government are not commensurable.

Answ. The question is not of the power, but of the extent of the State both of Worship and Government. He that is a Minister, and can alone perform an Act of publick Worship, yet he must do it in a publick Congregation; and so although it be done alone by his person, yet not beyond the extent of a Congregation, but still according to the limits and bounds of it. Now the Seat of Government, and the extent thereof, is commensurable to the Seat of Worship; so as although he cannot perform an Act of Government alone in the Congregation, but with others; yet still those others are but to be those, who belong to that Congregation, whereto he is a Minister, or an Elder for performing Acts of Worship.

Object. 2. The Apostles had a Latitude of power over all sort of Churches, and therefore the extent of Worship, and the power of Government, are not commensurable.

Answ. Although the Apostles had, in their Persons, power of Government over all Churches; yet still they exercised that power (for acts of censure) but when they were, in any of those Congregations, not in a consistory out of those Churches, but as personally present in the Churches. And therefore the Apostle saith, *When I come, I will do so and so*; and *shall I come with a Rod?* 1 Cor. 4. 19, 20, 21. And when they came to any particular Church, it was an Apostolick priviledge proper to them, which is not communicable to other Elders, they were συμπρεσβύτεροι *fellow-Elders*, (as *Peter's* Phrase is, 1 *Pet.* 5.) in every one of those Churches; and did for that time concur in the Government of that Church, though with the interest of an Apostle. So as still *de facto*, the exercise of all their Government, was in a Congregation; and as they Administred not the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper alone, or out of Churches, so nor did they Excommunicate, but as joyned with a particular Church; nor did they choose Officers or Elders, but as present with Churches, whom these were to be Officers to. They might give Doctrinal Directions to Churches, concerning Government, in which they were infallibly guided by the Holy Ghost; but acts of Government, they performed not, but in the Churches themselves, and as concreted and becomming one with that particular Church; and therefore the Churches remained as distinct Churches, notwithstanding they were under Apostolical Government; and many Churches are no where called one Church, because under an Apostle.

Arg. 6. That a single Congregation, with it's Elders, is an intire Seat of Government, is proved from the Nature of Excommunication it self.

1. Excommunication relateth to Communion, and Communion with Churches is either fixed, and in a constant way, or occasional. To throw a Man out of occasional Communion, is not Excommunication, it is but a secondary act, that supposeth first to throw him out of a fixed Communion. It is but Non-communion, or denial of Communion, and keeping of him out of it, as all other remote Churches may do. And the Execution of the act, is from the power of Christ; and that promise which he hath made, *I will be in the midst among you, when thus gathered together*, Mat. 18. 20. whereas the way of Presbytery classical Excommunication, is as if the congregation was gathered in the Name of the Pretbyters, and with their power, and that they could promise to be in the midst among them. Excommunication therefore, formally

ly and properly is a casting him out of a fixed Communion; therefore that Church, which actually doth hold a fixed communion with him, hath that power, and to them properly must belong the casting of him out. *Do not ye judge them that are within, saith the Apostle?* 1 Cor. 5. 12. And so far as any were *Within* to them, so far they had Power over them. Now to that particular Congregation, whereof a Man is a Member, a Man is so *Within*, in respect of a fixed communion as to no Church else in the World; there is therefore a Power of throwing of him out, belonging to them, which belongs to no Church, nor unto all the Churches in the World. Other Churches can but throw him out of an occasional communion as he shall come to them, and therefore answerably, their throwing of him out must be but occasionally, as he shall at any time offer to come to them. Hence therefore the formal act of Excommunication must needs be proper unto them, whom he holdeth a fixed communion with. Add to this, that other Churches can throw him out, but of that communion which he holds with them, and the communion ordinarily, he holds with them, is but as being a Member of a Church associated with them (supposing such an association) and as far as their interest goes, so far their power may go, they may throw him out of their association, but no further. But Excommunication is a throwing of a Man out of a fixed communion of all Ordinances for Worship, now such a communion he holds not with other Churches. They may indeed throw him out of their own *Within*, which is, for the fixed part of it, but a matter of association for Government; but the Congregations, *Within*, are in respect of ordinary communion in Worship. Now answerable unto their Interest is their Power; and therefore Excommunication is to take him from the midst of them (*from among you*, 1 Cor. 5. 13.) with whom he did use to Worship. The very import of the word *Excommunication* is *Excommuni cætu*, the formal and direct act therefore of Excommunication is to throw him out of that fixed communion, which he had. It is a casting out of all other Churches consequently, yea out of the visible Catholick Church consequently, but formally it is only out of that particular Church whereof he is a Member. Other Churches, by vertue of their communion together, may ratific it by approving it, but that Church, which the act properly concerns in the formality of it, is a particular Church whereof he is a Member, and therefore answerably the formal power must lie there. And although this Government of Christ hath been never so much corrupted by a power set over Congregations, yet still the act of Excommunication (or at least the execution) hath been performed in the particular Churches whereof a Man is a Member.

2. Where and by whom that act is done, that excommunicateth a Man, there the power and the main of the power must lie, (for the substance of the act) and there alone. But in particular Congregations, and by the Elders of the People thereof, that act alone is done, by which a Man actually is cut off from communion with all other Churches, and whereby he is excommunicated; Therefore that particular Congregation is the only, or at least the main substantial subject of that power, whereby a Man is excommunicated. We have an instance in the Church of *Corinth*, when the Apostle directs them to deliver that Man unto Satan, when they were met together. Whether the Man was excommunicated, or no, it matters not, however the direction was given, and the direction falls upon the very act itself, when and where it was actually to be executed and done, and in them it puts the power; *When ye are met together in the Name, and with the Power of the Lord Jesus, deliver such a Man to Satan*, 1 Cor. 5. 4, 5. There's the Act, and there's the Power, all meet together, and he speaks of the ultimate act of Excommunication; and where, and in what Meeting that is to be done amongst them, there the power resideth.

1. In all Spiritual Ordinances, the power is inseparable from the act: And therefore to make the power whereby a Man is excommunicated to lie in one Assembly, and the act of excommunication to be performed in another, is to divide what Christ hath put together. He that baptizeth hath the power of baptizing, and he that preacheth of preaching, and so those that actually excommunicate of excommunication, and the act is more than the sentence. If therefore they have the greater committed to them, they must needs have the less. And,

2. Whom Jesus Christ betrusteth with the act, he must betrust them the power, because his power, whereof their's is but the execution, doth accompany their act, and therefore *Paul* saith, when you are *met with the Power of the Lord Jesus, give*

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3. In Scripture the Power is expressed by the Act. *Paul* saith, *Whom I did deliver unto Satan*; and so ordination is called the laying on of the Hands of the Presbytery: The Power of the Presbytery is expresly their act; and therefore where the Act lies, the Power must lie.

Now we ask this Question, Whether a Man be actually Excommunicated and delivered up unto Satan, until he is so delivered up at a Meeting of that particular Church whereof he is a Member, Elders and People being present? We are not now inquiring what proceedings are to go before, preparatory hereunto; but this is that we contend for, that where the Act is done which *ultimately* Excommunicates him, there the substance of the Power lies.

Whereas it may be answered, that the *Execution* is in the Congregation, but the Sentence is in the Presbytery; as in Civil Courts it is where the Man is Sentenced by the Judges, but actually Executed by the Sheriffs. We reply,

1. That Instances of Civil proceedings will not hold here. For the Sentence by the Judge is that authoritative Act, as by him that hath the Power in Law to cut the Man off; but to Execute the Man, to put him to Death, that's an act of Nature which any Man can do, though he, that doth it, is to do it lawfully, by vertue of the Sentence; but the Act, whereby the Man is in Law kill'd, is the Sentence, and therefore he is from that time *Civiliter Mortuus*, dead in Law. But so it is not in this Spiritual act of binding of Sin, and of delivering unto Satan; there must be a power, and an authority that is in the persons that doth accompany them, and that as met together. And the Execution of the Act is from the Power of Christ, and that promise which he hath made, *I will be in the midst among you, when thus gathered together*, *Mat.* 18. 20. Whereas the way of Presbyterial Classical Excommunication, is as if the Congregation was gathered in the name of the Presbyters, and with their Power, and that they could promise to be in the midst among them. And however there may be, many preparatory acts unto it, yet the thing is not done till it be done, by them that have the Power. And therefore if the Classical Presbytery will challenge it, they must all be present, but if the Congregation must do it, it is an evident argument that the power lies there.

2. If the Classical Presbytery had the power hereof, then when they do Sentence him to be Excommunicated, they ought actually to Excommunicate him, and compleat it, for to say that the power should be in them and not the act, when as those that do the act are to meet and gather together in the power of the Lord Jesus, is very inconsistent. If they do not actually Excommunicate, what they do must be only a doctrinal direction, that the Man deserveth to be Excommunicated, such as the Apostle put forth in case of neglect, when he gave his judgment, *I have judged already* (saith he, 1 *Cor.* 5.) *Let such a one be delivered unto Satan*, &c. But he acknowledgeth the power to be in them, for saith he *Do not ye judge them that are within*? And therefore he saith not, I have *delivered him*, but *that he be delivered.* And it is in this as in case, suppose of Baptism, that a Minister had neglected his duty to Baptize one, and the Apostle had sent to him, to Baptize him, and given his Sentence, such a one should be Baptized, and should further press it, do not you Baptize such and such a one, do not you use to do it? So he speaks here, *Do not ye judge them that are within*? Do you not use to do it? Now as in this case, the question will be whether the power of Baptizing lay in the Apostle or in the Minister, that upon this doth Baptize? Certainly in the Minister, and he doth that by an immediate commission from Christ. For he that doth the substance of the Act, in him the power lies; though he may be directed in a case of neglect by an Apostle when alive. And so now tho' a particular Congregation in case of a neglect may be called upon, and urged by other Churches, yet still in the one case as in the other, in them the Power lies by whom the substance of the Act is done. Neither yet do we hereby intend to give that power to a Classical Presbytery that the Apostle had over *Corinth*, but only we alledge it thus far, that though the Apostle had Power to command now when absent, and if he had been present, had power to have concurred with them in the very act, that

that yet still the power lay in them, without the Apostle, to have proceeded, by whom the Act was to be done according to the Apostle's direction.

3. According to Presbyterial practices, it is evident that the power is not in them, but in the Congregation; for after that they have Sentenced a Man to be Excommunicated, and it is to be supposed, that his sin is ripe for Excommunication; and that he is obstinate enough, to be now Excommunicated, then it should be presently acted and done, if the power were in them. But they stay the Execution of it, in the particular Congregation, for three days; they give him three Admonitions more, and the People are to pray for him; and so they do manifestly, *de facto*, hereby put the ultimate judgment of his impenitence into the Congregation, and the ultimate act of Execution also. For if the Man did Repent, they were not to Excommunicate him; and because they judge him to continue impenitent, they do Excommunicate him, according to the Presbyterial practices.

If it be answered, as it is by some, that the Sentence, by vertue of which he standeth Excommunicated, is that of the Classical Presbytery, and that the Elders of the Congregation, are but the *Præcones*, they do not exercise the substance of the Act, only declare and publish it: Then we reply.

1. That here is more than a promulgation, not only because it is not presently done; but because other means of Admonitions, as Ordinances of Christ are applyed to him, to bring him to Repentance; and if so, it is apparent, that when the Classical Presbytery Intended him to Excommunication, that he was then not fit for Excommunication; for why should these Authoritative Admonitions of his own Elders come afterwards? They may as well continue their Admonitions, publickly after his Excommunication. Now if his sin were not fit for excommunication, so as they might take it upon their Consciences, he ought not now to be excommunicated, then by vertue of their Sentence, he is not excommunicated, when he is excommunicated; for they Sentenced him, when his sin was not ripe for it. So that according to their own practices, they make the Presbyterie's act to be but a Doctrinal discernment, that in such a case, if he continues thus and thus obstinate, he is to be excommunicated. But

2. That, which the Elders in the Congregation do, is more than to be *Præcones* of the Sentence of the Presbytery; and their delivering of him to Satan, actually, is more than a publishing, not only because they do Authoritatively as Elders, Admonish him after the Presbyterie's Sentence (and if they do Authoritatively Admonish him, certainly they do Authoritatively also excommunicate him after their Admonitions, if he continues impenitent) but also because when it is done, they call upon the Name of the Lord Jesus; and they do it in the Name, and with the power of the Lord Jesus. If it were a meer promulgation, there needed no invocation, as an act of theirs.

3. Again, if the Form of the Sentence, whereby the Elders of the Congregation do excommunicate him, be considered, do not they say; *We, in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and with his power*, deliver thee to Satan to excommunicate thee. Yea, were not that Congregation in *Corinth*, to do so, which the Man belonged unto? Whereas if the Classical Presbytery had the power, and these were only the publishers; then the Classical Presbytery were only to use those words, because the power was in them; and the Ministers were only to declare, that such an one was excommunicated by them, in the Name of the Lord Jesus. And if so, then all the Eldership of a Congregation are to the Classis, but even as Curates are to the Bishops: And indeed, the Bishop's principles are more consonant to themselves, than this; for they say, that the act of excommunication is done, and absolved, and perfected in their Courts; and that the Curate doth only promulge it (as their manner is) but that the Man is indeed excommunicated by the Bishop. But here there is a pretence of leaving the substance of the act, to be formally done and executed by the Elders of the Congregation; and yet a denial, that a power to do it lies in them; and the power to do it, assumed to be in them, who yet profess they do not actually excommunicate.

4. If they were only *Præcones*, then any Man may do it, as well as the Elders of his own Church.

If it be objected, that, in a Congregation it self, when it is done, it is done by one Man that pronounceth it, the Pastor of the place, or the like.

Chap. II. The answer is 1. That as in Prayer, when the Pastor is the Mouth of all the People unto God, he is but the Mouth of those People that are present, and do joyn with him; and it is their act, and not the act of Men absent: So it is here, in this act he is the Mouth of the Elders, and the whole Congregation as present, as of God to throw this Man out: But to make the Elders of the Congregation, and the whole *Congregation*, to be but the publishers of what the Presbytery hath done, when they were absent, this is indeed to make them meer publishers, which any Man may do, yea, they themselves may do it, by fixing it upon the Church Door.

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The seventh Argument, to prove that a single Congregation, is the intire seat of Church-power, because thus there appears a Harmony in all the Ecclesiastical Administrations.

Argu. AS we prov'd, that the constitution falls upon particular Churches, by shewing how naturally all things fall out in that way; and what distortions are in the other: So for the confirmation of the compleat power of particular Churches, for matter of Government, we shall now proceed in the like way of Argument. For the upholding of the Subordinations of Congregational and Classical Assemblies; and of many Congregations, being under one common Presbytery, made up of the Elders fixed to several Congregations, the Presbyterial Divines are forced to invent multitude of distinctions and divisions, thereby to uphold their principles. They are forced to make one Church for Worship, and another Church meerly for Discipline, a Church Real, which is of the Saints, the Body of the Faithful, that are a Church to Christ; and a Church Representative in their Elders, meeting in a Classical Assembly: A Church incompleat and imperfect (such they make Congregations:) A Church perfect and compleat for Government, (such they make a Classical Presbytery) yea, indeed as was observed before, they must make three sorts of Churches, to make up one. 1. A Church of the Faithful (for so the Brethren are called, in distinction from the Elders) 2. The Eldership of each Congregation, a Representative Church thereof; and 3. A Church Classical, the Elders of all those Congregations assembled in one. They must also be put upon finding out a double Presbytery, for ordering of Government; one Congregational, the other Classical; when yet they are not able to give one note or character of such distinction in the Scriptures. Yea further, to answer our Arguments, they have been fain to say, that the Elders of particular Congregations have the relation of Elders, in *Sensu divisio*, to each Congregation; but the Relation only of an Eldership, *in sensu conjuncto*, as met in a Classical Presbytery, to all and each of these Congregations. And then also they must find out distinctions of the difference of Duties, what the Elders owe to a particular Church; and what to all the Congregations in common. They must also make the same persons, to be Preaching Elders in the exercise of their Office, to their particular Congregations; and Ruling Elders also in the exercise of their Office, to all the rest. And yet are not able to make any Foot-steps of any such distinction, or of any such boundary of Duties. And as the Reformed Churches, would not have made that distinction of those several sorts of Elders, under the New Testament, had they not had distinct and peculiar characters of some, that ruled, of others that especially laboured in the Word and Doctrine, Rom. 12. 8. *He that Ruleth, let him wait on Ruling, he that Exhorteth on Exhortation, he that Teacheth, on Teaching.* And unless they had found these Foot-steps of Distinction, bounding their several Offices, they would never have invented these several sorts of Elders; nor could they be able to maintain these several sorts without them. So if there cannot be found like warrant, for all the Presbyterian distinctions, can they be able to say, that Jesus Christ hath made these several sorts of Churches, and these various Reflections of Elders, and their Duties, *&c.* And thus whilst to them, there are many Bodies, and many Churches; and Lords many, and Presbyteries many; our way is single, natural, uniform, and to us there is but one Church, one Presbytery,

tery, having mutual relation one unto another. One Church for the Seat of Worship, the same Church for the Seat of Discipline; and hereby all these groundless Distinctions are in a few words taken away. Book III.

Now as in the point of Institution of Congregational Churches, this uniformity is a confirmation to us, and the contrary is an evidence of the falseness of the constitution of the other: So when the point of power cometh to be disputed, what shall belong to each Congregation, the observation of the like uniformity in ours, and distortion in theirs, confirmeth us that the power is compleatly and intirely in each Congregation, having a particular Eldership of it self. As before they are put to distinguish, so now in this to part and divide the power between the Congregations, and these Classical Presbyteries; and that for ordinary Government. Their being out of the right way, produceth manifold distortions, their Administrations of the Discipline, differing from the Rules and Practices held forth by Christ, and his Apostles in their Epistles, unto which the placing the power wholy and intirely, and compleatly, in a particular Congregation, falleth uniform and suitable.

Presbyterial Divines, finding that particular Congregations were Churches, and that as such they are intended, in *Mat.* 18. *Tell the Church*, for shame they could not take all power from them, but they must allot them some; because they were a Church: And yet because they could not uphold the constant and ordinary intermedling (and that not by way of Appeal) of a classical Presbytery, which did challenge it's primary cognisance, and right in Excommunication, as well as the Congregations, however therefore they divided the power, and they put part of the power in one, and part in the other. They put the Sentence of Excommunication in a classical Church, and the Execution of it in the Congregational; and so indeed they do make two sort of Governments ordinary, for one and the same suit or cause or matter, and person to be proceeded against. The particular Eldership of the Congregation proceedeth so far, as to admonish, and to suspend from the Sacrament; and then when the Man is obstinate, the classical Congregation saith; bring him to us, ere you presume to Excommunicate him, that we may admonish him again, and so he may be found further obstinate; and then for the Execution, carry him down again to the Congregation, and let him be admonished, before all by the Elders thereof, and then again if obstinate Excommunicate him. Surely if to compleat Excommunication, there had been such divided proceedings in, *Mat.* 18. Jesus Christ would have said, *Go tell the Churches*, and not *the Church*; for it cannot be denyed, but that these are distinct Churches, the Congregational and Presbyterial. Whereas to us, as there is but one Congregation and Presbytery, so but one compleat and intire Government, whereof that congregation is the Seat. And however the knowledge of the matter may be first given to the Elders, and by way of preparatory cognisance, they may consider of it, (to cut off accusations impertinent, and apparently defective) yet therein they proceed not by Authority; but all that they do in an authoritative way, is done before the whole Congregation, to the edification of all; and so there is but one sort of publick proceeding, whereas our Presbyterian Brethren have many.

Now to Demonstrate the Distortions of Administrations in their way, and the Nullity of founding any such divisions and parting of Government and Proceedings, we present these considerations.

1. According to their own principles and practices, this division of power, and proceeding, to compleat an act of Government and Excommunication, is not parallel'd with, or uniform to the power and the proceedings, in those other Subordinances of Churches or Assemblies, which they would have erected for Government. It is known, that they make five several Subordinations. 1. Oecumenical. 2. National. 3. Provincial. 4. Classical. 5. Congregational. And all these are built but upon this one ground (the same that a Congregation puts in for) that they are all Churches, only the greater still having power over the lesser, as is affirmed, they are cast into these Subordinations. Now then let but the same be granted to Congregations in this its lowred condition; let it but have the same proportion of Subordination to it self, in comparison of classical, that the rest have one to another; let all these contignations, that consist of lower and upper Rooms, be but uniform in this Model; and then, until a Congregation doth miscarry in its Excommunication, it must needs have all the power within it self. For Classical and Provincial, which are the two next Subordinations, each to other, Provincial and National, do not divide a power of proceeding

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ceeding, to compleat one act of Government between them; (so as the Classical should have one part, and the Provincial another ; or the Provincial one part, and the National another ; and so as after the lower hath performed his part, it should be brought to a higher, to compleat the Sentence) but each of them have an intire and compleat power, to perfect what they take in hand to Excommunication ; and matters are carryed from one to another, but only by way of Appeal, and that too after they have compleated the Sentence and Execution ; having full power to Excommunicate within themselves. Why then should the Congregational in its Conjunction and Subordination, to and with a Classical Presbytery, be more injured, than all the rest? Why should the Classical alone put in to divide the Lands with them, and go half, and the greater half ; and not suffer the Congregational to perfect, and compleat the Sentence of Excommunication, as well as any of the other ; and so all to be brought (if at all) only by way of Appeal to them ? Whereas now all is brought to the classical Presbytery, from the Congregational, in a way of imperfection and deficiency of power, to compleat the Sentence. And this is the greater injury, in as much that one of the great Arguments, that (until of late, and of late also) hath been pleaded for the power of classical Presbyteries, and so of Synods, is but from the analogy of the Congregation's Right, that what power they have over a Brother, a Classis should have over a Congregation (as in our Kingdom, the Plea of Inheritance of the Eldest Son of a Yeoman, is the same with that of Nobles and Gentry ; yea, and in the Throne it self) But why alone should the poor Congregations be made Coppy-Holders, when all the rest are free and intire in their own acts of Judicature.

2. Our Presbyterian Brethren by this, makes two Courts of Judicature for one and the same cause ; which is not ordinarily found amongst Men. It's true indeed, in Humane Courts, the lower have only lesser matters or faults committed to them, Debts of such a value ; and Higher Courts have those that are of an Higher Nature, or a greater value. But look what matters are committed to them, they are able to pass a final and compleat Sentence upon them, and have power to execute it, if an Appeal be not made ; and if once a Suit be put in, they have power to end it, else it is no Court. But here now the Congregational Elders, are allowed to intermeddle, and have Authority in all Causes, even those that are the greatest, and the most Heinous sins that deserve excommunication, without any controversie and difficulty ; but then they are allowed to proceed but so far in it, and then to bring it to the Classical Assembly for Sentence, where all must be heard over again, ere they can proceed to a Sentence ; and then it is brought to the People, and there it is acted over again. And thus as they make two sort of Churches, one for Discipline, and another for Government, and part the Seat of Government and Discipline ; so for to compleat an act of one and the same Discipline, they make two several Courts ; and that not by parting them, by distribution of causes of less and of greater moment only ; but of acts of Judicature. And whereas the Classis pretends, that it's the perfect and compleat Church, and the Congregational imperfect ; according to these practices, it makes nothing more perfect, than the Congregational doth, as the Law did not ; but when the case is brought to this same perfect Church, yet it is forced to send the party down again to the Congregational (which is the imperfect Church) there to have the Sentence compleated.

3. Whereas the Apostles, in their Rules for Publick Admonitions, do make them to be two or three, *Tit.* 3. 10. An heretique, after one or two Admonitions reject as obstinate : This way of proceeding makes three sort of publick Admonitions, to the number of six or seven. It makes three obstinacies, and three publick Sentences against a Man that is excommunicated. First he is admonished by a particular Eldership (and we would know whether those be not publick Admonitions, yea or no, such as the Apostle intendeth ; which is done by a publick Court, to which we presume they will say, that all the People may come, and in that respect it is to be accounted publick, or if not ; yet that, which is done by publick Persons, in a publick Judicature, is publick Admonition) Then before they bring him to the Classis, they must judge and censure him as obstinate, and that by a Major vote, or he is not further to be brought (and we believe they will not censure him to be obstinate, unless he hath had one or two Admonitions, and that by them) there's the first obstinacy. Then he is brought before the Classical Presbytery, who are to Sentence him to be excommunicated (which we believe they will not do, unless they also have

also have by Admonitions, tryed whether he hath been obstinate and impenitent, or no, upon those means which they are to use also, which is Admonition) then he is brought before the Congregation, there he is Admonished again over and over. And is it for the good of the Man, or is it for the satisfaction of the People, that they may see him obstinate, that he hath so good Admonitions given him? It cannot be meerly for the satisfaction of his obstinacy, unless these Admonitions can be supposed fit to work upon him. And then again in the third place, he is to be judged obstinate after all those, or else he is not to be excommunicated; for if he Repented after all these, they are to forbear. And we may add, that they must needs make a judging of as many Repentances for his Absolution; and the judging of his Repentance must be a personal experience. Thus they multiply publick proceedings, beyond the Rule, whereas the proportion of Christ's patience seems to be set. Book III.

4. How doth the dividing of things thus retard their proceedings, in case of open and manifest Scandals? How must needs so many removes rather harden the Man, than soften him, and in stead of being a means of doing him good, be a vexation to him? The pretence is, that hereby Scandal is avoided, if the party Repents; but the Truth is, this inlargeth it; for either the Scandal is a thing commonly known in the Congregation of the People, and then it is best to have it examined and cleared, and that before them presently, if it may be, either by his Repentance afore them, that they may be Witnesses thereof, or by his appearing innocent. If it be not known commonly and ordinarily abroad, it is more Scandal to have it brought to strangers, than to have it to be kept in his own Church: especially it that those, of all the Churches (who are interested in what the Elders of the Classical Presbytery do) or any of them may be present at pleasure.

5. This Presbyterian way of Excommunication, causeth ordinances to be misplaced, a less effectual, after a more effectual; for those Admonitions by his own Elders before the Congregation, being the last (according to order of Nature, in all Remedies, according to Christ's order and degrees of proceeding, in *Mat.* 18. and according to God's order in his dealing with us) must be supposed more powerfully effectual, than the first: And yet if the power of Sentencing the Man be in the Classical Presbytery, by vertue of which he is excommunicated; that must be supposed to be more effectual, to bring him to Repentance. And then also they let their Classical Admonitions be the last, before excommunication, whereas if those before the Congregation be acknowledged to be the more effectual, then where the more effectual Admonitions, according to the ordinance of Christ, are supposed to lie in order to excommunication, there the power of excommunication must be supposed to lie also.

6. A *6th* Distortion is, the deformity that is occasioned by putting an interest into those two sort of Churches, Congregational and Classical, in the point of excommunication, and dividing the power between them; one for the Sentence, the other for the Execution. Which will appear from that interest the People have, comensurable with the power that the Elders are to have. We speak not now of joyning in the Sentence of Excommunication, and of suffrage in the Judgment, which will make a distinct argument, and is as strong as any of the rest, for power of excommunication to be proper and peculiar to a Congregational Church, and to prove that what ever other power Classical Presbyteries or Synods pretend to; yet of all other, they can claim no interest in this; because in them, there is wanting one sort or kind of Judges, into whose Hands God hath put the power. But suppose for the present, that the whole People have but an interest of presence only, at the Admonitions that are to be given to the party afore excommunication, and at the act of excommunication it self; and give them but the lowest kind of consent that may be, a Tacit consent, when the act is to be done; yet allow them to be present, that thereby such a Tacit consent may be held forth, and that they may be edified thereby; and that by mourning, over the party, his Heart may be broken, and the more wrought upon; and their Consciences may be satisfied in the justness of his excommunication; because that they are to joyn in the execution of it, and not so much as to eat with him afterwards. Now this interest, both Presbyterian principles and Preachers, do give and allow unto the People of that particular Church, whereto he doth belong. Yea the Papists themselves, who do hold, that what is done, in the Congregation, is but the promulgation of the excommunication, already compleated in

Ch. III. in the Bishop's consistory; yet give so much to the people, to that particular Congregation, whereof he is a Member, that there should be a promulgation. See the *Rhemist's* notes on 1 *Cor.* 5. But Presbyterian principles do give more; for they will not excommunicate, if the People be against it; yea, a whole National Assembly, if they should determine it, would yet stop the execution, if the people be against it. And therefore we argued afore, from dividing Discipline it self, and from the Sentence of excommunication, being given to the Presbyterian Classes, and the execution unto the Elders in the Congregations, so we shall now argue from the Deformity or Distortion, that is between the power given to the Elders of those Churches, as one Church, compared with the interest of the people of these Churches, considered as one Church also.

The interest, that these Classical Elders come to have together, with the Elders of the Congregation in the Sentence, must be, because that they are Elders of all those Congregations, as of one Church. For the strength of the argument, that is alledged by the Presbyterial Divines, for such a Classical Eldership, is, that many Congregations make one Church, whereof these Elders, in common, are the Representation; and when they pronounce the Sentence of excommunication, as Elders of all those Congregations, as one Church, which they are an Eldership unto; and by that one individual act of theirs, the Man is authoritatively and (so far as concerns the interest of Elders) in a special manner excommunicated out of all those Congregations, whereto they are an Eldership, as well as out of his own (so far as the Sentence goes) in such a special manner, as belongeth not to the next Churches of the Presbyteries about, but by vertue of that forementioned special relation. And this common Eldership, in this Sentence of theirs, must either have the relation of an Eldership, only to that particular Church, whereof this Man is a Member; so as that particular Church, and that common Eldership make up the adequate Relation of Church and Eldership, in and for this their Act, or this Eldership hath a relation to all the Congregations. If the first be asserted, then there would be so many several Relations of Elderships and Churches, as there are Churches, upon occasion. For this common Eldership, and this particular Church, would be one Church in this act for this time, and for this Man's excommunication; and they would be another Church at another time, in relation to another Man's excommunication, in another particular Church, which were observed. And if they act in this act, as a common Eldership to all the Congregations, as one Church; then the Sentence doth formally cast the Man (so far as the Sentence goes) out of all those Churches, as well as out of his own; and by one single intire individual act, they do as Elders to this Church, excommunicate him formally out of these Churches, and but virtually only, and consequently out of all other Churches, belonging to other Presbyteries, as out of the Universal it self. And so far as the power of the Sentence reacheth in this common classical Presbytery, he is afterward cast out executively in that particular Church, whereof he is more especially a Member, by the same way of Authority, by which he is cast out of that one Church, whereto he doth belong. For these classical Elders, being in their Vote a Church Representative, they Represent that Church, whereof the Man is a Member, as making one with all the rest of the Churches.

Now then, make these three things proportionable. 1. Make this interest of the people of all these Churches, in their kind and relation, proportionable to the interest of the Elders to all these Churches, in their kind and relation, these making one Church and they being but a common Eldership, because these are one Church. And 2. Make the interest of execution, but answerable to the interest of Sentence. Yea 3. Make the interest of the Elders of that particular Church, whereof the Person is a Member, but answerable to the interest of the People of that particular Church, whereof he is a Member; and there will appear so great a Distortion in the Presbyterian Government, thus sharing with the Congregational, as will confute and overthrow it; and such an uniform in the Congregational, as will establish it.

1. As for the first, there is all the reason in the World, that if these classical Elders do lay the pretence to their common Power and Authority, because these Churches are one Church (and they are all one Church in respect of the People, as well as of all the Elders) if this be the Foundation of their Plea, if it ariseth from this Relation and Respect; then look what interest the Elders, as Elders, can pretend to, as one Church, being one Church Representative; that individual and like interest,

rest, must the People, that are one Church, also lay claim to; for there is a disproportion, a great and a manifest Disproportion, in giving that to the Elders, as Elders of a Church, that is not given to the people, according to their proportion, as a Church. As then by these Elders, in common, the Sentence of Excommunication goes forth, and the Man is Admonished by them as Elders, to bring him to Repentance; and this is a common act of that whole Eldership, making a Church to all these Churches; so the People must be present at these, or some other Admonitions of the person (and that both for their edification, and for to work Repentance in the party) that their Tacite consent, by presence, might be given; and that they (seeing they are to execute it) might be satisfied in his being cast out. If indeed the People had, as a Church, no interest at all, then we acknowledge this Argument would wholy fail; and these Elders must have the whole fall, and intire power to give Sentence, to Execute, to Admonish, and all were to be done there, in the classical Assembly, and no where else; but the whole business would be there compleated.

1. If it be said first, that the power of Sentencing, and so of the act of excommunication, is performed in this common Presbytery, and that what is done in the particular Congregation, whereunto he belongeth, is but the promulgation of it?

Besides what was said against that before, this further here may be added; that the interest which the people have, is not meerly to have it promulged before them, but that they may be edified, and that they knowing the party, he having lived amongst them, may mourn over him; yea, and bewail that such a Scandal is fallen amongst them, whereby their Ordinances and Communion, was in danger of being Defiled, &c. and that the Man hereby may be wrought upon; yea, and it is necessary, that the Man be brought afore that Church, where he is personally to be excommunicated. Now all this is more still, than bare promulgation of the Sentence; for that might be done, whether he were present or absent. Yet still, if there be an interest of promulgation, let it be in all the Churches; and all these Churches, as met in one common Church, as the Elders themselves are. Or if there be an interest of being edified by the Admonitions, let it be in all the Churches. But how can this be? If in each Congregation apart, how will your Admonitions be more multiplied, that were multiplied enow afore? And if in common, how can they meet, as Presbyteries are cast? Or when did they ever?

2. If secondly it be said, that it is promulged in that fixed Church, whereto he doth belong, in regard they have a special primary interest; because usually he receiveth the Sacrament there; we shall speak to that under the third particular, by and by. Only for the present, consider that if the interest of People and Elders be made up proportionably, so as that Church hath a primary interest in the Person, because he hath a fixed Communion in the Sacrament with them, which, if he there partake, would be ordinarily defiled; and other Churches have but a secondary and remote interest, as the *Genus* hath to the *individum*, whereas this particular Congregation, is as the *Species* to this *individum*: Then let the Elders of the classical Presbytery, (be to make things commensurable) acknowledging to have a remote and secondary interest also in their power, to sentence him; and so let him come to them, but at second hand. Or to make the comensurableness yet nearer, as in the matter of promulgation, the People of all the other Churches, have but a promulgation at second hand, by hearsay; and have no interest of presence at all; so answerably let these Elders of other Churches, have but the like share in that power, and the controversie is at an end; for then as it is not at all promulged in other Churches, so the Man would not be at all sentenced in the Classical Presbyteries. But if they challenge the primary interest, and that the power, by which he is sentenced, belongeth unto them; then let the People of all those Churches, be acknowledged to have the like primary interest of promulgation also; because that they are the greater number in comparison of the Church, whereof he is a Member; that being but a part, the other the whole; and therefore the Congregation must have the lesser principal interest therein.

2. And Secondly, If that the act of excommunication, that is done in his particular Church, is the formal act of excommunication, by which actually he standeth excommunicated, and delivered up to Satan, and not until then; let but this act

Ch. III. of execution, be but commensurable to the sentence; and then as the sentence was denounced by those classical Elders, as making Elders to all those Congregations, as one Church, so also should the execution be; and so the Man must be actually excommunicated, over and over, as often as there are many particular Churches, to that Presbytery.

3. And thirdly; If the interest of the Elders of that Church, make an Eldership to that Congregation, and be made commensurable with the interest of the Congregation, the one as Elders, the other as People; Then first, as this Church hath the primary and the fixed interest, and such a peculiar interest, as all the Churches about him have not, *viz.* An interest of Communion, suitable to his casting out; as he had a fixt Communion with them, it is therefore a fixt casting out, which is properly the act of excommunication; and for these Reasons, their consent is so required, as of none of all the Churches about, and their satisfaction to be sought, so as of none of all the Churches about. Now then answerably, let the Eldership of this particular Church, have but a like power of an Eldership in their Relation to them, as a Church; and then the People's interest being consent, where consent only is required; and the Elders interest being Authority, and the sentence, it will follow, that, as the liberty of consenting is only in this Congregation, so that the Authority of sentencing should only be in these Elders. And as other Churches do but declare their offence, if things have not been rightly Administred, so the Elders of other Churches should do no more. At leastwise, as the consent of this people is actually required, which is not of all the other Churches, and as without which, because of their interest, the classical Congregation will forbear the execution of excommunication; yea, a whole National Assembly will: So then let the Elders of this Congregation, when they meet in this classical Presbytery, have but the like priviledge; that if they do dissent, and think the Man is not to be sentenced, or be excommunicated, the whole classical Presbytery, should not have power to proceed to sentence. For will not you give as much to the Elders in Government, as Elders of that Church, as to the people? Will you prefer the interest of the people, which is otherwise laid so low, before the interest of the Elders, that are over them in the Lord? And if that the Elders of that Church should have this Prerogative, in the classical Presbytery, the power thereof would soon come to nothing, without disputing against it. And in this case, these classical Elders are not a Presbytery in common, but the Pastor, or Eldership of the particular Congregation, would have some kind of Episcopal power in this Presbytery, having a Negative among them. Or suppose that the Elders of his own Congregation deny to promulge the sentence, and actually to excommunicate the Man, will you not give them the Ministerial interest of Elders, in the execution of the sentence of excommunication, as the Elders in common had in the sentence? Or will you send other Elders to do it? If so, then they in that act are an Eldership to them only.

CHAP. IV.

The eighth, ninth and tenth Argument, to prove a Congregational Church, to be the due subject of Ecclesiastical **Power**; *because Admonitions are to be given, and Excommunication to be Administred in the presence of such a Church.*

Argu. 8. IF further, the presence of the people in the Church, is to be the Seat of all Authoritative Admonitions, that go before the sentence of excommunication made by the Elders, to them that are accused of publick sin and scandal, for their edification, and if the act of excommunication is to be (as was granted) afore them; then the Seat of the power of excommunication is not in classical Elders, by Christ's Ordination, but in Elders that are Elders of a particular Congregation. The Reason of the consequence is clear, because the party is to be sentenced to be excommunicated, upon his being judged obstinate; and he is to be judged obstinate after Admonitions: That therefore, which is the Seat or Place in which these Admonitions are to be given, is also to be the Seat of the Judgment of

of his obstinacy, and of the sentence thereupon. It were strange, that the Admonitions and other proceedings, that make way, should be publick, and the Judgment and Sentence should be private. It is so in no publick Courts. And if the particular Congregation be the Seat of the Antecedent Acts, the Admonitions, and of the consequent Act, the Act of excommunication it self; it were as strange, that only that immediate Act of the sentence, should be privately done by the classical Elders, and not afore the people. Besides, that the classical Elders are not to sentence, is evident by this; because those that have the power to Admonish, surely they must have the power to Sentence: And therefore if the classical Elders cannot, nor do not come to perform the acts of Admonition before the people; then they cannot be those that, according to the Scriptures, have interest in the sentence as Elders. Neither can they be that Church which our Saviour Christ speaks of *Mat.* 18. because that the Admonitions of that Church, are expressed, as liable to be neglected, and therefore they must be supposed present at the Admonitions. And as the Apostle too commends it as an ordinance, that the Admonition should be before the people, 1 *Tim.* 5. 20. So classical Elders cannot be present.

Book III.

Now to prove, that particular Congregations, are the Seat of publick Admonitions, there is that place in, 1 *Tim.* 5. 20. which gives evidence, *Them that sin* (saith he) *Rebuke before all, that others also may fear.* It is evident here, that he doth give a direction to *Timothy*, concerning Church proceedings, and keeping of a Spiritual Court; and therefore in the verse before, gives directions about receiving an Accusation, and how that Accusation must be proved, by two or three Witnesses; and he speaks of all such publick Admonitions or Rebukes, as are to follow upon the receit of the Accusation, when it is made evident by Witnesses; and of such admonitions likewise, as are in order to excommunication, and for such sins as will deserve excommunication, if Men be obstinate (for if for any other sins, then certainly for those) and it is of sins, in case of publick scandal, which are the subject of excommunication; therefore he saith, *Them that sin, Rebuke afore all*, then when a Man's sin is publick, and comes to be taken notice of afore all. Now he speaks to *Timothy*, that was an *Evangelist*, and under him to all Church-Officers, to the end of the World, when *Evangelists* (who were extraordinary Ministers) should be removed: And as other directions, that are given to him, do concern the Eldership of Congregations in after Ages, so also this, to teach them how to behave themselves in the House of God. Now with the same breath that he doth give them power and warrant to Rebuke, when accusations are brought orderly to them, he withal directs (and his directions fall chiefly thereon) where these Rebukes should be, not privately, but afore all, and what all? Not afore all that are their Elders only, for they are to rebuke them afore all, that all may fear, surely therefore it is intended for the benefit, not only of the Elders, but of all the people.

If it be said, that this place is to be understood, but as that of the Old Law, when a Malefactor was to be put to Death, it was, that all might hear and fear; and so these admonitions may be given privately in the Consistory, and yet all may hear of it, and fear: The answer is, that there is this difference between executing of corporal punishment, and giving of spiritual admonitions; that the Terror of spiritual admonition, doth not lie in the hearsay, but it works by the people's personal hearing of it; and it is ordained so to do. The power of that ordinance (as of Preaching) lies in personal hearing, and as Faith cometh by hearing, so this fear must come by hearing also; otherwise it were all one, as to say, such a Man Preached a comfortable Sermon, that all might be comforted; or he Preached the Law, that all might be Terrified; and yet should mean, that all those, that were at the Sermon, should have comfort in it, or be Terrified by it. Therefore as those, that are wrought upon to fear, must be wrought upon by the admonitions, so it must be by being personally present, and hearing of them.

If it be said, that it is, in a classical Assembly, done in a place so publick, and in a Court so open, where all may come if they please: We reply, that the Apostle doth not only say, that it should be done in a place where all do come; but he lays it as a Duty upon *Timothy*, to do it in a place where all may come; for otherwise, one of the great ends of admonition is lost, he bids him Rebuke them, that sin, afore all. *That all may fear.* If therefore our Presbyterian Brethren will attain the end of their admonitions (that all may fear) it must be done where all do use to meet;

Ch. IV. and if so, then either their classical Elders must come and meet in the particular Congregations, or the particular Congregations must come to them, and so all the company of people of the classical Church must meet, Women, as well as Men; for they are capable of that particular part of edification, of fearing, and why should they be excluded the benefit of it? And whether the proceedings to excommunication according to our way, which is for the party to have his own Elders, before his own people, judicially to examine the fact, and to give publick Admonitions, edged with all sorts of Scripture, to bring him to Repentance; and if he remain obstinate in the view of all, then for him to be excommunicated; or if he Repents, to have that Repentance appear upon the place afore all (which all suit best, and fall in with the Congregational way) whether that this doth not agree more with right Reason, and all the ends than can be supposed of Examination, Admonitions, and Excommunication, either to work upon the party, or to work upon others, or for the fairness and equity of the proceedings, rather than the way of the Classical Presbytery, let any Rational Man Judge.

For what hath been said of examination and admonition, and the ends of them, or any other end that the Scripture holds forth therein (that go before, or accompany excommunicarion) they are better attained in this Congregational Government, than in the other.

As 1. For the examination of the person, that the evidence of the fact, in a judiciary way, should be before his own People, and by his own Elders, is every way most equal; because that they are to joyn in the casting of him out, and in the execution of the sentence afterwards, and are therefore to be satisfied of the justness of his being cast out: And there is that proper Communion, they have held with him, *viz.* a fixed Communion, which no Church else on Earth can pretend to. And if the People must be satisfied at any time, if after the Sentence by hearsay, and by relation (as the Presbyterians themselves acknowledge) it will much more satisfie them before, when they hear the Person himself examined, and all that he can say. And if that be true of *Cyprian*, *Quod omnes tangit, ab omnibus tractari debet*, that which concerns all, the whole common, it should be handled and transacted by all; and if that were not true, yet surely this, that what concerns all, should be handled afore all.

The like 2. Holds for those publick Admonitions, that are to be given, wherein also the people have an interest, that they may be edified thereby, as well as by Preaching; for what is Discipline or publick Admonitions, but a publick Application of the Truths of the Word of God, to the Conscience of a scandalous sinner, to warn others, and to bring him unto Repentance? So as indeed acts of Discipline, Admonitions, are the most pastoral Sermon; and so are a part of the Worship of God, which therefore the people of his own Church, must have a peculiar interest in, as they have in other Sermons.

3. If it be looked at, that the Man is to be shamed, as a means to bring him to Repentance, as in 2 *Thess.* 3. 14. To have all these Examinations and Admonitions, and to have all Transacted, that concerns a scandalous sin, before the whole Church, tendeth more to this. Neither can he be thought obstinate, until such time as he hath this means (which we see God hath Sanctified) in a Spiritual way applyed to him. In a word, for the whole, we say, as *Bains* long since said (and it hath a reason in it, therefore we quote it) *That when censure is the most sharp Spiritual Medicine, it were ill with our Church, if he (speaking of their Pastor) who is Resident always amongst them, as the Spiritual Physician should not have the power of Administring it.* That which he saith of the Pastor, to whom he gives the chief stroke in it, we say of all the Elders of a Congregation, that are continually a Resident with it.

If it be said, that afore he is put to this publick shame, before the Congregation, he should be Authoritatively Admonished by the Eldership, to see first how that would work: We Reply,

1. That either his sin is notoriously known to the whole Congregation already; *Res famosa*, as was the case of the Incestuous *Corinthian*; and then it is fit it should be brought instantly to the Congregation, that he may be shamed. Neither is it to any end, that the Elders should deal in the case privately with him; but as the Scandal is publick, the Admonition should be publick also, even from the first. Or suppose his sin be more

more private, then, if the private means, which Christ hath appointed, hath not been used by those that bring the Accusation, as telling it first to himself, and exhorting him to Repentance; and if that could not gain him, then taking two or three, or more, who also have dealt with him, and yet could not bring him to Repentance; in this case also the Elders are not to meddle in it, before the Church, till such time as those means have been used, for no man's sin is to be brought to them, till he hath past thorough those ways and means, which Christ hath appointed; which being done, then indeed the Elders may Admonish him, having thus the cognizance of it; but yet therein, they are not to deal as an Eldership, in a judiciary way; but as those two or three Brethren, who are to be called to Admonish him, should proceed. Though even such Admonitions from Elders, would perhaps have more Authority, in respect of their Relation, than those of private Brethren. But in case that a Man hath past through all these means, and still is obstinate and impenitent, and hath stood out Christ's proceedings; now it is the Man's own fault, that his sin should thus be brought to light, and now nothing will cure him, but the shame of it, by publick Admonitions before all.

Answ. 2. If (for the tenderness of his shame) he is first to be dealt withal by the Elders, before he be brought to the Congregation; yet not by the classical Elders, who are strangers to him. Who if they keep an open Court, as they ought to do (as all other Courts are) whither any one may come; then if not, the shame of his sin, yet the Dishonour of it will be greater this way, than the other; whilst it is kept within the compass of his own Church, and of these who are his Brethren, and have known his Converse, and have known also his Graces. And that shame, he shall have thus before Strangers, will be a means to harden him, whereas the shame, that he shall have before his own People, will work more kindly, and be a means to melt him.

Answ. 3. The presence of his own People, in all these proceedings, when he is thus convicted of the Sin, when he is thus Admonished, and upon obstinacy, cometh to be excommunicated, serveth to a further double end, both as it respects themselves (so as no Church else, nor no Elders else whatsoever) and as it respects the Person also, and his good. For it respects the Congregation themselves, both by vertue of that special Relation to, and Communion they have with him, as one Body to Christ; and therefore they are to Sympathize with him, to be humbled together with him, for his sin, to bemoan and bewail him, and themselves; that such a punishment, even as to them, should befall them, by such a sin falling out amongst them. *You are puffed up,* (saith the Apostle) *you have not Mourned,* 1 *Cor.* 5. 2. That Law is to take hold on them, in respect of this proper near relation, which *Paul* giveth, 1 Cor. 12. 26. *If one Member suffer all the Members suffer with it, or if one Member be Honoured, all the Members rejoyce with it; Now ye are the Body of Christ, and Members in particular*; that is, the Church of *Corinth*, being a particular Body, have a more special Relation one unto another, more than to any other Churches. And this mourning and the like, it is to shew themselves clear of that matter, which otherwise would be a sin of that Body; and as, in all other Relations, Members of a Nation, mourn for the sins of a Nation, Members of a Family, for the sins of a Family; so especially in this nearest special Relation of all other, each Member is to mourn, and sorrow for the sins of a Member, as if it were the whole's; because a Dishonour is thereby reflected also upon the whole, and an anger of God expressed against the whole; for even Church sins make God to be angry with particular Persons. As for that sin about the Sacrament, in the Church of *Corinth*, 1 *Cor.* 11. particular Persons were visited, *for this cause, some are weak and sick,* &c. *therefore* (saith he) *Judge your selves, that you be not Judged.* It is therefore necessary, when a Man's sin is ripe for publick Admonitions, that his own People should know it; and therefore that all these Admonitions should be afore his own, that the height and aggravation of the sin thus set open before his Conscience, to make him Repent, should be set open also before theirs, for all those ends afore mentioned. And to think that the Elders of a Classical Church, should Representatively mourn for all the rest, or that, whereas the cause of mourning is neerness of Relation, that they should mourn as his own would do, cannot be supposed. And then 2. If it respects working upon the Man, if that be the end of this bewailing, and of this mourning, to break his Heart, to have his own Congregation thus mourning, who have

Ch. IV. have thus known him, and with whom he hath communicated, and to see their Hearts broken for his sin, when they have not sinned, only are of the same Body with him; this must needs be an ordinance much more effectual to work upon him, than if he were brought afore all the National Councils in the World, who are taught with his sin but remotely, as the Body of a National Church must needs be very remote to a provincial Church, and this also remote in its proportion to a Classical.

Now we find that the proceedings thus, to excommunication, are expressed to us by the very Phrase, *bewailing, I am afraid*, (saith the Apostle) *that when I come, I shall bewail* some of you; that is, I shall be inforced as to Admonish you, so to proceed further; and so in 1 Cor. 5. 2. *You have not Mourned, that, he that hath done this Deed, may be taken from among you.* To bring him before National and Classical Assemblies, and the like, may work in a civil way more upon him; but, in a spiritual way, this is a means much more suited.

Lastly, for the act of excommunication it self, that then the People should be present, we need not contend for; because it is granted. And assuredly, if that they are to be present, that they may mourn and wail, when any is thus cast out, their presence is much more required afore, because their wailing and bemoaning of him then, might have been a means to prevent what befalls him.

Argu. 9. But if besides all these interests it be found, that the People of his own Congregation, have a joynt interest to judge; and that by way of Suffrage, and concur in the Sentence with the Elders, in the throwing of him out: Or have such an interest with Judgment, and cutting off a Member, that a Jury have, joyned with the Bench of Justices and Judges, and that they are to judge of the Fact, and of his obstinacy, and the like; why then, it will clearly follow, that the power of excommunication must be in every Congregation of People and Elders: And thus to have the Man judged, both by the one, and the other, is the fairest Law in the World. And we account it even the glory of one Nation, that no Man's life is subjected to the judgment of all the Judges of the Kingdom, but that he must be Tryed by his Peers, *per pares*. That we shall speak when we come to that Head, that the People are to have a concurring interest with the Elders.

Argu. 10. If no Elders are to set up a consistory for ordinary Government, but in the presence, and before the Church; then the power of all acts of Government must lie within the Body of a Congregational Church. Because there are no other ordinary constant Church meetings of the Body of the People, but only by Congregations; for all such Meetings are to be of as many, as can meet in one place; and all are interested in it for the present, one, as well as another.

CHAP. V.

The eleventh and twelfth Arguments, proving single Congregations inabled to exert all Acts of Church-power. That such Churches there were in the first Ages of Christianity. That the Apostles planted such Churches, that had the intire power within themselves.

Argu. 11. THere were in the first Ages of Christianity, Bishops in Churches and Villages. And in the sense of the Ages, in which this was, it was all one as to have an intire Government in a Church, in a Village; for the intire Government was in the Hands of their Bishops, in those times, such a Government as is now claimed by the Presbytery. Therefore from the practice of the primitive times, it is evident that one single Congregation, with its Elders, is a compleat Seat of Government, as well as Worship.

Argu. 12. The Churches in the first planting of them by the Apostles, were in all places Congregational Churches. Those, in smaller Cities, may well be supposed to have been always such. Those in the great Cities, were at first such: Of *Philippi* it is said, that in the beginning of the Gospel, it was a Church, and it was so called, *Ph.* 1. 4, 15. and it was a Church that had Bishops and Deacons, *chap.* 1. 1. who Communicated to *Paul*, by way of giving and receiving. In a manner, all sides have acknowledged this, even the Bishops themselves.

selves. *Hierusalem* it self at first, was but one Congregation; and other greater Cities also, were no more; for can we imagine that the Apostles should stay forming up Churches, till such time as they should multiply to so many, as to make many Congregations under classical Churches? So this is not supposable, because that the Apostles were to go over the World, and could not every where stay so long; they therefore staid till there were a sufficient number to make up a Church, and Elders over them. And to be sure, the first Church of all, had a sufficient Eldership, for they had the eleven Apostles. And for them all to be Officers, to so small a number at the first, is infinitely less disproportionable to them, than for our Great Lord and Master to serve and minister (as himself was pleased at his last Supper, to Term it) the Sacrament of Bread and Wine, unto Eleven Apostles; and then to Preach a long Sermon unto these Eleven, whom he had taken care of. And at the first, when they were so few, as they continued in prayer together, *Acts* 1. it is to be supposed, they had the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and so were a Church, seeing they had received it with our Lord and Saviour, with commission for him to do the like. And this Congregational Church at first, having these Apostles over them, who (as our Brethren say) acted the part of ordinary Elders, must needs be supposed to be as sufficient for a Presbytery, as afterwards their acts can be supposed to be, when they multiplyed to more Congregations (as our Brethren affirm) And if we could give no instance of any act of Government they did; yet it is certain, that the same power with which they did acts of Government, afterward as such a Presbytery, they had then at first; for they acted but out of that power afterward, which they had afore. And so in all those other Churches, when they were single Congregations, having Elders set over them, the like must be supposed. And when there was thus Congregational Churches, having Elders over them, they had the right, and they had the power to exercise all acts of Government within themselves, or else when the Apostles left them, and commended them to the grace of God, having set Elders over them; they had not been left to a sufficient means, to take away offences, and to purge out scandals, and to keep the Worship pure, and to preserve themselves for Succession.

And if they had this Right and Power, they must have it by vertue of that Institution, *Matth.* 18. Here then, *de facto*, Congregational Churches were invested with a compleat power. And so according to that Maxim, *primum, in quolibet genere, est Mensura reliquorum, the first in every kind, is the measure of the rest* we have to plead, that the first Churches in existence with that power we contend for, were such Congregational Churches which we assert.

We further add, that suppose that these Churches came to be multiplyed, or to have Neighbour Churches near them, what became of that Power and Right, which as Congregations having Elders in them, and as a Church to Christ, they were invested with? How should this power come to be taken away, or they come to loose it, and be Transferred unto an Associated Presbytery, of many Congregations? If upon this Association, there had been a new power, yet the old former power must be supposed to stand still intire, or else they loose it (as the Cities in *Germany*, before they were united into that Emperial Body, had intire priviledges within themselves; and that, they retain still notwithstanding their Union, only their Association was for Appeals, and cases of common concernment) and as the multiplication was accidental, so a new accidental power might come over them, which they had not afore, if they should miscarry in that they had afore; therefore that power, that was first in them, is never to be taken from them. It is true indeed, before their multiplication this must be said, they were Independent Churches, in that gross sense, which is imposed upon us; that is, they were accountable unto none; why? Because there were none near them, to be accountable unto. But that was not a priviledge Essential, but Accidental, not positive, but because there was no other near existent. And yet not so neither; for if there were any in the World, they should have Appealed unto them. And suppose a Congregational Church, alone by it self, can be supposed to have an accidental Independency private (which in this respect, is a Negative priviledge, rather than a positive) yet still that positive power, which they were intirely invested withal within themselves, for positive acts of Government, that was not invested on them, because there were no other Churches; but because they were a Church of themselves. And this power, if once they had it, is not, by Multiplication of Churches, to be taken away from them; the Multiplication is but accidental,

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dental, but the Form, they were cast into at first, is the essential Form that constituted them a Church, and a politick Body.

2. When these Churches were multiplied, and (as our Brethren would have it) continued many Congregations, under one Presbytery, of the Elders of each of these Churches thus multiplied: Either that first Church and their Elders (which still remain fixed Elders unto them) have all the power and priviledge they had afore, or not, in this New Government to come upon their multiplication and association: If they have the same power and priviledge, then this proposition standeth good; only the question then will be, what power over them (their own remaining thus intire) in a way of dependency any other Church can have, which we must afterwards speak to. If upon this association, this particular Congregation have not the power it had afore intire within it self, then the Form of the Government first constituted, is clean altered, and clearly a New Form of Government is set up; and that both in respect of the Right of the People, and the Right of the Elders in that Congregation. If the People had any interest of presence or of suffrage (which we contend for) at the Sentence of Excommunication, and the Examination of things; by vertue of this new Association, that interest is taken from them; and removed up into the Classical meetings of the Elders, and into a Government that is meerly Aristocratical. And look as in a Government consisting both of People and Rulers, and the interest of both, or including in it priviledges that the one hath, as well as the other, (though the one in a lower degree) if the one becomes meerly Aristocratical, we count that Government changed, and it will be a new Form of Government; so it would be here. Nor 2*dly*, Is it true, that because the Government (as our Brethren affirm) is in the Rulers only; therefore it may be inlarged, and dispersst to other Rulers of other Congregations, taken in with them; and the People not wronged of their Right. For first, if the Charter of a People, of a Corporation or Body should be, that they should be Ruled by their own Elders (whom themselves chose, as a Corporation) by their own Mayor, Recorder, and Aldermen, yet it were a new Form of Government, for them to come under two or three Mayors, Recorders, and Aldermen, of other Incorporate Towns, and they would account it so; And 2. The Rulers would think so too; As if there were a Family, the Master whereof had intire Government within it self; and there were Families increast, and they all joyned in a Combination, to Rule all those Families in common, and that in such things, wherein before he Ruled alone; surely this would be counted a new Form of Government; how else doth Oeconomicks differ from Politicks? Would not Colledges think so, though Associated into an University? If the Colledges should have those priviledges of choosing Master-Fellows, Scollars, of Admitting, of Expelling, invested into other Hands, if all the Juritdiction which they had when alone, or if any great part of it, should be exercised in common for them, when other Colledges are built; because they become an University, they would account this a Disprivilegding of them. So it would be here in this case of Churches.

CHAP. VI.

Some Exceptions made against the last Argument, as not Conclusive removed, how we are to consider the Churches, as at first planted by the Apostles as patterns, and Examples to us.

TO this Argument, there are many Exceptions, which I shall consider.

1. It is excepted, That the first Churches, though but single Congregations, having Elders in them, which did or might exercise all Church Acts, cannot yet be drawn into an ordinary pattern; because the first must, out of a necessity, do that which afterwards when multiplied single Congregations, that can Associate, may not do. Even as though *Cain* at first Marryed his Sister, yet that is no Warrant for us, now to do the like, when Men and Women are multiplied; so neither can the Instance of the Church of *Hierusalem*, or any other first Churches, be the pattern to Warrant single Churches now multiplyed, to do that which they then did.

Answ. 1.

Answ. 1. The Apostles did not stay in places, till there were a sufficiency to set up a Church, but if that a Presbyterian Government, over many Congregations, had been the Rule of Christ; and that they must of necessity have been set up, they would have rather staid, or sent an Evangelist to Convert so many, as to make up a sufficient Presbytery for a classical Church. If *Adam* could, with his Breath, have made Men and Women, though he had staid a while, *Cain* should not have Married his Sister. And therefore, if that, by the Ordination of Christ, a Presbyterial Church were the first Church; God would have staid, and the Apostles would have staid, as God staid giving the Ark, and the Tabernacle, and the Law of the Government of a National Church, till such time as the *Jews* became so many, as to rise to a Nation.

Answ. 2. It lies upon those, that affirm it, to prove that the endowing single Congregations at first with an intire power, was an act of necessity, and not voluntary, and as it should stand in all Ages. Had a Presbyterian Church Government been according to Christ's Institution, the Apostles would have Taught Christians to remove out of the places, where they could not make up Presbyterian Churches, and to go into Cities, where they might make them, that so Churches might be set up in their fulness at first.

Answ. 3. The power of a single Congregation, to have acted as a Presbytery at the first, was not grounded on a case of necessity (because there were no other Churches existing, to associate with, and so was accidental to them) but this one alone Congregation, was essentially and innately and intirely compleat in it self, and within it self, as much as when afterward there were many. To say the power of Eleven Apostles, as combined, was defective; because but over one Congregation, and but out of an extraordinary necessity, would be the greatest Derogation in the World. And if there could be a supposition, that there had been other Churches existing, or coming to *Hierusalem*, this Presbytery of the first Church had not been bound to associate, as not having sufficient power within it self. To affirm these things of this first Presbytery of the Eleven Apostles (as our Brethren suppose it, and it is the main foundation of their case) to have been defective, and their power (now because over one Congregation) to have been founded on an extraordinary necessity only, as for *Cain* to Marry his Sister, in a way below the Warrant, as of the ordinary Rule: Thus first to cast them (in this Example) into the condition of ordinary Presbyters, to make it an argument for the Presbytery; and then to cast their power at first, below the power of an ordinary Classis, and to make it then to be dependent on a providential necessity; how Derogatory is it to that Transcendent power of such Officers? So then, if they are to be lookt upon, at all, as the pattern of an ordinary Presbytery; then as such now, when over but one Congregation, as much as if they had been over many. For to say, they were but as extraordinary Persons, when over but one Congregation; and afterwards an ordinary Colledge of Presbyters, when many, is too incoherent, and inconsistent with it self, to be affirmed. And then what is the reason that this first existence of an Eldership over one Congregation, should not be as ordinary a pattern to Warrant, as full and sufficient a Presbytery in one Congregation, as it is for the supposed Presbyterial Government over many? So that if it were ordinary, it serves as much for us, as them, and indeed for us first; because that this, as one Congregation, existed first; and they were as much an ordinary Presbytery at first, as at last, and endowed with the same sufficiency of inherent power. And if it were extraordinary, the instance will not serve them at all, first nor last, for a ground of Presbyterial Government. And surely if this Church at *Hierusalem*, had so many Teachers besides Apostles, as is pretended, when these Congregations came to be Multiplied (as is supposed) and divided, here was (if ever) enough to have made several sufficient Presbyteries, to these several Congregations; and the Association of many Congregations into one can have place but in case of Defect, not of Sufficiency.

2. It is excepted, that we are not to consider Churches, as they were when the Apostles first began, but as they were, when the Apostles left them; and that *Ordo intendentis* is one thing, and *Ordo generantis* is another. Thus Nature first makes but a Child, which afterward grows up to a Man.

Answ. 1. As to the first, we argue the Example of those Churches, which the Apostles left, and, when they left them, commended them to the Grace of God, as

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in *Acts* 14. when they had chosen them Elders, as having sufficient means to support themselves. And (as *Bains* argues against Bishops, and their Government over Churches) those whom the Apostles placed as chief, in the first constituting of Churches, and left as their Successours in their last farewell, which they gave to the Churches; they had not, nor were to have any Superiour unto them in the Churches, as is evident in the instance of *Ephesus*, *Acts* 20. 28. & 1 *Pet.* 5. 2. So say we, that those whom the Apostles left, having placed Elders over them, and left as their Successours at their last farewell, commending them to the Grace of God, and so constituted, without mentioning of Association for Government, with other Churches; they, by Apostolical Warrant, were not to enter into such Associations, for matter of Government and Jurisdiction.

Bain's Diocesis Trial, p. 8. 55.

Answ. 2. As to that other part of the Exception, we reply, that certainly those Churches that the Apostles did thus leave, and the power in them, and the Presbyteries thereof, to do all Church-acts as a Presbytery now at first, were as perfect Churches the first Day (as *Adam* was a perfect Man, when first Created) as afterwards they could be supposed to be. If Nature at first do beget a perfect Child, with all the parts, it may indeed grow in Stature; but all the Natural parts it hath when a Man, it hath when a Child; and though it may grow in Stature, it doth not grow in perfection, nor is defective of any of its Natural powers, when a Child; but all exercise their Natural Functions, when a Child, as truly as when a Man. And beside, joyn a Thousand Children together, they will not make one Man.

3. It is expected, that although no Churches may give away their Right, yet they may joyn with them, that will Corroborate their Right: So if the Congregation, that had a Presbytery afore, be multiplyed into another Congregation, it retains the same Presbytery, and is one Church still.

Answ. 1. Either it is at their liberty to Retain their proper Presbytery, proper to themselves; and the other Congregation goes from them to have anew, or not. If it be at liberty, then Jesus Christ hath Instituted two Forms of Government, made two several Seats or Subjects of intire Church-power, for Men Arbitrarily to cast themselves into, which they please. This is to make two ordinary Patterns, of two sorts of Church-Government, one of a single Congregation, the other of the Presbyterial over many; and to Warrant the sufficiency and compleatness of either, when either of them have a sufficient Presbytery. But that Christ should leave the Government of his Church so indefinite, cannot be imagined; not only because it is impossible, that one of them should not be better than the other, but (also as hath been said before) in respect to the Congregations themselves; because the one makes a vast difference from the other, in the point of fixedness and unfixedness of Officers; and further, because one would destroy the other. For allow but this Principle, that all Congregations that may have a sufficient Presbytery, may retain the Right and whole Government within themselves, as the first Subjects of it, as agreeing with the Pattern, and what Church will subject it self to the Presbyterial Government? And that this is not indifferent to all our Judgments, the Contentions on all hands do Testific. If it be Arbitrary, then it would have been unlawful for any Congregation in the Primitive Times, to have Retained the Right that was first setled upon them; and to have in exercise all power within themselves as whole, as when Churches did multiply. If it be given as a liberty by Christ; voluntary Subjection is not to take it away, and that Form of Government, which it doth give up its right to, being a new change of Government (as was said afore) there must be as much an Institution for it, as there was for that Right it had afore. It is impossible there should be two Rights to the same thing, whereof the one is incompatible with the other; for if the Congregations can claim it as its Rights, then the Presbytery cannot; for that both should exercise it, is impossible. There may be differing interests of power, in the same politick Body, but that one and the same, while power should be in one, and also in a greater, and in another, cannot be imagined.

Answ. 2. To the second part of the Exception, *viz.* that it is a strengthening of the power of Congregations, and not a taking of it away, it being an intrinsecal Government, We Reply. 1. That of all other Answers, we wonder at that; for if a Master of a Family, that Ruled as a Master afore, should have his power, in governing of his Family, committed into the Hands of other Masters of Families, together with himself; would he account this a strengthening of his power, as he is a Master of a Family,

mily, or a loosing of it? Masters of Colledges would judge it a taking away of their power, not a strong thing of it, for by this they lost it as Masters. And 2. If that all these do Rule in common, and so the Major Vote of them, in common, carries it, multitude of cases will fall out (whereto tho' he gives a Negative) that shall be carryed by the Major Vote, so as he utterly looseth his power, it being thus swallowed up by the greater number, how is this a strengthening of it then? And in this case, is it not an extrinsecal power to that Congregation, which overrules it, as well as in the case of Bishops; when as the Votes of their own Officers that are proper to them, and fixed to them, whom they have chosen to watch over them, shall not carry matters that belong unto them, as afore they did. 3. The strengthening of Churche's power, lies in countenancing of what Churches have done, after they have done it, out of an Honour to them, and not lightly to hear Appeals from them; but it is not confirmed, by taking the power out of their Hands, and doing their acts for them Thus Kingdoms, in a League, strengthen each other's acts, when as they do not *Foster Traytors*, against each other; but if they should mingle powers in common, this were to destroy their power and right, as they be politick Bodies.

Book III.

If it be said, it makes Churches equal still: It is granted that it's true, it makes Churches in a like condition indeed; but how? Not in the priviledges of Churches, it makes them in like condition of Subjection, but not of freedom, as they are Churches, or incorporate Bodies to judge within themselves. As if Incorporate Towns should have their priviledge of Life and Death, within themselves, given up to a Combination of many Incorporate Towns together, they were *pares* indeed, *compeers*, and here is an equality they are brought unto in this condition, but what equity there were in it, we see not.

That I may conclude, if, when Congregations were thus multiplied, a Congregation that before had the Government intire in it self, being invested with it, began anew to Associate with others for Government: Either the Classical Elders Associated, have taken up the whole Government and Jurisdiction, and left to that Congregation and Elders, which once were invested with it, no part of it (which once they had proper to them afore) but as this exercised in common; or else there is a parting and a dividing of that power, and acts of Government they had afore. If all be taken away, let that be affirmed and practised, and a Warrant for it shewed, let the classical Presbytery choose, and ordain their Deacons, let them Suspend from the Sacrament, let them only Admonish, let them admit their Members, let them choose their Elders, let them do all. If they part it, either it must be Arbitrarily, as themselves please, (we will retain this, and you shall have that) and if so, then they Arbitrarily part with that which was once given them by Jesus Christ; or else they part with all by a Rule, and a Command from God, putting the bounds between what the one shall have, and what the other shall have; let these bounds then be shewn, or any instances, in the Primitive Churches, be assigned of such alterations when Churches were multiplied, which in this case is necessary. This will breed also a great alteration and change, in the constitution of these Congregations themselves, and their Relations to their Officers, as is obvious to any one who considers it.

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CHAP. VII.

Two Queries Resolved, 1. When a Church hath but one Elder, or none at all, whether it retains its power. 2. Whether a particular Congregation having compleat power in it self, may oblige it self, in a constant way, to ask Advice and Direction from a Consistory of Presbyteries. Resolved in the Negative, and proved by several Reasons.

I shall now Resolve some Queries that may be put, and in answering them, shall farther clear up my Assertion, which I have Demonstrated by so many Arguments.

Quest. 1. Suppose a Church have but one Elder? Yea, suppose it have no Elders at all? What is become of its power then?

Answ. 1. Yet that Church whereof there is but one Elder, being the Seat of this Government, it is in this Politick Body, as in the Natural Body. A Man (according to the Law of Nature) hath two Hands; but if one be cut off, or that he wants one, then he useth that one Hand, for which both were used afore. In this case, *Vis recurret in proximum membrum, The intire Vigour, will return into the next Member*; And this is properly a case of necessity, and not that other case which our Brethren would have, that one Congregation being alone, should therefore have the Government within it self of necessity, which it must part withall, according to the ordinary Rule, when more Congregations are multiplied.

Answ. 2. The power of Government, being the Right of that Church, and not of other Churches over it; they are to choose more Officers, and they have a right so to do; and so thereby to preserve the right within themselves, rather than to borrow an Eye or a Hand from other Churches. We may say in this case, as our Brethren have said in the case of not separating from a Church rightly constituted, tho' it want an Officer or Officers. They say, that none ought in that case to separate, but it is to be required, that Officers be chosen and supplied, so say we in this case. It is in this case, as it is in that of small Corporations, which although they are decayed, yet they are Corporations still; and they do not loose their priviledges, and they do not therefore come under other Corporations to Govern them; but they are enabled themselves, to choose who they are that shall Govern them.

Answ. 3. Their having, or not having Officers, doth not take away their Right; but only it takes away the exercise, untill such time as they have Officers. And their not having Officers, it doth not put the right into other Congregations, and the Elders thereof. The Right, in Elders, doth not lie in their being Elders, but in having a relation unto this Congregation, and in being their Elders.

Answ. 4. Suppose when a Congregation doth want a sufficiency of Officers, and so it be disinabled to act according to its Right; yet its case is but as the case of a Ward, who, though he is not able to manage his own Estate, yet this doth not put him by his Right; and those, that have the Wardship for the present, have not the right, they have but *quasi jus*; And if a Congregation useth Foreign Elders, Elders can have a charge in it; but until such time as the Congregation be able to have Officers of it self. And therefore if, in cases of Defect, Congregations should be associated; and by vertue of their association, make use of other Elders; yet they are not to be kept in that Defect, they ought, and they may purchase to themselves such an Eldership, and so exercise their own Right. The Churches of Christ, are not to be kept under Age and Wardship. Yea, ye ought to reform so, as the Churches should be reduced to this, and have their Rights. The Bishops, because they would Rule the Churches, in ancient time, made Canons, that there should be but one Minister in a Church, and they took away the power of ruling Elders, and so did destroy the Presbytery in every Church, that so in this Defect, there might be a colour for their Government. Whatever inconveniences therefore may be pretended, or whatever is the present State of things, nothing ought to prejudice the Rights of Churches; but all Congregations should have liberty to procure themselves a sufficient Eldership, so to have the Government within themselves.

Again,

Again, Suppose that such Congregations, as having a Defect of Elders, should subject themselves to a Classical Presbytery for Government, untill they had a sufficient Eldership of their own: Suppose (I say) that this should be the more ordinary condition, of the most Congregations in this Kingdom; yet those Congregations, that have a sufficient Eldership, are not, for uniformitie's sake with them, to subject themselves thereto. For uniformity, with what the Holy Ghost in the Word holds forth as perfect, is rather to be held by those Congregations, who are made thus compleat, than for uniformitie's sake, to subject themselves to the condition of those that are imperfect, that all may be alike, although that hath been the way of uniformity, that hath been urged amongst us; that because all Ministers cannot pray out of their own Gifts, that therefore for uniformitie's sake, there should be Forms of Prayer for all Ministers to use, even those that God hath inabled with sufficiency of Abilities, and Gifts to pray. It is in this case, as in the bringing up of fashions, many fashions being brought up by those that had infirmities, on purpose to cover them; they, who had infirmities, must be obliged to them, because they are in fashion, and brought up by some great ones.

Congregational Presbyteries, they are the Natural Presbyteries, those others, they are but as Step dames, Secondaries; they are but Compounds, and Decompounds of the several Presbyteries, of Presbyterial Churches.

And what though a Congregation with Elders, they are yet a Church to our Judgments, and are so to be acknowledged, as the Church in the *Canticles* was a Sister, though she wanted Breasts. If Congregations be small, and want sufficiency of Elders; they should be united many of them together to one Church, that they may have a full Eldership, and put themselves (though to some conveniences) to come together to Worship, for so, in the Primitive times, we find that Christians did often come out of Villages to their Cities, to Worship on the Lord's Day; and sometimes removed out of the Villages, into the Cities, that they might have Ordinances.

Quest. 2. But suppose that Congregations, having a sufficient Eldership, have also both Power and Ability, and right to act within themselves; yet in a constant way, may they not ask Advice and Counsel, and oblige themselves so to do; and before they proceed to Excommunication against their Members, if they be obstinate, bring them to the Classical Presbytery, as to a further means, there to be Admonished; and to have the Sentence of Excommunication there discerned by them?

Answ. 1. All communion with Classical Presbyteries (which we rather look upon as Synods, than Presbyteries) that we may lawfully hold, we will hold; and all such Communion we do account lawful, as is for such ends and purposes, for which they are ordained unto by Christ. But what is beyond the ground of erecting such Associations, or of calling such Synods, and the use and end of them, that will be to put an unlawful power into them; for every Ordinance, or Institution of God, is commensurable to the ground upon which it is founded. So as suppose for the present, that God had appointed Synods to be held on some occasions, in case of Mal-Administrations in Congregations; and in that case, had endowed Synods with the same power over Churches, that Congregations have over their own Members; yet because they had this power in this case, and upon this ground, it would not draw on an obligation in the Churches Congregational, constantly to advise with them so; and to bring their Members to be Admonished by them, afore they proceed to censure. So as such advice, as this, is not a case of Appeals; which always supposeth a Sentence past in inferiour Courts already; But it is a laying the Congregation yet lower; for it is a Suspending the exertion of that primary and first right, which they had, until such time as they have advised with another, supposed more sufficient and able Eldership.

It is with us in this particular respect, unto the Presbyteries, as it was with those that were moderate Separatists, in respect of their Communion with the Ministry of *England*, although we, in other cases, give more to these Presbyteries, than they would do to such a Ministry. Many of them, as Mr. *Robinson* and others, could communicate with the Ministry of *England*, in Hearing, and in Praying; because in these actions, they were not necessarily, or only to be considered as Ministers, by all them that should communicate with them; there being other grounds say they,

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Ch. VII. upon which they might Preach and Pray; and therefore although there was an unlawful relation or respect, which they pretend to Preach upon; namely, that they were Ministers; yet because there was another ground, upon which (suppose there had been no Ministers) they might have Preached; hence therefore they did, and could communicate with them in these Ordinances, so far as that other ground would bear them out. But if it came unto any act, wherein they should properly shew themselves to be Ministers, in these they did abstain, and could not partake with them; for thereby (according to their Principles) they might have acknowledged them to be such, which they thought they were not, and to have that Authority, which they thought they had not. Therefore if it came to the receiving of the Sacrament, because this is a Ministerial act; they therefore would not communicate with them, no not for one moment. So also as touching classical Presbyteries, we can, and shall willingly communicate with them, in all such things wherein we think there is a ground for their Erection; and so far as there is such a ground, we can Preach among them, and hear them Preach, where a company of Elders might resolve cases of Conscience, we can pray with them; yea, and have recourse to them for Advice in cases of difficulty, being the Elders of other Churches, and able to Resolve such cases. And this we can do, although we conceive that they are erected to a further end, and invested with a further power, which is to us unlawful: But wherein there is a proper acknowledgment of such a power, or that the former right of Congregations mentioned shall be prejudiced, and the Power and Ability, that Jesus Christ hath put in them, impaired we cannot do any act that shall joyn with them herein. We cannot do it, no, not for one Moment, much less for a constancy. And the Reasons why we Judge Congregations should not do all this, Namely, Advise constantly, bring their obstinate Members to be Admonished by the Presbytery, nor require their Sentence, ere they proceed to Excommunicate, are these.

Reason 1. If it were no more but to advise, that liberty is not to be taken from a Body of Christ, enabled by him to act within it self, and purchased by him; which is not to be taken from a Man, by a State or Common-wealth; because the Law of Nature hath bestowed it upon him. That liberty is not to be taken from a Church in its right, which the Law of Christ gives it; that is not to be taken from a Man in his right, which the Law of Nature giveth him. In all actions that a Man is the guide of himself in, he is not bound to seek advice, much less, that there should be a standing Court erected for Men to come into. And in all the other rights that a Man hath, as he is a Ruler or Governour of any Society? as suppose he be a Master of a Family, in which he hath a right by the Law of Nature, it would be an infringement of his Liberty, if in those acts, that belong unto him as a Master, he should be bound to advise with others, as for the putting away of a Servant, &c. To direct him indeed, in what cases he should ask advice, the exigents and necessity of the thing is the ground and foundation of it; but out of those cases, it is an impairing of his liberty. Wherein he thinks there is a danger of miscarrying, and wherein he himself wants light, therein he is to ask advice, because there is a ground for it; and yet therein a Man is at liberty, of whom, or with whom he will advise; and to take that away, were to take away from the priviledge of a Man, if Men are to preserve their Native Priviledges, Churches are much more to stand fast in the liberty Christ hath purchased for them, *Gal.* 5. 1.

Reason 2. That which the Cities of *Judah*, having Power and Jurisdiction within themselves, were not obliged to do, nor were to oblige themselves to do, (although they had a *Synedrim*, a set Court set over them by God, for advice in cases Difficult, and when it was too hard for them to Judge) that the Churches now under the Gospel, having the like priviledges of power within themselves, with a promise of God to be amongst them, are not to do, nor are others to usurp it: For in cases not Difficult, it had been an usurpation of an unlawful power in the *Synedrim* to require, they should ask their advice; and it had been a Diminishing of that right and questioning of that promise of God's being with them in Judgment, to have gone still and advised, in cases clear, especially to have always depended upon an autoritative Sentence of Judgment, required of them to be pronounced by the *Synedrim*, before that they proceeded; and without which, theirs should not have been valid.

Reason 3.

Reason 3. A constancy of seeking advice, and to be bound to it, doth in it self arise unto a Subjection to Authority; thus it is Subjection in a Child, to be bound to advise with his Parents in all actions of moment (whether they be clear to himself or not) as disposing of himself in Marriage, and the like; and it is an acknowledgment of an Authority. Yea, to be bound thus always to advise with, and not to proceed without the Sentence of a classical Presbytery, in Judgment, is of greater Authority in some respect; and is more than for them to have a coercive Authority over other Congregations, in case they proceed amiss. It is a further limiting of them, thus to tie them up, that they should not exercise Government without them. For Magistrates may Coerce the Churches, if they do amiss; when yet they will not oblige Ministers always to advise with them, and have their Sentence afore they proceed For one Minister to depend thus on another, for the exercise of his calling, is more than to be subject to the censure of another, if he doth exercise his calling amiss: It is a greater sign of Servitude, to do what one doth by the Direction of another, than to be under Authority, that shall punish him if he do amiss: This latter is the case of a Subject, the other of a Servant. This especially is true, when as those, we should be bound to advise with, do claim and challenge an Authority, upon which it should be done (as those that are for the Presbyterial Government in a rigid way do.) It was one great ground, that the Antient Non-conformists went upon, against yielding to Ceremonies, that supposing they were things indifferent; yet to have things indifferent in the Worship of God, Determined one way, and Men obliged to practise one way, when as God himself had left them indifferent; this was to give away that liberty, which Jesus Christ had given us Especially when as these, that urged them, pretended to have a Right and Power from Christ, to Determine things indifferent in the Worship of God; in that case to have submitted to them, had been to have acknowledged an unlawful power.

We will put this Parallel case, to be judged by their own Principles, that are for the Presbyterial Government. Suppose there were found one Man in a Presbytery, that is but an ordinary Minister for his Station. in a particular Congregation (and so he hath a right and lawful calling in the Ministry) and (as it is possible there may, and oftentimes it doth fall out to be) suppose that this Man hath more Abilities for Wisdom, Holiness, and all other Ministerial Gifts; than all the rest of that Presbytery, suppose such an one as *Calvin*, who was an ordinary Minister of *Geneva*, and an Elder in the Presbytery there. If now that Presbytery he liveth in, having a a right and an ability in themselves, as a Presbytery, to Judge and Determine in all cases that fall, within the Jurisdiction thereof, should oblige themselves not to proceed to Sentence without his advice, in a peculiar manner first asked, they would think it both a Blessing of their Authority, and a giving of too much Authority to that Man; much more if this obligation should lie upon other Presbyteries, whereof he is not a Member. This step (which was the first Episcopal Authority) the Presbyterians would think unlawful to allow unto such a Man; and in this point, they are so tender, as they will not yield so much as a constant Moderatorship, without any other power; and yet that there should be always one Moderator, in such an Assembly, is necessary, if there be an order kept up amongst them, as is in other Bodies. But now for a Congregation to advise with a Superiour Presbytery, in a constant way, is not so much as necessary; for where there is no need of advice, it is not necessary. Let this case and the other, be Paralleled, and see whether there may not be the like said for Congregations, they having this right amongst themselves.

The constancy of asking advice upon all cases, though it were pretended to be but advice; yet the act it self, by reason of its constancy, would argue a Majority of Power and Rule, it would turn to such in them (at least in the issue) that already claim it; and so claim it, as that some of the Presbyterians pretend all the power to be in the classical Presbytery, and not in the Congregational; and that the Congregational Elders, in their act of Excommunication, are but the Deputies of the classical Presbyteries, and that they are *Præcones*, the Proclaimers only of the Sentence; but the Presbyterians are the Judges. That power that is already in one Kingdom, hath a *jus divinum*, and if set up in another, would pretend to it; and when the plurality of Men shall be once for it (for the Rigidity of that power) it will draw up all the power to it self. And a Churches yielding, from such Liberties and Priviledges,

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Ch. VII. is by God's usual Dispensation, the loss of them in the issue, *To whom we yielded not, (saith the Apostle) no, not for an Hour, that the Truth of the Gospel might continue with you*, Gal. 2. 5.

When the Court challenged (about the choice of Masters of Colledges) this as the priviledge of the King, that the Party should at least be made known to him, the University stood upon their Priviledges, that they might choose and admit, without giving notice to the Court; knowing that they should soon loose their power, if but so much were given up to a greater power over them. Had there been yielding but for a time, it would have indangered, in the issue and consequence, the very continuance of that Truth of the Gospel, which in that respect was professed by them. *Periculosum est in rebus Divinis ut quis suo jure cedat ac potestate, Cyprian Epist. ad Jubaian de heret. Baptiz*: And all those Arguments, which were brought against Bishops, as having a direct power over Ministers, will fall in here; for corrective power is that, when the exercise of it is at the direction of another.

And farther, consider that, what will make the Church to be under Age, and to be a Child for Knowledge, and guided of it self, is unlawful; but always to ask advice, and to be bound so to do, is to bring the Church under Age, and so to be in Bondage (for to be under Age, and in Bondage, is all one, as in *Gal.* 1. 2, 3.) to be as well under these Tutors, as under Governours; under Tutors, whom they must advise withal; and under Governours, whose Authoritative Sentence must first be asked.

Reason 4. That which the Churches of the Primitive Times did, having a Right and an Ability to do it, and was a Duty lay upon them, to do of themselves, that should Congregational Churches, having a right to do now, do without having first Recourse for advice to Presbyteries. And what the Apostles, though set over Churches, and who were more able to advise, than all the Presbyteries now are, did not yet require of the Churches; but blamed them, if they neglected to proceed of themselves, that Presbyteries are not now to require of the Churches to do, which the Apostles did not. But for Churches then to advise with the Apostles or Evangelists, or extraordinary Officers, before they proceed to Excommunicate, was not then required; but it was their Duty to proceed of themselves, according to the power Christ had given them, without waiting for such advice. This is clear in the case of the Church of *Corinth* (whether it were Congregational or Presbyterial, we dispute not now) because that this Church had a Right to Judge that Incestuous *Corinthian*; and the Fact was so evident, that advice they needed not (*Do not ye Judge* (saith the Apostle) *them that are within?* Doth it not belong to you) he blameth them, that they did it not. And as *Chrysostom* saith, *he accuseth them*, not that *they did not certifie him of it*; but because *they had not mourned, or thrown him out. The Apostle thus shewing, that it ought to have been done without a Monitor, because of the Evidence of the Sin:* And when they had neglected to do it, *Paul* doth not do it himself; but only as an Apostle Doctrinally declareth such an one to be Excommunicated by the Church he liveth in. He doth not require, that they should come unto him for his Sentence, before they did it; but he calleth upon them to do it themselves because they neglected it.

Reason 5. That which is to be supposed needless, that is not to be done in a constant way. To go ask advice, when there is no need of advice, is needless. The *Synedrim* was God's Ordinance in its place, but if the Cities should still have come up for advice needlesly, they would not have found a Blessing in it. And besides that which is an acknowledgment of the Deficiency of God's Ordinance, and God's Presence with his own Ordinance, that ought not to be done; but such a constant having recourse for advice, is acknowledgment of such an insufficiency; for if they do not want it, why should they be bound to ask it?

Reason 6. Let this obligation to advise with another Presbytery, and for them to approve, *&c.* ere that a Church (that hath Power and Ability from Christ) proceed to Excommunicate, be but Parallel'd with the obligation of a particular Minister or Pastor, for the works of his Office; which, by vertue of his Office, he is enabled, by Christ, to do singly, and alone; the Presbytery of a Congregation being (as was said) as perfect and as compleatly inabled, for all acts within it self, as a particular Minister can be supposed alone to be enabled to the works of his Office (suppose Preaching, and the like) God's means being as perfect for Government, as they

they are for Preaching or Baptizing. Now then, as it would be a Derogation from the Gifts of Christ, and from the Office that Christ hath put a Man into; and a Dishonour to the Man that is a Minister, constantly to advise afore he performs any act of his calling; and be bound so to do, before he Preacheth a Sermon, or the like. The like Derogation would it be to a Church, and the Presbytery thereof, to be obliged to advised, for all their acts of Government, which they perform. And yet look what ground or occasion there will be, for a Man that is a Preacher, to advise with others of his Brethren, about what he is to Preach; the like will be acknowledged, and as far the one, as the other, in their several proportions, for a Congregational Church, and the Presbytery thereof, to advise with other Churches. If a Minister should be to Preach any thing that is of great Difficulty, and like to be much gainsaid, and contradicted, any thing that is of great Moment, or new, or uncouth; in that case he may do well to advise, afore he Preacheth, and have the Judgment of his Brethren. So if such a case of Government cometh, in any kind, that hath a great difficulty in it, wherein they are not clear what they shall do, or they, upon grounds, think that the way, they are to proceed, is like to be offensive and scandalous to the Churches, about them when done; in this case they may advise. Occasional advisings, so far as there is a ground for them, we deny not.

Reason 7. That which a classical Presbytery is not bound to do to a Provincial, nor a Provincial to a National Assembly; that upon the same grounds a Congregation (if it have a sufficient Presbytery) is not bound to do to a classical Presbytery. What ground can be alledged, why a classical Presbytery is not bound to advise with a Provincial Assembly, ere it proceeds to Excommunication, but this? That it is an Ordinance sufficient for those acts, within it self. If then a Congregation be by Christ inabled (he having given sufficiency of Power, and Gifts among them) to do all acts within it self. Why should this Church (which the promise of Christ's Presence, to be among them, is first made to) which is the Seat both of Worship and Government, be deprived of its priviledge, when the others are not. Where Jesus Christ hath given Power, he hath given Gifts.

Reason 8. What is it they should advise thus constantly for, and about what should they depend upon the Sentence of a classical Presbytery? First, it is not out of want of Skill; for that must be either of the *Jus*, that is, that they are unskillful, to know the Rule, for what sins Men should be Excommunicated. Now in the constant cases that fall out in Congregations, for which Men should be Excommunicated, the Rule is known well enough; that Excommunication is for such and such gross sins as the Scripture holds forth, and as are Scandalous to all Christians; and if any new cases fall out, let them advise. And we acknowledge, that *Synods* may be of use to find out those Rules, and to hold them forth; But when once they are held forth and known, and commonly received, there needs no advice to know the matter of right, for which Men are to be Excommunicated. Or else it must be want of Skill, of judging the matter of Fact done; and for that they need not advise, for it is to be proved by Witnesses. A company of Elders, and a Congregation, may as well be able to judge of that, as all the Assemblies in the World; and may be thought as sufficient, and as faithful to judge, whether the Fact be fully proved and cleared by Witnesses, or no, or is it want of skill, in that Judging, what obstinacy and impenitency is. As for that (as I said before) they are intrusted to Judge of it; for if they will receive him upon his Repentance, without bringing him to the classis, they may; neither are they to bring him thither, till he is obstinate. Secondly; It is not to have Authority from the Sentence of that Synod, that advice is necessary. For that Authority, must either be an Authority of Reverence only, or a further power Political. There needs not a further Political power, to be judged by their Sentence; for if a Congregation, and the Presbytery thereof, should proceed to Excommunication, the party was as truly Excommunicated, and with as full a power from Christ, as if all the Synods in the World had ratified it. And therefore to add Authority, as Defective in the Congregation, to that end their Sentence is needless. And then when a Man is to be Excommunicated, he is to be Excommunicated by them; when it is done, it is done by them; and if a classis addeth not Authority, it should not take away this Authority, by obliging Men to advise, and to have their Sentence first. If of Reverence only, then it should be giving a respectful Deference to their Judgments, which in some cases is allowable.

Ch. VII. *Reason* 9. Those Admonitions which the classical Presbytery are to give to the Person that is brought before them, by the Elders of his Congregation (they having themselves Admonished him, and he remained obstinate under their Admonitions) are either an Instituted Ordinance of Christ, Preparatory to Excommunication, to be further applyed to him, over and above those given him by his own Congregation: Or they are to work in a way of Moral perswasion, and by the way Reverence, that the person hath of the classical Presbytery, more than of his own Congregation; that is, they either work politically, as an Institution of Christ upon him, or only Morally. For what is it, by which this Man's Conscience must be wrought upon, in these Superadded Admonitions of the classical Presbytery, having been obstinate under those of his own? It must either be *vi materiæ*, by reason of the matter; and that they have a great Reverence in the Man's Conscience; or it must be by their being invested with an Authority from Christ. And if these Admonitions of the classical Presbytery be as an Institution Preparatory, they are to be reckoned Ordinances of the same Rank and Kind, with those which the Elders of his own Church hath given him; which Admonitions are not as if a company of Saints or Ministers should meet him occasionally, and Admonish him; (for he may have a Thousand such Admonitions, and yet his sin not be accounted ripe for Excommunication) but his sin is then ripe for Excommunication, when Admonitions Ministerially Administred, by such as Christ hath appointed, have been Administred to him, and he continues obstinate. So that Admonitions either may be said to have a perswasive power only, or else a Ministerial power by way of Institution; and so work on a Man by the Blessing of God upon them, and by vertue of the promise: And, in the want of either of them, a Man cannot be judged fit to be Excommunicated; because that Christ's means, appointed by him, have not been applyed to him. So then every Admonition, in this way of Ordinance, is in order unto Excommunication, if the Person continues obstinate.

Now then first; if it be such a necessary Ordinance to be Administred by the classical Presbytery, afore such time as the party can be Excommunicated; Then 1. The Congregational Eldership, and the Admonitions thereof, is not a perfect Ordinance. And 2. It were not only a sin, for any Congregational Church to Excommunicate a Man, without bringing of him first to the classical Presbytery; but the Man also is not capable, till then, of being Excommunicated by his own Church; for it may be said, there wants an Ordinance to be applyed to him, before he is to be Excommunicated; for all such Admonitions, that are a special Ordinance of Christ, as being preparatory to Excommunication, and in order thereunto, are not to be omitted. And let it be shewn, that Christ hath divided by his Institution, that some Admonitions should be in a Man's own Congregation, by his own Eldership, and others afterward to be by a classical Presbytery, before he is to be Excommunicated by his own Church. And also 3. If it were thus, then a Congregational Presbytery hath not sufficient power to Excommunicate a Man; for if he is, by vertue of an Institution, to be Admonished, also by a classical Presbytery, this Presbytery must, by Institution, have power also to give Sentence, without which, the Sentence of the Congregation were not sufficient; for that Church which hath power to Admonish publickly, in order to Excommunication, must necessarily have the power also to joyn in the Excommunication, or else the Excommunication is not valid.

But Secondly; If they be Admonitions only in a perswasive way, to a Man that is obstinate, to work upon him, as, and with a Reverence of the persons Admonishing, and to that end, he is brought to the classical Presbytery, to be Admonished, consider what will follow from it. 1. That those Ministers should rather be called out, which he in a peculiar manner most Reverenceth; they being the fittest Persons to give Admonitions, as *John Baptist* was to Admonish *Herod*, because *Herod* Reverenced him (as the Text saith) and therefore to make an Admonition-Court, of a certain sort of persons, whom perhaps the Man knows not, this is to extend it beyond what the ground of a Reverence will always reach unto. And by this reason likewise, there might be some one man, of Eminent Gifts, set up to Admonish, which should move a greater Reverence in the Hearts of Men, more than half a Dozen Presbyteries. 2. If he be brought only upon this ground, to be thus Admonished by them; then a meer Moral Ordinance of less force, is preferred to a standing Instituted Ordinance, that, according to Christ's Institution, is of a greater: a Moral power is

is preferred to a political that is given by Christ, whereas on the other side, the means, that a Man's own Congregation hath used, being Instituted means, the Blessing of Christ depends upon it. Book III.

Its true, we grant that if a company of Saints, or a company of Ministers occasionally meet him, they might admonish him, and God may bless it; but when those means, that Christ hath appointed, hath past upon him, and he is not wrought upon by them, then for us to set up any other Court of a Company of Men, to bring him unto; which, by Christ's appointment, hath a power of a lesser kind (as if it is but a Moral Reverential power, it is no more) this is but a Secondary and remote power, in comparison of the former. It is but Perswasive, it is not Ministerial, and perswasive Admonitions were applyed to him afore, and he was past them; he was Admonished by the Brother in private, he was Admonished by two or three more, which that Brother took to joyn with him; and therefore in a Congregation, Christ brings him to an Authoritative means, which himself hath in a publick manner instituted; and to bring him then from these means, unto perswasive means again; this must needs fall short, and be blasted to this Man's Conscience, when the means, that Christ hath in a special manner instituted, had taken no place upon him; and this would also make Jesus Christ to proceed, from the greater to the lesser: Unless it be affirmed by those, who hold that the Congregations have a sufficient Presbytery for Excommunication, yet Christ's appointment is; that classical Presbyteries must always joyn with them, without which they are imperfect, which is indeed a condition. Thus there is the shew of an ordinance set up, to the prejudice of the ordinance of Christ; whereas there should not be set up an Image to resemble any appointment of Christ; and if any thing, put into the road of an ordinance, be in the stead of an ordinance, or preferred to an ordinance, it will grow flat, though of it self it be good, and, upon occasion, may be useful; as we acknowledge the admonitions of a classical Presbytery may be; but not in this case. We acknowledge that such an admonition, God may bless, as he may bless good conference; but if any would set up good conference, as a more efficacious ordinance than Preaching, when Preaching is the special ordinance, there would not be found that blessing in it.

If it be said, but may not all good means be used, to reclaim a Man that is obstinate, before he be proceeded against by Excommunication? And is it not good means, to be admonished by a company of Men Grave and Holy; and is not this better, than to be admonished only by those of a Man's own Congregation?

I answer 1. That the goodness of all means lies in the Blessing and Appointment of Christ; and if he have appointed means sufficient, as the admonitions of the Eldership of a particular Congregation is, then in a constant and set way, to have an admonition Court, to bring Men unto, further to be admonished, hath not a Warrant for it. If the Congregational Presbytery be a sufficient Presbytery, then they are a sufficient means; and Cursed is he that addeth, as well as he that takes from Christ's Institution, he that will use more than Christ hath appointed, as well as he that will use less. In this case we may say, If they will not *believe* Moses *and the Prophets, neither will they believe if one come from the Dead*; because God had appointed *Moses* and the Prophets, to be a sufficient means. And thus in Physick also, to use more than is prescribed, is as dangerous, as to use less. And further, if he is to be accounted obstinate, after the admonition of his own Congregation, so as to be Excommunicated (as if they be a sufficient means, he is to be so accounted) then as God cutteth Men off, when their sins are ripe, so the Church also doth.

Answ. 2. If all good means were to be set up, as instituted ordinances, then this Man should be brought to be admonished, by the principal Assembly, before he is Excommunicated; yea, and before the National too (if you will set the bounds in a classical Presbytery, why had you not as good set them in a Congregational (if a Congregational be sufficient) where Christ hath set it?) For you may suppose still, that if he had the provincial Assembly's admonition (Men of greater Authority and Reverence) it might prevent his Excommunication. And besides, if he may, after his Excommunication, appeal to them, why should he not be brought unto them before?

Ch. VII. *Reason* 10. Add to this, that until the Delinquent hath been Admonished, before all the People of the Congregation, he hath not had all the means applyed unto him, in his own Congregation, which Christ hath appointed to work Repentance in him: For the whole Church is not told of it, as Christ would have it; neither is he Rebuked before all, so that all may mourn and lament over him, to break his Heart. And surely, it is the right of every Congregation, and of every Member in it, to have all means used, that are sufficient within that Congregation, afore its Members are brought before Strangers. Now if they are to be admonished by the classical Presbytery; after that they have been thus admonished twice or thrice, publickly in the Congregation, then, in that respect also, there is a proceeding from a greater, and more sufficient means unto a less sufficient; For the admonition of the classical Presbytery, though given by publick Persons, yet it is given privately; whereas the means according to Christ's Order, is to go from more private, to more publick, as a way of doing the person good. And the shame is more publick afore the Congregation, than afore the Consistory; and therefore, according to the Presbyterial practices, they are admonished first by the classical Presbytery, and when they are found obstinate, there they have two or three admonitions publickly before the people, afore he is Excommunicated; which admonitions, if they are in order to Repentance, then they are more Efficacious than what hath been done in the consistory of Elders, and therefore used last; and and if more Efficacious, why (according to the right of a Congregation, and according to the sufficiency of means in a Congregation) were they not used first so as the person need not be brought, in order to his Repentance, before the classical Presbytery; because a more sufficient means hath already been used? So that in a word, they are carryed unto the Presbytery, either afore or after they are admonished publickly in the Congregation; if afore, all good means have not been used in the Congregation; If after, you go from a more Efficacious means, unto a less Efficacious, even in that respect forementioned also.

Reason 11. When the Apostle saith, Tit. 3. 10. *after one or two Admonitions, him that is an Heretick Reject*, as condemned of himself, as much by those means, as by a Thousand; the admonitions he intendeth there, are those that are publick, and given by them that have the power of Excommunicating. If he be admonished afore his own Congregation, and the Elders thereof, these are either such admonitions the Apostle there intendeth, or not; if they be, he is to be rejected, without being admonished by any other; for the Apostle's Rule plainly evidenceth, that there is but one kind of publick power, by which the admonitions should be applyed: And therefore if the classical Presbytery were that power, which should Reject and Excommunicate this Man, upon their two or three admonitions; then he is not to be brought down, to have admonitions again, afore the people in his own Congregation; but he is to be Rejected, without any further proceeding; so that if he be brought to the classical Presbytery, after he hath been admonished before the whole Congregation, the Apostle's rule is not observed, or if he be brought to the Congregation, after he hath been with those that have the publick power, to admonish and cast him out; the Apostle's rule is not observed neither; and thus whereas God hath built one or two Altars, this would be to build seven.

Reason 12. That practice, which will breed distractions, and more inconveniences, ought not to be. But for a Congregation, that is supposed to have sufficient power in it self, to depend upon the classical Presbytery, for a Sentence first past, will breed greater inconveniences, than for them to proceed without them. For the first if the Congregational Eldership be of one mind, that a Man ought to be Excommunicated, and the classical Presbytery is of another, the Congregational Eldership having sufficient power, and the Conscience of Duty lying upon them, they are to proceed notwithstanding; and so by rejecting the advice aforehand, of the classical Presbytery, they are brought to cast a greater contempt upon it, than if they had proceeded without their Sentence, and so as to give them an account. And as for the party, if he will refuse to go afore the classical Presbytery (his conscience judging, and that upon right grounds, that the Congregation hath sufficient power, to proceed against him) what Rules, in Scripture, will compell him to go to be admonished afore them? If he goes by an Appeal, that's after Sentence, and then the

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Congregation and he are parties; if he goes as complained of by the Congregation, by what rule can they constrain him to it?

CHAP. VIII.

Some Objections answered.

Object. 1. THat Excommunication is a matter of so great weight, to give a Man up unto Satan, to throw him out of the Communion of Saints, as that for the weight and greatness of the Sentence, it should be advised upon, by a further Eldership, by a greater company, than those of a Man's own Congregation.

Answ. 1. You greaten the ordinance of Excommunication, as the Papists did that of the Lord's Supper, preferring it before Preaching, and so magnified the Clergy, and the Priests that Consecrated the Sacrament, and also drew the people to the Worshipping of the Bread. Thus you also advance an undue power of the Clergy, combined in an Association of particular Congregations; and to take their power away, under pretence of the greatness of the ordinance committed to them.

Answ. 2. And yet, it is not so great and dreadful a Sentence, according to your own opinion, making it only to be a cutting off of a Church, and not to import a formal delivering up unto Satan. And

Answ. 3. If the Congregation, and the Eldership thereof, be sufficient for power and skill, and faithfullness; why, for the greatness of the Sentence, should there be a going out to other Churches, when Christ hath proportioned his means to his end? And what is there in the Execution of a Brother, that these may not be supposed to be sufficient for, and to be betrusted with? They are betrusted to Preach the word, every particular person is (whether it prove Error or Truth) till he do miscarry. They are betrusted to admit Members, to Suspend from the Sacrament? why not to Excommunicate? Yea, the Sentence, and the proof it self, depends upon two or three Witnesses by God's appointment, and they cast it; and this, though the matter were brought before all the Judges in the World; then why not, when the matter is brought afore two or three Officers, faithful Men, and a Congregation of Saints; why should not they be esteemed as faithful Judges, as others? If you commit to a Jury, and one Judge, a Recorder or a Lawyer in an Incorporate Town, though decayed, the power of Life and Death, and cutting a Man off from this life, which when it is done, cannot be remedyed again; then why should you not betrust the power of cutting a Man off from the Church (if it be unto the Congregation, as being in this case the Judges and Jury) Especially, when as there may be a remedy? For he is not so cut off, but he may be restored.

Answ. 5. Wherein should the greatness of Excommunication lie, but in the matter for which a Man is Excommunicated? We profess, it is not for niceties; but for sins against light, against the common principles of Nature, and Christianity; as the Apostle saith, 1 *Cor.* 5. 3. He that hath so done this Deed. There must be a *scelus* in it, that, if he goes on in it, will Damn his Soul; and therefore the Apostle calls that *Corinthian*, *That wicked Person* ver. 13. And for these things, the Congregation is as well able to judge, as all the Elders in the World. In the matter of fact, (as was said afore) a Jury of Twelve men, do judge of the Fact, when a man's Life is concerned; and by a parity of reason, a Congregation may judge of the matter of fact, for which a man is to be thrown out of the Church.

Object. 2. But Excommunication is, *Res communis*, *a common concern*, which other Neighbour Churches have an interest in, and in that respect, they are to have a joynt concurrence in it aforehand.

Answ. 1. So it is likewise, to all the Churches in the World, more especially in the Nation, and the party may remove to any other part of the Kingdom; and so, then all the Kingdom should have a concurrence in the act aforehand as well, and then the whole Nation should be called.

Answ.

Ch. VIII.

Answ. 2. If the common interest of Churches should carry it, then it would follow, that because he is Excommunicated out of all the Churches of that Presbytery, all the Churches should be present at his Excommunication, as well as that particular Church he is a Member of.

Answ. 3. If Neighbourhood and common interest be insisted on, then the Churches of the next Presbytery (whereof many may be nearer to that Congregation, to which he is joyned, than this classical Presbytery) should be present also; for the Man may go thither to be received, and therefore it is fit that they should have an interest aforehand too. There is no Reason to be given, why it should be *Res communis*, *A common affair*, to that classical Presbytery, more than to other Neighbour Churches, as to the thing it self, it can only be said, they have associated voluntarily: But then the ground of that Association must be considered.

Answ. 4. When a Man is cast out of one Church, he is cast out of all Churches; but not formally, but only consequently, and by vertue of communion of Churches, this common Law being among them, that no other Church should receive him, till he have given satisfaction to his own; and therefore answerably, it is not an antecedent cognisance afore, and by other Churches, that it is necessary, but only a consequent, as was the manner of the Primitive times, to send to Churches after, and to tell them, from such an one let us abstain, this being the Law among Churches; that if a Man be cast out of one Church, he is cast out of all; either all Churches must be called, one as well as another, or else some particular Church must be betrusted, and betrusted by Christ; and if so, why not his own Congregation, having a sufficient Eldership for Excommunication.

Answ. 5. In admission (as was urged afore) every particular Church is betrusted to admit Members; and, by vertue of the admission of Members into it, they are admitted to have communion in all Churches; and therefore, why should it not be intrusted for Excommunication also. It is no obstacle, that it is *Res communis*, *A common Business*; for the other is equally such, to all other Churches. We ask also, if that Suspension be not *Res communis*, *A common concern* also, insomuch, that untill such time as he is Excommunicated, all Churches are to Suspend him from the Sacrament, after his own Church hath Suspended him? And if so, upon that ground, why should not all Churches be acquainted with his Suspension aforehand?

In Tom. 2. Collect. Concil. Labbei, pag. 45.

Answ. 6. The fifth Canon of the Council of *Nice* tells us, that *Synods* were therefore appointed amongst other ends, that all the Churches might know, who had been Excommunicated by a particular Bishop (as the manner was then) that all the rest might account him so, until he had given satisfaction. They were not therefore to be called aforehand, afore he was Excommunicated, on the pretence of a common interest.

Object. 3. But in the multitude of Councellours, there is strength.

Answ. 1. Let them have the use of Councellours only, and we deny it not. A Man will not go for Counsel, unless there be need; and in cases of need, we do acknowledge it.

Answ. 2. That Rule is the Rule of Nature; but we have a Rule for the sufficiency of the Eldership of a Congregation, with an Institution, and with a promise of Christ's presence, *where two or three are gathered together*. If this were founded upon meer Nature; then we would yield, that this *Axiom* might have place, and they might still take in more Councellours to them. But a Rule of Nature, will not set up an ordinance, though it may help to manage it; and it should not be set to weaken it, and disparage it, as this doth. Let us rest in God's ordinance, and rest in God's number, what he hath thought sufficient; and the conscience will rather be quieted, and wrought upon by subjection to an ordinance, than to a multitude. The promise is not to a company of more persons, as such; but the promise is made to the relation, to the constitution, and the blessing depends upon the promise; and to this purpose, God will be with two or three, as well as with three Thousand in an ordinary way. The Laws of *England* sets not up a multitude of Counsellours, that is, of Lawyers, for the Judging of Life and Death; but it sets up a few Judges, who sometimes alone, sometimes two or three together, do Judge all Causes, when yet there are multitudes of Lawyers, and as good Lawyers as they, and as able to Counsel. If we all do rest satisfied in this Law, as the ordinance of the Kingdom, why should we not rest in the other, as the ordinance of Christ?

Answ.

Answ. 3. If this alledged rule held, then classical Presbyteries should go to greater Synods; for there is a multitude of more Councellours. And then all the Churches should continually have had recourse to the Apostles, while they were alive, in all such Acts of Discipline; for any Apostle might have said, am not I Wiser? Send them unto me; yea, cannot I more effectually perswade? Therefore both take my advice, and come to me for my Sentence; bring them afore me, to be admonished. The Apostles indeed, when they were present in Churches, did joyn with the Elders and Officers of the Churches, in their Acts of Government; but they did not require (if absent) that the Churches should come to advise with them.

Object. 4. But may not this be done for peace sake, whenas this will compound all, and accommodate the differences amongst us?

Answ. 4. It is in the case of Peace, as in the case of Scandal. If a Brother be offended, and the thing be indifferent, and in my liberty; then indeed I may forbear, and I ought to forbear, because of an offence; but I am not to forbear, if it be a Duty which he is offended at; neither am I to give away a liberty: So for peace, Men may forbear things that are indifferent to them, and so they ought to do: Yea, they may conceal their own Judgments, and forbear to practice some things, which otherwise they might do; as the Apostle says, *Rom.* 14. 22. *Hast thou Faith? Have it to thy self.* But a Man is to do nothing positive, that shall acknowledge a seeming power, and bring Congregations into Bondage, when Christ hath set them free; for Peace must be so kept in Churches, as that withal their priviledges must be kept. There is no yielding from that right, which Christ hath given. The case of peace holdeth not in the acknowledgment of a false power, for that will breed Destruction.

Answ. 2. It is the keeping of the true bounds of power, as Christ hath seated them, that will preserve the peace of Churches; but to yield unto a false power, will always be occasion of quarrels.

Object. 5. But because that these Churches may be perhaps offended, with what you do, and with that Sentence you shall give, and so be ingaged to question you for that Act, after you have done it; is it not therefore better to advise aforehand, and so to prevent that offence?

Answ. 1. It was the preventing offences, and the avoiding of Schisms, that did set up Episcopal Power, as *Jerome* saith; for because a multitude of Presbyters could not agree in their Presbyteries, they devolved it into one Man; but the Remedy was worse than the Disease; for it Degenerated into Tyranny.

Answ. 2. Simply to prevent an offence, the liberty of Churches, nor the rights that is in Churches, is not to be taken away. An actual offence arising is a ground indeed for the Neighbouring Churches, to call upon that Church, to give them satisfaction; and there doth hereupon a Duty lie upon this Church, if it have miscarryed, to give them satisfaction. But then they must be actually offended.

Answ. 3. The ground, why they would have us advise with the classical Presbytery, is not meerly to prevent offences; but it is because they claim an Authority.

Answ. 4. The case must be supposed so to fall out, that either the classical Presbytery will be of the same mind with the Congregational, or not. If it be supposed, that they shall be of the same mind, then there needs not to be advice to prevent offence; and this will ordinarily be the case, when the Rulers for Excommunication are fixt, and by some common Agreement, concluded upon between Churches. Or if it be supposed, they may not agree, in that case the Congregational Presbytery is put into a greater strait, and will run into an higher contempt and offence of the Presbytery classical, when they shall think themselves bound to Excommunicate the Man, against the Advice and Sentence of the classical Presbytery given them.

Answ. 5. There is no Inferior Court, which hath a Power and Ability to Judge, that, upon a Supposition of miscarriage, and of offending of an Higher Court, hath an obligation laid upon it, upon all occasions, therefore to advise with that Higher Court, to prevent these Appeals, and these Offences.

Answ. 6.

Ch. VIII. *Answ.* 6. If, for avoiding of offences, there should be such advising always afore Sentence with other, or more or greater Churches; then the classical Churches should never give Sentence; for they may incur the offence of the Provincial, and this latter likewise of the National. And therefore, supposing that these Courts were one above another, and that the inferior had a full Right and Power to finish the Sentence of Excommunication, it were much better, to leave it to the cognisance of the higher Courts, by way of Appeals, than under the presupposition and pretence, that offences may arise to weaken the Right of the particular Congregation, by an obligation to advise, and to have the Sentence of the higher Court antecedent.

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The Government OF THE Churches of Christ.

BOOK IV.

The claims of the Presbyterian Government considered, and refuted. That the Church Universal, is not a Church Political, and the Seat of Government. That the Institution for Worship and Government, falleth not upon the Saints in a Nation, as a Nation or Kingdom, to be the Seat of it. That an Argument cannot be urged, for a National Church-Government, from the Instance of the *Jewish* Pattern. That a standing Presbytery is not to be set up, to Exercise Power and Jurisdiction, over particular Congregations.

CHAP. I.

That the Church Universal is not a Church Political, and the Seat of Instituted Government.

I shall now examine the Validity of the Presbyterian claims for their Government; and first, I shall prove, that the Church Universal is not, in the whole, and in all the Subordinate parts of it, a Church-Political, and the Seat of Instituted Government. The Church Catholick is not a formed Politick Body, which Christ hath made the Seat of this power. That it indeed affordeth fit materials, both of Saints and Men gifted, we grant, even as Men are by Nature, having variety of several parts, and variety of gifts, fitted to the Bodies Politick; and if you take all Mankind, there is, among them, variety of gifts, and Dispositions fitted to make up Common-wealths; yet all Mankind, taken together, are not a politick Body, but as they are formed up into Common wealths or Kingdoms; and Men, having thus several gifts, are put into several Offices and Places, in those several Kingdoms and Common-wealths; which are ἀνθρωποκτίσεις, a Humane Creature, as the Apostle calls it. Even so it is here.

We yield also, that take the Church Universal in its parts, and so the Keys are given to the whole *partitive*, as divided into several Bodies, in whom God hath set Teachers and Pastors, *&c.* As we say he hath set, in a Kingdom, Constables and

Ch. I. Justices of the peace, &c. but yet every Constable is not a Constable of the whole Kingdom; so he hath set in his Church Apostles, &c. who were as the Nobles, and were Ministers, and had power in all Churches; yet exercised their power, *per partes*, as they came to this Church, and that Church; but he hath set other ordinary Officers, as other Justices of Peace in their several less Jurisdictions, or as Majors and Recorders in Incorporate Towns.

We yield also, that all these Churches, by vertue of their Catholick Relation, are knit together again in a common communion, on which they owe one unto another, by several Bands and Tyes, so as they have communion one with another; and that as Churches too, and with their Elders, as Elders: But the present question is, of the Keys of Jurisdiction.

1. These Keys cannot be given to the whole Universal Church; for first they do not, nor indeed can assemble.

2. The whole Universal Church, hath not all the Keys; for it is not capable of Preaching, nor is it capable of Receiving the Sacraments altogether. And suppose there were a General Council, of all the Ministers of the World, and they should receive the Sacrament; they should not receive it as Ministers, but they should receive it only as Believers.

That the Church-Catholicks on Earth, neither is, nor can be the Seat of this publick Worship, nor of this Government, as appears by those Arguments.

1. It can no more be so, than all Mankind can make a Common-wealth.

2 This is reserved to Heaven, which is the only General Assembly, where the Worship of God is perfected; to which all other particular Assemblies, the Family on Earth, come, *Heb.* 12.23.

3. If this power of Governing be given to the Church Universal; then either to a meeting of Elders, or of all the Faithful: Not of all the Faithful, for they cannot meet as in Congregations they do; nor is there any Institution for all the Males to meet, as in *Hierusalem*, nor for all the People, Male and Female, as once every Seventh year there, so these in some one place in the World. Neither is this power of Government, given to any meeting of Elders, as Elders to the Church Universal; for then either it must be, that God hath appointed a set company, as in the *Synedrim*, whose Office peculiarly it is, to be these Catholick Elders, set apart for that Work, as those who were Elders of the People (such in a manner were the Apostles,) And if so, let the ordinary Institution for this be shewn, such as theirs was for that, *Deut.* 7. 17. This indeed is the Popish principle, that all Bishops, are by Office Catholick Bishops; and may all, by their Office, attend a General Council: And thus as in *Jury*, God might have made two great ordinances, for the Government of his Church only; an Universal *Synedrim* for the Church Catholick (such as the Parliamentary power is in this Kingdom) and the other in that of Villages and Cities; there being none intermediate, or subordinate between them. But if it were so, then all intermediate Synods should be taken away, and only a *General Council* be *that*, to which all Congregations should Appeal. And that the Institution was not so, is evident by this, that all our Divines do acknowledge, that General Councils are but *ad bene esse*, and not absolutely necessary, (which they would be, if the primary Institution fell upon them) and therefore for the first Three Hundred years, there was none. But if the meaning be, that each Elder is an Elder of the Church Universal; and that the Church Universal is a Politick Body, thoroughout from top to bottom, the greater part still Ruling the lesser, and the Universal Ruling the whole: So as by vertue of their Relation to the whole, they act in any part, or may act in the whole (which is according to the Principles that the Assembly goes upon, in their answer to our Reasons) then the Institution of the politick Power, is made to fall first, and primarily on the Church Universal; for in their first *Præcognitum*, they say the whole Church is one, made up of the collection of all; and that hence there is a dependency of all the lesser, as parts upon the whole. But

4. If the Institution falls upon the Church Universal, then the Church Universal is a politick Body; and if so, then as this whole Church should be but one politick Body, so each Elder, should be an Elder to this whole Church, for all ends and purposes of an Elder, both for Worship and Government, for Elder and Church are Relative; as when the Apostle saith, *Ordain the Elders to every Church*, assuredly they

they had the relation of Elders to that Church, both for Worship and Government. Now this will set up an unparallel'd Monster in Government, the like to which Mankind never knew; and therefore cannot be the Institution of Christ; for Christ's Government is orderly. Now the Monstrousness of this will appear. 1. This will make an external politick Government to be managed by Men, (by Christ the Head, we grant it is now managed) that is, greater than any of the Monarchies, which, through their vastness, were hurtful to Mankind, whom they Ruled. For the Church Universal on Earth, is now, and hath been ever since the Apostle's time, in most of Nations, As Mr. *Brerewood* proves. There are the *Ethiopick* and *Arabian* Christians in *Africa*; the *Grecians* under the *Turk*: The *Armenians* under the *Persian*, the *Indian* Christians of St. *Thomas*, so called, because he was the Converter of Christians there; then there are all which are in Europe: And that many of these Churches are, in a great measure, pure in their Doctrine, or at least have enough to save Men; and so cannot be excluded out of the List of the Church-Catholick, appeareth by that confession of Faith, made by Patriarch *Cyrill*, in the Name of the *Grecian* Churches. Now to have so vast a Body to be in the whole, the Seat of Government (especially if you add to it, when the fullness of the *Jews* and *Gentiles* shall come in, and the *North* and *South* shall give themselves to Christ) how can this be practicable? And if not so, how can it be the Institution? It is true, that Christ's Internal Kingdom, and is thus large managed by himself, both in whole, and in part, and by his Spirit: But that his External Kingdom should be such, is inconceivable.

2. That, which increaseth the wonder, is, that all these should be governed by a general Aristocracy, whereas that it should be governed, by one Man, would be more teasable: But then,

3. It makes it more strange, that this should further be the Law of it, that every Elder of every Congregation, should be the Elder of these Churches, yea, of the whole Church; for all acts of Government, and that he should be bound up in his constant function, and exercise to the compass of one Congregation; and yet have, by a Fundamental Institution, a Right of Eldership in power, in all the Churches of the World besides. See but how absurd such a Government will be in the like civil Society, that were so vast a Body; suppose that in all these Countries mentioned, or all over the World, the Forms of Government, that now are, should be pull'd down, and should begin anew; and that the Government should be, that the Burgomasters or Aldermen, yea, Constables of every little Town or Village, chosen by the People, should be an Alderman to all ends and purposes, in all Towns Imperial, Incorporate, yea, in Villages, to Hang and Draw, as occasion is, throughout the World, and to have as much Right, as any therein; and by vertue of the Law, this Duty should lie on him, to stir up others, and joyn with others (if there be any thing amiss) to assume the Authority to execute this. We read indeed, that in the *Roman* Monarchy, it was the priviledge of private Persons, that he who was free of one City, *Rome*, was free of all the World, for Trading, &c. but that he should have power of Office in all Cities, was never heard of. This is a thing that never fell out, no not in *Israel*. There were indeed, general Elders, on purpose, appointed over all the Nation; but they were not Elders over every City. It is no where found, but in *Turky*, it is not to be parallel'd, but in that Government, which the *Janizaries* have, and among the Jesuits, it is the Law of their Society, but it is formidable to Princes, as was that of the Templers.

4. It is strange, that Christ should appoint such a Government, and leave it loosely for the persons, if they be called (as that is the Limitation with which our Brethren would mollifie it) to act in this, or that part of the Universal Church; and never so much as set down any of these things. In so great a Body, and Latitude of power, there had needed to have been, the most sure and certain Order, distinctly appointed by Christ. For let it be considered, how many things were to be ordered: As whether there should be but one General Council, to which all controversies should be brought, as in *Israel* the *Sanhedrim* was: And whether it should be of a constant standing, or be chosen anew every year: Whether in it, there should be more of Ruling or Teaching Elders, or an equal number of both: Whether there should be many Subordinations of sorts of Elders, and how many of them; and by what Rules and Limits, set out; and what number of each Elders should be therein: And who should choose them which are to be sent, whether every in-

Chap. I. dividual Elder meeting, as in provincial Assemblies they did, or whether a few chosen should choose the others. It is a wonder, that Christ hath set down none of these things, that he neither appointed one General Court, to which all Appeals should be brought; nor, if there were to be Subordinate Synods, hath assigned how many they should be, nor so much as declared, that there should be any such Subordination. And if the General Law of this supposed Government is, that every greater number should Rule the less; this would be an exceeding loose, and confused foundation of a setled Government; and a setled Government, Christ must be supposed to have left. In this case therefore, surely there should, of necessity, be the most positive Law to determine what that call is, whereby such should execute it, as well as to lay down a Law for the right, or else every one of them would challenge it; for every Man will say, he hath as good a Right as another, nay, greater.

5. This Right would both give all a pretence to it, as also lay it upon them. For as it is their Duty (as it was *Paul's*) to take care of all the Churches, so they have a call already, by their Fundamental Relation. And then if Elders, chosen by the Churches, should determine one way; yet the rest having a Fundamental Right, being Catholick Elders by Institution, might Determine the other way; for the obligation is by vertue of their being Elders of this Catholick Church.

6. Christ never gave an Institution, which was never brought forth into Act; but such is this pretended Institution of a Catholick Church, to be the Seat of Government.

1. Because that Church can never meet; and as *frustra est potentia, sic etiam potestas quæ non reducitur in Actum*, i. e. *not only Natural Power; but Authority too is in vain, which cannot be brought into the condition of Acting.* Christ did not set up a Doctrinal Principle for Government, and *policie* in the Speculation; but such an one as is practical. And our Presbyterian Brethren make use of the Notion, yet reject the thing; for they would be unwilling, that a General Council of all Christians interested, should be the Major part, Determining all the parts of Government and Doctrine, and bind up all Churches thereunto. Surely Jesus Christ suited his Government of his Church to all times, and there have been few times, in the World, in which this could be done, no not by General Councils; Divisions have and will hinder it, Persecutions, or distance of place, or want of consent, who shall call them, will hinder it.

2. It cannot be, that the primary Institution should fall upon it; for then the Institution should fall upon the Representative Church first, rather than on the Church both of the Faithful, and of the Elders too. But the Institution must rather be where both are; for they have more of the Reality of a Church.

3. God giveth Gifts and Abilities, suitable to all his Institutions; when God did call Apostles to an Universal Eldership, he gave them Gifts suitable: Now there are few, we may say none, of Elders that are fit to be Elders Catholick, that are fit to act in the Church Universal: And yet, every one in their place, every Ruling Elder, by this principle, must be supposed to be fit if called; for the Institution and their Office (according to this principle) doth give them the *Jus*, the Right, and the Ability; whereas the choice, by others, gives only the exercise; but the right, if founded upon an Institution, supposeth a fitness, or an Ability in all. That every Bishop (who pretended to have an higher Degree of Office, than ordinary Elders, by Divine Institution) should be a Catholick Bishop (for by the Antient Canon Law, all Bishops, in the World, might be of a General Council, by vertue of their place) is far more supposable. For as by their principles, they were of an higher Function; so a supposition might be made, of a proportionably higher Eminency of Parts, and Gifts to be in them, above other Men, as in some few in the Church there eminently is, as well as there is a vast difference of Natural Gifts, among the Sons of Men. Thus as Bishops were supposed to be Men of an Higher Degree, so, like *Saul*, they might be supposed Taller than their fellows. But to make all Elders, yea, Ruling Elders, (for they must come in too, if they be likewise by Institution) and all Ministers, Catholick Elders, and fit for General Councils, is to assert, that Christ hath also given to them all Gifts and Abilities, suitable to so Great a function and charge.

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4. God never called Men to do work in any part, which they are not capable of, as these Catholick Elders are not; for they ought to have variety of Languages, as God gave the Apostles. For if Appeals may be made, they are to hear every Man in his own Language speak for himself. When God did make Catholick Elders, Catholick Rulers, he gave them Languages. You argue more Congregations than one, from variety of Languages in *Hierusalem*, or else they could not perform their Duties to each. We may do the like against this Catholick Eldership here. If it had been only asserted, that every Man is an Elder of a Church, in the same Nation, then indeed such Elders might, in respect of Language, have been fit for their Office; but if you extend their Office to all the World, then it is impossible for them, to discharge it, when they are called to exercise it in any part of it, since they have not all Languages; and so are not capable of a call, to exercise their whole Function (as our Brethren say, their Right and Office is) in every part, or in the whole. But now when God made Officers of all Churches, he gave Gifts accordingly, Tongues, and Languages, as to the Apostles. Now we believe, that most Ruling Elders, have but one Language; yea, and if Latin, were the general Language, they were not fit to be Catholick Elders. Book IV.

5. By the Law of this Rule, if the Apostles should have met in a General Council, other Elders being also in that General Council, Catholick Elders, and being there, by vertue of being Catholick Elders, they must needs have been, in that respect, equal with the Apostles. For in that place, and in that Sphere, what could the Apostles challenge more of Authority amongst them, since to be a Catholick Elder, was the Highest Authority of an Apostle?

6. This principle is contradictory to other principles of our Presbyterian Brethren: For, whereas to rear up their Subordination of Assemblies, they invented a Representative Relation, personating many Churches, and also other Superior Assemblies, such as National, and General Councils; this new taken up principle, of every Elder's being an Elder of the Universal Church, destroys it, or makes it needless. It takes away all such Representations; for every Person, chosen to be of them, was already a Member really, and not Representatively of the whole, and hath a full Right of Eldership of the whole Church, according to this their Notion, and the special call, any one hath, is but *Designatio personæ, a Designation of the Person*, who shall serve at such a time; but in that Council, when met, he Representeth the whole Church, as much as any particular Church, when he meeteth there. And to make him an Elder, representing any particular Church, is to give him a lower Title than he had; for he is an Elder of the Universal. And his call only gives the *Exercitium*, the other gives the *Jus*, which is more than the *Exercitium*, for it is the root of it.

7. It would make *Bellarmin's* Argument good, that the greater company of Elders simply would have the greater Authority; for, it lying not in representation, but in being Elders of the Catholick Church, they must (though out of a Council) needs carry it, if more of them will agree to meet in a Body, at any time.

8. If every Elder were thus an Elder of a Church Universal, then the Church Universal should call him to his Office; but the Church Universal doth not call him, but only particular Churches. For Church and Elder are Relatives, and the call is that which makes the Relation: And Jesus Christ calleth either mediately, or immediately. Immediately, he indeed did call Apostles to be Officers of the Church Universal; but then himself did it, and gave Gifts accordingly fit for it. When he calleth mediately, there is a proportion between the means by which he calleth, and the thing whereto a Man is called; and therefore the proportion must lie in this, if he be a Member of the Church Universal, the Church Universal must be the means of his call; and if he be called by a particular Church, then his Office reacheth no further: We have an express Institution, that Elders were set over their particular Flocks, by the Holy Ghost, *Acts* 20. and when the Apostles themselves, who were General Officers of all Churches, did Ordain any Elder, it was but Κατὰ πολιν, and Κατ' Ἐκκλεσίαν, so that although the callers had an Universal power, which no Synod in the World hath the like; yet the Office of the called was limited, according to the Seat and Church, to which he was called: And if the Apostle did not make General Elders, who yet had an Universal Power, then surely a particular Church cannot make a general Elder, that exceeds its proportion; he is thereby limited both by the

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the extent of the power of the callers, and the limits of the Seat, to which he is called: And indeed, the Nature of an Office, in the Church, is a Separation of him for a constant work; it is not to do here and there an act of Office, as a Journy-man, but to have a constant imployment, which Office therefore is limited to a certain Church, which Church also calleth him to a certain imployment there. And if it be said that a Corporation hath power to call a Man to be a Member of the Parliament, for the whole Kingdom. Yet there is a double difference in this. The Law saith not, that every Burgess is a Parliament Man, and a Burgess of the Kingdom; which is, that you would make to be the Law here. And then in the Second place, the whole *Terminus*, and *Object* of his call, is to be a Burgess in that case of the whole Kingdom; and the relation ceaseth, when the use and exercise ceaseth.

And if it be said, that every Member is a Member of the Church Universal; and therefore every Elder is an Elder of the Church Universal: The case is not the same: For the one is a meer communion by way of priviledge: The other is by way of Jurisdiction. And there is a great deal of difference, between a Man's being free to Trade in all places, and in all Countries; and to have the power of a Senator, or a Constable, or a Noble-man, in all Countries where ever he comes. And sure our Brethren will not hold themselves to the parallel thereof, for 1. Tho' a Member of any other Church hath the priviledge to Receive the Sacrament, or have his Child Baptized; yet they would not allow him a capacity of being called (when he comes occasionally among them) to choose an Officer with them, or exercise such a priviledge over them, or with them. 2. If the proportion of Elder and Members be observed, then by this Rule, as any Member of another Church may, without any further special call, than barely a Testimony, that he is a member of another Church, challenge communion with any Church; (without any precedaneous active call of the Church intervening) so by the same Rule of proportion, if every Elder, were an Elder of the Church Universal, you need not say, if he be called by another Church, he may do thus or thus; but if it be made out by Testimony, that he is an Elder of another Church, he may challenge the priviledge of an Elder, as the other may of a member. 3. As for the communion of members in other Churches, there needs not any special Association of Churches into a Presbytery, neither hath a member a further right or call, to receive in a Church within his Association, then in any other Church in the World. By like Reason, Associations should be as needless for these Universal Elders to exercise Government in, and if the proportion holds, then as the Elder or Elders of one Association is excluded from coming to intermeddle in a Neighbour Association: So members of another Association should be from communion in those Churches, which are not Associated with it.

9. That which is the principle and foundation of Popery; and which if it prevail'd, and all the Churches challenge the right of it, would hinder further Reformation and Growth in the Truth; and would make all the Reformed Churches Schismaticks, and would justifie Nonresidency, and introduce a Foreign Ecclesiastical Government, in all States and Kingdoms, that cannot be Christ's Government: But such is this Catholick Political Church.

1. As for Popery, *Bellarmine* and *Suarez* lay this Foundation for the Pope's Authority. 1. That the Church Universal is a politick Body, and he quoteth the same Scripture, that our Brethren use to do. And 2. He saith therefore, it must have a Supream power, existing somewhere: For as there cannot be *una res publica sine Civili Suprema potestate*, nor *unus exercitus sine imperatore*; so nor can there be *Ecclesiæ politia una*, without an External Supream power, suited thereunto. And if there be such a politick Body, see how easie a step it is, for the Pope's Monarchy in the third place: for if the Institution do fall first upon it, then there is reason supposed, that Christ hath ordered a constant existent Government; for the greatest Institution deserveth the greatest Blessing; And he that gave Ordinances to every particular Church, Pastors and Teachers, would be sure to give them to the whole, considered as a politick Body. So *Bellarmine* argueth also, that if the particular Churches had not been united into one Body, one Pastor might suffice each; but if they be all united into one great Body, there must be (saith he) one external Pastor over the whole.

2. To

2. To think that Jesus Christ should make an Institution of a Doctrinal principle only (which should not have existence) namely of this, that the Church Universal is a politick Body, only to set up pedling Presbyteries, by vertue of it, or Provincial Assemblies, when yet his Institution, is by that principle, supposed to fall primarily, upon the Church Universal, is not likely. Book IV.

3. The competition would be, whether a General Council should be the constant exiltent Government, or one Man. A General Council there never was yet, one that was truly General (as all acknowledge) but that some Churches have been left out, either those in the *Indies* or *Gothland*, or some-where else they have been still, as *Chamier* argues against the Pope: And if it could be, it could be but rarely; but Christ would have appointed his Government (if his prime Institution had fallen here) for one time, as well as for another. But now as when *Moses* was wanting, they set up a Calf, the Christian World, if this principle were true, would say, here is an Universal Church, but where is a Government extant?

4. And then if a General Council were extant, yet herein one Man may moderate; and it is not against the essence, or the constitution of Government, (as Presbyterial Divines acknowledge) that one Man should be a constant Moderator.

And then 5. If that this General Council were Dissolved, at some time they might have the same power that a National Assembly useth to have in *Scotland*, to make a Committee of a company of a Head City, to be Commissioners till the Council meet again, and this would be a good standing conclave (such as is at *Rome*) for the whole Church.

And then 6. If you would help it out with the Law of Nature, as you use to do with this principle of the Universal Church, if the Institution be not very express, the Law of Nature will as well set up one Man, to whom Appeals may be made; and the Analogy of the Forms of Civil Governments and Monarchies of the World, which all the World runs after, will help to strengthen it.

And then 7. You shall have the Examples in the Old Testament (which also, in this case, you use to have Recourse to) to back it. There was a perpetual *Synedrim*, where there was a National Universal Church, and there was an High Priest, and if the High Priest were ceremonial, yet that one Man should be over the several Order of Priests, was according to the Law of Nations, whereby the Eldest, in a Tribe, was over the rest. And to have this one Man, and this Conclave to be peculiarly designed for the Church Universal, is more practicable: For if there were such an Institution, who would not rather think, that there should be one Man, or some Men, whose business should be set apart, to watch over all in common, with Apostolick promise made to them, than that those that have charges of their own little Congregations (which Congregations are to be the main of their care) should be all Catholick Elders? That other way the Church would be easily governed; for particular Pastors would only have the care of particular Churches, and one Man perhaps, together with others singled out, should be appointed for nothing else but the publick: Whereas this principle would make it every Man's care, and so no Man's, or divide them between the general and their particular charges.

8. Then you would have all the inconveniencies of an Aristocracy, in the Government of so great a Body, which will prove equal to those of a Monarchy: For first, all Heresies have ever been from the Clergy, and their Divisions. And secondly, the Church would ordinarily, this way, want a Supream Government, which the other way of one Man, would be constant in. And 3. Divisions would not so easily be allayed. So as indeed, it is more Rational, (if this principle had been true, that the Great Body of the Church Universal should be a politick Body;) that Christ should have Instituted a constant Conclave for the Government of it, under some one Man.

Lastly, It would make the Clergy, the Catholick Church in the Creed; for to tell the Church, if it be a politick Body, is to tell these Elders which Represent the whole. Yea, by this you would make two Churches; one of the Elders, another of the Faithful: And if you distinguish it yet further, into the visible and invisible, you make three. And then as for that Catholick Church of the Elders, they would be a fit Body for the Pope presently to be the Head of them, and to step into the Throne; for the Pope, and the Popish Clergy, make that one Beast mentioned in the *Revelation*.

2. This

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2. This principle would hinder all Reformation, if Practised according to the Law of it; and prove all Reformed Churches Schismaticks: For if there were, *de jure*, a General Assembly of all *Grecian*, *Egyptian*, *Ethiopick*, *Persian* Christians, and they would set down the Doctrine, which we shall all be confined to; and we should be, by the Law of the Universal Catholick politick Church, obliged to an uniformity with them, or with the greater part of them, as well as now we think our selves to be with the Reformed Churches: How would this set the Clock of Reformation back? And yet according to this principle, we are more bound to the Law of uniformity to this General Body, than we are to any particulars: For Institution doth fall first according to this Notion, upon the Church Universal, and therefore the Law of it would oblige more: And so if we refuse to do this, we should make our selves Schismaticks, from the Great Ordinance and Institution of Christ. Yea, this must have been the Law of Reforming Churches in all Ages, with respect to the Church Universal. For the Law is perpetual, and is at no time Dispensable; for Christ is with his own Ordinances, to the end of the World. If *Luther* had been bound up, by this Law, how had the Church been Reformed? We should not have gained that in seven Hundred years, that he did in Twenty. Yea, if this Synod had been so chosen by the Law of the Universal Church, as to take in the Ministers of all *England*; so that the Law were to call all, one as well as another (for one and all are Ministers, as well as Churches) this would have spoil'd your Reformation. And besides, this would make us all Schismaticks, by our National Covenant; for if we were under the Law of the Church Universal, as a politick Body, we do make a Separation from this Law, by combining our selves only with Reformed Churches, that are so small and inconsiderable a part of the Church Universal.

The Assembly of Divines at Westminster.

3. It justifies Non-residency, or makes Non-residence, *Jure Divino*; for Ministers, being Elders of a Church Universal, by a prior Institution, can never be absent from their Flock. And every Man may pretend, for a more general Service of the whole, whereof he is a Member, that the lesser should give way. And this was the chief grounds for Non-residency, in the Bishop's times, that every Man was a Minister of the Church of *England* in general, and so he might serve the whole; and therefore, though he were a professor in the University, he was serving the whole Church, and so he might hold other livings too, and yet be absent from them.

4. It layeth a Foundation of bringing in a Foreign Power, to bind all or any of the Kingdoms in *Europe*. It will bind any, for the greater part of the Reformed Churches, if we should go no further, may challenge, by vertue of this ordinance and institution, that, what they agree upon, we all should receive.

Object. But you will say still, that the Magistrate may still call those Universal Elders to meet in a Council, or not call them.

Answ. 1. But still if this be an Ordinance, they are to call themselves: It is their Duty; They are to assume it, if the Magistrate should neglect. And

Answ. 2. However when they are called, they may impose their Canons. And

Answ. 3. The Magistrate is bound to be Subject, for they are Christians, and so *Pars Ecclesiæ*, and so to be Subject to this Ordinance; for they have not a power to break the Ordinance of Christ: And they are not to Resist it, for there is a Law of Christ's Institution upon it. If it be but consultive to the Magistrate, then they say no more than we; if obligatory, then it bindeth, and then they must either take the Magistrates into the Council as Members also, which is the usual *Salvo* for it; and so they are parts of the Parliament and Common-wealth, which hinders the freeness of the Vote of the Ecclesiastick Persons; And then if the Major part which carry it be not the Magistrates, but Ministers, as usually they are; then the Magistrates, in their civil Assemblies, when they come to confirm it, are bound either to ratifie it, or not: If not, then the Authority of the Synod is but consultive to them: If they be bound, then this Synod is a Superiour power to the King and State; and this within their own Dominions, by vertue of this Catholick principle. And then, without their Dominions, the greater number of Churches will

will oblige both the one and the other, and is a power over Princes; yea, and a Foreign Power may be brought in hereby, and as well as by Popery, only with this difference (if you cut off Infallibility) that there is but one Man, the Pope, but here an Aristocracy of Divines. Book IV.

Lastly, Any among us would not be more bound to the Elders of our own Churches, then to the Bishops, and Elders of the *Eastern* Churches, if there was to be found more of the Catholick Church, or a greater among them; for hereby I have as good a Warrant and Authority to cleave to them. Cohabitation doth not oblige me to my own Elders, when the Institution is Universal all the World over.

Those places that are ordinarily alledged, 1 *Cor.* 12. 28. and *Ephes.* 4. although they import communion amongst Churches, by vertue of that Catholick obligation; yet none of them hold forth, that *that Catholick Church* is a politick Body. Indeed it is said there, that God hath set up Apostles, &c. in that Church; but it is as a Man may say, he hath set up Kings and Emperors in the World, it d[illegible] therefore follow, that the whole World is one politick Body; and all th[illegible] and Emperors have an Authority over the Universe, but only partitive in t[illegible] ral Dominions.

And the communion which the Members are obliged unto, and the band[illegible] ties, there mentioned, are not only between the Saints and the Churches, and Officers thereof now extant, and existing in the World, the Catholick State of the Church, in all Ages, is implyed, with whom we profess to hold a communion now, and we ought to do it, as well as with the Churches now extant. And that is clearly the Scope, in *Ephes.* 4 and 1 *Cor.* 12. 28. for he speaks of Prophets and Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers, that are given to build up the Churches in the Faith, untill the coming of Christ, every Age being knit unto another, by certain bands and tyes; and the Church in every Age, receiving a benefit by the Pastors and Teachers, and by the Prophets and Apostles, and their Writings in former Ages: And in all Ages, they have conspired so far, as to preserve Fundamental Truths. And from those places it may as well be argued, that Pastors and Teachers, and general Councils in former Ages, have a Juridical power upon all the Churches afterward, as that the present Churches have, for he speaks both of the one, and the other, as one *Totum complexum.*

Object. And if it be said, that the Apostles were Ministers of the Church Universal, having Jurisdiction over the whole Universal Church; therefore once the whole Universal Church, was a politick Body in their time, and why not now: It is thus answered.

Answ. 1. Besides the difference of Apostles and other Elders, elsewhere spoken of, even to the Apostles themselves, all the Churches Universal did not make one politick Body, to be governed in common; but the Apostles still as they came to several Churches, had power in all those Churches severally apart; so as all those Churches are not called one Church, no, not in respect of the Apostle's Government. But this opinion of the Universal Catholick Church, being a Body politick to all these Elders, would make it to be in order to a Combination under those Elders, as one whole politick Body, governed by them in common, and in, and by common Assemblies; whereas the Apostles, severally and apart, had, in all these Churches, the power still as they came occasionally: And therefore to assert, that particular Churches, having their particular Eldership, by whom they are governed, make up one Mystical Church, is in this to answer the pattern of the Apostle's Government it self; that as the whole Church then was not governed by the Apostles, as a whole Church, but only by parts; that is, the particular Churches by an Apostle, as he came into it, or as he had occasion to write to it; that so now this whole Church is also by parts governed, that is, the particular Churches are governed by their several Elders, having Jurisdiction therein, and therein only. And if unto Apostles themselves, this whole Church was not a politick Body, taken as one, then much less to Elders of particular Churches.

2. And also further, the meaning of that place, in 1 *Cor.* 12. 28. is not that every Elder hath an Authoritative politick Jurisdiction in all Churches, as occasion is, which is evident by this; because other particulars are there mentioned, as namely Ruling Elders, and Deacons (which our Brethren do understand by those words, Helps and

Chap. II. Governments, for so it is in the Original) so then they also should be Officers, as Deacons, and as Governours in all Churches also. And therefore his meaning is only this, it is as if it should be said, in a Common-wealth he hath set Noble-men and Judges, *&c.* who have the power in the whole, and every part of a Kingdom; and he hath set Justices of Peace, and Constables, and Headboroughs, *&c.* but it would not follow, that as the Noble-men and Judges have power in every part, so the ordinary Justices of Peace, and every Constable or Headborough hath: And yet if from that place they would argue, that ordinary Elders have power in all Churches, as Elders, they must also acknowledge Deacons to have the like.

3. And that place in *Ephes.* 4. speaks of Pastors and Teachers, in respect of Doctrine, and therefore mentioneth only those that did labour in the Word and Doctrine, such as Prophets and Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers; and speaks of their being ordained to keep that unity of the Faith; and therefore speaks only of their Doctrinal power, not of their Judicial power of acts of Government.

4. And it is farther to be considered, that when it is said, that he had set Apostles, *&c.* in the Church, he speaks not of Officers in the concrete, or of this and that Church, in this or that Age; but he speaks of Church, and of Officers in the Abstract, he speaks of the kind; and so answerably we read, Eph. 4. 8. *He gave Gifts to Men*, that is, to such Officers in the Abstract.

5. The general Church receiveth Pastors and Teachers, but as formed up into particulars; therefore they are set in it only *partitive*; and though the Church is said to be the Subject in which they are set, yet not as a collective Body, and therefore they do not make up a general Government.

Object. It may be objected, that the Apostles are said to be the Church Universal.

Answ. 1. They are not set in it as a Collective Body, and if they were, yet as all Pastors cannot supply the Office of an Apostle, when met all together, so they are not set as Apostles, as the Apostles were. The Earls in a Kingdom are set otherwise in a Kingdom, than the Constables are; and therefore the meeting of all the Constables in a Kingdom, cannot make up one Office of an Earl, or the Relation they have to the whole Kingdom.

2. The Apostles were executively set in particular Churches only, and so the whole Church was not one Church, in Relation to them, nor did all Churches make up one Church, in relation to them for a Government.

Then 3. We acknowledge, that they may be all set in this Body as Apostles, and as Elders, and that by vertue of communion of Churches; and if you will keep it in that Mystical way, they are to be respected as Elders of such and such Churches, by all the Churches in the World.

As it is again objected out of those places, *Eph.* 4. and 1 *Cor.* 12. that the Gifts there, that are given to the Church, are not proper and peculiar to the elect.

Answ. It's true; but yet, though they are not given only to those that are elect in the issue, and in the event; yet they are given only to those that were visibly such unto Men, and to be taken for such; and such as, if we had lived in those times, would have been to be accounted Saints by us. All that are true Members of Churches, we are to look upon as elect, for they are elect to us; and therefore he Writes to the *Church elect in Babylon.* They are all Saints to us, and so they are visibly such, that make the visible Church. And that the visible Church there, though consisting of Men that in issue proved not the elect, is yet under the notion of such as are, appeareth by this; that they are said to drink into one Spirit, that is, into the Holy Ghost, alluding to the Receiving of the Sacrament; because that none should be supposed to be of that Catholick visible Body, or of particular Bodies of Churches, but such as are supposed to partake of the Holy Ghost, as every True Saint doth. And the drinking into one Spirit there, cannot be meant of extraordinary Gifts, which may be supposed to be given to Reprobates, because the Spirit in extraordinary Gifts, is not received by the Sacrament.

Object. Whereas it is said, that the Elders and the Officers, are given to the whole Universal Church; therefore that is a politick Body: I answer, that by the same reason, Mankind should be a politick Body also, for *they* are said to be given to Men, *Ephes.* 4. and the Gifts that are there said to be given to Men, are not to be understood

stood of the inherent Gifts or Qualifications, in respect of those Men they are given unto (as the grace of an Apostleship to an Apostle) but it is meant of Men giftedly put into Office, given unto other Men, or to Mankind; which appeareth by this, because they are given by conversion, before Men are of the Catholick Body, as well as for building up after they are in it.

It is again objected, that 1 *Cor.* 12. it is said, that *the Members are to Honour one another, that there be no Schisms in the Body*, ver. 25. *if one Member suffer, all the Members suffer with it*, ver. 26.

Answ. As there is a double Body of Church to Christ, the one Mystical, and the other Instituted; so there is a double Union, the one Mystical, though external; and the other more special for Government and Jurisdiction. And the same things, that are spoken of the Duty of Members in a Body Instituted, that are a Body to Christ in particular, as the Apostle afterward distinguisheth, are due also to all Saints, by vertue of their Mystical Relation. And we find that the Apostles indeed, do argue the instance of the communion of the Body Catholick, which is between all Saints, to exemplifie and to illustrate the Duties that are to be between Saints, in a particular Body so joyned; yet by way of Similitude, but not onenefs for kind. And because also all the Duties of Love, which, in particular Congregations, the Members are to perform one to another, are Duties by a Mystical Relation, as well as by that special obligation: Yet they are bound to them by an obligation, beyond that of the Mystical Relation, which they bear to all Saints in the World. For though the Church Mystical Universal, affordeth matter for such an Instituted Congregational Church; yet that they should thus meet in Christ's Name, is a Superadded Form to this matter, and lays a farther obligation upon the members.

CHAP. II.

That the Institution for Worship and Government, falleth not upon the Saints in a Natim, Qua Nation or Kingdom, as the Seat of it.

THough the Pattern of the *Jewish* Church be urged to prove such a National Church, yet it will not serve the turn.

1. For it was not therefore a Church, because a Nation, but because there were no more Nations that God had chosen, nor would choose till Christ came; and therefore if any other turned Proselite, they were to turn *Jews*, and to be as Natives.

2. The Instance of the *Jewish* Church, will rather serve for the proof of an universal Church, than for any evidence, that there should be as many Churches, as there be Nations. When the *Jews* did turn Christians, they were the same Nation; yet the Apostles do no where Write to them, as a National Church: They Write not to *the Church of Judea*, but *the Churches*.

3. That the Church of the *Jews*, was a Type of the Churches in Nations, as Nations, let that be shewn. We can shew that the whole Nation, and Temple-worship, was a Type of Congregations, and *that Royal Nation* (as that whole Nation was then called) *and the Holy Priesthood*, is a Type of the Saints in all Nations.

4. God at first Set up a Church-Government, suitable to that of a Kingdom, and suited unto the Government of the World; that policy is therefore called the Elements of this World, unto which the Church in the New Testament, is not to be conformed, *Rom.* 12.

5. And then when there was a National Church, there was a Worship for the whole Nation, as a Nation to come unto; and so a Government in the place that God should choose for all to appeal unto; but there are no such orders now.

6. If the Institution do fall upon them, it must fall upon them either as they are a Church in a Kingdom, or as a Kingdom. But not as a Church in a Kingdom, for *Qua* Church, there is a greater Church out of that Kingdom, namely the Universal.

7. This opinion, tho' it seems indeed calculated to comply with Magistracy, for it divideth the independency of Government, according to the Division of the Supream

Chap. II. power of Magistrates, and so would seem to fence them from any external power, from any other Kingdoms or Churches: Yet it makes the *Church-power* in that Kingdom, independent upon that Magistrate, and *that* united into a greater Body, would be too hard for them, whereas the dispersing it, into particular Congregations, makes it easily wieldable.

Neither doth the Institution fall upon a conformity, either to the extent, or to the Government of Cities, as those who are for Episcopacy have intended, and some Presbyterial Divines also; and both upon the same grounds, although with this difference, that the Bishops would have the Government of Churches, to be conformed to that of the Cities, taking in the Villages about them, and so to make a Diocess and a Diocesan Church; but those for the Presbytery, contract it to the extent of a City within it self, and so make a classical Church; the opinions of either, differing in this respect only, *viz.* the point of extent of larger and lesser Jurisdiction, the one confined within the City Walls, the other extending without.

1. Because if it were so, then the conformity either must fall upon the Government of Cities, or the bounds of the place; that look what extent either the Government, or bounds of the Local Circuit of Cities have, the same extent should your classical Presbyteries have conformable thereunto; and in asserting either unavoidable Absurdities, would follow.

1. To make the Government conformable to the Government of Cities, as their extent should fall out, is to make a warly Government, the pattern of Ecclesiastical, is wholy to conform Spiritual Government, to the Government of the World; and then the same degrees of Officers of Superiority, and Inferiority, that is in Cities, should be in Ecclesiastical Government.

2. The conformity must rather fall upon the bounds of the Governments of Cities, than upon the circuit or material consideration; because that, which makes it a City, is the Government of it, whether the bounds of it be within the Walls, or other Towns about it, whether it extend to a larger circuit, or to a less.

3. It must either fall upon a City, as having many Congregations in it; and if so, it might as well have fall upon Villages in the Country, capable by Association to be many Churches as well, and the one would be as uncertain as the other; because there may be many Congregations in the one, as well as in the other. Or else 2. It must fall upon the Form of the Government of Cities. Or else 3. Upon Cities of such and such a circuit; and some Cities greater, and some lesser, that would be uncertain also; because some Cities are greater, and some lesser.

2. The Foundation of this Assertion cannot be a conformity to the Government of the Cities amongst the *Jews*; for 1. The Villages, among the *Jews*, had a Government in them, as well as the Cities. 2. Suppose that the Government of the *Gentiles*, in their Cities, was not conformed to the Government of the *Jews* in their Cities (which may well be supposed) for the Government of the *Gentiles*, was oftentimes to have whole Empires under the Government of a City; so *Rome* had, and then all the World under *Rome*, whilst it was a City Government, must have been one classical Church. or however, among the *Gentiles*, the Cities were the Head of a whole Province, and of all the Villages under it, and it is so in many Cities at this Day; and that would make for a Diocesan Government, and not Presbyterial.

If thus the bounds cannot be fixed, we are still to seek even in Cities, what should be the bounds, and are as uncertain, as in Villages. So as the conclusion is, the bounds according to this measure are uncertain.

3. God doth not shape a Spiritual Government, unto the political? and the bounds thereof. Political Government, goes by the bounds of the Soil; so doth not the Spiritual. All that do live within such a place, or within such a Country, because they are of that Soil, fall under the same political Government; but there is no reason, that they should fall under the same Spiritual.

4. If the Frame of the Church were to be conformed to the City Government; then as the City did take in the *Suburbian* Towns, the Daughters round about, so the Church should not be confined only to the compass of the City, but extend to a whole Province: As the Bishops argue for a Diocesan Church.

5. Christ's Government is suitable to all Ages, times and places; but now in all Ages and places, there is not the City Government; and there could not be the same Rule for the Government of Churches in Villages, and therefore it did not suit all places.

6. Jesus Christ's way is rather conformed to the Synagogue way; for so the Churches are called, and it is therefore conformed to the Government of the Synagogues, although in Cities.

7. If this were the Ordinance of God, to conform Church Government to the Government of Cities, then all, in *London*, should make one Church, because it is but one City; and *Alexandria* and *Grand Cairo*, if it were converted, would be so too, nay *Rome* it self (whereof the present *Rome*, is but the tenth part of what it was, as *Cyprius* shews) must have been but one Church, if they had been all converted; and there should have been but one classical Presbytery, to have Governed all the Churches there. Yea, in some places there are two Cities built together, that have the priviledges of Cities, as *Constantinople* and *Galata*, *London* and *Westminster*, the two *Pragues*; yea, *Jerusalem* had the City of *David* within it, and so there must have been two classical Presbyteries in *Jerusalem*, from the first; For those of the City of *David*, might have challenged the priviledge of it, the Church had been conformed to a City Government; and perhaps that was the reason, why we read of two companies of the three and twenty Elders, that did sit in *Jerusalem*; because each City had an Eldership of Twenty three, and so there being two Cities in that one, that of *David*, and the other of *Jerusalem* it self; there might be two Elderships, for those two Cities, besides there great *Synedrim*.

8. When Cities are decay'd and do lessen, and are brought low, it may be to as smal a number of Inhabitants, as Villages; yet they often retain their Priviledges as Cities, as many decayed Incorporations do. Now then if there were but one Congregation left in such a lessen'd City, it would claim by vertue of this City, priviledge to be intire within it self.

Object. But the Apostle hath said, in Tit. 1. *Ordain Elders in every City*, and that is parallel with that in Acts 14. *They Ordain Elders in every Church*, holding forth the pattern of a City, and the Government thereof for the bounds of it, to be set for that of a Church.

Answ. 1. That place in *Acts* 14. in every Church hath Relation, as well to Churches in Villages, as in Cities; and so to Churches in those first times of the Gospel, that consisted of no more than might meet in one place; and therefore as well it may be interpreted, that there was but as many as would make but one Church in every City, as suiting the Phrase of his Direction, in Relation to what number of Christians were supposed to be in each City of *Crete*, when first *Titus* came thither in the beginning of the Gospel; and this number may well be supposed, to be no more than could make up one Congregation, and it was well if so too, no more than could make up.

Answ. 2. Ordinary Elders in every Church implies farther, that if there were more Churches to be in a City, that then he should ordain the Elders, Κατ' ἐκκλησίαν, to every Church apart.

Answ. 3. That it is so, appears; because as hath been shewn πόλις City is meant, small Towns as well as Cities.

Answ. 4. The Reason why his Direction runs to Ordain Elders in every City, was because though they did Preach the Gospel in Villages, yet principally in Cities at the first; because they were to leaven the Countries. And the Apostles, when they did Write to Churches in a Province; did use to Write to the Church of the Head City, as more eminent, not because that was either a Mother Church, as the Bishops say, or a classical Church of more Churches, as the Presbyterians say; but because it was more eminent, and from it the Epistle might be spread to others, as *Paul's* Epistle, to the *Colossians*, was ordered to be sent to *Laodicea*, which was in all likelihood, a less City than *Colosse*. And thus when they Write to the Churches of *Syria* and *Cilicia*, *Acts* 15. they Write especially to *Antioch*. So when he would Write to all the Churches about *Corinth*, he nameth especially the Church of *Corinth*, together with them; and wrappeth up all the rest thus, *and all that call upon the Name of the Lord.*

Object.

Ch. II.

Object. It was the Ordination of the Apostles in the Primitive Times, that all, in a City, should be one Church; both because the Distinction of Churches, and also their Names are taken from the City, as the Church of *Ephesus*, &c. And therefore whether in one consideration or more, whether for the present, or for the time to come, the Saints, in such and such a City, were to be one Church; and a Congregational Church they could not be, therefore a distinction of a classical Church was intended by a Church in Cities. And the Elders had charge given them, to take care of that whole City, to convert them. And to this pattern of a City Government, were the Villages also to be conformed, several Villages making an Association into one Church, as those Cities did.

Answ. 1. To the first part of the objection I answer, that they are called one Church in a City, and so distinguished; because there was but one Church for the present, as in *Acts* 3. 1. Κατὰ τὴν οὖσαν ἐκκλησίαν, *the Church existing at* Antioch, that is, which at present was there. It doth not follow, that all the Churches, that should afterwards be there, should be but one Church. So as *Bains* saith, there is an Adequate acception of these Phrases, *per accidens*, not because the City and Church, was to make but one Church; but because the Christians by occasion of their number, not being then too great, were formed into one Church, not because there was to be but one. Now he, who thus useth them promiscuously, doth imply, that one Church was as yet constituted, not that there was to be but one, through the circuit of a City, Suburbs, and Country. Thus likewise it is easily answered, to the purpose of the Proposition; for thus the Multitude of Citizens converted, and unconverted, could not be a Church of one Congregation; yet the number of those, who in City, Suburbs, or Territories, were actually converted, was no more than might be ordered into one Church; and the Apostles framing these into one, on the present occasion, did not exclude the after constituting of any other within the same local bounds. But if there had been more, there would have been other ways to have distinguished them: As when there were many Synagogues in a City, they were distinguished (for all the Synagogues could not have been called, by the Name of that one City; so nor the Congregations) and perhaps that was the reason, why that a School, which was a kind of a Synagogue, was for Distinction's sake, called the School of *Tyrannus*, as being the Ruler of it.

Answ. 2. If that were a Reason, then also the Name of a Village or smaller Town, as that of *Cenchrea*, would make as strong an Argument, that in every small Town, if there be a Church there, that it should be one intire Church (having the Government wholy in it self) as well as that many Congregations in a City, should become one Church for Government.

Answ. 3. The name of a Church, in a City, is not taken simply from the City, but from the People; as in the *Revelation*, the Church of the *Smyrnians*, and of the *Laodiceans*, &c. Suppose they had removed (as in those times, thorough Persecution they often did) to some other City; they would have been the Church of the *Smyrnians*, as well as the Church at *Arnhem* was called the *English Church*. So as the Name doth not refer simply to a City, and the bounds thereof. And when there was a Church of Strangers, of *Aquila* and *Priscilla*, &c. in *Rome*, it is called the Church in their House; and so also when they were removed to *Ephesus*, it bore the same Name, to Distinguish it from the Church of the *Ephesians*. It is one exception against us, that when we say the bounds of a Church should be so many as can meet in one place, we hereby do fetch the constitution of a Church, from what is meerly external and accidental to it; and the exception were true, if we fetch it from any one set or standing place, or House of meeting; but we fetch it from that which is essential to a Church, which is oneness of communion, in ordinances together, meeting with one accord, as in the *Acts*, their meetings are characterized, which because it cannot be done, unless they do meet in some place or other, hence we so express it, not as that thing the Ordination is set upon, but as the necessary consequent or adjunct; but this exception made against us, falls fully and directly upon them, that would make a City the extent, either of the Local bounds, or the Government thereof a pattern or measure of a classical Church, and the Institution of it.

If many Churches had been in one City, they might have been Distinguished by the Names of some of the Rulers, or as now they are by the Streets, or places of their constant meetings; for as if the Holy Ghost doth Write to the Angel of the Church of

of *Ephesus*, as if the King doth Write to the City of *London*, he should intitle his Letter, to the Mayor and Aldermen, as Writing to the whole Corporation in their Names; so also might several Churches in Cities, have been as well Distinguished by the Names of their Rulers, and of their Elders and Pastors, as *Tyrannus* his School was. And there are other Reasons, why in that case the Names should be taken from the place; for cohabitation and dwelling together in a place, we acknowledge is a ground, why the Saints, so far as possibly they can, should meet in one Church-Fellowship, and not make several Fellowships. And we much rather think, that still the Denomination of one Church, in a City, did hold forth this Rule, that in all Cities, the Saints dwelling together; and so elsewhere, should make as big Churches as they could; to shew their Unity, and to make the Worship more Solemn, and to have more of the assistance of the Holy Ghost; and therefore they should not make many Congregations, where there might be one only.

Answ. 4. To the Second part of the Objection, concerning the conversion which the Elders are to take care of, I answer 1. To Preach is one thing, to censure is another. And besides at that rate of arguing, all those, that a Man begets to Christ, hath therefore Authority over, to Rule them, to be their Minister. 2. The Elders, at *Ephesus*, indeed had a charge as Elders, by way of Government over the whole Flock, the Church that God Redeemed by his Blood; that is, of those that were converted; and although that they were to endeavour to convert others (for how should the Gospel otherwise be propagated) yet if more had been converted, then there must have been Churches multiplyed; but still in the uniform frame, that this first Church was, having the same priviledges; and so to have New Elders placed over them, as over a New Flock. And besides, they are not called Elders of *Ephesus*, but Elders of the Church at *Ephesus*. The care of Elders set in a City to convert, was to be extended as well to the Neighbour Villages, as to the Cities, especially then when they had gained as yet but few in a City: And then by this Reason, those in the Villages were obliged to be Associated with them, as well as those in a City, although all the City should also be converted, especially if those in the Villages were the first converts; and this is one of the Episcopal grounds for a Diocesan Church; they in effect tell the same story, for the rearing up of Episcopal Government.

Answ. 5. To third part of the Objection, we Reply, that the way of constitution of Churches under the Gospel, being uniform according to Christ's institution, both in Villages and Cities, it is therefore squared, as well to the condition of the one, as the other: And therefore a Church, in a Village, may as well be made the pattern for the constituting of Churches in a City, as a Church in a City, for forming one in a Village. But Christ hath framed his institution so, as will serve both; and the certain Rules for both are the due bounds of a Church set (whereof there are many sure and certain characters in the word, from the Nature and thing it self) that so many as dwell together, that can conveniently meet in one place, should become one Church.

We grant (as *Bains* in the like case, *pag.* 12. *Conclus.* 2. concerning a *Diocesan* Church) that God might have made this pattern of City Government, an Ordinance of Church Government, as he did once take a Family Government under the Old Law, and made that a Church; and extended the bounds still by a Family, as they grew either greater or lesser: But as then, if a Man's Family had spread into many Families, though he was the Priest of all these Families in publick Worship; because he was the Eldest of the Family, whilst he lived; yet that would not have been a binding Law to several other Families living together, that had not sprung one from another; that they should have come under the same Law of Association, that the others did. And therefore, though this were granted concerning Cities, it would not follow, that the Villages must be conformed thereunto.

CHAP.

Ch. III.

CHAP. III.

That the External Institutions of Christ, for the Government of his Saints under the New Testament, is not the same that was under the Law, nor can the Government of the Jewish *Church, be made a certain Rule for the Government of the Church of Christ.*

THere are many things that were commanded to the *Jews*, which are obligatory to us Christians; tho' there are also many things which were Rules and Laws to them, which are not so to us. It will therefore be necessary, in stating the case first, to shew what is equally binding to us both.

1. All such Duties as depend not upon Institution, but are Duties belonging to the First Commandment, as to Pray, to hear the Word, to give Thanks, must needs continue as well under the New Testament, as under the Old, and are the same.

2. Such things as then had then a Morality in them, yet if the Morality was only by meer Institution, which depends upon the Will of God, (which Divines call Moral positions) even such Institutions, in their own individual Nature, cannot be urged upon us as Rules. As to instance in that of the Sabbath Day; if any should infer, that *that Seventh Day* should be the Sabbath Day under the New Testament, which was the *Seventh* after the Creation, would be a false Reasoning; although indeed, the Institution of the Seventh Day, to be the Sabbath, was not Ceremonial meerly, but had a Morality in it; for it was from the Creation. The two Sacraments of Circumcision and the Passover, had assuredly besides the Ceremonialness annexed to them, the Institution of Typifying of Christ to come (which Circumcision did by Blood, and being Administred the Eighth Day) these Sacraments signifying Jesus Christ, the Substance of them must needs be Moral, and that by Institution, as well as ours are now; as in 1 Cor. 10. 1, 2. *They did all eat of the same Spiritual Meat* (the same Spiritual *Manna*) *and all Drank of the same Spiritual Drink.* But yet it doth not follow, that the same Sacraments for Substance (cutting off the ceremonial part) should continue, but God was pleased to Institute other two in their rooms.

3. Yet whatsoever was Moral in the Substance of the *Jewish* Institution then, there is this equality, that Jesus Christ should Institute something in the room of it, in the New Testament. As for Example, because there was an High Priest; because there was an House of God then, the Apostle therefore argues, (*Heb.* 20. 21, to 26.) that we having an High Priest over the House of God, there is to be Assemblies to be now, as well as then: But as these Assemblies should be Formed up, and cast into the same Latitude and Extent, and the like, which their Assemblies had then; herein a new Institution putteth the difference. They had National Assemblies then, not so now: The Priests were maintained by Tithes and Offerings then, the equity of this continueth, and the Apostle urgeth it in his Epistle to the *Corinthians*; but yet it followeth not, that their Maintenance now should be the same way. And although there was a Moral equality in it, yet the Apostle Superaddeth, *So I Ordain in all the Churches*, 1 Cor. 7. 17.

4. When the Gospel hath once made an Institution in the Room of what was under the Law (as it hath done Baptism in stead of Circumcision tho' not exactly on the same Moral Ground; yet on the same Evangelical Ground, as Baptism was the Substance extant, under the Type of circumcision) this will warrant the Application of Baptism, unto like Infant Children now; when the Gospel it self also holds forth the same priviledge for Substance, unto such Children now, as it did then; and renews the same promise to them; tho' in an Evangelical way, far differing from that in the Old Testament, which contained a Typicalness in it. And this is not to raise up a New Institution, it is only the Application of an Institution to a Person; and that also when the Gospel holds forth the same ground which the Law did. But if any would reason, that because there was a circumcision under the Law, a Sacrament of initiation into the Church, therefore there must be the same under the Gospel, (if they cannot shew that Jesus hath appointed it, for the continuing of such an Institution)

ſtitution) the Argument from the Old will not hold, or if they would argue, that it ſhould be Adminiſtred in the ſame Latitude; or that the ſame Perſons, who did Administer Circumciſion under the Old Teſtament, may Adminiſter Baptiſm now, we believe our Brethren will not concede to it, though the Argument will be as ſtrong one way, as the other; for the Father of the Family might circumciſe them, and did; but they would have only Miniſters to Baptize now; and they too circumciſed then in their Families, and did not bring their Children to the Temple.

5. That the Laws of the Old Teſtament, do help up to Regulate many Inſtitutions in the New, we acknowledge (as likewiſe the Laws of Nature do) but they will not be Warrant ſufficient, to ſet up the like. So the Rules of the Judicial Law, concerning the puniſhments of criminal Acts, that none ſhould be condemned under two or three Witneſſes, theſe Rules will ſerve unto, and perhaps ought to be received by, every State (as ſome have held) to Regulate their proceedings againſt Malefactors: But yet unto *Jewiſh* policy (take it for the Government of it, and the ranks of Officers among them, and power they had) Nations are not bound ſo, as though the Rules of equity, whereby that policy did proceed, were perpetual, yet the queſtion remains ſtill of the power. That Miniſters ſhould be maintained, as they were then, the equity of the Law holds, but it will no way follow, that there ſhould be the ſame Ranks of Miniſters.

6. That the New Teſtament, intitles ſome of thoſe Ordinances, that it ſelf hath anew Inſtituted, with the ſame Names and Words uſed in the Old Teſtament, argues not that thoſe Ordinances are to be framed and formed according to the Analogy of the Old: But they have the ſame Names, becauſe that the Old were Types of theſe. Thus that our Ordinances now are called Sacrifices: That Chriſt is called an High Prieſt: That the Officers of the Church are called a Presbytery: That Excommunication is called a purging out the Old Leaven, and many ſuch like, in the Evangeliſt; all this will not prove, that there ſhould be Sacrifices, High Prieſts, *&c.* under the New Teſtament. In the Evangeliſt, Chriſt ſpeaking of the Teachers of the New Teſtament, ſaith, (*Matth.* 23. 34.) *I will ſend you Wiſe Men, and Scribes*, &c, but yet it follows not, that the Orders of the Officers of the New Teſtament, ſhould be anſwerable to the Wiſe Men, and the Scribes: So when a Believer, or a Church is called the Temple of God, when the Saints are called a Royal Nation, and the like; no inference can be made, that there ſhould now be a Temple, and a National Church.

7. There were many things which are Moral now, that were not Moral then. To caſt out of the Church for Moral ſins, as ſuch *Qua* Moral, is the Law of Chriſt now: But under the Old Law, they did not keep Men from Ordinances, for ſins as Moral; but as having a ceremonial uncleanneſs annexed to them. No Man is to put his Wife away now, becauſe ſhe is a Heathen; but they were to put their Wives away then, if Heathens, after *Moſes* his Law was ſetled. In deſtroying matters of Idolatry, they were to be much ſtricter than we are bound to be, as Meats Sacrificed to Idols, they were in no place to eat thereof, *Daniel* refuſed the Kings Meat; but out of the Idol's Temple, we may eat things that have been Sacrificed to Idols, as the Apoſtle ſaith. They were to deſtroy all the Temples and Groves, *&c.* but if places have been abuſed to Idolatry, we under the Goſpel may make uſe of them. They were to deſtroy the *Canaanites* out of the Land, not we ſo now. They were to burn Idolater's Goods, as in *Jericho*, &c. Not ſo now.

Having thus made way by theſe particulars premiſed, I ſhall now prove, my Propoſition, that the *Jewiſh Economy*, is no Pattern or Rule for Modelling the Church of Chriſt, under the Goſpel.

1. The Prieſthood being changed, there is a neceſſity of a change of the Law, *Heb.* 7. 12. and ſo of the Law of the Government, which depends on Chriſt's Prieſtly Office. We having a new High Prieſt over the Houſe of God, we have a new Order in this Houſe. For he is the Apoſtle and High Prieſt of our Profeſſion, and it was meet it ſhould appear, he was the new High Prieſt, by uttering the Inſtitution for Worſhip and Government. So then that Old Law, which depended upon Inſtitutions, as the High Prieſthood it ſelf did, is to be changed, and a new Law of Inſtitutions, is to come in the room of it; and therefore in the *Heb.* 9. 10. it is called a *Reformation*, and the time of the Goſpel is called, the time of Reformation.

2. That *Jewiſh* Frame, and Form of Government, is called the Elements of the

Ch. III. World; and therefore both in *Coloss.* 2. and *Rom.* 12. the Apostle bids us under the Gospel, not to be conformed neither for Worship nor Government (further than as Jesus Christ hath been pleased to take what was before, and make it anew) to the Elements of the World. So in *Galat.* 4. 2, 3. he saith, they were under Tutors and Governours, till they came to be of Man's Estate, or to be of Age; which under the Gospel, they are in comparison. And indeed the Gospel being more spiritual the Frame of the Government, and Institutions of it, are not formed to a Worldly way to Governments of Nations, and of Kingdoms, as that was then, to an outward external Glory, as their Worship also was. As God hath chosen the Preaching of the Word, which is foolishness, so he hath chosen many of those things, which are vile and base, and contemptible, and a foolishness of Government, in comparison of what was then: And this is it deceiveth the World; for the Gospel is a Mystery throughout: He chooseth the Synagogue, and not the Temple; he chooseth a Congregation and Eldership, and not the *Synedrim*; he chooseth Baptism, and not Circumcision, *&c.*

3. Our Lord and Saviour, speaks altogether of a new Church to be made, a Church gathered in his Name, as when he Instituted Baptism, to shew that it was a new Ordinance; he bids them Baptize in his Name, so to shew that he erected a Frame of a New Church, he bids that it should be gathered in his Name.

4. Our Brethren's Principles, that hold the Universal Church, to be the Seat and Subject of Christ's Institution, argue this; for as his Church now over all Nations, both *Jew* and *Gentile*, is a differing Seat from that of the *Jew* only, so answerably, to set in his Church Apostles and Prophets, *&c.* in stead of chief Priests, *&c.* is a new Institution; and it is certain, that that Church, whereof the Apostle speaks, 1 *Cor.* 12. *Eph.* 4. is the Church of the New Testament: And therefore if the Church Universal being a politick, be argued from thence, it is by a new Institution, differing from the former; because the Church of the New Testament, which he speaks of there, began with the Apostles. And besides the Institution fell upon the Church of the *Jews Qua National*; but this falls upon the Church, *Qua Universal*, in all Nations, else it would not extend to all Nations to be equal standers in it, whereas under the Law, they were not to be so with the *Jews*; but were to come under that National covenant, only when Proselited.

4. There seems to have been several sorts of Policies and Orders extant, under the Old Testament, and unto which of these should the conformity now be made? By what rules should we now judge?

1. There were 1. Chief Rulers over several Bodies of the Priests and Levites: To which Government the Bishops say, their order is an Allusion. There was also a power in these Priests and Levites, proper and peculiar to them, to judge of the clean and unclean; and concerning the matters of Worship in the Temple. And this Government was purely Ecclesiastical; and unto this therefore, rather should the Analogy refer of matters in the Church, seeing that these were purely such.

2. Again, There were the civil Judicatures in their Cities and Towns, and in their great *Synedrim* at *Jerusalem*, for all controversies within their Gates, as the Distinction is in *Deut.* 17. Yet these were all Ecclesiastical, but indeed mixed both in respect of causes and persons; their Church and Commonwealth being so mixed, as it is hard to distinguish what belonged to them, meerly as a Commonwealth, and what belonged to them as a Church, in respect of what came under the cognizance and power of those Courts.

3. Then again, There was their Synagogical Government, which seems to be differing from what either the Priests had in the Temple, in respect of Persons clean and unclean ceremonially, or over one another; or from Courts of Judicature in their Gates. A Government those Synagogues had, for there are the Rulers of them mentioned; and also punishments they had, for when the *Romans* took away their Government in their Gates, they scourged in their Synagogues. There were Admonitions also, or Excommunications, or casting Men out of their Synagogues. The Great *Synedrim*, and their other Courts, did punish by civil mulcts, and the *Synedrim* did put to Death: In the Temple, the Priests kept out the unclean; and the Judgment of that was not by the *Synedrim*, but by the Priests that did look to the Worship of the Temple: But the Synagogues did cast a Man out; and the Priests did not Supervize the Government of the Synagogues.

And

And that all this was a matter of a differing cognisance, from what was Transacted in their other Courts, is evident by this, that for many sins (besides the civil punishments that were adjudged in the Courts of their Gates, as to restore and the like) a Man was further obliged to come to the Temple, with Confession, and with a Sacrifice; so as the charge of the things of the Temple, and the Order and Discipline thereof, was another thing than that of their civil Courts. And although a Man was cast out of the Synagogues, and was in respect of such a communion, as a Heathen and a Publican; yet he might still come to the Temple, and partake in the Worship thereof. But that the *Synedrim* did at any time pronounce that Sentence, that a Man should be as an Heathen or Publican, that this was proper to their Courts, we believe not. Now it is left very uncertain, to which of these the Analogy of the Government of a Gospel Church should be accomodated. Book IV.

Object. It is said, that our Saviour Christ, in *Matth.* 18. reflected upon some Bench or Court, the next then extant, to which the People were wont to resort among the *Jews*, and so intimated, that his Will was, that the Church, under the Gospel, should be formed up conformably to us, and that so it should be like to that of the *Jews*, and so the policy of the Church of the New Testament, should be conformed to the policy of the Old, by vertue of that first Institution. And from thence it is argued, that there should be Ruling Elders, that are not Teachers, because there were such among the *Jews*: From thence it is argued, that there should be a National Church, a National *Synedrim* or Assembly, as was among the *Jews*: From thence it is argued, that the power is in the Elders alone, because it was so among the *Jews*, who are called the Church: And so this Analogy of the *Jewish* Church, is one of the great Foundations of the Presbyterian Government, and of Classical and National Assemblies.

Answ. But besides that, it was not necessary that Jesus Christ should allude to it, though he useth the same Phrase: The Deformity of that Pattern, and the policy of the Government of the New Testament is such, as that that cannot be Christ's intent.

For 1. If we take the *Jewish* Pattern, in matter of Government, we shall be worse put to it, to judge what is ceremonial, and what is perpetual, or what was a judicial Appendix to the ceremonial, and added upon a supposition of it, more than we are put to it to judge, what was ordinary, and what was extraordinary in the Apostle's practices. If that our Saviour Christ alluded to it in the gross, and in the lump, who shall be able to distinguish?

2. If that policy should thereby be Established, it would as well serve for the erecting of Episcopal Government over Ministers; for although it is said, that *Aaron's* High Priesthood was Christ's Type, and not the Type of Bishops; yet that the Priests and the Levites (several companies of them) should have one that was the chief overseer over all, who is by the Septuagint called Ἐπίσκοπος Bishop and Overseer was no way Typical. There were four sorts of *Levites*. *Priests*, *Kohathites*, *Gershemites*, *Mecarites*, *Numb.* 3. 30, & 35. And over each of those, were four Eminent persons, whereof *Eleazar* was one, *Numb.* 3. 32. And when *Eleazar* was made High Priest, then *Phinehas* was Governour of the *Levites*, and had oversight of them, Ruling of them, as 1 *Chron* 9. 20. And *Numb.* 4. 33. *Ithamar* was over the Sons of *Gershom* and *Merari*. And in *Neh.* 11. 14, & 22. They are called Overseers, or as the Septuagint translates it Ἐπίσκοποι Bishops, the same word is used of the Apostles, *Acts* 1, 1. 20. and their office, unto which (say the Episcopal party) Bishops do Succeed as Rulers over other Ministers (though perhaps called Bishops also) as the Apostles were over the Seventy, and all other Ministers. And for this, will the *Jewish* pattern and policy (if that were alluded to) serve as well as for the Presbyterian Government. And in 2 *Chron.* 35. 8. we read of the three Rulers of the House of God, whereof but one was the High Priest: Now although that the High Priest, for his going into the Holy of Holies, was a Type of Christ, yet not all those other that were the Rulers of the Priests, and of the House of God.

These were called the chief Priests Mat. 2. 4. & Ch. 27. 1. Acts 19. 4.

And if it be replyed as it is by some, that this was but the Law of Nature, the Heads of these Familses being Rulers over the rest, it is answered:

1. So was not *Korah*, *Numb.* 16. 1.

2. The Law of Nature, makes as well for one Man to Govern over many, and so for a Monarchical Government, as for an Aristocratical, and so Episcopal Government might be argued to be suited to the Law of Nature, as well as to the *Jewish*.

3. It belonged not to the ceremonial Law, but it served only for Order; and although the Eldest of the Family were those Governours that were set over the

Ch. III. rest of a company of Priests of the same Family, and so that the Eldest had it by Birth, and by the Law of Nature; yet that one should be set over the rest, was meerly a matter of Order, and therefore will plead for it self as strongly (if we take the *Jewish* Pattern) as for any other way of Government.

It may be objected, that upon this ground, that one Man makes not the Church, Episcopal Power is cut off, and that therefore the Allusion of our Lord Christ in *Matth.* 18. is to those Courts that were erected among the *Jews*.

Answ. 1. In the first place, either there were two sorts of Courts, one civil, and the other purely Ecclesiastical, two kind of *Synedrims*, both in each City, and in *Jerusalem*, which can never be proved: And if two, which of these two Christ should Allude to, will still be the question. Or if there were but one kind of Court, that was both for civil and ecclesiastical Government; then the *Jewish* Pattern will not serve the turn, for then, by that reason, Persons Ecclesiastical, now should deal in civil causes (for so they did then) and Persons civil, should deal in Ecclesiastical. Yea, and those that hold there were two Courts, the one for causes civil, the other for ecclesiastical; yet they say, the Persons in both were mixed. And because that both were thus mixed, therefore in *Deut.* 17. 9. speaking of the *Synedrim*, he saith, *When thou shalt come to the Priest, or the Judges, which shall be in those Days*, &c. for sometime a Priest was the President of that Council, and sometimes a civil Person, that was not of the Priest's Office, whom therefore he calleth a Judge. It was by Institution, that there should be some Priests, *Ezek.* 44. 24. *Deut.* 24. 8. 2 *Chron.* 18. 18 *Deut.* 16. 18. And also that others then Priests and Levites, were of the *Synedrim*, and also Judges of particular Cities, as all sides acknowledge. For from hence, all Presbyterian Divines argue, the Pattern of Lay-Elders, which yet, if there be not an Institution for it in the New Testament, would never be able to be argued from hence; and therefore many of our Brethren that acknowledge Persons civil, that were not Priests and Levites, to have been mingled in those Courts, yet deny the consequence of that Argument, unto Ruling Elders now; which if the *Jewish* Pattern had held, it would have argued it. And it appears further, that therefore the Elders and the Priests are mentioned. Pharisees that were not of the Tribe of *Levi* threw off their Rulers, and the Priest or the Judge, *Deut.* 17. and the Judges, Elders and Priests, are usually put together in their Cities and Courts.

And the Reason why both were mixed thus, to become but one Court, was because that then the Church was mingled with the Common-wealth, and both were but one; therefore the Church of *Israel* is called the Common-wealth of *Israel*: And the Laws of their Common-wealth, were given immediately by God; and therefore the *Levites*, as well as the civil Authority, were the Interpreters of that Law. If therefore this should now be the pattern, as when according to our Brethren's Assertion, the Church grows up to a Nation, there should be a National Church; because that was the Pattern of the *Jews*, so when the Churches grew up to a Nation, the Ecclesiastical State, and the civil, should become mingled, and Ministers should Judge in civil Causes, and those, that are not Ministers, should Judge in Ecclesiastical, for so in that *Synedrim* they did.

If it be said, that all the Acts were not Church Acts, as sending Ambassadors, making Wars and the like: The answer is, that all such Acts as were towards other Nations, might not so properly be called Church Acts; but the question is, what was among themselves? And yet even their Wars were Holy, and their God was called the Lord of Hosts, and the Priests wait with Trumpets, to incourage the People to fight, as if it had been an Ecclesiastical business.

Answ. 2. Again Secondly, if that be the Pattern that Christ alludeth to, then if that State had whilst it stood in the Apostle's times turned Christian, it might have been conformed to the *Jewish* Patern of Government, as it then stood; and so the Persons of the *Synedrim*, that were Judges of the *Jewish* Church, should have continued Judges of the Christian Church.

3. If that the *Jewish* Government had been the Pattern, then there should be but two Courts Subordinate one to another; for so there was no more among the *Jews*, in a way of Subordination. There was the Court in each City and Town, consisting some of more, some of less, according to their proportion and bigness, that did Judge of all causes within themselves; and then there was the great *Synedrim*, and Appeals were made immediately from each of the Inferior Courts, unto this Superiour. And whereas it is said by some, that there were three Courts at *Jerusalem* for

for Appeals; we find not by the Scriptures, that there were three such Courts, although some of the *Rabbins* say there were. And when the Text saith, in *Deut.* 17. that whosoever would not obey the Sentence of the Judge, that should be in that place, should be put to Death; then when they brought it to the first Court, the Judges of the Twenty three at *Jerusalem*, according to that Notion, they should have been put to Death, and never have come to the great *Synedrim*. And if there were two such Courts of the Twenty three, besides the *Synedrim*, yet they were not for Appeals; but they were either the one of that City of *Jerusalem*, which as a City had the priviledge to have Judicature within it self, besides the *Synedrim* for the whole Nation; and the other of the Priests for the matters of the Temple (for the Temple was an inclosure) or else the one was for *Jerusalem*, and the other for the City of *David* (each having the priviledge of a City, although in two places, as *Westminster* and *London* have) the one was at the Door of the Mountain of the Lord, the other at the Door of the Temple. If then the Form of the *Jewish* Government be the Pattern, then all those Subordinate Congregational, Classical, Provincial, and National Assemblies, they shall be cut off; for the *Jewish* Pattern will not suit these.

4. If that were the Pattern, then the National Assembly should be the Supream Judge; and there should be none above that: But our National Assemblies, Presbyterian Divines, do place an Universal General Council, and make that to be the Supream; whereas the National *Synedrim* of the *Jews*, *Qua* National, was the Highest Court.

5. If that that be the Pattern, the matters brought to that *Synedrim*, so far as we have a Rule in the Word for it, were only matters that were too difficult; and when they were too difficult for those particular Courts in the Cities or Towns, they were brought to the General Assembly, Deut. 17. *If a matter be too hard for thee*, &c: Even as the hard matters, which none could Determine but God, were brought to *Moses*, *Exod.* 18. 21.

6. When the Inferior Court it self did find it to be too hard for them, it was not by way of Appeal, that they brought it to the Superiour, so in Deut. 17. *If it be too hard for thee*: So as it was not in the liberty of any Person to Appeal; but the Court finding themselves not able to decide the controversy, they were to carry it to the *Synedrim* (therefore the *Rabbins* say, that that place, *Deut.* 17. belongs only to a Rebellious Elder) And if so, then this place will not serve to have Ecclesiastical Courts for Appeals.

7. The *Synedrim* did only judge of the matter of the Law and Right in a Doctrinal way, in such and such a case; but it was still left, after their Sentence, unto the Inferiour Court to judge of the matter of fact, and to apply the Sentence: So as by this Rule, the greater Assemblies of Synods and Councils should not at all Excommunicate; but only Doctrinally deliver the Sentence, still leaving, to the particular Churches, the Application of that Rule, by the Sentence of Excommunication, in whose power alone it is. Therefore speaking to the Judges of the Inferior Courts, he says, *Thou shalt do according to the Sentence of the Law, which they shall teach thee, and according to the Judgments which they shall tell thee*, Deut. 17. 10, 11.

8. The *Synedrim* executed civil punishments, as putting to Death, &c. if their Sentence was not obeyed, so that they Excommunicated not, but punishment was civil, which their Court inflicted.

9. If Appeals were made, and things were carryed to the Higher Courts, from the lower; there was an High punishment for the neglecting of the Sentence (supposing there were an Appeal) meerly because the Sentence of that Court was contemned. The Man was to be put to Death, although the matter wherein he disobeyed, did deserve a lesser punishment. But in the Ecclesiastical Government, that Christ hath set up, there is no higher punishment than Excommunication, and delivering to Satan, therefore this Pattern will not serve.

10. In that *Synedrim*, Persons were still the same Men, continually Resident, They were Officers on purpose that were set, and constant for that Church (even as Bishops are amongst us) and they resided at *Jerusalem*. And so the Foundation of the calling of the one to that National Assembly, and the calling of Ministers to our National Assemblies (which they would pattern by this) do wholy differ; for as ours are called by a new choice for that special Assembly, as occasion is, and by a choice too, residing in their particular Congregations and charges.

Object.

Ch. III.

Object. It is said, 2 Chron. 19. 8. *They returned to Jerusalem.* It seems therefore they rod Circuit.

Answ. That was occasional, when first Religion was to be Reformed, and the People instructed, after a neglect of all Order and Government amongst them. Otherwise they were constant at *Jerusalem*, and had therefore a peculiar Title, being called *Elders of the People*, whereas others were called Elders of the Cities. And so the pattern of Bishops, who were constant Officers for a National Church, and attend wholy upon the publick (as the same Persons did always here in the high Commission) will much better suit the *Jewish* pattern.

11. They had always a chief, whom they called the *Nasi*, or the Prince, in imitation of the first Court, wherein *Moses* was chief, and the number with him: Seventy one, and so it is too *Eze.*8.11. 70 Elders, in the midst of them, *Jazanias* as the Prince; and if the Jewish pattern should hold, there should be such now. Therefore in *Deut.* 17. the Court, being Denominated from some one, is called the Priest or the Judge; and it would, according to that, much better suit *Rome*, than *Zion*, the Popish Government, than that of the Reformed Churches, it being a nearer pattern to have one *Nasi*, one Prince, one High Priest, with a constant number of Cardinals, in a place which they pretend the promise is made to. And accordingly *Bellarmine* urgeth it for the State of Antichrist, and with more reason and strength, and more likelihood, than for the Presbyterian pattern. For the High Priests were ordinarily over that *Synedrim*, so the *Asmones* in the time of the *Machabees*, *Matth.* 26. 5. 7. and *Acts* 23. 5. compared with, *Exod.*22.28.

12. There was a peculiar place, which God did then Sanctifie at *Jerusalem*, in which the Great *Synedrim* was always to sit: Therefore it is still said, in *Deut.* 17. Thou shalt go to the place that God shall choose, as well as that they should go to the Judge, or to the Priest; because it was God's promise to be in that place, and with the Court sitting there; and therefore also it is said, *If they should not do according to the Sentence of the Priest, that standeth before the Lord.* And if they shew us any one place that God hath so peculiarly Sanctified, and set up such a Court as the Papists would pretend to do, then it would be a pattern, or else not. But God hath not Sanctified any place now, therefore the pattern will not hold. It may much better, in a Type, be Transferred to the general Assembly in Heaven, even to which we under the Gospel are come, or to the General Judgment of the Great Day, when all causes shall be judged over again.

13. Neither were all causes Ecclesiastical, brought to this *Synedrim*; therefore it is said, *Thou shalt bring all Causes within thy Gates*, not all causes in God's House. Therefore the High Priest is said to be over the House of God, and the charge of that House belonged unto the Priests; and there were three Rulers over the House of God. Therefore to the *Synedrim* belonged Judicials, and such Ceremonials, as did not appertain to the Temple, as the cutting off of a Man, that had Leaven in his House, *Exod.* 12. But yet the ceremonial belonged to the Temple, and the Priests themselves were Judges thereof. And the Order of Priests and Levites had a peculiar power to Judge of Leprosie, and of Persons that were unclean, and to keep them out of the Temple, *Levit.* 10. 10, 11. *Ezek.* 44. 23. *Hag.* 2. 11, 12, 13. therefore the Priests of the Temple put out *Uzziah*, when he was struck with the Leprosie. So Christ answerably speaks, *Matth*, 8. 4. Go shew thy self to the Priest, saith Christ, to the Man that he cured of the Leprosie, that he might judge of it, whether he were whole or no. Neither were there any Persons that we read of, but those that were Priests, that were to do this. Yea, the Leprosie was so infectious, that there was no Warrant or Promise, that any that converst with, or came to a Leper should be kept from it, but only the Priest. And in *Numb.* 3. 7. they were to keep the whole charge about the Tabernacle of the Congregation: And in *Ezek.* 44. 27. they were to look to the Sabbath. Now it is evident, that others, besides the Priests, made up that Great Court at *Jerusalem*,

14. If that this were the pattern, then the Church in each Village or City, now should have an immediate and intire Government within themselves; and so it would suit the Congregational Government. For each Town in *Judea* had Elders in their Gates; in the smaller there were three to judge their causes, in the greater Cities there were Twenty three.

15. The

15. The number of the Persons were all set, they were Seventy, So that in the conclusion, we may say as *Paul* of those of the Circumcision, and observing the Law that they themselves keep not the Law, so nor those that were the Analogy of the Jewish pattern, here being these so great, so essential, and many differences between the Jewish and Presbyterial Government, so now for a National Assembly. Book IV.

And if it be said by them, we urge not the identity, that it should be the same: We reply 1. Why not the identity in things that were not ceremonial (for such they pretend to make a pattern) but matters of meer Order and Policy, suited to them, as to a National Church, and that by God's Institution, If they make the Institution of God the pattern in one thing, why not in another? 2. If it be only a meer Analogy, they themselves might shew some other Warrant, first, for the like things Instituted anew, by Christ under the New Testament, which being so Instituted, do bear Analogy with what was under the Old. For otherwise it's left unto the pleasure of Man to take and refuse what he pleaseth, and set it up as *Analagous* to the Old; and so others may set up other things, and indeed pick another form of Government out of other things, that were *Analagous* to the Government of that pattern. As when they argue out of *Matth.* 18. that Christ Alludeth to the Courts that were then in *Jury*, where he saith, *Go tell the Church*, and urged the Analogy to hold in this; that as their Courts which were called *Ecclesiæ*, were a Colledge of Elders and Judges, and that therefore, the Church, that Christ means under the New Testament, must be a consistory of Elders, and National Assemblies (as the lesser and greater *Synedrim* was distinct, and apart from the People) we have just reason to reply, why should the Analogy hold in this only, unless the New Testament hold forth that the Assembly of a company of Elders, apart from the People, are called a Church? If that were first found, then indeed this Analogy might be applyed thereunto; but to pick and choose out one piece of the Model, and leave out the rest, and to say that Christ intends this, rather than the rest, without a special Warrant of his so to do, but Humane and Arbitrary, under the colour of Divine Institution.

Tous this is an infallible Rule, that where God hath applyed a Type, or any thing out of the Old Testament, to an Institution under the New, we should so far be led by it, as he hath in his or that particular applyed it; for otherwise the Analogy of those chief Priests, which are called ἐπίσκοποι Overseers, as the Septuagint rendreth it, *Psal.* 109, 8, *Acts* 1. 20. *Zech.* 11. 14, 22. would hold for the Order of Bishops, by way of Analogy, as strong as any Argument can be framed from the Analogy of their Courts, to the like Ecclesiastical now,

It is urged by some, that that which belonged to that Church, as a Church, is Moral in all Ages (as that which belongs to a Child, as he is *Animal rationale*, belongs to a Man, though what agreeth to him as a Child, agrees not to all Men; but what agrees to a Child, as it is *Animal rationale*, is common to all Men) now this Government, say they, did not belong to the Church as Jewish, and as in its Infant condition, in a Typical respect, but as a politick National Church,

We answer 1. That their being a National Church was in a typical respect; and therefore all their Laws, Ceremonial, Judicial, Moral, the Laws that were given the State, were given by God; *Jus civile judaicum pars Theologiæ fuit, The* Jews *Civil Law, was part of their Divinity.* And therefore the Common-wealth of *Israel* is called the Church; and in 2 *Pet.* 1. *Peter*, speaking to the Saints, saith, applying the type, you are a Holy Nation, a Royal People, he speaks not to them, as they were a Nation under a Government, one National Church, although he Writes to the *Jews* that were Dispersst over many Provinces, 1 Pet. 1. 1. *Totus status illius populi fuit figuralis, Aquinas, prima secundæ Quæst.* 104. *Art.* 2.

Yea, 2. That great *Synedrim*, at *Jerusalem*, seems to have a typical Respect upon it, it being restrained to the place that God should choose, and was a type of the General Assembly in Heaven, or at the Day of Judgment; for to that Assembly, doth Christ seem to Allude, when he saith, they shall sit upon twelve Thrones, Judging the twelve Tribes of *Israel*; and the great *Synedrim*, at *Jerusalem*, was only that Court that did Judge the twelve Tribes, and no other Court besides.

3. There was that peculiar ground of the *Jews*, being a National Church (which was the main ground, why God made them a National Church) as is compatible to no

Ch. III. no Nation under Heaven; they were a National Church, not only as Men living under the same Government, and under the same Prince, and in the same Land, or of the same Language; but chiefly and principally, as they were the Children of *Abraham*, to whom the promises were made as to one common Father, whose Seed did grow up into a Nation, whom God did sever from all other Nations as such, and made a Nation of them, dwelling alone, so as they were not to Marry out of their own Nation. And herein *Abraham* was Christ's type, Jesus Christ being now the Father of all the Faithful in all Nations, who are become one Royal Nation unto him; but a Royal Nation Spiritually, and a Royal Kindred, although out of several Nations, but not as formed into a National Government. And when they did grow up into a Nation, then God gave them Laws for the Government of them as a Nation, God did Institute them to a National Church and Kingdom, and made a new Covenant with them, and gave them Laws. And if now under the Gospel, we should come to a National Church, and have a like Government, it may have an Institution under the New Testament, as that had then.

And there is likewise this difference between our Churches under the Gospel, and that of the *Jews*, that the *prima notio*, the first Notion of a Church fell upon them, as they were a Nation; but now doth not fall upon the Saints, as they are a Nation in that sense that they were; but it falls either upon the Church Universal, which is the Church Mystical, or upon Congregational, but upon none *Qua Nation*, as it did upon them; and therefore their being a National Church, was a type of the Universal, and not of this or that particular Nation, now *Qua Nation*; but we can shew too, that *Qua Nation*, they were the type of particular Churches and Congregations.

5. There is a great Fallacy in this Argument. It is true, that that which agreeth to a Church, *Qua talis as such*, is in every Church that is such; and so what was in that Church as National, purely so considered, may be, and ought to be in any other Church that is National in a political respect, as whatsoever belongeth to a Man, *Qua rationalis*, belongeth to every Man: When therefore it is said, this Government did belong to it, *Qua* Church, so we deny it, for it belonged only to it, *Qua* National Church in the general, and hath many specifical differences annexed. There is a Church National, such indeed was the *Jews*; and there is a Church Congregational, and such are those under the New Testament; there is a Church Universal, which is the Church Mystical: But what belongs to the Church of the *Jews*, as National, and cast into a Kingdom, will not belong to the Church Universal, nor will it belong to the Church Congregational, for it belongs to it only as National; and so we might as well argue, that what belongs to one *Species* under a *genus*, belongs to the other *Species*, or that what belongs to a Man, *Qua animal rationale*, should belong to a Beast, because he also is *Animal*. So that this remaineth first to be proved, that Jesus Christ hath made National Churches under the New Testament, to be politick Bodies; and then the Argument might have some shew in it, that what belongs to a Church, as a National Church, should belong to a National Church under the New Testament, for matter of Government. But otherwise it may as well be argued, that what Form of Government agrees to a Kingdom, as a Body politick, must be found in every Corporation; and that the same Government must be in the one, that is in the other (whereas a Body politick is the *genus*, as also *Church* is, and National, Presbyterial, *&c.* are but Specifical differences annexed) and also that what belongs to the Common-wealth of *Venice*, as an Aristocratical Common-wealth, must belong to all Common-wealths, whereas there are Common-wealths that are Monarchical, which we call Kingdoms, others that are Democratical, and what belongs to the one, with these differences, belongs not to the other. What belongs simply to a Monarchy, as a Monarchical Common-wealth, must not be said to belong to a Democratical Common-wealth. In a Monarchy, there are differing degrees of Marquesses, and Earls, and Lords; it will not therefore follow, that in a Democracy, or in a Common wealth, whose Government is by several Hance Towns, there should be the same too.

6. And if Christ had appointed National Churches under the New Testament in a political Respect, it was not necessary that the Analogy of the Jewish Government should be observed; no more than that, in every Kingpom and Common-wealth, the Analogy of the *Jews* political Government should also be observed. And the Ana-

logy

logy too, might be kept and observed in its proportion, in every Congregational Church, as the Analogy of the three Estates, in the Superiour Court in Parliament, is shadowed out in many Corporations, where there is the Mayor, Aldermen, and Common-Council; but it is not necessary, that there should be the same Subordination of Courts, all keeping the same Analogy as was amongst the *Jews*: For Churches depending immediately upon the Magistrates, in every Kingdom, might be well governed, as we see the Church in *Geneva* is and the *Helvetians* are. But we answer. Book IV.

7. Whereas the Argument runs, that that Government was not ceremonial, suppose that their having such a Form of Government with Courts of Appeals, having Judicature in them, were not typical and ceremonial, yet it will not follow, that the like must be in the Churches in Nations, under the Gospel: Therefore *Gersom Bucerus* Distinguisheth, that some things were meerly ceremonial; and they were cut off, other things were perpetually Moral, and other things, though they were not ceremonial, yet they did peculiarly serve to the conservation of that policy, and were annexed *for order's sake*, to the preservation of what was ceremonial. Now that National *Synedrim*, was of that latter sort; for suppose it were not ceremonial altogether; yet that Church being constituted a National Church, as a politick Body Ecclesiastical, it must have a National *Synedrim*, that was suitable and answerable. For if we suppose a National Church, it must have a National Government proportionable to it, and Officers accordingly: And so that there should be those Heads of the Priests, and that imparity accordingly amongst the Priests, was a thing proper to the policy of the *Levites*, and yet not typical; for multitudes of them meeting in their ranks and courses, for the Service of the Temple, it was necessary that there should be one that should order those Multitudes of them, that in their courses came up. *De gubernatione Eccles. p. 52*

It must be acknowledged, that what ever constitution of Churches as politick Bodies, Jesus Christ hath made, he hath took a suitable order, for the preservation of order among them: So having made congregational Churches those politick Bodies, he hath taken order for the Government of them as such. And if he had made Churches National, as politick Bodies; he would have took suitable order for them also, as he did among the *Jews*, and he would have done it afore such time, as Churches were multiplyed, so as to come up to a Nation; for so he did with the Church of the *Jews*, afore they came into the Land of *Canaan*, but so he hath not done in the New Testament, nor did the Apostles live to see it setled; and it were strange that that Form should be erected by Christ, that the Apostles lived not to see.

So that the conclusion of all, it must be this, that Jesus Christ did still suit the Government of his Church, to the condition of the matter, thus the Church, when in Families, had a Family Government; and when a Nation was singled out and chosen, it had a National Government; but the Saints being to be dispersst over all Nations (as the *Jews* themselves were, when they had their Synagogues dispersst) he hath Established a Government answerable.

A Church is said to be National, either 1. In respect of the Members, that all, that are of the Nation, are Members of the Church, which was the constitution of the Jewish Church: Or 2. In respect of Government, that because they are a Nation, they are cast therefore into a National Government. Now indeed, the National Government of the *Jews* did follow upon their National constitution of Members; and answerably under the Gospel, even in Nations, the Government of Christ's Church doth follow the condition of the Members. Now the condition of those that are Saints (which are only fit to be Members of Churches) is to be scattered up and down, and to be few; for they are Redeemed out of Nations: There are few Cities in *England* will afford more Saints, than will make one Church, but *London*. So as the reason, why, that under the Gospel, there is not this National Government for Churches, is because a Nation comes not up to Christ's terms, and if it should, there are other respects that make the alteration; for it was fit that the Body of the Saints, the People, should have interest of presence, and of a virtual concurrence, and of edification; yea, of suffrage in the Government. It was for the Honour of the Saints, that are come out of their Nonage, that it should be so, and that Worship and Government, and communion in both, should be commensurable; God loving more the Spiritual communion, that Saints have in publick Wor-

Ch. VI. ſhip under the Goſpel, than the National Sacrifices under the old Law; and did therefore caſt the Government under the Goſpel thus, to attain this end, without which, it could not be attained; and alſo, becauſe that Churches, as Churches, would be more ſweetly ordered by the Law of communion of Churches without Juriſdiction, than by a Juriſdiction placed in combination of many Churches over each, ſeeing that Government could not be tranſacted in the preſence of the Saints, but by delegated Meſſengers, and Repreſentative Elders.

CHAP. IV.

Whether a fixed and conſtant Aſſembly of Presbyters or Elders, have a Right of Authority over particular Congregations. The queſtion ſtated.

THough thoſe, who have ſtood up and Written for the Presbyterial Government, (as it is practiſed in the Reformed Churches) do aſſert it to be the only ordinary ſtanding, and perpetual Government, which ought to be embraced in all Churches and Chriſtian States; yet the Wiſdom of the Aſſembly of Divines, at *Weſtminſter*, thought meet to propound it to this Debate, that the Scripture holds forth *it may be*.

And whereas when the aſſerting the *Jus Divinum* of it is waved, that *yet it is a Government the neareſt, and in a Conſpicuous Eminency, moſt conformed to the Scripture Rules and Examples in the New Teſtament*, is a poſition in Succeſſion, the next, though a far lower ſtep than the former. And leſs could not have been expected to have been held forth, when all other Governments are laid aſide, to give room for its Entertainment. Yet this firſt and leading propoſition, to all the other that follow about it, *viz.* that the Scripture intimates, that ſuch a Government *may be*, falls as low in its undertaking, as any Government that can be ſuppoſed to pretend the leaſt for it ſelf. And in the like manner, the reſt of the Propoſitions, that follow, run but in the ſame Stile, *that it is lawful and agreeable to the Word*, that things ſhould be ordered thus or thus.

Though the Reverend Aſſembly would not venture ſo far, yet the next faireſt way, left for Deciding this controveſie, had been to have patterned the practices and directions, which the ſeveral ways of Church Government pretend to, for their Warrant; and to have compared theſe, each with the other, and by an Harmonious Draught and Platform of either, when ſet together, it would eaſily have been diſcerned, not only which of them *May be*, but which of them *rather ſhould be*; and *that* of the two which appeared to hold the greateſt likeneſs, to the Primitive picture, drawn in the Stories of the New Teſtament, and in the Rules and Commands in the Epiſtles, ſimular unto, let that have been eſteemed the True Child there. But the propoſition is ſo caſt, that we muſt directly oppoſe it with ſuch grounds, as may ſhew, that this Presbyterian may not be, without troubling our ſelves to conſider, which of the Forms of Government this ſhould be.

The Propoſition as thus ſtated for the Diſpute, upon a meer, *It may be*, as it allows the greateſt Latitude and compaſs to the affirmers of it, for their way of defending it; and paves the way for paſſableneſs with all Men, of all ſides whatever, whoſe Judgments are not bound up with the opinion of a *Jus Divinum*, in Church-Government, ſo it did put the greateſt difficulty, upon thoſe that were negative in Judgment to diſprove it. The Difficulty lay in this, that the moſt direct and punctual way, to overthrow the Propoſition, is Firſt, to prove and make good this other more general Aſſertion, ſo much controverted; *That there is a certain ſtanding ordinary Term of Church Government, held forth in the Directions given to the Apoſtles, or the Examples of thoſe Churches we read of in the Scripture, erected by their guidance*; and that alſo ſeconded by this Negative, *That there ought to be no other, than what is by Inſtitution*. Which two General Principles, if ſuppoſed or gained, then indeed this alone had been Argument ſufficient to Diſprove the Presbyterial Government, that if it be not held forth in the Scriptures, as the ordinary ſtanding Government for the Churches, that then it may not be. Theſe afore ſaid General Propoſitions having been Determined, there needed no more words, to have been on the

the Opponent's part, but to examine the Assemblies proofs, whether therein there appeared this standing Government Instituted. But the Discussion of the General Propositions, was denyed by the Assembly (in the very first entrance into the Dispute of Discipline) to be so much as Debated; and therefore could not be assumed here, nor any where else into any Debate, but against the former Order of the Assembly, so that they stood upon this Advantage, to maintain their Assertion upon *Erastian* Principles, and yet left us to disprove it upon the contrary Principles, which yet are common to them and us, and which (as one said, when it was laid aside) would require a quarter of a years Debate, and also would have been left wholly upon us to make good, although it be laid as the Foundation, by the Church of *Scotland*, and other Reformed Churches of the Pesbyterial Government, and made use of against the *Episcopal*, to prove that the Government of the Church by Bishops, may not be.

And whereas it may be said, that yet this was left us, that by proving *the Congregational way, to be by Institution*, we might by that, as another *Medium*, have shewed that the Presbyterial Government *may not be*: We were in this Disadvantaged also (if we would have introduced the Debate thereof, as against the Proposition) that though we had never so sufficiently proved *all*, (that is, a compleat) *Government*) to be in a Congregation, by Christ's Institution (and yet for this Demonstration of that, (as our Brethren full well know) it had been necessary to debate and discuss at large, first, that forementioned Principle, by what ways the Institutions of Christ in the New Testament are held forth, whether in ordinary Examples and Practices of the Primitive Churches) yet that had been (as to our Brethren) an insufficient Argument to disprove this Proposition, that therefore a Presbyterial Government over many Congregations, may not be. And the consequence would have been denyed by many of our Brethren, that hold *all power of Government, to be in a Congregation*, but not solely or only; and so a classical Government over many Congregations, may yet be. And therefore, to have overthrown their Assertion, there were two Propositions yet more necessary to have been proved by us, or the proof had not been sufficient as to them: First, that an Ecclesiastical Government may not be set up (unless Warranted by Institution) over many Congregations, that have it by Institution within themselves: Or Secondly, that the Scriptures do not hold forth by Institution, an Ecclesiastical Government in classes, *&c.* over many Congregations. One of these, or both, must have been proved by us. If the first, we should fall again into a new General Head about Institutions, Namely, *That what in Church-Government is not by Institution, may not be.* The latter we also saw, the Assembly did Decline, and stated their Assertion upon an, *It may be.* And then again, this latter also being a Negative, the Demonstration lies not in positive Arguments to the contrary; but in a Defensive Denyal, with answers to the Arguments which might be brought to prove the Affirmative. And our Brethren not undertaking to prove an Institution of the Presbyterial Government, all our answers to their Arguments, had answerably still fallen short of disproving the Institution of that Government. So that our Attempt this way, to oppose their Proposition, would have been unavailble, and in vain.

But this was not all the obstruction that lay in our way, to the confuting this Proposition, in respect of this their stating it upon an, *It may be*; but the Difficulty was increased further also, and yet no less from the vast indefiniteness, and indeterminate Ambiguity and uncertainty of that other Term [*Presbyterial Government, over many Congregations*] which importing an Association of the Elders of many Congregations for Government, doth admit many Variations, and includes in it several patterns of Government, and also differing Constitutions of those Congregations. For, (to give an Instance) there might be conceived, a Twofold Presbytery or Association of Elders, over many Congregations. There might be one *for the Ordinary and Standing Government* thereof, so as the greatest matters appertaining to any of those Congregations, should be in a constant way brought before their Consistory, as belonging to their Jurisdiction: So as the Congregations and their several Eldership should not proceed, but as first Warranted by the Sentence of the Higher Presbytery. And there might be another Presbytery or meeting of Elders (and the Assembly had not declared any difference between Synodical and Presbyterial Assemblies set for a standing Government) but only in case that Schisms

Ch. IV. and Contentions fall out in the ſeveral Congregations, either about matters of Doctrine or Government, or for Difficult caſes, which the ſeveral Elderſhips of the Congregations, do find too hard for them, and ſo ſeek their help and direction: Or otherwiſe when the Elderſhip of a particular Congregation, hath Scandalouſly managed their Government, or wrongfully Excommunicated, &c. Then the Neighbouring Elderſhips offended, or appealed unto by the Perſons offended, are to Judge and Determine of it. This is the firſt and moſt General Diviſion of the Preſbyterial Government, into which (as 'tis propounded in the [*May le*] it can be caſt. If it be limited to an ordinary and ſtanding Government, yet ſtill as great an Ambiguity, as the former, remains touching the ſeveral ways, ſorts or kinds, into which this Presbyterial Government, and the conſtitution of theſe Congregations may be, and are caſt in the Reformed Churches, ariſing from a differing Relation, that the Elders (that thus are to make a common ſtanding Presbytery) do bear unto theſe Congregations.

1. The one is common and promiſcuous, unfixed for all ſorts of Duties, of Preaching, &c. as well as for Ruling: That as in common, they make one Presbytery over them all for Government; ſo likewiſe they all are alike Elders and Paſtors to each Congregation, and do beſtow like pains and care for all Paſtoral Duties of Preaching, Feeding, &c. in their courſes and rounds, as is practiſed in ſome Cities in *Holland*.

2. A Second variety is, that they are a Presbytery unto all in common, for Acts of Diſcipline; yet they are Paſtors or Elders fixed in their Relations properly, but to one Congregation, to perform all ſuch Duties thereunto, and not unto the reſt.

In the firſt, the Miniſters of all theſe Congregations do, in a circular way, Preach to them all in their courſe, as well as they do Rule in common; as if three or four Pariſhes be together, the Miniſters of each ſhould in their turns feed them all, and the People partake of the Gifts and Graces of all, as well as the Miniſters Rule all. Now if theſe Congregations, for the number of the Perſons belonging to them, conſiſt only of ſo many as can at times meet altogether, with their common Elderſhips for matters of Diſcipline, choice of Miniſters, Admonitions and Excommunications, and can be all preſent upon ſuch Great and Solemn Acts of Government, in which we conceive all are intereſted, ſo to joyn in them, and to be edified by them; although in reſpect of convenience, they make ſeveral Set and Fixed Congregations for Worſhip, either on the account of Perſecution, or of Diſtance from each other, or the like: And if they are ſo few Congregations, and ſo near as that Elders, that make up an Elderſhip in common, can fulfil the Duties of the Relation of Paſtors to them all, in their round and courſe; ſo as thoſe Congregations, do partake of the Gifts and Graces of them all, as well as are Ruled by them all; this kind of Presbytery of Elders in common over ſuch a number, as can, and do, for their great Acts of Government, meet in one Aſſembly upon ſuch occaſions, both People and Elders altogether, make up one kind of Government and conſtitution of Congregations. But when there are Presbyteries that either through their extent and compaſs of the number and diſtance of the Congregations under them, or otherwiſe by the Law of their Combination, neither do nor can hold the Relation, nor diſcharge the Duties of Paſtors in common unto them, but do only and meerly rule them (and ſo do in reſpect to this, make a greater Presbytery over their many leſſer Congregations, and this for the ordinary Government of them) and when the Members of theſe Congregations cannot meet to be preſent at the Acts of Diſcipline (wherein they have an intereſt of preſence and edification) This is a ſecond ſort of Presbyterial Government; and which is generally practiſed in the Reformed Churches.

3. And again yet further, this latter may alſo be (in Rational Suppoſition) caſt into two ſorts of Government.

The firſt ſort of Government is, wherein the Elders of theſe many Congregations, have no ſhare of Government in publick Admonitions or Cenſures, nor bear no Rule in thoſe Congregations, they are reſpectively affixt to; but ſuch as under the Biſhops, the Paſtors of the Congregations had, of preaching, private Watching, viſiting the Sick: All Suſpenſions from the Sacrament, publick Admonitions, Cenſures, being immediately to be brought to the common presbytery of Elders, ſet over them all for Government.

2. And

2. Another Form of Government, is, that many Congregations (as in *Scotland*) having their proper and peculiar pastors and Elders, hereby come to be so many formed and distinct Churches; for the Relation of a pastor and other Elders, or Rulers, cannot but be unto a Church, properly so called; for Church and Elders are Relative, as Rulers and a Common-wealth. And therefore they are called *Ecclesiæ primæ*, as those to whom the Notion and true Nature and State of a Church doth first belong. And further, these Officers of pastors and Teachers, being first in these several Churches, and there being in each, some competent number of Elders or Officers, as a Pastor or Teacher, with other Ruling Elders (for otherwise the greater Presbytery should not be made up compleat, of some of all these sorts of Officers out of each Church, since the first Seat of all these Officers, is some particular Church) these pastors and Ruling Elders, do make up a Presbytery over each of these Churches respectively. And further, being thus particular Churches, or having a presbytery or Eldership, they have some, yea, and a great part of Government allotted to them within their several Churches, as Suspension from the Sacrament, publick Admonitions, *&c.*

For to suppose them Churches, and to have Elderships over them, and to have no priviledge of governing, would be to make an empty Title, without any of those things the Scripture gives to the Churches and their Elderships. There is only this difference, that when it comes to the great matters of Ordination or Excommunication, these are taken up to the great Presbytery. And thus within the Territory of this presbyterial Government, intended in the proposition, two sorts of Elderships are to be understood, as included lesser, and greater ones over them, and two sorts of Churches (though called only Congregations) Churches lesser, and incompleat joyned to make one Church, as the Subject of the common presbyterial Government.

In these unlimited and incomprehensive Senses, was this proposition (the first Born of all that follow about this Government) propounded to the debate, although we urged upon the Assembly, that they would specifie and determine, which of these Governments they intended, and would maintain, but it would not be granted, nor any thing added for the limitation thereof; as [*must be*] nor [*rather be*] in stead of [*it may be*] not [*over many Churches*] in stead [of *many Congregations.*] The advantage of which, on their part, was a liberty to defend it in any of these Senses, and each upon the lowest Terms [*it may be*] for the proposition might vary, and alter with any of these shapes, for its defence, as if a standing Government, immediately over many Congregations, could not be defended; then extraordinary and mediate of Elders Associated in Synods might: If the common standing Government of fixed Elders, to their several Congregations, would not abide the touch, then still the proposition (they might say) is not confuted; for presbytery of promiscuous unfixt Elders might notwithstanding be true, and so the Truth of the proposition would stand.

Being reduced to this narrowness in the entrance into the Debate, both for the state of the question, and for the Medium of arguing, We (1.) Profess to lay our Arguments against that way of Presbyterial Government, over many Congregations, as it is extant, or practised in the Church of *Scotland*, over many Congregations, having Elders fixed to them: And we did also desire, that no other answers might be given; but such as they would in rearing up the presbyterial Government, reduce to practice. And 2. For the Medium of Arguing, we had little else left us, to have in a direct and open way recourse unto; but those Exhortations and charges given to Elders in the Epistles of the Apostles, as lying apparently cross to this way of presbyterial Government, as thwarting the Rule of Christ, and Directions of the Apostles.

The State of the Question then is this.

1. By Government is meant, a standing ordinary and constant Government, exercised over many Congregations, in all the matters of greatest Moment, that concern any Persons therein.

2. These Congregations are such, and so constituted, as to have severally or apart, each their proper Elders affixed to them, to preach to them, and watch over them; and to be interested in lesser cases of Government, as Admonition, *&c.*

3. But

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3. But it is questioned, whether for all cases of Government that are the greater, as Excommunication, &c. that shall fall out in any of those Congregations, those Elders in common, meeting in one great Presbytery or Eldership, and made up of them all (even as for lesser matters, the Elders of particular Congregations meeting, are lesser Presbyteries to their several Congregations Respectively) should not appropriate this greater Government to themselves, which we deny, and shall endeavour to refute in the following chapter.

CHAP. V.

That if a Presbytery of Elders be erected, having power over many Congregations, besides their General Relation, they would also bear a particular Relation to each Congregation.

THat no company of Elders Assembled together, hath a Power and Rule over many Congregations, will appear, if we do but consider what the New Testament declares concerning Elders in their Relations to their Flocks committed to them; and concerning the Exhortations and charges to them, of Duties towards those Flocks, founded upon that Relation; as also the Duties of their Flocks to them, all which is like to be the surest measure to find out the extent of their power, and bounds of their Flocks, and whether that power for the ordinary way, be limited to one Congregation or many. For those Exhortations and Charges, must needs be supposed, suited to that boundary of Churches, and that constitution and extent of Relation, that the Elders of those Primitive times were placed in over them: Like as in the question about *Polygamy*, what the Scripture hath said of the Duties between Man and Wife, which were given and suited to the extent of that Relation, as God from the beginning bounded it; manifestly evinceth, that one Man cannot have many Wives, but one.

We have hitherto taken this for an undoubted Maxim; that as a Mutual Relation, is the ordinary Foundation of all power, whether Oeconomical, Civil, or Ecclesiastical; so the extent of all power, is commensurable with the extent of that Relation. A Master, as a Master, hath power but over such Servants, of whom he may say, I am your Master, and they of him, we are your Servants; for what hath any Man to do to Judge another Mans Servant? As the Apostle speaks. And the same is true correspondently here; those Elders that assume to be over either one or many Congregations, must have, as the Office of Elders, so the Relation of Elders unto that one, or those many Congregations; that they may be able to say, we are your Elders, and you all are our Church; which two are in Scripture expression, the *Relate* and the *Correlate*, as King and Kingdom, Magistrates and Common-wealth.

Now against this standing Government of these Elders in greater Presbyteries (as the Question hath been stated) We shall Humbly make use of the forementioned Maxim, for a *Medium* to overthrow this Government, by presenting together therewith, the Incongruities and Inconsistencies of it, and also by Arguing what the New Testament speaks of the Elders and their Duties, in relation to the Flocks committed to them; which all do argue, that according to the Scriptures, such a Government *May not be*. And we frame our Argument thus.

If many Congregations, having all Elders already affixed Respectively unto them, may be under such a standing Presbyterial Government: Then all those Elders, must also (according to the Scriptures) sustain a special Relation of ordinary and standing Elders to all the People of those Congregations, as one Church their Flock, and to every one as a Member thereof.

But for a company of such Elders already affixed, &c. to sustain such a Relation, carries with it so great and manifold Incongruities and Inconsistences, with what the Scripture speaks of Elders, in their Relation to a Flock or Church committed to them; and likewise with the Principles of the Reformed Churches themselves, as cannot be admitted, and therefore such a Government may not be.

That according to the Scriptures, such a standing Presbyterial Government, necessarily draws such a standing special Relation, we endeavour to evince by parts, thus.

1. They

1. They must have the Relation of Elders, for Church and Elders are Relatives. And the Argument, for the Presbyterial Government, is taken by the Presbyterial Divine from this: *That many Congregations* in Scripture, are made *one Church*, and the Elders thereof Elders of that Church. This we had the greatest reason to take for granted, from the former Writings and Expressions of the Presbyterial Divines: Yea, the main Arguments, by which themselves have proved this Government, have been taken from this; that many Congregations, in the New Testament, do make one Church, and the Elders thereof, Elders of that one Church; and therefore are to govern that Church. And this we have the greatest reason to take for granted still, for in the proof which was presented to the Honourable Houses of Parliament, by the Reverend Assembly (and before we entred into the Debate, was brought in by the Committee, in the instance of the Church of *Jerusalem*) this is one Medium, that mention is made of the Multitudes there, as of one Church, and of Elders, as the Elders of that Church. Yea, and there being no mention made, of any distinct particular Congregations or Churches therein, but of a *Church*, and the Elders thereof; as thereby the prime Notion of a Church is held forth and Attributed thereto; So the prime and more principle Relation of Elders, as Elders to this one Church, and every Member of them is imported, and so as true and as Genuine a Relation (according to the Scripture's intent and expression) must be supposed to be intended, as can be supposed between any particular Congregation and their Elders. Yea, and moreover, to make out the Presbyterial Government over those many Congregations, as one Church, whilst the Apostles were the Rulers of it, the Apostles themselves are made to act and become, as ordinary Elders to that Church. It was therefore desired, that they who should deny this Proposition, would rase out of their Writings for ever, all such expressions; and that in the proofs after, to be brought to Establish the Presbytery, they would forbear that Medium, which yet as a main studd in this Building, cannot be wanting.

2. This Relation, which these Elders have, must be a more special Relation: As is evident from the practice and principles of this Government. For when the Congregations, in Shires, are divided into several Presbyteries or Deanries, the Elders (though Neighbours) of a bordering Presbytery, intermeddle not with the Congregations under another Presbytery; and yet they are for their Office Elders. It is therefore a special Relation, puts the difference, that those of these Presbyteries, Judge the Congregations under them, as having a special Relation to them, such as not to other Congregations. So the Elders of the Church of *Jerusalem*, as they all had the Relation of Elders to that Church, so they had a special Relation to that Church; and the Church was an intire distinct Church within it self, from the rest of the Churches in *Judea*, and the Elders of that Church were in such a special manner Elders thereof, as of no Church else in *Judea*; yea, in such a sense as they might be said not to be Elders of those other Churches, but of this.

3. It is an ordinary standing Relation: For they exercise and assume a constant and ordinary power, as the Presbyters of lesser Congregations do. Their meetings as Elders, in a Presbytery, are constant and ordinary, as those of the lesser Presbyteries are; and as these are Established for the smaller matters of Government, so these always are for the greater, and most Solemn; and they are both alike ordinary: For their Meeting, Work, and Exercise of power, being standing their relation must be suitable and answerable, to that of Elders in their Congregations respectively.

Unto the Argument, several Answers were given by the Reverend Respondents. 1. Some said, that they meet not *Qua* Elders, only *Qui*: They, meet, as Commissioners, but not as Elders. But this answer is taken away, by the first and second Argument; which proves, they have the Relation of Elders in Ruling. 2. It was denyed by others, that if they make up a Presbytery to these Congregations, and all the people of them, that then they must bear the Relation of Elders to these Congregations, and every Member of them: For though they are Elders taken singly and apart, as in Relation to their several Congregations, which they are affixed unto; yet in this their conjunction into a common Presbytery over them all, they

Ch. VI. they bear the Relation of Elders, but of a Presbytery or Eldership acting all in common: For as all these Congregations, under this Government, are to be considered as one Body, and as making up one Church, so all these Elders, met in this community, are to be considered as one Body and commuuity; and therefore although they be considered altogether a Presbytery to that whole Church; yet it follows not, that they bear the Relation of Elders to each Congregation or Person they Govern; for according to that Logick Rule, *Quod convenit toti qua toti, non convenit cuilibet parti, what agrees to the whole, as a whole, doth not agree to every part*; these Elders, as in a Presbytery, make one *Totum aggregatum*; and these Congregations, as making up one Church, make another *Totum aggregatum* correlative thereunto: But take any Elder out of this Presbytery, and consider him in a single Relation to any of those Churches under the Presbytery; and he is not an Elder of any of those Churches, no more than if you take any Member of all those Congregations, that make up a classical Church; it would follow, that therefore he is a Member of all those many Congregations, whereas he is only a Member of that Community, as making one Church. And it was exemplified thus; that in *Juda*, the Heads of the Tribes Governed the Tribes; but so, as the Heads of the Tribe of *Benjamin* were not the Heads of the Tribe of *Manasses*; and so in the University, the particular Heads of *Trinity Colledge*, and of *Queen's Colledge*, are altogether Heads of the University, as a common Body; but it follows not, that the Head of *Trinity Colledge*, is Head of *Queen's*, and of all the other Colledges: And so in Parliament, a Burgess of *Warwickshire* acts for all *England*; yet it follows not, he is a Burgess of *Norfolk*: So the case is here, they are Elders in *sensu compositto*, as united into one Presbytery or Community; but not in *sensu divisio*, to each of these Congregations, but each to their proper Congregations, to which they are affixed: As the Collonels in an Army, are Collonels but to their several Regiments; yet they all joyn in one Body, as a Councel of War to the whole Army. And so these are Elders here in *sensu aggregato*, collectively to all the Congregations, though apart with a more special Relation to each. It was Retorted also, that in a particular Congregation, according to our Principles, the community of all the Brethren have power over any particular Member, as *Thomas* and *Peter*, with the rest over *John*; but it follows not, that *Peter* hath power over *John* apart, but only as in this Community considered; and so in this Presbytery, all these Elders are a Presbytery to the whole; but yet bear not the Relation of Elders to each apart considered. But we answer,

1. That we had the greatest reason to take it for granted (from the former Writings and Expressions of the Presbyterial Divines; as also because the main Arguments, by which themselves had proved this Government, have been taken from it) that many Congregations, in the New Testament, do make one Church; and that the Elders thereof, are Elders of that one Church, and therefore they are to Govern that Church.

2. That Logical Axiom is indeed true, *Quod convenit toti, qua toti, non convenit cuilibet parti*, and so here, that which doth *competere toti*, to the whole of those Elders, belongs not to every part: For take them all as met together, they are a Presbytery; and accordingly each Elder is not a Presbytery, to all these Congregations. Nor doth the Argument suppose it, but only that if they all be a common Presbytery to all these Congregations, that then they bear the Relation of Elders to them. Thus in a particular Congregation, though all the Elders are acknowledged by all, to be Elders to every Member of the Congregation; yet each cannot be said to be a Presbytery to the whole, or each Member; for that which belongs to the whole, as the whole belongs not to every part. That indeed which belongs to an *aggregate* whole, or collective community, formally considered as such, cannot be Attributed to every part; but what materially belongs to them, belongs to each apart. As take an heap of Stones, 'tis true, each Stone, is not an heap of Stones; but each Stone is a Stone; and both the Stones apart, and as an heap may be said to be such or such a Man's propriety, and to relate to him; so this company of Elders must be supposed both a Presbytery, and also Elders to this whole People, and every Member of them,

3. If they be a Presbytery in common to those Congregations, then according to the Scripture Notion and Expression (and what the Scriptures hold forth, is the Subject matter of this Debate) they bear the Relation of Elders also; and then they must

must be such Elders, as the Exhortations and Duties of Elders mentioned do concern. Now this consequence we make good by these Arguments. Book IV.

1. The Scriptures would have the people look at them, and Honour them as Elders in all Acts of Ruling and Governing, those especially wherein the most and chief of Government lies, and wherein the excellency of their Ruling is seen: Now the chief of the Acts of Government, and the most excellent thereof, are assumed and exercised by these Elders, met in a common Presbytery, as Excommunication, &c. And therefore they that exercise such Acts of Government over Congregations, must bear the Relation of Elders to them; for upon that Relation, we are to Honour them, as performing this Rule; and under that Relation, they must be said to perform it, *The Elders that Rule well, are worthy of double Honour, especially those that labour in the Word and Doctrine*, 1 *Tim.* 5. 17. From whom are they to have this Honour given them, but from the People under them, and to be Honoured in their Relation; and this, as well in Ruling as in Preaching, though an *Especially* is put upon that. And therefore if in giving this Honour to them that labour in Preaching to them; they are to look at them, under the Relation of Elders, and their Elders labouring in the Word to them; then in giving that Honour to them that Rule them, they are so to look upon them, and therefore they must sustain that Relation in that Ruling; and besides, otherwise we destroy the Relation of Elders, as Elders in the Highest Acts of Governing, which are exercised in a Presbytery, whereas the Apostle calls them Elders in Ruling, as well as in Preaching.

2. The New Testament doth indifferently and promiscuously, use the word Presbytery, and the word Elders of the same persons, in Relation to the same people; and therefore to whom the Elders are supposed to be a Presbytery, to them they must bear the Relation of Elders. That the phrase is promiscuously used, is evident by *Matth.* 21. 33. where those that are called *Elders of the People*, are called, *Luke* 22.66. Τὸ πρεσβυτέριον τοῦ λαοῦ, the *Presbytery of the People*, so that if they were Related as a Presbytery to the people, to the same people they were Related as Elders. Neither are they said to be Elders in Relation to their being a Presbytery, but to the people; therefore it is not said the Elders of the Presbytery, but of the people, as bearing a direct Relation as Elders to the people: And so in Analogy thereunto, if they be a presbytery to many Congregations, they must be supposed Elders of those Congregations; for to whom ever they are a Presbytery, to them they are Elders; and to whom ever they are Elders, to them upon occasion they are a Presbytery. And in Analogy, the New Testament useth the word Presbytery, as under the Gospel but once, and in all places else, the Holy Ghost still when he exhorts them to their Duties, calls them Elders, or them *that have the Rule over you*, and yet in all those places, he intends to involve the Duty of Elders, as met in a Presbytery, as well as those singly performed to each person.

3. It is evident from the like parallel instance of the Eldership of a particular Congregation, where the Elders bear the Relation of Elders to each Member, and when met in common, they are an Eldership or Presbytery in common to that Church, and each Member of it. And then this their being a Community, takes not away their Relation of being Elders, as if the answer given by the Respondents, should hold, it would; for they would only be a Presbytery, and not Elders in that Community, when as they never are Elders more than then, and are not Elders of that Church, because met in a Presbytery; but therefore meet in a Presbytery over that Congregation, because they personally bear the Relation of Elders to it. And when they meet in that Presbytery, they are Elders particularly to each Member, as well as are Universal Elders in the Assembled presbytery. The Scripture commits the care of Churches, to these as in a presbytery, as well as out of it; and therefore they are Elders of their particular Flock in this presbytery, as well as when out of it. Thus (*Acts* 20. 28.) all the care of the Flock was committed to them as Elders, and having Relation to it as such; and therefore when met in a presbytery (therein to have care of the Flock, or any Member of it) they were Elders to it. And they are therefore to meet in a presbytery; because they were first Elders to their several Respective Congregations; and that they must be acknowledged Elders of all the people in those Congregations, the very instance it self alledged by our Brethren, will evidently clear; for the General Elders of all the Tribes, were called Elders of the people,

Ch. V. *Mat.* 21. So as suppose the same individual persons, had been Members of the General *Sanhedrim*, or common Eldership of the people, and also Elders of the Tribes Respectively; yet they might as justly be called Elders of all those Tribes in their General Relation, for such ends and purposes, as truly as they were Elders to their particular Tribes, for other ends and purposes. Now therefore by like Reason, must all the Elders in this common Presbytery, have the Relation of Elders to all the Congregations, as well as severally they have their proper Relations to their several Congregations. For if in the instance given of the Jewish Government, we take all causes common to all the Tribes, as the Elders of *Manasses*, were Elders to the Tribe of *Benjamin*, so in like manner must these Elders of a Presbytery, in common to all these Congregations, be supposed to be to each Congregation, when any cause comes afore them in their cognisance.

Lastly, Those places and exhortations of Scripture, concerning the Duties of Elders, *&c.* to their Flocks, and their Flocks to them, may be alledged to strengthen the Argument, Heb. 13. 7. *Remember them that have the Rule over you, and have spoken the Word of God to you.* And 1 Thess. 5. 12. *Know them which labour among you, and are over you, and Admonish you.* And to the same purpose is the charge, *Acts* 20. To the Elders of *Ephesus*, *Feed the Flock*, &c. These are all spoken of them, and to them, under the very Notion and Relation of Elders and Rulers, (which is Equivalent) and as their Rulers and Elders. And surely if any Person in a Congregation, were called afore one of those Presbyteries, over many Congregations, they would urge upon the Conscience of the Person, these and the like places to obey them, by vertue of these commands. If he should Reply, that these places speak of such as have the Relation of Elders to their Flocks, and every Person therein; and that by vertue of their being such to them, this Obedience is urged upon them; but you of the Presbytery, do not own the Elders of your Prebytery to have a Relation to the Congregation I am of, and so I am quit of Obedience to you; how could they by vertue of these places, holding this principle, that they have not the Relation of Elders to him, enforce Obedience from him? And how will his conscience ever be brought to a Submission to their Sentence against him, if not satisfied of this Relation to him thus Specified? And yet would not these Elders by the Presbyterial Principles expect equal, if not more Obedience from him, than the Elders of that particular Congregation he is a Member of would do? I am sure that in practice, they assume more; and I doubt not, but any one of these Elders, or all of them apart, would as Authoritatively Admonish him (as an Elder to him) in private after the cause is brought afore the Presbytery, to obey and submit to them, as any of his own Elders would do before or after their publick Admonition, and would require Obedience to him as an Elder, by vertue of these places of Scripture before mentioned. If therefore they would require it; then the Relation must be the same. Yea, do not often some few of the Elders of a common Presbytery, come into particular Congregations, and perform Acts of Government, and ordain Elders to them; and in case of obstinacy, Excommunicate the Elders of any particular Congregation? Upon what plea of Authority do they this, as Elders to that particular Congregation, or not?

4. We come now to consider the other Distinction. 1. Of their being Elders only in a community to all these Congregations as one Church, in *sensu aggregato*: And 2. Of their being apart, Elders unto their particular Congregations respectively: And so the Duties mentioned of Feeding the Flock, *&c.* concern them only as considered apart; but Acts of Government, belong to them as Elders in a Presbytery. We reply 1. That this Answer supposeth two distinct differing Relations, the one a more particular Relation of Elders, as proper Elders to their several Congregations apart; and another more common Relation of the same persons considered as Elders meerly, as in a Presbytery. Now for the confirmation or Establishment of this Distinction, by the one side or the other, the Foundation on which we proceed, must be remembred, *viz.* what the Scriptures hold forth; and therefore what ever Suppositions or Instances may be found in other constitutions, to Illustrate such Distinctions here; yet if what the New Testament speaks of Elders in Relation to their Flock, warranteth it not, yea crosseth it, *it may not be.* Now then it is to be considered, that when the New Testament speaks of Elders and Churches, it speaks Universally, and without Distinction of a different Relation. It calls them simply and singly

ſimply *Elders of the Church*, and delivers (in that Relation to their Church, they were Elders of) Exhortations to their Duties, which that Relation ſpecially called for; and in thoſe exhortations intends their Duties, as their Elders, met in a Presbytery, as well as thoſe they are to perform in other Miniſtrations towards their Flocks; and on the other ſide, exhorts the people in like ſimular expreſſions, to Obey and Honour their Elders that Preach the Word, Rule them, and Admoniſh them, preſcribing Obedience to them, in their Rule in a Presbytery, as well as in other Adminiſtrations; and all this without any Diſtinction of this Relation of Elders in common, and in ſpecial. And farther 'tis enjoyned, that theſe presbyterial Elders, muſt perform thoſe Duties which belong to their Office, unto all thoſe they are thus Elders unto, without any Manifeſt Diſtinction of any ſeveral bounds of this ſo differing Relation. This evidently argueth, that there is but one ſingle Relation of Elders, to one Flock, to whom they perform theſe Duties; and that the ſame that Preach, ought to Rule them in publick; and that the ſame Perſons that Admoniſh them privately, do alſo in the publick Presbytery Rule them; and that the ſame Perſons that Rule them in thoſe publick Presbyteries, do Admoniſh them in private. So then, the ſame Perſons ſuſtain in the Holy Ghoſts intention, and view when he made thoſe exhortations, one and the ſame Univocal Relation of Elders to their Flocks, committed by him to them, whether they be met in a Presbytery for Acts of Government, or otherwiſe perform the Duties of Elders apart. And it is evident, that in a particular Congregation, they are Elders in one Univocal Simular Relation, unto the whole Flock, and every Member thereof. But now this is the wonder, that when Elders are thus affixed to particular Congregations; and that their Relation is a differing Relation from that other in common Presbyteries (yea, ſo vaſtly differing, that our Brethren dare ſcarce acknowledge them Elders, calling them rather a Preſbytery, than Elders of thoſe Churches) that yet the exhortations in the Scriptures, ſhould ſo univocally fall on them, to ſo differing Duties, founded on differing Relations; and that yet this only Genuine Relation of Elders to their particular Congregations, ſhould not be mentioned apart; and the Duties accompanying it, ſingled out from the reſt, ſeems to us very ſtrange. Yea, and to direct the Diſcharge of the Duties of the People likewiſe, to either of theſe Elders (that they might know what Duties to perform to their more proper Elders, acknowledged theirs by way of ſo eminent and differing a Relation, and what to thoſe more common; and that all confuſion might be prevented, that the one aſſume not the Duties of the other) it was as neceſſary to have ſet the differing Limits of theſe, as to ſet the bounds of Officers in the Church, which the Holy Ghoſt hath done.

2. And Secondly, If there had been this differing Relation of Elders, which from thoſe Similitudes in Common-wealths, Armies, and the Univerſities is given; it was neceſſary that the Scripture ſhould have held it forth, either by differing Names and Reſpects, or by differing charges, whereby it might appear, that *this Relation* obligeth them to this Duty, and *the other Relation* to that; which being not done in Scripture, the Diſtinction will not paſs upon us. That it is thought neceſſary, that the Scripture ſhould preſcribe herein, appears from the inſtances brought by the Reverend Reſpondents. As 1. That of the Tribes, where there were General Elders of all the Tribes, and there were (and perhaps ſome of them the ſame Men) Heads and Elders of Tribes: But as this was a differing Relation, and reſpect in the ſame or diverſe Perſons, ſo they had Names and Titles of difference and diſtinction; for the Heads General (as we may call them) were called Elders of the People: The particular Elders of particular Tribes, were called by way of Diſtinction from them, Elders of ſuch Cities, Families, &c. And there were as Diſtinct Laws given, ſo that in ſome cauſes the Elders of the ſeveral Tribes did judge ſuch and ſuch particulars in their Tribes Reſpectively: And the General Elders had reſerved caſes, of War, Blaſphemy, &c.

So in that Inſtance of Heads of Colledges, and Heads of the University; there is as a differing Relation, ſo a Diſtinguiſhing Character. For the Names are changed, ſince the particular Bodies are called Colledges; and the General Body the University: And their ſeveral ſpecial Relation to their Colledges, is expreſſed by the Title of Maſters of ſuch or ſuch Colledges; and the other by the Title of Heads to the Univerſity. Yea, and accordingly there are differing Statutes, the Local Statutes for each Colledge apart, or for Colledges as Colledges, and the Duties of Ma-

Ch. V. sters in their special Relations; and there are Statutes for the University, and for their Duties as Heads of it. And this Distinction or Difference was necessary here too, if there were this differing Relation: But for the case in hand, if we come to the New Testament, to find out the several Modifications and Relations of Elders therein, we still read but simply and singly, Elders and Churches, as Relatives, without any such Note of Distinction of a classical Church, and the Presbytery thereof; and the Congregational Church, and the Elders thereof. The New Testament in all its mentioning of Elders, speaks uniformly of them, as Elders of the Churh, and this Rule is to us certain, *Ubi Scriptura non distinguit, nec debemus distinguere, Where the Scripture makes no Distinction, we ought not to make any.*

But however, I will Represent the difference between us and our Brethren, by the Proposition of such a Case in Law as this is: If all the Records and Ruled Cases and Laws of this Kingdom, should, in setting down the ordinary Government thereof, have made mention only and singly, of *Burgesses* (as the Rulers) of Corporations (as the Correlate to them) and used no other Distinguishing Word (when yet there were undeniably Burgesses of every incorporate Town, continued from Antiquity) might any one afterwards pretend, that this Word *Corporation*, was intended by our Ancestors, to import an Association or Community of many of these Corporations in one Shire; and that by Burgesses of these Corporations, were meant a community of all these Burgesses in one Body for Government; and so pretend to the same Name without Distinction, and say, that these Communities were also meant, and to prove it, give instance in some Foreign Government, where there are States General of Provinces, and States particular of Cities; when as they have in *their Laws*, a Distinction and Differencing Character; but in the Laws of this Kingdom, there is no such Distinction made? But now if the Laws about the choice of such Burgesses in each Corporation, and the Duties given them in charge, and their Relation to their Corporations, do run without any Distinction of what the Burgesses in the supposed greater Corporations should do, in that Relation and Community; from what the same Burgesses in their lesser Corporations do in their more proper Relations: Yea, and if the Duties set down in those Laws, mutually between Corporations, and those Burgesses, should argue an inconsistency with the Government of Burgesses, over many Corporations in common; but should all naturally fall in with that of Burgesses over single Corporations, and argue such a Relation: Would not this plainly evidence, that therefore the Laws of the Kingdom did hold forth, there might not be (that is, according to the Laws thereof) such a Government of the Burgesses of Corporations over many others? And if in answer to such Arguments, it should be said, that both these might be consistent; for that in other Foreign States and Kingdoms, and Societies, there are Burgesses of particular Corporations, and there are Burgesses in an Assembly of Parliament (so called by way of Distinction) met in common for the ordinary Government of all those Corporations in common; and therefore the like may be here in this: The reply were easy, that what ever such Distinction there is in other States; yet the question is of such Burgesses, as the Laws of this State holds forth, and as this Kingdom hath set up, where there is no such Distinction of Burgesses of Corporations, and Burgesses in Parliament mentioned; but on the contrary, only one single uniform Stile and Title in the Laws, Namely, Burgesses of the Corporations; and further, the Rules about their choice and duties mutually between them, and the Corporations they have Relation to, be also delivered without any difference; which doth argue them to have been Anciently the Relation of Burgesses to some one Corporation, and not many; yea, to be utterly incongruous and inconsistent, with such a manifold Relation. Now Parallel to this case, are our Arguments; and the Answers given to the Arguments of our Presbyterian Brethren.

But they Retort the Argument upon us, and say, that it follows no more, that they are to be Elders to each Congregation, because joyned in a common Presbytery, than that in a particular Congregation; *Peter* or one Member apart, hath a power over *John*; because in community with the rest of the Brethren, he hath power over any one.

We answer, That let this Parallel decide it; and then as the Foundation of any one Members having an interest in that community over *John*, or any other, consists, in this that he stands in the Relation of a Brother to *John*, as a Member of that Church; and so

o in like manner to all the rest of the Members in that community: So likewise all and every one, when in that common Fraternity, stand in the very same Relation of Brethren to *John*, as well as when they are apart out of it; and do not become Brethren, having power over him, because met in a community; but therefore meet, because as Brethren; this Duty lies on them in common, to Judge him as much as in private to Admonish him; and so one and the same Relation, puts them upon both these Duties. And in Scripture, the Exhortations run to the same Persons to perform these Duties, though of differing sort; because of their Relation as Brethren. Let this Parallel be applyed to the thing in hand, and as it answers the Instance, so it strengthens our Argument.

Lastly, If they be acknowledged to have the Relation of Elders, as Assembled in a Presbytery; and in that respect, to have a Relation to all the People in the several Congregations: Yet still the same Incongruities mentioned will follow upon it. For many of those Duties from all the Congregation, as Honour, Maintenance, *&c.* are due to them, as well as to their own Elders, for that their Works sake: And the Acts too also of these Elders in this Presbytery, though in common, are the most eminent Acts that belong to the Office of Elders; and in which the Consciences and Interest of the People, and each Member, is as much concerned, as in the daily Preaching of their more proper Elders (as for Distinction sake, we now call them) for they have power, and they alone to cut them off from all Ordinances, and to deliver them unto Satan. Now then, if they are to be interested in the choice of their proper Elders, to Rule them in smaller things, then their concern ought to be, as much in the choice of, and consenting to these their General Elders, and they should be present at the Ordination of all of them; for one great part of their Function, is to be exercised towards any, and all of those Congregations in a standing way; yea, and to Rule them in matters of the greatest concernment. Thus then so far, as they are acknowledged Elders, so far these Inconveniences will still follow upon the Heels of that acknowledgment; and the Scriptures indifferently speaking the same things, without Distinction of both these kind of Relations, under the common Name of Elders, the People have as much cause to challenge their right about the one, as they have about the other; and these Elders may expect the same (by vertue of those Scriptures) from the People.

CHAP. VI.

The Incongruities which flow from the Elders of a Presbytery, sustaining special Relation of Elders to all the particular Congregations.

I have proved, that if a Presbytery be set over many Congregations, the Presbyters thereof must bear a special Relation of constant, and established Elders to all those Congregations: I shall now evince, that for these Elders already fixed to several charges, to sustain also a special Relation of Ordinary and Standing Elders to all these Congregations, as one Church; and all the people thereof, as Members of that Church; carries with it Great and Manifold Incongruities, and Inconsistencies also, with what the Scriptures hold forth concerning Elders, and other Officers of Churches, as also with the Principles professed by the Reformed Churches themselves.

1. This breeds an Incongruous Disproportion, between the Relation of the Officers of a Church, of this sort of Officers, Namely Elders, in the extent of their Relation and Power; and of those other sort of Officers of the Churches, acknowledged by the Reformed Churches, *viz. Deacons.* Now let us therefore put it to the examination of the consciencious, whether what the Scripture speaks of Elders, and of their Commission, Duties, *&c.* in their several Relations to the Flock under them, will afford clearer characters of the extent of their standing Government, to be Congregational to one Congregation, than of its being classical over many. Yea, let us see whether the Descriptions of Elders, and Exhortations given unto them concerning their several charges, do not plainly overthrow any such Relation of Elders (as Elders) unto many Congregations, as Inconsistent thereunto. Surely unto us, there appear

Ch. VI. appear many great and unanſwerable Incongruities and Inconſiſtencies, in this claſſical Government.

If we compare the extent of this Office of Elders in their Relation, with the extent of other Church Officers in their Relation; we ſhall find, that what holds true of one ſort of ordinary Officers of a Church, according to the word, may well be ſuppoſed to hold true of another; or elſe there is a diſproportion between the ſeveral Relations of Officers; and the one is not of like extent with the other, which yet the Scriptures make commenſurable, and to be of equal extent. More plainly, if the Scriptures had intended, and held forth many Churches, as making one Church; and the Elders of thoſe many Churches, to have been Elders in common to thoſe Churches, as one Church; then the Deacons of all thoſe Churches, ſhould make up a common Deaconry, and be Deacons in common, unto all thoſe Churches in an ordinary way, as the other are Elders. But this is contrary to the practice of the Reformed Churches, though ſubject to the Presbyterial Government, in which the Deacons have the ordinary Relation of Deacons, in no reſpect extended further than to a particular Congregation: Nor do they exerciſe Acts of that Office, in a ſet way to other Congregations, nor to Neighbour Congregations more than to another; much leſs is there a common Deaconſhip of them all. And yet why ſhould not this common Deaconry be erected over all thoſe Churches, as one Church, as well as a common Elderſhip, eſpecially if in matters of this Nature, a parity of Reaſon ſhould carry it? For,

1. A Church in Scripture, and all the Officers are alike Relatives, as a Church and the Elders are. The beſt of the Presbyterial Arguments for this common Preſbytery, are founded upon the commenſurable extent and relation of Church and Elders; that if any Churches make one Church, then the Elders of them all make one Elderſhip, and they are Elders in common unto them; then why not the Deacons alſo? Now this Reaſon of theirs, fetcht from this Mutual Relation of one Church, and one Elderſhip or Elders thereof, will require the like for Deacons: for every Church, as it is a Church, being a Body, hath a Relation to all its Officers, as Organical Members thereof: As we have it aſſerted, Rom. 12. 4. *As we have many Members in one Body, and all Members have not the ſame Office*, ſo it is alſo in the Church of Chriſt; and the Members have ſeveral Offices in the Church, which he mentioneth, *ver.* 8. and ſo if that Church of *Rome* were one Body, and a Church of many Churches; then the Deacons were Deacons in common of thoſe many Churches, as they all were one Church. For as the Paſtors and Teachers Office is held forth in that following Deſcription, ver. 8. *He that Exhorteth, and he that Teacheth*: So the Deacons in that, *He that Giveth.* And in the Analogy of the Natural Body (to which there the Apoſtle refers us, to exemplifie this of a Church organized with Officers, as a Body to Chriſt) though one Member may be leſs and inferiour to another, in bulk or uſe; yet it is a Member of that whole Body in its uſe. The little Finger, is a Finger of the whole Body, as well as the Arm is a Member of the whole: The Foot that ſerves the whole Body, is a Member in its Office, as fully as the Hand; and the extent of its Juriſdiction or Uſe, according to its kind, is the ſame, by vertue of the ſame Relations. If therefore theſe are Elders in common, or an Elderſhip do Rule in common thoſe Congregations as *One Church*, and as Organical Members thereof, as one Body; then why ſhould not the Deacons in as ordinary a way, perform their Office in common, and bear the Relation of Deacons in common unto all, as *One Church*? And

2. The Scriptures do confirm this like commenſurable extent of the Deacons and Elders Office, as Relating to a Church: For the Apoſtle Writing to *Philippi*, a Church in a City (which therefore we ſuppoſe our Brethren will needs have to have been a Presbyterial Church, of many Congregations, leſt any one inſtance of a compleat Congregational Church, ſhould be left unto us) He Writes to the Biſhops (the Elders) and the Deacons of that Church. And *Acts* 6. the Deacons of the Church of *Jeruſalem* (if there were many Congregations, as our Brethren ſuppoſe) were choſen by the whole Multitude, when gathered together by the Twelve; and therefore were Deacons of that whole Church, as well as the Elders were Elders thereof. Now if the Deacons Office ſhould thus be extended to all the Congregations, as the Elders is; then why ſhould not each Church be bound to bring Contributions to the Deacons of each Church, to be diſtributed in common; and ſo our

Purſes

Purses should be subject to the Deacons in common, as far as our consciences to the Elders in common; and they might challenge the same power in their Office over the one, that the Elders do over the other: And then also each Congregation were in as ordinary and standing an obligation, bound to Relieve all the poor in those Churches, as well as those in their own: Not only by the common Law of charity, but by vertue of a special Relation of their being one Church; which Relation in all these things, doth beget the like obligation, that it doth in Government: And so all things in this Nature, should be alike common to all and each; and there should be a common Treasury for this one great *Diaconate Church* (as we may in a Parallel Allusion, to that other Name of Presbyterial call it) as there is a common *Regimen* or Government, for this great Presbyterial Church. This strange Disproportion between the Officers or Members of this Body, which the Presbyterial Government doth make, seems to us, at least, unnatural: Whereas this (as all other things) fall in suitably and naturally, when the Relation of Elders and Elderships, is extended no further than each Congregation; which, as it is to be an Original Body unto Christ, so the Officers and Members thereof, according to the Law of Nature, are alike Members of, and for that Body; and the Use, Service, Relation, of all and each in their several kinds, bear alike proportion to the whole. And that even by the practice and judgment of the Reformed Churches themselves, the Deacons are confined to each particular Congregation, is to us a Testimony (as the remaining Office of Overseers for the poor under the Episcopal Government, hath been judged a pregnant evidence of the Deacons Office once in the Church) that the limits of a Church and Elders were all once within a particular Congregation, although the Elders, because a Superior Office, have assumed to extend their power and jurisdiction in their kind, further than the other more inferior in theirs.

But let it be supposed, that some reason of difference might be given of this Disproportion in the Elder's Office, and the Deacons, and that a common Deaconry would not follow upon a common Presbytery. Yet

2. There are other as great Incongruities will fall upon the very Relations of the Elders Offices themselves, which this Frame of fixed Elders to some Congregations respectively, and yet of ordinary Elders to all of them, causeth. God hath made some Preaching Elders; some Ruling Elders (as the Reformed Churches allow) or Church-Governours to assist the Pastors in Government. And to Preaching Elders, both Preaching and Ruling belongs; which are conjunct in that Office, according to the Principles of the Presbyterial Government, and the Scriptures. But the business of Ruling, belongs only to the other; and by this they are distinct, as two Subordinate Species, or as the Sensitive and Reasonable Soul, whereof the one hath Sense only in all its Acts, the other both Sense and Reason, and yet are Specifically distinct.

Every Church of Christ, is a Body ordered, *Coloss.* 2. 1. Rejoycing (says *Paul*) to see your Order. And the intent of the Presbyterial Government, is professed to be, to preserve Order in the Church; and if in any thing this Order is most to be seen, it is in the Distinction and Order of the Officers thereof. Now this Frame of Government, brings in a great Disorder in the Offices and Officers, and confounds them, and their Relations. To Demonstrate this, let us consider the Pastors, or Preaching Elders. They are all undeniably Preaching Elders, to their particular Congregations, of which they are the fixt Pastors; and yet they have another Relation of Elders (by means of this Presbyterial Government) to all these Congregations, considered as one Church: And if these Pastors be any way Elders to both; they must Sustain the Title of both sorts of Elders in these two differing Relations, which is an evident confounding of both these Offices, in one and the same person. For,

1. It is evident, that they do each apart, bear the Title and Relation of preaching Elders unto their particular Congregations; and such pastors, or such preaching Elders, they can be to no more or other than those they ordinarily preach unto; for they Labour in the Word and Doctrine, unto no other; and this is the character of Distinction from the other Elders and Governours, in 1 *Tim.* 5. 17. And it is evident, that they being fixt each as Pastors to their particular Congregations, cannot Labour in the Word and Doctrine to them all; therefore they

sustain

Ch. VI. ſuſtain this Title in Diſtinction of Elders, only unto thoſe their ſeveral charges. And it is certain, that all Offices have their Diſtinction and Denomination, from that ſpecial Praxis or Function they are ordained unto: As that is an Eye to the Body, whoſe Praxis or Function is to ſee for the whole Body. They can therefore be ſaid to be Preaching Elders to no other of this claſſical Church, than that Praxis of Preaching is extended unto. It is an Argument which *Whitaker* uſeth againſt the Pope; and our Divines make uſe of it againſt the Biſhops: That nor he nor they, can be ſaid to be Paſtors unto all they yet pretended to be Paſtors unto, becauſe they are not able to exerciſe the Function of Paſtors unto them. Therefore,

2. We ask what ſort of Elders the Paſtors are that are in this common Presbytery? What ſort of Relation of Elders do they bear to this one Presbyterial Church, over and above that Relation, they, as Paſtors, bear to their own? (And this Church and Elders, as Elders, are Relatives, as well as the particular Congregations and their Elders, or elſe this Great Church, muſt want its correlative of Elders to it) Surely they bear no other Relation, than of Ruling Elders, if they be Elders at all (and to make them no Elders, and not to have the Relation of Elders to this Great Church in this Presbytery, we believe will not be affirmed) And if they be Elders, then the Notion of their being Elders, muſt have one of thoſe two forementioned Formal Differences annexed to it, either of Preaching Elders, or meerly Ruling: And this Difference and Denomination muſt be fetcht (as was ſaid afore) from the differing Praxis, or uſe they ſerve for. And it is evident, that the ordinary Acts they ſerve for, and exerciſe in thoſe common Presbyteries, are meerly Acts of Ruling Elders (in all which therefore, Ruling Elders concur in common with them) and accordingly it is called the Presbyterian Government.

And further, the power of an Office in the Church (though exerciſed but as conjoyned with others) is a Relation in reſpect to ſome Adminiſtration in a conſtancy; now the conſtant and ordinary Adminiſtration they ſerve for in ſuch a Presbytery, is only Ruling, not Teaching, there being no Acts but ſuch, that Ruling Elders joyn in. So as by this Frame, the ſame Preaching Elder or Paſtor, muſt bear two ſorts of ordinary Offices, in theſe two Relations, of a Preaching, and a meer Ruling Elder, as if one were both a Phyſician and a Chirurgeon, and were fixed to one of the Companies in the City, to practice Phyſick to them, he ſuſtained the Office of a Phyſician to that Company; and if he were beſides, called to practice Chirurgery, to many other Companies, he were certainly only a Chirurgeon unto them, as truly as a Phyſician to the other. So as we ſhall not need to Diſpute the point of Ruling Elders any more; for here are ſuch as are Elders, acknowledged ſuch by all ſides, and yet for the ſort of their Office, but plain Ruling Elders, and deſerve properly in this Relation, no other Name, if we hold the Presbyterial Government; and they are as truly and properly to this Presbyterial Church ſuch, and no other, as thoſe Governours that Preach not at all, are unto thoſe they are Elders unto.

And this Incongruity, no Diſtinction will Salve; call them Elders in this Presbytery, in what Senſe you pleaſe, whether in *Senſu diviſo*, or *Conjuncto*, yet Elders they are; and if ſo, then one of theſe two ſorts of Elders, they muſt be to this Presbyterial Church, either both Preaching and Ruling Elders, or meerly Ruling. Their being Elders together in this Presbytery, cannot be ſuppoſed to Diveſt them of the Title of ſome ſort of Elders (and there is not a third ſort) no more than the Elders of a Congregation, met in a Presbytery, do thereby looſe the Title of Elders, which they ſuſtain to that Congregation, or no more (as was even now inſtanced) than when the Body hath two Eyes, that always concur in one Act of ſight, either of them ſhould not be Denominated Eyes unto the Body apart, and the one called the left, and the other the right.

The Diſorder and Confuſion hereby, may be further ſet out, 1. That by this means, the ſame Officer hath a full Relation to one Church, and but half a Relation unto another; and it cauſeth him to perform the whole of his Offices to one Church (the particular Church) to which he hath Relation, and but the half thereof to the other. And 2. It makes an ordinary Paſtor, not only perform the work of two Officers, but to bear the Relation of two Offices; for in

in his several Relations to these two several Churches, his Congregational and Classical, his Relations are parted and divided.

And it brings up the same Absurdity which was put upon Episcopal Government; That a Bishop professing himself to bear the Relation of a Pastor to the whole Diocess; yet was but a Ruling Elder to them, not a Teaching.

3. To extend a Pastor's power of ordinary Ruling, beyond the extent of his ordinary Teaching, is against the order which Christ hath set (and all extent of power, must as well have an Institution of Christ, as the Power or Office it self; for the difference of Evangelists, and of ordinary Pastors, lay but in extent of power) and then we argue thus; if the extent of a Pastor's ordinary Ruling Power, as a Pastor and Elder, be but to the Flock, as his whole Flock, which he is able to Feed: Then to bear the Relation of a Pastor or Elder for ordinary Government, to any more than he is able, and doth thus Feed, *May not be.* But the extent of a Pastor's ordinary Ruling power, is but to that Flock, as his whole Flock, which he is able to Feed. And this Argument, as also the former; besides that, it serves to make up more Incongruities of this Presbyterial Government, so it might stand alone, and make a compleat Argument of it self against it; for if the Pastor's ordinary power in Ruling, be not to be extended further than of his ordinary Preaching; then this ordinary standing Government of Pastors fixed for Preaching to their own Congregations, may not be over those many in common.

Now that the extent of a Pastor's ordinary Ruling power, reacheth only to that Flock which he is able to Feed, I prove 1. By Scripture. 2. By Reason.

1. I prove it by Scripture, Acts 20. 28. *Take heed to your selves, and to all the Flock* (the whole Flock) *over which the Holy Ghost hath made you Over-seers, to Feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own Blood.* Here are 1. Elders, (*ver.* 17.) spoken to. 2. Their having Relation to a Flock, an whole Flock is mentioned. 3. They are enjoyned to *Feed the Flock, and the whole Flock:* And all these are commensurable. Whence 1. We see that the special Limitation of their extensive Power and Relation to a Flock, and to all the Flock, is set by the Holy Ghost, and not by Man; and therefore is not to be extended by Man, further than the Holy Ghost hath appointed. 2. The extent of that Relation, is to that Flock; and the whole Flock they Feed, and they are to Feed all that Flock alike: And if they be Preaching Elders, then they must Feed it by Preaching; and therefore are Overseers to them, to Feed them, and because they Feed them. 3. He speaks to Preaching Elders especially, that Feed by Doctrine: For 1. He propounds his own Example to them, *ver.* 20. that he had Revealed the whole Counsel of God. And 2. He says, ver. 30. *Some of you shall arise, speaking perverse things.* And 'tis *Pauls* farewell; and (as *Baynes* argues against Bishops) those to whom at last the Apostles commended Churches, were the ordinary Governors left; but he commended them not to a Bishop, but ordinary Elders. Thus we argue also, for the extent of the Relation of those Elders that they are to Govern only that Flock that they are able to Feed; and therefore they have not the Office of Overseeing, as ordinary Elders over those whom they Feed not. And *Peter* seconds *Paul* in this, 1 Pet. 5. 2. *Feed the Flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof,* the Flock, ἐν ὑμῖν among you, is that Flock that any of them had Relation to, as his Flock Respectively. Thereupon Writing unto the Churches in a whole Nation, in *chap.* 1. *ver.* 1. (whereas in *Acts* 20. 28. the charge is to the particular Elders of *Ephesus*, to that whole Flock) he therefore puts in that Note of Respectiveness ἐν ὑμῖν among you, that is, that which Respectively belongs to you, answerable to which is that Text, Col. 1. 17. *Who is for you a Faithful Minister*, that is, your proper Pastor: And *Acts* 14. 23. They ordained Elders Church by Church, *Elders to them*, that is, proper Elders to them, so the Flock ἐν ὑμῖν signifies your several proper Flocks that belong to you. Hereby it appears, that their Feeding, and their oversight over any of those Flocks, are commensurable; and *that Flock* which they are not able to Feed, they have not the oversight over, for they are both of the same extent. Thus also, Heb. 13. 7. 17. *Remember them that have the Rule over you, and have spoken to you the Word of God*, which he speaks of Preaching Elders, for the extent of their Rule and their Preaching is all one. And of Ruling Elders he speaks, ver. 17. *Obey them that have the Rule over you; for they watch for your Souls, as those that must give an account.* And not to Dispute, whether these places note out two sorts

of

Ch. VI. of Officers, Preaching Elders, *v.* 7. and Ruling Elders, *v.* 17. Or but one sort, and so but several Acts of the same Office; yet this is certain that these are commensurable; for they are Officers together in the same Church: And if the Pastor's power of Ruling extends no further than his Preaching, then the meer Ruling Elders power, or his that is assistant to him, must extend no further also. 1. Remember those that have spoken the word to you. 2. Obey and Submit to those that watch for your Souls. This is the Natural Obligation to Obedience, and so is the measure to set the bounds of the extent of ordinary Church-power. 'Tis one Argument used against Episcopal power, that they are enforced to obey him that speaks not the Word to them, nor watcheth over their Souls; and this holds as well against these Presbyterial Offices; and when a Man comes before such to be Excommunicated, he may say, I am not bound to obey you in such an Authoritative way, nor do I owe a Subjection as to a power of Censure in you; for many, nay most of you, have never spoke the word to me, nor do watch over my Soul: Nay, perhaps the Man can say, he never saw their Faces afore. And it avails not to say, that they they may occasionally Preach; for the Apostle, 1 *Thess.* 5. 12. speaking of respect to their Officers, *Know them* (says he) *that Labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and Admonish you.* These two, Those that Labour, and are over you, are commensurable, and *they* are meant, who make it their callings to have the care of the Flock, which the many Pastors and Elders in a common Presbytery do not. But in what is it they Labour, the 1 *Tim.* 5. 17. expounds it to be, *That Labour in the Word and Doctrine; The Elders that Rule well, as worthy of double Honour, especially those that Labour in the Word and Doctrine.* And whether you expound this latter known place of Teaching Elders only, or of Ruling and Teaching both (as the Reformed Churches do) however it affords this to us, that the extent of Ruling, in either the one or the other, is but as large as Teaching. And if it be meant of Teaching Elders only, that both Rule and Labour in the Word and Doctrine; yet if they be limited in labouring in the Word, as being fixt Pastors to their own Congregations, then in Ruling also. And if it be meant of Ruling Elders (as distinct from them) yet their Ruling is of the same extent, that the others labouring in the Word; and that is extended but to one Congregation, whereas Pastors they are fixed. And

2. Though in a Pastor's Office, in which Preaching and Ruling is joyned, yet his power of Ruling flows in him from, and is the Adjunct of his power to Preach; and to be sure, it is not extendable further. And however, yet there is the same proportion of either; and then by just Reason, the extent of the Church, which is the Subject of his ordinary Ruling, cannot be extended larger than what is the ordinary Subject of his Preaching, and so those Relations are of equal limits, (which is the present case of a Pastor's Authority, appropriated to a Congregation, and extended but to his own in an ordinary way) and to make the ground of a Relation narrower, than the extent of it is absurd. If a Father hath the power of Governing as a Father, then it is extendable only to those he is a Father to. And that a Pastor hath his ordinary Ruling power, annexed to his ordinary power of Preaching, we prove by these Reasons.

1. If he hath no this Ruling power upon this ground, then must be assigned some other. He hath it not by any special Faculty or Office, over and above this of Preaching; for then he should be made a Ruling Elder, over and above his being first a Preaching Elder, as a new Faculty given him: Nor hath he it by being made a Ruler first, and then having this of Preaching Superadded (as the Bishops first made Deacons, then Presbyters.) For

2. All the Keys are given him at once, the Keys of Ruling, with the Keys of Knowledge. The power of the Staff intrinsecally follows, his being a Pastor or Shepherd; and though the one is a power of meer Order, Namely that of Preaching, and that of his Ruling is of Jurisdiction (to be exercised in many cases with others and not alone) yet still his receiving power to joyn with others in those Acts of Rule of Jurisdiction, is from this power of Order; and the ordinary extent of his Authority therein, is extended no further than his ordinary call to Preaching. Yea,

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3. The extent of the power of the Apostles themselves, in Ruling in all the Churches, was founded upon, and extendable with their Commission to Preach, and their very Call and Obligation being not to Preach in a set and fixt Relation, as an ordinary Pastor's calling is; but to all Nations, and in all Churches, hence their power of Ruling was answerable. It was their very Call to be Universal Pastors, and therefore Universal Rulers; Yea, and their Authority of Ruling, was narrower in the extent of it, than of their Preaching. The Apostles might preach to Heathens, and their Call was so to do, to convert them; but they had not power to Rule all Men, *What have I to do to Judge them that are without?* says the Apostle, 1 *Cor.* 15. 12. But in this way of Presbyterial Government, though they also may occasionally Preach, where they may not Rule; yet the proportion of their ordinary Ruling, is extended beyond the proportion of their ordinary Preaching, which was not so in the Apostles themselves. Let but the same Line of proportion equally be drawn over the Apostle's power in these and theirs, according to their several measures. Their Call to Ruling, was Uniform to Preaching in all Churches, though their Preaching was larger than their Rule, Namely, to those without; but ordinary Pastors have a standing fixt Call to Preach, but in one Congregation; let their Call and power of Ruling, be Uniform to it, and they can have an ordinary standing power to Rule, but in that Congregation; either extend both further, or contract both to this. It is no answer, to say that they may Preach as Pastors in Neighbour Churches occasionally; for so they may Preach to any Reformed Church, as in *Scotland*, where yet they have not so much as an occasional Call to Rule, and in such occasional Acts of Preaching also, they have but the proportion, which the Apostles had, whose power in Preaching, was larger than of Ruling; for it was extended to them without. But still if an ordinary standing power in Ruling, although with others (for the Apostles exercised their power with others) should be stretcht where they have not an ordinary standing Call to Preach, it should exceed the proportion of the Apostles in that respect.

4. And Fourthly, From hence ariseth another Disproportion between these Officers, Ruling and Preaching Elders, compared among themselves; and it is such a Disproportion, as is like to the former, alledged between the Deacons and the Elders. For this Government makes the extent of the Ruling Elders Office and Relation, to be larger than that of the Teachers or Pastors: For the Pastor as Pastor, is limited to his particular Congregation he is fixt to, as the Deacons also are: But the Ruling Elders Office, as Ruling Elder, is extended over all these Congregations in this Presbytery. The Ruling Elder performs his Office, in the highest perfection of it, as to Admonish, Excommunicate, *&c.* to all in these Churches; but the Pastors are limited as Pastors, in the Highest Work of their Callings (which preaching is; and more excellent than Ruling, yea, than Baptizing) unto one Congregation. That place in 1 *Tim.* 5. 17. (interpret how you will) Justifies what is asserted.

Now these are strange Disproportions, which are occasioned by this and the Presbyterial Government. And this greatly makes for the Congregational way, wherein as to these particulars, no such Incongruities are found, but all things fall naturally Uniform.

2. A Second Head of Incongruities and Inconsistencies, which will follow upon this Government, concerns the Mutual Duties required, that do necessarily follow upon this standing Relation, for a constant Government of these Elders, to all this people of these Churches, and of the people to these Elders.

1. The people of all these Elders (according to what the Scripture speaks of, as due to standing Elders) owe at least Honour and Esteem to them; yea, Maintenance to all of them, whether they ordinarily Rule them, or Preach to them; and they owe it on both accounts, 1 Tim. 4. 17, 18. *Let the Elders that Rule well, be counted worthy of double Honour, especially that Labour in the Word and Doctrine.* Which Honour is, (*ver.* 18.) in the Analogy of that Law, *Not to Muzzle the Mouth of the Ox, that treadeth out the Corn*: And this is certainly due to Elders, on account of what is the Work of Elders, whether performed apart or together; by way of Jurisdiction. And it cannot be denyed, but that their constant Ruling, as in the Presbytery, is one great part of the Work of Elders, here intended and mentioned

Ch. V. tioned with Preaching, for which an especial Honour is due. God appoints no constant work in the Ministry, but he appoints a Reward from those, for whom it is performed. And as they owe a Duty of Ruling to every one in the Flock, as *Acts* 20. 28. So there is a due of Maintenance and Honour, due from all this people, to all and every one of those Elders, to those that Rule, as well as to those that Labour in the Word and Doctrine. And in Reason, if the Elders that Rule well, and perform the lesser Acts of Ruling in their particular Congregations, are to have this Honour from them, in their Relations; then all these Elders that Rule well in the common Presbytery, and perform the greatest Acts of Ruling, are to have the like from all of that classical Church; for the Emphasis being put upon *Ruling well*, and in those Acts done by them, the Excellency of Ruling consisting; therefore to these, is this Honour due from this Great Church, more especially, than from the lesser Congregations, Respectively unto their proper Elders. Neither will the Distinction of being a Presbytery in common salve it; for if the particular Elders of Congregations, are to have this Honour for what is done by them in their joynt Acts of Ruling in the particular Presbyteries; then these are to have it in what is done in their common Presbyteries also. And the precept is, not to Honour Presbyteries in common in an abstract Notion, but to Honour Elders; because the particular persons of the Elders, are to be the Object of it; and those most, who excell most in that Rule, *that Rule well, or best*. But when there are many Congregations apart, who have their proper fixt Pastors and Elders, whom they maintain for performing one part of the Elders work (for they perform but one part of it) how shall they perform this due to all the rest, for that other part of the work? How Burthensome, how confused would this be? And yet due it is, for they are all one Church to them. And then how can this Duty be proportioned (suppose it should not be Maintenance, but Honour and Esteem) for the people will not be able well to judge of it, not only because they cannot be present at their Work, and so cannot judge of it; but because either it must be proportioned to them that are constant, as Preaching Elders, or as Ruling. For the ground it is there, (1 *Tim.* 5. 18.) required upon is, that they tread out their Corn, and the Apostle says, *Esteem them for their Work sake, that Labour among you*, 1 *Thess.* 5. 12, 13. So as it is to be proportioned to the Work of a Pastor, as Pastor; but to Honour or Esteem them as Ruling Elders only, were to Honour the Preaching Elders, below the Rank and Degree of their Office.

2. It also brings the like Incongruity, upon the performance of those Duties of Elders, which the New Testament indifferently requires of all those that it acknowledgeth to be Elders unto a people; and therefore no such constant Relation of Elders, to so many Churches may be. 1. One Duty is praying with the Sick, *Send for the Elders of the Church, to pray for them*, Jam. 5. 14. What! are these Elders of the Presbyterial Church bound to this? And this Duty lies in common upon Elders of the Churches; and how shall we Distinguish, when the Scripture doth not? 2. Another Duty is visiting from House to House, as *Paul* in his Example instructs the Elders of *Ephesus*, *Acts* 20. 2. 3. Another Duty is watching over Men's Souls, as those that must give an account, *Heb.* 13. 17. and that the people should *obey them*; and no Warrant is given to obey others in the way of an ordinary Rule. And to watch, is not to stay till causes are brought by Appeals, or so, from the Congregations; but personally to watch *over them*, as Souls committed to them. 4. Another Duty is Preaching (if they be Preaching Elders) in Season, and out of Season. The Bishops said, the Flock was theirs, and the whole care committed to them; and to Salve the Incongruity, of not being able to preach themselves to them all, they professed a Derivative delegated Power to Inferior Pastors, whom they called their Curates. This was plain dealing; but these Elders make all the whole Flock theirs, and this from those Scriptures, that speak of Elders and Flock; and yet themselves have no Curates, and so are personally obliged according to the Rules in Scripture, and yet cannot perform the obligation, which is a worse Incongruity. 5. It will be their Duty also, to attend to all causes, which so many Churches will fill their Hands with sufficiently; for Churches will be full of Scandal, and there will be cases of Difficulty. What a deal of Work, did one Church of *Corinth* find *Paul*? And 'tis the Duty of each Elder, to attend to all those that come in his cognisance, as if he alone were to Judge; for he is to give his Judgment of them all, as one that is to give an account,

account. 'Tis an Argument against Episcopacy, that they cannot take the care (according to what the Scripture seems to require of an ordinary Officer) of so many Churches in a Diocess; now this Work (suppose of Ruling only, as in a Presbytery) lies upon each of these Elders, as if he were but one, as to the matters of attending thereto (as was said) though each is helped by the Suggestion of others. And besides the common Work that must needs arise from all these Churches, they are to attend to all cases of Conscience, and of Temptations, in their particular Congregations, or from elsewhere, if those Churches will have Recourse to them. If it be said, that they may part these Duties among them, and perform only to the whole, those that are in common: The answer is plain, *Ubi Scriptura non distinguit, nec nos debemus distinguere, Where the Scripture makes no Distinction, we ought not to Distinguish.* Now all those Duties are spoken of, as owing from Elders to the Flock, without any Distinction. *Paul* saith to those *Ephesians*, *Feed the whole Flock*, Acts 20. 28. *Peter* says the like to those he Writes to, that they Respectively should Feed, and take the oversight over the Flock, ἐν ὑμῖν, which was among them. The Apostles tells the *Hebrews*, that their Elders watched over their *Souls*, *Heb.* 13. 17. And to the *Thessalonians*, he Describes them to be those that are over them, and Labour and Admonish them, 1 *Thess.* 5. 12. When these Injunctions are thus laid upon all, how shall the Conscience of Elders be able to part and distinguish themselves out of the discharge of them, and to say, though I am an Elder in common to all in these Congregations; yet I am bound but to govern them in greater matters, and to Admonish them as with others, when publickly met in a consistory, and to no other Acts of Eldership; and yet to my own particular Congregation, I am obliged to private Admonition, Rule and Watchfulness, *&c.* Where hath the Scripture set these bounds, or thus parted them? Therefore certainly all these places hold forth singly, only the Elders of a particular Church fixed thereto, and their Duty to it, as knowing no other. And indeed it was necessary that Christ should set the bounds, and give the Distinction, and not indifferently lay all these Duties upon all: And either in these places, the Duties of Elders in a common Presbytery are contained, or they are not to be found in the New Testament.

Lastly, That which is Inconsistent with the ordinary way of the Call of Elders held forth in the Word, and by the Reformed Churches allowed, *May not be*: But such is this Presbyterian Government. It is the Call, which breeds Relation between Elders and Church, and is the Foundation of it. None are to assume the Honour of Ruling the Church of Christ, that are not called thereto, as *Aaron* was not to have been over all the Church, but that he was called of God.

There are two parts of this Calling, 1. Choice. 2. Ordination.

1. As for Choice, *Chamier* in the Name of all the Reformed Churches, allows to the People, the Approbation of their Elders; and so it is in *Scotland*. And if the Apostles themselves, allowed them the choice of the Deacons that had the charge of the Church Treasury, and took care of their Bodies; then much more of their Elders that have to do with their Consciences. Look what ever Right of the People, is in the choice of those who should preach to them, there is as much Reason they should have the exercise of it in the choice of these, that in a common Presbytery do Rule over them; for they perform one part of the Elders Duty, Namely Ruling, as the preaching Elders do the other; and therefore by the equity of the same Law, that speaks of Elders indefinitely, if they choose any Elders as Elders to them, they are to choose these also, there being no Distinction put of choosing preaching Elders only, but Elders indefinitely. And further, the greatest and highest Acts of power over them, are committed in an ordinary way unto them, as of Excommunication, which is of all punishments, the most Formidable, and so there is put as much, if not more than every Mans Life (that is a Member of that classical Church) into their Hands. The enjoyment of all Ordinances for ever, and the power of Deposing their Ministers, already fixt to them, and the power of Refusing to ordain them they shall approve, is lodged in this classis. And therefore in the Primitive Church, the Persons of the Bishops, who had the power of all these, were chosen by all the people, and by panegyrical Meetings.

And the Argument is strengthned by this further parallel. A Minister's call hath two parts, 1. Ordination, which belongs to the Elders, 2. Choice, in which the people have some interest; therefore these Elders as Elders in common, and these

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Ch. VI. Congregations as one Church, being Relatives, that intereſt which a Church hath as Church, is commenſurable to the intereſt of theſe Elders as Elders. If therefore in Ordination, all the Elders in a common Presbytery, joyn to Ordain an Officer; then all the people as a Church, muſt joyn in chooſing and approving him; for the common Right of chooſing, cannot be ſwallowed up by the intereſt of their Elders Ordaining him. And if it be ſaid, they all chooſe by vertue of the general Law of Combination, as in the Shires they do Parliament Men: It is anſwered, that the conſtitution of the State makes it ſo, and if the like be found in Scripture for this other, it will be ſufficient; but if not, but that this intereſt muſt be common to the people of the claſſical Church, it is asked, when a fixt Paſtor is to be choſen to a particular Church, what Office he ſhall be choſen to, with reſpect unto the people of the other Congregations? Not to a Paſtor's Office; for he is not to be ſuch to them: If he be choſen to be a Ruling Elder only, then beſides that he hath two Offices, he muſt have two choices, and two Ordinations; we chooſe him for our Paſtor, ſays the particular Church he belongs to; and we, ſay the other, to Rule us. And beſides the people have an intereſt of preſence, and joyning in Faſting and Prayer, at his Ordination: And this therefore muſt be performed either in a panegyrical Meeting of all, which cannot be as the practice is, or in all the ſeveral Churches, which will multiply the Ordination of him.

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The Government OF THE Churches of Christ.

BOOK V.

The Jurisdiction of Synods Debated. That Appeals are not necessary to the Government of the Churches; and therefore there is no necessity of Synods upon that account. What power may be allowed to a Synod, occasionally meeting to consider the Male-Administration of any particular Church. That they have not that grand Prerogative of power given by Christ, to Excommunicate other Churches; and so by that Rod, to inforce them to Revoke their Sentence of Male-Administration, and to receive a Person wrongfully Excommunicated by them. The Subordination of Synods, Considered and Refuted. Though particular Churches are not Subject to the Jurisdiction of Synods; yet they are not wholly independent, but there is a communion, which they ought to hold one with another.

CHAP. I.

Concerning Appeals. That they are not absolutely necessary to the Government of the Churches.

THAT Appeals are not of absolute necessity to the Government of the Churches; and that the Law of Nature doth not necessarily require them, is apparent from these Reasons.

1. In the first Government under the Law of Nature, there were no Appeals in Criminal causes: But *Judah* the Head of his Family, peremptorily pronounceth the Sentence, *Let her be burnt*, *Gen.* 38. And indeed, to whom then should any Appeal have been made? Therefore Appeals are not necessary by the Light of Nature.

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2. The Law of Nature among the *Jews*, required them not. The Government was in the Cities, and no Appeals (in *Deut* 17. or elsewhere) in case of Wrong, were made by the Injured party; but only in case of Difficulty, they had Recourse to the Judgment of the Great *Synhedrim*, to Resolve cases that were too hard for them. And as for that instance of *Moses*, *Exod.* 18. 22. that the great matters were brought to him, and the small matters to other Elders, it was a dividing of causes, according to their sort and kind, and not a bringing of matters by way of Appeal unto him.

3. Some of the Reformed Churches have no Appeals, and yet are well governed; and in as much peace as those in *Scotland*. In *Geneva*, there is but one Consistory; and if there be any Appeals in case of Male-Administration, they are made to the Magistrate. And if it be said that it is so, because they being a Common wealth, and having Supream power, do bound the Church power: Yet still however, if the power of this our Government would appoint Magistrates to hear Appeals of particular Churches, and so bound their power in themselves (as the Imperial Towns in *Germany*, or the *Cantons* in *Switzerland* do) there is a great possibility to Govern these Churches, without any other or further Appeals, in case of unjust Sentences, as well as *Geneva*, and other Reformed Churches are Governed.

4. In matters of Life and Death in this Kingdom, there is no Appeals, not such as to Right the Man if wronged; but every Corporation hath the priviledge touching the Execution of the Man, to do it within themselves; and yet if in any thing, *De morte hominis deliberandum est*, *There is the greatest Deliberation to be had about the Life and Death of a Man*; and yet this way of proceeding without Appeals, in such a case as this, is not against the Law of Nature.

5. In Democracies, where the Sentence of Life and Death (as in many cases it was so) were referred to the immediate Sentence of the people, there were no Appeals; and yet such a Government, is not against the light of Nature. Now taking away of a Mans Life, may well be conceived to be of as much moment, as casting a Man out of a Church; for that deprives the Subject of all Ordinances for ever, and also of further time to Repent; and yet Incorporations and a Recorder, are betrusted with this, without the ordinary benefit of Appeals to relieve the Man; and therefore why may not a Church, a company of Saints, that hath the promise of Christ's presence to guide them, and which is a Body to Christ, being sufficiently furnished with Officers, having two or three Elders over them, be as well betrusted in Ecclesiastick Administrations? Nor can it be supposed, that God should take more care under the New Testament, for Relief of wrongs in Churches scattered, than he did in that National Church of the *Jews*, which (as a Nation) was capable of Appeals: Or that God for the pretended Relief of particular persons wronged, should Subject whole Churches, yea, Provinces to a coercive power, armed with the dreadful Sentence of Excommunication, in a National Assembly.

2. That Appeals are not absolutely necessary, is evident, because, if they were so, they should be brought either antecedently to the Sentence of Excommunication in a particular Church, or after it hath past on the person Excommunicated.

1. But that an Appeal should not go before the Sentence of Excommunication, appears,

1. From the power and duty of that Court, to which the persons cause is first brought. The Congregation that is told of the persons Sin (according to Christ's Institution, *Matth.* 18. 17.) hath the power of the censures; and Christ's command lies upon them, to execute Christs Ordinance, if he hears not that Church to whom the Accusation of him is first brought; whereas by an Appeal afore, the Sentence would be Suspended, and so it would be in the power of an obstinate Sinner, to hinder the Sentence from coming into Act.

2. It is apparent from the good of the person. For 1. If an Appeal was thus brought antecedent to the Sentence of Excommunication past in a particular Church, then a Man should never be obstinate, until he came to the National Assembly, and so he would want the means of his conversion all that while, which would be the ready way to harden him in his Sin, to defer his Repentance at least for a year; and then he must run through all the same course of Admonitions by the higher Courts, ere they can pronounce the Sentence. 2. Then God must wait upon, and lackey after Men,

Men, and Suspend a Sentence, till a Man hath gone through all these Courts on *Earth*, and baffled both God's Sentence, and also Man's. Book V.

2. That Appeals are not to be made, after the Sentence of Excommunication past in a particular Church, appears,

1. From the Nature of the Sentence, which is decisive, and is irreversible, as being bound in Heaven, unless the person Repents, and upon his Repentance, is restored again.

2. Because a particular Church, by yielding to such Appeals, would give up that Power and Authority, with which Christ hath intrusted them. For Christ hath given them full power to exercise all Acts of Discipline within themselves (as hath been proved) but if they admitted of Appeals to be made to a Superior Court, as having power over them, to Disanull their Acts; they would thereby acknowledge a Supream Authority, and that they had not the perfect power in themselves.

2. If there may be such Appeals, whether afore or after Sentence (other than to relieve the Person, and those we grant) then there should be a greater punishment for the Appellant, if he be cast in the provincial Assembly, and yet a greater also than *that*, if he be again cast in the National. So it is in civil Courts, and it deserves it here as much as in any; for a Man becomes Guilty of a greater Sin, by so Appealing (if indeed he is criminal) for he is guilty of more obstinacy; if the Appeal be afore the Sentence, by hindring it, if after, by continuing more impudently impenitent; and in both cases, in troubling all the Churches. But these Courts have no greater punishment to inflict, than what the Congregation or first Church hath; for the Man is by Excommunication, out of his own Church, cast out of all Churches, as well as when cast by the National. They can only Admonish, and Excommunicate at last, if the Sentence be not past afore the Appeal, or if the Appeal be after the Sentence, they can only pronounce the Sentence to be just, they have no further or more grievous Excommunication for him. There is indeed a final Excommunication with a curse, *Anathema*, *Maranatha*, (1 *Cor.* 15. 22.) to him that loves not (which is a Diminutive) that is, that shews Hatred against the Lord Christ, after inlightning; and so hath sinned against the Holy Ghost: But we believe that such an Excommunication, is not that which upon Appeals to the National Assembly (if the Person be cast there also) they shall have power to inflict. In the case indeed of Eternal Damnation, every Degree for every Sin, is another Hell added to the former (not an increase of Torment by a circumstance, but Substantially) but it is not so here; for every new Sentence of these gradual Courts, add not a new Degree of Excommunication. Whereas Excommunication is a giving up to Satan; if the Congregation Excommunicating gave up to one Devil, and the classical to more, and the Provincial Assembly to more; and then the National to worse than the former (as in the Gospel Christ says of a Man apostatizing, that seven Devils worse than before, enter into the Man) then these Courts might Arrogate such Appeals to them, and proportionably punish the Person's obstinacy, who wrongfully makes them, but the case is otherwise. If it be Replyed, that the shame is increased, that he is Rebuked by so many, and *that* is a punishment; and that as Christ's Death is aggravated by the shame, so here the Excommunication is made the more shameful in the National, than it would have been in the lesser Assembly: The Answer is, 1. That still that which is of the Substance of this Spiritual punishment, and which is Spiritual in it, and in which the Spirit of it lies, is not, nor cannot be added unto; *viz.* God's binding the Man in Heaven, which God did, and doth as much upon the first Excommunication, as upon the second or third; and as for Satan's power to Terrifie him, he is as much delivered thereby to it, and he is as much cast out of the Ordinances in all Churches by it, as by the confirmation of the Sentence in the National Assembly. And what is that outward shame of it (such as follows upon all other civil Crimes, made publick) to be compared with these, or to correspond to that further proportion of Authority, that these Higher Courts, by challenging of Appeals to be made to them, do seem to usurp, as if an answerable degree of Spiritual punishment, were by Gods promise Ministred in them? And if there should not be a further punishment unto the Appellant, then it comes all to one, with what we affirm; for if it be in order to relieve the party only, we acknowledge Appeals in those respects, to be useful to, by declaring the Sentence Null, and that there was no due or just Excommunication. And if it be a just Sentence, we acknowledge Appeals so far to be made to Neigh-

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bour-Churches, that they may declare it is a just Excommunication already past: So that what we contend against, is this, when under the colour of Appeals, they challenge to themselves a Juridical power, to Rescind Sentences, to have the power of Excommunication, as much as the Churches that do Excommunicate, to oppose or stop any Church inferior, from proceeding; and in a Reverence to this their power, to give liberty to any Person offending, to Appeal before Sentence unto them to judge of it, and to pronounce it.

3. The liberty of such Appeals, afore or after Sentence, through all those gradual Remedies, of Classical, Provincial, National (which we conceive should be rather for matters of Doctrine, than for the Relief of Persons of all sorts; and they should deal in generals, rather than in such particulars, as themselves are more General Assemblies) will breed great inconveniences. As,

1. Either the lower Churches must spare many gross Offenders in a Nation, that there may be few Excommunications, and so prevent occasions of Appeals (and then they would not take away the Dishonour done to Christ, by multitude of Scandals) or else if the lower Churches be Faithful in proceeding against all such Offenders; yet by setting up three such Courts over them for gradual Appeals, with liberty to Appeal to them, there will, instead of Relieving particular Persons, be occasioned the greatest Trouble and Cumber to these Assemblies in Multitudes of causes depending; for who will not Appeal, knowing at last he can be but Excommunicated? And they must dispatch these causes either by Committees only (and so to do, is to Reduce the Supream Judgment to a fewer company of Elders, than were in the first Classis or Provincial Synods, that judged it; besides that, it is a meer Delegated power, which such Committees exercise) or else they must trust the lower Courts wholly, and proceed according to their Sentence; and then to what end are such Appeals? Surely the Highest National Court, cannot deny to hear any Man that Appeals to them, and if they will hear all that will Appeal, they will be filled with them; and that will prove vexatious, both to the Persons, and Churches Appealing, and will be impossible to be dispatcht. And besides, no Man being to be Excommunicated, but upon impenitency, which may be where the Fact is acknowledged and confessed, and yet the Church not satisfied with the Repentance (for an undue outward formal confession, will easily be acknowledged not to be that upon which Churches should forbear Excommunication, in case the Fact be Scandalous, it being a Godly sorrow, 2 *Cor.* 7. 9, 10. that is required of Men in such a case) may therefore proceed justly to Excommunication, because they judge, that he Repents not, though the Appealer says he doth Repent; and then the Trial will be of the Man's Repentance, performed at his Confession, whether it be Godly or no, which how can any judge of, but upon their own having seen it, or putting the Man to a new Repentance afresh, upon a Reiterated admonition by them; and how then will a National Assembly so easily be able to judge of it? And if they could, yet if they hear all things as fully over again, as all the Inferior Courts did (or how shall they judge to the satisfaction of the Appellant?) What work would this create to all such Assemblies? It was objected against the Bishop's Extensive power, over so many Congregations, that they had more Churches, and so more Business to come before them, than any one Man could, or themselves did manage; and therefore had their Arch-Deacons and Chancellors, and the like under them: But a National Assembly will have much more to do; and yet it sits not as the *Synhedrim* all the year, but only a few weeks. To Discourage Men from those Appeals, at last by Banishment, *&c.* if cast, is to eke out the Spiritual power with the Temporal. A sufficient Spiritual Remedy is sought for, and it must be within it self; for that of the Magistrate, is but External, though helpful, and we seek a sufficient Government, that was in the Primitive Times, when there were no Christian Magistrates.

2. Such National Assemblies in a due proportion, should rather have work suited to their constitution, *viz.* National Reformation, and Advices to the Magistrate about that which is common to all Churches in the Nation (and they will find enough of it in all times) than every Man's personal cause by way of Appeal (that hath a mind to Appeal) to come afore them: Even as civil Assemblies, Parliaments, *&c.* do not admit ordinary Appeals from all Courts in this Kingdom; but leave them to these Courts, the Kingdom affording matters of far greater Moment for their Cognisance.

3. These

3. These Appeals still being made from one Ecclesiastical Court to another, and those Superior (when the cause is out of the Congregations Hands) consisting most of Pastors, or if of others, yet of Persons Ecclesiastical (for as such they sit in those Assemblies, being Homogenial Members of Presbyteries, and lay Elders you will not call them) by this means all causes are taken up into the Clergies Hands, abstracted from the People; and the Clergy will take part one with another, and the one Ratifie what the lower hath done, as the High Commission did what a particular Bishop had done, against an inferior Minister or other.

4. When the cause comes to the National Assembly, whose power is purely Ecclesiastical, either the Appeals must rest here, and go no further; and the civil Magistrate, if he back their Sentence with a civil Mulct, must, without his examining of the cause, judge as they have Determined it; and so the Temporal Power must pursue, and execute the Decrees of the Spiritual, by an implicit Faith (which was the Bondage the Secular Powers were in, unto the Popish Bishops in those Times.) Or else they also must take full cognisance of the cause, and have a power to Redress and Rectifie the wrong, if they find all these Courts to have injured a Person, perhaps differing in Judgment, or the like: And then it must either be the Supream power, the High Court of Parliament (and then that Honourable Court, must be fill'd with all Mens Ecclesiastical Appeals) or it must be some lesser ordinary Court of Magistracy inferior, which shall have power to correct the wrong; and we believe the National Assembly, will very hardly Subject their Sentence to their power, to Rescind and Declare it to be Unjust, so as to be bound by the Magistrates power on them to recall it; and yet otherwise, it is in vain to appeal at all to the Magistrate. One of these ways must be taken, or else the civil Magistrates must be denyed to have appeals in such cases brought to them; but all be left in the Churches Hands, and the benefit of Appeals made to them altogether, be cut off.

5. If the King and Parliament should in the Judgment of the National Assembly, aggrieve you in point of Religion, may appeals be made to the National Assembly therein? Will you appeal to the National Assembly against them? Whether our Brethren will not decline that answer that was given by one of the Brethren in the Debate, *Why should we be afraid to affirm they might Appeal to them*, we know not; but we cannot see how the Principles of the Presbyterial Government, can avoid the asserting of it. Surely that Independency so opprobriously ascribed to us, and retorted on us, is with Submission to the Magistrate; and an Obedience by suffrage, without appealing further, we professing not to know any Spiritual power on Earth, to which an Appeal may be made from the Sentence of the Magistrate, especially if it be the Supream Authoritative Magistrate. Though we acknowledge a Relation to no other Ecclesiastical Authority, that hath a coercive power, *Sub pœnæ Excommunicationis*, or of delivering unto Satan; yet we own a Subjection to an Assembly of other Churches, as occasion is; and that as to an Ordinance of Christ. But now to set up a National Assembly, growing up from the Ecclesiastical State, as a Court to whom Appeals may be made from the Sentence of the Supream Magistrate it self, is so Transcendent a way of Independency, not Negatively only, as knowing no Superior; but affirmatively also, Subjecting the civil power to the Church, as the other deserves not the Name of it. And if from the civil power, Appeals may be made to such Assemblies; then they have the Authority over it, such as under the Notion of Appeals is contended for. They will have a power to Convent, yea, to Excommunicate, and that as a joynt Body or Parliament.

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CHAP. II.

What power Synods composed of the Elders of particular Churches occasionally assembled, have in case of Male-Administrations, by any particular Church.

AS we acknowledge elective occasional Synods of the Elders of many Churches, as the Churches have need to refer cases of difference to them: So in case of Male-Administration, or an unjust proceeding, in the Sentence of Excommunication, and the like we acknowledge Appeals or Complaints may be made to other Churches; and the Elders of those Churches met in a Synod, who being offended, may as an Ordinance of Christ, Judge and Declare that Sentence to be Null, Void, and Unjust; and that not simply, as any company of Men may so Judge, giving their Judgments of a Fact done; but as an Ordinance of Christ in such cases, and for that end, Sanctified by him to Judge and Declare in matters of Difference. And the Church and Eldership of a particular Church, that proceedeth so unjustly, ought to look at this their Determination, as an Ordinance of Christ to them; and entertaining it as such, more sadly to review their own Act and Proceedings, to consider the grounds which the Synod gives why it is unjust, and themselves ought to acknowledge it such, and receive the Brother again with acknowledgment of their Sin, and of the wrong done him: Yet not with an Implicit Faith, because the Synod hath so Determined, as having a greater power from Christ to Restore the Man.

In case this Church will not own this Person thus wrongfully Ejected; these Churches, or any of them, upon this Determination of their Elders (the Churches at their return approving their Sentence) may both receive the party in among themselves, and so Relieve the Man; and further also profess to hold no Communion with that Church, if they perceive that Church doth continue obstinate, having either for the manner proceeded therein, against the common principles of Equity and Right (such as in Judging of matters of Fact, civil Courts proceed by, as when matters are not sufficiently proved, *&c.*) or against, and besides the Principles whereby Churches are to proceed (as for the matter of Excommunication it self) which that Church it self hath, and doth hold forth and profess.

If it fall out that a Person be thus cast, first by his own Church, and now by a Synod of many Churches, to whom he Referred his cause, and appealed, he is bound rather to sit down, than *Cursitare* (as *Cyprians* word and advice is) *run up and down*, still to other and greater number of Churches, and to suffer wrong rather (as in 1 *Cor.* 6. the Apostle in another case exhorts) than engage Churches against Churches (which may prove the event) in his own private quarrel.

In Christian Commonwealths, Appeals may be made in all such cases of wrong to the Magistrate, as to the other Churches, the Subject matter of Excommunication, being but such things as are against the common profession of Christianity, in Doctrine and Manners, and (not the niceties and curiosities in Theology) and such as the Laws of the Magistrate approve of; and the manner of proceeding for the proof of the Fact, being the same that are to be in all other Courts civil.

Now these things being premised and acknowledged by us; we proceed to the Negative part, what power we deny to Synods in point of Male-Administrations, which our Brethren would give them, and herein the points in difference are three.

1. We deny them to have power to Rescind a Sentence, but only Doctrinally to Judge a Sentence of Excommunication, to be void and unjust. Now *the power to Rescind a Sentence*, according to the acceptation of the words imports, 1. An Act of the same kind of Ministerial power, that gave the Sentence: It imports the same power to make it void, that did establish it; yea, a power containing in it all that the inferior hath, and is withal Superior to it. The Christian Magistrate hath a power over Churches, in case of wrong, not only to declare the Sentence to be unjust, as he is a Christian Magistrate, but to cause that Church that pronounced it, to Revoke it as such; but yet the Assembly will not, that they have power to Rescind the Sentence, as they say Synods may. Therefore this word (as in Synods the Assembly would place the power of it) must import not simply power of Judging and Declaring the Sentence unjust; for that is refused, but further, a power of the same kind, and yet Superior

Superior, by vertue of which the Sentence is made void, *Coram Ecclesia*, before the Church, and is now so to be conceived of all. And as in the Act of the Church that Excommunicated the Man, there was a further power put forth, than a bare Declaration, that he was to be Excommunicated; for they actually, with the power of Christ, did cast out, and deliver the Man to Satan: So here in this Act that bears the Name of Rescinding, there must be supposed a power, not simply to declare the Sentence unjust; but further, a power upon their Sentence, to make void the other's Act, that the Person before Excommunicated, stands now *Coram Ecclesia*, Unexcommunicated. Book IV.

2. A Second power which we deny to Synods, which is contended for by our Brethren, which also the word *Rescind* imports, is the like coercive power in this Synod given them by Christ, whereby to compel this Church to acknowledge their Sentence unjust, and to Receive that Brother again. And the punishment by which they are enabled to compel them to it, must be of the same kind with that which these supposed inferior Churches have over their Members, if they did not obey; Namely, to Excommunicate and deliver up to Satan that Church, Classis, or Province, that hath thus unjustly proceeded; and will not receive this Man in again, upon their Rescinding it. And this it imports in the Sense of our Brethren, for otherwise they do but intend *that* Government in these cases to be in Synods, which we the Dissenting Brethren contend for; which is, that these Synods, and the Churches under them, may in some cases withdraw Communion from other Churches offending, but not presume to Excommunicate, or deliver them to Satan, or Unchurch them; and lay a Law upon their Consciences, to shut up their Church-Meetings, and to be all Heathens and Publicans to one another, as well as to the Synod and their Churches. And yet this which we contend for, is cryed down with this common prejudice, that it is no Government, because this power of Excommunication is wanting. Again, when they Restore the Party wronged, is it to their Communion only, or to the Communion with that Church, out of which he was Excommunicated also? If only to their own, then still it is no more than what we acknowledge Neighbour Churches may do, in case of wrong; and it is a Relief to the party. But if also they have power to Restore him to the Church he was cast out of actually; then they must have power to compel that Church to receive him. In this case these whole Churches and their Officers, would be Subjects to be dealt with by these Synods; For 1. The appellant wronged is one party, and they another. And 2. The Excommunication was a publick Church Act, wherein the Elders and the People are involved, especially when they all stand to own him, and to execute the Sentence.

3 A Third thing wherein we differ, is concerning matters of Appeals. We taking them as importing, in the Sense of our Brethren, a Juridical Superior power, in the Superior Synods to be appealed unto. Concerning which we say, 1. That such appeals are not so absolutely necessary to the Government of the Churches, nor doth the Law of Nature necessarily require them: 2. Especially not such appeals as should acknowledge a Superior power in the Synod appealed unto, either by making the appeal afore the Sentence is given in particular Churches, and so the matter is taken out of their Hands, by vertue of a Superior in Synods, or by making the appeal after Sentence given, we deny them to be such fixed and solemn Courts of Judicature.

First, As for that Rescinding power pretended, if more than Declarative is intended, we conceive that the Nature of the Sentence of Excommunication, when untimely executed is such, that by what ever Court (that is the first Subject of pronouncing it) it is pronounced and executed, it is not capable of being Rescinded. It is capable of being declared Void, Null, or Unjust; but not of being Rescinded, in the Sense afore explained, in matterts civil, one Court having a Superior power, may in a true and proper Sense, Rescind the Sentence of another; because it hath a greater power of the same kind, by vertue of which, it can make that Act void, which stood before by vertue of the inferior power as valid, each Act depending upon that power, which on Earth is set up; and so the greater may undo, and Reverse what the former did. But thus to Rescind a Sentence of Excommunication, no power on Earth is able to do. Which is evinced thus.

There are two parts of that Sentence, one outward, which the Church performs (which is Ejection out of Communion.) The other inward, which God accompanies

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1. In case of appeals. That's the thing still in question between the Parties, whether it be just or unjust? And therefore to suppose that all appeals fall out only in cases of real unjustice and wrong, cannot be a sufficient answer. Yea,

2. The Sentence is to be judged by all the Churches (till the matter is examined, and cleared to the contrary) to be a right Sentence of Excommunication, and that his Sin is bound in Heaven: For they are rather to Judge that the Church hath proceeded rightly, than to Judge on the Appellants side, until the matter is cleared: And so still it goes up as a Sentence binding in Heaven.

3. Whether the Sentence be just or unjust, the matter is capable of no more than declaring and adjudging it such accordingly; and therefore it is capable of no such Act as may be called Rescinding. For if it be Just, no Sentence on Earth can Rescind God's Act upon that first Sentence, for it is bound in Heaven, and Man cannot alter God's Act; and if it be unjust, then there needs no power to Rescind it, but only to declare it to be unjust and void; and so to hold the Man, as if he had never been Excommunicated. And if Synods have but such a Declarative power, then let no more be affirmed, and we will not contend about it.

4. If they have power of Rescinding the Sentence, then the Act done by the inferior Courts, is made void by their sole Sentence, without any Act of Reversing, by the consent of those Congregations or Churches, that have pronounced it. For no Superior Court hath that power to Rescind the Sentence of another; but hath it so, as by their Act the Sentence is made void, without any Act of Revocation by the lower Court. Thus the Honourable House of Parliament, if it Rescinds an Act of an Inferior Court, sends not down to that Inferior Court to Reverse it; but doth it without them. And if that be the intent of this Rescinding, let it be so declared.

CHAP. III.

The other Prerogative of Power challenged by Synods, to Excommunicate other Churches, considered and invalidated.

THE Second Prerogative of Power challenged by Synods, which we contend against, and deny to them, is such a coercive power to be in them, as given them by Christ to Excommunicate other Churches, and so by that Rod, to enforce them to

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Revoke their Sentence of Male-Administration, and receive a Person wrongfully Excommunicated by them. Book V.

That such a power is not in Synods to Excommunicate a Church or Churches, or so Rescind a Sentence past in a particular Church, is evinced by these following Arguments.

1. For such a pretended power, there is neither Precept nor Example.

1. The Apostles never did exercise such a power, who yet had power in all Churches, and over Persons among them.

2. None of the Reformed Churches ever practised it. Mr. *Paget*, a Learned Presbyterial Writer, acknowledgeth that none of the Reformed Churches ever practised it. Mr. *Cartwright* speaking of this power, did in his Days, put an, *If it may be* upon it.

If it be said their Government is so good, as it hath had no occasion to put such a power into Act: I answer.

Let the Arminian Congregation, that were in the Low Countries, be remembred. Though a National Synod was called; yet none of them were Excommunicated, and yet we believe they judged their Errors worthy of their censure. So the Churches of *Anabaptists* among them, who not only hold the not Baptizing of Children, but run into many other gross Errors, were never yet Excommunicated.

If it be said that they forbear to do it, because of great Inconveniences that would follow, by provoking of Multitudes; and that it tends more (in such cases) unto Edification to forbear it, than to execute it: It is Replyed,

1. That God hath Suited his Ordinances to the ordinary way of his Providence; and therefore would not have given an ordinary standing power for Government, which could not ordinarily be executed, without Tumult and Disturbance; and therefore there is no such power given.

2. If a Church or Churches did deserve it, it cannot be for Edification to forbear it; for not to Excommunicate them, is to edifie them in Sin. Churches that deserve Excommunication, can be edified in nothing by being connived at in their Sin, that will Damn them. And Excommunication is the means appointed by God, for the destroying the Flesh, and saving the Soul.

3. Neither can a Multitude be an excuse for the neglect. For however these Synods (if they have such a power) are to Discharge their Duty, and the Soul or Souls of Sinners, must thus be punisht.

4. Let it be observed, that such a power is contended for by the Presbyterial Divines, which was never practised, which themselves think and judge inconvenient to practice; and yet without this power granted to them, they say there is no Government: And herein lies the main of this great controversy, whether they should have such a power or no, which they never have exercised; and themselves think it to be ordinarily inconvenient to exercise it, reserving it as a Rod, in the House which they never will use, as if they kept it to scare Children with. But the Efficacy of Government, lies not in the Speculation and Doctrine, but in what is practicable. Shall Kingdoms be Disturbed about the Dispute of that which in the practice is a *Chimera*, and when they have it, shall be exercised Arbitrarily, and at Discretion? Yea, may not a Tryal be made, whether that the other way (which they call no Government) may not be sufficient?

We further conclude this first Head of Argument with this, that as such a Synodical power hath no President or Example in the Primitive Practices, nor in the Reformed Churches, so it hath this character upon it, that none but the Pope and Bishops, and Synods of Bishops ever practised it: And they have practised it by interdicting Kingdoms, not simply as civil States, but as Churches in Kingdoms; commanding the Ministers to forbear to administer the Holy Things unto any that did cleave to their Prince, or for any the like causes. And certainly by the principles of this Doctrine, a general Council of all the Reformed Churches, may in like manner Excommunicate any Nation or Kingdom, whom they judge Heretical, or to make a Schism from them; for whilst the Foundation of the power of Synods is pleaded to lie in Christ's Institution, as it hath ordinarily been urged in the Assembly, in answer unto our Reasons, that the Church-Catholick is one politick Body, and so the Elders of all Churches have power over any Churches, that are parts of that great Body, be they

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Ch. III. in Nations or in Provinces, which Subjects all States as truly to the Thunderbolt of Excommunication from Foreign Churches, as it did once to *Rome*.

What though it be said that such Counsels are not likely to be practised, or if so, it must be with the States own consent: Yet still the Mystery is, that such a power is contended for as a Rod over them, as well as over lesser Churches; for though they have not Excommunicated *de facto*, any particular Churches; yet they have claimed that power, as a Rod to keep them in awe with.

If it be said, the Pope challenged to do this, as an Head of the Church Universal, and as Infallible: We Reply, that there is indeed this difference, that he, as but one, usurps it, and as the External Head of the Church; but yet these challenge the same power, as being themselves the Catholick Church it self Representatively. For it to tell the Church, *Mat.* 18. be in its ascent to tell General Councels as the Church; then they must be interpreted to be the Catholick Church, and infallibly may in the issue (through Mens pride) become the claim also, by how much many consenting, are more likely to have the Holy Ghost to assist them, than that, and so have more reason for their claim, then one set up to challenge it. And at first, that one was set up only to receive Appeals, and to Rescind Sentences, and to Excommunicate Churches, and from granting to them that power at the first, did that other of Infallibility spring.

A Second Head of Arguments, is drawn from the Nature of Excommunication, because that it contains more in that, than that which we call Non-communion, Namely this, that Persons are not only cast from communion with all these Churches (which we acknowledge) but further, are delivered to Satan, for the internal part thereof. And for the external part, it is strange that this Law of Synods, should oblige their conscience, that they should not meet among themselves, when as yet they are already a Church, and were a Church, without any power derived from their associating with others. All then that they can fall from by vertue of the Sentence of the Synod, is but what they have from them, and among them by their association, and not what they have among themselves. Yea, the very words whereby Excommunication is exprest, is but this, *Sit tibi Ethnicus, Let him be to thee an Heathen*, and *take that Wicked one from among you*: And therefore when Neighbour-Churches, deal so with a Church; they can but eject and keep them and their Members out from amongst them. But this power contended for, goes further; for the Synod assumes to throw a Church out of it self, and to make them to be Heathens and Publicans, *inter se, among themselves*, who yet have all this while been a Church to Christ.

And that which further strengthens all this, is, that very Principle which the Assembly doth go upon to Establish this power in Synods and Presbyteries (given up in their answer to our Reasons against Presbyteries;) That as Families are bound to joyn into some Congregational Church, so those Churches into Association together: And as these joyned in a New Congregation, gives them power over each other; so this association of Churches, gives the whole a power over each of these Churches. Tho' we wholly assent not to this latter, yet supposing it (and it is one of the best and fairest grounds for the Presbyterial way) the Law of this Principle (if the Parallel be rightly made up) will not extend to a power of Excommunicating any of these Churches so associated. For, 1. If you take that External part of Excommunication, it is a cutting Men off from all Ordinances, wherein Church-Communion lies (as some hold) but more especially from the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper (which latter is acknowledged by all) for since Suspension cuts off from the Lord's Supper, therefore Excommunication must do it much more: Now the Parallel Law between these two kinds of associations, must run thus; That as a Congregation casts out of the communion of all those Ordinances, which a Congregation is the proper Seat of; so this greater association can by vertue of its association, only cast out of those Ordinances that belong unto them, as such an associated Body in common, and from among themselves in particular; and then that Sentence can arise to no more than what we contend to be the only power that Churches have one with another; and that is Non-communion. The Reason is clear, because they can but cast that Church out of their association, and from having any interest in their counsel and advice, &c. For associated Presbyteries, have not the Sacraments, nor the Solemn constant Ordinances of Worship; and therefore they can but by vertue of this association, deny them communion with themselves; and this we grant to Neighbour-Churches, that they may and ought to deal thus with an offending

fending Church, by vertue of that Apoſtolick Rule, *from ſuch turn away*. But this power of Excommunicating a Church contended for, is a further thing, it is a laying a Law upon a Church, to Diſſolve their being any longer a Church, until they do Repent of that Sin they charge them with; it is to call in their Charter, that they can meet no more, *Inter ſe*, among themſelves to enjoy the Sacrament, or any other Ordinance whatſoever. This is beyond the extent of the power of an aſſociation; yea, this is more than they are able to execute, and doth Chriſt give power to do that which they cannot execute? Now they may keep them from communion with *them*, either by not letting them into the Aſſembly (and therefore they had *Oſtiarii* Door-keepers in the primitive times) or they may do it by thruſting them out; as the Prieſts of *Iſrael* did the King, when he came to offer Sacrifice, or rather by a Moral conteſt againſt them, or forbearing to Excommunicate, when they are preſent: But they cannot keep them from meeting, *inter ſe, among themſelves*. In the Primitive Times indeed they had Recourſe to the power of Magiſtrates for it; but we ſeek for a ſufficient Eccleſiaſtical Remedy.

To this if it be Retorted, that ſuch will the caſe be too, when in a particular Congregation, a company of Perſons deſerving Excommunication, are ejected (as a Paſtor and others with him) yet they will meet ſtill, and no Law can oblige them to the contrary: We Reply, by giving this Difference of the caſe.

1. That when a Congregation doth caſt out the very Members, the Act it ſelf whereby they caſt them out from among them, leaves them barely a company of Out-laws, without Church State or Relation among themſelves; for they had it but as Members of that Church, they are now caſt out of; and they can Retain no other Relation left them, that gives them actual Right to Ordinances; for this is their Original firſt Relation. And therefore if they meet, yea, with a Mutual conſent to be a New Church, they meet as Men, and Outlawed from a Church Relation, which they had put their Souls upon the Laws of; or at leaſt by a Judicial Act paſt on them, they have now forfeited. They fall as the Angels, from that Original State, and if they will ſet up a New Kingdom, they do it but as the Devils do. But although Neighbour-Churches did caſt them out from among them, that Act in the Nature and Extent of it, Reacheth not to caſt them out of that Relation of a Church, that they had originally among themſelves; Neither do they fall by vertue of that Act (which is all that is in the Synods power) from that Church Relation they had among themſelves; which they had before their aſſociating with *them*, and was the Foundation of it.

2. By that Act of being caſt out of this Congregational Relation, they are caſt out of the formerly enjoyed communion of the Lord's Supper, in a conſtancy in that Church; which they never enjoyed at all in that other Claſſical Church, for it is not the Seat of it: And ſo this Act of Excommunication, as in a Congregational Church performed, caſts them out of all Ordinances, and out of all that is proper to ſuch Relation and Fellowſhip; but it is not ſo in the other caſe. And hence it comes to paſs that Excommunication from all Ordinances, can only be in a Church where all Ordinances are; and therefore not in or by a claſſical Church, where the main Ordinances Men are ſhut out from, are not Adminiſtred:

3. This Act of a Synod's Excommunicating a Church, is yet further for the External part of it, not ſimply an Obligation, not to meet for Ordinances, and to account of each other as Heathens; but further yet, the Sentence Terminates it ſelf upon their Church-fellowſhip and Communion, Diſſolves that, cuts them off from being an External Body, or Spouſe to Chriſt, gives them ſuch a Bill of Divorce, as removes the Candleſtick, takes that in pieces, yea, delivers them as ſuch to Satan, and makes them as Heathens and Publicans each to other. For otherwiſe if the Act be only the Synod's putting away this Church from among themſelves, or the communion of other Churches; that we readily grant may be done, and ſurely it is Remedy ſufficient through Chriſt's Bleſſing (although this is reckoned no Government.) But to do the other Act mentioned to Church or Churches, Chriſt hath not given power to Synods.

If it be anſwered, as it is by ſome, that the Object of this Excommunication of a Church, is only the Perſons therein materially conſidered, but not their Church-State, otherwiſe than by conſequence: We Reply, that formally the Object of this Sentence, is a Church as ſuch, which is evident from this; that the great Argument

Ch. VI. alledged by the Presbyterial Divines is, that else there is no Remedy for an erring Church, as well as for Heretical Persons: And also that the Sins, which are the grounds of such Excommunications, be still Church Acts, Publick, not Personal, as grosly evil Administrations, or permissions of Notorious Sins, or Heresies Professed, Upheld, Defended, Adhered to by all in their Assemblies. And how else should Excommunication of a Church differ from the Suspension of a Church? This puts them into *that State*, as during the time of their Excommunication, they are to be reckoned as no Church, untill they Repent; for if they are as Heathens and Publicans, then they are no Church, unless we will make Heathen Churches, which is a contradiction. And if that whole Church should die Impenitent, they are to be reckoned to die, as out of Church-State among themselves, as well as in Relation to other Churches.

Now to prove that it is not in the power of Synods, thus to do to Churches, let the following Reasons be considered.

1. This is a *Maxim* of the Reformed Churches, that *Ecclesiæ sunt pares*, Churches are equal, and *Par in parem non habet potestatem*, one equal, *hath not power over another*. Admonish they may, withdraw communion they may; for as one Brother may do so from another, so these Churches may from an erring Church; yea, and a Synod being an Ordinance to them to heal them, and consisting of more Elders than are in that Church, they may declare Christ's command and will to them; but yet they have that power to deliver to Satan, to unchurch them, &c. We find not that a Synod or company of Elders are called a Church, and if they should be so Named, yet still they have not more of Church in them, than other Churches have; nay, they have less, for they want a Body of the Faithful, and their interest joyned with these Elders, who are more usually called the Church: They are not the Seat of the main Ordinances, for which Churches were constituted: They have not the Sacraments administred: They are not Bodies erected primarily for Worship; but only so far, as may occasionally accompany and subserve their Discussions, and Determinations. It would therefore be strange, that these should have so much more of Church in them, as to have power to unchurch other Churches and Bodies to Christ, when themselves are but Representative, at most of the Body of Christ (for Christ hath no Representative Body to him) but every Church consisting of Elders and People, are the Body of Christ, and so called, when the other never hath that Name.

2. To Dissolve a Church's external Estate as to all Ordinances, is a matter so far above Excommunicating single Persons, though never so many, that it is Christ's Prerogative alone to do it. This is confirmed,

1. By like instances in civil States, wherein to Dissolve an Incorporate Town, and to call in, and take away their Charter and Priviledge, belongs to the Supream Power; and though Judges and others may deal with Persons in Corporations, yet the Corporations themselves depend on the Crown.

2. It is confirmed by Scripture, *Revel.* 2. 5. Christ from Heaven makes it his Prerogative, to remove the *Ephesian* Candlestick, *Repent, or I will come quickly and remove thy Candlestick.* The Candlestick was their Church-State, Revel. 1. 23. *The seven Candlesticks, are the seven Churches*; and therefore he speaks not of their Mystical State, as they were Members of the Mystical Body, but of them, as they were a Candlestick Artificially formed up into that Holy Fellowship amongst them. So also it was Gods Prerogative alone, to give a Bill of Divorce to *Israel*, as she was a Church, and so it is expressed. And if it be said, it was done Ministerially by the Prophets declaring it, and so may this also be done to a Church by its Ministers: We Reply, that it was done by them Prophetically, as foretelling it; but there is no such Spirit of Prophecy in Synods.

3. It is Christ's Prerogative alone, to build and erect a Church, without the intervention of Ministerial Ecclesiastical power, to derive power to them; therefore also to Dissolve that Fellowship, and the use thereof, belongs only to him. Chuches to be Erected, may and ought to have the direction and consent of Neighbour-Churches, because a New Sister is to be added to, and associated with them; but they receive no power from them, to become a Church. It was not the Intervention of the Apostles power, that constituted Churches, further than as they converted Materials for Churches to be made out of, and as they Directed and Taught them to become

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Bodies unto Christ, teaching them to do whatsoever Christ hath commanded them; but we never read, that making them Churches, was a Ministerial Act in them; we read they Ordained Elders, but not that they Ordained Churches. *Paul* says, he planted indeed, and he was a Wise Master-builder; but he speaks the one of converting Persons, the other of Doctrines, because he speaks of building Hay and Stubble afterwards. Book V.

It is the great Error of some of this Age, that having lost all Church-state and Ministry; therefore (say they) there must come Apostles to make Churches again, whereas if all Ordinances had been lost under Antichrist, yet if there be Saints alive, and they have the Apostles Writings, those Writings do Authorize them as fully to become a Church, and choose Ministers, and then to Ordain them, as if the Apostles were alive. *Moses* was not the Builder of the National Church of the *Jews*, but Christ immediately did it, and not merely gave Directions, Heb. 3. 3. *This Man Christ, hath more Honour than* Moses, *in as much as he that Builded the House, hath more Honour than the House*, whereof *Moses* was but a part himself.

If it be answered to all this, that by Excommunication, their Fundamental Church-State is not Dissolved, as the character of a Brother, or of a Minister, is not so defaced when Excommunicated; but that if he Repent again, he remains a Minister without a New Ordination: We Reply, besides the Reasons forementioned, that so likewise if Christ should remove the Candlestick, and unchurch any, if they Repent, their Church-State would be Restored; and 2. If they be thrown out of their own Church by Excommunication, this Church-State must remain as it were in the Air, as an accident without a Subject. And 3. If they be cast out of the visible Church (which is the greater) by Excommunication, then they are cast out of the less also.

It may, and hath been said, that in cases of Male-Administrations, wherein Churches have Miscarryed and Erred, though Synods have the power of Excommunication in such cases; yet it is not necessary for the Rectifying of that Evil, that they should proceed against the Church, so as the Church should be the object of their dealing with; but it may be enough for them to deal with Persons only that are Scandalous, whom the Church will not amend; and that then in case of the Churches neglect, they may Excommunicate those Persons.

Now unto this we Reply, that in these cases of evil Administrations, what power Synods are betrusted withal, is to be primarily, or at least as much exercised upon the Church that hath miscarryed and neglects its Duty, as upon the Persons: And therefore it will not Salve it, that they should let the Church alone, or deal more lightly with them; and so take upon them to Excommunicate the Persons, whom the Church neglects to Excommunicate. Which is made good by these Reasons.

1. From the priviledge and power of that Church, be it Classical or Congregational, that is the first Subject of Excommunication; they have the power first from Christ to do it, and a command so to do, and the Duty lies on them. And therefore Synods are to call upon them, and to provoke them to do it, who have that power committed to them, and not take it out of their Hands; for Synods are not to assume more power than the Apostles did. When the Church of *Corinth* had neglected to Excommunicate the incestuous *Corinthian*, *Paul* did not take it upon him, and Excommunicate him himself; but in this case he deals with the Church, for not doing their Duty, because the power of Judging was committed to them; *Do not ye Judge them that are without?* 1 *Cor.* 5. 12. He blames them, lays it upon them as a Sin, and if they had still continued in that neglect, their Sin had been as great as that of the Man himself, and greater. And therefore Christ also in his Epistle from Heaven, to the Church of *Thyatira*, *Revel.* 2. 20. blames that Church and the Angel thereof, for suffering *Jezabel* to Teach, and lays the Sin upon them in this case, as well as upon *Jezabel* her self: And therefore if Synods are to Excommunicate at all, and have power to Excommunicate the Persons, they must proceed against the Church also.

1. If it be said, that the Church must be supposed not to see that Reason (for want of light) to Excommunicate a Member or Members, that the Synod doth, and so they may not have that cause to deal with the Churches, that they have with the Person or Member: We Reply, that if the Sin be not evidently notorious

Ch. III. in all Mens Eyes, deserving Excommunication; but such, as it may be well supposed, the Inferior Church might not see ground for Excommunication, why should the Synod meddle with cases of that nature, why should they not rather rest in the Sentence of those Inferior Courts? And if it be such a Sin as is Notorious, and the Scandal answerably, then surely this Church that Person belongs unto, is as much, yea more in fault for their neglect or partiality. And surely Synods (if they had any such Authority) being such Great and Superior Bodies, should not intermeddle but in cases suitable to themselves, in cases of Moment, great and manifest to all Men's Consciences.

And 2. The constitution of Synods, and the Relation they bear to Churches argues it. They are not as *Totum integrale*, but *Collectivum*; *not an integral whole*, they are not *Ecclesia integralis*, but *Collectiva*, not an integral Church, but Collective, that is, they are in our Brethren's intent, a Church of Churches (if a Church at all) and not in an immediate way a Church of the Members of those Churches singly, and apart considered. Their First and Primary Relation is therefore to the Churches, as a part of that whole, and but Secondarily unto the Members; and they are therefore accordingly to deal in all such cases of omission with the Churches. Their Work is to have the care and care of Churches, and their Miscarriages; and therefore to deal with Members only, and let the Churches alone, is to neglect that which is their proper charge.

3. So it was in the Government of *Judah*, the *Synhedrim* did not themselves meddle with the Person to be Judged, and pronounce the Sentence in stead of the Judges of a particular City, but left it to them still to Judge according to their proper Privledge; but dealt with the Judges, in case they pronounced not the Sentence; and so here it should be, if we will suppose any such power at all to be in Synods.

2. It may and hath been said, that Presbyterial Government supposeth the fault of this Excommunication, to lie in the Elders that Excommunicated the Man, and so need not to deal with the Churches by way of coertion to them; but only with those Elders that had the Hand in it, who may be Deposed, and others placed in their room.

To which we Reply, 1. That the People are supposed also at least to give their consent to the Excommunication of a Person in a Church (by their own acknowledgment, and according to the practice of the Reformed Churches) yea, and are to Judge as the Jury doth, by finding a Man Guilty; and the Officers are as the Judges (so in the Church of *Corinth*, 1 *Cor. 5th* and *6th chap.*) And if so, then they are to be Judged in fault, as well as the Officers.

But 2. If the People are not to be Censured and Judged, yet suppose they cleave to their Officers in this Act, as thinking that they ought, and as being convinced with them, that this Man is to remain Excommunicated; and therefore dare not partake with him, as it is their Duty in such a case: Then the People are to be Excommunicated, as well as their Officers, and both of them for this same thing, as being a Church Act, according to their interests, common to both.

3. If the Officers only should be Excommunicated in this case, and others put in their rooms: Then 1. If the People do cleave to their former Officers, these Officers will want a Church to officiate unto; and why should they Desert their Elders, when they in their consciences Judge their Act to be Just? It becomes them to say, let us all dye with them in such a case. And if the Synod will Excommunicate a Pastor, and the Elders of a Congregation (supposing the People cleave to them) where is it that you will Excommunicate him? In their own Church, or in your Churches? In his own Church, the People are against it. And if in your Churches, where is the Peoples concurring consent to this Man's Excommunication? And if it be done in your Churches, you only throw him out of your own. Or 2. If they do not cleave to their Officers, yet they conscientiously Judging that they ought not to receive the Man into communion with themselves, here is still no sufficient remedy for the Man by this.

4. Let it be further considered, that if these Elders only should be Deposed; yet they are perhaps the whole, the greater part at least of a Classis (for by the greater [illegible] every thing is carried) and so of the Elders of many Congregations. Yea, [illegible] Provincial hath seconded the Sentence; then the greater part of the Elders of [illegible]ce, are to be Excommunicated also: And if the People cleave to them (as [illegible]ey did use to do to their Bishops) then the People of all those Churches also

also, must be Excommunicated, and what a havock of the Churches will this make?

If it be said, that in this case as in a Rebellion, some few are singled out for example to the rest: It is answered,

1. It is not in this, as in civil Government; for there capital punishments are chiefly for example, to prevent and deter others; but here this of Excommunication, is for the personal good of those that have Sinned, to destroy the Flesh, that they may be saved; and therefore the Souls that deserve it, ought and must be Excommunicated: Neither is there any Warrant to think, that when the Merit and Obstinacy of the Sin, calls for that Ordinance appointed, the only means to cure it (which cure is only to bring Sinners to Godly Repentance) that that Sin will be healed, by any lower means of making others an Example: The Excommunication of some few, may be a means to prevent those that are not fallen; but not those that are fallen into obstinacy. 2. In such civil Mulcts, Princes and States have power to Pardon the Rebels, or to pass the Crime by; because the Injury (so far as 'tis civil, is to themselves) but no Ecclesiastical Court hath power to forgive, but where Christ forgives, and he forgives only the Penitent; nor yet ought they to forbear, if they have the power of inflicting this Spiritual Punishment.

Lastly, Let the Inconvenience be considered, if Synods should Excommunicate Persons (when the Inferior Churches did acquit them) without Excommunicating the Churches themselves, what Confusion and Disturbance it is like to bring. The Persons Excommunicated will say, where I am known, and am a Member, there I am acquitted, and not medled with; but by Strangers, and the Elders of a Nation (having taken the cause out of their Hands) I am condemned. This will belster up Persons, and make them obstinate, and they will oppose Sentence against Sentence.

CHAP. IV.

Arguments against Subordination of Synods, to rxercise Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction or Government. The first Argument, that there is no Warrant or Designment of such a Subordination in all the Scriptures.

THough we judge Synods to be of great use for the finding out, and declaring of Truth in Difficult cases, and encouragement to walk in the Truth, for the healing offences; and to give Advice unto the Magistrate, in matters of Religion: And though we give great Honour, and conscientious Respect unto their Determinations: Yet since not only an occasional, but a standing use of them be asserted and maintained; and that in Subordination of one unto another, as Juridical, Ecclesiastical Courts; and this in all cases: We Humbly present these Reasons against it:

All Subordinations of these Spiritual Courts, having greater and lesser Degrees of power, to which in their order causes are to be brought, must have the greatest and most express Warrant and Designment in the word for them. Whence it is argued thus.

Argu. 1. *Those Courts that must have the most Express Warrant and Designment for them in the Word; and yet have not the least, their power is to be Suspected, and not Erected in the Church of God; But these have not the least: Therefore*, &c.

There ought to be the greatest and most express Warrant, and that for two things belonging to them. 1. For their Subordination and Number. 2. For their Bounds and Limits of Power. And because this principle is made use of both in the point in hand, and other of like nature; Namely, to argue *à pari ratione*, from like and Parallel Reason, the Argument to Establish this Proposition, shall proceed accordingly, from the strength of like Reason, in other cases and instances, that there ought to be, that there ought to be a Warrant and Designment in the Word for them.

1. From the like Reason, in the case of Subordination of Officers in the Church, one over another, there was a special Institution, and it is required, or we own them

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not; and that for intensive power, and extensive power; and therefore for the Subordination of such Courts also. The Rule of proportion holds; for a Government of, and by special Subordinations, whether of one Church-Officer or Person over another, and of him over others; or of a many in the like Degree of Subordination are but several Forms of Government, of which there is the like reason in common. As of Subordinations in a Monarchical way, wherein but some one Person is Superior to another downwards, or in an Aristocratical way throughout, in this they come all to one; that if there be to be an Institution or Warrant for the one, there is to be for the other, whether God or Men be to be the Institutors of them. Now in the Government of the Church, for the Subordination of Officers, there was an express Institution, or Men ought not to have assumed it, 1 Cor. 12. 18. *God hath set in his Church; First Apostles, Secondarily Prophets and Evangelists* (who were of a Parallel Order) *Thirdly Teachers*; and the difference of power in Apostles and Evangelist's, is by Subordination; but Christ hath not set the like Subordination of Courts.

2. It is proved from what the Presbyterial Principles themselves Reject: An Institution is required by them in the case of Subordination of Bishops, Archbishops, Popes in their arguing against them and their power: Yea, and by the Episcopal Writers themselves, who when it is objected, that if there may be a Bishop, and an Archbishop over him, why not a Patriarch over Archbishops, and a Pope over all? They deny this, and Reject a Patriarch or Pope (although these Popes should Renounce Infallibility) as not warranted by the Word. They say, an higher and more Universal Subordination, alters the case. And the usual exception against this Subordination of such Church-Governours, is that in Scripture, we read neither of the Name of an Archbishop, nor of the thing, and therefore not of a Subordination. The like may be said of those; where read we of Councils Provincial, National, Names or Things? Yea, and in this way of arguing (in this Respect) the Disadvantage is on this side rather; for we are sure that once there was in the Church, such a Subordination in Church-Officers, Evangelists over Pastors, Apostles over Evangelists (only they were extraordinary, and so no Patterns.) But of such Subordinations of Councils in an Aristocratical way, there is nothing to be found.

3. It is argued from like and just reason, in other Societies and Bodies politick. In all Kingdoms and Commonwealths, well ordered and constituted, there is, and ought to be a set and express Order by the Laws, both of the number and bounds of Courts of Judicatory, from whom, and to whom Appeals are made, and in what cases, &c. And if this Subordination should be set forth, and fixed by the Law, is as necessary as the Laws and Rules by which Men in a Kingdom are to be Governed. The Wisdom of the Law doth Judge it not enough to appoint several kind of Officers, as to say, *Councellors, Serjeants, Judges*; but designeth also, and appoints several Courts, with their power and bounds, the Designment of which (especially standing Courts being made up of these) is a matter of much more Moment, than the other. Yea, and still the greater and higher such Courts and Assemblies are, having amplitude of power over others, the more express Evidence and Warrant for their power, there is and ought to be; as for Parliamentary power, and the priviledges thereof. And this is evident, as from the Example of all Kingdoms, so from what the Scripture speaks of the constitution of them. Each part of the Subordination of such power in all Government, both was and is called a Creation of Men in things Humane, whether it be in a Monarchical or Aristocratical way, 1 Pet. 2. *Submit your selves to every Humane Creation.*

And he speaks there evidently of (and therefore thus stileth) the Subordination of powers in a Common-wealth, whether Officers or Courts, for it follows, whether unto the King as Supream, or unto Governours, as those that are sent by him, &c. and so have Subordinations of power under him, now Parallel, Spiritual and Ecclesiastical Government with this. As in the rearing of an Humane fabrick and contignation of power, there must be an Ordinance or Creation from Man, when God hath left the framing of it (as in this case he hath) so this Subordination being in Divine power, there must be a Divine Institution of it, besides that of the Distinction of the Officers themselves.

4. It is argued from like Reason with Christ's Institution, *Matth.* 18. If in a particular Church, Christ hath prescribed the several Subordinations of proceedings, and set

set forth the Degrees, Bounds, and Order of them; then much more it is required in these, by how much a larger extent of power is committed to them. The First Rule in *Matth.* 18. for proceeding, is, *If thy Brother offend thee, tell him thy self*: Then 2. Take two or three, and if he hear not them, then 3. *Tell the Church.* If there were a Thousand Brethren in a Congregation, a Man were not bound, nor were it orderly in an ordinary and set way, to take, as the Church shall please, first two or three, and then ten, and then twenty, and still the like proportion of a greater and greater number, ere he comes to the Church it self: But Christ hath set the Order, and his Wisdom saw it meet thus to design, and limit the proceedings in a particular Church: And it had been much more necessary, to have appointed the like about these more general and greater Assemblies; because every one of these Courts (intended) have the power of a Sentence and Judgment, whereas those two or three, proceed but in a way of Admonition, in order to a Superior Court. Shall he take care of Congregations (which are esteemed the meanest) and not for these, of which if he should not have set the bounds of power, and the Subordination thereof? None would know what belongs to them, who is in fault, if offences be not corrected; now would any know whom first to Appeal unto, I will appeal to the National Assembly first, says one, and am not bound to the Classical or Provincial: Another would say, I will appeal to a general Council, which can best judge, and will be sure to make an end of it. Why should any be hindred from going, *per saltem*, if Christ hath not set forth, and obliged us to these Subordinations in their Order?

5. In the Churches of the *Jews*, the Subordinations that were, were set forth and Determined, by Institution or Example, how many Courts there should be, and where to rest. There were the Courts of the Cities and the Towns; and then their *Synhedrim*, to which the cause was to be carryed, if it were too hard for their particular Courts, *Deut.* 17. In the New Testament, we have for removing Scandals, a Congregational standing Court and Government (or be it a Classical standing Presbytery, over many Congregations, as our Brethren say) and we have an example also, of going out from a particular standing Church, whether the one or the other electively to another Church or Churches, when Divisions are therein (which *Acts* 15. holds forth) but still for such standing Subordinations and Courts, as these out of this Church nothing at all. If there had been any National *Synhedrim*, a set and constant Judicatory; then Christ would have appointed it as he had done before, but he hath not, no example, no constitution holds it forth, which is the second. And

I come now to prove, that these Subordinations of Synods, have not the least Warrant and Designments of them in the Word of God.

1. The New Testament is silent in it. And if it be said, that all Nations were not then converted, when the Apostles Wrote: It is answered, that God in the Old Testament, took care aforehand to set the Order when they had no Cities, nor were settled in the Land. And accordingly, if the Apostles had not lived to see that which might occasion such an Institution or Precept; yet they would some way have left order for time to come.

2. But Secondly, Though the Apostles lived to see many Famous particular Churches Erected in a Province, as well as in Cities; in a Nation, as in *Judea*, in *Asia*, in *Creete*, there were many Cities and Churches in each: And although all the People in those Countries, were not Christians nor Members of Churches; yet there was matter for the moulding and casting them into these Subordinations, as well as now in *France*, where not the third part are Protestants; or in the low Countries, where not the Tenth part of the Inhabitants are Members of their Churches. It had been as necessary to have appointed them. They set up, and appointed all needful Remedies, for ordering the Churches after them, when they should be gone: And 'tis more strange, that in the case of the spreading of Errors, they should not Write to Churches as gathered into Synods, and as having the standing power to prevent and suppress them (if such Ordinary standing Assemblies Armed with coercive power, had been then in that existence as now.) That upon no occasion, this should be done, when yet they had occasions.

Take the Seven Churches in *Asia*, *Ephesus*, *Thyatira*, *Smyrna*, &c. with the rest of the Churches therein, a Province, called therefore *Proconsular Asiæ*, and though

Ch. V. therein we find many great Disorders, and some in Doctrine (the more proper Work of these standing Synods) yet we see that Christ Writes only to each of these Churches apart; and Reproves each, for the Disorder in Each: Whereas had they been one Church, in such a standing Association for Government, and had had ordinary Provincial and National Assemblies extant, as now, the Reproofs would have been especially directed thereunto. As if Errors and Disorders were in the classical Churches (as those all are pretended to be) of *Scotland*, the chief Rebuke would now more justly fall upon the National and Provincial Assemblies as their constitution is.

3. Yea Thirdly, The Holy Ghost would have at least vouchsafed to these or some other Churches that were in like manner in a Nation or Province, as *Galatia*, &c. in Respect of such a Combination, the Name of a Church, who must have had according to the Principles of this Government, so much of the power of a Church. But no where are the Churches in a Province called a Church, but Churches in the plural: And if the lesser Churches, then these; yea, rather these, having most of the power, should therefore rather have had most of the name. Yea, and by how much the Church-power thereof, should have been most independent (as a Nation is) and so come most eminently within that Rule, *Tell the Church* (from which words, these pretend their power; and yet cannot shew so much Title thereto, as to have the Name Church given them) let a Rational account be given of this.

CHAP. V.

The Second Argument against Subordination of Synods, that it would introduce a Foreign Ecclesiastical Power over every State and Kingdom. The Third Argument, that there is no constant standing Rule, by which such a Subordination should be ordered and managed.

Arg. 2. *If there be such a Subordination of Synods in the Church of Christ, then there is no Independency, but in an Oecomenical Council: Which first would bring in a Foreign Ecclesiastical Power over each State and Kingdom. And Secondly, which therefore of all other, should have its Designation and Existence in the Word, and is more needful, than all the other two sorts of Synods mentioned; for if any should be Extant, then that which is* Remedium efficacissimum. 'Tis said, there is wanting *Remedium efficax*, if these Subordinations be not; but according to these Principles, there is wanting that which is the most Efficacious Remedy, if a General Council be not extant. For if there be not a Resting in a classical Presbytery, but Provincial also must be, and appealed to; neither are they reckoned Efficacious enough, but there must be National also, upon this Supposition, that the greater Assembly hath more of the promise and assistance of Christ, than the lesser; then of all other, a General Council must be supposed in a Transcendent manner above all the rest, to have the promise of Assistance made to it, and so to be the most eminently Efficacious (if not the only) Remedy on Earth; yea, and only to be Rested in, being that which only is the ultimate. Some of the Papist's, they gave this to such a General Council, that it cannot err; but according to these Principles of Presbyterial Divines, though it might err, yet it is supposeable to be Transcendently more irrefragable, than all the other under it; and God more with it, than with all the rest: And therefore God in his Word, would have given especial Order for this, above all other; and the same God that suits his Providences to his Institutions, would not have fail'd in what is the most Soveraign Remedy of all other, that it might have been existant in all Ages; as we see his promise was to the *Jews*, to keep their Land, when the Males thrice a year went up to the *General Assembly* at *Jerusalem*. But for 300 years, the Churches wanted them, and could not enjoy them, and they are adjudged, therefore not necessary to the Government of the Church, which yet according to these Principles, must have been the most necessary of all the rest. Yea, and further else, Thirdly, there must be an Injurious Independency set up in a National Synod; For when a Man hath Appealed from one Court to another, and comes to this National, that is, the

the ultimate existant, and upon the Sentence thereof, comes next to be Banisht out of a Nation, to have his Estate forfeited, to the Ruine of himself and Posterity; then it is he most of all needs the Relief of an higher Remedy, more Efficacious, than all those he hath gone through (if such an one may be) yet then he is left Remediless, and (according to those Principles) left more unsatisfied than ever; because, thinks he, there is by God's Appointment, a Court that hath more of God, and of Christ in it, than all these to Judge of the Truth and Right; and Lo it is not, nor can ever be expected.

Let it be withal considered, that when God appointed a Subordination of standing Courts, he withal designed out which should be the Supream, and made it the Ultimate: And the Supremacy and Independency of it, in a Set and Standing way, was his Institution, as much as the appointment of the Court it self: So that he was to be put to Death, that obeyed not the Sentence of it, and all Appeals were thereby cut off. Therefore if a National Church, doth take upon it to be an Independent Church, upon the Sentence thereof, to have the extreamest punishment executed (but that of Death) that in a Nation Men are capable of it, had need, for the quieting of all Men's Spirits, that must submit to it, not only shew a Warrant from God, to be an Ecclesiastical Judicatory; but also to be the Supream Court, as the *Synhedrim* was, that Appeals should be made unto.

Arg. 3. *To that end Thirdly, Let it be examined, what Set Rules there is, or may be supposed to be of these Subordinations, and their Bounds, and the Ultimate Independency in a National Church; which should be fetcht from some standing considerations, which the word Warrants: God never having constituted a Church, but he gave the bounds thereof.* All variation of Church-power, is from God. The alteration of the Government of his People the *Jews* from a Family Government (which had been under the Law of Nature) to National in *Moses* his time, was by express appointment: And as himself made and constituted it a National Church, so there was an Ecclesiastical Government framed by himself, suited thereunto. And in the New Testament, there is a Reed to measure the Temple, *Rev.* 11. 1. a Rule to set out the limits of Church-power, as well as under the old. And therefore the Argument is framed thus:

That Church-power which cannot shew a set and constant Divine Rule for its Variation and Subordination, and Ultimate Independency, is not of God, and so May not be. *But this Variation of Church-power into these Subordinations, cannot shew any such steady constant Rule for these things. Therefore,* &c.

The *Major* is evident from what hath been said. The *Minor* is made good by a removal of all particulars, that may be supposed to be the Square of framing these Subordinations, *&c.*

1. Not that Rule, that the greater number or company of Churches, should Rule and Govern the less; and that the whole should Rule the part, is a sufficient square, by which to Frame these Subordinations.

For then, 1. There would be as many several Subordinations, as there can be supposed Variations of greater Numbers; and that will arise to more than these three only. Every New greater company, would constitute a New Synod. 2. Where is the promise of God, that he will be more with the greatest part of them that profess Christianity, rather than with a few, so far as to constitute a New Power and Government? Yea, 3. The greater number of Churches professing Religion, are more corrupted; the pure Churches are fewer. It had been ill for *Philadelphia* and the Angel, and Elders thereof, if those seven Churches in *Asia*, had been cast into such a Subordinate Association for Government, to be exercised by the Angels and Elders of all the other six Churches, with the rest in *Asia*. And the like may be said of the purer Reformed Churches in *Germany*; if the greater number of those that yet were True Churches, should have Ruled the lesser; then (*Lutherans* and *Calvinists*, being bound to this Government) the *Lutherans* (being also True Churches, and yet the more in number) would by vertue of this Law, have soon corrupted the purer. And what reason can be pretended (according to this Rule and the Principles of this Government) to leave any True Churches out of an Association? 4. Suppose there should be as many Elders and Churches, more purely Reformed in one Province or Shire, as in the rest of a whole Nation besides (as instance

 might

Ch. VII. might be given in some of the Reformed Churches that there are) why should not God be thought to be as much with them, as with the National Assembly? And if all are to give themselves up to this Law, how will the greater, which is the wose, either corrupt the purer, or express them? 5. If *Qua* greater, then the Decrees of greater; (*viz.* General Councils) in former Ages should bind us more than National or Provincial now; for they should have had more of Church in them (by this Rule) and so more of Christ; and then take all General Councils, that set up Popes and Bishops, and all other Superstitions. If it be said, we chose them not; yet still that is not the ground makes their Decrees less Divine, or obliging to us; but it lies in the Authority of God's Ordinance, that they were the greater and more General Councils. And however, still if this be the Rule, that the greater number of Churches, Rule the less; then take the measure of this greatness and number of Churches from Time, stretching the Line over all Ages past, as well as from the greater number of Churches in such or such a place, or Nation in the present times; and so look what General Councils, for most Ages of the World did Establish, should (by vertue of this Law) oblige the present times, and have more force upon us, than the Universal Church in this present Age; much more than of any National Assembly, if either be simply considered, under a meer Ecclesiastical obligation; that is, *Qua* greater, and more of Church: Time varies not the case so, but that all their Acts having been Acts of the Church-Universal in all Ages, should comparatively stand more in force; but however, the Acts of any of the last General Councils will stand in force, until a Ceneral Council of like extent, Repeal those Acts, as the Statutes of Parliament of our Ancestors do, if not Repealed by like and equal Authority.

2. It is not the notion, or the consideration of their being Churches in such or such a Nation or Province, that can be the Rule of making this Obligation, or setting of these Bounds. It must be considered, that the question is of a meer Ecclesiastick obligation, by vertue of Church Principles, such as should have been a just Rule and Measure to the Primitive Churches, e're Princes turned Christian, to have reared up the like Subordinations. Now then the Limits from hence, must either rise from being first one Church in a Kingdom, under the same civil Government. Or Secondly, One Church in a Nation; that is, either from a *National* respect, or *Political*.

1. First in general from neither; for that instance in *Acts* 15. of the Council there, its Rise, or the bounds of its Authority, was founded upon either: For if either *National* or *Political* Respects, should have obliged them, they should have sent to *Syria*, or *Cilicia*, and not *Hierusalem*, who were both under a differing Government civil, and of another Nation. But,

2. Secondly, More particularly.

1. Not *Qua* Church in one Kingdom; for that is *per accidens* to a Church, that it grows up to a Kingdom, or that the whole Nation is converted to Christianity; and therefore a Set Rule for all Times cannot be fetcht from thence. This could not be the certain measure of the Independency of Church-power, in the Apostles times.

2. This makes the bounds of Ecclesiastical Independency and Jurisdiction, uncertain, varying, as the bounds of Kingdoms do vary. When the *Roman Empire* had all Kingdoms under it, all the Churches must then have been obliged, to have had then General standing Councils, suited to the extent of the Empire, to have been the next unto the Provincial, for their Supream Judicatory, such as the National are now to the Provincial, or else before the Empire turned Christian, there was this Rule, even as many Independencies as Churches: And then again, when this Empire was broken into ten Kingdoms, yea, and many more, there arose instead of the former, many new Independent Boundaries of Church-power (of which only the question is, and not of that power which a Church doth come to have, and simply and alone holds of the Magistrate, which will be meerly civil) and then, as Kingdoms vary by Conquest; the like alteration the bounds of Church-power must receive. Among the *Jews* it did not, which when the Church was broken into two Kingdoms, by Gods appointment, yet the Church-State by God's Institution, varied not; but was still one Church. Lastly, If this Independency ariseth from the Magistrate, then there is no need of such Subordinations, which is proved by experience in Reformed Churches abroad, who are well enough governed, without these

these Subordinations. *Geneva* hath no Appeals, but is governed by one classical Church; and why may not all other Churches, as well without them, if the Magistrate oversees them, and keep each to their Duties? The Churches in the Low Countries, want National Synods, and yet are peaceably governed; yea, some for a long time have been without Provincial, and say, if they can, they will never have more; and yet are peaceably and quietly Governed. It is as the civil Magistrate will Terminate the Independency, and himself overlook it.

2. Secondly, If these bounds be fetcht from National Respects, then in *Germany*, the *Calvinist's* must be subject to the greater number of *Lutherans*; and in this Kingdom, all Ministers must make up this Association, and the greater number will be the worse, and oppose the good. If because the *Calvinists* that profess a further Reformation, are Disobliged from Associating with the *Lutherans*, then those in any Nation, that profess a further Reformation than others, are free by the same Law. Surely uniformity of Principles, is a more intimate bond of such Association, than any such outward extrinsecal respects. 2. If *Qua* Nation, then *Wales* must be Independent. 3. If *Qua* Nation, then 1. If Nation be taken for a People of the same Tongue and Kindred, all the Christian *Jews* in the Primitive Times, when scattered into any Nation, were bound to have made one Church Distinct, from all the Churches they cohabited with. 2. If for a People dwelling in the same National bounds; then the same *Jews* being dispersed into several Countries and Nations, must have made one Church, with the several Nations where they lived; whereas *Peter* in his Epistle, and *James* in his, and *Paul* to the *Hebrews*, wrote unto the *Jews* apart, as Churches in all Nations.

CHAP. VI.

The Fourth Argument against Subordination of Synods, that it requireth Representations of Spiritual Power, arising from other Representations.

Arg 4 *THAT Government which necessarily requireth and produceth Representations, arising out of other Representations of Spiritual Power, having a Derived power therefrom, there is no Warrant for. But these Subordinations of Synods, Provincial, National, Oecumenical, for the Government of the Church do so, &c.*

The *Major* shall be spoken to, after the *Minor* Proposition is both cleared and proved, which is done by putting two things together. 1. That if there be an Authoritative Subordination of all Churches in the Provinces, to a National Assembly, and so of many Nations to an Oecumenical, binding unto Subjection; that then all in the Provinces, must be interested in that National, and all in the Nation, in that Oecumenical; so as it may be said, that they are all involved and included, and so obliged, as it is in Parliamentary power, wherein the Shires are involved. 2. That this interest in this Subordination, cannot arise but either by immediate choice of those Elders who shall Represent them, by each Church and Congregation immediately (which is the case of our Parliament Men chosen immediately by those they Represent) or else, that the Provincial Elders sent by the Congregations, shall choose out of themselves, some few that shall Represent the Provinces; and so likewise the National Assemblies, shall choose out some few, that shall Represent the whole Nation in a General Council. Now the first of these is not, nor can be: The Congregations meet not for any such immediate choice; but the Elders of them, all choose out of themselves. So as the Obligation of all the Churches, to Subject to a National Assembly (arising out of those other Subordinations) is not because they are a greater number of Elders or Divines; for in a Provincial Synod, there may be Assembled as many, as in the National; but it ariseth from hence, that some out of all, do Represent the rest; and otherwise, when a National Assembly sits in a Great City, all other Neighbour-Ministers must come, and Vote with them, and Outvote them who are the Representers of the whole.

Now such a Representation, having a derived Spiritual power from other Representations, is not in matters Spiritual Warrantable. Besides all Arguments against de-

Ch. VI. legated power in matters Spiritual, all Ministers being immediately *Christi vicarii*, and that all such Representations grow weaker, as Reflections use to do, Elders Representing the Churches in Classical and Provincial Assemblies, as being immediately chosen by them; but the Elders in National Assemblies, are the Representations of Elders in Provinces, and so are a shadow of that first shadow, whereas yet they have the most of power, even all that can be supposed to belong to the whole Substance. Besides such considerations, it is argued thus.

1. If that these few out of Nations, should bind all those Nations in matters Spiritual, and a few out of Provinces, the Nation, they must be supposed to have the the promise, and an Assistance answerable. But where is either the promise, or can Gifts in a few, be supposed to produce such an Obligation? 'Tis true, *where two or three are gathered together*, his promise is to be in the midst of them, and so suppose with more, when more are met; but that his promise should be to be with a few out of a Nation, as with the whole Nation; and those not chosen immediately by the Nation, but the Representers of them, cannot be expected. 'Tis granted, that each so met, hath the Gifts and Assistance of an Elder; and so the whole, as of so many Elders met (as we in this Assembly are to be lookt upon, and the Judgment thereof accordingly Reverenced.) But that as they are Elders Representative of Hundreds of other Elders, who themselves are Representers of Churches, that any such Addition should arise to them, by vertue of this Duplicated Representation, over and above what is in their single Gifts and Offices, let either a Warrant be produced, or a promise. Two things are allowed them; but a third denied them. 1. It is granted, they may have Assistance to Judge as Elders, which is their Office. 2. Assistance to Judge according to their Personal Abilities, being thus called to give their Advice. But 3. Such a Superadded Assistance, as holds proportion to that Spiritual Bulk and Body, which they Represent (for suppose that always it falls out, that the best and choicest of a Nation, are chosen; yet still not to hold proportion to a whole Nation) there must be a more than ordinary promise for it, and therefore had need be express and evident. That it is otherwise in Common-wealths, is because the Representations, and also the power conveyed, being Humane Creations the Persons Represented, can set up a power which shall Represent them: But this power we speak of, is Supernatural, and must be from God, and his Institution. The *Sinhedrim* of *Jerusalem*, had a special Assistance above all Courts else; and therefore God appointed causes to be brought to it, which special Assistance is intimated twice in the Institution of it, *Deut.* 17. by this, that they *should go up to the place which God should choose*, ver. 8. *and do according to the Sentence which they of that place (which the Lord shall choose) shall shew thee.* An Emphasis is put upon the Blessing, which by God's Choice and Election, did accompany that place which God had chosen, to put his Name, and promised to be in an eminent manner, present in, and to accept their Sacrifices there offered (which was a Representative Worship of that Nation) and not elsewhere. Now as that was the Representative Worship of the Nation, so these Governours were the Representative Governours of the Nation; and both Sanctified in that place, as the Gift was by the Altar, as that which God had chosen. If the like Institution were found, with the intimation of such a Blessing from a peculiar choice of God's, of National Assemblies, all ought to subject to them in matters Spiritual.

2. If there be such Representations as these, in one or few Persons of many Churches; they have each for that time, whilst in such an Assembly, Archiepiscopal and Episcopal power, and their case is Parallel (Parallel then for that time and occasion, and as met in a Synod) with that of so many Bishops, when met in a Council, whose Episcopal power, as then and therein met, lies in this, that they are so many Churches Representative, especially this would fall out, if these Synods should still consist of the same Men, or if some few should be always chosen to them. And why may there not be standing Persons, that are more Skillful in such Affairs, through exercise usually chosen, as well as standing Assemblies themselves? And then as touching matters of Jurisdiction in such an Assembly, they are for the present, the same with so many Bishops met in a Convocation.

3. If these Representations, having the power of all the Churches in the Nation, were Warrantable, they must be a Church. Besides, that they are no where so called (we leave the Usurpation of that Name, to the Popish Clergy) and if so, then a Body to

to Christ; for so every Church is, and where is Christ said to have a Representative Body, of his Body? They are a Church, that is, a company of Elders personally gathered, but a Representative Church they are not, cannot be; and yet must be, or they have not the power of all the Churches in a Nation in them, nor otherwise do their Acts oblige them to Subjection.

CHAP. VII.

Reasons against the Allegation brought, of Acts 15. *for the Subordination of Synods, Provincial, National, Oecumenical. And Reasons against the Argument drawn from the Analogy of* Matth. 18.

BEsides what hath been said against this Example, alledged to prove Presbyterial Acts of Government, by the Elders of the Church of *Hierusalem*, in the Reasons formerly present, proving, 1. That that one Example, cannot serve to prove both the Presbyterial Government and Synodical; but that if the Assembly will lean to the one, the other must be quitted. 2. That the Assembly was not a formal Synod, but only a Reference by the particular Church of *Antioch*, of their differences among themselves, unto this particular Church of *Hierusalem*, and no other. It is moreover added, that the Example of it is here further extended, to prove all sorts of Synods and Subordinations thereof, both Provincial, National, and Oecumenical, and so it must suit all these so great varieties, when it was not made fit for any one of them.

But if it had been a Synod; yet 1. Neither Provincial, nor National, but the contrary; for *Antioch* consults not with the Churches of her own Nation, but seeks to *Jerusalem*, a Church of *Judea*, of another Nation, and another Province. 2. Neither is it the instance of a standing Synod (which the word Subordination doth necessarily infer them to be standing Courts, or else the Links of those chains, will not hang together) but Elective; for they sent, out of Election and choice to them, but about this one question at this time, without any obligation to refer all other matters to them in an ordinary way. 3. Nor is it the Multiplication of Synods, but only of one, in whose Judgment those of *Antioch* rested. 4. Much less is it the instance of rearing up of a Subordination, and Contignation of Synods, Superiour and Inferiour, which is a further thing. For though when offences are not healed, and one Reference to other Churches is not sufficient to cure them, there should be a seeking to others; yet the example obligeth the Churches that are in difference, not to take and choose the Churches of that Province, either as of that Province, or as the greater number to whom both those among whom the controversie is, and those to whom it was afore referred, must be Subordinarily Subject. Much less doth it hold forth, that the Churches of that Province, may judicially challenge a Right of Authority to decide it, and oblige them *sub pœna*, to their Determination: and then the Churches of that whole Nation, challenge the like over all. But still it runs in this way only, that those who shall be Judged meetest and ablest, and Faithfullest to Determine and compose it, by those who are to refer it.

The Argument is usually drawn from like Reason, and let there be found like Reason, and it is granted; and though it self is not the pattern of a Formal Synod, yet it holds forth this Rule of Equity, that when offences arise among Churches, References ought to be made from out of themselves, to Churches abroad to heal them. But the question is, to what Churches these References are to be made, and how? And let the like Reason held forth in the Example, be kept unto, and decide it. Say we still to those Churches, the Churches offended or divided, shall choose as fittest and ablest to determine it. This is clear in the Example; *Antioch* was not bound to refer it to the Church of *Jerusalem*, as greater, or as a next Neighbour, or of the same Province; but as best able to Judge of the Differences. And this way agrees with the Law of Nature, and of Arbitration, so usual amongst Men, which God hath there set up, as an Ordinance and Pattern of proceeding in such cases. But this Subordination of Synods intended, holds so differing a course from this, as 1. In stead of Elective Synods and Occasional, it sets up Standing, and so set to be the Judge of

Ch. VII. of the Churches under them for ever. 2. Not in one case (as *Antioch* to *Hierusalem*) but in all cases what ever shall fall out. 3. Not in a way of Multiplication or Diversification, as need shall be, but of Subordination and setled Superiority; and the grounds of this to be, because the greatest must Rule the less, and that they are Neighbour-Churches, in the same Province or Nation. And this the like Reason, in *Acts* 15. is so far from countenancing, that in all things it is unlike, and so there is a differing constitution, and Rise of those Synods thus Subordinate, and what the Reason drawn from *Acts* 15. will warrant; and therefore doth make a differing formal Reason in the Government; and Humane Prudence added, will not Rectifie it, when the Reason of the Institution is so much varied from. For instance, if the Fundamental Law for Remedy of Wrongs, and deciding controversies in any Kingdom, were by Arbitration Elective to take them their Judges, whom the parties in difference judge aptest every way for the present controversie, and that the Presidents and Ruled cases hold forth no more; and if that the Government of another Kingdom were, that the greater should Rule and Determine the causes of the less, and according to the proportion thereof, to have Subordinate standing Courts erected, to which (by Appeal from the one to the other) all causes should be brought: Whether were not these two such differing Frames of Government, so as that he that would mould the first to the second, might not be challenged to set up a new Government, differing from the Fundamental Law of that Kingdom? And whether the one is not at liberty to withstand the Second, if it were vouchsafed to any Kingdom (and that is the case here) is humbly Submitted? And the bounds of such Assemblies Elective, needed no set or standing Rule; because they rise from occasional Electiveness, in case of controversie and offence, and the extent thereof: And so the condition and nature of the things themselves, do prescribe their own Limits, and hold forth their own rise; like as the bounds of particular Congregations, to be of such as live so, as conveniently to meet in one place, ariseth from the Nature of the thing it self, and the necessary requisites thereunto.

I shall now consider the Argument drawn from the Analogy of *Matth.* 18.

1. The strength of the Argument runs, that because there should be this Remedy, that therefore there is such a Remedy.

2. 'Tis granted there is a Remedy, which is a going forth to other Churches, which *Acts* 15. holds forth; but that Excommunication (which is the Remedy held forth in *Matth.* 18.) of the offending Church or Churches, should be the Remedy, is not there held forth, as hath been shewn. There is a Remedy of Co-ordination, such as between two Nations, and as between *Pares* (as Churches are) proceeding in a way suitable to their condition, but not this of Subordination, that the greater number of Churches should become standing Courts, and have power to Excommunicate the lesser; but that all Churches have a power to *Declare* the offence, and withdraw communion from those Churches. And in Reason, how is it possible for a National Church, to Excommunicate all the Churches of a Province? And how ineffectual would that be? Or for a General Council to Excommunicate a Nation? And if they cannot use this Remedy, to what end is this Subordination of Synods, having this Authority pleaded for?

And whereas 'tis said, that there must be the same Remedy, that is is in a Congregation for an offending Brother, or else where the Disease is strongest, the Remedy is weakest: It is answered,

1. That where the Disease is strongest, there this, which is called the strongest Remedy, cannot be applyed, or with an apparent inefficaciousness; for when the Churches in a Province err, or a National, here the Disease is strongest, and yet it would be in vain to interdict them communion among themselves, or deliver them unto Satan. Yea, when it comes to the highest, and where the Disease is greatest and strongest, there is not only no Remedy, but the highest and greatest power to do hurt upon all under them; as when the generality of the Clergy were *Arrians*: And if they err, the error is worse than of a Pope's erring, or of a Bishop's, he is but one, and may be Deposed; and in the greater Bodies of the Clergy, the greater part are, and have been still the worser, and more corrupt, as is apparent in this Kingdom at present, in which (by vertue of the Presbyterial Principles) all Ministers must be taken in; and if you will put them out, where will others be had in their room? Convert Men

Men we cannot, and if not converted, Ministers of all others, are the worst and greatest opposites to Religion: And if a National Assembly be chosen by these, the greater number are like to be of the worst, and such as may alter all that you now have done. And if it be said, that this would hold against great politick Bodies as well, who may undoe the Common-wealth: The Answer is, that the common and equal interest of all, and the common Principles of preserving the Rights and Liberties of a State, and seeking the common good, is natural to the generality of Men; but the Truth of the Gospel and Purity of Religion, and the power thereof, is contrary to the principles of all Natural Men; and in all Ages the most of the Clergy have been aptest to corrupt the one, and oppose the other. And in those Ages, when such Councils began to be standing, and in most credit, after the first 300 years, then was it that the Mystery of Popery did work most powerfully, and those Superstitious and corrupt Opinions grew up, which made way for *the Man of Sin*, and that Body of Popish Doctrine, that hath overspread the World. And if there should be no danger of corrupting the Truth; yet the Churches (though Reformed) coming all out of Popery, and not being fully enlightned in all things, and the first Notion of any thing further in matters of Theology, usually falling into the Hearts and Spirits but of a few, we shall have no further Truth taught, but Suppressed, till a whole Nation is inlightened in it. Book V.

2. The Efficacy of all Remedies, doth depend first upon Christ's Blessing on them, which depends upon his Institution of them; and *Par Ratio*, or like Reason will never set up an Ordinance, unless Christ hath himself appointed it: And in the example *Acts* 15. there is not this way of Proceeding held forth. Secondly, it lies insuitableness to the condition of those that are to be dealt with: Now when many Churches deal with an erring Church, the Churches in a Province, with many erring Churches, or of a Nation with a Province, they must be in Reason dealt with, suitably to the condition of Churches, and of a Multitude; and surely a Brotherly way of Admonition, and withdrawing Communion, is more suitable unto such: As in the civil Government, if a Province Rebelleth, or a great Multitude of Subjects, should the State presently hang up all in that Province, although unto particular Persons Rebelling, this is Efficacious to suppress Rebellion. Thirdly, Christ hath suited his Remedies unto all times. and unto all conditions; and how National and Provincial Assemblies could be during the first 300 years, when yet the Churches were all Governed, is submitted.

3. And Lastly, if the Analogy of this 18*th* of *Matth.* be argued; then first let the Analogy be kept, and then when a Church hath offended other Churches, they are not to bring them to a Set Court of Judicatory at first; for Christ's Rule is otherwise, in dealing with an offending Brother, electively to take two or three Churches, and Admonish them, which is suited to that way forementioned, *Acts* 15. But as for the proceedings against a Brother in a Congregation, there is not a Set appointed number, of two or three standing Persons, to be the Admonishers of all, ere it comes to the Church, nor have they power to Excommunicate: And thus by this proportion, in stead of these Set and Standing Provincial Assemblies, to whom causes are next brought, and these Armed with power of Excommunication, there should only be two or three or more Neighbour-Churches, to Admonish the offending Church; and not a Stated Court to bring it unto. Secondly, Let it be shewn, where a standing Synod of Elders is called *the Church*; and how then can the Analogy hold, when it holds not in this, the main, *Tell the Church?* Lastly, the like reason holds not, unless these particular Congregations have the power of Excommunication; for otherwise if these greater Assemblie's power be argued from the Analogy of the lesser, and the same Remedy, Excommunication, and the particular Congregations have not that allowed them; then by the principles of this Analogy, it is no where to be found, but as the Congregational Churches have a power only to Admonish, and to Suspend to Sacraments, that so the greater Assemblies should have no more also. And though the Church Universal, is called a Church, and one Body to Christ; yet as materially considered, and not as a politick Body, in respect to Government; which was never yet asserted by this Assembly. *The Assembly of Divines at West-minster.*

CHAP.

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Of the Intercourse or Communion, which particular Churches are to hold one with another. That there is a Twofold Communion of Saints, the one arising from the Relation which they all bear to one another, as Members of Christ's Mystical Body; the other which proceeds from their being formed into particular Churches by Christ's Institution. That the Duties of Catholick Communion, which one Believer owes to another, by vertue of their all being Members of the same Mystical Body of Christ, those Duties, one, or many Churches, may and ought to perform to another Church.

HAving proved that neither the Church Universal, nor a Church as National, or in a Kingdom, nor a Church classical of many Congregations associated, are the Subjects and Seats of political power for Juridical censures, as Excommunication, &c. but a Congregational Church only: There yet remaineth to be considered, what Intercourse, Communion, and Correspondency we assert, to be between each Church and their Elders, by vertue of any, or all those considerations and respects. We acknowledge, that by vertue of the consideration of the Church Universal, whereof each Congregation is a part; and by vertue of Churches being in a Nation of the same Language, under the same civil Government, or living in the same Neighbourhood, and being of the same Judgment; there is to be a great and near communion to be entertained between all such Churches, and according to such respects. This communion is to be observed, with some more nearly and strictly, and such is the Nature of this communion, as it will oblige all Churches one to another, in a multitude of mutual Duties; which if observed, may help to preserve Churches from running into confusion, may rectifie miscarriages, preserve them from errors, and may Salve all those inconveniences, which use to be objected against this Assertion, of placing only political power in Congregational Bodies.

We lay this for a General Rule; that there is a Twofold Church, and Church Relation, which the New Testament holds forth; and answerably, a Twofold way of communion. There is first, a Church-Mystical; and secondly, there is a Church Political, or a politick Body, which is the Seat of Government by Institution. We said at first, that communion of Saints and Churches, do both run along together, in a parallel proportioned communion of Saints, being the Foundation of uniting all into that Body of the Church, and as we said, there is a Twofold Communion of Saints, one fixed for communion in publick Ordinances, the other occasional, so there is a double constitution of Church.

1. There is first a Church Mystical, and a communion answerable, whether we take it for the invisible company of the Elect, or for the visible company of the professors of Christianity, that do walk as Saints throughout the World. The invisible Church, is acknowledged by all sorts, to be a Mystical Body; but it is not only called a Mystical Body, as it is opposed to the Church visible, but as it is opposed to a Church by Institution, that is, a politick Body. The visible Catholick Church, is not a Body by Institution, as in Heaven it shall not be. We acknowledge, that the visible Saints in a Kingdom, or in a City, may be called the Church, as bearing the respect or consideration, or notion of the Mystical Universal Church (as every part of water bears the Name of the whole) so as it is not only the Church Universal, that hath the consideration of a Mystical Body put upon it; but the same consideration may be put upon any company of Saints, whether smaller or greater, in a Kingdom, or in a City, or in a Province. And so we believe, that oftentimes when in the New Testament, the Saints in such a place are spoken of, and called the Church; they are called so, *Sub consideratione Mystica, under that Mystical consideration*, and not as considered as a politick Body; as when it is said, that *Saul persecuted the Church*, 1 Cor. 15. 9. it was not the Church Universal that he persecuted, it was not a Church under a political consideration; but it was the Saints in every place, where he came: So when it is

is said, that Prayers were made *by the Church for* Peter, *Acts* 12. 5. it is not spoken of them, as a Church congregated for Worship, or a Church political; but the meaning is, that the Saints generally in *Jerusalem*, and about in *Judea*, prayed for him, the Saints being there called a Church under that Mystical consideration, that the Church Universal is called.

Now answerably unto these two several considerations and notions of Church, whether applyed to the Church Universal, or to any parcel of Saints; there is a Twofold Communion, and the Duties are Twofold, which the Saints owe one to another. The one in respect of general and Mystical Relation, as occasionally they meet, or are cast together; and the other is as they are formed up into several Bodies by Christ's Institution. This may be exemplified by the like, among Mankind. Take all Mankind, as they are made of one Blood, under the general notion and consideration of being Men, by vertue hereof, there is a communion that one Man may have with another, and there are Duties that thence do arise, and as it is the Law of Nature, singly and apart considered, which obligeth them, as they are Men; so answerably there is a communion, and there is a Duty, which every Man oweth to every Man, as a Man, and a Duty which one Man oweth to many Men, considered as many, or to a greater number of Mankind; and therefore we say, there is the Law of Nature, which holds all the World over, and Laws of Nature, that are Fundamental to Men, as Men: And if you cast Men into several Nations, there is the Law of Nations, common to all Nations, as they are Nations, which binds them to Duties, one toward another. But there is another communion that Mankind hath, as they are formed up, and when they are formed up into several commonwealth, which tho' it be a mutual communion of those commonwealths, one with another; yet it ariseth not to Government and Authority over one another, but is but suitable and answerable to that communion, which Men have one with another as Men. Thus in the matter of communion of Saints as Saints, there is a communion which is carryed through all Saints, as it were by the Law of Nature, and that is carryed between these Saints, as formed up into several Bodies or Churches. The same kind of communion, holdeth between Church and Church, Elders and Elders, that would hold between Mankind, as formed into several Common-wealths; and there are Duties which they are obliged unto mutually, for mutual Help, for mutual Strength, &c. There are Associations, and Leagues made to several purposes; and there are Defiances, and Renunciations, when the Laws of Nations, and Nature common to Kingdoms, are broken. Amongst the Saints, there is a communion betwixt the Saints cast into the same Family, and there are Duties answerable and suitable; and then there is a communion which the Saints have, consisting of many Families united into one Church, and there are Duties agreeable: And there is a communion, and Duties which are to pass between these Saints, as they are Members of a Nation, and as they are Churches in the same Nation, and upon many such Respects; yea, and also as they are parts of the Church Universal. Only in this, here lies the difference between us and our Brethren, that they would make the communion which is between all the Saints, and all the Churches in the World, to be as truly political, the lesser being subject to the greater, in the Church Universal, or in a Nation, as it is in a particular Congregation, as we would; or as it is in a Church classical (according to their Opinion) or as it is in a particular Congregation, as we assert it.

Now that there is such a differing kind of communion, the one by way of Authority and Jurisdiction; and the other according to the common Law of Nature as we may so express it) is evident by the Principles of either side. For the Presbyterian Divines, who hold National Churches, in a political consideration (when Churches come up to that number, as to make a Nation, and so several Nations, several National Churches) yet hold, that there is a communion to be held between these, and an obligation to a multitude of Duties; yea, and an uniformity that is to be between these, when yet they will not say, that the one hath Authority, or power of Jurisdiction over the other. As for instance, if you take the National Church of *Scotland*, and the National Church of *England*, or if you suppose that there were but two Churches in the World, there would be a great deal of communion held between the one and the other, and ought to be, when yet the one could not assume a power over the other; but each retains a power of Jurisdiction intire within themselves. This different kind of communion, appears likewise by

See the Scotch Reasons for Uniformity.

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Hence therefore the Saints formed up into Congregations, with their Elders, being to us, the only Eccleſiaſtical Body by Inſtitution; an inſtituted Authority and Power of Juriſdiction, is found only anſwerably in them; and all other Relations of Saints and Churches one to another, fall only under a Myſtical conſideration, and therefore their Communion and their Power, is anſwerable. The one runneth *in a way of ſpecial Inſtitution*; the other, *Modo Myſtico, in a way of Myſtical Communion*: To the one, the Ordinance of Excommunication, is therefore only proper and peculiar, to the other a withdrawing, or a Non-communion appertains.

1. Hence therefore in the firſt place, we do grant and acknowledge, that many of the ſame Duties and Actions, which performed in a particular Church, do riſe up to Juriſdiction, are and may be performed by a greater number of Churches to another Church; but only *Modo Myſtico, in a way of Myſtical Communion*, becauſe the Relation is ſuch; and yet the Duties may be the ſame, and the Actions the ſame. A greater number of Churches, may Admoniſh another Church, they may caſt out another Church from their Communion and Aſſociation; but all this will not ariſe to a Juridical power of Excommunication. They may declare Men to be perverters of the Faith, to be Hereticks, ſo as to fulfil the Apoſtles Rule, not to eat with them, or bid them God ſpeed, *John* 2. 10, 11. and yet in all this, it doth not ariſe to aſſuming Juriſdiction.

2. We acknowledge in the ſecond place, that in ſuch Actions of many Churches toward one Church, there is an Impreſs of Authority, taking it in a larger Senſe, for that which hath a perſwaſiveneſs, and an inducement in it; but it will not ariſe to an Authority Juridical, ſuch as Jeſus Chriſt hath placed in them, as they are a political Body: But for that power which is placed by Chriſt, by vertue of an Inſtitution, there is a Superadded Authority of Jeſus Chriſt, beyond the force of Moral

tal or Rational Inducements; and the conscience is to be subject to the Power and Authority therein, as unto the power of Christ, for his Will and Institution sake. If we take the Elders of one Congregation, besides all the considerations that are common to them, with all other Elders and Saints in the World, there is an Authority stamped by Christ upon them, by vertue of their Relation and Office, so as the Members of that Congregation, are to be subject to them, not only upon Moral grounds, but on account of that Authority with which Christ hath invested them: and in the Acts that they do (Admonitions, casting Men out, Excommunication and the like) there is an Efficacy to be expected, which is in no other order of Men in the World, if they would undertake the like. The Difference of these two powers may appear, by Abstracting all Rational or Moral Inducements. 1. This Authority of the Elders, is more than Authority by way of Reason, or by ones alledging an express Rule out of the Word, which a Man's conscience may apprehend by Faith, from the Mouth of him that doth direct him, or lay it before him. Another Man's Wife or Servant, may Subject her self to the guidance of a Reason, or of a Scripture, that is brought by another Man, who yet hath not Authority added to it, such as her Husband hath, when he addeth a command thereunto besides. A Child is said to lead one New Converted, *Esa.* 11.6. But in this case, it is meerly the Authority of the Word or Reason alledged, that the conscience subjects it self to, without any further respect to any thing in the propounder. 2. The Authority of Jurisdiction, which is in a particular Church, is more than the Authority of Reverence or Respect, to the Grace or Judgment of another, founded upon whatever considerations, besides the Institutions of Christ. There are many considerations, that may breed Reverence to another, as their Grace and their Holiness, and the power of their Gifts, as *Herod* Reverenced *John Baptist*, and feared him, because he was an Holy Man. Thus a Man's Wife may be induced to obey the command of one that is a Minister, though not her Minister, she knowing him to be a Judicious Man, and a Man of much Holiness; but yet still, this doth not arise to a power given from Christ Juridically, by way of Institution, over and above such Respects. It is not such a power, as her own Minister hath over her, and for which, she is to respect and regard him; neither is it such, as her own Husband hath over her. The Judgment of many Ministers Assembled, hath an Authority of Reverence in it, because they are Wise; yea, and because they are the Ministers of Christ, by whose Judgments, Jesus Christ leadeth Men into Truth; and as they are Ministers of Christ, they have a special Blessing accompanying of them, and all such Respects the Consciences of Men are to take in to move them to yield to what they declare and determine: Yet, still this doth not arise to the consideration of Juridical Authority, which they have from Christ, over those whom they would guide, but such a Man's own Elders have. 3. There are many considerations, which may make a Man to Subject himself, to what another saith, which yet doth not rise to Juridical Authority. A Man in the cases of Scandal, and offending of a Church or a Brother, may forbear to do that which is in his liberty to do; but the Brother offended, hath not Authority Juridical over the other; for it is but an accidental consideration.

3. In the Third place, we acknowledge that by vertue of this Mystical communion, the Churches hold one with another, in their Mutual Transactions one with another, they are to look on them as Churches, and on the Elders, as instituted by Christ, and not only as Holy; but yet still they are not to regard them, as having an Instituted Authority given them by Christ, over this or any other Churches. Thus when *Paul* would put a weight upon his commendation of *Titus*, he put it upon this; that he was one, whose praise was in all the Churches, and that he was chosen by the Churches, to carry the Alms. And therefore of old, in the Letters that were wrote from one Church to another, were Superscribed as from the Churches (as in *Clement's Epistle*, the Stile runs thus, *The Church of* Rome, *to the Church of* Corinth) and they do deal with them, as one Church of Christ dealeth with another; and as having the Authority and Spirit of a Church with them, in their Admonitions, in their Reproofs, in their Directions, or the like; but still it riseth not to Jurisdiction. As if one Kingdom or State, doth deal with another State, they look on it as such, and accordingly Respect it, and their Mediations or whatever other

Ch. VIII. interpositions of theirs, are directed to them, not only as a company of Men, but as they are a State: And yet still it riseth not up to any Jurisdiction, that one State hath over another. And so also in the Transactions of Elders of other Churches, unto any Member of a Church, or to the Church it self, over which they are not Elders, they yet are to be looked upon as Elders, and accordingly respected in their Admonitions, and in their Judgments; but still it riseth not to Jurisdiction. If a Noble Man comes from one Kingdom to another, as the Nobles of *Scotland*, as Commissioners into *England*; they are to be Respected and Regarded as Nobles, according to their Place and Quality, by the Law of Nations, and the Law of Nature, and communion of one State with another; but still they are no way to be regarded, as having Jurisdiction, or exercising the Office of Nobles where they come, as the Nobles of *England* do.

4. In the 4*th* place, we do grant that other Churches may deal with any Church (as occasion is) as in the Name of Christ; and Admonish them, Reprove them, and the like: But they deal in Christ's Name, in this Sense, that they intreat them by vertue of that Name of Christ, which is called upon by them, and which in a common way, all do profess, and which would be thus and thus Dishonoured: But they deal not with them in the Name of Christ, in this sense, as if they had a Juridical power from Christ, to deliver them up to Satan, such as the Church at *Corinth* had, when met together, over the Incestuous Person, 1 *Cor.* 5.

5. In the 5*th* place, it may arise to an Authority of commanding, and that in the Name of Christ; and answerably it ariseth to be the Duty of that Church to be subject, and to obey them. In 1 *Cor.* 16. 16. (says the Apostle) *I beseech you, submit your selves unto such, and to every one that helpeth with us, and laboureth.* He speaks of Ministers, those that Labour in the Gospel. It's the same word with that which is used of Subjection to a Mans own Elders, in *Heb.* 13. 17. And yet it is not *Subjectio legalis, a Subjection by Law of Authority* (as *Estius* Distinguisheth it) such as a Man hath to his own Bishop (saith he) but *Moralis*; *Qualem reverentes præstamus virtute excellentibus.* But a Moral Subjection, such as we yield in Reverence, to those who excel in vertue. So as all Elders are to have in all Churches, the Reverence of Elders; and yet but such as a Church, considered as such, hath, and is to have from all other Churches. It is Reverenced, as a Church indeed, and as a Sister Church, but not as having that Authority over another Church, which it hath over its own Members, and such an Authority all the Churches in the World have not over one Church; as all the Imperial Cities of *Germany* have it not over one City. So as the question is not, whether there be not an obligation arising from the Admonitions and Judgments of many Churches, and the Elders of them, and also a Duty commanded from Christ; upon all such considerations as have been mentioned: Yet still so far, and no farther, than such grounds will carry it, is this Duty to be laid upon a Church, and a Subjection called for, as Jesus Christ himself lays it upon them. They are to be Subject, not only because these Churches do present to them, in the Name of Christ, what is their Sin, or what is their Duty; but further, they are to take into their consideration, their being Churches, and Churches Instituted by Christ, with whom the Blessing of Christ is to lead them into Truth, and to regard the Elders of Churches, as Persons with whom he is in a more peculiar manner present. But yet still they are not bound in such a Subjection to them, as to their own Elders, who are by Institution, set over them, and to whom they have a Special Relation, *Acts* 20. 28. If a Pastor of another Congregation should come, and is admitted to Preach for his Brother Elder in any Congregation; they are to hear him as an Elder, but yet not to hear him with that special peculiar Subjection, which by vertue of Christ's Institution, a Congregation ows to their own Pastor.

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CHAP. IX.

The several Duties of Communion, which one Church ows to another, Enumerated. That this Communion doth not include in it, that one Church may exercise any Act of Jurisdiction over another.

HEnce then all sort of Duties, that the Law of Love and Brotherly Union can any way exact or extend to, and that are founded thereupon in the Word of God, of Saints to Saints, and Church to Church, we approve of, and Judge ought to be held by any Church, to all Churches in the World; which we take to be the true meaning of that Scripture, in *Ephes.* 4. 16. that the whole Body of the Church being joyned together, every part is to edifie every part, and the whole, upon all occasions, and in all ways possible; but it is in ways of Brotherly Love, it is not with a Spiritual Rod, but of coercive censure and jurisdiction. The Bonds and Tyes of Law, are acknowledged. not Rods and Whips of coercive censure, and Jurisdiction *Sub pœna Traditionis Satanæ, under the penalty of delivering to Satan.*

1. Thus first, They are to afford part of their Spiritual good things, as occasion is, to all or any Church: So by vertue of that communion, the Church of *Philippi*, was bound to cause to be read, as much as in them lay, that Epistle which was Writ to them in the Church of *Laodecea* also, which was one of the *Asian* Churches; yet that their causing that Epistle to be received by the *Laodeceans*, was not by any Jurisdiction, but by communion of good things.

2. There may be communion in whatever is matter of meer priviledge in any Church; but not in Jurisdiction. Yea, there may be Associations, and Leagues of Friendship, as between two States, when yet not Subjection, thus between Kingdoms, a mutual intercourse of Trade. As he that was free of *Rome*, was free all the World over, and he might come and Trade in any other Kingdom; so any that are Members of such Churches as profess both, for receiving in of Members, and casting out of Members, to go according to the Rule of the Word, may occasionally receive the Sacrament in any Church truly constituted, and bring their Children to be Baptized, and may partake of all the Ordinances; for this is only to partake of the common priviledges, but they are not to exercise any act of power or punishment, when they come to those other Churches; as if a Minister were to be chosen, or a Member to be thrown out, or Suspended from the Sacrament, they are not to take upon them, to have a voice in it. Between two Families, there may be communion of good things, without exercising of Acts of Power and Authority; when as one Family doth not take upon them, to exercise Authority in the other Family, as not to chastise the Children, to dispose of parties in Marriage; nor is there any communion in conjugal Acts. So in Common-wealths, there is a communion of things communicable, as to afford Men, Money, and Assistance, to give Subsistence to any one that will live in a Stranger Kingdom: But they are not admitted to choice of Magistrates, to Judge of Causes, to be of a Jury in any Nation, but their own.

3. Also Thirdly, There is that Brotherly communion between Churches, that whom one Church denies communion with, having cast him out by a just censure, all the rest of the Churches do Reject him also; which was an usual practice in the primitive times, as often *Cyprian* Writes to other Churches, saying, *Abstinuimus, we have abstained* from such or such a Man, that they might have warning not to admit communion with him. And this seems to be one great end of Synods, as appears from the fifth Cannon in the *Nicene* Council before cited. And the Reason is fetched from that principle, which both Mr. *Cartwright*, and *Didoclavius* assert, that we have communion with the Universal Church, by means of being joyn'd to a particular Church; for communion with the Universal Church, we cannot have immediately, and yet by vertue of a particular Church, we enjoy the same kind of Ordinances, as if the whole Universal Church should meet together: Hence therefore, as we have communion with the whole Universal Church, by having communion with a particular Church, so we are cast out of all Churches, by vertue of being cast out of one; the trust being committed by Christ, to particular Churches:

Book 3. ch. 8. pag. 148. Of this Discourse.

Altar. Damascen. cap. 10. pa. 853.

Ch. IX. Churches: And the Law of Ecclesiastical Society, and Brotherly communion between Churches, requires it; that if they be cast out by one, they are Rejected by all; for there is that Sympathy and Concordance between all the Members of this Body, as one Body, and so between particular Churches, as Members of this whole, that as when one Member suffers, all suffers; when one Member rejoyceth, all rejoyceth, so whom one Church casteth out, all Churches casteth out, and whom one receives, all receives by vertue of this communion. Or if, when it is bound by a particular Church, it is bound in Heaven, then all the Earth over too; all Churches being to Reverence the Act and Judgment of a particular Church, with whom Christ hath betrusted the Keys. So as all the Churches do not Reject such an one, by an Act of Jurisdiction, or of interest in the Jurisdiction, but by the Law of communion; and by the like Law, that there is among Kingdoms, where there is Leagues Offensive and Defensive, to be Enemies to those that are Enemies to any of them, and not to Harbour those whom they have thrown out, and to be Friends to those that they are Friends to, and that are their Allies.

4. There may be a communication, by a sending out of Elders from Churches to Churches that want; yet without Jurisdiction, or the choosing of Elders for them, or putting Elders upon them. So Anciently, the Bishops in Cities did Instruct and Educate young Men, to fit them for the Ministry, whom afterward they sent out to the Villages that wanted (as young Men in Colledges, now under a Master) but yet (as our Divines against Bishops have argued) that did not prove a Jurisdiction, as in Colledges it doth not. So the Church in the *Canticles*, *Cant.* 8. 8, 9. speaking of a Sister Church she had, which wanted Breasts, by way of communication of good things, she afforded help, but yet without Jurisdiction, for she was her Sister. For still those Elders which in that case they should send out and afford, and part withal from themselves, or any other Church, are to be received and chosen by that Church, as Elders to them; and no way by vertue of any Jurisdiction, in the Church that lends them.

Diocesan Trial, p. 72. 5. So also in matter of Advice, there is communion between the Churches. There is a double Direction (as *Baynes* Distinguisheth) one *Potestativa*, *Autoritativa*, the other *Sociacia*, or *Social*, as one Servant that hath more experience than another, may give Advice to another upon occasion. An Advice we acknowledge in Churches, by vertue of this communion; but then let it be but Advice, and where there is need. And so now in difficult cases, we acknowledge they are bound to Advise with other Churches; and in case of Miscarriages, they are to be Advised, and Admonished by other Churches. But when they do Advise, that such a Man should be Excommunicated, for such an Act done, they do not add Authority to that Church: Jesus Christ hath furnished the Church with sufficient Authority in it self, only they add Counsel, and Direction, and Countenance: Moral strength or countenance they add, but not political Power or Authority. There is as much power in the Church it self, to deal with its own Members alone of it self, as in all the Churches of the World, put together: But this Advise is given, but as Alms is given to a Neighbour-Church. And again, that Advice, as to the object of it, is properly but only to give their Judgment of the Rule; it is not a joynt putting forth the Act of Administration of an Ordinance, in a way of Application of the censure to the Persons: Neither is a Congregation bound up by the Institution of Christ, to Advise so, as if they do not Advise with a Neighbour Presbytery, the Act is Null, and made Void, which they do, as if by Christ's Institution it were so, that they ought to Advise, such their case would be. In *Babylon*, they had such Elders as came to enquire, but not to judge, *Ezek.* 14. 1. & 20. 1. But all this Obligation to Advise in such cases, and the help that the Churches do give, ariseth (as our Brethren themselves say, in their answers to our Reasons) *Ex Charitate, ex debito mutuæ societatis colendæ, from Charity, and the Duty of maintaining Mutual Fellowship,* as is between Friends and Equals; *Non ex debito inferioris conditionis ad præstandum obsequium, not from any Duty, obliging the Inferior to Obedience.* And all that they there say afterward, *pag.* 50. unto *line* 16. we acknowledge. And since they say it is *ex debito societatis colendæ* only, and *ex charitate*, or as others have expressed it, *Jure fraternitatis, by the Right of Brotherhood*; and that the communion between Churches, according to their own expressions, is founded but upon that ground, hence therefore it can never grow up to *Jus Jurisdictionis, a Right of Jurisdiction*; for if the

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the communion of these Churches, be in a way of Fraternity, then the Acts it ariseth to, will be but Acts of communion in a Brotherly way, but for the communion of Friendship to arise to Acts of Jurisdiction, exceedeth the Sphere of it, as the Acts of Grace, exceed the Acts of Nature. And if it be said, that all Acts in a Church, are Acts of Brotherly communion; it is answered, they are Acts of Brotherly communion, in distinction to Magisterial power, or such power, as a Master hath over his Servants. It is not Lordly Power; but the power of Spiritual Jurisdiction, is a middle thing, between that of meer brotherhood, which is between Saint and Saint, or Church and Church, and that which is Lordly; for it is a power Ministerial, erected by Jesus Christ, and by Institution, having also a Spiritual punishment, put into their Hands, to execute it, with a promise to accompany it. Book V.

6. One Church is bound to communicate to another their Temporal things, to send Alms, &c. and one Man may be chosen by several Churches, to carry in their several Alms, to several Churches, as (2 *Cor.* 7. 19.) it is said of *Titus*, that he was chosen of the Churches, for that Service, the contribution being to be carryed from many Churches. But it is not to be said, that all those Churches met, when he was chosen; but his Office, being the Office of an Evangelist, to Travel up and down from Church to Church, he was by a Tacite consent chosen, first by one, then of another, and so of a third; otherwise the Apostle would have said, he was chosen of the Church of such a Province, if all the Churches had been united into a Synod, when it was done; but in that he saith *Churches*, it implies, that they were a part, when he was chosen. But if it had been such a common meeting; yet it was not an Act of Jurisdiction, it was by a common consent, to carry Alms; and such Acts in Synods, we acknowledge.

7. We acknowledge, that there are *Res communes*, *things in common*, that concern many Churches alike, in a Brotherly way. There were between the Apostles themselves, some things that were *Res communes*, as that they should confer, to see how far they should agree in the same Doctrine; and how far God had Revealed the same things to them, as *Paul* went up to that end, to confer with the Apostles at *Jerusalem*, *Gal.* 2. And yet there was not an Authority, that the greater number of the Apostles had in matter of Doctrine over another Apostle. We acknowledge, that the setting up Ministers over particular Churches, is *Res communis*; because the Transactions of all Business's between Neighbour-Churches, is ordinarily done by the Elders thereof; and therefore the bringing in a new of Ministers to such Associations, should be with their Privicy and Knowledge. But that will not arise to this, that the Neighbour-Ministers have the power of Ordination, the power of Deposition, or that they have a Negative Vote, by way of Jurisdiction, to which the Church must by vertue of an Institution submit: They may give the Right Hand of Fellowship, and it may be a due, *Ex debito fraternæ charitatis*, *from the Duty of Brotherly Love*, that a Church, when it chooseth its Elders, should ask the Right Hand of Fellowship from other Churches; but it must be remembred, that it is but giving the Right Hand of Fellowship, it is not giving the Right Hand of Authority to choose them their Elders, or to lay Hands on them. Because that Marriages are of a publick concernment to a Commonwealth, and to Families in a Common-wealth; therefore States are to be acquainted with Marriages, but the Power and Authority to guide them whom they should Marry, lies in the Parents, and in the Persons that are to Marry; and they may Marry whom they will, only in the Lord. And such a Respect to other Churches, it is no more an Act of Subjection to them, as having Jurisdiction then according to our Brethren's Principles, it is a Subjection in the Elders not to Excommunicate, if the People (who they say have no interest of Authority, or of a Negative Voice at all) should be against the Excommunicating of a Person.

As there are these ways of communion, differing from Government; so there are certain Tyes and Bands, some more general, some more special among all Churches, by which this communion is to be exercised, as appeareth by *Ephes.* 4. *Vide Zanch. in Eph.* 4. *in Tom.* 6. *oper.*

There is 1. That General Tye and Obligation of the Church-Catholick, which we acknowledge to be the chief Fundamental Relation or Obligation (Transcen-

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dent above all others) of communion of Churches: the other particular being but several Respects and Relations, that do knit more fastly by vertue of it.

2. We do acknowledge that every particular Church is to be considered as a Member of the Church-Catholick, as 1 *Cor.* 12. 27. the Apostle speaks of the Universal Body, in the words afore, and in the words after. But although it be a part of the Church Universal, yet not of the Church Universal, considered as a Ministerial Body, that hath Jurisdiction in it; but as being a Mystical Body, and it is therefore obliged to perform to other Churches, by vertue of this Catholick Obligation, only all such Duties of Christian communion, as proceedeth in a Mystical way, as hath been shewn. So as we profess our selves wronged, to have this put upon us, that in gathering of Churches, we make separate Churches from all the World; but do acknowledge as many, and as great Duties in a way of communion, to lie between us and all other Churches, as according to their Assertion, there are Duties of exercising Jurisdiction and Subjection, respectively among themselves.

3. They are to look also to the other Churches Elders, as Elders, and accordingly to Reverence them; but yet not as Elders, they carry Jurisdiction over all Churches, about with them. It will be hard to shew wherein Ministers have power of Jurisdiction over Persons that belong not to their own Churches.

If it be acknowledged that they are Elders, and so to be looked upon by other Churches; yet still but by vertue, and in the way of a Mystical communion, as all things in the World are the Saints, 1 Cor. 3. 21, 22. *Therefore let no Man glory in Men, for all things are yours: Whether* Paul, *or* Apollo, *or* Cephas, *or the World, or Life, or Death, or things present, or things to come, all are yours.*

Again, there are two things to be considered in every Elder. There is first his Separation unto the work of the Ministry, and unto Christ, that he is Dedicated, and set apart to him: And then in the second place, there is his Relation of an Elder, to this or that particular Church.

Now his particular Relation of an Elder to this or that Church, may cease by the Churches ceasing, by the Death of the Members, or by his Removal or Absence, when yet his Separation to Christ, and the Relation that is between Christ and him, continueth: It is here, as in the case of Widdows, as they were Dedicated to Christ, as Widdows, and should have waxed wanton against Christ, if they had Marryed; so *he*, if *he* should (unless upon an absolute necessity) divert to another calling, he would offend against Christ. And if his Relation to a Church, should thus cease; yet the Blessing of Christ, in Respect of his Dedication to him, might follow him in his Preaching unto those, who yet perhaps would not acknowledge him to be their Elder, in Respect of Relation to them. And the power of Jurisdiction, that he hath together with other Elders, is (for the exercise of it) in Respect of his fixed Relation to that particular Church, to whom he is an Elder: And therefore, although in many Ministerial Acts, he may have the Blessing of an Elder secretly accompanying of him from Christ; yet he cannot claim the power of an Elder, in respect of Jurisdiction. The Apostles themselves, had the Blessing of Apostles, and Ministers of Christ in their Preaching to them that were without; and yet they had not a Jurisdiction Ecclesiastical over them that were without; *What have I to do to Judge them that are without?* saith *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* 5. 12.

Again, our Divines have Distinguished, that there is *Potestas ordinis*, and *Potestas Jurisdictionis*, in Ministers and Elders; *Power of Order*, and *Power of Jurisdiction*; and that there are Acts, which are Acts of meer Power of Order of his Office, as an Elder, which he may perform alone, as to Preach, and the like; and that power he may carry along with him, where ever he goes; because he performs it personally, in respect of his Dedication to God and Christ: But the power of Jurisdiction is a farther thing, which therefore he exerciseth with other Elders; and with other Elders not materially considered, but as formed up into the Relation of Presbytery, to a Church which is to be the Seat of it. Power of Jurisdiction, is an External power, and therefore dependeth upon an External Relation to Men; but the Blessing and Power, that accompanieth his Ministerial Acts, to Preach, and the like, that depends principally upon his being Dedicated unto God, and is internal, and hath a more special Relation to God, according to which Relation, Men where ever he cometh, Reverence him, and receive him; and the Blessing of God may

may accompany him. And therefore this power of Jurisdiction with others is not to be extended beyond the Seat, the Church, to which he hath Relation. As is the case also of Magistrates, if you could suppose, that besides the Relation of a King to his People, in respect of which, he hath a Jurisdiction as a King over them, that there were such a Dedication and Separation of him to this Office, that where ever he came, he were a King in respect of some Acts, had a Kingly Spirit, Kingly Wisdom, to give Counsel in an Diety or Assembly of King's and Princes in the World, he might be received in all such, to perform such Acts; when yet he could not perform an Act of Jurisdiction; because that's founded upon that special Relation he hath to his own People.

And it is in respect of the communion of Churches,and other Elders,as it is in respect of Churches, and the Brethren of other Churches. If the Brethren of other Churches, few or more, occasionally come to a particular Church in a City, where, a Mart of Men coming from many Cities, is kept, if they receive them to all the meer Priviledges of that Church, by vertue of their Church-communion; yet they would not receive them, so as to sit and Vote with them, in the choice of Officers, or the like; because that's an Act that properly concerns that particular Church, whereof he is to be an Officer. So answerably, a particular Church, may receive the Elders of other Churches, and receive them as Elders, in respect of some Acts, as Preaching and the like; but not in respect of Acts of Jurisdiction, which we believe our Brethren themselves, would deny to the Elders of other Churches: As for example, if upon an occasion, the Elders of other Churches, belonging to other Presbyteries, should be present at some one classical Presbytery, although they would receive them as Elders, and Reverence them as such; yet they would not have them to sit with them, and Vote, so as that the Vote of those Stranger Elders, which yet they acknowledge Elders, should over-rule, or cast the Acts of their Presbytery. They would perhaps hear their Advice, and their Judgment as Elders, but not admit them to Acts of Jurisdiction,and Ecclesiastical Authority; because that *that* dependeth upon Relation to such a Seat or Corporation of several Churches, according to their Principles; but, to the Seat of a particular Congregational Church, according to ours.

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That though it were granted, that the Elders of one Church, might exercise Acts of Authority and Jurisdiction in another, occasionally and when called to do so by that Church; yet from this cannot be concluded, that Authority over particular Congregations, which our Presbyterian Brethren challenge.

BUT if the Elders of other Churches, were capable to exercise the Acts of Jurisdiction occasionally in some cases over Churches (which they have not a constant Relation of Eldership unto) by vertue of the Catholick communion of Churches, yet the Seat in which, and the Bounds of Extent, over which this Jurisdiction should be exercised, must still be only a particular Congregation. And the call by which this Jurisdiction is to be exercised, should be occasionally from that Congregation, in case of want or need; which therefore should,in such cases, stand in stead of a fixed and a constant Relation, that Elders do bear to that Church, the call being occasional, and from themselves, in case of need, as the Jurisdiction they exercise is but meerly occasional, and for that time. And so by this means, still as the right bounds, that Christ hath Instituted for the Seat of Jurisdiction, is kept unto, and not exceeded; so the power of the Congregation it self, is hereby also preserved. But it is another thing, which by vertue of the Catholick communion of Churches, and the Elders thereof, that the Presbyterian Divines do challenge, and would erect, according to their Principles. They do challenge an Association,to be an Institution of Christ; by vertue of which,the greater company of Elders of other Churches may assume and challenge a power over any Congregation in that Association; and so erect a constant and an ordinary consistory, whereby not only the bounds and limits set

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by Christ, for the Seat of Jurisdiction, are transgressed and exceeded; but an unlawful power is erected, and set over the Churches; not only in respect of the constancy of it, but in respect also of the want of that Relation, of being Elders to them, which is the Foundation of the constant exercise of Jurisdiction.

So as the question will not be, whether by vertue of this Catholick communion, a particular Congregation may make use of the Elders of another Congregation, to Ordain, to assist them in Excommunication, &c. and so they may come to have power in a particular Church, by their special and peculiar call, for such an Act at such a time, (though this will not be acknowledged by us) but the question is, whether by Christ's Institution, they may erect a Judicatory, and challenge a Subjection from all the Churches. In the other way, the Congregations do not Subject themselves, nor their Liberty, but make use of that Ministry of an Elder, which Christ hath put upon them: Even as in Arbitrations, or in References unto other Churches, they do not Subject themselves to other Churches, it being done occasionally, and by their consent, whom they would single out to be the Arbitrators. So as it is one thing, that there may occasionally be an exercising of an Elder's power, in another's Congregation, and it is another thing, that it should be assumed and challenged (which is the thing that remains further to be proved by the Presbyterial Divines) as it is one thing for a Child under Age, though he should not govern himself, to have liberty to choose a Guardian for the time; but it is another thing, that a company of Men should assume to be his Guardians for ever. It would be one thing for a Corporation to send to another Corporation for their Recorder, a Man skillful in the Law, to perform the Office of a Recorder, with a Jury at their Sessions, they now wanting one, or there falling out a case of Difficulty, wherein their own doth need assistance: But it would be another thing, for the Recorders of several Corporations in a County, to go and challenge by vertue of Association, and the common Law of communion in the Kingdom, a constant power of Jurisdiction to be exercised over them.

And in this case, the communion of Churches in respect of Members, *Qua* Members, and of Elders *Qua* Elders, answer one another, according to our Principles. For as the Members of another Church, if they come to a particular Church, and are received by their consent by them (and so for that time, become as one Body with them, by vertue whereof, they receive the Sacrament amongst them, as being for this Act incorporated, and as one bread with them occasionally) in this do not receive meerly and simply, as Members of another Church, distinctly and a-part considered, although by vertue of their being Members of another Church; but they are thereby for that time, occasionally received into that Church, *ad tantum*, *so far*, as to enjoy such and such a Priviledge: So as the Sacrament in this, is not said to be given to the Members of two Churches a-part considered, but to one Church, as thus making one, tho' upon a differing respect. And so it is also in their receiving Elders (if we may make that Supposition) to perform Acts of Eldership occasionally, they do it not in this single and a-part consideration, that they are simply Elders of other Churches, as if considered only as such, they may make a consistory met out of this Church, to be over this Church, and so Excommunicate; but they come to, and are present in and with that Church, being called by them, and received as Elders for that Act, aud for that time, as one with them: So as the Acts which they do perform are acts as of that Church, or of Elders in that Church, and are not to be considered as acts of other Elders that have power over that Church.

Though Ministers thus should be supposed to have, in respect of their Dedication to God and to Christ, a passive capacity to be used for any Ministerial Act in any Church, by vertue of the communion of Churches; yet it would be electively, and upon the call of that Church: But that they should have an active power, so as to come unto Congregations, and say, we ought to have this power amongst you, by vertue of Christ's Institution, and you ought to Associate with us, for all Acts of Government in common; and thus to challenge, as Elders, a power, upon occasion in any or all Churches in the World, this is that which was properly the prerogative of an Apostle. The greatest thing in the Apostles, for their extent of power, lay in this, not only that when they came to a Church, they were capable of being called to joyn with a Sister Presbytery, and Eldership, when they wanted Ministers and Elders; but it lay in this, that when ever they came to any Church, they could

could challenge this, as having an Universal call as Apostles, from Jesus Christ; and so they had Authority active, which they might assume. And if it were granted by us, that ordinary Ministers succeed the Apostles so far, as to have a passive capacity and power to be called to exercise their Ministry, in all or any Church; yet to assume the other, were to step into the Apostles Throne. The power or Authority of Jurisdiction is an active thing, not a passive, it is not as a dead Instrument that may be used; it is not simply to have the Gift and Ability to Judge, but it is to have the Power and Authority to Judge; which if the Church should not call them unto, they might call upon the Church, regarding it to be their Duty to exercise it for them. As the power of Government, or Jurisdiction of a King, is not a meer passive capacity, but it is a power to command them that are under him, which he is to perform and exercise among them. It is the Authority that gives the calling. Book V.

And in this respect, the Arguments that our Brethren use to bring, that Elders may exercise some Acts of Elders in others Churches, as that they may Preach, &c. and are to be received as Elders in other Churches, by vertue of the Catholick communion of Churches, are no way sufficient to prove and establish that Jurisdiction in their way. For,

1. It doth not follow, because they may do one Act of Ministry, as of Preaching, or Administring the Sacrament, that therefore they may do all; no more than it would follow, that because a Man may Preach alone, Baptize alone of himself; that therefore of himself alone, he may exercise Jurisdiction. Unto Acts of Jurisdiction there is a Formality, and the Formality doth lie in their Relation to such or such a Seat or Subject, over whom the Jurisdiction is exercised, and so and so bounded, and that by special Institution.

2. It will not follow, that if they may exercise as Elders one Act of Ministry, therefore all of Jurisdiction; because there may be some Acts of Ministry, which are properly belonging to the Church Universal, as Universal, and such Acts we judge Preaching, and Baptizing to be; and therefore we read, that Baptism was done both out of a Church Relation, and without the presence of a Church, as the Baptizing of the *Eunuch* by *Philip*. But so Ordination is not, so the Lord's Supper is not; Baptism we rather take to be an Ordinance of the Church Universal, *One Faith, One Lord, One Baptism, Eph.* 4. 5. But the Lord's Supper is an Ordinance of a particular Church, making one Body, and one Bread, and consisteth in a communion. One Apostle, and one Man, could not receive the Supper of the Lord together, because they could not make one Church, for this is made essential to it, 1 Cor. 10. *We being many, are one Bread*; therefore it is called, *the Communion of the Body of Christ*. But one Apostle may Baptize one Man when alone, and so we think one Minister may do it at this day, if he had converted him.

3. If the Elders of other Churches should have power to Judge and Determine things in a Doctrinal way, to give the Rule upon occasion; it will not follow, that they have the power of Juridical Application, of Excommunication according to that Rule. The Apostles might deliver the Doctrine of Faith, as Apostles to them that were without, when yet they could not Juridically judge them that were without. The *Pharisees* by their Doctrine, did bind Burthens upon Men's Consciences, and that in their Sermons, when they Sat in *Moses* his Chair, when yet they did not bind by way of censure. Yea, every Minister may Doctrinally deliver the Rule, when yet alone, and that as a Minister he cannot exercise an Act of Jurisdiction. We see this in civil power in Kingdoms, the Judges of the Kingdom altogether met cannot condemn a Man, without a Jury, though they may deliver what is Law, and say what is the Rule. Yea, though the House of Commons in Parliament, in an extraordinary way, by way of Bill, may adjudge a Man to Death, yet in an ordinary course, they are not Witnesses to the Fact; and although they have power of making all the Laws in the Kingdom, they do not give an Oath, as the House of Peers doth. The Assembly that now Sitteth, they are betrusted with power in a Doctrinal way, to give their Judgments what shall Reform the Kingdom; and their Judgment herein is to be looked upon, as the Judgment of so many Elders of several Churches; but they have not power to Administer a censure. *The Assembly of Divines at Westminster.*

4. Because they may come to have as Elders, Authority in any Church, in the way forementioned, occasionally, electively (the power of the Church being seen, in calling

Ch. X. ling them upon such an occasion together to assist them, and to be present with them, they exercising that power but in that Church, and joyntly with that Church, and as an entire Act of that Church, whereto for the present, they perform the Office of Elders) it will not follow, that therefore they may in all Churches, usurp a power over them, and call upon them, and challenge it from them. This will not follow from the other, because, as was said, the Priviledge of Government is given unto the Church, as the Seat of it, and is therefore to be drawn down to it, exercised in it, and not to be claimed out of it.

The one therefore running thus in a Natural Moral way, the other by a special Institution, forming up a Body on purpose, and arming it with a power, over and above what the Natural Law of communion and Non-communion reacheth to, which is to deliver unto Satan, and to perform all Acts of Admonition and Censure, in order thereunto: Hence therefore,

1. This commuion with other Churches, is not in a fixed set way, but occasional. The *Synhedrim* was a Set and a fixed Court, and therefore by Institution; but this communion is but as the communion of Saints one with another, in a general way. Hence,

2. It being in a Moral way to other Churches, and the Elders thereof, therefore the Obligation for matters of ending of controversies, is answerable and suitable. They are not bound to go to the next Neighbour-Church, but to any other whom they do most Reverence, or who are most fit and proper to end the controversie; therefore *Antioch* sent to *Jerusalem*. If it were by Institution, it would take in the Neighbour-Churches, as in the case of Murther, the next City was to make an Atonement. When *James* doth bid us confess our Sins one to another, in case a Man be so troubled with Lust, so that he is called to confess it to another, the Obligation doth not require him necessarily to confess it to his Minister, or to the next Saint or Brother he meeteth; for it is not laid upon him in a way of Institution, but upon a Moral ground, and answerably he is Morally to consider who is the fittest Man to confess this Sin unto, and will be Faithful and Secret, and is able to ease him; so that it runs not in a way of Institution of Set Persons.

3. Hence therefore, that Neighbour-Churches should have a Ground and a Warrant to call a Neighbour-Church in question, or to an account, is not by way of Power and Authority, as, if it ran in a way of Institution, it should be; but it is by way of Offence, and therefore they are to do it, when they are offended with their proceedings, and with their miscarriages. So then, as the Subjection of a Man or a Brother, in the case of Offence, to forbear such a practice, which is otherwise indifferent to him, is not by vertue of any Authority his Brother hath over him, but it is in a Moral way; so it is in this case.

4. Whereas the Analogy of *Mat.* 18. is urged to be as well between a Church offending and other Churches, as between a Brother and a Congregation; that when they are offended, they are to tell it to a greater number of Churches. We shall not be against this Analogy, for the like way of proceeding; only we are against the like Authority of proceeding. If other Churches will deal with a Sister-Church, in the way of Moral communion specified, let them observe the same Analogy, and we shall submit to it; but if they will erect from that Analogy the like Authority and Power of Jurisdiction, unto that we deny the Analogy to reach; because that in the Church-Universal, and the communion thereof as such, Christ hath placed no such Jurisdiction.

CHAP. XI.

That Churches in the same Nation, are obliged to maintain a nearer communion, one with another, than what all Churches, though separated by Distinct Kingdoms, are bound to, by vertue of their Catholick Obligation.

AS there is the general Bond of which I have Discoursed, that knits all Churches together, which, like to that which the Apostle speaks of charity, is above all, and runs through all, and gives Strength to all other, so there are more special Relations

Relations and Bonds, which knit some Churches to a more near communion than others: Even as in a Congregational Church, although there is a common Bond and Tye, which knits all the Members together; yet there are special Bonds and Tyes besides, by which that Fellowship is improved more between some of the Members, than others; as the Relation of Man and Wife, Servant and Master, Friend and Friend, all which are occasions of more converse, and so of Edifying one another more.

And herein we give and acknowledge much to those National Relations of being under one common civil Government, if considered as a bond or Tye, which makes the communion more near, and occasioneth more obligation of Duty. As also there is a closer communion between Churches, that are more near, Neighbouring in the same City, and the same Vicinity; because they have a more special occasion of converse, and of knowing each other's Affairs. But yet still all those Bonds and Tyes, by which Churches are thus knit together, doth not give Neighbour-Churches, or a National Church, power of Jurisdiction. For it runs in a way of that Mystical communion of the Church Universal; only there is a ground and occasion of exercising that communion more nearly. Thus in the Churches of a Nation, many Advantages do arise (we acknowledge) unto Churches thereby, as that they have the benefit of the common Laws, to protect them under the Christian Magistrate, who is to be a Nursing Father, and a Nursing Mother to them; and so to unite them together, and make that Mystical communion more entire. But the power of the Magistrate cannot set up, or form them into any other Ecclesiastical Power and Government than Jesus Christ hath Instituted. What communion Christ would have to be amongst Churches, the Magistrate may exact of them, and keep them to it; but he cannot raise up a new kind of communion, their having one Language, their having one Government, makes a greater nearness of it. The Apostles Write therefore unto the Churches of *Asia*, as in one Nation, or in one Province. Thus *Paul* Writing to the Church of *Corinth*, Writes to the Saints of *Achaia*, and many Churches in *Achaia*, may be called *Achaia*, for so it is in the Apostles Stile; *Achaia was ready a year agoe* (saith he, 2 *Cor.* 9. 2.) meaning many Churches in *Achaia*. So we may say *England*, for the Churches of *England*, and the Name may be given from the Nation, but the Name with the word *Church*, is never put together, as being a *National Church*, cast into one Body, in respect of Ecclesiastical Government and Jurisdiction, as the Kingdom is for civil Government. The Apostle therefore, when he Writes to Churches of a Nation, calling them Churches and not Church, doth argue, that the common Relation between them, was by way of communion, each Reserving their Jurisdiction as several Churches, but not as cast under one Jurisdiction, as being one Church: Yea, perhaps the Name *Church* may be given unto a Nation in a Mystical Respect; that which is given to the whole, being given to any part or number of Saints. The Strangers that were scattered all over lesser *Asia*, 1 *Pet.* 1. 1. are called *a Flock*, 1 *Pet.* 5. 2. And so our Saviour Christ saith, he had Sheep that were not of that Fold, *i. e.* that were not of that Nation, but that were *Gentiles*, and yet they are both called one Church in the General; for he would make them (both *Jew* and *Gentile*) one Fold; but they are so called, in respect of their Mystical Relation, as under him their Shepherd, not in respect of Government. *Peter* calls the *Jews* that were Scattered, a Flock in the General, distinct from the *Gentiles*; because they could not perhaps understand the Tongues of the *Gentiles*; and therefore kept together, as *Jews* distinct.

So then we shall grant very far to National communion of Churches kept in a Mystical way. As,

1. * We grant, that God under the Gospel, hath made a covenant with, and a promise unto Nations (in respect of the Gospel) as well as unto Families. *Paul* when some in *Achaia*, had received the Gospel, calls them *the first Fruits of* Achaia, *Rom.* 16. 5. He calls them the first Fruits, as a sign that more would come of the same Nation; but he would not Baptize Men of the same Nation upon it, or upon a bare outward profession, as the Apostles did not therefore Baptize all the Nation of the *Jews*, because some received the Gospel as the first Fruits. *Abraham's* covenant indeed goes to Nations, as well as to Families; Esa. 52. 15. *He shall sprinkle many Nations*. And God removes the Light of the Gospel from Nations, as well as from particular Churches. The Gospel it self becomes a National Blessing; and we see that

* *Yet we understand this in the same sense, as* Revel. 5. 9. *interprets it, of the Redeemed out of all Nations, so that all the people in Nations, will never grow up to be Members of Churches, especially, not till the call of the* Jews.

Ch XI. that one Nation hath more light in one Age than another; as the *Grecians* and those in *Asia* once had, and now we *Europeans*, in the Northern parts have. That part of *Brittain* which is now called *Wales*, had it more than the rest of the Nation, when *Austin* the *Monk* came into this Island, those that opposed him, being only found there, whereas now the whole Kingdom hath had it since, and the Gospel becometh a National Blessing; and when the Practices and Privileges of it are Established by the Law, it cometh to be a National Right. And when the civil Magistrate by Law doth countenance Religion, God doth bless the Nation, and bless the Magistrate for it, as he did the House of *Obededom*, for the Ark's resting there. 1 *Sam.* 6. 11, 12.

2. There are National Duties, which the Churches in a Nation, as they are a Nation, owe unto God in a joynt way, as to keep Solemn Fasts and Days of Thanksgiving for National Blessings, or for threatned Judgments, as *Nineveh* did.

3. In case that the Churches of a Nation are corrupted, they may have Assemblies and Conferences, where mutually it may be seen, what light these Churches can hold forth; so to make a Reformation, and to become a new lump, they may have such Assemblies, to direct them to do it. In *Babylon*, the *Jews* had Elders to come one to another, *Ezek.* 14. 1. *Eze.* 20. 1. but they had not the power of a *Synhedrim*, which was Instituted by God, that was only proper to them, while they were in the Land; and the promise was to it, as being in the place that God should choose. They came to enquire, but not to judge; and the Prophet was with them, who yet had not the power of Jurisdiction as a Prophet. Or otherwise at other times, we acknowledge, that National Assemblies may be chosen out by Parliament for National Respects, to advise them.

4. And by vertue of oneness of Language, and of Affinity, Churches in one Nation are able (by vertue of this Bond, as a Band and Tye to knit together) to edifie one another more than other Churches; as by Writing Books in the same Language, speaking the same Tongue, *&c.* Yea, and as they are Churches in a Nation, as they walk more exactly, God will give such a Nation more light than he doth another Nation. These, and many more such Advantages as these are, in ways of communion, we do acknowledge belong to them as a Nation; and the same also, by reason of Neighbourhood to Neighbour-Churches.

But to cast all these Churches into such a National Government Ecclesiastical, and such Subordinations as Presbyterian Government casts them into (such as being a Nation, in respect of civil Government, they are cast into) and that they should be obliged in respect of a National Bond to an uniformity, or obliged for uniformities sake, to the same Pitch and Model, that one particular Church, should not practise further than another, or hold forth more light in matters of Doctrine than another; but that there must be one Standard for all, and that they should be obliged to this, by vertue of a National constitution, such an Uniformity as this, we think is prejudicial to the Churches; the Apostles Rule holding in this, that so far as we have attained, we should walk by the same Rule. So the Churches in a Nation, may meet to see how far they have attained, and to convince one another, and so Establish by common consent, a common Rule amongst them so far; but so as that if any be otherwise minded, they should wait in this, till God Reveal it in his time; for otherwise the purer Churches, which will still be the fewer, must be kept and conformed to the light of the impurer, which would some corrupt them. And the greater compass is taken, to make the uniformity, still it will be the worse; because the greater part is still more corrupt.

And therefore for meer uniformities sake, to make a general Rule, that should bind weak and strong alike, when that general Rule also, is made in favour of the weak only (as to prescribe forms of Prayer, because many, or the most of Ministers, cannot pray conceived Prayer, or to make one and the same form of Government for all Churches; because many or most Churches, have not Ministers, or a People fit to Govern, or to give Prudential Rules for Worship, which should bind all; because some Elders of Churches as now constituted, have not wisdom to direct themselves, and yet are suffered still to be Elders) thus to bind up both weak and strong, under the same Rule, and to Restrain the one, for the sake of the other, we think is contrary to the Apostolical Rule. As Men in a personal walking, are to be left to a more or less purity, to

so Churches too, and there is no reason, that those that have a further light, should be Retarded by those that have not.

And that which we say of the Churches of a Nation, may in their several respects (so far as the Bond or Tye will hold) be said of the Churches in a City, or in any Neighbourhood: Yet so, as we conceive, that always Neighbourhood is not so near a Bond to induce Churches to Associate, as correspondency of Principles and Practices. As in *Germany*, where there are Churches that are *Lutheran* Churches, others that are of the *Calvinist's*, the Neighbourhood is not so near a Tye or Bond, as agreement in Principles to Associate themselves; tho' this principle is to be held Sacred, by vertue of the universal Catholick communion, that so far hold forth as Churches have any thing that is good in them, so far forth (whether in respect of Doctrine or Worship, or the like) there is to be a communion held with them (when in practice there cannot, yet, in judgment there ought to be) to acknowledge them the Churches of Christ, and the Ministers of Christ, and approve whatever is good in them; and if in one practice we cannot joyn, yet in others we may. This we do acknowledge, to be the universal Law of communion between Church and Church, throughout the World.

And we do acknowledge that it is possible, that a Congregational Government may be adequate with a Nation. For if it were a Nation of all visible Saints, according to the Rules of the Word (as the Nation of the *Jews*, when called perhaps shall be, *Rom* 11. 28.) then the Nation and the Church, would be adequate. But a few in Nations, come to be Saints; and then the Government must be suited to them. And if you would make a Rule for a whole Nation, where there is but a few Saints, tho' the whole profess Christian Religion; then the Rulers, whereby Jesus Christ would have his Churches Governed, as by the Peoples choosing the Officers, and the Peoples having an interest in censures, would not universally be applicable, and such a Government would not suit to a whole Nation, in a Congregational way; but the fault is not in the Government, but it lies in the Persons. *Castellus Bononiensis*, would say that the Old Government of Chnrches would not be available, *Nisi Ecclesiæ quoque statum antiquum obtineat.* The Rules whereby Jesus Christ would have his Church Governed, will not suit Churches, unless they have that State and constitution for Members, which in the Apostle's times they had, which, in the common profession of Christianity in a Nation and Parishes, as now more generally they are constituted in respect of Members, cannot be.

CHAP. XII.

That though no Church or Churches have the power to Excommunicate any other Churches, yet they have Authority of declaring Non-communion with them, upon occasion of just offence given.

THE upshot of the difference, between us and our Brethren, lies in this Principle; that all Church-Government, consisting in a Spiritual Instituted Punishment, or being in order to it, which is properly called a censure and an ἐπιτιμία, a punishment by the Apostle, 2 *Cor.* 2. 6. (for that is properly Government, which hath a power inflicting of punishment as such) now Excommunication being properly a Spiritual punishment, in a strict Sense so taken; hence therefore, where that only is placed, there is the Government placed, in a strict Sense. And that which makes Excommunication, as it differs from Non-communion, to be a punishment, lies in this.

1. That it is a delivering up to Satan, which because it Superaddeth to the severing of a Person or Persons from external communion, which is common to it, with that which we call Non-communion; therefore it must be a special Institution, and cannot be founded upon a natural ground, for who hath power to give up a Person to Satan, when any Church hath thrown him out, but only Christ? And hence other Churches, after a particular Church hath Excommunicated a Man, cannot Excommunicate him further, they cannot give him up to Satan again; for that

Act

Ch. XII. Act is already done, if he be rightly Excommunicated, and all their Act can be but a pronouncing Non-communion.

2. Excommunication and Non-communion differ thus, that in Excommunication, the Person is to look upon himself, as cast out of communion with Christ, and he hath his sins Judicially bound upon his conscience, not only in a Doctrinal way (for so his sins are bound, when a Brother reproveth him) but as by such an Ordinance, wherein Jesus Christ doth, as as a Judge from Heaven, bind his sin upon his conscience, having promised to do so, upon the Churches binding sin upon him; but declaring Non-communion, they do not a-new Judicially bind his sin.

3. In Non-communion, there is not so much an Authoritative Act over others, as an endeavour to keep themselves pure. It is indeed an Authoritative Act over others in this Sense, or the Church that doth keep another Church, or the Persons of another Church from communion with them exercise Authority in this Sense, that they having Authority from Christ positively, to partake in such and such Ordinances, and to receive Men thereunto, they receive only such and such Members (although of other Churches) and refuse others. Both these Acts are comparatively (take both positive and negative together) Acts of Authority; for they proceed by way of consequence, from the Authority they have to Administer ordinances amongst themselves: Yet the keeping out of that Person is not an Act of Jurisdiction over that Person, as the keeping out of an Heathen is not an Act of Jurisdiction over him.

4. Look what difference is between Suspension from the Sacrament and Excommunication within a particular Church; the same may serve to express the difference of Excommunication and Non-communion by other Churches. The Act of Suspension from the Sacrament is but by vertue of the Mystical communion that is between all Saints; but Excommunication is by vertue of the communion, which the Members of a particular Church, have one with another.

If it be said that they differ thus, that Suspension is but for a time; but Excommunication is a Final Sentence: The Answer is, that even Suspension is for ever, unless the Man Repents, as well as Excommunication; but they differ only in this; that the one is a withdrawing from a Brother to keep themselves, and the Ordinances pure; but the other is an Authoritative giving him up to Satan, in the Name of the Lord Jesus. Suspension therefore is after the Sin, till they try whether he will Repent or no; but Excommunication is when they have tryed, and they see he doth not Repent.

Of Non communion, there may be two grounds.

1. The one is when a Church urgeth, suppose in some one Ordinance (as kneeling at the Lord's Supper) that practice upon a Person which to him is Sin, although in all other Respects, that Church to him, is as pure a Church as any is in the World. In this case he is forced to a Non-communion, that is, to a forbearing communion with them in that practice, and in that Ordinance, wherein especially publick communion with the Saints lies: And this is done without any censuring of that Church; but only professing his not being able to see that light and ground, upon which he should have communion with them in it. Therefore those that leave other Churches upon such grounds, do not pronounce a Sentence of Non-communion with those Churches; but do it meerly and only to keep themselves pure and undefiled.

2. Another ground, or perhaps a Second kind of Non-communion is this, whereas a Church or Churches do judge another Church or Churches to be corrupt in their Doctrine, or in their countenancing such gross Sins, for which Men should be Excommunicated, and so are offended at those Churches; which being Admonished, do not Repent, but continue obstinate. Now such a kind of Non-communion in these cases, is materially for such kind of Sins, and ought not to be for such, as for which in a particular Church, Excommunication is to be Denounced against a Member or Members: And so both the one and the other do agree.

1. In the object matter of offence, for which, Men proceed to the one or the other.

2. They may agree in this, that for the external Act they are the same, and for the consequences of it too, so far as lies in their practice one toward another externally. For the outward substance of the Act, they are both a denying outward communion

nion in Ordinances; and also for the consequent Act, they are both of them a denying communion in ordinary converse.

Then 3. They agree in the Analogy of their proceedings, that as in a particular Church, in Admonitions tending to Excommunication upon Impenitency (upon which Excommunication follows) there are these degrees of proceedings; first to take two or three privately, then to give two or three Admonitions in a publick way, e're they proceed to Excommunication: So should other Churches deal with a Sister-Church offending, e're they proceed to Non-communion.

If the question be askt, what Institution there is for Non-communion: We answer,

1. There needs no Institution for it, since it ariseth from all the former Principles, and is not an Act of censure by way of Institution; but according to the Law of Nature; And as the Saints are taught of God to love one another, so they are taught of God to withdraw, and also any Church to withdraw from those that live inordinately. As the Mystical communion runs in a natural way, by Reason of the Law of Love that is in the Hearts of all the Saints, so doth the Law of Non-communion.

2. It cannot be said that there is no Warrant: For 1. The same Precept that Warrants Suspension, Warrants this; Namely, the withdrawing from a Brother that walks inordinately, as to what is in their power to give or refuse him Fellowship in; and it is in the power of one Church, to give or refuse Fellowship to other Churches in their Ordinances. So that it cannot be alledged, that there is not a command for it, but only that there is not an Institution for it; it is a Duty, though not an Act of Authority. 2. That which Warrants any Christian not to bid an Heretick good speed, which yet is not an Act of Jurisdiction, nor to receive them into their Houses; Warrants also this. 3. That which Warranted *Timothy*, being a Minister to Guide and Direct the Churches, *to turn away from those who had only* a form of *Godliness; denying the power of it* (2 *Tim.* 3.5.) Warrants also this Non communion of which we are Discoursing. It was Written to him by way of Prophecy, and so to all Ministers and Churches in the latter Age, when the profession of Christianity should grow as common, and be carryed by the same grounds of common Education and Imperial Laws, as the *Pagan* Religion before had been. When before (all in a general implicit way, thus professing Christianity, the Churches might be in danger of being defiled; by holding communion indifferently with all, since the case is such, that many should have a Form of Godliness, and deny the power of it, although professing Religion: Therefore (saith the Apostle) from such turn away. 4. What one Apostle did to another in case of offence, the same one Church may do to another, upon the same grounds. One Apostle had not power to Excommunicate another in a way of censure; neither had *Paul* power to Excommunicate *Peter*, or Admonish him in an Authoritative way; but to Admonish him by way of that Mystical communion, which all Saints owe one to another, and so was due from one Apostle to another. *Paul* accordingly did Admonish *Peter*, and withstand him to his Face. And when in that contention between *Paul* and *Barnabas*, *Barnabas* was in the wrong (for he went upon a carnal ground, because *Mark* was his Sisters Son, and so therefore he would have him along with him, though formerly he Deserted the Service; for which *Paul* would not take him into Fellowship with them) they, upon this occasion, part Fellowship one from another, and *Paul* did justly do it from *Barnabas*, though he could not Excommunicate him.

If the question be, why Jesus Christ should put this Ordinance of Excommunion, and delivering up to Satan, in a particular Church, rather than in a Multitude of other Churches: I answer, although the Reason of Institutions is only the Will of Christ; yet all his constitutions are consonant to Spiritual Reasons, and the consonancy of this particular instance to Spiritual Reasons may appear in this.

1. Because in the proceeding of other Churches with another Church offending, they can have but half that power as present to concur in it, which the Ordinance of Christ hath setled Excommunication upon. For there cannot both Elders and People meet in Synods ordinarily; and yet in a Congregation, both Elders and People must concur to Excommunication, as a Judge and a Jury use to do. Now to suppose that the power of this Ordinance should be Transferred to those that have but half the interest, to a company of Elders only, where the concurrence of the People as

Cha:XII. present is wanting: To suppose that in a Congregation both these should concur, and that in a Synod which hath the greater power but one of these should concur, would not be uniform to this Ordinance. Dealings with other Churches, must be Transacted by Commissions, and by way of Representation; and the power of Excommunication is not given to a Representative company. And for these to have power to take upon them to Excommunicate not only Persons, but Churches, when yet to Excommunicate Persons in a Church, both People and Elders concur, is yet less imaginable.

2. Again this Honour God hath given to his Church of Saints, that if the Formal Authority of Jesus Christ be not placed in them; yet virtually it should be exercised as amongst them, so as the unanimous concurrence of their Spirits, as well as of the Ministers, should have an influence unto this Ordinance, or should be concomitant to this Ordinance; and that therefore the power of Jesus Christ should be put forth, 1 Cor. 5. 4. *When you are gathered together*, both Elders and People. As the vertue of the Load-stone is then put forth, when it is set in Steel, and as the Authoritative power of an Act of the King and State is exerted, when both Houses of Parliament are met, and in their Presence; without which it would not be an Act of Authority, to Ratifie and Establish Laws; so is here: The power of the Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver a Man up to Satan, must be in the presence of the People: And as tho' the Eye alone sees, yet, as Seated in such a Body; so suppose all the power should be in the Elders, by which a Man is delivered up to Satan, yet, in the Elders, as Seated in this Church. And therefore to take a company of Elders abstracted from their People, Jesus Christ hath not given this power unto them, as the Laws of this Kingdom hath not thought fit to give the power of condemning any Man to the Judges alone, but as concurring with the Jury.

3. The enjoyment of a constant communion, as in a Congregation formed up into a fixed Body for Worship, is only proper to a particular Congregation, and the Members thereof; therefore the throwing out of such an enjoyment, out of such a Body (having this punishment annexed to it, to be given up to Satan when he is thrown out) is most proper to it, rather than to any other Body, where a Man comes but to meet occasionally: And as it only is the Seat of fixed Worship, so it only is the Seat of throwing one out of the Seat of Worshippers, and of delivering him up to Satan. And the nature of the Ordinance is such as that it could be placed but in *one* Seat; and therefore that Seat which hath it first should only have it; or a Man can be delivered to Satan but once.

Now the next question will be, how far this Law of communion of Churches will draw on a Subjection of one Church to another, and will tend to order Churches? And what proceeding by vertue hereof, one Church may have toward another, and what one Church, or many Churches, is to give to any Church?

We lay this for a general ground, that as there are particular Duties, and in a manner for the external part all the same kind of Duties, which are to pass between a particular Church, and the Members thereof; therefore by Analogy, there may be the same proceedings used, and courses taken for the discharge of these Duties between Church and Church occasionally, as is amongst the others. As,

1. There is an obligation of one Church over another, by vertue of this communion; to enquire in case of Jealousie, or common Fame and Report, how it fares with them? And therefore there may be an Association of Churches, whereby (in the meetings of their Elders or others Deputed) there may be enquiries of Miscarriages, which may be equivalent to those of Annual Visitations, which have been amonst us.

2. If that Persons wronged do complain, and their complaints do arise to that Height and Appearance of Injustice, as that there is a just offence occasioned: In such cases, or in what ever other cases of Miscarriages, one Church or many Churches are bound to give an account; and in cases doubtful, to give Oaths to clear things; and to Swear Witnesses to help to find out the Truth.

3. For the Judging part, they may declare against Churches, by way of Declaration Doctrinally, that they have thus and thus Transgressed the Rule. They may condemn them as having Sinned against light, as perverters of the Faith; they may Admonish them and Threaten them in the Name of Christ; that is, for his Name (his Name is put for his Honour) and so for his Honour's sake, that is called upon them.

them; his Name is put also for power. They may declare that they are offended as a Church, and that it is a Church Act as from them, and so deal with them, as a Church offended with a Church Delinquent; but still they act not by a power over them given by Institution from Christ: They do not Act from a power of delivering up to Satan; but only with the power of Christ's word, and Threatnings laid a-fore the offending Church.

4. When by way of Sentence, they profess to hold no communion with them; that Sentence yet is not that of Excommunication, for therein tho' they exercise Church-power over their own selves, in Relation to themselves, binding themselves as a Church, not to have communion with them; yet it is not an Act of Authority over them: As a Lord of a Mannor meddles not with anothers Mill, when he interdicts his Tenants to grind there; for it is not an Act of Jurisdiction over the other, but only over his own Tenants.

If the question be, what Fruit and effect there may be from Regulating Churches in this way? We answer,

1. That the Efficacy of all means, lies in the Blessing of Christ. Now there being two ways of Church proceedings, one by way of communion of Churches, and the Law of Nature, the other by Institution: there is to either, in their kind, a promise of Christ. The Admonition of one Saint to another, though not in Church-fellowship, as it proceedeth by vertue of the communion that is among Saints, and as a Duty of one Saint to another; so it hath a promise of Blessing answerable. The Exhortation of one Saint to another, hath a Blessing often to convert, though Preaching by Officers be the only instituted means; and so is it here. Therefore such proceedings, by way of Admonition and by way of Non-communion, have the promise of the Blessing of Christ as well as that of Excommunication in a particular Church.

2. In a Moral way there is a great deal of Efficacy in these means, to work upon Men. 1. A convincing of a Church offending of their Sin, and of the Error of their way. 2. There is a Testimony given against them. 3. There is a shaming of them, for the design of such withdrawing is (as the Apostle saith, 2 *Thes.* 3. 14.) that they may be ashamed: There is 4. A Depriving them of the Priviledges of communion with all other Churches.

3. In an External way, this is like to work as much as Excommunication it self, especially, being back'd by the civil Magistrate, as Excommunication useth to be.

4. It is more suitable for Churches to deal with another Church, or with Multitudes, with Provinces, with Churches in this way, than to assume a power of delivering them up to Satan.

If it be said that Excommunication being the Highest Supream Means, if this means should not be used, there is the most Efficacious means wanting: I answer, that God doth not always Establish that means that is most Efficacious for one sort or kind of Persons, or in all cases that he doth in some, and unto some. Neither is it necessary therefore, that what is in it self to be supposed the most Efficacious means should be applied to Churches, from a greater number of Churches, as the Argument would hold forth. For according to this Reason, God should have appointed Apostles always infallibly to have Governed Churches; because that was the most Efficacious means, and was once extant in the World. And it may as well be said and objected, as it is by the Papists, that unless there be an Apostolical Seat assisted with Infallibility, there is not an Efficacious Remedy for all controversies; and that God hath not provided for his Church, in our Age, as he did for his Church in the first Age. But it suited his Wisdom to leave the Churches in after Ages to have Recourse, in respect of Government, to a means less Efficacious. The like he did with the Church of the *Jews*, to whom he stirred up Prophets in all Ages, till after the Captivity, but then left them to the ordinary guidance.

Ch. I.

The Government OF THE Churches of Christ.

BOOK VI.

Of the constitution of a particular Congregational Church. The Rise, Institution, and Definition of it. A Comparison between it and the Church Universal. That Christ hath given to his *Saints*, a Right and Liberty of Gathering into such Holy *Societies*. That, in doing so, they are not Guilty of *Sinful Separation* or *Schism*. Of the *Diverse* kind of Officers in a Church. That there is an Institution for each sort. That the Pastor and Teacher are equal in Authority and Power. Of the Exercise of the Communion of Saints, which the Members of a Church ought to have, one with another.

CHAP. I.

The Reasons why God and Christ would have a Church, as the Seat of Divine Worship, wherein they might be Adored and Praised. What a Church is. That Saints or Persons Regenerated and Holy are the proper matter of it. The Church is either the Universal Mystical Church, or a particular Congregation. The grounds of this Distinction shewed from Scripture.

IT is the practice of all Societies and Corporations, at first embodying themselves to read over their Charter. Thus at the Assizes the Commission is first Read, and in Parliaments, the Writ, by which they are Summoned, is opened.

It is then requisite, when any number of Saints do, by mutual consent, joyn into so Holy a Fellowship as a Church is; to shew what Charter and Commission they have for it from Jesus Christ. The question otherwise may be put to us (which was put to Christ, *Mat.* 21. 23) *By what Authority we do these things?* Which Authority, if we are not able to produce, we incur that *premunire*, *Acts* 19. 40. *We are in danger to be questioned* by God, by Men, *If there be no cause whereby we may give an account of this meeting.* The word is ἐκκλησίας, whence, the name of ἐκκλησία is given to such a Fellowship of Saints.

All

All inferior civil Societies do embody themselves by a liberty granted and derived from the Head of the Common-wealth they live in; especially when they take on them to exercise any judicial Acts. Therefore this Holy Divine Fellowship, must much more be Authorized by Christ the Head of the Church Universal, since those joyned in it, take upon them the Authority to Judge them within it, as occasion is, 1 *Cor.* 5. 12. As all meetings in civil Affairs are said to be in the King's Name, so we must prove this to be in Christ's Name: and for this we have that known place, Matth. 18. 20. *Where two or three are gathered together in my Name*, &c. Where he spaaks not of every Assembly of Saints; but of such an Assembly as doth make and constitute a Church; for (*ver.* 17.) those two or three to whom this promise is made are call'd the Church. And by *Name* is, among other things, chiefly meant the Power and Authority of Christ; and is usually so taken in Scripture. So *Acts* 4. 7. The *Pharisees* take it, asking the Apostles, *by what Name or Power have you done this?* And in that Sense the Apostles make answer, ver. 10. *Know that, by the Name of Christ, this Man stands whole before you.*

That there is and ought to be a Church is the confession of all the Professors of the Name of Christ: Papists and Protestants agree in this Assertion, it being a Principle of the Gospel, universally asserted to by all, to whom the sound of the Gospel is come: As, *that there is a God*, is owned by all to whom the sound or preaching of the Works of God is come. As that Notion of a God was preserved in the ruines of the fall; so the Notion that there is a Church hath been preserved, notwithstanding the Apostacy and falling away of Nations to Antichrist, and accordingly hath been Transmitted to us. And as that Notion, that there is a God, was the occasion of an Idolatry and false Worship through Darkness; and of Worshipping a false God, not knowing the true: So this Notion, that there is a Church on Earth, hath, through the like Darkness been the main occasion of all Errors about Ecclesiastical Government, Men not discerning what was the Church which Christ intended.

And indeed, that God should have a Church, is exceeding natural and requisite.

1. The Divine Nature in God desires it, as it desires communication of it self to the Creatures, that they might glorifie him, so it design'd a communication of it self to many, and to many together united, mutually to praise him. The God-head it self is naturally communicated to three Persons, who mutually rejoyce each in the other, and together in the Union and Participation of such glorious Attributes, *Prov.* 8. 30. There is a blessed Fellowship between those three Persons; and God would also have Creatures taken up into the same Fellowship; not only each a-part with himself; but mutually together to glorifie him, which is the nature of a Church. Those three Persons that were three in one, would have a Church of Creatures also; and resolv'd, *that many should become one, as they are one*, *John* 17. 21. 23. The Gospel is called *the Fellowship of the Mystery*, *Ephes.* 3. 9. Wisdom also loves to open and cry her precious Wares in places of concourse, *Prov.* 1. 21. *Psal.* 22. 22. *Psal.* 40. 9, 10. Christ who was this Wisdom of his Father says, he had declared his Faithfulness not to his Brethren only apart, but together in the great Congregation, (*Psal.* 35. 18.) Because thereby Glory and Praises, being joynt and mutual, are so much the more encreased; for Glory manifested Results out of the Apprehensions and *Encomiums* of many joyned: Therefore God, e're he would so fully communicate himself, desires a meeting, and an Assembly of the People: So Exod. 25. 8. *Let them make me a Sanctuary, that I may dwell among them*; and *Exod.* 29. 42, 43, 44. *There I will meet with you*, that is, when they are all met there. And therefore it is called, in the Original, the Meeting-place; so that if there be a God, he will have a Church to Worship and praise him.

2. Jesus Christ desires it also, who was to be made glorious; and therefore was to have a Church, that is, many united in one, whereof he might be the Head: So *Ephes.* 1. 22. God gave him to be Head to the Church. It was a priviledge to him to have a Church, she is therefore given him; and as this was his desire too, his Father in answer bestows her on him, *Ask and I will give thee*, *Psal.* 2. 8. As he was to be a Head, so to have a Body; in whom, as in a Head, they might be gathered together in one, *ver.* 10. He was to have many Brethren; and his desire was, that they might be gathered together about him. Thus he declares, *Psal.* 22. 22. and thus he promises to them when assembled on Earth, *Matth.* 18. and thus he Prays, John 17. 24.

That

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That he and they may be together. So as if there be a Christ, there is to be a Church also.

3. The Divine nature in us, (2 *Pet.* 1. 4.) breath's after such a Fellowship As Reason and Understanding desires communion with Men, since Man is by Nature (as he that had but Nature said) *Animal* πολιτικον *sociable, a sociable Creature*, so a Saint is too. As it was not good for *Adam*, the New Creature of the First World, to be alone ; so nor for the New Creature of Christ's World. It was *that one thing* of *Davids* Desires, that is, the Top the chief of them, Psal. 27. 4. *One thing have I desired. to dwell in the House of the Lord.* The Church, as they have a Relation to Christ, so likewise one to another ; for they are not an *Holy Seed* only, but an *Holy Nation*, a *Royal Kindred:* Who, out of an instinct, desire Fellowship one with another. *They are taught of God,* (says the Apostle, 1 *Thes.* 4. 9.) And therefore as natural instincts shew themselves in Creatures, who, when new fall'n from the Dam, gather in a company about it ; so a Spiritual instinct shews it self in those, who, being new Born, associate together. So in *Phil.* 1. 5. *Paul* gives thanks *for their Fellowship in the Gospel from the first Day* ; as if, when they were not an Hours standing, they desire it. And therefore in the *Acts*, to be converted to the Church and to the Lord are used promiscuously ; they breathing after a Church-Fellowship with the Saints as well as with God.

But our Business further, is to enquire what manner of Church it is, which Christ would have erected ; and unto which his promise is made that he will be in the midst of them.

We shall come the better to know what this Church in particular is to be, if we enquire what the Church in general is ?

A Church in general is an Assembly of Saints, of Believers, of Men called.

1. It is a Company or Assembly united. If there had been but one Angel, or one Man saved, he had not made a Church. 'Tis a Body that hath many Members, 1 *Cor.* 12. 15. and *Rom.* 12. 6. *We being many, are one Body.* 'Tis a Nation, 1 Pet. 2. 9. *A Flock*, an Houshold, a Kingdom, a Common wealth, *Ephes.* 2. 12. The same Men, that considered a-part are call'd Saints, collectively taken, are called the Church.

2. A Church is a company united in one, for without Union, they are not a Church, but a confused Multitude ; Therefore it is called one Body, *Ephes.* 4. 4. as there is one God, and one Spirit, *&c.* 1 *Cor.* 12. 12, 13. And *Ephes.* 4. 16. it is said to be knit together.

3. A Church is a company of Saints united in one. It is a Society of Believers who are called, as 'tis a Nation for Multitude and Order, so 'tis a Holy Nation, 1 *Pet.* 2. 9. as it is an Houshold, so of Faith. As it is a Common-wealth, so of *Israel*, *Ephes.* 2. 12. As it is a Temple, so an Holy Temple, *ver.* 21. *Holiness* becomes thine House, *Psal.* 93. 5. It is a Congregation, but of Saints, Psal. 89. 5. 1 Cor. 1. 2. *To the Church of God at* Corinth ; *to them that are Sanctified in Christ Jesus, and called to be Saints*, not by Invitation only, as if all to whom ever the Gospel is Preached, might have that name ; for so the *West-Indians*, if but Preach'd unto, should be called. But they are called Saints by qualification, that is, they are Sanctified. *They that were not my People* shall be called my People, *Rom.* 9. 25. (called Saints) that is, that are Saints ; for God calls things as they are. *They are called with an Holy Calling*, 2 *Tim.* 1. 9. To all callings a qualification is required. If a Man is to be of the Privy-Counsel, the place requires that he should be Wise : If he is to be of a Company to Trade, it is requisite that he be brought up to it : If he is a Minister, that he be Gifted ; and so, if he be of a Church, that he be Holy.

4. It is a company joyned to have Fellowship with Christ, 1 *Cor.* 1. 9. It is called therefore Christ, 1 *Cor.* 12. 12. and *Complementum Christi*, the fullness of Christ, *Eph.* 1. 23.

The Kingdom is Spiritual. so are the Subjects ; for Christ is, in Relation to his Church, a King of Saints, *Rev.* 15. 3. To be in a Church is to be fellow Citizens with Saints, *Eph.* 2. 19. and with Christ, 1 *Cor.* 1. 9. And as Reason only fits us to have Fellowship with Men ; so Grace only qualifies us to have communion with Saints and Christ. A Fellowship is of those who are alike in Nature and Disposition. Thus God would not have *Adam* joyned in Fellowship with Beasts, and therefore

fore made a Woman for him, as a meet companion, much less will God admit his Second *Adam* Christ, and his Members to be joyned with Swine. *What Fellowship is there between Righteousness and Unrighteousness*, 2 *Cor.* 6. 14, 15, 16, 17. They are a Temple to God, and the Stones which frame it are Hewn, before they are laid in the material Building, 1 *Kings* 17, 18. and therefore they are to be lively Stones, not Dead, as *Peter* alludes, 1 *Pet.* 2. 5. They are a Body, and the Body of Christ, and therefore the Members are to be simular to the Head. Hence hath arisen that distinction of a Church Mystical, and of a Church Instituted, which suppose the same matter, the same Men, and which are but several Adjuncts of the same matter or relations, whereof the one may be Superadded to the other. As in *Holland*, the same Man that is a Member of the Society of the States General is also, and may be also, of the States of a particular Town; but yet still he must be a Dutchman: Or as in *London*, every Man of a particular Company, may also be a Member of the Common-Council of the whole City, but yet he must be a Londoner, and free of the City. So here in this case, if a Person is a Member of the Church Mystical, or of an Instituted Church, he ought to be a Saint. As a Church in general is a Company and Assembly of Saints united; so the Church Mystical is the general Assembly of all Saints on Earth united in Christ to him, and one to another: And the *Church Instituted is*, a particular Assembly of Saints on Earth, united in Christ by a special Covenant. The Members of both the one and the other, are to be Saints united into a Company and Assembly, that so there may be a communion.

1. I will shew the ground for this Distinction of Church, in Scripture.

1. There one Church is called *The General Assembly, and the Church of the first Born*, *Heb.* 12. 23. An Assembly it is, and a General Assembly: And that part of the distinction argues, there is another to be found from which, by that word, it is Distinguisht. And therefore, there are particular Assemblies, which also must be called a Church. Members of this General Assembly, these *Hebrews* were; for he saith, ver. 22. *Ye are come to this General Assembly* as being made a part of it: And that these *Hebrews* were also Members of particular Assemblies, though Dispersed through all Countries, and that they had a Relation unto them, is expresly mentioned, Heb. 10. 3. 25. *Not forsaking the Assembling of our selves together.* And they were so to Assemble, as in a special Relation joyned to consider and exhort one another.

Yea, more expresly we find this mentioned, 1 *Cor.* 12. 27. where having Discoursed of the whole Body in the former verses, he (in *ver.* 27.) draws down all he had said in the General of the whole Church, to that particular Church at *Corinth*, to whom he Writes, chap. 1. 2. *Now ye are the Body of Christ* (says the Apostle) *and Members in particular*: Where the Phrase *in particular*, hath Reference both to *Body*, as well as to *Members*. So as the meaning is this, that they in particular, made a Body of Christ; and were Members one of another, also in particular. And therefore all that he had Discoursed of the Nature of the Body, and the Members, and the Offices, and Duties in General, he brings home as particularly true of them, as making a special Body a-part, so the word is ἐκμέρους. They were a Body a-part in Relation to other Churches, and more particularly Members one of another, and that in such a particular manner, as they were not so of any Church else. The like we have as express, *Ephes.* 2. Where having Discoursed of the Body Mystical, as made up both of *Jews* and *Gentiles*, as appears by *ve.* 16. he shews (*ver.* 19.) their Relation thereunto. *Ye are no more Strangers, but fellow Citizens with the Saints, and of the Houshold of God*, (namely, that great Houshold of Heaven and Earth, as he calls it, (chap. 15. *and are Built*, &c. ver. 20. *With all Saints into an Holy Temple.* And then he further adds, ver. 22. *and you also are Builded together for an Habitation of God, through the Spirit.* Where 1. He means some one more special further Temple, then to be Members of the Mystical general Building: For he had said before, *ver.* 19, 20. Ye are Built up with the whole Church into such a Temple, and it needed not so Emphatically be Repeated again. But in that he says, *you also* καὶ, &c. he affirms some further thing of them, then what he had said of them before. He means something more than that, whereas the whole Body is built into a Temple, they are built with them, as a part of that Temple: For that he had said afore (*ver.* 19.) they being part of that whole Temple, of which he says, all is built, &c. *ver.*

20. 2.

Ch. II. 20. 2. he makes them a distinct Temple from the former, and plainly intends, that as with the whole they grew up into a Temple: So they in particular, were built up as an Habitation, besides the other. You *Ephesians*, and you as together considered (says he) συνοικοδομεῖσθε, *are built up together.* So as he speaks it not of that Personal Relation and Conjunction, which they had with all the rest of the Saints in the World, and which every one had privately and personally to the Mystical Church (for that was as common to the *Galatians* as to them) but he means that which they had together in a more peculiar manner, in joynt Relation each to other. If he had designed only their common Relation, he would rather have said, *you together with all Saints, are thus built up*, but this he had said afore; but now (says he) *You* Ephesians *together one with another, are built up into a more special House*, or private Oratory (as I may allude to private Chappels in great Cathedrals) or little Sanctuary (as the Prophet speaks, *Ezek.* 11.16.) private by themselves. I might prove the same out of *Ephes.* 4. where having first at large Discoursed of the whole Body on Earth (*ver.* 12.) he then passeth (*ver.* 16.) to the use, and end, and benefit of a particular Congregation, which he also calls a whole Body fitly joyned together, so as to supply Nourishment, and to edifie each other. Which of all the Saints on Earth, making up a Mystical Body, cannot be said; for how is every one so Dispersed able to edifie each other in love?

And because there is the same Reason every way of the Body Mystical, and of the Body Instituted; therefore the same priviledges every way, which appertain to the whole Body Mystical, do belong also as fully to every such particular Church, so as indeed they are one, that is, there is *unica & eadem ratio, one and the same consideration* of the one and the other, as there is the same Nature of a drop that is of the Ocean, since both are Wrater, the one as well as the other. Therefore the Apostles do so promiscuously speak the same things of the one and the other; and in their Discourses, pass without much Distinction from the one to the other. As he that reads an Anatomy of the Body of Man in general, may be said to read it of every Man in particular: So what is said of the invisible Church may be said and applyed to the visible. As the one is called the Body of Christ, so is the other. Yea, as the one is called the whole Body of Christ, so is the other. So of the Church of the *Corinths* he says, when the whole Church is come together in one place. For the Church of Christ is *totum homogeneum, an Homogeneal whole*, whose parts are of the same Nature with it self; and so what is said of the whole, is said of every part.

CHAP. II.

The Reasons why Christ hath Instituted a Congregational Church.

I will now give Reasons, why Christ did Institute such a particular Ordinance, as a particular Congregation of Members joyned, to grow up to be a Body, a Temple apart unto Christ, and why he hath thus endowed them with the priviledges, Name and Nature of the whole.

1. That there should be joynt and publick profession of the Name of God; and that God should be Worshipped of his Creatures, as Assembled together, is exceeding necessary, and indeed natural. Though the manner of Divine Worship is Instituted, yet that God should be Worshipped by many (when many are extant, that may Worship him) is as natural, as that he is to be Worshipped. Therefore all Nations have ever had publick Assembly's, in which to Worship their God's. And therefore in *Genesis*, no sooner did that common Work of Mankind spread into Branches; but it is upon the Genealogy presently Recorded, and put unto it, as the consequence of it, Gen. 4. 26. *Then began Men to call upon the Name of the Lord*, that is publickly and together; for privately, they had done it afore: Or if it be meant of Idolatrous Worship (as some interpret it) that the Men began prophanely to call on the Name of the Lord; yet publick it was. And however that they thus fall upon it, argues the voice of Nature as it is, *Mich.* 4. 5. and is argued from it. The People of God argue from it, to provoke one another to publick Worship, of which he there speaks, (ver.

(ver. 1, 2.) *How in latter Days*, that is, under the Gospel, *there should be flowing to the Mountain of the Lord, and all People should flow to it. And many Nations shall say, come, let us go up and Assemble*, &c He speaks in the Language of the Old Testament, to express the Worship of the New. You know the Temple stood upon a Mountain, to which the Church of the *Jews* Resorted for publick Worship, so as to go up to the Mountain of the Lord, is to Assemble together to Worship. And how do they provoke one another to this? By the Law of Nature Written in all Men's Hearts, ver. 5. *For all People will walk in the Name of his God*; that is, make a joynt and publick profession of him, and together call upon him: For to that he there exhorts, *v.*5. It is a Natural instinct in the New Creature, therefore they breath after it.

2. As to have Assemblies wherein to Worship God, is natural; so now under the Gospel, particular Assemblies are necessary. When indeed the Church was contracted in *Judea*, so as all the Nation might at once meet; for greater Solemnity, God ordained three Solemn meetings every year; and therefore they were a National Church. But now when the Gospel was Preached all the World over, and Saints were to be gathered from over all the World; it was necessary that Church Assemblies should be Instituted, and set up every where. Thus *Paul* gives Directions for publick Ordinances, that as now they might pray for all Men, which the *Jews* might not do, so that God now would have all Saved, 1 *Tim.* 2. 4, 6. And therefore he was the Apostle of the *Gentiles*, 8. 7. *I will therefore* (it is an inference therefrom) *that Men pray every where*, he speaks of publick Assemblies, and the ordering them, as in the whole Epistle. Therefore *Judea* it self, which was before a Church National, and they were to come to the Temple to Worship, now had many Churches in it, *Gal.* 1. 2. And therefore the Prophets speaking of the latter days, and Prophecying of the Church Assemblies, then call them not an Assembly only (as that of the *Jews* was called the great Congregation) but Assemblies. So *Isa.* 4. 5. He says, *He will create upon every dwelling place of* Mount Sion, *Assemblies*, &c. not *Assembly*: Which yet should be all on *Mount Sion*, and have the same priviledge and promise, that *Mount Sion* had. So we have it expressed in *Malach.* 1. 11. *Incense shall be offered up every where*; and so the Temple was to be every where.

For 3. It cannot be imagined, that Christ should not be as good to his Church, in respect of Dispensations of Grace under the Gospel, as under the Old Testament. Therefore all the Priviledges that the *Jews* met together in the Temple had, and all the Ordinances wherein they joyntly partook, and the like helps, and more full of Grace in stead of those other, were to Succeed in the New Testament: For his Name, he says, should be as great among the *Heathens*, as ever among the *Jews*. Therefore Christ sets up a Temple, and gives power to his Church in all places to set up Temples and Habitations to himself; and endows all those private Churches, with all the priviledges and endowments that the Assembly of the *Jews* had. And hence now, every such Assembly is called the Lord's Mountain, and his Temple; and hence, all the *Encomiums* mentioned of the *Jews* Church, are now given to two or three poor Assembled. As he said of the Temple, I will put my Name there, (*Deut.* 12. 11. 1 *Kings* 8. 29.) so now Christ's word is, (*Matth.* 18. 19, 20.) *I say to you, That where two or three are gathered together, I will be in the midst of them.* Which words as *Cameron* Notes, are not Assertory only; but Institutive. Yea, I say further, look what Priviledges and what Ordinances all Saints on Earth, if Assembled together, should partake of, the same as fully and entirely hath Christ appointed, two or three Assembling in his Name to partake in, till they all meet together in Heaven.

4. It was for Christ's Honour, that it should be thus; that such Spiritual Regiments and Common-wealths, and Bodies of Saints, should be erected to shew that Christ is King. For Christ is a King, and must Rule amongst the midst of his Enemies, *Psal.* 110. *Rev.* 15. 3. He Reigns over Wicked Men by his Providence; but as he is peculiarly King of Saints, *Rev.* 15. 3. so in and over his Saints peculiarly, and that not in their Hearts only; but outwardly and visibly in an ordered instituted Kingdom and Body. He is King not only in having Saints, but in having Saints ordered and embodied together in Holy Societies, Col. 2. 2. *I rejoyce to behold your Order.* He is a King over the Bodies of his Saints, as well as their Souls, 1 *Cor.* 6. 20. for he Redeemed both. And therefore as his work is to guide their Souls in-

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wardly by his Spirit; so their outward Man by his Officers and Ordinances appointed. An Instituted Church is called his Kingdom, *Mat.* 21. 43. For he says, *That Kingdom* shall be taken away, he means Ordinances, and the Candlestick of the Church. And it is reason, that his Kingly Office should be extended as large as his Prophetical and Priestly. His Prophetical reacheth to outward things, to Baptism, and the Lords Supper, *&c.* His Priestly Office was performed externally a-fore the World; and so he was to the *Jews* in outward things, *Jesus Christ the same to day that yesterday*, *Heb.* 13. 8. The Kingdom then answerably, is visible in an external Administration. Christ was to have an House under the New Testament, as under the Old, *Heb.* 10. 21. We have an High Priest over the House of God, and thereupon he urgeth Assembling together, *ver.* 25. which makes Christ an House: Now if we are not to forsake the Assemblies, it is then our Duty to begin to form them, and it is remarkable that he says *Assembling*, not Assemblies only.

5. By the Institution of these particular Churches, Christ sets up a Kingdom, and judgeth a-fore-hand. He judgeth them within, by casting them out if Offenders, which shews, that he will not bear with Scandals: And he Judgeth also those without, in denying to admit them, and so separates between the Pretious and the Vile, and makes a day of Judgment aforehand. Therefore we find it made by the Prophets, the Fruit of these Assemblies that Christ Judgeth amongst the Nations, *Isa.* 2. 3 4. *Michah* 5. 2. 3. And another Fruit is that they are Blessed, as means to convert Souls, *Acts* 9. 31.

6. Saints have as much need now of Assembling thus, as then. *Adam* had need of Fellowship in Innocency, and much more do we need it in a State of Corruption. Therefore the Apostle exhorts upon that ground to these Assemblies, *Heb.* 10. 25.

CHAP. III.

A Comparison between the Church Mystical, Universal, and an Instituted particular Church. Wherein they both agree, and in what Respects there is a difference between the one and the other. The Definition of a Congregational Church.

SInce there is like Reason for the Universal Mystical Church, and particular Churches; and since every particular Church hath the Resemblance, Name, Priviledges, and Attributes of the general, and all that it hath, is Modificated by a special Institution: Let us therefore compare a little the one with the other, by which we shall the more clearly see the true Notion and Nature of an Instituted Church, by seeing both what is common to both, and wherein the one is Modificated, and differs from the other.

A Church Instituted, is a company as well as the other, 1 *Cor.* 10. 16, 17. for the Ordinances of it are a communion, ver. 16. *And we being many, are one Body, and partakers of that* one Bread, *ver.* 17. There is only this difference, that an Instituted Church is but of as many as come together in one place, 1 Cor. 14. 23. *When the whole Church is come together in one place*; mark that, he calls that the whole Church, which yet was but those Saints at *Corinth*, 1 *Cor.* 11. 20. When you come together in one, not with one mind only, but in one place: But that other Mystical Church is the company of Saints all the World over. And the Reason why God did contract this Instituted Church to such a number, as could meet in one place, was because the end of that Institution and Meeting, was full communion and entire, such as that they who meet, should partake in all Ordinances together with one accord, as *Acts* 2. 46. And then Nature doth teach, that it can be but such a company, and so many as can all hear and edifie one another, *&c.* and who may from the same Pastor, receive the Holy Ghost, and the same provocation of Grace at the same time; and who may *Glorifie God with one Mouth, and one Mind*, Rom. 15. 6. *and serve him with one shoulder*, *Zach.* 3. 6. And therefore in that Institution of a Church, *Matth.* 18. he mentions their agreement. 'Tis agreement as met together, which is essential to every Ordi

Ordinance. *If two shall agree*, our Saviour, *Matth.* 18.19. The word is συμφονησωσιν that is make up a Consort, an Harmony; for Ordinances and Prayer are so to God, *Ephes.* 5.19. And therefore, 1 *Cor.* 10.16. Though he says, many made that one Body at *Corinth*; yet they were but so many, as could be partakers of that one Bread, and receive the Sacrament together, and as many as might all learn, when they Prophesied one by one, 1 *Cor.* 14.31. And so at *Ephesus*, (*Acts* 20.28.) The Elders were to take care of all the Flock, therefore such a Flock is to be no more, then such as Pastors can take the care of. And therefore in those Countries and Regions, where the Saints did Multiply, their Churches were Multiplied also, as in *Galatia*, there were the Churches of *Galatia*, 1 *Cor.* 16.1. and so in *Asia* too, *Revel.* 1.4.20. *Acts* 18.41. But the Mystical Church, is the Assembly of all Saints, it is *the whole Family both in Heaven and Earth*, *Ephes.* 3 15. which, like the Sea, is too vast in this World, to be gathered into one place.

Book VI.

2. As the Church Mystical is a company of Saints; so is the Church Instituted also to be. So was the Church of *Corinth*, 1 Cor. 1.2. *To the Church at* Corinth, *called to be Saints.* And it is a company of such as are Elect: So 1 *Pet*, 5.13. The Church which was at *Babilon*, is said *to be Elect together with them*, that particular Church was such. Thus *Paul* Testifies of that Instituted Church at *Philippi*, *Phil.* 1.1. calling them the Saints there, with the Bishops and Deacons, and in as much as he mentions Officers, he speaks of them as of an Instituted Church. And this he says, not speaking of the better part, as giving the Denomination to the whole; but as of every one amongst them, ver. 6. *being confident in this, that you have a good Work in you.* And he expresseth that it was meet to think so of them all, *ver.* 7. else they all had not been meet, to have been of the Church. The like is spoken of the *Thessalonians*, 1 *Thes.* 1.2. and 1 *Thes.* 5.5. And there is a World of Reason for it.

1. For to all callings there is to be a Qualification.

2. Because these are to make up a Body to Christ, as well as the Mystical; therefore they must be answerable to their Head. It would be very unsuitable, *Humano capiti cervicem jungere equinam, To joyn Monstrous Members to such a Glorious Head.* They who are joyned to Christ, must not be Members of an Harlot.

3. These are called to Fellowship with Christ and his Saints. And as Moral vertues fit Persons to have communion with Men, so Grace only qualifies Men to have communion with Christ and Saints.

4. Their Fellowship, and Meetings, and Transactions, are to be with one accord, *Acts* 4.32. and with one Heart. Now Faith will give them that. The Believers met with one mind, *Acts* 4.32. And they only can and will do so. There is to be an Agreement, an Harmony, σύμφωνία in a Church, and one false string makes a Discord. There must be agreeing in Principles to fit Men for Church-Fellowship, and as Men that agree in the Fundamental Laws of a Kingdom, are only fit to be Subjects in that Kingdom: So those only are fit to be Subjects of this Spiritual Kingdom, that agree in acknowledgment of the Fundamental Principles of Godliness; which only true Faith will enable a Man to do, *Titus* 1. 1. *Philemon 6.* Therefore those, who deny the power of Godliness, are not to be received; but we are to turn away from them, 2 *Tim.* 3.5. Nay, such a mixture will cause apparent variance, so Christ says, *Matth.* 10.34,35. For such Persons are contrary, and led by contrary Principles; and how then can they be joyned in such a Fellowship, as is the most near communion with Christ.

5. The ends of Church-Fellowship, are the Form of it (as I shall shew anon) Now therefore such matter is only to be taken in, as may comply and be Serviceable to those ends. Christ, when he makes any Institution to an end, makes it such as may attain that end; or else it is in vain, and so not an Ordinance. Now wicked Men are no more fit matter, nor no more capable of the Spiritual ends of a Congregation, than the body of a Beast is fit for a reasonable Soul to dwell in and enform, and to use to actions reasonable. For the ends of this Body of a Church, and of this Holy Society, and of every Member of it, is to edifie one another, and every part is to supply Grace to it, *Ephes.* 4.16. And for that Men must have received the Spirit, and some Spiritual Gift. Therefore those who have not the Spirit of Christ, and have no Spiritual Gifts and Graces, have but the Spirit of this World, and are unfit, and will be so far from edifying the Church, that (as *Solomon* says *Eccles.* 9: 18.) *One Sinner will destroy much good.* And are such Persons also fit to Reprove, to Judge, and thereby

Cha. III. to preserve the Church pure? Since they are such whom Christ calls Swine; they are so unfit to Reprove, as they are not fit to be Reproved; *Matth.*7 6. And it is of such the Apostle also speaks, (1 *Cor.*2.14.) That they cannot receive things Spiritual; but they are foolishness unto them, and therefore they are unfit to Judge those within, for the Spiritual Man only Judgeth all things, and is Judged of none, 1 *Cor.* 2.14. How many Men are of *Gallio's* Temper, if it be a matter of right or wrong, that is to be Judged of in the Common-wealth, they can do it: But if the matter is about the Spiritualness of the Law or Gospel (which things are within the proper cognizance of this Church-Court) they care for no such matter; or if they Judge, they will certainly cast out their Brethren, *Isa.* 66.5: And say God be glorified when they have done.

So then as well an Instituted Church, as the Mystical is to consist only of Saints, and Saints are to be the matter of both; only *de facto*, indeed there sometimes falls out this difference.

1. That the Mystical Church being immediately called by God, consists of those only, whom, as the Apostle says, *The Lord approves and Judgeth such*, (2 *Cor.* 10.18.) without the Judgment of Men coming between, who are *Jews* inwardly; and whose Religion is that of the Heart, and whose praise is not of Men, but of God, *Rom.* 2.29. But this Instituted Church, though immediately ordained to be of God, and according to his Laws; yet the gathering of it, and assembling of it, is an Act of Man's (namely of Saints) and therefore *Heb.* 10. 25. It is called *the Assembling themselves together*. And such is the calling and apointing of Ministers; whose calling, though it be of God's Institution; yet the Designment, who should be a Minister, is immediately by Men. And therefore so the Apostle Distinguisheth his immediate call from that of other Ministers, (*Gal.*1.1.) That it was not by Men, but by Christ: Hence therefore because what Persons should be of this or that Congregation is Determined by the Judgment of a company of Men that are Spiritual, whom in these things God hath left Supream Judges on Earth, (1 *Cor.*2.14. *The Spiritual Man Judgeth* all things, *&c.*) And because they in Judging are, and may be often deceived; hence *de facto* it comes to pass, that in great Congregations there may be some found that prove Hypocrites. Thus the Apostles tells them, *Acts* 20.30. that in *Ephesus*, *Men of themselves should arise Teaching* perverse things, though, in the institution and choice of Members, never so great care was had. But still though these Saints may be deceived in the application of the Rule; yet they are to hold fast the Rule it self, that Saints only are fit matter for a Church, and that such only are to be admitted (tho' they who have the power of receiving them are often mistaken. Yea, though Temporary Believers may be found in the Church, without a Wedding-Garment; yet to them in the Church they are as Saints, and justified as such, being not known to be otherwise. So as though before God, and as to his Knowledge, others than Saints may be in a Church, yet none but such as are to us, and in our Judgments, Saints and Holy, and of whom (as the Apostle says, 1 *Phil.*1.6,7.) it is meet for us to think they have a work wrought, knowing their Election, 1 *Thes.* 1. 5. are to be admitted by us into Church-Fellowship. By us there are none to be admitted, but such as to us are Saints. So then to us, a Church Instituted is all Holy, and Justified, and Elected, and Sanctified.

2. And hence also, this further difference between the matter of the one and the other ariseth; that those who are Saints invisible to Men, or inwardly such; and who yet are visibly such to God's Eye, are the matter of the Mystical Church: But such as are visible Saints to Men, not to wicked Men; (for they are blind, and Judge not of Colours) but visible to them who are appointed Judges, which are the Saints; who as they only have a Right to Ordinances, so to Judge, 1 *Cor.*2.15. So that as *True Faith* before God, is the Form of the Members of the invisible Church, so a true profession of Faith outwardly, is essential to make fit matter capable of being Framed into an Instituted Church. And as that is ordained to be an External Visible Body, so a visible True Faith is necessary in the Members of it; and therefore it is called the Houshold of Faith, *Acts* 4.23. Now it is not he that saith he hath Faith (*James* 2.14.) in a verbal profession that is outwardly a visible Believer; But saith *James*; *Shew me thy Faith by thy Works*, *ver.* 18. Faith is called therefore, (2 *Cor.* 9. 13.) a professed Subjection to the Gospel; but it must be a Faith that is effectual to the acknewledging of such Truths, as are after Godliness (*Tit.* 1. 1. *Philemon* 6.) and so effectual, as to prevail in

in others that are Saints, to acknowledge every good thing in them, (*Philemon* 6.) and such as it may cause them that are Saints, to think it meet so to judge of them (*Phil.*1.6.) and such as hath the obedience of Faith to attend it, (*Rom.*15.) and such as hath a professed Subjection to the Gospel in the whole Man; for it is to be such, as is no lye: Now to profess in Words, and deny in Deeds, is the greatest lye that is, 1 *John* 1. 6. And Lyars are to be without, *Rev.*22.15.

3. As the Church Mystical is a company knit and united together into one Body to Fellowship with Christ, and one with another by the Spirit: So also is a Church Instituted to be.

1. It is to be a company knit and united together; for they, though many, are called *One Body* (1 *Cor.* 12.20. and *Ephes* 4.16.) *joyned* together and compacted, and (*Ephes.* 2. 22.) they are *Builded* together for an Habitation for God; a Distinct Habitation by themselves (those places speak all of an Instituted Church) yea, and so in particular united, as to make a distinct entire Body unto Christ from all other Churches, as those *Ephesians* (*Eph.*2.22.) did; and the *Corinthians*, 1 *Cor.* 12. 27. Thus the Apostle speaks likewise, Rom.12.4. *We being many are one Body in Christ, and every one Members one of another.* And he speaks it in Relation to an Instituted Church, for (*ver.* 6,7,8.) he Reckons up the Offices and Organs of such a Body (*He that teacheth on teaching*, &c.) and therefore he intimates them to be in such a particular manner, Members one to another, as to none Else; and to be joyned into such a Body, as that they have power by vertue of such a conjunction, to Judge one another that are within the Body (1 *Cor.* 5. 12.) and to put out from among them, *ver.* 13. Which power they have not over other Saints, or any Saints in the World; but only over such as were by some special means made of them, and of their Body; and therefore distinctly Formed, as into a Distinct Common-wealth. And it is a Body not *Confused*, but *Ordered*, according to several Gifts, to several Functions, 1 *Cor.*12 so the Apostle saith of the *Colossians*, that he rejoyced beholding their Order, *Col.* 2. 5. So he tells the *Ephesians* that they were a Body not only joyned together; but *fitly joyned* together, *Ephes.*4.16.

2. It is to be a company united by the Spirit. So the Church of the *Ephesians* was built together *by the Spirit, into an Habitation*, *Ephes.*2.22. And those other places are to be understood of both, Eph.4.4. *There is one Body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called*, &c. that is, this is exemplified in you, who by one Spirit have been called into one Body, as into an hope of calling, and (1 *Cor.* 12. 12.) by one Spirit we are all Baptized into one Body, being made all to drink into one Spirit.

4. It is a company joyn'd to have Fellowship with Christ, such was the Church of the *Corinthians*, to whom he Writes as to a particular Church (1 *Cor.* 1. 2.) and who are said *to be called to Fellowship with Christ*, *ver.* 9. such were the *Philippians*, who were an Instituted Church, *Phil* 1.1,2. And they are said *to have Fellowship in the Gospel from the first Day*, *ver.* 5.

These things are common to both the Church Mystical, and Instituted; but there are these differences between the one and the other.

1. In their knitting together and union, there is a difference. The union of the whole Church Mystical is internal, and simply by the Communication of the Spirit, and by the commnnion of the same Faith and Love, having the same Spirit in them, that dwells in Christ, and all his Members; and having the same Faith (like pretious Faith, 2 *Pet.*1.1.) which is called the communion of Faith; and being interested in the same benefits, in the same common Salvation, as *Jude* calls it, *Jude* 3. and in the same common Lord, (1 *Cor.*1.2. with all that in every place call upon the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord. But the union of an Instituted Church (though it contains and supposeth all this in the matter of it) as it is more Special, particular, and Distinct, so it is founded upon something more peculiar. And as the Government of it is external, so the union of it is also. As 1. Is seen by gathering together in one place, in the Name of Christ, Acts 2.44. *All that Believed were together*, and Mat. 18.20. *Where two or three are gathered together*, &c. When the Law was given, and that Church of the *Jews* was to be Constituted, the People were all Assembled to meet God. Thus it is under the Gospel too, when ye come together, saith the Apostle, 1 *Cor.*14.26. as coming together and cohabitation is necessary to a Marryed condition; so it is to this. Though indeed it do not cease to be a Church if dispersed, or any Member to be a Member, if severed a while; but their union being in Relation

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lation to gathering together, it may continue as Man and Wife, may be Man and Wife still, , though for a Season they are asunder, but yet their Relation was ordained to be by coming together, (1 *Cor.*7.5.) And therefore if either voluntarily will depart, the other party is free, *ver.* 15. And because this Church-Relation is Ordained for coming together; therefore if any forsake the Assembling together, it doth unchurch them, *Heb.*10.25.

And whereas their gathering is in the Name of Christ; it is meant to be either in the Authority of Christ, as was said, or further also, for the Name of Christ, for so ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι is taken. This Christ says, (Matth.11.6.) *Blessed is he that is not offended in me, that is, for me.* So we are said to Exalt the Name of Christ in his Ordinances,and every Ordinance is Christ's Name,&c.This being gathered in Christ's Name, is the end of this Holy company, which Distinguisheth it from all Societies else; for *Finis in moralibus idem quod forma in naturalibus; the end of Moral things, is the same as the form in Naturals.* As a company of Students meeting together at publick Acts, &c. makes a Colledge; a company of Men Assembling to consult, are called the Council: So a company of Saints met not to any other purpose, as to eat, &c. (for then they make not a Church, 1 Cor.11.20,21,22. *Have you not Houses to eat in,* &c.) but in the Name of Christ, and to call upon his Name, are a Church for that end put upon the meeting, must go to make a Church.

They are to be united together, to a constant gathering together. It is not every suddain meeting that makes a Church, as to Pray, Fast, &c. for they are to be compact together, *Ephes.*4 16. It is an united company of Brethren, *that must dwell together in Unity. Psal.*113.1. *Jerusalem* the Type of our Assemblies, was a City compact, *Psal.* 122. 31. The first Church (as 'tis called, *Acts* 2. 47.) continued in the Apostles Fellowship, and that stedfast, *Acts* 2.42,46. For otherwise it could not make a distinct Body unto Christ, as the *Ephesians* did, *Eph.*2.22. They were made an Habitation unto God, alluding to the Temple; which was called the House of God, and was a setled thing. And the word εἰς κατοικητηριον is observable to this purpose (as it is by *Beza*) for κατοικεῖν and παροικεῖν differ as *Habitare* and *commorare*, to dwell, and to abide, *Natura Domicilium nobis non habitandi sed commorandi dedit*, as *Tully* says. A Church is an abiding place, not a Tent for a Night; and in that he says,they were not only an Habitation,but that they dwell together εἰς,&c. κατοικητηριον to be an Habitation, the Phrase implies constantly. And surely, that which setleth any Common-wealth into a Body, must fix this Sacred company. A company meeting at several Fairs or Marts, never make a Body or Corporation, because they are fluid and part again; but constant Assembling and Unity, makes a Society; and in as much as it is a Body compacted to edifie it self, it implies constancy. For if Members should be Disjoynted, and some Members make up the Body the one day, others another, there would be little supply of Nourishment; for the Nourishment is from what every joynt supplies.

And therefore to fix them, it is meet and requisite they be joyned by a special covenant, which may make and express a more special Relation. For indeed, as the Relation which Faith internal works between us and Christ, is the Form of the Church Mystical; so the Special Relation to Christ and to one another, to enjoy all Christ's Ordinances,goes to make up the Form of the Church Instituted. This Relation a Covenant formally and expressly works; and constant meeting with such an intention, really and virtually makes. And therefore not Saints scattered, though living and meeting in one place, makes a Church, *Acts* 19. 1. *Apollo* is said to find Disciples at *Corinth*, but not a Church.

The Tabernacle, the Type of this Gospel-Church was knit together by Taches, *Exod.*26.6. which (*Acts* 15.16.) is made. by *James*, the Type of Building up the Church of Christ for Worship, under the New Testament. And if no mention had been made of any such thing; yet the Nature of the thing implies it: For a Scattered People,that Assemble not out of an obligation, cannot be supposed to have power each over other. Hence also we find in Scripture, that the Apostles Writing to particular Churches, speak of such as were Members in covenant with them, in a Phrase of propriety and special Relation. So says the Apostle of *Epaphras*, *Coloss.*4.12. *Who is one of you*, in Special Relation. And there was a Stipulated Subjection to Christ; 2 *Cor.*9.13. as indeed all Societies are knit by outward agreements;

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2. As the Saints are joyned into one Body, so, as occasion is, into a Body ordered, not confused. For God in the Church is not the Author of Confusion but Peace. It is to be a Kingdom, a Common wealth of *Israel*, a Body Politick, not civily Politick, but Spiritually: An Army with Banners, in which are several Stations, Ranks, Laws and Constitutions. Therefore *Colos.* 2. 5. he Rejoyceth, as in their *Faith* as Christians, so in their *Order*, by which things were ordered in their Church among them. Which Order may note out.

1. An Enjoyment of all Ordinances Instituted by Christ, according to Christ's Laws. So when the Apostle had Rectified their Abuses, and brought them to the Primitive true Institution of the (Sacrament, 1 *Cor.* 11. 23. *That I received of the Lord, I delivered to you*) He calls this a setting things in Order among them, the Rest I will set in Order when I come, *ver.* 34. All which Ordinances when rightly and duly Administred, he calleth, (*ver.*2) Traditions or Ordinances, as he delivered them. Whereof the one was the right Administration of the Lord's Supper, *ver.*23. Which I think were called Traditions, not that they were unwritten, as the Papist's assert; but because they were new Institutions, which came in the room of the *Jewish* Ordinances, and Form of Government and which were meerly Institutions, *de novo*, received from Christ, and delivered only to them, (as *ver.*25.) implies: And not to be found formerly commanded, in the Writings of the Prophets.

2. The Order of a Gospel-Church, imports the Ranking and Ordering all their Members into such proper Offices, according to their Gifts; that all those Ordinances might be enjoyed; and all Gifts among them, to the utmost, be improved to the use of the whole. As therefore it is called a Body, for the Identity of Members in Nature, which are made for substance of the same Flesh and Nature, (for all Saints are Flesh of Christ's Flesh, and Bone of his Bone (as we say) of those that are a-like and a Kin) and of the same Graces: So also it is a Body *joyned*, (*Ephes.*4.16.) for Union and Unity; and not only so, but fitly joyned. It is not only rightly joyned, but fitly placed and disposed according to the Gifts of every Member. It is fitly joyned, not for the Ornament and Beauty only of the whole; but for the use and supplying true Nourishment to the whole. Which we shall find to be that which under the Similitude of a Body, the Apostle doth much insist on, *Rom.* 12.4 5,6. 1 *Cor.* 12.

In a Body there are not only many Members, as was observed, and so in a Church; But 2. These Members are of several sizes and measures of Gifts and Graces, *Ephes.* 4.16. There is a proportion in every part, which according to its measure supplies Nourishment to the whole; which the Apostle calls, (Rom.12 6.) *the proportion of Faith received by each.* And 3. These Gifts are divers, (1 *Cor.* 12. 4.) there are Diversity of Gifts, as are in the Members of the Body. The Hand is gifted and fitted to do something, which the Eye is not, *&c.* 1 Cor.12.15. *The Hand is not the Foot,&c.* that is, serves not for that use the Hand doth. Which Diversity of Gifts or fitness for use to the whole, ariseth partly out of the several Institutions and ordering of Graces. All the Members for Substance, consists of the same Simular parts, Flesh, Blood, Veins, Nerves, Arteries, Bones, which are a-like in the Hand and Foot; but being variously ordered and tempered (as the Apostles word is, *ver.*24. συνεκεραασε) in one there being more of Nerves, in an other more of Flesh; in some there being one Grace more eminent as Love, Pity, *&c.* in others Knowledge, *&c.* accordingly doth there arise a several Gift out of the various composition and temperament of the same Graces. They also arise from Superadded habits, infused by the Spirit; as in the Primitive Church the extraordinary Gifts wholly did, *ver.* 9, 10. And now these ordinary Gifts (that one should have his understanding furnished more for words of *Knowledge*, to teach Churches; another for words of *Wisdom*, to apply them wisely, *ver.*8.) are from a several infused Habit, put in by the Spirit over and above their Grace.

4. As their Gifts are divers, so the Offices, and Administrations, and Ordinances in the Church are divers; and the one are suited to the other, there being no Gift, but an Office is appointed to exercise it; and an Ordinance also is Instituted, unto which both these Gifts and Offices serve. This we find in *Rom.* 12.4. that all Members as they have not the *same Gifts*; so nor the *same Office*, and in 1 *Cor.*12.4,5. that as there are *Diversities of Gifts*, so of *Administrations*, that is, Offices, or Ministries, as the word signifies; to exercise them in. And the Operations of these Ordinances, and

Cha. III. and Succeſs by thoſe Ordinances, are anſwerable in the Hearts of the reſt. And all theſe are fitted to all the needs in the Church, (*ver.* 21.) *The Eye cannot ſay to the Foot, I have no need of you*; not ſo much as a little finger can be wanting.

5. As the whole Church hath need of the right placing and diſpoſing of all theſe Members to thoſe ſeveral Offices, for the enjoying all thoſe Ordinances, ſo Chriſt hath appointed it. This is the Order of the whole, and makes it a Body, when the Hand ſtands not where the Eye ſhould, nor the Foot where the Hand ſhould, which diſpoſure the Apoſtle (*ver.* 24.) called ſetting divers Officers in the Church, or fitly ordering them. And therefore to this Day, the putting or ordaining of any to the Miniſtry, is called giving and taking Orders.

In this doth this Inſtituted Body differ from that Myſtical; that though, when all the ſcattered Members of that Myſtical Body, ſhall come all together at latter day, there will be a differing meaſure of Grace and Glory (which *Epheſ.* 4. 14. The Apoſtle calls the meaſure of the Stature of every Member) which, put together, makes up Chriſt's fullneſs, and each Perſon a perfect Man in his Body Myſtical, all having their ſeveral, yet full Stature: Yet then becauſe there ſhall be a perfect Unity in Faith and Knowledge, as there ſhall be no need of Ordinances (God being all in all, and the Lamb the light of them, and ſo no Temple there, *Revel.* 21. 23.) ſo nor of variety of Gifts and Offices, which in this Inſtituted Body are found, *Till we all* come to the Unity, *&c.* and no longer, *ver.* 13.

We may then take this for a ſure Rule, in Reading the Epiſtles of the Apoſtles, that where we find the Body of Chriſt with Members, and varieties of Gifts and Offices, and Executions of Offices ſpoken of; there this Inſtituted Body of Chriſt is only and principally meant.

The Church Myſtical, and the particular Churches Inſtituted agree in this, that both of them are ordained, that in them we might have a Fellowſhip with Chriſt, and one with another, ſo (*Phil.* 1. 5.) It is called *Fellowſhip in the Goſpel.* And in the Inſtituted Church, there are the ſame Ordinances that are in the Myſtical, only there are ſome Ordinances in this, that are not in the other; ſo as it differs from it in ſome ways and means of Fellowſhip. In the Myſtical Church, the Members have Fellowſhip with Chriſt, by Duties of the firſt command, eſpecially private Prayer, *&c.* but in an Inſtituted Church, they have communion with him by Duties of the ſecond command: That as the Church it ſelf is an Ordinance, ſo the means of Fellowſhip in it, are Ordinances external alſo. Chriſt here communicates himſelf by publick Gifts and Diſpenſations, by the Offices of Teachers, Paſtors, Elders; and by Sacraments, and by Excommunication, *&c.* and ſo by theſe ways too, the Members have Fellowſhip one with another. By Ordinances of the Myſtical Church, as the Members have common Faith; ſo in immediate fruits of it, they have and may have a communion; as to love: and ſhew effects of it by Relieving, Reproving, *&c.* For if there be a communion of their Perſons, then alſo of their Graces, *Philemon* 6. *Titus* 1. 4. If they have a communion, as of one Chriſtian Friend with another, then in Offices of Friendſhip too. Thus having the ſame Spirit of Faith, they may build one another in Faith by Speech, *Pſal.* 116. 10. *I Believed, therefore ſpeak.* They have the ſame Spirit of Prayer, and therefore may Pray in the Holy Ghoſt, may ſay our Father, and ſo likewiſe out of Love, may Relieve one another. But in a Church Inſtituted, there is this difference.

1. Tho' that theſe things are all taken in; yet they are made conſtant Set Duties, not to be omitted. To others they are but occaſional, tho' by a ſpecial obligation, thus they are bound to do good to all, but eſpecially to the Houſhold of Faith; and ſo to love all, and to pray for all Saints as occaſion is; but theſe joyned in Church-fellowſhip are eſpecially, Setly, and *ex Officio, by Office* engaged in theſe Duties: As to talk Holily every Day, but ſetly on the Sabbath Day. Therefore Exhortation to theſe common Duties, comes in after a Church ſuppoſed to be Inſtituted ſo, *Rom.* 12. 9, 10, 11 *Heb.* 10. 23, 24, 25.

2. Theſe common Duties are taken in here as Ordinances, and ſo have a Superadded Relation put upon them; ſo as they have the Nature of an Ordinance. Thus (*Matth.* 18. 15.) Private Admonition is made an Ordinance; and therefore comes in after and upon the Inſtitution of ſuch a Church-fellowſhip, *Heb.* 10. 23, 24, 25.

3. In

3. In a Church Instituted there are Ordinances, in which the Mystical Church out of such a State, cannot at all partake. There is the Sacrament, which is a *Communion of many made one Body*, 1 *Cor.* 10.17. and there is Excommunication, which supposeth a Body; and a Fellowship engaging each other, and having power to Judge them within it self. Thus likewise there are Offices in an Instituted Congregational Church, which are not in the Universal Mystical Church. The *Jews* had publick Feasts and Ordinances, not to be used out of the Holy Mountain, and a great Assembly, (*Lev.* 4. 4. *Deut.* 12. 5,6 and *ver.* 14.) which was not to meet out of it, *Ezek.* 37. 26, 27. And this was a Type of Gospel-Assemblies, *Heb.* 10.25. *Isa.* 2.2,3,4. As private performances are not accepted, until a Man is a Member of the Mystical Body; so nor these, till a Man is joyned in the Instituted Body. As Ministers are set in the Church, (1 *Cor.* 12.28.) so are these Ordinances too.

4 In an Instituted Congregational Church, there is a further Blessing on all Duties. We Pray in private, but in the Temple more acceptably, we Reprove a Brother, but in a Church way more acceptably. There may be a Preaching out of Season, but in the Church 'tis in Season, as Sermons, on Week-days, bless; but on the Sabbath, give a special Blessing Redoubled from the consideration of the Day, and of the Duty, so it is here in this case, Psal. 133. 3. *The Lord hath commanded a Blessing.*

Thus, one end of a Church is, that a Man therein may enjoy further fellowship and more ways of communion than out of it. There is a threefold Fellowship.

1. Personal in Secret Duties; so *John*, in *Pathmos*, had Fellowship with Father, Son, *&c.* 1 *John* 1. 3.

2. There is a Mystical Fellowship common to all Saints.

3. There is a communion of Saints in an Instituted Church, which takes in all that is in the other, and some things besides. This was Typified out in the *Jews*, who had private communion in their Synagogues, as they had a publick communion in their National Worship.

Another end of communion of Saints, in a particular Church, is to edifie one another in Faith and Love, which is the end of all Gifts, Ordinances, and of the Institution of a Church it self, *Ephes.* 4.16. and *Colos.* 2. 19. The whole Body being thus fitly knit by what every Joynt, and Calling, and Member, supplies in every part, doth the whole in every part encrease to the edifying of it self in Love. For this end also, the several Gifts and Offices do serve, *ver* 12. Pastors, Teachers, *&c.* for the edifying of the Body of Christ. It is not only πρὸς καταρτισμὸν, which we Translate perfecting, but it may signifie the joynting in of Members so as it includes conversion, and the bringing Men into the Body, which are scattered from it; and the engrafting and joynting them into the Body of Christ, and the excellency of Gifts is to be measured by it, 1 Cor. 14.12. *But also for edifying the Saints.* Now to have the Church edified, is as much, and of as much moment and necessity, as to have the Saints converted at first: For there is a fullness of Stature appointed, and every Member must grow up unto it, before it goes to Heaven; for when all meet, every Member must have a due proportion in the whole. And therefore Christ says, (*Matth.* 18 3.) *Except ye be converted*, *i.e.* Except ye be further converted; ye Disciples already converted, ye cannot be Saved. Now for this edifying every part, doth this Ordinance of a Church, and of the Offices in it serve. And the Reason why among us, the Ministry serves to conversion more then building up; and the Gifts are more to work on Wicked Men, than to build up Godly Men, is that we want this Ordinance of a Right constitution of Churches, and of the Ordinances and Officers thereof. Whereas yet it is of as much consequence as the other. For as by conversion, the Church is encreased *Extensively* in Persons, so, in the other, *Intensively in* Graces: And to this end should all exercises, in Church Assemblies, and other meetings of particular Members of it in private tend, 1 Cor. 14.26. *Let all things be done to edification*, ver. 31. *That all may learn and all may be comforted.* And so in private meetings of the same Body, they should provoke to love and good Works, *Heb.* 10.24. and to have the Church edified.

And to conclude this, thus hath God ordained, that till the whole Body meet together, with every Member grown up to its full Stature (when they shall grow no more, and need no more edifying, being come to its full growth) these particular Bodies should serve to encrease them, and to fit them for that General Assembly

 against

Cha.III. against the time that they then meet; when this imperfect Church, and all the Gifts and Ordinances of it, shall be swallowed up in that General Church, as Rivers are when they fall into the Sea; and then all this, which is imperfect, shall be done away.

This communion of Saints in a particular Church, is further designed to the glory of God through Christ, which is the end of all: So gathering together in his Name, may be understood. Which may mean *for his Name* (as was observed) so 2 Cor. 20.8. *Thou hast Built a Sanctuary for thy Name.* He would put his Name there; and his Name was Great, *great there*, Psal.76.1. Ephes.3.21. *Unto him be Glory in the Church through Christ.* And through all his Works praise him; yet his Saints bless him, *Psal.*145.10. And they speak of the Glory of his Kingdom, and of the Glory of his Power, *ver.* 11. And where but in the Assembly of the Saints? *Praise waiteth for thee in* Sion, *Psal.* 65. 1. that is in the Church, where the sound of Praises Eccho again, and Resound in every Heart and Multiply, and is made more Glorious, therefore says he (Psal.35.18.) *I will give thanks in the Great Congregation; and I will praise thee in the presence of much People*; for that is the most proper place of Praise, and of making his Name Glorious.

This Fellowship of Saints in a Church, is *all through the Spirit*, Ephes.2.22. *Built through the Spirit*: 1. It is the Spirit makes them Saints, and so fit matter for this Building. 2. It is the Spirit, and not Man, that makes them willing, and moves their Hearts, to joyn in this Ordinance. 3. It is the Spirit, that gives all the Gifts that are in the Members. 4. It is the Spirit that is that Energy (as the word is, *Ephes.*4.16.) through which every part supplies Nourishment to others.

The Definition of a True Gospel-Church, will Result out of the recollection of all these forementioned parts together. *It is a company of Saints Assembling together in one place, built by a special covenant into one Distinct Body, which, as occasion is, is to be fitly ordered to enjoy constant Fellowship with Christ in all his Way and Ordinances; to their own mutual edification, and the Glory of God through the Spirit.* And the causes of it may severally and apart be considered, as included all in this Definition.

1. The true, and only true matter of this Church is Saints visibly obeying Christ, and a true profession of this, is the only true Adequate note of the matter of it.

2. The Special Relation which they have to Christ, and one to another in this way, and the Fellowship with Christ, and with one another, is the true Form of a Church. The mutual agreement works that special Relation, and is the Instrument of conjoyning this Matter and Form.

3. The Order and Right Administration of the Ordinances, and disposing of Members is the *Forma Externa, the External Form* of this Body. The Blessed Spirit that Acts and Breaths in all the *forma Assistens, the Assistant Form*, and their own Edification and God's Glory, through Christ their Head, is the Final cause of this particular visible instituted Church.

CHAP. IV.

That Jesus Christ hath given Liberty and Power to his Saints, to imbody themselves into Congregational Churches. That in doing so, they are not guilty of sinfull Separation or Schism.

WE have seen, that a particular Church is the Institution of Christ, and what this Church is, and of whom to be made up, and how: There yet remains to shew the Rise, Original of such Churches, and to clear it out, and by whom any such Churches are to be Reared, Erected, and Begun, and Set up; and in whom the Power and Authority lies to begin and Build, and gather together Saints into such a Church. Which we must consider; for otherwise; though the thing done is Lawful and Warrantable, and is God's Ordinance; yet we may still be ask't (as they ask't Christ) by what Authority do ye these things?

For the building of the Temple, it was not only necessary, that a command and Institution could be produced, that such an House was to be built; which though *Moses* gave express Warrant for, but yet this was not Warrant enough for every one to begin to Build it; no not for *David*, for though he was the King of *Israel*, and so had the Supream power in the Common-wealth, *&c.* committed to him; yet it was beyond his Commission to Attempt the Building it, till he should have a Special Commission from God to do it, as God tells him, 2 *Sam.* 7. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. He indeed provided Materials, and gave the Platform; but *Solomon* was only to build it, v. 13 As therefore we are to look to a word of Institution, that it be done, and to a right Pattern and Modell how it be done, and to right Materials, of whom this House be built; so as much also to the true and lawful Power, by which it is to be put in Execution; and by whom it may be built. For as the Apostle to the *Hebrews* tells us, (Heb. 3, 4.) *Every House is built by some Man*; so this House must have a lawful Builder.

All Assemblies (as at first I intimated) must be conveened by lawful Authority; and so must this. Now though it is Warranted to be set up in Christ's immediate Institution; yet the setting of it up is done by Men, whom Christ Authorizeth to do it. He Reareth it not as he doth our House in Heaven, without Hands (1 *Cor.* 5. 1.) but his Temple here below, as that of *Solomon's* is made with Hands; and the Rearing of it runs through the Hands of some, as the Builders of it.

Now there are that pretend to have this power as of Governing; so only of beginning and giving Warrant to Saints to make Churches: Who yet will be found to prove in this, such Builders as the *Pharisees*, who refused the head Stone, and neither build truly themselves, according to the Pattern, nor will suffer others. And they are such Magistrates, and such Church-Governours, who would call in all Church-Patents, not erected by themselves, with a *quo Warranto*?

This power must certainly lie somewhere, else it were an Institution in vain, which could never be produced into Act. Now this is that which I am about to Demonstrate. That as the Saints and Members of Christ Mystical, are only fit matter for this Church; so they have an immediate Independent Power and Authority from Jesus Christ, their immediate Head and King, to gather and combine themselves in such an Assembly, without expecting Warrant from any Governors, what ever on Earth. I shall first explain, and then prove it.

1. Ministers make not a Church, nor are they or their power requisite to the first gathering of it. The Ministers or Church-Governors, even those that begat to Christ, have not this power of casting us into Churches, and Disposing us herein. So far as they had a hand in begetting us: So far they may have a hand in it, that is by directing us to it, and exhorting us unto it; but the power is in our selves immediately. And there is this Reason, why the power of gathering Churches is not Dependent on them, because they are to be set in Churches, 1 *Cor.* 12. 28. *Acts* 14. 23. There were Churches gathered, e're Elders were made in them. And then besides, if such a power was Resident in the Ministers, then when they dye, a Congregation should cease to be a Church. We are not then to a-wait the leave of Church-Governors, for the gathering of a Church.

2. Two or three Saints have an immediate power from Christ, to begin this Fellowship.

1. It is so in Christ's Institution, *Matth.* 18. 20. The Writ or Commission for it runs immediately and singly in his Name, not in the Kings, nor in the Ministers, *&c.* because his Power and Authority is Warrant enough. Neither is it the meaning only, that when so gathered, they should do all in his Name, but even to *Gather* themselves into a Church, is in his Name. For if the very gathering together, be an Ordinance of it self to frame a Church thereby; then there is the same reason of it, that there is of all other Ordinances. And therefore as when gathered, they have power in his Name, to Excommunicate in his Name, 1 *Cor.* 5. 4. and to Baptize in his Name, *&c.* so to gather in his Name too: And as a Magistrate hath power to forbid those an Ordinance to be Administred, so not to hinder this other. For if gathering together it self be an Ordinance, as it is, it therefore hath his Name put to it, as well as the rest; and they have not power to intermeddle in it, nor is their power to be required for the one, more than for the other. And besides Christ's bidding Saints to gather in his Name, is as if the King should in a Commission, say to such and such

Cha. IV. when ye are gathered together in my Name, do thus, which implies, that he gives them power in his Name to meet.

2. As Christ did thus immediately in his Name ordain it: So the Apostles taught the Disciples to practice it as immediately from Christ, without expecting leave from Magistrates or any other; and what they taught them to do, we may do to the end of the World. And there is the same reason for doing it under Magistrates, Christian, as Heathen; for the power is but the same. The Apostles bad them not forsake Assembling themselves, *Heb.*10.25. He speaks not only to particular Persons not to leave the Assemblies; but to the whole Churches of the *Jews*, not to forsake Church Assemblings, not to break up their meetings, notwithstanding they were Persecuted, *ver.* 33. And so for the same reason, we are not to forbear to Assemble. And the true Radical Fundamental grounds of this are,

1. Because as Jesus Christ is the King of Saints, so he is an immediate King unto them, *Ephes.* 1. 22. As God hath given him to be over all things, so over all things a Head to his Church; so as in this point of Head-ship, no Inferior power on Earth doth come between. In all matters which immediately do pass between, and which concern him and them in this Relation, he is an immediate Governor to them; and hath put none of his power out of his Hands, to Magistrates or the civil power. And therefore his Ordinances they are to exercise and enjoy, without any immediate Commission from Men.

2. As he is thus immediate King; so he hath Reserved this power to himself: And you shall find that Christ mentions this his Transcendent power, to this very purpose. He first sent his Apostles out to Preach, and make Disciples, *Matth.*28.19. All power is given to me in Heaven and Earth, (says he) *Go ye therefore and make Disciples*, (as the word is) *and Baptize them, and Teach them to do what ever I command*, whereof this, as was shewn, was one. And in this saying, *I am not with you only, but those that believe on me, to the end of the World*, (*ver.* 20.) Christ mentions his Supream Power, and shews that he was able to command and make good this; for he had power over all. He commanded it, and promised this. And withall to see the equity of it, consider that he who is over all, and hath derived much of his power to Kings and Magistrates, his Vice-gerents on Earth, hath Subjected the Estates, Lives and Persons of his Saints as Men, as well as the rest of Men to them; yet that which concerns Spiritual power between him and them as their King, he reserved to himself, as a so exempt flower of his Prerogative. And it is as equal he should assume it and ordain it thus, as it was that God should reserve to himself one day of Seaven, having given us Six. So doth Christ allow Magistrates power in Temporal things over Men, and all Creatures here below; only his *peculiar People*, and *Royal Nation*, as they are Saints, and in things pertaining to him and his Worship, he hath Exempted them. The Magistrates are indeed to use their power, to see his Laws kept; so that this Liberty of ours, is not to be maintained and practised of us, as our Liberty; but as Christ's Prerogative, which we his Courtiers are not to suffer to be encroached upon, or diminished.

3. As he is thus a King immediate, and hath reserved this power to himself: so he hath given and imparted all to his Saints, that might fully enable them, and qualifie them for it.

1. By giving them Right, and such a Right, as is Natural to a Saint, as a Saint; and therefore can no more be encroached on by them, then Natural Liberties of Men, as Men May be invaded. The Saints (as was said) by reason of the Divine Nature do breath after a Fellowship one with another, even as every one as a Man, doth after fellowship with one of the same kind. It is not good for Man to be alone (as God said, *Gen.*2.18.) And therefore he Created the Woman, and besides Instituted that Ordinance of Marriage in Paradise, for the comfort and propagation of Mankind. The Right unto which Fellowship, and the comforts of it belongs unto a Man or Woman as such naturally, as likewise there is a Natural propension to it. So likewise to satisfie this common desire in all Saints, of having Fellowship together, Christ the Author of this New World and Generation, ordained this Ordinance of a Church, and Ordinances to be enjoyed in it, for the Building up of the New Creature; and the Propagation of it to others. And likewise the Right unto this Fellowship, and the Ordinances of it doth reside in a Saint as a Saint; and so in all Saints, wherever they be. So Christ says of Children, Mar. 10. 14. *Suffer them to come to me, and forbid*

bid them not, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven; that is, they have Right in me, as well as you, and in some Ordinances, as well as you. But more expresly the Holy Ghost speaks, Rev. 22. 14. *Blessed are they that do the commandments, that they may have Right to the Tree of Life, and to enter into the City.* He speaks of that Glorious Church, afore the end of the World; which was that City; and the Tree of Life is Christ, in the Ordinances of that Church: For so to *Adam*, the Tree of Life was a Sacrament of the Second Commandment. Which Tree of Life standing in the City, a Man must first enter into, and be admitted into the City; and then to the eating of that Tree. So that, Book VI.

1. He that doth the commandments, and is a Godly Man, hath a Right as such both to the Sacraments and to a Church-fellowship: But to the Sacraments but Remotely; and not till first admitted into the City. So that a Saint's immediate Right to the Sacrament, is founded in a Church-State, into which he must first be admitted; yet such a Radical Potential Right he hath, as he ought to be admitted; as every Man as a Man, hath a Right to Marriage comforts, but yet remotely; for he must be Marryed first, and entred into that Fellowship, and then he hath an actual Right.

But 2. He hath to a Church-fellowship, a more immediate Right, so as there is nothing betwixt him and it; but only that others joyn with him in it, as in a Marriage-fellowship it is.

3. Unto this Fellowship and Ordinances none other have Right, ver. 23. *Without are Dogs, and that make a Lye, false Professors*, and Rev. 21. 27. *There shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth*, &c.

2. As they thus have a Right to this Fellowship and Ordinances (Christ having ordained them, and them alone, as the Children's Bread, and not for Dogs) so Christ hath given them an immediate power from himself to enjoy these Ordinances, not deriving it from any other power whatever, but his own. Wherein it doth, in part, differ from that Ordinance of Marriage, to which, though a Man hath a Right as a Man, yet Parents have power over their Children (1 *Cor.* 7. 37.) to enjoin them in this Ordinance, that their consent be asked, and obtained. But it is not so in this Combination Spiritual, unto which a Saint, as a Saint, hath both a Right and full power to cast themselves, and joyn in such a way immediately; not only without asking Magistrate's consent. Who as in Marrying of the Subjects, they have no power in any Common-wealth, nor are to have, (it being an Act of Natural Right, not Civil, and so out of his Bounds) so much less have they power in this Spiritual Union, it being a Spiritual Right, which is Transcendently more out of the Sphere of their Authority and Power. Also according to the Law of Nature, King's have nothing to do with Family Government and Order, to appoint whom I shall admit, &c. because their power presupposeth Family Government first: Much less have they power in God's Family-matters.

1. 'Tis true indeed, they have a power to permit it. So *Cyrus* gave commission to build the Temple, and protected them in it. And therefore *Paul* bids them in their Congregations, to *Pray for Kings*, 1 Tim. 2. 2, 3, 4. *That they may lead peaceable Lives in all Godliness*, and so in all the Ways and Ordinances of it. And that advantage the Saints have, when Magistrates are Godly, &c.

2. They have power to exact the performance of Christ's Laws. Magistrates have a power to punish Saints that are either Subjects, if they neglect any Ordinance, and so if they neglect among the rest, this Duty of casting themselves into Assemblies. And God's good Hand may be with them in such commands, as 2 *Chron.* 30. When *Hezekiah* sent out commands to the People to Assemble to the Passover, ver. 12. *The Hand of God was to give the People one Heart, to do the commandment of the King, by the word of the Lord.*

3. They need not to expect their power or leave, for their gathering into a Church, as if without it, such a Combination were unlawful; nor to forbear out of Conscience of their Prohibition. If indeed they used force or persecution actual, they might forbear their Assemblies as the Disciples, *Acts* 8. 1. and scatter themselves; but not because of the command simply, but the Persecution; because God will have Mercy, not Sacrifice.

4. Christian Magistrates have no more power herein, then Heathen Magistrates; for his conversion encreaseth not his power, but Sanctifieth it. And therefore

not

Ch. IV. not as Christian Magistrates are we to expect their leave if we have immediate power from Christ.

3. Christ hath invested his Saints with such a power, by giving them power to Judge of, and to call each other to come into such Church-Fellowship. *Let us go to the Mountain of the Lord, Esa.* 2. 3. For the Spiritual Man Judgeth all things, and is Judged of none; and therefore is Supream Judge in things Spiritual, as this merly is: As he is a Judge of Truths (so as he needs no outward Judge in Doctrines) so also of Persons. And if they have power to Judge them within, without the help of Magistrates power; then also to Judge whom to take in.

4. Christ Invests them with this Right, by communicating his Offices to them, even as *Moses* put some of his power upon the Elders; so hath Christ on his Church. They are Kings and Priests, and made so by him; and if so, then in what they are Kings, they are Supream, and Independent, *Rev.* 1. 6. And as he is to have an eternal Government over them; so they are to have towards one another in his Church Fellowship.

5. This Kingdom is too Transcendent for the Sphere of any Inferior power to deal in. For their's is but of this World; but my Kingdom, says Christ, is not of this World, *John* 18. 36. And if they have nothing to do in things Natural, which Men as Men have a Right and Power to do, much less in that which is Spiritual, and which belongs to Saints as Saints.

6. It is a Liberty that Christ hath purchased for his Saints: Which, whatever it be, we are to stand fast in, *Gal.* 5.1. Now this is part of our Liberty, that in matters of Worship; which are things of another World, we are not Subject to Ordinances of Men, 2 Col. 20. *Why as living in the World, are ye subject to Ordinances*. In things of this World, you may be so, but not in things of another World; such as Christ's Ordinances, whereof the Fundamental one is this of Church-Fellowship. Which Liberty, though the Defence of it, hath cost us our Liberty in the way we once went in, and in the Ordinances then enjoyed; and so in some things, and especially in some times, may be a Snare; yet it is a Royalty, which take all times and seasons (that may run over the Churches Head) is for our Advantage, that by vertue of it in all times, we may enjoy the Ordinances as freely from Christ in one time or Age as in another.

7. For that was the end why Christ ordained it thus. For if Christ had not given this immediate Independent power to the Saints, as well as Right, then they might in some Ages, yea, in most, never have enjoyed that which they had a Right unto; and so that Right would have been in vain. But Christ did not leave his Saints so Destitute; but that as he gave them a fitness for a Church-Society, desires after it, a Right to it, and Ordinances to be enjoyed; so he gave power to enjoy them Independently, let Magistrates, &c. be in all Ages what they will.

Thus you see what Power and Liberty we have to begin a Church: But then again, the question and case will further be put; that we living under Christian Governors, and among Churches and Congregations allowed by them: What Warrant may we have for this apart, and Clanculary practice, of setting up such a Church as this?

In answer to this, suppose them Churches we will, as indeed I will not Dispute it (only to any of you that think them not; you have the fuller Warrant for that Practice, Warrant enough for that opinion; which I have not) therefore I will go upon Supposition, and such grounds, as all may and will agree in.

1. Though they are Churches; yet if you were never truly Members of any, you are free to begin where you will; and so to be of the best. This liberty we under the Gospel have, that the *Jews* had not; for there being to them but one Church, and that was National under the High Priest; they were in no case, to set up another; and but in case of Idolatry, to remove from communion with it. But now under the Gospel, Churches may be erected every where by Saints, and 'tis free to them to joyn with whom they please. Now for us, whether any of us may account our selves Members of any of their Churches, needs not much examining. To give our selves up to such a Fellowship with those, with which we did partake the Ordinances, was not our Intention then; but we came to receive Christ, as Members of his Mystical Body, and so as such who had a Personal Right to Christ, and that was all. Which Acts, though God accepted, winking at our Ignorance; and for those times and occasions

casions of receiving Sacraments, accepted them as Church Acts; yet not such as to oblige us to the Congregation we received in; we intending no more special communion with the Saints therein, in one than in another.

2. Though they are Churches before God, and so to be acknowledged by us, in our opinion of them; yet they are not such as necessarily we should be tyed to continue in; and not to remove from.

1. Because they are Churches defective in Ordinances, it is Warrant to remove to such a Church, where all may be enjoyed (which, do what we can, could not be in them) and this by vertue of that liberty mentioned under the Gospel. So as it is not a Removal from no Church to a Church; but from a Defective Church, to a Church more compleat in all Ordinances of Prophesying, Offices, Excommunication, &c. And in such Churches, where the Admission useth not to be Formal, the leave to depart needs not be Formal.

2. Because they are Defiled Churches to our Judgments, and so Defiled, as to continue in them, a Man himself would become Defiled also; in this case a Man may remove from them; and therefore much more he may choose, whether he will ingage in them when he is free. For though they remain Churches to my Judgment still (as a Leprous Man is a Man) and that because they are so in God's acceptation; yet to me they are the same as no Church, if I cannot enjoy the Ordinances in them; or shall be Defiled in the enjoying them. So as they may be Churches as to their State, when not in use to me.

As 1. If to the free enjoying any Ordinance, any thing sinful must be practised; as in receiving the Sacrament, let that Church be in it self, and in my Judgment otherwise never so Reformed, yet if this be imposed on me, or I must not receive; it is no Mother to me, for it denies to me her Child, the Bread which is due to me as a Child's Portion.

2. In other practises it is so Defiled, as that I cannot constantly be a Member in it, but I must also be Defiled; as in mixt receiving, in which since the wicked are made one Body with the Saints, there is a sin which lies somewhere, 1 *Cor.* 10.17. And if that the not exercising this power, which is due to a Congregation, and which they are not to forbear to exercise, in casting out such is a sin of the whole, and it be a Duty not to joyn with them: Then I am not to partake constantly with them (because then I should partake of their Sin) in such a mixture, and should also sin in omitting the Ordinance of withdrawing from them, 2 *Tim.* 3. 5. The command being, *Ezek.* 44. 24. That God's Laws shall be kept in all the Assemblies, (especially seeing by the Godlies presence, they become Assemblies; and God vouchsafes unto them that priviledge) they again should see to execute his Laws, which from Christ Independently they have Transmitted to them. However, if this Practice, and Omission, be made but doubtful unto me, it is to me a Sin to continue among them.

3. Though it should be granted, that I might occasionally receive the Sacrament in them (as being Churches *pro hac vel illâ vice*) yet it will not follow, that I should be a constant Member to continue with them. For in such an occasional receiving, I am not so made a Member, as to be called to exercise any such Judicial Act of casting out the bad; but it lies on them who are constant Members of it; who by their Approbation, make themselves one Body with them.

4 But in even such a receiving occasional, I am not to partake, till I am a setled Member in some Church: For, as was said, this is a Church Ordinance, which, as a Mystical Member of Christ, a Christian hath but a Remote Right unto. And therefore I must be in a Church, ere I partake of it any where. And seeing we are not so in theirs, Original Members, it is necessary we be of a more pure Church, e're we can be capable of receiving the Lord's Supper.

5. This Church-Society therefore is not a Separation from them, as no Churches in themselves; but as no Churches to us in use. For Separation is so to part from them, as to condemn them for no Churches (as when the Saints came out of the World, they are said to Separate from it, as condemning it as lying in Wickedness and Unregenerate) but so we separate not from them; not as from no Churches to our Judgments; but as none fit for us to joyn with.

6. This, our not Separating, we may testifie by holding such communion with them, wherein we may not be Defiled; and by vertue of this our Church-Fellowship, have this further improvement by their Ordinances, as to partake with them in a New Relation.

Ch. V. lation. And so it is not a Separation but a new moulding of a new Church more compleat, as whem a Man that pulls down an old House, and builds with the same Materials a new one more compleat. And herein we may do as the Saints did in *Hierusalem*; they were joyned in a Church-Fellowship-Christian, and yet went to the Temple, and enjoyed the Ordinances there, *Acts* 2. 46. Which *Jewish* Church they Rejected, not as no Church, though such as was to vanish afore the new.

7. It need not trouble us, that this is not a visible Church (that is in the exercise and profession of it) for though that would be more comfortable; yet it is not of the essence of a Church, it being but an Adjunct. And it is called visible, not in respect of a necessary visibility to others; but as to themselves, and one to another. For so, in the Primitive Times, their Congregations were not things visible to wicked Men; but in secret to themselves, the Church being fled into the Wilderness.

8. No Danger is to Restrain us from doing our Duty herein, as in the Primitive Times it did not, when Persecution was more hot than now, *Heb.* 10. 25. 33, 34. 'Tis true, God will have Mercy rather than Sacrifice; but then, if the enjoying Sacrifice be a greater Mercy, than the loss of what is hazarded can be, if both being put into the ballance, Sacrifice is the greater benefit of the two, compared with what is hazarded, then we are to choose Sacrifice rather, even by vertue *of that Rule*, that *as the Body is better than Rayment, so the Soul, than meerly Liberty or Estate.* Tho' in case of Life it would alter; for then you take away the Subject which should enjoy the Sacrifice it self. Therefore when the Persecution was but the spoiling their Goods, *Heb.* 10. 33, 34. they forbore not to Assemble; but when it touched Life, they Dispersed themselves, *Acts* 8. 1.

CHAP. V.

That it is necessary there should be various kinds of Officers in a Church, and that each should be setled by a Divine Institution.

I shewed before, what the constitution of a Church is, that, as it was to be a Body of Saints, so also *an ordered Body*, as *Col.* 2. 5. is intimated, and elsewhere, which Order, as I then said, noted out two things, 1. Enjoying all Ordinances. So 1 *Cor.* 11. *ver.* 23. compared with, *v.*24. The Lord's Supper is reckoned a part of the Apostolical Orders; and *ver.* 1. the Institutions of the New Testament are called *Traditions, &c.*

And 2. That Order, consists in their Ranking their Members into such Offices, according to the Gifts as Christ hath appointed; that so all the Ordinances might be enjoyed.

I shall now shew the necessity of Officers and Ministers in a Church.

It may abundantly convince us, that Heb. 6. 2. *Imposition of Hands*, is reckoned as one of those six-points, which are of the *Foundation*, and first *Principles* of Religion, *ver.* 1. laid by those Master-Builders, and by the sign used at the Ordination and calling of Officers, the use and power of the Ministry, and Officers of a Church is meant; and placed here next, and conjoyned with the Doctrine of the Sacrament (*Baptism* being here put for both, as breaking Bread is elsewhere put for the whole Lord's Supper.) because the one is conjunct with the other: Answerable unto which in the Reddition, is, tasting the good Word of God; which useth to be Dispensed by those Officers. The partaking of the Holy Ghost, is especially in Baptism and the Sacraments; and he usually is powred forth more abundantly at the Sacrament. This establishment of Officers in a Church, is not indeed necessary and fundamental to the Personal Salvation of a Christian, yet unto the Building of them up, which is as necessary as Conversion.

And therefore answerably: The course of the Apostles was, first, to go to plant and convert Men to Christ, and then to knit them into Church-Fellowship; as *Acts* 2. *v.*47. And then a while to leave them till Men fit for Offices, should be found amongst them by Trial of their Gifts, and soundness of their Conversion; and then to send Evangelists or themselves again to visit them: Both to confirm them in the Faith, and also

also to settle Officers and Elders amongst them, according to Christ's Institution. Book VI.

And thus *in every Church* these Officers were setled, so *Acts* 14.21,22,23,24. *Paul* and *Barnabas* returned to *Antioch, Iconium, Lystra*, confirming the Disciples; and when they had chosen Elders in every Church, with Prayer and Fasting they departed, *v.* 13.

And where themselves could not come they sent Evangelists, as *Titus* to *Crete*, 1 *Tit.* 5. *for this cause*, to ordain Elders in every City, where Churches were planted: So as the great care and work of the Apostles and Evangelists, was as first to gather Churches: So then to set Officers over them, and so to commend them to their charge, and God's grace: so in *Ephesus*, *Acts* 20.17.28,32. for then they made account they had provided for them, as much as in them lay; even as Parents, do when they see their Children Marryed, and well bestowed. The use, and excellency, and necessity of them to the Church, might many ways be demonstrated unto us.

1. These Officers and Gifts, are the Joynt and Distinct work of all three Persons. They conspire and have a Distinct hand in framing them for the Church, as well as in the Great Work of our Salvation; Father, Son, and Holy Ghost meet in the making and ordaining Officers: And each Person distinctly contributes something. As we gather the Excellency of the Creation of Man, above all Creatures, because the whole Trinity say, *Let us make Man*; and so of Redemption, that Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, set their Hands to it, and bear Offices in it; so we may infer the greatness, necessity, excellency of Officers in a Church and their holy Communion, because all three Persons, not only as in other Works, but distinctly and apart concur unto it. So we have it at once told us; and we need not have Recourse to several places for it, 1 *Cor.* 12. 4, 5, 6. Those three Persons are the three Great Officers in our Salvation: And these Officers in his Church, are the lesser, Christ is the chief Pastor, they the Inferior under him, 1 *Pet.* 5. and so are co-workers with the Trinity; shall all three Persons concur to constitute them, and shall we neglect to have them?

2. They are the Gifts bequeathed us by Christ at his departure; and his last Gift must needs be a great one, and so to be esteemed by us, and made use of accordingly. To have a Gift given (which is ordained simply for use, or else it is made vain, and ineffectual) and to let it be unuted, what a slighting is it of any ones love? If a Garment be given as a Legacy to wear, what a contempt of the Donor's Gift would it be to sell it? Now Officers are Christ's Legacy, and his last Legacy, *Ephes.* 4. 11. when he ascended, *He gave Gifts to Men*, as *Elias* at his Ascending, obtained a resting of his Spirit on *Elisha*, and what were those Gifts, *ver.* 11. save Apostles, Pastors and Teachers, *&c.* and mark it, the Gifts given, that make them to be Pastors and Teachers are not alone said to be the Gifts, but the Men endued with those Gifts, and put into those Offices; *Pastors, Teachers*. The Ministers themselves are Gifts, and so their Gifts became of double and treble use when Officers, to what before when private Men: Thus in like manner, *Numb.* 18. of the *Levites* it is said, to you they are given as a Gift for *Jehovah*, and as to serve *Jehovah*, so them also. And *Numb.* 18. 7. *Aarons* Service is termed a Service of Gift, and next to God's Son, and Spirit these are the greatest Gifts, because conveyers of both to us. If a precious Jewel were given you, would you not place it in a Ring where it might shine, and adorn you? If a Loadstone, which of it self would draw; yet would you not set it in Steel, that it might draw more, and not let it lie unuseful? Thus do with the Gifts of Men among you, which in Office will be more Serviceable, shine more, give a greater Lustre.

And the rather do this, for thereby you give their Gifts again to God. and return them to him. So when the *Levites* were consecrated by the Imposition of the People's Hands (*Numb.* 8.9,10, 11.) They were offered as a wave Offering says the *Hebrew* to the Lord, and as a Gift says the Septuagint, that they might execute the Service of the Lord. Some Services you cannot do without them, and so God is a looser of Worship which is imperfect without them.

And then 3. God in recompence again will come, and be more present with you then before. For this compare but, *Ps.* 68. 8. with that, *Ephes.* 4. 11. it being the place whence these words are taken. *Thou hast given Gifts to Men to dwell among them.* When Christ ascended, he became absent from his Church, therefore when he ascended he gave these Gifts, that by their Ministry he might dwell in their Hearts by faith more, and also by his Spirit. By these Officers he Buildeth the House more and

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Cha. V. more, and adds to it both *intensive* and *extensive* more Members, and more Graces; (*Ephes.* 4. 12.) for the perfecting the Saints, and building up the Body of Christ, (as also, 1 *Cor.* 3.10.16.) and when he hath built them up, and the more, the more he dwells among them; and the more he delights to do it when the House is finisht, and furnisht with all his Officers. Your selves love not to dwell in an unfurnisht House, you would have all utensils, and Servants of all sorts about you, you will stay Removing till a House is Furnisht, and as God brought Man into the World not till it was Finisht, so doth Christ. God would have his People first become a Church, that he might meet and dwell more among them, then when the Stones lie scattered here and there, so *Mat.* 18. his promise to invite us to be a Church is, I will be in the midst of you; and *Ezek.* 48. 35. The Name is, *The Lord is there*; and then when you have Officers and Ordinances dispensed by them, then you have a further presence, he will come down oftner amongst you: The more of Ordinances, the more of Christ; the more of Officers, the more of Ordinances.

And 4. The effect of them, and God's dwelling will be growth in Grace: So it follows, *Eph.* 4:13. Till they all come to their fullness of the Stature of Christ: As in the Body after it is begotten, God hath appointed Ordinances of Food, Sleep, &c. for the growth of it: And if any of those Ordinances are wanting, there is a decay of strength or Health, and a defect in Growth; so if any Ordinances be wanting to the New Creature, you will find the defect of it in your Souls, and for all such Ordinances for growth, Officers are appointed, and their Ministry, so *Acts* 20. 32. After they had Elders, he commits them to their charge, and the word of his Grace in them to build them up; his Speech implies that they were all converted, else they had not been of a Church. They wanted now nothing till they came to Heaven but building up; so it Followes, *to give you an Inheritance with them that are Sanctified*: And there is that near connexion between Heaven and building up in Grace, because growth is as necessary to bring us to Heaven as Conversion, as therefore you would think the Ministry necessary for the Salvation of your Children to convert them; so of your own Souls for growth in Grace; so as you cannot be Saved, unless you grow to such a pitch, to that fullness of Stature which in Christ God hath appointed you, except ye be converted says Christ to his Disciples, you cannot enter into Heaven, as well as except ye be born again; and though many have grown to that perfection without Ordinances, being ignorant of them; yet none that know and may enjoy them, and therefore also of *Timothy*'s Ministry it is promised, he should save himself and them that hard him. So as they are necessary to a Man's Salvation, that knows them to be Ordinances, and Ordinances appointed.

If you ask the reason of this connexion and necessity, 'tis true it is not absolute, as was not Christ's Satisfaction, as Christ intimates when Praying the Cup might pass, he says, *all things are possible*; but yet it was necessary, because it was God's wish so to have it: Thus God could save you, build you up without Ordinances, and so he hath many; but yet hath appointed these, and having appointed them, to those that know it, they become necessary; though they are not such in themselves; yet because so it hath pleased God. The reason we find of Diversity of Gifts and Administrations, 1 *Cor.* 12. *ver.* 18. God hath set the Members in a Body, as it hath pleased him that is all his Reason, and answerably that which he says referring to this, *ver.* 28. that God hath set some in the Church, first Apostles, Prophets, Teachers, is for the same reason also: It is as if you should seek a reason why Bread and Wine of all Creatures, are Typed out to be Elements Sacramental: There is no reason but so it pleased; so if you ask why these Ministries, there is no reason but so it pleased him, and there was no reason of necessity absolute but only the will of God: For he that Governeth the Angels and the Church above us, immediately by his Spirit, and all the Creatures below us (who yet continue to this day according to his Ordinances, in their course he set them, *Psal.* 119. 91.) in which course they are acted by an invisible power of his immediately concurrent, could in like manner have governed Men, yet chose as to have the World of Men governed by Magistrates: So his Church also by Officers of his own Institution and Appointment, and as of all other of God's appointments else, so of this we may behold and admire a Glorious and Wise harmony and conveniency and suitableness, that so it should be.

What in particular is the conveniency and necessity of each Office in particular, as suited to all particular necessities of a Church, I will shew when I speak of each particular Office, and their distinction. I omit also their use

use and necessity in respect of them without, to convert and add Men daily unto the Church, which is one great end of their Office mentioned, *Ephes.* 4. 12, πρὸς τὸν καταρτισμὸν, which imports the joynting in Members into the Church, and gathering in all the Saints, and making their number perfect as others read it. Book VI.

Now we chiefly speak of in relation to a Church Instituted and their edification, which is the other end there mentioned, where he also tells us that these Institutions (as also this Ordinance of particular Churches) shall last but till that General Meeting or concourse of all Saints in their perfection, as the word καταντήσωμεν signifies, when there shall *be but one Fold, and one Shepherd, John* 10. 16. But untill then, he hath appointed the Ministry of Apostles, *&c.* whose Ministry we enjoy not in their Persons but writings; and ordinary Officers we enjoy in their personal Employments: We will but take the Reasons which he doth there insinuate.

1. Because the Church is under Age, (which he implies, *ver.* 13.) therefore she is to have these Officers over her, untill she come to a perfect Man, and to the full Stature: And Children under Age now as well as then, are to be under Tutors and Governours, *Gal.* 4. 2. And though we are not in such Bondage to beggerly Elements, but comparatively are Men grown; yet as we are not perfect Men, not come to that full Stature we shall come to, so far, we are still left under the care and eye of Tutors and Governours, who yet are not the Heads, but Servants of the Church. As great Men's Children are (whilst at School learning the Elements and Rudiments) under the ferula and Bondage of School-Masters; from which being delivered, as being come to more Ripeness; yet especially if absent from the immediate eye of their Parent, and Travelling in a strange Country, their Parents set Governours to have an inspection over them, to bring them up and instruct them, till they all come home; Thus hath God done with his Saints not as Men grown, but whilst they are absent from him here, he hath betrusted them with the Government of Tutors and instructors, to have an eye unto them who yet are but their Servants. Which argues God's infinite love and tender care towards them, for their Education; yea, Though there be but two or three of them in a Congregation, yet he will not let them Travel here without a Guide, (as the Apostle calls their Elders, *Heb.* 13. 17.) so his promise was of old, Jer. 3. 14, 15. *I will take you one of a Tribe and one of a City, and give you Pastors* (not *Pastor* only) *according to my own heart.* The Education and Training up of his Children, God accounteth of to be a matter of greater concernment, than you can possibly esteem of the Education of yours, because, according to their growth here, they are ranked and placed in that body of Christ hereafter, where, if any Member should not have its full growth, the disproportion of a Member would reflect upon the Head, Christ, and cast a deformity on the whole, therefore every Member is to grow up to that Stature which Christ hath appointed it; and hence answerably God takes care for them, and thought it requisite to make it the proper and sole business of Men enabled, with the greatest gifts that ever were poured out upon Men, to attend and look to the bringing up of his Children, and thought it not enough for Men to have gifts, but for the improvement of them, to have Men set apart to such Offices, as might be separated (as *Paul* unto the Gospel, *Rom.* 1. 1. and so *Gal.* 1. 16.) the Phrase is taken from the *Levites*, who *Numb.* 8. 14. are said to be separated to do the service; or, as the Septuagint have it, to the work, which word the Apostle useth, *Ephes.* 4. 12. for the work of the Ministry, is a business of that weight, that they are to give themselves wholly to it, 1 *Tim.* 4. 5. First, God tendred so much the instruction and proficiency of his Children in the knowledge of Christ, which is mentioned here, that he contented not himself to have them enjoy such occasional means as the Brethren in communion were able to afford each other, as their callings and occasions should permit; (though we all were able to Prophesie) but he would farther have Men of the best and eminentest gifts set apart usually unto it, by continual labour to perfect themselves, and his Church. As in a School or Colledge, besides what Pupills may get out of Books, and mutual conferences daily with others, Parents provide Tutors for them, and Colledge-Officers, University professors are set apart to study what to read unto them; so God would shew himself more careful, for his and he would not have his children rendred too extemporary, he would have them fed with the finest fare, and therefore would have Men dedicated to his Service; yea further, he would have them grow in knowledge and grace, and every age to exceed another, which is tacitly intimated (as it seems

Ch. V. to me) in the 12. and 15. *verse*, he would have as every Member, so the whole Church grow till the day of Judgment: And one age to sow, and another to reap a more plentifull Harvest; now this would not have been in an ordinary way and course, unless Men were dedicated to this work, for every Scribe instructed to the Kingdom of God, brings forth out of his Treasure things new and old, *Matth.* 13. 52. If *Timothy* will profit and have his profiting appear to all, he must give himself wholly to it, 1 *Tim.* 4.15. He must be instructed, and he must have a Treasure, and that not of Coyn only, of present currant money, but he would have his children enriched with importation of new commodities, and to be such a Scribe requires the whole Man, such an one was *Ezra*, *ch.*7.6. 10. *Ezra* was a ready Scribe in the Law of *Moses*, that is, versed in it and the meaning of it, and the good hand of God was on him, *ver.*9. For he had prepared his heart, *ver.*10. to seek the Law, that is, to search out the meaning of it, and to do it, and to teach in *Israel*; yea further the Apostle otherways intimates, that without Men being set apart to it, there would have been no preserving of knowledge, but the ordinary sort of Believers would have been exposed to the danger of being carryed away by Seducers, so, Ephes. 4.14. *That we henceforth be no more Children*, &c. I take it, he makes it not so much an inference from the former by way of instruction of what we therefore should be, but goes on to shew the ends of these Offices, and the Word, μεχρὶ τι, is all one with *alias*, *otherwise*, *&c.* And indeed *otherwise*, our running into error could not have been prevented. For ordinary sort of believers being children not fully grown up, would easily have been seduced, if they had not had guides committed to them, who had been able to convince gain-sayers. The Apostle useth many Metaphors to express their danger herein, as First that they are children, and how easily are they deceived, Secondly, in danger to fluctuate as a reed in the water, this way and that way, and to have been in doubt what to hold and stick unto; and Thirdly, to be exposed to be carryed about with every wind of Doctrine as Ships in the water, if there be no Pilot nor Mariners that know how to steer and guide them. And therefore the word used by the Apostle, 1 *Cor.* 12. 28. concerning ordinary Officers is, κυβερνήσεις, that is Governours of a Ship, *Cubosa* being used in *Cicero* for the greater kind of Ships then used, built square, and so it follows in, *Ephes.*4.14. ἐν κυβείᾳ ἀνθρώπων in the Ship of Men, as *Beza* says it may be interpreted, wicked and naughty Men, if learned, would have driven the Ship whither they had pleased; To prevent this he appointed them Pilots, the Apostles, who left also behind them Writings, and ordinary Pastors and Teachers, who should be more then ordinarily skill'd in their writing, and be Pilots unto others. And as in that part of growing in knowledge, so likewise for their lives and manners God would have them watched over, and would not trust the care hereof to that which every Brother would have one of another; but thought it worthy of some Mens whole pains and care, to whom he might commit the charge of Mens Souls to watch over them, and of whom he might receive an account, as *Heb.*13. *v.*17. Even as in Colledges (besides private helps of Tutors) there are publick Lecturers and Deans to instruct and overlook the whole, so jealous is God of his Church and Children, and carefull of their Education. And there was need of all this, and all little enough; and otherwise if this business had been, in common, left to the common care of every Member watching over each other, there would have been a defect.

2. As many Officers are necessary for the growth, *&c.* of every Member in particular, so for the publick managing of common affairs amongst them, for every Church is a Body, a Common-wealth, a City, *&c.* which by vertue of their combination will (as all Societies) have many businesses in common that will concern the whole, every Church will have their τὰ περὶ ὑμῶν, as the Apostle speaks of the affairs of the Church of *Philippi*, 2 *Phil.*20. Church businesses, as Corporations have common Town-businesses, and as he intimates there, there had need be some to take care of them, to prepare them, to contrive them, to study them, to manage them, these common businesses are admission of Members, Excommunications. To examine Witnesses in case of Scandal to judge of the cause, to give a just weight to the sin according to the ballance of the Sanctuary. It was an especial Office of the Priests under the Law, to teach the people to discern between the clean and unclean, *Ezek.* 44.23. And in all these things, not only is it requisite simply for Order's sake, that some do in the name of the rest propound, discuss, *&c.* but also for the ease of the whole, and not only so, but for the better managing and dispensing all things, when Men shall make it their business to study Church affairs, as Men in Authority do those of

of their Common-wealth; and Lastly, it conduceth to the more faithful managing of them: For otherwise that which is every Man's business, is no Man's; and common businesses, if not committed to the especial care of some are ordinarily neglected, and miscarry as we see in ordinary experience. Book VI.

3. It is necessary that there should be many Officers in every Church, unto whom the exercise of Church-power may be especially committed, tho' the power it self be wholly in the Church it self, whose Servants and helpers they are, 1 *Cor.* 1.24. and not Lords over them, and it is fit these Officers should be constantly the same, because the Fellowship is to be constant (as was shewed) and through long experience they will be better exercised in such affairs, as they give themselves wholly unto.

Lastly, It was for the great Honour of Christ and of his Church to have such Officers, as Servants to attend his Royal Spouse and Queen, and Children. Princes you see have for every small business that belongs to them, an Officer on purpose because their Persons are so great, that no business might be forgotten or neglected that concern them. Now such provision hath Christ made for his Church, that as Princes Children and Wives have their Courts apart, and Officers apart, so hath the Church whilst here below; yet she keeps a Court, and hath Servants to attend her. You may read, *Est.* 2.2,3. how Officers were appointed to gather together fair Virgins for the King out of all Provinces, and how *Stegai* with others, were to purifie them for his Bed. So did Christ appoint his Apostles and their Successors his Officers as children of his Bride-chamber, (as *Matth.* 9.11. He calls them) who should purifie and adorn his Spouse for him; and they are jealous over them with a great jealousie, to present them as a pure Virgin unto Christ, 2 *Cor.* 11. 2.

In like manner in the Type, for the Honour of the Temple, and the service of it were there so many sorts of Officers and Attendants to watch, &c. when there was no need: And so it is reckoned up amongst Christ's Honours, *Psal* 44. That, as his Queen stands at his Right Hand, so that there are Honourable Women, Kings Daughters, that are Her's and his Servants, *ver.* 9. to bring her to him, and her Virgins, *ver.* 14. From the necessity of them to us, we will descend to the institution of them by God; which dependeth only on God's will.

I shall now then discourse of the Institution of these Officers by God, which depends only on God's Will, which is our rule in this case. It is God that hath set the Members of the body as it pleased him; and as of the Members of the body, it is said that they are set down in his Book, *Psal.* 139. *ver.* 16. it is all one here, for in like manner it is said, God hath set in his Church, some Apostles, some Prophets, &c. as principal Members of that his Church, and in his book we must find them all written too. Our Parents who yet are the Fathers of our Bodies, cannot say how their children should be formed, what Members they would have added, nor do they contribute any thing to the ordering or placing of them: But God's Pencil secretly draws and limns them; nay, we our selves cannot make a hair black or white; or add a cubit to our Stature, can much less add a Member which God hath not written in his book. So wonderfully and fearfully are we made in the lower parts of the Earth, and shall we think that any, though Spiritual Fathers, can dispose of the Members of the Body of Christ; yea, of that Body, which *Eph.* 4. 12. is called Christ's, and speaking of Officers, *ver.* 28. He says, he hath set Apostles, &c. the word εθηκο is the same in both, and it implies, he hath done wisely, to an end, deliberately, and not at random; but in a wise and orderly manner.

Authors of the Gifts of the Members in the Church, all will confess they are not: They are χαρίσματα, *Gifts*: And if that be not enough, κατὰ τὴν χάριν, according to grace, as the fountain of them, and if that be not enough, δοθείσαν ἡμῖν, given us, *Rom.* 12. 6. and Authors of the success of those gifts, and the operation of them, Men will acknowledge they are not: *Paul* may plant, and *Apollo* water, but God must give the encrease, 1 *Cor.* 3. But yet Men think they may appoint Officers how these gifts may best be improved according to their discretion and intention; but what says the Apostle in the Chapter afore cited, 1 *Cor.* 12. 4, 5, 6. as he makes the same Spirit Author of all the Diversities of Gifts, *ver.* 4. and the same God Author of the several operations of these gifts, *ver.* 6. In like manner the same Lord Christ Author of all the Administrations or Offices in the Church, *ver.* 5. which is set between both, as whereby those gifts should be successfully employed in the Church. And nothing is more ordinary than the word διακονία used there, to signifie the Office

Cha.VI.

fice or Ministry, as διακονία of the Apostleship, *Rom*, 11.13. of Evangelists, 2 *Tim.* 4. 5, &c. And as gifts are there suited and ordained to Offices, and strained in a fitness for them; so both of them for operations through God's blessing even as *Media* and means suited to such an end, now it is the same power that appoints the end that must appoint also the means, and here in this case especially, seeing the effects always of these means, dependeth on God's blessing: If Man therefore would undertake to appoint a new Office, he must be able to give new gifts, and to give a success; but so he is not. As *Moses* then blest the Tabernacle, *Exod* 39.43. when he saw all made according to the pattern or will of God; so God will accompany his own Institution only with a blessing; nor can any promise themselves a blessing farther. And so as the Apostle makes an enumeration of several gifts, as ordinary, *ver.* 8. and extraordinary, 9,10, &c. so after an illustration from the several Offices of Members in the body, from *ver.* 12. He shews, *ver.* 28. these several Offices God hath set in the Church, both extraordinary and ordinary: And the reason of it is, because.

1. The three Persons as was said, sharing the glory between them, to make Christ to have a less hand in his share and allotment; and proper work, than the other two in the other, how dishonourable were it for him.

As it were Sacriledge for any *Simon Magus* to think to bestow at his pleasure, the gifts of the Holy Ghost, and dishonourable to the Spirit, so as dishonourable is it to Christ to think at pleasure to appoint Officers in the Church; and as great Sacriledge every way, especially, seeing Christ challengeth it as his own Prerogative, and that as the Lord, King, and Ruler of his Church; he reserves the power of instituting and appointing what Ministries shall be in his Church. Every King will challenge it as his Prerogative, to appoint what Officers shall have his power imparted to them, as the Elders had from *Moses*: Though the people choose the Men, yet *Moses* made them Rulers, *Deut.* 13. and God gave them of *Moses*'s Spirit, *Psal.* 11. *v.* 17. 1 *Rev.* 2.13. And allegiance is sworn to the King as Supream, or unto inferior Governors as sent by him as having his power imparted to them, thus Supream are Kings often: And shall not Christ the Lord be thus Supream, and there is as much reason for the one as the other, and more; for as the businesses of a Kingdom are the *King's matters* and so called, 2 *Chron.* 19.11. so the matters of the Church are the Lord's matters, and so called there in that place.

2. The Second Reason is, because every Officer in the Church hath the power of Christ imparted to it, and he must communicate it. I have all power in Heaven and Earth says Christ, and he bids them go and teach; and this he speaks to all that should teach to the end of the World, *Matth.* 28.18. Christ's power is a part of his Image, and it is High Treason in Man to stamp it upon any but by his Authority. 'Tis true that Officers in Civil things Men may appoint; which Officers (and not their Laws) as the coherence shews, are therefore called, by way of distinction, ἀνθρωποκτίσεις, *Humane Creation* or Institution, thereby to distinguish them from Divine Institution, which Officers in the Church are; and every such Officer is κτίσις, *a Creature*, and a power must go to make it; But it is such a Creature, as all the power of Men and Angels cannot make, none but this Lord from Heaven: A Man *can receive nothing* (says *John*) speaking of power in things Spiritual, and of Christ's Ministry, except it be given him from Heaven, *John* 4. 27. and the like Christ again intimates of *John*'s Ministry, *Matth.* 21. 25. The Baptism (says he) that is by a Synecdoche; the whole Ministry of *John*, was it from Heaven or from Men? Whereby he expresseth it to be unlawful if from Men. And the like *Paul* says of his Ministry and Apostle-ship, *Gal.* 1. That as he had Christ's full call to it, it was not given of Man, that is, it was not meerly Humane. And if it be said that these things are true of such extraordinary callings, the answer is, That *Ephes.* 4. 11, 12. and 1 *Cor.* 12. 28. ordinary and extrardinary are made alike in this respect that Christ gives them, and so 1 *Cor.* 12. 28. where he tells us, that God sets them in the Church; he reckons up both ordinary and extraordinary. No, Christ is the Lord, and appoints his own Administration here on Earth; he is Lord over his own House, *Heb.* 3. and fit it is he should appoint by what kind of Officers his House should be governed, Luke 12.42. *Who then is that Faithful and Wise Steward, whom his Lord shall make Ruler over his Houshold, to give them their portion in due season*: Mark it, it is whom the Lord shall make. Now such great Officers are Ministers, 1 *Cor.* 4. 1. *Moses* and all the Apostles were but Servants, as 'tis there, and did all by appointment: He built not the House

House, *ver.* 4. there, nor added any thing of his own Head. All Officers in that House, and their distinction then was according to the pattern: But Christ is Lord, *Timothy*, an Evangelist, he must take Rules how to behave himself in the House of God, 1 *Tim* 3.15. having mentioned Officers to be ordained, in the verses before. So then Christ is to give orders for God's House: And as he is the Lord, the House is his own; and he is a faithful Lord, much more then *Moses*; and he as a Lord, built the House, *ver.* 2, 3, 4. and so as faithfully as a Lord, hath appointed all Offices in it, and things pertaining to it: As *Moses* whose faithfulness lay in doing by pattern. It was part of his last work mainly after his Resurrection, *Acts* 1. 2, 3. Then he spake of things pertaining to his Kingdom; and it is observable that it is placed at the beginning of that work, called the Acts of the Apostles, shewing the Scope and Argument of what should follow to be, especially those things which concerned his Kingdom; and that Book contains not so much the Doctrine as example of the Apostles in ordering Churches. But if it be said, such Institutions as these are such petty matters of his Kingdom, as he reserves them not to himself, but leaves the disposing of them to Men; the answer is, he is Lord, in respect of Administration, and so as Lord, hath reserved them to himself; and Secondly, to appoint What Officers are in a Kingdom, is a main appurtenance of it: And if the Lord so ordained in all Churches, for the maintenance of these Officers, 1 *Cor.* 9. 14. 1 *Cor.* 5. 4. Then, what the Officers should be, much more. For Men to appoint Officers of the Church, is to make Christ a Servant, and themselves Lords, and the Institutions then would not be perpetually binding. But as they are from Christ, they are of eternal obligation. For,

1. They proceed from Christ as a King and Lord, as that place shews, *Matth.* 28. 19. where he mentions his Kingly Office, as the foundation of sending them Apostles, and *Ephes.* 4. 11. The entrance into his Kingly Office, by his ascension into Heaven, is made the cause of giving gifts, when his priestly Office is subjected to his Kingly, as afore his Kingly was to his Priestly: Now his other Offices remain for ever, and the Laws of them all are the same. In his Priesthood, [illegible] consummated for ever with one oblation, all that are Sanctified; and his prophetical Office, gave Rules of Faith but once for all; *Jude* 3. and why should not the Institution of his Kingly Office also be thus, *Heb.* 12. 26, 27. yet once more I shake not the Earth only, but Heaven also: And this word, *yet once more*, signifies the removing of these things that are shaken, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain: And we have received a Kingdom cannot be shaken, and so the means of his Kingdom are unchangeable, he had spoken of the change of those who are Servants, and Officers under the Law; but in the Kingdom we have received or do receive (so that he speaks not of that State in Heaven, but of that under the Gospel, which is called *the Kingdom*, in which Kingdom there should be no more such change) the Offices now are unchangeable, and so is the work. And therefore, in the closure of that Epistle to *Timothy*, wherein he had discoursed of the ordinary Officers of the Church, he sets an Apostolical seal upon it from him, and all his Successors in him which was never to be violated or broken up, 1 *Tim.* 6. 13, 14. I charge thee to keep this command to the day of Christ's appearing, *&c.* That is, all the commands of this Epistle, for else he should not be blameless. And though here he says commandment in the singular, yet *ch.* 5. 21. where he makes the like observation, he says, *These* in the plural. His way of expression is observable, he says.

1. I Charge, not Counsel, as leaving to liberty.
2. It's a Commandment, not a Permission.
3. He mentions a living God, and our confessing Christ to our latest breath: They are such Truths as we should be willing to lay down our Lives for.
4. He tells us, that they are to be kept without spot, not in the least part neglected.

It is such an Epiphonema as that, *Rev.* 22. I testifie to him that shall hear the words of this Book, that if he add or take from, *&c.* And here to keep the commandment blameless, is all one as not to add or detract, and it is the same power to add as to detract and Man must do neither: And he speaks this as to *Timothy*, so to all whose Duty as *Timothy's* is spoken of in this Epistle. As also *Matth.* 28. and last, and elsewhere he says of his Apostles, in the name of their Successors, I am with you to the end of the World.

Ch. VI. It concerns us therefore to have a warrant for the Officers we choose rightly grounded on the word; and withal, we may detest the sin of those who are like *Jeroboam*, 1 *Kin.* 12. 31. who appointed Priests which were not of the Sons of *Levi*, and yet his variation was not of the Office, so much as of a qualification of the Officer God appointed. And therefore since we live amongst these that are guilty of that sin, let us do as these of *Judah*, when they were to fight against them, 2 *Chron.* 13. 9, 10, 11. So God shall be with us, and against them, as *ver.* 12. To add is as great a sin, as to take away; so *John*, *Rev.* 22. threatneth the same curse to both, for both equally detract from the power and wisdom of God.

CHAP. VI.

That particular Congregations are each of them to have more Elders than one set over them, for the publick Administration of their Worship and Government.

NOT only the Synogogues among the *Jews*, to which Congregational Churches bear a resemblance, had more Elders than one in each of them, but the Churches constituted under the Gospel had so too. So these Churches, *Acts* 14. and *Tit.* 1. (which we have proved to be Congregational Churches) were constituted, for the Apostles ordained Elders to them in every Church, *&c.* It is expressed Elders, not Elder.

Obj. The exception that some have made against this is, that this manner of Speech might be used, though there were but one Elder in Each Church, as in like phrase of Speech, if it were said the King appointed Mayors in every Incorporation, there would be no incongruity in such a Speech, though but one Mayor were in each town.

Answ To which we answer, 1. That it were somewhat an hard phrase of Speech, to mean Church in the singular number, and yet to say, Κατὰ ἐκκλησίαν which is equivalent to Καθ' ἐκκλησίαν, *to every Church*; and it is uncouth too to say Elders in the plural, as respectively to every one of these Churches; and yet to mean but one Elder in every of these Churches.

But 2. To follow the example given, if some of those Towns in the supposition, had more Mayors at once than one in them, though some others of them had each but one, then to speak uniformly of all alike in the plural were not so distinct, much more if the King should give direction (as *Paul* doth here to *Titus*) in such a way of Speech to appoint Mayors in every Incorporate Town; and yet his meaning be in some to have more than one, and in others but one; how would this direction be understood, if he speak in the plural of each? Now so is the case here; for that the Apostle planted more Elders than one in some Churches may be evidenced, and we suppose will not be denyed; much less can it be affirmed, that there should be a confinement unto the number of one Elder in each Church, and so there was left a priviledge and liberty of having more. Yea, if there be two kinds of Elders *Teaching and Ruling*, and of Teaching two kinds also, *Pastors and Teachers*, there may be three in each Congregation. So as if we consider that Elders in the plural are mentioned, and that they are expressed to be in every Church in the singular, who will not conclude the Holy Ghost's intent to have been, that Elders and not an Elder only, should be in each Church? Yea, surely his meaning would be so understood of any that should read it, unless it can be shewed by some other place, that his appointment was to define, that but one Elder should be in each Church.

3. It is especially remarkable, that he adds ((*Acts* 14. 23.) αὐτοῖς to Κατ' ἐκκλησίαν, which imports, that he *chose and ordained Elders in every Church to them.* He satisfies not himself to have said in every Church, but adds *to them* also, to shew that he meant not Elders to many Churches in a common and indefinite phrase of Speech, but proper to them in each Church, not in one Church one Elder, and another in another, and so Elders in every Church, speaking collectively, but by way of further appropriation, Elders to each, *to them*.

4. The

4. The comparing these Phrases together; Elders in every City, and Elders in every Church, evidently argues the same thing. For when he says *Elders in every City*, (*Titus* 1. 5.) he certainly means more Elders, than one in each City; yea, and a sufficiency of Elders for number, to Rule and Govern (or else an Episcopal Government of one Elder alone in each City must be asserted) and therefore why should not *Elders in every Church* have the same construction also? That is, that there should not be only one Elder in a Church, but more; yea, and a company of Elders sufficient to Rule and Govern that Church?

5. We never read *Church and Elder* mentioned, but *Church* and *Elders*, either when spoken of in the abstract indefinitely, or when mention is made of any particular Church: So as other Congregational Churches are no where intended, when Church and Elders are mentioned, or they had more Elders than one over them, in relation to them as their Elders. Thus it is expressed (Jam. 5. 14.) *send for the Elders of the Church*, not *Elder*, but *Elders*; and these not Elders of a Presbyterial Church in common, but such which are properly the Elders of that Congregational Church, unto which the sick Person does belong, who are Elders to him. For it cannot be supposed the Duty of all the Elders that make up a Presbytery over many Congregations, to visit the sick of all those Congregations, and to be sent for, but the duty is incumbent on the Elders appropriated to that Congregation. Also when all sorts of obedience to Officers is called for, it is still in the plural, *Obey them that have the Rule over you*, &c. *Heb.* 13. 7. It is spoken in the plural, not *him* only in the singular. Also when the Apostle Writes to *Philippi*, he Writes to the *Bishops and Deacons*, not to one *Bishop*, *Phil.* 1. 1. *Peter* speaks answerably, (1 Pet. 5. 1, 2.) *I say to the Elders that are among you, feed the Flock*, &c. So at *Ephesus*, (*Acts* 20. 17.) *Paul* sent *for the Elders of the Church*:

6. As his own example was, (Acts 14. 22.) *that he ordained Elders* in every Church, so he enjoyned *Titus* to do the like, *to ordain Elders* as he had appointed him, *Titus* 1. 5. This argues that he appointed it so to be, and so hath left it unto us, and that 'twas made an Institution.

7. In *Colossus* there was two Teaching Ministers, *Epaphras*, (of whom the Apostle saith, *Epaphras* who is a faithful Minister for you, who is one of you) and *Archippus*, of whom he saith, *say to* Archippus *take heed of thy Ministry*, &c. *Col.* 4. 12, 17.

8. In *Phillippi* which was a Church in the beginning of the Gospel, (so he calls it, *Phil.* 4. 14.) there were Bishops and Deacons, *Phil.* 1. 4.

9. As the natural Body consists of more sort of Members than one, that are publick Organs for the use of the Body (as the Apostle Reasons, *Rom.* 12.) so a Church organical should have more Officers and Elders than one, or of one sort, as the Apostle also doth there Exemplifie.

CHAP. VII.

That the Lord Jesus Christ hath not only appointed many Officers to be in every particular Church, but hath assigned Offices of different kinds, which they ought to discharge, Rom. 12. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.

WE have seen in general, 1. The necessity of Officers And 2. That they are to be only such Officers as God hath appointed, and no other. Now 3. Let us enquire particularly, what are these several Officers Christ hath appointed in his Church. I will not much trouble you with the distinction of the Extraordinary; and Ordinary: They are the ordinary which we here enquire after. 1. Who are the successors of the extraordinary; not in their Office, in that degree, and manner, and authority in the Church; yet in respect of the essential things administred, they perform the same to the Church now, that the extraordinary did of old, 2 Tim. 2. 2. *The things thou hast heard of me amongst many Witnesses, the same commit to faithful Men, that shall be able to teach others also.* And so, when he sent them out, *Matth.* 28. he says. *Lo, I am with you to the end of the World.* Even as when God first blessed those creatures then existent, in those words *encrease and multiply*, he

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In this enquiry, we will conſider 1. How an Officer differs in general from an ordinary Member. Then 2. What theſe Officers are, and how differing among themſelves. As to the *Firſt*, He is a Servant of the whole, ſeparated to ſome ſpecial work, with ſpecial authority in the name of the whole.

1. He is a Servant of the whole, ſo *Rom.* 16. 1. and 2 *Cor.* 4. 5. not ſimply a Member to ſerve one another occaſionally, but more; he ceaſeth to be, *Sui Juris*, as Servants do. Of *Epaphras* he ſays, not only that he is one of you, *Col.* 4. 13. but *chap.* 1. 7. who is for you a faithful Miniſter of Chriſt. All his Strength, Pains, and Abilities are theirs, and to be laid out for their Service, to ſpend and to be ſpent, Phil. 2. ver. 17. *Yea, and if I be offered up upon the Sacrifice and Service of their Faith, I joy and rejoyce with you all.*

2. *Separated to ſome ſpecial work, ſo the Deacons*, Acts 6. 3. *whom we may appoint over this buſineſs.* As the Apoſtles choſe other Miniſters, *to give themſelves continually to the word and prayer*, *ver.* 4. So as though a private Member doth the ſame work, yet he but occaſionally, the other makes it his buſineſs, his calling, his employment; a Brother, when he ſees his Brother want, is to diſtribute to his neceſſities, but a Deacon's Office is to ſeek out who want, and in diſcretion to diſtribute the Alms of the Church; that as the Sabbath day differs from other days, that on other days, ye are to perform Holy Duties occaſionally, but the Sabbath is ſet apart for nothing elſe; ſo do private Members differ from an Officer; it is the value of the day, it is the ſeaſon of it; ſo is ſome ſpecial ſervice, it is work and employment; *Archippus* muſt take heed to fulfill his Miniſtry, *Col.* 4. 17. Every private Member is to advance his Brother, but it is an Elder's work to do it.

3. He is inveſted with ſpecial Authority, and an Authority of right, to do that lawfully in ſome things, which in others he could not. Let a Man ſo account of us, as particularly priviledged and authorized to be the Miniſters of Chriſt, and Stewards of the Myſteries of God, 1 *Cor.* 4. 1. ſomethings they are ſo Stewards of, that they are kept under Lock and Key; and without them the Church cannot come to them (as the Sacraments are continued to be) and other things they do adminiſter, which others may, which are yet adminiſtred by them in a more ſpecial Authoritative way, not ſimply out of gifts, as when they Teach or Admoniſh, but out of a ſpecial Authority of Chriſt withal, as Ambaſſadors, as if Chriſt did Admoniſh and beſeech, and not a Brother only, 1 *Cor.* 2. 5. *ver.* 20. And though to Admoniſh others gifts, might ſerve as well; yet, the Diſpenſations is not from inherent gifts ſo much, as an intereſted power Authoriſing, *virtute officij, by vertue of Office*; thus a Colledge Seat cannot be ſet, unleſs they have a Governour (becauſe an exerciſe of power is neceſſary) tho the fellowes may have power to chooſe and inſtall that Governour. *John* ſpeaking of Chriſt's power to Baptize, ſays it was a ſpecial power from Heaven given, *John* 3. 26, 27. And in the Name of Chriſt and the Church, the Act of an Officer is as the Act of the whole in Adminiſtring, &c. not ſo as to the Acts of private Members, not ſo as to every Adminiſtration of a private Brother.

Now 2. More particularly to enquire into the Offices themſelves.

1. They

1. They are not only many but *diverse*, so we find almost every where, where we find them spoken of, 1 *Cor.* 12. 4, 5. There are diversities of *Gifts* and Administrations, so Rom. 12.6. *Having gifts differing*, he says not greater or lesser, but *differing*, *&c.* which Gifts and Offices are not only different in nature, but in the person also, that is, that several Persons have several Gifts and several Offices, for so 1 *Cor.* 12. 8. To one is given the word of Wisdom, to another the word of Knowledge, and 1 *Cor.* 7. 7. Every one hath his proper gift, one after this manner, another after that, and so much as to the Scope of his Similitude, drawn from the Body as he brings it, For in the Members all have not the same Offices or Action, *ver.* 4. so as his meaning must be, that several Gifts, and so Offices, do belong to several Persons. And the Preface the Apostle makes, (*Rom.* 12. 3.) is that every Man is to think soberly, or within his own compass, of that measure God hath given him, every Age hath but his part, not all; The word Translated, *Sobriety*, σωφρονεῖν, signifies a sound mind; a sound Member swells not, so as all are to keep within the compass, neither thinking too highly of their Gift or Office, nor stretching themselves to an higher or other calling then is given them; for says he, the Members in the Body have not the same Office, *&c.* and then, *ver.* 7.8. mentioning these Offices, he doth it not simply by naming several works, as Teaching, Exhorting: But as relating to several Persons design'd to these works; he that Teacheth, he that Exhorteth: As if he should say of the Members of the Body, let that which heareth, hear, that Member, which seeth, see, as having several Functions, so as there are several and distinct Offices, in several Persons. And the reason why God hath many, and those distributed Offices severally, and a several part to be performed by them, is because God would have no one do all, but keep all in Sobriety, (seeing he hath but his measure) and in mutual ease and charity, that (as 1 *Cor.* 12.) One Member should not say to another, what need have I of thee, that all might both partake and communicate: As also, because the several works in Offices would be too much for one; those Master-Builders needed helps, *Rom.* 16. 3. And it is for Ornament unto the Church too, which ariseth out of such a variety. And another reason of it is, that so each work might be the better and more throughly done, when every one should according to his gifts, have a several part given him; which he was wholly to give himself unto. In Arts and Sciences, and Professions, none prove Eminent, neither are they advanced and promoted but such as give themselves wholly unto some one Science, and it is the wisdom of the Jesuits, in disposing of their Followers in several professions. And this wisdom and care God hath taken for his Church, as a great Man, that would have his Children Educated in several professions, sets over them, not one, though somewhat seen into them all, but procures the most eminent in all kinds, wherein he would have them instructed, one to read Philosophy, another Tongues, *&c.*

2. That therefore which is chiefly to be done, is, as to enquire how many there are, so also especially, what the diversity or difference is, to seek out the formal distinction between Office and Office, which is a matter every way, of exceeding great moment: That confusion in the Offices, and the performance of them, should be avoided, which God hates, being the God of Peace and Order, and also that God's own Institution be rightly kept. We see how strict God was in keeping the bounds of difference between the Priests and Levites, they being distinct Offices, *Numb.* 3. 10. Thou shalt keep the Priest's Office, and the Stranger that comes nigh shall be put to Death; and by *Stranger* there he meant not only their Brethren the People, but even the Levites their Fellow-Officers; *Numb.* 16.40. And God requires the choosers, that they take a right estimate of Men's Gifts and Offices, and suit them according to their proper difference and distinction, that a Man's gifts, like waters, may have their natural current to run in, and so as they shall not need to use Art to force the streams another way, *Phil.* 2. 20. 1 *Pet.* 5. 2. that so they may naturally take care to feed the Flock, not in any the least way of constraint, no, not in respect of their gifts, to which a violence is offered, when they are not rightly placed. And so their gifts are to the utmost improved, and their work the better done; For the edifying of the Church. It is an error (as the Author of the Tryal of Wits, in his Preface complaineth) and a great error, like that which *Solomon* complains of, *Eccles.* 10. 6, 7. in disposing of dignities unsuitably, that in Common-wealths there is not a suiting of natural endowments and callings, to the great detriment of it: There being no Man's natural parts, if rightly placed, but would prove eminent: And the like error if commit-

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Let us therefore enquire into what these are, and wherein their diversity consists, which is eminently the proper Scope of, *Rom.* 12. That Epistle is, of all Epistles, written in a System and Form of wholsom words, methodically composed, as might be shewn; *Credenda*, or matters of Faith, he had handled in the eleven first Chapters, and then *facienda*, or matters of practice from the 12*th* to the 16*th* Chapter (which he spends in Salutations) the instructions concerning their practice, are as Methodical as the other, and are either their Duties as Members of the Church, in *cap.* 12. or as Members of the Common-wealth, *chap.* 13. and both in a like method. 1. What the Duty's of Members and Officers are in that Church, to *ver.* 9. 2. What the Duties of them as Saints towards their Brethren, and also all Saints in the following *verses* of *chap.* 12. as the like, *chap.* 13. *First*, Their Duty unto Officers in the Common-wealth, from the 1*st verse* to the 8*th*, then towards all Men from the 8*th verse* to the end, and then *chap.* 14, 15. how to behave themselves in the special controversie of those times about the Ceremonies, *&c.* 1. In that *chap.* 12. wherein he sets Rules to them in their Church, and Saint Relation, and doth it most compleatly. I begin 1. With their Service and Worship they offer up in publick, and he exhorts that it be Holy and Spiritual, and λογικὴ λατρεια, that is, word-service, squared wholly by the Rules of the word: For so the word is used, 1 *Pet.* 2. 2. λογικὸν ἄδολον γάλα, *The sincere Milk of the word*, opposed to the fatal corruption of worship lying in addition and carnal rites, and ceremonies; or λόγικὴ may signifie Spiritual Worship in the mind, opposed to bodily Service. As the best preservative of their Worship Spiritual, and prevention of Formality and Human addition: He exhorts them not *to be* conformed to the World, *&c.* The Holy Ghost foresaw that the Worship and Service in the Church, and that especially of *Rome* would be corrupted, by the conforming of it to the Rites and Ordinances of the World, *Heathenish* and *Jewish*: And the Government of the Church shaped and configured to that of the Empire, in all their Officers and Members, as many have excellently shewn in all particulars, and was foretold, *Rev.* 13 15. The Holy Ghost foresaw that the Pope should set up the Image of the first Beast, that is of *Rome Heathenish*, a Religion like theirs, and a Government like theirs. *Item*, The Apostle exhorts them negatively also, not to conform themselves to the World, μη συσχηματιζεσθε, *ne vos configurate, do not shape your selves*, as noteing an outward conforming; shaping themselves to their external Worship, *&c.* to that external form in Worship or Government, as thinking it to be but used among the Heathens and Jews in Externals, in which they might take a liberty. And because the Spiritual Government of a Church, and the Spiritual Worship of it, requires as much as any other Truths whatever, a Spiritual Heart which they are most suitable unto, and that Carnal Mind or Wisdom which is in all Men, is most opposite thereto, and would frame it its own way: Therefore he exhorts them to be Transformed by the renewing of their minds, μεταμορφοῦσθε, *&c*, as the other word notes out an external configuration, which he forbad; so this an internal formation in the mind or judgment (for that is the difference between *forma* and *figura*) which might square with the word, and suit with it: Having their minds cast in the mould of Doctrine, as *Rom.* 6. 17. that so they might approve and discern that will, τὸ θέλημα τὸ ἀγαθὸν, that is in this particular, with an Emphasis, which is not only good in it self to you, as the only means to build you up, and only acceptable unto God, but so perfect in it self, as it hath been committed to you, that it needs not much wisdom at all to add any thing unto it, neither in Ceremonies nor Offices.

Then he comes to the particular Duties; 1. Of Governours and Officers, *ver.* 3. 2. Of every Believer in common, *ver.* 9, *&c.* 1. To the Officers who had received gifts and functions for the edification of the whole, and who were the principal Members of the Body, and more eminently unto them his Exhortation, *ver.* 3. is principally directed, as appears by the instances brought, *ver.* 6, 7. where he applies, and brings home that Rule in particular unto all, and every one; and tho' the words might seem to be general to every one in that Church, *ver.* 3. I say to every Man, *&c.* yet the Phrase there used οντι εν υμιν, *existenti*, points at those *eminenter*, and in place amongst you. He says not simply τινὶ ὑμῶν, but οντι εν υμιν, that is, to those eminent amongst you in place and Authority. Who, because they were *some body*, were apt to think too highly of themselves. And now when he comes to give Officers their charge,

charge, observe his Preface, *I say, through the grace given to me*, he speaks modestly, yet says a command from his Apostolical Authority, which he averreth and alledgeth; for so grace is used by him to express his Apostolical Office, *Rom.* 1.5. And makes it *Sanctione Apostolica*, but to put the more weight upon the exhortation, and also to own and warrant their Institutions and Rules about Church-Government, to be Apostolical and perpetual. Now, the Rule it self which he gives in general, and then appoints and brings home to all the Officers of the Church in particular, is, as we Translate it; *Not to think more highly of himself, than he ought to think, but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every Man a measure of faith*, which of all Rules else, in the Latitude of its meaning that could be given, is to Church Officers the most pertinent and fit, the most full and comprehensive, both tying them to the diligent performance of their several Duties, and confirming them within the proper bounds of their Function: And it is the best prevention of all confusion, innovation, or addition, and exorbitancy in Church-Offices, and likeliest preservative of that primitive purity which was established, and wherein also, the Holy Ghost (as in the former about Worship) strikes at the Root of that corruption of Pride and Ambition, and stretching themselves beyond their Line and Authority, which was that true main reason of all Transcendent Usurpation, which in future times, Officers of the *Roman* Church especially took upon them, and after their Example all other Churches. So as both this Rule, and that exact Platform and Enumeration of all Offices, with their bounds and distinction, was the most seasonable and necessary for this Church (which was foreseen to be the Mother of Abominations) of any other, which is the reason (haply) why the Apostle is more distinct in it, than in any other Epistle. We have first the Rule, *ver.* 3. and then, 2. An Illustration and Demonstration of the equity of it, by a Similitude between a Natural Body, and the Members thereof; and a Spiritual Body, and the Members thereof. And 3. Application of that Rule and Form of that Similitude to all Church-Officers in particular, which to that end we on purpose mention, with their distinction and diversity.

We will, First, enquire into the true and proper Scope and meaning of the Rule, which we shall find to fall full and close with the particular Duties of Church-Officers. It hath two parts we see. 1. Forbidding Vice, that we should not think too highly above what we ought.

2. Commanding of a Vertue, *but to Rule our selves with Sobriety in such thoughts.* The word is φρονεῖν, which we Translate here to *think of a Man's self*: Upon the opening of which word, which is used thrice in composition, in this short Sentence, doth the whole depend, it is of a larger annexion, then any one word either in Latin or English is able to express, and that which is Translated, is the least thing intended.

1. It hath Relation to Knowledge, and *sapere*, not to be wise about what is meet, which is a most pertinent direction to the chiefest of Church Officers, not to affect curiosities of Knowledge, falsly so called, above what is written, as those, 1 *Col.* 2. *ver.* 18. that intruded into things they had not seen, or above the reach of their own Gifts, but to keep both to the measure of their own Faith and Knowledge, and also to the Analogy of that Faith once delivered to the Saints; and the like also is required in those that Rule, in whom as Godly Wisdom is as requisite as any other Grace, so affected Wisdom, and to shew themselves more wise, to controul and meddle in every thing, is as unsuitable.

But I think it hath not mainly a Relation to Knowledge; for he says not, be wise not above what, *Licet, is lawfull*, as having Relation to unlawful objects forbidden to be known; but not above what *oportet, is meet for his place*, or becomes a Man's place and gifts.

Therefore 2. φρονεῖν signifies also *Curare*, carefully and heedfully to mind and regard what belongs to him: Whence φρόντη, *cura*, and is all one with that Phrase of ours, *He minds his business*, it signifies intention, and what the mind is taken up about, so *Rom.* 8. 5. We Translate it, those that after the Flesh, do mind the things of the Flesh; the word is the same: So as it hath special Relation to what is a Man's Duty, and place which is given him to mind and to regard: And then the first part of the exhortation is μὴ ὑπερφρονεῖν, not to mind or take upon him, what is above him, or as *David* speaks, not to exercise a Man's self in things too high for him, (as *Psal.* 131. 1.) For his place, calling, function, gifts, or as *Paul* saith, (2 *Cor.* 10. 1.) not to stretch a Man's self beyond his own measure, not into another Man's line, nor to thrust his sickle into another Man's harvest.

And

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And then 2. That other particular commanding a vertue, which we have here Translated, *to think of himself soberly*, should be Translated, soberly to keep himself and his intention too within his calling, and function, and duty, [*as he ought*] παρὸ δεῖ φρονεῖν, is to do what is his proper duty in his place, and to keep to it, and to spend all his intention thereupon, and not ἀλλοτριεπισκοπεῖν not meddle with other Men's or Officers matters, as the Apostle elsewhere forbids, 1 *Pet.* 4. 15. He therefore is overwise above what he ought, that exceeds the measure of his place; and to be wise to Sobriety, is to keep within a Man's compass. So that it is not a meer Repetition: But implies that as he ought not to exceed, so also that he ought to mind his own place and duty; and then the word εἰς τὸ σωφρονεῖν, is an exhortation to both, it is to have a sound mind, a comparison taken from the Body, which is then said to be sound, and a Member sound, when it is kept in its natural equal and due temper, and every part performs its own office, swells not above its compass, exceeds not in heat and humours, nor is defective in what belongs to it; so when a Member of the Church swells not above his rank and place, but executes what belongs to him, then he is said to be sober, and of a right temper in his place. And so then that which follows *according as God hath dealt to every Man the measure of Faith*, directs and shews Men what it was every Man was to put forth in his place, *viz.* that measure of Spiritual gifts which God had parted diversly among Men, which gifts are to be suited to Offices, as we shall see anon. For by Faith here he means not primarily, justifying Faith, but Spiritual gifts for the good of the Church, superadded to Faith, which yet he calls Faith, because they are not natural, but had some work of Faith as their Foundation, whether saving or temporary, as 1 *Cor.* 12. 12. This the Apostle plainly intimates, when he shews that those Spiritual gifts they had not among them, till they were converted to the Faith; but then were endued with them. When you were led after dumb Idols, you had none of these gifts but you had them by a work of the Holy Ghost, enabling you to say and assert, and believe that Jesus was the Lord which assertion was the foundation of all those Spiritual gifts that follows, and so here called Faith; as also because that in the exercise of them, Faith should be the director of them to the good of others.

And then 3. The words may withal be interpreted as they are Translated, as aimed against pride and overvaluing a Man's gifts, which the Apostle also aims and strives at, as the root of all that ambition and affectation of preheminence in Church-Officers; and so ὑπερφρονεῖν will also bear that Sense; and so to be wise to Sobriety, is for a Man to give a due estimate to his gifts, and put them forth accordingly; and hence Humility is fully defined (as here.) A Sobriety or Moderation of Spirit, which only keeps a Man within his compass; and the contrary swells him to matters above a Man's calling and compass, and therefore *David* joyns them both together, Psal. 131. *My Heart is not haughty, neither did I exercise my self in things too high for me.* And the drift of the reason implyed in the following words, argue this to be his Scope.

1. It is God that guides those gifts, and that of Grace, *ver.* 3, and 6. and why should thou boast of what is received.

2. Thou hast not all the gifts, ἐμέρισε, he doth part them: We have gifts differing.

3. Of that very gift which thou hast received, thou hast but a measure, a portion, nor that in the fulness of it.

4. Others have gifts as well as thou; yea, every Member hath gifts, God hath dealt to every Man, so as thou cannot say thou hast no need of others. So as his Scope is at once to beat down Pride and Ambition, as the cause and affection of preeminence, the sin of *Abiram*, *Dathan*, and of *Corah*; who, being Children, affected the Priesthood, and also he meant to keep every Man to his own calling and place, diligently to execute it to the good of others, wherein, how did the Holy Ghost (in Writing to the Church of *Rome*) strike at the very sin which he saw then working in that Church, which corrupted and perverted all the Officers in the Chruches of Christ, even as he foresaw Superstition would corrupt the Worship, as was observed in the former verses.

The Root of that Mystery of Iniquity, and foundation of it, was laid in Church-Officers asserting of preheminence, the lower Officers assuming what belonged to the higher, as the Deacons did; and then the higher taking upon them all the power of the Inferior; yea, and of the whole Church it self; as to admit Members to Excommunicate, to Ordain, to Rule and Govern, and so to thrust out Deacons and Ruling Elders as unnecessary;

necessary; and those it left continuing to make them shadows, and then these greatened Officers presumed further to extend their power over other Congregations besides their own. Book VI.

The Bishops of *Rome* began to be from thence, to challenge Universal power over all Churches, and from being an ordinary Officer, to challenge that extraordinary power of Apostles themselves, and to sit in the Temple of God as Gods, and not to be content with Spiritual power neither, but to challenge Temporal also; to dispose of Crowns, curb, restrain, and cut short the Spirit of Princes; and his Bishops also began, and have continued to intermeddle in affairs of State. That ever of so small an Egg, as a poor Pastor of that Church, so foul and monstrous a Crocodile should arise so great a Prince, is that great Mystery which all the World may wonder at; as it did indeed admire his greatness.

How seasonably therefore was this Rule given to prevent ensuing mischief, and how necessary was it also in the Application of this Rule, to give a complicate and exact platform of Church-Officers, and their true bounds and distinction of their places to this Church above all other, who was to become the Mother of abominations. How seasonable was it to leave this Apostolical Canon in her *Archivi*, in her Records, to discover the falshood of those which she boasts, and to shew all the World in after times, how much she was swerved from her Original, and likewise to enjoyn the observance of these Institutions, with an Apostolical charge as his Preface shews, *Rom.* 12.3. *I say, through the grace given me.*

The Scope therefore of that which follows, is to illustrate this Rule, and to shew the equity of it from a Similitude drawn from the Body; and then to apply and bring it home to every Officer amongst them, that as his charge was to every Man, he says not *omnibus*, but *cuique* in particular, *ver.* 3. so his Application is to every one of them in particular, *ver.* 6, 7. I will not much insist in opening the Similitude, only observe for a Foundation to what follows, that this comparison here, as it is between the Body and such Members, as have general Offices for the whole, so the Church, he here compares the Body unto, is an instituted Church, whether among them, or where-ever else. 1. It is a Church (he speaks of) for it is a Body in Christ, *Non in Cæsare*, not a civil Body, that is put as a note of difference, for as not only many are requisite: So they are considered not as scattered Saints, but as making one Body, and so knit; and then the Members of this Body, to whom the Similitude is after applyed, are Officers of a Church, and those ordinary Officers also, for those that follow, *ver.* 6, 7. are the Members. He speaks of eminently gifted Members here in general, there particularly, and with application: Now we may take this for a Rule, that where-ever the ordinary Officers that are the proper ordinants of a Church, as instituted as ordinary Officers are, there the Church or Body spoken of is principally meant a Church instituted, and of the Officers of it, he speaks indefinitely and universally, we being many, *&c.* not particularly only, (*you*) because his Scope was to lay down indefinitely, a general platform of all other, as well as of this, unto which they were already moulded, and always to be framed. Now then the fundamental Terms of the comparison being thus suited, his Similitude hath two main parts, fitted to infer those two parts of that Rule delivered.

1. That as in the Body, many Members make one Body, and so become Members to the whole, and also one to another, for one another's good, *ver.* 4. so in this Instituted Body, every one the eminentest, and most gifted is a Member of another, *v.* 5. that is, are ordained for their best profit and good, and safety, as of themselves and the whole, so of every Member, to intend the good of the whole, and of every Member in particular, they are to use their Gifts with consideration of Co-members; and therefore Co-membership should oblige Church-Officers of whom he speaks here, especially to have a care to use and improve their gifts with diligence in their places, for the good of the whole; and not only so, but also to consider every part in particular, and perform a duty to it, which by their Office they are to do diligently: The eye sees not for it self, but for the whole; yea, for the foot, the hand, and every Member in particular as occasion is, so as diligence in their Office, which is one part of his Rule and Cannon, is hence inferred and argued:

But yet 2. They are to consider withal, that every Member hath not the same Office; yea, so far from having the same Office that they have not the

Ch. VIII. the same action: So as tho' every Officer and principal Member is to be diligent the good of the whole; yet not to usurp over the Offices of another, not to do that which is proper for another to do; one Member is not to invade the room of another; the foot is not to undertake to see, nor the Hand to walk.

Thus to do would be for the confusion of the whole, and an injury to that Member whose Office is assumed; and to whom it is proper, and its Honour to perform it, and the Member who usurps another's Office, would be less usefull to the whole, and injurious to its self, in perverting its proper Gift and Office to what it is not fit, and so to do it untowardly; and this is the Second part of that Rule given clearly, proven from this Similitude. Now then in the *6th* and *7th verses*, he goes on at once, both to amplifie that last part of the comparison, that as in the Body, every Member hath not the same Office, so that in this Instituted Body, we are Members having gifts differing (Enumerating all the particular Offices) and also he in the strength of that Similitude, urgeth and applies, and brings home both parts of the Rule in each particular Officer, which he Enumerates. I say, first he goes on to amplifie and inlarge that last part of the Similitude, by a distinct enumeration of all particular ordinary Officers, needfull to such a Church for ever. And so the Co-herence of the words most fitly joynts this verse with the former, for ἔχοντες, we are having, *&c.* refer to ἔσμεν in the former verse; the Apostle not beginning a new entire Sentence, as usually it is read; but continuing these words to the former, as not having made up his comparison compleat: That as he had said, so we being many are one Body, *&c.* so we are withal, having differing gifts also, *&c.* which answers to that part of the comparison, *ver.* 4. as all Members have not the same Office. And yet withal they are a strange inference, wherein the Apostle brings home and applies both those Duties in his Rule, *ver.* 3. to every Officer which he Enumerates, and that in the strength and force of the Similitude; so as that Rule given afore, should be put into every particular, and therefore in the Original, there is an ἐλλεῖψις a chink and void space left for the Reader to put it in, as in those first words, whether Prophesie [Let us Prophesie] those words, *Let us Prophesie*, are not in the Original; but applyed by the Translators to make up the Sense, whereas that which in General the Apostle had said, *ver* 3. is to be inserted in that, and all the other particulars; and therefore doth best make up the Sense, as whether Prophesie, let us soberly mind our Duty therein, and not be overwise or beyond what is above us, or not ours to meddle in; but keep to the bounds of that office and duty, which is the ἀναλογία of Faith, and so in that other Ministry (let us wait on,) is not in the Original, but that which he said is to be supplyed; let us soberly mind our Duty in Ministring, and not be overwise to meddle with what is not our office, but keep to Ministring, and so of the rest. So as he doth at once both exhort every one to diligence in their particular office, set him for the good of all, and also dehort him from medling with what belongs not to him, sends a Man to his own Body to learn these Lessons. All which considerdered, gives a most just and full account, and Reason why the Apostle doth here more distinctly, exactly, and compleatly reckon up all particular offices in this Epistle, which we find not so fully in any other; for it agreed with, and was more requisite every way to this Scope in hand.

For 1. The making up the Similitude entire in the Reddition of it, required it. He had said, *ver.* 4. that in the Natural Body, every Member had not the same office (and what are the offices of each Member, nature taught.) Then in the Reddition, and making up of this Similitude he shews, in this Instituted Body, all had not the same offices, by Enumerating all the particular offices themselves and their diversities, which was proper to do, and also was necessary to do, because they wholly depend upon Apostolical Institution and God's Will, and otherwise were not known.

And 2. His Scope was to bring home that Rule delivered in general, *ver.* 3. by way of application, as in an use of Exhortation or Reproof, a Man doth a general Doctrine by naming all and every of those sorts of Men he would apply it unto, and *ver.* 3. He in laying down that Exhortation, in his Preface to it he had said: This I say to every Man, not *omnibus*, or *to all* definitely, but every Man particularly, as *Musculus* observes, as intending to bring it home particularly to every sort of Men which he meant and spake unto.

And 3. One and the main part of his Exhortation, being that officers should keep to their bounds; so it was peculiarly necessary, as to apply it to particulars, so to enumerate

merate all and every particular, so to distinguish them, and set them their several bounds, that every one might for ever know his Duty, and not Transgress. Book VI.

And 4. The Epistle containing matter of Doctrine, wherein he had handled a perfect Platform of all other Epistles Methodically composed, it suited with his Scope, that in mentioning the Officers of the Church also, he should be as compleat and distinct, and set down the exact Catalogue and Table of them.

And 5. Being written to the *Romans*, whose eminent sin, in after days, was the corrupting of all Offices in the Church, and introducing new, which God never instituted, and excluding those he had ordained or perverting them: The compleat Catalogue of all Offices, their bounds and terms of their Duties and Distinction, was most seasonable and proper to them, as to prevent aforehand, so to that whore of her Abominations and Usurpations herein in after Ages.

And 6. To add weight to all, and to confirm these Canons of his to all Ages inviolably, it was requisite he should set to his Apostolical Authority and Seal; which in the Preface he doth; this I say by the grace given me: And this (as it were) in opposition unto, and to weigh down, in after Ages, that false counterfeit Apostolical Authority usurped, in that *See* which would make other Canons and Constitutions clean differing and opposite to these. His Scope therefore being to enumerate all Officers, and to distinguish them and their Duties, which is the thing we seek, let us go on to observe how Artist like, exactly and fully and methodically, he doth it every way, as he had done all else in this Epistle. He proceeds,

1. By a διχοτομία, or general division of all Officers into two general Ranks and Orders.

2. By a Subdivision, containing all the particulars of that general Division, and to prevent mistakes, lest that because seven are mentioned, that therefore so many particular Offices should be meant, as some have understood them, whereas he intends but five: Therefore the first two, to shew they are but a general Division of these five that follow, are expressed in the *Abstract*, *Prophecy*, *Ministry*, but the five particulars in the *Concret*, *he that Teacheth*; *he that Exhorteth*, &c. varying his expression, to make evident the difference.

1. There is a general Division of all Officers, into two Ranks or Orders:

1. Such whose Duty and the exercise of their Office, lyeth in simple Ministration, in instruction in the word, the other of Discipline, is that whose work lies in Ruling Mens Lives and Bodies; Prophesie hath Relation by Knowledge to instruct the Mind, διακονία, to ruling and ordering the outward Man; and although there were in the Primitive times Prophets of extraordinary gifts, both in foretelling persecutions to befall the Church, as *Agabus*, and others; who also by extraordinary Revelation opened difficult Scriptures: And who are in other places, ranked among the extraordinary Officers as *Ephes.* 4. 11. and 1 *Cor.* 12. 28. Yet here Prophets of ordinary gifts are meant; because he prescribes for their Rule the ἀναλογία of Faith to bound them with. Which Rule, the extraordinary assisted infallibly by the Holy Ghost in their Prophecyings, need not to be Regulated by no more then Apostles themselves. The Revelation of the Spirit, being an infallible Guide and Rule unto them; and also he commands them to abide in that calling, and confine themselves unto it.

By Prophecying therefore is meant, that speaking out of the word to Mens instruction, as (1 *Cor.* 14.3.) Prophecy is taken in opposition to gifts extraordinary, *ver.* 1,2,3. compared where he defines it to be a speaking unto Men to edification, and exhortation and comfort; and is put for the ordinary expounding of the Scriptures, which 2 *Pet.* 1. 20. is called a word of Prophecy, and so is taken often in Scripture, as *Matth.* 13. 57. A *Prophet* hath Honour but in his own Country; and so in that Speech, he that receiveth a *Prophet*, in the Name of a *Prophet*; *Matth.* 10 41. *that is*, any Teacher or Instructer out of the Word, to *Prophesie*, not being always taken to *foretell*, but *declare*, as *Exod.* 7. 1. God tells *Moses* that *Aaron* should be his *Prophet*; *that is*, a declarer of his mind for him, so to open the Revealed Will of God is Prophecying: So as by Prophecy here, their Office is understood whose Office it is, to open and apply the word according to the ἀναλογία of the Doctrine of Faith, and the proportion of their own gifts, and so is distinguished from διακονία, which includes all external ordering and watching over Men, but without labouring

Ch. VIII. in the word, διακονια which comparatively is a more ministerial and external work, this more internal and noble.

And so now under that general Head of Prophecy, is contained these two first Offices mentioned, *Teaching* and *Exhorting*, and under the other διακονια, is comprehended the other three more external and ministerial Functions. Giving is the Deacon's Office, Ruling, the Elders, shewing Mercy is the Widows: So as tho' διακονια is sometimes taken more largely for all Offices whatsoever, as 1 *Cor.* 3. 5. What is *Paul*? What is *Apollo*, διακονοι, Ministers, by whom ye believed. And also more strictly; for that most Ministerial inferior office of taking care of the poor, as *Acts* 5. 3, 4. and 1 *Cor.* 16. 15. yet here it being made a contra-distinct Member, it is judged, to be taken in a middle sense between both. For all those are Ministerial Functions which meddle not with the word and prayer, not *ex officio*, so as *Prophets* express a higher Rank of Officers, that *Acts* 6. give themselves to the word and prayer especially; and Ministry expresseth that lower Rank of External Government, either over the Lives or Livelihoods of Men; as the *Ruling Elder* and the *Deacon*. The office even of Ruling Elders, when compared with that of Prophecy, takes place rather with Deacons, and is reckoned with that inferior *classis*, rather than with the Prophets: And unto this division other Scriptures seems to give light and warrant, as that (1 *Pet.* 4. 11) maketh it also clear. *Let him that speaketh, speak as the Oracle of God*, which is all one with Prophecying here, by the Analogy of Faith, there is prophecy mentioned; then follows, *if any Man Minister* (the word is the same that here) let him do it as God giveth a liberty. There their Deacons are a contra-distinct division to Prophecy: The like I take the meaning of, (1 *Tim.* 1. 3.) where mention is only made of two Officers, *Bishops* and *Deacons*; the question hath been, under which of these two the Ruling Elders comes? I answer, under Deacon, in that Division; for Bishops there must be διδακτικοί, apt to Teach, which in an Elder is not so necessarily required; many having Ruling Gifts in private, that have not Teaching Gifts in publick; and that also which sways me so to think, is because the qualifications of Deacons here, are such as qualifie a Ruling Elder, as gravity and ruling their own House well, &c.

And according to the αναλογια of these places, that of (*Phil.* 1. 1.) may in like manner be understood. To the *Bishops*, that is, the Pastors and Teachers, and Deacons: That is, both Elders and Deacons (strictly so called.)

This differing Rank of Officers, seemeth to me also, to have been Typified out by those two orders of Church Officers under the Law of *Priests* and *Levites*, which Type I would not have thus applyed, had I not found it by way of Prophecy foretold.

As 1. It is prophecyed that two sorts of officers answering to both these, should be under the New Testament *Isa* 66. 20, 21. I shall be mindful of that Rule, which in the Application of Types, we are ever to follow, that no Types are to be applyed to any thing under the New Testament, but by a special warrant from the Holy Ghost, so applying it in some place of the New Testament, or in some Prophecy of the times of the Gospel in the Old Testament, because (*Heb.* 9. 8.) the Holy Ghost is alone said to give signification to those Types. Yet so, as when we have a General Type, applyed to design out such a thing; then by those ordinary gifts of Interpretation, we may fetch out the particular Resemblances, as we do in Parables and Similitudes of Scripture, when we know their main Scope and aim, these being also called παραβολαι, (*Heb.* 9. 9.) But to return to (*Isa.* 66. 21.) He Prophecies there of the times of the Gospel, and the State of the Church of the *Jews* when converted, for (*ver.* 20.) he speaks of the bringing in of their Brethren the *Jews* out of all Nations, as an offering to God, into the Holy Mountain and House of God; (the conversion of a People, being called an offering up to God, *Rom.* 15. 16.) and (*ver.* 22.) he makes mention of the New Heavens, and New Earth, &c. Now as he says, he will bring their Brethren the *Jews* to the Holy Mountain, and the House of God, which is a Church-Estate, (as I have formerly shewed) so he says, he will take of them for Priests and Levites, which design out in the Language of those Types, the Officers of those Churches, all not being meant; for he will take *of them*, and it being also spoken of some of them, by way of distinction, to the rest and multitude of their Brethren, (*ver.* 20.) it Typifies out two general Ranks of Officers in the New Testament, into which all then Instituted, are to be Referred. And so in the Old Testament, I find elsewhere that division

division made of all the *Jews*, into these three Heads and Ranks, *the House of* Israel, the Multitude of Believers; *the House of* Aaron, *the House of* Levi, as comprehending all of the Church as so considered, when he calls upon them severally to praise the Lord, (*Isa.* 13. *ver.* 19, 20.) even as when, (*Phil.* 1. 1.) He writing to the whole Church mentions three; 1. The Saints, 2. The Bishops, which answer to their Priests, Pastors and Teachers: And 3. Deacons, the Levites which comprehended all the rest.

I will add as the conclusion of this difference and distinction of officers, some observations which suit with these differences upon the Types of these officers mentioned out of (*Isa.* 66. 20.) and for suiting the particular Resemblances in those Types, I will take that liberty mentioned before, which is, having found out the General Notion as Priests, to Typifie out Preachers of the word, and Levites, those three other officers I will see what stamps of Resemblance there are in those Types of these offices, which will further clear the difference, and answer a main Argument for the Pastor's Superiorities over Teachers, as it hath been urged by some. Under Levites I Rank all inferior offices, finding a Resemblance in the Type of Deacons over the poor. For there were those that disposed of the Treasury of the Church among these Levites, who (1 *Chron.* 26.20.) were over the Treasury of the House of God, and the Dedicated things, and there were also Ruling Elders among those Levites who were Porters to keep out, and let in to the Assemblies, and the Gate of the Tabernacle, 2 *Chron.* 9. 18, 19, 20. as these Gospel Elders also are to watch over, and especially to regard with the Teachers concerning Admission, or keeping out of Members to examine and try, *&c.* They assist in opening and shutting the Doors of God's House. There were also Ruling Elders among those Levites, who watched the Temple Day and Night, and stood before it, *Numb.* 18.2. and kept the charge of it, *ver.* 5. so these are to watch over the Spiritual Temple, the Church, and have their Souls committed to their charge to give an account, *Heb.* 13.17. And then there are an higher Rank of Officers to whom these Levites are given in assistance, (as the Deacons were ordained, *Acts* 6.3,4. that the Teachers might more fully give themselves to the Word and Prayer, and 1 *Cor.* 12.28,29. are called Helps) even as the Levites were given to *Aaron*, *Numb.* 3.9, 10. and *Numb.* 18.6. The Septuagint says, *added*, in Allusion to the Name of *Levi*, which signifies *joyned*, (*Gen.* 29. 34.) and these Officers are these Prophets, answering to the Priests, the Priests being to do many things the Levites were not to do; for Application of that Type.

1. The Priests had the charge of the inward part of the Temple, and *Numb.* 4.19. they had the charge only of the most Holy things, and the Levites were not to go in, when they were set and covered, and so the cleansing the inward part of the Temple, (2 *Chron.* 29.16.) belonged to the Priests, the cleansing of the outward Court to the Levites, so answerably the outward lives and conversations, and the filthiness that appears therein, is the proper Sphere and Jurisdiction of the Rule of a Ruling Elder; but to instruct and comfort the Conscience, to purge out inward corruption by the word taught and applyed, and inform the understanding, *&c.* is most proper to these Prophets, the Pastor and Teacher.

So also 2. The Priests did only burn the incense, 1 *Cor.* 6. 48, 49. and only did bless in the Name of the Lord; and Sanctifie the most Holy things, 1 *Cor.* 23. 13. so these Prophets meddle *ex officio* only, with the most Holy things of the New Testament; being Stewards of the Mysteries of God, 1 *Cor.* 4.1. and put up the publick Prayers of the Church, *ex officio*, and are the ordinary mouth of the whole, and so giving themselves to the word and prayer, are joyned, *Acts* 6.4. as belonging *ex officio*, unto them. And so to dismiss the Church with a blessing, and to Administer and to bless the Cup of Blessing, *&c.* belongs only to them.

And although the Levites also did Teach, (2 *Chron.* 35. 3.) and so it might seem that Teachers are Levites also, and that there was no such distinction intended between Teachers and them.

Yet 1. To the Priests of *Levi*, that charge was in a more especial manner given, *Deut.* 24.8. do as the Priests and Levites shall Teach, and the Priests Lips were an especial Ordinance to preserve Knowledge; and so though Elders may now also Teach and Prophecy, as also other Members, (and so also other Tribes might Teach, as *Drusius* proves, and 2 *Chron.* 17.7. the Princes also are said to Teach, as well as the Levites, as the Pharisees did whom Christ bad his Disciples hear) Yet the Priests Teaching was that especial Ordinance to preserve knowledge, as now also the Pastors and

Ch. VIII. Deacon's Office is to preserve the unity of the Faith, and to prevent being tossed as Children; *Eph.* 4. 12, 13.

And 2. The Elders also have a Teaching, which belongs to them, *ex officio*, yet of a lower kind then that of these Pastors and Teachers; and so some extending that of Bishops, (1 *Tim.* 3.2.) to Elders also apply that property διδακτικοι unto them, and therefore in Common, they are exhorted to feed the Flock, 1 *Pet.* 5. 1. not by a word of Exhortation or Doctrine, but by a word of Admonition, for any sin committed, or Duty omitted, or Error held, he must be able to convince out of the word, that this is lawful or unlawful; to lay open the sinfulness of it 1 *Thess.* 5. 12. He not only mentions them that labour; that is, in Word and Doctrine; but them that are over you, and Admonish you: That is, Ruling Elders.

And 3. Though Levites did then Teach as well, and with the same Authority that Priests; yet Teaching now is one of the most Holy Ordinances amongst us, which among them it was not; but Sacrifices, &c. above it, which therefore did fully enough keep up the Distinctions, and made the Priesthood an High Office; but what was an inferior Ordinance then, being in the New Testament one of the Supream Ordinances now: Therefore that is it that now must make the difference and distinction; and that it is the highest Ordinance appears in this, that *Paul* says of it comparatively to the Sacrament, I was not sent to Baptize, but to Preach, 1 *Cor.* 1. 17.

CHAP. VIII.

Wherein the Distinction of the Officers in a Church consists, and what are the due and proper bounds of their several Offices and Duties; the difference between Pastor, Elder, and Teacher, stated. That they are co-ordinate, and that one hath not an Authority and Power Superior to the other, what are their Distinct Offices and Administrations.

NOW then I come to search and find out the proper Genuine Distinction of these Offices, which is the principal thing which I aim at; and is principally intended by the Apostle, (in this *Rom.* 12.) to the end to set bounds to Officers not to entrench upon one another's Duties and Callings, as also to set them more diligently about their proper work; for the clearing of these Distinctions here given by the Apostle, I must premise this necessary Distinction of these Offices. That some of them are, as was observed, Subordinate one to the other, others co-ordinate; that is, some are inferior and superior, more or less authorized, some are of equal power in the Administration of Holy things.

The co-ordinate as I shall shew anon, are the Prophets here, *viz.* Pastor's and Teacher's Office of an equal Rank and Power, and their difference is to be sought only in the differing manner of Administration or Ministry of the word. But unto both these Offices, there is a Subordination of the Elder's and Deacon's Office; as also of the Deacon's Office to the Elders. Which Subordination, when found out, will help us to see wherein the true difference lies: This their Subordination may be exemplified by the instance of Subalternate Species, that is, the several Kinds and Ranks of Creatures in the Old Creation, as these Officers are in the New, (God having made the one as the other, in order weight and measure) for instance, as there is Subordination between Man and Beast, and Plants, so among these three sorts of Officers, Deacons and Widdows are the lowest, *Elders* the middle; and Teachers or Prophets the Highest: Which Subordination that I may explain it, is not in respect of dependence or derivation of power, as the power of inferior Officers Civil, is dependent upon the Supream as the King, &c. no, but all hold immediately from Christ. As Man, tho' a more noble Creature, yet gives not Life to Plants, nor sense to Beasts, but all hold of God as *in capite*, so here too the Tenure is immediate; tho' Antichrist and Bishops would Subordinate Officers, yet it is not so in God's Institution.

Neither 2. Is this Subordination in respect of Subjection to any Jurisdiction of the Superior, so as the Superior might restrain the inferior of the Exercise of their power,

er, as the Bishops take on them to Silence inferior Ministers; no, but every Man hath, as his power, so the free exercise of it, is dependent only on Christ and his Church he is placed in, and that so as in his place and office, a Ruling Elder may with authority admonish a Pastor, as well as a Pastor him, like as Fee-Servants in an House, all know and are beholden, and subject to each other in their place and offices.

Neither 3. Is it only in respect of a greater or less excellency in their Functions, that the work of the one is more Noble and Honourable, and deserves double or treble Honour; though that be true as appears, by 1 *Tim.* 5. 17. which might have been, though that work the one doth, the more excellent could no way have done.

But 4. It is in respect of a larger Commission that the one hath, then the other in the Administration of Holy things, so as the Superior Rank; Pastors and Teachers have *ex officio*, all the power that the other hath, and more; and so the Elders all that the Deacons have, and more: That there is such a gradual Subordination in these Offices may appear; because the Apostle speaking of a Deacon's Office (1 *Tim.* 3. 13.) says, he that hath Administred it well, hath purchased to himself a *good Degree*, &c so in that place also, (1 *Cor.* 12. 28.) he Ranks them in Superior and Inferior Classes: First, Apostles, Secondly, Prophets, extraordinary, namely, (as *Eph.* 4. 11.) under whom also Evangelists are comprehended: And Thirdly, Teachers that is ordinary Teachers, under whom by a *Synecdoche* also pastors are comprehended, as being of the same Rank; and then after that as inferior to these, among others are promiscuously reckoned up Helps; that is, Deacons and *Governours*, which are Ruling Elders. That as Apostles had a larger Commission than Evangelists, being the planters of Churches, and had power over all the Evangelists (being but their Assistants) in Setling and Establishing them, and as Prophets and Evangelists had a greater power and gifts then Pastors and Deacons, (all which they had and more; for Evangelists had the gifts and offices both of Pastors and Teachers, since the Apostle chargeth *Timothy* to attend to Doctrine and exhortation, 1 *Tim* 4. 13. but here his Admonition is, he that Teacheth on Teaching only, and he that Exhorteth on Exhortation;) so likewise have the Pastors all the power that the Elders have; as the Elders all that the Deacons, and what is the work of either, the Pastors or Teachers may do as their leasure serves, as in *Acts* 6. 1, 2, 3. Originally the Apostles themselves, (as may be gathered from *ver.* 4. and 1. compared, did perform that daily Administration, but through the burthen of it appointed a special office, that they might attend to their principal and more proper work; yet so as occasionally they might overlook and joyn with them (as they had leasure) in their Administrations.

2. *Rule* and *Government* is also common to the Pastor and Teacher with the Elders, as by this Place, 1 *Tim.* 5. 17. expresly doth appear, in that he says in common, the Elders that Rule are worthy of double Honour; but especially those that labour in the Word and Doctrine: Therefore they that Labour in Word and Doctrine, are also Ruling Elders; and it is such a Speech, as when it is said God is the Saviour of all Men, but especially of them that believe, whence any Man would gather, that Believers were Men; only further, some special Rank of Men, or as if it be said, Honour all Fellows in a Colledge, in the University, but especially those that labour in Divinity. There is another place which proves the same thing, *Heb.* 13. 7. so as their Office is to do both, but yet they are in common with another sort of Officers, especially designed to that work mentioned, *ver.* 17.

Now this being premised to find out the proper distinctions of each of these Subordinate Offices, these ensuing Axioms, which fully agree with the Apostle's intentions here, and elsewhere may give us light:

The 1. Axiom is, *That what is common to a Superior Officer, with the inferior may yet be made a proper difference of that inferior Officer*; as for example. To Rule is an office common to Pastors and Elders; and yet, *to Rule*, is made the special difference of such an Officer in this, *Rom.* 12. 6, 7. as he is distinguished from Deacons and Prophets; For it is in this, as it is in other Species and kinds of Creatures, who have something common, something proper, so as Men have all that Beasts and Plants have, and yet when we would express the difference of a Plant from a Beast; we say it is a Creature that hath life in it, when we would express the proper difference of a Beast, we say, it is a Creature that hath Sense, a Sensitive Soul, and so of a Man, we express his proper difference; a Creature *Reasonable*, tho he

Ch. VIII. he hath Sense also, and so the Apostle, in this distinction of Offices, distinguisheth a Deacon by his Office of giving, because this is all that the power of his Office reacheth to. an Elder by one *that Ruleth*, because that is the highest that his Office extends unto, and the Pastor and Doctor by Prophecying, as that which alone is proper to them, though they Rule, &c. also.

2. The Second Axiom is, *That when that, which is common to a Superior Officer, with an Inferior, is made the difference of the Inferior Office, it is in respect of some peculiarity in that his work, which makes a true difference between them.*

1. Thus though to Rule is a Pastor's Office as well as an Elder's; yet the Elder is more especially said to Rule, because he is wholly set apart to it: It is his proper calling which he is wholy appointed to mind, and in a special manner; and so the Deacon's Office is to mind the poor; they are separated to this work, so as to none else: That as I said, all Officers in common differ from private Members, as being separated to some work, tho' withal they do besides retain in common with the rest of the Members the exercise of all Priviledges and Duties that belong to Members: So it is in this respect in the comparison between Inferior and Superior Officers, though the Superior in common performs the same works with the Inferior; yet the Inferior is set apart to it wholly, which the other is not, but to some other of an higher kind; by reason of intending which, he cannot so fully and wholy intend the other. And therefore it is observeable, that speaking of a Ruler's Office in Ruling, he says, let him do it with diligence; for that is his work which he is to mind, and there will be enough of it to fill his hand.

Or 2. There may be a peculiar duty to be exercised by one more than another in the way of Administration, and more peculiar bounds of Jurisdiction in *Ruling*. Thus the Elders Ruling and Inspection and Watching, is only principally over Men's Lives, their outward Man, the infirmities thereof in conversation, but the Pastors and Teachers care is over the inward principally, as their Errors, Temptations, Doubts, Scruples, &c. and the Teacher also is more especially to Admonish of Errors, and pluck up such ill weeds as are contrary to sound Doctrine; and the Pastor to watch over the doubts about their Estates, and slackness and deadness any way in Holy Duties, and accordingly the People are to make use of them; as they thus have in Ruling their more special walks and works.

Or 3. Sometimes there is a difference in respect of eminency, that as a Ruler's work is to Admonish and watch over the Life, so he may have a more special gift that way, than a Pastor or Teacher.

3. The Third Axiom is, *That in like manner the Superior Officers, Pastor and Teacher, have besides those Offices common with Ruling Elders a special work, in which they are more Eminent, and attend more upon it than Ruling, or on the Deacon's Office;* (though they *are to mind them also*) *which is to Prophecy and open the word, and accordingly therefore that gives them their distinction from the other.*

1. Thus they are distinguished from Deacons expressly, *Acts* 6. 1. The Apostles whose ordinary Successors these are gave over much of the business of looking to the poor, and establisht an Office for it, to the end, they might continually give themselves to Prayer, and the Ministry of the word; they being to be in publick the Mouth of God to the People, and of the People unto God.

Thus 2. Also they are most properly distinguished from Ruling Elders, 1 *Tim.* 5. *v.*17. Those Elders are such whose Office it is to Rule well, but these are they that labour in the Word and Doctrine: That is, that *ex officio* are to give themselves wholy up to it. To this purpose also may be observed that difference, in *Heb.* 13.1. in the 7*th* verse speaking of Preaching Elders or Prophets, he says, *Remember them who have the Rule over you, who have spoken to you the word of God*; that is, that are openers of the word among you; and therefore he adds whose Faith follow, and then at the 17*th*, comes in, as a new exhortation, so another Sort of Elders (or else I suppose he would have shut up all in that other) of whom he mentions that they Rule, but leaves, out as a note of difference, that which in the former he added; [that have spoken the word to you.] So as this is proper to these Officers, and not communicated to the rest, (not *ex officio*) to labour in the Word and Prophecy: And therefore in *Ephes.* 4 11, 12. mentioning such Officers as were appointed to gather the Saints, and build them up in Faith and the knowledge of Christ by Preaching, he mentions only Pastors and Doctors, and is silent of the other, as being the proper work of them, not of the other.

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As I have shewed the proper difference of subordinate Officers, it now remains that I should do the like, concerning these two in the Superior Rank, *Pastor* and *Teacher*, which are co-ordinate; of which we must shew the difference also. Book VI.

1. Some would have made the same difference of Subordination, between the *Pastor* and *Teacher*, that hath been shewn between them and the others; so as the *Pastor* should be alone the Supream Officer, and all the rest his Assistants; and he should have also a larger power of Administration and Government, both in the Sacraments and Censures, from which they would exclude the *Teacher*, from meddling in them: But in any such respect, I cannot find in Scripture any so vast a difference, but every way an equality given to them, only a difference in the manner of Administration.

1. There is only a difference as to the Administration of Holy things, not any thing as to power. For then the Scripture would mention also, that the Pastor hath all the gifts the Teacher hath, and more; for it is a Law will not fail us, that eminency of power hath eminency of gifts; that fullness of power, hath a fullness of gifts answerable: But God hath shared and divided gifts of prophecying between them, to one, a word of Wisdom, to another the word of Knowledge, 1 *Cor.* 12. Not to the *Pastor* solely, but so as the *Teacher* is not his assistant, but his com-peer in it; and as their gifts, so their duties here (in *Rom.* 12.) are bounded gifts *differing*, *ver.* 6. so as the exhorter is to attend on exhorting, as the Teacher on Teaching, and not to entrench on one anothers Office and Duty; and so both to Prophecy, κατὰ αναλογίαν πίστεως, as the *Syriak* Translation hath it, *fidei suæ*, of his own Faith; and then the meaning is not according only to the measure of his gift, more or less, for ἀναλογία respects quality rather than quantity; a likeness, a suitableness, and proportion therein, according to the kind of his gifts, so as the meaning is, that all his Sermons and Prophecying, should be Analogical to his Gifts and Office. As he hath Gifts and an Office of Exhortation, so let him accordingly frame his Sermons suitably: As we say of words (when proper) they are according to the Analogy of a Tongue; so here his Ministry is according to the Analogy of his gifts, when suitable thereunto. A day of Thanksgiving and Humiliation differs tho' there is no pre-eminence of Holiness in the one afore the other, only some Duties do *emirere* in the one, more than in the other; as Humiliation in the one, and Thanksgiving in the other. And therefore as a Man may in a day of Thanksgiving think of his sins, in order to raise up his Heart to thankfullness; and in a day of Humiliation, mentions God's Mercies to break his Heart for his sins: Yet so, as the eminent Duty is to be Thanksgiving in the one, and Humiliation in the other; so it is here in the Administration of your gifts.

Neither 2. Is it that there are any Holy things that a *Pastor* may Administer, that not a Teacher, as to instance in the Sacraments, wherein the difference must lie, if in any thing.

1. The Sacraments are committed promiscuously to the Apostles and their Successors, in teaching *ex officio*, *Matth.* 28. 19. Go and teach and Baptize.

2. Both are alike Stewards of the Ministries of God, which Elders are not, 1 *Cor.* 4. 1.

3. Both may bless and do, as in praying afore Sermons, so in Preaching the Gospel, and it is called the fullness of the Blessing of the Gospel, which a teacher in teaching brings, (*Rom.* 16.) as well as the Sacrament is called the Cup of blessing.

And 4. Though the Sacraments are the Seals of the Covenant that apply Christ, and so might seem peculiar to the Pastor's Office: Yet they are signs also for Teaching, and belong therefore to the Teachers to Administer. As therefore such truths as are mixt, belong to them both to Preach, so the Administration of the Sacraments too. For they shew forth Christ's Death till he come, as well as the word, (*Gal.* 3. 1, 2.) And they Preach to the Eye, that which the Gospel doth to the Ear.

5. Teaching is a higher Ordinance than the Sacrament, (1 *Cor.* 1. 7.) I was not sent to Preach, but Baptize: Therefore he that *ex officio*, doth the greater and more important, may perform the lesser.

3. They are equal in respect of Honour due to them, (1 *Tim.* 5. 17) where his Scope is to give every Office its due Honour. Therefore of Widdows, and so of Deacons, who are of the same Rank, he had said, Honour them who are Widows indeed. Of *Ruling Elders*, a Superior Office, he hath doubled it, appointing double Honour to him that Rules well. But to those that labour in the Word (of Wisdom or Exhortation) the *Pastor*; or in Doctrine, the *Teacher* he especially assigns double Honour, and to both the same, whereas if the

Ch. VIII. the Paſtor had been ſo Superior, (his Scope being to ſhew, what Honour was due to each, according to their Adminiſtration) he would have ſaid, give to your Paſtor more eſpecial Honour of all the reſt. He doth not intend any precedency, for he promiſcuouſly Ranks the one afore the other, and *è contra*, ſometimes the one, ſometimes the other, as (*Eph*.4.12.) *Paſtors* afore *Teachers*, ſo here *Teachers* afore *Paſtors* ; and ſometimes *Teacher* for to expreſs both, and that more ordinarily than the other, as (*Gal*.6.6. 1 *Cor*.12.28. 1 *Tim*.3. and *Tit*.1.) Nor doth he mean that there is an excellency in the Miniſtries of one above the other, that as all Ordinances excell other in ſomething, ſo it is here : for when all is in order, both come to one. The one is the Tutor of the underſtanding, the other of the Will : Theſe are their two Pupils committed to them: And when that controverſy in Philoſophy is decided, which is Nobleſt of thoſe two Faculties ? Then may this of theſe two Offices.

But they differ.

1. In reſpect of an eminency of Gift, inclining one way rather than another. It is ſaid of all Prophecying Elders, (1 *Tit*.9.) that they are to be able both to exhort and convince Gain-ſayers by ſound Doctrine, ſo as the *Paſtor* is to uſe a word of Doctrine, and ſo a Teacher a word of Exhortation, but that which is *eminere*, or *to ſhine forth* in their Preachings, is their ſpecial gift. It is not to be thought that a *Paſtor* is to ſpeak only in a way of Application and Uſe; for he ſhould have a Doctrine as a ground to plant his great Ordinance upon, which he diſchargeth. Nor is it that the *Teacher* is to leave his Doctrines altogether without Application; but that his gift is ſuited to his office, and ſo his Labour is to be moſt ſpent in Doctrine, and ſo the words of the Text are to be underſtood, Let him that Teacheth, be as in Teaching, that is, moſt employed about it.

2. They differ but *modaliter*, in the manner of handling their Miniſtry. The one turns all his Sermons into Application, by way of Comfort and Exhortation ; the other endeavours to inform the Judgment ; they differ but as Logick and Rhetorick, which are compared to a ſhut hand, and one opened, the ſame Arguments are uſed in both ; but the one ſo ordered, as to convince the Judgment, the other ſo as to perſwade the affection.

More particularly they differ.

1. In the ſeveral Subjects they are to deal with, both look to the inward Man; ſo they differ from the Elders who look to the outward: but thoſe ſhare the two Noble Faculties between them. The one the Underſtanding, the other the Will and Conſcience. The one hath more peculiarly the underſtanding to deal with, the other, the Will and Affections. Theſe are their Pupils committed to their charge, Men are ignorant and apt to err, and need to be built up in Knowledge. This the *Teacher* takes care of, to feed with knowledge and underſtanding, (as *Jer*.3.16. and 23. 3,4. and 6. *ch*. 8.) And Men are ſlow of Heart to do, and need quickning and ſtirring up: For this the Paſtor's office ſerves, (*Eccl*.12.11.) there is need of Nails to Rivet and faſten Truths on their underſtanding, and eſtabliſh them in them ; and there is need of Goads to provoke them unto good works, (*Heb*.10.23.) And there are feeble Arms and hands that hang down, that are to be ſtrengthned ; inward evils, diſcouragements which are to be removed, *&c*. which to do is the Paſtor's office.

2. They differ in the object matter. The one ſpeaks words of knowledge, and conſiders truths, and ſhews the ſtory and harmony of them, teacheth in Faith and Verity, (as 1 *Tim*. 2.7. or as *Rom*. 2.20.) is an Inſtructer of the Fooliſh, a Teacher of Babes, and has a Form of Knowledge, and of the Truth in the Law : The other is to conſider Men, and ſpeak words of Wiſdom pertinently to them. The one hath the Bible, and the Syſtem or Form of wholſom words for his Text: The other ſtudies Men more, and ſeeks to fit the word to them. And the Paſtor is one able to diſcern what is peculiarly fit for Men's Spirits, and ſo ſpeaks wiſely to Men, whereas the other ſpeaks pertinently to truths. The one brings Scripture to Scripture, and compares each with each ; the other deals and divides the word, and brings Scripture and Men's Conſciences together. You may diſcern this difference in Men's Conferences; ſome when they ſpeak, conſider the occaſion of the party : Some follow ſtill the occaſion the diſcourſe giveth.

3. They differ in reſpect of truths, the *Paſtor* deals with points of practice more with things to be done ; the other with points of Faith, with things to be believed

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Some truths are mixt, and in those both are alike to deal, as in cases of Conscience, and scruples of Conscience. Book VI.

4. To express it by the method of Preaching in use with us, whereas Sermons consist of Doctrines and uses, so the gifts of the one lies more in explaining the words and phrases, and to bring Reasons to confirm and to solve doubts, and resolve mysteries; and so succeed these Prophets under the New Testament, who opened harder places and difficulties. The other is more fit to enlarge into uses, and to digest all truths into practical thoughts, which with power he can set home on the Heart.

5. The *Pastor* deals with Mens sins more, the *Teacher* with Mens Errors more; the one in Information, the other in Mortification. The one hath more of Christ's Priestly Office in slaying the Old Man, and offering up Believers as a Sacrifice to Christ, (*Rom* 15. 16.) the other hath Christ's Prophetical Office more imported, in opening truths, as the *Elder* hath more of Christ's Kingly Office, in Ruling over Mens Consciences.

Use 1. See the goodness of God, who hath made such abundant provision for all defects; as he hath fitted gifts to Offices, so both to the needs of Men, (1 *Cor.* 12.21.) which implies, that God, in placing the Members, respected the need of the whole, as *Natura non deficit in necessariis neque gratia.* Look what the inward Man wants, preaching Officers are to provide for, and all the several parts of it; and what is defective in the outward Man, the Elders are to watch over. And accordingly we see, as Ministers are thus eminently gifted, so people are eminently fitted to them: Some are quickened more by an affectionate way, and cleave to such a Ministry; some by a Doctrinal way, and are built up by Notions and Knowledge, that so all tasts may be suited, and all have their portion.

2. *Use*, There is a Rule for Churches in their choice, to Rank Men into offices, according to their gifts. This you are to heed, for you chuse not for your selves, but for the Lord (as he said, you Judge for the Lord.) The Apostle says, (*Acts* 14.23.) the Holy Ghost made them Over-seers; yet they were called by Men, & set over his Church purchased by his Blood, over a Flock which God accounts so precious. You are not therefore to chuse, out of any ends of common prudence, but for Spiritual ends, meerly comparing Spiritual things with Spiritual, to suit Men and places accordingly: There is Simony in by ends. In other choises they use to give Oaths, as in Colledges, and in Corporations, but here there is none but conscience to be a tye upon you.

That which now remains, is to establish the truth of these several Offices here mentioned, because it is denyed by many (as you know) that there are such, or so many differing officers to be in Churches, denying that there is such a difference between the office of *Pastor* and *Teacher*, and that under those two *Names*, one only kind of officer is meant, in respect of a differing action to be performed by him; and so that there are several Works, not Persons: And then again wholly taking away the office of the Ruling Elder, as neither necessary, nor any way the Institution of Christ.

I will First therefore, in general, argue out of this place, of *Rom.* 12. *ver.* 6,7,8.

1. That in this place officers and not actions or duties of Members are spoken of, is evident, 1. In that he mentions, διακονία, or *Ministry*, which is a name of an office, not of an action of any private Member.

2. In that he says, *He that Ruleth*, it must needs note out an Office; for otherwise, one Brother is not to Rule over another, or to take upon him to do it.

3. In that he speaks of them, as of such callings as Men are to exercise themselves in. which is proper for Officers so to do. Now so he speaks of them; for that he calls for diligence of a Ruler, it is ἐν σπουδῇ, which, as *Boetius* defines it, is *Vehemens animi intentio ad id quod suscipitur; a Vehement intention of Mind, to that which is undertaken*: So as to mind it, and employ one's self in it, as in a Calling and Employment designed there, which also that Phrase, ἐν διακονίᾳ, implies: *He that Ministreth in Ministring, that Teacheth on Teaching*; that Phrase, *to be in*, notes out making it one's calling; for so, (1 *Tim.* 4.15, 16.) speaking to *Timothy* to perform the work of an *Evangelist*; he says, give thy self wholy to them, and be in them, *v.* 16. as the word is in the Original, and in that also he useth such participles to express it, as Exhortations, *In docendo, in exhortando*, it implies a Calling, and not an Action, for otherwise it were a Tautology: For if he meant an Action only, then to say, *He*

 that

Ch. IX. *that Teacheth, Teach*, were a Tautology: So as the one notes out *Jus & nomen officij*, the other, the exercise of his Office: To say, let him that seeth, see, is a Tautology. But to say, let the seer see, he whose Office it is; is to call upon him to do his Duty, by reason of his Office, so as the one, *he that Teacheth*, notes out, *Jus & potentiam*, the other, *in Teaching*, notes *praxin*, the exercise of it.

4. Those who oppose this Congregational way, have none to teach or exhort, but those that are in Office, or Orders, as they call it.

5. Though he call them Gifts, yet so Officers are called, (*Ephes.* 4. 3.) the Apostles office he calls χάρις, I say, says he, through the grace given me; that is, my Apostolical power and office, as was shewed afore.

And 2. Ordinary officers are meant.

1. Because the Gifts and Actions he speaks of are ordinary, such as no extraordinary Gifts are required for the performance of: As to teach or exhort, to give, &c. which Actions and Gifts remain still in the Church.

And 2. Because even the Prophets here (which if any, might seem extraordinary) are limited to the Analogy of Faith; and all exhorted not to entrench upon other's Callings or Actions, which bounds, if they had been extraordinary Officers, they could not have set to them.

Now then 3. If officers, and officers ordinary, be here meant, then look how many several Enumerations there are, so many several offices are there too. For else,

1. The Scope of his former General Exhortation, that they should not entrench upon one another's Functions, had been made utterly void, if several offices and actions had not been intended.

And 2. Because he had spoken of diversity, *ver.* 4 6. therefore these Enumerations must be understood as instances of that diversity.

And 4. If Pastors and Deacons are differing, then, why not all: There is the same reason for the one, as for the other. And therefore, why should not he that teacheth, be differing from him that exhorteth; as well as from him that giveth or Ruleth. And in that, (*Ephes.* 4.) *Pastor* and *Doctor*, and (1 *Cor.* 12.) teachers and helpers and Governours, are reckoned up amongst the extraordinary: It argues, that in an ordinary way there is the like necessity of them, that in an extraordinary there was of the other. I shall speak more particularly of the difference and distinction of the offices of *Pastor* and *Teacher*.

1. It appears that these offices are distinct in that place, (*Ephes.* 4. 11.) we find *Pastors* and *Deacons* enumerated.

Obj. Against this place is objected, that it is spoken exegetically, *Pastors* and *Teachers*, as making up all one office.

1. But then he would have said rather *Pastors* or *Teachers*, not *and* Teachers.

2. But Καὶ, doth not always lock together, but sometimes differenceth two things it is set betwixt, as in the like case, (*Acts* 13 1.) Prophets *and* Teachers: By Prophets he means, in the Language of the primitive times, extraordinary Gifts, but teachers were ordinary: And *Barnabas* and *Saul*, who were extraordinary Men, are there reckoned.

And 3. In all Exegetical Speeches, the latter explains the former, and useth to be more clear; but after *Pastors* in that Sense that's held (this being the proper name of the office) to say, i. e. *Teachers* is to explain the more proper by the Improper.

Obj. But to all the rest, there is a note of difference affixed, as when he says, some *Apostles*, some *Evangelists*, but of these *Pastors* and *Tecahers* there is none, so as it seems, they were intended as one.

Answ. But it is the manner of the *Grecians* to bring in the word [Καὶ, *and*] in the end of a disjunctive Enumeration, in a disjunctive Sense, as in that, (*Gal.* 3. 21.) after he had said, there is neither *Jew* nor *Greek*, neither bound nor free, he ends that last disjunction, neither *Male* or *Female*; in Greek it is, neither *Male* and *Female*, so in the Original, and the *Syriak* so reads it.

And 2. As their offices are thus here, and in that place thus distinct; so their gifts also are distinct: And this is a Rule infallible, that according to diversity of gifts hath God appointed diversity of offices: He suited gifts and offices together, so

1 *Cor.*

1 *Cor.* 12. 45. There are diversities of Gifts, and diversities of Administrations, so as they are commensurable; now in the same place, when (*ver.*8.) He enumerates the variety of Gifts: To one, says he, is given the word of Wisdom, to another the word of Knowledge.

1. He speaks of Preachers that speak the word, which differenceth them from Elders; for he calls it a word of Knowledge, and a word of Wisdom.

2. He speaks of ordinary Officers, for as *Beza* observes, when he begins to speak of extraordinary Gifts, in the next word he varies the Phrase, ἑτέρῳ πίστις, *ver.* 9. And they differ, as *prudentia* & *scientia* in Philosophy many Men knowing things in the notion, that are not so wise to discern of Men and things, and to apply accordingly. And according to what the Holy Ghost hath said here of the variety of Men's Gifts, we find nothing more evident in experience, even in a Church, where there is a confusion of Offices: Yet God still kept to his Rule, and distributed Gifts accordingly: Some apt to open things more largely, others to apply them; yea, the Papists did observe this difference of Gifts, as is evident in their comparing *Thomas Aquinas*, and *Bonaventure* together: *Thomas intellectu eminuit*, Bonaventura *affectu splenduit*: The one was a more understanding Judicious Divine, the other more Affectionate and Eminent to stir up affection: And even in the Natural parts of Men, there is that difference, some are fit positively to explain and convince, but cannot perswade; others are more fit to perswade and prevail with Men. And thereby do ordinary Officers differ from those extraordinary, that both meet in these: (So in *Timothy*) but are differing in those other.

3. As there are differing Gifts, so differing Works, to a differing end. Prophecying Elders are distinguished from Ruling, by labouring in the Word and Doctrine, (1 *Tim.*5.17.) for the great labour is that of the Mind. By *word*, some Particularly understand a word of Exhortation, as here distinct from Doctrine or Teaching. So *Heb.*13 22. *suffer the word of Exhortation, and* Acts 13.15. *If any have a word of Exhortation, &c.* And Doctrine, on the contrary, is taken for the form of truth and wholsom words, which is taught especially by the teacher, as (1 *Cor.*14.26.) Doctrine is taken. And as here they are called both Prophets, so according to those ends of Prophecying mentioned, (as 14.3.) may their distinction here be illustrated. Prophecying he says is a speaking to Edification, to Exhortation, to Comfort; if Edification be taken in a strict Sense as distinct from comfort and exhortation (though I confess elsewhere, and in the next Verses, it is taken largely) then it notes out Building up in knowledge, which is the Teachers work, and Exhortation and Comfort the Pastor's: The Teacher Prophecyeth to Edification, and the Exhorter, to Exhortation and Comfort. And therefore it is observable that the word used here, παρακαλεῖν, is either to Comfort or to Exhort.

4. By this distribution of Officers, there is a Communication of all the Offices of Christ.

1. The *Pastor* Represents the Priestly Office of Christ. For he by the word applyed, slays the Old Man, and presents the New Creature to God.

2. The Teacher Represents the Prophetical Office of Christ.

3. The Kingly Office of Christ, is more eminently seen in the Ruling Elder.

4. This suits with all the needs of a Church, their understandings are the *Teacher's* Pupils, their *Wills*, the *Pastor's*, their *Lives*, the charge of the *Elders*: And accordingly we see Believers Appeal some to Doctrinal Preaching, some to Exhortation. And thus Ranked were the Ministers in the Primitive times: There were two Prophecying Elders (at lest) in a Church, (*Col.*4.18.) *Archippus* had a Ministry he was to fulfill, and that surely a Teaching one; for their other Minister *Epaphras*, who was also their Minister, *Col.*1.1. was then absent, *Col.*4 12. more besides they might have, and a Church may have, (as *Acts* 13. 1:) they had many teachers in one Church, and as *Musculus* observes, on *Rom.* 12 he says, all have not the same Office, not that *none* have the same. The Body to which the comparison is, hath two Eyes, two Hands, *&c.* there was something in it, that Christ in sending forth the Apostles, sent them two by two. So *Cyprian* in his time says, you that are *Pastors* with the *Elders*, *Doctors* and *Readers*, *&c.* so in the Church of *Alexendria*, *Origen* was a Doctor.

Ch.IX. The *German* Divines make this Office proper to Universities, and professors there, but the Apostle makes the Officer a Member of the Church, and for all Saints, *Ephes.* 4. and *Rom.* 12. So in our Cathedrals, there remains a *Vestigium*, a *Footstep* of this distinction, in that we have, as *Bishops*, so also *Readers* in Cathedrals, and in the same Church there are *Vicars* and *Pastors*.

CHAP. IX.

That a Pastor and Teacher, and many other Officers of a particular Church, have the promise of a special Blessing from God. That accordingly they do receive such a special Blessing suited to the Rank, and order of their Office, to give Succes in the Execution of it, beyond what a meer Preacher can expect.

Psal. 133. 1, 2, 3. *Keep not thou silence O God: Hold not thy peace, and be not still, O God. For lo, thine Enemies make a Tumult, and they that hate thee, have lift up the Head. They have taken crafty counsel against thy People, and consulted against thy hidden ones.*

THere is one thing which I cannot pretermit, but must urge and press it, *viz.* that every Institution and Office, and order appointed by God, hath answerably to accompany it, and succeed it, a special blessing suited to the nature of it. This is evident from this, *Psal* 133. 1, 2, 3. It is common to the New Testament, though spoken of the Assemblies of the Old Testament, either of the lesser Synagogues, or of the General Assemblies at their Feasts, for they were under their High Priests, to whom he does allude, ver. 2. *It is like the pretious Ovntment upon the Head, that ran down upon the Beard, even* Aaron's *Beard, that went down to the skirts of his Garments:* Every Member partook of some benefit of the Holy Oyl poured upon *Aaron*'s Head, the chief Officer of those General Assemblies; and it is expressly added of them there, that God commands the Blessing. And this, though an Old Testament instance, may fitly serve for the New, *mutatis mutandis.* For a particular Church, where the Brethren meet in one επὶ τὸ αὐτο, and ὁμοθυμαδὸν, with one consent, one heart, one worship, is in it self alone a distinct special Ordinance and Institution of Christ, and he hath promised that *where two or three are gathered together in his Name, he will be in the midst amongst them, Matth.* 18. 20. And his presence brings all sorts of blessings with it, and there 'tis that God commands a blessing. For that company are the House of God, 1 *Tim.* 3. 15. The Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the Truth. Ἐδραίωμα, the Seat of Truth, a Pillar of Truth, not *Architectonically*, that supported the Truth, but *Phorendically* as pillars use to be, with papers pasted on them to declare the Truth. It is an Ordinance to preserve Truth in the World, to hold it forth, as on pillars they used to place their Writings. God is used to bless the small despised Assemblies of Saints gathered together in unity, more then great Councils consisting of Popes and Bishops, and Cardinals. These small Assemblies have been the little creepers in the Chimney, that keep up the fires, which the great Andirons, do not as was Prince *Henry*'s Speech. And a Church, though very small, is yet a Church of the Living God, and (as Mr. *Nye* once well said) A Church is a thing, that lives, because it has the Living God to dwell in it.

And as God blesseth the Churches that are the Casket, the Sheath, so he blesseth their Officers too that are proper to them (though among Men accounted the lowest) that is, they are Pastors and Teachers in particular Congregations, who are their Preaching Elders.

The Papists plead that it is their Church that keep the Faith and the Truth, and that God has made a promise to lead them into all Truth. But it is the ordinary Officers of the Church, Pastors and Teachers, which the Apostle *Paul* says do build up the Church, *till they come to the unity of the Faith, Ephes.* 4. 11, 12, 13. And it is among you he has commanded the blessing, which is demonstrated thus, that Christ when he ascended, gave Gifts unto Men, and scattered them among the Saints, *tanquam missilia,*

filia, As the *Roman* Emperors did their Donatives among the People, as their Chariots went along. Now what were those Gifts, but the Offices which God Instituted in the Church Universal; First the extraordinary, that ceased before *Tertullian*'s time, as Apostles, Prophets, Evangelist's, and there are no more of them to be found on Earth, only their Writings continue, and make up the New Testament. But who are the lasting Officers of continuance to preserve the Truths, when they were gone, none but Pastors and Teachers, and unto these it has been, that the Faith hath been committed, and by them preserved, and Truth hath been taught, and how long do they last? Till all come to the unity of the Faith of the Son of God: If any point of Faith be erred in, that is not Fundamental; these Pastors and Teachers do restore it unto its primitive Native Splendour. 'Tis there God appoints the Blessing, what ever Men pretend of General Councils; and the reason is, because God still follows his own Institutions with his own Blessing, and there God commands a Blessing. As Christ himself did ascend from the lower parts of the Earth unto that hight, which he has in Heaven, so doth all Truths arise from the lower sort of Ministers; and if General Councils have any Truth among them, it is because it hath ascended first unto unto them, from the inferior lower sort of Ministers, as they in Debasement call them.

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That in general, a special blessing from God is promised to all Assemblies and Institutions, whether of the Old or New Testament is evinced from this one place which I have mentioned, *Psal.* 133. 1, 2, 3. where a blessing is so emphatically declared, *There God commands a blessing*, which denotes the intention of God's mind in it. Now to whom and to what is this Superexcellent blessing even eternal life, which is the sum and quintessence of blessings commanded to be bestowed? Under the Old Testament the promise of Eternal Life was then given, Witness, that one Scripture speaking of the Old Testament worship by the twelve Tribes, *to which promise* (says the Apostle) *the twelve Tribes*, meaning the Nation of the Godly *Jews*, *hoping to come*, *served God Day and Night.* Their Assemblies were either the General Assemblies or Feasts, at which the High Priest, the greatest Officer of the Old Testament, and the Type of Christ was present, or else the lesser Assemblies of the Synagogues, and all the Order and Institutions belonging to them, and all this blessing was promised to each and every of them. And their Holy Communion together in the General Assemblies, the *Psalmist* compares unto the pouring down the Holy Oyl upon the Head of the High Priest, and as the Oyl dropt down upon all his Garments, the Skirts, *&c.* So every particular Member *likewise they exhorted to keep the unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace.* These are the unities of the New Testament, that the Saints are exhorted to live in also, and above all to avoid divisions, they are called to peace in one Body, and every particular Church is called the House of the living God, dwelling together with them to keep them in unity. And Christ's first Institution of a particular Church under the New Testament expresses it on this wise again: I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree upon Earth, *&c. Matth.* 18. 19. There is unity, and as touching any thing they shall ask of my Father which is in Heaven (says Christ) it shall be done unto them; and then adds the words of Institution, *For where two or three are gathered together in my Name, I am in the midst of them.* They therefore who are present, receive a participation of the blessings promised, of some of the Holy Oyl poured upon Christ the Head.

2. Secondly, This Scripture though written under the Old Testament, is yet, *Mutatis Mutandis*, readily Aplicable to the New constituted Assemblies of the Saints under the Gospel, and even the Terms and the Language used in the *Psalm* is fitted to those of the New Testament. As for instance, the word *Brethren dwelling together*, is the proper cognizance of the community of the Saints Assembled under the New. Those words [dwelling together in unity] is well nigh the same: For they dwell in Churches under Pastors and Teachers, and are instructed till they all come to *the unity of Faith* and Knowledge of the Son of God. And where Christ's presence is, there is always a blessing; and 'tis also a description of a New Testament Church, (1 *Cor.* 14. 23.) That 'tis a whole Church, consisting of all its Members *met together in one place.* There is unity of place. And then, *Acts* 1. 14. we have an account that they met with one consent, (ὁμοθυμαδὸν) to perform the Duties of Worship. And whoever will read the story of the first New Testament Church that God reared in *Jerusalem*, will find abundantly enough in the story of the first Chapter of the *Acts*, and

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and in the second Chapter concerning their continuing together in one place, *they were all with one accord in one place*, (*Chap.* 2. 1.) and there was fullfilled the Prophecies of *Joel*, in pouring out the Spirit of God upon them, which inwardly united them together, and Jesus Christ his presence was amongst them, and he being by the Right Hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost was in the midst of them : And he being the High Priest of the New Testament,(*Heb.* 3. 1.) God hath anointed him,of which anointing we have all participated, *Acts* 4. *ver.* 27. nor did they only continue together in the Apostles Fellowship in the Temple, and in *Solomon's* Porch,in Preaching, in Prayers, and in breaking Bread (as in those Chapters is mentioned) but it grew to such a unity,that *the multitude of them that believed, were of one Heart and of one Soul, neither said any one that ought of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things common,and with great power gave the Apostle witnesse of the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all, Acts* 4. 32, 33. For that time they keep as a day of Thanksgiving, and continual feasting unto the Lord for the Joy they had,that their New King was alive and risen. So as those other words of the *Psalmist, -Behold how good and how pleasant a thing it is, for Brethren to dwell together in unity*, were then verified in such a manner, and with such a joy, as had never been seen afore in the World at any time. Insomuch, as the common *Jews* that were not Believers, nor of their company beheld and magnified them *praising God, and having favour with all the People*, Acts 2. 47. *Ecce quam invicem diligunt, Behold how they love one another*, was the common cry of the Multitude, thus plausibly and happily did this Church begin, and *great grace was upon them all, Acts* 3. 33. they were joyned or glued together, as the word is. And thus blessed from God, was the first Seat and Pillar of Truth not Architectonical, or a pillar that bore up the Truth, but Phoreneical whereby according to the custom of those times, the Holy Mysteries of God and Christ, were posted to be seen and read of all, and thus much in general to prove that there is a blessing from God in a Gospel Church, truly gathered and constituted by God where Christ is present.

2 And if the case, the Sheath, the Cabinet be thus precious to God ; then the Gifts which God places in his Cabinet, I mean the Instituted Officers of this Church, which are the Furniture and Ornament of it, are also precious unto God, and ought to be unto us ; and that which I insist on, is that each of them have a special blessing from God to accompany them as a Gift from God, and special blessing. And indeed the Officers duly placed and fixed in this Seat of Truth, have been in all Ages since Christ the great Preservers and Restorers of Gospel Truth, and to whom we owe the Glorious Reformation of our Religion.

The Papists make a great plea of the Churches Infallibility and Authority through God's blessing, as they pretend, but when we come to examine what that Church is, that is, the preserver of Truth, they cry up the Higher Clergy (as they call it) of Popes, Patriarks, Bishops, and such like Doctors of the Higher Rank. But it is reported to have been Prince *Henry's* Speech and Similitude (Eldest Son to King *James* the first) that being invited to a Merchants House, where a great pair of brass Andirons were ; these gaudy appearances of shining brass (says he) are not the pillars that hold up the fire, as your Bishops and Doctors are not, but they are the little creepers of Iron, which bear up the fire : So it is not your Prelates which uphold the Church, but it is your inferior Ministers which take pains in their places that uphold it, and not General Councils, nor the Dignified Clergy. In *Eph.* 4. 11, 12. it is said of Pastors and Teachers, that they are the only standing Officers of the Church, whom Jesus Christ hath continued in the Ministry, for the edifying the Body of Christ through every Age, which their Succession does run through, till we all come in the Unity of Faith and Knowledge of the Son of God, every such Age by the instructions of these ordinary Ministers preserving the knowledge of Christ,and unity of Faith. Now what is the reason that the People of God should be built up by these means, rather then by pompous Ostentation of Knowledge, but only because indeed God's blessing follows his own Ordination ; and Apostles and Evangelists being ceased and gone of the Stage, and only their Writings in the New Testament left, God produces an oral propagating down of these Truths among his Elect, by these ordinary Pastors.

And these and the like blessings, Jesus Christ hath freely bestowed as special Gifts and Donatives of Grace, so as the Gift of them is in it self a singular blessing to any People that enjoys them, and besides God follows the Person with a special blessing and

and endowment, together with his Gift and Ability, according to the Rank and Order of the Office it self, which is also the gift in that, *Eph.* 4. before quoted. He rehearseth all sorts of instituted Officers in the Church, whether ordinary or extraordinary, as for Preaching the extraordinary, ver. 11. *He gave some Apostles, some Prophets, some Evangelists*; These are the twelve Stars about the Church's Head, *Rev.* 12. 1. wherewith the first Primitive Age was crowned; but they have ever since disappeared, only leaving their Writings, and they ceasing in respect of living, the Christian World began anew, were Children rather then Fathers, there being few Preaching Elders that had Gifts of ability, as may be discerned by their Writings they have left: But the ordinary standing Ministers were Pastors and Teachers, and to them Christ committed the institution of the Church. Now concerning them you may observe two things for our present purpose. Book VI.

1. They were special gifts of Jesus Christ, and superadded graces out of grace were bestowed on Men, and such as might somewhat exceed the common sort of Believers, being first instructed from the extraordinary, 2 Tim. 2. 2. *And the things thou hast heard of me before many Witnesses, the same commit thou to Faithful Men, who shall be able to teach others also.*

2. Christ having all power committed unto him in Heaven and Earth, appointed two distinct Offices of Preaching Elders, investing them with his Authority, and in his name, suitably.

3. He, by special Solemnities of his appointment, set and separated them to those Offices with Fasting and Prayer.

4. He gave a special blessing to each office and officer, in the execution of his office, for the People's sake over whom he is placed.

And when he had made up and compounded an Office and Officer, with all these particulars, he then gave them, as a Gift and Donative of meer grace, and has scattered them as *Missilia* among the People, according to his good pleasure. I call them so, alluding to the name which the *Romans* gave to the pieces of Gold and Silver which their Emperors ordered to be cast amongst the People. This our Lord Jesus doth from Heaven himself, withal blessing them; for our Lord and Saviour Christ, when he was to ascend to Heaven, in the sight of the five Hundred that were present, (1 *Cor.* 15. 6.) he then singled out his Apostles and other Ministers, whom he had appointed in his Life-time, and had sent them two and two, Matth. 28. 18, 19, 20. *All power is given unto me in Heaven and on Earth*, and upon that he founds their Commissions; *Go ye therefore and Teach all Nations, Baptizing them in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.* For that was spoken only of Ministers, *Go and Baptize, &c.* which was only proper for Ministers, who are the only Stewards of the Ministries of God, and so of Baptism being a Sacrament and Seal of the Covenant. And Christ also adds this for them, *Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you always even to the end of the World*, Amen. And when he had given them this Authority and Gifts to Teach all Nations, he promises to be with them to the end of the World, and the last thing he did was to bless them, Luke 24. ver 50, 51. *And he lift up his Hands and Blessed them; and it came to pass, whilst he Blessed them, he was parted from them and carried up into Heaven.* And this he did in Analogy to what God did in the first Creation, when he had made the first Man and Woman, Gen. 1. 28. *And God blessed them, and God said unto them, be fruitfull and multiply.* And thus Christ did in his New Creation of Ministers, whether extraordinary, as in the first times, or ordinary, which are to endure to the end of the World; and upon all inferior or lower Ministers, and on all Officers of his Church, to come; in their several degrees he commands the blessing, which still continues, and we Act, and are Acted in the vertue of it.

Thus I have proved, that Jesus Christ hath himself solemnly blessed these Institutions of the Offices of Preaching Ministers, and that he did it just as he was going to Heaven:

2. I shall now Demonstrate more expresly, that every Ministerial Office hath a blessing to accompany it, according to its Order and Institution, which will yet more confirm, that these two particular Offices we have instanced, of Pastor and Teacher, have certainly the blessing commanded to them, for if every Officer else hath it, then much more these which are very Noble, (*Rom.* 15. 29.) in their employment and usefulness to Man. If we want this compleatness we shall find we shall fall so much

short

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I proceed to Demonstrate this Truth by a view of particular Offices which God has Instituted, and with them each hath appointed a particular blessing or benefit, or issue, and event thereof.

As for the Old Testament, I will give but one instance, (but to me it is a great one) to evidence the thing in hand, Levit. 9. 23. *And* Moses *and* Aaron *went into the Tabernacle of the Congregation, and came out, and blessed the People, and the Glory of the Lord appeared unto all the People.* Yea, when the ordinary Levites and Priests blessed the People, their Voice was heard, 2 Chron. 30.27. *Then the Priests and the Levites arose and blessed the People, and their Voice was heard, and their Prayer came up to his Holy dwelling place, even unto Heaven.* And as it had its effect in the Heart of God, so the blessing of the High Priest had a strange and miraculous effect in the Heart of a poor Woman. How much was poor *Hannahs* Heart loaded, and made unquiet by her fellow-partner *Peninnah*, *Elhanah's* other Wife? the story doth pittifully and mournfully set it out, 1 *Sam.* 1. 6. And her Adversary provoked her sore for to make her fret, and then poor *Hannah*, (*ver.* 10:) was in bitterness of Soul, and prayed unto the Lord and wept sore; but when *Eli* blessed her (saying, (ver. 17.) *Go in peace, and the Lord God of* Israel *grant thee thy Petition, that thou hast asked of him*, *ver.* 18.) then the Woman went her way, and her countenance was no more sad.

In the New Testament (if we examine from the lowest Office of the Church to the highest) there is a peculiar blessing promised according to its Degree, Rank or Order of the Institution.

1. A Deacon is esteemed the lowest Office, but the discharging of it well hath a special incouragement, in comparison of what other common Christians have, 1 Tim. 3.13. *For they that have used the Office of a Deacon well, purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the Faith that is in Christ Jesus.* A good degree, that is, they obtain, as a reward to themselves, an Estimation above the Rank of ordinary Believers in the Faith, and great boldness thereupon. And in *ver.* 11. Likewise the Women γυναῖκας, *viz. Deaconesses* (so *Grotius* renders it, and not Wives) who were to tend the Sick, must be Grave, Sober, Faithful in all things, and Christ will be faithful to them to Reward them according to their deservings. Thus it is in the lowest Offices in the Church: If we ascend to the highest, which was the order of Apostles in the Church, there were several things concurred in an Apostle, as to have been conversant with Christ during the time of his walking upon Earth, and then to have been eye-witnesses of his Resurrection after his Death, but the principal eminent thing that had the blessing to convert Souls whereever they came, and had the great success in that their Ministry, was, by vertue of the very office it self. For when our Saviour Christ sent out his Twelve Apostles, he furnished them with two things.

1. With the matter which they should Preach. They were directed to Preach the Kingdom of God, and so to work upon Mens Souls.

2. Christ furnished them with Authority and Power extraordinary, (*Matth.* 10.1.) to Heal the Sick, cleanse the Leper, &c. Now this is my assertion, that it twas not only the Gift of Ability to Preach, but the Authority and Power which they were invested with, wherein lay their Apostleship and their universal commission to go over all, or, to any Nation, and Preach the Gospel with Success. In the vertue of this Office it was, that the blessing did accompany them where-ever they went, and from thence it was, that God wrought so with them as he did. It was by vertue of the Office it self which he had placed them in, and invironed them about with the power of God. What says *Paul*, (*Gal.* 2.6,7.) concerning his own and *Peter's* Apostleship? That when they saw, by different experiences, and by conference of us together, the various working of God in the Ministry by me and by them, they knew that the Gospel of uncircumcision was committed to me, as the Gospel of Circumcision was to *Peter*. Now this arose not from the different Abilities of *Peter* and *Paul*, but from the various Commission and Success that their Office and Apostleship had in it from God: It was not that *Paul* was more abundantly laborious in the Ministry then them

them all. That his Gospel ran like Wildfire upon seared Trees in a torrid Zone, Rom. c. 15. ver. 19. *Through mighty Signs and Wonders by the power of the Spirit of God, so that from* Jerusalem *and round about to* Illyricum (that is all along as far as *Hungary*) *I have fully preached the Gospel.* And it was not the knowledge of his own Ability he presumed on; but the Authority God had put him into by his Office, and he, in a Holy kind of Ambition in doing this, scorned to build upon another's Foundation, as in ver. 20. *Yea, so have I strived to preach the Gospel, not where Christ was named, least I should build upon another Man's Foundation.*

And it was chiefly the conscience of that Office of Apostleship which God had placed him in, and that Success to an Admiration that God accompanyed him with, which did thrust out that Holy Beast of his, 1 Cor. 15. 10. *But I laboured more abundantly then they all, yet not I, but the Grace of God that was with me.* And this I boldly interpret, that he speaks it not of the Grace of God that was in himself, but of the Grace of God that was with him, and so speaks of his Office which God had put him into, as in *ver. 9. For I am the least of the Apostles, that am not worthy to be called an Apostle, because I persecuted the Church of Christ. But by the Grace of God, I am what I am.* He speaks not of the Grace he received at his conversion to Christianity, but of that of his Apostleship, which I speak not to provoke to pains, that is unreasonable, but to shew that the Success ever he had from God in it, provoked him unto it. It was not the Grace of his conversion he thanked God for, but that of his Apostleship, as in 1 *Tim.* from *ver.* 12. to 18. *I was a persecutor and a blasphemer, and yet he put me into the Ministry, &c.* He seems to thank God for that, in the first and chief place, and Rom. 11. 13. *For I speak to you* Gentiles, *in as much as I am an Apostle of the* Gentiles, *I magnifie mine Office.*

By the way, Mr. *Parker*, in his Ecclesiastical policy, has a controversy with the Bishops about this, *viz.* to which of Christ's Offices Ministers owe their Original for the Ministry. They say they hold it from him as Priest, chiefly for their Honour, but the Apostle *Paul* Attributes it to his being King. He is the great Soveraign that works all things, and does all things, and yet he is invisible, which is his glory, and so Jesus Christ founds it on his Kingly Office; *All power in Heaven and on Earth is given to me*, (says he) and so go and Teach all Nations, *&c. Matth.* 28. 18, 19, 20. But here, the wonder may be, that the priviledge of being put into the Ministry, should be called by him *Grace*, but the Apostle has prevented us in our wonder at it, in Rom. 1. 5. *By whom we have received Grace and Apostleship for obedience to the Faith among all Nations, for his Name.* Which he accordingly urges them unto, upon every occasion, *according as we have received Grace* (says he) *we exhort you*, &c. Now, would you think it, he stiles every standing Office in the Church a Grace, or the Grace of God, in like manner as he had done the Apostleship, Eph. 3. 7. *Whereof I was made a Minister according to the Gift of the Grace of God given unto me, by the effectual working of his power.* In like manner he calls every particular Office, in the Church instituted, a Grace from God, Rom. 12. 4, 6. *For as we have many Members in one Body, and all Members have not the same Office. Having Gifts differing according to the Grace that is given to us.* And then he Enumerates the standing Instituted Offices as Pastor, and so downwards to the very Tenders of the Sick. *He that sheweth Mercy* (says he) *let him do it with chearfulness.* And as he calls these Offices Gifts, so he calls it Grace to be so called into such Offices, even as he had called the Apostleship the Gift of Grace unto himself, and so there is in their proportion the like blessing and obligation.

It is strange that all that perfect Holiness, that *Adam* had afore his fall, should be called the Image of God; and yet it arose not to the Dignity and Stile of being called Grace, which denotes something Supernatural above the due of Creation.

Because in *Rom.* 12. 6, 7. two standing Offices are in common named Prophecying and Teaching, in distinction from the lower Offices, I shall upon the occasion thereof argue the point in hand; namely, that the two Preaching Elders being made Officers, and their calling being to Prophecy that they have a special blessing promised answerably to their Institution. To explain which more distinctly, we may and must know, that Prophecying in the Language of *Paul's* Epistles, is used to express the Preaching of Members who are not Officers, and yet have Gifts fit to Edifie the Church, which the Apostle therefore allows, (1 *Cor.* 14.) but so as this kind of Pro-

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And here it will not be improper, nor impertinent to ſhew the procedure and degrees, but eſpecially the outward courſe and means, that God took to bring the Apoſtle *Paul*'s Apoſtleſhip to this perfection and height of conſummation But eſpecially it is for us to conſider the *outward means* and courſe God took therein.

First, The Foundation of his Apoſtleſhip was founded upon Chriſt's calling him in ſo extraordinary a manner, who Prophecyed of him aforehand, that he was a choſen Veſſel, and that he would ſend him as a Witneſs of him among the Gentiles, ſo at his converſion. Then for three years he lived in *Arabia*, during which time (as Biſhop *Uſher* happily conjectures) God took an occaſion to make known his whole Goſpel to him, both in the Center and Circumference of all the Truths of it, and their coherence one with another. And tho' God was able ſpeedily to Reveal, yet *Paul* was to take all in, and that required time. Now after God had filled and furniſhed *Paul*'s Heart and Head, with all kind of matter to inable him to Preach, after this you read of his Preaching up and down to the *Jews*, but unknown by face to them, *Gal.* 1.22. and then he went to *Tarſhiſh* his own City, from whence *Barnabas* fetched him, and brought him to *Antioch*. And there it was that *Paul* received an outward Miſſion and Commiſſion, to be an Apoſtle to the *Gentiles*. And it was by the ordinary courſe and means of laying on of Hands, with Faſting and Prayer, for him, which is an Example for our Encouragement in our being put into the Miniſtry, to receive a bleſſing in the uſe of that ordinary means. The Story is, *Acts* 13. The Elders of the Church at *Antioch* being met, and having faſted, the Holy Ghoſt ſaid, *ſeparate me* Barnabas *and* Saul *for the work, whereunto I have called them: And when they had faſted and prayed, and laid* their Hands on them, *they ſent them away.*

Now *Paul* Writing to the *Romans*, Citizens of the Head City of the *Gentiles*, refers, (*Rom.* 1. 1.) to the words of this Story, and to that miſſion of him Recorded in that Story in uſing the very words, as glorying in that Stile which he counted the Foundation of his Apoſtleſhip among the *Gentiles*. *Separate me* Barnabas *and* Saul, *for the work whereunto I have called them*, ſays the Holy Ghoſt, *Acts* 13. ſeparated unto the Goſpel of God (ſays the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 1. 1.) *We have received grace and apoſtleſhip, for obedience to the Faith among all Nations for his Name.* And from thence in the reſt of the Epiſtle, and in this Epiſtle to the *Corinths*, he urgeth obedience to his Apoſtolical Authority, in ſuch words as thoſe, according as we have received Grace, *viz.* Grace of Apoſtleſhip, as he interprets it, do ſo and ſo, as we have commanded. This is frequent too in the Epiſtles to the *Corinthians*, and in this to the *Romans*, Rom. 11. 13. *For I ſpeak to you* Gentiles, *in as much as I am the Apoſtle of the* Gentiles, *I magnifie mine Office*, Eph. 3. 3. *whereof, viz.* of the Goſpel *I was made a Miniſter, according to the Gift of the Grace of God given unto me, by the effectual working of his power.* It was to the Authority of his Office he aſcribed the Efficacy and Succeſs of his Miniſtry. And tho' the Offices of Paſtor and Teacher hath not the Authority, as that of an Apoſtle, nor the call ſo extraordinary, *yet deſpiſe not the day of ſmall things*; for they are the bleſſed Ordinances of God, and ſhall have their

their due Efficacy upon the Hearts and Heads of those exercised therein, and it is there God commands the blessing. Book VI.

And by the way the Separation to the work of the Ministry is ascribed to the Holy Ghost, who is the executive power of the Trinity: And therefore it is said, *Acts* 20. *Feed the Flock, over whom the Holy Ghost has made you Overseers*; and the Apostle says, 1 Cor. 12. 1, 2, 3. *Now concerning Spiritual Gifts, Brethren, I would not have you ignorant, ye know that ye were* Gentiles, *carryed away unto these dumb Idols, even as ye were led; wherefore I give you to understand, that no Man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed, and that no Man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.* The Apostle convinces them, that those Spiritual Gifts and Offices which were among them, were meerly Gifts out of Grace, tho' a common Grace to ungodly Men, to the Rebellious also. He convinces them by this, that they were Supernatural, for till my Ministry and the Gospel came among you (says he) you were far enough from such Gifts. Ye know that you were *Gentiles* carryed away unto these dumb Idols, even as you were led. And therefore if you have any knowledge of Christ, it must be from the Spirit, as an Heavenly Agent, that is come upon you all. The knowledge of, and assent to Jesus as the Lord, must be from the Holy Ghost, you have it not by Nature, you were led after dumb Idols. These Gifts are all Supernatural, and from a Divine Agent, and in that respect they are called Graces, and a Gift. But then the making a Man a Minister, and putting him into the Divine Office, whether of Pastor or Teacher, is no less then a work of all the three Persons, and not of the Holy Ghost only. There is a conjunction of all three Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, blessing, and laying on of Hands, as it were, upon a Minister ordained, 1 Cor. 12. 4, 5, 6. *Now there are diversities of Gifts; but the same Spirit. And there are differences of Administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of Operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.* There you have all the three Persons, the Gifts of a Minister are from the Spirit, the Administration, *i.e.* the Offices wherein a Man Administers, as from Christ as a Lord, the Operations, the powerfull Success that works upon Mens Hearts by them, is from God the Father; you see your calling, Brethren, as the Apostle speaks in another case, I mean you Brethren of the Ministry, learn to follow your callings and your Authority. When Christ laid his Hand upon *John*, *Rev.* 1. how did it revive him, and put life into him. All three Persons in the Work, do lay on their Hands. We count it a great concurrent dispensation of God, that each Person in the Trinity should share the works of our Salvation among them, and it is a wonderful thing to bless them for it: But seldom have the three Persons concurred in one Action. When Christ was Baptized, and God himself Proclaimed, *thou art my Son*, there were all the three Persons. The Father was heard by speaking himself immediately, the Holy Ghost was descending as a dove upon Christ, and the Son of God was himself in the water. And here is another θεοφανία an appearance of God, three in Persons at the Ordination of a Minister.

Which notion is confirmed and backed by our Apostle, in naming two of the Persons, the Father, and the Son, as Authors of the Instituted Officers of a Church, Gal. 1. 1. Paul *an Apostle not of Men, neither by Man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the Dead.* There is two of them, the Will of the Father, and Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost, the third Person, you have in *Acts* 13. as expresly named, to be a Founder of this Work; *Separate me* Paul, *for the Work I have appointed.*

And from hence you may learn, what Holy, Holy, Holy, Ground it is, that an Instituted Officer of the New Testament stands upon, which Mr. *Baynes* in his *Diocesan Tryal* hath firmly asserted, and it sets right, and corrects the brownist Error at their first setting out, who looked on their Ministers but as Servants of the Church, and Instituted by the Church only, which is but of Human Institution, (*Gal.* 1. 1.) and so they chose them anew, to officiate in their several turns, remaining but Brethren still. But Mr. *Baynes* makes them the immediate Servants of Christ, who is the Institutor of them.

And from hence I assert, that a Minister is a Servant of Christ to the Church, to do his work to the Church as occasion is. Before his call unto the Ministry, he was as Gold in the Bulloyn fit for, and capable of the Ministry; and the Church in Christ's Name chooses him, and Sets upon him the Seal of a Sacred Separation of him unto Christ. And in Christ's Name he acts toward them, Independently on them,

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And hence I assert also, that they are not only Ministers to that Church which calls them, but Preach as Ministers, and with a Ministerial blessing accompanying them, whereever they are called to Preach. And herein doth A singly called, though Gifted Man, fall short of that blessing which accompanies a Minister, rightly separated unto an Office of Ministery in a Church. There were some in the Church either of *Antioch* or *Jerusalem*, that were called principal Brethren, yet only Brethren, tho' the word *Principal* is annexed. And it is an ordinary Stile in the Epistles, when the Apostle speaks of the Brethren in a Church, who are chiefly such, he Stiles them *one of you*; yea, tho' they be acknowledged by the Apostles to have been helpful to them: Whereas when they have been separated to the Ministry, either as Pastor or Teacher of the Church, *Paul* gives the Honourable Title of *unto you* (speaking of that Church.) *A Faithful Minister*, and under that Title he sets out *Epaphras* to the *Colossians*, who was Minister to their Church; yea, and hence it comes to pass, that when ever they Preach to any either called or to be called, they may be said to Preach as Ministers to them. When (*Ephes.* 4. 12.) their ordinary Pastors and Teachers are said to be in the work of the Ministry, they are said to be in it not only for the edifying the Body of Christ, that is already his Body; but πρὸς τὸν καταρτισμὸν, for the joynting in, as Members of the Body, such as are yet unconverted and out of joynt, and loose from them, tho' Elect, and if they be Ministers (as 'tis there expressly said) to the joynting of them in, then they are Ministers before conversion, to them, whom to convert, blesses them as Ministers. And what other is the reason, why those who have been fixed Ministers to a People, and by Persecution are driven out have that allowance too given to them by Christ, who says, Mat. 10. 23. *If they persecute you in one City, fly unto another.* For Jesus Christ is not a loser thereby; but he follows on his blessing of them for Conversion unto a new People: For why? They carry their Ministry along with them, and Preach as Ministers to whomever they Preach, for they Preach πρὸς καταρτισμὸν, for the joynting of them in. Know therefore that your Ministry or being Ministers, doth not stand on your own feet, but on Christ's feet, in whose Hand these Stars are for their further Motion, Guidance, and Protection, and Blessing on them.

CHAP. X.

Of the Communion of Saints, which the Members of a Church ought to have one with another.

HAving proved that Christ hath instituted divers sorts of Officers to be in a Church, and having described the distinction of their Offices: The thing next to be considered is, what communion the Members of such a Church ought to have one with another (besides the Communion which they publickly enjoy in Ordinances) for their mutual edification and increase of their Graces.

The Communion which I intend, is not by way of exercising Gifts, but of Grace: A Communion not in the way of a set Institution or Ordinance; but in the way of a fit means, and help to encrease that love which ought to be between one Member and another. The question in sum is, whether every Member is not bound to seek the knowledge of every Member's Spirit and Graces, and that not only by occasional converse; but by fixed meetings appointed on purpose for such Spiritual converse, to know one another's cases and spirits, and *to provoke one another to love, and to good works*, *Heb.* 10. 24. There are two things which must be supposed as unavoidably to be granted.

1. That every Member of a Church cannot in publick edifie the others, for Women must not speak in the Church, 1 *Cor.* 14. 34, 35. And besides, publick meetings are for exercise of Gifts, which even all the Men have not.

2. In private occasional converse, one Member may not have opportunity to discourse with another once in seven years: For when will occasion offer for a godly Servant, to discourse with the Master of another Family? There seems then to be a necessity

ty of a fixed meeting to this very end, that such opportunities may be afforded to them.

And 3. It may be demanded whether for these Members, who occasionally perhaps meet every day, such appointed meetings are not necessary, that there may be a set time for this Spiritual Conversation? It is not meant that herein there should be Preaching or Praying; but a Spiritual Conference to gain experience of each others improvements in Grace.

1. I shall consider whether this be a Duty, and what in a Church-Fellowship should bind the Members of it to such a Duty.

1. This is certain, that one Member should make known his Spiritual case and condition to another, of known Faithfulness, (*Isa.* 5. 16.) And that he should make known too his needs or wants of any kind, not to the Minister only; but to any of the Members of the Church, who is in a special manner known to be Faithful, that he may pray for him, confess your faults (says the Apostle) and Pray one for another, that you may be healed. *The effectual Fervent Prayer of a Righteous Man availeth much. That Phrase, confess your faults one to another*, is not general, as if it were to be done to every one; but the Apostles design is to shew, that there are occasions upon which this Duty is to be done to some.

But 2. That place in, *Heb.* 10. 24. seems to call for, and require a more special Animadversion to know one another's cases and experiences, and that not only as they may be made known occasionally, but to enquire, of ones own accord, and to take occasion to do it. *Let us consider one another* (says the Apostle) *to provoke unto love and to good works*, The word is κατανοῶμεν, the same which is used to exqress, (*Mat.* 7. 4.) The diligent enquiry, and exact Animadversion which we ought to make upon our selves.

3. This also seems to call for such a stated converse of Church-Members together to enquire into, and know one another's cases and experiences; because otherwise every Member would not have an equal benefit in Church-Communion. For some that are Rich, and have time to converse much together, may indeed reap the fruits of a blessed Fellowship. But others that are poor, or Servants, &c. will be abridged, and so the same inconveniences will arise, as were in the *Corinthians Love Feasts*, 1 *Cor.* 11. 22.

1. Then, it is evident from Scripture, that it is the Duty of every Member to observe, and to take care of another's Spiritual Wellfare. This appears from the Duty enjoyned, *Heb.* 10. 24. And it is a Duty distinct from Assembling together, which follows in the next verse. The same thing is also manifest from that Text, 1 *Thess.* 5. 11. *Wherefore comfort your selves together, and edifie one another, even as ye do.* The Greek word is παρακαλεῖτε *exhort and edifie one another*, εἰς τὸν ἕνα. i. e. *every one of you, do this Duty to every one.* And the Apostle commends them, that it was their practice so to do, *even as also* (says he) *you do*: So that a Primitive Apostolical Church, did practise this Duty: And this was distinct from the work of these Officers, for of them he speaks afterwards, *verse* 12. And then he tells them the several ways wherein they should exercise this Duty one towards another, verse 14. *Now we exhort you Brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all Men:*

But the question is, whether this Duty is only to be exercised occasionally, as the providence of God gives opportunities and occasions of converse, and according to the Relations wherein he hath set Men, of Man and Wife, Master and Servant, &c. That as we ought to give to poor Saints, when there is occasion, so it is Duty also to Exhort, Admonish, &c. when an opportunity is offered.

1. It is evident that this Duty is to be discharged between Persons who live in these Relations, and as Man and Wife have more occasion of converse, so more of this Duty is incumbent upon them. They not only as Members of a Church, but, as being in such Relations, ought to serve the ends of Church-fellowship: And the greater the occasion is, the more are they obliged to this Duty, tho he ows it as a Member, yet he is bound the more to exercise it in this occasional way of Relation, Eph. 4. 16. *From whom the whole Body fitly joyned together, and compacted by that which every joynt supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the Body unto the edifying of it self in love.* The word πᾶν τὸ σῶμα, (which is Translated the whole Body) may be Translated every Body, or particu-

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lar Church, for he speaks of particular Churches there, for the whole Mystical Body of Christ is not edified by every particular Person.

2: He mentions here the Edification of the Members, by the Members, as considered distinct from their Officers.

3. The word συναρμολογούμενον fitly joyned evinceth as much: It signifies being joyned as with Sinews and Bones, for so ὁ ἁρμὸς is taken, *Heb.* 4. 12. And so here is it to be understood; for the Apostle speaks of a Body which every joynt supplyeth, διὰ πάσης ἁφῆς, as he also useth the word, *Col.* 2. 19. The Body is knit by Joynts, and the nourishment is supplyed from Christ. And it is knit together not only by Joynts, but by Sinews, (σύνδεσμων, *Col* 2. 12.) which run between every one. So then there are Joints by which Christ supplyeth Nourishment to the Body, and there are Sinews by which the Members of that Body are joyned together, and those are the several Relations which the Members have one to another, either as in a Family, or in the Offices of the Church. For if there were no other Relation, yet this of Membership in a Church is one sufficient, since all the Members have from Christ a measure of Supplies for the Nourishment, and strengthening of the whole Body. And the Laws of Life and Motion are as natural here, as they are in Bodies of Flesh and Blood. For as the several parts of them receive Spirits from the Head to enliven and move them, so, to all the Members of Christ's Body the Church, the Spirit is conveyed from him the Head, to give Spiritual Life and Motion to them all, and so to the whole Body. So that if there were no other Relation between the Saints, but this of their being set and joyned in one Body the Church, and not in a Family, &c. only: yet this is enough for their mutual Life, Strength, and Edification, 1 Cor. 12 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21. 22. *For the Body is not one Member, but many. If the foot shall say, because I am not the hand, I am not of the Body: Is it therefore not of the Body? And if the ear shall say, because I am not the eye, I am not of the Body; is it therefore not of the Body? If the whole Body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the Members, every one of them in the Body, as it hath pleased him. And if they were all one Member, where were the Body? But now are they many Members, yet but one Body. And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: Nor again, the Head to the feet, I have no need of you. Nay, much more those Members of the Body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary.* And indeed every Member hath some Grace, or some Experiences wherein it differs from another, and is helpful to it. As the Members of the Natural Body, tho' consisting of the same Flesh and Blood, yet differ in some properties wherein they excell, and wherein they are useful to the other: So every Member in a Church hath some peculiar Grace by which the other may profit. So *Paul* says of himself, writing to the Church of the *Romans*, that he was comforted by their mutual Faith, not by their Gifts, Rom. 1. 12. *That is, that I may be comforted together with you, by the mutual Faith both of you and me.* In like manner he says, that when in conference with the other Apostles, there was nothing added to him, yet their discerning the Grace of God which was in him, had the desired effect, *Gal.* 2. 6. 9. There is then no Member in a Church, but what is necessary and helpful, and no one can say, that he hath no need of another. Thus the Apostle tells us, that they who are feeble are necessary, 1 *Cor.* 12. 22. And therefore he argues, (*ver.* 25.) that all should have the same care one of another, tho' never so mean an object. And (*ver.* 27.) says he, *you are the Body of Christ, and Members in particular*, not only Members for the use of the whole Body, but for the use of every one Member considered apart.

There are three expressions used by the Apostle, which shew that the care which the Saints in Church-Fellowship together ought to have over one another, should not only be exercised as occasion offers; but that it is a constant Duty, and that we ought to seek all occasions of acting it.

1. The Apostle says, Heb. 10. 24: *And let us consider one another to provoke unto love, and to good works.* The Greek words are, Κατανοῶμεν ἀλλήλους, let us accurately consider one another, that our care over one another may be answerable.

2. The same Apostle speaks in like manner, 1 Cor. 12. 25. *That there should be no Schism in the Body; but that the Members should have the same care one for another.* The Greek word, μεριμνῶσι, signifies, that we should have an especial and solicitous care of one another's Souls.

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3. What the Apostle says in another place, is to the same purpose, 1 Thess. 5. 11. *Wherefore comfort your selves together, and edifie one another, even as also ye do.* The Greek words, παρακαλεῖτε ἀλλήλους καὶ οἰκοδομεῖτε εἰς τὸν ἕνα, import not a General, but a particular care, not only occasional, but such as we should study, and endeavour to exercise for the edification particularly of every one. But besides there are these further Reasons of the thing.

1. Because there is this difference between the Members of the Church Universal, and the Members of a particular Church, that the former are obliged to those Duties of taking care to help and edifie one another, as occasion serves; but the other are bound by a more especial covenant to perform this Duty, one to another in a constant manner, and therefore ought to seek occasion for it.

2. The same thing is evident from this, that every Member hath in him something that is needful for another (1 *Cor.* 12. 22.) tho' not in Gifts, yet in Graces, by which the strongest may profit; as *Paul* increased in Faith, by the mutual Faith in the *Romans*, (*Rom.* 1, 12.) tho' in the Gifts nothing could be added to him.

3. There would not otherwise be the same care taken of all, that there is of some, which is contrary to what the Apostle enjoyns, 1 *Cor.* 12. 25. And Reason shews, that care should rather be taken of the weak, 1 *Cor.* 12. 22, 23. 1 *Thess.* 5. 14. And the neglect and despising of the poor and weak, was the fault of the Loue-Feasts, which the Apostle reproves, 1 *Cor.* 11. 22.

4. Because otherwise the Relation of being a Member in a particular Church, would add nothing to the Person, as proper to such a Relation, if one Member was not thereby bound to be helpful to another, not only occasionally, but on set purpose, and on appointed times, when occasions are not offered.

But the question will be, how this care which every Member is to have of another, will differ from the care which is incumbent upon the Officers to take of the Church.

Answ. 1. The Officers are bound to their care in a more especial manner, and the exercise of it is incumbent on them, *ex officio*, by vertue of their Office. And besides, their care reacheth to the whole Church, but every Member's care to another, Rom. 12. 4, 5. *For as we have many Members in one Body, and all Members have not the same Office: So we being many, are one Body in Christ, and every one Members one of another.* The Greek word is πράξιν *Activeness*, working, so, that it is evident from this Text of Scripture, that every Member hath its peculiar working, as we say, that the Eye hath not only its Office; but the Ear also hath an Office proper to it.

2. The Officers are wholy in this work, and entirely devoted to it.

3. The Officers have the charge of the whole, and of every part, which is not incumbent on the private Brethren. Tho' in *Rom.* 12. The Apostle mentions the Authority and work of the Officers; yet withal he insinuates the activeness and working of each Member as needful, Rom. 12. 4, 5. *For as we have many Members in one Body, and all Members have not the same Office: So we being many, are one Body in Christ, and every one Members one of another.* And so, in 1 *Cor.* 12. he speaks of works and duties, which are incumbent on more Persons then the Officers of the Church. And the Apostle *Peter* also speaks of private Members, and their Duty and Work, 1 *Pet.* 4. 5. For he speaks of the Elders and their Office, in the 5*th* Chapter which follows.

3. It is made a sign of Grace, for Saints to visit each other. It discovered the Truth of Grace, and Faith in *Moses*'s Heart, that he visited his Brethren. *James* makes it also a Trial of the Sincerity of our Grace. Isa. 1. 27. *Zion shall be Redeemed with Judgment, and her Converts with Righteousness.* And our Lord Jesus makes it the Touchstone and Test of his chosen Sheep, when he separates them from the Goats, that they visited the poor little ones among his Saints, *Matth.* 25. 36, 40. And if there is the like Reason to visit the Members of a Church, then certainly it is to be done. We are to show our love to their Souls, to visit and refresh them; for Souls have need, as well as Bodies; and require suitable supplies

4. The Prophet mentions it as the Duty and Practice of Saints under the Gospel, to speak often one to another, *Mal.* 3. 16. What he speaks of those times, hath reference to ours.

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5. There ought to be so great and peculiar a love between the Members of a Church, as cannot be discharged but in the performance of this special Office and Duty, Rom 12. 10. *Be kindly affectioned one to another, with Brotherly love, in Honour preferring one another.* It is φιλοστοργία *A Natural instinct of Affection* φιλαδελφία, a Natural Love, such as Parents bear to their Children, and Brethren to Brethren. And in this they are to increase and abound, 1 Thess. 3. 12. *And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one towards another, and towards all Men, even as we do towards you.* 1 Pet.4.8. *And above all things have fervent Charity among yourselves, for Charity shall cover a multitude of sins.* The word is ἐκτενῆ, , such a Fervency as presseth to a mark. It is pure Love, all inordinacy of Love, of self, of Wife, &c. is removed, any inordinacy would take too much, that there would not be love enough for all the Brotherhood. As it is such a love, so it is a growing Love; and therefore what is necessary for the feeding it, is necessary to put forth towards the Members of the Church, which how can it be done without a Communion maintained among them.

6. Whatever other Relations binds us to, we are engaged to the same Duties by our Relation of Brethren in a Church. If obligations of Civility, or tyes of Nature, and Kindred engage Men to visit one another; then,much more the Relation of Members in a Church, obligeth us to the same Duty. And the poorest, meanest Saint, is as worthy of it as any; for otherwise *we should have the Faith of our Lord Jesus with respect of Persons,* which the Apostle forbids, *Jam.* 2.1.

Object. But the Work and Business of the Officers in a Church, take off this care from the private Members, and render it unnecessary: And besides, they have other Callings, as being Merchants, *&c.* which they ought to mind and attend.

Answ. 'Tis true,but yet these are Duties which occasionally they ought to perform. As if offence be given them, they are enjoyned to speak and admonish the Person, *Mat.*18.15. They are required also to do good,as opportunity serves,*Rom.* 14.19. 1 *Cor:* 10.24. If any thing be Revealed to a Person, it is proper for him to tell it, if there be leisure or opportunity, whereas an Officer ought always to have something ready for Edification.

The main question to be discoursed,is, wherein this Duty lies.

1. It doth not properly consist in the communication of such Gifts, whereby the Church is edified in the publick Worship of God: It doth not properly consist in expounding, nor in Praying together, tho' this may be done occasionally. There are two sorts of Gifts.

1. Such as are Superadded to Graces, and are Sanctified to a publick use, as the Gift of expression in Prayer, of Prophecying, *&c.*

2. There are such Gifts as are necessary to communicate, and make known our Graces one to another; as to be able to express what experiences of God's love, *&c.* we have had; for,as the thoughts of our minds cannot be known,unless we have a Tongue to express them, so neither can our Graces be known without such a Gift: Now the end of this communion of Saints, whereof I now Discourse, is not to make known such Gifts; but to communicate experiences, not to Repeat Sermons, (which is a Duty proper to Families) but to declare what it was in a Sermon that God blessed to them, and that affected their Hearts, what promises they have found to be made good to them, *&c.*

2. This Duty of communion of Saints, doth not consist in giving an account of their Graces in that set way, as they gave an account of their conversion, when they were first admitted into the Church. But it is a communication of their experiences, as to the growth of their Graces, and as to the exercise of them. The Graces of a Believer, the τὸ γνωστὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ, *may be known of God in him,* may rather appear thus, by way of conference, than in a Set Narration. The Reason of it, is, because an account of the Person's Grace is not now given; for a Judgment to be made of his state thereupon, as it was at his Admission into the Church. There is not in this case any Autoritative Act; for none have power to call for an account. But the Duty incumbent on the Person, is, to consider whether the Declaration of his Experiences may be for the edifying and comforting of others,and what good fruits may arise out of such a Manifestation, and accordingly to do it. 'Tis to be minded, what God leads a Man's Spirit to confer about. There is such a thing as a Manifestation of Spirits in a several way, whereby is not meant, that a person is obliged to lay open all that is in his

his Heart; but that by a mutual conference concerning Spiritual things, there should be a taſt given what is in one another's Spirits.

3. This communion doth not conſiſt in a confeſſion of all ſins, or in diſcovery of every thing that burthens us. For to that end, a Believer will make choice of ſome particular, in whoſe Wiſdom and Faithfulneſs he can confide as occaſion is, *Iſa.* 5. 16. As for extraordinary caſes, wherein there is need of help, as in caſe of Feeble-mindedneſs, (1 *Theſſ.* 5. 4.) Temptations, *&c.* There is no need for any Believer to tell his caſe to all the Members of the Church particularly, that they may all pray for him, for upon his making it known to the Paſtor or Officers, he may be prayed for publickly.

4. But yet that love which the Members of a Church bear one to another, will move them, and put them upon a Sollicitouſneſs, and a ſtudy, and care for each others Souls.

5. Let us conſider that Subjection, in which all the Members ought to be one, toward another, whereof the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 1 Pet. 5. 5. *Likewiſe ye younger, ſubmit your ſelves unto the elder; yea, all of you be Subject to one another, and be cloathed with Humility: For God Reſiſteth the proud, and giveth Grace to the Humble.* I cannot conceive otherwiſe, but that by this Subjection, (the word is ὑποτασσόμενοι) is meant, that they ſhould be content to receive inſtruction one from another.

6. It is to be conſidered, that Chriſt puts an Honour on the weakeſt Members, 1 *Cor.* 12. 18. to 24. And that there may be no Schiſm in the Body, application muſt be made to one, as well as to another; and there muſt not be a total neglect of any, 1 Cor. 12. 25. *That there ſhould be no Schiſm in the Body; but that the Members ſhould have the ſame care one for another.* And ſo likewiſe the Apoſtle tells us, that there are diverſities of Gifts, and Adminiſtrations, and Operations, 1 Cor. 12. 4, 5, 6, 7. *Now there are diverſities of Gifts, but the ſame Spirit; And there are differences of Adminiſtrations, but the ſame Lord, and there are diverſities of Operations, but it is the ſame God which worketh all in all; but the manifeſtation of the Spirit, is given to every Man to profit withal.* Theſe diverſities of gifts, and adminiſtrations, do not relate to Officers only, but to the whole Body; ſo that a courſe ſhould be taken to receive the benefit of every Member's gift. For otherwiſe there will be a neglect of God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, who are the Fountain of theſe diverſe gifts and adminiſtrations.

The Government OF THE Churches of Christ.

BOOK VII.

That the Preaching of the Gospel is an Ordinance of Jesus Christ, Instituted for the Conversion of Sinners, and for the Edification of the Saints. Of the use and necessity of Ministers wholy set apart to Preach. That Christ by his Institution hath appointed a due Maintenance for Ministers. Concerning the time for the Administration of Ordinances, and whether the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper ought to be Administred on every Lord's Day. Whether, in case of necessity, a Church may by common consent divide themselves, to meet in several parts, and receive the Lord's Supper in such distinct meetings, rather then omit that Ordinance wholy, whether in case of apparent Danger of Life, loss of Estate Rationally foreseen, or in case of force and violence, causing Ordinances to cease, there may not be a prudent forbearance, or secret avoidance. Whether one who is not a Church-Member, may be the Subject of Baptism. Whether one who is not a Pastor, may Administer Baptism. Whether a Church may Depose an Officer for a fault, which doth not deserve Excommunication. Of anointing with Oyl. Of Toleration, and liberty of Conscience to be granted to particular Churches, tho' differing from the National Constitution.

CHAP. I.

That the Preaching of the Gospel is an Ordinance Instituted by Christ, for the Conversion of Sinners, and Edification of the Saints. The Reason why he hath chosen the Preaching of the Word by Men, to be the means of Salvation, rather than any other. The pleas, which Men make against their constant attendance on the Preaching of the word as needless, Answered, Rom. 10. 14,15, 16.17 *How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a Preacher? and how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, how beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things: But they have not all obeyed the Gospel; for* Esaias *saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then, Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*

THE Apostle having proved at large in the former part of his chapter, and the whole Epistle, that the Righteousness of Christ apprehended by Faith, was the only true Righteousness whereby Men are to be Saved; he begins here at the 14*th* verse of this Chapter, to lay down the outward instrumental means of attaining to this Righteousness and Salvation; and this by a gradation or chain of causes: All which he shews to hang upon *Preacking of the word of Faith*, as the first

first Link of that whole chain of outward means. And as (in *Rom.* 8. 29, 30.) he makes a chain of the *Principal causes* of our Salvation: *Whom he fore knew, those he predistinated, and whom he predistinated, those he also called, &c.* so here he makes a chain of the *means outward*, praying and worshipping God, (that is the first step) *whosoever shall call upon the Name of the Lord, shall be saved, ver.*13. without prayer there is no Salvation; it is here (by a *Synecdoche*) put for all Obedience. But then *how shall they call on God without Faith, and how Believe without hearing, and how shall they hear without a Preacher? ver.*4. For it is such a hearing, as is by *Preaching*; neither is this Preaching (the Hearing whereof is blessed to work Faith) by any but *by Men sent*; *ver.*15. And the conclusion of all this is, that *Faith cometh by Hearing, ver.* 17.

And Experience also helps to manifest and confirm this. For still, where God meant to have a Church called, thither he still sends, and there he maintains the Preaching of the Gospel. For this, compare *Acts* 16. 6, 8. with the *9th* and *10th* verses of the 18*th* chapter: In that first cited place it is said, that God forbad *Paul* to Preach in *Bithinia*, but in this other, that he bad him stay and Preach at *Corinth*, giving this Reason; for *I have much People in this City.* So also, says the Apostle, Col. 1. 1, 4, 5. *Knowing the Election of God, our Gospel came unto you, not in word only, &c.* And therefore we see that those places that want it, lie like Desarts and Wildernesses, full of rudeness and ignorance; and the Inhabitants living rather like Beasts than Men. And this is the reason why the light of the Gospel, and the Preaching thereof shifts so from place to place; (in the *East* once, now in the *West*) for still where God hath a good shole and fry of Fish, thither he sends his Fishers with their Dragg-Nets: It being good Fishing sometimes in one Coast, sometimes in another. Where God intends to Plant a Church, thither he sends the Gospel, *to make known by it the Mystery of his Will, that in the Dispensation of the fullness of times, he might gather together, in one, all his Elect, Ephes.* 1. 9, 10. what is the reason of this?

1. Take that which the Apostle intimates in this, Rom. 10. 17. *Faith comes by Hearing*: And how so? *Hearing is by the word of God.* So that if the Reason be askt, why this way rather than any other? the answer is, it is so appointed and *ordained* by God: For that is meant by *Word* here, his *Word* being all one with his Commandment and Appointment. So says Christ, Luke 4. 4. *Man lives not by Bread alone, but by every* word *of God*; that is, by this Ordinance of God, that Bread should Nourish; it is not said *Hearing* [of] *the Word*, but [*by*] *the Word.* What is the reason the Rain that falls down upon the Earth from these *Bottles of Heaven*, the Clouds, *drops such fatness* with it? and *Crowns the year* with encrease, *Psal.* 65 11. It is only this; God at the beginning did so appoint it; as we read in *Gen.* 2. 5. Now *Isa.* 55. 10, 11. it is said, *As the Rain cometh down and watereth the Earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, &c. so shall my Word go forth and prosper in the thing whereto I appointed and sent it.* It shall prosper, because God so appointed it; and it shall cause the Earth both to *bring forth and bud*; that is, it shall work both beginnings and encrease. Yea, it doth that which other Rain doth not: For other Rain falling on a Briar, it remaineth a Briar still; but where this Rain falls, God accompanying it with a blessing, in stead of a Thorn, comes *up* a Fir; and, of Fuel for Hell, it makes Men fruitful Trees to God, and fit for his Building; for it fully alters the Nature of them: And though watering the Earth with water pots is good and useful in the time of Drought, and so is Reading of good Books, and conferring of things Holy: Yet Preaching is the kindly Ordinance, when *Doctrine drops as the Rain, and speech distills as the Dew, and as small Rain upon the tender Herb*; as in Preaching it still doth, *Deut.* 32. 2.

2. As *God appointed it*, so *Jesus Christ prayed for it*, in *John* 17. Christ consecrates his Death, and prays for the Application of it, namely, that the Apostles might be *Sanctified*, and how! *through thy Truth* (says Christ) that is, the *Gospel* called *the word of Truth, Ephes.* 1. 13. and then he goes on to pray, *not only for those, but for all that should believe*, and how should they come to believe? *through their word*: So, *ver.* 19, & 20. And certain it is, that Christ's Intercession puts a force into this means unto this Day. For doth Christ mean only the Apostles Preaching, as that which he then Prayed for? No, this Prayer reacheth *unto the ends of the World*: For it is their word that we do and shall Preach, and we are their Successors. Therefore (*Matth.* 28. 20.) Christ says (though he speak only to his Disciples) *I am with you unto the end of the World.*

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3. As God the Father *appointed it*, and God the Son *prayed for it*; so God the Holy Spirit is by promise and covenant engaged to accompany it with his blessing unto the Seed of Christ for ever, Isa. 59. 21. *My Spirit who is upon thee, and my words which I have put into thy Mouth, shall not depart out of thy Mouth, nor out of the Mouth of thy Seeds Seed for ever.* It is spoken of the word as Preacht unto the People, and therefore we find (Acts 10. 44.) *Whilst* Peter *spake, the Holy Ghost fell on all them who heard the word.* And therefore it is, that (1 *Cor.* 2. 4.) the Preaching of the Gospel is called the *Demonstration of the Spirit*; and (2 *Cor.* 3. 8.) the *Ministration of the Spirit*: Now if any demand the reason why God ordained it, and Christ prayed for it, rather than any other means; I shall for the Explanation of this, propound certain queries, in the answers to which, I will give the reason of it, and I shall proceed herein by degrees:

Quest. 1. Why did not God work immediately by his own power, and rather use no means at all?

Answ. 1. He doth this to shew his diverse manner of working, for he still loves to vary his Dispensations towards Man. At the first Creation he used no means, but made Man in his own Image; even as when he gave the Law, he both made the Stone-Tables immediately, and also writ it with his own Finger. But now in this Recreation and Renewing of the Image, because he will not go the same way to work, he will take a Pen in his Hand to do it withal. *Ye are*, (says the Apostle, 2 *Cor* 3. 3) *the Epistle of Christ Ministred by us.* And tho' God made the World without the help of Angels, or any other Creature; yet now in this New Creation, he is pleased to shew his diverse ways of working, and takes Creatures to work by; whom therefore he calls *Co-workers* with him, 1 *Cor.* 3. 9.

Answ. 2. He now useth means, as to shew his various kinds of working, so to hide it from the eyes of the undiscerning World, who contemn the means to their Destruction. For this work of Conversion, being the only standing Miracle in the Church (and indeed the greatest, and therefore all is summed up in it) Christ therefore hides his power in working it, *The blind* (says he) *receive their sight, the deaf hear, and the poor receive the Gospel*; but he lets them not see from whom all this comes, and by whom it is wrought: That so that might come upon the foolish World, which was fore-prophecyed, *Hab.* 1. 5. and alledged by the Apostle, Acts 13. 41. *Behold! ye Despisers, and Wonder, and Perish; for I work a work among you, which you will in no wise believe, though it be declared unto you.* Because the means are so small, and so unlikely, therefore it is that the World despises God's Word and People; and they wonder at this, that such weak means should have such power on mens Hearts, and yet they believe it not; they feel no such thing in their own Hearts, and so falling to despise it, they perish in their own ways. You have it, *Prov.* 25. 2. that *'tis the glory of God to conceal a thing*, to carry his greatest Counsels and Works covertly and closely; and therefore he hides them under means, because all should not see them. So, when he sent his Son, how did he befool the Devil and the World, in sending the Prince of glory, clad and concealed in infirmities, to be Crucified, and so to bring about God's greatest work? 1 *Cor.* 2. 6, 7, 8.

Quest. 2. But why, of all things else, hath he chosen his Word to do this?

Answ. 1. He hath chosen Preaching of the Word, because it is the weakest means of all other; and therefore his power would the more appear unto his own glory in it. What is weaker then a word? And yet God Created the World by it; for he only said, *Let there be Light, and there was Light*, &c. But you will say; that was his own word spoken by himself. I answer, that now to manifest his power the more, he will take the voice of a frail Man speaking his Word for him; and what is weaker then a Man's Breath? Indeed, *In the word of a King there is power*, (as *Solomon* speaks) but what power is there in the words of a mean and weak Man? Yes, there is a great power; and the reason why God chose this means is given, 1 *Cor.* 1. 18. to *ver.* 28. It is to shew his power and wisdom unto his own, and to confound the World. They know not God in *his Wisdom*, by reason of their *own Wisdom*, which they are so full of, and by reason of their High Esteem of Worldly *Learning* and *Eloquence*, accounting the plain, naked, and low Stile of the Word, to be but *foolishness*; that is, a foolish and an empty Doctrine, contrary to their Reason, and utterly unlike to work any great matter (as the *Athenians* thought.) But God chose it the rather; *it pleased him, by the foolishness of Preaching, to save them that Believe*, ver. 21.

ver. 21. to shew that *his Foolishness is wiser than Mens Wisdom*: And if his Foolishness be so, then, what is his Wisdom? He sent his Apostles forth, a company of poor Fishermen; and were they likely Men to conquer the World, by commanding living Men to believe on one Crucified? Especially when the conditions were such as these, that Men Rich and Learned, and Great, should wholy deny themselves and their own Wisdom, and become fools; was this ever likely? Well, but see, (*ver.* 20.) how the Apostle Triumphs upon this occasion. *Where is the Wise? Where is the Scribe? Where is the Disputer?* They are clear put down; they have lost ground both among *Jews* and *Gentiles*, by this foolish and weak means, this Preaching of Christ Crucified. All their Wit, and Carnal Arguments, could not prevail so much as one of the Apostles Sermons. And so when *Luther*, *Calvin*, and those other Divines came once to Preach, where were the School-men and Learned of the World? Popery fell down before Preaching, like *Dagon* before the Ark of God. And God appointed this way, that his Wisdom might appear to the confusion of the Wise; that so his power might the more appear to the praise of his grace towards them that are called, and to the confusion of Satan, and (*ver.* 25.) to shew that *the weakness of God is stronger then Men.* If God can by a word work such effects, as all Creatures are not able to work; then what would his strength do, if put to it? What will that power do for his Elect in another World? And this means did God appoint, thereby also to confound the power of Satan, as the strength of *Jericho* was subdued by the blasts of Rams Horns. Thus *Psal.* 8. *ver.* 2, it is said, *Out of the Mouths of Babes and Sucklings, hast thou ordained strength*: Through the weakest means, God hath ordained the greatest strength; and why? *to still the Enemy*; to confound Satan, that he should not boast of his Conquest. God therefore chose Preaching, that it might *be his own power unto Salvation.*

Answ. 2. The Second Reason why, of all means else, God hath chosen his Word, as the means whereby to work grace, and to Reveal himself unto us, rather then any other visible Representation, whereby he might have made himself known; yea, rather than by his Works (tho' they are said to *Preach* also, as *Rom.* 10. compared with *Psal.* 8. implies) was because the word was less apt to be abused to Idolatry, by corrupt Nature, of all things else. This was the most naked and simple Representation, and most suitable to Reasonable Creatures that could be, to Represent things by words. God made himself known by Creatures, *Rom.* 1. 20. and what was the issue of it? *ver.* 23. & 25. Men fell to *Worship the Creature*, in stead of *God the Creator*, *and changed the glory of the Incorruptible God, into an Image made like to corruptible Man*, &c. The Sun and other glorious Creatures Represented God, and they Worshipt those *Creatures more than God*, and ascribed all unto them. Thus also in the time of Popery, when Preaching was Banisht, they Represented all Religion to the Eye; the Objects of which, Man is more apt to Idolize, then the instructions which he barely receives by the Ear. An evident instance whereof we have in this; that whereas God ordained but two means to convey the Gospel to us, one by the word Preached to the Ear; the other to the Eye in Sacraments; which are visible signs (and as Christ is Preached in the one, so in the other; and indeed no more in the one, than in the other) yet corrupt Nature made an Idol of the Sacrament, and never of Preaching, and this Men did, tho God chose the meanest things to these Signs, even Bread and Wine. And for this cause especially God Sanctified his word, as a means to convey himself unto us; as appears by Deut. 4. 12. *The Lord spake unto you, and ye heard the voice of his words; but saw no Similitude*, &c.

Quest. 3. The third query is, why *Hearing* of the Word should be by God appointed rather than *Reading* of it alone by our selves?

Answ. 1. God hath appointed the hearing of the word; because he would confounds Satan, and untwists and dissolve the works of the Devil in the same way that they were woven. Our first Parents took their infidelity in by the Ear; and therefore God thought good to let Faith in the same way.

Answ. 2. Because God had many simple People to be called; and indeed, *not many wise*, nor book-learned are of that number; and if Reading were the ordinary means, how should they do? But the simplest can ordinarily *hear*, as well as the wisest: And so *the poor* do come to *receive the Gospel*, who otherwise would want it.

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Quest. 4. The fourth Query is, why hath God ordained hearing the word *expounded*, rather than hearing it read? So we find it, *Nehem.* 8. 7, 8. It is said, *The* Levites *read in the Book of God's Law distinctly, giving the Sense, and causing them to understand the Reading*; that is, the word read. The same we have, 2 *Chron.* 17. 9. The Levites *went about with the Book of the Law, and taught the People*, and the reasons of this are:

Answ. 1. Because of the dullness that is in many People, Acts 8. 30. *understandest thou what thou readest?* (said *Phillip* to the Eunuch) *how can I*, (says he) *except some Man should guide me*? It was therefore necessary, that there should be Men whose calling and business it should be, to study out the meaning of the word, and so to Reveal it unto others; and who might (as *Ezrah* did, chap. 7. 10.) *prepare their Hearts*, (and set themselves apart) *to seek the Law* (or the meaning of it) *and to Teach in* Israel, *Statutes and Judgments*; and (as *Timothy*) wholy give themselves to *attend on Reading*, &c.

2. Because Jesus Christ, when he ascended, *gave Gifts unto Men*; *Ephes.* 4. 8. And 1. *The Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge* being in him, (*Col.* 2. 3.) least when he went to Heaven, he should have carryed all Wisdom away with him; therefore, as he left the word written behind him, so he gave Gifts to Men to expound it, both for the begetting and perfecting of the Saints. Now as for simply *Reading* the word, every one can do that; but an *Interpreter* is *one of a Thousand*, *Job.* 33. 23. And it were a Derogation from Christ, to make a faculty of bare Reading, to be one of the utmost fruits of his Ascension. And for this Reason also it is, that the Gifts of Men are reckoned among the chiefest Goods and Riches in a Christian's Inventory, 1 Cor. 3. 22. *All are yours*, Paul *and* Apollo, &c.

Answ. 3. It is not the Letter of the word, that ordinarily doth convert; but the Spiritual meaning of it, as Revealed and Expounded. *Paul* who had the Letter of the Law; yet says of himself, *Rom.* 7. 9. that he was *without the Law*, until the Spiritual meaning of it was Revealed to him. There is the *Letter*, the Husk, and there is the *Spirit*, the Kernel; and when we by Expounding the word, do open the Husk, [out] drops the Kernel. It is the *meaning* of the word, which is the word indeed, it is the Sense of it which is its Soul. The Devil quoting Scripture, used the Letter of it; but the Apostles, when they quote it alledge not so much the words as the meaning. And therefore (1 *Cor.* 2. 16.) we are said to *have the mind of Christ*; that is, what he meant in his word, when he Revealed it. Now Preaching, in a more special manner, Reveals God's word. When an Ointment-Box is once *opened*, then it casts its Savour about; and when the Juice of a Medicinal Herb is once strained out and applyed, then it heals. And so it is the Spiritual *meaning* of the word let into the Heart, which converts it, and turns it to God.

Quest. 5. The fifth Query is, If we are to be Saved rather by Hearing the word Expounded, than by it as Read; yet still, why by it only as Preacht by Men like our selves? Why not by God's immediate Voice from Heaven, or why not by the Preaching of Angels? The Reasons of it are.

Answ. 1. Because Men themselves first chose this way, as most agreeable and suitable unto themselves, and unto their Natures and Conditions, Deut. 5. 25, 26. *If we hear the Voice of the Lord our God, we shall die*; *Go thou* therefore *near, and hear all that the Lord our God shall say, and come and speak thou it unto us, and we will hear it*, &c. *ver.* 27. and God hearing the People say thus, said unto *Moses, they have well spoken*, &c. *Stand thou therefore here, and I will speak to thee all the Statutes and Judgments which thou shalt teach them*, &c.

Answ. 2. God betrusted *this Treasure in Earthen Vessels*, not Heavenly, (as it is, 2 *Cor.* 4. 7.) because we are not able to behold the Angels. You see how the Sons of Men have always trembled when they appeared. And further, we shou'd have been apt to Worship them, as *John* would have done, *Revel.* 22. 8. And therefore God appointed Men like our selves to be the Instruments.

Use 1. See here the necessity of this Ordinance, so as to attend upon it, waiting upon God in the Dispensation of it, for the Conversion of thy Soul. *A necessity lies on me*, (says *Paul*) *to Preach the Gospel.* Now that necessity of his Duty was founded upon another necessity; Namely, That it was a means to save the Souls of Men, whom God had committed unto him. As for such as are already Converted, I shall not need to urge upon them the necessity of this Ordinance; they have one within

in, who will do it. If they ſhould but want a few Meals of their appointed Food, there is a New Creature within them would cry for Bread. In the firſt of *Pet.* 1. 23. the Apoſtle having ſaid, they were *begotten by the word*, in the next Chapter he exhorts them, *as Newborn Babes* to *deſire the ſincere Milk of the word, that they might grow thereby:* As if he had ſaid; if you be but Babes of a day old, you will deſire this word by which you were begotten. Now for ſuch as are not yet Converted, let me ask them but this one queſtion: Do you think Salvation neceſſary? Yes, then ſo is this, (*Neceſſitate Medii*) for (ſays the Apoſtle) it is *the power of God unto Salvation.* But you will ſay, God's power can ſave me by other means, if he will. I deny it not; but ſee what *James* ſays, (Jam. 1.18.) *Of his own will begat he us, with the word of Truth.* He that out of his good pleaſure begets us, out of the ſame free will hath choſen this means, even the word of Truth to do it by. You ſee the power of God engaged in it; (it is *his power unto Salvation*:) And you ſee his Will alſo in it; *of his own Will begat he us with the word of Truth.* But you will yet ſay (as *Rom.* 10.) *Have we not all heard?* I have heard Sermons enough already, if they would do me any good: Yes; (God be thanked) *their Sound is gone out into all the World.* But let me ask you another queſtion, which the Apoſtle asks in the former words; have all you that have heard, *obeyed the Goſpel?* Haſt thou had Faith wrought, has thy Heart and Life been changed, as yet, by this word heard? the Apoſtles who were better Preachers than we, yet, cry out (as *Iſaiah* once.) *who hath believed our Report?* And if thou be one of the Members yet unchanged, thou haſt as much need to attend to the word, as if thou hadſt never heard it; that ſo thou mayſt eſcape that Damnation, and *fiery vengance* that will befall them who *obey not the Goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt*, 2 *Theſſ.* 1. 8. But you may haply ſay, I have knowledge enough already, and as much as the Preacher can teach me; and may not that work ſufficiently in me to put me upon practice? Suppoſe this, that thou couldeſt not encreaſe in knowledge, yet thou maiſt as yet *not know any thing as thou ought to know*; and this plea is a ſign of it, and ſo made by the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 8. 2. And tho' thou maiſt have knowledge *in Salvation*, and the matters of it, yet *not to Salvation*, as the Apoſtle diſtinguiſheth it, 2 *Tim.* 3. 15. for ſuch a knowledge muſt be by a New work of the Holy Ghoſt, whom we receive by Preaching of the word; Galat. 3. 2. *Received ye not the Spirit, by the hearing of Faith?* All thy Notions may lie as dry Gunpowder Barrell'd up in thee; but what ſhall give fire to them, and enflame thy Heart by them; but a being *a-new Baptized with the Holy Ghoſt, as with Fire*, and by his ſtriking ſome ſpark and good Motion in? Now the Holy Ghoſt falls on Men at theſe Ordinances. Preaching is therefore called *The Miniſtration of the Spirit*, 2 *Cor.* 3. When a Pill lies dead in a Man's Body, and works not; then Phyſitians uſe to preſcribe another, which often ſets all a working. So after all the Sermons thou haſt heard, thou haſt need hear again, to make all effectual to thee. Again: When ſaving knowledge is once begun in thee, it receiveth daily encreaſe by the Preaching of the Word, even then when Notional knowledge doth not. That is, ſuppoſe thou heareſt no new Truths diſcovered, but the ſame again and again; yet in the things Repreſented by thoſe Notions, thou maiſt get a further and more clear and diſtinct inſight every time thou heareſt them. Thou maiſt grow up into *more Riches of aſſurance of the knowledge* of thoſe Truths thou knoweſt, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Col.* 2. 2. and thou mayeſt grow up to more comfort, and joy in thoſe Truths. *Paul* deſired ſtill to Preach to them (although converted) for *the furtherance of the joy of their Faith.* Tho' many promiſes belong to thee, and thou already knoweſt them, and diſtinctly remembereſt them, and daily viewest them; yet thou mayeſt haply not have much peace from them: But when thou heareſt them again, delivered in this Ordinance, thou may'ſt have ſuch peace from them: For *God Creates the fruit of the Lips; peace*, &c. *Iſa.* 57. 19. And this is a thing to be added to thy knowledge, and therefore is ſaid to be Created: And how, but by the Lips of Men uttering it? It is therefore called *the fruit of the Lips.* As for Example; thou knoweſt that thou art to be juſtified only by Chriſt's Righteouſneſs; and thou knoweſt all that can be ſaid to manifeſt the Truth of it, and nothing more can be added to thy Notion about it. Yet, for all this, the Apoſtle ſays, that *this Righteouſneſs is Revealed in the Preaching of the Goſpel, from Faith to Faith*, (*Rom.* 1.17.) that is, from one degree of Faith to another. This may be Revealed with more evidence to Faith, to draw thy Heart to truſt more perfectly in it. Again: Thou knoweſt all the particular Branches of the Law; thou haſt

Ch. II. haſt *a form of Truth*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 2 *Rom.* 20. that is, a Platform and Table of all the ſins which the Law forbids, and Duties which the Law commands: Yet when this is again taught thee out of the word, a new light may come in, to diſcover to thee thoſe ſins which thou never as yet ſaweſt before; a light which may *divide between the Marrow and the Bones*, and Anatomize thy Heart unto thee, and ſhew thee ſome new Vein or Artery, which thou never yet ſaweſt. In and through Prophecying the Secrets of Mens Hearts uſe to be diſcovered, 1 *Cor.* 14:25. So that thy experimental applying, and ſaving knowledge of the things themſelves may be encreaſed, although thy Notions be not. For tho' the Glaſs thou ſtill lookeſt in be the ſame, yet thy light may be new and different; and ſo thou mayeſt come to ſee the Beauty or Deformity of the things Repreſented in it; which is the difference between ſaving knowledge, and that which is not ſuch.

CHAP. II.

Of the end and deſign of the Miniſtry, and of the uſe and neceſſity of Miniſters ſet apart to Preach, and Devoting, themſelves wholy to that work.

Epheſ. 4. 8. *Wherefore ſaith he, when he aſcended up on High, he led Captivity Captive, and gave Gifts unto Men.*

THE Apoſtle having mentioned in the *7th* verſe, the variety of Gifts given by Chriſt under the New Teſtament, enlargeth himſelf about them.

1. By ſhewing the Author of thoſe Gifts, Chriſt, according as was Prophecyed, *Pſal.* 68. 18. *ver.* 8, 9, 10.

2. By Enumerating the variety of thoſe gifts, *ver.* 11.

3. The ends of thoſe Gifts, *ver.* 12, 13, 14.

1. The Author of thoſe gifts ſet forth, that his Perſon is God, *Pſal.* 68. 17, 18, 19. *Thou the Lord God*; for none but God could have given them.

2. Then it is declared, what he did for the beſtowing them. 1. He Deſcended. 2. He Aſcended. He Deſcended and Aſcended. The Apoſtle argues his Deſcending from that word Aſcending: So *ver.* 9. *Now that he Aſcended, what is it but that he alſo Deſcended into the lower parts of the Earth?* Pſal. 139. 15. He improves that Scripture againſt the *Jews* to Demonſtrate, that the *Meſſiah* muſt be humbled and laid low. He gathers a Doctrine from a word, as we uſe to do.

And from this obſerves. 1. *That before God Exalts, he Humbleth.* The Text ſays, *firſt he Deſcended.* Thus did God with his own Son, and ſo with us, as with *David, Joſeph*, and any other whom he employs. And therefore humble your ſelves under the mighty Hand of God, that he may lift you up.

2. Obſerve, *That Chriſt Deſcended to the loweſt, and Aſcended to the higheſt place*, as thoſe two Phraſes import. εἰς κατωτερα *to the lower parts of the Earth*: And his Aſcenſion is an high, *far above all Heavens*, ὑπεράνω, is *Super Supra, above all beings above.* The Deſcending was into the lower parts of the Earth, the aſcending far above the Heavens. By his Deſcending, is meant that emptying himſelf ſpoken of, *Phil.* 2. For oppoſitely the fruit of it is made *the filling all things*, Chriſt was full of all, and God emptyed him. He condeſcends to behold things here below, *Pſal.* 113. but to come down below is more. And in that Phraſe, *the lower parts of the Earth*, he Names the firſt and laſt ſtep of his Deſcending: Not from Heaven to Earth only, nor to live on Earth only.

1. It imports to be encloſed in the dark Dungeon of the Womb, *Pſal.* 139. 15. ſo the Womb is called, and there to be hid nine Months: 'Tis an Alluſion to curious Workmen, that work within doors their moſt curious works.

2. It imports to be laid in the Grave, to be killed and buried, *Matth.* 12. 40. The Son of Man ſhall lie in the Heart of the Earth three days: Not in Hell, the place of the Damned, as the Papiſts would have it, but in the Grave which is called the Heart of the Earth. As *Tyre* is ſaid to be in the Heart of the Sea, *Ezek.* 24. 27. which yet was a City near the Sea-ſide, from both theſe places, the Womb and Grave, Chriſt was raiſed, and the ſame Body that had lain in theſe two places and Dungeons,

geons, the same, says the Text, ascends far above the Heavens, ὑπεράνω ἄνω is above, but ὑπερ is added, that is, *above above*, above all Heavens; that is, Angels who are called Heavens (as the Devils are called the Gates of Hell, that is, the powers of Hell, for Magistrates Sat in the Gates) so *Heb.* 7.26. He is said to be made higher than the Heavens, that is in his Person excelling all Creatures, (so *Ephes.* 21. His Ascending is interpreted to be far above all principalities and powers, *&c.*) Tho' 'tis true also, he is above all Heavens for place; for tho' in Heaven, yet his Throne is Conspicuous there eminently. Book VII.

Use You see that to be much abased by God, is the way to greatest glory. Fear it not, the lower the Soul is laid in Distress, the more Comfort at last. The lower the Ebb, the greater the Flood.

3. His Descent was so low, as none would ever think, that had seen him in his Abasement, it were the same Man who is now exalted. He Descended so low into so mean a condition, that when you shall see him so glorious, you would never think that That Man should have been on the Cross. Therefore *verse* 10. the Apostle says, it is the same Person, and that he who Descended, is the same that Ascended. And so the same Bodies that were miserable here, shall Rise again and be glorified. 'Twill be such an infinite glory, that Men will hardly believe they are the same Men. Know, says *Peter*, That this same Jesus, whom ye have Crucified, God hath made both Lord and Christ.

4. Observe the manner of his Ascending, 'tis in a way of Triumph: He leads Captivity Captive. Enemies being conquered, Princes use to go in their Chariots Triumphantly, when from a great Journey they come again to their own City or Country, *Psal.* 7.6, 7, 8. Awake (says he) *in thine anger, so shall the Congregation encompass thee about* (that as a Conqueror, for he alludes to the manner of Soldiers in the Field, that encompass their Lord General) for their sake return then on High, as a Conqueror: Ascend gloriously. And the leading Captivity Captive is but to lead the Enemies Captive, for the Abstract is put for the Concrete; for so 'tis used, *Jud.* c.5. *v.* 12. *Numb.* 21.1.

Now then, 5. His end in ascending, as in descending was, 1. General, 2. Special.

1. General: *That he might fill all things*: 1. All places, Heaven and Earth, and therefore he comes into both; as a King that takes possession of all his Dominions. 2. That he might fill all Persons he hath ascended, as the Sun to fill all with Light to the top of Honour. 3. This is made the fruit of Christ's descending, as well as his ascending. He became poor, that we might be Rich, he became empty, that we might be filled.

2. The Second end of his Ascension is special, *viz.* the bestowing Gifts. To this end both this Ascending and Descending is here brought in, for both these were necessary for the bestowing these Gifts on Men; he must both Descend and Ascend. 'Ere Christ could give Gifts to Men, he must purchase them. Your Church Officers cost Christ his Death, and Christ gave away himself first, to give these to you, and emptyed himself to fill you. And to answer to both these, the Phrase the Psalmist useth concerning the Gifts bestowed, signifies both his buying of them, and giving of them; and it is besides Translated there by our Translators, *Received Gifts.* 1. It signifies to buy or purchase *Emere*, so לקח signifies, and is so used. *Prov.* 31.16. And 2. It signifies to give or bestow: So usually in the Hebrew, (*Gen.* 32.13. *Gen.* 25.2.) It is meant to take and bring an Offering. So then Christ's Descending was to buy these Gifts, his Ascending to receive and give them.

2. We may consider the variety of these Gifts. 1. Extraordinary. 2. Ordinary; they are here jumbled together, (also 1 *Cor.* 12.28. and *ver.* 8, 9, 10.) And the Reason is, because the Ministry in respect of the essential things, is the same now that it was then, (2 *Tim.* 2.2.) Therefore Christ blessed them, (*Matth.* 28.20.) as God blessed all Men at first in *Adam* and *Eve*. Now if we know which Gifts are extraordinary, and which are not; by this we shall know:

1. What ordinary Gifts remain, what ordinary necessities are still in the Church. We find Gifts of Teaching, *&c.* and Governing, and Bowels of Mercy still: But no Gifts of Apostles, Evangelists, *&c.* remain. Miracles, Infallibility, and foretelling things as Prophets, (so as *Agabus* was) are ceased; but Gifts of Teaching and Feeding remain. Now God continues no Gifts in vain.

Ch. III.

1. The power of Apostles ceaseth, *Acts* 12. 2. When *James* was Slain, there was none appointed in his room, but Elders were appointed in each Church, *Acts* 14. 23. The Election of one in *Judas* his place, was in conformity to the *Patriarchs*.

2. Prophets are Extraordinary, for so they are Ranked, *Acts* 13. 1. *Paul* and *Barnabas* were separated. So 1 *Cor.* 12. 28. Agabus, *Acts* 11. 28, 29. and *Acts* 21. 9, 10, 11.

3. Evangelists they had their Calling not immediate, but from the Apostles, as they from Christ, by laying on of Hands. These were to perfect the work that was begun, and to settle the Churches, *Tit.* 1. 5. 1 *Tim.* 1. 3. nor were they confined to any place, *Titus* 1. 5. *In every City*, &c.

3. The ends of these Gifts are two. 1. General, Ephes. 4. 12. *For the perfecting of the Saints. For the work of the Ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ.*

2. More Special, *ver.* 13, 14.

The General Ends are three,

1. Conversion, πρὸς καταρτισμὸν, *for joynting in the Members.* He had compared, (*ver.* 4.) the whole Church to a Body, (as also *ver.* 16.) and every Saint that belongs to that Body unto a Member. The Members of which Body are loosened, cut off, scattered one from another, and from the Head, whilst they remain unconverted to God, and separated from Christ. And the Fruit and Success of Ministers labour, is to bring all these scattered Members into the right place in the Body, fore-ordained to them by God. By Saints, here he means the Elect uncalled: For he speaks of Conversion, as in distinction from growth. Joynting in, is bringing in the Members to the Body, Edification is building them up. Who because they are chosen to be holy before him in love, afore the World was, (*Ephes.* 1. 4.) they are by Anticipation called Saints, and aforehand entituled by what they shall be, as young, great Heirs are Stiled Lords of the places they shall have. They are called also Christ's Sheep, *John* 10. 16. Sheep, not yet brought into the Fold, are Tearmed Sheep. So the *Corinthians*, not yet Converted, and so not God's People, (1 *Pet.* 2. 10.) are tearmed by Election and Anticipation, the People of God, Acts 18. 10. *I have much People in this City, yet to be called.* Thus the Elect of God in an Age afterwards to come unborn, are called our Brethren, and Fellow-Servants, Rev. 6. 11. *And white Robes were given unto every one of them, and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little Season, untill their Fellow-Servants also, and their Brethren that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.* He speaks to the Saints in Heaven in one Age, and of a persecution to come in an after Age, *viz.* Of the Saints to be killed by the *Arrian* or *Anti-Christian* persecution, that was long after to come. Thus also Christ calls his whole Body of Elect, to whom the benefit of his Death should extend, whether Converted, or yet to be Converted: He calls them the Saints on Earth, *Psal.* 16. 2, 3. *John* 12. 19, 20. I pray not for these Apostles alone (says Christ) but for them that shall believe through their word, namely in all Ages. And the thing prayed for, was *Sanctifie them through thy Truth.* So then since the Elect though unconverted, yet by Conversion are made Saints; he therefore Tearms their Conversion here, the joynting in of the Saints. Take it thus.

1. God had given from everlasting to Jesus Christ as an Head, a Company of Persons of Mankind ordained to make a Body to him, and such are their Names and Persons Represented to him. They were, and are in God's and Christ's account viewed, as set all together in one, as they shall be at the last day. But by the fall of Man into sin, the Members of all this Body are actually and in themselves loosened and dissolved from Christ; and every Joynt and Member of that Body, that by fore-ordination was set in its proper Place, Seat, and Socket in the Body, is now rent and torn from the Body, and one from another. Even as the Bones of Men dead are in a charnel House. Now then Ministers are appointed by God to be in their Ministry, the means of Converting Men, and to gather them into one, and to set each Elect Saint in his Right Seat and Socket of this Body. Which, (*Acts* 2. 47.) is called adding to the Church, such as should be saved. Even as the Angels Ministry at the Resurrection, shall be to gather the Elect from all the four winds, such is the work of Ministers now. Neither is this spoken of gathering Members to a particular Church, but is meant of the Church Universal, *ver.* 4. 16.

Use. Hence then learn, that Ministers are to employ their Gifts and Ministry for Conversion of them without, as well as to build up the Saints of their particular charge,

charge, even Pastors and Teachers are to mind this; for you see, they are thereunto appointed. Neither can, or should any particular Church engross the Gifts of their Ministers to their own use only, *Acts* 5. 19. The Angel of the Lord that set them at liberty, said to them; *Go and stand, and speak in the Temple to the People, all the words of this Life. To the People, i.e.* The common sort unconverted, and chose out the most publick place wherein to do it, *viz.* That of the Temple, the place where the *Jews* met. And Christ used to Preach there, *John* 18. 20. And they were bidden to Preach to them, not such Truths only, that may serve to build up the Converted: *but all the words of this Life*, that tend to Conversion, as well as Edification. And they practised accordingly, *ver.* 42. And therefore Saints Converted and gathered into a Church, should not think those Truths dead and dry that tend to Convert, to discover to Men their natural Estate, *&c.* For they tend to quicken Men dead, to enlighten the Elect ordained to be Saints, and to joynt them into Christ.

Use 2. And 2. Learn that Ministers are in a true and proper Sense, and for some ends Ministers to them without, as well as to them within. You see here Pastors and Teachers are as such, as well as πρὸς καταρτισμόν, as for edifying: The Apostles when they Preacht to Cities unconverted, as *Athens*, *Corinth*, *&c.* were they not Apostles to them, tho' the People owned them not as such, nor knew of it? Yet in the Tendency and Ordination of their Office, they were such to them, whenever and where ever they Preached; and if they Converted them, they were much more so to them. Yea, and when they Preacht, the power and presence of God went with them as such, as well to those that were to be Converted, as to those that were Unconverted to turn them, 1 Cor. 9. 2. *If I be not an Apostle unto others; yet doubtless I am to you: For the Seal of mine Apostleship are ye in the Lord.* And God owned me, and lookt at me as your Apostle, when his power accompanied me as such, in turning you to God. Now what is there said of an Apostle (who was sent to Preach in several places) is true of Pastors and Teachers in their Circle, Sphere and place where they are called to Preach. They Preach as Ministers to them without (whether they acknowledge them or not) as well as to their own Flock. And God looking upon them as Men set apart to the Gospel, he accompanies them with the blessing of a Minister, and useth them rather than others, to Convert more generally and more frequently. And tho' they have not that obligation for watching, or power to Censure, Admonish, *&c.* yet as to Preaching, which is an Ordinance of Conversion, they have. *Paul* as an Apostle, had not power of Censure over those that were without, 1 Cor. 5. 12. *What have I to do to judge them that are without?* No, not as an Apostle, had he such a power, yet to Preach to them he had, and that as an Apostle. And therefore it is neither on the one hand a right Assertion to say, that Ministers, when they Preach to others than their own Church; are therein, and as to them to be considered, but as private Men, Gifted Brethren, for God considers them as more, and blesseth them as Ministers; and hath as well ordained them as Pastors, to joynt in the Elect Saints, as to build up. Neither is it on the other side a true Assertion; That because they are Ministers in Preaching to other Congregations that hear them; that therefore they may challenge power of Censure and Excommunication over many Congregations. The Truth lies in the midst.

2. The other end of the Ministry is, as to joynt in the Persons Elect, and to make the number compleat *Extensive*: So to build up, and to be a means of growth unto them that are within; and so *Intensive* to increase their Graces, *Acts* 20. 32. When Men are Converted, they yet want building up to an appointed measure (which yet they know not, but God) without which they should not be saved, no more than if not Converted they should not. *Except ye be Converted*, (says Christ) *and become as little Children, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, Matth.* 18. 3. He speaks to Men Converted. Now he hath appointed the Word of his Grace to bring them to that measure, as well as to Convert; it is for building up of the Body. That word is added, as in Distinction from that former; First, Men must be brought into the Body by a καταρτισμὸν, then built up. The Natural Body after it hath all its Members formed, then 'tis nursed. The Ministry serves for both, the 13 verses tells us, that the Members are to grow up to a measure of Stature, which is Christ's fulness, *Ephes.* 1. 23. Now unto a perfection, a fulness of Body.

Ch. I.

1. There must be a fulness, a compleatness of all Members or Parts; so as none may be wanting; and to this serves Conversion to joynt in the Members, and for this the Ministry is appointed.

2. There must be a fulness of Degrees, and proportionable growth. There must be no Writhen Member; and tho' one be smaller than the other, as the little finger is to the rest; yet it must arrive to it's Stature; and the Stature of each is appointed by God. And when the whole Workmanship appears, and all is set together, there is an infinite Beauty. And to cause them each to grow up, thereto the Ministry serves. Or if you will take the other Metaphor of building, as an Allusion to an House supposed to be made up of Living Stones, as those are, 1 Pet. 2. 5. *Ye also as lively Stones, are built up a Spiritual House, an Holy Priesthood to offer up Spiritual Sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.* As suppose there were an House built of such Stones, having life and growth as the Body of Man hath, which being laid on a Foundation, did of themselves grow up into an House, there would be in such a case; 1. The plaining of the Stone in the Foundation, as in it's proper place, and 2. The growth of the Stones to such a proportion, as should make a comely building. Now such an House are the Saints, Ephes. 2. 20, 21. *And are built upon the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner Stone. In whom all the building fitly framed together, groweth unto an Holy Temple in the Lord.* Now then, Conversion is a building us on the Foundation, a laying us in the building: And growth in Grace is our growing up together into that comely Structure of the whole, and both are accomplisht by the Ministry.

3. The Third general end or use of Pastors and Teachers, is the work of the Ministry: This is usually taken, as brought in between both to shew; 1. That it is a work or calling of Labour ἔργον, as 1 *Tim.* 3. 13. And 2. Of Service, not Lordship. But I take it rather as noting out the whole work of their Calling, and the whole work of their Ministration, which is the immediate end of their Office, as their Duty, and which tends to those two other ends that follow thereon, through God's blessing thereupon, *viz.* that Men are Converted and Edified. And so all particulars of it, as Preaching, Administration of Sacraments, Prayer, are included, *Acts* 6. 4. And thus it imports certain works to be performed by them, that make up the proper special calling of a Man set apart to it. It is διακονίας, 'tis the work of Service, as the word signifies. When *James*, *Paul*, and other Apostles, stile themselves Servants of Christ, they intend it not in that Sense, wherein all Christians are Servants, but they intend their being, as Menial Houshold-Servants, that have a proper constant work every day assigned them. As Officers and Courtiers write themselves Servants to the King in a special manner; and not as other Subjects. Therefore a Minister is stiled by this, as a Name more proper to him, *The Servant of God*, 2 Tim. 2. 24. *Set apart to this work*, Gal. 1. 16. Rom. 1. 1, 2. *An Apostle separated*, and therefore, 1 *Tim.* 3. 2. He calls the very Office a work, because it should be his whole work: *He that desires the Office of a Bishop, desires a worthy work*; and Chap. 4. 15. *Give thy self wholy to them.* It requires the whole Man, let him that Exhorts, be in Exhortation, &c. Rom. 12. 8. *Totus in illo*, Let him make it his calling, and Meditate on these things, and make them his Study. He must be a Scribe instructed, (*Matth.* 13. 52.) that by long use and exercise, and experience of himself and others, hath a Treasure of old Coin and of new, a Stock of Coin laid up, and an importation of new Bullion, *Ezra* 7. 6. He was a ready Scribe in the Law of *Moses*, which the Lord God of *Israel* had given; and the King granted him all his Requests, according to the Hand of the Lord his God upon him. He was a ready Scribe verst in't; and *ver.* 10. *Ezra* had prepared his Heart, to seek the Law of the Lord, and to do it; and to Teach in *Israel*, Statutes and Judgments. He prepared his Heart to study it; and to seek out the meaning, and to Teach it, and he did nothing else in comparison. And (*ver.* 9.) The good Hand of God was with him. You will e're long, come to find that blessing in Men set apart to it, as to a Calling; that is not in all the Gifts of Brethren, that occasionally perform it.

2. The more especial ends of the Ministry are;

1. Positive. 2. Preventive.

1. Positive, the preserving them in, and growing up to the unity of the Faith, &c.

2. Preventive, *ver.* 14.

1. Positive

1. Positive growth in Knowledge and Faith, which is the cause of all other growth, and which Pastors and Teachers should take care of, Jer. 3. 15. *And I will give you Pastors according to mine Heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding*; that is, Wisdom Practical and Spiritual. God hath taken care, and made provision for the Instruction of his People in the Faith and Knowledge, and set apart Men, whose Callings should be to perfect them therein; for which private Prophecying is not sufficient. As in Universities and Colledges; 'tis an ample provision, that young Students have not only publick Acts which themselves perform, and what by private Study and Conference they get; but they have Tutors, and Professors set apart to make it their Employment to Read to them. God hath taken the same care, he would not have his Children Read to *ex tempore*; but they have Men that are as Scribes instructed in the Law; and in a Church, Pastors and Teachers are as Tutors to their Understanding and Affections, to Read constantly, and on purpose to both these ends, and to improve them in knowledge specially; which is therefore alone mentioned; because if it be Spiritual, it works upon the Affections. For if you grow in true Spiritual Knowledge, you will grow in Grace, 2 Pet. 3. 18. *But grow in Grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to him be Glory, &c.* The Church is under Age, Children, as *ver.* 13. not yet come to Stature. And as Great Men have Tutors for their Children in their Travel to perfect their understandings, and observe their Manners: So hath God betrusted his Church in their Pilgrimage with Ministers, whose work and calling it is to Read to you. God accounts the Training up of his Children, as great a matter as you do yours; and therefore hath not left them to the common care one of another.

2. Those words, *until*, &c. *Eph.* 4. 13. Which notes out the Duration, have a double Sense: 1. It means, Age after Age. The Church is instructed more and more in Truths, and their Judgments by the Ministry of all Ages are so cleared, that in the end, through the help of their Ministers, all differences will be ended; and they will have one Faith, *&c.* and be one Man of one Mind. 2. Or it signifies there, being one Foundation of Faith necessary to Salvation, even as one Body (as *ver.* 4.) And these Saints being to come forth in several Ages Successively, which Ages are to last till the day of Judgment; the use and duration of the Ministry, is to last and continue until all those Saints in every Age, come and arrive at this unity of the Fundamentals of Faith, and in the true knowledge of the Son of God, which as necessary to Salvation, God hath ordained; so as it shall be found true of all the Saints at the latter Day, that they all had the same unity of Faith. And the Ministry is to last therefore, until this be performed. And truly, if we look over all Stories, we find down all along, that God hath performed this promise in *Rome* it self, which is still Truth enough to save Men, though the light indeed in these latter days in other things is so cleared, that in denying and gainsaying, sin against light, and so are lost, though otherwise they had Truth enough to save them. So that this word *until*, doth not simply note out that one full *Terminus* or Period of perfection, that shall be at the latter Day, and not until then be accomplisht. (For it cannot well be judged, how at the Day of Judgment and in Heaven, there is the unity of the Faith, where Faith ceaseth) but it serves to note out what was to be a-doing all the time along in every Age. The Emphasis being put upon the word [all] who coming in a Succession into the World, the Ministry must, as a means hereof, continue until [*all*] come to the same *unity*. And so the meaning is, that the Ministry is needful, that they all might Arrive and be found to have the same Faith, and to have arrived to that Stature here, who appearing together at the latter day, make up Christ's fulness. There are common principles and foundations of all Saints in all Ages; as to instance in that one, 1 Pet. 1. 1. Simon Peter *a Servant and an Apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like pretious Faith with us, through the Righteousness of God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ.* There is an unity in the Faith, and that would we have made the Standard for Liberty and Conscience, not to dispense therein. And we may acknowledge this to the Honour of Counsels and Synods, that this we should have lost, if it had not been for Ministers and Counsels.

2. The Ministry is necessary to prevent Errors and Mischiefs, to that purpose.

1. He

Ch. II.

1. He shews the danger of Saints without Officers. 1. They are as Children, the ordinary sort of them, who are easie to be deceived, to take Counters for Gold.

2. They are as Ships at Sea, either riding at Anchor, or such whose Anchor is apt to be broken, and they exposed to be tost in both cases.

1. If they lye at Anchor in the main Sea; yet if a Storm come, they are exposed to the fury of the Waves, and to be tost this way and that way, and to a being unsteady, not knowing what to hold. This the word περιφερεῖν imports, to be carried round about.

Or 2. If their Anchor break, then they are liable to float, and be driven any way on Rocks, Heresies and the like, and so to make Shipwrack of Faith and a good Conscience. Do you use to commit your Ships you have but Merchandize in, unto ordinary Saylors? No, but to Men specially Skilled, to Pilot them, to direct them in a Storm?

2. He shews the advantage which evil Teachers have to do mischief.

1. Many of them are Men, which is spoken oppositely to the generality of Saints who are but Children, and these as Men, can wind and cheat Children as they please. There had need therefore be those that are Men too, and Men of God to encounter them, that have their Senses exercised to discern good and evil, as Heb. 6 13, 14. *For every one that useth Milk, is unskilful in the word of Righteousness; for he is a Babe. But strong Meat belongeth to them that are of full Age, even those who by reason of use have their Senses exercised to discern both good and evil.* Such are necessary, who are able *to convince Gain-sayers*, that have depths of knowledge to answer the depths of Satan.

2. He says, they are Masters of their Art, which is Jugling, and casting false Dice, who can cheat, as Men at Dice and Cards. They can pack Scriptures, so as they shall appear for their cause; they have that slight of Hand, as to deceive your Eye; and you have need of them that should discover them, and their Jugling Tricks, which being once discovered, are the most plain and easie to be avoided.

3. They are High-way-side-Men, that come stealing on you by degrees; and then with Violence Surprise (as having Judgment in an Ambushment) one Opinion shall draw on another cunningly, till being wound in, and encompassed about, you must needs yield. Now if the use and end of the Ministry is to be as a preservative from a Bank and Wall of opposition against these: Then whilst you see such as these Deceivers to continue in the Church (as in these times you do, and they have abounded) and perceive the Saints still as apt to be deceived; there must needs be acknowledged, the remaining and continuance of this Ministry, and the necessity thereof, as there will be to the end of the World.

Use 1. See and consider the greatness of the Benefit and Favour of God, vouchsafed in these Donations of Ministers and Officers to his Church. Which is discovered out of the Text in three things.

1. It is a Gift, and pretious Gift every way. A Gift not for *Jehovah* only, or his Worship, (although in that respect, they are said to be a Gift for the Lord, *Numb.* 18. 6.) But it is withal added, *To you* they are given as a Gift; so here says the Apostle, they are Gifts to Men; and consider the particulars. 1. The Gifts or inward abilities the Men have: How Rich and Pretious are they? It is a Rich Treasure, tho' in Earthen Vessels. 2. To ordain the Officers suited to these Gifts, the Administrations as well as the Gifts; these are from the Lord, 1 *Cor.* 12. As Numb. 18. 7. *I have given the Priests Office, as a Service of Gift.* God looks upon the Ordination of the Office it self, as a Gift. 3. That he should in his providence to our days, through the vertue of his Ascension raise up Men thus Gifted, to supply his Church withal; this is more than that Covenant made to *Noah* of, that Harvest and Spring shall not cease for ever. And 4. God gives them his Holy Spirit, inclining their Spirits to undertake this Service (so contemned in the World) so willingly.

2. They are the Gifts bequeathed us at Christ's Ascension. And so they his last Gifts, whereby he would express his love; as *Eliah* at his Ascending, let fall his Mantle; which with a double portion of his Spirit went. Yea, they are the Fruits, not only of Christ's Ascension, but of his Descending also; and that must be a matter of infinite Moment; for the effecting which, Christ must take such a Journey backward and forward, from Heaven to Earth, and then to Heaven again.

3. The

3. The Donative is great, in respect of the Blessing which God follows all there with. Indeed the Apostle mentions it not; but in citing it, referreth to all that the *Psalm* speaks of it. Now (*Psal.*68.19.) It is there added, he Ascended to give or receive Gifts for Men, *that he might dwell among them.* It fills up the Allusion to an House, when Christ Ascended, he became absent, going into a far Country; but to the end he might visit them with his Spirit, and Spiritual Presence. He first builds himself an House on Earth. (I will build my Church, says Christ) and then he furnisheth it with all sorts of Officers and Furniture; and when 'tis thus compleated, he comes down into it, and dwells in it, and delights to do so; and he there keeps open House for all comers. That Exhortation (*Colos.*3.16.) *Let the word of God dwell richly in you*, is spoken to them as a Church, (*ver.*15.) 'Tis an Allusion to God's keeping House among his Saints, and he loves they should fare richly and deliciously, and lean all that would come in among them, which is done by Gifts of Officers specially. This invites him to come and Sup and dwell with them. For so it runs, *He gave or received Gifts, that he might dwell.* Not but that he dwelt in these Saints afore: But much more now, when he finds all his Houshold-Servants about him to attend him.

4. The Donative appears to be great from the ends thereof, which are every way full; for both extensively they serve to bring into him all his Members, and to make his Body compleat; and to add to his Church, such as shall be saved; and so to bring in Honour to God, which consists as a King's, in the multitude of his Subjects. And it is the Church's Honour to Encrease and Multiply, and the means of each Person's growth, is by what every one supplies. And intensively, these Officers and Ministers do also serve to build up, and cause to grow to a full Stature (as here) every Member also, *Acts* 20.32. *Paul* committed to the word of God's Grace, to build them up, &c. And it is as if he he had said, now you have Ministers among you, I make account you are setled; you want nothing but building up, until you come to Heaven, and for that I have seen you provided; And so I leave and commit you to the word of Grace.

CHAP. III.

The Character and Duty of a True, Faithful Minister of the Gospel.

1 Tim. 4. 16. *For in doing this, thou shalt both save thy self, and them that hear thee.*

THese words are the Close or Conclusion of a Set and Solemn Exhortation made to *Timothy*; and in his Person, to all that are or intend the Ministry. The Exhortation it self is continued along from the eleventh verse, to this last Period of it. The matter thereof wholy concerns that part of a Minister's Office; Preaching or Teaching, (*ver.*11.) And this in distinction from Ruling the Church; of which in the next Chapter he Treats at large. And the design of the Apostle, is to give several directions and instructions to him, how to render himself a powerful and profitable Preacher unto the Salvation of himself and others, intermixt with stimulations to care and diligence in the observation of those Directions. The Directions and Instructions are reduced into two Heads; as appears both by the entrance into that part of his Discourse, (*ver.*12,13.) and then again in the conclusion of it in this verse.

1. He directs him to have a special care of his own Personal Converse, *verse* 12. *Be thou an Example of the Believers in word*, or good Conference or Discourse *in Conversation*, or Deeds answerable, &c. Christ Taught with Authority, and not as the *Scribes*. For they say, and do not, says Christ.

2. He directs him to furnish himself with meet Abilities for Preaching it self, v.13. *Till I come, give attendance to Reading, to Exhortation, to Doctrine*, Till I come: As if he should have said, until when I shall afford thee other helps by conference, and the like; I think meet to give these Instructions, which is all I can do by an Epistle. Here is first, the Preparatory part, that he must furnish him with Materials, give *attendance to Reading, with Meditation and Study*, (*ver.* 15.) Now this Reading must have

Ch. III. have an Object: And what that is *Paul's* Parallel Exhortation to the same, *Timothy* resolves us, 2 Tim. 3. 16. *All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for Doctrine.* 2. As for that which is here in one word Tearmed Exhortation; there he brancheth it forth into the particulars of it, *Profitable for Reproof, Correction, Instruction in Righteousness. That the Man of God may be perfect*; as you say he is a perfect Artist; a perfect Physitian; that is, skill'd in all these parts of Learning, Requisite to that Function; in Anatomy, in Simples, in the Nature and Symptoms of Diseases, and in the cures of them. And thus he Subjoyns, explaining himself; and it is Exegetical when he says, *Throughly furnished to every good work, viz.* of the Ministry. As in general he Tearms it, (Eph 4.12.) *The work of the Ministry*, so here he expresseth his instructions, that to every good work, that *Timothy* should be furnished, that is, to every business which belongs to that Function. For so in his intention here, it is to be Restrained, *viz.* to such particular work, as Doctrine Reproof, *&c.* which he had mentioned, and what ever else there may be supposed.

3. We have the Executive part, wherein he reduceth the work of Preaching to two Heads. 1. Exhortation, which we call Application, provoking and stirring Men up to practice. 2. *Doctrine*, Teaching, Explaining, Confirming Divine Truths out of the Scriptures, in a Dogmatical way. *Solomon* speaking Summarily of Preaching in the Synagogues (which he calls their Assemblies, which had Masters or Rulers over them; or rather (as others think) Interpreters of Sacred Scriptures, then written by himself and others, infallibly guided by one Shepherd) Thus Eccles. 12. 9. *And moreover because the Preacher was Wise, he still taught the People Knowledge; yea, he gave good heed, and sought out, and set in order many Proverbs.* He makes the same Division of the work of Preaching. The *words of the Wise* (says he) *are as Goads pricking* on to Holiness: And as *Nails* which rivet and fasten Truths in Men's minds, or which are as Nails to hold up and support lesser chains of Truth, that are Consequential from those that are more fundamental, and hang upon them.

Now *Paul's* Scope is, as to exhort *Timothy* to a Diligence in these two parts of Preaching; so in his Reading the Scriptures, to have these two parts in his Eye and Design. And therefore it is, he joyns these two with that of Reading in one continued Speech; because the use he would have him make of Reading, should be still, to sort and adjust what materially in Scripture he found serving unto these two parts of Preaching, either to strengthen and thicken all sorts of Exhortation, as there should be occasion, with Testimonies of Scriptures: Or if he were to explain and confirm any Truths, to have in a readiness Scriptures to do it by: That in what he speaks, though out of never so fresh and full experience, he might not seem to speak barely as a Man; but should still produce the Scripture, speaking the same thing, as *Paul* tells us that he did, (1 Cor. 9. 8.) *Say I these things as a Man? Saith not the Law the same also?* And as you have it, Acts 26. 22. *Saying none other things then what the Prophets and* Moses *did say, should come to pass.* And the Scriptures are an abundary, for all sorts of Truths and Experiences Spiritual; for Exhortations, Doctrines and Confirmations of all sorts. And when a Man speaks his own Faith and Experience. in the very meaning and sense of the Holy Ghost, it hath power in it; yea, his power to accompany it. *If any Man speak, let him speak as the Oracles of God*, 1 *Pet.* 4. 11.

4. And again at the 15*th verse*, he calls upon him to Meditate on these things. Which Speech refers (as *Chrysostom* says) to the things spoken, *ver.* 13. And therein (say I) it refers not barely or so much to the Precepts or Instructions themselves, as to the things propounded in them; Namely, the Scriptures read by him, that by Meditation and Study, he should search forth the mind of God in them; and by Industry and Intention of Mind, sort what he finds therein unto Exhortation and Doctrine; yea, and make this his Calling, ἐν τούτοις ἴσθω, *Sis totus in illis, Give thy self wholy to them.* He was not to Read or Study the Scriptures, as a private Christian is bound to do, (which is his Duty and Character, Psal. 1. 2. *In the Law of God, he Meditates Day and Night*) but as one that is to make Provision for the Comfort, Direction, and Instruction of others, as one who is to Read to the end, he may be able to Teach, Exhort, *&c.* (as was observed) He is to do these things, as a Man that is separated to the Gospel, *Rom.* 1. 1. who is as a publick Steward or Provider to a great Family, as both Christ and *Paul* compares the Miuisters of the Gospel, Christ in *Matth.* 13. 52. *Paul* in 2 *Cor*, 4. 1. A Minister therefore is to be furnished with a Treasure and a Stock,

Stock, as Christ there speaks and compares it. And it is not his Duty to do this for a time, and then to think himself furnished enough; but he is to continue, to persevere in them. So in this verse, the Apostle still carrying these things in his Eye, enjoyns him so to continue in this Study, as his profiting might appear to all, *verse* 15. his profiting in knowledge in the Scriptures, [*Gal.* 1. 14. I profited says *Paul*, in the *Jews* Religion, in the knowledge of it, and zeal for it) as well as his profiting in Piety. And all this concerns those who in their own intentions, have set their Hearts upon the Ministry, as the mark of their Calling, and are in preparation to it, as well as it doth concern those that actually are in the Calling of the Ministry.

Now then consider, that *Paul* should give these Directions and Counsels to *Timothy*, who had something extraordinary in his Call, it was by Prophetical Designment, (1 *Tim.* 1 18) The Holy Ghost setting him forth unto it by Name. Even as (*Acts* 13. 2.) You read that *Paul* and *Barnabas* were by Name at a Fast; and as it should seem, this our *Timothy*, was at a like Church-meeting at *Ephesus*, *ver.* 14. of this Chapter; at which *Paul* was present, 2 *Tim.* 1. 6. And therefore he may be supposed to have had a participation of Gifts extraordinary, which was common in those times. He also had from a Child, been trained up in the Knowledge of the Scriptures, 2 *Tim.* 3. 15. and had now, (when this was wrote) as a Preacher, been experienced long in them. Yet he calls a-fresh upon *Timothy*, to give attendance to Reading, Meditation or Study; and to give himself together with Preaching wholy unto these things. What pretence then can there be, either that the Ministry, or the Preparation to the Ministry, is not now in our days as a Calling, with Labour and Study, as other Callings, to be attained?

There is a Generation of Men, that are against acquired knowledge, or that which is sought out by Study, or received from others, and would have all infused. Now consider that *Timothy* had the main and chief of his knowledge this way, 2 Tim. 3. 14. *Continue in the things thou hast learned, and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them*, he had learned them of *Paul*. *Paul* indeed himself, had it by *Revelation*, Gal. 1. 14. *I indeed*, (says *Paul*) *had the Gospel by* Revelation: I neither received it of Man, neither was I taught it, but by the Revelation of Jesus Christ, which was my special priviledge. *Revelation* is there opposed unto two other ways of knowing Divine Truth. 1. By Tradition, which is receiving it from Man; as most do their Religion. 2. By instruction, and Teaching as *Paul* Taught *Timothy*, and this is the way of ordinary Christians and Professors, and hinders not the knowing things, by Faith or Experience. For so *Paul* there tells us, that *Timothy* had been assured of them, and yet Taught; and *Timothy* was by Teaching, to propagate them to other Teachers, 2 Tim. 2. 2. *And the things that thou hast heard of me among many Witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful Men, who shall be able to teach others also.* And this may be had from Men's Writings, as well as *ore tenus*, by word of Mouth, witness *Paul*'s both Books and Parchments, 2 Tim. 4. 13. *The Cloak that I left at* Troos *with* Carpus, *when thou comest bring with thee, and the* Books, *but especially the Parchments.* Books were those of other Mens Writings, and Parchments his own (which he therefore put a mark especially upon) his own *excerpta*, or notes gathered out of others: Or because, if he had a *Revelation*, he might forget it, he had therefore his Memorials in Writing. Yea, *that* word τὸν φελόνην (which we Translate Cloak) as *Estius* and others say, was a Case for Books, *librorum repositorium* from φέλλω, which signifies a Book, or the Bark of Trees, on which then Books were written. *Daniel* also tho' a Prophet, understood by Books the Period of the Captivity, Dan. 9. 2. *I* Daniel, *understood by Books the number of the years, whereof the word of the Lord came to* Jeremiah *the Prophet.* *Jeremiah* had the Prophecy by *Revelation*; but the accomplishment *Daniel* understood by Records, and so set himself to Fast: And God Recompensed his Diligence in the search of this with a *Revelation* of a more happy Period, the coming of Christ in the Flesh, at the Close of that day's Fast. And what says our Saviour Christ also? Mat: 13. 52. *Every Scribe which is instructed unto the Kingdom of Heaven, is like a Man that is an Housholder, which bringeth forth out of his Treasure, things new and old.* 1. He speaks of Ministers of the New Testament, who are instructed or furnished for the Kingdom of Heaven. And yet, 2. He gives them the same Title which they had under the Old, *viz. Scribes.* For in this respect, their calling and work is much alike, as also the means of attaining knowledge, Matth. 23. 34. *I send unto you Prophets, Wise Men and Scribes*, (says Christ) speak-

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Ch. V.

ing of the Preaching of the Gospel. Of *Ezra* it is said, Ezra 7. 6. *He was a ready Scribe in the Law of* Moses, *which the Lord had given. Ready*, some read it *diligent*, as that which had made him ready, so you have it, *Prov.* 22. 29. A Man diligent in his business. And *Ezra* 7. 10. it was added, *That* Ezra *had prepared his Heart, to seek the Law of the Lord*; that is, had set himself with all his might, to find out the meaning of it, and to do it, and to Teach in *Israel* Statutes and Judgments. 3. Christ in that Text, *Matth.* 13. 52. means, that they are to be furnished with a store and Treasure of knowledge, laid up aforehand, and ready at hand; and 4. That they should have the knowledge of former Ages, and so bring forth things old, as well as new Truths observed in present times. And therefore *Decreta Prudentum, the Decrees and Interpretations of other Ages and Persons are to be consulted.* For though Christ hath promised, that what ever Secret is in the Scriptures, shall be uttered and known openly, and upon the House tops, (*Mark* 4. 21, 22.) yet his promise is not, that every one shall be in any one Age only; but he doth this Successively, and in one Age one Secret is discovered, that was not afore. One Age Sows, and another Reaps, (*John* 4. 36, 37.) and day instructs night, and night day, *Psal.* 19. Which passages in that *Psalm*, the Apostle interprets of the Teachings and Writings of Apostles and Ministers, that go forth into all the World, *Rom.* 10. 18. The darkest night in Popery, as it received and retained much light from *Augustine*, whose Writings preserved the Foundations in the *Romish* Church, and his light as the day of the Primitive Times, hath Transmitted and Taught us this in this day of the Gospel, many Truths which otherwise we should have been to seek in. And answerably the Apostle, (*Eph.* 4.) tells us; that from the time of Christ's Ascension, Pastors and Teachers should Teach the whole Universal Church to come, to the end of the World, *ver.* 13. which could not be, did not the Ministry of one Age, afford and traduce down light unto another. Thruth's are Christ's currant Mony, for one Age as well as another; and some of them are stampt in one Kings Reign, others in another. If we should have had no more Silver in this Kingdom, then what was brought in our Age, how poor should we be? That is Revealed to one, that is not to another; It was so even in those times, when knowledge by *Revelation* was most frequent, 1 *Cor.* 14. 30. And how doth the Apostle take such Men up? *What* (says he) *came the word of God out from you? Or came it only to you? ver.* 36. as if he should have said, God hath Taught other Ages and Churches, as well as you. And you cannot say of any one, we have no need of you; that is, of your light or help, as (1 *Cor.* 12.) the Apostle, to another, though like purpose, infers.

Whereas some Men are for Preaching only *Extempore*, and without Study, *Paul* bids *Timothy* Meditate, and Study, and give his mind wholy to these things. Even in writing some Scriptures, the Pen-men, though guided infallibly by the Holy Ghost, yet used Study and Meditation and Art in the contriving of them. That *Psalm* of *Psalms*, *Psal.* 45. that Song of Songs about Christ's Kingdom, is an evidence of this. It was a Poem, and of all other the Master-piece, and the first rude Draught of that Song of Songs, which *Solomon* after wrote, and the very Epitome of it. Now what is his Preface to it? *My Heart is boyling up a good matter, ver,* 1. (so in your Margents) it was boyled in his thoughts (as the Meat-offering in the Law with Oyl, *Lev.* 7. 9.) and so it was prepared by Study, to be offered up to God. *I speak the things which I have made, touching the King* (says the Psalmist, *Psal.* 45: 1.) *i. e.* I speak my works to the King. He calls it, as Men do their Writings, his Works; and Dedicates it as Men do works to the King. And again, *Solomon* that wrote the Canticles and Ecclesiastes, professeth that in Teaching the People, he gave good heed, and sought out, and set in order many *Proverbs*; he weighed things as in Scales, as some read it, sought them out, and set them in order; yea, and he sought to find out words that might take, *Ecclesiast.* 12. 9, 10. All which imports, that it did cost Study.

Yea, if it be considered, these Men who decry Learning and Study, yet do not themselves, keep to this their Law; for that sound knowledge which they have, or retain, hath been from the ministry of this Age, which hath diffused it, and lighted the whole House; and yet unthankfully they set up against them, with that light they have had by Retail from them. Neither can they be said to Preach *Extempore*, or what is at that present Revealed; for they Preach those things which their thoughts and speeches have been exercised in before. So as ordinarily the Extemporarinesse is in respect of memory; for it is what comes to their memories of notions again and

again

again Meditated upon. The Holy Ghost may be supposed to bring to remembrance, things before considered in Study and Meditation, or reading in order to Doctrine and Exhortation in publick. And that place of Christ's, Luke 21. 14. *Meditate not aforehand what to say*, is spoken in case of Persecution, (*ver.* 12.) and of being brought to the Bar; which is in an extraordinary season, and so hath usually extraordinary assistance: It is not spoken of ordinary Sermons in the Pulpit. And again they were ordinarily taken on the suddain; and haled away to answer presently, as Christ himself was; and so could not Premeditate, to comfort them therefore, he gives forth that promise. And again, it excludes not Premeditation; for the Christians studyed, and Studyed Apologies: But it is spoken against Anxiety, and Solicited that way, and to provoke them rather to a dependency on the Spirit to help them, though they had prepared never so much.

I shall only close this, with the very conclusion of *Solomon's Ecclesiast.* which hath an Admonition in it full of weight, Eccles. 12. 12. *And further by these, My Son, be Admonished: Of making many Books there is no end, and much Study is a wearinesse of the Flesh.* Concerning the Scope and Coherence of this; I observe, 1. That he having commended the Writings of Sacred Scriptures (wrote by himself and the Prophets inspired by God immediately) unto every Man's Study and Search, he gives a Caveat and an Admonition concerning Reading and Studying too many other Books. Those words, *And further by these be Admonished*, seems to import only a superadded Admonition: As we use to say, *over and above, and in fine, take this Admonition.* Others read it thus, *Magis* or *potius ex his Admonitus*, that is, *Rather seek Knowledge and Instruction* ex his, *out of these Books, than others that are of Men's Writings, and Forraign to a Christian.* Exercise thy self in the Study of the Scriptures, and what doth best serve to open and explain them. Others (which comes all to one) Paraphrase it thus, *Amplius his, Cave quæras, Take heed of seeking too inordinately, other Knowledge then what is in these: Or then that tendeth to explain these.* Or if you will have my mind says *Solomon* more plainly, take heed of making or reading many other Books; for there is no end, no satisfaction in them. And besides much Study is wearisom to the Flesh, and preys upon the best of the Spirits. I observe, he doth not altogether Condemn reading other Books, or making of them, only preferring others to these, or not counting these most excellent: And 2. He condemns reading too many; and 3. He finds fault with it, when it tends to decay of Health and Spirits. And this is to be reckoned among these Vanities, which we had cryed down as vain, and not simply unlawful, as Gardens, Orchards, &c. are not. 2. He did this in his times, when the Holy Scriptures were but few, in comparison of that access which we have had since; for *David* had but *Moses's* Law: Yet you see how he Studyed it day and night. 3. He propounds in the Coherence of these words with the former his own example, as he had done in other things, throughout this Book. He was a Writer and Reader of many Books, perhaps the greatest in the World; and many of them were not Scriptures; but of other things; and he found it Vanity, as he had found the rest. It had took up too much of his time, and had shortned his Days. And therefore (says he) I commend to you rather my Sacred Writings, than all the other Books of mine or others in the World. And indeed the Holy Scriptures wrote by him only have remained, when the other are lost. Yea, 4. By the next words; *Fear God, and keep his Commandments*, he would insinuate, that even Study had took up too much of the Man from Piety, and keeping up Communion with God. Therefore so we should Study, as that the whole and main of our Souls, may be in the Worship of God, and doing his Will, which these Books teach you, says he, and none other. And last of all, I observe it is his last Admonition, and he reserved it to bring it in last. For 1. Learning is of all other, the best Vanity this World hath. *Wisdom* (says he) *is better than folly*, and so is apter to draw the Heart away from God, and his Holy Scriptures; and yet even this is a Vanity, says *Solomon*, as well as the rest. He had before concluded in general, and made an end of reckoning up any more Vanities, (*ver.* 8. Vanity of Vanities, all is Vanity, says the Preacher) only as having forgotten one as necessary to be mentioned, as any other; he brings it in with a *Furthermore* (as our Translators read it) as if he had said last of all, I gave you this Admonition, to the end it may the more stick with you, *Further my Son, be Admonished.* And he doth it, as you have heard upon occasion of commending the Scripture too, as alone sufficient to make one wise in the fear of God, and all this is done to make the admonition more weighty and solemn.

Ch. IV

CHAP. IV.

Of the Ministers Maintenance. Of the Right, & Tenure, by which he hath a claim to it: Of the ways, and means, by which it is to be setled and raised.

IN discoursing of the maintence which is due to a Minister of the Gospel we must first consider upon what a Tenure he holds his right to it, and that consideration will guide us to find out by what Rule this Maintenance is to be proportioned.

1. The Ministers of Christ under the new Testament hold their Tenure of Right to a due Maintenance, by vertue of the Laws of common Justice as are practised between Men and Men in *like* affairs. By the same right; on which all other stipends of Places, Offices and Callings in Kindgoms, or common wealths, are founded, these sacred Officers may challenge a Maintenance due, and proper for them. As both Civil and Military Offices, as that of a Captain in war, or of a Judge, Chancellor, *&c.* have a stipend from the state propotion'd according to the Rules of common Justice currant among Men, so a Minister ought to have a Maintenance from the Church, by the same Rule of Justice, suited to the dignity and Labour of his place and calling.

The Stipends of Offices in humane Governments are measured out by these Rules:

1. The dignity of the place is considered, and due provision is made, that the person may have an allowance sufficient to uphold the honour of his Function.

2. The expences of the Office are also rated, that the person may be furnish'd to discharge all that his being in such a place requires.

3. The Hazard which he may undergo in his Office comes also into Consideration.

4. The Labour and pains of the places and Calling are weigh'd, and a due Consideration had of them.

5. The breeding, and Education of the persons before they can be fitted for such an Office is also put into the Balance.

6. An account is made how beneficial and useful a Person in such an Office is to the Government.

All these things in all sorts of Offices are valued among Men, by the common rate that Justice currant among men doth put upon them. And all these considerations so far as they are found in this sacred Office of the Ministry (as they are all) are by that standard of common Justice, and Customs of Men in like Callings, to be regarded and this Office is to have its stipend answerably proportion'd. Now that this Calling holds upon these Tenures of Common Justice is evident, because the pleas us'd in the New Testament for the Maintenance of Christ's Ministers are founded upon this claim, and this right and Tenures are pleaded therein.

1. Let us consider the Text, 1 Cor. 9. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. *Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? who planteth a Vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? Say I these things as a Man? or saith not the Law the same also? For it is written in the* Law of Moses, *Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the Ox that treadeth out the Corn: Doth God take care for Oxen? Or saith he it altogether for our sakes? for our sakes, no doubt, this is written: that he that ploweth should plow in hope: and he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope. If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we should reap your carnal things? If others be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather? Nevertheless, we have not used this power: but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the Gospel of Christ. Do ye not know that they which Minister about holy things, live of the things of the Temple? and they which wait at the Altar, are partakers with the Altar? Even so hath the Lord ordained, that they which preach the Gospel, should live of the Gospel.* Mark the instances which he brings. 1. Of Souldiers, and their places in War. 2. Of Planters of a Vineyard. 3. Of a Shepherd. And he adds this expression, *Say I these things as a man?* He insists on the examples and customs of Men, in the like cases, the same common Rules of Justice holding in this case, as there. And (as *Pareus* observes) he also pleads all sorts of Titles of Justice, which serve to strengthen the Fundamental Title. 1. He mentions the customs of men in like callings, as in that of Souldiers, *&c.* 2. He takes notice what natural Justice it is, to plow and sow in hope of a crop, and to reap in hope of eating the fruits of the labour. 3. He remarks

marks the moral equity of the Judical Law, which forbids to muzzle the mouth of the Ox which treadeth out the Corn, and tho' it would be lawful to do so under the Gospel, yet God thereby taught a Rule of common Justice to be observed among all callings of Men, (for this was not a Type) and this among other things God taught by it, that in Justice a reward is due to a Labourer, since it is so to a Beast, and the Apostle herein pleads the Justice, not the Type of the thing. 4. The Apostle considers the Equality of commutative Justice, and what the Laws of Exchange require that value should be given for value (*verse* 11.) and tho', indeed, he doth not say, *Our spiritual things*, as he says *Your carnal*, yet he plainly expresseth that it is *we* who sow them. He, in justice, requires only *parva pro Magnis, small things for great*. For the fruits, and benefits of this calling, are to be considered, which exceed in proportion all carnal things whatever. 5. The Apostle takes notice of the Equity of the Ceremonial Law, *verse* 13, 14.

2. The other Text of Scripture to be considered is, 1 Tim. 5. 17, 18. *Let the Elders that Rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the Word and Doctrine. For the Scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the Ox that treadeth out the Corn: and the labourer is worthy of his reward.* 1. He speaks of honour to be paid to them, now Honour was a due as well as Tribute, which was exacted, *Rom.* 13. 7. And it was due in justice. 2. He tells us that *the labourer is worthy of his hire*; Every word which he useth, expresseth matter of Justice, 1. *Labourer*, This shews that, to the work, in justice the reward is to be proportioned, *Rom.* 4. 4. 2. The Apostle expresseth a worthiness of his work, that it deserves a valuable consideration, *That a Labourer is worthy of his hire.* 3. The Apostle mentions *hire*, whereby he intends a Covenanted reward, such as is set by mutual agreement, so μισθος signifies; 4. The words are, τοῦ μισθοῦ αὐτοῦ. *of his hire, i. e.* which he in justice may call his

3. This was also the first institution of Christ, Mat. 10. 9, 10. *Provide neither Gold nor Silver, nor Brass in your purses: Nor scrip for your Journey, neither two Coats, neither shooes, nor yet staves: (for the workman is worthy of his meat.)* And to this institution of Christ the Apostle plainly refers in both these fore-cited Texts, 1 *Cor.* 9. 1 Tim. 5. From all this there flows these Corollaries.

1. In the estimate of Christ in his institutions there is a great difference between the duty of relieving the necessities of our poor Brethren, and this duty of maintaining the Ministers of the Gospel. For tho' the relief of the poor be an act of spiritual justice, unto which, by spiritual obligations, in relation to God, and Christ, we are bound: yet the Maintenance of Ministers is farther due, by the Rules of all humane common Justice that are found among men: So as Rules of humane justice exact it, and Rules of humane Justice proportion it according to the desert and merit of the thing. But the poor have not power to claim relief by such a Title, for their Tenure is meerly from the obligation which the Gospel lays upon us. I find, indeed, a Collection for the Saints at *Jerusalem* to be called a debt, *Rom.* 15. 27. but it was a peculiar case, for from this Church of *Jerusalem* came the word of the Gospel, and the blessings of Spiritual things, to the *Romans* and other *Gentiles*, but this word did not come so from *Corinth* (*Cor.* 14. 36.) or any other Church. And again, all communication of benefits to the poor is matter of meer service to God (2 *Cor.* 9. 12.) nay, it is called Acts of grace (2 *Cor.* 8. 19.) But this is not meerly so, for it is both a gift, and a Sacrifice. And then besides, the Object of this communication to the poor is a certain condition of men, which wisdom must discern, and judge of, and proportion succors accordingly: but the Object of this act of Ministers Maintenance is a settled calling, and labour of men, in rewarding which justice must be shewn. The Rule of measuring out Collections for the poor is as God had blest men (1 *Cor.* 16. 2.) and that instance is only concerning such a Collection, but now in all cases, and respects, as the Labourer is worthy of his hire, so a Minister deserves a due subsistence.

2. If the Maintenance of a Minister is thus to be regulated by the common rules of Justice in use, and custom, and which are found in like cases; then it is also to be rated according to all these considerations, to which a regard is had in all like Callings. 1. It is to be consider'd that honour is due to Ministers on account of the Dignity of their Office and work, 1 Tim. 5. 17. *Let the Elders that Rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in Word and Doctrine.* 2. The necessary charges of their Office are to be considered, for by it they are bound to be charitable and hospitable unto others. 3. The hazard to which by their calling they are expos'd

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expos'd, is to be had in consideration. As it is a Spiritual warfare, so as Souldiers who stand in the fore-front of the Battle are most open to wounds or death, so Ministers in times of Persecution are most obnoxious to danger. 4. The labour of their Calling is considerable. It is inward especially, 1 *Tim.* 5. 17. It is the labour of the mind which spends the best Spirits, and preys on the vitals, and therefore it is the greatest labour of all other. 5. Their Education, and breeding for this Calling is long, and expensive. And Mens pensions in other places, and callings, are valued in the consideration of what is requisite to them. 6. The more, and greater benefits any calling brings, the more it is priz'd, and valued. If Ministers bring in Spiritual blessings to you (as they do) it is but equal that they should partake in those carnal blessings which you enjoy. We may, in justice plead all these considerations, and require as Good and equal justice; as is found to be distributed with respect to any other the like callings among Men. The Rule of Justice is not what the custom of men is to give to Ministers but it is to be taken from the measures of proportion which Men observe in respect to other Callings, which have the fore-mention'd resemblances to this of the Ministry. 3. The party himself who is this sacred Officer of Christ hath a right, and power to set a value on the merits of his office, as well as the people, who are the other party, in all like callings it is so. Therefore neither the deacon, nor the people can oblige the Minister to accept of what proportion of allowance they please to set him: But he himself hath a right, and power to plead for, and claim a just valuable stipend, and accordingly to rate what his Office deserves. It is not left therefore to the wisdom of either the Deacons, or the people, to adjust the value of it. Therefore the Apostle in reference to, . this maketh use of the word ἐξουσία, which implies not only *power*, but *authority*. He useth the word three or four times on this occasion. 1 *Cor.* 9. 4, 5, 6. And he expresseth a right, a title, and dominion, which they had over them in this respect, 1 *Cor.* 9. 12. whereby it is plainly asserted that the people have not a power over the Minister to oblige him to take whatever they are pleas'd to give, but that he hath authority to claim what is justly due to his calling. For not only Apostles had this power here spoken of (*v.* 12.) but ordinary Officers, for his words are, *If others be partakers of this power over you*, and by others he means ordinary Ministers, for the false Apostles preach'd *Gratis*, not requiring any consideration. 4. Unless there were something peculiar found in this calling of the Ministry, which is not to be found in any calling else; unless there were found some Gospel-duty obliging, and requiring Ministers to forego their Right (which, in justice, is to be insisted on by them) and to give themselves up to the free arbitary discretion of the Church and her Deacons; or unless there were some certain proportion set by God under the new Testament, as there was under the Old; A mutual Covenant between Minister and People is the best & most effectual course to adjust this affair. This is evident from the instances, of which the Apostle makes use, 1 *Cor.* 9. 7. Unto a Labourer in a Vineyard a set penny is due, *Mat.* 20. *v.* 2. Souldiers also have their fixed pay. The word us'd by the Apostle, which is ὀψωνίοις signifies a Souldiers stipend, as *Beza* observes: And when the Apostle says (1 *Tim* 5. 18. That *the labourer is worthy of his hire*, that which he is worthy of is called his *hire*. The word μίσθος signifies *merces pacta, a reward fixed by mutual Agreement*, and therefore they were not to stand to the Courtesy of those who were to give it them. Nor doth the Apostle use this expression as a proverb only, but as a Rule, which is to be observed. what is said (*Jam.* 5. 4.) of *the hire of the labourers*, hath respect to *Deut.* 24. 15. The instance of Shepherds also hath a regard to what was the usage in *Laban*'s time, when great men had others under them to look after their flocks, and agreed to reward them for their labour by giving them some of the Sheep which they kept, *Gen.* 30. 31. And to this custom the Apostle alludes, when he says, *Who feedeth a flock*, &c. From all this it necessarily follows that the Minister's stipend is not to be left to arbitary determinations, but as the Minister and the Church which calls him are joyn'd together by a mutual Covenant, so his stipend is to be settled by a like Covenant according to the dictates of nature's equalest Rule. By this way all complaints will be avoided, all things will be preserv'd in peace between all parties, whether people, or officers, & the one will be tyed to the other most fastly by their own Cords. I shall now examine what is pleaded for leaving the Minister's Maintenance unto the free, & voluntary contribution of the People. 1. Any instances out of the old Testament, to this purpose, do not seem to me convincing: what is moral, indeed, in them holds, and accordingly the Apostle brings them, not to be measures of proportioning a Maintenance for Ministers in like manner, but he only refers to the Moral justice of them: That as the Levites lived wholly on the

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Altar, so it was but just that Ministers should live wholy on the Gospel, *i. e.* that they should not live on their own charges, but on what they have for preaching the Gospel, that they should not live on their own means, but upon that which comes in by the Gospel, 1 *Cor.* 9. 13, 14. But the particle *so* doth not mean that that they should live after the same way and manner, but only that there was justice, and equity for one as well as the other. And so our Lord Jesus Christ ordain'd, *Mat.*10.9.10. So that according to that common Rule of Justice, *The labourer is worthy*, &c. Christ form'd his institution with respect to the Ministry of the Gospel. They were indeed extraordinary Disciples,& there what he says to them as such(*Ma.*10.8.is not a rule of perpetual obligation but he afterward alters this rule with respect to ordinary Ministers in saying that *the workman is worthy of his meat*,Mat.10.10.And he adds these further,*Lu.*10 7,8.Thus as Christ, in*Mat.*18.ordains the institution of a Church,so here,he ordains a rule for the Maintenance of Ministers.But to answer any*Objections* that may be brought from instances under the Old Testament,it is to be considered that there is not the same way now for the maintenance of the Ministers of God,as there was then, but there are many differences between one and the other. 1. The *Levites* then were a Tribe set apart from their birth by God himself,and accordingly God says that he would be their portion, *Num.*18.20. All these dues therefore which the people paid to them were first paid to God,and he gave them to the *Levites* : So that they held them not by any Law of humane Justice, but by Tenure from God, for as these dues were paid to God, so he gave them unto them.But maintenance is due in justice to Ministers,as they are labourers,by the same Rule whichChrist gives that the labourer is worthy of his hire:And yet too because Ministers are an ordinance of God, and they serve to the worship of God, therefore offerings made to them, are sacrifices to God, and thus they are a gift also, as well as a due : But yet so as the first Object,to whom the due is pay'd, is the Minister, not God,tho' they communicate to him for God's sake,*Gal,6.6. i.e.* that you may have an ordinance to serve to God's worship, be sure to maintain it,and therefore this giving to a Minister is called sowing to the Spirit, when all other expences are called sowing to the flesh,*Gal.6.8.* 2. This chief Maintenance of the *Levites* under the Law was not left to the freedom of the givers, nor did God trust men to assign the proportions of their Maintenance but he did it himself,since he appointed not only free Offerings, but Tithes.There was a portion set for them,and a fifth part of every Man's Estate went one way or other for the Maintenance of the Levites To leave all therefore only to free offerings now, and to cut off set Stipends, or Tithes, is to put us Ministers into a worse condition than the Levites were.And surely God hath not bound us to these hard Terms: what peculiar bond hath God laid upon us more than upon Men in any other callings? that we, who have both the faith of ordinary Men, and the Spirits, and necessities of Men, should yet depend meerly on free-will-offerings. I am sure as this answers not our Type,so neither doth it take in the Rules of Justice whereon a Minister's maintenance is founded. 3 The Minister's Maintenance is not left to the wisdom of theDeacon.For the distribution of the free-well-offerings of the people among thePriests, was by Rules of Justice, and according to equality ofproportion, respect, and measure, being had to their labours, 2 *Chron.*31. 14, 15, 16. And now then to make us wholy to depend on the peoples free-will offerings,and that the Deacon should dispense them according to his wisdom, would be to make our condition worse than that of the Levites was then, who had treasurers that were faithful to their charge, *Neh.* 13. 12, 13. 4. It was necessary in those times that some should distribute the Church's Treasure, because the Tithes that were needful for the services of the Temple were brought into a common Bank, and therefore it was necessary that some should be ordained to distribute it. There was a necessity of doing it, and it was not left to discretion.So here now in the times of the Gospel the same ground holds still, that so far as any thing comes in by common Collection for a particular appointed use, the Deacons ought accordingly to gather it for such an use, and as the Church's hands, to convey and distribute it. This Office, mention'd in that fore-cited text,was matter of needful order,not of Type, or significancy only, as many things were in the Ceremonial Law; which,the reason of them ceasing, the use of them is abolished. For (as *Zepperus* says) *Ratio Legis si cesset ipsa Lex cessat, non secus atq ; animâ expirante, homo moritur, Ratio enim Anima Legis esse dicitur. If the Reason of the* Law *ceaseth the law it self ceaseth, as the Soul expiring the Man dyes. For Reason is said to be the Soul of the* Law.

Nor doth any place, or argument out of the New Testament,evince any thing contrary

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trary to my fore-going assertions. There is mention, indeed, of Sacrifices to God (*Heb* 13. 16.) But yet it is a Question whether Ministers maintenance be spoken of there, or if it is, it hath that name, because it is a maintenance given to uphold God's worship. And yet still it is given by way of humane Justice to the Minister, who is the person which performs that worship. It is not given first to the Lord, and then to the Minister or Church, but to the Minister for the Lord's sake, and so it is an honouring God with our substance, and a sowing to the Spirit, and to spiritual ends. For tho' it be given to God first, yet that is not inconsistent with its being given to the Minister, but both may stand together, and it is still a debt in humane Justice to the person, the Officer. *Paul* calls it a gift (*Phil.* 4. 16, 17.) But this doth not import that he had no power to claim it, or that it was not due to him, but he calls their offerings, made to him, a *gift* comparatively to the omission of other Churches, who owing the same duty, yet had not done it: Or he calls it a gift with respect to their free doing it. And I think the nature of the thing hath a mixture both of debt, and of a Gift, and, as the way of saving us in the Gospel, is compounded both of Mercy and Justice; so this maintenance of a Minister is an act of Justice, and free love too, yet so as that the free love of the persons both in the contribution, and distribution of it, must come up to the Rules of Justice, and we our selves may claim it, and set the due rate and value of it, and fix its right proportion: *Have we not power*, &c. 1 *Cor.* 9 6, 7, 8. 2 *Thes.* 3. 8, 9. Thus to give to the Maintenance of a Minister is a mixt duty, for the Apostle gives the Rules and urgeth the grounds, and reasons both of common Justice, and also of love. He urgeth the Gospel consideration that it is, *a sacrifice to God*, and *a sowing to the Spirit*, Heb. 13. 16. Phil. 4. 17, 18. And so he calls it likewise *a sowing to the Spirit*, Gal. 6. 6, 7, 8. And yet likewise he asserts a power to claim it as a due, 2 *Thes.* 3. 8, 9. He urgeth both arguments, that if Gospel-considerations did not move them, the plain Reasons of common justice might prevail. That they might consider the Just right and claim that Ministers have to it, and might be influenc'd thereby. *Have I not power*, &c. says he. He urgeth the duty upon them from the Rules of common justice. We are called by Men, and if we are not justly dealt with by them, we have power to leave them. The Apostle's case was otherwise, who was called by God, and so was to trust God for means of liveli-hood, and to work with his hands, and on all accounts whatever to preach the Gospel, 1 *Cor.* 9. 16.

2. The contribution of maintenance to a Minister is left free, and it is fit it should be so, 1. That it may be an exercise of grace in the people, and an offering of Sacrifice to God. And such a freedom agrees with the *Genius* of the Gospel, and is suited to the nature of its services which requires a willing people. 2. This act is left to the freedom of the people that they may have an opportunity of exercising their love to the increase of the grace of love in them, whilst the Minister inlargeth their hearts, they stretch their purses for him. 3. Hereby Ministers avoid the reproach of preaching for Lucre. Hereby the calling of the Ministry becomes more honourable in the eyes of Men, when they see that it is not Mercenary, and that a Minister hath not set fees, as others have 5. The performance of this act is left to the liberality of the people, that they might have an opportunity of sowing more plentifully to the Spirit, *Gal.* 6. Even as men, when they would have more, they use to leave it to the liberty of the giver. 6. It is free, that the duty might come under a more transcendent rule than that of meer Justice, tho' still the act is to be regulated by Justice. Thus that Children should maintain their Parents when poor, is a duty which nature and justice requires, and the relief and supplies should be in proportion to their abilities, yet Justice ordinarily sets not the rate, and proportion, because the duty is also farther an act of *Piety*, and so left to the good nature and disposition of the Person, 1 *Tim.* 5. 4. 7. In this duty you are yet to have a distinct view of Justice in your eye. You must pay it in a just proportion, not only to the necessities of your Officers, but suitably to the dignity of their place, and the greatness of their labour. Tho' you are free in communicating it, yet a law of Common Justice must run along in the distribution. For if it be due by rules of Justice, the proportion in distribution is to be regulated by Justice. For the proportion is Just as well as the thing As the maintenance is due to the Minister, so you ought to give so much or so much, as by Rules of Justice his Office and Work are valuable: So that, what you should give as to the proportion of it is not left to your wisdom, or the discretion of your Spirits, but must go by a just Rule. A double maintenance therefore is due to Elders that labour in the word, on account of the honour of their place, as the Priests had more than the Levites; and the proportion still must be with respect to the Labour, *Gal.* 6. 6. He speakes of proportioning out what they gave to Teacher, as well as Pastor, and

and to one Teacher as well as to another, by a Rule of justice. Thus, tho' *Paul* less needed maintenance than *Peter*, who was married, and the Apostle could, and did earn his living, yet, he says, he had as much power to exact the same stipend in Justice that *Peter* had, 1 *Cor.* 9. 4. 5. *Paul*'s meaning is not that he would marry or purpose to shew that he had power to put the Church to more charges: But his intent is to shew that tho single and unmarried he had power to require what might maintain a wife, for he had the same right to the thing, as *Peter* had. And suppose *Paul* could live without it, yet his right and claim to it was not lessen'd thereby, for *no Souldier goes to war at his own charges*. His design then was not to tell them of his being in a single condition, but to urge to them the dignity of his place, and to lay before them the merits of it, and to remind them of the good which he had done them, and what he had deserv'd at their hands and to draw up an account of his labours, as a thing in justice, which they ought to respect in proportioning a maintenance accordingly, and to convince them, that if they did it for other ordinary Officers, they ought rather to do it for him, 1 *Cor.* 9. 11, 12. *If others have this power*, &c. So that he measures it by Justice; And tho' he had no wife, and so had not the same urgent necessities of a Family as others had, yet he had a power to require the Maintenance that was due to his Office and Work, and might exact the same which others did, whatever his condition was, 1 *Cor.* 9. 6. So that it is not only the necessities of the Ministers condition that is the Rule by which his maintenance is to be measur'd, and proportion'd, but the Rule of Justice takes place here also as a Rule of proportion, and it is to be consider'd what his Office, and labour deserves. The measure of the maintenance is not therefore to be varyed by mens necessities, No, the Maintenance of the Minister is not thus to be determin'd by the wisdom of the people, but they are to be regulated by a rule of Justice in this case, and the calling, the work, & the benefit are to be consider'd by them, as these things are considered in all callings else. Let us take but the instance which the Apostle gives (1 *Cor.* 9. 7.) what Souldier ever was there, tho' he had a great estate, who would not require his pay, and when he ventures his life for the publick good, expect to live upon the publick charge. And the Apostle tells us it is but just that Ministers should live of the Gospel, 1 *Cor.* 9. 14. They may if they please generously remit, and forego their right (as *Paul* did) and perhaps in some cases it may be their duty to do it, but this their right is no more subjected to any Man's discretion to determine concerning it, than their Estate in the world (whether personal or real) is. For after that rate a Minister, who hath wordly means, might be oblig'd to give more than other men, and yet besides to labour for nothing. But yet still a Minister may, upon Evangelical ground and reasons, forget his right as *Paul* did. Now, the proper way and means, of raising a due and competent maintenance for a Minister is next to be consider'd, and I shall deliver my thoughts about it in few words.

1. There ought to be set means of a Competent maintainance established by mutual Covenant and Agreement, that the Pastor and the People may be mutually ingag'd And this will take place in a way of Justice.

2. There ought likewise to be an enlargment of his maintenance by free-will-offerings. This is a natural way, and since the Apostle urgeth this duty both from reasons of Nature, and Justice (1 *Cor.* 9. 7. to 12.) why should not both of them be observ'd? Both these ways of maintenance were appointed for the Levites, who, as they had Cities for their settled inheritance, and fixed Tithes, so they had free-will-offerings from the people. And indeed these two methods joyn'd together are advantagious to both parties, for as the first secures a certainty of Maintenance for the Minister, so the other makes him to have a dependance on the love and affections of the people, and as by the one, provision is made that the Minister may have no cause to complain; So by the other opportunity is given to the people of exercising their Graces, and of shewing their love, and thankfulness.

CHAP. V.

Whether the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper ought to be Administred on every Lord's Day.

Acts 2. 42. *And they continued stedfastly in the Apostles Doctrine, and Fellowship, and in breaking of Bread, and in Prayers.* Compared with Chapter 20. 7. *And upon the first day of the week, when the Disciples came together to break Bread,* Paul *preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow, and continued his Speech until mid-night.*

I Will now but open the words so far as to give a hint to that Point which I mean to discourse of out of them: Which is this; *Whether the Lord's Supper be to be Administred every Lord's day*: For which these places use to be alledged.

When Christ ascended, he bid his Disciples teach those whom they converted, to do whatsoever he commanded them; *Matth.* 28. 20. Now this Book of the *Acts* records what practices the Apostles taught the Churches, and into what forms they set them. And therefore what we find the Churches to have practised, upon ordinary grounds, that we take for a command of Christ. Therefore is this preface on purpose made to this Book, *Acts* 1. 2. How that after his Resurrection, *Christ had given Commandments to his Apostles*, on purpose to credit the Practices or Acts of these Apostles (as the Title is) as conformed to these Commandments. And in this 42. *verse* of *Chapter* 2. you have the solemn standing Worship which the first Church continued in, as a pattern to all that should follow. Which standing worship consists of four Ordinances (which are together reckoned up no where but here (as all Church-Officers no where but *Rom.* 12.) As 1. Apostles Doctrine. 2. Fellowship. 3. Breaking of Bread. And 4. Prayers.) That by Apostles Doctrine is meant Preaching, all do agree; and that by Prayers are meant the publick Prayers (which 1 *Tim.* 2. The Apostles gives order for) not occasional, but standing; is not questioned: but only what is meant by κοινωνία (translated Fellowship) and breaking of Bread is in Question. For the clearing of this;

1. It is certain, that all the practices mentioned here, are ordinances; For three of them being so, it had been Heterogenal to mention a fourth thiug with them, which was not so. And 2. They are Ordinances of a sort; that is, of which for their continual practice, there is like reason: For it is said, *They all continued in them.*

Now for a more particular Explication of these two words.

1. The word κοινωνία, Fellowship, refers not to Apostles more than κλάσις τοῦ ἄρτου Breaking of Bread doth, and therefore it is ill translated Apostles Fellowship. I find the Sacrament called κοινωνία, *Communion*, 1 Cor. 10. 16. And Distrubution to poor Brethren is called κοινωνία also, or *Communication*; so some render it, 2 *Cor.* 9. 13. ἁπλότητι τῆς κοινωνίας, *Liberality in Communicating.*

2. We find giving to the poor, called *Breaking of bread to the Hungry*, Isaiah 58. And the Sacrament also is so called, 1 *Cor.* 10. 16. *The bread we break*, &c. Now what must determine which is which? Surely the manner of the use of the phrase. Now though the Lord's Supper be called *Communion*; yet it is *cum hoc adjecto*, still with this addition, *of the Body of Christ* to distinguish it. But I find κοινωνία when only and alone used, as here you see it is, to be still put for *Distrubution*, and for that alone; thus in three places, as, 2 *Cor.* 9. 13. *For your liberal distribution unto them*, Rom. 15. 26. κοινωνίαν τινὰ ποιήσασθαι *to make a certain contribution*, and *Heb.* 13. 16. *To Communicate forget not.* On the other side I find *breaking of Bread* (when simply and barely so expressed) put for the Sacrament (1 *Cor.* 10. 16.) but never used for giving to the poor, but *cum adjecto*, with an addition; as break thy bread to the hungry. Hence therefore κοινωνία (here translated Fellowship) is certainly to be understood of distribution, and so to be translated. And this fitly explains all: for then breaking of Bread is the *Sacrament of the Lord's Supper*: And if phrases must determine it, the Syriack interpreter thus translates it *the Lord's Supper*, and he best knew the use of the Phrases: And so you have all the four standing Ordinances in the Church enumerated together and no more; whereas else you must want one, as not mentioned.

Object.

Object. But the Phrase, breaking of Bread, as simply spoken, is used for common eating together ?

Answ. It is True ; but it is not so here ; for that eating is not a Church-Ordinance, and all the rest here, are; and where the Phrase *Breaking of Bread*, simply taken, is used; it is not used for distribution to the Poor : and therefore even that breaking of bread, which is mentioned (*verse* 46.) cannot be so understood of Distributing Bread to the Poor.

And if it be further said, that their Love-Feasts are there meant , and so here in this *verse*, and so it may be taken still in distinction from breaking of Bread to the poor; The *Answer* is.

1. That their Love-Feasts were for poor and rich together, and taken up, and used as common signs of Christian love, and therefore so called ; and not in order or respect to the poor only or chiefly.

2. Their Love-Feasts were no Church-Ordinance, and so not reckoned up here among Church-Ordinances. Christians might privately feast, and providentially, as they met, eat together, as a sign of love ; as in the Primitive times they often did, but not in the way of an Ordinance , or a standing Ordinance, as the breaking of bread here certainly is ; When they came to make an Ordinance of their Love-Feasts the Apostle rejects them, 1 *Cor.* 11. 22. *Have you not houses to eat and drink in?* and , *verse* 23 ; *I have received no such thing*, and *verse* 34. he infers ; *If any Man hunger let him eat at home.* And *verse* 33. He calls the Lord's Supper *eating together* ; *When you come together to eat, tarry one for another.* He speaks of it as the only eating that was to be in a Church as a Church-Ordinance ; and so excludes common eating to slack hunger, from being an Ordinance , bidding them in the next *verse* to do it at home. And therefore, says he, (1 *Cor.* 10. 16.) *The Bread which we break, is it not the Body of Christ* ? which is spoken by way of Eminency and Singularity τὸν ἄρτον as being *that Bread*, and only *that*, which we break as a Church: as in like manner he had, in the eleventh Chapter, call'd the Lord's Supper *eating together*, namely as they were a Church. And therefore here, *Acts* 2. There is also an Article put, *breaking* τοῦ ἄρτου *of that bread*, so 1 *Cor.* 11. 26. Now then, come to *Acts* 20. 7. The breaking of Bread there is used in the same sense, namely, of the Sacrament also ;

1. Not of *Alms* ; that is never called breaking of Bread, but with distinction [to the hungry, *&c.*]

2. Not of common eating ; For that not being an Ordinance, no meeting on the Lord's day could be denominated from that ; on which day, all Church meetings are for Ordinances only, as principally to hear the word. And to have say'd , the Disciples met to break bread, meaning common bread, is all one as for us to say, the Church meets to Salute and see each other, when principally we meet to hear the word, *&c.*

Now then, breaking of bread being not here to be understood of *Alms*, nor of ordinary eating ; it must needs be meant of the Sacrament : seeing there is no other breaking of Bread, especially as an Ordinance of a Church assembly, spoken of in Scripture.

And 3. This is there spoken, to shew what their custom was to do continually, *ex more* ; and therefore it is all one, as if he had said, they met every Lord's day.

For,

1. It is spoken of as a ground of *Paul's* stay seven days, that he might preach to them, as knowing that they would meet on the Lord's day, for this occasion, as they were wont.

2. It being customary to meet on that day for other Ordinances, as preaching the word, *&c.* (for so it was in Primitive times) he would rather have mentioned that for which *Paul* knew they were of necessity to meet than what was used but one Lord's day extraordinarily ; if this had not been as customary an Ordinance on that day practised , as any other.

3. This is written , and mentioned, though but in an hint , to shew their practice, and so the Apostles Institution ; For they taught them to do whatever Christ Commanded. And this we see they did on that Day, and no other.

Ch. V. The Question which I shall discuss and handle upon occasion of these words, is this; Whether every Lord's Day, the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is to be administred? My method shall be;

1. To prove by reason; that there is somewhere an institution for it to be found.

2. Further to enquire into these Scriptures, and see whether they do not hold it forth. But, First let us see, what may be done by reason, in the point.

Before I come to those assertions which I would by reason establish; I will, for Explication sake, premise something about the differing Rules and Ways that God hath ordered about the determining such Circumstances of his worship, as this is; the consideration whereof will be useful to this and other like points.

It is agreed upon by all here, that no such Circumstance is to be determined by the meer will of any Man or Men; and that God hath left no circumstance of worship so to be determined: especially not any so conducible to edification as this must needs be, *How often the Lord's Supper is to be administred*: And therefore the prescriptions and laws of Church-Governours, from will and authority, or of a whole Church in determining such Circumstances, we reject; as that for which the word gives no commission, or allowance, namely, not in such a manner to command a determination. And in that sense only it is, that we say, no circumstance of an ordinance is left unto man; that is, not to Mens wills, or the Authority of others. Hence it is, that for all such Circumstances, we do enquire into other rules, either prescribed in the word; or the light of Nature, and right Reason from the word: and we find two sorts of Rules given us to determine them by.

1. A direct word of *Institution*, or Example, which we are obliged to follow; as in the Old Testament, to Sacrifice twice a day. This Circumstance was an institution. So for us to pray twice a day, I conceive, an institution; and this Circumstance is set by God himself. Now all such Rules do properly belong to the Second Commandment, wherein God tookupon him, to give us Rules, by way of Institution, which are by Men unalterable.

2. The second sort of Rules to determine Circumstances, of the times, &c. of an Ordinance, are such as depend meerly upon occasions and other circumstances, according as the various conditions of Churches, and the customs of Places do require: which therefore for the particularity of them are undetermined by God, and left to the Wisdom of every Church, to determine them as occasions shall alter or vary; yet still, not by their meer will, but by other more general Rules given in the word, or the light of Nature, to order such Circumstances, in all that variety of occasions, that shall happen, and fall out. As for example; That this Congregation should meet in the day time, is more for the good and benefit of it, than to meet in the Night: which yet for the Primitive Christians in regard of the Circumstance of Persecution, might be more convenient: as haply, that Meeting, *Acts* 20. 6, 7, 8, when *Paul* preached so late, as he continued his Speech until mid-night) was, (as some think) in that respect.

Now the Scripture hath not determined the night of the Sabbath, for publick Assemblies, or the day-time, peremptorily: because, according to variety of Circumstances, Churches might meet on either, as their wisdom should judge best: yet so, as their wisdom is to be guided by some general Rule of Nature, or of the word in determining this: such as is that Rule, 1 *Cor.* 14. 26. Let all be done for Edification: that is, Let all be done with such Circumstances, as with which the Ordinances being accompanied, shall serve best to edifie the Church. Now as our case stands, the day-time seems best for our edification by the ordinances; because our Spirits are more fresh in the day than in the night; but to them whose meeting in the day costs them their lives, and the loss of Ordinances, and all; though the night was, in other respects, inconvenient, yet, better then, than not all, or than in the day, wherein to have often met, would have been for destruction, not for edification.

So now for us, as to what hour of the day we should meet: About nine a Clock is the best time, considering the time of preparation before, and the weakness of many, and the due times of repast and meales to come after: and that the Church should not meet in the afternoon presently after Meales, is the best also, for edification, to prevent dullness, or hurt by indigestion, &c. Now to these hours (as Circumstances stand with us) we are determined, not by an unvariable institution, but by a general

ral Rule; *Let all be done for the most edifying*; which falls out with us to be these individual hours, which haply to an other Church would not: and so the determining it to this hour, is not wholy humane; for Men are bound to determine by Rules; yet not wholy or meerly Divine (as particularly pointing them out, as by an institution other circumstances are) but Divine in respect of a general Rule; and also humane, in respect of the particular application; Man's wisdom being left to consider these circumstances, and so to apply these Rules.

Now all such Rules about such circumstances do belong to the third Commandment, which meerly takes order for the manner of worship, and the inward and outward Circumstances of it: that all be done (in respect of such Circumstances) for the best advantage, so that *God's Name be not taken in vain*, in the least degree. To give an instance or two in the same kind, one in an occasional Ordinance; and an other in a continued:

1. For the time of Administration of Circumcision, under the Old Law, which was an occasional Ordinance; there were two Rules given by institution:

1. How oft it was to be administred; but once, and never to be re-iterated.

2. There was the fixing also of a particular day, whereon it was to be administred, namely, the eigth day. But now,

3. If the Query were made, on what hour of the eighth day; that was left to Rules of the third Commandment which prescribe what was most convenient in respect of outward circumstances: It was left to such *Rules* as the third Commandment prescribes, and left to wisdom to apply.

So for Preaching the word, which is a continual Ordinance; the Circumstance of time was fixed by institution, that it should be used every Sabbath day, *Acts* 15. 26. But how much, or how often on that day; That the particular occasion was to decide: as there were more or fewer men of gifts to speak and prophecy: or as the need of the hearers variously required.

Now that you may yet further understand, with what difference these two commands proceed, in the differing rules which they give, about such Circumstances of Time; I will, by way of Further Explication, give you it, in these two particulars.

1. Concerning all such rules which come under the second head, and appertain to the third Command; Take this general *Rule* for certain, about them, to the end you may discern them from institutions, which belong to the second Command: (I speak not now of such circumstances, as the light of Nature dictates, which also belong to this third Command) The *Rule* is this;

That only such Circumstances of the times of worship, which would necessarily vary through new and differing occasions, or various and several sorts of outward circumstances which Mens conditions are cast into; and so were necessarily (as occasion should fall out) to be left to Churches by wisdom, and consideration of such circumstances to determine; that these, and these only, are left to be determined by those general Rules belonging to the third Command.

Thus, 1. The time of all occasional Ordinances is (for ought I know) left unto Men to determine by those general Rules. And there is no Rule given for them under the Gospel, but this, when an occasion calls for them, that is, their season, and that individual time which is the fittest in all circumstances, for the Ordinance to be administred in. Thus, when to have a Baptism, and to fix the time: it is not now, as in the Old Law, fixed to the eighth day, which was in a Type; but is left to the Church to determine. Only, it is not to be deferred longer than Circumstances do in wisdom require. Thus, in Admonition and excommunication, what the fittest season is, doth depend on Circumstances; and the Church is to judge.

2. This also is the Rule, for set Ordinances themselves, so far as they are occasional, and setting aside their necessary fixed Station. The Word Preached is a set Ordinance, instituted for every Lord's day: yet, if the Question be, How much, How long, or How often on the day, or How often on the week besides! No Rule can determine it, but as occasion, and need of the hearers require and call for, and their vacancy will permit. So that such *times* for any Ordinances do only come under those general Rules, which are capable of new and fresh occasions, that shall call for them, and make them seasonable at one time, more than at another; and are not capable of a set Rule.

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I add unto this, this other Distinction also, For explication.

That whereas *Regula generalissima*, the most general Rule and Command belonging to the third Commandment, about the ordering such various Circumstances, is, that famous Apostolical Canon, 1 *Cor.* 14. 26. *Let all things be done to edifying*; and whereas those other Rules whereby God hath by an institution fixed set times for worship, in the second or the fourth Command, are said to be for edification also: Yet between that edification which flows from God's institution of a Circumstance, and that which follows upon a prudent ordering outward Circumstances, there is an answerable broad difference. The edification which follows upon God's institution of a Circumstance, is such as is through God's appointment intrinsecally conjunct with, and inseparable from the Ordinance it self, and immediately accompanying it, from which we are to expect a special blessing, together with the blessing of the Ordinance; and so it affords such a kind of edification as the Ordinance it self does, in its measure, being as directly sanctified to edifie, as the Ordinance it self. But that edification which follows upon the right ordering of outward Circumstances, which are left to Men to determine by those general Rules; is but an edification extrinsecal to the Ordinance, and but secondary and subserving to it. These Circumstances being so to be ordered, that the Ordinance may give forth that edification which God hath appointed it unto, with the most advantage in all outward respects. And this is that edification which the Apostle means, when he says, *Let all be done to edifying.*

Hence by the way of Corrolary, I would have it considered, whether this Circumstance, to administer the Supper every Lord's day, be a circumstance of that Nature and rank, that if there be not a warrant from practice and institution by God for it; yet any Churchmay at all appoint, or determine it for a standing Rule, for edification sake. The reason of my Query herein is this; because this is a Circumstance which for the Administration of other Ordinances God once made an institution of: And therefore for the Church to determine or appoint their Circumstances for this Ordinance without an institution, were to make an image of those institutions of God. That God made an institution of this Circumstance in other Ordinances, is evident in the Sacrifices every Sabbath day; and in *Reading* and *Preaching* the *Law* (Acts Chapter 15.) every Sabbath day: and under the Gospel, in the laying up for the necessities of the Saints, the first day of the week, 1 *Cor.* 16. 2. But now to make an image or the likeness of God's institution, is that which is forbidden in the second Command; and the prohibition of it is indeed, the full scope, and speaks the utmost extent of that Command; and holds true in all institutions, from the greatest to the least. We may not make Sacraments like to his; nor days like to his (which was *Jerobeams* sin, 1 *Kings* 12. 32.) nor a Temple like his, which the *Samaritants* did; nor set our Posts by his (*Ezek.* 43. 8.) nor make the like Oil, that he ordained for *Aaron.* And as it holds in greater, so in lesser institutions of Circumstances as well; for they differ but in degrees; and when God hath once stampt his institution on a thing, about his Worship, Man is not to stamp his; for it were false Coinage, which is against God's prerogative, as it is unlawful to Coin Farthings as well as Shillings: so electively to make Circumstances, in worship every way like to those which God doth, or hath made, as well as to make institutions like to his greater Ordinances. Any thing, an institution once set upon it, is for ever after, Royal, and not to be imitated selectively in worship, by Man, or by his institution. We are not, I say, to institute any thing formally like to God's institution, nor for the same holy end, for which God instituted any Circumstance; and therefore we must appoint any Ceremonies to teach, or signifie, or to put us in mind of our Duty; because God ordained the Phylacteries, *that they might remember the Commandments to do them*, Numb. 15. 39, 40. So therefore, if God once ordained this Circumstance in other Ordinances, for edification sake, for the Church to appoint the same Circumstance for this Ordinance for Edification sake, is to make the same Image formally, which God once made.

Answ. This being a Circumstance upon which an institution is past for edification sake, in other ordinances; it is thereby made uncapable of being subjected to the Rules of the third Command; which gives general Rules to men, to order meer outward Circumstances. Now to subject it to such Rules, were to debase it. It is of an higher rank, and thereby made free (as I may so speak) of the Rules by which Men determine, God only by institution of his own, can now meddle with it. As a Noble Man is of an higher rank, and so not subject to imprisonment for Debts, &c. except by a Warrant from the King himself.

Object.

Object. But you will Object, and say; To have a Sacrament (being a good and holy Ordinance of God in it self) administred every Lord's Day is more for edification; for the oftner the more edifying. Book VII.

Answ. 1. If the ground of this Opinion be, that because the oftner an Ordinance is administred, the more may be the edification; I *Answer*, there may be a deceit in that; for there may be *an often*, which may be too much. So in private prayer one may pray too often in respect of other occasions. But the goodness of this Circumstance, *how often*, depends upon a due season, which either an institution designs, or special Circumstances and occasions: which indeed if they fall out to be every Lord's day; then I yield: but to do it setly, electively, and as a standing Rule; That I Question. So as, the edification that must answer to this so often receiving must either be from an institution, or special Circumstance and occasion leading to it, and calling for it; which varying (as they use to do) cannot infallibly be fixt to every Lord's day as best. However,

2. That edification which would arise from such outward Circumstances and occasions, to make most and best for the edification of the Church, to have it every Lord's day, is but a Circumstantial edification, and not such an edification. as flows from, and accompanies this circumstance, when it is an institution: And so it is an edification that comes in upon this ground, that because the Ordinance is good, therefore the oftner administred, the more edification.

3. If this Circumstance, to have this Ordinance every Lord's Day, had been an Institution of God, for more edification sake, he best knowing how often any Ordinance would be most edifying that way, would have appointed it himself, if it would be more for edification in such a respect. For he takes as much care for the edification of his Church, in one ordinance, as in another; else he should have been defective in his care in some things, or have took unnecessary care in others.

Object. 2. But it may fall out in respect of meer outward Circumstances and occasions that some Church should have the Sacrament every Lord's day.

I *Answer* 1. That then it is not an image of God's institution; for if occasions call for an ordinance every Lord's day (as suppose a Baptism to be administred) yet still because this is not made a set standing rule, whither there be occasion or no (which is the Obligation of a set institution) therefore such a Providence, that an Ordinance should come to be administred, is not an image of God's institution; which is only when in a standing way men so appoint it.

2. That Rule depending upon varying Circumstances, can be made and kept but from Lord's to Lord's day; but we cannot make a standing Rule and Canon of it. This assertion or consideration past would have this Circumstance in the administration of an Ordinance every Lord's day, to be such, as is not determinable by humane Prudence, or appointment. But I come unto two other Assertions (which I more mainly intend) which do concern this Ordinance, and the Question more nearly.

1. The first Assertion is, that the nature, and sort, and kind of this Ordinance of the Lord's Supper, is such, as there must of necessity be an institution, either expresly, or by necessary consequence, settled by God, and left for the time of its administration.

The 2. Assertion is, that according to the way, and prescriptions of the New Testament, that time can be no other than every Lord's day.

1. The first of these two I shall prove in general; that there is, and must be, an institution for the time of its administration, and then I shall prove that time to be every Lord's day.

I begin with the 1. That for the time of the administration of this Ordinance of the Lord's Supper, namely, how often it should be; there must necessarily be an institution somewhere in Scripture left, and to be found; or one, at least, that may be drawn from Scripture, by good Consequence (for it is an ordinance of that Nature and sort, as that Reason tells us, there must be an institution left and found in Scripture, about some set time for its administring) This I would evince by such Reason, as if there were as yet no Scriptures that we knew of, to be found for it, and to fix our thought; yet they might set us all a work to find out one. Now this Assertion I prove by these 3 main Propositions laid together.

1. That there are, and ever were, two sorts, and but two sorts of Ordinances appointed by God in the Church: and they are either continual, or occasional. This proposition contains two things in it. 1. That

Ch. VI

1. That there are Ordinances both Occasional, and Continual.
2. That there are, and ever were, but these two sorts.

1. I prove that are two such kind of Ordinances. I will here first explain the Terms.

1. By Occasional Ordinances, I mean such, as though they are in themselves to continue for ever in the Church, upon continual occasions; yet in respect of their use, they depend upon a particular occasion in Providence, to call for the practice of them. Some Ordinances were ordained for a single occasion extraordinary; as the extraordinary Sacrament of Manna in the Wilderness, and the Cloud, and the Baptizing in the Sea, &c. mentioned 1 *Cor.* 10. 11. but such occasional Ordinances I mean not; but only such as are for their use in the Church, or their Essence in the Church, continual; yet still the particular, precise Time when they shall be Administred is occasional. Thus in Philosophy, we distinguish of Essence and Existence; and say of several kinds or species of Creatures, that their Essence is always in *Rerum Natura.* So Roses (and many other Fruits and Plants) being a sort or kind of Creatures, that have a station and rank among the number of others, that help to the making up of the World's Perfection; we, in that respect say, The Essence of a Rose always is, Nature having ordained such a Creature always to belong unto the World, to make up the perfection of it: But yet so, as we say, that the Existence, or individual putting forth of such Flowers, is but in some one special season of the Year, and not always. Thus in like manner, some Ordinances always belong unto a Church, as parts of its Perfections and Priviledges; and so the Institution of them is for ever and for all times; and yet their Use and Existence is meerly occasional, even as Providence shall put them forth, and call them to stand up in their season. Such was Circumcision of old, which, though it was an Ordinance for ever, and so, continual in the Essence and Being of it; yet the Use thereof was to be but as Children were born, which made the Existence meerly occasional; so, offering Personal Sacrifices, or performing a Vow, were as occasion fell out; as upon occasion of Uncleanness, &c. And so Baptism is now, the use which depends upon new occasions. So likewise are Excommunication, and Admonition, which are Church Censures, and so likewise Admission of Members; all which are to be used, but as fit matter in Providence comes to be presented.

2. When I say *Occasional*, the meaning is not, that they are ordained for occasions Negative or Permissive (as I may so call them) that is, when the occasions of the Church will permit, and so a fit spare time falls out for an Ordinance: But when in this Distinction and Opposition to continual Ordinances, we use the word Occasional, the meaning is intended of such as have a positive, peculiar, and special Occasion, directly and properly calling for them; which Occasion is Affirmative. As when a Child is born in the Church; this is an Affirmative Occasion for Baptism, and the like.

Now having explained what Occasional Ordinances are; I come to explain that other sort of Ordinances, which are Continual. Such were the Publick Sacrifices of the Temple, which were called a Continual Sacrifice, (*Jer.* 33. 18.) and *Ezek.* 46. 14.) because offered Morning and Evening in a set and standing course, not at all waiting upon occasions. And it is not only said there to be a Perpetual Ordinance, that is, which was to last and endure in the Church (and such, even Occasional Ordinances may be stiled) but it is besides called a Continual Ordinance, because appointed to be every Morning by a set Ordinance of course; so *verse* 14. and 15. it is said to be *every Morning for a continual Burnt-Offering.* So Prayer now is a Continual Ordinance, *pray continually*, which is not meant of continual occasions; but that a continual course of Prayer, or a set course every day (I do not say at set hours) is of God's Institution, as *Paul* says, (2 *Tim.* 1. 3.) that *he served God from his Fore-fathers*; that is, according to the manner of the godly of old, who answerably to the continual Sacrifice in the Temple, offered up where-ever they were, either in Private, or in their Families, the Sacrifice of Prayer, twice a day, and were bound to do so; else the Practice had not been general, nor binding unto *Paul.* But, says he to *Timothy*, *I have thee in remembrance in my Prayers day and night*, that is, twice a day, every Morning and Evening. Thus also, the very entring into the Holy of Holies once a year, because it was of course and setly, is said to be done continually, *Heb.* 10. 1. And so the Passover, though but once a year, yet because of set course, it may be called continual. Thus all Church-Ordinances which are of set course in the Church, and

and depend not upon occasions, may be called Continual Ordinances, though not every week-day to be administred. Such Publick Prayer is by all confessed to be; and such I take the Word Preached to be also. And so this Distinction of Ordinances Occasional and Continual, if it be not *in Terminis*, in the same *Tearms* set forth in the Scripture, as to both the Parts of it, yet for the one Part it is: For the Term *Continual* is expressed in the places before cited, and that, in opposition to *Occasional*; for there being two sorts of Sacrifices; some ordained by Institution to be at set times; others as occasion of Sin and Uncleannesse fell out; those which were set were called Continual, in a way of distinction from that other (as also those four Ordinances here, in this, *Acts* 2. 42.) and so must have another branch to answer to them, which is this of *Occasional*. However, if the Scripture useth not the very Terms, yet the Distinction ariseth from the thing it self, namely, from the different use and end of Ordinances, which are necessarily such: Only I add this Caution, that solemn set Ordinances, though by Divine Appointment confined to a time, may yet occasionally be commanded at other times besides; and then upon all such occasions, they become occasional for that time. Thus, though the Sacrifices Publick were a set Ordinance; yet Sacrifice was an Occasional Ordinance also: For when a Man had Personally sinned, he was to bring an Offering to the Priest, &c. And so is the Word Preached, and Prayer now, which though set of course on the Lord's Day, yet as occasion is, they may be used on the week days also. And this is hinted to prevent a mistake, least upon this Doctrine any should think the obligation to administer this ordinance on the Lord's day to be exclusive, as if upon no other day besides the Church may have this Sacrament, or the word. For this celebration of the Sacrament on the Lord's day is so to be understood, as that it may likewise be administred upon any day besides, though that day be the more proper season of it, and no day to be chosen rather than it. The Gospel's priviledge is in this more large then that of the Law: some Ordinances, then, they could not have, but upon certain set times, and times were so appointed, as all times besides were excluded. The Passover could not be at other times eaten (but only in case of uncleannesse, or a journey) but at that set time appointed, the fourteenth day of the first Month. So likewise Circumcision was by institution confined to the eighth day; and they might not do it before, nor defer it till after that precise time. And so many other solemn Ordinances are appropriated to their Solemn Feasts. But it is not so now under the Gospel, when though God hath appointed a special time for publick worship, yet any worship may be performed at any time, and as *in every place we may lift up pure hands and celebrate Church-Assemblies*, so at any time. As the word is to be Preached *in season and out of season*, so the Sacrament may be administred in season and out of season. The Primitive Churches are therefore supposed in that first Church of the *Jews* (whose very calling for a while at first, was only to hold forth all ordinances of the Gospel) to have met (as for the Place) κατ' οἶκον, at *Home*; That is, in private Houses: for it is spoken in distinction from their meetings, in the Temple: So for the time of their Meetings καθ' ἡμέραν every day (*Acts* 2. 46.) and so to have celebrated this Sacrament every day even as *Acts* 5. 41. they are said to preach every day in the Temple.

This being premised, and proved; I now come to prove the other part of the proposition in hand, That there are but these two kinds of ordinances in the Church, occasional and continual. This I might prove, by an enumeration of all ordinances in the Old Testament; which may all be reduced to these two heads. For as for vows and free-will offerings (which seem most free in Man's liberty) they were occasional; and such, as when a just occasion fell out, that called for them, they were not to be omitted; nor yet were they made, and offered, but when a just occasion invited them. And, indeed, it were a wonder, if there should be a middle kind of *Vagous* Ordinances, which were indefinitely instituted and at randome; not fixed in the main ground of their institution, unto proper Occasions, or to set times by institution designed under the New Testament. Let any man instance in any other such, and it were strange this Ordinance should be such alone. Indeed, Reason tells us, that there is not, and cannot be any such middle Ordinance; for if there be, the main ground of its institution must be, to serve a vacancy from all other occasions of humane business and ordinances; and to be in use when ever such a vacancy should happen, that is, (as I explained in my distinction) that they would be instituted for *Negative occasions*, as not being affixed to any set time of course, as continual ordinances are; nor to serve a special occasion

Ch. V. that calls for it upon one day more than another: but for such a time it must be, when there is an opportune vacancy or empty space of time, that may fall out free from all other occasions, and all other ordinances, both which in this supposition are to be served first. Now I instance in this, as a supposed middle between the two other: for I cannot see how the wit of Man can invent any other. I grant, indeed, that such vacancys of time may fall out, and also, that those *Ordinances* which God hath already, by a primary intent, instituted for set times, and by Rule affixed to them, he hath, as an over plus, and an additional edification of his Church, commanded to be used at all such times of vacancy from humane occasions and refreshments. For example; he hath appointed the preaching of the word a set ordinance for every Lord's day (as was said) and so it is a continual ordinance of course; He hath also appointed this word to be dispersed and preached upon all special affirmative occasions that should require it; *As a word in season to the weary*, &c. And these being the main foundations and gronnds of its institution; he hath enlarged the use of it unto all such Negative occasions, when all other occasions will permit, and there happens a vacant time to hear Sermons Preached, and that when no special occasion or time instituted doth require it. But this was but a secondary enlarged ground of this Ordinance, for which alone it should never have been instituted, nor any else. This (as I take it) may be the most probable meaning of that text, *Preach the word in season*, either instituted by God, as the Lord's day, or occasional, as special need requires; and not only so, but *out of season*, in a meer vacancy.

Now to prove that there is no such Ordinance instituted meerly for Negative occasions, or vacancy from other hindrances, I urge those inconveniences and Reasons against it.

1. Such an ordinance would depend for its being and existance, upon too many uncertainties. But now as a Father would not venture any Child to an utter uncertain breeding; So, neither can I believe that God hath done so by any of his Ordinances. Now see the several uncertainties in this case.

1. There is not an absolute necessity that such an ordinance should ever be administred at all; for it might be supposed never to come to have any turn or vacancy spare from all other occasions for it to be administred in: for it is not of absolute certainty that there should be such a vacancy, or at least, not often; as this Ordinance of the Sacrament (if this should be said to be such) is commanded to be administred.

2. Besides this, if such times should fall out, yet the Celebration of the Ordinance would depend too much upon Man's arbitr'ment, and that for its only existence and being; which must be at such times, not only when a whole Church shall have no impediments by reason of other occasions: but when they shall judge so, and call upon one another for it: and how apt our Nature is, to find out impediments, or at least in such Cases to forget the Ordinances, God well knew. And this our obnoxiousness to forget our Duty makes it yet more uncertain; for how apt is such an ordinance to be forgotten, which hath no positive occasion to call for it, nor any fixt instituted time to say to us, now it ought to be administred?

It is one reason, and it is a good one, which our Divines give, why it was necessary that the Lord's day, should be fixed by God to a certain day, even to the seventh, and with a *Memento* in the Command; because if it had been left to Men to judge when their vacancy would have permitted it, the Publick worship of God would soon have permitted it, the publick worship of God would soon have fallen to the ground. And by the like reason any particular Ordinance would have been easily forgotten and discontiuned, as many have been, that yet were fixed, as the feast of Tabernacles was (*Nehem.* 8. 17.) from *Joshua*'s time till *Nehemiah's*. You may make an Observation, how great the neglective forgetfulness of Man would be of any such Ordinance, by the difference which was put in the administration of this ordinance, and the observation of the Lord's day (which are the Ordinances we have last instanced in) by the Papists, who alone bore the face of the Church many hundred years: As for the Lord's day, because they thought the institution thereof every week, to be Apostolical (being sounder in the point, then many of our Divines) therefore they have transmitted the observation of it every week, down unto our times: But as for the time of Celebrating the Lord's Supper, because they thought it to be left indefinite, they therefore kept not to it, but thought once a year enough for the receiving of it by the people; so rarely would men use an Ordinance which they thought was left to their liberty. Yea,

Yea *3dly*. This Ordinance of the Lord's Supper would be made yet more uncertain; seeing there is an allowance to fill up such vacancies with other Ordinances that are settled to fixed Times by Institution: As to have the Word Preached, or Prayer, when there is a vacancy; and so that vacancy might be as well filled up with them, as with this; and so it might still wait for a place, as that Man did at the Pool, and another Ordinance might step in before it: And if we might suppose any other Ordinances to be left unto Man's sole liberty, yet this least of all; for it being instituted to remember us of Christ's Death, surely it self hath either some special Occasion or fixt Institution, to put us in mind of it. Book VII.

2d Reas. As such an Ordinance would be left to too great uncertainties, for its existence; so it would be cast too far below all other Ordinances; for not having a Brother's settled Portion allotted it to live upon, it must wait upon all other Ordinances, till they were all served, and live upon their leavings of Time; which is not beseeming nor compatible with the honour of an Ordinance. This must necessarily follow; for Ordinances fixed in a set way to the Lord's Day, must be served every Lord's Day; for they are of the Foundation, and challenge it originally. And Occasional Ordinances that fall out, which have a proper especial occasion to call for them, must be also first performed. And certainly God hath not debased any Ordinances so low, as thus to attend all others; especially not so great an Ordinance, as this of the Lord's Supper is.

3dly. It stands with Reason, that every Ordinance might have its proper root for it to grow up upon, and so come to have its existence; it was meet that it should have a station, and season positive, as the main fundamental ground of its Institution, that so it might exist of it self, and be able to challenge it self a Place that cannot be denied it. And thus Continued Ordinances have such a season, by God's primary Institution of them; which having an Existence given them at fixt Times, God in a secondary intention enlarged the use of them to Negative occasions (as I term them) as he hath that of Publick Prayer, and the Preaching of the Word; which are continual Ordinances (in their proper root) for every Lord's Day; which yet God hath further commanded to be ingrafted upon occasions; but still so, as, this is the root they naturally first grow upon: and the Lord's day and every Lord's day is their Seat, and their Station by Institution; and that set time their inheritance, which they may make claim to. Thus Occasional Ordinances likewise have a proper root peculiar to them, like Flowers, that, though they put not forth continually, yet have their season which necessarily gives them existence; and when thir season is, they may challenge it (but whether their season be necessarily and electively only the Lord's day, that I shall afterwards discusse) surely God hath took as good order, and made no worse provision, for the existence of his Creatures of the new World (his Ordinances) than for the Creatures of the old, Now every species or kind of Creature in the old world hath a root; a season, either continual and fixed, or special and proper. God made no Vagabond Creatures, then only to have a place and to exist, when and where there should be a *Vacuum*, a void emptiness of other Creatures. And surely God hath acted by the like measure in the new World, wherein the Ordinances are the Creatures; and either some proper time and positive occasion, or else some fixed time all the year long, is their root of being.

II. The *second* main Proposition is this; *That for all Ordinances, which are not Occasional, but standing and continual, there must necessarily be a set time by Institution appointed for them.*

This Proposition is a necessary Corollary of the former, and follows upon those particulars, which I have brought to confirm the former:

Reas. 1. For every Ordinance that hath an Essence, Constitution, or being in the Church, must also have some existence, and therefore a time. All Creatures of the Old world have two things allotted them;

1. A *Constituted Essence*, by which they are, and differ from other Creatures: As the Essence of a Man is, that he is reasonable; and a Beast, that it hath a Sensitive being.

2. An *Existence*, by which some individuals of each kind do exist, and stand forth in the world, at such or such times and seasons. And there is no Essence nor kind of Being, but is appointed to have an existence at some time or other, in the world: For else that being might be ordained in vain, and have no being, and so it had as good con-

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2. The very purport or meaning of this Name of distinction given it, when it is called a *Continual Ordinance* (as in Scripture that phrase is used) doth necessarily intimate thus much; that, that distinction is given it from its having a set time, fixt by Institution for its existence. The word, *Continual*, as it doth respect time in all Men's apprehensions; so in the Scripture acception, it respects a set, fixed, appointed time, that in the Course of time comes about again and again continually, whether it be every day, or every Month, or every year. That was called *Continual* (as was said before) not only which is done at all times, or every day, but of set course; so (2 *Sam.* 9. 7.) *Mephibosheth* is said to sit at *David*'s Table continually, that is, not as a stranger, coming in upon occasion, but at the set times of Meals. And so, *Pray continually* in the New Testament, is taken, not simply, for praying always, or upon all occasions, or continuing in prayer with fervency only; but to pray settly, Morning and Evening (as I shewed out of 2 *Tim.* 1. 3.) even as it is called the *Continual Sacrifice*, because it came about every day by Institution, and if any were seldomer, yet if Ordinances, they had a set time for them. Thus the High Priests going into the Holy of Holies, because it came about every year once, at a set instituted time, is said to be continually, Heb. 10. 1. *Those sacrifices which they offered year by year Continually*. As therefore we say, that time is concreated with all things, so I may say of such Ordinances, that their time is Instituted together with their Institution, and by the same Authority.

And 3*dly*. If any Continual Ordinance had not a Time fixed for it, obliging the Conscience by Institution, that might call upon Men Now to practise it, and challenge an interest in some time allotted it; it were cast below an Occasional Ordinance, and made of an inferiour nature to it, in its Institution: For it would not have so much as a proper occasion to call for it, as those Occasional Ordinances have.

4*thly*. This Proposition is backt with this, that in the Old Testament all Ordinances, not occasional, had a fixed Time by Institution. It is true, that some occasional ones also, had a fixt Time when once an occasion required them; as Circumcision the Eight Day, but it was because of some Typicalness annexed to it. But now under the Gospel, all Occasional Ordinances are left to their proper seasons, as Providence calls for them, and so not affixed, as it became the Gospel wherein such Types cease. But yet Continual Ordinances are to be affixed to a set Time by Institution; else Christ were not so compleat in his Institutions, as *Moses*, but should leave things to Man's will, which being as corrupt and negligent now, as before, needed the fixing of such Ordinances to a set Time, as much as then.

III. The third Proposition which I lay down is this; *That this Ordinance of the Lord's Supper, is a continual standing Ordinance: It is of that Rank, and can be of no other.*

And

And the Reason thereof (which to me is undeniable) is this; because that it is not an Occasional Ordinance, that is, it is not an Ordinance, that hath, or can have any positive, special, proper, peculiar occasion to call for it, and require it one day or time more than another: And therefore it must be a Continual Ordinance; and so by consequence, a set, and fixed Ordinance to a Time by Institution; as the second Proposition declared. Now the Reason is founded upon this, that there is no Rank of Middle Ordinances, but every Ordinance must (as I shewed) be either the one or the other: And therefore to prove that it is not occasional, taking occasional in that sense before explained, is enough to prove that it is continual. Book VII.

1. It is not occasional in its first fundamental Institution. Indeed some of the Popish Divines would put it into occasional seasons; for they allowing a Private Communion at home, when Men are sick, and also allowing in Publick, that the Church should receive not always necessarily together, but that every day when Mass is said, any one or two (though no more who have a mind to Communicate be present) may Receive, if they please. For (say they) some persons may have more special need of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, than others (in respect of Tentations) to be comforted by it: And some have a more special mind to that Ordinance, and are more peculiarly affected unto it, than unto any other; and so may occasionally be called to it. They do hereby evidently shew, that they reckon this Ordinance to be occasional. But we know no such Divinity; for we say,

1. This Ordinance, of all others, is an Act of the whole Church It is the only proper Badge of the Church's Communion; and in this respect Church-Members are called *One Bread*, as well as *One Body* (1 *Cor.* 10. 17.) and therefore they are to take it together, when their Meeting hath the full number of all that can come, and this rather than any other Ordinance is in this manner to be celebrated. And therefore (1 *Cor.* 11. 33.) in this case, and for this Ordinance, if any come late, others are to stay for them; *Tarry one for another*, which in other Ordinances they are not so strictly tyed unto. And if thus it be the Ordinance of the whole Church; then variety of such occasions, as Personal Tentations, *&c.* cannot come to be any such peculiar, special occasion to the Administring of it to one Man more than another; for it is alike the Act of the whole.

2. Indeed, and in truth, there can never be invented, or supposed, any such proper, special occasion, requiring this Ordinance to be administred upon this Lord's day, or that, rather than upon another, which might, more especially call upon the Church for the practice of it. As for other Ordinances, there are such proper occasions, thus prayer for the Sick, Baptizings, and Excommunication: and even the prophesying of private Members is but an Occasional Ordinance, as God stirs up their hearts, and reveals something to them; as the Apostle speaks. There is nothing in the ordinance it self to vary it, or make it more seasonable at one time than at another, but it is fitted to all believers alike, whether grown Christians or young. It is Milk and Strong Meat too; For it is the Common *Christ* of all: neither was it instituted in any such more special manner for Tentations, or victory over Lusts; not peculiarly or specially; so as that you can say, it is good for one thing more than another: or that it hath a special vertue for something, which one Christian needs more than another. But it is an ordained Καθόλικον, composed of Qualities to work upon all Tempers, and in all seasons upon all constitutions of Souls. If Faith be never so weak, it strengthens it; if strong, a man is as much necessitated to take it, to grow in strength. Even as Church-Fellowship the cause of ordinances, is alike necessary for all, in all seasons, so is this. Yea it is so uniform in its nature and working, that all Churches in the world taken together, have as much need of it as one Church, and one Church as all and no more.

3. Neither can there be any variation in respect of any Circumstance a Church can be in at one time, which it is not in at another. There may fall out impediments; as if the not having an *Officer* to administer it (but so there may be also of such Ordinances as are affixed to the Lord's day) but there can be no proper occasions or circumstances, that may vary it, so as to have it administred one day, and not another. No Man or Church can say, we cannot prepare to receive every Lord's day; nor that any occasions on the week days do unfit us: For they are bound to be in such a Frame as always to be prepared: and if they be not prepared according *to the preparation of the sanctuary*; yet they ought not to omit it, as the *Israelites* did not the Passover. Yea, let

Ch. V. let me add this; it is less subject to variation by occasions, than the Word, or Publick Prayers of the Church, or laying up for the Necessities of others are; for which you have Institutions for every Lord's Day. For the Matter of the Word, the Subject of our Sermons do vary with occasions: And our Sermons are longer or shorter, and they are composed for Comfort one day, and for Reproof another day; for as your needs are, so they vary; yea, sometimes as a particular Member's need is they vary. *A word in season is to be spoken to the weary.* But here in the Lord's Supper there is no such variation. The Word, like the Moon, though it be a standing Ordinance in Heaven, yet appears in several shapes, and so the Word too: But this, as the Sun, is uniform; for the Person of Christ (the *Sun of Righteousness*) Crucified, is wholly and entirely the Matter of it; and as he is the *same to morrow, and to day, and yesterday*, so is this Ordinance. So the Duty of Alms varies: As God hath blest a Man; so let him lay up, as the Church, or other Churches have need. But it is not so with this Ordinance: And therefore this is capable of a more uniform Rule, and fixed Obligation, and Institution, than any other.

I might in the last place shew, that it is a Continual Ordinance, from this *Acts* 2.42. where all Ordinances Continual are reckoned up, which are four in number: And this, in the First Church, as the Measure of solemn set Worship for ever: But I leave that now, intending to argue it out in Reasons.

Object. But there is this Objection grounded on that speech of the Apostle, 1 *Cor.* 11. 26. *As oft as you eat, you shew forth*, &c. The Apostle seems there to speak of it, but as an Indefinite Ordinance, and not as a Continual; in that he says, *Toties quoties, so oft as.*

Answ. 1. His scope there is not at all to speak of the Time of this Supper; but only to inform them of the high end and nature and intention of this Ordinance: That when they took it, they might know what they did (as we use to say) and what they were about. You know they slighted it, and took it in vain, and discerned not the Lord's body. He therefore minds them of the Institution, that they might know what they did. *Know what you do* (says he) *for as oft as you receive this, you shew forth the Lord's Death.* It is a manner of Speech, used to shew what is the scope of an action that is customary; when we would insinuate the great danger of some Action frequent, yet out of ignorance slighted. Thus, if we hear one ignorantly and ordinarily swear, as not knowing what it is to take an Oath; we use to say, Do you know what you do in so doing? As often as you swear, you give your Soul to the Devil. So here (says the Apostle) as oft as you receive unworthily, you eat your own damnation. And because they were to receive frequently by Christ's Institution, therefore he minds them the more of it, that they might know what it was to receive. *As often as you receive* (says he) *you shew forth Christ's Death*, and therefore tells them, that if they receive unworthily, They eat Damnation to themselves.

2. This phrase of Speech was to shew the unvarying, constant, uniform End, and intent of this Sacrament; which is constantly at all times to shew forth Christ's Death. So oft as you do it, it is still for this principal end. The word sometimes shews one thing, sometimes another, but this constantly preacheth Christ's Death. *As oft as you receive, you shew forth Christ's Death:*

The third General Assertion is as the Conclusion of the two former, and inferred from them both; and it is this, That,

This being a continual Ordinance (as hath been shewed in the first proposition) and continual Ordinances necessarily requiring a time Instituted, or fixt somewhere (as was shewn in the second) The fixed time therefore for every Ordinance neither is, nor can be other, than the Lord's day, according to the ordinary Course and Tenour of the New Testament, which imports that every Lord's day is the Instituted time for them.

I shall demonstrate this by Reason first; and then examine Scriptures afterwards. It is proved by Reason thus; or by these steps.

1. Under the Gospel you have no other Instituted Time set and fixed, for any Ordinance, but the Lord's Day. I do not say, you are to have no other times for Ordinances, but you have no other times fixed by Institution. Occasional times there may

may, and ought to be upon other days, by vertue of the Command, that bids us serve *the season*, &c. (*Rom.* 12.) and take the fittest occasion for every Work and Ordinance Occasional. But you have no other Instituted Time appointed fixedly by God, besides the Lord's Day: Which indeed is one of the Differences between the Times of the Law and of the Gospel. Under the Law, God made special Sabbaths by Institution fixed to set Days, for special Ordinances to be administred upon, *viz.* for the Passover, and for the First Fruits: But now, there is no Instituted Time except this. Now then, if this Ordinance, being not occasional (as was said) must therefore have an Instituted Time appointed it by God, set, and fixed; this Time can be no other than the Lord's Day: For there is no other Time appointed by Institution, under the Gospel, except the Lord's Day.

But it may be said, that this gains but only thus much, that the Lord's Day is the Time Instituted for it: And so also it may be said of Occasional Ordinances, that the Lord's Day is an Instituted Time for them too; in as much as it is such for all Ordinances in common.

Therefore 2. I go a step further, and say, That Continual Ordinances, and among them the Lord's Supper, are not only to have a *Time that is Instituted, for them to be administred upon*; but further, there must be an Institution to appoint a Time for them, even a fixt, determined Time set apart for them by vertue of an Institution, which may determine the Conscience to them, and by vertue of a Command call for them. And so it is not enough to say, That the Lord's Day is the Time Instituted indeterminately, indefinitely and at random for this Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, as for all other Ordinances it is: But when it is said, that the Lord's Day is Instituted for it, the sense must necessarily be, that it is the Time fixedly and determinately set by Institution, for this Ordinance: And so it differs from the relation that this Instituted Time hath unto Ordinances occasional. It may be said, that the Lord's Day is the only Time, that we find Instituted, wherein they, or any Ordinance may be administred upon: But for other occasional Times in the Week Days, though there be a general Rule that will oblige the Conscience to them, as occasions are; yet they cannot be called Instituted Times. And therefore in that sense it may be truly said, that when Occasional Ordinances are to be administred, the Lord's Day is the only Instituted Time of the New Testament for them. But something more must be said of Continual Ordinances; namely, that there is a Time Instituted that calls for them, and obligeth the Conscience by an Institution to them. And so these two Ordinances differ in their Interest in this Day. That Occasional Ordinances have, by vertue of the Institution of this Day, but a remote, indefinite, undetermined Interest therein; and for their determinate Existence on this or that Lord's Day, there must come over and above, some special occasion, that calls for it, on this or that week, more than on another; only the Lord's Day presents it self still, as a Time blessed, and Instituted for such Ordinances in common and at random. But if this Ordinance of the Lord's Supper be a Continual Ordinance (as it is) and This the only Time we find Instituted; then this Ordinance must have by an Institution some fixed determinate Interest in it; and that by a defining by appointment, what Lord's Days it must be administred upon. And the Reason, for this, is out of the former grounds evident; of which now, I urge only this, that otherwise this Ordinance should have no determinate Existence allotted it; but were in that respect, cast below all Occasional Ordinances. For if its Interest in the Lord's Day be thus unlimited, and but in a common relation; that it is only a Time Instituted for it, no otherwise than it is for all Ordinances in general, and as a common Hall is for all Commers: And withal, that it hath no special set occasion to call for it, and require its Existence; then it is still left in far worse case and hazard for existing, than Occasional Ordinances are: For they (as Providence gives occasions) do call for Time, and oblige the Conscience unto a set Time for them: But this would be left like an *Individuum Vagum*, that has nothing to shew for it, why it should challenge a place or room in this Instituted Time, more than Vagrant Persons have in Common Town-houses. Yea, seeing other Ordinances can still challenge some peculiar, determinate Interest, either by Occasion, or Institution; this might ever be extruded, having nothing but an indefinite, common, Vagrant Interest to shew for it self. Therefore certainly, if the Lord's Day be the only Time Instituted under the New Testament; then must be found an Institution to determine and fix on what Lord's Day this is to be administred. And this, not to be left to the wide World for

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its subsisting and existence; but such, as by Law, or inheritance, it may call for, as its Portion.

Now 3. Therefore add to this then, That if there must be found an institution for it on set Lord's days (they being the only time Instituted) then either the Institution sets apart, every Lord's day, or some special Lord's days (which the word sets out and appoints for it, rather than others) I would see a Warrant for, however, some Churches persume to single out some special days; because their Congregations be too vast and so not according to Rule, which is, that Churches should consist of no more, than can meet together in one place) to administer it to all, every Lord's day. And others by preferring one Lord's day before another, as *Easter day*, *Whitsonday*, &c. do appoint it to be only or specially then administred: Yet there is no word for it, nor Reason by consequence from the word.

Now, if there be no warrant of institution for special Lord's days; then necessarily, the Institution must fall upon every Lord's day.

Yea, 4. Let it be but granted in general, that there is no other Rule to determine this Institution, but this common *Maxim*; That all Ordinances both Continual and Occasional are ordained for the Lord's day; and that the Lord's day is the only Instituted time for all Ordinances in this common general way: let that be all that the word says for it: so as no special Charter or Interest be produced, by Institution; yet this very common Charter will carry it; and this general, indefinite institution will serve its turn. For when each Ordinance shall come to claim its right, and particular allotment, and portion, in these Lord's days; It must necessarily be set forth according to the Nature and kind of each Ordinance. And then, look how Occasional Ordinances will justly put in, and call for an Occasional allotment for their administration, as occasion is offered, and requires; so continual Ordinances will challenge a continual set allowance, every Lord's day. For they must have maintenance and sufficience according to their Rank and Quality, and end of being ordained. The common Law and Dictate of Reason would, and must thus set out their Portions. Continual Ordinances must be continually on the Lord's day; and what is that, but to be every Lord's day? We say in the Decision of another point of Controversy, and difficulty, between the *Arminians* and *Us*: about the existence of things Contingent, and the Voluntary Acts of Man's will; That in respect of God's decree, all things do exist necessarily, and by his determinate Council; yet in respect of second causes, and their coming forth into actual existing or being, we say, that they all exist according to their kind. Which is, that Free agents, as, namely, Man's will should in respect of its own motion work freely: And Contingent or casual things that fall out by chance, should in respect of second causes fall out Contingently, according to their kind: But necessary and natural actions, as, namely, the motion of the Sun, should fall out necessarily and constantly, according to its kind, and yet all act in their several kinds, by the determinate Counsel of God, that rules all their causes according to their kinds. Thus we illustrate also the several existences of Ordinances, for their time and season, by saying, That they are varied according to their several Natures and Kinds. God hath took order in his word, for the existence of them all: but for Occasional Ordinances, he hath not given set Rules of Institution for the time of their existence, to bring them forth in: for that had not been according to their kind, but, indeed, clean contrary to it: For they being in their Institution intended for occasions, accordingly must exist, but as occasions are. Yet by a necessary command, when occasion is offered; Therefore as necessarily (when such occasions fall out) as continual Ordinances to be administred. But Ordinances of Continual and not Occasional use he hath ordained to exist, according to their kind, Continually, and not Occasionally; and therefore a Rule of Institution must determine their existence. And he having declared that the Lord's day is the only time that is instituted by him for all Ordinances: Suppose he had given no other Rule; yet Occasional Odinances are to exist occasionally on that day: that is, as occasion calls for any of them; But continual Ordinances are to exist, and be administred continually on that day; and what is that, but that every *Lord's* day they should be administred!

I will now in the last place, as the *Coronis* and Conclusion of all, and for the Confirmation of both these Assertions, add only this, which shall concern both, that it stands with the greatest Reason, both that there should be an Instituted Time for continual standing Ordinances: and also that there should be continual Ordinances purposely

posely appointed for that instituted time; and as much Reason for the one, as for the other. So as there is a proper, peculiar mutual Relation, between such Ordinances, and such an instituted time, they are mutually ordained for each other; these Ordinances for that time, and that time for these Ordinances. It stands with the greatest Reason that may be. Book VII

1. That God should institute continual standing Ordinances, for his Church to meet together, to celebrate; and so to constitute his publick visible worship; Besides such Ordinances as should be for occasions, that yet uncertainly would fall out. For it became him, who is the great God, the ever-living standing God of the World, who upholds all continually, by a constant hand of power and wisdom; to have a standing set worship, whereby he should be set up, and acknowledged in the World; and not be like the Gods of the Heathen, nor the Saints of the Papists, who were Gods for occasions, and are Saints for special occasions; and as they had Sacrifices, so these have Prayers, upon particular occasions. But the standing God must have standing Ordinances. It was not fit for God the great King, to stay and wait upon occasions, for all the publick worship he was to have; which might have fallen out, or perhaps not have fallen out. No, it had been too too little for him.

And 2. That he should institute and appoint a set and solemn Time for such Continual Ordinances, out of his own will; did become him also; and was as necessary as the former; For otherwise (besides other Reasons proper to that Argument) he had waited upon a greater uncertainty for the celebration of such Ordinances, than that which doth attend upon Ordinances Occasional, even on Mens wills and their occasions and pretences to put off such worship; For occasions still as they had risen, would have called for such ordinances as were occasional.

But if God himself does not set a time, and fix it, there would be nothing to determine and call for ordinances, so as to oblige the Conscience. And so, such ordinances, in stead of being the standing, continual ordinances of his worship, should have become the most uncertain, and (through Man's Corruption) the seldomest administred of all other. And indeed, fixedly to appoint, how oft they should be administred, and when, is that which makes them to be continual ordinances, and the worship of God to be solemn and standing in the world. And the determination of the Circumstance of time, how oft, and on what day, was a matter of more moment, and more intrinsecally conjunct with the worship of God, than the designation of a particular place. For though a place be as necessary as a time; yet from a set time appointed, doth arise a solemnity of worship: and it is as Royal a property and attribute of God's worship, as any other; and serves to set it out, and greaten it. And the iteration of a time in a set course thus or thus, adds to the worship a greatness, both in Multiplication of it, that it is so oft; and also a solemnity and a restraint upon Men; and so bears an impress of God's Authority; But thus it is not in the designation of a set place. Therefore, often in Scripture when there is an institution of a set day for an Ordinance, or mention of such a day; it is called a solemn Assembly, as the Prophet calls *the new Moon's Feasts and Sabbaths that were set, The Solemnities of the House of* Israel, *Ezek.* 45. 17. and 46. 11. And (*Levit.* 23. 36.) the eighth day of the Feast of Tabernacles is Translated a Solemn Assembly; which accordingly is by Christ called the great day of the Feast, *John* 7. 37. Solemn they were, by being set, and thereby greatned. And every such day had its set Ordinances by institution appointed to fill up the worship of the day, and (as the Phrase is, *verse* 37. of *Lev.* 23.) God speaking unto *Moses* concerning the Ordinances to be upon such Feasts, says, *that they must perform every thing upon his day.* For every such set time had its set Offerings and Ordinances; and the days were appointed for them, and they for the days. And therefore a standing day must have standing Ordinances, that have a proper reference to the day, and the day to them; they being made for the day, and the day for them. And this difference for God's instituting a set time for worship, under the Gospel, rather than a set place; They who are against the Institution of the Sabbath, have not considered; when they argue, that there is like Reason of Place and Time, between which, is this Relation to worship, there is a broad and manifest difference.

Now then, if under the Gospel it was meet there should be *Continual Ordinances* for a standing Worship; that God might still be sure of being worshipt (whatever occasions were) and that there should be a set Instituted Time in these Ordinances:

Ch. VI Then marry these two together, as being made one for another; these holy things, for this holy Day; standing continual Ordinances, for this set, and standing Day, according to the proportion of that Rule, out of *Leviticus*, *Every thing upon his Day*; *Opus Diei in suo Die*; the Day and the Ordinance thereof being mutually made for each other. And thus a solemn and standing Worship shall be kept up in the World, under the Gospel, as well as under the Law, which also was prophesied of (*Ezek.* 46. 13, 14, 15) That there should be a continual Worship now, as there had been a continual Sacrifice then. For there *Ezekiel* prophesies of the Worship of the Gospel, and that, under the Type and Notion of the continual Sacrifices and Sabbaths.

Use 1 See the gracious Provision that God hath made in the World for his Worship, and also for to feed his Church.

1. He being a great King, for his own glory reserves a standing Revenue of Glory to come in by Worship of Men, to himself, as it became him, besides that which comes in by occasions. You know, Princes have Crown-Lands, which bring in a standing Rent, that cannot be sold, or alienated (in a Legal way) and they have Customs and Tributes, which come in other ways; but the other are their Royalty. So God hath standing Ordinances, as Crown-Lands, to give him a set Revenue of Old Rents, which must never be left unimproved; as well as he has occasional Customs from other Ordinances.

2. See here the gracious Provision made for the Church; the Family and Houshold of God. Here is a constant Provision, of no less than four Ordinances, the Word, Prayer, Communication, and the Lord's Supper. We are not like to starve then. God hath kept to his own Rule, to *provide for his Family*. As good House keepers have some constant provision of store, as Corn, Beef, and the like; besides all occasional Dainties, that, like Fowl and Fish, come in to their Tables; so God hath laid up all spiritual provisions for us: And to be sure you have Christ himself for one standing Dish continually served up to you, as some Rarity useth to be served up, again, and again, and goes round at last. A Dish that fills all, and serves all Tasts (as they say *Manna* did) which is Milk to Babes, and to grown Men strong Meat; *all in all, and unto all*. Many things in a Sermon thou understandest not, and haply, not many Sermons; or if thou doest, yet findest not thy Portion in them; but here, to be sure, thou maist. Of Sermons, some are for comfort some to inform, and some to excite; but here in the Sacrament, is all thou canst expect. Christ is here Light, and Wisdom, and Comfort, and all to thee; he is here, an Eye to the Blind, a Foot to the Lame; yea, every thing, to every one.

Use 3. Hath God himself instituted both a Time, and also standing Ordinances for that Time, to keep up a constant Worship? what arrogancy is it then in such Church-Governours (whether Popish, or Reformed) as assume this power to themselves? saying, that Christ hath instituted no set Day for his Worship, but has left it unto them; it becoming the Liberty of the Gospel, not to be subject to Days and Times, as under the Old Law: And that God hath not defined out what set Times should be for the Lord's Supper; and so it falls under their Jurisdiction to appoint it; and they do all this, to enlarge their power. I will never believe that God would trust Officers with settling such Circumstances of Worship, as he trusted not his own High Priest with, under the Law, but settled them himself: No, God would have never have left matters of so great importance, at uncertainties: He would never have left even the Revenues of his Crown-Lands to those Landlords, of whom many would have the *Vineyard to be theirs*. And the fruit of their assuming this power, you may see in the Lord's Supper; which is absolutely by them commanded to be received at some certain times of the Year, no oftner necessary to be received; which is their poor Allowance for that Ordinance. And if God had left the Time of all Worship to their appointment, and not more clearly fixt it, it would have come to the same pass in process of Time; and a Sabbath once a Month would have been well, which haply might have been but once a Year. And yet all this was for the Churches Liberty; to free them from God's Yoke, and to bring the Consciences of Men into a worse Bondage of their own. As if God had made Christians free now, from the like Institution of a Sabbath to that of the Jews of old, and which himself then enjoyned; to

to leave room to Men, and their Power, to determine the very same. Thus they exclude God, that themselves may Rule. But blessed be thy Name, O God! that tho' other Lords besides thee have Ruled over Us, and would appoint us when to have Sabbaths, and Sacraments; yet thou hast wrought all our works for us: Thy self hast appointed our Works, and Times of serving Thee: Thy Service is perfect Freedom, but theirs is Bondage, which thou in mercy hast freed us from.

That you may clearly see the goodness of God in it, I will add this, that I find the Papists themselves, and the best of their School, acknowledge, That the Lord's Supper being a Sacrament given, often to be administred; there must necessarily be a defining by some Divine Authority, how many times at least, we are to receive it, else, says *Vasques*, the Affirmative Precept binding no Man so to any precise Time to receive this Sacrament; but that he might omit it, a Man might forbear to receive it, all his Life-time, (as well as any time) without sin. The like saith *Suarez*. Therefore they say, that Christ indeed left it indefinite; because he left power in the Church, to fix a set Time *how often*; which the Pope by Divine Authority (say they) hath done; which if he had not, this Precept, if indefinitely given, would not have necessarily obliged a Man all his Life-time. And therefore they say, it is a sin not to Receive once a Year, because the Pope (in whom is Divine Authority) hath so fixt it; but not oftner to Receive is no sin. But now we, if we were left thus indefinitely (whose Consciences cannot acknowledge any such Power in the Church) were left in a miserable uncertainty, how oft, at least, we must Receive or we sin. We have no help in this case, but the Word it self to decide it. And this is necessary. For, as we say of a Church, that the set Number, how many it should consist of, cannot be determined; yet there must *ad minimum*, be two or three gathered together in God's Name (as it is set down, *Matth.* 18.) or else it is no Church; one Saint alone not sufficing to make up a Church: So I say of this Sacrament; though *How often* at most it may be administred, cannot be determined (for it may be administred every day, as it was in the Primitive Times) yet how oft at least it must be administred, was to be determined so, to set bounds unto Man's neglect, and fix the Institution.

Use 4. If the Lord's Day be thus primarily appointed for these Ordinances, and they for it; you see then the Errour in appointing any other day electively for the Lord's Supper; as *Christmas-Day*, &c. Besides their missing of that Blessing which attends the Instituted Day of this Ordinance, they furthermore set up Days like God's, and prefer them to his; and yet thereby do afford this evident Beam of Light to us, that such an Ordinance honours a Day; for to that end was the Sacrament appointed by them to be on those Days celebrated; and so does this Ordinance, and the like, honour the Sabbath, which is sanctified by them.

CHAP. VI.

Some Cases concerning the Time of the Administration of Ordinances Resolv'd.

UPON what hath been hitherto treated of concerning the Administration of the Lord's Supper every Lord's day and the grounds thereof, there is a just occasion, or perhaps a necessity of Propounding and of Answering some Queries about other Ordinances. Some Cases of difficulty are to be discussed, and which are indeed the greatest difficulties and knots in this Question.

1. It is to be considered What interest this Ordinance of the Lords Supper hath in the Lord's day comparatively to other Ordinances? and whether by institution this Ordinance is to be administred, whatever be done about others?

And 2. If all have an interest also, then if the Case should be that the time and state of the Congregation cannot permit that all should be administred, it is to be considered which of them should rather be cut short or give way?

To Resolve these Cases; First in General, to prevent mistakes, I premise these two propositions.

1. That there is no such institution of any Ordinance, that all other Ordinances should give way to it, or that by institution this or that of necessity you must have,

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But otherwise take these kind of publique services (which you have here, *Acts* 2.42. and which are commanded, 1 *Tim.* 2. 1.) as they make up an Ordinance instituted as distinct from all the rest and that stands alone and is a Substantive Ordinance. And so know that this Ordinance so taken is not of that absolute singular transcendent institution, that this must be, whatever be done with the rest. They are all second Commandment Institutions, and must have alike their turn. They are Children all of one Father and of one Rank; The Eldest, which is prayer, is not enobled above the rest, that it must have a Subsistence, whatever becomes of the Younger Brethren.

2. The Interest, which by Institution any Ordinance hath is not such but that in Cases that may face out, any of them may give way to another; or all of them may give way to one. For besides the necessity of the Institution, there may be a Superadded necessity by Circumstances, that either now a particular Ordinance must be administred, or it cannot at all, or not to that full purpose be administred as is meet, and so God's name would be taken in vain. So it may fall out in the Admission of, or excommunication of a Member. And so it may seem to have fallen out in that case, *Acts* 20. That *Paul* put out the time of the Lord's day and administred the Sacrament at night when the Sabbath was ended.

For as he was an extraordinary Officer, so therefore his preaching was more than an ordinary Ordinance. It had a Superadded power of infallibility went with it. And though it was still but an Ordinance of the 2d. command; yet it was an Ordinance extraordinary and which they could enjoy but once; and at that once receive a foundation to build their Faith upon, and raise other Sermons upon that foundation all their lives. Yea, and it is to be considered that they could seldom enjoy him in that way of God's Institution, for their Office was to go up and down. And it is to be considered too that he was in the heat of Preaching, and though he broke off in a case of absolute necessity to restore a man to life, yet he would not break off for another ordinary Ordinance, for that work as in his hand it was performed was greater.

And so that place (wherein he says, *I was not sent to baptize; but to preach*) is to be understood, for his preaching was an Apostles, his baptizing was but as an act of an other man, the one was as an extraordinary Ordinance in his hand, the other was but as ordinary; yet it doth not follow from hence that ordinary preaching is to be preferr'd to baptizing.

Now there may (I suppose) fall out Cases, wherein there may a circumstanial necessity fall out superadded besides that of simple Institution; and then an Ordinance that hath place meerly by Institution may give way; as Ordinances Instituted do to works of necessity, as well as mercy. And there may be a necessity of mercy come to be annexed to the Administration of an Ordinance by some special Circumstances; and then an Ordinance that hath but the meer necessity of an Institution, must needs give way, as it doth to other works of necessity, but still not by vertue of any transcendent singular institution.

The Rule of no Institution is such, but an impediment may come in; and no Ordinance is so instituted but it may give way to another.

But to come nearer to the Case, the question may either be made of this Ordinance in Comparison with the Continual Ordinanes, Prayer, Preaching, &c.

Or, 2. The Question may be of Occasional Ordinances as Baptism Admissions, &c.

1. If

1. If the Question be limited to Continual Ordinances, which of them hath more Interest ?

I *Answer*, They have, by Institution, Interest alike: But yet so as one may have in Order the priority afore the other; As, *Let first of all Prayers*, these publique prayers be made, &c. 1 Tim. 2. 1. He speaks of Ordinary Church-meetings, as appears throughout that Chapter; So that prayer hath the first place, by institution. And then the preaching of the word seems to challenge the next place, and the Administration of the Lord's Supper the last; But whether after all other, or no, I yet know not.

2. Some Ordinances may for the meet Administration of them require more time, or else they are lamely Adminstred. So preaching may be oftner and require more time. I observe the phrase used, Acts 20. 11. *When Paul had talked, a long while*, as we translate it, but in the Greek it is ἐφ' ἱκανόν. When he had said what was fit throughly to instruct them in what their necessities required; when he had said *enough*.

It is certain that there is time enough for all standing ordinances and continual ordinances upon this day: and so as none of them will take up time so as to cause one to give way to another; and their Interest by Institution is alike.

But 2. The Question will most fall upon occasional ordinances, & if so stated; I deliver my Judgment with submission herein.

1. That the Interest which continual ordinances have in the Lord's day is (as I take it) more direct, immediate, proper and constant; so as it is a more native primary interest compared with that which occasional have.

I call it more direct, and immediate, for there is no third thing that comes between them to bring these two, *viz.* the Lord's day and these Ordinances together, but according to the ground formerly delivered, both being set and standing, they were made on purpose one for another, these for the day, and the day for them; that so to be sure God might have a solemn standing worship, and not occasional only. So as the time, the Lord's day it self by institution calls for their administration and their existing. But as for occasional Ordinances the day doth not thus immediately call for them, but only as an occasion intervenes, thus Baptism is required when a Child is to be Baptized.

Therefore the allyance between the Lord's day & continual Ordinances is, as that of a man's own kindred, immediate and direct, and of themselves, but that of it and the other Ordinances but as of affinity by marriage, through some middle thing coming between, that causeth it. And as it is thus more near, so more constant; and the constancy of any Relation and tye mutual makes a greater nearness, than that converse that is by fits and times.

Men that stand in such a relation one to another, that they must constantly meet together out of Office or a set Constitution, are & ought to be nearer one to the other in interest & respect, than those that use to meet but occasionally and by fits when such or such a business falls out. Now the *Lord*'s day and other occasional Ordinances meet but occasionally, but those that are contiual are standingly yoked together with it, and meet by mere Institution; And so their Interest comes to be primary and native, and in the first place, for that God might have a standing worship at set times, both this day and ordinances were ordained. But the day being thus ordained for this standing worship, and so founded, occasional ordinances are administred also, and the Church then meeting by Institution, they are fitly administred then. It is as in founding Colledges where the founders build Chambers and places of publique resort for Scholars indefinitely, but between the Scholars the Statutes do put this difference, that some are Scholars of the house as we call them, and of the foundation, which, that the Colledge might be sure to be upheld as a society, have a set pension and places of maintainance, that the Colledge may not be dissolved: and others are Pentioners, for whom the Statutes provide that such should be admitted also; but yet the primary, native, original foundation & interest, is that of Scholars of the house who are therefore preferred to Chambers, &c. before others; and the other is but the Interest of Strangers that are added to them, and have room amongst them by the founder's will. And hence (as I take it) is the denomination of your Meeting and Assemblies more frequently given to these continual Ordinances, even by reason of their primary original Native & Constant interest, as the ground of it. Thus here it is said, Acts 20. *When they meet to break bread*, And (1 Cor. 11. 20.) Their coming together in all those places is mentioned

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mentioned as if only it were for the Sacrament. Now the Reason is, because they are primarily and constantly to meet together for these Ordinances, and the Lord's day being first ordained for these, other Ordinances came to have a fit season also. By reason it is a sanctified time and the Church is then to meet. This seems to be the way made for the Administration of an occasional Ordinance, as (*1 Cor.* 5. 4.) for Excommunication, when ye are gathered together, then to deliver such an one to Satan: but for the Sacrament they meet, *to eat*, and the meeting is denominated from it. Now as an house is denominated *theirs* rather, who are the standing dwellers than occasional Incomers, that for an occasion have a room in it, so 'tis here. As the Gospel and Ordinances of it are called the Heavens in Scriptures, as (*Psalm* 19. 1. *Rom.* 10. compared) So these standing Ordinances are apointed as the Sun and Moon that divide and constantly Rule this day; and other Occasional Ordinances are as the Stars that have their influences in their seasons, *Job* 38. 32.

2. The second thing whereby I express my self in the Comparison of these two Ordinances Interest in this day is, That answerable to this more direct and primary institution of these, each for other, it comes to pass that a more special blessing doth mutually arise from the administration of continual Ordinances. God, when he sanctified and instituted this day, blest it also; which blessing is actually derived to us through those Ordinances administred upon it, as those whereby the day is sanctified; and he in like manner sanctifying these continual Ordinances for this day blest them by ordaining a special blessing from their administration by this day. The day blesseth the Ordinances more and the Ordinances convey the blessings put upon the day, which, I say, ariseth from this primary fundamental institution. So that though you may have a Sacrament of the Lord's Supper on the week day, and so likewise the preaching of the word (as was said) yet there is a further blessing on them may be expected on this day than any other.

So as, put the case you could meet conveniently enough for your occasions for a Sacrament on the week day, and therefore would defer and put off the Lord's Supper from the Lord's day; yet you should choose rather to have it on the Lord's day, for there is a special blessing on it that day, which through the mutual ordination of one for the other is bestowed upon it; so as that very reason should sway it rather to the Lord's day.

But now for an occasional ordinance I do Question, and do but propound it, whether there be such a special blessing that ariseth upon it, from this day rather than another day: So as a Congregation should rather put themselves to some inconveniences to have all such Ordinances administred on the Lord's day than on the week day, meerly for the Blessing sake which the day brings upon them. And my reason is because, they being Occasional Ordinances, and occasions calling for them, receive their special blessing (if any there be) from time or season or from their occasions, and so as their occasions give them existence, an *Esse*, so also the fittest season that is suited to such occasions in respect of occasional circumstances, gives them their *bene esse* or *melius esse*, their better being. So for baptizing a Child; as when a Child is born to any of you an occasion calls for the being of this Ordinance: So those Circumstances of time whether on the week day, or the Lord's day, as shall suit best with the good, or avoiding the hurt of the Child; the Conveniency of the parents, who may be to go a Journey, and the occasions of the Congregation, do give the preheminence to the administration of this Ordinance. And the same may be said as to admission of Members, *&c.* we are not simply for the Lord's day's blessing, to affect to have these Ordinances on the Lord's day, notwithstanding other inconveniences. But we ought to insist on it to have the Lord's supper on the Lord's day, for it is the work of the day, and the day is appointed for it.

But Though baptism is an ordinance to be administred but once and so (if a greater blessing could be supposed to accompany it on the Lord's day) it were much rather to be desired upon it, than any other day, yet we see the Apostles in the *Acts*, did baptize presently upon any day, as *Philip* baptized the Eunuch in his Journey, and *Paul* baptized the Jaylor's Family, &c. For the deferring it was not worth any special blessing conveyed by the Lord's day upon it; when all things else fell out to call for the administration of it. And therefore we are not bound to administer it on the Lord's day meerly for the blessing sake.

Now then to sum up the Solution of the case.

1. If

1. If all ordinances, both continual and occasional, can be administred on the Lord's day, as conveniently every way as on the week day they should. The Reason is because it is sanctified time instituted for Ordinances; neither is any other time instituted.

2. If all Ordinances cannot be administred on that day, then, I suppose no one continualOrdinance is in the frequency of it,so for to be preferred,as that it should be continually on this day,and another should give way:There is here to be observed the same Rule which the Apostle gives for prophesying of all. If many be in a Church, and all cannot prophecy at once, the Rule is, that two or three should do it at one time,and two or three at another and that by course, So,say I,let Ordinances take their course in their omissions, and no one be preferred to therest, but let it go by a *series* one by one, as the Apostle there says that all may prophecy.

These are Rules given by command for orderingOrdinances,and suit with right reason (so *v*: 37.) when ordinances have a like interest.

3. Or thirdly, That all may be administred every Lord's day, there must be the less time given to every one. For that also is a rule to order prophecying of Brethrn by, which have a like right and interest (so *v*.30.) let the firsthold his place, that is, so contract himself that another may speak,to whom God may have given a Revelation as well as to him, and therefore he must not take up all the time. The like, I say,is to be observed with respect to ordinances.

Or 4. The assemblies may begin sooner; and though some cannot come so soon yet when the most may, let them begin and the rest come after. For though for a special reason ye are to stay each for other for the Sacrament (as 1 *Cor*.11.) because it is a badg of the Communion of the whole: yet I know not whether we should allways thus stay for all other Ordinances for it is better that some few should want part and the beginning of the worship, that the whole may enjoy all.

Now these things I speak in case the Church cannot meet on other (as it seemed these in *Troas*, *Acts* 20. could not; for *Paul* stayed seven days for an opportunity to preach) which may also be the case of some Churches that are poor and numerous.

But in case the Church meet upon other days, and occasional Ordinances so encrease, as you cannot have all upon the Lord's day: or the inconvenience otherwise is such you cannot. Then,

1. For the reasons above given you should defer occasional Ordinances (as you use to do) to other days, and keep up the solemn standing worship by these Continual Ordinances.

As I apprehend it, the Lord's day is electively to be taken, for breaking bread but; not so for admission excommunication,*&c*. And in that case you are to deferr Occasional Ordinances rather for this Reason also. For being to be done but once for all, it is all one on what day,; it is no loss to defer any of them to the week day, or another Lord's day: But if you omit a Lord's Supper upon this day, it is an irreparable loss: There is one Lord's Supper less in the Course of Sabbaths in your lives, and the loss cannot be made up: 'tis as the loss of a good thought in it's season: But in the other case,*omittitur non ammittitur*,there is a delay but not a loss.

And 2. There may be such Circumstances in Occasional Ordinances, as will make their administration much better on a week day than on the Lord's day: And admission may require haste,through some journey to be taken by the party,or the like. So, a man's sin may be so ripe and high,as I would not have his excommunication deferred an hour longer that so the Church may clear it self.

Object. But here comes in theObjection,that there is no time under the New Testament,for which out of duty Christians are bound to meet,but the Lord's day. There is no other time instituted, and therefore it is to be supposed that the general rule that binds all Churches is that all Ordinances should be on the Lord's day only.

Answ. I Answer, That, indeed. there is no other time singled out by institution to oblige them to Assemblings together but the Lord's day. But yet there is a command to meet upon other days when pressing Circumstances urge to it, and their occasions will permit. The same command that lyes on *Timothy* to preach the word out of season, lyes upon Churches to hear out of the proper season assigned by institution. Other Circumstances may press to a necessity of a duty as well as an institution may; and so may oblige to meet on the week days, as well as Institution obligeth

Ch. VII geth us to meet on the Lord's days. And if still the condition of any Church be such (which yet ordinarily we see by weekly Lectures general in City and Country it is not) that they cannot meet on week days; but Occasional Ordinances multiply so as that they, and all continual ones cannot be administred on the Lord's day; then, say I, let some of the Continual give way at such a time, for if the case be that an Occasional Ordinance may not be administred at all, if not on that Lord's day or that it will otherwise be deferred too long, then, rather omit the practice of a Continual Ordinance rather than *that occasional one* should be so hazarded. And the Reason is because *that Occasional Ordinance* is a thing to be done but once: And rather than not have a Child baptized at all and dye ere baptized; it were better to loose a Lord's Supper which you may have every Lord's day. The Lord's Supper you have always with you, but not the other.

CHAP. VII.

Whether a Church of Christ may lawfully make an Agreement among themselves to to divide themselves into several parts, and to have the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper Administred to one of these Parts one Lord's day, and so successively to every part of the Church.

I Need not prove the first principle of a Congregational Church, and its being appointed by God as the seat of his publick worship and ordinances. I have already proved it, and may take it for granted by these, who profess Congregational principles with difference from others.

The Papists professing a visible Church Catholick, *&c.* do allow the dispensation of this ordinance of the Lord's Supper *Vage* and unlimitedly; Hence they have private Masses, and they think a Priest, and one more, to be enough for the performance of them and also for the giving and receiving the Sacrament.

Our Episcopal Divines, professing a National Church, allow a private communion to a party that is sick in case of that necessity.

Our Presbyterian Brethren that profess a National principle and that every ordained Minister is a Minister to the whole Church, do assert, that if several Christians meet and one such Minister be with them, he may (especially in difficult Times) administer the ordinance to them, though he hath no special Relation of being a Minister to them as a Congregational Church, and tho' those Christians have no particular Relation of members one to another.

In *Scotland*, also, a good and holy Minister, in repute, cometh to a place, and when thousands of people gather about him from far and near to hear him preach, ordinarily such a Minister useth to administer to them the Sacrament also.

That which is my design is to find out *what of a Church* is the true and proper seat of this ordinance of the Lord's Supper.

The Seat impowered for this, or any ordinance, is a matter of great moment, and it is not a Circumstance such as a local place is, and as *houses to eat and drink in* are. This is but a meer Circumstance of place, but (as the Apostle speaks) of this Ordinance *the Church of God* is unalterably the seat, as the opposition there shews, 1 *Cor.* 11. 22. Such Circumstances the Church may and doth appoint but the proper seat of an Ordinance instituted is another manner of thing.

The Passover (which this ordinance doth succeed) had an whole family appointed for the seat of it, *Exod.* 12. 46. *In one house shall it be eaten, thou shalt not carry forth ought of the Flesh abroad out of the house*, &c. Afterwards it must not be celebrated in any City but in a Family in *Jerusalem*, Deut. 16. 5. 6. *Thou mayst not Sacrifice the passover within any of thy gates which the Lord thy God giveth thee. But at the place which the Lord thy God shall choose to place his name in there thou shalt Sacrifice the Passover at even at the going down of the Sun, at the season that thou camest forth out of Egypt.* Unto which (as holy *Ainsworth* says in his discourse of the communion of Saints) a new Testament Church answers as the seat of ordinances.

Now that which I shall first do, is, to find out whether this ordinance of the Lord's Supper

Supper hath not a proper ſeat for it, with difference from other ordinances of worſhip that may be adminiſtred every where. I mean not as to the Circumſtance of place, for of that the Apoſtle hath determined, 1 *Tim.* 2. 8. *I will men pray every where*, as to place, and ſo the Sacrament may be adminiſtred any where for place. But as the ordinances of diſcipline have, beſide the circumſtance of place for meeting, a proper ſeat of a Church (*Do not you judge them within*, 1 Cor. 5. that is within your ſelves and that are of you?) So the enquiry is whether this Ordinance alſo hath not a *ſedes propria, A ſeat proper to it* with difference from other Ordinances, and what that may be?

This enquiry I ſhall manage by conſidering.

1. Our own commonly received principles hitherto, & ſee what they do neceſſarily (if retained) drive us up unto.

2. I ſhall conſider how the Scriptures will fall in, to confirm and ſuit with that, which by thoſe principles ſhall be found to be the *Propria ſedes* of this Ordinance.

We uſe to make a *Statue* by cutting away of matter, as in carving a Statue out of free-ſtone, and ſo in what is left a form ariſeth and it bears the image of what we intend (as well as we do it by adding to of matter as in making a *ſtatua* of *Playſter*, &c.) and ſo here *Præſcindendo* or by cutting away what will not ſerve for a *ſedes*; the true form in ſuch and ſuch a matter will diſcover it ſelf.

Now according to our Congregational principles received I believe we will agree in theſe particulars that follow, and if not, let the breach be made where any one thinks meet to make it upon them.

I ſhall in the firſt place ſet them down by way of Narration; the uſe and benefit of which Narrative will be to help us to diſcern the ſpecial value and tendency of this Ordinance of the Lord's Supper, which, when all is done, muſt regulate this caſe. And alſo by degrees each of thoſe particulars added to others coming up ſo far to the concluſion, thereby both the ſtate of the Queſtion will be ſeen, yea and perhaps ſome demonſtration of it ſpring out of all at leaſt to convince your judgments of the final concluſion which is this.

A Congregational body to Chriſt, or Church, conſidered as ſuch, and met as ſuch, is the proper ſole ſeat of this Ordinance of the Lord's Supper, with difference from other Ordinances of worſhip and other meetings. Now towards the proof of this I advance by theſe ſteps.

1. That if the whole Congregational Church were met it muſt be a Miniſter who muſt diſpenſe this ordinance, let the neceſſity of the Ordinance be what it will. Obſerve this that in caſes of the moſt abſolute neceſſity none will admit any other than a Miniſter to adminiſter it; and your beſt ground for that is (which I ſhall own) that we read not that any other but ſuch adminiſtred it, or baptiſm in the New Teſtament, and every where we read that where the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was adminiſtred it was by an whole Church, and ſo the argument for the negative is for this cauſe as good as for that other, *viz.* that Miniſters only ſhould adminiſter it: Nay, we have more inſtances for the one than the other. And this alſo ſhews a manifeſt difference of the Lord's Supper from other ordinances. For if we conſider publique prayers or preaching, gifted Brethren in caſes of neceſſity may adminiſter them, and yet you will not ſay this is common to the Lord's Supper which none but a Miniſter may adminiſter. However for this firſt difference betwixt this and other Ordinances there muſt be ſome reaſon in the nature of the Ordinances themſelves (for that it is the thing which in the firſt place I enquire) that ſhould require and admit ſuch a difference.

2. The qualification of being a Church-member, or of being in the order (as I may call it, Col. 2. 5.) of that ſtate, is alſo as requiſite as to a perſons receiving the Lord's Supper; as that the perſon adminiſtring it ſhould be in the order of preaching Elderſhip. This is acknowledged alſo, inſomuch that the holyeſt man in the world (and who is known to all that ſociety to be ſuch, and to be utterly remote from the leaſt jealouſy of Scandal) who owneth not a Relation to ſome Church-memberſhip, would not be admitted to this Sacrament by any of our Churches when met together.

3. The third caſe is this, If ſome Members out of each or all Congregational Churches in *England* were met together in a Town, and a Miniſter of that Town were

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met with them (where some one Congregational Church resides, but yet, where at that time that Church he belongs unto as Minister are not met, but yet there is such a full Congregation of such Saints mentioned with testimonials from their respective Churches) he, according to our principles could not administer the Lord's Supper to them, and yet they are all qualified for it in this respect, that they are in the order of a Church, and in a Church-state as Church-members, so as the defect that it was in, in the former case, is taken away also hereby.

And if it be said they cannot be administred unto, because he that is the Minister is not *their proper Minister*, but not because they are not capacitated themselves for it, I add these steps more still by putting further Cases in the way of answer to this, and to shew that this defect is ultimately resolved into this, that, indeed, they are not a Church, for that is the ground of any Man's being their proper Minister.

4. If any Apostle were present he could not administer this Ordinance to them. We may make this supposition, for in the primitive times it might *de facto* have fallen out: Therefore, the above-mentioned defects doth not lye in their not having a proper Minister, for an Apostle, having an universal Relation of Office to all Churches and Saints, would be (so far as being a Minister of all parts therein lyes) sufficiently qualified.

5. But still there is a defect why this company of men could not have the Lord's Supper administred to them, and that, although qualified in being each a member of some Church; and where lyes the obstacle but in this, that they are not one particular Church, or members of one and the same Church amongst themselves? so that an Apostle's presence and power doth not extend to supply that defect, any more than to make a company of Disciples a Church without their Co-alition first so to be. We use to say that a company of Elders met in a Synod cannot have the Sacrament together, if *Paul* were with them, although they each do represent particular Churches. So as still (according to us) the Administration of the Sacrament farther depends upon these being one in the same, individual, particular Church-fellowship, which can be said of no ordinance else whatever.

6. If two or three of that Church were met, and a teaching Elder with them, he might pray with them, preach to them, &c. but not administer this ordinance. The Evangelist *Philip* and the *Eunuch* alone went together, and he could baptize him, but he could not have administred the Lord's Supper to him, so as still it is not sufficient that members of the same individual Church be met with a Teaching Elder. Thus still the administration of this Ordinance advanceth it self and climbeth up further and further towards its having for its seat that company of believers which ought to be accounted an whole particular Church.

7. It is not *a number* of the Members of the same Church met with a teaching Elder *which* your priniples will allow capacitated for the Administration of this Ordinance. Yea, tho' it be supposed a number of so many and of such persons, that if there were a Church to be begun, there were a sufficient number for to make a Church (be it the *minimum quod sic* of seven (as Mr. *Cotton* says) or of ten, as in a Synagogue, or of eleven, as Christ's Disciples were when *Judas* was gone forth.) Yet your principles will not allow it. For,

1. Then any such *number* met with a teaching Elder for other Religious worship might in the end say, Let us have the Sacrament also in the close, since God hath been with us in the other ordinances, and we are sufficient for number. But this you would not allow.

2. If there be a Church of five hundred, and as many teaching Officers as were in the Church of *Antioch*, Acts 13. 1. who would accordingly meet in so many several parcels as they had Teaching-Elders over them (one teaching Elder meeting with one parcel of many of them, another with a second *many*, a third with a third *many*, and so on) and would multiply their meetings according to the number of their Elders, this you would not allow neither, especially you would not admit such several Meetings for the Lord's upper at one and the same time. This yet is a case supposable and it may be put. S

Now by cases put, we haviug brought the matter thus high, and thus near, it is to be considered what is here yet wanting or to be superadded to capacitate and endow them with power for this that the Lord's Supper may be administred in this case? Let any man of us either make a breach upon some or all of these principles, or assign wherein the defect

defect lyes, and as *Peter* said, what should forbid, that these should not be baptized? so let us enquire what doth forbid or hinder why these should not be the Seat of the Lord's Supper when so met; and when there are all requisites materially for it. Book VIII

1. Saints in the Order of Church-fellowship.

2. In the same individual Church-fellowship, and Members one of another in that respect.

3. A Teaching-Elder in proper Relation unto them.

4. A need (perhaps) of Edification of many of them, yea, and an earnest, spiritual and special longing after it at the meeting, and a great preparation made by other Ordinances unto it.

5. The common Warrant (as for time) to receive this Ordinance *oft (as oft as ye receive*, &c. 1 *Cor.* 11. 26.) and so, both season and time do meet also. There is,

6. A sufficient number as to the *Matter* of a Church to make an whole Church according unto that, to which any principles of any profession amongst us Episcopalian, Presbyterian, or Anabaptists will say is required for a Church, and so it is in that respect equivalent unto an whole Church. Wherein should the impediment lye? I press any man to assign it; but he that doth it must assign such a *Ratio* or *Condition* of this company to be superadded yet to them, as (taking into his eye all the fore-mentioned cases) shall carry with it a difference and distinct ground founded in the nature of the things, and he must compare them together.

1. With the Case of many Members of several other Churches so met with an Apostle, who yet may not receive the Lord's Supper.

2. With the cases of two or three (but not arising to many) of their own Church met with their own Elder, &c, who yet may not.

And yet 3. All these may enjoy any other Ordinance of worship, prayer, &c. but not this.

And 4. He must consider all these meetings to be of a distinct nature from a Church meeting of the whole Church, that is so acknowledged, in which, not the Lord's Supper only, but any or all other Ordinances of *Discipline*, *Excommunication*, &c. may be administred, which cannot be in any of the other Companies. Let any, I say, whoever, weighing the premises, assign what *Notio*, *conceptus*, or *Ratio* (taking *Ratio* for the *Modus*, *Relation* or respect put upon a thing) is a-new or farther requisite to *this Company of many*, &c. specified, and such a *Notio* also as will bear warrant and afford a true ground of difference of such a Church, both from the other Assemblies mentioned, and will also state a difference of this ordinance of the Lord's Supper from the other Ordinances, according to the variation of the cases put, and he will find himself driven up to what I shall by and by assign.

For, bring me two Half-crown-pieces, the one stampt the other *unstampt* (which yet for matter and all such requisites belonging to the matter, &c. is, *in valore*, in value, equivalent unto an half crown that is *stamped*) yet the unstampt piece is not constituted currant as Money to that purpose of payment as the other is; so it is in the present case.

The 7th. case propounded presents you with a *many* of Members of one and the same Church enough to begin a Church, &c. and yet you would not (out of times of persecution) in the modes of them propounded allow them capacitated for this administration, and yet they are, *in valore*, in value every way equivalent unto a Church which is immediately capable of this Administration. Let any Man now say what is the stamp that is to be superadded unto such a *Company* or *Companies*? Till others assign theirs I shall present what I conceive *in abstracto* this formal reason to be, *viz.* that a company of Saints, &c. met, must be indued with this superadded *Formality*, with this *Nova ratio formalis instituta*; That it is a distinct body unto Christ, wherein the Members are united to one another as such, with distinction from other Churches that are also Instituted bodies to Christ. And this is that company which having an Officer or Teaching Elder over them are the *propria sedes*, *the proper seat*, for the Administration of this Sacrament, and unless this consideration is, or can be justified to be in such, or in any company, they are not capacitated for this Ordinance of the Lord's Supper. For otherwise it is not their *Number*, and their being members of one and the same Church and their meeting with an Elder, who is their own Elder, that will impower them for this Ordinance.

1. In *General*, that there must be some farther *formalis Ratio*, some *conceptus*, or no-

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1. Because all things that go to compleat the matter do meet in that last instance. There is, 1. A *many*. 2. *Many* of the same Church. 3. They are met with their own teaching Elder, and yet they are defective, and are not the proper seat of the Lord's Supper.

2. Because there must some difference and distinction arise (besides what ariseth from these persons as the matter in this company) whereby they do and may become *Propria sedes* of this Ordinance with difference from all the former instances. Now differences arise properly from the form, and so it must be *Nova Ratio formalis*.

2. It must be something *instituted*, a *Ratio formalis instituta*, (as I said.)

1. Because it is that which must make a difference and distinction from,

1. A Company of Saints in no Church-Fellowship.

2. A Company of Saints in several Church-Fellowships.

3. From two or three of the same Church-Fellowship.

4. From a *many* of the same.

5. And so as that whereas any such Company of the former may partake of any other Ordinance of worship, yet not of this. That which must be, to put the difference, must be *Ratio formalis, instituta*, as take as many men for number and (every way qualified and enabled, &c.) as are sufficient to make a Corporation fit to enjoy such or such priviledges, yet they must over and above be empowred by Charter, and over and above have superadded the seat of their being a Corporation by a Civil Institution; So it is here.

2. Now secondly, for the demonstration of that particular *formalis ratio instituta* assigned, *viz.* That an instituted body to Christ considered as such is the only proper seat for this Ordinance, I shall proceed.

1. By removing all suppositions I can think of or that have been suggested; or what may be pretended to give the stamp or institution, so as it will still remain that nothing else but such a company as I have before defin'd, may assume and take on them to be an instituted body to Christ.

1. It is not a *Par Ratio* a parity of Reason. *The Church* is said to have prayed for *Peter*, Acts 12. 5. *Peter therefore was kept in prison, but prayer was made without ceasing of the Church unto God for him*; and this was done by two several meetings at least and so by parts of the Church, *v.* 12. *He came to an house where many were gathered together praying*; and another company was elsewhere, as appears from what *Peter* says *v.* 17. *Go tell these things unto James and to the Brethren*; and the words that follow are, *And he departed and went into another place.* But yet all this will no way come up to evince the matter we are upon, nor warrant that the stamp of being a Church may be put upon every assembly of many, nor will it follow that the Church may meet in parts for the Lord's Supper.

1. Because prayer is such an ordinance as may be exercised by a Church by parcels, and those parcells may be fewer or more, whether their Office is met with them or not, as in one of the former instances was alledged that one Elder meeting with one sick person may pray with him, whereas if all the Elders met with that person they would not be capacitated to administer the Lord's Supper to that sick person. For if this had been the manner then, or an apostolical Practice, the Apostle *James* had as fit an occasion to have made mention of it and to have enjoyned it to be administred also by them, as well as to prayer over them, &c. For the Sacrament is as needful for the Soul of such a Person as prayer, &c. is for their body.

It may also be said that any two of the Church and the whole Church by two and two may meet to pray for any business of importance, but you will not say they may do so for this Ordinance; Yea they may do so without any Officer, as, two or three may meet for prayer, but not so for this Sacrament. And one reason is because this Ordinance is a *Communion* of Christ's body, and of one with another therein; but it is not so in the other Ordinance of Prayer, so as there is *disparitas, a disparity of Reason.* For it would be a strange Assertion to say that two may meet for a Communion of Christ's body as well as to pray, and thereby exercise the Communion of Saints, which cannot be done apart, as well as by all, or many together.

Object. But the *Phrase* of *Acts* 12. 5. is urged, that prayer was made of the Church unto God for *Peter* (which how it was done the 12th. and 17th. *verses* shew, *viz.* That

That it was by parcels)and therefore theChurch may be said to meet in several parcels; The reply is. Book VII

Answ. 1. A Question may justly be made whether that phrase of *Prayer being made of the Church without ceasing*, refers us unto those Prayers that are afterward instanced to have been made by parcels of the Church, or whether that phrase is not intended to shew how the whole Church had during his being in prison met and made prayers for him ; for unto the former whole time of his having been in prison doth that speech refer (view the words and compare, *verse* 4.) and those after-passages (*v.* 12, 17.) are but what fell out to be that night afore he was to appear next morning, *verse 6.* But I will not at all insist on this but will suppose that during this time of persecution all their meetings were by parcels as well as that night ; though I believe that the assertion in the Answer given can never be disproved. But,

2. Prayer may be said to be made by the Church in parcels,and yet it may be affirmed that none of them were meetings of the Church as a Church. Tho', yet, if two by two had in such minute parcels met, yea if privately only one had earnestly prayed it might have been said, That prayer had been made by the Church thus distributed.

For, 1. The word *Church* in such a way of speech is taken materially for the members of the Church, whether singly or otherwise, and when a thing is done by them generally either one way or another it may be said, *The Church prayed*, and it cannot be inferr'd that they prayed as met together , no more than to say , *Prayer was made by the Churches*, would argue they all met together for one prayer. And that the phrase of *Church* is so used in this Book of the *Acts* is evident, for when 'tis said (*Acts* 8. 1.) that there was *a great persecution against the Church.* The word *Church* is materially taken. So as the phrase (*v.*5.) and those compared with it (*v.* 12. and 17.) will no way evidence that these meetings were Church-meetings or that they met *qua* Church, and so they had not the stamp which we seek: They were barely meetings of several members of that Church, and so the whole Church, indeed, might be materially in the one and in the other, but still it was not there *qua* Church.

2. The nature of the duty of prayer is unquestionably such, as will admit a Church to perform it by parcels greater or lesser, yea in its members singly. And how then can we interpret this phraseology, in *Acts* 12. to serve that purpose for which it is urg'd.

3. Nay 3. The Holy Ghost hath warily penned it to present such an interpretation, for he styles the meeting of those in *verse* 12. (where it is said, *Many were gathered together praying)* in distinction from being a Church, or the Church, or a Church-meeting, and so it in reality comes up but to that seventh or last instance we gave of many of the same Church-meeting, to whom yet you would not give the Supper. And as for the other company, who are called *James* and the *Brethren*, we will suppose them met as these *Many* (*v.* 12.) were, and yet so much is not said there, but the meaning may be that *Peter* bid them to go to their several houses. They are but the *Brethren* with *James*, not the Church,though *James*, their chief Elder,had been met with them.

Yea, 4. There will fall out this contradiction to what is said in the 5th. *v.* if you say that these were each formal Church-meetings. For then it must have been said that they met in *distinct Churches*, and not that *that Church, in singulari* met in each of these meetings, *v.* 5.

2 It is not the will or consent of that which we must call the whole Church (the πανηγυρίς) that can have authority to set this new stamp of a *Church* upon such partial Meetings of its own Members.

For 1. Tho' in Law Estates or Titles are convey'd, both by the will of man in making his will, and by inheritance, yet here,the adopting any or all of these meetings apart, into the priviledge of a Church,goes not by the *will of Man.* But look what Company is so met as by the will, and institution of God, the inheritance falls upon, they only are the Church. The Church's will gives not the stamp, but it must be such in the reality afore God.

2. If the will of theChurch had this pretended authority,then the whole Church may say of any such few or many of the members at any time met,that they are a Church, and that others, tho' many, are not so. Yea,

3. Then it may be said of as many several Companys that have each an elder with them, that they are so many Churches ; and if all these receive at the same time the Sacrament,

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Sacrament, they would be so many Churches made by that one whole Church and belonging to that one Church; whereas an instituted Church consists in *Indivisibili*.

4. It is not considered enough that the authority of being a Church is not *Potestas vicaria nor deputata, A vicarious, or deputed power.* Therefore the whole Church cannot say, This shall be your Church at such or such a time, for such or such an end.

3. It is not a case of necessity for the Ordinance, that will be argument sufficient for the administration of it to any such divided parcels of a Church. For put this case that many of the same Church are in case of great disconsolation and therefore need this ordinance, or that they have not had this Ordinance of a long time administred to them, and one of their proper Ministers were with them. Yea, put the case of necessity which the Papists and our Episcopal Divines put, that two or three or more are sick and weak in a great Family belonging to one Church, and being near death in all view, they as greatly long for, yea, more need this ordinance, *in agone mortis*, in an agony of death, than any other company of Church-Members in case of persecution: neither of these cases will be allowed to be such a necessity as would make or constitute such a meeting to be a Body unto Christ, instituted with difference from another part of that Church.

CHAP. VIII.

Whether, in case of apparent danger of Life, loss of Estate rationally foreseen, or in case of violence and force, causing Ordinances to cease, there may not be a prudent forbearance or secret avoidance?

THE Rule our Saviour gives, *I will have Mercy and not Sacrifice*, is our measure and standard to forbear Ordinances in the Case mentioned; for it is *Mercy* which God would rather have. Sacrifice was the eminent Ordinance of the old Testament in all the ages of it, yet, it being but a duty of the second Commandment or Instituted worship and not of the first, it yields unto mercy, as also the duties of the Sabbath do, as our Saviour Christ hath also declared and paralell'd that with the duties of the second Commanded, *Luke* 6. 1, 2, 3, 4.

But I shall give instances of such a Forbearance which confirm this, and shew the extent of this Rule.

1. I shall produce Instances out of the old Testament.

1. *Jacob* fled from his Fathers house when *Esau* had but spoken words of threatning, *Gen.* 27. 41. *And* Esau *said in his heart the days of mourning for my Father are at hand, then will I slay my Brother* Jacob; *And these words of* Esau, *his elder Son, were told* Rebecca, *and she sent and called* Jacob *her younger Son, and said to him, Behold, thy Brother* Esau *as touching thee doth comfort himself, purposing to kill thee.* Here was but a hearsay and report of *Esau*'s intention, and yet thereupon his Mother advises him to flee to *Laban* to *Haran*, verse 43. but to do it only to avoid the present distress, hoping his Brothers fury would be over as the word is, *verse* 44, 45. *And tarry thou with him a few days until thy Brother's fury turn away; until thy Brothers anger turn away from thee* (that is, the fury of his anger be over) *and he forget that which thou hast done to him, then will I send and fetch thee from thence.* And he did accordingly and had *Isacc*'s blessing with him also (*Gen.* 28. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.) and was sent away by his Authority; and yet, consider the Case how it stood; He went away from his Fathers house where God was worshipt, and where Sacrifices were offered; for so in the Patriarchs Families they were, and had been from the beginning, from *Adam*, *Abel*, and *Cain*, and so on. Yet, to avoid this fury he fled to a Family, where a strange God was worshipt (for we read that *Laban* did swear to another God than *Jacob* did, *Gen.* 31. 53. *viz.* The God which *Abraham* and *Nahor* had worshipt before *Abraham*'s Conversion, Josh. 24. 15. *The Gods which your Fathers served that were on the other side of the flood*: That *Laban* was an Idolater also appears by the said, *Gen.* 31. 30. *Wherefore hast thou stollen my Gods?* compared with *verse* 34.) and his flying was but a matter of prudence, it was but for a danger threatned: He was not yet surprized, but it seemed rationally impendent. And also it was but for a time, but not for always, and his

his Mother (as *Ainsworth* says) counsell'd him in Faith; yea, and farther *Isaac* sent him away with a blessing as from God. And there was this farther in the case, that he having bought the birth-right of his Brother *Esau*, if his Father (who was so old, that he was striken with blindness, and *Esau*, in his speech, had implyed that it would not be long to his death) had dyed, it was he that should have Officiated in the Priest's Office in the Family, and have performed the worship of the Family, as having bought the birth-right; and so was the head thereof in that respect. How soon his Father might dye he knew not, and yet he fled, and fled upon this occasion and with this reserve, till his Brother's fury should be over.

I might from hence urge an argument against what is ordinarily alledged by people in our times, who, in the case of eminent danger, tell their teachers and one another, *You must trust God*, and not avoid or forbear.

I reply, why should not he have trusted God against such fears as these, which were indeed but from flying speeches of his brother? but because it was rationally probable that his Brother would indeed have killed him, he therefore flyes to avoid it, but when indeed God really did call him to trust him, as when his brother *Esau* came with 400 men against him, he then trusted God, and prayed it out; but in this case, he was not called to do it, but wholly to avoid it rather.

2. To Sacrifice, and to worship God together in Assemblies had been the Religion of their fore fathers transmitted to them from before the flood, as appears from the first, in the case of *Cain* and *Abel*, Gen 4 and from the 26. *v.* of that Chap. *Then men began to call upon the name of the Lord*, that is, to call upon him together. But while they were in *Egypt*, the people did forbear Sacrifices and publique worship, Exod. 8. 25, 26, 27. Pharaoh *called for* Moses *and for* Aaron *and said, Go ye, sacrifice to your God in the Land. And* Moses *said, It is not meet so to do; for we shall Sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians to the* Lord *our God*: Lo! *shall we sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians before their eyes, and will they not stone us? we will go three day's journey into the willderness, and sacrifice to the* Lord *our God, as he shall command us. videtur colligi non fuisse liberum; it seems to be inferr'd, that it was not free, Sacrificia offerre*, no not in their own dwellings *for them to offer Sacrifices*, no not in their own dwellings in *Goshen*, or if they did it, they did it but *secretly*. And it is for certain that publick Sacrifices and meetings were not used; for it is but now granted as a special favour by *Pharaoh, Go, Sacrifice in the* Land, as that which they had not done afore, and they forbore upon a prudential ground (when yet according to the principles of trusting God in any case, *&c.* and if they were true, they ought not to have foreborn) they knew not infallibly and certainly, that the people would stone them, and yet thereupon *Moses* says, *It is not meet so to do*, verse 26. *for we shall Sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians before their eyes, and will they not stone us? we will go three days journey into the wilderness, and Sacrifice to the* Lord *our God*. Which argues further that they knew their Fathers had offered up Sheep and Oxen; and so it was not out of Ignorance that they forebore, as if they knew not what God would accept. *Rivettus in Locum.*

From the transactions of *Moses*, this may clearly also be argued, that if, in case any person be to enter into a state of Church-Ordinances (which Sacrifice was then more eminently in the room of) or to joyn with a set company and with a Pastor suitable to them, *&c.* which hitherto they have not done, they may warrantably forbear and wait a due and fit season for it in a setled way. Or if a man intended to remove for ordinances to another Country he were not bound (perhaps for some good space of time) to enter presently into them in the place where he is, or upon the next opportunity, which will present it self. Also in that case of a dangerous opposition from their Relations, such as, by reason of their Spirits and Principles, do threaten to break all between them; we do use rightly in such a case to advise, that Wives and Children are not so bound up to do it, but they may forbear to gain the consent of such Relations. And our Argument we account strong, because, for present enjoyment, we are not to hazard or prejudice a future more settled and quiet enjoyment, which yet truly hath much of the case afore us: For we only profess to forbear at particular times, wherein there appears, rationally, a more certain danger, to preserve our selves and our Estates to enable us to enjoy them more frequently at other times, and not to expend all your future enjoyments upon one present, and spend (as it were) the whole of all at once. And this is truly *Mercy* and is the same kind of Sacrifice too, *viz.* for the future instead of Sacrifice at present.

Now

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Now all this is justifiably inferred from the Case of the *Israelites* in *Egypt*, especially from the time that *Moses* presented himself as a deliverer unto them, for seeing deliverance was at hand, why did they not presently fall upon Sacrificing? Why doth *Moses* defer the time, and not set upon it presently? It was not that the duty of Sacrifice was not inforce, for it had been (as Christ says of Circumcision) from the Fathers, and obliged them as well as their fore-fathers, especially when *Pharaoh* had given liberty, saying, *Go Sacrifice in the Land.* No, but he defers it, to work about another thing, *viz.* a total deliverance, and sacrifizeth the present enjoyment they might have had unto the attainment of a future settled enjoyment. He forbears at present, that the present performing it for once might not hinder the future for a continuance.

3. During *Saul*'s wicked Reign, there was no frequenting the Ark, which yet was the Ordinance of God, 1 Chron. 13. 3. *Let us bring again the Ark of our God, for we enquired not at it in the days of* Saul. I omit *David*'s flying from *Saul*, and complaining of his dwelling in *Meshech*, and his saying, *O that I were a Sparrow, a Door-keeper in the house of God*, Psa. 84. 3, 10.

4. We have another instance in the Case of the ten Tribes all the days of the Kings of *Israel:* There was in *Elia*'s Time 7000 had not bowed to *Baal*, but they kept themselves from the defilement of Idols conscientiously (1 *Kings* 19. 18.) and yet they went not unto ordinances at *Jerusalem* to Temple-worship, nor did not during all those times, which were well nigh 250 years, nor do we find them any where blamed for it. Yea, and surely, had they been observant thereof, it would have been here remembred by God for the evidence of their sincerity, as well as that Negative of not bowing unto *Baal.*

If the Objection be, that of *Jeroboam* and the rest of the Kings, it is indigitated, that he made *Israel* to sin, namely, in their notgoing up to *Jerusalem* as well as in worshipping his Calves.

I *Answer*, 1. That the sin of *Jeroboam*, and the Kings that imposed both, did lye in both, *viz.* in restraying them from their going to *Jerusalem* as well as in requiring their worshipping his Calves, & the ultimate aim on his part was to keep them from going to *Jerusalem*, *If this people go up to Sacrifice in the house of the Lord at* Jerusalem, *then shall the heart of this people turn again unto their* Lord, *even unto* Rehoboam *King of* Judah, *and they shall kill me, and go again to* Rehoboam *King of* Judah: Yet the sin imputed to the people is eminently if not limitedly said to be their worshipping of the Calves, 1 Kin. 12. 29, 30. *And he set the one in Bethel, and the other put he in Dan. And this thing became a sin; for the people went to worship before the one even unto* Dan.

Answ. 2. The Nation generally incurred the guilt of both, because they walked willingly after *Jeroboam*'s Commandment, *Hosea* 5. 11.

But 3. Still those Godly people who kept themselves from the worship of his Calves (as certainly they did, as the prophets also did) and being under this hard restraint which hath been spoken of, and Mourners for it, to them simply their forbearance to go up to *Jerusalem* was not imputed as a sin, nor is any where found to have been so charged on them.

And that the greatest of the Prophets themselves did in that as well as in other Cases of danger betake themselves to ways of prudence to secure and save themselves after the most *Heroick* darings, and durst not abide by it; you have *Elias* for an example. *Elias*, indeed, once daringly offered a great Sacrifice, and gained thereupon the people to kill 800 of *Baal*'s Priests, in the midst of *Ahab*'s and *Jezebel*'s Reign, 1 *Kings* 18. But when he had done, he stayed not by it, but to save himself he betook himself to his heels and run away and went as far as his Legs could carry him, clear out of all *Ahab*'s Dominions and reach, 40 days Journey, even to *Mount Horeb*, where the Law was given, 1 *Kings* 19. 8.

Some further Objections may arise from the Adventures and seeming Hazards of utter ruine, that many godly of the 10 Tribes at several times made to come to *Jerusalem* to Sacrifice. There were three special times in which we read that many of that people after the beginning of *Jeroboam*'s Reign went up to *Jerusalem* to worship.

1. Then when the Division had been first made by *Jeroboam* during the space of 3 years.

2. In the days of *Asa* of *Judah*, and *Baasha* King of those ten Tribes, some 15 years after *Jeroboam*'s death, another irruption out of some of the 10 Tribes came unto *Jerusalem*, 2 *Chron.* 15. 9.

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3. The third was just at the last, even but 5 years afore the final ruine of the Nation.

Of any other times we read not (that I know of) of any one's going up unless you will credit that which old *Tobit* says of himself, *Tobit* 1. 6 *I went often alone unto* Jerusalem *to the feasts*; and what the Angel is brought in to say (*Chap* 5.) of two more that accompanied him at some of those times. Yet there it is not he always went when it was duty as well to do so, but only often, and that he alone did it, not others of the godly of that Nation in his days.

Now the Circumstances of those three times specified and the Condition of that people are to be enquired into that it may appear why then it was done by the godly, and not at other times (that are recorded) as that which will give a difference in the case, and give light to us in the point in hand, when to adventure and when not, for 'twill be found that none of these three Instances in the Circumstances of them will rise up to prove such an absolute obligation unto instituted Ordinances, but as may stand with mercy shewn to our selves in our lives, preservation of our lives, and of our Families from ruine. I shall therefore make a particular enquiry into the Circumstances of all these three.

1. As touching that first flush or breaking forth of *goers to* Jerusalem, when it was but young-tide with *Jeroboam* and his Government, we read, 2 *Chro.* 11. 13, 14, 15, 16. *And the Priests and Levites that were in all* Israel *resorted to* Rehoboam *out of all their coasts (for the Levites left their suburbs, and their possessions, and came to* Judah *and* Jerusalem *: for* Jeroboam *and his Sons had cast them off from executing the Priest's Office unto the Lord; and he ordained him Priests for the high places, and for the Devils, and for the Calves which he had made) and after them out of all the Tribes of Israel such as set their hearts to seek the Lord God of Israel came to Jerusalem to Sacrifice unto the Lord God of their fathers.* But the Circumstances of the times and condition of the persons must be therein considered:

As, 1. That this was done at that time when this alteration together with the government was first made, and (which also is to be taken along) was practised by the people; but the three first years, as v. 17. hath it: and although *Jeroboam* was thus rigid from the first towards the Priests and Levites (of which by and by) yet it being the beginning of his Government (when *Politique* Princes proceed by degrees) it may well be supposed that his being King depending much upon the people, he was a while more slack and conniving at the people; and indeed his first Declaration (I call it so rather then Edict) concerning the Calves and their going up to *Jerusalem* was (as to them) published in softer and milder and but exhortatory terms, and without penalties that we read of at first annexed, as appears, 1 Kings 12. 28 *Whereupon the King took counsel, and made two Calves of Gold, and said unto them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem, behold thy Gods, O Israel,* &c. It was but a presenting to them another worship and trying first how it would take with them.

2. The condition both of Priests and People is to be considered, to put the difference, between this and after times.

1. Consider the condition of the Priests and Levites who began first, as *v.* 13. 14. It is apparent that their Removal was Total and forced and absolutely necessitated. They could not choose, unless they would become Priests to serve *Jeroboam*'s Calves, for refusing which it was *Jeroboam* began with them. 'Twas he and his Sons had cast them off from executing the Priest's Office, 2 *Chron.* 14. and so their lively hood and maintenance utterly ceased, for their portion always had been to live upon *Jura templi*, *upon the revenues due by God's law to the Priests as serving the Temple*, as you read, *Num.* 18. *Deut*, 18. and *Josh.* 18. all which ceased in *Israel* then with their Non-execution of the Priest's Office. Only, it seems he left it yet free to them to continue in their dwellings, for 'tis said, those *they left*, *their suburbs*, as v. 14. for, alas! what would that have conduced to their Maintenance, they having no inheritance or Lot of Lands? but on the contrary, if they would remove to *Judah* and *Jerusalem* (which at this dawn of his Government it seems *Jeroboam* yet hindred them not from but permitted them) there they had a service at the Temple waited for them; for in their Courts they were there to serve. They had also a maintenance by God's appointment set out for them, and the Priest's self-denyal in this was but as that of Priests and Jesuites now with us in *England*, who, if they be banished from thence have yet Colledges and Monasteries and Universities to retire unto, where they have employments and

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other service to do and maintenance ready for them; which different case of theirs from others, who, if banished, have meer nothing to betake themselves to, is not enough considered and laid to heart. Yea, as things stood, it was every way their interest and advantage in this distress to take this course of resorting to *Reboboam* out of all *Israel*.

Then 2. For *the People* who *after them* (as 'tis said) both *after* that time, and after their example, came to *Jerusalem* also; besides that (as was said) they as yet had no positive prohibition to the contrary (that we read of) further, it is not apparent at al that they did for these three years remove their Stations from out of *Israel*, but keeping their houses and their Lands still did only go up to *Jerusalem* to Sacrifice at the usual times, and so it is *only* said of them, 2 *Chron.* 11. 16. *They came to Jerusalem to Sacrifice unto the* Lord *God of their Fathers*; and because this is spoken with an observable difference from what had been said of the removal of the Priests (*verse* 13, 14.) that they also *left their dwellings*, &c. and that the people here are barely said to go *to Sacrifice*: Hence therefore it seems more than probable that these peoples going was only at the feasts for Sacrifice, but they returned again to their own dwellings and lively-hoods in *Israel* as in former times they had been wont to do. And if so, then this clearly argues that *Jeroboam*'s Laws (if any concerning them were yet made) were not as then so severe against the peoples going up (that is, not for these three first years) as afterwards they were, when by the experience of their going up during those three years he saw that the Kingdom of *Judah* was *strengthened thereby*, v. 17. And that but three years are mentioned argues that then they ceased any more so to go up.

On the other hand if the case of this people had not stood thus free in this respect for those three first years (as hath been argued) but that they should be thought utterly to have quitted their Station, it had been far harder with them than with the Priests and Levites, and indeed unsuportable. And the vast difference between the case of the Priests and the People (if thus stated) is very apparent For the Priests and Levites left but meer dwelling-houses, but had a provision for them though perhaps less in *Judah* upon their removal, but the people, if they removed were to leave inheritances in Lands, Vineyards, Orchards, &c. which they already possessed in *Israel*, and that alloted them by God, which if *Jeroboam* had been so severe with them at first, as is supposed, they could not have sold them neither, for he would have prevented them in that also, and if they had liberty to have sold them, it had been but for the time till the year of the next Jubilee by the Law, which to many, would have been but little profit, for it was but 20 years at the utmost, as the Bishop of *Ardmach* reckons them, others but 14 between *Jeroboam*'s very beginning of his Reign unto the next Jubilee which was the 10. And when they should have come unto Judah they could not have brought any other lands of inheritance there, for those that were that time dwellers allready had their inheritances fixt to them by Divine right, they were, *bona immobilia*, immovable Goods, which they could not sell longer than the next Jubilee, when they must have returned, and so these poor *Israelites* should have had nothing to have lived upon, no, nor to employ themselves in, in the Land of *Judah*, if thither they had removed.

Neither had they any ground (for ought I know that may be gathered out of the story) to hope for any support or encouragement either from that people of *Judah* or *Reboboam* who was not a godly Prince nor sincerely hearty to the cause of Religion, but (2 *Chron.* 12. 1.) *After he had established the Kingdom* (once) *and had strengthened himself he forsook the* Law *of the* Lord *and all Israel with him.* And in that former place alledged 'twas but those three first years that he and they *walkt in the ways of* David *and* Solomon, upon which it may therefore well be supposed that the Godly people of these ten tribes ceased to go up to worship, though in the end he humbled himself, and *things went well again in* Judah, 2 *Chron.* 12. 12.

But then that after those three first years *Jeroboam*'s severity interrupted any from going up (as we read of that none did) is very likely and most probable, for of *Jeroboam* it is particularly said that he began to use force and violence to keep the people from going up to *Jerusalem*, as the summary account which God gives why he removed that nation wholly, at the last shews, 2 *Kings* 17. 21. *Jeroboam drave the people from following the* Lord, that is, from their going up to *Jerusalem*, for, indeed, in that did his main interrest lye, and his Calves was but a device to divert them to another worship; and that word, *drave from*, imports violence to have been used. And this

his way of severity begun by *Jeroboam*, was continued by other of their Kings both by severe Laws, as the statutes of *Omri*, mentioned (*Mic.* 6. 16.) shew whose Statutes are therefore mentioned, because he was under more strict penalties than ever had enacted the observation of the things which *Jeroboam* had first brought in. For unto the level of what *Jeroboam* had done *Omri*'s wickedness is limited, 1 Kings 16. 26. *For he walked in all the way of Jeroboam the Son of a Nebat, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin, to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger with their vanities.* And therefore those his Statutes in *Micah* are to be understood as more severely backing what *Jeroboam* had begun, and this *Omri*, who made these Laws, began his Reign not past 30 years after *Jeroboams* death; so that it did rise up to the highest severities very soon. And as he was severe by Laws, so also, by way-laying any that should go up to *Jerusalem*, which the *Jewish* writers do affirm their Kings did, and how they set guards and built watch-towers, on purpose, at the passages and ways to take and kill them that attempted to go to *Jerusalem*, and confiscated their Goods, and they do say that, that place, *Hosea* 5. 1. is an allusion to that practice which their former Kings had used upon *Mount Tabor* and *Mispeh*, whereon (says the *Jewish writers*) they had placed watch-towers and centinels as gins and snares to catch any that should attempt to go up to *Jerusalem*; these two places being out-lets into the dominion of *Judah* from some part of Israel. And that this was one way and course taken up & continued by these Kings, those Scriptures, do expressly relate. For of *Baasha* that succeeded but two years after *Jeroboam*, it is there said, *Baasha King of Israel went up against Judah and built Ramah, that he might not suffer any to go out or come in to Asa King of Judah.* Now *Ramah* was on the borders of *Benjamin* in the way to *Jerusalem*, and one fresh occasion of this design had been that (as 2 Chr. 15. 9. relates it) Many in abundance out of *Ephraim* and *Manasses* and *Simeon* had fallen to *Asa*, and came out from those Tribes to *Jerusalem* for the worship of God's sake. And *Ramah* which he attempted to build was the direct passage for those particular Tribes to go into *Judah* by.

Book VII

See Rivet. on Hos. 5. 1.

Jeroboam ut asseritur satis rationabiliter posuit custodes in terminis regni, ne quis de regno suo ascenderet in Jerusalem, et qui ascenderent capertentur & occiderentur et confiscarentur opera eorum. Tostatus on 2 Chr. 11. quæst 17.

The Second out breaking over the banks which the Kings of *Israel* had raised up to restrain their Subjects from inundations into *Judah*, is recorded, 2 Chr. 15. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13. *He* (viz. *Asa*) *gathered all Judah and Benjamin and the strangers with them out of Ephraim and Manasseth and out of Simeon (for they fell to him out of Israel in abundance, when they saw that the Lord his God was with him) so they gathered themselves together at Jerusalem in the third Month, in the 15th. year of the Reign of Asa. And they offered unto the Lord, the same time, of the spoil which they had brought, seven hundred Oxen and seven thousand sheep. And they entred into a Covenant to seek the Lord God of their Fathers with all their hearts and with all their Soul, that whosoever would not seek the Lord God of Israel should be put to death whether small or great, whether Man or Woman.*

We see this was a Flowing in abundance, and there were two persuasives of them to it, 1 God's prospering *Asa*. 2. Their desires to worship God. Yet here in like manner the Circumstances of that juncture of time, as also of the persons (who and what Tribes these were) are to be duly weighed, and will still serve to contribute light to us in this great point, both as under what rationally probable apprehensions men are called to adventure for the enjoyment of Ordinances in the times of such distress; as also in what cases and Circumstances, they are to do it.

1. As to the persons (who and of what Tribes) although the number of them was in a great abundance yet but three Tribes only are specified; and so interpreters do much narrow it unto the Godly of these Tribes, *Ephraim*, *Manasseth and Simeon.* To clear which it must be further considered;

1. That a good part of *Ephraim* (called elsewhere in this Story *Mount Ephraim*, 2 Chron. 15. 8. that is the Mountainous part of that Country) had been already brought under the Dominion of the King of *Judah* since *Jeroboam*'s Revolt; first some by *Abijah* this *Asa*'s Father, 2 Chron. 13. 19. *Abijah persued after Jeroboam and took Cities from him, Bethel with the Towns thereof, and Jeshanah with the Towns thereof, and Ephraim with the Towns thereof.* And those Cities were not recovered again by *Jeroboam* or their Kings, as *verse* 20. shews. Then again, more and other Cities had been taken by this King *Asa* himself, 2 *Chron.* 15. 8.

Other Cities were taken by him, besides the former by his Father, for it would not have been first there, and then again so expresly over and again said that *Asa* had

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Then 2. The Tribe of *Simeon* here specified, lay so near the Tribe of *Judah*, as it had been antiently a part thereof, and reckoned *within it*, *Josh.* 19. 1. And then the three Tribes, *viz. Manasses*, *Ephraim* and *Benjamin*, were adjoyning to one another, *Josh.* ch. 16. and 17.

So all these being immediate Borderers, and some of the Cities being already become the dominion of *Judah*, no wonder if many of those Tribes also fell in with *Asa* (especially if withal you take in the Circumstances that follow) and perhaps further many whole Cities of these Tribes, besides those formerly taken by them fell in, and not only particular persons out of them. And the way lying so open and fair to go forth out of these three Tribes unto *Jerusalem*, it is the less wonder that they should in such abundance come up thither, whereas others of the Godly Tribes, among them lying further off and remote, were cooped up and utterly debarred, disabled, and invincibly hindred from so falling in with him as these did, and therefore none of them are mentioned.

2. The Circumstances of the time were exceeding promising & inviting of them thus to fall in. And they were such, as I believe that every man will say, that if any Godly Zealous Christians were environed with the same in the like case, they would, and ought to do the like in any age for the enjoyment of the Ordinances of God. Let but the face of the Sky and of the times be considered with their difference from other times as both by the Prophecies of the prophets of that age and providence concurring they lay afore them then, and it must be said that it was in its self the best choice they could make for themselves (according as was meet for them to judge) to fall in to *Asa*, as things lay afore them, and to have done this, tho' there had not been this superadded invitement (the greatest of all other) that they should have the Ordinances of God to boot. And this we may not assert, although we suppose withal that many of them had quitted their possessions, for all needed not to do so in coming to *Jerusalem*, from which City, and the worship of God there, their Brethren in other Tribes were utterly debarred.

The Circumstances of these persons who thus came to Jerusalem, were these;

In general, they had had many demonstrations and convictions from God of his wrath against their Kings of *Israel*, and against the People, who willingly continued to cleave to them, and who declared for this very thing of their Calves, and for the driving of *Israel* from the true worship.

1. They saw an instance of this wrath of God by prophecy and a Miracle accompanying it at the very Altar of *Bethel* one of the new Chapels, whilst *Jeroboam* stood there to offer incense, the Altar cleaving in two, and the ashes falling out, and the prophet crying out against it, *Jeroboam*'s hand dryed up whilst he stretcht it out to lay hold on the prophet for so crying. You read the story of this, 1 Kings 13. and this fell out within the memory of these *Israelites*.

Then 2. It would have amazed any man to have seen *Jeroboam* for ever after so unfortunate, to have observed that fatal slaughter of five hundered thousand Men (a slaughter so great as was never read of afore or since any where in the world) out of an army of eight hundred thousand, and that but by half the number of the King of *Judah*'s men; and this was done when the issue and tryal of the battle was in an appeal to God put upon this very gage and cause of *Judah*'s retaining the true worship, and *Jeroboam*'s having set up a false (2 Chron. 14. from the 4. *v.* to the end) To see these Cities taken from him, yea and his *Bethel* too, and himself so weakened as never to recover strength again.

Then, 3. It was an astonishing sight to see *Jeroboam* himself at last struck to death by some extraordinary immediate stroke of God *The Lord struck him that he died*, says the text, in the 1 Kings 13. 19, 20.

Then, 4. It was an affrighting consideration to have prophecy upon prophecy issued forth against his house, and one of the loudest of them as it were drawn upon himself whilst he himself of his own motion would needs send his wife *Incognitio* and disguised to *Abijah* the prophet, 1 Kings 14. 10, 11, 12. *Behold I will bring evil upon the house of Jeroboam, and will cut off from Jeroboam him that pisseth against the wall, and him that*

is

is shut up and left in Israel, and will take away the remnant of the house of Jeroboam, as a man taketh away dung till it be all gone. Him that dyeth of Jeroboam in the City shall the Dogs eat, and him that dyeth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat; for the Lord hath spoken it. Arise thou therefore, get thee to thine own houses, and when thy feet enter into the City the Child shall die: Of the certainty of the fulfilling of all which the prophets gave him a present and as sad a sign. *The Child shall die* (says he) and he names the very time and hour of his Sons death, *verse* 12. *When thy foot enters the City*; and in the 14. *v.* he declares how it would be that God would raise up a King, *viz. Baasha*, that should execute and perform all this, and do it within a very small space. *And when was it to be done? Even now*, says God, v. 14. that is, *I will not stay long, but make quick work with them, I will do it presently*; and he performed all this accordingly on *Jeroboam*'s son, and all his posterity within less than two years, some say, less than one after *Jeroboam*'s own death; and of this thing this people (we are speaking of who here fell in with *Asa*) knew; for these things, *viz.* both the prophecies and these events thereof newly fulfilled afore their eyes, were not done in a Corner, and the people knew this very sin to be the Cause of all this.

Then, 5. It must needs have a great influence on these persons, to have heard (which came more home to touch them) the same prophets with the same breath to have denounced a fatal Captivity and destruction of that whole Nation of the ten Tribes as that which should be the end & issue of these sins, v. 14, 15. *Moreover, the Lord shall raise him up a King over Israel, who shall cut off the house of Jeroboam that day; but when? even now. For the Lord shall smite Israel as a reed is shaken in the water, and shall root up Israel out of this good Land which he gave to their Fathers, and shall scatter them beyond the River, because they have made their groves, provoking the Lord to anger.* And this is uttered indefinitely for time, for no time is set or named when it should be, for ought they knew, it might be that or the next year; and they having had so signally seen the former part of that prophecy, *Even now*, fulfilled, they might well tremble to think that this Captivity and Destruction threatned of the whole Tribes might, they knew not how soon, come upon them and their posterity together with the whole Nation in common if they were found in the same sin.

Then 6. Another thing which had an influence upon them was, To behold the Kings of *Judah* (these two last of them especially) one after the other to be holy, good men, and every way to prosper; yea even the Grand-father of these two, *Rehoboam*, (from whom God rent the Kingdom) so to be favour'd, that in his last times *things went well in Judah*, and after him his Son *Abijah*, a godly Prince, to have so great a victory, as was mentioned, and to grow *mighty* thereupon (as in an opposition to *Jeroboam*'s decay, it is spoken of him, 2 *Chron.* 13. 21.) And then to see this *Asa* now Reigning, the third King, an holier man, to see how he still to be so prospered, as to have with a few so great a Victory against the *Cushites*, as to rout an Army of a *Milion of men* and more, (2 *Chron.* 14.) and to take all the spoil of them, together with the spoil of all the Cities about *Gerar* from their Confederates *THE PHILISTINES.*

And then 7. It moved them, when they saw, hereupon, a new Prophet sent from God to *Asa* and all his Subjects and Compliants with him to revive the memory afresh, and their ears to rehearse the sum of these things to them, and so spread afore them the infinite vast difference God had put between him with them of *Judah*, and the others, the people of the ten Tribes; and this done on purpose to hearten and encourage them that God would still be with them and reward their work, setting afore them what and how great miseries had followed one upon the neck of another unto those of the Ten Tribes.

Thus in the beginning of this 15. chap. ver. 3. *Now for a long season*, saith he, (namely, from *Jeroboam*'s setting up) *hath Israel been*, v. 3, 4, 5, 6. *without the true God and without a teaching Priest, and without Law. But when they, in their trouble, did turn unto the Lord God of Israel, and sought him, he was found of them. And in those times there was no peace to him that went out, nor to him that came in, but great vexations were upon all the inhabitants of the Country: Nation was destroyed of Nation, and City of City; for God did vex them with all adversity.*

The fourth verse *Piscator* Renders, interpreting the whole round about it of the time past, that if so be *Israel* (namely the ten Tribes) had turned, when trouble was upon them, unto the Lord God of *Israel*, he had been found of them seeking of him. The Vulgar Translation reads all this in the future, as if the Prophet

Ch. VIII Prophet laid afore them what for time to come would certainly be the condition of those Tribes, as thus, *Israel shall be for a long season* (yet to come) *without God*, &c. *And in those times there shall be no peace to him that comes out or in, but great vexation shall be*, &c. verse 5, 6. And the Original admitting either interpretation I should take both to be intended; and I am sure that in the event and matter of fact, both had been the Condition of these ten Tribes and had continued to be so more or less until their final Captivity. But whether it be a Narrative either of what had befallen them, or should hereafter befal them, or both, it serves all fully to the main purpose I cite the Prophet for, which was to move and hearten them of *Judah* (who both had had, and he promiseth should have for the most part clean contrary dispensations from God) to set up a reformation of the publique worship of God, and together with them to hearten also the godly of the ten Tribes (that possibly any way could do it) to come over unto them (as *v* 9. we read they did) and to leave their interest amongst those ten Tribes, and to give themselves up unto the Lord and his worship as the most safe and secure allotment, they, in those times, could any way betake themselves unto. And that the prophet speaks all this as of a different condition of *Israel* from *Judah*, is evident, both, 1. In that his speech was directed unto *Judah* and *Benjamin*, and that *Israel* are the persons spoken of; Neither, 2. Was it true that *Judah had been for a long time without God*, &c. but the contrary. And, 3. The ten Tribes were after their separation from *Judah* ὀνομαστικῶς termed *Israel*; as also, 4. He tells them that *Judah* had enjoyed a clean contrary dispensation to this; *The Lord* (says he) *is with you*, v. 2. and will be *whilst you are with him*: And so indeed he had been from that first separation and rent made by *Jeroboam* from them until now. And that speech also you may put either in the time past, *He hath been with you*, or in time to come, *He will be with you*; the Original hath left it free for either, or for both, in saying only; *The Lord with you*, only the following words do carry it to the time to come.

These were the Circumstances of this Juncture of time, and after all these things thus related and urged by this prophet, thereupon that followed immediatly in the story, which also had followed as the consequent (at least) of this his exhortation; which surely was divulged by *Asa* in his gathering them together, *verse* 9. *And he gathered all Judah and Benjamin, and the strangers with them out of Ephraim and Manasseh, and out of Simeon, for they fell to him out of Israel in abundance when they saw that the Lord his God was with him.* So as this second *Ebullition* and inundation of these three Tribes in such abundance was effected in the view and intuition of all those things that have been mentioned; yea and also in the vertue and strength of them it was that *Asa* did gather such numbers, which must have been by sending unto all *Judah* and *Benjamin*, and these Tribes, inviting them to come in and to worship God at *Pentecost* at *Jerusalem* (*verse* 10.) and to enter into a Covenant so to do, &c.

Now if we look round about the Coast and face of these times and view the posture of affairs it will not be much material to enquire whether all these of the three Tribes or others of the ten that could remove had quitted their own possessions of Lands, &c. in their respective Tribes, and removed to *Judah* and *Jerusalem* to dwell therein.

It is most likely that many of these persons were necessitated to abandon their present possessions by reason that the people of their respective Cities that continued still under the King of *Israel*'s dominon, would see to it, that those who went out from them should no more return to possess what they had amongst them, especially seeing those that went are said to fall in to the King of *Judah* as unto their Prince, and not only to have come to him for the present, yea and to have entred into an Oath and Covenant to continue to worship God, &c. v. 12, 13, 14.

It must still be withal remembred and carried along with us, that these three Tribes were near borderers upon *Judah*; and so although they had been inhabitants in some of the Cities and Towns under the King of *Israel*'s Dominion, yet, being borderers, they had a fairer and shorter passage to slip into *Judah*, or any of the Cities in these Tribes in the possession of *Judah*. 'Twas but a day, or a day and a half's Journey. Yea and that a passage was at this time somewhat open for them so to do, may be argued from this, that *Baasha* the present King of *Israel* afterwards upon this very occasion did attempt to build *Ramah* to obstruct this passage (as the 1. *verse* of the next Chapter hath it) which passage for these Tribes therefore afore (and so at this time) lay more free for them to pass.

But

But this was not the present condition of the Godly, their Brethren in the other ten Tribes, who were distant many days Journeys, and who if they would remove must adventure far greater personal dangers of being taken and intercepted. Would not (think we) those hundred Prophets, whom *Obadiah* hid in *Ahab*'s Reign, have much rather run away unto *Judah*, unto the good King *Jehosaphat*, then Reigning there, than to have lain hid in a Cave and live barely on bread and water, 1 *Kings* 18. 4. As the times were harder so the distance made the difficulty to have escaped far greater. These in the heart of those Dominions, or utmost parts thereof, were more strictly watcht and encompassed and hedged in, and utterly dis-enabled to remove whole Families.

And the Consideration of this difference between these three Tribes and those others doth afford a great light unto the Case in hand, *viz.* What hazards we are to venture and what not.

But that which I urge and insist on in the case of those three Tribes (that did remove and had opportunity without such dangers to do it) as to the solving any seeming Objection that may arise therefrom, is; That, supposing the loss of their Estates at home (for that we will suppose) yet such a removal was simply and absolutely in it self best for them, and the best choice that possibly could be made by men considering all those Circumstances fore-mentioned, and they needed not to have much debate, or hesitance what to do.

The experience of so many former miseries which they and their Country-men had run through like one wave treading on the neck of another; the fore telling that the same, or worse, would continue for a long season (as indeed they did) and then the certain prophecies of a final Captivity at last to dispossess them of all and remove them to Heathenish Countries, which continueth even unto these our days were, considerations sufficient to make them change their abode, when they saw such changes of Princes, Usurpers over them made and like to be made, as the curse of their revolt from the house of *David*, when they saw so unstable a government, unhinged, and like a reed in the water tossed this way and that upon every alteration, so as they must needs make account to hold nothing that was their own in any certain way, but to tire out a dying life in fears and expectations of they knew not what calamities, nor how soon to come upon them, and when in the mean time they knew this to be certain, that the oppression of their Consciences in matters of Religion would continue as long as the Nation.

These thoughts were enough to make them weary of their dwelling, and it was best for these men in this case to quit all, and come into a settled stable Government, secured by a succession of Kings of the seed of *David* to which the promises were made for after times, whom God afore their own eyes had prospered hitherto unto wonderment, and to whom the promise was, that he would continue still to do great things for them. It was best for these men to remove into a place where a defence was upon all the glory. Yea, and they had this farther encouragement, that they had seen two such Kings farther and son, one after the other, so truly godly and Zealous of God's true worship, and lovers of their Brethren, the godly *Israelites*, whereof the letter now Reigning was holy to an Eminency; and farther they were encourag'd to cast themselves upon the brotherly aid and assistance of their Brethren of *Judah* and *Benjamin*, &c. and upon the bounty of so holy and large-hearted a Prince as this *Asa* was, and who, through the blessing of God was newly enriched with so great spoils (unto a consecrated part of which they came to joyn in the Sacrifice, *v.* 10.) and so was abundantly enabled to provide for them out of this abundance that fell to him, besides the other ordinary ways of doing it; who also had lately won Cities to put them into (if need were) especially considering that this King and this people had invited them to come and gathered them together upon the Sermon of a Prophet sent from God to that end to worship God and proposed unto them to joyn in a solemn Oath and Covenant afore God mutually, and also unto God so to do. For, by their access the Kingdom of *Judah* would be (as it was) greatly strengthened and grow in reputation and honour thereby, yea, and finally God had by that last Prophet promised this King and those of *Judah*, *that their work should be rewarded*, v. 7. and to unite and gather together, and so to support these strangers, their persecuted brethren in their sufferings, or to help any others who had afore voluntarily come into them, was one and a great part of that work the promise was made unto, that it should be rewarded. Now upon all these grounds

Ch. VIII grounds. These persons had reason to judge that this King and this people were in the highest measure engaged and obliged hereunto. Since therefore they were in these Circumstances, and were rationally possest with these and such like apprehensions, it was most eligible for them to leave their dwellings, &c. Though indeed in itself it was an hard and difficult tryal, yet when they were so necessitated on the one hand and their way on the other side was so promising and sweet'ned, and on both hands rendred the only way to secure and preserve themselves and their posterity, an appeal might be made unto all men to judge if these alone were not simply motives sufficient to render it every way most eligible, yea and to make them so to rejoyce in the good providence of God that had so wisely and so graciously contrived such a juncture and opportunity and season of advantage for them. And indeed their removal is put upon this very thing as part of the season of it in the text, *v.* 9. *They fell to him* (*viz.* Asa) *in abundance when they saw that the Lord his God was with him*, so wonderfully with him as hath been related, so as the outward prosperous condition of him moved them.

Sir *Walter Rawleigh* hath shewen himself as deep-sighted, and apprehensive to spy out of the Stories and imperfect Narrations of Times, what the face or Scheme of things in any age was, as any Historian whatever that hath undertaken to set forth matters of that Nature. And he gives this Judgment of that juncture of time during *Asa*'s Reign and puts not only this Remark upon it, that it was the *eminent sole time of advantage* (for he could find no such other during the whole 250 years) for the whole people of *Israel* to have taken the opportunity to have set themselves free from that Idolatry, &c. and to have united themselves to this *Asa* King of *Judah* their natural Prince, and the people of *Judah* their Brethren; and he spends two whole sections upon the debate thereof, and that chiefly upon politique and prudent considerations. He begins his fifth Section thus, *In the Reign of Asa the Kingdom of Israel felt great and violent Commotions which might have reduced the ten Tribes unto their former allegeance unto the house of David if the wisdom of God had not otherwise determined.* And the sixth Section begins thus: *Any man that shall consider the state of Israel in those times may justly wonder how it came to pass either that the whole nation wearyed with the Calamities already suffered under these unfortunate Princes* (from *Jeroboam* until now) *did not return to their ancient Kings and re-unite themselves with the mighty Tribes of Judah and Benjamin.*

And therefore give me leave, not to wonder, if, at such a season, multitudes of particular godly persons of those three bordering tribes, Zealous of the true Religion did thus choose to break from that Yoke for a time, when withal, this course was presented unto them to be the only probable way of safety, and so invited them thereto, and the opportunity lay so fairly open for it, especially when the enjoyment of the Ordinances of God was connext with it, and cast into the bargain to their present security.

3. There was a third going up of these Tribes in *Hezekiah*'s time but five years afore the final ruine of that people as a Nation; which was occasioned and drawn in by an invitation of *Hezekiah* (as that of *Asa*'s had also been) upon which it is said that Divers of *Asher, and Manasses, and Zebulon humbled themselves and came to Jerusalem*, 2 Chron. 30. 11 when the generality of that people laughed at the message and messengers, *v.* 10.

But then, withal, let the case and condition of this people at that juncture of time be considered also, and it will be found, the people then had a far greater freedom than any formerly had.

Their Condition at that time, in 2 *Chron.* 30. (not to insist on that which was before-mentioned in the case of that second removal) was this, that there were many Cities of the ten Tribes that had continued all along subject to the Kings of *Jerusalem* from *Abijah*'s, and *Asa*'s days even to *Hezekiah*'s, whom *Hezekiah* could command as well as invite to come; Read for this, 2 *Chron.* 13: 10. and *ch*: 15. 8. Yea, and it would seem that the Cities of *Manasseh* and others of *Ephraim* had upon the commotions and Miseries that had fallen out in *Israel* given up themselves unto *Hezekiah*, or formerly unto some of the Kings of *Judah*; For 'tis evident *Hezekiah* had dominion therein what is said (2 *Chron.* 31. 1.) that after that passover the people went and brake down the Images in all *Judah*, in *Ephraim* also, and *Manasseh*, which being done

done by *Hezekiah*'s Subjects and with his authority, these Cities also must have been under his dominion. Book VII

But that which I principally consider and urge in the case, and which will carry all afore it and defend it from objections is this, That God, in his gracious providence had so disposed of this nick and juncture of time that all of the ten Tribes that would, had liberty to go to *Jerusalem* to worship by the permission of their King who was over them; which was a mercy and priveledge never afore vouchsafed for almost two hundred and fifty years. *Hosea* was then their King (and the last King of their own over them) when *Hezekiah* sent this invitation to the ten Tribes, and the power of their Kings had been afore (as appears by 2 *Kings* 15. 19. and *v.* 29.) and was (as it remained in this Kings time) much broken; insomuch that the first nine years of the time from the vacancy of the former King whereinto this *Hosea* succeeded is reckoned by interpreters as a time of confusion and anarchy of the people, after those nine years when he is reckoned to have become a settled King, it was by his having been made but as a Tributary unto *Salmaneser* King of *Assyria* (as in 2 *Kings* 17. 3. expressly tells us) and who, as many think had set him up King, and by reason of this dependance, on a foreign Prince, his interest was changed from that of those former Kings who had prohibited the going of People to *Jerusalem*, out of a fear which they had of their making a party among them for the Kings of *Judah*; and hence, as for other reasons which the Circumstances, wherein he was, led him unto, he, of all the other Kings, gave this liberty unto the people to worship as they pleased, and this that passage (which the Holy Ghost, as on purpose, hath inserted) 2 *Kings* 17. 2. seems to signifie and point to us, *And he did that that was evil in the sight of the Lord, but not as the Kings of Israel that were before him*: Those latter words, *but not as the Kings of Israel that were before him* do *notanter*, *remarkably*, give a different character of this King from all the foregoing Kings and that in respect of that sin which had been common and universal to them all afore, and not of some particular personal sins only. Now what had that been but that sin which is noted all along to have been *Jeroboam*'s sin first, who was the Father of that abomination, and who led the round to all that succeeded, and which sin is heedfully all along from *Jeroboam* downward affixed to them all that they made *Israel* to sin as *Jeroboam* had in worshipping the Calves at *Bethel*, and who withal severely prohibited any of their Subjects to go up unto *Jerusalem* to worship; for that was the main intent that the Calves were set up for. This was general to them all whereas *Heathenish* Idolatry (which some would have to be the difference) was but the sin of some of them.

Many Interpreters, from hence, do plainly collect and, *in terminis*, in express Terms, affirm, that this *Hoshea* did give liberty to this people, his subjects, to go up to *Jerusalem* to offer there. The true reason whereof was, that the proper interest of those former Kings was broken, and he holding of a foreign Prince, strong enough to uphold him, scrupled not to quit this so long continued a Law, *viz.* that prohibition about going to *Jerusalem*; and thus Jewish writers themselves have understood it: Say they, though *Hoshea* himself did worship the Calves, yet permitted he his subjects that would, to go up to *Jerusalem* to worship in the Temple, which the rest of the Kings of *Israel* had not permitted, nay did use to set Watch-men and Gaurds at all ways whereby their people should go to *Jerusalem*, to stop and hinder them from going to worship.

And there is this further evidence for that in 2 *Chron.* 30. 6. where that serious and solemn invitation of *Hezekiah*'s is made by Letters and Posts unto the Cities of the ten Tribes in these words, *So the Posts went with the letters from the King and his Princes throughout all* Israel *and* Judah, *and according to the commandment of the King, saying, Ye Children of* Israel, *turn again unto the* Lord God *of* Abraham, Isaac *and* Jacob, *and he will return to the remnant of you that are escaped out of the hand of the Kings of* Assyria. Where you see the King is twice mentioned, and the first mention doth evidently refer unto *Hezekiah* and his Princes, who were the writers, and senders of the Letters together with the Posts, and who were at the charge of it; but the second mention in these words, *And according to the Commandment of the King*, do refer (says *Deodati*) unto the Command or permission of the King of *Assyria* himself to them who was the supream over them, and had assented to give them liberty. But I should say, those words refer rather unto this *Hoshea* himself, who though a Tributary King, under the *Assyrian*; was yet left to rule them as to their Religion, *&c.* as he should order, or

Ch. VIII else suppose him a King made by the people, and independent on any other, yet still so it fell out, that to gratifie all sorts among the people he had given allowance by an edict that they who would, should go up to worship, ; and so it was according to their own King's Commandment, that this was done as well as by *Hezekiah*'s invitation and Letters. And truly it cannot be rationally thought that the Letters as written in *Hezekiah*'s name should run in the style of a Commandment from him, as sent unto the ten Tribes of *Israel* (whom what follows there doth particularly concern) for they were no way under his Command or Jurisdiction, but subjects of another King; and therefore I take the whole of it up thus, That *Hezekiah*, the King of *Judah*, indeed wrote and sent the Letters, the contents whereof are specified, *saying*, *Ye children of* Israel, *&c.* But yet withal there had been an edict of granting freedom by their own King promulged, which is termed his Command, and whereas that word *saying*, immediately following the word *Commandment*, seems according to our Translation to carry the contents that follow, as if commanded by that King, we must know that in the *Hebrew* this word, being in the place of a *gerund*, may and doth refer to the Letters *Hezekiah* sent, and shews what they contained, aud not unto the Command; for, indeed, these words, *according to the command of the King*, are best read by way of Parenthesis, as signifying a coincident matter with the Letters, as if he had said, that these things were done by *Hezekiah* not against, but with an edict of their own King himself concurring, and declaring for leave to his people, which *Hezekiah* took the advantage of.

Indeed, if this *Hoshea* their own King had not thus far afore-hand someway declared this, it may well be thought that the entertainment of them that went with the Letters into his Dominion would not have been a mockage in word by the common people, but would have ended in blows rather, or in their having been intercepted at least, seeing the people were so highly and generally spirited against them for their Message (which their mocking shewed) and for their coming into their *Kingdom* under the Jurisdiction of another *King*, and that boldly to invite them unto what in former times had been accounted Treason and Rebellion. Certainly, unless *King Hoshea* had some way promulged and made publickly known so much as might quiet and hold the hands of this people off from violence unto these single persons the Messengers, they would have fallen upon them. But in that they only mocked and went not about so much as to excuse themselves for their refusal, which excuse had been easie and ready, if so be, they had been under the old wonted restraint in this King's days, which had been in force, all this put together would argue that they were indeed really at a liberty to have taken *Hezekiah*'s invitation if they had pleased, but that out of their own innate prophanness of heart they contemned it (having been for a long time disused thereto) which frame of heart (where it was let thus free to their arbitr'ment) God suffered to fore-run and make way for the filling up their own and their fore-fathers iniquity in this particular sin, and for justifying that fatal final Captivity that followed upon the whole Nation specially, and to this purpose further the Lord guided *Hezekiah* in his Letters to write in this manner to them, verse 7, 8, 9. *And be not ye like your Fathers and like your Brethren which trespassed against the* Lord *God of their Fathers who therefore gave them up to desolation, as ye see. Now be ye not stiff-necked as your Fathers were, but yield your selves unto the* Lord, *and enter into his sanctuary which he hath sanctified for ever; and serve the* Lord *your God, that the fierceness of his wrath may turn away from you. For if ye turn again unto the* Lord, *your Brethren and your Children shall find compassion before them that lead them Captive, so that they shall come again into this* Land: *for the* Lord *your God is gracious and merciful, and will not turn away his face from you, if ye return unto him*: Whereinhe prompted to them, that their Captivity threatned might hereby be prevented, and not only so but that their Brethren that had already been led Captive might yet come to have that compassion from the Kings of *Assyria*, who had led many of them away, and that God would encline their hearts so, as even they also should come again into their own land; so good and gracious is our God as for the repentance of some part of a Nation to be moved to shew mercy unto others of that Nation thereupon; which is a very great instance to encourage the people of God in a Nation to turn to him and seek to him for themselves and their Brethren.

One thing by the way I must here note, That whereas of these present inhabitants (to whom those Letters were sent) 'tis said, v. 6. *They were a remnant that had escaped*

scaped out of the hand of the King of Assyria, this passage is not to be understood as if the present King of *Assyria* had not been at this time supreme over them and they and their King *Hoshea* Tributary unto him, as was noted; but it is only to be understood that by God's gooodness this small remnant had escaped from being carried Captives as the rest had been by *Pul*, and *Tilgath-Pilneser*, 1 Chron. 5. 26. 2 Kings 15. 29. and that these words (*v.* 26.) are spoken in relation unto Captivity, the comparing of *v.* 8. and *v.* 9. shews. Book VII

There is one appearance more of an argument that they had such a freedom granted them by their King *Hoshea* in that the Passover having been ended (2 Chr. 31. 1.) *All Israel that was present brake down the images*, &c. *and after all was done, Then all the Children of Israel returned every man to his own possession into their own Cities.* This being so indigitatively said [*All the Children of* Israel] carries this with it, that those of the ten Tribes that had come out of all *Israel*, returned every man to his own City from whence he had come, and where his own possession lay, which (if they had not liberty from their King *Hoshea* to have come up, such as in former times had not been granted) they could not peaceably have presumed to have done or to have again enjoyed their possessions, which also that passage in Chron. 30. 25. confirms *And all the Congregation of Judah with the Priests and Levites and all the Congregation that came out of Israel, and the strangers that came out of the Land of Israel, and that dwelt in Judah, rejoyced.* Where we see, that, *The Congregation, who came out of Israel*, are distinguished from *the strangers that formerly came out of the Land of Israel, and then dwelt in Jerusalem*: So as the most of that Congregation that had at that present come, returned to their own homes. And yet I cannot but think that God did persuade and guide many of their hearts, either at that passover or some of the next (that for five years followed) to stay at *Jerusalem*, and so they escaped that lamentable Captivity, which, after those years ended, fell upon those fore-mentioned mockers in that Nation.

You have seen how many instances the old Testament holds out either for forbearance, or a prudent management of injoying Ordinances, or avoiding the Case of Danger.

Object. There's no Objection of moment in the Old Testament to the contrary, that I know of, but that of *Daniel*, Chap. 6. v. 7, 10. *Where all the presidents of the Kingdom, the Governors and the Princes, the Councellors and the Captains having consulted together to establish a royal Statute and to make a firm Decree, That whosoever shall ask a petition of any God or Man, for thirty days, save of the King, he shall be cast into the den of Lions. Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house, and his windows being open in his Chamber towards Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he did afore time.* And this indeed is a great Objection; in appearance, for he neither forebore altogether the practice of the duty, nor used any avoidance, or so much as a concealment. For if he would have pray'd he might have prayed secretly and performed the inward worship of prayer which God regards, or he might have performed the outward *privately*, as *for time*, he might have done it in the night; as *for place*, he might have done it in another place, in a privater room; he needed not to have opened his windows; but yet we see that he chooseth to use an open and an avowed profession, says the 10th. *v. Now when Daniel knew that the writing was sign'd*, that is, knew full well the nature of the Decree, that it was irreversible, knew his Enemies manner of getting it and their design in it, knew full well the danger that he should incur, *viz.* that the instant after he should have done it death must follow; for he knew the King, though he favoured him, could not pardon him; yet, he never so much as deliberates at all whether he should or he should not, but went immediately into his house and down upon his knees with his window open, and as some read it, did *every way* do as he had wont.

The argument from hence is this, that when the supreme Magistrate forbids any part of worship of God publick or private, every Christian is bound after *Daniel's* example to continue to practise it with boldness, openness, yea, in all Circumstances as he had wont; there being the like reason of all worship else as there is of prayer.

Ans. 1. This is perfectly contradictory to all the former instances. And in a special manner unto that last, Ezra. 4. 23, 24. *They made them cease by force and power, then ceast the work of building the Temple.*

Ch. VIII

Answ. 2. That this example of *Daniel* should extend unto all duties of Religious worship when prohibited by the Magistrate, whatever the case be, cannot be. For neither were all these former instances sinfully acted, nor was *Daniel* the only valiant man in the old Testament, whose example should reprove all the rest. The Scriptures (as our Saviour Christ says) cannot be broken, and therefore of necessity there must be found out a reconciliation.

And those that are of that opinion of an absolute obligation in case of such prohibitionsin any part of publick worship, without any relaxation,ought not to run away with one part (as yet men use to do) but are obliged soberly to seek to reconcile these things as well as we of this other oppinion,and to do otherwise is a great contempt untoScripture;and this Reconciliation is no way done but by finding out the clear ground of the difference from the nature of the duties and the cases. Our Non-conformists in the case of the Oath.*Ex Officio*, in which a man was put upon it to accuse himself in matter of fact, had Christ's instance was urged upon them, *that Caiaphas* the High Priest *by* an Oath did adjure him, *I adjure thee by the living God that thou tell us whether thou be Christ the Son of God, Jesus said unto him, thou hast said*; And it was inferred from thence that therefore every man was bound to answer by Oath unto what he should by theEcclesiastical power be put upon.TheNon-consequence of this did easily appear from a contrary practice of our Lord,as that when false witnesses came and said in the words afore, *This man said I am able to destroy the Temple of God and to build it in three days* (which yet in the substance of it was what he himself had, indeed, spoken in relation to the Temple of his Body, yet unto this *he answers nothing*. Was it that he had an oath put upon him in the one case, which put the difference? No, he might have chosen whether he would have accepted of that Oath or no; yet, he thought himself bound to answer to the one,but not to the other.

There was therefore in this case this ground of difference suggested by those good men, between the one caseand the other,that the subject matter whereabout he was askt was differing. The one was *matter of fact*, but the other was *matter of confession*. A point of absolute necessity to declare himself the Son of God, which was necessary at that time, or else for ever his Testimony ceased. For his Enemies were resolved to put him to death, it was necessary, especially for the matter of it, it being that great point both of his concernment, and our faith, *That he was the Son of God.* And the difference of these two doth give a rational ground why he answered to the one and not to the other. The likemay be observed when they askt him Concerning his Doctrine, he refuses to answer (*John* 18. 20.) because it was *matter of fact* in what he had preached, of which afterward.

Things that are thus like in all appearance have yet in the foundation of them a vast difference, and so will this Case of *Daniel's* be found to have from the former Instances.

1. There have been some who have denyed that it was well done of him, but that he was simple and foolish in it, and needlesly exposed himself to Death; for he might have prayed, say they, 1. Inwardly, and so have performed his Duty, At least, 2. If he would pray with bodily worship,he might have done it privately,or at night,and in another place.

But this opinion is confuted not only because the Holy Ghost hath recorded this great act of his, and also that it is witnessed unto, by so great a deliverance from God, which shewed God's acceptance of it, and also that *Darius*, a *Heathen*, did witness upon it to *Daniel's* integrity in those words,*Thy God whom thou serveſt continually he will deliver thee* (v. 16.) But also because *Daniel* himself (*verse* 22.) puts it upon this reason, *For as much as before God innocency was found in me*, and (*v.*23.) *No manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God.*

2. Others say it was an *Heroick* extraordinary act that is not to be drawn into Ordinary Example. But we have no Warrant to think so, and I shall not have recourse to extraordinaries whereby to difference it from the former Instances.

3. It yet must be acknowledged to be a special act in a special case, whereof perhaps such another instance is not, in all points, to be again found in the Old Testament.

4. I will tell you what the good old Non-conformists principles were in this case. Their practice is known, that when they were silenced from preaching by the Magistrate,or Bishops, they forbare preaching all their days,and afterwards when the way of

going

going to *New-England* had been ſtarted, ſome that were but in danger of the High Commiſſion removed unto *New-England*, and ſo avoided the ſtorm (as Mr. *Cotton* did, leaving the bulk of his Church here) and when this Inſtance of *Daniel* was urged Mr. *Cotton* gave this account of it.

He uſed to produce that example of *Ezra*'s ceaſing the building of the Temple conſtrain'd by force, for juſtification of the *Non-conformiſts* forbearance, and ſuffering themſelves to be ſilenced and then being ſilent: ſo, in anſwer to this place of *Daniel* and reconciliation of both, and for the clearing of either, he put this ſubſtantial difference between the one and the other, That *Daniel*'s caſe came under an immediate duty of the firſt Commandment, which was perſonal prayer unto God, as alſo under a duty of Confeſſion to be made of the true God, in which caſe there is no room for mercy or preſervation of a man's ſelf; but he is called to lay down his life in that caſe. But that other Inſtance in *Ezra*, and the like, was the forbearance of an outward inſtituted worſhip, and ſuch an one Temple-worſhip was, Sacrifice, and the like, parallel to our Ordinances of preaching by Miniſters, and to our Churches, Sacraments, &c. and that of theſe latter with difference from the other Chriſt's rule holds true, *I will have mercy rather than Sacrifice* (which was the Temple-worſhip) *Sacrifice* being the higheſt Inſtances of inſtituted worſhip.

I ſhall enlarge this Notion and proſecute it farther.

I ſhall, 1. Conſider the Nature of this fact of *Daniel*'s, in the Subſtance of it. And, 2. Inſiſt on the differences of other caſes.

3. I ſhall remove Objections that may be made from his retaining of outward Circumſtances, kneeling openly and toward *Jeruſalem*, as he had wont every day to do.

1. The ſubſtance of the act is a Complex of many things which, when ſtated, and firſt conſidered apart and then put again together, will aford a clear difference from the Caſe of other outward Ordinances. *Calvin* inſiſts on two things, as I obſerve out of his Comment, as Mr. *Cotton* alſo hath done.

1. That the Object of the prohibition was, that none ſhould pray to God for a Month together; and then he further adds that it came under the nature of the Caſe of a Confeſſion of God. Now I will not lay all the ſtreſs of the whole weight upon each of theſe apart ſingly (though each would bear a rational ground of difference from the former inſtances) but on the whole Complexion of all together.

1. The Object of the Edict was, that none ſhould pray at all unto God; for it runs thus, *To eſtabliſh a Royal Statute and to make a firm Decree, that whoſoever ſhall ask a Petition of any God or man for thirty days, ſave of the thee, O King, he ſhall be caſt into the den of Lions.* **Calvin* firſt makes a great matter of this that prayer ſhould be thus forbidden, becauſe that in the worſhip of God Prayer is the top and the chief worſhip, and the higheſt Sacrifice of all other; and it is at large urged by him that it is that we own ſimply to God in all conditions; a duty whereby we are to witneſs God to be the Author of all good to us, to acknowledge our dependance upon him for all benefits, either to come which we obtain by Prayer, or paſt and preſent; and therefore, in *Daniel*'s practice here (*v.* 10.) as he prayed ſo he gave thanks before his God. It is by prayer that we offer up our Deſires and Vows unto God and caſt all our cares upon him, which if we forbear we ſhew we can be without God, without His help, His aid; whereas if he withdraw, we periſh every moment; and this we are to do every day. Now, to make a Decree that whatſoever a man's diſtreſs be, if he be ſick he muſt not pray, if under luſts, if he were near unto death (as a man might think) he muſt not pray or call upon God for a moment together, would be to make an edict againſt all Religion: † And others alſo urge it unto ſuch a purpoſe as this; we further put it, it was againſt Nature, the Law of Nature (as the *Dutch Annotations* ſay) For, the *Heathen Marriners* in *Jonah*'s Ship, when in danger of death, called every man upon his God.

* *Cum in adoratione et cultu dei primas partes obtineat precatio — ne quisquam oraret erat manifesta et crassa nimis abnegatio pietatis* — and again that it being *præcipuum Sacrificium* —

† Hence, says *Calvin*, *Cum Rex vetaret usque ad totum mensem ullam precationem concipere, hoc erat exigere a singulis ut Deum abnegarent. Edictum Darij pugnat cum jure naturæ. Quod enim quemq; docet et convincet esse Deum ac proinde colendum Polanus.* Again he says, *Infringerit* Daniel *jus omnibus Hominibus innatum.* Also, *Willet* on Daniel, *Cap.* 6. *quæst.* 16.

1. Hence then, there is this difference between *Daniel*'s Caſe and that of Inſtituted worſhip; That, in this caſe of *Daniel*, Prayer in the general Univerſal Nature of it was prohibited, not Family-Worſhip or Aſſembly-Worſhip, but all; and Prayer thus taken

Ch. VIII. taken is immediately Natural, and needed no super-added Institution, but it is Essentially Worship, it is *Cultus Essentialis*, and not *Medium Cultûs*, as to pray in a Congregation, and the like, are, and so it doth differ wholly from Instituted prayers in a Church, & as put up by one man as the Mouth of the rest; such were Temple-Sacrifices, Synagogue-Prayers and Preaching, which are parallel to ours.

2. Add unto this that it was not only Commanded that thus prayer, in the general nature of it, and then simply considered should be forborn (though that had been an horrible impiety against the immediate Law of Nature, the highest Law of Nature that is for the worship of God) but further, this Act of *Daniel's*, in the Circumstances he stood in, rose up to be a Confession and Profession of the true God as God, which he must have renounced if he had forborn; and *Calvin* makes that a second ground of this act of *Daniel's** some interpreters puts it upon that though they extend that profession unto too great a Latitude, and leave the reader at an uncertainty about it. † *Calvin* himself makes a distinction of two sorts of profession, excluding the one as not binding us, and in the other he speaks limitedly, and uncertainly, in saying, *Quantum necesse est in cultu Dei*, as much as is necessary, he doth not say what is absolutely necessary, but that in the worship of God we should not give any sign of a perverse and presidious dissembling, as if we cast off godliness; which I would say too.

* *Quod ad professionem spectat necessitatis &c* Calvin. *Externus ritus cultus tum fuit loco confessionis veri dei.* Polanus.

† *Duplex est professio, ne quis enim dicat* says he, *quicquid sentimus passim vulgandum esse, ita ut statim rapiamur ab hostibus, ad Mortem.*— and secondly *Quantum necesse est* and therupon he speaks uncertainly, limitedly, *Sic nos contineamus in cultu Dei, ut nequod signum perversæ & perfidæ simulationis dum necesse abjiceremus pietatis studium.*

To explain this head, I shall distinguish thus: Confession is taken indeed;

1. Largely for the manifestation or holding out of any particular practice or duty, point or truth of Religion, of any or every Command of God whatsoever; for in holding forth of these, their is a profession (as we call it) runs alongs with all these. Now there is no man will say, that a man is bound to hold forth every truth he believes, although he is prohibited to speak it; *Hast thou faith?* (says the Apostle) *have it for thy self*; which is also the thing that *Calvin* asserts, that as there are many truths which a man may forbear to speak, as not being bound to do so, so many practices in which it is meet to forbear; and yet in all these there is a profession runs along; for in these Cases their not professing is not a denying such a truth or practice, but a concealing it, and forbearing to hold it forth at such and such a time, which at other times and in other cases we would do and were bound to do. *Therefore the prudent shall keep silence in that time, for it is an evil time*, Amos 5. 13. And this holding forth of duties or truths or practices in this general nature is rather profession than confession; And here there must be found a right joint or rational ground of difference, to Judge what we be bound to profess and what not, and at what Times and Seasons.

2. There is Confession strictly and properly taken: which is not at large a profession only, but an absolute Confession of God, wherein we must deny God, if we don't affirm him, if we conceal our selves, and our Faith. And Confession so taken is a transcendent thing, and comes up into the first Commandment, and is all one as to avouch God to be a man's God, and to love God or to fear him.

This called in Scripture *Confession*, with this additament, and a *not-denying* of him, *John* 1. 10. when the *Jews* sent Priests and Levites from *Jerusalem* to ask *John* the Baptist, who art thou? as supposing he might be the Christ, it is said, *He confessed and denied not, but confest, I am not the Christ*; and (says he, *v.* 27.) *He it is, who coming after me, is preferred afore me*, whom afterwards he pointed unto.

This must not be extended to every forbearance of a truth, or of an Ordinance, though prohibited by a Magistrate's Command. When therefore the point of absolute Confession is urged, as absolutely necessary, the Question still must be, and consideration must be had, of the Nature of the duty, and of the truth, which, in such and such cases to forbear or conceal, would be truly and plainly and really a declining it.

It is not barely, and hand over head that every man is bound, by the Law of Confession, presently to perform any or every practice, or any or every truth that the Magistrate shall interdict for the present; for concerning things of such a degree there may be some other Rule from God, who may warrant me to the contrary, as that which hath been instanced in of mercy and not sacrifice. Our Saviour Christ would not

not tell the *Jews* by what Authority he did these things; but he made a positive answer when he came and was put to it whether he was the Son of God, or no, by *Caiaphas* the High-Priest (and as it is said) by all the Assembly, Luke 22. 70. *Art thou then the Son of God? and he said unto him, Ye say that I am; and they said, What need we any further witnesses? for we our selves have heard it out of his own Mouth.* When they askt him of his Doctrine, as preacht by him, he would not directly answer, John 18. 19, 20, 21. *The High-Priest asked Jesus of his Disciples, and of his Doctrine, Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the World, I ever taught in the Synagogues, and Temple, whither the Jews resort, and in secret have I said nothing: Why askest thou me? ask them which heard me, what I said unto them; behold they know what I said.* If any honest godly preacher were Questioned, by an Adversary that had power, what he had preacht at such a time and should refuse to give in a Coppy of his Sermon, and the like, they would be apt to cry out upon him, and upon others also perhaps, who are godly, *Are you ashamed of what you have preacht? do you go from your Doctrine? which if you don't confess openly, or forbear to tell it, you do,* would they say. Yet, but take it as it had been preacht and then it is matter of fact, and he is not bound to confess it. Our Saviour Christ's example warrants it, referring them unto witnesses; but when they askt our Saviour Christ, whether he was the Son of God, or no? and what his Faith and Conscience in that point was, he answers roundly, and without hesitation, though he knew his life lay upon it; and this is that good Confession which he witnessed that *Paul* speaks of to *Timothy* (1 Tim. 6. 13.) which, whether it include not also that Confession of his to *Pilate* himself, That he was a King, and that for this end he came into the world, may be a Question, for the words will bear either sense, that he witnessed before *Pontius Pilate* or under *Pontius Pilate* as Governour.

I come now to the Point of *Daniel*'s act of his praying in these Circumstances and in this manner, and to consider it, as it was a point of the highest sort of Confession strictly and properly taken, so that if he had not so confest, he must have denyed God, and if he had forborn, he must have renounced Religion.

1. The Command (as was said) was to suspend all prayer to any God for a whole month's space, which was to bring in total Atheism for so long a time, and to take away all worship that *Daniel* had left him, or was capable of performing. For there is no Worship can be performed without invocation of God. Prayer was by their *Synecdoche* signally all worship; yea and it was so according to their own principles that procured this Law; for themselves worshipt some God or other, which they did under the common notion and acknowledgement of a Deity and a God-head, and therefore to suspend prayer to him for that time was to make a Law that there should be no acknowledgement of God in the World during that time, according to their own principles; and therefore I see most interpreters do state it upon the whole of Religion, that forbearance of prayer would have been the abnegation of it, and therefore *Daniel*, by such a Total and visible forbearance (having been accustomed to such a Confession) must thereby have given by a visible withdrawing and concealment a visible profession there was no God extant to be worshipt. And his opening of the Window toward *Jerusalem* in this case, became a visible profession that the God that he Worshipt was the God that dwelt at *Jerusalem* and had seated himself there between the Cherubims formerly, and kept the same place still.

And 2. In this Decree not only God and all his worship is taken away, but a King, and a mortal Man was set directly up in the room of God and unto the denyal of this God, for so the Decree runs, not to ask a Petition of any God or man for thirty days, save of the King.

This King was exalted above all that was called God, the true God and all God's else (in oppinion such) by this injunction to pray to none other God but unto him. For this was to ordain that during that time he should have all the respect and homage and reverence to be brought in to him instead of worship to God; and so though such Petitions put up to the King in the mean time, were but in Civil things for the matter of them, and such usually, were presented at other times, and so the Petitioning was in it self but a Civil act, as petitioning to a King is; yet in this case That all petitions to any God or Man must be forborn and none put up but unto the King, this was interpretatively a Worship of that Man because he was addressed unto, in lieu and stead of all addresses, or worshipping of God, and because it was to be to him with exclusion

of

of God as thereby acknowledging no other God but him all that while. In this case therefore further, for *Daniel* to have concealed himself, invisibly worshipping the true God, had been a Manifest Denyal of God, and in a visible manner.

Ch. VIII.

These Corollaries may be drawn from the former Examples.

1. We may admire the good and gracious providence of God, that in the times wherein his wrath was so high and great upon the generality of the ten Tribes during 254 years, and in the times of such great distresses as these were upon their Consciences; he should yet work out a liberty for any of them through a special providence at such several seasons. Yea, and the advantage which God did cast into the second, as also the third season of liberty, upon their removals, for the Ordinances, is very remarkable in the Event and success thereof.

1. As for the Second Company that removed in *Asa*'s time; They first came to live under the prosperous Reign of *Asa*, who reigned after this their falling in to him many years, and *Jehoshophat* his Son, a godly man, succeeded him and reigned many years; so as these, in the Event and Success by coming into *Judah*, enjoyed an age of rest and prosperity and a fulness of Ordinances with it.

Then, 2. They escaped very great miseries, which the ten Tribes fell into, as *Benhadad*'s invasion and the change of Government, and Governours, *Zimri*, and *Omri*, and *Tibni* (Sir *Walter Raleigh* reckons seven of their Kings in *Asa*'s Time) and besides that they escaped the Heathenish Tyranny in *Ahab*'s Time, which was the worst time the ten Tribes had.

Then for the third Company, who removed in *Hoshea*'s time, if it fell out that they removed their Stations altogether (as some think they did, because of that, 2 Chr 30.25. where it is said, *All the Congregation that came out of Israel, and the strangers that came out of the Land of Israel, and that dwelt in Judah, rejoiced, so there was great joy in Jerusalem; for since the time of Solomon the son of David, King of Israel, there was not the like in Jerusalem*) or if any of these strangers were of those that came up unto the passover upon *Hezekiah*'s invitation, in the former part of the Chapter, and placed their dwellings in *Judah*, then God in his providence did graciously guide them unto a great preservation of themselves and their posterity; for five years after Sennacherib came and carried the generality of the Nation away Captive, and the escape of this Calamity was the good which they got by removing for Ordinances according to *Ahijah*'s prophecy given in *Jeroboam*'s Time; and beside that these Strangers are twice said to be those that came out of the Land of *Israel*, which argues that they were of the ten Tribes.

Further, if you compare the Style that is given the former second Company that came out in *Asa*'s Time, (2 *Chron.* 15. 9.) you will find, that they are said to be the Strangers out of *Ephraim*, and *Manasses*, and *Simeon*, so as God owned and highly rewarded this their practice of a removal for the enjoyment of the Ordinances of God in a continuance.

2. These things were written for our example that we thereby might have light to guide us, and all these instances shew that as for any absolute obligation to instituted Ordinances (that fall back, fall edg, we should be bound to them) that assertion (whoever would maintain it) will come to nothing afore these Examples.

1. They fall short, and no ways rise up to any such proof; For,

1. All these three Instances shew that those godly *Israelites* came up to *Jerusalem* upon opportunites and advantages afforded them in the providence of God, and not simply upon the absolute obligation unto these ordinances. For you read of no more such coming up in the *interims*, but only these three times, which, how they were Circumstantiated, you have seen.

And, 2. Thousands of others out of other Tribes, as godly as they, did not remove when these did and yet are blameless, and this because of the difference of the case as hath been explained. I will allude to what *James* says, *Go take ye all*, the Prophets of those Tribes for an ensample (the enumeration of whom that were during those 250. years doth arise to a great number) take also the 7000 that had not bowed to *Baal*, and the 100 prophets hide in the causes; take also *Obadiah* and his case, who is said to *fear the Lord greatly*, who being Governour of *Ahab*'s house, could not be supposed to have removed to *Jerusalem* for Ordinances in those times, though no man had more opportunities to get away than he, if he could have removed once for all; for

for he had the liberty to go through one part of the Land by *Ahab*'s appointment. 1 *Kings* 18. 6 and at other times could by the authority he had at Court, have taken the liberty to have gone out at any time, but being in a great calling of trust to *Ahab*, and doing service to the people of God in hiding so many Prophets, &c. he forbare. And *Elijah* that met him, reproves him not at all for it; yea he hath the commendation of the Holy Ghost himself, that he *feared God greatly*. And for *Elijah* himself, the Lord Commands him expresly to *hide* himself, and names a safe place, 1 *Kings* chap. verse 23. Book VII

3. We read not of any in the *Interims* of these three times and seasons that did remove; which is to be put upon this supposition, that the oppressions of the times hindred them, as it did the former, and that there should be but these three times mentioned only, and a silence in all times else for so many years, argues that they cated in the *Interims* between.

4. The Rule and Measure given at first, *I will have mercy and not sacrifice*; was the ground of all this, and cuts off any alledged absolute obligation; for if they were bound at all times and in all cases, then they were not to forbear at any time for mercy sake, for then there were no room at all for it: The equity of which rule was then extant, as it had been in all ages, and must be to the end of the world; and one of the prophets of these ten Tribes of those times did first utter it, *Hosea* 6. 6. and Jesus Christ applies it unto the breaking of the Sabbath, in case of mercy by plucking the ears of Corn; as also in the case of eating the Shew-Bread, which *David* did, and then of the Priest's coding, as much as men in any calling do, which Christ calls a prophaning the Sabbath, and yet says that they are blameless, *Mat.* 12.

5. Nay, the omitting of an Instituted Ordinance, for mercy sake, is far less than the breaking of it, and this is but a forbearance, for Mercy's sake, of which we speak.

Object. But you will say, that Mercy to our Souls is to be considered, and it is mercy to our Souls to enjoy Ordinances, and they are to be preferred to all things else.

Answ. 1. I answer, it is true, this will go a great way, and weigh against many difficulties but yet we are to consider this; That mercy to our souls by Ordinances, depends upon our Edification by them, and what that will prove to be, and that edification depends upon God, as he will make them to be prosperous; and so now if God comes in between and says, *I will have mercy*, he can make such means as we have (in the want of these other means) edifying to us when as thus he calls us, to shew mercy to our selves. And he that hath given us this rule, out of his mercy and grace, will be sure to perform the other part of edifying us when he thus calls us out of the same grace.

2. Instituted Ordinances, though they have power of Obligation over us, for *our edification*, yet not when it is to apparent destruction, as the Apostles themselves had power for edification, but not for destruction.

3. There is some mercy to be shewed to the Magistrate, that we ought not daringly to meet in so open a way, as we know before-hand will provoke and irritate them to persecute us.

4. The Ordinances in the performance of them require quietness and rest, in mens Spirits at least, we cannot pray when we are alone without distraction, much less can we worship God, when we are rationally under certain fears, Deut. 12. 9, 10, 11. *Ye are not yet come to the rest and to the inheritance which the Lord your God giveth you: But when ye go over Jordan and dwell in the land which the Lord your God giveth you to inherit, and when he giveth you rest from all your enemies round about, so that ye dwell in safety: Then there shall be a place which the Lord your God shall choose to cause his Name to dwell there, thither shall you bring all that I command you, your Burnt offerings and your Sacrifices, your Tithes and the Heave-Offering of your hand, and all your choice Vows which ye vow unto the Lord.* And they forbare many Ordinances in the mean time (as in *verse* 8.) *Ye shall not do after all the things which we do here this day, every man whatsoever is right in his own eyes.* The equity of which may be drawn from the Apostles Example. *Paul*, though he had an open door, yet, having no rest in his Spirit, left *Troas*. And it will in a great measure hold, that men should not meet in the midst of fears and terrours, when they are full of fears within and terrours without. It being also a dishonour to the Ordinance when the Assemblies are by force broken up, and the like: Therefore men should so meet both as to time, and place, as it is rationally probable that their present meeting may be in some safety, through

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secrecy and privacy. And God did, by his special promise, secure his people under the Old Testament, that when they went up to appear before the Lord thrice in the year, *that no man should desire their Land at these times*, (Exod. 34. 24) which he hath not done to us in the like case.

2. But you will say, yea, but the glory of God is interested in our use of these Ordinances.

Ans. I answer, That if God will be so gracious to us as to quit that consideration of his own glory for mercy to our selves, as we have cause to be thankful to him for it, so to conform our selves unto this exception which himself hath made.

2. Men yet are to put themselves to much loss, inconvenience, and difficulty to enjoy the Ordinances, as this people of the ten Tribes did.

1. In the best times it was a *weariness* to the people of the ten Tribes, so remote to go up to *Jerusalem* three times a year; though to the next Tribes it was not much labour: and *Jeroboam* used this as an argument upon the experience which the people had had, as what he thought would move them the more readily to forbear; *It is much for you* (says he) *to go up to Jerusalem*, 1 King. 12. 28. It was an Argument *populum*, he spake their hearts, and that which was like to take their hearts, and as it had been a burden to carnal Spirits among them. And truly, do you measure it now you that have Country-houses, how do you excuse your selves from coming up to Ordinances, and if you had been put to it so much as they were to travel to Inns, you would grudge at it much more. It was also grievous to suffer great *reproaches to be made gazing stocks* (which those that went in the first three years of *Jeroboam* must needs be supposed exposed unto from the generality of the people) and to be accounted next door to Traitors in going unto the Quarters of a Prince, whose yoke they had cast off.

But more expressly it is said in that third remove in *Hosea's* time, that the messengers and message of invitation by *Hezekiah* was mocked at, and laught to scorn by those Tribes sent to, 2 *Chron.* 30. 10, 11. *The Posts passed from City to City through the Country of Ephraim and Manasseth even unto Zebulon: but they laughed them to scorn and mockt them. Nevertheless divers of Asher and Manasseh and Zebulon humbled themselves and came to Jerusalem.* Of these it must needs be judged that they were mockt and laught to scorn to purpose as they went out, or went along, and the word *nevertheless* imports that they went Maugre those reproaches, and despised the shame despisings and scorns.

Then, 2. The Priests in that first of *Jeroboams* times removed unto their great loss as to their outward estate, for the revenues and perquisites of the Temple which the Priests lived much upon, were (as Sir *Walter Raleigh* says) very small. And as to the people, those of them that came up and lost their inheritances of Lands, must needs suffer much more loss, as hath been argued, and enjoy a mean livelyhood in comparison to what they had in their own Country. Yet we see in what cases they do remove for Ordinances, an much therefore is to be allowed of loss of this way to enjoy the means for our Souls, yet so as to look as nature is the foundation of grace and the exercises of it, and if that should fail, the exercises of Religion would fail also, as we see in sickness, &c. so it is here, that there must be a subsistence laid as a foundation for the enjoyment of Ordinances, which, when there is, though it be with much loss and abatement, we are to rejoyce in that as in a great portion, Isa. 30. 20. *The people shall dwell at Zion in Jerusalem.* To dwell in *Zion* at *Jerusalem* is to enjoy the Ordinances at *Jerusalem*; for *Zion* was the seat of them, and unto such it is said, *v.* 20. *Though the Lord give you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, yet shall not thy Teachers be removed.* Bread and Cheese and the Gospel was said (in time of Old) to be good fare.

Sir W. R. p. 452. *The poverty of the Tribes of Levi must needs have been exceeding great at this time, all their lands and possessions in the ten Tribes being utterly lost, and the oblations and other perquisits from those ten Tribes by which they lived being now cut off.*

3. The consideration of the Circumstances these stood in, both those that went up to *Jerusalem*, and those that forbore, may instruct us, and give us light into our duty, and practice.

1. It instructs us, what *proportion* of mercy to our outward condition is to be weigh'd with Ordinances upon which we are to forbear, or not to forbear.

2. It directs us that upon the rational fore-sight of the same or like extremities, we should know how to guide our selves in our adventures to enjoy Ordinances where the like hazards are run, and the like vigilances to hinder them are used, and soberly and conscientiously to consider of every opportunity we adventure to take, how probably

bably secure it is, and not rashly, hand over head, rush upon and adventure upon all or any dangers, come what will.

4. As for the Case of the removal altogether to enjoy them elsewhere, if it be said that this we ought to do as they did, *Go take the same state and Circumstances*, and so it ought to be. I Answer

1. When it is to the ruine of Families we are not obliged, as these were not, that could not remove themselves and Families without ruine.

2. Parallel, put our case with theirs in those times, and it will appear far different, as will appear especially in the second instance when many of them removed for altogether, 1. They removed out of a Land over which the wrath of God hung, and was denounced against it, unto a Land where they saw that God was with them, and that is made one ground of their Remove, 2 *Chron.* 15. 9. 2. They removed to strengthen the Cause of God, which needed them in the Land they removed to. And 3. They were invited by a potent and able Prince and his people, who thereby were obliged to provide for them. 4. There was a final Captivity threatned in the end, by God, unto that Land from which they removed. And in this case for men to remove for Ordinances, was as if Protestant Borderers upon any Popish Country where the inquisition reigns, which Country they also knew was design'd to ruine, should remove, being invited unto a Neighbouring Nation where the cause of God is, and all the advantages Mentioned. But to remove,

1. From a Nation where there is a bulk and body of Saints that need the strengthning of their Brethren; which is made one argument in the case of them that went in *Jeroboam*'s time that they strengthned *Rehoboam*.

2. Where there is hope of a Resurrection of a good cause, which was no way their case but the contrary;

And 3. To remove from Ordinances to a place where the wrath of God is more impendent, or at least, no less.

And 4. Where they can promise themselves no provision for their Families, but must put themselves out of their Calling and serve God with distraction, and are like to starve with their Families; In that Case they are not obliged to a remove elsewhere, meerly for the Ordinances sake, but to a forbearance rather and waiting upon God.

I shall now give Instances out of the New Testament, and here first: *Let the Prudence*, which our Saviour Christ used in case of appearance of danger, *be considered*.

Before I give you the particular instances, I premise these few things.

1. Our Lord was wholly free of any the least tincture of sinful fears, therefore what he did is to be resolved into *Prudence*, applying it self to the providence of God; and he, being God as well as Man, could have preserv'd himself until his hour came without any hidings or withdrawings: therefore his example herein must needs be for our instruction to guide us in the like cases.

2. When his hour to suffer was come, as himself speaks (which had been by a set compact and agreement between the Father and him, made known to the Son; for, *John* 18. 4 it is said, *he knew all things he should suffer*, and elsewhere, *that so it was appointed*) then indeed he avoided not.

These things premised, I come unto the particular Instances of his avoiding danger, and the occasions of them, which we shall find to have been but prudential fore-seeings and warinesses to preserve himself till indeed the hour appointed by his Father, and consented to by himself should come. *Go tell that Fox* (said he) *I do cures to day and to Morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected.* But before that time he was managed by the Ordinary providence of God, as to what would befal him, and accordingly applied himself thereto. And hence he becomes an example unto us in two things.

1. How we are to manage our selves under the Ordinary Providence of God, which we are alway under, not knowing what will be the Event of things.

But 2 When we are called to suffer, then we should, after his Example, not withdraw, as in case we are necessitated to suffer by Providence we should then arm our selves with the same mind as he did.

Object. An Objection is and hath been made by some, that the reason of his avoiding was, that he was to go and preach over all the Cities of *Judah*, and therefore it was all one to him when, and whither he did with-draw, since he still was not out of his way; which is not the case of Ordinary Ministers that are bound to a certain place.

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Anſ. 1. The Anſwer is, 1. That be it ſo, that whither ever he went he ſtill had an employment to wait upon him; yet ſtill it is evident, that the cauſe of his remove from that place where he was afore, was matter of prudence and avoidence, and that the Inſtances will ſhew; and therefore that remains ſtill as an Example for us.

Anſ. 2. Miniſters, who are by the like Providences (as Chriſt was) taken off, may wait, that in ſome other places unto which they may remove they may have ſuch employments as the providence of God ſhall call them to, for the Exerciſe of their Miniſtry; as the Diſciples that were ſcattered by Perſecution, in *Acts* 8. went up and down preaching, *Acts* 11.

Anſ. 3. That was not the ground why Chriſt did remove, who had not yet gone over the Cities of *Judah*; for we read it expreſly ſaid, that he went again to the ſame place that he was at afore.

1. The firſt Inſtance that we have of Chriſt's avoiding danger, is in *Mat.* 4. 12, 13 *Now when Jeſus had heard that John was caſt into priſon, he departed into Galilee. And leaving Nazareth he came and dwelt in Capernaum which is upon the ſea coaſt in the Borders of Zebulon and Naphtali.* That *Galilee*, that he went into, was not that part of *Galilee* which *Herod* had who was of a perſecuting Nature, but which *Philip* had (as *Grotius* out of *Joſephus* ſhews) and the occoſion of his avoiding was but only when Jeſus heard that *John* was caſt into priſon, namely, by *Herod*, and ſo it was time for him to look to himſelf, and thereupon he ſecured himſelf. It was but upon hearing that *John* was caſt into priſon, no more; only rationally thinking his turn might be next.

Grotius in locum.

2. In like manner we have an account, *John* 4. 1, 2, 3. *When therefore the Lord knew how the Phariſees had heard that Jeſus made and baptized more Diſciples than John (though Jeſus baptized not but his Diſciples) He left Judea and departed again into Galilee.* Here again, though Chriſt knew only that the *Phariſees* had heard (which is remote enough from this, that Jeſus made and baptized more Diſciples than *John*) and although he had a plea for himſelf that he baptized none, yet upon this occaſion he left *Judea* and departed again into *Galilee*. It was that he knew that ſuch a report of him would contract an envy upon himſelf, and an *Odium* from the *Phariſees*, and ſo he avoided it, and breaks off, when he was in the midſt of an Employment, with as much ſucceſs as any he had at any time elſewhere afore or after.

3. We have another Inſtance, Mat. 12. 14, 15. *Then the Phariſees went out and held a Council againſt him how they might deſtroy him: But when Jeſus knew it he withdrew himſelf from thence*, &c.

4. There is another Inſtance, Luke 4. 29, 30, 31. *And they roſe up and thruſt him out of the City, and led him unto the brow of the hill (whereon their City was built) that they might caſt him down headlong. But he paſſing through the midſt of them went his way; and came down to Capernaum, a City of Galilee*, &c. and not only went his way for the preſent, but removed to another place.

5. We have another Inſtance, *John* 8. 59. *Then took they up ſtones to caſt at him, but Jeſus hid himſelf, and went out of the Temple, going through the midſt of them, and ſo paſſed by.*

6. There is another Inſtance, *John* 10. 39, 40. *They ſought again to take him, but he eſcaped out of their hand. And went away again beyond Jordan into the place where John at firſt baptized, and there he abode.*

2. We have alſo Inſtances of the Apoſtles.

1. Who after Chriſt's Death until his Aſcenſion, met ſecretly with the doors ſhut and in the night, John 20. 19. *Then the ſame day at evening, being the firſt day of the week, when the doors were ſhut where the Diſciples were aſſembled for fear of the Jews, came Jeſus and ſtood in the midſt, and ſaith, Peace be unto you.* And again a Second time after eight days, *v.* 26. The doors being ſhut. *And after eight days, again his Diſciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jeſus, the doors being ſhut, and ſtood in the midſt, and ſaid, Peace be unto you.*

2. After Chriſt's Aſcenſion, the Church by flying avoided perſecution, Acts 8. 1. *And at that time there was a great perſecution again the Church which was at Jeruſalem, and they were all ſcattered abroad throughout the Regions of Judah except the Apoſtles.* And although the Apoſtles ſtaid becauſe they were extraordinary Officers, and had not a Commiſſion yet from God to depart from *Jeruſalem*, which afterward they had, yet the Church was ſo leſſened by the Diſciples ſcattering abroad (for which the Diſciples had

had warrant by reason of persecution) That the Apostles might the safelier stay; and we read that for praying and preaching in the like cases they met in the night, and by parts, *Acts* 12.12. *And when he had considered the thing, he came to the house of Mary the Mother of John, whose Surname was Mark, where many were gathered together praying, James* and others of the Brethren being in another place, *v.* 17. Book VI.

CHAP. IX.

Two Cases resolved, whither a person who, is not a Church-member may be the subject of Baptism. Wrether a Minister who is not a Pastor, may Administer Baptism.

I Resolve the cases propounded into these two Questions.

1. Whether one that is not a Church member may be the Subject of Baptism.

2. Whether one that is not a Pastor in a particular Relation to persons that offer themselves to be baptized may baptize them? And if he Administers it, under what consideration he doth it, whether as a Minister, or otherwise as a private person?

Quest. 1. Unto the first Question I say these two Things:

1. The examples in Scripture do clearly hold forth, that persons that were not in Church-Fellowship were yet baptized.

1. The first Instance is of the Eunuch, baptiz'd by *Philip*, Acts 8. If it be said, that he was a Proselyte, and so of the Jewish Church, and upon that ground a subject capable of Baptism. The reply is, that his being of the Jewish Church did not make him capable of the Gospel-Baptism, of the Ordinance under the Gospel which we call *Baptism.*

1. For when *John* Baptist baptized, he bid them *say not, they had* Abraham *for their Father*, which yet was a ground for Circumcision, as under the old Covenant Administred, but he requires Repentance and Regeneration, which is the Gospel-Initiation into the Kingdom of Heaven:

2. Again *Peter* (Acts 2.) being to baptize Jews, baptizeth them, not upon the account they were the Seed of *Abraham*, but upon Faith and Repentance, which he calls them to. He only tells them, that if they would turn to God, then God would renew the promises unto them and their Children, yet in a Gospel way, namely, by vertue of their being call'd, as the 39 *verse* hath it; So as the ground upon which men were Members of the Jewish Church, and Circumcised, was not the ground upon which they were baptized; And therefore the Eunuch was not baptiz'd upon any such account. The dispensation of the Covenant was altered, and the application of the Ordinances had accordingly an alteration. So then, if he were not baptized as a Member of the Jewish Church, and when he was baptized, was a Member of no Gospel-Church Instituted, then it necessarily follows, that a person who is not a Member of an Instituted Church, or a particular Congregation, may be the subject of Baptism.

2. The second Instance (which also is an answer to the former Objection) is of the Jaylor, and his houshold, and of those baptized by *Paul*, 1 Cor. 1. 14. They to be sure were not of the Jewish Church, for the Jaylor was a perfect Heathen before, to the instant of his Conversion, yet he and his Houshold were baptized before Morning.

If it be said that *Philip* and the Apostles were persons extraordinary. I Answer, That still the extraordinaries of their Office, did only enable them with an extraordinary power over all Churches, and over all persons with an extraordinary Authority, but could not convey a requisite qualification unto an ordinary person, which was still required however in the subject that was to be baptized. They could not administer the Lord's Supper out of a Church, nor never did; and although they had extraordinary power over all Churches, yet that did not make all Churches one Church, but there remained Churches distinct according to that ordinary Capacity of them as Christ had instituted. And so it must be supposed in this Case.

2. The apparent difference that is between Baptism and the Lord's Supper in their several

Ch. VIII veral intentions, doth shew that the one is properly the Ordinance of a particular Church, and the other of the Universal.

1. Because Baptism is a baptizing of a single person into Christ, and consequently into the body of Christ (as 1 *Cor.* 12. 13. imports) and is but an act of a single person unto a single person (as the Instance of *Philip* and the *Eunuch*, being alone shews) and it belonging not unto a particular Church, as the former Instances declared, it must necessarily belong unto the Universal Church, as *Eph.* 4. 4. seems to hold forth, *One Lord, One God, One Baptism, One Body.*

2. As for the Lord's Supper, it is as evident that it was properly the Ordinance of a particular Church embodied together, 1 *Cor.* 10. *The bread which we break, is it not the Communion of the body of Christ?* It is the bread which we break, so that there must be a number of persons to celebrate it. For these we must be many, for, says he, *We, being many, are one Bread and one Body*, verse 17. It doth not hold forth the Union of single persons with Christ, or any ingrafting into him, as Baptism doth in the first Initiation; but it holds forth a joynt and a common participation. 'Tis the Nature of the Ordinance it self, for the Institution is, *Eat ye all of this, and drink ye all of this.* Insomuch as the Apostle says, *Tarry one for another*, 1 Cor. 11. 33. Insomuch also as it had the Denomination from the meeting or gathering together of many, and therefore was called Σύναξις. Therefore to come together into one place, and to eat the Lord's Supper, are put, as it were, mutually one for the other.

Quest. 2. I come now to consider the second Question, whether the Child of a person truly godly, not in fellowship with you, may be baptized by one who is not a Pastor, and under what notion, whether as a Minister or no?

1. I suppose that Infant-baptism of Parents godly is warrantably in its self required.

2. I suppose that the Judgment, whether the person is godly, yea or no, whose Child is baptized, properly belongs to him that baptizes it. There is this difference between Baptism and the Administration of the Lord's Supper; That it is a single act of him that baptizeth to the person baptized: but the act of blessing the Bread and Wine (*which we bless*) it is a joynt act together with the Church, and the Minister doth give it to the whole as Christ did. And therefore the Judgment of the Church, that a man is godly, may satisfie the Minister's Conscience for his administring the Lord's Supper among them; he not applying it to this or that person, but in the point of Baptism 'tis otherwise, as is clear.

3. If it be (as by reviewing the first question it appears) the right of men out of Church-fellowship, as well as in Church-fellowship to be baptized: This must be done by some body; and the Judgment that is to be past concerning the person is not incumbent upon a whole Church only or chiefly, but upon the single person that is to baptize. So as for a warrant of his Judging such a person to be godly, and the Child to be godly, it is not absolutely necessary that he have the Judgment of a Church for it. And if there were not a lawful way or means by which, after the Apostles times those out of Church-fellowship, which were converted might be baptized; Then Jesus Christ had not made provision for all times of the Gospel as well as for the first, in so great an Ordinance. If therefore it does lye upon some, those must either be Ministers or others, if it lyes upon others, you know the inconveniency that will follow upon that. If it lyes on the Minister, the Question is, whether as a Minister or no? To that I shall give this clear answer, That a man that is set apart by his own vow to God professed by his acceptance of that Calling, when he was called to be a *Minister* in a Church (and it hath the Nature of a vow on his part, and is so accepted of him by God) by vertue of that publique consecration and dedication of himself unto the service of Christ as a *Minister*; he is to be lookt upon as a *Minister*, not only unto them of his own Church, but occasionally also as he shall be call'd to such an act of the Ministry as he singly may perform, as to preach or to baptize, which when he does, he does it as a Minister, and with the blessing of a Minister, and with the promise made to a Minister. If one come to him with a case of Conscience, as to a Minister of Christ, he hath the blessing of a Minister, and the promise of a Minister and the guidance of a Minister to resolve it, and by like reason, if any one come to him and call him to baptize, he hath authority to do it. And this does no way prejudice our Congregational principles: for it is a single Act of the Ministry, and but occasionally put forth as he shall be call'd thereto: But the Matter of Ordination and of governing the Church

ruling, it is not a single act, but is to be performed with others; for 'tis an act of thority or power over others, but it is not an act of power above others, or which hers have not. Our Presbyterian brethren fail in their practice, and in their argu- ent, *in that*, they, because they are Ministers, therefore associate themselves together, id take power over the Churches to rule them and govern them whether the Churches) call them or no. And call them to it as Churches they cannot, unless they give way thereby and prejudice that power which is seated within themselves, as in a body, id ought to be exercised among themselves; and not without themselves in a Judi- iture that is without them. If I were seated in a Parish that had a Church in it ga- iered out of it, and the rest of the Parish came to hear me, I should not look upon ıy self to preach as a private man to all these that are not in my Church, and as a Minister only to them that are of the Church, but as one set apart to the work of the Ministry; to preach as a Minister to both, as to the matter of preaching: And that is I take it) by vertue of what is said, *Eph.* 4. 12. *He gave Pastors and Teachers as well πρὸς τὸν καταρτισμὸν τῶν ἁγίων, for the joynting in of the Saints*, which is Con- ersion, as well as for the edifying of the body of Christ.

Book VII

CHAP. X.

Whether a Church may depose an Officer for a Crime which deserves not Excommunication.

THat a Church may not disclaim an Officer for an offence which is not worthy of Excommunication appears to me evident from this Reason, because you are o exercise the same patience towards an Officer, as an Officer, in matter of Crime, hat you are to use to a private Member, and so you are not to disclaim him from be- ng an Officer, on a lesser account than you would excommunicate him. According o that Rule (which nature dictates) to entreat an Elder as a Father. (And this in case of censure.) This is a main duty of a Church to a Minister, and by a Rule of equity grounded on Nature, in the duty of Children to a Father, not to renounce him for that fault for which they would not renounce a Brother.

Object. All this runs upon a false Supposition, (*viz.*) that an Officer may not be displaced for a crime cleaving to the Administration of his Office.

1. Because, what crime may be cured by a lesser censure, needs not a greater; but crimes that cleave to the Administration of an Office, may be cured by the dis- placing of the Officer, which is a lesser censure, therefore there is no need of Excom- munication, which is a greater.

2. As an Officer cannot be chosen out of the Body, being guilty of some crimes; so the same crimes may be just matter of his displacing after his being chosen.

Answ. The Objection seems to intimate a distinction between sins cleaving to the Administration of his Office, and such as are otherwise common to him as a Brother, and that for such he may be disclaimed as an Officer, when he could not have been so as a Brother.

But 1. I do not see that the Scripture putteth any such distinction between these two sorts of sins, that for the one an Officer should be displaced, when not for the other. I am sure that other sins than such as cleave to the Administration of his Office, are promiscuously put together with the other, and alike forbidden in him, 1 *Tim.* 3. 2. *A Bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach.* And so it *Titus* 2. 2. *That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience.* So as the case of any such crimes is all one with those cleaving to the Administration of his Office.

Ubi Scriptura non distinguit, ibi nec nos distinguere debemus.

2. This your distinction doth run upon a false Supposition; as if the Subject to be considered in your treating with an Officer in matter of crime, were not the person, and that as he is a Saint and Brother, as well in sins of his Office, as in other sins; for though he is invested with a relation of Office (by vertue of his Gifts, and your choice) Yet the discharge of his Office faithfully is from his Grace; and the neglect of it (for which in such a case you would disclaim him) is but a *fruit of his sin*, from contrary corruption, and a failing as he is a Saint, so as in matter of sin you cannot distinguish

Ch. XI. distinguish his being a Saint and his being an Officer. Surely it is in this as in other Relations: a Brother being an husband as well as a brother, a Brother being a Master as well as a Brother, and he being an Officer as well as a Brother all these Relations do oblige them to several Duties) which, if they fail to discharge, you are to deal with them all as Saints failing in duty, seeing they are defects of Grace, and you have not in Church-fellowship one way of dealing with an Husband, if he sins against his Relation, another with a Master of a Family if against his; and so neither a peculiar one for an Officer if he sin against his. All the duties of the dispensation and of his Office, are but the duties of his particular Calling, and Relation, wherein, if he fail, (through corruption) he is to be dealt with as another brother who fails in his Relation, or neglects the duties of his Calling and no otherwise than the same Officer should be, If he sins in any other State: And though it be a sin against the Church more immediatly; yet it being but a sin, God's Ordinance is to have it reclaimed, the same way that all sins are, *Mat.* 18 15, 16, 17. you cannot shew a Warrant that God hath given this peculiar power in this case over an Officer to disclaim him as an Officer, in way of an Ordinance, till he grow so hardned as he deserves Excommunication.

Your first Reason for it is, because such Crimes may be cured by this as a lesser censure, and so needs not a greater.

Into this your Reason, if you view the expression, you will find that you again speak upon a false supposition, as if we had affirmed, that crimes in the dispensation of his Office did always need the Excommunication of the Officer. But our exception lies in this, that when his Crime needed not Excommunication in your own Judgment: for you thought that to be too great a censure, You should disclaim him as an Officer, when as on an Officer there is no such censure to be inflicted for matter of Crime in his Office, until it comes to that height as it deserves Excommunication. And that therefore it was violence in you to be so hasty to proceed so severely till he had deserved it.

1. 'Tis true, that simply disclaiming an Officer (if for insufficiency) is less than Excommunication: But then 'tis not a censure, for that respects Crime. But to disclaim an Officer, in case of Crime and Sin, is interpretative as much as Excommunication. For if dispensed according to the word, it should not be done till he were past cure; and so should be joyned, or rather included, in Excommunication.

2. The fault we find lies in this, that you make this invention of disclaiming an Officer, a Church censure, and so an Ordinance of God coming between Admonition and Excommunication to cure a man, which we affirm you have no warrant for: So that though it be a less punishment than Excommunication (if he had deserved it) would be, that being a delivering up to Satan, yet you must not take on you to invent other punishments, as you are a Church, than God hath ordained; you have your power, your honour, your lives from Christ & your punishment (as 2 *Cor.* 2. 6. excommunication is called) from him also. In a College you might invent twenty less punishments than expulsion: But in a Church you must invent none that God hath not ordained: And you have not the power that mens Courts have of varying their punishments who having Law to warrant them, use less violence under that consideration than you, who have neither God's Law nor man's to justifie your proceeding herein: And whereas you think because 'tis a less punishment, it may cure him, and so he should not need Excommunications. I answer

1. That which must cure must have God's blessing and promise of blessing annexed, and so be his Institution: but that this is such, we desire a warrant. It may cure him as a Cross (as an injustice done in a Civil Court may, and an unlawful suspension may do the man much good) but that is an accident, and no warrant for you to inflict it.

Yea, 2. What is it in him you would cure? would you cure him as an Officer? or cure him as a Saint and Brother? if as an Officer (as would seem by inflicting punishment answerable to his sin, he sinning in his Office you would punish him in his Office to cure him) how improper a remedy is this for his cure? which casts him off, destroys him as an Officer, lames him for use and exercise of his Office puts him out of it for ever? Doth that Surgeon cure a hand, that in going about to make it sound, makes it as an hand forever unuseful, though he leaves it a member still? Doth any man punish his Members so for failing in their Office? Will they cut off till there be no hope? Would you cure

him as a Saint or Brother when you must forgoe that distinction of punishing him as an Officer for Crimes in his Office, when not as a Brother, seeing he is considered by you as a Brother in the time of his Office. Book VII

And therefore ye are to proceed with him for sins in his Office, as with a Brother, if he have committed sins, and use the same means for his cure that you would do to a Brother for his sins, you must use admonition and patience, till his sin comes to that height that it deserves casting off as a Brother by Excommunicating of him. Yea, you ought to treat him with more patience in this kind than you would do to Brother, for he is more. Entreat him as a Father.

2 *Reas.* Your second Reason drawn from the instance of *Abiathar*, who remained a member of the *Jewish* Church, when put from his Priest-hood, the only warrant from Scripture you alledge, how remote is it from the case in hand?

For 1. It was not an act of Ecclesiastical, but Civil power, The text says, *Solomon* thrust out *Abiathar* from the Priest-hood; it was the King did it, 1 *Kings* 2. 27.

And 2. Not for a sin in the dispensation of his Office, but for High Treason: So it serves not your purpose at all.

3. For which Treason he was a man of Death, *verse* 26. and that he remained alive and so in their Jewish Church, was from the King's pardon, *I will not at this time put thee to death*, verse 26. He only thrust him from the Priesthood, which he forfeited in forfeiting his life: And so was part of the punishment included in that other Death.

Yea, 4. It was done to fulfil a particular word of Prophecy; and no way as a standing Ordinance to cure him, so, *v.* 27. *That he might fulfil the word of the Lord, which he spake concerning the house of Eli.*

And 5. In respect to his Office, *Solomon* was so far from heightening his punishment more than to another Brother, that he therefore spared his life, *because he had born the Ark of the Lord.* Whereas he put *Adonijah* and *Joab* to death, being in the same Treason with him.

Object. 2. " As an Officer cannot be chosen out of the body, being guilty of some " Crimes, so the same Crimes may be just matter of displacing after his chosing.

Answ. 1. If you have those Crimes, mentioned, 1 *Tim.* 3. in your Eye take them but as eminent infirmities that stand with sincerity, as there the Apostle speaks of them, yet if eminent, such an one (if other supply may be had) is not to be chosen; yet consider,

1. That those sins and infirmities there mentioned are not only such as are found in the dispensation of his Office; but others also, as was said afore. So that you must say, that, not only for sins cleaving to his administration, but of any other kind he is to be disclaimed.

And 2. Those infirmities are mentioned as Rules for the choice of Officers, not of casting out one chosen, as also to shew what an one a Bishop ought to be after choice, so *v.* 1. *If a man desires the Office of a Bishop*: And so is to be chosen, *let him be blameless*, and it respects choice. So of a Decon, *v.* 10. *Let him first be proved, then let him use the Office of a Deacon.* The Rule therefore respects choice, *Chap.* 5. 9. *Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years*, &c. still those Rules were intended to direct choice. But, if after choice, these as infirmities were found in them, he says not, they are to be cast out unless obstinate, and so it proves more than an infirmity; so as those places will no way afford a ground for this.

And for your inference thence; That if he may not be chosen, being guilty of such Crimes as are there mentioned; that therefore after choice, when guilty, they are just matter to cast him out:

The Answer is, 1. We grant it, if obstinacy be joined to them, and so he deserve Excommunication: but simply the guilt of them as infirmities (and they are no more till obstinacy and impenitency be added to them) is not just matter to cast out after choice and Ordination.

2. If you mean otherwise, that the sole guilt of them should require it: There is not the same Reason for not chosing at first and disclaiming afterwards. There is a vast difference to be put.

For, 1 In and before Choice there is an arbitrariness and freedom, and no obligation to chuse this or that man: But after he is chosen and ordained, there is an obligation by a solemn Covenant, the Covenant of God; and by Ordination the separa-

Ch. XI. tion of him unto the ſervice of Chriſt in that Church. Hence therefore, becauſe their choice is an act, wherein they are free, and wherein they give ſo great a Teſtimony to the Man, to be qualified according to the Apoſtles Rules; they become partakers of his ſins, if they choſe him with thoſe Infirmities, and ſo ought not to chuſe him, becauſe it is a ſin.

But when he is once choſen, and ſo great a Covenant paſſed, and ſo great an Ordinance as Separation paſſed upon him, then thoſe his Infirmities (though ſins in him) are not approved of by you, though you diſclaim him not; if you uſe the means God hath appointed for the cure of him, which is Admonition with patience: yea and by vertue of your Covenant you are to bear with them (if they be but Infirmities) though in his Adminiſtration of his Office, becauſe that Covenant cannot be ſo arbitrarily broken as it was made (as your Rule would make it) but binds, as all other Covenants do, till ſome other Rule warrants a diſclaim. The ſame Rule for choſing and diſclaiming, is not commenſurable each to other:

Which 2. Appears in this, that not only thoſe crimes here mentioned, but ſome circumſtances alſo, though no crimes, are given as Rules to divert from a Choice, which yet by reaſon of the Covenant paſſed, ought not to procure a diſclaiming after Choice. For *v. 6.* He is not to be one newly come to the Faith; (though never ſo well Gifted, for that he ſuppoſeth, and ſo in thoſe days it ſometimes fell out through the effuſion of the Holy Ghoſt at firſt) leſt he fall into Pride, but if choſen once, ſhould that have put him out? Or if he is one againſt whom after he was choſen, thoſe without had raiſed ill reports, ſhould this neceſſitate a diſclaiming, becauſe this, if it had fallen out afore, ſhould have diverted his Choice? v. 7.

3. See this in other Covenants that paſs: Marriage is a Covenant of God, which until made, many infirmities and circumſtances, &c. may and ought to divert one from chuſing ſuch or ſuch a perſon, which after cannot be a warrant for a divorce: for it is the Covenant of God. You muſt divorce in no caſe, but ſuch as God in his Word gives power and warrant for.

4. See it in another Inſtance more near the caſe. A private Chriſtian, that ſeeks admiſſion, being found guilty of any crime, without Repentance: The Rule for his admiſſion is, that he muſt teſtifie Repentance, and ſo ſatisfie the Church of the truth of his Grace and Repentance of thoſe ſins: But if he be once admitted, and in Covenant with you, you ought not preſently to diſclaim him as a Brother, till he doth repent, but to admoniſh him as a Brother, 2 *Theſ.* 13. 15. and with patience bear with him, uſing not only one admonition, but a ſecond alſo, ere you reject him, *Titus* 3. 10. and this in caſe of Hereſie; the moſt dangerous of ſins to Church fellowſhip, and not indeed to reject, till it comes to obſtinacy; becauſe now he is in Covenant with you; now the proportion as ſtrongly holds between the Choice of an Officer, and his caſting out as an Officer; and the admiſſion of a Brother, and his caſting out as a Brother; the Covenant that binds to the Officer, being as ſtrong as that which binds unto a Brother.

5. Upon commiſſion of ſuch crimes, he is made uncapable for the preſent of Choice (until Repentance) but not ſo, for the ſame ſins after Choice, unleſs you would make him fall in his Office, *ipſo facto*, and make him uncapable of admonition, &c. Therefore there is no way *par ratio*, before and after chuſing.

Again 6. If a man had been guilty of ſuch crimes, yet if he had repented, he might be choſen: Then eſpecially after Choice, if he be guilty of them, upon Repentance he might be continued in his Place; why otherwiſe would you have received him in again? and for his Repentance, why ſhould not all the ſame means and patience be firſt uſed, as is uſed for a Brother's, and ſo not a caſting off, as there is not the caſting off a Brother.

Yea 7. If an Officer ſhould be thus diſclaimed, he would not be under all thoſe Ordinances that a Brother as a Brother is under, but in a worſe caſe far: For towards a Brother, Chriſt hath appointed admonition upon admonition with patience (till ſuch obſtinacy be added, as it juſtly calls for Excommunication, which as it were unwillingly they pronounce upon him) as means to reclaim him ere he be renounced as a Brother; and ſhould it not be thus to an Officer? An Officer is capable of ſin in his Office, as well as a Brother; (for he that is moſt ſpiritual may be tempted, *Gal.* 6. 1, 2.) and ſo is capable of reproof in his Office, as well as a Brother, *Coll.* 4. 17. *Say to Archippus, fulfil thy Miniſtry*; and alſo of publick rebuke for ſins proved by two or three

three Witnesses that are publick, 1 *Tim.* 5. 19, 20. For, as appears by the coherence, those Rules concern Elders; yet so as in these proceedings they are to exercise not only the same, but more respect and patience than to a Brother. Book VII.

For, *v.* 1. They are gentle unto him as a Father; and *v.* 19. They are so far from censuring him hastily, that they are not to receive an accusation, or listen to it but upon the Testimony of two or three approved ones. Surely then the case is evident, they are, as *v.* 20. to rebuke them openly, but no more: Till it comes to Excommunication, you find not a tittle for disclaiming.

Object. 3. "That less admonition ripens an Officers sin sooner than a Brother's, for "displacing him as an Officer.

Answ. 1. The Rules by which you must judge of the ripeness of his sin, must be in the Word; now shew that the Limits of proceeding against an Officer, are more strict than against a Brother.

2. 'Tis true; his sin, is aggravated more, but still not ripe for rejection, until such impenitency and obstinacy be added to it, as would procure Excommunication.

Last of all, we add this, That if he were obstinate and impenitent in his sin, and deserved Excommunication, yet it doth not appear that thereby he fell from all future right to his Office, so as that you are free instantly to send for another. From the Scripture we have not learned, that the Relation is utterly broken and made void, as that of a Brother is not by Excommunication: But if upon that Ordinance he repented, as you are bound to receive him as a Brother, so as your Officer again, for you cannot shew a ground that the one Relation should be more evacuated than the other. Excommunication is not a casting off but in order to Repentance, which restores him *ad pristinum statum*, to his former state.

CHAP. XI.

Of Anointing with Oyl.

James 5. 14, 15. *Is any sick among you? let him call for the Elders of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with Oyl in the name of the LORD: And the Prayer of Faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up: And if he have committed sins they shall be forgiven him.*

THE Anointing spoken of in this Text, is not the Anointing spoken of, *Mark* 6. 13. by which the Apostles healed those that were sick through a miraculous Gift: But it is a standing Ordinance to confirm the promise of Healing unto Church Members; as will appear from the following Arguments.

1. The first Argument is taken from what anointing with Oyl is here joyned with, *viz.* The *Elders Prayers*, which are a standing Ordinance to this purpose even for the cure of the sick.

2. All the Precepts besides in this Epistle are about things which concern the Church for ever. And that which this Anointing is joyned with (namely, the prayer of the Elders) is such also. It were strange therefore if this alone should be extraordinary.

The third Argument may be taken from the *Persons* that are to be sent for, who have the power to *Administer* it; namely, the *Elders* of the Church.

1. It is not said, Send for Men who have healing Gifts, but for Elders.

2. Who were standing Officers, and that, of a Church which was to continue.

3. The Elders in every Church had not then such miraculous Healing-Gifts.

4. The Gifts of Healing and those of prophecy, by Wisdom and Knowledge, which enable Men for Eldership, were in those times variously dispensed; and not both to the same Persons (excepting Extraordinary Officers, as Apostles and Evangelists) but to one was given the Gift of Healing, to others a Word of Wisdom and Knowledge, that enabled them to be Elders, 1 *Cor.* 12. 8, 9, 11.

The third Argument is drawn from the *Persons* to whom it was to be *Administred*.

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1. They were *sick Persons*, or infirm. If it had been extraordinary Healing, it would have extended further, even to the blind, the deaf and the dumb: but this Healing reacheth only to these who were sick of Diseases curable, it being no miraculous Ordinance. 2. They were members of the Church, not unbelievers; for the expression is, *If any be sick among you*: And therefore the Elders of that Church are to be sent for.

Now Miraculous Healing did,

1. Extend to all sorts, Unbelievers as well as Believers.

Yea, 2. To them chiefly, as all miracles did, as 1 *Cor.* 14. 22. it is said of Tongues.

Therefore, 3. The Apostles themselves who had Gifts of Healing, seldom wrought any cure upon Believers that were sick: So *Paul* did not heal *Epaphroditus*, Philem. 1. 2.

The fourth Argument may be taken from the generality of the extent of this Ordinance, even to all persons in a Church. (*If any among you be sick*) which argues it not to be extraordinary, For when any was healed by an extraordinary Gift, it was by a Faith of Miracles concurring; which was never general, to heal any, or all, but particular, reaching only to such a Person as God would heal, and who was presented, and his Faith stirred up. There was no Universal Rule given for extraordinary Healings.

The fifth Argument is taken from the *Means* commanded upon all such occasions, which generally is Oyl. Now the extraordinary Gift of Healing was not confined to *Oyl*, but might be applied without means. It had been enough to have said, *Rise and walk*. So likewise some were extraordinarily healed by other means, as *Napkins, the Apostles shadow*, &c.

6. Another Argument may be taken from the generality of the Command, which enjoins every one that is sick to send and seek out for this cure. Now if extraordinary Gifts were meant, then in those times Men should not have died; For extraordinary Gifts of Healing failed not to effect the cure where there was a Warrant to apply them, as here there is unto any. Every one is to send, and they are to come and anoint every one.

It is therefore intended as an Ordinance to confirm the promise of Health unto Church-Members, for the words of the text are, *They shall be healed*. And because his promise to dispense this outward mercy is not absolute, but indefinite, therefore the Seal is to be taken as such also. For this Seal is to confirm Faith, and Faith is to be answerable to the promise, and the Seal to both. And yet it is of use; for though this Seal assures not the party unto whom it is applied, that he shall be healed; yet it gives a more certain evidence of God's seriousness and faithful care over the Bodies of his Saints, to preserve them in Sickness, than to confer on them any other outward Mercy: their bodies being most dear to him, next their Souls, and their lives precious in his sight, and it being one of his attributes, to be the God that heals them; he therefore hath shewn and confirmed that this is so, by a Seal annexed to the Promise of Healing, when he hath annexed a Seal to no other outward Mercy: So that it Seals up to our Faith, the certainty and faithfulness of that promise it self in its indefiniteness, though not of the infallible fulfilling it unto this or that party, yet so as to raise the heart of every one.

Object. 1. This is to make more Sacraments than two.

Answ. There are no more than two Seals of the Covenant of Grace: But for other ends, and to seal other Promises, there may be more. As that of the Rainbow is in force unto this day, to confirm the not destroying the World by Water.

Object. 2. But this Seal is for remission of sins, as it was then used; for it follows in the Text, *They have committed sins, they shall be forgiven*, and so there was an extraordinary Healing, at which their Souls were often converted.

Answ. The Remission of sins there spoken of, is not that general and eternal forgiveness of all sins promised in the Covenant of Grace; nor is this the Sacrament of such a Remission; but of the Remission and taking off of that Temporary guilt which might be in any particular sins committed by the persons provoking God to lay that sickness upon them. Which is evident from the Apostles speaking Hypothetically, *If he have committed sins*; which argues it not meant of the general forgiveness; for then there were no *if* to come in: it being certain, that all sick persons whatever have in that sense sinned. *All have sinned*; and *he that says he hath no sin, deceiveth himself*. The meaning

meaning therefore is, That if there be any special sin, the Temporal Guilt whereof hath, in a particular manner, provoked God to lay this sickness on him, it shall be remitted. And so forgiveness here is but the removal of that guilt considered as in order to the Punishment. And thus it is taken, *Psa.* 78. 38 *He forgave their Iniquity, and destroyed them not.* And so, that it should be a Seal of such a forgiveness, and of the promise of being restored, is but to be a Seal of an outward temporary mercy, and so, not of all of the Covenant of Grace. Book VI.

Object. 3. But all Sacraments, being Seals, are annexed to absolute Promises; and when rightly used in Faith, have certainly their effect: But so this hath not; for then none should die that in Faith do use it.

Answ. True; All Sacraments of the Covenant of Grace are such, and the Promises to which they are annexed are such; and God hath annexed a Seal to assure our Faith, and hope of the fulfilling of Spiritual Promises, rather than of any other outward Mercy, but yet he may have appointed a Seal for the confirmation of our Faith as to the Performance of them too. And of this nature is that other Ordinance, namely, Imposition of hands, for encrease of Gifts: Not that always, when rightly used in Faith, it hath its effect infallibly: But it is a Means appointed to convey the blessing and confirms the Promise of giving Gifts to Men, which yet is but indefinitely performed, as being of God's good pleasure. Yea, one end of this Ordinance of anointing with Oyl (when ever in use) is here made our indefinite, and with a supposition, *If he hath committed sins*: That is, in case he hath. And so it may be administred to this or that person with supposition, if he be one of those (as he may be) unto whom the Promise belongs.

Object. 4. That authority, and so, healing, was extraordinary: and how can this [illegible] Ordinance, unless the same gift were continued now?

Answ. So Imposition of hands in the Primitive Times serve extraordinarily to convey extraordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghost: Yet was it ordained to serve as an Ordinance of Encreasing Gifts, to the World's end; And why may not this be so converted also?

Object. 5. This gives countenance unto the Papists *Extreme Unction*, and condemns the Reformed Churches for rejecting it.

Ans. 1. The Church of *Rome* retains almost all Ordinances; only she hath perverted them. As she hath perverted this from being an Ordinance of restoring Health, and forgiving the Temporary Guilt of particular sins provoking God to that Judgment, to become a Sacrament of Justification and forgiveness of all sins, and so a Seal of the Covenant of Grace; and that not for the sick, but for all dying persons, when past recovery, in which case it should not be used.

Now, 2. The Reformed Churches, seeing that such a Sacrament could not be, and that this must needs be a perversion of it, did justly reject it as they used it: Only in rejecting it (as in some other things) they went too far, even denying it to have that use of restoring the sick, as a Seal of the promise, and an indefinite means to convey that blessing, which God in mercy hath appointed it to be.

Use 1. We see here God's care over our Bodies, as well as over our Souls, in Instituting an Ordinance for Sickness and restoring to Health; and his full provision by Ordinances for every Thing, and every Condition.

Use 2. See also God's especial Hand in that Mercy of restoring his Children unto Health, and of blessing Physick and Means unto them, rather than to Unbelievers; though it be but a common Mercy. And therefore believers should exercise a special Faith and dependance in the use of the means for recovery, beyond what ordinarily they use in other means for other outward Mercies.

Use 3. We should raise our Faith up to God with more hope as to this mercy, than about any other outward Mercies; for the promise of this hath a special Seal.

Use 4. We may infer, that God doth afflict with sickness for particular sins.

Use 5. We may infer, that yet he doth not always do so, therefore an *if* is put in, *If he have committed sins.*

Use 6. From hence a proof may be fetcht, that Elders only should administer Sacraments; as here they only are to anoint. And if the lesser Sacrament be appropriated to them, then the greater much more.

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Use 7. It ſhould be one ground of further honouring Elders, that God hath made them means of conveying health, as well to our Bodies as our Souls. So that if Phyſicians be to be honoured (as you have it in *Eccleſ.*) then they much more, even with a double honour.

Use 8. We may infer, that it is not neceſſary that all the Church ſhould be preſent. The Elders only are to be ſent for, ſince ſuch Rules are given by the Apoſtle, as may ſuit all Churches in all Circumſtances; But now the Church may conſiſt of ſo many, that all the members cannot meet without inconvenience to the ſick Party; And the Perſons ſick may be ſo many, that the Church cannot meet ſo often; The Elders therefore are ſet apart for the purpoſe, and may, and ought, to attend all ſuch occaſions.

Use 9. Yet the Elders muſt be ſent for by the Parties; and that whilſt there is hope of recovery, and not when they are a dying.

Use 10. Take notice here of the Priviledge of Church Members above other Believers. *If any among you*, that is, of a Church: and therefore it follows, *ſend for the Elders of the Church*. If thou leeſt out of Church-Fellowſhip, and falleſt ſick, thou wanteſt one Ordinance of recovery which a Church-member hath, and unto which there is both a Promiſe and a Seal annexed.

The Toleration and Liberty of Conſcience which we deſire is, that we may not be forced to communicate as Members in theſe Pariſhes where we dwell, but may have liberty to have Congregations of ſuch perſons who give good teſtimony of their godlineſs and peaceableneſs, and yet out of tenderneſs of Conſcience, cannot communicate in their Pariſhes, but do voluntarily offer themſelves to joyn in ſuch Congregations; which how it may beſt ſtand with the peace of the Kingdom, we humbly leave to the conſideration of the Magiſtrate.

This is our requeſt; The firſt part whereof, *viz.* That we may not be forced to communicate as Members in thoſe Pariſhes where we dwell, was in effect granted by the Sub-Committee of Divines, and therefore we diſpute it not. The other part, That we may have liberty to have Congregations, being denied us as unlawful for the Magiſtrate to grant, we humbly offer the conſiderations which follow.

CHAP. XII.

Of the Lawfulneſs of Gathering Churches out of other Churches. How if rightly ſtated it is not a Separation. That the Chriſtian Magiſtrate may lawfully tolerate ſuch Churches.

THAT the lawfulneſs of this our deſire to be indulged us by the State, may appear, we humbly preſent theſe two things.

1. The Principles upon which our ſelves do go in this deſire.
2. The Reaſons upon which the State may indulge it unto us.

1. It is not a ſeparation as from no Churches, but a ſeceſſion as from ſuch Churches as we cannot, as our Judgment ſtands, with a good Conſcience continue Members in, and wherein by reaſon thereof, we ſhould want the enjoyment of the Lord's Supper and other Ordinances. And we deſire that this profeſſion of ours not to continue Members, may be but as charitably interpreted, as our Presbyterian Brethren would deſire that their profeſſion in one of their Petitions ſhould be, wherein they profeſs that they cannot with a good Conſcience continue to officiate in the Adminiſtration of the Lord's Supper as Paſtors in their Congregations, whilſt no further power for Suſpenſion of perſons who appear unto them ſcandalous, from the Sacrament, is given them; and that they ſhall in Conſcience be enforced to lay down their Miniſtries; and many of them in private and in publick have ſaid, that they muſt turn Independents. Now as to them and their Conſciences as Miniſters, ſuch an evil doth ariſe as would make them lay down their Miniſtries; ſo to us, as Members, there ariſeth ſo much as cauſeth us not to renounce, but to withdraw from preſent Communion. The ſame kind of Principle that they now go upon, did we go upon, in withdrawing from our Pariſhes, which Principle they now hold forth, to perſuade a yielding by this State unto that Rule they have preſented to them.

2. It

2. It is not a gathering of Churches out of Churches, as it hath been interpreted: which imports, 1. An activeness to persuade men from their Churches, and to gain Proselites by all ways of industry, which the State may put restraint upon. 2. It imports a rending them from those Churches, whilst there yet remains an obligation to continue in them, and to remain Members of those Churches; but such a rending we acknowledge to be unlawful. But we desire in the behalf of those that are scrupled in Communion with their Churches, and whose Consciences their Ministers cannot satisfie, and whom in that case they ought not for ever to retain among them without Ordinances, nor upon whom in such a case an indissoluble obligation lieth; we desire that these, rather than they, that remain out of Ordinances, may be gathered into new Churches; and such Churches, wherein they may enjoy for substance the same Ordinances, and the same means of Edification, as will save them, and build them up to life eternal, as well as in the Parish Churches, others of the Saints of God, who can and do communicate therein, do enjoy them; we may as well build up such Congregational Churches, as the Reformed Churches have built up their several Members amongst them, though differing each from other; as in *England* under Episcopacy, and without power given to Ministers to cast out the scandalous; and as those in *Scotland*, or *Holland*, or the *Lutheran* Churches. Book VI.

3. This is not to set up one Church against another, *Altare versus*, Altar against Altar, but one Sister-Church by another, as the Dutch and French Churches in *England* are and have been unto the Churches of *England*, and the Parishes thereof; and this for the common edification of all sorts of Saints, and the whole Mystical Body of Christ, who otherwise are kept divided from Christ in his greatest Ordinances, and exasperated more one against another.

Now that this forbearance or indulgence of liberty from the common Rule established, and hitherto continued in this Church of *England*, may without sin by the Magistrate (of whom we humbly seek it) be granted to us, we humbly present this general Reason. That which is not unlawful, nor contrary to the Word of God for the Magistrates of this Kingdom (who have put this Case to us) to allow; nor destructive to the Peace of the Kingdom, this the Magistrates of this Kingdom may allow to us without sin. But this Request of ours is such.

The Proposition in it self is clear, and the Parliaments willingness to do it, they have expressed in their own Ordinance.

1. I shall prove that it is not unlawful, nor contrary to the Word of God, for the Magistrates of this Kingdom to allow the Liberty which we request. The contrariety to the Word of God for the Magistrate to grant this, must necessarily lie in one of these two things, or both; either that it is so as to the Magistrate's Judgment, who hath established the Rule of Communion, or else that in the verity and truth of the thing it self, the nature of the Rule by him establish'd, is such as is immutably commanded by God in his Word, and a command also of that high nature, as that it is not lawful for him to grant this Indulgence of swerving from it. That in either of these cases it would be unlawful to him, we do acknowledge. And look by how many degrees this Request of ours falls short of such an height of contrariety as this is, either in the Magistrate's Conscience, or in the thing it self, so many grounds and degrees of safety, as well as simple lawfulness there is as to the Magistrate's Conscience herein to grant it.

1. If to the Magistrate's Conscience and Judgment, the Rule should in that wherein we desire a Liberty, be prudential and *humani juris*, of humane right, though about spiritual things, which himself may vary and alter as may suit best for the Subjects of this Kingdom; then he may lawfully grant us this Liberty; for *Quicunq; potest Legem condere, potest etiam Privilegium concedere*, Whoever may make a Law, may also grant a Priviledge, whereof this reason is given, *Privilegium est Lex privata quædam, ergo ab eo maxime dari potest, qui potest Legem universalem condere. A Priviledge is a certain private Law, and therefore it may chiefly be given by him, who can make the Universal Law.* This (as becomes us) we humbly leave to the Judgment and Conscience of the Magistrate himself; yet withal humbly propound these considerations. The unlawfulness of granting this (as to the Magistrate's Conscience) must be either in respect to the *Terminus a quo*, or *ad quem*; that is, either in regard of the leaving the Parish-Churches wherein men scrupled do live, or in the setting up distinct Churches from them: For of these two parts only is what we desire made up of.

1. As

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1. As to the first; The obligation for men that dwell in the Precincts of a Parish cannot be such, as that it should be unlawful for the Magistrate to give allowance, for men dwelling in Parishes, to be of another Church than *that* in that Parish: For the bounding of Parishes in this Kingdom, after the manner that now they are, was by a prudential Law, and therefore being the Magistrate's own Ordinance, it may be by him dispensed with. And although that now *de facto*, and thorough long continuance, Churches by this Ordinance have been formed up in Parishes, and that those men that desire this Liberty, have been Members of some Church therein; yet it is not unlawful for the Magistrate to give them leave to cease to be Members of those Churches, and retain their dwellings, and to become Members of some distinct Church collected out of many Parishes. For, 1. The Magistrate might permit the People of this Kingdom to be cast generally into Churches otherwise bounded, without sin, and therefore may allow and permit particular Members who are scrupled, to cease to be Members of the Parish-Churches they are and were in: For otherwise this form of Parishes, now there is a Church-State in them, is by reason of that State, as it were consecrated, and so exempted from all alteration by the Magistrate or themselves.

2. The late Ordinance seems to permit as much as we have said to the Servants and Retinue of the King, his Children, and Noblemen.

3. Nor is this unlawful to the Magistrates Conscience in respect of the *Terminus ad quem, viz.* to permit setting up new Churches of men having left the Churches they were in; For, 1. If it were so, then they cannot Erect by their Authority in this Kingdom any new Church: But this they have done; as for instance, *Covent Garden*, and the Inns of Court, authorizing them for all Ordinances of Worship and Government, though the most, or many of the Members came up out of several other Parishes throughout the whole Kingdom: And such is the case likewise of the King's Houshold and Noblemens Families, instanced in before: Besides, might not the Magistrate give leave to any company of true Worshippers of God to set up a new Church, if they removed their dwellings and made a new Parish, even as lawfully as to grant a new Corporation?

Obj. 1. But it may be objected, That the sin lies in neither of these, but in permitting men to set up Churches of another Constitution and Government from what is Established by the Rule.

Ans. 1. We reply, That we do not set up Churches of another Constitution, having the same Ordinances for substance as the Churches have which we leave, and not taking in any Members but whom our Brethren may, or will acknowledge meet to be Members of Churches, such as are Saints and truly godly, though of differing Judgment from them. And as for Presbyterial Government, there are none, nay not those that hold it to be by Divine Right, who judge that it is of the Essence and Constitution of a Church, though a necessary Ordinance therein, for the preserving of it pure.

Ans. 2. But 2 If you will suppose that Differences in the framing of Churches should make them of another Constitution, yet the Magistrate might permit them: For, 1. This State did permit the Dutch and French Churches, when of a differing, if not of as differing a Constitution (in these respects) from the Churches amongst us then, as these of ours, which we desire, are now, who yet in continuance of time were become as Natives, and understood our Tongue. The Bishops, when they would have reduced them unto their Government, urged this very thing, and yet prevailed not in it, in the worst times. Again, 2. If a company of Scotch-men inhabiting among us, scrupling kneeling, and the Government by Bishops, *&c.* had then petitioned our State, as was in Consultation, to have Churches according to their Order and Constitution; might not our State then have permitted them?

Obj. 2. It may be objected, That though it were lawful for the Magistrate to permit leaving or removing from these Churches, and to set up new and distinct Churches simply considered; yet the ground and principle upon which we do it is unlawful, because we leave those Churches upon an Errour, *viz.* that we cannot without sin communicate in them, *&c.* and so to permit them upon this Errour is unlawful for the Magistrate to do.

Ans. 1. We reply, 1. The Magistrates Conscience need not be scrupled to permit what is in it self in the outward Act, warrantable, to them that yet do it out of an erring Conscience. We have all in the Assembly professed, that if we could agree in the

the same practices, though upon differing Principles, which were openly professed (whereof the one or the other must be an Errour) yet we would not only permit this, but rejoyce in it. Magistrates in such cases when the outward Act is lawful, and disturbs not the outward Peace, enquire not into Principles: The Apostles themselves rejoyced in Christ Preached, though they allowed not the Principles of all that Preached him; *If Christ be Preached out of envy, yet I will rejoyce*, says the Apostle; yea perhaps it will appear if it shall come to be debated, that the Magistrate may tollerate an outward Act, which is evil as to his Conscience, as well as an Act, which outwardly may be good, only the Principle being erroneous: And that he may do this, when there is not only an erroneous Principle, but an hardness of heart in men that desire it of the Magistrate; for so *Moses* did in the case of Polygamy, and that for the hardness of the Jews hearts.

2. This ground would utterly make void the Ordinance of Parliament concerning us, in that last part of it: For when the Honourable Houses did put it to our consideration, how far tender Consciences that come not up to the Rule, may be born withal, they judging their own Rule to be lawful, must needs suppose all those tender Consciences that could not come up to it, to be in an errour; and so far judge their practice to be unlawful, and yet are willing to indulge some practices to them, notwithstanding this erring Conscience. And therefore the Magistrate in Conscience may indulge this to us, unless it can be demonstrated by our Brethren, that there is such a peculiar sinfulness in this Principle in its contrariety to the Rule, as the Magistrate cannot indulge it of all other.

3. This ground will put an impossibility upon the Magistrate (if differing in Judgment about Church-Government, &c. from our Brethrens Principles) ever to grant them by way of Indulgence, much less to Establish by a Law what they have so earnestly sought: Nor indeed can our Brethren (if they be of this Opinion) petition the Magistrate for this. For instance, our Brethren have desired power of judging of scandal for Suspension, to be lodged in the Eldership, as that which belongs to them *Jure Divino*; if the Honourable Houses never convinced in their Consciences, but do judge those that request it, upon this ground, to be in an errour, then they can never so much as indulge this to them, much less by an Authoritative Law give forth this Jurisdiction to them over the Subjects of this Kingdom. This Principle, besides what other Reasons the Honourable Houses have had, will teach them to deny it. And then because some, or perhaps most of our Brethren hold National and Provincial Assemblies, to be *Divino Jure*, and thereby do challenge a power of Judicature and Jurisdiction over all mens Consciences, yea, over that of the Supreme Magistrates, in matters which they shall discern to be scandalous and unchristian, and the Magistrate withal, thinks this Principle to be, not only an Errour, but of as much danger to his Authority, as what this of ours can be pretended to be in the Church, the Magistrate hereby will be constrained to undo (upon the discovery of this Principle) what he hath set up. Yea and further, it is a Principle of many of our Brethren, that the Church Universal is a Politique Body in the whole, and the parts of it *Jure Divino*, and that every Elder is an Elder of the Church Universal, and so may and ought to unite into general Councils with the same right of Jurisdiction that National or Congregational Assemblies have. The Supreme Magistrates of *Europe* judging this an Errour (as they well may, and yet these are the Principles of many of our Presbyterian Brethren, if not of the most) they are taught hereby, not to grant the Presbyterial Government, the Principles whereof tend to this, even the setting up a Body of Elders invested with Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction, unto which *Divino Jure* all Churches and Christian Subjects and Kingdoms must be subject, and so a Forreign Power Ecclesiastical is set over all Kingdoms, in an Aristocratical way of Government, as was the Pope in a Monarchical way, though with this difference, that there is a renouncing of Infallibility in the one, but a requiring subjection upon pain of Excommunication in both.

This may suffice touching the Magistrates Conscience in relation to what may be supposed his Principles and Practices. Next we come to the Nature of the Rule of Institution it self, which Christ hath laid upon Members of Churches in respect of departing from other Churches, and setting up new. The obligation (say we) laid by Christ in this respect, is not such, but that the Magistrate may permit it with a good Conscience. The lawfulness or unlawfulness hereof (if it be said to lie in respect to Christ's Rule of Institution) must accordingly be measured by what in the Rule

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1. It may be taken for granted by the Magistrate (as it is acknowledged by us) that Church-Fellowship is by the Institution of Christ; so as both every Believer is obliged to be of some Church, where he may enjoy Ordinances; as also that the Churches themselves, the Seat of Ordinances are setled by a Divine Right authorizing of them; and further, that whilst any one doth continue a Member of any particular Church, he is so long obliged to the Duties to be performed by Members therein.

Yet 2. The unlawfulness of leaving this or that Church, and gathering new (which is the thing controverted) depends upon a further thing, namely, what, and how great (and that by Institution) the obligation of Members is to particular Churches, whereof they are Members; As if the Question were, Whether it were lawful for the Magistrate to tollerate Divorces and a Marriage with another; the measure and proportion of the unlawfulness or lawfulness hereof to him, must be fetcht from the nature of the Obligation and Tye which in Marriages God hath made to arise not simply from this, that Marriage is God's Ordinance (for so the Relation of Servant and Master, or Subject and Magistrate also is, and the Duties, whilst that Relation continues, are by God's Ordinance, such or such.) But further, it is from the strictness of the Obligation or Bond of the Relation by God's special Institution: For though the Relation of Master and Servant, or Servant and Family, be (as was said) God's Ordinance, yet there is not that Obligation upon men for not leaving it and entring into a new. Let therefore the Obligation of Churches and Members (so far as from Christ's special Command and special Institution it may any way be made appear) be impartially weighed; for thereupon do the proportions and degrees of unlawfulness depend; both how far it is lawful or unlawful to the persons that leave the Churches, or to the Churches that permit them so to do, or to the Magistrate in whose Dominions they are. For a right estimating of the firmness or looseness of this Knot in which the strength of this Controversie lies, we propound these things to consideration.

1. The Obligation of Members to this or that individual Church under the Gospel, is far less than under the Old Testament the Obligation of Members was to that National Church: So that to take a Judgment of it, or an Argument from the Jewish Church against removing from Churches now, and gathering new, would (as it hath done many) much deceive us. And the difference herein is manifest, and also the ground of it; for the Church under the Old Testament was but one by God's Institution, and so one, as there were to be no more set up, and therefore (though it proved Idolatrous) there was no setting up a new one. It was *Jeroboam*'s sin, and the sin of the Ten Tribes, to set up *Altare versus Altare*, Altar against Altar, as they did. But now every where pure hands are, and may be lift up to God, and Spiritual Sacrifices be offered every where as well as in the Holy Mount; only we are now bound unto Church-Fellowship, and the enjoyment of Publick Ordinances as well as they, and so if we cannot have it in one Church, we are to seek it in another.

2. Hence it will be (we suppose) granted by our Brethren, that it is a matter of much liberty (so it be done with peaceableness and sobriety) to remove from one Church to another for civil conveniences; yea out of many Churches, to set up a new Church for civil conveniences sake (as for Trade and the like, when a place is not well inhabited) much more for spiritual advantages.

3. Take the outward matter of fact (in this thing controverted) namely, to remove and leave our Membership with these individual Churches now extant, and to gather new, if you take the fact barely out of some supposed erroneous Principle as the ground of it, or scandal and disturbance annexed thereto, it is a matter of Liberty: At least it is such as needs not a warrant by a new Institution or Example which is called for: Neither as such doth the evil and unlawfulness of it lie in crossing or thwarting an Obligation by Institution indissoluble; but only it lies in the manner, ground, or the ill consequents of it, which are extrinsecal to it: It hath been laid upon our Opinions and Practices, that we held Members of our Churches under so hard and strict an Obligation, and to that end do bind them by a Covenant (yea it hath been affirmed by some, that we bind them by an Oath) as that they must remove when we remove, and by Divine Right are so bound up to Membership, to that individual Church they are of, as not to depart from it. This as we utterly renounce, so it will rather fall upon

upon our Brethrens Principles, who would hold their Members under so great a bond, that though they are scrupled in Communion with them, and cannot satisfie their Consciences, they, though arising to multitudes, must rather want these Ordinances, than leave their Churches and gather themselves into new; This hard Imposition will especially follow, if they should put this unlawfulness upon the Obligation of Members unto their Churches, or Churches of such or such a form. Book VI.

These things premised, we argue the lawfulness of this permission to be granted to Members; and it is lawful both as to the Magistrates Conscience, and to the Churches they are Members of to permit them.

1. It is lawful to the Churches and Magistrates Conscience, to permit us our desire of being free of the Churches (which is the case we in this debate have to do with) notwithstanding any Obligation to continue therein *Divino Jure*. If this Obligation of Members to their Churches were by Divine Institution, yet the Magistrates might permit men scrupled, to leave them, and be free therein. For, 1. Your selves have granted a liberty to Consciences, scrupling, receiving the Lord's Supper in the Parishes, which yet is a duty lies on them by Divine Commandment, *Do this in remembrance of me*, &c. 2. Our Brethren, whereof some yet hold Classical and Synodical Assemblies to be *Divino Jure*, have granted also a freedom for such Members as scruple the lawfulness of being subject thereto. Yea, 3. If any one that is now of a Parish Church, remove his dwelling to another Parish (which is permitted him) and consents not to be of the Church in that Parish he removes unto, we believe, that as the Law of the Land frees him from being a Member of the Parish Church he came from, so our Brethrens Principles will free him from being a Member of that Parish Church he comes unto, until he doth give his consent so to be. Thus easie a loose is there for freedom of Members in respect of this Obligation, and so for the Magistrates Conscience to permit it.

But 2. If this Obligation were by a special Divine Institution indissoluble, as that of Marriage was (and as this is not) yet the Magistrates Conscience might permit a secession from it without sin. For so notwithstanding God's Institution was, that in Marriage the knot between two persons was such as man could not sever or put asunder, yet *Moses* without sin, not only permitted Divorces, and so a freedom from this so indissoluble Obligation, but second Marriages also, and this all the Kings afterwards also permitted, and so by like reason it may be here in this case. And this Instance evinceth not only the permission of the privative part of omission of Communion with such Churches, but the positive too, *viz.* the gathering of Churches also, though both were in the Judgment of the Magistrate against an Instituted Obligation.

2. As for the positive part, To permit new Churches to be gathered, of Members out of these Churches, the like Practices and Principles of our Brethren will not only warrant the lawfulness of the Magistrate to permit it, but make it warrantable for us according to our Principles to do it.

For, 1. Some of themselves have gathered a Congregational Church out of many Churches, receiving and admitting upon their reformation, and forming up a Church in their Parish anew, an addition of Members out of divers other Parishes in City and Country unto the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and to Preaching, *&c.* in a constant way. If it be said they had not Sacraments in their own Churches, we reply, yet they had Preaching, and they should have remained Hearers in their own Parish Churches, till God opened a way for Sacraments there; for to this or the like Law would our Brethren oblige us unto. And again, constancy of Communion for Preaching and Sacrament doth constitute them a Member of that Church they thus communicate with, more than dwelling in the Parish, and occasional coming to that Church doth constitute them a Member of their own Parish Church. If it be said that this is *pro tempore*, for the time, and until such time as their own Churches are reformed, when they will restore them again. We reply, that so also when the Parish Churches shall be reformed to our Principles, we will be willing to restore all their Members also, and will but relieve them with Ordinances according to their Consciences until that time; and will our selves then become Members of them. We only add this, that this some of our Brethren have done before any Authority of Parliament did warrant it, which may stop their mouths at least in this so inculcated clamour (in our Brethrens late reply presented to this Committee) against us, who went out of the Kingdom to gather new Churches without offence to the Magistrate.

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2. Many of themselves have gathered a Church out of a Church in a Parish, and that of the lesser out of the greater number. Our Brethren do account all that have formerly received the Sacrament with them to be of their Church, and Members thereof; for else they make wholly a new Church; and why else do they claim power over all, and proceed by way of Suspension, which is a Censure (the Objects whereof are only Church Members) and not by way of Admission? Now for the Minister, and a few in the Parish whom he shall chuse, to begin to make up a new Body distinct from the rest, this act of theirs is either by way of separation and gathering a Church out of a Church (as they are pleased to call ours) or by way of Church Power and Authority towards its own Members. If the former, then we have our own Brethrens practices warranting ours: If the latter (which our Brethren by calling it Suspension seem rather to put it upon) we ask and demand, what Power Christ hath put into the lesser part of a Church, to take on them to suspend the greater part? And further, we desire our Brethren to resolve this Committee, whether they think not themselves bound according to the Principles of Church-proceedings, to proceed to Excommunicate (after two or three admonitions) all they do suspend, and so engage themselves to deliver to Satan, more than half this Kingdom in a month, if upon their admonitions they repent not; If they answer that they do thus take a few in a Parish to the Sacrament, and suspend the greater part by vertue of the Authority of the Magistrate: We reply, 1. That many have done this afore the Ordinance of Parliament came forth; And, 2. That then the Magistrate may not only permit, but Authorize us together a Church out of Churches, or at least out of a Church as well as our Brethren have done.

But, 3. As our Brethren have gathered Congregational Churches out of a Church, yea Churches: So their Classical Churches are electively by picking and choosing made up now at first not of all the Ministers in the Parish Churches, but of some chosen out from the rest: Whereas according to the principles of their Ecclesiastical Obligation, the Ministers of all Churches should be taken in, but that would spoil Reformation. And yet if they will tye us to the Obligation of Members, according to the Law of particular Churches, that because all in the Parishes have Universally been Members of Churches, and so are theirs already; and therefore we must wait a Reformation of these Churches, and take them as Churches, and not make new; then should they by the like Law take these all as Ministers of Churches into their Classes, and trust God with his own Ordinances as they account it.

If in the next place it may be Objected, That it is not simply the breaking of the bond of Obligation to the Churches of which we are Members, that the unlawfulness of this consists in, but in the erroneous ground which we leave our Churches upon, as if you cannot enjoy Communion with them without sin, which errour therefore binds ye, as an erring conscience doth, and not to remove, and also binds the Magistrate and the Churches not to permit this freedom from our Churches, but to continue in them till they recal that error.

We reply, Suppose this an errour in the person (as the Magistrate who hath propounded this Case doth suppose this Scruple of ours to be, and upon this supposition to resolve what forbearance he may permit) yet it is not unlawful for the Magistrate to permit them this freedom whom he judgeth to be in this errour. Besides the Reasons mentioned before, your selves also would permit us to forbear the Lord's Supper without your Censure, and to be free from the power of the Assemblies, which forbearance yet you judge to be upon an unlawful ground in us.

But more particularly, to reduce this Plea of our Brethren against us to its right State.

1. We say, if the Question be about the Magistrates or Churches Conscience, whether they may permit it or no, (as the Question is) then it is not, whether this be an errour in these Members, according to the Magistrates or Churches Judgment, but whether it be such an errour, as they have warrant from Christ, so to bind it upon the Conscience of the parties erring, as not to suffer them to practise it upon their own peril and account betwixt God and them, after due means be used to reclaim them. Our meaning in Stating it thus will be cleared.

If the Case be put as *in foro Ecclesiastico*, in the Ecclesiastical Court, if this errour come before

before the Church, these Members are of (and we hope our Brethren will not obliege the Magistrates Conscience to more strictness herein than of the Church it self.) The Question will not be whether these parties do err in their Judgment, or whether doctrinally the Church may not lay before them this errour; and their grounds why they judge it to be so, and so press it upon them as a good means to reclaim them from this errone as ground; But the Question is, Whether they are judicially to bind the Consciences of them that are in this errour of scrupling Communion, &c. So as this Sentence, according to the Law of Christ, should bind them up from practizing accordingly by vertue of this Ordinance and Power given the Church over them, though in the particular so judged their private Consciences remain as afore. And again the Question is, whether it be such an errour as the Church is obliged not to permit them to remain in, or to practise accordingly, but is bound to retain them, and if they do otherwise to excommunicate them. In a word, the Question is, Whether there be an Ecclesiastical Obligation both upon the Church to bind this errour judicially upon Conscience, and to retain these persons ever, and also an Obligation upon the persons, the Church so judging to continue still as Members.

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Now this we take for granted, That Churches will not take on them to bind thus judicially upon the Consciences of their Members, whatever they account an erroneous principle, nor bind them up from the practice of what ever they shall Doctrinally declare to be upon an erroneous ground, especially when otherwise the outward fact simply considered is Lawful, which is the Case in hand. And that this alledged is such an erroneous principle as they ought judicially to bind upon the Consciences of their Members, it remains upon our Brethren to prove; for when they shall take on them to prohibit a practice otherwise Lawful upon this errour, the burthen lies on them to make it forth, to be of that nature as that they that dare bind it upon the Consciences of others to so great a prejudice to them, as to deprive them of the Ordinances of Christ.

But beforehand the expectation of our Brethrens making this forth, We humbly present these Reasons why the Churches are not bound thus to bind this errour upon their Members, who are Members of them, nor their Members thus scrupled, to be bound up thereby.

1. Because it is not an errour of that degree of erroneousness, as should be the Object of such a judicial binding it upon their Consciences, it being but such an errour as comes under that Rule which the Assembly hath voted, that may stand with Piety, wherein godly and learned men possibly may and do differ, and such errours the Assembly discharageth from judicial binding by Censures.

2. Again, Our Brethren having granted that after due means used, they will not constrain (that is, by censures or otherwise) any that scruple Communion with them, and so run that principle, which is the foundation of what we desire, and do thereby grant that this errour is not the Object of Church Censures.

3. Therefore they are not to censure this practice, neither which we desire upon this supposed errour.

1. For if the unlawfulness of removing from these Churches and gathering New, be founded upon this supposed erroneous ground of it, and not upon the Law of the Obligation of Church-Membership; and if it is simply considered in the outward Act lawful, then if the errour it self be not worthy of an Ecclesiastical binding, the practice founded hereupon is not, and if it be not, then may the Churches tolerate it.

2. Otherwise if any Members of a Church remove from his Church to another upon a mistaken ground; as for example, his not edifying under that Ministry or the like, which the Church he is in, judgeth an errour, hath that Church power ever to retain him, because his going away is upon an erroneous principle, so as they may not dismiss him, or have they power from Christ to bind his Conscience not to remove, because they judge him to do this upon an erring principle?

3. Yea, we humbly offer it to consideration, if after due means used to convince men of this errour, when they shall find they cannot persuade them, they should not say as they to *Paul, The Will of the Lord be done.* Though the thing be against their own Judgment (as that was) and not only permit them to go from them, but assist them in gathering a new Church, according to the principles of their own Consciences, whilst they therein set up the substance of God's worship, and profess to hold

Ch.XII. hold all Communion in other Ordinances with them as far as possible they can. For,

1. For the general Obligation by Christ's command and appointment to all sorts of Believers to be in Church-Fellowship wherein to enjoy all Ordinances, especially the Sacraments, is a greater Obligation, than the Obligation that Members can have to any particular Churches. We are all sure that this general Law is an Institution of Christ, and absolute; and the Obligation to particular Churches is far less, as hath been shewn. Now as the Law of lesser Obligations useth to yield to the more universal, so should this; yea in this case men keep more to the Law of Communion with the whole universal Church, for they partake of all the same Ordinances with them, by which the Communion of the Church Catholick with Christ their head and one with another is more observed, than if in being deprived of this Communion, they held Communion but in some things with a particular Church.

2. We humbly offer, that as for such errours for which Members should not be Excommunicated out of their own Church, and deprived of the Ordinances therein; For such errours, Christ's mind is, that they should not be deprived of them where else they may have them. If there were Churches extant of their Judgment any where in the world, why might they not be permitted to remove to them? as put the Case, when our Non-conformists were scrupled in kneeling at the Sacrament, or to have been present at the Liturgy, and so were deprived of the Ordinances; suppose this to have been an errour in them, to have scrupled the Lawfulness hereof (as we may well suppose, it may be the judgment of some of our Brethren, that it was an errour in them) might not these have removed into *Scotland* to those Churches where the pure Ordinances might be had? And then again, suppose there were no such Churches extant, were it not a lawful way of attaining to enjoyment of the Ordinances by making a new Church, such at least as the Magistrate in tenderness to them might permit?

3. If the Primitive Condition and Differences among the Saints in the first Erecting Churches give not an Example, yet they do afford a principle of Equity for this. The differences between the Circumcision and Uncircumcision were such, as the circumcised Jewish Christian would not eat together with the Uncircumcised, tho' professing Christianity: How many years this continued, we know not, nor how long it remained in many mens consciences after the decision of the Apostles about the Non-necessity of Circumcision, *Acts* 15. But suppose it did remain in many for a long while, as appears by the Epistles to the *Galatians*, *Colossians*, &c. Yet surely Jesus Christ did alike provide a way of enjoyment for Church Fellowship and Communion in Ordinances for the one as well as the other, though the difference in Judgment was such as the one could not eat with another. And that Christ's mind was, that both should have the Ordinances, though thus differing, is clear, because *in Christ neither Circumcision nor Uncircumcision availed*; and notwithstanding this difference (because it might stand with Piety in either) they all were baptized into one body, the Church Universal, and did drink (which alludes to their having the Lord's Supper) into one Spirit, 1 *Cor.* 12. 13. The Apostles did labour all they could to allay this difference, but did they forbid either to make Churches apart if they could not be reconciled in one? As *Peter* said in the like case, *Can any man forbid water to them that have received the Holy Ghost as well as we* Jews? So, have the Apostles any where forbidden; or can any man forbid those to have the Sacrament in Churches truly Constituted, that cannot thorough an invincible scruple receive the Sacrament in the Churches they have been born in? Would not, and ought not general Counsels, if now called, if they could not reduce the Churches to one Rule, to permit each their way according to their several principles? And there are as great differences in the Reformed Churches as amongst us and our Brethren.

4. Yea, doth not God profess to accept practices for the substance good, though upon erroneous grounds? *Rom.* 14. *He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, and he that eateth not* (out of scruple of Conscience, which was an errour) *his not eating was to the Lord also*; and upon that very ground he commands us not to judge them in so doing, because he accepted them.

5. Is

5. Is not charity more seen in allowing to such tender Consciences those Ordinances which are of so general influence to build them up to life, though with the practice of some errour or upon some erroneous principle (which God will pardon, and Men should indulge to them) than for that errour for which they cannot justly be punished with Civil or Ecclesiastical Censure, to detain them from those Ordinances, by which they may be recovered and healed. This is as if one who had some Disease of smaller moment in probability incurable, and yet not mortal in the issue, should yet be denied such food as would make him more vigorous and fitter for all duties to God and Men, when in this case 'tis more charity to allow it him.

CHAP. XIII.

What Liberty of Conscience is to be indulged. That Peace and Love is the great Law of Christ that is to be observed among Christians, who ought therefore to bear with one another. What Principles and Practices are contrary to this Law.

Rom. 15. 1, 2, 3, 4. *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, but as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee, fell on me. For whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.*

Gal. 6. 2. *Bear ye one anothers burthens, and so fulfil the Law of Christ.*

I intend in this Discourse to strengthen our Faith, as to the having Liberty of our Consciences in Times of Difficulty. One great Foundation of our Faith is, that Christ died to take away that Enmity which is in the hearts of his People one towards another, which I have shewed in another Discourse. My design is now to state the Case of Liberty of Conscience, and to shew how agreeable it is to the Laws and Rules of Christ.

Discourse of Christ the Universal Peace-maker In Vol. 1. of his works.

The course which I will steer is this; First, To state the business; As,

1. It is not the general Liberty of all of what Religion or kind soever, which we prosecute. For if you observe it, in both these Texts (as there are abundance of other Scriptures to like purpose) the consideration is of what is the Duty between Christians professing Jesus Christ, by vertue of Christ and his Blood. Those that would make this Liberty of Conscience to be extended to all men, weaken our prayers wonderfully, and do weaken our Arguments; for the hold we have upon the men, among whom we live, is, that we all profess our selves Christians; and we do not plead for Liberty to be given to Atheists, Infidels or Mahumetans, but we plead for Christ, and you will find the strength lies there.

This Discourse was written in 1646. when there were those heats against the Dissenting Brethren, who asserted the Congregational way of Churches, & therefore all must be understood as relating to those times.

2. We profess this Principle, That all Saints should be of one mind, as in 1 *Cor.* 1. 10. *That ye be all of one mind, of one judgment; I beseech you Brethren by the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ* (he urgeth Christ too) *that ye all speak the same thing, that ye be perfectly joyned together in the same mind, and in the same judgment, that you being of the same mind and judgment, may acknowledge this.* It is this that all Saints should seek; and the Name of Jesus Christ should cause a Reverence to the Judgment of Christians.

3. But if this cannot be effected, (if that be the case) you have the Rule, *Phil.* 3. 15, 16. If men be otherwise minded, what then is to be done? The Rule is both there and here, Forbearance. When we say Forbearance, and cry out for Liberty, our meaning is not, that we should therefore remain indifferent whether this Truth or that Truth prevail; no, we are to contend earnestly for that Faith we think to be the Faith, and once given to the Saints, but it must be by Gospel means.

4. While

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4. While we plead for Liberty unto persons that are godly, and profess Christ, we do not favour the Errour that is laid upon us, of pleading for a Toleration of all Heresies. It was long ago said by the Bishop of *Lincoln*, that was Lord Keeper, that it is an Argument out of the Devil's Logick, to argue from the Concreet to the Abstract. A man is sick of such a Disease, insomuch as that the humour of the Disease requires food that is in it self hurtful, and yet the man must live, and he cannot live without food. In this case what is to be done? you must preserve the Life of the man. Physicians in that case do so, and allow that which otherwise they would not allow. Suppose men mingle with the Ordinances of Christ Superstition, the diseased humour of their Spirits run out that way, you must for Christ's sake bear with them (for the man is in Christ, and the man must be fed and nourisht) you must allow him what is mingled with Superstition, without which he cannot partake of the Ordinance and God will pardon the Errour, and bless the Ordinance. And in this case, it is not the Errour we indulge, but Christ in this Person, and Conscience in him, and we do it for Christ's sake; and if you go by outward force and keep him from what would edifie him, you endanger his Salvation, *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.*

5. The Apostle's Rule is, Though a man be in an Errour, you should be more earnest to regard the general End of his glorifying God in the substance of what he doth, than to punish his Errour. It is clearly the meaning of *Rom.* 14. *v.* 6, 7, 8. *He that regardeth a day, regardeth it to the Lord, &c. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks. Whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord, &c.* What is the meaning? You are to regard the common Principle of Christians: There is a substance of Worship, and though the man err, yet you are to regard more what he doth to God, than you are to regard his Errour, and you are to nourish that more, than to go and beat out his Errour by a violent course. This is certainly the Apostle's meaning. The rise of what the Apostle saith in the Text, *Rom.* 15. is clearly this, that it was not a matter indifferent, but was about things wherein one side were in a great Errour, and was in the wrong very much, (and I think *Calvin* acknowledgeth it) the Case here was concerning the whole of the Jewish Worship, though he gives Instances only of Days, and concerning their Sabbaths, and New Moons, and Meats that were forbidden. Now let all the World judge, if he that did abstain, did it as thinking it indifferent, and so would be at liberty; no, but in conscience I ought not (saith a Christian Jew) to neglect those Ordinances; they were given by God, and we ought all to be subject to them; they were not things indifferent; the Worship of God was stated in the one, and in the other, so that it was not a thing indifferent, as they stated it, yet in this case, and upon this occasion, when matters did stand thus, doth the Apostle plead his Argument, as he does in *Rom.* 14. and *chap.* 15. The true intent of their meeting, *Acts* 15. was to compose the difference, by letting the Jews alone, to go on in their way, though they were in an Errour: And as for the Gentiles, to let them be free, only to warn them to take heed of offending the Jew; of all Scriptures, I know it is most abused; it is alledged for using an Authority, when as the thing is for an Accommodation. But as to the stating the Question, you find the Apostle *Paul* flies upon the *Galatians*, and over-runs them, and that because they kept Days and Times, *&c.* You find here, he pleads otherwise, what is the difference? In *Acts* 15. he tells you, there was two Opinions on foot; there were some of them wretched men, that said, a man could not be saved, unless he were circumcised, and kept the whole Law, *verse* 5.

What do I gather hence? If a Doctrine come to be stated as in the Foundation of Religion, & urg'd so, as it comes to a point of Salvation or Damnation, says *Paul* there, I will not bear with you, no not for a moment. He falls upon them in his Epistle to the *Galatians* to the height, stays not a moment: But come to the Epistle to the *Romans*, there we find that those Judaizing Christians did not urge it by way of Salvation and Damnation, but went the moderate way, that it ought to be commanded, and that it

it was *ex Præcepto* to be done, and he here pleads for Liberty, and that there should be Forbearance, and it is a great Argument; I will not say what the Magistrate hath to do, but this I will say, the Magistrate is not to be more severe than the Church, unless it be in his own concernment of the Civil Peace; this is the state of it. So now I come to the Argument, the thing itself. Book VI

1. And the first head of Arguments I run upon is this, That in such cases of Differences thus stated, Christians ought to be equally minded one towards another, *Rom.* 15. 5. *Now the God of patience grant you to be like-minded one towards another, according to Christ Jesus.*

1. This being like-minded, is not onenesss of Judgment (which our Brethren would carry all these places to) but equality of mind, or like mindedness in affection one towards another notwithstanding Differences, *Rom.* 16. 12. *Be of the same mind one towards another.* (It is the same word in the Original) that is, let the same equality of Love and Affection be kept up mutually one to another; let Affections continue to one another, upon the same terms. It is not spoken of Onenesss of Judgment and Opinion, but of Affection; it is spoken so, *Rom.* 12. 15. *Rejoyce with them that rejoyce, and weep with them that weep*; that is, have like sympathy and feeling of one anothers Afflictions, and then *Be of the same mind one towards another*, v. 16. and *Have peace among your selves*, Phil. 4. 2. There be other Scriptures where it is used for mutual Comfort, Agreement and Affections, equal Affections, and equal dealing upon it. That we ought to be so affected, notwithstanding Differences, and that this is here intended, is clear enough. It is not only clear from the 14th Chapter, which comes in upon occasion of those Differences, but the Text clears it, that they should be equally minded in case of Difference. Take the 5th verse, it says, *The God of patience and consolation grant you to be equally minded one towards another according to Christ Jesus.* Here is prayer, and every prayer is usually fram'd according to the matter, and the thing that is required. If he prays that they should be all of one mind, why should he say, The God of patience, God that is the God of patience, the Author and God of patience and consolation, work such a like-mindedness in you. If his meaning were, that all should be of one mind and judgment, there were no need to say, The Lord give you patience. If his scope were, that they should be of one mind, there needed no patience. Truly they that impose need not patience, but those that were imposed upon; but he speaks of patience of one to another, and one is to be patient as much as the other: And truly there needs patience to bear with Differences, *v.* 1. *You that are strong, please not your selves, but bear the infirmities* (as Porters do) *Ephes.* 4. 2. *You should tollerate and suffer with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love.* It's plain it is meant in point of Difference, that they should be equally minded to keep the Bond of Union in the Bond of Peace. The meaning is, while you agree in such things in which the common and great concernments of Christianity, and of the Spirit's working upon all sorts of Christians are found; this is the Bond of the Difference in externals, and therefore bear that Difference with patience.

2. A second consideration is from *verse* 5. *According to Christ Jesus.* There is a great deal lies in this; Take heed of casting your case of Tolleration into the common case of Turks & Mahumetans, you then weaken your selves; for the tolleration must be according to Christ. We have a great strength and hank upon them that profess Christianity to urge Christ upon them. Let them look to themselves, for tho' the universal Tolleration must have other Principles, yet that Tolleration which we seek, and which is according to Christ, and so is to move them from such a consideration supposing men to be in Christ; that Tolleration hath a great, a mighty, a strong Foundation, which the Apostle here brings upon them. The meaning is, all sorts of Obligations drawn from Christ, which either Christ's Example, or our common Interest in him, or Relation to him, or the Nature and Law of having him to be our Head, and our Redeemer afford, are a compleat Topick for our Liberty. And let them come with all their Arguments out of the Old Testament, I will but only

Ch.XII Preach Jesus Christ, and say, What say you to Jesus Christ? *According to Jesus Christ*, says the Apostle. He first urgeth what Christ had done upon Earth; *Let every one please his Neighbour according to Christ*. Secondly, What was his carriage since he went to Heaven? *v.* 7. *Receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God*, both Jews and Gentiles, with all their Differences. Thirdly, He urgeth the like intent Jesus Christ had in dying; *Did he die for you of the Circumcision only*? He died for the Uncircumcision also; Did he die for you of the Uncircumcision only? No, he died for you of the Circumcision also, *v.* 8. One would think it should end the Controversie, but that men have a Zeal not according to knowledge: Now then out of all this being opened, take only that Argument, According to Christ, and you are compleat in him for liberty of Conscience; and methinks all the World must vanish before it.

My Assertion is this, That Saints, or Persons professing Christ, tho' they differ yet being in Christ, they ought not to judge or despise, but forbear one another according to Christ.

In proving this Assertion, I shall keep my self to Christ, and use such Arguments, as the considerations of Relation of Christ to us, and of us to him will afford.

1. And I begin first with the Example of Christ; *Let us*, says the Apostle, *bear the infirmities of the weak, and not please our selves, for even Christ pleased not himself*. Do you know what he bare when he was upon Earth? Do you know what his Light was (for all the business is, men have Light for this or that which they would impose, and they think much others should not yield to it) who had Light? He that had Life, hath Light; Could all the Earth come up to his Light, if they were now on Earth? How did he shew his condescension to his Apostles, to his Disciples, who had great differences, great fallings short? He pleased not himself; for a person who had all that knowledge, comes and lives amongst a company of poor ignorant people, so that he was forc'd to leave the half of his Light unmanifested; and when he comes to part from them, *John* 17. he was forc'd to pray, that God would teach them to know that he came from him. Thus Christ did bear with them, when he lived on Earth.

I may shew it also, how he hath born with his Saints since he went to Heaven: He found the Saints (and so in all Ages) differing; some would have Circumcision, and others not; whom doth Christ take part with? neither with the one, nor the other, but receives all to the glory of God.

I pass now from the Example of Christ, *Rom.* 15. and I come to the Law of Christ, *Bear ye one anothers burdens, and so fulfil the Law of Christ*, *Gal.* 6. 2.

When Jesus Christ had given us his Example, he left it with a Law, 1 *John* 2. 8. *A new Commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you, because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth*. What is this Commandment? *He that says he is in the light, and hateth his Brother, is in darkness even till now*. This was true in him first, that is, it had its real existence in him; first, he made it good in his Example, and then in you, it becoming a Law from him to you; he performs it for you, and he hath given the Law to you. Now I shall but add this premise for the interpretation of this place. It is true, this place in the *Galatians*, comes in upon the occasion of the spiritual restoring and setting in joynt with meekness, one that was overtaken in a fault. Says the Apostle, *Bear ye one anothers burdens*. But let me say this to you, this is not a particular Maxim restrain'd to that thing, for it is a general Maxim, as the Apostle in abundance of places brings a great general Maxim for a particular occasion: Now it is clear in that *Rom.* 15. there is a general Maxim; we that are strong, ought to bear the infirmities of the weak; and there it is spoken of a Christian forbearing, of a conscientious forbearing; and here it is spoken in a spiritual sense. Those that are spiritual ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, in several ways, in Restoring, if one falls for want of Light, &c. But the equity of the Maxim is one and the same, so that this Rule here, *Gal.* 6. 2. falls in, and is as applicable to that *Rom.* 15. as to the particular purpose he brings it for, in *Gal.* 6. This premised, let us consider the explication of this his saying, *Bear one anothers burdens*; what is the meaning?

1. It is to bear the burden we have from another, that is his meaning; What is burdensom from another to thee or me, this we are to bear.

2. Being

2. Being applied to be all one in the general, and the occasion being but a branch of it, in *Rom.* 15. the meaning must be, that one Party is to bear, and bear the burden indifferently, as well as the other, for it runs upon equal and mutual terms; and if any of the two should bear most, it should be the strong; they are to bear as Porters do; who are to be Porters? those that are strong certainly, and if need be, they are not only to carry their burdens for them, but to carry the weak themselves, as Christ doth his poor Lambs in his Arms. Now those that get Ecclesiastical Power in their hands, take upon themselves to be strong, and call themselves strong. Do they do so? Truly then they are bound by this, *Rom.* 15. and *Gal.* 6. to bear. They are to be the Bearers, and the more they take themselves to be strong, the more doth the Law of Christ come upon them to bear the infirmities of the weak. You see this place doth exhort indifferently to an equal bearing. Now then how unsuitable is it for those that are strong to run into so unequal a practice, as to go and lay the burden upon the weak, with all their Authority? And, that they may ease their spirits of the burden, they feeling the infirmities of the weak, will not come up to them and bear with them. In this case they ease their spirits by imposing those heavy burdens upon the weak; as it is plainly implied in *Rom.* 15. *Please not your selves: Bear one anothers burdens, and please not your selves*; it imports, it is the greatest pleasing a man's self that can be, to make others of my mind in point of Religion, and to see others subject to my understanding. They constrain you to be circumcised, says the Apostle, *Gal.* 6. 12, 13. and what is the rise of it? *verse* 13. That they may glory in your flesh, when you out of weakness yield they glory in their Victory, and so ease themselves. To be Lords of your Faith, is what the false Apostles sought for: To be Lord of your Faith, and to see you practise as they do in point of Religion, is more than to be Lords of Mens Estates, or Lives. If those men that are strong do thus, how do they bear one another burdens? how do they bear the infirmities of the weak? how do they suffer, or at least, how do they so suffer the weak, as the weak ought to suffer them? for they must bear one anothers burdens. Truly to see another differ, is both a burden to mens corruptions, that would please themselves to see others of their mind: And it is also pleasing to Grace (simply considered) to bring men off from their Errours, though to do it by force and violence, is a Sin and an Errour. It is a burden to Grace, and a burden to corrupt Nature, to see another dissent; you all find it in part, those that are strong, and strong in power too. In this case what doth Jesus Christ and his Apostles call to, not to please our selves, and so to deny both the desires of Grace in that case that would be inordinate, and of Corruption, that would put men upon it. So much for opening this; *Bear one anothers burdens*, applied, falling in with that *Rom.* 15.

2. Herein the force of the Argument must lye; that this is a special Law of Christ; *And so fulfil the Law of Christ.* Love one to another was the general Law Christ gave, but to bear the burdens one of another, which is the burdensom part, this hath the Title of the whole Law, which Christ hath given for Saints, to love one another is the special Law in respect of other Commandments of Christ; but for Saints to bear with the burdens of others (which is one branch of the Law) this is more the Law of Christ. If you would see the general Law of Christ, look into *John* 15. 12. *This is my Commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you*, verse 17, 18. *These things I command you, that ye love one another. If the World hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you*; which is, as if he had said, You Saints need love one another all of you, for you will have enough of the World's hatred, you need not lay Load one upon another; you need not lay Burthens, Persecutions, one upon another, therefore do you Saints see to this, that you love one another; I bring it for this, to shew that it is Christ's special Law; *This is my Commandment*, says Christ, of all the Duties of the Ten Commandments, Christ singles out this, to call it, His Commandment, as enforc'd from his Love; *These things I command, that ye love one another*, John 13. 34. Take it thus, says Jesus Christ here; I have died for you, and I leave this Commandment of all Commandments in special manner to you, and I have reason to do it, for I bear with you, and I must bear with you when I am in Heaven; and if there be any Commandment which is more peculiarly

Ch. XII. liarly mine, it is this, *That you love one another.* My Father loves you, and gave me to die for you; And, *I have chosen you out of the World.* But my Commandment is, *That you love one another*, John 15: 12. The Apostle (1 *John* 2. 7.) calls it a New Commandment, yet it was from the beginning: To love our Neighbour, that is, every Man, was a duty from the beginning from *Adam. Cain* was the first who broke this Command, and he hated his Brother for Religious respects; this was an Instance from the beginning of wickedness; nay, says God, I'll part you; and so from the beginning he suffered a separation; *Seth* came, and when he had Posterity, *Gen.* 4. Men began to worship God together, and they were sever'd from the World, *Cain's* seed; how did they corrupt that separation? They should have loved one another, this was the Commandment; but this Commandment was clearly obliterated. Christ comes and enforces it anew, and, says he, I have loved you, and died for you, and this Commandment I give you; Christ revives it, which had been from the beginning, so that it is now enforc'd from Jesus Christ's having renewed it, having died for his People, and having born with them, and having given them that Example; this Example past into a Law, a special Law; this Law of Love is enforc'd from Christ.

2. It is enforc'd from God the Father too, 1 *John* 4. 11. *If God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.* This was to confirm the general, yet special Law, what Person doth he speak of? God the Father; look into the words before, *He loved us, and sent his Son to be the Propitiation for our sins*; You have both Jesus Christ's Law, and God the Father's Law, in this giving his Son, that Saints should thus love Saints; truly in the Old Law all the Ten Commandments had this, *The Lord thy God that brought thee out of the Land of Egypt*, to enforce them; but if you come to this Law of Saints, Men that profess themselves Christians, have both Father and Son, and the enforcement of the Love of either put with an edge upon this Commandment; This is my Commandment; (says Christ) this is the Law of Christ (still remember) to bear one anothers burdens: This is a special Law of that special Law, because it is the hardest of all the rest.

3. Nay Thirdly, He tells us, the Love of the Father is perfected in us, if we love one another, 1 *John* 4.12. God gains nothing by it, but you are the gainers, for his Love is perfected when you love one another. I would but bring this special Law of Jesus Christ to all Saints; this Love, which hath the Love of the Father in sending the Son, and hath the Love of Jesus Christ himself to put the weight and edge upon it, and this Law of Love is obligatory to all Saints, and that upon mutual terms in point of Forbearance, *Ephes.* 1. 15.

3. There was another Commandment left, and what was that? *Have peace amongst your selves*; it runs upon mutual terms, one towards another; he did leave it (you know) before he died; it is a strain he runs much upon, *John* 14. 27. *Peace I leave with you, my Peace I give unto you*; after he died and rose again, says he, *Joh.* 20. 19. *Peace be with you, and among you*; whilst he was alive he spoke the same thing, *Mark* 9. *ult. Have grace in your selves to save you*; and next to that, *Have Peace one with another.* And the case was this; in the beginning of the Sermon they fell out, who should be greatest, *verse* 34, 35. He ends the Sermon with this, *Have Peace one with another*: *Have Peace*; wherein doth Peace lye? Peace lies especially in taking up cases of difference, therein is Peace required; it respects differences, and all by this Rule, for Love and Peace; he foresaw that differences would be in his Church to the end of the World, and he urgeth this thing because so necessary both for the ordering and preserving his Church, for he could never have built it else. So soon as he went to Heaven, they quarrell'd about Circumcision and Uncircumcision; had not the Apostles endeavoured Peace, they had never set up the Church of the Gentiles: For there was a pidling Principle, that a Jew must not Preach to a Gentile, and if Christ had not convinced them of the folly of it, where had his Church been?

Lastly, It is a New Commandment, *John* 13. 34. *A new Commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another*, *v.* 35. *By this shall all men know that ye are my Disciples, if ye have love one to another*, John 17. 21. *That they all may be one* (that is, amongst themselves) *as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that the World may believe, that thou hast sent me.* It's called a New Commandment, because the most excellent

excellent of all the rest, as a new Song, and new Wine is meant, when Christ says, that He would drink no more of the Vine, till he drank it new in the Kingdom of Heaven; that is more excellent Wine. Book VI

These plain and transcendent Admonitions both for Love and Peace, have been given by Christ, because he did foresee all the differences that have arisen in his Church, and which did arise in those first Times, and therefore saw that these Rules of Peace and Love, were necessary to begin, and constitute, and then to keep up, and preserve his Church. He could not have set up his Church of Jews and Gentiles, much less have kept them in Peace, unless these his Laws had taken place among them. And such a mutual Love and Peace shewn in bearing one anothers burdens, (and this is to be exercised even toward all Saints, great and small, weak and strong, and this, tho' but a branch, is dignified with the Title of the whole Law) is so peculiar, and transcendent a duty, as was sufficient to characterize them to be Christ's Disciples, with a notorious difference from that Love and Peace which is to be found in the World one towards another: And this Love and Peace is to be shewed among the Saints one toward another, with a difference from what they are in any way to shew unto the World who doth, and will hate them: Yea, it is to rise so high, as to be an Evidence to the World, that Christ is the Saviour of this World of Saints, and the Head, and Guide, and Inspirer of them with such a Peace, and Love. And this Rule of Love is to be exercised even toward all Saints, great and small, weak and strong; and tho' it is but a branch, yet it is dignified with the Title of the whole Law. It is past into a special Law above all other Laws; *For this* (saith Christ) *is my Law.* And it is the hardest part of that Law, to bear the burdens one of another, of Saints small, and weak, and yet 'tis called by the name of that whole Law, tho' it be but a branch of it: You have heard it is such a Law as Saints should observe one to another, they are enforc'd from the Father, and from Christ to love so, as no company in the World should love, and with difference from what love they bear to the World. They ought to be at such Peace one with another; so to bear one with another, as no other men would bear with others in the World beside; yea, it is such a Love of Forbearance and Peace, that men may know by it that they are Disciples of Christ, *John* 13.34, 35. We are to shew such Love to each other, as is not to be found amongst any sort of Men upon Earth, and such a Peace, such a Love, that it may manifest, That Jesus Christ is the Saviour of the World, (*John* 17. 21.) And do this to Saints, and to all Saints. Now truly, Peace is a fruit of Love, *Col.* 3. 10, 14.

From whence I may infer, That the Principles, and Practices of our Presbyterian Brethren, tho' Persons godly, do yet in this respect, not only fall short of this Rule, in degrees of Love, for all are thus deficient, but run cross to it.

1. For whereas Christ would have Saints, by vertue of their Christianity, to love all those whom they judge to be Saints, in a different respect from the World, our Presbyterian Brethren, even in Religious matters, extend their Charity, & Rule in things of Worship to the generality of Men in a Nation. There must be a National Church made up of all, who are plainly the World. They will take in Men meerly Moral, and civil in their outward deportment, and make such Rules, and Constitutions of Church-Fellowship, as shall take in these, and suit with them. And by this Rule multitudes of poor Saints in a Nation are excluded who cannot joyn in such a loose Constitution of a Church.

2. Men do it for the World's sake, and to please them, that thereby they may strengthen their Interest, while they make up their Party by joyning with the World in Ordinances: Whereas Christ says to his Disciples, *The World will hate you, but do you love one another.* And now what then is the Quarrel between their Dissenting Brethren, and them? Their Dissenting Brethren say, We love you, and are very desirous to joyn with you in the Ordinances of God, but you joyn herein with the World, which we cannot do. Upon this they cry out upon us as Schismaticks; what a terrible thing is this? They make up a Party in the World of those who have only a Form of Godliness, contrary to the Rule which enjoyns us to turn away from such, 2 *Tim.* 3. 5. And contrary to the Rule of loving all the Saints, they exclude a great many who cannot unite in the Laxness of their Discipline, and act oppositely to the Law of bearing the burdens of such, and act thus in matters too, wherein they cannot convince them that they are in the wrong.

3. In framing an outward Administration of Religion for the World, as well as for the

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the Saints of their Judgment, they greatly gratifie the World, and then it is no wonder if the World be at peace with them. For if they will own them, and their Children, and admit them to their Sacraments, they have in Religious respects what they did desire, and for other things of Religion they are not much inquisitive; for so they have but a Religion, they are not apt to be scrupulous in things of that nature, and so they are at peace. But what is the peace which they have with their? It is but a dull peace, such as *Rome* hath amongst her Children, who go by an Implicit Faith, insomuch as there is little Religion, and little Enquiry about it among them. But a man whose mind God hath enlightened, and who knows Jesus Christ to the purpose of Salvation, is an inquisitive creature, and must be satisfied, and it is his burden if he is not, and this burden they ought to bear. But they gratifie the World rather to make up an Interest with them, that so they may have peace.

4. They do that which is worse than all this, for when they have joyned with the World, they make use of worldly force, and compulsion, and employ and call in Aid and Strength from the World whereby to compel their poor Dissenting brethren to their way. How contrary is this to Christ's Advice and Counsel, who tells us, that the World will hate us sufficiently, and therefore we need not lay load upon one another. But they joyning with the World, it will afford them carnal weapons in this case, because of its hatred to any who are godly. And yet all this must not be counted Persecution. But I would ask, how doth the Antichrist of *Rome* persecute? Is it not by Imprisonment, and Death? And is not confiscation of Goods, tho' not materially the same punishments, yet a sort of Persecution too?

5. They do this for Points of doubtful Disputation (as the Apostles phrase is) for both the things urged by them, and the Power which they challenge to impose them are such. They are such disputable matters, as men may dispute their hearts out about them, and yet not prevail to a conviction. But oh! how is this such a Peace, such a Love of Saints to all Saints as should, and might distinguish them from all the World besides? for it is such a distinguishing Love, and Peace, which Christ enjoyns, as is not to be found in all the World besides. It is so remarkable a Love, that by it it might be discerned even by the World, that these are Christ's Disciples. How many differences far greater doth *Rome* the Antichristian World indulge to her Children in variety of Orders, Points of Doctrine, *&c.* And yet these men will not allow a Liberty in smaller things. They will not use the same Forbearance as the Men of the World commonly observe one towards another.

6. They farther herein go against as clear Rules, as any are in Christianity, or the Scriptures, while they thus impose things of doubtful Disputations. Is not that a clear Rule, *Phil.* 3. 15, 16. *Let us therefore, 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 thing.* We are to leave the rest to God to reveal when he pleaseth. It is another clear Rule which we have, *Rom.* 15. 1, *You that are strong, bear the infirmities of those who are weak.* This we are to do to fulfil the Law of Christ. Is it not a clear Rule, *That every one should please his Neighbour for edification?* Rom. 15. 2. We should then follow things that make for peace, and whereby we may edifie one another: But when they act thus contrary to these Rules, they pretend that their design is to procure peace in the Churches, as if the only way to peace (which they take for granted too) were to impose the more common, and generally prevailing Opinions concerning Faith, and Worship, upon others who do dissent; and if they do not submit unto those Impositions, to restrain them from holding any Religious Assemblies, or enjoying among themselves those Ordinances of the Gospel, which may edifie them. If we look into *Holland*, we shall find a Toleration of Worship allowed to those who dissent from the Establisht Constitution. If we go to *Turkey*, the *East-Indies*, or to any Government of Mahometans, we shall see that Peace is granted even by them to Christians, by a Toleration, and Forbearance of them. And what? must there be no way among Christians for Peace, but to constrain all to be of one mind, and that in things of lesser and doubtful moment?

7. They retain these Principles, and Resolutions, even while themselves are persecuted by other Protestants, who profess to do it out of the same Conscience, and Principles, upon which they themselves do proceed (only *mutatis mutandis*) and think they ought to do so, and that they do God good service in it. Our Presbyterian

terian Brethren have been put by, and not suffered to Preach, as being thought not to be legally Ordained, or not to worship God as they ought. And while they cry out Persecution, Persecution, when it falls thus upon themselves, how can they have any secret reserve, or entertain any Principles to lead them unto a resolution to do the like things unto others whom they judge to be godly persons, and who differ less from them in Doctrines, and Substantials of Worship, than they do from other persons? I will only say this in allusion to that in *Ezekiel*, Wilt thou persecute under the power of those who persecute thee?

8. The most Moderate of them condescended indeed so far, that Saints unsatisfied to hold Communion with them, might continue in their Congregations without being pressed to come to the Lord's Supper, but it would not be allowed that they should enjoy this Ordinance in other Assemblies of their own. Thus it was debated in the Assembly, and the reason given for it was, such an Allowance would be against the common Peace, and disturb the common Established Rule. And so out of Reverence to their Opinion, and Way, others must stand out, and be excluded from this great Ordinance for ever, in Reverence to, and for the sake of the pretended Peace of their Church The great business pretended is Peace, the Peace of the Church, ay but let them yield things conducive to Peace too. For the Peace of the Church doth not lie in this, that none must be suffered in any thing to differ from it. Peace doth not consist in this, that many persons truly godly must stand out, and be deprived of Worship, and Ordinances, for fear of displeasing them by entring into separate Congregations, which they cannot endure to see. Peace doth not consist in paying such a Reverence to a Church, that all who dissent from it must forbear meeting apart for Religious Worship No, let us truly follow the Apostle's direction, *Rom.* 14. 19. *Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edifie another.* And from hence these are the great things which may be complained of in the Case

1. That some persons think Peace to lie only in mens quietly not enjoying Ordinances in separate Congregations, as if there were no way to Peace but this. But there is another way of Peace, in bearing with men notwithstanding their different Practices, and Judgments. Tho' one man keeps a day which another doth not, yet peace may be preserved between them both, and this is the peace to which Christ exhorts us. It is not as if there were no other way but this; if you cannot be of our mind, and if you will not enjoy the Ordinances in Communion with us, you must fly out of the Land for them.

2. While they are so urgent for peace, they forget what follows, *Rom.* 14. 19. that we should mind such things whereby one may edifie another. If their claims for peace would hold, yet they run away but with half the Apostle's Rule, whereas all of it should be taken in. These Dissenting Christians should have the Lord's Supper (which they scruple to receive in your Parishes) for their Edification, for it is that whereby they are to be built up, and we are to please our Neighbour for his edification Yea this is of far greater moment to each Saint, than that dull Tyrannical peace which is aimed at by a Coercive Power. If indeed those to whom forbearance is used, disturb the Publick Church Assemblies, and would hinder them in the Ordinances, let them have the due reward of their Turbulency, for such behaviour is contrary unto peace indeed. But men might have peace, and others by them, and among them might have peace, true, everlasting peace, if they could quiet themselves in Christ's Rule for Forbearance.

All the Apostles when they were alive, could not perswade one Jew, though a Believer, to disclaim the continuance of the Jewish Ceremonies: *Peter* himself, and *James*, were of the mind that they should cease (as appears from *Acts* 15.) and yet they could not perswade the Jews to relinquish them. This was a tryed business, and in the highest supposition of Apostolical Power, and Authority; and what Authority is there then now upon Earth sufficient to perswade Mens Consciences, when the Apostles themselves could not do it in a case of like nature? The Apostles professed that they had power given only for Edification, and not for Destruction. And what greater destruction is there than by outward compulsion, and utterly ruining men to tempt them to break their Consciences, or against their Consciences to refrain Religious Assemblies for Worship, and Enjoyment of Ordinances in them, which is the food of their Souls. Is not this expresly contrary to the

Ch. XII. the Apostles direction, *Rom.* 15. 1, 2. *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.* Truly, I will not now ask by what Authority they would do these things, but I would ask by what Charity do they these things? Why should they lay any godly person under that necessity, that he shall not have the Sacrament unless he takes it in their way? Why should they tempt a man to act against his Conscience in one thing, to have the enjoyment of it in another? What a terrible thing is this? *Rome* bears with their Children more by suffering them to differ in a thousand things.

3. If they proceed in making Laws against us, let us go to Law with them. Let us plead Christ's Law, and let us in prayer urge him, that he would put his own Law in execution. Let us pray to him, that he would cause his Law to stand, and take place. It is very seasonable to do so: Why may we not thus in Appeals to Christ by prayer go to Law with them? We have a more Antient Law, a special Law of Jesus Christ, who is the great Law-giver, and who hath the Executive Power, even all power in Heaven, and Earth; and hath he not laid it at stake for the maintaining of his Ordinances, and Worship to the end of the World? And he is our Advocate to plead his own Law, and our Cause; and Heaven, and Earth shall pass away before the least title of his Law shall fail. No, it shall all be accomplished in the World; and he will shake Heavens, and Earth, but he will do it. Methinks this should afford a very great deal of strength, and help to our Faith, that we may go to God, and Christ, and plead this Law, this his own Law unto him. Yea, it is not his Law only, but we have his Oath, and Covenant annext. He hath sworn unto us to this purpose, *Luke* 1. 73. 74, 75. *The Oath which he sware to our Father* Abraham, *That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hands of our Enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.*

1. There is a Judgment acknowledged and confessed in the case, and (as you know) execution it sued out, is to follow. In the year 1640. when some would bring in Bowing to the Altar, what was then pleaded in the Canon? It was this, *Let not him that is strong, despise him that is weak; and let not him that is weak, judge him that is strong.* This is a Judgment past to prove all that I have said.

3 We must also bring them, and our Case to an Appeal in the day of Judgment, for thither the Apostle brings it, *Rom.* 14. 10. *But why doest thou judge thy Brother? or why doest thou set at naught thy Brother? we shall all stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ.* The Apostle urgeth upon them the observance of this Law of Love, and Peace, as they will answer it there.

FINIS.

THE GOVERNMENT AND DISCIPLINE OF THE CHURCHES OF CHRIST.

Set down by way of *Questions* and *Answers*, with an Explanation and Application of them.

By

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The Government and Discipline of the Churches of Christ, set down by way of *Question* and *Answer*.

Quest. *What is the Church of the New Testament?*

Answ. The Church of God is a Mystical Body, whereof Christ is the Head.

Explicat. The Church is here described by four Arguments. 1*st*. By the *Genus* or Kind, it is a Mystical Body. 2*dly*. By the Subject of it, that is the Head, the Members, Saints. 3*dly*. A Form and Essence by which it is a Church: There may be a Company of Saints which have Christ for their Head, and yet want Fellowship. Now that which makes them a Church, and distinguishes them from other Churches, is this, uniting into one Congregation by holy Covenant: The Form giveth Essence and Distinction. All Churches have Christ for their Head, and are Saints by calling, but that which makes us differ and makes us to be this Church, is this Covenant which we have made with God, to submit our selves to God's Ordinance in this Company ... giveth the Life and Being to a particular Church. 4*thly*. The end why we are thus united and knit together, and that is, to worship God, and that concerneth God: another concerneth us, that he may bless us, and we may edify one another in all his holy Ordinances: This is the nature of a Church.

I. For the first, The Church is a Body: That is the proper kind of the Church; to say a Company or Number, is too general a word; but it is a Body that we are in, knit together to one kind of Employment, which every Company is not fit to do. The Church is a Body, *Eph.* 1.22. the Church is Christ's Body, *Eph.* 5.23. Christ is the Head of his Church, the Saviour of his Body, *Rom.* 12.4. 1 *Cor.* 12.27,28. Now this word Body doth imply in it three things which concur to the nature of a Body.

1*st*. A Body consists of variety of Members of several Offices and Uses, but sufficient to serve to the Subsistence of the whole Person. There is no living Body but consists of variety of Members; so it is with the Church, 1 *Cor.* 12. 14 to 20. the Members have several Offices, *Rom.* 12. 5,6. every Member hath his different Gift, and by the use of them they are able to minister Supply to the whole Body.

2*dly*. A Body doth not imply only this, but a fit Communion and Combination of these Members together, they are joined together in Order, *Eph.* 4. 15, 16. Therefore a Church is of such Members that can fitly join and be joined, whose Spirits can well close and make sweet Consort, yea can better sute with those of their own Body than of another, *Col.* 2.19. The Body is knit by Joints and Bands; for so the Church is compacted together in a proportionable Frame with Joints and Bands.

Q. *What are those Joints and Bands that make Members so knit together and firmly joined, that you may as well break a Bone in the midst, as break them?*

A. The Body is great, Christ is the Head, therefore the Bands must be such as knit us to him, and one to another, *Eph.* 4. 4, 5. there the Apostle tells you what they be.

First, One Body, one Spirit with Christ, and one Spirit one with another: not only that we have all a Spirit of Grace, of Faith and Love, for so have all the true Members of every Church; but a natural Disposition of Heart that may fitly join together as much as may be, and this makes them one Body.

Secondly, One Faith, by which we all look to Christ for Grace to perform our Duties, and for Acceptance of them; this Faith knits to Christ, and also knits us together.

Thirdly, One Love, which is the Bond of Perfection, *Col.* 2. 14. some more Love which God calleth me to bear to the Members of my own Body than the Members of another.

Fourthly, One Covenant, and the Seals confirming that Covenant, 1 *Cor.* 10. 17. we are one Bread; one Bread combines us more to one Body, and so doth Baptism, 1 *Cor.* 12. 13. As for that Covenant which made a Gentile when he came on to

Grace to partake with the *Israelites* in the Ordinance of God, it was entring into Covenant, and having a place in God's House, *Isa.* 56. 4, 6, 7. But now I speak only of the Covenant, as that which makes them one Body; but more of them when I come to the formal part of the Church.

But this is not all, for the Apostle saith we are knit by Joints, not in Joints: the Spirit knits, and Faith knits; but what makes them fall into Joints? This is done by mutual Submission. What makes the Thigh fall into the Knee? there is an Hollow in the Knee, into which the Thigh shoots it self, and is there joined. That which joins us together in a Church is Submission, *Eph.* 5. 31. They that cannot well submit to one another are not well joined; so the Bands of the Church must be whole, of one Spirit, of one Faith, *&c.* Thus you see a Body must be joined together by Bands and Joints that they may close one with another, and can fall down and yield one to another, either in Admonition or Reproof.

3*dly*. The third thing in a Body is the ministring of mutual Help and Supply from one Member to another, for the Health and Growth of the Body, so that we cannot be without one, 1 *Cor.* 12. 21, 22, 23. You will say, Hath Christ need of us? Yes, for he is the Head of the Body; and if he will be a King, he must have his Subjects, for this is the Glory of a King, and serveth much to his Supply. Tho Christ would be happy without us, yet if he will be the Head of the Church, as every Member receiveth something from him, so it adds something to him, to the Beauty of the Body: *Eph.* 1. 23. The Church is *the Fulness of him that filleth all in all.* Christ were empty were it not for the Church, as the Head without the Body. When you have a Church, then you have a full Saviour and Advocate; the Church fills up his Mystical Body, his Divine and Human Nature need it not, but the Mystical Body needs it: Therefore the Apostle calleth the Church Christ, because Christ and the Church are one Body, 1 *Cor.* 12. 12. Christ is pleased to say he stands in need of us, yea of his poorest Servants to receive Grace from him, and that he might pour it out upon them, as a Woman with full Breasts stands in need of a Child to suck them; so Christ is so full of Grace and Comfort, that if he have not his weak ones to suck Grace from him, his Bowels ake within him; therefore he called to the weak and thirsty, *Mat.* 11. 28. *Isa.* 55. 1, 2. *Of his Fulness we receive Grace for Grace:* As the Head thus communicates to the Body, and the Body adds to the Head, so every Member adds Supply one toward another. We can want no kindly Member of the Body, but the Body will be sensible of it; *Eph.* 4. 16. every Part hath some measure of Spiritual Life, and so they can be helpful and useful one to another, and thereby they grow up according to the Increase of God, *Col.* 2. 19. One Member of the Body derives Nourishment from another till it comes to the lowest Member of all: So the Members of Christ draw Grace from him, till it stretcheth to the lowest, the lowest Servant, the lowest Skirt of his Garment. This is the third thing in a Body, the Members of it safe-guard and preserve that Body. And thus you see why the Church is called a Body. The Church is not only a Body but a Mystical Body, *Eph.* 5. 32. It is not the Natural but Mystical Body of Christ, Christ is such a Body as is secretly knit to him by one Spirit. This is a great Mystery, saith the Apostle; First, That the Church should be framed out of the Side of Christ, as *Eve* out of *Adam*'s Bone; for such is the Church, so is his Comparison. All that have been brought home to Christ, have been brought home by the preaching of Christ and his Death. 2*dly*. The Desertion of a Man's Father and Mother and all outward Comforts, to cleave to Christ; this is a great Mystery. 3*dly*. They should be one Flesh; and Union with Christ is a great Mystery: there is a Shadow of it in Civil Marriage, but it is a great Mystery; for this Body is a Spiritual Body.

II. Now to the Subject of this Church, *First*, Christ is the Head of it, *Eph.* 5. 23. and 1. 22. Reasons.

1. In regard of Eminency of Place therein: He is above all the Members in Place and Power.

2. As the Body receives from the Head Motion, Sense and reasonable Life; so have we all our Spiritual Life and Motion, all our Grace from Christ as our Head.

3. As the Head guides the Body which way it pleaseth, and the Body is ready at its Command; so every Member of the Body of Christ is ready to move or go at his Appointment and Command.

Secondly,

Secondly, The Members be Saints, 1 *Cor.* 1. 2. *Col.* 1. 2. *Acts* 2. *such as shall be saved*: And the Reason is, because it is meet the Head and the Body should be proportionable: What Proportion is there between a Leaden Heel and Golden Head?

Use 1. If the Church of Christ be a Body, then it is necessary that in the Body of the Church the Members should be of different Gifts and Growth: *If the whole Body were an Eye, where were the Hearing?* An hundred Apostles could not make a Church standing as Apostles, 1 *Cor.* 12. 24, 29. The Church must be a Body, there must be some Distinction, as much as is requisite to the Being of a Body, an hundred Hands will not make a Body, therefore conceive this necessary to a Church, as also how unweildy a Work the Fabrick of a Church is.

Use 2. If a Church be a Body, then you see what we ought to be, to be of one Spirit, of one Love, to be willing to submit the one to the other in the Lord, that we be careful to grow up in all things, to the mutual Helpfulness of one another. The Name of a Body is of strong Instruction to teach us what we ought to be: When saw you one Member of the Body fall out with another? but they are sensible of the Joy and Grief of each other: therefore be of one Spirit, and build up one another in Love.

Use 3. The Name of a Body binds us from easily starting one from another: if a Member hang by a loose Skin it is no trouble to cut it off, but if it be fast on, it will be a great Grief to the Body: therefore there should be weighty Reasons for disjointing one from another. May not a Man then remove himself, or may the Church keep a Man in the Body, or let him go at their pleasure? I answer, Neither of both, 1 *Cor.* 12. 18. If they be Members, they must see that Christ disjoints them; but if they will fall off, it is a sign they did hang but by a loose Skin, and then the Church will be no great Losers by the Departure of such from them.

Use 4. Is Christ the Head of the Church? then the Pope is not the Head of the Church: An Headship is applied to Christ; for if the Pope be the Head of the Church, then the Church is the Body of the Pope, which no Papist durst ever say to this day: Now these two stand relative. Princes are said to be the Head of the Church, as *Saul* to be Head of the Tribes, that is only in regard of Eminency of Place, that they be to see all the Members of the Church do their Duty.

Use 5. Is Christ the Head of the Church? Then if any Man want Wisdom, Direction or Comfort, where should he have it but in our Head? the Head must supply all to the Members.

Use 6. Also it keepeth us to be subject unto Christ, as the Church is to Christ her Head; when the Head calleth for any thing, make no difficulty of it, be willing to be led and guided by him.

Use 7. It is Comfort to every poor Member of Christ, that surely Christ cannot but be sensible of my Estate. If Christ be our Head, then the least Toe cannot be trodden on but the Head feels it. *Acts* 9. 4. *Saul* cannot persecute a Member of Christ, but he persecutes Christ. *Isa.* 63. 9. He is merciful to us, and his Soul is grieved for the Miseries that befal us, *Judg* 10. 16.

Use 8. If the Members of the Church be Saints, then you see what manner of Persons they ought to be that offer themselves to the Church, and whom the Church receiveth: They must be faithful Brethren, such as shall be saved, such as are knit to Christ by one Spirit: and when they have given themselves to Christ, then let them give themselves to the Church. To have a Golden Head and Wooden Leg is a Dishonour to the Head.

Use 9. If Members be Saints, then you see what God calleth us to be. A Saint implies to be set apart from all unclean Uses, they are devoted to God's Ways, to the building up of his Kingdom: this God calleth us to be, as to be Members of Christ, so to be Saints.

And now to the Form and Essence of the Church, to which also belongs the End, as the subject Matter doth to the Kind: the Form is that which distinguisheth it from all other Assemblies and Churches; for when it is said united into one Congregation, it distinguisheth it from the Church of the Jews, which was a National Church; from the Catholick Church, which never in this World meets in one Congregation; as also from the Diocesan-Church, and Family-Church: That they are knit into holy Covenant, distinguisheth one Congregation from another; that they meet to worship God in all his holy Ordinances, this distinguisheth them from all other

other Assemblies that may be. Godly Men may meet in one place for Civil Ends. The Church therefore to which God hath given Pastors and Teachers, is united into one Congregation that meets in one place, 1 *Cor.*14.23. and 11.18,20. When they come together in one place, then they make up a Church-Assembly, it must be a place of no bigger Compass and Latitude than that all may hear and be edified, 1 *Cor.* 14. 26, 31. To this Church *Paul* commendeth the Excommunication of the Incestuous Corinthian, 1 *Cor.*3.4. To a Church that may meet in one place, Christ biddeth us *tell the Church*, that is, one Congregation. The Apostle never calls the Christians of a whole Nation one Church, but when there are many Congregations in a Nation or Country, then he terms them many Churches, *Gal.*1.22. 1 *Cor.* 16.19. *Gal.* 1.2. therefore he stiles them Churches, because they meet not all in one place, *Rom.* 16.4. 1 *Cor.* 14. 33. He doth not call them the Church of the Saints, but the Churches, and there is a double Reason of it.

1. It is taken from the Duty that lieth upon the Church in the New Testament, to take up Offences amongst Brethren, *Matth.* 18. 17, 18. *Tell the Church*, saith Christ. Now that is not a Family-Church; for what hath one Family to do to judg another? It is not the Catholick Church, for they never meet but representatively, and they cannot hear all the Offences of private Brethren: neither can it be a National, Diocesan or Provincial Church: For a whole Nation or Province cannot meet for one Brother's Offence: Therefore by *the Church* is meant the Congregation that meets every Lord's-day, and it is easy for them to hear and heal all the Offences that fall out in a Week: To that Church Christ speaks, *Whatsoever you bind on Earth, shall be bound in Heaven.*

And from the silence of God in the New Testament touching all National Meetings, and Provincial and Diocesan Meetings: for if God had appointed such a Church, he would have appointed National and Provincial Meetings. In the Church of the Jews, which was a National Church, they were at the least three times in the Year to meet all together, and there were National Offices and Sacrifices to be offered only at those times. The High-Priest had a peculiar place; therefore Christ would have appointed National Officers and Meetings, and National and Provincial Worship, if he had appointed such a Church. Some will say he hath left Primates and Metropolitans, *&c.* but he hath not set down the Offices and Duties of such Men, there is a deep silence of all these things: Therefore the Church of the New Testament is a Congregational Church, that may meet in one place.

Use 1. A just Refutation of all that Platform of Churches that Antichrist brought into the Church, and with the Church came in to make way for him: for if the Church be a Congregation it may meet in one place; then National, Provincial and Diocesan Churches are such that the Apostles never heard of in the New Testament, they are therefore the Inventions of Mens Brains, and so an Image set up, and contrary to the second Commandment. If it should be said to us, You are a few scattered Churches, were it not fit to have transcendent Officers for Unity sake to prevent Schism and Factions? I answer, It was intended for that end, but that which was intended for the benefit of the Church, hath brought Contentions into the Church, hath made way for Ambition and Secular Pomp, for shouldring out of God's Ordinances and Godly Men. Hath God therefore appointed no such things as National Churches, National Meetings and Worship? then let us entertain no thoughts of them.

Use 2. From hence take the Limits of the Power of Church-Officers, how they may proceed as far as the Congregation reacheth; for the Church is a Congregation: therefore from hence will fall to the Ground Non-residence, that one Man should have many Churches under him, one in one Country, another in another Country; such walk beside the Rule; for if God hath ordained more Officers to one Church than one, and not more Churches to one Officer; then one Man may have no more but one Church under him. The Apostle left more Officers in one Church than one, *Phil.* 1. 1. with the Bishops, that is, the Pastors, Teachers and Elders. No Pastor or Teacher, but he is the Pastor or Teacher of one Congregation, and no more, *Acts* 20.7,28. God hath many Overseers to one Flock, not committed many Flocks to one Overseer; therefore Non-residency is against the Rule of Christ.

Use 3.

Use 3. Hence see the irregular Proceedings of such as take upon them Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction over many Churches, over a thousand Congregations, over a whole Province or Nation, or the whole World, as the *Pope* doth: For Christ left every Church his own Officers to rule the same.

Use 4. Also this is for Refutation of those that think Parishes are distinguished, not by Divine Institution but Human. Indeed that the Circuit of so much Land shall maintain the Minister, and all that live within such a Compass of Ground shall be of such a Congregation, this is of Human Invention, against the Commandment of God; but this is of Divine Institution, that the Church exceedeth not the Bounds of one Congregation, of such a Latitude that all may hear, and all may be edified: And as for those that are admitted into the Church, this is Divine; for the Lord admitteth all into the Church, 1 *Cor.* 12. 13. they willingly offer themselves to subject themselves to the Ordinances of God; therefore the Church is of Divine Institution.

III. Now the next thing is, that they are joined together in one Congregation by holy Covenant. First, To prove this by *Grounds out of Scripture*, and then by Reasons.

1. The first Direction and Institution of a Church was by Covenant; the *Israelites* made a Covenant with the Lord, and he with them, *Deut.* 5. 2. and from that time they were called a Church, *Acts* 7. 38. there they promised they would do all the Lord had said, and be obedient, *Exod.* 24. 3. 7. There was another Covenant made with them, *Deut.* 29. 12, *&c.* this was a Covenant of Grace, as the other was of Works, *ver.* 10, 11, 12. the Lord entred into Covenant with them that day, and with their Children: By a Covenant he takes them to be his People, and to be their God. Some of them were in Covenant with God before, as *Moses*, *Joshua*, &c. but when they became a National Church, then they made a popular Covenant with God and their own selves; and there is the same Reason of a National and Congregational Church. The Stranger that would be of that Church must lay hold of the Covenant with them, *Isa.* 56. 47. Therefore when *Abraham* took Strangers into Fellowship with his Family, in which the Church was, they did it by Confederacy with him, which is a Covenant, *Gen.* 14. 13. He would not have done it if they had been Idolaters, that was the Sin of *Asa* and *Jehosaphat*, and with *Ahab*; therefore when he took them to War with him they were confederate in Religion with him, they must come in by Covenant; and then my Horses are thy Horses, thy Friends my Friends, and thus all one: thus all in the Church of *Israel* came in by way of Covenant.

2. The second Ground of Scripture is taken from the Restitution of a Church when it is fallen, and there is the same Reason of Restitution as Institution, by the same means it is restituted as instituted: Now when they had ever fallen from God, or had decayed, they entred into a new Covenant with God, so did they in the days of *Asa*, 2 *Chron.* 23. 16. so did also *Hezekiah*, 2 *Chron.* 29. 9,10. so in the days of *Joash*, when it had been broken by *Joram* and *Athaliah*, 2 *Chron.* 13. 16. so did *Josiah*, 2 *Chron.* 34. 31, 32. Thus a Church is restored to its Purity, by renewing of its Covenant, *Ezra* 10. 3,5, 12, 19. and *Nehem.* 10. 29. They all cleave to the Lord and to their Brethren, with their Nobles; and therefore there was a Register kept of them that entred into Covenant, *Isa.* 4. 3. they were written, *&c.* *Psal.* 87. 6. therefore they that could not shew their Father's House in the Genealogies were put out, unless they would make a new Covenant, *Ezra* 2. 59.

3. The third Ground from Scripture is taken from the Apostles Practice in the New Testament, *Acts* 2. 42. *They continued*, &c. the word signifies, they joined and cleaved together, and this you see more plain in *Acts* 5. 13. none durst join themselves, that is, glue themselves to the Church; and it is the same word which Christ useth about Man and Wife, *Matth.* 19. 6. Now how doth a Man cleave to his Wife, but by mutual Covenant? no other ways: That being wanting or broken, breaks and dissolves; that being maintain'd and kept, keeps a Church: but the Covenant being wanting or broken, breaks a Church; therefore the Covenant being made and kept, makes and keeps a Church in its Institution. *Ezek.* 10. 10,14. there is a Description of the breaking of the Church of *Israel*. Christ had two Staves, and when he had broken the first, that was his Covenant he had made with his People, and they with him, and that was the Presence of Christ in his Ordinances, which is his Beauty. When you may go and hear the Scribes and Pharisees and be never the better, then Christ is gone; their Souls loathed

loathed him, and his Soul loathed them: But the other Staff was afterwards broken Bands, and that was the Covenant between God's People and the Scribes and Pharisees; and those that had a Name to be of *Israel*, and were not true *Israelites*, God broke Brotherhood between them: He broke it in the Death of *Stephen* and the Persecution following, and thereby severed his faithful People from amongst them, so that they were forced for to leave the Temple and the Worship, and then they turned to the Gentiles, *Acts* 13. 46. and then they ceased to be a Church. Now then if the breaking of the Covenant break the Church, then the making of it constitutes a Church; break the Covenant with Christ, and you shake the Foundation of the Church. The poor of the Fold began to perceive that Christ had left them, and yet he speaks not in the Scribes and Pharisees, but when he breaks the Brotherhood, then the Church is quite broken; therefore this being held, held and maintained a Church together. If this held in the Old Testament, it will in the New. These things were so plain to the Jews in the Old Testament, that they made no question but that in the New Testament the Children should be admitted as the Parents were: Therefore you read little of the Baptism of the Infants, but it was clear, that if the Fathers and their Seed were
Col. 2. 11, then received into the Covenant by the Seal of Circumcision, then in the New Testa-
12. ment they were to be received by the Seal of Baptism; so that in the New Testament you read of nothing but of the joining and gluing to the Church; and as Man and Wife were joined by Marriage-Covenant, so were they joined together by Covenant in Church-Fellowship. These be the Grounds from Scripture: Now to the Reasons.

Reason 1. First, it is taken from the Nature of a Church, as God stiles it in Scripture, it is called the Spouse and Queen of Christ, *Eph.* 5. 23. 31, 32. *Cant.* 6. 8. Now wherein doth a Queen differ from a Concubine? a Queen enters into the Bed by Covenant, but a Concubine is taken in by Power, as *Jacob* took his Maid. *Prov.* 2. 17. the Wife is said to forsake the Covenant; therefore if the Church be a Spouse, she must enter in by Covenant. Two things go to a Queen-like State. 1. She enters in by Covenant. 2. She hath the Keys of the Family, and rules the Affairs in it, but a Concubine hath neither; so a true Church hath both these. She is called *the City of the living God*, Heb. 12. 22. *Eph.* 2. 19. the Members of the Church are Citizens. Now Citizens enter into a Covenant together to keep the Laws and maintain the Liberty of the City, therefore the Church is a City, must enter in by Covenant.

2. From the Power of the Church to call her own Officers. *Acts* 1. *ult.* the Church called *Matthias*, he was numbred, the word signified by common Voice and Suffrage they accepted him, συγκατψηφίσθη, so were the Deacons chosen by lifting up of Hands, *Acts* 6. 5. the word καὶ ἐξελέξαντο, signifies they are chosen by lifting up of Hands: Now the Church doth not call her Officers to an annual place but constant, *Zech.* 11. 17. *Deut.* 12. 19. they must not forsake the Levite, nor the Levite them; the very calling of a Minister to the Imployment of the Ministry is an essential Covenant, tho something more implicite. An Officer should not thrust himself upon a Body, for then he maketh her a Concubine, not a Queen. Now then if he must be chosen by full Consent, then he hath no Authority over them that will not submit themselves to him, and therefore cannot do any Act of Power, as administer the Sacraments and Church-Censures, to those that do not call him to the Work, therefore there must be a Covenant.

3. From the Power of the Church over her Members: she hath Power to admonish them, and if they hear her not, then to exclude them. Now she hath nothing to do to judg those that are without the Church, but those that are joined to the Church, 1 *Cor.* 5. 11, 12.

4. From the End and Use of the Sacraments; one End is to seal up Church-Fellowship, 1 *Cor.* 12. 13. and 10. 17. therefore Church-Fellowship standeth by Church-Covenant, because they are the Seal of the Covenant.

Use 1. Reproof of those Spirits that look at Church-Covenants as a Human Invention: *Abraham* will not admit any to Fellowship with him, but by Covenant; the Church of *Israel* enters by Covenant, and is by Covenant restored; by Covenant the Church of the New Testament is the City and Spouse of Christ, therefore there must be a Covenant.

Use 2. You see how we have cause to be humbled if we sit down any where, and enjoy the Church-Privileges without Church-Fellowship by a Covenant.

Use 3.

Use 3. Learn we a true Estimation of Churches, and Discretion in judging of them: by how much any Church is more faithful in the Covenant, the truer and more pure the Church is. Hath any Church Power to choose her own Officers, and the Power to govern the Church? then such are pure Churches, but else they are defiled, and are but Concubines: How should we therefore be humbled for our Brethren, that are forced like Concubines, enter not into Covenant before the Lord and one with another, according to his Will?

Use 4. A just Apology for such Ministers and others, that dare not administer any Ordinance of God to such as offer not themselves to enter into Covenant with the Church. A Minister may not obtrude himself upon any; if they call him not to be their Minister, he may not dispense any Censure or Act of Power to them. Therefore it is not an Act of Schism in the Church or Minister, but in those that so withdraw themselves, they thereby make themselves uncapable to have any Ordinance of Power to be dispensed to them. Ministers have no Power but where they are called, and they are not but where there is a willing People: if Men will not have the Church to rule over them, God compels none, tho he commands it, and therefore neither may the Church: 2 *Cor.* 9.13. they thank God for their professed Subjection.

Use 5. Hence see the essential Difference of one Congregation from another, the difference of the Covenant; they enter into Covenant with Officers and Members here, and this distinguisheth them.

Use 6. This may teach the necessity of Constancy in Church-Fellowship; it is a Covenant of God, and God hath a part in all Covenants between Man and Wife, Prince and People, but especially in all holy Covenants, therefore they may not depart the one from the other, but God must part them: God hath set us in the Church by virtue of a Covenant, therefore we must have God's leave, and the Church's leave to depart, if we will depart in God's Fear: Unless God dispose of it, a Member may not depart, nor the Church dismiss him; there is a Tripartite Covenant, God is one Party, the Member another, the Church the third. Now as I have God's leave to come in, so I must have his leave to go out.

Use 7. To such as desire Fellowship with the Church, to exhort them, first, to enter into Covenant with the Lord, and then to make a Covenant with the Congregation. If any Man offer himself to the Church, and the Church defer his Entertainment, his very looking towards God's Temple is an Ordinance, and God will accordingly bless him; the desire of an Ordinance before God is accepted as well as the Enjoyment. Every Stone was hewen before they came to be laid in *Solomon*'s Temple. The chiefest Work, the Work of Regeneration, should be wrought before he enters into the Church: the Conversion of Men is not proper to the Members of the Church, but to Children.

Use 8. Comfort to us that are knit together in holy Covenant, therefore stand fast in this Liberty, *Gal.* 5. 1. It is an unspeakable Mercy, and for ever to be acknowledged to God's Praise; therefore tho they do abandon us, we should have a Care of them that are entred into Covenant with us.

IV. Now the End of this uniting together in Covenant, is, to worship the Lord, and to edify one another in all his holy Ordinances. 1 *Cor.* 5. 4. When you are met together *in the Name of the Lord,* 1 *Cor.* 14. 26. all must be done to Edification. This is the End of all Church-Meetings: but of this more hereafter.

Object. *But then where doth Contribution take place? it is neither the Worship of God, nor Edification.*

Answ. It is both God's Worship and an Act of Edification; it is not only a Christian Duty, but it tends to edify. *Phil.* 4. 18. the Succour of our Brethren is an acceptable Sacrifice to God, and that was Edification to *Paul*; for by this, saith he, *I am full, and abound*; and so he was quickned to his Work. Heb. 13. 16. *With such Sacrifices God is well pleased*: and hereby the Bowels of the Saints are refreshed, which is one part of Edification; *Philem.* 7. *And*, saith he, *we have great Joy and Consolation*, which is also Edification; therefore it is not only a carnal Affection that is helped by Contribution, but spiritual Edification.

Reason. Herein the Church differs from other Assemblies that may be Godly Men, and may meet in one Place, and be in Covenant, for so may a Common-wealth; but a Church always meets for spiritual Works.

Use 1. To teach us to do all our outward Works in a spiritual manner, to give to our Brethren to refresh their Bowels, to increase their Joy, to quicken them in the Work of the Lord.

Use 2. Learn what is the End of all our Meeting, and all our Confederacy, all is to worship the Lord, and to edify one another in God's holy Ways. Some think the Assembly of God's People to be factious; but saith *Tertullian*, *Congressus piorum non factio dicendus est, sed curia*; let there therefore nothing be done in the Church but that which tendeth to the Honour of God, and the Edification of the Church.

Use 3. Comfort to us, that God affords us such Liberties as these be, wherein we may meet to worship, and edify one another in God's Ways. It is an honourable Assembly wherein Christ is the Head, and every Member, if he be not an Hypocrite, is a younger Brother or Sister to the Lord Jesus Christ; and they meet not for the Good of the Common-wealth directly, tho that be honourable, yet it is nothing to the Salvation of Souls, and the edifying of one another in God's Fear: how therefore should all Matters be carried? there should nothing appear but the Presence of Christ, the Love of Christ, the Power of his Grace, and then they are the most honourable Meetings in the World.

Use 4. This is also Comfort to us, that Christ will be our Provision, Protection; he is our Head, and he will care for us: If we meet together and worship God, and edify one another, will he let us want and starve? do you think Christ is so ill an Husband? Would you leave your Wives naked, and without Provision, if you had it for them? Now Christ hath it for us, and he will not leave us without Supply. *Phil.* 4. 19. when they had supplied him, then saith he, *God shall supply all your Wants.* And now this Church of *Philippi* was one of the poorest Churches of all, it was one of the Churches of *Macedonia*, that was in deep Poverty, 2 *Cor.* 8. 2. yet *Paul* bears those Record, that they only had communicated unto him: Therefore, saith he, God shall do you good; walk as becometh the Spouse of Christ, and he will care for us; God will not be wanting to pour out Blessings upon us, those that enter into Covenant with him, and walk according to the Power of it. Now you see what a Church is.

Q. *What sort of Members hath God set in his Church?*

Answ. Some of them are Ministers and Officers of the Church, others of them are called commonly by the general Name of the Members, Brethren and Saints: So that here are two sorts of Members, and two sorts of Names; the Name of the first, Ministers and Officers, the other Brethren and Saints: Magistrates and Officers are all one, Brethren and Saints are all one. To prove all of them. First, for Ministers, 1 *Cor.* 4. 1. 1 *Tim.* 1. 12. *Col.* 4. 12. 2 *Cor.* 3. 6. *Rom.* 12. 7. by Ministers he means Elders, and Deacons for Officers; 1 *Tim.* 3. 1, 10. *Rom.* 11. 14. *Acts* 1. 20. *Psal.* 109. 8. These two Titles express one part of the Church's Body: the Brethren and Saints are distinguished from the Ministers and Officers. *Acts* 15. 22, 23. those he calls the Church, *ver.* 22. he calls them Brethren, *ver.* 23. all the Members of the Church are usually stiled Brethren, *Rom.* 16. 23. *Phil.* 1. 10. Those Christians that had no publick Offices in the Church he stileth Saints, *Col.* 1. 2. Now because God would have us give our Children significant Names, therefore it is likely for good reason the Holy Ghost gave these Names to the Members of the Church; some Officers and Ministers, others Brethren and Saints: In their very Names you may read the Idea and Platform of the Church-Government, their very Name should put them in mind of their Duties, that as readily as you know your Names when you are called, so you may hereby see the Duties that God calls for in our several places.

1*st*. For Ministers, this is expressed by two words in Scripture, the first is ὑπηρέτας, 1 *Cor.* 4. 1. let Men esteem of us as Under-rowers; the Ministers carry an end the Ship of the Church. Now what doth this hold forth unto us? It holds forth thus much, that Ministers are called to be Rowers and Under-rowers to Christ. This Text will lead Ministers by the Hand to see what God requires of them, that they should labour one way and look another way, and yet both without Hypocrisy. A Rower which way soever he rows he looks contrary; if he be for to row Westward, he looks Eastward. And did you ever hear a Minister preach Damnation in his Words, and see him look as tho he would carry all his Hearers to Hell? It is true, it may be he looks so, but now he rows a clean contrary way to that, and you would think he did respect the way to everlasting Happiness, that he would advance you to them when he delivers

delivers you all Delicacies and Comforts; you would think his Intent were to advance you to the Highest Heavens, and so it is, but withal he labours a quite contrary thing; his Course is quite contrary to that he looks: When he doth most exalt you, then he doth but abase you, it is to make you the more humble, *James* 1. 9, 10. You will sometimes think a Minister speaks with much Authority and Severness, and yet doth he serve you in all Meekness of Christian Wisdom, and Humility of Mind. *Paul* saith he did, *Acts* 20. 18, 19. when yet he charged them with all Authority, and when he beseeches you to receive Grace; when he moves and perswades to avoid any Evil, then doth he come with all Authority and rule over you with Power: These are compact together, and that without Sin, and what is said of one Minister is said of all, that is, Pastors and Teachers. This is the first thing implied in the word Minister, that is, an Under-rower.

2dly. The word Minister signifies a Servant. *Joshua* was *Moses*'s Minister, his Servant that waited on him; so are all the Apostles, Elders and Deacons; the word Deacon signifies a Minister.

First, They are Ministers to Christ, *Rom.* 15. 16. Now they are his Servants; 1. Because they deliver nothing, nor speak nothing to the Church but the Commands of Christ; they do nothing, nor speak nothing but what they have received from Christ, *Matth.* 28. 20. 2. They work for his End and for his Glory, and make it a Transgression of their Ministry to do otherwise, *Phil.* 2. 21, 22. *Gal.* 1. 10. then they are Ministers to Christ indeed.

Secondly, They are Ministers and Servants of the Church. *Rom.* 16. 1. Phebe *a Servant of the Church.* 1 Cor. 4. 5. *We preach our selves your Servants:* and 1 *Cor.* 3. 22. 23. Wherein are the Ministers the Churches Servants? Are they not called Rulers? *Answ.* Not in the same respect they are Ministers. The calling of a Minister is a Mystery, they look one way and work another, and yet dissemble neither way: But as they are Servants, their Service to the Church stands in these things. 1. They come at the Churches Call, this is one part of their Service to the Church. Acts 16. 9, 10. *Come into* Macedonia *and help us:* whence they gather'd the Lord called them. Hence God hath ordained the Church to call her own Officers, for the Man came in the Churches Name, *Come and help us.* It is a point of Service to come when a Man is called. 2. They go upon the Churches Errand, that is a point of Service, *Matth.* 8. 9. it is our Saviour's Rule, *He that is sent, is not greater than he that sends:* so then herein lies their Service, they come when the Church calls them, and go when the Church sends them, *John* 13. 16. *Paul* saith he was sent by the Church, and the Church chose another to go with him. 3. They submit themselves to the Church's Censure, *Col.* 4. 17. and if they will not hear an Admonition, they may deal further with them. *Peter* himself must not judg others, but the Church, and they must also judg him; this is the Service of Ministers to the Church.

Thirdly, The third thing wrapt up in the Name of Minister is, that he is a Dispenser, *Gal.* 3. 5, 11. *Rom.* 15. 16. *He hath made us able Ministers of the Gospel*, that is, Dispensers of it by the Spirit.

1. Therefore it lieth strongly upon their Consciences, to know and practise that which is a main part of their Calling: Never to think they have done this Ministry, till they have dispensed the Spirit. The new Testament and the Gospel, 2 *Cor.* 3. 6. this makes the Work too heavy for Men and Angels, that they must minister the Spirit, not only the Word, but the Spirit, saving Knowledg; this is the main weight of Duty that lies upon a Minister, not to dispense Ceremonies, Shadows, Rule and Pomp; but if we run without the Spirit, we run without our Errand, and we have not fulfilled it, except we leave the Spirit behind us in the Hearts of the People. *I create the fruit of the Lips, Peace, Peace:* Isa. 57. 19. speaking of the Ministers of the New Testament: This is therefore their principal Work to be dispensing a Spirit of Peace, a Spirit of Power, a Spirit of Love, a Spirit of Meekness, and of Zeal, and of Humility, and whatsoever savours of Life: thus they are called to the Work, therefore they are called Stewards, 1 *Cor.* 4. 12.

2. This therefore teacheth us Ministers to be faithful, for so must Dispensers be, they must tell all their Errand, and not only fill them with Words, but with the Characters of the Spirit also, if it be possible. 2 Cor. 2. 16. *Who therefore is sufficient for these things?* to be a Savour of Life? therefore it is not all the Learning in the World that will make a Man sufficient to dispense a Spirit of Life and Darkness: *Who is sufficient?* Are not you *Paul?* No, not *Paul*; for, for him to give the Holy Ghost is far from him,

him, but he keeps his Heart in Frame, and is faithful, that Christ may breathe in his Ministry.

3. This will carry some Respect back again from the People to the Minister, in regard he is a Dispenser to them, 1 *Cor.* 9. 11. Now for this word Officer, it signifies two things, and that God stiles them. 1. It signifies a Charge, *Acts* 1. 20. *Psal.* 109. 8. the word in the Original is properly Charge, and so it is translated, *Isa.* 60. 17. *Necessity is laid upon me to preach:* and 1 *Cor.* 9. 16. thou shalt give *Joshua* a Charge, *Numb.* 27. 23. it implies Authority, *Psal.* 109. 8. that word implies Authority, therefore the Officers are called Rulers, 1 *Tim.* 5. 17. God hath left Governours in his Church, 1 *Cor.* 12. 28. *Obey them that have the Rule over you*, Heb. 13. 17. But if they be Servants, how then can they be Rulers? this is the Mystery. The Rulers of the Church are the Churches Servants, and the Servants of the Church are the Churches Rulers. *Answ.* There are three things in which lies the Authority of their Office. 1. In dispensing of the Mysteries of the Kingdom of God, *Tit.* 2. 15. either in Exhortation, Doctrine or Admonition, they do it with all Authority. 1 Tim 6. 17. *Charge them that are rich*, &c. 2. Tho they come not on to the Ministry till they are called, yet being called, they have Authority to call Church-Assemblies, and to dismiss them, *Acts* 6. 2. the Apostles called the Church together. Joel 1. 13, 14. *Call a solemn Assembly.* They moderate Matters in the Assembly, give leave to others to speak, *Acts* 13. 9. and they dismiss the Assembly, *Numb.* 6. 23, 24, 25, 26, 27. 3. These are the Mouth and Hands of the Church by which they execute the Power of the Censures: and therefore he saith he hath somewhat against the Angel of the Church of *Ephesus*, and against the Angel of *Pergamus* and *Thyatira*, *Rev.* 2. 4, 14, 20. By the Angel is meant the Presbytery, and they are taxed for lack of good Discipline in the Church, because the Church having called Rulers, it lies upon them if there be any abuse in it, for they have the Power to act and moderate all in it, and the Church only consents and approves what they do. If you ask then, What is the Power of the Church? it is this, *1st.* She calls her own Officers and Members: And, *2dly.* She sends forth them for her Service; and if any fail she may call them to account, and censure their Failings by the Hand of her Mouth, which are her Ministers. The Ministers have another Power to call the Church together, to charge her there with all Authority, to moderate things in it, and to dismiss it, and to execute her Censures, according to God's Word. The Deacons also being Officers, have the Charge of the Churches Treasure, and they have Power and Authority to dispense it according to the Rule of Christ; and except they go besides the Rule, the Church breaks not in upon their Office.

Now for the word Brethren it argues three things. 1. That they are subject to Officers; which is not Service but Brotherhood, *Rom.* 14. 23. *Quartus* a Brother. 2. It is a Rule over Brethren, it implies a continuance in Brotherly Love, *Heb.* 13. 1. Break them, and you break the Covenant. 3. A continuance of Brotherly Communion and Fellowship, that it be not broken; except Christ break it, they may not break it, *Zech.* 11. 14.

That word Saints implies two things; 1. A Separation from all unclean and common Use: as Bread and Wine when they are set apart from common Use, are said to be holy; so Men when they are set apart from Lusts and Passions, are then sanctified. 2. A Devotion or Dedication of them to God's Service; as a Sabbath is sanctified when it is dedicated to God.

Then let the mentioning of these Names keep this whole Work of Discipline fresh in your Hearts and Thoughts; as often as you are called Officers, Ministers, Brethren and Saints, then read your Duty, and they will be a Commentary, whereby to know what God requires of you, your Duty to himself, to his Church, and one to another.

Q. *What sorts of Ministers or Officers hath God set in his Church?*

Answ. They are some of them extraordinary, as Apostles, Prophets and Evangelists; some ordinary, as Bishops and Deacons.

First, For the extraordinary Officers, they are Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists: And these God set in his Church, *Eph.* 4. 11. 1 *Cor.* 11. 28. To open these. And,

1. For Apostles, they are first set in the Church, 1 *Cor.* 11. 28. An Apostle signifies as much as an Angel or Messenger, four Benefits or Privileges accompanying their Calling. 1. They were Messengers sent immediately by Jesus Christ; they had their Calling by lively Voice from him, *John* 20. 21. So also saith *Paul* of himself, that he was

was not *of Man, nor by Man, but by Jesus Christ.* 2. They had an immediate Charge. *Matth.* 28. 19. *Go, teach all Nations: Mark* 16. 15, 16. 1 *Cor.* 11. 28. the Care of all the Churches lay upon him; yet where God blessed his Ministry, there he stayed longer, and departed from them that would not receive his Doctrine. *Gal.* 2. 7, 8. *Peter* was more mighty among the Jews, and *Paul* among the Gentiles: tho their Power were illimited, in regard of the Charge, yet there was a Limitation in respect of Effects and spiritual Directions by them. *Paul* would have gone to *Bythinia*, but the Spirit suffered him not. 3. They were guided by infallible Assistance of the Spirit: The Spirit led them into all Truth, *Gal.* 1. 11, 12. *Paul* doubts not to say that he had laid the Foundation; therefore good reason it was that they should be kept from Errors, 1 *Cor.* 3. 10. *Peter* erred indeed, but his Error was not in Doctrine, but only in Matters of Fact. 4. They were indued with the Power of working Miracles, to confirm their Doctrine, *Mark* 16. 20. These things made their Places extraordinary; other Ministers of the Church have not the same Call, the same Charge, the same Assistance, nor the like Power. When *Judas* the Apostle hang'd himself they had a Church-meeting to elect another Apostle into his Office, *Acts* 1. 15, 16. But when *Herod* had slain *James* the Apostle, *Acts* 12. 2. you read not of any other Meeting to constitute another; when they slept, their Calling slept with them, and were not to continue in Succession; for no Man was substituted in the room of *James*, as there was in the room of *Judas*, but instead thereof the Apostles constituted Elders in every Church, *Acts* 14. 23. As in the Old Testament there were twelve Patriarchs, and of *Joseph* that was cut off from his Brethren there came two Tribes, and so they were thirteen in all: So when *Judas* fell from his Office, God ordained another in his room. And, lastly, was *Paul*, as one born out of due time, sent by Christ himself, for to make up the Number of the thirteen Patriarchs of the New Testament: This was the Work of the Apostles, even to plant Churches; the Church could not call them, for they were to bring in the Gentiles which were no Churches.

2. A second sort of Officers is Prophets, *Eph.* 4. 11. 1 *Cor.* 12. 28. this is the second Office. There were three sorts of Prophets in the New Testament: 1. Those that were endued with an extraordinary Gift of foretelling things to come, needful to prevent the Churches Dangers, and give Direction for the Churches Safety; such an one was *Agabus*, *Acts* 11. 28, 29. if that Danger had not been foretold, the Churches would not have been ready for to send Relief to the Saints in *Judea*, and so many poor Saints might have perished, but by that Prophecy it was prevented. *Acts* 21. 9, 10. 11. *Agabus* prophesied what should betide *Paul* at *Jerusalem*: this was of excellent use in those times, that so the Churches might by their Prayers prevent such like Calamities; or else if *Paul* could not prevent Bonds or Death, then he might be prepared for such desperate Discouragements, as he saith himself, *I am ready to die*: these Gifts ordinarily now are ceased; all is written in the Scriptures, whereof we stand in need for help and Direction. 2. Prophets are taken for the preaching Elders of the Church: So it is taken, *Rom.* 12. 6, 7. The ordinary Preachers of the Gospel are Pastors and Teachers, and they are called Prophets. 3. Sometimes Prophets are taken to mean those who have the Gift of Teaching and Prophecy, which may be found in any Member of the Church; and this is not an Office, 1 *Cor.* 14. 31. these are not ceased in the Church, but still continue in the same.

For the Evangelists, *Eph.* 4. 11. who they were is much sought after; but they were such as had not their Call immediately from Christ, yet they had an immediate Call from the Apostles, who were extraordinary Men, and had extraordinary Gifts: They had their Calling from the Apostles, as the Apostles had theirs from Christ. 2 Tim. 4. 5. *Do the Work of an Evangelist*: and it is said of him that *Paul* would have him go forth with him, *Acts* 16. 13. Another Evangelist was *Mark*, whom *Paul* would not accept of to go with him, *Acts* 15. 37, 38. and these were called to perfect the Work of the Apostles, that which the Apostles had begun. When they had begun to plant Churches, they left the finishing and perfecting of them to the Evangelists. These were extraordinary in their Call, 1. That they were immediately called by the Apostles, tho the Church sometimes joined with them, as in ordaining *Timothy*, 1 Tim. 4. 14. 2. They were not limited to any one Charge, but had many, and executed Authority in divers places, and herein they differed from Pastors and Teachers: For the Pastors are to look to the Flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made them Overseers; but Evangelists stayed no longer in a place than they

they were intreated, which Pastors needed not to be. 1 *Tim.* 1. 3. He would not have besought *Timothy* to have tarried, if he might not have gone away when he pleased. *Tit.* 1. 5. He left him for to ordain Elders in every City, therefore they were not limited to one Charge, or bound to stay in any one place. 2 *Tim.* 4. 11, 12. thus he leaves some in one place, and some in another, and disposeth of them, for they were to perfect the Work of the Apostles, and not limited to any Charge. 2. Some of the Evangelists wrote the Gospel, as *Mark* and *Luke*, but this was peculiar to some of them; the rest of the Evangelists that wrote the Gospel, were Apostles also. but since the Apostles and Evangelists went to Heaven, you never heard the Holy Ghost took care to substitute any Evangelists in their rooms; as they died, so their Office died with them. Further, you read that *Philip*, one of the Deacons, *Acts* 6. 5. was an Evangelist, *Acts* 21. 8. and then the Holy Ghost sets him apart too, for he went down to *Samaria* and preached there, and the People gave heed unto his Ministry *Acts* 8. 5, 6. also he baptized the Eunuch, which as a Deacon, he would not have done, but as an Evangelist called to preach the Gospel: some therefore of the Evangelists were immediately called by the Holy Ghost, some immediately by the Apostles, some by the Apostles with the Church, 1 *Tim.* 4. 14. This Office is ceased as the callings of the Apostles and Prophets are; God hath of latter days given to some extraordinary Gifts for the settling of Churches, as *Luther*, *Calvin*, &c. having great Wisdom and Knowledg, but they did it not so much by virtue of Office as by Gifts: these are the extraordinary, Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists.

Two sorts of Officers in the Church are ordinary, and they are Bishops and Deacons, *Phil.* 1. 1. That these are ordinary, and that these are all, may appear by the Direction of the Apostle to *Timothy*, how to carry himself in the Church of God in constituting of Officers: He nameth these two, 1 *Tim.* 3. 1, 8. Bishops and Deacons: Whom doth he name by the Bishops? you may see, *Acts* 20. 17, with 28. the Flock over which God hath made you *Bishops*, Overseers; those he calleth Elders, *ver.* 17. he calleth Bishops, *ver.* 28. *Tit.* 1. 5. 7. and the same he calleth Elders, *ver.* 5. are called Bishops, *ver.* 7. For Deacons, see *Acts* 6. 2, 3, 4. the Deacons for the Church at *Jerusalem*; and *Paul* giveth Directions to *Timothy* about them, and it is a perpetual Charge to the Church. Compare 1 *Tim.* 3. 14, 15. with 1 *Tim.* 6. 13, 14. Bishops and Deacons must be kept to the coming of Christ in the Church, not so Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists.

Quest. *What manner of Persons hath God appointed to be called to the Office of Bishops, or (which is all one) Elders in the Church?*

Answ. A Bishop, or Elder in the Church, must be in himself blameless for Holiness and Righteousness, and for Freedom from Passions and Lust, also a vigilent Man, and of good Behaviour: Moreover in his Family, a Man of Government, and good Hospitality; in his Name, of good Report, yea even of those that are without: and in Profession he may not be a young Plant, but holding fast the Word of Truth, apt to teach it, and able to maintain it, 1 *Tim.* 3. 2—7, 11. *Tit.* 1. 6, to 9. To open all these Particulars from those Texts. An Elder is all one with a Bishop, and a Bishop with an Elder. Tit. 1. 5, 7. *I left thee to ordain Elders, if any be blameless: For a Bishop must*, &c. *Acts* 20. 17, 28. Therefore a Bishop in the first place must be blameless, 1 *Tim.* 3. 2. *Tit.* 1. 6. For what is it to be blameless? He must be holy, and *Tit.* 1. 8. he must be known to be holy in his Service of God, just in his Dealings with Men, and not justly taxed for any Profaneness or Unrighteousness: He must give God his own, Man his own, and not be blamed for the least Offence; so also he must be blameless from Passion and Lust: he must not be self-willed, *Tit.* 1. 7. he must not be self-conceited, self-pleasing, that pleaseth himself in his Fancy, and will not be drawn from it; he must not be soon angry, he must not be a Striker, he must not be a Brawler, 1 *Tim.* 3. 3. He must be free from readiness to be angry in his Speeches, nor must he be ready to strike, a Thought and a Word, a Word and a Blow; thus must he not be, but blameless from them: He may not lust after Wine, for that is a Lust of Intemperance; nor greedy of filthy Lucre, for that is a Lust of Covetousness, 1 *Tim.* 3. 3. *Tit.* 1. 7, 8. He must be a sober Man, and of temperate Behaviour. All those vain worthless things are reckoned under these Heads, 1 *John* 2. 6, 7. *The Lust of the Flesh, the Lust of the Eyes, and the Pride of Life.* Now when he is forbidden to be self-willed, to be angry, to be a Brawler, then he is no proud Person; take away

Self-

Self-will, and down falleth Pride; through Pride Men make Contention, *Prov.* 13. 10. He may not be blamed for Covetousness, the Lust of the Eye, nor the Lust of the Flesh, Intemperance and Incontinency: A Bishop must also be a vigilant Man, and of good Behaviour, 1 *Tim.* 3. 2. *vigilant*, that is, watchful; a double Watchfulness is required of him: 1. In respect of his own Estate, that he may not put upon the Church unnecessary Burdens; he must be prudent, not unthrifty. 2. In a diligent observance of the State of the Flock committed to him, that he may be able to apply a fit Word to them in season: Also he must be *of good Behaviour*, comely, he must not be slovenly nor rude, nor neglective to others; such a Man will bring his Calling into Contempt, especially amongst Carnal Men, this would make his People neglect his Counsel; therefore he must not be rude, whether it be through ill Nature or ill Nurture; they should be comely-carriaged Men, that they expose not their Callings to Contempt through Rudeness, or Slovenliness, but that they may be fit for any Company. God taketh no pleasure in Compliments; for God would not have a Man of a Mimick Behaviour, full of Gesticulations and Cringes, for they are not fit for Men of Gravity, as Elders must be; they must not be like Players and Courtiers, but of grave and comely Behaviour; this he must be in himself. Now in his Family he must be, first, a Man of good Government, he must have his Children and Servants in good Order, they must not be wild and unruly, not Pilferers nor riotous, nor sturdy, nor prodigal, *Tit.* 1. 7. but faithful, but frugal, but teachable, and ingenuous; he must be the Husband of one Wife, he must not have two as the Jews had, nor have a second when he had put away the first for any other Cause than Adultery; he must have but one, and her lawfully married. 1 *Tim.* 3. 5. If a Man cannot rule his own House, his own Servants, his own Children, how shall he rule other Mens Servants and Children, that are Members of the Church? He must also be of good Hospitality, 1 *Tim.* 3. 2. *Tit.* 1. 8. he must be a *Lover of Hospitality*, and given to it, the word in the Original signifies both, that a Man loveth he is given to; he taketh it for his Comfort to have Christian Friends in his House with him, it is his Joy, he doth not harbour his Brethren with grudging. 1 *Pet.* 4. 9. he must do it freely, frequently, according to the measure of his Estate God hath given him, *Heb.* 13. 1, 2. Now for his good Name, he must be a Man of good Report even of those that are without, 1 *Tim.* 3. 7. that they that would slander him, and Religion by him, may not be able, lest he fall into Reproach, which is a Dishonour to his Name, and to the Church of God, and he falleth into the Snare of the Devil; while he may seek to clear himself, he may fall into Passion, and Brawling, and Contention; or else may let a Report lie upon him, and not seek to vindicate his Name, and so the Devil will have him on either side. He must have a good Report even of those that are without, because this will first cut off occasion of Slander from Pagans, and also give them the better Opportunity and greater Encouragement to come into the Church; and for that end to confer with the Elders about it, for otherwise it would be a Stumbling-block unto them: and if they should be well reported of by those that are without, how much more by those that are within? Finally, he may not be a new Plant, a Novice, one that is new come on to Grace, or newly in the Church, for such an one is but raw, and unsettled, and of no great Experience: He must be a grave Christian, and of some standing and Constancy. *Tit.* 1. 9. he must hold fast the faithful Word of God, which a young Plant cannot do; he must be a constant Christian and Professor, that must hold fast the Doctrine of Truth and Grace, against his Adversaries Satan and his Instruments; yea, he must be able to maintain that he saith, and to perswade others to it: Apt to teach; for tho all Elders teach not, yet they must be apt for it, apt to admonish, and apt to teach, as they have occasion: they must be able to give good reason of what they hold, and able to justify it against Gainsayers. A good Cause giveth a great Strength to him that believeth what he saith, and practiseth what he believeth, such a Man will be able to give a Reason and Account of his Faith and Government, which a Gain-sayer cannot resist: He must not be a young Plant, for he is not a hold-fast; the reason of this is given, 1 *Tim.* 3. 6. *Lest being lifted up with Pride, he fall into the Condemnation of the Devil.* This holds forth thus much; That a young Plant being called to the Ministry may be puffed up with the Pride of his Place, and Respect done unto him from others, and so fall into the Condemnation of the Devil, which was Pride upon the Excellency of his Ministry, that was the Devil's Fall, and the Sin whereby he fell out of Heaven and became a Devil: God made him an Angel of Light, and when God had made his Angels ministring

Spirits

Spirits about his Throne, they were proud of it, and thought it reflected some Glory not upon God, but upon themselves, and therefore God cast them out, and they are reserved in Chains of Darkness unto the Judgment of the great Day. The Devil was not capable of the Lust of the Flesh, nor the Lust of the Eye, therefore his Sin was Pride, or the Fruits of it. Some have thought he offered to set his Throne equal with his Maker, *Isa.* 14. 12, 13. 14. but it is not spoken of him, but of the King of *Babylon*: and the Text saith, 1 *Tim.* 3 6. his Pride was in his Ministry; for Pride may shew it self as in Envy of Superiours, so in Contempt of Inferiours, or Self-sufficiency and Fulness in a Man's self; for their envying of God we read not any footsteps of it in Scripture, but that they prided themselves in their Ministry. Because they saw *Adam* and *Eve* not so glorious Creatures as themselves; but that they were more remote from God, therefore they prided themselves in their Ministry above *Adam*, and were full of themselves, and therefore would not serve and attend upon *Adam*, and this might be their Ruine: Therefore a Man may not be a Novice, lest he fall into the Sin of the Devil, who prided himself in his Ministry about the Throne, and despised *Adam*, to pride himself in his Ministry.

Use 1. This serves to teach the Church of God, when you come to choose your Church-Officers, whom they are to chuse into the Office of a Bishop or Elder, even Men thus qualified, of such Government in their Families, of such a Growth as hath been described; for if you walk besides the Rule, you walk besides Peace.

Use 2. It teacheth Officers their Duty, and what God calleth them to, even to be blameless, &c. and this is your Copy, this is that you are to express, that you may not fail in any.

Use 3. To teach us what cause of due Thankfulness to God we have, when God giveth us such as are in any measure conformable to this Rule laid down unto us.

Use 4. To teach the Children and Servants of Church Elders to take heed of Riot, of Anger, of Impatience, Disobedience, for thereby you disable them from ruling the Church. He that cannot keep in order his own Family, how then shall he rule the Church of God?

Use 5. To teach those whom God calleth to any publick Office, either in the Church or Common-wealth, to look to have their Hearts not puffed up with their Places; but be you humble in the Ministry God calleth you to, not to be exalted above your Brethren. A Man is not to be self full, but careful to receive Supply from Christ, and so to go in and out amongst your People, that you may be exemplary Patterns to them of Blamelessness, of freedom from Passions and Lust, of good Behaviour, of good Government, that so God's Work may prosper in your Hands, and you may give God a comfortable Account at the day of your Appearance.

Quest. *What sort of Bishops hath God set in his Church?*

Answ. Two; some Pastors and Teachers, some ruling Elders, under two Heads; some labour in Word and Doctrine, and of those some are Pastors, some Teachers, others rule only, and labour not in Word and Doctrine.

Quest. *What is the Work and Office of the Pastors and Teachers?*

Answ. The Work of the Pastors is to attend to Exhortation, and therein to dispense a word of Wisdom; but the Teacher's Office is to attend unto Doctrine, and therein to dispense a word of Knowledg: *Eph.* 4. 11. God hath given *some Pastors, some Teachers.* Now there be two Places which give clear Light to the difference of their Work and Office: The first place is *Rom.* 12. 7, 8. there is a Teacher which is to attend unto Teaching, and an Exhorter which is to wait upon Exhortation. If the Teacher be to attend unto Teaching, and there is besides an Exhorter, then that is left for the Pastor's Office and Work to exhort; for there are no other Officers in the Church now that labour in the Word and Doctrine but Pastors and Teachers: The Apostle maketh them distinct Officers, and they have their several Works to attend unto, the Teacher is not to attend unto Exhortation, nor the Pastor unto Doctrine. The second place is 1 *Cor.* 12. 8. the Apostle speaking of the several Gifts that God hath given to the Members of the Church; *To one*, saith he, *is given by the Spirit, the word of Wisdom, to another the word of Knowledg, by the same Spirit*; and these he maketh to be given to distinct and different Persons: As the Gifts are different, so the Persons are different. Now to which is the word of Knowledg given? it's the proper

Object

Object of the Teacher: So he is to teach Knowledg to the People, and then the Pastor is with Wisdom to dispense a Word of Exhortation. Consider what are the Objects of Knowledg and Wisdom; the Object of Knowledg is Truth, and the difference between Truth and Falshood, and contains in it all things that are to be known and believed by Christian Men, tho they are not to be practised, as the Knowledg of God, the State of Innocency, Man's Fall, of the State of Glory, yea of Man's Sins, which are not to be practised. The Object of Wisdom is Godliness, for Wisdom ever directeth to a good end, and the means to attain it: Matters of Wisdom must not only be known, but we must be stirred up and exhorted to the same; so that when he saith, *To one is given a Word of Wisdom*; that is, to discern what is best for the People of God to do, and to stir them up accordingly to it by wise Motives, and Inducements, and Helps, as may make a Christian wise unto Salvation; and for the Matters of Truth, and Faith, and Knowledg, they belong to the Teacher to dispense unto God's Children and People: but there are four things which are both for Knowledg and Practice, as what is the Nature of Repentance and Faith, Matters to be known and practised also; and so the Nature of Obedience, what is a Vertue and what a Vice; and where both these concur together, there both is the Teacher to deal in Teaching, and the Pastor to take them up in Application. Now the Reason why God is pleased thus to dispense himself is, First, Taken from the necessity of supplying the Defects of God's People: 1. Ignorance and Error lieth upon them; so God complains, *My People perish for want of Knowledg*. Now the Teacher is to look that they be taught the Knowledg of the Lord. 2. Folly and Slowness of Heart. Folly to see what is best to be done, and when we know it, we are slow to put it into practice, *Luke* 24. 25. Now here comes in the Pastor's Work, he teacheth them what is best to be done, and stirs them up to it; he cometh to heal their Folly and Slowness of Heart, and that he doth by a wise and quick Exhortation. Secondly, From the Defect of Officers themselves; for a Man may be abundant and rich in Knowledg, and yet cold in exhorting; and a Man may be quick and lively in Exhortation, and yet slow in Knowledg: and there is reason in Nature for it, for they require a several Temper of Body; a Man of Knowledg must be of a cold Temper, and an Exhorter of an hot Spirit; and therefore God for the good of his Church hath provided both. There may be little Light where there is much Heat, and much Light were there is little Heat. So God's Servants are some of them more full of Light, and some of Heat, and the Church hath need of both: And thus the Teacher may have need of the Pastor, and the Pastor of the Teacher, and so like two Hands they walk and help one another: 1 *Tim.*4.13. *Give attendance to Exhortation, and to Doctrine:* he chargeth them with both, all extraordinary Officers of the Church, as Apostles, Prophets and Evangelists, and a *Timothy*, that were to give Attendance to both; but he never saith so to any ordinary Officer: An Evangelist is as much worth as both Pastor and Teacher; and therefore they that have Spirits for both come nigh an extraordinary Officer, an Evangelist; as God raised up some in the Reformation of his Church and People: But the Apostle saith, *Rom.* 12. 7. *Let the Teacher wait on Teaching*, &c. but the word *wait* is not in the Original.

Quest. *What is this the Apostle would have them do, when he would have them attend and wait?*

Answ. He would have this to be all their Work, there they set up, there rest, they are to dwell upon them, that if you would have them, there you must have them; that tho they may have to deal in sundry occasions, yet all the Work of a Teacher is about Teaching, and of a Pastor about Exhortation. Now this word *applying* or *attending*, implies four things.

1. They must attend to the raising of their Doctrine and Exhortation, and that will require their Attendance to reading: for a Man to raise a Doctrine and not understand his Text, he buildeth without a Foundation; therefore he must read the Scripture and learn the Sense of it, and must withal attend to the State of the People which he is to teach and exhort. *Prov.* 27. 23. he would have them know the State of their Flocks, how much more should a Pastor and Teacher the State of their People? *Ezek.* 3. 17, 18, 19. therefore it is necessary for them to watch over them: *Heb.* 13. 17. that they may apply a Word to them according to their Estates. This is the first thing; if a Man either mistake the State of his Text, or of his Flock, he will speak very impertinently to them; they must not come off with a sudden Doctrine

or Exhortation; for that which is seasonable at one time, may be unseasonable at another.

2. They must attend unto applying of their Doctrine for Refutation of Errors, for Reproof of any Corruption of Manners: The Teacher to the one of them, the Pastor to the other, for there is a difference between these two; for, saith the Apostle, 2 *Tim.* 3 16. the Word *is profitable for Reproof, for Correction*, ἐλέγχος, that is, Reproof of Errors ἐπανόρθωσις, it is Reformation of Manners, and so they urge both; the Teacher presseth his Doctrine from manifold Scriptures, and Reasons from Scripture, and the Pastor presseth his Exhortation from sundry Matters, and dispenseth sundry Means by which the Duties he perswadeth them to may be performed: As also it is the Duty of both of them (in special manner of the Pastor) to comfort when either Doctrine is believed, or Duty performed.

3. They must attend to the ratifying and sealing of the Doctrine they teach, partly by dispensing the Seals of the Covenant, in which are wrapped up the Counsel of God. *Matth.* 28. 19. they must baptize and teach; and therefore they that attend unto Doctrine, must attend unto the Sacraments, to seal unto the People the Doctrine they teach, partly by Dispensation of the Church-Censures, together with the Church; whatsoever is an Act of Rule they must have a hand in it, tho others join with them. 1 Tim. 1. 20. *Whom I have delivered unto Satan:* he had a principal stroke in it, to make the Church to do it, and he did it, *that they might learn not to blaspheme*; and so he ratified his Doctrine; and so for the incestuous Corinthian doth wind about him, and send to the Church to excommunicate him, when they were met together with his Spirit, and as tho he was present with them, 1 *Cor.* 5. 3, 4. Both Pastors and Teachers have a Power to join in the Church-Censures.

4. They must attend to the perfecting of the Work they have in hand; for what is their Exhortation, and Doctrine, and Sacraments, and Censures, unless God's Blessing be upon them? therefore they must attend unto that which will perfect their Work, and that is Prayer, *Acts* 6. 4. They must attend to the Ministry of the Word and to Prayer, that is their main Work; *Phil.* 1. 3. he never prayed, but he prayed for that Church, *Col.* 1. 3. 1 *Thess.* 1. 2, 3. 1 *Sam.* 12. 23. Amongst these Prayers you must put in your Blessings, *Numb.* 6. 22, 24, 25. this perfects the Work, for Prayer opens the Treasures of Heaven for a Blessing: They also perfect their Work by their exemplary Conversation, 1 *Tim.* 4. 12. Attendance to their own Rule perfects their Work they have in hand: Nay, morever Pastors and Teachers must be willing to lay down their Lives for the Confirmation of the Doctrine and Exhortations they have given to their People, *Philip.* 2. 17. if God call they must be willing to seal it with their Blood; this perfects their Work.

Use 1. It is an Use of Refutation of a double Error: some think that the Offices of Pastor and Teacher are all one; others think that the Pastors and Teachers may be distinct Offices, yet not both of them needful in every Congregation: both of these are Errors, from that formerly delivered; for if God hath given some Pastors, and some Teachers, and hath commanded the Teacher to attend unto Teaching, and the Exhorter unto Exhortation, then they are different Offices commited to several Persons; they must attend to their several Works, the Pastor to Exhortation, the Teacher to Doctrine: I may have a Gift for sundry Matters, but I am not bound to attend to any but that which is the principal Work of my Calling: Some Man hath a Gift of Liberty, is he therefore bound to attend to that only? But when a Man is bound to attend to his Teaching, then that is a thing that will take up his whole Work, and is his peculiar Office, and so for the Exhorter. But what need both these in every Congregation? Doth not the Apostle say God hath set them in his Church? he means every particular Church. It is a maimed Body that wanteth an Eye, or some other Member; so is a Church unless it hath all the Officers, it may be a Church, but not a compleat Church: Hath not every Church need of Light and Heat, and need to be taught and exhorted? The Pastor and Teacher hath need both to be in the Church.

Use 2. To teach the Officers of the Church, both Pastors and Teachers, what is required of them in their several places, to teach, and exhort, and comfort the People of God.

Use 3. To teach the People of God, 1. Not to expect the like measure of Gifts from all your Officers; if God hath given different Gifts, you should not then look that a Pastor should be so ready and strong in Doctrine, nor from Teachers to be quick in Exhor-

Exhortations. 2. To teach us to be sensible of our own Defects: to what purpose should God give us different Officers, if we stood not in need of them? What need Teachers, if we were not dark in our Understandings? If we were not slow to believe, what need we Exhorters to quicken, to exhort, and comfort those that do well? therefore when you see your Officers, you may consider your own Defects in them. 3. To consider the marvellous Bounty of God to us, that hath sent Officers according to all our Necessities. 4. To teach you what use to make of your Pastors and Teachers, whom you are to choose to those Places and Offices; repair to them for the Word of Truth and Goodness according to God, that they may direct and exhort you in the ways of his Grace.

Quest. *What is the Office and Work of the Ruling Elders?*

Answ. Seeing the Kingdom of God is not of this World, but Heavenly and Spiritual, and the Government of his Kingdom is not Lordly, but Stewardly and Ministerial, and to labour in the Ministry of Exhortation and Doctrine is the proper Work of the Pastors and Teachers, it remaineth therefore to be the Office and Work of the Ruling Elders to assist the Pastors and Teachers, in diligent Attendance to all other Aids of Rule besides Exhortation and Doctrine, as becometh good Stewards of the Houshold of God. As, 1. To open and shut the Doors of God's House, by Admission of Members, by Ordination of Officers, by Excommunication of notorious and obstinate Offenders. 2. To see none live in the Church inordinately without a Calling, or idle in their Calling. 3. To prevent and heal Offences whether in Life or Doctrine, that might corrupt their own Church, or other Churches also, if their Counsel be required. 4. To prepare Matters for the Churches Consideration, and to moderate the Carriage of all Matters in the Church-Assemblies, as to propound Matters to the Church, and to order the seasons of Speech and Silence in the Church. 5. Finally, to feed the Flock of God by a word of Admonition; and, as she shall be called, to visit and pray for their sick Brethren.

The ground of all this is laid down in *Rom.* 12. 8. where the Apostle, besides him that exhorteth and teacheth, maketh mention of another Officer that ruleth with Diligence, and he is distinct from the Pastors and Teachers, and that is the Sum of his Work, to rule with Diligence. Now because this is a general word, to rule and hear, it is not limited, and to bring in an illimited Rule into the Church might overthrow the Estate of the Church; it is therefore requisite to enquire what manner of Rule this is. For opening of which you herein answer to the Question, that the Kingdom of Christ is not of this World, but Heavenly and Spiritual: from whence it will follow, that the Rule commended to a Ruling Elder is not a Worldly Rule, not with State and Pomp, but a Rule that doth inflict Bodily Punishment; this is the Rule of Worldly Kingdoms. Now as Christ's Kingdom is not of this World, so is neither the Rule of his Kingdom, we say it is spiritual: Is it then in such things as these Men may dispense at their Pleasure? Not so, for as his Kingdom is spiritual, so is his Government of his Kingdom, not Lordly, but Stewardly, *Luke* 12. 42. It is a Stewardly Office: and there the Officers in the Church are not said to carry the Sword as Magistrates, *Rom.* 13. 4. *But to thee will I give the Keys of the Kingdom*, Matth. 16. 19. The Power of the Sword is Princely and Lordly, but the Power of the Keys is only Stewardly and Ministerial; for so it was said, the Keys of the House of *David* were committed to *Eliakim*, *Isa.* 22. 22. and he was *over the House*, ver. 15. which Phrase of being *over the House* is translated properly, *Gen.* 43. 19. *Steward of the House.* So we see ground laid for clearing of the Office of the Ruling Elder: it is neither after a worldly manner, neither doth he rule with any illimited Power, but he is to rule as becometh a Steward in the House, not by the Sword, nor by his own Light and Direction, but by the Direction given him by the Master of the House, *Matth.* 28. 19, 20. they are to teach whatsoever Christ hath commanded them. Well then, what kind of Government is this? it is not Worldly but Ministerial, dispensing the Will of Christ: Is it then to attend upon the Ministry of the Word? we hear that to labour in that Work is commended to the Pastors and Teachers, *Tit.* 1. 5. 17. Therefore it doth remain that it belongeth unto the Office of this Ruling Elder to assist the Pastor and Teacher in all other Acts besides. Now the Rulers Office being ministerial, look what things there be that Christ hath not made proper to the Pastor and Teacher, they are communicable to those Ruling Elders: It is with the Ruling Elders now as it was with

the Levites, *Numb.* 8. 19. they are given to the Priests to assist them, but some things were reserved to the Priests, and some things were communicated to the Levites; they had indeed the Care of the Doors of the Tabernacle, but for offering Sacrifice it was not communicated to them, but reserved to the Priests only: so Attendance on teaching and exhorting is the proper Work of the Pastor and Teacher, but other Acts of Rule are as well communicated to Ruling Elders.

1. The first Act of Rule is, to open and shut the Doors of God's House; and of them to whom the Power of the Keys is committed, it is generally inferr'd that they have Power to open and shut, *Matth.* 16. 19. All the Members of the Church have some Interest in the Power of Keys, but it is specially delegated to them that are Stewards by Office for admission of Members into the Church, that is, to open the Doors of God's House. We read that when *Paul* sent for the Elders, he took his Leave of them in a most Heavenly Sermon as ever he preached; *Acts* 20. 28, 29. *Take heed therefore to your selves, and to all the Flock God hath made you Overseers of*, &c. Wherein he doth lay a Caveat to them to take heed to the Doors of God's House; grievous Wolves will be creeping in among you. This Charge lies upon all the Elders. And whereas it is said, *Let him rule with Diligence*, it implieth, 1. Watchfulness, and then Industry and Fidelity to take heed; set not open the Doors of the broad Gates of the Kingdom to let in all that comes. As the Levites were to keep the Doors of the Tabernacle, that no unclean thing should come in, no unclean *Israelite*, no not the King himself, if he were leprous and unclean: And this is the first part of the Elders Office, to open and shut the Doors of God's House, not to admit hand over head, all Comers whatsoever; but take heed no Wolf, no Hypocrite, no Carnal Person may come in, till they be able to give an Account of their Faith, to the Edification of God's Church: for this we shall read, that those are only Members fitted for the Church which are able to manifest their Faith, the Manifestation of the Spirit is given him to speak withal; so those that tender themselves to have Fellowship with the Church, tho you find that they have Grace, it is not sufficient presently to let them in, but tarry a while, and they will have a Gift to manifest the Work of Grace in their Souls, tho such should not be too long delayed, lest they be too much damped and discouraged. 2. They have Power to ordain Church-Officers, 1 *Tim.* 4. 14. The Hands of the Presbytery are the Hands of the Company of Elders, *Acts* 14. 23. those Elders are called the Eldership, or Presbytery: so that by the same Hands that they admit some into Church-Fellowship, others they admit into Office in the Church. 3. They do shut the Doors of God's House by Excommunication of notorious and obstinate Offenders. *Matth.* 18. 17, 18. *If he neglect to hear the Church, let him be to thee as an Heathen*, &c. They are to deliver them to Satan, as *Paul* determined concerning the incestuous Corinthian; now the Care of the whole Church is and ought to be, to see that they do not suffer amongst them such venomous Persons as would corrupt the whole Body, but in special-wise this Care belongeth to the Elders, some singular Accompts lie upon them. Christ Jesus writing an Epistle to the Churches of *Asia*, he doth in special reprove the Angels of the Churches, and those doth he blame for tolerating such things as God hateth. Now if they be principally and properly reproved by Christ for suffering scandalous Offenders, *Rev.* 2. 14, 15, 16. it is therefore their Care to see that the Church be not scandalized with notoriously corrupted Members, it lies principally upon them that are to be Guides and Rulers in the Congregation of the Saints.

2. The Power of the Keys reacheth further; it doth belong to the Stewards Care to see that none in the Churches do live inordinately without a Calling, or idle in their Calling. It is the Elders Office to see that no Drone or unprofitable Servant be in the Church which may live of other Mens Labours. 2 *Thess.* 3. 10, 11. there the Apostle taxeth the *Thessalonians* for a double Vice, some walked without Callings, others were idle in their Callings; and this belongeth to the Elders to see to the Amendment thereof: it is an Act of Rule.

3. A third Act of the Elders Office is to prevent and heal all Offences in Life or Doctrine in their own or other Churches, *Rev.* 2. 14, 15, 20. The Angels, the Officers of the Church, are to see that no *Balaamite*, no *Nicholaitan*, no *Jezebel* be in the Church, but such they are to heal, either by Admonition, or else to cast them out of the Church, 2 *Thess.* 5. 13, 14. This is the proper Character of the Elders Office; if warning may heal a Vice, that Member ought not to be cut off: but they are to be cut off if Warning or Rebuke heal not. The Elders are to seek to heal it; for if it be not removed or reformed

formed it lies upon their Heds: And I put it in that they are to help other Churches also if their Counsel be required. Churches may require the help of other Congregations to heal and remove the Offence that pelters the Body, if they cannot do it themselves. When the Church at *Antioch* was troubled about the necessity of Circumcision to Salvation, and they could not be satisfied in it, they sent to the Church at *Jerusalem*, and Apostles and Elders: The Apostles are not implied as extraordinary Officers, but they carry all things in an ordinary course, and meet together with the Church to debate the Matter with the Church Assembly, and there was such disputing amongst them: if they had spoken by Divine Testimony, what needed their Disputation? the Word of one Apostle might have quelled all Contradiction; but they send to them as to a Church, and it is a Precedent for other Churches, and therefore in that the Elders are named, it is their Care to look to such Errors as rise in other Churches if they be required, and it is also their Duty according to the Rule of Christ to go to other Churches and deliver their Minds. *Acts* 15. 22. there you may see that such ought to be the Care of the Elders, and of one Church over another, as that if any Church should send to them for their Counsel, they are to do what they can for the redressing of Errors amongst them, and they may set in order such things, and send chosen Men from amongst themselves unto other Congregations, as to answer by word of Mouth what hath been agreed upon: this belongeth to the Elders Office; but in case other Churches should be careless of enquiring after the Counsel of other Churches, it will be the part of one Church to admonish another, out of the Liberty that one Church hath in another, and the necessity that lies upon all to neglect no good Means to preserve the Houshold of God unsported. But how cometh it to pass that all the Churches are called one Church? *Mat.* 18. 18. Doth it not shew thus much, that all Churches have alike Power, and that all Churches should have alike Care over one anothers good? So this was prophesied of old of the Churches of the New Testament; *Cant.* 8. 8. *We have a little Sister, and she hath no Breasts*, &c. What if a Church hath no Breasts? and what if she should use means, and not be able to procure Breasts? What if she should be content to live without Breasts, should other Churches let such a Church alone? The Church doth complain *we have a little Sister, and she hath no Breasts; what shall we do for her?* This is the mutual Care that one Church should have of another: whatever Defects they see a Church lie under, they might labour to supply them. It was *Cain*'s profane Spirit that said, *Am I my Brother's Keeper?* and it savoureth of the Rancor of *Cain*'s Spirit to say, What hath one Church to do with another? Is it nothing if one Church want Officers, Breasts to give them Suck? if there be in you Spirits of Sisters, if the Blood of Christ run in your Veins, you may not put off the State of other Churches, as impertinent to you. It is therefore the Care of Elders that are Officers in the Churches, for to be ready to help other Churches if they do require them; and if they do not require them, yet by all means what they can to help them, and reform what is amiss amongst them.

4 The part of the Officers is to prepare Matters for the Churches Consideration, and to moderate Matters in the Church-Assembly: First, to prepare Matters for the Church's Consideration, *Acts* 21. 18. They knew *Paul* must come before the Church, therefore they meet to prepare Matters for it, that he might not raise an Offensiveness in the Church: When they meet together, the Elders are to take Care that things might be so carried that there might be no Disturbance, they must so fit them that there may be little Noise, and that the Churches Answer may be without Exaggeration, Contention and Disturbance, that things may be ordered with the most Care, with the least Offence to Edification, and they are to order the seasons of Speech and Silence in the Church. *Acts* 13. 15. *The Rulers of the Synagogue sent*, &c. so that they open the Mouths of Men and by the same Power do also shut them again: they who call for Speech may call for Silence; he that shutteth, he may also open; he that openeth, may also shut: They also propound Matters to the Congregation, *Acts* 6. 3. And what the Apostles did as Elders, the same may also Elders do. It is the Elders Office to feed the Flock of God with a Word of Admonition: For we heard before, that all the Elders were to be apt to teach, and able to convince an Adversary. Now what Word doth remain for them? not a Word of Exhortation nor Doctrine, for that belongs to the Pastors and Teachers; but the Apostle expresseth it, 1 *Thess.* 5. 12. *Now we beseech you Brethren*, &c. where he distinguisheth between them that labour and them that rule; *know them that labour among you*, that is, your Pastors and Teachers; and

know

know them that are over you, that is, your Ruling Elders: and what Work do they? they rule principally by a Word of Admonition, that is, such a Word that warneth every Man in his place to take up some Calling, and to be diligent in his Calling, to be able to teach this or that to be lawful or unlawful, this is he both able and fit for to do, and this he ought to do according unto God, *Acts* 20. 31. *Paul* propounds his own Example to them, how he ceased not to warn them day nor night with Tears; and the Warning is a principal part of Rule: And therefore when good *Lot* did but sadly admonish those lewd Persons, *Gen.* 18. 19. they said, shall he judg and rule? so that this is the Work of the Elders to admonish the Church. Finally, when they are called for, they are to visit the sick Brethren, and to pray over them, *James* 5. 14, 15. being called for, they ought to speak some Word of Edification to the Sick, and to pray over them, and God hath promised to heal them both in Soul and Body; *the Prayer of Faith shall save the Sick.* As for Anointments with Oil, it is ceased, as is the Gift of Miracles, but it is a marvellous strong Promise that is given to the Prayers of the Elders of the Church: for the Lord did know that this Ordinance would be despised, and to prevent it, the Lord doth marvellously incourage them to the use of it by the Promise of this very Blessing, that *the Prayer of Faith shall save the Sick; and if he have committed Sins, they shall be forgiven him*; so that it will be a wholesome Medicine both to Soul and Body: Not that God doth promise that this shall ever be granted, for then Men should never die, when they send for the Elders to pray over them; but they shall find it to be a usual Blessing to the Honour of the Elders Office, that at their Prayer for the Sick, the Lord will raise up their Estate and Strength again, tho it seems desperate. Thus you see the whole Duty of these Ruling Elders, and how they are to assist the Pastors and Teachers in all other Acts of Rule besides Word and Doctrine.

Use 1. From hence observe the great Bounty of God unto Pastors and Teachers, that God hath not left them alone in the Church; as *Martha* complains to Christ, that *Mary* had left her alone to serve: the Ministers of the Church have no such Cause to complain; for as he gave the Levites to the Priests to help them in their Service, so hath he given ruling Elders to such as labour in the Word and Doctrine, that they might have Assistance from them in ruling of the Church of God.

Use 2. It may serve to answer a Cavil that some have against this Office, who say, That if God hath given these Officers to the Church, he would have then set down the Limits of their Offices, and not have sent them forth with illimited Power. To which it is answered, that their Power is strongly limited, as a Stewardly or Ministerial Power and Office. It is the Power of the Keys, which Christ hath expressed in his Word, and it consisteth in these things that have been spoken of God's House, to open and shut the Doors of God's House, by Admission of Members, *&c.* (*ut prius.*) This is such a Rule as is no small help to the Spirits and Hearts of those that labour in Doctrine, and no small help it is also to the whole Church of God, and when they are wanting many Evils will grow, and those without possibility of Redress and Amendment, much Idleness, much Confusion, many Offences: tho other Ministers have been in the Church, we may see how much in the want of these Officers, the Churches have been corrupted.

Use 3. This serveth for Instruction to the Elders, to shew them what Bounds God hath set them in their Calling, as hath been said, that so they may walk according to God in them.

Use 4. It doth inforce a Duty lying upon all the Members of the Church to submit themselves to them in the Lord as becometh Saints: Members ought to submit to their Trial; it is no Arrogancy for them to deal with those that are to be admitted into the Church, to lay Hands upon Officers: And think it not a hard matter that they should be thus careful of setting Men into their Callings: It is no Transgression of their Bounds to prepare Matters for the Church, to moderate the Carriage of Matters in the Church-Assembly by their wise Direction, and it will be then the part and duty of the People to submit to their Elders in these things. From this Ground it will appear to be a swerving from the Rule, for Men to give way to their Spirits and Tongues to speak in the Congregation, tho their Matters be good, before the Door be opened by him that hath the Keys, otherwise it is out of order, they ought not for to speak without the Consent of the Elder; and if the Elder see that it tends to Confusion and Disturbance, he may as reasonably put an end to it, as at first he opened a Door for it.

Object.

Object. '*But suppose that all the Elders be in the same Transgression, and they will not hear any Admonition: If then before I can declare it to the Church, I must crave leave of them to speak, they will not give it me, may not I then declare my Grievance to the Church without them?*

Answ. If all the Officers be in an Offence, and if they will not hear thy private Admonitions, then tell the Church of them. If '*Peter* himself offend, and *Peter* will not hear thee, tell the Church of *Peter*: Christ alone and his Church is King and Judg in such a Case, then doth their Power return to the Church from whence they first receiv'd it: but if the Elders be not delinquent, nor possessed with any sinful Prejudice, then must they moderate the Carriage of all Matters in the Church Assembly, otherwise there would be no end of Speaking and Confusion, if every Man might open a Floodgate of Speech when he would. And when we see further what heth as a Duty upon sick Persons, that they must not neglect to send for the Elders of the Church; for we see how strong the Promise is, when they are sent for in Faith with Expectation of a Blessing from an Ordinance, and they pray over them in the Name of the Lord; and, lastly, as Brethren ought to receive Admonition from the Hand of any Brother, so surely they ought not to despise it from the Hand of an Elder. 1 *Thess.* 5. 12, 13, 14. there the Apostle shews them how willingly and surely they should submit to such with due Attention and Reformation according to God.

Quest. *What manner of Men hath God appointed to be called to the Deacons Office?*

Answ. Men of Gravity and good Report, not given to Dissimulation, nor to Wine, nor to Covetousness, Men full of the Holy Ghost and Wisdom, holding the Mystery of Faith in a pure Conscience, keeping their Houshold in good Rule; having such Wives as may neither dishonour nor corrupt their Calling; not Slanderers, but grave, sober, and faithful in all things.

Explicat. This full Description of the State of the Deacons Spirit is expresly laid down in two places of Scripture, 1 *Tim.* 3. 8——12. and *Acts* 6. 3. First, They must be Men of Gravity; this word translated *grave*, doth imply three things. 1. It is opposed to Lightness: A Deacon must not be light in his Gestures, in his Speech and Apparel, but be grave. 2. It is opposed to Wantonness: they must be retired, and clean from all wanton Dalliance. 3. Comeliness, the word signifies reverent and venerable: He must neither be light in his own Carriage, nor in the Hearts of other Men. The word cometh from a word that signifies to worship: He must not be light in his own Disposition, nor in other Mens Apprehensions. Him whom you would slight, is not venerable, (σεμνὸς) which is required of a Deacon. Secondly, He must be *of honest Report*, Acts 6. 3. Men gravely born witness unto, so signifies the word (μαρτυρουμένους) they must carry a good Report with them where-ever they are known. Thirdly, They must not be given to Dissimulation, not double-tongu'd. In Churches of great Multitudes, where many are to be maintained by their Hands, he may promise something to some which he may forget, or not be able to perform: his Word must be as his Oath or Vow, if it be gone out of his Mouth it must stand inviolable: He must not pretend more Care for the Poor than there is need, nor promise that he is not able to perform. A Man is double-tongu'd two ways; 1. When his Heart differs from his Tongue. 2. When his Tongue differs from his Tongue at several times, when the first thing was right and true: He must not be given to Wine; for so he may come to waste not only his own Estate, but the Stock of the Church, and that is contrary to the Spirit of a Steward. Nor to Covetousness, for that will overwork his honest Heart to divert the Church's Stock from the Church's Service, and to imploy it for his own Ends: therefore this is carefully to be avoided, these are his moral Vertues. Now for his Spiritual Endowments, he must be *full of the Holy Ghost, and Wisdom*, Acts 6. 3. He must be *full of the Holy Ghost*: which implies, 1. That a Man must be empty of his own Spirit, for else he cannot be full of the Spirit of God. A Vessel cannot be full of Wine and Water too: Therefore he must be empty of every Lust, and of himself. 2. He must abound in all the Gifts of God's Grace, and not only be full of Gifts, but of the Holy Ghost himself: For Gifts will grow rusty, dead, powerless, and unprofitable, and we shall turn them to our own Ends: but he must be full of the Holy Ghost, not full of Faith, Patience, *&c.* but of the Spirit of Faith, and full of the Spirit of God, to put Life into all his Graces: 1 *John* 4. 4. *Greater is he*, &c. it is not his Gifts, but his Person: *Rom.* 8. 11. It is not Gifts that raised Christ from the dead, but

but the eternal Spirit. Now then the eternal Spirit of God must rest in the Heart of a Deacon, a Deacon may be put to sudden Expressions; and if he be not full of the Holy Ghost, he will not well rule his own Gifts: the more pure any Grace is, the sooner it is wreckt, unless it be carefully handled and guided according to God. A Man is then full of the Holy Ghost, when he doth not content himself with Gifts, that he hath a Gift of Prayer and of Edification, and a Spirit of Diligence, but when he finds himself still empty for all this, but as he continually descries fresh Supply from the Holy Ghost. If in abundance of Gifts I find my self empty, and I am sensible of my own Unprofitableness, and Inability to do any good, then am I not only full of the Gifts of God, but of the Holy Ghost, to carry them an end with Strength. 3. And this implies such a Strength of Grace and Spirit, that it carries him above the World, above all Lusts, above all Temptations, all Credit and Reputation, and whatsoever he meets withal, and he is carried with full Sail steadily and strongly to God's Heavenly Kingdom; whatsoever is put into his Hand, he is carried an end with Speed and Strength above all Difficulties. 4. A Man is full of the Holy Ghost, when he is ready to utter spiritual things upon all occasions; *For out of the abundance of the Heart the Mouth speaketh.* When a Man is full of the Holy Ghost, there is a Law of Grace in his Lips: and there is reason that a Deacon should be thus full of the Spirit, for many times the Ministers may grow worldly with whom they are to deal, who then should speak a spiritual Word of quickning to them: and also they are to deal with the Poor and with the Sick, and therefore had need to deal with their Souls as well as with their Bodies. *Job* 32. 18. *Elihu* when he was full of the Holy Ghost could not hold his Peace, but must speak. 5. A Man full of the Holy Ghost will not respect Persons: a Deacon will be apt to respect his Kindred, or Friends, or Country-men if he be not full of the Holy Ghost. The Levites did not know their own Fathers when they had sinned, and they were then full of the Holy Ghost. A Man with his own Stock may lawfully have Respect to Persons, to his Kindred, *&c.* and ought so to do: but if it come to the Stock of the Church, that being in the Hand of a Man dedicated to God; now his Hands are the Hands of God, and the Hands of the Church, and therefore he distributes them according to God, as if the Holy Ghost did it, not respecting Persons. (*And full of Wisdom.*) There was in the Apostles time more need of Wisdom, for they had the Charge of all the Members of the Church, they had the common Stock of all, and therefore were to provide for all they had Charge of, and therefore had need to have the Wisdom of the whole Church that they might distribute an equal Proportion to all: But when the Church was not so poor, but Men might distribute to the Ministers and Poor, and yet not sell their whole Estates, yet then also was there need of Wisdom to administer the Churches Treasure; they must see the Burdens of Men, and relieve them accordingly. Nay, in this Country, if the Deacons have not a publick Providence, the poor Company of the Church may much want; for it is some Mens sinful Modesty, that they will perish almost rather than ask: Therefore they being the Churches Stewards, must see that every one hath such a comfortable Proportion of Estate, that he may attend to the things of God, and to the Edification of his own Soul, and not be disquieted in his Spirit; We must not serve Tables, saith the Apostle, but it is the Deacons Office: The Holy Ghost speaketh more of the Deacons than of Pastors and Teachers; for they have not so much need of this kind of Wisdom as the Deacon hath; therefore they had need cast an Eye to see what Mens Tables be, and so accordingly as they may comfortably provide for them, that so they may bless God, and attend to God's Ordinances (keeping the Mystery of Faith in a pure Conscience.) Must he be such now will you say? The whole Doctrine of Religion is a Mystery to Flesh and Blood: his Conscience being a pure and precious Vessel, the Mystery of Faith should be so kept, that he may be as exemplary in his Place for this as for Wisdom: and the reason is this, because that in the Persecution of the Churches the Deacons have been hunted after, partly to know what was the Churches Treasure, that they might confiscate it, and partly because they think them more excellent than other Men, being called to publick Office; and therefore the Deacons have been put to exquisite Torment, as *Lawrence* the Deacon, *&c.* Now if a Man be called to answer, he had need to be a Man of Knowledg and Faith, and that in a pure Conscience, for so he will dash his Enemies and honour his Profession. 2. He must hold the Mystery of Faith, that he may be able to speak a word of Edification to his poor Brethren, as well as minister to their Bodies. Now for his Family-

Gifts:

Gifts: First, He must keep his House well in order; if his Children be riotous, his Servants disorderly, it will weaken the Deacons Fidelity: and besides, publick Persons must be exemplary both in publick and private walking. For their Wives, they must be such as may neither corrupt, nor dishonour their Calling, nor Slanderers, grave, sober and faithful in all things: [and not Slanderers] the word is, not Devils, not unjustly accusing any Body, nor unseasonably doing of it: If one accuse another unjustly, or without due Order, the Deacon may grow more remiss in his Office to such, and so a Woman may corrupt and dishonour his Calling; she must speak well of her Brethren and Sisters: [grave] they must not be light in themselves, nor in others Esteem, but reverent and grave: [sober] the word is the same with vigilant; 1 *Tim.* 3. 2. The Deacon's Wife therefore must be a good Housewife, for else she may corrupt his Calling; she must also be sober and moderate in Meats and Drinks, and humble and meek, not high, above Sobriety, above due Proportion and Measure: [and faithful in all things] faithful to God, he trusts her, faithful to Men, they dare trust her; faithful to her Husband, faithful in Speech, in Carriage, not dealing unrighteously with any thing committed to her Hand, but helping forward her Husband in the place God hath set him.

Use 1. It may serve to teach the Church of God what manner of Men they are to choose into this Office. And,

2. It teacheth Deacons how they are to behave themselves whom God calleth to this Office, and what their Qualifications ought to be, and what they are to grow up unto, that so they may faithfully discharge the Trust that God and his Church have committed unto them.

Quest. *What is the Office of a Deacon?*

Answ. To receive the Offerings of the Church which are brought unto them and laid down before them, and therewith to serve Tables, distributing with Simplicity, not only to the Ministers of the Church, but to any other of the Brethren, as their Need shall require; *Acts* 6. 3, 4. The occasion of their Calling was this: the Apostles being sent by Christ with fulness of Power, being Pastors, Teachers, Elders and Deacons, finding themselves burdened with the Deacons Office, which was the lowest part of their spiritual Work, they disburdened themselves of it, and said it was not meet they should go to serve Tables, therefore to serve Tables they laid down to the Deacons; what the Apostles did in that Office, they delegated to them, *Acts* 6. 34, 35. It seemeth they set higher than the People, and every one brought his Offering and laid it down at their Feet, and they therefore received; they went not to call upon the People for such Benevolence, nor seek it where it is not to be had, but the Members freely offered it, and what they offered they took: Such was the manner of the old Temple. *Luke* 21. 1, 2, 3. They cast Money into the Treasury, where it was received by the Officers for that Service. *Nehem.* 13. 12, 13. there is set down what Officers they were the Gifts were brought and disposed to, the Treasurer, *&c.* and they faithfully distributed to their Brethren: so *David* appointed Men over the Treasury, 1 *Chron.* 26.20,26. And he gave *Solomon* the Pattern of the Treasury, 1 *Chron.* 28. 11. The People brought their Offerings, and the Levites received and distributed them, 2 *Chron.* 31. 11, 14. they were not exacted by the *Levites*, but brought and distributed as need required: So in the New Testament, Christ first appointed his Disciples the Apostles for that Office, who received the Contributions of the Church, and therewith served Tables; but when Necessity required, they laid down that Office to others. To serve Tables implies to minister to the Necessity of all their Brethren; for then they laid all upon the common Stock, and they had nothing peculiar, because else they could not provide for the Congregation, tho a part had been received, as *Peter* told *Ananias*. This therefore was the Care of the Apostles to see that every Man's Table in the Congregation was spread: Now lest it might be thought that the same course should be taken all Ages in the Church, therefore it fell out otherwise whilst the Apostles themselves lived, that in the Churches of the Gentiles which were rich, and Men might keep a Propriety in their Estate, and yet maintain the Church, they were commanded to put it into a Stock every Lord's-day, what they laid aside for the Necessity of the Church, 1 *Cor.* 16. 2. and out of that they did prepare the Lord's Table, the Table of the Officers and of their poor Brethren of their own Church, and other Churches, according to their Necessity. Now the

Deacon in ſerving of Tables muſt diſtribute in Simplicity. *Rom.* 12. 8. He that diſtributes, &c. which is the Deſcription of the Deacon. There is this difference between Diſtribution and Contribution: He that contributes gives his private Stock and Offering into a common Treaſury; but to diſtribute, is to turn a common Stock into Pieces and Parcels, as every one hath need. This muſt be done with Simplicity, which implies two things; (1.) It ſtandeth in oppoſition to Reſpect of Perſons, that a Deacon ſhould not reſpect any for Country ſake, for Kindred ſake, but diſtribute to every one as he hath need. (2.) 2 *Cor.* 8 2. this word *Simplicity* is there tranſlated *Liberality*, and 2 *Cor.* 9. 11. the ſame word which is here tranſlated *Simplicity*, is there tranſlated *Bountifulneſs*. A Deacon therefore muſt not diſtribute with Reſpect of Perſons: but alſo with a free and willing Spirit, without any upbraiding of any Brother or Other in the Church, but freely diſtributing, according to the Will of Chriſt and of the Church: The Chearfulneſs of the Giver, and the Readineſs of his Care in giving, ſhew expreſs much Simplicity. Now the Deacon is not only to diſtribute to the Miniſters tho he doth to them: 2 *Cor.* 8. 15. and ſo they did in the New Teſtament; for if the Church was ſupplied by the Treaſurers, then much more the Apoſtles and Officers of the Church.

Object. Gal. 6. 6. *Let him that is taught in the Word, communicate to him that teacheth him in all good things.*

Anſw. The word is not *diſtribute* but *communicate*, that is, put it into a common Treaſury, 1 *Tim.* 6. 17, 18. There is difference between diſtributing and communicating: to communicate is to lay a parcel of the Eſtate into a common Stock, *be ready to communicate*; but to diſtribute is another thing, which they may have occaſion to do here and there as they ſee any have need, of that which is put into the common Stock; and therefore the Apoſtle's meaning, *Gal.* 6. 6. is not to diſtribute, but to communicate according to a Man's Eſtate and the Churches Occaſions. 1 *Tim.* 5 17. there is a Care to be had of the Officers of the Church; that which is given muſt be given as an Honour and due, not grudgingly, but freely and readily; thoſe that are Officers muſt live of their Labour: beſides, the Officers are to diſtribute to every one according to his Need and Uſe, not only Neceſſity, but according to his expedient Uſe, *Acts* 4. 35. This was never counted Alms in the Church, or Mercy, but a Mercy of Juſtice and Equity, whether to their own Church, or the Members of other Churches in their need, with Conſent of the Church, *Rom.* 15. 26, 27. The Apoſtle giveth this Contribution a Name far off from Alms or Charity, for he calleth it a Service and Grace of God to be able to communicate to the Neceſſities of the Church, 2 *Cor.* 9. 12. and 8. 19.

Uſe 1. To teach you a true diſcerning of the Corruptions that have been brought into the Office in time of Popery, wherein it hath been impoſed upon them to teach and baptize ſome to rule, yea over-rule the Officers of the Church, and the Church it ſelf, ſo that very few of them have a hand in ſerving of Tables, a Burden which the Apoſtles perceived they were not able to bear, that is beyond the Inſtitution of Chriſt, and therefore an Invention of Man's Brain, and will never do good to the Church of God.

Object. Philip *preached and baptized*, Acts 8. 5, 12, 13. *and if ſo, why might he not alſo be a Ruler?*

Anſw. He was not only a Deacon, but when the Office was laid aſide by reaſon of the Perſecution, then God called him forth to be an Evangeliſt, *Acts* 21. 8. and therefore he may not be a Pattern for Deacons in other Ages. It is a like Abuſe that in ſome Churches they have inſtead of theſe Collections for the Poor, who receive not the Contributions, but gather them and diſtrain for them, and that not for the Miniſters, but for the Poor only, this never doth good in the Church; but it falls out that all the Collections made by the Church will not maintain the Poor of the Church, but they are forced to beg abroad; God marvellouſly beareth Witneſs to his own Ordinance, that either there ſhall be no Poor, or if there be, God ſo bleſſeth his own Ordinance, that a little Church hath well provided for all her Poor, yea ſometimes to the Relief of Neighbour-Congregations.

Uſe 2. To teach Deacons to caſt about how all the Tables of the Congregation may be provided for; not only the Lord's Table, and the Officers Table, but alſo the Tables of the poor Brethren; who tho they make not known their Neceſſity, yet the Deacons Care ſhould be to ſee that they be provided for of things ſufficient for this natural

natural Life, and therefore to provide that they may have Gardens, and planting Grounds, *&c.* by which they might live.

Use 3. It behoves all the Members of the Body that ought to have a Care one of another, to see that there may never want Provision in the Deacons Hands to provide for all the Tables in the Churches, and to see that there never want Bread in God's House, and then God hath promised, *Mal.* 3. 9, 10, 11. that he will open the Windows of Heaven, and pour in a Blessing. It is for Brethren of higher degree to see to the Treasury of the Churches, *Gal.* 6. 10. that so no Member of the Church may want convenient Supply; and where there is Meat in God's House, there shall never want Meat in any Man's House: He is a faithful God, and he hath said it; *Prove me now and see if I will not open the Windows of Heaven*, &c.

Use 4. To provoke the Deacons when Strangers come over from other Churches, to see that none of them want convenient Harbour among our Congregations, especially when there is only Care needful, no Charges required.

Quest. *But is it not the Deacons Office to shew Mercy with Chearfulness?*

Answ. Yes verily, to their Brethren in Misery; but that part of their Office they chiefly perform by the Hand of the Widows chosen into the Number, who are therefore called the Deacons or Servants of the Church: The Deacon is to shew Mercy with Chearfulness, *Rom.* 12. 8. He must not stay till his Brethren be in extream Misery, but before-hand prevent them with some seasonable Relief as may save them out of the Hand of such Extremity. A small matter will strengthen an House when it is undershooted, but when it is down, then a great matter will not do it: So it is with a poor Brother's Estate, therefore in ordinary course, Distribution in time should prevent it; but the Members will be sick, and sometimes sick of long Diseases, and poor Brethren will be sick as well as rich, and then there is room for shewing of Mercy; but where there is no Misery there is no need of Mercy, but when Danger, long Sickness, danger of Death, extream Wants fall upon Brethren, then must the Deacon shew Mercy, and that with Chearfulness: that is, not grudgingly, nor of necessity. That word Chearfulness implies, that whereas the Brother standeth in need of the Church's Love in way of Mercy; this Chearfulness distributes it readily, freely, joyfully, and not rejoycing in his Misery, but in that he hath to relieve him withal: this Grace adorns a Christian much. *Mich.* 7. 18. God describes himself by it, that he delights in Mercy, when he hath occasion to shew Mercy, that is the Work he delights in; tho the Sins of his People be many, and his Anger is provoked against them for the same, yet he sheweth Mercy, and that with Delight in it. *Luke* 15. 20. The Father was moved with Compassion, and ran to meet his Son and kisses him. When the Soul is very unfit to receive Mercy, then he runs to his Son and kisses him: and that which God sheweth to his Sons in Misery, he calleth us to shew the like, that so we may be like him; and the Reason is great that the Church offers in shewing of Mercy, that they should do it with Chearfulness. 1. God's Example requires it, as you see before. 2. The Brotherly Affection that should be between the Members of the Lord Jesus, requires the same. How busy is every Member of the Body to procure Help and Mercy to any Member that standeth in need? Now God calleth us to be Members of one Body, and commendeth this Work of Mercy to the Deacons, and they should come readily and chearfully to this Work, to shew Mercy to those that are in Misery. 3. From the great Recompence that God poureth upon his Church and the Officers, when he seeth them doing of Works of Mercy with Chearfulness. *Mich.* 6. 7, 8. God careth not so much for a thousand Sacrifices, but that he loveth that Men should love Mercy, and be diligent to shew it. But this part of the Office, *&c.* 1 *Tim.* 5. 9. and these Widows are taken into the number of the Deacons. The Apostle speaketh not of Widows to be relieved, for so a Widow of thirty or forty may stand in need by Sickness, or any other Misery; but of such Widows as are chosen into the number of those that are to shew Mercy with Chearfulness, and these are the Widows or Servants of the Church. *Rom.* 16. 1. it is translated *Servants*, but the word is *Deacons*; there was a Church at *Cenchrea* an Haven by *Corinth*, and *Phebe* was a Deacon there, and the Servant of the Church implies the thing: For a Woman may not teach nor rule in the Church, and therefore she must be a Deaconess: And the Apostle giveth her this Testimony, that she had been a Succourer of him and of others also. Now this succouring is to those that are cast down by Sickness or Sores, to look to them, and to provide them Tables;

and none are so fit for this as skilful, pitiful and compassionate Widows; they are fit to minister Succour to poor Brethren, to them that have none of their own Kindred to provide for them and relieve them: such are to be taken into the number of the Deacons; this was the Practice of the Primitive Church long after the Apostles times.

Quest. *What manner of Widows hath God allowed to be chosen into this Number?*

Answ. Antient Widows of threescore Years of Age, well reported of for good Works, for nursing of their Children, for lodging of Strangers, washing the Saints Feet, for relieving the Afflicted, for diligently following of every good Work, 1 *Tim.* 5. 9. First, They must be threescore Years old, and the reason is, 1. Because they must be dedicated to the Church's Service; for in those hot Countries many were sick of Pestilential Fevers; again, they were often in Wars, and therefore many poor Members might come home maimed, as also many were called before Judgment-seats, and there beaten and dismembred, and so need Succour. Now therefore he would not have her that is chosen into the Office to have an Husband, for such have Families of their own to look unto: and she must be one that is past Marriage; for when they are called to an Office, they should not easily lay it down again: and this Reason the Apostle giveth; for the younger Women wax wanton against Christ, and will marry: they having many Pagans about them, the young Women taking Affection to them they would leave their Faith and their Office to marry them: therefore he would have them be past Marriage. 2. From the Vanity that would befal younger Women; if they had no Imployment of their own but only publick, they would then be fit for the Devil's Work, they would go about from House to House, and be Busy-bodies; but elder Women would be graver than to talk of every thing they see, and therefore he would have them to be threescore Years old. Now there are four things required of these Widows. 1. Diligence. 2. Tenderness of Affection. 3. Lowliness in Mind. 4. That she diligently follow every good Work.

1. Diligence. She must be a painful Woman, and take Pains about a sick Body, and therefore the Apostle would know whether they had nursed their own Children or no: for many Women will not, tho God give them Breasts, they will not have their Sleeps broken, neither can they tarry so long at home; but if a Woman cannot endure to do servile Offices to her own Children, she will never endure to do Service to elder Bodies; therefore she must be one that hath nursed her own Children.

2. Tenderness in Affection to those that are in Misery; she should be full of Courtesy to all, of Mercy to those that are poor and in Misery: therefore the Apostle would know whether she had lodged Strangers or no. There is not the poorest Woman but, be she loving, at one time or other she shall have Strangers: and a Deaconess must not be churlish nor covetous, for if so they that are succoured by her will find but little Mercy, and slender Provision, she will divert the Church's Portion, and which the Deacons commit to her, to her self; therefore she must be one that hath entertained and lodged Strangers. But the Apostle would further know whether she relieved the Afflicted also or no; for a Man may lodg Strangers for his own Honour's sake; but to relieve the Afflicted, argues not only Courtesy but Mercy also: and therefore when such are in Office, they will do it with more Mercy. You will say, by this no poor Woman shall be called to this Office, for they can relieve but few. True, Poverty is a great hindrance unto it; but the poor Widow which cast more into the Treasury than all the rich Men did, she may have her poor Mites: Suppose she hath no Money, yet she can tend them, provide their Diet, and do such like things for them; and is a Woman ready to do this? Some may relieve with Money, some with Apparel, some with Counsel, and that the poorest may do. Courtesy and Mercy is the second Property which is required in a Widow to be chosen into the number of the Deacons.

3. Lowliness of Mind: Therefore, saith the Apostle, if she hath washed the Saints Feet, *Gen.* 19. 2. and 43. 42. and 24. 32. And this Christ charges upon *Simon*, *Luke* 7. 44. that he had not done unto him. In those Countries they wore no Stockins and Shoes, but Sandals tied about the bottom of their Feet; and their first Entertainment was when they came to any place, to wash their Feet: therefore the Widow must be such an one that hath washed the Saints Feet, and must do any humble Service to them: this is not useful in this Country, but implies she must not skue at any poor Service,

Service, or fulsome or mean Office that may concern the Comfort of a weak or sick Brother.

4. She must be diligently following every good Work; this is not every good Woman's Care and Practice: There is not any Conference but she will be one there, not any day of Humiliation but she will be one at it; this is the main thing he commendeth, she must be one of the foremost at every good Work, and she follows it on till it comes to some Perfection: this Woman is fit for this Service, this is a Work of Fruitfulness and Godliness, nay, she must be well reported of for all these: for many an one is given to these things, but is not known so to be; therefore she must be known; that is, required of all Officers, of Elders and Deacons, and so of Widows. Publick Officers of the Church must be of good Report, of a good Name and Fame, for that is the Honour of the Lord Jesus Christ, this good Report is the Cognizance and Badg of a Godly Soul; so much Faith as there is in the Heart, so much good Report there is of a Man in the Mouths of Men. *Heb.* 11. 2. Faith and the Fruits of Faith brought the Elders unto a good Report; and the ground of this is, no Man liveth by Faith, but he liveth by Christ, and honoureth him; and the more a Man honoureth Christ, the more will Christ honour him; and therefore a faithful Christian never wants a good Report, but he is a Crown of Glory where-ever he doth come: He walks in an humble Frame, for that is the Life of Faith, and fruitful unto Men, and thus he cometh to have a good Report, and then will Christ have no Dishonour by Administrations: They that speak Evil of such a Man, their own Consciences bear witness against them, and therefore these Widows that are to be chosen to this Office, are to be well reported of: They that speak ill of such Men as are humble and fruitful in their Course, and do all for the Glory of Christ, they are either brutishly ignorant, or such as sin maliciously against the Holy Ghost. Humility and Love never went without a good Name from the beginning of the World, nor never will to the latter end of the World.

Use 1. This doth reprove the Popish manner of their kind of Cloisters; for this place of the Apostle was the Foundation of their Nunneries. When the Apostle said they must be of threescore Years of Age, a Council afterwards decreed they should be forty Years old: Afterwards because the Apostle saith, she must be one that hath been the Wife of one Man, therefore they thought Virgins would be better, for that State was more honourable than Marriage, and they back'd it with that of the Apostle, 1 *Cor.* 7. 38. *He that giveth not his Virgin in Marriage doth better*, &c. But then these are not fit to tend sick Persons: And then that flew in their Consciences how to make that good, *she must be threescore Years old*, and therefore they ordained a Prioress, an antient Woman to be over all the rest; and because these could not tend to the sick Persons, therefore they should help the Church with their continual Prayers, this is the order of their Cloister-Virgins, and this is the Delusion which the Devil built upon this sacred Ordinance, instead of Holiness they have become Sinks of all Uncleanness and Abominations.

Use 2. Observe what is the Honour Christ reserveth for the best Women: Suppose that she which nursed her Children and lodged Strangers, *&c.* say she be well reported of for good Works; this is the Sum of her Preferment. Christ calleth her, when she is threescore Years old, to work, and to minister to the Church in the homeliest Office, to be the right-hand of the Deacon in shewing Mercy with chearfulness. Some that were high-spirited would think within themselves, that should they that have done thus and thus now come to this, how would their Spirits rise in Indignation against God's Ordinance? but God thinketh he doth us the greatest Honour when he putteth us into any Office; to be put into a Spittle to tend upon sick Persons, little do Men think what Honour God then putteth upon them: it is great Honour to be doing good: if you have been diligently following every good Work, you are at the last the fitter to be put into this Work, *Luke* 17. 7, 8, 9, 10. It is Christ that is to eat and drink in these poor *Lazarus*'s; he is to be washed: she that is wearied in the Field of Christianity, for threescore Years together, let her betake her self a little to God's Work, and then she shall rest for ever in God's Kingdom: And this trains up a Woman to Holiness of Mind after many Years continuance in any Imployment, and God will reward it abundantly.

Use 3. To teach the Church what kind of Officers you yet want, you have yet none of these Widows, the Church hath sometimes need of such, and great need too,

or

or elſe God would not have appointed the Office: Many come from the Ships ſick, and have no Servants, and we may have amongſt us many of our own Brethren ſick to be looked unto, therefore we are to deſire this of God, that he would ſupply us with ſuch in due time, of ſuch Years and Strength as may be fit for this Employment; and alſo you ſee whom and what manner of Perſons you are to chooſe unto this place in the Church.

Uſe 4. To teach Women what God calleth them to do: God looks whether a Woman nurſe her Children or no, it helps you to Preferment in God's Eye; they muſt not put out their Children, if God give Strength and Ability themſelves; love Hoſpitality, not only to Poor and Kindred, but to Strangers alſo: Help the Afflicted, relieve them with your Purſes, Counſel, Apparel, think not ſcorn to do a Work of Love, live by Faith, grow humble and diligent in good Works, ſo you ſhall have a good Report, and be called Mothers in *Iſrael*; ſo was *Deborah* called. If the Church have need of them, let them not ſcorn to be choſen in this Office. The Siſter of *Theodoſius* the Emperor did not diſdain it, and it was the faireſt Flower in her Garden, that in her old Age ſhe was fit to do the Church Service; this will add to their Comfort in this World, and to their Crown of Glory in the World to come. And this alſo may teach you, that if the loweſt Officers of the Church ſhould be thus qualified, what ſhould be the Spirit of other Officers, whom God calleth to higher Places in the Church? And whatever their Employments be, yet ſhould their Spirit be honourable. The Definition of the Church hath been laid open, and the Diſtribution of it into the Integral Parts, which are the Officers of the Church, and the Members of it. Of the Officers of the Church, their Qualifications, and ſeveral Duties, hath been ſpoken hitherto.

Queſt. *What manner of Men are they whom God hath appointed for to be received as Brethren and Members of his Church?*

Anſw. Such as are called of God out of the World unto the Fellowſhip of Jeſus Chriſt, and do willingly offer and join themſelves, firſt to the Lord, and then to the Church, by Confeſſion of their Sins, and Profeſſion of the Faith, and laying hold of his Covenant.

Here is a double Qualification: 1. They are ſuch as are called out of the World to the Fellowſhip of Jeſus Chriſt. 2. They that willingly offer and join themſelves, firſt to the Lord, and then to his Church. For the firſt, it appears from the ordinary Notion of the word *Eccleſia* uſed for a Church, which is a Company of Men called out: The Church is a Congregation as they are met together in a Body, but *Eccleſia*, as they are a Company called from God out of the World; ſo are they ſtiled *Rom.* 1. 6, 7. and he tells you to what you are called, *to the Fellowſhip of his Son*, 1 Cor. 1. 9. They are called out of the World, *Acts* 2. 40. When he calleth them to be Members of the Church, he ſaith, Save your ſelves out of the ignorant or malignant World, for ſo all the World lieth either in Ignorance or Malignancy, 1 *John* 5. 19. ſave your ſelves from ſuch: and they are called out by the Miniſtry of the Word and Spirit of God, and they are knit into the Fellowſhip of Jeſus Chriſt, as he is the Head of his Church, 1 *Cor.* 12. 12. Chriſt, to whoſe Fellowſhip we are knit, is not of one Member, but of many, and they are called one Chriſt; they are joined to Chriſt, not as the Hair to the Head, but ſo as to be knit alſo to the reſt of the Members. That they are ſo called out before they are Members appears by this, *Saul* was circumciſed and an Hebrew, and was called out, tho the Church knew it not; and when he aſſay'd to join himſelf to the Church, they were afraid of him, not knowing that he was a Diſciple. A Diſciple is not one that heareth one Leſſon only, but a Diſciple is a conſtant Hearer, and one that taketh himſelf bound to take out all the Leſſons that he heareth, and to ſubmit to the Diſcipline of the School. They doubted *Paul* was not ſuch a Diſciple that was a conſtant Hearer of God's Word, or if he were, yet that he was not one that ſubmitted himſelf to the Diſcipline of the School of Chriſt, therefore they were afraid of him. The Church may not receive any one that is circumciſed, if he be ignorant, or hath not been joined in Fellowſhip to Chriſt, and ſubmitted himſelf unto him; he muſt be a Diſciple, a conſtant Hearer, an obedient Learner, and one that ſubmits to the Diſcipline of the School of Chriſt, ſuch an one ſhould be received. But it may fall out Men may in Hypocriſy hear conſtantly, and practiſe what they hear, and profeſs Subjection to the Diſcipline of the Church; therefore tho this be enough for the

the Church to receive, yet it is not enough for him to offer himself, unless he can say that Christ is his Portion; or that he truly waits upon Christ for the Revelation of his Grace unto his Soul, such a Soul is invested with Christ, and such should they be that offer themselves. *Matth.* 22. 11, 12. If a Man be not found clothed with the Wedding-Garment of Christ's Righteousness, of Justification, of Sanctification, then saith Christ, *Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having thy Wedding-Garment?* tho he fall not out with his Servants for bringing him in, yet he saith to him, *Friend, how camest thou in?* 2*dly.* They willingly join and offer themselves, first to the Lord, and then to the Church. First to the Lord, *Isa.* 56. 6. they must join to the Lord before he brings them to his holy Mountain, and this they do willingly. *Psal.* 110. 2, 3. God's People are a willing People. Acts 2. 41. *They that gladly received the Word were baptized unto Christ*, and so received into the Church. *Barnabas* tells the Church how *Paul* had seen the Lord by the way, and then he is received, after he is joined to the Lord, and then to the Church. *Acts* 2. 41, 47. tho they were before of the Church of *Israel*, yet they were not received into the Christian Church before they repented and made a Covenant with God, and received the Seal of the Covenant, and then they were added to it; *Acts* 9. 26, 27. tho his Sins were pardoned in his Baptism, yet when he cometh to *Jerusalem* he assay'd to join, it was his own voluntary Act; tho you read, *Matth.* 22. 9. that Christ said, *Compel them to come in, that my House may be full*, Luke 14. 23. Tho there be a Compulsion to be used for the filling of Christ's Church, yet this is not the Compulsion of the Civil Sword, for it is the Compulsion of the Servants that are sent to call, and they are the Ministers of Christ: And how must they compel? by convincing them of their Natural State, by driving them out of themselves and driving them unto Christ, partly by the Law, partly by the Gospel. It is a compulsive Perswasion, by Terrors, by Threatnings, and by Promises, *&c.* The Magistrate may compel Men to hear, but to compel them to come into the Church is not compatible to the Name of the Church: For they must be such as are called out of the World, and when they are called, they will readily desire it, and it is a sign that they are not called, if when they have opportunity, they do not desire it. *Rom.* 1. 15. God commandeth and requires it of them, and will charge it upon them for Sin if they do it not; but neither the Church, nor Civil Magistrates may compel them; for *God's People are a willing People:* and it is no more but Reason that no Man should be compelled to subject himself to any Government that he is not willing to submit unto.

Now to the manner how they must join: Three things they used in the Primitive Church, and long after. 1. Confession of their Sins, *Matth.* 3. 6. they were Members of the Church of *Israel* before that, yet they were not admitted to Baptism, and to be his Disciples, unless they confessed their Sins, and their Subjection to take out such Lessons as he should teach them; therefore they said unto him, *Luke* 3. 10, 11, 12. *What shall we do?* *Acts* 19. 18. they that believed, confessed their Witchcraft and Whoredoms before they were received into the Fellowship of the Church. 2. Profession of their Faith. The Eunuch was a Proselyte and Member of the Jewish Church, yet he must profess his Faith before he is baptized, and *Acts* 8. 37, 38. and thus he was made fit for Church-Fellowship. 3. By taking hold of the Covenant: What Covenant? read *Isa.* 56. 6, 7. he requires that they be joined to the Lord, and love the Lord, and keep his Sabbaths, and then take hold of his Covenant: And what is the Covenant which God made with the House of *Israel?* *Deut.* 29. 10, 11, 12, 13. you there see what it is, they come to be established his People by entring into Covenant with him. *Psal.* 50. 5. they are not his People till they enter into Covenant with him. It is God's Covenant, because as in Marriage God is the third Party in the Covenant between Man and Woman, so in the Church-Covenant it is Tripartite between God and the Church, and the Member received. They may not receive into the Church but those whom God receiveth in, nor dismiss those but whom God dismisseth: therefore a Man must take hold of the Covenant, and then God bringeth him to be joyful in the House of his Ordinances; they shall then receive more Joy and Comfort than ever. God hath not promised any constant supply of Comfort and Blessing from his Ordinances, but to those that not only join to the Lord, but also lay hold of his Covenant, that is, the Covenant he hath made with his Church. And thus you see the meaning of the Phrases in the New Testament, they did join, and they were added to the Church: that is, the Gentiles, who were before joined to the Church of *Israel*, were joined to the Christian Church by laying hold of this Covenant.

Use 1.

Use 1. This serveth to confirm and justify the Lawfulness, and in truth the Necessity of this Course that is taken in admitting your Church-Members: Look not at it as a Work of Supererrogation, as a thing uncomely to be done, or as devised by Men, but as an Ordinance of God for Preparation of Men for the Church, and Admission of them into the Church, that hath its Institution from the Holy Ghost. What need we be admitted, will you say, when we are Members of a Church before? Therefore consider, *Paul* was a Member of a Church of Christ, yet they were afraid of him: a Man may not thrust himself upon a Church whether they will or no; and they also may not receive him, unless they perswade themselves that he is a Disciple, a Learner, a constant Hearer, and a Submitter to the Discipline of the Church. *Barnabas* must make that plain to the Church that he is a Disciple, and then they receive him into the Church: Those that are received, must either be such as approve themselves by their Conversation, or by the Testimony of some whom the Church dare trust; you also compel none to be Members of the Church: Compel them by Conviction, by strength of Argument, and bonds of Conscience; but they must freely offer and join themselves when they have been called, and have obeyed the Call: the Lord is the Head of the Church, and to be joined to the Head, or joined to the Members; and not to the Head, will not make a Man a living Member, but he will be a dead Member, that will rather be a Burden than any Help to the Church. You see also evident Practices of Confession and Profession; where there is little notice of any Man's Sins, there is not that need of large Confession, but notwithstanding they must make Profession of their Faith in Christ.

Use 2. To direct such as desire Church-Fellowship, to teach you what Persons you must grow up to be, such as are called out of the World; you must confess your Sins as you have been known to live in, and profess your Faith, lay hold of the Covenant, come not in till you be clothed with the Garment of Christ's Righteousness, to wait and trust upon him for his Grace, or else God will ransack you, and say, *How came you in hither?* All Profaneness, all Malignancy, all Ignorance must be laid aside; give up your selves to God, and then to the Church.

Use 3. To comfort the People of God that do thus come into the Church: God saith that he will make *their Souls joyful in the House of Prayer*, and that he will accept their Offerings, *Isa.* 56. 6, 7. If we find our Hearts uncomfortable, consider, have we not set loose from God, or have we not sat loose from his Covenant since we last received Comfort from it? our joying was but for a fit, and we sat loose from God, from his Ordinances, from his Sabbaths, and from our Brethren, then no wonder that we are uncomfortable: But come thus, as you have heard, into God's Presence, and then we may comfortably expect that he will make us joyful in the House of Prayer.

Quest. *What is the Office or Duty which God calleth the Brethren unto, the Members of the Church?*

Answ. To Brotherly Love, and to the Fruits thereof, Brotherly Unity, Brotherly Equality, and Brotherly Communion. First, Brotherly Love, this the Holy Ghost presseth upon the Brethren of the Church in divers places: 1 *Pet.* 3. 8. *Love as Brethren*, if you be Brethren. 1 *Pet.* 2.17. *Love the Brotherhood*; in that whole Society in which God hath joined you, love them. 1 *Thess.* 4. 9. *Ye your selves are taught of God to love one another.* *Heb.* 13. 1. Love is such an Affection of the Soul, whereby we offer Communion one with another, and Communication of Good one to another. On the other side, Hatred is that whereby one cannot endure to have Fellowship with another, nor communicate any Good to him: But when we love the Brethren, then are we in Heart with them, and desire to do Good unto them, and to receive Good from them. Add to the Fruits thereof Brotherly Unity: Eph. 4. 3. *Endeavouring to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace.* Psal. 133. 1. *Behold how pleasant a thing it is for Brethren to dwell together in Unity.* Col. 3. 15. *Let the Peace of God rule in your Hearts, to the which you are called in one Body.* Acts 7. 26. *Sirs, you are Brethren, why do you wrong one another?* It is against the Nature of Brethren for to harm one another: And this Christ beggeth of his Father for those that should believe on his Name, *Joh.* 17.20,21. that they may be one with the Father, and one with the Son, and one another: This is the main Petition in which he desires the Fruit of his Suffering might break forth. There is no greater Testimony of Christ's coming to save his People than this, that all the Churches of God, and all Brethren are all of one Mind, of one

one Heart, and of one Judgment; this is that convinces the World that Christ came in the Name of the Father, when Brethren dwell together in Unity. The second Fruit of Brotherly Love is Brotherly Equality, and this God hath respect unto in all the Members of the Church; tho there be a difference in outward Respects, yet in the Church-Privileges, as they are all Brethren, they are all equal. *Deut.* 17. 19, 20. The King, the chief Governour, must read in the Book of the Law all his days, *that so his Heart may not be lifted up above his Brethren.* And for the Ministers of the Word, Christ says unto them, *Be ye not called* Rabbi, *for one is your Master, even Christ, as ye are all Brethren:* and therefore being all Brethren, they must not take up Masterly Authority one over another. And the Apostle hath great regard to this, that there might be an Equality, so that the whole Burden may not lie upon some, while other go eased: And this is the Equality that God requires of the Members of the Church. The third Fruit of Brotherly Love, is Brotherly Communion or Fellowship, which is also the Fruit of both the other Fruits of Brotherly Unity, and Brotherly Equality. Acts 2. 42. *They continued stedfastly in the Apostles Doctrine and Fellowship, and in Prayers:* and *ver.* 46. *They continued daily with one accord in the Temple, and breaking Bread from House to House*; and they had constantly Fellowship together; and this also God requireth of Brethren that are knit in Covenant together in Church-Fellowship.

Quest. *Wherein standeth that Brotherly Unity which Members are to hold one with another?*

Answ. To be perfectly joined together in one Mind, and one Judgment, and one Speech, in one Truth; and where we cannot be of one Judgment, still to be of one Heart; not provoking or envying one another, but forgiving and forbearing one another; not judging or despising one another in difference of Weakness, but so far as we are come to walk by the same Rule, and teach and learn one of another the Way of God more perfectly, *till we are grown up in the Unity of the Faith, unto a perfect Man in Christ Jesus.* First, They must be perfectly joined together in one Mind, one Judgment, one Speech, in one Truth; 1 *Cor.* 1. 10. He would have them to be of the same Mind, and same Judgment, and that not in a common Error, but in one Truth: You may see what is the difference betwixt Mind and Judgment, therefore the Apostle doth exhort them to be of one Mind, to be of the same Judgment; for sometimes Men are not of a contrary Judgment because things are clear, yet they have a Mind to conceive and judg otherwise, and so to express themselves; but he would have them have a Mind to be all of one Judgment, so should also their Speech be the same: for he knew that difference of Expressions might breed diversity of Mind; he would not have Men express them otherwise than as things commonly received: He would have them avoid Babylonish Confusion, and to be all of one Speech; this also he earnestly desires of the *Philippians*, that they would mind, think and speak one thing, *Phil.* 2. 1, 2. He would have them willingly frame their Hearts, and Judgments, and Speech like one to another; and see what Weight he lays upon it, *If there be any Consolation in Christ*, &c. There is no Consolation of Christ in their Hearts where there is a Willingness to be of a contrary Mind, there may be Truth, but no Consolation; this will darken their Consolations where there is not a mutual Consolation in their Words, Speeches and Thoughts. He adds further, *If any Comfort of Love*, &c. Hath not this comforted your Hearts, the Love of God, and the Love of your Brethren? If you ever had Comfort from these, then be of one Accord. [*If any Fellowship of the Spirit:*] If you be all of one Spirit, then let the Spirit in all your Words, Minds, Judgments and Speeches be all one: [*If any Bowels of Mercy:*] If you have any Bowels to me, or your selves, to your Brethren, be of one Mind; and this it was that fulfilled Apostolical Joy, to see them all of one Mind. *Eph.* 4. 23. *Be renewed in the Spirit of your Mind:* that is the Inclination and Bent of their Minds, that they may be willing to see the Truth, and yield to the Truth, and to be of one Judgment. *James* 4. 5. There is a Spirit in Man that lusteth after Errors, there is a Spirit that lusteth to be of a contrary Mind to another Man's Mind; therefore saith the Apostle, *Be ye renewed in the Spirit of your Minds:* this is a Ground of much Affliction to any humble Soul when he is forced to be of a contrary Mind or Judgment. It calls to mind the Corruption of Nature; if it be Truth in me, then why should not he see it as well as I? and it is a great Temptation, for it makes a Man to call into question his own Judgment, and the Truth. But suppose we cannot be of one Judg-

ment, nor of one Speech (for a Man must speak as he judgeth, if he must judg, he must not prevaricate) yet still we must be of one Heart, we must be of a Bent to draw as close one to another as may be, and to drive it as far as Truth will bear. *Phil.* 4. 3. He desires they may be of one Mind, tho they judg differently, and speak differently, yet that they be willing to close one with another: they did not affect to be of one Mind and Heart, and therefore he beseecheth the Pastor to help them an end, that they might mind one thing in the Lord, mind Unity when it may be attained. But to help forward this Brotherly Love, the Apostle exhorts them not to provoke one another, not to envy one another, *Gal.* 5. 26. Let there be no Wrath to provoke, no Pride to envy, and this will maintain Brotherly Love: but because Provocation will arise from those that have attained least degrees of Grace, therefore we should forbear and forgive one another, *Eph.* 4. 2. If a Man seeth that if he should speak any further, it would break Love, then he forbeareth to speak his Judgment in a thing: Men should take their times to speak, and not to exasperate the Spirit of one another; so also must we forgive one another, *Eph.* 4. 32. When any one hath provoked another, let him forgive him, altho he is not bound to express his Forgiveness till the other desires it. Again, there is another Rule, not to judg nor despise one another in differences of Weakness, *Rom.* 14. 3. He doth not require that they should be of one Judgment, but there as they should not express their Judgment unless they see it will hinder Edification, *Rom.* 14. 22. But the Rule is, let him not judg if the Differences be not fundamental; *Let not him that eateth*, &c. So great is the Moderation of the Apostle, he doth not bind them to be of one Judgment and Speech in such things; and therefore to bind all Men to be of their own Judgment and Practice, be the things never so circumstantial, is against the Nature of Brotherly Love, and not to be of an Apostolical Spirit. So far as we are come to *walk by the same Rule*, Phil. 3. 15, 16. he would have their Mind one, and their Rule one, and that will much help to Unity. And what is that Rule? *Gal.* 6 16. It is in both places the Rule of a new Creature, that saith, *Neither Circumcision availeth any thing, nor Uncircumcision, but Faith which works by Love:* and the meaning is, he looks at all things as empty of true spiritual Comfort, but Faith in Christ; and then all Rents about Circumcision and Uncircumcision will in due time fall to nothing. Stick to this Rule, count Christ All in All, that his Name might be magnified, his Grace sanctified, and then they that plead for Ceremonies will quickly come to be of one Heart, altho not of one Judgment: what maketh a Man to have a Mind to differ? is it to magnify the Name of Christ? No, but to walk by that Rule, ever preserveth Unity of Mind (to teach and learn one another the Way of God more perfectly) this is another Means to maintain Unity of Mind. *Acts* 18. 26. *Apollo* and *Aquila* they both minded Christ, and that maketh him willing to learn, and them willing to teach him: Tho he was a Learned Man in the Scriptures, they took him unto them, and would not suffer him to be of another Mind, but they expounded the Way of God more fully unto him; they were not afraid of Suspicion of Arrogancy, that they should teach a learned Man, but knew that he being a good Man would be willing to learn of them, tho they were but Tent-makers. This that hath been spoken will not reach only to difference of Mind, but to different Practice *also*. If I know any thing will grieve and offend my Brother, and will be a Stumbling-block unto him, it is good not to do it, *Rom.* 14. 21. Whatsoever is offensive in Judgment or Practice should be removed, and therefore we should covet to be of one Judgment; if we cannot, we may forbear the Practice of many things that may be offensive; if there must needs be a difference, yet let there be one Heart, endeavouring to be of one Mind, not provoking, envying or despising one another, but to grow up to the State of Perfection that God calleth us unto, *Eph.* 4. 13. *Till we all come in the Unity of the Faith, and of the Knowledg of the Son of God, unto a perfect Man, unto the measure of the Stature of the Fulness of Christ.* This is the End that Ministers look at, that Christians in their edifying should look at, until we come to that Unity we are not perfect; but when we are, then we are come to the full *measure of the Stature of Christ:* do but follow Faith and Love, and then when we come to believe, mind and practise one thing then are we perfect. It argues that Brethren should have a care one of anothers Faith, Love, Knowledg, that we may be all fit to be presented unto Christ. *Numb.* 11. 29. I would that all God's People could prophesy. If we desire to help one another in the Ways of Grace, it is an evident sign of the Work of Grace in our own Hearts: And till a Man come to this, his Work is not done.

Quest.

Queſt. *Wherein ſtandeth the Brotherly Equality which we are to hold one with another?*

Anſw. In ſubmitting our ſelves alike to all God's Ordinances, in enjoying alike all Chriſtian Liberties, in preferring others before our ſelves, in ſeeking one anothers Welfare, and feeling their Eſtates as our own, in bearing the Burdens one of anothers Eſtates, and impoſing no Burdens but in equal Proportion. The Sum is, that Brotherly Equality ſtandeth in equal Submiſſion to all God's Ordinances, in equal Fruition of all Chriſtian Liberties, in giving equal Honour to all alike, to feel one anothers Eſtates as our own, and to bear an equal Proportion of Burdens. Firſt for Equality, in equal Submiſſion to all God's Ordinances, and equal Fruition of all Chriſtian Liberty. Gal. 3. 28. *There is neither Jew nor Greek, Bond nor Free, there is neither Male nor Female; for they are all one in Chriſt Jeſus.* There is no difference between Nations, nor between Maſters or Servants, nor between Male or Female in Chriſtian Liberties; one hath as much right to Chriſt, and the Means of enjoying Chriſt as the other, to the ſame Covenant, to the ſame Seals of the Covenant, to the ſame Admonitions and Exhortations; what is adminiſtred to one is free to another without reſpect of Perſons. Theſe words the Apoſtle uſeth alſo in another place, to ſhew Equality of Duty in Submiſſion to God's Ordinances. *Col.* 3. 10, 11, 12. He exhorteth them all to put on the *New Man*, and to put off *Anger*, *Wrath*, *Malice*, *Blaſphemy*, &c. and to put on *Bowels of Mercies, and Kindneſs, and humbleneſs of Mind*, &c. he calleth upon them all as one, all the Faithful alike every one to be clothed with theſe Duties, and to put off theſe Sins; for in Chriſt Jeſus there is *neither Jew nor Greek, Circumciſion nor Uncircumciſion*, &c. What Duty one Chriſtian owes, that another owes; what Grace one ſhould put on, that ſhould another put on: and this Equality is a ſpiritual Equality. *Deut.* 17. 19, 20. there it is ſaid that the King ſhould read the Book of the Law all the days of his Life, *that his Heart be not lifted up above his Brethren*, tho he be King. *Solomon* in all his Royalty muſt not be exalted above his Brethren; every Commandment of God is alike given to the King as to the meaneſt Man. It is ſaid of Kings, that they *did Evil in the ſight of the Lord*; Threatnings and Commandments belong alike to them; and the Conſideration that God putteth no difference between Kings and Peaſants, will make him not to count his Subjects like Dogs, but the ſame Inheritance is for them, the ſame Church-Privileges, they are all one in Privilege, all one in Duty, and this they are and ſhould be. Ezek. 46. 10. *And the Prince in the midſt of them when they go in, ſhall go in, and when they go forth, ſhall go forth:* They muſt not ſtay for him, neither muſt he be gone before them, but upon neceſſary occaſions, as any other Member of the Church may: This is the Rule, God by this means accommodating the Spirit of great Kings to frame themſelves to Brotherly Equality in the Houſe of God, with alike Reverence and Subjection, and alike to claim all the Privileges of God's Houſe: this is true ſpiritual Equality. Not but that they may ſit in a more eminent Place in the Houſe of God, that are of greater Authority in the Common-wealth. *Joſh* by the Pillar, 2 *Chron.* 23. 13. which was the Place for the King to ſit in. It may be lawful in deference in that kind; not that Men ſhould be ambitious of the higheſt Places: for it is ſpoken of the Phariſees, *Matth.* 23. 6. and that with Diſlike, that they affected the chiefeſt Seats in the Synagogues; yet a Confuſion of Civil Deference is not comely. There are no other Meetings, but in ſpiritual Duties and Privileges they are all alike, there is Equality, they may not ſtay for him, nor he go out before them, but they ſhould come in and depart together.

TWO LETTERS

Which passed between the Reverend

Mr. *JOHN GOODWIN* and the Author,

CONCERNING

A Church-Covenant.

To the Reverend Mr. Thomas Goodwin.

MY dear Friend, whom I love and honour, if not enough, yet (certain I am) exceeding much in the Lord. I am sorry, there being Differences between us otherwise, that in this we should so long agree neither to send so much as the smallest Piece of his Mind to other in Writing for a Token. Upon which of us the Law of Love and Christian Acquaintance rather imposed it, to have first appeared in breaking this Agreement, the same Law prohibits to dispute. Whether it will ease the Burden on my part, or no, I leave to your Ingenuity to consider and determine; but this I may truly say unto you, that I have had many Thoughts from time to time since your departure from us, that have dearly longed after your Bosom, and would hardly have been kept from their longing till now, but by a strong hand of indispensable Occasions and Employments otherwise. And if my Respects to you did not command me to entreat you the more gently in this behalf, I might truly charge upon your self (in part) the occasion of my silence hitherto. Your Authority, Grace, Learning, Parts, Judgment and Example have holpen to make the Stone of Separation so massy and heavy, that we are constrained to be at double Pains and Labour in removing and rolling it from off the Consciences of our People. A great part of our Employment is to stanch the Issue of that Fountain of Blood, which you with some others of your Conformity, have opened in the Womb of our Churches here. We hoping again your Re-union with us, and return unto us, through the Power of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is able to give you Light to comprehend your Darkness in those things which yet lie under Dispute between us, are willing to save you what Sorrow we can against your Return; and for this purpose endeavour our selves to make your Mistakes as innocent as may be (in respect of Execution) by keeping as many as we can from stumbling or falling thereby. Dear Brother! that there were a Heart in us to lay our Heads together, for the finding out of some course (if possible) that the Sword may not always thus devour! Doubtless there are Waters to be digged, that would much assuage the Heat, if not wholly quench the Flames of these Contentions and Divisions. How deeply is it to be lamented, that he by whom God hath reconciled the World unto himself, should be made a means of dividing this reconciled World in it self! The Heavens (I doubt not) will accord us; yet were it our greater Comfort and Glory, if the Earth herein might prevent the Heavens. I verily believe it would go far, and strike a great Stroke in compromising between the Parties at variance, if the great Men and chief Leaders on both sides could be perswaded but to take fast hold upon this ingenuous, free and noble Resolution (which yet I suppose we all pretend to do) τῇ ἀληθείᾳ θύειν μᾶλλον, ἢ διαβάλλειν ὑποθέσεσι, *rather to do Sacrifice to the Truth, than to be servile to Suppositions.* I know not how

how to open my Mouth wide enough, to ſhew you the whole Enlargement of my Heart unto you. If we ſaw the Truth clearly with you, you ſhould not reign alone; we would doubtleſs (at once) divide ſuch a Kingdom with you, and reign too. Many indeed of your Party are ready to ſay (in effect) that as it is Heaven that ſeparated you from us, ſo it is the World that ſeparates us from you: But if you have the Truth with you (which indeed if you have, at leaſt in many of your beſt-beloved Maxims, wo be to my Wits, Reaſon and Underſtanding; never poor Man ſo ſtrangely miſuſed by ſuch Friends in this World) it will never be a Debtor to ſuch Interpreters, or Agents for it. As for the World, if it be as little on that ſide the Sea, as it is on this, it will never be ſo much as a Mote in your Eye, to hinder you from ſeeing any Truth of God clearly. But as little as it is with us, we think it too great and too good to be ſacrificed upon the Service of an Error at any time (if yet thoſe that forſake us, do it not rather out of a deſire and intent to ſpare the World, than to ſacrifice it) otherwiſe, I doubt not but the Servants of God in *England* tread as light upon the Earth as you do in *Holland*; and are as ready to buy the Truth, and give as good Rates for it, as the beſt Merchants amongſt you. But however, I know that this left-handed Spirit rules much in Men of your Party, who, not content to make our Standing nought, labour much to make us worſe than our Standing: yet I make no queſtion, but your Anointing teacheth you more Chriſtian Thoughts concerning us: And if we judged it any advantage to the Truth or Cauſe we maintain againſt you, we durſt vie moral Imputations with you, and are confident that we could aſſign and ſuggeſt againſt you, both as many and as likely, indirect and fleſhly Grounds for your departure from us, as you can againſt us, for keeping our firſt Standing and Profeſſion. But the Truth will never be made great by ſuch Demonſtrations as theſe on either ſide: Sometimes the Truth is there where a Man, for many Reaſons, would think there were leaſt hope to find it: And again, many times the faireſt Overtures and pleaſingeſt Inducements will but deceive and diſappoint in this kind. And as for that kind of Truth which we enquire after, and toil in the Fire of Contention to find out, *viz.* Spiritual and Divine; there is no ſubſtantial or ſatisfying means for the Diſcovery of it, but by a holy, humble and impartial Conſultation with the Oracles of God about it. Yea if it be of that Species, or ſpecial kind of Divine Truth, which is not ſpread (as *Manna* was) upon the face of the Scriptures, but lieth low amongſt the deep things of God, 1 *Cor.* 2. 10. (as it ſeems the Truth in thoſe Queſtions depending between us doth) now it is not ſufficient ſimply to conſult, or ask the Scriptures concerning them; but they muſt be examined and re-examined again and again, both ſolitary and in conſort, they muſt be put home to it, and urged and preſſed cloſe together, before they will ſpeak their Mind plainly in this caſe, or deliver out any of this Treaſure: Yea in many Caſes a Man muſt be content to go to the one end of them to know what they mean in the other. Yea, (that which is much conſiderable, and I fear, much wants that which belongs to it) they may ſeem to deliver many pleaſing and plauſible Anſwers, under the Shadow whereof the Judgment and Conſcience of a Man may be much refreſhed for a ſeaſon, ſo that they may be ready to ſhout for Joy, and congratulate themſelves with his Acclamation, that cried Ἕυρηκα, Ἕυρηκα, he had found, he had found; and yet none of theſe Anſwers be the τὸ ζητούμενον, the true, direct and bottom meaning of them. As *Sampſon* gave *Dalilah* Anſwer upon Anſwer to her Queſtion or Demand, which pleas'd her for a time, carrying a plauſible Semblance and Reality of Truth in them, but ſtill her Experience diſcovered the Inſufficiency of them, and then ſhe rejected them, and would not give over till ſhe had the true Anſwer indeed; *Judg.* 16. 7, 8, *&c.* So (doubtleſs) the Scriptures may in many places to our Apprehenſions affirm many things, and deliver out many Notions of choice Approbation to us for a time, the Weakneſs and Defects whereof notwithſtanding, further Time and Experience, and a clearer Light may diſcover. Yea, there may from the very ſame Scriptures riſe up many Meanings and Interpretations before us one after another, that may be in our Eye, as *Eliab Jeſſe*'s eldeſt Son was in *Samuel*'s, (when he was ſent to anoint one of his Sons for King) *Surely* (ſaith he, looking on *Eliab*) *the Lord's Anointed is before him:* but he was yet a great way off from the Lord's Anointed; there was *Eliab*, and *Abinadab*, and *Shammah*, and more than as many more preſented before him, before *David* came in ſight, (who was the Lord's Anointed indeed) he was behind, and a great way off in the Field, and muſt be ſent for before he comes: So the anointed ſenſe and meaning of the Scriptures may be yet far off, when we perſwade our ſelves with the greateſt Confidence,

Confidence, that it is before us. And as he said of Benefits, *multa perdienda sunt, ut semel ponas benè, a Man must bestow many amiss, that he may bestow one well*: So many times a Man must be content, first to take up, and then to cast away many Interpretations of Scripture (and those sometimes such, which otherwise he would not willingly part with) that he may interpret at last as he ought to do. I make no question but you have had Experience of these things in your self more than once: For my part, I confess it hath been a frequent thing with me in the course of my Studies and Meditations, to meet with both from the Pens or Mouths of others, and from mine own Conceptions also, several Interpretations, which have much affected me upon the first greeting, yea, which for a time I have nourished in my Bosom, and made Pleasure of; and yet afterwards have apparently seen, that ὁ ἐπαινέτης, ὁ ἐμφανὴς ἐστὶ, the Rejoicing was not good, and by a strong Hand of superiour Conviction, have been compelled to call that Darkness, and to cast it from me, which sometimes I called Light, and kept close unto. Wherefore I beseech you by the tender Mercies of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and (if it be fitting so to engage you) by the Glory of those many Talents given unto you, the Strength whereof (methinks) should work through a Napkin, and disdain so weak and contemptible an Inclosure, once more to survey with a single, impartial, deliberate and disingaged Eye (if you can get out, whether it be Mote or Beam, that is gotten into it) your present Thoughts and Apprehensions concerning those things that have removed you from off an English Table, and put you under a *Holland* Bushel. Confident I am, that there is a Light beyond your Light in these matters, if your Eyes by long Slumber be not over-heavy to open; and that your Rods will make but the Enchanter's Serpents, which *Aaron*'s Serpent will devour. I profess in the sight of God, and in as great singleness and simplicity of Heart, as ever Man in this World spake word unto you, that I do as clearly apprehend Error and Mistake throughout the greatest part of your Way, as I do Truth in this Conclusion, that twice two makes four. The necessity of your Covenant, prolix Confession of Faith, putting Men to deliver their Judgments in Points of doubtful Disputation upon and before their Admission into your Churches; the Power of the Keys, and of Ordination of Ministers, to be the Right and Inheritance of the whole Body of the Congregation, and of every Member promiscuously and indifferently; the Divine Institution or peremptory Necessity of your Ruling Elders, the Necessity of Widows as of Officers in the Church; the absolute Necessity of one and the same Government or Discipline in all Particulars whatsoever, in all Churches, in all Times and Places; a full and peremptory Determination of all things whatsoever, appertaining to the Worship of God, with divers like Positions (which are the very Life, Soul and Substance of your Way) I am at perfect Peace in my Thoughts, that you will never be able to demonstrate or prove from the Scriptures, to any sober-minded and considering Man. I am loth to over-charge you with Words and Writings. To desire you to return, and to repair the Breach you have made upon us, I confess were a hard Motion, and of slender hope to be obtain'd, were it not made to a truly great and noble Spirit: and (*cæteris paribus*) the Request from you to me and others with me to come over unto you, were more reasonable, than that we should desire you to return back again unto us, because you have suffered already (at least in the Thoughts of many) under the Disparagement of some Unconstancy: and equal it is, where there is not some over-ruling Reason to the contrary, that Burdens should not be doubled, but rather divided. But herein I beseech you consider, your Advantage is the greater, you have by this means πλείονα θυσίαν, the greater and better Sacrifice to offer upon the Service of the Truth, than we, if you can apprehend the Truth with us, and deny your self the second time, in turning back again unto us. And yet give me leave to say this unto you; tho your Restitution to us be one of the first-born of my-this-World's Wishes, and the day thereof would be above the rest of the days of the Year; yet had I rather mourn over your Absence still, than bring you back again any otherwise than by the Hand of an Angel of Light. I relish no Satisfaction from any Man to any Request, but what I purchase more by reasoning than by requesting. And for your part, I know, that in the Motions of this Nature, a Friend and a Feather are both alike, except Reason makes the difference. I have made bold upon some words of Encouragement from your Mouth, related unto me by Dr. *P.* to propound a Query unto you, concerning the Head of your Way, your Church-Covenant, with some Reasons of my scrupling, partly the Lawfulness, but especially the Necessity of your indispensible

dispensible Exaction thereof. If you be willing to treat with your old Friend in a way of this Commerce, I shall hereafter (God willing) as Health and Liberty will agree, desire like Satisfaction from you in some other Particulars of your Way; but if the Motion dislikes you, neither have I any further Pleasure in it. If you shall suspend your Answer, give me leave so far to please my self, as to interpret your Silence, a ground of Hope, that your own coming is not far off: Or otherwise, if your Answers be too strong for me, and able to remove my Mountains out of my way, they are not the Seas that shall keep Friends asunder any longer: I am yours (if you care to own me). Send me over the Silver and bright-shining Wings of Truth, and upon these I come flying over to you out of hand. I would be as glad of a Bargain of Truth at any rate as another, God having taught me how to drown the World in the least drop of the Water of Life. Only this I desire may be the Law of this Dissertation between us, that since the strength of your Confidence in your Way is such, as to break out into a Departure from us, (and I conceive double Light to be requisite for a Separation in any kind, whereas single Light sufficeth for any Man's continuance in his Standing) you will go to work as a Prince, and not as a Beggar, and commend the Truth of what you hold and practise in opposition to us, by a high hand of pregnant and express Scriptures, and not beg any thing by any loose or faint Interpretation or Supposition. We look for from you, Letter for Letter, Word for Word, Tittle for Tittle, for the proof of all you maintain against us; and otherwise cannot but judg it somewhat hard to be so forsaken, only because our Logick is more dull, and less piercing than yours. I have used the more liberty of Speech unto you, because I know you are well able to bear it. The Queries and Objections which I offer against your Church-Covenant are these.

We doubt by what Warrant of Scripture, or otherwise, any Church of Christ can impose any such express and formal Covenant upon all those that desire Membership with them, as a peremptory Condition of their Admittance, as is now generally practised in all your Churches. We conceive the Scripture will no where justify these Proceedings, but rather judg there is much Evil, and a manifold Inconvenience, in the urging and exacting such a Covenant.

1. Confident we are (as Confidence it self can make us) that there is no Command given to the Churches for exacting any such Covenant of those that are to be admitted into Church-Fellowship with them: So that we conceive any such Exaction to be a meer Human Invention, and a strain of that Wisdom that desires to exalt it self not only above all that is practised by Men, but above that which is written by God himself: Yea, tho Instances and Examples could be produc'd of such Covenant, both demanded and given, yet this may stand without any Warrant of Lawfulness, much more without the Imposition of any Necessity upon Churches at this day, to make the like Demand of their intended Members; and most of all it may stand, without any Necessity upon Churches to make the Demand as of a Duty of absolute Necessity, or as a part of the Worship and Service of God. Because, (1.) No Example bindeth but by virtue, and in the strength of some Commandment. And if there were any thing necessary to be done which is not commanded by God, then must there be found Weakness and Imperfection in his Law. Therefore to make any thing necessary which the Law of God maketh not necessary, is not to keep the Law, but (as *James* saith) to judg it. (2.) There may be Examples found of many things done by Christians (yea by whole Churches) in the Primitive Times, not only lawfully, but with high and special Approbation; the doing whereof in these Times, is not only no ways necessary, but liable to much question, whether lawful or convenient. The selling of Lands and Houses by those that were the Possessors of them, and bringing and laying the Money at the Apostles Feet, was practised (we know) in the Apostles times; *Acts* 4. 34, 35. and, as *Tertullian* witnesseth, continued 200 Years together in the Church: But I know no Man now pleads for the Necessity of any such Practice; yea, whether it would not be much inexpedient for the Gospel (and consequently in some degree unlawful) if now put in practice, a few Thoughts would sufficiently discover, (3.) And lastly, there is no question to be made but that many times the Diversification of Circumstances and Aspects of things in the World, and Course of God's Providence, have not only a lawful Power of dissolving the binding Force and Authority of many Examples, but of suspending our Obedience to many Rules, and Precepts, and Exhortations. As for Example, that kind of Salutation between Men,

mentioned

mentioned *Gen.* 27. 26. 1 *Sam.* 20. 41. and oft elſewhere, being generally left and out of uſe. Thoſe Injunctions of *Paul*, *Rom.* 16. 16. 1 *Cor.* 16. 20. and elſewhere, *Greet ye one another with an holy Kiſs*, impoſe no ſuch literal Tie upon the Saints in theſe days, as when they were written; neither do I conceive, nor (I ſuppoſe you) that the Elders of the Church are now bound to anoint the Sick with Oil, becauſe this is commanded, *James* 5. 14. Neither do I conceive that the French Churches lie under any Guilt of Sin, for ſuffering their Teachers to have their Heads covered in their publick Miniſtry, notwithſtanding the Rule or Direction of *Paul*, 1 Cor. 11. 4. *Every Man praying or prophesying, having any thing on his Head, diſhonoureth his Head*: becauſe that Topical Cuſtom among the Grecians, upon which *Paul* built this Rule or Aſſertion, is wholly diſuſed by their Nation, and the contrary generally practiſed among them. Tho I do not think this Scripture is to be reſtrained to the Teachers only, but to concern as well the whole Aſſembly of Men preſent, who are all here ſaid to pray or propheſy in a Paſſive Senſe, (as Women alſo are, *v.* 5.) that is, to partake of thoſe Ordinances with the Teachers. Other like Inſtances might be given. And doubtleſs the Rule that *Cameron* gives, (who was a Man of as much Learning, Sharpneſs of Wit, and Happineſs in opening the Scripture, as any the Reformed Churches in *France*, yea I may ſay in any part of World, have enjoy'd of latter times) is moſt true. There are many things commanded in *Paul's* Epiſtles whereof there is no uſe at this day (*viz.* as touching the literal and preciſe Obſervation) as is that of Propheſying, 1 Cor. 14. and concerning the Habit of Women propheſying, which belong not to our Times. But concerning Propheſying, we ſhall (God willing) move ſome ſpecial Queries afterwards. And I verily believe, that one main Reaſon and grand Occaſion of all Separation from us (on that hand you are gone) is, becauſe the words of the ſacred Text fitted to particular Occaſions, and to the Condition of the Times wherein they were written, are taken and applied by ſuch Men to themſelves and others as they find them, without due reſpect had to thoſe weighty and material Differences that are between the one and the other; (as might be demonſtrated at large if it were any part of our preſent purpoſe.) In the mean ſeaſon it is evident by what hath been ſaid, that tho particular Inſtances could be produced, that the Covenant ſo much magnified, ſo indiſpenſably urged by your Churches (generally) upon their Members before their Admiſſion, yea by ſome great Maſters of your Way, defended in Writing as the very Form and Eſſence of a true Church (the Writing whereof hath gone along time under your own Name, but of late I hear you have diſclaimed it) hath been practiſed by former Churches, and put upon thoſe that deſired Membership with them, yet this is no ſufficient Ground to conclude a Neceſſity now lying upon all Churches to do the like, except there be a Precept or Command found for the doing it; no, nor yet to prove a Lawfulneſs of doing it, except all Circumſtances be clear and fair for the doing it: nay, a Precept or Command it ſelf will not evince a Neceſſity hereof, if any maſter or grand Circumſtance be now changed or altered, upon which the Precept was firſt given.

Myrothec. in cap. 5. Jacobi.

2. But yet notwithſtanding I add in the ſecond place, neither do the Scriptures afford any Inſtance or Example wherein any ſuch Covenant hath ever been demanded or exacted by any particular Church of thoſe who deſired Fellowſhip with it. But many Inſtances there are, wherein only upon a ſober Profeſſion of their Faith in Chriſt and Entertainment of the Goſpel, Men have been received into Churches without the leaſt noiſe or mention of any ſuch Covenant: Act. 2. 41. *They that gladly received his Word, were baptized: and the ſame day there were added* (*viz.* to the Church) *about three thouſand Souls.* Some of your Judgment ſtrongly conceit that they eſpy their Covenant in thoſe words [*were added*;] but ſurely if they were aſſiſted by the ſame Imagination, they might as ſoon diſcover it in thoſe words, *Gen.* 1. 1. *In the beginning God made Heaven and Earth*: for to any reaſonable and diſingaged Apprehenſion that word προσετέθησαν, with the number of Chriſtians joined with it, only expreſſes the exceeding great Work of God in making ſo great an Enlargement or Addition to his Church in ſo ſhort a time; and doubtleſs a Man muſt get a Diſpenſation for his Underſtanding, to enable him to think or believe, that within the compaſs of half a day, or a little more at the moſt (perhaps ſomewhat leſs, for the former part of the day was well ſpent before *Peter* began his Sermon, and how long he continued preaching is uncertain, it ſeems he was not very brief, *ver.* 40.) three thouſand Perſons ſhould particularly and diſtinctly, one after another, in the ſame Place, and before the ſame Perſons, be examined and tried,

tried, take a ſolemn Covenant, repeating your Contents and Words thereof. Doubtleſs the Art and Method of ſuch Diſpatch is utterly loſt and periſhed from the World at this day: Either the Covenant they made was very brief, and but an Ace to yours, or elſe the Motion of their Tongues in ſpeaking much ſwifter than our Thoughts. You muſt favour your ſelf beyond all reaſon, in both theſe Suppoſitions, or elſe ſuppoſe your Covenant no longer here. Beſides, evident it is, that thoſe that were added to the Church, were baptized, before this is affirmed of them. Now being baptized, and that in an orderly and right way (as you will not deny) this did immediately qualify them for Church-Fellowſhip according to your own Grounds, and the Truth it ſelf; therefore they needed not the Mediation of a Covenant to make them capable hereof; ſo that you ſee an impoſſibility of any Covenant to be implied here: And if you be not relieved at this Door, there is little hope to find more Charity in this kind at others. *Philip* required no other Covenant or Condition of the Eunuch to qualify him for Baptiſm, and thereby to give him Entrance into the Church, but only to believe in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt with all his Heart, and to profeſs it to him, *Acts* 8.37. When *Paul* aſſayed to join himſelf with the Diſciples at *Jeruſalem*, the reaſon why they declined him for a time, was not becauſe they tendred a Covenant to him, and he refuſed it, but becauſe they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a Diſciple; implying, that had they believed this concerning him that he had been a Diſciple, *i. e.* a Believer, they would have received him without more ado: Yea, upon *Barnabas* his meer Teſtimony of him, without any Covenant ſubſcribed, Confeſſion made, or word ſpoken by himſelf, he was received, *ver.* 27, 28. So again, *Acts* 11. 24. there is mention made of many that were added or joined to the Lord, *i. e.* were immembred into the Church; but no more words of any ſuch Covenant as you urge, than a deaf Man may hear. If you propoſe the Paſſages of the New Teſtament further, you will deſcry many more Stars of this Conſtellation. Neither here can you have recourſe to thoſe Covenants mentioned in Old Teſtament, to pattern yours withal; for then you fly to a Sanctuary which your ſelves have polluted, by deſtroying all Sympathy and Agreement between a National Church, and that which you call inſtituted or particular. And beſides, to forſake the Guidance of the Spirit of God under the New Teſtament, to ſeek to make out our Thoughts by the Old, is to ask the Twilight in the Evening, whether it were light at Noon-day. Moreover, (if deſire of Brevity for the preſent did not bind my Hands) it were eaſy to demonſtrate unto you, what a ſolemn Diſagreement there is many ways between theſe Covenants and yours, and particularly in that preciſe Circumſtance which muſt have relieved you.

Acts 9.26.

Ezr.10.3. Nehem. 9. 38, &c.

3. To me there is no imaginable Uſe or Neceſſity of this your Covenant, becauſe Believers willing or agreeing to live together in the ſame Body, are bound by greater Bands a thouſandfold, than any Covenant they can make between themſelves, to perform mutually all manner of Chriſtian Love, Service and Duties whatſoever. Chriſt himſelf is the greateſt of all Bands, and of all manner of Obligements and Engagements whatſoever, both to knit and hold Chriſtians together, to make them of one Heart and of one Soul, and to keep them ſo: By whom (*i. e.* by Chriſt) all the Body being coupled and knit together, *&c.* And where the Scriptures ſpeak of other Bands with him and beſides him, (yet all relating to him) indearing and binding Chriſtians together as cloſe as ever their Hearts and Souls will pack, or work into one; amongſt them all your Covenant cometh not into any mention or remembrance. *There is one Body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your Vocation. There is one Lord, one Faith, one Baptiſm, one God and Father of all.* Surely if they had been joined and jointed together by any ſuch Covenant as you ſpeak of, and this Covenant been of Divine Inſtitution, and of that high and ſovereign Conſequence, as to give them their Life, Being and Subſtance, as a Church, or Body, the Apoſtle could not ſo far have forgotten himſelf, as not to have mention'd it amongſt its Fellows, eſpecially there being no place (that I can readily call to mind) more commodious throughout all his Writings, to have made a particular and expreſs mention hereof, than here. And for my part, I freely and ingenuouſly, and in the ſimplicity of my Heart profeſs to you, that I neither know what further or greater Duty, or Service of Love in any kind I can deſire or wiſh of thoſe my Brethren in Chriſt, upon whom the Providence of God (together with my own voluntary Election) either hath, or hereafter ſhall caſt me in Church-Fellowſhip, than what they ſtand bound by the common Band of

Eph.4.16.

our mutual Interest in the same God, in the same Lord, in the same Baptism, in the same Hope, to exhibit and tender, and perform unto me, without the express of any such Covenant made with, or unto me: Nor yet can I conceive how possible I should have any better, richer or stronger Assurance from them for the Performance hereof unto me, by the Virtue or Aid of any such Covenant, above what I have in the Power of that Grace or Godliness, which (as far as I am able to judg) working effectually in them, and subjecteth them to all the said Bands and Obligations: Nor can I think, that he whose Strength to do Evil will serve him to trample under foot the Blood of the Lord Christ, to cast the Commandments of the glorious God behind his Back, to betray the Hope of his own Peace and Glory, will ever be kept in a Christian Compass towards me, by any Promise, Band or Covenant, of his own. I know not how to think it a Sin in me, not to desire or exact a greater Security for my Portion in the Saints than God himself hath given me, and established me in. It here your Answer be, that your Covenant respecteth as well every Man's Faithfulness towards God, as discharge of Duty one towards another; and therefore in this regard (at least) there may be a necessity of it. To this I answer, (in few words) 1. Why is not then the unnecessary part (at least) of your Covenant (which I conceive to be the greatest) *viz.* that which concerns the Covenanters Duty towards his Fellows, struck off? 2. If such a Covenant as this, with or towards God, be so necessary a Duty, why is the Place of it nowhere to be found amongst all the Commandments of God? Doubtless God requires it not at our Hands, to be either more provident or jealous for his Glory, than he is himself. 3. And lastly, This Covenant is neither lawful before Baptism, nor necessary after; therefore the Necessity of it falls to the Ground, and is not defensible. That it's not lawful before Baptism, is evident, because it's not lawful for a Church to receive the unbaptized into Fellowship with them, as Members of their Body, neither is there Example or appearance of Warrant in Scripture for such a thing: As evident it is, that after Baptism it is altogether unnecessary, because Baptism doth immediately qualify for Church-Fellowship (as hath been said, your own Principles not gainsaying) and your Church itself, by admitting any to her Baptism, *ipso facto*, admits into her Fellowship. Therefore I add,

4. That the requiring and exacting of such a Covenant of Men, and the imparting of Church-Fellowship upon it. I conceive to be an unchristian Usurpation upon the Consciences of Men, and a tempting of God, by laying such a Burden upon his People, which he must give Strength (more than otherwise were necessary) to bear, or otherwise they must suffer (at least) if not fall under it. And I believe I know some, worthy every ways of the Honour (according to the Line of Men) who, desirous of Entrance into some of your Churches, were turned back by a dislike of that new Door of your Covenant.

And lastly, We conceive the exacting and giving such a Covenant is not only a thing unnecessary, and a ὑπερβολὴ, a something above any thing that is written, but of worse Inconvenience also (at least, as many of those that are engaged in it, are wont to draw and interpret the Importance thereof): For many look upon the Covenant they have made with a particular Church, as a Partition-Wall, wholly to separate them in Care, Affection, Dependance, *&c.* upon all other Churches, and the Saints of God throughout the World; and take it for an authentical Discharge and Release from Heaven, from troubling themselves any ways with the Affairs of other Churches, or ministring unto their Necessities at any time. It was not much short of this which a great Defender of your Faith professed plainly unto me not long since, and that before some Witnesses. *Calvin* well observes upon *Rom.* 16. 16. that *Paul*'s Study and Desire was, by his careful remembrance, and sending the mutual Salutations of one Church to another, *quantum in se est, mutuo amoris nexu devincire inter se omnia Christi Membra*, as far as lay in his Power, to bind all the Members of Christ wheresoever in one and the same mutual Band and Affection together. Now if *Paul* herein did the Will and Commandment of God (which I cannot think you will deny) then as our Saviour charged the Scribes and Pharisees, that they made the Commandment of God of no effect (*i. e.* they had taken a course to do it, done that which directly tended thereunto) by their Tradition: So (we conceive) we may justly challenge your Covenant, for an ill Look or malignant Aspect upon that part of the Will of God, wherein he desires, that all Believers all the World over, should desire to maintain a free Intercourse of the dearest Love, and tendereſt Affection

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one towards another. The mighty God, and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, teach us how to make something of nothing, and by the use of a miserable, distracted, and broken World, to compass and fetch in the day of Eternity. Grace, Peace and Truth be multiplied to you and yours from the great Fountain of these Heavenly Treasures.

I am,

Colemanstreet, London, *Octob.* 25. 1635.

Yours in the Lord for the greatest Services of Christian Love and Acquaintance,

JOHN GOODWIN.

To the Reverend Mr. John Goodwin.

MY antient Friend, and dear Brother in the Lord, and Work of the Lord. I received from you now about ten Weeks since, a Letter, together with an inclosed Confutation of the Church-Covenant (as you suppose it is) practised amongst us: Your Letter is full enough of Provocation to an Answer, which you needed not to have seemed (so much) to doubt; and yet further to provoke unto it, and to get ground of us in it too, I hear that Copies either of your Letter, or Query, or both, as by you sent to me, were dispersed every-where abroad, and some afore the time they came to my Hand. Your Letter bears Date from you *Octob.* 25. I received it about the 20*th* of *November*; you had indeed used liberty of Speech enough in your Letter to me, as your self excuses it, because (as you say) you know I am well able to bear it, yea and this also. And whereas now you, or at least those who had yours so long afore my self, may think it high time to expect a full Answer, I must ingenuously tell you, what (perhaps in most Mens Eyes) will yet add to that Advantage you have already taken, that I do but now begin to consider by way of Study to answer your Objections; you then took me in the very midst of many other Notions upon another Subject, which both my own Heart and Promises had ingaged me in: And truly I resolved that this of yours should not take me off (notwithstanding all those Urgencies) until I had quitted my self of that which hath so much took up my Thoughts, that (God knows) I have not cast a Thought (more than what arose in the very first reading of it) upon this of yours: And besides other Reasons for this, I thought it a little unnatural to extrude what I was then a going with, or to entertain any other Conception that might weaken or abortive it, and I have not Strength enough to go with two together: But now that I am delivered of that Burden, I shall, as Health, and many other Ministerial Labours (which my Heart is much more in) will permit, apply my self (through Christ) to satisfy you in this, and I long and am straitned till I have accomplished it. But now I must further tell you to your greater Advantage still for the present, that I foresee the true and right stating this one particular Query, which you have singled out of the Drove as the weakest (which you thought to hunt and pursue to death) together with the clearing of it acording to your Mind, will necessarily require yet a longer time than happily may be expected: It was wisely done to begin to set down first before this small Fort, which being thus singly set upon, and alone, you made account to carry with an easy and glorious Conquest; for indeed it lies somewhat high and remotely up in the Regions of those other Fundamental Opinions about Church-Fellowship wherein we differ from you; so as to speak Truth, I cannot so fairly come at you to raise your Siege, until I have forced you to give up Truths of greater moment, which when I shall have done, this about a Church-Covenant shall fall into our Hands again with few or no Blows. I could for the present make out an Answer sufficient to your Arguments (as in your Discourse you will needs state the Question) by nothing but a bare relation of what is our common Practice and Judgment here at *Arnheym* in this Particular, which had you informed your self of afore you fell upon us, I am confident you would never have begun the

Quarrel with us here, and have made this the great Seat of the War. For as to the putting any to deliver their Judgments in Points of doubtful Disputations, upon and before Admission into our Church (I speak it in the words of the Charge in the Letter, and by some Expressions in the Arguments, I perceive it one Ground of this Quarrel, supposing that this is the manner of our Covenant;) we know not what you mean Look what Knowledg and Light agreeing with ours, any one voluntarily holds forth, we take and hear with rejoicing in the Unanimity: But profess in rigor, to exact no more Assent and Light (I speak in Matters of Church-Fellowship) than of being convinced, that Church-Fellowship is an Ordinance of Christ for Saints to enjoy other Ordinances in together, which is no more than what is essentially and absolutely necessary to that very Act of joining in it, and is in effect to profess they understand what they are about to do, that so we may be sure that a Name and Ordinance of God, is not taken in vain by them. And for any such Covenant (which you blame "so for length, that the Apostles their Dispatch was but an Ace to this Covenant of "ours, and for Tyranny as unchristian Usurpation upon the Consciences of Men, and "a tempting of God by laying such a Burden upon his People. And for Schism, you "would accuse it as a Partition-Wall wholly to separate Men in Care, Affection, De-"pendance upon all other Churches and Saints of God throughout the World) it is no more with us than this, an Assent and Resolution professed (by them to be admitted by us) with Promise to walk in all those Ways pertaining to this Fellowship, so far as they shall be revealed to them in the Gospel: Thus briefly, indefinitely, and implicitly, and in such like words, and no more or otherwise do we apply our selves to Mens Consciences, not obtruding the mention of any one Particular upon them before or in Admission, but wholly leaving before and after, their Spirits free to the Entertainment of the Light that shines, or shall shine, both to them and us out of the Word, and unto the sweet Guidance of the holy Spirit of Christ, to lead both them and us into all Truth, without either our haling or driving them. Indeed we that are to admit, do it upon a Conviction and Perswasion of the Party's true Grace, someway made forth visible to us: And we think any Christian Man may blush to name (now under the New Testament, when Types and Shadows are fled away, and the Body of the Truth is come) a Body, and Church, and Members of Christ our Head, and not mean Saints, and by Saints understand at least such as by the Rules of the Word given by God himself, to judg others by, are visible Saints: And we find Confession with the Mouth of the Work of Faith in the Heart, a Means among other sanctified by God to make any ones Grace evident and visible to others, and the Judgment we make hereupon to admit our Members, is no other, nor more rigorous, than what the Word holds forth as meet for us to judg of others by, and but such as I know your Conscience carries about with you, and which you can never lose, and which as occasion is given, you do use to judg of the Differences of Men by; and we know that in us it is righteous Judgment, being squared by the Rule given us, altho it is not infallible Judgment; for Men may deceive us in our Applications of it. Thus we do and have practised, and this is all for matter of Covenant, or Confession in use with us, and that from the beginning. And thus much in effect you grant, or seem to grant, whilst about Confession in the beginning of the second Argument you use these words; "Many Instances there "are, wherein only (say you) upon a sober Profession of their Faith in Christ, and "Entertainment of the Gospel, Men have been received into Churches, speaking of Scripture-Instances in the Apostles times. And in the beginning of the third Argument you add these words, Believers, willing and agreeing to live together in the same Body with you, afterwards instancing in your own, you do call Church-Fellowship. Well, let them be Believers, willing and desirous upon Knowledg of each other to be such upon a Profession of their Faith, and also what this Fellowship is: and let them withal but agree, by mutual Consent and Assent expressed to each other (or how else do they agree to live together in a Fellowship and Body?) so to live in that Relation, and all the Duties, and you and I are agreed: and now suppose unto this agreeing of yours, we join Covenanting and Promise, yet still but with those indefinite Expressions mentioned, assuredly whatever you and I mutually agree to do, if it be a matter of Moment, we may as well and as lawfully promise and covenant to do: And therein what do we more than tie a double Knot where you tie a single one? And yet that you and I may still agree, if you or any Believer comes to be admitted among us, upon the Terms aforesaid, and did scruple the word *Covenant* and *Promise*, we

we would take your ſingle Agreement without ſuch double Security: And this Knot and Band, this firmly by a Covenant made to tie us among our ſelves to the Duties of this Relation, is yet ſo far from being a Wall of Partition (as you would fain charge both us and it) from all Saints and Churches elſe, whom we love, pray for, hold Communion with, and honour as the Spouſe and Churches of Chriſt, and yours alſo (only give us leave to have our Churches not ſeparated, divided, tho in ſome things differing from yours, which therefore we could not be permitted to enjoy in our own Land): It is ſo far, I ſay, from being a Wall of Separation from all others, that we count it not indiſſoluble among our ſelves, (as that of Marriage is) but only obliging us to live together in this Fellowſhip, and the Duties of it as becometh Saints, whilſt you are caſt to live together as Men by your outward Calling and Conditions. Which Cohabitation, the firſt, tho remoteſt Ground of Church-Fellowſhip, and almoſt of all Fellowſhip elſe, wherein, if Providence maketh any Alteration, requiring a juſt remove, they may lawfully ſeek, and we do willingly grant a Diſmiſſion from us to any other Church, notwithſtanding this our Covenant, obliging us to this particular Fellowſhip; but whilſt we live together, a Covenant, and that made afore God, and an Oath unto God, are both and alike Ordinances, which may warrantably be uſed in all Affairs Human and Divine, wherein there paſſeth *mutuus Compactus*, a mutual Agreement between Men, or any ſpecial Relation made up among Men by Agreement. Thus if you marry, you make a ſolemn Covenant of it, to perform the Duties of that Relation: If you enter into any new League, even of Friendſhip, you may bind it by a Covenant, as did *Jonathan* and *David*; thus to be admitted into any Body or Polity Civil, Men make not only a Covenant, but do often add thereto an Oath, and ſuch is called the Covenant of God, as that of Marriage; and the Oath of God, as that between Prince and People in a Common-wealth. Now if this Church-Fellowſhip be a Body, and that to be entred into by Believers agreeing to live in the ſame Body, as your Words and the Truth expreſs, and ſuch a Body as ſuperadds any thing of a ſpecial Relation mutual between each other of that Church, more than that more common Communion, and Relation of, and unto all Saints in the Church Catholick, (and if it did not ſo, there were no need of any ſuch Act of Agreement to live in the ſame Body; for they were Members of the Catholick Church without it, and before it) Why then ſhould not ſuch a Covenant, and the Uſe and Benefit of it, be allowed to this Body, and ſpecial Relation of Church-Fellowſhip, to form up and knit faſt the Agreement of it, as is common to all Bodies and Societies, and particular Relations made up in the World? Not any of which you can well make up, or not ſo well without a Covenant, or at leaſt an Agreement, and that paſſed by way of Words mutually expreſſing Conſent, and muſt needs be confeſſed moſt ſuting with, and neareſt to the very Dictate of Nature, whilſt theſe Societies ſhall be made up of Men, to whom, to that very end that they might be ſociable, their Speech was given them; and ſo this comes to be argued not barely from the faint Illuſtration of a lifeleſs and lame Similitude and Reſemblance, but from the true and real Analogy and like Intereſt and Correſpondence with the Nature of the thing it ſelf; which this Divine Society, Body and Relation of Men doth in common hold and retain in this common Bond of all ſuch Societies, for their making up, namely, an Agreement expreſſed in Words, and a ſolemn Covenant, and this *Jure naturali*, even by a Right which both God and the Nature of the thing it ſelf hath endued it withal.

Firſt, Nature doth evince it, the Laws and Rules of which doth run along with, and are alike common to things ſpiritual and human, ſo far as both are ſaid to agree in one common Nature together: For as when God made ſpeaking to Men in a publick Aſſembly (as that of Preaching and Prophefying) a ſacred Ordinance, inſtantly did all the Laws of Nature and right Reaſon, that ſeem to regulate and covenantly concur to all orderly Speeches and Orations of Men in publick Aſſemblies made, fall upon this Ordinance alſo, as to ſpeak aloud, not to ſpeak in an unknown or ſtrange Tongue which the Aſſemblies underſtand not, not to ſpeak confuſedly two or three at once, but one by one: Even ſo when God made this Fellowſhip of Saints, and this ſpecial Relation of a few in a Church-Fellowſhip and Ordinance, inſtantly doth this of making up this Relation by a joint Agreement, and conſtantly expreſt in Words, preſent it ſelf as the natural and common way of knitting all ſorts of Men together in all other Relations elſe in the World.

Secondly,

Secondly, God hath ordained it: for if God hath thus lent in common (as we may so speak) a solemn Covenant as before himself made, unto all other Relations and Societies of any importance unto Mankind, which, when in such Civil Affairs used, is to be esteemed sacred, and an Ordinance of God, a Covenant of God (as was said) and an Oath with God; hath he not with that same Breath much more allotted and allowed the Practice of such a Covenant to have place in the Obligation of this Divine Society and Relation, which is it self an Ordinance, and so of the two the more proper Element for such a holy Covenant? so as this is so far from being an ὑπὲρ ὃ γεγραπται, any thing above what is written (as you speak of it) that it rather comes within the compass of the Apostles χρειαν ἔχετε γραφειν, yea indeed which needed not at all to have been written: For (as he then speaks of Love) ye are taught it of God, in a Law of Nature spiritualized; who also hath fully, roundly taught us to acknowledg, if we be spiritual, yea but reasonable, such Dictates of Nature and right Reason, in things wherein Divine Ordinances and Humane do alike partake in common, to be no less than the Commands of God; for of such like Rules (even the same we but now instanced in) doth the Apostle there speak. Nor yet is this Covenant the renewing that solemn general Covenant of Grace entred into at Conversion, where the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's-Supper are the Seals which you mention as Band sufficient; but this Covenant is but a particular Covenant, and so a Branch of that general one, and but to oblige unto the Duties more properly and specially pertaining unto this Fellowship, though all this in the virtue of the general Covenant. And therefore altho (as you say truly) the common Band of our mutual Interest in the same God, in the same Baptism, &c. do bind us to all those Duties, yet that hinders not a special particular Covenant to be made up on some special Duties upon various occasions; even as particular Leagues and Compacts used to be made out of some general Charter: For Example, baptism and all those common Interests in the same Lord, &c. do oblige Man and Wife, Master and Servant, Friend and Friend, and also Societies unto all the Duties belonging unto those several Relations, as they are laid down in the Word; and yet particular and solemn Covenants do and may pass between Men for the Performance of all these; or (to take your own Instance, which in your third Argument you have used) for the confirming those Duties and Services of Love to be performed towards your self by those our Brethren in Christ, upon whom the Providence of God, together with your own voluntary Election, either here or hereafter, shall cast you into Church-Fellowship with. To maintain Ministers for their Labour and Work of the Ministry, is (to go on to use your own words) one Duty and Service of Love, to which they stand bound by the common Band of their mutual Interest in the same God, in the same Baptism, in the same Hope, to exhibit, tender, and perform unto you, and which you may expect from the Power of Grace which worketh effectually in them, and subjecteth them to all the same Bonds and Obligations; and yet I believe you did, at least you might, expressly have covenanted with them that they should perform it, and yet what's this but a Duty and a Branch of Church-Fellowship, you have a Statute for in the New Testament? And doth not the like Reason hold for all other Duties of that whole Fellowship? And of this sort were those Covenants, which besides the Obligation of the general Covenant in the Law in *Horeb*, and in Circumcision were made of old by the People of God the Jews, namely, special Covenants upon special occasions made to engage them more expressly unto some special Duties unto God, or one another, whereof two Instances you cite, but withal do shut the Doors of those Sanctuaries upon us, if we should thither fly for Refuge by alledging the Forfeiture of our Privilege therein, "Our selves having (as you speak) pol-
" luted them by destroying all Sympathy and Agreement between a National Church,
" and that which we call Instituted or Particular. But we affirm with all Orthodox Divines, that all the moral Equity of these Covenants, do still hold under the New Testament as much as ever, as all things that were moral under the Covenant also do, as a seventh-day-Sabbath, Infant-Baptism, &c. And the Ministers Maintenance is argued from that of not muzling the Oxes Mouth: And we have destroyed only that Sympathy, with what was but typical then, which part of this Sanctuary God himself both polluted and abandoned; whilst we deny those wonted Arguments drawn from the Mould and Pattern of the National Church then, and from the universal mixture of all *Israel* therein, to prove the like now in any whole National Church in the World: And we affirm the Dedication of all that People to be a holy Nation, and a Kingdom of Priests,

and

and so generally to be Members of that Church, to be done but in a Type and Shadow, as most things else were, altho a real Holiness was commanded then as now, and required by God of all then, as now; as were their Temples also Types of that Royal Nation, and true Priesthood, and living Stones of Saints in Truth, and visibly such in reality, (as *Peter* expoundeth it) of whom alone a particular Church, the only instituted Church we can find mentioned in the New Testament succeeding that National, is to consist, as the only Truth and Reality of that Type. And as God made Persons and Actions unclean in the Type, that morally were not unclean; so on the contrary, in the like Type all the Nation holy, who yet morally were neither such, nor by the Saints in those times were judged such; but the moral part of this Sanctuary (which is still to continue) your self shall defile and destroy, if you either affirm the ground of making those special Covenants, not to have been moral, or being moral, not to hold for Pastors for a Church or Society, or Society of Men together, to enter into the like now. But I resolved not to write a Scripture (which yet confirms all this) but do now only leave you unto your own Reason spiritualized to answer you out of what hath been said, in all that is materially objected by you, yea even to that same Reason that tells you that twice two is four, as your self speaks of, there appearing so clearly Error in the greatest part of your whole Way. And now you know both our Judgments and Practice, (altho the Difference between you and us in this Particular can prove but small) to have answered all the material things in the Query, so far as they relate unto this Covenant, would be but an easy and no long Work; yet for their sakes to whom you have made this Challenge against our whole Church-Fellowship so publick, and endeavoured to make as odious as publick (who yet are ignorant of it) I shall, God willing, put my self to further Pains, yet to show more largely the Foundation of our Church-work, and so of this Practice; and in doing this I shall take the larger Compass, and require the more time, because I see you will not allow me so much as a Stick or a Stone unto this Building, yea, I am to fight for the very Ground I am to build upon; for notwithstanding what I have took hold of in your Discovery as granted by you, yet I cannot assure my self of any one Principle from you about Church-Fellowship, but that there is a Catholick Church, and a Communion of Saints in the Creed, which we all acknowledged; for otherwise when we spake of a particular Instituted Church, you seem to make it a Matter of our making, and not as of God's Institution: And besides, if I should go about to beg any one of these Principles, even the lowest about a Particular Church, I know not what, nor indeed how large I may be denied. You have enacted a supream Law (as you call it) against all such Beggars in this Dissertation; and if the Foundation should be denied, what can we do till we have established them? I am resolved therefore, and must be at the more Pains, and expence of Time (who yet am able to take but little Pains in much time) to satisfy and make good as I go along all those Principles which you slight as loose and faint Suppositions: And therein I have but one Request to make to you, and by you to make to others, to whom you have made your Letter and Objections so common; Let not this my taking a longer day, add one Hair to the Stature of your Confidence (which is full high and tall enough already in any Man's view, even in the very first words of your Arguments) neither unto your own, or any of their Opinions of the Strength of these their Arguments. But above all, I beseech you not to draw so hard a Consequence from the Suspension of a more full Answer, as to expect me sooner with you than an Answer; for I assure you, did not the Merit of the Cause it self, and the Condition of it (not being understood by most) require it, that Men may come to a right understanding of us, I should not have needed any more time for the clearing of any Scruple or Doubt, which all this your Discourse had any way begotten in my own Reason or Conscience, than simply when I was a reading it first over. And in this my Answer I shall not go about to contend with you, either in Rhetorick, or Subtilty of answering, but in Solidity and Faithfulness through the Grace of Christ. To say I shall so answer thus or thus soon, I make account is but the Credit of the Answer (which I have learned not to strive with you about) but to give you (as you see) all the fair Advantages, but to answer you with words of Truth and Soberness, that may (through Christ) convince you and others, shall be my only Aim; and then I know, altho I should be long in doing of it, yet Delays and Charges will therein be paid with Interest and Advantage unto the Cause

and

and Truth, which I expect more than what I am else in this World; neither yet will I undertake to answer you as you expect, Letter for Letter, Tittle for Tittle, Word for Word, in some things in your Letter; I know such Retortions are affixable to any Person or Cause, and never decided Controversies; much less will I begin to vie moral Imputations with you, no, though you should begin, and we fear not what you can beside: but my Endeavours shall be to return you Matter for Matter, and in that Business alone through Christ that strengthens me, to give you Measure for Measure pressed down and running over; and withal, which shall be unto me the supream Law of this Dissertation, to give a new Consideration to every Grain that addeth Weight in any thing you say; yea and re-cal and retract also whatever I shall find that we are out in: And this kind of Inconstancy, however you would blemish me for, yet I count one of the greatest Perfections of us imperfect Men, imperfect in Knowledg here below. And all this I shall do with the greatest Candor and Simplicity, and which shall also be sacred to me along this Dispute, so to handle Matters, as to be sure to part good Friends: And in the mean time let this be laid up in your Bosom, to sweeten these Waters of Strife between us, *viz.* an Assurance from me, that you still hold in my Heart as high and full Esteem of so great Worth, Learning and Piety as ever you did, and how much you did, your self knows and many others; and withal that I retain as candid a Judgment of the Truth of your Church-state and Calling in the Ministry for the Essentials of it, as is in any of your best Hearers: account but of me as the Servant of Christ, the unworthiest, and one of

Your most faithful loving Friends,

THO. GOODWIN.

TWO

TWO LETTERS OF THE AUTHOR, TO THE Reverend Mr. *ROBERT ASTY* of *Norwich*, CONCERNING The Equal Authority and Power of Paſtor and Teacher in a Church.

The Firſt LETTER.

Reverend Sir;

I See you are preſſed in your Spirit (and it may be from the Lord) to ſeek my Judgment in the caſe of your accepting or not accepting your Call at *Norwich* to the Miniſtry. I perceive you have given up your ſelf to ſerve Chriſt in the way of Preaching, with good and ſincere Intention, and you do only doubt, by reaſon of the ſenſe of your own Inability, whether you ſhould accept of a fixed Place of Office to be added to that of Preaching without it. To this Caſe thus ſtated, I give, according to my preſent poor Judgment, two Anſwers; The firſt is, that the great ſenſe of your own Inability, tho, as conſidered in it ſelf, it may deter you, yet that you have this deep ſenſe before-hand, ought to be a great Encouragement to you, that God hath given you ſuch a Spirit. As in the caſe of Profeſſion of Religion, the Fears of falling away, and not being able to do any thing as we ought (and twenty ſuch Diſcouragements) ought not, nor do they finally keep any that are ſincere from their Profeſſion of Religion: But (as ſaith one) the Power and Aſſiſtance of Chriſt they are to live upon for enabling them. Parallel to this, whether you ſhould be a Chriſtian or no, is whether you ſhould be a Miniſter or no. Senſibleneſs of our Inſufficiency is a Character of ſuch a frame of Spirit, as above all fits a Man for the Miniſtry: *For who is ſufficient for theſe things as of our ſelves?* and wherein you are weak, you ſhall find your ſelf ſtrong through the Power of Chriſt that reſts upon you; for Sufficiency is of God, and we are not able to think a good Thought of our ſelves. And with theſe Apprehenſions did *Paul* both enter into the Miniſtry, and was carried on in it. And as for your Apprehenſions of your Gifts for the Miniſtry, and Fitneſs for that Work, you are to take the Judgment of a Church (that have been uſed to Men of Gifts and great Gifts) now in chooſing of you, and that as by the Holy Ghoſt: For it is the Holy Ghoſt who makes Overſeers over the Church. Therefore the Church's Choice, and the Promiſe, that in what God calls a Man to, he will not leave him nor forſake him, may be ſufficient Satisfaction to you. And then beſides, There is a ſpecial Bleſſing will accompany a Man in an Office (through the Grace of God) more than doth in his ordinary Preaching without Office. I uſe to ſay the Loadſtone doth draw, but eſpecially if it be ſet in

Steel, 1 *Cor.* 12. 28. 1 *Tim.* 3. 15. Sir, I ſhould adviſe this concerning him that is to be joined with you in Office, endeavour to obſerve by all ways you can his Temper of Spirit, not as to Religion (I ſuppoſe Sincerity and Ability to be in him) but as to his Carriage, his natural Temper; there are oftentimes very great Burdens upon Mens Spirits that are yoked together, and Breaches from Unſutableneſs of Spirit do often fall out unto ſad Events in Churches. [The Man is utterly a Stranger to me.] You know the ſad Events between *Paul* and *Barnabas*, there was a ſelfiſhneſs in *Barnabas* to have *Mark* go with them; he was his Siſter's Son, and tho *Barnabas* was a good Man, an Apoſtle, yet he ſtuck unto this ſelfiſh end ſo much, he was ſo pertinacious in it, that it cauſed a Breach to part, and they never met again that we read of, and *Paul* was in the right. I heard ſince you wrote to me, as if there were ſome Diſcouragements that you have beſides them that you wrote, which I muſt leave wholly to your ſelf. But if you be yoked with your own Conſent, you are irrevocable; but yet you are free as to your own Conſent, and you have as great a Freedom on your part to accept or not, as the Church had of chooſing on their part.

For your other Query, of the Equality or Inequality of Power of the Office of a Paſtor and a Teacher, and of their Adminiſtrations wherein they differ: For the firſt, I know no difference of Superiority, and the Apoſtle condemned it in *Diotrephes*, 3 *Joh. v.* 9. of one above the other, they are Prophesying Elders both: *Epheſ.* 4. 11. *Some Paſtors and Teachers*, they are yoked together alike, whereas the former are ſingle; *ſome Apoſtles, and ſome Prophets, and ſome Evangeliſts.* Theſe being extraordinary Miniſters they may admit Subordination, as an Evangeliſt was under and lower than the Office of an Apoſtle; but theſe two are yoked together in one, *Some Paſtors and Teachers.* They that labour in the Word and Doctrine are to have double Honour alike, there is not a third Honour to be given to one above the other. The 65*th* and 66*th* Chapters of *Iſaiah* are Promiſes of the laſt and beſt Times of the Goſpel, which *ver.* 22. ſhows ſufficiently, and their Worſhip is ſpoken in *ver.* 23. their Officers in the 21*th*, whereof there were two ſorts in general, Prieſts and Levites; the Levites were thoſe that helped about Sacrifices, and were under the Prieſts, but the Prieſts were equal: and who are the Prieſts but thoſe whoſe Lips preſerve Knowledg? for the Subſtance of their Office, they were co-ordinate Officers, not ſubordinate, as the Levites to the Prieſts. Anſwerably in *Rom.* 12. where the Officers of a Church are ſet out at the 6*th* Verſe, and ſo on to the 9*th*, he ſays, *having then Gifts differing according to the Grace that is given us*, for Miniſterial Gifts and Offices are always ſuted, and then he divides them firſt into two Generals: 1. Prophecy. 2. Miniſtry. He ſpeaks of ordinary Officers: thoſe that are to prophesy have to do with Matters of Faith; *Let us propheſy according to the proportion of Faith given us:* or Miniſtry, *Let us wait on our Miniſtry.* Then he comes to ſubdivide theſe into theſe Particulars; Firſt, he that teacheth, to attend on Teaching, as upon an Office; *he that exhorteth on Exhortation:* thoſe are the Particulars belonging to Prophecy: And as Paſtor is ſet before Teacher in the *Epheſians*, here Teacher is ſet before Paſtor; ſo that comparing one with another I make them equal with thoſe Offices that belong to the Miniſtry. The other Generals are three, as it follows, and are lower and under, he that giveth, and he that ruleth, and that ſheweth Mercy; you may ſee this opened at large by Mr. *Cotton* in the *Way of the Churches of* New-England: this for the Equality; only I ſay this, as to the higheſt of their Work, which is the Word and Prayer, they are both equal.

For the ſecond; for the difference in their Adminiſtrations this is one Principle with me, that the Diſtinction of Officers ariſes from the Diſtinction of Gifts God doth give unto Men fitted for Office, and I found it upon 1 *Cor.* 12. 4, 5, 6. *There are diverſities of Gifts, but the ſame Spirit. And there are differences of Adminiſtrations, but the ſame Lord: and there are diverſities of Operations*, Succeſſes of God's working upon Mens Hearts, that is, from God the Father. All three Perſons are intereſted in the Miniſtry, as well as in our Salvation. The Gifts are what the Holy Ghoſt gives, and endows a Man habitually withal, and they are divers: The Adminiſtrations are Offices appointed by the Lord Chriſt the great Shepherd, and there are differences of Adminiſtrations, ſuted for the difference of Exerciſe of Gifts. And thirdly, the Succeſs is from God the Father, who is the God of all Grace, and the Founder of all, as the 6*th* Verſe has it. Now the diverſity of Gifts for Teacher and for Paſtor are as apparent, and that before called to Office, which is ſuted to theſe diverſities of Gifts, habitually given by the Holy Ghoſt, as Jeſus Chriſt appointed Offices: and happy is the Man that is a Miniſter, that is called to that kind of Office which

which his Gifts ſutes, for then they will run in a more natural Channel. The diverſity of Gifts by the Holy Ghoſt doth appear. Some more comparatively have a powerful way of exhorting, perſwading, working upon the Affections, and abound in Uſes: Others have a Gift of handling things in a Doctrinal way, to open and fetch out the true meaning and ſenſe of Scripture, which often needs an Acuteneſs to find out, and to give Reaſons for the Proof of a thing; an Ability to anſwer Objections and untie Knots, have a good Judgment in Controverſies, yet both may have Ability either way, but with a Diſproportion one more than the other: anſwerably in that *Rom.* 12. of the Prophesying Officers, one is an Exhorter, to bend himſelf to Exhortation, and Exhortation is put for Comfort, and for like Reaſon for Reproof, and for what is directly practical. And the Teacher he has Ability to eſtabliſh Mens Hearts in Truth, and they are to bend themſelves accordingly: He that exhorteth on Exhortation; He that teacheth on Teaching, 1 Cor. 12 8. *To one is given Wiſdom, to another Knowledg by the ſame Spirit*; theſe are meant plainly of ordinary Gifts. That which follows in the *9th* Verſe is Healing, and thoſe that are extraordinary. Thus alſo that place in *Timothy* is underſtood by ſome of Preaching Officers, that are worthy of double Honour, that labour in the Word, that is of Exhortation, and that labour in Doctrine: and ſome have fetch'd the Difference to be ſet out by that Scheme of a Church in *Rev.* 4. of the four Beaſts, the fourth was like an Eagle, that has an Eagle's Eye into Truths, *&c.*

Thus, Sir, I have given you my Thoughts that I have at preſent (for my Notes about Church-Government at preſent are not with me, being I am removing); with my Love remembred to you, and Prayers to guide you, I reſt

London, March *the* 25th, 1675.

Your very affectionate Friend and Brother in Chriſt,

THO. GOODWIN.

The Second LETTER.

Reverend Sir;

I Received your important Letter about two Months ſince, which was time enough to have anſwered it if opportunity had ſerved, but truly I have been weak and ſickiſh ever ſince, and my Eyes fail me that I cannot write my ſelf ſo much as to ſet down my own Thoughts and private Studies; and beſides, I did ſuppoſe that you had the Strength of what I could ſay in that Letter I wrote you by Mr. *Berman*, which your ſelf ſays in your laſt, ſatisfied you ſo much, that I thought I needed to write no more, or if I did, I ſhould but fall into the ſame Thoughts again: but you having now reviv'd it in your Letters to the Elders in general, and therein required my Cognizance, I ſtrain my ſelf to write again.

This Controverſy about the Authority and Power of Paſtor and Teacher, was firſt ſtarted among the Browniſt Churches in *Holland*, by *Francis Johnſon* one of the rigid Separation, who out of the Old Teſtament went about to prove the Government by Paſtors and Teachers under the New to be conformed to the Analogy of the Old, and ſo to make a Paſtor in a Congregational Church to be as a High Prieſt; but as I remember it took not with his Brethren. This Book I have either loſt, or it was burnt in the Fire of *London*, elſe I would ſend it you.

The Arguments in my preſent Thoughts to prove that the Paſtor and Teacher are equal in Power (which is the particular Point of which you enquire) are ſuch as theſe.

1. The first is taken from what the Apostle says (1 *Cor.* 4. 1.) *Let a Man so account of us, as of the Ministers of Christ, and Stewards of the Mysteries of God.* 1. He speaks it of the Preaching Elders of the New Testament, the ordinary Ministers of the Word. 2. He speaks what Esteem they are to have according to their Order and Rank, from all Men, and then much more from the Church over which they are placed. 3. He speaks universally of all such as are the Ministers to such Churches; *Let a Man so account of us*, &c.

Now their Office in common to them all is to be Stewards of Christ, and of the Mysteries of God, whereby the Sacraments are especially intended as well as the Dispensation of the Word and Prayer: For the Sacraments are in a figurative Signification the Person of Christ himself, and in a special manner Mysteries; and the Antients did usually and generally term them Mysteries: and accordingly that place *Ephes.* 5. 32. *This is a great Mystery*, is interpreted by them a great Sacrament; and thereupon the Papists, who are the great Pretenders to Antiquity, have made Marriage a Sacrament to this day; but that Scripture is genuinely meant of Christ and his Church, as appears by the words spoken after.

2. When our Saviour Christ did institute the new Ministry of the Gospel in the room of the old, he first chose twelve Apostles, who were the extraordinary Ministers of the New Testament: and besides those he sent out seventy Disciples to preach the Gospel, and sent them out two by two, one having like Authority and Equality with the other: and these are, as Bishop *Andrews* doth interpret it rightly, the standing ordinary Ministers of Congregations.

3. When Christ at last afore his Ascension gave Authority to go preach the Gospel, and teach all Nations with the same Breath, he gives them Authority to administer the Sacraments. Go and baptize as well as preach the Word. The Commission was for the Sacraments and Word together, and for one Sacrament as well as another, so as the Administration of these are of like extent, as occasion is: and correspondently to this the Apostle *Paul* (*Ephes.* 4. 10, 11.) confirms it, *When he ascended up on high* (says he) *and gave Gifts unto Men, he gave some Apostles, and some Prophets, and some Evangelists.* These are extraordinary Ministers in those times of differing Degrees and Order each particular of them, and therefore each particular is distinguished by the word *some.* And then he specifies the ordinary standing Ministers that were to continue in all Ages to the end of the World, Pastors and Teachers, about whom the present Question is. Now observe the difference he puts. Indeed the word *some* is set before Pastors and Teachers, to distinguish them from the extraordinary he had spoke of afore, and to shew they were of another Rank than the former: But observe again, that he puts no such difference between the Pastors and Teachers, he doth not say, *some Pastors, and some Teachers.* He doth not place the word *some* afore each, as he had done afore, but says only *Pastors and Teachers*, to shew they are of equal Commission and Rank.

See Ainsworth's Defence against Martin, 4°.

4. I might here add that grand Record (*Rom.* 12.) which the Apostle *Paul* left behind him, on purpose as it were to check the Pride of the Church of *Rome* (which the Holy Ghost foresaw would be the Mistress of Misrule) and to prevent that Disorder of Officers in the Church rising unto that Grandure (to which the Roman Clergy have ascended) of Thrones and Dominions, &c. and to depress and suppress all such Attempts in those Officers. The Holy Ghost left a Scheme of those several Officers and Works of them; first dividing their Functions into two Heads, (*ver.* 6, 7.) Prophecy and Ministry; and then subdividing them into Particulars, That he who *teacheth should wait on teaching*, (ver. 7.) There is one Preaching Elder, your Teacher; and he that *exhorteth on Exhortation*, there is your Pastor: and these two Particulars come under that first Head of Prophecy, and they that do so are the two Preaching Elders, as appears by the following words, *Let us prophesy according to the Proportion of Faith:* So as Matters of Faith are the subject Matter and Work of their two Offices; and then follows the three other particular Officers which are to be reduced under the other general Head of Ministry, or διακονία, which are the inferior Officers. *He that giveth, let him do it with Simplicity*; (which we call the Deacon): *He*

He that ruleth, with Diligence; (the Ruling Elder is meant): *He that sheweth Mercy, with Chearfulness*; which intends looking to the Sick and Infirm, which is a nauseating Work. And if any object, that this Office of shewing Mercy runs in the Language of the Masculine Gender: I answer,

(1.) Whether it be a Man or Woman who undertakes the Work, it is all one.

(2.) The Apostle had begun the Enumeration of these Officers in the Masculine Gender.

(3.) It is to be considered, that in all the other particular Offices he mentions, the Officers thereof are Males, and therefore at the last he continues the same Gender, noting out a Person, to keep to the Analogy of the Language with which he had begun. This Chapter I thus opened in the Assembly, but you may see it more largely in Mr. *Cotton*'s Treatise of the Way of the Churches in *New-England*.

5. Consider what the Apostle says (1 *Tim.* 5. 17.) *Let the Elders that rule well, be counted worthy of double Honour, especially they who labour in the Word and Doctrine.* The Apostle's scope is to set the differing Valuation that Churches were to put upon their Officers for their Works sake, and he puts a special Note upon the Preaching Elders that labour in the Word and Doctrine. The difference he puts is only between *them* and the *Ruling Elders*; but he yokes them, *viz.* the Pastor and Teacher together, as co-ordinate and of like Rank, for their Works sake; yea (and as I have thought) with a Distinction of their Offices, intimated in those Phrases, *that labour*, namely *in the Word of Exhortation*, which is the Pastor's Office (it is the Apostle's Phrase elsewhere); and in *Doctrine*, which the Teacher is to apply himself to.

6. The several Gifts God gives (which are suted to Offices and Officers to them) do warrant this Distinction. Thus in 1 *Cor.* 12. he discourses of the several Gifts and Offices of those that are the eminent Members of the Body. And by Helps in Government (*ver.* 28.) I understand the Ruling Elder assisting their Teachers. In the fore part of the Chapter, *ver.* 4, 5, 6. he shews how God has given Gifts (that is, infused Habits) and they are suted to Offices, and both blessed by God.

Now among those Gifts fitting Men for those Administrations and Operations, *To one is given a Word of Wisdom*, which is more proper to a Pastor; *to another a Word of Knowledg*, that is for the Teacher, which is a Gift more speculative. And you may find in Experience that some Mens Gifts are more for Exhortation, and to set home Uses; others to invent Reasons for Proofs and Explanations of Truths: And look into your Auditors, and you will find some to affect a Ministry that moves and perswades their Affections, and stirs their Wills; and you will find others that affect Depths of Knowledg, and each profiteth by either, for that is the Rule, 1 *Cor.* 12. 7. The Ministration of the Spirit in all these Administrations is given to every Man to profit withal; and thus harmoniously doth one thing answer, and is suted to another, and by these God shews his Care and Wisdom, by several Gifts and Offices suted to Mens Needs and Spirits, and shews his Love in making Provision for the Defects and Wants that are in his poor Saints. The Teacher has the Care of their Understandings to cure the Errors and Defects therein; and the Pastor has their Wills and Affections principally committed to his Charge to work upon and move them; and which of these you will prefer most in Man, the Will or Understanding to be the more principal Faculty, you may by the same measure give Dignity to these Officers for their Work sake.

7. God further shews he has a Care of Mens Lives and Conversations, in setting up the Ruling Elder to watch over their Conversations, for that is his Charge: God shews his Care over their Bodies and Estates, in appointing the Office of a Deacon to look to their Wants. And he takes care of their Bodily Infirmities, by appointing them that are to shew Mercy. And thus God has taken care for all about his People, both for his own Honour, and their Good who are his Children. He hath sufficiently provided for their Education in this World, till they come to Heaven. As Persons that are great Kings and Princes have several Offices for every Business, tho very small, and they have them to shew their Greatness; so Christ will have the like too in his Church.

Let

Let these things be sufficient to answer this my Scope, and Design, and to prove that these two Offices of Pastor and Teacher, and their Gifts and Labours are co-ordinate in respect of Preference of one to the other, or Dependance of the one upon the other; much more are they freed from any Subjection of one unto the other. So that to advance one above the other, is an apparent Violation of the sacred Order which God has instituted and fixed, and is an injurious Usurpation out of Ignorance and Pride, such as was in *Diotrephes*, whom the Apostle *John* so condemns: The breaking of Churches will be hazarded if this Principle prevail; and let any Man take heed how he defile the Temple of God, much more destroy it, for him will God destroy.

I am,

Yours, &c.

THO. GOODWIN.

POST-SCRIPT.

I Intended by my Letter to take away all Precedency whatsoever, and my Reasons do manifestly tend to it, and therefore I make it my Conclusion; and those words in respect of Preference, are all one as if I had said in respect of Precedency.

FINIS.

THE

AN

Alphabetical Table.

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——— *of Man, in it is to be a fixed and firm adherence unto God and Christ, and to the good things promised by them.* p. 176 a.
Witness *of the Spirit,* 1 John 5. 8. *what.* p. 95 b.
Wisdom *natural, and Reason against Faith.* p. 28, 34 c.
——— *of God, reserves it self a Liberty.* p. 147 b.
Work *of the Father, is to teach souls to come to Christ, and to draw them to him.* p. 121 a.
——— *performed by sinful Men, are carnal and abominable.* p. 58 c.
——— *of Faith in Christ's Blood, and it besprinkled, have a Testimony in them.* p. 93 b.
Workings *of Natural Conscience, will not help a Man to believe.* p. 35 c.
——— *which depend on God's Free-grace, will not be Natural.* p. 84 a.

Z.

ZEal *for God, what.* p. 77 c.

ERRATA

ERRATA.

Reader,

YOu have here the Errata not only of this *Fourth* Volume, but of the *First*, *Second* and *Third* Volumes of the Author's Works. Where the Number of the Line hath *a fi.* added to it, (*ex. gr.* 9 *a fi.*) it signifies that you must count the Lines beginning from the bottom of the Page. But in this *Fourth* Volume the Lines are always to be counted from the top of the Page; and where there happens any void and unprinted spaces in a Page, yet the Lines must be reckoned to go on, as if the Page had been filled up: *Ex. gr.* in the Treatise of *Church-Government*, p. 147. l. 28. that *Erratum* is but in *l.* 23. if you count only the printed lines: This came to pass, because in collecting the Errours of this *Fourth* Volume, the Lines were computed by applying a Scale of Figures to them, and not by telling every Line, which would have been exceeding tedious, and also more liable to Mistakes.

Vol. I. Part I.

page	line	
72	25	For *likewise* Read *likeness*
84	6	f. *Affection* r. *Assertion*
128	9	*a fi.* r. *summ'd up so many particulars as in*
152	9	*a fi.* f. *on Earth* r. *in Heaven*
154	19	*a fi.* f. *second* r. *first*
	3	*a fi.* r. *in its self*
164	13	r. *be to the*
188	24	r. *to the praise of his Glory.*
197	9	f. *now* r. *much*
205	*ult.*	r. *in his Word*
211	3	f. *heir* r. *their*
213	3	r. *faith before, they had faith under*
214	24	f. *speaking* r. *spoken*
215	17	*a fi.* f. *wrought* r. *not*
217	3	*a fi.* f. *a pledge* r. *an earnest*
226	6	*a fi.* r. *needeth*
	4	*a fi.* r. *that is not actual*
227	26	f. *there* r. *here*
279	8	f. *hundred* r. *thousand*
285	15	*a fi.* r. *Contriver*
289	37	r. *he addeth* ὑπερβάλλον
295	27	f. *ordinary* r. *extraordinary*
330	6	*a fi.* dele *Love*
		f. *page* 350. r. *p.* 354
372	31	f. *raising* r. *raised*
382	1	dele *both the*
403	11	*a fi.* f. *satisfie* r. *sanctifie*
437	7	*a fi.* f. *strengthneth* r. *answereth*
451	14	*a fi.* r. *then perhaps is here meet*
476	29	dele *unto*
	12	*a fi.* f. *New Brownists* r. *Old Brownists*

Part II.

page	line	
13	3	f. *death* r. *sin*
19	1	r. *only left a Man*
		f. *page* 32 r. 40
56	13	dele *it*
103	1	r. *but there were those who held that they were so, not by Nature, but by Imitation or Custom*
123	2	r. *whoever sins that sin, God makes an*
	21	r. *and in that Image we*
129	20	*a fi.* f. *nothingny any Creature* r. *to reduce the Creature to nothing*
133	30	f. *that* r. *a*
143	12	f. *commemorating* r. *communicating*
186	*ult.*	f. *spirit* r. *soul*
187	1	dele [*be*] after *and*
214	4	*a fi.* r. *these are things*
215	2	f. *union* r. *declaration*
222	6,7.	r. *hath upon the soul now under*
257	16	r. *any thing out of God to move*
279	5	r. *spoken of, which as it is given*
281	7	*a fi.* dele *it too, and by*
283	13	r. *but whether we are saved thereby*
	15	r. *do not hold that we are justified*
290	18	f. *eminent* r. *immanent*
297	27	dele *on account of his Act*
299	6	r. *which we had not before*
300	25	f. *where* r. *whereas*
	19	*a fi.* f. *mediate* r. *immediate*

Part III.

page	line	
35	26	f. *does* r. *do*
39	3	r. *should not work*
67	28	r. 2 *Cor.* 3. 18. & dele *lost*
67	12	*a fi.* dele *under*
94	7	f. *extra* r. *intra*
102	8	r. *Heb.* 10. 7.
	10	f. *attain* r. *again*
108	10	*a fi.* r. *he also took part of the same*
	9	*a fi.* dele *to*
	6	*a fi.* r. *extended*
108	4	*a fi.* r. *because he had not*
	3	*a fi.* r. *tho' his mediation be of*
108	*penult.*	r. *yet it doth*
117	11	f. *fourthly* r. *fifthly*
126	9	*a fi.* r. *but mediately by*
142		f. *Fourthly* r. *Fifthly*

Vol. II. Part I.

On the Revelations.

page	line	
4	6	For *Covenant* Read *Rainbow*
5	40	r. *in one English word to express it, signifies so*
34	23	f. *Cyrus* r. *Cyprus*
67	38	dele *parenthesis*
120	5	*a fi.* f. *culta* r. *cultu*
	ult.	r. *Antichristi.*

Part II. *Of the Knowledge of God.*

page	line	
9	25	f. *that* r. *not*
11	16	*a fi.* r. *as the Son and the Father*
16	28	*a fi.* dele *punctum*
16	48	r. *John* 6. *ver.* 57.
20	13	f. *is* r. *his*
	9	*a fi.* dele *semicolon* f. *a* r. *as*
24	23	*a fi.* dele [*that*] after *so*
25	15	f. 2 r. 1
40	1	r. *this soul as is will*
	14	r. *Psal.* 41. 13.
52	21	put *semicolon* after *first*
53	13	*a fi.* r. *deliverer by the hands of*
63	*antepenult.*	r. *Pareus doth*
66	32	r. *denying it unto*
	33	r. *is intended*
71	11	*a fi.* r. *indigitation*
73	37	f. 1 *Joh.* 5. 28. r. 1 *Joh.* 5 18.
77	6	*a fi.* f. *tis here* r. *this*
	3	*a fi.* r. *similar yet is*
92	*penult.*	r. *not all as*
100	24	f. *this of Reconciliation here* r. *those before*
101	34	r. εὐδόκησε
116	15	dele *semicolon* after *decreed*
124	6	*a fi.* r. *person that prayeth*
125	10	r. *Genuine*
140	6	*a fi.* f. *come under* r. *be*
	5	*a fi.* dele *when*, dele *and*
156	18	r. *Masius*
159	9	f. 81 r. 1
160	45	r. *Rabbim*
161	15	r. *Lordship*
174	20	f. 15 r. 13
176	21 & 29	f. *Creature* r. *Creator*
177	20	*a fi.* f. *in* r. *is*
	ult.	put the *comma* at *so*
179	*antipen.*	put the *comma* at *he*
193	30	put the *stop* not at λογῷ but after *again*
	28	f. *seeing* r. *seeth.*
	ult.	f. 200 r. 202

Part III. *Of the Creation.*

page	line	
6	33	r. *wore that Glory*
7	48	f. *Davids* r. *Adams*
15	16	dele *near to*
16	34	f. *John* 14. r. *John* 1. 14.
20	6	f. *destroy* r. *descry*
23	23	*a fi.* f. *the* r. *their*
26	17	r. *nothing but what he*
	25	r. *not a Debtor*
28	12	r. *may fall out*
29	18	*a fi.* r. *from Entity*
	26	*a fi.* r. *imperfect*
	12	*a fi.* r. *their defectibility*
31	17	f. *unalterable* r. *unalterable*
32	11	*a fi.* r. *imperfect, to the end* (as *Heb.* 11. *ult.*) that
33	20	f. *Creator* r. *Creation*
34	24	*a fi.* f. *World* r. *Word*
35	24	*a fi.* f. *relation* r. *revelation*
39	1	f. *present* r. *prevent*
42	7	*a fi.* f. *whom* r. *when*
44	14	f. *one* r. *once*, and put *comma* after *once*
46	5	f. *Mortality* r. *Immortality*
51	3	dele *punctum* ante *and*
53	22	f. *supernatural light* r. *natural light*
53	52	f. *and* r. *in*
57	14	f. *Christ* r. *Christs*
57	*ult.*	f. *entend* r. *intend*
60	48	f. *is the manner* r. *in the manner*
63	14	r. *known by Revelation*
	31	dele *to*, dele *comma after all*, put *comma* at *had*
	46	r. *principle*

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page	line	
	46	r. *principle*
	49	f. *faith, enough* r. *faith enough,*
65	11	*a fi.* r. *that 40th. Psalm*
67	27	r. *the Old Testament says*
	38	r. *not naturally*
70	10	*a fi.* r. *be began to be*
71	2	f. *Christ* r. *Adam,*
	3	f. *Adam* r. *Christ*
	5	r. *principle*
76	15	r. *referring*
79	4	f. *but* r. *not*
	16	f. *this* r. *his*
81	42	f. *out* r. *in*
83	32	f. *assuring* r. *assuming*
86	11	*a fi.* r. *premise*
88	11	*a fi.* f. *Abraham* r. *Adam* f. *Enoch* r. *Enos*
89	10	r. [*Col.* 2. 9. *The*
90	20	f. *assuring* r. *assuming*
91	51, 52.	f. *confirm* r. *conform*
94	51	r. *promise of God did it*
95	8	r. *moulder*
96	7	r. *Candle doth diffuse*
	29	r. *who hath*
101	25	r. *impassible*
103	12	f. *which now have* r. *we now have*
104	35	r. *the Humane Nature of Christ hath by*
	37	r. *what this Godhead raiseth*
109	7, 8.	r. (*1 Cor.* 12) *when he came down from Heaven. They were*
115	22	f. *lone* r. *lower*
116	7	f. *active* r. *to act*
117	8	*a fi.* f. *no more* r. *not*

Part IV. *Of Election.*

page	line	
3	16	*a fi.* f. *that* r. *than*
	8	*a fi.* r. *severed*
4	7	*a fi.* r. *priviledge rather than*
5	5	r. *obtain Salvation*
	8	r. *which they make of Christ is that Christ*
8	18	dele *it*
9	8	f. *as* r. *us*
9	15	dele *between*
10	14	f. *when* r. *whom*
13	13	r. *and they who were*
14	27	*a fi.* f. *our* r. *his*
15	11	f. *forces* r. *sorts*
21	54	f. *selfly* r. *setly*
24	*ult.*	f. *so* r. *to*
26	3	dele *his*
26	21	r. *with God by Faith*
29	26	dele *punctum*
	31	f. *proceed* r. *proceeding*
	32	put *parenthesis* after [*Amos*]
	14 & 15.	*a fi.* dele *comma* at [*Egypt*] put *comma* at [*became*]
30	32	dele *punctum* after [*did*] and put a *comma* after *Paul*
31	38	f. *blind* r. *bind*
32	2	put *a comma at subsequent*
32	41, 42.	f. *immutability* r. *mutability*
37	27	*a fi.* dele *comma* after (*decreed*) and put it in the next line after (*them*)
37	9	*a fi.* f. *doth* r. *hath*
	26	*a fi.* dele *semicolon after promises*
	24	*a fi.* dele *comma after Subjects* f. *person* r. *persons*
	20	*a fi.* f. *though not* r. *and*
	11	*a fi.* r. *that are within the bearing of it to seek*
	8	*a fi.* dele *two,* dele *colon as story*
39	23	f. *any* r. *and*
40	18	*a fi.* r. *recourse to for himself*
41	7	f. *Covenant and Grace* r. *Covenant of Grace*
44	16 and 17	*a fi.* r. *and all, by the use*
47	8	*a fi.* r. *be is pacified*
48	17	f. *set by* r. *setly*
	18	*a fi.* f. *begun* r. *begin*
	42	f. *receiveth* r. *reciteth*
51	4	*a fi.* r. *follow in my*
55	dele *the first line*	
57	1	f. *commensurate* r. *commiserate*
52	15	f. *any* r. *my*
59	30	f. *gim* r. *him*
60	15	dele *at all*
62	50	f. *bounds* r. *bonds*
63	7	*a fi.* f. *signified* r. *signifying*
64	23	f. *which* r. *without*
65	3	r. *righteous*
	10	r. *Salvation but by, and*
66	21	*a fi.* dele [*in that he intended an Oath*]
	15	*a fi.* r. *this is as the*
69	18	*a fi.* r. *of, in Noah's*
	41	r. *New Testament*
80	27	f. *expiate* r. *expatiate*
82	7	*a fi.* f. *do* r. *doth*
	6	*a fi.* put *punctum at same* f. *for* r. *For* dele *us*
	5	*a fi.* dele *punctum* after *Glory* f. *First* r. *first,* dele *of,* f. *Man* r. *Men*
	4	*a fi.* dele *comma* after *self,* put *comma* after *more*
83	4	r. *Acts* 13. 48.
	19	*a fi.* f. *things* r. *they*
	7	*a fi.* f. *without* r. *with*
	9	*a fi.* r. *exclude*
	30	f. *yet* r. *that*
84	3	f. *which* r. *with*
85	7	*a fi.* r. *but in another following instant in which such a non-elected persons final persevering*
85	40	f. *præ-election* r. *præterition and in the margent* f. *præ-elections* r. *præteritionis*
86	7	*a fi.* make a *parenthesis of the five last Words*
89	17	dele *who*
	11	*a fi.* dele *colon* r. *of this Image see*
91	3	f. *desire* r. *design*
92	30	dele *or*
93	47	dele *sufficient*
95	25	*a fi.* r. *consummated in that Union*
97	11	r. *Psal.* 135. 4.
	12	f. *and* r. *in* dele *comma* after *explained*
97	33	f. *for us* r. *in us*
	34	dele *and* ante *is*
104	15	r. *as that of the rest*
	22	f. *this* r. *his*
	25	r. *draw* dele *comma* after *draw*
	11	*a fi.* r. *be had prayed for*
106	11	*a fi.* r. *but as it shall be in Heaven*
107	29	f. *when* r. *whom*
108	3	r. *afore he came down*
	30	dele *for*
109	28	r. *Ascensions*
110	4	make the *parenthesis* to end at *me*
111	4	*in the Contents of the Chapter* r. *we are Creatures*
116	11	dele *to*
117	*ult.*	f. *ordain* r. *design*
120	12	*a fi.* dele *to*
	34	f. *is* r. *in*
121		is twice over (1) at the *2d. Book* and *6th. Chap.* and the (2) is at the *3d. Book* and *1st. Chap.*
		The *2d.* Number is marked thus [2] in the *Table*
123	21	r. *explained*
126	6	f. *renounced* r. *renowned*
	24	f. *it is* r. *is it*
127	9	*a fi.* r. *express words*
128	15	*a fi.* f. *own* r. *one*
131	22	f. *to* r. *do*
133	12	f. *not* r. *that*
	16	*a fi.* f. *my* r. *by*
140	26	r. *I do not submit*
141	27	r. *again and again said*
	2	r. *circumincession*
142	9	*a fi.* r. *readiness*
121		[in *Book* 3] *Title of the Book* f. *is* r. *in*
123	13	f. *parases* r. *parenthesis*
124	15	*a fi.* f. *that reason* r. *what reason*
126	8	dele *punctum*
127	1	f. *here* r. *be*
128	37	r. *propounded*
129	19	f. *purposes* r. *purposed*
	23	f. *yet* r. *that*
	35	f. *came to be decreed* r. *come to be employed*
	37	f. *now* r. *I say it will now be tryed*
	41	r. *to perform them*
	42	r. *to call him* f. *in them* r. *in him*
132	2	f. *the account* r. *that account*
	7	f. *absolutionis* r. *absolutum*
	14	f. *revived* r. *reviewed*
	21	r. *as clear and glorious*
	39	f. *in creating* r. *uncreated*
	42	r. *Destination to so great*
	48	f. *yet* r. *to*
133	3	f. *Law* r. *Love*
135	23	*a fi.* r. *were considered*
	penult.	dele *and regeneration* f. *supposing* r. *tho' we should suppose*
	ult.	dele *and*
136	15	f. *else* r. *esse actuale*
137	*penult.*	r. *till then they*
139	4	f. *Grace* r. *Elect*
	35	f. *through* r. *to*
140	4	f. *and the* r. *in his*
	5	r. *condition ; did take Man and viewed them as, and after calling them, as they*
	6	f. *of* r. *at*
	7	f. *a calling* r. *at calling*
	8	*a fi.* f. *out of* r. *into*
143	5	f. *with* r. *which*
	15	f. *many* r. *may*
144	2	dele *in*
146	1	f. *redeemed* r. *relieved*
147	3	f. *there* r. *thee*
	8	dele *away*
	16	f. *give in* r. *given*
	18	*a fi.* r. *this occasion*
149	23	*a fi.* f. *many* r. *may*
150	11	f. *continuation* r. *consideration* f. *serve* r. *serves*
	13	f. *contemns* r. *contempt*
	14	r. *compared with the Honour and Riches of others*
	ult.	f. *heights* r. *lights*
151	3	f. *hights* r. *lights*
	penult.	f. *letted* r. *settled*
152	13	f. *stay* r. *story*
153	22	r. *behold in this*
154	7	r. *one and the same act*
155	13	f. *theif* r. *chief*
	28	f. *who* r. *we*
	31	f. *and* r. *as*
	34	f. *Marrow* r. *Mate*
157	9	*a fi.* f. *it is* r. *his*

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page	line	
158	40	f. *thy* r. *this*
160	7	r. *were not Sons of Belial*
161	6	*a fi.* r. *by the Law that was then in force*
162	10	r. *worship*
165	21	*a fi.* dele *in*
169	1	r. *World*
175	4	*a fi.* r. *not being profited*
176	7	*a fi.* f. *inspected* r. *inspired*
179	3	*a fi.* f. *loves the same* r. *loves himself*
180	20	*a fi.* r. *Isa.* 55. 3. *Acts* 13. 34.
	13	*a fi.* f. *some* r. *son*
184	22	*a fi.* r. *not only the issue*
	17	*a fi.* dele *for*
190	8	*a fi.* r. *proper Order*
193	7	*a fi.* f. *from* r. *for*
	ult.	r. *which are in*
194	1	put *semicolon* before [*both*]
197	28	*a fi.* f. *them* r. *shew* f. *said* r. *sad*
	21	*a fi.* f. *yet* r. *that*
205	13	f. *indignation* r. *indigitation*
211	7	*a fi.* r. 2 *Kings* 6. 10.
212	5	*a fi.* dele *than*
221	14	r. *Rom.* 9. 2, 3.
224	6	r. 1 *Chron.* 17. 19.
226	*penult.*	f. *absolute* r. *able*
231	29	f. 3 r. 5
236	13	f. *Commotion* r. *Connotation*
	30	r. *intend* (*if he intended any at all*) *other than*
237	12	dele *to* r. *tittle*
242	7	f. *shewn* r. *shewing*
	22	*a fi.* dele *not*
	12	*a fi.* f. *there* r. *these* f. *term* r. *terms.*
250	18	*a fi.* r. *as are expresly*
	17	*a fi.* make the *parenthesis* end at [*purpose*] f. *in* r. *is*
252	9	r. *its self unto Eternal Love*
254	12	*a fi.* f. *no* r. *a*
260	1	f. *words* r. *works*
	20 and 21.	*a fi.* f. *counter-faith* r. *counterfeits*
264	4	dele *of*
265	4	*a fi.* f. *or* r. *our*
	penult.	f. *sin* r. *him*
267	25	r. *God or the times*
272	6	f. *imparted* r. *imputed*
273	10	f. *directed* r. *diverted*
	13	r. *if any thing did they would*
	19	r. *shall not hinder*
274	14	f. *contrived* r. *continued*
283	2	f. *no* r. *all* f. *yet* r. *yea*
	14	f. *suspected* r. *suspended*
286	13	dele *not*
290	8	*a fi.* f. *bitter* r. *better*
291	3	r. *if you could*
	12	*a fi.* f. *Ephes.* r. *Epist.*
293	15	r. *I do not say, that he will then shine more excellently in the Person of Christ himself; but that he will then shine more illustriously to us, than ever he did, either before the day of Judgment, or in and by Christ during the day of Judgment.*
298	6	f. *but* r. *put*
317	3	f. *you* r. *us*
	21	*a fi.* r. *turned to him*
	13	*a fi.* f. *him* r. *us*
	5	*a fi.* f. *but* r. *or*
319	7	*a fi.* r. *be being actually*
320	24	f. *tends* r. *sends*
321	7	*a fi.* r. *and pull* (*as it were*)
344	24	f. *them* r. *then*
345	24	f. *his* r. *is*
352	5	*a fi.* f. *him* r. *the vertue* dele *comma* after *again*
353		f. *page* 153 r. 353
353	22	f. *Christs* r. *Christ*
	28	dele *this consideration of*
355	25	f. *could* r. *would*
356	6	dele *comma* at *sheep*
	7	put , at *for*, dele , at *main*
	8	put ; at *them*, dele at *Lord*
	16	put a *comma* at *means*, dele *comma* at *is*
364	4	r. *is, because as he is the God of all Grace, he loves our persons; which makes him to account sin our greatest real misery, and causeth him to look*
	6	put *comma* at *loves*
369	2	f. *Psal.* 53. r. *Psal.* 55.
374	1	f. *like* r. *life*
375	7	*a fi.* f. *like* r. *life*
376	7	f. *Psal.* 12. r. *Psal.* 121.
378	12	f. *and* r. *so he*
381	4	*a fi.* f. *doth* r. *hath*
382	16	r. *Dickson, Glascow* Professor
	6	*a fi.* f. *Adams* r. *Adam*
	7	*a fi.* r. *continued to Man*
page next to 387. f. 390, r. 388, 389.		
393	24	*a fi.* r. *continued it to others*
399	7 and 11	r. 1 *Cor.* 7.
438	28	f. *Effects* r. *affects*
439	25	f. *Fourthly*, r. 4.
	29	f. *Fifthly*, r. 5.
	32	r. *Faith, and with Faith*
440	15	f. *Secondly*, r. *Fourthly*
448	7	*a fi.* f. *thus* r. *this*
	5	*a fi.* dele are
	ult.	r. I may say as
450	20	f. *impropable* r. *improbable*
454	2	r. *comfort*
454	8	dele *that is not in your power*
	25	f. *waken* r. *weaken*
	14	*a fi.* r. *Church, as a Mother*

Vol. III. Part I.

Of an Unregenerate Man's Guiltiness.

page	line	
3	6	DEle *for Sin*
	8	f. *approving* r. *proving*
15	*penult.*	f. *cast it* r. *caused it*
16	21	r. *two Objections clog this Assertion*
	22	dele *Assertion*
	5	*a fi.* f. *they though* r. *though they*
17	13	r. *having been spoken*
18	20	r. *comes up with chaff*
20	10	r. *representatively*
24	4	*a fi.* put the *stop* at *Wise*, f. *to* r. To
	3	*a fi.* f. [:] after *Body*, r. [,]
37	5	f. *Entrenchments* r. *Entrenchers*
	10	*a fi.* dele [*and*] ante *Notes*
43	14	f. *Covenant* r. *Consequence*
52	*ult.*	f. *of* r. *in*
56	2	f. *a* r. *as*
63	8	f. *purges* r. *purge it*
65	18	*a fi.* f. *though* r. *through*
	ult.	f. *thee* r. *me*
68	28	r. *aside; as it is James*
70	13	r. *bestow them upon thee*
	23	r. *for all this if thou wilt not be clean, mark*
71	17	f. *and* r. *ad*
	penult.	r. *Grief. And sensible we must be of it, thus particularly*
74	32	*a fi.* r. *Then in a higher demonstration the*
78	20	f. *primitive* r. *privative*
83	24	f. *his* r. *in his*
87	13	*a fi.* dele *Answ.*
88	29	r. *Answ.* This seems to be a great
92	22	r. *But this light if it*
98	3	r. *as well for*
101	10	*a fi.* f. *of sending* r. *offending*
102	13	*a fi.* f. *Enemy* r. *Enmity*
111	29	r. *punctum* after [*them*]
	36	dele *punctum* at [*general*]
138	4	f. *World* r. *Word*
144	5	r. 1 *Cor.* 13. 1, 2, 3. *Tho' I speak with the Tongues of Men and of Angels*, &c. *&* dele *line* 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.
152	27	*a fi.* r. *manifest them*
162	40	f. *The grew* r. *They grew*
174	21	r. *Eternal Life*
176	28	r. *They have not a tasting*
185	12	*a fi.* r. *Day of Death*
186	10	*a fi.* f. *cross* r. *right course*
193	24	f. *one* r. *ones*
194	22	r. *suit at Law*
195	27	*a fi.* r. *deed will give*
197	3	*a fi.* dele *semicolon* after [*King*] put *punctum* after [*him*] f. *that* r. *That*
202	13	*a fi.* f. *too* r. *so*
204	5	f. *save* r. *some*
	6	f. *save the* r. *some*
	14	*a fi.* r. *Invents*
207	9	*a fi.* f. *asserted* r. *assented*
208	2	dele *punctum* after *it*
210	1	r. *throw them down*
	44	dele *not*
213	10	*a fi.* f. *Christs* r. *Christ*
214	11	f. *oppressions* r. *oppressors*
215	15	r. *to us concerning the Antients*
	21	f. *who know* r. *They who knew*
217	7	*a fi.* r. *because she saw a Creature to subsist*
219	5	*a fi.* r. that whole Line thus, *here is better than the best hereafter, what they have here, is better than the best hereafter, so*
221	4	*a fi.* f. *Second* r. *Secondly*
226	6	f. *promise* r. *promises*
	17	dele *all*
	24	f. 2 r. 3
231	9	*a fi.* f. *and* r. *which*
233	6	*a fi.* f. *have* r. *burn*
236	29	f. *haste* r. *heart*
243	24	f. *mad* r. *made*
244	24	*a fi.* r. *discover it in*
246	8	*a fi.* f. *naturally* r. *natural*
249	10	dele *the*
	13	*a fi.* f. *none* r. *one*
255	25	f. *hath* r. *have*
	18	*a fi.* dele *and*
256	22	r. *Ezekiel* 16. 63. *To remember and*
270	12	f. *they* r. *she*
274	2	f. *come* r. *common*
299	27	f. *metaphorically* r. *metaphysically*
	32	f. *looking* r. *looketh*
300	38	f. *privately* r. *privatively*
303	18	f. *you* r. *them*
305	26	f. *signifie* r. *signifies*
307	*ult.*	after *heavy and sad* r. *if it be at a distance from God*
309	13	f. *come* r. *came*
310	13	dele *both*
311	2	f. *many* r. *mans*
	15	after *that is* r. *Lovers.*
	23	f. *and* r. *that*
312	2	dele *parenthesis*
	6	f. *that is* r. *as*
	19	put *semicolon* after *End*
	9	*a fi.* put *semicolon* after *himself*, dele *comma* after *otherwise*
313	20	*a fi.* f. *shews* r. *shewed*
318	7	f. *untainted* r. *untamed*
327	22	put *punctum* after *Acts*
	23	dele *punctum* after *Law*
	34	f. *lie* r. *lies*
	16	*a fi.* put *Interrogatory point* after *Essence*
	15	*a fi.* dele *Interrogatory point*
352	8	*a fi.* put the *comma* after *out*

ERRATA.

page	line	
356	10	f. *elevate* r. *alleviate*
	25	dele [*this*] ante *my*
	5 *a fi.*	r. *that it is partly*
358	27	f. *hence* r. *home*
	13 *a fi.*	dele *of*
367	*ult.*	r. *more than the sight of any other sin*
369	2	f. *God in justice* r. *God's justice*
370	13	r. *as well as*
375	25 *a fi.*	f. *through* r. *though*
390	11 *a fi.*	put the *colon* after *sin*
411	7	f. *Mens* r. *Men*
412	10 *a fi.*	f. *though* r. *through*
413	14	f. *and* r. *a*
414	*ult.*	f. *wet* r. *went*
	12 *a fi.*	dele *too*
417	11	f. *Assistance* r. *Assistant*
421	17	dele *so*
430	13 *a fi.*	f. *regenerate* r. *unregenerate*
433	9.	f. *confirmation* r. *conformation*
436	*ult.*	dele *for*
446	*ult.*	f. *of God* r. *in defiance of God*
473	29	f. *have* r. *hath*
482	12	f. *Omission* r. *Commission*
483	8	f. *those foregoing* r. *the foregoing*
	18	f. *Conversations* r. *Conversions*
492	9 *a fi.*	f. *say* r. *saw*
493		in *Cont.* of the *Chap.* f. *Valour* r. *Value*
	16 *a fi.*	f. *it* r. *its*
501	19	f. *foiled* r. *foiled*
505	13 *a fi.*	f. *as* r. *a*
515	5	dele *our*
	20	f. *collaterially* r. *collaterally*, f. *concomitantly* r. *circumstantially*
516	31	f. *New* r. *Now*
	9 *a fi.*	f. *any* r. *man*
517	2	f. *World* r. *Word*
518	11 *a fi.*	f. *For*, 1. r. *For the* 1st.
527	5	r. *moral*; *Juris*
528	17 *a fi.*	r. *so much the worse*
	11 *a fi.*	f. *National* r. *Notional*
533	12 *a fi.*	f. *and* r. *as*
539	6 *a fi.*	r. *thou art gone*
545	22	r. *Goodness*
550	25 *a fi.*	f. *may* r. *my*
	26 *a fi.*	f. *as* r. *are*
561	27 *a fi.*	f. *only* r. *openly*
562	16 *a fi.*	f. *than* r. *that*
	26 *a fi.*	f. *consideration* r. *considering*
571	5	r. *the truth, and real*
586	*penult.*	f. *were* r. *we*
588	6 *a fi.*	f. *verum* r. *rerum*
591	29	f. *nor nor* r. *no nor*
	37	f. *cario* r. *corio*
592	7	r. *it not that an*
	21 *a fi.*	f. *in* r. *is*
593	18	f. *provoke* r. *prove*
594	8	f. *or* r. *a*
607	3 *a fi.*	f. *yours* r. *your*
609	7	r. *begins*
619	5	dele *of*

Part II. *Of Man's Restoration.*

page	line	
14	16	f. 3. r. 2.
	24	r. *scatteredly*
15	9	r. *Christ's*
18	8 *a fi.*	r. *Sanctification as here*

Part III. *Of Christ the Mediator.*

page	line	
7	4	r. *Father is the*
11	26 *a fi.*	f. *low* r. *love*
	22 *a fi.*	r. *the gladder should be be*
12	10	f. *close* r. *choose*
16	18	dele *the first* [*and*]
25	21	r. *Rev.* 13. 8. dele *Here, &* dele *l.* 22, 23.
	3 *a fi.*	r. *John* 17. 2. *&* dele *the two last lines*
29	16 *a fi.*	f. *word* r. *award*
40	8 *a fi.*	dele *the first* [*of*]
42	12	dele *not*
48	14	f. *unequal* r. *equal*
	19	r. *as a middle*
71	15	f. *beginning* r. *beloved*
	34	f. *Word* r. *World*
75	13 *a fi.*	f. *in* r. *is*
	12 *a fi.*	f. *is* r. *in*
88	28 *a fi.*	r. *same time suffer*
	17 *a fi.*	dele *comma*
	3 *a fi.*	r. *Psal.* 49. 8. dele *not*
89	27	dele *or*
98	6	r. *an incongruity*
105	6	f. *Articles* r. *Actions*
	9	f. *persons* r. *person*
108	23	f. *lost by him* r. *lost by sin*
125	5 *a fi.*	f. *mocking* r. *mocked*
136	19 *a fi.*	dele [*to*] ante *lay*
154	5	r. *Glory of the People*
155	33	r. *conceived in*
159	22	dele *is* ante *used*
	36	f. *Net, for* r. *Neither*
	6 *a fi.*	f. *of* r. *or*
164	1	f. *streams* r. *stream*
189	18 *a fi.*	f. *sacrificer* r. *sacrifice*
191	*ult.*	dele *that*
192	15	f. *so* r. *son*
193		in *Cont.* of the *Chap.* dele *bow*, put *comma* after *demonstrated.*
194	16 *a fi.*	dele *will*
195	13	r. *we will now shew that it was*;
	24 *a fi.*	f. *we* r. *be*
196	13	f. *with ob* r. *which*
	15	dele *it*
204	11	f. *formerly* r. *formally*
213	12 *a fi.*	r. *with-held*
216	21	dele *great*
221	19	f. *Observ.* 2. r. *Observ.* 3.
226	12 *a fi.*	f. *thee* r. *thou*
228	16	f. *put to* r. *to put*
	7 *a fi.*	f. *thee* r. *be*
230	*ult.*	f. *be* r. *are*
235	9	f. *us* r. *him* (twice in that line)
	19	dele *punctum* after *us*, put *punctum* after *hereby*
248	17	f. *Waiting* r. *Writing*
253	24 *a fi.*	r. *art not thou one*
258	24 *a fi.*	r. *aimed at*
260	*ult.*	f. *have* r. *hath*
272	*antepen.*	put the *parenthesis* after *him*
275	19, 20.	begin the *parenthesis* at *as*, end it at *speaks*
292	17	f. *me* r. *thee*
	11 *a fi.*	f. *ye* r. *yet*
293	2	r. *crossed and*
	18 *a fi.*	f. *so* r. *to*
298	*penult.*	r. *Europe and Asia, and of the Mogul*
301	27 *a fi.*	f. *therefore* r. *thereof*
303	8	f. *that* r. *what*
311	9	dele *punctum* after [*hers*]
	17	dele *fruits*
312	3	dele *comma* after *extraordinary*
	9	dele *with*
314	18 *a fi.*	f. *hundred* r. *thousand*
321	8	r. *of a straw by a Rapier*
	12	f. *hath* r. *have*
	22 *a fi.*	dele *of Satan*
323	2	f. *Matth.* 12. 23. r. *Mat.* 12. 43.
341	15	f. *Rights* r. *Rites*
342		dele *line* 20
343	9 *a fi.*	f. *in* r. *it*
344	13 *a fi.*	r. *says of Christ that he is*
354	15	f. *Assentious* r. *Assertions*
359	6	f. *one* r. *no*
	10	dele 3
	9 *a fi.*	r. *justified by Faith*
362	23 *a fi.*	f. *three* r. *these*
	12 *a fi.*	f. *and other* r. *over*
365	31	f. *as so* r. *and so*
366	8	r. *I say he had*
	9	f. *and much as* r. *when*
369	32	r. *gives you ordinances*
374	7	r. *instant*
377	32	f. *hant* r. *than*
379	13	r. *endless life*
387	9 *a fi.*	dele *not only*
	8 *a fi.*	r. *required not only on*
389	26	dele *in*
391	*penult.*	r. *whom* Thomas *seems to speak it*
397	19 *a fi.*	dele *that doubt*
401	11	r. *we sinners much more wh*
402	3	r. *As to the inferiour Priests*
	14	*As to the* Kohathites
403	10	f. *at* r. *as*
406	*penult.*	r. *is by our Apostle observed*
	ult. & penult.	dele *is by our Apostle*
407	6	dele *and vices*
409	13	r. *Tabernacles of Moses were the Type which were*
410	4	r. *of Guilt, comest into Heaven; and that*
411	10	f. *in* r. *is*, l. 11. after *Wilderness* r. *is the other*
413	3	r. *thereof: the Answer is; it*
	7	dele *in*
414	4	f. *his* r. *our*
	antepenult.	dele *was*
417	26 *a fi.*	f. *invitation* r. *intuition*
420	11	f. *of all* r. *so*
422	22	dele *not*
423	27 *a fi.*	dele *and*
424	*ult.* and 425	1 f. *adorning* r. *adoring*
427	7 *a fi.*	dele *that is*

Vol. IV. Part I.

Of the Object of Faith.

page	line	
2	12	DEle *those the Subjects of*
	38	f. v. 7. r. v. 5.
3	22	f. III. r. 3.
8	50	dele *before*
11	53	r. *and no further*
14	10	f. *his* r. *their*
15	17	f. *exhale* r. *exhaled*
	25	f. 24 r. 34
22	15	r. *for in that relation*
23	52	dele *those of our Redemption*
27	18 and 22	f. *imminent* r. *immanent*
	50	r. *whatever he is made*
30	21	dele *was which*
45	31	r. *deitatem*
49	25	f. *ditto* r. *ditty*
	51	f. *praises* r. *praisers*
59	8	dele *either*
68	10	r. *unrighteousness*
72	22	f. *mine* r. *his*
75	26	f. *above* r. *alone*
76	1	f. *with* r. *which*
82	*penult.*	f. *third* r. *sixth*
89	25	r. *let us try if*
92	5	r. *to embrace*
	7	f. *do* r. *doth*
98	8	f. *there* r. *their*
100	48	dele [*and*] after *such*
101	13, 14	r. *punctum* at *supply*, *comma* at *quick sand*
102	21	dele *only*
	47	dele *for*
103	56	f. *Job* 13. 26. r. *Job* 33. 26.

ERRATA.

Page	line	
104	14	f. *then* r. *when*
105	39	r. *right and Title*
119	14	r. *and believe not*
	penult.	f. *how* r. *that*
120	50	f. *where* r. *there*
123	6	r. *punctum at secretly, comma* at *given*, put (?) after *words*, dele (?) after *John* 6. 37.
129	*ult.*	dele *punctum* at *only*, put *punctum* at *Christ*
130	56	f. *Heb.* 11. 3. r. *Heb.* 4. 3.
132	21	f. *him* r. *me*
134	1	dele *I have saved you and you*
143	1	r. *as Flesh his Humanity*
149	1	dele *and*
151	46	f. *way* r. *stage*
154	25	f. *words* r. *works*
167	40	r. *first act of justifying Faith*
169	29	f. *after* r. *before*
170	13	f. *accordingly* r. *according*
	42	r. *he believes, he doth*
171	1	r. *to be the Justifyer*
	39	f. *on* r. *out*
174	6	f. *altogether* r. *all together*
175	9	dele *Comma* after *Scripture*, put *Comma* after *in*
177	1	dele *to*
	39 & 42	dele *parenthesis*
	44	r. *Adherence? The*
	55	put ? after *Faith*
179	12	f. *have* r. *hath*
180	36	r. *a certainty himself*
	49	f. *this* r. *his*
182	42	dele *semi-colon*
	43	r. *to me* (2 Sam. 12. 22.) *in sparing his Life?*
	48	f. *Apprehensions* r. *Declarations*
183	55	dele *it may be's*
185	3	dele *and* Peter *of himself*
	34	f. *desire* r. *desired*
	35	dele *with*
187	27	dele *parenthesis* after *him*, put *parenthesis* after *personally*
189	8	dele *comma* at *God*, put *comma* at *performed*
191	4	dele *but*
192	41	dele *into*
199	57	r. *sound or appearance of the least such preference*
200	52	dele *comma* after *principal*
202	31	r. *God himself useth in*

Part II. *Of the Acts of Faith.*

Page	line	
6	51	dele *yet*
	penult.	dele *no*
8	11	r. *sense is never deceived*
9	52	f. *manest* r. *meanest*
13	12	f. *wisper* r. *whisper*
18	2	f. *punctum* r. *comma*
19	10	r. *nor hath it only*
23	13	dele *it*
	14	f. *deny all* r. *denial*
27	1	put *comma* after *saved*
	52	f. *quidam* r. *quidem*
28	51	f. *consideration* r. *considerations*
33	22	f. *that* r. *the*
	25	dele *or*
37	57	r. πρώ]ον
39	27	put *colon* at *plant*
	28	f. *if* r. *If*
45	18	dele [*in*] after *Faith*
52	15	r. *Law or Nature of Faith*
	48	f. *hath it* r. *faith*
55	1	dele 6
	27	after *Christ* r. *and it is*
	28	r. *which is*
56	7	put *semicolon* after (*mentioned*)
	8	dele *semicolon*
58	53	r. *Word of God*
60	35	f. *Thy* r. *my*
63	39	r. *false Shepherds*
64	57	r. *in a twelve month*
66	46	dele *semicolon* after (*nothing*)
68	18	r. *make out to Christ*
69	31	dele *of the*
70	4	dele *on*
71	*penult.*	dele *is*
72	34	f. *whereof* r. *where*
	antepenult.	r. *poor in Spirit*
77	23	r. *and he is made*
78	3	f *whereof* r. *thereof*
	5	r. *And if it*
80	26	dele *and*
84	49	f. *argues* r. *argue*
86	25	r. *Men that have*
97	10	dele *comma* after (*besides*)
98	37	f. *suggests* r *suggest*
102	9	f. *ye* r. *yet*
	14	r. *men are as their*
110	2	f. *nor* r. *nothing*
	18	dele *parenthesis*
	penult.	dele *comma* after (*them*)
113	15	r. *comma* at (*King*) r. *comma* at (*he*).
116	49	r. *calleth them Brethren*
119	44	dele *comma* after *Assurance*
120	*penult.*	dele *that*
121	52	f. *fall way* r. *fall away*
122	11	dele *it*
123	46	f. *delight* r. *delights*
125	11	r. *to be beloved*
127	32	f. *pulls* r. *pull*
	33	f. *sweetens* r. *sweeten*
128	56	dele ? after *God*, put ? after *justifying*
129	3	r. *First, some make*
130	55	dele *comma* after *first*
131	*antepen.*	f. *say it may* r. *it may say*
132	14	r. *purposed from Eternity*
	15	dele *from Eternity*
133	6	f. *act* r. *acts*
	24	f. *him* r. *them*
134	21	f. *together* r. *to gather*
	ult.	dele *is*
136	47	f. *Thirdly*, r. 3.
137	7	f. *it* r. *its*
	8	r. *dealing with others*
139	20	f. *them* r. *him*
140	3	f. 3 r. 4
	49	f. 4 r. 5
	antepen.	dele *an*
141	15	dele *comma* at *Election*, put *comma* at *then*, f. *than* r. *then*
144	52	f. *therefore* r. *before*
147	3	f. *Attributes* r. *Attribute*
	18	dele *comma* at *latitude*
	49	dele *are*
148	37	f. *destines* r. *designs*
150	11	*a fi.* f. *a part* r. *apart*, & dele *and*
151	7	r. *and not without a promise*
152	40	put *comma* at *such*
155	35	f. *Isa.* 1. 6. r. *Jam.* 1. 6.
	51	f. *to*) r. *to*
158	*Margin*	dele *comma* after *minuens*
159	22	f. χωοὶς r. χωεὶς
160	3	r. *come to me*
161	34	f. *causes* r. *clauses*
	6	*a fi.* put *punctum* at *Children*
		f. *but* r. *But*
		f. *fate* r. *case*
		put *comma* after *hand*
163	13, 14, 21, 22, 29.	f. *tenure* r. *tenour*
	27	r. *concerning*
164	2	put *interrogatory point* after *things*
	3	after *virtually* f. ? r. :
		after *that*, f. , r. ?
		after *things* f. ? r. ,
	13	f. *Auge* r. αὔξησιν
	23	f. *universal* r. *universally*
171	*penult.*	dele *in* ante *those*
173	8	r. *is there used, and in* 1 John 3. 2, 3.
	16	*a fi.* r. *that so far as a Man's*

Part III. *Of the Properties of Faith.*

Page	line	
3	5	*a fi.* dele [*is*] ante *to*
5	9	f. *given* r. *giving*, dele *comma* at *nothing*
6	17	put *colon* at *secure*: put *comma* at *rage*
	26	f. 2. r. 3 *lly.*
	53	f. 3. r. 4*ly.*
7	1	f. 4 r. 5*ly.*
	25	f. 5. 1. 2.
9	37	dele (*in us*) after *that*
11	17	dele (*in*) after *and*
13	26	f. *sin* r. *sins*, f. *set upon by all*, r. *it being set upon by them all.*
16	47	r. *so it justifieth his works*
18	22	f. *impleaded* r. *pleaded*
	26	f. *case* r. *cause*
19	51	dele *comma* after *infallibilitatis*, put *comma* after *only*
20	7	f. *those* r. *this*
22	20	f. *easiest* r. *the most difficult*
26	37	dele *no*
	51	f. 5 r. 2
28	46	put *semicolon* after *Estate*
31	34	f. *yea* r. *yet*
34	25	r. *it is utterly*
37	*ult.*	f. *Faith* r. *Works*
38	9	f. *thereto* r. *there to*
	52	f. *Thy* r. *They*
39	31	r. *Obedience*
47	58	f. 2 r. 3 f. *second* r. *third*
50	8	f. *all* r. *no*
60	11	r. *himself doth justifie me without*
	34	dele *out*
62	37	put *comma* at *them*, dele *comma* at *faith*
64	2	r. *Endeavours is in*
67	*penult.*	r. *Self-endeavouring*
71	20	put *semicolon* after *that*, put *comma* after *it*, f. ; after *words* r. ,
	penult.	r. *Soul faith is the thing*
79	39	f. *Mans* r. *Means*
87	*penult.*	r. *to wait in a way*
88	51	f. *hands* r. *hand*
94	1	f. *be* r. *you*
	antepen.	f. *that* r. *yet*
111	43	f. *than* r. *as*
112	55	r. *Language or Words*

The Government of the Churches.

Page	line	
3	34	For *Original* Read *Organical*
5	5	r. *that that of Institution*
	14	r. *at the latter day*
	15	dele *comma* after the first [*worship*]
7	56	dele (*out*) after (*of*)
8	35	f. *Canon* r. *Common*
10	*antepen.*	f. *all so* r. *also*
12	3	dele *semicolon* after (*are*)
15	11	f. 2 *Cor.* 10. 26. r. 2 *Cor.* 10. 4, 5, 6.
	20	f. *therein, we* r. *wherein we*
	22	f. *Apostles* r. *Apostle*
	29	f. *nor* r. *or*
	41	f. *naming* r. *meaning*
16	50	f. 1 *Cor.* 2. 5, 7. r. 2 *Cor.* 12. 5, 6, 7, 8.
17	4	f. 1 *Cor.* 10. 4. r. 2 *Cor.* 10. 4.

ERRATA.

page	line	
20	33	f. *Heb.* 6. 4. r. *Heb.* 4. 7. f. *of* r. *of the Christian-Sabbath*
24	18	f. *in Christ* r. *of Christ*, & dele *for*
	27	f. *the* r. *The*
	38	dele [*in*] after *alike*
25	1	f. *Tit.* r. *Tim.*
	17	r. 1 *Cor.* 11. 16.
	21	f. *almost* r. *most*
	28	f. *directions* r. *directions*
	38	f. *Apostorum* r. *Apostolorum*
26	50	dele [*for*] after *Precepts*
27	15	put *comma* after (*from*)
	16	dele *comma* after *both*
	17	dele *comma* after *Creation*
	21	f. *is* r. *are*
28	40	dele *parenthesis*
	44	r. *would have given no Rules*
	50	r. *any the like*
	51	f. *eat* r. *eek*
	55	f. *walking* r. *walk*
	57	dele *comma* after *experience*, put *comma* after *practice*
29	10	f. *desires* r. *desire*
	31	r. *way or means*
	39	dele *besides what*
31	26	f. *as this one* r. *in this one*
	30	f. *these* r. *those*
	31	r. *Argument would have had*
	35	r. *eat at his Table*
32	8	f. *bis* r. *this*
	24	r. *and on this side*
	32	f. *or* r. *and*
33	16 17	r. *good and evil*
34	8	f. *they* r. *that*
	10	f. v. 6. r. v. 7.
	12	f. *Lord* r. *Lords-Supper*
	23 *and* 36	f. *these* r. *those*
	30	r. *admonisheth as a Remedy*
	48	f. *hath* r. *have*
	55	r. *to be for this end*
36	19	r. *they are not to eat*
38	22	f. *could* r. *would*
	16	r. *comma* after *them*
	17	dele *comma* after *elsewhere*
	49	r. *Rules for Church*
	53	f. *convert* r. *censure*
39	2	r. 1 *Tim.* 5. 24. *doubtful disputations*
	5	f. 1 *Tim.* 25. r. 2 *Tim.* 2. 25.
	7	f. *also* r. *else*
	13	r. 1 *Cor.* 5. 5. *is called*
39	19	f. *Mat.* 11. 15. r. *Mat.* 18. 15.
	21	f. *prevent* r. *preserve*
	27	put the *semicolon* after *impenitency*
42	53	f. 2 r. 3
44	3	r. *universal Church*
45	39	f. *word* r. *words*
48	10	dele *as*
	44	dele ; after *admonition*
50	15	f. *politick* r. *politie*
	30	dele *us*
	34	f. *this* r. *their*
51	8	f. *together* r. *together*
51	14	f. *by* r. *but*, f. *but* r. *and*
	15	dele *ver.* 3.
	16	f. *John* 10. r. *John* 9. 34.
	30	f. *inclines* r. *includes*
52	16	dele *it*
	ib.	put *colon* after *argues*
	17	begin the *parenthesis* at *collectively*
53	28	f. *promised* r. *premised*
	45	f. *implied* r. *employed*
54	9	f. *Acts* 19. 5. r. *Acts* 22. 5.
55	54	r. *as Amen doth also, being set*
56	46	dele *comma* after *himself*
	47	f. *all, I grant* r. *All grant*
57	2	f. *them* r. *then*
	51	f. τῇ r. τῷ
	52	r. *call it* Ecclesia
58	6	f. *thereof* r. *therefore*

page	line	
	45	r. συμφωνήσωσιν
61	55	r. *would conduce more to the establishment of the*
62	44	r. *yet the Question*
	53	r. *making a particular Church in*
62	54	f. *Christian's* r. *Christians*, & dele *Church*
64	2	dele *comma* after *meeting*, put *comma* after *Church*
	7	dele the first (*of*)
	55	f. *being* r. *bring*
65	51 52	dele *as they are in*
66	5	r. *assisting in the Acts*
	6	f. *in vocato* r. *invocato*
	21	f. *to their* r. *to the*
69	11	r. *comma* after *all*
	12	f. *instances* r. *instance*
	22	dele *be*
	24	f. *thereupon* r. *there, upon*
71	*penult.*	r. *the party be*
74	3	f. *to* r. *too*
	4	r. 2 *Cor.* 6. 16. *shew. Ye are the Temple*
75	49	dele *of*
76	22 23	r. *abesse, not be*; and *adesse, be*
	46	dele *a*
77	47	r. *inasmuch as it concerns*
79	9	f. *It is* r. *Is it*
80	2	f. *for* (*afore* r. (*for afore*
	19	dele *as*
	28	f. *Acts* 14. 13. r. *Acts* 14. 23;
81	31	r. *former*, κατὰ πόλιν by κατ' ἐκκλησίαν, *City here*
	36	r. *he was not to ordain*
	39	r. *they are here*
82	21	f. *for so* Pliny (*who* r. (*for so* Pliny *who*
	27	f. *place* r. *places*
	33	f. *there* r. *then*, & dele [*and Church*]
83	*penult.*	f. *is* r. *as*
84		in the Title of the *Chap.* f. *many Churches* r. *a single Church*
	penult.	f. *full* r. *faithful*
85	5	dele *comma* after *there*, put *comma* after *besides*
	21	r. *if it had been*
	ult.	dele [*as*] after [*well*]
86	7	f. *and* r. *so*
89	28	f. *given* r. *grown*
90	29	r. *it hath fallen out*
92	19	r. *Wits of the World*
	penult.	f. *the of* r. *of the*
95	17	r. *within which*
	23	dele *did*
96	9	f. *touch* r. *truth*
	35	f. *Notive* r. *Native*
97	6	f. *give* r. *get*
	9	f. *as* r. *than*
102	10	r. *than what is affirmatively declared and extended in*
	19	dele *and*
	20	f. *there* r. *their*
	30	f. *hey* r. *they*
103	57	f. *Ocumenick* r. *Oeconomick*
106	45	dele *comma* after *have*
	46	put *comma* after *not*
107	46	f. *beset* r. *to set*
109	14	dele *and the efficacy of them*
	17	dele *if*
	56	dele *are*
112	20	f. *up* r. *upon*
114	36	dele *comma* at *over*
116	*penult.*	f. *clearly* r. *clear*
117	51	f. *Disciple* r. *Discipline*
119	25	f. *Excommuni* r. *Ex communi*
126	33	f. *observed* r. *absurd*
127	12	f. *fall* r. *full*
	44	dele *be*, f. *acknowledging* r. *acknowledge*
129	56	f. *do* r. *may*
	57	f. *may* r. *do*

page	line	
130	30	f. *Common* r. *Community*
	37 and 38	f. *Discipline, Admonitions*, r. *Discipline-Admonitions*
	51	dele *a*
132	27	f. *one* r. *our*
	29	r. *shall speak unto when*
133	15	f. *for* r. *from*
	43	f. *Emperial* r. *Imperial*
	58	f. *on* r. *in*
135	1	r. *Apostles did stay in places but till*
136	22	f. *expected* r. *excepted*
	53	f. *while* r. *whole*
137	2	f. *strong thing* r. *strengthning*
	31	f. *this* r. *it is*
139	15	r. *who had not infirmities*
	20	f. *with* r. *want*
	24	f. *conveniences* r. *inconveniences*
	34	f. *discerned* r. *delivered*
140	3	f. *suppose there* r. *suppose they*
141	38	f. *Blessing* r. *lessening*
142	13	f. *direct* r. *directive*
	16	r. *and not guided of it self*
143	5	f. *advised* r. *advise*
144	6	r. *way of Reverence*
145	20	f. *yet* r. *that*
	22	f. *a condition* r. *but a supposition*
	52	f. *principal* r. *provincial*
147	28	f. *execution* r. *excommunication*
148	17	dele *and*, dele *it*
149	49	f. *Rulers* r. *Rules*
151	5	*a fi.* r. ἀνθρωπίνη κτίσις
152	8	dele *on*
153	20	r. *Kingdom is thus large and*
156	10	r. *whole Kingdom only while the Parliament sits,*
159	7	r. *greater part among*
161	9	f. *of* r. *or*
162	21	f. *warly* r. *worldly*
163	12	f. *Cyprius* r. *Lipsius*
	18	r. *if the Church*
	23	f. *there* r. *their*
	40, 41	dele *no more than could make up*
	45	r. *because* (*as hath been shewn*) *by* πόλις, *City, is meant small*
165	16	r. *Christ, he hath*
	32	r. *To the third*
166	5	f. *is* r. *are*
	18	dele *then*
	23	r. *Creation, it would be*
	39	f. *is to be* r. *are*
	40	f. *But as* r. *But that*
167	55	f. *uttering* r. *altering*
171	18	f. *our* r. *over*
	22	dele *that*
173	3	f. *were* r. *are for*
	5	f. *so now for* r. *as to*
	29	r. *so to do, is but humane*
176	41	f. *simular unto* r. *similar thereunto*
	53	f. *Term* r. *Form*
182	1	r. *bear not*
189	15	f. *original* r. *organical*
192	11	f. *Offices* r. *Officers*
	16	dele *they*
	31	f. *whereas* r. *where as*
	33	dele *in which*
	45	f. *no this* r. *not his*
201	38	f. *pœnæ* r. *pœna*
202	57	r. *will not own*
203	44	r. *superior power in Synods*
	51	r. *punctum* after *explained*
204	5	dele *such*
	6	f. *Mens* r. *Mans*
206	13	f. *infallibly* r. *infallibility*
207	12	f. *excommunicate* r. *communicate*
208	21	f. *that* r. *not*
209	49	f. *without* r. *within*
210	18	r. *care and cure*
211	40	f. *be* r. *is*
	57	dele *that there ought to be*

57 dele

ERRATA.

page	line	
212	25	f. *those* r. *these*
	27	f. *disadvantage* r. *advantage*
	33	dele ? f. *Well* r. *well*
	36	f. *if* r. *that*
	59	f. *from* r. *with*, f. *with* r. *from*
213	16	dele ?
	17	f. *now* r. *nor*
	21	f. *saltem* r. *saltum*
	ult.	f. *therein* r. *there*, *in* & dele *comma* after [*in*] f. *Asiæ* r. *Asia*
214	33	r. *Oecumenical*
215	16	dele *comma* after [*it*] put *comma* after [*of*]
216	3	f. *wose* r. *worse*
	4	f. *express* r. *expel*
	35	f. *either* r. *neither*
219	17	f. *present* r. *presented*
221	23	f. *insuitablenes* r. *insuitableness*
222	39	r. *parallel proportion, Communion of Saints being*
223	23	f. *Commonwealth* r. *Commonwealths*
224	7	r. *as a duty of*
	34	r. *for him to seize*
225	52	dele *in*
227	16	dele *but*
228	31	f. *Sociacia* r. *Socia*
231	7	r. *any Diet*
232	34	r. *in this they do*
235	25	r. *tho' their having one Language*
236	47	f. *some* r. *soon*
237	10	dele *hold*
	24	f. *Rulers* r. *Rules*
	30	f. *obtineat* r. *obtineant*,
	49	f. *inflicting of* r. *of inflicting* f. *now Excommunication being* r. *since Excommunication is*
238	53	dele *not*
239	32	f. *When before* r. *When he foresaw* (*all*
	33	put *parenthesis* after *Christianity*
240	34	f. *or* r. *for*
245	51	r. *he calls it* Chap. 3. 15.)
249	1	r. *agrees, saith our*
	7 and 8	f. *as Pastors* r. *a Pastor*
250	51	after 1 *Cor.* 2. 15. interline *are the matter of the Instituted Church*
256	10	f. *through* r. *though*
	40	r. *in all is the*
257	55	r. *hath not power to forbid those Ordinances*
259	47	f. *either* r. *their*
262	40	f. *the* r. *their*
263	8	r. *was at first*
264	42	dele *we find*
	43	r. *we find* 1 Cor. 12. 18.
	44	put *colon* after *Reason*, put (*referring to this*) in a *parenthesis*
265	5	r. *speak of them in*
266	52	f. *them, these* r. *them. These*
	53	f. *Excommunications. To examine* r. *Excommunications, and to examine*
268	2	f. *strained* r. *stand*
271	11	f. *other* r. *either*
273	12	f. *Age* r. *Man*
274	46	r. *that is good in this particular*
	48	f. *much* r. *man's*
275	36	f. *annexion* r. *extension*
	38	f. *about* r. *above*
277	4	dele *to be*
	38	f. *ordinants* r. *organs*, dele *comma* after *Church*, dele *as ordinary Officers*
	49	f. *their* r. *the*
278	1	r. *diligent for*
279	12	r. *so to convict that where*
281	*ult.*	f. *Deacons* r. *Teachers*
282	1	f. *Deacons* r. *Teachers*
282	27	f. *they* r. *Pastor and Teacher*
283	23	put *comma* after *all*, dele *parenthesis*
	25	f. *Deacons* r. *Teachers*
	37	dele 2
285	53	f. *preach* r. *baptize*, f. *baptize* r. *preach*
286	20	f. *Ordinance* r. *Ordnance*
289	13	f. *confusion* r. *distinction*
290	18, 19, 20, 21.	f. *Keep not thou silence O God*, &c. r. *Behold how good and how pleasant it is for Brethren to dwell*, &c.
	42	r. *phorenically*
293	11	f. *institution* r. *instruction*
	38	f. *Ministries* r. *Mysteries*
295	11	f. *Beast* r. *Boast*
297	28	r. *administers, is from*
298	23	r. *convert, God blesses*
299	11	f. *Isa.* 5. 16. r. *Jam.* 5. 16.
	41	f. *these* r. *the*
303	5	f. *Isa.* 5. 16. r. *Jam.* 5. 16.
304	13	*ast.* put *punctum* after *answered.*
		Ibid. The Text *Rom.* 10. 14, 15. doth not belong to the Contents of the Chapter, but should have been printed separately from them.
313	6	f. *chose* r. *chuse*
	17	dele [*as*] after *well*
	24	f. *unconverted* r. *converted*
	42	r. *the Elect as to build up Saints*
314	15	f. *plaining* r. *placing*
315	37	f. *is* r. *hath*
	39	r. *gainsaying, they sin*
	53	r. *Liberty of Conscience*
316	51	dele *of*
	54	r. *they are his last*
	56	f. *which* r. *where*
320	21	r. *taught us in this*
321	10	f. *solicited* r. *solicitude*
324	25	f. *they* r. *he*
326	41	f. 5. r. 4.
327	4	f. *or* r. *on*
	35	f. *forget* r. *forgo*
332	48	r. *must not appoint*
333	36	r. *from Lords day to Lords day*
334	29	r. *use of which*
336	12	f. *dispersed* r. *dispensed*
	23	f. *those* r. *these*
	47	dele *the publick worship of God would soon have permitted it*
337	36	f. *and* r. *or*
341	28	dele *upon*
	34	r. *two sorts of Ordinances*
344	49	dele *have*
346	23	f. *face* r. *fall*
	37	f. *their* r. *his*
349	17	f. *place* r. *peace*
	27	r. *on other dayes*
	43	r. *amittitur*
	50	f. *for* r. *on*
354	42	f. *Office* r. *Officer*
	48	f. *prayer* r. *pray*
355	33	f. *present* r. *prevent*
356	34	f. *commanded* r. *command*
357	*antepenult.*	f. *your* r. *our*
360	38	f. *brought* r. *bought*
361	3	dele *was*
362	29	dele *not*
	antepenult.	r. *incognito*
363	26	dele *had*
	38	dele *to be*
365	42	f. *farther* r. *father*
	43	f. *letter* r. *latter*
366	12	f. *season* r. *reason*
367	15	dele *in*
370	14	dele *was*
372	12	f. *puts* r. *put*
	14	f. *bind* r. *binding*
	25	f. *their* r. *there*, f. *alongs* r. *along*
	44	r. *This is called*
374	57	f. *hide in the Causes* r. *hid in the Caves*
375	12	f. *cased* r. *ceased*
376	2	dele *that*
	41	dele *an*, dele [*of*] after *loss*
385	1	f. *when* r. *then*
387	44	r. *viz.* (1.) *The Elders prayers*
	50	f. *Third* r. *Second*
389	29	f. *converted* r. *turn'd to a like use*
391	10	r. *rather than they should remain*
	ult.	dele [*of*] after *up*
393	25	f. *lest* r. *less*
396	22	f. *together* r. *to gather*
397	24	f. *then* r. *them*
	25	dele [*that*] after *they*
	39	f. *and so run* r. *they own*
	41	dele *comma* at *practice*, put *comma* after *desire*
	49	f. *Members* r. *Member*
398	3	dele *For*
401	14	f. *Rom.* 16. 12. r. *Rom.* 12. 16.
402	24	f. *they* r. *he*

The Government of the Churches, by way of *Question* and *Answer*.

page	line	
5	35	For *keepeth* Read *teacheth*
6	7	f. 1 *Cor.* 3. 4. r. 1 *Cor.* 5. 4. f. *To* r. *to*, put *punctum* after *place*
	24	r. 2. *And from*
	38	f. *it* r. *that*
7	12	f. *they* r. *that*
	32	dele *and*
8	10	f. *and yet he speaks* r. *when he spake*
10	35	f. *Magistrates* r. *Ministers*
11	44	r. *Spirit with the New Testament*
14	26	f. *Name* r. *mean*
18	21	f. *wind* r. *mind*
	46	f. *Liberty* r. *Prophesy*
19	27	f. *she* r. *they*
	32	r. *rule, and here it is*
	35	f. *herein*, r. *hear us*
	38	f. *but* r. *nor*
22	13	r. *Anointment with Oil, it is not ceased,*
24	7	f. *desiries* r. *desires*
	19	f. *Ministers* r. *Members*
26	31	r. *mercy, but a matter of Justice*
29	10	dele *comma* after *is*
	43	f. *which* r. *hath*
30	37	f. *from* r. *of*
34	19	dele *there as*, f. *unless* r. *if*
45	10	f. *you* r. *we*
	11	f. *your* r. *our*
46	32	f. *our* r. *your*
47	18	f. *your* r. *our*