

*The Duty of holding fast the Form of sound
Words, as delivered in the Scriptures
By S. Wright.*

*The Charge given to Those
That were Ordained,
By Edmund Calamy, D.D.*



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The Duty of *holding fast the Form of sound
Words*, as delivered in the SCRIPTURES.

A
S E R M O N
ON
II *Timothy* I. 13.

Preach'd at the
O R D I N A T I O N
OF
Mr. *Obadiah Hughes*, U Mr. *Tho. Newman*, &
Mr. *Clerk Oldsworth*, R Mr. *John Smith*.

At the OLD-JEWRY, *Jan. 11. 1720/21.*

By S. WRIGHT.

WITH
The CHARGE given to Those
That were ORDAINED,
By EDMUND CALAMY, *D.D.*

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the Ministers then Present.

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II TIMOTHY I. 13.

*Hold fast the Form of sound
Words, which thou hast
heard of me, in Faith and
Love which is in CHRIST
JESUS.*



TIMOTHY is a Name, much to be esteem'd, by all them that are call'd to his *Office* and *Im-*ployment. Those Things are hinted at, in these two Epistles which make his Character very lovely. He had *known the holy Scriptures* from a Child; and his Knowledge of divine Things was accompany'd with a Faith unfeign'd. He descended from pious Ancestors and he inherited their Piety. There was some-

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thing

thing very promising in him, and there were great Expectations concerning him, at his *first setting out for GOD*. He was endu'd with considerable *Gifts*, as well as extraordinary and uncommon *Grace*. He had attain'd great Knowledge of the Principles and Duties of Christiariity. He was *Tenderate* to a Degree that was hardly allowable, considering his *Infirm* and *Weak* State. He was of a *Temper* very tender and affectionate; *St. Paul* himself being greatly impress'd and mov'd by *his Tears*. He had a most lively Sense of *Immortality* which *is brought to light by the Gospel*; professing to *lay hold on Eternal Life*, and to fellow alter those Things which *prepare* for it; and he had Courage to make this Profession before *many Witnesses*. His Company and Conversation seems above all Things to be desir'd by *St. Paul*, when he was in the most heavenly Frame of Mind, and ready to depart out of this World. Even when he could say, He had *finished his Course*, and was going to lay hold of *his Crown*, he requests *Timothy* to be *diligent to come shortly to him*. Knowing, that in *Timothy* he should find a Spirit and Temper just the reverse of what had appeared in *Demas*, who was carry'd away with the *Love of this present World*. And, to say many Things in one, *Timothy* was the *adopted*,
and

and *dearly beloved Son* of one of the wisest, and greatest Men, that ever appear'd upon this Earth.

FOR with me, I, must confess, the Name of St. PAUL is the most Venerable and Valuable of any amongst *mere Men*. He was not a *whit behind the very chiefest Apostles*, in any spiritual Gifts and Privileges; and in many humane Accomplishments, he excell'd them all. For Learning, for Experience, for Knowledge, of Men and the World; for Labours, for Sufferings, for Marks of Heaven's peculiar Love, and the Wicked's Envy and Hatred; for lofty thoughts, and penetrating far into the Mysteries of Religion, *Jewish and Christian*, and particularly into the great *Mystery of Godliness*, GOD *manifest in the Flesh*; for all the Force and Strength of Reasoning, and convincing the Mind; for Skill in the Arts of Address, and engaging the Affections; for generous Principles; for a brave and bold Spirit; for Zeal and Liveliness in the Work to which he was call'd; for Integrity and Stedfastness, amidst the greatest *Disorders* in the *Church* of CHRIST, and notwithstanding violent *Persecutions* from those who were *Enemies* to the Christian Name; and for the most diffusive, prevailing Love and Charity towards Men: For these Things (I say) he
was

was by none *exceeded*, and in many of them he *excel'd*.

BUT that which still recommends him more than all, was his sollicitous, constant Care to use all his Interest, and all his Abilities, solely to promote the Honour of his and our Common LORD. To the *Grace* of JESUS CHRIST, he imputes it intirely, that he was what he was. From the LORD he *receiv'd* what he *deliver'd* to the *Churches*, and only as so receiv'd, does he insist upon his Words being believ'd and obey'd. Nothing was more grievous to him, than to hear that his *own* Name, or Names which he loved and valued *as* his own, should be made use of to *divide* the *Church*, and to lessen the Honours which were done to the Name of CHRIST. See 1 Cor. i. 12. *and following Verses*.

IN these Epistles to *Timothy*, how does our *Apostle* abase himself, that his Great MASTER may be glorify'd? In the *First Chapter* of the former *Epistle*, we find him speaking in the lowliest Terms imaginable, on Purpose that he may carry our utmost Attention, and warmest Affections, to the Bledded JESUS, And when he has mention'd the Name of JESUS CHRIST, how does it dwell upon his Tongue, and his Pen! Read the 12, 13, 14,

15, and 16 Verses of the Chapter just quoted. We there plainly see, that our Apostle had nothing so much at Heart as the magnifying of his SAVIOUR, tho' it was to the vilifying of himself. "Here fix your Thoughts (as if he had said) "here fix your Love, upon *that Name* which "has every Thing in it *worthy of Acceptation*; "but let not *my Name* be mention'd with "this, otherwise than as the *chief of Sinners*, "and as a *Pattern* of Grace and Mercy to "those who shall be brought to believe on "JESUS CHRIST."

IN this *second Epistle*, just before our Text we find the *Apostle* pleading with *Timothy*, to be stedfast in adhering to their Common LORD, even amidst the greatest Tryals and Difficulties. *Be not thou therefore ashamed of the Testimony of our Lord*, nor of *me his Prisoner*; but *be thou Partaker of the Afflictions of the Gospel, according to the Power of God.* ver. 8. Such a LORD, and such a *Gospel*, deserve all that we can either do, or suffer, for than. After this, our Apostle is gone in a *Parenthesis* for three Verses together; in which he magnifies the Grace of GOD; and globes in the Appearance of CHRIST, *to abolish Death, and to bring Life and Immortality to light through the Gospel: Whereunto* (says he) *I am appointed a Preacher, and an Apostle, and a Teacher of the*
Gentiles.

Gentiles. The Character of an *Apostle* be long'd to St. *Paul*, as he was sent immediately from the *Person* of CHRIST; receiving his Commission from the LORD Himself, and: not from Men. But then in describing the Service and Work to which he was appointed, he uses those Words which our Legislature has seen fit to apply to such *Ministers* of Religion as *dissent* from the Church by *Law established*. And, I confess, this very Place of Scripture; has made the Appellations of *Preacher* and *Teacher* appear more becoming our Character, and more desirable to me, than any other Names or Titles, by which some are dignify'd and distinguish'd. St. *Paul* was one of the happiest Men in the World, in making his outward Disadvantages, and Sufferings, serviceable to the Cause of *Religion*, and the Glory of his LORD. Witness his Pleadbefore King *Agrippa*; and his declaring to the *Jews* the Cause of his being sent to *Rome*. Acts xxvi. and xxviii. One of the most persuasive Things had been wanting, in pressing *Timothy* to Christian Courage and Constancy, had not our *Apostle* made his very *Imprisonment*, and his *Afflictions*, an Occasion of doing the highest Honour to JESUS CHRIST. For i apprehend, that it is in our LORD JESUS St. *Paul* reposes his *Trust*, and
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to him that he *commits* his *Soul*, when he says in the Verse before the Text, *I know whom I have believed, or trusted, and I am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that Day.* And if this be apply'd to CHRIST, than the highest Acts of Worship and Devotion are paid to him; and in St. *Thomas's* Language, he is both our LORD and our GOD.

Now from what the *Apostle* had committed as a *Depositum* unto CHRIST, he immediately turns his Thoughts to what CHRIST had committed as a *Depositum* unto him: And putting this into the Hands and Care of *Timothy*, he charges him strictly and constantly to look to it. This Connexion of the Words I am going to enlarge upon, with the foregoing Verses, is justify'd by what a learned *Expositor* has observ'd from the *Jewish* Writings, to this *Purpose*: "The Jews "(says he) make mention of *Two Depositums* "of GOD: The Lamp within us, or the Soul; "and the Lamp without us, which is the "Law. And they introduce GOD speaking "thus: *My Light or Lamp is in thy Hand, and "thy Lamp which is thy Soul is in mine: If thou "shalt diligently keep my Lamp, I will keep thine; "if thou extinguishest mine, I will put out "thine.* Well, *Timothy*, (as if the *Apostle*

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had said) thy Soul, and mine, are committed as a *Depositum* into the Hands of our LORD: And he has committed his *Gospel*, as a *Depositum*, unto us: Be sure to keep it, as thou hast receiv'd it from me, who now commit it to thee, as I had it from CHRIST. And as ever thou expectest CHRIST should take care of *thy Soul*, do thou take care of *his Testimony*. Approve thy self a faithfull Witness to his Doctrine, his Death, his Resurrection, and his Glory. *Hold fast the Form of sound Words which thou hast heard of me, in Faith and Love which is in CHRIST JESUS.*

IN this Admonition of *Paul* to *Timothy*, we have the proper Work of this Day set before us. From hence we may learn, What those who *ordain* others are to *commit* to them; and what those who *are ordain'd*, must receive, and stedfastly maintain; and also in what *manner*, and with what *Spirit*, we ought to embrace and propagate the Truths of our holy Religion.

I would humbly offer my Thoughts on this Subject, in the following Method;

- I. Enquire, What that *Form of sound Words* was, which *Timothy* is here said to have heard of the *Apostle*.

II. SHEW

II. Shew in what Respects *Timothy* was called to *hold fast* this Form of sound Words.

III. *Consider* briefly what is included in those Expressions, *Faith and Love* in CHRIST JESUS.

AND then *apply* the whole to ourselves, and the Service of *this Day*.

I. I would enquire, with the utmost Care and Impartiality, *What that form of sound Words was*, which *Timothy* is here said to have heard of the *Apostle*.

THE Original Word (ὑπερτύπωσις) here render'd *Form*, is taken either from *Architecture* or from *Painting*. As it is us'd in *Building*, it signifies the *Type*, or *Model*, or *Plan*, according to which an Edifice, or House, is to be rais'd. As taken from *Painting*, it signifies the *first Lines*, or the *Original Draught* of a Picture. When therefore this is apply'd to the *Christian Doctrine*, it must signify, the *Original Prescriptions* of the *Gospel* which were to be copied out by *Timothy*: Or some *Draught*, and Summary, and *Symbol* of Divine Truths, which was to be held out to

the World in his Preaching and Life, and to which he was required strictly and faithfully to adhere.

THE Popish Expositors would have this Text understood to speak of *unwritten Traditions*. And they argue, That 'tis not said *Timothy* was to hold fast the Words which he *read*, or which were *written*; but those which he *heard*, and that were deliver'd to him by *Preaching* or *Conversation*. But before this Exposition can be justify'd so as to serve the Purpose of the *Romanists*; they have three Things to prove, which I apprehend it is impossible for them to do.

First, THAT the Things which the Apostle *delivered* by Word of Mouth, were; *different* from those which he committed to Writing.

Secondly, THAT Traditions received from *erring* and *fallible* Men, are to be received even as those Traditions were, which came from the Mouths of Men inspir'd by the HOLY GHOST.

Thirdly, THAT the Traditions now said to be from the *Apostles*, are of as great, yea, greater Authority then the Holy Scriptures, and of absolute Necessity to be received in order to Salvation. Till these Things are fully Proved, against all those valuable Pieces
which

which have been publish'd in our own Language as well as others, to expose the Popish Doctrine about their Traditions, we need not shew any further Regard to *their* Way of Expounding the Text.

BUT there are differing Opinions, even amongst our own Expositors, about the *Form of sound Words* here spoken of by St. Paul.

I. SOME understand the *Gospel itself*.

THIS, *Timothy* might first hear of the *Apostle*, and afterward might have it deliver'd to him in *Writing*, (probably as it is now publish'd by St. *Luke*,) together with the other Scriptures of the *New Testament* then extant. The Annotations on the Epistles of St. *Paul*, publish'd by Dr. *Fell*, Bp. of *Oxford*, thus explains the Verse following the Text, as speaking of the "*Gospel deposited with Timothy*, that "he might also deposite it with others; and "they with such as should succeed them to "the World's End; against all profane Innovations, and Diversity of Opinions, however "boasted of as Knowledge, Science, &c." *Calvin* writes more largely for this Exposition, rejecting all others. He says; "The *Apostles* "here requires *Timothy* * to hold fast the "Doctrine

* Ut tenax sit Doctrinæ quam didicit, non modo quod ad Substantiam, sed etiam quod ad figuram ipsam Orationis.—Sciebat Paulus quam proclivis sit à pura Doctrina

“Doctrine which he had learn’d, not only as
 “to the *Substance* of it, but even as to the very
 “*Form* and *Manner* of Speaking. St. *Paul* well
 “knowing what a Proneness there is to fall
 “from sound Doctrine, at leaat aome Way
 “or other to deviate from it, therefore
 “Timothy is here sollicitously warn’d to keep
 “as close as might be to the Original Pre-
 “script laid before him.” After this ’tis ad-
 ded, “Not that there is so much Religion
 “mere Words or Expressions, but because
 the least disfiguring of the Christian Doctrine
 “is exceeding prejudicial to it.” And then
 he instances in the *Popish Theology*. Bishop *Crofts*,
 in a Book † once highly esteem’d by all true
 Protestants, thus fixes the Sense of this Place;
 “We have no other safe Way to speak of
 “divine Matters, but in Scripture Language,
 “*ipsissimis Verbis*, with the very *same Words*; ac-
 “cording to that Text, *Hold fast, the Form of*
 “*sound Words, which thou hast heard of me in*
 “*Faith*: Mark (saith he) *Hold fast* not only
 “the *Matter* of Faith, but the *Form of sound*
 “*Words*, these are safe; humane Words in di-
 “vine,

na vel Lapsius, vel Deflexio. Hanc ob causam sollicitè
 cavet ne declinet Timotheus ab ea decendi forma quam
 acceperat, suamque docendi rationem quasi ad illud Præ-
 scriptum exigat.

† *Naked Truth*, Publish’d in the Year 1675: p. 5.

“vine and high Mysteries are dangerous: “Man can no more set them forth in humane Words, than exprest the Divine Substance by humane Painting; ’tis the sole Work of the HOLY GHOST, who is also Divine.” But,

2. OTHERS understand by the *Form of sound Words*, a *Summary of Doctrine*, or a *Creed*, which St. Paul deliver’d to Timothy at his Ordination.

Dr. *Whitby* thinks, from several Passages of Scripture, That there seems to have been some *Form of Doctrine* deliver’d to them who receiv’d the Christian Faith: † And “that there was a [παρακαταθήκη] or *Depositum* of Christian Doctrine deliver’d to them who were to preach, and instruct others in the Faith.” And he observes, “That all the *Fathers*, from *Irenæus* downwards, speak of such a *Symbol of Faith* deliver’d to the Church, by the *Apostles*, and these *Disciples*.” Concerning which he further adds, “That it was one and the same Faith which the Church retain’d throughout the World, than which they believ’d neither less, nor more, and which for Substance was the same with the *Apostles Creed*.” And had there been
neither

* See Annotations on 2 Tim. ii. 2.

neither less nor more insisted on, in the *Creeeds* which have since been made necessary to be receiv'd, the Church would not now be divided and broken as it is. Nor would any-one, that I know of, think a well compil'd *Summary* or *Symbol* at all improper to go along with the *Scriptures*; provided, that nothing be there defin'd, or determin'd, which the Scripture does not expressly define and determine. A Summary of Faith is doubtless of great Use to point out the *principal Things*, which those who are call'd to the Ministry ought to study, and to teach according to the *Scriptures*.

3. SOME think, That by the *Form of sound Words*, is meant, that *Form or Picture of divine Truth* and *Christian Graces*, which was drawn upon the Mind and Heart of *Timothy*, by the Preaching and Instructions of *St. Paul*.

THUS *Chrysostom* *, and others of the Ancients, represent the *Apostle* as here referring *Timothy*, to that lovely and compleat Draught of Things which he had in *himself*. He is call'd upon (as those Writers think) to attend carefully and constantly to those Impressions which were made upon his Spirit, and to those Representations of divine Things which were

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* *Homil.* III. in *Epist.* Secund. ad *Tim.* Et *Theodoretus* ad *Eundem Locum*, p. 494.

painted in his Mind by the Words and Mini-
strations of St. *Paul*. And whether there should
be Occasion to speak concerning Faith, or Love,
Timothy is directed not to borrow his Accounts
of Things from others, nor to make their Re-
presentations of Truth, a Pattern to him; but
to dispense the Gospel as, one that had it en-
graven upon, his own Heart; and as one that
knew the Power of it, and that could dis-
pense it in Life and Power, as an Exemplar
unto others. This Explication, if taken by
itself, does not seem at all to suit the Design of
the *Apostle* in the Text *: But if we con-
sider it together with what is mention'd be-
fore, it may be very useful and instructive
to us. If we look to that Sacred *Depositum*
which was put into the Hands of *Timothy*, and
then consider Divine Truths as they were en-
graven also upon his *Mind* and *Heart*; he would
be enabled, by a careful Attention do *both these*
the more successfully to declare and make
known the Things of the *Gospel*. And certain
it is, That a *Form of Words* delivered to, us, or
receiv'd by us, must have some *Ideas* † of
Image, and *Picture* of them in the Mind, of else
we cannot convey them to others as we ought

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* Vid. Calvin, in Loc. † Exemplar in animo fixum,
quod ὀδέαν Platonici vocant, *Pol. Syn.*

to do. Without this, mere Words (tho' in never so good a Form) are but dead and unavailable.

4. By the *Form of sound Words*, we are not to understand *Articles of Faith merely*, or *speculative Opinions and Motions*; but *such Doctrines* as are according to *Godliness*, and effective of it both in *Heart and Life*.

When the *Apostle* here speaks [ὕγιαίνοντων λόγων] of *sound Words*, he uses the same Expression that *St. Luke* does when he describes *Mens* being *healed* of their *Diseases*, or being made *sound* as to their *bodily Health*, and the life of their *Limbs*. See *Luke* v. 31. and vii. 10. and xv. 37. Now when the Expression [*sound*,] which is so apply'd to the *Limbs* and the *Body*, comes to be apply'd to a *Form of Words*, or a *System of Doctrines*, it must be understood of *SUCH* as cure the *Diseases* of the *Mind* *. So that *sound Words* must not be conceiv'd of, as signifying merely an *Orthodox Set of Phrases*, or *Scheme of Things* in the *Head*; but such *Schemes* and such *Words*, as tend to make a *sound Mind*, and to prodnce all manner of *Goodness* and *Holiness* in ourselves and others. Thus the *Form of sound Words* stands oppos'd to *Fables*, *vain Babbings*, *foolish and unlearned Questions*,

* Vid. Diater. Antiq. nov. T. in verbum, ὕγιεινός.

ons, perverse disputings, and other Things caution'd against in these *Epistles to Timothy*, which Men run into, when they consent not to wholesome, Words, even the Words of our Lord JESUS CHRIST. 1 *Tim.* vi. 3, 5. Whatever *Form of Words* tends to make Diseases in the Mind, instead of healing them, cannot be found in the Sense of our Text, let the Complexion and Appearance of it be never so much admir'd and commended. Thus much may suffice for the first Head.

II. I am next to shew, in what Respects *Timothy* was call'd to *Hold fast* the Form of sound Words.

THE *Greek Verb* [ἔχε] when it is used without any other Word to determine its particular Sense, has several noted Significations. It signifies to have a Thing as a *Treasure*, and to have it as *our own*, and to be Enrich'd with it. So in *Matth.* xxv. 29. the τῷ ἔχοντι is emphatically used for having or possessing much; and the τοῦ μὴ ἔχοντος is one that hath *nothing* remaining to him *. Thus we should have *the Gospel* as our *Treasure*, accounting ourselves poor without it: And we should be as careful to keep and

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secure

* So in other Writings, the οἱ ἔχοντες, signifies those that are possess'd of great Wealth or Estates, the οἱ μὴ ἔχοντες signifies the Poor. Diater. Antiquit.

secure this, as others may be to secure their greatest Treasures in the World. Sometimes the Word signifies *Esteem* or *Knowledge* of a Thing or Person *; so in *Mark xi. 32*. All *Men counted John* [ἔτιχον, had *John* in *Esteem* or *know John*] *that he was a Prophet*: Thus we must have the *Form of sound Words* in the highest *Esteem*, and must *know* it so as to discern what, and from whence, it truly is. Sometimes this Word signifies to *tarry* or to *abide* †. And thus our Minds must abide upon the *Form of sound Words*; *tarrying* in the Study of them till we are thoroughly acquainted with them, and dwelling upon them. These several Hints may be of some Use and Service to us, and therefore I chose just to mention them. But the Signification of the Word [ἔχθε] which our Translators have chosen to follow, is what principally deserves to be enlarged upon: As it denotes to *adhere* to the *Gospel*; to *maintain* and to *hold fast* the great Things reveal'd and requir'd in it. And here I will beg Leave to offer Three Things as included in this Expression.

I. TIMOTHY was requir'd to *hold fast* the *Form of sound Words*, *so as not to let it go*. However the Christian Revelation may be hated
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* Steph. Thes. T. I. Col. 1319. † Diater. Antiq.

by the Atheistical and Profane, and may be argu'd against, as if it were a Thing of nought; however the wise Men of this World may treat the *Gospel*, and represent it as *Foolishness*, and make it the Cross of CHRIST a Stumbling-block; yet, let the *Truth as it is in JESUS* be given up on these Accounts. Let the World *threaten* what it will, let it *offer* what it will, to make thee renounce the Things thou, *Timothy*, hast heard of me; yet, be sure not to let them go. If Men of Wealth and Power frown upon thee and persecute thee; if Men of Learning contemn thee, or dispute against thee; if Men of Humour and Wit Scoff at thee, and break their Jests upon thee; if Men who are bigotted to *other Forms* of Worship and Religion; pronounce *solemn Sentences* against thee, and stir up Enemies every where to *molest*, or even to destroy thee; and if some, who are call'd by the Christian Name should *make shipwreck of Faith and a good Conscience*, either through the *Love* of this World, or the *Fear* of it; yet, notwithstanding all these Things, (and all that Earth or Hell can contrive) *hold fast* the Form of sound Words so, *as not to let it go*.

2. HOLD it fast, so, as not to *corrupt it*, or to *err from it*, or to make, any Thing necessary to Salvation beside it.

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LET *no other Doctrines* be taught with and *beside* those, that are deliver'd in the *Gospel*. St. *Paul* tells us expressly, That which was committed to *his Trust*, was the *Glorious Gospel of the blessed God*, 1 *Tim.* i. 11. And if this was the *Depositum* committed to St. *Paul*, it must be *this* which by him was committed to *Timothy*. The Form of sound Words, therefore, was no other than the *glorious Gospel of GOD*. And when *Timothy* is requir'd to hold fast this *Gospel*, most certainly it is intended, that he should hold it fast in its native, original *Purity*, and *Glory*. It was so *glorious* in the first Publication or Edition of it, that no Alterations or Additions can be made, but to the defacing, sullyng, and eclipsing the *Glory* of it. *Timothy* must therefore *hold fast* the Form of sound Words, not only against those who *utterly rejected*, and deny'd it, but against all that should *corrupt* it, *alter* it, *add* to it, or *wander* from it. He must not advance any Thing as necessary to Christian Communion, and Christian Privileges, besides this. This was the very Cause of *Timothy's* being defil'd to *abide* at Ephesus, that he *might charge* some there *to teach no other Doctrine*, 1 *Tim.* i. 3.

3. HOLD *fast* the Form of found Words, so, *as not to grow indifferent toward it*, or *to lessen thy Regards* and *thy Affection* for it.

LET

LET not thy *Zeal* or *Love* abate. Let not Divine Truths lose their *Force* and *Efficacy* upon thy *Spirit* or thy *Practice*. Let not this Form of sound Words become a *mere Form*, and a lifeless Thing: Nor ever allow thy self to become cold and indifferent in the *Defence* of it, or in *recommending* it to Others. Thou must indeed be *gentle unto all Men*; and in *Meekness* must instruct those that *oppose themselves*, when they *fall into Errors* and the *Snare of the Devil*: But thou must be sure to *continue in the Things which thou hast learned*, and of which thou hast been assured. Thou must be *instant in Season*, and *out of Season*, *reprove*, *rebuke*, *exhort with all Long-suffering and Doctrine*. Do all that *Wisdom* and *Love* can do, to instruct and recover the Erroneous. But since, where *Wisdom* and *Love* fail of Success, nothing is like to be available; there should be great Care not to do any Thing which *Anger*, *Self-conceit*, *Envy*, *Hatred*, *Ambition*, or any such like evil Affections may put thee upon. That *good Thing which is committed unto thee*, thou must *keep*, Timothy! And thou must keep it, not in thy own *Strength*, or according to the Dictates of thy own *Temper* and *Passions*, but by the *Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us*. Thus it is in the Verse after the Text.

Let

LET the *Holy Ghost* teach thee how to keep the Form of sound Words, whose Fruits are *Love, Joy, Peace, &c.* and then he will strengthen thee, and enable thee to hold it fast. O Timothy *keep that which is committed to thy Trust, avoiding profane and vain Babblings, and Oppositions of Science falsly so called,* 1 Tim. vi. 20 Thou, that from thy Infancy *hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto Salvation;* Thou that knowest the Divine Authority and Inspiration of them, how profitable they are, and how powerful they are, and sufficient *to make the Man of GOD perfect throughly furnished unto all Good Works;* do thou keep these Scriptures safely, and keep to them carefully, and keep up the most lively Attention, and warmed: Affection for them; and let that *Zeal,* which worketh by *Love,* never grow cold.

These Things, I apprehend, will now meet with the more general Acceptance, because they have already been urg'd with so much Advantage in a *Publick Lecture* in this City; and by *One* for whom all here present have, I believe, a particular Esteem. And in reciting the Words, to which I refer, I shall but give you the Sum and Substance of what I have hitherto deliver'd. Speaking of the *Truth as it is in JESUS,* that Discourse says; "We are to re-
"ceive

“ceive it *as it is* deliver’d, and speak *it as it is*
 “communicated: And the nearer we keep
 “to the *Terms* in which it is deliver’d, we are
 “so much the safer. Having it committed
 “to us we should reckon it a great Trust:
 “And it highly concerns not only Ministers
 “but all the People of GOD to be found
 “*faithfull*. We should keep it intire without
 “changing, or altering it; *Holding fast the*
 “*Form of sound Words*. We are firmly to
 “adhere to it, whoever slight it; to stand
 “up for it, whenever it is assaulted or op-
 “pos’d; and, as far as we are able, to
 “clear it when it is obscur’d. We are not to
 “part with it, or let it go at any Rate, We
 “must keep the Truth of CHRIST’S Doctrine
 “*just as it was deliver’d* to the Church by his
 “Apostles, and *as it is contain’d* in the *sacred*
 “*Records* from whence, (rather than from hu-
 “mane Glosses, Comments, and Expositions,
 “how just and valuable soever) we are to
 “take and Collect it for our own Use. We
 “must adhere to it whatever we may suffer,
 “and whatever our so doing may expose us to.
 “And if we Corrupt or *misrepresent* it, betray
 “or lose it upon any Terms, we are account-
 “able to the Judge of all another Day †.”

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† Dr. Calamy’s Discourse from *Ephes. iv. 15.* at the Merchants Lecture at *Salters-Hall*, Nov. 29. 1720.

THE next Thing proposed, is,

III. To shew what is included in those Expressions, *Faith* and *Love* which is in CHRIST JESUS.

SOME make these Words refer to the *Verb* in the beginning of the *Verse*: And then the Sense of the Apostle is this; the Form of sound Words thou hast heard of me, hold fast *with Faith* unfeigned, and *with Love which is in CHRIST*. Or more fully thus, Let sound Words be attended, with sound and unfeigned *Faith*, and with a practical Love of CHRIST and his Cause, and Charity to Men, and this will make thee persevere in sound Doctrine so as not to recede from it.

OTHERS think that the Faith and Love here requir'd, refer more immediately to the *Form of sound Words*, and are no other than a Declaration wherein this Form of sound Words *consists*: Namely, *in Faith*, which includes all the *Credenda*, the Things, to be believ'd; and *in Love*, which includes the *Agenda*, or the Things to be practiced, according to the *Gospel*. And thus we find, in other Places of Scripture, that the whole of Religion is compriz'd under these two Heads †. And both the *Articles*

† Vide *Amesij Medullam Theologicam*.

cles of Faith, and *Precepts of Love*, must be receiv'd and taught as they are reveal'd and explain'd by CHRIST, and as they refer to *Him Faith and Love which is in CHRIST JESUS*.

'Tis here therefore repair'd of *Timothy*, and of those who are call'd to the same Office with him.

1. That they should hold fast the *Christian Faith*. Whatever is deliver'd to us by our LORD, and by the Inspiration of the HOLY GHOST, we must believe and adhere to, as *infallible Truth*; depending upon the Testimony of the *Apostles*, and *Prophets*, as most certainly *divine*; and as that which cannot *possibly* deceive us, or prove false. Hence we are oblig'd to believe, and make known, the *whole Counsel of God*, as contain'd in the sacred Writings. And that *Faith* is to be thus, understood, of the *Things believed*, is apparent from many other Places of *Scripture*. *Gal. i. 23.* We read of *Preaching the Faith*. And in *Phil. i. 27.* of *Striving together for the Faith of the Gospel*. And *1 Tim. iv. 8.* of *Denying the Faith*. And *Heb. x. 23.* of *Holding fast the Profession of our Faith*. And *Jude 3.* of *Contending earnestly for the Faith which was once* (and as Dr. *Whitby* very justly notes, *at once*) *delivered to the Saints*. This *Faith* includes every Thing which the *Word of GOD* declares, with relation to the *First CAUSE*, the *Great DISPOSER*, and the

Last END of all Things; the Nature and the Decrees, and the Works of GOD, and His Government of the World, and His Dispensations towards Men: As also what is recorded concerning the Fall of *Angels*; and the first Formation of *Man*, his *Apostacy* and Corrupti-
on; with every thing that relates to our *Redemption*, and Recovery by CHRIST; and whatever concerns us in our Transactions with FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST, in order to our *eternal Salvation*. This Faith must be held fast, pure, and entire, as it was at *first* deliver'd to the Saints.

AND now, (tho' it be not the primary Sense of this Place, yet) it may be of some Use to observe, That there must be Faith in CHRIST JESUS, as it signifies the *acting* of our *Minds* with reference to the Truths of the Gospel. We must *assent* to them; we must *consent* also, and *yield* our selves, to be molded and form'd by them; and, as the Gospel directs, must engage our selves to follow after the *Things which are not seen* that are *eternal*, more than the *Things which are seen*, that are but *temporal*. Faith may also be consider'd as including *Hope*, and *Trust*, and *Reliance* of the Soul; and as it is sometimes put for *Faithfulness*; *i. e.* for Integrity, and a stedfast Continuance in well-doing. Thus, *the Faith* is to be held fast, in *Faith*.

2. THERE

2. THERE must be a holding fast *the Love which is in CHRIST JESUS*. This Love may be consider'd either as it respects our LORD, and his *Truths*; or as it respects our Fellow-*Christians*, and Fellow-*Creatures*.

THE Three great Branches of *Love*, are Desire, Delight, and Duty: And the Exercsies of it in each of these Ways, may be apply'd both to GOD, and *Man*.

IF we consider Love as it has respect to our LORD, and the *Form of sound Words*; it must then be express'd by the most ardent *Desires* to know CHRIST, and the Truth as it is in Him, more fully, and perfectly than yet we do. And at the same time there must be a very great Complacency and *Delight* in GOD, and in the Knowledge of divine Things, so far as we are acquainted with them. Such Desire and Delight as this, will put us upon all Acts of Devotion; *Praying* to GOD. *Thinking* of Him; *Hearing* and *Reading* diligently what is His Mind and Will, and frequently *Conversing* with Him. And then a Love of *Duty* will shew itself by *Keeping* the *Commandments* of our LORD, and observing every Thing that He requires of us: And, in all, we must act *zealously* for Him. Thus the Form of sound Words must be held fast, as it includes these several *Expressions* of *Love* to CHRIST and his *Gospel*.

AGAIN

AGAIN, If we consider *Love* as it respects *Men*, it includes the following Things. There must be an earnest *Desire* of the Salvation and Welfare of the whole Race of Mankind: More especially wishing, and longing, to see All with whom we have to do, Wise, and Good, and Happy. And always maintaining such a Disposition of Mind, as to hand *inclin'd* and ready to every good Work. And then there must be a Love of *Delight*, in all those that truly fear God; and a taking Pleasure in every Thing that is good, in whomsoever we see it. No Distinction of *Names*, no Diversity of *Gifts* or *Graces*, should prevent our Complacency in them that *love our Lord JESUS CHRIST in Sincerity*. Wherever we discern an honest Mind, and a just, righteous, good Life and Conversation, we should be greatly pleas'd with such, notwithstanding their *differing from ourselves*, in Thinkings or Speaking of those Things which are *most surely believ'd amongst us*. The *Saints that are in the Earth*, be they of what Party or Denomination they will, should be accounted *the Excellent in whom is all our Delight*. If any of these are otherwise minded than we are, we should learn in *Honour to prefer*, at least, *in Love to forbear* one, another. We should never lessen the *Worth* of any; no not so as to have a despising detracting *Thought*
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in our Hearts, much less censorious and defaming *Words* in our Mouths, or to proceed to any injurious *Actions*. We must always allow for different natural Abilities, different Educations, different Acquirements, different Acquaintance and Ways of Conversation, different Views and Prospects, different Passions and natural Infirmities, with all those other Things that may occasion Differences amongst good Men, even whilst all of them are prevalingly concern'd for the Honour of their LORD, and for the Credit of Religion in the World, And we should endeavour to take Satisfaction in the Attainments, and Usefulness, of those that may differ from us, and that may even eclipse our Characters, in some Things by their Gifts or Graces. This is a noble Degree of Christian Love. Could we attain more of this happy Temper, what Credit and Success would it give to the *Form of sound Words!* And how would our own Hearts be establish'd! But if we cannot arrive to such a *Complacential Love* as this towards our *Fellow-Christians*; (as I am sensible it requires both great *Grace*, and a very great *Mind*, to go so far;) yet a *Love of DUTY* towards our Brother, must be attended to, in all the proper Instances and Expressions of it, both with respect to *Soul* and *Body*.

WE must endeavour to *inform*, and to help
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the Understandings of those that are ignorant or mistaken: And this we should do, in such a Way, as not to cast Reproach and Contempt upon them. We must *Want* and *Reprove*, where the Faults or Errors of any call for our so doing; but in this too, we must manage as becomes our Place, and may evidence our *Affection*, and may be most likely to answer a valuable, and *right End*. We must *Comfort* and *Support* those that are of feeble Spirits, that lie under Discouragement, and that are apt to lay their Disadvantages too much to Heart. We must forgive the *Faults* of the Penitent, and *bear* with those *Weaknesses* which are natural, and appear incurable. And we must *Pray* for *Grace*, and *Glory*, and all needful *Blessings*, to every Soul that *walks uprightly*.

OUR Love to the *Bodies* of Men must be such as to cherish them; to *feed*, and *cloth*, and *visit* them, and to further their *Health*, and *Prosperity*, in all lawful and proper Ways. If in *Straits* or *Confinement*, we are to endeavour their Liberty and Enlargement. We should minister all the Help we can, to the Bodies of the *Sick*: And should maintain a due Regard to the *Dust*, the *Names*, and the *Families*, of the *Dead*. Thus are we to *hold fast*, and *recommend* the *Gospel*. But to take away the *Bread* or *Clothing* of our Neighbour, to impair his *Estate*, or promote his *Affliction*, or to stab

stab his *Reputation*, which, in some Cases, is worse than to take away Life itself; and by such Methods as these, to think of making Men *receptive*, or *hold fast*, the *Form of sound Words*; how absurd is this? and how directly contrary to the Spirit and Intention of the *Gospel*? Such Proceedings may excite *strong Prejudices* against those *Forms of Words*, which are thus impos'd, and defended; but are never like to raise any *suitable Affections* towards them: And if any Man *does not* see this, surely it is because he *will not* see.

To conclude this Head, we must love *one another*, as CHRIST has loved *us*. We must hold fast, and propagate the *Truths* of the *Gospel*, with the *same Meekness*, and *Patience*, and *Kindness*, and *Charity*, which CHRIST shewed to his poor Weak, and often Erring *Disciples*, and which he Express'd to his very *Enemies*, and to the whole World. This is the *Love*, spoken of in our *Text*, *which is in CHRIST JESUS*.

I now proceed to the APPLICATION.

I hope nothing has been said that is disagreeable to the Sentiments of my *Reverend Fathers*, and *Brethren*, who are now to be Concern'd in *separating* and appointing *others*, unto the Work of the Ministry.

AND if I am so happy as to fall in with thei
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Sense of Things, they will then give me leave to say, "That what They are to commit this "Day unto such as they *Ordain*, is the *Form* "of *sound Words* which was publish'd by the "*Apostles*; and nothing *beside*, nothing *more*, "or *less*, than this."

YOU well know how distinct, and full, the Instructions are, which the *Sacred Scriptures* give, to make the *Man of GOD* *perfect*; and to furnish him for the Discharge of every part of the Work of a *Gospel Minister*. And you are throughly Sensible, that it is by such a close Adhering to the *Scriptures* as that now insisted on, that we must prove ourselves *Ministers* of JESUS CHRIST, against those, who from some particular Opinions, and from humane Constitutions, and from some later Writers in the Christian Church, would nullify our Orders, and all our Ministrations.

YOU will not, I am persuaded, demand the receiving of *Creeeds*, or Confessions of Faith, as they have been contriv'd, and impos'd, in the later and more degenerate Ages of the Church; nor will you do any Thing that shall Encourage a *teaching for Doctrines* the *Commandments of Men*. You know how much it would secure the *Peace* of the Church, to *hold Fast the Form of sound Words* as it was *once*, and (I beg leave to repeat it) *at once, delivered to the Saints*.

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You are very sensible how much this would promote the Honour of our great LORD, and MASTER; how much it would restore the *Credit of Religion*, by bringing things back to their Native Purity and Simplicity; and how many Occasions of Offence, among the Servants of CHRIST, would be taken away. You are well aware, how the great *Truths* of the *Gospel*, as Express'd in the *Words* of the *Holy Ghost*, may be secured and defended against all *Gainsayers*. That Either *something* will proceed from them which shall render them *Self-condemned*, and plainly shew their *Departure* from the Faith and Holiness of the *Gospel*; or else, that there is no need for us to fear their corrupting others; nor should we, upon any Surmises of their doing so, condemn them and cast them out.

You will allow to every one, no doubt, the liberty of uttering his belief of the *Gospel Doctrines*, Either in the *very Words* which the *Holy Ghost teacheth*, or in Words of *Truth* and *Soberness* which he may think expressive of the same Things: But still, in Matters of *pure Revelation* you will give a *Preference* to the Words of the *Holy Ghost*, as the safest and best.

You will not Encourage the annexing of *Damnatory Clauses*, to any *humane Compositions* or Ways of speaking. And you will not, I believe, demand any such Declarations as, [*sic*

sentio, sic sentiam:] So I *do think*, So I *will think*; But you will admonish Those to whom you Commit the *Sacred Oracles*, to use the best *Means*, and give the utmost *Diligence*, to know the *True Sense* of them; and then to act, as becomes *Honest*, and *faithful Men*.

So beautiful and forcible are *these Methods*, that even *Error* itself has succeeded, by pleading for them. The *Means* have had such Charms, that the *End* thereby has obtain'd, tho' it has prov'd a very bad, and destructive one. How gloriously, then, would Truth prevail and triumph, could we once bring *such Ways* of talking, and acting, instead of all others, to be Principally and Eminently on the side of *pure* and *undefiled Religion!* To. promote this Sense of Things, if my Heart deceive me not, I am ready even *to die*; and therefore shall be ready to suffer. any thing which may arise from the Prejudices and Passions and Mistakes of Men, till GOD *shall reveal even this* unto them.

IF any are Concerned for the Honour of a Redeemer, and for his being worshipp'd and served, as the GOD that *made Heaven and Earth*, the *True GOD* and an *Everlasting King*; This you are ready, (and you will allow me to speak particularly for my self, that I am so too upon all proper Occasions,) most heartily to Declare and Maintain. And if *any Truth* of the *Gospel*
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be struck at, by such as would Corrupt the *Christian Faith*, you will bear your Testimony to such opposed or deny'd Truth; and endeavour to Convince those of their Error who depart from it, in all such Ways as the *Gospel* directs.

WE do all, I hope, love our LORD, and love his *Gospel*, and love his *faithful Servants* too; and we should love not only this, or that *Party* of them, but all of them; I would not, for all this World, be found smiting, injuring, or defaming any of those who may be own'd and approv'd of JESUS CHRIST, at his *future coming*. *Let our Moderation be known unto all Men; for the LORD is at hand. Let us not grudge one against another, lest we be condemned: Behold, the Judge standeth before the Door,* James v. 9.

I need not apply thy self *particularly* to those who are now to be devoted, to the Work of the Ministry: To *you* I have had a special Regard in the foregoing Discourse. And the Things which are to be given you in *Charge* by another Hand, will (I doubt not) be very sufficient.

BUT there are some Things deducible from what has been said, that concern all of us; and which ought to be regarded by the *People* of GOD, as well as *the Ministers* of the *Gospel*,

I. WE

I. WE should all be engag'd stedfastly to maintain the *Truth* and *Authority* of the *Gospel*, against those that *deny Reveal'd Religion*.

'Tis well known, that some of the best Figure and Condition in these Nations, and of the best Estates, and of considerable Wit and Learning, have deserted Christianity to fall in with the Principles of *Deism*. And how common is it for such both to talk, and write, as if there were no other Principles becoming a Man of Wisdom and Penetration, but those they call Principles of *Reason*, and of *Natural Religion*! How frequently has such Conversation been brought, of late years into *Clubs*, and Company in *this City*; and into other Places of Concourse for Health or Diversion in this Kingdom? Yea, do we not sometimes meet with Things of this Nature even in private Families, and more retir'd Conversation? 'Tis what I have especially observ'd, in some, who have a more than ordinary Taste for modern and polite Learning, and who seem to study the Decencies of Temper, Conversation, and Behaviour; that they are apt to impute all *Humanity* and good Order of Things, to Principles *different* from, those of *Revelation*, or at least, to such Principles as might be known *without it*.

SUCH a State of Things, I apprehend, calls for a most sollicitous Concern to maintain the *Credit*
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of the *Scriptures*. This therefore should put us upon a diligent Search into the *Reasons* of the *Christian Religion*, and the *Proofs* which we have of the *Inspiration* of the *Prophetical*, and *Apostolical* Writings: And we should furnish our Minds and Memories, with all those Things that may recommend the *Christian Doctrine*, and the *Christian Precepts*: That so, whatever *Attack* is made upon *Revealed Religion*, we may be ready, with *sound Arguments*, to vindicate the *Form of sound Words* deliver'd in the *Gospel*. And we should render a *Reason* of the *Hope that it in us*, with such *Meekness* and *Good-will*, that those we converse with may see, we have no other *End* to gain upon them, or to serve by them, but to make *them* as *Blessed* and *Happy*, as we expect the *Grace* of the *Gospel* will make us. There are Things so great and important to be said, in Recommendation of the *Glorious Gospel* of the *Blessed GOD* and our *SAVIOUR*, that a meek and obliging *Way of speaking* such Things, will surely carry them to the *Hearts of Men*. In such a *Manner* as this, should we maintain the *Authority*, and *Truth* of the *Gospel*, against them that deny, or doubt of *Revealed Religion*.

2. WE should, *converse much with the Scriptures, and diligently study them.*

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HERE we have *sound Words*; such as will abide the most critical Search and Tryal; such as will retain the same Worth and Value, thro' all the Changes of *Times* and of *Languages*; and such as will cure the *Disorders* of the World, and the *Diseases* of Mens Minds. Here we have that which will make abundant Amends for the utmost Labour and Study. I have heard it observ'd of late Years, That *Reading* the *Scriptures* is much neglected both, in many publick *Assemblies*, and in very many professing *Families*; and the *Compositions* of Men are thought more profitable, and are more read than the Word of GOD. Many Students also, and even such as are to make *Divinity* their Profession, yet choose to spend their Time, rather in Studying other *Books*, and other Things, than in Studying the *Scriptures*. Whereas, this ought to be done in the first and chief Place, whilst the other (as we have Opportunity) should not be *left undone*.

SURELY, it is high time to call Men back to their BIBLES; and to assert the Excellency and Perfection of these *Scriptures*; that they may be more read, and regarded, and lived upon, by all such as in general allow them to be the *only Rule* of Faith and Practice. *Thou through thy Commandments* (says David) *hast made me wiser than mine Enemies; for they are ever*

ever with me. I have more Understanding than all my Teachers; for thy Testimonies are my Meditation, Psal. cxix. 98, 99. Much more may we say this, now the Revelation of the Mind and Will of GOD to the World, is compleated, and seal'd up.

IN this, our first *Reformers* from *Popery*, glory'd above all Things: And it was particularly enjoyn'd by publick Authority, in these Nations, "That every Parson, Vicar, Curate, &c. should be from Time to Time, examin'd, How they profited in the Study of "the Holy Scriptures *." And in Q. Elizabeth's Time, there was a *Protestation* to be made, promis'd, and subscrib'd, by Person to be admitted into any Office, Room or Cure, or other Place Ecclesiastical, in these Words; "I shall read "daily, at the least, one Chapter of the Old "Testament, and another of the New, with "good Advisement, to the increase of my "Knowledge †."

We that are *Dissenters* (considering Our distinguishing Principles) should rather exceed what is here requir'd of the *Clergy* of the *Establishment*, than fall short of it. And I wish to

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GOD,

* *Injunctions of K. Edw. VI. Anno 1547, Edit. II. of Dr. Sparrow. And Injunctions by Q. Elizabeth, Anno 1559.*

† *Articles of Q. Eliz. Anno 1564. p. 127.*

GOD, it was the *Attrition* of every one of us, to *excel* in this Matter; namely, in a thoro' Acquaintance with the *Scripture*, and a strict. Adherence to it.

3. WE should *carefully watch* against every *Corruption* of the *Christian Doctrine*, or *Departure from it*.

IF there are any about us, who err from, or are defective in owning, what appears to be a necessary and Fundamental Truth of the Gospel, we are certainly obliged to bear our Testimony against such. And I hope, for my own part, In shall never be justly chargeable with a *betraying the Truths of the Gospel*, through any Coldness or Indifferency, where I see Men are *actually* opposing them, and endeavouring to overthrow them. I would make it my *daily* Prayer, That I may never be left of GOD so far, as to neglect any *Duty*, or part with any *Truth*, that my LORD has made *necessary* to Salvation: But I confess, I have upon my Spirit an unconquerable Dread of making any Thing *necessary*, which CHRIST has *not* made so.

How then shall we judge, who they are that corrupt the Gospel, or that criminally depart from it? The shortest, and surest Rule to judge by, that occurs to me, is laid down in Gal. i. 8. *Tho' we, or an Angel from Heaven preach*

preach any other Gospel unto you, than that we have preached to you, let him be accursed. “Hence it appears (says Dr. *Whitby*) that a Man may err *fundamentally*, not only by rejecting a fundamental Article of Faith, but also by Maintaining and Teaching in the name of CHRIST, Things *unnecessary*, to be *necessary*, so as to say, Salvation cannot be obtain’d without them.” and again, he says; “Mr, *Walker* and *Grotius* note, That the *Apostle* speaks here only of Doctrines *contrary* to his Gospel. But this Exposition, is contrary to the very Words of the *Apostle*, who saith not, *against*, but $\pi\alpha\rho\ \delta\epsilon$, *besides what* I have deliver’d. And it is contrary to the Exposition of the Fathers, *St. Chrysostom*, *Oecumenius*, among the *Greeks*, and *St. Austin*, among the *Latins*, whose Note is this, *He saith not, If they preach Things contrary, but if they preach Things never so little different from the Gospel which I have preached to you.*” There is a good deal more added with an eye to the *Papists*, by the Writer I have mention’d *. I wonder that our Brethren of the *Church of England*, and all others who demand the receiving of any Thing *different* from, the Gospel, or *additional* to it, do not see the Force of such Texts; and of such a Way. of Reasoning; upon those Texts,

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* Annot. Vol. II. on Gal. i. 9.

in every other Instance, as well as in their-Disputes against the *Romamists*.

BUT farther; where it plainly appears that Things Erroneous are *uttered* and *taught* by Men, Our first Endeavours must be to *Convert* such. And we must carry it with great Prudence and Concern, least that which is *Lame should be turned out of the Way*, when it ought rather to be healed. This Caution and Warning the *Apostle* gives us, in Heb. xii. 13. And he immediately adds, *Follow Peace withall Men, and Holines, without which no Man shall see the LORD*. The best Way to restore Men, or to keep them from finally turning out of the Way, is, (not to lead them into *doubtful Disputations*, but) to shew a prevailing Regard to *Peace* and *Holiness*, Again, *If any of you do Err from the Truth*, (says St. James) *and one Convert him; Let him know, that He who to coverteth the Sinner from the Error of his Way, shall save a Soul from Death, add shall hide a Multitude of Sins*. Chap, v. ver. last.

IF our Endeavours should not succeed to Convert such as Err from the Truth; then we are to take the best Methods We can, to *prevent* the *publishing* of their Errors, and *infecting others*. We must offer our *strongest Reasons* in Confutation of their erroneous *Opinions*; but we should never go about to suppress them, by
fixing

fixing *odious names* upon them, or treating their Persons with Severity, and Resentment, much less with Insult and Injustice. Suppose we should call a Man, who *Errs from Truth*, by the Name of some *former Heretick*; and he should be able to clear himself, from the odious Imputations, which *that Name* would fasten upon him; why, then the Consequence will be, that *his Error* still remains, and he will prove us to be guilty of *scandalous and false Reports*; and so our *Ignorance* or *Ill will*, in the End, will expose us to the Reflections of By-standers, and *Truth* may possibly suffer too through our *unhappy Management*. It is not by calling Names, or venting Passions, but by *Arguments*, and *Prayers*, and *Charity*, that *Gospel Truths* must be defended, as at first they were propagated in the World. A gentle Treatment may *restrain* those Errors, which Roughness and Severity will provoke and embolden Men to *utter* and defend; and by Exciting the *Compassion* of Others towards them, may give their Errors the greater Spread.

THOUGH it must also be added, that in such a Case as the Apostle describes in the *Epistle to Titus*, *Hereticks* are to be *rejected* by us. That is, when they are *Subverted*, and *Sin*, and are *Self-condemned*, and this notwithstanding our *repeated admonishing* of them. And if Any
consent

consent not to wholesome Words, even the Words of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, and to the Doctrine which is according to Godliness; We are directed what Judgment to form of them, (as proud and doting and the like,) and from such to withdraw our selves. 1 Tim. vi. 3, 4, 5.

4. LET us be sure to *keep up a due Veneration to the very Words of Scripture, and the Form of speaking there.*

THE *Papists* have made very light of the *Words, of Scripture.* Bishop *Taylor*, among other Quotations out of the *popish* Writers; has this very shocking one, from Cardinal *Hosius*; * “That “the Words of Scripture being uttered in the “Sense of the Church, are the express Words “of GOD; but uttered in any other Sense, are “not the express Word of GOD, but rather “of the Devil”. Surely nothing should be done or said amongst *Protestants*, that has the least Tendency to support this Profaneness, and Contempt put upon the *Words of Scripture* by the *Papists*.

THERE is no need to repeat what was said before, concerning *mere Words* or *Expressions*; but surely the great *Truths* of the Gospel may be allowed to be *best* made known in the
Words

* De expresso Dei Verbo. *Taylor's Polemical Discourses.* p. 45.

Words of the Gospel. All Arguings that separate the *Words* of Scripture from the *Truths* of Scripture, and then depreciate those *Words*, are sophistical. But thus taken together, it appears safest and most adviseable in some Cases to keep wholly to *such Words*. When we speak of the *Nature* of GOD, as in the great Doctrine of the TRINITY; and when we speak of the *Decrees* of GOD, as in the Points of *Election*, effectual *Grace*, &c; Whatever *Words* we make use of to shew *our Notions* of these Things, yet should not insist upon any *Words* but those of the HOLY GHOST, as of *Necessity* to be received. For, since we all allow the *Infinite Nature*, and the *eternal Decrees* of GOD, to be infinitely above both our Expression and Conception; it must therefore be most safe, and best becoming us, to rest satisfy'd with those *very Words* and *Expressions* in which GOD has seen fit to make known *Himself*. And I confess, I am not able to discern, how those of differing Opinions can ever meet, and sit down in Peace, bu by following St. *Austin's* Expedient, when disputing with a *Manichee*: *No ego te, nec tu me, sed ambo audiamus Apostolum*. Neither *will I hear thee*, so as to be determin'd by thy *Words*; nor do I *expect thou shouldst hear me*, so as to be concluded by
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mine; *but let us both hear the Apostle.*

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* Thus Bp. *Crofts* thought the Deputes about the *Arian Heresy*, might have been prevented, or at least would soon have expir'd, had all been oblig'd to keep strictly to the *Words of Scripture*. He writes thus: "Had that most Prudent and most Pious *Constantine* the first, and best of Christian Emperors, pursu'd his own Intentions to suppress all Disputes, and all *new Questions* of GOD the SON, both *Homoousion* and *Homoiousian*, and commanded all to acquiesce in the very *Scripture Expressions* without any Addition, I am confident the *Arian Heresy* had soon expir'd: But by continual, Disputation, the Heat of Passion was rais'd, and the Matter pursu'd with far more Violence, which at length grew into Rancour and Malice irreconcilable. For some godly *Bishops* (I humbly conceive more zealous than discreet) would not rest satisfy'd unless the *Arians* were forc'd either to subscribe to the Word *Homoousian*, or to quit their *Livings*. This caus'd that great Persecution against the *Orthodox*, where the *Arians* prevail'd. Whereas by Silence impos'd on all Parties, the Malice, Rancour, Persecution, War, had all been prevented; and the *Truth spoken in Love*, would at length most probably have prevail'd For was not the *Gospel* at first planted this Way; Preaching and Praying Men to receive it? By this Way of Weakly it prevail'd; for the *weak Things of God, are stronger than Men*. But when Men will be wiser than GOD, and in their foolish Wisdom think at fit to add *their Strength* to GOD's Weakness, as a speedier and surer Way to establish the Truth, GOD, to convince them of their Folly, suffers that *strong Man* the Enemy of the Gospel (whom none but his Almighty Arm can bind and master) to come and sow his *Tares* of Division, which soon overruns the *good Seed* of the Church, and brings all to Confusion."

I plainly see that all good Men are of a Side in their honouring the *Scripture*, as to the *Sense* and *Substance* of it: And I hope there will be no *abiding* Disgusts or Differences, about such an honouring the *Words* of Scripture, as that which I have mention'd. In those high Points which relate to the *Nature*, and the *Decrees* of GOD, the several *Classes* of Christians, and the various *Churches* of CHRIST, will never come to speak the *same Thing* so as that there shall be *no Divisions*, (1 Cor. i. 10.) till they all keep to the *Words* of our LORD JESUS CHRIST. I speak this in the *Sincerity* of my *Heart*: And if any should be offended at it, I shall in part lament my own Unhappiness, that what others account Wrong, is so very evidently the Truth to me, that I am constrain'd to speak it: And I shall on other Accounts lament the Evil of the Times in which we live, being such as those complain'd of by one of the Ancients, *In quibus nec vitia nostra pati possumus, nec Remedia*; in which we can *neither hear the Faults* that are amongst us, nor their *proper Remedies*.

5. LET us not content *ourselves* in owning or maintaining one *Point of Faith*; but let us shew a just Concern for, and hold fast, the whole *Counsel of GOD*.

THERE is a certain *Eagerness* in the *Tempers* of some, and a *Narrowness* in the *Capacities*

cities of others, that when they are intent upon one Thing, they are altogether unmindful of another: But the thorough Christian, and truly wise Man, is one, who has his Eyes and Thoughts always about him; and will never run into such a disproportion'd Zeal for *one Part* of the *Christian Revelation*, as to give Advantage to those who lie in wait to corrupt or disparage *other Parts* of it; or act so as to lay the Way open, for a common Enemy to attack the *whole Christian Faith*.

WHENEVER Distinctions are made amongst Christians, by advancing some *one Point*, above *others* which our LORD JESUS CHRIST has made as *necessary* to be Contended for; 'tis highly proper and requisite to be upon our Watch, in Defence of the *whole Doctrine* of the Gospel. And surely he, who is concern'd for *all Truth* as it is in JESUS, must shew himself a better and wiser Man, than he who spends his Time and Zeal in some *one Cause* on which he happens. And when once a Dispute upon any Thing important in Religion, comes to be manag'd so, as that the common Sort of Christians are made to believe, all *Religion* depends upon the Issue of the Debate in hand; there is great need to be watchful least *other Points* of *Faith*, and all the *Precepts* of *Love*, should be disregarded.

THIS

THIS ought the more to be watch'd against because, as the incomparable Mr. *Hales* of *Eaton* observes, "There is a marvellous Violence of the weaker Sort in maintaining, their Conceits, if once they begin to be opinionative. For one Thing there is, that wonderfully prevails against the reclaiming of them, and that is the *natural Jealousy* they have of all that is said unto them by Men of better Wits, hand it with Reason never so good, if it *sound not* as they would have it," But I may add, If Things sound right unto such People, some *Shibboleth* or other, shall be made to stand for every Thing else in Religion, and become the *Standard* for trying Men: And then, if we are not very watchful to secure the *neglected Parts* of Religion, it will be in Danger of general Contempt.

IN the last Place, Let us take Care so to maintain Love, as *not to give up the Faith of the Gospel*; and so to hold fast the Faith, as *not so destroy the Love which is in CHRIST JESUS*.

IF we are careful to secure the *Authority* of the *Scriptures*, and to keep *close* to them, and to deal with those that would *pervert* them, and that *err* from them, as we have now hinted; I am persuaded we shall be ac-

quitted before God, as *holding fast the Faith* according to the Appointment of the *Gospel*.

AND that we may hold and secure the Faith, so as also to maintain the *Love which is in CHRIST JESUS*, we should take care, in all Matters of *Opinion*, either upon particular *Texts of Scripture*, or with reference to the Truths themselves more generally believ'd amongst us, to have a due Regard to these Three Things:

First, To consider that a Person, who *differs* from us in some *Opinions*, or *Expressions*, may *possibly* think as truly of Things as we do, perhaps *more truly*.

Secondly, IF we are assured in ourselves, that such as differ from us do not think *so truly*, yet if they use the Means GOD has appointed, and are humble, and diligent and sincere in their *searches after Truth*, we must allow, that they may be *accepted*, of GOD at *last*, as well as our selves. And therefore.

Thirdly, WE are to *carry it* toward them, as Those that *may be in the right*, if the Opinions and Arguments on each Side are probable, and the Matters about which we differ, are not capable of a certain and infallible Determination; Or at least, they should be *treated* by us, as those, that *may be accepted* with GOD notwithstanding their involuntary Mistakes.

THERE

THERE is a Passage in Mr. *Hales* of *Eaton's* Sermon, of *Dealing with Erring Christians*, that carries the regard to these Things as far as I would wish. "A better Way (says he, for *the Churches Peace*) my Conceit cannot reach unto, than that we would be willing to think, that those Things, which with some shew of Probability we deduce from Scripture, are at the best but *our Opinions*, For the peremptory manner of setting down our own Conclusions, under this high Commanding Form of *necessary Truths*, is generally one of the greatest Causes which keeps the Churches this Day so far asunder; when as a gracious receiving of each other, by mutual Forbearance in this Kind, might peradventure in time bring them nearer together."

To this great and good End, may the Services, and Prayers, of this Day be accepted and blessed. And now may He, who is *ascended on high* and has *receiv'd Gifts for Men*, bestow upon us all his *Holy Spirit*; as a Spirit of *Light* and *Knowledge*, of *Life* and *Zeal* and *Vigor* in the way of our Duty, and as a Spirit of *Love* and *Charity*. *Amen*.



ERRATA.

Page 9. l. 6. *for than read then.* p. 16. *To the Note at the bottom, add Theophylact, p. 805.* p. 18. l. 4. *from the bottom, for prodnce, read produce,* p. 25. *at the bottom, for I, read The.* p. 30. *Third line from the bottom put the Comma after forbear, and blot it out after One.* p. 33, l. last, *read their.* p. 48. *in the note, for Homoiousian read Homoïousion.*



THE CHARGE.

COLOS. IV. 17.

*And say to Archippus,
Take heed to the Ministry
which thou hast received
of the Lord, that
thou fulfil it.*



WE Learn from St. Paul's Epistle to *Philemon*, that *Archippus*, who is here soken of, was that Apostle's *Fellow-Soldier*; that is, he was ingag'd not only in the same holy Warfare, but the same sacred Ministry with himself. Perhaps, having been lately receiv'd in-
to

ver. 2.

so that Office *, the Apostle, writing to these *Colossians* to whom He was particularly related, thought it proper and seasonable, by a serious Admonition to stir him up to his Duty: Reckoning that he could not be press'd too earnestly, *to take heed to the Ministry which he had receiv'd of the LORD, that he might fulfill it.*

THE *Ministry which he had received*, is call'd, ΔΙΑΚΟΝΙΑ; but it does not therefore follow that *Archippus* was no more than a *Deacon*: For the Words ΔΙΑΚΟΝΟΣ and ΔΙΑΚΟΝΙΑ often refer to any Gospel Ministry. The Apostolical Office itself is call'd ΔΙΑΚΟΝΙΑ, or a *Deaconship*, tho' we translate it *Office* only. And St. *Paul* stiles himself ΔΙΑΚΟΝΟΣ, or a *Deacon*, tho' we translate it a *Minister* barely. And he tells his Disciple *Timothy*, that if he did but follow the Directions which he gave him, he would be a *good Minister*, or *Deacon* of JESUS CHRIST. Safely therefore may we with *Calvin* †, reckon this *Archippus* a Bishop or Presbyter in the

Rom. xi.
13.

Ephes. iii.
7.

1 Tim iv.
6.

* *Sermons* de M. Daillé, sur l'Épître aux Coloss. *Serm.* XLIX. † *Instit.* Lib. IV. c. iii. Sect. 7.

the Church of Colos, tho' St. *Jerom* † makes him but a Deacon.

SOME indeed have question'd whether he had any stated Office in that Church, and among these is our Dr. *Whitby*; who does not seem to think it credible, that St. *Paul* should send to the People of *Colos*, to admonish their Minister of his Duty. But if that be the main Difficulty, it need not much discourage us. For as it is the standing Work of Ministers to instruct and exhort their People, so is it not at all unbecoming or unsuitable, for the People upon Ocession to admonish their Ministers. However, the present Admonition came from St. *Paul*. And what could be more proper than for the Apostle after a great many needful Exhortations given to that Church, to add one seasonable Admonshion in the Close, to him that labour'd among them in the Word and Doctrine? In this Respect the Case will be much the same; whether we look upon him as direct Pastor of the *Colossian* Church, or as sup-
 H plying

† *In Loc. and in Philemon. v. 2.*

plying the Place of *Epaphras* in his Absence. The Apostle would have him remember that his *Ministry was received of the LORD*, by whatever Hands it was immediately committed to him at his Ordination. And he wou'd have him *take Heed to his Ministry, to fulfil it*. That is, consider thoroughly the Office which he had receiv'd, and completely discharge it, as in the Sight, and under the Inspection of God, to whom he would be accountable.

AND a very seasonable Admonition this is, for all of us that are engag'd in the same sacred Ministry, and more especially for You, who before God, Angels and Men, have been this Day consecrated to Service in that Office.

GIVE me Leave then (my Dear Brethren), to apply to you the Words of *St. Paul*; and to say to every One of you, with some Concern, and yet with a Freedom that suits such an Occasion as this; Let me beseech and intreat, nay, you must allow me to charge you, to *take Heed to the Ministry which you have received of the LORD, that you fulfil it*.

I CANNOT indeed suppose but that you that have been train'd up in order to this Service, and have for some Time been ingag'd in preparatory and initiatory Labours, with so much Acceptance from Men, and such Tokens of a Divine Presence also; You whose Seriousness of Spirit, and Unblameableness of Conversation, has been so well Attested, both in the Course of Your Studies, and since You have been in the Capacity of Candidates; You that in the Prefence of so great an Assembly, and in so solemn a Manner, have just now profess'd your Readiness, and bound yourselves to this Service; I cannot, I say, suppose, but that such as You, must upon this Day of your Dedication, Consecration, or Investiture, have your Spirits warm, and your Thoughts closely ingag'd: And for that Reason I hope what I have to offer, will be the more agreeable, have the more easy Admission, and make the deeper Impression.

MY Advice to you, will fall under Six Heads. Remember; I beseech you, the Awfulness of your Office: attend to the Work of it; take diligent Care of

the Flock of GOD; be prudent in your Conduct; careful of your Tempers; and regular in your Lives: And so will you answer the Call to *Archippus*, and effectually *take Heed to the Ministry which you have received of the Lord, that you fulfill it.*

I. REMEMBER the Awfulness of your Office. No Office can be more sublime, or more important, than that of the sacred Ministry which you have now taken upon you: None therefore can require greater Care or Diligence. You had need *take Heed* to it, 'Tis: plain the blessed Apostles themselves thought this no more than was needful, even in their own Case, when they so freely said, *We will give ourselves continually unto Prayer, and to the Ministry of the Word.* You have *receiv'd this Office of the LORD*, and to Him you are accountable. We that have been now with so much Satisfaction, laying our Hands upon you, have but (as far as we could judge) signify'd his Will concerning you, and committed this Office to you from Him. His Authority from whom your Office comes to you, ought

ought to affect and influence you in the whole of it. Remember tho' there is no small Dignity attending the Office which you have taken upon you, yet there's a great deal of Difficulty in it too; and perhaps never more than in such a Day as this is. Now if ever, may we well cry out, *Who is sufficient?* In the Primitive Times, many a Man has run away when he has been call'd to it: And indeed no Man that considers, and is well aware of the vast Importance of it, can accept it without Trembling.

LET each of you then think, that you this Day hear those awful Charges of St. Paul sounding in your Ears: *I give thee Charge in the Sight of God, and before JESUS CHRIST, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good Confession, that thou keep the Commandment (concerning thy Ministry) without Spot, Unrebukeable, til the appearing of our LORD JESUS CHRIST. And I charge thee therefore, before GOD, and the LORD JESUS CHRIST, who shall judge the Quick and the Dead at his appearing, and his Kingdom, preach the word; be instant, in Season, out of Season; reprove; rebuke, exhort, with all*

Long-

² Cor. ii.
16.

¹ Tim. vi.
13, 14.

² Tim.
iv. 1.

Long-suffering and Doctrine. Methinks 'tis not possible for any thing to be more affecting than such Charges as these, which teach all in the Ministry, and as much belong to you (my Brethren,) as if your Names had been particularly inserted in them. It highly concerns you never to forget them: And if you act but under the Influence of them, you cannot but acquit yourselves well.

YOUR Office in the Nature of it is a great Trust, and the Holy Scriptures represent it as such, in the Titles which it gives to those unto whom it is committed. †

YOU are to be Shepherds; and therefore should be provident and tender, watchful and faithful, and then *when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, you shall receive a Crown of Glory that fadeth not away.*

YOU are to be *Embassadors for CHRIST*, in the standing Part of that Office: For you are to *pray People in CHRIST'S Stead to be reconciled to GOD*, To you is *the Word of Reconciliation committed*; and you are to Publish the Treaty of Peace, be-

tween

† See Bp. Burnet of the Pastoral Care. Chap. i.

i Pet. v.
4.

2 Cor. v.
19, 20.

tween an offended GOD and winful Men, and to beseech and intreat them, and urge the most moving Arguments you can to engage them, to believe in CHRIST, and through him return back again to GOD, that they may be Happy. Take care to maintain the Dignity of your Character, and his Honour from whom you receiv'd it: And keep the great End of Your Office still in your Eye.

YOU are to be *Angels* in the Church in common with the Pastors in *Asia*, to whom the *Apocalyptical* Epistles were directed. Imitate those Blessed Spirits that are above, in Purity and; Zeal, and in Concern for the Glory of GOD, and the Good of the Souls of Men.

YOU are to be *Watchmen*: Answer that Character also, by your Diligence and Faithfulness in giving warning upon all Occasions both to the Righteous and the Wicked. And: be more afraid of nothing than of having the Blood of Souls to answer for, which is what the Prophet Ezek. iii. 18, 20. was told he must expect, if People dy'd in their iniquity, without Warning, given.

You

I Cor. iii.
11, 12, 13.

YOU are to be *Builders* in GOD'S House, Take care to lay a *Foundation* that will hold, even that which is laid in the Gospel, *which is CHRIST JESUS*: And *build upon this Foundation*, not *Wood, Hay, and Stubble*, but *Gold, and Silver, and precious Stones*; remembering that *every Man's Work shall be made manifest; the Day shall declare it.*

I Cor. iii.
9.

YOU are to be *Labourers* in GOD'S Vineyard, and to be employ'd in sowing and planting, and watering, and cultivating the Ground, wherever your Ministry is exercised. You are to be *labourers together with GOD*: And what an Honour is it, to work together with him, and under him, in order to the advancing his Kingdom, the repairing his Image; and the rescuing of poor Souls from Hell and Damnation!

I Cor. iv.
1, 2.

YOU are to be *Stewards of the Mysteries of GOD*, and therefore it highly concerns you to be *faithful*. To you has He in a special Manner committed, the highest and noblest, and most important Truths He has tho't fit to reveal to Mankind. Be true to Your Trust. Be sensible of the Dignity of Your Office, and careful to support it, and to do nothing unworthy
of

of it: And be more concern'd to deserve the Honour that is due to it, than to make Complaints if you should find the want of it. And let it be often in your Thoughts, that your Account hereafter will be answerable to your Trust at present.

II. ATTEND to the Work of your Office, in all the Parts of it, with Care and Exactness, that none may be omitted. Fill up all Ministerial Functions with that Seriousness and Diligence, that none may have any Reason to charge you with any remarkable Failure, in what properly belongs to you. Remember you are set apart to the Office, not so much that you may have the Honour, as that you may be strictly obliged to do the Work of it. Be admonish'd then by St. Paul, and *make full Proof of your Ministry*. Fill it up in every Part, and be Faithful and Diligent in discharging each Part, as you have Calls and Opportunity. Let not either *Doctrine, Worship, or Discipline*, be forgotten by you.

I. TAKE Heed to your *Doctrine*. Often consider, that as you are Ministers you are in a peculiar Manner intrusted with
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2 Tim. ii.
 2. that heavenly Doctrine, which the BLESSED Jesus Publish'd, and by which we are to be sav'd. This very *Doctrine* has been now *committed to you*, by us who Ordain'd you; and you have entred into Bonds to keep it. I beseech you Brethren, remember your Bonds. *Keep that which is committed to your Trust.* Keep it safe, that it may not be lost. And keep it pure, *avoiding profane and vain Babblings, and Oppositions of Science falsly so called; which some professing, have erred concerning the Faith.* Hold fast the *Form of sound Words*, which the sacred Scriptures deliver; and *teach no other Doctrine*, than that of the Apostles. By altering it, you would be false to your Ingagements: And by attempting to add to it, you would but take from it. Had you not appear'd to us *apt to teach*, that is, capable of Teaching, and dispos'd to teach it, we durst not have pretended to Ordain you; for our so doing had been against the Apostles Canon, which to us is a great deal more, than to go against the Canons or Determinations of the Gravest or Wisest Councils that ever sate.

1 Tim. vi.
 20, 21.

2 Tim. i.
 13.

1 Tim. i.
 3.

1 Tim. iii.
 2.

sate. Let me therefore *put you in Re-* 2 Tim. i. 6.
membrance, to stir up the Gift of GOD
which is in you. Let no Application
 be wanting on: your Part. *In your Doc-* Tit. ii. 7, 8.
trine shew Uncorruptness, Gravity, Sin-
cerity, found Speech that cannot be con-
demned; that he that is of the contra-
ry Part, may be asham'd, having no evil
Thing to say of you. And let your Do-
 ctrine be peaceable, and; tend to Love,
 as well as Pure and Sound. *Avoid* 1 Tim. vi. 4, 5.
therefore Questions and Strifes of Words,
whereof someth Envy, Striped Railings,
Evil Surmisings, and perverse Disputings.
 And let your Doctrine be Scriptural,
 and then will you be most safe, and
 at the same time you'l have the best
 Ground to hope it will have the des-
 sign'd Effect; and you'l be best able to
 answer for it.

2. TAKE Heed to the Worship of GOD,
 that as far is you are concern'd, it
 manag'd regularly. When you come to
 be Pastors, take Care that no Part of
 Divine Worship, be either omitted or
 indecently perform'd.

LET not the publick Reading of the
 Scriptures in considerable Portions at

Acts xv.
21.

once, be wav'd. If *Moses in old Time was read in the Synagogues every Sabbath-Day*, I think there is to the full as much Reason, that CHRIST and his Apostles, and the Writings of the *New Testament*, as well as the *Old*, should be now read in each worshipping Assembly, every *Lord's-Day*.

IN publickly offering up the Requests of those among whom you spend your Pains, and in paying their Acknowledgements to the Great GOD, be always grave, and serious, and pertinent. Let your publick Prayers and Praises be the fruit of your private Meditation, suitable to particular Exigencies, Circumstances, and Occasions, agreeable to the Rule and Patterns of Scripture, and as far as your Memories will serve you, in Scriptural Language.

LET the Ordinance of Singing, where you may be concern'd, be manag'd gravely; so that it may neither be remarkable for its rude Inharmoniousness on the one hand, nor any thing of a fantaatical Niceness on the other.

IN your Preaching, remember continually whom you personate, upon
whose

whose Errant you are sent, and what it is you are to be aiming at; and that and that will help you in your Preparation to appear in Publick, and in your Delivery and Deportment too. Aim no farther at pleasing Men in your Preaching, than is necessary to their Edification. Shun Curiosity, and yet avoid Slovenliness. Mix no Tares with good Seed of the Word. *I charge you before the LORD,* 2 Tim. ii. 14, 15. and St. Paul gives me a Warrant for it, *That you strive not about Words, to no Profit, but to the subverting of your Hearers. Study to shew yourselves approved unto GOD. Workmen that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth.*

ENDEAVOUR to instruct wisely. Lay a good Foundation, by possessing the People whom you minister to, with a just Sense of general Truths, such as the Being and Providence of GOD, the Divinity of the Scriptures, and the Truth of the Christian Religion, by which the particular Truths that we frequently hear of, are to be supported. Insist most upon those Things that are most important. Instruct your Hearers carefully

ly in the Nature of the Christian Covenant entred into by Baptism, and to be renew'd at the LORD's-Table. Do what you can to convince them how shameful a Thing it is for them to pretend to pass for Professors, twenty, or thirty, or forty Years or more, (as is but too common) without ever renewing the Baptismal Covenant. Often and freely shew them, the wretched Degeneracy of humane Nature, the Necessity of a REDEEMER, the Greatness of his Love, and the Riches of his Grace, the Nature and Necessity of Regeneration, the Way of Gospel Forgiveness, and Justification, the sanctifying Methods of the SPIRIT, the Nature and Necessity of Repentance and Faith, Hope and Love, and other Christian Graces; the Evil of Sin, and the Beauty of Holiness, and the whole Compass of Moral Duty, with both its Natural and Evangelical Grounds; and the Reality and Certainty of future Rewards and Punishments, as the Scripture has represented them. Let such as these be the Subjects which you most frequently insist on: And in your Discourses on
them,

them, don't overshoot your Hearers, but suit their Capacities. Endeavour first to inform their Judgments, and then afterwards to move their Affections. Strive to impress your own Hearts first, and then you'll be the more likely to do Good to others. And to carry you with Warmth through this Part of your Service, Consider that you are to be *a Savour of Death unto Death, or a Savour of Life unto Life* to 2 Cor. ii. 16. them that hear you.

To Preaching add Catechizing, especially of those of the younger Sort. This will be a good way to make Sermons more profitable to them by Degrees.

Do what you can to prevail with People to bring their Children to publick Baptism. This is the common Way in all the Reformed Churches, but, among us. And I am afraid the Want of it has had ill Effects.

AND when you are call'd to administer the other Sacrament of the LORD'S-Supper, do what in you lies that it may be celebrated with due Devotion: and so manag'd, as that a superlative Love to our LORD JESUS CHRIST,

CHRIST, and an hearty undissembled Affection to all his Real Followers, (who are all Brethren and Fellow-Members). which are the two great Ends of that sacred Institution, may be thereby promoted.

THUS managing your Worship, you may hope to be Instrumental in training up many for Heaven, and the Blessedness of the Upper World. But,

5. NEITHER is *Discipline*, a Thing to be neglected by you; for there is most certainly great Need of it, in its Place. But as to that, I must advise you rather to be Conscientious Practicers of Duty, than busy Affecters of Power. The former may perhaps, produce Regard; but the latter is more likely to procure Contempt, in such an Age as ours.

THO' you must not in any Case take upon you to judge of the Hearts of others, yet I think you may as justly claim a Right to judge with Reference to your own Actions as Ministers, as the People you minister to, may a Right to judge of their Actions in their more private Stations: Nor can it reasonably
be

be disallow'd you to make a Difference between those in whom there is an Appearance of Regularity and Seriousness, and the Profane or Scandalous. Admit not all that offer indiscriminately to either Sacrament. And yet he not so assuming, as to pretend to frame Terms of Communion yourselves, for o hase, as upon any Inducement to encourage that Inclination in others. Baptize not the Children of such as are under Scandals, until they profess their Repentance. Admit none to the LORD'S-Table that are either grossly ignorant, profane, or immoral. And if any such are in Communion, And not reclaimed after Admonition, cast them out, and own them not for Brethren, till their Repentance.

AND when you are discoursing with Persons about their coming to the Lord's-Table, among other Things let me recommend it to you to enquire, Whether they are certain they have been baptiz'd? and what Proof they can give of it? And if they have Families, Whether they keep up the Worship of GOD in them? Without which I can-

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not

not see what Religion there can be among them. I therefore mention such Things, as these, because I have in some Cases known the Want of such Inquiries has had ill Consequences.

THO' you should never pretend to Rebuke without Cause, or beyond real Desert, nor to act in such Cases upon bare Suspicions, yet you ought not to be sparing in Reproof, when there is real Occasion. Spare the Persons of the Guilty indeed as much as may be, but not their Vices. In any Matters of Censure, *preferr not one before another*, act without Prejudice; and *do nothing by Partiality*, according to the Apostle's solemn Charge on that behalf. In any Matters of Difference, always hear both Sides. Reprove Sinners of all Sorts, shewing them freely the Horridness of their Sins, and the Poyson either of their Errors or their Vices: And yet make a Difference according to Circumstances, remembering that some are to be *rebuked sharply*, while as to others, more Tenderness will be but requisite and proper.

AND that you may the better be able to go through with all this Work,
to

1 Tim. v.
22.

Tit. i. 13.

to which you are to attend, let me recommend. it to you, That you endeavour to be continually improving and increasing in Knowledge, Wisdom, and Experience, as Scholars, Christians, and Ministers. Be diligent in your Studies, and avoid Sloth, or any Thing that tends to it, or borders on it. Be not unmindful of St. *Paul's* Charge to *Timothy*, ^{1 Tim. iv.} when he says, ἐν τούτοις ἴσθι: *Give thyself wholly to these Things.* Be much in Reading and Studying the Holy Scriptures: And neglect not valuable humane Authors. Endeavour also to understand Mankind. Be much in Prayer and Meditation. And in the whole Work of your Office, keep the End of it in View, which is the Advancement of the Kingdom of CHRIST, and the promoting the Glory of GOD, in the Conversion, Edification, and Salvation of the Souls of Men: And humbly depend in all, on the LORD JESUS CHRIST, for Assistance and a Blessing.

III. TAKE diligent Care of the Flock of GOD. Something more than all that which has been mention'd hitherto,

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seems

1 Pet. v.
2.

Acts 20.
28.

seems intended by such Charges as that of St. *Peter* to all in the Ministerial Office, *Feed the Flock of GOD which is among you, or as much as in you lies, taking the Oversight thereof, not by Constraint, but Willingly; not for filthy Lucre, but of a ready Mind:* And that also of St. *Paul*, to the Elders of *Ephesus*, *Take Heed to all the Flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you the Overseers, to feed the Church of GOD, which He hath purchased with his own Blood.** Be careful therefore to give amongst whom you labour, that you may the better know how to suit yourselves to them. Go to them in order to it, or encourage them to come to you, as may be most convenient. Let none have any Reason to complain they are neglected. Despise none because of their Meanness. Favour none in an Irregularity, out of any worldly Interest. Look to them and their Behaviour in their own Families, as well as in the House of God.

Bear

* Allow me to refer you to my Sermon on that Text at the Ordination of Mr. *Munckley*.

Bear with their Weaknesses, so you can but do Good to their Souls. Instruct the Ignorant, encourage the Weak, and comfort the afflicted. Let all see that you *watch for their Souls, as they that must give Account* *. Watch against their being any Way seduc'd, betray'd, or corrupted. Be peculiarly tender to such of them as are troubled in Mind. Don't deny them a Freedom of Access to you, tho' it may at some Times have Inconvenience attending it. Study their Case particularly, and let them be able to find and perceive that you sympathize with them, and they'll be the more ready to listen to you. The comforting afflicted Consciences is a Sort of peculiar Gift †, for which you ought to labour

Heb. xiii.
17.

* *Chrysostom* de sacerdot. Lib. VI. declares that those Words struck a great Terror into his Heart. And says our famous Mr. *Robert Bolton*, methinks those Words should make all GOD's Ministers resolve to do nothing else almost, but read, meditate, preach and pray.

† That great Divine Mr. *Richard Greenham*, who dy'd of the Plague in this City in 1592, is said to have been wonderful skilful in comforting wounded Consciences. *Fuller's Church Hist.* Book IX.

labour and pray; because it will much promote your Usefulness. Be free to visit the Sick, and such as are in Distress and Trouble. A Word dropp'd at such a Time, may perhaps stick, and make a deeper Impression than at another Season. And don't make Visits of that kind, chargeable, by discovering an Expectation of any Thing in Return, purely upon the Account of that Office. I and afraid the taking of Money upon Visiting of the Sick, has discourag'd several from sending for Ministers in that Case, and hinder'd others from attending to what has been offer'd, through an Apprehension that the getting somewhat for their Pains, was the Thing mainly intended. I am glad that this Method is not so much used among us, as with some others, both at Home and Abroad: But must own, I think it would be no Disservice to Religion, if
it

p. 219. And Mr. *Robert Bolton* is by the Writer of his Life commended on the same Account. He has a Treatise extant, intitl'd *Instructions for a right Comforting afflicted Consciences; with Antidotes against some special Temptations*, that deserves. to be perus'd, even in as polite an Age as this.

it were univversally laid aside. In short, you must give me leave to urge it upon you as the Matter of your Duty, to behave yourselves towards the Flock of GOD, upon all Occasions, as Persons who are disinterestedly devoted to the Service of their Souls.

IV. BE prudent in your Conduct; which is a Piece of Advice that I am well assur'd is highly needful. If ever it became Ministers of the Gospel to be *wise as Serpents*, now is the Time: Not in order to the serving any Ends of their own, (for if they are upright and faithful, I see not how they can have any such) but in order to the securing and promoting the great Ends of their Office. Let me then recommend Prudence to you, in your Carriage towards those whom, you minister to, and such as are of the same Principles, towards those of the Establish'd Church, towards your Brethren in the Ministry, in your private Behaviour; and in your Carriage to all in general.

BE prudent in your Carriage towards those among# whom you spend your Pains, lake all fitting and proper

per Measures to gain a settled Interest in their Affections. Make. than sensible that you love them, and they'll the more easily bear with Freedom from you, and be the more ready to respect you, in the Discharge of your Office, in every Part of it. Don't differ with them at any Time about Trifles, especially not about Matters of Money; that you may convince them you seek not theirs, but them. And if any Difference should unhappily arise, or any Heat be struck don't bring it into the Pulpit. And take as little upon you in all Cases, as can consist with the faithful Discharge of your Duty.

BE Prudent in your Carriage towards those of the Establish'd; Church. Don't make the Difference between them and us wider than it is in Reality. Carry it so to them upon all Occasions, as that they may see you love, and respect them, and value what is good and excellent in and among them, tho' you think it your Duty to insist upon a farther Reformation, than that Constitution carries in it, which they so much applaud. Be careful not to discover a censorious
or

or uncharitable Spirit towards them, how much soever you may, be slighted by them. Let them see that you act upon Conscience, and not Humour or Fancy; and go no farther from them than is necessary to the coming nearer to the Scripture, and then, by attempting to run you down, they will but expose themselves.

BE prudent in your Carriage towards your Brethren in the Ministry. Be ready to speak well of them for their valuable Abilities and Endowments; rather cover than magnify their Defects; and be tender of their Reputation upon all Occasions. Instead of envying and undermining them, of saying or doing any Thing to lessen them, endeavour what you can to promote their Usefulness. This will be the best Way to conciliate their Love and Respect, and secure a Return of like good Offices from them, and so to promote Harmony, and Union, and a Brotherly Correspondence, as well as to secure and promote the Credit of Religion among us, and of your Office, for which you ought to be concern'd.

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BE

BE Prudent in your private Behaviour, and in the Management of your own Affairs. If those among whom you labour, should once get a mean or indifferent Opinion of you, 'twill be hard to secure your Usefulness. Let me advise those of you that are yet single, to be very cautious in your Carriage while you continue so, and in your Marriage, when you come to change your Condition. This is a Thing of great Consequence to all, but especially to Ministers. If you get a Blot there, 'twill be hard to wipe it off again. And may you that have a Family, and the rest of you when you come to have one, remember, according to St. *Paul's* Order, and your own Promise, to *rule your House well*. This is a Thing that is requisite in Prudence as well as Duty; and you will find by Experience much depends upon it.

I Tim.
iii. 4.

AND finally, Be Prudent in your Carriage towards all, and in the whole of your Conduct. You are under special Obligations (my Brethren) to walk circumspectly. Be not infallible how many watch for the Failings of Ministers, rejoyce to find them Tripping, and make the
the

the worst of their Indiscretions; and take Care to give them no Advantage. Be very cautious in the choice of Intimates and Familiars. Be not desirous of being intrusted with Secrets. Don't talk too freely in mix'd Company. Be not too positive in your Assertions. Pry not into the Private affairs of other People that don't concern you. Be sparing in your Censures; especially where Persons in eminent Stations are concern'd. Don't stand upon little Niceties and Punctilio's, or needlessly irritate and Persons you converse with: And discover a general Goodwill to all that you have to do with. This is my Opinion, will be a good Way to secure your own Peace, and Credit, and Usefulness at once.

V. BE careful of your Temper, upon which also there is much depending. Study Meekness. Be assur'd the Wrath of Man will never work the Righteousness of GOD.* You must be *gentle unto all Men,* 2 Tim. ii.
L 2 *and* 24, 25.

* Bp. Burnet in his *Pastoral Care*, Chap. iii. citing this Text, has this remark upon it. *This, saith he, is the Passage that was chiefly urg'd by our Reformers against the*

Tit. i. 7.

and patient, and in Meekness instruct those that oppose themselves. Be not soon angry, or easily provok'd. Give not way to Jealousies and Suspicions; as you would not make yourselves uneasy, and those also that are about you. Reckon upon Difficulties, and prepare to encounter them. Be not surprized if tho' you take Pains to be diligent and faithful, you should yet be censur'd and reproach'd, and that sometimes by your Friends, and even those whom you have study'd to oblige and serve. If you should be of such a Temper as not to be able to bear Things of this Kind, without being ruffled, it might go hard with you in many Cases. Be ready, with St. Paul, to become all things to all Men: And yet take heed of a mean and servile Spirit. Be always couragious where

1 Cor. ix.
22.

the Persecution that the Roman Clergy, did everywhere set on against them. The Extent of it ought to be well consider'd; that so it may not be said, that we are only against Persecution, when it lies on ourselves: For if it is a good Defence to some, 'tis as good to others; unless we own that we do not govern ourselves by that Rule of doing to others, that which we would have others do to us. Which is a Consideration that ought to affect those that are out of the Established Church, as well as such as are in it.

where Conscience leads, and plain Duty is concern'd: But in other Cases be plicable and yielding; and rather strive who shall stoop first, then who shall be the stiffest, and stand it out the longest. And depend upon it, when the *Day* of Account shall come, this will be found most to your Honour. And then,

VI. AND *Lastly*, Be very regular in your Lives. My Dear Brethrn, I beseech you remember, you are to be *Ex-*^{1 Tim. iv.}
amples of the Believers, in Word, in Con-^{12.}
versation, in Spirit, in Faith, in Purity. You
 are to *follow after Righteousness, Godliness,*^{1 Tim. ivi.}
Faith, Love, Patience, and Meekness. Let^{11.}
 your Carriage answer your own Instru-
 ctions, and your lives be a faithful Copy
 of your Preaching. You are in all
 Things to *shew yourselves Patterns of good*^{Tit. ii. 7.}
Works. Your Words are like to have but
 little Weight against the Authority of
 your ACTIONS. Be *blameless*, and free^{1 Tim. iii.}
 from Scandal. With what Face can you^{2.}
 or I pretend to reprove others, we our-
 selves are guilty of? And what will our
 Censures or Remonstrances signify as to
 them,

them, if they know that we are tardy? We shall in any such Case, be shrewdly tempted to spare them, that they may spare us. And this is what ought to well consider'd, over and above the Sport which the Failings of Ministers give, to such as despise both them and their Office, the Number of whom seems to be growing every Day.

Tit. i. 8. BE *Temperate*. Let your Carriage shew that you are able to govern the Desires of the Flesh, by your indulging to no Sort of Pleasures, beyond the Bounds of Sobriety and Honesty. Nay, endeavour so to manage yourselves, as that you may be able to abstain even from lawful Things, and to submit to such Things as are not in themselves necessary, whenever the Interest of the Gospel of CHRIST, and the Edification of the Souls of Men requires it.

1 Tim. iii. 2. AVOID every Thing that is vicious: And shun some Vices with a peculiar Care. If you are *greedy of filthy Lucre*, you will have venal Souls, and are never likely to be very useful as Ministers. That one Thing, if there were no more to be objected against you, will be an
Unspeakable

unspeakable Hindrance to you. 'Tis the same as to being *given to Wine*, which is often warn'd against, in the Epistles to *Timothy* and *Titus*. Take heed of Pride and Levity. Be not *Self-willed*. If you are full of yourselves, you will be Strangers to that easy Freedom, and Humility, that becomes those that are Charg'd with the Care of the Flock of GOD. Take useful Hints from any one, and despise 'em not tho' they may be dropp'd by such as don't bear you all the Respect that you may think you may reasonably desire and look for. In a Word, Take Care to be *Ensamples to the Flock*, and readily, and chearfully go before them in all proper Instances and Expressions, of Piety towards God, and Charity towards Men.

Tit. i. 7.

1 Pet. v. 3.

I HAVE not taken the Liberty, my Brethren, under these several Heads, to give such Advice to you, as I would not take, but have ey'd myself all the way as well as you. And I dare upon the Whole, be bold to say, That if you will but carefully follow these few Directions and Advices, you may depend upon having lasting Satisfaction in

in reflecting on the Work of this Day; you may help considerably to support the Credit of the Ministry, which is so much expos'd by some, and run down by others; you may expect a considerable Blessing from Heaven to attend your Labours; you'll be able to give up a good Account, at the Great Day; and may comfortably hope that, as St. Paul expresses it, you will, be able both to save yourselves, and them that hear you; Nay, you shall have an inhanc'd Reward; and being among *the Wise* that turn many to Righteousness, shall at last shine as the Brightness of the Firmament, and as the Stars for ever and ever.

1 Tim. iv.
16.

Dan. xii.
3.

FINIS.



☞ *In the PRESS.*

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