

A
Practical Commentary,
OR
AN EXPOSITION
WITH
Observations, Reasons, and Uses
UPON
The First Epistle General of
JOHN

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by

John Cotton

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A
Practical Commentary,
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AN EXPOSITION
WITH
Observations, Reasons, and Uses
UPON
The First Epistle General of
JOHN
By that pious and worthy Divine
Mr. *JOHN COTTON*,
Pastor of *Boston* in *New-England*.
LONDON,
Printed by *R.I.* and *E.C.* for *Thomas Parkhurst*, and are to be
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Great Conduit, at the lower end of *Cheapside*,
M. DC. LVI

To the Reader.

CHRISTIAN READER,

THESE following Notes upon the
First Epistle of St. *John*, falling
by providence into my hands, I
was unwilling to detain them by
me, and make only a private ad-
vantage of, but delivered them into the hands of
my Friend, Mr. *Thomas Parkhurst*, a Bookseller
in *London*, that if by the judgement of Reverend
Divines (to whom he intended to communicate
the same) they might be found useful for the
Public, they might see the light: And having

communicated those accordingly to such men whom the whole Nation may justly honor for piety and ability, and finding their approbation, as to their worth, their usefulness, and consequently their publishing, I have thought good to prefix an Epistle; in which mistake not, I neither intend a commendation of the Author or

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the Work; if I should undertake it as to the Author, I might be answered as *Antalcidas* did in the like case, to one, who having prepared a Book, he asked of him the Argument of it, who answered, it was *Herculis Encomium*; to whom *Antalcidas*, *Quis illum vituperat? Supervacaneum existimans in eo laudando sumere operum quem uno ore prædicarent omnes*: And the like might justly be reported unto me, should I go about to magnify the Author of this following Exposition. What needs this? Who ever dispraised, or durst undervalue him? He was a burning and shining light, famously eminent abroad and at home; as an instrument of great glory to his God, great good to many souls; and (which is an honor that all Preachers reach not) with the expiration of his Ministerial breath, he finished not his Ministerial work; for though he be dead, yet he speaketh, as in this, so in divers other excellent Treatises.

And as not of the Author, so neither to the Work itself; Shall I say ought this way? I judge it sufficient to render it desirable, to tell you it was the Work of that learned man; yet more, of that gracious man, and faithful Servant of Christ, Mr. *John Cotton*, as is assured me by a reverend and good Neighbour, Mr. *Tho. Oresby* Minister of *Hackwell* in *Essex*, who well knew him, and heard him preach much of it: Such was

the Author, and it commends the Work to attest it his; and yet such is the Work itself,

that though the Author were unknown, it could not however but meet with reverent and ready entertainment for its own sake. Had his own hand put it forth, doubtless it had been more polished than now it is, more enlarged and refined: But Christians know how to be charitable, & to deal with the Works of God's servants, brought into the world after themselves were taken out of the world, as we do by little Orphans whose Father is dead, if we see them any ways misused, or subjected to any wants, we reproach them not, but pity them, because their carers for, are taken from them: And yet for the Work as it is, let me bold to say, It may stand amongst none of the meanest helps to saving knowledge.

It's true, we live in a curious and carping age, wherein much knowledge, but (shame and grief to speak it) little obedience. Oh *England!* great are thy helps, thy means high, as to grace, and the things of thy peace, as to the *knowledge of God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, whom to know is eternal life;* but who is he (except he hath bowels of brass, and an heart of iron) that mourns not at thy requital? Are not unthankfulness, disobedience, contempt, wantonness, together with other sins, (whose name put them together is *legion*, for they are many) and at the best, a brain and notional knowledge; the fruits, that if God come to search thee with candles, he shall find thee only laden with.

Take heed yet a little while, and you will hear a voice, *Give an account of your stewardship;* all talents and prizes of this nature must be one day

accounted for, with which no people stored like thy self. What week almost passeth thee, wherein God affords thee not some additional supply or other to thy old store? Lo here another price put into thy hand to get wisdom, in the search and reading whereof, thou shalt not be distracted with vain, unnecessary, and unedifying controversies; but they are plain, sound, and saving truths that here present themselves, and those stomachs that stand affected to such meat, are invited.

But I have done, it being all my Work to attest whose Work this was; and being credibly informed that it will come forth recommended to thee by a more skilful and artificial hand, abler to judge, and judging to set forth the worth both of Work and Workman; and therefore commending thee to him, and him with thyself to God's blessing, I rest.

*From my Study in
Muchwakering
in Essex, October
15, 1655*

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A servant to both, in Christ,

and to the Church of Christ,

Chr. Scott.

IT is sufficiently evident by the preceding Epistle, and by many other arguments, that the ensuing Sermons were preached by Mr John Cotton, whose name is so deservedly precious among the Saints of God, that it cannot but encourage them to read them, and hath invited me to allow them to be printed for the public good.

Edmund Calamy

Books printed for, and sold by *Thomas Parkhurst*.

AN Exposition upon the First Chapter of the second Epistle to the *Corinthians*, by that pious and learned Divine, *Rich. Sibbes*, D.D. Published by Mr *Thos Manton*.

THE Journal or Diary of a Thankful Christian, wherein is contained Directions for keeping and using a Journal of God's dispensations, according to the rules of Practice; by *John Beadle*, Minister of the Word in *Essex*.

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A

COMMENTARY

UPON

The First Epistle general

OF

JOHN.

I John 1:1, 2, 3, 4

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of Life. &c.

THE Children of God, as in the whole course of their lives they are exercised with many conflicts of Conscience, so with this Doubt especially, at their beginning to enter into a course of Christianity, Whether they indeed do be-

long to the election of Grace, and are indeed amongst the number of those that belong unto God.

And, because Faith is very weak then in them for the most part, it cometh to pass, that their doubtings are strong, they doubt much of this their Estate: And from doubtings, ariseth trouble of mind, and terror of conscience. When the Sun is in its full strength, and shineth brightly, there are no Clouds, or Vapours, or Mists arise, but only when it is low, at rising or setting: so it is with Faith and Doubting for the removal of which, and for the settling of our souls, in the assurance of God's love, and for the pacifying of our consciences with the Peace of God, and filling our hearts with joy in the Holy Ghost, *St John*, moved by the Holy Ghost, penned this Epistle as Chapter 1 verse 4.

And because our joy cannot be full, unless we enjoy union with him, and communion with his Children; Therefore that end he also openeth, verse 3. And these are both begun and preserved by, First, Receiving of the truth of Doctrine, and Secondly, Walking in holiness of life;

And Contrariwise they are hindered and interrupted, First, By Error in Doctrine;

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Secondly,

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Secondly, Wickedness and uncleanness of life; Therefore he everywhere interserteth instructions, both for, First, Inlightening our minds with truth of Doctrine; Secondly, directing our steps with precepts of holiness of life.

And from both he teaches us to gather marks to ourselves of our Estate with God, so that our joy may be full.

In the text he instructeth us in the knowledge of the Truth of this point of Doctrine, what we are to think and believe, concerning the Doctrine of the Apostles, whether preached or written. Concerning which Doctrine, two things are here delivered.

First, The Subject of it, Christ Jesus; First, In himself, and that First, As God, from the beginning eternal, Secondly, As man, as being heard, seen, and sensible. Secondly, As in himself to us, the word of life, verse 1.

Secondly, The end and scope of it; First, Subordinate, Fellowship with the Apostles, and Saints, and with God, verse 3. Secondly, Supreme, our fullness of joy, verse 4.

That which was from the beginning.] Here are two questions,

First, Why rather is it said here, that was from the beginning, than he which was from the beginning?

Secondly, What is it here to be from the beginning?

First, It is here said, that which was from the beginning, to signify and set forth unto us a double nature in one and the same word of life, in one and the same person of Christ; If he had said, he who was from the beginning, whom we have seen, &c. It might have been thought that the same word of life was in one and the same nature, both from the beginning, and seen, and heard, or else that one person was from the beginning, another person seen, and heard, but when he saith that word of life, which was from the beginning, and that which we have heard and seen, &c. he plainly insinuateth, that there is (as they say) *alind et alind* in the word of life.

There was something of the word of life, which was from the beginning, as namely his Godhead; And again, something in the same word of life that was heard, and seen &c. as his Manhood, and withall, that this was not another person, but another thing, another nature in the same person. This serves to confute those two Ancient Heresies of *Eutiches* and *Nestorius*, he confounding the natures this dividing the persons of Christ. *Eutiches* confuted, because something there is of the word of life that was from the beginning, something of the same word of life that was heard, and seen &c. that which was from the beginning, was not the same thing which was heard, and seen &c. and that which was heard, and seen &c. was not the same thing which was from the beginning.

Nestorius is confuted, because both that which was of the word from the beginning, and that of the world which was seen, and heard, were both of the same word of life, both the natures of one and the same person.

Secondly, Again, if something there be of the same word Eternal, and again something of the same word Sensible, then there is no confusion of properties in the person of Christ. The Apostles preach such a Christ, as of whom something is from the beginning, something again heard, and seen, that of the word which was from the beginning, that of the word was not sensible, and that of the word which was sensible, was not that of the word which was Eternal.

And therefore such as teach the flesh of Christ to be everywhere (as the *Germans* do) or everywhere in the Sacraments (as the *Papists* do) they do not observe the distinction here made by the Apostle.

This phrase of speech (from the beginning) is ambiguous, and must be interpreted according to the nature of the thing to which it is attributed.

First, Sometimes it signifieth from the beginning of the story of Christ, *Luke* 1:2.

Secondly, The time of the delivery of the Law, 1 *John* 2:7.

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Thirdly, Institution of a thing (*Matthew* 19:8).

Fourthly, of the fall (*John* 8:44).

Fifthly, of the creation (*Joel* 2:2).

But none of these is mean here: not the First, nor Second; for before *Abraham* was, he was *John* 8:58. not the Third, Fourth, or Fifth; for he himself created all things *John* 1:3.

There is another from the beginning, which is higher than all these, namely from the beginning of eternity, which, wanting beginning, implieth he was before all beginnings *Proverbs* 8:23.

Doctrine. *And because there cannot be two Eternals, but one Eternal, and that is God; therefore Jesus Christ also is Eternal, God with the Father and Holy Ghost.*

This is not to be omitted, because it is plain, but to be preached, because it is certain; especially since some of late have been so far bewitched by Satan, as to seal the contrary with their blood.

1. This is proved: First, by the Names and Titles given to him. 1. *Very God*, 1 *John* 5:20; *Romans* 9:5. 2. *Jehovah*, *Exodus* 3:2,4,6. 3. *Saviour*, *Matthew* 1:21. which is none but God, *Isaiah* 43:11, *Hosea* 13:4. And who was able to save us from sin by satisfying God's wrath, but God?

Secondly, By the Essential Properties of the God-head agreeing to him.

1. Knowing the heart and reins, *Revelation* 21:23. yea all things, *John* 21:17. 2. Omnipotency, *John* 5:19. 3. Omnipresence, *Matthew* 18:20, *John* 3:13. 4. Eternity, *John* 8:58 & 17:5. 5. And here equality with his Father, without Sacrilege, *Philippians* 2:6.

Thirdly, By his works of, First, Power 1. Creation, *Hebrews* 1:2, *Colossians* 2:16, and that for his glory. 2. Providence, *Hebrews* 1:3. 3. Miracles, *John* 14:11.

Secondly, Grace, 1. Election, *John* 15:16. 2. Redemption, *Galatians* 3:13.

Thirdly, Giving of the Spirit, *John* 4:10, *John* 7:39.

Fourthly, Giving of eternal life, *John* 10:28. *Romans* 6. *ult.*

Fourthly, By the Worship ascribed to him, 1. Prayer *Acts* 7 *ult.*

2 Faith in him, for else how could we call on him? *Romans* 10:14. *John* 1:12. *Jeremiah* 17:5. Taketh no place in him, but contrary, *Psalms* 2:12.

Use 1. To confute all those blasphemous heresies by which Satan hath laboured to overthrow the truth of the Godhead of Christ; as those of the

Cerinthians, Ebonites, Arians, who taught him only to be pure man, to have no being before the *Virgin Mary*, or at most before the Creation.

Secondly, To terrify all such as are Enemies of his Kingdom, *Psalm 2:12; Luke 19:14,27*).

Thirdly, To Comfort all such as are Christ's, *John 10:28; Psalm 23:1; Isaiah 43:1,2*. because they were elected in Christ, *Ephesians 1:4*, and our life is hid with him, *Colossians 3:3*. Therefore it is both sure and unchangeable, for he is so.

Fourthly, To exhort us to worship him, *Matthew 10:10*, as an Eternal God, God from the beginning; *Moses* reproved the *Israelites* for worshipping new God's, *Deuteronomy 32:17*. God's whom their Fathers did not know, but him they knew and worshipped; *Moses* himself, *Deuteronomy 33:16, Jacob Hosea 12:4; Genesis 48:*

15,16, *Abraham, Genesis 22:11,12*.

Now his Worship consisteth in the duties of Faith and Repentance, for those are the parts of God's Worship which he has revealed to us, and requires from us.

1. In the duties of Faith, *John 14:1*, and here

First, Doth thou receive anything from God? receive it in the sight of thine own unworthiness in thyself, for so thou worships him, through whom God doth accept thee, and poureth his blessings upon thee, *Ephesians 1:3*, for none but God could receive them for us from all eternity.

Secondly, Dost thou give anything to God? offer up any obedience? do

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it in the sight of thine own weakness and imperfection, and so thou worships him, through whom our lame sacrifices are acceptable *Colossians 3:17*, for none but God could do this for us.

Thirdly, Dost thou want anything? Seek unto God in the name of Jesus Christ, and believe that thou shalt receive it, and so thou dost honour him, *John 16:23, 24*, for none but God can procure this for us.

Fourthly, Doth Satan at any time tempt thee to doubt of thy reconciliation with God? believe that Jesus Christ is God, and therefore hath made full satisfaction and propitiation for thy sins, 1 *John 2:1, 2*, for God can fully do this for us.

Fifthly, Dost thou doubt the truth of any of the promises of God, through unbelief? Believe that they are yea and amen in him, and so thou worship him, 2 *Corinthians 1:20*, for God can call things that are not, as though they were.

Secondly, In Duties of Repentance as

First, Dost thou at any time (though thou oughtest continually) remember thine old sins? O! remember withal, him whom thou crucifiest by them was the Eternal God, the Lord of glory, and that will work a godly sorrow, *Zechariah* 12:10, to see him so to abse himself for my sake.

Secondly, Doth Satan tempt thee at any time to commit any sin? O! remember thereby that thou shouldst trample under foot the blood of the Son of God, who hath saved thee from thy sins *Hebrews* 10:29.

1. *John* 1:1, That which we have heard, &c.

As something of the word of life, was eternal from the beginning, so something was sensible, which was 1. Heard, 2. Seen and looked upon, 3. Handled.

First, For the meaning of this, what is that of the word which first he saith we have heard?

They heard of him not a word of rumour, but 1. His Doctrine *John* 17:68), 2. The Testimony which his Father gave of him, *Matthew* 17:5,6; 2 *Peter* 1:17).

Secondly, What is that of the word which he saith, we have seen?

1. His Flesh; *John* 1:14, 2. His Works, especially his Miracles, *John* 2:11, 3. His Estate of, First, Humiliation.

1. His poor and despicable life, *Matthew* 8:20.

2. His Agony, *Matthew* 26:37.

3. His Accusation and Arraignment, *Matthew* 26:55–57; *John* 20:12.

4. His Death, *John* 19:26.

5. His Burial, *Mark* 15 ult; *John* 19 ult.

Secondly, We have seen the Estate of his Exaltation.

1. A glimpse of it, or preamble to it, *Matthew* 17:2,3; 2 *Peter* 1:16.

2. His Resurrection, *John* 20:8,20.

3. His Ascension, *Acts* 1:9,10.

4. His Sitting at the right hand of God, *Acts* 7:55.

Divers of these things seen *St. John* saw in a more familiar manner, than the most of his Apostles; Christ taking only with him *Peter*, and *James*, and *John* to behold.

1. His raising to life *Jairus'* daughter, *Mark* 5:37.

2. His Glory in the Mount, *Matthew* 17:1.

3. His Agony in the Garden, *Matthew* 26:37.

Thirdly, What is that of the Word which he saith we have handled, and that with our hands? Which addeth an Emphasis of Certainty, as before.

1. Before his Resurrection as familiarly conversing with him, as when he caught *Peter* by the hand, *Matthew* 14 31. When he washed their feet, *John* 13:5. When *John* leaned on his breast, *John* 13:15.

2. After his Resurrection, *John* 20:25,27, Many observations might here be gathered concerning the certainty of the Apostles' Doctrine, who taught
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nothing but what they had so sensible knowledge and experience of; but these I refer to the third verse.

Doctrine: *He that was from the beginning, truly God, was in the fullness of time, truly man.*

A plain Doctrine, you will say, and well known to the meanest of this Congregation; be it so, yet it is fit to put you in remembrance of it, 2 *Peter* 1:12, 13; *Romans* 15:14,15; 2 *Timothy* 2:8.

But you will say to me, Were it not much better to omit to speak of the person of Christ, and rather to speak of the benefits we receive by him, Justification, Adoption, Sanctification, by the Spirit of God, Faith, Hope, Love, Repentance, &c?

Take heed this be not one kind of spiritual Harlotry and Adultery. If you should see a Virgin affianced to a man, to desire still to hear and speak of the gifts and presents he hath, and will bestow upon her, as Rings, Bracelets, Jewels, &c. and to have no mind at all to hear or speak of his person, would you not say she loved his gifts and his tokens more than himself? So here, if we find our souls affected to Christ (I would to God, yea it were the joy of my heart, if I could draw you to be in love with the Gifts and Graces of Christ, our hearts are dead and dull even at the mention of them, how much more at the mention of his person or nature) yet though that hath tasted of his bountiful Gifts and Graces, be led on further, willingly to hear and speak of this person, (*Canticles* 5:9, When the Daughters of *Jerusalem* had asked of the spouse of Christ, what her beloved was more than anothers beloved? she in 8 verses following, enters into a long and large and lovely description, not of what he had given her, but of his person) especially seeing this part of his person, his human nature is an excellent gift of God to us, and the foundation of all the rest. Yea what Doctrine soever *John* teacheth us in this whole Epistle, tendeth to this end, that our joy may be full, which is a special benefit arising from all, Chapter 1:4. Now the manhood of Christ is proved by two reasons.

First, By the Titles given to him.

Secondly, By the properties of a man agreeing to him.

First, by the Titles given to him, he being called

1. Flesh, *John* 1:14; *Romans* 1:3 *Hebrews* 2:14, and this Flesh is not phantastical, but palpable, *John* 20:27. 2 Man, *Acts* 17:31. 3 Son of man *Luke* 19:10; *Acts* 7:56. 4 Seed of *David*, 2 *Timothy* 2:8; *Abraham*, *Galatians* 3:16. *The Woman*, *Genesis* 3:15. 5 *Emmanuel*, *Isaiah* 7:14; *Matthew* 1:23.

Secondly by the Properties of a Man agreeing to him.

1. Born of a Woman, *Matthew* 1 ult. 2 Hunger, *Matthew* 21:18, and with it thirst, *John* 19:28. 3 Weariness *John* 4:6. 4. Grief and Sorrow, *Isaiah* 53:3,4,10; *Matthew* 26:38, and from it weeping, *John* 11:35, Sighing and groaning, *John* 11:33. 5 Bleeding and sweating, *Luke* 22:44. 6 Dying, *John* 19:30.

Now for the reasons why Christ became man, they are

First, That he might be a middle person, or of a middle nature, between the persons offending, and the persons offended; if he had still remained God, he had been the person offended with us; or if only man, then he had been the party offending; and therefore that he might be of a middle condition, it was needful he should take upon him our nature.

Secondly, That that nature of ours which had offended, might make satisfaction; if he had not taken on him our nature, he could not have satisfied for our sins, *Hebrews* 2:16.

Thirdly, That he might be able to suffer death for us, *Hebrews* 2:9, which God could not do.

Fourthly, That he might be better compassionate of our infirmities, *Hebrews* 2:17,18.

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The reasons why Christ became not an Angel, which the Schoolmen render, are divers, principally these;

First, Angels being created all at once, and not propagated one from another by generation, though many of them fell, yet God lost not the whole kind, because many of them stood; but men proceeding all from one stock or root, he being corrupt, all his Off-spring were in the same Estate; so that if God had not provided this means of Christ's incarnation for him, he had lost the Creature wholly. But to this I answer, God might have made many men at once, as well as Angels, and so might have provided another means of saving some of them, as he did the Angels, but that he would set forth the abundant riches of his love to man, in saving them by giving of his own Son.

Again, though all men have perished, they had had but there desert, and God might have had more service, by one Angel redeemed, than by many millions of men.

Secondly, The Angels fell of themselves, but man by their procurement; to this also I say, That the greater the Angels sin was, the greater is their misery, and the greater their misery is, the greater mercy had God showed to have redeemed them.

Thirdly, The Angels conceiving things, not by discourse, but by a present view of all things that any way pertain to those things they turn themselves unto, they do all things with so full resolution, that they cannot alter their mind, or repent; but man conceiving things by discourse, findeth them in the event many times to prove otherwise than he expected, and so may come to alter his mind, and be fit to be brought to repentance.

To this take this answer, That the Angels being of a finite nature, must needs conceive one thing after and upon another, which is discourse, and so subject to error, and so of themselves capable of repentance; was not the Devil deceived in *Job* 1:11.

Fourthly, The Angels being pure, immaterial, intellectual Spirits, dwelling in the presence of God, and in the light of his countenance, could not sin by error or mis-persuasion, but of purposed malice, which is the sin against the Holy Ghost, irremissible; but man fell by error and mis-persuasion.

For answer hereunto, take this, That though the Devils dwelt in the presence of God (which cannot be proved) yet they received no more light than God would communicate to them, and who can say that God communicated so much to them, but that upon wilful not attendance to him, they might be deceived?

Fifthly, As men have a time, after which there is no place left for helping or altering their Estate, so was it meet Angels should have the like; that time to men is bodily death, which because Angels are not subject to it was not unmeet their time should be their first spiritual death, their first sins, hence *Damascen* faith, *hoc est Angelis casus, quod hominibus mors?*

To this I say, that the Angels might have had another time, beyond which there had been no place for repentance, namely, not their first sin, but their wilful rejecting of a Saviour, if he had pleased to have offered them any. Thus you see that all these (and so are the rest) but men's devices and conjectures; the true reason you have, *John* 3:16, God's love to us, which also causeth the Lord to say, as *Jeremiah* 8:4. God neither turneth nor returneth; Angels turn, but return not, men both turn and return, through this unspeakable love of God.

Use 1. To confute the Heresies of *Eutyches* and the *Manichees*, who taught that Christ had no true, but a phantastical body.

Secondly, To stir us up to some duties, 1. of Meditation, 2. of Practice. First, Of Meditation, and that 1. Concerning God, and 1. Concerning his Justice, so severe against sin, as all the mere men in the world could not satisfy for it, and therefore Christ became man, and that is the reason why
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the damned are tormented, because they cannot satisfy.

Secondly, His mercy and love to us; the Father to abase his Son, the Son to abase himself for us.

Third, His Wisdom, to find out such a means to save us, when he passed by the more glorious Angels.

Secondly, Concerning ourselves, who were in so wretched a condition, that the blood of Bulls and Goats could not save us, men and Angels could not help us, only the Son of God must empty himself of Glory and Majesty, and become man for us: if therefore thou hast not part in Christ Jesus, the same sins which plucked Christ from Heaven to Earth, will pluck thee from the Earth to Hell.

Secondly, It may stir us up to some duties of practice. 1. To teach us Humility *Philippians 2:6,7, Psalm 22:6.*

1. By Considering our own Estates, and the misery thereof, which caused him to take upon him the form of a servant.

2. By Considering his example, who took upon himself the form of a servant, to be serviceable to us; so ought we to abase ourselves to be serviceable to our Brethren.

Secondly, To stir us up to labour to be united to his nature, as he was to ours, 2 *Peter 1:4*, he became the son of man, that we might become the sons of God; we cannot answer the intent of his incarnation better.

Thirdly, To move us to a holy thankfulness and joyfulness in the Lord, as

1. *Zachary* blessed the Lord in this behalf, *Luke 1:68.*

2. *Mary* magnified him, *Luke 1:46.*

3. *John* leaped at it for joy in his Mother's belly, *Luke 1:41.*

4. *Abraham* long before, *John 8:56*, he saw it in the promise, and laughed *Genesis 17:16,17*, and hereupon called his Son *Isaac.*

5. The Angels, who have less benefit than we, hereby, *Luke 2:14.*

And sure if *John*, wrote every Doctrine of this Epistle, that our joy might be full, as chapter 1:4, then hence also let us raise up our hearts to this holy af-

fection, this is the fittest exercise for Christians, otherwise usually spent in carnal delights, because men have no part in this joy.

Doctrine: *If the Apostles saw and heard these things of the word of life, then blessed were they, Luke 10:22,23.*

Why? Because of his comely beauty, and goodly proportion? no, *Isaiah 53:2*, and then *Judas* had been an happy man, as happy as the rest of the Apostles. But the reasons are these.

First, By this means they had a greater measure of knowledge, *Luke 10:22,23*, he expounded to them the secrets of the Kingdom of God, *Matthew 13:11,16*; *Mark 4:34*, hence is that of the Samaritan woman, *John 4:34*, hence it was that *John Baptist* was more excellent than others, *Matthew 11:11*, so that as *Solomon's* servants were happy, (*1 Kings 10:8*), so much more Christ's Disciples, who saw and heard a greater than *Solomon*.

Secondly, Their Faith also by this means was more strengthened in the truth of this great promise of the *Messiah*, which had been deferred so long, *John 20:29*. It is many times an exercise to Faith, to be commanded to believe what we see not, but to see what we believe not, is a great strengthening to a weak Faith. Again, a greater measure of knowledge, is a notable means of a greater measure of Faith. And if you object against this, *Hebrews. 11:1*.

I answer that the meaning of the place is this, that though things be not seen, yet Faith maketh them evident; not that whatsoever we believe by Faith is not seen, *Stephen* saw and believed the same, *Acts 7:55*. There is a threefold light, of Sense, of Reason, of Faith, when a thing is obscure to both the former, Faith will make it evident.

Thirdly, Their Peace of Conscience also was more settled and established, *Luke 2:29,30*, for they saw now that Christ was come to accomplish

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that work of reconciliation, which was promised, and to make up our Peace with God; In these regards the glory of the second Temple was greater than that of the former, *Haggai 2:10*, the second Temple wanted five things of the former, *Aaron's Rod*, the Pot of *Manna*, *Urim* and *Thummim*, fire from Heaven, and yet it was greater than the former, because these 3. Knowledge, Faith, and Peace of Conscience, were so much increased, not to a few, as it was before, but generally, even to the simple.

Use 1. Hence we have just occasion to meditate of our blessedness also, above that of the old Church, for all those grounds of the Apostles' blessedness, by seeing and hearing Christ, remain to us, as, 1. Means of Knowledge clearer to us than to the old Church, by the Apostles' preachings and

writings, we even see Christ crucified, *Galatians* 3:10. 2. Means of stronger Faith, 1. Because of greater means of Knowledge, 2. Because that already accomplished to us, which they hoped for. 3. Means of settling greater Peace, seeing Christ is not only come to make our Peace (as he was to *Simeon*), but hath already done it; And therefore a shame it were for us to be more Ignorant, Faithless, perplexed in conscience than they were, and therefore for

1. Knowledge, let us be no longer babes, 1 *Corinthians* 14:20, the times require it, *Hebrews* 5:12; *Isaiah* 11:9. 2. Faith, let us strengthen it,

First, For Promises past, we have now received them.

Secondly, For Promises to come to the resurrection he so long foretold, was at last seen, and then belongs to us, that

1. Blessing, *John* 20:29. 2. Joy 1 *Peter* 1:8. 3. Peace, let that possess and rule us, *Colossians* 3:15, in life and death, as it did *Simeon*.

Use 2. To Stir us up to pity the Estates of such poor people, as sit still in darkness and in the shadow of death, having no means of Knowledge, of Faith, of Peace, *John* 7:49.

Use 3. How great then is that blessedness prepared for us in Heaven? where shall see Christ as he is, and then

1. Our Knowledge shall be perfect, 1 *Corinthians* 13:12. 2. Our Faith shall be joined with Fruition, yea, we shall see what we believe, 1 *Corinthians* 12:12. 3. Our Peace shall be passing understanding, *Philippians* 4:7, unspeakable and glorious, 1 *Peter* 1:8 (*a fortiori*).

It is good to feed on these spiritual joys, and then carnal delights, will soon grow out of taste and relish.

Doctrine: *Christ in himself, and to us, is the word of life.*

Here is to be showed in what respects he is called

1. A word, 2. A word of life.

Λόγος here is a metaphor, and every metaphor is a short similitude, and it must not be expected that any similitude should agree in all points.

But Christ is called a word of God in 4 respects, as he is the wisdom, image, interpreter, and promise of the Father.

First, The wisdom of the Father; As reason floweth from the soul, or mind of man, and is not any accident to it, but of the same nature with it, (though there is an accidental wisdom in us, which is habitual, yet there is also an essential wisdom in us, namely, our Reason which is natural) so Christ (who is the reason and wisdom of the Father) flowed from the Father, was begotten of him, and is of the same nature with him, hence he is called the wisdom that dwelleth with God, *Proverbs* 8:1,22,24,25; 1 *Corinthians* 1:24, and the Holy Ghost may seem to have reference to this place, *John* 1:1,2,3,

4,5, because the description which he maketh of the word, it seemeth he took from that description of wisdom, if you compare these places, *Proverbs* 8:1 with *John* 1:1, *Proverbs* 8:23 with *John* 1:2, *Proverbs* 24 to 30 with *John* 1:3, *Proverbs* 8:34 with *John* 1:4, *Proverbs* 8:35 with *John* 1:5, and chapter 1:22,24 etc.

Secondly, As the words or speech of a man is a character of his mind, for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh, a rotten heart begetteth and streameth forth unsavoury speeches, and holy heart breatheth

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out gracious words, so is Christ the character, or engraven form of the Father's person, *Hebrews* 1:3.

Thirdly, As the speech or word of a man declare the will and meaning, and Counsel of the speaker, so doth Christ of the Father, *John* 1:18; *Matthew* 11:27.

Fourthly, Christ may very well be called the Word of God, or the speech of God, because he it was of whom the Lord spoke from the beginning, that is, the word of promise which he made to *Adam*, to *Abraham*, to *Isaac*, to *Jacob*, to *David*, etc., hence Christ is called the Promise, *Hebrews* 11, hence, he who is called a Servant, 1 *Chronicles* 17:19, is called the word, 2 *Samuel* 7:21, that is, a servant spoken of or promised.

2. Christ is called a word of life.

1. Because he hath especial life in himself, *John* 1:4; *Job* 5:6

2. Because he communicateth life; and he communicates, 1. Natural life, which to us men is the light of Reason, *John* 1:4, this former we have from him as an author, these following as a head or root.

2. He communicates spiritual life, and that he doth, 1 by dying for us, for his death is our life; by his wounds we are healed, *Isaiah* 53:5, so by his life we live, now the life we live by Christ's death is,

1. Justification, that is forgiveness of sins, *Colossians* 1:14, *Ephesians* 1:7, therefore he is called the justification of life, *Romans* 5:18 we without his death were dead, mere Children of death, as condemned persons, and Christ's death procuring us pardon, procured us life.

2. Mortification; it is the first part of spiritual life (inherent in us) to die to sin, and that was procured by Christ's death, *Romans* 6:6; *Galatians* 2:19.

2. He communicates spiritual life to us, by rising for us, for as we have been like him in dying to sin by his death, so do we live to God by his life, *Romans* 6:5,10,11, now the life we live by his resurrection, is

1. Vivification or newness of life, Christ now living in us by his Spirit, *Galatians* 2:20; 1 *Corinthians* 6:17. Hence as living trees of Righteousness

we bring forth fruit unto God, *John* 15:5. 2. Resurrection to glory, *Romans* 8:11, hence he is called a quickening Spirit, *1 Corinthians* 15:45.

Use 1. If Christ be a word of life, then men out of Christ have no life in them, they have neither the life of justification, nor mortification, nor vivification, nor resurrection to glory, but are stark dead men to grace and glory.

2. If Christ be a word of life, then we who profess our selves to be Christians, to be Members of Christ, are to live no life but this; now for the better conceiving of this, know that we live a threefold life, 1. Natural, 2. Spiritual, 3. Carnal, whereby we live the life, 1. Of Reason, 2. Grace, 3. Sin.

The former two we may live, and are so to do, because we receive both these lives from Christ the word of life; the last we are not to live, for the Members can live no life but the life of their head, the branches live no life but the life of the root; Hence *Paul* lived not, but Christ in him, *Galatians* 2:20, now that we may do this, we must esteem and carry ourselves as dead men to all things else; that we may wholly live, and move, and have our being to him; and from hence ariseth three duties.

First, We are not to live in our old sins at all, but to be as dead men to them, *Romans* 6:11, and therefore to have no Member to stir at their command, *Romans* 6:13, old lusts when they now call upon us, we are to lend the deaf Ear to them; when we were dead to Righteousness, we did not one living action but sinful; so now being dead to sin, let us do no living action but righteous.

Secondly, We are no longer to live unto friends, to riches, or honours, or pleasures, but to the Lord; we once were wedded to such things, but now being dead, we are free from them, *Romans* 7:1,2, if these call for any motion

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or action of a living man at our hands, not agreeable to the Will of Christ, we are dead; hence Wives are to obey their husbands in the Lord, *Colossians* 3:18, and Children their Parents, *Ephesians* 6:1, and Servants their Masters, *Ephesians* 6, so *Psalms* 45:10,11.

3. We are to be as dead men to our own reason and will, and all the affections of our hearts, and to yeild to them only in the Lord, *Luke* 9:23. He that would live to God when he is dead, must die to himself while he is alive.

Use 3. If Christ be a Word of Life, a living and quickening word, then when we find our hearts dead and dull, and indisposed to good duties, run we and seek unto him for life and quickening, *Psalms* 119:37,40. If we be af-

flicted in Conscience, and esteem our selves as dead men, in regard to the apprehension of God's Wrath, and the want of the life of Justification, then let us seek him, *Psalm 119:107 & 28*. If we fear, that though we find some life of grace, yet we shall be unfruitful, and dead unto God, except we be strengthened and quickened more than ordinary, here again let us seek unto this Word of Life, *Luke 17:5; Mark 9:24*. In the midst of our entertainment of many of our acquaintance (as *Hezekiah* did) *2 Kings 20:13*, who might have taken an excellent opportunity of sanctifying God's name, considering the occasion of their coming, *1 Chronicles 32:31*, he might have wrought on them to have embraced the true worship of such a God, *Deuteronomy 32:31*. And so indeed did *Moses* upon *Jethro*, *Exodus 18:8,9,10,11,12*, and in the liberal use of God's Creatures, and easy matter it is to forget God, and to be dead and unfruitful unto him; here then seek to this Word of Life, but always seek we in humility, and consciousness of our own weakness, and then God will delight to quicken us.

I John 1:2

For the life appeared, and we have seen it and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested unto us.

This Verse containeth nothing in a manner in it but what you have mentioned, either in the verse before, or else in the next after it. In it consider, 1. The dependence of this verse upon the former; the words come in by way of answer to an objection.

Objection. *If Christ was from the beginning, eternal, God, how then could he be seen, and heard? John 1:18 No man has seen God at any time.*

Answer. Yes, for that eternal Word of Life was in fullness of time made manifest in the flesh, etc.

2. The order of the words in themselves; and in plain placing they stand thus, For that Life, that Eternal Life, which was with the Father, and which we have seen, and whereof we bear witness, and which we show (or declare) unto you, appeared, appeared I say, unto us.

3. The meaning of the words, which is best opened by handling distinctly five Propositions, which are express in the text, Three concerning Christ, Two concerning the Apostles.

First, Three concerning Christ.

1. Christ is Life, Life eternal.

2. This Eternal Life, Christ, was with the Father.

3. This Eternal Life, which was with the Father, appeared to the Apostles.

Secondly, Two concerning the Apostles.

1. The Apostles and disciples saw this eternal life.

2. The Apostles and Disciples bare witness unto, and declared, this eternal life unto the Church of God.

Proposition 1. *Christ is life eternal.*

Life] Therefore called the Word of Life, *verse 1*, hence also *John 14:6*, though

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life is not taken so largely as here, There the meaning is, I am the true and right way to eternal life, as appeareth by that which goeth before, from verse two to six, and the reason following verse 6. Here it is taken for him who liveth in himself, and is the Fountain and Author of all life to us, whether of Nature, or Grace, or Glory. *Eternal life]* 1 *John 5:20*, and he is so called, because ,

1. Himself liveth for ever, *Revelation 1:17,18; Proverbs 8:23.*

2. To us he is the author of eternal life, *Hebrews 5:9; John 18:28.*

Use 1. From hence the God-head of Christ is argued, and that

1. From his simplicity, comparing this place with *John 5:26*, see the like, 1 *John 1:5 & 7*, he is therefore free from all composition, not only of matter and form, universal and particular, but even of subject and adjunct, *ergo* he is God, and these speeches are no Hyperbolies.

2. From his Eternity, for no Creature is eternal, but all had their beginning in time.

Use 2. Hence we see a reason

1. Of that speech in *Proverbs 8.ult. All who hate me love death*; such are all they that will not be governed by him, *Luke 19:14.*

2. Of that speech, *Ephesians 2:1,5*, men out of Christ are dead.

3. Why ungodly and wicked men die eternally, they are out of Christ, *John 15:6*, where is to be translated, not Men, but Angels, *Matthew 13:49,50*, the Angels, whomever they find out of Christ, they cast into eternal death, not so much because they have deserved it, for so have the godly, but because they are out of Christ.

4. Why some for a time make a fair profession, yet hold not out, their life of grace is some Land-flood, a torrent for a time, but not fed by any living spring *John 4:14.*

5. Why the Children of God forsake all for him, *Matthew 19:27; Job 2:4.*

6. Why the Children of God live for ever, *John* 14:19, why hath he that believeth everlasting life? Because to believe is to lay hold, he that believeth on the Son then, layeth hold on everlasting life.

Use 3. This teacheth every one to labour to find Christ, for in finding him we find eternal life, *Proverbs* 8:34.

Proposition 2. *The Eternal Life, Christ, was with the Father.*

1. He was with the Father as a nourisher of the Creature

1. Sustaining all, *Hebrews* 1:3.

2. His Church especially, preserving unto us that Spiritual life which he conveyed unto us. Hence *Ephesians* 1:3, all Blessings; as Election, *verse* 4, Adoption *verse* 5, but when were these? before the World was made, 2 *Timothy* 1:9, hence *Isaiah* 9:6, he is called *The Everlasting Father*.

2. He was with the Father as a delight,

1. To the Father, *John* 17:24, *For thou hast loved*, etc., *Matthew* 3 *ult*.

2. To the Creature, *Proverbs* 8:31 (rightly translated, *Vid. Jun. Bible*). If the Creature can fill and ravish us with servile delights, how much more can the Persons of the blessed Trinity one another, yea and us also? seeing the several delights which are scattered in the Creatures, as in Meats, Drink, Company, Recreation, etc., are not so delightful as Christ, *Psalms* 4:6,7; *Psalms* 16 *ult*.

Use 1. Hence we learn,

1. Our Saviour Christ's conjunction with the Father.

2. His distinction from him.

If this life was with the Father, then they were together from all Eternity; and because there cannot be two Eternals, but one Eternal, therefore they must needs be conjoined and united in the same Essence.

And yet because the one was with the other, there must needs be some

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distinction between them, which because it cannot be essential, for their Essence is one, neither can it be accidental, for no Accidents are in God, it must needs be personal.

Use 2. If Christ was with the Father in the manner before declared as a Nourisher, and Delight, then here is an answer to that vain cavilling question of Atheists.

Objection. *If the World be but five thousand and odd years old, what did God so many years before?*

Answer 1. They nourished, delighted, and solaced each other.

2. God ordained Christ to be a nourisher, and solacer of his Church, 1 *Peter* 1:20, compared with places above mentioned.

Use 3. If Christ was with the Father, in whose presence is fullness of joy, and pleasure for evermore, as *Psalms* 16 *ult*, then how unspeakable was the love of Christ to such wretches as weare, who for our sakes would leave his Father, to take part of our miseries, that we might be partakers of his pleasures? Would a man think that he whose delight was so unspeakable and glorious with his Father, would say that which he doth, *Psalms* 16:3, for that whole Psalm is meant of him, or of the whole Church, but principally of him; O where are our hearts, that they can delight no more in him? our foolish hearts can delight in any thing more than him.

Use 4. If Christ was with the Father, then the Children of God may comfort themselves in assurance of this point, that we shall also be with God too, to behold the glory which Christ hath with the Father; Christ is now where from eternity he was, *John* 16:28, and where he now is, he has prayed that we also may be, *John* 17:24, and doth so pray to this day, *Romans* 8:34, 35, now him the Father heareth always, *John* 11:42.

Proposition 3. *This eternal life which was with the Father, appeared unto the Apostles and Disciples.*

What is meant by appeared, ἔφανερωθη was made manifest, how was he made manifest? in the flesh, 1 *Timothy* 3:*ult*.

True it is, that Christ was made manifest before the Apostles time unto the Patriarchs, and that in three ways.

1. By Apparition, in the similitude and shape of flesh, *Genesis* 18:17, and there he is called Jehovah, and he afterwards prayed unto him, *Genesis* 27:25, to *Hagar*, *Genesis* 16:7–13, to *Jacob*, to *Moses*, *Exodus* 3:2,4,6, to whom *Moses* prayed, *Deuteronomy* 33:16

2. By Preaching, *Genesis* 3:15.

3. By Faith, which maketh things appear which appear not, which maketh things evident which are not seen, *Hebrews* 11:1; *John* 8:16; *Genesis* 17:17.

But not in the flesh, not by Incarnation, till the fulness of time was come, which was the Apostles times, *Galatians* 4:4; *John* 1:14.

Doctrine 1. *He who was from the beginning with the Father, eternal living God, became in the fulness of time truly man.*

But of this we have spoken at large before, *verse* 1, and that upon the Feast of the Nativity; now at this time, only such things are to be spoken of as appertain to his Incarnation, so far forth as it was a manifestation of him.

Doctrine 2. *The Incarnation of Christ, and his conversation in the World, was the manifestation of him to the Apostles and Church of God.*

Ἐφανερωθη is here called his φανέρωσις in 2 *Timothy* 1:10, it is called ἐπιφάνεια which is a Metaphor, as if it were the breaking forth of the Sun from under a Cloud; hence also *John* 12:46.

For the Reason of the Point, this incarnation of Christ, etc., was the manifestation of him to the Apostles and Church of God.

First, To the outward man.

1. Because his Divine Person before that time invisible and insensible, by his incarnation became sensible and palpable, *John* 1:18.

2. Because that person, though before he was known to the Church of God, yet but obscurely.

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Secondly, it was the manifestation of him to the inward man; for though they knew him to be God, *Psalms* 110:1, mark our Saviour's urging that place, *Matthew* 22:44,45, and Man, *Genesis* 3:15, to be of his Church, the King, *Psalms* 2:8,9, the Priest, *Psalms* 110:4, *Daniel* 9:17, the Prophet, *Deuteronomy* 18:18, *John* 4:25: yet how these things should be, they knew not *Luke* 1:24, hence *Luke* 10:22,23,24, though they knew his benefits before, yet but obscurely, and darkly, as wrapped up in a shadow, 2 *Corinthians* 3:13, as things seen afar of, *Hebrews* 11:13, but now are brought to light by his incarnation, and coming into the world, 2 *Timothy* 1:10.

Use 1. For Knowledge, and 2 for Practice. 1 For Knowledge, and hence we learn, 1 The meaning of that difficult place, *Hebrews* 9:7,8, why was the way into the most Holy place shut up from the sight of God's people? because the way into Heaven was not manifested, the being a type of this; but what was that way into Heaven? Christ, incarnate, living, and dying amongst us, *Hebrews* 10:19,20, hence at Christ's death the veil of the Temple was rent in twain, and so the way into the most holy place was opened, *Matthew* 27:51.

2. The reason why the Apostles, and Saints of God that lived in those times were endued with a greater and larger measure of gifts and graces than ever before, or since, which was this, the King bestows many gifts upon his poor Subjects, when he keepeth retiredly in his Court, but when he comes abroad, and manifests himself to public view, then much more abundantly, *Joel* 2:28,29. Christ then left his Apostles behind him, as it were his Almoners, to bestow his Dole and Largesse on the Church; we see also the reason why there was a greater measure of light of the knowledge of Salvation shed abroad into the World in those times than ever before, which was,

because of Christ's coming in the flesh, which was his manifestation, and then the Sun rising, how should not the light break forth more gloriously than before? five thousand were converted at two Sermons, *Acts* 2:41 and 4:4.

3. The reason for the ceasing of Oracles in the Apostles' times was, because Christ then appeared, his light brake forth, and *what communion hath light with darkness?* 2 *Corinthians* 6:14, and because they were the Devils, 1 *Corinthians* 10:20, when Christ's Kingdom was partly outward in solemn Sacrifices and Ceremonies, he suffered the Devil to erect the like, but when Christ's Kingdom became in a manner wholly spiritual, (as it did from the time of his appearing in the flesh) he would not suffer his enemy to enjoy any other Kingdom but spiritual in the hearts and souls of men.

Plutarch renders two other Reasons, *Defectus Oraculorum*, but both false, and confuted by his own Doctrine; the

First was, because then many wise men might serve for Oracles.

Secondly, Because happily those spirits in time grew old and died, the Devil himself made a true confession. See *Suidas in vita Augusti*.

4. Why all Ceremonies and Sacrifices were abolished at our Saviours coming, *Hebrews* 10:5, because they were but shadows, *Colossians* 2:17, *Hebrews* 10:1, and all shadows vanish in the Sun-shine, which is Christ manifest in the Flesh.

5. A difference of Sights. Christ was made manifest in the flesh, yet some knew him not, *John* 1:5; 1 *Corinthians* 2:8, when as others did, *John* 1:14.

And the reason why some saw him not, is Threefold.

1. They shut their own eyes, *Acts* 28:27.

2. The Devil blinded their eyes, 2 *Corinthians* 4:4.

3. God blinded them, *John* 12 from 37 to 40.

Use 2. To reprove all such Christians as are yet ignorant of Christ, and know him not, they are now without excuse, 2 *Corinthians* 4:3; *John* 15:22. If the veil had still lain over Christ, there might have been some pretence, now there is none.

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Use 3. To exhort us to walk no longer in darkness, *Romans* 13:12,13; *John* 12:46; 1 *John* 3:8, and that while we have the light, *John* 12:35,36, which seemeth not to be likely to continue long, the fulness of the Gentiles being almost come in, *Romans* 11:25,26, for is not the Vintage and Harvest of the Gentiles gathered, when so few Christians remain? like *Isaiah* 17:6.

Use 4. If Christ's first coming was such a manifestation of him, then the Children of God should learn hence to meditate what a glorious manifestation his second coming will be, *2 Corinthians 3:ult.*; *1 Corinthians 13:penult.*

Proposition 4. *The Apostles saw this eternal life made manifest in the flesh.*

The truth of it is apparent, *John 1:14.*

The observations arising from hence are these.

1. The truth of our Saviour's incarnation.
2. The blessedness of the Apostles in seeing what others desired and could not; but of these we have spoken before, *verse 1.*

Proposition 5. *The Apostles bare witness unto, and declared this eternal life unto the Church of God.*

For the meaning of this, to bear witness unto Christ, and to declare him to the Church, is all one, they bare witness unto him by declaring of him, they declared him by bearing witness unto him.

Hence it was that when he appointed them to be declarers, and publishers of his Gospel to all the World, he appointed them only to bear witness to him, *Acts 1:8*, so also is witnessing put for declaring, *Acts 20:21.*

For the confirmation of this Proposition, not to heap many places in a clear truth, take these two, *Acts 10:30,40,41*, *Acts 5:32.*

But how could the Apostles bear witness to Christ, since he receiveth not the testimony of men? *John 5:33,34.*

The testimonies of men are of two sorts, as all Arguments in Logic are of double force.

1. For confirmation, such our Saviour refuteth, as having greater, *John 5:36,37.*
2. For declaration, such our Saviour embraces, as appointing his Disciples to that end, and indeed if he would have had witnesses for confirmation, he would rather have sent *Solomon* in all his royalty, and such others as he, men of credit and honour, than poor Fisher-men? if therefore the Pope and his Clergy were not greater than *Peter* and the Apostles, they would not challenge to themselves power to give authority to the Scriptures; for are not such men for confirmation?

Question. *But why would our Saviour have such poor and simple men to be his witnesses, and to declare and preach him, rather than Gamaliel and the other Rabbins of the Jews?*

Answer 1. To magnify his power, who was able to persuade the whole World to embrace him and his Doctrine by such weak instruments, *2 Corinthians 4:7*; *Acts 4:33*; *Acts 4:13.*

2. To take away and prevent a slander, which might otherwise might have been raised upon the Doctrine of the Gospel, that it had been the device of a man's brain, a human policy devised by great men, to keep the rest in awe, *1 Corinthians* 2:8 & 6, many profane Atheists are ready now so to deem, and speak of it as it is, how much more if these had seen great men and Princes embracing it, and setting it forward at first? At first Satan hindered Religion, by persuading the World that the Professors thereof were enemies to the state, *Acts* 16:20–21, but when long experience proved none more faithful, now he goeth about to persuade, that Princes devised it for their own turn.

3. To teach all Ministers, both how to become most able, and sufficient Preachers of the Gospel, and also to deliver the Gospel so as may be most for God's glory. If Learning, and skill in all Human knowledge would have made us most able Ministers of his Gospel, he would either have chosen

such

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such to be his Witnesses, or have made them such, by instructing them thereafter in that three years space when he abode with them; but he found them ignorant Fishermen, and left them very raw and rude in the knowledge, yea even of the Principles of Religion, *Acts* 1:8, and yet in one hour, fifty days after, by the sending the Holy Ghost, he made them more able Ministers than all the Prophets before them, and their Fathers, Schoolmen, and the late restorers of the Gospel since, to show us, that howsoever we must not neglect the help of Studies of the Arts, and Tongues, for want of immediate revelation, yet these are not the things that make us most sufficient, but we above all things are to desire, and strive with God, for the annointment of his Spirit, mentioned *1 John* 2:27. And again, the Apostles being such simple men, were fitted to deliver it so as might be most for God's glory, not in excellency of words, but in evidence of the Spirit, *1 Corinthians* 4:5, and therefore *Paul*, (though otherwise a learned man) imitated their simplicity, *1 Corinthians* 2:12,13. And here *Chemnitius* his modesty is to be commended, who when he cometh to speak of some points of Divinity, carved out by the School-men too curiously, is wont to say, *Hac non sapiunt Piscatoriani sapientiam*.

Use 1. Behold then the great and fearful unthankfulness of the World, who put most of these men to death, who did declare unto them Eternal Life.

Use 2. If the Apostles show unto us Eternal Life, it is easy to discern how far they be from Eternal Life, who do not receive their Witness; alas, how

many poor souls through the greatest part of the World, *Jews, Turks*, all the rest of the Pagans and Infidels, are by this means cut off from all hope of Eternal Life? how true alas is that speech of our Saviour, *Matthew 7:13, 14*. many there be who go in the broad way to destruction?

Use 3. Then how much to blame are the Wolves (rather than Shepherds) of the Church of *Rome*, who shut and lock up from the people in a strange Tongue the Writings of the Prophets and Apostles? is this not one way to bar them from Eternal Life? how truly upon them is that verified? *Luke 11:32*.

Use 4. Then we all of us are to be exhorted diligently to be conversant in the Writings of the Apostles, *John 5:39*, where what our Saviour spake of the Writings of the Prophets, my text speaketh the very same of the Writings of the Apostles; they bear witness of Christ, and show unto us Eternal Life; and as the Apostle spake unto our Saviour, so may we to them, *John 6:68*. Ministers most of all are to be conversant in their Writings, because they succeed the Apostles in bearing witness unto Christ, and declaring of him, so little differing from that of theirs, else we bring a curse upon our own heads *Galatians 1:8*, which if the Church of *Rome* had remembered, they would never have thrust out the Apostles from the Chairs of their Professors, and brought in the Sentences of *Peter Lombard*; but we are to follow *Timothy's* example, *2 Timothy 3:15,16,17*, and all Christians are to imitate the forwardness of Christians in *Chrsostom's* time.

Use 5. Then we are to praise the Lord's goodness unto us, who has granted unto us their Writings. Consider the like example, *Psalms 147:12,19,20*. It was a great preferment to the *Jews* to have the Writings of the Prophets, *Romans 3:1,2*, but their witness of Christ is much more dark and obscure than this of the Apostles; without their Writings, we should but have groped after God, *Acts 17:27*, and as for Christ, this Eternal Life, we should never have dreamed of him: the Lord make us more thankful, and more careful to walk more worthy of them, lest he take them from us.

I JOH.

16

I John 1:3

That, I say, which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you, etc.

In these two Verses we have of the Apostles' Doctrine,

1. The subject repeated, *That which we have seen and heard.*

2. And declared.

3. The end.

1. Subordinate, fellowship with the Apostles

2. Supreme, fullness of joy.

The subject is repeated,

1. For Explication or plainness sake, for the Parenthesis of the second verse would otherwise by interrupting the course of speech, have obscured the sentence.

2. For confirmation of what he had said before, he thrice repeateth *that which we have seen*, and doubleth *that which we have heard*, to show, that he doubted not of what he spake, but was most confident and resolute therein.

Observation. Observe hence the certainty and undoubted truth of the Doctrine of the Apostles.

Reason 1. The Apostles taught nothing but what was manifest to their senses. See 2 *Peter* 1:16. Compare with him his Successor, who seeing great sums of Money brought in by Indulgences, Pardons, etc. said to one of his Cardinals, *O quantum fabula ista de Christo nobis proficit!* Again, sense took away doubting even from unbelieving *Thomas*, *John* 20:25,27,28.

2. The Apostle again and again ingeminates here, that what they taught was manifest to their sense; now ingeminations are for confirmations, *Genesis* 41:32; *Galatians* 1:8,9; *Ezekiel* 7:6, this therefore doth show again how confident he was of it himself, *i.e.* therefore no marvel of that speech, *John* 21:penult. We know, etc. For,

3. The efficacy of that Doctrine, or the power of it, argueth the certainty of it; for that Doctrine which giveth us union with God, communion with the Saints of God, fullness of joy in ourselves, must needs be a most certain Doctrine of heavenly truth, there is no persuasion to settle a man's own Conscience answerable to this.

4. For a Fourth Reason, consider another Branch of the power of this Doctrine, the Apostles that declared it were for the most part poor and simple men, and unlearned men, the Doctrine taught was but of a Crucified Saviour, harsh to Carnal ears, 1 *Corinthians* 1:23, the times were such, wherein it was not only everywhere spoken against, *Acts* 28:22, but also grievously persecuted throughout the *Roman Empire*, and that with exquisite Torments, and yet it did so powerfully work, that of *Tertullian's* time¹ (which was the next Age after Christ) there were more Christians everywhere than of all other Professions besides; *Cyrus* indeed allured many to be his followers; but he sent out great men to make another kind of Proclamation, Whosoever will come and follow after me, if he be a Foot-man, I will make him a Horse-man; If

he be a Horse-man, I will make him a Rider in a Coach; if a Farmer, a Gentleman; if he possess a Cottage, I will give him a Village; if he have a Village, I will give him a City; and if he be Lord of a City, I will make him Prince of a Region, or Country; and as for Gold, I will pour it out to him by weight and heaps, and not by number: But Christ's Proclamation is contrary, *Luke* 9:23 & 14:26, and yet had he infinitely more followers.

All other Reasons, as the testimony of the Church, etc. are but like the woman of *Samaria*, preparing us to believe, *John* 4:29, this convinceth us so strongly, that in comparison we reject other reasons moving us to believe, as they did, *John* 4:41, 42. How true is that of *Picus* in his Conclusions? as

Faith,

¹ Plut in Apoph. Prisc. Regum.

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Faith, which is but bare credulity, is in a degree of perfection inferior to science, so that Faith which is wrought in us by the work of the Holy Ghost is greater, and more certain, than any science, gotten by demonstration.

Use 1. If the Apostles' Doctrine were so certain, that they preached nothing but what they had seen and heard, then hence we see a reason, why they were so bold, and zealous, and diligent in preaching, *Acts* 4:20; 2 *Peter* 1:15,16. Fables are best at first hearing, but comfortable, sound, and certain truths, the oftener they are heard, the more profitable.

Again, hence we see a reason of their certainty and constancy in all their ways, for they and their Doctrine; were of the same nature, 2 *Corinthians* 1:17, 18,19,20.

Use 2. Then all of us are to receive their Testimony, for upon this ground our Saviour complaineth justly, for not being received, *John* 3:11, the like doth *John Baptist*, *John* 3:32.

Use 3. Then the Children of God that repose their hopes upon the Apostles' Doctrine, we may hence comfort themselves, we build not upon uncertainties, as they, *Isaiah* 28:15, if our faith and hope were built upon the Doctrines and traditions of men, we might justly fear and stand in doubt, lest they might fail and deceive us in the end.

Use 4. If the Apostles preached nothing but what they were most certain of, then it must be our care also to preach unto the people of God no uncertainties.

And so in this we shall follow the Apostles, and this we may do by two means especially.

First, By preaching nothing but what we have good warrant for from Scripture; for the Scriptures are of certain Truth, 1 *Corinthians* 4:6; *Acts* 26:27.

Secondly, By having our hearts established with Grace, *Hebrews*. 13:9; 2 *Peter* 1 two last verses, where he saith, No Scripture is of any private motion of interpretation, because being penned at first by the Spirit, by him best interpreted; hence 1 *Corinthians* 2:11, & 2 last. If these means were sufficient, how comes it to pass that the Children of God having these means, have yet differed one from another by not attending to these means? but leaning to their own judgement, or the opinions of men, are carried with some sinister respect of their own credit and estimation in the world; see *Luther's* example of defending Consubstantiation, and therein dissenting from others of his Brethren.

The ends of the Apostles' writings followeth, which are

1. Subordinate, Fellowship with the Apostles and Disciples. 2. Union with God, verse 3. 3. Supreme, Fullness of joy, verse 4.

Before we come to speak of these severally, some things more may be gathered from all these jointly, touching the nature of the Scriptures, as

1. For the perfection of the Scripture; for if the Apostles declared what they had heard and seen, to the end that we might have fellowship with God and them, and fullness of joy, then either they failed of their end, or else we by their Doctrine (written for that purpose, verse 4) may have all things necessary for salvation, yea what is salvation itself, but these very ends? our Saviour calls it (which was a good conclusion of the whole Bible, for the Gospel was written last of all, to stop the mouths of *Ebio*, *Cerinthus*, etc. who then began to urge the traditions of the Apostles in time of his banishment, see *Eusebius*) eternal life, to know him, and what more comfortable knowledge of him than this? *John* 17:3, hence also *John* 20:2 last, 2 *Timothy* 3:2 last; away then with Popish traditions which the Papists allege, they are either false Doctrines, as invocations of Saints, images, transubstantiation, etc., or certainly true, as baptism of infants, truth of Scripture, etc. and these be proved for it; or such as seem not necessarily to procure us Fellowship with the Saints, as the perpetual Virginity of the Virgin *Mary*, whether the Hebrew woman's children had any Sacrament to initiate them into the Church, and yet the Papists elsewhere, prove all these by Scripture.

D

2. The

2. The profit of the Scripture; that Doctrine by which we come to have such comfortable and excellent benefits (such as than which none are greater) must needs be of singular profit and commodity; yea, no profit like to this, *Matthew* 16:26. Hence *Psalms* 19:10, and therefore we are never to make ac-

count we have profited by their Doctrine, when we can speak and discourse of it, but when we have found it to have wrought these heavenly things in us, he that will be conversant in it, to practise it indeed, must labour for these things by it.

2. And again, if the Word be so profitable, they lose not their labour, who seek it from Sea, and from East to West, as *Amos* 8:12, if by seeking they find it, *Matthew* 15:32; *Luke* 10: ult, it is no vain gadding humour this desire to hear the Word.

3. The power of the Apostles Doctrine, of the Scripture; that which must bring us from having fellowship with Satan, and the unfruitful works of darkness, to have fellowship with the Saints, yea God himself, and to enjoy fullness of joy, what admirable efficacy must it needs be of? hence *Romans* 1:16; 2 *Corinthians* 10:4), this word must needs be stronger than Satan, *Luke* 11: 21,22).

Use 1. This reproveth the practice of those who will profess that the Word of God taketh place in them, and hath power upon them, yet they still keep their old fellowship with Satan with the wicked of the World, with the unfruitful works of darkness. See *John* 5:38.

Use 2. Then fellowship with God, and with the Saints, and fullness of joy may be obtained, else why did the Apostles preach, and write of Christ to that end? it is a let by which Satan keepeth many from seeking these things, because they think them impossible to be attained, as it was with the Jews, *John* 6:52,66, so it is common in this case with many, but *Nicodemus*, though at first he conceived not such a like mystery as this, yet at length having it explained, he came to Jesus by night, and his Doctrine took place in him, *John* 3:9 & *John* 7:50,51; & *John* 19:39.

Use 3. Then great reason have we all to attend to the Doctrine of the Apostles; art though a man yoked under the bondage of Satan, and canst not free thyself from his fellowship? attend to the Doctrine of the Apostles, it will give thee fellowship with God, and the Saints, *Acts* 26:18. Art thou in the estate of Grace, yet feelest thyself in heaviness through manifold temptations? 1 *Peter* 1:6, attend to the Apostles Doctrine, it will give thee fulness of joy, *Psalms* 19:8.

Ministers also for the same cause are to be painful and diligent, 2 *Timothy* 4:2, preach the Word, be instant in season, etc. *Ecclesiastes* 11:6, in the morning sow thy seed, etc.

I John 1:3-4

That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also might have fellowship with us, etc.

IN handling these three ends of the Apostles' Doctrine,

1. Communion with Saints.
2. Union with God
3. Fullness of joy, it is to be showed,
 1. What each of them is in its order.
 2. How the Apostles' Doctrine procureth them unto us.
 3. Some consecratories for each one.

By fellowship with us, the Apostle meaneth himself, and all the Saints of God.

The communion of the Saints is a Spiritual conjunction of the Saints with Jesus Christ, and one another, wherein Christ partaketh of our infirmities, and we in common partake of his benefits, and communicate them one to another.

I. I

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1. I call it [a Spiritual Conjunction,] to distinguish it from,
 1. A Natural, as the three Persons of the Trinity are joined in one nature and essence.
 2. Personal, as the two Natures of Christ are in one Person.
 3. Moral, as Man and Wife are in Law one flesh by God's Ordinance.

For this is a Conjunction of men's Persons, not by an outward bond (such as God's Ordinance is to Marriage) but by an outward bond, one Spirit resting in Christ above measure and in the Saints according to their measure, 1 *Corinthians* 6:17; 1 *John* 4:13; *Romans* 8:9. Hence it is that the same mind is in us which was in Christ, *Philippians*. 2:5, and all the members are alike affected, and disposed toward God, Christ, their own sins, good duties, one to another.

2. I say [of the Saints with Christ, and one another] where by Saints I do not mean only Saints Canonized by the Pope, nor only the Saints departed, but the Saints also on earth, whose conjunction with Christ and one with another, is mentioned in 2 *Corinthians* 1:2; *Colossians* 1:2; *John* 15:5; *Ephesians* 5:30;

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Corinthians

12:13; *John* 17:20,21.

3. I add [wherein Christ partaketh of our infirmities.] And infirmities wherein he partaketh with us are of three sorts;

1. Of Nature, Flesh, and Blood, *Hebrews* 2:14; *Philippians* 2:7.
2. Of Corruption, all our sins imputed, *2 Corinthians* 5:21; *1 Peter* 2:24.
3. Of Condition, all our afflictions and miseries, *Acts* 9:4; *Colossians* 1:24.

4. I add [we in this communion partake of Christ's benefits,] which are Six.

1. Adoption, *Galatians* 4:4, 5, 6, hence we are said to have fellowship with God in the text, the greatness of this benefit; See *1 Samuel* 18:23.

2. Righteousness of Christ imputed, *2 Corinthians* 5:21. Papists do deride this, thinking it all one to say, A man may be wise or learned by another man's Wisdom and Learning, but Christ was not another man to us.

3. Holiness, *1 Corinthians* 1:penult which stands in Mortification, *Romans* 6:6, and in Vivification, or fruitfulness, *John* 15:5. Worms that are dead all Winter, live again, lying in the Sun at the Spring.

4. Protection of Angels, *Psalms* 91:11,12; *Hebrews* 1:ult.

5. Dominion over the Creatures, *Hebrews* 2:7, 8; *1 Corinthians* 3:22, 23, they hold in *capite*.

6. Right to a glorious Inheritance, *Galatians* 4:7; *Colossians* 1:12.

The means of further conveying and confirming these benefits unto us, (besides the Doctrine of the Prophets and Apostles) are the Sacraments; hence *1 Corinthians* 12:13; *1 Corinthians* 10:16,17.

5. I say [we communicate these benefits to one another] and that,

1. In heart, mutually praying for one another, *Ephesians*. 6:18. Hence a Christian man, a rich Merchant, has Factors dealing for him with God, in every Country.

2. In voice, by

1. Mutual instruction, *2 Timothy* 2:25, 26; *Acts* 18:25,26.
2. Mutual reproof, *Galatians* 6:1,2; *Leviticus* 19:17.
3. Mutual consolation, *1 Thessalonians* 5:14).

3. For Action, by

1. Good example of Christian life, *Matthew* 5:16; good example edifieth much, *Philippians* 2:15, see *Peter Martyr's* testimony of *Bucer's* Family in *Epist. ad Ecclesiam*.
2. Liberal bestowing of outward things upon them, *Galatians* 6:10.

In regard that this Communion is,

1. A Spiritual conjunction of the Saints with Christ, and one with another, it is compared to the Conjunctions, *Ephesians* 5:23,30; *John* 15:5.

2. This his partaking of our infirmities, and ours of his benefits, it is compared to a Marriage *Hosea* 2:19,20.

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3. A communicating of our goods one to another, it is a Brother-hood, *Colossians* 1:3.

2. How doth the Apostles' Doctrine procure and preserve this union and communion? by these means;

1. By making known to us, that by nature we were strangers and enemies to God, *Colossians* 1:21; *Acts* 26:18; *Ephesians* 2:2; 2 *Timothy* 2:26. This fellowship which all natural men have with Satan (to omit the fellowship which Conjurers have with him by League, *Psalms* 85:5, and that which Witches have with him by carnal copulation) standing in three things.

1. In resemblance, both sin with one continued Act, 1 *John* 3:8; (sinneth) *John* 8:44; *Acts* 13:10, and so all ὁμοτέχνοι, have a fellowship one with another.

2. In subjection of the Natural man to the government and guidance of Satan, *Ephesians* 2:2; 2 *Timothy* 2:ult. all God's Children are led by his Spirit, *Romans* 8:14, so are Natural men led by that wicked Spirit, he first worketh upon the mind, deluding, and blinding them, 2 *Corinthians* 4:4; *John* 13:2, and then he carrieth the heart and affections whither it pleaseth him, *John* 13:27; *Ephesians* 2:2.

3. In undergoing the same punishment, *Matthew* 25:41.

2. By working upon our hearts a remorse of Conscience, with the sense of this, *Acts* 2:37 (this word is used in a contrary sense, *Romans* 11:8, where it signifies not compunction, but the deep slumber wherein Natural men feel no compunction). *Romans* 7:9, this is called a wounding, or the spirit thus afflicted is called wounded, *Proverbs* 18:14, broken-hearted, weary, *Psalms* 51:17; *Matthew* 11:28. This remorse is not alike to all, to some it is more terrible, and maketh a deeper impression, *Job* 6:2,3,4; *cap.* 13:24, to others it is not so grievous, as in *Lydia*, *Acts* 16:14,15, her readiness to entertain them showeth that the Wound was made and healed in the Sermon-time. I conceive *Lydia's* Conversion to be like the Thief's on the Cross, he first had fear of God, *Luke* 23:40, yet assured of Salvation soon after, *verse* 43. In the *Jews* *Acts* 2:37 to 42, at the next Exhortation. In *John Glover*, not for many years, five in all, yet it is found in all, *Romans* 8:15, all do receive the Spirit of bondage to fear, though they receive it not to fear again, *Luke* 4:18.

The Reasons of this are three.

1. To make us like Christ, he was so, *Matthew* 26:37; *Luke* 22:44; *Matthew* 27:46, and we must be like him, *Romans* 8:29.

2. To make us value Christ, and his benefits, at an higher rate, *Matthew 9:12*, (need not) *Proverbs 27:7*, the want of this is the reason why Christ is so little esteemed of the most.

3. To tame our wanton hearts, and make us more pliable, and tractable, to the yoke of Christ, and any course of obedience he shall show us, *Acts 9:6* & *16:30* & *2:37*. Our Saviour can soon persuade heavy laden, and weary souls, to think that his yoke and burthen is light, when they have felt the burthen of sin; which how heavy it is, see *Psalms 38:4*, but an hard matter it is to persuade others to think so.

3. By revealing Christ unto us, and working in our hearts a sound and earnest desire to seek and enjoy him, *Matthew 5:6*, and because Christ is not ours but by faith, *John 3:16*, and Faith is not ours but by the Holy Ghost; therefore we rest not, till, by pouring out our earnest desires to God, we have obtained him, *Luke 11:13*.

4. The same Doctrine works Faith, whereby we are united unto Christ, *Romans 10:17*; *Galatians 3:7*.

The Consectories or the Uses are three.

Use 1. Hence then it is easy to discern what estate Natural men be in, out of fellowship with God and his Saints; If by nature we had fellowship with them, what needeth the Apostles' Doctrine to bring us unto it, they who defy
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the Devil, and cannot abide to hear that they have had any fellowship with him, have as yet none with God.

Use 2. Then fellowship with God and his Saints is a thing that may be attained.

The conceit of the contrary, Satan useth as an effectual means, to keep men from seeking it. See *Fol. praced.*

Use 3. Then all have great cause with diligence to attend on the Apostles' Doctrine, it is God's power to salvation, *Romans 1:16*.

1 John 1:4

And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.

FOR the meaning of these words, we must show you

1. What is here meant by Joy; 2 How this joy is said to be full.

1. Some by Joy understand that glorious Estate full of delight and pleasure which the Saints in Heaven enjoy, and we ourselves hope for after this life,

according to that *Psalm 16:ult*, but here I suppose (though that be not excluded, but followeth upon the other) to be meant that joy in the Holy Ghost, which such as have fellowship with Christ enjoy in this life.

The Reasons why I think so are two.

1. Because though in Heaven be fullness of joy, yet in Scripture phrase, Heaven (to my remembrance,) is nowhere called full of joy, nay in the *St John's* course of speech there is another on this side Heaven which is called full joy, 2 *John 11; John 16:24 & 15:11*.

2. What *St. John* meaneth by this end of his writing, fullness of joy, we may easily conjecture by the means he uses to procure it to us, now if you mark it, the whole course of his writing is in a manner, nothing else but a laying down of certain marks, whereby which we may examine ourselves, and discern whether we have fellowship with God or no, whether we be in the Estate of Grace or no, See one, verses 6,7, another, 8,9, another, Chapter 2 verse 3, now these marks do not so directly tend to procure us fullness of joy in Heaven, as to settle our hearts now in the assurance of this point, that we are in the Estate of Grace, and may reap and receive, true and found Peace of conscience, and full joy in the Holy Spirit.

So then by full joy, I here understand joy in the Holy Ghost.

For the better and more profitable handling whereof there is to be shown

1. What this Joy is? 2. How it is said to be fill. 3. Some Corollaries from thence. For the first, what this Joy is.

Joy in the Holy Ghost, is a spiritual joy arising from peace of conscience, whereby we rejoice in our union with Christ, with joy unspeakable and glorious.

1. It is a spiritual joy, not only because the object of it are spiritual good things, union with Christ, and the benefits which we reap from it, (Adoption, Righteousness, Holiness, protection of Angels, dominion over the Creatures, right to a glorious inheritance,) but also and that more principally, because it is wrought in us by the holy Spirit, hence it is called joy in the Holy Ghost, *Romans 14:17*, hence he is called the Comforter, *John 15:penult*. when God and Christ are said to dwell in the hearts of faithful men, nothing else is meant but the Holy Ghost dwelling in them, and working this joy (*John 14:23; Revelation 3:20*) *John 14:18* compared with *John 16:7 & 22*.

2. Arising from Peace of Conscience] *Romans 14:17; Romans 5:1,2,3*, now Peace of conscience is a work of the Holy Ghost, which ariseth from feeling of our righteousness, or our justification before God, for to be justified before God, is not enough to pacify the conscience, unless it be felt. See *David's* example, *Psalm 51:8–12*.

Hence ariseth that distinction of four sorts of consciences.

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1. Quiet, but not good, *Luke* 11:21.
2. Good, but not quiet, *Psalms* 51:17.
3. Neither good nor quiet, *Genesis* 4:13,14.
4. Both quiet and good, *Luke* 1:47.

Hence is that also, *Proverbs* 15:15, it is a cause of continual joy in the Holy Ghost, as a continual feast is of continual mirth.

3. Whereby we receive in our union with Christ] 1 *Peter* 1:8, in whom we do believe and rejoyce, yea rejoyce in him whose by faith you are, *Galatians* 6:4, this is shown also, in that it ariseth from peace, and peace from righteousness, but by union with Christ.

4. With joy unspeakable and glorious] these words may seem to express some accidental things to this joy; but because the nature of it cannot be well declared in itself, these words shadow out the nature of it, 1 *Peter* 1:8.

This Joy is

1. Unspeakable, because it is better felt than expressed, *Proverbs* 14:10, like to bodily health.
2. Glorious, both because it is a glimpse of the Glory, and the Joys of Heaven; hence the Spirit that works it, is called *The earnest of our inheritance*, *Ephesians* 1:14, and because it triumphs gloriously against all causes of grief and sorrow, *Romans* 5:3; *Acts* 20:23,24.

2. How is this joy said to be full?

1. In opposition to that joy which ariseth from the things of this life, this is more full than that, *Psalms* 4:6,7, those are empty joys to this, witness,

1. The variety of them, if there were full joy to be had by them, what need we to seek for variety? wherefore doth the Bee suck so many Flowers, if she could find Honey enough in one?

2. The mixture in them of sorrow, *Proverbs* 12:13.

3. The shortness of them, that which must be full joy to an eternal Soul must be eternal, whereas these are not, *Job* 2:5.

2. In opposition to that joy which Christians have in Christ Jesus too, but yet is often eclipsed, and in the wain, as I may say, through manifold doubtings of our estate, 1 *Peter* 1:6.

Use 1. If by the Apostles' Doctrine full joy may be had, then there is no need of Traditions, if joy may be full by the Word written, what then can they add?

Use 2. Then they embrace an empty shadow of joy, that seek joy in earthly things, which are like empty Pits, *Jeremiah 2:13*, though the stars should shine always to us, yet if we should have no greater light, we should have a continual night.

Use 3. Then the heart's embracings of the Apostles' Writings, and finding the fruits of them, bringeth not melancholy, and dumpishness, as the world thinks, but fullness of joy.

Use 4. Then let us search the Apostles' Writings, and enquire for full joy out of them, but of that in the next.

1 John 1:4

This last Use our Saviour teacheth us, to make in the like business, *John 5:39*.

How this joy is wrought at the first, in their Writings is showed before, as,

1. By knowledge of our communication with Satan by nature.
2. By remorse of Conscience in us, by the force of that communion.
3. By earnestly desiring, hungering, and thirsting after deliverance by Christ.
4. By peace of Conscience arising from the sense of that deliverance.

Now then we are to search their Writings, to see by what means this joy thus begun, may be continued and preserved.

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1 John 1:5

This then is the message which we have heard of him, etc.

IN the four former Verses we had the Apostles' Doctrine, or the Doctrine of the Gospel, described.

1. By the subjects of it, Christ Jesus in his Divine and Human nature, verse 1,2.

2. By the ends of it; 1. Subordinate, Communion with God, verse 3.
2. Supreme, Fullness of joy, verse 4. Here the same Doctrine is described,

1. By a treble adjunct of it.

1. It is a Message,
2. Heard of Christ,
3. Declared to the Church.

2. By part of the matter of it, *God is light, and in him is no darkness.*

The second and third points before mentioned, have been spoken of at large, verses 1,2.

The parts then of these words are two, the condition,

1. Of the Doctrine of the Gospel, it is a Message, etc.
2. Or Nature of God, he is light, etc.

The Doctrine of the Gospel is a Message appears,

1. By the title of it, *Evangelium*, a good Message, *Romans* 10:16.
2. By the style of the Pen-men of it, Evangelists, Bearers of good tidings.
3. By the style of the first Preachers of it, they were Apostles, Messengers, *Romans* 10:15. Tiding-bearers of good things.
4. By the style of the after Ministers of it to this day, they are Angels, *Revelation* 2:1, that is, Messengers, so *Job* 33:23. Observations hence concerning Ministers are,

1. These, first, if the Gospel or the Apostles' Doctrine is a Message, then it hath not its authority from such as deliver it, for it is not the Messenger's part to judge, or ratify his Message, but to bear witness to it, to declare it.

Use. Against the Papists, who make their Judge and Clergy, Judges of the Scriptures, the Pope himself here most faulty, who hath left off his Office of declaring his Message, and keepeth himself to that which was never committed to him, to judge of the Scriptures.

Observation 2 Then Ministers are not to run with the Gospel in their mouths, before they be sent, *Romans* 10:15; *Hebrews* 5:4; *Exodus* 4:10 to 13; *Jeremiah* 1:6.

Use. This is not spoken to quench the timely zeal of such as being furnished, and sanctified with gifts, undertake the Function when they are called, for the Prophet *Isaiah* offered himself when his lips were touched, *Isaiah* 6:8. Paul immediately, *Galatians* 1:16, but to stay the too soon ripe forwardness of such who run on the Lord's errand before he sends them.

Observation 3 Then Ministers are to be well instructed in the knowledge of the Gospel, *Malachi* 2:7, else we run without our errand, as *Ahimaaz* did, 2 *Samuel* 18:22,23,29, so we shall bring nothing but confused tumultuous Notions.

Use. Against ignorant Ministers, *Hosea* 4:6, they are not after God's own heart, *Jeremiah* 3:15.

Observation 4 Then Ministers are to be faithful in the delivery of it, *Proverbs* 13:17 & 25:13, which stands in two things,

1. In delivering their whole Message, so did *Paul*, *Acts* 20:26,27, and no more, *Jeremiah*. 23:28; *Proverbs* 30:6.

2. In applying it as the sender intended it; he is no faithful Messenger, that having commission to denounce War against *Spain*, and to make peace with *France*, should proclaim War against *France*, and peace with *Spain*.

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Use 1. Of refutation of Papists, who add to their Message Traditions, such as deliver no Message at all, such as preach not at all, such as make the hearts of the righteous sad; see *Ezekiel 13:22 & 16*.

Observation 5. Then Ministers are to be diligent in carrying of it, *Proverbs 10:26*, the Lord's Errand is his Work, which being negligently done brings a Curse *Jeremiah 48:10*, though that be to kill, yet this to save. Sloth, maketh waste, as in every work, *Proverbs 18:9*, so here especially it makes waste of souls, *Proverbs 29:18*.

Use. Paul's Exhortation, 2 Timothy 4:1, 2.

Observation 6. If the Apostles' Doctrine be the Lord's Message, then purity is needful in the Messengers, the Lord expostulateth with an ungodly man for the want of it, *Psalms 50:16, 17*, that mouth should not be used to rotten and un-savoury speeches, which is the Lord's Interpreter to the people, all the Vessels of the ministration to the Lord were holy in the old Tabernacle, how much more ought the Minister who is the chosen vessel unto him? Earthen vessels we are indeed, *2 Corinthians 4:3*, yet when they are clean and sweet, we loathe not to eat and drink out of them.

Use. Against profane and uncircumcized Ministers. Observation from hence for the people.

Observation 7. Then the Apostles' Doctrine, the Doctrine of the Gospel, must not be received as the Doctrine of men, but as a Message from God, and that is

1. With attentive hearts, *Psalms 85:8*, not then to be reading other Books, though they be good, nor sleeping, for both these are a taking God's name in vain, but as those, *Acts 10:33*.

2. With reverence, *Judges 3:20; Psalms 66:2*).

3. With believing and faithful hearts, *Acts 27:25; Hebrews 4:2; Luke 1:45*.

1 John 1:5

God is light, and in him is no darkness at all, etc.

THe parts of these words are two;

1. The condition of God, he is Light.

2. The perfection, or purity of that condition, in him is no darkness.

In opening the meaning them, I must show you,

1. In what respect God is called Light.

2. To what end it is added, in him is no darkness at all.

For the First, or Light, there be three attributes;

1. It is bright and shining; hence it is put for Knowledge, *Matthew* 4:16. Hence also *Ecclesiastes* 2:13), hence Ministers conceiving Knowledge are called Lights, *Matthew* 5:14; *Romans* 2:19.

2. It is pure and clear; thence it is put for purity and holiness of life, *2 Corinthians* 6:14; *Matthew* 5:16, your Light, that is your Doctrine and holy life; hence also godly men in regard of their holy conversation are called Lights, *Philippians* 2:15).

3. It is pleasant and cheerful, *Ecclesiastes* 11:7, hence it is put for joy and comfort, *Psalms* 112:4. Now God is said to be Light in all these three respects, but the last is not here intended, a man may have fellowship with God, that walketh not always in joy and cheerfulness, but we cannot have fellowship if we walk in ignorance and uncleanness.

He is said to be light,

1. Because he is so in himself;

1. He knoweth all things, *Hebrews* 4:13; *Psalms* 147:5.

2. He is holy, *Leviticus* 11:44; *Habakkuk* 1:13.

2. He is said to be light because he makes us so;

1. Men of knowledge, scattering the darkness of ignorance, *Psalms* 91:10;

2. Holy, *Leviticus* 20:8.

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Hence at our first Creation, God's Image consisted in

1. Knowledge, *Colossians* 3:10.

2. Holiness, *Ephesians* 4:24.

And by our Regeneration we are again light, *Ephesians* 5:8.

Furthermore, God is not said to be Light, not tropically by an Hyperbole, because these things are in him, but properly, because he is Light, that is, Wisdom and Holiness itself, for God is Knowledge, and so his Holiness is Himself, for either God understandeth all things by his own Essence, or by the Species, or Images of things, this he could not, because he understood them before they were, therefore he understood them by his Essence, God's Holiness also is Himself, or else it is in God, and so some composition will be found in God, at least of Subject and Adjunct, then something will be found before God, for a simple thing is in Nature before a Compound; now in Nature nothing can be before God, if it could, he were not God.

2. In him is said to be no darkness at all,

1. In way of confirmation of what he said before, for so *St John* usually as he affirmeth a truth, so he denieth the contrary falsehood, *John* 4:2,3 & 7,8), as *Pharaoh's* repeated Dreams, were for confirmation, *Genesis* 41:23; *Galatians* 1:8,9.

1. In way of opposition to our

1. Knowledge, 1 *Corinthians* 13:12.

2. Holiness, 1 *John* 1:8.

Use 1. Observe God's Simplicity of Nature, he is in the Light, the Light is in him; he is Light itself, which shows that whatsoever is in him is himself; the Sun, though light be in it, yet it is not Light itself.

Use 2. Then no wonder if we cannot see the full Wisdom of the ways of God, who can look upon the Sun in its full strength? yet the Sun is not Light itself; whose eyes doth not his glorious light dazzle? 1 *Timothy* 6:16; *Romans* 11:33,34.

Use 3. If in God's Light, there is no drams of darkness, or ignorance, then he knoweth all things, *John* 21:17. Four things especially.

1. Events of things, *Isaiah* 11:22,23 & 14:7, and therefore is not subject to after Counsels; hence we know, though God be said to repent, as of Creating Man and choosing *Saul*, yet both are said Humanities, when he went about to do otherwise, *Genesis* 6:6; 1 *Samuel* 15:ult; *Numbers* 23:19, how needful then is it to consult with him, and seek his direction in all our Counsels?

2. The most secret sins that are committed, *Psalms* 139:11,12; *Job* 24:14; *Isaiah* 29:15.

3. The inmost heart of man, *Jeremiah* 17:9, 10; how vain then is Hypocrisy, how doth it dance in a Net before God? *Hebrews* 4:13; 1 *Samuel* 16:7).

4. The wants of his Children, *Matthew* 6:32, hence we are eased of destructful, and distrustful care, *verse* 31.

Use 4. For such as live in ignorance and uncleanness are without God in the World, for he is Light, *Ephesians* 4:18,19, then we are to labour to be light, in all manner of knowledge and holy conversation, 1 *Peter* 1:15,16.

Use 5. Then we are to seek to him to enlighten our darkness, he is the Fountain of Light, Light itself, he alone scattereth the mists of our darkness, our ignorance, and pollutions, *Psalms* 119:33; *Psalms* 5:8.

Use 6. If no blemish of darkness be in God, then he is holy in all his ways, *Psalms* 145:17, well said *Chemnitius*, *De causa peccati tenenda est hæc veritas, Deum non esse autorem peccati, etiamsi si non possimus omnes argutias, quæ contra opponuntur executere.*

1 John 1:6, 7

IN the first Four Verses Saint *John* had declared the subject of his Doctrine, and his end.

The Subject was God-man, that which was seen, and heard was Man,

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the Word of Life, that is God-man; this is amplified by some adjuncts in the second verse, of manifestation, and of declaration.

The end of his Doctrine was double;

1. Subordinate, to bring on Christians to fellowship with the Apostles, and lest they should despise them, he tells them their fellowship was not base, it was with the Father, and his Son Jesus Christ.

2. The supreme and main end was, that their joy might be full; fullness of joy in the Spirit, is the main end of this Epistle.

Then Verse 5 he comes to a particular of that Subject which he had handled before in general, he tells them one thing that he had heard of Christ, and that was, that God is Light, and in him is no darkness at all; this was one part of the Message he was to deliver.

Some understand it of Christ, so he is called, Light, *John* 1:9, that enlightens everyone that comes into the World; but Verse 7 he speaks of Christ the Son of that Light, and therefore here he speaks of the Father, We have heard how God is Light, and in him is no darkness.

Now we come to the application of it; he desiring to train them up in the fullness of joy, he desires to clear all doubts; therefore this is his method, he tells you of some things he heard from Christ, and then he gives signs of their fellowship with Christ, that so everyone might know what part he hath in this joy.

From this he gathers a double note of our fellowship with God, whereby we may know it, that our joy may be full, *verse* 6. Negatively, for if God be light, then he that saith he hath fellowship with God, and yet walks in darkness, is a Liar.

Then on the other side Affirmatively, *verse* 7. If we walk in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and so with God.

1. Then here is a sign of Hypocrisy, to say that he hath fellowship with God, and yet walk in darkness.

2. A sign of sincerity, he walks in the light, which brings a double benefit.

1. We have fellowship one with another.

2. The blood of Christ cleanseth us from all our sins; If we say we have fellowship with God, and walk in darkness, we lie, etc.

Doctrine 1. *Opinion and profession of fellowship with God, is no certain sign of true fellowship with him, opinion of Religion is no certain sign of Religion.*

If we say, etc. now saying includes three things; *Oratio est*

1. *Mentalis*, to think, a man may say it in his heart, when he thinks so, and that is his opinion, *Psalms* 14:1, *The fool hath said in his heart there is no God*, *Exodus* 2:14; *Psalms* 30:6).

2. *Vocalis*, to speak, to say in outward words, *Genesis* 22:7.

3. *Vitalis*, in outward carriage, to make show and profession in his walking, *Romans* 1:22.

All these are meant here; to carry a man's self therefore as if he were a Christian, and yet to walk in darkness is Hypocrisy, *Proverbs* 14:12; *Matthew* 7:21, 22, 23. *Not everyone that saith Lord, Lord*; It is not thinking, nor saying that carries it, nor walking so outwardly; for we may do so, and have no fellowship with Christ.

Reason 1. Because opinion may spring from φιλαυτία, even as *Haman's* opinion was, that the King would honour no man so much as himself, *Esther* 6:6, so many times out of self-love, we think we wish well to God, and he to us, when there is no such matter in truth.

2. Opinion may spring from common Graces, such as may be in Hypocrites, *Matthew* 7:22, 23, they wondered why they were not received, because they had done many good works and Prophesied in his Name, and cast out Devils, etc., therefore they doubted not of acceptance, so from these common Gifts it often falls out, that we have a good conceit of ourselves, that God will accept us.

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And for carriage, a man may so carry himself, as if he were a good Christian.

1. A man may profess Religion for worldly respects, as many became Jews, *Esther* 8:17, it may be for fear of the Laws, or Friends, many love Christ for Loaves, for Profit, because there is fullness in Christ, *John* 6:16.

2. Common Graces may make us profess Religion; as a man that hath been enlarged at the word, he is willing to come to it, as those *John* 5:35 and yet were but προσκαίρος *John* 4:20 [[should this be *Mark* 4:19?]], and the stony ground.

3. Some are drawn on through mere compulsion of conscience, and yet live in darkness; some have gifts in prayer, and preaching, and zeal, as *Jehu* had, and joy in the word, as *Herod*, yet because they walked in darkness, they had no Fellowship with God.

Use 1. A ground of comfort to such as are afraid that they are Hypocrites, and are much discouraged, and think they have no fellowship with God, why this may comfort them; if there be some that say, they have Fellowship with God, and have not, so *contra*, some may think and say they have no Fel-

lowship with him, and yet may have.

Use 2. It confutes the Papists, that say we teach that men's opinion is Faith, and a man is justified by persuasion; but we do not say that every opinion and persuasion is a good argument of justifying Faith, but that kind of persuasion and opinion, that is built upon God's Testimony, upon the Testimony of the Word and Spirit, that is a divine justifying Faith, otherwise we say many a man's persuasion is built on self-love, or some Common Graces.

Use 3. It may exhort such as have a good opinion of their own Estate, and make a profession of it, it may teach all such, seriously to consider whether they be well grounded, for a man may be deceived in it; if we say that we have Fellowship, and yet walk in darkness, we lie; a man would be loath to be couzened in a piece of gold, why, what are thousands of gold and silver, to have all his Estate and body current, and strong, and to have his heart unsound and counterfeit, all current but his own soul? what greater confusion than the cutting of a man's hopes? for a man to live all his days in a good hope, and at death to have his hopes to fail him, this confounds his Spirit; therefore take not all for gold that glitters.

Use 4. It teacheth us not forthwith to be deluded with the opinion of others, but consider whether they be not deceived that he takes for good, or they be not sound whom he takes for Hypocrites, do not easily take them for our Brethren and Sisters that carry a show; the Church had never more wrong, than by false Brethren that have spied out their liberty, and informed against them; take not every Professor for a Brother; men may say they have fellowship with God, and yet walk in darkness, therefore take heed of entertaining such into your good opinion and fellowship.

1. It will dishonour God, when such have been embraced by such and such people of God, and now what is become of them?

2. It will bring prejudice to God's Saints many times; they are more wronged by them than any that carry it closely, and at length break out, *2 Corinthians 11:26*, so *David* complains, *Psalms 55:12,13,14*, it was a commendable practice of the Apostles, *Acts 9:26*, they would not easily admit of *Pau*, and it is commonly said, if a man or woman carry a Bible, or come to good duties, why they begin to be esteemed, but others that make not such a show are less respected.

Doctrine. *A life led in ignorance and uncleanness is a certain sign of Hypocrisy; to live so and profess Religion, or profession of Religion joined with a life led in ignorance and ungodliness, is a sure sign of Hypocrisy.*

Darkness implies both, Ignorance and Ungodliness; Darkness hath a fourfold signification, sometimes it is put for Ignorance, the people that sat in darkness, etc. *Matthew* 4:16.

2. It is put for Profaneness and Ungodliness, every sin is called darkness, 2 *Corinthians* 6:14; *Ephesians* 5:8

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3. Sometimes it is put for horror of conscience and confusion of Spirit, *Isaiah* 50:10.

4. For obscurity and dishonour, confusion and desolation, *Proverbs* 20:12, for as light is took four ways, so is darkness.

Light is put sometimes for Knowledge, sometimes for Grace, sometimes for Comfort, sometimes for Glory, *Colossians* 1:12,13, so contrary, darkness is sometimes put for darkness of ignorance, of ungodliness, of discomfort, and of dishonour and obscurity.

The two last are not here meant; a man may walk in much discomfort, and yet have Fellowship with God, *Isaiah* 50:10; *Matthew* 12:20, the bruised reed will he not break, etc. a man in such a condition walks in darkness, and yet God will not break and quench such.

2. Many a Child of God walks in much dishonour and baseness, and yet have Fellowship with God, 1 *Corinthians* 4:13; *Psalms* 22:6. *David* complains he was a worm and no man, a reproach and scorn of men, and yet was a good man, and had Fellowship with God, therefore it cannot be meant of these two, for those that are in such a condition, are ordinarily most sound and sincere, whereas others having more comfort, walk more loosely and carelessly, but if we live in Uncleaness or Ignorance, we have no Fellowship with God, *Proverbs* 19:2. God is a God of Light, omniscient, and how can he have Fellowship with God, that hath no light in him? *Hosea* 4:6, my people perish for want of Knowledge. Ignorance is a certain note of destruction, *Proverbs* 29:18, where no vision is, the people perish, that is, where there is no means of seeing, *Matthew* 15:14.

Reason. Why Ignorance cannot stand with the Fellowship of God, because where there is no knowledge, the light of the Word is wanting, the Word is a light and a Lantern, now as one in a house cannot do work without light, especially a stranger, he knows not what to do, so a man is a stranger within himself that hath no light, and how can he order himself, tell what to do, if he hath no light in him? he that knows neither himself, nor Christ, nor the way to him, how shall he be saved by him? many do think their Estate good, but if they had light, they would not think so; others think their Estate

bad, but cannot get out of this, they have no light to get out of it, and therefore cannot have Fellowship with God.

2. For Uncleaness and Ungodliness, that cannot stand with Fellowship with God, 2 *Corinthians* 6:14, implying an impossibility, *Psalms* 94:ult; *Psalms* 5:4; *Hebrews* 1:13

Reason 1. God is of pure eyes and cannot endure to behold any iniquity.

2. From the power of all saving Graces, they do purify and cleanse the heart, so Faith purifies the heart, *Acts* 15:9, so hope 1 *John* 3:3, so love, ye that love God depart from iniquity.

3. From the power of the Spirit in him that hath Fellowship with God, 1 *Corinthians* 6:17; *Ezekiel* 36:27.

Use 1. It shows that Ignorance is no Mother of Devotion, for what is Devotion but a stricter and nearer Fellowship with God? it shows therefore the dangerous Estate of wicked Ignorant men, they think their Ignorance will plead for them, but they are deceived, through want of knowledge my people perish, God takes no pleasure in Fools, you may think you have Fellowship with God, and yet live in Ignorance and Darkness, but you deceive yourselves, can a man live in the Sun and have neither light nor heat? so what Fellowship hath that man with God, that hath neither light of Knowledge, nor warmth of Grace from him?

Use 2. It may be a trial of our Estate, if we have no Knowledge of God, we have no Fellowship with him, if you delight in Ignorance, and be now willing to be taught, as many Servants and Children are, how can these have any Fellowship with God, that have no knowledge or desire after it? it is true, many there are that desire Knowledge, and yet cannot attain it, and

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such, God will accept of their desire, or give them Knowledge, but such as please themselves in their ignorance, have no Fellowship with God, 2 *Timothy* 3:11, they are sealed up to damnation; if a man live in darkness of sin and ungodliness, and is convinced of it, and yet will live in it, in idleness, and wantonness, and Sabbath-breaking, etc., be not deceived, if you make a show of Religion you deceive you own soul, if a man walketh in darkness, and saith he hath Fellowship with God, he lies.

Question. Who can say his heart is clean? have not the best of God's Children their failings?

Answer. It is true they have their failings, but do they walk therein? it is one thing to step into a way, and another thing to walk in that way. *David* stepped into the way of Adultery and Murther, but he walketh not in it; a man

that walketh in a good way, may be turned out of it by a wild Beast, or a Storm, or Carelessness, but when he sees he is wrong, he turns into the right path again; so is it with a godly heart, he may be carried out of the way, by the violence of Temptation, etc., but he returns again, as soon as he sees his error.

Use 3. To teach men, as ever they desire to have Fellowship with God, to cleanse themselves from Ignorance and Ungodliness; if you desire to have Fellowship with God, you must, 1. Avoid Ignorance, and labour for Knowledge, desire to know his will, and they that love light, God loves them.

2. Turn not aside to any dark crooked way, *Psalms* 125:6, the *Israel* of God have no crooked ways to walk in, 2 *Corinthians* 6:17,18 with chapter 7:1, showing us, if we would have Fellowship with God, that God might acknowledge us for Sons, and we him for our Father, we must look into all dark corners, and cast out all uncleanness, and if you do thus strive to reform yourselves, you are not in darkness; if you cleanse yourselves from dark, and crooked, and unclean ways, you may assure yourselves that you have Fellowship with God.

1 John 1:7

But if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have Fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all our sins.

THe scope of the Apostle St *John* was to deliver what he had heard and seen from Christ, and to this end, that their joy might be full.

His first message was that God is light, verse 5, and from thence he descends to gather a certain sign of our Fellowship with God, or want of it, a sign of the want he lays down, verse 6, he that walketh in darkness hath no Fellowship with him; now in the 7th verse, he lays down a sign of our enjoying this Fellowship with God.

In the Verse we have two parts, 1. A certain sign of our Fellowship with God, namely if we walk in the light.

2. The privilege of such an Estate, the blood of Christ cleanseth us from our sins; so that here is the mark of a true Christian, and his privilege.

Doctrine. *To walk in the light, is a certain mark of true Fellowship with God, one with another, that is, God with us, and we with him.*

Light is sometimes taken for light of Knowledge, Holiness, Comfort, Glory. 1. It is taken for light of Knowledge, *Mark* 4:16. Light is clear, and so is Knowledge.

2. For light of Holiness, *Ephesians* 5:8. Light is clean, so is Holiness.

3. For Comfort, *Psalm 97:11*.

4. For Glory; now Darkness is contrary to all these; now therefore to walk in the Light, is to walk in the ways of Knowledge, Purity, Comfort, and Glory; but what is it to walk?

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It is commonly took for the whole course of a Christian life, but in borrowed speech there are some significations therein.

1. It implies, That a Christian course is a voluntary motion, a man is not said to walk that is pulled and hauled, no motion more voluntary than walking.

2. It is a continued motion, not a step or two that makes a walk.

3. Walking gets ground, its *motus progressivus*, standing still rids no ground, but walking doth; so a Christian, goes about Christian duties, not only voluntarily but continually, but he grows up therein from time to time; so that this sense of the Doctrine is thus much; To lead a Christian course, voluntarily, continually, and increasingly, is a sign of fellowship with God; now that such as thus walk have undoubted fellowship with God, appears, *Ephesians 5:8*, *Ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord, walk therefore as children of light*, that is, children of God, for God is light, those that walk in truth, and not in error and heresy, and in holy ways, they are children of God, *Psalm 1:1,2*, the Law of God is the way of holiness and truth, and if he that walks in that way be blessed, then he hath fellowship with God (for in his fellowship stands all blessedness, *Psalm 119:1,2*).

Reason 1. From the insufficiency of our nature to walk in these ways, without the Spirit of God in us, and directing of us, *Ezekiel 36:27*; *John 15:5*, without Christ we can do nothing, *Hosea 14:8*, if any good fruit be growing in a Christian it is from the Spirit of God, otherwise the fruit of a carnal heart is carnal, *John 3:6*, we cannot be holy without God's Spirit, nor bring forth any good fruit.

2. As we cannot be good without his Spirit, so we cannot do good without him, *2 Corinthians 3:5*, and Christ thinks it an impossible thing for a Carnal man to speak well, *Matthew 12:34*.

Reason 2. Such as do walk in the light have recovered the Image of God, now his Image stood in light, *John 1:4*, light of Knowledge and Holiness, *Colossians 3:10*; *Ephesians 4:24*, what fellowship Adam had with God in Paradise, the same have all such as walk in the ways of truth and holiness.

Question. *Do you not see many true Christians that have true grace, and yet walk in much darkness, how then have they fellowship with God?* *Isaiah 50:10*, *he that feareth the Lord, and hearkens to the voice of his Servants, that walks in darkness,*

and sees no light, etc., which shows that a man may fear the Lord, and hearken to the voice of his Servants, and yet walk in darkness.

Answer. Such a one walks not in any gross ignorance, or error and heresy, or in darkness of uncleanness, and profaneness, but he may walk in darkness of discomfort, and dishonour, and yet have true fellowship with God; no Christian walks more in light than they that walk most in darkness, those that walk most discouraged, they walk more carefully and fearfully, whereas many that walk in more comfort, walk more loosely, and scandalously.

Q. What need they walk in discomfort if they walk in the light? doth not all discomfort arise from ignorance, that they do not know their own estate and God's nature, and love towards them, &c?

Answer. It is true, they walk in darkness, and that is the reason why they walk so uncomfortably, for if they were truly enlightened in the Nature of God, and their own estate, they would have more comfort; but yet this is no affected ignorance, but out of infirmity and weakness, and want of experience, it is one thing to be in a way, and another thing to walk in that way, such a man doth not walk in that darkness because it is not voluntary, he doth not desire to walk in darkness; neither is it continual, but he at length grows to be further enlightened.

Use 1. Of refutation of the Papists, that say we deny Works, and maintain the doctrine of the Solifidians.

Answer. We disclaim all Works as any cause or merit of Justification,

Psalm

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Psalm 130:3, but we do not disclaim good Works in themselves, we do not discourage any from good Works, but indeed encourage them thereunto; is this no encouragement to walk in the light, when we say that all such shall have fellowship with God, and be cleansed by the blood of Christ? these are strong motives to good works; we maintain good works (as the Apostle saith) for necessary uses, *Titus 3:14*. What are these necessary uses?

1. For our own parts, that we may have fellowship with God.
2. To glorify God, *Matthew 5:16*, *Let your good works so shine before men, etc.*
3. To stop slanders of vain men, *2 Peter 2:5*.
4. That by our good Works others may be led on to a Christian course; good conversation is a good means of the conversion of others.

We further say, That good Works justify us, in St *James* his sense, *James* 2:14. There is a double Justification.

1. A justification of a man from sin in the sight of God.

2. Of a Christian from Hypocrisy in the sight of both God and Man; the first way a man is justified only by the blood of Christ; in the second way by good Works; for we know that a man's Conscience has two burthens.

1. My Sins are great, and liable to Damnation, how shall I acquit of that? from this our own works cannot justify us, it is done only by the blood of Christ.

2. I, but the blood of Christ cleanseth only true Christians that are in Christ, and have true grace, but you am an Hypocrite, how shall I now quit from the imputation of Hypocrisy? In that I am justified by my works let it appear to myself and others, that I have lived in all uprightness, 2 *Corinthians* 1:12, so that justification from Hypocrisy before God and Man, is from the witness of my upright and unblameable life, so that I am justified from a double accusation, from the one by the one way, from the other by another way. I am a sinner; that I cannot deny; my best works are sinful, therefore from that I am justified only by the blood of Christ.

But Christ's Blood belongs not to you, you are an Hypocrite, now how shall I know the sincerity of Faith but from the fruits, which is an holy and righteous life, so that if I walk so, I justify myself from that imputation. How doth *Hezekiah* help himself when God spake bitter things? *Remember how I have walked before thee with an upright heart*, 1 *John* 3; *Isaiah* 53:11, how do I know if I know him? why if I keep his Commandments; therefore we say, that an holy life is an evident sign of our fellowship with God, it glorifies God, it stops slanders, and brings on others, and besides all this, a godly life will justify us from hypocrisy.

Use 2. For trial, whether we have fellowship with God or no; why if we walk in the light we have fellowship with him, *Colossians* 3:3; *Isaiah* 50:10, if a man walk in light of truth and holiness, in knowledge of God's will and obedience to it; if a man walk in such a way (I say) that is, if he do willingly give up himself to the knowledge and obedience of the will of God, if he continue therein, and grow in grace, and go forward from step to step, from strength to strength, *Psalms* 84, it is a true sign of fellowship with God, there is no corrupt nature that can have such desires, at least not continue and grow up in them.

Question. *May not a Christian be carried out of his way as David into Adultery, Noah into Drunkenness, Peter into denial of Christ?*

Answer. They were indeed ways of Darkness, but they did not turn into them voluntarily, but through violence of Temptation and corruption, 2. They continued not in them. 3. They grew not up in them, they took no pleasure in them.

A man is not judged by a step or two, but according to his walk, what is his course; a man may take a step or two out of the way, but yet if he recover
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himself, we say that is his way, God judgeth not of a man's Spirit by a step or two, for then who could be justified? no Christian, but sometimes he steps awry, and it may be three or four steps; as *David*, 1. Into Idleness, 2. Into Adultery, 3. Drunkenness, 4. Murder (2 *Samuel* 11). he went into four wicked steps, foul steps, but you must not judge a man for two or three or four steps, for so on the contrary, a wicked man, may take a step or two into a godly course; he may read some good Book, pray, hear the Word, this is to bring about some end of his, he hath another way to go, only he is turned out of his way for some conveniency as he thinks, so that there is no judging of a man, on either part by a step or two, but we must judge of men by their walks; will you judge a man to be good, that is, good in good company? many a man for company sake, will go out of his way, so we must not judge what they do by a start, but what is their constant, voluntary growing course, what way they hold to, that is their way, a good man in evil company, his heart is not quiet, it is no voluntary motion, and so *contra*, we often fail in judging some men by some few steps, but observe what is his voluntary constant course, and what doth he thrive and grow upon, if a man's Christian course be voluntary, constant, and growing, it is not the going out a step or two that will condemn us, the wise men they came a long journey to seek Christ, and went out of their way to *Jerusalem* to inquire. But when the Star left them, but they stayed not there, but went into their way again, and then the Star appeared to them again, so a godly man goes to seek Christ, and God gives him the light of his Word, yet upon some error, he may turn out of the way, and then leave God's Word; but they stay not there, but go into the way again, and then they have the light of God's Word to direct them.

Use 3. May teach men not to content themselves in any Ignorance, or Uncleaness or Wicked course, you cannot walk in Darkness and have Fellowship with God; therefore as you would claim Fellowship with God, disclaim Fellowship with sin, you cannot continue and grow up in any sin voluntarily, but you disclaim Fellowship with God, yea and with the blood of Christ, no Fellowship with Christ as long as you have any fellowship with sin.

Use 4. To teach Christians, that it is not enough to be holy and true, but God requires you should walk in Light and holiness, *Ephesians 5:8; Galatians 5:25*, if you would be men of Knowledge and Piety, it is needful that you walk in that course, it is not enough to set an instrument in tune, but it must sound forth; it is not enough to have our hearts in a good frame, but we must walk in that frame, *Psalms 119:105, Thy word is a light unto my feet, and a Lanthorn to my paths*; God's Word was a light to his feet, what, to look on? no, but to be a guide to his steps; we should order our steps according to the Word; the Church is compared to a Garden, *Canticles 4:14*, full of spices and flowers; is she content that she has these? no, but verse 16, awake O North-wind, and blow upon my Garden, that my spices may show forth, and yield a fragrant smell; a Christian must not only have gifts and Graces, but walk accordingly, a Christian that hath good parts and gifts, if he doth not walk according thereunto, what good doth he? it is a gouty foot that dares not walk, so he is a distempered Christian, that hath the feet of a Christian, and yet walks not, he is only the image of a Christian, an image has the exact parts of a man, but makes no use of them, it hath eyes and sees not, ears and hears not, feet and walks not, *Psalms 115:5-7*, so he is but the image of a Christian that hath parts and gifts, and walks not accordingly, therefore whatsoever Spirit of God hath given thee, walk in it, if thou hast a Spirit of Meekness use it, if a Spirit of Humility, Patience, etc. use it, if a Spirit of Prayer, use it, walk in it, else you are but images and no true Christians. The more you walk in good duties and a Christian conversation, the more you feel Fellowship with God, otherwise if you go out of the way, you lose the Light, the Star, as the wise men did; when you walk in the waves of Pride, and impatience, and Covetousness, and Uncleaness, you lose your way, and your light too, which
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should direct you; therefore what gifts you have, walk in them.

Use 5. Of comfort to such Christians, as are walking and doing, though they cannot go on so fast as they would, a man that walks, does not so fast as he that gallops; but yet if you do but walk in a good way, you make a progress, and shall come to your journey's end at last.

What if *Judas* gallop faster than the rest of the Apostles, as it is likely, because they did least suspect him, he galloped, but he soon stopped his course, and turned into the way of perdition, therefore it is no discouragement, if in a Christian course you be but going on, though you go on but slowly, yet if you rid ground and stand not at a stay, nor go backward, that is comfort, for you surely have Fellowship with God.

1 John 1:7

The main scope of this Epistle, is to comfort tender consciences, that their joy may be full, for this end, he tells them certain messages which he heard from Christ, the first message is, verse 5. whereupon he infers a note of Fellowship with God, Negatively verse 6. Affirmatively verse 7. if we walk in the light, &c. Doctrine: *Such as walk in the light, the blood of Christ purgeth them from all their sins.*

The Verse sets down two Privileges of them that walk in the light, they have not only Fellowship with God, but with Christ, and that in his mediation, and that in cleansing them from all their sins.

Question 1. What is meant by the blood of Christ?

Answer. The blood of Christ, is here put, not only for that blood shed on the Cross, but for his whole death, set out by blood, which was the effect of his death, for blood poured out after his death, *John 19:33,34*; for it is said of the death of Christ, *Romans 5:8*. And the death of Christ is not all, for he suffered many things besides; so that it comprehends all his sufferings, *1 Peter 3:18*, yet there is a further Synecdoche; sometimes his passion is put for his whole obedience, *Romans 5:18, 19*; *Luke 22:44*, for that is attributed to his obedience, that it makes us righteous, that is, free from sin; all his Spiritual desertions, were sufferings of Christ, tending to cleanse us from sin, blood includes all his sufferings and obedience; And indeed the very blood of Christ, had it not been done in obedience and humility, it would have done no good, for the promise is to him that doth something, *do this and live, John 10:18*, his passion was done in obedience, *Philippians 2:7,8*.

Question. Why is our cleansing from sin ascribed most to his blood, seeing it reached to his whole death, and passion, and obedience? why is his blood most instanced in, Matthew 26:28; Romans 5:9; Hebrews. 9:14; 1 Peter 1:19; and why is salvation most attributed to his blood?

Answer. It was meet.

1. Because death was the wages of Sin, *Romans 6:23*; *Genesis 3:17*; therefore we must satisfy that, or our Surety for us.

2. His death is most stood on, because the whole covenant stands in that, the Legacy is of no force, without the death of the Testator, *Hebrews. 9:17*.

3. Blood is most mentioned; because it is an evident Testimony of death; because in blood is life; 2 because it accomplished all the legal types, *Hebrews 9:22*.

Question 2. Why is it called the blood of Jesus Christ his Son?

Answer: Because that Christ that shed his blood, was the Son of God, and that added efficacy to it, *Hebrews* 10:14, not the blood of sinful man, *Hebrews* 2:26,27, and it must be therefore of infinite power, *Acts* 20:28.

Question 3. How is this blood said to cleanse?

Answer 1. As it Justifies us. 2. As it Sanctifies.

1. As it Justifies us, by his blood we are cleansed, *Romans* 5:9; *Ephesians* 1:7.

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we are justified by it, because it frees us from the guilt and punishment of sin.

1. From the guilt of Sin, guilt is that by whereby we are liable to the Curse.

2. It frees us from the punishment of Sin, so that now there is no condemnation to us, *Romans* 8:1; *Romans* 4 25; 1 *Peter* 2:24).

2. We are cleansed from Sin by a sanctifying power in the death of Christ, that it is whereby our Consciences being sprinkled, we are freed from the stain and lust of sin, *Hebrews* 9:29, and are endued with supernatural grace, so that we are afraid to commit any sin.

Q. What is meant in the text by all Sin?

A. That is, from original, and actual sins, from sins of Omission, and Commission, it cleanseth us from the sins of our Birth, and of our Life, of Youth, and of riper years, *Romans* 5:9, now we could not be justified if any sin were unpardoned, *Hebrews* 9:14, if it be a dead work, or sin of Omission, our conscience is purged from it, for if the blood of Bulls and Goats cleansed from all sins of the flesh, much more the blood of Christ from all sin; no sin but we are cleansed from by Christ's blood, except the sin against the Holy Ghost; *Hebrews* 10:26, because verse 29, they tread under foot the blood of the Covenant. For the proof of the point, see *Romans* 8:1,2; *Romans* 6:6.

Reason 1. From the wonderful efficacy of Christ's blood, in respect of the Divinity of his Person, the reason why it is so effectual is, because it is the blood of the Son of God, *Hebrews* 9:14.

Reason 2. Because he stood in our Persons on the Cross, through the acceptance of God, God accepted him as a Surety for us, *Hebrews* 7:22; *Isaiah* 5. *ult.* 1 *Peter* 2:24, therefore it is as much as if we had done it in our own persons, *John* 10:11. He had no need to shed his Blood for himself, for he had never sinned.

Use 1. To reprove the Papists, who teach that the Mass being celebrated for the dead and living, justifies from sin, but if the blood of Christ cleanse us from all sin, there is no need of the Mass to cleanse us from any sin; and

they teach that the Mass is an unbloody Sacrifice; now it must be a bloody Sacrifice that must cleanse, *Hebrews* 10:10,14, but if it be often offered, it doth not exceed the Sacrifices of the Law, *Hebrews* 10:1–5.

Use 2. To refute the Popish Purgatory, if Christ's blood cleanse us from all sin, what need a Purgatory to expiate any sin? This is a Blasphemy against Christ's blood.

Q. Do not Temptation, and Affliction, and Word, and Sacraments, and Faith, and other Graces, purge us from sin, and purify us? It is said of Afflictions, *Hebrews* 12:11.

Answer. It is true, there are many means to purge us from sin; but no efficacy in any of them, except by virtue of Christ's Blood; therefore those in Hell have no benefit, because Christ's blood does not reach thither, so that if any be bettered by Afflictions, or Word, or Sacraments, it is from the virtue of Christ's blood, and if Christ's blood be sprinkled on Purgatory, we will not reject it.

Use 3. Of refutation of the opinion of many godly Divines, that hold we are purified from the sin of our Birth by the purity of Christ's Birth; from Sins of Omission by his active obedience, from Sins of Commission by his passive obedience, but we must know there is thus much in the purity of his Birth, in his Obedience, in his Passion, that it makes us fit to be cleansed, but yet we must hold the Blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin, that brings this fitness to perfection. A Lamb defiled in the old Law was never accepted, though it were slain for a Sacrifice, and if it had been without spot and blemish, yet if it had not been slain it would not have been accepted either; so had not Christ been a Lamb spotless and undefiled, his death would not have cleansed us from our sins, and though he were spotless and undefiled, yet he must be slain, or else we could not be clean-

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neither, the purity of Christ's Nature doth not cleanse us from sin; but we must take all jointly together, all his active obedience was passive, and all his passive obedience was active, *Galatians* 4:4,5, that he was obedient to the Law was part of his Passion, and by the obedience of Christ to the death, we are cleansed from all sin.

Use 4. To refute some that say we are justified by faith, as it is a work in us, they say we are justified not by the works of the Law, but by our faith, *Romans* 11:5, 6, but if we are justified by faith, as it is a work in us, how doth the blood of Christ cleanse us from sin? but it is faith as it lays hold on the blood of Christ.

Use 2. For comfort to all such as walk in the light; let them not be comforted; you will say, your hearts are full of impatience, and covetousness, and uncleanness, these are great sins indeed, but the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin, there is no number nor measure limited.

Objection. *He cleanseth not all men, how shall I know whether my sins be cleansed?*

Answer. Why, do you walk in the light as God is in the light? If you do, then his Blood cleanseth you from all sin, therefore if a man would have comfort, he must consider whether he live in any sin voluntarily, and walk in darkness, if he do, he has no part in Christ's Blood, but if there be no sin, but he is willing to avoid it; no duty, but he desires to perform it, and amend all, it is a sign that he walks in light; if you see what is amiss and labour to mend it, then you walk in the light, and then assure yourselves that the blood of Christ will cleanse you from all your sins.

Use 3. For instructions, if Christ's blood cleanseth from all sin, then no sin is venial, is that sin venial that cannot be cleansed but by Christ's blood?

Use 4. To show us the reason why the blood of Christ is called precious, *1 Peter 1:19*, it is more precious than the blood of Bulls and Goats, &c. so all silver and gold in the world cannot remit one sin; or save one soul from Hell, *Psalm 49 6-8; Hebrews 12:24*.

Use 5. To teach Christians notwithstanding all former sins, to walk boldly in a Christian course; we are much troubled in our spirits by reason of our sins, the multitude and greatness of them; why in consideration of this, let us be bold *Hebrews 10:19-23*, we may be bold to approach to God's Throne, bold to enter into Heaven, let no sin discourage us, for his blood cleanseth from all sin.

Use 6. If his blood cleanse from all sin, let us make use of his blood, *Zechariah 13:1*, it is even this Fountain of Christ's blood, let us therefore bathe ourselves often in this Blood, that we may be thoroughly purged from all sin, from the stain and guilt of sin.

Use 7. All Ordinances, Word, Prayer, Sacrament, Communion of Saints, all holy duties will do no good without his blood, therefore desire God that every Ordinance may be sprinkled by his blood, as Water alone cleanseth not without Soap, so it is that all the waters of *Jordan* that can cleanse us from dead works without the blood of Christ strike in with it, let us not rest in any Ordinance or performance, in any Prayer, or Fast, or in all of them, if you would spend your blood to cleanse your Souls from sin, all will be in vain, except it be mixed with Christ's blood, therefore pray that the Word and Sacrament, and every Ordinance, may be sprinkled with Christ's blood

to justify, and sanctify: the blood of Christ hath procured sentence of absolution from God, and virtue from the Spirit of Grace, to wash away all our sins, therefore lay hold on it, this is to lay hold on the Horns of the Altar; therefore in all Christian consideration and duties, look chiefly and principally to him, or else all will be in vain.

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1 John 1:8.

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

FROM the former Verse St *John* gathers a two-fold mark of our estate; First, in this verse, if the blood of Christ cleanses us from all sin, then they are liars that say they have no sin, *If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, &c.*

The second mark is verse 9. If we acknowledge our sins &c.

The first in this Verse, it is a dangerous sign of an evil estate, if we say we have no sin, for we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

Doctrine: *Opinion and profession of perfect holiness is an error wilful, pernicious, and dangerous.*

If we say: 1. In heart, *Psalm 14:1*, where such a thought is.

2. To speak such a thing, to say, is to profess so, to carry ourselves so, as may manifest our opinion, *Romans 1:22*.

That we have no sin, that is, that we are perfectly holy and righteous,

First, It is an error; and

Secondly, wilful error, for he saith so himself.

Thirdly, it is a pernicious and dangerous error, it roots out all grace.

1. It is an error and delusion, for it is contrary to God's express Word, *Proverbs 20:9*; Who can say he is clean? *Ecclesiastes 7:22*; *1 Kings 8:46*; *James 3:2*, in many things we sin all, both in matter and manner

2. It is a wilful error, a man does not learn it from others, but he persuades himself so.

1. Because if any read the Scriptures, he shall find it contrary, *Psalm 130:3*; *Psalm 143:2*.

2. Though a man never read the Scriptures, he shall meet with daily crosses, now a man's own heart will tell him it is for his sin, *Job 14:1*

3. None but finds he hath need of craving pardon for sin, *Zechariah 11:4*; *John 16:9*, he shall convince the world of sin, not a man in the world, but he is convinced to be a sinner, therefore none can say he hath no sin, but it must be wilful error.

3. It is a dangerous error.

1. Because it evacuates all truth of Grace, where this conceit is, there can be no truth of grace, because all truth of grace expresseth itself in Three things;

1. In something about sin, every godly man first renounceth all his own righteousness, *Philippians*. 3:7,8

2. He complains bitterly of sin, *Romans* 7:24.

3. He fights against sin to the death, *Hebrews*. 12:4. Now if every godly man do thus, how can any truth of grace be, where a man either thinks or professeth he hath no sin?

2. Where there is truth of Grace, it expresses itself in some things that respect the blood of Christ.

1. He prizes it above all blessings in the World, *Galatians* 6:14; *1 Corinthians* 2:2; and why need he prize it so much, if he have no sin?

2. Every godly man desires to bathe himself daily in that blood, *Zechariah* 13:1; now what need that, if he have no sin?

3. Take a Christian man's carriage towards perfection of holiness.

He strives after perfection earnestly every day, *Philippians* 3:12–14, what need Mortification if there were no sin or vivification?

Use 1. It convinceth many sorts of people to be in a dangerous estate, devoid of grace.

1. Such were the Pharisees, that counted themselves just and holy. Such were the *Essenes*, who counted themselves strict observers of the law of

Moses.

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Moses. Such a one was the young man that came to Christ, *Matthew* 19:20, but Christ convinces him that he was not perfect. Such were the Catharists of old, a sect in the Church who thought themselves pure from all sin.

It likewise reproves the Libertines, who counted themselves perfect keepers of the Law.

Such are the Papists, who say the Virgin *Mary* was without sin, she doth not say it herself; she acknowledged a Saviour, and therefore had sin.

And so all they are deceivers of themselves, that so live as if they were free from sin, that conceive well of themselves in a carnal Estate; and such is the body of the World, they will, it may be, say they are sinners, but why then do they not repent and mourn for sin? why, they see no need of that, I have lived honestly all my life, and I hope my Estate is good, and so deceive themselves.

Use 2. Hence we see a necessity laid on Ministers to preach the Law, or else how shall people see their sins? by the Law comes sin to be revived, *Romans 7:7.*

Use 3. If it be so wilful and dangerous an Error, then it behoves contrary judgements, to carry themselves as those that are of another opinion; do do you believe you are guilty indeed of many sins, why then profess it, and carry your selves so, and that by an inward renouncing of all your sins, mourn for them, strive against them, for otherwise you do not profess your selves to be sinners, unless your hearts prize the blood of Christ, desire to be bathed in it; and if you do think your selves to be sinners, daily get more hold of Grace; you are yet sinful and miserable, therefore need more grace.

Use 4. If we be all sinners, then let us learn to bear God's hand patiently, *Micah 7:9.* is any froward and impatient in affliction? he professes he is no sinner he that practiseth Impatience, professeth Innocency; for if a man be Innocent, he will be ready to storm, if a man taketh crosses impatiently, he thinks they fall on him undeservedly.

Use 5 [[6]]. Learn not to be censorious, reject not others for sin; we ought not to do so, but for wallowing and walking in sin, but despise them not for sin, for in many things we sin all, and truly if we are over censorious, we profess our selves to be no sinners, for if we were, we would pity them, and look most to our selves, *Math. 7:5,6.*

If we say we have no sin, we have no truth in us.

If we say we have no sin, we have no truth in us.

Doct. *Unfeigned confession of our sins to God is the ready way to the pardon and healing of them.*

Confession is the ready way to Justification and Sanctification, pardoning of sin, and cleansing from sin.

This place is stood upon by *Bellarmino* for auricular confession, he saith, it is meant of confession, not to God, but to the Priest. And what is his ground but this? to the confession here spoken of, is a promise made of pardon, but no word of promise in Scripture to confession to God, but to confession to the Apostles and Ministers of Christ, *John 20:23.* but

1. It is a notorious Falsehood to say that no promise is made to him that confesses to God, *Proverbs 28:13.* we understand it of confession to God, but he denies it, because he speaks it of confession to him, from whom sin may be hid; But that cannot be from God; but yet many a man hides his sin from himself, and will not search his own heart, and labours to hide it from God. *Isaiah 29:15. Psalm 32:3-5.* And that place in the *Proverbs* is meant of confession to God, appears, in that he speaks of it of confessing to him, of whom he might

find mercy, but confession to man often brings ruin. I would yet further ask them if there be no place that expresseth pardon to him that confesseth his sins toward the Temple, see *Psalm* 32:5, 6; *Job* 33:27. and the whole prayer

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of *Solomon*, 1 *Kings* 8. runs on promise of Pardon to him who confesseth to God, and God answers to that Petition, *Cap.* 9:3. And now that *Solomon's* Temple is destroyed, we have a greater than the Temple, whereof that was but a type; if we confess our Sins, and put up our Prayers in the name of Christ, our Sins shall be pardoned and healed, and for that place, *John* 20:23. we say there is no mention of Confession, but they have power to remit them without confession, according to *Acts* 9:17. *Ananias* comes to him without hearing a word from him, *Acts* 22:16. his Sins were not remitted by confessing them to *Ananias*, but by calling on the Name of the Lord; indeed if a man be burdened in Conscience it is meet he should confess his faults to the faithful Ministers of God, and request their help and prayers, *James* 5:16. which is meant of Ministers as well as Lay-men, of Christians in general, *Malachi* 2: 7.

Q. *But what difference will you make between Ministers and Lay-men? if you say we may confess our faults to Lay-men in private?*

A. When Christ saith, those sins you remit, they are remitted, it is not meant that they have a judicial power to absolve them, and say, *Ego absolvo te, in nomine Patris, filii, & spiritus sancti*; [[Your sins are forgiven, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit;]] but he has given them a Ministerial power to declare remission of sins to them that are penitent, if we see them penitent and humble, they may declare some promise whereto pardon is annexed.

Obj. *But common Christians may do thus, and is there no difference between them?*

A. God is more wont more usually to bless a Minister's discerning of the estate of a man, and applying comfort than other common Christians, *Romans* 10: 14,15. the ordinary way of faith, and to get comfort by faith, is by the Ministry of the Gospel, *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins*; faithful and just, expressing the truth and righteousness of God, in making good his promise to those that confess their sins.

To forgive sin is to free a man from Sin, and Punishment, and to remit it, *Jeremiah* 31:33.

To cleanse from Sin, is to mortify Sin, and quicken Grace.

Reas. 1. In respect to God; 1. From the great Honour confession of Sin doth to God's Justice, no man confesses his Sin to God, but he glorifies

God's Justice, though he should deal never so hardly with him, yet his Justice should be magnified, *Psalm 51*; *Nehemiah 9:33*; *Daniel 9:7*.

2 It sanctifies the name of God's grace; why doth the apostle so set out the sinfulness of all, in *Cap. 2. & 3. ad Rom.* but that he might magnify the riches of God's grace? it shows, that if they have any mercy it is from Free Grace.

Reas. 2. In respect to our selves.

1 It exceedingly humbles us, and makes us willing to accept any hand of God, *Leviticus 26:41, 42.* how do these men come to be humbled? if they confess their sins, and the sins of their Fathers, this will humble them.

2 Confession of sin to God, doth restrain us from Commission of Sin, for a man considers he must come before God, and break his heart for it, and an ingenuous heart is more ashamed of his sin before God, than before men, *Psalm 51. Against thee, against thee only have I sinned,* that most affected him.

3 Confession of Sin makes us examine our selves, and that is very profitable, when a man comes and considers the frame of his heart and life, it afflicts him much, as the searching of a Wound doth anguish the Body, so examination of our selves doth much afflict our souls.

Now for the properties of this Confession, it must be serious and sincere, and with a resolution to do so no more, when a man confesseth his sins with grief of heart, that he hath offended God, and a resolution never to do the like again, this is very effectual.

Use 1. It serves to teach us, that in Scripture phrase the repentance of an

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humble sinner goes before Justification and Sanctification, and in failing, many a man comes to be humbled, and yet is confident his sin is neither forgiven, nor his heart sanctified; if Confession be the way to Pardon, what need a man confess his Sins, if he be truly persuaded they be forgiven? we grant therefore that Repentance is the way to Pardon, to the fence of it at least. It is a question whether Repentance go before Faith, or Faith before Repentance. I answer, if you take it practically, there is no man that either believes his sin pardoned, or healed, before he is brought to Humiliation, contrition, and sorrow.

Use 2. To teach all, that stand either in need of pardon of Sin, or cleansing from Sin, what course to take, the best have need to increase it; but didn't thou not find pardon at all, or cleansing; here is a plain Promise, *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins*; as if he should say, if we should confess our Sins truly, and yet find no pardon, it would violate the faithfulness and righteousness of God.

Ob. *You will say, you have confessed your sins oft before God, and yet have found no pardon?*

Ans. 1. Have you confessed your chief sins, by which you have most dishonoured God? if you hold any back any, no wonder if God hold back comfort; he that hides his sin shall not prosper, *Prov. 28:13*.

Ob. *You will say, you have dealt plainly with God, as far as you can tell?*

Ans. I ask you, has your Confession been serious, heartily grieving for dishonouring God, giving him the praise of his Justice, that you have deserved nothing but Hell, and do you magnify his Mercy, and humble your Souls? why in this case God may suspend the feeling of pardon, but you are in the way to pardon; would you commit those sins again you confess? do you hate and abhor them? then you are cleansed from them; if sin be your greatest burden, and you could not be cleansed from sin unless sin were pardoned, for the same blood of Christ mortifies Sin, that justifies us, therefore as ever you desire to find pardon, go to God, confess your Sins, deal plainly and seriously, that your hearts may be humbled, and you shall find pardon; and he doth not indeed limit the time he may make good this promise, to some sooner, to some later, but there is none but he will make it good to them, if they will wait upon him.

Use 3. Of consolation to every Soul that doth confess Sin to God, that doth truly and seriously confess, and grieve, and mourn for his Sins, that confesseth those Sins whereby he hath most dishonoured God, and wounded his own soul, *1 Sam. 12. 19*. if you do thus, God will certainly pass by all your transgressions; God that hath pawned his Faith, and Truth, and Justice on it, will certainly do it, an honest man will not fail in such a case, therefore we may build on his Promise, for it is as impossible he should deny pardon to such a one, as it is for him to be unfaithful or untrue, and though you shall find many corruptions, yet you may conclude, you are in the way to further comfort and cleansing, therefore let everyone that desires to find comfort in the pardon of his Sin, and cleansing from it, why confess your Sin to God, God hath promised it, therefore if you desire to find pardon and cleansing increased, you must look up to him, that so you may have your Sins pardoned and cleansed through Christ.

And to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Doct. *It is a filthy thing to lie in Sin unpardoned, or sin unpardoned is filthiness and uncleanness, it is an unclean and filthy thing.*

Ezekiel 36:25; Zechariah 13:1. There is a Fountain set open for Sin, and for uncleanness, *2 Corinthians 7:1*. where we see he calls sin filthiness, and unclean-

ness; there are many other expressions of this kind; God is willing to possess men with this truth, therefore he compares it to most filthy things.

1. To mire and dirt, which the Sea casts out, *Isaiah 57:20.* which is meant of casting forth sinfulness, 2 Peter 2. *ult.* it is compared to vomit, and a Sows

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wallowing in the mire, which is loathsome, *Ezek. 4. 13.* it is compared to scum which is cast into the fire, or into ashes, *Jerm. 16. 17.* it is called the carcass of detestable and abominable things; hence it is that our best duties are sometimes compared to a menstruous cloth, *Isa. 64. 6.* So it is called uncircumcision, *Col. 2. 14.* and therefore wicked men are compared to dung, *Psal. 83. 10.* and *Math. 2. 3.* God saith he will cast the dung of their solemn feasts upon their faces, that is, their sinful carriage of holy Ordinances, so that God counts sin, mire, and scum, and dung, &c. he would have us look at sin, as a congress of all filthiness, if you could put it all together, sin would comprehend all.

Hence it is, that the best performances of wicked men are unclean, *Titus 1. 15.* the sacrifices of the wicked are an abomination, *Prov. 28. 9.* why is sin so loathsome?

1. Because it is that which comes naturally from man corrupt, it is the natural issue of corrupt nature, therefore loathsome, the excrements of a clean person is loathsome, much more of a corrupt, now this is but the issue of a corrupt nature, *Num. 15. 7.* *that which is born of the flesh, is flesh, Joh. 3. 6. Job 25. 5. Job 14. 4.*

Use 1. A ground of reproof to any that boast in sin, if it be as mire, or scum, or dung, or a vomit, how vainly do they glory, that glory in sin, they glory in their shame, *Phil. 3. 19.* they glory in dung, in their vomit, in their base filthiness, *Isa. 3. 9.* it is a woeful case to profess filthiness openly; if men do thus, woe be to them.

Use 2. It should stir us up not to lie in sin, one day to an end; if a child should lie in its dung, or if we should, we would think we were unfit for civil company, yet such we, as long as we lie in sin unpardoned; it should therefore spur us on to repentance, and not to rest, till we get sin pardoned, we shall then be washed from our filthiness.

Use 3. To move us to help one another out of sin, we should count it beastly and brutish, if we should let a Child lie in its filth, so are we, if we let any that we can help, lie in their own defilements of sin, and were our minds as quick to smell as our bodies, we should as much loathe the smell or presence of some, as of filthy dung, it is for want of spiritual sense, that we are no more affected with it.

Use 4. To provoke us to more earnest wrestling, for cleansing from sin, when we have defiled our selves with sin, none can help us out but God, others may help the work forward, but none can effectually cleanse us but God, therefore we should come before God as the Saints of God have done, *Ezra* 9. 6. *Jer.* 31. 18, 19. *Dan.* 9. 7. we must not come before God with extenuation, like *Adam*; we would be ashamed to come into company with defiled bodies, we should not say it is our infirmity or a looseness we are subject to, we have our spiritual looseness from God, from prayer, from our callings, from holy duties, this is a loathsome thing to pretend looseness or infirmity in filthy things, therefore let us take shame to our selves and strive for cleansing, *Psal.* 51. 7. he would be thoroughly cleansed.

Use 5. It may stir us up to take heed of evil company without, and corruption within a man should loathe to keep company with base filthy unclean fellows, Drunkards, Swearers, &c. *2 Cor.* 6. 17. and the same Apostle exhorts to cleanse our selves from all filthiness within, *2 Cor.* 7. 1. we would be loath to have any filthy unclean thing about us, so we should cleanse our selves from all sin, because it is a remnant of filthiness.

Use 6. It may show us the wonderful preciousness of the blood of Christ, and the no less wonderful favour and love of God towards us; were not Christ's blood of wonderful efficacy? it could not cleanse such base filthy sinful lusts, so God's favour, were it not wonderful he would not take upon him such an homely office; women, if they were not Mothers, would not take such homely offices up, as to cleanse their Children from their filth; why if

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God were not of the like affection to us, he would not cleanse us from our filthiness, we count it an homely office, to sweep Sinks, and scum pots, &c. this is God's office, if he did not sweep the Sink, and scum off the scum of our hearts, it would never be done; and therefore it shews the tender affection of God towards us, in that he is willing to take such an office upon him, to cleanse us from our filthiness, he pours clean water upon us; all other means will do no good without him; it is with us as it is with young Infants that would lie in their defilements, if their Mothers did not make them clean, and so would we even wallow in the defilements of sin, if God did not cleanse us, therefore admire God's love and mercy towards us.

Use 7. It is a good help to mortification, if wee consider what a loathsome thing sin is, and what pure eyes God is of, it would be an antidote against sin; shall wee commit such filthiness in God's sight, to make our selves so bare and loathsome before him?

Doct. 3 *All sin is unrighteousness, and cleanse us from all unrighteousness, that is, from all sin.*

Sin and Unrighteousness, the one explains the other; *Rom. 6. 13.* yield not your Members, weapons of Unrighteousness, that is, weapons of sin; sometimes Unrighteousness is properly confined to the sins of the Second Table, as unholiness to the full, but sometimes righteousness comprehends the whole course of a Christian, and Unrighteousness comprehends all sins. πάντα ἁμαρτία ??ἡ ἀδικία.

Reas. Because every sin doth either God wrong, or others, or our selves, Righteousnesse gives every one pardon, if we sin in temperance, we debase and defile our selves, if we sin in theft or slander, we wrong others in their goods or good names, if we worship not God as God, if we keep not his Sabbaths, or profane his name, we wrong God.

Use. 1 Shews the Error of those, who think if they pay every man his own, they are righteous men; why, do you no wrong? are you not sinners? yes they will say, why then you are not righteous, for every sin doth wrong to God, our selves, or others.

Others say, if they wrong any, it is themselves, Why, it is unrighteousness to wrong your selves.

2 As you love innocency, live righteously, do God no wrong, others no wrong, your selves no wrong, otherwise you are unrighteous.

3 For Comfort to any that have their souls cleansed by the blood of Christ from all filthiness, we are holy, set at liberty from all filthiness, and all unrighteousness.

Doct. *Sin pardoned is ever cleansed, sin pardoned is sin cleansed, what sin God pardons, the same sin he cleanseth.*

Heb. 9. 14, The same blood that pardons, cleanseth us from sin.

Reas. From the power of the death of Christ:, which serves not only to procure pardon of sin, but likewise healing of sin, for his blood is offered up as a ransom for sin, well then it is pardoned, but it is not only so, but it is a means to kill and mortifie sin, *Rom. 6. 6.* there is a destructive power to kill sin, as well as meritorious power to pardon sin; now his death is said to mortify sin in us.

1 Exemplariter, For if Christ bee dead, we also shall die with him to sin, *Rom. 6. 9 & 11.*

2 It hath a natural Efficacy, as it is an object for us to look at as fearfull and formidable; when sin presents it self, wee look at it as crucifying Christ, and shall we look on it without mourning? *Zach 12. 10.* shall wee wrong him so much as to crucifie him again?

3 His blood cleanseth sin, in obtaining at God's hand a Spirit of Sanctification, which makes the death of the head, reach to the lowest Members of the body, as when the head dies, all the Members die, so the death of Christ having obtained the Spirit of God from him, if he our head die, then we

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shall die to sin, as the resurrection of Christ procures vivification, so the death of Christ, mortification, *Gal. 4. 4, 5.*

Obj, *If sin be always mortified where it is pardoned, how comes it to pass that godly men fall so often into the same sin? Doth not David confess that there was a way of lying in him, Psal. 119. 29. Remove from me the way of lying; which implies it was not one act, but a way, a course that he walked in sometimes; so Isaac, Gen. 26. said the same Lie, both to the Philistines, and Abimelech; so it was with Jonah, he was forward before he went to Nineveh, and forward afterwards; how is it then, that sin may be cleansed and yet renewed, and if renewed how cleansed?*

Ans. It is with Sin in this respect as with, *Sampson's Hair*, it may be cut, but it will grow again; Sin may be mortified in some kind, and yet renewed again, because Sin in this Life is mortified but in part; Pride, Wantonness, Covetousness in part mortified, but in part alive, and if we neglect the practise of mortification, that Sin we had got some mastery of, we shall fall into again, if Sin break out again it is because we neglect those means we should mortify Sin by; he doth not say, the blood of Christ hath cleansed us, but cleanseth; *Doth cleanse*, implying that cleansing is a continued Act, the blood of Christ is a notable Medicine to heal Sin, and purge from filthiness, but if a man neglect to apply this Plaister to his Soul, it may nor be so effectual as it would.

Use 1. For trial, whether our Sins be pardoned or no, would you know whether your Sin be pardoned? why then it is also cleansed, if your, Sin be not cleansed in some measure, it is nor pardoned at all; therefore look at your Sins if they be healed, then they are certainly pardoned, for it is the same blood of Christ that both heals and pardons Sin, *Hos. 14. 14.* God doth not only love freely, and pardon graciously, but he heals them also; therefore consider, do you find your Sins healed, that is, that they have not that power they had before, and it seems loathesome to you, whereas, before you delighted in it, nowin heart you loathe it, and in practise avoid it, then that Sin is pardoned, and if he pardons one Sin he pardons all, his Pardons are universal; but if a man live in Sin still, and love it as well, and is no more

ashamed than formerly he hath been, but goes on in the same Sin, truly it is not healed, and then not pardoned.

Obj. I feel my Sin so far from being mortified, that it grows more strong and vigorous, therefore what shall I think of my self?

Ans. It may grow stronger in our feeling, when it is not so in it self, it is not because Sin is stronger, but our sense is more quick, a man that is in extremity of Sickness, he feels no pain, but when he begins to recover, he feels more pain, why then the Disease is not stronger, but he is more sensible.

2 Do you not find that Sin is more loathsome and bitter to you? then it is in some measure mortified, for mortifying is a borrowed speech from a Surgeons mortifying a Wound, they use to bind the joint, and stop all spirit and blood, so that it is made insensible of pain; so if we have stopped the freeness of our spirits to Sin, we are not so lively and frolic to Sin, it is a sign corruption is mortified, but if you see you are as lively, and ready, and delight as much in Sin as before, Sin is not mortified, but if it grow loathsome and bitter to us, it is a sign of mortification.

Use 2. Direct us how to make good use of the blood of Christ, not only to pardon our sins, but to heal them; we are wont to make use of it for pardon, but we must make use of it as well for healing, for else we take the blood of Christ in vain, if we make use of it to pardon and not to cleanse, for his blood was sent as well to pardon as to heal, therefore pray not to God to pardon your sins through Christ's blood only, but lay his blood warm to your hearts every day, that so you may have your hearts always cleansed, it is a continued act, not of one day or two, but throughout our whole life we should make use of Christ's blood to cleanse us,

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1 Consider what great things he did for us, the Just for the unjust, and the meditation thereof will make us ashamed of sin.

2 Pray to God for the quickening work of his Spirit, that the same blood of Christ that hath procured pardon, may also procure healing for us.

Use 3. It may teach us all to labour to grow in cleanness of heart and life, for the blood of Christ cleanseth us, *Zach.* 13. 1. a Fountain that runs into a Channel that is muddy, it will by continual running cleanse it; so though Christ find our spirits muddy and defiled, yet we should let it run daily on us, and be ever rinsing of our heart at the fountain.

Use 4. Comfort to all God's Servants, that have had any experience of the pardon of their sins; you shall certainly in time feel and find healing and cleansing from your Sins, if you see a clear Fountain running into a filthy

Channel it is very muddy; and the worse for the present, the mud being stirred, but afterwards it is cleansed and made pure and clean; so Christ's blood may run into muddy spirits, and that blood at full may make corruption more stirring, you find more pride, and vanity, and uncleanness; but will it hold so? no truly, in cleansing it will cleanse, and go on till it hath purged all corruption.

I JOHN I. 10.

If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and the Word is not in us.

THESE words are a repetition of the former, *vers.* 8. but with some addition, he aggravates this sin; they do not only make themselves liars, but they make God a Liar, which is nor only Blasphemous, but Heretical, it extirpates all the truth of the Word.

Doct. Opinion and Profession of perfect righteousness even in those that are cleansed by the blood of Christ, is not only an Error, but a blasphemous and heretical Error, it is Sacrilegious and Heretical.

For having told us before, that if we confess our Sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and that the blood of Christ cleanseth us from all unrighteousness, yet if after this we say we have no sin, we do nor only make ourselves liars, but God a liar, for if he be not a true God he is no God, and his word is not in us; that is, no part of the Word is in such a man.

Q. But why doth St. John repeat this thing, had he not said enough before, that he repeats it?

Ans. 1. Before it might be thought that he spake of Carnal men, therefore to make it manifest, that even those that had confessed their sins, and were cleansed from unrighteousness, yet even those if they should say they had no sin should make not only themselves liars, but God a Liar, therefore he repeats it.

2 He saw that men were ready to cleanse themselves from sin, if we can by any pretence, we will be ready to free our selves from such opinion of sinfulness, therefore he presses it, that indeed we are so full, that if we say the contrary we have no spark of Religion in us, not one spark of the Word dwells in us.

3 Because it is a point of great necessity to believe the contrary truth, therefore he takes up this conclusion again;

To say, is either in Heart,
In Word,

In Carriage;

Well, to say thus, is to make God a Liar, and so no God, for if he be not a God of Truth, he is no God; for *Verum & bonum convertuntur*.

Q. *Why doth he make God a Liar?*

A. 1 Because God hath given his Son Christ to cleanse us from all sin, and to what end should he send Christ to cleanse Sin, if we had no sin; he that saith
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he hath no sin, overthrows the coming of Christ, and the cleansing virtue of his blood.

2 God hath often said, all men are Sinners, in his Word, *Rom.* 3. 23. *Gal.* 3. 22. *Job* 15. 14. *What is man that he should be clean?* *Job* 7. 20. *David* an holy man, yet professeth, *Psal.* 130. 3. *Psal.* 143. 2. the perfectest of God's Servants have testified of themselves, that they are Sinners, therefore if we say we have not sinned, we make God a Liar.

Secondly, *What is meant, when he saith, the Word is not in him?*

A. It is not in his judgement, when he is not persuaded of it.

2 It is not in his heart, when he trusts not in it, and receives it not in love, and the saving efficacy of it; he that saith he hath no sin receives not the Word; he speaks of the Word here, as *Verbum salutiferum*, *Acts* 20. 32. 1 *Thes.* 2. 13. 2 *Tim.* 3. 15. now the Word is said not to be in a man when there is nor so much Word as will save; a man may be ignorant of some Divine truths, and yet the Word of God may be in him, but if he want the Knowledge, and Faith of such Points, without which he cannot be saved, the Word dwells not in him; now he that denies sin to be in him, there is not only a denial of that truth, but he is empty of all other saving truths.

All the Saving Truths of God are comprehended;

1 In Repemance for Sin.

2 Some lead on to Faith for pardon.

3 Some lead to Mortification of Sin.

4 Some tend to Sanctification from Sin, to be accomplished in due time; now if a man be without Sin, to what purpose are all such exhortations to Repentance? To what purpose are all Scripture tending to faith, in Christ? To what purpose are such as tend to Mortification, or Sanctification; so that he that denies Sin to be in him, he not only sins against God, and makes him a Liar, but he doth also Heretically ere in over-throwing all saving Truth, the Doctrine of Repentance, of Faith, of Mortification, of Sanctification, all these are over-thrown.

If a man apprehend or profess perfection in himself, it is impossible a man should have any truth of Grace, believing he hath no need of Repentance, or Faith in Christ, or Mortification, or Sanctification, this is a terrible point; St. *John* may well be called *Boanerges*, a Son of Thunder, for these are thundering speeches; he that saith he hath no sin is a Liar, against himself against God a Blasphemer, an Heretick.

Use 1: To confute perfect obedience to the Law, as the Papists hold, that Justification is by Works, were there no other Errors but this, it is Blasphemous, Atheistical, and Heretical, and over-turns the foundation of Religion, for what is the foundation of Religion but the Doctrine of Repentance, and Faith? and if any be justified by Works, he hath neither need of Repentance, or Faith, if righteousness be by the Law, then Christ died in vain, and his blood is of no effect, *Gal. 5. 14.* therefore that opinion is vain, that Popish Religion and ours may be reconciled, let St. *John* put in his judgement, he tells you, that he hath faith he hath no sin, that he hath fulfilled the Law, and is justified by Works, there is no truth, no saving truth in that Religion that teacheth so, therefore it is impossible he should have any saving religion in him, that holds Justification by Works, that holds Merits, he makes God a Liar, and his Word is not in him, for,

1 God then should send his Son in vain, *Gal. 2. 19, 20.*

2 Christ himself should be in vain, and should lie, for he teacheth us to pray, *Forgive us our debts;* now if we have none, Christ lies in saying so.

3 The Holy Ghost should be a Liar, when he was sent to convince us of Sin, and there is none in us, he should lie unto us.

2 It shews the wickedness of their Opinion, who say, the Virgin *Mary* had no sin; if she had said to herself, she had been a Liar, and no truth had been in her.

3 It

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3. It reproves likewise the Catharists of old.

Use 2. It shews us a necessity of taking up daily such a persuasion as this, that this day we sin, this day we have need of Christ, and need of Faith; we must daily take up this persuasion, or else we have no saving truth in our hearts, and if every day we be possessed with a persuasion that we are subject to Sin, not only Venial but Mortal; that we have need of Christ, of Repentance, of Faith, and that we can never say, This is the day wherein I have not sinned, if we be thus possessed, it will lead us on to all that saving Knowledge of God, and of the Word, as may keep our hearts always in an holy frame, such a man will be ready to think I have need to renew my Repen-

tance to day, I have need to lay hold upon Christ, I have need of Mortification, theretore the Apostle would have us take up a daily continual persuasion of this, that we are Sinners; therefore we are daily to consider with our selves wherein we have failed, and to renew, our Repentance, and to look up to God for pardon of such and such Sins, and for Sanctification, otherwise we shall weaken our grace, and Divine truth daily, if we daily take not up such a persuasion, we shall begin to sit loose from the saving truths of God's Word, and the power of it in our hearts, not but that many Christians may sit loose from this truth, yet so far as we neglect this, so far we dishonour God, and weaken our grace.

Use 3. It will serve to teach us, that whosoever walks in the sense of his own sinfulness, is possessed of it, and conscious of it, such glorify God's Truth, and magnify the power of his Word in their hearts, God hath said it, and we witness it in our hearts, we bear witness that Christ was not sent in vain, that the Holy Ghost was not sent in Vain, *Matth. 21. 31.* Publicans and Harlots enter into the Kingdom of God before you; Why? because Publicans and Harlots were sensible of their sinfulness, and so would soon be convinced of their sinful estate, and so acknowledge their need of Repentance, of Faith, of Mortification, and Sanctification, whereas the Pharisees that thought themselves just, they were not sensible of their sinful estate, and so saw not the need of Repentance, &c.

Use 4. And because St. *John* writes this Epistle, that their joy might be full, that the joy of a Christian may be always like the Moon in the Full, never in the Wain, and Eclipse; as any Christian therefore desires such fulness of joy, let him be daily sensible of his sin, what is the reason that many Christians fail in their confidence, and fall into doubts concerning their estate? I would ask you, whether you have walked in a sence of your sinfulness daily? if not, no wonder though your joy, be over-clouded and eclipsed; Saint *John* would have us strongly persuaded of this, *If we say we have no sin, we make God a Liar, &c.* therefore if any Christian can go all the day without any sense of remorse for sin, his heart startles him not, if it be thus, no wonder though his joy be eclipsed; On the contrary, if you go on continually in a sensible apprehension of your sinfulness, and so renew your Repentance, and Faith, and Mortification, this will make you still to cleanse your selves daily, and so you would keep your joy renewed daily. We never had cause to complain of our estate, but it was by reason of hardness of heart, and how come our hearts to be hardened; sin gets within us, and we perceive it not, and so we are hardened by it, and then our joy is over-clouded, *Heb. 12. 13, 14.* therefore if we would keep our hearts from hardness, let us labour to spy

out our sins, and be humbled for them daily, and so you will keep a soft heart and a soft heart is commonly peacable.

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1 JOHN Chap. II. Vers. 1, 2.

My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:

And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also the sins of the whole world.

UPON the former points delivered, might arise an Objection to encourage men to sin, thus it ariseth, If Confession of Sins be a means to have them pardoned, and if the blood of Christ cleanse us from all unrighteousness, then it is but going to God, and confessing our sins after we have sinned, and we shall be pardoned.

2 Whereas he saith, *If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and there is no truth in us*, it might be objected. To what end then should we strive against sin, seeing do we what we can we shall still sin?

Against both these Objections he shews them to be in text, that he writes not these things to embolden them to sin, but to discourage them from sin; *These things I write unto you, that ye sin not.*

The Parts of these words are Three.

1 A loving compellation, *My little Children:*

2 A declaration of the end of his writing, *viz.* their innocence, that they sin not.

3. A consolation to them, who notwithstanding fall into sin, for this he tells them, Christ was both an Advocate and an Atonement.

1 For the Comellation, *My little Children*; he speaks not of Natural, but Spiritual Children, such as are justified and sanctified; justified, as appears vers. 12. sanctified, as appears vers. 13. when he calls them, *My little Children*; it implies therein such as his Ministry helped to beget to God.

Doct. *Such as are the Instruments under God of our Conversion, Justification, and Sanctification, they are to us as Spiritual Fathers, and we to them as little Children.*

It is a speech often used by the Apostle, 1 *Cor.* 4. 15. where he prefers himself before all other Teachers they had, he begat them; so he calls *Timothy*,

1 *Tim.* 2. 2. *Tit.* 1. 4. so he calls *Onesimus*, in *Philemon*, *Phil.* 2. 22.

Reas. From the resemblance betwixt them and Natural Parents, as they begat Children of that seed they infuse, so Ministers beget Children of Immortal Seed of the Word, 1 *Pet.* 1. 23, 24, 25. as in Natural Seed, so in Spiritual, there is a more material, and a more Spiritual party, the Material part is the Letter of the Word, the more Spiritual part is the Spirit conveyed in it; now because Ministers together with the Word convey the Spirit, therefore they begetting Children of such a Words they are called Fathers, and those so begotten, Children.

Ob. Mat. 23. 9. *Call no man father, &c.*

Ans. He doth not forbid to call such Ministers Spiritual Fathers, but he forbids the affectation of such Titles, many affect to be called Fathers of the Church, that never begat any to God, as the Pharisees did; *Non appellatio, sed affectatis prohibetur.*

2 *Non appellatio, sed denominatio prohibetur;* If anyone will be the Father of such a Sect or Faction, to draw Disciples after them, 1 *Cor.* 1. 12. as if any
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affected to be called *Calvinists*, or *Luterans*, because they affected their Doctrine, the denomination of Factions and Sects is forbid, but we should look }at all as Members of one Christ, and Ministers are but all Servants of the same Christ, 1 *Cor.* 3. 5, to 9. if men will be divided, and some will be of *Paul*, and some of *Apollo*, &c. this is forbidden.

3 *Non appellatio, sed fiducia interdicatur,* not the call of such, but the confidence on them, as when we trust more to their sayings, because they are ancient, then to the Scripture, or to others of equal Grace and Gifts.

2 Ministers are not to affect such Titles, to be called Rabbi, or Masters, &c. this is forbidden, so that when we see Christ did not simply forbid such Titles.

Use 3. Of direction to Ministers, or such as intend the Ministry, what is it about which they are most to bend their endeavours, to be fruitful to beget Children of God, it is meet for them to look at the good respect of the people, and living, and maintenance, but he is chiefly to desire and bend his endeavours to beget Children of God, to beget such to God whom he may respect as Children, with like care and diligence; for a man to look at preferment, or credit, or wealth, these are but husks of his employment, the true end of his Calling is to beget Children.

How may that be done?

1 He is to look that he grow strong himself, for weak men in nature are not *prolifici*, therefore Ministers must labour to grow strong in grace, a man without grace seldom begets any to God, therefore they must first more-tify sin, and then increase in grace, *Prov.* 11. 13.

2 There may be strength in Ministers, yet there may be a disproportion betwixt them, and their people, therefore Ministers and people must strive to keep a proportion and correspondance, he must see how he may accommodate himself to the temper of his people, they must with *Paul*, become all to all, that they may beget some, in any thing that is lawful he must accommodate, but he must by no means comply to the evil humours of his people, *Jer.* 15. 19. for then he brings contempt upon his Life and Doctrine.

3 Look that your Seed be Spiritual, that is, the pure Word dispensed in the Spirit and Power, mingle no Traditions or Tricks of your wit with it, if you do, your Seed is corrupt, and wants vigour, a velvet scabbard dulls the edge of the Sword, so the Word decked over with Human eloquence is like a Sword in a velvet scabbard, it hinders the power of it, what hath the chaff to do with the Wheat? *Jer.* 23. 28, 29. you must not mingle the Word with the dreams and fancies of men, but dispense the Word in the power and evidence of the Spirit, and labour to have the Word sealed in your hearts, that you may speak out of the heart and inward affection; that Word which comes from the heart, sooner goes to the heart.

Use 2. It may teach Hearers how to hear the Word of God aright, if Ministers are so to dispense the Seed of the Word that they may beget Children to God, then Hearers must learn how to apply themselves towards their Ministers, not to content themselves in having gotten good Ministers, and their respect to them (though these be very good) till you be Children to him whom he hath begot, if you were not so before, or if you were, yet Children to be nursed by him, such nourishment from him, grow in grace under him, labour to receive stronger meat from him, that you may become Father to others, *Heb.* 5. 12. it yields much comfort to the spirit of a man, when he can say, the seed of such a sermon converted him, it often fills a man with many doubts, because he hath not discerned the power of the Word.

Use 3. It may teach both Ministers and people so to carry themselves one towards another, as Fathers and Children; as many times a Mariner carries a King over Sea, but though he be a Prince, yet in that case he must be ruled

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ruled by the Mariner; so a Minister may teach Princes and great men, and they in this case must beas Children to him.

1 People are to give to their Teachers such kind of respect as Children owe to Parents, *Gal.* 4. 14, 15.

2 Children owe to Patents imitation in any good carriage, and the more they see the Image of God in them, the more they are to imitate them; so people are to follow their Ministers in any good counsel or carriage, that is the duty of Children to their Spiritual Fathers, *1 Cor.* 4. 15, 16, it will lie upon the Consciences of people to imitate any virtues they see in their Teachers, because they are their Fathers, as Children do imitate their Parents.

3 Obedience in the Lord is required of Hearers, *Phil.* 2. 22. speaking of *Timothy*, saith he, ye know the proof of him how as a Son with the Father he served me in the Gospel, he makes it his commendation, he never commanded any duty to him, but he readily obeyed him as a Child his Father, he shewed professed obedience to the Gospel of Christ; so people are to yield obedience to the Gospel of Christ, which they receive from their Ministers.

Now on the other side, it also teacheth Ministers wherein to shew their Fatherhood to their people, not only in begetting Children, for that is the least part of Paternity, but they are not then to leave them, for still there are some Corruptions cleaving to children from the womb, which if they be not helped against, they will perish, *Ezek.* 16. 4. so Ministers will be but Murthe-rers, if when they have begotten Children by the Seed of the Word, they leave them to their rawness, and corruptions of their own hearts, and do not help them against them, and help them to grow in grace, and make progress in Christianity.

2 Parents train up their Children in all knowledge, they can help them to, either in Learning, or Trades; *Isa.* 6. 18. so Ministers are to adorn their people with such Graces and Ornaments that they may give them up to Christ, as Brides fitted for him, *2 Cor.* 11. 2, 3.

3 Ministers are to provide for them an eternal Inheritance, *2 Cor.* 12. 14. Parents lay up for their Children, they labour to get an Estate to leave to their Posterity; so Ministers are to lay up an eternal weight of glory for their people, not only to get them into Heaven, but to load them with an eternal weight of glory, fill them with patience and humility, &c. and all the graces of God's Spirit, for the spirit of glory rests upon such, he should help them to grow in grace that they might be filled with glory.

1 And first, labour to help them to grow in Humility, a man must lay down all ambitious thoughts, or else he will never come to Heaven, *Matth.* 38. 2, 3. David could not get a Kingdom till he had learned to be like a weaned child, *Psal.* 131. *Jer.* 45. *ult.* however we shall get but a poor piece of glory; the means to be exalted in Heaven, is to be humble here on Earth, an humble spirit shall be a glorious Soul; before Honour goes Humility.

2 Labour to help them with patience and constancy, for if with well-doing they grow patient in suffering, and be ready to run through all conditions for Christ's Cause, and the Gospel, great is their reward in Heaven, *Matth.* 5. 10, 11, rest not when you have begotten them, and see some truth of grace wrought in them, but lay up for them a plentiful treasure in Heaven; help them to be rich in grace; that they may be rich in glory at length.

Three Graces especially go to the attaining of the excellency of Glory, Zeal in doing God's Will, Patience in suffering, and Humility in both; and Zeal breeds truthfulness, *Luke* 19. 17. & 19, what was the reason, why he that gained more had a greater reward? because he was more fruitful wick his Talents, therefore it should be the care of Ministers to help

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their people (what in them lies) to grow in these Graces.

We come now to the Second part, viz, the Declaration of the end of his writing, *These things I write that ye sin not*; now from this Declaration observe this Point.

Doct. 2. *The end of dispensing any promise or convincement of our sinful estate, is, not to give liberty to sin, but to prevent sin in us.*

For here the Apostle answers an Objection which might arise, If the blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin, then we may be bold to sin, it is but running to Christ's blood and we shall be cleansed from our sins; but he saith, *I write these things that ye sin not*, therefore it implies that neither Law nor Gospel should encourage us to sin, but restrain us.

1 The Law, that shews us the impossibility of not sinning, but doth not teach us how to sin, *Rom.* 3. 20. it shews us sin, and to shew sin, is not to learn us how to sin, but how to avoid it.

2 It shews us not only the nature of sin, but also convinceth us of sin, and the danger of it, *Rom.* 7. 14. *Gal.* 3. 10.

And for the Gospel, that teacheth that the blood of Christ cleanseth us from all our sins.

1 It shews a remedy against Sin, the blood of Christ, and the means, *If we confess our sins*, &c. but it shews us such a remedy that is so procious, that if we shall hereupon willingly commit sin, we do most ingratfully, and prophanely tread under foot the blood of Christ, *Heb. 10. 29.* we account it prodigality to despise precious things, how much more delperate is it to despise the most precious blood of Christ.

2 The Gospel teacheth us so to use the blood of Christ, as that we may mortify sin, not only pardon it, but cleanse it; for the use of the Gospel is to mortify sin, therefore it leads us not to the commission of sin.

3 The Gospel begets those Graces that cleanse us from sin;

First, It begets Faith, which purifies the heart, *Act. 15. 9.*

Secondly, It begets Hope, and that also purifies, *1 Joh. 3. 3.* he that hath this Hope purifies himself, as he is pure.

Thirdly, It begets Love, and that Love constrains us to good, and restrains us from evil, *2 Cor. 5. 14,* so that both Law and Gospel dehorts us from sin.

Use 1. Of direction to Ministers what course to take.

Two Points of Wisdom are hence to be learned.

First, If any misconstruction may arise from your Doctrine, wisely to prevent it, *St. John* saw there would arise an encouragement to sin, from one Doctrine he had delivered, and a discouragement from fighting against sin from another, therefore he tells them, *These things I write, that ye sin not, but if any man sin, &c.*

Secondly, Another direction is, to frame your selves to disperse Milk to Babes; *Saint John* was a son of Thunder, and a Pillar among the Apostles, *Gal. 2. 9.* yet he writing to little Babes, tells them thus, *My little children, these things I write unto you, that you sin not;* it seems a weak line for such a man, but he tempers his Doctrine according to their strength; we should be ready to think it poor homely stuff to say thus, who could not have said as much?

Use 2. Of reproof to the Papists, who lock up *St. John's* writings from the people, they may not be suffered to read them; why if he write them for this end that they might not sin, then they give the reins to sin that deny leave and liberty to read them.

Use 3. To teach us the poisonous corruption of our natures, that out of the purest soundest Doctrine gathers poison, *Saint John* foresaw that from his Doctrine they would be ready to gather false conclusion, So *Rom. 5. 20.* when *St. Paul* had delivered the free Doctrine of Justification, see what use they make of it, he had taught that as sin abounded, so did grace much more

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abound, now he saw that they would be ready to gather false conclusions from this, therefore he prevents it, Chap. 6. 1. shall we then sin that Grace may abound? God forbid; therefore it must make us out of love with our selves; the commonest meats are most nourishing and good, other rare meats commonly breed distempers, but some stomach will corrupt any meat, so the plainest points of Religion, are the soundest and best, but such is the corruption of our nature, that it is ready to gather poison our of them.

Use 4. To teach us when we have made agood use of the Apostles' writings, *viz.* when they divert us from sin, if you be restrained and kept back from any sin by them, you make good use of them, St. *John* wrote this Epistle, that they might not sin, labour therefore by reading thereof, to be made more cautious against sin.

1. It we can, to do no sin.

2. If we do, to disallow it, and hate it, and so it will be as no sin to us.

We come now to the third point, *viz.* the consolation, If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, &c. as if he had said, how can it be that we should not sin, he had taught the contrary, and told them he wrote those things, that they might not sin, but yet for all that, notwithstanding their best care and endeavour, it could not be, but they would sin, but here is the comfort, if any man sin we have an advocate with the Father, &c. he doth not say any man hath an advocate with the Father, but I, and you, and such as we are, we have an advocate with the Father; now what is an advocate? sometimes it is applied to the Holy Ghost, sometimes to the Son; to the Holy Ghost, *John* 14. 16. he is called *παράκλητος*, both because he is a comforter, and because he is an advocate, how? not in pleading our case before the Father, but by pleading in our hearts, in giving us the Spirit of Grace and Supplication, as the Apostle saith, *Rom.* 8. 26. as in law, he may be said to be our advocate that draws our petitions for us; the Holy Ghost doth not plead for us in heaven, but he draws our petitions for us, so that they are accepted in heaven, *Rom.* 8. 27. he doth speak good things from God to us, and good things from us to God, *1 Cor.* 2. 3. he tells us of our peace with God, and our comfort, and helps us to plead with God.

But properly it is the office of the Son, to be advocate, an advocate in Court, is a more special pleader in the behalf of another, whose person and cause is there to be judged of, and so Christ is our advocate in special manner with the Father,

Doct. *Every sinner hath Enemies, that before the Father in heaven plead against him.*

If any man sin, &c. there were no use of an advocate to plead for us, if we had none to accuse us, and plead against us, we no sooner sin, but we have accusations put up in heaven against us, and so our advocate puts in for us; what be these adversaries?

1. Our own sins, they plead against us, and accuse us day and night, some sins do in a special manner plead against us, and those are crying sins, *Gen.* 4. 10. the murder of *Abel* was a crying sin, *Gen.* 18. 20, the *sins of Sodom* cried, and *Ezek.* 16. 49. there are four sins of *Sodom* mentioned, which cried to heaven for Vengeance, Pride, Idleness, Intemperance, Unmercifulness to the poor; so sometimes detaining the labourers wages, *James* 5. 4. so also oppression, *Exod.* 22. 22. 27. these are special crying sins, because they will give God no rest, till he hath revenged them in this World, they will not stay till the last Judgement, but call for present judgement; but all sins do speak in the Lords ear, and call for vengeance against us.

2. Another Adversary that accuse thus, is the righteous Law of God which we have broken, that the word may not be in vain, *Joh.* 5. 45.

3. The third Enemy is Satan, that accuseth us night and day, *Rev.* 12. 10. so he did, *Joh.* Chap. 1. 9, 10, 11. he accused him of Hypocrisy, because, he had no real reason to accuse him, therefore he surmiseth one.

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4 Our own Consciences accuseth us, and that is as a thousand witnesses, *Rom.* 2. 15.

Use 1 To take heed how we make bold with any sin, you may put upon them a pretence of pleasure, or profit, or credit, but there is no sin we commit, but pleads against us, yea and stirs up the Law and Satan, and our own consciences to plead against us too.

2 It teacheth us the miserable Estate of a poor sinner that goes on in sin, and never takes any care to get Christ be an advocate for him, he may hope that Christ pleads for him in heaven, but this is a vain hope, so long as he goes on in sin, but he may be sure that sin, and Satan, and the Law, and his conscience accuseth him, and he having none to plead for him, what a woeful case is he in?

3 It may stir us up to get an advocate that may plead for us against our accusers.

Doct. *Every Child of God hath the Lord Jesus Christ in heaven to plead his cause for him.*

It any man sin, *we* have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous, he doth not say every man that sins hath an advocate, but we have an advocate, that is, I and you, and such as we are; the children of God, *Rom.* 8. 34. he makes intercession for us ὁς και ἐντυγχάνεις *interpellat pro nobis*, he interrupts the accusation, and strikes in for us, *Heb.* 7. 25. because he hath nor only died for us, and risen for us, but he follows the business to the utmost, till it be accomplished.

How doth he make intercession for us?

1 He doth not fall down at his Fathers feet, but he acts the part of an Advocate by his presence, at the Throne of Grace, so that his presence cuts off many accusations; it being known he is our Friend and stands for us, they dare not be so bold. *Heb.* 9. 24.

2 He not only, pleads for us, by his presence, but he intercedes for us by the merit of his blood, and that pleads more powerfully for us, than either sin, or the Law, or Satan, or our own Consciences can plead against us, *Heb.* 12. 24. his blood speaks better things than the blood of *Abel*; that cried for condemnation, this for absolution.

3 He pleads for us, in giving us leave to use his name for our help, and his Spirit to plead for our selves; he sends his Spirit to draw out petitions for us, and help us in his name to plead for our selves, he is our chief Advocate, he sends the Spirit, *Joh.* 16. 23, 24. and he promises, *Zach.* 12. 10. so that though the Spirit be an Advocate, yet he is sent by Christ, *Joh.* 14. 16, 17.

He plays the Advocate in our behalf, by expressing his will towards us, to his Father, he declares his will to be, that they may be cleared from all doubts, and be where he is, to behold his glory, this he did upon Earth, *Joh.* 17. 24. and this very same doth he express for us in heaven, and the reason of it is from *Rom.* 8. 34. where his mediation is made a distinct work from his death, and resurrection, and ascension, and sitting at his Fathers right hand; besides all these, he makes requests for us in his own person, pleading to God for us, for good things, as *Moses* did oft for the people, *Exod.* 32. 31, 32. and as it was with *Moses*, so it is said it should be with Christ, *Deut.* 18. 18. as *Moses* being a Mediator, put in a word of Peace for the people, so doth Christ.

But doth he thus Intercede for every sinner? no, he doth not say every man hath an Advocate, but we have, he did not intercede for all when he was upon the Earth, *I pray not for the World*, *Joh.* 17. 9, 20. for if Christ should have prayed for all men, God would have heard him for all men, and then his death had been effectual for all men, for he saith thou hearest me al-

ways, *Joh.* 11. 42. Christ is not an Advocate for all, but only for the Children of God.

Use 1 Of direction to a Christian that doth sin, what course to take for his

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peace and pardon, to look up to Heaven for an Advocate that may stand to plead for him, when Sin, and Satan, and the law, and Conscience plead against him, many a poor soul hath his Conscience pleading horror against him, that he is proud and unclean, and Hypocritical, &c. why, look up to Heaven now for an Advocate to plead for thee; first, get into the estate of the Children of God, *My little Children, if we sin, we have an Advocate*; it is not any man, but we that are as little Children, lay down all pride, and emulation, and labour to frame ourselves to holy obedience, *If we sin we have an Advocate, &c.* therefore labour to become little Children, begotten to God by the Ministers of his Word, *2 Cor.* 8. 5. give up your selves to God, and to his Ministers, to be caught of them according to his Will, and if we be such, we have an Advocate.

Use 2. Of Consolation to all whose Consciences strike and gall them, and they are disquieted with the bitterness of their sins, when Sin accuseth, and the Law accuseth, and Satan and Conscience accuseth, what should comfort a poor Soul in this case? why, consider we have all Advocate with the Father, so that though the Law, and Conscience tell us we have been disobedient, yet Christ our Advocate hath fulfilled all obedience, though we sin, and our Sins plead against us, yet Christ pleads for us, his Blood cries for us, and speaks better things than the blood of *Abel*, and he sends his Spirit to help us to put up our Petitions, and he himself puts in for us, and performs our prayers for us, *Rev.* 8. 3. by the Angel there is chiefly meant Christ, he sweetens them, takes all the corruption out of them, so that they are a sweet smelling savour to God; let us accuse our selves to the lowest acknowledgement of our own unworthiness, and then let us with comfort look up to our Advocate that pleads for us.

How shall I know that he prays and pleads for me?

1 If you be little Children to God, give up your selves to him, and to his Ministers, to be obedient to his Ordinances.

If he send his Spirit into your hearts, and that helps you to draw your Petitions, it is a sign that he himself is about the work, by our sins we damp his Spirit, but if God renew his Spirit in us, it is a sign that Christ hath our Cause in hand.

1 JOHN 2. 2.

And he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

IN these words we have Christ described by his Function external, 1. Advocate, 2. Propitiation for our Sin; and secondly by his inward qualification, righteous; Jesus Christ the righteous.

We have done with his Office of Advocation, we come now to the second, He is the Propitiation for our sins, and not ours only, but the sins of the whole world.

Jesus Christ is the propitiation for the Sins not only of believing *Jews*, but likewise of believing Christians all the world over.

He is the Reconciliation as some translations render it, but that expresseth not the full meaning, we must know therefore that Propitiation ἐλασμός includes Three things.

1 That he should expiate our Sins, that is, make satisfaction for our Sins, a man may be a means of Reconciliation without satisfaction, but he cannot be Propitiation without suffering satisfaction for the wrong done; now Christ did make satisfaction for our Sins, *Heb. 2. 17.* and to make satisfaction, he did offer a satisfactory sacrifice for our sins, 1 *Pet. 2. 24.* he bearing the Sin and Punishment due thereunto, it is as much as if we had done it.

2 To be a Propitiation it is required, that he make peace and reconciliation, for though a man sometimes recompence and satisfy a wrong, yet the

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Party wronged will nor be, at peace with him, and reconciled to him, but Christ hath took upon him to reconcile God to us, so as that his wrath is turned from us, and favour restored to us, *Col. 1. 21.* now this reconciling implies Three things.

1 That sometimes we were friends with God.

2 That we fell out with God.

3 Being fallen out, we are reconciled again, and made at peace with him; Now this is procured by Christ, whereas we were once friends with God in Paradise, and fell from him and his favour, Christ hath come and made up that breach, and reconciled us again.

Thirdly, when Christ is said to be a Propitiation for our Sins, it implies, that he hath procured the manifestation of God's favour to us, for suppose a Friend make satisfaction for another, and reconciliation with another with whom he is fallen out, yet if he know it not, his heart is as loose as ever,

but Christ hath not only procured us God's favour, but he tells us, his Father is reconciled with us, and at peace with us, *Job* 33. 23. and 26. there is the effect of Christ's propitiation, that we shall see God's face with joy, we shall pray to him with comfort, *Joh.* 14.21. *He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, &c.* which shews, that he will bring them together, and there shall be a mutual expression of love to one another, and refreshment in one another, God shall take comfort in us, and we in him, *Rev.* 3. 20. for that Christ goes further in this case than any man can.

Absolom had offended his Father, in slaying his brother Amnon, well, he flies away from his Father's Courts, Joab procures a Reconcilement, but yet he could not satisfy for the blood he had shed, but yet he procured so much that he was sent for home by the King, but yet saith the King, Let him return to his own house, he shall not see my face, *2 Sam.* 14. 24. Joab could not satisfy for his blood, and the King would not see his face, to that there wanted satisfaction and manifestation of the Kings favour; well, afterwards manifestation was procured, but yet there wanted Propitiation, because satisfaction could not be made; but Christ hath not only procured favour, but satisfaction, and hath declared his favour towards us. Now further, Christ hath done this, not only for the believing Jews, but all Christians all the World over, for so whom doth he speak here? why to little Children, and what were they? why they were Jews, as appears vers. 7. who from the first giving of the Law were commanded to love one another; now besides these weak Jews, the Apostle saith, He is one propitiation, including the Ministers of the Gospel, And not only so, but for the sins of the whole world. Now the World is diversly taken in Scripture;

1 World is sometimes put for the frame of Nature, as *Act.* 17. 24.

2 It is sometimes taken for the pleasure and profits of the World, as *1 Joh.* 2. 16.

3 It is sometimes put for the wicked of the World, *Joh.* 15. 19.

4 It is sometimes taken for the *Gentiles* in opposition to the *Jews*, *Rom.* 11. 12.

5 It is sometimes taken for the Believers of the World, *2 Cor.* 5. 19. though it may have further extent, but here it is taken in opposition to Christian *Jews*, he is not only a Propitiation for the *Jews*, but also for the believing *Gentiles*.

But further, Christ is not only a Propitiation for his Children, but for the whole World, that is, the whole body of the Creation, for as by *Adam's* Fall the whole World was cursed, Christ by his death renewed the blessing to the World again, the whole body of the Creation, *Rom.* 8. 20. therefore

it is said, the whole body of the Creation waits for the liberty which the Sons of God have. A type of this we have in *Noah*, Gen. 8. 20, 21. *Noah* being a Type of Christ, and making atonement for the World by Sacrifice, God smelt a sweet savour, and doth promise that he would no more Curse the earth

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earth for Man's sake, and that which was done by Type in him, is perfectly procured by Christ, all the Creatures are encouraged to rejoice in his Redemption, because they are redeemed in him, *Isa.* 44. 23. All the Creatures are become the Servants of Christ, subject to the Dominion of Christ, he hath bought them all, *Rom.* 14. 9. Christ is now Lord of all, he hath bought not only us, but our Ground, and Cattle, and Houses, and our Children, and he hath so purchased it, that the world shall be a blessing to the Church, the Tumults, and Agitations, and Disorders, shall be for the good of his people.

Quest. *Whether hath Christ made any propitiation for the Wicked/ for Reprobates? how else for all the world?*

Ans. you must distinguish between such and the rest of the World, in this they all agree, that Christ is Lord over all, wicked and good, he hath bought all, 2 *Pet.* 2. 5. so that they are Vassals to be ruled by Christ's Dominion, he hath bought them for the Churches service to do them good.

2 I say that Christ hath laid down a sufficient price for all, and thus much he hath procured God's patience to forbear them, and his bounty to lead them to Repentance, *Rom.* 2. 45. yea he hath procured for them, not only gifts fitting them for Magistracy and Ministry, and the common Gifts and Graces at his Spirit, but many sanctifying Gifts, see *Heb.* 10. 29.

Quest. *Is Christ then a propitiation for them?*

Ans. To make a propitiation is required, not only that such a satisfaction and reconciliation be propounded, but that they lay hold on it, as the sacrifices in the old Law, who are they that had an atonement made by the sacrifice they offered? only those that laid their hands on the head of the sacrifice, *Lev.* 1. 4. so then this is noting for the propitiation of the wicked, they do not lay hold on the head of Christ, they do not take hold on him as an Advocate and propitiation; therefore they are left inexcusable. This point is likewise handled by *Paul*, *Rom.* 3. 25. 2 *Cor.* 5. 19. the whole world was out with God, he purchased something for all.

Use 2 It shews that it is a Wicked opinion of the Papists, that say, the bread in the Sacrament is a propitiatory sacrifice for the sins of the World, as they wrong Christ in his Advocation, so also in his propitiation, *Heb.* 10. 10. if there had been need of another propitiation, his had been insufficient, but

they ascribe this to the sacramental bread, to purgatory, and they say afflictions are satisfactions for our sins, and their own voluntary devotions are satisfactory, as whippings and pilgrimages, and fastings, why if Christ be the Propitiation, there needs no more but him,

2 So also they wrong him, in adding other Advocates, as Angels, and Saints, especially the Virgin *Mary*.

Object. *You will say, you allow one Friend to pray for another here on Earth, and to intreat God for him, and may not Saints in heaven pray for us, as well as Saints on Earth?*

Ans. 1 We have both commands and examples for the one, *Jam. 5.* and *Paul* often defiles the prayers of the Church, but we have none for the other.

2 We desire none but such as knows our cases to pray for us, but it is uncertain whether the Angels, or Saints in heaven knows us or our wants; it is certain they know not our thoughts.

3 And when we desire other men here on Earth to pray for us, we do not make them Advocates as they do Angels and Saints.

1 We do not desire them to pray in their own merits and name, as they do the Angels and Saints in Heaven.

2 They pray to the Virgin *Mary* for Graces, *miserere peccati*, &c. and command thy Son to grant such and such things, so they ask spiriual gifts of the Saints, which is peculiar to God.

3 They do herein ascribe to them certain proper works, make them Patrons of several Countries, and part among them several others, they pray to

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one for healing of one disease, and to another for another.

Use 2. If Christ be our reconciliation, then it shews us what we are without Christ, enemies to God, and such enemies, then if all the Angels and Saints in heaven should put in for us, they could not make propitiation for us, it is only Christ's Prerogative, *Col. 1. 21. Rom. 5. 20. Ephes. 2. 3.* we are enemies and strangers to God, and all our imaginations of our hearts wholly evil continually, we are ready to delude our selves, I hope I am not so far out with God, I am not an enemy, but we are all so by nature.

Use 3. It should teach us, when we do find and feel that we are sinners, to consider of Christ's Reconciliation, and Propitiation.

Q. *I do believe, that Christ hath made an Atonement for Sinners, and reconciled all Believers, but how shall I know that I am of that number or no?*

Ans. 1. Hath Christ ever brought you to see God's face with comfort? if you have at any time beheld God's face with joy and comfort, know that this could not be, unless Christ had been a Propitiation for you.

Obj. *I, but that comfort is all gone again.*

Ans. No man that is brought into the Kings presence stands always before him, but there is a time for the King to sequester himself from him, so there is no Christian that stands always in the presence of God's face, it is enough if thou hast been brought to kiss God's hand, and taste of his favour.

Obj. *But I have never felt any comfort or joy in Prayer, and other Ordinances?*

Ans. 1. I would ask you, Are you fallen out with your sins? if you be, you love God, and are beloved of him, *Psal.* 97. 10.

2 Do you find that you love God much, for you have been a great Sinner, and yet God hath had mercy on you, if so, it is a sign much is forgiven you.

3 Do you find your hearts compassionate over other men's sins? it is a sign yours are forgiven, *Matth.* 18. 23. to 33. *Eph.* 4. *ult.*

Use 4. It we find that we are enemies to God, and our peace is not made with him, it is our wisdom to pacify God, do as *Adoniah* did when he had offended King *Solomon*, he ran and took hold of the Horns of the Altar, *1 King.* 1. 15. so we should run and lay hold on Christ, as he that had any benefit by a sacrifice, was to lay his hands on his head, so, would you have any benefit by Christ? lay hold on him, confess your sins over him, intreat him to make your peace with God.

Q. *But how shall I know wheher I lay hold of Christ?*

A. 1. No man lays hold on Christ, but he takes him for better, for worse, he takes him to be a Ruler, as well as a Saviour, you must give up your selves to be guided by his will, as well as to receive any benefit by him.

2 If you find your hearts wholly resting on Christ, and none but him, if this be the frame of your heart, that there is none in Heaven or Earth that you desire in comparison of him, *Psalme* 73. 25. then you have laid hold upon him.

Use 5. For Christians that have their sins pardoned, and are in Christ, through it be thus with you, yet you are not to think that you have no need of Christ, for were you as *St. John*, and the Apostles, Pillars, yet you have need of an Advocate, and Propitiation still, for in many things you sin daily, and fall out with God, so that if God should fall our with us as often as we with him, we should never have peace, therefore still go to Christ, in-

treat him to be your Atonement from day to day, Christ is not only a Peace-maker, but Peace-keeper, we daily offend God, or others, or our selves, and therefore stand daily in need of Christ's mediation.

2. We have much need of Christ's Spirit to help us in our prayers.

Use 6. Of Consolation to every Christian soul, to consider in the midst of our sins, that we have Christ for our Propitiation, to keep our peace with
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God, there is not a day passeth over our heads wherein we fall not out with God, and if Christ should not put in, what would become of us? but here is the comfort, Christ is our Propitiation, and therefore it is certain and sure that he is more able to keep our peace than we are to break it; and besides, he hath taken it upon him, he hath made it his Office to be an Atonement between God and us; and here is also further comfort, that he hath not only been a means of reconciliation, but he hath manifested it unto us, he hath brought us to see God's face with comfort.

But this is not all, but here is matter of further comfort, in that he being made a Propitiation for the whole world, the whole world shall be at peace with us, there is a reconciliation betwixt me and all the Creatures, I have comfort from every blessing, from Christ's Propitiation, *Job 5. 19. & 23.* so that whatsoever a Christian meets with, whether good deeds or bad, persecution, &c. why this is his comfort, that the whole world shall be for his good, though I meet with crosses and afflictions it shall be for my good, from this ground, that Christ is a Propitiation for the whole world.

Use 7. Seeing God hath made so large an Atonement for all, let us draw one another to take heed of Sin, to run to Christ, make use of Christ's Atonement, and take heed of sin; this use old *Eli* made, *1 Sam. 2. 25, If one man sin against another, the Judge shall judge it, but if a man sin against the Lord, who shall plead for him?* If you fall out with God, and walk in sin, who shall make your peace with him? that is a work no friend you have can do, no means you can procure can make up that breach, none but Christ, and you must not presume upon Christ's mediation, he will not be a Baud to any one's sin, that is a sign of Reprobation to turn God's grace into wantonness, *Jude 4.* and take heed we do not offend Christ; it is notable counsel God gives to *Moses* to deliver to the people, *Exod. 23. 20, 21, 22.* Behold I send an Angel before thee (that is, Christ, the Angel of the Covenant) beware of him, provoke him not, he will not spare your misdeeds, for my Name is in him; if you do willingly sin against him he will not pardon you, therefore encourage all the friends you have to make use of Christ's Reconciliation, he is a

Propitiation for little Children, *vers.* 1. for young men, for old men, in the following verses, for all that are willing to lay hold on him, this use *Paul* makes, *2 Cor.* 5. 19, 20, 21. this is the chief point of the Gospel, that God hath made Christ a Propitiation for sin, therefore we beseech you to make use of it, take not Christ's blood in vain, beware to offend his grace and mercy, and labour to bring on all to Christ, since the Propitiation is so general, seeing there is such a Fountain set open, let us draw at it for our selves, and for our Children, let us teach our Children that Christ is made a Propitiation for their sins.

We have heard Christ described from his external Offices;

1 He is an Advocate.

2 A Propitiation.

We come now to his internal virtue, or qualification; *Jesus Christ the righteous.*

Doct. *Jesus Christ is the righteous Lord, or, Jesus Christ, either in his Office of an Advocate, or Reconciler, is Jesus Christ the righteous.*

The Scripture much testifies this, *Heb.* 4. 15. *1 Pet.* 3. 8. *1 Pet.* 2. 22. and *Pilate*, that condemned him gave him this testimony, *I am innocent from the blood of this just man*, *Mat.* 27. 24. yea from his birth he had this testimony, that holy thing, *Luk.* 1. 33. in opposition to all others, who are sinners from the very Womb, he was holy in his Birth, in his Life, in his Death, *2 Cor.* 5. *ult.* *He knew no sin*; that is, he had experience of none, but he made him sinful by imputation, that we might be just by imputation.

It was Meet that he should be righteous without sin; 1. That he might be our reconciler. 2 That he might be our Advocate, if he had had any sin, he could have been neither of these.

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1 For the first, had he been sinful himself, he could not have made atonement for sin, it was required that all the Sacrifices should be without blemish, *Lev.* 3. and 10, else it had not been accepted, as the Lord tells them, *Mal.* 1. 8. all things defiled with sin are abominable to God, *Heb.* 7. 25, 26. unless some atonement be made, now had he been sinful, he had stood in need of Sacrifice for himself, and could not have been an atonement for our sins, *2 Cor.* 5. *ult.* he that knew no sin, was imputed a sinner for us, that we might be imputed righteous for his sake.

2 It was meet that he should be righteous, that he might be our Advocate, God hears not sinners, *Joh.* 9. 31. the blind man was not so blind, but he could say so much, but God hears Christ always, and we should

have such an Advocate, as should continually prevail with God, look at all the parts of his advocacy for us, and it is meet that he should be righteous.

1 He appears for us in the sight of God, and had he been a sinner, his person would have been odious in God's sight.

2 He Advocates by pleading the merits of his own death, now how could it have been meritorious, had he died as a malefactor.

3 He gives us his name and his Spirit to use in our Prayers; now to use his name had been of no effect, if he had been a sinner.

4 He prays for us, makes known his will to his Father concerning us, but this would do no good, had he been a sinner.

3 It is meet he should be righteous, that he might be our justifier, our justification is by his obedience, his righteousness is imputed to us, now his righteousness could not have been imputed to us, had it been imperfect, 1 *Cor.* 2. 3.

Use 1 It is a ground of much consolation to such as lay hold on Christ, and have him for their Advocate and Reconciler, for he is one that is just and righteous, and therefore fit to prevail for us, what hinders the Joy of a Christian?

Object. 1 *I much doubt the pardon of my sins, if I could be less sure of that, I should be joyful.*

Ans. You have such a Reconciler as is Just and Righteous, and therefore will procure pardon for you.

Object. 2 *But I am still unjust and unrighteous.*

Ans. But your Reconciler is Just and Righteous, and it is not required that the reconciled should be righteous, but he that reconciles us, it is meet that he be righteous.

Obj. 3 *I cannot pray, my prayers are heartless and faithless, &c.*

Ans. Well, but we have an advocate that is holy and just, and that prays and intercedes for us, and we shall find the benefit of his Righteousness, though we fall daily into much unrighteousness, yet Jesus Christ our Mediator, is righteous.

Use 2 To teach us to be Righteous, as he is Righteous, God would have us conformable to the image of his Son, *Rom.* 8. 29. and that consists in Holiness; and Righteousness, God would have us to walk, that our Sir-name may be *Justus*, Righteous towards God, to give him his due, Righteous to others, to give them their due, and Righteous to our selves.

To be called Christians, and yet not to be righteous, is to be called Christians, and yet to be no Christians. Why are we called Christians? but because we are anointed with the Unction Christ, if a man profess him-

self to be a Christian, and is not Righteous, he is not a Christian, for he hath not the Spirit of Christ, and therefore is none of Christs, not but that we may fail; but it is required that the stream and bent of our hearts and ways be to walk Righteously, we aim at Righteousness, though sometimes we miss the mark.

Use 3 May quiet us, if we fear evil in well doing, why? beause Christ was most Righteous, yet he suffered much unrighteous dealing in a Righte-

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ous cause, we think we have much wrong, if for righteous dealing we meet with unrighteous dealing, if in innocency we meet with crosses, and Fire and Faggot, we cry out, *O temora, O mores*, but it was the case of Christ, and therefore we must not think it strange to suffer ill for well-doing, not only to be reviled, but to loose our Goods, and our Lives, if we should meet with them, it is no more then Christ suffered, it was the ground of Atheists in old time, if they did see *Bona malis, & mala bonis evenire*, why is there a God that doth govern the earth? but we must consider God is patient as well as just, and therefore many times forbears punishment.

I JOH. I. 3.

And hereby we know that we know him, if we keep his Commandments.

THe Apostle St. *John* having shewed in the former Verses that Christ is our Advocate, and Propitiation, here might his little Children reason. But how shall I know that Christ is my Advocate, and Reconciler? though he be both, yet how shall it appear that he is so to me? why, *hereby we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.*

Saint *John* here speaks of such a knowledge as we call acquaintance, and familiarity, and fellowship, *I know you not*, Matth. 7. 23. that is, I have no acquaintance and fellowship with you, hereby we know we have fellowship with Christ, if we keep his Commandments, you may know whether you have fellowship with Christ or no by this. This third Verse therefore shews our fellowship with Christ in his mediation.

Doct. 1. *A man that knows Christ, may, and ought to come to know that he doth know him, or hath fellowship and communion with him.*

Doct. 2. *Such as do keep his commandments, may come to know that they do know Christ, that they have true fellowship with him.*

I For the First, a man that knows Christ, may, and ought to come to know that he knows him, or hath fellowship and communion with him; hereby we

know that we know him, here is *actio reflexa*, the Senses they do not reflect themselves, the Eye sees other men's faces, not its own, but by reflection in a Glass; but in our Spiritual knowledge we may more sensibly discern our Spiritual estate, than our faces in a Glass, for we see not that, but in another *Medium*, but a man knows his knowledge of Spiritual, things directly, he not only knows, but knows that he knows what is meant by these.

To know Christ, is not only to know his Nature, and Person, and Offices, that he is God-man, and that he is our Advocate, and Reconciler, and Propitiation, the Devil knows thus much; so that a spiritual knowledge is not superficial, but such a knowledge as is operative, nor dead, but lively, not naked, but such a knowledge as is joined with acquaintance, such a knowledge as works us to obedience, *Psal.* 9. 10. *Isa.* 53. 11. and that works us to Mortification, *Gal.* 6. 14. such a knowledge as makes all the World dead to us; As a man that hath set his affections on a woman, it deads his affections to all others, *1 Sam.* 2. 12. the Sons of *Eli* knew not the Lord; and *Exod.* 5. 2. *Who is the Lord*, saith *Pharaoh*, *I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go*; they knew not the Lord, that is, they had not this lively operative knowledge joined with obedience, so then true knowledge is operative, begets trust, and confidence, and joy in God, *Jer.* 10. 23. and is likewise joined with obedience, *1 Chron.* 28. 9, 10. then we see it is such a knowledge as makes us trust in him, fear him, honour him, serve him, cleave to him, and yield obedience unto him; and no wonder, for *verba sensus accipienda sunt cum effectu and affectu*; *I have seen the oppression where-with the Ægyptians oppress my people Israel*, *Exod.* 3. 9. I have seen, that is, not only looked on it, but have compassion, and intend to deliver them; so, *Remember thy Creator* &c. that is, bend thy affections to him, and honour him, so to know Christ is to affect him, to honour him, to cleave to him, to obey him, to acquaint

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our selves with him, for by knowledge is here meant acquaintance, and familiarity.

What is this Knowledge, to know that we know him?

It is an Act of the Understanding, by which, upon good ground, he doth discern, that he doth know God, and hath fellowship with him, no man calls that Knowledge which is only a Conjecture, nay this Knowledge is more than a true faith, for they are two distinct things though they stand together, *1 Joh.* 4. 16. *We have known and believed*, &c. so that this knowledge is more than a true faith, for faith is a persuasion or trust a man takes up upon the credit of Diviue testimony, if I take it upon man's testimony it is credulity,

but when I take things on God's authority, that is faith; but here is something more, we know and believe, and we know that we know, which is an *Actus judicii*, and more than opinion, or faith; Knowledge is such an acknowledgement as ariseth *Ex principiis scientificis*, such as proceeds from certain Principles, as I know that Fire burns from the light and heat, so then I know it by experience, all knowledge ariseth either from Causes or Effects, such effects as cannot delude us, if it may, it is but conjecture, but what we know, it is upon sure grounds and experience, that is Knowledge. So then we know that we knew him, this implies, that a man that knows Christ may not only think so, and have such an opinion, and believe so, but he may know he knows Christ, and that by two effects; that breed

1 Experience; 1. By feeling in his own heart, that having been oppressed with sin, he finds his soul comfortably pacified, if he find Christ pacifying his soul, he knows that he knows Christ, such a man whose spirit hath been oppressed with the consciousness of sin, if this man's soul be comforted and pacified, then he knows that he knows Christ, he is now acquainted with Christ one that was never troubled with sin, knows not the worth and virtue of Christ, but a man that hath been afflicted in conscience for sin, and is now pacified, now he knows that he knows Christ, he had hold of him before, but he now plainly sees him, *Job* 42. 5. I have heard of thee, by the hearing of the Ear, but now mine Eyes see thee, as if all his knowledge before, had been but as the hearing of him, but now he comfortably finds Christ presence he now sees his worth and excellency, *Cant.* 5. 10. a man knows that this is Christ's, because he knows that nothing in Heaven or Earth could pacise him but Christ.

2 He knows that he knows Christ, not only by the pacifying of his conscience, but by the purifying of his conscience, *Act.* 15. 9. purifying it from the lusts of sin, whereas before we were covetous, we are now heavenly minded; whereas before vain, now serious *in serio*, and look at Trifles as Trifles; before unclean, now holy and chaste; before intemperate, now temperate; before disordered, now our hearts are cast in another mould and frame, both the inward man is purified, and the outward, the words and actions are purified; thus we know that we know him, if we keep his Commandments, so that they that know Christ, may say, I know that I know him.

Use 1. To refute that Popish Doctrine that teacheth, that none can be certain of his Salvation, nay they say it is Heretical presumption, and many, worldly men think it is impossible, and others think it is needless to be attained, but such may be convinced from this Doctrine, and what faith the Apostle *Peter*, *Give all diligence to make your calling and election sure*, 2 *Pet.*

1. 10. how shall we make it sure, if we know not that we know it? 1 *Cor.* 2. 12. God gives us his Spirit, that we may see the grace he hath given us, *Joh.* 3. *ult.* St. *John* speaks it here of little children, that they may know it, so that this knowledge is both possible, necessary, and may be certain.

They say we may have a Conjectural knowledge, but no certainty of faith; it is a speech which implies a contradiction, if it be Conjectural it is no Knowledge, that which I only conjecture, I know not; we do not know that we only conjecture, if I ask you, if you know such a one? if you say, you think

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you know him, you do not know him; so that when they say, we cannot have knowledge of faith, we do nor say they may only believe it, but they may have certainty of feeling, Faith may admit much doubting, but Knowledge excludes much doubting.

Use 2. To consider whether we can say thus, we know that we know him; do you know that you have acquaintance and fellowship with Christ? do you believe it? How do you believe it, on what ground?

1. Have you found Christ purifying your Consciences by his blood? if you have found that, then you know that you know him, *Phil.* 4. 7.

2. Do you find your Consciences purified? do you find your Corruptions mortified? do your Lusts grow abominable? do you find your hearts cleansed from wrath and impatience? &c. certainly then you know that you know Christ, for none else could have pacified and purified your hearts? if it be so that you dare not sin, you seek peace and ensue it, then you may know that you have Christ, but if these signs be wanting, especially purifying, then you know him not.

Use 3. To exhort us never to rest till you know that you have acquaintance with Christ, if a man had all the knowledge in the World, what comfort would it afford him, if he knew not that he had fellowship with Christ, never count you know any thing if you know not Christ, *Si Christum discis, satis est, &c.* and yet rest not there till you know that you know him; Beasts see, and hear, but they know not that they do so, because they are irrational, and want the faculty of reflection, and in spirituals a Carnal heart is blind; but it is for a Christian to know Christ, and not only so, but to know that he knows him, we must not rest either in men's good persuasions, that they hope, and are persuaded well of us, or that they speak well of us, but we must never rest till we know that Christ dwells in us, and we in him, which we may know by his pacifying and purifying of our consciences.

Use 4. Or Consolation to such as do sin, and fall daily, and find their own emptiness, their knowledge is but small, their experience little, their outward comforts shallow, yet this is a man's comfort, that he knows Christ and not only so, but knows that he knows Christ; God never gives us a Blessing but he is willing that we should know it, if he set up a Light in our minds he would have us discern that light, and walk in the light thereof; therefore let us thankfully acknowledge it, and comfort our selves therein.

We come now to the evidence whereby we come to know that we know Christ, hereby we know that we know him, if we keep his Commandments; for the understanding of this, we must know that there is a perfect keeping the Commandments without sin, and that St. *John* disclaimed before, *Cap. 1. Vers. 8, 10.*

2. There is another keeping the Commandments, that is, not perfect without sin, yet perfect without dissimulation or hypocrisy, and that is here meant.

Doct. *Sincere obedience, or keeping the Commandments of Christ, is a Scientific argument, and sign of our undoubted and known fellowship with Christ.*

Q. *What is it to keep his Commandments?*

A. The keeping of his Commandments is usually in Scripture expressed by divers comparisons.

1. Sometimes it is expressed by keeping his Commandments as a man would keep his way, turning neither to the right hand, nor to the left, *Josh. 1. 7,* and then we must look at the Commandments as our way, as a Traveller doth not go out of his way, if he doth, it is besides his intention.

2. Sometimes it is expressed by keeping Jewels, we should keep them as our Treasure, set our hearts on them, *Prov. 6. 20, 21,* bind them about thy heart. Which implies, they are to be our greatest treasure to be looked at, and wear them about thy neck, he would have us look at them as our Ornaments

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ments, many men would be rich, but they would not always have it known, but a Christian is not only to look at Christ's Commandments as his Treasure, but as his Ornaments and credit; a man is then said to keep the Commandments, when he looks at them as his Treasure and Ornaments, he fears not to shew himself, and let it appear that he keeps his Commandments, he is not ashamed to wear them about him openly.

3 It is compared to the keeping of the apple of a man's eye, *Prov. 7. 1, 2.* keep them as the apple of thine eye; a man keeps the apple of his eye very

tenderly, every mote is ready to trouble him, therefore he would not have the least mote come imo his eye, so that is true keeping of God's Commandments, when the least offence or scruple against God's Commandments is bitter and noisome to him, as motes to the apple of his eye, he cares not what the World thinks of it, if it be against the Law of God, it is noisome unto him.

4 It is expressed by keeping the Commandments as a man would keep his Soul, *Prov.* 19. 16. as it it some to this pinch, either keep the Commandments or lose your life; a Christian will lose his life, and keep the Commandments, nay of the two, he would rather lose his Soul, *Luk.* 14. 26. a man must be willing to sit loose from his life for Christ; now if we thus keep his Commandments, it is an evident sign that we know that we know him.

Obj. *But such a keeping is very strict, and hardly to be attained, who can do this? in many things we offend all, and who is it that goes not astray?*

Ans. A Christian may keep the Commandments as his way, when he intends to go on, and it he be out, it is besides his intention, he may keep them as his treasure, though sometimes upon some temptation he may part with something thereof, yet after he knows it, he mourns for it, and it is the guise of his heart, and though a Christian may sometimes be ashamed of his Profession, yet afterwards he is ashamed of his Fact, as *Peter*, and though a Christian may sometimes offend the Commandment, yet he is never well till he hath got our this mote, sometimes a man, may rather choose his life as *Peter*, but afterwards he grieves, and weeps bitterly, and would rather part with his life than the Commandment; and if it be thus with thee, it is a sign thy keeping is sincere.

Quest. *How is such obedience a certain sign of our acquaintance with Christ?*

Ans. 1. This sincere keeping of the Commandments our Saviour looks at it, as an act of friendship to him, *Joh.* 15. 14. then are ye my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you, as we take it as a point of special friendship, when a man is ready at our command, and willing to do what we would have him'j nay, *Joh.* 15. 10. our Saviour takes it not only as love, but as abiding constant love, and if it spring from our love to Christ, it must needs spring from Christ's love to us, for we could nor have loved him except he had loved us first, 1 *Joh.* 4. 19. 1 *Joh.* 5. 3, no man keeps any thing that is grievous, a man may have fire about his house, or a mote in his eye, but he keeps it not, it is grievous; a man may be out of the way, but it, is grievous, but when he keeps the Commandment, as his way, his neasure, his eye. his

life, and it is not grievous to him; every Office, be it never so bad, it seems easy, because he loves him dearly; as *Jacob's* seven year's service for *Rachel* seemed but a little space, because he loved her, *Gen.* 29. 20. if there be such mutual love, it is a certain sign of acquaintance.

2 This keeping of his Commandments is a sign of our abiding in Christ, and so our acquaintance with him, *Joh.* 15. 1. *Hos.* 14. 8. upon me is thy fruit found, otherwise we are barren, it is Christ that puts forth any fruit in us, *Ezek.* 36. 27. how comes it to pass, a man keeps God's Laws and Judgements, but because he hath his Spirit within him, and he keeps us, and then we keep his Commandments?

Use 1.

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Use 1. To refute that Popish Error, that a man may keep the Commandments perfectly without sin.

2 That though he can thus keep them, yet he cannot be sure of his Salvation. But this is contradictory, hereby we know that we know him, if we keep his Commandments, so that is either certain they keep not his Commandments, or if they do, they may be certain at their fellowship with Christ, and so of Salvation by him.

2 It refutes them in this, in that they say we are wont to discourage men from good works, but we say, none can be justified by the works of the law, but we do not discourage them from good works; for we say thus, if men keep God's Commandments, which is to perform good works, hereby we say, we may come to know that we know Christ; we say more, not only a perfect keeping, but a sincere keeping of them, though imperfectly, with respect and care, we say, though this doth not justify u., yet we say, they do justify the truth of our Estate, and that is no small matter; we challenge them for discouraging of men from good works, for they will not grant that hereby we know that we know him, but still leave a man in doubt, but we grant much comfort from good works, for though they do not justify us, yet hereby we know that we are justified.

Use 2 To confute the *Arians*, this shews a certain ground of the divinity of Christ, for if by keeping his Commandments, we may come to know him, now this would not hold, if he had not the same authority to command with God himself, *Jam.* 4. 12. there is but one Law-giver; therefore if Christ be our Law-giver, he is one God with the Father, his Commandments with the Father, are of like benefit and use.

Use 3 Shews the cause why many men do not know, that they know Christ, none can know Christ: but such as keep his Commandments.

1 Therefore such cannot know Christ, that do not know his Commandments, for, if they do not know them, how can they keep them? God's ways are too hard to be found in the night, in Ignorance, or Darkness.

2 Though a man do know them, yet if he divide them, some he will keep, and some he will not keep, if he do thus, he cannot come to know that he knows Christ, because he doth not keep his Commandments; there are some Commandments he doth not keep, if you take liberty to break the Sabbath, and will not keep it, and know, it is God's Commandment, it is impossible you should come to a saving Knowledge of your Estate in Christ, if you be content to live in the least known sin, if you do not as gladly root out any sin, as you would pull a mote out of your eye, you cannot know Christ, or come to know that you know him.

3 There are others that know Christ, and yet do not know that they know him, why? because they do not keep his Commandments, as their way, do not look at them as their Treasure, as their Ornaments, do not keep them as the Apple. of their Eye; but swallow many motes, this doth very much hinder the Eye, of their souls; many would do much for Religion, but would not have it come to life, then no wonder if we see not our Estates, if motes be in our Eyes, we cannot see, as otherwise we might, so if sin lie on our souls, no wonder if we be so blinded, that we cannot see our Estate in Christ, not know, that we know him.

Use 4 It shews a ready way to peace of Conscience, would we have our Consciences pacified? why, labour to know that we know Christ, and that will pacify the Conscience, when we come to know that we are acquainted with Christ, this being peace of Conscience, but how shall we know that? why, keep the Commandments of Christ, as our Way, as our Treasure, as the Apple of our Eye, as our Life, then we may know that we know him, that we have Fellowship with him, and then our Consciences will be at quiet both in life and death, if we keep the Commandments as our way, and if we be out of the way it troubles us, if we keep it as our Treasure, and if

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we lose any it grieves us, when we grieve for the loss of it, as for the loss of our Ornaments; if we cannot suffer any sin to be in our souls, but it afflicts us, then our Consciences will be at peace; if we keep the Commandments carelessly, we keep the peace of our Consciences loosely, as we keep the Commandments, so we keep the Comforts of our Souls; it may be we walk in God's ways, but not so closely and charily as we should, this hinders our own peace; it was a speech of *Jonah* when he was now in a good tem-

per and dissembled not, *Jonah* 2. 8. they that follow lying vanities, forsake their own mercies; they that follow lying vanities, any comfort of the world, if these be any way, any Treasure, any Ornament, any Life that we prize above the Commandments of God, these are lying vanities, deluding things, and then we forsake our own mercies, that is, the portion of mercy which God had appointed him, and he spake it by woeful experience, he clave to his credit, a lying vanity, and thought he would prevent his discredit; but God found him out, and he found it by experience, that they that stick to any pleasure more than God, they forfake their own mercies, he might have had mercy if he had been obedient, but now he saw no hope of mercy, in this world at least; therefore it may teach us to take heed of trusting to any deluding vanity.

Use 5 Of Consolation to constant keepers of God's Commandments, sometimes a man may keep them, and yet be in fear and doubts of his Estate, why, go on in that way still, keep them as your Way, your Treasure, and Apple of your Eye, your Life, that is the way to comfort, be it known unto you if you do thus, that you do know Christ, for did you not love God, you would never go on in a constant course of keeping his Commandments, and you could not love him, except he loved you first, and you could not keep his Commandments, but by his Spirit dwelling in you, and that argues acquaintance with him, *Psal.* 19. 11. in keeping of them mere is great reward, greater than any gold or silver; a man may keep that, and yet want a quiet Conscience; but a man that keeps God's Commandments, shall not want peace of Conscience, *Psal.* 119. 72; thousands of Gold and Silver, will not keep a man's heart warm and comfortable, but the keeping of God's Commandments will, and be it that you be about your calling, no business of your calling will hinder your peace, no, Commandment of God hinders your Peace; indeed if you go about things without warrant from a Commandment, be it in the World, in your callings, if you look at your profit and pleasure &c. and not at God's Commandment to set you a work, you lose your Peace, and you will want your Peace, in that day's conversation, but if you go about things in virtue of a Commandment, never fear, your calling will never hinder your Peace, keep the Commandment, and keep your Peace, we hinder our Peace often, because we go about business, without an Eye to the Commandment, and so it is not acceptable to God, he finds no favour of rest in it, and therefore no wonder if we lose our Peace, but if any work, though never so mean, be done in obedience to God's Commandments, we shall keep and maintain our Peace.

I JOHN I. 4.

He that saith I know him, and keepeth not his Commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

IT is St. *John's* usual course to propound the Truth, Affirmatively, and Negatively, Vers. 3. Affirmatively, Vers. 4. Negatively, Vers. 5. he amplifies the keeping of Christ's Commandments by a double benefit. 1 In him that doth so, is the Love of God perfect.

2 Hereby we know that we are in him,
From whence Verse 6. he passes this conclusion of conforming our lives, to the life of Christ.

Verse

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Verse 4 *He that saith he knows him, &c.*

To say, is either, In Heart, In Word, In ourward Carriage.

He that saith I know him, he speaks not of an active understanding of him, but of an affectionate hearty knowledge.

Knowledge is either speculative or operative, infused or acquired; Historical, or Experimental, all come to one; but this knowledge here meant, an acquaintance, so then, he that saith he hath acquaintance with God, and keeps not his Commandments, that is, as his Way, his Treasure, his Ornaments, his Eye, his Life.

1 He is a Liar, that is, he not only speaks false, but he knows he speaks falsely, for that is the difference between an untruth and a lie.

2 There is no truth in him, not one true grace, not one true act of Repentance, Faith, &c.

Doct. Opinion or profession of the Knowledge of Christ, without keeping of his Commandments, is an undoubted sign that he is a liar, and the best Grace in him is counterfeit, he hath no true Grace in him.

To say in the heart, is opinion, to say in the tongue or carriage, is profession, and if he do thus, he is a liar, the truth is not in him, *Tit.* 1. 15, 16. they, profess they know God, but in their works they deny him, such a one is abominable, disobedient, and to every good work reprobate, that is, he goes about it untowardly, is unskilful in it, hath no sincerity, and his work is rejected of God, as Reprobate counterfeit silver.

Q How is such a man a liar? and no truth in him? A man may be a liar sometimes, and yet have some truth in him, but this man hath no truth in him, but 1 *He speaks falsely, 2 Against Conscience, 3 No truth is in him.*

A. 1 He speaks falsely, which appeareth from the Efficacy of all true Knowledge of Christ, which brings forth obedience, if a man knows Christ, he loves him, and affects him and obeys him, *Math.* 7. 22, 23. all saving Knowledge, stirs us up to obedience to God, to righteousness to man, if a man be a Son of *Belial*, such a man knows not God, those that obey him not, never knew him, 1 *Chron.* 29. 9. Know thou the God of thy Father, and serve him, they that never served God, never knew him, *Joh.* 14. 21; if any man love me, he will keep my Commandments, and further no man knows God, but he hath known the depth and danger of sin, he hath known his estrangement and absence from God, if a man know nor himself, he knows not God.

2 After that he hath known sin; he comes to know Christ and his mediation, such a man is sensible of his former misery, and knows the excellency of Christ; he hath been so bitten with sin, that he looks at it, as the most heinous sight, and the keeping of God's commandments, he looks at it as the sweetest thing in the World, 2 *Cor.* 6. 14 God's Commandments are not greivous to him, such Knowledge springs from experience of our former misery, therefore they that never come to this, never knew Christ.

2 Why, is such a man a liar, that saith he knows God, and keeps not his Commandments?

1 From the conviction of the Testimony of that light which shines in his heart, *Joh.* 16. 9. there is a Spirit of conviction, in all those that live in the Church, for others do not contend that they know Christ, but those that thus profess, are convinced of their sins, of their unbelief, and disobedience, and of the wickedness of their hearts, and lives.

Obj, *Are there not many that live carnally and wickedly, and yet are not convinced of their sins?*

It is true there are such, but then they live in such a course, that they do not trespass against their Consciences, they think they keep the Law, and so think well of themselves, and they are at peace and secure.

Such as walk thus civilly, and conformably, yet such a man's Conscience is at uncertainty about his Estate, he is convinced that he wants something, but he cannot tell what it is, till he be thoroughly convinced by God's Spirit,

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thus it was, *Mark* 10. 19. *Matth.* 19. 18, 19, 20. the young man told Christ all these have I kept from my youth, what lack I yet, his Conscience guided, him to feel that he wanted something, though he kept them in the outward letter, yet he saw he wanted something, and his Conscience was not at rest, so that such a man as saith he knows Christ and keeps his Com-

mandments, speaks against the conviction of his Conscience, and therefore is a liar; I speak not of such Christians who want Peace, because they do not keep God's Commandments, but of such who when they have Peace, thinks they keep his Commandments.

3. Why is there no truth of grace in such a man as saith thus?

Rea. From the necessary conjunction of all graces with obedience, no true grace of God, but is either the cause of obedience, it breeds it, or else is a companion of obedience, or else an effect of obedience, it sprang from obedience; Faith worketh by love, *Gal.* 5. 6. and love is the fulfilling of the Law, *Rom.* 13. 10. 1 *Tim.* 1. 5. and so hope, 1 *Joh.* 3. 3. patience is joined with obedience, and meekness springs from obedience, and from the spiritual experience of a man's weakness, and experience of Christ's power, in him springs humility; so that all graces either spring from obedience, or serves to it, or accompany it; so that even these very graces that are more in the understanding, and speculation, they either spring from obedience, or help to obedience, the Knowledge of a Christian is not unfruitful, 2 *Pet.* 1. 8. which shews that a Christian Knowledge, brings forth fruits of obedience; no gift a Christian hath, but he considers what good he may do with it, and if he see it not serviceable, he regards it not, so that if every grace do breed, or nurse, or accompany obedience, then whosoever professes he knows God, and doth not keep his Commandments, there is no truth in such a man, no true grace.

Use 1. For trial of the truth of our profession, would you know the truth of your Grace, of your Repentance, of your Faith, of your Humility? you shall know it by your fruitfulness what use do you make of your Graces? would you know whether your Repentance be sound? or your love, &c. found? would you know this? why, consider, do they make you obedient and careful to keep God's Commandments? as your Way, your Treasure, your Ornaments, your Eye, your Life; if any grace be fruitful, make you conscionable of the keeping of God's Commandments, that is a witness of the truth of that Grace: a painted Tree, be it never so fair, yet it bears no fruit, but a living Tree brings forth fruit, you have cause to suspect your Grace, if it make you not fruitful and careful to please God; if Grace make you obedient, it is sincere, but if a man hath never so many Gifts and Graces, if they lead him not to obedience, truly they are, but counterfeit, and there is no true Grace in him, *Isa.* 47. 10. if they caused them to rebel, there is no truth in them, if any Grace leave you more corrupt, or less fruitful, there is no truth in you.

Use 2. It exhorts us to a conscionable diligent keeping of God's Commandments, hereby we shall keep our profession true; our Consciences void of

offence, and shall have an evidence that we know Christ, let a man say he knows God, and keep not his Commandments, his protection is not true, but he that both saith so, and doth so, his profession is sincere.

2. It will keep your Consciences in Peace, when your Consciences checks you not; but bears you witness that you desire to do God's will in truth, this brings great Peace.

3. It keeps your Grace sound, the more fruitful, and the more obedient, the more doth Grace increase; a Christian that lets his Grace lie at rest, it grows rusty, and he may doubt of the truth of his Grace; if any metal lie up and rust, we may suspect whether it be right or no; but if it be kept with continual use, we suspect it not; take a Christian that doth no exercise himself in Grace, he grows so rusty, that he suspects the truth of his Grace, but put thy Grace to employment, let it be in continual use, and thou shalt easily

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see it is good metal and currant, the employment of Graces proves the truth of them, therefore as we desire to keep our profession true, or our conscience clean, or our graces sound, keep in a daily course of obedience, always be doing good, and that from God's Commandment.

Use 3. Of Consolation to all such as take a good course, and labour to keep God's Commandments, they may sometimes suspect all their grace is counterfeit, and their and there is no sincerity in them; why if there be no sincerity in you, you do not keep God's Commandments as your way, but you cannot say, but you would gladly find your hearts keeping them as your way, and you endeavour it, and it is the grief of your souls when you go out of the way; do not keep them as your treasure, and ornament, and apple of your eye and life? why then there is truth of grace in you, truth of sincerity, though not of perfection; you must not look to keep them without sin, but if you desire to keep them as the most precious thing, as your treasure, your ornament, your life, the apple of your eye, though a man may sometimes have a mote fall into his eye, but in this case do not say, your graces are counterfeit, for if they were counterfeit you would not keep God's Commandments, *Psal. 36. 1.* Wickedness saith to the wicked, there is no fear of God before his eyes; how doth that appear to *David?* *vers. 4.* he sets himself in no good way, he is in a bad way, and goes on therein, and such a one, it is plain, *he hath no fear of God before his eyes*, by their fruits he knows them; if you set your selves in no good way, your profession cannot be true, but if the way you take be good, and if not though dost not take it up; why if it be thus, your profession is true, and your grace found; it is a question whether *Solo-*

mon fell finally, or his graces were true or no; you may know his repentance was true, because he found his lust to women as bitter as death, *Eccles.* 7. 6, 7. well then, if an adulterous, or Idolatrous Wife were as bitter as death to him, then it is an evident sign, if he looked at his transgression as death, he looked at the Commandment as life, and therefore his repentance was sincere; so then if a man find his sin as bitter as death, it is a sign his repentance is true. But yet we must here distinguish between the horror of sin, and sin it self, the horror of sin may be as bitter to us as death, but not the sin it self, as *Judas*, he horror of sin was so bitter to him that for it he hanged himself; but had *Judas* been troubled with the sin of his conscience, as he was with the horror of his conscience, he would not have gone about to help one sin by another; had he hated sin for it self, he would have hated Murder as sin. So would you know whether it be horror of sin, or sin that troubles you? if it be horror, you will seek to drive it away by sin, as some do by merry company, and merry Books, this is a plain sign that sin troubles them not, for then he would not seek to help one sin by another, but if a man look at the breach of the Law, as the loss of his way, it troubles him as much as the losing of his treasure, it is as a mote in his eye, he had as lieve part of his life, if it be thus with the thou mayest have comfort, thy profession is true, thy conscience clear, thy profession sound and sincere.

1 JOHN 2. 5, 6.

But he that keepeth his Word, in him is the love of God perfect indeed, &c.

The words do declare a double comfort that betides all those that keep the Commandments of Christ Jesus.

1 The perfection of God's love in such *In him is the love of God perfect.*

2 The Knowledge of their fellowship or abode in Christ, *Hereby we know that we are in him.* So, that he that keeps his Commandments, if he look within him, his love is perfect; if he look without him, he is in Christ; yea
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and more, he knows it to; whence he concludes, vers. 16. that he that saith he is in Christ, ought so to walk as Christ hath walked.

To keep his Word, or his Commandments (as I told you) is a borrowed speech from many things which we keep with great care; as out way, our treasure, our ornaments, the apple of our eye, our life. What is such a man's benefit? why,

1 The love of God is perfected in him.

2 He *knows* he is in Christ.

The love here spoken of is not the love whereby God loves him, but the love whereby he loves God, and that is perfected in him.

Doct. *The keeping of God's Commandments is undoubtedly, and truly the perfection of our love to God.*

Q. *What is here meant by perfection?*

A. 1. There is a double perfection, one complete without all want or imperfection, and that is denied to any man in this World, *Philip. 3. 12. οὐκ ἦδη τετελείωμαι* that is, not exempt from all weaknesses, our knowledge is imperfect, and our love is imperfect, there is a continual reluctance, *Gal. 3. 17.*

3 There is a perfection without falsehood, hypocrisy or dissimulation, or guile, and such a perfection is found in all true Believers that keep God's Commandments, *the love of God is perfected in them*; that is, without hypocrisy, dissimulation, or guile. *Gen. 6. 9. Noah* was a perfect man, and *Asa 1 King. 15.* his heart was perfect; that is, sincere, though he had many and great failings; *1 King. 20. 3. Remember* saith Hezekiah, *how I have walked before thee with a perfect heart.* This phrase is usual in Scripture, to call that perfect which is sincere and true.

Reas. 1. Sincerity of obedience is called perfection, because whatsoever is wanting is covered in the blood of Christ, and if a man sin be covered, it is as if he had no sin, *Psal. 32. 1, 2. Blessed is the man whose wickedness is forgiven, and whose sin is covered; blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile*; when there is so much uprightness in a man's heart that he walks without any guile, to him the Lord imputes no sin.

Q. *It there any in whose heart there is no guile?*

A. There is none that they tolerate or justify? none that they nourish or maintain, if they have any they strive against it, are not well till they be rid of it, no guile but what their judgements dis-allow, and their wills consent not to, blessed are such to whom no sin is imputed, in whose spirit there is no guile.

2 Such are said to be perfect, because they strive after perfection, and if they have a willing mind the Lord accepts of it, according to that a man hath, and not according to that a man hath not, *2 Cor. 8. 12.* See how Christ approved the two Mites of the poor Widow, because she had an heart to give all her estate, Christ saith, *She gave more than they all*; so if a man gives all his heart to God, and if he had more he would give more, why, God accounts it as perfect.

3 God accounts of any sincere truth of grace as perfect because in time it will be so, and he looks at things to come as present, he that hath begun a good work will also perfect it, *Phil.* 1. 6. 1 *The.* 5. 23, 24.

Q. *But how comes it to pass, that such a keeping of the Commandments argues love to be perfect?*

A. A thing is said to be perfect three ways.

1 When there is *Perfectio partium*, a perfection of all parts, none wanting, *Gen.* 2. 1.

2 A man is called perfect, that is ready, and skilful, and nimble at any business.

3 A thing is said to be perfect that will hold, that is constant, as we call

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thrm perfect colours that will hold their hue in every weather, now such a true perfection of love to God, is in all keepers of God's Commandments.

1 There is a perfection of all the parts of love in all such men, there is none of the parts wanting; and the parts of love are,

1 An affection unto fellowship with Christ.

2 An affection to be doing good to him.

What we love completely, First, We desire communion with it.

Secondly, We desire communication of good thereunto; if we have it, we rejoice in it, if we want it, we earnestly desire it; how doth a man know his love to his friend, but by desire of communion with him, and communication of good to him, now such a man as keeps Christ's Commandments thus loves Christ.

1 He is broken off from the love of all other things, and he hath an unfeigned affection to have fellowship with him, and to get that, he keeps his Commandments, and so dwells in him, and he in him, *Joh.* 14. 21, 22.

1 For communication of good to him, our works cannot profit God, yet if we be willing to do God any service, to be at his command at any time, then the love of God is perfect in us, when we desire fellowship with him, and desire to do him the best service we can.

2 Again, in perfection there is a readiness to a work; so such a man as keeps God's Commandments, his love is ready, he is forward to every good duty, because it is a Commandment of God, He is a willing person, *Psal.* 110. 3. 2 *Cor.* 8. 12. you need not stand urging him, he is willing to do, God's will, *His tongue is the pen of a ready writer*, *Psal.* 46. 1.

3 There is perfect love in him, because it is constant and durable, and will not change, such a man's love is the same in health and sickness, in the Church and at home, in prosperity and adversity, and if it be any way disturbed at any time, yet it will return again to its former constant course.

Q. *But how may I know, wherein doth it appear, that if I keep God's Commandments, my love is perfect?*

A. 1. From the contrariety of our tempers naturally to any Commandment, so that if you see any one willing and ready to be at God's command, you may say, certainly the love of God hath overcome him, the Commandments of God do cross his will, cross his affections, cross his profit and pleasure, so that if you see any one give himself up to keep God's Commandments and cross himself, it is an undoubted sign that there is the love of God in him, which constrains him to do what Nature would not do.

2 You may know such a man's love to be perfect that keeps his Commandments, because whatsoever weak beginnings of love you find in such as keep God's Commandments, that man's love grows perfecter every day, such a man still grows in fruitfulness, he grows ready to every good work, *Joh. 15. 2.* so that the love of God is perfected in him by obedience; As a fruitful Tree, the more it sticks his root downward into the ground, the faster it grows, so a Christian, the more he sticks his root on Christ, the faster he grows, And so the Husband-man will have more care of a fruitful Tree to prune it, he hath no such care of a sour barren Tree, but if a Tree be fruitful, he cuts off all superfluous Boughs that hinder the increase of such a Tree; so a man that is fruitful in God's Commandments, he doth not only stick his root, his faith and hope deeper in Christ, but the Lord himself is willing to cut down all those noisome Lusts that suck a way the sap of grace; if God see a man set himself fully to follow God, and keep his Commandments, the Lord will cut off all cumberances, all corruptions, all things that hinder the growth of grace.

Use 1. For trial of our love to God, whether it be perfect or no, whether sincere or counterfeit; how dost thou find thy heart affected to God's Commandments? dost thou look at them as thy way? it grieves thee to be out,

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dost though look at them as thy treasure, as most profitable to thee? dost thou look at them as thy ornaments, as most: honourable to thee? dost thou look at them as the apple of thine eye, as thy life, most near, and dear, and precious to thee? If thou dost, thou hast that love in thee that is perfect without guile, perfect in every part of love, and in regard of readiness and constancy;

but if a man looks at God's Commandments as a by-path; as if he were out of the way, if he looks at them as unprofitable, and dishonourable; if he can break them without any scruple; if he would rather part with them all than his life, verily the love of God is not perfect in such.

Use 2. For direction to all such as desire perfection of love to Christ; do any desire to love the Lord Jesus in perfection, not only of truth, but parts, and degrees, if he could? why this is the way, keep his Commandments take heed of breaking any one of them. What is the reason we deceive our selves in our love to Christ? we think it is love to Christ, if we keep a solemn Feast to him at this time of the year, in memory of his Nativity, but is there no better Argument, nor furtherance of thy love to Christ than this? take heed of it, if Christ hath commanded us to deck our bodies and houses; if Christ hath commanded us to feast and be liberal, you will find that a great help to further your love to Christ, and an evidence thereof; but if you go on in any course without a Commandment, if you keep such Feasts, which end in all excels and riot, and gaming and playing, they begin it may be, pretty well, but we fall from Religion to civility, from civility to intemperance, and wontonness, &c. and what is the reason? because we have the custom of our Fathers for it, not the Commandment of Christ; the Apostle doth not say, he that keeps customs his love is perfect, but he that keeps Christ's Commandments, therefore if you would get your love to Christ perfected, it must not be by keeping of old Customs, but by keeping his Commandments; what is the reason why the most are so ready to keep such Feasts, is it because it is Christ's Commandment? If it were, the more you would find your love perfected, you would be more froward to good, your spirits grow from one grace to another, but because men look at customs they begin in the Spirit, and end in the Flesh. Take a Christian at the beginning of the Sabbath, he finds his heart unlisty to holy Duties, but before it be ended, he is so enlarged, that he is sorry it is done? Why, because he obeys a command, but if we do any thing out of custom it grows from better to worse, so that Christ hath not more dishonour the rest of the twelve Months than he hath these twelve days; but would you have your love perfected, then frame your lives and courses according to God's Commandments, and then the more you practise the more you may, you shall find: your grace growing, and your love perfected to every good work; be doing God's Will, and the Lord will be with you, blessed is that soul whom the Lord shall find doing his Commandments; be doing, and your doing shall multiply your strength and growth in grace.

Use 3. Of Consolation to all such as apply themselves to be doing of God's Commandments; doth a man find himself ordering his ways according to a Commandment? if you find it delightful to you, that you would still walk in it, you look at it as your way, your treasure, your ornament, &c. why this is your comfort, the love of God is perfect in you, and will grow more perfect, so perfect that God covers all your infirmities; so perfect, that it grows up high to perfection, even to all the parts thereof; so perfect, that God sees you willing and ready to be doing his will; so perfect, that you resolve to hold on and be constant, and if God see you this molded to a Commandment, and not to Customs. God will uphold you, and help you, and strengthen you, till he make you perfect, which is no small comfort to a soul.

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1 JOHN 2. 5, 6.

Hearby we know that we are in him. He that saith he abideth in him, ought even so to walk as he hath walked.

IN Verse 5 you have an obedient Christian set out. 1. By his practice, he keeps Christ's Commandments.

2. By his priviledge, which is double.

1. His love is perfected.

2. He knows that he is in Christ.

3. Verse 6, here is a duty enjoined to all men that would profess Fellowship with Christ, namely, imitation of Christ; they ought to walk, as he hath walked.

From the former part of the 5 Verse, we have observed.

Doct. The observation of Christ's Commandments, is the perfection of our love to Christ.

Those next words shews the right honouring of Christ and your selves together; so as we may honour God, and he honour us; that is by Knowledge of our Fellowship with Christ, and by our duty, so to walk, as he hath walked.

Hereby we know that we are in him.

By what? by the love in us? no, by keeping his Commandments, we know that we have Fellowship with him, though both be coincident; so then here is a promise, not only of their being in Christ, but their knowing that they are in Christ,

Doct. *Sincere obedience to the word of Christ, is both a certain and evident sign of our blessed estate in Christ.*

Hereby, that is by keeping his Commandments, we know that we are in Christ.

Quest. 1. *What is it to be in Christ?*

Ans. They are said to be in Christ, in Scripture phrase by three degrees.

1. They are said to be in Christ, that do submit themselves to the ordinances of God, hear the Word, receive the Sacrament, use prayer and other good duties, and live unblameably before his people, *1 Cor.* 7. 39. where he gives liberty to any Christian woman that makes, profession of Religion, if her Husband be dead to marry with whom she will, but in the Lord, and *1 Tim.* 5. 11. he forbids *Timothy* to receive younger widows; because when they begin to wax wanton against Christ, they will marry; this is not here meant, though it be a part of it.

2. There is a further being in Christ by a participation of some Graces, though not sanctifying Graces; yet such as may fit them for many Christian offices, as may fit for Magistracy, as *Jehu*, and Ministry, as *Judas*, *Joh.* 15. 2. Every branch that beareth nut fruit in me, he taketh away; as who should say, there may be a branch in Christ, and yet bring forth no fruit, but no man can be thus in Christ, but he must suck some sap and juice from Christ; but this is not here meant of common Graces, as *Jehu's* zeal, *Felix* his trembling, *Herod's* joy, &c.

3. Men are said to be in Christ, when they participate of such Graces as accompany salvation; such as make them true members of Christ, as Faith and Humility, and Hope and Patience and of such *St. John* here speaks, by such fruits we know that we are in Christ.

And thus we are said to be in Christ, partly from all eternity, in the purpose of God, *Ephes.* 1. 4. not actually, but virtually, *non actali inextentia, sed virtuali continentia*, God looked at us as Members, in time to be in Christ, and notwithstanding this decree, yet these may not live in obedience to any Commandment, have as yet no Fellowship with Christ.

2. There is another being in Christ, which is actual, namely, of such, who
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being called out of the estate of Nature, bringing forth the fruits at new obedience, *Rom.* 16. 7. who were in Christ before me, not elected before him, but called before him, he was Persecutor when they were Professors; thus we are said to be in Christ, when by faith we lay hold all him, *Joh.* 1. 12.

Q. 2. *What is it to know that we are in Christ?*

A. It is more than opinion, or thinking so, for we are never said in any speech to know that which we only think to be so, no man knows this to be gold or silver, if he but think it to be so. No man grounds his knowledge upon Conjecture, and indeed opinion flows from contingency, it may be so, or otherwise, but Knowledge is on sure grounds; what then, is it Faith? No, they go together, yet they differ much, there is as much difference between them as between hearing and seeing, *Faith comes by hearing*, when we assent to any thing upon Divine testimony, as if God hath given us some word, we believe it, but if we see a thing by sense, or by experience, or by some certain Arguments of God's dealing with us, that we do not now only believe it from God's Word, but we plainly see it by experience in our heart from some love of God, from some obedience and humility, &c. if we have found our Consciencs pacified after much horror. Again, we find that our heart have been proud and unclean, but now down falls pride and uncleanness, and we begin to conform our selves to God's will, now we know that Christ is in us, or else we could not have turned our selves to any good thing.

Q. 3. *What is the reason that such obedience is a certain sign and evidence of our good estate in Christ, that we know that we are in Christ?*

Reas. 1. From the wonderful insufficiency of our natures to keep any Commandment of God without this, 2 *Cor.* 3. 5. *Matth.* 12. 34, 35. *Rom.* 3. 12. we of our selves are altogether fruitless in the works of righteousness, till Christ's love dwell in us, *Ezek.* 36. 25. to 37. How come men to keep God's Law but from the Spirit of God which dwells in them? look on men in the state of Nature, and their fairest fruits are but the Vines of *Sodom*, and Grapes of *Gomorrah*, *Deut.* 32. 32, 33. they seem as fair as any, but their clusters are bitter, and so the best fruits of all Natural men are bitter, our very Honey is like Gall, and Wormwood, and our best actons full of corruption and bitter, so that if a man find his Grapes savoury, his words, thoughts, and actions gracious and sweet, so that now he is fruitful in obedience, it is an evident sign we are in Christ, else we could not be inabled to any thing which is good.

2 Were it not for the love of Christ that constraineth us, we should never be willing to deny our selves; Do you see a man willing to submit himself to Christ, to his Ordinances, it could not be but by the love of Christ's that constrains us to deny our selves.

Use 1. Of refutation of that Popish Error, that think it impossible that any should know his estate in Christ, or that he shall be saved; it is one of their Canons, Why doth the Apostle speak to little Children, Babes in Christ thus,

they may know that they are in Christ, and that by keeping his Commandments in sincerity, if it were impossible to be known? for them therefore to conclude an impossibility for a man to know that he is in Christ, is against the Doctrine of the Apostles, and against Christ; if (I say) any man preach another Gospel than this that St. *John* delivered, let him be accursed *Gal. 6. 7.*

Aquinas concludes, that we cannot know we are in the state of grace, certainly, but upon conjecture, which implies a contradiction, for opinion is *contingentium, scientia necessarium & certerum*, yet he makes some Objections against himself.

Obj. Is it not said, *Gen. 22. 12. Now I know that thou fearest me, &c.* that is, as he expounds it, *Cognovi*, i.e. *Cognoscere te feci*, I have made thee to know that thou fearest me, therefore saith he, he might know that he was in the
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state of Grace, because he was willing to deny his dearest Son for Christ. He answers, it may be it was special Revelation, but it was not special Revelation, to resolve to kill, his Son at God's command, he knew his own heart well enough.

Obj. 2 *1 Cor. 2. 12.* Now we have received not the Spirit of the World but the Spirit of God, that we might know the things that are given us of God; so then saith he, if we may know things that are given us by the Spirit of God, then it is more than conjecture, it is a certain Knowledge. His answer to this is, it is spoken of a state of Glory, but it is manifest to be meant of a state in this life; for he speaks of Princes that persecuted the truth, and that they knew not these things, but we know it by the Spirit of God.

Obj. 3 If men may discern they are in darkness, when they are in darkness; much more may we know we are in light, when we are in light, of the two, it is the easier; now he that is in the state of darkness, knows it, *Ephes. 5. 13. Gal. 5. 19.* the works of the flesh are manifest.

4 He saith those things which are in a man essentially; he knows they are in him; now Graces are essential in a regenerate man, that is, the essence of them is there; therefore he may know that Repentance and Faith, &c. is there; it they be there, what is in a man, is known to be in him; if he have a judgement, he knows he hath it; if he hath a will, he knows he wills; so if a man hath Graces in him, he may know that he hath them, as a Woman with child, doth know that she is with child, *Gal. 4. 1.* and takes it not upon others repon, but upon her own sure Knowledge; so if Christ be conceived in us, the stirring motions of God's Graces be in us, we may know it,

thus *Aquinas* confutes himself.

Use 2 Refutation of an unjust complaint they do make against us; they say that we discourage men from good works, this complain is unjust; for though we do not say they justify us, yet thereby we know that we are justified, and that is no small encouragement; my good works do not justify me, but yet they justify my justification, nay further, we say to them that they discourage men from good works; who say, when a man hath done what he can, and fulfilled the whole law, yet he cannot certainly know that he is in Christ, and so what profit will it be for a man to take pains, and do much and suffer much, and yet knows not whether God loves him or not? but we on the contrary say, if a man walk in a constant course of obedience to God's Commandments, he may thereby know that he is in Christ, and this must needs be an encouragement to good works.

Use 3 For trial, 1 Whether we keep God's Commandments.

2 Whether we be in Christ or no.

1 Wouldst thou know whether thou keepest God's Commandments as thou shouldst? dost thou keep them as thy Way? as thy Treasure, &c. it thou dost, I dedare to thee, thou art in Christ, and thou either dost, or shall know Christ. And if thou wouldest know whether thou be in Christ, why, thou mayest know it, if thou keep God's Commandments.

Use 4 Of Consolation, to every such soul as keeps God's Commandments; here is a double benefit to such.

1 Thou art in Christ, 2 Thou knowest thou art in Christ, and this is fulness of joy; for if thou be in Christ, thou hast no condemnation belonging to thee, *Rom. 8. 1.* and thou mayest also know it; how ill then do they deal with their own souls, who know they are in Christ, and yet every discouragement puts them off from comfort? it is a shame that Christians that have such a priviledge as to be in Christ, and know it, should be so discouraged; therefore, those that would keep a continual festival unto Christ, let them get into Christ, and learn to know that they are in Christ, and this may be a comfort unto them, against all discouragements.

Doct. It is the duty of all such as profess Fellowship with Christ, to walk as Christ walked or the profession of Fellowship with Christ, ought to be joined with imitation of Christ.

Q. What

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Q. *What is it to walk as Christ walked?*

A. Christ hath walked in some ways, as God, in some ways, as Mediator, God and man, and in some ways, as man,

1 Then he wrought some works God, he fasted forty days, and forty nights, he fed five thousand with five loaves, and two fishes, he walked on the water, &c. God never calls us to imitate him in these works, but he calls, *learn of me for I am meek and lowly.*

Q. *Doth he call us to walk in those ways which he walked in as Mediator?*

A. He doth not call us to walk in the same kind, but in resemblance to them, as he died for us, and rose again so in resemblance he calls us to die unto sin, and to rise again to the life of Grace, so to die to the World, as he died to nature, and to rise to newness of life, as he arose from the dead, *Rom. 6. 16.*

2 As he was a King, Priest, and Prophet unto God, so he would have us Kings to over-rule our temptations, to rule over our families, to rule over our Tongues, to rule over our hearts; he hath called us likewise to be Priests, to offer up sacrifices of prayer, and praise, and alms, and to offer up our bodies and souls, an acceptable sacrifice unto him, *Hos. 14. 3. Heb. 13. 16, 17. Rom. 12. 1, 2.* and to be as Prophets to teach our Children, and Servants, and Families, and instruct them, *Act. 2. 17.*

3 Some works he wrought as man, and so he was either a Minister of Circumcision, or as a Servant of God; a goodman, and in these we are to imitate him, 1 As a Minister, so Ministers should follow him.

1 In undertaking his Calling from him, as he did his from God, he saw God's call, he was sent by his Father, so we should see his call, otherwise to undertake it without a call from him, is the way to bring a curse upon our selves.

2 In his Calling he performed his Ministry with all Faithfulness, he did bring in the stray, heal the sick, instruct the Ignorant, &c. *Ezek. 34. 16.* and his inward care was, that they might have life, and have it more abundantly, *Joh. 10. 10, 11.* so should Ministers dispense the word of life, strive to beget the life of Grace in the hearts of their people, to help the weak, comfort the distressed, inform the Ignorant, &c.

2 As a private Christian, a goodman, we must imitate him in his doing and suffering.

1 For the matter of his doing, it was always God's command, *Joh. 14. ult.*

2 The manner of his doing, 1 It was in obedience to God's command, *Joh. 5. 30.*

2 He did it with cheerfulness, it was his meat and drink to do God's will.

3 The end of his work was God's Glory, *Joh. 17. 4.*

1 So for his sufferings, 1 They were all in Innocency, 1 *Pet. 2. 21.*

2 With much patience, 2 *Pet. 2. 23.*

3 He suffered with much profit, he learned obedience by his temptations and sufferings, *Heb.* 8. 8. he profited by his Agony, by his despising, by his buffetings, by his crucifying, and in these things we should labour to imitate and follow him.

Q. *Why should we be like him?*

A. 1 From God's predestination, *Rom.* 8. 29. he hath decreed that we should be like him.

2 From the near Fellowship we have with him; it is meet the Members should be conformable to the head, the branch to the root.

Use 1 An evident conviction of that Popish Doctrine of the merit of works, and satisfaction, and super-arrogation; if so be when we have done all that we can, and walked as Christ walked, as perfectly as he did, if we could, if then we had done no more than our duty, God hath no cause to thank us, and we deserve nothing, *Luke* 7. 9, 16. now what is our duty? we ought to walk as he hath walked, now a Servant looks not for thanks for

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his days work, so we have not merited thanks for the works we have done; and if when we have done what we can, we have done but what we ought to do, then we cannot do more than we ought, and so superarrogate; and for satisfaction, if our best works be our debts, then we cannot satisfy for our sins, by our duties; suppose a man owed another a great debt, and besides owed him all service for some great benefit, for redeeming him from Captivity, &c. the doing of this service would not satisfy his debt, because he ought him that besides; so we were all Captives to Satan, and God through Christ delivered us; and for that, we owe to God all we have, and if we were in debt besides by our sins, all our service will not satisfy for our sins, for we owe that besides, now one debt will not pay another.

Use 2 Of Direction and exhortation to all that desire to walk answerable to that knowledge they have, do you desire to be in Christ? and know you are in Christ, why, conform your selves to walk as Christ walked, if thou dost so, thou mayest keep a good Christmas all thy life, thou shalt keep Christ's honour all thy life in remembrance, if thou walk as Christ walked; therefore Christ died, that we might die unto sin, 1 *Pet.* 4. 1, 2. whatever corruption is in you, let it die in you, mortify pride, and anger, and uncleanness, and covetousness, &c. learn to die to these, and live to God; make it your chiefest pleasure to do God's will, rise from all deadness, and sluggishness of Spirit; have you been unable to rule over your Spirit? now put on the Spirit of Kings, over-rule your passions and corruptions, rule your Families, be as

Priests to offer up sacrifices of prayer, and praise, and alms, to offer up body and soul to God's service, every work do it in obedience to God's Commandment, do it with cheerfulness and meekness, do it to God's glory, and if you be called to suffer, suffer Innocently, not for any sinful carriage, not for murder or theft, &c. but for Righteousness sake, and then suffer patiently and meekly, and whatever you suffer, be sure that you profit by it, by temptation, by crosses, by persecution, &c. learn obedience, and so you shall walk as Christ hath walked; be stirred up to walk in imitation of Christ, 1 *Cor.* 11. 1. set this pattern before you, to imitate him both now, and all the year; look upon Christ, aim at him, work as he did, suffer as he did; and so for Ministers, walk faithfully, help the weak, bring back the stray, comfort the distressed, walk as Christ hath walked.

1 JOHN 2. 7.

Brethren, I write not a new Commandment unto you, but an old Commandment, which you have had from the beginning the old Commandment, is the word which ye have heard from the beginning.

FROM the 6th Verse, the Apostle had taught, It is the duty of all Christians to walk as Christ hath walked, now this, Commandment the Apostle amplifies, verse 7, 8.

1 By denying the newness of it, it is no new Commandment; to press that all that will be saved, it is no new Commandment.

2 He admits it may be called new in some respects, verse 8.

1 In the 7th Verse we have these parts, 1 A loving compellation, *Brethren.*

2 A denial of the newness of this Commandment, *I write not to you a new Commandment.*

3 The antiquity of it.

4 A declaration how it shall appear not to be new; all the Doctrine which you have heard from the beginning is no other but this, that all must walk as Christ hath walked.

Doct. *The Ministers of Christ are to acknowledge, even their little Children as their Brethren.*

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Compare this Verse with the first, there he calls them, *little Children*, and here Brethren; so *Paul* doth express himself thus, *Rom.* 15. 14. 1 *Cor.* 2. 1. 2 *Cor.* 3. 1.

Reas. Because he and they do partake in all things wherein Natural Brethren partake.

1. They have the same God and Father that begets them, *Ephes.* 4. 6. *Jam.* 1. 17, 18.

2. They have one Mother, the Church, *Gal.* 4. 26. and he speaks of Jerusalem on earth, though he calls it *Jerusalem* which is from above, because it is above an earthly condition, and *John* himself was a little Child to some, as they were to him, *Gal.* 4. 19. And so sometimes private Christians they do labour, and travel in begetting children to God, it is a wonder to see many times, how some are put to pangs to beget their friends to God, sometimes by Prayer, by exhortation, by reproof, by all means they use much pains, therefore the Church is called, *The Mother of us all*, because some in the Church begets us.

3. They all partake in one Immortal Seed, by which they are begotten unto God, *1 Pet.* 1. 23. this immotral Seed, for the Material part, it is the Word, for the Spiritual part, it is the Spirit of God, *Joh.* 3. 5. so it is not so much the Letter of the Word, as the Spirit of God, whereby, all are begot to God.

4. They are all begotten to the same eternal inheritance, *1 Pet.* 1. 3. and so they are all, both Ministers and People called Brethren.

Use 1. To teach Ministers so to look at their Spiritual Fatherhood, as not to forget their Spiritual Brotherhood, *ver.* 1. he calls them *little Children*, not that Ministers should shew dominion over them, as Lords over them, *2 Cor.* 1. *ult.* *1 Pet.* 5. 2, 3, 4. so then their Fatherhood must not make them Lords, but the name of Brotherhood must bind them to communion, they have indeed a kind of power, but not to subdue their Spitits to them, not to believe as they do, or walk as they do, only so far as they are like unto Christ, *1 Cor.* 11. 1. otherwise Christians are not to be led, by them.

Use 2. This must teach both Ministers and People to maintain brotherly love and affection, if you be Brethren, *Let brotherly love continue*, *Heb.* 13. 1. *1 Pet.* 2. 17. therefore what kind of desire and comfort there is in brotherly Communion, what mutual joy when they meet, the same should be in Christian Ministers and People.

Now the fruits of Brotherly love are chiefly three;

1. Unity, that they should *keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace*, *Col.* 3. 14. *Ephes.* 4. 3.

2. Equality, (not to take away different respects) but to make our selves equal to others in affection, to conceive that though we have more gifts, yet they may have less corruption, they may not have so much grace, but they

may make better use of it, *Phil.* 3. 3. we should always conceive of others as equal, or better than ourselves.

3. Spirtual Communion, that is, mutual dispensing of help one to another, of Exhortation, Admonition, Consolation, and Reproof, *Levit.* 19. 17. 1 *Thes.* 5. 14. and for temporal things we should be helpful one to another, take up quarrels, 1 *Cor.* 6. 5, 6. pardon one anothers failings, be helpful to the poor brethren, *Rom.* 15. 15, we must not neglect, or despise one another, or carry our selves as strangers one to another, is this brotherly love, to carry our selves strangely towards them, or not care for their communion or company, never to help them? this is not brotherly love. And indeed the Sacrament invites us to brotherly love, for we are moulded as it were up into one Loaf, and drink of the same Cup, 1 *Cor.* 10. 17. therefore if there be any strangeness, or quarrelling, or contempt between us, it is to sin against his Ordinance; if God be the God of peace, then Satan is the author of discord; how comely a thing is it for brethren to live together in unity? *Psal.* 133. 1, 2, 3. he com-

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pares it to the most precious Ointment that was poured on the head, and ran down upon *Aaron's* beard, and the skirts of his garments; and so what grace is poured on the eminentest Christian, must run down to the lowest, and as me Mountains let the drops of Dew which fall upon them to fall down upon the Valleys, so where God hath mounted any blessing, where God hath bestowed eminent Gifts, every one should so use his Gifts, as the lower Val- lies may be the more fruitful, they the more helpful.

Use 3. It reproves Ministers that dis-hearten, and make sad those that God would not have made sad, many times Ministers are most bitter against their best Hearers, *Ezek.* 13. 22. nor let people make sad the hearts of their Ministers, brethren should not thus carry themselves, but rather comfort one another.

It also reproves the aptness of many to affect natural carnal men, their on- ly delight is in them, and they only hate the Seed of the Woman, that is con- trary to *St. John's* precept.

I write no new Commandment, &c.

Doct. The Ministers of Christ are carefully to avoid all suspicion of no- velty in all the Doctrines they teach, whether of faith or manners.

Thus *St. John*, he seeing that it might seem a new Commandment to walk as Christ hath walked, he tells them; *It is no new Commandment that I write unto you*, *Jer.* 6. 16. *Job.* 8. 8, 9, 10. and *Moses* sharply reproved the *Is-*

raelites for serving new gods, *Deut.* 32. 17. *Act.* 26. 22. he continued witnessing no other truth but what *Moses* and the Prophets had delivered before him.

Obj. *Is it not said*, *Mat.* 13. 52. *is it not the part of a good Scribe to bring forth things both new and old?*

Ans. True, he is to bring forth new things; but,

1. Such as may be new to the people, not new to the Word, such as they never heard of, yet not new to the Word, for it is their duty to bring their sheep to new fresh green Pastures, *Psa.* 23. 2. but it must not be new in it self, but anciently delivered by the Prophets and Apostles.

2 A Minister that delivers an old Doctrine, and known to the people, yet he must bring it in in a new manner, that it may affect them the more, being dressed after a new manner; the appetite desires new dishes more, as for our Saviour, be taught no new Doctrine, but he spake it in such a manner, in such Parables, that it seemed strange to them.

3 He should have so much respect to newness, as to bring out all old Doctrine with a new vigour of Spirit, not with the old Spirit, but with a new affection and vigour, that so the people may be more affected therewith, he must deliver the same matter with a new Spirit, he must drink a new draught of the Wine of the Sanctuary, but a Minister must not teach any thing that is new to the Scripture.

Reas. From the perfection of the Scripture, *Psal.* 19. 7. God's perfection is more seen in this, then in any other works, the World is perfect in its kind, vers. 6. but vers. 7. How perfect is the Law of God? now, as it were a Frantic thing to go about to create new Creatures, so to come with *Nova dogmata*, and new Opinions; it is as if a man should come with new Creatures, there is not any new Creature in the World, so let a man survey all Doctrines, he shall find them to be the same which were from the Creation.

Use 1. To mortify a new fangled trick of Ministers and People, when the Minister sits their itching ears with New-fangled Doctrine, and the people affect new Doctrine, this is against the Apostles practice here, *2 Tim.* 4. 2, 3. *Act.* 17. 19, 20, 21. they thought *Paul* came in with new matters, and they were affected with news, but though this Doctrine was, new to them, yet it was not new to the Word.

Use 2. To reprove the Popish Religion, it is new, some are *Franciscans*, and some *Dominicans*; these are new, we never read of them in the Scripture,
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neither do we read of Jesuits, or Monks, or Abbots; they never had any footsteps in Scripture; some of them confess that in their matters of difference from us, they have no ground in Scripture for purgatory, or prayer for the dead; but what faith St. *John*, *I write unto you no new Commandment*.

Use 3 To Assemblies and Synods, to take heed what they impose on the Church, no new traditions must be thrust on us, if it be not from God, let it be abandoncd.

But that which you have had from the beginning.

Doct. *True Antiquity in all Doctrines of the Apostles or Ministers, is that which fetches its original from the beginning.*

1 That which hath had its original from old times, is not always safe, as we see, *Math.* 5. 27. & 35. and yet this dost not make it true Antiquity, because it was not from the beginning, *Joh.* 8. 44. the Devil had his lying from the beginning, but it was not from the first beginning, for he was not created a liar, but he made himself so.

But the true Antiquity is twofold.

1 From the first Institution or Creation of a thing, *Math.* 19. 8. and that is a good Antiquity, that is fetched from the first Institution.

2 That which fertheth its beginning from God, though it were of later times, for he is *Alpha* and *Omega*, *Rev.* 1. 8. the beginning and end of all things.

Rea. 1 From the nature of all evil, which is an aberration from the first good Estate, if any corruption be in marriage, as polygamy, or adultery, from the beginning it was not so, if the Devil be a liar, from the beginning he was not so.

2 From the nature of Truth and good things that come from God, they have the nature of God stamped on them, and as he is the ancient of days, it is that good; as Baptism and the Lord's Supper, though they were not in the World before Christ's coming in the flesh, yet being from God, they have true Antiquity, they are derived from the ancient of days.

Use 1 It discovers the vanity of the Popish allegation of Antiquity, they will bring you a thousand years, alas, many errors concerning circumcision, and the denial of the Resurrection, have been of six thousand years standing, yet that is nothing; it was not from the beginning, that is true Doctrine which was from the beginning, or else from God immediately, all other Antiquity is but vain, therefore when the Papists pretend Antiquity; truly if it be not as ancient as the Ancient of days, if it come not from him, it is not true Antiquity; they will tell you that these Feasts that we celebrate, in me-

mory of Christ's Nativity have great Antiquity, some four hundred years after Christ's time, but it is but as yesterday, if it come not from Christ or the Apostles, for he hath revealed his whole mind in Christ, *Heb.* 1. 1, 2. so that what comes not from Christ is vain; *Ignatius*, saith, my Antiquity is Christ.

Use 2 To shew the ungrounded confidence, of Scholars in the Fathers, if it come from the Fathers, it sinks deeply, truly if it have no higher rise than the Fathers, it is too young a device, no other writings besides the Scripture can plead true Antiquity, whatever it be, if it come not from Christ, or the first Institution, it is too late, because it is not the same we have had from the beginning, and indeed there is just cause to suspect them.

1 Many of them had no skill in the original, and therefore must see by other men's eyes, by translations, for few knew the meaning of the Scripture in the original, none knew the Hebrew, but *Jeremy* and *Origen*.

2 Most of them were converted from heathenism, and so brought in many errors, as purgatory, and festivals, &c. which the Papists take from them.

3 They lived in such times, wherein many said they had their Doctrine from the Apostles mouth, as one said, Antichrist should be a Jew, and live at *Jerusalem*, and saith he, was *John's* Disciple, a gross error, and from him came *Peter's* supremacy.

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4 They lived in those days when Popery came in, when the bottomless Pit was opened, and Frogs arose; but later Writers lived when these were dispelled, therefore take heed of them, not but that many spake very well, yet there is a great difference.

5 Observe generally, God did not give them the Spirit of Interpretation, but weakly, and if they wanted such a spirit, how could they open the Scriptures? whereas later Writers had a clearer discerning, therefore it will be of more use to read wholesome later writers.

Use 3. To teach Christians what kind of life and manners to take up; you will say you love not new-fangledness, why then, *Vive moribus antiquiss utere verbis presentibus*; live antient lives; your obedience must be swayed by an old rule, walk in the old way, walk not in ways of Superstition, of Covetousness, of vanity, of uncleanness, every sin is a novelty, though it be never so old a custom.

This Old Commandment is the Word that they had from the beginning.

Doct. *The Commandment to walk after Christ's example is the old Doctrine that was taught to the Church in all Ages from the beginning of the World.*

He tells them, this was no new Doctrine, but such as they had from the beginning, for in the time of innocency *Adam* was made after the Image of God, and *Christ* is the Image of God, *Col.* 1. 15. After he fell, the first Sermon that he had was, That the Seed of the Woman should break the Serpents head, *Gen.* 3. 15. and this Promise was renewed to *Abraham*, *Gen.* 22. 18.

In after times, when the Lord led *Israel* out of *Ægypt*, he sent the Angel of the Covenant to go before them, *Exod.* 23. 20, 21. *Deut.* 18. 18. from the beginning it was thus dispensed, to walk after the Lord, and whatever Pattern they had from God, it was from *Christ*, the second Person in the Trinity; so *Joh.* 1. 18, *Levit.* 19. 17, and he charged them to be holy as he was, that is the same with this of *St. John* here, to walk as *Christ* hath walked, *Heb.* 13. 8. the same before and under the Law, today in the time of the Gospel, and the same for ever, *1 Corinth.* 10. 1. to 5. *Act.* 15. 10, 11. they held to be saved by faith, and by faith lived all the Saints of old, *Hebr.* 11. *Hebr.* 12. 1, 2, 3.

Use 1 To justify the antiquity of Christian Religion, there is nothing in Christian Religion but we have it either from Commandment, or Promise, or Pattern of *Christ*, the death of *Christ* that was shadowed in the Sacrifices in the Old Law; and promised in Paradise, and when *Christ* would convince them, he doth it from hence, *Luk.* 24. 26, 27. all our forefathers believed, and died in the same Religion that we do,

Use 2. If the imitation of *Christ* be of so great antiquity, then it convinces them that blame Christian Religion of new-fangledness, why there is no Christian that walks as *Christ* did, but he walks as *Abel*, and *Noah*, and *Abraham* did, therefore it is not a novelty, but from the Ancient of days, even from the beginning.

Use 3. It may encourage every Christian to walk as *Christ* did, when they consider all the Patriarchs, and Prophets, and Apostles since the world began, have gone before them in the same steps, and in the same faith, if we cannot shew an higher ground, and longer antiquity for our Doctrine, than the Papists for any Popish tradition, we will renounce it, but we take up no other Religion but that which came from the Ancient of days, and was from the first institution. The care that any Christian takes to prepare himself for the receiving of the Sacrament hath been of old, the Apostle reproved the want thereof in his time, *1 Cor.* 11. and they set the Lamb aside three days before the Passover, to prepare themselves, *Exod.* 12. 3. 14. so that this

kind of preparation hath been of old, 2 *Chron.* 35. 5. therefore let every one of us examine our failings, humble our selves, entreat for pardon and cleansing, for strength of grace to walk as Christ walked.

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1 JOHN 2. 8.

Again, a new Commandment I write unto you, that which is true in him, and also in you, for the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth.

IN this Verse he amplifies his Doctrine by a contrary Argument of newness. 1 He describes the Old Commandment by another adjunct of newness.

2 He sets down in what respects it is new, and in a double respect the Old Commandment may be called new;

1 In respect of Christ.

2 In respect of Christ.

3 He propounds the reason of it, because Christ hath scattered Light among, them, and Darkness *παράγεται*, *abigitur*, is a driving away.

Doct. The Commandment and Doctrine of the imitation of Christ is a new Commandment, both in regard of Christ, and Believers, the Members of Christ.

1 It is new in respect of Christ.

1 Christ hath expressly commanded it; whenever Christ converted any to Grace, this was his common speech, *Follow me*, *Matth.* 4. 19. (which if it were not a word of Conversion, yet at least of new Conversion, *Mat.* 9. 9.) and it is a general rule, *Luk.* 9. 13. where by following of Christ in the last place is meant imitating Christ, thus it is new in respect of Christ's Commandment.

2 In respect of Christ's efficacy and power working in our hearts, *vers.* 9. it is wrought and stamped in us by a new work of Christ, in the spirits of his followers, that they do indeed let their hearts to follow Christ.

2 It is new in respect of us Believers.

1 In regard of the outward hearing of the ear it is now, spoken to the *Jews*, never so plainly spoken before, *Follow me*; in all the Old Testament there is not such an express letter as follow Christ, imitate Christ, walk as Christ hath walked.

1 In regard of that new work wrought in the hearts of Christians, *Ephes.* 4. 24. that is, put on such a frame of holiness and righteousness, wherein you may lively resemble the new *Adam*, the new man Christ.

Use 1. As we ought not to affect new-fangledness, so we ought not to loathe and reject newness, before St. *John* carefully avoided new-fangledness, now he commends newness.

The ground of this difference is;

1 Look whatever comes from God (the Ancient of days) is always new, and never waxeth old, and as it is new, so it is always old, yea, old enough if it come from God, *Eccles.* 1.9.

2 If it come from God, the newer it is the better it is, because our old Natures, and Corruptions, and Courses should always be abhorred of us, but grace, and that new man, and new ways of holiness should be acceptable to us.

3 If it be new, and come from God, it is a greater manifestation of God, we may see a greater light in it than ever before.

Use 2 Never look to fulfill this Commandment of imitating Christ, until you become new men, for it is a new Commandment, and a new Commandment requires new obedience, and new obedience requires new spirits, and a new man; do not therefore think to follow Christ: with old spirits; thus much of the quality; now follows the reason, *For the darkness is past, &c.*

Doct. *The state of the Children of God in this Life, is as darkness passing, and true light now shining.*

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It is an excellent description of a godly man's Estate from his first Conversion forward, the word, in the Original signifies passing, or a driving away *παράγεται*, it is not so well translated, *past*, For the opening of the point consider, there is a threefold darkness, and a threefold light.

1 Darkness of 1 Ignorance, *Math.* 4. 16.

2 Uncleaness, 2 *Cor.* 6. 16.

3 Affliction or discomfort. *Psal.* 112. 4.

2 Light of 1 Knowledge, *Math.* 4. 16.

2 Holiness, 2 *Cor.* 6. 16. *Ephes.* 5. 8.

3 Comfort, *Psal.* 92. 11.

It may be spoken at all here, but chiefly of the two former, darkness of ignorance and, uncleaness is passing away in a Christian, and light of Knowledge and Holiness is shining forth daily more and more in his heart, *Num.* 13. 12, the day is at hand, *i.e.* not yet come, yet near at hand, and the night far spent, *i.e.* almost gone and spent, yet not so spent as wholly gone, the shadows of the night still remain, but the day begins to dawn, 2 *Pet.* 1. 19, the

dawning of the day, is when the shadows of darkness, are not yet dearly vanished, and he doth not say the Sun, but the day star, which riseth before the Sun a good while; he there describes the State of the Church, till the day of resurrection, the light of the Gospel, doth not yet dearly and fully shine, but is only dawning, Christ is in his Children, as a day Star gives them comfortable light, but the Sun is not yet in his strength, *Prov.* 4.18, it is not yet perfect day with us, no, not with the best Christians under Heaven, but it grows by degrees, till it be perfect day with them, which is at the day of their dissolution, like to the earthen Pitchers of *Gideon's* men, *Judg.* 7. 16. 20. when they brake their Pitchers, the Lamps gloriously shone forth, and dazzled their eyes, thus it is with a Christian when these earthen Pitches, and carcasses are broken, his light will shine forth gloriously, in the mean time we have light, we have Lamps, but they are in Pitchers shining very dimly.

Q. *If we had been perfected the first day, and the light had shined gloriously forth at the first, had it not been better?*

A. Yes, It God had been pleased so to have done, but God would not have it so, and therefore it were not better, God rather sees it fit that we should carry our light in earthen Vessels, wherein there is partly darkness, and partly light, *2 Cor.* 4. 7. and that for these reasons.

Reas. 1 That God might shew his power in our weakness, *2 Cor.* 12. 9, 10. we should never have known Christ's virtue, the power of Grace, or the depth of our corruptions, if we had been perfected the first day of our conversion, as God made the world by degrees, and described it so, because he would have us discern his power, so God doth display the power of his grace, by perfecting us by degrees, and not all at once.

Reas. 1. That God might teach us to war with spitual enemies, as God left *Canaanites* among those *Israelites*, that had not known, and were untaught in the wars of *Canaan*, to prove them, and to know, it they would harken to God's Commandments, *Judg.* 3. 3. so God leaves his Children some imbred enemies still in their souls, to humble us, and to prove us, and try if we will cleave to him; besides Jesus Christ loves, and takes delight in ruling, especially at home, in the midst of his enemies (*Psal.* 110. 2.) in the midst of our corruptions, in the midst of unbelief, Faith rules; in the midst of pride, Humility rules in the midst of anger, Meekness rules; &c. Grace gets ground in the midst of corruptions, which is to the glory at Jesus Christ.

Reas. 3. To prevent the multiplication of the Beasts of the Field amongst us, as God left *Canaanites*, among the *Israelites*, to that end, *Exod.* 23. 29, 30. if there were not weaknesses in us, it were impossible for God's people to live in the World, 1. The World would not bear with us, you know it would

not bear with Christ, who walked as meekly as might be, *Joh. 4. 30. i.e.* Satan found no weakness in him, no corruption in Christ, for him to work
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upon; if Christians has a full and clear light of Grace breaking forth at once, all would cry, away with them, they are not worthy to live.

Use 1 See here a ground of the great difference between Christians and Christians, differing in Faith, differing in manners, some are comfortably persuaded of their own Estates, but others full of fears and doubts, how comes this about? truly it is with Christians as it is with mornings of the day, some mornings are a great deal more bright than others, and some more dusky and dark; you will say, why should not a soul come to some settled Peace? true, but it will never be perfect day with us. *St. John* was an old Christian, and yet you see what he saith, the darkness was but going, and the light coming, so that we by degrees get hold of God, and strength against corruption; you have some summer mornings more lightsome than all the days of the year besides, so it is with some Christians in this morning of the first conversion, they see more clearly their own Estates by far, than others in their whole conversation, and though all have partly darkness, and partly light, yet some get more light in one thing, some in another, such a Christian, it may be, though he do not such hold of Peace, yet some corruptions, as Wantonness, Pride, Covetousness, he subdues, and gets greater hold of the contrary Graces; as it was with the pillar of the Cloud, *Exod. 14. 20.* unto which the Apostle alludes, *Heb. 12. 1.* just so is it with the spirits or God's servants, something there is in them that is cloudy, something in them that is lightsome; old *Peter, John 21. 18.* would not have gone to *Martyrdom*, and yet he would, partly willing, and partly unwilling, thus it is with the Spirit even of the best Christian, he hath some unwillingness to some good duty that God calls him unto.

Use 2 To teach us somewhat the more to bear with one another's infirmities and eclipses, *Jam. 3. 1, 2.* be not of an unruly, imperious, and censorious spirit, over-piercingly and censoriously judging others; as we have streams of light, so streams of darkness, vapours, therefore bear with, and succour one another, and help one another out of this darkness, as in a Lanthorn there is a pane of light, and a pane of darkness, so in every good quality, we have all some darkness, *Rev. 12. 1.* the Church is compared to the Moon, which when she is at the full, is fullest of spots; and yet we do not neglect the Moon, because she hath spots, but make use of the Moon, because she hath light: so neglect not any Christian, because of his spots, but make use of

his light, of that good he hath; also be something forbearing of carnal men, for ye were sometimes darkness as they are, *Tit.* 3. 1, 2, 3.

Use 3 Let no man's life be an absolute pattern to you to follow; but so far as they are light in the Lord, *1 Cor.* 11. 1. see how this in the Text proves what the Apostle speaks of, follow Christ, why? because our perfection is but imperfect, we are but darkness passing, if you follow us in all things, you may take us on the blind side, and so fall.

Use 4. To teach us to be driving away darkness, and to be trudging out of it; as it is with a Candle, the least snuff in a Candle doth not only dim the light, but doth waste the Candle; so it is with our spirits, the least snuff of Corruption doth waste that oil of Grace which is in our hearts, and dim and damp the light which is in us, therefore snuff we our hearts often, take we the Thief out of the Candle, let us shew forth the virtues of him that hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light *1 Pet.* 2. 9. *Ephes.* 5. 8. *Rom.* 13. 12. away with darkness, all darkness of doubtings, or unbelief, of pride, &c. this darkness is passing away from us, we must not call it back again, do not again draw the curtains of darkness about us; when the Sun is risen, and a man begins to sleep, and draw the curtains about him again, it is a sign he means to slug it out; so when new light shines in our hearts, and we draw our old corruptions about us again, it is a shame for us, *Col.* 3. 12. *2 Pet.* 3. 18. help one another out of darkness, help thy Wife and Children, and Servants, and Friends, and Neighbours out of it, *1 Cor.* 13. 9, 12. we

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cannot practice better than we know, but we know but in part, therefore pray, admonish, exhort, cleanse thy self, and cleanse others from the mist and shadow of darkness, as much as may be.

Use 5. Of comfort to a Christian; 1. Against troubles which many undergo in regard of darkness of Spiritual estate; it is a common thing for Christians to complain of darkness, of pride, of unbelief, of dulness; fear lies upon us, with what should we comfort our selves? we think no body is so, yes, here is some comfort for thee, all are so in some measure, it is so with the best, they have but a mixed estate, one crossing and thwarting another; the fairest day hath dark Clouds.

2 Is our darkness deeper than others? but do you not yet find, it passing away? do you not find more faith, more obedience? do you not make more conscience of your thoughts, words, and actions? this is a comfort, your darkness is going away, it wastes apace.

3 Here is a comfort against death; the time will come when all darkness shall vanish away, Death will be but the breaking of our earthen Pitchers, and our light shall break forth. *Epicteius* came forth one day, and saw a Woman mourning for breaking her Pitcher, the next day he came forth, and saw another weeping for her Son, and he said, *yesterday an earthen Pitcher broken, and to day a mortal body dead*; as if it were the same to have a Pitcher broken, and to die.

Use 6. Of trial of our estates; would you know whether your grace be true or no? whether do you find your darkness passing away, and light shining? a man may walk in a condition of darkness, and see no light, viz. of peace and comfort, *Isa.* 50. 10. I, but do you not then walk in a greater light of innocency, and watchfulness, and obedience? When a man is in the dark, he goes slowly, and warily, and lifts up his feet high every step, *Prov.* 14. 16. a godly man is afraid of something in the way, but a wicked man goes on boisterously; and confidently, he knows his way as well as yon can tell him, but he is but a fool for his labour.

I JOH. 2. 9, 10, 11.

He that saith that he is in light and hateth his brother, is in darkness until this time.

He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of evil in him.

But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knows not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes.

THe custom of this Apostle St. *John*, is, after he hath delivered any Doctrine to make some application of it, for the joy of God's children, for the end of his writing to them was, that their joy might be full, *cap.* 1. 4. and so he doth here, for having in the former verse said, that in the Children of God darkness is passing, and true light now shining, here he gathers a sign whereby we may know whether our darkness be passing, and our light springing, and that is from brotherly love, in this ninth verse, and tenth, where you have a description of him that hates his Brother, and of him that loves his Brother, the first he describes by Four things.

1 He is in darkness; *He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness.*

2 He ever was in darkness; *he is in a darkness even until now*; that is, as yet he never was out of darkness.

3 He *walketh in darkness*, vers. 11.

4 *He knows not whether he goes*; and that is amplified from the cause of it, *because that darkness hath blinded his eyes*.

Doct. *He that hateth his Brother, whither he profess the light or no, he is in darkness, ever was in darkness, and knows not where he is, not whither he goes.*

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By Brother is here meant chiefly a Christian brother, as vers. 7. it is chiefly meant of Spiritual brethren, but there is a truth in it, even towards Natural brethren, such as are of the same Parents, as likewise those of one Kindred, or of the same Country.

To Hate here, is opposed to love, which stands in Two things, desire of Communion, and Communication of good to him whom we love; hatred therefore desires neither of these, but consists in strangeness and enmity; in strangeness, when they desire not communion with them, and enmity, when they are not willing to communicate good to them; although for the most part it goes further, to do evil to one; yet, *Levit. 19. 17. Thou shalt not hate thy brother*; there Hatred is not to communicate good to our brother, *viz.* wholesome Reproof; now he that thus hates these brethren, or his brother any brother, though not all (for if a man should hate all that were Spiritual brethren, it were manifest that he were in darkness; as it were strange for a man to hate all his Natural brethren) but if there be but one brother whom he hates, he is yet in darkness, both of ignorance and wickedness.

2 Such a one was always in darkness, He is in darkness even until now.

3 He walks in darkness, *i.e.* there is no action of his but is a work of darkness, a sinful action; he makes not one good Prayer, or one good Sermon, &c.

4 He knows not whither he goes, *που ὑπάγω* where he is, nor whither he goes, *i.e.* he knows not what estate he is in before God, nor whither he goes, whether to Heaven or Hell, nor what his end will be, whether comfort or woe; now for the proof of the Point you may see it, *1 Joh. 4. 7, 8.*

Reas. 1. Because God is Love, *1 Joh. 4. 16.* and therefore he that is not in love is not in God; God is not only loving, but Love it self, *Psalm 145. 9.* God communicates good to every Creature according to his condition.

Reas. 2. From the distemper which Hatred puts both upon our judgements, and affections in every action, *vers.* 11. because darkness hath blinded his eyes; it blinds us that we cannot see that good which is in our Brother wherefore we should love him, and it puts false opinions and surmises upon everything we see him do.

3 Hatred makes every duty we perform to God abominable to him, and therefore such a man walks in darkness, *Matthew* 5. 23. *James* 1. 20. οὐκ ατεργάζεται, *non perficit*, he cannot bring a good work to an end, *Gen.* 4. 4. *Cain*, because he hated his Brother, his Sacrifice would not burn, it would not enter into God's acceptance.

Use 1. To refute an Opinion of the Popish Doctors; they say, men may fall away from Grace, and they prove it by the example of *Saul* and *Judas*, who they say were in the Estate of Grace; this will be easily decided whether they ever were in the Estate of Grace yea or no; for *Saul*, did not he hate his Brother, did not he hate *David*? if he did, then *St. John* gives here his judgement, he was ever in darkness; and of *Judas* you may see *Psal.* 109. 5, 8. which is applied to *Judas*, *Act.* 1. 20.

Use 2 From hence every one may take a scantling of his own Estate; whether do we hate our Brother, any Brother, whether spiritual, or natural, or any other man? then we are in darkness.

Object. *But may not a man hate those that hate God, with a perfect hatred?* *Psal.* 139. 22. *David makes it a sign of a citizen in heaven*, *Psal.* 15. 4.

Ans. If a man hates God, and malign goodness, we must consider two things, 1 Whether he doth it of Ignorance, or 2 Whether he doth it of malice; if he doth it of malice, we may, and ought to hate him, *Mat.* 15. 12, 13, 14. and of these did *David* speak; but if they sin of Ignorance, I must not hate them with a perfect hatred, but so far as not to affect Fellowship and communion with them, but yet to communicate good to them, that I may and must do upon all occasions; I must pray for them, and admonish,

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them; *Luk.* 23. 34. Christ prayed for those that crucified him, so did *Stephen*, *Act.* 7. 60. and it is thought by learned Divines, that prayer was a means of *Saul's* conversion; and for admonishing such an one, read. 1 *Thes.* 3. 14, 15. but if a man sin of malice, we are neither to pray for him, nor admonish him.

Use 3 This teacheth us, that as we would have a sign of our good Estate in Christ, so to love every Brother, every Brother in Christ, every Brother in nature, or civil society, *Gal.* 6. 10.

Object. *May not good men sometimes be bitter against some Brother?*

Ans. It may be so, but first they know them not to be Brethren.

2 They do not hate them with the whole heart, but partly, as far as they are unregenerate, and they will repent of it when they know it; but howsoever, it we do not hate any Brother, hereby we shall certainly know that we are in a good Estate.

Use 4 This is a ground of comfort to God's servants, God will not have one of them ill beloved; the world hates them, *Joh.* 15. 18. and if God should suffer his servants to hate them, who should love them? nay, God would have every man love his Brethren, for as verse 9. the Apostle speaks of professors, he that saith he is in the light, &c. so verse 11. he restrains it not, but he that hateth his Brother is in darkness, whosoever he be whether he profess the light or no; now therefore this should be our comfort, and this should make us careful to walk so as to be beloved.

Doct. *He that loves his Brother, walks constantly, and inoffensively in the state of Grace.*

That they walk constantly, and persevere, you may see, 1 *Joh.* 3. 14. *Joh.* 13. 35. *Heb.* 6. 9, 10. that they walk inoffensively appears, in that love covers a multitude of sins, 1 *Pet.* 4. 8.

Reas. 1 Is the contrary to the first reason of the former Doctrine; God is love, therefore such as dwell in love, dwell in God, and God in them, 1 *Joh.* 4. 16. now if God dwell in them, and they in God, they must needs walk constantly, and inoffensively.

Reas. 2 There is a power in love, to fit us to dispense God's ordinances willingly, and likewise willingly to have them dispensed to us, which doth exceedingly help us to walk constantly, and inoffensively, 1 *Thes.* 3. 12, 13. love is apt to interpret all things well, 1 *Cor.* 13. 7. and for want of this it is, that men withdraw themselves one from another, and so exhort not one another, and therefore are they subject to fall away, *Heb.* 10. 24, 25, 26. every good duty establisheth us in Grace, now love is strong in good duties; and therefore it is, that he that loves his Brother, walks constantly and inoffensively, in the State of Grace.

Reas. 3 Because there is an holy light that shines about love, now in the light, one may see, and avoid all stumbling-blocks.

Use 1 To remove a false slander cast upon godly men, that they are the most bitter, envious, and malicious men, the veryest cut-throats that are, you see they that are in the light, are of another temper; such envious and malicious men, may say that they are in the light, but if they were, they

would love their Brethren; therefore these you speak of, either are not so uncharitable as you say, or if they be, they are not as yet the Children of light.

Use 2 This shews us a way to help forward the settledness, and inoffensiveness of our Estate; if we be settled or offensive, it is for want of love, *Prov.* 13. 20. if we keep love and communion with God's Children, we shall find Grace secretly increase to establishment, if we ever were in the light, and now find our selves as it were in darkness, we are at a loss, were know not where we are; let us consider the first rise of it, and we shall find it was want of love, *Rom.* 13. 10.

Use 3. Of comfort to those that love God and his Children; if we cannot discern any other Grace in our selves, yet if we know certainly, there
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is never a brother, but we love him with all our hearts, this is an evident sign we are in the light, and that we shall walk constantly and inoffensively in the state of grace, we shall abide in the light.

I JOH. 2. 12.

I write unto you little Children, because your sins are forgiven you for his sake.

BEcause your sins are forgiven you for his sake, for whose sake? there is no name mentioned either before, or after, till we come to the Sixth Verse, this Verse therefore hath reference to vers. 6. *I write unto you, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake*, that is, for Christ's sake, so that the Commandment of walking after Christ, to walk as he hath walked, he now amplifies by the motive to stir them up to it, and that is taken from pardon of sin, *Little Children*, *τεκνία*, not *παιδει*, Babes, as vers. 13. he calls Babes, *παιδες*, so that the word *τεκνία* is of three sorts, some Fathers, some Young-men, some Babes.

1. In the Verse we have, First, a loving compellation, *Little Children*.
2. An office of love, *I write unto you*.
3. A reason of his former exhortation, *Walk as Christ hath walked*, because he hath forgiven you your sins.

Doct. *The Children of God, of what growth or strength soever they be in Christ, they must be a little Children, whither πατέρες νεανίσκοι, or παιδες.* As this benefit reacheth to all, your sins are forgiven you, so this title also.

Why as little Children?

1. You must be like them in modesty; Children are free from ambition, therefore our Saviour to wean his Disciples from ambition, tells them, they must be as little Children, or else they should never inherit the Kingdom of God.

2. We must be like them in innocency, free from malice and revenge, *1 Cor.* 14. 9. vex a Child never so, and he tells you, I will tell my Father, and will not do so without great cause, but if he do, that is all; so should it be with Christians, they should not easily complain, if they do, let this be all, make known your wrongs; we see Children, though they be angry, yet they will not seek to revenge themselves.

3. Like them in simplicity, affecting simple plain meat, Milk, *1 Pet.* 2. 1. so a Christian should not affect vanishing, but the sincere Milk of the word.

4 Like them in weanedness from the World, *Psal.* 131. 1, 2. he could be content to be without his Kingdom which before he had affected; so should we be.

5. They are content with promises and hopes; tell Child of some thing, let but his Father say, he will buy him such a thing at *London*, or he hath it laid up for him, he rests well pleased; so would God have us contented with promises and hopes, when we cry to God for this and that Blessing, or Grace, he tells us, we shall have it when he sees fit, it is laid up for us in Heaven, and in the mean time we should sit down content, *Psal.* 131. 2, 3.

Use 1. Of examination of our own estates, whether we be children of God or no, if we be, we are as little children, for outward honour, not ambitious of it, more careful how to use it, than how to get it, and if we have not honour we will not contend for it; and for innocency, we will be like little Children, for revenge, we will lay it down, and be without malice, till you be thus framed you cannot enter into God's Kingdom; if you be covetous, or ambitious or malicious; if you rise up either with ambition, or malice, you shall never enter into God's Kingdom; and for simplicity, do you nor affect curiosity? so for weanedness, is your heart murmuring and repining, if you
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cannot get such a thing? why then truly you are not as little Children; Can you be content with promises, and hopes, and that is laid up in heaven for us, or in Christ, our life is hid in him, *Col.* 3. 3. if we can be thus content, it is a good sign we are God's children.

Use 2. If Saints be as little Children, then take heed how you offend them. Parents will be more offended if you hurt their little Children, than if you

hurt their bigger, because a little hurt doth them more harm, *Matth.* 18. 6. to 11. the Angels are ready to come from Heaven presently to help them.

I write unto you, &c. it was the greatest desire of the Apostles to be present if they could, but if absent, they helped them by writing. *Gal.* 4. 20.

Doct. *The Apostles of Christ, when they could not be present with the Children of God, they were willing to advertise them by writing of things behooveful.*

So *Paul* writ his Epistles when he was absent, and *Peter*, and *James*, and Christ himself, to the seven Churches.

1 They write first to help their knowledge, to make them wise, 1 *Tim.* 3. 15. to know these duties, 2 *Tim.* 3. 15.

1 They wrote to them to help their memoties, 1 *Pet.* 1. 12, 13, 14.

3 To establish them in knowledge received, and to confirm them.

4 To stir them up to practise those things they knew, and remembered, and were established in, 1 *Pet.* 1. 12, 13.

5 *Moses* gives the reason, *Deut.* 17. 19, 20. he would have the King to read the Book of the Law, that he might learn to fear God, and keep his Commandments, &c.

6 That by this means their joy might be full; when they thus understood and remembred. and practised, it would encrease their joy, which was the end of *St. John's* writing this Epistle.

Use 1. To refute the Papists, who with-hold these Writings from the common people; to what end did they write them, if little Children might not read them? Fathers, Young-men, Babes, *St John* wrote to all, and would have all read them.

Use 2 To stir us up to constant reading of the Scripture daily; how often? why the greatest man in a Kingdom must read them once a day at the least. *Deut.* 17. 19. it will help our knowledge, our Memories, establish us, stir us up to practise, help us to fear God, to grow in joy, and fulness of consolation; what an help was it to the *Bereans*, that they read daily? it wonderfully helped their faith and comfort, therefore many of them believed, and were confirmed in Grace; what if we be in a Journey, or Sick, what then? why in this case we must meditate in the Law of God, *Psal.* 1. 2.

I write unto you because your sins are forgiven.

Doct. *All the Children of God have their sins forgiven them.*

Acts 10. 43. *Ephes.* 1. 7. sometimes remission of sin is called the covering of sin, *Psalms* 322. 1, 2. if sin be forgiven it is covered, it is not imputed unto us.

Sometimes it is called the throwing of them into the bottom of the Sea, *Micha.* 7. 18, 19. God when he forgives iniquity and sin, drowns them as deep out of sight, as things in the bottom of the Sea.

Sometimes it is called, a changing of them, *Isa.* 1. 18. *Come let us reason together, though your sins were as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow;* they are quite changed, though they were deep scarlet sins, yet they shall be made as white as snow.

Sometimes it is called, a washing away of sin, *Psal.* 51. 8. *Sprinkle me with Hyssop;* it is an allusion to the Blood in the Law sprinkled with Hyssop; so when we are sprinkled with Christ's Blood, our sins are washed away.

Sometimes it is called, a blotting out of sin, as a thick cloud have I blotted out your sins, *Isa.* 44. 22. As when the Sun appears in its brightness, the Cloud is suddenly vanished, and cleared, so our sins when they are forgiven,

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Isa. 43. 25. *Jer.* 31. 34. *I will remember your sins no more,* *Jer.* 50. 20. when God pardons sin, he doth so utterly blot it out, and it so vanisheth, that it is no more to be found, there is no such thing extant.

Q *How comes it, that when your sins are forgiven, they are so thoroughly purged?*

Reas. Because all are washed away in Christ, our sins are imputed to him, and his righteousness is imputed to us, *Isa.* 43. 5. *2 Cor.* 5. *ult.* our sins are his, and his righteousness ours.

Use 1. To reprove the Popish opinion, who teach, That the sins of the godly, though they be forgiven, yet they are not utterly forgiven, but with reservation of a Temporal punishment, partly here, and partly in Purgatory: but it is a false doctrine; for if he cover them, if he wash them away, if he throw them into the bottom of the Sea, if he blot them out as a thick cloud, if he remember them no more, they are thoroughly forgiven, without any reservation of punishment.

Use 2. It reproves their Doctrine that say, The afflictions of God's Children are punishments for sin; but we must know, if sins be not accounted ours, punishment are of another nature, if sin be changed, then punishments also; all the sins of God's Children are not accounted as sins, but diseases of the Soul; and so all the afflictions of God's servants are not as punishments, but as Medicines and Purges to root out distempers, *Dan.* 11. 35. so that now afflictions do not come out of God's Justice in way of revenge, but in Mercy, in way, of cure.

3 It confutes Purgatory; If God pardon sins so as he remembers them no more, then what need of Purgatory, to punish the relics of sin in God's Children?

Use 4. It may reach all that desire to have their sins forgiven, to be of Child-like dispositions, free from ambition, and malice, and revenge, to frame themselves to humility and innocency, and meekness, and simplicity, and contentment, and resting on promises and hopes; if it be thus with us, God will forgive us our sins; what is the reason why we doubt of Remission, but because we fail in this condition?

5 It may comfort all God's Children, they have this white Stone, that is, Absolution for sin, and in that a new name written, that is, Adoption; and if we be of a meek, humble, innocent, simple frame of heart, we have this comfort.

Use 6. Lastly, If God hath thus freely forgiven us, let it teach us freely to forgive others, and it is an argument of our own remission, *Mat. 6. 11, 12.*

2 It must stir us up to be careful that we offend God no more; if God when he pardons our sins remembers them no more, let us be careful not to offend him any more, *1 Joh. 5. 18.* As a woman when her clothes are washed very white, she would be loath that they should be spotted, or mired: so after God hath made us white like Snow, let us take heed of polluting our Consciences any more; it is a good argument our Consciences are pure, when we are afraid to spot them.

3 It must reach us to walk fruitfully, and be abundant in God's service, *Luke 7. 47.*

Lastly, it must teach us to be exceedingly thankful to God, that hath thus forgiven us, *Psal. 103.*

Doct. God forgives the iniquity of his Saints for his name's sake,
Isa. 43. 25.

For his own sake he blots out our sins;

1 For his own glory, that his name may be magnified and feared. *Psal. 130. 4. Psal. 103. 1, 2, 3.*

2 For the honour of Christ he doth it, that he may be honoured through Christ, *Ephes. 1. 6, 7.*

3 For his own sake, that is, without, any desert of ours, yea sometimes

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without any desire of ours, *Isa. 43. 22, 23, 24, 25. Thou hast not called upon me, nor offered sacrifices unto me, &c. yet I, even I am he, that for mine own names sake putteth away thine iniquities, and will remember thy sins no more.*

Use 1. To teach us to, be abundantly the more thankful to God, to fear him the more, to serve him the more, to honour and praise him the more, that for his own sake hath blotted out our iniquities; if we had run further into a man's debt, then we were ever able to get out, and he freely forgave it, we would be loath to offend him, we would honour him, and be ready to do him the best service we could; so we should be careful, seeing God hath forgiven us so great a debt, to take heed that we run not into further Arrerages, that we dishonour not, nor offend that God who hath to freely for his own sake forgiven us.

Use 2. It must teach us all that have any comfortable experience of the forgiveness of our sins, to walk even as Christ hath walked, for even upon this ground doth St. *John* here press it, it should be our meat and drink to do his will to glorify him in all our course, as it was Christ's care, *Joh. 17. 4.* and that is the end that God aims at in forgiving our sins, that we thould walk as Christ walked.

Use 3. For Consolation; If our sins be forgiven for Christ's name sake, then we need not fear the continuance of them, for had he forgiven us for our own sake, we might justly have feared that he might yet afterwards through our defaults lay them again to our charge, but he hath forgiven us for Christ's sake, he doth not forgive for thy Prayers sake, but thy sins were pardoned before thou calledst on him, *Isa. 65. 24.* God was answering before, and your prayers grew so zealous because your sins were forgiven, *Isa. 43. 22.* and therefore God will cancel our acquittance, because he did it for his name's sake, for the glory of his oen grace.

1 JOHN 2. 13.

I write unto you Fathers, because you have known him which is from the beginning, &c.

VErse Six, he commended this duty to all Christians, to walk even as Christ walked; which duty and Commandment, vers. 7. he amplifies by the antiquity of it, vers. 8. from the newness of it. Thirdly; instanceth in one special duty of it, that is, love of our Brethren, vers. 9, 10, 11. vers. 12. he amplifies it by a benefit or motive, to walk as he hath walked, and that is from the pardon of sin generally granted to all Christians, therefore walk as Christ hath walked, because he hath forgiven you your sins; now vers. 13. these $\alpha\beta\chi\delta\epsilon$, or little Children, he distinguisheth into three sorts, Fathers, Young-men, and Babes; little Children is the quality of all Christians, but

Babes are newly born to Christ; now all these should walk as Christ hath walked.

In the Verse we have these three parts;

1 An Enumeration, or distribution of the several Ages of Christians, to whom he commends this duty.

2 A Ministerial duty of love he tenders to, them, that is, he writes unto them.

3 He propounds to every one of them a several Reason why he urges this duty upon them, *I write unto you Fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning; I write unto you Young-men, because you have overcome the wicked one; I write unto you Babes, because ye have known the Father.*

What is meant here by Fathers, Young-men, and Babes? some cthink it is meant of several statures of Grace that Christians grow to, some are Fathers, some Young-men, some Babes, but we never read these distinct; but
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that an old man in Christ is a strong man in Christ, for Grace doth not grow weaker but stronger, and the elder in Grace the more wise, the more fruitful, the more gracious; therefore I think by Fathers he means ancient Christians, yet old men too; he therefore hath respect to their Natural age, and by young-men he understands men young in years, yet stronger in Grace; by Babes, such as are tender in years, and so Babes in Christ too; therefore it may well be understood of the Natural difference of Ages; and this interpretation may be confirmed from the reason he gives, taken from the several inclinations in Natural ages; take Old age, that takes pleasure in study, and rehearsal of old things that have been long past; so, you have known the Ancient of days; you have known how Christ hath been dispensed from the beginning, so that your natural desire of old things you have turned to the antiquity of Christ.

And for Young men, they have Natural strength, and strive to put it forth in Fightings, or Combats; why, *I write unto you Young men, because you have overcome the wicked one,* because you have turned your strength to fighting against Sin, Satan, and the World, and have overcome them; and for Babes, though they know little, yet they first discern their Parents, and express their joy in them; so, *I write unto you Babes,* you that are very young in years, and young in Christ, because you have learned to know the Father; First, in that he writes to all sorts of Christians, Fathers, Young-men, and Babes, and all well seasoned with Grace, Obedience, Knowledge, &c. observe thus much.

Doct. *God hath his children among all sorts of Ages of men; some of them are aged, some young, some babes in Nature, and in Grace.*

He hath his children out of Old Age, Youth, and Child-hood, out of all he hath elected some to do him service; these old men, he doth not tell you, when they came on, but whensoever they came they had strength of grace; so Young-men, he tells you not when they came on, whether in Child-hood or no, but they had strength of grace, sure they had overcome the wicked one; and for Babes, they came on in Child-hood, and yet had strength of grace, and it may be some old men might in their old Age come on to the knowledge of the ancient of days, so that there is strong grace found in all sorts of men, Wisdom in Old men, Spiritual vigour in Young men; and he speaks of Babes, as knowing their Father in Heaven, as well as their Parents on earth; God hath a company of all Ages calling on him, justified, and sanctified; Amongst old men and women we read of *Abraham* and *Sarah*, an old Couple stricken in years, of *Isaac*, and *Rebecca*, an old couple also, and knowing the Promises made of Christ, *Joh. 8. 56. Your Father Abraham saw my day, and rejoiced*; so did Sarah rejoice in the promised Seed. We have also the examples of *Moses*, and *David*, and *Zechary*, and *Elizabeth*, that continued till they were old both in age and grace; there were some such among the Priests, as *Joshua*, and *Caleb*; some among the Soldiers, there were some old Soldiers of Christ, old Kings, old Nobles, &c. which knew him which was from the beginning.

For young men, famous is the example of *Phineas*, Numb. 25. in his youth he was full of zeal; such was *Josiah*, 2 Chron. 34. 1, 2, 3. we read that at sixteen years of age he sought the Lord God of his Fathers, and at twenty years he grew so strong that he wholly carried before him the whole State, though they were then strongly corrupted, and given to Idolatry, yet being strong in the Spirit, he carried them on to Justice and Reformation strongly, he cleansed the Land from *Dan* to *Beersheba*; notable encouragement to youth, to be vigorous in zeal and grace.

And for Children, *Samuel*, when he was but a child ministered to the Lord, 1 Sam. 2. so *John the Baptist* was filled with the Holy Ghost from his Mother's womb, *Luke 1. 15.* and of *Timothy* it is said, that *he knew the Scripture from a child*, 2 Tim. 3. 15. & 1 Tim. 1. 5. so that in this Family there

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were all degrees, his Grand-mother *Lois* an old Woman, his Mother *Eunice*, a young woman, and *Timothy* almost a child, *Lois* teacheth *Eunice*, and both teach *Timothy*, *παιδιόθεν*, from a very Babe he knew the Scripture.

But why will God have some of all sorts to be servants to him, old men, young men, and children?

Reas. 1. That the grace of Christ might be as largely extended to all sorts of men, as the sin at *Adam* was extended to all degrees and ages, *Rom.* 5. 12, to 18. if *Adam* had defiled all sorts, and Christ had restored but some sort of men, only, young men, then *Adam's* sin had been more powerful to destroy, than Christ's righteousness to save; it was meet therefore that as *Adam* defiled all Ages, all Conditions, so Christ should restore all Ages, all Conditions, and sanctify them, as there are of all sorts that are defiled, *Jer.* 7. 17, 18. all Ages wholly corrupted, the Fathers kindle the fire, the Women knead the Dough, and the Children gathersticks, to make Cakes to the Queen of Heaven; now as there are of all sorts thus corrupted, so it is meet there should be of all sorts sanctified; why should not God have all sorts to serve him, as well as the Queen of Heaven?

Reas. 2. From the Honour that is returned to God by the several Ages.

1. For old men, they bring this honour to God, whether they be called in old age, or before, and hold on.

1. Herein God glorifies the truth of his promise, that length of days is in the right hand of Wisdom (by Wisdom is meant the fear of the Lord) on this ground he encourageth his Son to Wisdom, that it will be a means to lengthen his days. *Prov.* 3. 16, therefore that God might justify this promise, he will have some old men stand up before him, it doth not make them so melancholy that they shorten their days, Religion distempers no man, godly sorrow never wasted our days, but worldly sorrow; *Heman* the *Ezra-hite*, was wonderfully addicted to godly sorrow, yet he grew up to his old age, *Psal.* 88. 8. Riches, and Honour, and long Life are the reward of godliness, *Prov.* 22. 4. Wealth, and credit, and length of days happen oft to them.

2 When you see old men continue in their profession to their old age, they put an honour on Religion; if young men and children only should profess Religion, you would take it as indiscretion, and, hotness of spirit, but do you see any grave wise old man take up a Christian course? none do it but young Punies that know not what they do, this would be a great disparagement, but that God may make it known, that wisdom and discretion is to be found in the ways of grace, therefore he will have some old men walk in those ways, *Prov.* 16. 31. that grey hairs may honour Religion, and Religion may be a crown to them; Eighty six years said old *Ignaius*, have I served God, and yet never found him an hard Master; so when Christians can say, so many years have I served God, and if it had been such a wearisome course

they would have shaken it off, but when we see they hold out in it, it implies they find some comfort and joy therein; and if old men come on, it will be said, they now see by experience the vanity of all other courses, but they see it is best dying a Christian, and spending our last days in Christianity; old men would never fall into it, unless they saw there is no way so comfortable and peaceable as that is.

2. For young men, it is a great honour to Religion if they come on, they make the power of Christ's grace manifest, that is able to overcome the heat and violence of youthful lusts, no age so violent and boisterous incorruptible, so head-strong, so indiscreet and rash, so that what for unruliness, stubbornness, vanity, pleasure, they are most indisposed to grace, and will not hold on; if God therefore take hold of their spirits, and stablish their spirits, when they by God's grace shall be able to rule their spirits, their lusts, to rule their hearts, this argues the strength of grace, in that when neither wise counsel, nor Magistrates can rule them, yet the grace of Christ can rule them, rule
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their passions, so that they can put forth their strength against the enemy, either against their own corruptions, or abuses at others, so that when the Elders sit still, sometimes a young *Phineas* rises up, and shews his zeal for Christ, what an honour is this to Christ's grace? *Psal.* 119. 9. *Eccles.* 11. *ult.* Childhood and youth are vanity, so that if God's grace can lay hold on them, and restrain them, the power of God's grace is hereby magnified, *Psal.* 110. 2, 3. 2 *Cor.* 12. 7. youth is only strong in weakness, if God's grace therefore shall be so strong as to subdue all these, and make them like unto *Josiah*, who at sixteen years of age set himself to seek God. and compelled the whole Land to do so, 2 *Chron.* 34. 33. he compelled them at least to outward Reformation; it is a great glory to God, when young men thus give up their young days to God.

2. Another Honour they bring to God, is by their boldness and courage in a good Cause; old men sometimes, though wise, yet are too cautious and backward, but young men, what is wanting in experience they have in zeal, they are forward in any good service for God.

3 And for Babes and Children, if they be brought to grace, God hereby calls shame on elder men, *Psal.* 8. 7. when they see Babes come off with more savoury words than old men, somerimes God confounds the folly of ancient men by the wisdom and grace in Children; when Christ came riding to *Jerusalem*, the Children cried out, Hosanna, and praised him, the High Priests disdained it; but, *Matth.* 21. 16, 17. Christ told them, have ye not

read, that *out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?* this is to still the enemy and revenger, they shame you that are Elders and Priests in regard to your backwardness. Thus we see, God will have of all sorts and ages of men, stand up to do him service.

Use 1. May serve to teach all sorts of men.

1. Old men; If God hath his number among all Ages and conditions of men, then God looks to have his number amongst you that are old men; say not, I have now long lived in another course, but come on to a Christian course, or if you began before, go on; *I I write unto you Fathers, because you have known him that was from the beginning;* it may well beseem you to talk of the ancient Promises and Mercy of God, God looks that you should take away the reproach of Religion, that they, may not say, none but young Heads take up this course; do you this remember, that Religion is no point of indiscretion; no, an hoary head is a crown of glory if it be found in a way of righteousness; would you not think it a great misery if it should befall a Mariner after all Tempests, to suffer shipwrack in the very Havens mouth? so is it with old men, when you have run on through all the difficulties of this Life, in your last days, when you should arrive at the Haven of Peace, and Hope, and eternal Happiness, if you should sink and fail, what a misery were it? *Tit. 2. 1, 2. ὑγιαίνοντες*, *Paul* did consider that old age was an old crazy time, their heads unhealthful, their stomachs unhealthful, their hearts unhealthful, how should old age get healthful hearts again? why get an healthful spirit, a sound heart, an upright spirit; what a staff would this be to weak age? to have found faith, to be found in love, found in meekness and patience? what a support will it be to them, to uphold all diseases and distempers? how will they be able to bear all the Sicknesses of this age, when their spirits are lively, and their hearts comfortable, and God's Spirit uphold- ing them, that will be the staff and crown of old age, as therefore you deflre to honour God, to support your old age, as you desire to go to the Grave with a crown, give up your selves to God, that so the Apostles and Elders may acknowledge you as Fathers in Christ.

Use 1. For Young men, think it not too soon for you to enter on a Christian course, and if you have begun, grow up in grace; what an honour will it be, As you have been strong in outward strength, so now to be strong in Grace, strong in the Spirit? what an honour will it be to see you strong, to

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subdue your corruptions? what an honour will it be to see your zeal and courage, stirring up old men's discrction, so that what is wanting in them, may

be supplied by you? how many strong temptations are incident to young men, from evil company, from beauty, from pleasure, &c? what an honour will it be to God's Grace, to see your strength turned against sin and lust; to see you sober, and temperate, and chaste, to see you zealous and quickened in Grace? *I write unto you young men, because you have overcome the wicked one. Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth.* Eccles. 12. 1. God takes pleasure then in thy service; if you remember him then, he will be most ready to remember you in your old age.

Use 3 And for little Children, if God have his number amongst Babes, then you that are Parents say not, it is too long to learn them any thing, they are too young, they cannot understand; why, cannot you learn them to know their Father? you learn them nothing, till you learn them to know you, and express joy in you; but teach them to know what an happy thing it is to have God for their Father; tell them, that he is able to do more for them, and give them better things than you can do. *Levit. 23. 10. to 15.* take no comfort in them, till they take comfort in God; train them up to know God, to know his ways, that they may be able to rejoice, and solace themselves in God and good things, that the first fruits of their age may be consecrated to God; and if you do so, you consecrate the whole lump, if the first fruits be holy, so will the whole Vintage be, if the root be holy, so will the branches; consider, these Babes are flexible and easily bowed; it is far more easy to train them up to good things now, than in their youth and riper years; therefore labour now to incline them unto God and good things; take special care to train them up to know God their Father, train them up to come to the ordinances with reverence and diligence, and this will be their honour, God will make them instruments to confound elder, stronger men.

Thus we see God hath among all sorts and ages of men, some that belong unto him, whose sins are remitted, whose spirits are sanctified.

2 Now, in that St. *John* applies himself to all their conditions and ages, observe,

Doct. *That Ministers of Jesus Christ, are to apply themselves and their Doctrine to several sorts and ages of men that they have to deal with.*

So St. *John* here carves out several Portions for Fathers, for young men, and for Babes, so *Paul, Tit. 2. 1. to 10.* so when *John* the Baptist had pressed a necessity of Repentance, first came the people and ask, Master, what shall we do, and then the Publicans, and Soldiers, what shall we do? and he answered them according to their several conditions, *Luk. 3. 10. to 14.*

Reas. From those Offices God hath put Ministers in; he looks that they should be as Stewards, to give every one his own Portion, *Luke* 12. 42. they are to be Physicians, *Jer.* 8. 22. now they must nor dispense one salve to several sores; so sometimes he calls them Shepherds, now they are to dispense themselves according to the Estate of the Sheep.

Use 1 To reach Ministers, in all their studies, to provide a several portion, for the several conditions of men's souls; one thing may be fit for Fathers which will not be fit for young men and Babes; they should therefore labour to provide every one a portion; Ministers should look at their people, not as if they were all of one mould and frame; people come to the Congregation, as men to a market, they come nor to buy all things that are good, but what may be most for their use; so Ministers may set down many good things before people, but if they do not seem to belong to them they regard them not, but in a special wise will retain that, which particularly belongs to them; therefore let Ministers be exhorted, to cast such Precepts, Exhortations, Admonitions, Reproofs, before the people, as may suit with their several conditions.

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Use 2 To teach all hearers, as to listen to all, so especially to listen and attend to those things, which more especially concern them, and belong unto them, old men to what belongs to them, young men to what is their portion; it is true, no Doctrine but may fit every one present; as a young man may become an old man, and so have use at what belongs now to old men, but especially attend to those things, which for the present belong unto you; and you must not think it too much, if Ministers come to particularize, it is your Crown to be particularized, you take it kindly when you are bidden to a Feast, and the Master of the Feast, not only sets on the whole lump before you, but carves out a particular piece for you, so you ought to take it kindly, and as a careful part in the Minister, if he dispense a particular portion to you; yea you ought to make known your Estate unto him, or else you fall in your duty.

3 From the duty he tenders unto them, he writes unto them all, *I write unto you Fathers, I write unto you young men, I write unto you Babes*; from hence observe this point of Doctrine.

Doct. It is the duty of all sorts, and ages of Christians, to be conversant in reading of the Scripture.

To what end doth he write to old men, if old men do not read what he writes? and so young men and Babes; it was the charge put upon the very

Kings of *Israel*, *Deut.* 17. 19. that they should read the Book of the Law all the days of their lives; and when they have not opportunity to read, then let them meditate on the word, *Psal.* 1. 2.

Reas. There is great use of reading of the Scriptures.

1 It helps Knowledge much, 1 *Tim.* 3. 15.

2 It helps to make a right use of what we hear; yea it sets such an edge on the Word heard, that though the preaching did not so thoroughly affect, yet by reading, they come to quicken Faith, *Act.* 17. 11, 12. though the Word prepared their hearts, and made them attentive; yet till again they read, and revised, and meditated on what they had heard, their Faith was in suspense, but after they saw the agreement of his publick Doctrine with the word, then many of them believed, not that God doth ordinarily beget Faith by reading, without hearing; but when we have heard, reading exceedingly quickens our spirits and Faith.

3 There is a further benefit from reading the Word, *Deut.* 17. 19, 20. a man shall find himself thereby framed to the fear of God, to humility. &c. that day a man neglects reading of the Word of God, he shall find his spirit more loose and unbridled, less conscionable, he doth not stand in awe so much.

4 It is a means to confirm us, and establish and help our memories, and for us up to holy duties.

5 It makes the Word more ready in times of temptation; what a marvellous use our Saviour made of the Word, when Satan tempted him? *Ephes.* 5. 17. a man in temptation, will find need of many passages of Scripture.

6 Lastly, another use of reading the Scriptures, is, that our joy may be full, 1 *Joh.* 1. 4. reading doth fill our hearts with comfort and consolation, not that reading is sufficient to salvation, no ordinance roots out another, *Rom.* 10. 17. Faith comes by hearing, but though that especially begets Faith, yet for sundry other Graces, reading is of special use, at least to quicken and stir up Grace; we do not read, that God ever blessed reading alone to beget Faith, for God doth not usually bless it alone, but when it is joined with hearing the Word preached, in any Congregation where there is only reading of the Word, what one soul is begot to God, comes on to Faith, to God's fear, to humility, to patience, &c? not but that in such places be found good Christians, but it is, because they go abroad, otherwise it fares with reading, as with the Eunuch, that knew not what he read, *Act.* 8. 30, 31. till *Philip* declared the interpretation. But yet I say, you old men read, and you young

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men read, and you Children read, and it is a great fault to neglect it, and put it over wholly to little Children, as a petty childish exercise; but what doth St. *John* write only to Babes? no, but he writes to young men, and therefore they are to read what he writes; and to old men, and therefore they are to read what he writes; when God laid the charge upon the Kings of *Israel*, *Deu.* 17. 19. he did not impose it only upon Babes, but whatsoever their employment be, whether they be in war, or sitting in the seat of Judgement, they must let no day pass without reading the Law; no person, but let him read; we shall underand the Word better, and the better remember it, we shall be more stirred up to fear God, to keep his Law, we shall be the better furnished against many temptations, which otherwise will prevail against us; In a word, seeing he wrote to them that they might learn to walk as Christ walked, hence you may comfortably expect, by reading the Word, by laying it up, by praying for a blessing, you may be helped to walk even as Christ walked.

I write unto you Fathers, because you have known him that was from the beginning. Who are these Fathers? they are such as are opposed to young men and Babes; therefore he speaks of old men, *1 Tim.* 5. 2, 3. why doth he call them Fathers? not that they were his Fathers to beget him to God, for before he had called them Brerhren; neither it is meant of his natural Father, but he calls them so, even out of very reverence to their age.

Doct. *It is the duty of all Christians, yea, even of Ministers, to carry themselves to old men as their Father.*

For this duty belongs to all Christians, as well as Ministers; God hath special care to the reverence of old age, for he would have Ministers to rebuke with all authority, and yet he would not have them easily rebuke an Elder, *Tit.* 2. 15. much less is a private person that hath less authority and commission, to deal roundly with elder years; *Levit.* 19. 32. he gives special Commandment to all men to rise up before the hoary head, and reverence the person of the Old-man, and dread thy God; implying, that the fear of God requires this duty, as who should say, there is no fear of God in such men as do not reverence the persons of old men.

Reas. God hath stamped on old men the image of his Eternity, as on Magistrates the image of his Sovereignty, God himself is called the ancient of days; so that an old man bears a blush of the image of God; rich men carry the Image of God's All sufficiency, Magistrates of his Sovereignty, old men of his Eternity.

Use 1 To teach us to honour old men as our Fathers.

2 It reproves the rudeness of some young men that look at old men as base and contemptible, he speaks of it as a sign of confusion, (*Isa.* 3. 5.) to those persons, when they see the hoary head pass by, rise not up, nor reverence him.

3 It may stir up all young men to reverence old age, and that by a three-fold respect.

1 In rising up before them, *Levit.* 19. 32.

2 You must shew them reverence in speech, as *St. Joh.* here calls them Fathers.

3 In silence, in their presence not to put forth your selves, *Job* 32. 6, 7. but to be silent, till at least they have spoken.

Use 4 This should teach old men, seeing God hath put such honour and respect upon them, how much the more should they think themselves bound to God? Shall he be so respectful to thy honour, and wilt not thou honour the Ancient of days? would he have all to rise up, and express reverence in speech and carriage to you, and ought not you then to come before God with reverence, and speak reverently of his name? would he have others be silent in your presence, much more should you subject your best gifts to God, and take heed that you put no dishonour upon your selves, by any unseemly

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carriage; old *Noah* had no sooner committed that shameful sin of Drunkenness, but his own child mocked him, *Gen.* 19. 17. *Prov.* 6. 11.

Doct. *It is the honour of aged men, of fathers, when they know him which was from the beginning,*

When they know the Father of Eternity, the Ancient of days, this is that which is all honour to old men, both before God and man, *viz.* the knowledge of Christ dispensed from the beginning, as *1 Joh.* 1. 1.

From the beginning is not to be taken in opposition to what was before the beginning, but in opposition to Eternity, he doth not say. *That was with the beginnings,* but *from the beginning, before the beginning,* *Joh.* 8. *Before Abraham was, I am;* he was before the World; now the knowledge of Christ is the honour of aged persons.

There is a Two-fold knowledge of Christ.

1. A Speculative Historical Knowledge, only of the understanding, *Acts* 9. 15.

2. There is a Practical saving knowledge of Christ, and there is a Three-fold difference, between that knowledge that rests in the understanding, and this practical and saving knowledge of Christ.

1. The knowledge that rests in the understanding, is only by hearing or reading, but the other is got by the Spirit of Christ infused into us, *1 Cor.* 2. 9. partly by enlightening our minds, partly by feeling the work of Grace in our hearts. *Phil.* 3. 10. hence it is, that this experimemal knowledge excels the best knowledge that is got by reading, or hearing, he knows the worth and virtue of Christ.

2. They differ in their Effects, that knowledge that rests in the understanding breeds pride and carnal confidence, *Isa.* 47. 10. and scandal and offence to the weak, *1 Cor.* 8. 12. but this saving knowledge breeds,

1. Prayer, *Joh.* 4. 10.

2. Faith, *Psal.* 9. 10. *They that know thy name will trust in thee.*

3. Justification, *1 Joh.* 1.0,

4. Obedience,

5. Innocency towards our Brethren, *Isa.* 11. 6. to 9.

6. It works eternal life.

3 They differ in the adjuncts; saving knowledge is joined with an high esteem of Christ, *Phil.* 3. 7, 8. yea a man hath liberty to rejoice in this knowledge, which he may not in any other, *Jer.* 9. 24, 25.

There are two things in the knowledge of Christ, which old men have more than other men, Jacob expresses them both, *Gen.* 48. 6, 7. he did now by much experience know the goodness of God that he had provided for him at home, in *Laban's* house, in his journey, he had supplied him in all his wants, and delivered him out of all his dangers; a young man cannot say so much; it seems not so savoury in a young man's mouth, but when an old man comes out with a recital of God's favour, this is the honour of old age.

Use 1. Of direction to old men, to take notice of their own Estate, whether they know him that was from the beginning; hath God's Spirit brought you to pray, to humble your selves, to obedience, to innocency, &c? if it be so, happy are you, you are truly honourable.

Use. Not to satisfy your selves with any knowledge, till you know him that was from the beginning; the study of Antiquity is pleasing to many, especially to old men; no knowledge like this, when you are able to speak of God's old mercies to you, that he hath led you all your life; when you are able to tell your Children of their duty to God; could you tell of all Antiquities, it is nothing, till you know him that was from the beginning.

1 JOHN 1. 13. The middle Part.

I write unto you young men, because you have overcome the Wicked one.

WHy doth he call them young men, and not Brethren, as before he called old men Fathers?

Ans. Because then he had not distinguished them from others, for all Christians are brethren one to another.

1 Observe here, First, their Adversary, *the wicked one.*

2 Their Victory, They have, *overcome the wicked one.* This wicked one is Satan, 1 *Joh.* 5. 18. *Mark* 5. 37. *Mat.* 13. 19. *Mar.* 4. 15. he is called Satan, he being once one of the noblest Creatures, nobler than man.

Doct. *The chiefest of the glorious Creatures of God, may become the chiefest wicked one.*

He is called ὁ πονηρὸς that wicked one, κατ' ἐξοχή and it implies,

1 That he excels in wickedness, his understandmg most blind, his Will most rebellious, his Affections most corrupt.

2 It implies, he is the Father of all sin, *Matth.* 5. 37. *Joh.* 13. 2. *Joh.* 8. 44. he is called the Father of Liars.

3 It implies, That Satan takes pains to do evil, is industrious in evil, πονηρὸς ἂ πόνος, *labor*, he traverseth the World, goes about continually doing evil, 1 *Pet.* 5. 8. *Job* 1. 7. he is *insigniter improbus.*

But how comes it to pass, that he that was a glorious Angel is now become that wicked one? The causes of his deprivation were partly accidental and outward, rarely inward; accidental, as,

1 God did not elect him to stand as he did ordain some Angels, 1 *Tim.* 5. 21. so that he was left to a possibility of falling, though not to a necessity.

2 His condition being a creature, gave occasion to his fall. God being infinitely good, his Will is the rule of good; now he being a Creature, God's Will is his rule, and he may not attend to the rule, and then he doth evil.

3 But thirdly, There was an inward cause thaded him to sin, and that was the pride of his nature, not made so, but he exalted himself, 1 *Tim.* 3. 6, which implies, that he saw man made after the Image of God, and he was a glorious Creature attending on God himself, and was puffed up with his glorious condition, and despised man, that was to live on the earth and dress the Garden.

Use 1 May teach young Scholars, not to please themselves in any gifts of Nature, though never so excellent, for even an Angel that excelled in Wisdom hath fallen a way, and become that wicked one.

Use 2. It may teach them to take heed how they enter into the Calling of the Ministry in their young years, especially before they be humbled, it was the cause of Satan's Fall, that he was puffed up with his Office; it is a wonder to see, when Scholars are admitted into the Ministry in their young times, how they despise the People, think themselves unmeet to condescend to Peasants, but they will rather exercise their Gifts in the University, and so fall into the condemnation of Satan.

3 Hence you may see part of the Image of Satan, why was he called that wicked one? because he excels in wickedness, and is the Father of Sin, and takes pains to do evil; so, do you see men excel in wickedness, lead on others to sin, take pains in mischief? such a one bears the Image of Satan upon him, When *Paul* saw *Elimas* hardened in mischief, leading on others, and taking pains to keep the Deputy from the faith, he calls him, the child of the Devil, *Act. 13. 10.*

4 Hence we learn, If the Devil have got this Name by excelling in wicked-

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kedness, and drawing on others to sin, and taking pains to do mischief; then on the contrary, by how much the more any excel in goodness, strive to draw all others to God, and take pains in it, they are the more like God their Father.

Because ye have overcome the wicked one.

All overcoming implies a fight, so that when you read of their overcoming, it implies that young men have strong wrestlings with Satan.

Doct. *Satan, as he is an enemy to all mankind, so especially to young men.*

He doth not write to Fathers or Babes, that they have overcome the wicked one, as if it were not so proper to them, but he chiefly encourages young men, *I write unto you young men*, implying, it was a proper work for them. Observe all the temptations of Satan in Scripture, and where you shall read of one old man tempted by Satan, you shall read of ten young men; when did Satan set upon *Eve*? was it not presently after her first creation? our Saviour was not above thirty years old, when Satan tempted him: *Peter* when he was tempted was young; we shall find few falls of God's Saints, but it was in their young days, except two, *Noah* and *Solomon*, who fell in their old days; and less shall we read of Children, *2 Kings 2. 22.* but Satan's chiefest assaults have always been against young men.

Reas. 1 Why Satan chiefly sets upon young men, it is from the vigour of their nature and parts which God gives them, their courage, their strength, and fervency; therefore Satan strives to draw them on, and he knows, that if they get loose from him, they will do him least, and do God most service, more than either old men or Children; therefore he strives chiefly to draw them on; indeed God sometimes makes use of the weakest, but Satan always makes use of the stirring, quickest spirits among men.

2 Because he hath most advantage to surprize them; no age so subject to temptation, a 2 *Tim.* 2. 22. *Fly youthful lusts*, yet he was not more subject to lusts than others, nay, he was of a weak abstemious nature, 1 *Tim.* 5. 23. yet *Paul* charges him to take heed of youthful lusts, which implies, if such a weak abstemious nature was subject to youthful lusts, then it implies, that no age is so subject to be led into lusts, as youth.

3 From the counsel of God, whose purpose it is then to magnify his Grace when corruption is strongest, therefore God himself, who is that $\acute{\alpha}\gamma\omega\nu\theta\acute{\epsilon}\tau\epsilon\varsigma$ to magnify his Grace, let's loose Satan upon young men; so it was with our Saviour, *Mat.* 4 It is the purpose of God; *that where sin abounds, Grace should much more abound*, *Rom.* 5. 20. therefore it is, that young men are most strongly assaulted, that God may magnify his Grace.

But why do the temptations of young men exceed all other ages?

Why, children are not to come to the lusts of youth, and old men are past them, so that young men are most liable to temptations and discouragements.

Use 1 It may therefore teach young men to fear their Estates; if they have not strong temptations, it is a sign the Devil hath strong hold already, and so is it peace, but otherwise they are subject to spiritual assaults.

Three Temptations Satan commonly assaults the Sons of men with.

1 Against their effectual Callings, their repentance, he persuades them it is yet too soon to look towards repentance, and they are more liable to evil company, given more to pleasures and delights than old men, and impatient of Counsel; and if God break through this by his power.

2 Then he puts them to question their Faith and Adoption, whether they be God's Children or no? their strong lusts make them doubt of it, and if God's Grace break through this.

3 He tempts them about their sanctification, he will fill their hearts with unclean lusts; and if a man break through these, he hath much cause to magnify God's Grace.

Use 2. To teach young men, seeing Satan's aim is chiefly at them, to strive

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and grow strong against him, watch warily against him, that the evil one touch you not.

And there are three especial Graces to help young men against the assaults of Satan.

1 Sobriety; watch to Sobriety, be sober and vigilant, 1 *Pet.* 5. 8. take heed of intemperancy, and incontinency.

2 Stand stedfast in the faith, 1 *Pet.* 5. 9. not trusting to your own strength or courage, but rely upon God; while young men are confident of themselves, as *Peter*, they fall, but if you stay your selves upon God, he will support you.

3 Treasure up the grace of Humility, that you think not highly of your selves, which is the folly of youth; *God resists the proud, and gives grace to the humble.*

And there are three Duties which I commend to young men.

1 Diligence in your Callings; the want of which overthrew *David*, when he was idle, Satan took advantage to tempt him to uncleanness, 2 *Sam.* 11. 12.

2 Frequency in God's ordinances, in reading and hearing the Word, *ver.* 14. the more you treasure up the Word, the more power and strength you have against Satan, and the more you receive the Sacrament, the more strength you get, for this is the end of receiving the Sacrament, to get strength against your lusts.

3 Be frequent in Prayer, and that will help you much, *Jam.* 4. 7, 8. *Draw near to God*, complain of the slipperiness of your nature, of your weakness to withstand Satan's assaults, and intreat God to give you strength that you may hold out.

Doct. Satan may be overcome, and is often-times overcome, and disappointed of his hold, even by young men, against whom he had most advantage.

I write unto you young men, because you have overcome the wicked one.

Q. 1 *What is it to overcome Satan?*

A. It is a borrowed speech from the Victory of Soldiers in War, and Soldiers overcome either by killing their enemy, or spoiling, or captivating, or putting to flight their enemies, now Satan cannot be put to death, he is a Spirit, and so is not capable of death, only of the second death.

And to lead him captive, that Victory is only peculiar unto Christ, *Ephes.* 4. 8. *He led captivity captive.*

But for the two last, so young-men may overcome Satan, they may spoil him, and put him to flight, for spoiling, Christ hath done the worst, *Col.* 1. 15. he hath spoiled Satan. But,

1 For putting him to flight, Young-men may do this, *Jam.* 4. 7. which implies, that there is a possibility in young men, and a power to stand, and not to yield to his temptations; for though he hath a power to delude our Senses, and may hurry a man's body about, yet he cannot captivate our Wills, therefore stand, resist, give no place, and if you do so, he will fly from you for shame, he hath no power, longer to hold out, when he sees a man stand out against him; God hath not given him liberty to pursue us unto death, but if we stand out against him, he will fly from us. So it was with our Saviour, first he tempted him about his Son-ship, *If thou be the Son of God command that these stones be made bread*; then he tempted him to presumption to cast himself down from the Pinnacle of the Temple; and then he tempted him with the glory of the World, *All these will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me*; but because our Saviour still resisted his temptations, and Satan could not prevail, he departed; If a man stand out strongly, Satan flies in deed, if a man yield never so little, he makes use of the least advantage, and will press it; but if you stand fast, and yield not, he will be gone from you, his very pride and insolency makes him scorn to trouble himself with any Creature, he distains to be overcome by him, therefore he will depart. Thus

Joseph

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Joseph was strongly assaulted, *Gen.* 37. 9. but he resists, and answers with much affection, how can I do this great wickedness and sin against God? he had long resisted and stood out against the temptations of his Mistress, and therefore she no more solicits him with that thing, but takes another course, falsely to accuse him to his Master, and so caused him to be cast into prison.

2. A Young-man may not only put him to flight; but he may also spoil Satan, that is, he may take advantage by his assaults, to grow more wary, more holy, more obedient, more fruitful, and so he spoils Satan; if a Christian enrich his spirit by the temptations he meets with, he makes a spoil of Satan; the riches of the Soldier, is the spoil of the Enemy; when young men stand fast, and make a spoil of Satan, and grow more humble, and meek, and obedient, they shall so much the more overcome Satan; *Job* was strongly tempted by Satan to blaspheme God, but yet he stands fast, and not only so, but takes occasion to bless God, *Job* 1. 21. so when Satan tempts him by his wife, see how he answers, *Job.* 2. 10. *Michol tempts David by deriding him*

when he danced before the Ark, but he grew more zealous by it, 2 Sam. 6. 20, 21. so Joh. 3. 26. They would have stirred up John to emulate Christ, but that stirred him up to magnify him more than ever he did before, and give the most honourable Testimony of him.

Q. *How come such men thus to overcome Satan?*

1. By the blood of the Lamb, his power is quelled by the death of Christ.
2. By the power of the Word that dwells in them, verse 14.
3. By the power of the Spirit, that is stronger in them, than in the world, 1 Joh. 4. 3, 4.

Use 1. Since young men may, and do so overcome the World, it must teach young men to make this their glory, to be fighting this spiriual battle; there is no gifts they should so much please themselves in, as in this, Pro. 20. 29. What a shame is it for young men to shew their strength in pouring down strong drink, and spend their strength upon women? what a pitiful thing is it, for young men to strive to overcome one another in drinking and gaming? &c. nay, were they valiant in war, yet how much more honourable is it to fight the Lord's battles, to overwrestle our lusts? when a young man shall single out that grand Captain the Devil, and foil him in war, that is truly honourable; if Satan in a special manner strive to overcome you, then strive you most against him, stand out against him, resist him, and yield not to him, and examine what spiritual battles you have had with Satan, if none, then your case is not good.

Use 2. May encourage the feeblest Christians, not to be discouraged with conflicts; many a soul saith, my corruptions are so strong, and my lusts so powerful, I shall never be able to stand out against them, and overcome them, why St. John writes here to young men, whose corruptions were strong and violent, and yet he saith, *you have overcome the wicked one.*

Use. 4 Of reproof to old men and Childlen, if they do not overcome; Children are not come to, and old men are past the dint of lusts; therefore they may be the more ashamed, if they be given to voluptuousness, and gluttony, and gaming, and lying, and company-keeping; Children and old men; their bodies are dead to such lusts.

Use 4. It exhorts all, though we cannot put Satan to death, or captivate him, yet what we may do, let us do in every temptation, let us stand fast and put him to flight, and labour by temptations to spoil him, let his temptations make you more humble, and fruitful, and obedient; this is the greatest honour of a Christian, thus to put Satan to flight and spoil him.

1 JOH. 2. 13. the latter end.

I write unto you Babes, because you have known the Father.

WE have heard of old men, and young men, now we come to his Apostolical writing to Babes. Doct. *Little Children, even Babes, may know God as their Father.*

For the proof of this,

1. I will shew it by examples, 1 *Sam.* 3. 1. though at first he knew not, yet from that time forward he knew God, 1 *Chron.* 34. see it in *Josiah*; so *Timothy*, it is said that he knew the Scripture of a child, 2 *Tim.* 2. 15. *Luk.* 1. 15. and our Saviour bears testimony of little children, *Suffer little children to come unto me, for to such belongs the Kingdom of Heaven*, *Mark* 10. 14. and that they were little ones, we may see, in that *he took them in his arms*, as we use to do infants, and whereas the Anabaptists say, he means not of these, but of such as are of years, but little children in grace, but this cavil is vain, for otherwise his reason had been in vain, for he might have said it as well of Sheep as little Lambs, for such are God's Servants, but yet he never mentions such, but only these little ones, that is, little children.

There are Three grounds of the Regeneration of little children.

1. From the Original Sin that they are born in, for they that are capable of sin are also capable of grace, for no subject is capable of sin but it is capable of grace, and the greatest part of their sins is the privation of grace, which they are capable of, *Luk.* 1.15. *Psal.* 58. 3.

2. From their interest in the Covenant, they enter into a Covenant with God even from their childhood, as we may see, they brought their young Babes to enter into a Covenant with God, *Exod.* 29. 10 to 14. and so are capable of grace, *Joel* 2. 15, 16. In times of great dangers in the Land, God required little children and Babes to humble themselves for breach of the Covenant, which implies they were in a Covenant; indeed, the *Ninivites* made their Beasts fast, and their Children, but they were Heathen, and were not within the Covenant.

3. Children are capable of the seals of the Covenant of Grace, *Gen.* 17. 7, 8. therefore capable of the righteousness of faith, *Rom.* 4. 11. so that we see little children may know God as their Father.

Q. *How soon do children come to be capable of this grace, to know God as their Father?*

1. They are capable of the habits and gifts of grace from their first Conception, *Luke* 1. 15. he was sanctified from his Mothers womb, and the reason, as soon as capable of sin, capable of grace.

2. They are capable of the acts of grace, as soon as they are capable of the use of reason; yea Grace is subject to work more silently than Reason, though there be no acts of grace, but it is from reason, yea they are capable of exercising grace and reason with it, sooner then we discern it, even as soon as they can discern their Natural Father, so soon may they discern God to be their Father; you see Children sooner than they can well use reason, they content themselves much with looking on the light, and Looking-glasses, and other toys, so these little Children, something they have in their hearts which pleaseth them, though they know not what it is, and as you can still a Child sometimes by some gesture, so can God refresh the spirit of a Child by some silent consolation which pleaseth the Child, though it cannot express it, but so soon as they begin to know their Natural Parents, so soon they begin to know God their Father; nay, no object so easily known as God, seeing he infuseth some light into all, especially to know that there is a God, and if the Holy Ghost strike in, they may discern that he is their Father.

Q. *But*

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Q. But how do these express their knowledge of God to be their Father?

A. 1 They express it in their silent thoughts, in some inward comfort, which they cannot well express, but something they feel which cheers their spirits.

2 In their affections, they will shew you some love of God, joy in God, fear of God.

1 Love of God, so that they are not averse or froward to good duties, but listen to them, though they know not the meaning, and have some delight in them, and some fear of God, that tell them of God and his Judgements, they will be broken off from evil courses, and they will be well pleased in God, and delight in his way, and fear him; these things may be found in a Child, I call them Children till they be grown up to young men, and as a Child soon discovers that he knows his Parents, by smiling on them, by crying after them, and joying in them, so they will shew you their knowledge of God by delighting in him, longing after him, and fearing his name.

Use 1 To reprove the sinful vanity that is in that Proverb, *A young Saint and an old Devil*; for if *St. John* acknowledge it as a great matter, *I write un-*

to you Babes, because you know th Father, then surely it is no ill prestage of their future marriage, because they begin to have the knowledge of God; no, it is a sign that in old age they will know him that was from the beginning; nay rather on the contrary, if he be a young Devil, it is likely he will prove worse, a young Devil an old Beelzebub, but a young Saint an old Angel; you do not use to think that it will make a vessel fully if you season it well at the first; so if a Child be well seasoned at the first, he will keep good favour to his old age; a straight twig makes a straight tree, so if a Child be well set, and straight in Child-hood, he will grow more strong and compact when he is elder. Our Saviour was much moved, when they forbad little Children to be brought unto him, and when the chief Priests and the Scribes took it ill, that the Children cried out after Christ, *Hosannah, thou Son of David*, he told them it was written, *Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast though perfected praise*, Matth. 21, 15. therefore let not such a Proverb pass, if they prove old Devils they were never young Saints, but young Hypocrites it may be.

2. It refutes an error of the Papists, that think it a point of presumption to say, that a man knows his state in grace, why St. *John* writes in a all sorts, to old men, to young men, to Babes, that they know their Father.

If it were extraordinary it would not be so common; and this indeed may justly discourage us from that Religion; that woman that holds it impossible that her Child should know his Father, is a Strumpet; so that Church that holds her Children cannot know their Father, is an Harlot; because they worship so many gods, they know not of what seed they be, for if they were begotten of the seed of the Word, hereby we might conclude, we know that we know him, because we keep his Word; neither let them put it off, and say, We have a conjectural knowledge, but not a certain knowledge, for when we say we know such a thing, we do not say we think it; Opinion breeds Conjecture, but Knowledge breeds certainty; *Contingentium est opinio, necessariorum & certorum est scientia*, whether it be a *causis* or *effectis*.

But say they, This Doctrine breeds presumption;

I answer, No Doctrine makes us more circumspect than to know that God is our Father, and if we grow grace, God will shew he is a Father as well to correct, as to shew indulgence.

Use 3. To confute the Anabaptists, that exclude Infants from Original sin, an so from capability of Grace, and so from Baptism, therefore they rebaptise men, because say they till then they are neither capable of Sin, nor Grace, how doth *David* then say, that he was conceived in sin? how is it here said, of Babes, that they know their Father? and why were infants Circumcised

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under the Law the eighth day; if they did but as well know God as some of these little Children, they would not hold such an opinion so contrary to Scripture.

4 It reproves elder people, if they do not know God to be their Father, if even Babes may know God to be their father, if they know him so soon why do we neglect it? Saint *John* writes it as an ornament to Children, that they know their father, and it may shame elder people, if Children in this point go beyond them, *Heb.* 5. 12.

5. It may teach little Children, that God looks at it as their duty, to know God their Father; you have known your Natural Fathers thus long, and why should you not know God the father of Eternity? you might hereby honour God, and censure elder men; you have entered into Covenant, therefore fly not back; you have received the Seals of the Covenant, therefore give up your selves unto God, and labour to know him to be your Father.

6 For Parents, and Governors of Children, if little Children may know God their Father, then learn them to know him to be their Father, and the Church their Mother; fill their heads with knowledge of God, learn them to love God, and rejoice in him, and delight in his ways in some measure.

Motives hereunto.

1 In respect of God.

First, from God's command, *Ephes.* 6. 4 *Deut.* 6. 7. take all good occasions, dull them not, a little and often will bring them on; the water falling drop by drop hollows a Flint, so by dropping now and then a little, you will learn them the knowledge of God.

2 From God's acknowledgement of it, and his Promise to reveal himself to such Parents, *Gen.* 18. 19.

Secondly, In respect of Children, they are capable either to scoff, as the Children that mocked *Elisha*, 2 *King.* 1. or to cry Hosannah, *Matth.* 21. 15, though they be not so easily brought on to that which is good, yet they are not so corrupt then, as when they are grown up to more years.

3 In respect of Parents, it is an irrecompensible injury you offer your Children, if you have begot them into the World sinful and wicked, as we are by nature, and do not seek by all means to redress this evil, they will cry out against you for Judgement; therefore that they may not curse you at the

last day, let it be your care to bring them up in the knowledge and fear of the Lord.

What course may we take thus to redress young Infants?

1 Teach them the Principles of Religion, their Baptism, that will teach them they are unclean by Nature, and that they are cleansed by the Blood of Christ; they were Baptised into the name of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, therefore learn them to know God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, and that will make them think of it, when they see others baptised, *Prov. 22. 6, Train up a Child in his way wherein he should walk, and he will keep it to the end*; nurture him, or initiate him in the trade of his way, in the original it is, *in the mouth of his way*, that is, at the beginning of his way, let him right at the first in his way, and he will keep it to the end; if a Traveller be set right in his way at first, it will help him the better to keep his way all his Journey; so set a Child in a good way, learn him to cease from evil, and to do well, and he will the better keep that way in his age, as *David* teacheth, *Psal. 34. 11. to 15.*

2 Learn them to read the Scriptures, and be conversant therein, *1 Tim. 1 4, 5. & 2 Tim. 3. 15.* reading brings much benefit to little Children.

3 Bring them to Church, and help them to remember something, and tell them the meaning of it, and take a little in good part, and encourage them, and that will make them delight in it.

4 Give

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4 Give them a good example; let them learn no wickedness, no disorder, or miscarriage from you, *1 Chron. 29. 9. Know the Lord God of thy Fathers, &c. know him, and serve him, as I served him.*

5 God hath sanctified seasonable and wise correction to Children, *Prov. 29. 15. Prov. 22. 15.* it is a means to give wisdom, which is the fear of the Lord, and drive away folly, and more, to deliver his soul from Hell; but if you use correction without instruction, it is brutish, *Prov. 6. 23.* therefore instruct them also, and withal use Prayer, and still wait on God for a blessing.

1 JOHN 2. 14.

I have written unto you Fathers, because you have known him which is from the beginning; I have written unto you young men, because you are strong, and the Word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.

V^{ERSE} Sixt, the Apostle had exhorted all Christians to walk as Christ had, walked, and he amplifies this duty, from the antiquity of it, vers. 7. and from the newness of it, vers. 8. and then he instanceth in one special duty of loving one another, vers. 9, 10, 11. and vers. 12. lays down a motive, *because their sins were forgiven them*, and then vers. 13. he distributes those to whom he writes into three sorts, *πατέρες, νεανίσκος, παῖδες*; now in this fourteenth verse he repeats the same words almost, some think it a fault of the Copy, it being a vain tautology, but this is not likely; Sometimes repetitions in Scriptures imply certainty, but I think this is not intended chiefly; but I think the Apostle being to press them to another duty, vers. 15. namely, *Not to love the world*, he makes this a ground to urge them to it.

Why doth he not reckon Babes too here? why? because they were not so easily carried away with the world; but he writes to old men, and young men, who seeing they knew God, and had overcome the wicked one, they should not love the world; but to little children he writes, vers. 18. to *beware of seducements of false Doctrine*.

Doct. *The saving knowledge of him that is from the beginning, of the Antient of days, or Jesus Christ, is able to wean even old men from the love of the world.*

To know Christ, and his worth, and our need of him, is a sufficient motive to wean old men from the world.

Two things there were which made wise, antient, cauetlous men, not to embrace Christ, and his Gospel.

1 The antiquity of the Heathenish Rligion; Jesus Christ seemed a new God, but of two or three and thirty years, hatred of all men, and Crucified, now to commend such a God to them against their ancient Doctrine, and that all must subject themselves to him, seemed strange.

2 The authority of Heathen Emperors that gain-said it. Now to remove these impediments, the Apostle lays down this as a means, *Love not the world*, implying, that it was love of the world that made them to embrace that ancient Religion, and reject Christ, therefore he writes unto them, *Love not the world*; and that they might do this, he tells them, *that they knew him that was from the beginning, the Antient of days*, and all other Religions are but novelties.

Use. It shew a preservative against deluing our souls, against embracing false Religion, either from grounds of antiquity or authority; if old men follow it, yet it is no good ground, for St. John writes to them, *Love not the world*, which you may be kept from, *if you know him that was from the beginning*; and if the authority and Laws of man should got that way, yet if you

rightly know Christ, and him that was from the beginning, you will be kept off deom the love of the world, and then no worldly things will keep you
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from embracing Christ and his Gospel; *I have written to you young men, because you are strong, and the Word of God dwelleth in you, and you have overcome the wicked one.*

Here are two causes of their Victory over the wicked one, that is, their strength, and the abiding of the Word in them. For the first,

Doct. *Spiritual strength in young men, it is a grace highly acknowledged of God's servants.*

Prov. 20. 29. The glory of Young-men is their strength; but the Apostle speaks not here of a bodily strength, but such strength whereby they overcome the wicked on, and this he acknowledgeth in them.

Q. *What is this strength?*

A. It is the power of God's Spirit, whereby a Christian is enabled to do all Spiritual duties in the power of Christ.

1 It is a power of God's Spirit, 2 *Tim. 1. 7. 2 Cor. 3. 5. Gal. 6. 10.* and hereby he is enabled to do all spiritual duties, *Phil. 4. 13.*

A Christian man, younger or elder, is able to perform every Christian duty, he is able to do all duties, and suffer for Christ with power.

1 It enables a man to do every Christian duty with strength, and so to do implies Four things.

1 When a man performs a thing in strength he performs it cheerfully, *Psal. 19. 5. The Sun rejoiceth to run his course, &c.* if a man runs through his work with cheerfulness it is a sign of strength, *Joh. 4. 34.* Christ accounted it his meat and drink to do his Father's will, he took as much delight in it, and it was his strength that made him do so.

2 Doing the Will of God with strength implies a spirit of boldness and courage, that they are not fearful, but go on with courage and boldness, 1 *Timoth. 1. 7. Acts 4. 13. & 19. 20.* they were strengthened by Christ's power.

3 Strength makes a man do God's Will diligently, and constantly; and old man is soon wearied, and slacks, but take a strong man, and he does his business diligently and constantly, 1 *Cor. 15. 10.* and painfully, he doth things with dexterity, and he that hath strength doth things constantly, with constancy and perseverance. Let a Child shoot an Arrow with a weak hand, it waggles, but if a strong man shoots it, it goes evenly; so if a weak man

take a duty in hand, he begins to lag, and fail, but a strong Christian he does duties constantly.

2 For Suffering; strength of grace appears in bearing all things patiently, and joyfully, *Phil.* 4. 11, 12, 13. *Col.* 1. 11. when a man therefore is able to do duties with cheerfulness, and suffer with patience, he is endued with the power of the Spirit.

3 There is a strength required for the over-coming and standing out against Satan, when a man is not only able to do and suffer valiantly, but is ready and able also to hold out, and resist all temptations, *Jam.* 4. 7. and makes advantage thereof, 2 *Sam.* 6. 20. *Joh.* 3. 26. this argues much strength, when a man can go on in power and vigour, notwithstanding Satan's temptations.

Q. 2. *Why doth God vouchsafe young men this strength, and not old men, and children?*

A. 1. Because they are to wrestle with stronger Lusts, which old men are past, and Children are not come to; young men are sure to be transported with strong lusts, 1 *Tim.* 5. 23. even those who are of a weak and abstemious nature, much more those that are of a strong constitution, therefore God gives young men such strength to resist against these strong lusts.

2 Their Temptations are stronger from without, they are more apt to be carried away with company, and worldly business, and pleasures, old men are not fit, but young men are more strongly carried with profits and pleasures; therefore that God might shew his might in them, he strengthens them,

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and indeed the Devil loses more by one young man that breaks off from him, than by six or seven old men, or twenty Children; fir lustful strong youths to break off, weakens Satan most, and doth God most service, and therefore Satan assaults them most; therefore the Apostle writes unto them with honour, *I write unto you young men, because you are strong.*

Use It may serve to exhort all young men, to labour for this Spiritual strength, the strength of young men is their honour, to be able to over run, and out-wrestle others, but what is that, if he be not able to out-run the World, and his lusts? what is it to out-wrestle his Adversary, if he cannot out wrestle Satan, and his Temptations, and his own Corruptions? for a young man to overcome the world, is a greater Victory than *Alexander* the Great could reach unto; what a comely and honourable thing is it for a young man to out-wrestle Satan, the Word, his own Lusts? and God to this end hath made his Ordinances strong, his Spirit is strong, the

Lord's Supper is Meat indeed, and Drink indeed to strengthen us, and shall we have such strong means, and shall we be led away, and overcome with every company? no, it is the honour of young men to be strong against temptations, to do God's Will, to suffer patiently, to hold out constantly; what an honour is it for a young man when his Bow abides in his strength, &c. *Gen.* 49. 24. for a man to suffer valiantly for the truth, this is a sign of strength.

Means to help a young man to this Spiritual strength, and grow in it.

1 Truth in grace; no man by any outward performance only can be strong; a shadow of a man may be like a man, but it hath no strength; truth of grace and power go together, but where there is no truth there is no power, 2 *Tim.* 3. 5. therefore as we would be powerful in godliness, let us do duties with hearty affection, do all things in obedience to God, and to do him service, and this very truth and sincerity will grow up to such strength, as you may go further conquering to conquer.

2. To get strength, we must get wholesome and good diet, and feed heartily on it; so if we would get Spiritual strength, we must feed on the Ordinances of God, the Word of God, 2 *Pet.* 2. 1, 2. no man that receives the Word and Sacrament with a good heart, but he grows strong thereby, they are meat and drink indeed, and it is not good enough to hear, but especially attend to it, and apply that which belongs to you; this is a means whereby you may grow strong, and put forth your strength to it; water it with Prayer, and look up to God for a Blessing; thus if a young man feed on these wholesome meats he will grow strong; indeed if a man feed on windy meats he will never grow strong; so if men affect tricks of Elegancy, and Wit, and Speech, such will be filled only with vain empty Notions, but he that feeds on wholesome food, on the purity and simplicity of God's own Ordinances, will grow in strength.

3 Exercise increaseth strength; let a man daily exercise himself, let a man exercise himself in Grace, and he will grow up in the Lord, and increase in Spiritual strength, *Gal.* 5. 16, *Col.* 2. 6, 7. a tree, the more deeply it is rooted, the more fruit it brings forth, and so they that walk daily in a Christian course, increase in strength; it is not every duty that will strengthen us, though it be often renewed, but walk in Christ, that is, walk not in your own strength, in your own gifts and parts, *Without me you can do nothing*; even *Paul* of himself was not able to think a good thought, 2 *Cor.* 2. 12, 13. therefore let us exercise our gifts in Christ, that is, to wait on Christ daily for the renewal of strength, according to our daily employments, *Isa.* 40. 30, 31. shall change his strength, renew it according to the necessity of his business, that so

he may walk in obedience to him, and depend on him for strength, and aim at his glory.

4 Because we often contract Crudities, and ill Humours, therefore, if we would increase strength we must purge out these, so if we would get Spiritual strength, we must purge out our corruptions, *Rev.* 2. 3, 4, 5. there is
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need of daily repentance which may cast out all noisome lusts and weaknesses, and make us able to perform duties in strength; as you desire therefore to be strong, and to have your strength acknowledged by God, and good men, as you desire to do the will of God cheerfully, diligently, laboriously, and constantly; as you desire to suffer with boldness and patience; as you desire to stand out against all temptations, this God requires of you, to grow true hearted, to feed heartily on every ordinance, to exerceise your graces in Christ, to depend on him, to deny your selves, and if you find you have committed any sin, cast out all before God by confession, and purge it out by repentance, and then you shall find your selves to increase in strength, as becomes young-men.

I JOHN 2. 14.

The Word of God abideth in you.

WE have heard of the strength of Young-men.

The second cause of their victory is, because, *The Word of God abideth in them.*

Verse 12 he had called all *τεκνία*, and he testifies that their sins were forgiven, and of those, the Fathers knew him which was from the beginning, and Young-men had overcome the wicked one, and were strong, *and the word of God did abide in them.*

Doct. *Such Young-men as have their sins forgiven them, have the Word of God abiding in them.*

Q. *What is meant by the Word of God abiding in them?*

1 He means not part of the Word, but the whole Word abides in them, both Promises, Commands, and Threatenings; Commands to bind them; Threatenings to awe them, Promises to comfort them; good examples to encourage them, bad examples to discourage them; therefore for men to be carvers and choosers of the Word, is not to have the Word abiding in them. *Herod* would have some of *John's* words abide in him, but not all, but this is

the commendation of good young men, that not only every kind, but every parcel of the Word abides in them.

2 When he saith, *the Word of God*, it implies, that they receive it as the Word of God, and not as the word of man, 1 *The*. 2. 13. and a man then receives the Word, as the Word of God, when he looks at the Commandments, as God's Commandments, and so the Promises and Threatenings as God's, he looks at them as of highest authority, so as no word of man shall fraud against it, all falls to the ground before it, it sways all.

3 When he saith, the Word *abideth*, it implies, that this Word did not only flash in suddenly, and continued for a time, but it abideth in them continually, *Joh*. 1, 35. *Heb*. 2. 1, 2.

4. (*In you*) that implies the whole man, in their judgement they understood the Word, in their wills they embraced it, in their affections they rejoiced in it, in their lips, the law was in their mouths, in the whole man the Word of God abode, and that not for a time, but continually.

Q.2 *What is the reason why those that have their sins forgiven them, have the Word of God abiding in them?*

Reas. The ground of this is, became whose sins soever are forgiven them, their eyes have been opened to see the weight and danger of sin, the Word hath opened and affected the heart, and hath made such deep impressions that it cannot be rooted out, *Psal*. 119. 93. those promises that have comforted his soul, he shall never forget, *Psal*. 119. 129. and hence he looks at them as sweeter than the honey and the honey comb; and those threatenings that have awed his soul, he still trembles at them; because he hath found the Word wonderful to humble him and til comfort him, therefore he still keeps it.

Use 2 Of trial unto us, whether our sins be forgiven us or no; nothing

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more necessary to know, nor nothing more comfortable; how then shall I know this? why, consider what place the Word of God takes, if the Word of God abide in you, the whole Word, there is no Commandment but you would obey it, no Threatening, but you humble at it, no Promise, but you look as it as the Word of God; do you find your whole man submitting to it, your minds understanding it, your wills embracing it, your affections rejoicing and delighting in it, as the Word of God? it is an evident sign of the remission of your sins; this could not have been, had not the Word of God been wonderful to humble you and comfort you.

Object. *I have a brittle memory and cannot retain the Word, therefore how can the Word be said to abide in me?*

Ans. Dost thou remember other things well, and not the Word? then it is dangerous, but if thy memory be brittle in other things, then it argues the less danger, though the Word do so also; but though it slip out of thy memory, doth it not abide in thine heart? dost thou not delight in, and desire more and more after it? if it be so, it may be said to abide in the.

Use 2. Of exhortation to young men, whosoever have found your sins forgiven, this God requires of you, that you give up your hearts to the whole word of God, to be wholly guided by it for ever, if you sit loose from the word. you shall find the pardon of your sins sit loose from your souls, he will take away the comfort of the pardon of your sins, therefore let the Word of God abide in you richly and plentifully, that so you may have the comfort of such a benefit as pardon of sins.

Doct. *Such young men, as have the Word of God abiding in them, are strong young men, they are connected together.*

Reas. 1. They are strong, because the Word of God wheresoever it abides, abides not in the letter, but in the power and efficacy, and the Word of God is mighty and powerful; and therefore where it dwells it conveys strength and power, *Rom. 1. 16. 2 Cor. 10. 4.* it is mighty to cast down the strong holds of Satan, mighty to over wrestle lusts, mighty to overcome the World, *Psal. 119. 9 & 11.*

Use 1 May serve to shew you, what poor weak young men they be, that have not the Word of God abiding in them, if you see such a young man, write on him, he is a weak young man, if the Word of God abide not in him, every company, every temptation will carry him away.

2 Learn hence, if you desire to be strong indeed, to let the Word abide in you, thus *Joseph*, though he was much tempted to uncleanness, yet he did not consent, but looked at it as a breach of God's Word, how can I do this wickedness, and stand out against God? none so able to resist temptations, as those that have the Word of God abiding in them; therefore if you would overcome pride, wantonness, &c. let the Word of God dwell in you, receive it in your Judgement, in your wills, memories, affections, do not think it weakness for men to have the Word abiding in them, they are strong; he that fears God, fears not any Commandment or threatening in respect of God's, he that is affected with God's promises, regards not all the flatteries of the World.

Doct. *Such young men as have the word of God abiding in them, they overcome the wicked one, this is one reason of their victory, the abiding of the Word in them.*

There are three special temptations of Satan either against Repentance, or Faith, or Sanctification, now the Word of God is mighty through God to repel all these.

1 Against the temptation of repenting so soon, there is a Word that binds him, *Eccl.* 12. 1, 2. Word that threatens the contrary, *Eccl.* 11. 9. there are promises, *Prov.* 8. 17. there are comfortable examples, as *Josiah*, *Timothy*, and these resist this temptation.

2 If a man do give up his heart to God and will set on a good course, yet

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he will make him live in pensivenesss, and fears, and doubts; now against this the Word is powerful, there are Commands to believe, 1 *Joh.* 3. 23. 1 *Joh.* 5. 1. *Matth.* 11. 28. there are Threatenings if a man believes not, *Joh.* 3. ult. and there are notable Promises to him that believes, *Joh.* 3. ult. many Examples, *Paul* believed on God, and he was pardoned, so *Mary Magdalen*, and others.

3 If a mans heart be satisfied in the pardon of sin, then Satan, will tempt him with some base Lusts that may defile and wound his Conscience, now against this the Word hath.

First, Commands, 1 *Thessal.* 4. 3. 1 *Pet.* 1. *Be ye holy as I am holy*, *Matth.* 5. ult.

Secondly, Promises, *Rom.* 2. 6 to 8. and Threatenings to discourage him, and Examples to encourage him, as *Paul*, *Act.* 24. 16. *I exercise my self to keep a good Conscience.*

Q. *But how comes the Word to be thus powerful, to overcome all the enemies of Salvation?*

A. 1 Because it is the sword of the Spirit, to cut asunder all lusts and temptations, *Ephes.* 6. 7. No man hath more need of a sword to defend himself, or offend his enemy, than young men have of the Word to defend themselves, and resist Satan, and it is not so much the Letter of the Word, as the Spirit of the Word that doth this, the Word cuts off all temptations, there is no place for invasion.

Use 1 To teach us, as we desire to walk in the World as Masters of the Field, so as not to beaten out, and kept off either from Repentance, or Faith, or Sanctification, let this be our care, to have the Word of God ingrafted in us, this is all our strength against temptations.

Q. *But how shall I get the Word of God to abide in me?*

A. 1. Be sure you keep your heart broken and clean, and if it be broken and clean, the Word will abide there, and will have the rule and dominion, for the Word of God dwells in a trembling heart, *Isa.* 66. 2. if we resolve it with fear and reverence, this very reverence will over-rule us; *Psal.* 119. 161. what is the reason why Princes could not prevail against him? because *thy servant kept thy Word*; so that is an antidote against all temptations, and persecutions; What if Princes rise against you, that Prince of Darkness, Satan, and his Angels? if the Word dwell in you, it will help you to resist them; what if evil company come against you? if the Word dwell in you, it will help you; *How shall I do this great wickedness, &c.* the Word of God dwells in broken vessels; and withal keep the Vessel clean, keep your hearts pure, come to the Word resolved not to keep any Lust, that is the reason why *Herod* came not out, because he clave to his Lusts, to his *Herodias*, wherefore *lay aside all filthiness and superfluity, and receive with meekness the ingrafted Word of God*, *Jam.* 2. 1. if you come to the Word with a broken and clean heart, it will abide in you.

2 Look at the Word as wonderful, as very effectual to do great things, and that will make thee keep the Word in thee; thus saith *David*, *Psalm* 119. 129. the sence of the great efficacy of the Word, to humble you, and cleanse you, &c. will make you keep the Word.

3 Another means is, to look up to God to send his Spirit, that may bring to mind those things which you have need of, and fallen them to your hearts; though you forget the Word for the present, yet when you are tempted to any Lust, the Spirit will bring it to your remembrance. *Isa.* 30. 21. *You shall hear a voice behind you, saying, This is the way, walk in it.*

4 Ponder the Word of God in your hearts, which was *Moses* practice, *Luk.* 2. 19. and this made her an eminent Christian.

5 Confer of the Word, it is a great help to make it abide in you, teaching it to others, searching the Scripture, *Act.* 17. 11, 12.

6 If you would have the Word abide in you, give up your souls to a conscionable obedience of whatsoever you hear, if you resolve to keep it, it
will

will mightily keep you against the World, against Satan, against your Lusts; he that would keep his heart in a good frame, let his heart stick close to the Word, and the Word to it, let them be riveted together, that you may love the Word, and rejoice in it, this is the very way to have the Word abide in you; as therefore you desire to be Conquerors, *Let the Word dwell richly in you*, *Col.* 3. 16. *Isa.* 11. 9. that so you may grow up to abundance of know-

ledge; look at it as a wonderful Word, and submit your souls to it; ponder on it, confer about it, and this will help you against all Temptations.

1 JOHN 2. 15.

Love not the world, nor the things of the world, &c.

THE Apostle having exhorted to many Duties, as keeping the Commandments, and walking as Christ walked; here he removes an impediment which might hinder all, and that is, Love of the world; and he writes here to young men, and old men chiefly, to little Babes he writes, vers. 18. In this verse we have a prohibition of Love in respect of a double Object; 1 The World, 2 The things of the World. This prohibition is grounded on a Three-fold reason;

1 From the removal of the love of the Father from such.

2 Love not the things of the World; because whatsoever is in the world, is either the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, or the pride of life, and is not of the Father, vers. 16.

3 From the transitoriness of the World, and the contrary permanency of the love of God, vers. 17.

Q. 1. *What is the World?*

A. The World is taken Four ways, and all incident to this place.

1 For the frame and fabrick of Heaven and Earth, and all the Creatures, *Act. 17. 24.* So *love not the world*, that is, not the Creature.

2 The wicked of the world, *Joh. 15. 19*, and though he doth not here intend them, yet we are to separate our selves from them.

3 The World is taken for the Fashions and Customs of the world, *Be not transformed after the world, Rom. 12. 2.*

4 The World is taken for those endowments and benefits the World affords, as Riches, Honours, Profits, and Pleasures, &c, *Jam. 4. 4.*

These three are chiefly aimed at. Love not the Creature, love not the Fashions and Customs of the world, love not the Profits and Pleasures of the world.

Obj. *May not we love the Creature? are not all the Creatures very good? Gen. 1. ult. are we not exhorted to do good to all? mayst we not then love all? Gal. 6. 10. what then is the love of the world which is here forbidden?*

Ans. Love is such an affection of the heart, whereby a man affects communion with the Creature, and communication of good to it, as the love of Money, is when we love it for it self. This love is double;

1 *Amor concupiscentiæ*, when a man covets the thing for the thing it self, for the gain of it.

2 *Amor amicitis*, which is, when I not only desire communion with it, but communication of good to it.

The first is chiefly here forbidden, when I affect the World, or the things of the World for themselves, for its own sake, and not for God's, that it may be a furtherance to God's service, when we love the world rather than God, when we desire it though we be without God, and rejoice in it for it self; this is the love of the World here forbidden.

Q. *What is meant by the things of the World?*

A. 1. Not the Creatures, for that is included in the world, Act. 17. 14. and it appears

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appears by verse 16. that by the things of the World, he means the lusts of the World, not only lusting after women, but such an affection whereby we are carried after any Creature inordinately, that is lust, *Rom. 7. Gal. 5. 17.* and again the Creatures are of the Father, but he speaks of such things as are not of the Father. *Love not the World*, he writes to old men and young men, such as are most subject to it.

Doct. *The World is not to be beloved of young and old.*

I write unto you Fathers, love not you the World; I write unto you young men, love not you the World; St. James is sharp at this point, *Jam. 4. 3, 4.* where he reproves them as Adulterers that love the World; those that are friends to the World are enemies to God.

Object. *Are not all the Creatures of God good, and ought we not to be merciful to our Beasts?*

Ans. He doth not forbid mercy of love to Beasts or Creatures, but he would not have your love terminated by them, bounded in them, he would not have you rejoice or delight in the Creature, before you have part in the Creator, for if you affect these things for themselves, the love of God is not in you.

Reas. 1 From the enmity that is in the Creature it self, against the Creator, ever since the fall, therelies this vanity on the Creature, that it empties out souls of Grace, and love to the Creator, and from all God's ordinances.

1 In hearing the Word, if it be possible, the World will keep you back; let God propound a Feast of fat things, *One makes an excuse he hath hired a Farm, and he must go see it; another hath bought yokes of Oxen, and he must go try them, a third hath married a Wife, and he cannot come.* Luk. 14. 19, 20.

2 If a man break through this, and come to the ordinances, he shall find that the World is a great enemy to him there, *Ezek.* 33. 21, 22. his heart is drawn after profits and pleasures, it may be it will make you despise what you hear, as the *Pharisees* did, they scoffed at Christ, as a poor man himself, and so had not felt the sweetness of the World; and this is the enmity of the World.

3 If you should hear the Word and attend to it, and delight something in it, yet the World will so damp you, or choke you, that all the seed will be smothered, *Matth.* 13. 22. while we busy our selves here and there in the World, the Word is gone, and grace is gone, this is the enmity of the World.

Use 1 It may serve to teach all, young and old, to take up this exhortation, *love not the World*; no man is addicted to the World, but he is in more slavery and bondage, than any galley-slave, his hands may be bound, and his feet shackled, but his heart is free, and he desires freedom from that slavery, but a worldly man is employed and busied in the World, and his body is a slave to it, and not only so, but this very mind and heart is a captive to the World, he cannot be free to any good and spiritual employment, neither can he so much as desire freedom from his slavery; what a miserable thing it is, to see a man employed altogether for his body and estate, and have no heart at all to that which is good? O! they may not be suffered to come to sermons, they have other things to attend to; for men to be thus inthrall'd it is a misery; and if they come to the Word, yet the World fills their heads, that either they cannot attend to it, or if they do, after they are gone, the World steals them all away; therefore I say again, *love not the World*, if riches increase, set not your hearts upon them, nor count them you chiefest good, but be sure first to seek the Kingdom of God, and if God bestow any worldly blessings upon you, take it as a pledge of his love, and be thankful to him, and acknowledge your own unworthiness, *Gen.* 32. 10. as *Jacob* there did, and make them a means to help you forward in God's service; as it is with Seamen, the deeper and wider the Sea is, the more free they are and less careful, so if you have abundance of wealth to swim and wallow in, you must use more liberty in good courses, and take no care for winds and storms, you
have

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have Sea-room enough, set not your hearts on them, but go on in a more speedy course of Christianity.

Use 2. A sign of trial, whether thou love the word or no; Dost thou love the world for itself? dost thou think it well with thee if thou hast the world, and not weel if thou hast not the world? doth all thy content rest in

the world like the rich man in the Gospel? then thou lovest the world; but if thou regard the world no further than it may help thee on in a Christian course, then it will never hinder thee in the ways of God, and thou lovest not the world, but the love of God is in thee.

Doct. *There is in our corrupt nature not only a love to the world, but also a love to our own lusts.*

Love not the world, nor the things of the world, that is, our own Lusts, implying there is in us by nature a love to the world, and the things of the world, the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eye, and the pride of life.

The lust of the flesh is such a corrupt inclination, whereby our bodies do affect sensual lusts, and sensual objects, as meat and drink, that is, intemperancy, or women, that is Incontinency, or Pastimes and Pleasures; and that is Voluptuousness; and they are called the Lusts of the flesh, because our flesh sets us a work to them. What are the lusts of the Eye? there is a good eye, a bountiful eye, but an evil eye is called a covetous eye, *Prov. 23. 6. Deut. 15. 7.* for them the lusts of the eye is Covetousness and it is called the lust of the eye, because the eye stirs us up to it, and that is all he hath, to behold them, *Eccles. 5. 10, 11.* the very beholding satisfies.

The pride of Life, is the affecting of a man's own carnal excellency, when as he doth look at himself only, whether he doth it in heart by high conceit, or worldly boastings, or in outward carriage; now all these we are ready to love, we are ready to love our own wantonness, our intemperancy; or to be carried away with the lust of the Eye, the profits of the World; or else to be puffed up with our own excellency; whatsoever the heart lasts after, it is either honour, or profit, or pleasure; now, *love not the world, nor the lusts of it*; why, would you think a man should be so wicked as to love Voluptuousness, or Profit, or honour? yes, *St. John* else would not so carefully have forbidden it.

Reas. 1. Now that this is so, appears, 1. From our aptness to take part with our own lusts, when they are either discovered or reprov'd; thus *Herod* loved his lust, his *Herodias*, which appears in that he took part with his lust against *John Baptist*, and took it heinously that he should reprove him for it, *Matth. 14. 3.* he will rather restrain *John* than restrain his lust; when a man would rather restrain the Minister than his lust, that is a sign of his love to his lust. So *Asa*, *2 Chron. 16. 10.* he nor only affected his security but he loved this lust, which is manifest in that he took it so heinously when the Prophet reprov'd him for it; so for pride of life, it was *Jonah's* greatest lust, love of his own credit, which appears, in that he was displeas'd exceedingly, because he was cross'd in it, that the City was not destroyed; he had

Prophecied destruction to *Nineveh*, and God upon their repentance spared them, and he thought he should be counted a false Prophet, and lose, his credit, and therefore he was much displeas'd, yea, he was displeas'd that God should reprove him for his frowardness, *Jon. 4.* so that he loved this pride and anger in himself, because he pleaded for it, when God ask him, *Dost thou well to be angry? Yea,* saith he, *I do well to be angry even to the death.* If a man plead for his Lusts, and stand out against reproof, that is a sign he loves that lust.

Reas. 2. From the slight regard we give exhortations against our Lusts; if Ministers exhort, *Love not the world, nor the things of the world,* if we slight them, and search not out our lusts, and put them away, and mortify them; if we favour ourselves therein, it plainly appears we love them. If a Prince should send to a City, not to harbour such and such Traitors, but to seek
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them out and punish them, if they never look after them, never seek them out, is it not a sign of their love to those Traitors? so if we hear of sinful lusts, that we should not have them; it yet notwithstanding we go home, and never regard them, it is a manifest sign that we love these lusts.

Use 1. May shew us the wonderful depth of the wickedness that is in our hearts; one would think it were wickedness enough to have voluptuousness, and Covetousness, and Pride, and vanity in our hearts, but this is nothing in respect of our love to them, we not only have these lusts, but we love them; therefore this should learn us to abhor our own carnal estate, that we are not only full of pride, and covetousness, and intemperancy, but that we should love these lusts, that is a depth of wickedness; that a man should stand out against any friend, or counsel, or reproof, or exhortation, and take part with his lusts, this is a sign that the heart is desperately wicked, *Jer. 17. 9.* therefore let no man have an high conceit of himself but labour to see the depth of the wickedness of his heart by Nature, in that he not only is filled with these lusts, but loves them.

Use 2 May serve to teach us, whosoever we renew our Repentance, and find out any covetousness, or pride, or intemperance, go but a little lower, and you shall find a love of those lusts in your hearts; and as God said to *Ezekiel, Ezek. 8. 6. Turn thee, and thou shalt see greater abominations the these,* so shall we find in our own hearts; whence else comes all extenuating, and mincing, and hiding of sin? whence else comes disputing, and pleading for our lusts? it is made manifest, that rather than we will be accounted proud,

or wanton, or covetous, we will bid defiance to all; alas, what is this but to love the world and the things of the world.

Doct. *The Lusts of the world, young and old are to be weaned from.*

The love of Christians is not to be set on the lusts of the world.

The Holy Ghost dehorts from this by Scriptures that enforce restraint from these lusts, *1 Pet. 2. 11. 2 Tim. 2. 22. Fly youthful lusts*, and St. Peter wishes them to abstain from them, as if they were some deadly poison, that would stain and infect our souls; it implies some great danger, *Rom. 13. 14. fly from them, make no means to accomplish them.*

2 There are other words which shew more enmity, as mortifying; *Col. 3. 5.* there he calls Lusts the members of the body, implying, there is a body of sin; now this mortifying is a metaphor taken from Chirurgions, who when they would cut off a Member, they mortify it, by binding it, and hindering the recourse of the blood and spirits, and so benumb it. Secondly, They apply Corrosives to stupify it, and then cut it off, left it free and kill the whole body; so we ought to mortify our lusts, by restraining and binding our hearts from delight in any pleasure, *Psal. 119. 101. my feet*, that is, the inclination of my heart, he had bound up his spirit from them, and restrained from any fellowship with them.

2 As Chirurgions apply Corrosives, so Christians to mortify their lusts apply such Corrosives as may subdue their lusts, *Rom. 8. 13. If ye walk after the flesh ye shall die, but if ye through the Spirit mortify the deeds of the Body, ye shall live;* either kill your lusts, or else you will kill your soul, therefore mortify your lusts through the Spirit that you may live; which is a notable Corrosive to mortify them by the Spirit of God; to another Corrosive is, when a man applies the threatenings of God to his soul, and against his Lusts; if you shall lay to heart all the dangers of your lusts, it will eat out the corruption of the flesh. Another special Corrosive is the Death of Christ, when we consider Christ died for us, and we are dead in him, how then should we live any longer to sin, *Rom. 6. 1. to 6.*

3. As Chirurgions cut off that Member that is thus mortified, so Christians, that they may not love their lusts, must cut off those lusts, and cast them away, *Matth. 18. 8, 9. were our lusts as near and precious to us as our right eye were they never so convenient or necessary, even as our right hand,*

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though we should dis-able our selves in our Callings, yet cut them off, it is better you should be lame in your business, better you should go with reproach and shame in the world, than at length be cast body and soul into Hell

fire; cut off the members of sin, which are as near, and dear, and necessary unto you, as right eyes and hands, in regard of your worldly employments, yet away with them, mortify them.

Like to this phrase of Mortifying, is *the Crucifying of the flesh, with the affections and lusts*, Gal. 5. 24. they that are in Christ have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts, they have crucified the whole body of Sin, partly in the affections, which are not sinful in themselves, but as they are inordinate, but they keep in their affections and passions in such order, that they sin not in anger, or joy, or love, &c. and partly their lusts of the flesh also, covetousness, pride, vanity, wantonness, they are crucified; they look at all their lusts as Crucifying Christ, and they look up to Christ for the pardon of sin, and so also for the healing of sin, for pardoning and healing goes together, *Hos.* 14. 3, 4. *1 Joh.* 1. 7, 8. they that are Christs looking up to the virtue of Christ's Death, they find their lusts not only pardoned, but healed; crucifying of our lusts, hath some resemblance with Christ's Death; as,

1 They attach Christ, seek him out, and are content to give money rather than not to find him; so will a Christian do in regard of his lusts.

2 He lays them open as enemies to *Cæsar*, to the great God, and desires vengeance on them.

3 He considers that Christ is dead for him, and he is crucified with Christ, therefore what hath he to do to live to the world, or the lusts thereof?

Reas. 1. Why, all should be wearied from lusts, from the enmity which these lusts have against God, which is a sufficient motive to wean us from the world, *Gal.* 5. 17. if they be enemies to God, then a Christian hath reason to hate them as enemies to his best friend, and indeed he cannot love God, and those lusts too, *He that loveth the world, the love of the Father is not in him*; he is not fit for any duty, he that loves the world cannot accomplish the will of the Father; every lust hinders spiritual duties, hearing of the Word, Prayer, receiving of the Sacrament; any one lust tolerated, or lived in hinders all Spiritual duties.

Reas. 2. From the enmity they have against our souls, *1 Pet.* 2. 11. *Dearly beloved, as strangers and pilgrims abstain from fleshly lusts which fight against your souls*; they fight against your souls, and so fight, that either you must kill them, or they will kill your souls; either mortify them, or they will mortify your souls; either captivate them, or they will captivate your souls. Therefore seeing they are so contrary to God, and any Spiritual life, and our own souls, as we would not have our lusts hinder our peace with God, and eat

our own grace, as we would maintain our communion with God, and the life of our souls, *Love not the world, nor the lusts of the world.*

Use 1. To teach us, it is not enough for us to abstain from outward gross sins, but love not your lusts: thou mayest refrain from the outward acts of sin, but yet thy heart may be strongly affected towards sin, and thou mayest delight therein, if thou dost, thou lovest the world, and the things of the World; therefore labour to cleanse your selves from secret lusts. Circumcision was the cutting off the fore-skin of a secret member, and yet God would have another Circumcision more secret, and that is of the heart, we must not content our selves with outward reformation, but circumcise our hearts *Levit. 3. 3, 4.* God took special care that he would have all the Kidneys and Fat; the Kidneys and Fat are our strongest desires and lusts, why, when we come to offer Sacrifice, we must bring them before the Lord, and burn them, there is no favour so sweet in God's nostrils as the burning of our strongest lusts, the more our lusts stink in our nostrils, the more sweet smelling favour

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it is to God, so long as our lusts smell sweet in our nostrils; so long we are loathsome to God.

Use 2 It must teach us, it is not enough to cut off some lusts, but those that we love most; a good Husband that hates prodigality, you shall not need to exhort him to frugality; so prodigality cannot endure covetousness, it hates baseness and pinching, he cannot abide it, it is not his own lust; so another, he cares not for his pride and bravery, so he may lie close at the pot, or an Harlot; why this is no great matter to cry out against those lusts that are not ours, but it is a Christian duty, not to love our own lusts; covetousness is not thy lust, but if prodigality be thy lust, do not thou cry out against covetousness; and thou which art covetous, do not thou stand out against another man's prodigality, but strive against thy own covetousness; there are lusts which are to us, as *Eve's apple*, fair to the eye, such lusts as our souls lust after, *Rev. 18. 14.* look thou to these lusts which thy soul lusts after, let them depart from thee.

Use 3 This reproves our aptness to cherish and nourish our own lusts; when we are commanded not to love them, to mortify them, not to make provision for them, if we then provide for them, we are justly to be reproved. *Job 24. 15. Prov. 7. Woe be to them that draw iniquity with the cords of vanity, and iniquity as it were with Cart-ropes, Isa. 15. 18.* that take occasion to fulfil their sins, that draw them on with Cart-ropes, that give way to such reasons,

and such incentives as draw on a lust, woe be to them that put away all fear of judgement, and so draw on lusts with the cords of vanity.

Use 4 To teach us all to wean our selves from these lusts. *Young men I write unto you, love not the World, nor the things of the World;* and old men have nothing to do with them, refrain from them, apply such corrosives, such threatenings, such promises, Christ's death, and cut off all occasions of sin, root it out, challenge your hearts, arraign them before God, bring them as enemies to your souls, and labour to cut them off utterly.

If any man love the World the love of the Father is not in him.

Doct. It is not the having, but the love of the World, that keeps our hearts from the love of the Father.

It is not the having of the World, for *David's* mountain was strong, *Joseph* had his will in *Egypt*, *Abraham*, was rich, but though they had the World, yet they had not the love of the World, *Jam. 4. 3, 4.* whosoever is a friend to the World, is an enemy to God; it is not the Lordship of the World, but the friendship of the World, that is enmity against God, for the time shall come, that they that take the Lamb's part, shall be Princes of the World; and *Saint James* calls the love of the World Adultery; as a woman that makes her self a friend to another man, and bestows that love upon him, which her Husband only should enjoy, is an enemy to her Husband, so a man that is a friend to the World, or to the lusts of it, is an enemy to God, alienated from him, and he would have them know, that there is no worldly covetous man, but he knows that his love of the World is enmity against God, it is the World that hinders you from the Word, and Prayer, and good duties.

Reas. 1. From the amplitude of that love which we owe to God, which cannot therefore be divided to others; *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and all thy soul, and mind, and strength, Mat. 22. 37.* then we must love the World no further than it may help us in his service, and we may employ it to his advantage, if we love it more, we sin against the great Commandment; if we must love the Lord with all our heart, and mind, and strength, then what sorry weak affection is due to the World? even an heartless faint love; all our love and vigour of our spirits is to be set on God, now if a man love the World, he cannot thus love God, for if he love the world, his first and chiefest care is for wealth and riches, and then it may be he will a little look rowards God; first let me bury my Father; first let me stock my Farm, and try my Oxen, and then if I have any time, I will come to the Feast.

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2. A covetous, or a lustful, ora proud man, when he hath the World, and the lusts thereof, he is fully satisfied with his portion, without God, *Psal.* 17. 8. so *Luk.* 12. 19. Soul take thine ease, thou hast goods laid up for many years; he wraps up the comforts of his soul in these outward things; if he have wealth, or pleasure, he is content without God, the more he hath of the World, the less he cares for God; as the Moon when it is at the full, it is most opposite to the Sun, so is it with a worldly man,

3. The love of the World, will make a man part with God, rather than with the World, he will rather part with Grace and Heaven mo, than leave the World, he will rather part with eternal life, than his wealth; as the young man in the Gospel, *Matth.* 19, from 16. to 22. he had rather part with Christ, and an express promise at heaven, shall part with his possessions; so we see how the love of the World keeps us from the love of God. Notable is that speech of Christ, *Matth.* 6. 24. *No man can serve two Masters, &c.* God and this World are as two masters; such is the amplitude of God's service, that he that serves God as he ought, hath no time to serve the World. No man that hath a servant; but he looks that his whole time should be spent in his service; so if we spend any time in the service of the World, we cannot be servants to God indeed. If services be subordinate, we may serve many, so we may seek and take pains for the World, but be sure it be in subordination to God's service, look that it may make you more free to God's service.

Use 1. To discourage any man from the love of the World; there is no greater discouragement than to say, *If we love the World, the love of the Father is not in us.* As if a Father come to a child and say, if you love such a young man or woman, you cannot love ee, and I shall take you for my utter enemy, and you shall never make it up again, would not any ingenuous child rather than he would be an enemy to his Father, part with any? so when God saith, *If you love the World, you cannot love me,* I shall look at you as my enemies, were not this enough to make any Christian out of love with the World? therefore choose whether you will love God or the World, if you love the one, you cannot love the other; therefore it is not a matter of frugality or providence to love the World, for I say, *If a man loves the World, he makes the World his Gods,* therefore Covetousness is called idolatry, *Col.* 3. 5. a man's belly may be his God, the love of the World is directly against God, the love of God requires all your hearts, souls, and strength; therefore no part to be set on the World.

Use 2. It may exhort Christians to mortify their love to the World; you must either crucify your love to the World, or to God, *If you love the World,*

you cannot love God, if you love God, you cannot love the World, you cannot serve God and Mammon.

Motives.

1 If a man can but withdraw his mind from the World, he may be Master of the field in any temptation that befalls him! what is the World? all that is in the World, is either profit, or pleasure, or credit, and we regard the World no further; so that if thou beest weaned from thy profit or pleasure, in meat or drink, or pastime; if thou beest weaned from credit, thou shalt bereave Satan of the weapons he fights against thee with, for how doth he keep men back from Religion, but that it will not stand with his credit, and applause in the World? what hinders them from holy duties, but love to their profits and pleasures? therefore could but a man wean himself from them, he might easily overcome the wicked one; how did *Joseph's* Mistress work on him? was it not from pleasure? and if *Joseph* be content to leave the lusts of the Flesh, he over-masters that temptation; what made *David* fall, but the lust of the flesh? what made *Peter* deny his Master? was it nor fear of death? what made *Demas* forsake *Paul*? was it not love of the World? so that there is no temptation, but it is headed with the World; if it be not pointed with the World, it can do little, so that if the Prince of the World come and find nothing of the World in us, no love to profit, or pleasure, or credit, he can do nothing; as Christ when he

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saw he had no love to these things, he had nothing to do with him.

Use 3 Of consolation to every soul, who though he be busy in the World, yet loves not the World, it is not the having of the World, nor the having of the lusts of the World, that makes you enemies to God, but the love of them, so that you may have the World, and the lusts thereof, and yet have God too, so that you love them not, but desire to mortify them, and crucify them, let God see that your heart, and strength, and the vigour of your spirits be towards God, not for your own lusts, but for God's service, and then though a man have the World, and many lusts in him against his will, these do not separate him from, the love of the Father.

1 JOHN 2. 16.

For all that is in the World, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, as not of the Father, but is of the World.

IN the former ver. the Apostle dissuaded both old and young from the love of the World, and the things of the World, that is, *the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life.*

And he dissuades them from this, from a threefold reason.

1 *Love not the World*, for it evacuates the love of God in us, verse 15. latter end.

2 The lusts of the World are not of God, but of the World, verse 16.

3 The third reason, why we should not love the World, and the lusts thereof, is from their nature and original, they are not permanent, but pass away.

Doct. *All the sinful dispositions, and courses of the World, are of these three sorts, either the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eye, or the pride of life.*

This Text is a sufficient warrant, though there be no other such division in Scripture, for every Word of God is perfect; therefore all the sinful dispositions and ways of the World, are either *the lusts of the flesh, of the eye, or pride of life.*

Lusts of the flesh, are such as are stirred up by the flesh, which being obtained, our bodies find comfort, such pleasure as we find in meat and drink, or women, in intemperancy, or incontineny.

Lusts of the eye, are such as satisfy the senses, and that is called covetousness, and they are called *lusts of the eye*, because the eye is only satisfied with them.

Pride of life, is the affecting of a man's own carnal excellency, when he look duly at himself, and hath an high conceit of himself.

Reas. 1. From the observation of what the heart is set upon, when it is drawn aside to any concupiscence; either credit leads a man, or profit and pleasure leads him, *Jam.* 1. 14. every man is drawn aside of his own concupiscence; if to Credit, *that is pride of life*, if to Profits, *that is lust of the eye*, if to Pleasure, *that is lust of the flesh.*

Reas. 2. From the answer of such objections as might be made against this.

Object 1 *You may say there are many sins which fall not under the division, as when a man grows contentious, it may be neither for profit, nor pleasure, nor pride.*

Ans. No contention but springs from pride, *Prov.* 13. 10. a carnal affecting at his own excellency makes him contend.

Object. 2 *Atheism or superstition, no profit, or pleasure, or credit in it, so profaneness; what profit or pleasure or credit in swearing.*

Ans. All the sins against the first table, fall either under Atheism, or Superstition, or Profaneness, and all these proceed from disobedience, which is
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want a far and reverence of God, which is nothing else but pride; do you see any Creature neglect Religion? surely it is from pride of heart, *Psa.* 10. 3, 4. *The wicked through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God;* so superstition comes from pride, though it seems to be done in humility and devotion, *Col.* 2. *ult.* *Micah* 6. 6, 7, 8. do not come before him with your own inventions, and think to please him, for it is nothing but pride; so for profaneness, as swearing, or Sabbath-breaking, it comes from pride? so when *Pharaoh* said who is God? I know him not; it proceeded from pride, *Exod.* 9. 17. so whensoever men break off the bonds of God's service, and will not be held in, this springs from pride of heart, that they will not be subject to the Lord.

Obj. *Indulgence to Children, as in David and Eli, when they cannot find in their hearts to give them a bad speech, doth this spring from pride, or profit, or pleasure, is it not rather meekness and mildness?*

Ans. Such indulgence always proceeds from pride; thou hast honoured thy Children above me, *1 Sam.* 2. 29. when a man shall rather see God, dishonoured than his Children, or his children honoured than God, this is a great measure of pride.

Object. 4. *What say you to timorousness, when out of very fear a man neglects Religion, as Peter denied his Master for fear, it was neither for pleasure, or profit, or pride; or whence comes Cain or Judas his despair, comes this from pride?*

Ans. This springs from pride of heart, when a man grows so timorous; for, was it not for his self-confidence, that God left *Peter* to such baseness of spirit, and when he preferred his own pleasure and safety, was not this a lust of the eye? so *Pilate*, what made him afraid of *Cæsar*? was it not love of his own safety? did he not honour himself before God, and was not that pride? and from whence came *Cain's* despair? was it not from his Pride against his Brother? he envied his Brother, and what was that but pride? and for *Judas* his despair, it is from pride of heart, in that God is not in a man's heart; if he find not comfort in himself, he will not seek it in God, but seek it rather in all halter, this is pride, this is pride that he cannot brook such horrors of conscience as God inflicts; had he had an humble soul, he would have contented himself, and looked up to Christ for pardon, as well as many that crucified him; all baseness of spirit, and timorousness proceeds from pride; that, makes a man afraid to offend such great men, it is because they would not lose their credit and honour, and is not this pride? *aut servit humiliter, aut*

superbè dominatur, ejusdèm spiritus est, basely to serve, or proudly to domineer. Let us survey the whole Law of God, and all sins will fall under Atheism; superstition, or profaneness, and all from pride; Sabbath-breaking, that is from neglect of God's honour, that is from pride; murder, that is from contention, and contention from pride; Adultery is the lust of the flesh, stealing the lust of the eye, bearing false-witness, either from profit or credit; covetousness in the tenth Commandment, is the lust of the eye.

Use 1 To shew the great change of the World, for in the creation, God looked upon all the World, and all was good, but whwn *Solomon* comes and surveys, and looks over all the World, he cries out Vanity of vanities, all is vanity and vexation of spirit, and *St. John* he comes after him, and cries, *Love not the World, for what is in the World, is either the lust of the flesh*, and that is vanity, *or the lust of the eye, and pride of life*, and that is vanity and vexation of spirit; *the whole World lies in sin, Joh. 1. 3.* there is no man by nature, but his whole course is carried this way, either to his credit, and then he is proud, or to his profit, and then he is covetous, or to his pleasure and then he is voluptuous and licentious.

Use 2 Hence every man may learn what sin he is most given to, what corruption most defiles his heart, and which way his heart is most inclined, which is a needful thing; it is piety a man should know strange Countries abroad; and be ignorant at home, pity to be sensorious abroad, and careless at home; would thou know then what sin most sways thee? it is one of these,

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either lust of the flesh, lust of the eye, or pride of life, or all of them, but one must over-rule us; if thou beest not born of God, they reign, if born of God, yet they may captivate thee, therefore see which of these bears most sway in thy heart; if it be intemperance, then your hearts will be addicted to Gluttony, or Drunkenness, or Pastime, or Frolicks, and Jestings; if your hearts be carried towards Women, that is a lust at the flesh; if you find that you stand not much on your Pleasure, but you can fare hardly, and lie hardly, that you are not given to Women or Lust, how then are you affected to profit? doth not thy soul cover after wealth, and when thou art rich, thou considerest not so much what thou hast, as what thou shall not; when thou hast it, there is no care to employ it in God's services, for God, or his Church, or his Children, to do the more good, but thou carest not how thou comest by it, and contentest thy self only with looking on it; this is a lust of the Eye; but what if thou beest a Prodigal, he hates covetousness, but yet all Prodigals are proud, for Pride thinks it baseness to keep within compass, but lives

above his estate; so, dost thou affect thy credit, or outward applause? that is pride of heart; that we will not deny our credit, and so we dare not look after God, because of the loss of our credit, or honour, why this is from pride of heart; and if thou beest Regenerate, yet one of these lusts it is that puts thee to distempers, and discouragements, if any thing discourage thee, and vex thee sinfully, so that thou growest discontent, it is from one of these three; nay, art thou inwardly affected with thy sin, that it carries thee to unbelief, or distrust. that thou canst not look up to God with comfort? it is one of these lusts that hath damped thy comfort and enlargement, because thou canst not find so much comfort and enlargement, thou growest discontent, this is from pride, or sometimes we are so carried to our profits or pleasures, that it damps our grace in us.

Use 3 May exhort us to humiliation when we find all these lusts working in our hearts, because he that is addicted to pride may be given to the world too, and look to pleasure, and many sensual objects, this should unfeignedly humble us, that such a mass of sin should be in us, that not one sin of the world but is in our hearts; so that when St. *James* calls the tongue a world of iniquity, *Jam.* 3. 6. what a world of mischief is in our hearts, when there is no sin in the world but is in our hearts? What is the reason why men are so vexed if they be hindered from their credit, or honour? it is from pride; if they be cast in their profits and pleasures, it is from the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eye; therefore do not say, I find no great power in my self to abstain from such and such sins, but I have a good heart to God, alas, there is no lust but is found in thy heart, all that is in the World is in thee.

Use 4. A cause of much thankfulness to God, that he hath restrained any of these lusts in you, and that you have not run into it with as much extremity as any in the world; when you see any punished for Adultery, or Murder, we may see it in us, we have hearts within subject to the like, had not God held us back; therefore we ought to be thankful unto God.

Use 5. If there be such a world of wickedness, let us get an heavenly measure of grace, that may countervail all these Corruptions, look for a new world of grace that may humble our hearts against our pride that may make us liberal against covetousness, chaste and pure against lusts of the flesh, that so this world of wickedness may not reign in us. We come now to shew, that we must not love these lusts, and that from their Nature and Original, they are not of the Father, but of the world.

Doct. *There is no lust in the world can challenge or claim God for the Author, or Fountain of it.*

He doth not mean the Creatures of the world, but the Lusts of the world; Take it in particular, *David* when he had committed Adultery, which was a lust of the flesh, 2 *Sam.* 11. 3. this was evil in the sight of the Lord, therefore it was not pleasing to him, he pleased himself, but not God in this; in other things

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things he was a man after God's own heart, in this after his own heart. So what made *Joseph* abstain from the like sin, but because he considered it would be a great sin against God? so for Covetousness, a lust of the eye, God abhors it, *Psal.* 10. 3. he is so far from loving it, that he hates both it and the covetous man, *Isa.* 57. 17. *For the wickedness of his covetousness I was wroth with him;* and for pride at life that God hates, *Prov.* 6. 16, 17. it is one of the most loathsome things in the sight of God, 1 *Pet.* 5. 5. ἀντιρροσεται God wars against a proud man, he sets an Army against him, and therefore seeing God hates these, he cannot be the Author or Fountain of them; it is manifest that they spring not from God, for he abhors them, hates them, punishes them, *Job* 34. 9, 10, 11, 12. *Rom.* 1. 18, 19. *Gal.* 5. 17. the flesh lusteth against the Spirit of God, therefore God is against them. But what is the reason why they cannot challenge their Original from God?

Reas. 1. From the purity of God, *Hab.* 1. 8. he is of pure eyes, and so abhors all sin; *What fellowship hath light with darkness?* what fellowship hath filthy lusts of the flesh with a pure God? what fellowship hath a covetous heart with a liberal God, a proud heart with the great God? a proud man will be his first cause, and last end, and therefore hateful to God, *Psal.* 5. 4, 5.

Reas. 1. From the baseness and ill disposedness of sin to the service of God; *Jam.* 1. 13, 14. there is nothing in sin, for which God should desire it, or respect it, or make use of it.

Obj. *Doth not the Scripture manifest that there is no sin, but God hath a great hand in it? why did Joseph's Brethren sell him, was it not from envy, and from pride? and yet he saith it was God that sold him, Gen.* 45. 7, 8. *was it not from envy that the Pharisees crucified Christ? and yet it was but what God fore-ordained; and for Judas, was it not from covetousness that he betrayed him? and yet God has decreed it; and for the lusts of the flesh, doth not God speak plainly, That he would give David's wives into the hands of Absalom? so that no sin but it is from God's hand, nor pride, nor covetousness, nor voluptuousness, how is it thou that no lust can challenge its original from God, they are not of the Father?*

Ans. They are of the Father as of the world, but not in that sense as they are of the world, they are not from him as an Author, or Fountain, or

causa per se, for the good God can work no evil, but yet there is no sin but he is the occasion of it, though the cause of no sin; all good things come from God as a cause, all evil as from an occasion thereof; as the Gospel is a Gospel of Peace, and from the God of Peace, yet it is made a fire-brand of contention, to set men at variance and strife, *Mark* 10. but it is not the proper work of the Gospel, but of the corrupt distemper of men that abuse it to the contrary end, there is no work of sin that doth *per se* propagate by God, but by occasion. Now the accidental work of God in sin stands,

1 In leaving men to themselves.

2 In leaving them to Satan.

3 In propounding good occasions, and objects which they pervert to sin.

First, So God would harden *Pharaoh's* heart; How? by leaving him to himself, as Wax left to it self will grow hard, how much more the stony heart of man? God not ruling and working in his heart, it grows hard.

Secondly, He left him to Satan, he suffered Satan to help his Sooth-sayers to do the like Miracles as *Moses* did, *Exod.* 7. 13, 22. and because he saw his Enchanters could do so much, he thought they were no better than his Magicians.

Thirdly, He hardens our hearts often by many comforts, mercies, and outward blessings, and these often harden our hearts, as respite from Judgements, did *Pharaohs*, *Exod.* 8. 15. when it should lead us to repentance, *Rom.* 2. 4, 5. yet by occasion it hardens our hearts, so for other lusts.

First, How did God tempt *Absolom*, by leaving him to his lustful heart?

Second-

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Secondly, By leaving him to ill counsel.

Thirdly, By giving the Kingdom into his hand, so that he took liberty to commit that wickedness, to lie with his father's Concubines. So, how did God work *Josephs* selling into *Egypt*?

First, By turning his Father's love towards him, above his other Brethren.

Secondly, By his Dreams, then he stirs them up to sell him, so that God only gives the occasion, and propounds objects; which they provoke to sin; so God stirred up the Pharisees, and *Judas*, to Crucify and betray Christ, God left him to himself, then,

1 Satan filled his heart, *Joh.* 13. 2, 27. and God gave a fit opportunity to take him; so the Pharisees they envied him, they saw he would take away their glory and credit, therefore they envied him, but those were but such

occasions as they might have revisited, he laid them by them, but they needed not have taken them up, he tried them by it, but he did not tempt them to do it. So *Adam's* sin, God led him into a Temptation, but it was but of trial, not of seducement, it was *Temptatio probationis*, not *seductionis*, he Popounded a goodly tree to him, and the fruit fair to the eye, but the cause of all was their own consent, and mutability which they might have resisted.

And for God's Decree, though they did nothing but what God decreed, God's purpose never decreed any sin would be wrought otherwise than as it is wrought by the propounding objects and occasions, and leaving them to themselves and Satan, but he never decreed to force any to sin, therefore let God and his Throne be guiltless, let iniquity rest on the wicked, but God's hand is not with it.

Use 1 Is a just refutation of the Papists, that impute it to us, as if we made God the Author of Sin, whereas we teach and believe, that there is no sin in the world that is from the Father, but from the world; let no man when he is tempted say, he is tempted of God, for he finds nothing in sin to desire it, but his care is to shew the wisdom of his Providence and Justice; we say there is no sin but God gives occasion to; if *Shimei* curse *David*, the Lord bid him, that is, gives him opportunity; so the Lord stirred up the Pharisees to Crucify Christ, but all this was not from God as a proper cause, Suppose a man were Master of many Horses, and one falls lame, what, shall not the Master ride on him because he halts? it is not the Masters fault that the Horse halts, but from some distemper, or disease in the Horse, and he knows it too, yet he will not leave off using him for that; what it God know if he send showeres there will grow as well Weeds as good Corn, and Herbs, what then, must he therefore restrain the showeres? no, it is meet his Providence should be fulfilled; what it the Dunghill stink by the Sun beams, shall not the Sun therefore shine? the Sun causes not the stink properly, but the filth in the Dunghil, so there is nothing but God's Providence worketh; what if his Providence turn many things to sin, the fault is not in God's Providence, but men's corruptions, but he is as far from the sin as the Sun from stench.

Use 2 To reprove all such foolish men as wrong God's Providence, that if they fall into any sin, they impute it to destiny, and if it be it is from God's hand, or else it had not been, *Deus impulsor fuit*; what a prophane thing is this, for a man to impute his sin to God? God is no more the cause of any sin, than the Sun is the cause of the stench of a Dunghill, God forbids it, hates it, and punishes it; was *Absalom* therefore innocent because God gave his Fa-

thers Wives into his hands? No, God punishes his sin before all the people, because he committed his sin openly before them all.

Use 3 To teach every man and woman to abhor all these sins, all Pride, Gluttony, Adultery, Covetousness, detest them; why? because they are not of the Father, God takes no pleasure in high looks, what pleasure takes he in unclean

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unclean lusts, in covetousness? he detests them, and abhors them; therefore if they be not from God, should good men have to do with them? what should we meddle with that which we have no Word or Commandment for? abhor these lusts therefore, and detest them, let those follow them whose chief good is in the World, but live you as becomes God's Servants.

Use 4 May teach us to clothe our selves with the contrary Graces, if those lusts be not from the Father, then surely contrary Graces are; therefore deck your selves with humility, *God resisteth the proud, but gives grace to the humble.* Matth. 11.28. *Learn of me, for I am humble and meek;* Humility is of me. but Pride, that is not of the Father, but of the world; so for heavenly-mindedness, *Col. 3. 1. If ye be risen with Christ seek those things that are above;* heavenly-mindedness that is from Christ, therefore be of an higher mind than the world; Alas, are these worldly things your highest things? it is a sign you are not risen with Christ; and so for the lusts of the flesh, there is o-ther meat than bodily food, *Joh. 6. 29. Joh. 4. 34.* we may make use of our bellies, but we may not make them our gods, *1 Cor. 6. 9, 10.* deck your selves with sobriety, chastity, temperance, liberality, humility; thus walk, and you shall find rest to your souls.

Doct. That which is not of the Father, the love of young men, and old, is to be weaned from.

The Syllogism stands thus, whatsoever is not of the Father, the love of old and young must be weaned from. But these lusts are not of the Father, *Ergo.*

All the comforts of this world, if they come not from the Father, our love must be weaned from them; if honour come not from God, and people affect it, it hinders their faith, they cannot believe, *Joh. 5. 44.* what kept *Joseph* from the lusts of the flesh, but God's providence in with-holding his Mistress from him? if God withhold a thing, it is not for us to put forth a teaching desire to it; this satisfied *Jacob*, *Gen. 30. 2.* If God with-hold such a blessing, why should our desires be set upon it? Shall we take it unkindly that God's hand with-holds it? so for profit, this was the claim that *Jephthah* made, when the King of *Ammon* contended with him, *Judg. 11. 24.* he told him, *What God*

gives us we will possess; if God had not given it he had usurped it, as did the King of *Ammon*; so if our God give us not a thing, let us not reach after it, and to this a promise is made, to him that shakes his hand against any unjust thing, *Isa.* 33. 15. & vers. 16, 17. such, though they have less, yet they shall be confirmed in it, it shall be strong foundations.

Obj. *What is there that any man receives but it is from God's hand? good and evil comes from him,* 2 *Sam.* 12. 7, 8. I gave thee thy Master's house, and thy Master's Wives into thy bosom, and I gave them up to their hearts lusts; so *Zach.* 11. 16. *Lo, I will raise up a shepherd in the Land, which shall not visit those that be cut off, &c. so that we cannot be given to our lusts, but it is from God.*

Ans. It is one thing when God gives us a blessing in his Providence, another, when he gives us a blessing in his Ordinances, we may have many things by way of God's providence, and yet have little comfort in them; it was his providence to give them up to their lusts, it was God's providence that sent Monarchs against Nations that they had no right to; so God's providence you will say, sends a Bribe, I never sought after it, but we must not reason thus, for these are but trials of our obedience, and not for seduction; so if a Bribe comes, God tries whether you will shake your hands against it; so if an Harlot press all you, God tries your chastity by this, this is God's providence; but it God offer us a thing in an Ordinance, that is either by his Command, or our Calling, that we may safely take, *Heb.* 5. 4. so that God's Command, and our Calling are God's Ordinances; whatsoever he calls us to receive, he ordains, and whatsoever he calls us not to receive, he ordains not; so that whatsoever is ordained by God in his Ordinance, that we may take, but

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what comes not thus, let us shake it off.

Use 1 To teach us to take heed of all unlawfull Honours and Riches, for though they may comfort us a while, yet they shall do us no good, if they come not from God; all lawful Honour and Riches come from God; 1 *Chron.* 29. 12. and that as a Father. We need not be afraid to receive any lawful Honour; so for pleasures, 2 *Cor.* 1. 3. he is the God of all comfort, if it be a lawful comfort, so that these we are not to be weaned from, but from all the lusts of the World; though we may receive Honour, yet we must not be ambitious; so Riches, they are God's gifts, but let us not use ill means to come by them; so for Pleasures, if we cannot come by them but by violating God's Command, why let not your hearts reach to them; and this should be a notable motive to mortify all lusts, because they come not from the Father

of Lights, but from the Prince of Darkness; if no Ambition, or Pride, or Covetousness be from God, mortily it, so if there be any love to pleasure and wantonness, root it out, for it is not of the Father, therefore what should Christians have to do with it? Men's Children may lawfully take gifts from others besides their Fathers, because they are not able to give us all kind of blessings, but God's Children must take nothing that comes not from their Father, whatsoever is not from him is a lust, and our love must be weaned from it; and the reason is, from the amplitude of God's bounty, there is no good gift but comes from God, and that in his Ordinance, and God will bellow upon his Children whatsoever is good and needful for them.

Use 2 May quiet our hearts in the want of all such blessings as come not from God, as God gives us not; you see you cannot have such riches, or such pleasures, or profits, but God's Providence or Ordinance with-holds them; why wean your hearts from them, and be content without them; it is the wisdom of men to follow an occasion, when they see God's providence leading them to it, but if thou see God's providence hindering it by lawful means, that thou canst not have Children by lawful means, or Riches by lawful means, if it come not from the Father it is not good for us, and therefore we must be content without them.

Use 3 Shews God's Children what they may lawfully enjoy, such things only as come from the Father, in his Providence and Ordinance, that you may love and comfortably enjoy.

Q. How shall I know whether I had all my blessings, as from my Father, my Wife or Children, or Riches, or Calling?

A. 1. Whatsoever you have obtained by Prayer, it is a good sign you have had it from God, as a Father hearing prayer, *1 Sam. 1. 27.* so whatsoever profit, or pleasure, or credit you have, if you have obtained it by prayer, it is a sign you had is from God as your Father.

Obj. I have many things which I never prayed for. I have it may be Wise, and Friends, and Honour, and Calling, thad never prayed for, may I have comfort in them?

2 In the second place therefore a man may say, he hath a thing from the Father, when he hath it by fellowship with Christ, *Ephes. 5. 17.* many times God gives us things out of his love in Christ:, that we never thought of, for our hearts are shallow, and empty, and not able to comprehend what God is able to do, for he is able to do above all we can think, or ask, therefore let us get hold of Christ, and then we need fear no blessing.

3 Whatsoever you receive by faith, that is from the Father, *Matth. 8. 13.* If you believe, God will do whatsoever he sees needful and we believe he is

able to do above what we are able to ask; now we receive it by faith, when either we teach it and bring it by faith, or if not so, yet we have it, and receive it by lawful means as a pledge of God's love, and when we have it use it to his glory, for though we get it not by faith, yet we hold it by faith, now faith is *adequate* to our calling, the just lives by his faith in every several calling, so that if we come by it in a lawful calling, any credit, or profit, or pleasure,

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sure, faith gives us to see that it comes from God's ordinance, so that we may comfort our selves in it; therefore be exhorted, whatsoever God gives not in his ordinance, let us not reach to it, so that we are to be weaned from all pleasures, and points, and honours, if they come not from God's providence by lawful means.

2 You must be quiet and content without them; and Thirdly, whatsoever you receive from God in his ordinance, you may use it comfortably.

Doct. *All the lusts in the World, are of the World.*

1 *Joh.* 5. 18. The whole World lies in these lusts, *Gal.* 1. 4. that he might deliver us from this present evil World, *Jam.* 3. 15. this wisdom is not from above, but earthly.

Object. *But God made the World, and therefore that which comes from the World, comes from God.*

Ans. The World is taken for the system of heaven and earth, *Act.* 17. 24. secondly, for sinful men, *Gal.* 4. 4. *Joh.* 15. 19. thirdly, corrupt customs and fashions of the World, *Rom.* 12. 1. fourthly, for endowments of the World, as honour, riches, &c. the first and last, wisely used, are from the Father, but here he understands the second and the third, corrupt men, and corrupt customs, and the fourth ill used, *2 Pet.* 1. 4. having escaped the corruption that is in the World, through lust; these are all from the World.

1 As a corrupt Principle or Fountain; the heart being empty of God's image, and not able to attain it, it doth *subsedere* in outward things; If God doth vouchsafe his Grace, it attains above the World, being not thus assisted, it falls below it self, the soul we see contented with earthly things, is woefully corrupted.

2 As a Pattern; when men accommodate, themselves to the lusts of other men, some to this man's covetousness, others to that man's pride, this is the conformity to the World, which *Paul* forbids.

3 As an Object; the Object is often the cause of its adjunct, *ex visu nascitur amor*, so *Achan* saw a wedge of gold and covered it, so these endowments of the World, falling upon our corrupt hearts, work in us these lusts; these

lawful honours, and pleasures, and profits, by accident effect lust in us, they abuse us, when we look at them as subsisting of themselves, not tending to God's Glory; our desires must not be confined, or terminated in them.

Use 1. All God's Children, old and young, are to be weaned from these lusts, they are of the World, and not of the father; in the World, we must live above the World, the darkness is past, the light now shineth, when the Sun shines, men call one another to the heat of it, so let us; these lusts make us unholy, unmeet for this heavenly off-spring; the holy Ghost lays a base imputation upon the dug of the World, to wean us from it; it would discourage a noble spirit, to match with a base-born Creature, let us not therefore strike matches with the World, which is so base and odious.

Doct. *What comes from the World, the Children of God sre to be weaned from.*

This is the Major, the Minor was before, they must be weaned from all things that look not at God as the fountain and end.

1 We may make use of the Creatures, they were made for our sakes; God put all into man's hand, *Psal.* 8. 6. *Nehem.* 12. 10. *Eat the fat, and drink the sweet,* 1 *Chro.* 29. 12. , *Riches and honours come from thee,* 2 *Cor.* 1. 3. *He is the God of all comfort,* *Eccl.* 9. 7, 8. *Live jpyfully with the wife of your youth,* God would have us live comfortably in the World, and use all the lawful comforts of it, we shall need them all against the discouragements of the World, but may we conform to the civil customs of the World, common good and bad? there is a lawful use of the civil customs, *Phil.* 4. 8. *If any thing be of good report, think on these things;* these words contain civil customs in men's commerce.

Reas. Civil customs spring not from the corruptions of men or their

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customs, but from the law of nature, from the rudiments written in the heart, *Rom.* 2. 15, not remnants of an old, but rudiments of a new nature, *Joh.* 1. 9. *Christ enlightens every man that comes into the World;* Civil Prudence, Learning, all comely things are from him, so that we should not shun these.

Quest. *How are these things distinguished from the other?*

Ans. Customs that spring from the World are corrupt, they flow from a corrupt heart, as vain customs of apparel usually flow from pride and vanity of mind, and not from civil prudence; or moral virtues; when thou dost well to thy self, men will praise thee, this springs from the general covetousness in men, so Drunkards praise Drunkards, Gluttons, Gluttons, look at these as fashions you are to be weaned from; but civil Customs spring

from the light of Christ shining in us, in moral, oeconomical and political virtues.

2 When there is a lust in God's Children against them, though many receive them, their hearts are secretly set against them, this in sign they are carnal, and we must turn from them.

Reas. 1 These cannot satisfy our souls, they are transitory, and our souls eternal, what should an high soaring Eagle meddle with such flies? an eternal soul must be set upon an eternal object.

2 These are corporal, and feed the body only, in the midst of these the soul is blind, carnal, foolish; there are disproportionable to the nature of it, and therefore cannot strengthen it.

3 They are not of the Father, and therefore lead us not to the Father; a man cannot work above the sphere of his calling; so give up your hearts to these, and you will never teach higher.

Use 1 Shews, we may conform to the civil customs of the World, the Holy Ghost doth not forbid those, 1 *Cor.* 9. 20, 21, 22. *Paul* became all things to all men, so that in presence of mortification, we must fill our spirits with morosity, and rustical rudeness, good manners, and civil respects, stand well with Christianity.

2 This shews that we may have a lawful use of honours, and pleasures, and riches, we are to use them as from God and to God.

3 It teacheth us what is in the World, and of the World, that we are to be weaned from, *viz.* from corrupt Customs, they are of the World, and are transitory and corporeal, and lead us not to the Father.

Thus much for the General; now because these lusts beforementioned are the springs of all the lusts in the World, therefore we will speak of them in particular.

Doct. *Old-men and Young-men are to be weaned from the lust of the flesh.*

For he writes to Old-men and Young-men, *Love not the World, nor the things of the World*, for all that is in the World, the lust of the flesh, &c.

Quest. 1 *What are the lusts of the flesh?*

The lust of the flesh, is an affection to satisfy the flesh, as *Col.* 2. *ult.* whatsoever therefore the flesh, the body of man (not taking it for the whole corrupt nature, for that includes all these sins) but these lusts are bodily lusts, such as the body desires to be satisfied with.

Now the body stirs up first to intemperancy, whereof two parts, Gluttony, and Drunkenness.

2 The body tends to Incontinency, Whoredom and Adultery.

3 The body desires ease and pleasure, Gluttony and Drunkenness in meat and drink, Wantonness, Whoredom, love to Idleness and pastime, all these are included here; and to Children he doth not speak, for they are not usually given to eat much or drink more than needs, but when they have enough, they cease; and for incontinency, they are not tempted to it; and for ease it cannot be Idleness in them, though they spend much time in pastime and play, *Zach.* 8. 5. for their bodies are too weak to labour, and their minds to study are too shallow, but when they come to riper years, let them be

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employed, but even the first seven years are spent in pastime, and God looks not much at it; but you young-men, and old men, love not intemperancy incontinency, or idleness.

1 The body distempered with meat is Gluttony, with drink, is Drunkenness.

Now a man may sin in Gluttony, and Drunkenness, or Intemperancy either when his appetite is carried to all unfit objects, as,

1 When a man hath a longing desire to those things which are hurtful unto him, as if by the Physician Wine be forbidden, or salt meats to some bodies, yet there is a lust in men's natures to affect these; it was a lust of intemperancy in the Old Law, to desire after any unclean meats forbidden, *Lev.* 8. and God reproves it, *Isa.* 65. 4. they lusted after Swine's flesh, and abominable things, so that though a man exceed not in the measure, yet in the object, this is intemperance, such a lust was that in our first Parents, *Gen.* 3. 6. here was lusting after a meat forbidden, because she saw it was fair.

2. This lust shews it self, not so much in the nature of the meats or drinks, as in the measure of it, for a man may exceed measure in eating and drinking.

1 Beyond health, when it is not for strength, *Eccl.* 10. 16, 17. it is a lust forbid to eat in the morning excessively, and glut themselves, this is beyond the strength of the body; the same may be said of drinks in excessive manner, *Luke* 21. 34. when the Lungs and Liver are distempered and inflamed, and health hurt, *Prov.* 23. 26. this is an excess.

2 When we covet meats and drinks beyond the measure of our estate, when we lust above our means, *Prov.* 23. 20, 21. when by costly meat and drink he weakens his estate, *Prov.* 21. 17. if a man be given to costly fare he shall surely come to poverty.

3. A man may exceed, when he exceeds the measure of the order, when they compel men to eat and drink more than willingly they would.

4 When we exceed the bounds of season, when we so eat and drink that we forget our business, and reason is quite disturbed, as *Lot* was so drunk that he defiled his Daughters, *Gen.* 19. 33, 35. and *Noah* was so far drunk that he could not cover his nakedness; in *Lot*, his reason was wholly taken away, in *Noah* partly; and now whether reason be disturbed in part, or in whole, it is a lust of the flesh.

5 He may exceed the bounds of his Calling, when he eats or drinks so much as makes him unfit for his Calling, this is a lust of the flesh that hinders either our general or particular Calling, *Luk.* 21. 34. and for particular Calling we read, *Exod.* 32. *They ate and drank, and rose up to play*; so that the meat and drink that should strengthen a man, utterly disables him to follow his Calling.

3. If we be carried to meat and drink with no other end but to eat, and drink, and satisfy our appetite, this is a lust of the flesh, a satisfying of the flesh, and looking no further than to serve the body, this is oft the failing of many that abhor Gluttony and Drunkenness yet ask them why they eat and drink, it is only to satisfy their appetite, this is only to fulfill the lusts of the flesh, *Col.* 2. ult. *1 Cor.* 10. 31. *Whether ye eat or drink, do all to the glory of God*; therefore not only to please Nature, but to make you fit for God's service, either in your general or particular callings. Let this be the last end of all your meat and drink, to glorify God, to make you more cheerful and strong about the business God calls you to, not that it is a sin to satisfy the appetite, for God hath not made the appetite frustrate, and it is of God to be hungry and thirsty, and we may cheer our bodies, but we must not terminate all this in eating and drinking, for then it is a lust of the flesh, *Gen.* 27. 3, 4. *Go and take thy Bow, and take some Venison, and make me savoury meat, such as my soul loveth*, What, did he only look to please his appetite? no, but *that I may eat, and bless thee*, that being refreshed by thy provision, I may be
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strengthened to bless thee, a lively Pattern for all Christians so to eat savoury meat, as that we may be fitted for prophecy if God call, fit to pray if God call, fit to hear, fit for any duty God shall call us to, and not to make us more dull and heavy.

Thus we see intemperance is a lust of the flesh, and wherein it consists.

Next to that follows incontinency, which is an affection to women, which is inordinate, *Matth.* 5. 28. and that is a lust to be avoided of all; And this just expresses it self in three kinds.

1 When it is carried to a wrong object, 2. When it exceeds measure,
 3 When it aims not at a right end.

For the first, Sometimes the heart is carried to beastly unnatural lusts against nature and order, as with beasts, *Lev.* 18. secondly, If it be carried to kindred, as when *Ammon* defiled his Sister *Tamar*; and this lust lies in carrying itself to a wrong object; thirdly, When it is carried in women to men, or men to women before consent of Parents, though it may be a fit match, yet it must be with consent of Parents, though the Angel prospered, *Abrahams* Servant in his way, yet he durst not ask *Rebecca*, good-will before he asked the good-will of her Parents.

2 It is a lustful affection in conjugal affection, when it exceeds measure, as when for it he omits his duty to God, or denies his profession; sometimes a man hath a good affection to Religion, but the love of his wife carries him away, *Luk.* 14. 26. a man may be so transported to his wife, that he dare not be forward in Religion, lest he displease his wife, and so, the wife, lest she displease her husband, and this is an inordinate love, when it exceeds measure.

3 It is a lust of the flesh, when they are so transported with affection, that they look at no higher end than marriage it self, to have conjugal affection, *1 Cor.* 7. 29. the meaning is, let such as have wives look at them not for their own ends, but to be better fitted for God's service, and bring them nearer to God, and then we so have wives, as if we had them not; every man is to look at his wife, as a Talent sent from God; and therefore he must look to restore it better by twofold at least, that I may say Lord, here is the wife thou gavest me, and I am the more wise, and humble, and gracious; and so Children and Servants, when we affect them only to do our business, and look at no higher end but our selves, this is a lust of the flesh, when in any thing we enjoy, we look no higher but to please our selves therein.

3 There is a lust at the flesh, which is a lust of pastime or pleasure inordinately, and this God threatens with poverty, *Prov.* 21. 17.

There is a threefold lust in pastime. 1 When we are set on unlawful Objects, unlawful Games, 2 In excessive Manner, 3 To a wrong end.

1 Our pastimes are unlawful in respect of the Object, if we make a pastime of every thing, of such things as should be matters of devotion, and sorrow, and humiliation; we may not jest in Scripture-phrase, neither may we make shews and pageants of Scripture stories, as Christ, or other holy men, this is unlawful, to make pastime of holy things; when *Moses* drew near to God, and God called to him, *I am the God of Abraham and Isaac, and Jacob*, *Exod.* 3. 5. *God bid him put off his shoes, for the place whereon thou standest is*

holy ground; when men come into the presence of God, you should put off your shoes, that is, your unclean affections; if we come near to God, we must not come with common ordinary affections, we must not come with our old shoes; so cards and dice, we may not make a pastime of them, if they be lots, it is an ordinance of God, and therefore not to be made a pastime of.

Object. *There are some religious lots, some civil, some indifferent, , if we should deal with divine lots. we should use more devotion, but the other a man may take more liberty in.*

Ans. I say all lots are religious, whether they be about holy things, as
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choosing Apostles; or civil, as calling lots about division of lands, or any other thing, to determine a controversy, or the like, as they cast lots on Christ's Garments; for it is not the object that makes a thing lawfull or unlawful, as whether we swear in Religious or Civil matters, or Lusory; because whatsoever we swear about, we call God to be a witness; so in all kind of lottery, whatsoever it be about, we appeal to God, who is disposer of all things, *Prov. 16. 33.* for man being but *causa per accidens*, of the event of the lot, there must be some *causa per se*, and that is God; so that whatsoever it be about, though matters of pastime or lusory, it is a religious ordinance, because it appeals to divine providence, and therefore to be avoided.

2 It is a wrong object, when we set our pastime on other men's sins, which should be matter of grief and sorrow, *2 Pet. 2. 3.* it was prophaneness in *Ham* to make a mock at his Father's nakedness, so it is prophaneness to make others drunk, and then make a pastime of it, and so for stage-plays, to put on women's apparrell, to make pastime; so to make pastime by them, who live without a calling,

3 When men play with the Judgements of God, *Psal. 119. 120.* if you see God's Judgements on another, make not a pastime of other men's infirmities, in this regard it hath been thought unmeet for great men to keep fools. and mad-men to make them pastime, *1 Sam. 21. 14, 15.* he thought it unmeet for the gravity of a King, to make pastime of his folly, not but that a man may smile at the simplicity of an Idiot, but yet he should see God's hand in it, and be thankful to God that he is not such a one; so it is unlawful to make a mere recreation of hawking and hunting, seeing the enmity between the Creatures came for our sins, and therefore it should be a matter of compassion.

2 Pastime is unlawful when it exceeds measure, 1 Of time, *Ephes.* 5. 16. when men spend whole nights and days in pastime.

2 When men make an occupation of recreation, as stage-players, and musicians, men should have a calling besides; so then it is prophaneness for a man, altogether to follow his pastime and recreation, according to the Proverb, What hath a Gentleman but his pleasure? six days should be employed in the works of our callings.

When we abuse it in excess of our affections, that our hearts are overwhelmed therewith.

3 When we look at a wrong end, when as in our pastime, we look at no higher end than our own pleasure, whereas *Paul* saith, *Whatsoever ye do, do it for the glory of God*; we should hereby be the better fitted for God's service.

Lastly; When we abuse our pastime in regard of gain, though carding were lawful, yet to make a gain at it, *Aristotle* could reprove it as ἀισχρομέδεις for pastime should be for our delight, and not to make a gain of; it is not a vendible matter to pay for our pastime, that a man should sell his pastime, is filthy lucre; indeed if you play for no more than you would spend betwixt you, or give to the poor, it is not unwarrantable, but to make a gain of recreation, is an abuse of the end of the pastime.

The last lust of the flesh, is the lust of Idleness, or ease, or sleepiness, for it is the body that craves sleep and ease, add is satisfied with it; sleep begets drowsiness, and ease begets Idleness; now these, both young and old are to be weaned from.

Q. 1 *How is a man carried inordinately to ease or sleep?*

First, Either in unseasonable objects; or secondly, In excessive measure; or thirdly, when we use them not to a tight end.

1 When we sleep at such times as are unseasonable to sleep and be drowsy.

1 In holy duties, when we are so drowsy that we cannot attend to them, the very inclination to sleep is now a sinful lust; this lust fell heavily on *Eutiches*, *Act.* 20. 29. an heavy sleep fell on him, and an heavy hand of God followed it, which shewed his judgement, though he restored him, because he
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would not have such assemblies scandalized, but always some hand of God or other falls on them, either in body or soul; however the spirit gets such a cold by such sleepiness and drowsiness, that a man finds it lustful.

2 So in the duties of a man's calling, if a man be drowsy, this is a lust of the flesh, *Prov.* 10. 5. *He that sleeps in harvest is a shameful Son*, he shames himself and his Master, and indeed the fitness of his work implies, that in har-

vest he should be at it early and late, not but that a man may take a little sleep to fit him for his work, but when the Sun is risen, and calls him to his business, he loves his bed, this is a lust of the flesh, and this is called deceitful working; *Cursed is he that doth his work deceitfully*, that is, with such deceit as comes from slackness, for so it is interpreted, *Prov.* 10. 4. and the Metaphor is taken from a bow that is slack bent, which deceives, *Psal.* 58. 8. a man never reaches the mark he aims at, because it is not strongly bent, so when a man's heart is not strongly bent to his business, he will never reach to his business thoroughly to purpose, and so it is a deceitful work, cursed is he that aims at any business with a slack bent hand, *Prov.* 18. 9. *He that is faithful in his own business, is Brother to a great waster*; a slothful man and a prodigal, are both of one womb, bred of the same lust of the flesh, and so wastes that which he might have increased, *Eccl.* 4. 5, 6. *better is a hand full with ease, &c.* saith the sluggard, but such a one shall come to beggary, *Prov.* 26. 21. Idleness will clothe a man with rags, rags will be their raiment, *Prov.* 19. 15. he doth not only mean that an Idle person shall want outward means, but were he of a better means? yet he shall find his body shall be so distempered, that he shall have no stomach to his meat, so that an idle person, shall either want meat, or a stomach to eat it, when as a diligent shall have both, but that is not all, for it may be extended to the soul; by rising late, and being drowsy, he is so distempered, that he either omits good duties, or else he finds no favour, nor life, nor strength in them.

In God's ordinances we complain of sluggishness, but is not the fault in our sluggishness; better fares a sluggish soul with an handful with ease, &c. so a sluggish man roseth not that which he catcheth in hunting, it hath no warmth, no spirit in it; our bodies and souls should be as a burnt sacrifice, therefore must not be cold; and to this end, he exhorts us not to be sluggish in business, *Eccl.* 9. 7. whatsoever thou doest, do it with all thy might; therefore when we have any work to do that requires diligence, yea, though it were to slaughter the enemy, as he understands it, *Jerem.* 48. 10. *Cursed be he that doth the work of the Lord deceitfully, that keeps back his sword from blood.*

2 It is a lust of the flesh, when a man is carried to sleep above due measure, *Prov.* 5. 9, 10, 11. poverty comes on such a one suddenly and strongly, most men's natures require seven hours sleep; some eight, and that is the most; and if we observe it, we shall find the same distempers arise from too much sleep, that arise from want of sleep, it makes the body drowsy, and the brain dull, and makes a man unfit for any thing.

3 This love of Sleep and Rest is a lust of the flesh, when we use it not to a right end; now the end of all Sleep and Rest, is to refresh the Spirit and

strengthen the body, and help digestion, like the unbending of a Bow to make it stronger, if a Bow stand always bent it weakens it; therefore so much Sleep as may help digestion and comfort and refresh a man's body and spirit, God allows; God knows all the Comforts of this life are little enough to uphold us against vexations and discouragements, but when a man is grown to love Sleep and Ease, a little more Sleep, a little more Slumber, one ease after another, and never looks how to employ it to God's service, now he propounds no right end, but we are our selves that we may be eased, and never looks further than ease and Sleep, and so we rest in the Creature, and never look up to God, to whom all our Ease and refreshment should tend, otherwise its a Lust of the Flesh, because we look no further, but to satisfy the Flesh, *Prov. 26. 14.* As a door sometimes turns this way and that way, but
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is never off the Hinges; so a sluggard would toss himself from one side to another; the door hath some end in turning upon the Hinges, to open and shut, but a sluggard doth no good by it, but rowls himself from one side to another, after he is satisfied with Sleep, but cannot get up, and then when he is up, he doth nothing but rowl himself from one thing to another, he hath no settled business to employ himself about, but takes care what to do, he goes from one Company to another, from one Game to another, till he shuts out the day, and then he returns to his Rest and Ease and sleep again, as it was with *Peter, James,* and *John, Mat. 26. 41.* when Christ called on them to watch and pray, he comes and finds them sleeping, what saith he, the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak; even then when he had most need, and themselves also, of watchfulness, they fell into drowsiness, and so fell into Temptation, that they all left Christ, and *Peter* especially; *Simon* sleepest thou, whom Satan desires to winnow? For thee now to Sleep is a Lust of the Flesh. Let us therefore so look at Sleep and Ease as that we must give account of; It's a common fault of Gentlemen that live of their own Means, they may Live at Ease and rest they think, what is a Gentleman but his Ease and Pleasure, God forbid that we should be like that Fool in the Gospel, *Soul take thine Ease, thou hast Goods laid up for many years,* you must not think that God hath given great means and estate to live at ease, the glorious Angels are ministering Spirits, doing their duties with all agility and cheerfulness; *Adam* who was Lord of the world, yet was set to till the ground; from the highest creature to the lowest, all have employments appointed them by God.

Dangers of it.

1 It will bring you to poverty, that you shall be suddenly Beggars, and that without remedy.

2 It distempers your Bodies and Stomachs.

3 It will make your Souls naked and ragged, that is plain, the field of the sluggard is over grown with Thorns and Thistles, all your impatience, vanity, idleness, all your dullness, unprofitableness in your life, it springs from your sluggishness of heart, you have not stirred up your spirits.

4 It will make you a Brother to a great waster, you waste your outward patrimony, and your patrimony of Grace; when *Peter* was once fallen into drowsiness, how woefully was he bankrupt, how poor and naked? *Simon* sleepest thou? and we see Temptation came on him suddenly, and strongly.

5 Such as do their business with a slack unbent hand, cursed be that man; if you see a sluggish hand, God leaves him to himself, he curses both himself and his business, therefore be diligent and fruitful and strengthen your selves, you shall find the blessing of God going along with you, prospering your estates and Souls.

Thus we see what we the Lusts of the flesh; they are such as the body affects and is satisfied with, as intemperancy, incontineny, love of pastime, and love of idleness and sleep, these are the lusts of the flesh.

Now for the Reasons why we should wean ourselves from these Lusts, which may be as so many motives to dissuade us from them.

Reas. 1 All these Lusts are so many Enemies to our Souls, 1 *Pet.* 3. 11. they are the diseases of our Spirits, now if we satisfy any disease in our body, we feed the disease and make it worse; So we cannot satisfy any of these Lusts, but the more we feed them the stronger they grow: They are like the Dropsy, the more you drink the more you may, so satisfying increases the disease, the more you obey a Tyrant and submit your selves to him, the more authority he claims over you and the more will he Lord it over you so if you once give up your selves to obey these lusts and let them reign, obey will Lord it over you, and keep you in the greater subjection. *Rom.* 6. 12. so that when a man pleads for his Lust, but this once that I may fulfil my Lust, and I hope I shall never do it again, but I will bid farewell to it; if I now take leave to go into evil Company for one merry meeting, I shall hereafter deal with them no more,

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why take this course against a Lust, do but once give way to any Lust, and instead of satisfying it, you will add fuel to it, this will be a way to engage you to a further commission of that lust; many have a conceit, may I but now

tipple with a customer to get a bgood bargain, I will give it over; why, give but once way to a lust, and it will make such a gap, that all the lusts in the Forrest may break in, make but one little crevice in the bank of the Sea, thinking to abate the rage of the Sea; why it will make it wider and overflow all, so if you give but a little way to a lust, to a little Gluttony, or Intemperancy, you will never give over, *mode & mode, non habent modum*, the more fuel you give, the stronger the fire of lust burns.

Reas. 2 The heavy distempers that bodily lusts put upon the soul of man, they do aggravate the diseases that Christians most complain of, it is the common complaint of Christians, oh the deadness, and dullness, and hardness, and coldness of my heart and spirit! oh that I could but get a soft heart! why the lust of the flesh so overcharges our hearts, and makes them so heavy, that we have no desire to good, *Luk. 21. 34.* take heed that your hearts μή βαρυνθῶαν, you shall find that whereas our spirits have been enlarged and comforted in God's ordinances, and in his service; it is strange how little affection or comfort we find in these, if our hearts be overcharged with intemperancy, or Wantonness, or Voluptuousness, or Idleness, it is like lead at a Bird's heels; what we feed on, we grow into the nature of it; let a man feed on earthly things, he grows earthly and unsavoury, so if a Christian gives way to any sensuality; he shall find his spirit grow so sensual and worldly, that it is made very unfit for spiritual things.

Reas. 3 From the end of these lusts, if we affect any pleasure of he World for itself, it is a lust of the flesh, to cleave to the Creatures; now we shall find that none of these lusts commend us to God, neither meat nor drink, nor pastime, nor sleep, if we affect any thing for it self, it never commends us to God, or makes us draw near to him, though we had all these pleasures in the largest measure, as *Paul* saith of them, *1 Cor. 8. 8.* now if these draw us not to God; but many a poor soul that wants these, hath far more fellowship with God, than such as enjoy abundance thereof, why then a Christian should thus reason, am not I a whit the nearer God for these? why then should my heart affect them?

4 Nay as they do not commend us to God, so *1 Cor. 6. 13, Meat for the belly, and the belly for meat*, they are all corruptible, both the cheer we affect, and our bellies, both corruptible; therefore let us set our minds on eternal incorruptible things.

Use May exhort both old and young from affecting the lusts of the World, you see from the Father they are not, but from the World, and the means to help us against these lusts,

1 Abstain from fleshly lusts as *Peter* speaks, *Rom* 13. 14. *make no provision for the flesh*, take heed on all occasions; *I have made a Covenant with mine eyes* (saith *Job*) not to look upon a Main, *Job* 31. 1. so for drink, *Prov.* 23. 31. *Prov.* 4. 15. it is a notable means of mortification, to withhold the blood and spirits from flowing into that member, thereby in a good measure they stupify it. Secondly, They use some course to stupify that part. Thirdly, Cut it off; so, would you mortify lust? beware of all occasions, if such meats or drinks will make you Gluttons or Drunkards, meddle not with them, and so you shall hinder influence to these lusts, and so apply the death of Christ, the threatenings of God, and so when it begins to stupify, cut it off better it is to want all the sinful pleasures of this life, than having of them, to be cast into Hell.

2 Refrain from bringing forth fruit of these lusts, the more fruitful a Tree grows; the more sap and strength it draws, and strikes deeper into the earth; so let sin once grow fruitful, bring forth acts, it will get deeper hold, and grow so rooted that it will reign in you; if you avoid all occasions, and yield not

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to satisfy the the least of them, it will soon be gone; if a strange Dog comes in, if you feed him, he stands waiting for one piece after another, but if you beat him he is gone, where he may find better entertainment; so if lusts find that they can have no entertainment, they cannot get one morsel, no yielding to them, but repulsing, they will be gone from you, where they may find better welcome.

3 When thou findest any lust of the flesh arising in thee, turn the strength of it to a Spiritual end; A man hath an affection to meat or drink, what saith Christ, *I have meat and drink that ye know not of*; though he were very faint and hungry, yet when he saw a company come, he attended not to his meat and drink, but there was Spiritual food, and that comforted and refreshed him; so, art thou troubled with lust after Women? and God calls thee not to Marriage, why turn the strength of thy affection to another Spouse, *that is white and ruddy, the fairest of ten thousand*. The more you set your heart to consider, how amiable, and beautiful, and excellent he is, you shall find he will so satisfy your heart, that you will find little content in any other thing besides: As the Sun, if it shine hot on a fire it puts it out, so the love of Christ, if it once shine in your hearts, and fill your souls with light, and joy unspeakable and glorious, you shall find all base Kitchen lusts were they never so vehement, the Sun of Righteousness will soon eat them out; so for love of idleness and rest, let but a Soul consider what comforts he ever

found in the favour of God when his left hand was under him, and when God held him up in his everlasting Arms, do but consider how sweet was one hour of that inward peace you found then above all outward comforts, you shall easily see, that though your body should never find rest more, yet this inward peace will so satisfy you, that you will be ready to say with *Paul*, I have enough, I have learned in all these to be αὐτάρκης self-sufficient, that I need not more, *Phil.* 4. 11, 12.

4 Walk faithfully and constantly in your general, and particular Callings; the reason why a Christian grows carnal and sensual is, because either in God's Ordinances, or his particular Calling he was not spiritually minded, walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh, *Gal.* 5. 16. be spiritual and heavenly, in Prayer, in hearing the Word, in your Calling, and you shall find your lusts decay; otherwise, he that rusheth into occasions of sin needlessly, he tempts the Devil to tempt him, so that whereas the Devil might otherwise be much weakened, and not so able to overcome, if we invite occasions, and rush into such places where Satan reigns, we thrust Weapons into Satan's hand, and a man never ordinarily leads himself into temptation but he falls; let *Peter* go into the High Priest Hall, he shamefully denies his Master before he come out, therefore take heed of running into occasions of sin.

2 Refrain from the fruits of sin, and grow Spiritually minded, look after Spiritual objects, when we are carried to Sensual objects, when we are carried to delight in pleasures, and pastimes, why let us remember, *Blessed is the man that hath not walked, &c.* *Psal.* 1. 1, 2, 3. *but his delight is in the Law of the Lord*, he re-creates himself, his Soul in that, such a man shall be as a tree planted by the rivers of water, ever sucking sap and grace from the Ordinances, that so he grows up; but contrary, such a one as runs into occasions, and fulfils his lusts, he shall be as a barren Heath, and parched Wilderness, his leaf and fruit blasted.

We come now to the second sort of lusts.

Doct. *Young and old are to be weaned from the lusts of the eye.*

By the lust of the Eye is meant Covetousness, or inordinate desire of profit.

1 Because the Eye makes us to cover it, as *Achan*, *Josh.* 7. 21.

2 Because the Eye in some measure is glutton with the sight of it.

Obj. *Why doth he not speak of lusts of the Ear? for 2 Tim. 2. 4. there is an*

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itching Ear; and of the Athenians it is said, *Acts* 17. 21. and so some have a strong affection to Music and never well without it; this is a lust of the Ear, and why is not this reckoned as well as the lust of the eye?

Aquinas makes this objection, and answers it thus, That these lusts stand not so much on the bodily eye as the imagination, but the man may as well desire curiosities by the Ear, as the Eye make us covet what it sees?

Ans. The answer therefore is, the Eye is the seat of sundry Faculties.

1. It may be referred to the Understanding and Imagination, for that is in the Soul, *Psal.* 33. 18.

2 The hope of a man is translated to his Eye, 2 *Chron.* 20. 12. sometimes pity, *Thine eye shall not spare*, *Deut.* 13. sometimes disdain expresseth it self in the eye, sometimes pride, *Prov.* 30. in a lofty look, and the eye is put off for the desire of the heart, when the eye looks long after it, *Mat.* 5. 28. there is a desire that reacheth to something, *Psal.* 54. *Psal.* 92. 11. *Mine eye also shall see any desire upon my enemies*; not only hopes, but desires are ever in the eye.

It is true therefore that the desire of Melody is a lust of the flesh, desire of news to satisfy curiosity, affectation of vain preaching tends to satisfy the pride of life, for the lust of all outward senses as far as they satisfy the Senses and Body, they belong to the lusts of the flesh, but a longing earnest desire after profit, is Covetousness, which is a lust of the eye.

Q. 1. *Wherein stands the lust of the eye?*

A. Either when it is set on wrong objects, or in excessive measure, or to a wrong end, and these the Scripture aims at, if the eye be set on wrong objects, this the Scripture calls, *on hasty eye*, that have it he will, *perfas nefasque*; *Prov.* 28, 22, 23. an man of an evil eye hastes to be rich, never staying on God's Providence, such was *Achan's* lust, and *Ahab's* after *Naboth's* Vine-yard, he made haste to obtain it; so a man makes haste when he pursues some gain not lawfully but by Simony, or Sacrilege, or Bribery, or Deceit, whereas *Isa.* 33. 16. so that a man looks at his gain, and not at God, *Quærenda pecunia primum est, vertus post nummos*, so that a man hastes so much after wealth that he cannot stay Sermons or Prayers, he must follow his gain, and he will have it by hook or by crook, this lust is against Piety, because our love of God should make us affect nothing but what we may lawfully enjoy, and in subordination to his will, and to employ it to his service.

2 This lust of the Eye is expressed in excessive measure, and this is called a greedy eye, a man perhaps will not get it but by honesty, but when he hath

laid hold on goods he is never satisfied, *Eccl.* 4. 8. so *eccl.* 5. 9, 10, 11. like a Dropsy, the more a man drinks the more he desires; so, the more a man hath, the more he desires, *Prov.* 27. 20. there a greedy eye, or covetous heart is compared to Hell and the Grave, you may as soon satisfy Hell as a covetous heart, you may sooner fill his Land, or Houses, or Barns, than fill his eye that is never satisfied.

This greedy eye offends against that inward contentment that a man owes to his Soul, when he is so covetous that his heart is never satisfied.

Q. *When should a man think himself satisfied, and how far may he desire these things?*

A. In our Callings we must be diligent, and we may desire Wealth of God, partly for our necessity, and expediency, and partly to leave to our Posterity, this far a man may desire Wealth, but we are never to desire more than we may have good use of, and glorify God by, a man must be content as well to want as abound; but when a man is insatiably craving, when he hath much he would have more, and when he hath most, he is not satisfied, that is a greedy eye.

3 There is a lust of the eye that fails in the end, as it is insatiable, so it is an unprofitable desire, and when a man craves Wealth for Wealth's sake, and
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never takes care to use it well, and this I call a needy eye, when God calls him to bestow some on Church, or Common-wealth, or Family, or Friends, what saith he? what know I whether I may have need my self? and so for fear of future need, he will not provide seasonably for family, or Church, or Common-wealth, he will part with nothing willingly, unless he see it be for his profit, *Deut.* 15. 19. this needy eye is there reprov'd, and this was a *Nabal*, 1 *Sam.* 25. 11. he was afraid his servants should want, and therefore would not supply *David's* necessity.

This needy eye trespasseth against Liberality and Charity.

The ground of this evil eye it springs from an evil judgement, all spring from a blind eye; whereby it is possessed, that wealth is good in it self, and he places his his happiness in his riches, and his safety and life stands in it (contrary to the assertion our Saviour, *Luke* 12. 15. *A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth*, and therefore he desires wealth above all things.

Use 1. It discovers the true nature of Covetousness; you will say, I hope frugality is not Covetousness, and providing for Children, and Family, true; but dost thou see thy heart carried after wealth, though by unlawful means,

by Simony, or Deceit, or Sabbath-breaking? then thy heart is covetous, because thou hastest to be rich, thou art so hasty that thou canst neither stay for Sermons, or Prayer, or grace, certainly then Covetousness transports thee, the first born of Hell.

2 When thou art diligent, if gain come not in, thou art not content, or if much come in, yet thou art not satisfied.

3 When thou hath wealth, thou takest no care how to use it, thou grudgest to give any thing to Church or Common-wealth, or poor Friends; thou sayest, what if thy self and thy Children should want? why truly this needy eye is Covetousness, but when thou takest lawful pains, and it hinders thee in no good duty, if God cross thee thou art content, if God bless thee, thou art forward to be helpful to do any good, then thou art not covetous.

Use 2 Of exhortation to Young-men, and Old-men, *Love not the World, nor the things of the World*; you see how such trespass against Piety, and Liberality, and Charity; it is the root of all evil, 1 *Tim.* 5. 10. not so much the breeding root, as the seeding root of all evil, and it is called the root of all evil in three respects.

1 It separates from God the fountain of all good, *Col.* 3. 5. and therefore it is called Idolatry, because he blesseth himself in his riches, *Psal.* 49. 18. *Prov.* 18. 11. *Matth.* 6. 24. wealth makes him serve Mammon rather than God, *Deut.* 13. 18.

2 It chokes the best seed of the Word, sometimes keeps him from coming to the Word, *Luke* 14. 14. or distracts him there, or chokes the Word afterwards.

3 Covetousness exxposeth a man to every temptation of Satan, lays him open to Satan, to be a slave unto him, makes him to Apostatise, Swear, Lie, Deceive, if he propounds wealth to himself as the chiefest good.

2 If you belong to God, you shall seldom find your hearts staitened, and God's face turned away, bud it for your Covetousness, *Isa.* 57. 17, 18. he sees you neglect him, and his Ordinances for wealth's sake.

REMEDIES AGAINST COVETOUSNESS.

1 A contented desire, *Heb.* 13. 5. if you can say once, I have enough, I am full, I am content to part with any thing.

Q. But how shall I be content?

2 Godliness is never satisfied, when the Soul is endued with grace it is content, in regard of these outward things,

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There are two things in godliness that breed content and satisfaction.

1 It makes God our portion, and then dry bread and cold water, with God's favour and mercy, is a sufficient portion to us, and our Children, *Psal.* 16. 5, 6. this made *Paul* content, *Phil.* 4.

2 It doth not only fill our hearts wth God; but it turns the desire of the Soul to God's Ordinances, godliness will make a man look at the Word, as more precious than gold, *Psal.* 119. 4. and as all hidden treasure, that he will part with all for, *Psal.* 36. 6, 7. *Psal.* 63. 13. Now we come to the third sort of Lusts, the Pride of life.

Doct. *Pride of Life, Young and Old are to be weaned from.*

Pride of Life is an inordinate affection of our hearts unto Carnal excellency, *i.e.* to be great in our selves, and for our selves; a proud man contends with God about the cause and end of his life, he will depend on himself, and makes himself the end.

1 As he depends on himself, makes himself the cause of all, so it is self dependance.

2 As he affects and aims at excellency, in himself, so it is called Self-seeking.

When he depends on himself, he throws off the Crown from God's head, there are four parts of it.

1 Self-conceit, *Rom.* 12. 3. when a man thinks soberly of himself, he is not so blind as not to see himself, nor so proud, but he is willing not to think above that which is meet.

2 It is expressed in Carnal confidence and presumption, he doth what he doth by his own strength, and wit, and pains, this is called Arrogancy; when a man undertakes to carry through business by his own strength, *Jer.* 10. 23. *Isa.* 10. 7. to 11. *Isa.* 37. 12, 13. he boasts of his Wisdom and Power to do great matters.

3 Curiosity flows from Self-dependance, when a man will thrust himself into that he ought not; so it was vain curiosity in *Eve* to affect Knowledge, so *Col.* 2. 18. *Paul* reproves the *Colossians* for prying into secrets.

4 It is expressed in Self-fulness, he is full of himself, and rests himself in his present condition, *Rev.* 3. 17. and thanks God it is well with him, and he desires to be no better, all these are several lusts of pride.

This sin is against God, as one, from whom, to whom, and in whom are all things.

A Second Branch of this pride of life is Self-seeking, *He seeks not God in all his ways*; *Psal.* 10. 3, 4. so he seeks not God's glory, but his own, *Prov.* 25. 27.

It is not good to eat much Honey, so for men to seek their own glory, is not glory; as much Honey turns into choller, and bitterness, so he licks up too much of his own glory, but it turns to his shame and confusion.

This Self-seeking shews it self;

First, In pursuing of his own glory, he looks no further than his own glory, which is shewed.

1. In Ambition, when they aim at their glory, add primacy, this *S. John* reproved in *Diotrophes*, 3 *Epist.* 9, 10. *Judg.* 9. this was ambition in affecting a Government God did not appoint them, the modester sort of Trees did think they should lose their fatness, and sweetness, as if he should say, for them to be ambitious of an unappointed Government, it would turn to bitterness, and harshness, and loss of fatness, and comfort, and this comes all ambition to, it makes the soul lean, and lose all comfort from God and man.

2 Hypocrisy is another lust of pride in Self-seeking, when a man in religious duties seeks his own credit and applause, to be seen of men, *Matth.* 23. 5. this is pride in Hypocrisy, *Matth.* 6. 1, 2. to 16. hence comes self rejoicing, when he rejoiceth in his own praise and glory, as *Amos* 6. 14. so *Herod* rejoiced in the applause of the people, *Acts* 2. 3.

1 There is another lust of Self-seeking, which is, contemning and de-

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spising others in respect of a man's own excellency, *Luke* 18. 11. and this proceeds from making himself his own end.

4 There is another lust of pride which is expressed in boasting of himself, either in words, or carriage, *Prov.* 27. 2. that is boasting, when a man magnifies himself, boasting in words, in great and false promises, so in gesture in the eyes, *Psal.* 30. 13. so in stretched-out necks, *Isa.* 3. 23. when a man struts, and prides himself in his carriage.

So there is pride in Works, when men build to make themselves a name, *Gen.* 11. 14. *Dan.* 4. 27. so in strange fashions and apparel, *Isa.* 3. 18. to 24. because they took pride in their bravery and gay clothes, therefore he would send baldness instead of beauty, &c. so pride is shewed in Feasting, to shew their own Magnificence and Riches, and they aim only at that, as *Nabal*, 1 *Sam.* 25. when he feasted as a King.

There is another pride expressed, when a man is crossed in his pride, and this shews it self.

1 In discontent, when a man hath made himself his end, and if he be crossed in it, he is discontented at it that he went and hanged himself; and so some, though they do not grow so desperate, yet they so vex and fret, as that

they can neither eat, nor sleep seasonably, whereas if we made God our end, we should be willing to want what God denies.

2 He falls into contention, *Prov.* 10. 13. all contention comes from pride.

3 Indignation flows from being crossed, when others take away their applause, they disdain and loathe it, *Matth.* 21. 15. as the Pharisees did, when they saw Christ took away their praise.

Use. To exhort us all, to wean ourselves from this lust of pride.

Motives.

1 The proud man is an abomination to the Lord, *Prov.* 16. 5. as if God had resolved, what wicked man soever escapes, he should not, and shall we live in such an estate, that God cannot look at us but with loathing and indignation? and no wonder, because they contend with God, they depend on their own strength, and seek themselves, and their glory; and if they be crossed they are discontent and envious, let such a man use all the means he can he shall never prosper, *God resist the proud, ἀντιταωεται*, he will cross him at every turn, march against him and cross him.

2 Pride of all other sins cuts asunder the sinews of Grace, whereas the whole duty of Christianity consists in Repentance, Faith, Obedience; now Repentance consists in loathing, abhorring, and being ashamed of our selves, *Job* 42. *Dan.* 9. 7. now a proud man is far off from this; so for faith, *Hab.* 2. 4. as if he should say, a faithful man goes out of himself, and depends on God, and for obedience, we see how it is expressed, *Micah* 6. 8. *He hath shewed thee, O man, what the Lord thy God requires of thee, &c.* now a man of an high spirit cannot bend to humility, and self-denial, *Luke* 9. 23.

Means to wean us from Pride.

1 Meditate on what you are, do but know your selves what you are, what you must tend to, Dust you are, and to dust you must return, you have no dependance but on God; shall we then be full of our selves? *1 Cor.* 7. God made all for himself, therefore we are not to aim at our selves, especially consider there is nothing but you have despised and perverted, therefore consider your own insufficiency.

2 Exercise yourselves in those graces that are most contrary to Pride, if you see your hearts grow ambitious, and vain-glorious, and discontent, why weed out this lust, renew your repentance in dust and ashes, loathe your selves, judge your own unworthiness, learn to live by faith, know you are nothing of your selves, but depend wholly on Christ, learn to be obedient, to be at God's Command, we are servants, and therefore not for our selves; it is not

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for us to look at our own ends, but to do all for God's glory, and use all we have for God's service.

1 JOH. 2. 17.

And the world passeth away, and the lusts thereof, but he that doth the Will of God abideth for ever.

TO dissuade them from the love of the World, and the Lusts of it, the Apostle useth three Arguments; 1 Vers. 15. 2 Vers. 16. 3 From the contrary disposition of them that love the World, and them that keep the Word; as if he should say, That which eternal ought not to addict it self to transitory things, but you that have your sins forgiven, &c. are so, *Ergo*, So then this third Argument is taken from the frailty: and sickleness of all these outward things, and the constancy and perpetuity of heavenly things, therefore be weaned from the one, and affect the other. By the World is meant all the Creatures, all the fashions and courses of the World; the condition thereof, Honour, Credit, Profit, Pleasure, all these pass away.

Doct. *The World, and all the Lusts thereof are of a transitory and fading condition.*

So saith the text, very inconstant, now here, presently gone; the things of the World are transitory, and transitory they are in three respects.

1 *The world passeth away*, 1 Cor. 7. 31. $\sigma\chi\eta\mu\alpha$, &c. the shape and fashion of the world passeth away, the word is taken from the presentation of the World, as upon a Stage, a man seldom acts the same part a week together; you shall never see the, World, or the Creatures in the same state long, now in one state, then in another; come now and you shall see a man married, come again, and you shall find him a Widower; sometimes joyful, sometimes doleful, crying, Have pity on me, O my friends; sometimes again in abundance of sorrow over-night, and joyful in the morning.

2 In respect of the fleeting and fading condition of the estate we do enjoy whilst we do enjoy it, fleeting and passing away by little and little, even while you rejoice in it, *Isa.* 40. 6, 7. where he compares them to flowers, which whilst they flourish, decay; what are all the comforts of the World, but a Nose-gay? which for the present thou smellst sweetness and comfort in, yet even as a Posy, whilst thou smellst at it, fades, and dies; so are all the comforts of this World, even fading, and decaying whilst thou enjoyest them.

Again, All the sorrows and vexations of the Word pass away, sorrow abides not ever, nor cares, yea in the midst thereof we may find some joy; *Psal.* 94. 18, 19. yet many times we add sorrow to sorrow, we think we shall go on in the bitterness of our souls all the day, but he was deceived, *Isa.* 38. 15.

3 In regard of the passing away, and fading of all worldly things, *Eccles.* 1. 4. one generation passes after another, and so do all other comforts, yea the World it self shall be consumed, 2 *Pet.* 3. 10. the individuals consumed, the Elements changed, *Psal.* 102. 6, 7.

Q 2. *How do the lusts of the World pass away?*

A. The lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and pride of life, which are the sum of all the ways of the sons of men. all his time is spent either in pleasure, or profit, or credit, and now all these pass away.

1 Because they are oft disappointed of those objects which they aim at, a man pursues Pleasure, but he finds sorrow; another Profit, but it fades away; another in ambition seeks Honour, and Glory, but *Psal.* 112. 8, 9. *The desire of the wicked shall perish*, it shall be as the house of the Spider.

2 These pass away, because when a man doth enjoy them, they fade and wither away in it; a man strongly desires a thing, but as soon as he hath it

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he is weary of it, 2 *Sam.* 23. as *David* that desired the water of *Bethlehem*, or as Children soon weary when they have that thing they desire, so *Gal.* 4. 15, 16. see how their affections to him were dead, *Psal.* 146. 4. when *David* looked at the ways of his own lusts, he desired God to winnow him, and see if there were any way of wickedness in him, implying, though sometimes he had lusts in his heart, yet now he found none, 2 *Sam.* 13. 15. *Ammon* had a strong lust to his sister *Tamar*, but when he had fulfilled it, he hated her more than he loved her, so when we have fulfilled a lust, we are not satisfied with it, but say to it, arise be gone, as a Bee, when it hath sucked something from one Flower, goes to another, and then to a third, so we are soon weary of lusts, there is an emptiness in the Creature, no way able to satisfy the desires of man's heart, but they are soon weary, and therefore desire variety.

3 From the perpetual destruction of these lusts and our selves with them; when we die, all our lusts die with us, all our pride and wantonness, yea in Hell there are none remaining, but such as come from disappointment of hope, as discontent and murmuring, and obstinacy, and Blasphemy, and despair, but all other lusts, gluttony, incontineny, ambition, die with us, there-

fore well saith the Apostle, *the World passeth away, and the lusts thereof*, they are all but for a season.

Use 1 Is it so, that they all passed away, all the Creatures, and all the lusts of the World are transitory? then it may be a strong ground of exhortation to old men and young, *love not the World, nor the things of the World*, this is the Counsel of an aged Apostle, when he was near a hundred years old, he spake it out of experience of heavenly things, and vanity of the World; do but consider the things themselves in their own estate, *love not the World, nor the things of the World*, for they all pass away; on this ground *Solomon* exhorts us not to set our hearts on the World, *Prov. 23. 4, 5.* on riches, which is the way to honour, *cease from thine own wisdom*, you think it wisdom to provide a large Estate, but it is folly, *Wilt thou set thine eye on that which is not? riches certainly make themselves wings, and fly away like an Eagle*; suppose one of you should invite your friend to dinner, and lead him to your Garden or Orchard, where he finds a company of wild fowl, and you tell him, be of good cheer, yonder is a good store of wild fowl we shall have, but when you go to take them, they fly away, how will his expectation be frustrate? so it may be thou hast thy fields well stocked, thy houses well filled and thou sayest now, soul, eat, drink, retest refreshed in them, and sets thy heart on them, but God saith, *O fool this night thy soul shall be taken away, and the whose shall all these things be?* or else sheep rot, and Cattle die; casualties by Sea, heavy losses take away a man's Estate suddenly, never did wild soul more deceive them that set their eyes upon them, than riches do the owners thereof.

Use 1 May teach all that desire perpetuity and constancy in any condition; trust not in riches, honour, no not in life it self, for they are all transitory, but entreat God to set your hearts on everlasting things, or everlasting life, and enduring riches and pleasures, for from him they flow, *Psal. 16. ult.* these are an abiding inheritance, and will stick close to us; this is the vanity of earthly things, the fulness of them breeds loathsomeness, and fulsomeness, and a man is dulled with them, they seem full of comfort, till we get them, and when we have them, we are weary of them, but grace on the contrary, seems hateful, till it be got, but when it is once got, the more a man hath, the more he desireth; godly sorrow breeds repentance never to be repented of, *2 Cor. 7. 10.* neither by God, nor by them, never did Christian repent of his repentance, or Faith, or godliness; *Ricjes profit not in the day of wrath*, *Prov. 11. 4.* therefore love not those things which cannot comfort us when we have most need, *Joh. 6. 26, 27. Labour not for the meat that perisheth*, so labour not for the riches, or honour, or pleasure that perish, but labour for that profit, and pleasure, and honour which endures for ever.

We come now to the opposition, that which is opposed to the transitori-

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tiness of these things, the World, and the lusts thereof, *viz. He that doth the will of the Father abideth for ever.*

Doct. *Such as do the will of God, are not as the World and lusts of it, of a fading transitory condition, but they stand in a permanent abiding Estate.*

Q. 1. *What is it to abide for ever?*

A. 1 It implies, he is not of an unsteady fleeting temper, but of a constant and even frame of spirit and life, not now in and now out, and never of a constant frame, but of an even temper, as mountains are not easily shaken, or driven to and fro, but remain in their strength and place; why, so *such as trust in the Lord shall we be as Mount Zion, that shall not be moved*, Psal. 125. 1. and he gives the reason, verse 2. without any changing or removing.

2 He is said to remain for ever, because he doth abide in our Estate for ever; there is a difference between constancy and perseverance; a man may be said to go to *London*, though he keeps not even on, but goes out and in; so such a man as aims at heaven, and goes on as evenly as he can, and if he goes out, he gets in again, such a one perseveres in his way to heaven.

Q. 2 *What is it to do the will of God?*

A. *He that doth the will of God*, stands in opposition to the World, and the lusts of it, and by this will is not meant only the will of God's pleasure, but the will of God's Commandment, for all the Creatures do the will of God's good pleasure, for they all do things, so far as God wills; so that if a man do his own will, he shall not go besides God's will; but here he means the will of God's Commandment; *Not every one that saith Lord, Lord, shall enter into Heaven, but he that doth the will of my Father*, Matth. 7. 21. that is, the revealed Will of God, *Joh. 8. 51.*

For the ground of the point, why they abide for ever?

1 Because they are born of the unchangeable Will of God, *of his own Will begat he us*, Jam. 4. 18. and he manns our Will, which is not dependant on the Creature, but free, *Rom. 9. 15.* There is no cause moving, but the only Will of God, *he will have mercy, because he will have mercy*; therefore when God bestows any mercy on the Creature because he will do it, it puts the Creature on an unexchangeable condition.

2 From the vigour and strength of doing the Will of God, no man doth the Will of God, but the more he shall be enabled and caused to do it, the doing of God's Will, is the ground and strength of a Christian life, *Joh. 4.*

34. he means not only he did it chearfully, but it was that which refreshed his soul, and strengthened his body, so that he felt neither hunger nor thirst, but it was strength and freedom of spirit to do his Father's Will, so that though he was thirsty, yet his words to the woman did so refresh him, that it was his strength and refreshment; now if it be so, that the more a man doth the Will of God, the more strength he hath to do it, nay it conveys not only strength to the soul, but also to the body, as a Tree, the more fruit it brings forth upwards, the deeper rooting it takes downwards, so a Christian, the more fruit he brings forth to God, the deeper he strikes his root in Christ, *Joh. 14. 21, 22.* if it be thus, I say well may he abide forever.

3 From the near union which such have with Christ, that do the Will of his Father, Christ came for that end, to do his Father's Will, *Joh. 6. 33.* therefore he that doth the Will of his Father, is near to Christ, he is Father, and Mother, and Brother, and Sister, *Mark 3. ult.* because they are born of the same Father, of the same spirit, and they do the same work, if therefore we do his will, not as Servants, but as Children, then we are as heirs, and remain in the house for ever, *Joh. 8. 35, 36.*

4 From God's readiness ever to hear the Prayers of such as do his Will, as the blind man said, *Joh. 8. 34.* *If any man do the Will of God, him he hears,* wherein he shews that suitable to our hearing of God, God hears us; if we hear God in his Commandments, he will hear us; if we hear God in his Commandments, he will hear us in our Petitions if

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we take up God's Word, he will take up our prayers that they be not lost; if we be sinners God hears not us, why? because we hear not him, God is as ready to do our wills, as we are to do his, *Matth. 7. 2.* with what measure we mete to him he will mete to us; if we be careful to attend to his Word, and industrious to do his Will, God will certainly do our wills, as we have done his, *Psal. 139. ult.* he desiresto be led in everlasting ways, that is the Will of God, for that is only everlasting, and a Christian praying to do God's Will as the Angels, God will fulfil his will, and his will is to abide for ever, and so it is God's Will that he should abide forever.

Obj. *Doth not David complain,* I am tossed to and fro as a Grasshopper? *Psal. 109. 22.*

Ans. He speaks not there of his inward estate, which was constant and even; but his outwaed estate, which was very unconstant, sometimes pulled from the Ordinances, he hopped from one place to another, from Mountains to Woods. and Caves, from place to place like a Grasshopper, but his inward frame was

constant and even.

Obj. *But was not David's inward frame sometimes very uneven? he that had sometimes shewed much kindness to Mephibosheth, after took away his Lands; he that sometimes was smitten for cutting off Saul's skirt, after sticks not to commit Adultery, and slay Uriah, and after that to number the people.*

Ans. He may err through infirmity, as a man in a Journey, he propounds no other end but to go on, but yet he goes out of the way sometimes through ignorance, and carelessness, but then when he knows it, he makes the more haste to get in again; so a Christian, he aims at a good course, even ways, but sometimes through heedlessness, or ignorance, he falls into by ways, but when he knows it, he makes hast to recover himself, and the cause why he goes aside, is because he doth not the Will of God, but his own will.

Use 1 Justifies the Doctrine of the perseverance of the Saints, and confutes the contrary opinion of their Apostacy, for every Christian doth the Will of God, now he that doth the Will of God abides for ever, such make God's Will their meat and drink, and so they lead all everlasting life, they feed on everlasting food, *Joh. 6. 26.* they have near union with Christ, they are such as fulfil God's Will, and therefore he will fulfil their desire.

Use 2 A ground of direction to all such as would find comfort in Life and Death, if you follow the lusts of the World, they will not last always, Conscience accuseth, God will judge you, *Eccles. 11. 9.* *Rejoice O young man in thy youth, &c.* so Riches endure not always, nor Honour, therefore though a man now pride himself in his youth, or riches, or lusts, why these will not hold, time will come when you shall be weary of all these, but would you abide for ever? why this is the way, do God's Will, and then thou chocest that part which shall never be taken from thee, *Luke 10,* two last verses, *Psalm 125. 1, 2.* let a man be doing God's Will, he shall never die; there is no man but would have his estate confirmed to perpetuity, from age to age; why all the lusts of the World continue but for a while, but would you turn all to perpetuity? be doing God's Will, and then you shall abide for ever; so, would you heal all the fleeting unstableness of your spirits? sometimes you are much enlarged, sometimes as much straitened; sometimes you have vigour of spirit, and sometimes you are dull, and quite out of frame, what is the reason? all this is because thou an out of the way, and therefore the Star hath left thee as it did the Wise men, when they went out of the way to *Bethlehem.* to go to *Jerusalem;* even so when thou art in the way to *Bethlehem* to seek Christ, and give up thy self to such courses as lead to him, why all this while the comfortable power of the Spirit shall go with thee, but when thou consultest with flesh and blood, to satisfy any lust of the World, the Star will leave thee,

till thou come into the way again; so it you walk in the even ways of God, you shall find your selves always enlarged, though sometimes more, sometimes less, yet always so much as is sufficient for your present condition.

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Use 3 Of consolation to every obedient Christian that breaks off from his own will, and sets himself with all his power to do God's Will, and is grieved when he doth anything against it; why this is your comfort, that is an everlasting way which leads to eternity, *He that doth the Will of God, shall never see death*, that is, with fear or danger; nay, he shall stand as a mountain that shall not be shaken, which is a great blessing for a poor Christian.

Obj. May not mountains be shaken and removed, are they not shaken by Earthquakes? so may not Christians be shaken and removed; are they not tossed up and down in the World, and never in a settled condition?

Ans. Mountains may be shaken and removed, *isa.* 54. 10, 11. and Christians may be tossed in their outward Estate, but yet though mountains remove, and hills be shaken, yet God's loving kindness shall never depart from them.

Now from the Scope the Apostle aims at, observe thus much.

Doct. The disproportion that is betwixt the World, and the lusts thereof, and the Children of God that do his Will, ought to wean them all from the love of the World, and the lusts thereof.

John 6. 27. Labour not for the meat that perisheth, as who should say, this meat is corruptible, and you corruptible, but that meat I give you is eternal, and will nourish eternal life in you.

Quest. Wherein stands the disproportion between the World, and the lusts thereof, and those that do God's Will.

1 The World, and the lusts thereof are transitory and fading, neither continue at a stay, nor last long, but all perish, *But he that doth God's Will*, the more he doth it, the more he is strengthened, and confirmed, and supported to everlasting life.

2 The World it self and all the things thereof, are ordinarily bodily, and sensual, and not heavenly; take all the frame of the Creatures, they are bodily things, and all the comforts of them, tends to sensual life, *What will it profit a man to win the whole World, and lose his own soul?* implying, a man may have all the World, and yet lose his own soul; it never feeds a spiritual heavenly life, but there is a spiritual eternal bread, that feeds to everlasting life, it is not for a body, to nourish a spirit, nor earthly things heavenly, nor can a transitory thing feed everlasting life.

Q. 1. *Why should this disproportion wean us from the love of the World, and the lusts thereof? what is the ground?*

1 From the vanity that is found in all these things, they are bodily and transitory, it is impossible they should nourish heavenly and permanent life; therefore godly men should withdraw their affections from them inordinately, *Isa. 55.* 2. why do you lay out your money for that which satisfieth not? and for that which is not bread? why do you spend cost and pains about that which is not bread? which will never satisfy your souls, but your souls in the midst of them may be as *Pharaohs* lean Kine, hungry, and empty of grace, void of good things.

Reas. 2 From the corruption these things will put upon our spirits, if we set our love and lust on them; it will be as a running issue which will empty us of all goodness, either they will draw us from coming to the ordinances I have married a wife and cannot come; or secondly, they will fill our hearts with cares when we come, *Ezek. 33. ult.* or else after we are gone, they will choke the Word of God, for that they draw away our hearts from spiritual food.

2 There is a power in them, to assimilate us to themselves, what we feed on we are like unto, feed on wild meats, you will be wild men, feed on gross meats, your spirits will be more gross and dull, feed on light meats, your spirits will be more quick and agile; so if a man feed on the World, glut himself with the World, he can relish nothing but the World, his spirit is made carnal, and stupid, and worldly, and can rise no higher, therefore when *Solomon* gave himself to seek pleasuew, *Ecl. 2. 3.* to try what was in them,

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though he did not neglect Wisdom, as *eccles. 1. 8.* yet he found by experience, deal as wisely as he could, in the end they did so stupify him, that he was led away by them to Idolatry, *1 King. 11. 4.* then is a man become stupid, | when he is serious about trifles, and trifling about serious things; by pursuit of these, his judgement was quick in earthly matters, but in matters of Religion he began to grow very weak and ignorant; how much more then they that wholly give themselves to the lusts and pleasures of the world?

Reas. 3. Ever since the Fall of our first Parents, there lies a Curse of God upon all the Creatures, *Gen. 3. 17, 18.* now in cursing the ground he Cursed all the Creatures with it, so that now there is a disproportion and unsuitableness be twixt the Creatures and Man, for whom they were made, so that the whole Creature is subject to vanity, *Rom. 819, 20. Eccles. 1. 2. Vanity of vanities, all is vanity.* Now if they be all accursed, you shall find that there

is a venomous corruption in them all, which with-holds us from that chief good for which we were made; so that let any man put upon you any Profit, or Honour, or Credit, continually you would think your self-engaged to him, and set your selves to be serviceable to him, and should not we deal as kindly with God? should not we be more obedient to God, for this following us with his blessings? one would think we should; but what is the reason of it? the more we have of Profits, and Honours, and Credit, the more full we are of our selves and the more loose from God, so that the more he blesseth us, the more we neglect him; the more he comforts us, the more we grieve him; how comes this, but from a secret Curse that lies upon all the Creatures? otherwise it could not be, that we should grow so careless and stupid; as the Moon when it wants light, it draws nearer to the Sun, but when it is at the Full, and hath most light, it is furthest from the Sun; so when God fills us, we fit furthest from God, our spirits become empty of grace, and regardless of God, therefore this should move us from affecting the World, and the lusts of the World.

Use 1. A ground of strong exhortation to both old men and young, *Love not the World, nor the lusts of it*, for there is no proportion betwixt the World and a Child of God; what proportion betwixt transitory and everlasting things? fading and permanent? these are bodily and carnal, your hearts are spiritual and heavenly, therefore it is for you to look out for other things that will abide; nay, why do you spend your strength for that which will not profit? all will not help your souls; why should a man sweat, and toil for that, which when he hath he may lose his own soul? he may get credit in the World, and yet may be base in God's eyes, it is that which will not satisfy the soul, the immortal soul will not be contented with transitory fading things, these are but as dreams, they dream of abundance, but their souls are all this while empty and starving, and if these be so transitory, why do we feed on meats that are so unsuitable to our souls? if we have once made the World our Element, if we be lifted up out of the World to heavenly and Spiritual things, we are like a Fish out of the water, we faint and gasp, and are weary, and must return to our mud again, we have no comfort at all, is not this a woeful disproportion? Nay further, seeing all the things of this World are vanity and folly, even lawful pleasures, *I said of mirth, it is madness and folly, Eccles. 2. 2.* why therefore let us be exhorted to wean our affections from them walk among them as snares, take heed you be not trapped by them; all the Blessings of this Life are but Curses, if you use them for themselves, and then they weaken your spirits, and corrupt your hearts, therefore, *love not the World, not the things of the world*, so these all fade away; there is a dispro-

portion betwixt the cursed things of this World, and spiritual Blessings, indeed they are not Curses, if you receive them as coming from God, and use them to him, otherwise you set your hearts on them, and use them for themselves, they will prove a curse to you.

Use 2. Let us be exhorted to lift up our hearts to more heavenly and spiritual

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tual things, let us lift up our souls to those pleasures and profits that endure for ever, *Joh.* 6. 26. labour for those pleasures that may truly satisfy your souls, desire God to lift up your hearts from worldly to Spiritual things, and then we shall find the Word of God sweeter than Honey and the Honeycomb; therefore feed not on Husks and Chaff, but feed On Spiritual things. which may nourish you to eternal life, and for earthly things, use them as helps to Spiritual things, to make you more vacant for religious exercises, more fruitful in good works, so you shall find them helpful to you, and you shall draw near to God by them, when we look not so much at honour, or pleasure, or profit, as God's hand giving them.

1 JOH. 2. 18, 19, 20.

Little Children, it is the last time, and as ye have heard that Antichrist shall come, even now are there many Antichrists, whereby we know that it is the last time, &c.

Saint *John* writing to all sorts of Christians, Old, Young, and Children, he speaks particularly to them all; to Young-men, and Old, he wrote, *Vers.* 14, 15. *Love not the world*, but for Babes, he writes not to them about the love of the world, for they are not easily subject to it; but no Age so flexible as young Children, so that if they be once set in a right way, and live under faithful Instructors, there is no great danger of them, therefore he writes to them here, to make them beware of false Teachers, and cleave to sound Doctrine.

First, now he describes and sets out these false Teachers.

1 By their coming in the *last Times*, *vers.* 18.

2 By their Apostacy, *they went out from us*.

3 By shewing the cause of it, *they were never of us*, *vers.* 19.

Secondly, he gives them Signs, whereby they may know them, and discern them and that is from their Unction they have received, *vers.* 20, 21.

Thirdly, He gives a mark of Antichrist, *he is a Liar*, who denieth Jesus is the Christ is a liar, &c. *vers.* 22.

Fourthly, He lays down some means to help them.

1 By looking to the Doctrine, *Keep close to sound doctrine.*

2 Cleave to your holy Unction, have a special care to live righteously.

Vers. 18. In this verse he plays the Trumpeter, and warns the Church, *Little Children, now is the last time*, and look to it, there are many Antichrists come.

These words afford thele Points.

1 These times were the last times.

2 That the Church then was warned before-hand of Antichrist.

3 That many Antichrists were already come in that time.

4 That the Prophecy of the Antichrist to come, was partly fulfilled in the Antichrists that were then come.

5 Such is the condition of the last Ages of the Church, that the Church cannot be long without some Antichrist, for so he makes the last Times reciprocal with Antichrists; *There are many Antichrists, whereby we know that it is the last Time.* For the first.

Doct. *The days under the New Testament are the last Times.*

The times one thousand six hundred years since have been called, *ἔσχατη ὥρα* the last Seasons, and this is no singular Phrase of St. *John's*, but common with other places of Scripture, *1 Pet.* 4. 7. *Acts* 2. 17. *1 Cor.* 10. 11. as if he looked at himself as living in the very last Age of the world, *Heb.* 9. 26. *Jam.* 5. 8, 9. *Phil.* 4. 5.

It may be wondered that the spirit and inditer of the Scripture, should give
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out that these were the very last days, when there have been so many changes since the ten persecutions the flourishing of the Church under *Contantine*, and after it, a great mist of Ignorance, and since the light of the Gospel; how then did he call them the last times, since there have been so many changes since.

There is a double reason of this, in regard of the Apostles sense and scope that they aimed at, for they did not mean that the last judgement should presently come, for whereas some Christians, began to grow slack in their callings, because they thought it would be in vain, the last Judgement being so near, he seriously disuades them from such sudden expectation of it, *2 Thes.* 2. 1, 2, 3. so that though he had said that day is at hand, yet he would not have them conceive, that it should presently come upon them, for first, there must be an apostacy; therefore we see they were not deceived, or spake uncertainly.

1 Therefore they are called the last times, because they are the last period of time, before the last Judgement.

The first period was from *Adam* to *Moses*, 2450 years, *Rom.* 5. 4. the second period of time was from *Moses* to Christ, *Luk.* 16. 16. *Mat.* 11. 13. for in the first age the Church was nor national, nor any writings of the word, only they delivered the law and promises from Family to Family; many years after *Moses* time, he collected a National Church of the Jews, and excluded all the nations by a partition wall of ceremonies which the Gentiles would not conform to, then did he give them the Law written, and this continued till Christ's time.

The third Period of time, or third age, is from Christs time to the end of the World, *Heb.* 1. 1. *in those last days, &c.* It is the last time of the Revelation of God's Will, and we must expect no further Revelation to the end; for though the Church hath seen many differences, yet there is but one uniform Doctrine, that God hath set up for all that will be saved, *Heb.* 9. 16, 17. now whilst Christ lived, that is before he was crucified, he might change the form of the Testament, but now there is no more opportunity of changing, he hath delivered his last will, which shall not be reversed, if now there comes any and declares a new Doctrine, let him be accursed, he is an Antichrist.

2 The Apostle had some respect to their particular Estate, stirring them up to many duties on this ground, because the end drew near, *1 Pet.* 4. and this would not be an argument of patience, unless he had some respect of their particular, *Jam.* 5. 8, 9. *Phil.* 4. 5.

Q. *In what sense shall we understand that the coming of Christ was near in the Apostle's times?*

1 In opposition to former ages which were far off.

2 *In God's account a thousand years are but as one day*, *2 Pet.* 3. 8, 9. yet God will come so, that when the day of accomplishment is come, he will not stay a day longer, for that were as much to him as a thousand years.

3 Such is the Faith of Christians, that what they see in a promise, it is as much as if it were presently fulfilled, *Joh.* 8. 36.

Use 1. If this time of the Gospel, be the last time, then hence we may certainly conclude, that not so much time by much, shall pass from Christ to the end of the World, as was from *Adam* to Christ, for then how can they be called the last times? and if it were the last time then, what is it now?

Use 2. If there be the last days, we must not wonder if we meet with perilous times, for such should they be, *1 Tim.* 3. 1. now are the dregs of the last times; wonder not therefore if you see haters, and scorners, in these

last times; when men once grow aged, they grow cold and distempered, and if they have any spirit, it is a spirit of morosity; such is the spirit of these times, froward against good, teasty and malignant, wonder not at it, these are the last times.

Use 3 If these be the last times, then how vain is it to deliver or expect
any

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any new kind of revelation; if any teach any other Doctrine than Christ hath already revealed, he is Antichrist.

Use 4 Of exhortation, first, to patience, *Jam.* 5. 8, 9. on this ground, *for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh*. He exhorts to a double patience, to *be patient in bearing evil, and patient in forebearing revenge*; be patient a while, the Judge stands at the door that will right all.

Obj. *This is a cold encouragement to patience, to say, The day of the Lord is at hand, how long hath that been promised: and yet it is far enough off?*

A. When his Will is accomplished he will not stay a day, and get you but faith, and you shall look at it as present, so that you dare do no injury, no more than if Christ were presently to come.

3 There is another patience required on this ground, and that is, patience to expect the Promises God hath made, we have need of patience for this end, *Heb.* 10. 37. therefore, *Heb.* 11. 1. he saith, *Faith is the evidence of things not seen*, faith sees things afar off, and so did all the Patriarchs.

2 It exhorts us to watchfulness, *2 Pet.* 4. 7. and there is a double watchfulness required.

1 Watchfulness against false Teachers, that you may stand fast against all Errors, be sober minded, look narrowly to your ways, the last Times are perilous and dangerous.

2 Watch, unto Prayer, that is, because the times are the last times, and the days are perilous, watch unto Prayer; that is, watch every occasion, that you may stand fast in evil times, and walk safely in dangerous days, you will have need of Prayer, in regard of many perils, and evils in these days.

Doct. *That the Church of God was fore-warned of Antichrists aforehand.*

Q. *When, or by whom were they forewarned?*

A. Our Saviour forewarns them of Antichrists, and false Teachers, *Matth.* 24. 24, 25. unto which words Saint *John* seems to have reference; so also the Apostles were careful in fore-warning them, *2 Thes.* 2. from the third Verse to the tenth, *1 Tim.* 2. 3, 4, *2 Pet.* 2. 2, 3. which was expressly spoken of

Rom. Rev. 18. 13. so we see by the mouth of two or three witnesses this truth was confirmed.

Reas. 1. To prevent the misconceit that the people had, that the Day of the Lord was neerat hand, and thereupon began to think it was no time to settle to their Callings, but to give themselves to vigilancy and prayer, 2 *Thes.* 2. 1, 2, 3. to prevent this conceit, he tells them expressly, Antichrist must first come.

2 That they might be the better fore-armed against such false Teachers, for there should be damnable Heresies, 2 *Pet.* 2. 2. and not as points of curiosity only, but *contra dogmata fidei*, therefore that they might prepare themselves against such Heresies, Christ and his Apostles were careful to forewarn them, *Matth.* 24. 24, 25. 2 *Pet.* 3. 17, 18. unless you be well established in the truth, they will carry you away into error.

3 That they might quicken the Pastors of the Church to lay sound foundations, that they might establish them in sound Doctrine, *Acts* 20.28, 29, 30.

Use 1 Shews the great faithfulness of the great Shepherd of our Souls, Christ Jesus, in fore-telling himself of Wolves coming, and stirring up his Apostles to do the like.

Use 2. It may teach both Christian Ministers and people to practise such duties, for which end he writes these things; one main end is, to establish them in found Doctrine, that so whatsoever false Teachers say, yet Christians may not be seduced, for if they gave warning so long before, much more, now we know this to be come to pass; therefore let not Women, or little Children excuse themselves, for God looks that you should be so grounded in the truth, that no Seducers may carry you away.

Doct. 3.

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Doct. 3. *In the days when St. John wrote this Epistle, many Antichrists were then come into the World.*

1 *Joh.* 4. 1, 2, 3. This is the first place that mentions Antichrist expressly. *Ἀντιχρίστου ἀπὸ ἀντὶ* which signifies, first *opposition*, as *ἀντικείμενος*; secondly *substitution*, as *ἀνθύπατος*, *pro consul* & *ἀντίδικος*; thirdly, it signifies *equality*, *ἀντιθεσις* & *ἀντίχριστος*, *Jude* 4.

Now *Antichristos* includes all, as one that is opposite to Christ, so he is called *ἀντικείμενος*; secondly, he is *ἀνθύπατος*, that is, substitute or vicar of Christ, hence the beast that came out of the Sea, had the horns of a Lamb, as if he had the power of Christ; thirdly, he is Antichrist, that is, one that carries himself as equal to Christ; therefore he dispenseth with those laws, which no

mortal man may dispense withall, as incestuous marriage, and he binds the consciences of men, *Jam.* 4. 20. now it is proper to the law of Christ to sit in the conscience, therefore he may well be called Antichrist; but yet of these, he is properly called Antichrist in the former sense, that is, one that opposeth himself against God, and Christ, and all Emperors and Kings, *Bellarmino* excuses the Pope from coming to the Nicene Council saying, *indignum est caput membra sequi*. Secondly, lest he should sit beneath the Emperor, which he thought unmeet, therefore he may well be said to exalt himself, ἐπί πάν τὸ, 2 *Thes.* 2. 4. above every Cæsar, and yet here is the misery; that he carries himself as a vicar of Christ, yet can oppose himself against Christ.

Q. *But how were many Antichrists the come?*

A. In ecclesiastical Histories, we shall find that St. *John* lived about an hundred years after Christ, and was born about the same time with Christ, now about the year 26 after Christ, Histories report there was *Simon Magus*, who seemed to be the great power of God, and to be he that gave the Law in Mount *Sinai*.

He gave out that it was he that was crucified under *Tiberius Cæsar*; here was an Antichristian spirit, and I was, saith he, that Holy Ghost, that descended on the Apostles, so that he denied both the Father and the Son, after him sprang up *Menandor*, that affirmed that it was her that died for the World, and that all that believed on him should be saved. In those times *Ebion* taught that Christ was but a mere man, and held circumcision necessary, and in his time lived *Cerinthus*, who retained all the Judicial Law, and denied Christ to be God, *Act.* 15. 1. and he is held to be one of those, that held the World to be made by Angels, and he was the root of the error of the Chiliasts, all these lived in *John's* time.

Use 1. It shews us the marvelous enmity of that wicked one, that as soon as ever Christ had sowed good seed, that evil one sowed tares, this was the subtlety of that old Serpent to sow errors, before the truth could take firm rooting.

Use 2 Hence we see the impudency of Heresy, especially, when opposition is set on fire of Hell, that such monstrous opinions should be broached in St. *John's* time, that enveighed against them, and wrote against them; and therefore we must not wonder if Heresies *sine pudore*, broach themselves in the Church, for even in St. *John's* time a sun of thunder that shook them down mightily, yet even against him were these Darts shot; it must therefore stir up Christians, to ground themselves in the whole Counsel of God; do you think if such Heretics did not blush before St. *John*, they will blush before us?

3 Hence we see the truth of God, is of more power than the spirit of Error, for though there were so many heads of Error, yet they all fell down before the Doctrine of St. *John*, so that this writing remained, when all they were lost, *magna est veritas & prevalebit*, therefore such is the power of truth, that it dispels all Errors.

3 It confutes boasting of Antiquity; every ancient thing is not true, for then these false Heresies had been true, but yet there is Antiquity, which springs from the first institution, and that is prevalent; there is a secondary

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antiquity, that is, Tares that are presently sown after the good Seed, yet though they were sown the very same day, yet secondary antiquity will not justify their Doctrine, but that which comes from the institution by God.

Doct. *In the coming of these many Antichrists, that which was told afore-hand of the coming of Antichrist, is in some measure fulfilled.*

For otherwise St. *John's* discourse would be somewhat impertinent; to what end doth he say, *Ye have heard that Antichrist shall come, and that Antichrists are come already?* And again, he doth argue from the last times to Antichrist, and from Antichrist to the last times, reciprocally, which reason were not of strength, unless it were grounded upon this point.

For proof, see 1 *Joh.* 4. 3. 1 *Tim.* 4. 1, 2.

Obj. *Doth not the Apostle say, that Antichrist shall not come until there be a general Apostacy, and until that which with-holds him be taken away?* 2 *Thes.* 2. 3. *what is that τὸ κατέκον which hindered him?*

A. That τὸ κατέκον was not the *Roman Empire*, for that was not taken fully away many hundred years after, and it is still not wholly taken away, but stands upon its two Legs the Emperor of *Turkey* and *Germany* but the things which with-held him was indeed the Emperor himself, when the Emperor *Constantine*, removed from *Rome* to *Constantinople* then the τὸ κατέκον was taken away, the lustre of the Emperor, that Monarch of the World, and that Antichrist could not stand together, but so soon as the Emperor was departed from *Rome*, Antichrist began to be revealed, when as all the Bishops of the Christian World did meet together at the Council at *Nice*, the Bishop of *Rome* (requested by Letter) came not, pretending indeed the weakness of his body, and Old Age, but *Bellarmino* plainly tells us the reason: It was not meet, saith he, the Head should follow the Members, the Members were rather to follow the Head, and if the Emperor were present, it was likely he would take his place above the Pope, which was not meet, the

Pope being the Spiritual Head, therefore because of this, and some other inconveniences, the Pope in his discretion thought it meet to absent himself. At this time Antichrist began to be revealed to the full, for though after that time some godly men were in that Seat, as *Gregory the Great*, and some others, yet the question is not of the Person, but of the place.

Obj. *But the Apostle saith, that let must be first taken away which with-held Antichrist; and St. John saith here, that many Antichrists were come already, how can these two stand together?*

A. Though the Antichrist was not then revealed, yet the Mystery of Iniquity did then work in many men, when *St. John* wrote this Epistle, and *St. Paul* his second Epistle to the *Thessalonians*, for then men began to observe the Traditions of men, and the Laws of the Church must be as well kept as God's Laws, against whom *St. John* wrote in his second Epistle, vers. 5, 6, 7. besides, some then exalted themselves above their Brethren, as you may see in his third Epistle, and so did put out their Brethren: this was the Spirit which made way for the Bishop of *Rome*, exalting himself above other Bishops, as the Emperor was above Kings and Princes, this Mystery by degrees encreased, now as the King may be laid to come when he is yet in his Chamber, but some Parliament men go before, and the King follows soon after; so it is here, because Antichrist was not to come nakedly, but with Pomp, therefore way was made, and the Apostle wrote against the spirit of Antichrist then working, though Antichrist himself was not so fully revealed till afterwards, and so it is plain that which was spoken of Antichrist is in some part fulfilled.

Use 1 Confutes a conceit of the Church of *Rome*, that cannot yet discern Antichrist, but say, Antichrist is some singular person.

But we savy, Antichrist is a state that hath many fore-runners, and followers, and the Pope himself is one at them.'

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Obj. *But the Article ὁ signifies a certain singular person?*

A. Sometimes it doth so, yet not always, for sometimes it signifies a State; as we say, ὁ βασιλεύς the King made this Law; here we understand the Kings afore, or present, or them that shall come after, *Matth. 13. 3. ὁ σπείρων The Sower went forth*; here it is not spoken of one singular Minister, *Paul*, or *Peter*, but of every Minister of the Gospel.

Obj. 2 *The. 2. 8.*

A. True, he shall continue till the coming of Christ, and shall be abolished by the spirit of his mouth, and therefore it cannot be said of one singular

person, no man liveth such an Age as is from the Council of *Nice* to the coming of Christ.

Use 2 Learn hence the near fellowship that is betwixt Antichrist himself, and all that make way for him, as all Hetetics do, *Simon Magus, Menander, Ebion, Pilagius, Arius, &c.* they all wrought the coming in of Antichrist, and though himself hath condemned many of those Errors, yet he so corrupteth the lives of men, that Charity waxeth cold, and false Doctrine are received; some of those Errors this Antichristian holds, when the King himself comes, the people will give more room than for the Noble-men that went before; so when Antichrist comes himself, the people most of all yield to him, though formerly they had received many Errors; and therefore it must teach us, not to keep any error or superstition, for there is a strong Combination betwixt Antichrist and Heresies, that we cannot separate one from another; though we use many strokes at a Tree before it falls, yet every blow makes way for the fall of it; so every error makes way for Antichrist, and corrupts the true Religion, and godliness is not seen; when the Church was infected with many terrors, even then Antichrist arose, the way was ready for him to corrupt all.

Doct. Such is the condition of these last times, that they cannot be long without an Antichrist.

For the Apostle argues reciprocally from the last times to Antichrist, and from Antichrist to the last times. Antichrist is come, therefore it is the last time, and it is the last time, therefore there must be Antichrists. *Joh. 4. 3, 2 Joh. 7.* for his relation to the last times, *1 Tim. 4. 16.* in these latter times, the Spirit speaks expressly.

Q: What is the condition of the last times, that is so prepared for an Antichrist?

A. This mutual reference proceeds;

1 From the state of the times in the Apostles times, there was an itching ear alter new Doctrine, inwardly loathing the truth, and affecting any new Doctrine they can hear, *2 Thes. 2. 10, 11, 12. 2 Tim. 4. 3, 4.* so that the radical cause of the arising of Antichrist, is the itching humour of men after new Doctrine, therefore God would send such as should deceive, and if you survey the whole Body of Popery, it consists either of curious speculations of the School-men, whereby they deceive Scholars, and the Secular Priests fill the common people with idle Fables, and so deceive the whole people.

2 From the abundance of knowledge that shall be revealed in the last times, as *Isa. 11. 1. to 9.* now where there is much knowledge, and emptiness

of Grace, and Faith, there is a world of pride in such, 1 *Cor.* 8. 11. 2 *Tim.* 3. 1. to 8, for want of faith with their knowledge, the time was fit to receive new Doctrines, 1 *Tim.* 4. 1, 2. men of knowledge, but no conscience, and then no marvel if men entertain Errors, 1 *Tim.* 1. 19. *Hold faith and a good Conscience, which some having put away, have erred from the faith;* while some have neglected to keep their Conscience clean, their judgement is unsound; a corrupt Conscience, a corrupt Judgement.

3 From the disposition of men; and aptness then to catch the greatest cold, when their spirits have been most warmed and heated; no man so apt to take

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cold, as they who are very warm and hot; so in the days of the Apostles, they did not only fill them with knowledge, but warmed the Church with Zeal, and Heat; zeal towards their Ministers, zeal in their liberality, they loved not their own lives in respect of Christ, now their spirits being so warm, they are more subject to get cold and disemper; every Christian in particular finds it so; when he hath been most enlarged at the Word, or Prayer, ere long he will be more straitened, there being a secret pride in the experience of God's favour, and to rest in our selves, thinking that we have sufficient grace in our selves; when we see our need of Christ, we depend only on him, but when we are full, we depend on our selves, and so by sitting loose from Christ we get a great cold, we are cold in Prayer, Word, Sacrament; thus it is with the Church, when God sheds his Spirit abundantly in the Church, they grow secure, and depend upon themselves, thus we see, *Josh.* 1. 9, 10, 11. so that one would have thought that that generation would have been more zealous, yet none so Idolatrous till God quickened them by their enemies; so in the Apostles times, the Church was very forward and zealous, a few Generations after, their spirits were carried away with errors.

4 From the disposition of Satan, he hath great rage because the time is short, *Rev.* 12. 8. and we shall always find that the Devil hath imitated God, if God have Sacrifices from his people, so the Devil from the Pagans; so if God set up a Christ, Satan will have an Antrichrist set up, that may be, not only a substitute, but an enemy of Christ, that as God had won the world by Christ, so he would delude the world by Antichrist.

5 From the wife and just dealing of God, if God reveal more means of knowledge, he will use many means of trial, he will have them winnowed, that so the good may remain as Wheat, the Chaff may be blown away, if God give more Talents, he will put them upon more employment and exercise.

Use 1 To teach Christians not to be offended, if they find variety of seducing spirits in these days, a man would wonder in such peaceable days, when Religion is maintained, there should be so many opinions and agitations, how comes this about? you must know that God never dispensed generally more knowledge since the revelation of Antichrist than now; now where there is most knowledge, Satan will be reducing and corrupting their wisdom; where there is more wisdom there is more curiosity and pride; so much knowledge, so much want of truth many times, and so pntung off the truth, men run into several errors, and it is just with God, seeing they put away a good Conscience, and would not give heed to sound Doctrine, therefore *God gave them up to follow lies*, 2 Thes. 2. and their longing desire and zeal, in former times, will end in such a cold, that there will be a defect of all warmth and heat, and wheresoever you see the truth not held in a good Conscience, they run their faith on Rocks, some split on a rock of Arminianism, some on a rock of Popery; so that it must needs be that in these last times many Antichrist must be.

Use 2. Since many Antichrists are, and will be in these last times, let us labour to be so established in the truth, that however the times be, we may keep out faith and religion.

Q. *How shall we be thus established?*

A. 1. Get contrary spirits to the former, give not up your selves to curiosity, and vain speculations, if the Lord find you humble, he will teach you in his ways; if when you are warm and hot, you have a care that you get not cold, 1 Chron. 29. 18. Pray to God to keep your hearts always in that frame, or at least in such a frame as may befit every days business, and then whatsoever the times be, our hearts and judgements shall be established in the truth, but unless God give you a good Conscience with your knowledge, you will be soon perverted, and therefore I say, as *Paul to the Ephesians*, Ephes. 2. 12. continue in a firm love of the truth as well as in the knowledge of it.

I JOH.

I JOH. 2. 19.

They went out from us, but they were not of us, for if they had been of us, no doubt they would have continued with us, &c.

THE Apostle, Verse 18. had instructed Babes of the coming of Antichrist, now in this Verse he first describes them;

1 By their Apostacy, *they went out from us.*

2 Their condition before, *They were not of us*, he amplifies both, the latter he proves by an Argument, *They were not of us, for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us.*

The former he amplifies by the reason, why God gave them up to Apostacy, which was, *that these Seducers might be made manifest that they were not of us.*

Q. 1. *What is meant by this, They went our from us?*

A. 1. They departed from their Doctrine in Judgement, and from their Fellowship in Practice.

Answ. Now these men departed from both, they forsook the truth which before they professed, 1 *Joh.* 9. and not in circumstantial points, but in such, whereby they denied both the Father, and the Son, as vers .22.

1 *Tim.* 1. 19.

2 In their fellowship, they declined from them in communion of Ordinances, and mutual help, *Heb.* 10. 25.

They went out from (us) from whom? who are they from us? Apostles, and Ministers, *from us*, that is, from Old men, Young men, and Children, they went out from all the true Members of the Church.

They were not of us.

That is, they were never true members of our Body, they were with us, and amongst us, but they were never of us, 1 *Joh.* 4. 4, 5. as the Children of God are in the world, yet not of the world, their minds are not on this world, their inheritance is not in this world; so on the contrary, the Children of the Church are in the Church, but not of the Church.

Doct. 1. *Some may be in the Church, which after do depart from the Church.*

Doct. 2. *Such as do depart, were never Members of the Church.*

Doct. 3. *Such as are Members, continue always in the Church.*

Doct. 4. *Those that depart, manifest themselves, not to be of the Church.*

Doct. 5. *This departing from the Church, is a note of Antichrist.*

Doct. 1. *There are some in the Church, which may depart from the Church.*

That may leave the Doctrine, Fellowship, and Practice of the Church, *Heb.* 10. 25. 2 *Thes.* 2. 3. 1 *Tim.* 2. 4.

Q. *How comes it to pass that men in the Church, and in some measure affecting the ways of Religion, depart from the Church?*

A. 1. This comes from want of thorough and entire fellowship with the Lord Jesus, for though they may have much joy and comfort in the Mem-

bers of the Church, yet it is but as a Land-flood, all that joy and grace may be dried up, unless they partake of that Fountain which never fails; and as the Lord told *Samuel*, *They have not rejected thee, but me they have rejected*; so, see you any departing from the Church, they departed from Christ, and union with him first, *Dan. 11. 34, 35. many cleave to him but feignedly, Heb. 12. 13.* when a man halts between falsehood and truth, or God and his lusts, he will be turned out of the way,

2 From the stumbling-blocks they meet with, in

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1. The Church, first persecution, *Matth. 13. 21.* that makes some offended.

2. Hard Doctrine, *Joh. 16. 66.* the Doctrine of Purity seems harsh Doctrine to them, so the Doctrine of Predestination offends some.

3. There fall out some admonitions or reproofs to be dispensed to me Member of the Church; now if they come with proud unmortified spirits, they will be offended at them, and fly back again; this was the cause of *Simon Magus* his Apostacy, when *Peter* reprov'd him sharply, he could not brook it, but fell off, and set up a false Doctrine, and lying miracles, to subvert the Apostles Doctrine; some depart from others, because they think themselves more holy than others, *Isa. 6.* either they give offence to others, or others to them.

Use. Shews us our duty, nor to rest our selves satisfied, in that we are Members of the Church; we may live in the Church, and partake of the ordinances, yet after fall off; therefore be sure that you give up yourselves first to the Lord, and then to the Church, otherwise keeping any pride or covetousness in our heart, it will make us fall off, pride will make us take offence at others, and others at us; and covetousness will make us fall off when we meet with persecution; and loss at goods, and liberty, for Christ; therefore come with humble and mortified hearts, and give up your selves to Christ, and then you shall not easily give offence to others, and will be content to part with any thing for Christ, and so will continue Members of the Church.

Doct. 2. *Such as depart from the Church, were never Members of the Church.*

They were not of us, that is, of the Apostles, nor *of us*, that is, of such whose sins are forgiven them, either old men, or young, or Children.

Q. *What is the Church, or who are the Church?*

1. The Church is called a company of Saints, because they are holy in heart and practice, *1 Cor. 14. 13. 1 Cor. 1. 2.*

2. The Church is called an elect people.

3. They that are indeed of the Church, are such as shall be saved, *Act. 2. ult.* as all those that were in *Noah's* Ark were saved, so all those that are true Members of the Church.

Grounds

1. From the near fellowship such have with the Catholic Church, and so certainly are of the number of the first born, written in heaven, *Heb. 12.* so therefore Christ saith, *all his sheep hear his voice. Joh. 10. 2, 3, 4. 16. 27, 28.* and none shall pluck them out of his hand. Those that are truly Members of the particular Church, are likewise Members of the Catholic; my finger which is a part of my hand, is a part of my whole body.

2. From the fellowship such have with the head Christ, all the true Members receive nourishment from the head, *Col. 2. 18, 19.* therefore they not holding to the head, fall into vain speculations; therefore those that depart from the head, fall from the Church, *Ephes. 4. 15, 16.* and being knit to the head, they are joined with such bands at the spirit, and band of ordinances, that they all partake of one spirit, *1 Cor. 6. 17. so 1 Cor. 12. 13. 1 Cor. 10. 6, 7.* and join all their prayers, they pray for the whole Church, Our Father, thy Will be done, of us, we have a tender care of all the Church knit together in one Love, one Faith, one Hope, one Baptism, so that those that are truly knit, cannot fall off.

Use 1. To reprove an Error of the Romish Church, that do maintain that wicked men may be true Members of the Church, but we say that those that fall off, were never true Members of the Church, and yet they hold that many fall off, and yet were true Members, but they might indeed depart from their Church, but never from any true Church, if they do depart from the Church, they were never true Members of the Church, they were not of Christ's sheep, for he will keep them that none of them shall fall off.

We

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We say therefore that such were not true Members, but ill humours and superstitious excrements of the body, and therefore no wonder though they fell off. But you will say, Come there are that continue faithful friends to the Church, and never fall off from them; are there not some that are ornaments, and maintainers, and supporters of the Church, yet have no truth of grace in their hearts, are not they Members at the Church?

They have the place of Members, but are not true Members, a glass eye may be an ornament to the body, and a Wooden Leg a support to the body, yet are no true Members, so such may be ornaments and supporters of the

Church, yet no true Members, but as a glass eye, or a wooden leg; these though they cleave to the body, yet they are not joined by nerves and sinews, neither animated by the head, so these are not tied to the Church by the spirit at God, or bond of Faith and Love, but some external ligaments, as honour, or profit in the Church.

Use 2 It may teach us not to judge of such men as have been sometimes very forward and zealous Professors, but afterwards they sit loose from Religion, and fall off from the Saints, and grow enemies to the Church, they were never true Members of the Church, *Stella cadens nunquam, stella commeta fuit*, never any Star fell; the Church is compared to Heaven, Christians to Stars, when we think we see a Starfall, it is no Star, but a meteor drawn up by the heat of the Sun, which when the heat of the Sun is withdrawn, falls, so if you see any Stars fall from the Church, they were some sluggish meteors, that by the heat of God's ordinances were raised up and inflamed, but after the heat was a little dissolved, they fell away, if any fall, they were never any true Stars in heaven, but blazing meteors.

Use 3 It may teach us, never to rest in any fellowship, or society of the Church, till we are knit by the spirit to God and Christ, so that every ordinance kept you nearer to Christ, and to his Members, and every conference quickens your affection to the Church, and theirs to you; come not therefore to the Fellowship of the Church for custom or credit, or to satisfy friends, these are but as glass eyes, and wooden legs; how little good will it be to that person that lives in the Church like a noisome humor, hurtful, and pricking the Church, troublesome to the Church and the Members thereof? such a one is but an evil humour, and it were better it were cast out; nay content not your selves in being an ornament and supportance to the Church, liberal for any good use; and so Ministers, you must not rest in this, you are but as wooden legs, and glass eyes, and you lose by it, unless, you draw juice and nourishment from the body by the spirit; rejoice not therefore in this, that you cleave to the Church, and they to you; but rejoice that you are of that number, whose names are written in heaven; rejoice in this, that by the spirit and faith, you are knit to Christ, rejoice, that you do any good office to the Church, nor for any by-respect, but naturally.

Use 4 Here is it direction to all societies, what society to follow, even the highest society, that is, even of the Church, the company of Saints; therefore if you would aspire to the best society, you must not be such as are noisome humours, hurtful to one another, such will break off, but be knit together in love, with one consent join together.

So for all Members of the Congregation, be doing good one to another, be knit together, you are all Members of the same Church, let no outward respect dis-join Members, you would think it a woeful thing, to see a convulsion of the Members, one limb pulled from another, so let no external respect hinder fellowship, therefore contend not for your profit or ease, and so fall off from one another, but contend to be helpful one to another, and grow up in love.

Use 5 Of consolation to such as find their hearts knit to Christ, by his ordinances, and one to another, this is good comfort, you shall never depart one from another, no true Member shall ever fall off, either from Christ, desire
Church

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Church, or heaven, 1 *Joh.* 1. 4, 8. bring one of the Church, and added to the Church, you are such a one as is appointed to salvation; they that are in God's Tabernacle, shall one day dwell in his holy hill, *Psal.* 15. and he tells you what they are, they that are Members of the Church militant here, shall be Members of the Church triumphant in heaven, your name is entered amongst the general assembly of the first born, whose names are written in heaven.

Doct. *Such as are true Members of the Church, do keep continual fellowship with the Church, and do never depart from the Church.*

If they had been of us, that is, of our fellowship which is with the Father, they would have continued for ever with us, Psal. 125. 1. *They that trust in the Lord, shall be as Mount Zion, which shall never be moved;* God gives a man true fellowship with him by trusting in him, and such stand as a mountain, or rock, that cannot be removed, and the cause of it is, because God in a special manner protects them, God's protection stands as an hill about them, so that none can climb over God to come at them, 1 *Tim.* 2. 19. *The foundation of God standeth sure, &c.* the foundation, some take it for election, some for their faith, such a man doth set to his seal that the Lord is true.

Q. *How comes it to pass that they always thus keep communion with Christ, and his members?*

A. 1. They keep fellowship with Christ, from the nature of that Covenant which Christ makes with all Believers, it is opposed to a Covenant that may be broken, *Jer.* 31. 31. to 35. so that this Covenant cannot be broken, where he opposeth this new Covenant to the first Covenant made with *Adam*, which he brake, but this cannot be broken, for what should break it but sin, but *God will write his Law in their hearts, &c.* and they shall not depart from him.

This Covenant is either expressed without condition, or else such a condition as he will give us power to perform, or else such a condition as Christ: will perform for us, therefore cannot be broken.

Obj. *It is possible that any Covenant should be without condition? is it not the nature of a Covenant, to have a condition on both parts?*

A. It sometimes requires none, as *Gen. 9. to 17.* the Covenant God made with *Noah*, he made a Covenant never again to destroy the whole World by a flood, and yet there is no condition expressed on man's part, but all the World knows, that whatsoever the lives of men be, be their sins never so great, evil as the sins of the Land, yet God will keep this Covenant with them, and not destroy the World by waters any more; now this Covenant of Grace is likened to the Covenant he made with *Noah*, that as that Covenant was without all conditions, so the Covenant of Grace that God makes with us, is absolute without condition, so that he will remember us with everlasting mercy, *Isa. 54. 8, 9. to 10.* that whosoever have made a Covenant with God to cleave to him in Christ, he will never cast them off; no more than he will drown the world.

2 Though he do require a condition, yet it is such as be himself will perform, so that I shall never forfeit his Covenant, *Jer. 32. 40.* God will never depart from them, I but we may depart from him; no, God will put his fear in our hearts, that we shall not depart from him, so that though God requires faith, and repentance, and obedience, yet he gives it to us, or else we have Christ as a Surety, that hath fulfilled all righteousness for us, *Heb. 7. 22.* if therefore I, or my Surety pay, as he hath done here, no breach of Covenant can be made on our part, because Christ hath fulfilled all righteousness; to that though we be unfaithful and disobedient, yet Christ hath undertook for us.

2 From the Spiritual vigour, and efficacy of that Grace which the Lord gives to every true member of the Church, that Spirit which knits us to Christ: and his Members, *1 Pet. 1. 23.* is an immortal seed, it is that spring which springs up unto everlasting life, *Joh. 4. 14.*

Obj.

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Obj. *True, if we drink, but we may cease drinking, and so thirst?*

A. But then it should not differ from *Jacob's Well*, for as long as we drink of that we shall not thirst, but this is opposed to that, *Hebr. 10. 8, 9.* he opposeth *καὶ ἀπεσάστω* & *καὶ πιστεῶ*, so that whosoever draws back from Christ, had never true faith.

Nay, this Grace is expressed, as overcoming all the enemies of Salvation, Satan, the World, the Flesh, 1 *Joh.* 1. 4. 1 *Joh.* 5. 4. *Rom.* 6. 14. Sin, that is, your corruption, shall not reign in you, it may be *remanent*, but not *regnant*, it may tyrannize us, and lead us Captive, but it shall not carry us willingly, but it is a Captivity to us, very grievous and hard, and we strive to get loose from it, it may *πρᾶντιεν* but not *βασιλεδειν* now if sin have once dominion over grace, it should be superior, which cannot be.

2 As they never depart from Christ, so they never depart from the Fellowship of the Church.

Q. *What may be the ground of it?*

A. 1. From the sweetness of that Grace, Life, and Power they have felt in the society of the Saints, sweeter than which they shall not find in any other company, or in a solitary condition, that sweetness which they have found in Christ, and his Ordinances, and his Members, will make them cleave close to them, and not depart from them, *Joh.* 6. 66, 67. *Whither shall we go, thou hast the words of eternal life?* where can we mend our selves, this is the House of God, and the Gate of Heaven, so that they intend to dwell here for ever; *Psal.* 84. 1, 2, 3, 4. & 8, 9, 10. they find such sweetness and fulness in God's House, that they had rather to be Door keepers in God's House, than to dwell in the Courts of Princes without, *Heb.* 11. 26, 27. he that hath once seen God's face in his Church, he regards not the wrath of men, and for the pleasure of the Word, he accounts the very reproaches of the people of God to be sweeter, and if they be better and sweeter, what are the Consolations and Promises, and Hopes of God's people, the true Church of Christ that hath found conjugal society with Christ, what should move them to turn aside to other companions, *Cant.* 1. 6, 7, 8, therefore up to *Jerusalem*, and rest there, there you may find me, *Psal.* 16. 3. *My delight is in the Saints.*

Q. *If Christians cannot fall off, what needs there so many exhortations and threatenings to backsliders?* 1 *Cor.* 5. 1, 2. 1 *Cor.* 10. *Rom.* 8. 13.

A. These are not Arguments of Apostacy, but means of perseverance, they are as means to keep us from Apostacy, for he that hath appointed the end, hath appointed the means.

2 Though true Members cannot fall off, yet there are many Hypocrites that seem to have fellowship with the Church, and they may fall away.

Obj. *This Doctrine breeds security, seeing they cannot fall off, what need they care how they live?*

A. This is no doctrine of security but only to carnal men, for we shall find that no Christian is more careful to please God, and fearful to offend him,

than those that have got most assurance of God's love, and fellowship with Christ and his members, 2 *Cor.* 5. 4. *Gen.* 39. 19.

2 If God's Children do wax wanton, yet he hath means to scourge them soundly, though he doth not take away his loving kindness; and we say, though he cannot lose Grace wholly, yet he may lose the strength of his grace. And Secondly, Corruption may grow strong; and Thirdly, He may lose all the comfort of his grace; Fourthly, He can make them meet with such afflictions from men as *David* did, though he cast him not out of Heaven, yet out of his Kingdom, after he had committed Murder and Adultery, he raised up his own Son to rebel against him; so that *David* saw the bitterness of his wantonness against God's grace. As if a Phistian should give a man such a Drug, and say it will not only free you from your sickness, but also preserve you that you shall never die, therefore should he say. What need I care what enemies I meet with, or what diet I use? no, it implieth that he

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must

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must have a care of such things; so though God give us a Well-spring of eternal life, yet if you look not to your selves, but rush into danger, you may be so wounded and unsettled, and so terrify your Consciencences, that you shall feel the smart of your wantonness all your days.

Obj. *Did not Lot depart from the fellowship of Abraham, and pitch his tents in Sodom?* *Gen.* 13. 9. to 13.

A. 1. This was dangerous, to *Lot*.

2 It was not without the consent of *Abraham*, and there was some necessity of it, for they could not well live together, they had such great estates.

3 The Church was not then in Congregations, but in Families, &c.

Obj. *But what say you the Ten Tribes, did not they renounce fellowship with the Church?* 2 *King.* 12. 16.

A. Herein they did reject the Covenant of Grace, and so had no fellowship with the Church.

Obj. *Were there no good people there?*

A. The good people of the Land left their possessions and went to *Jerusalem*, with the Priests and Levites, 2 *Chron.* 11. 13. to 17. so that rather than they would leave the Fellowship of the Church, they would sell all that they had to purchase such a pearl.

Use 1 To reprove the error of the Pelagians and Papists, that do teach, that the true Members of the Church may fall away, not only for a time, but finally, and for ever, contrary to this Doctrine, for though they may be as orna-

ments, or supports, yet they are no true members, for *if they had been of us, they would have continued with us.*

Use 2 May shew us the wonderful eminency of that Grace, and that Covenant that we have in Christ, above that Grace and Covenant that *Adam* had, *Adam* had that Grace which he might keep, and he might lose, and that Covenant which he might break, or not break, but we have such grace as we cannot lose, and such a Covenant as we cannot break, so that true Christians have no cause to complain of *Adam's* fall, for they have a more sure Covenant, such a Covenant as we can no more break than we can *Noah's* Rainbow; and according to the state of the Covenant, God hath given several Sacraments to confirm it, he had a Sacrament of Death, but we have no Sacrament of Death, but both are for our confirmation in Life; therefore had there been a possibility of death, he would have given us a Sacrament, to put us in mind of it.

Use 3 Be not offended, because of all these Antichrists, and Back-sliders, there are thousands fallen away within these few years, why understand this, they were not of us, but as noisome Humours, and the body is better without them; such as have true fellowship never depart, such as do depart never had true fellowship, *2 Tim. 4. 15.* *Demas* forsook *Paul*, and evident sign he was an Hypocrite, if his heart had been right, he would not have left *Paul* for the whole world.

Use 4. Would you have good company (as most men desire to have) why as you desire company that may be for your perpetual comfort, then use this fellowship of the Church, there was never any that once got into true society of the Saints, that would ever be pulled from them; *whither should we go? thou hast the words of eternal life?* what company so sweet as Christian communion? *Moses*, that had trial of Princes Courts, yet he found the sourest bit of Christian communion sweeter than the sweetest pleasures of *Egypt*; you that delight in the company of Drunkards, and Whoremongers, and Harlots, at length when you are consumed, and your estate spent, you must be glad to leave them, and with you had never kept them company; but on the contrary, had you but once got into a near communion with the Saints, you should never depart from them, it was the saying of a late faithful Servant of God, Dr; *Preston*, Though I leave my life, yet I shall not leave my company.

Use 5

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Use 5. Of consolation to any soul that ever had true fellowship with Christ, and his Church, having once loved you, he will love you to the end, *1 Cor. 10. 13. 1 Thes. 5. 23, 24. Psal. 37. 23, 24, 25.* though we do fall, yet the

Lord puts under his hand, *Rom.* 8. 25. *Rom.* 5. 10. 1 *Pet.* 1. 5. we are kept by the power of God to Salvation, he embraceth us with his everlasting arms, so that if we once got fellowship with God, and his Church, fear not, you shall not fall, and if you do start aside, and feed on ill Diet, you shall find the smart of it, he will humble you, that he may save you at the last day.

Doct. *It is a note of Seducers, or Antichristian Teachers, to depart from the fellowship of the Church.*

They went out from us, because they were not of us, and so such were never cordial or hearty to the Church, therefore when you see any fall off, know it argues an Antichristian spirit, 2 *Thes.* 2. 3. 1 *Tim.* 4. 1. *Many ἀποστήσονται shall depart from the Church,* so that all Antichristian spirits have a corrupt spirit of separation.

For Explication.

Q. 1. *What is this separation?*

A. 1. A separation Local, such was that practice of the Tribe of *Gad*, and *Manasses*, *Josh.* 22. 9, 10. it was not separation in fellowship as they profess, ver. 26, 27. but that is not a separation that makes an Antichrist.

2. A departing in fellowship, which yet falls short of an Antichristian spirit, though it deserve blame and reproof, *Gal.* 2. 12. not but that his judgement and affection was with them, yet he withdrew from their society in Ordinances, for this *Paul* blamed him, but yet it was not an Antichristian spirit, though he were a man of most zeal and courage, yet none so subject to be carried away with fear as he was, let Christians therefore most suspect themselves there wherein they least suspect themselves, and think themselves strongest, but this was an infirmity in him.

3. There is a departing from the Faith of the Church, or sitting loose from them in spirit, judgement, and affection, their Doctrine contrary, and hearts contrary, as *Paul* saith, *In the latter days certain shall depart from the faith*, *Heb.* 10. 25 to 29. so that such fall off not only in place, nor fellowship, in ordinance, but in judgement, heart, and affection, that is a mark of an Antichristian spirit, *Jude* 4. 5. 3 *Epist. Joh.* 8, 9, 10.

It is said of the new Converts that were added to the Church, that *they continued in the Apostles Doctrine*, *Acts* 2. 42. therefore when they break from the fellowship of the Church, they depart from the Apostles Doctrine.

Q. *What be the grounds?*

A. 1. From the fellowship the true Members of the Church have with Christ, 1 *Joh.* 1. 4. therefore when you see a spirit of withdrawing from the fellowship of the Church, they depart from the Apostles doctrine, and if from them, then from Christ, for surely our fellowship is with God, and with the

Son, therefore to prevent that denying of Christ, he gives them charge that they do not forsake assembling themselves, &c. *Heb.* 10. 25. to 29. A finger cut off from the hand, is not only cut off from the hand, but from the head too; so if men fall off from the Members, they will also fall off from Christ the Head.

Use 1. Seems to inform our judgements what to think in case of separation, for this place is much abused; The Papists they build on this place that they that separate from their Church are Antichrists. That company, say they, that breaks off from the fellowship of the Church is Antichristian, as it is plain here; now what were *Calvin* and *Luther*, but such as brake off from the fellowship of the Church, therefore they were of Antichrists spirit, and fore-runners of him.

We must therefore know, it is not every separation from that which is called a Church that is a note of an Antichristian spirit, but it must be known whither that were the true Church; now this Church *Saint John* speaks of

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was the true Church, for it was from such whose sins were forgiven; now if it be not a true Church that they break from, it is no sign of Antichrist, 2 *Chro.* 11. 16. such as set their hearts to seek the Loed, separated themselves from those that followed *Jeroboam*, and came to *Jerusalem*; so the Apostles were fain to segregate from the Church of the *jews* which persecuted Christ, and them, and so constituted a Church by themselves, a Christian Church; so then it is not a separation from a false Church, but a true, that is a sign of an Antichristian spirit.

Obj. *But what pretence, or just ground had such Divines to fall from the Romish Church, or we in England? for we only upon the falling our of Hen. 8. with the Pope, fell from him?*

A. True, that matter of Divorce did move him to fall off from the Pope, and indeed that cause was enough to fall off from the Pope, who would bind a Prince to an unlawful marriage.

But the whole Body of Christendom had a Three-fold ground of separation which may be just, when a Church is Heretical; that is, hold an error contrary to the foundation obstinately, yet that is not a sufficient ground; as them Saints; so though the Pharisees had charged that none should profess Christ, which was an obstinate denying of Christ, and taught false Doctrine, yet Christ charges them to obey them, because they sit in *Moses Chair*, and therefore fundamental erroneousness is not always a just cause.

1 Therefore that is a just cause of separation, when a Church is infected with Blasphemy, and Contradiction, and blasphemeth the ways of God, *Acts* 19. 19. *Acts* 13. 45, 46.

2 Idolatry is a just ground of separation, 2 *Cor.* 6. 16, 17, 18.

3 Persecution is a just ground of separation, *Mat.* 10. 23. *Acts* 8. 1.

Now all these have met in the Church of *Rome*, they have blasphemed and condemned as Heretical, Justification by Faith, and other fundamental truths.

2 They worship images, as of the *Virgin Mary*, yea with Divine honour, as the Bread in the Sacrament, what greater Idolatry?

3 The World knows, and the blood of thousands or Martyrs can testify their horrible Persecutions, that as long as we were subordinate to them, we could not profess the true Religion without loss of Goods and Life, therefore we have a just cause to separate our selves from them.

Use 2. It may teach us what to judge of the Separatists, or Brownists, are they of Antichrist?

Surely their practice is blame-worthy.

1 Because they separate, where Christ keeps fellowship, *Rev.* 1. 18. and that he walks with us, we argue, because he is still pleased to dispense to us the Word of Life, and edifies many souls thereby, and therefore surely Christ hath fellowship, and shall man be more pure than his Maker? where Christ vouchsafes fellowship, shall man renounce it?

If they be converted, where had they their conversion?

2 Have not many of God's Servants heretofore kept company with Churches as corrupt as ours are? Did not *Peter* and *John* keep company with them persons, and shall they be more pure and curious?

3 Christ commands, *If thy Brother offend, admonish him*, *Matth.* 18. 17. *if he hear thee not, take two or three more, if he hear not them, then tell it to the Church, and if he hear not the Church, let him be to thee as an Heathen, or Publican*; but if the Church hear not thy complaint, he doth not say, let the Church be as an Heathen, or Publican; now there are many of our Separatists never admonished their brethren, nor made their complaint to the Church, and if they did, and the Church heard them not, must they therefore Excommunicate the Church, and renounce it? therefore unless you find it in Blasphemy, or Idolatry, or Persecution, there is no just ground of separation.

There

1 They say our Worship is corrupt.

2 Our Government is Antichristian.

For the first, you cannot maintain it, for in sundry Congregations you shall not find much Corruption, as for reading of Prayers, if it be lawful to read Psalms, why is it not lawful to read Prayers? therefore that is no just ground, it is that which all Protestant Churches have used.

2 Suppose there were and are sundry abuses in the Church, yet that is no safe ground of separation, *Ezek. 5. 11. Ezek. 9. 4.* so when the Sons of *Eli* corrupted the Sacrifice of God, their Sin was great, yet it was a sin for the people to separate and abhor, *1 Sam. 2. 17.*

2 They say our Government is Antichristian, we say it is that Government that expelled Antichrist sometimes, and sundry have witnessed it with their blood; and I say, further, there is no such corruption in our State as was in *Jerusalem*, when Christ and his Apostles kept Fellowship with them, as two High Priests, &c.

3 They say our Ministry and Calling is Antichristian, we say we do not profess ourselves enemies to Christ, and for our Callings, many of us are elected by the people's approbation, or by such as are set up by the King and State, and if God bids our Ministry to convert thousands to God by that means, it is an evident sign God approves our Calling; for, if it were Antichristian, they would not convert souls to God.

4 They say our people are corrupt, and some such as *Paul* bids not to have communion with, *1 Cor. 5. 11.* as Drunkards, Whoremongers, and therefore you see what evil such do, they make God's people abhor the Offerings, and break off from fellowship with you.

We cannot deny but there are very many corrupt and scandalous persons in our Church, but private Christians have no authority to root them out.

1 For Ministers, if they see that it would turn to the dissipation and destruction of the Flock, it were better to forebear, *1 Cor. 5. Matth. 13. 29, 30. Ezra 4. 20.* they ceased from building the Temple, when there came a command against it; therefore they had better forbear, when it cannot be redressed without greater prejudice to the Church.

2 The Corruption of such doth not corrupt the Church, or the Ordinances of God, *He that eats or drinks unworthily, eats and drinks damnation to himself,* not to the whole Congregation, and you shall find many Churches as corrupt as the Church of *Corinth*, yet the Apostle would not have them renounce it.

Lastly, they say we were never truly constituted, our Church had no true constitution.

A. That constitution which they themselves require hath not been wanting in ours.

1 They say there must be entering into a Covenant, that was done in King *Edward* and Queen *Elizabeth's* days; and whereas they say our Church is but a Parliament constitution, that doth not weaken, but establish our Church.

2 But they say that our Church consists of a mixed multitude, so was that 2 *Chron.* 20. 13. when *Jehoshaphat* assembled all *Judah* before the Lord, *Numb.* 11. 4. there was a mixed multitude, and they did it out of fear, and yet it was a true Church, and so is ours, though there be a mixed multitude. And yet this falling off, because it is not from the main Doctrine, but from the skirts, and some circumstantial, therefore they do not fall utterly from Christ, but yet it is not possible but they weaken their faith.

3 This refutes the Anabaptists, that fall off from our Church, because we baptize Infants before they come to knowledge.

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1 We say, though there were no Baptism, it were no cause to make it no Church as *Israel* in *Egypt* without Circumcision.

2. We say our Children have as much right to Baptism as *Isaac* to circumcision, but they were circumcised the eight day, and if the Covenant belong to them, then the Seals of the Covenant, *Act.* 2. 39. *Mark* 10.

Use 4 Lastly it may teach us all, if it be a sign of Antichristianism to withdraw from the Church, then it is a mark of true Christianity to stick close to the fellowship of the Saints; in Love, in Christian duties, in admonishing one another, in counselling, in comforting, in reproving one another; therefore take heed you forsake not this fellowship, for so you loose your grace and strength, if you sit loose from them; *They that follow lying vanities, for sake their own mercies*, all that ointment that was poured on Christ's head, descends to the lowest skirt of his garment, *PSal.* 133. to the meanest Christian, therefore if you sit loose from Christ and his Members how can you look for any drops of his oil, the vallies receive the showers from the Mountains, there God hath commanded a blessing, and it comes with power and authority; a man that gets a blessing any where else, get it but *precarious*, and as it were by stealth, but in public communication, God hath commanded a blessing.

Now we come to the last point; the end of the departing, of these men out of the Church, *they went out, that it might appear they were not all of us.*

Whose end was this? who propounded this end? it was not their intention to manifest themselves, not to be of the Church, but all heretics pretended that they aimed at a better Church, they never intended it to manifest themselves to be enemies to the Church, neither was it the end of the Church; the Church did not cast them, out but it was voluntary defection, they went out of themselves, therefore the Church did not look at that end, whose end was it then?

Surely it was God's end, who overruled their Apostacy to the benefit of his Church, when he saw them warp from the Fellowship of the Church; God gives them up to Apostacy, that he might make it appear they were not of the Church, *1 King. 3. 24.* fight not against them, for this separation is from me, so this Apostacy of these first teachers is from God, and his end is to manifest that they were not of the Church.

Doct. 5 It is the holy end that God aims at, in giving up seducing corrupt spirits to Apostacy from the Church, that he might discover them that they were Hypocrites whilst they lived in the Church.

God punisheth Hypocrites with Apostacy.

What should move God to discover the Hypocrisy of men by Apostacy? a fearful sin to forsake the ordinances of God, the Covenant of the Church; and what should be the cause moving God thus to work?

1 By this means God manifests the integrity and sound-heartedness of his own servants; God would have his name sanctified by his servants, and it is never more sanctified, than when their sincerity is approved, when others fall off, *1 Cor. 11. 19.* it is needful that Heresies arise, that those which are approved, might be made manifest among you, as in winnowing time, when there comes a good wind, it carries away the chaff, but the Wheat lies on a heap more clean, *Matth. 3. 12.* so Christ hath a fan to winnow his Church, and cleanse out the chaff, that it may be more clean.

2 That so he might prevent the corrupting and seducing of his weak servants, least any should be misled by them, therefore God timely discovers them, *2 Tim. 3. 9.* they shall proceed no further though they had led away some simpler women, laden with many lusts, yet they shall proceed no further, they shall glean no more than some weak judgements, or corrupt hearts, but they shall be discovered, their folly shall be manifest to all men, so careful is God, that when his Church is negligent in casting out such, why God in a special care to his Vineyard, gives up such to defection voluntarily.

3 He

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3. He gives them up to apostacy, that he may preserve the purity of his ordinances and law, *Mal.* 3. 3., 4, 5. as if he should say, as long as corrupt teachers live among men, they so pollute God's ordinances, that they are not so pure and sweet, therefore God he takes a course to refine them from their dross, that is, not only Ministers, though when their spirits are refined, their Ministry is more savoury and fruitful, but further he will make a difference between Hypocrites, and those that are sincere, that so his ordinances may be refined, and this was fulfilled in *John* Baptists time, who came before Christ, *Matth.* 3. 7, 8, 9. who discovered the Pharisees to be Hypocrites that should renounce Christ; and Christ himself said, *Matth.* 23. *Woe be to you Scribes Pharisees, Hypocrites;* so that by their defection, the Christian Congregations, and the ordinances, were more pure and refined, *Prov.* 25. 4, 5. so take away the dross from the ordinances, they came forth more pure.

4 To exempt his people from many scandals and aspersions, that would be cast upon the Church, if these corrupt persons should live among them, *Jude* 12. therefore that these spots might appear to be corrupt humours, and not Members of the body, it pleaseth God that they depart, and so carry away these spots and scandals with them, that so his Church may not be defamed.

5 A fifth end is this, it tends to the just punishment of Hypocrisy; it is a just judgement of God to leave such spirits to be discovered and revealed, *Matth.* 12. 33. it is more acceptable to God, to have things seem as they are; God will have the Tree known by his fruit at length, there is no great difference between the Crab and the good Apple tree, by the leaf or the blossom, therefore it must be known by the fruit, *Rev.* 3. 16. I would thou wert either hot or cold, that I might know what thou art.

Use 1 It may teach us, that even the falls of the sons and daughters of men, are managed and ordered by the wife and good hand of God's providence so you see here is a hand going quite beyond all the ends of men, *they went out that they might be manifest,* and God hath always challenged this to have an hand in the sins of men, not to work, but to punish one sin by another, if God sees envy in *Joseph's* Brethren, he stirs them up to sell him into *Egypt*, and God challenges it, *Gen.* 47. *Gen.* 50. 20. 2 *Sam.* 11. 12. *Exodus* 7. 3. so *Act.* 4. 28. 2 *Chron.* 32. 21. *Isa.* 10. 5. the worst evils that have been in the Church, God hath had an hand in it, 2 *Sam.* 24. 1. not as an Author, but by accidental occasion, he gives them up to take such courses; if *David* be Idle, God gives him up to Adultery; if *Pharaoh* vex God's people, God leaves

him to hardness of heart; if *David* commit Murder and Adultery, he gives up his Son to fratricide and incest; If *Judas* be covetous, he gives him to betray it, by betraying his Master; if they be his own Servants, he doth it to cleanse the; if wicked, he doth it to punish them; therefore let us fear that God that is not only able to cast both body and soul into Hell, but also into sin, which is worse than Hell, by propounding such temptations as may leave a man to run into desperate courses; therefore give not way to any sin, thinking to recover your selves, but fear God will leave you to run into worse.

2 It may teach God's people not to admire, and be offended at it first, if they see men of good esteem and profession fall off, wonder not, such were never of the Church, 2 *Tim.* 2. 17, 18, 19. *Prov.* 10. 25. the righteous are as an everlasting foundation, which God hath founded, and every one of them hath this seal, *The Lord knows who are his*, and therefore be not discouraged, when you see others whom you thought better of than of your selves fall, for *the foundation of God standeth sure*; 2ly, let not other men be offended, if they see some that were Professors fall off into vile courses, say not they are all of one sect, they are all of the same spirit, none better than other, this is the course of them all; say not so, for God gives them up to these base courses to manifest it, that they were not true members of the Church, God would have it thereby manifested

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nifested, that these spots of the face of the Church are not spots of the Body of the Church, but spots in the Vizards of the Church; but God keeps his Church unspotted and undefiled; so that even *Balaam*, could say, *How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob*; therefore if you see any in the Church grow corrupt, and defiled, it implies they were never Members of the Church, God hath nothing to do with such, therefore he turns them out that it may appear what they are; if God at any time leave his people to any scandalous course, that God casts shame on them (which is very rare) if he do, he gives them such unfeigned humiliation, and broken-heartedness, and such chastisements that they recover themselves, that all the World may see, neither doth the Church allow it, nor God, but as they were patterns of sin, so they shall be patterns of repentance, 2 *Sam.* 12. 11. if *David* do fall into scandalous sin, God will follow him with such chastisements, that God will manifest he is no approver of such courses; and *David* himself shall proclaim, that he repents unfeignedly, so that he was not so careful before to cover it, as he is now to divulge it, and declare that it was the cause of bitter anguish to him, so that neither God, nor the Church, nor themselves approve of their sin, but are a-

gainst it.

Use 3. It may teach God's servants to make an holy use of other men's falls; Dost thou see Professors fall into loose wicked courses, and give no testimony of their repentance, why God hereby would manifest that thou art sincere and upright. God hereby prevents thy misleading by their evil counsel, or practice; bless God that hereby he purifies his ordinances, and wipes away the soil of his Church, he wipes their face by casting out such; and especially make this use, *Be not high-minded, but fear; fear that God that is able to cast men from one sin into another, Isa. 6. 2, 3.* Why did the Angel there sing *τρεῖς ἅγιον, Holy, Holy, Holy? &c.* why, because he was to send the Prophet on a Message, to harden the wicked, and make their hearts fat.

Use 4. To exhort all in a special manner to take heed of Hypocrisy, if we take up a course of Religion, and good duties at home, and abroad, we think that God will be merciful to us; but let us see that what we do, we do in spirit and in truth, *Heb. 12. 13. Lev. 10. 3.* God will certainly discover us, scarce ever any lived and died in Hypocrisy, but he was uncase before his death, there is nothing so secret but it shall be revealed. Hypocrisy must be manifest to all men, though there were good hopes of them, yet God washes all the spots of his Church, and not only at the last Day, but in this World, therefore let it nor suffice you to live in the Church, for you may be as ill Humours, and so annoy the Church of God, and it will be well that you be cast out, or at the best, though you be ornaments, and supporters to the Church, yet you are but as glass eyes, and wooden legs, why God may stay long Ear the good of his Church, but certainly he will lay you open to some corrupt Doctrine, or way, that you shall be manifest, *2 Tim. 3. 9.* why, vers. five he tells you what they were, *They had a form of godliness, &c.* implying, it is a mad course to be an Hypocrite, for by his outward profession, he gets the ill will of wicked men, and for want of sincerity, he gets the ill will of God.

There are sundry signs of this Hypocrisy,

1 If thou findest in thyself an hatred of admonition, *Matth. 14. 4. Herod* being impatient of admonition, therefore he put *John* in prison, and thereby manifested his hypocrisy.

2 If thou beest given to praise wicked men, and accompany with them, *Pro. 13. 20. Prov. 28. 4.* that is a fore-runner of forsaking of the Law.

3 When a man makes no Conscience of his Tongue, but lets his Tongue run at random, to passion, or railing, or slandering, *Jam. 1. 26.*

4. If you see any man living in any known sin, and delighting in it, its is such a link as the Devil will chain him fast by.

5 When

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5 When a man shall make use of Religion to my other end than for God's glory, if you make Religion a stalking-horse to your own ends, certainly you will fall off,].h. 6. 26, 60, 66, those that followed Christ for the Loaves, not one of them continued with him, 2 *King.* 10. 29. *Acts* 8. 17. to 23. When *Simon Magus* would make use of Spiritual gifts to get money, he was in the gall of bitterness, and bond of iniquity, his heart was nor right; therefore as you desire to have fellowship with God, be sincere and upright.

I JOHN 2. 20.

But you have an Unction from the holy one, and you know all things.

THe Apostle having instructed little Children that Antichrist would come, and described him, vers. 18, 19. in this verse and the next, he propounds some means to help them.

1 An Unction within themselves, whereby they know all their seducements and snares, vers. 20, 21.

2 The second means is, from the corrupt and false doctrine of these Teachers, who is Antichrist but he that denies the Son? whose doctrine perverted that unction which they had received, vers. 22, 23.

In the first means observe,

1 A benefit received, an Unction.

2 The Author, from Christ.

3 The virtue of it, whereby you know all rhings, you know the truth, and that no lie is of the truth.

To begin with the first, the beuefit, *Ye have an Unction.*

Doct. *There is not the least of the Children of God, but they are partakers of an Oinment from Christ, you little Children have it,* vers. 7.

There were three sorts of Functions in the Old Testament, into which they were instituted by Ointment, Kings, Priests, and Prophets; Kings, 1 *Sam.* 13. 10, 11. so Priests, *Exod.* 29. 7. so Prophets, 1 *King.* 19. 16. now Christ being ordained to be King, Priest, and Prophet, therefore he is called the Anointed, $\kappa\alpha\tau'$ ἔξοχὴν *Joh.* 12. 15. *Luke* 1. 32, 33. *Heb.* 6. 20. *Heb.* 7. 24. *Acts* 3. 22, 23. all other Unctions were but types of him, therefore he is said to be anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows, *Psal.* 45. 4. he was not

only gladdened himself, but all the ends of the earth were made glad by him, therefore has called *χριστός*, now because he was not a type, but the person typified, he was not annointed with material oil, but with the Spirit of God which is the true Unction, *Acts* 10. 38. *Luke* 4. 18. *Dan.* 9. 24. hence called Messiah, in Hebrew, the same with *χριστός* in Greek; from this Ointment of Christ, we are annointed by the same Unction, as *Psal.* 133. so that spirit which was poured on his head, descended to his lowest members, *2 Corinth.* 1. 21, 22. yea to the skirts of his garments, so then we are annointed by the Spirit.

Now fitly are we said to be annointed by the Spirit, as it were by Oil, in a Four-fold respect.

1 As Oil hath been used for healing Wounds, *Luke* 10. 34. so when the Spirits of men are wounded by the sense of sin, God pours in such an Oil of his Spirit, that he heals and binds them up.

2 Oil hath a suppling, softening, and lithening power; so God's Spirit makes us nimble, and agile to every good work; in the East Countries they used to anoint Wrestlers, and Runners, to make them more nimble and quick, such use is the Spirit of, to make us quick, and ready to run the ways of God's Commandments, *Ezek.* 36. 27. and fight and wrestle against our Spiritual enemies, Sin, Satan, and the World.

3 Oil cheareth the hearts and countenances of men, so the Spirit is an oil

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of gladness, *Isa.* 61. 3. so that they are anointed therewith, are no more afraid of hell or Satan, but walk on cheerfully before God; so the graces of God's Spirit, Wisdom makes the face to shine, *Eccles.* 8. 1. takes away Pride, rough looks, wanton looks, and so smooths and makes the countenance amiable; such a soul is annointed with the oil of gladness.

4 There was an use of Oil, to consecrate all Vessels, no Consecration but Oil was a part of it, *Exod.* 33. 23. whether to consecrate Vessels or Offices; this use of oil is in the Spirit of God, from him it is that God's Children are no longer for themselves, or the world, but consecrated to God, and dedicated to him, as Kings, Priests, and Prophets, *Act.* 2. 17. *Rev.* 1. 6. so that that Ointment which was poured on Christ above measure, depends to every Member of his Church, healing their Wounds, softening and suppling their souls, cheering their hearts and countenances, and consecrating them to be Kings, Priests, and Prophets to God, and therefore as Christ was called *χριστός* so every member of Christ is called *Christianos*, *Acts* 11. 26. that is, one annointed, so that every child of God hath in some measure a Kingly, Priestly,

and Prophetical Office, 1 *Samuel* 8. 28. Kings were chosen to be Judges, and to fight the Lord's Battles; why so in some measure every Christian hath a power to judge, 1 *Cor.* 2. 15. and fight the Lord's Battles, such an Unction he hath, that whatsoever case he is called to, he hath a spirit of judging and discerning what is good, what bad, so that he stands not at any man's judgement; if it be of matters concerning Salvation, God hath given him a regal spirit; so Secondly, he is able to fight the Lord's Battles, not against flesh and blood, for they are but typical and shadowy battles, but we fight against Principalities and Powers, *Ephes.* 6. 12. to 18. and so their wars are far above Princes, *Rev.* 12. 1. these are great Battles with Satan, and the World, and our own corruptions, 1 *Pet.* 2. 11. so we should all fight the good fight, 2 *Tim.* 4. 8.

2 As a Priest, he performs the Priestly Office, which stood partly in praying, partly in teaching, partly in sacrificing; so God hath given to every Christian a Spirit of Prayer, and Teaching, *Rom.* 8. 15. *Jer.* 31. 32, 33. so also they offer up to God a sacrifice of a broken heart, *Psal.* 51. 17. a sacrifice of praise, a sacrifice of righteousness, *Psal.* 4. 5, 6. *Rom.* 12. 1, 2. nay, sometimes the Lord gives them to sacrifice whole Towns and Cities unto God, as *Paul*, and *Peter*, offered three thousand together, he takes them from sin, and brings them to God, so that they bring in heaps upon heaps to God, so that they are not poor Kings and Priests, but truly if Christians knew their worth, they would not be so discouraged and cast down in respect of the World.

3 For Prophets, it was their office to Preach and Pray, but this was principal, they had a special revelation of God's secrets, and this is verified of poor Christians, he reveals his secrets to them, *Psal.* 25. 14. *Matth.* 13. 11. so that many a poor Christian is able to discern more than his Minister. *Apollos* was an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scripture, yet he found *Aquila* and *Priscilla*, Tent-makers, that were able to instruct him more perfectly, *Matth.* 11. 25, 26, 27. the great mysteries of Election, Vocation, Justification, which are hid from the world, God reveals these to poor Fisher-men, and to Babes; and as it was a spirit of Prophecy to interpret obscure mysteries, so God many times helps poor Christians so see more clearly into Scripture than many greater Scholars, *Rev.* 3. 18. they have received an Unction from the holy one, that is Christ, he is often called τὸ ἅγιον, *Luke* 1. 65. *Psal.* 16. 10. *Dan.* 9. 24. he is the Holy one, the holy head of the Church, and from him it is that we receive this Unction.

Holiness is that whereby we give God his own due, Holiness is the fulfilling of the first Table, righteousness of the Second; now Christ is called the

Holy one, because he was set apart, not only from all unclean but common uses, and dedicated to the Lord.

Two

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Two things make a thing holy, a setting apart from unclean and common uses and dedicated to Spiritual and Holy uses; so the Sabbath and the Sacraments are said to be holy; now Christ was properly called, *the Holy one*, for no Ordinance so separate from community, as Christ, nor so wholly dedicate to God as Christ was, therefore we see how these little Babes should help themselves against Antichrist; as there is an Antichrist, so there is a Christ, as they have a spirit of seducing, so he is an Unction; a Box of Ointment which is able to confirm you, and help you against all these.

Use 1 Of trial to every Christian, whether he be a true Christian or no, for *he is not a Jew that is one outwardly*, Rom. 2. 27, 28. we would think our selves deeply wronged, if any should deny us to be Christians; why what is a Christian? one that is annointed to be King, Priest and Prophet; dost not thou know the things that belong to thy peace, and heavenly knowledge? Dost thou find that thou canst not war against thy Spiritual enemies? Dost thou find that thou canst not pray, or instruct others? and as for judging, thou sayest, God forbid that I should meddle with other men's matters, the secrets of God are not with me; why, if it be thus with the, though mayest pretend Christianity, but thou hast none in thee; but on the contrary, if thou knowest how to discern things that differ, if thou knowest how to fight the Lord's Battles, thou knowest how to pray, and instruct others, and bring in others; if thou beest able to discern the mysteries of God to subdue Satan, the World, and thine own heart; if it be thus with thee, thou art a Christian, and thou hast that Unction that will never forsake thee, if thou hast received no more then thou hast by thy Book, or thy education, thou wantest these infused gifts, there is never a Christian but he now knows better what Sin is, and what Grace is, then he did before, he is now able to see what he never saw before, he knows the Wrath of Christ, and the excellency of God's favour; why if thy graces come from this inward annointing thou art a Christian, such a one whose praise is of God, and not of man.

Use 2. Would you know where the Church is, every company of faith, It is in me, the Papists say, it is in me, and the Separatists, it is in me; the Protestants say, it is in neither of you, but in me; why where you have a Company endued with this holy Ointment, why there the Church is, and he that departs from it, is of Antichrist; so then, the question is, Where is this Spiritual Unction? alas, it is an hard thing for blind natural men to know, but

yet as the Ambassador of *Persia* said, *Quot Senatores, tot reges*, so where you see a company of Christians, *Quot Christiani, tot reges*, so many Kings, Priests, and Prophets, *Psal.* 45. 16. the children of the New Testament, shall be answerable to the Fathers of the Old, and shall be endued with suitable graces; they are Princes in what part of the World soever they are, Princes judging of things in difference, indeed with a Princely spirit to overcome the World, and Satan, and his own Corruptions; they have a Priestly Office, to pray and instruct, to sacrifice themselves and their Families to God, &c. therefore if you find such a company, verily there is the Church of God; and let not the Separatists say you have profane persons among you: We say, though they be amongst us, yet they are not of us, and therefore that hinders us not from being the Church; therefore whither should we go to seek the Church, but where this Unction is.

Use 3. For all you that have received this Unction, it is not for Kings and Princes to be digging in the earth, it is not for Priests and Prophets to be ignorant, and blind, and dumb, *1 Cor.* 6. 1. to 7, *Paul* is confident that the meanest Christian is a Judge, What a shame is it for a Christian at every temptation to be carried Captive? What a shame is it, for Kings to soil and besnut themselves, for *Saul* to cast away his shield was a vile dishonour; so for Christians to be soiled, and carried away with every temptation, for you to cast away your shield, as if you had not been annointed is a great disho-

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nour. It becomes Christians to fight like Princes, and to be victorious, and to judge like Kings; to walk as Priests of the high God, know how to pray, how to instruct your Families, how to offer all your ways to God, all your Families, you are not to be only holy-day Priests, but daily Priests.

Use 4 It may teach every Christian that stands in need of healing or suppleing your stiff spirits, you need balm and oil for healing the wounds of your souls, and suppleing, and softening your stiff spirits, why here is an unction that will heal thy wounds, and soften thy heart; entreat God that he would shed abroad his spirit into thy heart, that he would heal thy spirit, and soften thy heart, and cheer thy soul; look up to the holy one, he is able to pour floods of consolation on thee, and establish thy soul in peace; do we find our spirits hard, and stiff, and bound, our spirits very straight, and stand in need of a great deal of alacrity? why yet this spiritual unction will so enlarge thee, and supple thee, that thou shalt find thy self helped and quickened, that thou mayest do things not weakly, but with power and life; so if we find corruptions so strong that we know not how to overmaster

them, there is an unction from this holy one, able so strengthen us against them, entreat God therefore to power it down upon thy soul; so do you want power and life in God's ordinances? why in any need look up to him,

Use 5 Here is a ground of much consolation that God is pleased to bestow such a mercy, such a blessing as this upon us, how are we bound to Christ that is pleased to annoint us with the same ointment where with himself was anointed? it is a ground of much consolation; Christians are often called to great employments, which if they look on themselves, they see themselves altogether unfit for, such as *Moses* said, send by whom thou wilt send; but is not this unction able to make us Kings and Priests? we know where to find supply, and if God call us to more employments, that is our comfort, that we have an unction which is able to fit us for every work, and employment God shall call us to.

Use 6 Of exhortation to every Christian, not to rest contented in an empty name of Christianity, till you get this spiritual unction; rest not in any known strength, but what you receive by this spirit, otherwise you shall find much wanton help, *Matth.* 25. 1. to 10. the wise Virgins had their oil continually ready and prepared, whensoever Christ came; but the foolish Virgins, some oil they had, some common gifts and graces, but they were spent, and it was too late to seek for oil when the Bridegroom came, so do not only hear the Word, but labour to find some oil dropped into your souls, that so in storms, you might find the life and comfort of the spirit.

1 JOH. 2. 20.

But ye have an unction from the holy one, and ye know all things.

IN these words the Apostle prescribes a means to preserve them against seducements and the first means is the unction they had received *from the holy one*, which is a comparison from the legal ointment; this spirit of Grace should be as an Antidote against all Antichrists.

Now we come to speak of the virtue of this unction.

Doct. The little Children of God, by virtue of the ointment of the spirit of Grace, they know all things.

So Verse 27. so that there is an abiding ointment, and so sufficient, that they need not be taught more or better things than it will teach them.

For Explication.

1 Consider the subject, *ye know all things*. This universality of Christian knowledge is amplified by the subject *ye know all things*.

1 For

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1. For the desire of their hearts, they desire to know all things necessary to salvation, *Act.* 10. 33. this is the frame and disposition of a converted heart, to know all things, and so great is the desire of God's Children to know this, that they desire to know those things that are most against them, 1 *Sam.* 3. 17. *Eli* knowing by *Samuel's* lingering that he had some terrible message, yet he would know it, and urged him by a curse to declare it, and when he had told him, yet saith he, Good is the Word of the Lord; so that a godly heart desires to know all the will of God, especially if it belongs to him, though it be never so bitter, it is contrary with a carnal heart; few are willing to know all things, especially if they be against them, and cross their lusts, they would not know it, so *Mark* 6. 12. in *Herod*, so *Isa.* 13. 10. they were men of that frame, that would have the Prophet speak pleasing things, *Mal.* 2. 11.

2. As in their desire, so in the preparation of their hearts they know it, so that if God reveal his Will at any time, they have hearts ready to hear it, and apprehend it better, *Joh.* 10. 4, 5. there is a vertue in them, whereby they discern betwixt the truth of Christ, and false Doctrine, so the noble *Bereans* were more noble, because they received the truth with all readiness and fear, *Act.* 17. 11, 12. they searched the Scriptures, so that the Word falls into their hearts like good seed; but on the contrary, if any man consent not to wholesome words, but makes questions and contention about them, he knows nothing, 1 *Tim.* 6. 3, 4, 5. because he hath an heart unprepared to receive it therefore *contra*, he that is ready to receive it, knows it; such a one knows all things.

3 In regard of their humility and meekness of spirit, whereby they think they know nothing, and more foolish than any, *Prov.* 30. 2, 3. *Agur* saith, I am more brutish than any man, and have nor the understanding of a man; yet as foolish as he was, and debased himself before his Scholars, yer he exhorts them to fetch their knowledge from the high one; therefore the Holy Ghost seeing such a deep self-denial in him, he ranks him with *Solomon* for his wisdom, and puts his Proverbs among his, 1 *Cor.* 2. such a man as thinks he knows any thing, knows nothing as he ought to know; therefore he that thinks he knows nothing, as weak Christians do, such a one knows all things, which God sees meet for him, and this sense of their own Ignorance, makes them still thirst the more after Knowledge.

2. For the Act, *ye (know) all things*, other men may know much, yet knowing they do not know, and understanding they do not understand, *Prov.* 9. 12. he that knows not for his own soul's good, is not wise, *Prov.* 24. 5. a wise man increaseth in knowledge, this difference is

1 His knowledge is more clear, one man sees a thing by Candle-light, another by daylight, but he sees most clearly, that sees at noon day; so a Christian sees things not only by the dim light of nature, nor the day;ight of the Word, but by the bright clear light of the spirit, that clearly manifests things.

2 His knowledge is more certain, he knows by his own experience the misery of sin, the excellency of Grace, he knows how Christ was formed in him, he hath conceived him in his soul, and so knows all the motions and operations of his spirit, *Gal. 4. 19.*

3 It is more particular, he can apply all he hears and reads to himself, how far this promise belongs to him; he thinks the command belongs to him, the threatnings to him, the promises to him, he thinks the Word was penned for him; another man he reads and hears, and never applies it to himself, *nunquid ego talis*, when he hears a Christian may be assured of his salvation, am I so? Christ's death is not only sufficient, but effectual to them that believe, but do I believe? he hears that young men overcome the World, but do I so, and overcome? thus it is with a Christian, another man rests in the Theory.

4 Their knowledge is effectual, it makes them ready to obey, *the Law is a light*

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a light to my feet, and a lanthorne to my paths, saith *David*, it is not a light to the understanding only, but it is a light to my steps, to my practice, all the understanding they have is a true knowledge; if a man should walk in such a soil, where he should certainly sink in, and be swallowed up, would you think he knows the danger? it is a sign he knew it not; so we say, if we meet with one of our acquaintances, and he passeth by us without observing, we say, he would not know us.

3. For the object (*all things*) that is, all things pertaining to life and godliness, *2 Pet. 1. 3.* for they do not know the motions of the Heavens, the influences of the Saints, the nature of the Creatures, but they know all things belonging to life and godliness.

1. They know all things necessary to Salvation, no fundamental point but God reads it to them which is necessary to Salvation, *Joh. 17. 3.*

2. They know all things that are expedient in their Callings, and places to know, and there is a manifold expediency.

1. It is expedient, some men in some Callings should know more than others, as Ministers, *Jer. 3. 15. Mal. 2. 7.* it is fit that they should know more than others, and God hath promised *their lips shall preserve knowledge*; so it is not enough for a Magistrate to know as a private Christian, but he

should know how to administer Judgement, 1 *King.* 3. 9. & 12. as *Solomon* prayed for Wisdom so Husbands should know more than Wives, 1 *Pet.* 3. 17, to Parents than Children, *Ephes.* 6. 4.

2 There is an expedience and meekness in regard of the present condition of God's people, if God see that his Children be put up with knowledge, he is pleased to leave them in much ignorance; but if he finds their hearts humble, and prepared to hear, he doth delight to pour out his Spirit on them, *Psal.* 25. 9. as long as the Woman had an empty Vessel, the Oil run, but when it was full, it ceased; so as long as we come with empty hearts this Oil runs upon them, but as soon as they think they have enough, and rest content their knowledge stands at a stay .

3 There is expediency for the present practice in any business, a man that hath present need of direction, in some present business that must: presently be done, if men have humble hearts, and look up to God why the Spirit is pleased to whisper into his heart, there is your way, walk in it, *Isa.* 30. 21.

4. There is a further expedience for the present condition of the Church, for sundry things are expedient in sundry Ages, it had been an hinderance of many Providences of God, had they known the sinfulness of *Poligamy*, in the first Ages of the World; so, many Christians were ignorant of the Death and Resurrection of Christ, but after the Ascension of Christ they had the clear knowledge thereof, 2 *Pet.* 1. 18. the days of the Old Testament were but as a dim light, now it is more clear; the Fathers of the Church of Old had little of the *Revelation* of Saint *John*, and as the Church hath now need to know more than at other times, so God reveals himself accordingly; had those seven thousand in *Israel* which bowed not their knee to *Baal*, been endued with the spirit of *Elias*, certainly the Church had been dissipated, had they spoken with the same spirit and power that he did, they had been dissipated; but they knew as much as God saw fit for their present condition, and so what God sees meet for you to know, as far as you stand in need to know the spirit of Antichrist in these times, so far shall knowledge be revealed to you, so that you may be preserved.

For the Reasons of the Point.

Reas. 1. From the object of their Knowledge, and in him all things needful, 2 *Cor.* 2. 2. in Christ they have enough, *Col.* 2. 9, 10, therefore having got Christ, will he not give you all other things needful? since God hath given us Christ,

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our head understands all things, and the head will be sure to guide the foot, when it hath need to go.

2. From the excellency of their Teacher, *John* 6. 45. thy Children shall be Θεὸ διδάκτοι, *Isa.* 48. 17. and if God undertake to teach us, to profit by him, and he is able to do more than any other teachers; they may teach, but they cannot give a dullard wit, but God can open our understandings, and enlarge our hearts with wisdom, so that he will clear the object, the Medium, and the faculty, *Psal.* 119. 13. *I have more understanding than my teachers,* so vers. 97.

Use 1. A ground of singular comfort to any poor Christian, that whatsoever is needful for him, expedient for him, we have a teacher; every poor Christian hath a Counsellor within him, that teacheth him all things, and this is better than the *Urim*, and *Thummim*, and *Ephod*, to counsel at, we have an unction which is worth all, we have an oracle in our breasts, which if we would but rub up, would reveal all things to us.

2. Here is a ground of trial to all, art thou a true Child of God? thou mayest know it by thy knowledge, dost thou find thy heart prepared to receive Christs's voice? and dost thou discern of things that differ? and dost thou still think thou knowest nothing? is thy knowledge clear, particular and effectual? doth God give thee knowledge according to thy calling, and present employment? why then certainly thou art a Child of God, and hast received an unction from the holy one; but if it be contrary with thee, thou canst not be assured that thou hast received an unction from the spirit, and so the least in God's Kingdom is greater, and hath received more knowledge than you.

Use 3. May teach every Child of God, what course to take to get knowledge, and use it, and increase it; if you want knowledge, give up thy heart to God, labour for that spiritual eye salve, that may enlighten thine eyes; one days teaching in Christ's School, is able to teach thee more than thou canst learn all thy life time from other teachers, if you neglect this, though you should spend much time in Schools, and Universities, you shall not find so much, as the poorest Christian can teach you.

And for you that have received this unction, make use of it, it is not for you to hide and smother this light, it is for you to consult at this oracle, and take heed by all means that you grieve not this spirit by any vanity, or sin you cleave unto, for then you shall find this ointment very much straitened, and you shall be put to great straits, therefore keep your hearts empty, and humble, hungering after the ways of God, and gladly receive his motions,

he will be ready to fill empty Vessels, and to guide an humble soul in his ways; *Lead me O Lord in thy ways*, saith *David*, he speaks as a blind man, that wants some body to lead him; such souls as are sensible of their own blindness, and depend upon God, and are ready to walk according to the counsel he gives, the Lord will be ready to reveal all things to them, necessary and expedient, and yet think you still have need of help, but yet take heed of trusting to any motion, but what comes from the spirit.

Use 4. Here we see, of what use it is to consult with Christians in cases of difference, *1 Cor. 6. 1 to 6.* for the weakest Christian is more able to discern than the greatest heathenish Philosophers or Counsellors; God doth provide that there shall be some differences in the judgements of his Children, but in the main, they shall hold no error hurtful; therefore let us search more into this ointment, and labour for it more than ever; we never had more knowledge, than in these days, and our Children will have more; therefore let us labour to establish them and our selves in the truth.

1 JOHN

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1 JOHN 2. 21.

I have not written unto you, because you know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that life is of the truth.

THESE words are an answer to all objection that might arise from the former verse, why might they say, if we know all things, what need you write to us concerning such and such things? or thus, if we know all things, what need you write to us? if we know not, how can we be said to know all things? to this he answers in this vers. *I write unto you, not because you know not the truth, &c.* wherein we have the cause of his writing.

1 The Negative, not for their Ignorance.

2 The Positive cause, because ye do know, and because *verum ex Judice, exsui & oblique*, therefore you know likewise what is not of the truth, *that no lie is of the truth.*

Doct. *The Apostles writings were rather directed to such as know the truth, then such as know not the truth.* Or thus, *It is not the ignorance of the truth, but rather the knowledge of it, that occasioned the Apostles writings.*

Observe all the Apostles writings, they were never written to any Country, or Town, or, person that did not know the truth before, but they were already brought on to the knowledge at the truth, *Rom. 15. 14.* so the *Corinths*,

he speaks to them, as to a Church of God, 1 *Cor.* 1. 2. & 8, 9. so *Gal.* 1. 2, 3, 4. and chap. 3. so *Ephes.* 4. 21. *Phil.* 1. 6. *Col.* 1. 12, 13. so the *Thessalonians*, he blessed God for their election, 1 *Thes.* 1. 9. so *Timothy* and *Titus* he writes to them, as to his natural sons in Christ, *Heb.* 6. 9, 10, 11. so the Apostle *James* chap. 1. 2, 3. so 1 *Pet.* 1. 2, 3, 4. so this Apostle *St. John*, *I write unto you, because you know the truth*, 2 *Epist.* 1. and third *Epistle*, 2, 3. so the *Epistles*, Christ wrote to the seven Churches of *Asia*, he wrote to them as such as knew the truth of Christ, and professed his name; so that this is an universal truth, that not the Ignorance of the truth, but the knowledge, hath occasioned the Apostles writings.

Reas. 1. From God, who hath not sanctified their writings to this end, to the conversion of the *Gentiles*, but to their establishment, the Apostle here speaks of them that knew the main truth, though they were Ignorant of many particular truths; if men be converted to the truth; and brought to prize Christ and walk in obedience, there may be great use of the Apostles writings to establish them in the truth, we never read that they wrote to any Kingdoms where themselves had not been or sent; they wrote not to *Persia*, or *Spain*, or *France*, but to such places as they had been at, and if God had sanctified their writings to the conversion of the *Gentiles*, it had been more fit to write to such places, where they were not likely to come, rather than such places as they came at, 1 *Cor.* 1. 2. but we see that God hath so ordered it, that men should be called by the foolishness of preaching, *Rom.* 10. 13, 14, 15. and not of writing, it is not his writing to them, but he must be sent to them, so that the work of conversion is wrought by the preaching of the Gospel.

Reas. 2 From the accompanying of their preaching of the Gospel with mighty signs and wonders, but we never read that God accompanied any of their writings with miracles, their writings laid upon any disease, healed none, but their presence healed many, and did many wonders, *Heb.* 2. 2, 3, 4. 1 *Cor.* 5. 22. tongues are not for them that believe, but them that believe not, that is, the miracle of speaking with divers tongues, is not for them that believe, but for them that believe not; therefore we never read in any History, that their writings did work any miracle, and so he never intended that they should convert.

Obj.

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Obj. *What then, is their writing in vain, seeing they are of no use to convert?*

A. No, there are singular uses of their writings.

1 Sometimes to put men in remembrance of what they have heard, *Rom.* 15. 14. 2 *Pet.* 1. 15.

2 That they may be established in the truth, and confirmed in the knowledge thereof, 2 *Cor.* 13. 1. *Phil.* 3. 1. To write the same things, to me it is not grievous, but for you it is safe.

3. To stir them up to the exercise of such truth as they knew, but were slack in the performing thereof; sometimes in liberality slack, sometimes in dispensing of the Ordinances, 2 *Pet.* 2. 13. 1 *Joh.* 1. 4. 2 *Joh.* 8. *Revel.* 2. 4, 5. to stir them up to their first Love, to stir them up to take heed of false Doctrine.

4 To inform them in some particular truth which they were ignorant of; some were afraid that the Day of the Lord was so nigh that they neglected their particular callings, 2 *Thes.* 2. so some were ignorant of the Resurrection, so he tells *Timothy* how to behave himself, 1 *Tim.* 3. 15. so he informs the *Corinthians* how Husbands ought to carry themselves towards their Wives, in case of desertion, or present persecution.

Use 1. It shews a reason of that little good which hath been done among the Papists, by any Writings that have been writ in defence of the truth, they have been means of much good to them that have known the truth, but amongst Millions of Papists, it is hard to know whether any have been converted to the true Religion, after such evident demonstration and conviction, the reason is, because Writings do not profit them that know not the truth, but such as know the truth, for else why did not Saint *John* write to *Cerintus*, or other Heretics in that time? but he tells them, *I write to you, because you know the truth*, had he writ to *Cerintus*, or *Menander*, his labour would have been lost, not but that it hath done much good, not only to them that have known the truth, but those that have not known the truth, it hath stirred them up to like the truth better, and some to seek out the truth in other Writings, but never to convert them to the truth; God hath many times blessed sudden specches to convert some that have come to hear the truth, but it hath never been so effectual to them that have only read it in writings, for God never sanctified the Apostles Writings to the conversion of the unbelieving *Gentiles*.

Obj. *Why then do not our Divines spare their labour in writing?*

A. Though they do not prosper to conversion, yet to establishment of many in the truth, and to stir them up to stick closer to the truth.

Use 2. You may hence see the reason, why such as read the Word of God diligently, it may be once or more every day, yet notwithstanding not being

accompanied with the preaching of the Gospel, few, or none such are converted and brought to the true knowledge of the truth, but such people are fit to be led into Popery or Heresy; no wonder, for God never blessed the Apostles Writings, while they were living, to the conversion of unbelievers, therefore we see the necessity of preaching to every Congregation, or else the body of the place will fit in darkness and shadow of death; therefore it is a false Assertion of those that say, Reading and Preaching are of like efficacy, for it is certain, had the Apostles' Writings been as effectual to conversion as their presence in preaching, they would have wrote most to such Churches as were most remote, 2 *Chron.* 15. 3. a long time they were without a God, and without a Teaching Priest implying, they that are without a Teaching Priest are without God, 1 *King.* 13. 33. the reason, because he set up base fellows, that wanted both learning and grace, and so only read, but they had not a Teaching Priest, and therefore lived without God.

Obj. *But you will say, what can be more said of pagans?*

Z

2. *And*

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2 *And what the, will you judge that all such as live under dumb Ministers are cast-a-ways?*

A. Whether do you think it greater charity to tell them that they may be without a Teaching Minister, or to tell them, that without a Teaching Minister they live without God, and without the Law? we know, that many that live in such places go abroad, and light on good Sermons, and so Christ is found where he was not sought, and then they either remove themselves, or go many miles to hear the Word abroad, and God often blesseth private conference and helps, to do much good, *Neh.* 8. 12. but men that go home from bare reading, their hearts go home as dead as their Minister was dumb, so that you shall find many people as ignorant as Pagans and Turks.

Use 3. It may serve for direction to such as God hath given a gift of writing unto, to know where their Writings may be of most use; if you write to some, thinking to convert them, it will be labour in vain, but to write to them that know the truth, may be of much use, to inform them, to reprove them, to stir them up, and to you may write with comfort to them.

Use 4 May serve to encourage all Christians to be frequent in reading; to what purpose did the Apostles write, if others read not? it is good to be reading; put more fuel to fire and it grows hotter, so let people read after they have heard, and it will be very profitable; therefore we see the great abuse

of the Papists, that deny the reading af the Scriptures in a Vulgar Tongue.

Let us therefore be stirred up, not to forebear the reading of the Scriptures, though you do know the truth, *Deut.* 17. 19. if Kings might not be excused, much less private men.

Doct. 2. *Such as have received from Christ the anointment of the Spirit, they know the truth.*

You that have received the Unction of the Holy one, *I write to you, not because you know not the truth, but because you know it,* 1 *Tim.* 4. 3. where he puts Believers and Knowers together, now Believers are anointed with the Spirit of faith, *Job.* 8. 31, 32. so much sinceriry of truth, so much Discipleship, the stronger faith, the stronger knowledge of the truth, the weaker our faith, the weaker our knowledge.

For Explication.

Q. 1. *What is the truth?*

A. The truth might be taken for the Lord Jesus Christ, and he is not to be excluded, but he is not principally meant here, *Joh.* 15. 6. and it is true, that they know Christ that have received this Unction, *Joh.* 6. 69.

But here by the truth is meant the Doctrine of the Gospel, *Ephes.* 4. 21. which is called the truth in Jesus, that truth which teacheth us to find Christ, to prize Christ, and you know it in a special manner, as it is in Jesus in a Crucified manner, you know it as it is in Jesus which raiseth you from death to life; it is sometimes called *the Word of truth*, *Col.* 1. 5. *Gal.* 2. 4, 5. so then, you that know the truth, you know the worth of Christ, the means to find him, yea you know him in a Crucified manner, in his Death and Resurrection.

Q. 2. *What is the knowledge of the truth?*

A. Three things make up the knowledge of the truth.

1 The understanding of it.

2 Approving of it, and consenting to it.

3 Because a man may consent to it, either as probable, or as certain and evident knowledge, therefore is not only an understanding of the truth, but a consenting to it, and that not as a probable thing, but as an undoubted certain truth, *Judicium contingentis axiomatis oft opinio, necessari scienti*, if it be from the causes, then it is *scienti*, if by the effects, *congnitio*.

And thus these Babes know the truth you understand it, you consent to it,
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you yield to it as a certain and undoubted truth; and that all these concur to knowledge, we may see by Scripture.

1 For understanding, see *Luk.* 24. 45.

2 They approve and consent to it, and follow it, *Joh.* 10. 4, 5, 27.

3 They do not only understand it clearly, and approve at it, but receive it as a certain undoubted truth; so *Joh.* 6. 69. *We know*, and are assured, *that thou art of Christ.*

There is as much difference between knowledge and faith, as betwixt hearing and seeing; if I hear a thing from an undoubted testimony I believe it, but when I see it myself, I know it more evidently; *Stephen* believed that Christ sat at God's right hand, but when he saw it, he knew it certainly; so that these Babes by some sight and experience know those things that they believe, *Heb.* 11. 3. this knowledge, is one of the chiefest things that perfects the mind of a man, *Isa.* 11. 2. what spirit of wisdom and understanding? understanding apprehends it, Wisdom Judgeth of it, and discerns of the truth hereof; Knowledge sees that they are most certainly true, and then he believes it *Joh.* 6. 69. we know, and are sure, for none can know a thing but those that are sure of it.

Q. What is the reason, that by virtue of this Unction babes come to know the truth?

Reas. 1. Because this Spirit is an eye-salve to make them understand; by nature we are slow and dull of understanding, but as soon as God hath dropped in some of this Spiritual eye-salve, we strongly see the deep things of God, and those which we were dull to understand before.

2 He vouchsafes to them Wisdom, whereby they embrace and approve the truth, as the very truth of Christ, and they have a spirit of faith to believe it, theretore have knowledge of it.

3 He gives them experience, that their hearts do as plainly feel, as their understandings know; nay these Babes, they fetch their understanding from the feeling of their hearts, they know the danger of sin, and the worth of Christ, and this puts them to reach after Christ, and look at him as the most excellent of a thousand, and so they come to find true fellowship with Christ, by putting into them a spirit of peace, 1 *Pet.* 3. 8. so that they know it not only by faith, but by experience, and so they know the truth as it is in Christ; you may have men by hearing and study, come to know very largely of the ways of Grace, the Doctrines and points of Divinity; nay, they may come to approve of them, and may convince an adversary, but yet this is not properly a knowledge of these things, but an understanding of them; a man

that wants this Unction may say, he understands there, and believes them, but he cannot say he know, them by any sensible work of God on his own soul.

Use 1 May exhort all (in the nature of the Lord) that intend to receive the Sacrament, to a conscionable care and endeavour to get knowledge, it is not a priviledge of Scholars, but even of very Babes, if they have received this Unction, therefore let none excuse themselves, for if the Apostle acknowledge it in Babes, it may shame elder people, if they be ignorant of the rudiments of Religion, therefore labour to grow up to a knowledge of the truth; there is no hope that you should either find comfort in God's Ordinances here, or in the life to come, if you be ignorant of the truth, *Isa. 27. 11.* it is a fearful judgement. These people have no understanding, therefore their Maker will shew them no favour, that is, no grace in Christ, they shall neither find mercy, nor favour; and mark how he prevents an Objection: He that made us will surely save us; no, if you be ignorant he that made you will not save, you, therefore if you would ever get any good to your souls, above all gettings get understanding, for without it look for no mercy, and above all understanding get this wisdom, which is infused by the Unction of the Spirit.

Z 2

And

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And so Parents and Masters, as yon desire to get favour of God for your Children, and Servants, be careful to instruct them in the ways of truth, and for such as have got knowledge, labour to grow up in this Spiritual knowledge, *Col. 2. 2, 3.* Three things did *Paul* conflict for;

1 That their hearts might be comforted, nothing more useful for a Christian than comfort, but when Christians have got comfort, it is easy for Christians to sit loose one from another, and not to regard one another; therefore,

2 His conflict was, that they might be knit together in the bond at love.

3 That they might grow up to fulness of knowledge, &c. so that we see it is matter of great Conflict to the Apostles, with God, that they might be brought to the riches of full assurance, and shall Ministers thus Conflict for their people, and shall not people themselves labour to grow up to fulness of knowledge, and not be remiss, and know some pieces and parts of the truth; but to come to the riches of the fulnels of understanding? it would be a great Conflict to a faithful Minister to see people poor in knowledge, to have only a few remnants and shreds of knowledge, some superficial kind

of knowledge, therefore let people labour for the riches of the full assurance of understanding, which is properly true knowledge; we see therefore how much Parents and Masters are to blame, that are so far from having Conflicts for the knowledge of their Children, and Servants, that they have no care at all to help them on; you are merciless Parents, and Masters, that do not labour to bring them on to the riches of knowledge, for without this they shall find no mercy, nor favour from God.

Use 2 It may serve for a sign of trial of our knowledge, whether we have received the unction of the Holy one, if you know the truth in a right manner, then you have partaken of the Unction of the Holy one; this differs from all other knowledge, for the cause of it, it is from God, *Isa.* 54. 4. the means of getting it, is to attend diligently to the Word; private conference may bring on men to the understanding of the truth; nay, where other means fail, it may bring them on to the knowledge of faith. *Joh.* 4. 42. when we come to public Ordinances, we arise to higher and full understanding, and riches of full assurance, they perceived Christ so speaking to their Souls, that they believed on him now by experience.

First, therefore listen to private Christians, but frequent the Ordinances, whereby you shall grow up to fulness of knowledge.

The Second Means, is, frequency in prayer, *Prov.* 2. 13, 14.

Thirdly, Obedience is the way to get knowledge, *If any man do my Father's Will he shall know the truth*; If you pray to God, and come to the Word, with a desire to do what you hear, and resolve that what the Lord speaks, you will hear and do it, and not only such resolution as is extorted by some Thunder-shakings, as the Jews, *Exod.* 20. but when you have a settled resolution, to obey what you know to be God's Will, God will increase your knowledge.

2 This knowledge differs from other knowledge in the effects, for this knowledge humbles men, *Prov.* 30. 2, 3. and this knowledge works faith, *Psal.* 10. 9. *They that know thy name will trust in thee*; and obedience, *Col.* 1. 5, 6. that knowledge which bring not forth obedience is no knowledge, which none doth but this kind of knowledge.

I JOH.

I JOH. 2. 21.

Because ye know the truth, and that no lie is of the truth.

These words afford us Three Doctrines.

1 That every Antichristian Doctrine is a Lie, for of that he speaks.

2 That no Lie (that is, no Antichristian Doctrine) is of the truth, that is, flows from the truth of the Gospel.

3 Such as have received the spiritual Unction, and do know the truth, they also know that no Lie is of the truth. For the first,

Doct. *Every Antichristian Doctrine is a lie.*

Q. *What is a lie in Doctrine, for that is the Lie that is here meant?*

A. Three things make up a Lie.

1 That the Proposition do not agree with the thing we speak of.

2 That it agree not with the Notion that we have in our minds.

3 That we speak it with a purpose to deceive; all these are found in every Antichristian Doctrine.

1 These enunciations do not agree with the word of truth, for else they could not be a lie, the word ἀντιχριστοῖς shews they agree not with the truth of Christ.

2 These Doctrines are contrary to the Judgements of them that deliver them, and this may appear from the definition of an Heretic, *Tit. 3. 10, 11.* an Heretic is one that is subverted in his error, and is condemned of himself; Heresy therefore is all subversion by error, and maintaining of the same with obstinacy; a man may be an erroneous man, but he doth not come to be an Heretic till he be condemned in himself, that is, speak contrary to his judgement, which may appear, when rather than he will depart from his error, he will contradict himself, as when he is convinced, he falls to wrangling, or blaspheming, these are signs of such as speak contrary to their own Judgement.

3 They deliver them with a purpose to deceive, as *Ephes. 4. 14.* *They lie in wait to deceive,* they plot how to beguile the Consciences of men, and this kind of Heresy is called πονουργία, that is, Cheaters every way, or they are as Coggers of Dice, so that their trade is but to deceive and cheat men, so that we see, there is a Threefold Lie in every Antichristian Doctrine.

1 It is materially a Lie, the Doctrine it self is contrary to the truth.

2 It is a Lie formally, they speak against their judgement.

3 It is efficiently a lie, they breed lies in others, 1 *Tim. 4. 1, 2.*

Q. *What is the reason why every Antichristian Teacher is a liar, and his Doctrine a lie.*

A. Because it springs from a lying spirit, not from a Spirit of truth, but of lies; so the Devil describes himself when he seduceth false Prophets. 1 *King.* 22. 22. to be a Lying spirit, as if there were no more effectual way to seduce Kings than by false Teachers, acted by the Lying Spirit; I will put error in their hearts, and make them obstinate in it, and unanimous in it, so that four hundred false Prophets shall easily out-bear one *Michiah*; the like doth the Devil in all false Teachers, he cometh, and is a Lying Spirit in them, with such seemliness and shew of truth, that it deceives them, they take it for truth, 2 *Thes.* 2. 6. they shall come with deceitfulness of Doctrine, and many false lying Wonders, whereby they shall seduce many.

Reas. 2. From the corrupt end that these false Teachers do evidently aim at in all their Doctrine, *Acts* 20. 30. some do it in ambition to draw Disciples to themselves, and not to Christ; such was *Simon Magus*, that gave out

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that he was the Christ that suffered, and so drew many after him; after him, *Menander*.

2 Some aimed to fill their bellies, and to get gain and pleasure from their followers, *Rom.* 16. whose belly is their God, so that they serve not Christ, but their own bellies, and for that end with fair flattering speeches; they beguile for filthy lucre; *Tit.* 1. 11, 12. so that all the lusts of the World, they aim at, ambition, sensuality, and filthy gain, are the ends they aim at, and if their ends be so corrupt, their Doctrine must needs be corrupt and a lie.

Reas. 3 From the sport and least they make at deludllg people, one would think there should none be so desperately wicked, to come into congregations, and obtrude false Doctrine, and delude men, and then make a sport of it 2 *Pet.* 2. 13. it sports them to see how handsomely they circumvented such a man, at such a conference, this is matter of sport to them, to see how at feasts and meetings they could carry the whole Table before them. *Gal.* 6. 12, 13. what is their end? they desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, and they glory in it, and triumph, and they themselves regard not many things that they obtrude on others, they make no scruple of it themselves, they know they are empty things, so that this is manifestly a lie.

Use 1 May teach us how to conceive of Popery, and stir upon our selves an holy indignation against it; you see that Popery is at thee, and hath deluded many; *Machivell* did clearly discern that their religion was but mere juggling, to fill the Pope's Coffers, and keep his Kitching warm by Purgatory and pardons, &c. therefore let none trust them, but indeed this was his wickedness, though he discerned this, he sought not the true Religion, and this is the

evil of their Religion, it leads simple men to superstition, and understanding men to Atheism; and if Popery be but cheating, and juggling, and lying, it must kindle in us, an inward loathing of that Religion; *Bellarmin* doth directly bring that for his defence, which was palpable and *ex institutio*, writ against them, and therefore it is plain, that every Antichristian Doctrine is a lie, not only against the truth, but against their own judgement to deceive, *Psal.* 119. 128. let it be our care to look at every law of God as just, and to hate every false way, nothing so odious to man, as to be cheated; men take it most indignely to he made a fool of, why truly that is the end of Antichristian Doctors to cheat and beguile men.

Use 2 It must teach us how prone our natures are to receive such false Doctrines, *Psal.* 58. 3. *Rom.* 13. 4. every man's judgement is apt to take up that opinion which suits with his understanding; now because by nature we are prone to lies, and errors, therefore let us take heed to our selves, and watch more exactly; Heresy is a truit of the flesh, *Gal.* 5. 19, 20. and therefore no wonder, if carnal hearts be ready to take it up, seeing by nature the truth seems harsh to us.

Use 3 It must stir us up to embrace the Doctrine of the Gospel, the more your spiritues loathe falsehood, the more are you to cleave to the truth, do they make a sport to juggle and deceive? do you see they aim at corrupt ends? do they speak by a living spirit? if this be the fruit of Popery, that the whole bulk of it is but an heap of lies, men as we are to detest that, so we are to love the truth of the Gospel; it comes from the spirit of truth, the ends of it are contrary to Antichristian, they aim to bring on Disciples to Christ, they look not at their own belly and gain, but to edify and do good to the Church of God, seeing therefore the Religion of Christ is so pure, so peaceable, so self-denying, so free from cheating and juggling, therefore let us be more enamoured on it, imbrace it, study it more, practice it more.

Use 4 It every Antichristian Doctrine be a lie, then they that are born of it, are not born of the truth, and the Doctors of it are liars, so that if it be asked whether it be a true Church, we say it is a lying Doctrin they hold, those that are the Doctors and teachers of their Church are liars; and take the body of the Church, it is a bulk of lies, a company of liars, deceiving the

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World, and sporting themselves in their deceivings.

Doct. *No lie, that is, no heretical Antichristian Doctrine, is of the truth.*

Out of false things we may sometimes conclude falsehood, and sometimes truth, but out of a true Principle, you can never gather falsehood; so *St. John*

here, out of the truth you cannot conclude any lie, any false Doctrine; so that no lie is of the truth.

For Explication.

A Doctrine may be said to be of the truth, or not of it, in a double respect.

1 Of the truth, as the cause of it, *Joh.* 8. 37. he that is born of the truth, *1 John* 3. 19. so to be of the truth, is to be a Child of the truth, so that when it is said, it is not of the truth, that is, it is not bred of the truth and it is not bred of the truth.

1. Because it springs not from the Gospel of truth.

2 It springs not from the Spirit of truth, but from a lying spirit.

3 It springs not from the truth of their own hearts, not from the very moral civil truth; they neither spring from the divine truth of the Gospel, nor from the Spirit, nor from the moral truth in their own hearts; a man may speak not from the Spirit of truth in the word, and yet speak from an honest heart, but an Heretic speaks not from the truth of his own heart, *Tit.* 3. 10, 11. so that these men's Errors are not from Ignorance or infirmity, but merely from the spirit of falsehood.

2 It is not of the truth, that is, it keeps not correspondency, or fellowship with the truth, and the reason is, because no Antichristian Doctrine, but it comes from the spirit of lying and murder, and such a spirit is the Devil's spirit, *John* 8. 48. Satan's intendment is to lie, and deceive, and murder men's souls, and that proceeds from the enemy betwixt Christ, and the seed of the Serpent, now the seed of the Serpent is not only Heretics, but Heretical Doctrine, and they strive to root out one another, *Amos* 7. 10, 11. which shews, what little fellowship falsehood hath with truth, *2 Cor.* 6. 14, 15. and therefore they would not suffer Christ to live, and so they persecuted the Apostles, because they spake the word of truth.

Use 1 May exhort all professors of the truth, to take heed of lying; if no lie be of the truth, then if you speak falsehood or lies, you walk not like yourselves, such words come not from the spirit of truth, but from the lying spirit, the spirit of wickedness and falsehood; and therefore what have the Children of the truth to do with falsehood, with false words, and false dealing? and especially take heed of false Doctrine, for it is not of the truth, but lies; therefore have nothing to do with the spirit of falsehood, the spirit of Popery, or the spirit of separation, to draw you from the truth of Christ, from the communion of the Church.

Use 2. If no Heresy be of the truth, then certainly it will never be for the truth; no stream riseth higher than the spring from whence it comes; if such Doctrine comes not from the truth, it will never rise so high as the truth; ne-

ver look for true dealing from an Heretic that lies against the Gospel, and against his own conscience, never believe any Doctrine of theirs, for they aim at subverting; if they deal not truly with God, they will not deal truly with man, it is a conclusion of the council of *Constance*, *fides non est servanda cum Hæreticus*, why? because they are Heretics; but you should know they were Heretics that swore it, and therefore they shew such false dealings; therefore you shall never find any true honest dealing with Antichristian states in any negotiation.

Use 3. It may reach us, there is no safe reconciliation with these Doctrines, nay, no safe toleration; for no lie is of the truth; how can you reconcile night and day? light and darkness? there is as wide a difference between the truth, and Antichristian Doctrines; therefore there is no safe toleration of them, but one of them will be rooting out the other, either lies or the truth will be banished.

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Use 4. It may refute an Error of some, that say, As Anabaptism sprang from *Luther*, and Libertanism from *Calvin*, so Separation from Puritanism; but this cannot be, for no Lie is of the truth, therefore these could not spring from any truth of *Luther*, or *Calvin*, or Puritanism.

Doct. Such as have received the unction of the Spirit, they knew no Errour, no false Doctrine is of the truth.

They know it, not only think so, but know it, *and they know it.*

1 From the contrariety that they see betwixt that unction of the Spirit which they have received, and that Doctrine, the Spirit of God in them teaches them to be humble, *2 Pet. 2. 18.* but the spirit of these false Doctors is ambitious, they speak great swelling words; this suits not with the Spirit of God, to look at their own ends, at their bellies, at their gain.

2 It is contrary to their experience; a true Christian knows that the Doctrine of Antichrist is contrary to that experience he hath found; if they come to speak of Free Will, his own heart tells him, he was fain to be drawn out of himself, he found that he could very hardly be pulled out of his Natural estate, so that a christian heart knows this is contrary to the truth. Let another say, we are justified by works, you cannot persuade a Christian to that, for he knows his best righteousness is defiled, *Isa. 64. 6.* and when he hath done what he can he is but an unprofitable servant; when they tell him, there is merit and satisfaction in his Works, yea supererogation, no Christian but he knows this to be a Lie, and that he deserves wrath for his best performances, he knows he is no way able to satisfy God's Wrath, or God's Law,

but only Christ satisfies for him. When they shall come to a poor Soul and bid him confess his sins, and tell him they have power to absolve him from his sins, he knows it will not quiet his soul; tell a Christian, that going on Pilgrimages, and scourging himself will satisfy for his soul, he knows that is false; tell a Christian, he may fall away finally, he knows that is a Lie, 2 *Tim.* 1. 12. 1 *The.* 5. 24.

3 They know the truth, because they have received it from a Messenger of truth.

4 They know the truth by the effects, by the peace and grace they find from the truth; and on the contrary, no Antichristian Doctrine ever brought peace to their souls, and there is no truth where no peace is, where you cannot find peace of Conscience, that religion hath no saving truth in it; if they find not the fruit of peace, they know it is not of the truth.

2 Another fruit of the true Religion, is, it brings liberty and freedom of spirit to come to God from Satan, from his Lusts, from the World, *John* 8. 32. therefore if Religion do nor make us free to come to God, and free from the World, and our own Lusts, surely that Religion is not of the truth, 2 *Pet.* 2. 19. he speaks of these false Teachers, that they promise liberty, themselves being servants of sin.

Use 1 May serve to reprove all such as are at an uncertainty in their Religion, they know not which Religion to take, they say they find Reasons on both sides so probable, and there are some on both sides so corrupt, that they know not which to take; why, if it be so, you have not received the unction of the Spirit, for there is not the least of these little Children which have received this unction, but he knows the truth, and that no Lie is of the truth.

Use 2 For you that have took up your Religion, and the true Religion, but do you know your Religion to be the truth, and that it is no Lie? why they hope it is true, because the King and State follow it; but do you know it to be true, and do you know every contrary Doctrine to be a Lie? if you do not, you do not know what you should, *Psal.* 119. 30, I have chosen the truth, he doth not say the State hath chosen it, or others have chosen it, and therefore I will follow it too; No, but I have chosen it, let others choose what they will; let every Christian know that he hath chosen the truth, and that no lie is of the truth.

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Use 3 It may teach all to grow up in discerning the truth, and that will discover all falsehood; as suppose you should have some come to you, and

tell you, you frequent the Ordinances, and perform good duties only in the Letter, but you ought to do nothing but when the Spirit moves you; but let a Christian examine if this be not a lie, and contrary to the truth, and to that experience I find, for we ought to pray continually; so if one come and tell you, you ought not to read the Scriptures, your own spirit tells you, you have as much need of the Word, as a Child of his daily Milk; therefore let Christians learn to discern of the spirit of Truth and Error.

1 JOHN 2. 22.

Who is a Liar, but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? he is Antichrist that denieth the Father and the Son.

THe Apostle, vers. 20, 21, 22. propounds some means to help them against false Teachers,

1 By something in themselves, that Unction in them.

2 By the grossness and falseness of their Doctrine, which is called a Lie; and the Teachers liars; who is a Lier if they be not?

These false Teachers in this Verse are described by an adjunct of lying, and that so grossly, that if they be not Liers, there are none in the World, it is as gross a Lie as any, so that these Liers may stand in comparison with any.

2 Their Lie is set out by their Doctrine who is a lier, but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ?

3 He expresses it by their name and nature, he is the Antichrist, and their Doctrine is, to deny the Father and the Son, for if they deny the Son, then the Father.

Doct. Antichrist's Teachers are as gross Liers as who are the worst.

Who is a Lier if not these? let none be accounted Liers if not they, they are as great Liers as any, equal to the worst; these words come home; and no wonder Christ called *Janes* and *John* Sons of Thunder, for they speak plainly and boldly.

Two things make a man a gross Lier, equal to the worst.

1 The perniciousness of his Lie.

2 The Evidence of it.

1 The perniciousness of it; It is it Lie to speak against the Government of an House or Family, or good of others, but no lie so pernicious as Popish Lies, none do so much harm as the Lies of Antichristian Teachers, they lie not only against their own souls, but also to the hurt of others, 1 *Pet.* 3. 2, 3. they shall bring in damnable Heresies, such Doctrines that if men live and die in them, they shall be damned, and many shall follow their pernicious ways,

and so they tell the souls of men, and so one part of the Merchandize of the *Romish* Whore is the souls of men, *Rev.* 8. 12, 13. and therefore if any pernicious Liars, who more pernicious than they that lie against the souls and salvation of men? no greater Cheaters than to cheat us of our Savior, of our Father, of Salvation.

2 The evident falsehood of them; A man lies when he mistakes the truth which he might easily see, or though it were more hard to see; but if a man know it to be false and pernicious, yet to lie against his knowledge and Conscience, this makes the Lie palpable and gross; now these Lies are not only contrary to the truth of the Word, and experience of Christians, but also contrary to their own knowledge and Conscience; and they must needs be gross Liars that lie in such weighty matters as Salvation, and that so evidently, that he that runs may see their falsehood.

Use 1 Lets us see the damnable estate of all Antichristian false Teachers, for they that shall not only hold, but thrust on others damnable Doctrines, where-

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by they hasten their own, and others destructions, must needs be in a damnable estate; it is their tenent, that no Church so safe to live and die in, as their Catholic Church, and their reason is, because among Pagans, and Infidels, you shall find nothing but horrible lies, and blasphemies; and it is true; and amongst Christians, there is the safest living, for they are confident that salvation is found in their Church; and all out of their Church cannot be saved; and therefore it is safest for all to live in their fellowship; but though there may be some that in that Church may be saved, yet whosoever they be that do know the Doctrine of the Church of *Rome*, and that do believe, and obey, and practise that Doctrine, not one of them, but they have sucked in damnable Heresies, and bring on themselves swift damnation; so that if there be any Liars among Turks and Infidels, these Antichristian teachers shall carry away the prize in lying, and those that are saved among them, is, because they secretly renounce their Doctrine; therefore let them not boast of our charity to some amongst them, for none more pernicious and evident Liars than they; therefore let us be dehorted from their Doctrine, and cleave close to the profession of the truth.

Use 2 Let us take heed of Antichristian Doctrine, if ever they come among us; these are described to be the Frogs that go about the World to seduce poor people; be not deluded then, when they profess themselves to be Patrons of the truth, the Spirit condemns them to be liars; and none more gross and evident lies than theirs.

They are likewise cunning Liar, 2 *Thes.* 2. 10. none ever by cunning deceit, to circumvented the World as they have done.

Use 3 It may serve to teach men not to be mealy mouthed in speaking plainly and home; the Spirit we see puts the grossest term on them; who be Liars; if they be not? therefore we must not be offended at the plainness and simplicity of the Scripture; none so plain as this Apostle, he calls them Liars and Frogs, in the, *Revelations*, and Beasts, and the Whore of *Rome*, he deals even as an old Father, when he would detain Children from any evil, they use to put homely names on them.

Use 4 It may serve to teach us all to be abundantly thankful to God that hath delivered from this lying false Doctrine, wherein many of our Fathers have perished; for there is no Religion more gross, and no blessing greater than to be delivered from such a gross lying Religion to be delivered from a gross sin, is no such great matter, for the Publicans and Sinners came into the Kingdom of Heaven, sooner than the Pharisees, and yet theirs was the strictest sect, and *Paul* blesses God that delivered him from that Religion, when he was a strict Pharisee, yet God was pleased to call him to the grace of Christ; and such a mercy is it to us, as none can be greater to any Nation, to be delivered from this lying Religion; and on this ground God urgeth obedience to the moral law, because, *he was the God that had brought them out of the Land of Egypt, out of the house of Bondage, Exodus 20. 1.* and on this ground, we should stick close to God, and that Religion he hath set us in, that God may see that we are sensible of this great mercy, that we are delivered from such gross pernicious evident lies.

Doct. 2 *Antichrist denieth Jesus to be the Christ, or, he that denieth Jesus to be the Christ, is Antichrist.*

1 *John 4. 3, 2. Epist. John 7*, the name Antichrist shews he is such a one as is against Antichrist, an enemy to Christ, 2 *Thes.* 2. 4. he is called; ὁ ἀντιχρίμ-
νοϛ.

A man may deny Jesus to be the Christ, either grossly and assertively, or else cunningly and fraudulently; of ancient Heretics, some denied the manhood of Christ, and some the God-head, and some palpably denied his office of mediation and redemption. But that false Antichrist did not deny him palpably and grossly, 2 *Thes.* 2. 2. for first, Antichrist is said to work in a mystery. Secondly, that he should sit in the Temple of God, 1 *Tim.* 2. 4. so
that

that he should keep some correspondency with Christ, and his, and sits as a Member of Christ, otherwise no Church would suffer him; so that he should

not openly and grossly deny Christ, but he should deny him to be that Christ that is anointed of God, anointed to be King, Priest and Prophet; therefore if you shall find any in the Church to deny Christ to be King, Priest and Prophet of his Church, that is Antichrist; therefore observe how their Doctrine cuts asunder the whole work of redemption.

1 For his prophetic office, the Church of *Rome* denies it; Christ is anointed to be a Prophet to teach his Church by his Word, and by his Spirit in his Word; they deny his Prophetic office.

1 By adding other unwritten traditions to the Word of God, as necessary.

2 By preferring the Vulgar translation to be more authentic than the Original languages.

3. By denying the use of the Scripture to the common people, and telling them it is obscure and dangerous for them.

4 By suspending the authority of his Word, not upon the Testimony of his Spirit, but on the Church of *Rome*; so that if you ask a Papist, why they receive the Gospel of St. *Matthew*, and deny that of St. *John*, they say, because the Church hath received the one and renounced the other; and so they make the Scripture to depend on general Councils, especially on the Pope.

2 The Lord teacheth his Church by his Spirit, which they evacuate.

1 By confining this Spirit to Councils, and Clergy-men, and not to the common people.

2 They evacuate this teaching of the Spirit, by making; it a conjectural thing, and probable, but not of any certain knowledge; and thus Antichrist denies his Prophetic office.

For the Priestly office of Christ, which consists, first, in offering sacrifice; secondly, in intercession, for the application of his sacrifice.

Now the Church of *Rome* evacuates his Priestly office, first, in his sacrifice.

1 By adding other sacrifices, and so they make his not to be sufficient; and they add two Sacrifices, first, the Sacrifice of merits; and they say they merit, first, by works done, as building of Churches, Monasteries, &c. which they say satisfy for men's sin; and secondly, they merit by suffering, as Pilgrimages and Purgatory, and so by Indulgences and Pardons.

1 They evacuate the Sacrifice of Christ, by evacuating the redemption of Christ.

1 By making it not plentiful; whereas the redemption of Christ is a plenteous redemption both for body and soul, they say he redeems us from eternal pains, but not from temporal, from Purgatory.

2 By making it not gracious; for they say the grace of redemption is applied to us not invincibly, but according to the will of the Creature.

2 By applying it not by faith, but works.

3 They say a man cannot know his redemption by Christ, surely and certainly, but probably.

4 This grace they dispence not spiritually, but elementally, by imposing it on Sacraments; so that without Sacrament, no grace; and some grace is given, *ex opere operato*.

3 They evacuate his Sacrifice, by making it not eternal; so that this grace is not certainly eternal, but he that hath been washed by Christ's blood, may fillally fall away, and become a reprobate.

4 In making it not necessary in respect of some as the *Virgin Mary*.

2 They lay it is not necessary, in respect of temporal punishments.

2 They evacuate his Priestly office, by discouraging people from coming to God in the name of Christ, but to approach to God by the mediation of the *Virgin Mary*, and some Saints; they would have us direct our prayers to some Saint, and so deny the sole mediation of Christ.

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3 For his Kingly Office, they deny it, partly by denying his Head-ship; they deny his absolute Sovereignty, they will not make the election to be of Free Grace.

2 By setting up another Head in the Church, the Pope, which God never appointed; as he that sets up a another King without his consent, doth as good as deny the other King, so here is as much dishonour to Christ, in setting up a new Head, as in cutting off the true Head, to set up one that may rule all Nations, have the deciding of all Causes, &c.

3. They deny his Kingly Office in his great work of Conversion, by making it not depend on the Sovereignty, or Prerogative at his Kingly Office, but on the liberty of our wills.

4 They deny his Kingly Office, by defacing his Kingdom, which is his Body, his Church; yhey deface his Church, his Body, and transform it not into a Christian state, but Antichristian, and so make it no Church of Christ, and so deny his Kingly office.

They deface the Church of Christ, whether Militant, or Triumphant.

The Church Militant, whether you look at it as a Catholic Body, for that,

1 They teach that the most erroneous, notorious livers, are truly Members of the Church; but we see Christ's Kingdom consists of Spiritual people; they, are but ill humours.

2 They give false notes of the Church, antiquity, universality, prosperity, which may agree to some Heathenish places.

3 They make the Church infallible, and this they confine to the Church of *Rome*, so that if *Rome* fall, the Church of Christ falls.

2 For the Parts of the Church, either in a Council,

1 They say, a Council is incapable of error.

2 Subject to the Pope.

3 That they may make Laws to bind the Consciences of men.

Or else in the several parts.

1. For the Head the Pope, they set two heads on the Body, and so make it a Monster.

For the middle Members, the Priests.

1. They say, they may not marry, and so are unclean.

2. Exempt them from the power of Civil Magistrates, and so are an inordinate generation.

2 Their regular Priests, as Monks and Friars, they are all of them abominable, not planted by God, and profess poverty and chastity, which exposeth them to uncleanness.

For the lowest Members, the Lay-men, whether Magistrates, or private men.

1 For magistrates, they make them not Heads, no not in their own Kingdoms, but subject to the Pope, and he deposeth them.

2 For the People, he can dispense with their Oath of Allegiance.

3 From both, they withhold the Scripture in the known Tongue, and the Cup.

For the Church Militant in Purgatory, they make a Church God never acknowledged.

For the Church Triumphant, they make the Saints as so many Idols, in praying to them, visiting their Relics, making them partakers in Christ's mediation; such a Kingdom as this Christ would loathe, and any true Christian detest. So that we see, though they do not deny his Man-hood, nor his God-head, yet they, deny him to be the Christ, that is, the annointed, for they wash off all his Unction.

Use 1. It may discover to us the depth, and the danger of Popery; the Doctors of their Church say, it is impossible any should be saved out of their

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Church, but you must know, you cannot give up your selves to an Antichristian Doctrine but you turn an enemy to Christ, you take away his Offices, make him no Christ, no Saviour; therefore let none say, Popery and the true Religion may be reconciled, they may as well combine Light and Darkness, as Christ and Antichrist.

Use 2. It may be an use of thankfulness to God, that hath delivered us from this darkness, and brought us to know the truth as it is in Jesus, the true King, Priest, and Prophet of his Church; therefore let us sanctify God in our hearts, let us walk as men that are redeemed, and taught of him; learn we to rest on him for pardon, for teaching, for direction, and guidance.

Doct. *Antichristian Teachers deny the Father, and the Son.*

Before, he had said they deny the Christ, but he goes further, and saith *They deny the Father, and the Son*, because he that denies the Son denies the Father; the reason is, because of that near relation that is betwixt them, vers. 23. and so contrariwise; the truth of this appeared in Saint *John's* time, for some made themselves the Christ, and some God the Father, as *Simon Magus*, and *Menander* made themselves the Christ, and so took away the Father-hood, and the Son-ship; some again taught, that the Father came down and took flesh, and was buried, and so often descended in cloven Tongues, so that they denied the several persons.

But that great ἀντιχρίμνος, the Antichrist of *Rome*, he denies the Father, and the Son.

1 He denies the Son; if you speak of the God-head of Christ.

1 They say we are in an error to say Christ: is ἀυτοθέις, but from God, from the Father, and they will not take the true sense, but say, Christ hath a derived God-head, but so they make him no God-head, though *Bellarmin* blame them for it, yet some of them vehemently accuse him for it; so that we say the Person of Christ is from the Father, but his God-head is the same with the Father, *There are not three Gods, but one God*; and if you make it a derived God-head, you make three God's.

2 They as much wrong his Man-hood; for when they say the Priest hath a power to create, so they take away his Manhood; whilst they say the Priest makes *Integrum Christum*, in truth they abrogate the very Man-hood of Christ, for it is incompetent to Human Nature to make any living Creature; and when they say *Hoc est Corpus meum*, they make the Body.

2 Whilst they say, that the whole Body of Christ is in a thousand Churches together, now every Communicant receives whole Christ, they say;

now if Christ have so many Bodies, he is a Monster; nay, they say still his Body sits at God's right hand, a strange Lie, were they not the great Liars, so that the Pope said to Cardinal *Bembus*, *Vide quantum fabuls: sta de Christo nobis pradesit*; and when he was dying they comforted him with the consideration of Christ, but he said, *Quanta in his Fabula*, and no wonder, for that Christ they describe is no better than a Fable, and so they deny the Son, and denying him, they deny the Father, for *uno sublato, alterum tollitur*.

3 When they take away all assurance of favour with God through Christ, and say, it is presumption to be ascertained of the favour of God, as a Father through Christ; *I ascend to my father, and your father*, if he be the Father of Christ, he is the Father of all his Members, and therefore if they take away all assurance of God's love, as a Father, they deny the Father.

Use 1. It may teach us something concerning God, it shews us a reference between the Father and the Son, and first, if there be a reference betwixt them, then,

1 It is manifest they are living and reasonable Natures, for Father and Son is competent only to rational beings, not to Beasts and Trees, therefore if we that are Fathers, and Children, have reasonable nature, much more God the Father, and the Son.

2 If

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2 If there be this relation, then they are both of the same nature, a Father; a Man, doth not beget a Beast, but one of the same nature, and therefore when the Father begets the Son, it implies the Son is of the same nature with the Father, both eternal beings, *Joh. 10. 32. to 36.* when as Christ did deliver himself to be the Natural Son of God, they conceived that he made himself God, which they thought Blasphemy, so that being the Son of God, he is the same Divine essence.

3 If Christ be the Son of God, then he is equal with the Father; if he be the Son, he is God, and if God, there is not one superior, and another inferior, but he must be equal with the Father.

Obj. But the Son is oft greater than the Father, and the Father than the Son?

Ans. True, amongst men, but in the God-head no Person can be superior to another, there are no distempers, nor misery, *Pater & filius in Divinus sunt aequales.*

2 As there is a Reference, so there is also a Difference, for the Father cannot be the Son in the same relation; nor contrarily, the Son in the same relation cannot be the Father, which cuts off the error of *Sabellius*, which said,

the same God the father took upon him, and was the Son; but this is an horrible error, for the Father cannot be a Son to himself, nor the Son a Father.

Use 2. If such be Antichrists as deny the Father and the Son, then the anti-ent Heretics, *Simon Magus*, and *Menander* are convinced.

3 The same Doctrine condemns the Antichristian Teachers, for though they say they teach the same with us yet it is manifest they deny the Son, for he that makes him a derived God-head, makes him no God, and so when they say his Body is in divers places at once, they deny his Man-hood, for one cannot be many, and many cannot be one.

4 It may teach us to magnify the mercy of God, that hath delivered us from this lying Doctrine which our Fore-fathers lived in, and we it may be should have followed as greedily; therefore let us abhor their Doctrine, and cleave to the truth, and walk in the truth of Christ.

I JOH. 2. 23.

Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father.

WE have heard Three Points out of the former verse; now because he had said before, that he that denies the Son denies the Father, he proves it from the near relation betwixt them, so that he that denies the Son, denies the Father; and contrarily, he that acknowledgeth the Son, acknowledgeth the Father.

Some doubt of these words, whether they be in the Canon, but *Beza*, testifies, he hath found these words in four old good Translations and the *Syriac* Translation reads it, and the Vulgar Latin, and it is a common thing in this Epistle, to shew one thing by the contrary to it.

Doct. According to our acknowledgement or Confession, oe Denial of the Son, we either have, or have not the Father.

He that acknowledgeth the Son, hath the Son, and the Father also; and he that denies the Son wants both.

For Explication.

Q. I. What is it to confess, and to deny the Son?

A. To deny the Son, is not only a dogmatical denying in Doctrine or word, neither is confession only a dogmatical confession of him with the mouth, and yet if in Doctrine you deny the Son, you deny the Father also, and if you preach Christ in a true manner, you preach and confess the Father also. But there are more denials and confessions of the Son than ????? word, so

that it includes having not the Son and the Father, and not having the Son and the Father, as vers. 24.

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Did not *Peter* deny Jesus, and did he deny God? did not many confess Jesus, and yet at last day he will deny them? did not *Judas* and *Demas* profess Christ, and yet denied both Father and Son?

Therefore in Scripture Phrase there is a threefold denial, and so a threefold confession.

A denial in heart, in word, in practice.

In heart, *Psal.* 14. 1. *The Fool hath said in his heart there is no God*; he doth not mean natural Idols, for he speaks of them that eat up God's people as bread, &c. *Luk.* 9. 23. *let him deny himself*, he doth not mean in word, he must say he is not himself, but he must deny all worth, all parts and gifts in himself, he must deny all pleasure and gain; this is to deny a man's self, though he do not express it in word; so there is a denial of Christ in heart, when he doth not prize Christ and magnify him, nor see the worth nor want of him, this is to deny Christ.

2 Some deny him openly in word, 2 *Pet.* 2. 12.

Some in carriage, 1 *Pet.* 5. 8. *Tit.* 1. 16. *they profess they know Christ, but in their work, they deny him*, 1 *Tim.* 3. 5. one that doth thus, denies Christ, and so the Father.

Suitable to this there is a confession.

1 In heart, *Prov.* 3. 5, 6. *In all thy ways acknowledge him*, trust not in thy own wisdom, so that in a man's heart to trust on him, and depend on him, is to confess him.

2 In words, *John* 1. 20, 29. and this kind of confession is mixed with holy boldness, and holy humility; he is so humble that he denies all his own credit and life, and so bold, that he dares confess Christ before Kings and Princes; we read of some that professed Christ, but it was secretly for fear of the *Jews*; here was want of humility and boldness, such want of humility was in *Peter*, for want of Christian courage and leaning to his own strength, he denies Christ in word, though in heart he did confess him.

3 There is a confession of Christ in our lives and practice, *Prov.* 3. 6. *in all thy ways acknowledge him*, not only in word, but in thy outward course, that so in thy whole walking thou mayest acknowledge him, and depend on some word of command or promise, *Tit.* 2. 11, 12, 13. *the grace of God hath appeared to all men, teaching us to deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts, &c.* A man

confesses Christ, that denies ungodliness, and walks soberly, righteously, and holily, as one that looks for the hope of his appearing; so that in his very practice and life, he acknowledgeth Christ.

Q. 2 *What is it to have the Father, or want the Father?*

A. To have the Father, is to have him for my Father, and to deny him, is to renounce him for thy Father; to have him, is to have fellowship with him, as with a Father, to continue with him; when God commands us to have him for our God; and saith, *though shalt have no other God but me*, he would have us to trust in him, and depend upon him, and to set him up as the God of all our Peace, and comfort, and help; when we think we have enough, if we have God, though nothing else; so then he is said to have God; that hath fellowship with him, that hath God for his portion; to have the wisdom and righteousness of God, and not to have God, is to live without God in the World, without fellowship with him; what is the reason, that according to our confession or denying of the Son, we have, or not have the Father? a Testimony of this we have in those poor, *Gentiles*, *Ephes. 2. 12.* that heard of God, yet not having him through Christ, they were ἄθεοι; but why doth such a man want the Father.

Reas. 1 From the dreadfulness of God's wrath against all such as are out of Christ, *John 3. ult.* if we do not confess Christ, and shew forth the virtue of Christ in our lives, the wrath of God is gone out against us, for sin makes God our enemy; therefore if we have not a mediator, woe be unto us.

2 From the near relation that is betwixt them, *I and my Father are one,*

Joh.

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Joh. 10. 13. John 14. 11. they are wrapped and folded up, one within another, deny one, you deny both.

3 From the great ordinance of God, in setting up Christ, that we might have access through him to God; Christ is the only way to come to the Father, *Joh. 14. 6.* so that if we would get God for our Fathers, we must get Christ for our elder Brother.

Obj. *Some of God's own Servants have denied Christ with their lips, and had not they the Father? as Peter.*

A. Even at that time that *Peter* denied Christ with his lips, his Faith did not fail him, *Luk. 22. 31, 32.* and if his Faith remained then Christ dwells in our hearts by Faith, and if he had Christ, he had the Father; as a Tree in Winter, though you see neither leaf nor sap, yet there is life in the root; so there was Faith in *Peter's* heart, even then when he denied Christ with his lips; so that this is not meant of a vocal denying of Christ, for a man may in

mouth deny Christ, in some sudden temptation, yet in his heart confess him, and in his mouth will confess him again, and in his life, as *Peter* did, and so *contra*; so that his was not a total, but a partial denying in lips only, neither in heart, nor life.

2 That denial of him was but for a time, which afterwards he repented of, and professed him constantly; and according to his threefold denial he professed him three times, so that this was but for a time; afterwards *Peter* and *John* when they were charged and threatened to speak no more in his name, they would not smother him any more, but confessed him to the death; otherwise, if it be a constant denial, in word, that is a fearful thing, *Matth.* 3. *ult.*

Use 1 Shews the desperate danger, not only of all such Heretics that have doctrinally denied Christ, but also of the Heathen that never knew Christ, there is none of them have God for their Father; it is a woeful conceit at some, that hold a man may be saved in any Religion, but if we have not Christ, we have not the Father; and so saith the Apostle, *Ephes.* 2. *Remember ye were Gentiles and lived without Christ*, and so without God in the World. See then the danger of the *Turks*, that deny Christ to be their Prophet, and of the *Jews*, who though they hold one God, yet in their Liturgy they pray, *pereat nomen ejus & memoria*, speaking of Christ; what a woeful case are they in? denying Christ, they deny the Father; take God out of Christ, out of the Trinity, he is a meet Idol, and it might move us to pity their Estate, who have lived without Christ many Generations.

2 Hence you may see how much the Church of *Rome* is without the Father; they charge us for holding Christ: to be $\alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\tau\theta\acute{\epsilon}\omicron\varsigma$, God of himself, they say he is *deus deo*, but not $\alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\tau\theta\acute{\epsilon}\omicron\varsigma$, they deliver him to be such a Christ, as whose body is in an hundred places at once, and so they deny the Son, and so they intrench upon all his offices, and so denying the Son, they deny the Father.

Use 2 It may teach us what to think or believe of all the Saints of God before Christ; doth God say I am the Father of *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, then you may certainly conclude they had the Christ, *John* 8. *your Father Abraham rejoiced to see my day*, he saw Christ to come of his Son, and therefore he rejoiced; so *Moses* wrote of Christ, so *David* knew Christ. *Psal.* 110. quoted *Matth.* 22. *the Lord said to my Lord, &c.* so that *David* knew Christ, the Lord, God the Father, said to my Lord, that is Christ, so Christ expounds it, so *Dan.* 9. 17. he prays God to be merciful to his people, for the Lord's sake, that is, for Christ's sake, *Act.* 15. 21. there is no other way to be saved; they saw Christ in all Sacrifices and types; there is no other name under heaven to be saved, but by Christ.

Use 3 It may be a ground of trial, whether we have God for our Father or no, we say daily *our Father, &c.* would we know whether he be so or no? it we deny the Son, we have not the Father, if we confess the Son, we have the Father; let us enquire therefore whether we acknowledge him
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in our hearts, if we do, we will deny our selves; to entertain him, you will deny your own wisdom, that his wisdom may take place, your own honour, that so his honour may take place; so if you trust in him, depend on him, choose him, cleave to him, then you have the Father also; if contrarily you choose the World, and prize it above all things, why *the Fool hath said in his heart there is no God*, it be thus with you, you do not acknowledge Christ, and so have not the Father; so it you be ashamed to confess him in your words, for fear of shame, or if you be afraid of danger, Christ will be ashamed of you, or if in your works you deny him, you care nor whether your ways please him or no, if you walk unholily, or unrighteously, you have neither the Father nor the Son, and so lose your own souls; but contrarily, if you acknowledge him in your hearts, trust and depend upon him, choose him, prize him, then in thy heart thou dost profess Christ, and so the Father; so, art thou not ashamed to be known to be a Christian? art thou bold and constant to profess his name before wicked and cruel Tyrants? and if in thy life thou walkest as one that expects the coming at Christ, and doth all things by a call from him, it thou walkest thus soberly, righteously and holily, thou hast the Father.

Use 4. Of consolation to every such soul as knows and professes Christ; there is no poor Christian, but he confesses Christ, and would profess him, desires to live as may please him; why if thou walk thus, thou hast both the Son and the Father, the Son for thy Saviour, thy King, Priest and Prophet, and thou hast God for thy Father, and if so, he will provide for thee, thou shalt want nothing, *Psal. 23. 1. to 4.* therefore here is comfort in sickness, you have the God of health, *Exod. 15. 26. I am the Lord that healeth thee*, God is the life and length of our days, *Deut. 30. 29.* so that if you should bury your Children, yet having the Father, they shall have length of days; God is no weak keeper, none can pluck them out of his hands, *1 Pet. 1. 5. 1 Pet. 5. 10.* if we have God, we have life, and health, and peace, and grace, he is the God of all grace whatsoever we want; therefore if we want any thing, get Christ, and with him we shall have all things, *Rom. 8. 32*, If a man gives himself to a woman, he gives her the use of all things he hath; so if we have God, we have enough, *The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want.*

Use 5. Reproves Christians, who acknowledge Christ, and so have the Son, and having the Son, have the Father, yet they walk as if they had not received Christ, walk scandalously and duly; if we live thus, we either never know Christ, or walk very unworthy of him.

Use 6 Lastly it should stir up Christians to walk in a daily acknowledgement of Christ; deny him not, neither in heart, word, nor life; if we thus confess Christ, we have him, and with him the Father; and therefore have enough, we shall have a supply of all our wants.

Now there are three graces whereby we walk in an acknowledgement of Christ all our days.

1 Faith in Christ; walk by Faith in him; *I live, yet not I, but the life I live in the flesh, is by the Faith of the Son of God*, Gal. 2. 19, 20. this Faith is a grace much known, more talked of, but very little practised; so much as we live besides Faith, so much we live besides Christ; therefore live by Faith in Christ, look at your selves as unable to do any thing without him, depend on him, walk as such as live not for your selves, but for Christ, do all for his virtue, and for his glory, and so you shall acknowledge him.

3 Mortification, or self-denial; when aman denies his own lusts, his own honour, profit, and credit, and is content to be all in Christ, he looks at outward things as Talents, he is to imploy to God's service, he looks at them in a crucified manner, he is weaned from them, regards not much how they go, so he can get Christ; if every profit or pleasure withdraw us from Christ, we do not deny our selves, Luke 9. 23. Christians should make it appear that their profit, and pleasure, and honour, is not of this World, but in Christ;

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they should deny all these; as faith makes you adcknowledge Christ as your Saviour, so Self-denial as your Lord.

3 Zeal; when a man doth not only desire to do good duties, but to do them with life and power, walk in power and zeal, which may shew in us the power of the Resurrection, of Christ; God requires that we should be zealous, *Tit.* 2. 11, 12, 13, 14. zeal is the life, and strength, and grace, *1 Cor.* 15. *ult.* If at any time you find your selves straitened, then think you want the might of the Father, and if you want him, then you want the Son, therefore you must seek to Christ, and then you shall find a pew spring of help; therefore in all your ways acknowledge him.

I JOH. 2. 24, 25.

Let therefore abide in you the same which you have heard from the beginning, &c.

WE see the Apostle instructs them against Antichrist's coming,

1. By foretelling his coming.
2. By describing them.
3. By the means, which is double.

First, Their Unction. Secondly, The grossness of their Lies.

Now we come to his Exhortation of them, to use a special means against Antichrist, and his exhortation is, that that Doctrine which they heard from the beginning should abide in them; he presses this exhortation from a double benefit.

- 1 Continuance both in the Son. and the Father.
- 2 Obtaining the promise of Eternal Life.

Doct. Perseverance in the Doctrine of the Apostles, is a certain pledge of perseverance in grace, and attaining of glory.

Both these benefits are joined together; perseverance in the Doctrine of the Apostles, is an undoubted pledge of our fellowship with the Father and the Son, and of Eternal Life, 2 *Joh.* 9. he that abides in the Doctrine of Christ abideth in the Father, and the Son; *Acts* 2. 42. & 47. It is said of the Primitive Christians, that they clave to, and continued in the Doctrine of the Apostles, and he tells us they were such as should be saved; (*That which ye have heard from the beginning*) that is, the Doctrine that was preaoched at first by Christ, and after by his Apostles, *Luke* 1. 2.

There are three Graces especially whereby *God's Word* is said to continue in us, for it is not enough for a Christian to have it rest in his judgement and consent, the Devil himself knows and believes that Antichristian Doctrine is a lie, and he knows the truth: yet because he continues not in the truth, he hath neither fellowship with the Father, nor the Son, nor any hope of Salvation; therefore there are some more special Graces, whereby the Word is said to continue in us, as *David* saith, *I have hid thy Word in my heart*, *Psal* 119. 11.

1 By faith, 1 *Thess.* 2. 13. when ye received the Word, ye received it not as the word of man, but of God, &c. men then receive the Word aright, when they believe it, and when they think it effectual to Salvation, able to save their souls. *Jam.* 1. 21. when we receive it as the word of life, when we receive it as our stock and portion, then it dwells in our hearts by faith; let a man receive the Word as true only, and not as good, it will not continue in

him; the Devils receive it as true, but do not receive it as good, but think it mischievous to them, and therefore they get no good by it.

2 It dwells in our Consciences by an holy awe and fear of this Word; unless the Word awe us, and rule in our hearts, we have no fellowship with it, *Psal.* 119. 161. the Hearts taken for the Conscience, in the Old Testament, we read not of the word Conscience, although his heart stood in awe of Princes, as when he cut off *Saul's* skirt, yet it was the Word that over-awed him that he would not hurt him, thi. awe of the Word, over-awes that authority we
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might use to evil; so *Job*, when he had it in his hand to do wrong, yet the fear of God kept him from doing any wrong, *Job* 31. 13, 14, 15. even to the least servant or maid he had, *Jer.* 32. 40.

3 Obedience keeps the Word in our lives, and our lives in the Word; *Teach me O Lord the way of thy statutes, and I shall keep it to the end*, *Psal.* 119. 33. if a man take liberty to live, sometimes by the Word, sometimes beside it, he will break off from fellowship, *Herod* for a while kept an awe of *John*, but in his life he would not exercise it, therefore he shakes off *John*, and his word, and cleaves to his lust; so that the Word abides in us, by faith, fear, and obedience.

Q. *What is meant by continuing in the Son, and in the Father?*

A. 1. It implies communion with them; a man cannot continue in them without communion with them.

2 It implies perseverance in them for ever; so that he that hath the Word abiding in him, hath fellowship with the Son, he hath Christ for his Saviour, his Brother, his King, Priest, and Prophet, and he hath God for his Father, all All-sufficient God blessing him with all blessings.

He shall persevere in this estate for ever.

What are the Reasons why such continue in the Son, and in the Father.

Reas. 1. From the intercession of Christ, *Joh.* 17. 20, 21, 22. without which we neither could have fellowship with them, nor eternal life. Christ himself hath prayed for this, and doth, and he was heard, always, *Joh.* 11. 42. therefore when he prays, that all they that believe in his Word may be one with him and with the Father, they shall have union with them, and glory everlasting, and so vers. 24.

Obj. *You will say, Christ's intercession for himself was not sometimes heard; did not he pray that the Cup of his Passion might pass from him?*

A. He prayed against it, and yet did drink it, but he prayed conditionally, if it might stand with his Father's Will, therefore he had his desire, because he fulfilled God's will, *Hebr.* 5.

Secondly, He prayed not so much that he might not taste of it, as that he might not be over-whelmed by it, and so he was supported by his eternal God-head, so that he was saved in death, and from death; therefore Christ having prayed for our union with him, and eternal glory, we shall attain it.

Reas. 2. From the effectual power of sound heavenly Doctrine; it is the power of God to Salvation, it is called the arm of the Lord, *Joh.* 12. 38. it is called the glorious ministration of the Spirit, *1 Cor.* 3. 8. *2 Corinth.* 10. 4, 5. *Jam.* 1. 21. so that this Doctrine is the Ministration, the mighty power of God to convey to us the Spirit of God, which gives us fellowship with the Father, and the Son, and eternal life, the breath of the Word, breathes the Spirit of God into us, and makes us live spiritually here, and gloriously here-after.

Use 1 May shew us what an hard thing it is to persevere and abide in the Doctrine of the Apostles, which appears from this strong exhortation; one would think that the honesty and purity of the Word should prevail with us, to cleave and abide in their Doctrine, but yet we see that is not enough, but the Holy Ghost useth as strong motives here as any call be, he knows the World might over-reach us; some come and tell us, if we continue in this World, we shall lose our Friends, and Goods, and may be our Life, and why then will you be singular? now seeing that the World offers so largely to with-draw us, therefore he gives a far larger offer, such an offer as all the World cannot give, he out-bids the World, and even promises Fellowship with the Father and the Son, or Eternal Life; therefore that we might be established against all the subtleties of the World, he offers us such Promises as may eternally establish us in the truth.

Use 2 Exhorts us to take hold of this Doctrine while we may have it; if we

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preach no other Doctrine, but what hath been delivered from the beginning: why then, if you would have fellowship with the Father, and the Son, and eternal glory, cleave to this Word, abide in it, receive it with Faith and fear, and express it in obedience; *Lord thou hast the words of eternal life, therefore wither should we go from it? Prov.* 19. 16. *he that keeps the Commandment, keeps his own soul, but he that regards not his own ways, whether he walk according to this rule, or no, he shall die.* What an encouragement would it be

to keep a Pill, if the Physician should say, keep this, and you keep your life, cast it up, and you die? why truly such is the Word of Christ, keep it, and you keep your life, but if you despise the Commandment, care not how you live, you shall certainly die; this is the promise, that if, we receive and keep this word, we shall not only keep a long life, but even a life lor ever and ever, that is a promise God hath given you, even eternal life, why this is more than all the World can give; this is an argument that countervails all other Arguments.

Use 3 Of consolation to all such as lose any thing by keeping the Apostles Doctrine; whether they lose goods, or friends, or life, or liberty, here is a comfort that over-balances all discomforts.

Two things chiefly discourage a Christian, he may either loose fellowship with the Church, and be excommunicate or else he may lose his natural life; here is comfort against both these, what though you be excommunicated from society with the Church, you shall yet notwithstanding keep fellowship with the Father and the Son; *Joh. 9. 34.* the blind man gave such a strong Testimony to Christ, that the *Pharisees* call him out, (that is, excommunicated him) well, when Christ: heard that he was cast out, he found him out, and so though this paor man was call: out of the Church, by a *clavis errans*, wrong excommunication, yet he had fellowship with Christ; what if a Christian be cast out? why here is his comfort, a man is no sooner shut out from Fellowship with the Church, but he is sent to Christ; this poor man, Christ came and instructed him; though he were cut short from instruction in the public ordinances, yet Christ instructed him, and he never spake more powerfully and effectually, so that he gave him Faith to believe, and Grace to worship him; so that though a man in a good cause should be cast out from the society of the Church, yet he shall find more near communion with Christ.

2 A man by prosessing Christ may be delivered up to the powers, and so may lose his life; why this is the promise, even eternal life, he may lose a temporary life, but he shall gain an eternal life.

Doct. *Primary Antiquity is a certain note of devine and Apostolic verity.*

Prime Antiquity, because he saith here, it was from the beginning, and he appeals to the Doctrine that was delivered from the beginning of his time, that is, from the first promulgation of the Gospel, *If that which you have heard from the beginning abide in you, &c.*

So that Prime Antiquity, that which the Apostles first taught, is a note of the truth. *Jerm. 6. 16.* enquire for the old way, that is, the good way, *Jerm.*

18. 15. he complains that they strayed from the ancient ways, and were run into by-ways, and he complains of it, as if thereby they had forgot God; therefore when St. *John* would describe the Gospel, he calls it an everlasting Gospel, *Rev.* 14. 6. and contrarily, when God would confute the people for leaving him, he convinces them of novelty, *Deut.* 13. 7. they followed other new God's.

But why is Prime Antiquity the note of divine and Apostolic verity?

1 Because Antiquity is the image of God, and every truth is an image of God, whilst Satan stood in the truth, he had the image of God; when a Doctrine reacheth the truth, it comes to the image of the ancient of days, it is the same truth now, *that was from the beginning of the World.*

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2 From the special care God takes to plant and water the Church with pure Doctrine. Satan is up early to do mischief, but God is up before him to do good; as soon as God made a World, he made a Church, and gave them truth though Satan was a Liar from the beginning, yet God taught him truth before he was a Liar; *the good seed is first sown, and then comes the envious man and sows tares.*

3 From the nature of all errors, they are aberrations from the first way of truth. What are errors but deviations from the first way? therefore there was some way of truth before; when our Saviour would tax the error about divorce, he saith, from the beginning it was not so.

Use 1 May serve to be a sign of trial between the Popish and Protestant Religions, they boast much at Antiquity, that they can fetch it from the Apostles times, why, but yet if they fetch it from the prime Antiquity, from the first Doctrine of the Apostles, we will not yield it them, but *John* himself would not fetch his Antiquity from the latter part of his days, but from the first promulgation of the Gospel, *Matth.* 5. our Saviour saith. *it hath been said of old, and yet was not truth*, that is prime Antiquity, that comes from the ancient of days, from the first Institution, *vetustas consuetudinis, est vetustas erroris*; *Ignatius* said, my Antiquity is Christ; Error may come as soon as the truth is sown, but yet it hath not prime Antiquity, for Satan was a Liar from the beginning, and yet that will not serve to prove that a lie is the truth, is a false Antiquity that comes not from the ancient of days; for our Religion, if we cannot fetch it from the Apostles first Doctrine, and from the Prophets and Apostles of old, we will renounce it, but when we can bring for all our Doctrine, the seal of the Prophets and Apostles, we have a sure note of the truth, we preach no truth, but what Christ and his Apostles taught; our

Antiquity stands not on Monuments or writings; though all, records were burnt, our faith depends not on them, but on the prime Institution.

Use 2 It confutes the Common cavil against Professors, they accuse them of new-fangledness; they say none of your Fathers or Ancestors walked in this way, why, it is the way of Christ, and his Apostles; sin is a new way, a new strange thing.

1 JOHN 2. 25.

And this is the Promise he hath promised to us, even eternal life.

THis eternal life is said to be promised.

Doct. Eternal life is given by promise.

Gal. 3. 18. Heirs of eternal life are called Heirs of Promise, *Heb. 6. 17.* because they are Heirs of that Promise was made to *Abraham, Rom. 4. 13, 14.*

Reas. 1 From the grace of eternal life to Christ, and through him to us, *Gal. 3. 16.* that therefore eternal life might be by Christ, it is needful it should be by promise, *2 Cor. 1. 20.*

Reas. 2 That it might procure those two great benefits, first, Honour to God, secondly, Peace to his Children; had we pleaded it by the Law, we had pleaded it of debt, but God provided, that what grace should come, should be free, and therefore by Promise.

2 From hence follows peace of Conscience; had we been under the Law, every failing would make us doubt, and therefore that our hearts might be settled, he hath given it us of Promise, *Rom. 6. 16.*

Use 1 A strong refutation of Popish merits by the works of the Law, and that in their own persons; why then it is not of grace nor promise; that is the true reason why they deny certainty of Salvation, because they hold it from the works of the Law; therefore there is no peace of conscience in their Religion; if it be of the works of the Law, then not of grace, if not of grace, then not of Promise, if not of Promise, then not of Christ; for if they be bound to
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obey the whole Law, they are in doubt to break it; if they keep it, yet they know not whether they shall persevere to the end, and so no peace; it is as impossible for a man to attain Salvation by Works, as to be his own Saviour.

Use 2 Hence learn the way of attaining peace of Conscience, and assurance of Salvation; why, claim it by promise, and it is sure to thee; what makes

thee doubt of thy Salvation? why, thou seest this Corruption, and that Rebellion, and thou seest the want of this and that Grace, and therefore than an in doubt, why thou shouldst claim Salvation by promise, thou wouldest have thy Works more perfect; why, that which makes us doubt, is a secret cleaving to the Works of the Law, but we must not so much look at what we do, as what we believe; what we work, but as what Christ hath wrought for us, therefore take heed of sticking to any Works of the Law; and as you desire to maintain peace of Conscience, and to die peaceably, claim Salvation by promise, there is no more required of you than to lay hold on Christ, he doth not look for perfection of faith, but truth of faith; be thy faith never so weak, if true, it gives thee Christ, and he gives thee the Promise, and that gives thee eternal life.

Q. But how shall I know whether I have this faith?

A. If God hath given thee an heart to distrust, as gifts, and parts of Nature, and Education, and to be humbled, and look after Christ; if thou prizest Christ, and desirest him above all blessings, this is true faith, if thy faith hath emptied thee of thyself, to go out to Christ as thy Portion, as the most sweet and comfortable thing, I say, thou hast that faith that conveys Christ to thee, and Christ the Promise, and the Promise eternal life; say not therefore as some do, I thank God I never doubted of Salvation, neither have I cause, I have always lived honestly, &c. if thou fetchest thy Persuasion from the Works of the Law, then not from Jesus Christ, nor the Promise, therefore do as *Paul, touching the Law*, saith he, *I was unblameable, and yet I count all these as dross and dung to win Christ*, Phil. 3. therefore distrust all these, go out of your selves, and lay hold on Christ.

Use 3 May teach us to magnify the grace of God, that hath thus devised a way for our Salvation; he hath therefore given it us of grace, that it might be sure.

1 JOH. 2. 26.

These things have I written unto you, concerning them that decieve you.

TO help young Children to beware of Antichrist, the Apostle had given them some instructions, and some means; now in this Verse to the end, he rehearseth the two special means he had prescribed.

1 Was his Writings, vers. 26.

2 Their Unction, vers. 27. therefore vers. 28, he exhorts them to abide in Christ.

First, In vers. 26, we have set out,

1 Saint *John's* writing to these Babes, and the Argument of it.

2 A description of false Teachers, Seducers.

3 A description of their Act, and Work.

1 Their Sin is a seduction and deceiving of men.

2 The vigour of it.

3 He passeth them by calling them Seducers, without naming their persons.

Doct. *There is good use to be made of the Scripture against false Teachers, even of those that want not the unction of the Spirit.*

These things I have written unto you; that have received the Spiritual Uction; otherwise Saint John's Writing had been in vain, and their reading, if there had not been use of them; 2 Cor. 11. 13. be informs the Corinthians
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of false Teachers, *Gal. 5. 12. Phil. 3. 2. Col. 2. 8.* all these shew that the Spirit thought it meet to instruct even Christians against false Teachers.

Obj. *If this anointing teach all things, what need the Scriptures to be written? is it not to give light to the Sun?*

A. No, there is a double use of the Scriptures.

1 For the confirmation of the witness of our own Conscience; a Christian man's heart witnesseth against false Doctrine, but when the Holy Ghost not only witnesseth in our hearts, but in his Word too. *In the mouth of two or three Witnesses every truth is established, 2 Cor. 13. 1.*

2 There is use of them to help our own spirits; what though my spirit rise up against such false Teachers, yet I might be deceived, therefore that I might discern the truth of my own spirit, I must try it by the Word; a good man may not know what spirit he is of, *Luke 9. 55.* in some things, therefore that we might discern the truth of our own spirits, we must try them by the Word; the Word, and the Spirit of God in Conscience; are like two Tallies they answer one another in every line.

Use 1 May teach us to discover the corruption of their spirits, who say, after they have once received the spirit of regeneration (which is indeed but common illumination) they need not the Scriptures, therefore they neglect reading of them, as Enthusiasts, and Anabaptists, that will neither read, nor pray, but when the Spirit moves them; and to this purpose they abuse a notable place, *2 Pet. 1. 19.* they say, we do well to attend to the Scripture till the day dawn, and the day-star arise in our hearts, but afterwards there is no further use thereof; but (*until*) is not always a word of restraint, but ye do well to do it before, and to do if after, as when it is said, *Michal had no Child till*

the day of her death, it implies not that then she had any, but that she never had any, so that it is a vain collection to reason after this manner, 1 *Tim.* 4. *Give diligence to reading and exhortation till I come*; would he have him leave of when he come? No, but he would rather have him always continue so doing, so that place rather exhorts them to attend to the Scripture, *after the day dawn in their hearts*, rather than restrains from it.

2 The Scripture there opposeth not the Law and the Gospel, but he would have them now attempt especially to the Gospel.

3 This word *until*, is not limited to the attending to the Prophets, but to the words *day dawn*, meaning their hearts are a dark place, *until the day dawn*, and *the day-star arise in their hearts*, therefore such men as these, are not of Saint John's spirit, who exhorts those to whom he wrote to attend to his Writings, as an help against false Teachers.

Use 2. It may exhort us in these seducing days, to be diligent and frequent in reading the Scriptures, because they are written to help us against Seducers; if a Friend should write to us to beware of such Cheaters, we would give heed to what he wrote, and observe his Counsels; why we have letters sent from far, even from Heaven, to warn us of Seducers, and sets down their Notes, and Marks, and means to avoid them; therefore let us be persuing them, and observe what they direct us to.

Doct. *The Children of God are to look at false Teachers as Deceivers*, 2 *Joh.* 7. 2 *Cor.* 11. 13. *Rom.* 16. 17, 18.

Q. *What is meant by Deceivers, why calls he them so?*

A. A Deceiver is such a one who upon presence that which is good, and true, puts us off with that which is counterfeit and nought.

So these false Teachers' deceit is their Doctrine, and in their persons.

In their Persons, 2 *Cor.* 11. 13.

In their Doctrine they make us believe it is the Doctrine of Christ, but in truth it is empty, windy doctrine, *Ephes.* 4. 14.

Use 1 May serve to stir us up so much the more to hate and detest the, and to a more serious watchfulness against them; a man hates a Deceiver worse than a Robber, a man had rather lose his purse by violence, than be
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cunningly cheated of it, the reason is, because a man that takes your Purse only wrongs you of your Money, but the other deprives you of your Money and also befools you, and makes a mock at it; so these Deceivers do not only deprive us of the truth, but through cunning delusions they over-reach us, and laugh us to scorn, 2 *Pet.* 2. 14.

Let us therefore try all things, and hold fast that which is good, 1 *Thes.s.* 5. 21. If we heard that there were counterfeit Money abroad, and cunning Fellows that would undermine us, we would look narrowly to our selves; why there are cunning Deceivers abroad, which will not only deceive you of your Pur-
ses, and Goods, but of your Faith, and the Gospel, and Salvation, therefore how circumspect and careful ought we to be? it is a wonderful sluggishness of spirit, when we know there are so many false Teachers now in the Land, and yet it is a wonder to see how raw we are in the Scriptures, how unapt to answer any thing out of the Scripture if we were put to it; therefore do not only receive the truth from the credit of Ministers, or our own spirits, but warranted from the Word, that we may be ready to render a Reason of the hope that is in us.

Doct. 3. *Sometimes in reproving and confuting of false Teachers, it is seasonable to conceal their names.*

Saint John doth not say, These things I write unto you concerning *Cerintus*, or *Ebion*, but he passeth by their names, and faith, *These things I write unto you concerning Deceivers*, 2 *Cor.* 11. 13. 1 *Cor.* 15. 12. *Gal.* 1. 7. *Phil.* 3. 2. *Jude* 4. he doth not there describe them, he names none, yet sometimes we read he names them, 1 *Tim.* 1. 19. 2 *Tim.* 2. 18. 2 *Tim.* 4. 14, 15.

It is seasonable to conceal their names.

1 When there may be any hope of their conversion, we should not too much exasperate them, because the contention is not so much against their persons, as against their Doctrine and practice.

2 When it were good, that both they and their Doctrine should utterly perish, and be forgot, *Gal.* 5. 12.

It is seasonable to express their names.

1 When they are excommunicate, as *Hymeneus* and *Philetus*.

2 That others may beware of them; 2 *Tim.* 4. 14, 15.

Use To teach us to forbear personal invectives in our writings; a wound in a man's good name, is a wound in the apple of his eye; a man that hath his eye hurt, he sees you not, so if you strike a man on his good name, it is hard if ever he hear any thing after from you.

He writes to them, about them that seduce them, yet they did not seduce them, but only did endeavour it.

Doct. 4. *The desire and endeavour to deceive, is deceit.*

Such as have a desire and purpose to deceive, are indeed deceivers, though they actually seduce not, 2 *Joh.* 7. *Rom.* 16. 17, 18. 2 *Cor.* 11. 13. *as he that looks after a woman to lust after her, commits Adultery*, *Matth.* 5. 28. because in his heart he desires it; so because a man hath a long look in his heart to de-

ceive, he is a Deceiver; you read of some that trod uuder foot the blood of Christ, *Heb.* 10. 29. now that is impossible, for Christ is in Heaven, yet if a man do what in him lies, it is as if he did it.

Reas. From God's acceptance of the will for the deed, whether in good or evil, *2 Cor.* 8. 12. therefore it was provided in the Law, if any man did bear falsh witness against his Neighbour, it should be death, because he would have taken away his Neighbour's life; so if there be a will in a man to deceive, it is as if he did deceive. And as the poor Woman, *Luke* 21. 4. is said to cast more into the Treasury than they all, because she had a will to do it, and put forth her self to her utmost ability; so if a man put forth himself in what he can to deceive, though he never reach it, yet he is a Deceiver; for though it be impossible the Elect should be seduced. *Matth.* 24. 24. yet it is his desire and endeavour do it, for God hath communicated to men more will and
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desire many times then power to accomplish it; therefore if there be will to it, the hinderance is not on man's part, but on God's.

Use 1 Must teach men to make as much conscience of their wills and desires, as of their acts; men are apt to excuse themselves in respect of the will, if the act be not done; but didst thou desire it, and go about it? if thou hadst a mind to it then it is done, because God sees that which was in thine heart as done, there was the desire of thy soul, and the endeavour of thy hand, but that it came not to pass is from God's hand.

Use 2. This may be a singular comfort to God's servants that cannot do what good they would; they have a mind to profit by the Word, to read, and pray as they ought, but they cannot; I say, if there be a willing mind, that the desire of thy soul is towards God, if thy care and endeavour be to do it, it is certainly done, though thou canst not reach it, *Gen.* 22. 12. *Abraham* did spare his Son, why true, but that was because God held his hand but because he went three days journey, and came to the place God had appointed, and built an Altar, and bound him, and would have slain him (though upon God's calling from Heaven to him he spared him) yet God accounts it as if he did it; so, had a man many corruptions in his heart, that were as his *Isaac*, darling lusts, if thou use all means to mortify and crucify them, though thou canst not get the Victory over them as thou desirest, yet God accounts it as if they were mortified; if God will have it rest there, and say it is enough, it is an acceptable sacrifice to God; when *David* had a mind to build a Temple to God, and prepared abundantly for it, though God forbad him, yet saith he, it was well it was in thine heart, and I will

therefore build thee an house, 2 *Sam.* 7. he accepted the will for the deed; so if thou set thy heart to build God's House, to be doing good to the Church; and reform the Town where you live, if in authority, though you fall short of it, if your souls desire it in good earnest, God accepts of it as done; so for your Families, if you instruct them, and strive to build them up, you say it is in vain, no truly, God will be your reward. So it may be a stay to Ministers, that desire by all means to convert some, and yet find no fruit of their labours, yet thou shalt have thy reward with rhy God: for if false Prophets, that go about to seduce, though they seduce not, yet God accounts them Seducers; so God accepts of thy good will and endeavour, as much as if thou hadst effected it.

Obj. *There we may easily flatter our selves, and say, I desire that my soul, and all mine might do well.*

A. It a man have a willing mind to a thing, it will much comfort him if he do it, and grieve him if he cannot perform it; thou sayest, thou wouldst have thy self, and all thine do well, is it thy greatest grief that thou canst not effect this, and would, be thy greatest comfort if thou couldst? then God accepts thy desire: but if a man have only some lazy desires, if it go well, well and good; if not, he is not much troubled, there was no right desire.

1 JOHN 2. 27.

But the anointing which you have received of him, dwelleth in you, &c.

Doct. *Every Child of God, even the least, and the meanest have received the Unction of the Spirit, of this we heard, vers. 20.*

But something is to be considered in the varying of the Words; vers. 20. he said, *they had it*; here he saith, *they have received it of him.*

Doct. *The Children of God receive this Unction of the Spirit from God, from the Father, and from Christ.*

Joh. 14. 16, 17. *Joh.* 16. 13. God's sending, and our receiving are *relata*, 2 *Cor.* 1. 21, 22. God's giving, and our taking mutually agree one to another

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and sometimes God the Father is said to send the Spirit, and sometimes God the Son, it is God that sends it, but Christ that hath prayed that he would send it, *Joh.* 14. 16, 17. and by his Death and Ascension hath he purchased the Spirit for us, *Acts* 2. 32, 33.

The Reasons why we must receive this Unction from God, and from Christ.

Reas. 1. Because of ourselves; what we have by Nature is a spirit of error, and falshood, and corruption, and therefore because we have no Unction from the first *Adam*, no spirit that heals us, and softens us, and cheers us, we have no spirit that doth anoint us, but rather besmear us, and daub us with base lusts; therefore if we have any Spirit of Grace, it is needful that we should receive it from the second *Adam*.

2 We receive it from the Father, because by Christ we are made Sons, and therefore have need of the spirit of Sons, *Gal.* 4. 5, 6. all of us like Christ his eldest Son; God's Spirit is the mark whereby he owns us, it is the earnest penny that we have, *Rom.* 8. 14. that we might be comforted, therefore called the Comforter, *Joh.* 16. 13. the earnest penny, and first fruits of eternal glory; an earnest penny is part of the payment, of the same nature with the whole, this Spirit is part of the payment which we shall then receive in abundance, now in a small measure, we have now little love, and faith, &c. but he will make perfect love, perfect knowledge, perfect strength.

3 That Christ should give it, is from his death wherby he purchased it, *Gal.* 3. 13, 14. and by his Ascension he shed abroad his Spirit in our hearts; as when *Elias* was ascending into Heaven, he spread abroad his Mantle upon *Elisha*, whereby he was cloathed with a double Spirit; so when Christ ascended into Heaven, he spread abroad his Mantle as it were, his Spirit, which every Christian taking, is cloathed with the Spirit of Christ, with the Spirit of gladness and holiness.

Use 1. Shows the wonderful love of God, even so the least and meanest of his Servants, that not only gives us his Son to be our Redeemer, but his Spirit to be our Sanctifier, so large is God in his bounty; no wonder then if he give us health, and peace, and friends, and means, and maintenance, for he that gives us his Son, and his Spirit, will he deny us lesser things? so that this is not only an expression of his love, but all argument of our faith and consolation, he that gives us his Son, and his Spirit, will give us all things, *Luke* 12. 32. *Fear not little Flock, &c.* and no wonder, for he hath given us the earnest here.

Use 2. To reach God's Children, not to be proud of any Spiritual gift that God gives us, *1 Cor.* 4. 7. if all we have we have received, what have we to boast of? And let us not insult over others, for they may receive the Spirit of Unction as well as we, as *Paul* did, though he were a Persecutor; so much less should we despise weaker Christians than our selves, what if they have received but a little measure of faith, and love, and patience, &c? why that lit-

tle is so much that it seals them up to eternal happiness, they have received so much that they are invested with the garment of Christ; therefore let there be no striving, or contention, or contempt among Brethren, seeing all have received this Unction.

Use 3. Have you received the Spirit? then so walk in him, rooted, and established in him, *Col. 2. 6, 7.* why have you received it, but that you may pray and preach, and buy and sell in this Spirit? therefore let every one to walk that he may express that he hath received the Spirit of God, *Gal. 5. 25.* as ye have received the Spirit, so walk in him, put forth the life of the Spirit in every employment, not your own spirit, but shew forth the grace of him which hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.

Doct. 2. The Spirit which the Children of God have received of him, dwells in them for ever.

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Job. 14. 16, 17. it is an indwelling and abiding Spirit, *1 Cor. 3. 6. & 6. 29. Ephes. 2. 20, 21, 22.* the Spirit of God builds a Tabernacle in you, and dwells in you.

Reas. 1. Now the Spirit is said to abide in us, because having knit us to Jesus Christ, we are become of his flesh and bone, now it were both a dishonour and unseemly for Christ to have any lifeless dead member; therefore that God might make us serviceable unto him, he continues his Spirit to us, that may inliven us.

2 God that gives us this earnest penny, would have it continue with us till the payment be complete.

3 The same reason that moves God to give us his Spirit, moves him to continue it to us, we have as much need to be like God in our whole course, as at first, and have as much need of assurance of glory, *Phil. 1. 6.* the same God that begins the work, will also continue it to us.

Use 1. A ground of trial of our estates; if we have no spirit but the spirit of the old *Adam*, the spirit of pride and malice, and covetousness, truly this is not the spirit of Christ that makes us like him, this is not that Spirit that Christ purchased for us by his Death, and Ascension; but suppose we had some of the Spirit of God, the spirit of Wisdom, as *Achitophel*, the spirit of Joy, as *Herod*, the spirit of Zeal, as *Jehu*, the spirit of fear, as *Felix* had, yet we have not this Unction of the Spirit, unless it dwell in us. What is it to be wrapped with a spirit of a *Balaam*, or a *Saul*? it was only for a fit, and what comfort was it to them? it was a shuttle spirit by starts, and did not abide in

them, therefore let us try whether we have received the Spirit, if we have received a dwelling spirit, it is a true spirit.

Obj. *But some may say, Alas, what then will become of me, it may be now I pray, but ere night wholly unable; now enlarged, the straitened; I have now a spirit of zeal, and courage, soon after all cold, and weak, and dead; wonderful was the zeal and courage of Elias in slaying four hundred of Baal's Prophets openly, 1 King. 18. 40. he went through it with such zeal and speed, as if he had been sent from Heaven, yet cap. 19. 1, 2. when Jezebel sent to him he fled for his life, and was so weary of his life, that he wished death; now his Spirit was cold, and discontent, and weary of his life. So David, Psal. 119. 24. David said, he had made the Word his delight, yet vers. 25. he saith, his soul cleaves to the dust, and prays to God for quickening.*

A. This Spirit that is so to abide, doth not always abide in the same measure, nor in the same measure of expression; but we must know, though there be several garments, yet the Soul is never naked; a man hath not always his Holy-day garments sweetly perfumed, but sometimes homely, mean garments; so *Elias* when he shew *Baal's* Prophets was cloathed with zeal, and Holy-day garments, afterwards he remitted of it, and yet had he the Spirit of God on him, he was not naked, though he was not clothed with the Spirit in such a measure; even so sometimes we have even poor ragged homely garments, and much of our nakedness appears, and sometimes again may be, when God hath greater business for us to do, cloathes us with better, richer garments, a greater measure of the Spirit; but yet consider, though we have not the same measure, yet always some garment of the Spirit rests on us, be it but the spirit of love to our Brethren, or grief for the want of it, yet we are not left naked.

Use 2. May exhort us, if we have this Spirit dwelling in us, then let us use him honourably, and courteously as an in-dweller; he is come from far, even from Heaven, sent from our Father, and he brings joy and comfort with him, therefore let us give him honourable entertainment; he is sent to guide us in all our ways, to be a pledge of our eternal inheritance, therefore let us not entertain him like some Guests that we are weary of in two or three days; you must know this guest came not for a day, but to dwell with us for ever, *Joh. 14. 16. therefore take heed of grieving him, Ephes. 4. 13. he comes*

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for your good, and benefit, for your redemption. When a man keeps a Ward, and for keeping him keeps a great estate, a Kingdom, he would be very careful; so the Spirit is such a Guest, that if you keep him, you keep Life and

Salvation, you keep an eternal Kingdom by him, therefore take part with God's Spirit, join with the Spirit of God, quench it not; what an heavy complaint made Stephen? Acts 7. 37. Isa. 63. 10. the Spirit may be so grieved and vexed by men, that he will depart from them.

Q. *How shall we keep ourselves from grieving the Spirit?*

A. 1. As God hath given him to guide you, so look that you be guided by him; if you entertain him kindly he will comfort you, if you grieve him, he will grieve your spirits.

2 Be careful to nourish him do nor starve this Guest, neglect not the Word, and Ordinances, which are the food of the Spirit; *Quench not the Spirit, despise not Prophecies*, 1 Thes. 5, as if the despising of Prophecy, were the quenching of the Spirit; therefore feed the Spirit of God, with-draw not food from it, prefer not outward things before it; it is a wonder how lean our souls will grow, if we do not nourish the Spirit.

3 Take heed especially of living in any known Sin, for that damps and deads the Spirit, therefore *David* woefully complains, *Psal. 51. 8. to 12. Restore, &c.* as if it were quite gone, his very bones were broken, that is, not of his body, but his soul, *i.e.* the strength and staff of his spirit; the Spirit is like fire, every gross sin is like water cast on it, it quengeth it.

Use 3 A ground of much consolation to God's servants; you can never say you dwell alone and want company, you cannot want good company if the holy Spirit dwell in you; *I am not alone* saith Christ, *but the Father is with me*; so may a Christian say, I am never alone, the Spirit of God dwells in me, he is an in-dwelling and abiding Spirit.

Doct. 3 *The anointing of the Spirit, teacheth us all things*, of which you heard, *verse 20.*

It teacheth all things needful to salvation, needful to life and godliness, *2 Pet. 1. 3.* and not only so, but needful to our places, and callings, and ages.

Doct. 4 *The anointment of the Spirit is so plentiful and sufficient, that we need not be taught better things, nor in a better manner, than the Spirit teacheth.*

Jerem. 31. 32. not that we need not Magistracy or Ministry, but he speaks comparatively, you shall not be so helped by any Instructions without the Spirit, as with the Spirit, the Spirit shall declare the Truth in Jesus.

For Explication.

1 The Holy Ghost teacheth fully, *1 Cor. 2. 9, 10, 11.* the spirit of a Christian is inquisitive concerning all things, now the Spirit helps him to search even into the deep things of God, so that the Spirit is a full teacher.

2 The Instruction of the Spirit is plain and clear, 1 *Tim.* 4. 1. *Joh.* 16. 25. Christ spake in parables, but after his ascension, the Spirit revealed things clearly.

Three things go to clear discerning, the object must be clear, the medium clear, and the eye clear, and then we may clearly discern, now the Holy Ghost plainly reveals the Counsels of God, and then opens our judgements to discern it, and then clears all the mediums, so that a Christian may plainly discern; so that the Spirit is a clear Instructor, no men need be taught more clearly. 1 *Cor.* 2. 4, 5.

3 The Instruction of the Spirit is a certain Instruction; scarce any truth, but a Christian can tell it by experience; as a woman that is breeding a Child feels such qualms and distempers, that she knows thereby she is with Child; so they that have had the breeding of the Spirit in their hearts and have perceived his motions, they know more clearly than any other; verse 20. *Ye know all things*, it is a scientific Instruction about certain experimental things; they know the danger of sin, the sweetness of Grace.

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4. The Spirit teacheth us most profitably; for that is the dexterity of the Spirit, that it tells you what use you are to make of such a Scripture, such a Sermon, such a Providence, such an Affliction; *I am the holy one of Israel, that teacheth you to profit*, Isa. 48. 17. let the Minister speak never so powerfully, and plainly, yet the heart of man cannot discern it, and profit by it; unless the Spirit strike in with it, we shall do little good.

Use 1 May discover the vanity of the Popish Doctrine, that would not have men trust their own spirits, but follow the Judgements of the Church; this is a poor Instruction; what if the spirit of the Church become Apostatical? what is become of all the famous Churches of *Asia* and *Grecia*? have not they warped from the Truth? therefore if men should follow the Spirit of the Church. they might fall from the Truth, but you see how St. *John* magnifies the Instruction of the Spirit; you need not that any one teach you otherwise than the Spirit within you witnesses.

Obj. *May not a man's spirit be a delusion, must we trust every private spirit?*

A. Though it be in a private man, yet it is not a private Spirit, but the same Spirit common to the whole body of Christ; his Spirit is not limited to public persons or Ministers, but to all generally that are the Members of Christ; so that we do not maintain it to be a private spirit, though in a private man, for it is a public spirit; the Spirit breaths where it lists, and wherever it breaths, none need teach more or better.

Use 2 If God's Spirit be so sufficient, then let us make of the Spirit, to discern falsehood, and to know the Truth; not to rest in what Ministers, or Parents, or Masters teach, but what the Spirit teacheth, that follows; one days instruction of the Spirit, will lead you into more knowledge than a hundred Sermons.

Use 3 Look that you keep the Spirit in good order; if you grieve the Spirit, he hath no comfort to teach you, as Parents or Masters take no delight to teach their Children or Servants, when they take no heed to what they teach them; but if the Spirit see you be willing to hear and listen, and reach after what he reveals, the Spirit teacheth us with delight; but if ye grieve God's Spirit by sensual lusts, the Spirit is so discouraged, that you shall find his Instruction very thin and weak; if God's Spirit see you do not intend to make use of what he teacheth, he will have little delight to teach you.

Use 4 Reproves such as content themselves in Ignorance, by saying they are not book-learned, and therefore there is not much expected from them; why, if you give up your spirits to God's, his Spirit will teach you all things, he will teach you without book, as much as shall be needful for you.

Use 5 Of Consolation to God's Servants, that have always a Teacher within them, they carry a Prophet about them, a Minister about them; every man desires to have the best Teacher for his Child, you cannot put your Child to a better Teacher than the holy Spirit, *Isa. 54. 14. Joh. 6. 45. your Children shall be taught of me*, therefore pray to God to teach you, and to counsel you, he will give you that counsel and direction, none can give. *Vide plura* verse 20.

Doct. 5 *The Spirit of God in the hearts of his Servants is not a spirit of delusion, but of truth.*

They might say, every man will boast of his own spirit; we know there are many lying spirits abroad; how shall I know that I have the true Spirit? why, he saith it is not a lying, but true Spirit, so our Saviour calls it a Spirit of Truth, *John 16. 13. Joh. 14. 16, 17.* and it is a true Spirit.

1 Because it makes us true men, whereas by nature we are full of falsehood and lies, *Rom. 3. 4.*

2 It reveals the Truth of God in a true manner, it teacheth such things as agree with the Scripture, the word of Truth.

3 It is given by the God of Truth, therefore must needs be true.

4 Because it teacheth nothing but what it receives from Christ, and Christ teacheth

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teacheth nothing but what comes from the Father, the God of truth, *Joh.* 12. 49, 50. and therefore must needs be true.

Q. *But how shall I know that my spirit is not a spirit of Error and delusion, but of truth? 1 Kings 22. 22, 23, 24. when went the Spirit of the Lord from me to speak to thee? yet there was a lying Spirit amongst them, we see here was a lying Spirit in four hundred Prophets, and he cunningly conveys himself like an Angel of Light, how shall a Child of God discern the true Spirit from a Spirit of delusion?*

A. They that have received a Spirit of Error, may be deluded by a Spirit of Error, but they that have received the Spirit of Truth, cannot be deluded by a Spirit of Error. But how shall I know that I am not deluded, and that my Spirit is a Spirit of Truth?

1 By the Testimony of this Spirit; there is such a clear light in the Spirit, that he will reveal himself plainly enough, *1 Joh.* 5. 3. *the Spirit bears witness that the Spirit is Truth.*

2 You shall find the Spirit of God, is ever suitable to the Word of God; that Spirit that teacheth you other things than the Word, or withdraws you from the Word, that Spirit is a delusion; the Word begat us, and a Christian loves to be sucking at it.

3 It is a Spirit of Truth, if it make you conformable to Christ; meek and lowly as Christ was, patient, and going about doing good as he did, wherever we come, that is the proper work of the Spirit, to make us holy, as he is holy, meek, as he is meek, pure, as he is pure.

4 We may discern the Spirit by his fruits, a tree is known by the fruit, good fruit comes not from a corrupt Spirit, take any corrupt Spirit, it so confounds and troubles the Spirits of men, that they cannot bring forth good fruits, but the holy Spirit is so meek and plain, that it doth not disturb nature, but perfect it, but a bad Spirit doth not perfect, but corrupt nature, *Gal.* 5. 22. *But the fruits of the Spirit are, Faith, and love, and meekness,* it is a sign an evil Spirit was upon *Zedekiah*, *1 Kings* 22. because he was so boisterous, and rude, and impatient, he struck *Micaiah* on the face, but God's Spirit is meek, and humble, and lowly.

Use 1 May teach us to see the excellency of a Christian, above other wicked men, *Psal.* 12. 20. the way of a Christian is the way of Truth and goodness, but the ways of the wicked are deceitful, and will certainly seduce us, but a Christian hath fellowship with the Spirit of Truth.

Use 2 It must therefore stir up men to labour to be partakers of this excellent Spirit, this Spirit of Truth, the way of righteousness will not deceive us.

It may be many times by following the Spirit, we run into dangerous ways; the way of truth is a straight narrow way, but it is a safe way; keep your way, and it will keep you; the Spirit of Christ will carry you on strongly, *Jer.* 20. 10. men think that Christians walk in dangerous ways, set like Christ on the top of a pinnacle, but we shall find that these ways of Truth will not fail us, but lead us on to eternal happiness, therefore get this Spirit of Truth.

Use 3 A ground of Comfort to all them that have received this Spirit, this Spirit will not deceive you; if God's Spirit were not in you, you were of all men most miserable; but we have a Spirit that will not fail us, as *Policarpus* said, These eighty six years have I served Christ, and he never deceived me, therefore now I will not leave him.

Doct. 6. The anointment of God's Spirit teacheth us our perseverance in Christ, i.e. doth assure us that we shall abide in him.

Rom. 8. 16, 17. *The same Spirit beareth witness with our Spirits; two Spirits bear Witness, God's, and ours, and both co-witness our adoption; our Spirit, that is, our renewed, regenerate Spirit, for God's Spirit would not join with our corrupt Spirit, but with our renewed Spirit, and this makes us become the Sons of God; for there is a manifold difference between the fruits of the Spirit and the flesh; but besides this renewed Spirit of ours, God's Spirit witnesseth, the other indeed was the fruit and effect of God's Spirit, but*

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God's Spirit it self is some lively and comfortable witness, which speaks more clearly and fully, than the created graces of God in us; it you would speak of an immediate work of the Spirit, it doth it by such peace of Conscience, and joy, as passeth understanding, *Phil.* 4. 7. *φρουρήσει* it shall so guide your hearts; this peace that God's Spirit immediately pours into the heart, is without understanding, and the witness God's Spirit gives to our spirits, makes us that we never doubt more.

2 It works in us joy unspeakable, and full of glory, *1 Pet.* 1. 8. there is such a witness as fills our hearts with glorious consolation, *Rom.* 14. 17. and this fills our souls, so that, a man tastes of the first fruits of Heaven, *In his light we shall see light*, *Psal.* 36. 8, 9. there are certain times when God sends this into our spirits, and that is usually in the end of many Conflicts, God abundantly recompenseth our work.

3 Sometimes when we are preparing for some great trial, then God sends some more special help of his Spirit; as it was with our Saviour, when he was to be tempted forty days, immediatly before he had a testimony from Heaven, *Thou art my beloved Son, &c.* presently after he was led into the Wil-

derness to be tempted of the Devil, *Matth.* 4. and as the Angels rejoice at our conversion, *Luke.* 15. 10. so when God hath any great Temptation for us, he pours down more enlargement and comfort of the Spirit; so when Christ was to be Crucified, he was a little before gloriously Transfigured, and when he came riding to *Jerusalem*, exulting and rejoicing, presently after he went to be Crucified, *Rom.* 5. 8. and often in the midst of tribulation, so oft after Afflictions and Conflicts, God comes to comfort us with happy enlargements, *1 Pet.* 4. 14. not only a spirit of grace, but a spirit of glory, as it did on *Steven*, *Act.* 6. *ult.* *1 Joh.* 3. *ult.* hereby we know that we abide in Christ, even by the Spirit, *1 Cor.* 2. 9, 10, 11, 12.

Reas. 1. From the names and titles given to the Spirit in Scripture three names, all which witness this truth.

1 It is called the Comforter, *Joh.* 14. 16, 17. not so much comforting us in outward Crosses, but specially because he comforteth our hearts, by assuring us we are Sons, and Daughters of God, and Heirs of life, for else it were not above the world, for the world can, comfort us in Spiritual things, but here is a Comforter that far transcends the world.

2 The Spirit is called the seal and earnest of our inheritance, *Ephes.* 1. 13, 14. *Eph.* 4. 30. *2 Cor.* 1. 21. now a seal hath a Three-fold use.

1 It hath no use to keep secret, or distinguish.

2 Not only so, but to confirm us in all Leases, Bonds, Covenants; so the Spirit not only keeps us sure, and distinguisheth us from all Hypocrites, but seals us by confirming the happiness of our estate present, and future.

3 It is a seal alluding to the seals of Princes, wherein their person is portrayed; so this Spirit is the very Character of God's Image, and fashions us after the Image of God, and hereby he confirms and establisheth all the Promises to us, *2 Cor.* 1. 20. and *Ephes.* 6. the Article ō shews, that not only the gift of the Spirit, but the person of the Spirit witnesseth.

3 He is called the earnest, whereof three Uses.

1 It binds and assures a man.

2 An earnest is part of the payment, though small in regard of the whole; so the Spirit of grace is part of the payment, and shall remain with us till the full payment.

3 Because it abides with us after the whole payment.

Use. May serve to comfort the hearts of all that have received the Unction of the Spirit, they have an assurance of their state of grace here, and Glory hereafter.

Obj. *How comes it to pass then, that so many Christians are so troubled?*

1 There is a double reason of it;

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First, Sometimes by imaginary causes, when there is no such cause; as,

1 In case of desertion; we think we have quenched and grieved the Spirit, and therefore it hath left us, but God doth not assure us that the Spirit in a full and glorious measure shall abide in us, but some fruits of it shall always remain.

2. Sometimes outward Crosses and Afflictions make us doubt, as *David*, Psal. 73. surely, *I have cleansed my heart in vain*.

3. Sometimes Melancholy may so distemper us, that we will hardly be persuaded of that whereof we have no cause to doubt.

Secondly, There are some real Causes; as,

1 If we live in any known sin, that breaks the very bones, *Psal.* 51. 8. deprives as of the vigour of the Spirit.

2. The high prizing of earthly contentments, when we exceedingly delight our selves in Husbands, or Wives, or Children, which much benumbs and dims the light of the Spirit, *Matth.* 13. 44, 45. when a man so prizes this Pearl, he keeps it with him in comfort.

3. The proud frame of our spirit hinders our peace; we are all naturally of proud lofty spirits, and if God see not in us all humble meek spirit, God's Spirit will not so freely converse with us, *Isa.* 57.15.

4. Impediment of our peace, is suspending of our peace upon our own performances, because we cannot pray so enlargedly, nor hear so profitably as sometimes we have done, but then we deceive ourselves, *Rom.* 5. 1. because then we do not look for peace and justification from grace, but from the works of the Law, whereas we should depend wholly on the Merits at Christ; and thus by these means we grieve the Spirit, and blur the seal, and so dim and dull our peace and comfort.

Use 2. It may conlote a Popish error, who say, it is presumption, and dangerous to think we may have assurance of God's favour; but we see we may know it by the witness of the Spirit.

1 JOHN 2. 28.

And now little Children abide in him, that when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.

THE Coherence stands thus; he had written to several Ages several instructions, vers. 27. to Babes he had said, they had received an Unction, whereby they did abide in him.

In this twenty eighth Verse, he turns his speech to all Christians in general, for here it is *τεχνία* not *παίδις* having promised they should abide in him.

Two Parts.

1. An Exhortation to all to abide in Christ.
2. A Reason for encouragement from the comfortable benefit that shall arise from it.

Doct. 1. *The promise of perseverance in the state of Grace, doth not open a gap to carnal liberty, but rather gives us cause of encouragement to abide in Christ.*

Now he hath promised they should abide in him, vers. 27. he doth not say, therefore take your ease, take no care, you are safe; no, he saith not so, but abide in Christ. In other places of Scripture, when the clearest promises of grace and perseverance are laid down, there is exhortation to careful obedience, 1 *Cor.* 10. 12, 13. though thou canst not fall finally, yet *let him that standeth take heed lest he fall*, Phil. 2. 12, 13. not a carnal fear, but such a fear as is opposed to carnal confidence and pride, though *God work both the will and the deed*; Paul a man most confident of his good estate, so as he triumphed in his estate, *Rom.* 8. *ult.* Did this make him carnally secure? No, he is

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now more vigilant and careful than before. 1 *Cor.* 9. 26, 27. so we see confidence breeds not negligence, but rather diligence; so we read he renounced all for Christ, *Phil.* 3. 7, 8, 9. yet verse 12, 13. the more assurance he had, the more vigilant he was; and now little Children even now you have a promise to abide in Christ, abide in him.

Reas. 1. For the nourishment of those Graces (by these kind of promises) whereby we most cleave to Christ, faith feeds on these Promises, as it is bred by them, so it is nourished by them, now the more faith, the more do you purify your heart; *faith purifies the heart*, Acts 15. 9. no Promise promises perseverance to us in our own strength, but all are made in Christ, and therefore make a Christian by faith to cleave the faster to Christ.

2 These Promises breed Hope in us, and this Hope makes us purify our selves, as Christ is pure, 1 *Joh.* 3. 1, 2, 3. A Maid that knows she shall be married such a day, will it make her the less careful to adorn her self? no surely,

so have any hope to meet the Bridegroom at the last day as their Husband? do they go and soil and defile themselves, with base Lusts? No, they adorn and beautify their souls the more. When *Pharaoh* sent and called for *Joseph*, and he had now hope to make his suit known to the King, doth he now come in his poor Prison-garments? no, he shaves himself, and puts on other garments; so those Maids that were to go in to King *Ahasuerus*, they spent six months in purifying themselves.

3 These Promises increase love in us; the more beautiful God is in his Promises, the more doth the love of Christ constrain us.

Use 1. To confute Popish spirits, that say, The doctrine of perseverance breeds security; to what purpose say they do you press people to abide in Christ, when they can do no other; we see Saint *John* practice here; it is true, if these new Premises were put into old Bottles, it would breed security in us; but a Christian spirit that is taught to believe in Christ, he is made the more watchful by it, *1 Cor. 15. ult.*

Use 2. May stir up all to abide in Christ; and for that end, to make use of these Promises to stir you to it, *Psal. 116. 9. to 12.* seeing God hath freed your souls from darkness, and ignorance, and bondage, why walk holily therefore in the sight of the Lord, none more dissolute and careless then those that are uncertain of their Salvation.

Doct. 2. It is the duty of all Christians to abide in Christ, Joh. 15. 5.

R. 1. If ye abide in me, ye shall bring forth much fruit; not fruit without Christ.

2 If you abide in him, it keeps you from sin, *1 Joh. 3. 6.*

3 Abiding in Christ, is the means to have all our petitions heard, *Joh. 15. 7.*

4 Abide in Christ, and abide in eternal life. verse 24, 25. *hujus capitis.*

Use 1. To reprove the Apostacy, that is found sometimes in Professors, though many dead branches be cut off, yet the Vine is perfect, but not without living branches; some are Members, some only unperfect, so some may adhere to Christ by the redundancy of some graces, as *Judas* and *Jehu*, these may be cut off, and we see how woeful their case is, they wither and are cut down, *John 15. 6.* and are cast into the fire, *Jer. 2. 13. this people have committed two evils, &c. Jerem. 18. 14.* it had been better they had never tasted of Christ or known him.

Use 2. Let it exhort us, as we desire to be faithful, to abide in Christ.

Q. How may we abide in Christ?

A. 1. If his Word abide in us, Christ abides in us, *1 Joh. 2. 24. 2 Chr. 25. 16.*

2. Know that all your strength depends on Christ, live therefore in his Grace.

3. Be fruitful in Christ, make use of him to grow in Grace.

4. If at any time you turn from him, return to him speedily, that so by repentance you may renew your Covenant. *Jerem.* 3. 1.

Doct. 3 *Such as do abide in Christ, do with boldness expect, and without shame receive him at his coming.*

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It is plain in the Text *παρρησία*.

1 From the causes, what makes men afraid of his coming? either knowledge it shall go ill with them, or not knowing it shall go well with them, as the Cardinal said, he had rather have his part in *Paris*, than his part in *Paradise*, the one he was certain of, the other uncertain; but now such as abide in Christ, they know that it shall be well with them at that day, *Psal.* 23. 3, 4, 5. doubtless mercy and favour shall follow them all their days, and therefore they are confident, 2 *Tim.* 4. 7, 8. what makes *Paul* thus bold? because he knows he shall receive a Crown of Righteousness at his appearing.

2 From the effects of their confidence, first, they love the appearing of Christ, and therefore manifest, they look for it with confidence, 2 *Tim.* 4. 8.

2 As they love Christ's appearing, so they pray for it, *Cant.* 8. *ult.* and therefore it is a sign with confidence they expect it, *Rev.* 22. 20. Did you ever know any Malefactor write to the Judge to hasten his coming to the Assizes? No, but they would rather prevent his coming, but if they hasten his coming, they are confident it shall go well with them, the Prison is a burden to them, and at his coming they are confident to be freed. Many Afflictions, as so many bolts lie on God's children, many vexations, therefore they desire the Lord to hasten his coming, to rid them out of all their misery, and revenge them of their enemies.

2 As they are confident, so they are nor ashamed, they profess his name here without shame, and therefore Christ will not be ashamed of them at that day.

Use 1. It reproveth and refutes a Popish Doctrine of uncertainty of Salvation; how could Christians love and pray for Christ's coming, if they did not know it should be well with them at that day? this love and desire after it, shews they are confident of their good estate.

Use 2. Of trial, whether you abide in Christ or no; why see how thou standest affected to the coming of Christ; art thou bold, and confident at the hearing of the last day? art thou reverently bold, and lovest, and prayest for his coming? then it is a sign thou abidest in Christ; but if the hearing of it strike terror into thee, and thou wouldst gladly put it off, surely thou art not in Christ; the Day of Judgement to the Godly is a day of Marriage, and

therefore the Spouse longs for it; to the wicked it is a day of Execution, and therefore they tremble at the thought and hearing of it; it is a day when he will shew himself marvellous in mercy to every Christian, and in flaming fire to the wicked and ungodly; consider then how thou art affected to this Day, is it a day thy soul desires? *Come Lord Jesus, come quickly, even so, Amen.* But is the consideration of it dreadful to thee, that thou knowest not how to meet it? then thy spirit is corrupt, and not upright before God.

Obj. *How comes it to pass, that many a godly soul fears and trembles at death? was not Hezekiah and David afraid of it, Psal. 30. 9. Did he not say, that though he walked in the shadow of death he would not be afraid, and is he now afraid?*

A. In Two Cases God's Children may be afraid to die.

1 When they have loosely and negligently laid up the evidences of their estate, as a man at the Assizes, that is to try his Evidences, if he have them to seek, he desires the Assizes were put off.

2 Sometimes he is fearful, when he knows he hath lived somewhat loosely, and his heart hath run a Whoring from God by some carnal delights, so that he would gladly gather up himself better, before he go hence and be no more seen; because our hearts have gone whorishly from God, we are afraid, not that he will cast us off, but that we shall not find that welcome which otherwise we should, if we had time to recover our selves. So *David*, Psal. 39 *ult.* he was in some grievous Disease, and somewhat conscious his spirit was not perfect but he had much weakened his grace, therefore he prays, *O spare me a little, that I may recover my self, before I go hence and be no more seen.*

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Hence oft Christians at their conversion are afraid of Death and Judgement, because their Evidences are nor so good, and others afraid, because they have blurred their Evidences by some sinful delight, and sitting loose from God, but yet their fear differs from wicked men's, wicked men tremble, because they have no evidence at all, but a godly man knows he hath evidences, but he hath them not so, ready, and therefore desires to be deferred.

Use 3. It may stir us up all, as ever we desire to live comfortably, and die gloriously; so to have a care to abide in Christ, otherwise you will die both with fear and flame; but if you abide in Christ, you may with boldness look Death in the face, therefore abide not in your Natural estate, in Civil honesty, but abide in Christ. It is a profane and false speech of some Politicians, that say, Religion makes men cowards, and never famous Warriors; no,

doth that make us cowards that makes us look Death in the face, and Judgement also? were those cowards that have looked Fire and Faggot and Torments in the face? therefore it is not Religion, but want of Religion that makes men cowards, therefore strengthen your faith, and so you shall expect Christ's coming with confidence, and boldness, and courage.

I JOH. 2. 29.

If yet Know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doth righteousness is born of him.

IN the former Verse he had exhorted all to abide in Christ, and that from all Argument of boldness and confidence at the day of Death, and Judgement; in this verse he proves that such may have boldness; they that are born of Christ are Children of God, may lift up their heads with joy at his coming; a Child is not afraid, but glad of his Father's coming, but such as abide in Christ are born of God, *Ergo*. But how do they know they are born of God? why they that do righteousness are born of God, but those that abide in Christ do righteously; how appears that? they that know that Christ is righteous, they know that such as do righteousness are born of God.

Doct. 1. *Jesus Christ is righteous.*

Isa. 53. 11. *Matth.* 27. 19. & 24. That just one, *Acts* 22. 14. 1 *Pet.* 3. 8.

Reas. 1. From his Righteousness, and innocent Conception, and Birth; he was not begot as other men, but the Holy Ghost over-shadowed the Virgin.

2 From his innocent Life, he fulfilled all righteousness, *Matth.* 3. 15. *Heb.* 4. 15. *Joh.* 14. 30. Satan coul find no sin in him to take advantage of.

3 From the necessary use of his righteousness, he must be righteous.

1 To overcome the sorrows of Death, one sin would have kept him under death, *Act.* 2. 24, 25, but by his innocency he overcame death.

2 That he might be an holy High Priest to us, and a perfect Sacrifice for us, *Heb.* 7. 26, 27. had he not been innocent and harmless he could not have been so; the Priests in the Law were to be without blemish, *Lev.* 2. 17. to shew, that the great High Priest should be so; so was the offering to be without blemish, *Lev.* 27.7. and therefore requisite Christ should be so, *Heb.* 9. 4.

3 It was needful he should be righteous, for the use and end of his righteousness, his righteousness is imputed to us for righteousness.

4. That he might work inherent righteousness in us, that we might do righteousness, had Christ been blemished in one sin, he could not have begot us righteous to God.

Q. *What is it to be righteous?*

A. Holiness gives God his due, Righteousness; man his due; but righteous-

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ness put alone, implies both giving due to God and man; so Christ he gave to *Cæsar* what was his due, to the Pharisees their due, and every one their due.

Use. A ground of wonderful consolation to every poor soul, that is butted with his own unrighteousness, though we are unrighteous, yet Christ is righteous, and what is wanting in our parts, is supplied on his; this comfort *Elihu* gives to a man in extremity of body and soul, *Job.* 33. 23. to declare where his righteousness is to be found, that is, it is not to be found in himself, God will say of such a soul, deliver his soul from going into the pit, for I have received a recompence; what thought we have cause to complain at the Church? *Isa.* 64. 6. yet if we know Christ is Innocent, and pure, and holy, why then his righteousness is imputed to us, what though we were born sinful? yet Christ was born without blemish; what though our lives be unclean and wicked? yet Christ's life was innocent and harmless; what though we should have died for our iniquities, as the good Thief said, *Luk.* 23. 41. yet this man hath done nothing worthy of death, verse 47. certainly this is a righteous man; so every soul that is sensible of his own unworthiness, as the good Thief said, verse 40. *fearest thou not God,* &c. if a man fear before God and tremble at his wrath in such a case, Christ will say as he did to the good Thief, this day shalt thou be in *Paradise*, or at least have right to it.

Obj. *Christ is righteous, but what is that to me? do all wicked men receive righteousness from him? alas, I have nothing to move God to impute his righteousness to me.*

Ans. If thou canst but find this in thine heart, that thou fearest God because of thy sins, and art humbled, why then if Christ be righteous, thou needest not fear his coming, for his righteousness shall veil thy unrighteousness, and thy estate shall be happy.

Obj. *Was not Judas afraid of the horrors of Hell when he had betrayed Christ? did not he fear sin, and it was a terror to his soul?*

Ans. *Judas* was afraid of that sin, but he was not afraid of all sin, for then he would have been as much afraid of having himself, as betraying his Master; therefore he feared we horror of that sin, but not of all sin; but take a man

fearing God for all sin, and fearing other men's sins, as the good Thief, afraid least Children and Servants should sin, and looks at Christ's righteousness; this is a *supersedeas* of all danger at death, we may expect death and judgement with comfort and joy.

2. It is a ground of Comfort likewise to such as having found comfort heretofore in the righteousness of Christ, are now in that case that they doubt of their Estate, why? what though you fail in many things, yet look up to Christ? he is pure and righteous; and so being clothed with his righteousness, we may lift up our heads with comfort, and this *Paul* comforted himself in, *Phil.* 3. 7, 8, 9. in that, *he counted all dross and dung in respect of the righteousness of Christ*; here is the comfort of a Christian, he should not look to his own righteousness, never think to get any thing by your own works, but if you lay hold on Christ's righteousness, you may know that you are born of God, and so may expect the last day with joy and comfort.

Doct. 2. *Such as work righteousness are born of Christ.*

1 *John* 3. 10. the manifest difference between the Children of God, and of the Devil, is working of righteousness.

Reas. 1. From the weakness and impotency of nature to bring forth a righteous work, *Rom.* 8. 3, 4. *Rom.* 7. 18. & 3. 10. 12. none of the famous *Heroes* among the Heathen, but their best actions were *splendida peccata*, *Deut.* 32. 32, 33. God's people had corrupted themselves, and the Spirit of God was not upon them; their sweetest works were like the Grapes of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, which are fait to the eye, but if touched vanish away; there is a fair outside, but no nourishment, none so opposite to Christ, as men of best natural abilities, *Act.* 17. 32. 19, 20. *Rom.* 11. 17, 20. *Phil.* 3. 6. though *Paul* was

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clean in his own and other's eyes. Yet did he persecute the Church of God, there is no power of nature, can reach to a supernatural work, *Rom.* 6. 16, 17, 18, 19, 20.

2 From the impotency and weakness of common Graces, *Matth.* 12. 33. *Heb.* 9. 14. until Christ's blood hath sprinkled our Consciences all our works are but dead works, every work that is spiritual, must.

1 Spring from Faith, *Gal.* 3. 14. *Rom.* 14. *ult.*

2 The end must be the glory of God, 2 *Cor.* 10. 31. nature never works higher than its own glory. *Brutus* when he heard his sons conspired with the *Tarquins*, he sent for them and cut of their heads, whereof the Poet spake thus, *vivit amor patriæ, laudumque immensa cupido*; has this been bounded in God's Glory, it had been good, let *Saul* Prophecy; let *Jehu* set upon refor-

mation with great zeal, let *Herod* hear *John Baptist* gladly, yet all these detain the truth in unrighteousness.

3 From the necessity of abiding in Christ, to the performing of every duty, *John* 15. 5. he doth not say without me ye can do no great matter, but without me, ye can do nothing.

4 From the resemblance that is between Christ, and such as work righteousness; there is such a resemblance as is between Father and Son, *Joh.* 3. 2. we are the seed of Christ, and are made like him; as a Child is known to be born of such a man, by his look, speech, carriage, such as work righteousness, their works will own them, *Isa.* 61. 1, 2, 3 *Isa.* 9. 6.

Q *How are we said to be born of Christ?*

A. He is sometimes (though he be our older Brother) called our Father, we are born of his seed, his word and Spirit, and we resemble Christ as well as the Father, *Rom.* 8. 29.

Use 1 This reproves the Jesuits and Franciscans Doctrine, that hold that by strength of common graces a man may receive justifying grace when it is offered, a man must be born of God, that will do so good a work, it is therefore a Doctrine contrary to the Word of God.

Use 2 Those that are in a state of nature or common grace, should not rest there.

Use 3 Such as are born of God should make use of their new birth; walk in the life of the new birth, else thou dost nothing, *Gal.* 2. 20. we must do all out of the strength of the new birth; if the Sun should shine into our houses, and we shut up all the doors and windows to keep it in, we shut it out, so we must keep the windows of our hearts open to Christ.

Use 4 Have respect to works of righteousness, it is injustice to sell places of office, and suffer men to sell them, if men buy dearly, they must be forced to deal hardly.

Obj. *A man that buys dearly, may sell so.*

Ans. A man may sell what he bought justly, a man may buy his own right, yet not sell it; it is injustice to sell what is not our own, as places in free election.

Doct. 3 *Such as know that Christ is righteous, they do know that every one that doth righteousness is born of God, a Child of God.*

Q *What is it to know Christ to be righteous?*

A. It doth not consist in the understanding of it, conceiving it, and acknowledging it, for *Pharaoh* could say the Lord is righteous, *Exod.* 9. 10. and yet he could not come to say, that God's people were righteous, and born of God, he did not see that God afflicted him for oppressing his people, this

he was convinced of, that God was righteous, but yet he would not say, you *Moses* and his people are born of God, *Luk.* 23. 47. certainly saith the Centurion, this was a righteous man, and yet we do not read that he joined himself to the Disciples of Christ; but this Testimony was extorted by the wonderful works of God.

To know therefore that Christ is righteous is to acknowledge him by divine
Faith

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Faith; and they know, that he that doth Righteousness is born of God,

There are two things implied in it.

1 No man knows Christ to be Righteous, but he that is sensible of his own unrighteousness, otherwise he cannot know that Christ is Righteous, *Phil.* 3. 6, 7, 8. *Paul* before his calling, thought himself Righteous, and unblameable, but when he saw that Christ was Righteous, he saw that himself was unrighteous; therefore he thought all his own Righteousness loss in respect of Christ's, his education, his profession, his wisdom, his zeal, his privileges, he counted all loss to win Christ.

2 It implies a sensible experience of the Righteousness of Christ pacifying our consciences, and purging them from dead works, *Heb.* 10. 22. for Christ's Righteousness doth both; none know Christ to be Righteous, but they that know that in his Righteousness, they have their consciences quieted and purified, they are freed from the guilt and uncleanness of an evil conscience, they know that they are such grievous sinners, that if Christ were not Righteous, they could never look for pardon.

2 They find the power at Christ's Righteousness, purging their consciences from dead works, *Heb.* 9. 14. all our works before were dead, but now by the blood of Christ we are purged from them, and quickned to do him lively service, though a man may have a good opinion that Christ was a good man, and may have a general belief that he was so, and that he was both God and man, yet none know it, but those that know they have so woefully provoked, that if Christ their Mediator were not Righteous, they could have no hope of pardon or mortification, such only know it certainly by experience in their own souls, for *scientia est rerum certarum & necessarium*.

Q. 2 How do such know that they that work Righteousness are born of God?

A. 1 They know it by experience of their own spirits, they know themselves that they never wrought a work of Righteousness, till they were born of Christ; all their works before, were for the World, or for self-love; therefore if they find a man denying himself, not looking at his own ends, going out of himself, not relying upon himself, nor aiming at his own ends; they know

such are born of God, or else they could not do so, *Rom.* 3. 10, 12. not one natural man comes off with a good work.

2 They know it from the life of Christ that breaths and works in every work of Righteousness, and the works of it, they know their own spirits would not reach it.

Two things make our conversion to be called a new birth, far in it self it is but only an alteration, not in substance, but in qualities, which is properly called alteration, but it is called a new birth, or regeneration.

1 Because it changes the whole man, as in generation; there is a whole change from one thing to another; so in regeneration, there is an alteration of the whole old man, into the whole new man, a new heart, new judgement, new affections.

2 It is the mighty power of God, as in generation, there is more in it than any work of Parents, it could not be without a special conscience of God's mighty power, so in conversion; there must not only be a change of some qualities, but a mighty power in changing us wholly, from our old Estate to a new.

Use 1 Discovers the fond Paganish Ignorance of such that know not that they that do Righteousness are born of God; we would account him no Christian, but a very Pagan, that should deny Christ to be righteous, why, if thou dost not know that they that do Righteousness are born of God, thou knowest not that Christ is righteous, therefore this shews their great Error that malign God's Servants, for surely if they knew they were the Children of God, they would not oppose them, or injure them, but because they conceive them to be new-fangled persons, and likely to prove hurtful to the State and Kingdom, therefore they cast them out but thereby they manifest,
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that they do not know that they are born at God, and if they know not that, they do not know that Christ is Righteous, *Isa.* 66. 5. they cast them out in pretence of God's glory, but they shall know that they were born of God, and they shall be ashamed that they did not know it before; therefore there lies a Paganish Ignorance on the hearts of all oppressors.

Use 2 May serve for a ground of trial; doth thou know that they that work Righteousness are born of Christ? as many a poor soul can testify it of others, that will not say it of himself; but thou couldest not have known that others were born of Christ, unless thou hadst known it thyself, thy own unrighteousness, and Christ's Righteousness, pacifying and purifying thy conscience; therefore let it comfort thee.

Obj. May not a carnal man see plainly by common illumination, that such are God's Servants? they see a broad difference between them and others.

A. So far as they know Christ is Righteous, so far they may know, that those that work Righteousness are born of Christ; they have no true knowledge that Christ is Righteous, but only an opinion, and this opinion afterwards they may doubt of; therefore it is no knowledge, but if thou knowest it, then thou seest it by experience of his Righteousness pacifying thy conscience, and purging it from dead works; and if thou knowest that Christ is Righteous, thou knowest also that they that do Righteousness are born of God, but if thou knowest not that Christ is Righteous, thou canst not know experimentally that those that do Righteousness are born of God.

Use 3 Here is a notable encouragement to all that are born at God, to work Righteousness, for if you work Righteousness, not one righteous man, but shall know you are born of God, and testify it of you; not that I would have men practice Righteousness for their credit, that they may be known, &c.

Obj. May not a man do many works of Righteousness, of Prayer, and alms, and yet do them out of his own ends, so that others may be deceived in him?

A. Though Christian Charity is apt to think the best, yet none will say they know thou art born of God, till thou deny thy self, and thine own ends, and dost things in virtue of Christ, and walkest constantly in a Christian course; therefore walk humbly before God, do things in the power of Christ; and if it come, that your ends, and Christ's ends cannot stand together if they see that you willingly leave your own way, and take Christ's, though it cost you much, why, this will be your encouragement, every one that doth Righteousness will know that you are born of God.

Use 4 May discourage every man from evil ways, from doing unrighteousness; for if Christians know, that they that do Righteousness are born of God, then they will know that they that do unrighteousness are born of the Serpent; if they see that you work for your own ends, and by your own gifts, not by virtue of Christ, they may wish you well, but they know, that you are not born of Christ; as in nature, the spirit of a nobleman and a peasant, will much differ, though they should be educated both alike, yet a noble man's Spirit, will be rising to higher matters; so if you see a Christian's Spirit reach higher than the World, he cannot confine himself within the limits of the World, but he is lifted up to heavenly spiritual matters for God's glory, and he doth things from Christ's virtue, this makes it evident he is born of God; a worldly man cannot rise higher than his own ends; a thing riseth no higher than the original it comes from; therefore let

it discourage you from working unrighteousness, from looking at your own ends, and gifts, and abilities, for if you do, you will be known to do unrighteously, and so are not born of God; therefore walk so as you would be known to be indeed, you cannot be hid; if you would be counted Righteous, be doing Righteousness, and then you shall be known to be born of God.

I JOHN

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I JOHN Chap. III. Vers. I.

Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the Sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

The Apostle having delivered this as a truth, that they that work righteousness are born of God, and knowing how apt we are to pass over

such a mercy without serious and humble acknowledgement, he stirs them up to consider of this mercy.

The Apostle removes a double objection, *We meet with none that acknowledge us the Sons of God.*

Answ. 1. To this *John* answers: Not every one that acknowledgeth this, but *they that work righteousness*; not the world, because they know not Christ.

2. From some doubts God's Children make within themselves; partly for corruption, partly for affliction; what with corruptions and afflictions, we have much ado to be persuaded that we are the Sons of God.

To this the Apostle answers: Now we are the Sons of God. Take us in our strongest corruption and affliction, we are God's Sons; but it doth not appear what we shall be; when he appeareth, we shall be like him, free from corruption and affliction, expressed by the reason, *we shall see him.*

Then he informs them of their duty, *He that hath this hope, &c.*

1. The manner of God's love to us, we are called his Children.

2. The exhortation to behold and look at this.

3. The removal of objections.

Note. It is a great and wonderful love of God, that we are accounted and called the Sons of God: *Behold, what manner of love!* such love as cannot be said how much, Matth. 8. 27. Luk. 1. 29. Eph. 2. 4, 5. where speaking of quickening us to our new birth; he saith it is a *rich mercy, great love*, Tit. 3. 4, 5. 1 Pet. 1. 3. *abundant mercy.*

Reas. 1. From our wonderful unworthiness of such a favour, We have a fourfold unworthiness.

1. Prodigal riotous waste of originall righteousness, Luk. 5. *ult.* *Adam* was made the Son of God by Creation but he sold it for an apple;

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more profane than *Esau*, because he sold it for necessity and hunger, *Adam* not so; now for God to give us a new stock, to set us upon our legs again, argues wonderful love and mercy. Luk. 15. 21. The Prodigal his Father had bestowed a portion upon him, he spent it riotously, now he freely and rightly acknowledgeth, *I am unworthy, &c.* might not every Son of *Adam* say as much?

2. Our estrangement from God, and enmity against God, before we be called the Sons of God, Col. 1. 21. If a man should adopt a child, would he adopt a stranger or an enemy?

3. There is no child of God, but time was when he was as enemy to God, so an Harlot: suppose King should marry his first-born to an Harlot that were his enemy, and press him to take her; would not this seem strange? We were Harlots, running a whoring after our pleasures and profits; What a depth of love is it for God to offer us his Christ, his only Son in marriage to us; what manner of love is this?

4. There is nothing that God should expect from us, but what it nought; many an understanding man will match his daughter with a man that hath not so much means, but he is an understanding man, able to manage his estate: A man will say, Had I such a man in hand, I could set him in such a course, that he should thrive and do well; but how much shame and dishonor have we been to God? 2 Sam. 12. 13. *Noah's* drunkenness, *Lot's* incest, *Abraham* when an Heathen King could check him for dissimulation; What a discredit hath God by us?

Reas. 2. From the little need God hath of us. Men use not to adopt, unless they have none of their own. God had a natural Son, Christ; and the Angels are his Sons by Creation, Matt. 3. 17. Christ was God's Son, in whom he had pleasure. Men if they have children of their own, and adopt others, it is because they are unthrifths.

Reas. 3. From the great difficulty ere we could be the Sons of God, Christ came from heaven, and must be humbled even to the death, Gal. 4. 4, 5. God denies his natural Son, abaseth him.

Reas. 4. The excellent benefits we are called to hereby:

1. We call God Father, 1 Sam. 18. 23. is it a light matter for the God of heaven and earth to be called your Father, since you are but men?

2. Christ is your Brother, Heb. 2. 11, 12.

You partake with him in the Spirit, the Comforter, Joh. 14. 16, 17. Rom. 8. 14, 26, 27. Ezek. 36. 27. Whereas before you had but rough hewn spirits, that God should shed his own spirit abroad in us, make us partakers of the divine nature, that we should have high thoughts of a Kingdom, eternal life.

4. Provision for a Son here, provision for an Heir hereafter: God provides spiritual and temporal means, Deut. 8. 6. God nurtures us, washeth us *Ethiopians*, and hath given us an inheritance, 1 Pet. 1. 3, 4, 5. If a man should sit down as *David* did, 2 Sam. 7. 18. and consider what God hath done for such mean men, &c.

Use 1. To refute all good opinion that men have of themselves, they know not that God hath no need of us, they know not what Christ paid for

us, they know not what a great mercy it is to have God our Father, 2 Cor. 4. 17, 18. They never knew what manner of love it is.

2. To reprove a great unworthiness of God's children; and a shameful dishonour they put upon him, when they are ashamed to call him Father. This is the case of many of God's servants, when they come in bad company, they cover themselves with a veil of carnality. What do we lose by calling God Father, who loseth by calling us Children? This *Peter's* sin cost him many a bitter tear, Matth. 8. 38.

3. This should teach all the Children of God to love God with all their strength and might. We can never abound too much in love, 1 Joh. 4. 19.

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4. Here we may learn how much we are bound to love our Brethren, let us enlarge the bowels of our affections, and think we can never sufficiently love them. If the King favour any man, every man will be looking at him, and ingratiating themselves with him.

5. This teacheth worldly men how much they wrong themselves, to deprive themselves of this manner of love, when they content themselves with other things.

Note. God would have every child of his to behold his love in calling us his children, *Behold* implies presence, evidence, eminency. There's some things in the object, and in the act.

1. For the object.

1. What we behold is present, we cannot behold what is absent.

2. It is evident; none can behold a spirit, or the wind.

3. It is a thing of weight, excellent and eminent, Joh. 1. 29. Psal. 133. 1.

2. In the act, *beholding* implies;

1. A beholding with the bodily eye.

2. To consider it.

3. To fix our eyes upon it, Isa. 1. 2. Hos. 2. 8.

Reas. 1. For his own glory. There is nothing wherein God doth more shew his glory, Rom. 9. 23. Eph. 2. 4, 5.

2. That we might the better support our spirits against the discouragements we meet with, the world knows you not.

3. That so we might be persuaded to love God, and strengthened to doing and suffering, 2 Cor. 5. 14.

Use 1. To reprove men's squint-lookings, they do not look at God's love, but into themselves, Lam. 1. 12. and can see their corruptions and afflictions;

it is a wonder God's children should pour only upon corruption, and not consider what love it is for God to discover them to a man, and pardon them, Matth. 24. So when God's children look at great matters in the world; if they look a squint at gain, do you look that your sins are subdued, Luk. 10. 19. 20.

2. It reproves a Popish opinion that looks at our adoption and spiritual estate as doubtful and uncertain, Eccl. 9. 2. Why then are we bidden to behold it? Can a man behold that which cannot be seen? If a man be bidden to behold, the thing is pleasant and visible,

3. To lift up the hearts of all God's people, to fasten their meditations much upon the love of God. We read such speeches, as, who works righteousness, born of God, but we are ready to pass over such things, therefore St. *John* saith, Stand still, and behold, look at it.. 3 present benefit and rell, till you see it present and evident, look narrowly to this, when you do find it, stand and behold what God hath done for you, wonder to behold it, so shall you honor God wonderfully. What though you meet with a world of corruptions, temptations, discouragements; this above all, God will not suffer us to want, Mat. 8. 26.

Against this point of God's wonderful love, that it is evident, sensible, and present, an objection may arise.

1. For the world, The world knows no such matters the Apostle confesseth it, and rendeth a reason.

2. For God's own people. We see nothing in us; for is it possible that the children of so great a King should be so defiled with so many corruptions? To this the Apostle answers: We are now the Sons of God, even now when we have so much baseness, and so much corruption.

The world knows not you, because it knows not him.

Note. The world knows not the children of God, Joh. 16. 2. If it did know them to be children, they would not kill them. It is not good service to a Father to have his Children killed, 2 Cor. 4. 8. 1 King. 18. 17. A sign

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he did not know him, for he was the chariots and horhemen of *Israel*, the strength, stay, and protection under God.

Q *What is meant by World?*

Ans. Not the whole body of the Creation, nor only reasonable men, but that part of the world that is destitute of God's Spirit.

1. These are called the world, because born of the world, as in the world, Joh. 8. 23. 1 Joh. 4. 5. born of corrupt nature, defiled with the world.

2. They have their portion in this world; as a man is said to be of such a place where his means lieth, Psal. 17. 11.

3. The world is the object of all their thoughts and affections, because they are the greatest part of the world, 1 Joh. 5. 19.

4. The world is called by the name of wicked men, it borrows its name from them, 2 Pet. 2. 5.

Q. What is meant by this, that they know not God's children?

Ans. 1. Knowledge is taken for discerning, and many times they do not discern who be the children of God, as appears by the former reasons.

2. They do not acknowledge them. As if a friend of old acquaintance should pass by, and give no testimony of acknowledgement; we say, such a one would not know me, Joh. 16. 99.

3. They are ready to do ill offices to them, Joh. 16. 2.

Reas. Is taken from the second Doctrine, because they know not Christ, they know not you, 1 Cor. 2. 8. Act. 3. 17. Joh. 16. 2, 3. & 15. 21. In reason, if a man know not the face or head of a man, he know, not the hand or any other part, no part so easily discerned as the head: Christ is the head of his members, if they knew not him the head, they know not us the members, *John* had told us before, that if we know Christ to be righteous, then we know that ye that work righteousness are born of him; the world is ignorant of Christ's righteousness.

1. They look at him as righteous, yet as merciful, and to save men out of Christ, therefore they think God requires not so much as is found in the lives of God's people, but think it superstitious.

2. The world doth look at God as righteous, yet a respecter of persons: As, take a righteous Judge, yet if that men put forth themselves, and many of them, they will sway him. So men think that learned men and wise, God must needs accept, and they cannot go wrong, Joh. 7. 48.

3. It is the conceit of men, that God blesseth the good with prosperity, and the wicked have want and adversity: So did *Job's* friends,

4. They measure God's righteousness to reach no farther then the second Table.

5. If any be so enlightened, that they know God requires service to himself, they content themselves with performance of duties, without endangering of their hearts and lives, Psal. 51. 6.

6. Some that are of the best discerning, they find some desires after the Word, some affections in prayer and fasting, Rom. 10. 3, 4. They perform duties, not only to men but God, and they did God service zealously, where

is the defect? They being ignorant of the righteousness of Christ, going about to establish their own righteousness; they know God requires righteousness with zeal, and yet they know not the righteousness of Christ; they think that the doing of good duties, and that zealously, will serve them at the day of judgement; they never knew what need they had of Christ to cover their imperfections, and to help them to perform good duties; hence those did persecute *Paul*, who knew the righteousness of Christ better than they, Act. 2. 20.

Obj. *But doth it not fall out oftentimes that evil men know good men? Herod knew John.*

Ans. Sometimes a hypocrite may discern a righteous man, but then they
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are more then mere worldly men, 1 Cor. 12. 1, 2, 3. There must be some work, of the Holy Ghost.

2. There is a defect in all such men's knowledge, they cannot discern them of weak grace, and many corruptions, but eminent men they may. *Herod* revered *John*, and despised Christ.

Use 1. Of refutation of two Popish opinions, that the Church of God is a visible Church always to the world. If we say that the Church is not visible to the world, we say no more then St. *John* speaks.

2. They say none can know himself to be born of God, St. *John* makes it the property of a worldling not to know the children of God, much more not to know himself to be a child of God, Gal. 6. 10. If a man could not know one for another, how should he make this difference? God's own servants many times have but little discerning, as an old man naturally hath a very bad discerning, can hardly see his friends, unless he be nigh them, and look upon them. Many times a man is able to give a fuller testimony of another, then of himself.

3. It reproves all the uncertain walks of God's servants, or such as profess themselves so to be. You shall have them many times to walk so unevenly between God and their own souls, between themselves and men; either you are worldly, or your brethren, else they would know you to be the children of God, or of the world, 2 Joh. 2. 7. 1 Thes. 1. 2.

4. It is a ground of trial of a man's estate. If thou knowest not that they which fear God are born of him, thou art yet of the world, and dost not know Christ, if thou love them not, nor affect them, nor lend an helping hand unto them,

5. To teach us, that God's Children are hidden and unknown to the world. A man that is wealthy, and carries things meanly, we say such a man is a hidden man, he is worth thousands. God's people are worth millions, but they are hidden men, the world knows them not. If a pearl fall into the dirt, you cannot discern it, but wash away the dirt, and you shall see it sparkle.

6. It should teach God's children to moderate the affections of carnal excellency in the world. It is leaven of hypocrisy & pride that infects many times the hearts of God's people, they would be somewhat. The world knows you not. Be willing to go as unknown men in the world, Joh. 5. 44. A Prince that comes among his Subjects disguised, he cares not though they jostle him, and take place of him, and speak hardly of him; a Prince would smile within himself, he knows how they would respect him, if they knew him. Shall the hand or foot take it ill, that it is not known, when as the head was not known?

7. It should work in God's children an inclination to forgive wrongs and injuries; if they knew you better, they would use you better, Luk. 23. 34. Act. 3. 17.

Obj. *They speak most unjustly and undeservedly.*

Answ. Pity their malice, and envy them not.

It may teach the world not to flatter themselves in doing ill to God's servants you think it is out of wisdom, it is indeed out of ignorance, and because you know not Christ, and his righteousness.

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I JOHN

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I JOHN 3. 2.

Beloved, now are we the Sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him: for we shall see him as he is.

IN the former vers. the Apostle exhorts Christians to a serious consideration of the love of God which he hath shewed them. Against this great dignity, he answers some objections.

1. For the misprising of the world, the world knows no such excellency in them. To this he answers, that this ignorance of theirs ariseth from the ignorance of Christ.

2. A second objection they might make, is from the doubts that themselves have of their estates, by reason of those sundry temptations and afflictions they meet withal in the world.

1. To this he answers: Even *now* they are the Sons of God.

2. Though now their estate be bid, yet is *shall appear*.

3. He confirms this, that they shall appear *when Christ appears*. And that he confirms from their own knowledge, *for they shall see him as he is*.

1. Consider we their estates, *Sons of God*.

2. The hiddenness of their present and future estates.

3. What they shall be like, *viz.* Christ, which is set out by testimony of their own knowledge; and he insinuates all by a sweet compellation, *Beloved*.

Doct. *That the Sons of God ought to be the men of our love and delight,*

3. Epist. Joh. 1. 2, 5. 1 Pet. 2. 11. Phil. 4. 1.

Where we see his deep affection towards them, he looks at them as born of God, and therefore he styles them *Beloved*, and *Dearly beloved*.

In those things we love, there is first an affection of desire to be united to them: Secondly, a communication of good unto them.

For the first. Psal. 119. 63, & 79. If he be to choose company, he will make choice of such a sfear God. And this is called, *amor concupiscentiæ*.

Secondly, there is a love with desire to communicate good to the thing beloved. And this is *Amor amicitiae*, Psal. 60. 1. 2 Peter. 1. 7. *Do good to all, but specially to those of the household of faith*. Such as are born of God. So that whether we desire union or communion of good company to any, we should chiefly desire it to the company of believers. This was *David's* grief, that he could not enjoy the company of good men, Psal. 120.

Reas. 1. For God's singular love to them, vers. 1. *What manner of love*. And if God love them so dearly, we ought also to love them.

1. From their love above all others back again to God: when others sit loose in their affections, Christians should love them that love God, who hath loved them so dearly, Psal. 139. 21, 22.

3. From the truth that is in every Christian believer, 2 Joh. 1. 2. If a man loves Gold, he loves to have Gold; so if we love any, let us love them in whom is truth; of other men, not one of a thousand that hath truth in them, you shall find them no further loving then may be to their own ends; in latter times men shall be lovers of themselves; for in former times God did enlarge the worlds affections, many brethren would have hazarded their lives for their friends; but now no further love then they shall find *aliquid jucundum*, or *utile*. But Christians love one another for the loves sake that is

in them. Many complain much that true friendship is gone, it's an hard thing to find a faithful friend, Prov. 20. 6. This faithfulness in friendship is a proper badge of the Son of God, Joh. 13. 35. & 15, 19.

Use

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Use 1. This should teach Ministers with what affection they should speak to their people, when they call them *Beloved*. This ought not to be a word of complement, but their hearts should go with it. How can such call them *Dearly beloved*, when they come at them but once a year? how do they love union with them, or communion of good to them?

2. This may be a direction to us all, as we would approve the truth of our hearts before God, to love all that are born of God, as St. *John* he calls them *beloved*. Look at all believers as the Sons of God, and look at them as beloved, if they walk in the truth.

3. This is a reproof of all such as estrange themselves from Christians; yea, many there be that are glad of any advantage to trouble them that are born of God, they are far from St. *John's* spirit. There are some that will not malign and oppose them, but yet if they be such as are poor, from whom they can get neither pleasure nor profit, they estrange themselves from them. But St. *John* calls any Beloved, in whom he finds the truth of grace. There is no Christian but hath something for which he ought to be beloved, there is something in them worthy our imitation. You shall find more comfort in your love to poor weak Christians, then if you fasten your love upon more eminent persons, and greater in place.

Doct. 2. *That the ignorance that the world hath of God's children, and our obscurity and weakness in the world, doth not hinder our present good estate in the world.*

Now we are the Sons of God, now that we are afflicted in the world, Isa. 54. 11. Which shews you, that though the children of God be afflicted and weather beaten, yet God hath promised such blessings to them as may make them blessed in the world, vers. 13. 14. Isa. 43. 3, 4. Though we be led through the water and fire of affliction, yet in the midst of all our troubles; when we are passing through, the Lord promiseth that he will be with us, and that he will be our comforts in the midst of persecution and temptation.

Thus you see how dear and precious God's children are in his sight. *David* when he saw the prosperity of the wicked, that all went well with them, then he began to think that he had cleansed his heart in vain; but soon after, when he went into the Sanctuary of the Lord, then he saw that the Lord set

them but in slippery places. Therefore howsoever it seem in our eyes, that it goes well with the wicked, yet let us not despair, God will guide his children by his counsel, and afterward receive them to glory. You may hear *Job* complaining of his poor and miserable estate, *Job* 19. 18, 19, 20. he had now no more comfort left him then he had skin in his teeth, and therefore he cries to his friends to pity him, *vers.* 21, 22. And what do you think was the thirsting of his soul in the midst of the anguish of his spirit, and affliction of body, being all consumed away with misery? He tells you, *vers.* 25. to *v.* 27. *Yet, I am sure my redeemer liveth.* So that what though his present estate be miserable, and his future happy estate be obscure to the world, yet he knows when Christ shall appear, he shall be like him, *Col.* 3. 3, 4. as the Apostle speaks, *Our life is hid with God in Christ.*

Reas. 1. Taken from our likeness to the Son of God, Christ Jesus, who was in such a poor condition, as that though *the birds of the air had nests*, yet *the Son of man had not where to lay his head*, yet all this while he was the Son of God, *in whom alone he was well pleased*, *Mat.* 3. 17. And as it was with Christ *our head*, so may we look it should be with *his members*, *Rom.* 8. 29. If God did see it meet that his Son should be thus afflicted in the world, and drink of such bitter portion of God's wrath; let not us think we shall go to heaven, and partake of those heavenly mansions which Christ hath prepared for us, but we also shall drink of the same cup that he drank of. Let us account our selves happy, that God will so esteem of us to make us his Sons.

Reas.

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Reas. 2. From the freedom of God's love to men, that he doth not esteem of them according to their outward lustre, *1 Sam.* 16. 7. *God seeth not as man seeth*, *Psal.* 22. 6. This meant of Christ. So *Isa.* 53. 3.

Reas. 3. It is taken from the freedom of God's love to men, that he doth not esteem of them according to their inward estate, *Ezek.* 16. 16. *Deut.* 7. 7, 8. So that though there be much pride and stubbornness of heart found in God's children, and oftentimes in a great measure against God, yet all these inward corruptions do not hinder our glorious estate.

Use 1. This should teach the children of God to be content with their estates. They are indeed apt to think, that if the world do not esteem of them, but are ready to put many injuries upon them, and to persecute them with hatred, and they surely are not God's children; or else they murmur and grieve within themselves. And if the world do sometimes esteem of them, yet if their health, liberty, and maintenance be taken away, then

they think surely they have cleansed their hearts in vain, and washed their hands in innocency, Psal. 73. 13. As for the men of the world, they are in prosperity, they suck water out of a full cup, their eyes start out with fatness, and they have more then they can wish. But *David* can tell them, when he went into the Sanctuary, that he saw that God had set them in slippery places. And then *vers.* 22. he condemns himself for his ignorance.

2. This should teach the children of God not to misjudge of themselves, in regard of their inward estates; for some of them will be ready to doubt, and say, Surely I am not a child of God, because I find much pride in my heart, and much rebellion and corruption in my spirit. Surely, if I were born of Christ, I should be like him. But what saith St. *John* here? we are the *Sons of God*, even now, though there be much unbelief in our hearts, and much weakness, and many corruptions in us.

But how shall I know that I am the child of God? The answer is laid down in *v.* 3. *Every man that hath this hope in himself, purifieth himself as he is pure.* So that though he see much filthiness in his spirit for the present, yet he labours to purge himself from time to time, and is ashamed of his hardness of heart, and unbelief, that he hath so long stood out with God; and now he being sensible of his own misery, and wretched estate which he lies under by nature, he doth strive daily to get out of it; and therefore he labouring to purify himself as Christ is pure, he is the child of God.

But it doth not appear what we shall be.

Doct. 3. *That the future glorious estate of God's children is for the present an hidden estate, Col. 3. 3, 4.*

It is therefore said to be hidden, because it is hidden with the veil of corruption, temptation and affliction, which do overshadow our future glorious estate. A Christian many times hath many desertions in his spirit, and hath many temptations from the world, the devil, and his flesh; many corruptions in his nature, as hypocrisy, lukewarmness, &c. And many carriages which are unbecoming the Gospel of Christ. And therefore in regard of all these, well may their present estate be said to be an hidden estate.

Reas. 1. Is taken from the conveniency betwixt Christ the head, and us his members, Heb. 4. 15. Though Christ was without sin, yet he was counted a sinner, yea a conjurer, a friend of Publicans and sinners. But as for God's servants, they are oft-times overtaken with many gross sins, and God will have them to be overshadowed with much weakness, that so the glory of his grace may be seen in their weakness, and also that they might not be too much lifted up with the conceit of thine own worth, 2 Cor. 12. 7, 8. If God should have purged and cleansed us from all sins, then we should not

have believed that our hearts were so desperately wicked, and indeed they are, and as we in process of time do find them to be, in tht we see God ever going along, and taking pains from day to day to purge and cleanse our hearts: As God did not make the whole fabric of the world at once, though it was not
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impossible to him, being a God Almighty, but in the space of six days: So doth God deal with his children, in creating in them a clean heart; first he suffers their hearts to be as a rude and mass lump, full of darkness, and then God sends his holy Spirit into their hearts, and it doth illuminate them, and drive away those black clouds of darkness and ignorance, and then breaths in the sweet air of his Spirit, that a man may perceive the gracious providence of God, leading him along in his Christian course.

Reas. 2. Why God suffers his children to be veiled over with many infirmities in this life, is, That so they might have a better toleration to live in the world: If God should suffer them to be perfectly holy in this world, the men of the world would not suffer them long to live amongst them, Deut. 7. 22. Since our eyes cannot endure to behold the light of the Sun, so wicked men cannot endure to see the candle-light of grace in God's children.

3. That God might keep his people in exercise. God will have the *Canaanites* to remain among the *Israelites*, so that he may have their graces exercised.

Use 1. To teach the children of God not to judge of their spiritual estate by outward appearance, but to judge righteous judgement; that is, to judge as the thing is in it self, and not according to what befalls a man in his outward or inward estate, for oft-times a wicked man meets with lesser temptations then many of God's children; and hence the proud Pharisee judged his estate to be better then the poor Publicans, Luk. 18. 8, to 11. But God judgeth not according to the outward appearance, but he judgeth the heart, Luk. 16. 15, 16. What though there be a lust of pride or arrogancy in the best of God's children? was though the *Canaanites* be powerful within him, and he hath much ado to get from amongst them, so that he begins to think that he hath cleansed his heart in vain? yet if he do but endeavour to keep himself pure and unspotted of the world, to purge himself as Christ is pure, he shall at length come to a blessed and happy estate in the heavens.

Use 2. Of consolation of all God's children. What though our future condition be hid, yet it is safe enough, for it is laid up with Christ in the heavens. *If in this life only we had hope in Christ, then we were of all men most miserable.* If the Christian should have no more joy and happiness then

he hath in this life, then the vilest wretch in the world should be more happy than he. But our happiness doth not depend on our present condition.

Use 3. This should teach the children of God to sit down contented with their present estate, though a hidden condition. What though they do not enjoy so much pleasures, riches, honours and esteem, as many men of the world do? Let them be content, it will appear what they shall be. They shall be Kings and Princes, and therefore it must be their daily care and labour to be sitting and preparing themselves for that Kingdom, to be purging themselves as Christ is pure.

Doct. 4. *That when Christ shall appear in glory, then shall our glorious estate appear with him,* Col. 3. 4.

This is our glorious estate, which consists in our likeness to Christ, doth appear.

1. In our bodies.
2. Our souls.
3. Our outward estates.

For in all those Christ shall be glorious, so shall we see him as we are capable, 1 Cor. 11. 4.

1. For our likeness to Christ in our Body. The Apostle saith, *the body is sown in corruption, and is raised again in incorruption.* Our bodies while we live in this world are subject to many sicknesses, diseases, agues, &c. But in the life to come there shall be no noise of corruption heard of, our bodies shall

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then be so hardened and strengthened, as that they shall be no way capable of corruption or change; yea, the bodies of wicked men shall be so hardened, that they shall not again return into the matter of which they were first made; but they shall be so hardened *ad pœnam*, to everlasting torments. But the bodies of the godly shall be so strengthened to receive an eternal weight of glory.

2. *Our bodies are sown in dishonour, but shall be raised again in glory,* when we are dead. Though in our life time our bodies were made so comely and favourable, yet then they are changed, and subject to putrefaction, so that we cannot endure to have them long above the ground unburied, but reason of the unsavoury smell that comes from them. And you may read that *Abraham* bought a field to bury his dead, Gen. chap. 23. v. *ult.* But the world to come, we shall be as the Sun in the Kingdom of our Father, Matth.

13. 43.

3. *Our bodies are here sown in weakness, but they shall be raised again in power.* You see old men here need a staff to sustain their feeble joints, but at the day of Judgement then we shall need no staff, for then we shall be stronger than the strongest man that even lived, stronger than any of *David's* Worthies, one of which shew 300 men, 2 Sam. 23. 18.

4. *Our bodies are sown natural bodies, but they shall be raised spiritual bodies.* Our bodies here must be sustained with meat and drink, else they cannot continue; but there we shall stand in need of none: *Our meat and drink there shall be to do the will of our Father which is in heaven.* Our bodies now are subject to descend, but then they shall be made so light, that they shall ascend and pass from place to place even in a moment, we shall be quick to dispatch the business we are sent about. And the Sun doth now move with much celerity, so fast, that it doth in the space of a day, run over many millions of miles. Now if a natural body be so quick, shall not then a spiritual body be endued with much more celerity?

2. Now as our bodies shall be then changed, so also shall our souls; now our souls are much stained and polluted with ignorance, pride and wantonness, impatience, and full of infirmities, but then we shall be perfect in strength and knowledge, 1 Cor. 13. 12. Now whilst we live here, our souls are as it were damned in sin, Ezr. 9. 6. But then we shall not have any combating or striving between the flesh and the spirit, but then the flesh shall in all things be subject to the spirit. We are now full of imperfections, so as the good duties that we perform even in the best manner we can, are full of much human frailty and weakness. Now our natural affections do whirl us about and carry us away from the performance of good duties oft-times, but then it shall be our constant course to be performing of good duties, we shall then know our Christian friends and acquaintance, and rejoice mutually together, Joh. 4. 36.

3. We shall be like Christ in our estates, Matth. 25. 34, to 41. Then will our Saviour say, *Come ye blessed, &c.*

2. Then will our Saviour lay open before our eyes, all our good performances, Luk. 12. 2. Eccl. 12. 14. 2 Thess. 1. 10. Matth. 6 from 1. to 16. 1 Cor. 4. 5.

3. We shall sit on the throne of God, and shall judge the world and the Angels, 1 Cor. 6. 2, 3.

4. We do not count it a great mercy, and matter of great joy to see the face of Christ in the Gospel, in his ordinances, how much more will it be joy unspeakable to see Christ face to face? And if the seeing Christ in the Gospel, in his ordinances, doth in some manner transform us into his like

ness, then how shall we be transformed into his image, whe we shall see him face to face? Heb. 12. 22, 23. It shall then be our meat and drink to do our Father's will.

Reas.

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Reas. From the day of Christ's coming to judgement. It shall be our Marriage day, noiw we are but betrothed to Christ, we are now so coy that Christ hath much ado to get our good will; the Ministers of Christ travel in birth of us; and when they have got us to give our consent, it is their labour to fit us and trim us against that day, 2 Cor. 11. 2. For we are now full of whorish and adulterous lusts, wherefore the Apostle exhorts the *Corinthians*, 2 Cor. 7. 1. and in them all us, to cleanse our selves from all filthiness of fleash and spirit.

2. Although when we have done all we can, we are but unprofitable servants, Luk. 17. 10. yet Christ at that day will give us a Kingdom, 2 Thess. 2. 6, 7, to 10. 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8. 2 Cor. 4. 17, 18. Rom. 2. 6, to 9.

Use 1. This may be a matter of great consolation to us, when we shall know of our departure hence, it shall be for the better, and not for the worse; then shall we be every way perfect, then shall we receive our rewards, according to our deeds, Rev. 20. 12.

2. This should exhort us all to be fruitful in every good word and work, 1 Cor. 15. 8. *as knowing our labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.*

3. This may exhort us to patience. For what though we do meet with much hard dealing here, let us yet gird up our minds with patience, for there will a day come shall pay for all, when Christ shall reward every man according to his works, Rev. 2. 16, 17. 2 Tim. 2. 11.

4. To exhort every one that would see a joyful and comfortable end, and receive a crown of glory in the world to come, to have a care that he become the child of God here, Rom. 8. 11. and *not to set our affections on the things of this world*, Jam. 4. 4, 5. You that are to choose, make your choice now, whether you will have Christ, and a poor, base, miserable life, or cleave to the world, and be in endless torments foever hereafter. If those Virgins that were brought to the King, had twelve months time for their purifying, six months with oil, and six months with odours, Heb. 2. 6, to 12. Then how ought we all our life to be decking and purifying our selves, that so we may be taken up into the Presence chamber of the King of heaven?

Doct. 5. *We know we shall know him, because we shall see him, and this seeing of him shall make us like him.*

Job he is confident of this, *ch.* 19. 27. This thing was much desired of *Zachariah*, *Luk.* 19. 4. *Joh.* 12. 21.

Reas. 1. Is taken from the prayer of Christ, *Joh.* 17. 24. and whatsoever he prayed for, his Father heard him, *Joh.* 11. 41, 42.

2. From our estate here. We are now but espoused to Christ, as Princes send Ambassadors into far countries, to make matches for their Sons and Daughters; so the Lord Jesus doth send his Ministers to us, to win us to him, and to get us to be betrothed to him, and at his coming to judgement shall be our marriage, 1 *Thess.* 4. 17.

Use 1. This may be a ground of much comfort to all the servants of God, in the midst of temptations and distresses, *Job* 19. 25, 27.

2. This may be an use of encouragement to all those that think they shall never see good days, after they have set foot into the ways of God, and fellowship of Christ. Certainly you shall have one good day, here is one promised in the Text. We shall see him when the Marriage day comes, and so see him as he is in great glory. Wherefore strive we after perfection here, for if we become not the children of God here, we shall never see his face with comfort in the world to come.

Use 3. This should exhort us to prepare to meet Christ in the face. If a man were to come to speak to a Prince, what care would he have to make himself handsome? therefore what care ought Christians to have that are to come into the Presence-chamber of the King of heaven?

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Doct. 6. *That the beholding and seeing of Christ face to face, shall fashion us to be like him, for we shall see him as he is,* 1 *Cor.* 13. 12. *Heb.* 11. 27.

This seeing of Christ did invest *Moses* with such glory and strength, as that he feared not the fierceness of the King; and so should the full assurance of seeing Christ in his Kingdom, arm us against all discouragements, or whatsoever the world would lay upon us.

Q. *What is it to see Christ face to face?*

Answ. The alone knowledge of God, which proceedeth only from Christ Jesus, for *no man hath seen God at any time,* 1 *Tim.* 6. 16. *Joh.* 4. 12. *Tit.* 1. 8. opposed to the sight of Christ in the world, 2 *Cor.* 3. 13, to 17.

The first is a sight of Christ through a veil of ceremonies, 1 *Cor.* 12. 13.

2. In the New Testament we see Christ as a glass of God's Word, Sacra-

ments, Christian communion; afterwards we shall not only see him without ceremonies, but without ordinances also, we shall then see Christ more immediately.

3. Then we shall see Christ's manhood, and all the glory he had before the world, 1 Cor. 13. 12. John 11. 24.

Q. How shall this make us like him?

Ans. We shall see him in the glass of the Gospel, 2 Cor. 3. 18. and so grow from one measure of grace to another. If the Gospel will do this, much more the presence of Christ's body, and view of Christ.

2. Look as *Moses*, when he saw God's back parts, his face did shine, Exod. 34. 29. So our face then much more.

3. As *Peter, James and John*, when Christ was transfigured, Matth. 17. 2, 3, 4, 5. Prov. 27. 17. A Christian may learn something from the countenance of a Christian. When Christ did but look at Peter, it was enough to work him to repentance.

Use 1. As ever you would have comfort on your death-bed, labour to be like Christ, by seeing him in the glass of the Gospel. If you be the worse by seeing him in the ordinances, what will you then be by seeing him face to face? Labour to feel a powerful change by the Ordinances.

2. This may be an use of comfort to such as find benefit by the ordinances. If thou findest good by the ordinances, then how much better shalt thou be, by seeing Christ face to face? That which makes a Christian fear death, judgement, distresses, is because he doth not see Christ.

Doct. 7. God's children do know thus much, that when Christ shall appear, they shall be like him, and that they shall be made like him by seeing of him as he is, Psal. 17. 15.

Q. How know ye this?

Ans. Partly by the testimony of the Spirit of God, that reveals the deep things of God, 1 Cor. 2. 9.

2. From the sensible experience of the efficacy of God's ordinances in this life. If they be the better for seeing Christ in his ordinances, then how much more when ye see him face to face?

Use 1. This refutes the Doctrine of Doubting. We shall not only persevere, but we know it. This assures us of perseveration, that we shall never fall away. They know they shall persevere: Now knowledge is of a certain conclusion.

Q. How may we come to such a knowledge?

Answ. Labour to be like Christ in his Word, Sacraments, Christian communion. If we find that every ordinance doth make us like Christ, then the sight of Christ much more.

Use 2. This should encourage us to bless God, who hath redeemed us from darkness or error. If they that write against this Doctrine, had seen Christ in his ordinances, they would have believed it.

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Use 3. Those which have seen God in his ordinances, let them take up such meditations as these: That though they be obscured with the veil of affliction, temptation, persecution, yet they shall hereafter be made like Christ. *Zacheus* by seeing Christ was made the Son of *Abraham*, and was ready to part with all. *Moses* saw Christ in a bush, and feared not *Pharaoh*.

1 JOHN 3. 3.

And every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

IN these words you have a description of a child of God. He is such a one as hath hopes in Christ.

2. This is set forth by its proper work and efficacy, purging.

3. The pattern or rule, according to which it purgeth, *even as Christ is pure.*

Doct. 1. That every child of God hath hope in Christ, to be made like him at his appearing.

Every man that is begotten again, is *begotten to a lively hope*, 1 Pet. 1. 3, 4, 5. An hypocrites hope is dead, it hath neither comfort nor power in it, to cleanse or purge. A child in the womb, when they doubt of the life of it, though the parent be very wealthy, yet hath not lively hope of his possession; but if the child be born alive, then there is a comfortable hope: so if we be not born again, all our hopes of eternal life are but vain, 1 Cor. 15. 19. It's the property of the *Israel* of God to hope in their God, Psalm 130. 7.

Q What is this hope?

Answ. It is a patient, certain, and sure expectation of all those promises in Christ, which by faith we believe to belong unto us. It's a sure and patient expectation.

There are two acts of hope:

1. Expectation.
2. Waiting.

This is not an expectation of mere opinion, but a sure expectation. The Apostle puts both together, Rom. 8. 25. Heb. 6. 11, 18, 19. An anchor is a sure and steadfast stay to the ship, that though it waves up and down, yet it hath a certain stay. And so a Christian's hope, it's like an anchor to stay the soul, the object of hope is the accomplishment of the promises to come, and so differs from faith; no man hopes for that which is present or past, but that which we see not, promises that belong to us in reversion, Tit. 2. 13, 14. Heb. 11. 1. Faith looks at all promises as present, faith believes that all the promises are true, and then hope stirs up it self to look for accomplishment, and if God tarry long, it awaits, Rom. 5. 5. It's a sure hope, never was any man disappointed; and yet hope, though it be sure, yet it is not without all doubting. No true Christian but hath this hope.

Reas. That God's children might not be tossed and hurried up and down the world. A child of God is never carried far, an anchor sticks in the foundation, Heb. 6. 18, 19. Whie we hold on our hopes, and they are fastened to Christ, we have strong consolation, hereby are we kept from dashing against rocks, and sands, and shores; here is the difference between an anchor and hope, an anchor is fastened in the earth, and hope in heaven.

Use 1. This may shew you the dignity and honour of a Christian. He is a man of great hopes, he will not give his hopes for the best man's estate in the world, he hath a steadfast hope of being like Christ when he sees him; though the clothes he now wears be mean, yet he hopes to be glad with Christ's righteousness; and though his house be mean, yet he hopes for an house

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not made with hands; this is his anchor, and this will hold whithersoever we fail.

2. This may be a ground of trial. What be the hopes you build upon? there is a double difference between the hopes of a godly and wicked man.

1. The wicked man's hopes are groundless, he hath no grounds but hopes.

2. It is fruitless, Job 8. 11. The hope of an hypocrite that is without ground, is like a rush or flag without water or mire. Grass if it have got head, will do well enough without much moisture or water. Hope without a promise wants water to nourish it. A Spider's web looks like a curious

work, but it's drawn out of its own bowels and so is soon swept away; so a hypocrite hath no hope but what he spins out of his own bowels, he builds upon future duties, his hope is fruitless, it neither yields comfort nor self-purging. A true Christian rejoiceth in tribulation, but an hypocrite is overthrown with it, Rom. 5. 2, 3. The hope of an hypocrite makes him careless, he takes no pains with his heart, Prov. 14. 23. Take an hypocrite while he is in prosperity, and he hath great hopes; take away prosperity; and perhaps it may hold still, for he may hope that friends will do something; when he is sick, he hopes to recover; when he fears death, he hopes for another life, but when death comes, all his hopes are crushed: But a godly man, he hopes in death, he hopes for God's goodness, his hope will never fail him, nor make him ashamed.

3. Hence learn, that hope and knowledge of the same things may well stand together. In the former *vers.* he saith, *We know*, here he *hopes*. A man's hope ceaseth not in another world; for do not the Saints believe that their bodies shall rise again? and do not they hope for it? They know the perpetuity of their estates, and they hope for it, 2 Cor. 13. 13.

4. This should stir us up we would have a comfortable death, and safe, not to go to Sea without this anchor of hope. The world is full of perplexitiies, carry your anchor about with you, see your hope well wrought and you shall be safe. Mariners go not to Sea without an anchor, but perhaps sometimes though they have pitched their anchor in the bottom of the Sea, yet the storms may be so great, that they may be forced to cut the cable; but if thou hast an anchor pitched in heaven, thou shalt be safe. A woman in childbed may be put to distress, but hope in heaven will carry her through.

Q How may we get this hope?

Answ. 1. We can never come to it, till we be out of hope of any goodness in our selves.

2. We must attend upon God in his ordinances, that so he may work faith in us; and where there is faith, there will be strings of hope, hope is built upon faith.

Q How shall we carry it about with us?

Answ. Look at it as a mercy that you have it, stay your selves upon your anchor, look afresh at the promises, and believe them, then thou shalt have hope enough. That which makes us unquiet, is because we have not visited the promises many a day, nor renewed our faith in them.

Doct. 2. *That every Christian man that doth hope to be like Christ in glory hereafter, doth purge himself, to be like Christ in grace here.*

The lively hope of a Christian here, is set forth by the lively fruit of self-purging, 2 Pet. 3. 12, 13, 14. Tit. 2. 11, 12, 13, 14.

How does this hope thus purify us?

1. By the holy meditations it doth suggest into the heart of every hopeful Christian.

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1. A Christian that knows he hath long been imprisoned in the fetters of corruption, and knows he shall surely be called to appear before God; it makes him put off all superfluity of uncleanness, and to put on the garments of holiness. Shall I come before Christ invested in pride and wantonness? This makes him careful to purify himself, Jer. 2. 32. Can a Maid forget her ornaments when she is to be married? an can a Christian forget such ornaments as may befit him for such a Kingdom?

2. A second meditation which provokes a hoping Christian to purify himself, is this, He considers, the more he is purged and purified, the more he is cleansed, the greater shall this glory be, 2 Pet. 5, to 11.

2. Hope purifies by settling some graces on worl, which do cleanse and purify: As,

1. Repentance is a grace that purgeth us from sin, Psal. 130. 1, 2, 3.

2. Faith purifies our hearts, Act. 15. 9. If God stir but up our hearts to wait on him, we may certainly know that he will do so as we have desired, else our hope would make us ashamed, Psal. 119. 49. *Remember thou the word unto thy servant, in which thou hast made me to trust.*

3. The meditation of the graces in Christ transform us into their image, 2 Cor. 3. 18. There is such power in the promises of God, that they fashion us like unto Christ.

2. Hope cleanseth us, by giving us hearts fastening on the Word, and applying it; and the Word applied hath a strong power to cleanse even young men, Psal. 119. 9.

3. This hope hath a power to stir us up to faithfulness, which hope persuades us our labour shall not be in vain in the Lord, and this faithfulness sets God on work to purge us, Joh. 15. 2. that we may bring forth more fruits. When God seeth us to stand at a stay, and to wax barren, the he is ready to cut us down, that we cumber not the ground.

4. Hope to be made like Christ in glory hereafter, makes us to abandon such impediments as hinder our purification, 1 Cor. 5. 6. When he saith, that *every one that hath this hope purifies himself*, it implies it is a continued work, he makes it a part of his daily work.

2. *He purgeth himself*, he doth not say from what wantonness, and leaves covetousness behind, he leaves it indefinitely, he includes all, and excludes none, Jam. 1. 19. This hope purgeth the whole man, the understanding, will, and affections, 2 Cor. 7. 1. 1 Thess. 5. 23. Well then may it be called a lively fruitful hope.

reas. 5. Hope comes to all the ordinances of God, with hope that it shall find benefit from the Word, prayer, and good company. Hope waits on God for good in every ordinance, and then it never goes away empty; it strives before it comes to prepare the heart, and to cleanse it from all filthiness.

Use 1. This may discover us the wonderful loathsomeness of sin. If sin were not an excrement, why should we purge it out? We purge out nothing but filthy loathsome things, and therefore when hope is said to purge, it implies that sin is loathsome.

2. Hence discern the soundness of our hope. Do you find your hearts daily striving to cleanse your selves? if not, thy hope will make thee ashamed. If they hope do not set thee on work every day that to cleanse thy heart, truly thy hope is nothing but a vain delusion, and nothing will more sting thee at the last day, when thou shalt hope for heaven, thou shalt be cast out of God's presence.

3. Let it teach all Christians, as they would not be ashamed of their hopes, to *make their calling and election sure*. Let their hopes makes them purge and cleanse themselves. And let not Christians think it is enough to purge themselves, but they must purge their families. A Christian must suffer none in his family to be uncircumcised. God would have killed *Moses*
because

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because he had one uncircumcised, Magistrates must cleanse their Towns and places where they live. Good *Josiah* when he was to celebrate the Passover, he set himself with all his heart to purge *Jerusalem* and *Judah*.

Doct. 3. *The purity of Christ is the pattern of every Christian's purity. Or thus: Every hopeful Christian makes Christ's purity the pattern of his,* 1 Cor. 11. 1. Heb. 12. 12. *Be ye followers of me, as I am of Christ.*

Set before you a pattern of a cloud of witnesses, 1 Joh. 2. 6. He that abides in Christ, ought to walk as he hath walked.

Why should every Christian make Christ the pattern of his purity?

1. From the end of God's predestination. *He hath predestinated us to be conformed to the image of his Son*, Rom. 8. 29. And God in all things requires that we should *grow up to the fellowship of the stature of Jesus Christ*.

2. from the perfection of the pattern. All other patterns of godly men will fail us in some things, but Christ is a perfect pattern, he will fail us in nothing.

Use 1. This should teach us to reject the society of such men as inwardly loath the name of *Puritans*; alas, if they cannot endure the name of purity in poor weak Christians, how would they hate the purity of Christ? If they cannot endure the brightness of a candle, how will they endure the brightness of the Sun? and yet they say, they love Christ. But if they have not purity, how can they love Christ? and if they love not Christ, they are accursed for ever.

2. This reproves those, who though they do not hate purity, yet they think themselves very well, if they exceed the worst sort of men; they are no whore-mongers, nor thieves, nor deceivers. Alas, if there be no more then moral honesty, they shall come far short of Heaven.

3. This reproves the *Romish Church*, that think ordinary Christians are not bound to so strict a pattern as their regular Christians. Did ever any of them reach higher then Christ? and is not every Christian exhorted to set Christ as a pattern?

4. This reproves another sort of Christians, whi if they have got but such a measure of grace; as they are assured to be in a state of grace, they never look further, but now they look out for themselves in the world, as if they might rest in what is behind, and never press forward to what is before them, contrary to *Paul*; Know, O Christian, it is not enough to get truth of grace, not some purity, but you must grow pure as Christ is pure.

Use 2. This may exhort us all, as we would maintain our hope to be made like Christ hereafter, so to strive to this exactness of purity, *to purify our selves as he is pure*. If you would be hopeful Christians, you must be growing Christians, *growing up to the measure of the purity of Christ*; decay in growing, and you decay in hope. No Christian so full of joy and hope, as they that are every day getting something, and *growing up to perfection*, 1 Joh. 2. 6. Phil. 3. 12, 13, 14.

Motives to stir us up to grow in grace.

1. So soon as you slack this care, your hope, faith, and grace waxeth weak. If we see our bodies do not void excrements for many days, we think our bodies are not in a good state, but some diseases lie on us. How can we have an healthful soul, when we purge not out corruption many a day?

2. From the great uncomeliness that is in us, if we do not strive to be pure. Is it not an uncomely thing to see the head to be of gold, and the members partly brass, partly clay and dirt?

3. It's very grievous to the Spirit of God, that we should be no better, for all it hath dwells so long in us. When Christ had been long with his Disciples,

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ples, and they were not bettered by him, he upbraids them, *O foolish and slow of heart to believe! how long shall I be with you?* It was a grief to Christ that he should be long with his Disciples, and they not to grow up to strength of grace.

Obj. But doth not virtue consist in a golden mean?

Ans. Virtue consists not in a mean between two degrees, but in a mean between two extremes. You may exceed the bounds of righteousness, and so be unrighteous; but you cannot exceed the degrees of righteousness. Christ saith, *Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect.* Can you then be to pure and holy? No, you cannot, though you were as full of grace and holiness as Christ himself.

4. As ever you desire to be worthy partakers of the Sacrament, then labour to purify your selves. The reason why many a Christian comes to the Sacrament, and finds no comfort, is, because they grieved the Spirit of God, before they came, by neglecting to cast out those obstructions which hinder the influence of the head to the members, 1 Cor. 11. 30, 21.

Means to help us to purify our selves.

1. Be persuaded that you are not in a safe estate, till you are grown up to some good measure of purity. You would think him in a poor case, that should live 200 years, and yet for want of evacuation should live in sickness and weakness. And so a Christian is in an uncomfortable estate unless he purge himself.

2. Be very watchful over thy ways.

3. Use the ordinances of God cosntantly. Say not after conversion, It is no matter whether we be always conversant in God's ordinances, but at

some times, when the Spirit moves us. Labour we not to care as idle hearers, but as faithful doers; labour we to see our spots and deformities, and strive to purge them; labour we to practise new duties, as they are renewed to us.

I JOHN 3. 4.

Whoso committeth sin, transgresseth the Law.

IN the words, and in the following to *vers.* 7. he useth four Motives to stir up to self-cleansing.

The 1. is from the danger of committing sin, proved from the proper definition of sin. *Sin is the transgression of thw Law.*

2. From the end of Christ's coming, that was to take away sin.

3. From the pattern of Christ, who was without sin.

4. From the practice of such as have any fellowship by union with Christ. *Whosoever abideth in Christ, sinneth not.* Set out by the contrary, *He that committeth sin, he hath neither seen Christ, nor known him.*

Doct. *It is and ought to be a sufficient motive to every hopeful Christian to abstain from sin, because it is the transgression of the Law.* Numb. 14. 41. *Why will ye go up? why will ye transgress the Law?*

The *Rechabites* were commended that they kept their Fathers commandment. And he hereby convinceth the *Jews* of rebellion, that the Sons of mortal men should make more conscience of obeying their dead Fathers, then his people of his Laws, Dan. 9. 11. Neh. 9. 34, 35. Rom. 2. 22, 23, 24. Jam. 2. 9.

Reas. 1. From the Law-giver, he looks at every sin as an abrogation of his ordinances, Deut. 27. *ult.* He that walks in his Law confirmeth it, sets his seal to it. They who break it, would make it of no force. This is one act of high rebellion against God, 2 Sam. 12. 7, 8.

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2. From the wrath and displeasure God pronounceth against every transgressor, Jer. 7. 19. & 44. 4.

3. God takes it as a dishonor, to the power and efficacy of his Word, Jer. 5. 22, 23. God looks at it as more boisterous and unruly passage in a man to break the bounds of his Law, then for the Sea to break in bounds.

4. From the delight of God takes in the keeping and keepers of his Law, 1 Sam. 15. 22. He more delights in obedience, then in the cattle of an hundred hills, Prov. 23. 26. *My Son, give me thy heart.* That is more acceptable

then all Sacrifices. Transgression is as rebellion, and the sin of witchcraft.

Reas. 2. From the Law it self.

1. It's holy, just, and good, and therefore it is abominable to transgress it. For this is a sin against Holiness, Justice and Goodness.

2. From the vigour and efficacy of this Law, offering life to the obedient, Psal. 19. 11. 1 Tim. 4. 8. Psal. 119. 16. death to the disobedient, Gal. 3. 10. Isa. 59. 1, 2. 2 Chr. 16. 11.

Use 1. To reprove such as are afraid to break men's Laws, for fear of penalty, and are sensible of such dangers, but are not afraid to violate and break the holy and righteous Laws of God. This argues a most rebellious and revolting heart. Such are not hopeful Christians.

2. To teach and exhort us to make conscience of all our ways, and to take heed to our paths, lest we transgress the Law, and sin against God, Lev. 28. 9. If we turn away our ears from hearing God's Law, even our prayers are abominable. The consideration of this should keep us from secret petty sins. For though man seeth not, yet God seeth and will punish, 2 Sam. 12. 11, 12. If we think to get honour, profit, or pleasure by sin, we deceive our selves. Is it not as grievous a thing to have our soul wounded by our darling child, as our mortal enemy? It is all one to be stabbed to the heart with a pen-knife with a sword. Every sin wounds and rents our hearts. Abstain we from all sin, even the least sin is a transgression of the Law.

3. This refutes such as think the Law is not given to the regenerate. The Apostle here encourageth hopeful Christians not to transgress the Law.

Obj. *But we are not under the Law, but under grace.*

Ans. He means, We are not under the covenant of Works, but of Grace, Psal. 119. 105.

Obj. *As Christ's passive obedience freeth from the curse, so his active obedience freeth from the commanding power of the Law.*

Ans. 1. Christ hath done this, and therefore those that are in Christ fear not death by their obedience, nor look for life by their obedience; but we look at the Law as a rule of obedience, that we may walk according to God, and shew that we live by endeavouring to keep his commandments. Take heed of Satan's flight, that would make the Gospel a *Supersedeas* to the Law in certain things; pray not, preach not, but when the Spirit moveth. Thus you shall set up a spirit of delusion.

For sin is a transgression of the Law.

This is a perfect definition of *sin*; *transgression* is the *genus*, the *Law* the *difference*.

By *Law* in Scripture without addition, is not the Law of the ten Commandments, Jam. 4. 11, 12. & 2. 10, 11.

Obj. 1. *What if a man sin against the Law of Nature, is not that a sin?*

Answ. It is in effect and substance the same, Rom. 2. 15. Though the Law of Nature was more dimly and darkly known, *Moses* Law was but a new draught of the Law of Nature in innocency. Heathen law-givers, Philosophers, and Poets have expressed the effect of all the Commandments save the tenth, Rom. 5. 14, 15.

Obj. 2. *Was it not a sin to transgress the Ceremonia;l and Judicial Law?*

Answ. To the *Jews* it was. The ceremonial Law was but an exemplification

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cation of the second Commandment, and the Judicial Law doth but explain the second Table. The Judicial, in regard of the equity, is included in the Moral Law, the Ceremonial stood in force till Christ came.

Obj. 3. *Is it not a sin to transgress the Gospel? and is not unbelief a sin?* Joh. 16. 9. *Is not new obedience required in the Gospel?* Joh. 14. 21. Ezek. 36. 27. *What say you to the commandments of the Gospel, that we should walk as Christ hath walked?*

Answ. The commandments of the Gospel are all of them reduceable under the commandments of the Law, God commanding perfect conformity and obedience to his whole will, not only revealed, but to be revealed. If God command *David* to bring in music into the Temple, 2 Chron. 29. 25. though *Moses* speak nothing of it, yet this was expressed, to hear and obey God of all things, Deut. 18. 18. God commanded to hearken to Christ, *Moses* improperly and hiddenly delivered the substance of the Gospel, partly in the Ceremonial law, partly in the Sacrament of Circumcision and the Pass-over, Christ was veiled under them, Rom. 10. 5, 6, 7, 8. with Deut. 30. 12. The word of faith spoken of by *Moses*, Gal. 3. 24.

Transgression is ἀνομία, want of Law, and absence of it, when a man speaks and doth without law, which we do against it, or beside the Law; it is ἀνομία.

Reas. Taken from the end for which God gives the Law, to be the means of perfection, 2 Tim. 3. 16, 17. Sin is called *the error of the Law*, Isa. 63. 17. Jam. 5. 20. Prov. 21. 16. *He that wanders out of the way of righteousness, shall remain among the dead.*

Use 1. Of refutation of the works of Popish supererogation, which are better & more perfect then the Law, for the Law never commands such things;

such are those Monkish vows of perpetual Virginity, and voluntary Poverty; if these be above the Law, then they are transgressors of the Law, Isa. 1. 12, 13. Will a man be wiser then his Maker, holier then the Law-giver? Josh. 1. 7, 8. To devise a worship better then God hath appointed, is worse then to fail in breaking God's law. This is mere impotency, the other is arrogancy, casting aspersion on God's wisdom.

2. They further hold some sins to be venial in themselves, some mortal. If they be sins, then they fall under the curse, *The wages of sin is death.*

3. That original sin in the regenerate is no sin, but *David* saith, that he *was conceived in sin*; and original sin in whomsoever it is found, it's a transgression of the tenth Commandment.

4. They say that man's law doth bind the conscience, and the transgression of man's law is sin.

We answer and grant, when these laws are grounded on God's laws, they bind, not otherwise. If the breaking of men's laws is a sin, then the keeping of them were a virtue, but this is hypocrisy, Isa. 29. We must be subject for conscience sake.

2. Against those that hold, that infants are without original sin, but the Scripture saith, *they are conceived in sin.*

3. To reprove the Familists, who hold, that godly and regenerate men are in no wise subject to the Law, but are freed from the condemning and commanding power of it. But if they sin, then certainly they are transgressors of the Law.

Use 2. Of instruction.

1. That all the sins and good things found in the whole Bible, are to be ranked within the compass of the ten Commandments.

2. That all Nations are under the Law.

3. That the Law and Gospel mutually thus agree. That the Law of *Moses* is included in the Gospel, and yet the Law and Gospel are not con-

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founded together. The Gospel require. that in the way of thankfulndli: We should keep the Commandment of God, Ezek. 36. 27.

3. This should discourage us from all sin, and encourage us to labour to purge our selves from all sin. All sin is the transgression of the Law of God. Let not pleasures, profits, or credit assure us to sin against God; Shall we for our own ends sin against God, and so transgress his holy, good, and righteous Law? We must take heed how we meddle with that we have no law for. We

must prove all our paths by the stony tables of God's Law, Psal. 119. 105. Obedience is the fulfilling of the Law, and hath great recompense of reward.

I JOHN 3. 5.

Christ was manifest to take away our sins, and in him there is no sin.

THese words contain in them the second and third reason, why every hopeful Christian should purge himself as Christ is pure. The second reason is taken from the end of Christ's coming into the world, and that was *to take away our sins*.

The third argument is taken from the pattern of Christ's righteousness, for *in him is no sin*.

From the second reason, which is the end of Christ's coming into the world.

Doct. That the end of Christ's coming into the world, was to take away our sins.

By the manifestation of Christ, we must understand the coming of Christ in the flesh, 1 Tim. 3. 16. He came for this end, *to take away our sins*, Joh. 1. 29.

Q. But what did Christ for us to take away our sins?

Ans. He became our surety, he willingly took upon him the burthen of our sins, 1 Pet. 2. 24. Isa. 5. 44.

2. As Christ took the burthen upon him, so God laid it upon him, *Christ did take away our sin*. by impulation, as in the old Law, every man was to lay his hand on the head of the burnt offering, and so confess their sins, and so by that means their sins were taken away. So now in this time of the Gospel, we must lay hold on Christ by a true and lively faith, challenging Christ to be our Saviour, Lev. 16. 21, 22. 2 Cor. 5. *ult*.

Thus Christ taketh away our sins by justifying us from the guilt, and by sanctification he cleanseth us from the spot and stain of them, Ezek. 36. 25. 1 Joh. 1. 8.

This he doth three ways.

1. By his death he overcame the principal enemy of our salvation, as the Devil, Heb. 2. 14. and he hath overcome the world, which was strong to carry us captive by flattery, and fear, Gal. 6. 14. He hath crucified the body of sin and corruption in us, Rom. 6. 6.

2. By sending such ordinances into the Church as might cleanse us, Ephes. 5. 6. Prov. 13. 20. Isa. 27. 9. The fruit of afflictions is to purge away sin.

3. He hath sent his holy Spirit into our hearts to change us. A Spirit of faith purifying, Act. 15. 9. and of hope and love, 1 Joh. 3. 3. Gal. 3. 14. We receive the Spirit of grace, which makes God's ordinance effectual to cleanse us.

Use 1. Of instruction to every one that is afflicted in conscience for sin, and knows not how to be eased and purged. It is not fair buildings, music, and merry company that will take away sin. This course will make thee worse. But this thou mayst do, consider to what end Christ was manifested and sent into the world, was it not to take away our sins? But I find not this wrought in me, I find the world and lusts of thy heart prevail against
me;

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me; Christ takes away the burthen and debt of sin, by undertaking to accept and bear them, 1 Joh. 2. 2. Matth. 11. 28. The Father hath laid on Christ the iniquities of every weary and broken soul. Now we must get to Christ, and confess all our iniquities, and leave them upon him, calling upon him for grace and mercy.

2. To combat those that depend upon Christ for mercy, and have confessed their sins to him. If he have taken away sin, it is done effectually, Heb. 10. 1, to 10.

3. To teach every soul that believes that Christ came to take away our sins, to renounce and abhor all sin, and to cleanse themselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit. Let us not take Christ's coming into the world in vain, but give all diligence to purify our selves as Christ is pure.

And in him is no sin.

This is the reason, which is taken from the spotless innocency of Christ.

Doct. That Christ is spotless and pure from sin, Luk. 23. 22, 41.

Pilate and the Centurion acknowledged him to be so, Heb. 4. 15. Joh. 14. 30. 1 Pet. 2. 21, 22. & 1. 19, 20.

Reas. 1. In regard of the purity of the divine nature. If there had been sin in the human nature of Christ, it might have been said that God was a sinner.

2. That he might fulfil all the legal types and sacrifices, which were to be without blemish.

3. From our necessity to have such a Saviour, Heb. 7. 26, 27. If he had offered sacrifice for himself, he had needed a Saviour to have redeemed him. If he had not been without sin, he had been swallowed up in death.

Obj. How could he be clean that was born of a woman? Job 25. 4.

Answ. He was born by carnal generation, after the manner of men.

Use 1. To shew a difference between the first and second *Adam*. The first *Adam* was a sinner, and propagated sins. The second *Adam* was without sin, and propagated righteousness, Rom. 5. 19. We must not rest in a carnal generation, for our natural birth is polluted; until we be born of him in whom is no sin, we cannot be blessed.

2. It is a ground of consolation to such as feel themselves burthened and pressed fown with sin; though we be sinful, and laden, and compassed about with it, yet in Christ is no sin or spot in nature, heart, or life. He came to fulfil all righteousness, and apid all to God to the utmost farthing. Righteous is Christ both in life and death, what is wanting in us is supplied in him.

3. Hence we must learn all, not to judge our selves more sinful and miserable then others, because we are evil entreated in the world, and afflicted of God. Thus it was with Christ, it is our happiness to do well, though we suffer evil, 1 Pet. 2. 21, 22.

Doct. *The spotless innocency of Christ, is and ought to be an effectual motive to every hopeful Christian, to purge himself as Christ is pure, 1 Pet. 1. 16. Mat. 5. ult.*

Reas. 1. From the end of God's predestinating us, Rom. 8. 28, 29. and *God worketh all things according to the counsel of his will, Eph. 1. 11.*

2. From the end of Christ's spotless life and death, leaving us an example to follow his steps, 1 Pet. 2. 21, 22. To justify us from the guilt, and to purge us from the blot and stain of sin. If we sin, we sin against God's predestination, and the end of Christ's coming.

3. From the near fellowship betwixt Christ and us, he is our head and husband, we must labour therefore to be suitable and conformable unto him, Eph. 5. 26.

4. Christ taketh pains to cleanse and heal us, that so he might present us

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without

without blemish to God. This is the scope of all his holy ordinances, and of Christ shedding his blood.

Use 1. To reprove such as take pleasure in sin, and being reprov'd, justify themselves, in saying, all are sinners, we must purge our selves as Christ is pure, in whom is no sin.

2. To stir up all the children of God, to conform themselves to Christ in life and death, 2 Cor, 7. 1. Let us not sin against God's predestination

and Christ's blood. Let us not be a dishonor and grief to our head, and take God's ordinances in vain.

How shall we do this?

1. Believe steadfastly in the Lord Christ for justification, and get his blood sprinkled upon us to cleanse us for sanctification.

1. Set the pattern of Christ before thee, and wisely behold it, and view it. This will be effectual to mould and fashion thee according thereunto, 1 Joh. 1. 16. There is a supernatural power in Christ, looks upon by the eye of faith, to transfigure us into his likeness, 2 Cor. 3. 18. There is a power in the sight of Christ to convey his spirit to transform us.

2. Deal effectually with thine own heart, and pray to God for grace, that thy soul may abhor, and disallow, and condemn all sin in thee, Rom. 7. 12, 13. Let thy judgement disallow it, and thy will abhor and hate it, and then it is not we that do it, but sin that dwels in us. God looketh at sin as thy enemy, and pitieth thee.

1 JOHN 3. 6.

Whoso abideth in him sinneth not.

THe fourth reason why every hopeful Christian purifieth himself, is taken from the constant practice of every hopeful Christian, that he abideth in Christ, amplified by the continuance.

Doct. *Every hopeful Christian that hath constant fellowship eith Christ, doth constantly avoid sin.*

To *abide in Christ*, implyeth communion with Christ.

2. Continuance in it.

First, we have fellowship with Christ, by the free donation of God, we are by God's counsel and purpose, by imputation, members of Christ, our sins are imputed to Christ, his righteousness imputed to us, Joh. 16. 16.

Secondly, by a communication of his Spirit, causing us to receive him, and cleave to him by faith and love, 1 Cor. 6. 17.

2. And thus this communion with Christ is indissoluble and everlasting, Joh. 8. 31, 32. Such as continue not, had never fellowship with Christ as his Disciples, Jer. 31. 40. Such do not sin, Psal. 119. 2. Psal. 1. 1, 2. 3. Mat. 12. 35. Isa. 61. 3. *Whoso is born of God, sins not.*

1. He never sins to death, 1 Joh. 5. 18. He commits not the sin against the Holy Ghost.

2. He liveth not in sin; he makes not that his course and employment, he may, slip and go astray, but he turneth into the way again, Rom. 6. 2. Living in sin is made all one with continuing in sin.

3. Because his judgement and conscience alloweth not sin, but abhorreth it. It is not his sin, but the sin of his rebellious and carnal part, Rom. 7. 14, 15. He judgeth and condemneth himself, and grieveth for, and hateth what he doth, and therefore is said not to sin.

1. In a regenerate Christian there is the flesh and the spirit, his will and conscience is more sanctified then corrupt. In the state of innocency the will was the weakest, but in regeneration God hath made it the firmest and best. God hath provided, that the hedge should be stronger where it was broken.

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2. The will and judgement being the most predominant faculties, to lead and rule the whole man. A clear fountain will purge it self to a clean stream; so will the will and judgement, being the fountain of all our actions.

3. If these faculties be for God, God accepts the whole man according to these. If there be a league between two Kings, though there be offences committed by some Subjects, yet if the Rulers do punish such, the league is not broken. So is it with the godly.

1. The godly resolve against all sin.

2. They labour to mortify all sin, and quicken all grace in them, and life all good means to that purpose. In the commission they are unwilling, and after the commission they are grieved and ashamed, and take an holy revenge on themselves, 2 Cor. 7. 10, 11. Thus they shew themselves to be clean from the sin committed, denomination is taken from the best and greatest part.

Obj. Why doth God bitterly and sharply reprove his people for sin?

Answ. God doth this, to bring them to better sight of sin, and judgement, and sense of it in their hearts, to shake us out of a lethargy and benumbedness. But when he hath awaked us, and caused us to judge and loath our selves for our sins, God looks at us as righteous, Thus the diseases and distempers of judgement and heart are pitied and healed. As the stone in the reins distempers men, so the stone in the heart, distempers the heart and judgement. God looks at this as the disease of his children.

Use 1. To shew abroad difference betwixt those that are *born of God*, and those that are not.

1. Those that sin unto death are not born of God, God keepeth his from that sin.

2. They that take pleasure in sin, and make a trade of sin. God's children do not so.

3. If men live in secret sins, against knowledge and conscience, they are not as yet born of God, their will and affections are not with God, but against him.

Use 2. To teach us all to make a favourable construction of the failings of God's people, we must not believe everyone that reports evil of them, Those that are born of God, when they commit any great sin, their repentance is as exemplary as that sin, as is seen in *David* and *Peter*.

3. For comfort to such Christians as find their judgements and wills upright, hating and abhorring the sins they commit, complaining and shaming themselves for them. If the judgement and heart be with God, and against sin, God looketh at them as not sinning. But this must not make no secure and careless of repenting, and being grieved for sin.

From the scope St. *John* aimeth at in this discourse, to wit, that *be that if born of God, sinneth not*; and therefore this ought to be a motive to such as hope to see Christ, and to be like him, to purge themselves; note thus much,

Doct. That the exemplary walking of the children of God, ought to be an effectual motive to every Christian not to walk in the ways of sin, but to purge themselves, 1 Cor. II. 16.

When the Apostle dehorts from wearing long hair, and women from shearing their hair, the argument he useth is, *We have no such custom*; when argument were of no force, except the examples of God's servants were an effectual motive to stir us up to the same ways, 1 Cor. 14. 33. There is a decency in all Churches of God, therefore he pleads against their confusion. *Let all things be done with decency, conely, and without confusion*, Psal. 52. 9. This is a reason why we should wait upon God, because *it is good in the eyes of his Saints*.

Reas. 1. God commands it, God hath set this as the royal way, Phil. 3. 17. This is the high way to heaven, God would have all to walk in the trodden path of his people.

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2 It is a matter of comfort to our own souls, it will excuse us from many doubts of our own hearts, and many slanders which might be cast upon us. If a member have a motion not guided by the body, you look at it as a Palsy distemper that we have.

3. From a discomfort we put upon our Brethren, when we walk in such ways as are contrary to them; they walk in a blameless course, if we shall

walk in sinful ways, we put upon them breaking of heart, Psal. 3. 17, 18. When the Apostle saw men walk in ways contrary to God's, it was the grief of his heart.

Use 1. This is a notable comfort to every soul that stands in a mammering what way to take. Walk in innocency from sin, think not they are solitary ways, and singular ones; no, if you walk in good ways, you shall not go alone, all good company have gone this way, some will go out of their way for good company. Walk in a way free from sin, so shalt thou have good company, and in this only.

2. It dissuades from sin, gird up thy loins from it. When we walk in the ways of sin, none go that way, but bad company, and it will be a shrewd argument against you, Mat. 7. 23

3. To guide us to a wise observation of the ways of godly men. Though there be no godly man but hath his failings, for which he blusheth before God; yet none of them, but have something in their ways, whereby you may purge your selves. None of them, but come nearer Christ in something then you, there is something wherein they purge themselves more then you. Have respect to the generality of your ways, God hath been always wont to guide his servants into ways of innocency. If God guide you into good ways, then follow them.

Obj. May I not be deceived?

Ans. True, sometimes generally God's people go wrong, Exod. 32. 19. *Aaron* and most of the people dance about the Calf. The people of God took up a custom of carrying the Ark in a Cart from the Heathen, the shoulders of the *Levites* should have carried it, 1 Chr. 13. 5, 6, 7. When *David* saw his error (for he was troubled for *Uzziah* his death) he said (2 Chr. 15. 2.) none should carry the Ark of the Lord, but the *Levites*. So true it is, the generality of God's people might go wrong, if they were all met together in a counsel; but though they may go astray, ye take them not at their starts, their ordinary courses are good. *David* and his people, though they went wrong, yet presently after they saw their error.

2. Look at the pattern of God's people, so as that thou weigh them in the balance of the Sanctuary. Have your wits exercised in the Scripture, that so you may discern of their ways, and that you may so far follow them, as they go right.

Doct. Whosoever sins had never any clear sound knowledge of the Lord Christ, hath not seen him.

Sight implies clearness, certainty, (*know him*) he speaks of such a knowledge, whose ground is Experience, Word, Spirit, Phil. 3. 10. whose fruit is obedience, 1 Joh. 2. 3. whose end salvation, Joh. 17. 3.

Reas. 1. Men that have had an experimental knowledge of God, they have a spirit within them, that they cannot sin, Gal. 5. 17. If they do, their conscience will so smite them, as that they that be glad to be rid of it, the Spirit keeps possession for God.

2. From the perseverance of Saints, or else they should never have fellowship.

Use 1. To refute the doctrine of the Papists, who say, that a man that is in Christ may fall away. St. *John* here refutes them, *If they sin, they never knew him. Stella cadens, nunquam stella, cometa fuit.*

2. As we would rivet this comfort in our souls, that we have known and seen Christ, let us keep our hearts innocent from sin.

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3. Of consolation to such a soul as hath formerly seen Christ's death, purging sin in him. Though we be weak, and think we shall not hold out, yet God will keep us from sin, and comfort us against the aspersions cast upon Religion, by the sins of professors. *Whosoever sins, never knew, nor saw Christ.*

1 JOHN 3. 7.

Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous.

THIS argues that all hopeful Christians do cleanse themselves from sin. It might be objected, We have false Teachers that teach otherwise, as *Simon Magus* was let loose at that time, and taught the free use of women. The Apostle meets with this, You say an hopeful Christian abstains from all sin, how comes it then to pass that so many teach otherwise? To this St. *John* answers, *Let no man deceive you.* Here is a loving compellation (*Little children*) which comprehends babes, young men, and old men.

2. The exhortation is a warning against deceivers.

3. He delivered two doctrines clean contrary unto them.

1. *He that doth righteousness is righteous as God is.*

2. *He that commits sin is of the Devil.* Which he proves,

1. From the practice of the Devil.

2. From the contrary end of Christ's coming.

3. From the contrary practice of those that are born of God.

Doct. *It is the duty of all sorts of good people, to take heed they be not deceived in judging who be righteous men.*

The question was, who were righteous? The false Teachers said, A man may be righteous, and yet live in sin. *Be not deceived*, saith St. *John*. Phil. 3. 2. We must as much beware of counterfeit righteousness, as of dogs, they are not so apt to bite men, as these to do the Church hurt.

Reas. 1. From the easiness of being deceived by the pretences of righteous men in all ages, Gal. 1. 14. Under the mask of righteous men, may walk men unrighteous.

2. From the necessity that lies upon our selves to have communion and fellowship with them, Psal. 16. 3. Gal. 6. 10. doing good to them, 1 Joh. 4. Yea, we are commanded to walk in their steps, Phil. 3. 17.

3. From the danger of walking with unrighteous men, Prov. 17. 15. & 4. 14, 15. This we may easily do, unless we know them.

Use 1. To reprove such as think all they live amongst are righteous; wherefore was this exhortation, how should a man be deceived, if all were righteous? Numb. 16. 2, 3.

2. To teach us all to pray to God that we may grow up in a spirit of discerning. There is an instinct in the servants of God, whereby they are able to relish the spirits one of another. A dog will scent out his way with more dexterity than all men can reason it out. A man can open the whole Law, but when he comes to discerning, he knows not who is righteous, and who not.

2. Grow we righteous ourselves, and to a great measure, so shall we the better discern of others. A woman that hath conceived, she will the more easily discern of another. So when thou feelest the work of righteousness in thine own heart, how shalt thou comfort thy self that thou art righteous, because thou lovest God's children?

How shall I know who is righteous?

A righteous man is known by his righteous ways, St. *John* speaks not here, what makes a man righteous, but what declares him to be righteous. The

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Jesuits grant this, Mat. 7. 18, 19, 21. If a tree brings forth grapes, it is a vine; if figs, a fig tree.

What is it to do righteousness?

The contrary to what it is to commit sin. He *doth righteousness*, that walks in God's commandments, when his judgement and heart is for it.

2. When God's laws are the rule of righteousness.

3. Whose end is righteousness. *Hallowed be thy name.*

4. When we do righteousness, it is a burden and grief, and we recover our selves.

Obj. *But righteousness doth not consist in the bulks of the work, but in the heart, and an hypocrite may have as fair an outside as a true righteous man.*

Ans. True. But God hath given a spirit of discerning to a Christian, that he shall discern the main sway of a man's heart.

1. If tny affections work as well as the outward man, Psal. 51. 6. his griefs, cares, desires, see with what affection they come off, 2 Chr. 8. 2, 3. He saw such joy when they came to offer, as if they would have offered more if they had had it.

2. See whether they come with some facility, forced things are not natural, Joh. 4. 34.

3. Consider the evenness and constancy of man's way. Violent things will not last, unless there be a continual supply sent, Hos. 6. 4. If when we have done good works, we kiss our hands, and sacrifice to our own nets, this is unrighteousness.

Obj. *In times of religion, God's ends and ours may be level, how then shall we know a righteous man?*

Ans. Observe when those ends part, which will be at one time or other. When two men walk together, a dog follows them, you know not whose it is, but let them part, then the dog will follow his Master. So it is here.

Use 3. To avoid the doctrine of the Papists, of justification by works. He saith not that good works make a man good, but we may know a man is righteous by his righteousness, lest they should run away with this, that the habit of righteousness make us righteous. We answer, imperfect righteousness cannot make us perfectly righteous, Isa. 64. 6. 1 Cor. 13. 8, to 12. This which you say, will neither hold in covenant of works, nor covenant of grace. In the covenant of works, not the habits of grace, but works of righteousness do justify. And in the covenant of grace, we are justified by faith, without the works of the Law.

Now a sign of trial of our own righteousness and others, when in ordinary course we give God and man his due, when we go about good duties in God's name, and for his glory.

Obj. *It may be I do it for the stopping of conscience, and that I may be well thought of.*

Ans. So may you do, and yet be sincere. I may please men, and my own conscience. What if you please men, will you not still stick to God? If you do good duties freely, constantly, and humbly, though you do them to satisfy your conscience; if men, yet you are righteous. So you may judge of other men. It is not enough to do good duties, but to see with what effect they do them; if they cleave to God, though for their own ends, they are righteous.

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I JOHN 3. 8.

He that committeth sin is of the Devil: for the Devil sinneth from the beginning: for this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the Devil.

Against the wicked principles of false Teachers, the Apostle arms them with these two principles of Christian religion.

1. *Who doth righteousness it righteous.*

2. *Who doth commit sin it of the devil.*

He that makes sin his work, makes himself the child of the devil. So in the Original.

Q. *What is it to commit, to work sin?*

Ans. Jam. 3. 2. *In many things we sin all.* Yet a man is not said to sin who ordinary course is not sin, but a righteous and good way.

1. Which a man makes his course a trade of sin.

2. He allows himself in sin, justifies, and excuseth himself, doth not hate his sin, nor himself for it.

In proper sense a man is said to *commit. sin,*

1. When he imagineth, deviseth, plotteth sin, as a Poet his fictions.

2. Acts it.

1. By travelling in birth, as a woman with child.

2. By bringing it forth in due time, Psal. 7. 14. *He that doth not righteousness is not of God.* Of whom then? Joh. 8. 41. *of the devil.* To be *of the devil,* is to be of him as a Father of a child, to be begotten of him. So *Elymas,* when he would have kept the Deputy from the faith.

Reas. 1. From the imitation of the Devil, which those exercise and put forth in such works. When a man is freely carried into evil, he imitates Satan, and so his child, Gen. 4. 20. So they were called Falhers, who were first in any act of all them that imitate them.

2. By spiritual propagation begotten of his seed, those are called the seed of Satan. There is a seed of Satan which stirs them up to this imitation, Gen. 3. 17. The seed of Satan expresseth it self in obstinacy and efficacy in sin. When a man is willing to take pains in sin, Joh. 8. 44. *Ye are of your Father the devil.* How will that appear? *his work ye will do.* So the Devil, ὄπινηρός, take pains and is industrious in sin. *Elymas* sought to pervert the Deputy, who attended to the Word.

Use 1. Of trial. Here we may see, of what parentage we are of. We may see whether we be so ill as to be born of Satan. Let us examine our selves. What is our business in this world? if it be to follow the lusts of our own hearts, to regard our own profits and pleasure, and we delight in sin, and what crosseth us, we malign, and are at enmity with it. The Scripture doth not call a man the child of the Devil, when he is but merely natural, deprived of grace, and prone to sin; men are then called the children of the devil, when as they are in the bosom of the Church, and see the way they should walk in, and that their estate is not good, and yet are resolved to do evil, to take pains in it, and if any cross them, they will be at enmity with them, there will be private grudges between many, but when it is for righteousness sake, then they are of the seed of Satan.

Now such men as are the children of the devil, may possibly become better, 2 Tim. 2. two last verses. They may be delivered out of the snares of Satan. But this God never doth, but with such conflicts, as it may be seen there hath been strife between *Michael* and his Angel, and the Devil and his Angels. Take a man merely natural, and it is an easy matter to bring him home, Jude vers. 22, 23. shews, that when we are merely natural, tenderness of compassion

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prevails much, They have been in a blameless course, and know not when they were convened. There is less opposition against grace, then when the Devil is come into the heart, and joins with sin. The Devil cast a thought into *Judas'* heart to betray Christ, Joh. 13. 2. he did not, presently consent to it, but after he had eaten the sop, Satan entred into him, vers. 27, The Devil had possession of him before, setting his heart in a course of covetousness, but now he had a farther possession of him, now he resolves to betray Christ, and now he spies a time to bring it about, The devil finds us flesh and blood at the first, and then he tempts us to sin; if we begin to run to him, then he enters, and sets us in that way. When a new temptation comes, and we consider whether we shall do it or no, when we break off, we are the better, and get strength against sin. But if we yield, and commit sin willingly,

then we are the children of the Devil. Take we heed of pleasing our selves in any sinful estate. If we have committed sin willingly, and the devil come with full sail into our souls; if we now lie down in peace, we shall be the children of Satan. This is to give our souls and hearts to the Devil, 1 Sam. 15. 15, 16. Sin of rebellion is not of ignorance, but through depravation of will. When out of resolution a man will sin against God, he will make bold with God, this is a sin of witchcraft. As in a sin of witchcraft a man or woman give their souls to the devil; so when a man commits sin willingly, he gives his soul to the Devil. You would think it a strange thing to be called a Witch, therefore rest not in this condition.

How shall we get out of it?

1. Henceforth resolve, that through the strength of God's grace, you will never commit any sin again.

2. Listen more diligently to the Word of God, give up your hearts to God and his Word, 2 Cor. 8. 14.

3. Lay open all your rebellion, confessing your sins and rebellions to God tell him of those passages of your lives wherein you have rebelled against him, 1 Joh. 2. 9.

Use 2. To magnify the freeness of God's grace, that hath delivered you out of darkness into light, from Satan to God, when you have sinned against knowledge and conscience.

Doct. The devil keeps a constant and continual course of sinning from the beginning to this day.

The word *διαβολος* signifies an *accuser*, yet that is not his only word, for he is sometimes called *Satan* an adversary, this is one of his ordinary works to accuse the Brethren. Sometimes he doth accuse God to us, as he did God to *Adam*.

He accuseth God to the conscience of a poor sinner, that God hath cost him off forever.

2. Sometimes he doth accuse us to God as he did, Job. 1. 9, 10. *Doth Job fear God for nought?*

3. He accuseth them to those that are instead of God, as to the Magistrates, and he accuseth them to other men, he puts slanderous speeches in the mouths of others, without any ground or cause,

How is he said to sin from the beginning?

It implieth that he transgresseth the law, and that by a constant act, he sins daily, and provokes others to sin, that hath been his constant course from the beginning; (*from the beginning*) is not meant from his first creation; for it is evident that he stood till the sixth day, else God would not have said, *Omnia*

voldè bona.

There are five things wherein Satan hath sinned from the beginning, wherein he transcends all sinners besides.

1. He was the eldest sinner, the first in sin.

2. He is the most industrious painful sinner, he comes from compassing the world, *πονηρός*,

3. He

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3. He is the Father of sin, Joh. 8. 44. If a man can utter any vain word, any sinful practice, it's from the devil, because generally he doth so watch over the ways of men, and he is casting in blasphemous thoughts against God, and envious thoughts against our Brother.

4. Every sin he hath committed, hath been a sin against the Holy Ghost. For to that sin is required illumination, and malice of heart.

5. He transcends others in the perpetuity and constancy of sinning. He is called an *unclean spirit*, 2 Cor. 1. 1. when he lies, he speaks of his own accord, Joh. 8. 44. If at any time he speak true, it is by the over-ruling hand of God. Psal. 34. 3, 4.

Reas. As is the tree, so is the fruit, Mat. 7. 18.

Use. It shews us that Satan hath the Law of God in his heart; else he could not sin, for *sin is the transgression of the Law*; therefore Satan is sometimes bound to the Law of God, Satan at first had the image of God stamped upon him, he was created in holiness and righteousness, having all the Commandments of the first and second Table written in his heart, Job 1. 6. They are called the Sons of God, but sinning against holiness and righteousness, do transgress the Law of God.

2. It confutes the Anabaptists, that say, by the parents sin enters into the world, not by propagation, but by imitation only; whence it follows that children sin not till they are capable of imitation. But why doth *David* then complain he was *born in sin*?

3. It exhorts us all to a threefold duty.

1. It teacheth us for to walk more circumspectly against Satan, for he knows all the ways and methods of the Sons of men, therefore we had need pray daily, *deliver us from evil, and lean us not into temptation.*

2. It teacheth us to loath sin, and all the ways of it. You cannot walk in a way of sin, but you have Satan for your companion,

3. Take heed especially of continuing long in any sin. Many there are who not only now and then fall into sin, but ever (from the beginning to the end) walk in sin. Are they not herein truly patterns of the devil?

Use 3. This may teach God's servants never to be weary of well-doing. The devil is not weary of sin, he is always employed therein, and yet is not weary. It is his meat and drink to sin, to draw in others to sin. And if Satan find such pleasure in sin, then you may much more find comfort in well-doing. If he be not weary to aggravate his own sin and misery, be not you weary in getting grace and peace to your selves and others. As he is industrious in sinning and accusing the Brethren, so let God's servants take heed of accusing their Brethren. Take heed of slander, do not believe Satan, he is a deceiver, he is an accuser, he is your enemy.

In the former verses, seducers were crept into the Church, now to prevent the seducement of the people of God, to prevent future delusion, and withdraw them from present errors, St. *John* sets down two principles of Christian practise.

1. *He that doth righteousness is righteous.*

2. *He that sins is of the devil.*

First, because the devil sinned from the beginning.

The second argument is from the contrary end of Christ's coming.

Thirdly, from the practice of every child of God, *vers. 9.*

From the second argument, taken from the end of Christ's coming; note,

Doct. *The end of Christ's coming into the world, was to dissolve and loose the works of Satan.*

This was expressly foretold, Gen. 3. 15. *The seed of the woman should break the Serpent's head;* that is, the projects and plan of Satan. When as the devil did plot to bring our first parents into sin, and so into eternal misery, and

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fellowship with him therein. *Head* is taken for dominion and power, the will he hath in our hearts.

What is it to loose and dissolve?

It implieth that the work of the devil was knit in divers knots. A three-fold knot.

1. He had tied our nature to sin, that you cannot draw mere nature, but you must draw his corruption, Gen. 6. 5. Joh. 3. 6. Rom. 7. 14.

2. There is a binding of one sin to another. Draw one sin, and you draw all, Deut. 29. 19.

3. If we draw sin, we shall inevitably draw punishment, Rom. 6. *ult.* Gen. 2. 17. Gal. 3. 10.

What is a curse?

That is a curse, that sets us further off from God, Heb. 2. 14. Prov. 1. 32. Christ came into the world to loose these knots.

But how did Christ's coming into the world loose the works of Satan?

By Christ's manifestation, you must understand the whole work of Christ's mediation. Christ by his innocent birth, holy life, righteous and holy suffering, hath procured pardon of sin, and having gotten it, sin and punishment is dissolved.

But may not our natures be corrupt, though our sins are pardoned? Gal. 4. 4, 5. The same Spirit that makes us cry *Abba, Father*, Rom. 8. 15, 16. leads us into all ways of holiness and righteousness. Hence our ways are healed, and our course of sin broken off.

But though God hath broken off the wicked course of a man's life, Luk. 19. 48. Yet we are still bitterly entangled with the corruptions of our own hearts, Hos. 4. 8, 9.

Use 1. To teach such as live in any sin, or are the Authors of any sin, what is a sign that they are of the Devil, because they tie those knots, which Christ came to loose.

2. Of trial, whether we be indeed born of God, or not. Would you know whether Christ came effectually for you? if he did, then he hath untied those knots and snares.

3. This may be a ground of exhortation to two or three several duties.

1. Take heed of all sin, and allow not your selves in any, If you do the work of Satan, you dissolve the work of Christ.

2. This exhorts all that find their souls so entangled, to labour to dissolve the work of Satan. Now, none can dissolve it but Christ, he came for this end, therefore make we our moan to him. And because this will not serve, unless we give up our selves wholly to be ruled by him, therefore let us resign up our souls to him, wholly to be wrought upon by the Word of God.

3. To exhort us to comfort ourselves, who have given up ourselves to Christ. If we see that Christ hath begun to pardon our sins, to cut us off from sin, and to mortify it, he will perfect this good work, Deut. 32. 4. Rom. 16. 22.

1 JOHN 3. 9.

Whosoever is born of God, doth not commit sin: for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

THE third argument whereby St. *John* proveth that he that committeth sin is of the Devil, is taken from the common practice of God's children, who are so far from gratifying the Devil by commission of sin, that *whosoever is born of God sinneth not*.

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In the verse there's three things,

1. The practise of a child of God, *He doth not commit sin*.
2. The cause of it. *The seed of God is in him*.
3. This is amplified from an impossibility of sinning, which it in regard of his new birth.

Doct. *The seed of God in the hearts of God's children, preserves them not only from sin, but from possibility to sin*.

To be *born of God*, is the same with *the seed of God*.

What is this seed of God? 1 Pet. 1. 23. The Word of God is an immortal seed, and that not in the letter, but in the spirit.

To be *born again*, is when the Word and Spirit hath framed a man to the image of God. A man is then *born again*, when the Word and Spirit hath done the work of seed. For many a man knows the Word is true, the Devil knows the Word well enough; but the Word is then seed, when the soul of a man doth not only receive the Word, but conceives of it, and is framed to the will of God, and being born of God, he is always his child. When a man is transformed into the image of God, his judgement and heart stamped with the image of God, he delights in God and his ways, and children, his judgement and heart are carried that way, they are all for God: *repentance* is called *μετάνοια*, his mind is then changed, Prov. 23. 26. *My Son give me thy heart*, his heart is given to God. The seed of God's Word was not in *Herod*, Joh. 2. 24. Psal. 119. 11. 1 Joh. 2. 27. The seed of God remains in the children of God both Word and Spirit.

Reas. 1. From the mighty power the Word hath had in his soul, when he was first begotten and born of God. It was such as did so affect and terrify, as no earthly comfort was able to satisfy his heart, he hath been so overwhelmed with fears and doubts, as that he will be afraid to sin as long as he lives.

2. From the strong possession that the Word and Spirit have in the heart, as they do abide in the whole man, so especially in the conscience and will. I do not allow what I do, but what I hate, that do I; which shews, that the

Word hath taken such fast hold of his judgement and will, that both are for God, Jer. 32. 40. Psal. 119.161.

3. From the great change this seed makes in the heart of a child of God. It makes him from a wild olive, to be a sweet olive. *A good tree* (Mat. 7. 18.) *cannot bring forth evil fruit*. Every thing brings forth fruit according to the seed.

Obj. *There is a seed of corruption, cannot a man bring forth according to that?*

Answ. There is an old man, but he is crucified; if we sin, we do not trade in sin, our judgements and hearts are against it. When some lawless lusts have carried us captive, and we complain of them to God, and desire that they were cast out, God looks at them, not as ours, Rom. 6. 14. Psal. 110. 28.

Use 1. To refute all such doctrines as teach the apostasy of Saints. They say such as are born of God may come to sin totally and finally. This error fights against a double doctrine of the Apostle. He saith, *Whosoever is born of God, the seed remaineth in him*. If a man can shake out the Spirit, how doth it remain? 2. The text saith, *there is no possibility of sinning*; they say, *he may sin*.

Obj. They say, *whilst he is a child of God he cannot sin, but he may cease to be a child of God*.

Answ. now he cannot sin, where by he should be made no child of God.

2. There is a doctrine of the Papists and their Divines, that teach, liberty of will cannot be *nisi ad opposita*, that a man may will a thing or not.

I ask whether a child of God forbears a sin willingly or not. We say, willingly. If a child of God walk in innocency from sin, he can do no otherwise. Whereas their doctrine is, a man I will is not free, unless a man

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may do a thing or not do it. What do they think of Saints and Angels in heaven, or God himself? whether have they free-will or no? I hope none of them can sin, yet do they good most freely. Wherein stands liberty? Not only that a man doth a thing without constraint but that he follows the counsel of his own will, he follows his own judgement and reason.

2. For trial of our own hearts, whether we be born of God or no. If we be, our ordinary course is good, we dare not sin, know not how to go about it, that seed which is in us, sets our hearts and judgements aright, Gen. 39. 19. Other men may think it strange, that we cannot do as they do. This is a good evidence that thou art *born of God*.

3. See what to judge of those that have made a profession, and yet fall away. They were never *born of God*, for then they *could not have sinned*.

4. This may be a ground of much comfort to every child of God. He will preserve us spotless and blameless. Here is a double comfort.

1. He looks not at any course as sin, if thou be humbled for it, and he will take a course to mortify it.

2. You can never lose the favour of God, because if you be once begotten, you can never be unbegotten. You are begotten of an immortal seed, and therefore cannot die.

Obj. *This may seem to be a doctrine of presumption, for then a man may live as he list.*

Ans. Suppose a Christian could give us the apple of the tree of life, that so we should never die, but yet bids us take heed to a diet, for although we could not die, yet we should have such pangs, stone, gout, strangury, as that we would wish death rather than life. So God will make the best of his servants know what it is to wax wanton against him, and make them curse all the occasions that lead them to sin.

5. This should teach us that have received any seed of God, to take heed that we did not, and therefore inform the judgement aright, out of the Word of God, 2 Tim. 1. 3. that so you may come to sound judgement and wisdom. One error of judgement will shake you much in your way, 1 Joh. 5.18.

I JOHN 3. 10.

In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his Brother.

Herein is a manifest difference between the children of God, and the children of the Devil.

The signs of difference are twofold.

1. General, *do not right*.
2. Particular, *do not love the Brethren*.

Doct. *The children of God, and the children of the devil, and not so alike one to another, but that there may be found a manifest difference betwixt them, even in this world, Gal. 5. 10. Mat. 7. 20.*

Were there not a manifest difference, it were not so necessary for God to change his people, Jer. 15. 19. to walk with a divided affection towards them, Ezek. 13. 22. If a difference had not been so manifest, God had not so justly blamed them.

If you say, this is peculiar to Ministers, Levites; they must judge who are clean, who are not, and not private Christians.

Answ. That God makes it a badge of them that shall inherit heaven, and have fellowship with God there, Psal. 15. 4. Jude v. 20, 21, 22, 23. which shews we should put a sign of difference, not only between good and bad, but even between bads. Some sin ignorantly, others more absolutely.

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How doth this manifest difference appear?

A double sign of it, 1 Cor. 12. 10. It is a spiritual gift of discerning. He speaks of discerning what gifts, and what measures a man hath, and wherein the strength of a man's gifts lies, 1 Cor. 2. 15. Although he cannot discern every man's special gifts, what he is most fit for, yet plain and manifest things he discerns, and also between moral and spiritual, between things of God, and Satan, and the World.

The second manifestation of this difference is the inclination of the end of the one and of the other, *By their fruits you shall know them*, Mat. 7. 20. Gal. 5. 19.

Obj. *Cannot an hypocrite pass so as that he cannot be discerned? What say you of Judas, he was not discerned of a long time*, Matt. 26. 22. *for every of the Disciples began to suspect themselves*, 2 Cor. 1. 13., 14, 15, 16. *Again, God's people carry things so weakly, and the pulse of God's grace beats so weakly, as if no life and strength were in them*, 1 King. 19. 17, 18. Psal. 12. 1.

Answ. Sometimes hypocrisy is spun with so fine a thread, and it is so well died, as that you can hardly discern any difference. And sometimes grace is so low in the heart, as that you cannot discern it. This is true, but it is but for a time. *Judas* at length was plainly known to have been but a thief, 1 Tim. 3. 9. *Jannes and Jambres* can do miracles as well as *Moses* and *Aaron*, but in time, they shall be discerned, 1 Tim. 5. 22, 45. Lay hands suddenly on no man; for if he prove not pure, thou shalt be partaker of his sins, and all hurt he doth. Some men's sins lie open before hand, *i.e.* before the judgement of the Church, others follow after, they cannot be hid, God will have them made manifest in due time, Luk. 12. 12. There is nothing so secret but it will be discovered. If you put leaven into five pecks of meal, it will not always lie hidden, but in time break forth.

Use 1. An argument of just reproof to good men and bad. If after a while we know not our selves, 2 Cor. 13. 5. As if it were a dangerous sign of a man's separation from God, if after so long a time of the Apostles' preaching, they knew not what was in them.

2. This reproves the Popish Doctors, that say, that no man can discern his own estate. They alledge that place, Eccl. 9. 1, 2. A man cannot know by outward things whether he be in God's favour or not. If a man come in a sheep-skin, I shall take him to be a sheep, Mat. 16. to 20.

3. To teach everyone to take heed of a devilish spirit, or an unrighteous course of life; for though a man may hide it long, yet at length it will be known. It is as impossible that a man's want of love should not be known, as for a man to keep fire in his bosom, and not to break out, Psal. 36. 2, 3, 4.

4. Of exhortation to all that are born of God, not always to smother grace; God will have your grace manifest, and that to edify withal, 2 Cor. 12. 7. Do not content your selves with close and household Christianity, but manifest of what spirit you are. It was commendable in *Elizabeth*, to hide her self six months Luk. 2. 6. when she was stirring with child, then she visited her Cousin *Mary*: So if God have wrought any conception of grace in our hearts, it doth well to be concealed a while, lest like the stony ground, in time of persecution it should fall away. When thou art sure there is a manifest work of God's Spirit in thy heart, then manifest thy self.

Doct. *Not only commission of sin, but negligence of a Christian course of life, is a manifest sign, not of a child of God, but a child of the Devil.*

Mat. 3. 10. Every tree that brings not forth good fruit, is cut down, and cast into the fire, Psal. 36. 1, 3, 4. *There is no fear of God before their eyes.* How shall this appear to *David*? *He hath left off to do good, he doth not shun evil, but if an evil matter comes in his way, he sets himself to work it,* Psal. 116. 12. He doth not study as *David* did, *What reward shall I give unto the Lord for all his benefits?* He that sets not himself in a good course, is not the child of God, but of the Devil.

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Reas. 1. His ways bear the image of Satan, he was set in a good estate, but he ceased to do good, and set himself in a course now, not good.

2. From the necessary fruitfulness of the seed of God wheresoever it is, Psal. 1. 2, 3. A child of God is working in his mind and heart, and always doing good.

3. From the hinderance which such put upon others that would do better, if such were removed, Act. 13. 10. The Devil is always an Impediment of good, Luk. 13. 7, 8, 9. A man if he can do good, and do not, he cumpers the ground, therefore cut him down.

Use 1. To reprove the ignorance of such people that conceive, if they do no body any harm, they hope God will accept them; but if it go badly with

them, what will become of whoremongers and adulterers, &c. Can you say you have devised good, and watched your opportunity to be doing good? This is a comfort to you. But do not comfort your selves merely in your innocency from evil, without doing good.

2. To teach us all, as ever we desire an evident mark to our selves that we are children of God. To turn Poets of righteousness, it is the seed of God that sets you awork. God requires that we should be doing good with our estates, that when we go hence we may say, as Joh. 17. 3, 4. *Father I have finished the work that thou hast given me to do.* 2 Kings 20. 31. 2 Chron. 1. 2. *Rehoboam* did evil in the sight of the Lord, because he prepared not his heart, he studied not to do good.

Neither he that loveth not his Brother.

Doct. *Not only the hatred of our Brother, but the want of love to our Brethren, is a sign (not a child of God, but) of the devil,* Joh. 13. 35. 1 King. 18. 17, 18.

Reas. 1. From the constant practise of God. Is there anyone of them which he hath adopted, whom he love not? Mat. 10. *ult.* And observe the contrary practice of Satan; there is no child of God but he is estranged from, and sits loose from.

2. From the want of knowledge of God, 1 Joh. 4. 8. *He knows not.*

1. He hath not experience of God's love. Here is a double reason.

1. He hath not experience of God's love.

2. God is love.

When the Sun shines upon a stone wall, though it be cold, yet reflects the heat back again upon every person. So there is none that hath felt the warmth of God's love upon his soul, but though his heart were cold before, yet he reflects it upon all.

2. God is love. It is a property inseparable from the nature of God, he loves to communicate good.

3. From the like condition of all Brethren. He that loves not his Brother, because he is a Brother, he loves none at all. He that loves not one of a man's children, because he is born of such a man, loves none of them. A man may hate a Brother for some sinister respect, as *Joseph's* Brethren; it was a certain sign they were not born of God, though afterward they came to good. And they that did not love *Joseph* for his goodness sake, could not love *Jacob* nor *Abraham*. A man may hate and distaste some injury offered, but if once the corruption of any child of God shall prevail with me to hate him more then his goodness to love him, it is a sign there is a distemper in my heart.

Use 1. See a manifest difference between the children of God and of the Devil. If there be any Brother thou lovest not, from whom thy heart is girded up, whom thou canst not affect, thou art not born of God, I know provocations may be such as may weaken affections, and turn the streams, as that it shall not run so fully, nor so strongly, yet a child of God dares not allow himself, but be doth take a course to remove matters of enmity, and he takes himself as much bound to hate himself for neglect of his Brother, as he found cause to neglect his Brother. A man may be angry towards those he
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loves, without sin. But this want of love will do more injury to your spirit, then the injury that is done to you. A man may be angry, but when his passion is over, his love returns again.

Why is it not to love any Brother?

There are two things in love.

1. Communion with them.

2. A communication of good to them. In some things a man desires communion with others; other things there be, wherein though a man desires not communion with them, yet he desires communication of good to them.

Use 1. This should exhort us to stretch our love universally to every soul. You were better bestow your love upon some base hypocrite, then restrain your love from some poor Christian. You cannot neglect one Christian, but it will hazard your whole general estate. In judgement of Charity, if they abstain from gross sins, and do good duties, we think well of them, and we had better lose our love upon them, then neglect a child of God, Psal. 35. 12, 14. And indeed it is not lost, for it shall return into his bosom, It is a sign I love a man, if I love his picture; so though a man should be an hypocrite, yet if we love the shew of grace, it is a sign we love grace indeed. Never say thou lovest a Christian, unless thou lovest the picture of a Christian. What a miserable thing is the want of this? a man is not born of God, but of the Devil. And what a poor case is a man in, that makes his spirit the spirit at Satan?

I JOHN 3. 11.

For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.

THE Apostle in the former verse, had given us two manifest differences, between the children of God and of the Devil. The latter mark the Apostle proves to be a manifest difference. It is a message, and an ancient one which we have received of God; as who should say, He that is born of God, will hear the Word of God. But this is a *message*. The duty of brotherly love is set out by a *message*, and that by its adjunct, *from the beginning*.

Doct. *That when we read or hear the Word of God, we should look at it as a message sent from God.*

This word is no where used, but in Joh. 8. 11. *I am the light of the world.* What saith St. *John* of this, 1 Joh. 2. 5. shewing what Christ delivered at large. The Apostle sets the stamp of *message* upon it,

Reas. From the scope of all the Scripture; *Whatsoever is written, is written for our instruction*, Rom. 15. 4. There is not in Scripture something for some men at parts, and other things for meaner men, but all things are for our comfort and instruction. If we read the Magistrate to be called to such and such duties, it is for our instruction, for our comfort, that we may know what care God hath of us; no calling but redounds to our benefit. Whether I read threatenings, commandments, promises, they are all a *message* to me; though every threatening belong not to me, yet thus far it doth, to keep me from such and such sins, and to terrify others. And so, though promises belong not to thee, because thou art not in the state of grace, yet 'tis good for thee to know them, that those promises might break thy heart, to see what mercies thou neglectest.

2. From the office and calling of the Pen-men of Scripture, Mal. 2. 7. 2 Cor. 5. 10,

Use 1. Of direction to those that either hear or read the Word, Deut. 17. 14. God calls the King to read it once a day. If thou take it up the Book

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of God, thou takest up a bundle of *messages*, as if God should round thee in the ears. Understandest thou what thou readest? Thou shalt read it in vain, if thou look not at it as a *message*. We are wont to receive the message so much the better, by how much they come from great men or friends.

2. In hearing or reading the Word of God, we must be led on to a twofold duty.

1. To receive all with reverence, Judg. 3. 20. Act. 10. 33. Psal. 65. 8.

2. Whensoever thou hearest the Word of God, consider how far it pertains to thee; though all Scripture be for my comfort, to know, yet I must

apply it to my self, so far as it concerns me, receive it as bread of my portion, chew upon it, Heb. 4. 3. God requires of us, that we do mix the Word with faith.

Obj. *The Minister doth not know the frame of my heart, therefore how should he know what to say to me, I am a stranger to him?*

Ans. It is true. If he speak out of his own mind and fancy, many times we think that things are spoken by suggestion from neighbours; true, oft-times it is so, but God knows better how such a thing is useful to us then we do, 2 King. 9. 5.

3. This should teach us conscionable to obey the Word, it is a message sent from God, therefore take it not ill at the messengers hands, nor cavil at it. For a Prince is not so to do, though an Herald of Arms come and pronounce open Wars against him, he comes and goes peaceably, telling the message of his Prince. The Lord makes this a cause of captivity, 2 Chron. 36. 15. 16.

4. This should exhort all to get them Bibles, if they have none, and if they have them, every day to read something. There are but two ways of parley between God and our selves.

1. When we speak to God in prayer.

2. When God speaks to us in his Word. It is a fearful thing, when there is such strangeness between God and us, that he should seldom hear of us, and we seldom hear of him,

Doct. *The love of another, is an ancient message that God hath sent us, and hath continued to send us, from the beginning.*

He saith not *in the beginning*, but *from the beginning*, which implieth a continuance of it, 1 Thess. 4. 9. Rom. 15. 10. Writing a Law, he wrote nothing else but a Law of God, Gen. 4. 6. Thus God complains of *Cain*, *Why dost thou lowre upon thy Brother?* Gen. 13. 8. When *Abraham* and *Lot's* Herds-men were ready to fall out, this message from heaven was sent by *Abraham* a Prophet, *we are Brethren*. This continued to *Moses*, Lev. 19. 18. Our Saviour is instant in preaching this love, Joh. 13. 34. *Paul* is earnest in this, Rom. 13. 8, 10. 1 Cor. 1. 6, 14. 1 Pet. 1. 21, 22. & 18. 4, 8.

Reas. 1. From God's love to us. He walks in tender love to us, and therefore he never writes a letter to us, but he bids us *love one another*, Gen. 43. 24. *See that you fall not out by the way*, 1 Joh. 4. 8. It is an argument we are *born of God*, if we love one another.

2. From the great use of this grace. It is necessary above all graces, it is the band of perfection, knits all together in a family, in a congregation, Psa. 133. 1, 2, 3.

2. Love covers a multitude of sins, both in me and thee, 1 Pet. 4. 8. Cant. 8. 7, 8.

3. The excellency of love, it is the fulfilling of the Law, Rom. 13. 20. When a man walks in love, there is no good duty but love will carry him through with cheerfulness and comfort.

Use 1. Reproves all strangeness and enmity amongst members of a family or congregation. If God ever send this message, and we receive it not, there is no fellowship between him and us, a spirit of strangeness, or the breach of
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the whole Law. If a man come not to Church in love, all is lost; he never profits by any thing, neither Word nor Sacraments.

2. This exhorts us, whatsoever we learn, let us learn this lesson so anciently taught us, so often pressed upon us. If we should see a child that hath not learned a lesson, which he hath been a long time plodding upon, we would say, he were a Non-proficient. If love have this efficacy, that it *covers a multitude of sins*, that it is the *fulfilling of the Law*, we shall have this comfort to our selves, that we are *born of God, and not of the devil*.

1 JOHN 3. 12.

Not at Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his Brother: and wherefore slew he him? because his own works were evil, and his Brother's righteous.

IN the tenth *vers.* the Apostle makes it a manifest difference between the child of God, and of the Devil, want of love to the Brethren. This he proves, because to love our Brother is the message of God.

2. Want of love, *he is of the Devil*. This he proves by the pattern of the eldest Son of the devil, as he did, so will his younger Brethren do. Here is a pattern of hatred of our Brother, *Cain*, he is amplified by his spiritual original, *of the devil*.

2. The cause, *Because his Brother's works were good, and his evil*.

Doct. *The example of any not loving his brother, should be an effectual encouragement to us, to love every brother.*

Consider what was the hatred of *Cain* to his Brother.

1. It was causeless, Gen. 4. 7. Joh. 15. 15. They hated Christ without a cause. So *Cain Abel*, Psal. 69. 4.

2. It was impious and wicked, he had just cause to love, and against that just cause, he bated him for his righteousness.

3. It was a deadly hatred, such as would not be slacked but with blood.

4. It was implacable, Gen. 4. 8. for no counsel would abate the mood of his malice. God parlies with *Cain*, *Why it thy countenance cast down? &c.* The good counsel God gave him, was as bestows to blow up his wrath.

5. It was an hypocritical hatred, for it is likely upon God's speech he had smoothed over his countenance and speech, yet when he gets him in the field, and had opportunity, he slew him.

Use 1. This dissuades us from the hatred of anyone Christian soul. If there be but one *Abel* whom we hate, it will translate us into the Brotherhood of *Cain*. Therefore, either love your Brethren, or be as *Cain*.

Obj. *But we do not slay our Brother, though we hate him.*

Ans. That is no thank to you, that is because your malice is curbed and restrained.

Use 2. To teach us all, as ever we desire to be free from hating our Brethren, to love goodness for goodness sake, Rom. 6. 4, 5. *Aquila* and *Priscilla* would lay down their necks for *Paul*, 2 Pet. 1. 7. If we say, a man loves the light well, it is a sign of good eyes: So, if we love to see many lights about us, it is a sign our eyes are good, Act. 11. 22, 23. If we were evil, we could not but wink, and shut our eyes.

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I JOHN 3. 13.

Marvel not my Brethren, if the world hate you.

THe Apostle having told us of *Cain's* hatred to his Brother, he takes away an objection. It might be said, *It was a wonder, there were but two Brethren, and Abel so innocent, it is a wonder he should slay him.* But he bids them not wonder at it.

Doct. *The world is given to hate God's children.*

By *world* he means worldly men:

1. Because their original is the world, Joh. 8. 23. & 15. 19.

2. Because they art the greater part of the world, 1 Joh. 5. 19.

3. Because they are wholly conversant about the world, minds, hearts, speeches, actions, Phil. 3. 19. Col. 1. 3, 4. They serve the god of this world, 1 Cor. 4. 4, 5. They have their portion in this world, Psal. 17. 14. Such men hate God, children, Mar. 13. 13. Luk. 6. 22.

Reas. 1. Ignorance of them, 1 Joh. 3. 1. *The world knows you not.* For a man to be discourteously used when he is known, though he be a Prince, it is no great matter, Joh. 16. 2.

2. The separation of God's people from the world, Joh. 15. 19. *I have chosen you out of the world.*

3. Because God's servants are desirous to draw others out of the world, which they cannot endure, when a man will be saving all that he can.

Use 1. To reprove the unthankfulness of the world, that will requite evil for good, and hatred for good-will. They run not with the world into the same excess of riot, Heb. 11. 38. 2 Pet. 3. 9. 1 Cor. 3. 22. The world hath its standing for their sakes, 2 King. 3. 14. Act. 18. 9, 10, 11. If your worldly estates prosper, it is for the sakes of God's people, Gen. 30. 27. & 39. 5. Psal. 106. 23. Gen. 19. 22. God would have poured out his wrath, had not *Moses* stood in the gap.

2. To teach us not to enter upon Christianity, if we cannot swallow bitter pills, the hatred of the world; if it be too churlish for your stomachs, keep your hearts and hands from it, Luk. 14. 26.

3. Comfort to God's people, that though the world hate them, yet they are but the world, they have no higher breath then the world.

Marvel not.

Doct. *God's people are wont to marvel at this.*

Reas. Three causes of marvel.

1. Ignorance of the cause.

2. Some eminent and good thing, Mat. 8. 10.

3. Some rare and new thing, 2 Sam. 26. Mat. 1. 27.

And so God's people are apt to marvel at this:

1. Because they know not the cause, Psal. 69. 4.

2. The hatred sometimes is extreme and deadly.

3. It is new and rare, because they have been wonted to no such thing.

Use. Let the world know that God's people have more cause to think strange of the world, then the world of them; they give the world no cause to hate them, Act. 17. 6.

Doct. *God's children are not to marvel at the world's hatred,* 1 Thess. 3. 3.

Reas. 1. God hath appointed you to it, you must take notice of it, God hath done it for many ends. How else should you shew forth your patience? how should you be kept off from bad company? God will lay bitter pills to the breasts of the world, that so you may be weaned from it, Psal. 119. 115.

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2. The world many times doth it out of ignorance. *The world knows it not*, therefore we may take, it the better that we are ill dealt withal. A King takes it not ill to be badly dealt withal at strangers hands.

3. The world hated Christ, therefore no marvel if it hate us.

4. It is no new thing, it hath continued from *Cain*.

5. From the inclination of your own hearts, if you were in the world's case, and it in yours, Therefore *marvel not*, Tit. 3. 2, 3.

Use. Of instruction to such as live in places of Religion. If we be hated, wonder we not at it. We shall condemn the generation of God's people. The cause is partly from the tempter, partly from the wickedness of the world.

Use 2. Do not lay down Religion for fear of the world's hatred. This is not the way, fear not the hatred of the world. Some Subjects will not fear the body of a State, so they may have the King's favour. Much less God's servants, though the whole body of a Country should fall foul upon them.

3. This should teach God's servants to walk so much the more circumspectly, humbly, lovingly. If a man were to walk amongst his friends, he would care the less; but if he live among his enemies, he will look to every step, so soon as you trip, you shall have mouths enough open against you. Therefore *David's* course was notable, he so walked that they could not tax him, Deut. 6. 1, to 7.

I JOHN 3. 14.

We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the Brethren: he that loveth not his Brother, abideth in death.

THE Apostle lays down this as a second reason why they should not marvel; implying, that they that know they have passed from death to life, need not marvel though the world hate them.

Doct. *God's people have passed from death to life.*

God's people are opposed to the world, they are translated out of the world, Joh. 5. 24. They are redeemed out of the world by death, he means a contrary state to life, *Death and Condemnation are Synonymous*. By *death* is meant *death in sin*, and *death in sin* the natural estate in which a man lives whilst he is in this world, which is called a state of *death* in a fivefold respect.

1. All death presupposeth life to go before. We do not say that a stone is dead. Death is a privation of life. A man that hath no life but what the world gives, he is dead, because he had a life at least in possibility, in the loins of *Adam*, Eph. 2. 3.

2. Death in the proper notion of it, is a separation of soul from the body. We are said to be dead, Gal. 2. 20. because our souls and bodies which are capable of life, are separated from the Lord Jesus the fountain of life, Eph. 4. 17, 18, 19. & 2. 12.

3. From the definition of life, which is a power to move it self in its own place. When we see a thing to move it self in its own place, we say, it is quick, and hath life. A man may do many things, yet not from an inward principle, as *Judas* and *Jehu*, Matth. 27. 18, 19, 2 King. 10. 15, 16. is this life. There are some motions from the common graces, but it is not spiritual life, unless it aim at spiritual ends, and upon spiritual grounds. If a man shall be humbled for sin, because it is displeasing to God, *Judas* was troubled in his conscience, not for sinning against God, because then he would not have grieved God by hanging himself. It was not an inward motion and voluntary: so *Jehu*, he did it to establish his own

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Kingdom, he regarded not the commandment of the Lord, 2 King. 10. 30, 31.

4. In regard of the binding over to eternal death, as a condemned man is counted a dead man, Joh. 3. *ult.*

5. From the power required to make such a man alive, 2 Cor. 5. 17. There must be a new breathing power.

The state of grace is called life.

1. Because we have received fellowship with Christ, he lives in us, and we in him. Gal. 2. 20. Joh. 15. 1.

2. We have an inbred power in our selves to move upon spiritual grounds, and for spiritual ends, Rom. 8. 2. Mat. 5. 3. to 10. *Passed from death to life*, from the hatred of our Brethren, to the love of them. These are these steps of it from one to another.

1. A man is a poor man; and that,

1. In debt,
2. Hath nothing.
3. An hard creditor.
4. No surety.

2. He begins to mourn bitterly for this his estate.

3. He becomes meek.

4. He hungers, and thirsts, and prays for grace, and cannot be satisfied without it.

5. He begins to be merdful, he pities every soul that is in a state of nature, and under a spirit of bondage.

6. He is pure in heart, abstains from sin, doth God's commandments.

7. He is a peace-maker, he is at peace with God, and with his own conscience, and now he labours to make others at peace.

8. He will now suffer persecution for righteousness sake.

Use 1. This convinceth all the works of the Heathens, as dead works. Some are famous for courage, justice, &c. But all these are but dead works. God's pure Martyrs have suffered not for any glory of this but God's glory.

2. It refutes a main ground of Popery, the doctrine of Free will, which gives a man power to be converted when he will. If a dead man can rise from death to life, then may a dead man in sin come to life of grace.

3. Gather hence how our state stands. We come to Church may be, repeat Sermons, and do many good duties. Would we know whether our life be a dead life, or no? Consider we upon what principles we do good duties; if we do good duties because they are pleasing to God. If we have respect to all God's Commandments, if there be a change in our hearts, which makes us willing; this is a sign. *We are passed from death to life.*

4. To teach us not to rest in our natural condition, for then thou art but a dead man, although thou hast all moral grace, 1 Cor. 13. 2, 3.

5. This may be a comfort to every soul that hath *passed from death to life*, God is his God, and he shall never come into condemnation, Matth. 22. 23. Joh. 5. 24.

Doct. The love of our Brethren is a known and undoubted evidence that we are passed from death to life.

What is it to love our Brethren?

Love is an affection, whereby we desire communion one with another, and communication of good one to another. A man in nature prizeth his Brethren, and will do more for them then any other: So it is in grace, Act. 4. ult. & 2. 42, 44. Phil. 1. 2. We must affect to be of one heart, Eph. 3. 3, 4. There must be brotherly equality, if we be Brethren. You are of the same Father, Gal. 6. 26. one Mother, one Seed, 1 Pet. 1. 23. one Inheritance, 1 Pet. 1. 4. We will desire to communicae brotherly offices to the inward man, Rom 2. 11, 12. and to the outward man, if need be, Act. 2. 44.

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Reas. 1. From the natural proneness which is in our nature, to strangeness, envy, &c. We do not naturally seek any man's good but our own, or so far forth as reacheth our own end.

2. From the affection of every man's heart to liberty. Now a man delights only in such company as are like himself, because otherwise he is restrained. It God's people be the men of your delight and counsel, you are never so well as with them, Psal. 115. 115. & 16. 3. This is a sign *we are passed from death to life*.

3. From a man's backwardness of communication of brotherly offices, Gal. 6. 10.

4. From the great distance that is between us, and the love of our Brethren, and how many steps there are before we come to it, Matth. 5. 3, to 9.

Use 1. Of trial of our own estates, whether we are in a state of death or life. It is one of the plainest notes in Scripture and most evident, Gal. 6. 10. If our love run in an equal channel to all men; if we know not God's people, we know not Christ, 1 Joh. 3. 1, 2. If you know them, how do you affect them? Do you think it were good if the Town were cleansed of them? Gen. 49. 4, 5. Psal. 101. we are not as yet born of God.

Obj. *Do not many love God's children, and honour them, and yet are not the children of God?* Gen. 27. 29. Act. 5. 13. That they did not join with them, was a sign that they were not born of God, Gen. 39. 1, 2, 3.

2. To convince the doctrine of doubting Papists, who say a man cannot know himself to be in a state of grace, Eccl. 9. 1, 2. No man can know it by outward things. They say here, by knowledge it meant conjectural knowledge, not certain knowledge.

Answ. This is a contradiction. A man lies, if he saith he knows a thing, and is not certain of it. There is no peace of conscience in this Religion.

3. To exhort such as knot yet that they are passed from life to death, to labour to love the Brethren, Prov. 13. 20.

4. Of consolation to every soul that hath nothing in this world but this, *they love the Brethren*. This is such a thing, as upon which thou mayest build a certain knowledge that thou art *passed from death to life*, and therefore thou mayest take comfort.

He that loveth not his Brother, abideth in death.

The Apostle in the former word, did imply the world was in death for want of love. And lest any should think that he did but imply it, and not directly express it, he sets it down expressly.

Here is description of a man that loves not his Brother.

1. *He is in death.*
2. *Abides in death.*

By *death* is meant the same that was meant in the former part of the *vers*. *Abiding* implies not only a being in that estate, but continuance and residence in it.

Doct. *The want of love to any of our Brethren, is a sign of abidance in the state of damnation, or in an unregenerate and carnal estate.*

And he saith not, *he that hates*, but *he that loves not*; and he saith not *brethren*, but *brother*, any or every Brother, Mat. 18. 6. *Offend not one of these little ones*. Christ's little ones are such as have but little grace, and great corruption.

Reas. From the want of love that is found in such a one towards God; and that is an argument of being in a state of death. If a man love God in obedience to his commandment he would love his Brother by the same commandment. That commandment which requires me to love one Brother, requires one to love all, Jam. 2. 10, 11. Break one commandment, breaks all, for who gave one, gave all; whoso neglects offices of love to

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one performs none to any, nor to God. It is a note of sincerity, that a man hates all sin, as well as one, Psal. 119. 101, 104. For it is an argument of love when there is no Brother or Sister but we enlarge our affections towards them, Gal. 3. 28. So much want of love, so much hypocrisy.

2. From the bitter or deadly root of want of love to this or that Brother. It springs from two occasions,

1. Either from his infirmities in himself: Or,
2. From spiritual injuries to our selves.

True, a man will say, such Chriilian. I would away with, but they have such unsavoury corruptions. See the root of this, the condemnation of the generation of God's people. If a man may condemn this or that man, for this or that corruption, sin may come to condemn the best of God's servants, because the best of God's servants may be in the same failings for which thou hatest such a Brother, Prov. 30. 12. The greatest of God's servants have shamefully fallen, *David, Peter, Lot, Noah*.

The second root is from the enmity against the free justification of God, of sinners. Take away this, and you take away all Christian religion. If you love not a Brother, because of some infirmities, you do overthrow the free justification of God's grace of a sinner. For God that hath justified the greatest, hath justified as well the least as freely and as fully; and wilt thou justify some, and condemn others? God condemns none, Rom. 8. 1, 33, 34. If Christians do believe the free justification of sinners, then let us imitate our Father which is in heaven, justify whom he justifies.

The third bitter and deadly root. If there be the least spark of grace, in his heart, all his corruptions are his enemies, and he but a shrimp in grace, and hath many enemies. What good nature is this, when a man would love a man if he had no enemies? but when he hath enemies, and such as are ready ever and anon to beat him down, he cannot love him.

The fourth, want of a member like spirit; for the more naked, unseemly, or deformed any member is, the body is the more careful of it; if it may be, it shall be healed; if not, it shall be covered, 1 Cor. 12. 23, 24. If we want this, it flows from want of a member-like spirit.

2. Sometimes neglect of our Brother springs from some personal injury done to our selves. We cannot love them. This springs from this root, want at forgiveness of our own sins; for we pray for forgiveness upon this ground, Mat. 6. 12, 15. Our Saviour gives a reason of this above all, there is no surer argument then this. A Christian may reason thus: If I that have but a little spark of grace, can forgive injuries, how shall not the Ocean of love much more forgive me? Matth. 18. *ult.* God will never have us to think, that if we cannot forgive one injury, he will forgive us a thousand. Yet a man is not always bound to express his forgiveness unless a man come and say, it repents him; yet from his heart he must do it.

Use 1. Shews the dangerous and fearful estate of a man that dares live in envy and malice against his Brethren. A man thinks he hath cause, he will not receive the Sacrament, nor suffer them. What a poor thing is this? Thou hast not thy sins forgiven, thou lovest not God, nor any Christian soul in obedience to God. A Christian dares not allow himself in hatred of any Brother, but looks at it as an enemy to his soul.

2. It exhorts every Christian to enlarge the bowels of his affection to every Brother, Psal. 119. 63. *I am a companion to all them that fear thee.* He doth not pick and choose. Psal. 66. 16. Gal. 6. 10. If to all men, then *especially to household of faith.*

3. It is a ground of thankfulness, to God, that hath taken care for weakest Christians; for want of love to him, God will either discharge a man let an

hypocrite, or else his own corruption shall take him by the throat, and make him believe that many sins are not forgiven, and that he shall hardly get pardon of sins.

I JOHN

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I JOHN 3. 15.

Whosoever hateth his Brother is a murderer, and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.

THe Apostle having said in the former *vers.* that he that loveth not his Brother, abideth in death, he proves it by a Syllogism taken from a Murderer.

Doct. *He that hates his Brother is a murderer.*

As he that looks upon a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery, so he that hates his Brother is a murderer.

Reas. 1. From the wrapping up and enfolding this in the heart, as the seed of a tree in the root, though it break not forth: So sin hath its seed in the heart, Mat. 15. 19. No murder could spring from the heart, if it were not there. A fountain could not flow over unless water were in it, Prov. 4. 23.

2. From the foul murder hatred commits; to give offence is a destroying of our Brother; now, who hates his Brother, makes no scruple of giving offence, Rom. 14. 15. 1 Cor. 8. 11.

2. It is a soul murder in regard to withdrawing many good offices. A man shall be unwilling to do any good office either for soul or body. Ill never never speaks nor doth well.

Use 1. Teacheth us the spiritualness of the Word of God. It doth transcend the words of men, they never reach farther then speeches and actions; they make no laws for the hearts of men. But the Word of God hath special regard to the heart, 1 Sam. 16. 7. As it is with wise parents, they look not only to the guidance of their children's speeches, but that their countenance and carriage be well framed, Gen. 4. 6. So soon as God saw hatred in *Cain's* heart, and expressing it self in his countenance, he re-proves him for it, he will not have so much as a wrinkle in the face.

2. Hence we may see a just ground of Divines referring to all sins and virtues to the ten Commandments, Mat. 5. 21, 22. Before God unadvised anger is killing, so of adultery, *vers.* 28.

3. See the wisdom of God in putting such foul names upon the beginnings of sin, to make us afraid. *He that hates his Brother is a Murderer*. As if a Father should say, Do not hate your Brother, you will be a murderer. He puts bad words upon the seeds of sin.

4. This should be a means to cleanse us from all hatred of our Brother, look at it as an ugly and loathsome vice. If there be a spirit of envy in thy heart, what though thou lift not up thy hand against thy Brother, this is murder.

Doct. *Tht is a known truth amongst God's children, every murderer is devoid of eternal life*, Rev. 21. 8.

Reas. 1. Because of the injury done to God's image. If a man deface the image of a Prince, it deserves death; then the defacing of God's image much more, eternal death, Gen. 9. 6.

2. From the seed of all murderers, *vers.* 12. he makes every murderer to be of the posterity of *Cain*, Joh. 8. 44. Now because a man kills his Brother, out of the seed of the Serpent, a devilish and malignant spirit, therefore he hath not eternal life abiding in him.

Use 1. See the danger of such, who in their drinkings quarrel even to murder.

Obj. *If there be no possibility that a murderer should be saved, what say you to David, and others in their carnal estate?*

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Answ.

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Answ. *David* did indeed kill, and God follows him with judgements and afflictions, 2 Sam. 12. 8, 9, 10. but yet upon repentance God forgave him his sin. And as for such as have murdered in their carnal estate, if God give them hearts to be humbled, then the blood of Christ is of a louder cry then the blood of *Abel*, Isa. 1. 28. St. *John* speaks not of *every murderer*, for some do it against their judgements and hearts, but others, if they repent not, have not eternal life, 1 Cor. 6. 8, 9.

2. To stir up every Christian man, that hath his hand, in blood, to have recourse to the blood of the covenant, for the pardon of their sins; and healing of them. Sin on *Joseph* held him longest under, to bring him to repentance, Gen. 44. *Jacob* blessed him in a curse, God preserves us with curses, that may put us in mind of our sins, and make us walk sensibly of them, therefore renew we our mournings for our hatred.

3. In respect of challenges, let us take heed we take them not, and that we stop them in the beginning. It is not fit that fire should burn out of its place.

4. Such as love their Brethren, are not only not abiding in death, but have everlasting life, already abiding in them. If thou see any hatred spring in thee, thou art taken with a dead Palsy. You cannot bring out a good word or good countenance, so much hatred, so much death, so much want of love, so much want of life.

I JOHN 3. 16.

Hereby we perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the Brethren.

THese words are part of the exhortation St. *John* useth to all Christians to love one another. He useth many arguments, *vers.* 14. He tells us, it is a sign we are *translated from death to life.*

2. From the danger of hatred of our Brother.

3. From the exemplary and strong love of Christ.

4. From the emptiness of such hearts of grace, when there is no love of their Brethren.

These words are a notable motive to Christians, to express and abound in love, taken from the great love of God to us.

Doct. The death of Christ for us, is the manifestation of his love to us.

Such a manifestation, as makes it a certain and known truth that he loves us, Rom. 5. 10. 1 Joh. 4. 10. He gave his Son to be a propitiatory sacrifice, Eph. 4. 5. Gal. 2. 20.

reas. 1. From the greatness of Christ's self-denial. That which commends love is this, to bestow so great matters and to come off freely with it. Joh. 15. 12. *Greater love then this, no man can express, then lay down his life for his friend.* But Christ did it for his enemies, 2 Cor. 3. 8.

2. It farther magnifies his love, if we consider the great benefit we receive; reconciliation, pardon of sins, 1 Joh. 4. 10. Secondly, adoption of Sons, Gal. 4. 4, 5. Such favour as to be accepted as his Sons and Daughters.

3. Our corruptions are deadened and mortified, Heb. 9. 14. Gal. 6. 14. *We are crucified to the world;* to all objects that draw us to sin, temptations and snares.

4 Christian liberty, that by virtue of Christ's death we should be delivered from the curse of the Law, Col. 2. 13. from the enmity are stood in against the Church, Eph. 2. 14, 15, 16. from hell, and fear of death, Heb. 2. 14. that we should have liberty to call God *Father*, enter into his Sanctu-

ary, have confidence our prayers are heard, have assurance when we die that we shall enter into the holy place, that we shall have right and liberty to the
 Creation,

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Creation, Rom. 5. 1, 2, 3. Heb. 10. 19. The benefits will appear, if we consider how miserable our estate had been. If Christ had not done this, we had been in our sins, under the guilt of them, and in horror and anguish of spirit.

5. How freely hath God done it. We gratified God with no kindness. Some will recompense a small kindness with a great reward, Rom. 11. 35. But all we have done, hath been to abuse every mercy of God to his dishonour, Col. 1. 10, 20.

Use 1. It reproves such weakness of God's servants in time of temptations, that can see no love of God, because he doth not gratify them with something in this life. God's servants many times do want necessaries the world abounds with all; therefore *David* hath cleansed his heart in vain, Psal. 73. But what though God's servants never see good days? Yet here is abundant, rich, and inestimable love, that when you were enemies, strangers, children of wrath, Christ died for you. God hath shewed you more love, then the Angels, *for he laid down his life for the Angels*, Heb. 11. 14. And if he had done so, he laid down his life for his friends, who never displeased him, Psal. 78. 3.

2. To reach such as abound in outward things, not to content themselves therein, Eccl. 4. 2. We can perceive neither love nor hatred by those out-out-ward things, Psal. 17. 14. Labour you to say that God hath laid down his life for you, else you cannot say he loves you.

3. It teacheth us, that the death of Christ was not the cause of God's love. God's love is more ancient then the death of Christ. Where shall we lay the foundation of God's love, but in eternity? He hath loved me, and given himself for me, Gal. 2. 20. Gal. 3. 16.

Obj. *But God attribute his love to the death of Christ?* 1 Joh. 4. 10. Rom. 3. 24, 25. Eph. 2. 14, 15. Col. 2. 21, 27.

Answ. In a double respect Christ's death is said to make this reconciliation. Hence he hath slain the enemy and hatred on our part, that we might be no more enemies to him.

Obj. *But Christ is sent not only to make reconciliation on our part, but propitiation on God's part.*

Answ. 'Tis true, Christ by his death hath made a way whereby God might shew his love to us, whilst sin was in the way, he could not shew it. Many a

Father bears a tender affection to a child, yet will not seem to regard him, shuts him out of doors, and though he be entreated, yet he thinks it not meet for him to express his love; he will have his child humble himself, acknowledge his faults; and will send some body to persuade his Son to humble himself: So God sends his Son out of love, to take a course, that he might shew us favour, notwithstanding his justice.

4. Of exhortation, to take a view of God's love, that we may be able to say freely, We perceive the love of God. Rest not in any spiritual duty, nor in any common gift, till you know that Christ died for thee.

How shall I know this?

Some will say, that Christ died for all, and so all may know. True, the efficacy of Christ's death reacheth to all, but none can say Christ died for him, till he find in his soul some fruits of the death of Christ.

5. To encourage God's servants to expect offices of love from God to us and ours all his days. He hath given his Son, what would you have more? Psal. 84. 11. Lay hold on this love of God, and plead with him upon his love. All blessings are wrapped up in his Son, Gal. 4. 4. As God in fulness of time sent his Son, so will he every other mercy.

6. To teach us to abound in his love to God, and to his children, hatred against sin. Give up all to God's work for him, suffer him, he loves us being strangers and enemies.

Doct.

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Doct. *Christian men ought to be ready to lay down their lives for their Brethren.*

The exemplary love of Christ in laying down his life for us, ought to provoke us in like sort to lay down our lives for our Brethren, Rom. 10. 3, 4. The apostle doth extol the love of *Aquila* and *Priscilla*: as if all the Church and himself were bound to them that were so ready to lay down their lives, Phil. 2. 17. *If I be poured out as a drink offering.*

Reas. From the example of our blessed Saviour; he laid down his life for us. This is an imitable practice of Christ, this is none of his miraculous works, but one wherein he sets forth himself a pattern to us.

2. To this add Christ's command, which binds us to the imitation of this, Joh. 13. 34.

3. From the near fellowship of our Brethren with Christ. *We fulfil the sufferings of Christ, for his body*, Col. 1. 2, 3. He calls them Christ's sufferings, Christ suffered in him, and for Christ in his Saints.

4. From the subordination of God's eminentest servants to the Church of God, as *Christ* is for God, so *Paul* and *Cephas* for the Church. God hath sub-

ordinated the life of his Servants to the Church, and the Church to Christ, and Christ to God. Christ the head of the Church, the Church the head of the Members, Phil. 2. 17.

5. From the rule of love God hath given in ancient time, Levit. 19. 18. *We must love our neighbour as ourselves.* Many a Christian will lay down his life for him self, therefore must in some cases lay down his life for the Church. A man will lay down his life for his own salvation, and for honour; therefore how much more for God, and for the honour of Religion?

In what cases is a man to lay down his life?

Ans. The Apostle means, we should be ready to do it for the service or the Church, if it cannot be otherwise.

1. In heat of persecution, to confirm the faith of the people of God, who would be ready to think much if he should withdraw himself, though he might escape, yet a Minister or eminent person is bound to go before in sufferings. So *Paul*, if he be *poured out as a drink offering*, every drop of blood in his body poured out, if it be for the strengthening of the faith of weak Christians, he rejoiceth, Phil. 2. 17. The stronger must lay down their lives for the confirmation of the faith of the weaker.

2. There may be a case wherein the weaker are to lay down their lives for the stronger; *Aquila* and *Priscilla* were ready to lay down their lives for *Paul's* life; they thought it better to expose themselves to the utmost extremity, then that *Paul* should be hurt. I must not spare my own life, if it may be serviceable to God and the Church, Rom. 16. 4, 5. 2 Sam. 21. 16, 17. & 18. 3.

3. When we perceive it would much advantage the glory of God, that we should rather perish shen our Brethren, Rom. 9. 2, 3. He could with himself accused for the Jews, even his soul for a sacrifice. Thus *Moses*, Exod. 32. 33.

4. When a man doth see that the wrath of God is kindled against others for his sin, he must rather offer himself to death, then that that evil should be upon them that converse with him, Jonah 1. 22. 2 Sam. 24. in *David*.

Use 1. Learn we from hence to justify our selves and others. If we should be called to lay down our lives to suffer for our Brethren, here is a direction how to suffer, Phil. 2. 5. God hath given us a commandment to love our Brethren as our selves. Also, God hath subordinated the members of his Church to the body of it.

2. To teach us, that though it be lawful to fly in time of persecution, yet if it cannot be without weakening the Church wherein we live, we must in heart live and die together.

3. To

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3. To teach Ministers when they are called by God for the service of any Congregation, not to dispense with himself for air or health, fearing the cutting short of his days. You must not live from your means. Either never take such a charge, or make account you must hazard your lives for the people of God, unless upon trial it appears you may do more good in some other place.

4. It reproves such as are so fat from laying down their lives, as that they will not lay down their estates, nor the superfluities of their estates for their Brethren's necessities, 1 Sam. 25. 11. How shall such ever persuade themselves that Christ died for them?

5. A ground of much thankfulness, that God should not only give Christ to die for us, but also would have Christians to be fitted to lay down their lives for their Brethren.

I JOHN 3. 17.

But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his Brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him; how dwelleth the love of God in him?

DOCT.

THere dwells no love of God in such a man's heart, as having this world's goods, stretcheth not out his hand to help the necessity of his Brother.

What is it to have the *world's good*? In the Original it is τὸν βίον τοῦ κόσμου, *the life of this world, this world's living*, whereof to live, whereof to maintain his life.

Bowels of compassion. Because compassion is an affection of grief and love stirred up in us, by the sight and sense of one another's misery, as if we suffered with them; our compassion is stirred up as well as theirs, Heb. 13. 3.

To shut up bowels, is to withdraw the affections, and the stirring of the entrails. A man many times hath little means to help, but if we have not bowels to work for him, how dwells the love of God in such a man? This is a preumptory question, itterly denying all.

Reas. 1. From the nature of *love*. Such is love that God wells in it, 1 Joh. 4. 26. There is no affection wherein God reveals himself more then in love, 1 Cor. 13. 4. Love is bountiful, ready to be doing good, succouring others in their need.

2. Consider the nature of *Brethren*.

1. They are more worthy of our estate, one of their souls cost more then all our estates, yea, more then all the world. How dwells the love of God in us, if we love the world more then our Brother?

2. Look at our Brother as a member of Christ, hungry, thirsty, naked, harbourless. We could not but love Christ wheresoever we did see him, Mat. 25. 40. and they are members of our own body, 1 Cor. 12. 25, 26.

Use 1. Of instruction, and rules to order our lives aright, or any work of mercy.

1. Who shall relieve his Brother?

Answ. He that hath this world's goods, that can live, he must open his heart and hand. This therefore will reach not only to men, superfluities, but if we can but live, if we have but what we labour and sweat for, Ephes. 4. 28. We must not only labour for our selves, but give to him that hath need, 2 Cor. 8. 3, 4, 5. Luk. 21. 34. & 8. 3. Joh. 13. 28, 29. & 12. 6.

2. To whom must we be helpful?

Answ. He must, 1. Be a Brother, 2. Have need, 3. Every Brother, Gal. 6. 10.

Beggars that are unable to labour, and would gladly labour, they must be relieved,

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relieved, Luk. 16. 20, 21. or such although they do labour, yet cannot get a living, 2 Thess. 3. 10.

2. A brother that hath need, Eph. 8. 28. 1 Tim. 5. 4, 5. Such are poor indeed, as have neither hands, friends, nor maintenance. A man is said to be in need, not only when he is utterly cast down, but when he is falling.

3. Every Brother, one as well as another, Eccl. 10. 2. Job. 31. 19.

4. Consider the matter out of which we must give, out of this *worlds good*, Eccl. 10. 1. When we have unjustly gotten, we must restore, Prov. 5. 16, 17.

5. The time when we must give; when we see our Brother hath *need*, that we may see it our selves bestowed. It is a vanity to leave alms after our death, to be bestowed by others, 1 Sam. 20. 15. 2 Sam, 16. 4, 19, 29. If we give alms while we are alive, we shall have the benefit of them, *the loins of the*

poor shall bless us; and though they have no heart to pray for us, yet the warmth of their loins will bless us. When we are dead, their prayers will do us no good, Luk. 16. 8, 9.

6. Give alms with *compassion*, give from within as well as from without, Isa. 58. 10. 2 Cor. 9. 7. Give heartily, let your bowels work.

7. Give alms out of love to God, fetch your love deep, even from the love of God, who hath given thee a hand to give, and him to receive.

Use 2. To reprove those that are close handed, and close-hearted. Though a man should do something for company sake, and out of vain glory, yet if he give not out of love and compassion, how dwells the love of God in such a man?

3. Comfort to poor men that are in need. God so far takes their parts, as that he thinks there is no love to God in him that loves not, and helps not his Brother; not that people should be idle, and sturdy; work with a slack, and beg with a sturdy hand,

1 JOHN 3. 18, 19.

My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and truth.

And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him.

THe Apostle exhorting to Brotherly love, useth divers arguments. The third argument is taken from the security of such men's consciences that love in truth. But a man may say, I may be deceived. To this St. *John* answers, *If out own hearts condemn us not, God will less condemn us.*

Doct. *That the love of Christians one to another, ought not to be verbal, or in word only, but in deed, and in truth. Not in tongue, but in truth of inward affection and deed, and performance,* Psal. 16. 2, 3.

He confines not his love to them, but that *all* is an universality of the Subject, no part in him but expresseth love to them. He loves them in his words, thoughts, carriage, in his whole man, Psal. 122. two last vers. 2 Sam. 1. 26. His heart was clearly affected to *David*, passing the love of women, in affection, action, 1 Sam. 18. 3. He loved him as his own soul.

Reas. 1. From the unprofitableness of Lip-love, it will neither do thee good nor thy Brother. It is an empty love. *Let us not love with an empty love,* Jam. 2. 15, 16. This will do our Brother no good, to pity his nakedness will do him no good, nor us either, because as is our love to our Brother, such is God's love to us. No man can assure himself of his hearty receiving God's

real love, unless he loves his brethren really and heartily.

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2. From the unsuitableness of this verbal love to God's love towards Christians, Luk. 1. 78. Isa. 55. 3. It is an hearty love, real, Joh. 13. 10. He loves his enemies, Rom. 3. 8. & 8. 32.

Use 1. To reprove all such love as falls short of reality. Some fall short of Lip-love, cannot afford their Brother a good word, or a good work, when they know a word in season might be of such use, for the maintaining of the innocency or honour of a man, not a blossom of love grows upon the tongue.

2. Such as give good words, but their hands are withered, and that ariseth from withered affections, Prov. 23. 7, 8. *He saith, Eat and drink, but his heart is not with thee.* 2 Pet. 1. 27. He shews every man wants ability to love his Brother, if his heart be clogged with any base lust, of envy, covetousness, wantonness, &c. If there be any Kitchin lust, it will not endure this heavenly fire.

Doct. The sincerity of our love to our Brethren, is the security of our consciences and estates before God.

Use 1. To reprove the Popish doctrine, That it is impossible to have a certainty of salvation. The Apostle saith here, *We assure our hearts before God.*

2. Of exhortation unto brotherly love in sincerity, and to glow up in it. A man may give all that he hath, and yet not know love. Get your hearts purified from all lusts. The Word of God will purify you, Psal. 119. 9. You shall find a fresh Spring of love bubbling up and streaming forth, and though your Brethren cannot recompense it to you, yet you shall have peace.

3. See here a means to seal confidence and belief of hearts. Cleanse your hearts from sin, that hinders brotherly love.

4. Of comfort to those that love the Brethren heartily. You may be assured of your good estate.

I JOHN 3. 20, 21.

For, if our hearts condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.

Beloved, if our heart condemn us, then we have confidence towards God.

These two *verses* declare the good or evil estate of a man, according to the good or evil report of our consciences.

Doct. *According to the verdict or testimony of our consciences, God will save us, or condemn us at the last day.*

If our hearts condemn us, God knows more by us to condemn us.

By *heart* here is meant *conscience*: For St. *John* here speaks a Hebraism, The Old Testament hath not *conscience*, only the New, Prov. 15. 15. 2 Sam. 24. 10. If our conscience record we are innocent, God in heaven will record it, Tit. 3. 10, 11.

Reas. 1. From the office of *conscience*, which hath a fivefold work.

1. Conscience useth to be an observer and spyer of what a man is, and what a man doth, Prov. 14. 10. Another knows not what a man is, but himself doth. Conscience is a good companion of the good, the worst of the bad, Prov. 15. 15. *A good conscience is a feast.* There is good company where a good conscience is. No man knows a man so well as his conscience doth.

2. Conscience is a register of what we have done long ago, 1 King. 2. 44. *Whereto thy heart is privy*: He means, his conscience, Gen. 14. 20, 21.

3. Conscience is a witness, and will either accuse or excuse, Rom. 2. 15. Excuse in well-doing, accuse in ill-doing, Heb. 13. 18. Rom. 4. 12. 2 Cor. 1. 12.

4. Conscience is a Judge, either to clear or condemn, 1 Cor. 4. 3. Gen. 20. 5.

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5. It is an Executioner of what God gives judgement and sentence. It goes before God's judgement, and witnesseth, Matt. 27. 4, 5. But after God's sentence and his word, Conscience doth execute it, Rom. 8. 15. then Conscience pours upon us horrors and terrors which is a forerunner of hell, only differing in measure and durance. Thus Conscience doth to good men upon some occasions, So *David*, when he had numbred the people, 2 Sam. 24. 10. *I have done very foolishly.* He speaks with some bitterness of heart, Act. 2. 37. This is called *pricking the heart*, Prov. 18. 14. *A wounded spirit who can bear?*

Why doth God put such a faculty into men?

1. That God might manifest his being. There is a stronger evidence of God being: For to whom doth it witness? Is it not to God? Before whom doth it condemn, or to whom is it an executioner, if there were no God?

2. His own providence. And we must not think that God minds not things below; if he did not, why is Conscience afraid and comforted, if God did not look into Conscience?

3. For God's justice, that he might magnify it. God proceeds in his Judicial course, without any witness but Conscience: If God have none to bear witness, how shall he magnify his justice in condemning secret sins?

4. God's mercy, If God be angry with a man, it is an advantage to a man that he knows it, Act. 9. 6. Heb. 9. 4. As Conscience doth determine here, so will God in another world, Conscience is God's Vicegerent, set up in the throne of a man's heart. Conscience is our companion, God much more, Psal. 139.

Reas. 2. God is our witness, therefore when we speak soberly, we call God to witness. He is a Judge, Heb. 10. 3. an Executioner; and therefore if Conscience sees cause to condemn us, God much more; if Conscience see cause to acquit us, God much more. Psal. 139. 2, 3.

Use 1. A sign of our present estate, and what God will do concerning us, if we live and die thus. What saith thy Conscience, if thy heart assure thee thou lovest thy Brother, 2 Cor. 1. 12. That thou favourest not sin, that there is no good duty but thou wouldst do; thou hast been humbled for thy sins, Conscience hath been an Executioner, and yet hath come with pardon sealed to thee, with the broad seal of heaven. If thou seest one spark of sincerity in thee, God sees more.

Obj. *May not a man's conscience be deceived?* Rom. 3. 17. *Luk.* 18. 9, to 14. & 16. 4, 5. *May not a man say, I have no guilty conscience?*

Ans. 1. Conscience sometimes bears false witness, Tit. 1. 15, 16. If a man have a defiled conscience, it will deal falsely. A man's conscience through ignorance and partiality, doth bring a false verdict: As it is many times with a Jury, ignorance of law, and false evidence, makes them bring a false verdict; but then send them back again, and shew them better evidence, and the law &c. So Conscience doth oft-times bring false-verdict, but it's through ignorance of the Law of God, or partiality. Doth thy conscience speak bitter things? Consider what the grounds are. If such as do argue thee dead in trespasses and sins, then know that God doth call thee from heaven to repentance. If it tell thee thou art an hypocrite, consider what grounds it hath, Conscience may be muzzled by ignorance and partiality; the devil puts false glasses before our eyes.

2. A ground of serious humiliation to every man's heart, whose conscience upon due examination doth accuse him.

3. To teach every Christian which hath found that he hath *passed from death to life*, to be afraid to commit any sin. And comfort thy soul, if Conscience do acquit thee, then will God much more.

4. Labour we always to be doing some good, for we have a companion that hears and sees all, and a register that notes every good word or work.

The

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The Apostle in stead of telling us, *If our hearts condemn us, God will condemn us much more*. He gives a reason of it, describing God,

1. From his greatness.
2. Knowledge.

Doct. *God is better acquainted with our hearts and ways than our selves*, Psal.

19. 12.

He means sins not only secret and hidden from others, but from our selves. Psal. 139. 12. *Thou Lord knowest my thoughts afar off, they are ever before thee*, 2 King. 8. 11, 12, 13.

Reas. From God's omniscency, his all-sufficient knowledge, Heb. 4. 13. They are anatomized before him, as if every vein and sinew were laid open, he divides between the marrow and the bone, Joh. 21. 12. Rom. 15. 11. Job 26. 6. Though hell and destruction be both covered, yet before the Lord they be both open. Whether hell be in the water, or on the earth, they covet not from God, *Hell and destruction are before the Lord, how much more the hearts of the children of men?*

2. From the creation. God made our hearts, gave us power to affect, think, purpose. He knoweth what is in us, Job 38. 36. If God give understanding to the heart, he knows much more what is in the heart, Psal. 33. 13. God hath fashioned our hearts, therefore he knows them, Psal. 99. 10.

3. From the providence of God. We have our motion in God. A Mill moves from the Miller, because he hath caused it so to do, but the motion of the will is not in the Miller, it can move without him. We move in God, as a supportant conservant cause, as a Mill moved by the breath of the wind, so we by the breath of the Lord; as there is not a turning in the will, but from the wind, so not a turning of our hearts without him. *Our hearts are in the hands of the Lord*, Prov. 21. 7.

4. From the unsearchable depth of the deceitfulness of man's heart, Jer. 17. 9, 10. Prov. 3. 17. Our hearts make us believe we are rich, and have need of nothing, when indeed we are wretched, and miserable, poor, blind, and naked, Prov. 30. 2, 3. Sometimes that we are more foolish, then any man, and have not the understanding of a man, while we walk in a sinful way,

they make us believe we are in God's favour, Luk. 18. 9. When we are in a good estate, and God would have us walk cheerfully in him, our heart, will call a thousand discouragements upon us, we cannot pray or profit by the Word of God, or do any good duty, our hearts will sow pillows under our elbows, that so we may sleep quietly; but when we go to try our hearts by the Word of God, then they will fall out with us indeed, 2 Sam. 15. the beginning.

Use 1. Take heed of all secret sins. Not only such as may be hid from men, but of such roots of sin as are hid from thy self, yet cannot be hid from God. Take heed of such sins as are so subtle, that thou knowest not whether they be sins or no, sins which our own souls know not of. If a man would be kept from presumptuous sins, he must cleanse the inward and hidden frame of his heart.

Q. How shall we cleanse our hearts?

Answ. Pray to God with *David*, Psal. 19. to cleanse us from such sin. which we know not. We have confessed such sins as we know by our selves, and those which the world knows by us, but we must make a new reckoning for such sins as we know not.

2. Not to trust our own hearts, but the Word of God, Psal. 119. 9. The Word of God saith, there is such sins in every age, therefore we must pray to God to help us against them.

3. Keep our hearts with all diligence, observe every winding and turning, and take heed of occasions that provoke our hearts any way to sin, Prov. 4. 23. Deut. 31. 22.

M m 2

2. This

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2. This shews the impossibility of their good estates that look to be justified by habit and works. It is the happiness of God's servants, in that they look not to be justified by the perfection of their hearts.

3. Ground of trial. If we find that our hearts do not condemn us, let us trust our heart no farther then we prove them by the rule of God's Word. If God hath helped you to look up to Christ for the pardon of your sins, and you now sit loose from sin, it is an argument that your sins are pardoned, because we could not else hate sin, Psal. 119. 6. But on the contrary, if we find our hearts condemning us, our hearts are full of self-love. Parents are full of partiality, as that they can scarce see any evil in them. If they see cause of death in them, much more God the righteous Judge. If they see cause of condemnation in them, the Judge much more.

I JOHN 3. 21.

Beloved, if our heart condemns us not, then have we confidence towards God.

Doct.

Such as have peace with their own consciences, have boldness with God.

If we have peace with our hearts, we have not only peace with God, but boldness, Eph. 3. 12. *παρρησία* *liberty of speech*; hence comes *liberty of carriage*. When God hath been pleased to give us fellowship with him in Christ, that we have the Ministry of the Gospel revealed to us, then we have boldness, Phil. 1. 20. He that hath this hope, shall never be ashamed before God or men, Rom. 5. 1, 2. This rejoicing is a companion of boldness.

Wherein stands this boldness.

Answ. In three things.

1. In liberty of spirit, to ask those things at God's hands that are meet for us. This we may do with some boldness and liberty, Heb. 4. 16. *Let us go boldly to the throne of grace.* He means in prayer. A Christian that hath the Lord Jesus Christ for his High-priest, who hath reconciled him to God, to him God's throne is not a Judgement-seat, but a Mercy-seat, and he begs mercy to help him in time of need; we may safely expect, God will not deny what we ask, Phil. 1. 6. The Apostle tells us by his own example, he never prays for them, but his heart is warmed with joy, and he was confident God would grant what he prayed for. *We come to a throne of grace*; that is, we may speak as favourites to God,

2. Boldness in dangers that may befall in this world, or another. He walks fearlessly and securely against the fear of danger, Psal. 23. 4. *ult. Doubtless loving-kindness and mercy shall follow me all my days. Surely, or doubtless.* This is bold speech, to assure himself that goodness and mercy shall follow him whithersoever he goes.

3. In expectation of all good things, whether we pray for them or not. God many times will have more care of us, than we of our selves, *Paul* was in a straight, he knew it would be better for him to be *dissolved, and to be with Christ*, yet better for the Church, if he should stay in the flesh, and he is confident he shall stay with them to their joys, Phil. 1. 24, 25. Act 20. 23, 24. There was a readiness of heart in him, so to carry all things as that he might rejoice in all, 1 Cor. 1. 12.

Reas. 1. From the justification by faith, Rom. 5. 1, to 5. *We rejoice in tribulation, hope never makes ashamed.* The soul is never at peace, till such time as by faith it doth receive and apply Christ's righteousness, Act. 14. 5. A man

that owes another man money, and knows not how to pay him, he is ashamed to come into his light, He that knows he hath injured his Prince, and that he doth watch an occasion to be revenged of him, he will be afraid and ashamed.

2. The

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2. The sincerity of his sanctification. Though a man hath assurance that his sins are pardoned, and that he is a child of God, yet if he walk crookedly and loosly in his own ways, his conscience will be so perplexed and distracted, as that he will think every hand of God comes as a judgement, 2 Cor. 1. 12. Here is his boldness, he hath walked in simplicity and pureness. A man is fearful and ashamed when he hath dealt doubly either with God or man, or walked in some way of impurity of heart, Psal. 51. 8. *David's* bones were broken, he could not stand upright, he could not look God in the face. When God gives a man to walk in simplicity without guile, and pureness without uncleanness, then a man may walk boldly, and with joy, otherwise he walks like a cripple, and creeps up and down.

Use 1. It reproves an old cavil that hath been in the world, that Religion makes men Dastards and Cowards. No, rather want of Religion. If men had but purity of heart and good conscience towards men, they would fear no dangers, 2 Cor. 1. 12.

2. Refutation of all Popery. They cannot be bold, because they cannot know God to be their Father, they keep not a good conscience. Where there is no good conscience, there is no boldness. Wicked men indeed may be bold through ignorance, or through abundance of natural spirits, mettle, courage, &c. This may be in Papists, and was found in Heathens.

3. A ground of trial of a man's peace, Luk. 11. 21. Thou art at peace. Dost thou pray boldly? dost thou look that God should answer thee? How dost thou look danger in the face? Prov. 28. 1, 2. In danger thou knowest Christ hath born all; many things befall thee, thou art confident all shall be for thy good.

4. This teacheth us the true way of boldness. St. *Austin* praiseth God that he can think of his former evil, without fear. If thou wouldst do thus, strive with God that he would sprinkle thy soul with the blood of Christ. If thou hast found peace of justification with God, labour for peace of sanctification. Let no rebellious lusts be in thy soul, but complain of it to the Lord, and fight against them.

5. Much consolation to a child of God, that walks in simplicity of a good conscience. If God hath given thee an heart to loathe all wickedness,

and abandon all occasions of sin, there is a boldness springing in thy heart. A child of God hath boldness, but he sees it overclouded, he knows not with what sin; but God doth sometimes pour out himself more largely, sometimes more straightly, therefore a child of God fears something amiss in him, and he is discouraged, but he needs not, there is a cause of boldness, it is our portion. *If our heart condemn, us not, we have boldness towards God.*

I JOHN 3. 22.

And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.

THere is a double benefit of our assuring our selves that we are of the truth.

1. *If our hearts condemn us not, God will much less condemn us, but we have boldness towards God.*

2. Acceptance of all our prayers in the presence of God. Which he proves from an argument taken from the practice of such as have inward peace, they *keep his commandments.*

1. Here is a priviledge of such as are at peace with God, they may assure themselves that their prayers are heard.

2. A reason of this, *because they keep his commandments.*

Doct.

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Doct. *According to our hearing of God's commandments, so he hears our prayers.*

As we regard God's Word, so he ours. Joh. 9. 33. The question was, *What he thought of him that opened his eyes?* He thought he was a Prophet, because God heard not sinners, Joh. 15. 7. *If my word abide in you, &c.* Let us keep God's Word, and he will keep our prayers to fulfill them. *God's Word abides in us*, when in our judgements we approve of it, and in our hearts we cleave to it, in our lives we practice it. The Word of God abides not in us, except it rules as becomes the Word of God, Zac. 7. 13. Prov. 28. 9.

Reas. From a rule of equity, which God useth in dispensing himself, Mat. 7. 2. As we dispense our selves to him, so doth God himself to us. This is a general rule of God's walking towards men. With what measure we mete, God will measure to us again. If we let no Word of God fall to the ground, but our conscience stand in awe of it, and our hearts cleave to it, God will let none of our prayers fall to the ground.

2. From the unity of the Spirit that doth help us to meet the commandments. God makes account we keep the commandments, when there is none but our judgements approve, Ezek. 36. 26, 27. Rom. 8. 15. The Spirit helps us to pray, and it asks things according to the will of God, and he knows the meaning of the Spirit. As who should say, He that prays not in the Spirit is a *Barbarian* unto God.

3. From the love and respect God bears to them that keep his commandments. It is the way to become God's Favourite, Joh. 14. 21, 23.

Use 1. It shews us the cause of the fruitlessness of our prayers at any time, God hears not us, because we hear not him. If our prayer fall to the ground, then surely God's Word hath fallen to the ground. A good prayer and a bad life can never meet, Jam. 2. 20. If we live in lawless respect to God's commandments, he hears not our prayers.

2. Encouragement to the obedience of God's commandments. What comfort would a man have more then to have his wish? If God give thee an heart to keep all his commandments, thou mayst assure thy heart, that all thy petitions are granted.

3. A ground of comfort to every such soul as makes conscience of his ways. If thou walkest with a care to fulfil God's will, he will fulfil thine. Such as give themselves to walk as Christ hath walked, may have this comfort, Joh. 11. 32. Psal. 119. 5, 6. Such petitions as are long delayed, and seem to be most strongly denied, are fulfilled, Dan. 10. 3, 10, 11, 12. *Daniel's* prayers were heard the first day, but not then answered. A petition is granted in heaven, and a course taken for the accomplishment of it, but yet there must be a time to bring it about, Deut. 5. 25, 26. Though God delay our prayers, yet even then he grants them, Prov. 21. 10. Jer. 17. 10. God regards the hearts of his people, and their movings. *Moses* desired only to see the good Land, God bid him go up to the hill, and so strengthened his sight to see it; he should not go over, because the people should see God's displeasure against him. We have an end always in our prayers, and we prescribe means to God, he many times denies the means in displeasure, but gives the end, 2 Cor. 12. 7, 8. So it was in *Paul*, God would not remove the messenger of Satan, but he did that by it which he would have done, the free passage of the spirit in his heart, Heb. 5. 7. A Christian prays for the light of his countenance, God hears not, Why dost thou desire it, to strengthen thy faith? He will do it by the word of promise. We pray that God would mortify some corruption, Why do we desire it, that grace may have free passage in our hearts? God will by such lusts mortify a greater, that is, pride of heart; and God

works such a loathing in thy heart, and bitterness in regard of sin, that we might mortify them.

The second benefit is the acceptance of all our prayers in the presence of God, amplified by an argument taken from the practise of such men whose hearts

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hurts do not condemn them before God, they keep his commandments, & do that which is pleasing in his sight, set forth in a Syllogism, *Whoso keeps God's commandments, those whatsoever they ask, they receive of God*. But those whose hearts condemn them not, keep God's commandments.

Doct. *That such as keep God's commandments, they keep a good conscience, and God's favour together. They have peace at home and in heaven.*

First they have peace at home in their own conscience, Heb. 13. 18. *We have a good conscience in all things, desiring to live honestly; that is, to keep God's commandments.*

Secondly, as they keep a good conscience on earth, so they keep favour in heaven, 1 King. 15. 5. Thus it's said of *David*, that *he did that which was good in the sight of the Lord*, he had a care to keep God's commandments. Thus did *Asa*, 2 Chr. 14. 2. *Hezekiah*, Ibid. 29. 2. So did *Josiah*, Ibid. 3. 42.

What is it to keep God's commandments?

Ans. It is not to keep them in our minds and memory; but, First, to keep them as one would keep his high-way. A traveller, so soon as he is out of his way, and sees it, he blames himself for it, and hastens to get into it again. Secondly, as a man would keep his jewels, Prov. 6. 20, 21. Thirdly, to keep it as the apple of our eye, Prov. 7. 1, 2, 3. If the least mote fall into our eye, we never leave till we get it out; so we must make scruple of the least sins. Fourthly, we must keep the commandments as we would keep our life. Now, *skin for skin, and all that a man hath, will he give for his life*: So we should lose our lives, and all we have for God's commandments.

Reas. 1. From the suitableness of the will, and the commandments of God, and the conscience of a Christian. You please a man when you do that which is according to his will; and so look what is good in God's sight, that is according to God's commandments. The commandments of God are a lively image of his will and commandments. God is a God of pure eyes, Hab. 1. 13. he hateth wickedness, Psal. 5. 4. Any thing that is evil, is displeasing in God's sight. When *Uriah* was slain, and *David* took his Wife into his house, it is said that thing displeased the Lord, 2 Sam 12. 27. But *the will of God is our sanctification*, 1 Thess. 4. 3. A man is said to be made after God's own image, when he is righteous and holy. The Apostle exhorts us to *put*

on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness, Eph. 4. 24. Holiness is the sum of the commandments of the first Table, Righteousness of the second.

Use 1. Hence we may have a trial of our conscience, whether it be good or no, for upon the goodness of our conscience depends the peace of this world, and another, Heb. 13. 18. Examine your selves, Do you keep God's commandments as a man would keep his way, the apple of his eye, his life and soul, or his jewels? Else you do not keep a good conscience. There are four sorts of consciences.

1. A conscience that is quiet, yet not good. As, *when the strong man keeps the house, all that he possesseth is in peace*, Luk. 11. 21.

2. There is a conscience which is good, but yet not quiet. Such was *David's*, Psal. 31, 32. when he said in his haste, *he was utterly cast out of his sight*; though it was good, yet it did not speak the truth concerning *David*.

3. There is a conscience which is neither good nor quiet, such was *Judas* his conscience, Mat. 27. 3, 4.

4. There is a conscience both good and peacable, which walks in God's commandments; and if he slip out of God's commandments, he looks at himself as out of the way; he finds refreshments in walking in God's ways, he could not by any means part with God's commandments, he had rather part with his life, and all that he hath. But on the contrary, if a man keep not God's commandments, he is so far from making scruple of any sin, that he allows himself in any sin, yea in all sin.

Use

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Use 2. It exhorts us all, to take the right way, to keep God's Commandments, and to keep a good conscience.

Obj. *What shall we get by this?*

Ans. In keeping God's commandments is great reward. You shall keep a good house at home, and favour in heaven. A good conscience is worth keeping, it will uphold thy heart against all discouragements thou shalt meet withal in the world, and thou shalt have peace with God by keeping his commandments, you shall keep a good conscience, which is a continual feast. The peace of a good conscience is the greatest blessing in the world, nothing in the world can take it away. A man may keep all other things, and yet not a good conscience; but without a good conscience, what good will they all do thee at the last day? Wherefore, above all things have a care to keep it, it will be more joy to thee than all worldly contentments, Psal. 4. 6, 7.

3. This may be matter of comfort and consolation to every such soul that hath a care to keep God's commandments, for such a man keeps God's favour in heaven, and a good conscience on earth, *which is a continual feast.*

I JOHN 3. 13.

And this is the commandment, that we should believe on the Name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment.

IN this *verse* he shews you what this commandment is, in keeping of which we obtain the grant of our prayers. This is his commandment, *that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and that we love one another.*

Doct. *That in stead of loving God with all our hearts, the great and first commandment now is, that we believe in the Name of the Lord Jesus.*

When the holy Ghost would rank all the commandments under two heads, he reduces them to these two,

1. That in stead of loving God with all our hearts, we must *believe in Jesus Christ.*

2. In stead of loving our neighbour as our selves, that we *love our Brethren;* as Christ commands. When Christ was demanded what was the first and great commandment, he answered, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and the second is like unto this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self,* Mat. 22. 36. to 39. But the Apostle *John* he sums up the commandments in these two. He saith not here, *these are the commandments,* but *this is the commandment.* As if he should have said, *there is no more commanded of God.* 2 Tim. 1. 13. *Keep a pattern of wholesome words,* Which is the sum of them? *Faith and love in Christ Jesus.*

Q. *What is meant by the name of Jesus Christ.*

Ans. Here is not meant the letters or syllables of the Name of Jesus. *There is no other name under heaven whereby we can be saved, but by the Name of Jesus,* Act. 4. 12. It were Atheism to believe there were virtue in the letters or syllables of the name *Jesus.* He means, there is no person under heaven, whereby we can be saved, but only by him whi is named *the Lord Jesus.* As it is, Gen. 13. 4. *Abraham called on the name of the Lord,* that is, *upon the Lord,* Phil. 2. 10. The Apostle saith, *At the Name of Jesus every knee should bow.* So Isa. 45. 24. there you may see what is meant by *the Name Jesus,* and what is *to bow to the Name Jesus.* Rom. 14. 11. To bow to, or worship the Name Jesus, is to worship the Person of Jesus. He doth therefore add *Name* to *the Lord Jesus,* because we do believe in Christ by those attributes given to him, it is by Christ we are saved. Now if we did not consider him, as a Priest, a Prophet, and a King, he could not have saved us, these offices of Christ are the name of Christ.

Q. *What is meant by believing in his Name?*

Ans. There are three acts of Faith in believing in the Name of the Lord Jesus.

1. To

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1. To be persuaded of his goodness and promises. Doubting is opposed to faith, Rom. 4. 20. *Doubting* is an act of the *minde*, *Persuasion* an act of the *will*.

2. Faith is an act of a man's will, whereby he trusts on the name of the Lord Jesus. Not to believe in God, is not to trust on God for his salvation, Psal. 78. 22. *Credere in Christum*, 1 Pet. 2. 6. is as it were to rowle our selves upon Christ. There are two things in God's promises:

Truth. 2. Goodness.

Understanding believes the *truth*, *Persuasion* the *goodness*. These be acts about a promise.

There is a true faith, but yet weak, which doth not reach to those, and yet reach to believing in his Name, and hath salvation by his Name; which is, when a man can abide by the Lord, and will not away till he bless him, like *Jacob*, Gen. 32. 26. This is the same with drawing near to God, Psal. 73. 28. A man draws near to God, when he is willing to forsake all his lusts, and can find no satisfaction in earthly things, but only in the Lord.

Reas. 1. It is a work of greater honour to God to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, then to love God, when we know him to be our friend. When a Christian doth first begin to believe in Christ, he doth not take God as a friend, but as an enemy; now, to cleave to God when he is an enemy, is more then to love God when he is s friend unto us. For a soul to throw it self on God when he is terrible, and seems as an angry God; now, not to let him go till he shews mercy, is a famous thing. The faith of a weak Christian becomes more famous then the love of a strong Christian. The one hath had the experience of God's love, the other never felt the warmth of God's Spirit in the heart.

2. This doth magnify the grace of God, because such a soul as believes in Christ, doth rely on Christ for every blessing; he doth not trust on the best graces he hath received, he doth not trust on his own faith, but he trusts on Christ for the favour of God, and he believes that for his sake every promise shall be fulfilled. The great commandment gives God and Christ all the honour.

3. Because by faith we rest on God for all the good we stand in need of, Rom. 4. 16.

4. From the wickedness of our nature, and impossibility to love God, before we trust Christ, and before we be persuaded that our sins are forgiven. The end of the commandment is love. Whence comes this love? From faith unfeigned, 1 Tim. 1. 5. Joh. 14. 1. Christ's disciples were much troubled, because he was to leave the world, but he labours to comfort them, saying, *Believe in God, believe also in me.* But *vers.* 6. No man must think to believe in God, before they believe in Christ.

Use 1. This reproves a sinful error of the Doctors of the Church of *Rome*, who say that Faith may be severed from Love. A man may believe in God, and yet not love him. Which is contrary to this great commandment. We do no sooner believe in God, but we love him.

2. To exhort every soul, as they would desire to do any thing pleasing to God, to make this their greatest duty, to *believe in the Lord Jesus.* Faith and Love are correlatives. Let no man flatter himself in this, That he is born of good parents, that he lives in the bosom of the Church, and that he enjoys God's ordinances, but trust thou on the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Psal. 9. 10. Now, we cannot trust on God before we know him.

3. It teacheth this: That this believing on the Name of Jesus Christ, is a divine thing. For Christ Jesus is no creature, but equal with the Father, Joh. 14. 1.

4. Of comfort to every soul that believes in the Name of the Lord Jesus. He fulfils this great commandment, is not this a great comfort to a man, when he knows there is little that he can either do or suffer, but yet this he is persuaded of, that he abides in Christ Jesus, and trusts in God.

N n

Doct.

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Doct. 2. *The second great commandment is, that we love one another.*

When the Scribe asked Christ, *What was the greatest commandment of the Law?* Mat. 22. 36. Christ answers him, *And the second is like it: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self.* John saith here, *to love one another.*

Reas. 1. From the large extent of it: There is no duty or office of love which we perform to man, but is comprehended in this, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self.* Love is the fulfilling of the Law, Rom. 13. 10. Love not your neighbour, and you break all the commandments of God.

2. Because whatsoever we do perform without love is unprofitable, as without faith no duty profits, Heb. 4. 2. So, without love we cannot profit our Brethren, 1 Cor. 13. 1, 2, 3. Neither can we profit our selves. The Apostle exhorts that all be done in love, 1 Cor. 16. 14, *Love edifieth,* Ibid. 8. 1.

3. Love makes all other duties honorable to our Brethren. They are best entertained of those for whom we do any office of love. *By love we should serve one another*, Gal. 5. 13. Love makes a Nurse very painfull about her child, you shall not have so much service from any servant you keep as that service a Nurse performs; she doth it freely and readily, love will make us serviceable without measure.

Use 1. Let us all be stirred up to have great respect to this great commandment. If it be a work of love, it is that which God requires. By love we perform all the commandments of God at once. *Love is the fulfilling of the Law*. Whatsoever a man doth without love, it neither profits himself nor his brother. Whatsoever duty you perform to any Brother, if you do it not out of love, you will soon be weary of it, that is the truest hearted duty that is performed in love: avoid we therefore such occasions as hinder us from loving one another, which is sometimes strangeness, sometimes enmity, sometimes because of the wickedness of others, sometime self-love.

For the first, avoid strangeness one towards another, God loved us when we were strangers unto him, Col. 2. 1. So ought we. Consider also we may be strangers. It's an ill quality in a dog to fly on strangers. It is a *Nabal-like* nature to neglect any office of love to a stranger, 1 Sam. 25.

2. We must love yhose that are our enemies, Rom. 5. 10. Thus did Christ, *whilst we were enemies he died for us*. Will a man hate such a member as is painful to him? No, he will rather labour to heal it. Shall we not be as compassionate to those members that make us sick, or disquiet us?

3. We must in no wise hate those that do evil in God's sight or ours, but rather pity them, 2 Thess. 3. 14, 15.

4. The fourth enemy of love to our Brother is self-love, We must love our selves, but we must not determinate our love in our selves. When men cannot love others but for themselves. Such men may have a *form of godliness, but deny the power of it*, 1 Tim. 2. 1, 2, 3, to 5. The greater any commandment is, the more ready we are to break it. But (as we desire our prayers should prosper in heaven) so let us love one another, and let us do all that we do in love. This will do both our selves and others good.

2. Love we our Brethren in obedience to God's commandment; this must be the rule of our love. There are many cankers in love, which this love in obedience to God's commandment heals.

1. All carnal love springs from our nature, and so we love no farther then serves our own ends, but love in obedience to God's commandment is spiritual.

2. If our love be not from a commandment it is faithless; now, *whatsoever is not of faith is sin*. Therefore our love must be in obedience to God's commandment.

3. There is an immoderate love, which is not out of conscience to God.

4. There is an immoderate love, which is lawless, but our love must be ruled by the commandment of God. We must love where and because God hath commanded us.

5. There

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5. There is an inconstant love. When men will love fervently for a time, be ready to put me in their bosom, but after a while their love grows cold, These love according to their mind, Gal. 4. 14, to 17. This is not according to the rule.

3. Let us love the Lord our God so much the more, because he is careful to lay this commandment on us; though a stranger, an enemy, a wicked man, God cannot endure the rank breath of hatred.

As he hath commended us.

This is the rule of our love. How is that? *We ought to love our Brethren as Christ hath loved us*, Joh. 13. 34. & 16. 12.

Doct. *The rule of our love one to another, is not now as we love our selves, but as Christ hath loved us.*

Indeed, the rule in the Law was, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self*, Levit. 19. 18. But now a *new commandment*, so called, because it is given by new rule (*As he hath given commandment.*)

1. Christ denied his own ease and pleasure, that he might save us from pain.

2. He denied himself in his own profit. He laid down his own soul, 2 Cor. 8. 9. He laid down both earthly and heavenly profits, *that we through him might be rich.*

3. He denied his own honour, *He being in the form of God, yet made himself of no reputation, to save us from reproach.*

4. As if all this had been too little, *he denied his own life, and laid it down for us*, Joh. 3. 16.

Reas. What is the reason of this difference, that our love to our neighbour must be so great above the love to our selves.

1. Because there was no cause of denying our selves in innocency, but now man is fallen, he cannot raise up another, but he must stoop. If two men go together, if they go both upright, they may go hand in hand; but if one be fallen, and not able to rise, the other if he will raise him, must stoop down,

and toil to get him up. God hath raised up some sooner then others, therefore we must take up our fallen Brethren.

2. God requires love in a more exact manner and measure, because he hath now given an higher and more exact pattern. We have the pattern of Christ, that forgave us a thousand talents, therefore we ought to forgive our Brethren an hundred pence, Mat. 28.

Use 1. This should stir us up all Christians to walk now in a higher frame of love then formerly they were wont in times past. We walked then in a lower way, to love our Brother as our selves. But we must not now say, I will do so for my Brother, as I may not prejudice my self, my estate, credit, or life. But now, *we that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weaker*, Rom. 15. 1, 2. Now we must have *the same mind in us which was in Christ Jesus*, Heb. 2. 4, 5, 6. 2 Cor. 11. 7, 8. *Paul* abased himself that they might be exalted, and denied himself of many comforts, that he might help them, 1 Joh. 3. 16. As Christ laid down his life for us, so must we for our Brethren in sundry cases.

For more particular direction.

1. A man ought to deny his own expediences for his Brothers necessity, Neh. 5. 18.

2. He ought to deny himself in outward things, to supply his Brethren in spiritual things. Thus *Paul*.

3. If a man be of a private condition, and his Brother of public use to the Church, he ought to deny himself to maintain and succour him, as they said to *David*, *Thou art worth ten thousand of these*, Rom. 16. 4, 5. *Aquila, and Priscilla*.

2. This should teach you that are of higher estate, to help your poor, neighbours that are fallen into straits, not through prodigality or riot, but through God's hand, or charge of children. You must not say, I must look

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to my self, and to my children, that they be maintained. This was the old *rule*, now we must deny out selves and our own experiences, and be continually doing good in obedience to this commandment. It was a royal speech of *David*, 2 Sam. 24. *Shall I offer a sacrifice that cost me nothing?* Heb. 13. 15, 16. When God blesseth thee with many a pound, wilt thou offer a sacrifice to God that cost a penny, or a thing that cost thee nothing? It's for you to bless God that hath enriched you with such abundance, and say with *David*, *What shall I render to the Lord for all these goods?* Your goods reach not to God, but to the Saints that are on the earth; and if you begin to straighten your hands and hearts, you will find God straightening himself to you.

What a blessed thing were it, to b.laying aside something for good uC.. 1 Our Saviour that lived in so mean a condition, yet had care to provide for the poor, Joh. 13. 28.

Doct. *There is a more effectual means to the obtaining our petitions, then by growing up in the practice of these two commandments, in believing on the Name of Christ, and love yo our Brethren.*

Mark 11. 22, to 26. There you have both joined together, Jam. 1. 8. Let a man pray in faith and waver not. When a Christian is tossed with doubtings and distractions, he shall rather drown his prayers then bring them to the bosom of Christ Jesus. *Job's* friends were godly men, but because they deal not in love with *Job*, God professeth he would not hear them. Want of love to our Brethren, it damps our prayers before God. So that though our perfans be accepted, yet our prayers shall not.

Why is faith so necessary.

1. Faith make, our persons acceptable to God. God hears the young ravens and lions when they cry unto him, but he rather hears their misery then their prayer, but faith makes the person acceptable. Thus *By faith Abel, &c.* Heb. 11.

2. Faith purifies the heart. Act. 15. 9. *If I regard iniquity in my heart, God will not hear my prayers,* Psal. 68.

3. Faith furnisheth the heart with graces, that make our prayers amiable. There are four graces requisite in prayer, and all are wrought by faith.

1. Reverence to God. A man without faith considers not before whose presence he stands, he considers not that God is near to hear his petitions, but faith is the evidence of things not seen, it makes us come before God with reverence and godly fear, Heb. 11. 7.

2. Faith breeds in us humility, whereby we come before God with a sense of our unworthiness, and of the least of God's mercies, and an unability to ask any thing according to his will.

3. Faith works fervency and earnestness of spirit, that we will give God no rest, 2 Sam. 15. 16. Effectual fervent prayer is called a prayer of faith. For,

1. Faith puts life into every duty, Gal. 3.

2. Faith lays hold of the promises of God in Christ, and we urge and press God upon his Word.

3. Faith makes us very sensible of our wants, and therefore we cry hard for help.

4. Faith works in us an holy confidence, that what we ask God will undoubtedly grant; and it's meant of faith in the Name of the Lord Jesus.

There are three things in *the Name of the Lord Jesus* which Faith lays hold on.

1. Faith lays hold on the office of his mediation. There had been no hope of acceptance, unless there had been a Mediator to reconcile God and us, 1 Joh. 2. 1, 2. Heb. 4. 14, 15, 16. Though we should find many weakness, in our selves, yet with confidence may we draw near to God, seeing we have such an High-priest which is touched with our infirmities; he is that great Master of requests, that is in such favour with God, that he never
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presents up a prayer to God, but he returns such an answer, that we need not go away with sad hearts, Joh. 16. 23, 24.

2. Faith looks at Christ as him in whom all the promises are *yea* and *amen*, 2 Cor. 1. 20.

3. Faith lays hold on all the attributes of God, set on work by Christ for our good: So that if we look for wisdom, grace or power, they are all set on work for the good of his Church. *The Name of the Lord is a strong tower*, that is, the attributes of God, *the righteous fly to it*. How? By faith.

Q. *How is the love of God our Brethren such an effectual means for the obtaining of our prayers?*

Ans. 1. Love enlargeth us to forgive injuries done unto us, and that moves God to forgive our trespasses. To forgive is a work of love.

2. Love is ready to give, Act. 10. 4. God was ready to give ear to the prayer of *Cornelius*, because he was ready to give alms.

3. There be to whom we can give little, but yet there is a good opinion and esteem to be had of them. Now this is a fruit of love to esteem well of our Brethren, and to judge charitably, and this prevails with God to have a good conceit of our prayers. If we be estranged and alienated from our Brother in ill conceits, we shall find God to be estranged to us. This was the fault of *Job's* friends, they had an hard conceit of him, which was for want of love, and thus provoked God against them. Matt. 5. 23, 24. God will accept of no prayer as long as he sees us in harsh conceit of our Brother.

Use 1. To exhort us in the Lord, when we go about any such duty as prayer is, to present it up unto God, in the spirit of faith and love. They are such special graces, as without them no prayer can be accepted. Let us but labour to grow up in these two, faith towards God and love to our Brethren, and then whatsoever we ask being darted up by these two, shall find acceptance with God.

Use 2. Of consolation to every soul that comes in any measure with faith and love before God, we shall not put up any petition but we shall find God ready to answer it.

I JOHN 3. 24.

And he that keepeth his commandments, dwelleth in him, and he in him: and hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.

V*Ers.* 22. The Apostle hath taught us a notable privilege of keeping God's commandments, and that is the obtaining the grant of our petitions, *vers.* 23. He tells us what commandments they be in this *vers.* 24. He lays down another benefit which we have by keeping God's commandments; that is fellowship with God, God dwells in us, and we in him.

This *vers.* consists of two parts.

1. The benefit of obedience to God's commandments, God dwells in us, and we in him.

2. The means by which we know that God dwells in us, and that is by himself, for a Christian might else doubt of it.

Doct. That an obedient Christian keeps mutual, entire, and constant fellowship with Christ.

He is an obedient Christian that keeps the commandments of God as his way, 1 Joh. 7. 8. as his jewels, Prov. 6. 21. as the apple of his eye, Prov. 7. 2, 3, 4. as his life, Prov. 19. 16. To keep them as commands implies obedience, superiority in the commander, inferiority in the person commanded. He that keeps the commandments in such a manner hath true fellowship with God, God dwells in him, and he in God.

Reas.

Reas. From the effect. Our keeping of God's commandments is a means to keep fellowship with God, Joh. 14. 23. God will come and keep house with us, and refresh and comfort us. If a Christian shall grow up in obedience to Christ, then Christ his Husband will lop off his superfluous branches, that so he may bring forth more fruit then he did before; he will comfort us with the consolations of his holy Spirit, he will come in and sup with us, Neh. 8. 10. The more comfort, the more strength. Comfort comes from *comfortare* to strengthen, the more strong a Christian is, the more cheerfully he performs Christian duties, like as the Son is said to come forth like a giant, rejoicing to run his race, Psal. 19. 4. A weak man soon faints and is weary, but a strong man goes through his business cheerfully.

Use 1. It reproves a Popish clamour. They say Protestant Christians can do no good works, because we deny any merit in them; like as our Saviour teacheth us, *when we have done all we can, we must say, we are unprofitable servants*, we do not deserve our daily bread; but, as *Jacob* confesseth, *we are less then the least of his enemies*, Gen. 30. 1. Is there no use of good works except they merit? Is there no use of gold, because it doth not justify us? Is not this encouragement enough for us to be doing good works, seeing thereby we shall maintain mutual, entire, and constant fellowship with God? Yea, we say that God also will at the last day recompense us, though not for our works, yet according to our good works. We do not merit any thing at God's hand, by our good works, because we do receive strength from him for the performance of them.

2. This may shew every Christian just ground of encouragement to keep himself close to God's commandments, in keeping of them is great reward. For we keep in Christ Jesus, and we keep mutual, and entire, and constant fellowship with the Father; and so we shall find him as an Husbandman taking pains with us, keeping us from evil, and cleansing us from those corruptions which will make us stink in his nostrills; and this he will do, because he sees us taking pains and employing that stock of graces which he hath bestowed on us. By this means God will make our lives comfortable, and will multiply graces in us in a great measure, and give us more strength to make us yield more obedience unto him. And whereas other Christians lives are very obscure, we shall shine forth as the Sun at noon day, therefore those Christians much wrong themselves that think themselves bound to no commandment, though they would do as God requires, yet they would do it freely, and not as to commandments. But why then doth *John* bid us keep God's commandments, and promise such blessings to us, if we do keep them? A good man would be doing good duties, though God did not command him, but yet he must also therefore do good duties, because God commands him.

3. Those Christians are reproved that walk loosely with God, who keep not God's commandments; as they would keep their way, their jewels, the apple of their eye, their life, such Christians fall short of that great reward which God promiseth. Whence is it that Christians are wanton, proud, covetous? Is it not because they do not keep God's commandments? For else God would keep their hearts, and cleanse their spirits.

4. This may be an use of comfort to such Christians as have regard to the commandments of God, and to walk more close with God on God's holy day, such shall have God dwelling with them, and working all their

works for them; God will play the good husband about them, he will prune them from all loose distempers that hang about their souls, he will give us more wisdom than our Teachers, and by this means we shall come before him with Christian boldness and confidence, and we may expect to receive strength of grace, whereby we may run with cheerfulness the way of his commandments.

Hereby

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Hereby we know he abideth in us, byt the Spirit which he hath given us.

In the second place we come to speak of the means whereby we may discern that God dwells in us, and that is, *by the Spirit that he hath given us.*

Doct. *That the Spirit of God bestowed on us, is an evident sign of Jesus Christ dwelling in us.*

He doth not say, *we believe*, though this be a great word, for *faith is the evidence of things not seen*; but he saith, *we know it*; now *soire is tem per causam cognoscere.*

What is that Spirit that being bestowed on us is an evidence of Christ's dwelling in us? Did not the Spirit of the Lord come upon *Saul*, and he prophesied? 1 Sam. 10. Yet it is not said that Christ abode in him, for ch. 16. vers. 14. it is said that *the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil Spirit from the Lord troubled him.*

Answ. There be sundry degrees of God's Spirit which may be given to a man, and yet be no evidence of God's dwelling in him, or he in God.

1. There is a Spirit of illumination, whereby a man may prophesy, as *Saul* did. But a man may have this Spirit of God and yet fall away, so as to sin against the holy Ghost, Heb. 6. 4, 5, 6.

2. A Spirit of administration of Christ or Common-wealth, 1 Sam. 11. 6.

3. A Spirit of power, to do many wonders, Matth. 7. 22, 23. And yet Christ acknowledgeth that he never knew, they did never abide in Christ, not he in them.

4. There is a Spirit of renewal of many affections, which may befall any man.

1. A Spirit of Zeal, as in *Jehu*, *Come and see my zeal for the Lord*, 2 King. 10. 15, 16. and yet he took no heed to walk in the Law of the Lord, vers. 31, 32.

2. Of Joy in *Herod*, Mark 6. 20.

3. Humility in *Ahab*, 1 King. 21. 29.

4. Fear in *Felix*, Act. 24. 25.

What is then the Spirit whereby we know that we keep God's commandments, and have fellowship with him?

Answ. It is the Spirit of life which is in Jesus which frees us from the law of sin and death, Rom. 8. 2. This is the Spirit of *Adoption*, vers. 15. of *grace and supplication*, Zac. 12. 10.

What doth this differ from the former, for they were the Spirit of God?

Answ. It exceeds in this: Because the former Spirits of God did rest only upon the outwards of a man, as his Tongue, Memory, Affection, but this bids defiance unto all the enemies of his salvation, the Heart, and Will, which are the Castle whereon Christ abides, are given up to Christ, Pro. 23. 26. God requires the heart, if we give the heart to God we give all, Pro. 4. 23. Life springs not from good affections nor good actions, but from the heart.

Q. *What doth this Spirit must in my heart then did the other? How shall I know that the holy Ghost hath gotten possession of my heart.*

Answ. If the Spirit of God hath taken possession of your hearts, it lifts up your hearts for to prize the Lord Jesus above all other things in the world, it makes thee willing to do and suffer God's will with patience, it will cause you to resign your selves and your desires to the Lord Jesus; now all your affections and whole heart is for the Lord. If *Paul* now sin, he doth that which he would not, Rom. 7. 16, 17. Having given us this Spirit, we dwell in Christ, and he in us, 1 Joh. 4. 13. Because, by this Spirit we keep his commandments. If we keep his commandments, it shall go well with us, and with our children after us for ever, Deut. 5. 29.

Reas.

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Reas. From the free covenant of grace, by which he hath promised everlasting fellowship to those that keep his commandments, Jer. 2. 40. Isa. 55. 2, 3.

Obj. *This may make us believe, but not to know as we believe, Unity in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity but we cannot know it. But you say, We do not only believe but know.*

Answ. There is a difference between faith and knowledge: For a man may believe a thing is true, because he doth not doubt of the authority of it, but yet we do not know all truths that are spoken, though we believe them, for knowledge is of a certain conclusion; we know this to be so, partly by faith, partly by sense and reason; for though faith believe things before we know them, it being the evidence of things not seen; and so a man may believe that God is gracious before we know it, but yet when faith hath laid hold on the promises, it sets reason to work. This Spirit of God works in

us an evidence of our abode in Christ, for 1. this Spirit of God works peace of conscience, Phil. 4. 7. which passeth all understanding; though it doth not always abide, yet it keeps garrison always, it bears witness to a man that Christ is in him, and he in Christ.

2. It works a change in all Christians, it changeth them from the power of Satan to the power of God, Gal. 5. 19, 20, 21. And though the peace of conscience and consolation of the Spirit abide not always, yet the Spirit of regeneration and sanctification doth always abide, and doth change the whole man, 2 Cor. 5. 17. Before a carnal and fleshly Spirit, but now the Spirit of glory and grace rests upon us, which makes us relish Christian communion, and Christian society. This Spirit doth always abide, and so we know that Christ abides, Rom. 8. 9.

Obj. *I may think there is a thorough change, but yet it may be it's only of the outward man?*

Ans. Consider how it changeth thy heart. Is thy heart with God, and wholly for God? Dost thou long for peace with God? Wouldst thou not forgo it, if thou hadst it, for all the world? Is the Word of God more precious to thee than thine appointed food? No profit, pleasure, or preferment, shall hinder thee from following of Christ. When a man hath horrors of conscience, he would give his life for peace, but then a man doth not affect God so much as his own peace, Thus *Cain*, Gen. 4. When *Saul* had a spirit full of trouble, then *David* must play a fit of music. When wicked mens hearts are at rest, then they never regard God, but then they close with the world, and sensual lusts. But when the Sun of righteousness doth arise in a man's heart, he will scatter abroad all those distempers of spirit that hang about him, and frame his heart to an holy care of keeping God's commandments.

Use 1. To reprove a Popish opinion, that no man can know whether Christ abide in him or no. But why doth *St. John* then say, *Hereby we know?* and he speaks to old men, young men and babes, to try themselves. These men condemn the whole generation of the just. Such a woman as cannot tell her child who is his Father, is a strumpet, and so is the Church of *Rome*.

2. It reproves others that think it impossible. Some think it not worth the knowing, others think it not meet to know whether Christ abide in them or no; such have no care to make their *calling and election sure*. But *S. John* saith 'tis possible, and a thing worth the seeking after, and also very expedient.

3. This should exhort all Christians to try and examine themselves, whether they are in the faith or no, 2 Cor. 13. 5. *Know ye not*. He speaks of such as have lived long under a faithful Ministry. It is an evil sign; Either know that Christ is in you, or be not satisfied.

4. To exhort us to give up our hearts to God, that his fear and love may rule our hearts, that so those outward things take not up your affections, Rom. 8. 9, & 14.

5. Comfort to God's servants, that give up their hearts and lives to God, which have laid their salvation not on a sandy but sound ground, which have built it upon divine testimony, even the Spirit of God, which is a divine Spirit.

I JOHN

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I JOHN Chap. IV. Vers. I.

Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false Prophets are gone out into the world.

THis Chapter consists of two parts:

1. A preservative against *false Teachers*, to vers. 6.
2. A renewed exhortation to *Brotherly love*.

The argument falls by the way on the *trial of the spirits*, for he had said, *Thereby shall you know that Christ abideth in you, by the spirit that he hath given you*. Now lest the people of God should be deceived by the spirits of their Ministers; he bids them therefore to *try their spirits*: and that by the Spirit which Christ hath given them, *For he which is spiritual discerneth all things*, 1 Cor. 2. 15.

These words are an exhortation to the people of God, how to order themselves towards the spirits of their Ministers; which exhortation is laid down,

1. Negatively, *Believe not*.
2. Affirmatively, *But try the spirits*.

The negative duty and affirmative, are both confirmed by an argument taken from the multitude of false Teachers, *There are many false Prophets gone out into the world*, which shews he speaks chiefly of the trial of their Ministers, or else you may be deceived in your judgement, as if a friend should bid his friend take heed what piece of gold he takes, because there are many slips and counterfeits gone abroad. In that St. *John* bids his hearers not to believe every spirit, hence observe,

Doct. *That every Minister is carried away with one spirit or other; or else why doth St. John exhort them to try the spirits?*

He speaks of ordinary Prophets, such are subject to the judgement of the people, 1 Cor. 14. 23. as for *Paul*, he was an extraordinary Prophet, 1 Cor. 4. 3. What is meant by Prophecy, such as a man may attain to by use, Ministers are called Prophets, they were wont to foretell sundry things to come, look what they speak on earth is confirmed in heaven; though they cannot foretell things besides the Scripture, yet they may things out of the Scripture; so that you may see *that God is in them of a truth*. Every good Prophet so far as he prophesieth according to God, is acried by the holy Ghost: but when he doth not speak according to God, he is carried with an evil spirit, Numb. 11. 25, 26. 1 Sam. 18. 10. *an evil spirit came upon Saul*, so that every Prophet prophesieth either by the Spirit of God, or by a wicked spirit; an evil man may sometimes prophesy well, and then it is by the spirit of God, it is spirit that comes upon them; as *Balaam* offered sacrifice, that he might curse the peo-

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ple, Numb. 22. 23, 25. a good man is ordinarily led by the Spirit of God, but sometimes he is transported by an evil spirit, and then he speaks not by the Spirit of God, he perverts the Word, and he misseth the text and application of it. *Peter* he will tell our Saviour, *this thing shall not be unto thee*, Matth. 16. 22. what saith Christ to him? vers. 23. *Get thee behind me Satan*: There is not the worst debauched Minister, but when he comes to preach, one spirit or other comes upon him; therefore well doth St. *John* say, *Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits*.

What is the spirit of the Prophets.

1 Thes. 5. 23. There are three things in a man, body, soul, and spirit; the soul of a man is the breath of God by which he is made a living creature; by the spirit of a man here is meant, the inclination of the mind, which is called a spirit in divers places, as a spirit of fornication, a spirit of slumber, a spirit of jealousy; every good or evil inclination is called a spirit, *Be renewed in the spirit of your minds*, Ephes. 4. 23. that is the disposition of your minds. What is the reason some are more just, some are more painful then others? the good or evil spirit comes upon them.

Why is the inclination called a spirit?

1. It always comes from some spirit.

2. It hath some vehemency in it, to bow the will one way or other, either to better or worse, as the spirit leads him: it is possible a man may preach well in the morning, and badly in the afternoon.

Try the spirits, what variety of spirits are there.

Try all things, saith the Apostle, *and keep that which is good*, 1 Thes. 5. 21. There be three sorts of spirits, of the World, of the Devil, and of God, every Minister is led by some of these; of every one of these spirits there is a great variety.

1. Sometimes the spirit of God comes upon a man, as it did on the seventy Elders, Numb. 11. 25, 26. The Spirit of God is like the spirit of new Wine, which ripens the wits; so when the Spirit of God comes upon a man, he doth better understand the Word of God, and the hearts of the people, *The spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God*, 1 Cor. 2. There are two sorts of deep things of God, some lie hidden in the word of God, some in man.

2. There is a spirit of the world, which doth not shine for the uniting of the hearts of God's people; but this is a spirit of pride, when a man would be counted a learned man; or when a man seeks his own profit or honor; the Spirit of God seeks *to know the things that are given him of God*, 2 Cor. 2. 12.

3. There is the spirit of the Devil, which guides a man into error in his doctrine, as *Peter* said to our Saviour, *This shall not be unto thee*, this spirit searcheth not the deep things of God, but of the Devil; this spirit seeks to make the hearts of those sad, whom he would not have made sad, 2 Cor. 11. 13, to 15, to pervert the Scripture, and drive out the care of God's service, and the power of godliness.

Use 1. This should instruct Ministers, when they come into the presence of God, and enter into the Ministry, to labour to prevail with God, that they may be acquainted with the deep things of God, that they may lead the people of God by the still waters of comfort and consolation, such a man will go out *conquering and to conquer*, and in prospering to prosper.

2. This should instruct the people of God to search the Scriptures daily, that so they may be the better to try the spirits of their Ministers; labour they also to try their own hearts.

3. To exhort people to be earnest with God, that they may be enabled with his Spirit.

Try

Try the spirits.

Doct. *That the people of God are first to try the spirits of their Ministers, before they trust them; they must first try, then trust.*

Beloved, *Try the spirits*, as if he would take them by the hand, and exhort them to try the spirits of their Ministers, try how they relish Christ, whether they do shew forth the mighty power of God in human frailties, *Despise not prophecy, try all things, hold fast that which is good*, 1 Thes. 5. 19. to 21. By trying all things you shall keep your hearts from quenching the Spirit.

1. By trying the Spirit you put honour upon it; a man doth not try a small piece of money, but if he suspect a great piece, he will try that.

2. In so doing you shall keep your hearts from damping the Spirit. Act. 17. 11. The noble men of *Berea*, when they had heard *Paul* preach, (whom they might have believed, if they had known him) yet they searched the Scriptures daily, whether such things as he preached were so or no, finding his doctrine true, they believe it, *and many of them believed*; it was not then counted a Conventicle for them to meet together, to see what they could remember of what they had heard, neither was it counted any disgrace for great men to be conversant in good duties.

Why is it to try the spirits of their Ministers?

They must try the spirit of man's Person, Calling, Doctrine, Applications.

1. There may be a false spirit of a man's person, Matth. 7. 15, 16.

2. Try the spirit of their Callings. Christ saith to *John* and *James*, *You know not of what spirit you are*, Luk. 9. 55, 56. yet they were pillars of the Church, Gal. 2. 9. men of excellent gifts and graces; one of them was this *John*, which wrote this Epistle: you know not what spirit you are proving, of what calling you are of, your calling is the same with mine; now he tells them, *That he came not to destroy but to save*; as for *Elijah*, and *Elisha* they were Ministers of vengeance, Ministers of the law, they might curse, but you must seek to save.

3. Try the spirit of their doctrine: for they may be sometimes carried away with spirit of truth, sometimes a spirit of error, Mat. 16. 16. compared with 19. 22. v. *Peter* received the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, was he therefore kept from error? No, he spake with a good spirit in the morning, and with a bad spirit in the afternoon, he rebukes his Master; and what faith Christ to him then? *Get the behind me Satan*.

4. You must try the spirit of their application, Bad Ministers will misapply the Word of God, they will *make sad the hearts of the righteous, whom God*

would not have made sad, Ezek. 13. 22. thus also may good men ofttimes misapply the Word of God, like *Job's* friends, 42. 6, 7, 8. they spake from a spirit of truth, but not from a spirit of righteousness: when you shall see a man to go on in wicked courses, it is not now time to apply the promises, but rather threatenings to him; and so on the other side, you may not apply threatenings to a wounded conscience, for now you do not speak aright of God.

Believe not.

Ans. To believe, is to acknowledge, and to be persuaded of the truth, Heb. 11. 13.

2. To apply the promises to a man's self wisely, Ephes. 3. 17, 1 Joh. 1. 21.

3. We must trust to it, trusting is an act of faith, 2 Chron. 20. 20. There are two things in a promise, truth and goodness, we must be persuaded of the truth, and trust upon the goodness, Psal. 119. 44.

Reas. 1. Taken from the great danger that may befall the children of God, by the neglect of this duty 1 King. 20. 35. to 39. he not knowing what the Prophet spake, whether he spake in the name of the Lord, or no, he hearkened to the word of the Prophet, therefore a Lion slew him, 1 King. 13. 15. to 25. on the contrary.

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2. From the danger in regard of the Prophets themselves, Matth. 7. 15. 2 Pet. 1. 2, 3. Rev. 18. 13.

reas. From the easiness of Prophets to delude God's people.

1. Because there are great store of false Prophets, 1 King. 22. 21, 22, 23. a man is easily deceived by a multitude.

2. They may delude by their calling, many men may think surely their Minister is right.

3. From the hypocrisy of their Ministers, Matth. 7. 15. *They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravening Wolves.*

Use 1. To refute the Doctrine of the Church of *Rome*, they would keep men in ignorance, thinking it to be the Mother of Devotion.

2. This may stir up all the people of God, to search the scriptures, that so they may discover the spirit of their Ministers: do not take every thing as true from your Minister, because he is your Minister, no, though he be a man that fears God, but try his spirit, try every word, follow him from first to last,

if you do not try the Word, you will not trust it, so that all that is delivered to you, *us as water split on the ground.*

How shall I try the spirit of our Minister?

1. Try them by the Word of God, Esa. 8. 20. acquaint your heart with the Word of God, Heb. 5. *ult.*

2. Labour for the ointment of the Spirit of God.

3. Consider whether it make you more conformable to the Word of God or no, whether it make you obey the Word of God more carefully then before, whether it make you more like to Christ; if it work these effects, it is the Word of God that is preached.

Doct. *That many false Prophets even in the days of St. John the Apostle, were got out into the world.*

There were ten several false Prophets as Ecclesiastical stories relate.

What if a false Prophet?

He is not everyone that teacheth false doctrine, *for we know but in part, and prophesy but in part*, 1 Cor. 13. 9. to 12, therefore in part we may prophesy falsely. A false Prophet then is such a one that preacheth some doctrine that overthroweth the doctrine of the Christian faith; when he doth seduce others to believe false doctrine, whose words fret as a Canker, 2 Tim. 2. 17, 18.

1. When men preach such doctrine as cannot be delivered without peril, without damnation; except they afterwards repent, 2 Pet. 2. 1, 2, 3. Such are called ravening Wolves, Matth. 7. 15. they destroy both the souls and bodies of those that believe them, they root up the Church of God like wild Boars.

2. They seduce others to believe the same, 2 Pet. 1. 1, 2, 3. they sell such men's souls for nought; of such men it's said, *They should deceive if it were possible the very elect*, Matth. 24. 24.

3. Such as are convinced of their errors, and yet will not yield, Tit. 3. 10, 11. such are to be rejected, being perverted, and sin being damned of their own souls; a man is then convinced when he will slight the point in which he is convinced, and if you hold him to it, that he cannot start back, he will fall out with you, the Apostle wisheth that such men were even cut off, Gal. 5. 17.

Reas. 1. 1 Cor. 11. 19, God will not only have division, among Christians, that so the spirits of his faithful ones may be discerned, but also he will have heresies, that so they may be tempted in judgement as well as in affections 2. That so those *that are approved may be made manifest*; as by the wind you may see the difference between corn and staff.

2. From the envious man who sowed tares, while the husbandman that sowed good seed in the field slept, Matth, 13. 24, 25.

3. From

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3. From the ignorance and darkness of the mind, of professors, Rev. 9. 2. those Locusts were false teachers, which came out of the smoke of the bottomless pit.

Use 1. If in St. *John's* time there were so many mists of errors; this re-proves such men, as when they see such variety of opinions in Religion, do sit down till all men be agreed; but doth St. *John* make this use of it? *Many false Prophets are gone out into the world*, therefore sit down till there be none but true Teachers? No, but rather makes this use of it; to try the spirits of their Ministers, because *many false Prophets are come into the world*.

2. This may teach us not to wonder, although many false Prophets be gone out in these days, in the light of the Gospel, seeing they durst look such glorious light in the face as were St. *John*, and *Paul*, in those days: there is not such power of godliness in the hearts of Professors; but Christians now are given to much worldliness, and many rest in security, therefore wonder not though the face of the earth be overspread with heresies.

3. This should teach professors to take heed of opening a door to false Prophets. Take heed of ignorance in your judgement, of ambition and sensuality this is the smoke of the bottomless pit.

4. Try the spirits of false Prophets in these days, and take not up every instruction at the first blush, but try them" there are sundry spirits of false Prophets; you shall find in Popery a spirit of presumption, doubt, despair, hypocrisy, not one point in Popery by is carried on some of those wings.

1. They teach a man cannot be assured of salvation, this is doubting; yet a man may merit salvation, this is presumption: they worship stocks and stones.

2. The spirits of *Arminians* are a spirit of bitterness towards the brethren, a spirit of emulation, of disloyalty to their Prince, of liberty and security.

3. Among the Separatists you shall find a spirit of unconformity and whoredom.

4. There is a doctrine of faith and free grace, which doth undermine the doctrine of Jesus Christ, Rom. 8. 2, 3. the doctrine of free grace is maintained to free a man from prayer, preaching, and any Christian duty that God hath

ordained to maintain grace in a man; but doth not *David* pray God to *create in him a new heart, and to renew a right spirit within him*, Psal. 51. 10. therefore a man ought to pray that he may have the spirit of God quickened in him; this doctrine of faith and free grace, doth secretly withdraw a man from the Ordinances of God.

Lastly, There is a spirit of common Protestants, which fashion their Religion according to the world, they have respect only to their profit and ease, they follow the course of the Court and Country.

I JOHN 4. 2.

Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God.

IT is not rightly translated (*come*) for many false Prophets did believe that Christ was *come in the flesh*, as the Disciples of *Balaam*, and the *Nicolaitans*, *Hymeneus*, and *Philetus*, but it should be rather translated thus, instead of *Christ come in the flesh*, *Christ veiled over with human frailties*.

Doct. *That the people of God may well discern the spirit of their Ministers, by the confession which their spirits make of Christ come in the flesh.*

What is it to confess?

There is a threefold confession in Scripture.

1. To

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1. To acknowledge the truth, doctrine, and worship of Christ, even before Rulers, Matth. 32. 35. to confess, is to profess, to bear witness of the grace of Christ.

2. There is a condition of a man's Ministry, as it is said of *John*, Joh. 1. 20.

3. There is a confession of a man's work, Tit. 1. 16. He that confesseth Jesus Christ, is to confess him to be a Saviour, Matth. 1. 21. Christ as the anointed of the Lord, who is made the Priest, Prophet, and King, Jesus Christ the second Person in the Trinity, Jesus Christ came in the flesh, which is a great mystery, 1 Tim. 3. 16.

What is it for the spirit of a Prophet to confess Christ Jesus? By spirit is not meant the soul nor body, 1 Thess. 5. 23. but the inclination both of soul and body seasoned by God; or else it is carnal, sensual, and devilish: when the spirit of a Minister, that is, the bent both of soul and body, the inclination of the whole man doth hold forth Christ Jesus; that is the mighty saving power of Christ revealed in human infirmities: What is *Paul's* mean-

ing, when he saith, *I desire to know nothing*, 1 Cor. 2. 3, 4. He means he desires to express nothing in his life and doctrine but Christ Jesus revealed in the flesh, in human infirmities: when the *Corinthians* sought a sign of Christ in him, he acknowledgeth that for his outside he was weak; but yet he did express the mighty saving power of Christ crucified in his Ministry, 2 Cor. 13. 3, 4, 5. and he tells the *Galatians*, *They know, that through the infirmities of the flesh, he preached the Gospel at the first*, Gal. 4. 13, 14, 15. Was any doctrine weakly delivered? he speaks of his bodily presence, for in his life he shewed such a mighty power of Christ, as they looked at him as an Angel of God, yea, they did so affect him, that if it were possible they would have plucked out their eyes to have done him good.

Reas. 1. This cannot come from man's nature, for man's spirit comes short of it, Phil. 2. 20. every man seeks his own, *Demas* hath forsaken Christ and embraced this present world, 2 Tim. 4. 10. Some men look too high, they look to their own profits and preferments in the world, and account the seeking to save souls, a matter not pertaining to them; if they preach, they preach but some moral discourse, which sends away those that are looking towards the ways of grace with spirits more daubed: the mighty saving power of Christ Jesus is not to be found in their Ministry.

2. It's not from the spirit of Satan, for this spirit far exceeds his spirit, he cries down Christ Jesus, Ezek. 13. 22. he speaks with envy against Christ, therefore it must needs be *the Spirit of God that confesseth Christ Jesus come in the flesh*.

Use 1. To teach God's people to be well acquainted with the Lord Jesus, or else they will not be able to discern of the spirit of their Minister in doctrine, life, and carriage; it is an usual sinful vanity of God's Saints, to express their carnal excellencies before men, the Apostle complains of the *Galatians*, that they made a fair shew in the flesh: they that make a fair shew in the flesh, when they come to suffer they will not hold out, their spirits will not bear it; a Christian should say of those outward things, as *David* of *Saul's* armour, if any man will come after Christ, he must deny himself, his wisdom, life, and carnal excellency; God puts honour upon many Christians, and gives them carnal excellency, but they must take heed that they do not darken the power of the Lord Jesus Christ thereby.

2. Of trial of our estates: consider whether the bent of our carriage doth hold forth the Lord Jesus in human infirmities: God is not affected with our human excellencies, we best please him, when we shew forth the hidden man of the heart, this the Apostle exhorts women to do, 1 Pet. 3. 3, 4.

Isa. 52. 53. there was no form or beauty in Christ, why he should be desired.

3. If there were so many false Prophets in St. *John's* time, then this reproves
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the Papists, that are burdened with traditions, Col. 2. 20. they much adore Venerable Antiquity, as they call it; true indeed, *a hoary head is a crown of glory*; but it is when it is found in a way of righteousness.

4. Labour now especially to discern the spirits of your Ministers, for many a man makes a fair shew, hath a fair outside, but nothing within him but rottenness: many again have a fair outside, and as for their inside are like empty shells, they have no flower of godliness, Col. 2. 22, 23.

I JOHN 4. 3.

And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God: this is that spirit of Antichrist, whereof you have heard that it should come, and even now already is in the world.

Doct. *That the spirit of every Prophet, that holds not out the mighty power of Christ veiled with human frailties and infirmities, is not of God but Antichrist.*

He doth not say every Prophet, or every Person, for a good Prophet may express much weakness, but he saith *every spirit*; whatsoever spirit is in a Prophet that doth express Christ Jesus: if any spirit shall not acknowledge *Christ come in the flesh*, as the spirit of *Menander* did not, such a *spirit is not of God, but of Antichrist*.

1. If a man doth not express the truth of the Lord Jesus in his Ministry, but breaths such error in his doctrine as doth overthrow the Lord Jesus, such *is not of God*, Joh. 14. 17. & 16. 15. If a man speak truth, and not saving truth, but only moral truths, he doth not press the saving power of the Lord Jesus, he expresseth a spirit of morality, which is not to be disliked; but he doth not hold forth the saving power of the Lord Jesus; and a man must not only express the saving power of Christ, but the saving power of *Christ come in the flesh*; do you see a man revealing Christ in Moral writings, in tinkling cymbals of man wisdom, if his spirit relish nothing but affected eloquence, his spirit is of Antichrist.

2. Do you see the spirit of a Prophet savour of ambition, pomp, and delicacy? this is the spirit of Popery, this doth not hold forth the Lord Jesus.

3. If a man's doctrine do hold forth the Lord Jesus in a tyrannical manner, making the hearts of those sad whom God would not have made sad, such do not hold forth Christ.

Reas. Because the whole carriage of the frame of spirit is clean contrary to the spirit of the Lord Jesus; for though he be veiled with human frailties, Joh. 14. 6. *Yet he is the way, the truth, and the life*, Christ Jesus riding upon the Colt of an Ass, he came not in any outward magnificence; when the people would have made him King, he said, *My Kingdom is not of this world*, he did not tyrannize over his people, but he gathers into his arms those that go astray.

Why doth the holy Ghost say, *That the spirit that doth not confess Christ Jesus, is the spirit of Antichrist?* He is called Antichrist, *quasi anti-Christum*, it is called the spirit of Antichrist, because it is against Christ, contrary to Christ; and this spirit makes way to the errors of Antichrist.

2. Because it doth make cold the spirits of people, it makes iniquity to abound, Matth. 24. 11, 12.

3. Because while Ministers do pump out the doctrine with Heathenish rights, they have a special care to feed themselves as *Demas*.

Use 1. This should teach Ministers what frame of spirit they should hold forth, when they take upon them such an holy and heavenly profession; if they would approve their hearts to God and his people, they must hold forth the Lord Jesus Christ in human simplicity, though men cannot so

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well try the doctrine of their Ministers, yet they may try their spirits; *Paul* desired to know nothing, 1 Cor. 2. 2. that is, to express nothing in his life and doctrine, but Christ Jesus veiled with human frailties.

Use 2. A ground of much consolation, when their hearts can bear them witness, that God hath given them a Spirit of saving Truth, not to deliver their doctrine in carnal excellence, seeking high matters but in human simplicity.

3. This reproveth men of an Antichristian spirit, who content themselves with outward flourishings; they know not what hurt they do to the Church of God in so doing.

4. This may direct the people of God, narrowly to watch the spirits of the Ministers, as they would be freed from Popery, affect not flourishing Eloquence, affect not him that hath a tyrannical spirit, or him that delivers only Moral truths; and let the people of God labour to have their hearts filled with a spirit of truth, and the saving graces of God's Spirit.

Doct. *That the spirit of Antichrist was come into the world in St. John's time, and as in St. John's time, so in St. Paul's time also.*

He speaks of the mystery of iniquity, that Antichrist did work in his time, 2 Thess. 2. 7.

There are three things in the body of Popery:

1. A spirit breathing in the doctrine, worship, and discipline; the same was shining in the Apostles time.

1. For the doctrine, there was a spirit of error in their foundation, and wrought mightily at that time in their hearts, so that men durst not trust the grace of Christ, as if there were not safe holding upon naked Christ; but the Apostle doth utterly inveigh against such, Gal. 5. 3, 4, 5. saith he, *either trust God for all or nothing*; distressing of grace, or depending on something, in nature or grace received, are the rocks upon which so many souls suffer, shipwreck in Religion at this day.

2. There is a spirit of arrogancy, contempt of Magistracy and Government, Jude vers. 8. looking at the Pope as the Sun in the Firmament; this was flourishing in the Apostles time, and now also.

2. There is a spirit that breatheth in their worship:

1. A spirit of superstition, Col. 2. 18. men at that time worshipped Angels, thus the Papists at this day; but they have more Angels and Saints, to which they cleave to rather than Christ, they did begin to worship Images, 1 Joh. 5. 21. Therefore *John* blesseth his babes from them: men departed from God, and clave not only to creatures, but the works of men's hands; the same spirit ruleth at this day: there was a spirit of hypocrisy, a shew of Religion, without the mighty power of the Lord Jesus shewed in any performance, Col. 2. 23. they had many things to draw their bodies, and they durst not come to the Lord Jesus, but they must have some Saint or Angel to come to him; they did invent courses, the Lord did not require, this the Apostle calls a shew of Religion, which is hypocrisy: and so at this day among the Friars, they have a shew of Religion; they take up worships which God doth not require, of which it may be said, *Who required those things of you?* the *Galatians* did observe days, and months, and years, therefore the Apostle is afraid that he hath bestowed his labour in vain upon them, chap. 4. 10, 11.

3. What was the spirit of their discipline and government? they did affect primacy; the Apostles were no sooner removed out of the world, but this spirit began to spring up.

2. That the spirit did affect and exercise tyranny, casting out of the Church such Ministers as were more faithful, 3 Epist. Joh. 9, 10. *Diotrophes*

would not receive *John* himself, nor his brethren; nor would suffer those that would: the spirit hath been in the Church of *Rome* from that day to this. A second part of their tyranny was, in iposing upon them un-profitable

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profitable courses, unprofitable they were because they did perish in the using, Col. 2. 20. to 22.

3. There was a spirit of covetousness in Ministers, they did not favour the things of God; but did relish wealth and ambition, Jude 11. they follow the ways of sin, as *Cain* did. In *Cain* there was first hypocrisy, he offers a sacrifice, and when he saw his brothers sacrifice accepted, being offered in faith, and his not, there arose in him a spirit of wrath, which ended in bloodshed; such was the spirit of Popery in Queen *mary's* days. Some walk in the ways of *Balaam*, the ways of covetousness, putting stumbling blocks before the people, and that for covetousness sake. Thirdly, some have the gainsaying spirit of *Korah*, they gainsay the Ordinances of God; like as he rose up against *Moses* and *Aaron*; the spirit breathing in Antichristian teachers at this day, was hatched in the Apostles' time. There was a spirit of Schism in the Apostles' time, some saying, *I am of Paul*, and *I of Apollo*, &c. 1. Cor. 1. 12. and so at this time among the Papists, Jude 19.

Use 1. See the dilience of Satan to sow tares, in in the Apostles' times, therefore Ministers should watch diligently over their people, so that no such spirits be sown in their hearts; Satan will creep in by dissension, the affections being once distempered, the judgement will soon be corrupted. Wherefore Ministers and people should have a special care of dissensions; for if dissension creep in, then soon will you have your worship shut up, and then there will be a woeful waste of religion.

2. See the impudence of Heretics, that dare look God in the face, and rise up among his many bright and glorious lights in the Apostles' times; but let no Christians be discouraged by this, but rather the more encouraged to contend and strive for the faith of Christ.

3. This should teach scholars, not to take any ancient doctrine for truth till they have examined it; Though *Peter* was blessed for the testimony of Christ, one part of the day, yet cursed the same day; trust not any doctrine almost in regard of the antiquity of it; for it may be Antichristianism, though in the Apostles' times.

4. If we would be growing up in grace from day to day, take we heed of the spirit of Antichrist; of taking up the worship which God hath

not commanded, take we heed of hypocrisy, a spirit of Popery, a shew of devotion. Come we to the Sacrament, as if we would receive the power of the Lord Jesus veiled in much simplicity; take we heed of the spirit of *Cani*, *Balaam*, and *Korah*, gainsaying the Ordinances of God; but walk we stadfastly in that Religion we have received.

I JOHN 4. 4.

Ye are of God little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, then he that is in the world.

AS you had before in the former verse, a sign of the spirit of teachers so in these verses you have a sign of the spirit of hearers, which is double.

1. Sign taken from victory, which good hearers have got of, bad teachers, a good hearer is not overcome of bad teachers; but he soon finds them out, and overcomes them, and this is argued from a double cause.

1. They are of an higher off-spring then corrupt teachers are.

2. From the strength and excellency of their spirits, above the spirits of worldly teachers, *Greater is he that is in you, then he that is in the world.*

False teachers are set forth, 1. By their *Original*.

2. By their *false Doctrine*.

He that knoweth God, heareth us; there is another sign of good hearers, they

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did hear good teachers; on the contrary, *he that is not of God, heareth us not.*

You see here, 1. a difference between good and bad teachers, good and bad hearers; good teachers and good hearers *are of God*; on the contrary, bad teachers and bad teachers *are of the world*.

2. Here is a combat between good and bad teachers; and a victory also: *Good hearers do overcome bad teachers.*

3. You have the issue of the conflict; *good hearers overcome.*

4. The cause of the victory, is the divine descent and excellency of their spirit; *greater is he that is in good hearers, then in bad teachers.*

5. Here is a congratulation; *little children you are of God.*

Doct. *That there is in the Church of God two sorts of teachers, and two sorts of hearers, some of God, some of the world.*

Quest. *Why are good teachers and good hearers said to be of God?*

Ans. 1. They are of God because they are of a divine Original, they are born from on high, from the seed of the eternal God, Joh. 8. 23. *I am from above,*

saith Christ; and such are those that are regenerate, they are descended from God: whereas those that have no higher off-spring then flesh and blood are of the world.

2. They both favour and relish that doctrine, Rom. 8. 15. They that are of the Spirit of God, favour the things of God, such as hold forth the mighty power of God veiled in humane frailties, they are of God.

3. He that is of God, hath a place in the Church of God, 1 Cor. 12. 28. God sets the members of Christ in the Church, this is a work of God, vers. 18. not any member of Christ, but the Lord hath set him in that place, as all men in the world cannot fit one member to the body, but it would be both unprofitable and burdensome, except God join it to the body; so all the men in the world cannot put one member into the spiritual body, except God put it in; indeed those that are of the world, they have a place in the Church too, but yet they are not of the Church, they are superfluous humours, as Christ speaks of the Pharisees, Matth. 15. 13. as it is never well with the body till the noisome humours be purged out, so the Church will never be well, till those superfluous humours are cut off.

Use 1. This should teach us all, not to comfort our selves, because we are members of the Church, that we live under such a Minister, and are baptized, we must not here rest, as if we were of God, for all this while we go no further then flesh and blood, and worldly respects lead us, we savour all this time of the world: we may live civilly and painfully in our Calling, and yet have no higher plantation in the Church, no higher Offices then worldly: but what are we the better by this? What do noisome humours in the Church, what though we be ornaments and supportants, we are not the better for this, we are not all this while members of the Church, but labour we to be so in the Church as we may be of the Church, that we be in that place in which God hath set us, that we do daily derive sap and strength from the root Christ Jesus; we must thus try our hearts, and the spirits of others, and except this frame of spirit be in us, we are not true members of the Church.

And have overcome.

They overcome, therefore there is a *conflict*.

Doct. *That godly hearers and worly teachers have a conflict*, Jude vers. 3.

He shews them, that when corrupt teachers should break into the Church, he would not have godly hearers sit down, but contend and wrestle earnestly for the faith. *Paul* stirs up *Timothy* to war a good warfare, to hold faith and a good conscience, 1 Tim. 1. 18, 19. Which shews there are two things

for which good ministers and people, and worldly Ministers and people do contend for, *viz.* faith and a good conscience; else of faith thou mayst make shipwreck: and a good conscience you may turn away.

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Quest. *In what manner is this conflict acted between bad Ministers and good people?*

1. When bad ministers contend with good people to pervert their faith, 2 Tim. 2. 18, 19. or else they labour to destroy their good conscience; if they see good Christians make a conscience of keeping the Sabbath, of performing family duties, and abstaining from sin, bad Ministers will do as much as they can to pervert their faith, to destroy their good conscience; now the people of God contend for both.

1. They wrestle with Gos for a better faith, and a better judgement, Rom. 15. 30, 31. if they did so for *Paul*, then much more for themselves.

2. They do observe such as do corrupt their faith, and so are better armed against them, Rom. 1. 16, 17, 18. and so are the better able to overcome.

3. Good hearers do admonish bad teachers, to look better to their doctrine, Col. 4. 17. and conversation.

4. If none of these will prevail, they argue with them, and deal seriously with them, as the blind man, (and therefore no great Scholar) did reason with the *Pharisees* about Christ, and affirmed that he was a good man, because he did open the eyes of the blind, Joh. 9. 7. to 34. If all this will not prevail, then they avoid their doctrine, Matth. 22. 3, 4. and their leaven, Luk. 12. 1.

2. They have a care either to remove altogether from their Congregation; or else depart from them on the Sabbath day; *The Levites left their Suburbs and Possessions, and came to Judah and Jerusalem*, 2 Chron. 11. 14. and those that could not sell their possessions, took horses, and rid, whither the Word was faithfully and sincerely taught: when the *Shunamitish* woman asked her husband *Ass*, and a man to go with her to the Prophet, *he said, Wherefore wilt thou go to him today, it is neither a new Moon, nor Sabbath day*, 2 King. 4. 22, 23. which shews you, that it had been either new Moon or Sabbath day, she should have had liberty to go; and so should men live under bad Ministers, take their horse, and ride to such places, where the Word of God is faithfully taught; not that people must go from their Ministers, when they preach the Word of God in truth, &c.

Use. This shews how much people are left without excuse, who are ignorant and graceless, when their Ministers are so; he worse your Ministers are, the more should you contend to hold fast faith and a good conscience: you must not plead that you are ignorant men; are you more ignorant than the blind man? he was never book-learned, if you would shew your selves to be Christians, you must hold forth faith and a good conscience.

2. To exhort people to contend with their Ministers, when they are not of God.

Ye are of God little children, and ye have overcome them.

Doct. As there is a conflict between godly hearers, and world teachers, so godly hearers do overcome.

Who so is born of God doth overcome the world, Joh. 5. 4. the World not only of vain glory, and reproaches of covetousness, injury, and losses, but the world of false teachers.

In what doth this victory stand? A godly hearer overcomes worldly teachers.

1. By trying and examining their doctrine; and finding it to be false; if he do discover him, he overcomes him, Rev. 2. 2. by this means he puts them to shame, as those that have lost the field.

2. When they stand fast in the doctrine of God, truth and liberty of Christian profession, whatsoever those false teachers say, Jam. 4. 7. *Resist the Devil and he will fly from you*, so those false teachers, if you yield not to there doctrine, you overcome them, Gal. 2. 4, 5.

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3. When

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3. When God's servants grow so much the more fervent, resolute and zealous Christians, by how much the more they see themselves, opposed, as *David* when he danced before the Ark of the Lord, *Michal* the daughter of *Saul*, laughed at him, but saith *David*, *I will yet be more vile then them*, 2 Sam. 6. 20, 21. thus 1 Sam. 6. 10.

4. A man gets ground when he is able to prevail, either by avoiding them, or by being content to suffer extremity under them; by avoiding them, as the *Levites left their possessions, and went to Judah and Jerusalem*, 2 Chron. 11. 15, 16. when a man cannot overcome them, to hold constant to the death, and so *vincit qui patitur*.

Reas. 1. From the blood of Christ, whereby we are sprinkled, Luk. 1. 74. we are delivered from the hands of our enemies, vers. 68. they overcome by

the blood of the Lamb, Rev. 12. 11. Col. 2. 13, 14. Christ hath triumphed over them openly; so that we come to fight with wounded enemies, Christ hath broke the Serpents head; we come to finish that victory that Christ hath begun for us; were the Devil and ungodly teachers, let loose in their great strength, they would be too strong for us, but now their teeth are broken.

2. From the mighty power of God that dwells in God's children, *I write to you young men* (saith St. John) *because you have overcome the wicked one*, they are so ballasted with promises and threatenings as that they do not sin against God; if the Devil or the world promise them earthly things, they have a great many better promises.

3. From the glories of him that dwells in godly gearers, in respect of him that dwells in wicked teachers: Who is he that is greater in them? it is the Spirit of God, Ephes. 1. 22. 1 Cor. 3. 16. the Lord dwells in his children by his Spirit, he is greater then he that dwells in the world.

Wherein is greater?

Answ. In all those things whereby men achieve victory, counsel and strength, they are forewarn, Isa. 26. 5. To the obtaining of a victory there are required three things, wisdom, strength, and watchfulness.

For wisdom, *David* saith, *I have more wisdom and understanding then all my teachers*, Psal. 119. 98, 99, 100. God had so taught him by his Word, that he came to get more understanding then his old teachers, he doth not speak in this way of arrogance, only he doth comfort himself hereby, God teacheth wisdom secretly, Psal. 51. 6.

2. God puts a renewed strength and power into their souls, by which they are mighty to overcome all their enemies, Ephes. 6. 10. Phil. 4. 13. and whereby they are able to do and suffer all things.

3. They are greater in watchfulness; which when it is wanting, and only then they fall; they never want wisdom and strength, but then it is the fault of God's servants to wax fat, and to kick up the heel against God, and to forget the great things he hath done for them; and then though they have their armour about them, yet are they beat back by worldly teachers, and beat almost dead, so that you shall scarce see them pant: but now at this time, *greater is he that is in them, then he that is worldly teachers*, for they do rise again, and get greater strength and overcome mightily, Mark 14. 37, 38. *Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation*, so that when we have most need of watching and prayer, then are we least able; because *Peter* could not watch with our Saviour, therefore he fell away most grievously; which shews when God's servants put on a careless spirit, and do not make use

of their wisdom and strength they have received, they come to be soiled, yet there is a seed in them, by which they do overcome all their enemies, yea themselves also. Hence *David* breaks forth into praying of the Name of the Lord, Psal. 144. 1. the people of God are blessed with the blessings of God, Gen. 49. 19. they shall overcome at the last, in which respect they may well be said to be of his Tribe. How comes a man to overcome

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at his first conversion? God puts forth such a mighty arm of watchfulness, wisdom and strength, as that he overcomes the Devil, Luk. 11. 21. thus he overcomes the world, Gal. 1. 4. Joh. 15. 19. he is crucified to the world, and the world to him.

3. *He doth then crucify the flesh, with the affections and lusts*, Gal. 5. 24. so that he looks at them all as ignominious and deadly enemies, and if Christ shews himself thus wrong when a man comes on to grow, what will he do when Christians grow more strong in wisdom, grace, strength, and watchfulness.

Use 1. This reproves every one that excuseth himself, and thinks he may lawfully grow worse under bad and worldly teachers, they cannot do as they have done, they cannot walk on in that power and strength, which they did before; what is the reason, hath a worldly teacher overcome you? What a shame is it for a Christian man that hath the seed of God in him, to suffer himself to be overcome of worldly teachers? It is an ill sign for Christians to grow worse because of bad teachers: it is a great shame, that God should give place to the Devil, that the children of God should give place to the children of the world, and of the Devil.

2. This should teach all God's children to walk against all worldly teachers, with the wrcllings of God, with strong wrestlings, and not give over the conflict, for they are upon certain grounds of victory; if you stand but out, you shall overcome, for Christ hath overcome, and his promises and threatenings are greater then those of the world and of Satan.

3. A ground of much consolation and assurance to God's children of perseverance for if any thing could separate them from God, then it must be, either the world, the devil, or lusts of their own flesh, but none of these can. *Ergo*, Rom. 8. 15. to the end.

I JOHN 4. 5, 6.

They are of the world, therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them.

We are of God: he that knoweth God, heareth us; he that is not of God, heareth not us: hereby know we the Spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.

Doct. *That according to the several descents of Ministers, such are their several doctrines and several hearers.*

Quest. *What is it to be a worldly teacher?*

Ans. Teachers are said to be of the world, because it is their natural frame and temper to be worldly, Joh. 3. 23. There be several descents of Ministers, some have no other spirits then that they draw from their parents, but the Spirit of God comes down from God upon some Ministers, and makes them walk by another rule then worldly men do.

2. Worldly men favour the things of the world; if a man be of a divine Spirit, he relisheth divine matters, the saving of the souls of God's people, be relisheth the danger of sin; but a worldly teacher, he relisheth preferment and house-keeping, his spirit reacheth no higher.

3. The end of worldly teachers are worldly, Act. 20. 30. to draw disciples after them.

2. They have respect to their wages of unrighteousness; Ephes. 3. 9. they love only to live in pleasure, and keep good house, 2 Pet. 2. 13. But godly Ministers labour to make Disciples for God, Matth. 28. 19, 20, they make not disciples for themselves; for what is *Paul*? or what is *Apollon*? They do not seek their hearers goods, but their souls, they look for their pleasure in another world, 2 Cor. 11. 15. according to the descents of Ministers, such are their doctrine, and such as their hearers; worldly teachers speak of the World, and from worldly principles, and from worldly helps, and to Worldly ends.

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Quest. *What is meant by the world?*

Ans. The world is a mass of mankind, that lies in a state of corruption, such as fell in *Adam*, and never rise again, of whom it is said, *you are of the world*, Joh. 15. 19. wicked men are called the world, because they are but flesh and blood, Joh. 3. 6.

2. They favour those things that are of the world; every man speaks of matters in his own element.

3. Because most of the world are such, 1 Joh. 5. 19. the world lieth in wickedness, take up their rest therein.

4. Because they have their portion in this world, Psal. 17. 14. but a child of God looks for another inheritance, Immortal and undefiled, 1 Pet. 1. 4.

Again, those that are of the world would not have their conscience troubled, they would go home in peace; and possess all they have in peace; but those that are of God, they do relish the things of God, they cannot relish worldly teachers, because they speak not to the conscience, not shew how to lay hold of eternal life, *and to make their calling and election sure*, and if they speak of heavenly matters at any time, they see he speaks but with a cold affection, and therefore they go home, and do not affect them; but when they have a godly Minister preach, he being moved by a godly principle, his conversation is in heaven, Phil. 7. 20. he talks of heaven, Matth. 12. 35. *A good man out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth good things.*

Use. If Ministers would know their own spirits, let them consider what doctrine they deliver, what end they aim at, and what act their hearers, and so by this means, they will easily discern their own spirits.

1 JOHN 4. 7, 8.

Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth, is born of God, and knoweth God, &c.

IN the words and the verse following, the Apostle exhorts his hearers, and himself to natural love one of another, the occasion is from what he had delivered, vers. 6.

In the words, 1. An exhortation to mutual love between Ministers and people.

2. A reason to press this on them:

1. From the Original of their love, that is, *from God.*

2. From the Estate of such who love, *they are born of God, and know God.*

3. From the evil estate of such as do not love, *they know not God: this is proved by an argument from God's Nature; for God is love.*

Doct. That it is the part of godly Ministers, to exhort themselves and their godly hearers to mutual love, both the people to love their Ministers, and the Ministers their people.

When our Saviour was about to leave the charge of the souls of his people to *Peter*, he asked him three several times, whether he loved him, Joh. 21. 15, 16, 17. that so out of his abundant love to Christ, he might feed his sheep, 1 Thess. 5. 13. esteeming him, they would love him for his work sake. Heb. 10. 24. the Apostle exhorts them to provoke one another to love, Heb. 13. 1. whatsoever happens, he would have brotherly love to continue, so St. *Peter* exhorts, 1 Pet. 1. 22.

Reas. 1. From the Covenant that stands between Ministers and people they are partakers of one baptism, members of one and the same body, 1 Cor. 10. 17. & 1 Cor. 12. 27. therefore they should enlarge themselves one to another, Ephes. 4. 16. they do receive increase by mutual edifying, they should love one another, because God hath incorporated them into one body.

2. Because

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2. Because they do not receive mutual edification, except all be done in love, for all edification is wrought by love. Knowledge puffeth up, but love edifieth, therefore let all things be done in love; mutual love is both profitable and comfortable.

3. Want of love, is the souring of Minister's spirits, 2 Cor. 12. 20. to be heavy when he sees the people envying one another; when the body is full of swellings and inflamations, the medicines and plaisters laid on do not heal, a man must first allay the inflamations; so when a Minister sees swellings amongst his people, what he preacheth is split upon the ground.

4. If people walk not in mutual love, the Minister shall lose his portion, 1 Thes. 5. 13. from them, he shall lose his estimation among them, for they will not profit by any Ordinance of God, but wax cold.

Use 1. This exhorts Ministers to make it their main and principal work to allay swellings, and to knot together all the Members of a Congregation in one spirit, and mutual love, as God knits them together in one body; as we desire to grow up together in the graces of God's Spirit, let us love one another; where there is no love, there is no edifying, all graces fall short of edifying, where love is wanting, 1 Cor. 13. 1, 2.

2. To exhort the people of God to receive this exhortation of love, not to suffer any dissension to be found among them, Heb. 13. 17. you cannot be inflamed with hatred, but your Minister shall lose his portion of love.

Doct. *That the springing of our love from God, should move Ministers and people to mutual love.*

Love is the chief lesson Christ gave to his Disciples, when he went out of the world, Joh. 13. 35, 36. 2 Tim. 1. 13. a man may as soon lose his inheritance in the Lord Jesus, as lose his love to his brethren, if God set love in my soul, and God unset it, I shall destroy the work of God in my soul.

Use. Take heed of wrath; if love be of God, whence then is hatred? that is from the enemy god, *Ephes.* 4. 26, 27. if we keep leaven long, it will sour, so this anger will degenerate into hatred.

Object. You will say, *You will not hate your brother, but yet you will have nothing to do with him; when a man affects not Communion with his brother, nor communication of good to him, such a man doth hate his brother.*

2. If we would have any comforts in our hearts, we must have a care, that nothing that befalls betwixt us and our brethren should take away our love from them; if we suffer a fire of wrath to kindle in us, we do as much as in us lies to destroy our own souls, *Cant.* 7. 7, 8. *Much water cannot quench love*, therefore love is an heavenly fire, hatred a fire from hell. *Majus lumen extinguet minor.*

Doct. *That the love to our brethren, is a pledge of our birth-right,* *Joh.*

13. 34.

Reas. 1. It is the nature of God, and by this means thou partakest of the Divine Nature, *Rom.* 5. 5.

2. Love is a fruit of faith, *Joh.* 17. by which we receive Christ, *Gal.* 5. 6.

Use 1. This condemns such a deep prodigality as suffer love to decay; so much you lose of your love to your brethren, so much you lose of your love to God, and so much you lose of the evidence of your inheritance.

2. Preserve your love to your brethren, and you preserve your inheritance; your brotherly love is a pledge of your inheritance.

3. Of comfort to such souls, as abound in their love to the brethren; so much love, so much grace, so much hope of an everlasting inheritance: if your love decays, your faith and hope of salvation decays.

Object. *But a little thing frets my soul, and I am not so soon healed being fret-*
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ted; some flesh is hard to heal; so is it with some men's spirits: What shall I do to uphold my brotherly love?

Ans. 1. Keep your love to God, and so you shall preserve your love to your brethren; forgive your brethren, and God will forgive you, *Matth.* 28. *ult.*

2. Keep your hearts clean; love will long rest in an unclean heart, *1 Pet.* 1. 22. because love is an heavenly fire.

1 JOHN 4. 8.

He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love.

Doct. *That according to our love, or want of love to our brethren, such is our knowledge, or want of knowledge of God.*

What is it to know God? The Apostle bears witness of the *Corinthians*, 1 Cor. 1. 5. that they abound in knowledge, so that they fall short of no gift, yet 1 Cor. 1. 10. he complains that there is schism among them; therefore there may be knowledge of God, and yet want of love to our brethren.

Answ. The knowledge that is there spoken of, is a knowledge that enlightens the understanding that puffs up and swims in the brain, it sink, not into their hearts and affections.

2. There is a knowledge that reacheth to the heart and life of a man, a man is said not to know, when he doth not acknowledge, Psal. 1. 6. *The Lord knows the way of the righteous*, the Lord approves, affects and delights in their way; when a man doth not regard, he is said not to know, Matth. 7. 23. *Known unto God are all his works*, Act. 15 18.

3. There is a knowledge that doth express itself in action, *Know you the God of thy Fathers*, 1 Chron. 18. 9. 1 Sam. 2. 12. *the sons of Eli they knew not God*, though Priests; yet knew not the way of Religion, because they were wicked children, without yolk; they are not acquainted with the ways of the Lord.

Reas. 1. From the nature of God both in his attributes and works, both express in abundance, that those that know God, cannot but love their brethren; for no attribute doth so much express the nature of God, as this of love.

2. If we know God, and be acquainted with God, there will be some likeness between God and us; if we see God loving godly Ministers, and hearers, so will we, Gal. 6. 10.

3. From the impression which the love of God makes in our hearts, Rom. 5. 5. our hearts are like to a stone-wall in a cold day, the wall is cold always, but warmed on a Sun-shine day.

4. From our love to God: What causeth you to love God? if for this, because he pardons your sins, and saves your souls, this a man may do by a spirit of false love; he that loves God truly, will love him for his goodness, not only to us, but to others.

Use 1. This may be a ground of trial of our love and fellowship with God; if you find in your hearts an unfeigned love to godly Ministers; if you make God's servants the men or your delight, you need no better evidence from heaven, that you are beloved of God.

Object. *I am acquainted with many godly Ministers and good men.*

Answ. Consider, whether thou lovest them for thy own sake, because they may be helpful to thee, this is not from self-love: but dost thou love a Minister

or a Christian for his goodness sake, for his likeness to God, for his graces and virtues? this is a sign thou lovest him not for thy sake, but God's.

2. This exhorts every such soul as desires fellowthip with God, to be acquainted with God, to love their brethren; you come to the Ordinances of God, and you find not Christ; you come into Christian Communion,
and

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and find little comfort; know this, that according to your love to your brethren, such is God's love to you; if there be any strangeness in you to any brethren, this will make God strange to you, all the affections we find in prayer, in reading, preaching, or any Ordinance of God, they will prove but delusions, if we love not our brethren.

1 JOHN 4. 9.

In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.

THe second Argument to move us to brotherly love, is taken from the example of God the Father's love to us ward.

A third argument is taken from the benefit which such, receive, which walk in love among themselves.

The benefit is twofold:

1. They have fellowship with God, they see the face of God, and find God dwelling within them, to vers. 16.

The second benefit is, they grow up to perfection, without love there is no growth of grace.

These words then contain an argument to move us to love our brethren, and it's taken from God's love; Wherein we have

1. The manifestation of *God's love*.
2. The Object, *towards us*.
3. The Evidence thereof, *because he sent his Son into the world*.
4. The Place whereunto he sent his Son, and that is, *into the world*, as also with the end, *that we might live through him*.

In this was manifested the love of God towards us.

Doct. *That God doth not only bestow love upon his people, but it his good pleasure to manifest it, Rom. 5. 8. Psal. 98. 2, 3. Isa. 52. 10.*

There is the mighty power of God by which he overcomes all our sins, by which he redeemeth us, Luk. 3. 6. *All flesh shall see the Salvation of our*

God, yea more then all flesh, for it is manifested to the Angels, Luk. 2. 13, 14. and as to angels, so to men's conscience, Rom. 5. 18. Gal. 2. 20. 1 Cor. 2. 20. God commonly gives us no gifts, but he is willing his Spirit should shew unto us his love.

3. The love of God is manifested to the rest of mankind, Rev. 3. 9.

Reas. From God's glory, Luk. 2. 14. the high promises of God were in their mouths; *Jerusalem* shall be comforted, because God will make bare his arm in the redemption of his people, Isa. 52. 9, 10.

2. If God did not reveal our salvation to us, it would be no comfort to us, but when it is manifested, it is a ground of joy.

3. It's a means to draw on many men into the unfeigned love of God, which also might be left in darkness, Zech. 8. 23. When the love of God is manifested to the children of men, it doth raise them up to seek God, Cant. 5. 16. therefore the daughters of *Jerusalem* are provoked to seek Christ Jesus with the rest of his people; when they discern what a gracious God he is to them, that cleave to him in a conjugal affection, Psal. 106. 45. this encourageth them that are coming on in the ways of grace, and discourageth them that do not, and convinceth them that are of the synagogue of Satan, who know that he is the Lord.

Use 1. This should teach the servants of God not to bear an hidden love, but a manifest love to Christ; now indeed are the times, wherein men need not be a manifest love to their love; but if times grow hard, then men will come to Christ by night, as *Nicodemus* did: but God requires, if he manifest his love to your conscience, that you should make it known to the world, and not be like *Joseph of arimethea*, and *Nicodemus*, Joh. 9. 38, 39. if

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we be ashamed of him in the world, he will be ashamed of us before his Father, Mark 8. 38. when Christ hung on the Cross, *Joseph came in boldly to Pilate, and asked the body of Jesus*, Mark 15. 43. which shews you, that where there is truth of grace, though it be close at the first coming on, yet when there is danger indeed, every man will put forth himself to bear witness to the truth.

Doct. That God bare love to us before he sent his Son to reconcile us to himself.

The sending of Christ into the world, was out of free love, for his love moved him to send Christ, Rom. 5. 8. Joh. 3. 16. Christ saith *God so loved world that he sent his only begotten Son into the world, &c.*

Reas. He died for us to make an atonement for us, Christ did not come unspent, he was sent before he went, Heb. 5. 45.

Quest. *How can this be, seeing the death and blood of Christ is the Original of our reconciliation?* Rom. 5. 10. Rom. 3. 24, 25. Ephes. 4. 16.

Answ. 1. Christ by his blood wrought reconciliation, because God loved us before, yet we loved not him before, for there must be a mutual fellowship in reconciling us to God, 2 Cor. 5. 16. not so much in reconciling himself to the world, in the 20. vers. he faith *we pray you in Christ's stead*, which shews you that Christ's blood did not so much reconcile God to us, as us unto God, that we seeing the blood of Christ shed for us, we might be stirred up to love God, who out of the abundance of his compassion takes a course, that we may be brought unto him.

2. Because though he did bear love to us before, yet his love was secret, and he did not break forth into a manifestation of his love to us, until he sent his Son into the world, though God did love us within everlasting love, Jer. 31. 3. yet God did not manifest it to our conscience, neither could it stand with his Justice so to do, until he had given his Son the Lord Jesus Christ to die for us.

Quest. *What kind of love was it, that God bare to the world in that he sent his Son, Tit. 3. 5. was it his love towards mankind, by which he did love the whole world, or a peculiar love which he bare to the people of the Election of grace?* Joh. 3. 16. *The Arminians say, that he bare a love to the world, and this love was general to all, before the sending of Christ, and therefore all may be saved.*

The truth is, that God bare a love to the world, a *φιλανθρωπία* reaching to all, but he bare an ancient love to his own people, had he only bore a general love (as they say) all men might have perished, for if God sent his Son, that *whosoever believed, should be saved*, was it in the will to believe or not? yet say they, he gave them means, but they might will or not, if this was a general love, then there was a greater love, then the sending of Christ, which is contrary to Scripture, Greater love then this hath no man.

Use 1. Let us magnify the love of God to us in Christ, we esteem much of ancient love, it (like wine) is the best, God loved us, before he did send Christ, Pet. 1. 12. before the foundation of the world was laid, Jer. 31. 3. This love, was without reason on our parts, for we were enemies to him.

2. This exhorts us to accept this love, shall God send his Ambassadors, 2 Cor. 1. 20. and shall we still stand out with God?

3. If God so loved the world, we ought to love one another.

Doct. *God sending his only begotten Son into the world, is a manifest token of God's love to us.*

Joh. 3. 16. *God so loved the world, this love is manifest.*

1. If we consider, that God doth not only send us bodily bread every day, but the bread of eternal life, not so much the gift, as the giver himself.

2. Consider upon what terms we stood with God, when he sent us his
Son?

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Son? Even then when we provoked him to the face, and were enemies to his Majesty, Rom. 5. 8.

3. Consider we that God looked not at the seed of Angels, but the seed of man, God passed over Angels, left them in chains of darkness, Heb. 2.16. but of man he said, *Shall he fall and not rise again?*

Again, consider we were strangers and enemies to God; dead in sins and trespasses, and so we did neither desire nor deserve love, yet us he hath reconciled, Col. 1. 21. Ephes. 2. 4, 5.

2. Consider Christ who was sent, had it been a morsel of daily bread, it had been a great mercy, but in Christ he sent an horn of salvation, Psal. 89. 19. Psal. 100. 1.

2, Consider Christ, not as a servant, but a Son, and a *well-beloved Son in whom he was well-pleased*, and such a Son as thought it no blasphemy to think and say, *he was equal with God*, Phil. 2. 5, 6.

3. Consider whither God sent his Son, into the world, our Salvation could not be wrought in heaven, it was no place for suffering, no place for a man to be born in; therefore needful that Christ should come down.

2. Consider, the world did not put on Christ that honour which was due unto him, but rather dishonour, a Crown of thorns.

3. Consider, the more the world knew him, the more they hated him; in heaven they adore and honour him; *But you have known me and hated me*, saith he, Joh. 15. 18. *This is the heir come, let us kill him.*

Use 1. Learn hence to acknowledge the Divinity of the nature of Christ, he is called *the only begotten Son of God*, therefore of the same nature with God, Phil. 2. 5, 6.

2. This shews you the love of the Father to us, in that he sends his Son to be a ransom for us; when all other signs fail you, if God give you his only Son, that is a true token of God's love, Eccles. 9. 1.

3. This shews us the woeful misery that we naturally lie in, when as Christ must come down from heaven, or else we could not have been saved, no man nor angel could do it.

4. This should stir us all up to accept of this love of God, that God sends forth such a manifest token of his love to us; and shall not we accept of it? We should accept a small gift from a Prince.

5. To persuade us all, that if God gives Christ, he will deny us nothing, Rom. 8. 32. we may go boldly to the throne of grace, and he will fill our mouths.

6. This should cause us to return back again to God, manifest pledges of our love to him, let us give body and soul to God, since he hath not been wanting in his love to us; doth not love require love? Psal. 116. 12. Train we up our children to know God; and draw we as many as we can to know God: there is no greater dishonour to God, then to refuse this manifest love of God. The end for which God sent his Son into the world, that we might live through him.

Doct. *That our life was the end why God sent Christ: Or thus; God therefore sent Christ, that we might live by him, Joh. 1. 10, 11.*

Quest. *What is the life that Christ came to procure us?*

Ans. 1. A life of God's favour; that is the chiefest life for the soul of a Christian, the manifestation of God's love to his conscience: though God loved us before he sent Christ, yet we know not so much; there is a life of justification, Rom. 5. 18. that is, the pardon of our sins.

2. *In his favour is life, Psal. 30. 5.* The Sun is the life of many Vermine, take away the Sun, and they die, as flies; but when the Sun shines in its season, they live: let God take away the Sun-shine of his favour from us, we can neither pray nor preach a life of grace, of holiness, Prov. 16. 14, 15. Rom. 8. 2. Ephes. 2. 4, 5. there it life enough in Christ, to procure us life.

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3. There is a life of glory, of which it is said, *That Christ's sheep hear his voice, Joh. 10. 27, 28.* and Christ gives to them eternal life, 1 Cor. 15. 4. Joh. 5. 24, 25, 29. so many whose souls receive life by the Word of the Gospel, their bodies shall rise to eternal life.

How did Christ procure us this life?

He procured this by his death, Rom. 5. 9, 10. while we were yet enemies, we were yet reconciled by the death of Christ.

2. We received life of grace and holiness by his means, Act. 2. 27, compared with 9. 32, 33. *I will pour out my Spirit of grace upon all flesh.* Our sins did separate between God and us: God saw nothing in us wherefore he should love us, but Christ bearing the burthen of our sins, hath reconciled us unto him, 1 Pet. 1. 3, 4, 5.

Reas. 1. It was impossible our corrupt nature should fulfil any law of God, Rom. 8. 4. Gal. 3. 21.

2. The glory of Christ requires, that as the Father quickeneth, so he also, Joh. 5. 21.

Use 1. This shews us what our condition is without Christ, if God send Christ, that we might live through him, then in God's sight without Christ, we are dead, as dead flies, dead worms in a cold frost; we are utterly dead without true peace, we are like thorns that give a blaze; but we lie down in sorrow, Isa. 35. 11. Christ is our life, without him we can do nothing, we are not able to put forth any spiritual action.

2. Let us try our Estates, Whether can we say that God sent his Son into the world, and hereby manifested his love to us? Do you live in God's sight? without him we are but dry bones, until we can say we live in Christ, we cannot say we have any sense of God's favour.

3. It teacheth such as have any evidence of faith in Christ, Joh. 10. 10, to come into God's presence, as dry bones, entreat God that he would so speak the word, as that those dry bones may live.

4. To teach all such as have received this manifest token of God's love, to acknowledge the Lord Christ to be their life, Phil. 1. 21. *For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain;* now *Paul* is crucified with Christ, Gal. 2. 20. and now for him to live is Christ; now every day he lives, he doth the more express Christ.

I JOHN 4. 10.

Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

THe love of God to us, was not procured by our love to him, but from his own good pleasure; he therefore loved us, because it pleased him: so that in these words, we have the freeness of Christ's love, he loved us freely, because *he loved us*, when we loved not him, we did not begin in love to him, but he to us; and this is set out by the effect and end of it, the pardon of our sins.

What is that love God bare to us, before we loved him?

Answ. There is a threefold principle of love, which God magnifies and manifests to his people, before they loved him.

1. That love whereby he chose us to life, and to redeem us by Christ, 2 Tim. 1. 9. and the choice to life was not according to works, but free grace.

2. God's love in redeeming us by Christ, was before any love of ours to God, Joh. 3. 16.

3. His love prevailed us, by effectually calling us; drawing implies unwillingness, therefore it prevailed all good affections in us: he must draw us out of presumption, then out of despair.

Reas.

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Reas. 1. From the cause of our love, self-love is so riveted in our hearts, that we cannot love any, unless it be for some cause concerning us; a natural man, loves none any further then tends to profit or pleasure; but a Christian is enlarged to all God's children, he loves them all; and the ground of this is, because we know such to be incorporated into the same body with us, and so as we see them in some kind our own; and so we should never have loved God, unless we had found his love to us.

Object. *A Christian comes off freely to many offices of love to them, that love not him.*

Answ. True, but it is because he knows God can abundantly recompense it, they sometimes may lay down their lives for their brethren, and for the Truth; but they know that Christ hath done it for them before.

2. From the eternity of God's love, now Jer. 31. 3. an everlasting love can have no cause; the cause is always before the effect: no temporal thing can be the cause of an eternal love.

3. From the end of God's love, that he might bring us to walk in love, Ephes. 1. 4. Tit. 2. 14. The love of God to his people of old, is a fit precedent of his love to all his children, Deut. 7. 8, 9. compared with Deut. 9. 4, 5, 6.

Use 1. Reflect a Popish and Arminian conceit, that God chooseth none to life, but out of foreseen faith and good works, else he had chosen none to life; but this is a mercenary love: let a servant labour never so hard; yet he knows he shall be well paid at the year's end, and therefore it's servile love, this is that love which they would put upon God.

2. It exhorts all to begin betimes to love God; begin never so soon, God hath prevented us, Rom. 11. 35. it was an early love of *Josiah*, as twelve

years of age when he sought after God, but God's love was up before him; you cannot be in your love before him, though you begin as soon as you are warm in the womb; *John Baptist* was very early, when he leaped for joy in the womb, yet God's love was before him; an Angel had appeared to his Father, and had promised a blessing, before *John* was begotten.

3. To teach old people, if God have prevented them with love long before, how should this stir them up to love God, and to be humbled for the want of love to God, that hath loved them so long? Shall we be to seek in our love to God, and cleave to worldliness in our old times, and let God stay till our children be provided for? What an unworthy dealing is this, with God? This should exhort all God's servants that have had experience of God's love, to acknowledge the freedom of God's love. *Job* by God's testimony, was a man that feared God and eschewed evil: What saith the Devil, *Doth Job serve God for nought?* No, but though God had stripped him of all, as he did, yet he had shewed such marvellous love to his soul, as that he had just cause to love God forever, if God should not have bestowed on him one dram of wealth.

4. This should teach God's children, to be as observant in love to God's children as God is to them, to love them freely, to do kindness to them freely, *Psal. 16. 2, 3.*

Object. *If a man be thus free to others, he shall empty himself?*

Answer. Do you think that ever any, man served God for nought? Did *Jod's* care over the poor draw him dry? No, he multiplied it abundantly.

5. Comfort to all God's servants that have tasted of this love; he that loves you freely, loves you for ever, because his love stands not upon condition: he that loved us when we were enemies, will he hate us when we are acquainted with him, and reconciled? We shall not be worse then we were before; and if he loved us, because he would love us, his love will for ever remain.

Doct. *That the sending of Christ for our sakes was, a fruit not only of his love, but of his free love, Rom. 5. 8, 9.*

Herein

Herein is love, *Joh. 3. 16. God so loved the world,* implying there was a love of God that moved him to send Christ before we did believe, that believing on him, we might have mercy and salvation: Love is said to be free in two respects.

1. When love is granted, without any desert on their parts to whom it is granted, and then it is so much the greater, when there is no desert, no fitness of the persons that receive it, but rather the contrary, if men shall deserve our love, our love is not free; God's love is so free as that he sent his Son into the world to redeem us, when we did not deserve it, but rather wrath, Col. 1. 21.

2. Love is said to be free, when it is without condition, so that nothing on our parts, shall take away his love, Jer. 31. 34. *He will not remember their sins any more.*

Object. *But why then is faith required, Joh. 3. 16. & ver. 36. He that believes on the Son, shall have everlasting life?*

Answer. True indeed, there is condition required, but in what sort? It is this, That the same God that requires the condition, doth promise likewise, that he will work the condition; and therefore the love of God is free.

Object. *But we did bring something to God, that did make him deal thus graciously with us?*

Answer. Ezek. 36. 32, 33. the Lord doth shew mercy freely, without any condition on our parts, *But be ashamed and confounded O house of Israel.*

Object. *God requires faith on my part, but faith is a supernatural gift, nature cannot reach to it, he that believes shall be saved, but he that believes not shall be damned: This condemnation is unjust because it is not in my power to believe.*

Answer. He is condemned, because *light is come into the world, and men love darkness more then light.*

Reasons. 1. Is taken from the estate in which we lay before Christ was sent into the world, we were then strangers and enemies, Col. 1. 21. Mat. 5. 18. we were not fit to receive mercy, much less to deserve any.

2. This God did that the glory of his great Name might appear, Ephes. 1. 5, 6, 7. Deut. 7. 8. God did not love us, because we were many, but because it pleased him to love us: there is a great difference in the death of Christ, in respect of his own and the wicked; the benefit they have by Christ's death in this, that they partake of God's patience and bounty; for the same day that Adam sinned, he and his posterity should have died, Gen. 3. 15. But the benefit that the godly have, is, that we might live, and that we might all come to the knowledge of his grace, 2 Pet. 3. 9. Rom. 2. 4, 5. so that if they ask why God is patient to the world, it is for Christ's sake, Exod. 33. 1. to 5.

3. God sent Christ into the world, that so he suffering, his Elect might suffer, he growing, they might grow, and he dying they might die, Col. 2. 20. There is a difference between Christ's dying for the world, and for

the elect; He so died for the elect, as that he prayed that his death might be effectual to them, Joh. 17. 9, 20, 21. he prays for all them that shall believe in him, he prays not for the world.

Use 1. This refutes an error of the Papists, that Christ was equal in his love to all the world, and that without difference God sent his Son for the one as well as for the other; they say God doth not bestow his love without condition: this we deny.

2. This teacheth us that have pardon of sins, to acknowledge God's love, in that he sent his son freely, Rom. 5. 8.

3. A ground of comfort, if God so loved us, when we loved not him, then how much more being reconciled? Rom. 5. 8, 9, 10.

4. To teach those that have not found reconciliation with God, what course to take to be reconciled, 1 Joh. 2. 2. get the Lord Jesus Christ to be a Propitiatory Sacrifice.

Doct.

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Doct. *That Christ was sent of his Father to be a propitiation of our sins.*

What is meant by propitiation?

This word signifies four things:

1. It signifies a pledge, satisfaction, or redemption, or a ransom, Numb. 35. 31, 32. Heb. 12. 24. the blood of Christ being spilt for our sins, speaks better things then the blood of *Abel*, his blood cried for vengeance; Christ's that I might receive a ransom.

2. It signifies a gift to appease wrath, Gen. p. 20.

3. It signifies a surety to undergo wrath for another man, Prov. 21. 18. Rev. 12. 11.

4. It signifies a covering, not such a covering as the garment to the body, but a covering as a plaister, for the word signifies *rozen* or *pitch*, Gen. 6. 14. this keeps the Ark from the injury of the water; and it signifies sometimes to pitch as a man doth a wound: this blood of Christ will expiate and purge away all our sins, as a plaister doth a sore: God sent Christ so to plaister us, as to keep us from the ways of his wrath, and to purge away the filth of our souls.

Reas. 1. Taken from the insufficiency of other things, to take away sin, Heb. 10. 1. to 10. Psal. 40. 16, the blood of Bulls and Beasts could not satisfy God's wrath.

1. Because they are but finite creatures, and base things, it cannot be in reason, that such base creatures, worse then men, should be a propitiation for our sins.

2, Bulls and Goats never die willingly, but by force; and though sheep be most patient, yet did they but know what evil is towards them, they would be readier to run away, then come to the place of facrificing.

Reas. 2. Because of the disproportion of all other things, and the price of atonement: we by our sins have provoked God to infinite, displeasure; Now that gift which must: appease God's wrath, must be infinite, and that is only Christ Jesus.

Use 1. This holds forth unto us the wonderful, wisdom, justice, and grace of God that are met together; it was God's wisdom that he took such a course, as would reconcile us to himself, neither men nor Angels could have done it, wherefore when no creature would serve the turn, God sends his Son to suffer for us. Then see the grace of God, that he would send his Son to be a Propitiation for us, and to be a surety for us, to drink up all the dregs of his Father's wrath for us.

2. This shews the exact justice of God, though he be infinitely compassionate and gracious, yet he will be satisfied; and yet rather then the creature should perish in suffering, God in his infinite wisdom devised a mean, how all our sins should be done away.

2. This sets forth the wonderful miserable estate that we had plunged our selves into, so great, as that all the men in world, and all the Angels in heaven, because finite creatures, could not have made satisfaction.

3. This shews us what course to take to have our sins pardoned; if God hath sent his Son to be a Propitiation for our sins, we must take the same course that they did of old, Levit. 4. 4. we must confess all our sins, and offer up Christ, and intreat God that Christ's blood may speak better thing then the blood of *Abel*.

4. This may be a ground of trial, whether we have found Christ Jesus to be a Propitiation for our sins: see whether his blood hath been sprinkled on thy soul; so that now thou findest peace in thy soul.

But how shall I know whether I have found true peace, for there is a peace when the strong man armed keeps the house? Luk. 11.

Answ. Satan's peace is not a peace which passeth understanding, Phil. 4. 7. God's peace doth; when a man hath peace which passeth understanding, it is
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such a peace, as is careful to preserve it self, and rather then a man will lose it, he will lose all the world.

5. This is a comfort to all such souls, for whose sins Christ is a propitiation; he makes now the Father to be reconciled to them, and well pleased with them.

I JOHN 4. II.

Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

THis is the conclusion of the argument, stirring up to the love of one another; here heaven and earth as it were meet in one exhortation.

Doct. *Such love of God to us, is a president and pattern of the like love in us to our brethren.*

So as is described in the two former verses, set forth to be 1. a manifest love, vers. 9. Gal. 4. 4.

2. A bountiful and large love, he spared not his Son, he sent him out of his bosom into the world: a man will not send his son into an ill air.

3. When we loved not God, when we were enemies and strangers, he cast about how he might by sending his Son reconcile us to himself: this is free gracious love; so we should *love one another*, in manifest, bountiful, gracious love: see some Scripture pressing this president, Ephes. 5. 1, 7. if he hath *so loved us*, as he hath given himself an offering of a sweet savour, the more good offices should we do to God's people, expose our selves to injury for them, Ephes. 4. 32.

Reas. 1. This argument is of great force, as the Apostle applies it, both to the subject and object of this love.

1. In regard of us that are beloved of God; children should be like the parents, therefore the Apostle presseth the argument from our near conjunction with God, Ephes. 5. 1. and the resemblance that ought to be between God and us, Matth. 5. 44, 45. as we look to approve our selves and children of such a kind, gracious, tender hearted Father, so to be to our brethren.

2. In regard of us, as loved of God; there is an equity required in our giving, and receiving, Matth. 10. 8. as we have received love, so give, Matth. 18. 33, 34. *Oughtest not thou to have forgiven*, &c. ought we to be so rigorous to our brother, when God is so gracious to us?

3. From the just recompence of love we owe to God that hath loved us: where we sow more seed, we look for a more plentiful harvest, Matth. 25. 28. not to give God his own with advantage, is a part of injustice in us; our love cannot much reach to God, but as *David*, Psal. 16. 2, 3. 1 Cor. 12. 7. the members of the body serve for the help of the body, pour all God's

love upon his Saints: *David* inquires if there be any left of *Jonathan's* house, that he might shew kindness to, 2 Sam. 9. 2. the kindness of the Lord; as if *David* had been bound to it by the Lord.

2. Look at them that are to be loved, and they have received such love, we are to love them from the firmness of God's love to them, which we cannot reverse: therefore to be beloved of men and Angels. Numb. 23. 20. he hath blessed, and I cannot reverse it, my curses cannot pierce through God's blessing towards us: it's a vain thing to hate there where God hath blessed, we may say. How can I hate, where God hath not hated? He hath loved, and I cannot reverse it: it is not for the creature to be so sawey malepert to dare to bestow his hatred, where God his love and blessing: when *Isaac* had blessed *Jacob* the younger brother, Gen. 27. 33, 34. though *Esau* did entreat him, and sought it with tears, though his own affection went that way, yet he would not reverse it.

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3. From the danger that may befall our selves, if we love not where God hath loved, 2 Chron. 19. 2, 3. If the wrath of God hath gone out against his children, when they have loved where God hath hated; so when we hate where God hath loved, the wrath of God is gone out against us. What displeasure did befall *Jehoshaphat*, was he not a prosperous Prince? there were only some few ships broken in going to *Tarshish*, he met with no great matter of wrath: but yet because he joined in league and affection with *Ahab*, God's enemy, wrath was gone out and did not return in vain, but fell foul upon his children; his eldest son proved a Persecutor: as *Jehoshaphat* put forth love to God's enemies, so his own bowels hated God's children: so if we shall be straight-hearted where God hath loved, God's wrath is gone out against us, and will find either us out, or our children.

Use 1. Reproves all such strangeness or enmity that is found in God's people, towards the brethren, one would think they should love one another that have God's love shed abroad in them; yet this exhortation shews they are backward in this duty: when God's people are young beginners, and new come on, then they think they can never love Christ nor his servants enough; so *Mary*, Luk. 7. 47. when her sins were now forgiven her, many debts forgiven her, she loved the creditor much: but St. *John* implies, that his old age had need of this exhortation, what through love of the world, themselves, and their lusts, the people of God grow cold in their love to God and his servants: this argument of love St. *John* doth press in all his Epi-

stle, and the danger of the contrary is great, you renounce the resemblance of your heavenly Father; you are not like him, you cannot love them so manifestly, freely and largely as God hath loved us, we expose our selves to the loss of the sense of our comfort: this is one reason why we call in question of our hopes of eternal life, because we love not our brethren.

2. To exhort us to put this will of our heavenly Father in execution, Christ did shew us an example in his life, death, urged it upon his Disciples; God hath bequeathed a testimony of love from our hearts to our brethren, Rom. 13. 8. this is a due debt, we must pay it out of our hearts; I and if we do not so, no wonder if our wills be not executed: as God loves us manifestly, graciously, bountifully; so should we our brethren, Prov. 27. 5. 1 Cor. 16. 14. be bounteous in your love, so shall you enjoy peace and comfort to your souls, we shall keep the wrath of God from us, procure good to us and our selves for many generations: since God hath loved and blessed his people, let us love and bless them, and make it our happiness to be doing his will.

1 JOHN 4. 12.

No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.

IN these words the Apostle stirs us up to brotherly love, and that from the benefit of it, which is twofold:

1. Fellowship with God, vers. 13, 14, 15, 16.

2. From the perfection of his love to the end, both mentioned in the 12. vers. the fellowship we have with God is invisible: *No man hath seen God at any time.*

How can we love God, since we never saw him?

We never saw our own souls, nor ever shall; yet we know that such we have, and without such we could not subsist. *No man hath seen God.*

Doct. *That our fellowship with God and Christ, it is not outward and visible, but inward and consists in love.*

Joh. 1. 18. *No man hath seen God at any time, no man hath had speech face*

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to face with God the Father; the only begotten Son that lay in the bosom of the Father hath revealed him, 1 Tim. 1. 16. He dwells in that light, that no eye can attain unto, whom no man hath seen, nor can see: his light is

so glorious, that no man behold it: when *Moses* desired to see God face to face; God answered, *None could ever see him and live*, Exod. 33. 20.

Object. *Jacob saw God when he wrestled with him?* Gen. 32. 24.

Jacob saw not God the Father, but Jesus Christ, he is called an Angel, and *Hosea* calls him an Angel, chap. 12. 4.

2. No man hath seen the Son in his glorious presence, in the presence of his Nature and Essence.

But Moses saw God face to face, Exod. 33. 11.

Ans. He did not see his glory, vers. 18. though in some sense he saw his face: *Moses* saw God's back parts; but his face he could not see, vers. 23.

What is meant by God's back parts?

That is spoken of God according to the manner of men, Numb. 12. 8.

Quest. *What was it that Moses saw when he saw God's glory?*

Ans. That he should see him in a glorious resemblance, he should see him in his attributes, which did wonderfully affect *Moses*, that glorious similitude was such, as that it was wonderful glorious; so that it did make his face to shine, vers. 35. and as the outside was glorious, so was the inside of *Moses* heart enlarged; which made him go in and out before the people: in this manner they saw Christ, Matth. 17. 1. to 5. they were so affected: they knew not what they said.

Quest. *Why cannot we see God's face and live?*

Ans. First from the frailty of flesh and blood: the presence of God would swallow us up, we are not capable of beholding God the Father, Son or holy Ghost; when we are in heaven, we shall be changed.

2. From the sinful corruption of human nature; his glorious presence, which is a consuming fire, would consume us. When *Isaiah* saw God in a similitude, but in a glimpse of his presence, then said he, Isa. 61. 5. *Woe is me, for I am undone, because I am unclean*, he was afraid of his life though he saw God but in a similitude.

Use 1. To teach us how to understand many places of Scripture, that speak of God's manifesting himself to any; understand not God the Father, but Jesus Christ assuming a human body, they saw him face to face, or spake mouth to mouth, or they saw a similitude of God his glorious attributes.

2. Be willing to put off mortal infirmities, so shall we see God face to face, Phil. 1. 23. 2 Cor. 12. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

3. Of trial whether we have Communion with God or no?

1. You never heard God the Father, nor the Son; God hath now delivered all his counsel in his Word by his Son, yet we may have familiar, sensible affectionate Communion with God, Heb. 1. 1.

2. We may find God revealing himself to our hearts and consciences, Psal. 73. 24, 25. that he is the chiefest joy, other fears and cares take us not up, Heb. 11. 27.

4. It stirs up to the love of our brethren, *No man hath seen God at any time*, but have Communion with him, and Communion of love; God loves his people, we have Communion with God, Psal. 16. 2, 3. The Papists ask for Images, can there be any better resemblance of the Father, then the Son his Image, and in loving and having Communion with God's Image that is like him? they kill his living Images to honour dead Images: it is the greatest love we can shew to God to love his Image.

Doct. *Where love dwells, God dwells, for God is love*, ver. 16.

What is it for God to dwell or abide in us?

God is said to dwell, not where he is, but where he loves to be, and so doth a man: Now God loves to be where love is, God loves not to be where malice and discontent is; God being a God of peace, loves to dwell in a
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place of peace, or else he dwells not. God indeed is all the world over, if we go to hell, he is there; if to heaven, he is there: but yet he doth not dwell every where, Isa. 57. 15. If where the Devil dwells, all that he possesseth is in peace, much more God, who is the God of peace, loves to be where peace is, and keeps that peace which passeth understanding.

There is a twofold peace that passeth understanding.

1. The peace of that soul whose sins are pardoned, Phil. 4. 7.

2. The peace of that soul whose fins are mortified; now where God is, where God keeps the soul, there is peace that passeth understanding, both pardoning sin, and mortifying corruption: when *Jacob* was with *Laban*, and *Joseph* in *Potiphar's* house, all was well; much more will all be well, where God himself is.

Reas. 1. From God, Nature, *for God is love*, where sparks fly out of the Chimney, there is fire; so where you see love in the lips, carriage and heart of a man, there is the presence of the blessed God.

2. Where God dwells, pardoning sin, and purifying the conscience, or prospering the outward man, there is a spirit of love in that man's heart; where God freely pardons, there is much forgiven, and where is much forgiven, there is much love, Luk. 11. 44. where we have a thousand forgiven, we shall be ready to forgive an hundred, Ephes. 4. *ult.*

2. If our hearts be purified from uncleanness, and sinful distempers, there the heart runs clear in love, and there God dwells, 1 Pet. 1. 21. But if the

heart be full of mud, it will run foul in hatred.

3. If we love our brethren, it must be from the love of God in us, if there be love, it is from God; if there be hatred, it is from the Devil, Judg. 9. 23. it is said, *That he sent an evil spirit between the house of Abiam and the men of Shechem, where Satan dwells, he will set one another on fire, all hatred and wrath is from hell, and it will so kindle that it will consume one another; fire from hell doth not warm, it scorseth,* Ephes. 4. 17. if we give way to sinful wrath, we give place to the Devil. Love cannot be from the Devil.

2. This love is not from the world, Jam. 4. 4.

3. This is not from our flesh, Jam. 4. 5.

But 4. This love springs from God, who makes peace, pardoning our sins, and mortifying our corruptions.

Quest. *But may there not be peace where Satan is?* Luk 11. 21.

Ans. He dwells in peace, but a false peace, for the wrath of God lies on that soul, as a man's house when it is on fire, he being asleep, he sleeps, but not securely.

2. This peace is a peace of a man's own conceptions.

Object. *There may be much peace and much love, and I have known much true hearted love amongst men, that have nothing but the light of Nature, much more where in the light of God's common grace, shall we say God dwells not here?*

Ans. The Spirit speaks not of civil love, but of such a love as wherein God dwells, pardoning sin, and mortifying sin, which he never doth in natural men; there may be found good nature in men; but that love which procures pardoning and healing of sin, is not found in natural men; this love differs from carnal love.

1. This love reacheth not to the body only, but to the soul, Levit. 19. if we love not the soul of our brother, our love is not true love.

2. Christian love reacheth to strangers and enemies, as well as neighbours and friends; good natured love may reach to strangers, but not to enemies.

3. Christian love will be stronger to our brethren than worldly love; though Christian love may be damped, yet it will overflow; good natured love that comes from a little fountain, a little thing will stop it; but Christian love springs from heaven, and no man can make a dam to stop it.

Use 1. Of trial of God's fellowship with us, whether God dwell in our

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hearts

Quest. *How shall I know whether God dwell in my heart or no?*

Ans. Ask thy soul whether love dwell in thee or no: not good natured love; but that love which desires peace of conscience, and purity of thy own heart, and of thy brethren, 2 Cor. 7. 8, 9, 10.

2. This should teach us also walk in a frame of brotherly love, to abound in tenderness of spirit to one another's souls, not to provoke one another to wrath and seduce from ways of salvation, but to be helpfull one to another in our spiritual estate: God loves to lie in a bed of love, God will not dwell where love dwells not, therefore keep open house for the spirit of love; God is where he loves, and he loves to be where love is: wrath, malice, and hatred smokes God out of doors; a man performs no duty pleasing to God while wrath is in his heart.

Doct. *That such as love in brotherly, love of God is perfect in such,* vers. 16, 17.

His love is perfect in us, he doth not mean, that love which God hath shed abroad in our hearts, for there is no love of God, but is perfect in every man, *but his love is perfect*, that is, that love by which we love God: if our love be not wanting to our brethren, our love is perfect towards God.

What is meant by perfect?

Perfect, is diversly taken, sometimes it is taken for sound and unfeigned; thus *Amaziah* did not that which was good in the sight of the Lord, with a perfect heart, 2 Chron. 15. 2. But *David* and good King *Hezekiah* did that which was good in the sight of the Lord, with a perfect heart, 2 King. 18. 3. that is, without hypocrisy and rottenness; let a man profess love to God, and not love his brother, his love is not true but hypocritical; but if a man unfeignedly love his brother, he doth soundly love God: a man cannot find God pardoning his sins healing his infirmities, but he will love his brethren, and do good offices to them.

2. Perfect is all one with Entire, as a child is then said to be perfect, when he hath all the parts of a man; this perfectness is opposed to that which is maimed, so his love is perfect, which is entire to God and man: all our duty is to love God, and to love our neighbour as our selves, 1 Joh. 4. 21. he hath shewed thee O man what is good, and what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to walk humbly with thy God? that is, to express thy love to God, and to do justice and love mercy, that is, to our brethren, Micah 6. 8. This is perfection of spirits, Rom. 13. 10. therefore saith the Apostle, *He that loves, fulfils the Law*, the law of the first and second Table, and God would have the chiefest part of our love to him expressed in our love to our brethren, 1 Cor. 13. 12. the chiefest of those is love; we do

God more honour by faith and hope; but we edify the Church more by love: so that God requires, as we see 1 Cor. 13. 1, 2, 3. our love to him to be expressed by doing good to the sons of men; hence our Saviour will reason with the sons of men at the last day, *Come ye blessed of my Father*, Matth. 25. 34. to the end; so that all the love God expects we should shew to him, should be poured out to our brethren; if thou be righteous, what dost thou then give to God? Job 35. 6, 7, 8. 1 Cor. 11. 10. *I have abounded more then they all*, (saith St. Paul) *by the grace of God*, and that good was by doing many good Offices to the brethren; hence God would have all the sons of men to serve him in their general callings, with such graces, 1 Cor. 16. 14. as they may shew forth in their particular callings in doing all the duties in love: when *David* was earnest with God for the pardoning of his sins. Psal. 51. 8. & 18. vers. and 12. 33. shews you that as he would spend himself in God's praise, so he would labour to bring on others in the ways of grace.

3. Perfection of degrees, which he means here, and though no man is perfect

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fect in all degrees, yet he is more and more perfecting, he is on the growing hand, Ephes. 4. 15, 16. As no member can grow in the body, except it be knit to the body by joints and sinews, so Col. 3. 14. in the body of Christ, love is the bond that knits us together to God and our brethren, 1 Cor. 18. & 13. 1, 2, 3.

4. A thing is perfect when it is expert, thus Ezra 7. 8. so a man's love to God perfect to any good office, a loving Christian is a perfect Christian, you cannot set him to any good duty, but he is perfect to it; love oils the wheels of his affections, and sets him on to that which is helpful to his brethren; and hence it is, that when our Saviour would set *Peter* on to feed his lambs, he would lead him on to this work, by propounding this question, whether he loved him or no? Joh. 21. 15, 16, 17. he pressed upon him this love; every time he asked him, his love required him to feed his lambs, 2 Cor. 4. 15. The love of Christ constraineth *Paul* to be ready for doing and suffering; a man that goes about a business with ill will, he always bungles it.

5. A thing is then perfect when it is durable; so it is with a man's love, it is durable if it be nourished with love to his brethren; this will make it not only grow and continue, but also to abound for ever, Ephes. 2. 4, 5, 6, 7. If love continue not, the Church will not continue, that is, the whole body of

Christians, the body of faithful Ministers and people, the Church will be removing, if love begin to remove.

Use 1. A sign of the truth of our love; we must have as great a care of the truth of our love to our brethren, as of faith and repentance from dead works: How shall we know our love is perfect to God? How stands your love to the brethren? If your love be closed up from your brethren, then your love is very unsound, or very sick; so much love, so much life; and so much failing in your spiritual love, so much failing in your spiritual life, Gal. 5. 6. Faith works by love, and that avails much with God: we must receive the Sacrament oft, that we may be strong in love, according as our love works, so works our faith.

2. It exhorts us all to the love of one another, for by this means God dwells in us, and his love is perfected in our hearts. As you desire therefore that your love to God may be found entire, and thriving in your souls, give your selves to the unfeigned love one of another; edify one another in love.

3. Comfort to such a man as knows he is of a loving heart, his love to God is perfect, you may know your love to God is perfect, if your love be found to your brethren.

1 JOHN 4. 10.

Hereby we know that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.

They that love their brethren, they have a twofold benefit, they have God's Spirit dwelling in them, and they know it.

Doct. That such as love one another, to them God hath given of his Spirit.

What is meant by this, that God hath given us of his Spirit?

1. It implies that God hath given us that spirit of love that accompanies salvation; this branch of that spirit that dwelleth in God, Numb. 11. 25. *Moses spirit* was not diminished, though God did communicate it to the seventy Elders, God did cause it to be enlarged in them, that were in the place of Magistrates with him; so who so loves, dwells in God, and the same Spirit of love do they communicate to their brethren, so that

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they walk by the same rule, and aim at the same end, *The fruit of the Spirit is love*, Gal. 5. 27. But the works of the flesh are adultery, &c. They that walk in love have received of the Spirit; they have received of the Spirit of the holy Ghost, for the spirit lusts against envy, Jud. 9. 22, 23.

Use 1. It teacheth us, there is no love to be found towards our brethren, but amongst spiritual men, for if we love one another, there is a spirit of God in us, where the spirit is not, there is no love; love is not a fruit that grows upon thorns, or on such a stock as nature brings forth, the old Olive.

Object. *But many of God's servants brings forth sour fruit which will neither benefit themselves, nor others, therefore how is it said that God's Spirit is in them?*

Answ. They have sour Oil distilling from the old stock, for there are many branches in us that suck sourness from the old stock; though there be a spirit of love in God's children, yet many times it doth not run forth, but when you see Christian love expressing it self, it springs not from nature, but the Spirit of God.

2. A ground of much comfort to any soul, that doth find his spirit supplied with any compassion; if you can find your spirits mourning for the evil case of your brother, 1 Sam. 17. 1. it is a sign that God's Spirit is in you.

3. Labour we to preserve our hearts in brotherly love, for love is a fruit of the Spirit of God; so much as a man's heart runs sour and hard, so much doth he damp the lively Spirit of God, which the Lord hath shed abroad in his heart; therefore as we desire that God would for ever keep us in a good estate, and that his Spirit should not be grieved by us, we must keep this Spirit of love, that is, the Comforter; when we grieve the Spirit of God, we shall have grief enough; if the Spirit of comfort that is in us be uncomfortable, how great is that discomfort?

Doct. *That such to whom God hath given his Spirit of love, they maintain mutual entire and constant fellowship with God, and they know it.*

God dwells in us, which is more then to have God to dwell with us: if God did but dwell with us, it would argue much happiness; but this is more, for God to dwell in us, we are not only near one another, and branches one of another, but one body with another, he abides in us as the head, we in him as the members.

Quest. *What is this, we know it?*

Answ. This act of knowledge is more then an act of faith, men may believe more to be true, then they know, Heb. 11. 3. *By faith we understand the world was made*, faith understands a thing to be done, and so we may be persuaded of the truth of a thing. Something we know by reason, which by sense we cannot know; if it be not evident both by sense and reason, we cannot know it: when it is said that God dwells in us, and we in him, and we know it; the meaning is, we have evident sense, and evident reason for it.

Reas. 1. Is taken from the evidence of sense; when God hath shed abroad into our hearts a spirit of love, we shall see and feel the favour of God shining in our hearts, the mercy of God pacifying our souls; so that now we do not only believe the promises belonging to us, but the feelings of God's love is a manifestation of God's grace, Joh. 14. 21, 22. *If any man love me, saith Christ, and keep my Word, my Father will love him, and we will come into him, and make our abode with him: as we grow in love, so the comforts of God's Spirit grow in us. The ground of this reason is taken from God's nature, who is love; God is said not to be faith or hope, but love, and the more any man hath received of love, the nearer doth he come to God, and the readier is he to be doing good offices, and to be helpful.*

Reas. 2. From the cause of love we know; *God dwells in us, and we in him,*

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him, because we have received a Spirit of love. What is the reason we could not receive a Spirit of love, if we did nor receive a spirit of faith, Gal. 5. 6. We could nor love our brethren, if we had not faith to believe in Christ: Now where faith is, there Christ dwells, Ephes. 3. 17. This reason is from the cause of love.

Use 1. Of consolalion to loving Christians, they have manifest experience and knowledge of God's love, *Hereby we know that God dwells in us, and we in him*: the benefit of a loving spirit is this; that it keeps fellowship with God, and that entire fellowship: a loving man doth not only believe that he hath fellowship with God; but he knows it, he hath evident reason for it.

2. To teach such as want the goodness of the promises, they are not sensible of God's favour, they have no sensible experience of it; they may be persuaded that God will shew them mercy at the end, but yet they do not know it: if thou wilt know the fellowship between God and thy soul, then pray more that the Spirit of love may dwell in thee; as thy love grows, so shalt thou grow in sensible experience of God's love to thee: God crowns

faith with trust and confidence, and assurance; but he crowns love with experience; if you want experience of God's love, then think surely there is some weed of envy, wrath, and hatred, from which if thou cleanse thy heart, thou shalt not only have assurance, but experience.

3. This refutes the Papists, that say, a man cannot know that God dwells in him, this is an evident sign, that they have neither faith nor love; if they had faith, they should have assurance; if love, they should have experience.

I JOHN 4. 14.

And we have seen and do testify, that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.

Doct. *THat such as love one another, they have seen and do bear witness of the Father sending his Son to be a Saviour of the world, Joh. 13. 4, 5.*

Reas. This word *sight* is more then believing, for the Apostle puts a difference between them, 2 Cor. 4. 3. We believe that Christ sits at the right hand of God, but we have not seen it, when he saith, *they have seen*, he would have you know that they have had experimental knowledge; all sight is an act of sense, and riseth from some ground of reason, reason is from sensible feeling, which every loving soul hath found, *that's God hath sent his Son to be a Saviour of the world*; a Christian knows that except his heart be warmed with the love of God, he cannot love his brethren: the woman in the Gospel, of whom Christ asked, a little water, when she saw that Christ was the Messiah, and had convinced her of her sins, Joh. 4. she left her water pots, vers. 20. and ran into the City, and saith to the men, *Come see a man that hath told me all that I ever did, is not this the Christ?* ver. 29. and ver. 39, 40. When the *Samaritans* were warmed with his words, they besought him to stay amongst them, and many of them believed in him; so that so much sight of Christ, so much love.

Reas. 2. From the knowledge that such have of God's love unto themselves, the Lord hath sent his Son to save the world, the Lord hath sent his Son into the world from his own wrath, and shall bear wrath and malice towards those that are his: a Christian will be ashamed that his heart should be wrathful and malicious; he will be reconciled to his brethren; when a Christian walks in love, he hath *seen the Saviour of the world*, and hath known him, for that makes him love them, because God sent his Son to save them. They bear witness.

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For if a man refuse the love of his brethren, he denies, that God sent his Son to be a Saviour of his brethren from his wrath; God sent his Son to save us from hell, death, and the grave, and from all evil we may meet with, God hath promised to *with-hold no good thing from them that fear him*, but if death and sickness be good, we shall have them, Psal. 84. 11. now if we withhold any good from our brethren, we bear witness that Christ came not into the world to save them.

Use 1. This should teach us to lay down all wrath and hatred, and to be discouraged from harbouring any such distempers in our souls, for else you proclaim before God, Angels and men, that God did not send his Son to be a Saviour; for shall Christ come to save his people from the wrath of God, and from the Devil, and shall he not free his people from my wrath? Either make a Christ a whole Saviour, else make him no Saviour at all. If Christ save from any evil, he will save from all: *Agrippa* was a Christian in part, but Christ was not a Saviour in part.

2. To exhort every soul to be loving to their brethren, the more you abound in love to your brethren, the more you testify that God sent his Son into the world to be a Saviour, and the more love will God express to your souls.

3. Of consolation to such as love all men, but especially such as are of the household of faith, such a man *hath seen that God hath sent his Son to be a Saviour of the world*, and his will is, they should be saved, and for his part, his will is, they should be saved, such a man may be persuaded that God hath forgiven him his sins.

I JOHN 4. 15.

Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.

THE 14. and 15. verses contain an argument of God, love dwelling in us, the proposition is laid down, vers. 14. the assumption, vers. 15.

Doct. The confession that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, it is a true note or pledge of our mutual entire and constant fellowship with God.

They have entire fellowship, because they do not only dwell one with another, but one in another, as members in the body, as branches in the root; *Who shall confess Jesus, &c.* So that this is one mark of true Christi-

anity, in that it seals up a man's soul to everlasting fellowship with God; there are many marks of Christianity, but none so general, so that where this is, there is true fellowship with God, so that where this confession is, there is fellowship with God, this is certain and true, Matth. 16. 16, 17. *Whom say men that I the Son of man am, &c. but saith Christ, Who say ye that I am? Peter answered and said, we confess those to be the Son of the everliving God; what saith Christ to him? Blessed art thou Simon; if he were blessed, then his soul was wrapped up into the fellowship of the souls of just men made perfect, and so into fellowship with God. The same acceptance did Christ give to the Thief upon the cross, when his Disciples left him, when the soldiers spitefully entreated him, and all despised him, one of the thieves railed on him, saith the other, Fearest thou not God, since we are in the same condemnation? Luk. 23. 42, 3. Remember me, saith he, when thou comest in thy Kingdom, he acknowledgeth here that Christ was the Son of God, because he saith, remember me when thou comest into thy Kingdom, knowing thac power and glory was his: what saith Christ to this confession of his? that he should confess him in the midst of so many reproaches and disgraces, that one thief should confedd more then all the rest; Christ saith to him, *This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise*, his soul was taken up into heaven, and*

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so he was a blessed man, and had fellowship with God, 1 Joh. 5. 5. *He that overcometh, believeth that Jesus is the Son of God*, so chap. 2 & 3. of the Revel. if any man overcome the world it is only he that confesseth that Jesis is the Son of God, 1 Cor. 12. 3. *No man can truly say, that Jesus is the Lord, but by the holy Ghost: such is the work of the holy Ghost, that God dwells in him, and he in God.*

Object. *But if that be such an argument that we are blessed, if we confess that Jesus is the Lord, then I hope we shall do all well enough; for who of all the sons of men that are not persuaded, and do not believe that Jesus is the Son of God? Papists believe this, and the Pharisees that sinned against the holy Ghost, believed this, Matth. 21. 38. This is the Heir, say they, therefore the Son of God, come let us kill him; they sinned against the holy Ghost, because they knew that Christ was the Lord: there are two things in the sin against the holy Ghost, light in the mind, and malice in the heart, the Devils profess that they knew Jesus, Mark 1. 24. What then doth God dwell in the Devil, or the Devil in God? God forbid.*

Answ. There is something in respect of the time, it was something in the days of St. John, for a man to confess, *that Jesus was the Son of God*, for then men durst not, because this was but a new doctrine, this point had

Universality, and antiquity against it; but now it is burning ashes to deny it: It is now no thank for men to *confess that Jesus is the Son of God*, he that shall not confess it, shall have cause of confusion in this world, and in the world to come. The Devils did believe this, but they did not confess him truly; and good men will sore distrust this point, because the Devil confesseth this, the Devil was convinced of the truth of this; but yet it was no argument of his *dwelling with God*, because he did this fraudulently.

Object: *But the Pharisees they confessed this, and they knew that he was the Son of God.*

Ans. They did not believe it, and were convinced in their consciences, but yet they did confess him openly, Joh. 7. 13.

Quest. *What is it to confess that Jesus is the Son of God?*

Ans. It is not only an act of judgement, neither is it an act of the lips to say, that *Jesus is the Son of God*, in every age, it is no such sign of our fellowship with God; for it is now as great a wonder for a man to deny it, as it was then to confess it.

2. Therefore there is an act of the works or deeds of a man, and so confessing it is an argument that we have fellowship with God; God doth not take that for a true confession, when a man doth confess him with his lips, but in his works deny him, Tit. 1. 16. Isa. 29. 13. Now in tru confession with the heart there are two things.

First, A looking to Christ for salvation, and this is an evident pledge of *God's dwelling with us, and we with him*, Isa. 95. 22. to 25. Rom. 14. 11. Phil. 2. 10, 11. Look to me and be saved; no man can look up to God as a God of his salvation but shall be saved; this is the proper work of faith.

The second is a penitential confessing; when *Peter* had convinced the *Jews*, that *Jesus* was the Lord, they were pricked in their hearts, Act. 2. 36, 37. Act. 12. 31. For a man to *confess that he is the Lord*, and never to be troubled that he doth afflict him, nor never look for salvation by him, there is no truth, no heartiness in that confession, but when the heart is humbled for all the wrong it hath done to Christ, this is an evidence of hearty confession.

Thirdly, In the confession of our life there are two parts of confession, if I *confess Christ to be the Son of God*, I do not only take him to be my Saviour, but to be my Lord and Govenor, 2 Cor. 10. 4, 5. Heb. 5. 9. we obey Christ in thoughts, in speeches, affections and conversations, 1 Pet. 3. 14. 2. When we suffer as Christians, and are not ashamed of the Cross of Christ, but answer as did the three children, Dan. 3, 17, 18. The grace of a Christian is the lively confessing of Christ.

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Reas. These may be all, as so many reasons of the point: another reason may be this, flesh and blood cannot believe it, and confess it, Matth. 16. 16, 17.

Object. *But Peter did swear, that he never knew Christ.*

Answ. But yet he did believe, for it pricked him at the heart, that he had so wronged Christ, he wept bitterly, and did afterward with constant courage profess Christ.

Use 1. Refutes all contrary religions: you see what becomes of all the Nations of the world, that do not *believe Christ to be the Son of God*, they have no fellowship with God, nor God with them; there is no other Name given by which we shall be saved, but the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ; whosoever doth not *believe that Christ is the Son of God*, he excludes himself from the fellowship with God in this world, and in the world to come.

2. Of trial; would you know whether God dwells in you, or you in him, do you *confess that Jesus Christ is the Son of God*, do you look up to Christ for salvation? Isa. 45. 22. Do you find that your hearts are pricked when you sin against Christ? Do you desire to walk in obedience unto Christ? Do you sanctify him in your hearts? Zach. 12. 10. If you be obedient children unto God, you shall enjoy entire fellowship with God.

3. Of comfort to such, as have prevailed with their hearts and lives to make such a confession: Doth any man desire everlasting life? Let him look up to Christ, there is none from whom you should look for salvation, but Christ; wrestle with God by prayer, that you may find Christ in all the Ordinances you partake of, so shall you be sure to have *God dwelling in you, and you in him*, so shall you not go from home, whither soever you go.

I JOHN 4. 16.

And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us, &c.

THESE words contain a third argument to prove a proposition laid down, vers. 12, *That they that love one another, God dwells in them*, and the argument is taken from the knowledge and faith, that such have of the love that God hath towards them, and it stands thus; they that *have known and believed the love that God hath to them*, such *dwell in God*, and *God in them*; but they that love one another, doth know and believe the love that God hath to them. *Ergo*—

Doct. *That loving Christians do discern the love that God hath to them, as well by knowledge as by faith.*

We have known and believed the love that God hath to us, this love is wrapped up in the bosom of the Father, and no man can discern either love or hatred by any outward thing; but yet this love is manifested not by outward things, but by faith and knowledge; faith and knowledge are both acts of the judgement, for both are *Scientia axiomatis certi*, the knowledge of a certain truth, for it is not divine Faith, unless it be of such a touch, *Cui subesse fulsum non potest*.

Quest. *How then doth faith and knowledge differ?*

Ans. Faith is the judgement of a certain truth, but certain by divine testimony, whether of the Spirit or of the Word; the apprehension we have of a truth by the authority of a divine testimony is faith; but knowledge is the judgement of a truth certain, not only by a divine testimony, but either by sense or experience, or evident reason; experience is but an observation of certain Sciences, and so most of the rule of practical Art are known by experience, or by evident reason; such are Mathematical rules gathered by certain principles of evident reason; such therefore as love our another, have a certain persuasion of God's love to them, by some divine

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testimony, and that is faith, or else *we know it*, and that implies, it's evident, wither by sense, or by experience, or by evident reason, or by all together, as indeed by them all, *We know the love of God to us*. Loving Christians discern by faith the love of God to them, by the testimony both of the Word and of the Spirit of God; there is a twofold love of God, whereby *we believe the love of God to us*: one is a word of doctrine, the other a word of promise.

1. There is a Word of doctrine, which teacheth us the fruit of faith, Gal. 5. 16. *faith worketh by love*, if therefore we find love in our hearts, then surely there is faith in us, to *believe the love of God to us*.

2. There is a word of doctrine which teacheth us the efficacy of love, Rom. 15. 10. *Love is the fulfilling of the law*, if therefore God give him a testimony that he loves his brethren, then he hath an inclination to keep the whole law, and so consequently assurance of God's love to him.

3. There is another word of doctrine, which confirms our faith herein, *viz.* the Word reacheth that God is love, if therefore we have a spirit of love in us, then we are partakers of the divine nature.

2. There is a word of promise, that assures us of our comfortable estate, 1 Joh. 2. 10. *He that loveth his brother abideth in the light*, Matth. 10. 41, 42. If we therefore find love in our hearts, God will give us of his light, so 1 Joh. 4. 12. *If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.*

2. They are assured of God's love to them, by a testimony of the Spirit: now the spirit witnesseth by the fruits of it, and one of the *fruits of the Spirit of love*, Gal. 5. 12.

2. We discern his love to us by knowledge, *We know that he hath loved us.*

1. By sense, for if a man love God, and be loving to the children of God, God delights to reveal himself sensibly to such a soul, 1 Joh. 14. 21, 22, 23. *He that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest my self unto him*; the more tenderly affected we are towards our brethren, the more shall we grow up in sense of God's favour to us, according as we mete to God, God will mete to us: if we close up our hearts to our brethren, God is not wont much to manifest himself to such, but if we abound in love to God's Saints, God will abundantly reveal his love to us, Psal. 16. 3. to 6. *My goodness extendeth not to God, but to the Saints that are on the earth, to the excellent in whom is all my delight*; and what follows upon that? Why, God marvellously poured forth his love to him, that so poured out his love to his Saints, so that he is encouraged against death and hell, and assured of his joyful resurrection.

2. Knowledge springs from experience; now frequent observation of things by sense, breeds experience: now when a man is of a loving heart, God not only gives him a taste of his love, but he often renews the sensible feeling of his favour, and that breeds experience, Gal. 2. 20, *I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, who gave himself for me*, from the constant expression of God's love to him, he finds that Christ lives in him daily, and by the daily actions of life, he finds that Christ loves him, and gave himself for him, now of all the Apostles none express so much love as *Paul*, 2 Cor. 11. 26. to 30. he was affected, as if every man's cumbrance and grievance lay upon his own soul; and God more manifested himself to him, then the rest of the Apostles.

3. A loving Christian knows the love of God to him by evident reason, by artificial arguments, such as may convince his judgement of God's love to him.

First, From the change and frame that is wrought in a Christian's heart, when he is once brought to love his brethren, Tit. 3. 2, 3. he exhorts them to be loving and gentle to all, for, saith he, *We our selves were sometimes foolish,*

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disobedient and hating one another, Jam. 2. 5. do you think the Scripture speaks in vain, the spirit that is in us lusteth after envy, he frame of our natural temper lusteth after envy, emulation, as the sparks fly upward; if therefore we find this temper subdued, that we can think well, and speak well, and do good offices to our brethren; why, this is an evident argument, that God hath *shewed love to us,* or else we could never have so freely saved others.

2. From the knowledge which others may have of our abiding in Christ, because they see us expressing love to his Saints, Joh. 13. 35. *By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another;* if you see men forward and ready in helpfulness to their Christian brethren, all men will say, surely he is one of that company; if therefore others may know us to be Christ's Disciples by this mark, may not we much more know it our selves? May not a man's own heart discern love to his brethren, when all the world knows it?

Use 1. Of refutation of some Popish Tenants: *Bellarmino* saith that faith is rather defined by ignorance then knowledge, for saith he, faith is the evidence of things not seen; but we see faith and knowledge may well stand together, yea we first know a thing before we can believe; when *Steven* saw Christ sitting at the right hand of God, what did he not then believe it? For that place, Heb. 11. 1. it is not a definition of faith, but a description of faith by one of the effects of it, vers. 12. that it makes things evident, that we never saw; as by faith we believe the world was created, though we never saw it, *Thomas* his feeling hindered not his faith, but helped it, Joh. 20. 27, 28.

2. *Bellarmino* and most of their Writers say, that *fiducia specialis misericordiæ*, is not *actus fidei* but *præsumptionis*, certainly their error is presumptuous, for doth not the Apostle plainly say, *We know and believe the love that God hath for us.*

Use 2. This may be a strong incitement to us all, to be abundant in love, and tenderheartedness one to another; little doth a man know how he disturbs the peace of his own conscience, that disturbs another man's peace: true it is, a man may wrong his brother in evil surmisings, in hard speeches, in doing evil offices to him, and he goes out as at other

times, and thinks all is right as before, but he wists not that the Lord is departed from him; so that there is as much difference betwixt himself now, and himself at other times, as betwixt a man found and a man fainting away with some evil disease: or betwixt a Vine of *September* and *December*, formerly full of sap and moisture, now dead and dry: Why, what's the matter the heart is so straight and heavy? Why, our bowels have been shut up towards our brethren, and therefore God shuts up his savour and helpfulness from us; therefore we hear much and profit little, receive the Sacrament often, and little good done: as you desire therefore to keep God's love fresh, and springing up in you, so let love to your brethren grow up and spring in you. Many a soul is in fear and doubt of God, love to him, Why what must he do? Why, stir up your love to God and your brethren, and God will manifest his love to you, Jam. 2. 13. *Mercy rejoiceth against judgement*: It a man have an heart pitying the miseries of others, whether in their bodies or in their souls, at we day of judgement, when others tremble and quake, merciful men shall rejoice, Matth. 5. 7.

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I JOHN 4. 16. the latter part.

God is love, and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.

THESE word contain a fourth argument to prove that those that love one another, have mutual and entire fellowship with God, as he had laid down, vers. 12. the arument is taken from the nature of God, *God is love*, and therefore they *that dwell in God, dwell in love*; these words contain two parts:

1. The nature of God, *God is love*.

2. The condition of such as *dwell in love*, they have mutual, entire, and constant fellowship with God, they not only dwell one with another, but, but one in another. From the nature God observe,

Doct. *That God is so loving, that he is love it self.*

God is love in a threefold sense;

1. He is the only adequate object of love, he is altogether lovely, every part of him wholly delectable, altogether lovely: Now in Scripture phrase it is called *love*, that is, the object of love, Cant. 4. 6. The Church

is called *Christ's love*, the object of his love; so is God the only object of our love, Psal. 73. 25. In the creature there is something lovely, and something not; but it's not so in God, there is nothing in God but what is wholly lovely.

2. *God is love* effectively, he is the fountain of love, 1 Cor. 1. 30. as Christ is called *Wisdom*, because he gives us wisdom; so God is called *love*, because if there be any love in us, it is only from his love first to us, 1 Joh. 4. 19. and so if any shew love to us, it's from God's love towards us.

3. *God is love* subjectively, he is the subject of love, he is a God full of love and mercy; we cannot properly say of any creature, there is wisdom it self, or love it self, without a Trope, for it's a rule in Logick, *Accidens non prædicatur de subjection in abstracto*, we cannot properly call a wise man wisdom, or a wall whiteness, but *in concreto*, wise or loving: but here God transcends all creatures; we may properly speak of God *in abstracto*, *God is love*, from whence may be gathered the divinity of love, that it's of the divine Essence, we may as truly say *God is love*, as our Saviour saith *God is a Spirit*, that is, it's not a quantity in him, that we may be or may not be, but love is essential and natural to him, God's love is in himself, and so his power is wisdom.

2. It implies the simplicity of God's nature, God is not compounded, but free without mixture, he is without all causes besides himself, he is of himself, from himself, and by himself, and for himself: and as he is not compounded of causes, so he is not compounded of subject, and adjunct; man is one thing, and his learning and wisdom another thing: but God and his wisdom are not two distinct things; God and his love are the same. There is no reason of this truth, because he is above reason, there are reasons of his works, but not of his nature.

Use 1. This may exhort us all, to be willing to forego any blessing in the world for the love of God; many are discouraged from Christian ways, because they shall lose the love of friends by it: why, it may be otherwise, for it a man's ways please the Lord, he makes his enemies to be at peace with him, and then much more his friends: but suppose at one clap, thou shouldst lose the love of all thy friends, yet thou shalt not lose by it, thou shalt gain more by God's love, then by the loss of all other love; a world of love is nothing to the God of love, the world may be loving, but *God is love* it self, and in enjoying of God, thou enjoyest an Ocean of love, love passing
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knowledge, Ephes. 3. 18, 19. you never met with love in the world, but you might fathom the measure of it, but God's love is like a bottomless depth without bounds or bottom, you can neither know the beginning nor end of it, therefore a Christian in this may say more truly, then *Medea* did of *Jason*, *Non magna relinquam, magna sequar*, I shall not lose great love, but follow great love.

Use 2. To teach all godly men to strive to be as God is, we cannot be so loving, as to be love it self, for so are not the Angels; but we should strive to be like minded with God, to be altogether lovely, abounding in love, *Let all things be done in love*, 1 Cor. 14. 26. and the ground of this is evident, *Be you perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect*, Matth. 5. 44. *ad finem*, let us be kind hearted, willing to forgive injuries upon any shew of repentance, Luk. 17. 34. God is of that nature, and he would have his Children to be so. As Christ argues *God is a Spirit*, and therefore requires spiritual worship: so let us reason, *God is love*, and therefore they that worship him, must worship him in love, Matth. 5. 22, 23. *If thou bringest a gift to the Altar, and rememberest any unkindness betwixt thee and thy brother, &c.* God doth not so require hast in his service, but that he would first have thee reconciled to thy brother. God smells a rank savour in all your services, if he discern bitterness, in your hearts, Jam. 3. 20. there is no righteous work that we can perform righteously, whilst there is want of love in our hearts, 1 Pet. 2. 12. let all duties be performed in meekness, the Word is full of power, but never had power to save any, but such as receive it in love.

3. If God be love, then the Devil is hatred, and therefore the more we live in hatred, the more we walk in the Devil's ways, and make our selves fire-brands of Hell.

Doct. 2. *Constancy in love is an evident mark of our mutual, entire and constant fellowship with the God of Love.*

Constancy or abiding in love; be that dwells or abides in love, $\mu\epsilon\nu\epsilon\iota$ he not only dwells with God, which breeds familiarity, but in him, which implies intireness and constancy.

Reas. 1. From the nature of God, from whence the Apostle infers it, *God is love*, not only the object, but the Fountain of love; all the well placed love in the creature is from God. Love is as the Chariot of God, whereby he conveys himself into our hearts, when he sheds abroad his love in our hearts, and he means Christian love, which extends as well to the soul as the body, not temporal but eternal. Carnal love is neither of God, nor from God, but where there is true spiritual love, which is indeed called charity,

where that is, God communicates himself to such a soul, as the root to the branches; and the ground of it is, from the immediate presence of God, where ever true love is found, even such a presence as whereby the holy Ghost lives in the soul, and dwell there for ever, Gal. 5. 22. *Love is a fruit of the Spirit*, Joh. 15. 34, 35.

Reas. 2. From the fitness and aptness that is in such a soul to grow up by every Ordinance, Eph. 3. 17, 18, Col. 3. 14. Love is of an edifying nature, 1 Cor. 8. 1. Let love admonish, reprove, or exhort, it edifies much; especially if it be received in love, where there is love on both sides, both in speaker and hearer, he speaks savingly, and you hear savingly: it's love that puts life into every Ordinance.

3. From the delight of God to communicate his love there more abundantly, where he finds men walking in love; no creature partakes of the boundless love of God, but such as are grounded in love, Eph. 3. 17, 18, 19. Let but faith towards Christ, and love towards our brethren abound in us, and we shall have a large measure of God's love dispensed to us; According to the capacity of the receiver, so is the thing received: now no grace is of so enlarging a nature as love is; so that if we abound in love, then we become of a fathoming

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fathoming and comprehending nature, so that we comprehend the height, and breadth, and length, and depth of God's love towards us.

Use 1. It exhorts us all not only to the love, but the constant love of our brethren, this is the benefit of it you shall have constant and abiding fellowship with God; we should not only grow in love but grow rooted in love, let no grace be so eminent in you as love; if God had said he dwells in wisdom, how should it have provoked men to study for wisdom; but God doth not say he dwells in knowledge, for what then should the ignorant, do? He dwells not in honour and riches; for what then should poor men do? But he dwells in such an house as the poorest may build to God, an house of love, therefore above all endowments and gifts of soul or body, have a special care, to grow rooted in love: a man may have a world at wit, and yet not God dwell in that wit; a man may have abundance of wealth, honours, and beauty, and yet God not in them: but if you ask where God dwells, I answer, God dwells in love.

There are four places wherein God is said to dwell:

1. In the highest holy place.
2. In an humble heart, Isa. 57. 15.
3. Christ dwells in our hearts by faith, Ephes. 3. 17.

4. God dwells in a loving heart: so that if you would know where God dwells, it's in one of these three graces, humility, faith, or love. How should this provoke us, as *David* saith, *never to give sleep to our eyes, or slumber to our eye-lids*, till we have built God an habitation of love in our hearts? *Psal.* 132. 3, 4, 5. Set up a loving heart, and there will God dwell for ever; whereas if hearts be envious, and hateful and bitter, little do you know what an evil spirit dwells there, and instead of comfort, you shall find such horror and anguish, that you may plainly discern, surely God is not in this place, *Ephes.* 4. 26. if you sleep in wrath, the Devil rests with you.

Use 2. Of consolation to every loving heart, if God hath given you an heart to love your brethren, with true spiritual love, take God home with you, God dwells in thy heart, and more then that, thou dwelleth in God's heart; so that hadst thou testimony of no other grace, yet canst thou find an hearty love in thee, thou hast a Tabernacle for the most High to dwell in.

I JOHN 4. 17.

Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgement, &c.

THESE words depend on vers. 12. where he promiseth a double benefit to them that love one another, God dwells in such, which he proved by four arguments before: the second benefit now, that if we love one another, God's love is perfected in us, this he enlargeth in these following verses, and shews wherein it's perfect, and how that it is perfect, he proves from the boldness they have in the day of judgement; and the arguement stands thus, *They that may have boldness in the day of judgement, in them love is perfected*; but loving Christians *may have boldness in the day of judgement*; Therefore, The assumption he proves thus, they who are in the world, as God himself is, they *may have boldness in the day of judgement*; but they who love one another are in the world as God himself is.

Doct. *Such in whom is found perfect love to God and their brethren, they may have boldness in the day of judgement.*

This *Paul* confirms, 2 *Tim.* 2. 4, 7, 8. he is confident that God would give him a crown of righteousness, who had sought the good fight of faith, and had finished his course, had abounded in love to God and man, which is our righteousness, to give God and man his due; and this crown of glory God

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will give not only to him, but to all that love his appearing, Jam. 2. 13. *Mercy rejoiceth against judgement*, which is a fruit of love, for mercy is nothing else but love compassionating our brother's distress: the judgement day is terrible to all bitter, cruel and harsh spirits, but mercy riseth against judgement, Matth. 25. 34 to 41. We see what encouragement he gives to his sheep on this ground, because they shewed him kindness in being kind to his brethren.

Reas. 1. From the esteem the Lord Jesus bears to such, before whom they are to appear in judgement; for such as love Christ and his members, have found Christ dispensing himself to them, not as a Judge, but as a Saviour, or else they could never have loved him nor others; now they that are to meet with a Saviour have cause of boldness in that day; or if he come as a Judge, it's but as a Judge to plead their cause, and right their wrong, and revenge their enemies.

2. A loving Christian hath a further ground of confidence in his heart, that the day of Christ's appearing, shall be as the day of his marriage; now a marriage day is a day of the gladness of the heart, Cant. 3. 10. Now they that love one another, are espoused to Christ here by their vocation; but the day of judgement is as the marriage day, Christ here adorns and beautifies us, that so at the last day we may be presented as fit Spouses for himself; Such as are in marriage love, how do they desire and long after the marriage day? and so do all true Christians, that have kept their hearts chaste to Christ, how do they pray for the hastening of that day? Beloved, be like a Dove or young Hart upon the Mountains of spices, Cant. 8. *ult.* This day is called the day of refreshing, Act. 3. 19, and it's the work of the Ministers of the Gospel, to drive a match between you and Christ, that so at that day they may look them out, and present them to Christ, Lo here am I, and the children that thou hast given me, Isai. 8. 18. 2 Cor. 11. 1, 2, 3. It's therefore the day of the comfort of God, Ministers and all his servants, therefore a day of boldness.

3. It's a day of much comfort and boldness, because then they shall be freed from all discouragements, from all persecutions and malignities, from slanderous tongues and hard speeches, from all fears and sorrows; nay more, from all temptations and corruptions; this must needs give boldness to them; it's all the casue of boldness we have in this life, because that day all our sins and sorrows shall be put away; it's a day of universal freedom from all sin, 1 Joh. 3. 12. we shall then be like him in grace and glory, and freedom from all evils.

Use 1. To reprove a gross error in Poery, which is that no man can be certain of his salvation in the day of judgement, but we see it's no other doctrine, but St. *John* here delivers, it is not a world of boldness and confidence that *Paul* hath, 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8. *I know from henceforth is laid up for me a crown of glory?* true say they, *Paul* was an extraordinary Christian: but he adds, *not for me only, but for all them that love his appearing:* were not Christians confident against that day, how is it that they so earnestly desire that day? The Spirit and the Bride say *Come*, and every one that is athirst, say, *Come Lord Jesus, come quickly*, be like a young *Roe*; which shews plainly, they do not look at it as a day of terror, but as a day of boldness and comfort.

Object. *Have not many of God's servants been afraid of the face of death, and troubled at it? What was Hilarius his speech, Egredere anima mea, quid trepidas? Egredere, septuaginta annos Christum colui, & jame mortem times?*

Answ. The words of *Hilarius* shew that he checks this fear, he thought he had no cause to be afraid, therefore he bids his soul go forth.

2. I grant that a man's nature may shrink at death, though he knows that he hath been a faithful servant, and is not afraid of judgement, for death is an enemy to nature, though a friend to grace, 2 Cor. 5. 12, *Paul*

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himself desires to be clothed with glory, but yet is loth to be unclothed of his body, so Christ told *Peter*, Joh. 21. 18. they shall lead thee whither thou wouldst not, he means to martyrdom, implying if he could have shunned martyrdom with a good conscience, he would have avoided it, because it's an enemy to nature; but yet this fearfulness of nature is after aggravated by temptations and doubts, so that as nature shrinks at death; so corruptions will startle and tremble at death, Satan commonly at such times taking away all matter of comfort, that though in hid right temper, he was confident of his happy estate; yet then Satan will put out of his mind all matter of comfort, and possess him that that day shall be a day of strict examination, and possess him with the sins of his youth, that his spirit will startle at death, so Psal. 30. 7. to 10. when God hid away his face, then he cried out, *What profit is there in my blood?* So *Hezekiah* and *Job* both unwilling to die; but yet this hinders not, but that a man of perfect love may have boldness in that day, though in the day of desertion, when a man's soul is stricken with temptations and corruptions, it may be afraid; but take *David*, (and so other Christians) in his right temper, and he is confidently persuaded of Christ's love to him, Psal. 3. 6. *I will not be afraid of ten thousand that shall compass me*

about; so said St. *Ambrose*, I have not so lived, that I am ashamed to live any longer, neither doth it irk me to die, because I have a good Lord, so *Paul* professeth, Phil. 1. 21. *πολὺ μᾶλλον κρείσσον* it's much better for me to be dissolved, to Job 19. 25, 26. so it is not only the resolution of eminent Christians, but even of everyone, whose love is perfect, they may have boldness in that day.

Use 2. Shews the dangerous estate of such whose love to God and their brethren is not perfect; for if they whose love is perfect may have boldness, then such as never sought after God or his favour, never loved the fellowship of his servants, in that day where shall such appear?

Object. *I have known men that have never troubled themselves with matters of religion; yea scornful, spiteful boisterous men, yet as little afraid of death and hell, as the best,* Isa. 22. 14, 15.

Ans. That which the Papists condemn as heretical presumption in God's servants, that may be called profane presumption, such men as they who never shrink at death or judgement: and indeed it proceeds from their profound ignorance and deadness of their hearts, who never felt the wrath of God, nor the terrors of hell, *Dulce bellum inexpertis*, but if once they come to see that day, then shall they call to the mountains and hills to cover them from the wrath of the Lamb.

Use 3. For those that would live comfortably and die peaceably, take this ready way, be perfect and sincere in your love to God and his Saints, and that will breed in you marvellous boldness against that day, when the Lord Jesus shall come to be admired in you, and glorified in all his Saints; so much perfect love, so much perfect boldness; if your hearts be hollow and your love unsound, all fears at such times spring from the halting of your love: What made *David* afraid of going down into the pit, but that his heart was conscious he had dealt hollowly with *Uriah* and *Bathsheba*.

Use 4. Of consolation to all loving hearted Christians, that walk sincerely towards God and their brethren; why, thou walkest up and down with a spirit of boldness, whereas others call death *τῶν φοβερῶν φοβερῶτατον*, the most terrible of all things terrible, thou shalt look at it with confidence, when others are cast down thou shall be lifted up.

T t

I JOHN

I JOHN 4. 17 latter part.

Because as he is, so are we in this world.

IN these words he proves, that such in whom love is perfect, such may have boldness in the day of judgement, and his argument stands thus, they who are in this world as God himself is, &c.

Doct. *Such as love one another, are in this world as God himself is.*

For proof Ephes. 4. *ult. cap.* 5. 1. Be kind one to another, *Γίνεσθε εἰς ἀλλήλους χρηστοί*, be useful and helpful one to another, ready to do them good, tender-hearted, if they have done you any wrongs, and compassionate them in their miseries and chap. 5. 1. *be ye followers of God as dear children*, they that walk in love, walk as Christ himself did, he was kind and helpful to the sons of men, forgiving injuries, and giving liberally to all men, so is God in this world, all his paths are mercy and truth, in his love he promiseth, in his love he performeth; so they that walk in love, walk like God in this world; when *Adam* stood in innocency, he loved him abundantly, and when he fell, he would not let him lie, but in his love he sent his Son to redeem him; so let men walk lovingly towards all, and if their love to thee decay, yet stretch out thy hand of compassion to help them.

Reas. 1. From the universal frame of righteousness, that is expressed in the spirit of love, all the attributes of God, mercy, wisdom, goodness, all proceed from love, in his love he made us, in his love he preserves us, in his love he guides us, in his love he chastens us, Rom. 13. 10. *Love is the fulfilling of the law*; and it it fulfil the law, then it fulfils all the righteousness we owe to God and man.

Use 1. This is a notable encouragement to Christians, to grow up in the grace of love: if a man would know how in a small scantling of performance, he may be as God himself is; why, this is the ready way, he who is perfect in love, is in this world as God himself is: many think the duties of Religion hard and intricate, but to a loving heart all is easy; let there be but love in the heart, and every duty both to God and man will come off easily; so many loving Christians, so many gods in resemblances: Magistrates are called gods in Scripture, because they bear the Image of his Sovereignty; old men bear the Image of his Eternity, learned men of his Omniscency; but a man may have all these Images of God, and yet perish: the Devils are spirits of power and wisdom, and yet bound in chains of darkness; but a poor Christian that walks in the spirit of love, he is in this world, as God himself is, he goes beyond all other resemblances, and they that are such *may have boldness in the day of judgement*, which is more then either wisdom, or wealth, or honous can afford; a man may have all them, and yet tremble at the thoughts of death: if you observe, you shall find men in the world busy themselves about some of those perfections, to be perfect in wisdom, learning, or

honours, and these things they labour hard after: why, go you home and labour as hard after love, strive to be as eminent in love, and thou shalt get more by due purchase than they can get by all their endeavours, all their contents will not give them *boldness against the day of judgement*: great men, and learned men have slept in the grave, and have found nothing in the morning when they awaked; but a loving Christian when he sleeps in the dust, in the morning when he awakes, shall be satisfied with the Image of God. But if withal, you that are blessed with Magistracy, wisdom, riches, learning, if you likewise abound with a spirit of love, you are more like God than another poor Christian, that wants those other resemblances; a rich man and a loving Christian, an aged man and a loving Christian, a Magistrate and a loving Christian, how much do they set out the similitude and fulness of God himself? God is royal and loving, God is wise and loving withal,

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he is Almighty and loving withal; it's his love only that doth good to us, his Majesty, Power, and Eternity, would be a terrour to us, it's his love whereby he doth us good; therefore to all endowments, add, what good do riches, and honours, and knowledge, except thou have love withal.

Doct. 3. *They that are in this world, as God himself is, they may have boldness to the day of judgement*, Mat. 18. 33. to the end.

The which shews, that suppose a man should live in this world, with a confidence that all his sins are forgiven him, and in the mean time he grows straight hearted & bitter to his brethren; why, upon his sick bed, or some other trial, the Lord takes him by the throat, and exacts the whole debt of his sins at his hands; or if before he have had good assurance of the pardon of his sins, yet he shall find such horror and anguish, that he believes all his sins still lie on the score. If we want love, we cannot *have boldness in the day of judgement*, Christ had so furnished his Disciples with love that thereby they abounded in much service to him and his, and these being men of love, they should not be afraid of Christ's coming, but then he bids them lift up their heads with comfort, Luk. 21. 28.

What is this boldness?

Boldness is that which mortifies fear and shame which two things are contrary to boldness; if a man be fearful, what boldness is there? but this boldness make a man look at death and judgement without fear.

2. Boldness removes shame, 1 Joh. 2. 28. when he shall appear we may have boldness, and not be ashamed; a man therefore that is like God in this

world, is neither afraid nor ashamed in the day of judgement.

Reas. 1. Because that which might be matter of fear is removed, for that which makes a man afraid at that day, is, because he is not like God, God is of pure eyes, and they are altogether unclean, and then indeed Christ will command such to depart from him, the workers of iniquity; but now a loving Christian is not a worker at iniquity, but a worker of love, a worker of mercy and righteousness and so God accepts of him.

2. This spirit of love, clothes us with those duties and works, which God most recompenseth at that day; God will then crown men with glory, not because they are wiser and richer then others, but because *they saw me hungry and gave me meat, naked and clothed me, &c. Mercy rejoiceth against judgement,* God will there be abundantly merciful, to recompense every work and office of mercy.

2. There is no cause of shame, for where there is a resemblance of God there is cause of joy: God acknowledgeth his own Image, and will perfect it at that day, for love ceaseth not a man may have learning and riches, and honour, and be ashamed at that day, but if we be clothed with love, we than never be ashamed.

Use 1. Labour therefore above all graces, to cloath your selves with love, a loving Christian is a couragious Christian, when other men's hearts shall quail and tremble for fear, and shake like the leafs of a tree, Isai. 7. 2. then a loving Christian may lift up his head with joy, because then he knows his love shall be consummate, and when others are ashamed of their riches, learning, and honours, he is not ashamed of his love, a loving Christian, is safe and bold both in life and death: look at all the straits of a Christian, if they be upon any ground, it's for want of love, he that neglects this duty of love, God and his conscience will take him by the throat, and exact the due debt, because he walked with a private spirit, in the public world, whereas if we do but walk in a spirit of love and helpfulness to our brethren, and learn to walk with a public spirit, neglecting private respects, the Devil and thy conscience shall find nothing to accuse thee of, but thou shalt meet death and judgement in the face, without fear or shame.

T t 2

I JOHN

I JOHN 4. 18.

There is no fear in love, but perfect love casteth out fear, because fear hath torment: he that feareth, is not made perfect in love.

VErs. 17. he proved, that such as love one another, *may have boldness in the day of judgement*, this be proved:

1. From the likeness to God vers. 17.

2. He proves it from the contrariety that is betwixt fear and love, *There is no fear in love*, which he proves by an effect of love, *perfect love casteth out fear*, and therefore perfect love and fear cannot stand together, this he proves by a double argument from fear:

1. Fear hath torment, therefore love a peaceable grace casts out fear.

2. Because he that feareth is not perfect in love, therefore he that is perfect in love fears not.

In this 18. vers, 1. Observe that estate of a soul troubled with fear, and that is a *state of torment*.

2. The unsound and uncomfortable condition of such a soul, *he is not perfect in love*.

3. The remedy of this estate, *perfect love casts out fear*.

4. The exemption of perfect love from all fear, or the comfortable condition of a soul so healed by love, *There is no fear in love*.

Doct. *A fearful conscience lies in torment*.

Fear hath torment, and bespeaks of the fear of death, but specially of judgement; where that fear is, there is torment, the word translated torment, *κόλασιν*, is elsewhere so translated, Matth. 25. *ult*. The torment here spoken of, is such a kind of torment as hell is, not for measure, but for kind. For the handling of this, we may see what the Scripture speaks of this torment in the several descriptions and metaphors.

1. This torment is sometimes called pricking of conscience, Act. 2. 37. they were pricked at their hearts with fear and shame for sin, though but a little before they scoffed at the Apostle, vers. 13. yet now they were struck with such torments, as they knew not what to do.

2. It's called a wounding of the spirit, Prov. 18. 14. which wounding is a larger gash then pricking, and so implies more anguish, fear and shame.

3. It is compared to the sting of a Scorpion, Revel. 9. 5. the Jesuites do so sting men with torments of hell and horror of conscience, and God give them not power to heal themselves again; hence they thought every thing little enough to satisfy their conscience, and so they suck out their estates in building Hospitals, and bestowing on their Cloisters.

4. The wrath of God in the soul is compared to venomous arrows, Job 6. 4.

5. This torment is called the rending of the heart, Joel 2. 13. *rend your hearts and not your garments*, the heart and thoughts are so rent and distracted, that one thing will not hang by another.

David calls this, melting of spirit, Psal. 119. 8. as if the heart were like wax, and God's wrath like burning fire, therefore a man in this case is in a bitter estate, Job 13. 26. *Though writest bitter things against me*, Isa. 38. 15. *I shall go mourning in the bitterness of my soul*, for this the soul is troubled, Psal. 77. and sorely vexed, Psal. 6. 3.

Why doth a soul lying in fear, lie in torment?

Reas. 1. Consider this fear in the effects of it, this fear sometimes brings men into trembling of body, so that all the spirits fly inward.

2. If it continue, id.ad, oft times to inward Confumptillns of body, or blminll Agues, Hab. 3. 16. Psal. 38. 4, 5.

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3. Sometimes it causeth terrible dreams, which do amaze and affright us, Job 13. 14.

4. It causeth weariness of life, so that a soul long exercised with this kind of fear, cries out in bitterness, and heartily wisheth for death, Job 7. 15. *My soul chooseth strangling rather then life*, if he might have his choice he would rather choose strangling then life; there are worse effects then those proceeding from this fear, when Satan sets on withal against us.

1. Sometimes Satan so follows us with fear and horrors, that though a man be of a large measure of patience, yet he is able to bear no longer, but breaks out in impatience, *Cursed be the day that ever I was born*, Job 3. 1, 2, 3. and this is a sinful effect.

2. It breeds in some a flying from the presence of God, that they dare not read or pray, they are afraid the earth should swallow them up, and God suddenly consume them; so *Cain* when he was persued with horror of conscience, he fled from the presence of God, from *Adam's* family, from the Church.

3. This fear sometimes brings destruction, when the soul is so wearied with sense of horrors, with cares and watchings, that the brain grows frenzy, so that you can be able to do them no good, till God puts in his help, Psal. 88. 15, 16. This was *Heman's* case, through the terrors of God, he was distracted, yet when God healed his spirit, he grows one of the wisest men upon the earth, except *Solomon*.

4. Sometimes upon this fear follows despair, the soul is persuaded it shall never see the light of God's countenance again, but that it's utterly cast off, Psa.

3. 6, 7. Psal. 77. but this was but for a time; but sometimes this despair is final, as *Judas* his was.

5. From hence follows sometimes self-murder, as in *Judas*, Matth. 27.

Reas. 1. From the properties of this fear, it's incomprehensible, when *Job* would express it, he could not tell how to set it forth; but *O that my afflictions were laid in the balance*, Job 6. 2, 3. Lam. 3. 12, 13. *Is there any sorrow like my sorrow?*

2. It's insupportable, *a wounded spirit who can bear?* Prov. 18. 14. the stoutest heart is not able to stand under it.

3. It's immovable, nothing in the world is able to remove it; no balm can cure the conscience but the blood of Christ.

Reas. 3. From the causes of this fear, which are two:

1. The sense of God's wrath here, and the expectation of greater hereafter, Psal. 90. 11. *Who knows the power of thy wrath?*

2. A terrible expectation of violent fire, to consume God's adversaries, Heb. 10. 27.

Reas. 4. Consider the subject of all this fear and torment, and that is the conscience and heart of man, the judgement and will; the will that before was most tough and obstinate, of all the faculties, these torments make it soft, and tender, therefore it's said, *Josiah's heart melted at the hearing of the Law*, 2 Chron. 34. 17. Job 23. 16. the heart is made raw and tender, that look as raw flesh would be against the fire, so the tender raw conscience is anguished with this fire of God's wrath, according to that old saying, He that would go to heaven must sail by hell gates.

Use 1. To stir up all such who have any of their friends thus exercised, to pity and compassionate them; Is it nothing to you that pass by, that God's hand lies so fore on him? to him that is afflicted, pity should be shewn by his friends; but they forsake the fear of the Almighty, Job 6. 14, Even as some Sea men at their first voyage, they can pity those that are Sea-sick and tossed, but afterward they grow senseless: so when Christians first launch out themselves into this troublesome condition, they could have pitied others in the like case; but through custom men forsake the fear of the Almighty; for though commonly these fears be safe, yet they may end in despair,

spair, and therefore pity should be shewed them, *Job* never cried out for help in the loss of his children or estate, but when God's hand touched his soul, then he called upon all that feared God to pity him; and indeed God is very sensible of all such as compassionate them; why, if ever God send them com-

fort, he will restore comfort likewise to their mourners, Isa. 57. 78, for those torments are not always safe, except you find them mixed with some spark of faith and love, but however, God looks, that if he be angry, we should fear.

Use 2. From those that are thus afflicted, learn to be sensible, of your estate, and do not think this estate desperate, for this torment may be healed, and therefore let us labour in this case to seek out for healing: is a man in torment, and will he live and die? what in torment, and not seek out for help?

How shall I help my self in this case?

Answ. God would hereby have you know something, which you never considered before, know therefore, and see that it is an evil thing and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God, we have gone on obstinately and call aside God's yoke, therefore thy own wickedness shall correct thee; therefore know, and see and learn by it, to see the danger of sin, and if thou begin to be tendable, there is hope this torment will end well; know that it is an evil to provoke God to such fierce anger, for as you have pressed God, Amos 2. 13. so he will press you.

2. Confess thy sins to God, lay open thy ways, and see them in order before him, and by this means you will find an unmeasurableness of ease, Psal. 32. to 6. he that confesseth his sins shall find mercy, Prov. 28. 13. And with this confession add prayer for pardon and healing of thy sins, and God ordinarily will heal such, Hos. 14. 3, 4, 5. Job 33. 27, 28.

3. Use the Ordinances, the Word, the Sacraments, Christian Communion; these are of special use to quiet the afflicted conscience, Isa. 57. 19. *I create the fruit of the lips, peace*, God by the lips of his Ministers, secretly drops sweet balm: and so in the Sacrament, behold the blood of the New Testament shed for thee, for such souls especially, is Christ's blood, and for Christian Communion, read Job 16. 5. *The movings of my lips should have asswaged your grief*; he would have spoke words which should have been as balm or oil to a Christian soul.

4. Bow your hearts to wait on God patiently, as he hath waited on you; the soul is ready soon to wax weary, and to say, Wherefore should I wait on the Lord any longer? Isa. 50. 10. Tarry but a while, and he that shall come, will come, and will not delay.

5. Prize the least expression of God, mercy to thy soul, praise him for dealing thus with thee, that he would take such pain, with thee.

1. Bless him that thou art yet on this side hell, crying for mercy, it's a greater blessing then all the Devils or damned have.

2. It's another fruit of God's love to thee, that he hath applyed a fit medicine to the frame of thy spirit, Jer. 2. 17. Thou drinkest but of the cup thou brewest thy self; that God should thus hedge thee in with his hands, and break thy heart, and lay it on so; sure, this is such a mercy, as we cannot be too sensible of.

3. Another fruit of God's love is, that hereby he cuts you off, not only from the wildness and looseness of thy heart, but from taking further day with him: we are ready to put off repentance from time to time, to the cool of the day, and the evening of our age: but when God embitters our souls with this torment of conscience, then we should stand out no longer, but the soul longs and cries for mercy, this night before the morning; then they could wish no greater blessing then God's favour, Psal. 45. 6.

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4. Hereby, by such terrors and anguish, your heart shall be so broken off from its self, that you shall not be afraid of reproaches or scoffs, that may follow you in your after course: an unbroken spirit is not able to brook the reproaches and scorns of the world; but when God hath once broken the heart throughly, then it's enabled to bear patiently all the discouragements it may meet with.

Use 3. For them that have been in such a case, and have gotten out; take heed of relapses, for if we start back again, God will make us know what an evil and bitter thing it is to fly back from God: when *David* made bold with his sins; O what woeful horror fell he into! therefore take heed, lest by sinning, you fall into this torment again.

We come now to the second part of the Text, which is the unsound condition of such a soul as lies in fear from whence observe,

Doct. *A fearful conscience is void of true hearted love.*

He that feareth, *viz.* death and judgement, such a man is not perfect in love, a fearful heart is not sound in love, Rev. 21. 8. the fearful are reckoned amongst the most notorious sinners and fire-brands of hell; therefore surely they are not found hearted.

There is a double fearfulness:

1. Of the day of judgement, of death, of wrath.

2. When a man is afraid of displeasing men; when he dare not do a thing, be it never so right and good, for fear of displeasing men, Prov. 29. 25. *The fear of man bringeth a snare:* both these are unfound; *è contra*, a child of

God fears not, though he walk in the midst of the shadow of death, Psal. 23. 4.

Reas. 1. From the ground or root of fear, which is unbelief, for faith breeds confidence and boldness, Ephes. 3. 12. *We have access with confidence through faith in him*, that therefore which breeds fear is unbelief, Rev. 21. 8. he puts the fearful and unbelievers together: that heart that believes not God's faithfulness or goodness, is a fearful heart.

2. From the effect of this fear, it drives us from God, men possessed with this fear at the last day, shall cry to the Mountains to cover them from the presence of the Lamb, Rev. 6. *ult.* So when *Adam* had sinned, he hid himself from the presence of the Lord.

3. From the object of this fear, which is an expectation of some evil terrible to him: if therefore the creature look at God as terrible, and to be feared, it's a sign they are not found in love; for they that love Christ, love his appearing, the Spirit and the Bride say, *Come Lord Jesus, come quickly*, be like a Roe or young Hart, for they look on Christ as comfortable, and his presence as joyful and good for them.

4. From the adjunct of fear, fear brings torment and stinging with it, it's a kind of torment in the soul, but love brings peace, and joy, and comfort; therefore this properly argues, that where fear is the heart is not found.

Object. *how comes it to pass then, that some that are of loving spirits, are full of fears and terrors, as Job 6. 4. So Heman and Paul complains, 2 Cor. 7. 5. that he found fightings without, and terrors within: if such glorious Saints may be fearful, will you say they were unsound?*

Ans. There may be found such fears even in God's Saints that have experience of his love to them, and the world experience of their love: but consider what kind of fear it is the fears differ much from the fears of un-found hearts.

1. The fears of the godly spring not o much from the expectation of death and hell, as from some inward trouble for want of God's favour, Psal. 80. 3, 4. *Turn us again O Lord, and cause thy face to shine, and we shall be saved*, it's for want of the light of his countenance, that they so grieve, otherwise we read not of the fears of hell or judgement: now here is a

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great difference, for here is ever a spirit of love mixed with these fears, for it's the love of God they most desire; on the contrary, a wicked man is not

so much assured for the want of God's favour, as for the sense of wrath and judgement, and expectation of future evil.

2. In the midst of a godly man's fears, there is an intermixture of many secret supports and comforts, Psal. 94. 18, 19. *In the multitude of my thoughts within me, thy comforts uphold my soul; è contra*, a man of an unsound heart, he hath no intermixture of comfort; he drinks of the cup of God's wrath, not mixed with joy and comfort, but full of terror, grief, and discomfort, Psal. 75. 8.

3. There is a difference in the effects, a wicked man's fears drive him from God, as *Adam* and *Cain*, they ran from the presence of God, and seeks out other means: *Saul* to his distress sometimes seeks for help from *David's* Harp, sometimes he runs to Witches; *Judas* runs to an halter; *Cain* to quiet his conscience falls to building of Cities: but the fear of the godly drives them to use the right means to run to God, to keep closer to him; *Jehosaphat*, when his enemies came against him, it's said, *he feared exceedingly*; What then? ran he to Witches, or Idolaters? No, he *set himself to seek the Lord*, and to pray to him for help, 2 Chron. 20. 3. So that though God seems very angry, yet they will throw themselves into his arms, they run to the horns of the Altar, and there if they must perish, will they die: and indeed the heart is never more found in love then when it runs to God most, and it argues the more love to cleave to him, when we see least cause.

Object. *May we not find many wicked, that defy death and judgement? they are no more afraid of hell, then if it were a fable.*

Ans. True there are such boisterous spirits that neither fear God nor man, are not afraid of hell, and yet far from any soundness, their fearlessness differs from the boldness of Christians.

For 1. it's without root.

a, Without fruit; whereas the true boldness of Christians proceeds from faith in Christ, Ephes. 3. 12. Rom. 5. 1, 2, 3. But their fearlessness, proceeds from fearedness and benumbedness of conscience; no wonder then if such neither fear God nor man; whereas the boldness of the Saints makes them reverence God, and fear sin the more.

2. Their fearlessness is fruitless, they are not more fruitful by it, but more licentious, and such men ordinarily at death, are desperately licentious, then halter or dagger, or any thing to rid them out of the horror of conscience.

Use 1. May teach all them that will be possessed with a spirit of boldness and confidence, let them maintain sound hearted love to their brethren; and indeed there is no fear that befalls God's servants, but it proceeds either from

bemudding themselves with the world, or else for want of love to their brethren: as a wife, when her husband hath been long abroad, and her heart hath gone after other lovers, his coming is the les welcome, she could wish his coming deferred: so when we have let our hearts run loose from God, and our brethren; why, then our hearts grow full of doubts and fears, gladly could we desire that God would defer his coming, and respite us a little, that we might recover our selves before we go hence, and be no more seen; therefore as you would find your hearts comfortable and unmoveable at death, and judgement, when the Mountains quake, and the Seas roar; would you then be cheerful? grow up in love to God, acquaint your selves with him, let your desires be towards him, and withal join the love of your brethren, or else his coming will be uncomfortable: Even as children, when their Parents have been abroad, and they have fallen out, and sought, and hurt one another, then they are afraid of their Father's coming, which otherwise would have been most welcome: so if you fall out with your brethren, and stain their good names and wrong them, you still find your
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hearts afraid of God's coming, and would gladly have God to defer it a while: It's a direction therefore to all the sons of men, how to be prepared for death and judgement; it's not building Hospitals, that will sit you for it, but this is the best way, love God, and love your brethren, and you cannot die uncomfortably: no man dies more fearfully then a contentious, or covetous man; a wrangling contentious man never dies with peace and comfort, if therefore thou findest an heart afraid of death and judgement, if thou wouldst help this, labour to cleanse out all enmity and want of love.

Use 2. Of consolation to such as find their hearts fearful and uncomfortable, and yet find their hearts sound in love to God and their brethren; why, consider if there be not an evil root of bitterness in you, and if thou findest thy heart free from envy and wrath, and hatred; then consider what good offices thou dost; labour not only to be sincere, but to grow up to fruitfulness, and if God give you to see that your fear is rather for want of his favour, then for hell and wrath, this is not the fear of hypocrites, Isa. 33. 14. but proceeds from want of experience.

Use 3. It's a ground of much comfort to those that are either fearless of death and judgement, or found in love, if thou findest thy fearlessness arise from longing after God, and making the more fruitful, Why, it's an evidence, thou art sound hearted in love; and again, if thou findest a loving

heart: why, thou hast a just ground of fearless boldness; soundness of love, and boldness, go hand in hand: and how should we labour for that grace that will help us against all fears and doubts?

We have formerly heard of the torment of fear, and the hypocrisy of fear.

Now the third thing is the remedy of his fear, *But perfect love casteth out fear.*

Doct. 3. *True hearted love to God, casteth out all fear of evil from the hand of God.*

So that though at first the conscience of a young Christian be fearful of the wrath of God and judgement, yet as love grows, so fear is casting out; *Perfect love casts out fear*; he means not without imperfection, *For we know but in part, and love but in part*, but he speaks of love without hypocrisy and dissimulation; true hearted love fears no evil from the hand of God; Now this *love casts out fear*: Not as soon as ever it comes into the soul, but by little and little, as a man that goes to cleanse a pit, he cannot do it presently, but he is calling it out till it be all cleansed: Fear is a deep pit, compared to the sinking into deep mire; now love comes to cast out this fear, but it's not done the first hour, but by little and little it will get rid of all fear: it doth not cast out the fear of God, for the more we love him, the more we fear him; but it casts out all tormenting fear, it casts out the fear of the day of judgement, and so consequently of God's wrath, 2 Thes. 3. 5. He prays that the Lord would direct their hearts into the love of God; Why, what is the fruit of that? And into the patient waiting for of Christ, when a man's heart is once directed to the love of God, he is prepared to wait for the coming of Jesus Christ, Jude vers. 21. *Keep your selves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life*, so much love as you keep in your hearts towards God, so much expectaion you keep in your hearts against the day of his appearing; the like may be said of keeping our hearts in love to our brethren, Jam. 2. 13. *mercy rejoiceth against judgement.*

Reas. 1. From the proper nature and effect of love, love things no evil, 1 Cor. 13. 5. This is the work of love in the heart, it bows the heart to take all in good part, that God doth against it, so that though we find much disquiet and anguish, and torment, yet love makes the soul take all in good part, so that it thinks no evil of God. For particulars,

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1. The soul thinks thus, though I feel much smart and anguish, yet I cannot but think it well, that God should apply such corrosives to my rankled festered wounds.

2. The soul takes it well, that God shews him all the danger before times of sickness of death, that he shews him this out of Hell, and awakes him before he comes there: it's a great mercy that I have yet time of mercy, that Hell hath not swallowed me up, but that he hath given me so fair a warning to prevent it.

3. A loving soul takes God's dealing in this kind in very good part, as being a notable preservative against many sinful distempers, he should have fallen into; by these anguishses, he drives me from the world, and putting off God for after times: this makes us seek God speedily, there is no man, when grace knocks at his heart, that quite rejects the motion, but defers it; but these tormenting fears are like hooks in a fishes belly, they draw us to God presently.

4. The soul takes it in good part, in that by these fears of conscience, he is brought to attend better to Sermons, to be conversant in the Scripture more, to like good company better; this though it quite calls not out tormenting fear, yet it makes all to be taken in good part, for that the soul hereby grows more meek and lowly, and by this means he begins to find rest to his soul: when a man begins to take Christ's yoke and bear it patiently. and learn of him to be meek and lowly, he finds rest to his soul, then he is not in torment.

2. Effect of true hearted love, it stirs up a man to seek him whom his soul loveth, and the very seeking prepares the heart to rest; for such a soul, when he hath found Christ, will not let him go, till he be possessed of his love, Cant. 3. 4. Whereas the soul that wants love runs away from God, as *Adam*, and *Cain*, and *Saul* fled from God in their distress; but love in the midst of all these tormenting fears, gather up the soul, that it runs not to music nor mirth, or any evil means to quiet it, but provokes the heart to seek God by all good means and so casts out fear.

3. Love of God makes us afraid of all sin, and conscionable to obey in all things; all that love God hate sin; love maketh us hate sin, and affects us with a desire to keep God's Commandments, and to be doing good, Joh. 14. 23. Now both these lead to tranquillity, Psal. 97. 10, 11. There is a double ground at comfort to those that begin to hate evil, out of love to God.

First, The Lord preserveth such a soul.

Secondly, Light is sown for such, which in time will sprout up to manifest comfort, therefore, Psal. 97. 12. he saith, *Rejoice in the Lord ye righteous*. Love likewise provokes us to be fruitful in goodness, and if we be so, Christ promiseth that he will manifest his favour and familiarity to such, Joh. 14. 23.

Reas. 2. From the object of love which is always some good, and if the soul love good, God will be good to it, Psal. 79. 1. Truly God is good to *Israel*, in the midst of many fears and doubts, and griefs, in the midst of all, like the Sun through a cloud, he breaks out, yet God is good to *Israel*: Now when a man in the midst of evil, can look at God as good, this makes way to quiet all, as he expresseth, vers. 24, 25, 28, 29. When the heart conceives of God as good, it scatters all doubts and fears wherewith the soul is possessed, that though his heart and flesh fail, yet God is his portion for ever.

Use 1. Of direction to them that have to deal with troubled spirits, where they may apply comfort; a man comes and complains bitterly of the burden of his soul: Why, as yet there is no sure ground of applying of comfort, but when you can discern any fruit of love in their expressions, if you find them taking all in good part, and blessing God, that by this means he is pleased to break them off from their own sinful ways, and

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draw them closer to them, then you may safely apply comfort, but otherwise, if you see men murmuring against God's hand; why, truly that fear hath torment, and that soul is not sound hearted: this is true love, to love God when he is angry, and to take it in good part, that God should deal frowardly and crabbedly with a froward and crooked heart.

Use 2. For them that find their hearts overwhelmed with fears and doubts, and yet are unwilling to come to this frame of spirit, that think they have not lived so badly as some have done; convince them they have deserved more then this, that so they may take all in good part, and then if they be possessed of God's love in this, and apprehend it, there is way for comfort and peace.

Use 3. For you that find disturbance and anguish of soul, it may be a ground of consolation and direction to you; thou findest thy heart pricked with the torment of sin, consider how thou findest thy heart affected to God; doth thy soul say to God in thy deepest anguish, as they did *Neh.* 9. 33. *Thou art art just in all that is come upon us, thou hast done righteously, but we have done foolishly?* Dost thou take it in good part, and bless God that in

very faithfulness to thy soul he hath afflicted thee? If thou submittest thy self to God, and putteth thy mouth in the dust, willing to be turned any way, so that he will set thee in a good way: Why, then there is a spirit of love in thee, which in time will call out all fear, there are now seeds of light and joy sown, which ere long will sprout forth to thy endless comfort.

Use 4. May teach them whose consciences are tormented, what course to take for comfort.

1. Look at God's good providence to thee, in trying thee, and proving thee, that he may do thee good in the latter end.

2. As you have cause to take all in good part, so learn to seek him carefully: Again, take heed of sin, and be doing what good you may, strive to be more fruitful in good services to God, and offices of love to your brethren, and certainly, this unfeigned love will lead a peace.

Use 5. Hence see the estrangement of wicked men from ways of peace, Rom. 3. 17. *The way of peace they have not known.*

1. They cannot think that torment and fear, should be the way of peace, if they see man in this case.

2. They would put off such fears with merry company, but if they see such a man seeking God earnestly, praying and hearing the Word carefully, they cannot think this is the way of peace: will you bless God and die when he is ready to swallow you up? *The way of peace they have not know, salvation is far from them,* Psal. 119. 155.

Vers. 18. *There is no fear in love, &c.*

We come to the fourth thing, exemption of perfect love from all fear.

Doct. 4. *An heart possessed with the love of God, is dispossessed of fear of evil from God.*

He speaks of the fear of death and judgement, as is in our hearts, so much freedom and boldness against the day of Judgement; a loving heart fears not wrath, nor judgement, nor hell, Psal. 23. 4. when once I look at God as my Shepherd, and love him, and follow him: Why, then *though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear none evil,* though I walk in near danger of death, for if the shadow follow me, the body is not far off, yet I will fear no evil, Psal. 44. 15. *David* makes open proclamation to all men to hear and harken, there is the solemnity of the audience: the matter is, It's a parable, and dark mystery, and yet a word of wisdom and understanding, Why, what is this parable that all the world

should take notice of? Why, this is it, *Wherefore should I be afraid, when the iniquity of my heels do compass me about?* that is, the iniquity of my footsteps,

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the tripping of my steps, or the iniquity of my heels, that is, the fears and dangers that follow him at the heels; yet wherefore should I fear? An heart possessed with the love of God is dispossessed of fear of evil from God, Psal. 3. 6. *I will not be afraid of ten thousand people, that shall compass me about:* Why, what makes him so confident? *because the Lord is my shield and lifter up up of my head,* vers. 3. so that we see that a Christian possessed of the love of God, stands not in the fear of judgement or hell, nay more, not of his sinful failings, Psal. 49. 5.

Reas. 1. From the nature of fear, and the removal of it, fear is a troublesome affection in the expectation of some evil: Now for the removal of fear two things must be done;

1. There must be no evil towards him.

2. He must know this. Now to him that feareth God, no evil is towards such a one, Psal. 91. 10. *There shall no evil befall thee:* Now to whom is this promise made? see vers. 14. *Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore I will deliver him, I will set him on high,* far above all dangers and evils; indeed sickness may befall him, and reproaches, and imprisonment, but what ever befalls under the nature of evil, that shall not come nigh him.

2. As no evil is towards him, so he must know this, that no evil shall befall him: Now a Christian that loves God, he knows that no evil shall befall him, Psal. 56. 3, 9. & 10, 11. *What time I am afraid I will trust on thee,* vers. 10. *When I cry unto thee, thou shalt cause mine enemies to turn their backs, this I know, for God is for me,* so that a Christian not only finds security from danger, but knowledge of it too. Nay further, the child of God is so far from fearing any evil to come nigh him, that he knows all those things that are counted evil, shall turn to his advantage, Rom. 8. 28. so Philip. 1. 19. where he tells you what wrong false Apostles did him on purpose, to add afflictions to his bonds, well saith he, *I know this shall turn to my salvation, through your prayers,* upon a double ground be comforts himself against all their malignities.

1. He knows the more they afflict him, the more will the Church pray for him.

2. That the more he is tempted, the more will God supply by his Spirit.

Quest. *How do they know, that no evil shall befall them?*

Answ. 1. From the love of God shed abroad in their hearts, Rom. 5. 1. to 6.

2. From the presence of God for him in his worst times, *and if God be for him, who can be against him?* Rom. 8. 31.

3. From the interest he hath in the blood of Christ, which hath cleansed him from all his sins, so that he doth know that God will follow him as a revenger of his sins, so that the soul though burthened with many sins, yet fears not, Psal. 44. 5.

4. From a knowledge he bath of all the promises as belonging to him which are a stay and support to his soul, Psal. 56. 3, 4, 10, 11. Psal. 84. 11. he knows God will be a Sun and a shield to him.

5. From the knowledge that he hath from the integrity of his conscience, which is as a brazen wall against all evils, 2 Cor. 1. 12. *For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of conscience.*

6. The prayers both of his own soul and other Christians are for him, so that through them he is confident no evil shall befall him, Psal. 56. 9. Phil. 1. 19.

7. He is emboldened against dangers, from the supportance of God's Spirit in his worst times, Phil. 1. 19. Psal. 5. to Psal. 46. God is a present help in the time of trouble; when trouble is near at hand, yet God is nearer; as at was sometimes with *Elisha*, he saw the Mountain full of Chariots and Horsemen, 2 King. 16. 17. though there were not such a multitude constantly

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stantly about him, yet when an Army of the enemies come, an Army of Angels come as soon. It hath been an ancient opinion, that every true Christian hath a particular Angel to deliver him; why, this is certain, when dangers come, there never want Angels without, nor God's Spirit within, nor the prayers of his servants for us, and therefore we have no cause to fear.

Use 1. This is a notable ground upon which this heavenly truth is built, of the preservation of Saints, and a bulwark, against Apostacy; if a loving heart be without fear at the day of judgement, he is without fear of falling away.

Object. *True, as long as he keeps perfect in his love, but may he not fall off from his love, and so from his good estate?*

Answ. When the Apostle saith, *there is no fear in love*, then if there be no fear, there is no fear of falling away.

Use 2. Of direction to poor souls, against those troubles and fears of their hearts, if we would be quit of all those cares and griefs; why, grow

up in love to God and to your brethren, *for there is no fear in love*, cleanse your souls therefore from all hatred of God, learn to take all God's dealings in good part, as proceeding from his love to your souls; look at all those tears and anguishes he puts you to, as wholesome for your spirits, and the very apprehension of God's love to you in these will quiet your consciences, and scatter those fears. Grow up likewise in love to your brethren, lay aside all wrath and revenge, be tender hearted and merciful unto them, and thus growing in love, you shall grow in fearlessness.

Use 3. Shews the fearful estate of a hateful heart, as *there is no in fear love*, there is nothing but fear in hatred; he that finds his heart estranged from God; and wanting love to his brethren; why, when troubles comes, fears increase. What if the reason natural men are so afraid of death and judgement? Why, because they have hateful spirits, whereas a loving soul prays for the hastening of the day of judgement, *Come Lord Jesus, come quickly*: but an hateful spirit knows, the Lord Jesus comes to take vengeance on all his hateful carriages and hard speeches, and therefore he trembles at judgement. Yea this hateful disposition is more dangerous to the soul then any sin besides: let a godly man be defiled with many sins, fall into divers weakness and frailties, yet because he maintains a loving heart to God and his people, they do not celipee his boldness, *David* confesseth, *That the iniquities of his heels compassed him about*, yet because he kept his heart sincere and upright to God, he dares be confident, *wherefore should I be afraid?* whereas on the contrary, let a man walk never so justly and hopessly, and do many good things, yet if the heart be estranged from God, have no fellowship with him, nor his Satan, let death and judgement come, because his heart is not possessed of God's love, therefore he is oppressed with many tears and anguishes.

Use 4. Of consolation to every loving heart; if thou findest thy heart possessed with love to God and his Saints, that there is none in heaven or earth, that thou desirest in comparison of him, and for the Saints they are the only men of thy delight; if thou beest afraid, thou art much to blame: if thou discernest God's love in thy heart, bid farewell to groundless fears.

Object. *But will a loving heart say, Have not I just cause to fear, do you not see how loosely I walk, how often I trip and fall in my Christian course?*

Ans. These are no causes of fear, *Wherefore should I fear in the day of evil, when the iniquities of my heels compass me about?* These are causes to make me love God the more that pardons these failings, and to hate sin the more, but they ought not to weaken thy confidence, for *there is no fear in love*.

1 JOHN 4. 19.

We love him, because he first loved us.

THESE words depend on the form of words, vers. 17. he delivered this truth; that those that are found hearted in love, *may have boldness against the day of judgement*, this he proves from the resemblance that is between God and a loving heart.

2. From the contrariety betwixt fear and love, *there is no fear in love*, which he proves,

1. From the effect of love, *perfect love casts out fear*.

2. From the adjunct of fear, *Fear hath torment*, therefore love that is a quiet peaceable grace, cannot stand with it.

3. From the unsoundness of fear, *he that fears is not perfect in love*.

The 4. argument it takes from the cause of love, which is God's love to us, if we love God, because God loved us first, then *perfect love casts out fear*, but we do so: *Ergo*. For this is the nature of love, it makes us look at God as good and merciful to us, and therefore *love casts out all fear* of evil from the hand of God.

In this 19. vers. observe two parts:

1. The freedom of God's love to us, he loved us, not because we loved him, but *he first loved us*.

2. The root and spring of our love to God, is God's love first to us, preventing us. For the first part observe,

Doct. 1. *The love of God to us is altogether free, unprevented and undeserved on our parts.*

If the question be, why God loved us? it was not because we had done him any service of love, but he loved us before we loved him, 2 Tim. 1. 9. *He called us not according to our works, but according to his free purpose and grace*, Deut. 7. 7, 8. *The Lord did not set his love upon you, because you were more in number than any people, for ye were the fewest of all people, but because the Lord loved you*, so Deut. 9. 4, 5. he loved them because he loved them, and therefore surely without prevention or desert on our parts.

Reas. 1. From the removal of such causes of love, as might prevent God on our parts, if there be any cause on our part, he loved us either out of foreseen faith or good works; but from neither of these; not from foreseen faith, for it's the love of God to us that produceth faith, Act. 13. 48. *As many*

as were ordained to eternal life believed, so that our faith springeth from God's love choosing us to life; nor for our good works, for we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to good works, so that good works did not cause God's ordaining us to life, but God's ordaining us to life causeth good works, so that faith and good works are not causes, but fruits of God's love to us.

Reas. 2. From the eternity of God's love to us, Jer. 31. 3. *I have loved you with an everlasting love*, now if God's love be eternal, before the world was, then it was not for our sakes, who were made after, Ephes. 4. 5. Nothing temporal can be the cause of that which is eternal, our love and faith began in time, his love was eternal.

Object. *Though our faith and love began but now, yet he foresaw it from eternity, and therefore it might move him to set his love on us.*

Answ. It's all one with God, whether you have respect to that which is now, or what he knows will be hereafter, so a wise man serves a Prince, not out of mere affection to the Prince, but because he loved himself first; for he foresaw if he served him carefully he should have abundant recompence: Now to the wise man it's all one, whether he have respect to the future foreseen recompence, or to the present, and therefore still his service it mercenary; therefore when God loved us, it was not for any thing we did, or was

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foreseen to be done by us, for then we had not *loved him*, because *he first loved us*, but he had loved us, because we first loved him.

2. In Scripture account, that which comes after, is not the cause of that which went before, therefore our love coming after cannot be the cause of God's love going before: to *Abraham* and his seed were the promises made, not by works or obedience to the Law, for the Law was given four hundred years after, Gal. 3. 17. and therefore God had not respect to it, as the Apostle argues; so that which we have done four thousand years after the world was made, cannot be the cause of God's love before the world was, Rom. 9. 12, 13, 14. it the Apostle there had not excluded foreseen works, his arguing had been of no effect; for he speaks not only of what was then, but he considered nothing that might be afterwards as the cause of his love.

Use 1. To refute those that make God's love to us depend upon our love to him, they expressly blot out this Scripture, to say that anyone is beloved of God for his foreseen faith, is to say, that God loved us because we first loved him, which is expressly contrary to this text, so that if we enquire

the cause of God's love to us, we must seek it in God, not in our selves, for he loved us, because he loved us.

Use 2. May teach us to love God betimes, for you can never begin too soon, but he hath prevented you, you can never begin so early, but he hath been up before you: what a shame is it for men to defer this, till 30. 40. 50. years, till their old age? God was up betimes to manifest his love to you, and will not you begin to love God, till you are going out of the world?

Use 3. To such as have already given their love to God, let them learn to maintain their love, and increase it: a man is wont to make much of an old friend; Thine own one friend, and thy Fathers friend forget not; why, God is the ancientest that ever thou hadst, he loved thee before thou wert, before thou knewest what the world was, or what love was, therefore love him again.

Use 4. Of consolation to such as have experience of God's love towards them, it God loved us before we loved him, when we were strangers and enemies, then surely he will not cast us off for our infirmities in our after loves, it may be we may be loose and sinful, but God loved us at first, not for our goodness, neither will he call us off afterward for our wickedness. Yet this is no encouragement to licentiousness, for God knows how to put us to anguishes and straights, and crosses, and yet reserve everlasting life for us, Mar. 3. 6. There is never a servant of God, but had he cast him off for his failings, he had never been saved, none but have failed in many things, and abused God's grace; but God knows how to heal such distempers, and yet reserve his mercy to us; if he began to love us, before we loved him, then as he was first in love, so he will be last.

Use 5. May teach us to be free in our love to God and our brethren, Mat. 10. 8. Freely ye have received, freely give: God loved us, when we loved not him; so though then prevent you not with love, yet prevent you them, and if they provoke you, be fast in your love, be like God in your love, begin first, and continue last, and so come off freely in your love to God; be content to part with all for him, for when shall we be able to give more to God, then he hath given us? If you ask *Qua consistit efficia gratiæ*, What makes grace effectual to any soul? the answer is, the love at God to us.

Doct. 2. The preventing love of God to us, is the effectual cause of our love to God.

The love he here speaks of, is such a love as casts out fear of judgement, and therefore must needs be a securing love.

1. Objectively, by following him: by following him as a pattern of
love,
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love, but that's not all, for all have read and heard of the great love of God to us.

2. *Phyficè* by working something in us, which makes us to love him, Jer. 31. 3. *With Ioving kindness have I drawn thee*, and this is not only a moral drawing, by propounding some suitable object, as an horse is drawn by a lock of Hay, for that is a leading rather than a drawing; but God's drawing us is not only by propounding fit arguments, but by a physical or rather hyperphysical work of his Spirit, he makes of unwilling to be willing to follow him; objects do not give us a new heart, but God is said to *give us a new heart*, Ezek. 36. 26. this he works.

1. By striking us with shame and horror for our sins, so that we are brought heartily to grieve for them, and when he hath drawn us to the suburbs of hell, then he shews us the glad tidings of salvation, and with all gives us a believing heart to long after them, to embrace them, and to assure our selves of them.

Reas. 1. From the efficacy of God's gracious work, there is no work of God in us, but it works in our hearts; the like suitable work, if God choose us for himself, then we choose him for our God, we choose him, his Word and favour and promises above all treasure; God's election of us stamps on us an election of him; hath God purchased us at a dear rate, then we learn to purchase Christ at a dear rate, though with the loss of all we have: Doth God call any of us to be his sons? then we learn to call him Father, Hos. 2. 1. to 3. In what ways he walks towards us, we begin to walk towards him, but ever God begins first, Psal. 27. 8. when God saith to a soul, *Seek my face*, then it answers, *Thy face O Lord will I seek*: if God go on in a constant course of helpfulness by his Spirit to us, then we go on in a constant frame of grace towards him, Jer. 32. 4. *I will not turn away from them*, and then he will put his fear in our hearts that we shall not turn from him, so that God's work ever leaves some impression of the like frame in us: if God first love us, then we learn to love him.

Use 1. To reprove the *Papists & Pelagians*, that have attributed the efficacy of grace to other causes: if you should ask the *Pelagians* of old, & their followers at this day, What is the reason why *Peter* accepts God's love, *Simon Magus* refuseth it? They would say, the one was willing to accept the offer, the other not: well then, the efficacy of grace consists in our wills, then we begin first. Many of the *Papists* say the same, but the more moderate amongst

them, ask them why *Peter* accepts grace, *Simon Magus* refuseth it, they say the grace offered was sufficient for them both; but God offered it to *Peter* in a fit time and place, when his heart was free from temptation; but it was offered to *Simon Magus* at such a time, when his heart was carried away with the love of money: but the true cause was God's first love to *Peter*, that made him love God again; should God wait for times and opportunities, why, at the best time, men's hearts will find some evasions, if God should stay for a fit time, he should never find it, for Christians can tell, God took hold on them, when their hearts were most undisposed to it: How long is it before they can be convinced of their dangerous estate, or will be brought on to seek for help, till God awaken their hearts and open their eyes, so that they would be glad to see one glimpse of favour? why, tell them of never so fair promises, they cannot be brought to embrace them, so that unless God mightily draw, us to it, we should never come on to accept of the offer of grace, but we therefore love God, because he by his preventing love brought us to that which of our selves we could never have been brought to.

Use 2. Would a man know whether God love him or no? a needful point to be known. Why, no man can know it by these outward things, these fall alike to all, Eccles. 9. 1. Why, enquire you how thy heart stands affected to God, if thou canst find in thy heart that thou lovest God, the text will tell thee, that *God loveth thee*.

Object

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Object. *Love God? who doth not? God forbid that any should not love God.*

Answ. That thou mayest know this indeed, dost thou find thy heart choosing God above all things in the world? Why, thou couldst not thus choose God, unless he had first chosen thee; if thou findest thou canst be content to purchase Christ at the loss of thy dearest comforts, then make account that God hath loved thee, and been willing to part with Christ for thee: What made *Abraham* willing to offer up his son: but that he knew that God had given his Son to die for him? Canst thou look up to God as thy Father? then he hath adopted thee for his son: dost thou find thy heart cleaving close to God, as *David* did, Psal. 73. ult. *It's good for me to draw near to God?* why, it's evident that's God's love is constant to thee, because thine is so constant to him.

Use 3. Of consolation to such as do find in their hearts that they do love God; if thou findest thou couldst be willing to part with all for his sake; why, then surely, God so loved thee first, that he will rather part

with any thing then thee, Isa. 43. 4. O how this should stir us up to love God more then ever we did; if thou lovest God dearly and prizest him above all things; why, this will seal up to thee, that he loveth thee as dearly: if you would know whether God love you with a love unto life, why, labour you to love him with a lively love.

I JOHN 4. 20, 21.

If any man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen, &c.

THese words continue the discourse begun, vers. 12. wherein he used two motives to stir up to love our brethren.

From the fellowship such have with God, amplified from the 13. verse to 16.

2. From the soundness of God, love to such, from vers. 17. to the end.

In these two verses, he argues this truth by the contrary, *viz.* that such as hate their brethren, their love is not perfect, but unsound: *If any man say he loves God, and hates his brother, he is a liar*, then he loves not God, this be proves by a double argument.

1. From the greater occasion he hath to love his brother then God, therefore if he love not his brother, he loves not God, and the occasion is, the daily fight of his brother.

2. From the like and the same cause he hath to love his brother, as well as God, and that is from the equal commandment of God, and therefore if we love God out of obedience to his law, we should love our brother, out of obedience to the same law.

Doct. That the hatred of a Christian brother, is an undoubted sign of the hypocrisy of the profession of our love to God.

If any man say in heart, tongue or practice that *he loves God, and yet hates his brother, such a man is a liar*, that is, he expresseth not the truth, 1 Joh. 3. 9. to 11. this is part of the message of God, that we love one another: now the profession of a Christian, is a profession of his subjection to the Gospel of Christ: Now the Gospel holds out five principal Ordinances.

1. Prayer.
2. The Apostles' Doctrine.
3. Sacraments,
4. Mutual Communion.
5. Discipline.

Now if a man professes subjection to the Gospel, he professeth subjection to these five Ordinances. The Apostle delights in this Word profession, Heb. 3. 1.

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and commend, it in *Timothy*, that he had made a *good profession before many witnesses*, 1 Tim. 6. 12. Now do but consider, what every one of these Ordinances express about brotherly love.

1. In prayer we call God *Our Father*, and if he be our Father, then all his children are our brethren, and if we do not respect them as our brethren, we renounce God for our Father.

2. In the same prayer we desire God to forgive us, no further then we have hearts to forgive our brethren; it therefore we will not forgive our brethren, we are no true professors.

2. In the hearing of the Word, we are to come like *New born babes, desiring the sincere milk of the Word*, and that is, when we come free from all malice and emulation, as babes be, 2 Pet. 2. 1, 2. Therefore if a man come to the Word with an heart full of envy and emulation, he professeth himself a Christian, but he deceives himself.

2. It overthrowes the Gospel, because this is one of the great Commandments of the Gospel, that we love one another, Mat. 22. 36. to 40. for a man therefore to profess himself a hearer of the law, and so of the Gospel, (for he that renounceth the Law, renounceth the Gospel; for the Gospel establisheth obedience to the Law, Rom. 3. *ult.* Besides, it is the Commandment of the Gospel, for the whole Gospel is compare of two, Faith, and Love, 2 Tim. 1. 13. Joh. 13. 34.) If therefore a man profess obedience to the Gospel, do not yield obedience to this particular Commandment of the Gospe, *he is a liar.*

3. The Sacraments are seals of our love, in baptism, *We are baptized into one body*, 1 Cor. 12. 13 and in the Lord's Supper, *We are all partakers of one bread, and one spirit*, 1 Cor. 10. 17. If therefore there be a different spirit in us, we are not of the same spirit, work not by the same Spirit. In a natural body, if a member be but cut off in a combat, in our hot blood we miss it not, nor feel the pain, but in cold blood we find the miss of it, and seek out for help; so in hot contentions betwixt Christians they fall off from one another, they discern no change for the present; but when they begin to look back at former passages, and see what wounds they have made, both jointly begin to be sensible of pains, and cannot rest till they have taken some course to set the members in joint again.

4. For private Communion, it calls for love; this profession *David* made, and so doth every true Christian, *I am a companion to all them that fear thee*, *Psal.* 119. 63. He doth not say only, he is a well wisher, or favourer to such (which yet is a great matter in our days) but he was a companion to them, he had sweet and comfortable familiarity with them; if therefore we be so far from making them our companions, that we can hardly be brought to be favourers of them, we renounce subjection to the Ordinances of the Gospel.

5. For discipline; this is one of the main ends of discipline, to see that no offence be given from one to another, *Matth.* 8. 15. to 20. if therefore a man offend his brother, and be not willing to be reconciled, in this case a man renounceth subjection to a main Ordinance of the Gospel.

Use 1. To teach Christian men, if you would be honest true hearted men, let there be no Christian brother in the world, but thou canst say, that thou lovest him; if there be any one that thou neglectest, and canst not have fellowship with; why, there is no soundness in thee; better it is thou shouldst love an hundred hypocrites, then hate one Christian brother; he that professeth himself a Christian, and professeth subjection to the Gospel, and yet wants love to his brethren, he renounceth subjection to every Ordinance of the Gospel, and therefore his protection is but hypocrisy, and he himself is a liar: *è contra*, if God give thee an heart unfeignedly loving every brother, if you make them your companions, and the men of your delight; why then, *If he that saith he loves God, and hates his brother is a liar,*
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then on the other side, he that doubts whether he loves God, and unfeignedly loves his brother, he deceives himself; if thou canst say, thou lovest thy brother, the text will tell thee thou lovest God: if thou canst but find in thy heart true love to thy brethren, though thy profession may be but weak and poor, yet it is sound and sincere; so much love, so much sincerity, so much want of love, so much hypocrisy.

Doct. 2. *The sight of our brother is a stronger inducement to the love of him, then any that hates his brother, can have to the love of God.*

For some might say, What though I love not my brother? he is full of weakness and failings, yet I can love God, for I have more cause the Apostle tells you the sight of your brother is a greater occasion to love him than any that hates his brother, can have to love God; it's true indeed he that loves his brother, hath more cause to love God than his brother,

but he that hates his brother, shall find less cause to love God then his brethren.

By sight is meant not only viewing the face, but to have familiarity and fellowship with him, to have daily intercourse and commerce with him, now this much furthers love.

Reas. 1. From the strength that is in daily commerce together to procure love.

2. Our brother doth many things in our sight, which might justly win our love, we see many good parts in them, many good offices which they do to us, and we to them, which much increases our love, the more we see our brother, and communicate good one to another, the more we love them.

Reas. 2. From the little cause a man hath to love God that hates his brother; take a man that is estranged from his brother, he is much more estranged from God.

1. Such a man hath no faith in God, that wants love to his brother, *for faith works by love.*

2. He can have no sense of God's love, for God never reveals sensible love to such, as have no love to their brethren, and then how can we love God, if we have no sense of his love to us.

3. Much less can he have experience of God's love to him, for he never had it.

4. You will say, he may have reason to love God, for many bounties of God towards him; I, but what reason can such have to think, that God gives them these in love? and therefore he will have little cause to love God; if he find in his heart no reason to love his brother, he will find less reason to love God.

Use 1. To stir us up to hasten out of this sinful lust of hatred towards our brethren, for though we may think we have more cause to love God then them, yet truly we shall find if we be willing to part with our brother, we shall be more willing to part with God.

Object. *But this man hath done me much wrong, but God never did me any.*

Answ. If he hath wronged thee, and thou seest him daily, pity him the more, strive to heal it, and redress it, if thou canst not do it, thou canst not look that God should ever pardon thee.

The second argument the Apostle lays down, why we should love our brethren is from the equal cause we have of both, and it is from God's Commandment to love both.

Doct. 3. *True and sincere profession of Christian Religion, doth as duly yield obedience to one Commandment as to another.*

He that loves God, let him love his brethren also: Why? because God hath commanded the one as well as the other, Psal. 119. 6. *Then shall I never be ashamed when I have respect to all thy Commandments*, he doth not say, when he keeps them all, we all fail in that; but I may have respect to all, so a

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Christian cannot keep all God's Commandments, but he may have respect to all, so *David* professeth Psal. 119. 128. *I hate every false way.*

Reas. 1. From the same Law-giver that gives all the Commandments, Jam. 2. 10. 11. he that breaks one, breaks all; if in obedience to God's Law thou love him, then in obedience to the same law thou wilt love thy brother also.

2. From the near affinity betwixt the Commandment, they are like to the links in a chain, break one, you break all: if a man love not his brother, how can he love God, or worship him, or keep his Sabbaths? He that hath not respect to all God's Commandments, hath respect to none.

Use 1. Gives us a free trial of our sincericy or hypocrisy, if God give thee an heart to have respect to every Commandment, and therefore to make conscience of them all; why, then thy profession is true and sincere, though thou canst not say that thou keepest one of them aright, yet if thou be conscionable unto them all, and it grieves thee, that thou canst not perform that indeed which in heart thou respectest, thy heart is found; contrary, if we shake off the bounds of these Commandments, or break but one willingly, we have no truth in us: *Jehu* had no respect to walk in all the Commandments of God, and therefore was an hypocrite; if a man take not heed to all the Commandments, he takes heed to none at all: When the two Harlots came before *Solomon*, his judgement was that the child should be divided betwixt them, the Harlot was willing, but the true Mother would by no means endure it: so if God give thee undivided obedience, thy heart is sound, but if you divide with God, and some part you will give to God, and some part keep for your lusts; why, you have the heart of an Harlot, and all your works are dead works.

Object. *Do we not all sin in many things?* Jam. 3. 2.

Answ. Yes, We all fail in performing, but we may have respect to all God's Commandments, and it grieves us that we have failed in those we do respect, and we are sorry for it; if we be thus affected, our hearts are right before God.

Use 2. Of consolation to all such as find this frame of heart, to yield universal obedience to God, God himself testifies your profession is sincere, and so you shall find you shall never be confounded, when you have respect to all God's Commandments.

Use 3. Of exhortation to all that would have a testimony of the sincerity of their profession; Why, make we conscience of every Commandment of God, and so we may have a sure ground of our sincerity.

1 JOHN 4. 21.

And this Commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God, love his brother also.

WE come now to observe one point out of the words themselves.

Doct. 2. *The same Commandment that requires love to God, requires love to our brethren also.*

God requires no man to love him, but he requires him also to love his brethren; it's one of the great Commandments of the Law, neglect love to your brethren, and you neglect love to God likewise; and this direction Christ himself gives, Matth. 5. 23, 24. Which implies as God would not accept a service to himself without reconcilment to our brother, so God will not accept any Office of love to himself, if we come not in love

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to our Brethren. God loveth a cheerful giver, that doth it in hearty love and affection, God would stay for his service, and he would have us stay, till we be at peace with our brother, not but our love to God ought to be greater, and in case of competition, God will be loved even with the hatred of our brother. but when there may be a subordination of their loves, he requires the one as well as the other, 1 Tim 2. 8. Let us lift up pure *hands, without wrath and doubting*, and he means wrath to our brethren, as when a man comes with doubtings he is not accepted, Jam. 1. 7. so neither is he accepted when he comes in wrath; nay, if he comes in wrath, he either wants faith, or his faith is full of doubtings, or else it's a false faith, *The wrath of man accomplisheth not the righteousness of God*, Jam. 1. 20. a man can do no righteous service to God, if he comes in wrath.

Reas. 1. From the near relation that lies between God and our brethren, God looks at his people, as his children, as his Spouse, as his Members, and therefore oft-times, he will longer bear with injuries done to himself,

then to his Members; *Pharaoh* was an Heathen Prince, but yet God passed by that, he doth not charge him for his horrible idolatry and filthy abominations, God winked at these things, but when God's people came amongst them, and werer evil intreated by them, then *Moses* his message is, *Exod. 4. 22, 23. Israel is my son, even my first born, and if thou refuse to let him go; I will slay thy son, even thy first born;* this was that which made God fall so heavilt upon him, for opposing of his people: so though *Babylon* abounded with many Idolatries, yet God makes litle mention of it, but he punisheth them, for the insolency against his people, *Psal. 137. 8, 9. Zach. 1. 15. I am very sore displeased with the Heathens that are at ease, for I was but a little displeased, and they helped forward the affliction.* They are his members like us, and therefore the misery done to them, rebounds to God himself. *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* and they are such members as are as dear to him as the apple of his eye, *Zach. 2. 8.* Now he will endure touching any where else rather then on the apple of his eye. God knows that men's goodness extends not to him, so neither doth their hatred; if we be wicked and injurious, what harm can we do to him? Why, God will bear much longer Idolatry, swearing, and other gross sins, then injuries put upon his people: How long did God endure the Heathen Monarchs, till they fell sore upon the Church? The *Roman* Monarchy flourished exceedingly a thousand years, though their *Capitol* was filled with all manner of gods, but the times of this ignorance God regarded not, but followed them with great Victories and designs, and there were many worthy men among them for valour and prudence; but when the Emperors grew hot against the Christians, and persecuted them, God would endure them no longer, but tumbled their Monarchy into dust: *Touch not mine anointed, and do my Prophets no harm.* Some man will endure much more injury against himself, then against his children; so while the world trespasseth against God himself, by Idolatry, Superstition, or profaness, he sits silent as if he regarded them not: but when they wax fierce against the Church, then he ariseth like a mighty Giant, and raiseth his forces, even such plagues as the world rings of, as those ten plagues of *Egypt* witness; and all this ariseth from his tenderness over them, because their afflictions may do them more harm then they can do him, as long as the Church keeps any good terms with him; no man is more tender of his Spouse, no father of his child, then God is of his Church.

Reas. 2. From the delight God takes in the sincerity of his service, *1 Cor. 16. 14. Let all things be done in love,* what is done in love is an hearty sincere service; and if love be wanting, a man either performs no ser-

vice, or else it's not done in truth, God that is a God of truth is most impatient of such overly, and halting performances, Psal. 51. 12. God requires

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quires truth in the inward parts, whether in duties of service to himself, or man, 1 Pet. 1. 21.

Reas. 3. From the care God takes of the preservation of love unfeigned to himself; why, that it may be preserved spotless, God will still keep in us a diligent care of love to our brethren; for next after hypocrisy, nothing more odious to God then apostacy, and more dangerous to us, as being the way to the sin against the holy Ghost: Now so long as a man walks in love, and keeps a constant fellowship with the Saints, so long we keep a constant fellowship with God himself: but let a man fall in his love to his brethren, he falls off from God, and so runs into grievous apostasy against God to the spighting of the holy Ghost; therefore as you would put honour on God, and maintain his Spirit in you, so take heed you neglect not brotherly love; if we neglect this we are in the way to total Apostasy.

Reas. 1. From the delight God takes that all his servants should wear his livery, and be known to be his Disciples: now if God had only left us to faith in Christ, to calling on his Name, all this might have been and yet we never been known what we were; but because God would have it known that there is a generation of men calling upon his Name, and serving him in truth, he would never have them come abroad without this cognizance to their brethren, and by this mark all men should know ye are my Disciples, if ye love one another, Joh. 13. 35. therefore if a man throws away brotherly love, he throws away the profession of Christianity, he is no Christian, therefore offer not to say, thou lovest God, or love thy brother also.

Use 1. To teach us that the love of our brethren, is not a conceit of perfection, or supererogation, but it's a duty of necessity straightly lying upon all men, that it they love God they must love their brethren also, never say you have a God in heaven whom you love, if you neglect love to your brethren; we think we may love our brother as long as he loves us, but if he comes betwixt us and our profit, we fall off from him; Why, if you love them that love you, what singular thing do you? Matth. 5. 45. Turks and Pagans will do so much; but you must know you are bound to love your brethren by virtue of a commandment; if thou thinkest thou art bound to love God,

by virtue of his Commandment, by virtue of the same Commandment thou art bound to love thy brother also.

Object. *I, but my brother is changed.*

Answ. It may be so, but yet God's Commandment is not changed, indeed we are to carry the expressions of our love according to divers occasions; it's one thing to comfort, another thing to reprove, yet both acts of love; besides, there is no Commandment of God, but the transgression of it brings a curse with it, Deut. 27. *ult.* If therefore I love not my brother I fall under a curse, and so under separation from God's presence, for that is properly a curse, and so then we cannot so wrong our brother, as we wrong God and our own souls: as soon as *Cain* hated his brother and slew him, he went out from the presence of God, and dwelt in the land of *Nod*, a land of agitation; wandering prayers, and wandering performances does an hateful soul put up: When *David* had once wronged *Uriah*, what poor work made he? He then makes nothing of the destruction of a worthy subject, that had before-time been scrupulous of cutting an Enemies skirt: whereas *à contra*, no man that expresseth hearty love to his brother, prays for them, doth them good, but he shall find as he closeth with his brother, God will close with him; as he lifts up a cheerful countenance upon his brother, so will God on him,

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so that he shall plainly find, that in keeping this great Commandment is great reward.

Use 1. To teach us to love God so much the more, that hath such care that no man withdraw his love from us, but he will be as ready to sit loose from them, as they sit loose from thee; why, what marvellous love is this, that God should take is soill, that any should offer injury to thee; so that he will not, endure, that the greatest Monarch should evil intreat thee? how should this shame us, that we should sit so loose from God, and slight him, and wrong him, that is so careful that none should wrong us?

I JOHN

I JOHN Chap. V. Vers. 1.

Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God: and everyone that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him.

THESE words contain a third Argument to confirm a truth delivered Chap. 4, vers. 20. which was, That the profession of the love of God, without the love of our Brethren, is but Hypocrisy. In this Verse the argument is drawn from the nearness of our Brother to that God whom we profess to love. He is as near as the begotten is to him that begat him; and the argument stands thus, If our Brother be begotten of God, then we cannot love him that begat, but we must love him also that is begotten; but our brother is born of God, which he proves by his faith, *Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God.*

In this first Verse observe these two parts,

1. The safe and comfortable estate of every believer. *He is born of God.*
2. The necessity that lies upon such as love God. *To love the Brethren also.*

Here therefore is a double universal proposition.

1. Concerning *Faith.*
2. Concerning *Love.*

The former universal proposition is, *That whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God.*

Doct. 1. *Faith in Christ is a certain and universal mark of Regeneration.*

Quest. *What is it to believe on Christ? Do not the Devils believe and tremble?*

1. To believe that Jesus is Christ, is to be persuaded that God hath anointed him to be King, Priest and Prophet of his Church; as a Priest to sacrifice himself for us; as a Prophet to direct us, and reveal his will to us; as a King to govern and rule us.

2. Believing is not only an all of the understanding, for the Devils believe that Christ is the Messias; that is, that he is Priest, King, and Prophet of his Church, therefore in this believing there is more then a meer persuasion, namely, a particular application to mine own heart, that he is a Priest, King and Prophet to me. And,

3. Where this faith is, it works such a frame of heart in me, that I trust on him alone for my salvation, and out of him I look for none; in his

blood I look to be pardoned; in his Prophetical Office, I look to be guided; and I look to him as King to subdue my rebellious heart; this kind of faith is a certain mark of Regeneration.

1. From the removal of all other causes, for a man to look up to him, as the Christ, the anointed of God, this is above the reach of flesh and blood,
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and this kind of faith makes a man blessed, Mat. 16. 16, 17. The hand of faith is a work of God's Spirit; for take the state of nature, it recreates no further then this, Flesh and blood looks to satisfy by the works of the Law; and this was the stumbling block of the Jews, they sought righteousness by the Law, Rom. 9. 3. and this natural ever since *Adam*, for this principle being given to *Adam*, *Do this and live*, this still cleaves to us by nature, and this is the Religion of all the nations, to look to be saved by the works either of the natural or moral Law.

2. Suppose you convince flesh and blood, that all his righteousness is unclean, why, yet far off was it from men in St. *John's* time, to look for salvation in a crucified Saviour; *this was a stumbling block to the Jews, and to the Greeks foolishness*, 1 Cor. 1. 23.

3. Suppose you prevail so far with flesh and blood, as to convince them their righteousness is unclean, and that there is no salvation but only in Christ; yet nature will not be persuaded that Christ did all this for him, but in anguish of soul nature runs to merry company, to the world, to the gallows, rather then it will come to Christ for help, and wait on him, and cleave to him; if therefore a man be brought to believe on him as his Saviour, and by his Priestly, Kingly, and Prophetical Office to look for salvation, and trust on him for it, is an evidence of our Regeneration.

Reas. 1. From the mighty power of lively faith; for St. *Jolm* here doth not speak of a cold dead faith, but of a lively powerful faith; now where such faith is, it makes us live by our faith, Heb. 2. 4. The just shall by his faith, live a life of justification and sanctification; faith looks not at his own work. for satisfaction, but to him that justifies the ungodly, Rom. 4. 4, 5, 6. And so by faith we live a life of sanctification; whether God, will be to be done or suffered, he lives by faith, that is, he will have a commandment for his rule, no duty he takes in hand, but he will have his warrant for it.

2. Faith looks to the promise for strength when he goes about any Christian duty, he goes not about it in his own strength, but he derives strength from Christ, Without me ye can do nothing. In him is thy fruit found, Hos.

14. 8, 9. he relies on the promise for help, for comfort, for acceptance, he doth all in the name of Christ, that is, in his life and power, and looks for acceptance in the name of Christ only.

2. If he suffers the will of God, and lies under heavy temptations and afflictions; why, he waits on God, he lives by his faith, he knows that he that will come, shall come and will not tarry, Heb. 10. 36, 37. in the mean time the just lives by faith, that is, quiets himself in dependence on Christ and expectation of his promise.

Use 1. To refute a Popish Doctrine that teacheth, That faith may be common to God's people with Hypocrites, and they profess no other faith, then what may be common to Hypocrites and Devils; and therefore they disclaim justification by faith, because if faith justify, then the Devils and Hypocrites, may be justified. But the Apostle speaks of a faith that flesh and blood cannot attain unto; therefore that which they call Catholic faith, to believe those Doctrines *mala fide*, propounded by their Church; the Devil believes better than they, he believes the world of God to be true, but to believe this to be true by true and lively faith, is such a belief, as whereby we are born of God.

Use 2. Of trial, wherehy we may take an estimate of our faith, thou saist, *thou believest that Jesus is the Christ*. Why, try that, hath thy faith regenerated thee? hath it brought thee into subjection to God's will? Dost thou live by thy faith? that is, if thou beest to do any part of God's will, dost thou walk by a Commandment for thy rule, and dost thou depend upon some Promise for strength? if thou beest to suffer God's will, dost thou wait patiently on Christ, and quiet thy self in him? then thy faith is a regenerating,

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faith, Contrary, if a man say, he believes in Christ, and yet makes no conscience to live according to God's commandments, relies not on him for strength in his performances, is not patient under his hand, such a belief as this, is far from that which the text speaks of.

Use 3. Of direction, what course he must take, that would become *a son of God, born of him*. Why? faith is the door whereby we are to enter into this happy estate; there is a power in faith, not only to justify, but to sanctify: If therefore thou be convinced of thy filthy unclean state by nature, and lookest up to Christ for cleansing; if thou findest thy heart submitting to God's will, careful to walk by a rule, going out of thy self, depending upon him for strength; and if God hide his face, thou canst wait patiently on him: why, this is the way to regeneration, To believe on Christ,

and not to make use of him, is to say, we believe in him, and yet believe him not. If thou wert told, that in such a corner of a field there lay abundance of treasure, and yet thou livest in penury and want, and never goest about to dig it up, every man would think thou wert not persuaded of the truth of it, but that thou lookest at it as a fable. So for a man to say that he believes on Christ, and yet to let Christ lie by him, as a refused commodity, and never look to him for salvation and help, who will believe that we are persuaded that Jesus is the Christ the anointed of God?

Use 4. Of consolation to every believing soul, we are ready to call in question our regeneration and adoption, why if God gives us hearts believing that Jesus is the Christ, and therefore thou goest about to dig up this treasure in him, and therefore art resolved not to leave off till thou hast found him, and trustest upon him daily for help and comfort, dependest on him, seekest him with all thy heart: Why, be of good comfort, thy faith is a sufficient testimony to thee, that thou art born of God.

I JOHN 5. 1. Latter part.

And every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him.

Doct. *EVERY Christian that is affected with the love of God as a father, is enlarged also with love to his brethren, as those that are begotten of him.*

The Doctrine is not delivered in these express terms any where else, but something like is found, Joh. 20. 17. *I ascend to my Father and your Father.* He acknowledgeth his Father to be their Father reconciled in him, and he looks at them as his brethren, *therefore tell my Brethren.* He therefore that acknowledgeth God as his father, and bears a child-like love to him, by the same affection is he carried to love his brethren, as those that are begotten of God.

Reas. 1. Because he takes them all to be his Brethren. And

2. Because he looks at God as their father as well as his, so that he that looks at God as his father, and yet respects not his children as his brethren, is a liar; he that loves his Father, loves all his children, because they are his brethren of the same parents, of the same blood, of the same womb.

2. If we look at God as our Father, and love him accordingly, then we look at his children as those that have the image of God stamped upon them,

and therefore we look at them as of the same temper with our selves, as partakers of the divine nature with our selves, 2 Pet. 1. 4.

3. If we look of God as our Father, and so at every believer as the son of God, then we cannot but conceive that they are beloved of God, and that God pities them as a father doth his children, Psal. 103. 13. Why

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then we cannot love God the Father, but we must love his children, for the loves sake that God hears them, it was that *Jehoshaphat* was reprov'd for, 2 *Chron.* 19. 2. Shouldest thou love them that hate the Lord, so wilt thou hate those whom the Lord loves, and who loves the Lord? it was an argument of *David's* integrity, that he hated those that hated the Lord, Psal. 139. 20, 11. So it will be a sign of thy sincerity, if thou love those that love the Lord, and are beloved at him.

4. Suppose thou shouldest find many weaknesses in the children of God yet when a man looks at them as children of such a father, who though they walk in contrary steps, yet he loves them, yet then he cannot but love them; for God's love towards them, we read of the Kings of *Judah*, that walked in evil ways, yet the Lord spared them for *David* their father's sake, 1 *King.* 15. 3, 4. We read of *Abijam*, though his heart was not perfect with God, yet for *David* his Father's sake, God gave him a lamp in *Jerusalem*. Though God see the children of those whom he loves to walk in evil ways, yet for their father's sake, he will reserve them a name and a lamp in *Israel*. So let us do, if God their father be holy, and just, and righteous and good, though his children sometimes walk astray, and have many failings, yet for their father's sake, we must leave them a name and a lamp, we must be helpful and loving to them for their good father's sake. What though their spots be not the spots of God's children, Deut. 23. 5. though you can not see those badges of holiness and righteousness in them, yet because God is holy, and just, we are to respect them, for the love God bears them and us. It was observable, that speech of *Jehu*, guided then by the Spirit of God, when he came to *Jezebel*, and commanded *Jezebel* to be thrown down out of a window and slain, he sends forth his servants, saying, *Go now and bury yonder cursed woman, for she is a Kings daughter*, 2 *King.* 9. 34. What King's daughter? but an Idolatrous King; and yet because a King's daughter, bury her. Now if this speech of *Jehu* were acted by God's Spirit, it shews that children of Kings and Princes, even Idolatrous Kings, must be respected for their blood's sake. Why, how much more respect will? God look you should put upon the poorest and uncleanest servant of

God; should any of his children be so far forsaken, as to throw *Jezebel*, to persecute and blaspheme, yet let them be respected, not because the King of *Zidon's* daughters, but because the sons and daughters of the King of heaven; and though they have many failings, and sinfull passages in them, yet do offices of love to them, because they are King's sons and daughters, even born of God; they have some seed of their Father in them, though they much degenerate, and that's greater then to be borne of any earthly King.

Use 1. Excludes all such from the love of God a. their Father, whose bowels are shut up from Christians as their brethren, if once they come to have the spots of God's children upon them, his image stamped upon them, why they begin to sit loose and estrange themselves from them, though formerly they loved them dearly. What a poor case is this blind world in, that the more any express the nature of God, the more they hate them? but let such know, they can never look up to God as their Father, and say Our father, if they despise and neglect their brethren: were they the sons of Princes, you would honour and respect them for their Father's sake: why, will you not do so for God's sake? But know, that if you estrange your selves from them, you plainly shew that for want of love to them that are begotten, you want love to their father that begat them.

Use 2. To exhort us all to this brotherly love, for if God use so many Exhortations and Arguments to stir us up to this duty, it shews that we are very backward to it, and that our Spirit lusts to envy, Jam. 5. 5, 6. And to help us to this duty of love, this is an especial good means.

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by looking at them as born of God, and so partaking of the same faith, partakers of the same divine nature; by looking at them as our Brethren, as the beloved of God, as children of the great King; and though they walk in many loose courses, yet God loves the children of good parents, and doth not easily break out in wrath against them. And how much more ought we to love the children of God? and withal consider God is a great King, and *Jehu* could respect the Daughter of a King, though an Idolater and enemy to the State; so, though you should not see the Spirit of God on them, why however love and respect them, bury their infirmities, for they are King's Sons. We use to say so to, some young men, I loved your Father well, he was my good friend, and an honest man, therefore I cannot but love you for your Father's sake, and therefore I am sorry you take courses so unlike

your good Father; I wish you well, and desire you to break off from such bad company. Thus we deal with the children of those whom we love, and shall we not do so much more for God? Go to his children that we see degenerate from him, and tell them, I am sorry you should take such courses as no way beseem the children of such a good Father, I beseech you carry your self like his children, be holy as he it holy, and this is a true act of love.

1 JOHN 5. 2.

By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments.

IN the fourth Chap. the Apostle had exhorted us to the unfeined love of our Brethren; now he proceeds to a word of direction, how we may know whether we love them or no.

Hereby we know, &c. It was the scope of this holy Apostle to write such things as by the knowledge whereof their joy might be full, and with his exhortations he mingles divers marks and signs, that so knowing their estate, they might have fulness of joy. Now therefore, because love of our Brethren was a course of full joy, yet if we knew not whether we loved them or no, it would be matter of little joy; therefore he tells us how we may know this, to satisfy some weak Christians that might be doubtful, he tells them, *Hereby we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments.* A right Preachers method, First he lays down instructions and duties, and then lays down signs of them.

In the words two parts.

1. An expediency oh our knowledge of our love to our Brethren. which is here implied, else he would not have laid down marks to know it by.

2. The marks of discerning our love, which are two.

1. *Love of God.*

2. *Obedience to the commandments of God.*

Use 1. It is a behoveful point to a Christian man, comfort, not only to love God's children, but to know that he loves them. The scope of his writing was to fulfill their joy; as a means of this, he teacheth us this main duty to love our Brethren, and not only so, but signs how to know it. Isa. 48. 17. *I am the Lord thy God the holy one, which teacheth thee to profit.* Why then surely if God teach us such a point as this, it is a way of profiting, and therefore to walk in the knowledge of our love to God's Saints, is a profitable way.

Reas. 1. From the assurance it will give us of our good estate before God, and of God's protection of us in such an estate; and therefore if we know this we know we are in a good estate. The love of our Brethren is an undoubted argument of our passage from death to life, 1 Joh. 3. 14. Therefore
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the knowing of this, must needs give us much comfort; nay, it not only gives me evidence, but it manifests to others that our estate is good, Joh. 13.35. Now, if we did not know our love, we should lose this comfort: It often discourages a Christian that others suspect him, and are afraid of him, and it makes him suspect himself; but if he knew that he walked in love, he might know that which other men know, that he is a disciple of Christ.

Further, by this knowledge of his love to the Brethren, he may know that God will preserve and maintain him in that comfortable estate, because he finds his heart knit to them that are knit to God, Psal. 16.1, 2, 3. Mark here the argument whereby he urgeth God to preserve him.

1. From his *trust in him*, vers. 1.
2. From his *love to the Saints*.
3. From his *covenant with God*.

From these grounds he presseth God to preserve him in such an estate as wherein his heart would rejoice, vers. 9, 10, and that at his death his flesh would rest in hope, and not see corruption, *vers.* 10.

2. From the prosperity they may expect from God in such a case, Psalm 122. 6. *They shall prosper that love her.* If therefore God give us to know that we love him, and his servants, we know we fall under a covenant of prosperity: *I will bless them that bless thee*, Gen. 12. 3. *è contra*; *Let them be confounded and turn back that have ill will to Zion; let them be as the corn on the house top, whereof the mower filleth not his lap, neither do they pass by say, God speed*, Psal. 129. 5, to 8. Implying, that he that lives in an estate of hatred of his Brethren, shall never prosper in the outward or inward man, but shall wither as the corn on the house top; and as God blesseth him not, because he is turned from him, so man blesseth him not, because he is turned from him; and it's further said, *he shall be turned back*. If we do not love our Brethren, every thing shall go cross against us. A man that wants a spirit of love, hath no ground-work for blessing, he withers as the corn on the house top in hot weather, having no root, If a man have not his heart softened with the love of his Brother, there is something within him which will not suffer him to prosper, there wants sap and moisture, upon which he might prosper; but when he grows up to a fair blade, he yields no service either to God or man.

Therefore if a man would not be withered in hopes, the spirit of love is the sap that nourisheth all his comfort and blessing.

Reas. 3. From the confidence and comfortableness of a man's spirit in his dealing with men, then he knows that his heart is sincerely affected to them, 2 Cor. 1. 12. As if a man were to pay a debt of money, and had said it over carefully, and paid it, and they come and tell him, Thy coin was not current, or the sum was not fully paid: If he know both, he stands confidently out, and it comforts him much: So it much helps a man's joy, when others suspect his love to them, which is his debt, Rom. 13. 8. Why, if he know he hath paid it them to the full, and in current duties of love, this satisfies his heart: *This is our rejoicing, the testimony of a good conscience.*

Use 1. It reproves the hollowness of men, when they content themselves with the love of their Brethren, but are not solicitous to know whether that way be a way of love indeed; we have so much self-love and false love, as that we may easily deceive our selves. *All this have I done*, saith the young man, Matt. 19. 20. He was self-conceited of himself, and this is usually incident to men, that we are fully persuaded we do such things in love, when it's nothing so. Such as take their love upon trust have not so much wisdom as those that pay money, they tell it surely before they pay it. Why, every day we have a debt of love to pay, let us look therefore we pay our debt in current love. God requires not only that we should love our Brethren, but that we should know it.

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Use 2. Of direction to Ministers, not only to lay down duties to people, but withal to lay down signs thereof, whereby they may know it. This was St. *John's* practice, and he doth it to add to their joy.

Doct. *The love of God, and the keeping his commandments, is an undoubted evidence of our love of our Brethren.*

So that we must know how our hearts stand affected to God before we can know our love to our Brethren, 2 Joh. v. 5, 6. We are said to keep God's commandments, when we keep them as our *way*, Joh. 1. 8. as our *jewels*, Prov. 6. 21. as *the apple of our eye*, Prov. 2. 9. as our *life*, Ib. 19. 10.

Reas. 1. Because a man that keeps not God's commandment, as he sits loose from obedience to God, so he will sit loose from his love to his Brethren. When *David* had committed adultery, and therein offended God, he soon falls off from *Uriah*, regards not his life; *Asa* falling off from faith in God, soon fell into wrath against his Brother; *Herod* heard *John Baptist* gladly, but when he clave to *Herodias*, he sat loose from *John*, and imprisoned him, and

at last beheaded him. There is such a near combination between the *keeping of God's commandments*, and *love to our Brethren*, that a man cannot sit loose from the one, but he sits loose from the other.

Reas. 2. The love of God is an evidence that we love our Brethren, for if a man love not God, he loves not his Brother, unless it be for self-respects, on earthly grounds, and it's but Civil love, not a Christian Brotherly love, 2 King, 10. 15, 16. For *Jehu* a great King, so to close with *Jonadab*, a good man, one would think it was great love, but truly it was that he might see his seal for the Lord of hosts, and to work out his own ends. So *Laban* would by no means part with *Jacob*, was not this great love? No, he did it because he found it did advantage his estate,

Use 1. A ground of trial, whether our love to our Brethren be unfained or no; such as we may be bold to say, *I know I love them*, Why, how art thou affected towards God? Dost thou look at God's Law as thy way? and wouldst thou keep his commandments as thy most precious jewels, as thy life, that thou wouldst part with thy life sooner then them? If thou findest it thus, thy love is sincere and unfained. Many think their estates very good, because they find their hearts love God's children, and favour religion. But except you have an heart fearing God, making conscience of every commandment, it's not thy favouring religion that will assure thy good estate, unless the love of God and obedience to his commandments, be found in thy heart; otherwise you may affect God's children, because you see them innocent and harmless, as *Pilate* did Christ, gave him a good testimony, yet the fear of *Cæsar* was a sign the fear of God was not in him, but he was an enemy to Christ, only out of conviction of confidence, he saw he was a just man. 2. Self-respects may many time, move a man to love them, the very sense of many blessings and helps by them; as *Laban* loved *Jacob*. But this is far from true love; otherwise, if we love them in obedience to God and his commandments, it's an evidence of our sincere love.

Use 2. For them that desire to know that they love their Brethren. Be constantly conscionable of your obedience to God's commandments, and love him, and then you may be assured that your love to your Brethren is sincere. Break your obedience to God's commandments, and your love to him, and then you will soon break off love to your Brethren, as *David* and *Asa* did, but maintain obedience to God, and you maintain love to your Brethren.

Use 3. Of comfort to God's servants that desire to have good evidence of their unfained love to their Brethren, If God give thee an heart to love God and keep his commandments. It's current love if thy love hath this superscription on one side, *Love of God*, on the other side, *Obedience to God's comman-*

ments, it will prove current before God. This will be a sufficient breastplate against all misconstructions of the world. By this *we know our love to our Brother, if we love God and keep his commandments.*

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1 JOHN 5. 3.

For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments, and his commandments are not grievous.

V*Ers* 2. he had given a double mark of our love to our Brethren, which was *if we love God, and keep his commandments.* Now because a Christian might be inquisitive and doubtful, *How shall I know that I love God and keep his commandments?* Why, *vers. 3. This is the love of God. that we keep his commandments?* and they are not grievous.

Doct. The keeping of God's commandments, and the easiness of that yoke, is an undoubted sign of our unfeigned love to God; that is, If we be willing to bear the yoke of Christ, and account it easy, that evidently argues that the love of God in our hearts is sincere.

This Christ teacheth his Disciples, Joh. 15. 14. *Then are ye my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.* Now friendship argues integrity of love. Now betwixt friends there passeth a mutual covenant, a mutual communication of good one to another, and of secrets; so there is a certain community of all things, all things are common among friends: So, he that keeps God's commandments, looks at God's law, so as he makes it of his counsel and delight, and is ruled by it. And again, God communicates his attributes to him, which is something more then a parent doth to his child, though he love him well, yet he will not communicate to him whatsoever is his, nor always make him of his counsel, nor yet shew familiarity towards him; but God looks at Christians as his friends, communicates his counsels to them, grows in acquaintance with them.

Obj. It's not for friends to be at command, but servants. It's a point of service, and not of friendship.

Answ. To do it as a duty of necessity, is a servants condition; but to do a thing for love's sake to his friend, this is an act of friendship. Further, a man is not said to keep the Commandments, when himself only strives to keep them, but when he draws others to the same conscionable obedience. Friends have all things common, and they do not love that any that belong to them, should be enemies to their friends: So God looks at it as a part of *Abraham's*

friendship, that he would command his children and servants after him, that they should keep the way of the Lord, Gen. 18. 17, 19. Hence in Scripture it's a spiritual style given to *Abraham, Abraham the friend of God*, Jam. 2. 23. Isa. 41. 8. Now, what eminent service did he above others? There were others as zealous as he, but this he had eminent in him, *I know he will teach his children and household to keep my ways*. Look at *Moses, David, Eli, Jehoshaphat*, all godly men, yet they were all failing in this, in instructing and bringing on their children and servants to the fear of God, but this was *Abraham's* friendship, that he was not only careful himself, but he sought to bring on his whole family to God's worship. We see his care about *Isaac* that God would establish his covenant with him, Gen. 17. 18. And about *Ishmael*, that he might live in thy sight; and he brought on his whole family to be circumcised, though a painful thing, Gen. 17. *ult.* This was a fruit of true love. So *David* professeth in his own person and Christ, Psal. 40. 8. *O Lord, I delight in thy Law*. Psal. 19. 9, 10. *Thy commandments are more precious than gold; yea, then fine gold: thy precepts are sweeter than honey and the honey-combe*. A sign they were not grievous to him. Love makes us delight in the thing beloved.

What is the reason that this is such an undoubted argument of our love to God?

Reas. 1. From the strictness and purity of God's law, and the crossness of it to our nature. *The weapons of our warfare are mighty to bring down every high thought*, 1 Cor. 10. 4. Here two contraries meet together; the prerogative of

 God

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God he will have our thoughts brought into subjection; and the liberty of the Creation, We will not have our thoughts and tongues bound, Psal. 12. 4. We are free born, we are servants to none. Now these being so cross one to another, for a man now not only to do God's commandments, but to do them willingly, and out of love; why, this is such a yoke, that were it not for the mighty power of God's love prevailing in our hearts, which constrains us to do it most willingly, which nature is most unwilling unto, it would never be wrought. Hence God's people are said to be a *willing people*, Psal. 110. The Spirit of God is a *Spirit of liberty*, 2 Cor. 17. It's evident God's spirit is there where we do God's commandments with freedom and willingness.

Reas. 2. From the experience such have had of the burden of sin, to whom God's commandments seem easy: For this is certain, the more welcome sin, the more unwelcome God's commandments; the more we delight in sin, the less we delight in God's commandments; but when once sin is wearisome to a soul, to them *Christ's yoke is easy, and his burden light*, Mat. 11. 28, 29.

3. From the unsufficiency of any estate but an estate of love, to reach to the obedience of God's commandments, much less to the easiness thereof. A man by nature is not *subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can he*, Rom. 8. 7, 8. And though by common gifts we may be brought to do much, as *Jehu* and *Herod* did, yet unless there be soundness of love within, you shall never prevail with *Jehu* to cast out the golden calves, or with *Herod* to put away *Herodias*. It must be the love of God within that must bring us to keep his commandments, or at least to do them willingly and heartily,

Use 1. A ground of trial of our estates, whether we love God or no. If we would be assured of this, as we all had need to be, consider of this, Dost thou keep God's commandments as thy way, thy jewels, the apple of thy eye, thy life? And, dost thou desire to bring all thy children & family to the like conscionable obedience, that all thy family may be God's friends? This is an argument of thy unfeigned love to God. And if withal this seem easy to thee, & thou delight in it, and thinketh it thy happiness, that every thought in thee may be subject to Christ; this is a sufficient testimony of the sincerity of thy love But, *è contra*; If we shake off God's yoke, and we will have our thoughts and tongues at liberty; if it be a grief to us to see any of our friends conscionable of God's worship or of religion; why, thou art none of God's friend. For if thou wert, thou wouldst desire that both thy self and all thy friends were Christ's friends. If a man loved his Master, and liked his service well, and desired to stay with him, he would have his ear bored, that so all his Masters commandments might sink the better unto him; why, this must needs argue great love to his Master. This *David* alludes to, Psal. 40. 6. *Mine ears hast thou bored*, or as it is in the Original, *digged*. He digged through all obstructions, and made him willing to listen to God's will; a loving Servant becomes a friend: So, if we might have liberty to get loose from God, yet if we had rather abide in his service, let us give our ears to God to be bored, and give up not only our selves but our whole family to be God's bondservants.

Use 2. To teach all such as love God, to take heed that they be not drawn to break any of God's commandments, for love to others. This is plain. If love to man makes us break any of God's commandments, then we love him better than God.

3. Of encouragement to natural men to give up their hearts to God's commandments, and not to think them burdensome and intolerable. For if thou hadst but the love of God in thy heart, God's commandments would be sweeter then the honey, or the honey-combe. They are deceived much that look at God's commandments heavy and burdensome: No, his com-

mandments *are not grievous*; and if his commandments be pleasant, what are his promises and reward?

Use 4. For them that would have God's commandments seem easy to them, and not burdensome; why, grow up in the love of God, meditate on
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his goodness, and promises, and mercies, and si thou shall grow up to love him; and the more love, the more willing and obedient. A man never loseth his first works, but he loseth his first love. Let him renew his first love, and he shall renew his first works, Rev. 2. 4, 5.

1 JOHN 5. 4, 5.

For whatsoever is born of God, overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.

What is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?

V*Ers.* the Apostle had made an evidence of the love of God to keep his commandments, and to do them with ease. This he proves *vers.* 4. by an argument taken from the removal of the impediments of God's love in such an heart, and that is the overcoming of the world, And the argument stands thus: *To them that overcome the world, God's commandments are an easy yoke: that hinders our obedience to God's commandments.* This kept off the young man; so everyone that is kept off, it's for the love of some pleasure or profit, which they will not deny, and so God's commandments seem burdensome.

Doct. 1. Every regenerate Christian, is a victorius Christian, a conqueror of the world.

Every Christian be he never so poor, that hath but the least pittance or shred of true grace, hath a mighty power in him to overcome the world. It was a famous thing of old to be but conquerors of the world, as the *Babylonian* and *Roman* Monarchies were. But *St. John* testifies here, that every Christian is Lord of the whole world, 1 Cor. 3. 22, 21. He hath it there by gifts, but here by conquest, he overcomes the world, *viz.* so far as it is an enemy to grace. Indeed, in themselves the comforts of the world are good and useful, but as far as they have a snare in them, he overcomes them, 1 Joh. 4. 4. The honors of the world have a snare in them to puff up our hearts, 2 Chron. 26. 16. *Profits of the world choke the good seed of the Word*, Mat. 13. 22, 23. So the *pleasures of the world they make the Word unfruitful*, Luk. 8. 19.

Now, how doth a regenerate Christian overcome this?

1. He abideth constant in his Christian course, notwithstanding the flattering or threatening of the world, so that he will not be seduced by any of these snares, Eph. 6. 11, 13. *Paul* would not give place to such seducements; no, not for an hour: Now, that is part of a man's victory, to hold his own, and to keep his standing, and not to flit; such a man is never said to be overcome, that keeps his standing.

2. He not only holds his own, but he resists his enemies, he musters up all the forces he hath to refill the temptations of the world. Jam. 4. 7. *Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.* Stand out against temptation, and you overcome it, *Joseph* being tempted by his Mistress he takes into his hand, for his weapons God's commandments, and his Masters kindness, Gen. 39. 7, 8, 9. That that would be a dishonor to God, and an injury to his Master, and so he overcame the temptation.

3. To overcome a temptation, is to make good use of every temptation, and to get ground by it, that the more he is invited by a temptation, the more earnest he is against it, and the more forward in his Christian course. When Michal reprov'd *David* for his unseemly dancing (as she thought) *Why*, saith he, *I will be yet more vile.* Whereas her temptation was fetched from his disgrace; why, he would bear more such disgrace: So when *John's* Disciples stirred him up to emulation against Christ, that he carried away all the applause of the people after him. What saith *John*, *he must increase, and I must decrease,* He is the Bridegroom, and I but his friend. And it is my joy and

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glory to see him glorious: so that he made an advantage by that temptation, and drew them on the more to honour Christ, by how much the more they sought to debase him: For the more we are tempted to covetousness, wantonness, or emulation, the more liberal, chaste, and humble let us grow. This is to overcome a temptation, to take a spoil, to enrich our selves by the spoil of our enemies, that is such a conquest as the Apostle calls *more than a conquest*, Rom. 8. 37. *In all this we do more than conquer.* For a conqueror gets a victory sometimes, but with much wounds and loss, we sometimes with no loss. 2. After victories they grow luxurious. As it was said of the *Romans* after their great conquest.

Luxuria incubuit, victumque velciscitur urbem.

But a godly man so overcomes and divides the spoil that he spoils not himself. Worldly conquerors fall to riot and excess after their victories, but a

Christian conquerors falls more wary, and humble, and sober then before. As it was said of *John Baptist* by Christ, *A Prophet, yea more than a Prophet*: So, a regenerate man is a conqueror, yea more then a conqueror.

Reas. From Christ's victory over the world. Rom. 8. 37. *It is through him that loved us. Christ hath overcome the world*, Joh. 16. ult. Therefore I am to wrestle but with a wounded, pinioned enemy, Christ having led captivity captive, I come but to contend with a captive world, and so I overcome through Christ that hath loved me. It's the death of Christ that hath crucified the world to me, Gal. 6. 14. And therefore I am to fight but with a crucified enemy.

2. From the mighty power of God's Word abiding in a Christian's heart, 1 Joh. 2. 44. The commandments of God, and his promises do so rule in his heart, that no flatterings of the world, no commandments of men can overstay him.

3. From the Spirit of God dwelling in them, which is greater then the spirit of the world, 1 Joh. 4. 4. This Spirit doth so mortify him to the world, and so quicken him to grace, that he overcomes the world.

Obj. *Did not Demas a great professor, forsake Paul, and embrace this present world?* 2 Tim. 4. 10. *Have not many for the love of the world erred from the faith?* 1 Tim. 6. 9, 10. *Was it not so with Ananias and Sapphira, and Judas? The love of this world overcame them. Hath not the love of the world overcome many of the German Christians apostacize to Idolatry, and yield themselves to the temptations thereof? How is it true then, that every poor Christian overcomes the world?*

Ans. 'Tis true, the world prevails with many professors, but many of them were never truly born of God, as *Demas* and *Judas*, *Ananias*, and *Sapphira*.

Obj. *Do you think that every one that is led away with the world, hath no shred of true grace in him?*

Ans. No, for then I might condemn the generation of the righteous; for it may easily fall out, that sometimes the servants of God are so filled with the world, that they have much ado to take pains about edifying themselves, or keeping peace with God. But yet, though a true Christian he led captive by the world, so as he hath little skill in any thing else but worldly matters; full of dexterity in the world, and but a bungler in grace; yet if a man be born of God, the Spirit of God at length will let him see his error, and then he will mourn for it, and oppose and resist to the death. As a child getting into a boat, at length the wind riseth, and carrieth the boat from the shore, and tosses him in the deep, he is not able to use the oars to bring him to the shore, but after much toiling he is drowned, and a puff of

wind, or the return of the flood, casts him on the shore dead: So, many times a Christian falls a tampering with the world, and it pleaseth him well, till at length the world heaves and carries him up, until he be carried into the main, plunged so deep in the world, that he sees he hath lost his love to God, and then he strives to recover himself, and labours and goes mourning to his
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grave, but at his death, he is cast up safely on the shore, the seed of God hath kept some life of grace in him.

Use 1. Shews the hypocrisy of such as are carried wholly captive with the world, such were never truly born of God, *Stella cadens, nunquam stella, comita fuit.* Some illumination may make them blaze a while, but they vanish away at length.

Use 2. Shews us the marvellous danger of the world. We think it an happy thing to lade our selves with thick clay, to have our treasures full, and our houses well furnished. Why, would a man think himself rich, if his house were full of enemies? Why, truly such is the world, it carries us into the deep, and drowns us with many sinful lusts. Therefore the more we have of the world, the more wary grow we of keeping the world shackled, that it may not hinder us, but help us to more freedom; as a man, the more Sea-room, the better he sails: So let Christians that have much of the world, learn to be more free for God.

Doct. 2. It's the faith of a Christian that helps him to overcome the world.

Moses his example is full, Heb. 11. 24, to 28. We see here,

1. Honor might have tempted him. He might have been called *the Son of Pharaoh's daughter*, this he refused *by faith*.

2. There was much treasure to be got in the Court, but *by faith* he esteemed the reproach of *Christ* greater riches than the treasures of *Ægypt*.

3. He might have had many pleasures in the Court, but *by faith* he esteemed the affliction of *God's people* before the pleasures of *sin*.

4. He might have incurred the King's wrath, but *by faith* he feared not the Kings wrath: So that, let the world flatter or threaten, *faith* overcomes it.

Reas. 1. Because faith enlightens the mind, to see things in another manner then the world seeth them. Faith lets us see things as they are. Faith lets *Moses* see, that to be called *God's Son*, is far greater honour then to be called the *Son of Pharaoh's daughter*. Faith lets him see, that the afflictions of *God's servants* are better then worldly pleasures. Faith lets him see, that *God's wrath* is more to be feared then the Kings. Faith is of a discerning na-

ture, Heb. 11. 1. Faith makes that evident to a Christian, which others see not.

2. Faith estates us into Christ. Now Christ dwelling in us by faith enables us to overcome the world.

3. Faith hath a power to purify our hearts, Act. 15. 9. 2 Pet. 1. 14. from the lusts of the world. Faith looks at God as our pardon, and therefore regards not the profits of the world. 2 Faith cleanseth us from voluptuousness. Faith lets us see more joy and pleasure in God's favour, then in all the contents of the world. 3 Faith establisheth our hearts in God's fear, Prov. 29. 25. and therefore makes us not to be afraid of the wrath of men; so that faith senseth us on every side against the world.

4. Faith lays hold on the promises, 2 Pet. 1. 5. Now, God's promises have a power to take off our minds from the world. Faith believes the promises of God's protection and provision and goodness, and therefore make us not to regard the world.

Use 1. To teach a Christian never to go without the continual exercise of his faith. The world will be still drawing us away, either after pleasure or profit, or else will discourage you with fears and dangers. Why, faith alone is able to overcome them; therefore live continually by faith, depend upon Christ, look up to the promises, and you shall be too hard for the world.

Use 2. Of comfort to every faithful believer, of their perseverance. If faith overcomes the world, then it will overcome Satan, and your own lusts.

Doct. 3. *To them that have overcome the world, the yoke of God's commandments is easy.*

By the *world* we heard it not to be understood the creatures, but there be
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something in the world that have a share in them. 2 There be many comforts in the world that are apt to draw our minds from God. Again, there are many discomforts and dangers, which are enemies to grace. Now, to him that hath overcome these, the yoke of God's commandments is easy, *Paul* to whom the world was crucified, Gal. 6. 14. when he hears that bonds and afflictions attend him, he cares for none of these things, he can fulfil his course with joy for all these, then surely his task is not a grievous yoke, but joyful.

Reas. 1. From the weapons that the world lends Satan in every temptation. Whatsoever temptation comes from Satan, or from our own corruptions, they find no argument to persuade us, but only taken from the world;

so that if once you have overcome the world, no temptation will lay hold on you. There have been many that have been willing to partake of Christ, but when Christ hath bid them part with all, they went away sorrowful, Mat. 10. 22. Here was loss of profit kept him off. Some are kept off by profits, some by pleasures, Luk. 14. 18, 19, 20. The profits of the world made *Ananias* dissemble, the love of the world made *Demas* forsake *Paul*. What made *Achitophel* hang himself, but disgrace of the world. For ease sake *Judas* hanged himself: So some men's credit and honors keep them off, Joh. 5. 44. How can ye believe that receive honour one of another? The seeking of worldly honour and glory, hinder them from seeking God's glory, Joh. 12. 42, 43. All the discouragements that hinder in our Christian course, are either from the profits, pleasures, or honours of the world. If therefore we have got victory over the world, then no temptation shall make us think God's yoke grievous. What made *Herod*, and *Demas*, and others think God's commandments heavy, but their profits and pleasures?

Use 1. May serve to teach those that would walk on in a Christian course with freedom and liberty, to wean their affections from the love of the world. Bear a crucified affection to the contents of the world, and then God's yoke will not seem heavy.

1. Though the commandments be great and heavy, yet as a man is, so is his strength. When a man hath got victory over the world, he hath God-Christ in his soul, and so through the strength of Christ he is able to prevail, Joh. 4. 4. And withal, there abides with him the mighty power of God's Spirit, and God's Word, which affords him mighty strength.

2. There is a weakening of the enemy, All the weapons that Satan useth are took away. When a man hath once overcome the world, were a man advanced to the stars, he would see the stars to be huge immense things, far above that they seem now, and he would look at the earth as a small point. But if we stand here below, we look at the earth as a great thing. We think worldly honour and preferments great dignities, and the stars we think them small things, because we stand below, and are removed from them; but in case God lift us above the world, and we might have our eyes enlightened to see the greatness of God's favour, and Christ's blood, and heavenly things; why, then those earthly things would seem small. If we would therefore walk in an enlarged frame, let us esteem earthly things as small matters, worth little regard, and account heavenly things as worthy your highest esteem, and chiefly to be looked at.

I JOHN 5. 5.

Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?

Doct. *The faith that overcomes the world, is faith in the divinity and Sonship of Christ.*

Who is he that overcomes the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God? When Peter had made that profession of his faith, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God; what saith Christ to this? Blessed art thou Simon, &c. Matt. 10. 16, 17, 18. This confession made Simon to be a rock; and upon this rock of Peter's confession, Christ built his Church: So that, if you ask upon what foundation the Church stands, it was upon this faith, and against this faith the gates of hell and all the judicial power thereof shall not prevail.

What is it then to believe that Jesus is the Son of God?

1. He that believes that that Jesus whom *Judas* betrayed, and the *Jews* crucified, is the Son of God.

2. He that believes that he is the Son of God, in whom he is *well-pleased*, Mat. 3. 7. So that he is that mighty power and wisdom of God, in whom his Father is well pleased. This faith overcomes the world.

1. Because this kind of faith.. nnot be attained by any human means, but by an heavenly revelation from God the Father, Mat. 16. 16. And in that age when *S. John* wrote this, there was no human reason to induce us to believe it.

1. All antiquity of the *Gentiles* was against it. They had heard of *Jupiter*, *Apollo*, and *Hercules*, but *Christ* seemed a new God to them, Act. 17. 18.

2. All authority was against it, 2 Cor. 2. 8. None of the Princes of the world knew of it.

3. The universal consent of all the habitable world was against it, save only a small handful of people that believed him to be the Christ, the Son of God.

4. There was something in reason founded against it, for a man to look for salvation from a poor Carpenters Son, from a despised man; one that was excommunicated, and crucified, and could not save himself; for a man to look for salvation from him, was more then flesh and blood could reach; for the poor thief upon the Cross, to see him on the Cross, and yet to beg of him a Kingdom, and after death too, this was such a faith as overcame the world. This flesh revealed not, to take a man at the worst, and then to believe on him for salvation.

Obj. *But now who is there that believes not Jesus to be the Son of God?*

Answ. 'Tis true. We have now all those arguments to prove him to be the Son of God, which they wanted. We have the antiquity of many hundred years. We have authority on our parts, and the universal consent of the whole Christian world hath now taken up such a principle; and for reasons, we have reason enough, seeing so many ages, so many wise and great men consent to this truth. And therefore it's now less wonder to believe Jesus to be the Son of God.

What then? Is *S. John's* argument of no force now?

Yes certainly, therefore 2 we say, it's one thing to believe Jesus to be the Son of God, upon human credulity of antiquity, universality, or human reason, That's not the faith that overcomes the world; but it must be such a faith as is wrought in our hearts by God himself, and this faith far differs from human credulity.

1. No man that believes Christ to be the Son of God by this divine faith, but looks up to him for salvation, *Look unto me and be saved all ye ends of the earth*, Isa. 45. 22.

2. If we look at Christ as the Son of God, this faith hath an efficacy in

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it, to work in us contrition and mourning for our sin., whereby we have crucified the Lord of life, Act. 2. 37. *When they heard that was the Christ whom they had crucified, they were pricked in the hearts*, Zac. 12. 10. To such as believe thus Christ is made the author of eternal salvation, Heb. 8. 5.

3. From the mighty power and virtue a faithful soul derives from Christ to overcome the world: when you look at all the world, and all the comforts thereof, and compare them with Christ, you shall find them so vain and empty, that there is no comparison, Psal. 73. 25. Mat. 16. 24. What is there in the world that would be equal with Christ? Did not *Moses* on this ground despise all the creatures and pleasures of *Ægypt*, because he had seen him that was in the bush? Heb. 11. 27. That was the Lord Christ. The transcendent worth a Christian finds in Christ, far outsways all worldly dignities.

Use 1. Of encouragement to a Christian soul against all temptation, for if this faith overcome the world, then it will overcome Satan, and the corrupt lusts of thine own heart, and therefore this faith cannot be overcome, but is secure against all enemies. If it were possible that our faith could be extinguished, then this were not true, that *Faith overcomes the world*. If a man therefore lose his faith, such faith was never true.

2. It teacheth us the exceeding danger of the love of the world. How many are there that rise early, and sit up late, that spend their whole care and pains to get worldly wealth? Why, do you think this a safe condition? Would you not think him an infidel, that would not believe that Jesus is the Son of God. If a man be overcome of the world, truly he believes it not, that Jesus is the Son of God, and can such a man be a Christian?

Obj. *What say you? Were there never any good men overcome of the world? What say you to those that recanted in Q. Mary's days for fear, and after repented, and were burnt for their profession? What say you to Peter?*

Answ. A godly man in a combat may be overthrown, yet not overcome; as it is in wrestling, a man may get the soil, and yet afterwards rise up and get the victory; so oft-times a soiled Soldier gets the day: So *Peter*, though he were soiled at that day, yet when he got up again, and afterward was charged not to preach in the Name of Jesus, he overcame all, *Whether it be meet to obey God or man, judge ye*, Act. 4. 19. Indeed, if a man be thrown down, and there he lies, and takes no care to get up again, look at him as no true believer; therefore look not at these as things that may stand together, to serve God and man, and the world too. So respect the world, as that you ever look at Christ to have incomparably more worth then all the world, and let your chiefest love and endeavour be towards him.

Use 3. Of consolation to them that maintain this principle, that *Jesus* is the Son of God. Why, you may assure your selves that the world shall never overcome you. Look up to him as your Saviour, for your salvation; look so on him as to mourn for your sins, and obey him as the eternal Son of God. Keep this faith in exercise, and you shall not be overthrown; or if you be, it will so raise you up, and recover you, that you shall overcome at the last.

1 JOHN 5. 6.

This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ, not by water only, but by water and blood: and it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is the truth.

IN the former *vers.* he had shewed, that faith overcoming the world, is faith in the divinity and Sonship of Christ, Now in these words he describes Christ the object of our faith:

1. By his manner of coming: *This is he that came by water and blood.*
2. By the witness that is born of him.

1 In general, *the Spirit*, v. 6. Then, 2 *In heaven*, and 3 *On earth*, v. 7, 8.

1. For

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1. For the furniture of his coming, He came fully addressed for the works of our redemption; *he came by water and blood*. By *water* is not meant their legal oblations; for he speaks of such a water as bears witness that Christ is the Son of God to this day, which they do not. By this *water* therefore is meant the clear water of sanctification, spoken of Ezek. 30. 25, 26. where-with our Saviour Christ came abundantly furnished, fit to be our redeemer. By *blood* is not meant the blood of his sufferings.

Doct. *That Jesus Christ came to execute his office by the water of sanctification, and by the blood of redemption.*

It is he that came to over come the world, to redeem us. How? *By water and blood*. Why by water and blood both?

1. From the end of his coming, that he might fulfill the types of the Law. In the old Law no Priest might enter upon his office upon pain of death; but he must first wash his hands and feet, Exod. 13. 18, & 22. Which shews how careful we should be, to come with clean hearts and hands to God's service; and it typed out that when the Lord Christ should take upon him his Priestly office, he should come free and spotless from all sin, and he did so, so that no guile was found in his mouth. *Pilate* himself justified of him, *I find no evil in him*.

2. As they came by water, so they might not enter into the holiest place, except they were first sprinkled with blood. Which signified that it was needfull that Christ should come by his own blood to expiate our sins, Heb. 9. 7. to 12. More particularly:

Q. *Why should he come by water; that is, throughly watered from all sin?*

Ans. 1. It was fit he should be such a one, that he might not expiate for his own sins, Heb. 7. 25, to 29. Had there been found the least sin in Christ, all the blood he spilt would have been little enough for himself.

2. That his sacrifice might be available for us. Had he been unjust himself, he could not have redeemed us, 1 Pet. 3. 18. But being just himself, there was no need he should die for himself, but for us.

Q. *Why was it needful he should come by blood?*

Ans. Had he come near so purely sanctified, yet this would never have made atonement; for, *without shedding of blood is no remission*, Heb. 9. 22. He came by blood therefore.

1. That by his blood and sufferings he might purchase out of his Father's wrath, a Church unto himself, Act. 20. 18. And by that blood, not only the elect, but all the creatures are purchased, at least to be serviceable to the Church. Christ hath bought all things quick and dead, either for his Churches

comfort or affliction, 2 Cor. 3. 22, 23. *All power in heaven and in earth is given into his hand*, Psal. 2. 8.

2. That he might make atonement for our souls. It was impossible that the blood of Bulls and Goats should expiate for our sins, but as they look at *Christ*, his blood is given to be an atonement for our sins, Heb. 9. 12, 13. And it makes an atonement not only between God and us, but also between *Jews* and *Gentiles*, Eph. 2. 17, 18, 19. Whereas before the Gentiles would not become *Jews*, by reason of their hard ordinances; now, *Christ took away that wall of separation*.

3. That he might procure not only God's favour, but this fruit of it, the remission of our sins, Mat. 6. 28.

4. That by the price of his blood, he might purchase the inhabitation of his Spirit to us, that he might procure it for us, that our consciences might be purified, Heb. 2. 24. *This blood purifieth our consciences. The blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin*, 1 Joh. 1. 9. And that is done by putting in as a Spirit of grace, which purgeth us from all uncleanness and sin, and adorning us with the contrary graces of piety, humility, patience. Christ by his cursed death for us, hath procured a Spirit of grace for us, which purifies our consciences from the guilt and from the stain of sin, Heb. 9. 14.

5. That he might confirm his new covenant, the New Testament to us,
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Matt. 26. 28, *This is the blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins*. Now without the death of the Testator no Testament is in force, Heb. 9. 16, to 21. It's accounted a sacriligious thing to violate the Testament of the dead: So it is with Christ; for as man to call any of his promises into question, is a sacriligious violation of his Testament.

6. That he might keep us in everlasting nourishment to feed on in our hearts, Joh. 6. 56. So that his blood may be his wine to cheer us, that by the comfort of his blood, and mediation applied to our souls, we might have wherewith to sustain our selves in the worst times. This is meat indeed, and drink indeed, no nourishment our souls can feed on, but this; our souls cannot feed on pleasures and profits, spirits must feed on spiritual things. Those are beggarly naked souls that have nothing but lands and riches to feed on, the soul's food is only spiritual things; and if the ordinances yield you any good or comfort, whence comes this, but only from the blood of Christ that hath besprinkled all these ordinances, and made them effectual, Heb. 9. 19. It's the blood of sprinkling that makes every ordinance effectual to us.

7. He came by blood to us, that so he might open a way to us into the most holy place.

Use 1. Teacheth us, that a poor Christian that believes in Christ, may thereby overcome the world, because he believes on such a one as came both by water and blood, by the water of sanctification to purify and cleanse us, and by the blood of his redemption, whereby he hath procured for us pardon and happiness; therefore whosoever believes on Christ, is so sprinkled with the blood of Christ, that he is redeemed from the world, to become the servant of God, he hath all the promises of God, which make him overcome all the promises of the world, and encourageth him against all difficulties, and so assureth him of heavenly glory; so that he looks at the world as a thing little to be regarded.

Use 2. To stir up all those that desire to get victory over the world, to labour to get faith in Christ Jesus, who is so abundantly furnished with helps and means for our redemption, fit to satisfy us by the water of sanctification, fit to sprinkle us with the blood of redemption; whereas, if we do not believe on Christ, we must be continually slaves to the world. Hence it is, that worldlings take such content and comfort in the things of this life, and are so discouraged at the loss of them; a plain sign they want faith to overcome the world.

Use 3. Of trial what portion we have in Christ. Why, what feedest thou on? If thou hast a part in Christ, thou hast a Spirit of God within thee to comfort thee, thou findest the ordinances sprinkled with the blood of Christ to feed on; thou canst say to the flattering world, *I have better meat and better comforts to feed on, then the world can yield*, Psal. 4. 6, It's poor nourishment for spirits to feed on the husks of his world; but a Christian finds the blood of Christ, the only food of his soul, and the world to be his Servant, and not his Master. But if we have no higher matters to feed on, then the profits and contents of the world, the Spirit of God and grace we relish not; why then truly Christians we are not.

4. If thou wouldst use the privileges which come by Christ, why this is the way, *Believe on the Lord Jesus*, and then he is come for thee *by water and blood*. Distrust therefore thy own righteousness, rest upon Christ, live in such places where Christ is dispensed in his ordinances, that so being brought on to believe, thou mayst find Christ to thy salvation.

5. Of consolation to such as renounce the world, and esteem Christ to be better worth than all the world; why, thy hope is not frustrate, thou believest on such a one as *camest by water and blood*; so that though thou be unclean, and thy works defiled, yet he came by *water* to purge and cleanse thee, Exod, 28. 37, 38. And what though thy heart be full of many sinful lusts, yet thou trusteth

on one that can by *blood* make atonement for thee to procure his Spirit, and when thou diest, to give thee an open entrance into the most holy place.

I JOHN

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I JOHN 5. 6.

This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ, not by water only, but by water and blood: and it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth.

IN these verses as we heard Christ set out

1. By the manner of his coming, he *came by water and blood.*

2. By the witnesses born to him, which are first in general, *the Spirit*, ver. 6. Secondly, more particularly the witnesses are distinguished into two parts, three in heaven, and three on earth, vers. 7, 8.

It is the Spirit that beareth witness here, Christ's coming is confirmed by the witness of the Spirit, and that Spirit amplified by the certainty, that *Spirit is truth.*

By the Spirit is meant, the Spirit of God breathing in the Word, and in the conscience of God's people, both are here included.

For 1. the Spirit breathing in the Scripture, is one of the chiefest testimonies, that is born to Christ, Joh. 5. 39. and therefore this witness may not be omitted.

2. *By the Spirit*, is meant the Spirit as it breaths in the conscience of God's people: for though the Spirit be strong in the Scripture, yet how shall I be ascertained of that truth of the Scripture, but by the consent of the same Spirit in my heart? It's the Spirit in our hearts, that witnesseth to the truth in the Scripture, Joh. 3. 33. and therefore it's called *a Seal*, 2 Cor. 1. 20. *All the promises in Christ are yea and Amen*; how appears that? by the Spirit breathing in our hearts.

Quest. *What is that the Spirit witnesseth?*

Some understand it thus, *The Spirit bears witness, that the Spirit is truth*: if there were no other testimony of the Spirit, but the Spirit itself, it would shew it self, as the Sun shews its self.

But 1. the Apostle hath occasion to speak of the witness it bears to in own truth; but the scope of his speech is, to speak of the witness that is born to the truth, *that Jesus Christ came by water and blood*, and therefore

the witness here spoken of, is of the Sonship of Christ, and of his powerful coming, and to this the Spirit bears witness, and that *Spirit is truth*.

Doct. *The Spirit of God breathing in the Scripture, and in the conscience of God's people, bears witness to our souls, that Jesus Christ came to save us, by the water of Sanctification and the blood of Redemption.*

The Spirit breathing in the Scripture, Joh. 5. 39. It's not the saying of the Prophets nor Apostles, that bears such authentic testimony, we look at the testimony of them, as of *Isaiah* and *Paul*, Christ speaks of them, *I receive not the testimony of men*, Joh. 1. 33. Therefore some that have read them have looked at them as fables, 1 Cor. 2. 6, 7. What is it then that captivates the world to the belief of this testimony, but the testimony of the Spirit breathing in them?

What is that Spirit that breaths in the Scripture that bears such strong witness to Christ? Zach. 4. 6. *It's not by might or power, but by my Spirit*, that any building of grace is built.

Answ. There is in the Scripture 1. A Spirit of power,

2. Of Perfection,

1. Of power, Luk. 24. 29. and it's that power that fell on them on the day of Pentecost; which our Saviour intimated to them expressly, Joh. 20. 21, 22. so that their words remit sins, and ease the conscience, and bind it, 1 Cor. 13. 24, 25. 2 Cor. 13. 3, 4, 5. Now then the Spirit breathing in the Apostle, though their outward man was base and weak, yet their words were mighty and powerful, and even as Christ was most full of power, when he was most debased. There is a threefold power in the Scripture.

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1. There is a mighty power therein to convince men of their sinful estate, and of their need of Christ, Joh. 16. 8, 9.

2. A power to comfort the hearts of God's servants in sense of his favour, Rom. 8. 15. hence the Spirit is called *the Comforter*, Joh. 14. 15. and when the soul finds this success, it witnesses that no writings are like them, to cast down to hell, and lift up to heaven again.

3. There is a Spirit, of power in the Scripture, to cleanse us from all defilements, to purify our hearts, to overcome the world, to strengthen us against all temptations and discouragements. The Spirit breathing in us, lets see that Christ came fully furnished for our redemption, *I can do all things through Christ that strengthenth me*, Phil. 4 13. by the power of Christ I can learn to stand even in every condition of life, and to walk in his fear, Ezek. 36. 25, 26.

2. In the Scripture there is a Spirit of perfection, whereby the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished to every good work, 2 Tim. 3. 16. 17. There is no calling but a man may find abundant directions for it in the Scripture: the Heathen Moralists have written concerning our carriages towards men, but little towards God; so the laws of men, a man may fulfil them all, and yet live an hypocrite, and die a reprobate, which shews their imperfection, and therefore men's laws are often changed and altered: if therefore a man find such a word, as that when he understands it he finds sufficient directions to lead him in all his ways, and bring him to heaven: this shews the divine perfection of the Scripture, that what once it delivers that which is absolutely perfect, and this Spirit bears witness to it.

2. The Spirit bears witness to Christ, as it breaths in our hearts, for though the Spirit should breath never so strongly, yet if we have not the evidence of it in our hearts, we shall not know the truth of such a thing: Now the Spirit breathing in our consciences, is a Spirit of peace and purity, both springing from Christ; the Spirit of peace persuades our consciences of the virtue and power of Christ's blood, had it not been for Christ's blood, we should never have had peace, but have been like *Cain* living in *Nod*, in continual agitation; but Christ's blood speaks peace.

2. As he came by blood, so he came by water, and this is witnessed by the Spirit of Sanctification, and there is in this Spirit a threefold work suitable to this water.

1. A Spirit of refreshing: as water refresheth the dry and thirsty soul, Isa. 44. 3. so doth the water of the Spirit allay the heat and scorch of God's wrath.

2. As springing water washes and cleanses all along as it goes, so doth the Spirit of God wash us with clean water, Ezek. 36. 25. unless it be troubled with some obstructions, which yet it will overgrow and run clear.

3. As water hath a power to make trees fructify about it, Psal. 1. 3. so the water of life gives a Christian such supplying strength unto his heart, that it makes him strong and fruitful, that whatsoever God or man requires, he in some good measure is enabled to perform it: so that a Christian soul by this Spirit breathing in him, can plainly discern that Christ *came by water and blood*.

Use 1. May be a just refutation of Popery, that place the ground-work of our faith upon the testimony of the Church; ask them how they will be saved? they will say by Christ: ask them, how came you to believe in Christ? By the testimony of the Scripture. But how know you the truth

of the Scripture? by the testimony of the Church, say they. But may not the Church err? Did the whole Church so dangerously err, as all to consent to the crucifying of Christ, and may not they as well err in putting on us false Scripture? Are not all men subject to errors? and therefore a Christian dares not build his faith upon human testimony; for their testimony

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can give but human credulity; but a Christian tells them, he therefore believes the Scripture, because the Spirit of God breaths in them by a Spirit of power and perfection, and withall God's Spirit breaths in him such peace, as he knows Christ *came by blood*, and such purity, as he knows Christ *came by water*.

Object. *Thus you will pin the Scripture upon our own private spirit.*

Ans^w. This is not our private spirit, but the same spirit that breaths in the Scripture, which witnesseth to our conscience the truth.

Use 2. To teach Christians never to rest in any Scripture they read, or Ministers they hear, before they have examined things by the testimony of the Spirit: it's not the saying of all men that can assure you of this, but it's the Spirit of God in the Scripture, and in your hearts, that must testify that Christ *came by water and blood*; if you do not discern this Spirit in you, all your faith is but human credulity, not divine faith.

Use 3. For trial of our faith, whether it be the faith of God's elect or no. Dost thou believe *that Jesus is the Son of God*? Yes, thou wilt say: But what witness, hast thou to believe it? Is it from the Scripture, or because thou hast been taught so; and so takest it up as a Principle? Why, this is no divine faith: But dost thou find a Spirit within thee, which convinceth thy conscience, purifies thy heart? Why, this divine witness testifies, that Jesus Christ *came by water and blood*.

Use 4. Of consolation in the testimony of the Spirit, whereas the world will tell you it is but delusion and a fancy; be not deceived, *this Spirit is truth*, and such a Spirit as witnesseth thy true faith, only trust not thy private spirit, which agrees not with the Spirit breathing in the Scripture, and therefore both are to be joined together, the Spirit breathing in the Scripture, and the Spirit breathing in our heart.

I JOHN 5. 6. the latter part.

Because the Spirit is truth.

THe Spirit which beareth witness to Christ, is amplified by the effect, witness-bearing, and by his adjunct of truth, which is the cause of his bearing witness, *he bears witness, because he is a Spirit of truth.*

Doct. 3. *The Spirit of God bearing witness in the Scripture, and the in hearts of God's people, is a Spirit of truth, Joh. 14. 16, 17.*

Joh. 16. 13. *When the Spirit of truth is come, he shall guide you into all truth.*

Quest. *Why is it called a Spirit of Truth?*

Ans. Not only because he is one of the Persons in the blessed Trinity, and therefore his witness must needs be truth: a man that works by a rule may go awry, but the rule it self is not awry; the holy Ghost being a God of Truth, cannot but speak truth; himself being the line, cannot go wrong: But he is called a *Spirit of truth* rather;

1. Because he speaks nothing but what he hears of the Father, and of the Son, Joh. 16. 13. the Spirit proceeding from the Father, and the Son, speaks nothing but what he receives from them, what they apprehend and judge; the same he testifies, Joh. 8. 26. and he speaks it without change and alteration.

2. Because he speaks a testimony, not of a shadowing, or typical representation, but of evidence and manifest truth, *Moses* spake by types, which obscured the truth; but what the holy Ghost speaks is evident truth, without veil or covering, 2 Cor. 3. 17, 18.

3. From the effect of the Spirit, the Spirit not only speaks, but works truth in the hearts of those to whom he speaks, by speaking truth he works truth in the heart, so that they that receive this testimony are of the truth, Joh. 3. 9. 2 Joh. 1. 2.

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Now they that receive the testimony of the Spirit, that Jesus Christ is come by *water and blood*, they are cleansed from the world, from dissimulation and hypocrisy, and so are made of the truth.

Object. *How comes it to pass then, that sometimes many speaking by the Spirit, yet speak falsely, and yet are confident they speak truth.*

Ans. 1. True, a man having received some work of the Spirit, may speak falsehood, as *Zedikiah*, 1 King. 22. 24. and yet was confident he spake by the Spirit; but yet though a man speaking by a spirit of delusion, may think he hath spoken the truth; yet it hinders not, but when the Spirit of God indeed bears witness, it may be discerned so be truth.

Use 1. If this Spirit bearing witness to Christ's coming be a Spirit of truth, then such as have received the Spirit of truth, need not be afraid,

that they are led by a spirit of delusion, that do believe that Jesus Christ came by water and blood, Jer. 20. 10, 11. the way of the righteous man cannot deceive him.

Quest. How shall I know that this spirit doth not dream, when it witnesseth pardon, and healing, and the like?

Ans. 1. The Spirit bears witness of itself, as well as of other things; the Sun shews it self, as well as makes other things visible.

2. The Spirit beareth witness of it self, from the work it frames in the hearts of God's servants the testimony of the Spirit doth so set on its witness, doth so pacify, and purify the conscience, that be plainly sees, that this is the very Spirit of God, which is manifest by the fruits.

3. The testimony of the Spirit breathing in the Word, and in the hearts of God's children do so agree in every thing, that it's evident to be the same Spirit, though it be true, the Spirit is more strong and evident in the Scripture; the witness may be weak in our hearts, yet always in the main aim and ends they agree together.

4. By how much the more suitable it is to the Scripture, by so much the more it conforms us to the Image of Christ; the Spirit of Christ makes you meek and lowly, as he was, draws us from earthly objects to a more divine frame; that Spirit which fashions us to Christ is of God.

Use 1. Of just reproof to God's servants that have found the blood of Christ pacifying and purifying their hearts; if in this case their souls doubt, and are solicitous, they refuse the testimony of the Spirit; Satan, say they, may transform himself into an Angel of light; I, but Satan cannot pacify the conscience, much less purify it, himself being an unclean spirit, loves to draw on others to impurity; if therefore the spirit within you, draw you on to walk in truth, and to frame your heart according to the Image of Christ, if you find any measure of peace and purity, it's evident the Spirit is a Spirit of truth.

Use 1. Of comfort to all such as have put their trust in Christ, upon the testimony of God's Spirit witnessing to them, that Christ came to save and heal them; Why, this is strong consolation to them: that which makes our spirits doubtful, is the deceitfulness of our own hearts, Jer. 17. 10. But yet this should comfort us, that though our hearts be deceitful, yet this Spirit of God breathing in us is a Spirit of truth: and if you would know whether you have a spirit of truth in you or no: Why, by this you shall know it, that Spirit which speaks peace and purity to a man's soul, that Spirit is of God; Satan may do much, but he is not able to transform himself into such a spirit; no other spirit can work this but the Spirit of God; a spirit

speaking peace without purity may be a delusion; and a spirit purity without any measure of peace, may be a delusion, for all the paths of Wisdom are peace; but both peace and purity together, do evidently manifest it to be the Spirit of God.

Use 4. For them that have found any measure of peace and purity, they ought to teach them, to be very careful to discern whether this spirit be of
 God

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God or no, if thou hast found much peace, and withal thou walkest in simplicity and godly sincerity, this Spirit is of God, 2 Cor. 1. 12. But if our peace make us careless of our ways, and more licentious, we shall never approve such a spirit to be of God; where God's Spirit breaths, the more peace, the more care of purity, and therefore let us always put them together. *Herod's* spirit of joy was a spirit of delusion, because it was not a spirit of purity, Mark 6. 20. *Herod* and *David* both, fell into the same lusts: how shall we know whether of them had the Spirit of God? *David* for a while seemed to do worst, but *Herod* he so favoured his lust, that he destroyed *John* that reproved him; *David* he heard the Prophet, and humbled himself, and renewed his repentance before God, and therefore doubtless his Spirit was of God, because he was studious of purity; such a soul as favours his lust, and takes part with it, hath not God's Spirit in him: that sickness is mortal, that refuseth utterly all means of health; if therefore either our peace or purity be wanting, we shall not have this testimony of God's Spirit; that spirit that speaks both, is a Spirit of truth.

I JOHN 5. 7.

For there are three that bear record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the holy Ghost: and these three are one.

CHrist the Object of our Faith is set out,

1. By the manner of his coming, vers. 6. *He came by water and blood.*
2. By the testimony given him of his coming, which is double, *three in Heaven, and three on Earth.*

In this verse the heavenly witnessess are set forth, 1. by the number *Three*.

2. By their place, *in Heaven.*
3. By their work, they *bear witness.*
4. By their names, *The Father, the Son, and the holy Spirit.*
5. By the unity, *these three are one.*

Doct. *That there are three Persons, yet but one God, that do bear witness to the divinity of Christ, and of the plenteous salvation wrought by him.*

For Explication,

Quest. *Who those three Persons be, and why so called?*

Ans. The first Person is called *the Father*, so called,

1. Chiefly because he is the Father of Christ, 1 Pet. 1. 3. Partly by eternal generation, as he is God; partly by adoption, as he is man.

2. As he is the Father of all *the Elect*, 1 Pet. 1. 3, 5. Luk. 1. 3. Joh. 20. 17. The second Person is styled *the Word*, as likewise, 1 Joh. 1. A solemn name given him in his greatest triumph, Revel. 19. 13. A style seldom attributed to Christ, but by St. *John* in all his Books, although some understand it of Christ, Heb. 4. 12.

Christ is called *the Word* in a fourfold sense, he is a Word of wisdom, of representation, of revelation, of promise.

1. Christ is a word of wisdom: for λόγος is not only προφορικος but ἐνδιάθετος *ratio*: now *Wisdom* is *accidental*, but *ratio* is *essential* to a human soul: Now such a thing is Christ to his Father, he is the wisdom or reason to his Father, Prov. 8. 23, 24. he is the begotten of his Father they that write of the Trinity express it thus, the Father from eternity considering and understanding himself, from this conceiving of the Father resulted the Image of himself, that was his Son; from them both resulteth the holy Ghost.

2. He is called *the Word of God*, as he is a word of representation, for λόγος ὁμοίωματα πραγμάτων, so Christ is the living Image of God, Heb. 1. 3. the character of the Father, like a seal stamped in wax, they answer in every point.

3. He is a word of revelation; Joh. 1. 18. No man hath seen God at any time, but Christ the Wisdom of the Father hath declared unto us, and revealed God's

will

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will, it was the Lord Christ that appeared to *Adam*, and *Moses*, and *Abraham*, and *Gideon*, and the rest of the Patriarchs, Rev. 1. 1. as a word expounds all our meaning and reveals our will, so it is Christ the Word of God, that reveals the will of God to us.

4. He is a word of promise, Heb. 11. 39. Christ was promised of old, but not exhibited till the last days.

The third witness is *the Spirit*, every Person in the Trinity is an holy Spirit, Joh. 4. 24. yet it is more particularly attributed to the third Person, because he works powerfully and effectually, all that life and power we see the creature express, so we see that there are three Persons that bear witness to the Divinity of Christ, and if three, there is a difference in number; now

there is no difference but a Personal difference, Heb. 1. 3. so that the Father is one Person, the Son a second, the holy Ghost a third, yet these Persons make but one in Nature, and so they are one in witness, Deut. 6. 4. *Jehovah our God is but one*, for it is impossible there should be more then one God: Nature of it self abhors more Infinities then one; if there were more Gods then one, if many gods, how could they be all All-sufficient, but that one should have the perfection of another?

Quest. *What is that they witness too?*

Ans. They all witness Christ to be the Son of God, and that he *came by water and blood*.

1. The Father testifies this, by that voice that came down from Heaven. *This is my well-beloved Son in whom I am well pleased*, Matth. 3. 17.

2. He bare witness to his works, Joh. 6. 30, 31, 32, 36, 37.

Christ bare witness to himself, that he was the Son of God by his Ministry as oft as occasion served, Joh. 8. 14, 17, 18. Joh. 17. 38.

2. By his works, Job. 5. 36.

3. By his Resurrection he declared himself mightily to be the Son of God, Rom. 1.

3. The holy Ghost bare witness of him, by descending upon him in the shape of a Dove.

2. By convincing the world of sin, because they did not believe on him.

3. By sealing up this with to the conscience of men, Ephes. 1. 13.

Use 1. Of refutation of the Jewish heresy, that denies the Trinity of the Persons, and others that denied the unity of the Godhead, all such heresies are here condemned, *There are three that bear witness in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, and yet these three are one*.

Use 2. Learn here a just ground work of our faith, there is nothing we believe concerning Christ, but we have sufficient testimony for it, Deut. 19. 15. *At the mouth of two or three witnesses every truth shall stand*: now we have six witnesses, *three in heaven*, and *three on earth*, if therefore we believe this truth, we set to our seals that God is true, who hath witnessed it, 1 Joh. 5. 10. But if we believe not Jesus to be the Son of God, we make God a liar, because we believe not the testimony that he hath given us of his Son, were not our hearts flow to believe this truth, what need we so many witnesses?

Object. *There is none but believes this truth*.

Ans. It's not enough to believe this upon antiquity, or authority, or universal consent of the Christian world, but God calls us to believe this, upon some divine testimony of the Father, and of the Son, & of the Spirit; it's not enough for us to believe that Christ is the Son of God, but that God is our

Father in him: so that soul that doth not give up it self to be conformable to the Image of God, the wisdom and revelation of Christ, and unless the Spirit likewise transform our spirits to holiness and purity, we do not believe this truth upon any Divine testimony, but upon human credulity,

Use 3. If all the three Persons in the Trinity agree together in the witness of this truth, then we see what manner of men we ought to be in our witness.

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were we never so many persons, as the Persons in the Trinity are three, and yet their nature such, as they cannot be but one, one holiness, one goodness, one truth, so all that worship him, though their persons be never so different, yet let their spirits be all one.

Hence learn 1. not to take up a truth upon a slight report; God would not commend any work of his to us, unless he had confirmed it by *three witnesses*, therefore believe not single reports; say not he was a good man that said it, for God would not put upon us any truth, but confirmed it by sundry witnesses, therefore believe not every report, though brought by a good man, let God be true and every man a liar, Rom. 3. 15. Jer. 9. 2, 3, 4, 5.

2. Hence learn that all that believe this divine testimony of the Son, ought to be compounded into unity; it was the last solemn Prayer that Christ put up for the Church, that they all might be one with him, as he was one with the Father, Joh. 17. 8, 9, 20, 21. where he useth this as a motive to God, to bring on all believers to unity, because he was one with the Father, and the Father with him, and therefore he prays that they be one, that hereby the world might believe that God had sent him; as if dissensions among brethren would bear witness to the world, that God did not send his Son to be our Saviour; so that by these dissensions, as much as in them lies, they make the promises of God of none effect.

2. They annihilate all the testimony that the three Persons give to Christ; this unity is that mark whereby all the world shall know them to be Christ's Disciples, and it is the main duty *Paul* calls for, Ephes. 4. 3, 6. from this ground, because there is but one God, and one Christ, and one faith, Act. 4. 31, 32. And indeed all the dissensions of the world have sprung from his ground, that they do not all worship one God, or believe not that God is but one: For what makes a man to fall out with his brother, but either his profit, or pleasure, or credit is conceived to be hindered, and is not this because I make my profit, or my credit my God? and so I had rather love God, and fellowship with his Saints, then lose my gain and plea-

sure, and so I am a lover of pleasure more then of God: Now the Apostle made account, if we profess but one God, the unity of God should be more powerful to make us one, then any thing in the world should be to make us two: so much dissension, so much atheism: if we suffer the world to be more mighty to make difference then God to make unity, we make God our Idol.

I JOHN 5. 8.

And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.

IN these words is described the testimony given on earth to the Divinity and Sonship of Christ.

Wherein 1. Their number, *Three*.

2. Their names, *the Spirit, the Water, and the Blood*.

3 Their consent, *and those three agree in one*.

Doct. *The Spirit, the Water, and the Blood, are three principal witnesses on earth, that bear witness to the Sonship of Christ.*

The three principal witnesses for he doth compare them to the three witnesses in heaven.

Quest. *What these three witnesses be?*

Ans. The Spirit partly breathing in the Scripture, partly in the conscience of men.

1. The Spirit breathing in the Scripture, for they in a special manner bear witness to Christ, and they are called *Testaments*, and indeed they are so far witnesses, as indeed no witness is to be received, unless they are

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consonant to the testimony of the Scripture, Gal. 1. 7, 8. and it is not *Paul*, or *Peter* that testifies this, but the Spirit breathing in them, otherwise Christ receives not the testimony of men, neither doth the conscience of a Christian receive the testimony of any living man, except he find the Spirit breathing in him; for let God be true, and every man a liar. This Spirit breathing in the Scripture is a Spirit of power, and perfection, the Spirit of power in the Scripture, is discerned partly in convincing men, Joh. 16. 9.

2. In comforting those that are dejected, Rom. 3. 16.

3. In strengthening us against temptation, 1 Joh. 2. 14.

Secondly, There is in the Scripture a Spirit of perfection, so that if we have but the testimony of the Scripture, what need we any further witness? 2 Tim. 3. 16, 17.

2. There is a Spirit that bea witness in our hearts, *that Jesus is the Son of God*, and that Spirit is the same that breathed in the Scripture, so that when we are hearing, or reading, yet the Spirit sets it home to your hearts and souls, so that we go home either convinced, or comforted, or strengthened to every good work and duty God requires; now this Spirit fully persuades us, *that Jesus is the Son of God*; for this Spirit goes beyond the power of all created things; for no created power is able to convince an hard heart, or comfort a dejected spirit, or strengthen us in our Christian course, therefore if we find a Spirit in us, enabling us to do all this, the soul rests satisfied without any need of further witness, *that Jesus is the Son of God*.

2. Water bears witness to this, by water some understand the water of baptism, and indeed that gives strong testimony to Christ, especially to them that are prepared to receive it: as in the Apostles times, when they were first brought on to believe, and then to be baptized, God then strongly testified this truth, so that after baptism, they were filled with much joy. and oftime, with divers gifts and tongues, Act. 8. 36. The water of baptism sent away the Eunuch rejoicing, see Act. 19. 6, 7. and though children be not capable of this mercy now in their Infancy, except by an extraordinary power, yet notwithstanding a Christian afterward, finds such virtue and strength from his baptism, that they see there is no water like it, but that there is a divine testimony in it: But because water, is but a representation of this Spirit, therefore by water here, may be understood the water of sanctification, the Spirit of God sanctifying and regenerating us; for besides the Spirit of God, that at some extraordinary times fills with unspeakable joy of the holy Ghost; there is also an ordinary work of God's Spirit, partly cooling, refreshing us, as water doth, partly making us fruitful in our Christian course; for those great enlargements of God's Spirit, do not always abide with us in that measure, but this water is a spring in us, continually affording us something which evidently witnesseth this truth, Tit. 3. 5. Joh. 4. 14.

1. In this water of God's Spirit, we find a power to cleanse us from our lusts, as running waters do channels and sinks, Ezek. 36. 26. when I see something in me conforming me to Christ, that water bears witness, *that Jesus is the Son of God*.

2. There is a power in water to cool and refresh us, when God sheds abroad his Spirit in us, there is something that cools us from the heat of God's wrath, Isa. 44. 3.

3 This water is of a mighty power to make us fruitful, Psal. 1. 3. A Christian watered by the Spirit of God, draws such moisture and life from every Ordinance of God, that he brings forth fruit in due season, according to his calling, Ezek. 30. 26, 27.

Quest. *How doth this water bear witness that Jesus is the Son of God?*

Ans. Because all the virtue that this water hath to cleanse, comfort, or fructify us, springs only from faith in the testimony, *that Jesus is the Son of God*, Gal. 2. 19, 20. let Christians observe, when we walk in the strength
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of our own spirits and graces, we shall grow so dry and barren, that not one good fruit comes from us, and this is because we suck from our own graces, and so spend on the flock, and so soon draw our selves dry, for want of living by faith in the Son of God; but a Christian that hath the water of Sanctification, let him do all in the Name of Christ, and suck life from him daily, and he shall be sufficiently enabled to every duty that God requires; we never found this water, till we believed on Christ, and this water no longer runs fresh and full, then we renew our daily dependence on him, and if we did so daily, we should always find it full Sea in our hearts.

3 Blood is a third witness on earth, and that is the blood of his sufferings that doth bear witness in our souls, *that Jesus is the Son of God*.

And it bears witness to us, 1. by pacifying our conscience, Heb. 12. 24. There is a louder cry in the blood a Christ to pacify our souls, then in the guilt of sin to bring wrath upon us, and this is so lively a testimony, that a Christian knows, were it not for the blood of Christ, all the things in the world would not have quieted his conscience.

2. The blood of Christ, purchaseth us to become his, Act. 20. 28. Now when we can find our selves the purchased ones of God, the peculiar people of God, this blood of purchase witnesseth, that it was the Son of God that redeemed us from the world and our own corrupt hearts.

3. The same blood doth therefore bear witness, *that Jesus is Son of God*, because it's a blood of purity, sprinkled upon every Ordinance and creature, every thing was purified by blood, Heb. 9. 19. to 23. this blood of Christ on every thing makes it pure, *To the pure all things are pure*, so that to such a one, his calling and company, his meat and drink do nor ensnare him, as

they do other men, set further off from God, but by this blood it is, and the blessing of God, that we are made more fruitful and serviceable to God, yea were it not for the blood of Christ, our very graces, would corrupt us, it's the blood of Christ that makes them all useful and savory, and turn to our good.

Doct. 2. *These three witnesses, the Spirit, the Water, and the Blood, are in one.*

Not only in this witness, but they are all one for one work; in the Original, εἰς τὸ ἓν εἰσὶν, that it, they all consent to one truth.

And 2. they all go an end and conspire in one work of our Redemption, so that one would be of small use without the other.

Use 1. To establish our hearts in this testimony, *that Jesus is the Son of God*, and so to believe it, that we may overcome the world; *In the mouth of two or three witnesses every truth shall stand*, how much more when *three in heaven and three on earth* testify the truth? and it's not enough to believe this upon the authority of the State, or thy Parents, or upon the universal concern of all men, for this is no part of divine testimony, and this belief will never help thee to overcome the world; and yet this is the testimony of the Church of *Rome*, but these human testimonies will beget but human credulity.

Use 2. For trial, whether you believe this truth aright or no; if your faith be built upon the testimony of *the Father, and Word, and the Spirit*, upon the testimony of the Spirit breathing in the Scripture, and in your own conscience upon the water of Sanctification and blood of Redemption, if your faith be built on these principles it will stand.

Use 3. Reproves that Popish doctrine that maintains a Christian can never attain to any certain assurance; Why, if a Christian have such six strong witnesses, and divine, as these, will they not breed more then probable conjecture? Six honest men's testimonies would breed more then probability; And do not God the Father, Son and holy Ghost breed assurance in their testimonies? It's a dishonorable thing to think otherwise.

Use 4. Of consolation to every one that hath found this witness in

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him, it is a ground of singular comfort to them, that that Jesus on whom they have believed, will help them to overcome the world.

Use 5. Since these three, *the Spirit, the water, and the blood*, do bear witness to the Sonship of Christ, it should teach us to keep our hearts and ears always open to these testimonies. Two things hinder this testimony, the noise and tumults of worldly businesses so fill our hearts and hands, that we cannot

hear what the Spirit speaks. Secondly, the noise of our lusts doth so fill our souls, that we cannot listen to the peace Christ's blood speaks, which speaks better things than our lusts; therefore we should always keep our hearts and ears open, and free from tumults of the world, or the noise of our own lust, that so we might hear what God's Spirit testifies to our own hearts.

I JOHN 5. 9, 10.

If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God, which he hath testified of his Son, &c.

HAVING spoken in the former verse, of the manner of Christ's coming, and of the witness born to it, *three in Heaven*, and *three in Earth*, in these verses he excites us to receive the testimony of those witnesses by four arguments.

1. *A minori*, *If we receive the witness of men*, how much more ought we to receive *witness of God*?

2. From the divinity of this testimony, whatsoever any of these six witnesses speak, their testimony is not from the earth, but from God, vers. 9.

3. From the nearness of this testimony, in the heart and conscience of every believer, and therefore the rather to be credited, because it is an inward testimony that we feel in our own hearts.

4. From the dangerous condition that such fall into that do not believe this truth, they do no less than *make God a liar*, for all these bear witness from God, and therefore if we believe them not, *we make God a liar*.

Doct. *The three witnesses in heaven, and the three witnesses on earth, are all of them divine and inward testimonies in the hearts of believers, and therefore far more to be credited, than the witness of all men in the world.*

1. That the Father, Son, and Spirit, are divine witness, if no question, for they are the three Persons in the Trinity, and yet are but one God, Deut. 6. 4. Therefore their testimony must needs be divine. But the question is, *How do these bear witness in our hearts to the truth, he that believeth hath all these witness in himself?*

1. The Father, as he is the Fountain of the Godhead, so his work is a work of Almighty power, and that is it which speaks in the heart of every believer, Joh. 6. 44. *No man can come to me, except the Father which sent me draw him*: as none come to Christ, *except the Father draw him*; so he draws none, but by the same power whereby he sent Christ, and that was by his Sovereign authority; if God should draw us only by the cords of men, we

should break through all, as the *Israelites* did, Hos. 11. 4. But when God shakes our hearts by an Almighty power, and lets us see the danger of our estate, and after enlightens us to see the ways of salvation, then he draws a man on to Christ: take a natural man, all the world cannot persuade him of his dangerous estate, but he is persuaded of his good nature and good heart toward God.

Secondly, If he be convinced of it, all the world cannot persuade him, that any promise belongs to him, and therefore here God must put forth an Almighty power of a Spirit of adoption, whereby he is brought on to believe the promises; before he had only an humane credulity, now he believes it from a testimony within himself, Joh. 6. 45.

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2. The Son of God bears witness in our hearts of the truth, by speaking freedom and liberty to our souls from the guilt of sin, Joh. 8. 36. *If the Son shall make you free, then shall you be free indeed*, that whereas before we were bound to our sins, and lusts, and waya, Christ comes and sets us free from all, so that now we serve not our selves or men, but the Lord Christ; & by this a Christian, knows, that surely *Christ is the Son of God*, that hath made me a son of God my self.

3. The Spirit bears witness to our hearts of this truth, by convincing our hearts of it, Joh. 16. 9.

Secondly, By working a Spirit of faith, and spirit of joy in believing, Joh. 14. 16, 17. Hence he is called *the consolation*.

Thirdly, By giving us a spirit to make us overcome the temptations of the world, and the lusts of our own hearts, 2 Tim. 1. 7. 1 Joh. 4. 4. and this testimony is divine.

1. Because it is the revelation and will of God himself.

2. Because it is above all human power thus to draw us and convince us, and strengthen and comfort us against all temptations.

From the *three witnesses on earth*, they likewise bear witness to this truth in our hearts.

1. *The Spirit*, that is, the Spirit breathing in the Word, hath such a mighty power to enlighten, and quicken, and strengthen a soul, that whatsoever the Spirit speaks in the Scripture, the same it witnesseth in our souls, 1 Cor. 14. 24, 25.

2. *The water* bears witness in our hearts to this truth, that is, the water of Sanctification doth so cleanse, and cool, and refresh the conscience of a man, and make him so fruitful in his Christian course, that it's plainly a divine testimony, it passeth all the power of the creature thus to pacify and

quiet the conscience; it is only the Spirit of God that is able thus to pacify a guilty soul; thus to cleanse an impure heart, and to make these dry barren stocks as we are, fruitful; this is a divine work of God's Spirit.

3. *The blood* of Christ witnesseth this truth to our hearts, by being sprinkled on our consciences, and so speaking peace to us; this is a divine work.

2. The same blood purifies every Ordinance, and creature; there would be no virtue in any Ordinance, nothing would do us good, but for the blood of Christ sanctifying it to our use: now this testimony is of greater force than the testimony of all the sons of men together. There be three things needful in a testimony.

1. That it be certain.
2. Evident.
3. Powerful and Effectual.

1. This divine testimony is more certain, than all the testimonies of the world, because God is greater in knowledge, and so knows more than men can.

2. Because he is greater in truth; men may err, but God cannot lie, Tit. 1. 2, 3, Rom. 4. 2.

2. This testimony is more evident; to make a thing evident is required.

1. *Objectum perspicuum.*
2. *Organum bene affectum.*
3. *Medium apte dispositum.*

Now God doth make this truth evident by the concurrence of all these.

1. He lets us plainly see the danger of sin, and the virtue and worth of Christ's blood; God reveals his Son to our hearts, Joh. 3. 12. Gal. 1. 16. so what the Gospel speaks of his Son, the same is plainly revealed, and so he makes the object perspicuous.

2. He opens the eyes of men to discern it, to long after it, to taste of his virtue and power, Act. 6. 29. 1 Pet. 2. 3. 1 Cor. 2. 14, 15. A natural man sees nothing of this work.

3. He clears the *Medium*, that is, the Word and Sacraments, Prayer & Christian

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Communion, so that whereas before we looked at them, but as beggerly rudiments of little power or worth, after God hath once enlightned us, we see the power and virtue of God therein, so plainly, as if we had been touched by the Sun beams.

3. This divine testimony is far more powerful than any human testimony, Heb. 4. 12, 13. 2 Cor. 10. 4, 5. The Ordinances of God are mighty and

effectual through God, so to change and renew our hearts, that no human power is able to reach them.

Use 1. To refute two doctrines of the *Romish Church*.

1. That the last ground-work of faith is resolved on the testimony of the Church: Ask them if they believe *Jesus to be the Son of God*, they say yes; ask them why? Because the Scripture say so: ask them, But why do you believe the Scripture? From the testimony of the Church, say they; so that their best faith is but human credulity: But ask a true Protestant, why he believes *Jesus to be the Son of God*? he tells you because the Scripture say so; ask him why he believes the Scripture? he saith, not because the Church believes so, but he believes it from a testimony within himself. What say they, you trust a private spirit of your own? nay his private spirit is common with him to all believers, ever since the world was, and that spirit is no other then the Spirit of God that breatheth in all his children. Besides, he hath other witnesses in his heart, *the Spirit, the water, and the blood*, and this is a divine testimony, greater then the witness of all the world; so that here is a double error of these; 1. In grounding their faith upon the Churches testimony. 2. In blaspheming the Spirit of God, for a private spirit, Fundamental errors.

That Doctrine that lifts the Church from Christ, and builds it on the testimony of the Fathers and the Schools, that doctrine overthrows the foundation; for other foundation can no man lay, then what is laid already, even Jesus Christ.

Use 2. Refutes a oother uncomfortable doctrine of the *Romish Church*, that teach, that a man cannot by divine faith have assurance of his estate in grace and salvation; for say they, all divine faith is general; thus he that repents and believes shall be saved, but I repent and believe, this say they, the Scripture no where saith: But say we, besides the testimony of the Scripture, there is a *threefold witness in heaven*, and *three on earth*, all witnessing this truth; now their testimony is divine, and therefore my faith is divine, and they all witness to this truth, *that Jesus is the Son of God*; and that I believing on him shall be saved.

Object. *All these are but suavis quidam motus, and cannot produce a divine faith.*

Answ. Cannot the testimony of men produce an human certainty, and cannot three divine witnesses in heaven, and three on earth, produce more then an human probability? If not, how doth the text say, *their testimony is greater then the testimony of men*?

Object. *How comes it to pass then, that this witness is so low sometimes, that we can hardly discern it?*

Answ. We so grieve the Spirit of God sometimes, that he delights not to reveal himself to us; but this is our own fault, that we so black this evidence, that we cannot read it; but if we maintain and cherish it, it will be a strong testimony to our souls.

Use 3. For trial of our faith; wouldst thou know whether thy faith be true or not? If it be, it will convey a double trinity of witnesses into thy heart, witnessing that *Jesus is the Son of God*, and that he *came by water and blood*. If you should resolve most men's faith into its principle, you should find most men's faith built upon antiquity, and authority, and universal concern of all men: Why, if there be the best grounds of thy faith, the Devil hath better grounds of faith than so; but if thou find this truth confirmed to thee, by the testimony of God's Spirit within thee, this faith will hold trial.

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Use 4. Of consolation to all them that find this witness in themselves: why, they have grounds of full assurance of their good estates, seeing they have such divine and certain witness of it, both in heaven and earth.

I JOHN 5. 10, 11, 12.

He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God, hath made him a liar, because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son, &c.

HAVING shewed vers. 6, 7, 8, *three witnesses in heaven*, and *three on earth*, that bear witness to the Sonship of Christ, vers. 9, 10. he stirs us up to believe this witness.

1. *A minori*, If we believe the witness of men, the witness of God is greater.

2. From the Divinity of all those witnesses in our hearts and consciences.

3. From the nearness of this testimony.

4. From the danger that follows the not believing this testimony, we thereby *make God a liar*, and he gives a reason of it, *because he believes not the record that God hath given of his Son*, and he shews what that record is, *this is the record that God hath given us of his Son*, even *eternal life*.

From the change of the phrase in this 10. vers. believing on the Son of God, and believing God, observe

Doct. *True faith that believeth God, believeth also on the Son of God.*

There in double phrase used,

1. *Credero Deo.*

2. *Credero in filium Dei.*

Credere Deo, is to believe that there is a God.

2. That every testimony God gives us is true, Act. 27. 25. *I believe God, that it shall be so as he hath said*, but to believe on God, or on the Son of God, is a phrase peculiar only to Scripture, not found in any human Writers.

Now to believe that there is a God, and that his Word is true, are acts of the understanding; but to believe on God, is not only an act of my understanding, but of my will; whereby I trust on him, and rowl my self upon him; it's expressed by laying a stone upon a foundation, 1 Pet. 2. 5, 6. Christ lies as the corner stone of his Church, every living stone lies upon him. depends upon him, and that is to believe on God, to lift up our souls, and lie on the foundation, Joh. 14. 1. *Let not your hearts be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also on me*; so much belief, so much less fear, and so much fear, so much less faith, Jam. 2. 19. *The Devils believe and tremble*; but he that believes on the Son of God fears not, this believing on him, is a resting on him, for many may have faith, and not rest on Christ, Isa. 30. 15. *In quietness and confidence shall be your rest*, there is no such rowling our selves upon Christ, so that as living stones we lie still and quiet upon Christ the corner stone, so that you cannot lift off a Christian from his foundation, except you overthrow the building. and this is, when a Christian is so established in faith, that all mists of doubtings are removed, and God's favour clearly seen, and then the soul sits down in calmness, and quiet, Psal. 3. 5, 6. and this hand of faith the children of God are wont to put forth in dangerous, times, Psal. 91. 12. *He that abideth in the secret place of the most High, &c.* Two things are in God, which are the secret place of the Almighty, and both expressed in the Name of the Lord.

Which implies, 1. his attributes of mercy, goodness, and patience, and the like.

2. His truth, Psal. 138. 4. *Thou hast exalted thy Word above thy Name*, the Word of God doth more comfort, and command, then any attribute without the Word; so that the Name of God, is the secret place of God in danger: A Christian runs to the attributes and promises of God.

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2. But if this were all, it would exclude from faith, all those whose faith is not grown to this quietness and rest, for many a day is it, before we come to such quietness and rest, but full of doubts and agitations are we: as if you commit such a sum of money to be paid at *London*, into a faithful able man's hand; I never doubt of his care or faithfulness, if I doubt of either, my heart is never at rest, till I hear how matters ga? no Christian ordi-

narily doubts of God's power and ability; but he doubts whether God be willing to put forth his power for my salvation or no; hence a poor soul hath many thoughts and cares what will become of his soul, yet there is some kind of saving faith in him that believes his ability, and makes him in some measure to lean on Christ, as Mark 1. 40. the poor Leper came to Jesus, and said, *If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean*, he believed his power, yet something doubts of his will; yet he comes to him that he might be willing.

3. There is a weaker faith then this, that is, a Christian comes sometimes to doubt even of the power of God, that he is not able to shew him mercy, and so doubts of it, as thus, because God hath said, *That they that have sinned against the holy God shall never be forgiven*, and they are afraid they have committed this sin, and they know God is not able to break his word, Mark 9. 22. There comes a poor man to Christ for help for his son, and said, *If thou canst do any thing, bhave compassion on us*; What saith Christ, *If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth? viz. that I am able*; why, saith he, *Lord I believe, help my unbelief*, he believed God was able to help him, and yet was not certain of it neither, and yet this faith procured this blessing from God.

Quest. *How can this be called believing on Christ, when the heart is not grounded on Christ, nor rest on him?*

Ans. As to believe on Christ, is to rest on him, as a stone on the foundation, so there is a believing on Christ, when the heart yet rests not on Christ, but rowls it self on Christ, and that may be done, while the heart is yet in motion. Resting is a settledness of condition, but rowling is an unsettled tumbling about, sometimes rowls one way, sometimes another; yet such a Christian believes on Christ, because he is rowling towards him, that so he may lie on him, Psal. 37. 5. *Commit thy ways to the Lord*, in the original, *rowl thy ways upon God*, lean thy soul that way, that is done by rowling thy self towards him, that thou mightest rest on him, Prov. 3. 6. *Trust in the Lord with all thy heart*, lean not on thy own wisdom; a man may be said to lean that way, whereon he is not yet settled.

Quest. *When is a man said to lean on Christ?*

Ans. 1. When a man is persuaded that God is able to help him, yet doubts of his willingness, and yet comes to him, leans toward, him, craves his help: as Mark 5. 25. there comes a woman to Christ with a bloody issue, she came, neither doubting of his ability, nor will, *If I may but touch the hem of his garment, I shall be made whole*, this was resting on Christ: But the poor Leper was not come so far, as to assure himself that Christ

would do it; but he believes his power, and useth the means to make him willing, *Lord if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.*

2. A man may be said to lean on Christ, when he believes not his willingness, nor yet confidently his power, and yet desires God to help his unbelief, this is a rowling upon Christ; *If thou canst do any thing, help us,* in Scripture phrase, this kind of rowling upon Christ, is called a coming to Christ; it's one thing to be coming to Christ, and another thing to rest on him, but yet he is a believer, if he do but come to Christ, Matth. 11. 28. this coming to Christ, is believing on him, for to such he promiseth that he will refresh them, and he refresheth none but believers, Joh. 6. 35, 37, 67. By coming to Christ, we believe on him, and *he that cometh to him, he will in no wise cast out;* if a man be but coming onwards, humbled for his sins, and persuaded
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that God is able to help him, if not, yet if he be grieved for his unbelief, and prays to God to help his unbelief, this is coming to Christ, that is, making towards him, and this is faith. Suppose a man tell you in such a field of yours is a rich treasure, if you believe the man, will you not go about to dig it up? but if you doubt of the truth, then you let it alone: so God tells you all the treasures of life and grace are laid up in Christ, this record God gives of his Son; now if we believe this record, we will use all good means to attain this eternal life, otherwise if we do not use the means to get this treasure, *we make God a liar,* as if his record were not true.

Use 1. It reproves the dangerous sin of such, as neither rely on Christ, nor rowl towards him, St. *John* tells us, *we make God a liar,* a fearful thing for mortal men, to make the God of truth, a God of lies; now if *we make God a liar,* we make him no God at all; if we live in unbelief, we live in Atheism; all such as find not their hearts resting on God, or rowling towards him, they *make God a liar,* and there is no truth in them, for if we did but believe that eternal life were to be found in Christ, we would not rest till we were assured of it: if we know of any Inheritance left us, we will rowl from one end of the land to the other to obtain it: so if we believed that the treasure of salvation were laid up in Christ, we should never rest rowling towards him, till we had got possession thereof.

Use 2. May stir us up never to rest, till we have brought our hearts to rely upon Christ, to lean on him, to rowl against him, if we do not this, we are Atheists; therefore as we desire to make God, a God of truth, let us never rest, till we have found our hearts relying on him, Psal. 13. 1. to 6. It was a notable resolution of *David,* in the midst of all his troubles, that

he would not give himself rest, till he had prepared an habitation for God, to let us never cease rowling against Christ, till at length we find our selves resting on him.

Quest. *What would you have us to do to bring our hearts to rely and lean on God?*

Ans. 1. Rowl yourselves to such places where you may have means of grace, *Faith comes by hearing*, Rom. 10. 17.

2. Rowl off your hearts from all your sins, come out of your sinful corruptions, rowl your selves out of your beds of security, 2 Cor. 6. two last verses.

3. Rowl yourselves so far from all worldly comforts, as that you set not your hearts on them, Psal. 62. 10. nor on great friends, Psal. 126. 23.

4. Cast your meditation on the mighty power of God, which is able to heal such untoward hearts as yours.

5. Use all the means you may, and endeavour with all the strength you may, that God may heal you.

6. If you doubt of his will, and are not confident of his ability, pray that God would give you a believing heart: *Lord help my unbelief.*

Use 3. For them that have rowled themselves on Christ, rest not in rowling, there is no rest to be had in rowling, therefore from rowling labour to come to establishment in Christ, and there rest, sit down in quietness and confidence; now if thou wouldst have a stone lie on the foundation, thou must cut off all the roughness & unsquareness, or else it cannot lie sure there is none but either he hath some doubts that make him uneven, or else pride that is a swelling, therefore we must lay down all our high thoughts and lie level with Christ, for he is meek and lowly: besides, all hatred and malice, is an uneven swelling in our hearts, and how then can we lie smooth in the building? bowls and swelling bodies will not touch but in a little point, smooth things lie flat: what swelling of heart we see in us either to pride, or covetousness, or wrath; if we would lie smooth and sure in the building, we must pare off all these over-runnings and swellings of our hearts, and so being made smooth and even, we shall lie sure upon the foundation.

I JOHN

I JOHN 5. II.

And this is the record that God hath given us eternal life, &c.

Vers. 7, 8. having declared the *three witnesses in heaven*, and *three on earth*, that bear witness of the divinity of Christ, vers. 9, 10. he exhorts us to receive their testimony, in these 10, & 11. vers. he tells us what this divine record is, which he presseth us to believe, and this record is threefold.

1. Of an heavenly gift, *eternal life*.
2. That this life is given us *by Christ*.
3. That this life is given only *to believers*.

Doct. *Eternal life is the gift of God*.

Here two things are to be opened, 1. That the life given us by God in Christ, is *eternal life*.

2. *That this eternal life is the gift of God*.

1. It's *eternal life*, 1 Joh. 3. 16, *Eternal*, *ab anti*, because it was given us before the foundation of the world, it's more antient then the world, or man's fall, and this was not only purposed in God's Counsel, but this was manifestly promised before the world began, Tit. 1. 2. The Trinity then concluded that the Lord Christ should be made head of all.

2. That all that *did believe on him should have eternal life*, therefore it's said, *He chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world*, Ephes. 1. 4. and therefore God choosing us as members of Christ, be promised to Christ, that he would give them all *eternal life*, 2 Tim. 1. 9, There was not only a purpose of God, but a declaration of the same to Christ; of this gift our Saviour speaks, Joh. 17. 6. Revel. 13. 8, and this gift is more ancient then our actual vocation, for a man is said to be given to Christ, when he gives up his heart and service to him, but this is given in fulness of time; but we were given to Christ, before we were called to the fellowship of his Spirit, and adoption of sons, Joh. 6. 39.

2. It's called *eternal life*, because the fountain and principles of this life are eternal; the Word of God was revealed from eternity, and of this Word were we begotten, 1 Pet. 1. 23. And as in seed there is something more material, something more spiritual; so in the Word there is both a material spirit, and there is the Spirit of the Word, Joh. 3. 5. Now we are born of the Spirit, and this Spirit in us is a fountain of living water, springing up to everlasting life, Joh. 4. 14.

3. The continuance of this life is to everlasting, *He that believes on Christ*, shall never die, but *have everlasting life*, Joh. 3. 36. Joh. 5. 24. and this eternal life is record which God hath given us of his Son, because the gift was given to Christ, and through him, as by our Head, is the life conveyed to all the members.

2. This life is a gift of God, Rom. 6. 23. All the life we have is God's gift: There is a fourfold life, and all given us by God.

First, The life of justification is a free gift, Rom. 5. 15. we say all dead in sin, now the pardon of all these is the vety life of our souls, Col. 2. 13.

Secondly, There is a life of holiness whereby we live to God, are for his ends, and walk by this rule, and this life is the free gift of God, Ephes. 2, 4, 5.

Thirdly, There is a life of consolation, which is called *a man's life*, 1 Thes. 3. 7, 8. *We live, if you stand fast*, he means a life of comfort, and this life is given by free grace, 2 Cor. 1. 4, 5. When God so comforts a poor soul, he is to be looked at as the Father of mercies, and God of all consolation.

Fourthly, There is a life of glory, which God hath given us by Christ, Rom. 6. 23.

Reas. I.

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Reas. 1. A minori, If our natural life be God's gift, how much more this spiritual and eternal life, Job 10. 12. *Thou hast granted me life and favour*, and he speaks of natural life, that is, thou in thy favour hast granted me life, and preservest it: Now if that be a gift of God, as it is, for it was neither Father nor Mother that could give us life, how much more is *eternal life the gift of God*. It was *Mephibosheth's* speech to *David*, 2 Sam. 19. 28. *What was all my Father's house, but dead men before my Lord the King?* so take us without God's gift, we were but all dead men before him. Now if this natural life be a gift of God, and that of his favour too; how much more is this spiritual and eternal life a free gift from God?

2. All our life must needs be God's free gift, by removing all that might concur to the making up of our merit of this life.

Four things must concur to merit, which are all wanting in this gift.

1. If you would merit, you must prevent the other in giving, but who hath given to God first? Rom. 11. 35. and if we give God but his own, how then do we merit? 1 Chron. 29. 13, 14, 15.

2. In the nature of merit is required, that what we give we should give freely, not of due debt, nor due recompence, Luk. 17. 9, 10. If we do but our duties, what do we merit? When we have done what we can, we have done but our duty, and how then do we merit?

3. What merits at God's hands should be perfect and pure, without spot, else it deserves nothing: Now our best righteousness is defiled, Isa. 46. 6. Exod.

28. 38. Our best offerings, if God did not accept of them in Christ's holiness, he might justly reject them,

4. In all merit it is requisite that there should be something proportionable betwixt the work and the reward; now what proportion is there between natural life and spiritual, and betwixt our life of grace, and the life of glory? Our sufferings, which are the highest part of our obedience, they are not worthy to be compared to the *eternal weight of glory*; indeed they work for us a plentiful recompence of reward, 2 Cor. 4. 17. But this is through the free gift of God,

Use 1. For reproof of Popish merit, if *eternal life* be the free gift of God, then the life of grace is not given us of merit, *ex congruo*, nor this life of glory *ex condigno*; if it be gift, then sure we pay no answerable price for it; there is no purchase on our part, but a gift on God's part, I would know whither this natural life, was given us of merit; who dare say, he hath merited to be a man, rather than a Beast, or a Serpent, or a Toad, and how then can we say our *eternal life* is of merit? Doth not every Christian freely confess at his first conversion, that if God should utterly call him off, and never shew him mercy, just and righteous should his proceedings be? And how dare any appear that dare claim peace and glory of merit? In the conciuance of his faithful obedience, who dare claim the least mercy *ex condigno*, how much less *eternal life*? Whereas *è contra*, God's servants do not think God beholding to them for their service, but they never, think themselves more engaged and beholding to God, then when he inables them to most service, they say with *David*, *Who are we that we should be able to offer this willingly*, 1 Chron. 29. 14. they know every jot of mercy is free grace, every sin pardoned is free grace, No malefactor on earth, but if the King send him a pardon, he acknowledgeth it to be of the King's free grace and Royal compassion: but yet the Synagogue of *Rome* will not acknowledge God's pardon to be of free grace; but God's people acknowledge they are all hut as dead dogs before God; and were it not for the free grace of God, they had never seen life.

Use 2. Of exhortation to all the sons of men, that never look after Christ, why as ever you desire to see life, and that life for ever, look up to God for it, to derive it from him, it is his free gift, *Every man is a friend to him that giveth gifts*, *Prov.* 19. 6. Shall we respect Princes so, that have, but earthly

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honours and profits to give, that we think it our happiness to do them any service, and shall we neglect God that hath such great gifts to give, even

eternal life, and a Kingdom of glory, it is God that gives us these natural lives, and that gives us power to get wealth, Deut. 18. latter end; nay it's he that gives life of comfort, and the life of justification, and holiness and also the life of glory, and shall we neglect this great life, and more respect the pure comforts of the world then him, in whose hands is our breath and life? *Skin for skin, and all that a man hath will he give for his life.* he means for his natural life, and shall eternal life lie by like a refuse thing that no man looks after.

Use 3. Of trial whither God hath given us this life, or no, and this we may discern for the eternity of the gift, consider whither there be any eternal life shed abroad in thy heart or not, hast thou found any pardon of sins, that whereas thou sawest thy soul as a dead dog for want of this life? Now God hath justified thee from thy sins; Why, the life of justification is *eternal life*, if he hath once pardoned sins, he will remember them no more, Jer. 31. 33.

Secondly, Hast thou found a spirit of life in thee to obey and serve the Lord, Rom. 8. 2, Why this is *eternal life*, that will never decay, Joh. 17. 3. hath God shed abroad the comfort of his Spirit, and the joy of the holy Ghost into thy heart, which is better then life; Psal. 63. 3. this is *eternal life*, which though it may be sometimes overwhelmed, yet it shall spring up again, as trees after winter, if thou find none of these works in thee, then thou hast no life.

Use 4. Of consolation to all those that have received this life, if we have found the life of justification in the pardon of our sins, the life of holiness in our Christian obedience; if we have found the lively comforts of God's Spirit: Why, know this is a life that will never decay, this is the record of God himself, that the *life which he hath given us is eternal life*, it was give us before we were born, and will he take it away when we are born? that which he gave us before there was a world, he will not take away, when the world shall be no more, it comes from everlasting principles, and therefore it cannot decay; if therefore we find this life in us, we may be assured, that God that hath given us this life, will preserve it to eternity, if it be eternal, how can it decay; therefore let us walk worthy of this eternal life, and pray with *David, Consider me Lord, if there be any wickedness in me, and lead me in the way everlasting*, Psal. 139. ult. Sinful lusts are dead lusts, and what hath eternal life to do with dead lusts, keep hands off from a sinful carnal life, but lay fast hold on *eternal life*, 1 Tim. 6. 12. get sure possession of it, and let neither Satan nor the world wrest it out of your hands.

I JOHN 5. 11. the later part.

And this life is in his Son.

Doct. 2. *The Eternal life that God hath given us, is laid up for us in Jesus Christ, Joh. 11. 25, 26. Col. 3. 3. Joh. 14. 6.*

This life is fourfold, of Justification, Sanctification, Consolation, and Glorification. All these are laid up in Christ, Jer. 23. 6. *He is the Lord our righteousness, Psal. 4. 1, 2.* For them altogether, see I Cor. 1. 30. *He is made our Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption.* Our Redemption not only from the guilt eternal and punishment of sin, but from all the afflictions both inward and outward that God's servants lie exposed unto, as for inward temptation in sickness, and griefs, &c. Col. 3. 3. *Your life is hid with Christ in God, It's sometimes under a veil of corruptions, sometimes of affliction but yet laid up in Christ.*

Quest.

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Quest. *How is our life said to be laid up in him?*

Ans. 1. Because he hath received it for us from God the Father to give unto us, Joh. 5. 21, 26. I Thes. 5. 9, 10. He hath appointed us to salvation, through Jesus Christ, that so whether we remain alive or die, yet we may live in Christ.

2. Christ hath purchased this life for us, I Thes. 5. 9, 10. the Father hath not, only appointed us life, but he hath appointed it through the death of Christ, Joh. 10. 10. *I am come that they may have life, and that they may have it in abundance,* and this is by giving his life for us.

3. It's laid up in Christ as one that prepares it for us, and so for it, Col. 1. 12. it's he that *makes us meet to be made partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in light,* that whereas before we were unfit, now he hath adorned us, and made us fit Spouses for himself, which he doth by turning us from darkness to light, by giving us of his Spirit, by dispensing himself to us in his Sacraments, and Christian Communion, wherein all the members receive nourishment from the head, Ephes. 4. 6. and as he prepares us for *eternal life,* so likewise he prepares a place for us, Joh. 14. 2, 3.

4. It's reserved to us principally in himself, notwithstanding the Communication of it daily to us, Jude 1, we are said *to be preserved in Jesus Christ to life,* all our life of grace here, and of glory hereafter is preserved in Christ.

First, Because all the claim of eternal life is laid up only in him, we neither desire or beg any pardon of sin, or any grace, or comfort, or glory, but through Jesus Christ the claim of *eternal life,* is wholly in

him; for though God hath promised all those kinds of life, it's only in Christ.

Secondly, As he reserves the claim of it in his own hands, so he reserves the security of it in his own hand, even as a Father doubting how his son will spend his estate, he puts not into his hands the writings or evidences, but he keeps them in his own hands; so God saw the life he communicated to our first parents, they prodigally wasted it away, and therefore never since would he put it into our own hands, but reserved it in the hands of Christ, Rom. 4. 16. *Therefore it is faith that the promise might be sure.* If our salvation had stood upon our own works, the promise had been sure only so long as we kept our obedience, but we are unsettled, sometimes enlarged, and sometimes straightened, so that we should have been at a stand oftentimes, nor knowing whether we had life or no, therefore he hath laid it up in Christ, that it might be sure.

Thirdly, The possession of this life is reserved for us in Christ, our justification is complete in Christ here, never increased, though the sense of it may; the first day we are regenerate, we are fully justified; the justification of all Christians is equal, though their sanctification be not alike, our life of justification is complete; but yet our life of holiness is but imperfect, *We know but in part, and believe but in part*, but it's fully laid up in Christ: so for the life of consolation, we have same beginnings of it here, Phil. 4. 7. 1 Pet. 1. 8. But sometimes all our comforts are lost, and where then lies it but in Christ; as the sap doth in the root in winter time, so that in him we rejoice always, Phil. 4. 4. and so our eternal life is reserved in him, Joh. 14. 2, 3 Ephes. 2. 5.

Fourthly, In regard of the wondrous manifestation of this life at the last day, 2 Thes. 1. 10. when he shall come to be admired of all his Saints, this life is now laid up for his Saints, which at that day he will dispense to his servants, to the admiration of all men.

Quest. *Why hath God laid up this life in his Son?*

Reas. 1. From the impossibility of laying up life for us in the law, or in the first *Adam*, Gal. 3. 1, 2. If the Law could have given us life verily righteousness had been given us by the law; No, the law that *Adam* had given him in Paradise could not have secured our life, but that we might forfeit

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it by our own fall, nor could *Adam*, himself give us this life, for in *Adam* all died, 1 Cor. 2. 22. & therefore it's Christ alone that hath restored us to life and glory.

Use 1. Hence learn the order of all that life, and grace, and salvation, that it derived to us, God did not first give us life, and then provide Christ to maintain it in us, but he first appointed Christ, that in him we might have life; Ephes. 1. 3, 4. He hath chosen us in Christ, Christ is the first fruits of all that life that we enjoy, he loved Christ, and in him loved us, he first gave him eternal life, that he might give it to whom he would, Joh. 5. 26. he poured this life first on his head, and from him this life runs down to the lowest skirt of his garment, to the meanest member that belongs to him, he poured on him the oil of grace, and from him it drops down upon us; he first crowned him with glory, that he might glorify us.

Use 2. It teacheth us the dead estate of all men by nature, if all our life be laid up in Christ, then such as want this life, they want pardon of sins, and want holiness, and want comfort, and want eternal life, Ephes. 2. 11, 12. Ephes. 4. 19. *We by nature are aliens from the life of God, strangers from the Covenant,* that as strangers neither meddle nor make with that which is none of theirs, so we have nothing to do with the promise, of life, till we be in Christ; let natural men go look at themselves as dead men, all their best comforts are but as the crackling of thorns, they may warm themselves a while with the sparkles of their own fire; but this they shall have at length, *They shall lie down in sorrow,* Isai, 50. 11. Nay by nature we have no hopes of eternal life we must be regenerate to this hope, 1 Pet. 1. 3,4.

Use 3. May teach all such as live in a dead estate, to look out where they may have life; look into your own hearts, there you shall not find life, look into the world, that is notable to give you life, but get Christ, and then you get life; as *Jacob* said to his sons, *Why stand ye gazing one upon another; have ye not heard there is corn in Egypt? Why, go up, go and buy that we may live,* Gen. 42. 23. So that the Spirit saith to us, when we find our hearts ready to starve for want of this life, for want of pardon of sin, of grace, of comfort; why stand ye gazing upon the profits and pleasures, and contents of this world, none whereof can give you life? do you not hear there is life laid up in Christ, go and buy of him: it's the speech of Wisdom, even of Christ the Wisdom of his Father, Prov. 3. 85. *Whoso findeth me, findeth life, and all that hate me, love death.*

Use 4. Of consolation to all those that have found their parts in the Lord Christ; if you have found him, you have found life, pardon of sin, peace of conscience, and life eternal, Rom. 5. 1. If you have found him, your sins are done away, as no Saint under heaven is justified more then you. 2. Having found him, thou hast a life of holiness laid up in him, so that though we want zeal, wisdom, patience, we may fetch it from him; and though we find our hearts sometimes drooping under heavy discouragements and afflictions, yet in him

thou mayst rejoice always; and what though our life here be poor and base, yet there is an eternal life laid up for us in him, *and when he appears, we shall appear with him in glory*, Col. 3. 3, 4. And the more we may comfort ourselves in that our life is not laid up in Satan's hands, for then we should never finger any of it; nor in our own hands, for we should lose it at every hand; but this is our comfort, that our life is laid up in Christ, and reserved safely for us, in him, and therefore it may teach God's people, that if our life be laid up in Christ, we must be daily spinning our life from him; what ever we do, let us do all in the Name and power of Christ, 1 Thes. 5. 9, 10. all the peace and comfort we find in ourselves or families, let us derive it from him, live not upon the stock of your own graces, but fetch your daily supply from him, Gal. 1. 20. *I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life I now live, I live by faith in the Son of God*, live upon Christ daily, fetch all your help, and comfort, and life from him, and for eternal life, seeing it is laid up in him, let us lay claim to it in his Name, and lay up the security of all our life in him, that so though it be unsettled, yet in him it may be sure.

I JOHN.

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I JOHN 5. 12.

He that hath the Son, hath life, and he that hath not the Son, hath not life.

THIS verse contains the *third record God hath given us of his Son*, and that is the subject of this *eternal life* to whom this life is given, and that is only to the true believers, *He that hath the Son, hath life, and he that hath not the Son, hath not life.*

Doct. 2. *Upon our having or not having Christ, depends our having or not having life.*

Prov. 8. 35, 36. *He that findeth me, findeth life, but he that hateth me loveth death.* Ephes. 2. 11, 12. *Without Christ we are aliens from life, and strangers from the Covenant.*

Quest. *Why doth our life depend upon the having of Christ?*

Reas. 1. From the insufficiency of all the creature to give life, Heb. 10. 1, 4. *For it is impossible that the blood of Bulls or Goats, should take away sin.* Besides, should we die for our sins our selves, yet we could not satisfy for our sins, because we could never overcome death, neither can our obedience to the law give us life, Gal. 3. 21, 23. *David speaks it fully in the Name of Christ, Psal. 22. 29. No man can keep his soul alive, he cannot keep natural life, much less a spiritual; yea Adam in innocency was*

taught to look for the preservation of his life out of himself, and therefore he was to eat of the tree of life, implying that the maintenance of that life he then lived, could not have been in himself, but he must eat of the tree of life, a type of Christ; How much less could *Adam* fallen keep this life in him?

Quest. *Why is the creature insufficient to give life?*

Ans. 1. From the preciousness of that price which was to be paid for our life, the master of our justification, is the price paid for our redemption, Psal. 49. 8. The redemption of souls is precious, and it is beyond the power of the creature, it was only the obedience of Christ as suffering to the death, that could give a sufficient price for us, and none but Christ could do it, because he thereby declared himself mightily to be the Son of God.

2. For our life of Sanctification and Consolation, that proceeds from the Spirit of God within us, springing up in us to everlasting life, Joh. 16. 7. Joh. 4. 10. Now it's only Christ that can give us this life, it's he that must ascend up to heaven, and find down the Comforter; it's he that sets open this living Fountain.

3. For eternal life that can only be given by Christ, in regard of the difficulty of it, above all human reach, no man is able to deliver his soul from a grave, Psal. 49. 7, 8. Death is the passage to eternal life; now for a man to die, and afterward, to rise up himself, is above created power, Joh. 11. 25.

Reas. 2. From the good pleasure of God that hath appointed, *That in Christ should all fulness dwell*, Col. 2. 9. Col. 3. 4. All the springs of life flow from him only, there is no deriving of life from any other fountain.

Use 1. From hence we may have an evident ground of trial, whereby we may know whether we be alive or dead; why, *if we have the Sun, we have life, if we have not the Son, we have not life*. For the understanding of this, we are to consider,

1. What it is to have Christ.
2. What it is to have the Son,
3. Shew some signs of life.

For the first we are said to have Christ four ways. 1. By way of service. 2. By way of purchase. 3. By way of Covenant. 4. By way of acceptance.

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1. By way of service or worship, a man is said to have God that worships God, as some Princes are chosen by the people's adoration, so by our adore-

ing of God, we have God, Exod. 20. 3. *Thou shalt have no other Gods but me*, that is, Thou shalt worship no other God's but me, if thou worship me, you have me, Psal. 45. 11, 12. *For he is the Lord thy God, and worship thou him*: we receive Christ to be our Lord, by worshipping him. This *Moses* seeing at the red Sea, Exod. 15. 2, 3. to exalt and worship God, makes him our God; the worship of God is performed in our minds, in our wills, in our lives.

1. In our minds; we then have Christ, when we have him in high estimation, Cant. 5. 10. *Mt Beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest of ten thousand who is like unto thee among the gods?* Psal. 8. 7. Exod. 15. 10, 11. when the soul prizeth Christ above all, then we have him; this is the difference between spiritual and earthly things: a man may prize gold, and silver, and riches, and yet not have them; but we never prize spiritual things, especially Christ, but we have them; and this is worship, for all worship stands in exalting another, and debasing my self: now if I give Christ divine esteem, it's divine worship; now when the soul thus esteems Christ as the highest, and debaseth himself to the lowest, it hath Christ. Joh. 1. 27. *Joh the Baptist* he so advanceth Christ, that in comparison of him, he thinks himself unworthy *to loose the latchet of his shoe*: no mortal man so great, but another may be worthy to loose his shoe; but Christ is so highly advanced, that we are not worthy to do him the meanest service; when a man's heart thus advanceth Christ, and thinks himself most unworthy of the meanest service about him, much more of having Christ himself; when once we have Christ in such high esteem, we have him indeed, and this high prizing of Christ may a poor soul have, when it can express little else; and this is an evident argument of our having Christ, when we can think the worst thing in Christ, honourable and precious; this was *Moses* his faith, that he looked at the very reproaches and afflictions of Christ as greater riches, then the treasures of *Egypt*, Heb. 11. 25, 26.

2. We honour Christ in our mind., when we esteem nothing more worthy knowing than Christ. 2 Cor, 2. 2. *For I am determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ, and him crucified*, Joh. 17. 3. and to know Christ, is to know the virtue and worth of Christ, as *Paul* knew him, Phil. 3. 7, 8, 9. that is, to esteem all his best outward privileges, as base and filthy in respect of the knowledge of Christ, an evident sign that *Paul* had him. In Nature we never have a thing, but we desire to know the worth and use of it, Luk. 14. 8, 9. so every one that hath Christ desires to know what the power of his death is, and the virtue of his Resurrection, and the fruits of his mediation.

2. In our hearts and wills, we have Christ, when we look at him as our chiefest good, that there is nothing in heaven or earth, that we desire in com-

parison of him, this is an act of the will and afflictions, Psal. 73. 25. Psal. 42. 1, 2, this is called hungering and thirsting after Christ; No hunger is satisfied, without eating of that we hunger after; so when a soul hungers and thirsts after Christ, give him pleasure and profits, yet they satisfy not, except you give him Christ; and this is an high point of worship, Gal. 6. 14. when our hearts are so set on him, that our chiefest care is to get him, our greatest grief to lose him, our chiefest delight in him; why, if we be thus affected to Christ, we have him.

Object. *The Church earnestly desired and sought and fought after Christ, yet found him not,* Cant. 3. 1. to 4,

Answ. She could neither have sought after him, nor desired him except, 1. She had had him,

2. When she sought him, and said, *She found him not,* she means, I found him not in that measure of peace and comfort, and fellowship I desired, but yet she had him, for she said, *She sought him whom her soul loved.* Secondly, Such a soul as it thus highly prizeth, and desireth, and hungers

after

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after Christ, so it debaseth it self the more we esteem him, the more we debase our selves, the more we love him, the less we love our selves; when Christ once revealed himself to *Job*, Job 40. 3. What said he? *Behold Lord, I am vile,* see Job 42. 4, 5. No soul that highly prizeth and affecteth Christ, but the more he disaffects and loaths himself, as unmeet to come into the presence of Christ, Isai. 6. 4, 5. *Then said I, woe is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips, for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts,* the more he sees Christ, the more he abhors himself, as an unclean and abominable thing, that if he could, he would go out of himself; this self-denial is the first principle in Christianity, Luk. 9. 23.

3. We worship Christ in our lives, by our obedience in doing his will, and by patience in suffering for him, 1. Our obedience in true worship of Christ, 1. When a man hath such respect to all God's Commandments in his heart, that there is not one of them, but he hath respect, and submits his heart to it, this is a principal part of God's worship, Psal. 119. 6. 2. When he hath respect to them all in his conversation; 2 Cor. 10. 4, 5. The Gospel of Christ brings every thought into subjection; now this is a marvellous worship of Christ, when a man hath not a thought in him, but it is subjected to Christ.

2. We worship Christ in our lives, by our patience in suffering, if the Lord call us to suffer for him, when we can sit down quietly, and rest well contented to endure his good pleasure with patience, this is a principal part

of God's worship, 1 Sam. 3. 18. It was a good testimony of Elies sincerity, when he heard of a woeful judgement denounced against him, *It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth good in his eyes*, we have the Lord for our Lord, when we give him leave to rule us as he pleaseth, and patiently submit our selves unto him in every thing, Job 1. 21. an argument we have God for our God, otherwise how should we complain and murmur at the instruments? Psal. 39. 9. Lam. 3. 29. The Church complaining of her misery, tell us the frame of her Spirit, such a time it is good to bear the yoke in our youth, she sits alone, and keeps silence, Psal. 62. 1, 2. Micah 7. 7, 8. This is a solemn worship of Christ; if God call a man to suffer for his Name divers evils, he is so far from being ashamed of it, that it is his glory and rejoicing; if any man suffer as a Christian, let him rejoice in that behalf, when a man is thus framed to obedience in doing, the patience in suffering the will of God, such a soul is a true worshipper of Christ, and by worshipping him, we have him; if contrary, we look at Christ as no such excellent thing but are ashamed of him; if we can look at our selves as great men in the world, and scorn to seek and mourn after Christ, when we will not be under Christ's yoke, but scorn to stoop to him in every thing, and by no means we will endure any hardship for him; why, then we do not worship Christ, and if we do not worship him, we have him not, and not having him we have no life.

2. We are said to have Christ by purchase, this is expressed partly in that parable, Matth. 13. 46. One way to have this Pearl, is to buy it, see Isa. 55. 1, 2. *Come and buy, yea without money; why, without money?* Cant. 8. 7. If a man should give all the treasure of his house for Christ, they would be greatly despised, Act. 8. 19. when *Simon Magus* offered money, for the gift of the holy Ghost, *Peter* tells him, *Thy money perish with thee*, yet many times without parting with money, we cannot have him, the holding fast of money oft-times looseth Christ; upon this ground the young man went without him, Matth. 19. 21. to 25. Upon the point of money Christ parted with the *Pharisees*, Luk. 19. 11, 12.

In three cases money must be parted with, else you shall not purchase Christ.

1. When the Lord upon some special command requires it, as he did the young man expressly; now for him to stck his money, for want of parting with it, he lost Christ; upon the same point *Ananius* and *Sapphira* lost Christ,

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because *they kept back some of the price*, Act. 5. 1, 2, 3, 4. a fearful judgement fell on them, to shew how dangerous it is to stand upon terms with Christ, in this case money must be parted withal.

2. When in times of persecution, a man cannot have Christ with peace and purity, unless he be willing to part with all for him, as sometimes the market goes higher, sometimes lower, but at what rate soever it goes, a Christian is resolved to take Christ at the highest rate; sometimes unless a man be content to be spoiled of all his goods, he cannot have liberty of conscience in this case, and in this case let money and goods and lands and all go, and suffer joyfully the spoiling of your goods, Heb. 10. 34.

3. When sometimes by laying out money, we may win Christ, as in case we want a good Ministry among us, and cannot have it unless we be willing to lay out money for obtaining the Gospel, and this he calls *sowing to spiritual things*, Gal. 6. 8. As a man by laying out money provides things needful for him, so when a man lays out for spiritual uses, he shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting in these three cases money must be parted with, and yet if you think money can purchase Christ, you are not worthy of him. 2. Christ must be purchased, by parting with all those strong lusts that keep us of from Christ, Isa. 55. 7. vers. 1. having bidden us *buy without money*, he tells us then what it is that we must lay out for Christ; why, *Let wicked forsake his ways, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, let him forego his secret and open sins, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will abundantly pardon*, upon this point sundry have broken off from Christ; *Jehu* was carried with ambition to rule, and when he saw it would hazard his Kingdom to forsake his golden Calves, he would rather part with God, then with his Kingdom, 2 King. 10. 29, 30. and therefore he is said, Not to regard the *Commandments of the Lord*, and theretore because he cut short hid reformation, and did it not fully, therefore v. 33. the Lord began to cut short *Israel* in his days, so that *Hazael* cut off many of the out parts of his Kingdom; if we cut short with God, God will cut short with us: so *Herod* heard *John Baptist* gladly and did many things, but when he would not cut off his lust of uncleanness, but rather cut off *John's* head that reproved him, it's said he added this above all his other evils, that he shut up *John* in Prison; they that will not be cut off from their sinful lusts, they cut themselves short of mercy; *Demas* a forward Christian, yet the love of the world so prevailed with them, that he fell off from the Lord, and embraced this present world, if we would have Christ, our lusts must be parted with, Judg. 10. 10. to 16. the people were in great distress by their enemies, they come and cry unto God for help,

God bids them go to the gods that they had chosen, to see if they would help them, *I will deliver them no more*, upon this they put away all their gods, and then the soul of the Lord was grieved for them, and he raised up a deliverer for them, when he saw they were willing to part with their gods for him, then God had compassion on them; so when men are willing to forgo their honourable and profitable sins, which stick as close to a man as his very heart, if God see men willing to send out their dearest lusts for him; why, then God's soul is grieved for them, Hos. 14. 3, 8. then the Church cries unto God, *Take away our iniquities and receive us graciously*; and that's not all, but they go about about to reform their ways, *Asher shall not save us, neither will we ride upon Horses*; Why, then vers. 4. *I will heal thy back slidings and love them freely*; the like means *Ephraim useth, Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with Idols?*

What saith God to this? *I have heard him and observed him*. When we begin to protest a solemn abandoning of all our corruptions, then God hears such a soul: many a soul crieth hard for mercy, *Take away all our iniquities, and receive us ungraciously*, and God regards them not, but when we not only cry to God, but set to in earnest, to turn from all our evil ways, and say, *What have I to do any more with Idols?* Why, then God hears and observes us; when we abandon all our lusts, then Christ shall suddenly come into his holy Temple.

3. We

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3. We must purchase Christ sometimes, by parting with all confidence in his Ordinances; we may soon lose Christ, if we look for life in them, and not in Christ, not that we are to reject the Ordinances of God, but account them a great blessing, and earnestly desire them, Psal. 27. 4. Psal. 84. 10. but yet we should not put our trust in *the Temple of the Lord*, Jer. 7. 3, 4. Part not with your fellowship in them, but yet trust not in them, Mat. 3. 9. Test not in the outward letter of any Ordinance, count all your best privileges, as *dross and dung that you may win Christ*, Phil. 3. 8. Many that have lived under great means, shall say at the last day, *Lord though hast eaten and drunken in our presence, and we have heard the preach in our streets*, but Christ shall say, *Depart from me, I know you not, ye workers of iniquities: trust not therefore in often hearing, or in the great means you enjoy; for what is Paul, or Apollos?* they are nothing, but *it is God that giveth the increase*, 1 Cor. 3. 6, 7, 8.

2. Sometimes we must be content to part with the very Ordinances themselves: if we cannot enjoy the Ordinances of God in purity, without sin, let us part with them all; so when the Priests could not enjoy the liberty

of their places in *Jeroboam's* days; except thty would offer sacrifice in their course to the golden Calves, which were the Image of the Cherubims, they left all and came up to *Jerusalem*, 2 Chron. 11. 14. where they might enjoy God's Ordinances in purity, and as the Priests did, so did the people, v.16, as Christ wisheth them, Cant. 2. 7, 8. which is spoken of *Jeroboam's* days; and so in case we cannot have the liberty of the Ordinances, without some impurity, which may defile the conscience, in this case part with all, for we come not to the Ordinance for the Ordinance sake, but for Christ's sake; therefore if we cannot have them without sin, in this case part with them.

4. We must part with all our good parts, and good gifts, and good natures for Christ, 1 Cor. 3. 18. *If any man seem wise in this world, let him become a fool that he may be wise*; we must lay aside all carnal wisdom and reasonings, and be content to be counted fools, that we may win Christ.

2. We must part with all common grace., which commonly choke all hypocrites, who having received some common gifts and graces, they think they have part in Christ, or else be would not have vouchsafed them such graces. Matth. 7. 21, 22. We see there they not only plead their privileges, but their gifts and graces, that they had prophesied in his Name, &c,' and so trusting in them, they fell short of saving grace. And it is a wonder to think what a strange change a Spirit of Prophecy works, 1 Sam. 10. 10. 1 Sam. 19. 20. As in a Scholar, when a man hath been given to loose vain courses, yet when God begins to enlighten his mind to enlarge his affection, and comfort his soul; 'tis a wonder to think what a change it will work in a Scholar; so that now he will leave his old vain courses, and compose himself to more edification and spiritualness in his teachings: why; such a change works such a confidence in him, that he thinks all the Congregation may sooner perish then he; and if Ministers may be deceived upon those common gifts and graces, how much more may people be deceived? *Herod's* joy, and *Jehu's* zeal, all these you may have and yet want Christ, a man may have these, and yet not prize Christ, nor give up himself to him, he may still reserve some lust which he savours; therefore if thou hast such common graces, observe, in the midst of those whether, thou cleavest not to some lusts, for so Christ shall tell such at the last day, *Depart from me ye workers of iniquities*: if thou been a worker of iniquity, all thy good gifts and parts will deceive thee in the end; but if in the midst of such gifts and graces, thou hast a care to keep thy heart clean, and doest favour no lust, and dost not place any confidence in these, but in Christ, thy case is safe; for this is

a true rule: hypocrites though they have many good common gifts and graces, yet they are given up to some sinful way, by which the world shall know

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what they are, by their fruits shall you know them. 3. We must part with all confidence, even in the saving graces of God's Spirit, trust not to them for justification, look not to be justified by them; if you think to be justified by your own works or graces, Christ shall profit you nothing, only by faith in Christ stands our justification, Rom. 4. 5, 8, 1 Cor. 4. 4. *I know nothing, by my self*, that is, wherein I have failed, *yet am I not thereby justified*, and this is the error of the *Romish Church*, if God give them any common graces, they look to be justified by them.

2. Trust not on them for the life of your sanctification, for though they be true parts of sanctification, and we may look at them all precious talents, yet if you shall trust your graces, and go about your performances in the strength of grace received, you will want Christ, the life and power of Sanctification; you may have Christ, and he lie like a dead Christ in your hearts; though you have saving graces, yet know that the life of a Christian, is not a life of graces, but a life of faith in Christ, Gal. 2. 20. If you would have Christ live in you, you must live by your faith, fetch all your grace and strength from him, Isa. 40. 30, 31. If we go about any duty in our own strength, we shall utterly faint; but if we wait daily upon Christ, we shall renew our strength as Eagles, we shall mount above all straights and difficulties, our graces are too weak to carry us through in our Christian course, and therefore live upon Christ daily.

3. We are said to have Christ by way of Covenant, Isa. 49. 8. Psal. 50. 5, 7. *Gather my Saints together to me, those that have made a Covenant with me by Sacrifice*, and then vers. 7. *I am God, even thy God*, and so the tenure of the Covenant runs, Gen. 17. 17. Deut. 29. 10. to 13. Deut. 26. 17, 18. This day thou hast anointed God to be thy God, *Sponsionem stipulatus es*, Junius reads it, When God's people give up themselves to the Lord, and yield themselves to what God requires, then God is their God, and they his people, 2 Cor. 6. 17, 18. This Covenant is made by Sacrifice, Psal. 50. 5. and he means that solemn Sacrifice they offered before the Lord, Exod. 24. 7, 8. wherein they promised before the Lord, to be obedient to all the Lord would command them, and on the other side *Moses* sprinkled the people, and said, *Behold the blood of the Covenant, which the Lord hath made with you*, which implies when we come to make a Covenant with God, we confess before God, that death is our just portion, and therefore we look up to Christ, that his blood being sprinkled on us, he

might impart life to us; this is to make a Covenant with God; for burnt offerings typed out Christ, the meat offerings typed out the people, giving up themselves to God, and when we do thus, God for his part promiseth to he our God, Gen. 17.7. *I will be thy God*, that is, not only a good Father, a good Mother, a good King, a good friend, but whatsoever is good in the creature, that he promiseth to be to us, he will be a good Father, and Ruler, and Friend, and Husband to us, partly in his own person, that if all those fail, he will be all these unto us, or else he will dispense himself so in those instruments, that we shall see God's goodness in every creature; when therefore we desire God to be our God, we desire him to do all that good for us that our estate in this life, or another world requires. 2. We on our parts offer our selves to be obedient to every command, and to expect from him all that goodness that he hath promised; and as we offer up our selves to God, so must we offer up all our children and servants and friends, all that are under our reach, we promise before God, that as much as in us lies, we and our household will fear the Lord, Josh. 24. 15. and when we give up our selves and ours to the Lord, God promiseth that he will be a God to us and ours.

There is a threefold Covenant that passeth between men in civil society in this world. 1. There is a Covenant between Prince and people, 2 Chron. 23. 16. 2. Between man and wife, Matth. 2. 14. 3. Between friend and friend, thus *David* and *Jonathan* made a Covenant together, 1 Sam. 20. 16. Now in all these respects God makes a covenant with his people.

1. He

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1. He makes the Covenant of a Kingdom with them, that as a King he will rule us and defend us, and we for our part promise to be at his command, and to be obedient subjects to him.

2. There is a Covenant of marriage betwixt God and his people, Jer. 3. 14. *Turn O back-sliding children, for I am married to you*, that as a wife promiseth to be for her husband alone, and he for her only; so doth the Church promise that she will be for Christ alone, and he for her, Hos. 3. 3.

3. There is a Covenant of friendship betwixt God and his people, 2 Chron. 13. 5. *Ought you not to know that the Lord gave the Kingdom to David, and his sons for ever, by a Covenant of Salt*, that is, a Covenant of friendship, such a Covenant as friends that eat salt together, make and it's a perpetual Covenant, 2 Chron, 34. 31, 32. and this covenant implies not only subjection and affection, but communication of secrets and counsels one to another, and to do all things out of friendship and love, heartily, and readily; thus God said of *Abraham*, *I know that Abraham will command his family to keep the*

way of the Lord; therefore saith God, shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do? If God be our friend, he will communicate many secrets to us, which the world shall not know of, Psal. 25. 14. And 2. he will counsel us for the best, Psal. 25. 22. so that in a doubtful case, he will still tell us what way to take, he will guide us by his eye, Psal. 32. 8. 2. We on our parts shall communicate all our counsels to him, that we shall do nothing, but we shall acquaint him with it, we shall acknowledge, Lord we know not what to do, but our eyes are towards thee, and withal we are ready to do whatsoever God commands us Psal. 119. 5. & 24.

Try therefore if such a Covenant have past betwixt you and God, have we for our parts given up ourselves to God, be sure God hath prevented us in all, this if there have no such Covenant passed between you and God, then God is not your God, you have not Christ.

Object. Who is there to be found, that so looks to his own ways, and his households, that he walks so strictly with God as you require?

Answ. True, they that do make a Covenant with God often break, even as often as there is a thought, or word, of action that was not from God's Word, or mouth, or counsel, but this is our hope, we have Christ for our surety of this Covenant, Heb. 7. 22. and he will make up all breaches; when therefore we break Covenant with God, let us renew our humiliations, and be ashamed of our breach of Covenant, and charge our souls for it, and acknowledge, that as we have broken Covenant with God, so might God justly break Covenant with us, and if we thus return and humble our selves, then God will renew his Covenant with us again.

3. We have Christ by way of acceptance, this is expressed, Joh. 1. 12. *To as many as received him he gave power to become the sons of God;* to received him, as divers express this place, is to receive him as a Father; as a King, as an Husband, but it may rather be conceived, that to receive Christ, is to receive him into an house or Temple, and this may be gathered from the precedent words, vers. 11. εἰς τὰ ἴδια ἦλθεν, εἰς τὰ ἴδια is meant his own place or own home, for so it is used, Joh. 19. 27. ἔλαβεν αὐτὴν εἰς τὰ ἴδια, *he took her into his own home, so as many as received him, as many as received him into their hearts, as into a Temple, when we thus receive him, we have him.*

Quest. How do we receive Christ as into a Temple?

Answ. Three ways, 1. When we prepare a way for him to come into his holy Temple, Mal. 3. 1.

Now what is this preparation? Isa. 40. 3, 4.

1. Mountains must be pulled down, that is, the lofty spirits of man must be pulled down, and that is, when we subject our selves at his feet, wil-

ling to be disposed and framed which way he pleaseth, and to do what he would have us do; if we would have Christ come into our hearts, he must not find high craggy rocky ways, but all must be laid level and even.

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2. *Every*

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2. *Every Valley shall be filled*, that is, every base earthly heart shall be lifted up to the high ways of the Lord, to mind life and heavenly things, raised up above earthliness and low things of the world, Psal. 24. 7, to 10. *Lift up your heads O ye gates, and be ye lifted up ye everlasting doors, that the King of glory may come in*; Christ will not descend into pits, but if your hearts be set on heavenly things, on God's favour and his heavenly Kingdom, then you are fit for Christ. 2. A man's heart may be too low through despair, many a poor soul, after his high thoughts are pulled down, he sinks down so low into despair, that he thinks no promise or mercy belongs to him; Why, this heart is too low for Christ, theretore it behoves a Christian to believe there is an hope in *Israel* concerning this; Christ hath had mercy on as bad as me, and therefore we will lay our mouths in the dust, till he shall have mercy on us; and if he offer grace) we are willing to receive it.

3. Crooked things must be made straight; there are in our hearts many turnings in and out, these must be made straight, it's when we look with a single eye, and are willing to be guided by a straight rule, and aim singly at God's ends, such an heart is fit for Christ, when it's cleansed from all by-pocrisy. 2. There is another crookedness of our hearts, when we shift off and cover sin, Psal. 125 5. but to prevent it, Christ will have us deal plainly, discover our sins openly before God, and then is Christ ready to come suddenly into his Temple.

4. Rough places must be made smooth, many a man's heart is rough and harsh, and bitter; why, God will have this frame of heart laid down, all bitterness, and wrath put away, and the heart made loving and meek; the Lamb Christ will nor rest in Lion's dens, therefore the Apostle bids us *lay aside all wrath and malice*; when our rough hearts are made smooth and amiable; why, then undoubledly Christ will come into his Temple. 2. When Christ is come into our hearts, if we would look to keep him there, we must look to it, that there be no common or unclean thing found there, 2 Cor. 6. 16, 17, 18. This Temple is an holy place, therefore put away not only unclean, but common things; all your affairs must be dedicated to the Lord, all your wealth and store, all your household and children must be consecrate to the Lord, Christ loves to lie clean, be dislikes even bodily slovenliness, much more spiritual defile-

ments. 3. To receive Christ into his Temple, is to look well to the charge of God's holy offerings; God would have every man in particular to take the charge of his holy thing on himself, and not put it off to others; let every one keep his charge, everyone offer up his daily sacrifice, and his service for the Sabbath; all God's offerings must be looked to, and if we do thus, God will rest in his holy Temple tor ever, *Exod. 15. 2.* consider therefore whether you have thus received Christ, have you found your proud hearts humbled, your base earthly hearts lifted up to God's ways, all crooked by-paths of hypocrisy and shifting put away; Do you find your rough spirits made smooth and amiable? Why, if it be so, then Christ is come, and when he is come, do you strive to keep your hearts, clean, and undefiled, and dedicate your selves and yours to God, you keep the charge of God's holy offerings, and set up his Ordinances amongst you; why, when we have received Christ, *è contra*, if we find it not thus, we have no Christ, and so no life. Hitherto we have heard what it is to have Christ; the second thing to be required after, is, What it is to have the Son, *He that hath the Son hath life*, it is not enough to have Christ, but if we would have life. We most have Christ as the Son.

Quest. *What then is it to have the Son?*

Ans. There are three things implied in having the Son, 1. That such as have Christ in truth, do not rest so much in having any of the benefits of Christ, but they do chiefly affect to have the Son himself; many professors sought after Christ for the loaves sake, *Joh. 16. 26, 27.* But Christ bids them

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not to labour for the meat that perisheth, but to labour for Christ himself, the bread of life; hereby *Peter* discovered the hypocrisy of *Simon Magus*, in that he desired the gift of Christ, but not Christ himself, and such gifts as might tend to profit; but *Peter* tells him, *Thy money perish with thee*, *Act. 8. 18, 19.* So *Balaam* wished, *O that I might die the death of the righteous*, *Numb. 23. 10.* but he desired not Christ, but his own happiness and freedom from hell and misery, and therefore what ever gift he had besides; as indeed he had a goodly gift or Prophecy, he never sought Christ in any of them. Nay further, a true Christian that affects Christ himself seeks him, not only without respect to profit or gain, or happiness hereafter, but even here in this life, in the Ordinances of God, wherein he seeks for help against his lusts, for increase of grace, for supply of comfort, be doth not so affect them, as to find Christ in them: When *David* fled from *Absalom*, and the Priests carried the Ark after him, as knowing, they should never meet with a Prince, that more favoured and upheld God's

worship, then he; *David* had the Priests carry back the Ark again, *If I shall find favour in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me back again, and shew me both it and his habitation*; but if he say, *I have no delight in thee, here I am, let him do what seemeth him good*; as if he had said, the Church shall not be so much prejudiced as to be deprived of the Ark of God for my sake, without which they cannot offer their solemn Sacrifices, nor find the presence of God, therefore he considers, that thereby God's Name should be dishonoured, and the Church wronged, and rather then he would do that, he would part with the very Ark, the presence of God, and his Ordinances, which yet was his greatest care and desire, *Psal. 27. 4.* Now this an argument of grace in sincerity, to be willing to part with the Ordinances, rather then have God dishonoured, and the Church prejudiced, This was *Moses* care, rather then God should be dishonoured by the Heathen, he would have God blot his name out of the book of life, *Exod. 32. 32, 33.* A true Christian prefers God's honour, above the pardon of sin, above the best graces, yea above salvation it self; if a Christian desire the Ordinance, it is that he may find the beauty and loving kindness of the Lord in them, *Psal. 63. 1, 2, 3.* if he desire the subduing of his lusts, it's not so much for his own comfort, as that the power of Christ might be magnified in him; if he desires salvation, if he desires gifts and graces, it is not that he might be made excellent; but that the grace of Christ might be magnified in him; if he desires salvation, it's not so much for his own joy and happiness, as that he may be with Christ, *Phil. 1. 28,* having a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better, *Can. 5. 10.* *My Beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest of ten thousand,* not only of persons but, *the chiefest of ten thousand,* benefits and privileges which God gives, pardon of sin, and grace, and comfort, and salvation itself, Christ is better then all these, and be that thus affects Christ, *hath the Son, and so hath life.* Grounds of this.

1. Christ must be so received as God gives him, but God gives us Christ first in every Ordinance: when *Philip* preached to the Eunuch, it's said *he preached Jesus to him,* *Act. 8. 35.* So in the Sacrament, you must first take and eat his flesh, and drink his blood, and then you have remission of sins, *Mat. 26. 26.* No gift of grace but is given through Christ, if it be lively and true, *Herod* received joy, *Jehu* zeal, *Ahab* humiliation, but none of these received life, because they received the shell and not the kernel, the casket, and not the Pearl, the gift, but not Christ; and therefore their graces were not lively. *Simon Magus* believed yet had no lively faith, because Christ was wanting: except we find Christ, we find no true grace, *Hos. 4. 8.* in me is thy fruit found, *without me ye can do nothing,* *Joh. 15. 5.* Hence let us gather an estimate of our selves, whether we have life or not, *If you have the Son, you have life,* try therefore whether you labour

not more for the loaves, for the benefits of Christ, then for Christ himself; if thou findest thou comest to the Ordinances rather to find Christ, then the pardon of sin, and comfort, and happiness, and salvation; if with the Church in the *Canticles*, thou seeketh Christ and not the loaves; if thou with her inquireth
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of the watchmen, where thou mayst *find him whom thy soul loveth*, if we thus affect Christ, we have the Son, we could never have sought him thus, if he had not first sought us, but *è contra*, if we have longing desires after pardon of sin, and after grace and salvation, those desires indeed are ordinarily sincere, but there may be an harlots affection in them; as an harlot she seeks an husband not for his persons sake, but for his goods sake, that her debts may be paid, and that she may be a sharer in his wealth, now she seeks him not for his ends, but for her own; so if a man shall desire Christ, that he may have his sins pardoned, and his conscience pacified, and seek not Christ himself; why, this is but an whorish affection; whereas one that loves her husband, she will have him though she have but the bare man, though she beg with him; so one that truly loves Christ, he would be glad and think himself happy to have him, though he should never see good day after, never find peace or quiet after, *Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is nothing on earth, that I desire in comparison of thee.*

This will exclude from having of Christ, 1. All such as are so far from seeking Christ himself, that they do not seek the benefits of Christ, they look at grace and Christian duties as melancholy wearisome things, for pardon of sins, they never look after it, and for heaven they hope they shall do as well as others; why, these men they will neither have Christ, nor any thing of his, Psal. 11. 11.

2. This excludes such from having Christ have more desire of his benefits than Christ himself, pardon of sin, and grace, and peace or conscience, and comfort that they look after, but Christ they forget; why, as yet our seeking is nor sincere: if a woman perceive that her love seeks more for wealth and dowry, then her person, no wonder, if she hold off; so if Christ find we come to him, and seek for pardon of sin, and grace, and peace, more then for himself, no wonder if he keep off, and hide himself from us, because this may come from self-love, from respect to our own good, and yet nature teacheth us not to seek such things, and those desires are ordinarily good beginnings; for indeed Christians at first are full of self-love, but yet Christ will never fully reveal himself, till we seek his Person rather than his gifts, therefore first labour to get Christ, and he will bring, all these priviledges with him, Rom. 8. 32. seek

him chiefly, not his gifts; you must first know Christ will be more loved for his own sake than his gifts, before he say to you as to the Church, Cant. 2. 14. *O my Dove, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice, for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance lovely*, before he thus manifests himself himself to thee, he will make thee willing to seek him as thy head and husband, as the most wise, the most beautiful, the chiefest among ten thousand; and let but thy desire be towards him, and his desire will be towards thee, Hos. 3. 3. Stand not upon dowries, take him without Feoffments, for better, for worse: and if you thus take Christ, and choose his Person in the first place, then all his benefits and priviledges become yours, 2 Cor. 3. 22, 23. 2. A child of God is said to have the Son, when he hath the Spirit of the Son, 2 Cor. 13. 17. Having spoken before of a Spirit of ministration and grace; why, saith he, *the Lord is that Spirit*, not only because he is the giver of it, but there is a secret union betwixt Christ and his spirit, so that if you have the one, you have the other, Rom. 8. 9. If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is non of his, Gal. 4. 6. he that hath the Son, hath the Spirit of the Son, and is made conformable to his Image,

There is a twofold Spirit whereby we are knit to Christ, and Christ to us.
1. A Spirit of union. 2. A Spirit of liberty.

1. He that hath fellowship with Christ, hath a Spirit of union, whereby he is made one with him, Joh. 17. 21. It's the prayer of our Saviour for all believers, that they all may be one, *As thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one is us*, Thou in me by thy Spirit, and I in them by the same spirit, hence it is, *That of his fullness we have received grace for gracer*, Joh. 1. 16. Rom. 8. 29 *We are predestinate to be made like to the Image of Christ*. There is a threefold

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and likeness betwixt Christ and us, that is wrought by the Spirit.

1. We are like him in his nature, 2 Pet. 1. 4. by the precious promises, we are made partakers of the divine Nature, so that we are meek as he was, lowly as he was, innocent and harmless as he was; the Spirit of God stamps the same Image on us that was in Christ, Joh. 1. 16. Hence it is, that these that have Christ, they reason from Christ's nature to theirs, and from their nature to Christ's, 2 Cor. 1. 17, 18, 19. *Paul* had sometimes sent to them, that he would come to them as he passed by into *Macedonia*, but neither in his going nor his return did he come to them, therefore they accuse him of levity and inconstancy; *Paul* excuseth this and he pleads from the nature of Christ; for the Son of God, Jesus Christ that was preached among you by us, was not yea and nay, but in him was yea; Why, what's that to him? Yes, look as Christ is yea and amen, the faithful witness, that what he speaks, he will perform, so make account that Christ hath poured the same Spirit on us, that our words

likewise are yea and amen, had not God's providence hindered it; there is such a participation of the divine nature, that the nature of Christ, the nature of the Gospel, and the nature of a Christian, all of them answer one another; the same Spirit that made Christ yea and amen, faithful and true, hath made the Gospel, and so the same Spirit in God's people makes them true and faithful, so that look what they say, their hearts go with it, and if God's providence hinders not, they will perform their word.

2. There is a conformity in his offices, he hath made us Priests, Kings and Prophets to his Father, Rev. 1. 6, Kings to over-rule our lusts, to overcome the world, anointed with a royal Spirit, although not yet invested with full glory; Priests, to offer sacrifices of prayer, of a broken spirit, Psal. 51. 12, Sacrifices of righteousness, Psal. 4. 5. and to sacrifice our lives for Christ, Phil. 2. 17. so he hath made us Prophets to God, Act. 2. 17. he hath poured on us the Spirit of prophecy, poured, not dropped sparingly, but poured on us abundantly, hence it is that a Christian understands many secrets of God's will, Psal. 25. 14. many hidden mysteries of the Scripture, so that he is bound to see a secret providence of God, guiding him in his way.

3. There is a conformity in their estate: our Saviour in this world went through a double estate, 1. Of humiliation, 2. Exaltation, and in the most deep passions he went through, when he was excommunicated by the Church, hated, crucified, yet even then he mightily shewed forth his divine power; hence he is said *to triumph openly on the cross*, Col. 2. 17. and such is a Christian's estate. Psal. 34. 19. *Many are the afflictions of the righteous*, there is his humiliation, *but the Lord delivers him out of all*, there is his exaltation, for by those deliverances he makes them glorious, Psal. 149. 4. *He will beautify the meek with salvation*; nay a Christian in the midst of all his worldly comforts, he gets loose from them, so that you may see those are not the things he chiefly looks after, if he have great parts and gifts, yet they are clad with a Spirit of Christ crucified, Gal. 6. 29. their outward deportment is but mean and homely, yet in their outward meanness and baseness, you may discern the power of Christ crucified, 2 Cor. 13. 4. *Since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me, as he was crucified through weakness, and yet liveth in me by the power of God*, even so we are weak with him, that is, in outward shew; why yet as Christ when he was most debased, shewed forth most power; so a Christian in his greatest debasements and weaknesses, God's power is most magnified in him, never more glorious then when most debased. Hence those strange phrases, *We are dead with Christ*, Col. 2. 20. *and risen with Christ*, Col. 3. 1. *crucified with Christ*, Rom. 6. 6. that is, by the same Spirit of Christ that is in us, we are so knit with him, that we are made of the same state with him; that as he was weak and base, and yet glorious; so are we.

2. There is a Spirit of liberty; nothing better expresseth the temper of the Son, Christ the Father's image, then a Spirit of liberty, 2 Cor. 3. 17. *Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty; If the Son shall make you free, then you are free indeed*, Joh. 8. 36. His liberty is a real liberty: and this is

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1. Liberty from the fear of sin, of hell, of the grave, & of all his enemies, he is not afraid like a slave that is not in a spirit of liberty, Rom. 8. 15. Heb. 2. 15. A Spirit of liberty is a Spirit of freedom from all fear, Luk. 1. 74, 75. Such a man is not afraid what flesh can do unto him, Psal. 3. 5, 6. *I will not be afraid though ten thousand should compass me about, I will lie me down and sleep quietly*, the fear of men shall not break his sleep, so Psal. 56. 3, 10, 11. this holy tranquillity frees us from all fears, and this liberty is proper to a son, he fears not others, so he may please his Father; he knows his Father will give him protection, and provision, Rom. 8. 37.

2 He hath a liberty from the dominion of sin, sin hath not that power to carry him captive, Rom. 6. 4. Rom. 8. 2. *The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death*, that is, the Spirit of grace that commands and rules me like a law, hath freed me from the law of sin and of death, that a Christian is now but a beginner of sin, sin hath not that power over him that formerly it had; time was when I could not break off from evil company, but now *the Law of the Spirit of life hath set me free from them*; many a valiant spirit fears not death; many a soldier ventures upon a Canon's mouth, but yet I presume he is captivate to many a base lust; but a Christian is not only freed from the fear, but the bondage of sin.

3. He hath liberty from being servant unto men, 1 Cor. 7. 23. *Ye are bought with a price, be not servants of men*: he doth not mean that they should shake off all obedience and subjection; but though they should be subject to their Masters, yet now they should not serve them in a slavish manner, but with freedom of Spirit in obedience to Christ, heartily and readily, 1 Cor. 7. 22. he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freeman, he doth his Master's work with a free spirit, and with all he doth the work of God's service, with much more freedom, and when they come to their own liberty, they will be inclined to good duties; strive to gain opportunity for prayer and reading, and hearing though they have much more outward liberty, yet they have far less inward,

2. The Spirit of God that sets me free from the service of men, makes me free to every duty of God, to have free access to him, the Spirit that set me at liberty from Satan, will make me run the ways of God. Commandments with an

enlarged heart, Psal. 119. 32. Psal. 100. 3. God's people are a willing people, and as he is free from the bondage of men, so he is Lord over them, he can make them all serve him; Gen. 25. 3. God told Rebecca there were Nations in her womb, and the elder should serve the younger, how was that fulfilled, seeing *Jacob* calls *Esau* Lord, and himself his servant? Gen. 33. Why, as some say, that must be understood of the Nations, not of the persons; but it may be *Esau's* Lordship and roughness did *Jacob* more real service then ever *Jacob* did him, whence was it that he went out of his Father's house, met with so glorious a vision the first night? whence was it that he made such a vow to God, that if the Lord would be with him, and bless him in that country, then the Lord should be his God? whence was it that he returned with such a blessing? whence was it that he so wrestled with God and obtained a blessing? was not this from *Esau's* bitterness, and for fear of him? which shews that every fury and persecution of wicked men, do Christians the truest service, as it was with the Tyrant. in *Syria*, and *Egypt*, all the tyranny did but purify the people of God, and make them white, Dan. 11. 35, 46, they are but as scullions to scour and rinse God's people, they are but as servants or like housewives, they lay them in soap, and dung, and sharp lee, but it is but to make them white.

Try therefore whether you have the spirits of sons, Do you find in you the nature of Christ? do you find your selves invested with a Kingly Royal spirit? do you find in you the spirit of prophecy? do you find in you the state of Christ, that in the meanest condition you have a mighty power of Christ breathing in you? why, then, it is evident you have the Spirit of God, but if we find we are not like him in his nature, we cannot pray for prophecy, then we have none of God's Spirit.

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Do we find our selves still in bondage to sin, lying under the fear and dominion at it? then we have not God's Spirit in us, God's Spirit would set us free from all bondage.

3. We are said to *have the Son*, when we have Christ not only for our Saviour, but for our Prince, Act. 5. 31. *Him hath God exalted to be a Prince and Saviour*. To whom he is a Saviour, to them he is a Prince. It were a dishonour to God to save those whom he cannot rule, to deliver them from sin and Satan, and yet leave them in their sins; God hath sent his Son not only to save but to rule us.

Two things here are to be opened.

1. That he that hath Christ, hath him for his Saviour.

2. That that hath him for his Saviour, must have him for his Prince likewise.

We are ready commonly to conceive, that everyone would have Christ for his Saviour, but indeed they are but rare that would have a Saviour Indeed. To have Christ for our Saviour implies two things.

1. He that hath Christ for his Saviour, looks up to him for salvation in all his distresses. Isa. 45. 22. *Look unto me, and be saved, all ye ends of the earth.* he that looks for any other Saviour, denies Christ. He that hath Christ for his Saviour, in what coasts soever of the world he lives, he must look up to him for salvation; as they that looked towards the Temple, and their petitions heard: So whatsoever we are, in what condition soever, we must look towards Christ, and long after him for salvation, not only from God's wrath, and hell, but even from whatever distresses we are in, torment of conscience, sickness, imprisonment; we must wait upon him for deliverance. Isa. 8. 17. *I will wait upon the Lord that biddeth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him.* The Church was then in grievous distress, both in regard of sin and calamity, there were none for her to look unto, either Princes or Priests, to redress the matter, all had been in vain; but though there was no hope in them, yet *I will look unto the Lord, and wait on him that hideth his face,* Isa. 17. 7. Speaking of such times wherein only a few gleanings should be left. *In that day shall a man look to his Maker, and his eyes shall have respect to the holy one of Israel.* We can cast respect or disrespect upon one with our eye, whilst our eyes are upon the creature, and turned away from God, we disrespect God; but when our eyes are toward him, set on him, we shew respect to God, and this man hath Christ for his only Saviour. This was *Jehoshaphat's* practice, 2 Chron. 20. 12. Being in a great fear of a mighty host that came against him, he set himself to seek God, and prayed, *O Lord, we know not what to do, but our eyes are towards thee.* This having our eyes towards Christ in evil times, argues that we have Christ for our Saviour. Psal. 121. 1. *I will lift up mine eyes to the hills, from whence cometh my help.* And he means the Hills of Zion and *Moriah*, where the Temple and Ordinances were. *My help cometh from the Lord who made heaven and earth.* *Jonah* went away from God when he went to *Nineveh*, he sent him to *Nineveh*, but he fled to *Tarshish*; and therefore, because he would not have God for his Prince to rule him, he would not be his Saviour, but sent out a mighty tempest against him, and the most unruly creature of the Sea to swallow him up; and when he had saved him, then *Jonah* out of hopes prays out of the Whale's belly, *If I am utterly cast out of his sight yet I will look again towards his holy Temple,* Jonah 2. 4. His heart had respect to it, though he could not tell which way it stood, and in that he had respect to

Christ, and therefore the Lord sent him a glorious deliverance, *vers.* 14. If you have Christ for your Saviour, your eyes will be towards him in every distress.

2. He that hath Christ for his Saviour, not only looks for salvation by him from all his distresses, but from all his sins likewise, *Psal.* 130. 7, 8. *He shall redeem Israel from all his sins*, and therefore his name is called *Jesus*, *Matth.* 1. 21. *Hos.* 14. 2. They said unto God, *Take away all iniquities, and receive*

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us graciously. They desire God not only to take them away, that is, to pardon them, but to heal them, for so God understands them, *vers.* 14. *I will heal your backslidings.* We think it a common thing for men to desire Christ to be their Saviour, but how few are there that desire to be redeemed from all their sinful ways? How many are there whom Christ would lovingly gather, but they will not be gathered? *Mat.* 23. 37. And if God speak so of his Church, wonder not if he say so of *Babylon*, *he would have healed her, but she would not be healed*, *Jer.* 51. 9. God looked that his people, living amongst them 70 years, they should be brought on, but none were, or very few, therefore God bids his people, *Come out from amongst them*, *Jer.* 24. 25. God complains of the evil lives of his people, that they were like wild asses snuffing up the wind at their pleasure; and when he called to them, *Withhold thy foot from being unshod*; they said desperately, *No, strangers have I followed, and after them will I go.* How do such men look for Christ to be their Saviour, when they will not be delivered from their sins? when Christ comes to cast out their sins, they are ready to cry as the man possessed with the devils, *Art thou come to torment us before our time?* Pulling away their sins from them, is a grievous torment to their souls; do but take away their hopes of some gainful sin, and they are enraged, *Act.* 16. 19.

2. If we have Christ for our Saviour, we must have him for our Prince, *Act.* 5. 31. that is, we must resign up our selves, and submit our selves to him, *Isa.* 9. 6. *Unto us a Son is born, to us a child is given.* And why, how shall I know whether the Son be given me? Why, *the government is upon his shoulders.*

Two ways we are said to have Christ for our Governor.

When we resign up our selves in obedience to him, when we have not a thought within us but is brought into subjection to the Lord Christ, *2 Cor.* 10. 4, 5. *Prov.* 12. 5. The thoughts of the righteous are right thoughts, coming from a right ground, guided by a right rule, tending to a right end.

Obj. *But, whose heart is so right, that every thought is subdued to the will of Christ? Who is there but have many vain thoughts lodge in them?* Jerem. 4. 14.

Ans. He that hath Christ for his Prince, will not have a vain thought lodge in him; indeed, evil thoughts may rush in upon him, as sturdy beggars into an house, and they would be Masters, and have every one tend upon them; but a Christian, he suffers them not to lodge there, he rests not till they be thrown out of doors, they find no welcome in his heart: Indeed, a Christian man may have many evil thoughts within him, but yet here is the difference between him and the carnal man, a wicked man that hath not Christ, he hath not one good thought in him, the frame and inclination of his heart is wholly evil, *Gen. 6. 5.* Or if good thoughts or motions be cast in to stir him up to repentance; why, they suffer them not to lodge there, but they bid them come another time; whereas a good man, if a good thought come, it's most welcome to him, he entertains it, and cherisheth it, even as a Messenger sent from his Prince.

2. If an evil thought come into a natural man's heart, it's connatural to him, it finds lodging and welcome there, *Eph. 4. 18, 19.* But a godly man, if an evil thought come, he looks at it as an enemy and traitor, he calls to all the family, to all the faculties of the soul to help against it; and if he be not strong enough, he calls to all his Christian friends, but especially he calls to his Prince to deliver him, even as a good Subject that hath a Traitor got into his house, that plots treason against the King, and spoils his goods, and he is not able to get rid of him, he secretly sends to his Prince for aid. This course *David* took, *Psal. 139. 23. Search me, O Lord, and try me.* He would have God to make privy search, and find out the frame of his heart; unlike to them, *Isa. 29. 15.* And then *vers. 24. See if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the*

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way everlasting. And if he would, have God to be ruler over his thoughts, then much more of his words and actions. Now there are some men whose hearts are like the high-way ground, let evil thoughts come and go at their pleasures, they will not be subject to Christ. *As for this man, we will not have him rule over us,* *Luk. 19. 14.* What say they? *Thoughts are free, and our tongues are our own, Who shall control us?* Whereas a Christian would have God rule all his thoughts and words; nay, a carnal heart is so wonderfully desperate, that they will not only be servants to God, but they will make God servant to them. *Isa. 43. 2. Thou hast made to serve with thy sins, and wearied me with thine iniquities.* They make God to serve a wear-

some service, that as a cart is pressed under the sheaves, so is God under them; they load God's patience with one sin after another, pitch one sin upon another, till he be burdened with our sins; and what parts, and gifts, and liberties God gives them, they abuse to God's dishonour: And is not this monstrous rebellion, for poor creatures to make God serve a wearisome service? Wonder not therefore if he call *rebellion as the sin of witchcraft*, 1 Sam. 15. 26. As a Witch gives her soul to the devil, to have her own liberty for a while, so rebellious sinners are at league with the devil and hell, to serve their lusts whilst they live.

2. As a witch makes the devil serve her all her life, but at death she serves the devil: So God shall serve them all their lifetime, but at death they would serve God, and then they will do him the best service they can. Why do you think God will accept our service when we die, when we have made him serve us all our life time?

2. To have Christ for our Prince, is not only to serve him, but we must give him Princely service, such service as becomes so royal a Prince, Matth. 1. 8, Serve not him with blind and lame sacrifices, but with the best and fattest; crucify your fattest and dearest lusts to him, let him have your best parts, and best affections; righteous *Abel* brought to God the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof, Gen. 4. 4. So let God have our first years, and the strength of your affections; give not him your old decrepid age, 2 Sam. 24. 24. *I will not offer to God* (saith *David*) *that which cost me nothing*. *Araunah* indeed gave them all freely to the King, like a King. If a man give to a King, he must give as to a King, he must give as a King, *Nay*, (saith *David*) *if you as a King give those things to me, must not I then who am a King to that King of Kings?* Let God have all you have, give up your selves and all your families to him.

For application.

Would you know then whether you have life? Why, if you have Christ, you have life; and if you would know whether you have Christ or no, you must consider, God hath exalted him to be both Saviour and Prince. Dost thou find thy heart looking up to him for help in all thy miseries? Then thou hast him as a Saviour. If in cases when thou knowest not what to do, yet thy eyes are towards him? Why, this very looking towards him, is of an healing nature, as was the looking towards the brazen Serpent, Numb. 21. 9. The Conies are but a feeble folk, and yet they make their nests in a rock: so, it's good for us in our distresses, to have recourse to the rock that is higher than we.

Again consider, are there any lusts in us that we desire to be spared in, and would not be saved from? Why, then we have not Christ for our Saviour. So consider, Have we Christ for our Prince? Do we subject every thought unto him? Dost thou not entertain an evil thought? if they rush in upon thee, dost thou strive to thrust them out? Then thou hast Christ for thy Prince. But if thou findest evil thoughts in thy heart, and sufferest them to rest in thee, Dost thou make God to serve a wearisome service from month to month, and year to year, and over burthen his patience and mercy? Then Christ is

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not thine. If thou lookest at him as thy Prince, be should have the best service thou couldst afford him.

A third head of signs whereby we may know whether we have Christ or no, is expressed in the text, *He that hath the Son, hath life*. For we may as well argue from having of life that we have the Son, as from the having of the Son that we have life; they are reciprocal, *he that hath the Son hath life*, and *he that [hath] life hath the Son*,

This *Life* is fourefold:

Of *Justification*,
 Of *Sanctification*,
 Of *Consolation*, and
 Of *Glorification*.

If we have good evidences of the three former, we may have assurance of the latter.

The signs of life are of three sorts, our spiritual life may be discerned three ways:

By the *causes*,
 By the *effects*,
 By the *properties*.

For he *confess*, the holy Ghost gives us three causes of our spiritual life, which if we find, we may assure our selves that we have life, and so consequently we have the Son.

1. Cause of our spiritual life, is God's own good pleasure. *Of his own will hath he begot us*, Jam. 1. 18. This St. *John* proves by denying all other causes of our begetting to life, 1 Joh. 13. *Not of blood*; that is, not of parentage, for godly parents may have wicked children, though God's commandment do much, yet it is not from their good parentage, but from God's pleasure in the covenant: *Nor of flesh*, that is, not of corrupt nature: *nor of the will of man*, that is, not of the will of our best friends, that desire it, and pray for it unless

God set in with all those of his good pleasure, he shall not have life, Ezek. 16. 6. It was *God that said unto us when we were in our blood, Live*. This is an evident sign of the life of grace. Such a man's heart acknowledgeth all the grace he hath to be of God's good pleasure. Take a natural man, he thinks well of himself, that he hath always had a good nature, and towardly, and hopeful, and all his friends could say no less. But now a regenerate Christian acknowledgeth that he had no heart to goodness by nature, only some outward corrrespondency towards his friends, to please them; but he acknowledgeth what *Paul doth*, Gal. 1. 15, 16. *When it pleased God to call me by his grace, and to reveal Christ in me, then I lived*, but not before. A living soul never attributes any thing to his good nature or towardliness, but when it pleaseth God to call him to his grace.

A second cause of life is a word of promise; for, *all that are of Abraham are not the children of Abraham*, only the seed of promise, such as are begot of a word of promise, as *Isaac* was; and lest you should think it belongeth to *Isaac* only, he makes it common to all the elect, that they are all children of promise, Gal. 4. 28. But yet *Isaac* had the peculiar, in that even his birth was by promise to *Abraham* and *Sarah*: But the Apostle would thereby infer, that all our spiritual birth, is by a word of promise. Here therefore try thy life, thou sayst thou *livest*, but what word of promise wert thou begot of? *Faith comes by hearing*, Rom. 10. 17. Gal. 3. 5. There is some wood of promise dispersed in the Word preached, which the soul lays hold of, and is thereby knit to Christ by faith: Indeed, many good soul cannot tell what word of promise he was first begot of, yet sure it was by a word of promise; & though thou dost not know this promise, yet there is no *Christian* but he sustains himself by some promise, which shews plainly that he was bred of a promise which is fed by promise. Many times a word of grace and wise admonition sinks so deep into the heart, as that it makes many a one amend his wicked ways,

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and take better courses, and reform his life; but this is no evident sign of spiritual life. So an hypocrite may be so far convinced as to turn the stream of his life, and yet without all power of godliness, and the ground is, we cannot receive life from the words or work of the Law, it's altogether impossible, Gal. 3. 21. All true spiritual life is from some word of promise that hath been dispensed to us in the Word. The word of the Law may reclaim us from giving outward offence, but yet without all respect or obedience to God. But when we are quickened by a word of promise, then the love of God constraineth us.

Obj. *It is not ordinary for the word of the Law to cast down and humble us, before we can lay hold on a promise.*

Ans. True. Yet this is not that which makes a man a new man, this may reach to the reformation of many outward sins, but yet it gives not spiritual life, till we begin to think of, and long after Christ, and meditate and talk of him, till at length the sight of Christ, doth so work on us, that we do not only long after him, but we so receive him, and imbrace him, that we are enlightened by him.

A third cause of life, is the Spirit of God, Joh. 3. 6. There is a shedding abroad of the Spirit into the heart of every regenerate man, that he hath not the same spirit he had before. Now a man's spirit is the bent and inclination of the soul. Eph. 4. 23. *Be your renewed in the spirit of our minds.* The soul and the body is the same: But there is another spirit, they see other things they never saw before, judge otherwise then they did before; now they have new thoughts, and judgement, and affections, so that there heart is far off from earthly things, and set on spiritual things. *All things are become new.* A new heart, new conscience, new imployment, new company, the whole man hath another frame of spirit in him. He that finds it thus hath life.

For application.

Consider therefore how you find your hearts speaking concerning your estate. Do you find indeed that sometimes you have had good motions call in, but before God was pleased to call you to his grace, nothing did you good? Do you find your life wrought by a spirit of promise? Do you find that you are renewed to a new inclination and frame of spirit? then you have life. Your life springs from true causes, if not you have not life.

A second sort of signs of life is from the effects of spiritual life: And,

1. Justification or pardon of sins is a principal part of our spiritual life, Psal. 32. 2, 3. And this is called *justification to life*, Rom. 5. 18. Even as a condemned man's pardon is the life of the man, so is the pardon of our sins the life of our souls. Now the first effect flowing from the pardon of our sin, is,

1. Some inward peace of conscience, some inward satisfaction that he never found before. *My sin is not pardoned*, at least not manifested so to be, till I find some measure of inward peace, Rom. 5. 1. What was it that butthened thy conscience, but guilt of sin? If therefore God say to my soul, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee; upon this follows the tranquillity of the mind, and sometimes in that unspeakable manner, that passeth all understanding, Phil. 4. 7. Though this be not so ordinary, yet they always find a secret peace

and ease, as if you had cast off millstones from the heart, Isaiah 32. 17. The effect of righteousness is quietness and assurance for ever; if sin be pardoned, peace and everlasting assurance follows.

A 2. effects of the life of Justification, is that look as you see in a moral life, no man hath received life, but he strives to maintain it, so that *all that he hath will he give for his life*: So, if thou hast received the life of the pardon of thy sins, thou shalt find a serious and constant care of preserving
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that life and peace, so that you will let all go rather than the peace of your conscience, *Thy loving kindness is better than life*, Psal. 63. 4. And therefore if I find a tender care in me to maintain my peace, it's a sign I have received life, seeing I am so careful to maintain it. A man that hath been in a great debt, and lately paid it, he is careful to run on the score no more: so when God hath blotted out the score of our sin, a Christian is very solicitous to sin no more, but that he may live an holy and spotless life all his days. Notable is the example of *Joseph*, Gen. 39. *How shall I commit this great wickedness, and sin against God?* How shall I break my peace of conscience, and run on a new score? Sometimes indeed God's children have received pardon of sins, and yet afterwards turned God's grace into wantonness; but withall observe if they have been overtaken with some grievous lusts, the loss of their peace, and favour of God, hath been more bitter to them than death it self; and if the Lord give us hearts solicitous to maintain our peace, it is a sign that he hath given us peace, those sins are pardoned which we abhor; it's the nature of life to preserve it self, and to expel what may be an enemy to life: And this is a sign our peace is not counterfeit, but sound, if we be careful to preserve it.

A 3. effect of our life of Justification is that which our Saviour gives, Luk. 7. 47, *Her sins which are many are forgiven her, because she loves much*. He that loves much hath much forgiven him. The love of God in some measure proportionable to the sin pardoned, is a good evidence of the pardon of our sins. God's pardons are lively pardons, they leave not a man as he was, but whom he pardons them he heals. This woman was a notorious Harlot, her loving much shewed that her many sins were forgiven her; according to the multitude and measure of sins pardoned, such is the measure of our love to God and his Saints: And indeed, there is none hath so little forgiven him, but he thinks it a great deal, as indeed well he may, and thinks himself bound to love God abundantly,

For application.

Consider, herefore what peace thou hast. Perhaps thou wilt say, I have had peace all my life long, but such peace is ill rooted, it springs not from a word of God: And,

2. It's fruitless. Thou sayst thou hast prace, but what care hast thou to maintain it and to expell thy sins which hinder thy peace? And again, if thou hast such peace, where is thy love? If that be wanting, pardon of sin is wanting.

If thou wouldst have good ground of the pardon of thy sins, try thy self by the former signs.

Having before heard of the effects of the life of our *Justification*, now we come to shew the effects of *Sanctification*, Now because Sanctification is found partly in the heart, partly in the life of a Christian, First I will shew you the effect of Sanctification in the heart. Wheresoever this Spirit of Sanctification is shed abroad, you shall find variety of graces, so different and various, that in nature they could not stand together. There are in Christians certain combinations of graces.

1. Look at grace as it first works in the conviction of a sinner. When a man is first brought on to God, he is then taken up with two contrary effects, with joy that God should have such mercy on him, and withall grief and sorrow for his sins, whereby he hath offended so merciful a God: as it was with the return of the *Jews* temporal Captivity, Psal. 126. 1, 2, 3. *We were like them that dreamed, then were our mouths filled with laughter.* They were out of themselves, like men in a dream, they rejoiced at this their delivery, and yet the same people that rejoiced at this their delivery, yet in their return they went up mourning with weeping and supplication, for their on-
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worthy dealing with God, Jer. 50. 4, 5, And such a combination of affection is there in a Christian at his first conversion, he rejoiceth in his deliverance; and yet never was there any so kindly mourning all a Christian sensible of Christ's redemption and goodness to him, in this case he mourns a man that mourns for his first-born, Zac, 12. 10.

2. In the duties of God's worship there is another combination of affection, and that it joy and fear, Psal. 2. 11, *Rejoice before him with trembling.* When grace is lively and stirring, a Christian comes with holy fear and awfulness, & yet none comes with more joy and holiness, A dead hearted Christian he comes very unwillingly, and holds back; but living Christians are willing people Ps. 110. 3. It's the joy of their hearts to do God any service;

and yet withall, never do Christians go about any duties with more awfulness then when they come with most joy. In another thing those affections do not concur. When a man goes joyfully about his business he goes not about it with trembling; or, if he goes trembling, he goes not rejoicing: But a Christian, though he go about a duty with much fear, yet with much joy, Psal. 130. 4. *There is mercy with thee that thou mayest be feared.* Exod. 15. 11. *God is fearful in praises.* When the heart is most enlarged to praise God, then is is most awful of God.

3. Take a godly man in tribulations, when he is most oppressed with afflictions, and made sad and awful by them, yet then is the heart most joyous. This was an argument of their sincerity, 1 Thess. 1. 6. *Having received the Word in much affliction, and joy in the holy Ghost.* Now, naturally no affliction is joyous, and yet Paul saith, *We rejoice in tribulation,* Rom. 5. 3. A Christian under sore pressures of God's hand, that doth through him out of his husk, is not only content, but joyful; and that is above all nature.

4. There is a mixture in his affections, in his dealing with men. In a Christian you shall find much patience, and yet without all forbearance; very patient, and yet by no means bearing with evil, Rev. 2. 2. This is the nature of spiritual patience, injuries put upon himself, he endures with patience, but injuries against God, he will by no means bear.

5. You shall find gentleness and meekness mixed with much austerity and stiffness. *The wisdom that is from above is peacable and gentle,* Numb. 12. 3. *Moses* was the meekest man upon the earth, yet the same *Moses* so meek and gentle in his own cause, if it be in God's cause, be it so stiff that when the King would have the cattle left, he will not leave so much as an hoof at the King's command, he is inflexible in God's cause; even as the liquid air most easily yields to the least fly, yet if God set it as a firmament, to separate the waters above from the waters below, it stands like a wall of brass, it yields not, only let it drop through by small drops, as through a seive, but not to fall into a deluge: So, though a Christian be as the liquid air, easy and gentle, apt to yield, yet in a cause of God, let there be never so great a mass pressing on him, he stands stedfast and unmovable.

6. There is a modesty mixt with magnanimity, a thing not easily found in moral virtues *Paul* looks at all his outward priviledges but as dross and dung in comparison of Christ; a man that speaks of himself, *I am less than the least of all Saints,* Eph, 3. 8. though he were not inferior to the chiefest of the Apostles, 2 Cor. 12. 11. Yet this modest man, Act. 10. 37. when the Magistrates had whipped him and his companions, and then when they had done, would have sent them away; *Nay,* (saith he) *but let them come and fetch us;* see the

magnanimity of his spirit, when his person, or calling, or cause is called in question, in that case he will put forth himself, deep modesty and high magnanimity to meet in one man, at one time, in the same action, this is a work above nature, Psal. 131. 1, 2. You would think that such a weaned child as *David* was, should not have an high thought or word in him, but he that was thus mean, and low, and thus weaned from earthly preferments, if you come to speak of spiritual things, he looks at all worldly things as too mean for him.

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him, Psal. 24. 7, 9, *Lift up your heads ye gates, and be ye lift up ye everlasting gates*; that is, let your hearts be lifted up to higher objects then the world can afford; his heart is weaned from the Kingdom and Crown, but to God's so-
 vour and grace, and the Kingdom of heaven; why, are not these of an higher nature then they? Yes, and yet in these matters his heart is in a kind haughty, and his eyes lifted up, and he exerciseth himself in great matters; so that a Christian hath not a base spirit, but an heart lifted up above the world, to the favour of God, and pardon of sins, an an eternal Kingdom. Psal. 149. 6, *Let the high praises of God be in their mouths*. In the Original, *high things, great and mighty things of God, his mighty majesty, and power, and glory and praise, let these be in your mouths*. He would have a Christian's spirit filled with high thoughts, and his mouth with high words, high words and powerful threatnings to bind Princes, the high promises and commands of God; nay, the high counsels of God, that are unsearchable; yet as far as they are revealed, a Christian will be prying into them, yet with much modesty and Christian magnanimity, his spirit searcheth out the deep things of God.

7. There is another combination in a Christian, busy diligence in worldly affairs, and yet a dead-heartedness to the world. For a man to rise early, and sit up late, follow his work hard, take much pains, is not a thing to be dis-
 commended, Prov. 10. 14. Prov. 31. 27. It's commended in the good House-
 wife, even the greatest Princess may not eat the bread of idleness; then we see diligence in worldly business may well stand with grace; but yet the same person must be dead to the world, his heart must be set on things above, these are not his life, that is *laid up in Christ*, Col. 3. 1, 2, 3. His *heart is crucified to the world*, Gal. 6. 14. Though his employment be in the world, yet his *con-
 versation is in heaven*, Phil. 1. 20. Prov. 6, 5, 6. It's made a part of wisdom to be as busy Ants, gathering and laying up, but all the while his hands are there, his heart is in heaven; he doth things in obedience to God by the rule of his Word, and for his freedom in God's service, another may do the same work, with the same care and success, and yet the heart far unlike.

8. The love of our enemies is a particular virtue of God's Saints Matth. 5. 45. to 47. Now this very grace hath in it contrary works in our hearts, it's like fire, and like water both; naturally our hearts are very cold, and hard, and frozen like ice towards our enemies, but a Christian comes and thaws these frostings, and is warmed with compassion towards them, that his heart oftentimes mourns for them, to see them take such unjust courses against them who have not wronged them; and on the other side, whereas a natural man if he see his enemy, he boils in wrath and passion against him, love comes like a cool water and cools the heat of passion in our heart.

For application.

Wouldst thou know whether thou hast life or no! Why, hast thou found thy heart affected with joy for God's goodness to thee, and yet withal grieved and sorrowful for thy unkind dealing with him? These are certain evidences of the life of grace in thee. You may find many affected and comforted with the Word, as *Herod* was; but if this joy were of God, it would not vanish away like smoke, but would administer so much the more sorrow and mourning for sin; though a Christian's joy may suddenly vanish, yet it always leaves behind an inward grieving for sin, to keep possession of it.

2. How do you find your hearts affected to God's worship? Do you find your heart generally unwilling to pray or hear? This is an ill sign. But if you find your heart willing, and the more willing, the more careful withal. In this case there is life. but if a man have fear without joy, or joy without fear, the heart is not in a good temper.

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3. How dost thou find thy heart in tribulation? Dost thou find no consolation supporting thee? This is an ill sign. But if thou findest with *David*, in the multitude of thy troubled thoughts, God's comforts sustain thy soul, Psal. 94. 18, in this case thou hast life.

4. Observe your carriages. Do you bear patiently with bad men, and yet not so patiently as to bear with evil? Patience and zeal must go together.

5. Are you of a meek gentle, and flexible temper? It's well, But how are you in God's cause? Are you there inflexible, and immovable, so that you will not abate an hoof in God's cause? Why, both these are a life of grace.

6. Thou sayst thou art modest, and thinkest meanly of thy self; I, but how is this grace coupled? for God sends them two and two together, as he

did his Disciples, to balance one another. Hast thou withal a lofty spirit in the ways of God, an hear lift up to heavenly things? Why, such a spirit hath life. The most modest should be most magnanimous.

7. Look at worldly business, Canst thou be diligent in thy calling? Why, this God requires. But how stands thy heart? Art thou busy in the world, and yet thy heart dead to the world? This is a sign of true spiritual life.

8. If we find our hearts so abounding in love, that like fire it thaws our cold frozen affections; and again, like water, can cool our hot passionate spirits; why, this love is a fruit of faith, and a sign of life; it's a sign our sins are forgiven us, if we have hearts forgiving others.

Now we come to the effects of *Sanctification*, as they are expressed in the life of a Christian, and they are answerable to the effects of natural life. The effects of natural life are principally five.

1. *Motion.*

When a creature is able to move it self in its place, to those duties of this or that life, its said to live. If a thing move not but by others, it's not alive, or if it move out of its place, it's not alive, as a stone thrown up moves downward, and fire moves upward; but this is not properly life, but rather a desire of rest; and for things that move, they move according to the life they have; as a tree a vegetative life, a beast a sensitive life, a man a rational life, but if a man have a spiritual motion in his proper place it's a sign of spiritual life; sometimes a man reacheth out of his place, reaching to higher matters, and more ambitious thoughts then his calling leads to, those move not from an inward principle of grace, but from levity of heart; so the Pharisees, they moved to holy duties, but it was for credit, others for profit, for loaves, John 6:26. It's one thing to move to spiritual duties out of an inward inclination and affection to them, another thing to move out of levity or desire of eminency; it is one thing to move to them out of love, another thing to move to them out of respect or credit or profit, Why, this is but at the moving of a stone out of its natural gravity. *Absalom* had a marvellous affection to reign, and oh that he were King, every one should have justice, 2 Samuel 15:13. But he was now out of his place, and therefore the thing he did, was but to attempt the cutting off his Fathers life; but that is life properly that moves in its place.

Again, a man may move in his place, and yet by an outward principle, as a clock moves by the weight that hangs on it: so a man may move to some duties of Religion by the weight of the Law, or authority hanging on him.

Again, *Jehu* may move in his calling very busily, and yet have no spiritual life; so it must be inquired whether the duty a man doth be spiritual or no. And a duty is spiritual.

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1. When we are sensible of our insufficiency, and therefore depend upon Christ, that thorough him we may do all thing.

2. When we have respect to the Word of God as our rule.

3. When we do all for the glory of God, Gal. 2. 20. *The life I now live I live by faith in the Son of God*: So far a man lives, as he denies his own sufficiency, and depends on Christ for assistance, and hath respect to God's commandments as his rule, Psal. 119. 6. and aims at the glory of God at his end. Zac. 7. 5, 6, *When ye fasted, did ye fast unto me at all? Did ye it to bring any service or glory to me? Did ye it not for your selves, for your own safety and deliverance? Why, if we go upon such principles, we want life, till we be in Christ we detain all the graces we have in unrighteousness, to magnify our selves, to bring about our own ends.*

Obj. *May not a good Christian have his heart so dead that he is unfit for prayer or hearing, or any holy duty, that he is unwilling to pray at all, or to receive the Sacrament at all? Will you say such a soul is dead, because unfit for motion?*

Ans. True, there may fall such a deadness on the heart of a Christian, as whereby he may be both unable and unwilling to good duties, to which God usually leaves us, when we go about things in our own strength, and grow self-sure; but when by this God hath schooled us, and caught us thereby that all our life is hid in Christ; why, in this case God is wont to make us sensible of this sinful disloyalty, and that in us *dwells no good thing*, that we of our selves are unable to do any good duty, and for this distemper we mourn and grieve heartily. Why, this very sense of deadness is an act of spiritual life, which in time will work him to a farther dependence on Christ, and to be more heedful of God's Word, and by how much the more we strive thus, so much the more life we have.

A second effect of life is feeding. This sign Christ gives, Joh. 6. 54. *Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life*. This is not meant of the Sacrament, for it was not then instituted, but of Christ himself; but when God hath instituted ordinances, this is a sure sign of life, if in every ordinance we partake in, we feed on Christ, on his blood; he that feeds not, lives not, he that forbears his meat, and forbears it long, he cannot live. Indeed, for a time a man's stomach may be so distempered, that he cannot eat, but he recovers himself and falls to his food.

Q. *How do we know whether we feed on Christ?*

1. Do you find an inward longing after Christ in every ordinance, that nothing will satisfy your soul but Christ, he is a sweet savour to you; as an hungry man, give him silver and gold never so much, he is not satisfied unless he have meat? It was an argument of life in the Spouse, that she sought Christ diligently in every ordinance, and her soul was grieved because she found him not. If a man therefore come to the ordinances, and it never trouble him though he go home without Christ, this man feeds not on Christ.

2. Feeding implies a finding of sweetness and relish in our meat: So consider, how do you find Christ, is he a sweet savour to you? Do you find comfort and strength in him, 2 Cor. 2. 15, 16. Why, it's a sign of life that you relish your meat well; nay, it's a sign of health, for a sick man cannot relish his meat; and if a Christian find no relish in the ordinance, he complains of it as his sickness, and looks up to God for help against it.

3. In all feeding there is a taking of the meat down, we do not spit it out, and when it is down it must continue tjere, we must not cast it out: So, if God's Word abide in us, and we hide it in our souls by a wise applying of it to our souls, Psal. 119. 11. and therefore give up our selves to be guarded by it, this is a sign of life and strength.

4. All feeding implies conversion of the aliment into the thing nourished so that in time our meat is so digested that it's turned into our own nature and this is more then receiving Christ by faith; for when we receive him, and

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apply him to our selves, that is faith; but to be conformed to him in every thing, to be fashioned according to his nature, this is a farther act of life. When a Christian so feeds on Christ, that he is of the same nature with him, meek, lowly, and patient, as he was, this is a sign of life. When we are turned into his nature by feeding on him, and he into ours; why, this very feeding on spiritual food, implies a spiritual life: *è contra*, he that eats not the flesh of Christ, hath not Christ; he means not a *Cannibal* like eating of his very natural body and blood; for if a man should indeed eat the fleth of Christ, and suck out his blood, it would profit him nothing, Joh. 6. 63. And this the *Capernaites* thought a monstrous thing to eat the flesh of Christ, therefore it is not the flesh of Christ, but the Spirit that quickeneth and giveth life.

A third effect of spiritual life is growth, that which lives grows, until it comes to full maturity, and then it either stands at a stay, or begins to decay;

but a spiritual life grows up to full perfection, and then it continues in that perfect estate for ever in heaven, 1 Pet. 2. 2. & 3. 18. Eph. 4. 11, 12. 2 Col. 19. If a Christian grows, he lives.

Obj. *Doth not many a Christian stand at a stay, or oft-times go back, and lose his first love and fruitfulness?*

Ans. True, for a time he may, as a living man by sickness may lose his strength and vigour, and be made unfit for any employment, but if he strive to recover himself, it's a sign of life: so a Christian by some corrupt lusts may waste his best graces, like a thief in a candle, but if he be a living Christian, he strives against them, and prays with David, *O spare me a little that I may recover my strength, before I go hence, and be no more seen!* If he find a decay, he considers from whence he is fallen, and be recover himself, and doth his *first works*, Rev. 2. 4. Repentance is the purge of the soul, it expels out evil lusts, and then we do more at last then at first, Rev. 2. 17. So then, a Christian is continually a growing, if not in the bulk of grace, yet in more sweetness, and mellowness; as apples at their full bulk, yet grow more ripe and sweet; so a Christian, though he grow not to more tallness, yet he may grow to more rootedness in Christ

2. In more sweetness of spirit, that is, in more love to his Brethren, and care of God's glory.

A fourth effect of life is this, life hath an expulsive power to expel that which is noisome and dangerous to it, it will call it out either by purging, or sweat, or vomit, any noisome humour is burdensome to nature; so if grace be living, there is a power to expel every thing that is superfluous, much more what is noisome and hurtful, nature keeps nothing but what it converts to its own nourishment; so a Christian cuts away every superfluity, if it be a thing of no purpose, or no use to his calling, though it may others, this he abandons, Jam. 1. 21. But that knowledge which may be either necessary or expedient for him, that a Christian retains, a Christian casts out that chiefly which is contrary to grace.

1. Doubtings, for that is contrary to the life of grace. 2. It casts away all presumption, and self-dependence, perfect love casts out fear, and patience strives against frowardness, and every grace against its contrary, so that he may grow up to full holiness; the life of grace casts out the life of the world, so much of the world as is combersome to his spirit, so much a Christian lays down.

A fifth act of life is the begetting of his kind: nature grows up to this ability, though at first it be but weak; so grace no sooner moves or grows, or feeds in any measure, but it hath a mind to beget others; as soon as ever the

woman of *Samaria* began to be acquainted with Christ, she ran to all her neighbours, and tells them she had met with one that told her all that ever she had done, *Is not this the Christ?* Joh. 4. 29, This is the nature of spiritual life, as soon as they are well begot themselves, they are ready to beget others.

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Indeed, a Christian may bide himself a while, but as soon as he is assured of life himself, he propagates the same to others, Joh. 1. 41. to 46. When one Disciple was called, he goes and calls another to come and see, Psal. 51. 10. 11, 12, 13. *David* professeth that if God will but assure him of mercy, and establish him therein, then he will teach others God's way, and sinners shall be converted unto him, he that is once converted himself, his care is to convert others to God.

Try your selves by these signs.

Do you find your selves moving a life of grace, growing up therein, feeding upon Christ, expelling the enemies of life, and drawing on others yo the same life? these are evident signs of life; if you find it not thus, there is no true sign of the life of grace in you.

3. This life may be discerned by the properties of it, by finding of which we may discern of our spiritual life. And there are three principal property of life.

1. Where ever life is, there is some warmth, When *Elisha* had stretched himself over the dead child, the flesh of the dead child began to wax warm, a sign of life, 2 King. 4. 34. So the presence of the Spirit united to the soul of man is the cause of all spiritual heat, Rom. 12. 11. *Fervent in spirit*. Therefore the Spirit is compared to *fire*, Mat. 3. 11, 1 Thess. 5. 19. *Quench not the Spirit*. A sign that the Spirit is of a fervent nature. So 2 Tim. 1. 6. *I put thee in remembrance to blow up the graces of God's Spirit*. A Metaphor taken from blowing up the fire with bellows; all which imply, that the Spirit of Christ communicated to Christians is a fervent spirit. Where there is no warmth, there is no life. If our spirit begin to wax warm, it's a sign of spiritual life; as the two Disciples that went to *Emmaus* said, (Luk, 22. 32.) *Did not our hearts burn within us whilst he spake those things?* Implying, the Word hath a power to quicken, and warm, and heat the spirit of a Christian. This same warmth and heat is expressed divers ways.

1. The very knowledge of a Christian is warm, whereas in all others the knowledge is cold, and meerly speculative, without any life or power. There is a zeal according to knowledge, and there is knowledge according to zeal. The zeal that is not according to knowledge is a rash vain zeal,

Rom. 10. 2. So, it is a cold empty knowledge that hath not zeal with it. *John* was a burning and a shining light, shewing every several condition what they should do, but he burns up the hypocrisy and lusts of the body, and inflamed their affections with zeal and warmth, as *Herod* heard him gladly. Where there is truth of light and knowledge, there is burning, The knowledge of a Christian makes him fruitful in a Christian course, 2 Pet. 1. 8. So that whatever he knows either necessary or expedient for him to do, he will do it, and he will cause others to do their duties that belong unto him; such is the heat of his spirit, that he will not suffer his Brother to lie in sin, Lev. 19. 17. Now another man knows many things, but doth them not, nor thinks he is bound to do them; but a Christian's knowledge is of that nature that it will not suffer him or his Brother to lie in any sin. True Christians are thought oft-time to be more busy then needs.

2. There is a warmth in our breath; as long as there is life in us there is breath, and that breath is warm; so if there be any spiritual life, there is always some warm breathing, some warmth in his breathing towards God, there is always some warmth in his prayers, the prayers of hypocrites are but cold, and empty, and vanish away, but there is always some breath of life in a good man's prayers, even then when we know not what to pray for, or how to pray, yet then there is always something in him that expreseth warmth, his very fightings and growns come from some kind of heat and life, Rom. 8. 16.

2. As their breathing towards God is warm, so they breath warmth one toward another, so that in their conference, if they speak of the things
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of the Word, they do not speak slightly, and overly, without any affection, but they speak of them with reverence, and fear, and love, and affection.

3. There is that kind of warmth in him, as that thereby he doth not only affect the Word, but he is able to digest it in some measure; there is no life, but there is some power to digest something, if not strong meat, Psalm 119. 20, *My soul breaketh for the longing it hath to thy judgements*, So Ps. 42. *My soul panteth after thee*. This very panting and breathing of the soul after God, so unites the soul unto God, that thereby be digests something that inables him to walk before God in the land of the living, whereas an hypocrite is hopeless to any good.

4. If things be warm, the more they lie together the more warmth and heat; cold logs laid together heat not one another, but two or three brands

put together are enough to kindle an heap of wood: so take a Christian that is very cold, and almost benumbed, yet put him to two or three more, and one word kindles another, and their spirits are more and more inflamed, more fit to pray, and filter to admonish, and comfort, and help forward one another, 1 Pet. 4. 8. Fervent love among Brethren so kindles one another that they are inflamed to any good office; but when Christians are disjointed they lose all their heat, as when a man means to put out the fire, he lays one brand from another, a sign he means to go to bed and sleep; so when Satan would put out the life and hear of grace in a family or Town, he disjointes Christians, and so they fall into security, and grow dead in sins and trespasses, all their heat is quite extinguished. Therefore the Apostle exhorts us not to forsake the assembling of our selves together, as the manner of some is, Heb. 10. 25. 2 Pet. 1. 21. *See that ye love one another, with pure hearts fervently.*

Obj. If this heat be always found where life is, how comes it to pass that the hearts of Christians are so cold and dead? How comes a Christian to be so unprofitable if he digest the Word? Do not Christians meet and afford little warmth and help one to another? Luk. 24. 32. The two disciples hearts burned when Christ talked with them, a sign before he came and chased them up, they were cold and dead-hearted.

*Ans. True Christians oft times sin, a marvellous coldness and benumbedness of heart, that they find little warmth in their breathing, in their prayers or conferences, and this comes partly from want of supply of new fuel, when they walk in their own strength, without looking up to Christ for new supply; and partly by pouring cols water upon it, that is, some noisome lusts that put out the grace of God, or else the use of outward comforts with worldly hearts, these cast cold water on the fire, as the fire is put out either by withdrawing the fuel, or by casting, water op it: But yet though this be their fault, yet even then when they want chasing and heat, there is some striving in them, which argues life, so much life as in them, so much heat. As for those two Disciples that went to *Emmaus*, though their hearts burned whilst Christ spake, yet before Christ came, they were talking of Christ, and of his sufferings, which made them sad, then Christ comes and puts life, *O fools and slow of heart to believe*; This blew up the sparks in them. So much as a Christian hath lost of his heat, so much of his life, if his warmth be smothered his life is smothered.*

Now this warmth is sometimes expressed in sad looks, and pantings, and deep sighs, and groanings and mourning for his forlorn estate, and surely there is life in that, for in grief the heat runs to the heart. But worse than this, a Christian sometimes vanisheth away in much frothy emptiness, outwardly rejoicing in worldly comforts, when there is no life within. *Peter* when he denied his master, his heart was filled with grief and sorrow, and he

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went out and wept bitterly. But what say you to *David*, when he had committed adultery, how did he go on from one sin to another? He can make *Uriah* drunk, and then kill him, and then make no matter of it, he is careless in all this, as if he had quite lost all life and affection to God, there was not the least beating of the pulse of a Christian, such a *λειποθυμία*, that a man that knew him not before, might have written in his forehead, *a man forsaken of God*, without any life of grace in him; Where now was *David's* life? None so far gone as he, 'tis a question whether he prayed or no all this while; as some Christians have so lost themselves, as for three years together they have not prayed at all, as doubting of any acceptance, because they were so sinful, yet there is some habit of grace, but hardly one act of life; yet still this holds true, so much warmth so much life, as by the Almighty power of God, there may be fire, and yet no heat; as the fiery furnace, though made seven times hotter than ordinary, yet God so restrained the act, that it did not so much as singe the garments of the three children that were cast into it, Dan. 3. So *è contra*, there is a marvellous hellish power in sin, so as it will suspend all the acts of grace, so as a Christian may express no acts of grace, but lie as a man in a deep swoond, without life and motion, that can be discerned, and yet this you shall find in a Christian at such times, a listlessness of his heart to sin, that he cannot break out into sin with all his strength and power as he did in his natural condition; and the ground is this, because there is still flesh and spirit in him, so that as the spirit cannot do what good it would, so the flesh cannot do that evil it would, Gal. 5. 17. And when a Christian is most lively, yet there is still some faintness and weakness in him; so *è contra*, when grace is most weak and corruption most strong, yet he cannot commit sin with all his strength as formerly he hath done, but he goes about sin willingly, not with the full sway that he was wont to do, he goes listlessly about it.

Try your selves therefore by these signs, if thou hast Christ, thou hast life; if life, thou hast warmth and heat; look to thy knowledge, doth it puff thee up, and not edify? Dost thou magnify thy self by it? If it

be lively knowledge, it is joined with zeal, as Christ revealed himself to the Church of *Thyatira*, Rev. 2. 18. Thus faith the Son of God, whose eyes are like flames of fire, writing to the Church of *Thyatira* that was warm in love, and growing up therein, he revealed himself according to the state of the Church, as having eyes like flames of fire, as that Church had zeal with her light; so that if thou hast a true knowledge, thy eyes are like flames of fire, what thou knowest thou dost with zeal and fervency of spirit, as *Peter* and *John* said, *We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard*; that is, which we have certain knowledge of, Act. 4. 20. See Jer. 20. 9.

Consider therefore whether thy knowledge be joined with zeal: How dost thou breath? dost thou smell a sweet favour in the Word? Then there is breath in thy nostrils.

2. Dost thou breath warmth in prayer, pant and sigh after God? In thy conference, dost thou express life and heat? Then thou art a living Christian.

3. How dost thou find thy stomach to the Word? dost thou relist it, or else art thou ashamed of thy unprofitableness? Then there is life.

4. Dost thou love to be disjointed from thy Brethren, like brands cast one from another? Then there is no life. Life loves to preserve it self; if you sit loose one from another all heat and life goes out, religion ceaseth, there is a bidding farewell to all Christian duties; but if you see bone join to bone, one gather to another, then you shall see flesh and sinews will cover them, and life will come in, Ezek. 37. 7. Put brands together, and there will be some fire and heat propagated.

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2. A second property of life. Where life is, there is some pliability and flexibility, a dead carcass is always stiff: So consider whether you be stiff or no; why, if there be life of grace in you, *That wisdom that is from above, is gentle, and easie to be entreated*, Jam. 3. 17.

There are four things in this pliability.

1. He is easily pleased with any indifferent endeavours, 1 Pet. 3. 8. A gracious man is easily pleased; if a man be froward and hard to please, it's a sign such a soul is stiff and dead.

2. If he be offended, he is easy to be entreated, Jam. 3. 17. It's a sign of a reprobate sense to be implacable, Rom. 3. 1.

3. If he have offended another, he is willing to yield to that man whom he hath offended; so much stiffness, so much deadness.

4. There is this gentleness in every living Christian, he is willing to deny himself upon unequal terms, when he might stand upon his right, yet he yields his right, rather than any offence should grow; so *Abraham* did to *Lot*, Gen. 13. 8, 9. If we find it thus, we are loving Christians; but if men be hardly pleased, like *Nabal*, churlish, hardly recalled, will not yield, but stand upon their right to the utmost, then they are in a deep, swound, or dead.

3. Whilst the body is alive, it's savoury, a dead carcase is very unsavoury; mark your spirits, every living Christian is a sweet savour to God, his words are savoury, Col. 4. 5, 6. Eph. 4. 29. His works savour well in the nostrils of God and man, Ephes. 5. 10. But if your speeches and carriages be unsavoury, uncomely, and profane, are ye not then carnal? 1 Cor. 3. 3. But a good Christian so carries himself, that the bowels of the Saints are refreshed by him. Unsavoury speeches and carriages argue the deadness of such a soul.

Use 2. May shew us the dangerous and uncomfortable condition of every such soul that hath not Christ; *He that hath not the Son, hath not life*. If we be without Christ, we are dead in trespasses and sins, Eph. 2. 1, 5. We may say of men by nature, as was said of *Senacherib's* host, *Behold ye are all dead carcasses*, 2 Kings 19. 35. We by nature have not this act of life.

Five acts of life we heard of before, by Nature we are wanting in them all.

1. By Nature we have no spiritual motion, all our works are but dead works, Heb. chap. 9. Vers. 14, And so dead are we by Nature that we do no good; nay, we can do no good; and, which is worst of all, we will do no good. Rom. ch. 3. vers. 12. *There is none that doth good, no not one. All the imaginations of our hearts by nature, are wholly evil, and that continually*. Gen. 6. 5. And as all his thoughts are evil, so are all his words, Matth. 12. 33. And so are all his works, Matth. 7. 18. We are as rotten trees, we cannot bring forth one good, fruit. There is not so much in a natural man, as one good thought, or word, or action, that proceeds from faith, or is regulated by God's Word, or aims at God's glory; nay, if God would raise us up, and enable us to do good, yet we would not. Jerem. 13, *Ult. Oh Jerusalem! wilt thou not be made clean? When shall it once be?* The man that had a bodily disease on him, when Christ asked him, *Wilt thou be made whole?* He said, *Yea Lord*. But if

God ask us the question, Wilt thou be made clean? we refuse it. We find shifts to put off Christ, never could we find that day, wherein we could say, This day I would be a Christian, but we are either almost persuaded to be Christians, or else it must not be this day; as bad debtors, they would not have the creditors set them a day, lest they
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should break it; so we would be spared from setting God a day, for surety we would break it; indeed, when we are pressed with some sore sickness, indangering death, what say we? O! If God would but once restore me to health again, all the world should see I would become a new man, and yet when he was in health, he said, I will seek God, and turn to him in sickness; and thus we put God off from Winter to Summer, from Spring to Harvest? when we are sick, we promise amendment, if God will send us health; but why not now? Do you know whether ever you shall have health or no? And will you hazard your souls? And therefore God expects that in afflictions we should seek him.

2. They feed not on Christ, which was a sign of life, but as God said of his superstitious people, Isa. 44. 20. the same may be said of every natural man. *He feedeth Him ashes, a deceitful heart hath turned him aside, thathe cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?* Every natural man hath an idol that he sets up in his heart, and whoever he be that feeds not on the living God, feeds upon ashes. It is taken from children, that for some evil humour, delight to be mumbling upon ashes and coals: So every natural man he feeds upon ashes, that is, upon dry and unsavoury meat that will not profit the fool, for the soul is spiritual and fed upon spiritual food; profits, and pleasures, and honors are no more fit meat for the soul, then ashes for the body. *Soloman* complains of the vanity of mankind, Eccl. 3. 21. *Who knoweth the spirit of a man that goeth upward, or the spirit of a beast that goeth downward? Who knows? Who considers, or takes it to heart, that his soul goes to a better place then the beast? Who provides better for his soul then the beasts? Do not they all feed on worldly comforts, who should feed on immortal food? We by nature all of us feed on ashes, so that we cannot deliver our souls, and say, Is there not a lie in my hand? Is not this a false course, a lying vanity? Will not profits and honors deceive me? A seduced heart hath deceived him.*

3. A third act of spiritual life is growth. Now a carnal man is far from growing in grace; apt is he to grow in sin, to proceed on in evil, to increase in ungodliness, 2 Tim. 3.17. Jerem. 9. 3. From covetousness to ambition, from ambition to voluptuousness, this is his best growth.

4. A fourth act of life was expulsion of noisome lusts. Now by nature we are loath to part with our lusts. Jer. 4.14. *O Jerusalem! wash thy heart from wickedness, how long shall vain thoughts lodge in thee?* We by nature will never cleanse out our lusts, but if do we cast out any thing, it's the motions of God's Spirit, we think them superfluous and burdensome, and hinderers of our credit and pleasures, so that all good motions and good counsels that have been put in us, we cast them out. *Ahab* is struck with fear and humiliation, but he casts out all, by calling a Council for War; Let *Cain* have a good motion, he puts it off by building a City, and so takes off his thoughts from once seeking to God to heal his sins. *Felix*, when *Paul's* Words made him to tremble, he would hear him no more at that time, Act. 24. 25. As *Paul* complains of the *Jews*, Act. 13. 46. And *Stephen*, Act 7. 52. *Ye-stiff-necked and uncircumised in heart, ye have always resisted the holy Ghost.* They are not well till they have cast out all such thoughts; we are not well, till we are alive to run from God; wise are we to do evil, but to do good, we have no knowledge, Jer. 14. 22.

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5. A fifth act of life was begetting men to grace, but we *è contra* endeavour to, beget them to the devil, and make them seven times more the children of the devil then before Matt. 23. 15. Though we understand that chiefly of corrupt Teachers, yet *Jeremy* speaketh it of all men by nature, Jer. 6. 26. *They are all corrupted;* not only themselves, but corrupters of others, none that comes amongst them but is made worse by them, kept off farther from God, they would not have their friends look towards matters of Religion. *All flesh have corrupted their ways.* Gen. 6. 11.

Use 3. It may teach us to bemoan all those our friends that yet lie in the state of nature. Hast thou any child, or wife, or friends, that lie in the state of nature, look at them as thy dead children, and dead friends; and if our friends lie dead, how bitterly do we mourn for them? Zach. 12. 10, They so mourn, that they will not be comforted, Matth. 2. 18. All was full of mourning, lamentation, because all the children were dead;

and have not many parents many children lying in their natrnal condition, and is not the spiritual death far worse then the bodily? if they be alive in grace, *Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord*, Rev. 14. 17. Therefore mourn not so much for their natural death, but if they be spiritually dead, without God, without Christ, without the life of grace; why, weep then for this child and that friend that lies dead before you. It may be thy whole house is full of dead carcasses, not one child or servant alive. Oh! then weep over them, mourn for them, be earnest to God for them, and never leave till thou hast got life propagated to them. And if thou dost thus, he that hath given thee children will give: them life, some of them at least; that promise is full, 1 Joh. 5. 16. *If an man see his Brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life.* You may therefore so handle the matter, that as you have given them natural life, so you may give them spiritual life. You know what a sore and bitter cry there was in; *Ægypt*, so that they arose at midnight; why, what was the matter, there was not one house wherein one was not dead; what would they have done then, if there had been but one alive in every house? Such is the case of many families, that a man may rise up in the morning, and not find one alive in his family beside himself, it is a just occasion of bitter mourning; if there were but one dead, how much more then when there is hardly one alive ? Therefore pray heartily for them, that their souls may live in God's sight. If you have the bowels of parents, be earnest with God till you have procured life for them.

Use 4. To condemn the Church of *Rome*, that think by nature men have free will to lay hold on Christ; but I would ask them, when they lay hold on Christ, whether they have Christ or no before; why, before they have received him, they have him not, and if they have him not, they are but dead men, and how shall dead men lay hold on Christ? If they do lay hold, it's an act of life, if we be either able or willing to do any good, it proceeds from the grace of Christ, Phil. 1. 12, 13.

Use 5. Let it teach us all, if we yet be without Christ, let us not give rest to our eyes, nor slumber to our eye-lids, till we have procured Christ to ourselves and ours. What if a man have wealth, and honour, and beauty, if he hath not Christ, he hath not life. Therefore labour for Christ, that having him thou mayst have life.

Motives.

1. From the sweetness of life. *Skin for skin, and all that a man hath, will he give for his life*; and he means natural life, but truly our spiritual life is worth the laying down our natural life. *What shall a man gain, if he*

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win the whole world, and lose his own soul. If a man live and die without Christ, we may say of him as Christ did of *Judas, It had been good for that man if he had never been born*, Matt. 26. 24.

2. Consider, if we have Christ we have life, and that in abundance. If you have Christ you have all the promises, for in him they are *yea and amen*, 2 Cor. 1. 20. All the blessings of God are yours, both spiritual, Ephes. 1. 3. and temporal, 1 Tim. 4.8. 1 Cor. 3. 2 last vers. If you have Christ, the world is yours, all the dealings and carriages shall be serviceable to you, whatever you want, peace, or comforts, or outward things, if you have Christ, you have all things, Rom. 8. 32.

Q. *But what shall we do to get Christ? Are we not by nature unable and unwilling to receive Christ? To what end then it this your exhortation?*

Ans. Though this be our sinful distemper, yet our exhortations be not in vain, for God by his Word oft-times conveys a power whereby we are enabled to lay hold on Christ. *Peter* spake to a lame man to walk, Act. 9. 6, 7. Would you not think it was a vain word? No, because he conveyed strength withall, whereby he was enabled to rise up and walk.

Means to help us to get life in Christ.

1. Consider how dead and lost thou art by nature. Christ came to call such as feel themselves lost, Luk. 19. 10. Matt. 9. 12, 13.

2. If thou knowest any sin by thyself, rid thy hands of it, cast them from thee. Many a man lives in sin, which if he would but renounce, God would receive him to mercy, 2 Cor. 6. 17, 18. Isa. 1. 16, 17, 18. None might eat of the Passover, except they put away leaven, Exod. 12. 15. So, if we purge away the old leaven, we shall become a new lump, 1 Cor. 5. 7, 8. Isa. 55. 6, 7.

3. *Seek the Lord whilst he may be found*, Isa. 55. 6. Do but seek him, and he will be found. And how is this done;

1. By longing and thirsting after him.

2. Seek him in all the means. *Hear diligently, and your fault shall live*, Isa. 55. 13. It's a notable promise, Prov. 8. 35, 36. Therefore men should be willing to straighten themselves a little in their worldly business, to love and hear God's Word.

3. Seek him in prayer, Isa. 55. 6.

Use. 6. To teach every soul that hath Christ, and yet complains of the deadness and dulness of his heart; if thou findest a decay of life, seek Christ again, get faster hold of him, and thou shalt increase thy life; exercise your faith, live daily by faith, and you shall not wast life.

Use 7. Of consolation to every soul that hath Christ. If thou hast Christ, thou hast life, and shalt have it more abundantly; he that findeth him, findeth life; and they that seek not Christ, seek death.

JOHN

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1 JOHN 5.13.

These things have I written to you that believe on the Name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that you may believe on the Name of the Son of God.

WE are now come to the beginning of the conclusion of this whole Epistle, wherein he sits down the persons to whom he writes;

These things I have written to you, to you that believe.

2. The end wherefore he writes these things to these: the end is twofold.

1. *That ye may know that ye have eternal life.*

2. *That ye may believe on the Name of the Son of God;* which he amplifies in the verses following.

These words afford three Notes.

Doct. 1. *This Epistle of John was written and delivered to believers only.*

This is evident not only in the Text, but sundry other places of the Epistle, *cap. 1. 4.* He wrote it to such, as by reading this Epistle might attain to full joy. This is evident likewise by recounting the several sorts of persons to whom he wrote, *cap. 1. 12, 15, 14.* Which were of three sorts, Babes, Young men and Fathers, yet all believers so, *cap. 4. 4. Ye are of God little children.* His second Epistle was written to the elect Lady; and the third Epistle to his beloved *Gaius*, vers. 1, 2. All his writings were directed to believers: so were all the Epistles of all the rest of the Apostles, directed to believers, to Saints, to the chosen of God, to their brethren, as will appear in all their first greetings; when our Saviour himself wrote, she wrote to such in whom he acknowledged many special graces, yea even in the worst of them, in the Church of *Sardis*, he acknowledged that she had a few names. Now this

gives us just occasion to enquire; Why they were written to believers?
2. Why to them only.

To Believers, 1. In regard of the special help and benefit, their writings afford the Church; the benefits of their writing to the Church, were 1. Teaching, 2 Thes. 2. 2. Putting them in remembrance, 2 Pet. 1. 22, 23. 3. Stirring them up to practice what they knew, 2 Pet. 1. 2, 3. 4. To humble the spirits of them that were puffed up, 2 Cor. [[12.]] 7, 8. 5. That they might be strengthened in their faith, 1 Joh. 5. 13. 6. That their hearts might be filled with joy, 1 Joh. 1. 4. which was effected, Act. 15. 31. 7. These writings havebift the foundation of the faith of all Christians to the end of the world, because they have afforded matter of all the preaching of the Ministers, for by them the men of God are fully furnished, and made perfect to every good work, 2 Tim. 4.16, 17.

2. He writes to believers only, the reason is taken from the little use or profit that unbelievers will make of these writings, till they be brought on to believe, which is so little, that not one of the Apostles directs any of their writings to them, but only for the believers sake, amongst them; it's with the Apostles' writings, as with prophesies, and not miracles; Prophesies are not for them that believe not, but for them that believe; Miracles are not for them that believe, but for them that believe not; not but that Miracles may confirm believers; but believers should chiefly attend to Prophesies. Take a company of unbelievers, it's little good they get by reading their writings, for no good is done without faith; now faith comes not by reading, but by hearing, had God ordained that reading should be effectual to the conversion of men he would have confirmed it by Miracles, as he did the preaching of the Apostles. Again, had their writings been sanctified for the conversion of men, they would have sent them abroad to the most remote places of the world, where they were never likely to come, but we see they did not, but rather took pains themselves to go about the world, Rom. 10. 15, 15,17,18.

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Object.

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Object. *Sometimes God hath blessed the reading of the law to the conversion of men, Deut. 3. or 31. 10, 11, 12, 13. He blessed it not only to them that knew the law before, but to their little ones that knew nothing; and why then should not the reading of the Gospel be as effectual now, seeing of the two its fuller of power?*

Ans. You shall not read that God blessed the ordinary reading of the law to this end, but the reading there spoken of Deut. 31. Was a solemn reading of the law, at the years of solemn release, which was but once in seven

years, and the reason of it was, because that year of release was an acceptable year, and typed out our redemption by Christ; for in one of those years of release, Christ was put to death; therefore to denote that God gave an extraordinary blessing to the reading of the law in that year even to little children, and it shews that those that are released by Christ, they shall read with understanding and profit.

2. He doth not speak of bare reading, but of expounding and applying it likewise, which ordinarily accompanied their readings of the law, for so we read expressly that they did at that very feast, Neh. 7. *ult.* & *cap.* 8. 4, to 9. *Ezra* stood up and read, and then gave the sense whereat they were so much affected, that they all wept abundantly.

Use 1. May shew us the reasons why so many good books, written by learned godly men, have so little prevailed to bring on any of the Papists few or none converted by any of our writings; and no wonder, for the writings of the Apostles themselves were not sanctified to this end; it's true, writings have ever been useful to the convincing of some, to the establishment of others, to the satisfaction of others, but none have prevailed to the conversion of any,

Use 2. The like may be said of our reading Ministers, look at all the good that hath been done in such Congregations, where they have only readings, you shall find them as ignorant of Christ, and empty of grace, as if they had never heard of such things. You will say, this an uncharitable saying: But I would know whether is more uncharitableness, to flatter you in your woeful condition to your destruction, or to tell you of your danger? 2 Chron. 15. 2, 3. *Now for a long time Israel had been without the true God, and without a teaching Priest,* it cannot be conceived, but that they had the law read in their Synagogues, for the very Judicial law of *Moses*, was the form of the Government, which they could not be ignorant in, but yet they are said to be *without God*, because they had not a Priest to teach.

Object. Act. 15. 21. *For Moses of old time hath in every City them that Preach him, being read in their Synagogues every Sabbath 3. Doth not that imply that reading is preaching?*

Ans. No, it implies that when he is read, he is also preached, for they used with the reading to expound, and lay open the law to them, Amos 8. 11, 12, 13. God threatneth a famine of hearing his Word; never was there a somine of reading, since the Church was in any measure established, but it's threatened as a grievous curse to want the word preached, Hos. 4. 6. *My people perish for want of knowledge; because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee:* Now wherein did they resuse knowledge, did they resuse to read?

That cannot be conceived, but because they resused knowledge to instruct and comfort the souls of the prople.

Use 3. May teach all that are believers, diligently to be conversant in the reading of the writings of Saint *John*, and the other Apostles. Shall the holy Ghost have hand to write, and shall not we have an hand to receive, or an eye to read? To us were those Epistles written, even to all that believe to the end of the world, Rom. 15. 4. How much then is the Church of *Rome* to blame that lock up those writings from the people, that they may not hear them, but in an unknown tongue which they understand not? nay sometimes the Priests understand not the *Latin* they read, much less are they able to expound it.

Use 4.

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Use 4. Of direction to carnal men, what will you say they have no benefit or profit by reading the Word? Yea surely.

1. By hearing the Word expounded, they may be brought on to faith.

2. The very reading it self is useful to beget knowledge, to stir up their memory, to quicken their desires.

3. They serve to discover to the people what sin is, what moral works be; so that they have a power to keep men in civil conformity, so that there is good use use of them to moral men; but they were chiefly directed to believers. But yet for unbelievers, how should this stir them up to be diligent in hearing the Word preached; for may I read much, two or three times a day, and yet little the nearer salvation? How should it provoke them then, to give diligent heed to hearing? that so wherein reading prevails not, hearing may.

Use 5. To teach all those that are believers, not only to read, but to expect and look for in reading, those benefits before mentioned; it you do not find those benefits by reading, you read unprofitably and take God's Ordinance in vain.

Now for the ends of his writings which were two:

1. That they might know that they had *eternal life*.

2. That they might *believe in the Name of the Son of God*.

Doct. 2. *Such as do believe on the name of Jesus Christ, by reading the Epistles of John, may come to know they have eternal life.*

1. Because he sets before them, where eternal life is to be found, and that is in Jesus Christ, as vers. 2.

2. He directs them to certain means, whereby they may attain eternal life, A. 1. Confession of sins, 1 Joh. 1. 9. 2. By looking up to Christ as our Propitiation and Advocate, *cap.* 2. 1, 2. By walking in the light, *cap.* 1. 8, 9.

3. He gives certain signs, whereby we may know whether we be in an estate of eternal life. As 1. Walking in the light, *cap.* 1. 7. 2. Keeping his Commandments, *cap.* 2. 3. 3. Purifying ourselves from sin, *cap.* 3. 3. 4. Love of our brethren, *cap.* 3. 14. 5. Boldness towards God, *cap.* 3. 21.

Use 1. This may be a just refutation of the Popish Doctrine, that faith we cannot know that we have eternal life; but if that be true, then St. *John's* ends in writing these Epistles is disappointed, and not only St. *John*, but the holy Ghost himself is deceived: Whereas they tell us we cannot have a certain, but conjectural knowledge only, there is a contradiction; for if a man saith he knows such a thing, it implies he is certain of it, or else he speaks falsely; and were it for nothing else, this doctrine of doubtings were a sufficient discouragement against their Religion; that Church that trains up herself, and children to be ignorant of their Father, is not the true Spouse of Christ, but an Harlot, and a sign the Church of *Rome* hath mixed herself with so many false gods, that she knows not of whom her children are begot.

Use 2. It condemns their excluding the vulgar sort from reading the Scriptures, for if by them we may come to know Christ, and that we have eternal life; then take away them, and you take away a principal means of salvation.

Use 3. For such Christians as are doubtful of their estate, above all the writings of the Apostle read this Epistle, it was the main scope of St. *John*, in this Epistle, that their joy might be full, and that they might know they had eternal life; here you shall find good ground-work of thy good estate.

Use 4. To teach all believers to know what they have profited by reading; it's an usual thing to content our selves, if we do but read a chapter, and pray every morning, and our conscience is not satisfied if we omit it; but a man may read and pray, and yet get no good, but if you would read profitably, so read *that you may know that you have eternal life*, and when you have so
read,

This verse declares a double end of St. *John's* writing this Epistle, one was, that believes might know they have eternal life, of which before; the second end was, *That they might believe on the Name of the Son of God.*

Doct. 3. *It's one of the holy ends, and scope of the holy Scripture, that believers might believe.*

St. *John* when he wrote his Gospel, it was for this end, *That they might believe,* Joh. 20. 31. For though believing be already wrought, yet they that do believe had need to believe more, the Word is the mighty power of God to lead believers from faith to faith, Rom. 1. 17. that is, from one degree of faith to another, Phil. 1. 25. As that is not only faith, but increase of faith, so 1 Thes. 3. 10. there is not any of God's servants, even the most exemplary Christians, but there is some defect in their faith, which had need to be supplied, and this may be the first reason.

Reas. 1. Taken from the defects that are found in believers, the supply whereof they had need to increase and grow up to. 1. They had need to grow up to the belief of some principles which they believed not before, and this is a defect in the objects of faith; many of the Apostles believed not the Resurrection of Christ; nay *Thomas* said, he should not believe, *except he should see the print of his nails,* Joh. 10. 25. So many of the *Corinthians* believed not the Resurrection of the dead, a main Article of Faith: the *Thessalonians* lacked this in their Faith, they thought Christ would then have come suddenly, and therefore began to lay aside all care in their outward callings, which *Paul* informs them in, 2 Thes. 2, The *Galatians* are wanting in believing justification by faith, and therefore *Paul* writes that Epistle to them.

2. There is something wanting in the habit, or in the grace of faith, therefore the Apostle prays for the *Colossians*, that they might be rooted and established in the faith, Col. 2. 7. even as a young plant may be so weak, that the least rub may root it up; so a Christian may have some rooting in Christ, and yet want sound rootedness, and firmness of faith, there may be a want of that confidence and full assurance that is required.

3. Faith may be wanting in the sense of it, for a Christian may have attained to a great measure of lively faith, and yet be in doubt whether he have any true faith or not; now that we may be assured of it, he had need to be built up in faith; as the poor man said to Christ, *Lord I believe, help mine unbelief,* he believed, and yet knew not well whether he should call it faith, or unbelief, therefore Phil. 1. 25. *Paul* trusted that he should continue with them for the furtherance and joy of their faith; now so long as a Christi-

an is doubtful of his faith, he hath little joy or comfort in it, therefore they had need to be brought on further, that their faith may be a joyful faith.

4. Faith had need to be increased in regard of the acts of it, which are persuasion and trust on Christ, those had need to be increased. *Peter* when he walked on the water, he was persuaded Christ would save him, but when the winds began to be boisterous he was afraid and began to sink, but Christ reacheth forth his hand to help him, and reproveth him, *O thou of little faith*, Mat. 14. 30, 31. The two Disciples that went to *Emmaus* and were talking of Christ's death, they said one to another, *We trusted it had been he that should have delivered Israel*, we so trusted, but now are afraid we are deceived, for they looked that the Messiah should abide for ever, but what saith Christ to them? *O fools and slow of heart to believe*, so that faith had need to increase in the acts of it.

5. Faith, had need to grow in the fruits of it, though faith may be of some strength and comfort, yet it may be much wanting in the fruits of it; one fruit of faith is love, Gal. 5. 6. Now a Christian may leave his first love, and so far, that withal he may lose his first works, Revel. 2. 2, 3. there-

fore

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fore a Christian had need to grow in the intrese of the fruits of faith, in their love and fruitfulness, that their love may abound, and that their last works may be more then the first.

Reas. 2. From the marvellous power that is in the Scripture to supply all thore defects of faith; in the Scripture, whether read preached, conferred, examined, or meditated on.

1. The Scripture preached, *they are the mighty power of God unto salvation*, Rom, 1. 16, 17. All their writings are good helps this way, but yet their personal presence, their preaching much more effectual. Therefore *Paul* prays that he might come to the *Thessalonians*, that he might perfect what was lacking in their faith, 1 Thess. 3. 10, 11.

2. The Word conferred about is very effectual to the increase of faith, Luk. 24. 27, When the two Disciples were conferring together, and their hearts were sad, Christ he comes in with them and warmed their hearts, so that their faith was confirmed, that when they returned to *Jerusalem*, they told the Disciples, *The Lord is risen indeed*, Now they made no more doubt of it. And you know how effectual *Philip's* conference was with the Eunuch, he was brought on thereby to believe with all his heart, Act. 8. 37.

3. The Word read is of that force that by reading ye may believe, Joh. 20. 31. By reading the Scriptures believers are established in the Faith.

4. The Word examined; that is, when hearers bring things to the balance of the Sanctuary, when they try the Ministers doctrine by the Scriptures, whether it be sound or no. This is of special use to farther our faith; nay, to beget faith sometimes in those that believed not before, as it did in the *Bereans*, Act. 17. 11, 12. They taking this course, many of them believed. Many times when a Christian hears the Word of God, his heart fails him, he is not well persuaded of what is taught him in private, he meditates on it, and examines it; why, oft-times the Word examined works and increaseth faith, when the Word preached did not.

5. The Word meditated on is of special use to increase our faith, to make a Christian more comfortable, and fruitful, and rooted in his faith, Psal. 1. 3, 4. When a man so delights in the Word, that he meditates thereon day and night, such a one shall be as a tree planted by the river side, well rooted, well watered, and so he becomes to be very fruitful in every season, his leaf fades not, but in every condition of life he brings forth seasonable fruit.

Use 1. Hence we may take a good tryal of a faithful Minister, and a faithful Christian. We see St. *John*, when he had begun faith in them, he would not leave them so, as thinking that what he had begun, God would perfect, and therefore he would leave them and turn to others. This was sar from St. *John's* practise, and so it should be far from every faithful Minister, to leave believers after they have begun faith in them; but their care ought to be, as to be desirous first to grow themselves in faith, *Lord increase our faith*, Luk. 17. 5. so to confirm and establish others in the faith. So for Christians, it's a sign of a good heart, not only to labour for truth of faith, but also for growth of faith, that as the Apostle prayed, so ought every Christian to pray, *Lord increase our faith*, or as the poor man cried to Christ, *Lord I believe; help my unbelief*. A man had need of a great deal of faith to be so plentiful in love, and to heal offences, as Christ requires, for on this ground the Apostle prayed for increase of faith, Luk, 17. 3, 4, 5. So we have many temptations to meet with; therefore a Christian had need of strong faith. *Above all things take the shield of faith*, Eph. 6. 6, the shield that covers the whole body. No man would willingly go into the field with a weak shield, but that had need to be metal of proof to supply a man at every turn, and every occasion, it's a sign of a lively faith, if it be a growing faith.

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2. It reproves the sacrilegious, ungodly, and uncharitable practise of the Church of *Rome*, that take away the Scripture from the people, St. *John* writes those things that they might believe; why, then take away the Scripture, you are no better then Infidels, that hinder the faith of God's elect; And as they are injurious to the souls of the people, so they cast the imputation of ignorance upon God, as if God had been mistaken when he sent his Word, that believers might believe, and they think that reading the Word would make them heretics.

Use 3. For you that do believe, be frequent in reading the Word, for to you it was written, that you might believe. Meditate thereon day and night. The blessed will find a time to meditate on God. Word every day, and every night, and this you shall find very effectual to the increase of your faith. The Ki. himself, whose employments were greatest, the Lord laid a charge on him to read in the Book of the Law all the days of his life, Deut. 17. 14. And much more is every private man bound to it. If these God hath sanctified, to help us in our belief, then as ever you would believe, be diligent in hearing, reading, conferring, examining, and meditating on the Word, all these are notable means to increase and enlarge our faith; therefore if this be wanting in faith, consider whether thou hast not been wanting in this practise, take away the Word, and you take away the fuel of your faith. And for you that believe not, though this Scripture was not so much written for you, yet because hearing is the only way of faith, Rom. 10. 17. be diligent in hearing the Word preached, Prov. 8. 34, 35, *Blessed is he that heareth me, for whoso sinneth me, findeth life.* And when you have heard, be careful to search and examine whether the thing preached be agreeable to God's Word. By this means many that believed not before, have been taught to believe, and be careful to confer on the Word. The Lord hath sanctified the Word preached, and the Word examined, and the Word conferred about, to the begetting of faith, and the Word read to the increasing of faith; therefore be frequent in these, and withal join hearty prayer to God, 1 Tim. 4. 4, 5. that he would open thine eyes, and cause thee to understand, and bow thine heart to imbrace every truth, that so every ordinance may be effectual to thee; to the begetting and Increasing of faith in thee.

1 JOHN 5. 14, 15.

And this is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us.

And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.

VErs. 13. he had shewed a doublescope of his writing; the latter was, that they might *believe on the Name of the Son of God*. This he exhorts Christians to vers. 14, 15, 16. by three argaments.

1. From the confidence such may have of the hearing of their petition, vers. 14.

2. From the certain knowledge such may have that their prayers are granted.

3. From the prevalency of our prayers with God, that as we shall be assured of the granting of our petitions, so we shall thereby obtain life for our Brother, that hath not sinned a sin unto death.

Doct. *A prayer that is made well, never speeds ill: Or thus,*

A prayer made according to God's will. God will grant according to our will.

Notable is that encouragement Christ gave to the woman, Matth. 15. 26. *O woman! great is thy faith, Be it unto thee even as thou wilt.* As if God would let such into his privy treasury, and grant them what they would.

For

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For explication.

Q *What is it to pray according to God's will?* These two things it holds forth at the first view.

1. When we pray for such things as are agreeable to God's will, *viz.* his revealed will, we should ask nothing but what he commands us. In the Lord's prayer Christ tells us what he would have us pray for, for those things we have warrant to pray.

2. Whatever we ask, we ought to ask with submission of our wills to God's will. So did Christ himself. Matt. 26. 39. *Not as I will, but as thou wilt.* But for further enlargement.

1. A man is said to pray according to God's will, partly as his will is expressed in his Word, and partly as his will is revealed in our hearts.

For the will of God expressed in his Word:

1. God requires that we should ask for nothing but what he commands us to do, and therefore had need to pray for; whatever duty God requires of us, that we are to pray for. So did *David*, Ps. 119. 4, 5.

2. Whatsoever we pray for, God commands us to ask it in the Name of Jesus Christ, Joh. 16. 22, 23, 24.

To ask in the Name of Christ requires two graces of us, *Humility* and *Faith*.

Humility of spirit in prayer is expressed in four acts.

1. We acknowledge our selves less than the least of God's mercies, Gen. 32. 10. So that if God should grant him nothing, he would justify God.

2. Another act of Humility, is to pray in sense of our insufficiency to think a good thought, much more to pray according to God's will, 2 Cor. 3. 8. Rom. 8. 6.

3. A man prays in humilily, when he doth not desire God to satisfy any of his sinful lusts, but that God's will may be done, Matth. 26. vers. 39.

4. To pray in humility, is to make mention of no meditation in our prayers, bul only of Christ, Col. 2. 18. They made a shew of humiliation, as not being so bold as to have immediate access to God, therefore put up our prayers through the mediation of some Angel; but to go lower then God allows, is but pride of heart.

2. To pray in the Name of Christ, is to pray in Faith. Which is expressed in four acts.

1. Faith directs us to put up our prayers only to him on whom we believe, Rom. 10. 14. But we believe only in God, therefore neither Saints, nor Angels, nor the Mother of Christ, the Virgin *Mary*, are to be prayed to, but we are to pray to our Father only, Gal. 4. 5, 6. Rom. 8. 15.

2. Faith makes us come with some child-like confidence to God as our Father,

1. By Faith we come to God as our heavenly Father in Christ, and well affected to Christ, as loving us himself, Joh. 16. 36.

2. We come to him as a Father Almighty, full or goodness, readier to give then we to ask,

3. A third act of faith is, for a man to come truly cleaving unto Christ, not standing in demure, whether we had best leave our lusts or no, whether we were both become altogether Christians or no. This wavering cannot stand with faith, for it's faith a wavering as whereby he is *ἀνὴρ δίψυχος*, *a double-hearted man*, an heart for God, and an heart for the world; sometimes for God, sometimes for his own lusts. Let not this man think he shall receive any thing, Jam. 1. 6, 7, 8.

4. A fourth act of faith, is to believe that what we have asked according to God's will, he will certainly grant, Matt. 11. 24. So far as you have asked with submission to his will, so far will he grant according to your

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wills, and though he deserve, yet make account your prayers are heard, that he will either grant what you ask, or what he knows will be better for you, and as welcome to you; for God looks not so much at the petition as at the end you aim at it importuning such a blessing, and that he will grant even when he seems to deny us our petitions, Heb. 5. 9. Christ was heard in that he prayed for. Why, how was he heard? Did he not drink of the cup he prayed against? Yet, he was heard:

1. Christ's will was that the Father's will might be fulfilled, not his; in this he was heard.

2. It's said he was heard in that he feared; though he did drink of the cup, yet he was saved from those fears and terrors that overwhelmed him.

3. The main end of Christ was, that his Church might be redeemed, which God granted; so God granted the end of his petition, though not the thing it self. So *Moses* prayed earnestly that he might go over and see that good land, God told him he should not go over, yet God let him see that good Land as well as if he had gone over. If we submit our wills to God's will, and pray in humility and faith, make account God seriously ponders the aim of your hearts in begging such a mercy, and though he seems to cross such your petitions, and to delay them, yet he knows how to grant the end of your petitions by other means then you conceive, even then when God is displeas'd with our weak and unworthy prayers, as he was with *Moses*, Deut. 3. 22, to 28. Yet then he knows how to grant what we aimed at. And this magnifies the name of Christ, that thou in our own name we should never find acceptance, yet in Christ's name he will grant our petitions.

2. We pray according to the will of God, when we pray according to his will revealed in our hearts, *in the spirit of him that prays*, Jude v. 20. Eph. 6. 18. Now we pray according to God's will revealed in the spirit,

1. When the Spirit raiseth our hearts to reach forth sensibly with longings and breathings after the blessings we want. This *Hannah* poured forth her soul unto God, 1 Sam. 1. 15. She expressed not so much in words, as in the reaching and breathing of her spirit after the blessing she prayed for. So Isa. 20. 9. *With my soul within me have I desired thee*; as if there were another Spirit in his spirit. When we pray in a further measure of strength then our own hearts could reach to, such a prayer is of the Spirit.

2. When we pray with fervency and earnestness, Jam. 5. 16. This is that which is called wrestling and striving with God, Rom. 15. 30. When

our hearts are so set on God's favour, as they will not let go, till we have prevailed, Gen. 32. 10. & 24. 25, 26. Expounded, Hos. 12. 4.

3. We pray in the Spirit, when we persevere in praying and are importunate with God, Luk. 18. 1, to 10. This is expressed by the importunity of the Widow that prevailed with the unjust Judge: Shall a sinful Judge, a mortal man be prevailed with by the importunity of a poor Widow, and will not God much more avenge his elect that cry to him day and night? You may think God regards not your prayers, but the poor Widow did not more trouble this Judge, then God is troubled with your prayers, so that he cannot rest until he have fulfilled your desires. To the same purpose, Luk. 11. 5, to 11. Though God seem to be asleep, yet if you continue knocking, God will open unto you; therefore when you have a good petition in hand, never give over, but pray continually, and watch thereunto, Eph. 6. 18. Till he answer. To what end doth he call it knocking, but to imply that our prayers make as much noise in heaven, as men do by knocking at our doors? Matt. 7. 7. So the woman of *Syropænicia*, she knock'd and continued knocking, and would not have a denial, so that Christ answers her, *O woman! Great is thy faith, be it unto thee as thou wilt:* As if he were overwrestled by her importunity, to grant her petitions.

Reas.

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Reas. 1. Because when we pray according to God's will, he fulfils his own will when he grants our petitions. It's God's will that we should pray so, now God's will must be fulfilled.

2. Because when we pray according to the will of God, in the Name of Christ, our prayer is Christ's prayer; as if you send a child or servant to a friend for any thing in your name, the request is yours, and he that denies your child or servant in this case, denies you; so no more can God deny a prayer put up in Christ's name, then he can deny Christ himself, Joh. 16. 23–24.

Reas. 3. From the intercession of the Spirit in such a prayer; no prayer, put up in the manner aforesaid, but is the prayer of the holy Ghost, and God knows the meaning of his Spirit, Rom. 8. 26. God knows our prayers would be weak and cold, except there were another Spirit besides our own; if therefore he discern his own Spirit in our prayers, he cannot deny his Spirit; nay further, as the Spirit makes intercession for us, so Christ himself prays for us, Rom. 8. 34. He takes up all our prayers for us as the great Master of requests, and he doth so perfume them, and take out all Weakness out of them, that he presents them as a sweet odour to God, Rev. 8. 3. Even as if a

younger Brother should go and gather a Posie for his Father, be out of ignorance gathers many weeds withall, but his elder Brother takes it, and pulls out all the weeds, and perfumes the flowers with sweet water, and then, presents it to his Father in his Brother's name: so Christ sees many sinful weaknesses in our prayers, but he takes away all unfavouriness, and perfumes them, and so presents them to God, and he accepts them.

Use 1. As ever we desire that our selves or ours should speed well, let both our selves and ours learn to pray well, you have enough if you can but pray well, you can but speak and have, desire and it shall be granted, open thy mouth wide and God will fill it; as long as you have an heart opened to pray, you shall want no blessings, therefore above all blessings beg of God a spirit of prayer. Now that you may pray well,

1. Take heed that you be not of a wavering double mind, Jam. 1.6,7,8. partly for God, partly for your selves; pray with a single heart, Act. 11. 21. that is,

1. Give up your hearts wholly to God.

2. Be careful to keep all God's commandment, for as we hearken to God's commandments, so will he hearken to our prayers; if we observe his words, he will observe ours.

2. Have respect to pray according to God's will, in faith and humility.

Use 1. For them that do pray according to God's will, be assured that God will grant your petitions according to your wills, God hath spoken it, and therefore he will not deny it. Notable is that place, Dan. 9. 23. & ch. 10. 12. At the beginning of his supplication the commandment came forth, only God was bringing it about in the Court of *Persia*. The King oft-times grants a petition the first day it is put up, but it must pass many hands before it come to the Subject; so the very first day we put up a lawful prayer, God grants it, there be many means to bring it about, which we must wait for.

Doct. *Such as do believe on the Name of Christ for salvation may come to have confidence and knowledge of the hearing and having all their petitions.*

For explication.

How do these two great benefits, confidence and knowledge of granting our prayers, spring from what St. *John* hath written in this Epistle?

Ans. Five things concur to this confidence, and all of them insisted upon by St. *John* in this Epistle.

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1. Our adoption expressed by St. *John*, ch. 3. 1. He wonders at the admirable love of God, not only in debasing of himself to behold things here below as *David* did, Psal. 113. 4, to 8, but in looking on us poor earth-worms, and raising us up to be Sons and Daughters to God: So that this is the first ground of our confidence in prayer, *viz.* our adoption, that we are Sons of God. Gal. 4. 5, 6. Rom. 8. 15. To whom may a Son come more boldly then to his Father? And what assures him more of the grant of his petitions, then that he is his Son?

2. Christ's advocacy breeds confidence in us, 1 Joh. 2. 1, 2. Christ pleads with his Farher on our behalf for the hearing our petitions, and for the granting of what we want. An advocate puts the petition, that it may be was rudely drawn by a man, into a form of law, and so it holds current in Law, so doth Christ with our prayers, he puts them into a right form, and so pleads for us.

3. The atonement or propitiation of Christ, is another cause of confidence, 1 Joh. 2. 2. So that whereas many a Christian may be afraid that his prayers shall never be heard, he is so sinfull and unclean; *Why*, (saith St *Joh.*) *If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, and he is the propitiation for our sins.* He is not only an advacate, but a propitiation, to make atonement for our sins, that they shall not hinder our acceptance.

4. The anointment of the Spirit, whereby we know all things, 1 Joh. 3. 20. it a ground of much confidence, that though we be blind and dull, and know not what God doth for us in our prayers, or how they speed in heaven; why, Christ like an advocate sends down his Spirit, and lets us know how all things speed. *This unction teacheth us all things*, 1 Cor. 2. 12.

Q. *How doth the Spirit certify us of the hearing of our petitions?*

1. By helping us to pray; for we know our own hearts are dead and straight, not able to put up any good prayer, if therefore the Spirit come like oil, and make us pray affectionately, and sensibly, we know a prayer well made cannot speed ill, a prayer made by God's Spirit cannot but be heard, for God knows the meaning of his Spirit, Rom. 8. 26.

2. This Spirit puts in us a perswasion of faith, that what, we pray for God will answer. Matth. 11. 23, 24. And so God gives us an *Amen* in our hearts. Psal. 6. 8. *David* was in a sore trial and affliction, he prays to God then, Vers. 8, *Away from me all ye workers of iniquity, for the Lord hath heard the voice of my weeping.* In the midst of his mourning, this unction fills him with a perswasion of the granting of his prayers; and so God oftentimes satisfies the heart of a Christian with this perswasion. *Hannah* when she had

poured out her spirit before God, and *Eli* had said to her, *The Lord grant thy petition thou askest of him*: Why, she took this as a voice from heaven, and so she went away comfortably, and she feared that petition no more, 1 Sam. 1. 16, 17.

2. There is another act of faith besides perswasion, and that is a constant wrestling against all discouragements which come betwixt us and our prayers i, famous is that example of the woman of *Syrophænicia*, Matth, 15. 26, 27, 28. If the holy Ghost doth but give us so much resolution, as not to be overwearyed with difficulties, then *Be it unto thee as thou wilt*.

3. This Spirit works as a Spirit of hope, and this stirs us up to wait patiently on God, till he answer; our carnal spirits would be ready to say, *Wherefore should I wait on the Lord any longer*, as that wicked King did, but now a spirit of hope waits on God, till God shall give an answer of peace, Psal. 52. 1. Psal. 130. 2 last vers. Psal. 229. 1. When God gives us spirits to wait on him, he seals up unto us the grant of our petitions. A wise Prince if a petition be put up that is lawful, and he bid me wait for it, I count it granted; so if I put up a prayer, and God give me an heart to wait for it, I make account he will grant it.

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4. This Spirit is a Spirit of fear, Psal. 145. 9. Dost thou walk in thy Christian course depending upon Christ, reverencing his name and ordinances? Why, *God will fulfil the desires of them that fear him*, Jer. 32. 40. And so he keeps covenant with us. If God give us an awful reverent heart, that keeps us from despairing from God, and God from departing from us, then the Lord will be near when we call upon him, and this is from the unction of the Spirit which makes us profit in all our ways, Isa. 11. 2, 3.

5. This is a Spirit of obedience, and that gives us good assurance of the hearing of our petitions, 1 Joh. 3. 21. For as we harken to God, so God harkens to us, Prov. 28. 9. *he that turneth away his ear from hearing the Law, his prayer shall be abominable*. But if you harken to God, God will harken to you, Judg. 9. 7. If we say, *Speak Lord, for thy servant heareth*; 1 Sam. 3.5. then what we speak God will hear. An obedient Christian is a powerful petitioner, mighty in prayer.

6. From the root of confidence, which springs partly from God's nature, partly from faith in Christ, partly from the unction of the Spirit; now for those things we see many promises belong to us, our adoption assures us of God's nature, that he is a merciful Father's; our Father assures us that Christ is our advocate; the unction of the Spirit breeds in us experience that we

have the Son; that we are Sons, it assures us of our election, vocation, and salvation; and if it assure us of greater matters, then much more of the grant of our prayers, Rom. 8. 32. But now Knowledge is a further work, knowledge springs either from sense or experience; How are the rules of Art found out, but by frequent experience? Now then this unction of the Spirit which gives us experience, not only gives us confidence; but knowledge, that our prayers are heard, Eph. 3. 19. This Spirit of God in our hearts gives us both sensible and experimental knowledge that our prayers are heard. This Spirit of God in our hearts, gives us both sensible and experimental knowledge of God's favour, and breeds certain knowledge of the hearing and having our petitions granted; *hearing*, that is, of God's accepting them, *Verba sensus cum affectu, & effecta sum intelligenda*; and *having*, that is, of the performing and fulfilling of our desires, chiefly of the ends and aims of our prayers.

Use 1. Serves to take off our hearts from confidence from all things in the world, and to believe on the Name of Jesus Christ; why, because hence you shall not only be assured of salvation, (which yet is more then all the travails, and pilgrimages, and devotions of our Fore-fathers could reach unto) but by believing on the Name of Christ, you shall have confidence that all your prayers are heard.

Use 2. For them that do believe in Christ, here is a method whereby they may be assured of the granting there petitions.

1. Make sure your adoption, for that breeds much assurance in prayer.

2. Meditate much on Christ, that Christ your advocate, and atonement for your sin.

3. Labour for a Spirit of faith, and hope, and fear and obedience, and so you shall grow up to confidence and knowledge that your prayers are granted. Many a Christian falls short of this confidence, because he considers not who helps him to make his prayers, who makes intercession for him, or else he is wanting in some of those graces, and so his prayers are full of doubts.

Use 3. Of consolation to all that believe on Christ; why *This is our confidence, that what soever we ask according to God's will he heareth us.* How comfortable then is the condition of a believer? Be his estate never so miserable, his wants never so great, if he can but pray well, he may go on comfortably.

I JOHN

1 John 5:16,17

If any man see his Brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death, I do not say that he shall pray for it.

All unrighteousness is sin, and there is a sin not unto death.

THESE words contain a third motive to stir us up to believe on Christ, and that is from another benefit, we shall thereby be enabled to bestow on our Brethren, and that is, *our prayer for him shall give him life.*

The words contain,

1. A promise to such as shall pray for their Brother that sins a sin not unto death, *he shall give him life.*

2. An exception, or restraining a man's prayer, *There is a sin unto death, I do not say he shall pray for it.*

3. The prevention of an objection, vers. 17. *All unrighteousness is sin; and, the wages of sin is death,* Rom. 6. ult. And therefore this promise is of none effect, for every sin is unto death. Unto this St. John answers, vers. 17.

1. By granting *all unrighteousness is sin, yet there is a sin not unto death;* not but that every sin deserves death, but every sin doth not cut off all hope of recovery, but as Christ said of *Lazarus* his sickness, Joh. 11. 4. *it was not unto death,* yet he died; but he means, it was not irrecoverable, because he was raised to life again: so every sin is unto death, but every sin is not irrecoverable, but that a man may be raised up out of it into life.

Doct. *A believing Christian is not to hide his eyes from beholding and observing the sins of his Brethren.*

If any man see his Brother sin, he may see it, and ought to see it, Gal. 4. 14. St. Paul did not turn away his eyes from seeing *Peter's* dissembling, but took notice of it, and reprov'd him, Heb. 3. 12, 13. *Take heed lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief.* He speaks not only of a man's self, but of his Brother, *that ye have not an evil heart,* and therefore he propounds a means to help them, and that is *exhorting one another.* This the Apostle exhorts us to, Heb. 10. 24.

Reason 1. From the love we owe to our Brethren. God requires larger love towards our Brethren, then towards our Ox or Ass, and yet God requires

that if we see them lying under their burden, we should help them up, Deut. 22. 4. Now if God require so much help to their beast, much more to our Brethren's souls, that if we see them going astray, or sinking under the burden of sin, we should raise them up again.

2. From the love we owe to ourselves; this benefit we shall reap a by it, we shall learn to keep better watch our selves, when we see our Brethren fall, Rom. 11. 20. We must not by their falls grow high-minded, and pride our selves that we are not so bad as they, but their falls must be our fears.

Q. *With what eyes should we look at the falls of our Brethren?*

Ans. 1. Look not at them with a partial or hypocritical eye, Mat. 7:3, 4, 5. But we must so look at the mote in their eye, as to see a beam in our own; we should see as great sins in our selves, or greater, if God did not restrain us, for we all have the same root of evil, and should break out into as bad as any, if God did not hold us back.

2. We must not observe them with a curious and censorious eye, for that is an inbred curiosity in us, that we love to be prying into other men's sins, not to heal them, but to censure them. This St. *James* reproveth, ch. 3. 1, 2, 3. *Be not many Masters*; that is, be not of a Master-like spirit, not busy in every man's matters, and censorious of them.

3. Look

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3. Look not at them with an envious, malicious eye. This *Jeremiah* complains of, ch. 20:10. *All my familiars watched for my haltings*. This an envious eye, when a man watches for an advantage to undermine his Brother.

4. There is a wanton eye:

1. A man is not humbled at the sight of his Brother's sins, but puffed up by it, like the proud Pharisee, Luke 18. 9, 10. he built his comfort on the falls of others. This the Apostle reprehends in the Church of *Corinth*, 1 Cor. 5. 2. That there was fornication among them, and yet they were not humbled but puffed up, they magnified themselves that they were honest men.

2. A man sees his Brother's sin with a wanton eye, when he thereby grows to imitate him; if such a man came into such a course, I hope I need not stick at it. This God grievously complains of in the Church of *Judah*, that though she saw what her treacherous Sister *Israel* had done, and that God had therefore cast her off, yet she feared not, but went and played the Harlot also, *Jeremiah* 3. 7, 8. Now all those heads of seeing our Brother's sins ought to be far from us.

What use should we make of our Brethren's falls?

1. Let their falls affect us with an holy fear and jealousy of our own hearts, in that we have a deceitful heart, subject to the like. This use *Paul* would have the Church of the *Romans* to make of the fall of the Church of *Israel*, *Romans* 11:20.

2. Look at them with such an eye as may move you to pity thy Brother; if he be gone astray, bring him back; if he lie under the burden of sin, help him up, and if thou canst not have opportunity to speak to him, yet pray heartily for him, that is the frame of heart of every loving Christian, to be compassionate of his Brother's misery.

Obj. *Doth not the holy Ghost say, Love covereth a multitude of sins?* 1 Peter 4. 8.

Answ. True, it covers them, but how?

1. With a mantle of wisdom, not so to cover them as to skin over their wounds, but so cover them as that they may be covered before God and man, *James* 5:19, 20. This is a right covering, when a man takes such a course as that his Brother's sins may be covered from God's eyes, and from the conscience of the sinner, that it may not be overwhelmed with them, *Psalm* 32. 1, 2. God would have us cover them not with a mantle of flattery, but with a healing plaster that may cure them.

2. We much cover their sins with a mantle of faithfulness, that is, not to blaze them abroad to their defaming, but as if our Brothers beast lay under his burden, and we were not able to help him up alone, we get the help of others; this is faithfulness, no further to reveal their infirmities, then to such as may help them, *Proverbs* 11:13. And yet we may so reveal them in this kind to others, as may be sinful, if it be done in an insulting, scorning manner, *Genesis* 9: 22, 23. *Ham* told his Brethren of their Father's nakedness, but he did it in a scornful manner; beside, he might have covered him himself, and never told them, and therefore *Noah* made him a curse. This God requires of us, if we be able to heal an infirmity our selves, then to let it go no further; if not, then to get the help of others, but not in a scornful manner, but in a spirit of grief and holy fear.

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3. Cover them with a mantle of compassion, that if they shall turn again, and say, It repents them, be ready to forgive them, even as God for Christ's sake forgave you, *Luke* 17:13, 14. *Ephesians* 4:2 last verse.

Obj. 2. *If a man thus willing to observe other men's sins, we shall be counted busybodies, and meddlers in other men's dioceses.*

Ans. True, we shall be busy, but yet not where we have nothing to do, God lays the charge upon us to have regard of our Brethren's carriages; if we keep the true bounds of observing them, named before, we do not go beyond our commission.

Obj. 3. *But I shall be more busy then I shall have thank for, I shall be worse, and he never the better.*

Answ. True, for a while it may be so, but yet remember what *Solomon* saith, Proverbs 28:28, *He that rebuketh a man, afterward shall find more favour than he that flattereth with the tongue;* but suppose thou shouldst lose his favour, yet thou shalt have favour with God.

Doctrine 2. *Upon the sight of our brother's sins, a faithful man is to pray for him.*

So *Moses* did pray for the people when they had sinned, Exodus 32:30, 31. Either pardon them, or let me have no mercy, Thus God would have *Job* pray for his friends, *Job* 42:7, 8. So did *Jeremiah*, ch. 13:17. Our Saviours example is a full pattern, Luke 23:24. *Father forgive them, they know not what they do.* So *Stephen* the first Martyr, with a loud voice prayed for his adversaries, Acts 7:60. *Lord lay not this sin to their charge.*

Reason 1. From the compassion we owe to our Brethren, we are bound to pray for them in sickness, Psalm 35:13. or in any other calamity, Psalm 141:5. How much more in the calamity of sin, which is the greatest calamity that can be.

2. We are bound to exhort and reprove them, now neither will do good without prayer, 1 Tim. 4:4, 5.

3. From the desperate condition of sin, which is such, that none alone is able to help them, except God do it. It's the work of an Almighty power to redeem us from any sin, Psalm 130. *ult.* Sin is of a poisonous nature, some poisons take away our eyes, and some benumb us; so sin takes away our eyes that we cannot see our condition, and so hardens us, that not any thing can help us but God, and therefore to be prayed to for help.

4. From the displeasure of God against men, if he see none to stand up and intercede for their Brethren, Isaiah 56:16, 17.

5. From the benefit that befalls God's servants, if he see them praying for their Brethren. *Job's* prayer for his friends was the rise of his deliverance, *Job* 42:8, 9, Isaiah 18:19. If ever God restore comfort to those we pray for, we shall be sharers in their comforts, God will restore comfort to them and their mourners.

Doct. 3. *A faithful Christian praying for his Brother fallen into any sin, shall obtain life and peace for him.*

If any man see his Brother sin a sin not unto death, he shall pray for him, and shall give him life. He that prays for him shall be an instrument to convey life unto him; or God himself moved by his prayer, shall give him life; it's all one, he shall give him life of justification, sanctification and consolation. This is evident by other examples, when the *Israelites* had committed a great sin, so that God in his displeasure had threatened to destroy them, yet at *Moses* earnest request, he spared them, and *Aaron*, Deuteronomy 9:15–21. *Job* prayed for his friends, and the Lord accepted him. Our Saviour's prayer for his enemies is thought to be the cause why *Peter's* Sermon was effectual to the con-

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version of three thousand at once, *Stephen's* prayer made way for the conversion of *Paul*.

Reason 1. From the pleasure God takes to knit the members of his body together, now no better means to knit them then to make them useful one to another, 1 Corinthians 12:21, 22. So *Job's* friends should not prevail by their own prayers, but they should all be beholding to *Job* whom they had wronged.

2. From the ointment of Christ that is poured on the head of every believer. *This honour have all his Saints*, that they shall become intercessors for others. What is said of Christ, Romans 8:34. the same word is used of our prayers, 2 Timothy 4:1; James 5:15.

Use. It's a ground of much encouragement to all that see their Brethren sin a sin not unto death, to pray for them; be it a sin of covetousness; nay, be it a sin of frowardness, which is of a deep nature, yet the Lord promiseth to hear us for them, Isaiah 57:17, 18.

Motives.

1. The Lord will be angry with you, if you neglect it. Is it nothing for you to see your Brethren lie under the burden of sin.

2. It will increase your comfort, if you pray heartily for them God will return all your calamities, Job 42.

3. None can help but God, therefore pray to him.

4. This is a marvellous benefit, that thy prayers shall be an instrument to raise the dead to life.

Obj. *Many pray for their Brethren, yet fall short of giving them life. What say you to Abraham's prayer for Ishmael, Gen. 17. 8. and Samuel's for Saul? 1 Sim. 31. 7.*

Answ. 1. It would be confirmed whether he be a Brother thou prayest for; *Abraham* prayed for such a one as was neither yet gracious, nor belonged to the election of grace, at is likely, for it's prrequired, *Samuel* prayed for *Saul*, but God tells him he had rejected him.

2. Consider whether you use the other means that God requires in your places. *David* no doubt prayed for his Sons, yet he neglected other means as it's said of *Adonijah*, that his Father never displeased him at any time, saying, *Why hast thou done so? 1 Kings 1. 6.*

3. A man may pray, but it may be without faith or fervency, for that's required, *Jam. 5. 17.* If we be wanting in none of these, God will make good undoubtedly that which he hath here promised.

Verse 16. latter part.

There is a sin unto death, &c.

These words contain an exception from his former direction, that in case we see our Brother sin a sin unto death. *I do not say he shall pray for it.*

There is therefore a sin unto death.

Indeed every sin is mortal, no sin venial, *Romans 6:23.* There is no sin but deserves death, but yet there is a sin not unto death; that is, there is no ordinary sin but may be forgiven, that therefore is a sin unto death, that not only deserves death, but doth certainly and inevitably procure death.

Doctrine. *There is a sin that not only in itself is deadly, but that irrecoverably procures everlasting death, Matthew 12:31,32; Mark 3:22).*

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What is this sin unto death?

Two things concur to the composition of it:

1. Illumination in the mind.
2. Malice in the heart.

The Apostle joins them together, *Hebrews 10:26.* If they sin wilfully, maliciously, after they have received the knowledge of the truth (which is called *enlightening*, *Hebrews 6:4.*) then there remains no more sacrifice for sin.

1. Such a knowledge of the truth is required, as comes from the illumination of the holy Ghost, when he is clearly allowed let to see the truth of God's

Word, and the goodness of his grace, if after this they sin wilfully, there is no more hope of mercy.

2. There is malice in this sin, that is included when it's called *the sin against the holy Ghost*, Matthew 12:31, 32. which partly expresseth the object against which they sin, which is the Spirit of grace; and the manner, it is done with spite and malice against the known truth. That malice concurs to it, it's evident, Hebrews 10:29. they are said to despise to the Spirit of God; now this is not only contempt and despising, but it's joined likewise with malice and scorn. That is unpardonable, our Saviour testifies, Matthew 12:32; Mark 3:22. Hebrews 6:4,5,6.

Why is this sin so unpardonable?

1. From the mighty strong power of Satan in such a man, because it's ever committed when seven worse than himself, worse than the former, have entered in, after the knowledge of the truth, and reformation of many things, Luke 11:24-27. When a man hath been so enlightened and convinced, that he hath cast out many sinful lusts; if he shall make way for Satan again, by voluntary and wilful commission of sins, then Satan enters with seven other spirits worse than before.

2. Some yield a reason from the order of the Persons in the Trinity. If we sin against the Father, the Son may intercede for us; if we sin against the Son, the holy Ghost may intercede for us; but if we sin against the holy Ghost, there is no other Person to intercede from us; but I rest not in that, for it is certain this sin trespasseth against all the three Persons.

3. From the nature of this sin: It's not a sin of ignorance, for want of knowledge, not a sin of infirmity, nor is it only a sin of presumption, for that may proceed from boldness, rather than malice; but a sin of malice far worse than any of these. *he that despised Moses Law died without mercy, under two or three witness*; that is, that sinned presumptuously, and out of boldness; for sins of ignorance and infirmity, there were sacrifices ordained in the Law; but if a man sinned wilfully, he died without mercy, though his sin were never so small, as gathering of sticks; now therefore, if there was no pardon for such a sin of presumption, *How much sorer punishment is he worthy of, that tramples under foot the blood of the covenant, and doth despise to the Spirit of grace?*

4. From the glory of God's grace. It's the glory of grace that it extends to the pardoning and healing all sins besides; no sin of ignorance or infirmity, but grace can heal, the most presumptuous it can humble, but if a man maliciously despise the Spirit of grace, God that is most jealous of the glory of his grace, will never have it abused by them.

Use 1. Of refutation of some ancient tenets about this sin. The Schoolmen say it is one of six sins, as *Aquinas* reckons them up, either despair, or presumption, or opposing the known truth, or envying the graces of others, or obstinate purpose in sin, or final impenitency; but many of those may be found in those whom God afterward received to mercy. There hath been found despair even in God's own servants, Psalm 31:22. And as for presumption, *Nathan* chargeth *David* that he had *despised the commandments of the*

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Lord. And that was a sin of presumption, Numbers 16:30, 31. for opposing known truth. *Herod* put *John* in prison, and to death; and *Darius* cast *Daniel* into the Lions' den, both against their conscience, and yet neither of them sinned against the holy Ghost, because they were both sorry for it. *Asa* put the Prophet in prison. For envying the graces of others, it was found in *Joshua*, Numbers 11:28, 29. For obstinate purpose in sin, it's found in every one that sins presumptuously, 2 Samuel 24:1-4). For final impenitency, that it is not the sin against the holy Ghost, because St. *John* then would not have given order not to pray for them, for final impenitency cannot be discerned till death, and so St. *John's* direction had been but frivolous.

St. *Austin* taught this sin to be envy, and final impenitence. *Origen*, any sin after Baptism: The *Novatians* took up the same tenet; but that it was an error, is evident, for *Peter* sinned after Baptism, and so are all the sins of God's children; if these were sins against the holy Ghost, who should be saved?

2. Of refutation of *Bellarmino* and *Suarez*, that say, Therefore this sin is said to be unto death, not that it is never pardoned, but not without much difficulty. Whereas it's said to be impossible, Hebrews 6:4. They answer,

1. *Impossible* in *Aristotle* is the same with *difficile*.

2. It's impossible with men, not with God.

But were it a sin that might be pardoned, though with never so much difficulty, yet we ought to pray for it, and so much the more earnestly; therefore, seeing St. *John* dissuades us from the usual remedy against sin, *viz.* prayer, therefore certainly it's a sin unto death, that cannot be pardoned.

3. A third error hence refuted, is of those that conceive this sin is very rarely found, and more hardly to discerned, but why doth St. *John* write to common Christians not to pray for them? a sign they may be found and discerned.

Use 2. To teach all that would live long and see good days, let us take heed of opposing and maligning the known truth. Many have conceived that

this sin hath hardly been found in the world, except in *Julian* the Apostate, and such open enemies of Christ; I wish it were so rare, but are there not too many in the world, that have been enlightened and convinced of the truth of God, that those are the ways and servants of God, and yet rise against them with open spite and disdain, and persecute them with malice and scorn? Is not this sin found too often in the Church? Many indeed of our Saviour's persecutors did it out of ignorance, and our Saviour's prayer was effectual for them, *Father forgive them, they know not what they do*: But there were of them that knew him to be the heir, and said, *Come, let us kill him*, Matthew 21:38. And for such as those, there remains no more sacrifice. It was *David's* prayer, Psalm 57:5. *Be not merciful to any malicious offenders, that transgress without a cause*, Psalm 25:5.

Use 3. It may teach all the servants of God to strengthen themselves against this sin, and to use all good preservatives against this sin unto death.

1. Keep constant fellowship with God's servants, and forsake them not, for that is the rise of the sin, Hebrews 10:25. As long as God keeps in thy heart a love to his people, and a reverent esteem of his grace, it's impossible thou should fall into this sin.

2. Be diligent to add one grace to another, for so thou shall make thy calling and election sure, and shall never fall, 2 Peter 1:5,10. Psalm 73:27, 28).

3. Deck thy heart with an humble and awful respect towards God and his ways, Prov. 28:32. Jeremiah 32:40).

4. Take heed of turning aside to crooked ways, Psalm 125:4, 5. *One sin will draw on another*. Hebrews 12:13. *Make straight steps to your feet, lest that which*

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is lame be turned out of the way. *Saul's* once straining his conscience, brake the back of his profession.

Use 4. To such as fear that they have committed this sin, which is the case of two sorts of Christians.

1. Of such who having found much enlargement, after fall into deadness and slack-heartedness, and all is damped, and therefore they fear they have sinned against the holy Ghost.

2. It is the case of such as have sinned against their consciences.

For the first sort, it's true, a man may sin against the holy Ghost, by vexing, and despising, and damping the Spirit, but yet this is not the sin against the holy Ghost, unless it is done with spite and scorn against God's Spirit.

For the second sort, such indeed as have sinned against their consciences, they have wronged their own souls, and brought much mischief upon themselves; but yet a man may sin against his conscience, and not sin against the holy Ghost; for it may either be done out of infirmity, or boldness, as *Peter's* and *David's* sins were, they sinned not out of spite or malice; if therefore thou fear thou hast committed this sin, this fear argues thou hast not committed it, because thou art afraid and sorry for it.

Again, some answer thus, and say it's not a sin against the holy Ghost unless it be joined with a universal apostasy from the whole Gospel of Christ. Indeed that was a good mark in the primitive Church, when the Church censures were so hot, that such were cast out, and so being cast out, turned open pagans and enemies to Christ, being admitted into the Commonwealth; but now this is not so sure a mark in our times, wherein such a man should not only be excluded from the Church, but from the Commonwealth too; and therefore now they keep themselves from open blaspheming Christ, and so would those former Apostates, had they lived in our days, and others would do as they did, fly out as openly, had they lived in their days; and therefore judge not so much by that, as how thy heart stands affected to Christ. This is certain, *they that are born of God sin not* this sin, for they that sin this sin cannot avoid everlasting death, whereas they that are born of God shall live for ever.

Vers. 16. last part.

I do not say you shall pray for it.

Doct. *The sin unto death, or the sin against the holy Ghost, we have no warrant to pray for it.*

I do not say; that is, I give you no warrant, nor any other of the Apostles, to pray for it, that is, for the good or salvation of them that have sinned this sin. Though *Paul* bids us *pray for all men*, 2 Tim. 2. 1. yet *St. John* excepts them that have sinned this sin; and *Paul* himself is so far from praying for them, that he prays against them, 2 Tim. 4. 15. *Alexander the Coppersmith hath done me much harm, the Lord reward him according to his works.* No more dangerous curse, than to be rewarded according to our works. Ps. 18. but he means according to the innocency of his cause, not of his person; in case of some particular action he may plead to, but if it be spoken at large, in general, that the Lord would reward us according to his works, no more heavy curse; therefore when he prays so against *Alexander*, he means, that God would confound him, whatever he was, no doubt he was a member of the Church, for *Paul* judged not

them that were without, 1 Cor. 5. *ult.* Whether it were that *Alexander* spoken of Act. 19. that *beckoned with the hand*, as if he would have pleaded for *Paul*, and the people esteemed him as enemy to their superstition; or whether it were that *Alexander*, 2 Tim. 1. whom *Paul* delivered to Satan (as is likely) certainly he had formerly been a professor of the truth, who afterward made shipwreck
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of faith and a good conscience, and withstood *Paul*, and therefore *Paul* prays against him. Some think he did it as discerning by extraordinary revelation that he was in a state of reprobation, but that is not likely, he leaving his prayer as exemplary to all-comers. Gal. 5:12. *I would that even those were cut off that trouble you*, that subvert or undermine you, those he wished they were utterly cut off from Church and Commonwealth. These false Apostles they would have overthrown the Gospel of Christ, and brought in another Gospel; and because those false Apostles were all alike, the Apostle discerned them to be in a state of damnation, as being enemies to the Cross of Christ, Phil. 3. 18, 19. At the first they preached the Gospel, but afterwards turning aside to earthly things, they began to magnify themselves, and vilify the Apostles, and hindered the preaching of the Gospel, and therefore he looks at them as deserving to be cut off, he looks at them as dogs, Eph. 3. 23. 1 Cor. 16. 22. *If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema maranatha*; that is the greatest curse that can befall a man.

There was a threefold Excommunication in the primitive Church.

1. A mere restraint from the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, of such as were ignorant, till they were better instructed.

2. There was *excommunicatio major*, when they cut them off from all fellowship with the Church, from the Word and Sacraments, and Christian communion, and from eating with them. This ought to be inflicted upon notorious, scandalous sinners.

3. Let him be *Anathema Maranatha*, was a greater curse than any of those; for in the former Excommunication, though they excluded them from their fellowship, yet they ought not to count them as enemies, but might admonish them, and bring them on to repentance, that they might recover themselves, 2 Thess. 3. 14, 15. There was hope of such, for they did therefore excommunicate them that they might be saved, 1 Cor. 5. 5. And when it was rightly dispensed, it was a notable means to humble them, when they considered, that if the Church saw cause to banish them from their Society, God might see much more cause to banish them from heaven. But yet there was a greater Excommunication, *Let him be Anathema Maranatha*; that is, let him be ac-

cursed until the coming of the Lord; surely then their sin is a sin against the holy Ghost.

Obj. Some will say, *Paul himself loved not Christ at first.*

Answ. True. He speaks not of men without the Church, but within the Church.

Obj. *Why, are there not many carnal men in the Church, that love not Christ, that desire him not, that never look towards him?*

Answ. I take it to be a kind of *μείωσις*, in this slender expression he intends much more than he expresseth; *If any man love not; that is, if any man hate the Lord Jesus Christ, if he have partaked in the gifts and graces of Christ, if he have received not only Baptism, but tasted of the sweetness and goodness of his grace, if after he come to oppose and malign Christ and his ways, let such a man be Anathema Maranatha.*

Reas. 1. From the despite such persons do to the chief means and help of prayer, one is the Spirit of grace, for the Spirit of grace is the Spirit of supplication, Zech. 12. 10. Now they that despite the Spirit of grace, the Spirit is so grieved, that it will not assist us in any prayer we make for such, Heb. 10. 29.

Reas. 2. From the like despite they offer to the other principal help of prayer; that is, *asking in the Name of Christ*: upon those two wings our prayers fly up to heaven, *viz.* upon the mediation of Christ, and the Spirit of grace, with these two they prevail; now these men that sin against the holy Ghost, they make a scorn of Christ, Heb. 10. 29. *They trample under foot his blood, and put him to open shame*, Heb. 6. 6. that is, they put him to open and exemplary punishment, as the most notorious malefactor. Now if a man shall know

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Christ, and afterwards hate him, what doth he but show that Christ was a notorious malefactor, and suffered not for other men's sins, but his own? Therefore there is no hope that Christ should lend his Name to be a Mediator.

Reason 3. Where Christ is not a sacrifice of propitiation for sins, there he cannot be expected to be an intercessor for such. *Now there remains no more sacrifice for such*, Hebrews 10:27. If the sacrifice of Christ reach not to such, then he will never make intercession for them.

4. From the encouragement God is wont to give his servants in their prayers. *He will fulfil the desires of them that fear him*, Psalm 145:19. And this is their confidence, that *whatsoever they ask in the Name of Christ, they shall receive*; and therefore God will not so much dishonour his promise, nor dis-

courage us, as to give us hearts to pray when we shall not be answered; we may pray for wicked men, whom we know not in what condition they are, but then our prayers shall return into our own bosoms, Psalm 35:13. But if men be professed enemies to Christ, then we do not show ourselves to be God's friends, if we show friendship to them, or pray for them, and therefore our prayers will do them no good, and ourselves harm.

Use 1. To teach us, that the sin unto death may be discerned even of common Christians, for else why doth he write to common Christians, to all believers in general, Verse 13. That if his Brother sin a sin unto death, then he should not pray for him?

Use 2. It may therefore teach God's people to learn the nature of this sin, lest they pray unawares for such whom their prayers shall do no good. If therefore you see professors that have tasted of the grace of God, if afterward they malign and oppose those ways, and his servants of God, in this case, save your labour in praying for them, your prayers will do no good, but harm.

But how shall we discern when they are enlightened and convinced? We may indeed discern their malignity, and opposition, but it may be they do it of ignorance. In this case our Saviour and Stephen prayed for their adversaries, because they knew not what they did; therefore three thousand after they were convinced that it was the Christ whom they had persecuted, they were pricked in their hearts, and brought on to repentance. Therefore, if you discern they do this of ignorance, pray heartily for them.

But how may we discern they do this against the light and knowledge of the truth?

Answer. If they do express in their speech and conversation, that they are affected with Christ, and the ways of his grace, and convinced that those are the right ways, if after they maliciously oppose those ways, then pray not for them, Matthew 21:28. The Pharisees knew Christ to be the heir, and yet said, *Come let us kill him*; and in the mean time they said he was a Conjuror, and cast out devils through *Beelzebub* the Prince of the devils, when as they knew he was the Son of God, and did it by his own power, therefore Christ tells them, their sins should never be forgiven them. But if they shall go further, and affect the society of Christians, delight to do them offices, and take the like from them, if such after fall off, and maliciously oppose those ways, they more plainly manifest themselves to have sinned this sin, and therefore pray not for them.

Use 3. Shows us the desperate condition of all such that commit this sin, and therefore to bless ourselves from it, they are cut off from all means

of salvation, a man may neither admonish nor reprove them, nor show them any courtesy, or do any good to them, for if I might, I ought to pray for them, for no office of love ought to be dispersed without prayer; and therefore take heed of all sins against conscience, of all presumptuous sins, and sins of boldness, for they lead to this great transgression, Psalm 19:13. And that you may be kept from presumptuous sins, take heed of secret sins.

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Use 4. Of direction. If we be Children to Parents, or Wives to Husbands, or Subjects to Kings, and they sin against the holy Ghost, yet they may do civil service and offices towards them, as those that lived under *Julian* the Apostate; he committed this sin, therefore the Christians prayed against him; but he had many Christians in his Army that doubted whether they might serve him, or acknowledge him as their Emperor, or depose him; it was concluded they might serve him, but yet they prayed that God would take a course against him, as *David* said, *his day shall come on, or he shall descend into the battle and perish*; which shows that if a Prince shall sin this sin, his Subjects ought not to depose him, but to do him offices of service. The like may be said of Children to Parents, and Wives to Husbands, if there be any tie of nature, a man may do them civil offices; which shows that desperate doctrine of the *Romish* Church, that whosoever denies the Pope to be the Supreme head of the Church, he is to be excommunicated, and then no man is bound in allegiance to him, but that whoever shall slay such an heretical Prince, shall merit salvation.

Use 5. Learn here to discern the nature of peremptory prohibitions. When *St John* would peremptorily forbid praying for such, he saith, *I do not say he shall pray for it*. Neither does you say he shall pray against it (might some say). *St John* makes account this is a strong prohibition. *I do not say*; that is, you have no warrant from me, I give you no commission; such is the manner of Scripture prohibitions, *Isaiah 1:12. Who hath requested those things at your hands?* So *Jeremiah 7:31. I commanded them not, neither came it into my heart*; implying, that it is a most peremptory prohibition, if God's Word give us no warrant or direction, for if there be nothing for it, there is enough against it; for this is our direction, that we are to do only what God commands in his Word, so that we must add nothing, nor take away any thing.

THE END

Errata

PAge 1, l. 54, chap 1 add *to*, p. 3, l. 11, chap. 1. after *therefore* add *Jesus Christ*, p. 165,
l. 1. 45.
chap. 2 for *form* r. *formed*, p. 200, l. 54, chap. 2. for *exposed* r. *opposed*.