

**THE KEYS OF THE
KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
&
THE WAY OF
CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCHES CLEARED**

**THE KEYS OF THE
KINGDOM OF HEAVEN**
and
**THE WAY OF
CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCHES CLEARED**

by

John Cotton

(1585–1652)

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The Way of Congregational Churches Cleared

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Introduction

A Life of John Cotton

by Dr Digby L. James

In his day John Cotton was considered the greatest Puritan preacher and theologian in New England. Yet he is hardly known by most people today except, perhaps, as a character in a modern debate about the extent of the atonement. In fact John Cotton has a great influence in both old and New England and was generally acknowledged as the spiritual leader of the latter.

Early Life

John Cotton was born in Derby on the 4th of December 1584, the second of four children born to a struggling lawyer, Roland Cotton, and his wife. His education began at Derby Grammar School in 1592 where, for five years, Richard Johnson prepared him for university. At the age of thirteen in 1597 Cotton went up to Trinity College Cambridge to study for the ministry. Such study was of very long duration, taking at least twelve years before the award of a B.D.

Cotton matriculated in 1598 as a sizar, the lowest class of paying student who had to perform menial tasks for others. His curriculum included rhetoric, logic and philosophy for his B.A., Greek astronomy and perspective for his M.A. and Hebrew and theology for his B.D. He also had to take part in several debates to prove his abilities. Having gained his M.A. he was permitted to preach in the university.

Preaching was very sparse in Derby because of episcopal restrictions. At Cambridge Cotton was confronted by a feast of preaching. Early on he

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heard William Perkins. He found it troubling to him and was brought to see that he was not saved. He tried to avoid Perkins' sermons and yet often felt compelled to go. But when Perkins died in 1602, Cotton rejoiced to hear the sound of the funeral bell which told him that his "tormentor" was dead.

Perkins had considerable influence upon Cotton. Not only did Cotton see that he was not saved until he felt God working in his heart, but he also adopted a large measure of Perkins' Puritan principles. Thus, when Trinity College had no funds available for fellowships in 1603, a move to the Puritan Emmanuel College was quite natural. The rest of his university life was spent at Emmanuel, obtaining his M.A. in 1606 and being ordained in 1610. His reputation grew steadily during this time to such an extent that he was made the head lecturer, the Dean and the Catechist and also tutored a number of students. His preaching was well spoken of and crowds flocked to hear him deliver his artistically beautiful sermons. Commenting on a funeral sermon Cotton delivered someone said that it was "so accurately performed in respect of Invention, Elegancy, Purity of Style, Ornaments of Rhetoric, Elocution and Oratorius beauty of the whole so that he was henceforth looked upon as another Xenophon or Musa Attica throughout the university". He enjoyed this preaching style and avoided the plain simplicity of the Puritans.

So great did Cotton's reputation become that he was being tipped as the next Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity, but as Cotton's fame grew his own spiritual doubts increased. The human cause for this was the preaching of Richard Sibbes who was college preacher in 1609 and lecturer at Holy Trinity in 1610. Cotton heard Sibbes frequently and was in a state of spiritual conviction for three years until, in 1612, when he felt the Spirit of God work within his heart, he was converted and found peace. This took place two years after his ordination. Cotton became devoted to Sibbes after this and always had his portrait in a prominent place in the house.

Some time after his conversion it came to Cotton's turn to preach at St Mary's. He was in a quandary as to whether he should preach plainly or not. If he did, his popularity would suddenly wane. He decided to preach plainly on the doctrine of repentance which was not well received by the mass of hearers, but he received great satisfaction in his own soul and encouragement from some of the doctors. The greatest consolation

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came from Dr. John Preston coming to Cotton after the sermon deeply troubled and asking what he must do to be saved.

Boston, Lincolnshire

In 1612 the people of Boston began to seek for a new vicar for St. Botolph's Church. The gift of the living was in the hands of the corporation and they sent a delegation to seek out a man who would be suitable for this parish which had a reputation for non-conformity. After some debate they chose the 26 year old John Cotton. Meanwhile the mayor's party had chosen another and the corporation had to vote on the matter. The first vote was tied and the mayor inadvertently voted for Cotton. He insisted on a new vote and exactly the same thing happened. The mayor was refused a third vote and so Cotton became vicar. He now had to learn to minister to ordinary people, not academically trained. He also now had to deal with political pressures to conform to the established practices of the Church of England. He had been shielded from much of this at Emmanuel but now had to face these difficulties during a time when the pressure to conform was increasing and the Arminian party was rising to power.

The bishop of Lincoln, William Barlow, was unhappy about such a young man (and a Puritan) being chosen for such a large parish. Cotton thought of returning to Cambridge, but the corporation were able to charm the absentee bishop's subordinate Simon Biby (who was known by some as Simony and Bribery) into accepting Cotton. The bishop could not be too strict upon conformity as a large number of his clergy were non-conformists and his diocese was undermanned. Cotton therefore remained in Boston. Within a year he visited Cambridge to receive his B.D. and had married Elizabeth Horrocks to whom he had been introduced by a Cambridge friend, Paul Baynes.

Initially Cotton did not concern himself with changing the Anglican forms of worship used but concentrated his efforts on preaching. So popular was his preaching that he began to preach on Thursday afternoons as well. There was a strong Arminian influence in the town which he overcame by preaching a modified form of Perkins' Calvinism. He taught that election to salvation was unconditional but that reprobation was conditioned upon pre-seen sin. This seeming inconsistency was attacked many years later by William Twisse, a strict Calvinist, but by then Cotton was more consistent.

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When John Preston became the master of Emmanuel College in 1622 he would send students to Cotton for a period for what some called “seasoning”. This influx of students from Cambridge and elsewhere necessitated the addition of further lectures on Wednesday and Thursday mornings and Sunday afternoons.

During the years 1613 to 1615 Cotton struggled with the question of conformity. Could he conform with a clear conscience or should he separate from the Church of England and be guilty of schism? He solved his dilemma by having a church within a church. There were the normal services for all of the parishioners and separate services for professed believers where the objectionable aspects of Anglicanism were avoided. Those outside of this select group objected to the bishop’s court. Cotton was suspended but was reinstated upon appeal, after his friends’ political manoeuvring, and treated as if he were a conformist.

In 1617 George Montaigne, no friend of Puritans, became bishop of Lincoln. This could have made it difficult for Cotton to continue his non-conformity, but this problem was removed in 1618 by the appointment of Edward Wright as mayor’s chaplain. Wright conducted those parts of the service which Cotton had scruples about and Cotton concentrated upon preaching. One result of this arrangement was an increase in latecomers to services; Puritan members would not enter until after the recital of the Apostles’ Creed.

In April 1621 there was an outburst of iconoclasm, stained glass windows were smashed, ornaments destroyed and statues broken. This was probably the result of an overzealous application of some of the implications of Cotton’s teaching about idolatry. The timing was unwise, being shortly before the preaching of the bishop’s visitation sermon by Robert Sanderson. Cotton was suspended once again for non-conformity and inciting the iconoclasts. Cotton and other suspects were subsequently cleared of all blame. Bishop Montaigne wanted to examine Cotton after this and was assisted in so doing by John Davenant, the president of Queen’s College. They were satisfied that Cotton was a quiet scholar who had scruples and not a revolutionary. They promised to restore Cotton if he would but once receive communion kneeling or would give reasons why he could not. He took the latter option and gave them a syllogism in Latin which said: “A form of reverence that is not appointed is not sanctioned. Genuflexion in receipt of the Eucharist is an unappointed form of reverence. Therefore it is not sanctioned.” Cotton was reinstated, partly because

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Montaigne's interests lay elsewhere, being appointed bishop of London and assisting William Laud, who was *de facto* Archbishop of Canterbury. John Williams was then appointed bishop of Lincoln and was very lax concerning the laws of conformity, mainly because of opposition to Laud and his group, not because of any Puritan sympathies.

Cotton was thus able to continue his ministry. Because of this, as well as his abilities, his fame spread in Puritan circles. Others were amazed at the freedom he had to ignore virtually all the directives to enforce conformity. Samuel Ward, Puritan minister at Ipswich, wrote: "Of all men in the world I envy Mr. Cotton, of Boston, most, for he doth nothing in way of conformity, and yet hath his liberty, and I do everything that way, and cannot enjoy mine".

Increasing numbers of non-conformists were emigrating to America to escape persecution, including some from Boston. Cotton was gratified to hear, in 1629, that the church at Salem, Massachusetts, followed his example in church polity. His pleasure later changed to alarm when he heard that they would admit none to fellowship or the ordinances unless they first entered into a church covenant, no matter what their previous church standing was. To Cotton, this was little more than separatism and he wrote to the pastor rebuking him and asking why they did this. In the following year he preached to the emigrants who left from Southampton aboard the *Arabella*, warning them against separatism.

By this time William Laud had become very powerful and began to clamp down on nonconformity. It was at this time that Cotton and his wife were struck down by malaria. After a year's rest at the Earl of Lincoln's manor house, Cotton began to return to full health, but the malaria killed his wife. She died childless. As part of his recuperation Cotton began to travel the country and discovered how privileged and protected he had been at Boston. He began to consider emigration to America or Holland should his situation change.

On the 6th of April 1632, Cotton married Sarah Hawkrige Story, a widow with a daughter. But they were not to enjoy a peaceful time together in England. A Boston parishioner, seeking revenge against the magistrates of the town, informed the High Commission Court that the magistrates did not kneel at the sacrament or observe many of the other prescribed ceremonies. The Court insisted that the minister be named and the informer eventually was persuaded to supply it. The Court then summoned Cotton to answer for his nonconformity. He appealed to the

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Earl of Dorset to use his influence to help him. The Earl of Dorset had heard Cotton some years earlier and was so impressed that he promised his support whenever it may be needed. Dorset spoke to Laud but found that his influence was not powerful enough, so he urged Cotton to flee. Cotton, already in hiding, was uneasy about running away. He sought the advice of John Dod who advised flight with the words: "I am old Peter, and therefore must stand still and bear the brunt, but you, being young Peter, may go whither you will, and ought, being persecuted in one city, to flee to another".

In October 1632 he was in hiding in London where he was visited by Thomas Goodwin and John Davenport who urged him to conform in things indifferent as he had once done. Instead of their convincing him, Cotton persuaded them of his position. Within a year they had resigned their livings and fled to Holland. Holland was where Cotton thought of going, but he decided against it after Thomas Hooker told him of his experience there. Some of Cotton's former parishioners in Massachusetts had heard of his problems and wrote, urging him to join them. So it was that on 7 May 1633, Cotton wrote to the bishop of Lincoln resigning his charge and asking that his successor be someone acceptable to the people of the town (he was succeeded by Anthony Tuckney who had been the mayor's chaplain and was acceptable to the authorities). A month later, with officers of the state searching the ports and Puritan haunts, he joined the ship, the *Griffin*, in the channel with his wife, stepdaughter, Thomas Hooker and others and sailed away to New England. He was forty-eight.

Boston, Massachusetts

The *Griffin* arrived in New England on the 3 September 1633, with one more passenger than it had when they departed. Sarah Cotton had borne her husband his first son in mid-Atlantic whom they named, appropriately, Seaborn. Seaborn's baptism was delayed until the rite could be performed in a properly constituted church, even though three of the passengers had been ministers in England.

At the request of his former parishioners Cotton settled in Boston. His reputation when he arrived was that he was the greatest preacher and theologian in England and the New Englanders continued to believe this over the ensuing years. On the Saturday following his arrival he was asked to speak on the subject of the nature of the true church. Following this he and his wife were admitted into membership of the Boston church

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upon profession of their faith and Seaborn was baptised. The church at Boston had a membership of about a hundred when the Cottons joined. The pastor of the church was John Wilson. On October 10th, 1633, Cotton was elected the church's teacher. This meant that Cotton was concerned with the church's doctrine while John Wilson was concerned with the church's practice.

New England church polity was much advanced compared to anything being practised in England. Much of it was a logical extension of what Cotton had already been teaching and practising. Each local church was autonomous; members were admitted by profession of faith and united by a church covenant; the church elected its own officers (pastor, teacher and ruling elders) and ordained them. In spite of this relatively high degree of reformation, the members claimed to be loyal members of the Church of England and not separatists. Though this was the logical outworking of much of Cotton's teaching, he initially had some reservations about it. He kept quiet though, and studied what the Scriptures taught and observed the situation.

In 1634 Roger Williams was appointed minister of the church at Salem. He held some radical separatist views. He preached that no New England church should have fellowship with the apostate Church of England. A year later he became more vocal and told his church members that if they did not separate from the churches of Massachusetts which would not separate from the Church of England, he would separate from them. This horrified the magistrates who were worried about opinion in England if they heard of this, so they banished Williams for sedition. Cotton wrote a letter to instruct him of his "error" which became the first letter in a protracted correspondence concerning religious freedom and the relationship between church and state. Cotton believed in a form of theocracy where only church members had the right to be citizens. The functions of church and state were to be kept separate, although it was the state's responsibility to ensure the establishment of true religion. Persecution was justified if, having been instructed, a person continued to sin against their conscience. When it was pointed out that those who were persecuted in Old England were persecutors in New England Cotton argued that he had been persecuted for disobeying man-made rules. Disobeying God's rules in New England was different.

In 1636 Cotton preached at Salem to the church he had rebuked six years earlier for what appeared to be a drift to separatism. He confessed

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to them that he had now come to accept their view of the nature and government of the church after studying the Scriptures, but then urged them to go no further down the road towards separatism.

Cotton's doctrine of the church was influenced by his view of conversion. Man is totally helpless and can do nothing of any spiritual good, not even to bewail a hard heart of unbelief. Many gracious acts of God, such as conviction of sin, were necessary, but not saving. There was no guarantee that conviction would result in conversion. Conviction of sin, the spirit of bondage, should take a person to the point of despairing of all hope in himself, what Cotton called a spirit of burning. Upon trusting in Christ this would be replaced by the Spirit of adoption. It was only upon receiving this direct witness of the Spirit that one was converted, and this was the only thing which could give assurance in the first instance. In Cotton's view, to look to sanctification was a counsel of despair. Having received the witness of the Spirit, a person would seek to please God out of gratitude, and so, as their sanctification, this would be a secondary evidence and confirmation of their justification. The Scriptures are the only revelation that we need, but the promises must be revealed to our hearts by the Spirit, Who gives us greater light than the Word alone.

Cotton was somewhat injudicious in presenting this teaching and it led to a major controversy known to history as the Antinomian Controversy. Sermon tasters noticed differences in the content of the sermons of Cotton and other preachers, particularly John Wilson, and began deriding all preaching except Cotton's. These people distorted his teaching, saying that he taught that sanctification is no evidence *at all* of justification, only the witness of the Spirit was important. They were often ambiguous in their public statements so as to appear orthodox and avoid being called to task. Chief among this group was Mrs Anne Hutchinson, whom Cotton, unaware of her true beliefs, regarded highly.

The other ministers in the colony, alarmed that churches were being divided, asked Cotton a series of questions to clarify his position. In answer Cotton restated his doctrine with further explanation.

A synod was called which first met on the 30th September 1637, to deal with the issues. (Earlier in the year the magistrates had dealt with some of the zealots who had spoken publicly against ministers.) The synod proceeded to refute the teachings of the zealots, which Cotton was horrified to discover had been attributed to him. He did not believe that such a wide gulf in doctrine could have existed and was sure that Anne Hutchinson

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did not hold to the errors. He appeared to be confirmed in this view until she claimed immediate revelations of the Spirit which told her which ministers preached the truth. This admission led to her banishment. She was subsequently also excommunicated when she lied, trying to maintain that these aberrant views were of recent origin. The controversy ended and relative peace returned to the churches of New England.

In 1640 Cotton was invited to attend the Westminster Assembly with Thomas Hooker and John Davenport. Though he was keen to attend he decided that it was pointless travelling 3,000 miles to agree with five men, the authors of *An Apologetical Narration*. Instead of attending, Cotton began to write in defence of the “New England Way”. His definitive book on the subject was *The Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven* which was published in 1644. The preface, written by Thomas Goodwin and Philip Nye, spoke of Cotton’s position as being the middle way between separatism and presbyterianism, which they had written about in their *Apologetical Narration*. The book was highly influential. The presbyterian John Owen read *The Keys* and was convinced that Cotton was right and became an independent as a result, a not inconsiderable “scalp”.

Harsh attacks were made on Cotton and his polity by Robert Baillie and Daniel Cawdrey to which Cotton replied in 1648 in his book *The Way of Congregational Churches Cleared*. In it he writes “If there must needs be some note of difference to decipher our estate, and to distinguish our way from a National Church way, I know none fitter than to denominate theirs [the Presbyterians] Classical and ours Congregational.” This is possibly the first use of the term when applied to a method of church government, though the form had existed for many years.

In the years 1646–1648 a synod met at Cambridge, near Boston, to discuss church polity. Many of their conclusions are based upon Cotton’s teaching. They viewed baptised children as church members until they reached maturity, after which they needed to make a profession of conversion. Several years later, because relatively few children were being converted, children who had been baptised were allowed to remain church members (and hence citizens) throughout their lives. This arrangement became known as the Half-Way Covenant, and the conclusions of the synod concerning church polity as the Cambridge Platform.

Towards the end of his life Cotton became less inclined to controversy. He had always been something of a retiring scholar though he still viewed his primary task as preaching, the God-appointed means of saving sinners.

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Sermons were designed to be heard and not read, so they should be relevant to the hearers. During his life he expounded the whole Bible one and a half times, and preached sermon series on numerous books, as well as individual texts. In new Boston he baptised 1,034 children and saw 652 people join the church. This made Boston the largest church in the colony.

Shortly before his death, Cotton crossed the Charles River to preach to the students of Harvard and as a result of exposure to the bad weather he took ill. Sensing that his life was coming to a close, he hurriedly finished his series on 2 Timothy. By November he was bed ridden though visited by hordes of people. By December the crowds had to be turned away. Shortly before he died, John Wilson prayed that God would lift up the light of His countenance upon him and shed love into his soul. Cotton immediately replied, "He hath done it already Brother." He died on the 23rd of December 1652, at the age of 68.

Conclusion

During his ministry in Massachusetts the influence of John Cotton towered over the colony. Today he is largely forgotten. His views on the relationship of church and state and on religious freedom are rejected by most in favour of those of Roger Williams. His views of conversion and assurance are generally ignored in favour of the view held by the Westminster Assembly. In spite of this, much of his teaching concerning the government of the church is practised by many whether called Congregationalists or not.

Acknowledgements

Grateful thanks are expressed to the *Evangelical Library*, especially Dr Terence Crosby, for the extended loan of an original edition of *The Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven* and *The Way of Congregational Churches Cleared*. The Evangelical Library is a wonderful source of Puritan theology. It is open on weekdays and Saturday mornings for study and loans. For information about membership, contact: The Evangelical Library, 78a Chiltern Street, London, W1M 2HB.

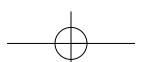
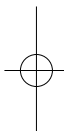
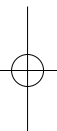
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Dr Digby L. James
Weston Rhyn,
September 1993



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The Political and Religious Background to John Cotton's Writings

The period in which Cotton worked and wrote was only 100 years after the great upheavals of the Reformation. During this time in Britain and the Continent there had been intense religious and political battles fought. Many people had testified to their faith with their blood, most at the hands of Roman Catholic authorities, though some at the hands of those who held to the “new” reformed religion. At the time there was, in the minds of most, an inextricable linkage between religion and state. Very few, notably the Anabaptists, insisted upon a separation of church and state whereby it was possible for people of different religious persuasions to live together in harmony. Most Reformed churches were suspicious of other religious opinions because of their fear of Roman Catholic plots to undermine the state and because they believed that a common religion within a state was a necessary glue to hold society together.

It was the stated policy of the Roman Catholic church to restore its own religion to those lands that had departed from adherence to Rome. During the brief reign of Queen Mary this was achieved in England in such a way that she ignominiously became known to history as Bloody Mary. Following her death her Protestant half-sister, Elizabeth, ascended the English throne. Roman Catholicism was seen as being a dangerous foreign power, especially when Roman Catholic edicts were issued absolving English Roman Catholics of sin if they brought about the overthrow of Elizabeth and the return of England to Rome. It is no wonder that Roman Catholics received such harsh treatment during Elizabeth's reign.

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It was not only Roman Catholics who suffered in England. While most of the clergy were content with the Elizabethan religious settlement, some Protestants were dissatisfied that the Church of England had not been reformed enough. They wanted to sweep away any remaining popish remnants and have a pure reformed church. Because of their zeal for church purity these clergy were referred to, derogatively, as “puritans”. The name stuck. Thomas Cartwright was one of the leading puritans during Elizabeth’s reign who wanted to see the Church of England reformed along presbyterian lines. His efforts were suppressed. Robert Browne could not find scriptural warrant for waiting for having a state church reformed by the state. He abandoned the Church of England and established an independent church. While not having a fully developed ecclesiology Browne can be seen to be the first budding of congregational church government. Browne and his followers were suppressed by the state. Eventually Browne was to repudiate his “Brownism” and return to the fold of the Church of England. Other were not so fortunate. William Barrowe, Henry Greenwood and John Penry were hung for “sedition” because they wanted churches separate from the Church of England.

The Religious Situation in England in the first half of the seventeenth century

Following the death of Elizabeth the Puritans were more hopeful of change within the church with the accession of the Scottish presbyterian educated James I (VI of Scotland). The Puritans presented the Millenary Petition to him asking for various reforms. As a consequence, James convened the Hampton Court conference in 1604. The Puritans were sadly disappointed. James ignored most of their requests, famously insisting “no bishop, no king”. The only positive result of the conference for the Puritans was the approval of a new translation of the Bible which was published in 1611 and is the translation that is now referred to as the Authorised Version or the King James Version.

James’ religious policy continued to be intolerent towards the Puritans. This resulted in a steady stream of Separatists leaving England for the Continent, mainly Holland, where they found greater toleration for their beliefs and practices. One group, which after some difficulty had left Lincolnshire, had settled in Leiden under the pastoral care of John Robinson. Robinson had proposed that the group emigrate to the New World and

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begin a new life in freedom. Robinson did not travel with them, planning to follow later, but died before he could travel. The group set sail from Southampton in the Mayflower and the Speedwell and then, having put into Plymouth because of the unsoundness of the Speedwell, set sail again in the Mayflower alone.

Need to finish off here

Brownism and the Separatists

Anabaptists/Antipaedobaptists

Massachusetts Puritanism

Modern Church Polity

In the 20th century a more 'democratic' approach to church government developed. With a breakdown in authority and a decline in biblical knowledge an individualized attitude developed within churches whereby members thought that matters of doctrine could be decided by vote instead of reference to Scripture. Presbyterianism won the day almost by default as there appeared to be a clear authority structure. Some Presbyterians could be heard deriding Congregationalism as encouraging schism and lacking discipline and unity. The formation of the United Reformed Church in 1972 saw the union of most Congregationalists in England and Wales with the Presbyterian Church of England. But not all wanted to abandon independency and a not insignificant number refused to join the new organization. Presbyterians in Britain have also seen failures of discipline and lack of unity leading to acrimonious splits in some denominations.

A recent book on church government by Poh Boon Sing is, interestingly, entitled *The Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven*. In this he surveys the various forms of church government in existence today from his reformed baptist position. When he discusses congregationalism he identifies it with democracy, and wrong. Cotton's books and more recent books on congregational church government (such as John Angell James' *Christian Fellowship: The Church Member's Guide* and RW Dale's *Manual of Congregational*

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Principles, both published by Quinta Press) show that this is a caricature of the true situation. Any congregational church that practices democracy in its running of church affairs is not congregational in practice as Cotton, James and Dale understood it. The only significant difference between the views propounded by these three congregational authors are very close to Dr Poh's position, with the notable exception of baptism.

The text

The text of this reprint has been taken from the editions found in the Evangelical Library. No attempt has been made to update the English of this edition apart from modernizing spellings. Though this would have made these works more accessible to a wider audience it was felt that there was a need to have an accurate reprint of these two seminal works. The text has also been compared to Larzer Ziff's reprint *John Cotton on the Churches of New England* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1968). Ziff's edition was found to be generally accurate, but where he differs from the texts we have used we have followed the original. We are not always in agreement with Ziff's analysis of the New England church situation.

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THE
KEYS
Of the Kingdom of
HEAVEN
AND

Power thereof, according to the
WORD of GOD.

BY

That Learned and Judicious Divine,
Mr JOHN COTTON, Teacher of the Church
at Boston in New-England,

Tending to reconcile some present differences about

DISCIPLINE.

The second time Imprinted

Genesis 13:7,8, *And Abraham said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray, between thee and me; for we be Brethren.*

Genesis 45:24, *And Joseph said to his Brethren (when they were going the third time out of Egypt) See that you fall not out by the way.*

Acts 7:26, *Sirs, ye be Brethren, why do ye wrong one another?*

Ephesians 4:15, *Ἀληθεύοντες ἐν Ἀγάπῃ, ἀυξήσομεν εἰς αὐτόν, &c*

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THO. GOODWIN

By {

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THE KEYS OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN AND THE POWER THEREOF

TO THE READER

THE greatest commotions in Kingdoms have for the most part been raised and maintained for and about Power, and Liberties, of the Rulers and the Ruled, together with the due bounds and limits of either: And the like hath fallen out in Churches, and is continued to this day in the sharpest contentions (though now the seat of the war is changed) who should be the first adequate, and complete subject of that Church-power, which Christ hath left on earth; how bounded, and to whom committed. This controversy is in a special manner the lot of these present times: And now that most parties (that can pretend any thing towards it) have in several ages had their turns and vicissitudes of so long a possession of it, and their pleas for their several pretences, have been so much and so long heard, it may well be hoped it is near determining; and that Christ will shortly settle this power upon the right heirs, to whom he primitively did bequeath it.

In those former darker times, this golden Ball was thrown up by the Clergy (so called) alone to run for among themselves: And as they quietly possessed the name Κληρὸς, The Clergy, and of the Church, appropriated to themselves; so answerably all manner of interest in power or cognisance of matters of the Church, was wholly left and quitted to them: whilst the People that then knew not the Law, having given up their souls to an implicit faith in what was to be believed, did much more suffer themselves to be deprived of all Liberties in Church-affairs. This royal donation bestowed by Christ upon his Church, was taken up and placed in so high thrones of Bishops, Popes, General Councils, &c. Not only far above these things on earth, the people; but things in Heaven also, we mean the Angels and Ministers of the Churches themselves; in so great a remoteness from the people, that the least right or interest therein, was not so much as suspected to belong to them. But towards these latter times, after many removals of it down again, and this as the issue of many suits again and again renewed and removed, and upon the sentence (even of whole States) as oft reversed. It hath

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now in these our days been brought so near unto the people, that they also have begun to plead and sue for a portion, and legacy bequeathed them in it. The Saints (in these knowing times) finding that the Key of knowledge hath so far opened their hearts, that they see with their own eyes into the substantial of Godliness, and that through the instruction and guidance of their teachers, they are enabled to understand for themselves such other things as they are to join in the practise of. They do therefore further (many of them) begin more than to suspect, that some share in the Key of power should likewise appertain unto them.

It was the unhappiness of those, who first in these latter times revived this plea of the people's right, to err on the other extreme (as it hath ever been the fate of truth, when it first ariseth in the Church from under that long night of darkness which Antichristianism had brought upon the world, to have a long shadow of error to accompany it) by laying the plea and claim on their behalf unto the whole power; and that the Elders set over them did but exercise the power for them, which was properly theirs, and which Christ had (as they contended) radically and originally estated in the people only.

But after that all titles have been pleaded, of those that are content with nothing but the whole, the final judgment and sentence may (possibly) fall to be a suitable and due proportioned distribution and dispersion of this power into several interests, and the whole to neither part. In Commonwealths, it is a Dispersion of several portions of power and rights into several hands, jointly to concur and agree in acts and process of weight and moment, which causeth that healthful $\kappa\rho\alpha\sigma\iota\varsigma$ ¹ and constitution of them, which makes them lasting, and preserves their peace, when none of all sorts find they are excluded, but as they have a share of concernment, so that a fit measure of power or privilege, is left and betruſted to them. And accordingly the wisdom of the first Constitutors of Common-wealths is most seen in such a just balancing of power and privileges, and besides also in setting the exact limits of that which is committed unto each; yea, and is more admired by us in this than in their other Laws; and in experience, a clear and distinct definement and confinement of all such parcels of power, both for the kind and extent of them, is judged to be as essentially necessary (if not more) than what ever other statutes, that set out the kinds and degrees of crimes or penalties.

So in that Polity or Government by which Christ would have his Churches ordered, the right disposal of the power therein (we humbly suppose) may lie in a due and proportioned allotment and dispersion (though not in the same measure and degree) into divers hands, according unto the several concernments and interests that each rank in his Church may have; rather than in an entire

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and sole trust committed to any one man (though never so able) or any sort or kind of men or Officers, although diversified into never so many subordinations under one another. And in like manner, we cannot but imagine, that Christ hath been as exact in setting forth the true bounds and limits of what ever portion of power he hath imparted unto any (if we of this age could attain rightly to discern it) as he hath been in ordering what kind of censures, and for what sins and what degrees of proceedings unto those censures; which we find he hath been punctual in.

Now the scope which this grave and judicious Author in this his Treatise doth pursue, is, to lay forth the just lines and terriers of this division of Church-power, unto all the several subjects of it; to the end to allay the contentions now on foot, about it. And in general he lays this fundamental Maxim, that holds in common true of all the particulars, to whom any portion of power can be supposed to be committed: That look what ever power or right any of the possessors and subjects thereof may have, they have it each alike immediately (that is, in respect of a mediation of delegation or dependence on each other) from Christ, and so are each, the first subjects of that power that is allotted to them. And for the particular subjects themselves, he follows that division (in the handling of them) which the Controversy itself hath made unto his hands; To wit, 1. What power each single Congregation (which is endowed with a Charter to be a body-politique to Christ) hath granted to it to exercise within it self: And 2. What measure, or rather, kind of power Christ hath placed in Neighbour-Churches without it, and in association with it.

For the first. As he supposeth each Congregation such, as to have the privilege of enjoying a Presbytery, or company of more or less Elders, proper unto itself; so being thus Presbyterated, he asserteth this incorporate body or society to be the first and primary subject of a complete and entire power within itself over its own members; yea, and the sole native subject of the power of Ordination and Excommunication, which is the highest Censure. And whereas this corporation consisteth both of Elders and Brethren, (for as for women and children, there is a special exception by a Statute-law of Christ against their enjoyment of any part of this publique power;) His scope is to demonstrate a distinct and several share and interest of power, in matters of common concernment, vouchsafed to each of these, and dispersed among both, by Charter from the Lord: as in some of our Towns corporate, to a company of Aldermen, the Rulers, and a Common-Counsel, a body of the people, there useth to be the like: He giving unto the Elders or Presbytery a binding power of Rule and Authority proper and peculiar unto them; and unto the Brethren, distinct and apart, an interest

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of power and privilege to concur with them, and that such affairs should not be transacted, but with the joint agreement of both, though out of a different right: so that as a Church of Brethren only, could not proceed to any public censures, without they have Elders over them, so nor in the Church have the Elders power to censure without the concurrence of the people; and likewise so, as each alone hath not power of Excommunicating the whole of either, though together they have power over any particular person or persons in each.

And because these particular Congregations, both Elders and People, may disagree and miscarry, and abuse this power committed to them; He therefore, secondly, asserteth an association or communion of Churches, sending their Elders and Messengers into a Synod, (so he purposely chooseth to style those Assemblies of Elders which the Reformed Churches do call Classes or Presbyteries, that so he might distinguish them from those Presbyteries of Congregations before mentioned.) And acknowledgeth that it is an Ordinance of Christ, unto whom Christ hath (in relation to rectifying Maladministrations and healing dissentions in particular Congregations, and the like cases) committed a due and just measure of power, suited and proportioned to those ends; and furnished them, not only with ability to give counsel and advice, but further upon such occasions with a Ministerial power and authority to determine, declare and enjoin such things as may tend to the reducing such Congregations to right order and peace. Only in his bounding and defining this power, he affirms it to be: First, for the kind and quality of it, but a dogmatical or doctrinal power, (though stamped with authority Ministerial as an Ordinance of Christ) whether in judging of Controversies of faith (when they disturb the peace of particular Congregations, and which themselves find too difficult for them) or in discerning matters of fact, and what censures they do deserve: but not armed with authority and power of Excommunicating or delivering unto Satan, either the Congregations or the Members of them: But they in such cases, having declared and judged the nature of the offence, and admonished the peccant Churches, and discerned what they ought to do with their offending members; they are to leave the formal act of this censure to that authority which can only execute it, placed by Christ in those Churches themselves; which if they deny to do, or persist in their miscarriage, then to determine to withdraw communion from them. And also for the extent of this power in such Assemblies and Association of Churches, he limits and confines that also unto cases, and with cautions (which will appear in the Discourse) to wit, That they should not entrench or impair the privilege of entire Jurisdiction committed unto each Congregation, (as a liberty purchased them by Christ's blood) but to leave them

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free to the exercise and use thereof, until they abuse that power, or are unable to manage it; and in that case only to assist, guide, and direct them, and not take on them to administer it for them, but with them, and by them.

As for ourselves, we are yet, neither afraid, nor ashamed to make profession (in the midst of all the high waves on both sides dashing on us) that the substance of this brief Extract from the Author's larger Discourse, is, That very Middle-way (which in our Apology² we did in the general intimate and intend) between that which is called Brownism, and the Presbyterian-government, as it is practised; whereof the one doth in effect put the chief (if not the whole) of the rule and government into the hands of the people, and drowns the Elders' votes (who are but a few) in the major part of theirs: And the other, taking the chief and the principal parts of that rule (which we conceive is the due of each Congregation, the Elders and Brethren) into this Jurisdiction of a common Presbytery of several Congregations, doth thereby in like manner swallow up, not only the interests of the people, but even the votes of the Elders of that Congregation concerned, in the major part thereof.

Neither let it seem arrogance in us, but a testimony rather to the truth, further to Remonstrate, that this very Boundary platform and disposement of Church-power, as here it is (we speak for the substance of it) set out and stated; as also that the tenure and exercise thereof in all these subjects, should be immediate from Christ unto them all, is not now new unto our thoughts; yea it is no other than what our own apprehensions have been moulded unto long since: And this many of our friends, and some that are of a differing opinion, having known our private judgements long, as likewise our own Notes and transcripts written long ago, can testify; besides many public professions since as occasion hath been offered: Insomuch as when we first read this of this learned Author (knowing what hath been the more general current both of the practice and judgement of our Brethren for the Congregational way) we confess we were filled with wonderment at that Divine hand, that had thus led the judgements (without the least mutual interchange or intimation of thoughts or notions in these particulars) of our Brethren there, and ourselves (unworthy to be mentioned with them) here. Only we crave leave of the reverend Author, and those Brethren that had the view of it, to declare: that we assent not to all expressions scattered up and down, or all and every Assertion interwoven in it; yea, nor to all the grounds and allegations of Scriptures; nor should we in all things perhaps have used the same terms to express the same materials by.

For instance, we humbly conceive Prophesying (as the Scripture terms it) or speaking to the edification of the whole Church, may (sometimes) be performed

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by Brethren gifted, though not in Office as Elders of the Church; only 1. Occasionally, not in an ordinary course. 2. By men of such abilities as are fit for Office: And 3. not assuming this of themselves, but judged such by those that have the power, and so allowed and designed to it: And 4. so as their Doctrine be subjected (for the judging of it) in an especial manner to the Teaching Elders of that Church: And when it is thus cautioned, we see no more incongruity for such to speak to a point of Divinity in a Congregation, than for men of like abilities to speak to, and debate of matters of Religion in an Assembly of Divines, which this reverend Author allows; and here, with us, is practised.

Again, in all humility, we yet see not that Assembly of Apostles, Elders, and Brethren, Acts 15. to have been a formal Synod, of Messengers, sent out of a set and combined association from neighbour Churches; but an Assembly of the Church of Jerusalem, and of the Messengers from the Church of Antioch alone; that were far remote each from other, and electively now met: Nor are we for the present convinced that the Apostles to the end to make this a Precedent of such a formal Synod, did act therein as Ordinary Elders, and not out of Apostolical guidance and assistance; But we rather conceive (if we would simply consider the mutual aspects which these two Churches and their Elders stood in this conjunction, abstracting from them that influence and impression which (that superior Sphere) the Apostles who were then present had in this transaction) this to have been a Consultation (as the learned Author doth also acknowledge it to have been in its first original, only rising up to be a General Counsel by the Apostles' presence, they being Elders of all the Churches;) or if you will, a reference by way of Arbitration for deciding of that great Controversy risen amongst them at Antioch, which they found to be too difficult for themselves; and so to be a warrant indeed for all such ways of communion between all, or any, especially neighbour Churches; and upon like occasions to be Ordinances furnished with Ministerial power for such ends and purposes. Our reasons for this, we are now many ways bound up from giving the account of, in this way, and at this season; But however, if it should have been so intended as the learned Author judgeth, and the Apostles to have acted therein as ordinary Elders, yet the lines of that proportion of power that could be drawn from that pattern, would extend no further than a Ministerial Doctrinal power, &c. in such Assemblies, which we willingly grant. And it may be observed with what a wary eye and exact aim he takes the latitude & elevation of that power there held forth, not daring to attribute the least, either for kind or degree, than what that example warrants, which was at utmost but a Doctrinal discernment, both of the truth of that controversy they were consulted in; as also the matter of fact in those that had

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taught the contrary, as beliers of them, and subverters of the faith; without so much as brandishing the sword and power of Excommunication, against those high and gross delinquents, or others, that should not obey them in that Epistle.

Only in the last place, for the further clearing the difference of the peoples' interest (which the reverend Author usually calleth Liberty, sometimes Power) and the Elders' rule & authority (which makes that first distribution of Church-power in particular Congregations) as likewise for the illustration of that other allotment of Ministerial doctrinal power in an association or communion of Churches as severed from the power of Excommunication (which is the second). We take the boldness to cast a weak beam of our dim light upon either of these; and to present how these have lain stated in our thoughts, to this end that we may haply prevent some reader's mistake, especially about the former. For the first, we conceive the Elders and Brethren in each Congregation, as they are usually in the New Testament thus mentioned distinctly apart, and this when their meeting together is spoken of, so they make in each Congregation, two distinct interests (though meeting in one Assembly) as the interest of the Common-Council or body of the people, in some Corporations, is distinct from that of the company of Aldermen; so as without the consent and concurrence of both nothing is esteemed as a Church act. But so as in this company of Elders, this power is properly Authority; but in the people there is a privilege or power. An apparent difference between these two is evident to us by this: That two or three, or more select persons should be put into an Office, and be trusted with an entire interest of power for a multitude, to which that multitude ought (by a command from Christ) to be subject and obedient as to an ordinance to guide them in their consent, and in whose sentence the ultimate formal Ministerial act of binding or loosing should consist: this power must needs be esteemed and acknowledged in these few to have the proper notion and character of Authority, in comparison of that power (which must yet concur with theirs) that is in a whole body or multitude of men, who have a greater and nearer interest and concernment in those affairs, over which these few are set as Rulers.

This difference of power doth easily appear in comparing the several interest of Father and Child, in his disposement of her in marriage, and her concurrence with him therein, (although we intend not the parallel between the things themselves.) A virgin daughter hath a power truly and properly so called, yea, and a power ultimately to dissent upon an unsatisfied dislike; yea, and it must be an act of her consent, that maketh the marriage valid: But yet, for her Parents to have a power to guide her in her choice (which she ought in duty to obey) and a power which must also concur to bestow her, or the marriage is invalid, this (comparing

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her interest (wherein she is more nearly and intimately concerned) with theirs doth arise to the notion of an extrinsical authority; whereas that power which is in her, is but simply the power of her own act, in which her own concernment doth interest her free by an intrinsical right. The like difference would appear if we had seen a Government tempered of an Aristocracy and Democracy; in which, suppose the people have a share, and their actual consent is necessary to all laws and sentences, whereas a few Nobles that are set over them (whose concernment is less general) in whom the formal sanction of all should lie, in these it were Rule and Authority, in that multitude but Power and interest: and such an Authority is to be given to a Presbytery of Elders in a particular Congregation, or else (as we have long since been resolved), all that is said in the New Testament about their Rule, and of the peoples' Obedience to them, is to be looked upon but as Metaphors, and to hold no proportion with any substantial reality of Rule and Government.

And in this Distribution of power, Christ hath had a suitable and due regard unto the estate and condition of his Church; as now under the New Testament, he hath qualified & dignified it. Under the Old Testament, it was in its infancy, but it is comparatively come forth of its nonage, and grown up to a riper age (both as the tenure of the Covenant of grace in difference from the old, runs in the Prophets, and as Paul to the Galatians expreseth it.) They are therefore more generally able, if visible Saints (which is to be the subject matter of Churches under the N. Testament) to join with their Guides & Leaders in judging & discerning what concerns their own and their Brethren's consciences; and therefore Christ hath not now lodged the sole power of all Church matters solely and entirely in the Churches' Tutors & Governors, as of old when it was under age he did: But yet because of their weakness & unskillfulness (for the generality of them) in comparison to those whom he hath ascended to give gifts unto, on purpose for their guidance & the government of them; He hath therefore placed a Rule and Authority in those Officers over them, not directing only, but binding: so as not only nothing (in an ordinary way of Church-government) should be done without them, but not esteemed validly done unless done by them. And thus by means of this due and golden balancing and poising of power and interest, Authority and Privilege, in Elders and the Brethren, this Government might neither degenerate into Lordliness and oppression in Rulers over the Flock, as not having all power in their hands alone; nor yet into Anarchy and confusion in the Flock among themselves; and so as all things belonging to men's consciences might be transacted to common edification, and satisfaction.

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For the second, Let it not seem a Paradox that a Ministerial Doctrinal Authority should be found severed from that power of Excommunication, to second it, if not obeyed. Every Minister and Pastor hath in himself, alone, a Ministerial Doctrinal authority over the whole Church that is his charge, and every person in it, to instruct, rebuke, exhort with all authority: By reason of which, those under him are bound to obey him in the Lord, not only vi materiæ, by virtue of the matter of the commands, in that they are the commands of Christ (for so he should speak with no more authority than any other man; yea, a Child, who speaking a truth out of the Word, should lead us, as the Prophet speaks;) But further, by reason of that Ministerial authority which Christ hath endowed him withal, he is to be look'd at by them as an Ordinance of His, over them and towards them: And yet he alone hath not the authority of Excommunication in him, to enforce his Doctrine, if any do gainsay it: Neither therefore is this authority (as in him considered) to be judged vain and fruitless and ineffectual, to draw men to obedience.

Neither let it seem strange, that the power of this Censure, of cutting men off, and delivering them to Satan (in which the positive part (and indeed the controversy betwixt us and others,) of Excommunication lies) should be inseparably linked by Christ unto a particular Congregation, as the proper native privilege hereof, so as that no Assembly or Company of Elders justly presumed and granted to be more wise and judicious, should assume it to themselves, or sever the formal power thereof from the particular Congregations. For though it be hard to give the reason of Christ's institutions; yet there is usually in the ways of human wisdom and reason, something analogous thereunto, which may serve to illustrate, if not to justify this dispersion of interests: And so (if we mistake not) there may be found even of this in the wisdom of our Ancestors, in the constitutions of this Kingdom. The sentencing to death of any subject in the kingdom, as it is the highest civil punishment, so of all other the nearest and exactest parallel to this in spirituals, of cutting a soul off, and delivering it to Satan; yet the power of this high judgment is not put into the hands of an Assembly of Lawyers only, no, not of all the Judges themselves, men selected for wisdom, faithfulness, and gravity who yet are by office designed to have an interest herein; But when they upon any special Cause of difficulty, for council and direction in such judgments do all meet, (as sometimes they do) yet they have not power to pronounce this sentence of death upon any man, without the concurrence of a Jury of his Peers, which are of his own rank: and in Corporations, of such as are Inhabitants of the same place: And with a Jury of these (men, of themselves not supposed to be so skilful in the Laws, &c.) two Judges, yea, one, with other

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Justices on the Bench, hath power to adjudge and pronounce that which all of them, and all the Lawyers in this kingdom together, have not without a Jury. And we of this nation use to admire the care and wisdom of our Ancestors herein, and do esteem this privilege of the Subject in this particular (peculiar to our Nation) as one of the glories of our Laws, and do make boast of it as such a liberty and security to each person's life, as (we think) no Nation about us can show the like. And what should be the reason of such a constitution but this (which in the beginning we insisted on) the dispersion of power into several hands, which in capital matters, every man's trial should run through; whereof the one should have the tie of like common interest to oblige them unto faithfulness; as the other should have skill and wisdom to guide them and direct therein.

And besides that interest that is in any kind of Association, fraternity, yea, or neighbourhood, or likewise, that which is from the common case of men alike subjected to an Authority set over them to sentence them; there is also the special advantage of an exact knowledge of the fact in the heinous circumstances thereof; yea, and (in these cases) of the ordinary conversation of the person offending.

We need not enlarge the application of this: Although a greater Assembly of Elders are to be revered as more wise and able, than a few Elders with their single Congregations, and accordingly may have an higher doctrinal power, (a power properly, and peculiarly suited to their abilities) in cases of difficulty, to determine and direct Congregations in their way; yet Christ hath not trusted them with that power He hath done the Congregations; because they are abstracted from the people: And so one Tribe of men concerned in all the forementioned respects is wanting, which Christ would have personally concurring, not by delegation or representation alone, not to the execution only, but even to the legal sentence also of cutting men off, as in the former parallel and instance may be observed. Yea, and the higher and the greater the association of the Presbyteries are, the farther are they removed from the people, and although you might have thereby a greater help, in that Judicial knowledge of the Rule, to be proceeded by: yet they are in a farther distance (and disabled thereby) from that precise practise knowledge of the Fact and frame of Spirit in the person transgressing. And Cases may be as truly difficult and hard to be decided from obscurity, and want of light into the Circumstantiation of the Fact, and person, in which it was committed, and by him obstinately persisted in; as of the Law itself.

Other considerations of like weight might here be added, if not for the proof (which we do not here intend) yet the clearing of this particular; As also to demonstrate that that other way of proceeding by withdrawing communion is

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most suitable to the relation, that by Christ's endowment, all Churches stand in one towards another; yea, and wherein the least (being a body of Christ) doth stand unto all: But we should too much exceed the bounds of an Epistle, and too long detain the Reader from the fruitful and pregnant labours of the worthy Author.

The God of Peace and Truth, sanctify all the truths in it, to all those holy ends (and through his Grace much more) which the holy and peacable spirit of the Author did intend.

**THO. GOODWIN.
PHILIP NYE.**

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Of the Keys of the Kingdom of HEAVEN, and the Power thereof; according to the WORD of GOD, &c.

CHAPTER I

What the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven be, and what their Power.

The Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven are promised by the Lord Jesus (the Head and King of his church) unto *Peter*, Matthew 16:19. *To thee (saith Christ) will I give the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on Earth, shall be bound in Heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on Earth, shall be loosed in Heaven.* The words being Allegorical, are therefore somewhat obscure: and holding forth honour and power in the Church, are therefore controversial; For where there is no honour (nor pride to pursue it) there is no contention.³ It will not therefore be amiss, for opening of the Doctrine of the Power of the Keys; somewhat to open the words of this Text, whereon that power is built. Five words require a little clearing.

1. What is here meant by the Kingdom of Heaven?
 2. What are the keys of this Kingdom, and the giving of them?
 3. What are the acts of these Keys, which are said to be binding and loosing?
 4. What is the object of these acts to be bound or loosed, here put under a general name, *Whatsoever*?
 5. Who is the subject recipient of this power, or to whom is this power given? *To thee will I give the Keys, &c.*
1. For the first: by the Kingdom of Heaven is here meant, both the Kingdom of Grace, which is the Church; and the Kingdom of Glory, which is in the highest heavens: For Christ giving to *Peter* the Keys of

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the Kingdom of Heaven, conveyeth therewith not only this Power to bind on earth (that is, in the Church on earth; for he gave him no power at all to bind in the world; The Kingdom of Christ is not of this world:) but he gives him also this privilege; That what he bound on earth, should be bound in heaven. And heaven being distinguished from the Church on earth, must needs be meant the Kingdom of Glory.

2. For the second: What the Keys of the kingdom of heaven be?

The Keys of the kingdom are the Ordinances which Christ hath instituted to be administered in his Church; as the preaching of the Word, (which is the opening and applying of it) also the administering of the Seals and Censures: For by the opening and applying of these, both the gates of the Church here, and of heaven hereafter, are opened or shut to the sons of men.

And the giving of these Keys, implieth, that Christ investeth those to whom he giveth them, with a power to open, and shut the gates of both. And this power lieth, partly in their spiritual calling (whether it be their Office, or their Place and Order in the Church:) and partly in the concurrence and cooperation of the Spirit of Christ, accompanying the right dispensation of these Keys; that is, of these Ordinances according to his will.

Moreover, these Keys are neither Sword nor Sceptre; No Sword, for they convey not civil power of bodily life and death; nor Sceptre, for they convey not Sovereign or Legislative power over the Church, but stewardly and ministerial. As the key of the House of *David* was given to *Hilkiah*, (Isaiah 22:22.) who succeeded *Shebna* in his office; and his Office was על בֵּית over the house, verse 15, and the same word over the house, is translated Steward in the house, Genesis 43:19.

3. Touching the third thing, What are the acts of these Keys?

The acts of these Keys are said here to be binding and loosing, which are not the proper acts of material Keys; for their acts be opening and shutting, which argueth the keys here spoken of be not material keys, but metaphorical; and yet being keys, they have a power also of opening and shutting: for Christ, who hath the sovereign power of these Keys, he is said to have the Key of *David*, to open, and no man to shut; to shut, and no man to open, *Revelation* 3:7, which implieth, that these Keys of Christ's Kingdom have such a power of opening and shutting, as that they do thereby bind and loose, retain and remit; in opening, they loose, and remit; in shutting they bind, and retain: which will more appear in opening the fourth point.

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4. The fourth Point then is; What is the subject to be bound and loosed?

The text in Matthew 16:19, saith, *whatsoever*, which reacheth not (so far as the Papists would stretch it) to whatsoever oaths, or covenants, or contracts, or counsels, or laws; as if whatsoever oaths of allegiance, covenants of lease or marriage, &c. the Pope ratifieth or dissolveth on earth, should be ratified or dissolved in heaven: No, this is not the Key of the Kingdom of Heaven, but the key of the bottomless pit, *Revelation* 9:1. But this word, *whatsoever*, is here put in the Neuter Gender, (not in the Masculine, *whomsoever*) to imply both things and persons; Things, as sins; Persons, as those that commit them. For so, when our Saviour speaketh of the same acts of the same Keys (*John* 20:23) he explaineth himself thus: *Whose sins soever ye remit, they are remitted, and whose sins soever ye retain, they are retained.* Whatsoever you bind on earth, is as much therefore, as whose sins soever you retain on earth; and whatsoever you loose on earth, is as much as whose sins soever you loose on earth.

Now, this binding and loosing of whatsoever sins, in whosoever commit them, is partly in the conscience of the sinner, and partly in his outward estate in the Church, which is wont to be expressed in other terms, either *in foro interiori*, or *in foro exteriori*:⁴ As when in the dispensation of the Ordinances of God, a sinner is convinced to lie under the guilt of sin, then his sin is retained, his conscience is bound under the guilt of it, and himself bound under some Church-censure, according to the quality and desert of his offence; and if his sin be the more heinous, himself is shut out from the communion of the Church: But when a sinner repenteth of his sin, and confesseth it before the Lord, and (if it be known) before his people also, and then in the ministry of the Doctrine and Discipline of the Gospel, his sin is remitted, and his conscience loosed from the guilt of it, and himself hath open and free entrance, both unto the promise of the Gospel, and into the gates of the holy communion of the Church.

5. The fifth point to be explained, is, To whom is this power of the keys given? The Text saith, to thee *Simon Peter*, the son of *Jonah*, whom Christ blesseth, and pronounceth blessed upon his holy confession of Christ, the Son of the living God, and upon the same occasion promiseth both to use him and his confession, as an Instrument to lay the foundation of his Church; and also to give him the keys of his Church, for the well ordering and governing of it. But it hath proved a busy Question, How *Peter* is to be considered in receiving this power of the keys, whether as an Apostle, or as an Elder, (for an Elder also he was, 1 Peter 5:1) or as a

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Believer professing his faith before the Lord Jesus, and his fellow Brethren. Now because we are as well studious of peace, as of truth, we will not lean to one of these interpretations, more than to another. Take any of them, it will not hinder our purpose in this ensuing Discourse, though (to speak ingenuously and without offence what we conceive) the sense of the words will be most full, if all the several considerations be taken jointly together. Take *Peter*, considered not only as an Apostle, but an Elder also, yea, and a Believer too, professing his faith, all may well stand together. For there is a different power given to all these, to an Apostle, to an Elder, to a Believer, and *Peter* was all these, and received all the power which was given by Christ to any of these, or to all of these together. For as the Father sent Christ, so Christ sent *Peter* (as well as any Apostle) *cum amplitudine, & plenitudine potestatis*,⁵ (so far as either any Church-Officer, or the whole Church it self, was capable of it) *John 20:21*. So that *Austin* did not mistake, when he said *Peter* received the keys in the name of the Church. Nevertheless, we from this place in *Matthew 16:19* will challenge no further power, either to the Presbytery, or to the Fraternity of the Church, than is more expressly granted to them in other Scriptures. Now in other Scriptures it appeareth; First, That Christ gave the Power of retaining or remitting of sins (that is, the power of binding and loosing, the whole power of the keys) to all the Apostles as well as to *Peter*, *John 20:21,23*. Secondly, it appeareth also that the Apostles commended the rule and government of every particular church to the Elders (the Presbytery) of that church, *Hebrews 13:17*; *1 Timothy 5:17*. And therefore Christ gave the power of the keys to them also. Thirdly, It appeareth farther, that Christ gave the power of the keys to the Body likewise of the Church, even to the Fraternity with the Presbytery. For the Lord Jesus communicateth the power of binding and loosing to the Apostles, or Elders, together with the whole Church, when they are met in his Name, and agree together in the censure of an offender, *Matthew 18:17,18*. If an offender (saith he) *neglect to hear the Church, let him be to thee as an Heathen or a Publican*, that is, let him be excommunicated. Which censure administered by them, with the whole Church, he ratifieth with this promise of the power of the Keys: *Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever you shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever you shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven*. In which place, howsoever there be some difference between Classical and Congregational Divines, what should be meant by the *Church* (*Tell the Church*) whether the Presbytery or the Congregation; yet all agree

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in this, (and it is agreement in the truth, which we seek for) That no offender is to be excommunicated but with some concurrence of the Congregation, at least by way: 1. Of consent to the sentence. 2. Of actual execution of it, by withdrawing themselves from the offender so convicted and censured. Now this consent and concurrence of the Congregation, which is requisite to the power and validity of the censure, we conceive is some part of the exercise of the power of the Keys.

So that when Christ said to *Peter*, *To thee will I give the Keys of the kingdom of heaven*: If *Peter* then received the whole power of the Keys, then he stood in the room and name of all such, as have received any part of the power of the Keys, whether Apostles or Elders, or Churches. Or, if he stood in the room of an Apostle only, yet that hindereth not, but that as he there received the power of an Apostle, so the rest of the Apostles received the same power, either there, or elsewhere: and the Presbytery of each Church received, if not there, yet elsewhere, the power belonging to their office: and in like sort each Church or Congregation of professed Believers, received that portion also of Church-power which belonged to them.

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CHAPTER II

Of the Distribution of the Keys, and their power, or of the several sorts thereof.

The ordinary Distribution of the Keys, is wont to be thus delivered.

There is <i>clavis</i>	}	1. <i>Scientiæ</i> , A key of knowledge, and a
		2. <i>Potestatis</i> , Key of power: and the Key
of power is	}	1. <i>Ordinis</i> , Either a Key of Order, or a Key of
		2. <i>Jurisdictionis</i> , Jurisdiction.

This distribution though it go for current both amongst Protestants and Papists; yet we crave leave to express, what in it doth not fully satisfy us. Four things in it seem defective to us:

1. That any Key of the Kingdom of heaven should be left without power: For here in this distribution, the Key of knowledge is contradistinguished from a Key of power.

2. There is a real defect in omitting an integral part of the keys, which is the key of Church-liberty. But no marvel, though the Popish Clergy omitted it, who have oppressed all Church-liberty: and Protestant Churches, having recovered the liberty of preaching the Gospel, and Ministry of the Sacraments, some of them have looked no farther; nor so much as discerned their defect of Church-liberty in point of Discipline: and others finding themselves wronged in withholding a key or power, which belongs to them, have wrested to themselves an undue power, which belongs not to them, the key of Authority.

3. There is another defect in the Distribution, in dividing the key of Order from the key of Jurisdiction; of purpose to make way for the power of Chancellors and Commissaries *in foro exteriori*:⁶ who, though they want the key of Order, (having never entered into holy orders, as they are

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called, or at most into the order of Deacons only, whereof our Lord spake nothing touching Jurisdiction) yet they have been invested with Jurisdiction, yea, and more than ministerial authority, even above those Elders, who labour in word and doctrine: By this sacrilegious breach of order (which hath been, as it were, the breaking of the Files and Ranks in an Army) Satan hath routed and ruined a great part of the liberty and purity of Churches, and of all the Ordinances of Christ in them.

4. A fourth defect (but yet the least, which we observe in this Distribution) is, that order is appropriated to the Officers of the Church only. For though we be far from allowing that sacrilegious usurpation of the Minister's Office, which we hear of (to our grief) to be practised in some places, that private Christians ordinarily take upon them to preach the Gospel publicly, and to minister Sacraments: yet we put a difference between Office and Order. Office we look at as peculiar to those, who are set apart for some peculiar Function in the Church, who are either Elders or Deacons. But Order (speaking of Church-order properly taken) is common to all the members of the Church, whether Officers or private Brethren. There is an order as well in them that are subject, as in them that rule. There is a τάξις as well τῶν ὑποτακτικῶν, as τῶν ἐπιτακτικῶν. The maid in *Athens* is said, θεραραίνης ταξιν ἐπιλάβονσα as well as her Mistress.⁷ Yet if any man be willing to make office and order equipollent, we will not contend about words, so there be no erroneous apprehension wrapped into the matter.

To come therefore to such a Distribution of the Keys as is more suitable to Scripture phrase. For it becomes true *Israelites* rather to speak the language of *Canaan*, than the language of *Ashdod*.

When *Paul* beheld, and rejoiced to behold, how the Church of *Colossæ* had received the Lord Jesus, and walked in him; he summeth up all their church estate, *to wit*, their beauty and power, in these two, Faith and Order, *Colossians* 2:5,6.

There is therefore a Key of Faith, and a Key of Order.

The Key of Faith, is the same which the Lord Jesus calleth the Key of knowledge, *Luke* 11:52 and which he complaineth, the Lawyers had taken away. Now that key of knowledge Christ speaketh of, was such, that if it had not been taken away, they that had it, had power by it to enter into the kingdom of heaven themselves, and it may be, to open the door to others, to enter also. Now such a knowledge, whereby a man hath power to enter into heaven, is only Faith, which is often therefore called

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Knowledge, as *Isaiah 53:11*, *By the knowledge of him shall my righteous servant justify many*: that is, by the faith of Christ. And *John 17:3*, *This is eternal life to know thee*: that is, to believe on thee. This Key therefore, the Key of knowledge, (saving knowledge) or, which is all one, the Key of Faith, is common to all believers. A faithful soul knowing the Scriptures, and Christ in them, receiveth Christ, and entereth through him into the kingdom of heaven, both here, and hereafter. Here he entereth into a state of grace through faith: and by the profession of his faith, he entereth also into the fellowship of the Church (which is the kingdom of heaven upon earth:) and by the same faith, as he believeth to justification, so he maketh confession to salvation, which is perfected in the kingdom of glory, *Romans 10:10*.

The Key of Order is the power whereby every member of the Church walketh orderly himself, according to his place in the Church, and helpeth his brethren to walk orderly also.

It was that which the Apostles and Elders called upon *Paul*, so to carry himself before the *Jews* in the Temple, that he might make it appear to all men that he walked orderly. (*Acts 21:18,24*) Orderly, to wit, according to the orders of the Jewish Church, with whom he then conversed. And it was the commandment which *Paul* gave to the whole Church of Thessalonica, and to all the members of it, to *withdraw themselves from every brother that walketh disorderly*, 2 *Thessalonians 3:6*. This their withdrawing from him that walked disorderly, was the exercise of their key of order. And it was a like exercise of the same key of order, when he requireth the Brethren to warn the *unruly*, which is, (in the original) the same word, to admonish the *disorderly*: 1 *Thessalonians 5:14*. And this key of order (to wit, order understood in this sense) is common to all the members of the Church, whether Elders or brethren.

Furthermore, of *Order* there be *two keys*: a key of *power*, or *interest*: and the key of *Authority* or *Rule*. The first of these is termed in the Scriptures, *Liberty*: So distinguishing it from that part of *Rule* and *Authority* in the Officers of the Church. We speak not here of that spiritual liberty, whether of *impunity*, whereby the children of God are set free by the blood of Christ from Satan, hell, bondage of sin, curse of the Moral Law, and service of the Ceremonial Law: nor of *immunity*, whereby we have *power to be called the sons of God*, to come boldly unto the throne of grace in prayer, and as heirs of glory, to look for our inheritance in light: but of that *external liberty*, or *interest* which Christ also hath purchased for his

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people, as liberty to enter into the fellowship of his Church, liberty to choose and call well gifted men to office in that his Church: liberty to partake in Sacraments, or seals of the Covenant of the Church—liberty, and interest to join with officers in the due censure of offenders, and the like. This liberty and the acts thereof, are often exemplified in the Acts of the Apostles: and the Apostle *Paul* calleth it expressly by the name of liberty. *Brethren* (saith he) *you have been called unto LIBERTY, only use not your liberty as an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another*, Galatians 5:13, that the Apostle by that liberty meaneth Church—liberty, or power in ordering Church—affairs, will evidently appear, if we consult with the context, rather than with Commenters. For the Apostle having spent the former part of the Epistle, partly in the confirmation of his calling, partly in disputation against justification by the works of the Law, to the end of verse 8 of Chapter 5. In the ninth Verse he descendeth not to exhort unto *bonos mores*⁸ in general, (as usually Commenters take it) but to instruct in Church Discipline, in which he giveth three or four directions to the tenth *verse* of Chapter 6.

1. Touching the censure of those corrupt Teachers, who had perverted and troubled them with that corrupt Doctrine of justification by works. Chapter 5, *verse* 9. to the end of the Chapter.

2. Touching the gentle admonition and restoring of a brother fallen by infirmity, Chapter 6, *verses* 1 to 5.

3. Touching the maintenance of their Ministers, *verses* 6,7,8 and beneficence to others, *verses* 9, 10.

Touching the first, the censure of their corrupt Teachers. 1. He layeth for the ground of it (that which himself gave for the ground of the excommunication of the incestuous Corinth, 1 *Corinthians* 5:6.) *A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump*, *verse* 9. 2. He presumeth the Church will be of the same mind with him, and concur in the censure of him that troubled them with corrupt doctrine, *verse* 10. (from fellowship with which corrupt doctrine he cleareth himself, *verse* 11). 3. He proceedeth to declare, what censure he wisheth might be dispensed against him, and the rest of those corrupt Teachers. *I would* (saith he) *they were even cut off that trouble you*: cut off, to wit, by excommunication, *verse* 12. Now lest it should be objected by the brethren of the Church: But what power have we to cut them off? The Apostle answereth, they have a power and liberty (to wit, to join with the sounder part of the *Presbytery*, in casting

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them out, or cutting them off:) *For brethren (saith he) you are called unto liberty.*

If it should be further objected, Yea, but give the people this power and liberty in some cases, either to cast off their Teachers, or to cut them off, the people will soon take advantage to abuse this liberty unto much carnal licentiousness. The Apostle preventeth that with a word of wholesome counsel: *Brethren (saith he) you have been called unto liberty: only use not your liberty as an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another,* verse 13, and thereupon seasonably pursueth this counsel with a caveat to beware of abusing this liberty to carnal contention, (an usual disease of popular liberty) and withal dehortheth them from all other fruits of the flesh, to the end of the Chapter.

Evident therefore it is, that there is a key of power or liberty given to the Church (to the Brethren with the Elders) as to open a door of entrance to the Minister's calling; so to shut the door of entrance against them in some cases, as when through corrupt and pernicious doctrine, they turn from Shepherds to become ravenous Wolves.

Having spoken then of that first key of order, namely, the key of *power*, (in a more large sense) or liberty in the *Church*, there remaineth the other *key of order*, which is the key of *Authority* or of *Rule*, in a more strict sense, which is in the *Elders* of the Church.

Authority is a moral power, in a superior order, (or state) binding or releasing an inferior in point of subjection.

This key when it was promised to Peter, Matthew 16:19, and given to him with the rest of the Apostles, *John* 20:23, they thereby had power to bind and loose: and it is the same Authority which is given to their successors the Elders, whereby they are called to feed and rule the Church of God, as the Apostles had done before them, *Acts* 20:28. And indeed by opening and applying the Law (the spirit of bondage accompanying the same) they bind sinners under the curse, and their consciences under guilt of sin, and fear of wrath, and shut the kingdom of heaven against them. And by opening and applying the Gospel (the Spirit of Adoption accompanying the same) they remit sin, and loose the consciences of believing repenting souls from guilt of sin, and open to them the doors of heaven. By virtue of this key, as they preach *with all authority*, not only the doctrine of the Law, but also the Covenant of the Gospel; so they administer the seals thereof, Baptism, and the Lord's Supper. By virtue also of this key, they with the Church do bind an obstinate offender under

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excommunication, *Matthew* 18:17,18 and release, and forgive him upon his repentance, *2 Corinthians* 2:7.

This Distribution of the *keys*, and so of *spiritual power*, in the things of Christ's kingdom, we have received from the Scripture. But if any men out of love to Antiquity, do rather affect to keep to the terms of the former more ancient Distribution (as there be who are as loath to change: *Antiquos terminos verborum*, as *agrorum*⁹) we would not stick upon the words rightly explained, out of desire both to judge and speak the same things with fellow-brethren. Only then let them allow some spiritual power to the key of knowledge, though not Church-power. And in Church-power let them put in as well a *key of liberty*, that is, a power and privilege of *interest*, as a *key of Authority*. And by their key of order, as they do understand the key of office, so let them not divide from it the key of jurisdiction (for Christ hath given no jurisdiction, but to whom he hath given office) and so we willingly consent with them.

CHAPTER III

*Of the subject of the power of the keys, to whom they are committed:
and first of the key of Knowledge, and Order.*

As the keys of the kingdom of heaven be divers, so are the subjects to whom they are committed, divers: as in the natural body, diversity of functions belongeth to diversity of members.

1. The *key of knowledge* (or which is all one, the key of Faith) belongeth to all the faithful, whether joined to any particular Church or no. As in the primitive times, men of grown years were first called and converted to the faith, before they were received into the Church: And even now an Indian or Pagan may not be received into the Church, till he have first received the faith, and have made profession of it before the Lord, and the Church: which argueth, that the key of knowledge is given not only to the Church, but to some before they enter into the Church. And yet to Christians for the Church's sake: that they who receive this grace of faith, by it may receive Christ and his benefits, and therewith may receive also this privilege, to find an *open door* set before them, to enter into the fellowship of the Church.

2. The *key of order* (speaking as we do of Church order, as *Paul* doth, Colossians 2:5) belongeth to all such, who are in Church order, whether *Elders* or *Brethren*. For though Elders be in a superior order, by reason of their office, yet the brethren (over whom the Elders are made Overseers and Rulers) they stand also in an order, even in orderly subjection, according to the order of the Gospel. It is true, every faithful soul that hath received a key of knowledge, is bound to watch over his neighbour's soul, as his own, and to admonish him of his sin, unless he be a scorner: but this he doth, *Non ratione ordinis, sed intuitu charitatis*: not by virtue of a state of order which he is in (till in Church fellowship) but as of common

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Christian love and charity. But every faithful Christian who standeth in Church order is bound to do the same, as well *respectu ordinis*, as *intuitu charitatis*, by virtue of that royal Law, not only of love, but of Church order, *Matthew* 18:15,16,17, whereby if his brother who offended him, do not hearken to his conviction and admonition, he is then according to order, to proceed further, taking one or two with him: and if the offender refuse to hear them also, then he is by order to tell the Church, and afterwards walk towards him, as God shall direct the Church to order it.

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CHAPTER IV

Of the subject to whom the Key of Church privilege, power, or Liberty is given.

This key is given to the Brethren of the Church: for so saith the Apostle, in Galatians 5:13 (in the place quoted and opened before) *Brethren, you have been called to liberty.*

And indeed, as it is the εἰ εὐναί, εὐεξία and εὐπραξία¹⁰ of a Commonwealth, the right and due establishment and balancing of the liberties or privileges of the people (which is in a true sense, may be called a power) and the authority of the Magistrate: so it is the safety of Church estate, the right and due settling and ordering of the holy power of the privileges and liberties of the Brethren, and the ministerial authority of the Elders. The Gospel alloweth no Church authority (or rule properly so called) to the Brethren, but reserveth that wholly to the Elders; and yet preventeth the tyranny and oligarchy, and exorbitancy of the Elders, by the large and firm establishment of the liberties of the Brethren, which ariseth to a power in them. *Bucer's* axiom is here notable; *Potestas penes omnem Ecclesiam est; Autoritas ministerii penes Presbyteros & Episcopos.*¹¹ In *Matthew* 16:19, where *Potestas*, or power being contradistinguished from *Autoritas*, Authority is nothing else but a liberty or privilege.

The liberties of the Brethren, or of the Church consisting of them, are many and great.

1. The Church of Brethren hath the power, privileges and liberty to choose their Officers. In the choice of an Apostle into the place of *Judas*, the people went as far as human vote and suffrage could go. Out of 120 persons (*verse* 15) they chose out, and presented two; out of which two (because an Apostle was to be designed immediately by God) God by lot chose one; And yet this one so chosen of God, συγκατεψηφίσθη, *communibus*

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*omnium suffragiis inter duodecim Apostolos allectus est,*¹² verse 26 was counted amongst the Apostles by the common suffrages of them all. And this place *Cyprian* presseth amongst others, to confirm the *power* (that is ἐξουσίαν, or *privilege*, or *liberty*) of the people in choosing or refusing their Ministers. *Plebs Christiana* (saith he) *vel maxime potestatem habet, vel dignos sacerdotes eligendi, vel indignos recusandi*, Epistol. 4, lib. 1.¹³

The like, or greater liberty is generally approved by the best of our Divines (studious of Reformation) from *Acts* 14:23. They *ordained them Elders, chosen by lifting up of hands*.

The same *power* is clearly expressed in the choice of Deacons, *Acts* 6:3,5,6. The Apostles did not choose the Deacons, but called the multitude together, and said unto them, *Brethren, look you out seven men amongst you, whom we may appoint over this business: And the saying pleased the whole multitude, and they chose Stephen, &c.*

2. It is a *privilege*, or a *liberty* the Church hath received, to send forth one or more of their Elders, as the public service of Christ and of the Church may require. Thus *Epaphroditus* was a *Messenger* or *Apostle* of the Church of *Philippi* unto *Paul*, *Philippians* 2:25.

3. The *Brethren* of the Church have *power* and *liberty* of propounding any just exception against such as offer themselves to be admitted unto their communion, or unto the seals of it: Hence *Saul*, when he offered himself to the communion of the Church at *Jerusalem*, was not at first admitted thereto, upon an exception taken against him by the *Disciples*, till that exception was removed, *Acts* 9:26,27, and *Peter* did not admit the family of *Cornelius* to Baptism, till he had inquired of the *Brethren*, if any of them had any exception against it, *Acts* 10:47.

4. As the *Brethren* have a *power* of order, and the *privilege* to expostulate with their *Brethren*, in case of private scandals, according to the rule, *Matthew* 18:15,16. So in case of public scandal, the whole Church of *Brethren* have *power* and *privilege* to join with the *Elders*, in inquiring, hearing, judging of public scandals; so as to bind notorious offenders and impenitents under censure, and to forgive the repentant: For when Christ commandeth a brother, in case that offence cannot be healed privately, then to *tell the Church*, *Matthew* 18:17, it necessarily implieth that the Church must hear him, and inquire into the offence complained of, and judge of the offence as they find it upon inquiry. When the *Brethren* that were of the circumcision expostulated with *Peter* about his communion with *Cornelius*, and his uncircumcised family, *Peter* did not reject them,

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and their complaint against him, as transgressing the bounds of their just *power* and *privilege*, but readily addressed himself to give satisfaction to them all, *Acts* 11:2 to 18. The *Brethren of the Church of Corinth* being gathered together with their Elders, *in the name of the Lord Jesus*, and *with his power*, did deliver the incestuous person to Satan, *1 Corinthians* 5:4,5. And *Paul* reproveth them all, Brethren as well as Elders, that they had no sooner put him away from amongst them, *verse* 2, and expressly he alloweth to them all power to *judge* them that are within, *verse* 12. Yea, and from thence argueth, in all the Saints, even in the meanest of the Saints, an ability to judge between brethren, in the things of this life, as those that have received such a spirit of discerning from Christ, by which they shall one day judge the world, even Angels, so in the next Chapter, the 6, of that *1 Corinthians* 1:2,3,4,5. And the same *Brethren* of the same Church, as well as the *Elders*, he entreateth to *forgive* the same incestuous *Corinthian*, upon his repentance, *2 Corinthians* 2:7,8.

If it be said, to *judge* is an act of rule; and to be Rulers of the Church, is not given to all the Brethren, but to the Elders only: *Answer*: All judgment is not an act of authority or rule; for there is a judgment of discretion, by way of *privilege*, as well as of authority by way of sentence: That of discretion is common to all the *Brethren*, as well as that of authority belongeth to the *Presbytery* of that Church. In *England*, the Jury by their verdict, as well as the Judge by his sentence, do both of them judge the same malefactor; yet in the Jury their verdict is but an act of their popular liberty: In the Judge it is an act of his judicial authority.

If it be demanded, What difference is there between these two?

The answer is ready, Great is the difference: for though the Jury have given up their judgment and verdict, yet the malefactor is not thereupon legally condemned, much less executed, but upon the sentence of the Judge: In like sort here, though the Brethren of the Church do with one accord give up their vote and judgment for the censure of an offender, yet he is not thereby censured, till upon the sentence of the Presbytery.

If it be said again; Yea, but it is an act of authority to bind and loose, and the power to bind and loose, Christ gave to the whole Church, *Matthew* 18:18.

Answer: The whole Church may be said to bind and loose, in that the Brethren consent, and concur with the Elders, both before the Censure in discerning it to be just and equal, and in declaring their discernment, by lifting up of their hands, or by silence: and after the censure, in rejecting

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the offender censured from their wonted Communion. And yet their discerning or approving of the justice of the censure beforehand, is not a preventing of the Elders in their work. For the Elders before that have not only privately examined the offender and his offence, and the proofs thereof, to prepare the matter and ripen it for the Church's cognizance: but do also publicly revise the heads of all the material passages thereof before the Church: and do withal declare to the Church the counsel and will of God therein, that they may rightly discern and approve what censure the Lord requireth to be administered in such a case. So that the people's discerning and approving the justice of the censure before it be administered, ariseth from the Elder's former instruction and direction of them therein: Whereunto the people give consent, in obedience to the will and rule of Christ. Hence is that speech of the Apostle; *We have in readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your OBEDIENCE IS FULFILLED*, 2 Corinthians 10:6. The Apostles' revenge of disobedience by way of reproof in preaching, doth not follow the people's obedience, but proceedeth whether the people obey it or no. It was therefore their revenge of disobedience by way of censure in discipline, which they had in readiness, when the obedience of the Church is fulfilled in discerning and approving the Equity of the Censure, which the Apostles or Elders have declared to them from the Word.

This power or privilege of the Church in dealing in this sort with a scandalous offender, may not be limited only to a private brother offending, but may reach also to an offensive Elder. For (as hath been touched already) it is plain that the Brethren of the Circumcision, supposing *Peter* to have given an offence in eating with men uncircumcised, they openly expostulated with him about his offence: and he stood not with them upon terms of his Apostleship, much less of his Eldership, but willingly submitted himself to give satisfaction to them all, *Acts* 11:2 to 18. And *Paul* writeth to the church of *Colossæ*, to deal with *Archippus*, warning him to see to the fulfilling of his Ministry, *Colossians* 4:17. And very pregnant is his direction to the *Galatians*, for their proceeding to the utmost with their corrupt and scandalous false Teachers. *I would* (saith he) *they were even cut off that trouble you*; And that upon this very ground of their *liberty*, *Galatians* 5:12,13, as hath been opened above in Chapter 2.

But whether the Church hath power or liberty for proceeding to the utmost censure of their whole Presbytery, is a Question of more difficulty.

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For 1. It cannot well be conceived that the whole Presbytery should be proceeded against, but that by reason of their strong influence into the hearts of many of the Brethren, a strong party of the Brethren will be ready to side with them: and in case of finding dissension and opposition, the Church ought not to proceed without consulting with the Synod. As when there arose dissension in the Church at *Antioch*, and SIDING, (or as the word is *στάσις*) they sent up to the Apostles and Elders at *Jerusalem*, who in way of Synod determined the business, *Acts* 15:2 to 23. A precedent and pattern of due Church proceedings in case of dissension, when some take with one side, some with another. But of that more hereafter.

2. *Excommunication* is one of the *highest* acts of *Rule* in the Church, and therefore cannot be performed but by some Rulers. Now where all the Elders are culpable, there be no Rulers left in that Church to censure them. As therefore the Presbytery cannot excommunicate the whole Church, (though Apostate) for they must tell the Church, and join with the Church in that Censure: so neither can the Church excommunicate the whole *Presbytery*, because they have not received from Christ an office of rule, without their Officers.

If it be said, the *twenty-four Elders* (who represent the private members of the Church, as the *four living Creatures* do the four Officers) had all of them *Crowns* upon their heads, and *sat upon thrones* (*Revelation* 4:4) which are signs of regal authority: The answer is, The crowns and thrones argue them to be *Kings*, no more than their *white raiments* argue them to be *Priests*, *verse* 4, but neither *Priests* nor *Kings* by Office, but by liberty to perform like spiritual duties by grace, which the other do by grace and office: As *Priests* they offer up spiritual sacrifices: and as *Kings* they rule their lusts, passions, themselves, and their families, yea, the world and Church also after a sort: the world, by improving it to spiritual advantage: and the Church, by appointing their own Officers, and likewise in censuring their offenders, not only by their officers, (which is as much as *Kings* are wont to do) but also by their own royal assent, which *Kings* are not wont to do, but only in the execution of *Nobles*.

But nevertheless, though the Church want authority to excommunicate their Presbytery, yet they want not liberty to withdraw from them: For so *Paul* instructeth and beseecheth the Church of *Rome* (whom the Holy Ghost foresaw would most stand in need of this counsel) to make use of this liberty: *I beseech you* (saith he) *mark such as cause divisions and offences,*

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contrary to the DOCTRINE you have received, καὶ ἐκκλίνατε ἀπ' αὐτῶν, WITHDRAW from them.

So then, by the agitation of this objection, there appear two liberties of the Church more to be added to the former.

One is this (which is the fifth liberty in members) the Church hath liberty in case of dissension amongst themselves to resort to a Synod, *Acts* 15:1,2. Where also it appeareth the *Brethren* enjoyed this liberty, to dispute their doubts till they were satisfied, *verse* 7,12, to join with the *Apostles* and *Elders* in the definitive sentence, and in the promulgation of the same, *verse* 22,23.

The sixth Liberty of the Church is, To withdraw from the communion of those, whom they want authority to excommunicate. For as they set up the Presbytery, by professing their subjection to them in the Lord: so they avoid them by professed withdrawing their subjection from them according to God.

A seventh and last Liberty of the Church, is, Liberty of communion with other churches. Communion we say: for it is a great Liberty, that no particular church standeth in subjection to another particular church, no, not to a Cathedral church; but that all the Churches enjoy mutual brotherly communion amongst themselves; which communion is mutually exercised amongst them seven ways, which for brevity and memory sake, we sum up in seven words. 1. By way of *Participation*. 2. Of *Recommendation*. 3. Of *Consultation*. 4. Of *Congregation* into a Synod. 5. Of *Contribution*. 6. Of *Admonition*. 7. Of *Propagation* or *Multiplication* of Churches.

1. By way of *Participation*; the members of one church occasionally coming to another church, where the Lord's Supper cometh to be administered, are willingly admitted to partake with them at the Lord's Supper, in case that neither themselves, nor the churches from whence they came, do lie under any public offence. For we receive the Lord's Supper, not only as a Seal of our communion with the Lord Jesus, and with his members in our own Church, but also in all the churches of the Saints.

2. By way of *Recommendation*; Letters are sent from one church to another, recommending to their watchfulness and communion, any of their members, who by occasion of business, are for a time to reside amongst them. As *Paul* sent Letters of *Recommendation* to the Church of *Rome*, in the behalf of *Phoebe*, a Deaconess of the Church at *Cenchrea*, *Romans* 16:1,2. And of these kind of Letters he speaketh to the Church

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of *Corinth* also though not as needful to himself (who was well known to them) yet for others, 2 *Corinthians* 3:1.

But if a member of one church have just occasion to remove himself and his family, to take up his settled habitation in another church, then the Letters written by the church in his behalf, do recommend him to their perpetual watchfulness and communion. And if the other church have no just cause to refuse him, they of his own church do by those letters wholly dismiss him from themselves; whereupon the letters (for distinction sake) are called letters of dismissal; which indeed do not differ from the other, but in the durance of the recommendation, the one recommending him for a time, the other for ever.

3. By way of *Consultation*, one church hath liberty of communicating with another to require their judgment and counsel, touching any person or cause, wherewith they may be better acquainted than themselves. Thus the Church of *Antioch*, by their messengers, consulted with the Church at *Jerusalem*, touching the necessity of circumcision, *Acts* 15:5, although the consultation brought forth a further effect of communion with churches; to wit, their Congregation into a Synod. Which is the fourth way of communion of churches: All of the churches have the like liberty of sending their messengers to debate and determine in a Synod, such matters as do concern them all; As the Church of *Antioch* sent messengers to *Jerusalem* for resolution and satisfaction in a doubt that troubled them: the like liberty by proportion might any other church have taken; yea, many churches together; yea, all the churches in the world, in any case that might concern them all. What authority these Synods have received, and may put forth, will come to be considered in the sequel.

A fifth way of communion of churches, is the Liberty of giving and receiving mutual supplies and succours one from another. The Church at *Jerusalem* communicated to the churches of the *Gentiles*, their spiritual treasures of gifts of Grace; and the churches of the *Gentiles* ministered back again to them, liberal oblations of outward beneficence, *Romans* 15:26,27; *Acts* 11:29,30. When the church of *Antioch* aboundeth with more variety of spiritual gifted men, than the state of their own church stood in need of; they fasted and prayed; as for other ends, so for the enlargement of Christ's Kingdom in the improvement of them. And the Holy Ghost opened them a door for the succour of many countries about them, by the sending forth of some of them, *Acts* 13:1,2,3.

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A sixth way of communion of churches is by way of mutual admonition, when a public offence is found amongst any of them: For as *Paul* had liberty to admonish *Peter* before the whole church at *Antioch*, when he saw him walk not with a right foot (and yet *Paul* had no authority over *Peter*, but only both of them had equal mutual interest one in another), *Galatians* 2:11 to 14. So by the same proportion, one Church hath liberty to admonish another, though they be both of them of equal authority; seeing one Church hath as much interest in another, as one Apostle in another. And if by the royal law of love, one Brother hath liberty to admonish his Brother in the same Church, (*Matthew* 18:15,16) then by the same rule of brotherly love, and mutual watchfulness, one Church hath power to admonish another, in faithfulness to the Lord, and unto them. The Church in the *Canticles* took care not only for her own members, but for her little sister, which she thought had no breast; yea, and consulteth with other Churches what to do for her, *Canticles* 8:8. And would she not then have taken like care, in case their little sister having breasts, her breasts had been distempered, and given corrupt matter instead of milk?

A seventh way of communion of Churches may be by way of propagation and multiplication of Churches: As when a particular Church of Christ shall grow so full of members, as all of them cannot hear the voice of their Ministers; then as an Hive full of Bees swarmeth forth, so is the Church occasioned to send forth a sufficient number of her members, fit to enter into a Church-state, and to carry along Church-work amongst themselves. And for that end they either send forth some one or other of their Elders with them, or direct them where to procure such to come unto them. The like course is wont to be taken, when sundry Christians coming over from one country to another; such as are come over first, and are themselves full of company, direct those that come after them, and assist them in like sort, in the combination of themselves into Church-order, according to the Rule of the Gospel. Though the Apostles be dead, whose office it was to plant, and gather, and multiply Churches; yet the work is not dead, but the same power of the keys is left with the Churches in common, and with each particular Church for her part, according to their measure, to propagate and enlarge the Kingdom of Christ (as God shall give opportunity) throughout all generations.

CHAPTER V

Of the subject to whom the Key of Authority is committed.

The key of *Authority* or *Rule*, is committed to the Elders of the Church, and so the act of *Rule* is made the proper act of their office, *The Elders that rule well, &c.*, 1 Timothy 5:17, Hebrews 13:7,17.

The special acts of this rule are many.

The first and principal is that which the *Elders who labour in the Word and Doctrine*, are chiefly to attend unto, that is, the *preaching of the Word with all Authority*, and that which is annexed thereto, the administration of the Sacraments, or Seals, *Speak, rebuke and exhort* (saith *Paul* to *Titus*) *with all authority*, Titus 2:15. And that the administration of the seals is annexed thereto, is plain from Matthew 28:19,20. *Go* (saith *Christ* to the *Apostles*) *make Disciples, and baptize them, etc.*

If it be objected, Private members may all of them prophecy publicly, 1 Corinthians 14:31, and therefore also baptize: and so this act of authority is not peculiar to preaching Elders.

Answer 1. The place in the *Corinths* doth not speak of ordinary private members, but of men furnished with extraordinary gifts. Kings at the time of their Coronation give many extraordinary large gifts, which they do not daily pour out in like sort in their ordinary government. *Christ* soon after his ascension poured out a larger measure of his Spirit than in times succeeding. The members of the Church of *Corinth* (as of many other in those primitive times) were *enriched with all knowledge, and in all utterance*, 1 Corinthians 1:5. And the same persons that had the *gift of prophecy* in the Church of *Corinth*, had also *the gift of Tongues*, which put upon the *Apostle* a necessity to take them off from their frequent speaking with *Tongues*, by preferring prophecy before it, 1 Corinthians 14:2 to 24. So that though all they might prophecy (as having extraordinary gifts for it,) yet the like

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liberty is not allowed to them that want the like gifts. In the *Church of Israel*, none besides the *Priests* and *Levites*, did ordinarily prophecy, either in the Temple, or in the Synagogues, unless they were either furnished with extraordinary gifts of prophecy, (as the Prophets of *Israel*) or were set apart, and trained up, to prepare for such a calling, as the *sons of the Prophets*. When *Amos* was forbidden by the *high Priest* of *Bethel*, to prophecy at *Bethel*, *Amos* doth not allege nor plead the liberty of any *Israelite* to prophecy in the holy Assemblies, but allegeth only his extraordinary calling, *Amos* 7:14,15. It appeareth also that the *sons of the Prophets*, that is, men set apart, and trained up to prepare for that calling, were allowed the like liberty, 1 *Samuel* 19:20.

Answer 2. But neither the sons of the Prophets, nor the Prophets themselves, were wont to offer sacrifices in *Israel*, (except *Samuel* and *Eli* by special direction) nor did the extraordinary Prophets in *Corinth* take upon them to administer Sacraments.

If any reply, That if the Prophets in the Church at *Corinth* had been endued with extraordinary gifts of prophecy they had not been *subject* to the judgment of the Prophets, which these are directed to be, 1 *Corinthians* 14:29.

Answer. It followeth not. For the People of God were to examine all prophecies, by the *Law and Testimony*, and not to receive them but according to that rule, *Isaiah* 8:20. Yea, and *Paul* himself referreth all his Doctrine to the *Law and Prophets*, *Acts* 26:22. And the Bereans are commended for examining *Paul's* Doctrine according to the Scriptures, *Acts* 17:11,12.

2. A second act of Authority common to the Elders, is, they have power, as any weighty occasion shall require, to call the Church together, as the Apostles called the Church together for the election of Deacons, *Acts* 6:2. And in like sort are the *Priests* of the old Testament stirred up to call a solemn Assembly, to gather the Elders, and all the inhabitants of the land, to sanctify a Fast, *Joel* 1:13,14.

3. It is an act of their power, to examine, if the Apostles, then any others (whether officers or members) before they be received of the church, *Revelation* 2:2.

A fourth act of their rule is, the Ordination of Officers (whom the people have chosen) whether Elders or Deacons, 1 *Timothy* 4:14; *Acts* 6:6.

5. It is an act of the Key of Authority, that the Elders open the doors of Speech and Silence in the Assembly. They were the Rulers of the Synagogue, who sent to *Paul* and *Barnabas* to open their mouths in a word of exhortation,

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Acts 13:15, and it is the same power which calleth men to speak, to put men to silence when they speak amiss. And yet when the *Elders* themselves do lie under offence, or under suspicion of it, the brethren have liberty to require satisfaction in a modest manner, concerning any public breach of rule, as hath been mentioned above out of Acts 11:2,3, &c.

6. It belongeth to the Elders to *prepare matters beforehand*, which are to be transacted by themselves, or others, in the face of the Congregation, as the *Apostles* and *Elders* being met at the house of *James*, gave direction to *Paul* how to carry himself that he might prevent the offence of the Church, when he should appear before them, Acts 21:18. Hence when the offence of a brother is (according to the rule in *Matthew* 18:17) to be brought to the *Church*, they are beforehand to consider and enquire whether the offence be really given or no, whether duly proved, and orderly proceeded in by the brethren, according to rule, and not duly satisfied by the offender: lest themselves and the Church, be openly cumbered with unnecessary and tedious agitations: but that all things transacted before the Church, be carried along with most expedition and best edification. In which respect they have power to reject causeless and disorderly complaints, as well as to propound and handle just complaints before the congregation.

7. In the handling of an offence before the Church, the Elders have authority both *Jus dicere*, and *Sententiam ferre*;¹⁴ When the offence appeareth truly scandalous; the Elders have power from God to inform the Church, what the *Law* (or *Rule* and *Will*) of *Christ* is for the censure of such an offence: And when the Church discerns the same, and hath no just exception against it, but condescendeth thereto, it is a further act of the Elders' power, to *give sentence* against the offender. Both these acts of power in the Ministers of the Gospel, are foretold by *Ezekiel*, Chapter 44:23,24. *They shall teach my people the difference between holy and profane, and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean. And in controversy they shall stand in judgment, and they shall judge it according to my judgment, &c.*

8. The Elders have power to *dismiss the Church* with a blessing in the name of the Lord, *Numbers* 6:23 to 26; *Hebrews* 7:7.

9. The Elders have received power to *charge* any of the people in *private*, that none of them live either *inordinately* without a calling, or *idly* in their calling, or *scandalously* in any sort, 2 *Thessalonians* 3:6 and verses 8,10,11,12.

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The Apostles' command argueth a power in the Elders, to charge these duties upon the people effectually.

10. What power belongeth to the Elders in a *Synod*, is more fitly to be spoken to in the *Chapter of Synods*.

11. In case the Church should fall away to blasphemy against Christ, and obstinate rejection and persecution of the way of grace, and either no Synod to be hoped for, or no help by a Synod, the Elders have power to *withdraw* (or *separate*) the *Disciples* from them, and to carry away the Ordinances with them, and therewithal sadly to denounce the just Judgment of God against them, *Acts* 19:9; *Exodus* 33:7; *Mark* 6:11; *Luke* 10:11; *Acts* 13:46.

Objection: But if Elders have all this power to exercise all these acts of Rule, partly over the private members, partly over the whole Church, how are they then called the *servants of the Church*? *2 Corinthians* 4:5.

Answer: The Elders to be both Servants and Rulers of the Church, may both of them stand well together. For their Rule is not lordly, as if they ruled of themselves, or for themselves, but stewardly and ministerial, as ruling the Church from Christ, and also from their call: and withal, ruling the Church for Christ; and for the Church, even for their spiritual everlasting good. A Queen may call her servants, her Mariners, to pilot and conduct her over the Sea to such an Haven: yet they being called by her to such an office, she must not rule them in steering their course, but must submit herself to be ruled by them, till they have brought her to her desired Haven. So is the case between the Church and her Elders.

CHAPTER VI

Of the Power and Authority given to Synods

S*ynods* we acknowledge, being rightly ordered, as an Ordinance of Christ. Of their Assembly we find three just causes in Scripture. 1. When a Church wanting light or peace at home, desireth the counsel and help of other churches, few or more. Thus the *Church of Antioch*, being annoyed with corrupt teachers, who darkened the light of the truth, and bred no small dissension amongst them in the church; they sent *Paul* and *Barnabas* and other *messengers* unto the *Apostles* and *Elders* at *Jerusalem*, for the establishment of Truth and Peace. In joining the *Elders* to the *Apostles* (and that doubtless by the advice of *Paul* and *Barnabas*) it argueth that they sent not to the *Apostles* as extraordinary and infallible, and authentical Oracles of God, (for then what need the advice and help of *Elders*?) but as wise and holy guides of the church, who might not only relieve them by some wise counsel, and holy order, but also set a precedent to succeeding ages, how errors and dissensions in churches might be removed and healed. And the course which the *Apostles* and *Elders* took for clearing the matter, was not by publishing the counsel of God with Apostolic authority, from immediate revelation, but by searching out the truth in an ordinary way of free disputation, *Acts* 15 verse 7, which is as fit a course for imitation in after ages, as it was seasonable for practice then.

2. Just consequence from Scripture giveth us another ground for the assembly of many churches, or of their messengers, into a Synod, when any church lieth under scandal, through corruption in doctrine and practice, and will not be healed by more private advertisements of their own members, or of their neighbour Ministers, or Brethren. For there is a brotherly communion, as between the members of the same church; so between the churches. *We have a little sister* (saith one church to another,

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Canticles 8:8) therefore churches have a brotherly communion amongst themselves. Look then as one brother being offended with another, and not able to heal him by the mouth of two or three Brethren privately, it behoveth him to carry it to the whole church; so by proportion, if one church see matter of offence in another, and be not able to heal it in a more private way, it will behove them to procure the Assembly of many churches, that the offence may be orderly heard, and judged and removed.

3. It may so fall out, that the state of all the churches in the country may be corrupted; and beginning to discern their corruption, may desire the concurse and counsel of one another, for a speedy and safe, and general reformation. And then so meeting and conferring together, may renew their covenant with God, and conclude and determine upon a course, that may tend to the public healing, and salvation of them all. This was a frequent practice in the old Testament, in the time of *Asa*, *2 Chronicles* 15:10 to 15, in the time of *Hezekiah*, *2 Chronicles* 29:4 to 19. In the time of *Josiah*, *2 Chronicles* 34:19 to 33, and in the time of *Ezra*, *Ezra* 10:1 to 5. These and the like examples were not peculiar to the *Israelites*, as one entire *national Church*: For in that respect they appealed from every *Synagogue* and Court in *Israel*, to the *national high Priest*, and Court at *Jerusalem*, as being all of them subordinate thereunto (and therefore that precedent is usually waived by our best Divines, as not applicable to Christian churches:) but these examples hold forth no superiority in one church or court over another, but all of them in an equal manner, give advice in common, and take one common course for redress of all. And therefore such examples are fit precedents for churches of equal power within themselves, to assemble together, and take order with one accord, for the reformation of them all.

Now a *Synod* being assembled; three questions arise about their power: 1. *What* is that *power* they have received? 2. How far the *fraternity* concurrith with the *Presbytery* in it; the *brotherhood* with the *Eldership*? 3. Whether the power they have received reacheth to the enjoining of things, both in their nature, and in their use indifferent?

For the first; we dare not say that their power reacheth no farther than giving counsel: for such as their ends be, for which according to God, they do assemble, such is the power given them of God, as may attain those ends. As they meet to minister light and peace to such churches, as through want of light and peace lie in error (or doubt at least) and variance; so they have power by the grace of Christ, not only to give light and

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counsel in matter of Truth and Practice; but also to command and enjoin the things to be believed and done. The express words of the Synodal letter imply no less; *It seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and unto us, to lay upon you no other burden,*¹⁵ Acts 15:28. This burden therefore, to observe those necessary things which they speak of, they had power to impose. It is an act of the binding power of the keys, to *bind burdens*. And this *binding power* ariseth not only *materially* from the weight of the matters imposed, (which are necessary *necessitate præcepti* from the word) but also *formally*, from the authority of the Synod, which being an Ordinance of Christ, bindeth the more for the Synod's sake. As a truth of the Gospel taught by a Minister of the Gospel, it bindeth to faith and obedience, not only because it is Gospel, but also because it is taught by a Minister for his calling's sake, seeing Christ hath said, *Whoso receiveth you receiveth me*. And seeing also a Synod sometime meeteth to convince, and *admonish* an offending church or Presbytery; they have *power* therefore, (if they cannot heal the offenders) *to determine to withdraw communion from them*. And further, seeing they meet likewise sometimes for general reformation; they have power to *decree* and publish such *Ordinances*, as may conduce according to God, unto such reformation: Examples whereof we read, *Nehemiah* 10:32 to 39; *2 Chronicles* 15:12,13.

For the second question; How far the *Fraternity*, or the *Brethren* of the church, may *concur* with the Elders in exercising the power of the Synod?

The Answer is; The power which they have received, is a power of liberty: As 1. They have liberty to *dispute their doubts* modestly and Christianly amongst the *Elders*: For in that Synod at *Jerusalem*, as there was *much disputation*, Acts 15:7. so the *multitude* had a part in the *Disputation*, verse 12. For after *Peter's* Speech, it is said, *the whole multitude kept silence*, and silence from what? *to wit*, from the speech last in hand amongst them, and that was, from *Disputation*. 2. The *Brethren* of the church had liberty to join with the *Apostles* and *Elders*, in approving of the *sentence* of *James*, and *determining* the same as the common sentence of them all. 3. They had liberty to join with the *Apostles* and *Elders*, in *choosing* and *sending messengers*, and in *writing Synodal Letters* in the names of all, for the publishing of the sentence of the Synod. Both these points are expressed in the Text, *verses* 22,23 to 29. Then pleased *it the Apostles and Elders, with the whole Church, to send chosen men, and to write Letters by them*. See the whole church distinguished from the *Apostles* and *Elders*; and those whom

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he called the *whole Church*, verse 22, he calleth *the Brethren*, verse 23, *The Apostles, and Elders, and Brethren, &c.*

But though it may not be denied, that the *Brethren* of the church present in the Synod, had all this power of liberty, to join with the *Apostles* and *Elders* in all these acts of the Synod; yet the *authority of the Decrees* lay chiefly (if not only) in the *Apostles* and *Elders*. And therefore it is said, *Acts 16:4, that Paul and Silas delivered to the churches for to keep the Decrees that were ordained of the Apostles and Elders*: So then it will be most safe to preserve to the Church of *Brethren* their due liberties, and to reserve to the *Elders* their due authority.

If it be said, The *Elders* assembled in a Synod, have no authority to determine or conclude any act that shall bind the churches, but according to the instructions which before they have received from the churches.

Answer: We do not so apprehend it; For what need churches send to a Synod for light and direction in ways of truth and peace, if they be resolved aforehand how far they will go? It is true, if the *Elders* of churches shall conclude in a Synod any thing prejudicial to the Truth and Peace of the Gospel, they may justly expostulate with them at their return, and refuse such sanctions as the Lord hath not sancited.¹⁶ But if the *Elders* be gathered in the name of Christ in a Synod, and proceed according to the rule (the word) of Christ, they may consider and conclude sundry points expedient for the estate of their Churches, which the Churches were either ignorant or doubtful of before.

As for the third question, Whether the Synod have power to enjoin such things as are both in their nature and their use indifferent? We should answer it negatively, and our reasons be:

1. From the pattern of that precedent of Synods, *Acts 15:28*. They laid upon the Churches no *other burden*, but those *necessary things*: necessary, though not all of them in their own nature, yet for present use, to *avoid the offence* both of *Jew* and *Gentile*: of the *Jew*, by *eating things strangled, and blood*; of the *Gentile* and *Jew* both, by *eating things sacrificed to Idols*, as *Paul* expoundeth that *Article* of the Synod, *1 Corinthians 8:10,11,12* and *Chapter 10:28*. This eating with offence, was a murder of a weak brother's soul, & a sin against Christ, *1 Corinthians 8:11,12*, and therefore necessary to be forborn, *necessitate præcepti*, by the necessity of God's Commandment.

2. A second reason may be, from the latitude of the Apostolical commission, which was given to them, *Matthew 28:19,20*. where the Apostles are commanded to *teach the people to observe all things which Christ had commanded*.

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If then the Apostles teach the people to observe more than Christ hath commanded, they go beyond the bounds of their commission, and a larger commission than that given to the Apostles, nor Elders, nor Synods, nor Churches can challenge.

If it be said, Christ speaketh only of teaching such things which he had commanded as necessary to salvation.

Answer: If the Apostles or their successors should hereupon usurp an authority to teach the people things indifferent, they must plead this their authority from some other commission given them elsewhere: for in this place there is no foot-step for any such power. That much urged and much abused place in *1 Corinthians 14:40*, will not reach it: for though *Paul* requiring in that place, all the duties of God's worship, whether Prayer or Prophesying, or Psalms, or Tongues, &c. that they should be performed *decently and orderly*, he thereby forbiddeth any performance thereof undecently; as for men with long hair, and women to speak in open assemblies, especially to pray with their hair loose about them. And though he forbiddeth also men *speaking two or three at once*, which to do, were not *order*, but *confusion*; yet he doth not at all, neither himself enjoin, nor allow the Church of *Corinth* to enjoin such things as decent, whose want, or whose contrary is not undecent; nor such orders, whose want or contrary would be no disorder. Suppose the Church of *Corinth*, (or any other Church or Synod) should enjoin their Ministers to preach in a gown. A gown is a decent garment to preach in: yet such an Injunction is not grounded upon that Text of the Apostle. For then a Minister in neglecting to preach in a gown, should neglect the commandment of the Apostle, which yet indeed he doth not. For if he preach in a cloak, he preacheth decently enough, and that is all which the Apostle's Canon reacheth to. In these things Christ never provided for *uniformity*, but only for *unity*.

For a third reason of this point, (and to add no more) it is taken from the nature of the Ministerial Office, whether in a Church or Synod. Their office is *stewardly*, not *lordly*: they are Ambassadors from Christ, and for Christ. Of a *Steward* it is required to be found *faithful*, *1 Corinthians 4:1,2*, and therefore he may dispense no more injunctions to God's house, than Christ hath appointed him: Neither may an Ambassador proceed to do any act of his office, further than what he hath received in his Commission from his Prince. If he go further, he maketh himself a Prevaricator, not an Ambassador.

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But if it be enquired, *Whether a Synod hath power of Ordination and Excommunication*; we would not take upon us hastily to censure the many notable precedents of ancient and later Synods, who have put forth acts of power in both these kinds. Only we doubt that *from the beginning it was not so*: And for our own parts, if any occasion of using this power should arise amongst ourselves (which hitherto, through preventing mercy, it hath not) we (in a Synod) should rather choose to *determine*, and to *publish* and *declare* our determination. That the ordination of such as we find fit for it, and the excommunication of such as we find do deserve it, would be an acceptable service both to the Lord, and to his Churches: but the *administration* of both these acts we should refer to the *Presbytery* of the *several Churches*, whereto the person to be ordained is called, and whereof the person to be excommunicate is a member: and both acts to be performed in the presence, and with the consent of the several Churches, to whom the matter appertaineth. For in the beginning of the Gospel in that precedent of Synods, Acts 15, we find the false teachers *declared* to be *disturbers* and *troublers* of the Churches, and *subverters of their souls*, Acts 15:24, but no condign censure dispensed against them by the Synod. An evident argument to us, that they left the censure of such offenders (in case they repented not) to the particular Churches, to whom they did appertain. And for Synodical ordination, although Acts 1 be alleged, where *Matthias* was called to be an Apostle, yet it doth not appear that they acted then in a Synodical way, no more than the *Church of Antioch* did when with *fasting and prayer* they by their Presbyters *imposed hands* on *Paul* and *Barnabas*, and thereby *separated* them to *the work* of the Apostleship, whereto the *holy Ghost had called them*, Acts 13:1,2,3. Whence as the holy Ghost then said, Ἀφορίσατε δὲ μοὶ τὸν τε Βαρνάβαν καὶ τὸν Σαῦλον: so thereupon *Paul* styleth himself Ἀποστόλος ἀφορισμένος,¹⁷ *Romans* 1:1. And this was done in a particular Church, not in a Synod.

CHAPTER VII

*Touching the first Subject of all the forementioned power of the Keys.
And an explanation of Independency.*

What that Church is, which is the first Subject of the power of the Keys, and whether this Church have an independent power in the exercise thereof, though they be made two distinct Questions, yet (if candidly interpreted) they are but one. For whatsoever is the first Subject of any accident or adjunct, the same is independent in the enjoyment of it, that is, in respect of deriving it from any other subject like itself. As if fire be the first subject of heat, then it dependeth upon no other subject for heat. Now in the first subject of any power, three things concur. 1. It first receiveth that power whereof it is the first subject, and that reciprocally. 2. It first addeth and putteth forth the exercise of that power. 3. It first communicateth that power to others. As we see in fire, which is the first subject of heat: it first receiveth heat, and that reciprocally. All fire is hot, and whatsoever is hot is fire, or hath fire in it. Again, Fire first putteth forth heat itself, and also first communicateth heat to whatsoever things else are hot. To come then to the first subject of Church-power, or the power of the keys. The substance of the doctrine thereof, may be conceived and declared in a few Propositions. Church-power is either supreme and *sovereign*, or subordinate and *ministerial*. Touching the former, take this proposition.

The Lord Jesus *Christ*, the *head* of his Church, is the Πρῶτον Δεκτικόν,¹⁸ the first proper subject of the *sovereign* power of the Keys. *He hath the Key of David: He openeth, and no man shutteth; He shutteth, and no man openeth,* Revelation 3:7. *The government is upon his shoulders,* Isaiah 9:6. And himself declareth the same to his Apostles, as the ground of his granting to them

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Apostolical power. *All power (saith he) is given to me in heaven and earth, Matthew 28:18. Go therefore, &c.*

Hence 1. *All legislative power* (power of making Laws) in the Church, is in him, and not from him derived to any other, *James 4:12, Isaiah 33:22.* The power derived to others, is only to publish and execute his Laws and Ordinances, and to see them observed, *Matthew 28:20. His laws are perfect, Psalm 19:7, and do make the man of God perfect to every good work, 2 Timothy 3:17, and need no addition.*

2. From his sovereign power it proceedeth, that he only can erect and ordain a true constitution of a Church estate, *Hebrews 3:3 to 6. He buildeth his own house, and setteth the pattern of it, as God gave to David the pattern of Solomon's Temple, 1 Chronicles 28:19.* None hath power to erect any other Church-frame, than as this Master-builder hath left us a pattern thereof in the Gospel. In the old Testament, the *Church* set up by him, was *National*, in the New, *Congregational*; Yet so as that in sundry cases it is ordered by him, many Congregations or their Messengers, may be assembled into a Synod, *Acts 15.*

3. It is from the same sovereign power, that all the offices, or ministries in the Church, are ordained by him, *1 Corinthians 12:5, yea and all the members are set in the body by him, together with all the power belonging to their offices and places: as in the natural body, so in the Church, 1 Corinthians 12:18.*

4. From this sovereign power in like sort it is, that all gifts to discharge any office, by the officers, or any duty by the members, are from him, *1 Corinthians 12:11. All treasures of wisdom, and knowledge, and grace, and the fulness thereof, are in him for that end, Colossians 2:3 and verses 9,10; John 1:16.*

From this sovereign power it is, that all the spiritual power, and efficacy, and blessing, in the administration of these gifts in these offices and places, for the gathering and edifying, and perfecting of all the Churches, and of all the Saints in them, is from him, *Matthew 28:20. Lo, I am with you always, &c. Colossians 1:29; 1 Corinthians 15:10.*

The good pleasure of the Father, the personal union of the human nature with the eternal Son of God, his purchase of his Church with his own blood, and his deep humiliation of himself unto the death of the Cross, have all of them obtained to him this his highest exaltation, to be *head over all things unto the Church, and to enjoy as king thereof this*

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sovereign power, *Colossians* 1:19; *Colossians* 2:2,9,10; *Acts* 20:28; *Philippians* 2:8 to 11.

But of this sovereign power of Christ, there is no question amongst *Protestants*, especially studious of Reformation. Now as concerning the *Ministerial* power, we give these following *Propositions*.

I. *Proposition: A particular Church or congregation of Saints, professing the faith, TAKEN INDEPENDENTLY FOR ANY CHURCH (one as well as another) is the first subject of all the Church-offices, with all their spiritual gifts and power, which Christ hath given to be executed amongst them; whether it be Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, all are yours, (speaking to the Church of Corinth, 1 Corinthians 3:22) not as a peculiar privilege unto them, but common to them, with any other particular church; And theirs was such a church, of whom it is said; That they came all together into one place, for the communication of their spiritual gifts, 1 Corinthians 14:23. And Paul telleth the same church, that God hath set the officers, and their gifts, and all variety of members, and their Functions in his Church, 1 Corinthians 12:28, where it is not so well translated [Some] God hath set some in his church; for he hath set all; but speaking of the members of the church, verse 27, he proceedeth to exemplify those members, in verse 28, και οὗς μὲν ἔθετο ὁ θεὸς ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ, and which God hath set in his Church; that is, which members, Apostles, Prophets, &c. For though the Relative be not of the same gender with the Antecedent before, yet it is an usual thing with the Pen-men of the new Testament, to respect the sense of the words, and so the person intended, rather than the gender of their name, and to render the Relative of the same gender and case with the Substantive following: so here, οὗς μὲν Ἀποστόλους, προφήτας,¹⁹ &c.*

In the new Testament, it is not a new observation that we never read of any national church, nor of any national officers given to them by Christ. In the old Testament indeed, we read of a National church. All the tribes of *Israel* were three times in a year to appear before the Lord in *Jerusalem*, *Deuteronomy* 16:16. And he appointed them there an high Priest of the whole nation, and certain solemn sacrifices by him to be administered, *Leviticus* 16:1 to 29, and together with him other Priests and Elders, and Judges, to whom all appeals should be brought, and who should judge all difficult and transcendent cases, *Deuteronomy* 17:8 to 11, but we read of no such national church or high Priest, or court in the new Testament; And yet we willingly grant that particular churches of equal power, may in some cases appointed by Christ, meet together by

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themselves, or by their messengers in a Synod, and may perform sundry acts of power there, as hath been showed above. But the officers themselves, and all the Brethren members of the Synod; yea, and the Synods themselves, and all the power they put forth, they are all of them *primarily* given to the several churches of particular Congregations, either as the first subject in whom they are resident, or as the first object about whom they are conversant, and for whose sake they are gathered and employed.

II. *Proposition: The Apostles of Christ were the first subject of Apostolical power; Apostolical power stood chiefly in two things: First, in that each Apostle had in him all ministerial power of all the officers of the Church. They by virtue of their office, might exhort as Pastors, 1 Timothy 2:1; teach as Teachers, 1 Timothy 2:7; rule as Rulers, 2 Timothy 4:1; receive, and distribute the oblations of the churches as Deacons, Acts. 4:35; yea, any one Apostle or Evangelist carried about with him the liberty and power of the whole church; and therefore might baptize; yea, and censure an offender too, as if he had the presence and concurrence of the whole Church with him. For we read that Philip baptized the Eunuch without the presence of any church, Acts 8:38. And that Paul himself excommunicated Alexander, 1 Timothy 1:20, and it is not mentioned that he took the consent of any Church or Presbytery in it. It is true indeed, where he could have the consent and concurrence of the Church and Presbytery in exercise of any act of church-power, he willingly took it, and joined with it, as in the ordination of Timothy (2 Timothy 1:6 with 1 Timothy 4:14) and in the excommunication of the incestuous Corinthian, 1 Corinthians 5:4,5. But when both himself and the person to be baptized, or ordained, or excommunicated, were absent and distant from all churches, the Apostles might proceed to put forth their power in the administration of any church act without them. The multitude and plenitude of power, which they received immediately from Christ, would bear them out in it. As my Father sent me (saith Christ) to wit, with amplitude and plenitude of sovereign power, so send I you (with like amplitude and plenitude of ministerial power) John 20:21.*

2. Apostolical power extended itself to all churches, as much as to any one. *Their line went out into all the world, (Psalm 19:4 compared with Romans 10:18). And as they received commission to preach and baptize in all the world, Matthew 28:19. So they received charge to feed the flock of Christ's Sheep and Lambs (which implieth all acts of Pastoral government over all the Sheep and Lambs of Christ) John 21:15,16,17. Now this Apostolical*

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power, centring all church-power into one man, and extending itself forth to the circumference of all churches, as the Apostles were the first subject of it, so were they also the last; Nevertheless, that ample and universal latitude of power, which was conjoined in them, is now divided even by themselves amongst all the churches, and all the officers of the churches respectively, the officers of each church attending the charge of the particular church committed to them, by virtue of their office, and yet none of them neglecting the good of other churches, so far as they may be mutually helpful to one another in the Lord.

III. *Proposition*: When the church of a particular congregation walketh together in the truth and peace, the *Brethren* of the church are the *first subject of church liberty*, and the *Elders* thereof of *church-authority*; and *both* of them together are the first subject of *all church-power* needful to be exercised within themselves, whether in the election and ordination of officers, or in the censure of offenders in their own body.

Of this *Proposition* there be three *Branches*: 1. That the Brethren of a particular church of a Congregation, are the first subjects of church-liberty: 2. That the Elders of a particular church, are the first subjects of church-authority: 3. That both the Elders and Brethren, walking and joining together in truth and peace, are the first subjects of all church-power, needful to be exercised in their own body.

Now that the key of church-privilege or liberty is given to the Brethren of the church, and the key of rule and authority to the Elders of the church, hath been declared above, in *Chapter 3*. But that these are the first subjects of these keys; and first the church, the first subject of liberty, may appear thus.

From the removal of any former subject of this power or liberty, from whence they might derive it. If the Brethren of the Congregation were not the first subject of their church-liberty, then they derived it either from their own Elders, or from other Churches. But they derived it not from their own Elders: for they had power and liberty to choose their own Elders, as hath been showed above, and therefore they had this liberty before they had Elders, and so could not derive it from them.

Nor did they derive it from other particular churches. For all particular churches are of equal liberty and power within themselves, not one of them subordinate to another. We read not in Scripture, that the Church of *Corinth*, was subject to that of *Ephesus*, nor that of *Ephesus* to *Corinth*;

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no, nor that of *Cenchrea* to *Corinth*, though it was a church situate in their vicinity.

Nor did they derive their liberty from a Synod of churches. For we found no foot-step in the pattern of Synods, Acts 15, that the Church of *Antioch* borrowed any of their liberties from the Synod at *Jerusalem*. They borrowed indeed light from them, and decrees, tending to the establishment of truth and peace. For upon the publishing of the decrees of that Synod, the Churches were established in the faith (or truth), *Acts* 16:4,5, and also in consolation and peace, *Acts* 15:31,32, but they did not borrow from them any church-liberty at all.

2. Now, the *second branch* of the *Proposition* was, That the Elders of the church of a particular Congregation, are the first subject of rule or authority, in that church (or congregation) over which the Holy Ghost hath made them over-seers.

1. From the charge of rule over the Church committed to them immediately from Christ: For though the Elders be chosen to their office by the church of Brethren, yet the office itself is ordained immediately by Christ, and the rule annexed to the office, is limited by Christ only. If the Brethren of the church should elect a presbytery to be called by them in the Lord, this will not excuse the Presbyters in their neglect of rule, either before the Lord, or to their own consciences. For thus runneth the Apostle's charge to the Elders of *Ephesus*, (*Acts* 20:28) *Take heed to yourselves, and to the whole flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you over-seers.*

2. The same appeareth from the gift of rule, required especially in an Elder, without which they are not capable of election to that office in the church, 1 *Timothy* 3:4,5. He must be one *that is able to rule well his own house*, or else how shall he order the church of God? The like gift of rule is not necessary to the admission of a member into the church, as to the election of an Elder: If a private brother be not so well able (through weakness in prudence or courage) to rule his own house, it will not justly debar him from entrance into the church; but the like defect will justly debar a man from election to the office of an Elder. Neither hath God given a Spirit of rule and government ordinarily to the greater part of the body of the brethren: and therefore neither hath he given them the first Receipt of the key of Authority, to whom he hath not given the gift to employ it.

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If it be objected; How can the brethren of the Church invest an Elder with rule over them, if they had not power of rule in themselves to communicate to him?

Answer: They invest him with rule, partly by choosing him to the office which God hath invested with rule, partly by professing their own subjection to him in the Lord: we by the rule of Relatives do necessarily infer, and prefer the authority of the Elders over them. For in yielding subjection, they either set up, or acknowledge Authority in him, to whom they yield subjection.

Objection 2: The body of the Church is the Spouse of Christ, the Lamb's wife, and ought not the wife to rule the servants and stewards in the house, rather than they her? Is it not meet that the keys of Authority should hang at her girdle rather than at theirs?

Answer: There is a difference to be put between Queens, Princesses, Ladies of great Honour, (such as the Church is to Christ, *Psalm 45:9*) and Country housewives, poor men's wives. Queens and great persons have several offices and officers for every business and service about the house, as Chamberlains, Stewards, Treasurers, Comptrollers, Ushers, Bailiffs, Grooms, and Porters, who have all the authority of ordering the affairs of their Lord's house in their hands. There is not a key left in the Queen's hand of any office, but only of power and liberty to call for what she wanteth according to the King's royal allowance: which if she exceed, the officers have power to restrain her by order from the King. But country housewives, and poor men's wives, whose husbands have no Officers, Bailiffs or Stewards, to oversee and order their estates, they may carry the keys of any office at their own girdles, which the husband keepeth not in his own hand. Not because poor housewives have greater authority in the house than Queens; but because of their poverty and mean estate, they are fain to be in stead of many servants to their husbands.

Objection 3: The whole body natural, is the first subject of all the natural power of any member in the body; as the faculty of sight is first in the body, before in the eye.

Answer: It is not in the mystical body (the Church) in all respects alike, as in the natural body. In the natural body there be all the faculties of each part actually in-existent, though not exerting or putting forth themselves, till each member be articulated and formed. But in the body of the Church of Brethren it is not so. All the several functions of Church-power, are not actually in-existent in the body of Brethren, unless some of them have

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the gifts of all the Officers, which often they have not, having neither Presbyters, nor men fit to be Presbyters. Now if the power of the Presbytery were given to a particular Church of Brethren, as such, *primo & per se*, than it would be found in every particular Church of Brethren. For a *quatenus ad omnia valet consequentia*.²⁰

Objection 4: But it is an usual tenent in many of our best Divines, that the government of the Church is mixed of a Monarchy, an Aristocracy, and a Democracy. In regard of Christ the head, the government of the Church is sovereign and monarchical. In regard of the Rule by the Presbytery, it is stewardly and Aristocratical: in regard of the people's power in elections and censures, it is Democratical: which argueth, the people have some stock of κράτος,²¹ power and authority in the government of the Church.

Answer: In a large sense, Authority after a sort, may be acknowledged in the people. As 1. when a man acteth by counsel according to his own discerning freely, he is then said to be αὐτεξούσιος,²² *Dominus sui actus*. So the people in all the acts of liberty which they put forth are *Domini sui actus*, Lords of their own action.

2. The people by their acts of liberty, as in election of Officers, and concurrency in censure of offenders, and in the Determination and Promulgation of Synodal acts; they have a great stroke or power in the ordering of Church-affairs, which may be called κράτος, or *potestas*, a *Power*, which many times goeth under the name of rule or authority, but in proper speech it is rather a privilege or liberty than authority, as hath been opened above in *Chapter 3*. For no act of the people's power or liberty doth properly bind, unless the authority of the Presbytery concur with it.

3. A third argument whereby it may appear that the Elders of a particular Church are the first subject of authority in that Church, is taken from the like removal of other subjects, from whence they might be thought to derive their authority, as was used before to prove the Church of Brethren was the first subject of their own liberty in their own Congregation. The Elders of Churches are never found in Scripture to derive their authority which they exercise in their own Congregation, either from the Elders of other Churches, or from any Synod of Churches. All particular Churches and all the Elders of them, are of equal power, each of them respectively in their own congregations. None of them call others their Rabbis, or Masters, or Fathers (in respect of any authority over them) but

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all of them own and acknowledge one another as fellow brethren, *Matthew* 23:8,9,10.

And though in a Synod they have received power from Christ, and from his presence in the Synod, to exercise authority in imposing burdens (such as the Holy Ghost layeth) upon all Churches whose Elders are present with them, *Acts* 15:28 (for the Apostles were Elders in all Churches) yet the Elders of every particular Church, when they walk with the brethren of their own Church in light and peace, they need not to derive from the Synod any power to impose the same, or the like burdens upon their own Churches. For they have received a power and charge from Christ, to teach and command with all authority the whole counsel of God unto their people. And the people discerning the light of the truth delivered, and walking in peace with their Elders, they readily yield obedience to their Over-seers, in whatsoever they see and hear by them commended to them from the Lord.

3. Now we come to the *third branch* of the third Proposition, which was this, That the Church of a particular congregation, Elders and Brethren walking and joining together in truth and peace, are the first subject of all Church-power, needful to be exercised within themselves, whether in the election or ordination of officers, or in the censure of offenders in their own body.

The truth hereof may appear by these Arguments. 1. In point of *Ordination*. From the complete integrity of a Minister's calling (even to the satisfaction of his own and the people's conscience) when both the Brethren and the Elders of the particular Church whereto he is called, have put forth the power which belongeth to them about him. As, when the brethren of the Church have chosen him to office, and the Presbytery of the Church have laid their hands upon him: and both of them in their several acts have due respect to the inward ministerial gifts whereunto God hath furnished him: he may then look at himself as called by the holy Ghost, to exercise his talents in that office amongst them, and the people may and ought to receive him, as sent of God to them.

What defect may be found in such a call, when the brethren exercise their lawful liberty, and the Elders their lawful authority, in his ordination, and nothing more is required to the complete integrity of a Minister's calling? If it be said there wanted imposition of hands by the Bishop, who succeeded in the place of *Timothy* and *Titus*, whom the Apostle *Paul* left,

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the one in Ephesus, the other in Crete, to ordain Elders in many Churches, *Titus* 1:5.

Answer: Touching ordination by *Timothy* and *Titus*, and (upon pretence of them) by Bishops, enough hath been said by many godly learned heretofore, especially of later times.

The sum cometh to these conclusions. 1. That *Timothy* and *Titus* did not ordain Elders in many Churches, as Bishops, but as Evangelists. *Timothy* is expressly termed an Evangelist, 2 *Timothy* 4:5. And *Titus* is as clearly deciphered to be an Evangelist as *Timothy*, by the characters of an Evangelist, which either Scripture holdeth forth, or *Eusebius* noteth in his *Ecclesiastical History*, lib. 3, cap. 37, Gr. cap. 31, Lat. Not to be limited to a certain Church, but to follow the Apostles, finishing their work in planting and watering Churches where they came. They did indeed ordain officers where they wanted, and exercised jurisdiction (as the Apostles did) in several Churches; yet with the rest of the Presbytery, and in the presence of the whole Church, 1 *Timothy* 5:17–21. But for the continuance of this office of an Evangelist in the Church, there is no direction in the Epistles either to *Timothy* or *Titus*, or anywhere else in Scripture.

2. Conclusion: Those Bishops whose callings or offices in the Church, are set forth in those Epistles to be continued; they are altogether Synonyma with Presbyters, *Titus* 1:5,7, 1 *Timothy* 3:1 to 7.

3. Conclusion: We read of many Bishops to one Church, *Philippians* 1:1, *Acts* 14:23 and Chapter 20:17,28. *Titus* 1:5,7, but not of many Churches (much less all the Churches in a large Diocese) to one Bishop.

4. Conclusion: There is no transcendent proper work, cut out, or reserved for such a transcendent officer as a Diocesan Bishop throughout the New Testament. The transcendent acts reserved to him by the Advocates of Episcopacy, are Ordination and Jurisdiction. Now both these are acts of Rule. And *Paul* to *Timothy* acknowledgeth no Rulers in the Church above Pastors and Teachers, who labour in word and doctrine, but rather Pastors and Teachers above them. The Elders (saith he) that rule well, are worthy of double honour, but especially they that labour in Word and Doctrine, 1 *Timothy* 5:17.

5. Conclusion: When after the Apostles' times, one of the Pastors by way of eminency was called Bishop for order sake, yet for many years he did no act of power, but 1. With consent of the Presbytery. 2. With consent, and in the presence of the people. As is noted out of *Eusebius*, *Ecclesiastical History*, lib. 6, cap. 43, Gr. ca. 35, Lat. *Cyprian Epist.*, lib. 3,

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Epist. 10 & lib. 1. Epist. 3. Casaub. adversus Baronium, exercitat. 15, num. 28.

When it is alleged out of *Jerome* to confirm the same, that in the primitive times, *Communi Presbyterorum consilio, Ecclesiae gubernabantur.*²³ It is a weak and poor evasion, to put it off with observing, that he saith, *Communi Presbyterorum consilio, not autoritate.* For 1. No authority is due to Presbyters over the Bishop or Pastor, no more than to the Pastor over them. They are *συνπρεσβύτεροι*, fellow-Elders, and coequal in authority. And 2. when *Jerome* saith, The Churches were governed by the common counsel of them all; It argueth, nothing was done against their counsel, but all with it, else it might be said, the Bishop governed the Churches with the common counsel of Presbyters, to wit, asked, but not followed. And that would imply a contradiction to *Jerome's* testimony, to say the Churches were governed by the sole authority of Bishops, and yet not without asking the common counsel of the Presbyters. For in asking their counsel, and not following it, the Bishop should order and govern the Churches against their counsel. Now that the churches were governed by the common counsel of Presbyters, and against the common counsel of Presbyters, are flat contradictories.

2. For a second Argument, to prove that the Brethren of the Church of a particular congregation, walking with their Elders in truth and peace, are the first subject of all that church-power which is needful to be exercised in their own body: It is taken

From their indispensable and independent power in church censures. The censure that is ratified in heaven cannot be dispensed withal, nor reversed by any power on earth. Now the censure that is administered by the Church of a particular congregation, is ratified in Heaven. For so saith the Lord Jesus touching the power of Church-censures, *Matthew 18:17,18.* If the offender refuse to hear the Church, let him be to thee as a Heathen and a Publican. Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in Heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in Heaven.

Against this Argument from this Text many objections are wont to be made, but none that will hold.

Objection: 1. By *Church* in *Matthew 18:17* is not meant the Christian Church (for it was not yet extant, nor could the Apostles then have understood Christ if he had so meant) but the *Jewish* church, and so he

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delivereth their censure, in a *Jewish* phrase; to account a man as an *Heathen* and a *Publican*.

Answer: 1. The Christian Church, though it was not then extant, yet the Apostles knew as well what he meant by *Church* in *Matthew* 18:17 as they understood what he meant by *building his Church upon the Rock* in *Matthew* 16:18. It was enough the Apostles looked for a Church which Christ would gather, and build upon the confession of *Peter's* faith; and being built, should be endued with heavenly power in their censures, which they more fully understood afterwards, when having received the Holy Ghost, they came to put these things in practice.

Answer: 2 The allusion in the Church-censure to the *Jewish* custom, in accounting a man as an *Heathen* and *Publican*, doth not argue that Christ directeth his Disciples to complain of scandals to the *Jewish* Synagogues; but only directeth them how to walk towards obstinate offenders, excommunicate by the Christian church, to wit, to walk towards them, as the *Jews* walk towards *Heathens*, (to wit, denying to them religious communion) and as toward *Publicans*, withholding from them familiar civil communion; for so the *Jews* said to Christ's Disciples, *Why eateth your Master with Publicans and Sinners?*

Answer 3: It is not credible, that Christ would send his Disciples to make complaint of their offences to the *Jewish* Synagogues:

For, first, Is it likely he would send his Lambs and Sheep, for right and healing, unto Wolves and Tigers? Both their Sanhedrim, and most of their Synagogues were no better. And if here and there some Elders of their Synagogues were better affected, yet how may it appear that so it was, where any of themselves dwelt? And if that might appear too, yet had not the *Jews* already agreed; *That if any man did confess Christ, he should be cast out of the Synagogues*, *John* 9:22.

Objection 2: Against the Argument from this Text, it is objected; That by the Church is meant the Bishop, or his Commissary.

Answer 1: One man is not the Church.

If it be said, one man may represent a church; the reply is ready: one man cannot represent the Church, unless he be sent forth by the Church; but so is neither the Bishop nor his Commissary. They send not for them, but they come unsent for, (like water into a Ship) chiefly for the terror of the servants of Christ, and for the encouragement of the profane. And though some of Christ's servants have found some favour from some few

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of Bishops, (men of more learning and ingenuity) yet those Bishops have found the less favour themselves from their fellow-Bishops.

Answer 2: The Bishop ordinarily is no member of the Church of that congregation, where the offence is committed, and what is his satisfaction to the removal of the offence given to the Church?

Answer 3: The new Testament acknowledgeth no such ruler in the Church, as claimeth honour above the Elders that labour in word and Doctrine, 1 *Timothy* 5:17.

Objection 3: To tell the Church, is to tell the Presbytery of the Church.

Answer 1: We deny not, The offence is to be told to the Presbytery; yet not to them as the Church, but as the guides of the church, who, if upon hearing the cause, and examining the witnesses, they find it right for public censure, they are then to propound it to the Church, and to try and clear the state of the cause before the church, that so the church discerning fully the nature and quality of the offence, may consent to the judgment and sentence of the Elders against it, to the confusion of the offender; and the public edification of them all, who hearing and fearing, will learn to beware of the like wickedness.

Answer 2: The Church is never put for the Presbytery alone (throughout the new Testament) though sometime it be put expressly for the Fraternity alone, as they are distinguished from the Elders and Officers, *Acts* 15:22, and therefore Tell the Church, cannot be meant Tell the Presbytery alone.

Objection: In the old Testament, the Congregation is often put for the Elders and Rulers of the Congregation.

Answer: Let all the places alleged be examined, and it will appear, that in matters of judgment, where the Congregation is put for the Elders and Rulers, it is never meant (for ought we can find) of the Elders and Rulers alone, sitting apart, and retired from the Congregation; but sitting in the presence of the Congregation, and hearing and judging causes before them: In which case, if a sentence have passed from a Ruler, with the dislike of the Congregation, they have not stuck to show their dislike, sometime by protesting openly against it (as 1 *Samuel* 14:44,45) sometime by refusing to execute it (1 *Samuel* 22:16,17). And what the people of the Congregation lawfully did in some cases, at some times, in waving and counterpoising the sentence of their Rulers, the same they might and ought to have done in the like cases at any time. The whole Host or Congregation of *Israel* might protest against an unrighteous illegal sentence;

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and a part of the Congregation, who discerned the iniquity of a sentence, might justly withdraw themselves from the execution of it.

Objection 4: When Christ said *Tell the Church*, he meant a Synodical or Classical Assembly of the Presbyters of many Churches. For it was his meaning and purpose in this place, to prescribe a rule for the removing of all scandals out of the Church, which cannot be done by telling the Church of one Congregation; for what if an Elder offend; yea, what if the whole Presbytery offend? The people or brethren have not power to judge their Judges, to rule their Rulers. Yea, what if the whole Congregation fall under an offence (as they may do, *Leviticus 4:13*) a Synod of many Presbyters may reform them, but so cannot any one Congregation alone; if the Congregation that gave the offence stand out in it.

Answer 1: Reserving due honour to Synods rightly ordered, or (which is all one) a *Classis* or *Convention* of Presbyters of particular churches, we do not find that a Church is anywhere put for a Synod of Presbyteries. And it were very incongruous in this place: For though it be said a particular Congregation cannot reach the removal of all offences; so it may be as truly said, that it were unmeet to trouble Synods with every offence that falleth out in a Congregation; Offences fall out often, Synods meet but seldom; and when they do meet, they find many more weighty employments, than to attend to every offence of every private brother. Besides, as an whole particular Congregation may offend, so may a general Assembly of all the Presbyters in a Nation offend also: For general Councils have erred; and what remedy shall be found to remove such errors and offences out of this Text? Moreover, if an offence be found in a Brother of a Congregation, and the Congregation be found faithful and willing to remove it by due censure; why should the offence be called up to more public judicature, and the plaster made broader than the sore?

Again, If an Elder offend, the rest of the Presbytery with the Congregation joining together, may proceed against him, (if they cannot otherwise heal him) and so remove the offence from amongst them. If the whole Presbytery offend, or such a part as will draw a party and a faction in the Church with them, their readiest course is, to bring the matter then to a Synod. For though this place in *Matthew* direct not to that; yet the holy Ghost leaveth us not without direction in such a case, but giveth us a pattern in the church of *Antioch*, to repair to a Synod. And the like course is to be taken in the offence of a whole Congregation, if it be persisted in with obstinacy. Neither is it true which was said, that it was the purpose of

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Christ in *Matthew* 18:17, to prescribe a rule for the removal of all offences out of the Church; but only of such private and less heinous offences, as grow public and notorious only by obstinacy of the offenders: For if offences be heinous and public at first, the holy Ghost doth not direct us to proceed in such a general course from a private admonition by one brother alone, and then to a second, by one or two more, and at last, to tell it to the Church. But in such a case the Apostle giveth another rule, (*1 Corinthians* 5:11) to cast an heinous notorious offender, both out of church-communion, and private familiar communion also.

Objection 5: The Church here spoken of, *Matthew* 18:17, is such an one, as whereto a complaint may orderly be made: But a complaint cannot be orderly made to a multitude, such as an whole Congregation is.

Answer: And why may not a complaint be orderly made to a whole multitude? The *Levite* made an orderly complaint to a greater multitude, than 400 particular Congregations are wont to amount to, *Judges* 20:1,2,3,4, &c.

Objection 6: The Church here to be complained of meeteth with authority, (for censures are administered with authority) but the church of a particular Congregation meeteth with humility, to seek the face and favour of God.

Answer: Humility to God may well stand with authority to men. The 24 Elders (who represent the grown heirs of the Church of the new Testament) they are said in Church-assemblies to sit upon thrones with crowns on their heads, *Revelation* 4:4, yet when they fall down to worship God and the Lamb, they cast down their crowns at his feet, *verse* 10.

Objection 7: In the church of a particular Congregation, a woman may not speak: but in this Church here spoken of, they may speak; for they may be offenders, and offenders must give an account of their offences.

Answer: When the Apostle forbiddeth woman to speak in the church, he meaneth, speaking partly by way of authority, as in public praying or prophesying in the Church, (*1 Timothy* 2:12) partly by way of bold inquiry, in asking questions publicly of the Prophets in the face of the Church, *1 Corinthians* 14:34. But to answer it: if the whole Congregation have taken just offence at the open sin of a woman, she is bound as much to give satisfaction to the whole Congregation, as well as to the Presbytery.

Objection 8: When Schisms grew to be scandalous in the Church of *Corinth*, the household of *Chloe* told not the whole Congregation of it, but *Paul*, *1 Corinthians* 1:11.

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Answer: The contentions in the Church of *Corinth* were not the offence of a private brother, but of the whole church. And who can tell whether they had not spoken of it to the Church before? But whether they had or no, the example only argueth, that Brethren offended with the sins of their brethren, may tell an Elder of the Church of it, that he may tell it to the Church, which no man denieth. *Paul* was an Elder of every church of Christ, as the other Apostles were, as having the government of all the churches committed to them all.

Having thus (by the help of Christ) cleared this Text in *Matthew 18:17* from variety of misconstructions, (which not the obscurity of the words, but the eminency of the gifts, and worth of Expositors hath made difficult) Let us add an argument or two more to the same purpose, to prove, that the Church of a particular Congregation, fully furnished with officers, and rightly walking in judgment and peace, is the first subject of all Church-authority, needful to be exercised within their own body.

3. A third argument to prove this, is usually and justly taken from the practice and example of the Church of *Corinth*, in the excommunication of the incestuous *Corinthian*, 1 *Corinthians 5:1* to 5.

Objection 1: The excommunication of the incestuous *Corinthian*, was not an act of judicial authority in the church of *Corinth*, whether Elders or Brethren, but rather an act of subjection to the Apostle, publishing the sentence, which the Apostle had before decreed and judged: for (saith the Apostle) I though absent in body, yet present in spirit, have judged already, concerning him that hath done this deed, &c.

Answer 1: Though *Paul* (as a chief Officer of every church) judged beforehand the excommunication of the incestuous *Corinthian*: yet his judgment was not a judicial sentence, delivering him to Satan, but a judicious doctrine and instruction, teaching the Church what they ought to do in that case.

2. The act of the church in *Corinth* in censuring the incestuous person, was indeed an act of subjection to the Apostle's divine doctrine and direction (as all church-censures, by whomsoever administered, ought to be acts of subjection to the word of Christ) but yet their act was a complete act of just power, (even an act of all that liberty and authority which is to be put forth in any censure). For, first they delivered him to Satan, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and with the power of the Lord Jesus, *verse 4*, and that is the highest power in the Church. Secondly, the spirit of *Paul*, that is, his Apostolic spirit was gathered together with them, in

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delivering and publishing the sentence; which argueth, both his power and theirs was coincident and concurrent in this sentence. Thirdly, the holy end and use of this sentence argueth the heavenly power from whence it proceeded. They delivered him to Satan for the destruction of the flesh (that is, for the mortifying of his corruption) that his soul might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Fourthly, when his soul came to be humble and penitent by the means of this sentence, *Paul* entreateth the church to release and forgive him, 2 Corinthians 2:6 to 10. Now *ejusdem potestatis est ligare et solvere, claudere et aperire*.²⁴

Objection 2: All this argueth no more, but that some in the church of *Corinth* had this power (to wit, the Presbytery of the church, but not the whole body of the people) to excommunicate the offender.

Answer 1: If the Presbytery alone had put forth this power, yet that sufficeth to make good the Proposition, that every church furnished with a Presbytery, and proceeding righteously and peaceably, they have within themselves so much power as is requisite, to be exercised within their own body.

Answer 2: It is apparent by the Text, that the Brethren concurred also in this sentence, and that with *some act of power*, to wit, such power as the want of putting it forth, retarded the sentence, and the putting of it forth was requisite to the administration of the sentence.

For, first, the reproof for not proceeding to sentence sooner, is directed to the whole church, as well as to the Presbytery; *They are all blamed for not mourning, for not putting him away, for being puffed up rather*, 1 Corinthians 5:2.

2. The commandment is directed to them all, *when they are gathered together*, (and what is that but to a Church meeting?) to proceed against him, 1 Corinthians 5:4. In like sort, in the end of the Chapter he commandeth them all, *Put away therefore from among you that wicked person*, verse 13.

3. He declareth this act of theirs in putting him out, to be a judicial act, *verse 12, Do you not judge them that are within?* Say that the judgment of authority be proper only to the Presbytery, yet the judgment of discretion (which as concurring in this act with the Presbytery) hath a power in it (as was said) may not be denied to the Brethren: for here is an act of judgment ascribed to them all: which judgment in the Brethren he esteemeth of it so highly, that from thence he taketh occasion to advise the members of the Church, to refer their differences even in civil matters, to the judgment of the Saints or Brethren. *Know ye not* (saith he) that *the Saints*

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shall judge the world? yea the Angels? 1 Corinthians 6:1,2,3, how much more the things of this life? Yea rather than they should go to Law, and that before Infidels, in any case depending between Brethren, he adviseth them rather to set up the meanest in the Church to hear and judge between them, 1 *Corinthians* 6:4.

4. When the Apostle directeth them upon the repentance of an offender, to forgive him, 2 *Corinthians* 2:4 to 10, he speaketh to the Brethren, as well as to their Elders to *forgive him*. As they were all (the Brethren as well as the Elders) offended with his sin: so it was meet they should all alike be satisfied, and being satisfied should forgive him: the Brethren in a way of brotherly love and Church-consent, as well as the Elders, by sentencing his absolution and restitution to the Church.

3. *Objection:* But was not this Church of *Corinth* (who had all this power) a *metropolis*, a *mother Church* of *Achaia*, in which many Presbyteries, from many Churches in the villages were assembled to administer this censure?

Answer: No such thing appeareth from the story of the Church of *Corinth*, neither in the Acts, (*Acts* 18) nor from either of the Epistles to the *Corinthians*. True it is, *Corinth* was a *mother-city*, but not a *mother-Church* to all *Achaia*: and yet it is not unlikely that other Churches in that region, might borrow much light from their gifts; for they abounded, and were *enriched with variety of all gifts*, 1 *Corinthians* 1:5,7. But yet that which the Apostle calleth the *Church of Corinth*, even the *whole Church* was no larger, than was wont to *meet together in one place, one congregation*, 1 *Corinthians* 14:23.

A fourth and last *Argument* to prove the *Proposition*, that every Church so furnished with officers (as hath been said) and so carried on in truth and peace, hath all Church power needful to be exercised within themselves, is taken from the guilt of offence, which lieth upon every Church, when any offence committed by their members lieth uncensured and unremoved. Christ hath something against the *Church of Pergamus*, for *suffering Balaam* and the *Nicolaitans*, Revelation 2:14,15, and something against the *Church of Thyatira*, for *suffering Jezabel* v20. Now if these Churches had not either of them sufficient power to purge out their own offenders, why are they blamed for toleration of them? yea, why are not the neighbour Churches blamed for the sins of these Churches? But we see, neither is *Pergamus* blamed for tolerating *Jezabel*, nor *Thyatira* for tolerating *Balaam*, nor *Smyrna* for tolerating either. Indeed what Christ writeth to any one Church, his *Spirit* calleth *all the Churches* to hearken unto, and so he doth

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our Churches also at this day: not because he blamed them for the toleration of sins in other Churches, but because he would have them beware of the like remissness in tolerating the like offences amongst themselves: and also would provoke them to observe notorious offences amongst their Sister-Churches, and with brotherly love and faithfulness to admonish them thereof.

It is an unsound body that wanteth strength to purge out his own vicious and malignant humours. And every Church of a particular congregation, being a body, even a body of Christ in itself, it were not for the honour of Christ, nor of his body, if when it were in a sound and athletic constitution, it should not have power to purge itself of its own superfluous and noisome humours.

IV. Proposition. *In case a particular Church be disturbed with error or scandal, and the same maintained by a faction amongst them. Now a Synod of Churches, or of their messengers, is the first subject of that power and authority, whereby error is judicially convinced and condemned, the truth searched out, and determined, and the way of truth and peace declared and imposed upon the Churches.*

The truth of this Proposition may appear by *two Arguments*.

1. *Argument*: From the want of power in such a particular church to pass a binding sentence, where error or scandal is maintained by a faction; For the promise of binding and loosing which is made to a particular church, *Matthew 18:18*, is not given to the church, when it is leavened with error and variance. It is a received maxim, *Clavis errans non ligat*; and it is as true, *Ecclesia litigans non ligat*:²⁵ And the ground of both ariseth from the estate of the Church, to which the promise of binding and loosing is made, *Matthew 18:17,18*, which, though it be a particular church (as hath been showed) yet it is a Church AGREEING together in the name of Christ, *Matthew 18:19,20*. *If there want agreement amongst them, the promise of binding and loosing is not given to them*: or if they should agree, and yet agree in an error, or in a scandal, they do not then agree in the name of Christ; For to meet in the name of Christ, implieth, they meet not only by his command and authority, but also that they proceed according to his Laws and Will, and that to his service and glory. If then the church, or a considerable part of it fall into error through ignorance, or into faction by variance, they cannot expect the presence of Christ with them, according to his promise to pass a binding sentence. And then as they fall under the conviction and admonition of any other sister church, in a way of brotherly love, by virtue of communion of churches; so their errors and variance,

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and whatsoever scandals else do accompany the same, they are justly subject to the condemnation of a Synod of Churches.

2. A second Argument to prove that a Synod is the first subject of power, to determine and judge errors and variances in particular churches, is taken from the pattern set before us in that case, *Acts 15:1 to 28*, when certain false Teachers, having taught in the church of *Antioch*, a necessity of circumcision to salvation, and having gotten a faction to take part with them, (as appeareth by the *στάσις & συζήτησις*²⁶ of *Paul* and *Barnabas* against them) the church did not determine the case themselves, but referred the whole matter to the *Apostles* and *Elders* at *Jerusalem*, *Acts 15:1,2*. Not to the *Apostles* alone, but to the *Apostles* and *Elders*. The *Apostles* were as the *Elders* and *Rulers* of all churches; and the *Elders* there were not a few, the *Believers* in *Jerusalem* being many thousands. Neither did the *Apostles* determine the matter (as hath been said) by *Apostolical* authority from immediate revelation; but they assembled together with the *Elders*, to *consider of the matter*, *verse 6*, and a *multitude of Brethren* together with them (*verse 12,22,23*,) and after, searching out the cause by an ordinary means of *disputation*, *verse 7*, *Peter* cleared it by the witness of the *Spirit* to his *Ministry* in *Cornelius* his family; *Paul* and *Barnabas* by the like effect of their *Ministry* among the *Gentiles*: *James* confirmed the same by the testimony of the *Prophets*, wherewith the whole *Synod* being satisfied, they determine of a *judicial sentence*, and of a way to publish it by letters and messengers; in which they *censure the false Teachers*, as *troublers of their Church*, and *subverters of their souls*; they reject the imposition of *circumcision*, as a *yoke which neither they nor their Fathers were able to bear*; they impose upon the Churches none but some *necessary observations*, and them by way of that authority which the *Lord* had given them, *verse 28*. Which pattern clearly showeth us to whom the *Key of authority* is committed, when there groweth offence and difference in a Church. Look as in the case of the offence of a faithful brother persisted in, the matter is at last judged and determined in a Church, which is a *Congregation of the faithful*: so in the case of the offence of the Church or *Congregation*, the matter is at last judged in a *Congregation of Churches*, a *Church of Churches*: for what is a *Synod* else but a *Church of Churches*?

Now, from all these former *Propositions*, which tend to clear the *first subject* of the power of the *Keys*, it may be easy to deduce certain *Corollaries* from thence, tending to clear a parallel *Question* to this; to wit, *In what sense it may and ought to be admitted, that a Church of a particular congregation,*

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is independent in the use of the power of the Keys, and in what sense not? For in what sense the Church of a particular congregation is the first subject of the power of the keys, in the same sense it is independent, and in none other. We taking the first subject and the independent subject to be all one.

1. *Corollary.* The Church is not independent on Christ, but dependent on him for all Church-power.

The reason is plain, because he is the first subject of all Church-power, by way of sovereign eminency, as hath been said. And therefore the Church, and all the officers thereof; yea, and a Synod of Churches, is dependent upon him, for all Ministerial Church-power. *Ministry is dependent upon sovereignty*; yea, the more dependent they be upon Christ, in all the exercise of their Church-power, the more powerful is all their power in all their administrations.

2. *Corollary.* The first subject of the ministerial power of the keys, though it be independent in respect of derivation of power from the power of the Sword to the performance of any spiritual administration, yet it is subject to the power of the sword in matters which concern the civil peace.

The matters which concern the civil peace, wherein Church-subjection is chiefly attended, are of four sorts.

1. The first sort be *civil matters*, τὰ βιωτικὰ, the *things of this life*, as is the disposing of men's goods, or lands, lives, or liberties, tributes, customs, worldly honours, and inheritances. In these the Church submitteth, and referreth itself to the civil State. Christ as minister of the circumcision, refused to take upon him the dividing of inheritances amongst brethren, as impertinent to his calling, *Luke 12:13,14. His Kingdom* (he acknowledgeth) *is not of this world*, *John 18:36.* Himself paid tribute to *Caesar* (*Matthew 17:27*) for himself and his Disciples.

2. The second sort of things which concern civil peace, is the *establishment of pure Religion, in doctrine, worship, and government*, according to the word of God: as also the reformation of all corruptions in any of these. On this ground the good Kings of Judah commanded *Judah to seek the Lord God of their fathers*, and to worship him, according to his own statutes and commandments: and the contrary corruptions of strange gods, high places, Images, any Groves, they removed, and are commended of God, and obeyed by the Priests and people in so doing, *2 Chronicles 14:3,4,5; 2 Chronicles 15:8 to 16; 2 Chronicles 17:6 to 9; 2 Chronicles 19:3,4; 2 Chronicles*

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24:4,5,6,8,9,10; 2 *Chronicles* 29:3 to 35; 2 *Chronicles* 30:1 to 12; 2 *Chronicles* 34:3 to 33. The establishment of pure Religion, and the reformation of corruptions in Religion, do much concern the civil peace. If Religion be corrupted, there will be *war in the gates*, Judges 5:8. and *no peace to him that cometh in, or goeth out*, 2 *Chronicles* 15:3,5,6. But where Religion rejoiceth, the civil State flourisheth, *Haggai* 2:15 to 19. It is true, the establishment of pure Religion, and reformation of corruptions, pertain also to the Churches and Synodical Assemblies. But they go about it only with spiritual weapons, ministry of the Word, and Church-censures upon such as are under Church-power. But Magistrates address themselves thereto, partly by commanding and stirring up the Churches and Ministers thereof to go about it in their spiritual way: partly also by civil punishments upon the wilful opposers and disturbers of the same. As *Jehoshaphat* sent *Priests and Levites*, (and them accompanied and countenanced with *Princes and Nobles*) to *preach and teach in the Cities of Judah*, 2 *Chronicles* 17:7,8,9. So *Josiah* put to death the idolatrous *Priests* of the high places, 2 *Kings* 23:20. Nor was that a peculiar duty or privilege of the Kings of *Judah*, but attended to also by heathen *Princes*, and that to prevent the wrath of God against the Realm of the *King and his sons*, *Ezra* 7:23. Yea, and of the times of the New Testament it is prophesied, that in some cases, capital punishment shall proceed against *false Prophets*, and that by the procurement of their *nearest kindred*, *Zechariah* 13:3. And the execution thereof is described, *Revelation* 16:4 to 7, where the *rivers and fountains of waters* (that is, the *Priests and Jesuits*, that convey the Religion of the See of Rome throughout the countries) *are turned to blood*, that is, have *blood given them to drink*, by the civil Magistrate.

Nevertheless, though we willingly acknowledge a power in the civil Magistrate, to establish and reform Religion, according to the word of God; yet we would not be so understood, as if we judged it to belong to the civil power, to compel all men to come and sit down at the Lord's table, or to enter into the communion of the Church, before they be in some measure prepared of God for such fellowship. For this is not a *Reformation*, but a *Deformation* of the Church, and is not according to the word of God, but against it, as we shall show (God willing) in the sequel, when we come to speak of the disposition or qualifications of Church-members.

3. There is a third sort of things which concern the civil peace, wherein the Church is not to refuse subjection to the civil Magistrate, in the

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exercise of some public spiritual administrations, which may advance and help forward the public good of Civil State according to God. In time of war, or pestilence, or any public calamity or danger lying upon a Commonwealth, the Magistrate may lawfully proclaim a Fast, as *Jehoshaphat* did, 2 Chronicles 20:3, and the Churches ought not to neglect such an administration, upon such a just occasion. Neither doth it impeach the power of the Church to call a Fast, when themselves see God calling them to public humiliation. For as *Jehoshaphat* called a Fast: so the Prophet *Joel* stirreth up the Priests to call a Fast in time of a Famine, threatening the want of holy Sacrifices, *Joel* 1:13,14.

It may fall out also, that in undertaking a war, or in making a league with a foreign State, there may arise such cases of conscience, as may require the consultation of a Synod. In which case, or the like, if the Magistrate call for a Synod, the Churches are to yield him ready subjection herein in the Lord. *Jehoshaphat* though he was out of his place, when he was in *Samaria* visiting an idolatrous King: yet he was not out of his way, when in case of undertaking the war against *Syria*, he called for counsel from the mouth of the Lord, by a Council or Synod of Priests and Prophets, 1 Kings 22:5,6,7.

4. A fourth sort of things, wherein the Church is not to refuse subjection to the civil *Magistrate*, is in patient suffering their unjust persecutions without hostile or rebellious resistance. For though persecution of the Churches and servants of Christ, will not advance the civil peace, but overthrow it; yet for the Church to take up the Sword in her own defence, is not a lawful means of preserving the Church-peace, but a disturbance of it rather. In this case, when *Peter* drew his Sword in defence of his Master, (*the Lord Jesus*) against an attachment served upon him, by the officers of the high Priests and Elders of the people: our Saviour bade him *put up his sword into his sheath again*; for (saith he) *all they that take the sword, shall perish by the sword*, Matthew 26:50,51,52, where he speaketh of *Peter* either as a private Disciple, or a Church-officer, to whom, though the power of the keys was committed, yet the power of the sword was not committed. And for such to take up the sword, though in the cause of Christ, it is forbidden by Christ: and such is the case of any particular Church, or of a Synod of Churches. As they have received the power of the keys, not of the sword, so the power of the keys they may, and ought to administer, but not of the sword. Wherein nevertheless we speak of Churches and Synods, as such, that is, as church-members, or church-

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assemblies, acting in a church way, by the power of the keys received from Christ. But if some of the same persons be also betrusted by the civil State, with the preservation and protection of the Laws and Liberties, peace and safety of the same State, and shall meet together in a public civil Assembly (whether in Council or Camp) they may there provide by civil power (according to the wholesome Laws and Liberties of the country) *Ne quid Ecclesia, ne quid Respublica detrimenti capiat.*²⁷ If King *Saul* swear to put *Jonathan* to death, the Leaders of the people may by strong hands rescue him from his father's unjust and illegal fury, 1 *Samuel* 14:44,45. But if *Saul* persecute *David*, (though as unjustly as *Jonathan*) yet if the Princes and Leaders of the people will not rescue him from the wrath of the King, *David* (a private man) will not draw out his sword in his own defence, so much as to *touch the Lord's anointed*, 1 *Samuel* 24:4 to 7.

To conclude this *Corollary*, touching the subjection of Churches to the civil State, in matters which concern the civil peace, this may not be omitted, that as the Church is subject to the sword of the Magistrate, in things which concern the civil peace: so the Magistrate (if Christian) is subject to the keys of the Church, in matters which concern the peace of his conscience, and the Kingdom of heaven. Hence it is prophesied by *Isaiah*, that Kings and Queens, who are nursing fathers and mothers to the Church, *shall bow down to the church, with their faces to the earth*, *Isaiah* 49:23, that is, they shall walk in professed subjection to the ordinances of Christ in his Church. Hence also it is, that *David* prophesieth of a *two-edged sword*, (that is, the sword of the Spirit, the word of Christ) put *into the hands of the Saints* (who are by calling the members of the Church) as to subdue the Nations by the ministry of the Word, to the obedience of the Gospel, (*Psalms* 149:6,7,) so *to bind their Kings with chains, and their Nobles with fetters of iron, to execute upon them the judgment written*, (that is, written in the Word) *Psalms* 149 verses 8, 9.

3. A third *Corollary* touching the independency of Churches, is this, That a Church of a particular Congregation consisting of Elders and Brethren, and walking in the truth and peace of the Gospel, as it is the first subject of all Church-power needful to be exercised within itself, so it is independent upon any other (Church or Synod) for the exercise of the same.

That such a Church is the first subject of all Church-power, hath been cleared above in the opening the third Proposition of the first subject of the power of the keys. And such a Church being the first subject of

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Church-power, is unavoidably independent upon any other church or body for the exercise thereof; for as hath been said afore, the first subject of any accident or adjunct, is independent upon any other, either for the enjoying, or for the employing (the having or the using) of the same.

4. A fourth *Corollary* touching the independency of churches, is, That a Church fallen into any offence (whether it be the whole Church, or a strong party in it) is not independent in the exercise of Church-power, but is subject both to the admonition of any other Church, and to the *determination and judicial sentence* of a Synod for *direction into a way of truth and peace*.

And this also ariseth from the former discourse. For, if *clavis errans non ligat, & Ecclesia litigans non ligat*;²⁸ that is, if Christ hath not given to a particular Church a promise to bind and loose in heaven, what they bind and loose on earth, unless they *agree together, and agree in his Name*, then such a Church is not independent in their proceedings, as do fail in either. For all the independency that can be claimed, is founded upon that promise: *What ye bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven: what ye loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven*, Matthew 18:18. On that promise is founded both the independency and *security*, and *parity* also of all Churches. But if that promise be cut off from them, they are like *Sampson* when his hair was cut off, weak, and subject to fall under other men; and yet they fall softer than he did: he fell into the hands of his enemies, but they fall under the censure of their friends. As the false Prophet recanting his error, did acknowledge, so may they: *Thus was I wounded in the house of my friends*, Zechariah 13:6. In the house of a neighbour-church or two, I was friendly smitten with a brotherly admonition, which (like a *precious oil*) did *not break mine head*: and in the house of a Synod of Churches, I was friendly, yea, brotherly censured and healed.

5. A fifth and last *Corollary* arising from the former discourse, touching the independency of Churches, may be this, Though the Church of a particular Congregation, consisting of Elders and Brethren, and walking with a right foot in the truth and peace of the Gospel, be the first subject of all Church-power needful to be exercised within itself; and consequently be independent from any other Church or Synod in the use of it; yet it is a safe, and wholesome, and holy Ordinance of Christ, for such particular Churches to join together in holy Covenant or communion, and consolation amongst themselves, to administer all their Church-affairs, (which are of weighty, and difficult and common concernment) not without common

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consultation and consent of other Churches about them. Now Church-affairs of weighty and difficult and common concernment, we account to be the *election and ordination of Elders, excommunication of an Elder, or any person of public note, and employment: the translation of an Elder* from one Church to another, or the like. In which case we conceive it safe and wholesome, and an holy Ordinance, to proceed with common consultation and consent. Safe, for *in multitude of counsellors there is safety,* (as in civil, so in Church-affairs) *Proverbs 11:14.* And though this or that Church may be of a good and strong constitution, and walk with a right foot in the truth, and peace of the Gospel: yet all Churches are not in a like athletic plight, and they will be loath to call in, or look out for help as much or more than others, though they have more need than others: yea, and the best Churches may soon degenerate, and stand in as much need of help as others, and for want of it may sink and fall into deep Apostasy, which other Churches might have prevented, had they discerned it at first.

It is also wholesome, as tending to maintain brotherly love, and soundness of doctrine in Churches, and to prevent many offences which may grow up in this or that particular church, when it transacteth all such things within itself without consent.

It is likewise an holy ordinance of Christ, as having just warrant from a like precedent. The Apostles were as much independent from one another, and stood in as little need of one another's help, as Churches do one of another. And yet *Paul* went up to *Jerusalem* to confer with *Peter, James, and John,* lest he *should run in vain* in the course of his ministry, *Galatians 2:2.* And though in conference the chief Apostles added nothing to *Paul,* verse 6, yet when they perceived *the Gospel of the uncircumcision was committed to Paul and Barnabas, as that of the circumcision to Peter, James, and John, they gave* unto one another *the right hand of fellowship,* verse 9. Now then it will follow by just proportion, that if the Apostles, who are each of them independent one of another, had need to consult and confer together about the work of their ministry, to procure the freer passage to their calling, and to their doctrine: then surely Churches, and Elders of Churches, though independent one of another, had need to communicate their courses and proceedings in such cases one with another, to procure the freer passage to the same. And if the Apostles giving right hand of fellowship one to another, did mutually strengthen their hands in the work of the ministry: then the Elders of Churches giving right hand of

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fellowship to one another in their ordination, or upon any fit occasion, cannot but much encourage and strengthen the hearts and hands of one another in the Lord's work.

Again, something might be added, if not for confirmation, yet for illustration of this point, by comparing the dimensions of the *New Jerusalem*, which is a perfect platform of a pure Church, as it shall be constituted in the Jewish Church state, at their last conversion. The dimensions of this Church as they are described by *Ezekiel* (Chapter 48:30) are (according to *Junius*) *twelve furlongs*, which after the measure of the Sanctuary (which is double to the common) is about *three miles* in length, and as much in breadth. But the dimensions of the same Church of the Jews, in *Revelation* 21:16. is said to be *twelve thousand furlongs*. Now how can these two dimensions of the same Church stand together, which are so far discrepant one from another? For there be a *thousand times twelve furlongs* in *twelve thousand furlongs*. The fittest and fairest reconciliation seemeth plainly to be this, that *Ezekiel* speaketh of the dimensions of any ordinary Jewish Church of one particular congregation. But *John* speaketh of the dimensions of many particular Jewish Churches, combining together in some cases, even to the communion of a thousand Churches. Not that the Church of the Jews will be constituted in a *National* and *Diocesan* frame, with *National* officers, and *Diocesan* Bishops, or the like: but that sometimes a thousand of them will be gathered into a Synod, and all of them will have such mutual care, and yield such mutual brotherly help and communion one to another, as if they were all but one body.

If a man may say, *Theologia symbolica*, or *parabolica non est argumentativa*, that arguments from such parables, and mystical resemblances in Scripture, are not valid, let him enjoy his own apprehension: and (if he can yield a better interpretation of the place) let him wave this collection. Nevertheless, if there were no argumentative power in parables, why did the Lord Jesus so much delight in that kind of teaching? And why did *John*, and *Daniel*, and *Ezekiel*, deliver a great part of their prophecies in parables, if we must take them for riddles, and not for documents nor arguments? Surely if they serve not for argument, they serve not for document.

But furthermore, touching this great work of communion and consociation of Churches, give us leave to add this caution; To see that this consociation of Churches be not perverted, either to the oppression or diminution of the just liberty and authority of each particular Church within itself: who being well supplied with a faithful and expert Presbytery of their own,

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do walk in their integrity according to the truth and peace of the Gospel. Let Synods have their just authority in all Churches, how pure soever, in determining such Διατάξεις,²⁹ as are requisite for the edification of all Christ's Churches according to God. *But in the Election and Ordination of Officers, and Censure of offenders, let it suffice the Churches consociate, to assist one another, with their counsel, and right hand of fellowship, when they see a particular Church use their liberty and power aright. But let them not put forth the power of their community, either to take such Church acts out of their hands, or to hinder them in their lawful course, unless they see them (through ignorance or weakness) to abuse their liberty and authority in the Gospel.* All the liberties of Churches were purchased to them by the precious blood of the Lord Jesus; and therefore neither may the Churches give them away, nor many Churches take them out of the hands of one. They may indeed prevent the abuse of their liberties, and direct in the lawful use of them, but not take them away, though themselves should be willing. The Lord Jesus having given equal power to all the Apostles, it was not lawful for eleven of them to forbid the twelfth to do any act of his office without their intervention. Neither was it lawful for the nine, who were of inferior gifts, to commit the guidance and command of all their Apostolic administrations unto *Peter, James, and John, who seemed to be Pillars.* And that, not only because they were all (one as well as another) immediately guided by the Holy Ghost: but because they were all equal in office, and every one to give account for himself unto God.

It is the like case (in some measure) of particular Churches; yea, there is moreover a three-fold further inconvenience, which seemeth to us, to attend the translation of the power of particular Churches in these ordinary administrations, into the hands of a Synod of Presbyters, commonly called a *Classis*.

1. The Promise of *Binding and Loosing*, in way of Discipline, which Christ gave to every particular Church (as hath been showed) is by this means not received, nor enjoined, nor practised by themselves immediately, but by their Deputies or Over-seers.

2. The same promise which was not given to Synods in acts of that nature (as hath been showed in the Chapter of Synods) but in acts of another kind, is hereby received and enjoined, and practised by them, and by them only, which ought not to be.

And, which is a third inconvenience; The practice of this power of the Keys only by a Synod of Presbyters, still keepeth the Church as under

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nonage, as if they were not grown up to the full fruition of the just liberty of their riper years in the days of the Gospel. For a mother to bear her young daughter in her arms, and not to suffer it to go on its own feet, whilst it is in the infancy, is kindly and comely: but when the Damsel is grown up to riper years, for the mother still to bear her in her arms, for fear of stumbling, it were an unnecessary burden to the mother, and a reproach to the Virgin; Such is the case here: The community of Churches (according to the Hebrew phrase) is as the *Mother*; each particular Church is as the *Daughter*. In the old Testament, while the Church was in her nonage, it was not unseasonable to leave the whole guidance and bearing thereof in the hands of their *Tutors and Governors, the Priests and Levites*, and in the community of the National Courts. But now in the days of the New Testament, when the Churches are grown up (or should be grown at least) to more maturity, it were meet more to give the Church liberty to stand alone, and to walk upon her own legs; and yet in any such part of her way, as may be more hard to hit right upon, as in her Elections, and Ordinances, and Censures of eminent persons, in office; it is a safe and holy and faithful office of the vigilancy of the community of Churches, to be present with them, and helpful to them in the Lord. And at all times when a particular Church shall wander out of the way, (whether out of the way of truth, or of peace) the community of Churches may by no means be excused from reforming them again into their right way, according to the authority which the Lord hath given them for the public edification of all the several Churches within their Covenant.

*Soli Christo, Τῷ Α, καὶ Τῷ Ω*³⁰

This is licensed and entered according to Order.

FINIS

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NOTES

- ¹ Greek: *Mixture*
- ² *An Apologetical Narration* was presented to Parliament in 1643 by Thomas Goodwin, Philip Nye, Sidrach Simpson, Jeremiah Burroughs and William Bridge. They were independents known as the Five Dissenting Brethren who were vastly outnumbered by the Presbyterians in the Westminster Assembly.
- ³ Proverbs 15:1
- ⁴ Latin: *In the inner forum or in the outer forum.*
- ⁵ Latin: *With fulness and abundance of power.*
- ⁶ Latin: *In the outer forum.*
- ⁷ Greek: *There is an arrangement of subordinates as well as of those in charge. The maid in Athens is said to have undertaken the position of a maidservant as well as her mistress.*
- ⁸ Latin: *Good behaviour.*
- ⁹ Latin: *The ancient terms as the ancient boundaries of the fields.*
- ¹⁰ Greek: *Well being, good state of health, good conduct.*
- ¹¹ Latin: *Power belongs to the whole church; authority of office belongs to the elders and bishops.*
- ¹² Greek: *he was enrolled with [the rest];* Latin: *he was elected among the twelve apostles by the common vote of all.*
- ¹³ Latin: *Ordinary Christian people have particularly the power either of electing worthy priests or of turning down unworthy ones.*
- ¹⁴ Latin: *To pronounce judgement and to give the sentence.*
- ¹⁵ Originally *burthen*, and so throughout the book.
- ¹⁶ A rare form of *sanctioned*.
- ¹⁷ Greek: *Separate apart for me Barnabas and Saul:* so thereupon Paul styleth himself *an apostle set apart.*
- ¹⁸ Greek: *First recipient.*
- ¹⁹ Greek: *Whom as apostles, prophets.*
Latin: *First and of itself.*
- ²⁰ Latin: *In as far as it is valid in all circumstances.*
- ²¹ Greek: *Power.*
- ²² Greek: *In his own power.*
Latin: *Lord of his own action.*
- ²³ Latin: *The churches were governed with the common consent of the elders.*
Latin: *The common consent of the elders, not their authority.*
- ²⁴ Latin: *It has the same power to bind and to loose, to close and to open.*
- ²⁵ Latin: *A broken key does not bind; and it is as true, a quarrelling church does not bind.*
- ²⁶ Greek: *Dissension and disputation.*

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Greek: *Things pertaining to life.*

²⁷ Latin: *Lest the church or the state suffer any loss.*

²⁸ Latin: *A broken key does not bind and a quarrelling church does not bind.*

²⁹ Greek: *Arrangements.*

³⁰ Greek: *To Christ alone, who is our Alpha and Omega.*

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The Way of CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES CLEARED: In two TREATISES

In the former, { From the Historical Aspersions of Mr
Robert Baylie, in his Book, called [A
Disswasive from the Errors of the
Time]

In the latter { From some Contradictions
of
VINDICÆ CLAVIUM:

And from, { Some Mis-constructions of Learned Mr
Rutherford in his Book intituled [The
due Right of Presbyteries]

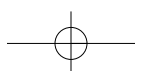
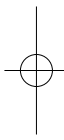
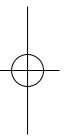
By Mr JOHN COTTON, sometime Preacher at *Boston*
in *Lincoln-shire*, and now Teacher of
the Church at *Boston*, in
New-England.

LONDON,

Printed by *Matthew Simmons*, for *John Bellamie*,
at the signe of the three Golden-Lions,
in *Cornhill*. 1648.



THE WAY OF CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES CLEARED



LAYOUT DRAFT

An Epistle PACIFICATORY,

To the Brethren dissenting from this Way:

HERE (Reverend Brethren) is presented unto you in Print, that very Copy, which the worthy Author (Mr *John Cotton*, Teacher of the Church at *Boston* in New England) sent together with his letter under his own hand unto me. His honouring me therein (upon my real account) deserved his request, *that I would assist the Press*, which with the greatest diligence opportunity put into my hands I have performed. And the worth of the subject, and the Author's sweet and solid handling of it, hath richly rewarded my labour, *legendo, perlegendoq;* in the usual and perusal thereof. The *Man*, most patient towards a sharp *Antagonist*, (you yourselves being judges.) The *Manner of handling*, gracious; meek words, playing the Champion of Verity and Innocency, with arguments of steel, unsheathed and shining with an amiable plainness of speech, and a free and sincere openness of heart. The *Matter* partly *Apologetical*, partly *Controversial*. In the *former* part you will meet with: 1. A true and terse History of the purer Churches in later puddled times: The blots aspersed upon them, clearly pummiced and sponged off; and divers precious Saints for learning and religion (through whose sides Christ's ways by opponents have been sorely wounded) εὐτόνως καὶ ἀναπολογητῶς,¹ evidently and unreliably vindicated. 2. A very good account of many singular Doctrinal points, not only of more speculative Theology, ventilating the chaff from the wheat, error from truth; but of most practical Soul-searching, Soul-saving, and Soul-solacing Divinity. I might give golden instances, glaring gloriously upon my Spirit, but for falling under a leaden retarding of dispatch; fearing lest the press tarry for me; for it even treads on my heel. In the latter part of this Book, being *Controversial*, you have a fair *Additional* to the^a Models (afore printed) of the Church way (so much called for by you;) not

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Magisterially laid down, but friendly debated by Scripture, and argumentatively disputed out to the utmost inch of ground, and defended *Cap a pie* (as they speak) from the head to the heel, of every branch of Truth essential to the controversy.²

Now then (worthy Brethren) consider and view over what ye gain to your design, whiles some among you endeavour by pen to blot the fair copy of Truth; (because *you at present*^b Stoop not low enough to see it a Truth) and to cross out of the Book of men's memory and esteem the names of them whom God will honour, though you will not? Surely the copy is written out fairer and fuller; books are multiplied; more men read them; and by reason of the late mists hovering over Truth, and cords of bondage straitening men's consciences; all men of conscience are more eager to search out, and having found, to stand to, and sit down by those Truths that clear their minds, and set free their spirits. Mists mantling and masking, the Sun ascending, are soon cast off, and dispelled by its beams, being near his Zenith. We grasp with men of rising parts, and high places, for free speaking, about Text proof Points, to our loss. By an Antiperistatistical opposition, the zeal of godly learned Writers, (before concealedly clouded with more silence) is set on fire: the cloud breaks, the voice of their thunder (as the Historian speaks of that Greek Commander *Pericles* his Fulminating Oratory) awakens the World, the flame burns up *the hay and stubble*.^c Truth is like Camomile; the more it is trodden, the more it spreads. Like the Walnut tree, the more it is beaten for its fruit this year, the more it fructifies the next. Eclipses cause men more to stare after the Sun, and more joy in the enjoying of its light, when got free. The *Jews* crying up Mosaical ceremonies, and human traditions; *Stephen, Peter, Paul*, dispute, Preach, Apologize for the Spirituality, and liberty of the Gospel.^d What succeeds? thousands are converted, ten thousand are convinced, and the World is *overrun with the knowledge of the truth, as the waters cover the Sea*. The *Gentiles* likewise, (especially the *Roman Empire*) take the next turn to dedignify the Christians, scandalize their religious practises, and to persecute both (witness the ten persecutions.) What was the income, the return of gain upon that adventure? Up start those mighty Giants in Religion, awakened with an holy inflammation of zeal, *Aristides, Justinus, Melito Apollinaris, Athenagoras, Apollonius, Tertullanus*, etc. And gloriously Apologize for the Truth: *James, Thomas, Andrew, Matthew, Philip, Mark*, and others of the *Apostles*;^e *Simon and Parmenas* of the 7 *Deacons*; *Simeon, Zenon, Polycarp*, and millions more in ensuing ages by

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succession, die for Christ, and seal to the certainty of the Truth with their bloods, making glorious confessions of it, whereby many Martyrizers, become Martyrs. *Sanguis Martyrum semen Ecclesiae.*³ Whiles the Persecutors marred (as they thought) Martyrs, they made Martyrs: and by their opposition they increased shrill and conspicuous confessions and professions of the Truth of Jesus. In so much that *Pliny* a great Statesman to the Emperor, writes to him a persuasive to stay the persecution. At last, an Emperor himself *Constantine the Great*, becomes a Christian, and then down went *Barrabas*, and *Christ* was exalted. The Sun of the Gospel shone out once again over the face of the whole earth.

Therefore my humble request to you my Reverend Brethren, is, that ye more study Peace, and stir up Love, among Brethren, and less controversy in these unparalleled times of universal contention, totally polemical, both Scholastically, and civilly. And to this end let us be warned (by that good account this Book renders unto us) of facile credulity, either to reports, or letters, or Books, unless they be handed to us from the Authors themselves, with whom ye have to do. Otherwise (as this book bears notable witness) our eyes and ears shall be abused, and our judgements warped from the simplicity and straitness of Truth. Suppose any real difference should be between us: if we agree in *foundation doctrinals*, yea, and in the main Principals of the *constitution* and *jurisdiction*, or power of a *particular Congregational Church*: as that it should consist of *Saints in union*, invested with *Power* to take in and cast out; I wonder it should amount to so high a contest, about degrees (which alter not the kind) of *forming* and *reforming* such a Church. You say *SAINTS* in *outward profession* is the *Matter* of such a Church; and an implicit uniting, *viz.* a walking and communicating with you is a sufficient *evidencing of the form*. We judge that *real SAINTS* uttering in discourse the breathings of the Holy Spirit, and experiences of conversion, witnessed in a stricter conversation, to be the *Matter*; and their *solemn confession* of their Faith, and *express open covenanting* with the Lord to walk with such a body of Saints in all the ways of Christ to their light and power for reciprocal edification, to be the *Manifest Form*. How is it now that only a *going before one another in degrees of reformation*, according to the *National Solemn League and Covenant*,⁴ should breed in you as it were a *specific* opposition against us? If you have a mind to ascend up higher to fetch down differences from above, about *Appeals*: Nor here hence is there just cause to build up such Bulwarks of Hostility between Brethren. If in the reign of *Episcopacy*, those Parishes

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were quiet where could not be found work for the *Hierarchy* to intermeddle; surely then the *Classes* may conveniently permit particular Congregations, (prostrated below them as it were at their feet) to rest in peace, whiles they meetly manage their own Church affairs, within their own Sphere. If *we* need advice, we shall willingly look on a company of Godly Elder and Brethren of other Churches, called together for counsel by our, and other Churches (be the Assembly of them smaller, greater, or greatest) as upon an Ordinance of Christ, and as bound by the Truth of Christ as readily to receive, as they are to give counsel to us according to the Truth. Only we cannot be contented to look absolutely upon all their advice (without exception) as *authoritative* dictates, and *Magisterial Canons*, necessarily to be obeyed *sub poena* under a penalty, how much soever our consciences remain unsatisfied the mean whiles.

The case standing hereabouts (as near as I could rough-draw the state of it in this instantaneous haste) let us I beseech you be rather *Irenei*, than *Cassandri*.^f As we do, ὀρθοποδεῖν (Galatians 2:14) walk even *with the right foot in the Gospel*; so let's in discipline (whiles the difference in the *thing* is no wider) give one another (as the Apostle speaks, Galatians 2:9), the *right hand of fellowship*. A learned Scot well observeth,^g that *there is a kind of justice among thieves, else their society would soon be disbanded*. And shall it not be among Brethren, Saints, Ministers, least we dissolve Churches, yea, ordinary communion of Saints? Let *Idol-Dagon* be half fish and half man, but let not Christ be divided, nor the profession of his Truth be set at odds. If our hearts grudge (and let that be our sorrow) yet let us not^h gnash the teeth and saw one another's repute a two, with the teeth of keen words. Let not anger צַקⁱ boil up into a foam, to throw the scum upon one another. Hereby else we slay both the souls of thousands, and the charity of 10,000 to their sin, and our discomfort. O it is a sad thought on my spirit, that we should pretend to have the *Paraclete* (so called in many languages^j for its comprehensive signification of *Friend, Comforter, Doctor, Advocate, Intercessor*, etc.) that is, the *Spirit* to be our *comforter*, and yet it should appear so little in us, to *teach us* and *convince* us of vilipending, or to work in us *love, friendship, and beseechings* towards one another. Now that the Lord would by his Spirit, with a second conversion (as the Scripture calls the progress of mortification of some special corruption) transform our rugged hearts into love, charity, yea dilection, is the prayer of yours to serve you in the Lord, and for the Lord,

NATHANAEL HOLMES

LAYOUT DRAFT

The worthy name of the Reverend and Learned Author of this Treatise (which with delight I have perused) is a sufficient argument to persuade, not only to the reading of it, but also to a belief and expectation of something excellent therein.

Imprimatur

January 1, 1647

John Bachiler

THE WAY OF CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES CLEARED

PART I

Treatise I

CHAPTER I

Of the title inscribed to Mr Baylie, his book, A Dissuasive from the Errors of the Time

Noah gave it for a blessing to his son *Japhet* (in a word both of Prophecy and Prayer) *God persuade Japhet to dwell in the Tents of Shem*, Genesis 9:27. And if a Persuasive to dwell in the tents of Shem were a blessing; then a Dissuasive from the Errors of the Time (rightly so called) is a blessing also. But when Mr *Baylie* is pleased amongst the Errors of the time to reckon (that which he calleth) Independency; he may do well to consider, whether he bring not upon his credulous Reader a curse instead of a blessing.

The supposed Errors found in those who are called Independent Churches, are chiefly two, upon which all the rest do depend: and both of them such as may well be cleared by *Noah's* blessing.

For, 1. they hold that *Cham* and *Chanaan*, whilst they are such, (that is, graceless persons, and scorners at the falls and infirmities of the Saints) they are not to dwell in the Tents of *Shem*. *Noah* did not pray for such a blessing to them; yea, it had been a curse both to them and *Shem* (if he had so prayed) and not a blessing.

2. They hold also, that *Japhet* himself should not be brought to dwell in the Tents of *Shem* till God persuade him. They would not have *Shem* to enlarge his Tents, to compass or compel *Japhet* to live under his shadow. It is one thing for *Japhet* and *Shem* to dwell together by voluntary

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consociation; another thing for *Shem* to rule over *Japhet* by undesired and unallowed jurisdiction. Let *Cham* and *Chanaan* be as servants unto *Shem* and to *Japhet* too, (for so *Noah* prophesied:) but let not *Japhet* be a servant to *Shem*, no more than *Shem* to *Japhet*. But though these be the principal Tenents of Independents (as they are called;) and indeed blessed truths in the blessing of *Noah*: yet Mr *Baylie* reckoneth these amongst the Errors of the Times; and the Independents themselves amongst the wanderers on the right hand, together with Brownists, (as he calleth them,) Anabaptists, Antinomians, Seekers: As on the left hand, he reckoneth Prelates, Papists, Arminians, Socinians, Erastians.⁵ And it should seem, he taketh Independents to be one of the most dangerous Sects of them all, (at least, as the state of the times now standeth:) or else he would not have addressed all the whole force of his Discourse against them: Only taking up Brownists (as he styleth them) by the way, to usher in the other with the greater prejudice. But for my part, I dislike not Mr *Baylie's* zeal against Errors where it is rightly placed: Only let him allow the like liberty to us, which he taketh to himself, That as he publisheth a Dissuasive against Errors; so we may have leave to bear witness to the Truth.

CHAPTER II

Of those whom the Dissuader styleth Brownists

SECTION I

“**M**aster Baylie rightly observeth, That in our departure and flight from *Rome*, some took up their stand too soon, before they had passed the lines (he meaneth all the lines) of communication with the Whore: and others ran on too long (or too far) beyond the bounds of truth and love. The former of these sorts he maketh the Lutherans, in respect of some defects in their Reformation. The latter, he maketh to be the Anabaptists in *Germany*. The successors of the former, he maketh to be *Cranmer, Ridley*, and those other Confessors and Martyrs who settled Episcopacy and Ceremonies in *England*. The successors of the latter sort, (the Anabaptists) he maketh to be those whom he styleth Brownists.

But as there is a vast difference between the Episcopacy of *England* and the Superintendency of *Germany*, (the one ruling by Monarchical Power, the other by the consent of the Aristocratical Presbytery:) so neither is there such correspondency between the *German* Anabaptism, and the *English* Brownism, as to make Brownism a native branch of Anabaptism.

“Yes, (saith the Dissuader) that Brownism is a native branch of Anabaptism, is evidenced, by the frequent transition of the one to the other. The dissolution of ice and snow into water, argueth strongly their original from that element; so the ordinary running over of the Separatists to the Anabaptists.

Answer The dissolution of ice and snow into water, doth indeed argue strongly their original from water, because they are easily resolved into it without putrefaction or corruption. But so is not the Separatist resolved

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into a *German* Anabaptist, without a further degree of corruption and putrefaction. It is no argument a man is bred of worms, because he is next resolved into worms; for he is not so resolved without putrefaction. Say not, a man is resolved at last into dust from whence he was first taken; and yet the resolution is not made without putrefaction. For a man is not made of dust naturally, but by a transcendent creating power above Nature. But the Dissuader maketh the Separation a native branch of Anabaptism.

Besides, I suppose, it is not an obvious thing to hear of an Anabaptist turn Separatist, though some Separatists have turned Anabaptists; which argueth there is not such a mutual frequent transition from the one to the other, as is yearly found of ice and snow into water, and of water into ice or snow again.

SECTION II

The first Separatist, which the Dissuader saith he hath read of, “was one *Bolton*, who was a Minister of an old separate Congregation, and afterwards felt the sense of his Errors so grievous to his soul, (by the finger of God’s Justice stirring in his conscience) that he did not only publicly at *Paul’s-cross* recant them, but thereafter was so dogged with a desperate remorse, that he rested not till he had hanged himself.

Answer 1: Though *Bolton* may have been the first Separatist that the Dissuader hath read of; yet he might have read of others before him. For in the Book called *The Register of memorable matters touching Reformation*,⁶ there is recorded a story of an hundred persons, who refused the common Liturgy, and the Congregations attending thereunto, and used prayers and preachings, and Sacraments amongst themselves: whereof 14 or 15 were sent to prison: Of whom the chiefest was *Mr Smith*, with *Mr Nixon*, *James Ireland*, *Robert Hawkins*, *Thomas Boweland*, and *Richard Morecroft*. And these pleaded their separation before the Lord Mayor, Bishop *Sands*, and other Commissioners on June 20 in the year 1567, which is about fourscore years ago; and this as it seemeth was many years before *Bolton*; for *Mr Baylie* reckoneth the wandering of the Separatists to be about 50 years standing, (page 59) but this *Smith* and his company was 30 years before.

Answer 2: Old *Mr Brewster* (the reverend Elder of the Church of *Plymouth*, a man of long-approved piety, gravity, integrity) his testimony of this *Bolton* may take off the prejudice which the fearful fall of *Bolton* seemeth to *Mr Baylie* to cast upon the Separation:⁷ Which I will recite, not to

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justify that way of his separation, but to take off unjust scandals. “This *Bolton* (saith he) partly by the terrors of Bishops, and partly by flattery, was brought indeed to recant. But afterwards they sleighting him, the terrors of the Almighty fell upon him, and considering how he had sinned against his conscience, he (*Judas*-like) laid violent hands upon himself.”

But the Dissuader may be pleased to consider, that Apostacy from the way of Separation, and terror of conscience even to desperation, and self-murder following thereupon, are no just exceptions against Separation: no more than *Judas* his apostacy from Christ, and terror of conscience even to desperation and self-hanging following thereupon, were any just exceptions against Christianity.

SECTION III

Of Mr Brown, and Barrow

Of Mr *Brown* and Mr *Barrow*, it is far from me to make any defense either of their persons, or of their way of rigid Separation: the hand of God upon their spirit, giving them up, one to a spirit of inconstancy and profaneness; the other to a spirit bitterness and rashness. Though it is no just conviction of the errors of their way of Separation: yet it is a shrewd argument that either their way was not right, or their hearts not upright in it.

But this let me say, be it so, that *Brown* did revolt from way, and took a Parsonage from the Bishop, and that in a Town by name called *A-church* in *Northamptonshire*, (a real check to his error, who formerly counted every Church in *England* no Church:) yet this backsliding of *Brown* from that way of Separation, is a just reason why the Separatists may disclaim denomination from him, and refuse to be called after his name, Brownists. If *Judas*, or *Julian*, or *Ecebolius* do apostate from Christianity, no reason is there that all that profess the way of Christianity should be called Judaites, or Julianists, or Ecebolians. In the Ecclesiastical History,⁸ though *Photinus* was the disciple of *Marcellus* in an heretical opinion touching Christ: yet the followers of them both, when *Marcellus* had revoked his error, were not called *Marcellini* but *Photiniani*. To speak with reason, if any be justly to be called Brownists, it is only such as revolt from Separation to Formality, and from thence to profaneness. For Mr *Barrow*, though I neither excuse the unsoundness of his judgment, nor the bitterness of his style: yet I doubt the Dissuader is deceived, when he saith “That Queen *Elizabeth*

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was so impatient of his contumelies, that she caused him in a morning to be hanged on the Tower-hill. For there be grave Professors (who lived nearer those occurrences) who speak of Queen *Elizabeth* as ignorant of *Barrow's* execution, and *Greenwood's*, and displeas'd at it, when she heard of it afterwards: neither was their execution on Tower-hill, but at Tyburn, long after the sentence of death pass'd against them.

SECTION IV

Of Mr Johnson and Mr Ainsworth

The Dissuader is deceived when he saith, "Mr *Ainsworth* with his half, did excommunicate Mr *Johnson* and his half. For as I am inform'd by some judicious Professors who lived in those parts, Mr *Ainsworth* and his company did not excommunicate Mr *Johnson* and his, but only withdrew from them, when they could no longer live peaceably with them. Mr *Johnson* his last Book,⁹ argueth he had learned more moderation of spirit, then he did put forth in his former times.

Mr *Ainsworth*, a man of a more modest and humble spirit, and diligently studious of the Hebrew text, hath not been unuseful to the Church in his Exposition of the *Pentateuch*,¹⁰ especially of *Moses* his Rituals, notwithstanding some uncircumcised, and ungrounded Rabbinical observations recited, but not refuted.

But when the Dissuader saith, that Mr *Ainsworth's* company after his death, remained long without all Officers;"

There be sundry living that know the contrary. For when he died he left two Elders over the Church, Mr *Delacuse*, and Mr *May*.

And therefore I do not see any ground of that speech,

"That the weight and evidence of God's hand against *Ainsworth* had so far disgrac'd that Sect, as the Dissuader expresseth. For though in simplicity of heart, in some things he went astray: yet the way he walk'd in, did not suffer disgrace by him, nor by the weight and evidence of God's hand upon him, for ought I have ever heard or read of him, save in Mr *Baylie*. The Lord knoweth how to be merciful to such as seek him in simplicity of heart, according to light revealed, though he do observe and chasten some Error in their way.

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SECTION V

Of Mr Smith and Mr Robinson

The fall indeed of Mr *Smith*, and the Spirit of errors and instability that fell upon him, was more observable: and a dreadful warning from heaven, against ἀυθάρδεια self-fulness, and self pleasing. For though the tyranny of the Ecclesiastical Courts was harsh towards him, and the yokes put upon him in his Ministry, too grievous to be borne: yet neither was he alone in suffering: Nor were those that suffered with him at that time, (Mr *Clifton*, and Mr *Robinson*) such inconsiderable Persons, that he should affect to go alone from them. It is true, he had found help by the conference (which himself had requested) with Mr *Dod*, Mr *Hilderson*, and Mr *Barbon*, before he left *England*; yea and such help, that he thought he could have gained his Tutor *Johnson*, from the Errors of his Rigid Separation. But he had promised them, not to go over to him, without their consents: and they utterly dissuaded him there-from, as fearing his instability. And yet contrary to his Promise he went over to him, yea, and that contrary to his own pretense and offer of another conference with them before his going. Though the way of Rigid Separation had been less Heterodoxal, than it is, yet to venture upon it in such breach of manifest Rules, no marvel, if it led him into manifest temptations and Aberrations.

“The Dissuader is misinformed, when he saith (page 16) he moved a great company to follow him to *Leyden* in *Holland*. For as I understand by such as lived in those parts at that time, he lived at *Amsterdam*, and there died, and at *Ley* in *Holland* he never came.

Of Mr *Robinson*, the Dissuader doth rightly observe, that he was a man of the most learned, polished, and modest spirit of that way, and withal he might have said, so piously studious and conscientiously inquisitive after the Truth, that (as the Dissuader rightly observeth) it had been truly a marvel, if such a man as he, had gone on to the end a rigid Separatist.”

As a fruit of his studious inquisition after the Truth, he resorted (as I have understood) to many judicious Divines in *England* for the clearing of his Scruples, which inclined him to separation: and when he came into *Holland*, he addressed himself to Dr *Ames*, and Mr *Parker*: rather preventing them with seeking counsel and satisfaction, than waiting for their compassion. But as they excelled in learning and godliness, so in compassion and brotherly love also; and therefore as they discerned his weanedness from self-fulness, so did they more freely communicate light to him, and received

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also some things from him. The fruit of which was (through the Grace of Christ) that the Dissuader himself confesseth, he came back indeed the one half of the way: Acknowledging the lawfulness of communicating with the Church of *England*, in the Word and Prayer: but not in the Sacraments and Discipline, which was (saith he) a fair Bridge, at least a fair Arch of a Bridge for union. But when he saith, he came on to communicate with the Church of *England* in the Word and Prayer, it must not be understood of the Common-Prayer-Book, but of the Prayers conceived by the Preacher before and after Sermon: And yet in coming on so far as he did, he came more than half way of any just distance.

For though he stuck at the Common Liturgy, Sacraments and Discipline: yet since then it hath appeared, there was no just ground of coming on to them. The Honorable Parliament, and Reverend Assembly of Divines have (by the grace of Christ) seen just cause to remove the Liturgy, to abolish the Hierarchy (which was the Discipline he chiefly stuck at) and to give order for restraint of ignorant and scandalous Persons from the Sacrament, which may well make up two or three Arches more (as Mr *Baylie* calleth it) of that fair bridge for union, far more than the half way.

It is true, Mr *Robinson* did not acknowledge a National Church governed by the Episcopacy to be a Church of Divine Institution. But though he acknowledged the style and privileges of a Church in the New Testament to belong to a particular Congregation of visible Saints: yet such National Churches, French or Dutch, as were governed by Presbyters, and separate from the world at the Lord's Table, he did not disclaim Communion with them, I have been given to understand, that when a Reverend and godly Scottish Minister came that way, (it seemeth to have been Mr *John Tarbes*) he offered him Communion at the Lord's Table: though the other for fear of offence to the Scottish Churches at home, excused himself. Yea when some Englishmen that offered themselves to become Members of his Church, would sometimes in their confessions profess their Separation from the Church of *England*, Mr *Robinson* would bear witness against such profession: Avouching, they required no such professions of Separation from this or that, or any Church, but only from the world. All which do argue, that his coming on to Protestant Churches, was more than the half way. "But (saith the Dissuader) this new Doctrine (or way) of Mr *Robinson*, though it was destructive to his old Sect; yet it became an occasion of a new one, not very good. It was the womb and seed of that lamentable

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Independency in *Old and New-England*, which hath been the fountain of many evils already though no more should ensue, as anon shall be declared.”

Answer: When this cometh to be declared, I hope it will come to be declared also, that the way of Independency hath been bred in the womb of the New-Testament of the immortal seed of the Word of Truth, and received in the times of purest Primitive antiquity, many hundreds of years before Mr *Robinson* was born: and that it hath not been the fountain of any evils at all, much less of such evils, as to deserve the style of lamentable Independency.

SECTION VI

Of the contempt and contumely said to be put upon the old Brownists by the Independents

To shut up this Chapter, the Dissuader telleth us, “That the way of the old Brownists is become contemptible not only to all the rest of the world, but to their own children also; even they begin to heap coals of contumelies upon their Parents’ heads; as may be seen in the Elegies which both Mr *Cotton*, and the five Apologists¹¹ are pleased to give them in Print; yea, so much are these Children ashamed of their Fathers, that they usually take it for a contumely to be called after their name. No Independent will take it well at any man’s hand to be called a Brownist either in whole, or in the smallest part.”

Answer: No marvel, if Independents take it ill to be called Brownists, in whole, or in part. For neither in whole, nor in part do we partake in his Schism. He separated from Churches and from Saints: we, only from the world, and that which is of the world. He turned apostate from the Separation which he had professed: and it is absurd to denominate either Sect or right way, from such as apostate from it. If he had stood constant in his way, and his way had been the same with ours, yet we were not baptized into his Name; and why should we then be called after his Name? If schism be a manifest fruit of the flesh, then they that give Nicknames tending to the reproach and division of Brethren, they walk after the flesh; for they sow variance and schism amongst Brethren.

2. It is an unjust and unworthy calumny, to call either *Cotton* or the Apologers, the children of their Fathers, whom he styleth Brownists. They never begot us, either to God, or to the Church, or to their Schism: a

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Schism, which as we have lamented in them, (as a fruit of misguided ignorant zeal:) so we have ever born witness against it, since our first knowledge of it.

3. Though we put not such Honour upon those he calleth Brownists, as to own them for our Fathers; yet neither do we put so much dishonour upon them, “as to heap coals of contumely upon their heads.” We look not at them with contempt, but compassion: Neither do we bear witness against their Schism in any words of contempt and reproach, (which are the characters of contumely) but in words of spiritual and just reproof; even in such terms, not which scornful wit, but which holy Scripture suggesteth.

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that it confineth us within ourselves, and holdeth us forth as Independent from all others: whereas indeed we do profess dependence upon Magistrates for civil Government and protection: Dependence upon Christ and his Word, for the sovereign government and rule of our administrations: Dependence upon the counsel of other Churches and Synods; when our own variance or ignorance may stand in need of such help from them. And therefore this title of Independency straiteneth us, and restraineth us from our necessary duty, and due liberty.

Again, in other respects, Independency stretcheth itself too largely, and more generally, than that it can single out us. For it is compatible to a National Church, as well as to a Congregational. The National Church of *Scotland* is Independent from the Government of the National Church of *England*; and so is *England* Independent from *Scotland*. Nor is there any Sect at this day extant, but shroudeth themselves under the title of Independency. The Antipædobaptists, Antinomians, Familists, yea, and the Seekers too, do all of them style themselves Independents.¹² Nay, even the Pope himself, (who exalteth himself above all Civil and Church-power) yet even he also arrogateth the title of Independency; *Prima sedes à nemine judicatur*; that is, the See of *Rome* is Independent. Why then should Independency be appropriated to us, as a character of our way, which neither truly describeth us, nor faithfully distinguisheth us from many others? Wherefore if there must needs be some note of difference to decipher our estate, and to distinguish our way from a National Church way, I know none fitter, then to denominate theirs Classical, and ours Congregational.

SECTION II

Of the number of the Congregational Regiment, and of the wisdom threaped upon them, in engaging Persons of note to them

The Dissuader acknowledgeth, "We are not numerous, but the fewest in number of the noted Sects, and not to consist of above One thousand persons within the Lines of the Cities' Communication."

Answer 1: If we be the fewest of noted Sects, it was sometime the lot of God's *Israel* to be the fewest of all people, Deuteronomy 7:7.

Answer 2: If there be a thousand of our way within the Lines of the Cities' Communication, I hope there want not divers more to be added

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to them in other parts of *England*, besides some thousands more in *New England*. But it is not for us to follow *David's* sin in numbering the people of the Lord; only the Lord increase their number an hundredth fold, (yea, a thousand fold) and make them as the stars of heaven for multitude.

But for the quality of the persons, the Dissuader telleth us, "They have been so wise, as to engage to their party some of chief note in both Houses of Parliament, in the Assembly of Divines, in the Army, in the City, and Country Committees."

But in so saying, the Dissuader putteth a dishonor both upon God, and upon those persons of chief note. It is a dishonor to God, to attribute that to the wisdom of man, which is the mighty and gracious work of the wisdom of God. And it is a dishonor to such men, to hold them forth as engaged to this way by the wisdom and industry of men, who have been well known (and some of them for many years) not to have engaged themselves or others any further, than the grace of Christ, and the conscience of his Word hath engaged them to do and suffer, according to the will of God.

SECTION III

Touching the Line of the Pedigree of the Independents in New England

"The Separatists (saith the Dissuader) were their Fathers. This is demonstrable not only by the consanguinity of their Tenents, (the one having borrowed all their chief Doctrines and practices from the other:) but also by deduction of their Pedigree in this clear Line. Mr *Robinson* did derive his way to his Separate Congregation at *Leyden*; a part of them did carry it over to *Plymouth* in *New England*: here Mr *Cotton* took it up, and did transmit it to Mr *Goodwin*, who did help to propagate it to sundry others in *Old England* first, and after to more in *Holland*; till now by many hands it is sown thick in divers parts of the Kingdom.

Answer. That the Separatists were our Fathers, we have justly denied it above; seeing they neither begat us to God, nor to the Church, nor to their Schism. That we are (through grace) begotten to God, and to his Church, we received (many of us) from the blessing of Christ upon the Ministry of *England*. That we grew weary of the burden of Episcopacy and Conformity, we received from the Word of God by the help of the

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Nonconformists there. That we laid aside the Book of Common-prayer, we received from the serious meditation of the second Commandment, and not from the Writings of the Separatists, though they also had taken up the same Conclusion upon other premises. The particular visible Church of a Congregation to be the first subject of the power of the Keys, we received by the light of the Word from Mr *Parker*, Mr *Baynes*, and Dr *Ames*: from whom also, (from two of them at least) we received light out of the Word, for the matter of the visible Church to be visible Saints; and for the Form of it, to be a mutual Covenant, whether an explicit or implicit Profession of Faith, and subjection to the Gospel of Christ in the society of the Church, or Presbytery thereof. And these be the chief Doctrines and practices of our way, so far as it differeth from other Reformed Churches. And having received these, not from the Separatists, but from the Lord Jesus, by gracious Saints, and faithful witnesses of Jesus; the consanguinity of our Tenents with any the like found amongst the Separatists, will not demonstrate the Separatists to be our Fathers.

It is very likely (and by the fruits of some of them, it is very evident) that the Church of *Plymouth* in *New England* received very much light and life, by the blessing of Christ upon Mr *Robinson* his Ministry, whilst he lived with them in *Holland*: nor need we to be ashamed, to learn any truth of God from him, or them, or from any other Saints of God, of far meaner gifts, than he or they had received. But I must confess ingenuously, that his denial of the Parishional Congregations in *England* to be true Churches (either by reason of their mixed and corrupt matter, or for defect in their Covenant, or for excess of their Episcopal Government) was never received into any heart, from thence to infer a nullity of their Church estate. Neither was our departure from them even in those evil times, a Separation from them as no Churches; but rather a Secession from the corruptions found amongst them, unto which also we must have been forced to conform, even in our own Practice through the Rigour of the times, unless we had timely departed from them. In which case, Doctor *Ames* will excuse us (yea and the Holy Ghost also) from aspersion of schism or any other sin, in so doing. *De Conscientia, lib. 4, cap. 24, Numero 16, in Responsione 7 ad quaest. 3.*

The Dissuader is mistaken (when he saith *Page 54*) That “after the death of *Ainsworth*, there remained only a small handful of Separatists at *Amsterdam*, and another small company at *Leyden*, under Mr *Robinson’s* Ministry, and

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besides them, no other at that time were known in the world of that Religion.”

For Mr *Jacob*, whom Mr *Lothrop* succeeded and after him Mr *Barbon* being an Elder governed the same Separate Church in *Leyden* which held Communion with Mr *Robinson's* Church, as appeareth by their Letters published in Print. And that Church as it began before Mr *Robinson*, so it continued after him, and still doth. And it is no less a mistake, when the Dissuader maketh the Divisions in Mr *Robinson's* Church, or his desertion of many of their Principles to be an occasion of well near bringing that Church to nought: till some of them went over to *New England*, and persuaded their neighbours who sat down with them in *New Plymouth* to erect with them a Congregation after their Separate way.

For the church at *Leyden* was in peace, and free from any division, when they took up thoughts of transporting themselves into *America* with common consent. Themselves do declare it, That the proposition of Removal, was set on foot and prosecuted by the Elders upon just and weighty grounds. For (to use their own words) though they did quietly and sweetly enjoy their Christian & Church-liberties under the States: yet they foresaw *Holland* would be no place for their Church, and their posterity to continue there comfortably: at least in that measure, which they hoped to find abroad, and that for these reasons, which I shall recite, as I received them from themselves.

1. Because themselves were of a different language from the Dutch where they lived, and the Dutch were settled in their way; in so much that in ten years space, whilst their Church sojourned amongst them, they could not bring them to reform the neglect of the Lord's Day, or any other thing amiss amongst them.

2. Because their Country-men who came over to join with them, by reason of the hardness, and chargeableness of the Country, soon spent their estates, and then were forced either to return back for *England*, or to live very meanly.

3. Because the Country was a place of so great liberty to children, that they could not educate their children, as their Parents had educated them: nor could they give them due correction, without reproof and reproach from their Neighbours.

4. Because their posterity would in a few generations become Dutch, and so lose their interest in the English Nation, name and language.

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These being debated at first in private, and thought weighty, were afterwards propounded in public, and after Solemn Days of Humiliation both in public and private, it was agreed, that part of the Church should go before their Brethren into *America* to prepare for the rest: And in case the major part of the Church did choose to go over with the first, then the Pastor to go along with them. But if the major part stayed, then he to stay with them: and to follow afterwards, when they should hear out of *America* of their safety and health, and possibility of subsistence: But the Lord translated him to himself, before the rest could prepare to go along to their Brethren. Notwithstanding when the first company Embarked themselves for *America*, their Brethren accompanied them to the Sea, and took their leaves with such abundant expressions of Brotherly Love, as drew the neighbour Dutch to much observation, yea and some Admiration of them, at *Delph-Shoven* in *Holland*. Their departure therefore was not in a way of division among themselves, but with mutual consent, and common intendment of peaceable cohabitation.¹³

Neither did that company which came over to *Plymouth*, erect here a New Church (as the Dissuader taketh it,) for by consent of the Church which they left, they came over in Church-estate, and only renewed their Covenant when they came hither.

Neither did the Church of *Plymouth* (as the Dissuader reporteth them) incontinently leaven all the vicinity.

For (as themselves say) at the first coming there was no vicinity of Christian habitation. They came over in the year 1620. Mr *Endicot*, (the Captain with his Company) came not over till the year 1628, and sat down at *Salem*, 8 years after *Plymouth*. The year following, Mr *Skelton*, and Mr *Higginson* came over, and sitting down with Mr *Endicott* at *Salem*, entered into a Church there. How far they of *Salem* took up any practice from them at *Plymouth*, I do not know: sure I am, Mr *Skelton* (their Pastor) was studious of that way, before he left *Holland* in *Lincolnshire*.

Nor was there any other Church planted after *Salem* till Mr *Winthrop*, and some other godly gentlemen, and many good Christians came over together with Mr *Wilson*, and Mr *Philips*, (Ministers of the Word:) whereof the one gathered a Church at *Boston*, the other at *Water-Town*, in the year 1630. The next year followed Mr *Eliot*, and the year after Mr *Weld*, who gathered into a Church at *Rocksbury*, as old Mr *Naverick*, and Mr *Warham* had done the same before at *Dorchester*.

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It was in the year 1633 when Mr *Hooker*, Mr *Stone*, with myself arrived in the same Ship together: and being come, we found several Churches gathered, and standing in the same Order, and way, wherein they now walk: at *Salem*, at *Boston*, at *Water-Town*, at *Charles-Town* (which issued out of *Boston*) at *Dorchester* and *Rocksbury*. So that the Dissuader is much mistaken, when he saith, the Congregation of *Plymouth* did incontinently leaven all the vicinity: seeing for many years there was no vicinity to be leavened. And *Salem* itself that was gathered into Church-Order seven or eight years after them, was above 40 miles distant from them. And though it be very likely, that some of the first comers might help their Theory by hearing and discerning their practice at *Plymouth*: yet therein the Scripture is fulfilled. The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of Meal, till all was leavened, *Matthew* 13:13.

But yet if the Dissuader knew the spirit of those men who first came over hither, after *Plymouth*, (though before us) he would easily discern, they were not such as would be leavened by vicinity of neighbours, but by the Divinity of the Truth of God shining forth from the Word. The body of the people at that time was not of such a carnal spirit, as so many of them to leave so fair accommodations, and dear relations in our native Country, to come over into a wilderness, to take up a Form of Government, upon any such ground as the Dissuader conceiteth, because it holdeth out so much liberty, and honour to the people.

This were indeed not to seek out for Liberty of Conscience, but Elbow-roomth of lust; and not to attend the honour, but the humor of the people. To pass such a judgment upon strangers, had need to arise from Divine Revelation, or else it will fall under the note of human temerity.

But (saith the Dissuader) howsoever it was in a few years, the most who settled their habitations in the Land, did agree to model themselves after *Robinson's* pattern.

Answer: I do not know, that they agreed upon it by any common consultation: But it is true, they did as they had agreed (by the same Spirit of Truth and unity) set up (by the help of Christ) the same model of Churches, one like to another. But whether it was after Mr *Robinson's* pattern, is spoken *gratis*: for I believe most of them knew not what it was, if any at all. And if any did know it, the men were such as were wont to attend to the patterns of men in matters of Religion, (for against that

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many of them had suffered in our native Country) but to the pattern of the Scriptures.

SECTION IV

Of Cotton's pretended former dislike of the New English way, and after closing with it

In pursuing this pedigree and descent of New English Discipline, the Dissuader is pleased to present me to the world, to be the first who appeared in displeasure against it, though afterwards to have fallen into a liking of it.

But how doth he make it appear, that I did appear in displeasure against it? His proof is from a private Letter of mine to Mr *Skelton*, where I call it an error, (whether in Mr *Skelton*, or some of his people) to conceive, that our Congregations in *England* are none of them particular Reformed Churches. Surely, if that be all the proof, I willingly acknowledge, I did appear against that Error. But neither was I the first that did appear against it, (but divers godly English Ministers before me:) neither have I fallen to the liking of the contrary opinion since.

But the Dissuader is much deceived, if he take that Error to be the judgment of the Churches of *New England*, howsoever some particular persons may lean that way.

Nor will it yield any better proof, of that which he allegeth out of my Preface to Mr *Hildersam's* Sermon upon *John*¹⁴ For that which I there wrote, concerneth the way of the Rigid Separation, which renounceth the Churches of *England* as Antichristian, and the godly members thereof, as no visible Saints. Neither is my judgment altered at all in this Point to this day: which also I have lately maintained in my Reply to Mr *Williams* his Answer of my Letter, and in a Treatise concerning the Baptism of Children.¹⁵ And what I have written in this Point is suitable to the judgement of the Body of the Churches and Elders in *New England*, and not at all repugnant to the way wherein we walk.

But I marvel, what should move the Dissuader to report of me, That though in *England* I fell off from the practice of some Ceremonies, and but of some of them, and was distasted with Episcopal Government: yet so long as I abode in *England*, I minded no more than the Old Nonconformity: For in this one sentence he giveth a double misreport of me.

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First, that in *England* I fell off but from some of the Ceremonies. For (by the grace of Christ) I forbore all the Ceremonies alike at once, many years before I left *England*. The first grounds which prevailed with me to forbear one Ceremony, would not allow me to practice any. The grounds I well remember were two: 1. The significancy and efficacy put upon them in the Preface to the Book of Common-prayer: That they were neither dumb nor dark, but apt to stir up the dull mind of man to the remembrance of his duty to God, by some notable and special signification, whereby he may be edified, or words to the like purpose.

The second was the limitation of Church-power, (even of the highest Apostolical Commission) to the observation of the Commandments of Christ, *Matthew* 28:20, which made it appear to me utterly unlawful, for any Church-power to enjoin the observation of indifferent Ceremonies which Christ had not commanded. And all the Ceremonies were alike destitute of the commandment of Christ, though they had been indifferent otherwise, which indeed others have justly pleaded they were not.

What favour I was offered not only for connivance, but for preferment, if I would have conformed to any one of the Ceremonies, I forbore to mention. Yea, when I was suspended upon special complaint made against me to the King that then was, and all hope of restitution denied to me, without yielding to some conformity, at least in one Ceremony at least once; yet the good hand of the Lord so kept me, that I durst not buy my Ministry so dear: And yet (I thank the Lord) my Ministry was dearer to me (to speak the least) than any preferment.

When the Bishop of Lincoln-Diocese (Dr *Mountaigne*) offered me liberty upon once kneeling at Sacrament with him, the next Lord's Day after: or else to give some reason, why (in conscience I could not) unto Dr *Davenant* (then Bishop-elect of *Salisbury*, who was at that time present with him at *Westminster*) I durst not accept his offer of liberty upon once kneeling; but I gave them this reason for my excuse and defence,

Cultus non institutus, non est acceptus:

Genuflexio in perceptione Eucharistiae est cultus non institutus;

*Ergo, non est acceptus.*¹⁶

The second misreport which the Dissuader maketh of me in his former sentence, is, That howsoever when I was in *England*, I was then distasted with Episcopal Government; yet so long as I abode in *England*, I minded no more then the Old Nonconformity.

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I pass by his unsavory metaphor of my distaste of Episcopal Government. Conscientious judgment in matters of Religion is not led by taste or distaste: will he say, that both the Parliaments of *England* and *Scotland* have abolished Episcopal Government upon a distaste?

But when he saith, I minded no more than the Old Nonconformity whilst I abode in *England*, he must be more privy to my mind than any mortal man is, and then myself too, to make it good. There were some scores of godly persons in *Boston* in *Lincolnshire*, (whereof some are there still, and some here, and some are fallen asleep) who can witness, that we entered into a Covenant with the Lord, and one with another, to follow after the Lord in the purity of his Worship; which though it was defective, yet it was more than the Old Nonconformity. Besides, I had then learned of Mr *Parker*, and Mr *Baynes*, (and soon after of Dr *Ames*) that the Ministers of Christ, and the Keys of the Government of his Church are given to each particular Congregational Church respectively: and therefore neither Ministers nor Congregations subject to the Ecclesiastical jurisdiction of Cathedral Churches, no, nor of Classical Assemblies neither, but by voluntary consociation, and that in some cases; and those falling short of that which is properly called subjection to their Jurisdiction. Which made me then to mind not only a neglect of the censures of Commissary Courts, (which bred not a little offense to them, and disturbance to myself) but also to breathe after greater liberty and purity not only of God's Worship, but of Church estate. But suppose that I had then minded no more than the Old way of Nonconformity: yet the experience of the Godly will easily acknowledge, that the way of the Lord is light and strength to the upright, and giveth more and more understanding and enlargement to them that walk in it.

Nay, the Dissuader's own words might convince him, that I minded more than the Old Nonconformity, whilst I abode in *England*. For if Mr *Cotton*, and those Brethren who went along with me, came over to *New England*, to join ourselves with those *American* Churches, (as he saith) it argueth plainly we did not upon our coming hither, go contrary to our former judgment, and fall into a liking of this way. For then we would never have taken so long and hazardous a voyage to join to Churches, whose way was contrary to our judgements all the while of our abode in *England*. Rational charity would conceive that Christian men, who chose rather to forfeit our Ministry, and maintenance, and all our dear relations in our native Country, than to submit to a course contrary to our judgments,

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would never transport ourselves to *America*, to run a contrary course to our judgments in a land of liberty. But thus in heat of pursuit of an adversary (whether cause or person) men will not stick to suffer their tongues and pens to run over, though for haste one word interfere with another.

SECTION V

Of the pretended danger of the New English way unto the world, after Cotton and others closing with it.

But to proceed, why should the Dissuader conceive, That our coming over into these parts, and joining with these *American* Churches should cause this New way (as he calleth it) to begin to grow dangerous to the rest of the world?

To which world (I pray you) hath this way grown dangerous? to the Christian world? or to the Antichristian world? or to the Pagan world?

The Pagan world of Indians here will acknowledge our sitting down by them, hath prevented the danger either of their dissolution or servitude. For the Indians in these parts being by the hand of God swept away (many multitudes of them) by the Plague, the manner of the Neighbour-Indians is either to destroy the weaker Countries, or to make them Tributary: which danger ready to fall upon their heads in these parts, the coming of the English hither prevented. And of late (through the grace of Christ) one of our fellow-Elders, Mr *Eliot*, Teacher of *Rocksbury*, having gotten the knowledge of the Indian language preacheth to them every week: one week to one Congregation on the fourth day, to the other on the sixth the week following. And to him they willingly give care, and reform their vicious living according to his Doctrine; and some of them offer themselves to be trained up in English Families, and in our Schools: and there be of them that give good hope of coming on to the acknowledgement of the grace of Christ. To them therefore our way is not dangerous.

To the Antichristian world, the more dangerous it is, I doubt not, it is the more acceptable to God, and I hope, it is not the less safe in Mr *Baylie's* eye. Some of the Jesuits at *Lisbon*, and others in the Western Islands have professed to some of our Merchants and Mariners, they look at our Plantations, (and at some of us by name) as dangerous supplanters of the Catholic cause. If that be the greatest danger, I presume Mr *Baylie* will

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not *ad hoc dicto secundum quid*, pronounce us dangerous (*simpliciter*) to the rest of the world.¹⁷

To the Christian world, what danger hath accrued by our means? many that knew both our Magistrates and Elders, and the chief sort of our people, and knew how little we affected to travel into foreign Countries to see fashions: they upon our departure grew more inquisitive into the cause of our voluntary exile; and thereupon, more jealous of corruptions at home in the Worship of God, and in Church-Discipline; more sensible of the burden and danger of Episcopal tyranny, and consequently more ready to follow the good example of the Churches and Commonwealth of *Scotland*, in rejecting and shaking off Episcopal usurpations and intrusions of Liturgies. And hath this been so dangerous to the rest of the world?

Besides, if Books and Letters do not delude us with false intelligence, the great salvation, and glorious Victories which the Lord hath wrought for *England* these late years by any English power, his own right hand hath brought to pass chiefly by such despised instruments as are surnamed Independents. And are then the witnesses of that way so dangerous to the rest of the world?

Wherein then lieth the danger of this way?

It seemeth the Dissuader conceiveth (as some others have done) that this way hath been a double danger to those Churches: 1. In becoming a dangerous inlet to all kind of Sects, who shroud themselves under the name of Independents, and claim impunity under their shadow. 2. In retarding the establishment and free passage of the work of Reformation.

But for the former, if the devil come and sow Tares, yea Briars and Thorns, where Christ hath sown Wheat, is therefore the wheat a dangerous grain? And if thereupon not only tares, but briars and thorns plead for freedom from eradication, must therefore the wheat be plucked up, to root out the rest? Surely the way which is practised in *New England* cannot justly be taxed for too much connivance to all kind of Sects: we here do rather hear ill for too much rigour, which evidently argueth, our way is of itself no inlet at all to all kind of Sects, unless it be merely by accident; as Christianity hath been an inlet to all kinds of heresy; for where there is no Christianity, there is no heresy.

As for the latter, the retarding of the work of Reformation, Surely we find it here the readiest way to a speedy Reformation The common disorders obvious and ordinary in other Plantations, are here either not found, or soon Reformed. The retarding of Reformation in *England*

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springeth rather, partly from such as would have no Reformation at all, but affect elbow-roomth to their own lusts: partly from such as will have no Reformation, but in their own way. But if it might please the Lord to bow the hearts, both of the Presbyterians, and of the Congregational, so far as both of them are come, to walk by the same rule, and mind the same thing, (both of them to mind Reformation according to the rule of the Word, as they conceive it; both of them to redress abuses, the Presbyterians, the abuses found in their Churches, and the Congregational in theirs,) doubtless, it need not to be feared the work of Reformation will speedily find (by the blessing of Christ) a free and mighty passage throughout the three Kingdoms.

SECTION VI

Of Cotton's pretended misleading { *Mr Davenport*
 { *Mr Goodwin*

If it be true which the Dissuader relateth from Mr *Edwards*,^k that before my departure from *England*, I had by conference in London brought off Mr *Davenport*, and Mr *Goodwin*, from some of the *English Ceremonies*.

Why doth he note me in his margin to be a Misleader of Mr *Goodwin* and others? Is it a misleading to lead men away from the English Ceremonies? Were they Misleaders, who led the Honorable Houses of Parliament to fall off from the Ceremonies? Or did the Parliament mislead the people of *England* to the disuse of them?

But Mr *Baylie* knoweth not Mr *Davenport*, nor Mr *Goodwin*, if he think the ablest Divines in Christendom, much less such a poor weak thing as myself could bring them off to forsake their public Ministry, wherein they were notable instruments of good service to God and man, unless they saw the light of the Word and Spirit of Grace to go before them in such ways. Virgin souls are wont to follow the Lamb, wheresoever he goeth, (*Revelation* 14:4.) And the Sons of God are led by the Spirit of God, (*Romans* 8:14). And therefore let Mr *Baylie* be entreated not so much to undervalue his holy Brethren, as to think they were rather misled by me, then led by the Spirit and Word of Grace in their own judgements and consciences. It is true, Mr *Davenport*, Mr *Goodwin*, with some other godly Brethren had some conference with me at *London*, about the cause of my sufferings, and of my purpose to leave the Land; which they said,

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they desired the rather, because they did not look at me as a passionate man, though the Dissuader (who knoweth me not) be pleased so to represent me to the world in this Paragraph. And upon their motion two Points were chiefly debated: 1. Touching the limitation of Church-power, to matters of commandment, not of indifferency, (which I touched before.) The 2. touching the office of Bishops, whether the Scripture Bishops be appointed to rule a Diocese, or a particular Congregation. Now both these being agreed upon amongst us, Mr *Edwards* is much mistaken, and Mr *Baylie* too, when they say, that neither Mr *Davenport*, nor Mr *Goodwin*, nor myself did mind any further then the leaving of some few ceremonies. For grant the former principle, of the limitation of Church-Power to matters of Commandment, and all the Ceremonies must be left off at once. And grant the latter, touching the limitation of Bishops to a particular Congregation; and it will necessarily infer an unavoidable Separation from under the shadow of Diocesan-Episcopal-Government.

Besides, presently after, I received Letters from Mr *Goodwin*, (and as I take it, before I left *England*) signifying, that as in our former conferences, we had debated much of the negative part of the 2. Commandment, so he had since meditated much, and seriously of the affirmative part of it, the positive institutions of God's Divine Worship in opposition to humane inventions. Whereby I plainly discerned, (*England* as the State of it stood then) could not hold him long. It is an usual thing with God, in times of Reformation to enlighten his Servants, though far distant one from another, with the same beams of light of Divine Truth, which the world interpreteth, they have learned one from another: but indeed all from the same Spirit, who distributeth to every one, even as he will. But whether Mr *Davenport*, and Mr *Goodwin* received ought from me, I do not know, sure I am, I have received much from them. The members of the Body of Christ, are wont to minister supply one to another, according to the effectual working of the Spirit of Grace in every part, to the mutual edifying of themselves, and of the whole Body in Love, *Ephesians* 4:16. And why should mutual edification be made a matter of exprobration?

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SECTION VII

Of Cotton's pretended sudden change to the passionate affecting of the New English way, and the conversion of Mr Goodwin to it

It seemeth to me a strange speech of the Dissuader, as far as from Truth. as from ingenuity, "that as soon as I had tasted of the New English air, I fell into a passionate affection with the Religion I found there."

For I knew their Religion before I came into *New-England*, and himself said above, that I came with a purpose to join with their Churches: Which argueth, *I did not fall into an affection to their religion, by tasting of New English Air.* Nor hath his speech any reasonable construction, that with *tasting the new English Air, I soon fell into a passionate affection to their Religion, unless he take me for one of those children, who are tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind (or air) of doctrine, Ephesians 4:14.* Nor do I yet understand why he should account the Religion of *New England* another Religion, then that of *England* and *Scotland* and other Reformed Churches. Difference in some external form of church administrations is not wont in the writings of judicious Divines, to make up the note and name of a different Religion.

Neither can I imagine what should move him to say, that I "fell into a passionate affection with the Religion here." A passionate affection, is a strong, yea a violent, and inordinate affection. Did the Dissuader ever read, or hear me, to express any such violent or inordinate affection to the Religion here professed?

How Mr *Goodwin* cometh to be accounted, and called of the Dissuader, my Convert, I do not know. It is not good to take liberty to use Scripture idioms, but in Scripture sense. The Scripture speaketh not of conversion, but in the sense of Regeneration begun, or renewed: neither doth it style one man, another man's Convert, but reserveth that solely and solidly to the Lord.

But I do marvel why rhe Dissuader should say, "That Mr *Goodwin* with a little ado was brought by my Letters from *New England* to follow in this step of my progress."

For first, I do not remember that ever I wrote Letter to him from *New England* about our way. And my Letter, which Mr *Baylie* quoteth amongst his testimonies (in *G*) was not written to him, but to a brother of mine (by Marriage) in *Boston*. Men that have been bred and brought up under a form of Doctrine, or Worship, or Government, and never saw ground

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to scruple it, they may with little ado receive it, and embrace, and follow it: which, it may be, hath been the case of many thousands in *England*, and usually falleth out in settled Churches. But for Mr *Goodwin* to take up a way not only contrary to that wherein he hath been bred and brought up, but also discrepant from the judgments of so many godly learned Brethren, to the hazard of his Ministry, and to the smothering of himself in a cloud of calumny and obloquy, believe it who will, I cannot easily believe it, that he took up such a way with very little ado. I cannot but believe, it cost him many prayers, and sighs, and groans, much study, meditation, and conference, before he could satisfy himself in such a course; He being especially (as Mr *Baylie* reporteth him) a man of a fine and dainty Spirit, (and therefore loving and tender:) to which sort of men, it is most unwelcome to offend Reverend Brethren by dissenting from them: and with whom it is most usual to suspect their own judgments and ways, when they go alone. *Luther* was not accounted a man of a fine and dainty spirit, but of a more resolute and stern temper; and yet it was no small temptation even to him. “*Nunquid in solus sapiſ? Quoties mihi palpitavit tremulum Cor, et reprehendens objecit fortissimum illud argumentum, Tu solus sapiſ? tóne errant universi?*”¹⁸ etc. *Luther. in Præfat. de Abrogandâ Missa privata, etc.*

Mr *Edwards* his Antapology, I have not had the opportunity to come by, much less to read: and therefore I cannot tell what sense to make of those words which Mr *Baylie* quoteth out of him (in *H:*) and wherein he saith, “Mr *Goodwin* was bold to boast of me in terms beyond the bounds of moderation.” Sure I am, Mr *Goodwin* was not wont to be accounted, either a bold man, or a boaster. I have many years known him and his modesty, and abhorrency both from boldness and boasting: and if Mr *Baylie* take up a report to the contrary from Mr *Edwards* (who is but one witness, and it may be prejudiced) I dare not follow Mr *Baylie* herein, but must allow Mr *Goodwin* the privilege of an Elder, against whom no accusation is to be received under two or three witnesses, 1 *Timothy* 5:19. By what rule therefore Mr *Baylie* receiveth this testimony against Mr *Goodwin*, by one single witness, he may do well to consider. Sure I am, it agreeth not with the Rules either of Congregational or Classical Church government.

But if Mr *Goodwin* himself do acknowledge such a speech, he knoweth best in what sense he spake it. For myself, I can own it only in the same sense wherein *Agur* spake it of himself, *Proverbs* 30:2,3. *Surely I am more*

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brutish than man; I have not the understanding of a man: I have not learned wisdom, nor know the holy.

The next testimony which Mr *Baylie* quoteth out of Mr *Edwards* to the same purpose, speaketh not of Mr *Goodwin*, but of some other whom Mr *Edwards* nameth not. But such Apocrypha testimonies with judicious and equal minds, will never go for authentical evidences. For the matter of the testimony itself, I conceive, the form of Church government wherein we walk doth not differ in substance from that which Mr *Cartwright* pleaded for. For two things chiefly there be wherein such as are for a Congregational way, do seem to differ from Presbyterians: 1. In the matter of their Churches; they would have none allowed but visible Saints. 2. In the exercise of Church censure, they leave that power to the Elders and Brethren of the same Church whereof the delinquent is a member. And in both these we find Mr *Cartwright's* footsteps going plainly before us. For, 1. he taxeth in Bishop *Whitgift*, that speech of his; "The Church is full of Drunkards and Whoremongers, etc." Whereas Mr *Cartwright* would not have scandalous persons born withal in the Church. And for the 2. he speaketh fully, in 1 *Corinthians* 5:4. "Forasmuch (saith he) as the Apostle reproveth the Church of *Corinth*, for that they had not (before his Letters) excommunicated the Incestuous; It is evident that the Ministers, and the rest of the Church there had power and authority thereunto."

The next Testimony which Mr *Baylie* allegeth to prove Mr *Goodwin's* boasting of this new light (as he calleth it) beyond the lines of moderation, is from the words of Mr *Williams* in his examination of a letter of mine.¹⁹ His words be, That some of the most eminent amongst them have affirmed, That even the Apostles' Churches were not so pure as the New English Churches.

But what is this to Mr *Goodwin*? Mr *Williams* speaketh of some of the most eminent in *New England*, where Mr *Goodwin* never came.

Besides, Mr *Williams* doth not ascribe these words to any definite persons in *New England*. And, as I said before, Apocrypha testimonies will never go with equal minds for authentical evidences. It is no new thing for Mr *Williams* to mistake both himself and others, as hath appeared in the Reply both to his examination of that Letter, and to his *Bloody Tenent*. I never heard of any man's speech in *New England* so hyperbolical in the praise of *New English* Churches, nor coming nearer to the words in hand, than the words reported of Mr *Williams* himself: *that of all the Churches in the world, the Churches of New England were the most pure; and of all New*

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English *Churches, Salem* (whereof himself was Teacher) *was the purest*. But such arrogant comparisons are as smoke in God's nostrils, Isaiah 65:5, the first born of vanity, and the first step to apostasy.

SECTION VIII

Of Cotton's pretended rashness in the change of his mind in latter and former times

Mr *Baylie* proceedeth, and telleth us, "It had been happy for England, that Mr *Cotton* had taken longer time for deliberation, before that change of his mind. He might have remembered his too precipitant rashness in former times, both to receive, and to send abroad to the world such Tenents, whereof after he had cause to repent."

I should think myself a most unhappy man, if *England* should be the less happy for my sake. Mr *Baylie* doth either undervalue *England*, or overvalue me; if he think the happiness or unhappiness of *England* doth stand or fall upon any deliberate or precipitate act of mine.

But what think ye, was that rash and precipitate act of mine, which hath impeached the happiness of *England*? It was, saith he, that change of my mind. What change was that? That which I mention in a Letter to some friends in *Boston*, "That if I were with them again, I durst not take that liberty which sometimes I had done: I durst not join in Book-prayers: I durst not now partake in the Sacrament with you: to wit, in respect of those scandalous persons who communicate with you, and will settle upon their Lees with the more security by your fellowship with them".²⁰

I do remember such a Letter I wrote; whether to one or more in *Boston* I remember not: Some say it is printed, but I know not, nor have I seen it: But I take the contents as Mr *Baylie* reporteth them. And concerning them, I durst appeal even to Mr *Baylie* himself, (though a stranger to me, and professing opposition) yet let him speak in good earnest, whether if I had taken longer time of deliberation even to this day, I should not have found just cause to have changed my mind, as I then did? Did I change my mind then to any other judgement or practice, than what the Reverend Assembly of Divines, and the Honorable Houses of Parliament have found (by the grace given to them) to be the Truth, and by Public consent approved, and by Public authority established? And doth he think, that it had been happy for *England*, if the Parliament and Assembly had neither

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of them changed their minds, but still retained Book-service, and admitted scandalous persons to the Lord's Table? How shall a poor Christian do to satisfy his Brethren, that are not satisfied with their own judgment and ways; if he be of the same judgment, or speak the same thing with them? verily, it is not good in God's sight (but even an abomination to him) to keep a weight and a weight, a measure and a measure: to judge the same act in themselves to be weighty, which in others they judge to be light and rash. But the comfort is, the righteous God judgeth righteously, not according to acceptance of persons, but according to Truth; and accepteth the work of his own Spirit of Truth and Grace wheresoever he findeth it.

As for my too precipitant rashness in former times, which he is pleased to remember me of, let him be pleased to forbear his censure a while, till I may give account thereof to Reverend Doctor *Twisse*.²¹ In the meantime let him know, that those Tenents which he saith I sent abroad to the world, whereof I had cause after to repent, I neither sent them abroad to the world, (but wrote them privately for the satisfaction of a neighbor Minister) nor do I yet know, whether I have cause to repent of them or no, it being near thirty years ago since I wrote them, and many years ago since I read them.

But in the meantime, let Mr *Baylie* be pleased to understand, that I came hither in *September* in the year 1633, and that letter of mine which I sent to *Boston*, was dated (as himself quoteth) in *October*, 1635. And surely to write my Opinion of such a case, which I had considered of for the space of two whole years, doth not seem to be a rash and precipitate act: Nor can it be said with truth, "That I did incontinent persuade to the *New English* way, as soon as I had tasted of the *New English* air". Two whole years and more, giveth a man more than a taste of *New English* air; nor is that an act done incontinently, which is done upon two years' deliberation.

SECTION IX

Of Cotton's pretended known failings, and Mr Baylie's pretended just cause to discover them to the world.

Mr *Baylie* proceedeth to discover my evident and known failings, (as he calleth them) and he conceiveth neither piety nor charity will hinder him

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to remark them. And why so? Me thinks it should be some great and weighty cause, that himself, who is wont (as he saith) to speak liberally to the praises of men, who in his thoughts are much inferior to Mr *Cotton*; should now give up himself to speak liberally to the dispraise and disgrace of him, whom yet in his entrance thereinto he seemeth to reckon amongst such as he calleth the dear children of God. Surely there is not the least child of God, but is ordained of God to be a vessel of honour; and to make any such a vessel of dishonour, what is it else but to endeavor to overthrow the eternal counsel of God? Nor is there the least child of God, but is a member of the Body of Christ; and the natural members of the Body are wont to cover the nakedness of such members as are most uncomely.

But Mr *Baylie* is of opinion, as he saith, that when my gifts are turned into snares, and made inducements to others to follow me in my wanderings: then the discovery of my clear weakness may be a retractive to every Prudent man, and a caveat from God, to beware of my ways. Belike then it will follow, that though it be contrary both to the counsel and Commandment of God, and to the Communion of his Mystical Body, to cast reproaches and dishonour upon the least of God's servants: yet for a good end, to keep others from idolizing of them, it may be lawful to ransack all their former lives, and to hang them up in the sight of the Sun, in chains of public infamy, and obloquy. But I confess, I have not so learned Christ, as to allow myself to do evil that good may come of it. Nor do I believe it had been a way of God, when the men of *Lystra* so highly Idolized *Paul* and *Barnabas*, as to account one of them to be *Jupiter*, and the other *Mercurius*, and to present them with Divine Worship, that then some godly brother of *Paul's* company should have stept in amongst them, and said, Sirs, why do you these things? *Paul* hath been a bloody persecutor of the Truths of God, a Blasphemer, a scornful oppressor: and *Barnabas* is a man subject to passion and dissimulation, and both of them mortal men, subject to all kind of sinful corruption. Such zeal for the glory of God, I know not by what rule of piety or charity, it could have been justified. God hath sanctified other means, to wean his servants from idolizing their Brethren. *Cornelius* idolized Peter even with Divine honour, *Acts* 10:25. But did *Peter* therefore, or any of the 6 Brethren that went along with him, think it a just warrant, to proclaim to *Cornel*. Take heed what you do, this man whom you idolize hath been a liar, a perjured person, an horrible curser of himself, and renouncer of the Lord Jesus

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before many witnesses? God forbid. Yea of latter times, when the pregnant strength and glorious lustre of many heroical and excellent gifts of *Luther* had been so idolized, that many and great Nations followed him in some notorious errors of his way: yet *Calvin* thought it no just ground, why *Bullinger* or other Divines should break forth against him, as he had done (*atroci invectiva*, to use *Calvin's* word) against them, but sweetly professeth, *sæpe dicere solitus sum, etiamsi me Diabolum vocaret, me tamen hoc illi honoris habiturum, ut insignem Dei servum agnoscam*,²² *Calvin, Ep. 57, ad Bullingerum*. The want of this spirit is *Fundi Anglicani calamitas*, the unhappiness of *England* at this day. But what if all these heresies or errors, which Mr *Baylie* chargeth upon me, be but so many errors of himself, or of his witnesses? Will he still make it an act of piety, or charity to remark them (as he calleth it) for my evident and known failings, and follies: which are either no failings, nor follies at all, or none of mine?

Let us examine the particulars.

SECTION X

Of Cotton's Prelatical Tenents

1. He instanceth in the Errors of my education, and my long continuance in them: sundry of them: sundry of them (as he saith) I confess stuck by me all the time of my abode in *England*.

And this he proveth from the testimony of mine own Letter (above mentioned) from *New England* to my friends at *Boston, October 5, 1635*. As joining in Book-prayers and fellowship at the Lord's Table with scandalous Communicants. It was but in the next foregoing *Page*, (*page 56* of Mr *Baylie's* Book) wherein he maketh it the unhappiness of *England*, that I changed my mind from those very Tenents, which he now calleth the Errors of my Education, and Prelatical Tenents? But if they be Errors, why doth he tax me for changing from them? And why doth he say, "It had been happy for *England*, if Mr *Cotton* had taken longer time, before he had changed his mind from such Tenents?" Let Mr *Baylie* choose which he will take; either these are no Errors nor Prelatical Tenents; or if they were, it was no Error in me, nor unhappiness to *England* that I changed from them. A considerate and equal mind should not be so far transported *studiopartium*,²³ nor so soon forget itself, as to censure it in one *Page* for an unhappy change from such Tenents, which in the next *Page* he noteth for Erroneous and Prelatical Tenents.

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SECTION XI

Of Cotton's pretended Pelagianism and Arminian Errors

2. My next Error, he calleth, "My more dangerous fall into the gulf of Pelagianism,²⁴ some of the Arminian Errors. I did expect, he would have named what those Pelagian or Arminian Errors had been. But for that, he referreth me to the Antapology, a Book which I do not know that ever I have seen. Sure I am, I have often assayed to get, but cannot yet procure it. The testimony which Mr *Baylie* quoteth out of it, referreth me to the Preface of Dr *Twisse* his Answer. I have read his Preface, wherein I find no particular Tenents of mine expressed as Erroneous. But this testimony he is pleased to give me, (which might somewhat allay the harshness of the scandal of my fall into the gulf of Pelagianism and Arminianism:) "Mr *Cotton* (saith he) as I have heard, is very sound and orthodox in the Point of Election: and cometh to this work with a gracious intent to clear the Doctrine of Predestination, (and that, in the particular of Reprobation) from such harsh consequences as seemeth to be derived from thence."

Dr *Twisse* doth indeed truly express that which (through grace) was my true intent, to clear the Orthodox Doctrine of Predestination from such harsh consequences, as are wonted to be derived from absolute Reprobation. For when I was first called to *Boston* in *Lincolnshire*, so it was, that Mr Doctor *Baron*, son of Dr *Baron*, (the Divinity Reader at *Cambridge*) who in his Lectures there, first broached that which was then called Lutheranism, since Arminianism:) this Dr *Baron*, I say, had leavened many of the chief men of the Town with Arminianism; as being indeed himself learned, acute, plausible in discourse, and fit to insinuate into the hearts of his Neighbours. And though he was a Physician by profession, (and of good skill in that art:) yet he spent the greatest strength of his studies in clearing and promoting the Arminian Tenents. Whence it came to pass, that in all the great Feasts of the Town, the chiefest Discourse at Table did ordinarily fall upon Arminian Points, to the great offense of the Godly Ministers both in *Boston*, and Neighbour-Towns. I coming amongst them a young man, (as having gone to *Cambridge* in the beginning of the 13th year of my age, and tarrying there not above 14 years in all, before I was sent for to *Boston*;) I thought it a part both of modesty and prudence, not to speak much to the Points, at the first, amongst Strangers and Ancients: until afterwards, after hearing of many Discourses in Public meetings, and

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much private conference with the Doctor, I had learned at length where all the great strength of the Doctor lay. And then observing (by the help of Christ) how to avoid such expressions, as gave him any advantage in the expressions of others, I then began publicly to Preach, and in private Meetings to defend the Doctrine of God's eternal Election before all foresight of good or evil in the Creature: and the Redemption (*ex gratia*) only of the Elect: the effectual vocation of a Sinner *per irresistibilem gratiae vim*,²⁵ without all respect of the preparations of Free will: And finally, the impossibility of the fall of a sincere Believer either totally or finally from the estate of grace. Hereupon, when the Doctor had objected many things, and heard my answers to those scruples which he was wont most plausibly to urge; presently after, our public Feasts and neighborly meetings, were silent from all further debates about Predestination, or any of the Points which depend thereon, and all matters of Religion were carried on calmly and peaceably. Insomuch, that when God opened mine eyes to see the sin of conformity, (which was soon after:) my neglect of conformity was at first tolerated without disturbance, and at length embraced in practice by the chief and greatest part of the Town. But so it fell out, that a neighbour Minister dwelling about 16 miles off (and my very loving friend) hearing of some Answers of mine tending to clear the Doctrine of Reprobation against the exceptions of Dr *Baron*, he seemed not to be satisfied therewith, but wrote to me seven or eight Questions about the same; whereto I willingly gave him such Answers as then came to hand, and that soon after the receipt of his Questions, which is now long since, about 30 years ago. Little did I think, that a private Letter of mine written to a very friend, should ever have been divulged abroad. But it seemeth some got Copies of it; and in process of time, one Copy multiplied another, till at length it came to Dr *Twisse* his hand. None of his Writings against *Arminius* or his followers had been then published: but he was then (by the report which went of him) of such high esteem with me, as I wrote him a thankful Letter for the pains I heard he had taken in examining my Answer to Mr *Bell's* Queries: (for that was the neighbor Minister's name who sent them to me;) and desired from him leave to see the copy of his Answer. He lovingly granted it, only with desire after a time to return his *αὐτόγραφον*:²⁶ yet after that having got himself another Copy, he sent me word, he was content I should keep his. Whereupon I took it with me to *New England*; but since my coming hither have found such constant diversion from such Contemplative

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Controversies, to attend Practical, that I have not to this day been able to perpend the Doctor's Answer, which I see is now Printed: I hope, God will give me opportunity ere long (after two or three other Treatises perused) to consider of this his labour of Love. I bless the Lord, who hath taught me to be willing to be taught of a far meaner Disciple than such a Doctor, whose Scholastical acuteness, pregnancy of wit, solidity of judgment, and dexterity of argument, all Orthodox Divines do highly honour, and whom all Arminians and Jesuits do fall down before with silence. God forbid I should shut mine eyes against any light brought to me by him. Only I desire I may not be condemned as a Pelagian or Arminian, before I be heard, or be found more slow in retracting an Error, than in discerning it.

SECTION XII

Of Cotton's pretended Montanism

3. The next error which Mr *Baylie* is pleased to threar upon me is my old Montanism,²⁷ which he saith, he hath heard from some gracious Ministers; and wherein some think I remain to this day.

Who those gracious Ministers are from whom he heard this, he doth not mention; nor what this old Montanism of mine should be, he doth not express. But thus I must stand guilty in Mr *Baylie's* judgement, and by his relation, in the judgement of all men that give credit to his testimony, of an horrible Heresy, but I must not know what; and by the accusation of gracious Ministers, but I must not know whom.

Augustine recordeth (in his Catalogue of Heresies) *Chapter 26*, the heresies of *Montanus* to be: 1. That *Montanus* and his two harlot-Prophetesses, *Prisca* and *Maximilla*, had received the Holy Ghost not in part, as the Apostles, but without measure. 2. Second marriages they condemn as whoredom. 3. The bread in the Lord's Supper, they mingle with the blood of a yearling Infant.

Danaeus in his Comment upon that Book of *Augustine*, addeth other Heresies, out of other Authors: as for a 4. That *Montanus* himself was the Comforter promised to the Apostles. 5. That incestuous copulations were not to be disallowed. 6. That Enthusiasms and Revelations were rather to be followed than the Word of God. 7. That they confounded the Persons in Trinity, as did the Sabellians and Patropassiani.

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Now amongst all these Montanistic Tenents, I would entreat Mr *Baylie* to tell me (in faithfulness) which of them it is he chargeth upon me, and which he calleth, my old Montanism, wherein some think I do remain to this day.

Or if he say, (as he doth) that he hath heard of my old Montanism, by some gracious Ministers, let him be pleased to entreat them to declare to me those Points of Montanism, which they know by me, or suspect in me. Otherwise I shall conceive, though they may be gracious Ministers that so told him, yet it was no part of their graciousness so to speak; a speech that neither savoured of Truth, nor love, nor wisdom, nor faithfulness.

But in perusing the sequel of this Discourse, I find a passage, which maketh me suspect, what Tenent of Montanism it is which he aimeth at, in *Page 61*, speaking of the vileness of the errors of the members of our Churches; "They did (saith he) avow openly, The personal inhabitation of the Spirit in all the godly; his immediate Revelations without the Word; and these as infallible as the Scripture itself. And this (saith he) is the vilest Montanism."

These two latter Tenents, immediate Revelations without the Word, and them as infallible as the Scripture itself, I willingly confess they are vile Montanism; though I would not say (as he doth) the vilest. For the vilest is, to hold *Montanus* himself to be the Holy Ghost, or to have received the Holy Ghost in a more full measure than the Apostles themselves.

But for the first of these Tenents, touching the Personal Inhabitation of the Holy Ghost in the godly, it may further be considered before it be condemned. Personal Inhabitation may be taken in a double sense: For, 1. It may hold forth no more but this, the indwelling not only of the Gifts of the Holy Ghost, but of his Person also in the Regenerate. Or 2. it may hold forth, further, the indwelling of the Person of the Holy Ghost in the Regenerate, so far forth as to make us one Person with himself, or to communicate with us some Personal propriety of his own.

In this latter sense, Mr *Baylie* may well be allowed to call it, vile Montanism: for the Errors are vile, and also wrapped up in *Montanus* his Tenents: But for the former, the indwelling not only of the Gifts, but of the Person also of the Holy Ghost in the Regenerate, I must profess, I neither believe the Tenent to be vile nor Montanism. Not Montanism, for amongst all the Errors of *Montanus* or his followers, I never read this imputed to them, by such as have been the most diligent Recorders and Refuters of ancient Heresies. Neither *Augustine*, nor *Epiphanius* before

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him, nor *Danaeus* after him, did ever father this Tenent upon the Montanists. Nor is the Tenent vile or erroneous, but an holy Truth of God delivered to us from the Word of Truth. As may appear,

1. From the testimony of the Lord Jesus, *John* 14:16,17,26 with *John* 15:26. The argument standeth thus, *The Comforter which proceedeth from the Father and the Son; even the Spirit of Truth, he dwelleth in the Disciples of Christ Jesus.*

The Comforter which proceedeth from the Father and the Son, even the Spirit of Truth, is the Person of the Holy Ghost himself.

Therefore the Person of the Holy Ghost himself dwelleth in the Disciples of Christ Jesus.

2. From the testimony of the Apostle *Paul*, 2 *Timothy* 1:14. *That Good thing* (saith he) *which is committed to thee, keep, by the Holy Ghost, which dwelleth in us.* That Good thing is fitly understood by our best Interpreters, *Calvin* and *Beza*, to be, not only the sound Doctrine of the Gospel, and his Ministerial Office, but also the excellent gifts of the Spirit of Grace furnishing him for discharge of his Office, and dispensation of the Gospel. Whence the Argument holdeth thus;

The Holy Ghost that keepeth the good gifts of Grace in us, dwelleth in us.

The Holy Ghost that keepeth the good gifts of Grace in us, is not the gifts, but the person of the Holy Ghost distinguished from them:

Therefore it is the Person of the Holy Ghost, and not his gifts only that dwelleth in us.

3. From another testimony of *Paul*, *Romans* 8:11. *If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead, dwell in you: he that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.* Whence the Argument ariseth thus,

The Spirit that dwelleth in us, is the Spirit that raised Christ from the dead, and shall also quicken our mortal bodies;

But it is not the Gifts and Graces of the Spirit, but the Person of the Spirit himself that raised up Christ from the dead, and shall quicken our mortal bodies:

Therefore it is the Person of the Spirit that dwelleth in us.

It was not the Gifts and Graces of the Spirit of Christ himself, much less our Gifts and Graces that did raise up Christ from the dead. Not the Gifts and Graces of Christ himself; for they were but created. And it was an act far above all created power, to raise up Christ from the dead. Much

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less were they our Gifts and Graces that raised him up; for ours are not only created, but imperfect, and which is more, they were not then in Being, when God raised up Christ from the dead.

To these three Divine Testimonies (which are the ground of my faith in this point) let me add one humane Testimony of a learned Divine, who was never tainted, nor taxed with Montanism, I mean *Zanchius, de Tribus Elohim Parte altera, lib. 4, cap. 1*. His testimony cometh in thus: “*Præter alia argumenta, quibus confirmavimus Spiritum Sanctum verum esse Deum, illud etiam non fuit minimum, quod inde deduximus, quia Fideles vocantur Templum Spiritus Sancti,*” 1 Corinthians 6:19 and 3:16.

Against this argument from the proof of the Godhead of the Holy Ghost, Ochinus gave this answer amongst others: “*Dona Dei nobis concessa, hoc eodem nomine notari; sed non tertium suppositum, hoc est personam, a Patre et Filio distinctam, etc.*”

To this *Zanchius* replieth: “*Non potest Spiritus Ochinianus nisi impudenter inficiari, quin Spiritus Sanctus, hoc est, tertia hæc persona (quæ etiam Spiritus Dei, et virtus Dei appellatur) habitet in Sanctis hominibus, et quin illi sint hujus Templum, quoniam in iis habitat, judicio, et voluntate præditus est, et loquitur; Spiritus Patris vestri (inquit Christus) loquitur in vobis, Matthew 10:20. Spiritus autem Sanctus appellatur ipse Spiritus Dei, et Spiritus Christi. Spiritus igitur Sanctus, hoc est tertia Persona, habitat in Sanctis. Quod vero ait Spiritus Ochinianus, Non posse tertiam Personam habitare in Sanctis, quin ibi etiam habitent reliquæ, dictum est bene. Nam etiam Christus dixit, Ego et Pater ad eum veniemus, et mansionem apud eum faciemus, John 14:23. Hoc vero ideo fit, quoniam omnes sunt una et eadem essentia, etc.*”²⁸

SECTION XIII

Of Cotton's pretended Antinomianism and Familism

The Dissuader proceedeth to point at (as he calleth it) another more dangerous fall of mine, which in his Margent, he nameth Mr *Cotton's* Antinomianism, and Familism:²⁹ and within a few lines, his wandering into the horrible Errors of the Antinomians, and Familists, with his dear friend Mrs *Hutchinson*, so far that he came to a resolution to side with her, and to Separate from all the Churches in *New England*, as legal Synagogues.

If all this charge were true (as indeed, in all parts of it, it is false:) yet the errors of Antinomianism, and Familism, then stirring in the Country,

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and condemned in the Synod at *New-Town*, were not more dangerous, than the old Montanism. I confess, the Familism afterwards broached by Mr *Gorton*, and his followers, the same which *Calvin* in his *Opuscula* refuteth (in his *Instructio adversus Libertinos*) as *Calvin* judgeth it more dangerous than Popery, so I conceive it to be as dangerous as Montanism, though I cannot say more dangerous: for both of them overthrow all principles and foundations of Christian Religion. But for the making good of this charge upon me, let Mr *Baylie* be pleased to instance in those horrible errors either of Antinomianism or Familism, whereunto I either wandered or fell: Or let him make it appear “that I came to such a Resolution, to side with my dear friend Mrs *Hutchinson*, and to separate from all the Churches in *New England* as legal Synagogues”.

Let us examine his proofs and Testimonies.

“1. The first is from the parties themselves, the followers of Mrs *Hutchinson*, who (saith he) boast of Mr *Cotton* for their Master and Patron.

And it is true, they professed so: just as *Wightman* who was burnt at *Litchfield* for Montanism, (avouching himself to be the Holy Ghost) professed he had received all his grounds from Mr *Hildersam*. And I confess myself, being naturally (I thank God) not suspicious, hearing no more of their Tenents from them, than what seemed to me Orthodoxal, I believed they had been far off from such gross errors, as were bruited of them. But when some of my fellow Brethren (the Elders of Neighbour Churches) advertised me of the evil report that went abroad of their corrupt Tenents, I desired to know what the Tenents were, which were corrupt, and which they had vented here and there, in my name. They mentioned some to me, some of those which are published in the short story of that Subject:³⁰ and named also to me the persons, who had uttered the same. I therefore dealt with Mrs *Hutchinson* and others of them, declaring to them the erroneusness of those Tenents, and the injury done to myself in fathering them upon me. Both she, and they utterly denied, that they held such Tenents, or that they had fathered them upon me. I returned their Answer to the Elders, who had spoken to me of them: and I inquired, if any two of them, or their Neighbours could bear witness in this case. They answered me they had but one witness of any corrupt Tenent: and that one, loath to be known to be an accuser of them. I replied, what course would you then advise me to take? They answered, that I could not indeed bring the matter to the Church for want of witnesses: But the best way would be, publicly and privately to bear witness against such errors. I took their

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counsel, and bare witness against the errors complained of, as well publicly as privately Which when some Elders and Brethren heard, meeting soon after with some of these Opinionists: “Lo, say they, now we have heard your Teacher bearing witness openly against those very points, which you falsely father on him. No matter (say the other) what you hear him say in public: we know what he saith to us in private”. This answer bred in some of my Brethren and friends, a jealousy, that myself was a secret fomentor of this spirit of Familism, if not leavened myself that way. Whereupon sundry Elders and Brethren perceiving these Errors to spread, secretly and closely, they consulted among themselves, and with me what I thought of a Synod, whether it might be of use in such a case for the clearing of these Points, and the allaying of the jealousies and differences in the Country? I answered, yea. Thereupon, with consent of the Magistrates, a time, and place was appointed for a Synodical meeting, and sundry Elders were sent for, from other jurisdictions, and messengers from all the Churches in the Country to assist in this work.

Against which time three things principally were attended for preparation.

1. A Solemn Fast kept in all the Churches: in which it fell out, that Mr *Wheelwright's* Sermon was apprehended to give too much encouragement to the Opinionists.³¹ And himself hath since confessed, that being but new come into the Country, having but little acquaintance but with his kindred, and their friends, (who were many of them leavened this way) he spake some things, which if he had before discerned their Familism, he would not have expressed himself as he did.

The 2. thing attended to, for preparation to the Synod, was, the gathering up of all the corrupt and offensive Opinions that were scattered up and down the Country, and to commend them to Public Disquisition in the Synod: that howsoever, the Authors of them were loath to own them publicly, yet at least, they might see them publicly tried, confuted, and condemned. The which was accordingly done in the Synod: and the Opinions with their Confutations are since printed in the short story, whence Mr *Baylie* fetcheth many Testimonies.

The 3. thing thought needful for preparation to the Synod, was, to gather out of my Sermons to the people, and my conferences (in word and writing) with the Elders, all such opinions of mine as were conceived by some, to be erroneous: and having gathered them together, to inquire in a brotherly conference with me, how far I would own them, or how I did understand them, that so the true state of the questions in difference

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might appear; and withal, if there were any aguish distemper, or disaffection grown in any of our spirits amongst ourselves, it might be healed in a private brotherly way, and mutual satisfaction given and taken on all hands. Accordingly we had such a meeting in private; wherein five questions were propounded unto me, with desire of my plain and explicit answer to the same: which also upon their demand, I gave suddenly.

QUESTION I

“Whether our Union with Christ be complete before and without Faith?”

Where I gave this answer, which was taken in writing: “Not without, nor before the habit (or gift) of Faith, but before the act of Faith; that is, not before Christ hath wrought Faith in us (for uniting himself to us, he worketh Faith in us:) yet in order of nature, before our faith doth put forth itself to lay hold on him.”

For indeed I looked at Union with Christ, as equipollent to Regeneration. And look as in Generation we are in a passive way united to *Adam*: so in Regeneration we are united to Christ. And as the soul *habet se mere passive*³² (in the judgment of our best Divines) in Regeneration, so also in union, and by the judgment of Christ himself, who saith, without Christ abiding in us (and so united to us) we can do nothing, not bring forth any spiritual fruit at all: much less can we before union with Christ, unite ourselves to Christ, which is the greatest and most solemn spiritual fruit of all. I was not ignorant, that some of the Schoolmen (even some Dominicans) and out of them *Ferius*, and some others (even of judicious Protestants) are of opinion, that Christ doth give the Soul by the Almighty power of the *auxilium efficax* of his Spirit, to put forth an act of Faith, to lay hold on Christ, before he give them a habit or gift of Faith. But I could not understand how this could stand with Christ’s Word, *That without Christ abiding in us, we can do nothing*. Which argueth, no spiritual act can be done by us without Christ habitually permanent in us. And as acute and judicious *Baynes* saith, (in Ephesians 1) This were to give a man to see, without an eye to see withal: which though God can do by his Almighty power, yet as the Philosopher said of *Entia*: so it may be much more said of *Miracula* (which are extraordinary *Entia*) *Miracula sine necessitate non sunt multiplicanda*.³³

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QUESTION II

Whether Faith be an instrumental cause in applying Christ's righteousness to our Justification.

Whereto I answered,

"Faith is an instrument to receive the righteousness of Christ applied to us of God, for our Justification: but not properly an instrumental cause."

Where I understood Instrument, as the Hebrews do **יֶלֶק** which they indifferently put for Instrument, or Vessel: For Faith emptying the soul of all confidence in its own righteousness, is a fit vessel or instrument to receive the righteousness of Christ offered and imputed; and so I took Faith rather as a fit disposition of the subject to be justified, then as a proper instrumental cause of our justification: like the empty vessels of the Prophet's widow, which whilst they were empty, the oil ran forth into them (the empty vessels being fit to receive it:) but yet the empty vessels were not properly instrumental causes of the running forth of the Oil, but only instruments to receive it.

QUESTION III

Whether the Spirit of God in evidencing our Justification doth bear witness in an absolute promise of free Grace, without Qualification, or condition.

My answer was,

"The Spirit in evidencing our Justification doth bear witness either in an absolute promise, or in a conditional: in case, the condition be understood, or applied absolutely, not attending the condition as the ground or cause of the assurance, but as the effect and consequence of it: or (as I might have added, as before) as a fit disposition of the subject to receive it."

For I conceived, though the Spirit may evidence to us our Justification in a Qualification or condition: yet sometime the condition is not there before the promise, but freely given with the promise, as *Acts 10:43,44*, where though *Cornelius* and his household were believers, yet many of his kindred and friends were not: who yet upon hearing the promise of Remission (or Justification) unto Faith, they received both Faith and Justification, and the evidence of both, all together: as did also the Jailor in the like sort, *Acts 16:31*. Sometime, though the Qualification or condition be there before, and the Spirit do bear witness to our Justification in that condition: yet the condition is not the cause either of justification, or of the evidence of it, as in *Luke 7:47*. Christ beareth evident witness of the Remission or Justification of *Mary Magdalen*, in her love to him. Nevertheless her love was not the cause, neither of her Justification, nor of the assurance

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of it, but an affect of both. For she expressed those evidences of her love to Christ, because her sins were forgiven her, and because herself was assured of the forgiveness of them.

Sometimes the Qualification or condition mentioned in the promise, though it be in the soul before, yet it is not evident there before. And then the evidence of Justification springeth not from the condition, but from the Grace of the promise, clearing and evidencing both the condition and the Justification. Thus Christ applieth himself by his Spirit, to bruised Reeds, or broken hearts, *Isaiah 57:15*.

Lastly, if Faith itself be meant to be the saving qualification or condition, and be also found, and that evidently in the soul to whom the Promise of Justification is made; yet the Spirit may bear witness in the Promise of Grace to the Justification of such a soul, without either the word expressing the Condition in that place, or the soul attending the Condition at that time: As when Christ said to the Woman, *Luke 7:48*. *Thy sins are forgiven thee*, He neither mentioned her Faith in that word, nor doth it appear, that she did reflect upon her Faith in receiving that Promise at that time. Many an Israelite stung by the fiery Serpents in the wilderness, might look up to the brazen Serpent for healing, and yet at that time not look to their eye, nor think upon their eye by which they looked. And though afterwards Christ do make express mention of the woman's Faith, to which he attributeth her salvation, (*Woman*, saith he, *thy Faith hath saved thee*, verse 50.) Nevertheless, that Faith, though it be an Evidence of Assurance in the subject Person of his Justification: yet it is also an Effect or Consequence of the Evidence and Assurance of the Object, that is, of the grace and mercy of God clearly revealed and applied to the soul in the Promise, even to the begetting of Faith itself, and the Assurance of it. As when Christ did promise (by the Ministry of *Paul*) salvation to the Jailor in Believing; the Grace of Christ clearly revealed and applied in the Promise did beget Faith in the Jailor, and the Assurance of Faith. And so his Faith, and the Assurance of it was an Effect and Consequence of the Grace and Assurance of it offered to him in the Promise. Faith though it be an Evidence of things not seen (with bodily eye;) yet it is an effect of a former Evidence, even of the light of God's Countenance shining forth through Christ in the Promise of Grace upon the soul, to the begetting of Faith, and the assurance of it.

But howsoever, Faith being always of a self humbling efficacy, it is a fit disposition of the subject to receive comfort and assurance, *Isaiah 57:15*.

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Calvin defineth Faith to be *Divinæ ergo nos benevolentia firmam certamque cognitionem, quæ gratuita in Christo Promissionis veritate fundata, per Spiritum Sanctum et revelatur mentibus nostris et cordibus obsignatur*,³⁴ Institut 1.3.c.2, Section 7. Now when he cometh to expound what he meaneth by the free promise of grace in Christ, upon which this knowledge (or assurance) of Faith is founded, he maketh it to be, not conditional. And he giveth this reason, “*Quoniam (saith he) Conditionalis Promissio quâ ad opera nostra remittimur, non aliter vitam promittit, quàm si perspiciamus esse in nobis sitam. Ergo, nisi Fidem tremere, ac vacillare volumus, illam Salutis Promissione fulciamus oportet, quæ à Domino ultrò ac liberaliter, potiusque miseriæ nostræ quàm dignitatis respectu offeratur*,”³⁵ *ibidem* Section 29.

But what was the occasion of this Question from any speech or writing of mine, I cannot call to mind, unless it were concerning the First evidence of justification, which is the purport of the next Question. For otherwise, if Faith and Assurance be first founded and bottomed upon a Promise of Free grace, I never doubted, but that Sanctification or Faith, (any saving qualification) may be, (and is by the help of the Spirit) a clear and certain Evidence of Justification. So that put the Question *in teminis*,

“Whether the Spirit of God in Evidencing our Justification doth bear witness in an absolute Promise of Free Grace, without qualification or condition?”

I should answer plainly and roundly, The Spirit doth Evidence our Justification both ways, sometime in an absolute Promise, sometime in a conditional.

QUESTION IV

Whether some Saving Qualification may be a first Evidence of Justification?

Hereto I answered,

“A man may have an argument from thence, (yea, I doubt not a firm and strong argument) but not a first Evidence.”

For I conceived, Faith itself, which is an evidence of things not seen, and the first saving Qualification that doth Evidence Justification, is itself founded upon a former evidence, even the Free grace of God in Christ, revealed in the promise of Grace, and applied to the soul effectually by the Spirit of grace both in our effectual Calling (even to the begetting of Faith) and in our Justification. Accordingly, the Apostle reckoning the Evidences that bear witness of our life in Christ, giveth the first place to the Spirit, before any fruit of the Spirit; There are three (saith he) that bear witness on earth, the Spirit, the Water, and the Blood, 1 *John* 5:8.

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First, the Spirit, to wit, of illumination and drawing, whereby he revealeth Christ to us, and worketh Faith in us, 2 *Corinthians* 4:6; *Ephesians* 1:17,18; *John* 6:44,45. Secondly, the water of Sanctification. And thirdly, the Blood of atonement (or pacification) pacifying the conscience.

Calvin also is of the same judgment in this Question, in 2 *Peter* 1:10 and in 1 *John* 3:14 and 19.

And *Zanchi* likewise doth at large dispute this Question, and conclude it against Dr *Marbachius* in his *Miscellanies*, in that part of it entitled, *Disceptatio inter Duos Theologos*, from page 598 to page 605. Editionis in quarto.

QUESTION V

Whether Christ and his benefits be dispensed in a Covenant of Works?

Whereunto my answer was,

“Christ is dispensed to the Elect in a Covenant of Grace: to others he may be dispensed in some sort, (to wit, in a taste of him) either in a Covenant of works, or in a Covenant of grace legally applied.”

To give an hint of the reason of mine answer. The Covenant on Mount *Sinai*, (wherein Christ was dispensed in sacrifices and ceremonies) though to the faithful seed of *Abraham* it was a Covenant of Grace, (wherein they saw Christ and his benefits graciously dispensed to them, *Psalms* 51:7) yet to the carnal seed, it seemed to me to be a Covenant of Works, to prepare them for the saving benefits of that Covenant of Grace which was formerly given to *Abraham* and his seed, (but neglected by them in *Egypt*) and afterwards renewed in the plains of *Moab*, *Deuteronomy* chapter 29 and Chapter 30. And so *Paul* maketh that Covenant on Mount *Sinai*, to be expressly a different Covenant from that of grace, to wit, a Covenant gendering unto bondage, *Galatians* 4:24,25, and the other Covenant, (*Deuteronomy* 30) to be of Grace, *Romans* 10:6,7,8. *Moses* also himself, having recited the Covenant on Mount *Sinai* (*Deuteronomy* 5) he maketh the observation of all the Commandments to be the righteousness of the people, *Deuteronomy* 6:25. and their life, *Leviticus* 18:4. And so *Paul* understandeth him, *Romans* 10:5; *Galatians* 3:12. Now that Covenant which gendereth unto bondage, and holdeth forth righteousness and life upon obedience to all the Commandments, is a Covenant of Works.

And so have the chiefest Germane Divines, as well as *Piscator*, and *Polanus*, taken the Covenant on Mount *Sinai* to be a covenant of Works. See *Piscator*, *Ezekiel* 16. *Observat. ultima in vers.* 60,62, et *Polanus ibidem*.

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How far there arose any consent or dissent about these questions, between my Fellow Brethren (the Elders of these churches) and myself, it is not material now to particularize; it is enough, that upon our clear understanding of one another's minds and judgments, and upon the due proceeding of our Church against convinced notorious errors and scandals, we have ever since (by the Grace of Christ) much amiable and comfortable Communion together in all brotherly kindness. But this short relation may suffice.

To let Mr *Baylie* know, and all them that shall read his Book, to consider, what slender "ground he had to speak of my wandering into the horrible Errors of the Antinomians, and Familists, and siding therein with Mistress *Hutchinson*, and therein to tell the world of a more dangerous fall of mine, than that of Montanism: And withal to clear up to him, what little ground Mistress *Hutchinson* had, to pretend, that she was of Mr *Cotton's* judgement in all things: that so Mr *Baylie* may likewise observe what ground himself had to take up such a report against me, upon her testimony. Which yet will the more fully appear, if I proceed to relate a principal passage or two in the Synod, after it was assembled. It was the first act of the Synod (after Prayer and choice of Moderators) to propound the several offensive opinions, which had been dispersed up and down in the Country, and briefly to argue them, and bear witness against them. The opinions were about fourscore (more or less) which being orderly propounded and argued against, I perceived that some of the Members and Messengers of our Church, were ready to rise up, and plead in defense of sundry corrupt Opinions, which I verily thought had been far from them; especially such as concerned union with Christ before Faith, Justification without Faith, inherent righteousness, and evidencing a good estate by it at all, first or last. Whereupon as soon as I could get liberty of speech with them, "Brethren (said I) if you be of that judgment, which you plead for, all these Bastardly Opinions, which are justly offensive to the Churches, will be fathered upon *Boston*." They answered me again, "Though they were not clear for those Opinions, which they spake for, yet neither were they clear for condemning of them, considering the tenderness of some Consciences: I replied, if they were doubtful of the Erroneousness and danger of such Opinions, they should have dealt openly with the Church at home, when they were chosen Messengers, and should have declared their judgements before the Church: as knowing such points amongst others were likely to come into agitation in the Synod: whereas now look

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what they speak, it is conceived by the whole Country to be the judgement of our Church.”

Hereupon some of the Messengers of our Church withdrew themselves, and appeared no more in the Synod, such as did appear, did much what forbear any prosecution of argument in such causes. But that (to my remembrance) was the first time of my discerning a real and broad difference, between the judgements of our Brethren (who leaned to Mistress *Hutchinson*) and myself. And therefore to clear myself, and the sounder Members of our Church from partaking in those manifold errors there presented, I declared my judgement openly before all the assembly, “That I esteemed some of the Opinions, to be blasphemous: some of them, heretical: many of them, Erroneous: and almost all of them, incommodiously expressed: as intending to except those chiefly, wherein I had declared mine own opinion, as before.”

But because I would deal openly and ingenuously with Mr *Baylie*, and hide nothing from him, that might fortify his accusation against me, there was some colour of my leaning to one Antinomian Tenent in one day of the Synod. For though in answer to the questions of the Elders before the Synod, I had affirmed Faith to be an instrument for the receiving the righteousness of Christ to be our justification: yet for as much as some great Divines had let fall some expressions, that seemed to favour the Antinomian party in a contrary Tenent, I was desirous to hear that Point a little further ventilated, and to see the difficulties a little more fully cleared. Dr *Twisse* (not suspected for an Antinomian, much less for a Familist) in his *vindiciæ gratiæ, de electione, Parte 2, Section 25, Numero 5*, bringeth in *Arminius*, arguing against Mr *Perkins*, thus: “The righteousness of Christ wrought or performed, is not ours, as wrought or performed, but as by Faith imputed to us.” Whereto the Doctor answereth, “Before Faith, this Righteousness of Christ was ours, and in the intention of God the Father, and of Christ our Mediator, was wrought for us. And because it is wrought for us, therefore God in his own time will give it us, and Grace of every kind, even Faith itself amongst the rest. But Faith coming, (which the Holy Ghost kindleth in our hearts) then at length this love of God to us in *Christ*, is acknowledged and perceived. Whence it is, that the Righteousness of Christ is said to be imputed to us, by Faith, because it is not discerned to be imputed to us, but by Faith: and then we are said to be justified with that kind of Justification, and absolution from sin, which breedeth peace in our Consciences.”

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“And this (saith he) I confirm by two arguments. 1. Because by the Righteousness of Christ, we obtain not only Remission of sins, but Faith itself, and Repentance, as it is written, God hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in Christ, *Ephesians* 1:3. Therefore even before Faith and Repentance, the Righteousness of Christ is applied to us, as for which we obtain Grace effectual to believe in Christ, and to repent. 2. Because Justification and absolution, as they signify an imminent act in God, are *ab eterno, etc.*”

Whereto he subjoineth the Poet’s ingenuous verse to the reader.

“*Si quid novisti rectius istis,*

Candidus imperti; si non, bis utere mecum.”³⁶

Before Dr *Twisse*, *Chamier* (a Divine, as free as the other from suspicion of Antinomianism) denieth Faith to be a cause of Justification; “For if it were (saith he) Justification should not be of Grace, but of us. But Faith is said to justify, not because it effecteth Justification, but because it is effected in the justified person, and requisite to be found in him, *De Fide libr. 13, cap. 6*. And to the same purpose, *De Justificatione, libr. 22, cap. 12*, he contendeth, “that Faith as it doth not merit, nor bring Justification, so neither doth it (*impetrare*) obtain it. For if it were so, then *tum ratione, tum tempore Fides præcederet Justificationem*, Faith should go before Justification, both in nature and time: Which (saith he) in no sort may be granted. For Faith is itself a part of Sanctification; but there is no Sanctification, but after Justification, *quæ et re, et naturâ prior est*, which both in the thing itself, and in nature is before it.

To the like purpose doth Mr *Pemble* deliver his judgements in his Book of the Nature and Properties of Grace and Faith, *Page 24, 26*, of his Edition in Folio.

The Discrepance of all these Divines from the received expressions of the most, gave just occasion, why in such an Assembly, the judgement of sundry acute and judicious Elders, might be enquired. Accordingly, in one day of their dispute in the Synod (with Mr *Wheelwright*, if I forget not) I interposed such a word as this, God may be said to justify me before the habit, or act of Faith, and the habit is the effect of my Justification, intending the same sense, as hath been expressed out of those Divines: upon which, the next day was taken up in disputing and arguing that Point with me. And when I saw their apprehensions, that they were suitable to Scripture phrase, and the contrary difficulties might be removed *sano sensu*, I the next morning did of myself freely declare to them publicly,

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my consent with them in the point, which (as they professed) they gladly accepted.

Now upon all this relation (which is the substance of the whole Truth in this cause) I desire Mr *Baylie* might consider what ground he had, “either to report me to the World as sometimes dangerously fallen into the horrible Errors of Antinomianism, and Familism: or to take Mrs *Hutchinson’s* report in this cause, That she was of Mr *Cotton’s* judgement in all things”. Let him please to read the short story of the Errors and heresies, for which she was admonished publicly in *Boston* Church, and compare them with the Tenents of mine now mentioned, and let him judge of himself, whether she was of Mr *Cotton’s* judgement in all things.

I would not have enlarged myself so much, either to clear her testimony, or to elevate it, were it not to take off some scruples and surmises in Mr *Baylie* of some dangerous guilt in me of Antinomian, and Familistical errors, which he thinks cannot be avoided by what he collecteth from other testimonies, as well as hers which may fully be prevented and avoided by this relation of the true state of things.

But before I leave speech of her, let me speak a word to Mr *Baylie* of the Epithet he is pleased to give her, “when he styleth her, my dear friend, with whom I resolved to side and separate from all the Churches in *New England*, as Legal Churches”.

At her first coming she was well respected and esteemed of me, not only because herself and family were well beloved in *England* at *Allford* in *Lincolnshire* (not far beyond *Boston*;) nor only because she with her family came over hither (as was said) for conscience sake: but chiefly for that I heard, she did much good in our Town, in woman’s meeting at Childbirth Travails, wherein she was not only skillful and helpful, but readily fell into good discourse with the women about their spiritual estates: And therein cleared it unto them, That the soul lying under a Spirit of Bondage, might see and sensibly feel the heinous guilt, and deep desert of sin, and thereby not only undergo affliction of Spirit but also receive both restraining, and constraining Grace likewise, (in some measure:) restraining from all known evil (both courses, and companies) (at least for a season) and constraining to all known duties, as secret Prayer, Family Exercises, Conscience of Sabbaths, Reverence of Ministers, Frequenting of Sermons, Diligence in calling, honesty in dealing and the like: yea and that the Soul might find some tastes and flashes of spiritual comfort in this estate, and yet never see or feel the need of Christ, much less attain

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any saving Union, or Communion with him, being no more but Legal work, even what the Law, and the Spirit of bondage (breathing in it) might reach unto. By which means many of the women (and by them their husbands) were convinced, that they had gone on in a Covenant of Works, and were much shaken and humbled thereby, and brought to enquire more seriously after the Lord Jesus Christ, without whom all their Gifts and Graces would prove but common, and their duties but legal, and in the end wizen and vanish. All this was well (as is reported truly, *page 31* of her Story) and suited with the public Ministry, which had gone along in the same way, so as these private conferences did well tend to water the seeds publicly sown. Whereupon all the faithful embraced her conference, and blessed God for her fruitful discourses. And many whose spiritual estates were not so safely laid, yet were hereby helped and awakened to discover their sandy foundations, and to seek for better establishment in Christ: which caused them also to bless the Lord for the good success, which appeared to them by this discovery.

Hitherto therefore she wrought with God, and with the Ministers, the work of the Lord. No marvel therefore if at that time, she found loving and dear, respect both from our Church Elders and Brethren, and so from myself also amongst the rest.

Afterwards, it is true, she turned aside not only to corrupt opinions, but to disesteem generally the Elders of the churches, (though of them she esteemed best of Mr *Shepard*;) and for myself, (in the repetitions of Sermons in her house) what she repeated and confirmed, was accounted sound, what she omitted, was accounted Apocrypha. This change of hers was long hid from me: and much longer the evidence of it, by any two clear witnesses. I sent some Sisters of the Church on purpose to her Repetitions, that I might know the truth: but when she discerned any such present, no speech fell from her, that could be much excepted against. But further discourse about her course is not pertinent to the present business. But by this Mr *Baylie* may discern, how far Mrs *Hutchinson* was dear unto me, and if he speak of her as my dear friend, till she turned aside, I refuse it not.

But yet thus much I must profess to him, That in the times of her best acceptance, she was not so dear unto me, but that (by the help of Christ) I dealt faithfully with her about her spiritual estate. Three things I told her, made her spiritual estate unclear to me. 1. "That her faith was not

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begotten nor (by her relation) scarce at any time strengthened, by public Ministry, but by private Meditations, or Revelations only.

2. That she clearly discerned her Justification (as she professed:) but little or nothing at all, her Sanctification: though (she said) she believed, such a thing there was by plain Scripture.

3. That she was more sharply censorious of other men's spiritual estates and hearts, than the servants of God are wont to be, who are more taken up with judging of themselves before the Lord, than of others.

Now a word of that other passage, in *Mr Baylie's* speech, touching my resolution to side with Mrs *Hutchinson*, and to separate from all the Churches of *New England*, as legal Synagogues. The truth is, I did intended to remove, but not to Separate; much less with Mrs *Hutchinson*, and least of all from all the Churches of *New England*: and yet less than the least of all, to separate from them as legal Synagogues.

The occasion of my intent of removal was this. After the banishment of Mrs *Hutchinson* and sundry others by occasion of her, the general court made an order, that none should be received to abide as Inhabitants in this Jurisdiction, unless they were allowed under the hand of the Governor, or two Assistants. The Assistants are our Magistrates. When this Law came to be put into use, I was informed that some godly passengers who hither arrived out of *England*, were refused to sit down amongst us, because (upon trial) they held forth such an union with Christ by the Spirit giving Faith, as did precede the acting of Faith upon Christ: and such an evidence of that union, by the favour of God shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost, as did precede the seeing (though not the being) of Sanctification.

This took the deeper impression upon me, because I saw by this means, we should receive no more Members into our Church, but such as must profess themselves of a contrary judgement to what I believed to be a Truth. Besides I was informed, that it was the judgement of some of place, in the Country, that such a Doctrine of Union, and evidencing of Union, as was held forth by me, was the *Trojan Horse*, out of which all the erroneous Opinions and differences of the Country did issue forth.

Hereupon, fearing this might in time breed a renewal of Paroxysms, I called to mind the intent of my coming hither, which was, not to disturb, but to edify the Churches here: and therefore began to entertain thoughts rather of peaceable removal than of offensive continuance. At the same time there was brought to me a writing, subscribed with about three-

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score hands to encourage me to removal, and offering their readiness to remove with me into some other part of this Country.

I considered, If we removed, it would be matter of much various construction amongst such as knew us, both in *Old England*, and *New*; and I was loath to do any thing, (especially of importance) but what I might give account of before God, and his people; I took advice therefore of some friends here, especially Mr *Davenport*, and resolved, first to clear the certainty of the grounds of the information given me of the rejections of those godly persons (of whom I had heard) for their judgement's sake in those points. 2. To see if my continuance here would certainly, or probably breed any further offensive agitation: And 3. If both those things were found clearly, then to take opportunity with common consent to remove to *Quinipyack*³⁷ whereto at that time a door was opened.

But when I came to enquire the certainty of these informations, in conference with some of our chief Magistrates and others, I found, though there had speech been about such points between themselves, and some passengers: yet their refusal of such passengers was not upon those points, but (as I remember) upon denials of inherent righteousness in believers, and of any evidence of a good estate from thence, first or last. Withal, they declared to me their minds touching such points of Union, or evidencing of Union, which I had taught, that they did not look at them to be of such Fundamental concernment either to civil or Church Peace, as needed to occasion any distance in heart, (much less in place) amongst godly brethren. Which when I heard from them, and found upon search, the misinformations given me, were but misprisions, I then laid down all thoughts of removal, and sat down satisfied in my abode amongst them, and have so continued (by the help of God) to this day. By all this may appear the truth of what I said, that though I had thoughts of removal, yet not with Mrs *Hutchinson*, she being gone to *Rhode Island*, but I intending *Quinipyack*. Much less had I any thoughts of Separation from all the Churches of *New England*: for the Churches in *Quinipyack* are in *New England*. And those Churches at the *Bay* (amongst whom I lived) It was far from my thoughts to separate from them, whom I ever truly honoured as the holy Spouses of Jesus Christ. Nor did I ever look at such Points, as any just ground of Separation from any Church (so much as in place, much less in Communion:) no nor any just ground of removal from them, unless a man were compelled to profess contrary to his judgement. And least of all durst I turn my back upon such Churches as Legal Synagogues,

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who do all of us hold Union with Christ, and evidencing of Union by the same Spirit, and the same Faith and the same holiness: though some may conceive the Union wrought in giving the habit, and others rather refer it to the act: and some may give the second place to that, whereto others give the first.

It was therefore too much credulity in Mr *Baylie*, either to take up the former testimony from Mrs *Hutchinson*, or this latter from Mr *Williams*: though if both of them had joined in one and the same Testimony, (which they do not) yet the Testimony of two excommunicate Persons doth not make up *idoneum Testimonium*³⁸ in Ecclesiastical causes.

“No? Saith Mr *Baylie*, if I mistake not the humour of the man, (Mr *Williams* he meaneth) he is very unwilling to report a lie of his greatest enemy.”

I look not at myself, as his greatest, or least, or any enemy at all. I do not know, that I did ever walk towards him either in the affection, or action of an enemy, notwithstanding the provoking injuries, and indignities he hath put upon me.

Nor would I call it any man’s humour (as Mr *Baylie* calleth it, Mr *Williams* his humour) “to be very unwilling to report a lie of his greatest enemy.”

But this I say, Mr *Williams* is too too credulous of surmises and reports brought to him, and too too confident in divulging of them. Which if Mr *Baylie* know not, he may (at his leisure, if he think it worth the while) peruse the Reply, I have made to his answer of my Letter, as also my answer to his bloody Tenent.

But Mr *Baylie* giveth the more credit to Mr *Williams* his Testimony, because Mr *Williams* saith in his examination of my Letter, How could I possibly (saith he) be ignorant of their estate, when being from first to last in fellowship with them, an Officer amongst them, had private and public agitation concerning their Estate, with all, or most of their Ministers?

The answer is very easy both to Mr *Williams*, and Mr *Baylie* too, that Mr *Williams* speaketh of the times before his banishment: then indeed he had some fellowship with us, and might have had more, but that he suspected all the *Status conventus*³⁹ of the Elders to be unwarrantable, and such as might in time make way to a Presbyterianial government. But this Testimony, which he giveth about my nearness to Separation from these Churches, was many years after his banishment from us, when he was in no fellowship with us, sacred nor civil, nor came any whit near any private

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or public agitation amongst us, nor could have any intelligence of our affairs, but by report and fame, which is *tam ficti praviq̄ue tenax, quam nuncia veri*,⁴⁰ and is indeed in this point, most false.

“But yet (saith Mr *Baylie*) the truth of this horrible fall (of Mr *Cotton*) if you will not take it, neither from the followers of Mrs *Hutchinson*, nor from the Testimony of Mr *Williams*: yet we may not reject the witness of Mr *Winthrop*, and of Mr *Wells* in their printed relations of the Schisms there.

“Both these, albeit, with all care and study, they endeavor to save Mr *Cotton*’s credit: yet they let the truth of Mr *Cotton*’s Seduction fall from their Pens in so clear terms, as cannot be avoided: yea so clear, as no Art will get Mr *Cotton* cleared.”

Notwithstanding all this confident charge of Mr *Baylie*, there will be no need at all of any Art to clear Mr *Cotton*, from seduction into any such horrible fall, the naked truth (by the help of Christ) will clear both itself, and him. The Testimonies of Mr *Winthrop*, and Mr *Wells*, are all delivered (as it seemeth) in the short Story.

There

In the Preface, *page 7*, It is said, “By this time, they had to patronise them, some of the Magistrates, and some men eminent for Religion, Parts and Wit.”

Answer 1: This were something, if there were no more men eminent for Religion, Parts and Wit, in the Country but myself, who profess no eminency in any of these in respect of many of my Brethren. But if I were eminent, the testimony concludeth not. Let not Art judge, whether the conclusion will follow from both the premises particular: but let common sense judge of such men, as then lived in the Country, whether there were not many eminent persons for Religion, Parts, and Wit, who did patronize them, though I had been out of the Country.

2. I willingly confess, that I myself, though I did not patronize them, yet I did countenance them (in my measure) whilst they held forth (to my knowledge) no more than I have formerly delivered of my own Tenents: which yet I hope he will not again tax, as an horrible fall into Antinomianism and Familism. When their Errors were brought to me, I bare public witness against them, even before I was fully persuaded that those persons were guilty of them.

His next Testimony (which he quoteth from *page 25* of the short Story) the former part of it concerneth Mr *Wheelwright*, and not me: though I

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must confess I do not know how it can be collected from Mr *Wheelwright's* doctrine, unless it were by a forestalled misapprehension and misapplication of those hearers, who were leavened with corrupt Opinions. The latter part of the testimony, "That the former Governor never stirred out, but attended by the Sergeants with Halberts or Carabines, but the present Governor was neglected:" I do not remember, that ceremony was any more than once neglected: and when I heard it, I bore witness against it. And they excused their former observance, by the eminency of the person. But sure I am, the present Governor (as he well deserveth all honour from this People, so) he is seldom or never seen in public, but in like sort attended with Halberts or Carabines.

Next, he allegeth a testimony from the Court, which (it is likely) was delivered by Mr *Winthrop*, being then Governor, *page 35* of the short Story: "They soon profited so well, as in a few months, they outwent their Teacher."

Answer. This testimony is so far from taxing me of any horrible fall, that it clearly acquiteth me from the fellowship thereof. For if they outwent their Teacher, as the Court said (and said truly:) then I went not along with them in their Tenents. And Teacher I was called, and their Teacher, as being called to that Office in that Church, whereof many of them were Members.

The next testimony (from *page 33* of the story) expresseth, "That upon the countenance it took from some eminent Persons, her Opinions began to hold up their heads in Courts of Justice."

Answer. This might indeed argue, that some Magistrates leaned more or less to that way: but it reacheth not me, who am seldom present at any Courts, but when with other Elders I am sent for. And let it not be forgotten, what I related above, that many held with those Opinionists (as they were called) when they knew of no other opinions held forth by them, but what was publicly taught in our Church: but after they were discovered to overgo not so much their Teachers, as the truth, and that so evidently, as could clearly be convinced by the testimony of two or three witnesses, they were soon forsaken by those, who esteemed better of them before.

His next testimony is from the story, *page 32*. "It was a wonder, upon what a sudden, the whole Church of *Boston* (some few excepted) were become her new Converts, and infected with her Opinions."

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And Preface page 7. “Most of the Seducers lived in the Church of *Boston*.”

Answer: That most of the Church of *Boston* consented with Mrs *Hutchinson*, (whilst she openly held forth no more, than what was publicly taught) is true; but nothing to prove Mr *Cotton*'s horrible fall, for after she fell into any horrible, or evident errors, it may clearly appear, the whole Church were not become her converts, by this undeniable evidence, that the whole body of the Church (except her own son) consented with one accord, to the public censure of her, by admonition first, and excommunication after.

But (saith Mr *Baylie*) “None of these erroneous persons were ever called to account by the Presbytery of that Church, till after the Assembly, though the Pastor of the Church, Mr *Wilson* was always exceeding zealous against them.”

Answer 1: Mr *Baylie* is mistaken, when he saith, Mr *Wilson* was always exceeding zealous against them. For the whole Church will bear him witness, he was a long time full of much forbearance towards them, and thought well of them, and bare witness to the ways of free Grace in such manner, as testified his good will to them and the Truth. Afterwards in some private conference, which one or more of them had with him, and (our beloved Sister) his Wife, he discerned some more rottenness in them, and their way, than he suspected before: And after that time indeed, he grew more zealous against them, but the occasion of the offense was private, and (for a good space) unknown both to me and the Church.

2. But why they were not called to account by the Presbytery of the Church, the reason was evident: because their gross errors were not confirmed into us, by two or three witnesses. And this I can truly profess, That when the Elders of other Churches acquainted me with some of their Errors, (even when the noise of them was spread far and near:) yet they acknowledged, the Erroneous persons were so cautious, that they would never vent any gross Errors before two witnesses. And this I can further truly avouch, that myself dealt sadly and seriously with some chief leaders of them, both by word, and writing to recover them from the Error of their way: which though they would argue for, yet they would ever excuse themselves from settling upon any such things. I dealt also with others (whom I began to suspect might be leavened by their Leaders) and earnestly charged them to beware what Tenents they received from them, lest by that means they might be corrupted themselves, and their

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Leaders hardened. But they would not be known to me, that they drunk in any such dregs, as afterwards appeared.

His next testimony is taken from Mrs *Hutchinson's* speech in the open Court, "Preferring my Ministry in holding forth free Grace, above some, or most of the other Elders. But of the invalidity of her testimony in these things I have spoken, (I suppose) enough above. An evil Spirit (which sometimes breatheth both in good and bad persons,) may give a glorious testimony to some servants of God, not so much to honour them, or their doctrine, as either to cover themselves under their shadow, or else (but that was not her aim) to bring them and their Doctrine into suspicion, and trouble, as the Spirit of the *Pythoness* did to *Paul* and *Silas*, Acts 16:17, to 20. That speech of hers, I bore witness against it, as prejudicial and injurious both to them and me.

Another testimony he allegeth out of the Story, Page 50. "That all the Ministers consented in bearing some witness against Mr *Wheelwright*, except their Brother the Teacher of *Boston*."

Answer: The Story relateth those words, as the speech of the Elders; that they speak of me, as their Brother, to wit, the brother of the Elders, lest any should misconceive of their speech, as ranking me in a Brotherhood with erroneous persons.

That I did not consent with the rest of my Brethren (the Elders) in drawing the inference out of Mr *Wheelwright's* Sermon, which they (being required) presented to the Court, I had a twofold reason for it. 1. Because I was not present with them, when they searched Mr *Wheelwright's* Sermon, and gathered that inference from it.

2. Because I could not speak it of mine own knowledge, "That the Elders of the Country did walk in or teach such a way of Salvation, and evidencing thereof, as Mr *Wheelwright* describeth, and accounteth to be a Covenant of Works."

They knew what themselves taught in that point, better than I. The Elders might testify what they knew: I could not testify, what I knew not. But it seemeth any testimonies will serve turn, when such as these are thought unavoidable, to lay me under the guilt of an horrible fall.

Yet one more remaineth, from page 21, "That albeit the Assembly of the Churches had confuted and condemned most of these new opinions, and Mr *Cotton* had in public view consented with the rest: yet the leaders in those Erroneous ways stood still to maintain their New Light. Mr *Wheelwright* also continued his Preaching, and Mrs *Hutchinson* her wonted

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meetings: and much offence was still given by her, and others in going out from the Pastor's Exercise".

Answer 1. As the Assembly of the Churches confuted and condemned those Errors, so I will not say, That the motion of confuting them (as I remember) arose from myself. And myself also had an hand in confuting such of them, as the Elders committed to my hand, as themselves took several likewise tasks, none of us confuted all. My consent to the confutation, I have expressed above, and in what sense. What I did in public view (as the Story expresseth it) I spake before the Lord, and from the truth of my heart.

That notwithstanding this Act of the Assembly against the Errors, the leaders still stood to maintain their way, it was because the Assembly did not fasten these Errors upon any Persons either in our own, or other Churches. And what corrupt opinions were maintained by our Members, it was done in private, and not before such witnesses, as might reach to public conviction.

Mr *Wheelwright's* continuance in his preaching, was 8 or 9 miles distance from us. And having been put into that place before by the Church, whilst the Farmers there belonged to our Church, (which by reason of the distance, we soon after dismissed into a Church estate amongst themselves) we that were Elders could not (if we would) discharge him from that work without the consent of the Church. But though he gave some offence in some passages at the Assembly, (which he since upon further conference and consideration retracted:) yet neither the Church, nor myself (notwithstanding those unsafe expressions) did ever look at him, either as an Antinomian or Familist. Many of us knew that he had taken good pains against both, and in that very place, where he was wont to preach; insomuch that one of his hearers (who since joined Mr *Gorton's* society) openly contested against his doctrine as false and Antichristian. And when Mr *Wheelwright* was put out of this Country (though he be since restored) yet if he had cleaved to the Errors which Mrs *Hutchinson's* company fell into, he would never have refused their earnest invitation and call of him, to Minister unto them. They sent to him, and urged him much to come to them, to a far richer soil, and richer company than where he lived: yet he constantly refused, and upon that very ground, because of the corruption of their judgements: "Professing often, whilst they pleaded for the Covenant of Grace, they took away the Grace of the Covenant."

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Mrs *Hutchinson's* continuance of her weekly meetings we could not proceed to the suppression thereof, with consent of the Church, before we received the conviction of her personal Errors, which she still closely carried, till after her civil censure. And then she declared herself more plainly, and witnesses arose more fully, and the Church proceeded against her accordingly.

The going of herself and others out of the Congregation when our Pastor began to Exercise, though many feared it was a turning their backs upon his Ministry: yet the most of them were women, and they pretended many excuses for their going out, which it was not easy to convince of falsehood in them, or of their contempt of him.

But in fine, when her Antinomian and Familistical Errors were held forth by her before sufficient witnesses, our Church (as I said before) proceeded without delay, first, to admonish her according to the rule, *Titus* 3:10,11. Afterwards when upon serious pains taken with her, Mr *Davenport*, and myself (as we thought) had convinced her of her erroneous ways in judgement and practice, so as that under her hand, she presented a Recantation before the whole Church, (indeed before many Churches then assembled at *Boston*) yet withal, (after some passages of speech) "Professing that she never was of any other judgement, than what she now held forth," so many witnesses forthwith rose up to convince the contrary, that with common consent both of the Elders and Brethren of our Church, she was cast out of our Communion.

And now that (by the help of Christ) I have perused all the testimonies which Mr *Baylie* hath alleged to convince me of an horrible fall into Antinomianism, and Familism, I desire him in the fear of God to consider, whether any or all these testimonies severally or jointly, will amount to make good such grievous scandals, as he hath charged upon me. Which if they neither will, nor can reach unto, let him remember his promise in his Epistle Dedicatory, "That in all which he hath said over and above (just testimony) he will undertake to give ample satisfaction, wherein so ever he hath given the least offence to any." Meanwhile the Lord lay not this sin to his charge.

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SECTION XIV

Of Cotton's humiliation upon his former fall, as is reported by Mr Baylie.

But yet let me add a word more, to a word of Mr *Baylie's* in his entrance of this discourse of my Antinomianism, and Familism, which may else leave an impression upon the minds of some Reader, as if I had acknowledged this my dangerous fall, and had been much humbled for it.

"This other more dangeous fall (saith he) as it hath already much humbled his Spirit, and opened his ear to instruction, and I trust will not leave working, till it have brought him yet nearer to his Brethren: so to the world's end, it cannot but be a matter of fear and trembling to all, who shall know it, and of abundant caution, to be very wary of receiving any singularity from his hand, without due trial."

Answer 1: Suppose all this were true *in terminis*, as Mr *Baylie* hath expressed it, yet this were no impeachment at all to the doctrine and practice of that (which he calleth) our Independent Church way; nor is it any just ground of caution to be wary of receiving my testimony to it. *Peter's* dangerous and dreadful fall into the denial of Christ, (though he seemed to be a pillar) was no impeachment, but advancement to Christianity. And if my fall were so dangerous, walking in this Church-way, and stumbling so foully in it, the greater Grace and witness from heaven was upon his Churches in this way, who by the blessing of God were instruments of recovering me out of this fall, even by consultatory conference in a Synod, which did not assume to themselves any power of Church censures. Let me be accounted to have fallen, and to have fallen (as Mr *Baylie* representeth it) horribly, so that the truth and ways of Christ may stand and find free passage.

Neither is this fall of mine such a just ground of caution (as he would make it) unto any, to be very wary of receiving my testimony to this Church way. For the way is no way of singularity from my hand, but that which the body of the rest of my Brethren, and of the Churches in this Country do walk in with me.

Answer 2. But yet, let not Mr *Baylie* make further speech or use of my humiliation, than was performed, or intended by me. For God hath not given me to this day (upon my best search) to discern any such dangerous fall into Antinomianism, or Familism, as either hath, or might much humble my spirit.

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It is true, my spirit hath much cause to be humbled, (and so through mercy it was) upon many just occasions at that time. As first, that so many Erroneous and Heretical opinions should be broached in the Country, and carried on with such Arrogancy, and Censoriousness, and guile of spirit.

Secondly, That the principal offenders in this kind were members of our own Church, and some of them such as had near relation to myself.

Thirdly, that myself should be so sleepy and invigilant, as that these (not Tares only, but Briars) should be sown in our Field, and myself not discern them, till sundry persons up and down the country were leavened by them.

Fourthly, that such as endeavored the healing of these distempers, did seem to me to be transported with more jealousies, and heats and paroxysms of spirit, than would well stand with brotherly love, or the rule of the Gospel.

The bitter fruits whereof do remain to this day, in the Letters sent over that year from hence to *England*. Whence also it came to pass finally, that in the course taken for the cleansing of God's Field, it seemed to me, that some good Wheat was plucked up with the Tares, some simple hearted honest men, and some truths of God, fared the worse for the resemblance which the tares bare to them.

Upon all which grounds, myself with our whole Church thought it needful to set a day apart for public humiliation before the Lord, wherein these and the like, both in Prayer and Preaching, were opened more at large before the Lord and his people.

But all this will not amount to make good Mr *Baylie's* word, "That my dangerous fall into Antinomianism and Familism hath much humbled my Spirit."

Nor can I say (as he doth) that it opened mine ears to instruction. For I do not know, that they have been shut to it, when I discerned the Spirit, and Word of truth breathing in it.

Nor can I say after him, "That the humbling of my spirit for those dangerous errors, will not leave working till it have brought me yet nearer to my brethren."

For though I bless the Lord, who hath brought me nearer to my brethren, and them also nearer to me, which I trust will still grow whilst ourselves grow (in all the duties of brotherly love, wherein we have much sweet and frequent intercourse:) yet I do not intepret this as the fruit of my

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spirit's humiliation for my Antinomy, and Familism: but as the fruit of our clearer apprehension, both of the cause and of the state of our differences, and of our joint consent and concurrence in bearing witness against the common heresies, and errors of Antinomianism, and Familism, which disturbed us all.

But Mr *Baylie* as he began his discourse of my dangerous fall with relation of my humiliation for it: so he shutteth it up, *page 58*, with a like close of my grief of mind, and confusion for it.

"I have been informed (saith he) by a gracious Preacher who was present at the Synod in *New England*, that all the Brethren there, being exceedingly scandalized with Mr *Cotton's* carriage, Mistress *Hutchinson's* process, did so far discountenance, and so severely admonish him, that he was thereby brought to the greatest shame, confusion, and grief of mind, that ever in all his life he had endured."

Answer 1: I conceive it is not allowable in Presbyterial discipline, (sure I am, not in Congregational) that an accusation shalt be received against an Elder under one witness, though he gracious and a Preacher: especially when this gracious Preacher is nameless, and his testimony hovereth in generalities, without instance in particular offences: as "That all the Brethren were exceedingly scandalized with Mr *Cotton's* carriage in Mistress *Hutchinson's* process, but not expressing what carriage, nor what process, nor wherein they were scandalized."

"And that all the Brethren did so far discountenance him, and severely admonish him, as that he was thereby brought to the greatest shame, and confusion, and grief of mind, that ever in all his life he endured." But no mention for what offence they did so severely admonish him, nor wherein they did so far discountenance him.

Such words of infamy, and reproach may pass for Table talk (which yet moral Philosophy would not approve:) but surely in orderly Church Discipline, such dealing could not pass without just reproof, unless there were too much prejudice or partiality, the rule is plain and obvious, and not now the first time violated in the Dissuasive, 2 *Timothy 5:19*.

Answer 2. I must (as justly I may) protest against that testimony, not only as violating the rule of Love, but of Truth also. For,

1. It is untrue, that all the Brethren were scandalized with my carriage, much less exceedingly scandalized at the Synod, or in any process about Mrs *Hutchinson*. There were sundry godly brethren otherwise minded, and otherwise affected.

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2. It is untrue also, that such as were scandalized, did so severely admonish me, or discountenance me; for I can neither call to mind any such deep discountenance, nor any such severe admonition of Brethren, and yet I had reason to know it, and to remember it well, as well as any Brother at the Synod: the matter so nearly concerning myself, and more nearly and deeply, than any man else.

3. It is most untrue, that I was so far discountenanced, “and so severely admonished, as that I was brought to the greatest shame, confusion and grief of mind, that ever in all my life I had endured.”

I should have little comfort in my own spirit, to look either God or man in the face, “if the discountenance or admonition of men (especially for such carriage) were the greatest shame, and confusion, and grief of mind, that ever in all my life I had endured”. The rebukes of God upon the soul for sin will put a man to far greater shame, and confusion and grief of mind, than any discountenance, or admonition from Brethren, (especially for such offences) *Psalm 76:7*. But whatsoever discountenance, or disrespect I met withal, from one hand or other, till the true state of my judgement, and carriage was clearly manifested, I have long ago left with the Lord: But I conceive I have met with more hard measure in Letters to *England*, and in ungrounded reports there, than ever I found from the admonition, or discountenance of any brethren here.

SECTION XV

*Of the shameful absurdities said to be found in the way of
Independency: notwithstanding the great helps, to prevent, or cover it:
and first, of those helps.*

Mr *Baylie* now undertaketh to prove that which he calleth a broad Assertion, and well may he so call it: for it reacheth far beyond all dimensions of truth. His assertion is, “That the way (which he calleth) Independency hath in a few years (less than one week of years) flown out into more shameful absurdities, than the Brownists to this day, in all their 50 years’ trial have stumbled upon.”

How will Mr *Baylie* (think you) make this good?

His affirmation, that the way of Brownism, and Independency (as he styleth them) are both of them really one and the same, because he saith, it will appear hereafter, I refer it therefore to his place.

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But before he cometh to make his broad assertion good, yea and (as he promiseth) palpable, he maketh it also by the way, admirable, and that many ways.

“1. In that the Independency hath been brought to the utmost pitch of perfection, which the wit, and industry of its best Patrons were able to attain: and hath been fenced with the Laws of gracious Magistrates, who were at our absolute devotion, and yet hath flown out, etc.”

Answer 1: We that judge that way (which he calleth Independency) to be of God, should account it blasphemy in ourselves to accept such a style put upon us, as to be the best Patrons of it. We do verily believe, that though ourselves, all of us, should employ our best wits and industry to join with Mr *Baylie* to subvert and deface it: yet the Lord Jesus would show himself a Patron to maintain his own Institutions, though with the confusion of the faces, and enterprises of us all. The Word which hath gone out of his mouth for the Government and ordering of his Church till his second appearing, he himself as he hath spoken it, will also shew it forth in his times, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, 1 *Timothy* 6:14,15.

Answer 2. We cannot but with thankfulness acknowledge the goodness of God in our gracious Magistrates, and their assistance to us in the work of the Lord: But when Mr *Baylie* maketh them to be at our absolute devotion, his ὑπερβολή⁴¹ is too too injurious in debasing them, and (in their eyes) advancing us. For neither are they devoted to us at all, nor much less absolutely. Though they sometimes consult with us in matters of conscience; yet they take our counsel no further than they see it cleared from the Word. And besides, it is too vast an advancement of us, to make them absolutely of our devotion. For devotion in matters of Religion, (or as *Thomas* speaketh, *in iis quæ ad Dei cultum, et famulatum pertinent*)⁴² is a divine worship due to God only; in as much that *Aquinas* taketh it to be too high a worship to be terminated in saints, 22, *Quest. 82, Art. 2.* And yet he alloweth more divine worship to Saints, than any orthodox protestant can excuse from Idolatry.

Again secondly, “It may seem to make the palpableness of our outflowings the more admirable, in that (as he saith) much of our way is yet in the dark.”

Thirdly, “In that none of ourselves have proclaimed our discords to our own shame.”

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Fourthly, “That none who have fallen from us, have of purpose put pen to Paper, to inform the world of our ways.”

Fifthly, “That none of us have been willing to reply to any of the books written against us, etc.”

Answer: It were much I confess, if we had all these advantages of concealment which he mentioneth, and yet nevertheless so many, and so shameful absurdities of ours should fall out in so short a time, and become so palpable as Mr *Baylie* proclaimeth them. But the truth is, neither have we had those advantages, (he speaketh of:) but the contrary disadvantages, nor yet do we fear, that he will be able to find such absurdities to have fallen out in our way, much less so shameful.

For first, the way of the New English Churches is not in the dark, but published to the view of the world, in the book so entitled (refuted by Mr *Rutherford*;) as also in the Apology of these Churches, in the Covenant, in the Answer to 32 Questions; in another answer to 9. Questions; in the answer to Mr *Herle*, and to Mr *Rathbone*.⁴³ Some of our most populous Churches do no Church Act, no not of discipline, but in the presence of the whole Town, (non-members, as well as members) so many of them as are pleased to be present. Ways of truth seek no corners; if any Church admonish a brother privately, it is because his offence is not known to non-members.

Again, if in our discords, none of us have proclaimed our shame, whence hath Mr *Baylie* gathered all our shameful absurdities? The short story, (the greatest storehouse of his testimonies) what is it, but a fruit of our discords? Besides, if none that have fallen from us, have of purpose put pen to Paper to inform the world of our ways, what mean the bleatings of Plain dealing, and Mr *Williams* his Invectives against us, which yield a further supply to Mr *Baylie*'s testimonies?

Moreover, if none of us have been willing to reply to the Books written against us, how come it to pass that Mr *Hooker* hath written a large answer to Mr *Rutherford*, Mr *Davenport* to Mr *Paget*, Mr *Mather* to Mr *Rathbone*, Mr *Shepard* and Mr *Allen* to Mr *Ball*, Mr *Norton* in Latin to Mr *Appollonii*; myself to Mr *Williams*, both to his examination of my Letter, and to his bloody Tenent?⁴⁴ If any of these have miscarried by the way, or in England have met with a suppression for an impression, it cannot be said, “that none of us have been willing to reply to the Books written against us”, nor that we have been wanting in endeavors, according as the Lord hath vouchsafed us means and opportunity.

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If still there be other books written against us, unto which no Reply is yet made, it may be considered, our labourers (in that kind) are few, our hands feeble, our times took up with the duties of our calling, helps to ease us are wanting, Domestical Questions are not wanting, and many times Books are extant against us some years before they come to our hands. And yet let not Mr *Baylie* take our silence for a consent to what is written against us: or for a sign of our fear to lay open the true state of our cause, or the nakedness of our way, (as it seemeth to him:) but let him consider, that if many Books be written by several hands, of several subjects against any of us, he whom it concerneth, cannot Reply to them all at once, but to one after another, as the Lord giveth help and opportunity.

SECTION XVI

Of the first absurdity said to be found in our way of Independency

“But what may be those shameful absurdities, which in less than one week of years, we have flown out into more than (those he calleth) Brownists in 50 years of their trial.

“The fruits of our Church way, (saith he) are first, the holding out of all our Churches and Christian Congregation many thousands of People, who in former time have been reputed in *Old England* very good Christians.

“And this (saith he) seemeth a grievous absurdity, a great dishonour to God, and cruelty against men to spoil so many thousand Christians, whom they dare not deny to be truly religious of all the privileges of the Church, either to themselves, or to their children, or put them into the condition of Pagans, etc.”

Answer 1: If all this were true, yet it is no greater an absurdity than that wherein those whom he calleth Brownists, have not only stumbled upon, but professedly walked in: yea it may be, denying Church Communion to as many Churches as we do to persons in this Country. And this Mr *Baylie* hath taxed them for, above in *page 27* of his Book, though here he forget it.

Answer 2: It is not true, that we hold out any at all, English or Indian, out of our Christian Congregations. All without exception are allowed to be present, at our public Prayers and Psalms, at our reading of the Scriptures, and the preaching and expounding of the same, and also at the admitting of Members, and dispensing of seals and censures.

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Answer 3: It is not truly spoken, that we hold out of all our Churches “many thousands of People, who in former times have been reputed in *Old England* very good Christians, and whom ourselves dare not deny to be truly religious”.

I dare be bold to speak it, we hold not out any one such: but if any such be held out, we hold not off from them, but they from us: yea we seriously invite them (publicly and privately) to join with us: unless such religious persons lie under some scandal of corrupt life, or Doctrine.

How then will Mr *Baylie* make good (that which he truly calleth) his broad assertion? yes, he undertaketh to make it good by three testimonies.

1. Saith he, “We have heard sundry to esteem the number of the English in that Plantation to exceed 40,000 men and women. But when Mr *Cotton* is put to it, he dareth hardly avow the one half of these to be Members of any Church.”

And to prove this, he quoteth (in *p.*) the answer to the 23 questions, page 7.

Whereto the Reply is ready, 1. Mr *Baylie* is mistaken, if he think the answer to the 32 questions was penned by me. Those questions were sent by some Ministers in *Lancashire* or *Cheshire* to one of their Countrymen, (a reverend Brother, and fellow-Elder amongst us) Mr *Mader*: who to satisfy their desires returned them that answer, which (it seemeth) hath since been printed. Which I speak not, because I waive the answer, for when he wrote it, he wrote advisedly, and as his whole answer is solid, and judicious; so is his answer, to the question put to him, pertinent and full: but to Mr *Baylie*'s Assertion, it cometh nothing near it. But Mr *Baylie* should have done well, to have taken his full answer to that question. “The New English Plantations are scattered above two hundred Miles in length upon the Sea Coasts: and of what they did in those remote Plantations, he could not then give present account. But (saith Mr *Mader*) in the Churches within the *Bay*, where most of us are best acquainted, we may truly say, that for the heads of Families those that are admitted, are far more in number than the other, besides whom there are sundry children and servants, that are admitted also.

“And for the reasons (saith he) why many are not yet received to Church Communion, they be sundry:

“1. Sundry are new come over, and so are not yet known.

“2. Sundry when they come to be known are found scandalous.

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“3. Some godly persons forbear to join with us for a time, till they may try, which Church and Ministry they can best close withal.

“4. Those that are known to be godly (I may add, though but in judgment of charity) they are all admitted to some Church or other, presently upon their own desire, unless they have given some offence, which also is removed upon their giving due satisfaction.”

This testimony will not reach (nothing near) Mr *Baylie's* assertion, “That we hold out of all Churches many thousands of people, who were well reputed of in *Old England*, for very good Christians, and such as ourselves dare not deny to be truly religious.”

2. His second testimony is from Mr *Lechford*, who styleth his Book against the Country, Plain dealing. And what saith he? In his *page 73*, “Here are (saith he) such confessions, and professions required both of men, and women, both in private and public, before they be admitted, that three parts of the people of the Country remain out of the Church, so that in short time, most of the people will remain unbaptized.”

Answer: The Book is unfitly called plain dealing, which (in respect of many passages in it) might rather be called false and fraudulent. I forbear to speak of the man himself, because soon after the publishing of that Book, himself was called away out of the world to give account of his Book and whole life before the highest Judge. He was indeed himself not received into the Fellowship of the Church, for his professed Errors: as 1. That the Antichrist described in the Revelation was not yet come, nor any part of that Prophecy yet fulfilled from the 4. chapter to the end. 2. That the Apostolic function was not yet ceased: but that there still ought to be such, who should by their transcendent authority govern all Churches. To reclaim him from these Errors, he was seriously dealt withal both in conference, and (according to his desire) in writing. But when he saw, he could not defend the latter Error, but by building again the Bishops, against whom he had witnessed (as he said) in soliciting the cause of Mr *Prynne*, he rather then he would revoke his present tenent, acknowledged he was then in an Error, when he took part with Mr *Prynne*, and Mr *Burton*, and therefore he would now return to *England* again, to reduce those famous witnesses from the Error of their way. And accordingly, away he went: but see the wise hand of God disappointing his ends; When he came to *England* the Bishops were falling, so that he lost his friends, and hopes both in *Old England* and *New*: yet put out his Book (such as it is) and soon after died. By the way, let no man think, he was kept out of

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our Churches, for maintaining the authority of Bishops. For we have in our Churches some well respected Brethren, who do indifferently allow either Episcopal, or Presbyterian, or Congregational Government, so be it they govern according to the rules of the Gospel. Neither do we disturb such, nor they us in our communion with them. But to return to Mr *Lechford's* plain dealing; that which he testifieth, neither is it true; neither if it were, doth it reach Mr *Baylie's* assertion.

It is not true, that three parts of the Country remain out of the Church, if he means three parts of four, no though he should take in those remote *English*, who live a score of miles or more from any Church.

But were his speech more true than it is, yet it will not make good Mr *Baylie's* assertion, unless those three parts of the Country, which (he saith) “remain out of the Church, were reputed in old *England* for very good Christians, nor durst ourselves deny them to be truly religious,” to which this testimony alleged giveth no evidence at all.

Mr *Baylie's* third testimony is from Mr *Williams*, whom he calleth one of us, “who maketh such Protestants to be Heathens and publicans, who depart from the Beast in a false constitution of National Churches, if the bodies of Protestant Nations remain in an unregenerate estate”.

Answer: I know not, why Mr *Baylie* should call Mr *Williams* one of us, who renounceth our Churches, and is himself cast out both of Church fellowship, and civil cohabitation with us.

His testimony, which Mr *Baylie* quoteth out of him, “of the estate of all such Protestants, as live in a National Church estate, as if Christ did account them Heathens and Publicans”.

I say no more to it but this, they may be so accounted by Mr *Williams*, but we do not believe they are so accounted of by Christ, but many thousands of them to be precious Saints in the eyes of the Lord Jesus.

To these testimonies, Mr *Baylie* interfereth his own testimony and others of his judgment, “It seemeth to us (saith he) a grievous absurdity, a great dishonour to God, and cruelty against men to spoil so many thousand Christians, whom we dare not deny to be truly Religious, of all the Privileges of the Church, etc.”

Answer 1: It is not enough, that we dare not deny men to be truly Religious: but it were meet we should know them, at least, conceive good hope, they are truly Religious, (at least in the judgement of charity) before we receive them into the Church. And of such there are not many

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thousands, no nor many scores, no nor any scores, whom we dare spoil of Church privileges, unless their own offence, or choice spoil them.

Secondly, if men be not Religious, no not so much as in profession, why should it be accounted a grievous absurdity, not to receive them into the Church? A thing is absurd, which is *ατοπον* out of place. Are men who are not spiritual, out of their place, when they are not placed in a spiritual society? If the Churches be (as Christ describeth them) golden Candlesticks (Revelation 1:20) is Tin and Lead out of place, when it is not soddered into a Golden vessel? Sure God himself thought otherwise, *Isaiah* 1:25. But is it not rather a grievous absurdity, and far out of place, when such are admitted to the Lord's Table, who either discern not the Lord's Body, or if they be admitted to drink his Blood, will be ready when they are got into the Field to spill the innocent blood of those Roundheads, whom they lately partaked withal at the Lord's Table?⁴⁵

And as for the great dishonour to God, (which Mr *Baylie* imputeth to this way of ours) Is it a dishonour to God, that such are withheld from the Lord's Table, by whom the name of God is dishonoured either through their ignorance or scandal?

Is it not rather a great dishonour to God, to set up Christ a visible head of such members, by whom his name is evil spoken of? And what cruelty is it against men, to keep such from eating and drinking the Lord's Supper, who would eat and drink it unworthily, and so eat and drink their own damnation? *1 Corinthians* 11:29. The Lord himself thought it no cruelty to debar our first parents from the Tree of life, who if they had found free liberty to eat it, would have blessed themselves in a false hope of living forever? *Genesis* 3:22,23.

SECTION XVII

Of the second shameful absurdity said to be found in our way of Independency

Come we now to a second shameful absurdity, which he maketh to be another fruit of our Church way.

“That it hath exceedingly hindered the conversion of the poor Pagans. The principles and practise of Independents doth cross this work and hope of it. What have they to do with those that are without? Their Pastors preach not for conversion: their Relation is to their flock, who are Church

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members, converted already to their hand by the labours of other men, before they can be admitted into their Church. Of all that ever crossed the *American Seas*, they are noted as most neglectful of the work of Conversion. I have read of none of them, that seem to have minded this matter.”

Answer: This is indeed a shameful absurdity, if it be true: but a sinful and shameful calumny, if it be false. As indeed false it is in every branch of it. First, there is no principle or allowed practise of ours that doth hinder (much less exceedingly hinder) the work or hope of the conversion of the Natives: though we profess we have nothing to do to censure *Indians*, and so to judge them that are without; yet we think it a principal (though not the only) work and duty of our Ministry to attend the work of conversion, both of carnal *English*, and other Nations, whether Christian, or Pagan. The neglect of it, we look at as an ungracious and uncharitable fancy. How shall men (ordinarily) be converted to the faith without hearing? and how shall they hear without preaching? and how shall they preach, unless they be sent? and who are now sent, but Pastors and Teachers?

“But the Relation of our Pastors is to their Flock? What then? May there not fall out to be Hypocrites in our Flock? and must we not preach for their conversion? And are not the children of the Members of our Church, many of them such, as when they grow up stand in need of converting grace? and must we not preach for their conversion? Besides, when an Infidel or unbeliever cometh into the Church, do not all the Prophets that preach the Word, (and among them, surely the Pastors and Teachers are not the least) do they not all apply their speech to his conviction and conversion? 1 Corinthians 14:24,25. What though Pastor be a Feeder to his Flock already begotten unto God? Yet he may (and ought to endeavor to) become a Father also in Christ, to such as are yet unregenerate, whether of his Flock, or out of his Flock. To turn many to righteousness is prophesied of, to be the work of the *המשכילים*⁴⁶ of the New Testament, Daniel 2:3. “But our Church members are converted already to our hands by the labours of other men, before they can be admitted to our Church.” So saith Mr *Baylie* indeed: but if he were here, he would soon hear many of those who are admitted into our Churches, openly acknowledge, the first work of saving grace to have been wrought in their hearts by the ministry of the Word here, and sometime by the same, or like ministry in our Native Country. And the children of the

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faithful born, and baptized in our Churches, will acknowledge no other Ministry, by whom they have believed, but that which they have attended upon, here.

“But (saith Mr *Baylie*) I have read of none of them that seem to have minded the matter of conversion.”

Answer 1: What if he have not read, what we preach here of conversion? Doth he think it meet, we should print all the Sermons we preach? What if any of us should say, I have not read of any *Scottish* Minister who have published any of their labours in that argument, (save Mr *Rollock*, and him in Latin, and that haply in the Schools, and many have not seen him neither:) shall we therefore think it credible, that so many holy faithful labourers in Christ’s Vineyard in that whole Nation, do not seem to mind the matter of conversion?

But whether he have read of any of our books of that Subject, or no, surely it is not, because none of such are extant to be read. He may read when he pleaseth Mr *Shepard’s* two Treatises, one styled The sincere Convert, the other The sound Believer, besides sundry Treatises of Mr *Hooker* touching the Soul’s preparation to Christ, Effectual Calling, and Justification, etc.,⁴⁷ and when he hath read them, let him then tell the world, whether of all that have crossed the *American* Seas (as he speaketh) the Ministers of this way have been justly noted to be most neglectful of the work of conversion. Yea let me make bold in God’s fear to pray Mr *Baylie*, and those others, who have noted us as most neglectful of this work, to enquire and consider whether among all the servants of Christ now living in any reformed Churches (put them all together) they have published so many Treatises of the work of conversion, as the Ministers of this way have done, in *New England*, and *London*, which I speak not (the Lord is witness to my soul) out of carnal Arrogancy to boast of our labours, in so holy and weighty an Argument: but out of conscience to bear witness to the way of God’s truth against such an unjust and unworthy scandal. But when I speak of these Treatises of Conversion, I do not include all that are written under the glorious and fallacious styles of Free Grace, and Gospel Truth, which nevertheless do but indeed lay the Leaven of Arminian-universal-free Grace, and Antinomian Impenitency: but I speak of those Treatises which are pure from such Leaven, as keeping the pattern of wholesome words and sound doctrine, dividing the Word of truth aright, in the right use of the Law and Gospel, wherein though they sometime dedare such works of Grace to be preparations to conversion,

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which others do take to be the fruits of conversion: yet they all agree in this, that such works are found in all that are under the powerful and effectual saving work of the Spirit, and Word of Christ, and in none else, which is the light and life of the Saints in Christ Jesus.

I will not speak here of the conversion of *Weaquash*, which (as I hear) is published in a little Script, entitled, *New England's First-fruits*.⁴⁸ Nor would I have mentioned the endeavors of some of our fellow Brethren here, to help forward the work of conversion in *Virginia*, were it not that the blessing of the Lord Jesus upon their labours doth call for acknowledgment. Some honest minded people in *Virginia* discerning their want of spiritual Ministry, sent earnest Letters, and one or more messengers, to the Elders of these Churches here for some of our Ministers to break the Bread of Life to them. The Elders here seeking Counsel of God, and one of another, we borrowed two of the Pastors of our Churches, (Mr *Knowles* of *Watertown*, and Mr *Thomson* of *Braintree*, the Churches being either of them supplied with two Ministers apiece) and sent them forth solemnly in the Name of the Lord to that work; who as they went along took with them one Mr *James*, a Minister (though then out of employment) from *New Haven*, to the fellowship of that work. And for their better encouragement, our Governor here wrote a Letter to the Governor of *Virginia* to acquaint him, and his Assistants, with the occasion and end of their coming, and expressed withal his desire of their Christian entertainment for a time, and peaceable return, if they found any inconvenience by their coming. What entertainment they found from the major part of the Government there, I forbear to speak. The bloody Massacre, which soon after their dismissal, the *Indians* in those parts executed upon the *English*, cried aloud from heaven, that after a white Horse, God is wont to send forth a red, *Revelation* 6:2,3,4. But nevertheless, God so far forth followed their labours with his blessing in the work of conversion, that sundry of them were effectually wrought upon by the power of the Lord Jesus; whereof some of them came along with our Ministers at their return, and are received into our Churches: others of them who could not so well dispose of their affairs there, joined with one Mr *Harrison*, a Minister there, (who was also mightily stirred up by our Ministers' coming:) and they with him have since given up themselves to more holy communion and conversation before the Lord.

Others of the Western Islands (as *Barbados*, *Antigua*, *Nevis*) have desired the like help from us: but the departure of some of our Ministers since,

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(one to Heaven, others to *England*) have hitherto detained us from opportunity to afford unto them the like succour for the present.

I will not speak, what opportunity of reaching forth a blessing to the *Indians* in this kind, God hath lately begun to open us a door of: in that divers of their *Sachims*, and *Sagamores*, (as they call them, to wit, their Governors) have submitted themselves to the government of the *English*, and have willingly subjected themselves to the acceptance of the Ten Commandments, though some of them, do most stick at the seventh Commandment, as it forbiddeth Polygamy. Nevertheless otherwise they willingly consent to abandon Adultery and Fornication, and unnatural lusts.

But though the *Indians* have been slow to learn our language, especially in matters of Religion (howsoever in Trading they soon understood us:) yet we have often offered to bring up their *Indian* children in our Schools, that they might learn to speak to their Countrymen in their own language. But because that might prove long, one of our Elders (Mr *Eliot*, the Teacher of the Church of *Rocksbury*) hath (with the consent of the Natives) preached to them first by an Interpreter, but since having with much industry learned their language, he now preacheth to two Congregations of them in their own language weekly. One week on the fourth day to one Congregation, who sit down near *Dorchester Mill*, and another week, on the sixth day, to another Congregation of them, who sit down in *Cambridge*, near *Watertown Mill*. To ease and encourage him in his work, the Ministers of neighbour Churches take off by turns his weekly Lecture on the third day. The fruit hitherto hath been, the *Indians* resort more and more to these Assemblies, hear with reverence and attention, reform (and make *Laws* amongst themselves, for reformation of) sundry abuses, ask sundry questions for their instruction, and among the rest, an old Counsellor of one of their *Sagamores* enquired, if it might be possible that our God, and our Christ should accept an old sinner such as himself? Mr *Eliot* answered him, "yes, there was hope, because he never had the means of the knowledge of God offered to him before. And our Saviour Christ did sometimes call into his Vineyard some to do him service, even in the last hours of the day, in the last part of their lives. And the old *Indian* being demanded if he understood this?" He answered, yea, saith he, I understand it, and believe it.

It is true, there may be doubt that for a time there will be no great hope of any National conversion, till Antichrist be ruined, and the Jews converted;

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because the Church (or Temple) of God, is said to be filled with smoke, till the seven plagues (which are to be poured upon the Antichristian state) be fulfilled: And till then, no man (that is, no considerable number of men out of the Church, as Pagans be) shall be able to enter into the Church, *Revelation* 15:8, yet nevertheless, that hindereth not, but that some sprinklings, and gleanings of them may be brought home to Christ, as now and then some Proselytes were brought into the fellowship of the Church of *Israel*, when there was a greater partition wall set up between Jews and Gentiles, then now there is between Christians and Pagans. And the Lord shine upon them in mercy, in blessing the means of his Grace to them in the Lord Jesus.

The proof that none of us seem to have minded the work of conversion, Mr *Baylie* allegeth out of the Book entitled Plain dealing, which saith, "There hath not been sent forth any, by any Church, to learn the Natives' Language, or to instruct them in our Religion first, because they say they have not to do with them being without, except they come to hear and learn English."

Answer 1: What if there have not been any sent forth by any Church to learn the *Indian's* language? That will not argue our neglect of minding the work of their conversion. For there be of the *Indians* that live amongst us, and daily resort to us; and some of them learn our language; and some of us learn theirs. And men that love the Lord Jesus do gladly take opportunity to instruct them in our Religion, and to teach them both Law and Gospel. And of late, the Word (as I have said) is publicly preached unto them in two several *Indian* Congregations, though we never thought it fit to send any of our English to live amongst them, to learn their language: for who should teach them?

Answer 2: When the Authors of Plain Dealing saith, "We have not instructed them in our Religion, upon this pretense, because we say, we have not to do with them being without, except they come to hear and learn English."

I know not whether ever any gave him so weak an account or no: If any so did, it was his rashness, or ignorance both of us, and the truth. But if the Author speak it, as a Point of our Profession or practice, that we do neglect the instruction of the *Indians*, and especially upon such a reasonless reason, I will say no more to it but this, it seemeth there are two sorts of Plain dealing: Plain honest dealing, and Plain false dealing, of which latter sort, this speech is.

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But Mr *Baylie* acknowledgeth Mr *Williams* his endeavors in this kind, but doth thereby the more aggravate our corrupt principles and practice, who have neglected so great an opportunity as to prosecute his course. Only Mr *Williams* (saith he) did assay, “what could be done with those desolate souls, and by little experience quickly found a wonderful great facility to gain thousands of them to so much and more Christianity both in profession and practice, than in the most of our people doth appear.

“But the unhappiness of these principles whereof we speak, did keep him (as he professeth) from making use of that great opportunity, and large door, which the Lord there hath opened to all who will be zealous of propagating the Gospel.”

Answer 1: If Mr *Williams* his speech of the wonderful great facility he had of gaining so far upon the *Indians*, be not too prodigally hyperbolicall (as I much fear it is) I think his sin is so much the greater before the Lord, that he did neglect to take the opportunity of preaching to them the Word of the Lord, that they might have been brought on, not only to an Antichristian conversion (such as he maketh the conversion of the common sort of Christians in Protestant Churches:) but to a sincere conversion unto Christ Jesus. But I confess with Mr *Baylie*, his own corrupt Principles, (his own I say, not ours) it seemeth have detained him from putting forth his hand to the Lord’s Plough in so large a Field. For if he look (as it seemeth) for new Apostles to be sent immediately from Christ for such a work: or if he think, no Church is, or will be extant upon the face of the earth, till Antichrist be abolished out of the world, these and such like principles are enough, not only to retard him from the planting of Churches amongst *Indians*, but also to further him in supplanting all the Churches of Christ in Christendom.

Answer 2: I said not without cause, that I feared Mr *Williams* his testimony of the facility of such a conversion of the *Indians* was too hyperbolicall. For I received advertisement from Mr *James* (one of the Ministers, who went to *Virginia* upon the Lord’s work, of which I spake before) that whilst he was detained (by winds) in *Maryland* (a Popish Plantation between us and *Virginia*) he saw, as I remember, (for his Letter is not present at hand with me) 40 *Indians* baptized in new Shirts, which the Catholics had given them for their encouragement unto Baptism. But he tarried there so long for a fair wind, that before his departure, he saw the *Indians* (when their shirts were foul, and they knew not how to wash them) come again to make a new motion, either the Catholic *English* there must give

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them new Shirts, or else they would renounce their Baptism. I doubt, the *Indians* about Mr *Williams* are not of a much better spirit. I might mention a fairer instance in these parts, yet such as may argue what kind of facility there is in the *Indians* to conversion, so much as to outward profession. At our first coming hither, *John Sagamore* was the chiefest *Sachim* in these parts. He falling sick, our pastor Mr *Wilson* hearing of it (and being of some acquaintance with him) went to visit him, taking one of the Deacons of our Church with him, and withal, a little Mithridate, and strong water. When he came to his lodging (which they call a *Wigwam*) hearing a noise within, he looked over the Mat of the door to discern what it meant, and saw many *Indians* gathered together, and some *Powwaws* amongst them, who are their Priests, Physicians, and Witches. They by course spake earnestly to the sick *Sagamore*, and to his disease, (in a way of charming of it and him) and one to another in a kind of Antiphonies. When they had done, all kept silence, our Pastor went in with the Deacon, and found the man far spent, his eyes set in his head, his speech leaving him, his mother (old *Squaw Sachim*) sitting weeping at his bed's head, Well (saith our Pastor) our God save *Sagamore John*, *Powwaw Cram* (that is, kill) *Sagamore John*: And thereupon he fell to prayer with his Deacon, and after Prayer, forced into the sick man's mouth with a Spoon, a little Mithridate dissolved in the strong water; soon after the *Sagamore* looked up, and three days after went abroad on hunting. This providence so far prevailed with the *Sagamore*, that he promised to look after the *English* man's God, to hear their Sermons, to wear *English* apparel, etc. But his neighbour *Indians Sagamores*, and *Powwaws* hearing of this, threatened to *Cram* him (that is, to kill him) if he did so degenerate from his Country Gods, and Religion, he thereupon fell off, and took up his *Indian* course of life again. Whatsoever facility may seem to offer itself of the conversion of the *Indians*, it is not so easy a matter for them to hold out, no not in a semblance of profession of the true Religion. Afterwards God struck *John Sagamore* again, (and as I remember with the small Pox:) but then when they desired like succour from our Pastor, as before, he told them, now the Lord was angry with *Sagamore John*, and it was doubtful, he would not be so easily be entreated. The *Sagamore* blamed himself and justified God, and confessed, he should not have been discouraged by their threats from seeking our God: For those *Sagamores* and *Powwaws* who did most terrify him, he had seen God sweeping them away by death, before himself, in a short time after. And therefore when he saw he must die (for he died

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of that sickness) he left his son to the education of our Pastor, that he might keep closer to the *English*, and to their God, than himself had done. But his son also died of the same disease soon after. All which I relate, to show, that though a form of Christian Religion may be professed amongst Christians with some facility: yet it is not so easy a matter to gain these Pagan *Indians* so much as to a form of our Religion, and to hold it, howsoever Mr *Williams* did promise himself greater possibilities.

Answer 3: Mr *Baylie* shall do well to consider, that Mr *Williams* his speech doth not so much hold forth the facility of the *Indians* to any such conversion, as might fit them for Church estate, but rather the Hypocrisy and Formality of the ordinary Church Members of National Churches; which he professeth is so far off from true conversion, “that it is the subversion of the souls of many Millions in Christendom, from one false worship to another.”

Answer 4: It is no unhappiness of any principle of ours, that hath kept Mr *Williams* from making use of his great opportunity, and open door, to propagate the Gospel amongst the *Indians*. For though their facility to such a carnal conversion, as he describeth, gave him no just warrant, to gather them into a Church estate: yet it was a just encouragement to provoke him (who understood their Language) to have preached the Word of God unto them, which might have been mighty through God (if sincerely dispensed) to have turned them from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto God, and so have prepared them, both for Church fellowship here, and for heaven hereafter.

But if Mr *Baylie* conceive that either Mr *Williams*, or else we were to be blamed, because we do not presently receive *Indians* into the Fellowship of our Churches, seeing their facility to conform their outward man to us, and to so much of our religion, as Mr *Williams* mentioneth: he shall do well to consider beforehand, whether *Jacob's* children did well, to persuade the *Sichemites* (Genesis 34) to receive circumcision, before they better understood the Covenant of *Abraham*, (to which circumcision was a Seal) and had made some better profession of taking hold of it.

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SECTION XVIII

*Of the third shameful absurdity said to be found in our way of
Independency*

Come we now to consider of the third shameful Absurdity, which Mr *Baylie* maketh the fruit of our Independency, “breaking forth in the practices and profession of the most, who have been admitted as very fit, if not the fittest Members of our Church”s.

And these evil fruits he brancheth out into five sorts:

- “1. (Saith he) in the vileness of their Errors.
- “2. In the multitude of the erring persons.
- “3. In the hypocrisy joined with their Errors.
- “4. In the malice against their Neighbours, and contempt of their superiors, Magistrates and Ministers for opposition to their evil way.
- “5. In their singular obstinacy, stiffly sticking unto their errors, etc.”

Answer 1: Suppose all this to be true: yet this is so far from discrediting the way of Independency, or arguing the Tree to be bad by these bad fruits, that it doth rather justify the way to be of God, which so easily hath either healed, or removed, so many, so vile, so general, so subtle, so headstrong corruptions, and them that maintained them. *Non seclus, non scelerum varietas aut atrocitas, is dedecus Politia, sed scelerum impunitas.*⁴⁹ The Church of *Ephesus* was not blamed by Christ, because false Apostles and Nicolaitans were found amongst them: but commended, because she could not bear them, *Revelation 2:2,6*. Nor is *Thyatira* blamed, that *Jezebel* was found amongst them, but that they suffered her, *Revelation 2:20*. What if so many, so hideous vile Errors were found in our Churches? What if the number of erring persons were (as he speaketh) incredible? “Multitudes of men and women everywhere infected? almost no Society, nor Family in the Land free from the pest? *Boston* (which he is pleased to style, the best and most famous of our Churches) so far corrupted, that few were untainted? What if they accounted the late Governor⁵⁰ their true friend, and thought no less of Mr *Cotton*, and Mr *Wheelwright* whom they adored? What if they had drawn to their sides not only multitudes of the people, but the ablest men for parts, in all Trades, especially the Soldiers? What if all these evils were carried forth with presumptuous contumacy against godly Magistrates, and the Orthodox Ministers? Yea, what if to all the

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rest, they added obstinacy against all wholesome means of redress and remedy?

Is it not therefore the more evident Demonstration of the gracious presence, and mighty power of God, in the Discipline of our Churches, that did so effectually, so speedily, so safely, so easily, purge out all this Leaven, either out of the hearts of the people, out of their Families, and Churches, or else out of the Country?

Whence the argument seemeth to me to arise unavoidably.

Those evils, which Independency doth either heal, or remove, they are not the fruits of Independency.

But all these grievous and dangerous evils, Independency did either heal or remove.

Therefore these grievous and dangerous evils were not the fruits of Independency.

Again, That government, which by the blessing of Christ, doth safely, speedily, and effectually purge out such grievous and dangerous evils, as threaten the ruin of Church and State, that government is safely allowed, and justly and wisely established any civil State.

But Independency by the blessing of Christ doth speedily, safely, and effectually purge out such grievous and dangerous evils, as threaten the ruin of Church and State: therefore Independency is safely allowed, and justly, and wisely established in any civil State.

Objection 1. But this purging and healing of these grievous and dangerous evils was not the fruit of the Independent Church Government, but of their civil Government. "We have oft marvelled, that the Eldership of *Boston* did never so much, as call Mrs *Hutchinson* before them, to be rebuked for any of her errors, though their general Assembly had confuted them, and condemned them: yet still she was permitted to go on, till the zeal of the new Governor, and the general Court did condemn her to perpetual banishment. Then, and not till then, so far as we can perceive by the story, did the Church of *Boston* bring a process against her. And when the process was brought to an end, Mr *Cotton* would by no means put it in execution; that burden was laid upon the back of Mr *Wilson* his Colleague, however not the fittest Instrument, being the person to whom Mrs *Hutchinson* had professed greatest opposition. And when the sentence was pronounced against her, they tell us, that the great cause of it was none of her Errors or Heresies, but her other practices, especially her gross lying."

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Answer 1: Whatever assistance the civil Government gave to the purging and healing of these evils, it was the fruit of Independent Church Government. For whether the Neighbour Churches suspected our Church of *Boston* might be partial, and indulgent to these erroneous persons: or whether they saw, we wanted sufficient witnesses upon which we might proceed against them in a Church way, they took a right course (according to the principles of the Independent Government) to gather into a Synod with the consent of the civil Magistrates: and in the Synod to agitate, convince and condemn the Errors, and the offensive carriages then stirring. Whereat the Magistrates being present, they saw just cause to proceed against the chief of those whom they conceived to have bred any civil disturbance: and the Churches saw cause to proceed against their Members, whom they found to be broachers or maintainers of such heresies.

Answer 2: It hath been declared above, “why the Eldership of *Boston* did not call Mrs *Hutchinson* before them to rebuke her for her Errors, or to restrain her from going on, though the general Assembly had confuted and condemned her errors and course.”

For though the Errors were condemned, (and by the Elders of *Boston*, as well as others:) yet the errors were not fastened personally upon her: nor had we any two witnesses, that would affirm it to us, that she did broach or maintain such errors or heresies, till after her sentence unto banishment by the general Court; And then indeed, as she was more bold and open in declaring her judgement before many witnesses: so the Elders of the Church of *Boston* called her to account before the Church, and convinced her of her Errors, and with the consent of the Church, laid her, and one or two more of her abettors under the censure of an admonition even for those corrupt opinions, which ere charged upon her, and proved against her.

Objection 1: Yea but Mr *Cotton* would by no means put the censure in execution upon her, that burden must be laid upon the back of Mr *Wilson*, etc.

Answer: The censure of admonition, because it was for matter of Erroneous doctrine, it was thought meet to be dispensed and administered by Mr *Cotton*, who was their Teacher: which also (by the help of Christ) he did perform, setting before her both the corrupt causes of her errors, and the bitter fruits of them: and charging her solemnly before the Lord, and his Angels, and Churches then assembled, to return from the Error of her way.

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Afterwards, when upon further serious debate and conference with her by Mr *Davenport*, and myself, she was convinced of all her errors in particular, she being called again before the Church, did openly recant every error and heresy, and professed her repentance for every miscarriage against Magistrates and Elders: which far exceeded the expectation of the whole Congregation, which then consisted of many Churches, and strangers. But when she had done, she added withal, “That she had never been of other judgement, howsoever her expressions might seem to vary.” This sounded so harshly, and falsely in the ears of many witnesses, that many rose up to convince her of her falsehood and lying, in so saying. Which when she did not hearken to, she was esteemed, by the judgement of the Elders, and our whole Church, to be justly subject to excommunication. Which though I did not think meet to be dispensed by myself (because the offence was not in matter of Doctrine but of practice, which more properly belonged to the Pastor’s Office, or ruling Elders:) yet I declared to the whole Congregation the righteousness of the censure, and satisfied the Scruples of some Brethren, who doubted of it. But yet if the Church, or other Elders had put that task upon me, I should no more have refused the dispensing of the censure of excommunication upon her, than I did before of admonition. Neither was her opposition against Mr *Wilson* any just reason exempting him from that duty. For she saw, we all with one accord, concurred in that sentence: it was no partial act of his, but the common vote both of the Presbytery, and Fraternity. And what if she had professed her opposition against us all? had that been a just excuse to exempt any of us from performing a service due to God, and the Church, yea and to herself also?

Objection 2: “But when the sentence was propounded against her, they tell us, the great cause of it was none of her Errors, and Heresies, but for other practices, especially her gross lying.”

Answer: We could not justly pronounce the cause of her sentence to be her errors and heresies, which she had openly recanted, and given her recantation under her handwriting. Neither did any of us say, That such Heresies did not deserve the censure of excommunication, if she had continued obstinate in them: but we thought it needful to follow the rule of the Apostle, not to reject an Heretic till after once or twice admonition, *Titus 3:10*, under which if the Heretic relent, the Church proceeding sayeth, unless some other offence set it forward, as it did in her case.

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SECTION XIX

Tending to rectify some mistakes of Mr Baylie in relating the fortner absurdities.

But before I leave this close of Mr *Baylie's* third Chapter, touching the evil fruits of Independency, let me advertise him of some few further mistakes in his Narration of the same.

First, when he reckoneth in the front of vile errors, the inhabitation of the person of the Spirit in all the godly, let him weigh what hath been said above, touching that point. And if he clear it to be an error, I willingly shall acknowledge, he shall teach me that, which I yet know not. I profess myself willing to learn of a meaner man, than Mr *Baylie*.

“Secondly, when he maketh the number of erring persons incredible, almost no society, no family free from that pest, *Boston* itself so far infected, that few there were untainted: let him be pleased to consider, whether his testimony will make it good. His testimonies (recited in his Marks *FF. GG.*) speak to the utmost of truth, but not so much as he avoucheth. The short Story in Preface, *page 7*, saith indeed, “They had some of all sorts and qualities in all places to patronize and defend them: and almost in every family some were ready to defend them as the Apple of their own eye.”

But this will not make it good, that almost in every family some were infected with the pest of their errors. It is one thing to speak in the defence of erroneous persons, another to speak in defence of errors. Multitudes there were, that thought well of the persons, who knew nothing of their errors, but heard only of their unbottoming sandy foundations of a spiritual estate, which hath been mentioned above, Chapter 3.

Which may also truly be said even of *Boston* likewise. The body of the Church, the greatest part of them were like those members of the Church in *Thyatira*, of whom it is said (Revelation 2:24) They knew not the depths of Satan. The truth whereof may evidently appear by this, That when those errors of Mistress *Hutchinson* were publicly charged upon her before the Church, and proved by sufficient witnesses, the whole body of the Church, and all the Brethren with one accord (save only her son) consented readily to her censure: which they would not have done, if the whole Church of *Boston* (some excepted) had become her converts, and were infected with her opinions.

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Thirdly, when he saith, they adored some of their Ministers, and instanceth in Mr *Cotton*, and Mr *Wheelwright*.

Adoration is too vast an Hyperbole to be made good by just testimonies. All hyperbolical praises, though they may far exceed the bounds of truth in comparisons of men with men; yet they will not reach adoration, which is divine worship. Neither will it be made good, That they magnified either Mr *Wheelwright*, or me, for the defence of their errors. Yea they soon forsook Mr *Wheelwright* (as well as he them) when they saw his judgement (as well as mine) against Antinomianism, and Familism.

Fourthly, when he saith, “Mistress *Hutchinson*, and the late Governor, kept almost every day, so private and long discourse with Mr *Cotton*, that made them conclude all was their own.”

I must needs profess, that cannot be made good by any witness of truth, Mistress *Hutchinson* seldom resorted to me: and when she did, she did seldom or never enter into any private speech between the former Governor and myself. And when she did come to me, it was seldom or never (that I can tell of) that she tarried long. I rather think, she was loath to resort much to me, or, to confer long with me, lest she might seem to learn somewhat from me. And withal I know (by good proof) she was very careful to prevent any jealousy in me, that she should harbor any private opinions, differing from the course of my public Ministry. “Which she could not well have avoided, if she had kept almost every day so private and long discourse with me.”

But what Testimony, or proof doth Mr *Baylie* allege for this our private and long conference, almost every day? His mark [YY] referreth us to the short story, where it is said, “They made full account the day had been theirs.”

But did they make this account upon occasion of these our private, and long, and frequent conferences every day? Not a syllable of proof for this point. It is not righteous dealing, large charges, and narrow proofs.

Fourthly, that which Mr *Baylie* further relateth from the testimony of Mr *Williams*, is as far from truth, as the former.

“Mr *Williams* (saith Mr *Baylie*) told me, that he was employed to buy from the Savages, for their late Governor, and Mr *Cotton*, with their Followers, a portion of Land without the *English* Plantation whither they might retire and live according to their mind, exempt from the jurisdiction of all others, whether Civil or Ecclesiastic, Mr *Williams* was in so great

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friendship with the late Governor, when he told me so much, that I believe he would have been loath to have spoken an untruth of him.”

Answer: But this I dare be bold to say, if Mr *Williams* told Mr *Baylie* so much, that he was employed by me to buy any Land from the Savages, for me and my followers (as he calls them) he spake an untruth of me, whatsoever he did of the Governor. Yet because I would not speak nor think worse of Mr *Williams* than necessity constraineth, I cannot say but that he might speak as he thought, and as he was told; for it may well be, that such as abused the Governor’s name to him for such an end, might also more boldly abuse mine. But I must profess, I neither wrote, nor spake, nor sent to Mr *Williams* for any such errand. If ever I had removed, I intended *Quinipyack*, and not *Aquethnick*. And I can hardly believe the Governor would send to him for any such end, who I suppose never thought it likely, that himself should tarry longer in the Country, than he tarried in the *Bay*.

Fifthly, when Mr *Baylie* objecteth the profaneness of these erroneous persons, and justifieth it by the testimonies of Mr *Weld* and myself, “And aggravateth the same by their profession of Piety (so far, that they avow their standing loose from all reformed Churches as unclean, because of their mixture with the profane Multitude.)”

Let him be pleased to consider; First, what was said above, *Non scelus, sed sceleris impunitas*, is the guilt of a society, whether civil or sacred.

Secondly, what Mr *Weld* meant by fouler sins than pride, or lying, found in those persons, I cannot guess: nor have I heard of them: unless he meant the adultery of one, who upon his own confession was cast out of the Church for that crime.

As for the testimony of mine, which he quoteth from some words in the vials,⁵¹ wherein the sins of the people were reprov’d, let him not improve them further than they will bear. Such reproofs do not always argue sins of our Church members: or if they did, yet not, that those sins are openly known: or if openly known, yet not, that they were tolerated. And yet all these must concur, or else the vices found amongst professors, will not argue the viciousness either of their doctrine or worship, or Church Government.

Luther complaineth in *Postill.*, *super Evangel.*, *Dom. adventus*, *Sunt nunc homines magis vindictæ cupidi, magis avari, magis ab omni misericordiâ remoti, magis immodesti, et indisciplinati, multoque deteriores, quam fuerunt sub papatu.*⁵²

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And *Chrysostom*, (*in opere imperfect in Matt. Hom. 49*) speaketh of Christians as becoming like the Heretics, or Pagans, or worse.

Yet I suppose he that should improve the words either of *Chrysostome*, to argue the discipline of Christians, worse than that of the Pagans: or of *Luther*, to argue the discipline of Protestants to be worse than that of Papists, he shall doubtless stretch their words upon the Rack, far beyond the scope of their meaning. The words I spake, were in comparison between the godly Professors in *England*, and ours here, and at such a time, when Episcopal persecution made them draw the nearer to God, and to walk the more circumspectly before men. But Sheep set at liberty from the fear of Wolves, will straggle further from their Shepherd, than when they resent danger.

Thirdly, it is too gross and heavy an aggravation, which Mr *Baylie* putteth upon us, if he mean it of us, "That our profession of piety is so fair that we stand aloof from all reformed Churches as unclean, because of their mixture with the profane multitude."

For it is more than he can prove, or we do profess. Though in the Bishops' time, we did not forthwith receive all the members of the Church of *England* into the fellowship of our Churches: yet (for ought I know) we are not likely to stand aloof from Presbyterian Churches faithfully administered, nor from the testimony which they shall give of their members, that may have occasion to Traffic hither. And the like do I conceive of other reformed Churches in other Nations of Christendom. Presbyterian Churches faithfully administered, are not wont to admit a mixed profane multitude to the Lord's Table.

Sixthly, let me take off one instance more, which Mr *Baylie* giveth of one abomination, which to him seemeth strange. "That the Midwives to our most zealous women, should not only have familiarity with the Devil, but also in that service commit devilish Malefices: which so far as they tell us, were not only passed over without punishment, but never so much as enquired after."

Answer. This accusation is indeed of some weight, because it is of a grievous, and devilish crime, and it tolerated. But how doth it appear to him, that it was tolerated? "not only passed over without punishment, but never so much as enquired after?"

Why, saith he, so far as they tell us. So far as they tell us? Is the silence of a short story of this or that fact, a good argument, a *non dici, ad non esse*?⁵³ Yea it is a good argument on the contrary, that there was inquiry

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made after that Midwife, and diligent search into her, or else it would have been recorded, as some close conveyance of the erroneous party. The truth is, the woman, though she offered herself to the Elders of our Church, yet was not received, upon discovery of some unsound principles in her judgement. Being then no member, the Church had no power to deal with her. But when suspicion grew of her familiarity with the Devil, especially upon that occasion, which the short story relateth, she was convented before the Magistrates, and diligently examined about that, and other evils. But though no familiarity with the Devil could be proved against her; yet because of some other offenses in dealing with young women, she was forbidden to stay in the Country.

SECTION XX

Tending to consider what better fruits might have been expected from Presbyterian discipline, for the removing of the like absurdities.

Having thus given account to Mr *Baylie* of the inconsequence of all his discourse from the errors of this country, to argue the unsoundness of our Church discipline, let me now entreat him to consider, what better fruits might have been expected in the like case from Presbyterial Government. I demand, if Presbyterian Government had been established amongst us, should we not then have received all these Heretics, and erroneous persons, into our Church? Yes surely, for no member of the Commonwealth is excluded: well, therein our Congregational discipline bringeth forth no worse fruit, than their Presbyterian.

I demand again, if these persons should afterwards fall into error, or Heresy, which could not be proved by two witnesses, what course would Presbyterian government have taken? would it not have forborne process, till sufficient testimony might be brought to convince them? If suspicion of their unsound judgement had grown, would they not have examined them, and if they denied it, and no sufficient testimony could be brought against them, would not the Presbyters have let them alone? Hitherto we did the same.

I demand further, if any Presbytery in a Church, were suspected to be too remiss in proceeding against such Delinquents, would not the Presbytery of the neighbour Churches have taken the matter in hand, and so gathering into a Synod, first convinced such errors, and then condemned them, and

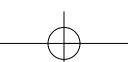
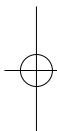
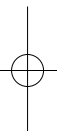
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the maintainers of them too, if they were found guilty of them, and persistent in them? Thus far also the Presbytery of our neighbour Churches did proceed as to gather into a Synod, and both convinced and condemned the errors. And though they did not proceed to condemn or censure the maintainers of them; yet when they had gotten proof thereof, they proceeded in their own congregations to the censure of their own erroneous members (after all other means to recover them used in vain:) And besides, they dealt with the Presbytery of our Church to do the same. And we hearing their complaints and their proofs, we respectively hearkened to them, and proceeded to the like censure in our Church, as they had done in theirs; And in like sort travailed with our members for their conviction, as they had done with theirs, even so far, that Mistress *Hutchinson* was brought to a recantation, though her prevarication of it brought her to a censure, yea the utmost censure, and that with general consent of our whole Church, and satisfaction of others. It seemeth then, that our Independency (as it is called) doth no more breed, nor nourish, nor tolerate errors, or Heresies, than Presbyterian discipline doth. And if there should a defect arise in any Church, there is the like remedy in the vigilancy of other Churches, and finally, obstinacy in all evils of notorious offense, whether in judgement or practice, meeteth at length with the same or like censure, in either government.

Let not therefore Mr *Baylie* allow himself in saying as he doth (in the close of his third Chapter) “That this new and singular way, the Lord hath so manifestly cursed with more bad fruits, and greater store of them, than ever yet did appear upon the tree of Brownism.” For though it becometh not us to make comparisons of fruits with other Churches (unless themselves did provoke us to it:) nor doth it concern us to deal with them about any offense, unless we dwelt near them, and knew their estate:) yet this is enough to us, to clear us unto Mr *Baylie*, and to the world, against all his exceptions, That (through the mercy of Christ) no evil fruit at all hath sprung from our Church Government. What offence soever, in judgement or practice, hath been suspected or found among us, it hath not sprung from the government, but from personal defects, either among the Brethren or Elders. And what hath been suspected, or found in either of them, hath either been cleared, or healed, or removed by the government. Blessed be the name of the Lord Jesus, whose throne is in *Zion* and his furnace in *Jerusalem*, who delighteth to bless his own ordinances with power and peace.



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CHAPTER IV

Of the antiquity of Congregational discipline, compared with Classical.

SECTION I

Mr *Baylie* speaketh of our Congregational, and (as he calleth it) our Independent way, as not having continued a week of years (that is, not 7 years) when the errors brake forth in *New England*, Page 59. Sometimes he maketh us the same in reality with the *Brownists* (Page 58) to whom he attributeth about 50 years of continuance, Page 59, sometimes he maketh us followers of Mr *Robinson*, “who stepped in to support (as he speaketh) languishing Brownism, when it was ready to fall,” Pages 17 and 54. All which expressions tend to make the world believe, that our Congregational way, or (as he calleth it) Independent, is but of yesterday, newly sprung up, unknown and unheard of in the former Ages of the Church; which if it were true, were no small prejudice to the way we walk in. The way of God is the old way, *Jeremiah* 6:16, yea so old, as fetcheth his antiquity from the ancient of days, and from the Lord Jesus, who is the way of Truth and of Life. *Id verum, quod primum: id primum quod ab initio.*⁵⁴ There is no false way, but is an aberration from the first institution.

Give me therefore leave to profess freely without offence, what I truly believe without scruple, that though the Acts of Church government (in the ordination of officers, and censure of offenders) by the Presbyters of neighbour Churches, be very ancient: yet not more ancient than *Humanus Episcopatus*⁵⁵ (as *Beza* calleth it:) nor so ancient, as the way of our Congregational government of each Church within itself, by the space of 300 years. I will not here speak of those Texts of Scripture (*Matthew*

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18:15,16,17; 1 *Corinthians* 5) which convince us, that Congregational discipline was instituted by Christ, and his Apostles. I refer them to the sequel, wherein our particular Tenents are discussed by Mr *Baylie*, which will come in due place (God willing) to be reviewed and examined. But,

In the first century, whilst the Apostles lived, we read of no act of Church power put forth by the Elders of Churches over absent Congregations, but only in *Acts* 15:28 with Chapter 16:4. But let it be considered:

1. That this Synod was not *Status Conventus*, a set monthly, or yearly Assembly, the ordinary standing Judicatory of the Church: nor assembled for administration of ordinary Church power (as ordination of Officers, or censure of offenders) but called together upon urgent, and unwonted occasion, the dissension of the Church of *Antioch*, which both craved, and needed direction in such a case, *Acts* 15:1,2. And we easily grant (what we willingly practice in a Congregational way) that neither doctrine, nor discipline can well proceed unto public Edification, when the Church is rent with dissension. The promise of Christ's presence with his Church, is given to them met in his name, and agreeing in his Name, *Matthew* 18:18,19. But when a Congregation wanteth agreement and peace amongst themselves, it is then a way of God (according to the pattern, *Acts* 15:2) to consult with some other Church, or Churches, either by themselves or their messengers met in a Synod. But then they send not to them for power to administer any ordinance amongst themselves, but for light to satisfy dissenters, and so to remove the stumbling block of the suspicion of maladministration of their power, out of the way.

But otherwise, when Churches want not peace nor light within themselves, to exercise that power without distraction, which the Lord hath given them, Christ doth not direct his Churches to gather into a Synod for removing of known offences either in Doctrine or manners: but only sendeth to the Pastors or Presbyters of each Church, to reform within themselves, what is amongst them, *Revelation* chapter 2 and chapter 3. A plain pattern to Churches, in case of public offenses tolerated in neighbour Churches, not forthwith to gather into a Synod (or Classical meeting) for redress thereof: but by Letters and messengers to admonish one another of what is behoveful; unless upon such admonition, they refuse to hearken to the wholesome counsel of their Brethren. And then the dissension of this Church from others hindering the free passage of the Gospel (as much as dissension amongst themselves doth) it may give just and necessary occasion of assembling a Synod of Elders, and messengers of Neighbour

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Churches for the conviction of their sin with common consent, and if (after long patience) they remain obstinate, to withdraw from them the right hand of Fellowship in the communion of Churches.

2. The Synod assembled at *Jerusalem*, (*Acts 15*) was not a convention or consistory of Elders apart from brethren: but such a number of Brethren were admitted into their Assembly, as carried the name of a whole Church, distinguished expressly from the Apostles, and Elders, *Acts 15:22,23*. The same who are called the Brethren, distinct from the Apostles and Elders, *verse 23*, are called also the whole Church, *verse 22*. And with them is the power communicated, which the Apostles and Elders put forth in those Synodical Letters, *verses 22 to 29*. If the Classis do admit the Brethren of the Church where they meet, to sit with the Elders, in debating and determining the matters of the Synod, even such a number of Brethren, as may denominate them a whole church, as then they shall come nearer to the Primitive pattern, so they may expect a freer passage of the presence and blessing of the Holy Ghost with them.

3. That Synod having heard and argued the whole cause in controversy, they give their judgment both of the doctrine taught at *Antioch*, and of the persons that taught it, as troublesome to the Church, and subversive to their souls, and unwarranted by themselves, *verse 24*. Nevertheless, they neither excommunicate them themselves, nor command the Church to excommunicate them: but leave that to the Church to exercise their own power according to the rule of the Word, in case any of their members should be found to persist obstinately in such pernicious doctrine after conviction.

4. That Synod laid indeed a burden (or weighty charge) not only of a doctrine to be believed, but of a duty in matter of practise to be performed (for avoiding of offence:) and lay it they did with the greater power, according to the greater measure of Grace and light received, both from Texts of Scriptures clearly opened, and from direction of Apostles personally present. But though we dare not allow alike equal power to ordinary Synods, unless they had the like equal presence and assistance of infallible guides, (such as the Apostles were:) yet our Congregational way doth easily allow the like power to the like orderly Synods so far forth, that when they have cleared from the Scriptures any doubtful point of doctrine or practice, to be of necessary observation, they will readily submit as to a counsel and command of God, both from the Word, and the Word dispensed in the way of an Ordinance. In such a case we acknowledge

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(with our best Divines) *Potestatem in Synodis διορθωτικὴν, καὶ διατακτικὴν* a power in Synods to direct and appoint, what spiritual prudence from the Word shall determine. But it is one thing, to direct and charge Churches from the Word of the Lord, what should be done by them: another thing to do their Acts of power for them. The one guideth them in the use and exercise of their power: the other taketh their power, or at least the exercise of it, out of their hand, which is more than the pattern of Synods (in *Acts* 15) doth hold forth.

SECTION II

In the second century of years, the Government of the Church was administered, not in a Classical, but in a Congregational way, as in the former century, of which we need no better evidence, than the evident Testimony of the *Magdeburgenses*, in the second century, chapter 7, “*tit. de consociatione ecclesiarum, cæterum (say they) si quis probatos auctores hujus seculi perspicat, videbit Formam Gubernationis propemodum Δημοκρατίας simlem suisse. Singulæ enim parem habebant potestatem, verbum Dei pure docendi, Sacramenta Administrandi, Excommunicandi Hæreticos, et sceleratos, ministros eligendi, vocandi, ordinandi, et justissimas ob causas iterum deponendi, conventus et Synodos congregandi, etc.* that is, If a man search the approved Authors of this age, he shall see the Form of the Government, to be almost like to a Democracy: For every single Church had equal power of preaching the Word, administering Sacraments, excommunicating heretics and notorious offenders, absolving penitents, choosing, calling, ordaining Ministers, and upon just and weighty causes deposing them again: power also gathering Conventions and Synods, etc.”

What is Congregational Government, and Independent from other Churches, and Presbyters, if this be not? Though he mentioneth Conventions and Synods, yet he speaketh of them, not as having power to govern the Churches, but of the Churches, as having power to gather them. But the Synods left the power of choosing, calling, ordaining Ministers, of censuring heretics and offenders, and of absolving Penitents to the single Churches, each one enjoying equal power within themselves. The help which neighbour Churches yielded one to another, was not *Cum imperio, et subjectione*, (as he speaketh in the same place) not with Dominion of some, and subjection of others, but *Charitatis et ædificationis studio*, out of brotherly love and care and desire of mutual edification. Which made him say, their

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Form of Government was like well-nigh, or almost to a Democracy: like to Democracy, in regard of mutual equality of power in one Church towards another: and yet but almost like to a Democracy, in regard each Church within itself had an Aristocracy or Presbytery for their guidance and Government, though they did no act of Church Government without concourse and censure of the Brethren.

The rash attempt of *Victor* (Bishop of *Rome*) in this age against the Churches of *Asia*, to censure them for a different observation of *Easter*, it only argueth, that the Mystery of iniquity did more early, and earnestly work in *Rome*, than in other Churches: but doth not hold forth any received custom of that age, the officers of one Church to proceed to the censure of their Brethren in other Churches. For this attempt of *Victor* was generally contested against by *Irenaeus*, and other Bishops.

SECTION III

In the third century of years, the Churches enjoyed (to use the words of the Centurists,⁵⁶ “*Cent. 3, cap. 7*) almost the like form of Government, according to the course of the Former Age, though somewhat more enlarged by ambition.”

For it appeareth, *Novatus* was excommunicated by a counsel at *Rome* under *Cornelius*. And *Samosatenus* was excommunicated and deposed by a council at *Antioch*. But yet where the Bishops did more attend to the rule of Scripture, and former precedents, Congregational Churches did still enjoy their wonted liberty and power.

Their Bishops and other Officers were not chosen to their hands by a consistory of Bishops (or Pastors) amongst themselves in the absence of the people: but (as *Cyprian* telleth us) amongst them, in *Carthage*, and almost throughout all the Provinces, “As they have received from the Apostles, so they hold it, that for the orderly Celebration of Ordination, all the neighbour Bishops, (or Pastors) of the same Province, where a Minister is to be Ordained, they come together to that people, and the Bishop is chosen in the presence of the people, to whom his life is best known. As (saith he) was done amongst us in the Ordination of our fellow Minister *Sabinus*; his Office was put upon him by the suffrage of the whole Brotherhood, and by the judgement of all the Pastors both present, and such as by Letters gave testimony of him: and so hands were imposed upon him,” *Cyprian Epistolarum l. 1, Epistola 4*. And in the same Epistle

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he saith, “The people fearing God, and obedient to the Ordinances of Christ ought to separate from a wicked Ruler, *Cum ipsa maxime potestatem habeat vel eligendi dignos Sacerdotes, vel indignos recusandi*: Seeing the people chiefly have the power of choosing worthy Ministers, and refusing the unworthy.” And as Election and Ordination of Ministers was transacted in the presence and with the suffrage of the people; so was excommunication also: for upon this ground, *Cyprian* argueth and aggravateth the offense of the Brotherhood in other Churches, who took upon them to question and waive that censure, *post Divinum Judicium*, (he meaneth, the judgment of God’s Ministers the Elders) *post populi suffragium, post Coepiscoporum consensum*: after the Divine judgement of their Elders, after the suffrage of the people, after the consent of neighbour Ministers, *Cyprian Epistolarum l. 1, Epistola 3*, where he giveth to each rank, their proper act in passing Church censure: he assigneth to the Elders of the Church *Judicium*, the judgement: to the people, *Suffragium*, suffrage or vote: to neighbour Ministers, *Consensum*, consent.

And that the people had the like concourse in the absolution and admission of penitents, appeareth by *Cyprian* in the same Epistle, “*Vix Plebi persuadeo* (saith he) *immo extorqueo, ut tales patiantur Admitti*: (tales nempe, de quorum sincera Pœnitentia vix Plebi constabat) *et justior factus est Fratemitatis Dolor, ex eo quod unus atque alius obnitente Plebe, et contradicente, mea tamen facilitate suscepti, pejores extiterunt quam prius fuerant*.

“With much ado I persuade people, and even wrest it from them, that they would suffer such to be admitted, (of whose repentance they were doubtful: and the grief of the brotherhood is so much the more just, because one or two before having been received by my facility (the people gainsaying, and striving against it) proved worse afterwards than they were before.”

Where though he spake of the peoples’ gainsaying and striving against his receiving of one or two: yet it evidently appeareth that in his ordinary and usual course, he was not wont to receive any without the peoples’ consent. And even then when they did gainsay and strive against his act at first, yet he was not wont to proceed, till with importunate persuasions, and wrestlings with them, he had prevailed with them to give way.

But of others he speaketh (*Epistolarum lib. 3, Epistola II.*) “*Cæteros*, saith he, *cum ingenti populi suffragio recipimus*: the rest were received with the free and general suffrage of the people.” And again, (*Epistola 16 of the*

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same book) he thus speaketh “*ad plebem, Examinabuntur singula, præsentibus, et judicantibus vobis.*”

And indeed (in the end of the tenth Epistle of his third Book) he professeth his resolution “to perform no act of Church Government without consent of the Elders and Deacons, and Brethren of the Church: *A primordio Episcopatus mei, statui, nihil sine consilio vestro, et sine consensu Plebis, mea privatim sententia gerere.*”⁵⁷

All these are express and lively lineaments of the very body of Congregational discipline, the same (for substance) wherein we walk at this day. And therefore let it not be slighted or despised, as a Novel invention, of seven, or twenty, or fifty years’ standing.

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CHAPTER V

Of the fruits of Congregational discipline

SECTION I

Of the fruits of it in the primitive times

WE have heard of the corrupt fruits, which Mr *Baylie* chargeth (but corruptly, and causelessly) upon Congregational discipline: Let us now see, whether better fruits have not been found to grow upon it, even such fruits as do argue the discipline to be the plantation of the Lord Jesus.

1. Presupposing that which hath been proved, that our Congregational discipline, is the same (for substance) wherein the Primitive Churches walked for the first 300 years, (to wit, during all the time of the Primitive Persecutions) I conceive (without arrogancy) we may acknowledge the fruits of their discipline to be the fruits of ours.

First, their exact strictness in examining and trying their *Catechumeni*, before they received them into *Ecclesiam Fidelium*, brought forth this savoury and spiritual fruit, the purity of Churches. Pagans themselves could not charge them with any crime, but the name and profession of Christianity, see *Pliny, Epistolarum lib. 10, Epistolam 97, Tertullian Apologetick, Chapter 3*. That which he saith of *Cajus Sejus*, was a general Elogy of their Church members, *Bonus vir, malus tantum quòd Christianus*.⁵⁸ A like fruit to that of *Daniel* against whom his enemies could find no occasion of complaint of error or fault, except it were for the profession of the Law of his God, Chapter 6:4,5.

And as their strict examination received their members pure: so their strict censure kept them pure. For in the Church, "*Judicabatur magno cum*

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pondere:— And in their Feasts they were temperate and religiously fruitful in savoury and gracious conference, and so departed better than they met, *Ut qui non tam Cœnam cœnaverint, quam disciplinam*,⁵⁹ *Tertul. Apol., Cap. 39.*

2. From this purity and vigilancy of their discipline, in the admission of their members, and in the administration of their censures, there sprung forth many other gracious fruits, as their holy and constant and confident confessions of the Name of Christ before judgement seats, the patient and glorious Martyrdom of innumerable Saints, to the conviction and astonishment of a world of persecutors.

Whence also sprung at last, the conversion of a great part of the word unto the truth, the advancement of a Christian Emperor, the rooting out of Paganish Idolatry, and propagation of the profession of Christian Religion, not only through the Roman Empire, but in many other Nations exempt from the power of Roman Armies, yet not from the power of the Name of Christ, and of his Church.

Afterwards, in the days of *Constantine*, when the external peace and liberty of the Churches, encouraged all sorts of men (clean and unclean) to offer themselves to the fellowship of the Church, and Congregational discipline began to be neglected through the usurped authority of the Bishops, and Presbyters, the limits of the Church began to be as large as the Precincts of the Parish: and the Church itself (which before was wont to be as a Garden enclosed, *Canticles 4:12.*) did now become as a Wilderness lying open to all the Beasts of the Field; who so would offer himself, might have free passage into the bosom of the Church: and offer themselves they did, not from the savour of spiritual gifts (as was wont to be done in Congregational discipline:) but from respect to the countenance of higher powers, and the privileges and preferments flowing therefrom; Church members being far more readily received to place of trust and honour, than men without. But this inundation of corrupt members was prevented by the vigilancy of Congregational discipline, whilst it stood in force, in the former centuries.

3. This was another good Fruit of the Congregational discipline in those primitive times, That whilst it took place in the Churches, there could be no place, nor way open for the advancement of Antichrist, no nor for the usurpation of Episcopal prelacy. For whilst every Church kept their Government within their own Congregation, they knew not the heavy and Lordly yoke of Cathedral Churches, much less were they trodden

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down with impositions from the See of Rome. It is true, *Victor* Bishop of Rome attempted a censure against the Churches of *Asia*, but his Arrogancy was speedily repressed by *Ireneus*, and sundry others both in *Europe* and *Asia*. And when some scandalous persons in the *African* Churches did appeal in *Cyprian's* time from those Churches unto Rome, *Cyprian*, and his fellow Bishops (or Presbyters) in the *African* Churches, did easily prevent the impeachment of their Church Government from remote Churches, and kept still their Government within themselves.

SECTION 2

Of the Fruits of Congregational discipline in our Churches in New England

2. For the fruits of Congregational discipline, as it hath been exercised amongst us (though in much weakness) the Lord hath not left us without testimony from Heaven.

First, in making these Churches a little sanctuary (through his grace) to many thousands of his servants, who fled over hither to avoid the unsupportable pressures of their consciences by the Episcopal tyranny.

Secondly, in blessing the Ministry of our Preachers here with like fruits of conversion (as in our native Country) of sundry elder and younger persons, who came over hither not out of respect to conscience, or spiritual ends, but out of respect to friends, or outward enlargements: but have here found that grace, which they sought not for.

Thirdly, in discovering and suppressing those errors of Antinomians, and Familists, which brake forth here amongst us, and might have proceeded to the subversion of many souls, had not the blessing of Christ upon the vigilancy of Congregational discipline, either prevented or removed, or healed the same.

Fourthly, it hath been also a testimony from Heaven of God's blessing upon our way, that many thousands in *England* in all the Quarters of the kingdom, have been awakened to consider of the cause of Church discipline, for which we have suffered this hazardous and voluntary banishment into this remote Wilderness: and have therefore by letters conferred with us about it, and been (through mercy) so far enlightened, as to desire an utter subversion of Episcopacy, and conformity, yea and the Honourable Houses of Parliament, the Lord hath been pleased to help them so far to

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consider of our sufferings, and of the causes thereof, as to conclude a necessity of reformation of the Ecclesiastical state, (amongst other causes,) by reason of the necessity put upon so many *English* subjects to depart from all our employments, and enjoyments in our Native Country, for conscience sake.

SECTION 3

Of the Fruits of Congregational discipline in England

3. For the fruits of Congregational discipline in *England*, they that walk in that way amongst you, might speak far more particularly, and largely, than I here can do at such a remote distance. But if Books, and Letters, and reports do not too much abuse us with false intelligence, the great, and gracious, and glorious victories, whereby the Lord hath wrought salvation for *England* in these late wars, have been as so many testimonies of the blessing of God upon our way. For the chiefest instruments, which God hath delighted to use herein, have been the Faith and fidelity, the courage, and constancy of Independents. And when I say Independents, I mean not those corrupt Sects and Heresies, which shroud themselves under the vast title of Independency, and in the meantime cast off all Church Government, and Churches too; but such as profess the kingdom of Christ in the government of each holy Congregation of Saints within themselves.

Far be it from me to undervalue the brotherly assistance of the Scottish Churches and Commonwealth in working so great a deliverance for England. Yea I account their concurrence a greater matter than assistance in this great work. Their exemplary piety and zeal, their courage, and confidence in rising up, and standing out against the invasion of Episcopal tyranny, and superstition, did doubtless quicken and encourage England to stand for the like liberty in the like cause: and to put forth that zeal, which the Lord had kindled in the hearts of many for Reformation. And this was more than an assistance, even a guidance. Afterwards the forwardness of the Scottish Nation to advance their Armies into the English Fields for the help of England against the Common Enemies of Church and State, was an Act of brotherly love never to be forgotten without due and thankful acknowledgement, and encouragement. But yet let the good pleasure of the Lord be acknowledged, who out of his abundant grace, hath granted the chiefest successes to the English designs by the Forces

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of the Independents, which may not be denied without too much ingratitude both to God and man. Let all the glory thereof be wholly and solely given to the Lord: but yet let not the instruments be accounted unfruitful, by whom the Lord hath brought forth such blessed Fruits of victory, and liberty, both from civil servitude, and superstitious thralldom, and withal so great an advancement of Reformation both in Church and State.

The inundation of Sects and Heresies in *London*, and the retarding of Reformation in England, which have both of them been objected as the bitter fruits of the Congregational way, have been cleared above, to spring from other Roots, not from that way. See Chapter 3, Section 5, the end of it.

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The second Part (being Doctrinal, and Controversial) Concerning Congregational Churches and their Government

The PRÆFACE

The Author of the Book entitled *Vindiciæ Clavium*,⁶⁰ thought good to conceal his own Name, though in matters of Accusation (whereof the Book is full.) It was the manner of the Romans (and that Roman manner was but just and equal) to have the Accuser *show himself face to face*, Acts 25:16. And indeed the equity and equality of Brotherly love would have required him either to have declared his own Name, or to have concealed mine as well as his own. A little love amongst Brethren would sooner heal the dissensions of Brethren, than great store of Books, breathing lust to contention. It is neither Presbyterians, nor those of the Congregational way (whom they call Independents) that do hinder either Reformation or Peace: but only the want of ἀληθεύειν ἐν Ἀγάπῃ, the want of following and holding forth the Truth (or that which we believe to be the Truth) in love, on both sides: It is love that edifieth both souls and States.

But since the author of *Vindiciæ* is pleased to conceal his Name, I therefore think it not amiss (for brevity's sake, and to prevent a long Periphrasis of the Author of *Vindiciæ Clavium*) when I am occasioned to name him (which is very often) only to take leave to call him *Vindex*, or (in English) sometime the *Assertor*, sometime the *Avenger*; which both the

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Title and Purport of his Book, do hold him forth to be, acting the part of both.

The scope of his Book (so far as it concerneth me) is chiefly to shew forth my weaknesses and contradictions, as his Title manifesteth. But if Christ may have any glory by that, I shall willingly acknowledge (without his accusation, and much more without his conviction) that I am made up of weaknesses and contradictions. The best good in me is but weak at the best: and that which is corrupt, is weakness itself. If there be Old and New man in me (as by the grace of Christ I see what I am) verily I cannot but find a bundle, not only of contradictions, but of contrafactions in myself. I believe, I doubt: I allow, I condemn: I hope, I fear: I love, I hate: I rejoice, I grieve: I would, I would not: I do, I undo: the same self, the same thing, at the same time.

Nevertheless all this will not argue that which the *Avenger* saith; "*He hath heard, that I have often altered my Judgment since I went to New England: Nor that the Author of the Keys does contradict the Author of the Way, which is himself.*"

I have not had liberty to peruse the *Way*, since it was published: but I see by the first words of it, that the Publishers had not the Copy which was taken hence from me, but an imperfect Transcript. But I do believe what the Publishers do report; "*That setting aside some difference in Logical Terms, there is no material difference between the Keys and the Way, either in Doctrine of Divinity, or in Church practice.*"

Yes, (saith the *Avenger*) I find, He doth (in these) as flatly contradict himself, as ever any man did. "*Instance in one place, (and leave the rest to the following discourse.) In the Keys, (Page 4) he saith; The Keys were delivered to Peter as an Apostle, as an Elder, and as a Believer. The sense of the words (of Christ to Peter) will be most full, if all the severall considerations be taken jointly together. But in the Way, (Page 27) He saith, "The Power of the Keys is given to the Church, to Peter not as an Apostle, not as an Elder, but as a professed Believer: Is not this a flat contradiction?"*

Answer 1: The words are not mine, but the *Assertor's*, which he reporteth me to say in the *Keys*; "*The Keys were delivered to Peter as an Apostle, as an Elder, and as a Believer.*" I would be loath to be found to speak so illogically, as to say, *Socrates* hath a power of motion given to him, as a living Creature, as a Man, as a Philosopher. It is a trivial rudiment in Schools, Whatsoever is attributed to any as such, is given to all such universally, and to such reciprocally and only. If the *Keys* were delivered

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to *Peter* as an Apostle, then to all the Apostles, and only to the Apostles. My words expressed by me are plain enough, and (I thank God) not destitute of reason. *“It hath proved a busy question, how Peter is to be considered in receiving this Power of the Keys, whether as an Apostle, or as an Elder (for an Elder also he was) or as a Believer, professing his Faith before the Lord Jesus, and his fellow Brethren.*

I added indeed, the sense of the words of Christ to *Peter*, (*“To thee will I give the Keys of the Kingdom of heaven”*) *will be most full, if all the several considerations be taken jointly together.*

Wherein as I expound mine own meaning in the words following (in that Treatise of the *Keys*) So the Publishers of the *Keys*, do fitly express the same in their Epistle [*“The Disposal”* (say they) *“of this Power, may lie in a due allotment into divers hands according to their several concernments; rather than in an entire and sole Trust committed to any one man, or any sort or rank of Men, or Officers”*.] What saith the *Avenger* to this? *“Herein (saith he) Perhaps we might agree with them, but then not with the Author, who places all the power in one sort of men alone, that is, the Brethren without Officers, in the Way”*, page 45. But the *Assertor* taketh too much liberty, to affirm, I say that in that place, which in the same passage I do expressly deny; My words are express, *“They, (that is the Brethren) may not administer Sacraments in defect of all Officers, because by the appointment of Christ, that pertaineth only to such as are called by Office to preach the Gospel”*, Matthew 28:19,20.

But (saith the *Avenger*) in the *Way* (page 27) He saith, *“The Power of the Keys is given to the Church, to Peter, not as an Apostle, nor as an Elder, but as a professed Believer, in the name of Believers. Is not this a flat contradiction?”* No verily, the Solution is very easy and obvious, even to the *Avenger* himself, if he would but have cast his eye upon the very next words in the *Keys*, whence this ἐναντιόφανες⁶¹ is fetched. The words run thus, *“The sense of the words will be most full, if all the several considerations be taken jointly together. Take Peter considered not only as an Apostle, but withal an Elder also, and a Believer too, professing his Faith, all may well stand together. For there is a different power given to all these, to an Apostle, to an Elder, to a Believer: and Peter was all these, and received all the Power which was given by Christ to any of these, or to all of these together.— So that Augustine did not mistake, when he said, Peter Received the Keys in the Name of the Church.*

I cannot conceive what should move the *Avenger* so confidently to charge a flat contradiction in these two passages, and that as flatly as ever man did contradict himself: unless it were partly through misreport of my words

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in the one place: whereof before) partly, through misapprehension what the force in Logic is, of a *quatenus tale*:⁶² For he that knoweth that, he is not ignorant, that if *Peter* had received the Power of the Keys, *quatenus Apostolus*, or *quatenus Presbyter*, as an Apostle, or as an Elder; then only Apostles, or only Elders had received all Church power, which all judicious Divines, and (I doubt not) himself amongst them will utterly deny. But he saith *Peter* received the power of the Keys, as standing in the room of all sorts of Officers and Members of the Church, and so in the name of the whole Church, He affirmeth that *Peter* received all Church power, which is found in all professed Believers, whether Officers, or private Brethren: and of Officers, whether Ordinary, as Elders; or Extraordinary, as Apostles and Evangelists. And is there any passage in the *Keys* which crosseth or contradicteth this? and that flatly, and so flatly, as never any man more?

Let this serve for my first Answer to this Contradiction: let me also add another.

Answer 2: If there had been some difference between the *Way* and the *Keys* in some expressions: yet (as the Prefacers related from a Letter of mine to a friend of theirs:) it lay rather in Logical Terms, than in Doctrine of Divinity, or Church Practice: And such, amongst others, is this very point in hand. If there seem to be any difference in the expression of the one Treatise, or of the other, about this point, it is in the first Subject of the Power of the *Keys* (which is a Logical Notion:) but the point is the same, both in Doctrine of Divinity, and in Church practice.

As for the imputation of Inconstancy, which the *Avenger* is pleased to put upon me, "*He hath heard that I have often altered my Judgement since I went to New England*": I should thank him if he would tell me either wherein I have altered my Judgement, or from whom he so heard: Meanwhile, he may do well to remember, That a Citizen of *Zion* (a pure member of a pure Church) taketh not up a *Reproach against his Neighbour*, Psalm 15:3. *John Baptist* was surmised by some to be a *Reed shaken with the wind*; but it was a windy Fancy.

3. And for a third Answer, It were no just matter of calumny if in some later Tractate I should retract, or express more commodiously, what I wrote in a former less safely. *Augustine* (as much above me, as the Moon to a little Star) lost no whit of his Reputation in the Church, by writing two whole Books of Retractions of his own Opinions and Expressions.

CHAPTER I

Of the CHURCH, to which Christ committed the Power of the Keys

SECTION I

V*index* doth here first enquire what I mean by this Church: whereof, though he might fully have informed himself from the fifth point of the first Chapter of the *Keys* (which he himself had in hand:) yet in hope of some advantage, He chose rather to fetch it from another Tract of mine, touching our Church Way: Which though he say, it went up and down in the dark; yet its dark walking was no intent of mine, but that it should find either timely impression, or (by advice of friends) utter suppression. Now in that Tract I said, The Church to which the Lord Jesus committed the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, (Matthew 16:19) is *Cætus Fidelium*, commonly called a particular visible Church, meeting together with common and joint consent into one Congregation, for public worship and mutual edification.

“But (saith the Avenger) of all the rest this is the most improbable sense of our Saviour’s words, If by the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth, he meaneth that Church of which he spake before in verse 18. But that was either the Catholic Visible Church: or rather the Invisible Mystical Church; for that only is built upon the Rock, and against that the gates of Hell shall never prevail: Whereas Particular Churches may fail.”

Answer 1. It is not a more improbable sense of our Saviour’s words, to understand the Kingdom of Heaven (Matthew 16:19) of a Particular Visible Church, rather than of the Catholic Visible Church. For I do not read that the Scripture doth anywhere acknowledge a Catholic Visible Church at all. The Catholic Church is not Visible as a Church: and the Church

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that is Visible, is not Catholic. Doctor *Ames* his Judgement seems to me more Orthodoxal, *Ecclesia non est tota simul Visibilis*.⁶³ *Medull*, l. 1, c. 32, num. 1. For though the whole Church (or which is all one, the Catholic Church) may be Visible in her singular Members; yet so they are not a Church. Or though it may be Visible in the several Particular Congregations, yet none of them is Catholic. Or though all of them together may be called a Catholic Church, or General Assembly, if they were met together; Yet I suppose, *Vindex* would be loath to say, That Christ giveth the Power of the Keys (all Ecclesiastical Power) into their hands. Such general Assemblies are rare and extraordinary; and extraordinary Assemblies are not fit Judicatories to hear and censure ordinary offenses, or to administer the ordinary Acts of Church Power.

Answer 2. He therefore distrusting (as it seemeth) that to be the meaning of our Saviour's words (to understand the Kingdom of Heaven of the Catholic Visible Church) He expoundeth it rather to be meant of the Invisible Mystical Church. And indeed, true it is, that *Peter* and other Preachers of the Gospel have received such a Power of the Keys, as by the Ministry of the Word, to beget Faith in their Hearers, and so to open to them a door into the Invisible Church: as also to convince unbelievers of their damnable Estate, and so Ministerially to declare them shut out from the fellowship of the Invisible Church. But there is also a Power of the Keys, to open a door unto professed Believers into the Visible Church: and again to shut them out of the Visible Church, when they grow scandalous. And therefore the Visible Church cannot be excluded from one part of the meaning of the Kingdom of Heaven, whereof *Peter* received the Keys.

Besides, certain it is, that when by the power of the Keys, a Believer is received into the Invisible Church, he can never be shut again out of that Church. But the Keys here given to *Peter*, have a Power to shut out of the Kingdom of heaven, even the same Persons, unto whom they have opened the door before. And therefore the Kingdom of Heaven (whereof *Peter* received the Keys) is not meant only of the Invisible Church, but of the Visible Church also.

Answer 3: The reasons which *Vindex* objecteth to the contrary, will not prevail against this Truth, no more than the gates of hell against the Church.

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Objection 1. It is the Invisible Church only which is built upon the Rock, and against that, the gates of Hell shall never prevail: whereas Particular Churches may fail.

Answer: It is not true, that the Invisible Church only is built upon a Rock; for Particular Churches are built upon a Rock also. Built they are upon Divine Institution, and Christ is laid for the foundation of them; or else they are not Churches of Christ, which are described to be *in God our Father, and in our Lord Jesus Christ*, 1 Thessalonians 1:1. The Apostle Paul laid Christ for the foundation of the Visible Church of Corinth, 1 Corinthians 3:10,11. Christ is not the head of that Church whereof he is not the foundation: and where he is the foundation, he is also the Rock, on which they are built; for he is not a sandy foundation.

“Yea, but Particular Churches may fail.”

What then? So may true Disciples of Christ fail (in respect of bodily subsistence) and yet the gates of Hell never prevail against them; For they will be received into everlasting habitations, Luke 16:9.

“Yea, but Particular Churches may fail and fall away from the Faith; all the Churches of Asia are fallen from Christ to Mahomet: and sundry in Europe, from Christ to Antichrist.”

Yet those Churches that were founded upon Christ, and builded upon that Rock, they neither failed, nor fell away. It was their Successors, and not they, that failed, and fell in that sort. If the Posterity of an holy Particular Church do degenerate, they were never founded upon Christ, but in an outward form. God may remove the Candlestick (that is, his particular Church) out of that place (say out of Corinth or Ephesus, *Revelation 2:5*) yet he will ever have some or other Particular Churches visible in one place or other; and so against that Church state, the gates of hell shall never prevail. Dr *Whitaker* declareth the Judgement of Orthodox Protestants in this point; *Nos dicimus, aliquam semper fore in mundo Ecclesiam, quæ Christo pareat, eamque visibilem,*⁶⁴ *De Ecclesia*, Quest. 3, cap. 2. *Junius* in his *Animadversions in Bellarm.* Controv. 4 de Concil. and Eccles. Cap. 13 Art. 1. *Concludimus inquit, ne visibilem quidem Ecclesiam, posse Deficere, atque interire, adeo ut in se ipsa sit invisibilis, etc.*⁶⁵ And Doctor *Ames* beareth the like witness. *Ecclesia nunquam plane definit esse visibilis.*⁶⁶ *Medull.* 1, 1 cap. 31. And this they intend of some Particular Visible Church or other. For a Catholic Visible Church they dispute against, but maintain the Catholic Church to be invisible. *Whitaker's de Ecclesia Q.* 2a, 10, *Dicimus*

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*Ecclesiam Catholicam invisibilem esse, etiam tum cum Particularis quæq; Ecclesia vel maxime floret.*⁶⁷

Objection 2: “*The Kingdom of Glory is one part of the meaning of the Kingdom of Heaven, and it is not contradistinguished to a Particular Congregation, but to the General Visible Church on Earth.*”

Answer: There is not any Particular Congregation on earth, but may be, upon just occasion, contradistinguished from the Kingdom of Glory. It may truly be said, whosoever is duly bound or loosed in any one Particular Church, is also bound and loosed in the Kingdom of Glory. There is no semblance of difficulty herein.

Nevertheless, when (in the *Keys*, page 2) I spake of the Power of the Keys given to *Peter* to bind on earth, I did not mean it in any one single Particular Church on earth alone, but generally and indefinitely, in every Particular Church on earth. For every Apostle had transcendent power in every Particular Church on earth: And every Particular Church on earth (being all of one common Nature militant here on Earth, and different from the Triumphant Church in Heaven) may justly be contradistinguished from the Kingdom of Glory. But yet I never dreamed of a General Visible Church on earth (as *Vindex* expoundeth me:) unless he mean it, as Visible in Particular Congregations. And if he so mean, it will better express the Truth, and my meaning, to say, That *Peter* received the Keys to bind and loose (as in the invisible Church in some sort, so) in the Particular Visible Church indefinitely; that is, in every Particular Visible Church on earth. For a Particular Visible Church is of a common and general nature, and comprehendeth in it every singular Particular Visible Church, as that of Corinth, Ephesus, Philippi, and the rest.

Objection 3. “*That Church is meant (in Matthew 16:19) whereof Peter was one (Way, Page 1). But Peter was not a Member of such a Particular Congregation: for there was none such extant, when Christ spake these words to Peter.*”

Answer: I presume *Vindex* is not ignorant, that in rational discourses, and propositions of Art, The *Copula* doth not *Connotare Tempus*, but only *Connectere* the *Subject*, and the *Predicate*: else he will open a way to insoluble fallacies.

As in that Sophism, *Nullus Infans fuit Juvenis:*

Omnis Senex fuit Infans:

*Ergo, Nullus Senex fuit Juvenis.*⁶⁸

This Connotation of time in the *Copula*, breedeth the Fallacy; Let *Vindex* therefore be pleased to leave such arguings to Sophisters, or make use of

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them when he will refresh his wit in Argument with young Scholars. But amongst Brethren, what if I should say, Resurrection to glory is given to the Bodies of the faithful, whereof Elect Infants are a part? Though the resurrection be not yet come, nor Elect Infants yet come to be faithful? yet the Proposition is true, because the *Subject* and *Prædicate* have true Connection in the nature of the thing, though not in the present order of time. When Christ directed his Disciples, and amongst them *Peter*, in case of private offence, and obstinacy therein, at length, to tell the Church, whether by Church he meant the Particular Congregation, or the Presbytery; neither of them both were then extant, when Christ spake these words to *Peter*. But will that be a good Argument to prove, That Christ did not direct the offended Brother either to tell the Particular Church, or to tell the Presbytery, because neither of them were then extant?

Objection 4: “*That Church whereof Peter received the Keys, was such, whereto Peter or any offended Brother might tell an offence, and have it censured. But that was never done in a Church of Saints, Believers without Officers; nor was the Church of Corinth such a Church, but had Officers, who might authoritatively censure the incestuous Person, etc.*”

Answer. This is another passage of Sophistry, but somewhat more open.— For if the Objection be cast into a true Syllogism, it will run thus: The Church of which *Peter* received the Keys, was such to which *Peter*, and any offended Brother might tell an offence, and have it censured. But the Church of Saints and Believers without Officers, was not such to whom *Peter*, or any offended Brother might tell an offence, and have it censured.

Thus the *minor* is justly denied: and therefore *Vindex* chooseth rather to put his *minor* in other terms;

The Church of Saints and Believers without Officers, was not such a Church, to whom *Peter* or any offended Brother did tell an offence.

But now there is *Quatuor Termini*⁶⁹ in his Syllogism: Might tell an offence, and Did tell an offence, make two different *Mediums*. What if the Church of Corinth when they censured the Incestuous Person, were not such a Church without Officers? Or, what if no Church wanted Presbyters in the Apostles’ times? If it were so, it was the greater bounty of Christ to them in those Primitive times, when the gifts of the Spirit were poured out in more abundance. But yet if a Church of Saints, or Believers without Officers, have power from Christ to elect Officers, then have they power also much more to admit Members. And if they have power to admit them without Officers, they have like power upon just

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offence to exclude them out of their holy Communion with Officers. For it is the same power to open and to shut, *Instituere, et destituere*.

Objection 5: “*The Church to which the Keys are given, are said to be such as do all of them meet in one place for the administration of the Ordinances of Christ:*

“*But the Ordinances of Christ are not to be found, much less administered in a Church of Believers without Officers.*”

Answer: This latter Proposition is left naked and unguarded without proof. And I confess, *Ipse dixit* may go for a warrant in *Pythagorean* Philosophy: and *teste me ipso*⁷⁰ may go for a warrant in Royal Grants of Favour: but not in matters of Faith, nor of Justice between King and Subject, much less in matters of controversy amongst Brethren. The truth is, Though the Ordinances of Christ may not all of them be administered in a Church of Believers without Officers, and authoritative dispensing of the Word and Censures, and Ministration of Sacraments: yet some Ordinances of Christ may be found and administered in a Church of Believers without Officers. As it is an Ordinance of Christ, two or three of them (much more all of them) to meet and pray together, and admonish one another in Christ’s Name, Matthew 18:20. It is an Ordinance of Christ, to elect Officers, (Deacons and Elders) for this is the power and privilege of the Church of Brethren. Though *Titus* was left in Crete to ordain Elders in every City (Titus 1:5) yet not to elect them: As *Cyprian* argueth from sundry passages of the Acts of the Apostles, and other Scriptures; and thereupon inferreth, *Plebs Dominicis Præceptis obsequens, et Deum metuens—ipsa maxime potestatem habet, vel eligendi dignos Sacerdotes, vel indignos recusandi.*⁷¹ *Cyprian. Eplarum l. 1, Epla 4.*

And if a Church of Believers may thus supply themselves with Officers when they want them, and if Officers and Brethren have all ordinary Church power, (and so all Ordinances of Christ, which are ordinarily administered, found amongst them) then what hindereth, but that a Church of Believers hath in it, as some Ordinances formally, so all radically and virtually, and the same administered, and administrable amongst them?

Objection 6. “*When it is said (in the Way, page 1:) Christ committed the Keys to the Church, that is, to a Particular Congregation, it must be meant either Subjective, or Objective; If it be meant in this latter sense, That the Keys are committed to the Church, as the Object of the exercise of the Keys, that is, for the good and use of the Church, it is truly said, but nothing to the purpose. In this sense, the Keys are given first and more immediately to the Invisible Mystical*

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Church (all are yours, whether Paul, etc.) then to the General Visible Church for their sakes; then to the Particular Congregation, as a part and Member of that General Visible Church”.

“But if it be meant in the former sense (as it must be so meant, or else the Author of the Way doth equivocate with us from the beginning throughout the whole Book) then he falleth into the extreme of the Brownists, which he so laboureth to avoid. For to take the Church (in Matthew 16.) For a particular Congregation of Believers without Officers, is a new, strange, and false Gloss, maintained by none but Brownists, and such like Separatists.”

Answer: When I said Christ committed the Keys to the Church, that is, to a Particular Congregation, I meant it indeed *Subjective*, though not excluding *Objective*. For I do not make the Particular Visible Church a different Church from the Invisible. The distribution of the Church into Visible and Invisible, is not into divers kinds of Churches, nor into divers kinds of Members of the same Church, but into divers Adjuncts of the same Members of the same Church: who in respect of their Spiritual and Internal Estate (to wit, their Faith) are Invisible: but in respect of their External condition (to wit, the Profession of Faith) are Visible. The Particular Church (I speak of it indefinitely) receiveth the power of the Keys both *Subjective* to itself, and *Objective* for itself, though the saving benefit thereof redound only to the Elect amongst them, who are also of them. “Neither is this to fall into the extreme of (those whom you call) Brownists, to take the Church for a Particular Congregation without Officers.”

For first, When I wrote that Proposition (in the first words of the *Way*) it was not then in my mind to understand any other Particular Congregation to which Christ had committed all ordinary Church Power, and the administration thereof, but to a Congregation of Believers furnished with Officers. For I spake of such a Church whereof *Peter* was one; and he was an Officer. Though I perceive Mr *Rutherford* understood me otherwise, (as you also do:) and so from thence raiseth his first controversy: “*Whether the Church of Believers destitute of the Eldership, have the power of the Keys?*”

Which (to avoid misconstruction) I expressed more distinctly in the Tract of the *Keys*. But yet, take it as he doth, for a Church of Believers without Officers; They have received some part of the Power of the Keys formally, as the election of Officers, etc. and the whole ordinary Power of the Keys, radically and virtually. The stock of the Vine (which groweth in the bulk from the root) hath not immediate power to bring forth Grapes; but yet it hath power to produce branches, which do bring forth Grapes:

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So the Body of the Church of Believers, though they have not immediate power of rule authoritatively to dispense the Word, or to administer Sacraments at all: yet they have power to produce such Officers as may perform the same.

Again secondly, Dr *Whitakers* was none of them whom you call Brownists, yet he speaking of this Text (which you quote in this Paragraph, to prove that Ministers are given to the Church *objective*, for their good, not *subjective*, so as the Church to have power over them, 1 *Corinthians* 3:22,23. He beareth witness against your gloss: “*Apostolus*, saith he, *non tantum ait Ministros institutos esse propter utilitatem Ecclesiae: sed sic illos esse Ecclesiae, ut Ecclesia est Christi. At ecclesia Christo subjicitur non propter Christi utilitatem instituta est. Et Apostolus Ecclesiam esse Dei Templum, affirmat: Ministri in Templo, non supra Templum.*”⁷² *Whitak. Controv. 4, Quest. 1, Num. 11, in fine.* Neither was *Parker* one of those whom you call Brownists, or such like Separatists, but wrote against them. But yet he understandeth the Church, (*Matthew* 16) of a particular Congregation of Believers, as distinct from Officers: yea and proveth it at large. *Parker de Ecclesiastica Politia, l. 3, cap. 1, 2, 3.*

Objection 7. “*To conclude, the Church of which our Saviour speaketh, is called here the Kingdom of Heaven (on Earth:) But a Particular Congregation of Believers is never called the Kingdom of Heaven; being but a Member or Corporation of that Kingdom. It were as improper to call a Congregation, Christ’s Kingdom, as to call London the Kingdom of England.*”

Answer 1. It is not material whether a Particular Congregation of Believers be ever expressly called the Kingdom of Heaven or no; It is enough it is called a Church, yea as it is distinguished from Church Officers. Those whom he calleth the whole Church distinguished from the Apostles and Elders (*Acts* 15:22) the same he calleth the Brethren, verse 23. And if the Brethren may be called the Church, they may justly also be called the Kingdom of Heaven, seeing the style of the Kingdom of Heaven is usually given to the Church. You may more truly observe, that the Presbytery is never called in Scripture the Kingdom of Heaven: no, nor are they called the Church, unless it be in that one place, (*Matthew* 18:17) which yet may sooner be presumed, than proved to be understood of the Presbytery; I mean, a Consistory of Presbyters, distinct from the Congregation of Believers.

Answer 2: I dare not say that the Particular Visible Church is never called the Kingdom of Heaven. For when Christ went out to hire labourers into

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his Vineyard, it was into this or that Particular Church, respectively. And this Vineyard thus destitute of Labourers or Officers, and distinguished from them, is called the Kingdom of Heaven, *Matthew 20:1*.

Again, when the Kingdom of Heaven is compared to ten Virgins, five wise, and five foolish, (*Matthew 25:1,2*) this is a description of the estate of each Particular Church, respectively; without respect to their Officers. Besides, when the Kingdom of God is said to be within us, (*Luke 17:21*). And all the faithful are said to be made Kings and Priests unto God (*Revelation 1:6*). Even a Kingdom of Priests (*1 Peter 2:9*) can it then be termed an improper speech to call a Particular Church of Believers, the Kingdom of Heaven?

“Yes, they are but a Member, or Corporation of the Kingdom: and it were improper to call London the Kingdom of England.”

But every similar part of a similar Body doth properly partake both in the Name and Nature of the whole. Every part of water is water, and is both cold and moist, as the whole water is. And such a part of such a Body, is a Particular Visible Church. The Church of Corinth is said to be the Body of Christ, and the members thereof, members in particular. And Christ hath given unto them all his Officers, as well as unto other Churches, *1 Corinthians 11:27,28*. But such is not the State of London. London is not a similar, but a dissimilar part of England, and different from all the Corporations of England, different in power, different in privileges: How then can a comparison of unequals, be drawn to parallel a state of equals.

SECTION II

What the KEYS of the Kingdom of HEAVEN be

In opening what the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven be, it was not my intent to enumerate them all distinctly and particularly in that first Chapter of the Script of the Keys, which was but a Preface and Introduction to the whole Tractate. I thought it enough to give an instance only in general, there, in two or three examples; reserving a more exact distribution of them to the chapters following: and referring each sort of them to their several Subjects in their proper place, lest I might clog myself and the Reader with needless repetitions. I therefore contented myself to say in general, *“The Keys are the Ordinances of Christ, which he hath instituted to*

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be administered in his Church, as the preaching of the Word, as also the administering of the Seals and Censures.”

I instanced in these, as most obvious, and of easiest apprehension to any vulgar Reader. But in instancing these, I supposed no man would be of so narrow apprehension, as not to conceive those things to be included, without which, these cannot duly be performed. As, the word cannot be preached, nor the Sacraments dispensed, without a vocation unto such spiritual Administrations. Nor can it be doubted, that if there must be a vocation to administer these, there must be also some, who have power from Christ to give such a vocation.

Albeit, If it had been of any weight for the expediting of any controversy about the Keys (which I know none:) I might easily have given some definition of the Keys; as to say, The Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven are spiritual Powers given by Christ to his Church to dispense the Treasures of his Kingdom, for the opening and shutting, binding and loosing the spiritual Estates of men in the Church. By spiritual Powers, I mean spiritual callings, and spiritual gifts fitting for them, enabling to some spiritual Acts: By the treasures of the Kingdom I mean the Word, Seals, and Censures, and the spiritual blessings laid up in them. But Callings, Gifts, and Treasures, are all of them Ordinances. The other parts of the Definition, what be the Acts, and Ends, Objects, and Subjects of this power, I opened formerly in the third, fourth, and fifth Paragraphs of the first chapter of the *Keys*.

But upon what I expressed in this Paragraph, *Vindex* is pleased to animadvert some things.

1. *“In this Paragraph (saith he) as you do clearly lay down the state of the Question: so do you strongly confute the scope of your whole Book, which is to give the People a share in the Government of the Church.”*

Answer: *Vindex* doth clearly mistake my scope and meaning, to think I did lay down the state of the Question in this Paragraph. For I think it is no Question at all, That the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, are the Ordinances of Christ, which he hath instituted to be administered in his Church. Neither is it the scope of my whole Book, to give the people a share in the Government of the Church: Nay, it is not the scope of the greater part of the Book: Nay further, there be that blame the Book for the other Extreme, That it placeth the Government of the Church not at all in the hands of the People, but of the Presbytery. So various are the

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apprehensions of Books by variety of Readers, and by their sometime judicious, sometime cursory reading.

Least of all is there any colour for this apprehension, that I do “*in this Paragraph strongly confute the scope of my whole Book. Yes, (saith he) For if the Keys be the Ordinances of Christ, they are given indeed for the Church of Believers, that is, for their good and benefit, objective; but are never in all the Scripture, nor in all Antiquity said to be given to the Church Subjective*”.

Answer: What Power I acknowledge given to the Church of Believers *Subjective*, either in admission of Members, or election of Officers, or censure of Offenders, I do alleage Scriptures for it; which when *Vindex* taketh in hand to evade them, I shall return him (God willing) further answer, which in this place were an unseasonable prevention: But when he affirmeth that such power as I acknowledge given to the Church, is not to be read in all Antiquity; it maketh me to suspect, that either he hath not read All Antiquity, (which yet is no crime, only he should not then have denied them all, to own this Power; for it is not safe to avouch more than we know:) or if he have read them all, he hath forgotten what is recorded by the most ancient Antiquity for the space of the first three hundred years, during all the time of the Primitive persecutions. Of which I have given account to Mr *Baylie* in answer to the Historical part of his *Dissuasive*, (chap. 4 Sect. 1,2,3) whereto I refer him.

“*But*”, saith *Vindex*, “*it soundeth ill at first hearing, to say, that the People have any power to exercise Ordinances, of Preaching, or administering the Seals or Censures. The power of Preaching or administering Sacraments by the People, as none but Separatists do usurp; so yourself complain of it, Page 6. And why you should allow them power in censures, there is very little reason.*”

Answer: If Preaching the Word, or Administering the Seals, were all the Ordinances which Christ hath instituted, and no more but they, *Vindex* saith true, it would sound ill at first hearing (and if he will, at second and third hearing too) to say, The People have any power to exercise these Ordinances; unless that kind of Preaching be understood, which Dr *Ames* approveth, *l. 4 de Casibus Conscientiæ, cap. 25, in respons. 3, ad Quest. 1.*

But to allow the people a power in Censures, I marvel it should sound so ill at first hearing, of such whose ears have been long wanted to hear of Suspensions, and Excommunications; not only of private Christians, but even of many Ministers, by Chancellors and Commissaries, who generally are no Ministers, and it were to be wished, that the most of them, (yea, or the best of them) were as good as Brethren. But yet I

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somewhat wonder, that he that in this Paragraph could allege all Antiquity, should think it to sound ill at first hearing, That the Brethren of the Church should have any hand in Church Censures; who knoweth what reverend Testimony Ancient *Tertullian* giveth of them (*Apologetici Capite* 39) *Quum Probi, Cum Boni Coeunt, Cum Pii, Cum Casti Congregantur, non Factio dicenda est, sed Curia.*⁷³ And what an hand *Cyprian* giveth to the People in Church censures, none that have read him can be ignorant. What reason there is for their Power in Church censures (whether little, or much) we shall further consider (God willing) in its place: for here you neither give reasons against it, nor refute our reasons for it.

2. A second thing which *Vindex* animadverts in the former Paragraph is, “that I call the Keys, Ordinances, which Christ hath instituted to be administered in his Church, the Church of Believers, a Particular Congregation”.

“But mark it (saith he) not by a Church without Officers: but by the Officers instituted in the Church.”

Answer: He need not have bid me to mark that, which if himself had marked, He could not but see, That I never acknowledged it to be in the power of the people to administer all Ordinances, but to administer some Ordinances themselves, and to elect and call such to them, as might administer all the rest.

3. His third Animadversion is, “That I say, the Keys are neither Sword nor Sceptre: for they convey not Sovereign power; but Stewardly and Ministerial: which clearly (saith he) excludeth the People; for they have no Stewardly or Ministerial Power over themselves.”

Answer: As if the People were not Stewards of the Grace of God given to them! The Apostle *Peter* maketh account, That as every man hath received the gift, so he should minister the same, as good Stewards of the manifold Grace of God, 1 *Peter* 4:10. If the people have received any gift of Grace, they are either Stewards of it, or Lords: Lords they are not, who must give account to the Lord for the employment and improvement of their gifts: what are they else then but Stewards? Yea, (you will say) but private men may bestow their Gifts privately. But election of Officers is a public Gift, whatsoever else beside; and that must be dispensed publicly; and that not as Lords, to elect whom they list, but as Stewards and Ministers to Christ, to elect whom the Lord hath chosen.

“I said indeed (in that Paragraph) That Christ in giving the Keys, investeth those to whom he giveth them, with a power to open and shut the Gates both of the Church and Heaven; and that this power lieth partly in their spiritual calling

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(whether it be their Office, or their Place, and Order in the Church) and partly in the concourse and cooperation of Christ, accompanying the right dispensation of those Keys or Ordinances.”

“But (saith Vindex) I suppose the word Calling, should be taken here of some special Calling or Office: which again would exclude the people, as having no Office in the Church.”

Answer: There is no reason why you should suppose, That Calling here should be taken of some special Calling or Office; if special denote a specification of a Calling distinct from other Members of the Church: But if it only specify a distinct calling, or state, or order different from such as are not members of the Church: so it is true indeed, every Member of the Body hath a special Calling distinct from such Believers or others, as are not yet received into Member-like communion with this or that particular Church; Yea, and every Member of this or that particular Church, hath a calling to put forth some Acts of Power in his own Church, which Members of another particular Church have not power to put forth there, though they may put forth the same each one in his own Church respectively: Every Member of the Body of a Particular Church hath some Function, or Action, (or as the New Translation termeth it) some office in the Body. For that which is expressed in the Protasis of the Apostle’s comparison, is implied in the reddition; *Romans 12:4,5*. As we have many Members in one Body, and all Members have not the same office: so we being many, are one Body in Christ, etc. If all the Members of the Body have not the same office, it implieth, they have all of them some office, or function, or action, though not the same. But custom hath obtained, that they only are accounted to have a special calling or office in the Church, who are set apart for the eminent administrations in the Church; as the Pastors, Teachers, Elders, Deacons. And such a special calling, it is not requisite that the common Brethren of the Church should have, to disperse that power of the Keys which is committed to them. For Christ hath neither called them to it, nor given them gifts suitable for it.

“But (saith Vindex) when you say the Power of the Keys lieth in their spiritual calling (whether it be their Office or Place, and Order in the Church:) you add this explication on purpose to steal in the interest of the People in some share of the Keys.”

Answer: It is not stealth, but Justice to give every man his own: Liberty, to whom liberty; power, to whom power; honour, to whom honour belongeth. The Psalmist foretold it in a new song (all which new songs

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have special accomplishment in the new Testament) That this honour have all his Saints, to wit, in the Congregation of Saints to execute the spiritual censures (or Judgements) written, *Psalm 149:9*. And if the Lord have given them this honour, it is rather stealth (yea sacrilege) to take it from them, than to allow it to them.

“But (saith Vindex) if place, or Order in the Church, do give the People out of Office, any Power in the Keys; that is, in the Ordinances; then may Women and Children claim an Interest in those Keys, for they have a Place and Order in the Church as well as men.”

Answer. It is not every place or order in the Church, that giveth power to receive the ordinances administered by others, much less power, themselves to dispense ordinances. Children have not power to receive the Lord’s Supper, much less to administer it. And for Women, God hath expressly forbidden them all place of speech and power in the church, *1 Corinthians 14:34* and *1 Timothy 2:11,12*, unless it be to join with the rest of the Church, in singing forth the public praises of the Lord. Let every soul enjoy such privileges and liberties, as the Lord hath given him in his place and order: and neither affect nor attempt more. The Female Sex, and Nonage, fall short of some power, which Christ hath given to the Brotherhood.

SECTION III

Of the Subject to whom the Power of the KEYS is given.

I conceive it would be some loss of time and labour, to argue this Question with *Vindex* alone: whose exceptions so far as they concern the point in controversy, are but collections out of the writings of others, who have more distinctly and elaborately disputed the cause. And therefore it will be requisite, in this, and the like points in controversy, rather to consider what hath been written by learned and reverend Mr *Rutherford*, and Mr *Baylie*, and yet by the way, not to neglect what personal exceptions *Vindex* hath taken of myself.

In the Way of the Churches of New England, chap. 1, sect. 1, it was laid down for the first Proposition: *“That the Church which Christ in the Gospel hath instituted, and to which he hath committed the Keys of his Kingdom, The power of binding and loosing, the Tables and Seals of the Covenant, the Officers and Censures of his Church, the administration of all his public Worship and Ordinances, is Cœtus Fidelium, a company of Believers, meeting in one*

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place every Lord's Day, for the administration of the holy Ordinances of God to public edification."

Upon this Proposition Mr *Rutherford* (as he excelleth in acuteness and Scholastical Argumentativeness) hath raised four Questions, though some of them more than I did intend to point at in the Proposition. Let us consider of them in their order, not with a spirit of contention (which himself in his Epistle to the Reader, candidly professeth against) but with a spirit studious of Truth and Peace.

The first Question he raiseth from that Proposition, is this: "*Whether a company of Believers and Saints, builded by Faith upon the Rock Christ, and united in a Church Covenant, be the only instituted Visible Church of the New Testament, to the which Christ hath given the Keys?"*

Himself understandeth the Proposition, as if it held forth the Affirmative. But in very Truth, as the word [only] is not in the Proposition: so it was far from my intendment, to exclude an Organical Church (a Church furnished with all her officers) from being an instituted Visible Church of the New Testament, as well as *Cætus Fidelium*, a company of Christians without Officers. When the Proposition speaketh of Officers as given to the Church, it intendeth them not as mere adjuncts given to a Subject, but as Integral parts given to the whole Body of the Church, for completing the integrity and perfection of it. And so much the very words of the Proposition do imply; for it speaketh of such "*a Church, to whom Christ hath given the administration of all his public Worship and Ordinances: which is not a power given to a Church of private Believers, destitute of Officers.*" Howsoever they may be capable (more or less) of some spiritual Administrations: yet doubtless they are not capable of all: and for instance, not of the administration of Sacraments, without Officers.

Neither was it my intendment in that Proposition, to exclude lawful Synods (gathered, and proceeding according to the pattern, Acts 15) from all participation in some part of the power of the Keys. For they have a power to decide controversies from the Word, and to appoint a course for the preventing and healing of offences, and for agreement in the Truth according to the Word. But these Synods are not the ordinary standing Judicatories of the Church: neither do they convene, nor exercise their directive Power, but when the particular Churches lie under variance or offence, or are not yet settled in a way of Truth and Peace. But my intendment simply was, That each particular Church when it is organized with all his Officers, and walketh in a way of Truth and Peace; There is

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no part of the power of the Keys, but a particular Church hath received it within itself, and may administer the same to the edification of the whole body.

Neither let it be thought (in that first Proposition) That I intended to invest a Church of Believers (without officers) with all the power of the Keys, because I speak of the Election and ordination of officers afterwards. For so I speak also of the gathering and admission of Members: and yet it may not be inferred, that I should intend a Church invested with all power, which yet is destitute both of Members, and Officers. But it is a well known rule of *Method*, to define or describe at first, *Totum Integrale*, with the proper Adjuncts (or Passions) of it, and then to descend to set forth the several Members, and integral parts thereof, with their several operations in due place.

So that this first question raised from this first Proposition is no question at all; and therefore it will not be needful to examine the distinctions, or conclusions raised up against it. For they do not contradict the true meaning of the Proposition, unless it be some parts of the second conclusion, which come in their place to be considered of in the sequel.

SECTION IV

Touching the power of the Keys in the Church of Believers without Officers.

The second question, which Mr *Rutherford* raised out of the first Proposition formerly mentioned, is

“Whether or not, Christ hath committed the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven to the Church of Believers, which as yet wanteth all Officers, Pastors, Teachers, etc.”

But this question, so far as it concerneth my Proposition (to speak with leave and due Reverence) is as ungrounded as the former. For the Proposition speaketh not of a Church that wanteth all Officers, but of a Church that having received Officers from Christ, hath power to Administer all the Public worship, and Ordinances of Christ. This point and my plain meaning therein, is more fully and distinctly opened in the small treatise of the Keys. But for the present stating of the question, our judgement is expressed in two Conclusions; which so far as they are controverted, are to be cleared.

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First that the Church of Believers destitute of Officers, hath received some part of the Power of the Keys: as a Power to receive Members, to elect Officers, and to do such other Church Acts, as do not require Office-Rule, or Office-Power.

Secondly, that the Church of Believers, though for the present destitute of Officers, hath in it a Radical or Virtual Power, whereby it may call forth such Officers, as may Administer all those Acts of office Rule, or Power, which of itself without them, it could not exercise.

Against these two Assertions, I do not find any thing in his distinctions or conclusions, or Arguments which doth prevail with me to depart from them, as indeed he doth not directly so much dispute against these conclusions which we hold, as against that question (which himself by mistake gathered from the Proposition) which we hold not.

“Though I said the Keys were given to a Church of Believers. whereof Peter was one,” yet that was only to show, that *Peter* in his lowest spiritual relation in the Church (as a Professed Believer) had his share in the Power of the Keys: but not that he had his share in the whole power of the Keys, as a Professed Believer: but that he had other parts of the power of the Keys, as an Elder, and as an Apostle immediately given Him by the Lord Jesus.

In his second Distinction (page 7) *“I do not understand the safety of that speech; That Pastors and Teachers are Gifts, of which the Church is not capable, as a Subject.* For the Apostle saith, Christ hath given (amongst other Officers) Pastors, and Teachers to his Church, *Ephesians 4:8,11.* And if He have given them to the Church, the Church is the recipient Subject of them. As if the Eye be given to the Body, the Body is the recipient Subject of it. And though the Church cannot exercise the Pastors’ and Teachers’ place by themselves; yet they may be their Pastors and Teachers. As the Body though it cannot see by itself, yet it may by the eye, which is given to it of God for that end: Neither is it a safe speech (as I conceive) to say, *“That the Church is capable of these Gifts (Pastors and Teachers) as the object and end, because the fruit and effect of these Gifts redoundeth to the good of the Church; if that be meant as the only respect, in regard of which they are said to be given to the Church”.* For Pastors and Teachers are given to the Church, as Integral parts of the Church, as the Church is *Totum Integrale.* Now Integral parts are intrinsical and essential to a *Totum Integrale,* and not extrinsical, as the object, and end be to a thing.

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The Testimony which he allegeth from Reverend *Parker*, and *Baynes*, and the *Parisian School*,⁷⁴ doth indeed argue, that the fruit and effect of the gifts of Pastor and Teacher doth redound to the good of the Church (which no man denieth:) but Mr *Rutherford* well knoweth, that *Parker* and the *Parisian School*, do grant further (even more than I argue for) that the Church is not only the object and end, but the first subject also of all Church Power: which though Mr *Baynes* waive (in the place alleged by him) and dispute thereupon both against Mr *Parker* and the *Parisian School* (under the name of *Sorbonists*;) yet he clearly closeth with Mr *Parker* and us, in the conclusion; That the visible Church, instituted by Christ and his Apostles, to which the Keys are given, is not a *Diocesan*, or *Provincial*, or *National Assembly*, but a particular Congregation: *Diocesans* trial, Q. 1. But if Mr *Rutherford* intend no more but this, That the Church is not capable of exercise of the Pastors' and Doctors' place, and therefore is not the first subject of their Office power; I for my part readily close with him therein, reserving due respect to others of different judgment.

In his third Distinction, "*which he putteth between a formal ordinary power, and a virtual or extraordinary power, I do not well reach his meaning: For when He cometh to apply this distinction in his second Conclusion, He granteth a virtual Power, not Formal, in the Church of Believers to ordain Pastors, or to do some such Act, as may supply the defect of ordination: As in a Church in an Island, where the Pastors are all dead, or taken away otherways; and yet he maketh not this an official, or an authoritative Power properly, but a virtual, and extraordinary Power, not ordinary: like that which David had to eat the show-Bread. And in like case of extreme necessity, he alloweth a private man, endued with gifts and zeal to teach publicly.*" But I confess, I do not well understand, how a man in case of necessity hath any virtual power to do this or that Act, but he hath also a formal power to do such an Act in that case of necessity. Such an Act I say, either the same in kind, or the same in Analogy. When *David* did eat the show-Bread, he had a lawful not only virtual, but formal power, as an Israelite in necessity (to whom moral duties were to be preferred before Ceremonial) to eat for the sustentation of life. When a free People choose a King, and Crown him, though they be not endued with a formal, but a virtual Sovereign Power, to give Kingly authority which they have not; yet they have formally a Power to yield themselves unto subjection to such a Person as they have chosen; and that doth virtually and analogically set up him in the Throne. For He that hath formal Power to make one Relative, He hath an Analogical

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Power, to set up his Correlative. They that can make themselves Subjects, can make another to be their Sovereign.

But this I willingly admit which he saith, "*That the ordination of Pastors by the Church of Believers, is not an official, nor properly an Authoritative Act of Power.*" For the election of a Pastor by the Brethren of the Church, is an higher Act of power than their ordination is: As the Election of a King is an Act of higher Power, than his Coronation. And yet the Election of a Pastor, is not an Act of official, or Authoritative power: no more than the Election of a King by a free People is an Act of official, or Authoritative Sovereignty.

As for the public Teaching of a private man endued with gifts and zeal, I know not why it may not be allowed, not only in case of extreme necessity, but in some cases of expediency, as when his gifts are to be proved, before he be called into office.

In the third conclusion, Mr *Rutherford* telleth us, "*That as a Reasonable man is the first, immediate, and principal subject of Aptitude to laugh, and the mediate and secondary subjects are Peter and John, and such particular men: So it is the order of Nature to give Church properties, and powers, first to the Species and common Nature of the Church, and not to this or that particular Church.*"

But this conclusion of his crosseth nothing in that first Proposition of mine, nor any other Tenent of ours. For that Proposition doth not make this or that particular Church (which is indeed a singular Church) the first subject of Church Power: But a particular visible Church, which holdeth forth the *Species* or common nature of each particular, or singular Church.

It is readily admitted what he saith, "*That to be builded on a Rock, victory over hell, and such like, are given principally and immediately to the Catholic and Invisible Church, as to the first and principal Subject.*"

But we cannot so easily admit that which he subjoineth, that the Keys are given to the Catholic Invisible Church, as the first and principal Subject (though we grant they are given for their end and use:) But we rather believe they are given to the particular Visible Church, wherein the power of the Keys is only exercised and used. The Invisible Catholic Church doth never convene for the Administration of Church power: And it were in vain to give power to such a subject, which never is called to bring it forth into act.

In his Arguments, Mr *Rutherford* doth chiefly aim at this conclusion; To prove that the Keys are not given to a Church of professed Believers,

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destitute of Pastors and Teachers, etc. A conclusion which he is pleased to frame unto himself, but had not occasion to collect it from any words in my Proposition; which only affirmeth, that the Keys were given to such a particular Visible Church, whereof *Peter* was one, and to whom *Peter* in case of offence might complain, even to the Congregation. I might therefore omit this Question wholly, but that he so handleth it, as if there were no Church power at all, but only that which he calleth official, and Authoritative power: and so he maketh all the Acts of the Brethren of the Church (who are no officers) as no Acts of power at all, and consequently, no part left to the People in the power of the Keys: which putteth upon me a necessity of clearing some expressions in his Arguments.

1. His first Argument (page 9) is, “*The Church to which the Keys were given, is builded upon a Rock, is the House of Wisdom, the house of God.*”

“*But such is not a company of Professing Believers, united by Church Covenant, and destitute of Pastors and Teachers, etc.*”

Answer. This latter Proposition is justly denied.

For Mr *Rutherford* himself acknowledgeth a Church in an Island, where the Pastors are taken away by death, or otherwise, page 8. And if such be a Church, then truly it is built upon a Rock, the Rock of Divine Institution, and the Rock of Christ believed on, and professed. Such a Church is also an House of Wisdom, and an House of God: or else the Wisdom, and presence, and grace of God given to the Church (yea to two or three of the Church) dieth and perisheth with their Church Officers.

Objection. “*The Church of Believers gathered without Pastors and Teachers, though united in a Church Covenant; yet not being builded by Pastors and Teachers (who are given to gather and to edify the Body) they are only the materials of the House, But not the House*”.

Answer 1. The Church is truly said to be builded by Pastors and Teachers, upon the foundation of the Prophets and Apostles, when by their Doctrine they were first brought on to believe, and by the same Doctrine taught to assemble into Church Fellowship. It is true, the faith which they received by the edifying Ministry of Pastors and Teachers, doth not make them Members of the Visible Church, but of the Invisible; and so fit materials only of the Visible Church. But yet they being also taught to make profession of their faith before the Lord, and his people, in covenanting or professing subjection to the Lord, and one to another in the use of his Ordinances (so far as they are or shall be committed to them) they thereby

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receive the form of a Visible Church upon them. For as faith is the essential form of the Catholic Invisible Church: So is the profession of faith, and the obedience of faith to Christ in his Ordinances amongst themselves, the essential form of a Particular Visible Church, amongst themselves I say. For profession of faith, and of the obedience of faith at large, without respect of subjection to Ordinances in this or that Church, maketh a man no more a member of the Church at York, than of the Church at Edinburgh. But when such a Society of Believers is combined together by profession of faith, and obedience of faith to the Ordinances administered, or administrable amongst themselves; they are now not only the materials of a Visible Church, but have the true form of Church Estate, notwithstanding their want of Pastors and Teachers. Otherwise Pastors themselves should be the form of the Church, by which it is, and without which it cannot be a Church. As if the Body of a man could not be an Human body, without eyes or arms: Or had only the matter of a Man, (or some part of the matter) but not the form.

What though such a society of Believers be not a ministerial Church, without Pastors and Teachers? yet it is not Pastors and Teachers, that giveth them the form of a Church, no not of a Ministerial or Organical Church, much less of an Homogeneal. For Ministers (Pastors, or Teachers) themselves are only materials (parts, and members) of a ministerial Church, not the form of it. The form of such a Church, is the mutual profession (or stipulation) or (that which amounteth thereto) the Agreement and consent between ministers and people to administer and submit unto, the holy ordinances of Christ amongst themselves, according to the rule of the Gospel. Say not, a "*Church of Believers without Ministers, wanteth the power of edifying the body of Christ, which is required in a Visible Church,*" Ephesians 4:11.

For every member of the Church hath an edifying power, received from the head Christ Jesus, to the effectual working of the increase of the body, unto the edifying of itself in love, *Ephesians 4:16.*

And though neither all, nor most of the Brethren of a Church have ordinarily received a gift of public Prophecyng, or Preaching: yet in defect of public ministers, it is not an unheard of novelty; That God should enlarge private men with public gifts, and that they that have received such gifts, should take liberty to dispense them unto edification. For we read that when the Church at Jerusalem were all of them scattered

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abroad, except the Apostles; yet they that were scattered went everywhere preaching the Word, *Acts* 8:5, and *11:19,20,21*.

Neither let it be said, “*That such a Church (or Society) of Believers is not Wisdom’s house, because it is not builded by Pastors and Teachers, who are given to edify, and gather the Body.*” For though in a material house of wood or stone, the builders do not only prepare the materials, but do also introduce the form: yet in a spiritual house (such as a Church of Believers is) the form is induced not by any formal Act of the Ministry of Pastors and Teachers (though they may be instrumental, in giving a word of Direction:) but by the voluntary stipulation or profession of subjection of this society of Believers to the Lord Jesus in the use of his ordinances. The Church as it is the house of God; so it is also the Spouse of Christ: Ministers are the friend of the Bridegroom, and of the Bride. The ministers have done their work in preparing the Bride for the Bridegroom; as also in ministering to her when she is married. But in Betrothing her to Christ, the Bride in that work, must herself profess her own acceptance of the Lord Jesus, and subjection to him: which she may do effectually, whether ministers be present and Assistant or no. It is true, ministers are ordinarily present and directive in this Work, and in that respect are sometimes said to espouse them to Christ, *2 Corinthians* 11:2, but the formal bond of their Spousage lieth not in the presence or assistance of ministers, but in their own professed yielding up of themselves unto the Lord in his Covenant. As in the consummation of marriage between man and wife; the bond of the Espousage lieth not in the presence, or assistance of ministers or magistrates, but in the Husband’s open profession of his acceptance of her, and in her open profession of her acceptance of him; and subjection to him in the duties of marriage.

His second Argument is taken from the Stewardship of them to whom the Keys are committed.

“*To them (saith he) are the Keys promised, who are the Stewards of the mysteries of God, 1 Corinthians* 4:1, and *servants of the house by Office, 2 Corinthians* 4:5, and *by office to open the doors, and behave themselves aright in God’s house, 1 Timothy* 3:16, and *to divide to those of the house their portion of meat in due season, Matthew* 24:45, and *to cut out the Word. 2 Timothy* 2:15.

“*But a Company of Professing Believers, joined together in Church Covenant, and destitute of Officers, are not stewards by office, nor servants over the house, etc.*”

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The Assumption Mr *Rutherford* taketh for granted, and so he well may; unless office be taken in a large sense (as it is in *Tully's Offices*) for a duty, which we owe to every one in his place respectively; and as he saith (*ad Terent.*) *In Familia bene instituta, dicimus omnes in officio esse oportere.*⁷⁵ In which sense also the Translators take it in *Romans* 12:5, where they speak of all the members of the Body (whether Natural Body or Ecclesiastical) as having all of them received an office, though not all of them the same office, *Romans* 12:4. And in the same sense, the Apostle *Peter* exhorteth all the Saints of God to administer the good gifts they have received, as good Stewards of the manifold grace of Christ, 1 *Peter* 4:10,11. In this sense every member of the Church may be said to have an office, and a stewardly office in the Church.

But take office properly, for a calling invested with Power to perform special Acts of public service to the Church; so indeed it implieth a contradiction, That the Church should be its own officer. For the very term of officer implieth subordination: and Mr *Rutherford* speaketh properly; That they are servants of the House by Office, whom he putteth for the Officers of the House. Now the Church cannot be her own servant.

But yet this giveth the more just ground of denying the *Major* Proposition. That to them only are the Keys promised, who are the stewards and servants of the House by Office. The *Mater familias* in the House, hath Keys of power over her children, and servants, and yet is neither steward nor servant of the House.

It is true, the Keys are a symbol of power. And power is either Supreme, and Sovereign; or Subordinate, and Subservient. Sovereign power in the Church belongeth to the Lord Jesus, who is therefore said to have the Key of *David*, to open and none to shut; to shut, and none to open, *Revelation* 3:7.

And yet in proper speech, Christ is no Church Officer, no officer in the Church, (unless it be to God the Father) no more than the King can be said to be an Officer in the Commonwealth. Officers are of an inferior rank, *Deuteronomy* 16:18. But subordinate power is two-fold: 1. *οικονομικη*, *Officiaria Potestas*, stewardly Ministerial Office Power. And secondly, *Honoraria Potestas*, an honorable Power: such as a King going into a far country may leave to his Queen; whom though He leave her subject to the Laws and Officers of his Court and Kingdom; yet he betrusteth her with this power, that in defect of officers, she shall have power to choose new, according to the Law: and together with the officers, joint power,

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either to admit servants into her family, or upon just cause to remove any of them out of her Family. And that Christ (the King, and Husband of his Church) being gone himself in bodily presence into a far Country, hath left this honourable power to his Church, as to choose their own officers, to join in admission of Members, and censure to Offenders; I presume Mr *Rutherford* will not gainsay. To give a touch of each; Plain it is, that when Deacons were to be chosen into office, the Apostles referred the choice of them to the multitude of Brethren, and they performed it, *Acts 6:1,2,3,5*. When *Saul* essayed to join himself to the Church at Jerusalem, he was not received till the Brethren's fear of his carnal estate was removed, and themselves satisfied, that he was a Disciple, *Acts 9:26*. Let no man except, *Paul* did not essay to join himself as a member to the Church at Jerusalem: for he was (as being an Apostle) an Officer, (and therefore a member) in all Churches: For his call to the Apostleship was at first unknown to them: and the Argument holdeth so much the stronger, that if the Brethren must be satisfied in the Discipleship of an Apostle, before he can be admitted to join with them; much more may they require probable ground of the Discipleship of a Brother, before he be admitted to join with them in Church Communion. And when the Incestuous Corinthian was to be cast out of the Family of the Church; *Paul* referreth the Administration of that power to the joint proceeding of the Elders and Brethren of that Church, leaving to either sort their concurrence of several power respectively.

Now then to apply this distinction of power to the Argument. All the places alleged by Mr *Rutherford*, do indeed prove "*That the Keys were promised and given to the Stewards and Officers, and Servants in the House of God:*" which we willingly acknowledge. We acknowledge also that which he affirmeth, "*That a company of professing Believers joined together in Church Covenant, and destitute of Officers, are not stewards by Office, nor servants in the House of God.*" But this we deny, that all the Keys, all kind of Power in the Church, is promised and given to the officers of the Church, solely and solidly. All Office power indeed, is given to the Officers: Nor do we permit the Church of Brethren to usurp any part of office power unto themselves. But we see the Scripture acknowledgeth other Power in the Church, besides office power.

I shall not need to enlarge further answer to this second Argument. The Testimonies which he allegeth to prove his Proposition; they prove that the Keys signify Power, and Authority, and that Stewardly, or Office

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Power, is given to the Officers of the Church. But none of them prove, that all power is Office Power, or that the Keys hold forth no other power but office power: or that the Church of Believers hath received no power at all. The Text in *Isaiah 22:23* speaketh not of a spiritual or Ecclesiastical Power, but of a Civil Power. The Text in *Isaiah 9:6* and *Revelation 3:7*, speaks not of a Ministerial, or Office Power, but of a Sovereign Power in Christ Jesus.

What *Schindler* speaketh of מפתח as it crosseth not us; so it concerneth not the Keys spoken of in *Matthew 16* where the word the Syriac is not, מפתח but קלורה a word (as it seemeth) taken up from the Greek.

What those many other Authors say of the Keys in the places alleged by him, do not at all weaken our defense: which maketh me (I confess) the more to wonder, that he should conclude that Troop of witnesses with this Period: “*That he thinks while of late, never any Interpreter dreamed, that in this Text, Matthew 16, “That the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven are given to all Believers, but only to the stewards of the House.”*”

Mr *Rutherford* knoweth well, that *Bucer* expounding *Matthew 16* saith expressly *De Potestate clavium*, “*Hæc Potestas penes Ecclesiam omnem est; Autoritas modo Ministerii penes Presbyteros et Episcopos, ut Romæolim Potestas populi fuit, Autoritas Senatus, Ferus:* (not later than *Bucer*) upon *Matthew 16* affirmeth; “*Claves datas Ecclesiæ, ut Dominicæ, et Sponsæ: Petro, ut Ministro.*”⁷⁶ Reverend *Baynes*, though in the first subject of the power of the Keys he do somewhat dissent from us: yet he confesseth in that third conclusion of his, upon Question 3 page 83, of his *Diocesans Trial*: “*That he setteth down that Conclusion against the Divines of Conscience against our prime Divines, as Luther and Melanchthon, and against the Sorbonists.*” But though all these might be said to be of late, surely *Augustine* is not of late, whom I think best to quote, as his Testimonies are at large alleged by Doctor *Whitakers* against *Bellarmino*; the rather, that so we may take in the judicious Doctor’s Notes upon them. *Augustine, tratat, 50 in Johannem*, “*Si in Petro, inquit, non esset, Ecclesiæ Sacramentum, non ei diceret Dominus, Tibi dabo claves Regni Cælorum. Si hoc Petro tantum dictum est, non facit hoc Ecclesia: Si autem hoc in Ecclesia fit; Petrus quando claves accepit, Ecclesiam sanctam significavit.*”

Again, *De Agon. Christ., c. 30*, He saith, “*Petrus inter omnes Apostolos, Ecclesiæ Personam sustinuisse: et claves datas esse Ecclesiæ, cum Petro datæ sunt.*”⁷⁷

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On which, and some such like passages in *Augustine*, Doctor *Whitaker* giveth this Exposition: This is not saith he, “*That the Church should receive the Keys suo quodam modo, after a certain sort, but that in Peter they did receive them properly, truly, and more principally, than Peter himself.*”

Let no man except, that by the Church be understood not the Brethren of the Church, but only the Apostles, and their successors the Presbyters.

For though it be true, that Office power was given to them only, yet it is clear; he acknowledgeth (as others do) a power likewise of the people in the government of the Church. In stating Church Government, He giveth it thus for a Conclusion. “*Si velimus Christum ipsum respicere, fuit semper Ecclesiae Regimen Monarchicum: si Ecclesiae Presbyteros, qui in Doctrina et Disciplina suas partes agebant, Aristocraticum: si totum Corpus Ecclesiae, quatenus in Electione Episcoporum et Presbyterorum, Suffragia serebat, Democraticum. Sic partim Aristocraticum, partim Democraticum, partim etiam Monarchicum, est, semperque fuit Ecclesiae Regimen*”,⁷⁸ *Whitakers, Controv. 4, Q. 1, c. 1, Num. 2.*

Nor let any put off *Whitakers* or *Augustine*, with this evasion, that *Peter* is said to have received the Keys in the Person of the Church, not because the Church is any subject of that power, but because it is the end of that power: all the power of the Keys being given to *Peter*, not for himself, but for the good, and utility of the Church.

Such an evasion *Chamier* rejecteth with indignation, “*Hocine vero (inquit) est candide agere? hocine Augustinum interpretari? Atqui Augustinus non quaerit, quem in finem datae sint claves, sed quaerit cui. Haec vero Quaestiones quanto separentur intervallo, quis non videt? Sed et exemplo facile docetur. Unicuique datur declaratio Spiritus ad utilitatem, inquit Paulus, 1 Corinthians 12, id est, in Bonum Ecclesiae, ut totus sermo ostendit. An dicat aliquis, eum cui datur Declaratio Spiritus, Figuram gestare Ecclesiae, quum eam accipit? minime vero: est enim non publicum sed privatum donum: publicum quidem ipsa utilitate, sed privatum donatione, possessioneque. Cum igitur quaerit Augustinus, cui sint datae claves, Petro soli, an toti Ecclesiae, importune inculcatur, datas esse in Bonum Ecclesiae quia nihi obstaret, quo minus et datae essent in incommune Bonum Ecclesiae, et tamen soli Petro. At Augustinus haec opponit, datae sunt soli Petro, et datae sunt Ecclesiae, ut si soli Petro, non Ecclesiae: et si Ecclesiae, non soli Petro. Si Petro inquit hoc tantum dictum est, non facit hoc Ecclesia.*”⁷⁹

I forbear (for brevity sake) to recite what he further disputeth against *Horantius* to the same purpose in the words following, *De Oecumen. Pontifice. l. 11, cap. 10.*

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3. I come to consider of Mr *Rutherford's* third Argument which he propoundeth thus:

“To those (in *Matthew* 16) *Doth Christ give the Keys, to whom he giveth warrant for the actual exercise of the Keys? But this warrant is official Authority of binding and loosing, Christ giveth to Peter only, as representing Apostles, Teachers, and Elders: and not to a Church of Believers converted covenant wise, and destitute of Officers, Ergo etc.*”

Answer. The proposition is not always universally safe, if it be understood of the Actual exercise of the Keys, (by them who receive them) in their own person. For Christ himself, who received from the Father the power of all Church Administrations: yet in the Days of his flesh, He in his own person baptized no man: *John* 4:2. And after his Ascension, though the Sovereign power of the Keys do still remain with him, yet he performeth all the External exercise of Church power by his Ministers.

If it be said, that though Christ did not exercise all Church power in his own person, yet he had warrant so to do: It may justly be replied, Christ best understood his own warrant, and he that did not exercise this or that Act of the Church power in his own person, surely He did not think it expedient to exercise it in his own Person. And *quicquid non expedit, quatenus non expedit, non licet*: That which is not expedient, so far forth as it is not expedient, is not warrantable.

Besides it is a disputable case amongst Civil, and Canon Lawyers, and by *Covarruvias* judged for the Affirmative, that in some Cases, the Wife after her Husband's death hath a just Interest in some such Offices as he cannot warrantably exercise in his own Person.

And he instanceth in *Officio Decurionatus, Covarr. Tom. 2, lib. 3, cap. 19, Num. 4.*

Queen *Elizabeth* whilst she lived, had lawful power to punish her enemies by slaughter in War; Her criminal Subjects by hanging: other offenders by scourging: but it were an hard saying to affirm, that she had Warrant to exercise all these Acts of Power in her own Person.

Answer 2: I willingly grant that *Peter* (in *Matthew* 16) “*Received the Promise of all Office power, as representing the Officers of the Church, Apostles, Teachers, and Elders: and with that Power, a Warrant of all Official Exercise of that Power*”.

But this I say withal, That *Peter* in receiving the Keys (or the Promise of them) He received from Christ both sorts of subordinate Church Power, not only *Officiariam*, but *Honorariam Potestatem*. And in receiving this

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latter, he represented the Person of all professing Believers. For it were not reasonable to think, that *Peter* receiving the Keys as a reward of the Profession of his Faith, should receive no power at all to professing Believers as such, but all Power only to professing Officers.

Objection: *But if professing Believers, as such, had received any part of the Power of the Keys, they had then received the Power of binding and loosing, which they have not: For binding and loosing are the Acts of the Official Power of the Keys: Ergo, The Church of Believers being destitute of Officers, and Governors hath not received any part of the Power of the Keys.*

Answer: The proof of assumption of this Argument will not hold, unless binding and loosing were the *Adequate* Acts of the Official Power of the Keys. But though binding and loosing, or (which is all one) opening and shutting, be indeed the *Adequate* Acts of the Power of the Keys; yet not so of their official Power. The Lord Jesus hath the Key of *David*, He bindeth and none looseth, He looseth and none bindeth: (*Revelation 3:7*) and yet this his binding and loosing are not the Acts of the Official, but of the Sovereign power of the Keys. The Brethren of the Church at Jerusalem, who were scattered upon the persecution that arose about *Stephen*: they preached the Word of Christ to Jews and Grecians about Antioch, and by the good hand of the Lord upon them, a great number believed, and turned to the Lord, *Acts 11:19,20,21*. These Brethren in opening the Door of Faith to their Hearers, though they wanted Office, yet they wanted not the Power of the Keys, to open the Kingdom of Heaven unto them.

The Brethren of the Church of Corinth concurred with their Officers, in delivering the incestuous person to Satan, and afterwards in the public pardon of him, and release of his censure. In both which they put forth the Spiritual Power of the Lord Jesus, which is, *the Power of the Keys*, *1 Corinthians 5:4,5* with *2 Corinthians 2:7 to 11*. And yet they neither had the official power of the Keys, nor did they exercise it. It was also an Act of Church Power, which the Church of Brethren at Jerusalem did put forth in joining in the Definitive sentence of the Synod, and in sending forth Letters and Messengers to the Churches of Antioch. Syria, and Cilicia, for the publishing and promulgating of the Sentence. And yet the Brethren themselves neither had office power in themselves, nor did they exercise it.

Objection: *“But these Brethren in Corinth, and Jerusalem, though they had not office power in themselves, yet they had it amongst themselves in the Apostles,*

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and in the Elders then Assembled: And so with them they might join in some Act of Church power, which without them, they might not have been put forth at all: or if they had, It had been of no power.”

Answer: This were indeed to make the Church Power in Brethren a mere Cipher, yea less than a Cipher. For a Cipher though it be of no number or account, unless some Figure of the Decad be joined before it; yet if it be joined before it, the Cipher will increase the number and account, and make it at least tenfold more than it was before. But all the Brethren of the Church without officers, are not only made as so many Ciphers, as those who of themselves can do no Act of number or account at all: But also though an Officer, or a whole Presbytery join with them, and go before them, yet the Act of the whole Church of Brethren, maketh the Act of no more account, no more value or validity, than it was before; which seemeth to me an unworthy thing and unreasonable. For seeing that the profession of the Faith in Christ was the original ground, (or at least the occasion) of the grant of all Church Power unto *Peter* in the name of the Church, how can it stand either with Faith or Reason, That a Church of Believers professing the same Faith with *Peter*, shall receive no part of Church Power at all, in respect of their profession of the Faith, but only in respect of their Officers that preach the Faith? whereas *Peter* then spake not as a Preacher only, but as a Professor of the Faith. Faith when it seeth a Promise made to another in respect of this or that Qualification or Duty, It is apt (by the help of the Spirit of Grace) to apply the same blessing, or some part of it at least, unto itself in the same cause.

Again, if it were so, that a Church of Believers destitute of officers, should have received from Christ no part of the power of the Keys, then in case the whole Presbytery of a Church should be removed by Death, or Crime, or otherwise, the Church should cease to be a Church. For the Power of the Keys comprehendeth the Latitude of all Church power. And *ut seres habet in esse, sic in operari.*⁸⁰ Take away all power of Action, and operation from a Church, and you take away the Church itself. And so you will make Ministers to be not only the Integral parts of a Church, but the Essential parts also. Yea by this means, The estate of the Church is in worse condition, than is the estate of any civil Commonwealth. For take away all the Magistrates, and Governors of the Commonwealth, yet still the Commonwealth subsisteth in itself; It ceaseth not to be a Commonwealth, nor is it left destitute of all Actions of a Commonwealth.

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The Body of the People may solemnly assemble together, and choose out of themselves new Magistrates: or if they want good choice among themselves, they may supply themselves from their confederates. But the Church of Christ (which of all Societies is the most Honourable, and most completely supplied with Power to attain its own end, and is built upon the most sure Foundation) If it be once deprived of her Officers and Rulers, it straightway becometh Null, both in Essence and Action. Time was, when *David* speaking to the Church said, *Glorious things are spoken of thee, thou city of God*, Psalm 87:3. And one of those glorious things were, *That her Foundations are in the Holy Mountains*, verse 1. And *the Lord loveth the Gates of Zion, more than all the dwellings of Jacob*, verse 2. But surely, if the Church's Being, did so easily vanish with the loss of their Officers, This would turn their glory into shame, above all other societies.

4. Proceed we now to the fourth and last Argument, whereby Mr *Rutherford* goeth about to prove, that the Church of Believers destitute of an Eldership, hath no power of the Keys.

If the power of the keys lay in competition between a Church of Believers destitute of its own Eldership, and a Church of Believers furnished with it (as the question might seem to import) I should easily grant more ample power to a Church with its Eldership, than to a Church without it; or if the competition of the power of the Keys lay, whether in the Church without the Eldership, or in the Eldership without the Church, (especially when the greater part of the Eldership consisteth of the Elders of other Churches) though we give not much power to a Church without an Eldership: yet we should give less to an Eldership without the Church.

But the true state of the question is, whether a Congregational Church of Believers furnished with Officers, and walking in the Truth and Peace of the Gospel, have not received the power of the Keys (the power of binding and loosing) within themselves? or, whether this power be first given to a Classical, or Provincial, or National Assembly of the Church Officers, or Presbyters: and from them derived to a Congregational Church of Believers with their Officers?

But it may be also a second question touching a Congregational Church of Believers, whether no power of the Keys (that is, no part of the power of the Keys) be given to them without an Eldership.

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This hath Mr *Rutherford* put for the question, and maketh it the Title of every leaf of Chap. 1, Sect. 2. “*The Church of Believers destitute of an Eldership have No Power of the Keys.*”

Three of his Arguments in this question we have already perused: come we now to his fourth.

His fourth Argument then is this: If Christ do not say in this place, (*Matthew 16*) nor in *Matthew 18*, “*That the Keys and the Acts of the Keys (to wit, binding and loosing) are given to a Church of Believers without their Officers, then neither of the places prove, that the Keys are given to such a Church.*”

“*But Christ doth not say it: Ergo, The Text cannot bear it.*”

Answer 1: If this Text, in *Matthew 16*, Do prove that the Keys are given to a Church of Believers with their Officers, It is as much as I infer from it.

Answer 2. Yet two things there be in the words of the Text, which do infer, that some part of the Power of the Keys is given to a Church of Believers without their officers.

The first may be collected thus; If the Keys be the power of edifying the Church, and the Church be edified of Believers by the Public profession of their Faith, Then Believers publicly professing the Faith, have some part of the power of the Keys given to them.

But the Keys are the power of edifying the Church, and the Church is edified of Believers, by the Public Profession of their Faith.

Therefore Believers Publicly professing the Faith, have some part of the power of the Keys given to them.

What may here justly be denied, I see not. The *major* Proposition is evident of itself. For no man can do any Act of spiritual efficacy, but he hath received from Christ some spiritual Power to do it.

And *habenti dabitur*,⁸¹ to him that edifieth the Church by any power received, to him shall the more abundant power be given to do the same.

The *minor* Proposition is as clear: For the Keys are nothing else, but the Instruments of edifying the Church. Though their immediate and proper work be to open and shut (and Metaphorically, to bind and loose:) yet both these are nothing else but Acts of edifying the Church. And that the Church is edified or builded of Believers, Publicly professing their Faith: the Lord himself doth acknowledge in the words of the Text: when he saith, *Upon this Rock*, (that is, upon this Public Profession of Faith in me) *I will build my Church*. Peter by this public profession of his Faith, did

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edify himself, and his fellow Disciples: and thereby obtained both a reward of his Profession, to become the foundation of the Church: and a reward to himself, of receiving the Keys; that is, a power both by gift, and office to edify the Church in a more settled manner, and abundant measure, not only as a Believer, but as a chief Elder, and Apostle.

The second thing in the Text, that may infer some part of the power of the Keys to be given to a Church of Believers even without officers, may thus be taken up.

If *Peter* had the Keys given to him as a reward, not for doing an Act or Duty of his office, but for doing an Act or Duty common to him with other Believers; then Believers making the same public confession of Faith with him: As they do partake with him in the Duty, so do they partake also (in some measure) in the reward.

But *Peter* had the Keys given him as a reward, not for doing any Act or Duty of his Office, but for doing an Act or Duty common to him with other ordinary Believers.

Therefore other ordinary Believers making the same public confession of Faith with him, they do partake with him in the Duty; so do they also partake in some measure in the promised reward of the power of the Keys.

The former Proposition is not only the collection of many Divines both ancient and modern, but it dependeth upon a principal ground of the work of our ministry. For our Ministry taketh it for a sure ground of the Application of Scriptures; That what promise we find given to any upon occasion of this or that qualification or condition, the same is intended by God, and easily applied by us to all others, in whom the like condition or qualification is found according to their measure.

The latter Proposition is so clear, as needs no proof, unless we shall make the public confession of Faith in Christ, not to be the duty of ordinary Believers, and Church members, but only of Church officers: or unless we could find some other occasion, upon which Christ made this Gracious promise of the Keys to *Peter*, beside the public confession of his Faith in Christ before the Lord, and his Brethren.

Objection 1: “*When Christ gave the Promise of the Keys, he speaketh not to the Church, but turneth his speech to Peter, verse 19, saying, I will give to thee (Peter, not to the Church) the Keys of the kingdom of Heaven. Surely none needeth to teach our Lord to speak: This change of the Persons to whom the Keys are promised, wanteth not a reason, etc.*”

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Answer As we need not, so we do not go about, to teach the Lord to speak. Here is no changing of Persons, nor turning of speech, in giving the promise of the Keys. Christ began his speech to *Peter*, and he continueth his speech to *Peter*, from *verses* 17 to 19. All upon occasion of *Peter's* confession. In *verse* 17, Christ giveth to *Peter* a promise of blessedness from the cause of his confession. In *verse* 18 He giveth a promise of reward to his confession; That upon it, as upon a rocky foundation, He will build his Church in impregnable stability. In *verse* 19 He giveth a promise of reward unto himself upon occasion of his gracious public confession, even a promise of the Keys of the Church. And the promise is more fitly given to *Peter* in the Name of the Church, than to the Church by Name; because it was not the Church by Name that made that confession, but *Peter* in the Name of the Church.

Objection 2. *“If the Promise were given to Peter in the Name of Believers, how will that stand with the judgement of the way, who will not allow every company of Believers, because they are Believers to be an Instituted visible Church; (to whom the Keys are given) but they must be a company of Believers professing Covenantwise, Faith in Christ and Church Communion. But then the Keys are not given to Believers because they are Believers, and the Spouse of Christ, but because they are such Professors and so combined in Church Covenant.”*

Answer The Author of the *Way* doth no where say, That the Keys are given to a company of Believers, only because they are Believers; but because they are Believers making public confession of their faith before the Lord, and their Brethren. For *Peter* himself received not the Keys merely as a Believer, but as a Believer publicly professing his Faith before Christ, and his fellow Disciples in Christ's School. If other Writers speak otherwise, (that the Keys were given to *Peter* a Believer in the name of Believers) they must be understood to speak of Believers, not as keeping their Faith to themselves, but as making profession of their Faith publicly; so as they come to be received into the society of the visible Church. Faith giveth a man fellowship in the Invisible Church, and in all the inward spiritual blessings of the Church. But it is profession of Faith, that giveth a man fellowship in the visible Church. It is not a society of Believers, as such, that maketh them a Church: for a society of Christian Merchants may meet together in a ship to transport themselves to Hamburrough, or Lubeck but they are not thereby a Church, nor have received Church power. But if they do publicly profess their Faith, and their obedience of Faith to the Lord Jesus in the public ordinances of his

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worship, which he hath committed to his Church, and they are capable of; then indeed they are a professed visible Church of Christ, and a Body united to him, and one to another by such profession, and do also partake in the power of the Keys according to their measure.

Objection 3: “*I ask, whether true or false profession be the nearest intervening cause of these, to whom the Keys are given?*”

Answer. True or false profession may be attended, either in respect of the Doctrine of Faith in Christ professed, or in respect of the Grace of Faith professing it. If the profession of the Doctrine of Faith be true, though the Grace of Faith in the Professor of it be uncertain, and it may be hypocritical (and so false:) yet we dare not deny the nature and power of a Church to such. As the Church judgeth not of hidden crimes, so neither do the Faithful judge of the Churches by their hidden hypocrisy, but by their open scandals in Doctrine, or life. God would have his people live without anxious perplexity, (as in point of marriage, 1 *Corinthians* 7:32 so) in every society. It were an inextricable perplexity, to suspend the Essence or validity of Churches or Church Administrations, upon the hidden sincerity of Churches, and of Church Officers, or Members. It is true, that Church estate and Church privileges, and Church power are given to Believers, making public profession of their holy Faith: to them are the Keys given, and for them. And yet for their sakes God doth vouchsafe both the Name, and Style, and Power of a Church to such as make the like profession of the Faith with them, though not with the like sincerity. The Church of Sardis had a name to live, yet was dead, *Revelation* 3:2. Nevertheless, the Lord reckoneth it amongst the golden Candlesticks, and walketh amongst them, *Revelation* 2:1. It appeareth there were a few Names amongst them, that were sincere: *Revelation* 3:4. And Dr *Ames* maketh it most probable, “*That there is no Particular Church, wherein the profession of the true faith doth take place, but that in the same are found some true Believers, Medull. Theolog. l. 1, c. 32, num. 10.*”

Objection 1. “*If a false Profession be sufficient to make Persons a true Visible Church; then 1. The Keys are not given to Believers, because they are Believers, and united to Christ as his Body and Spouse.*”

Answer. The Keys are given to Believers, because they are Believers, making public confession of their faith. To hypocrites they are given, not for their hypocrisy, but for the truth of that faith which they do profess in common with sincere Believers: and for the sake of those true Believers

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who do communicate with them, and for whose sake the whole Body is united to Christ, and his Spouse, though adulterous in heart.

Objection 2. *“Then the Author of the Way saith amiss, That the Church instituted by Christ, is a company of Believers, faithful and godly men; for a company of hypocrites are not such.”*

Answer: The Author of the *Way* speaketh of the Church as it ought to be, and as it is in outward visible profession. Hypocrites in outward profession and appearance, go for faithful and godly, and such in truth they ought to be, as well as in appearance.

Objection 3. *“Our Brethren prove the Keys to be a part of the liberty of redeemed Ones; but counterfeit Professors are not redeemed Ones: nor have they that liberty purchased to them in Christ.”*

Answer: It is true, the Keys are a part of the liberty of redeemed ones. For the Keys hold forth an Ecclesiastical power, and all power in heaven and earth was given to Christ upon his resurrection from the dead, *Matthew 28:18*. And though counterfeit professors be not the redeemed ones of Christ (properly so called:) yet for the sake of the redeemed ones, counterfeit Professors have that liberty purchased to them by Christ, as to partake in the power of the Keys. Otherwise what can be said of hypocritical elders, of whom Mr *Rutherford* doubteth not, they have received the power of the Keys: and yet though their persons be not the redeemed ones of Christ, yet they have this liberty, or service rather purchased to them by Christ, as to be serviceable to the Church in the administration of the power of the Keys. The spiritual gifts (though common) whereby Apostates are said to be sanctified, were purchased to them by the blood of Christ, *Hebrews 10:29*. And yet the power whereby hypocrites or Apostates lord it over the redeemed ones of God, is but a service, *Romans 9:12*.

Objection 4. *“It shall follow, that our Brethren widely mistake a supposed difference, which they devise betwixt the Jewish and Christian Churches; to wit, that to make men members of the Jewish Church, external holiness was sufficient, as to be born Jews, to be circumcised, etc. but that the Visible Church of the Gentiles after Christ, must be the Bride of Christ, and by true faith united to him. Whereas the members of a Visible Christian Church, are and may be hypocrites, though not known to be such, as were the members of the Jewish Church.”*

Answer: Who it is that Mr *Rutherford* meaneth, to have put this difference between the members of the Jewish and Christian Church, I do not know: but thus far I own it, 1. That the Church of the Jews was National in their

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solemn assemblies, as well as Congregational in their Synagogues: and that accordingly they had National Congregations in Jerusalem; national sacrifices, and National high Priests, besides national government: but the visible instituted Churches of Christ in the new Testament, are Congregational, 1 *Corinthians* 14:23. 2. That we do not read of the children of Israel, who were circumcised in their infancy, to have been afterwards debarred from the Passover upon point of moral profaneness: they having many sacrifices to expiate אשמות ceremonially, which Christian Churches have not, but only penitential acknowledgement after censure. In that respect, I suppose (under correction) there was more toleration of sundry moral crimes in the Church fellowship of the Jews, than ought to be born in Christian Churches. But otherwise I easily acknowledge, that in Christian Churches, as well as in Jewish, many hypocrites creep in, and are long tolerated therein (it may be all their days) and yet without impeachment of the truth and essence of the estate of Churches whereof they are members, and without infringement of the power of their Church administrations (when dispensed otherwise according to rule) notwithstanding the hypocrisy of sundry members, yea, and of officers also.

To this place it belongeth (I mean to the clearing of this Text, *Matthew* 16) to consider of the reasons whereby Mr *Rutherford* goeth about to prove, “*That Christ spake to Peter, as to one representing the Apostles, and not as one representing all Believers.*”

I suppose he understandeth Apostles in a large sense, for all messengers sent of Christ for the ministry of the Gospel in the Church. Otherwise, if he should mean, Christ spake to *Peter*, as to one representing the Apostles properly so called (the 12 Apostles) then the Elders of Churches could claim no interest in the power of the Keys from Christ’s words to *Peter*.

Nor do I maintain from this place, that Christ spake to *Peter* as representing all Believers; but as representing Believers making public profession of the Name of Christ before the Lord and their Brethren. Against this his Arguments be.

Argument 1. “*Binding and loosing are denied of our Brethren to belong to many that make Peter’s confession. [Thou art the Son of the living God] as to believing Women and Children.*”

Answer 1. Women and children, though they being Believers, may make *Peter’s* confession, yet they make not public confession before the Lord and his people, as *Peter* did. Now it is to Believers making public confession of their faith in Christ, to whom the promise of the Keys is made.

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Answer 2. Women are expressly forbidden public speech in the Church (and therefore public profession), 1 Corinthians 14:34. And children are not able to make public profession; and therefore both of them are justly exempted from the power of the Keys.

If it be objected, that it is a new and uncouth exposition of the Text, to interpret *Peter's* confession, of the confession which members make of their faith, when they enter into the fellowship of the Church: nor were Christ and his Apostles at that time in hand with any such work.

I answer, Though *Peter's* confession of his faith at that time was not made for such an end, for his admission into the household or Church of Christ: yet it is enough, That Christ rewardeth that confession of his, with such a promise of all Believers into his Church by such a door. It is true, the same confession may be made upon other occasions: but yet this appeareth to be one occasion and use of this confession, to receive professed Believers into the fellowship of the Church, and the ordinances thereof; seeing we read that *Philip* made it a necessary præcedential act unto the Eunuch to make the like confession before he would receive him unto Baptism, which was the seal of his admission, as into Christ, so into the fellowship of his Church. And accordingly it hath been anciently observed in the Primitive Churches, not to receive *Competentes*, or *Catechumeni* into the fellowship of the Church, and unto Baptism, before they had made public confession of their faith before the Lord and his Church: Which is a thing I doubt not, well known to Mr *Rutherford*, to no man more; that I might seem to do him wrong to allege testimonies for it.

Argument 2: If Christ had spoken to Peter here of building a ministerial Church upon his confession, and gifting it with the Power of the Keys, then the Visible Church should be made as stable and firm from defection, as the Church of elect Believers, against whom the gates of Hell cannot prevail. Now this is most untrue, since Visible Churches do fall away (as the seven Churches in Asia, the Church of Corinth, Ephesus, etc.) and likewise this would warrant the Papists to make use of this place, as they do, to prove the Invincible stability of the Church and their impossibility of Apostacy, etc.

Answer 1: Though this or that Visible Church do fall away, yet Christ hath ever had some or other Visible Church upon the face of the earth, in one Country or other. Else the gates of hell had more prevailed against the Visible Christian Church, than ever this could do against the Visible Jewish Synagogue.

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Answer 2: This or that Visible Church that did fall away, was not a society of such professed believers as were built upon a rock; but rather the sinful generation that rose up after them, who did degenerate from their Parents' faith and Profession, and so fell into the gulf of Apostacy, whether Turkish or Antichristian.

Answer 3: Though the gates of hell have sometimes prevailed against this or that particular Visible Church, holding fast the profession of their faith without wavering: yet they have not prevailed to their destruction, but to their dispersion only; which tendeth to the multiplication and enlargement of Particular Churches. The persecution raised by the gates of hell against the Primitive Church at Jerusalem about *Stephen*, it prevailed indeed to the dispersion of the whole church (save the Apostles), *Acts* 8:1, but that dispersion was as seed scattered out of the garner into the field, which bringeth forth a more plentiful harvest. And so did their dispersion propagate Churches both in Samaria and Antioch.

Answer 4: Nor will this stability of Visible Churches promised by Christ, strengthen the Popish plea of the stability of their Church at Rome. For it is neither that promise of Christ, *Matthew* 16, nor any other that doth promise stability to any one particular Church in this City or Town: nor doth any exposition of ours, reach forth such a thing. The woman may be in the wilderness, and fed by witnesses, (the Church may be in obscure places, and fed by faithful witnesses) when yet neither herself, nor her witnesses dwell in Babylon.

FINIS

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- 1 Vigorously and inexcusably.
- a Church government and Church Covenant. 2 The way of the Churches in New England. 3 The *Apologetical Narration*, 4 The Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven. 5 The model of the Church way by M. Bartlet. 6 Answer to 32 Quest.
- 2
- b 1 Peter 1:12. Εἰς ἃ ἐπιθυμοῦσιν ἄγγελοι παρακῶσαι The Angels desire earnestly to stoop down to look into the things of the Gospel.
- c 1 Corinthians 3:12,13,14 etc.
- d Acts 2; Acts 4
- e *Sanguine fundata est Ecclesia, sanguine crevit, sanguine succrevit, sanguine finis erit.* [The church was established in bloodshed; it grew and thrived on blood; it was renewed by blood: and its end will be in blood.]
- 3 The blood of the Martyrs is the seed of the church.
- 4
- f Peace-makers, not Breach-makers.
- g John Weems, *The Portraiture of the Image of God in Man*, London 1632, p. 1.
- h Acts 7:54.
- i Esther 1:18. The word signifies to be angry, and to foam.
- j Chaldee. Job 16:20, /Syriac. John 16:7, Greek: παρακλητος. In the New Testament often/Vet. Lat. *Paracletus*, in New Testament often.
- 5
- 6 *A Parte of a Register, Contayninge Sundrie Memorable Matters* (London 1593).
- 7 [Apparently in an unpublished letter or in conversation.
- 8 *Ecclesiastical History*, by Eusebius (ca. 260–ca. 340) is the principal source for the history of Christianity from the apostles to the time of its composition.
- 9 Henry Ainsworth and Francis Johnson, *A Christian Plea* (Amsterdam 1604).
- 10 Henry Ainsworth's annotations on the Five Books of Moses began appearing in London in 1616, all five books being annotated by 1619 with the Psalms and the Song of Songs added in some editions after 1627. Each of the forms of his annotations had frequent reprintings.
- 11 The authors of *An Apologeticall Narration*: Thomas Goodwin, Philip Nye, Sidrach Simpson, Jeremiah Borroughes and William Bridge.
- 12 Familists were members of a sect called the family of Love who maintained a mystic pantheism mixed with Antinomianism. Antipædobaptists are Anabaptists, for which, as for Seekers, see note 5.
- 13
- 14 Arthur Hildersham, *Lectures upon the Fourth of John*, London, 1629.
- 15 The reply to Williams was printed as *A Reply to Mr Williams His Examination* and bound with *The Bloody Tenent Washed and Made White in the Bloud of the Lambe*, London, 1647.
- 16 A form of reverence that is not appointed is not sanctioned. Genuflection in receipt of the Eucharist is an unappointed form of reverence. Therefore it is not sanctioned.
- 17 By what follows from what is said here, pronounce us dangerous (utterly) to the rest of the world.
- k Page 56 in *Antapologia*, (London 1644) by Thomas Edwards.
- 18 Do you alone know the truth? How often has my heart trembled and reproachfully raised against me that strongest of arguments, Do you alone know? Are all the rest, so many of them mistaken?

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- 19 Roger Williams, *Mr Cotton's Letter ... Examined and Answered*, London, 1644.
- 20
- 21
- 22 With harsh invective ... I have been accustomed to say that even if he were to call me Devil, I will hold him in such honour as to recognize him as an outstanding servant of God.
- 23 By partisan spirit.
- 24
- 25 By grace...through the irresistible power of grace.
- 26 Autograph (the original copy).
- 27
- 28 Zanchi: Besides other arguments by which we have confirmed that the Holy Spirit is truly God, that also was not the least weighty which we deduced from the fact that the faithful are called the temple of the Holy Spirit.
- Ochinus: The gifts of God granted to us—this is to be designated by a common name, but not as a third principle, that is, person distinct from the Father and the Son.
- Zanchi: The Ochinian spirit cannot, except out of impudence, deny that the Holy Spirit, that is the third person, which is also called the Spirit of God and the Virtue of God, dwells in saints and that they are his temple, for that which dwells in them is endowed with judgment and will, and speaks: "The Spirit of your Father," says Christ, "speaks in you." Matthew 10:20. But the Holy Spirit is called the very Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ. Therefore the Holy Spirit, that is. the third Person, dwells in the saints And indeed what the Ochinian Spirit says, that the third person cannot dwell in the saints unless the other persons dwell there also, is well said. For Christ actually says, "I and my Father will come to him, and we will make our dwelling in him," John 14:23. And this comes about for the very reason that they are all of one and the same essence.
- 29
- 30
- 31 John Wheelwright, "A Sermon Preached at Boston in New England upon a Fast Day the XVIth of January 1636,"
- 32 Is in a completely passive state.
- 33 Miracles are not to be multiplied without necessity.
- 34 A firm and certain knowledge of divine good will towards us, which founded upon the truth of the free promise in Christ, by means of the Holy Spirit is both revealed to our minds and impressed upon our hearts.
- 35 Since a conditional promise, with which we are sent back to our tasks, does not promise life on any other condition than that we perceive it to be situated in us. Therefore, unless we want our faith to be shaken and to totter, we must prop it up with the promise of salvation, which is offered by the Lord spontaneously and generously, looking rather to our wretchedness than to our worthiness to receive it.
- 36 If you know anything more correct than this, share it openly, if not adopt these principles with me.
- 37 Original name of New Haven, Connecticut.
- 38 Proper witness.
- 39 Assemblies.
- 40 As much prone to fiction and falsehood as a messenger of the truth.
- 41 Hyperbole.
- 42 In those matters which pertain to the worship and serving of God.

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- 43
44
45
46 They that be wise.
47 Thomas Shepard, *The Sincere Convert*, London, 1641 and *The Sound Believer*, London, 1645; Thomas Hooker, *The Soul's Preparation for Christ*, London, 1632, *The Soul's Humiliation*, London, 1637, *The Soul's Vocation*, London, 1637, *The Soul's Implantation*, London 1637, *The Soul's Ingrafting*, London, 1638, *The Soul's Exaltation*, London, 1638.
48 *New England's First-fruits*, London, 1643.
49 It is not crime, nor the variety and atrocity of crime that is a shame to the state, but rather its impunity.
50
51 John Cotton, *The Pouring Out of the Seven Vials* (London, 1642).
52 There are now men more desirous of vengeance, more covetous, more completely removed from Compassion, more unrestrained and undisciplined, and far meaner than they were under the papacy.
53 Because it wasn't spoken of it doesn't exist.
54 That is true which is first; that is first which is there from the beginning
55 Human episcopacy (i.e., the ideal that all men are priests).
56
57 In the presence of the people they will be examined one at a time while you are present to judge...At the beginning of my episcopate I decided to do nothing privately on my own initiative without your advice and without the common will of the people.
58 He was a good man, bad only in that he was a Christian.
59 Like men who have not so much dined on dinner as on learning.
60
61 Apparent contradiction.
62 Literally, "to the extent that such is so," and in this context, "in such a Capacity." So *quatenus apostolus*, e.g. is in the capacity of an apostle.
63 The church is not completely visible everywhere at once.
64 We say that there will always be some church in the world which obeys Christ, and that it will be visible.
65 We conclude, he says, that not even the visible church can fail and die to such an extent that it should be in itself invisible.
66 The church never absolutely ceases to be visible.
67 We say that the church as a whole is invisible; even when each particular church is flourishing to the highest degree.
68 No infant has been a youth. Every old man has been an infant. Therefore no old man has been a youth.
69 Four terms.
70 He himself says it...I myself as witness.
71 The people, obeying the precepts of the Lord and fearing God, have themselves the greatest power to elect worthy priests or to refuse unworthy ones.
72 The apostle does not only say that ministers are appointed for the advantage of the church; but that they are of the church even as the church is of Christ. Although the church is subject to Christ, it is not instituted for the advantage of Christ. And the apostle maintains that the church is the temple of God: the ministers are in the temple, not above the temple.

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73 When honourable men, when good men come together, when pious men, when holy men assemble, they ought not to be spoken of as a faction, but as a senate.

74 The theological faculty of the University of Paris, which met regularly at the Sorbonne throughout the seventeenth century, argued as a school against the pope's dominion over things temporal and in favour of the authority of general councils, the liberties of the churches, and the revocability of papal judgments. These doctrines were summed up in 1682 as the Four Gallican Articles and represent the French clergy's claims to a wide degree of independence within Roman Catholicism.

75 In a well-established family we say that all ought to have an office.

76 This power belongs to every church; only the authority of ministry belongs the elders and the bishops, as the power of Rome once belonged to the people; the authority to the senate...The keys were given to the church as to a bride and mistress; to Peter as to a minister.

77 If the sacrament of the church were not in Peter's care, he says, the Lord would not have said, "To you I shall give the keys to the heavenly kingdom." If this was said to Peter only [as an individual] this does not make a church. If, however, this happens in [the framework of] a church, when Peter takes the keys that signified that the church was holy...Peter among all the apostles has taken upon himself the person of the church and the keys were given to the church when they were given to Peter.

78 If we wish to consider Christ himself, the rule of the church has always been monarchical; if we consider the elders of the church, who play their parts in teaching and discipline, it is aristocratic; if we consider the whole body of the church, inasmuch as it casts its votes in the election of overseers and elders, it is democratic. So the rule of the church is and always has been partly aristocratic, partly democratic and also partly monarchical.

79 Is this really (he says) to act sincerely? Is this to interpret Augustine? And yet Augustine does not ask to what end the keys are given, but to whom. Who does not see by how great is the difference between these questions? But it is easily shown by an example. To each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit, says Paul, for the benefit, 1 Corinthians 12, that is, for the good, of the Church, as the whole discourse shows. Would anyone say that he, to whom the manifestation of the Spirit is given, carries the form of the Church when he receives it? Certainly not. For the gift is not public but private; public, it is true, in its usefulness, but private in its granting and possession. Wherefore Augustine asks to whom the Keys were given, to Peter only, or to the whole Church; it is strongly insisted that they were given for the good of the Church (because nothing prevents them from being given for the common good of the Church) and yet to Peter only. And yet Augustine places these in opposition, they were given to Peter only and they were given to the Church, as if to Peter only, not to the Church; and if to the Church, not to Peter only. If, he says, this was said merely to Peter, does not make the Church.

80 As is the essence of a Chinese, so is his actions.

81 To him who has it shall be given.