

**Writings
of
Henry Denne**

Containing

Grace, Mercy & Peace. 1640.

**Doctrine and Conversation of John the
Baptist, Delivered in a Sermon. 1641.**

**Seven Arguments to Prove, that in order
of Working God doth justify his Elect
before they do Actually Believe. 1643.**

**Conference Between a Sick Man and a
Minister of Christ. 1643.**

Man of Sin Discovered. 1646.

By Henry Denne.

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Brief Biographical Sketch

Henry Denne, {1606? - 1660,} who began his ministerial labors as an English Anglican Clergyman, but after being convinced of the tenent of believer's baptism came over to the Baptist Persuasion, is identified as the son of David Denne of Kent, educated at Latton, Essex under his uncle, Thomas Denne. He was admitted as a sizar {student receiving financial assistance} at Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge in 1621, graduating B.A. in 1625 and M.A. 1628. In 1630 he was ordained by Theophilus Feild, Bishop of St. David's, and soon afterwards became curate {parish priest} of Pirton, Hertfordshire, a preaching position he held for more than ten years; and, being a more frevent and lively preacher than most of the clergy in his neighborhood, was greatly beloved and respected by his parishioners.

In 1641 he was one of the ministers selected by the committee of the House of Commons for advancement; and in that same year he preached at Baldock at the visitation held there, in which sermon he freely exposed the sin of persecution and took occasion to lash the vices of the clergy with so much freedom as gave great offence and occasioned many false reports.

In the sermon he freely censured the principal evils of the time, and laid open the numerous vices of the clergy; particularly their pride, covetousness, idleness & drunkenness. Regarding the latter vice, he made this comment in reference to the temperate diet of John the Baptist; "John's practice {of eating locusts & wild honey, &c.,} is no precept, neither doth it take away our Christian liberty herein, yet it is sufficient to condemn our excess and riot, when we rise up early to drink wine, and sit till night, till we be inflamed. A breach that is made both by ministers and people. Who would have thought that the true Church of Christ should have been troubled

with such a swinish brood? Had I a hundred mouths and so many tongues, I could not express the lewdness of this generation! What censure on earth sharp enough! What place in hell deep enough? Why are ye not ashamed of your doings?" Although he did expose the moral corruption of the 'Church' in that message; the true offence came from his charge that the pure message of the Gospel {proclaiming Christ, all in all, in the work of salvation,} was being turned into {by 'Gospel' taskmasters, destitute of the Truth,} a legal system of law righteousness, based upon conditions that had to be met {faith, repentance, &c} in order to qualify one for salvation; which could for the most part, be traced to their inability to rightly discern {because of the blindness of their heart} the difference between the Law and the Gospel. Denne writes, "what is the reason that amongst men professing the same Christ, and reading the same Scriptures, so many irreconcilable controversies do daily arise? Is it not chiefly from hence; that men distinguish not rightly between the Law and the Gospel? He that shall search into the most material controversies, even between the Protestant and the Papist, and look into the original of them, he shall find the error of the Papists to arise chiefly from hence; the want of distinction between Law and Gospel. From this fountain proceeded the troubles of the Church of Antioch, Acts 15, from this fountain proceeded the apostasy of the Church of Galatia; and from this fountain proceed the perverse disputations of the Popish Schoolmen about repentance. And what heresy is it that hath not a part, either more or less, in this? - It is the part of a faithful minister, to divide the word aright, which in Martin Luther's exposition, is aptly to distinguish between Law and Gospel. It was prophesied by Luther, that after his time the difference between the Law and Gospel should be neglected. Our age hath proved him too true a Prophet, for it is a thing not ordinarily

observed. But will some say, what; shall not the Law now be preached? I say not so. I wish we could hear it oftener than we do; for I know that the Law is good, if a man use it lawfully; but the fault is not rightly to apply it; as when we apply it to troubled consciences to give satisfaction. Let us take heed of mingling these two, and so producing a confounded and compounded doctrine. Let us not sow the Lord's field with mingled seed, nor clothe them with a linen woollen garment, {Lev.19:19,} for whom the Lord hath provided a vesture of fine linen. Take we good heed that we present not unto the sheep of Christ water, that we have puddled with our feet, Ezek.34:19. What are puddled waters? What is a linen woollen garment? What is mingled seed; but confused and obscure doctrine?"

It is alleged that during the delivery of the sermon, some of the clergy could hardly exercise patience to hear it out; and afterwards there was so great a noise in the country, and so many false reports were propagated against both the preacher and the sermon, that he was obliged to publish it in his own defense; which he entitled the 'The Doctrine and Conversation of John Baptist.' 1642.

From this time he began to be much noticed, not only as a man of considerable parts, but as one spiritually qualified & equipped to help forward the Reformation of the Church. The revolution which soon after took place in the country {English Civil War: 1642–1651} occasioned a material alteration in the affairs of religion. Many learned men were led to a closer study of the sacred scriptures, as well as a more accurate investigation of some doctrines then generally received as true. Of this number was Mr. Denne, who, judging that the baptism of infants had no foundation in scripture, or in the purest ages of the church, publicly professed himself a Baptist, and, about the year 1643, was baptized by immersion. He immediately joined himself to Mr. Lamb's church, meeting

in Bell Alley, Coleman Street, London. In reference to this Thomas Lamb {apparently there were 2 'Baptist' ministers by that name during this time,} we insert these remarks from Wilson's History, "*there are, at least, three publications extant by Mr. Lamb. The first, a small octavo pamphlet, entitled, "The Fountain of Free Grace opened." The second, a larger pamphlet, in quarto, published in 1642, entitled, "A Treatise of Particular Predestination, wherein are answered three Letters; the first tending to disprove particular Predestination; the second to show the Contradiction betwixt Christ's dying for all, and God's election of some; the third to prove that the soul doth not come from the parent, and consequently that there is no original sin."* The title of Mr. Lamb's third piece, which was published in 1656, and dedicated to his Highness the Lord Protector, was, "*Absolute Freedom from Sin, by Christ's Death for the World, as the Object of Faith, in Opposition to Conditional, set forth by Mr. John Goodwin, in his book entitled, 'Redemption Redeemed;'* and the final *Perseverance of the Saints proceeding from Election, by the Grace of God alone, maintained and sweetly reconciled with the aforesaid Doctrine. And the great Question of God's eternal Decree of reprobating the unbelieving world, cleared from that odium cast upon it by Mr. Goodwin."* From these publications, it is evident how grossly Mr. Edwards has misrepresented the fact, in stating that Mr. Lamb maintained and taught the Arminian tenets. On the contrary, it is very clear that, upon the subjects in dispute, he was a strict Calvinist." Walter Wilson {History of Dissenting Churches, Vol.2.}

Sadly, this assessment is incorrect, as Wilson obviously never read much of Mr. Lamb's writings, but merely based his deduction, that Lamb was a 'strict Calvinist,' from the titles of the afore mentioned works. For though Lamb was a firm Predestinarian in points respecting the Absolute Sovereignty of God in the

salvation of His elect in Christ; yet he embraced a general notion of the redemptive work of Christ that somehow severed it from God's unconditional election in asserting that Christ's death had a universal scope. Lamb's treatise entitled "Particular Predestination, 1642," was chiefly written to "manifestly declare Christ's dying for all, and Particular Election to stand together." This gross inconsistency was apparently embraced to some extent by Denne as well, for his book entitled, "The Drag-Net of the Kingdom of Heaven; or Christ's drawing all Men," printed in early 1646, {a book which, it seems, has been lost to the ages,} was opposed by the Particular Baptists Spilsbery & Knollys later in that same year. In the book by Robert Garner, entitled, "Mysteries Unveiled," {printed in 1646,} we find this statement written by Knollys in the Preface to the work: "Considering with myself the usefulness of this little Treatise {through the Blessing of God} as also the seasonableness thereof at this time, when so many doubting and wavering in their Judgment, concerning the Doctrine of Redemption, I cannot but commend it unto your serious perusal, and the rather because, you are able to judge of the hope of this work for the Benefit not only of the Churches, but also of all the people of God, who shall read the same. The Doctrine of Redemption by Jesus Christ flowing from the glorious grace and everlasting love of God to Mankind, is handled herein plainly, and spiritually: Also the most usual Scriptures {which are alleged by Master Denne, Thomas Moore, Thomas Lamb, and others to prove the Universality of the Death of Christ, extended to all persons} are explanted, and freed from the corrupt sense, and unsound interpretations, which are put upon them." Robert Garner {Mysteries Unveiled; wherein the Doctrine of Redemption by Jesus Christ, flowing from the glorious Grace, and everlasting Love of God, the very fountain of Life and Salvation unto lost Sinners is

Handled, 1646} In John Spilsbery's book {Peculiar Interest of the Elect in Christ; otherwise known as "God's Ordinances,"} printed in 1646; we find another Reference to Denne on page 46. There on the left column we find the name of Den, along with mention of his Dragnet book {also printed in 1646.} In the body of the book Spilsbery speaks of the "new doctrine of our adversaries," apparently in reference to Denne teaching this strange admixture of truth & error.

Again; there is no doubt that Thomas Lamb held these notions throughout his ministry, for in his book written in 1656, {"Absolute Freedom from Sin by Christ's Death,"} against the Heretical Arminianism of John Goodwin {1594-1665} in which Lamb emphasizes an Unconditional Eternal Election in Christ, Effectual & Irresistible Grace, Absolute {to use his own terminology} Perseverance of the Saints unto Salvation &c., along with, {again, to use his own terminology,} his confession that "God's Decrees are Absolute and Personal of such and such by name to Faith & Salvation - in this New Covenant of Grace God gives and does all - God's will is the only cause why some only are elected above others - men's accounting the Covenant of Grace Conditional overthrows the nature thereof" &c.; which doctrinal truths are sacred to every believing heart; yet, notwithstanding such a foundational bulwark against the encroachments of Antichrist, {in that system known as Arminianism,} we find a gross deviation in that Lamb devised a system which in essence denies the substitutionary satisfaction & sovereign imputation of sin to Christ, as Mediatorial Head & Representative of all {his elect,} for whom he died. Lamb maintained that "the Decree of God in reprobating the unbelieving world in no ways obstructs the Death of Christ for the sins of all men;" accompanied with this clarification that "God's New Covenant of Grace freely gives eternal life by remission of sins through Christ unto

all and only those in whom the doctrine thereof begets the True Faith thereof." {Absolute Freedom, 1656} Again, a strange and toxic admixture! This brief inquiry into the beliefs of Thomas Lamb is deemed necessary and warranted by the fact we believe that Mr. Denne, who was in close communion with Lamb for many years held the same doctrinal sentiments.

Thomas Edwards, {a frantic & delusional Presbyterian,} whose often unreliable and fabricated tales can be found in his three volume work entitled Gangraena {1646;} says in regards to the preaching of Denne in London that, "his usual theme of discourse is Christ's dying for all, for Judas as well as for Peter - Men were only damned for not believing in Christ, and for nothing else." According to Edwards, the year 1646 was employed in a similar way, "going up and down the countries," says Edwards, "spreading his corrupt opinions, and dipping." {Gangraena Vol.1, 23, Vol.3, 86} With no surprise, the Baptist 'Historian' Adam Taylor {History of the English General Baptists, 1813} latched onto this remark of Edwards, and transformed Denne from a High-Grace Predestinarian to one of his own party. I say, with no surprise, because Taylor himself was a rank Arminian, and so attempted to clothe Denne in his own Christ denying garb. To some credit, Taylor does preface his remarks on the life of Denne, in the following cautionary footnote: "Though several late authors have classed the Congregation in Bell-Alley among the Particular Baptist Churches and have asserted that Mr. Lamb and Denne were strict Calvinists; yet we, without hesitation, rank them among the General Baptists. Mr. Edwards, who was their cotemporary, and had good opportunities of knowing their sentiments, constantly represents them as zealous assertors of the universal love of God to man. The reports of this calumniator ought, it is readily allowed, to be received with caution; but when

he so repeatedly and circumstantially states a fact of which he could not be ignorant, and which, had it been false, thousands of his readers could have contradicted, he surely deserves some credit." {Taylor, Vol.1, pg.99} On the contrary, Edwards, for the most part deserves no notice for many of his wild speculations; although in regards to his assessment of Denne he comes close to hitting the 'mark.'

Denne was also accused, along with Samuel Richardson, Tobias Crisp & Robert Towne of Antinomianism; chiefly on account of the fact that he contended most enthusiastically for the truth that Christ's righteousness is made ours by God's imputation "before the act of our Faith." Faith was not a condition of salvation or justification; as he maintained that "the act of our faith is a consequent of our justification;" and likewise that "remission of sins is even as ancient as satisfaction for sin and at what time Christ Jesus taketh our sins upon Himself, at the same time are the persons of God's elect just before the Tribunal of Almighty God." {Doctrine & Conversation of John the Baptist, 1642}

This change in Mr. Denne's sentiments {his adopting Believer's baptism} exposed him to the resentment of the rising powers, who put frequent obstructions in the way of his preaching and public usefulness. In the year 1644 he was apprehended in Cambridgeshire, by the committee of that county, and sent to prison for preaching against infant baptism. After he had lain in Cambridge jail for some time, his case, through the intercession of some friends, was referred to a committee of the House, and he was sent to London, where he was confined in Lord Petre's house in Aldersgate Street until, his case having been investigated, the committee ordered his release.

At this time there was confined in the same prison, the learned Dr. Daniel Featly, famous for his opposition

to the Baptists. The doctor having just published his book, entitled, "The Dippers Dipt; or, the Anabaptists Ducked and Plunged over Head and Ears, at a Disputation in Southwark," it was laid in the way of Mr. Denne, who having read it, thought himself called upon to defend his principles. He therefore challenged the doctor to a disputation, which being accepted, Mr. Denne is reported to have had the best of the argument, and that the doctor declined proceeding further, under pretense that it was dangerous so to do without a license from the Government. Mr. Denne, upon the invitation of the doctor, immediately set about answering the book, {Samuel Richardson also defended the Baptist position in answering Featly's book in the same year - 1645,} and in the course of a few weeks produced a very learned and ingenious reply; entitled 'The Foundation of Children's Baptism Discovered and Razed; an answer to Dr. Featley,' &c. {1645,} which showed great learning and ingenuity, and was for a considerable time a standard authority among the Baptists.

Shortly after his release Denne obtained the living of Eltisbury in Cambridgeshire, and, though strongly opposed to both Presbyterians and Episcopalians, managed to retain it for several years. The committee of the county endeavored to prevent his preaching at St. Ives, but on being interrupted he left the building, and going into a neighboring churchyard preached from under a tree to an enormous congregation, 'to the great mortification of his opponents.'

In June 1646 he was apprehended by the magistrates at Spalding for baptizing in the river. According to the Baptist historian Crosby, Lucy Hutchinson, the wife of Colonel John Hutchinson, Parliamentary Governor of Nottingham Castle during the Civil War, in her "Memoirs of the Life of Colonel Hutchinson," records how she and her husband came to

adopt Baptist views after reading literature confiscated from Baptist soldiers in the Castle. She speaks of the Presbyterian ministers being unable to defend the baptism of infants "for any satisfactory reason but the tradition of the church ... which Tombes and Denne has so excellently overthrown." In 1646, Denne preached several times in Spalding in the house of a merchant, John Makerness. As a result four people were converted. Their names were, Anne Stennet and Anne Croft, who were servants of Makerness, and Godfrey Root and John Sowter. It was arranged that these four should be baptized at Little Croft a few days later, the baptism to take place at midnight to avoid interference by the authorities. One of the women unwisely told a friend about the baptism who passed on the information to the magistrate. As a result Denne was arrested and committed to Lincoln Jail.

Soon thereafter, it would appear that much hardship, continual persecution and mis-representation eventually took a toll on him; inasmuch that he resigned his living and became a soldier in the parliamentary army, {taken part in the war which overthrew the king, and ended in his death by execution, and in the creation of a republic,} where he gained a 'great reputation' for zeal and courage.

By 1649 he had become a Cornet, {a Cornet was originally the third and lowest grade of a commissioned officer in a British cavalry troop, after Captain and Lieutenant,} and became a leader of the Levellers at Old Sarum, challenging the authority of the Rump Parliament; and so on the 15th of May, General Thomas Fairfax surprised his regiment at Burford, and condemned to death Denne, along with three other reputed ringleaders of the Levellers. {The Levellers were a political movement during the English Civil War which emphasized popular sovereignty, extended suffrage, equality before the law,

and religious tolerance, all of which were expressed in the manifesto "Agreement of the People." They came to prominence at the end of the First English Civil War - 1642/46, and were most influential before the start of the Second Civil War - 1648/49. Leveller views and support were found in the populace of the City of London and in some regiments in the New Model Army.}

The Lord, in accordance with his Providential Reign & Grace delivered him from certain death. The following paragraph is taken from a Newspaper of the Time: "Saturday, May 19. — This day also came intelligence of the surprisal of the revolted troops about Burford in Oxford-shire, they being twelve troops were all taken; very few escaped, some of the chief of which were immediately condemned to suffer death, viz.; Cornet Tompson and Henry Denne, or as we call him, Parson Den, and two corporals, Church and Perkins; these being found guilty upon the articles of mutiny, are thereupon adjudged to die. Denne, being a man of parts, and one who had been esteemed for piety and honesty, received his sentence with great manliness and fortitude of spirit, yet with so much relenting and acknowledgment of the just hand of God, the justice of the sentence, and his submission thereunto, that he seemed to rejoice with willingness to suffer under so righteous a sentence, and he professed openly, that although his heart could not accuse him of an evil meaning, yet was he convinced of the evil of the action and dangerous consequences of it; that if they had but continued three or four days longer, the land had been plunged in misery and ruin, and that the invasion of the Scots, and the insurrections in Wales and other parts of the nation, last year was not so hazardous as this. The four condemned persons were one after another brought to the place of execution, in the sight of the rest of the soldiers. Cornet Tompson, brother to him called Captain Tompson, a declared rebel by the

Parliament, was the first that suffered. He said not much at his death, the man in outward appearance having little of God in him; only he confessed the judgment was righteous, and that God was offended with his disobedience, whereof he was guilty. The two corporals {Church and Perkins} died, saying very little or nothing before their death. Denne being called out, came with much composure of spirit, expecting to die, but the general having commanded the Lieutenant-General {Oliver} Cromwell to let him know at the place of execution that his excellency had extended mercy to him, he soberly and suddenly replied, 'I am not worthy of such a mercy; I am more ashamed to live than afraid to die,' — weeping bitterly." {Modest Narrative of Intelligence fitted for the Republique of England & England, Num.8, 1649.}

The death of three of his companions was sufficient to bring about the submission of the rest, and leniency might well be shown to one so highly esteemed as was Mr. Denne, by members of Cromwell's own family. On Mr. Denne's conduct in this affair we shall offer no opinion, for his own judgment of himself will suffice. While awaiting death, as he thought, his meditations led him to see the absolute justice of God's ways, for he says, "justly did the Lord disown us, to teach all men that he is a God of order, and not of confusion; to teach us that he needeth not our disobedience to superiors, or any evil action to consummate this determination. These things have I declared for this end, that I may manifest unto my fellow soldiers, that I am ashamed of the late proceedings, and do conceive great indignation against myself, for being accessory to such rash attempts; that I may give warning unto others, that they may beware and fear to do any such thing. Oh! How necessary it is at all times to draw near unto God for wisdom and understanding, to guide us and direct us in all our ways."

{The Levelers Design Discovered; or the anatomy of the late unhappy mutiny; presented unto the soldiery of the army under the command of his Excellency, the Lord Fairfax, for the prevention of the like in others. Written by Henry Denne, an actor in this tragedy London 1649.}

At the conclusion of the Civil War he again took to preaching, and took every opportunity of defending his principles. In 1658 he held a public dispute, lasting two days, concerning infant baptism with Dr. {afterwards Bishop} Gunning in St. Clement Danes Church. In one of his last publications, Mr. Denne, oddly enough comes to the defense of the Quakers, and of the celebrated "Tinker" of Bedford {John Bunyan,} against the 'frivolous' charges of an old Cambridge friend of his, a Mr. Thomas Smith. It seems that Mr. Smith fancied the Quakers were papists, because they would not take the oath of abjuration. Denne, like Samuel Richardson {who wrote much in defense of liberty} was a firm advocate for civil & religious liberty; and especially against the spirit of religious persecution. As for Bunyan, "You seem," says Denne, "to be angry with the Tinker because he strives to mend souls as well as kettles and pans. The main drift of your letter is to prove that none may preach except they be sent." In Denne's judgment, it was enough that the church of Bedford had called the "Tinker" forth to preach the gospel. He needed no higher commission than that. Denne's death is supposed to have taken place soon after the Restoration of the English monarchy in 1660. He was full of zeal and decision, and his preaching is said to have been persuasive and affectionate. Indeed, he was accounted by one who had a considerable hand in the public affairs of the nation, "the ablest man in the kingdom for prayer, expounding, and preaching."

His writings are as follows:

1. Grace, Mercy & Peace. Originally Published in 1640, and reprinted in 1696.
2. Doctrine and Conversation of John the Baptist, Delivered in a Sermon on Dec.9, 1641.
3. Seven Arguments to Prove, that in order of Working God doth justify his Elect before they do Actually Believe. 1643.
4. Conference Between a Sick Man and a Minister. 1643.
5. The Foundation of Children's Baptism Discovered and Razed; an answer to Dr. Featley, &c. 1645.
6. Man of Sin Discovered, whom the Lord will destroy with the brightness of His Coming. 1646.
7. The Drag-Net of the Kingdom of Heaven; or Christ's drawing all Men. 1646.
8. Levellers Design Discovered. 1649.
9. Contention for Truth; in two several Disputations at St. Clement's Church, between Dr. Gunning and Henry Denne, concerning Infant Baptism. 1658.
10. The Quaker no Papist, in answer to The Quaker Disarmed. 1659.
11. An Epistle recommended to all Prisons in this City and Nation, to such as choose Restraint rather than the Violation of their Consciences, wherein is maintained: (1) The Lawfulness of an Oath; (2) The Antiquity of an Oath; (3) The Universality of it; with the most material Objections answered. 1660.

The following sources were utilized and consulted in gathering together this brief biographical sketch: Crosby's History of the English Baptists; Wilson's History of Dissenting Churches; Brook's Lives of the Puritans; Neal's History of the Puritans; Edward's Gangraena; Howard's Looking-Glass for Baptists; Taylor's History of the English General Baptists; Barclay Inner Life of the Religious Societies of the Commonwealth; and Underhill Records of the Churches of Christ, gathered at Fenstanton, Warboys, and Hexham.

GRACE, MERCY AND PEACE.

Containing

God's Reconciliation to Man.

Man's Reconciliation to God.

By Henry Denne.

An Unworthy Servant of the Church.

***"This is the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel,
saying, not by might, nor by power, but by my
Spirit, saith the LORD of hosts." Zech.4:6.***

LONDON.

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A PRAYER.

O Lord God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hast given commandment unto thy apostles and ministers to preach the Gospel to every creature; behold, O Lord, the oppositions and threatenings which the enemies of thy Grace have breathed forth against thy truth, and thy servants for thy truth's sake. How they gnaw their tongues for pain, and blaspheme the God of heaven, not repenting them of their deeds. Behold the troops that are assembled together against the Lord, and against his anointed Son, Jesus Christ; for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel hath determined before to be done. Now let the Lord grant unto his servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word, being nothing terrified by the adversary; that the light of the grace of God may shine in the hearts of his people; that the man of sin and son of perdition may be destroyed by the brightness of thy coming. Amen.

RECONCILIATION OF GOD TO MAN.

***"The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ."
Acts 10:36.***

It was our Saviour's commandment unto his apostles, "whatsoever city ye enter...say unto them, the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you...and into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace be to this house. And if the Son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it; if not, it shall turn to you again." {Lk.10:5-9} I am this day, by the providence of the Almighty, come a stranger to your city. And now, what fitter subject can I think of for a stranger to speak unto strangers, than the glad tidings of peace by Jesus Christ?

Cornelius, the centurion, with his kinsmen and near friends are the auditors, Peter is the preacher, and this text a part of that sermon at the preaching whereof the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. Acts 10:44. Oh, that the Lord would vouchsafe that the like effect may this day follow the preaching of the word of this life, that as many as hear me this day may go away filled with the fulness of God. Peter doth seem to say in effect thus much, you are here met together to attend unto the word of salvation, delivered from my mouth. I can preach to you no other Gospel than that which was before by the prophets declared unto the children of Israel, in due time to be revealed, that is to say, peace by Jesus Christ, he is the Lord of all. The proposition from these words is, that the Gospel is a doctrine of peace by Jesus Christ.

This doctrine propounded, needeth not so much proof as explication, namely, to show unto you what manner of peace this is which is held forth unto you by the proclamation of the glorious Gospel. I hope you do not expect that I should this day declare unto you any outward, temporal, or worldly peace; in the midst of these distempers I would I might, and be yet a true prophet. The peace which is the subject of the Gospel, is like the kingdom of Christ, {being, indeed, a part of it,} not of this world. "Jesus answered, my kingdom is not of this world." Jn.18:36. The peace which came by Jesus Christ is not an earthly peace; our blessed Saviour will not that you should entertain or harbor such a thought as this. "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth; I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household." Matt.10:34-36. If anyone, then shall preach unto you, that if you will embrace the Gospel you shall have outward peace and prosperity; is not this the presumptuous man speaking his own words, is not this a false prophet prophesying in his own name, whom the Lord hath not sent? If any Christian shall embrace the Gospel in hope to attain outward felicity and prosperity, let me tell him that his thoughts wander from the truth, and he errs, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God. Matt.22:29. "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, if any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." Matt.16:24. "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." II Tim.3:12. Hear we, also, what Paul saith, "in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I

have been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. II Cor.11:23-27. What a catalogue of evils, what an inventory of afflictions have we here? And yet all this and more is the portion of a laborious apostle. And if we will seek for a true and sincere minister of the Gospel, we shall as soon find him in poverty and nakedness as jetting up and down the streets with attendants at his heels; we shall as soon find him in the university of Newgate, or some other prison, as in great men's houses; we shall as soon find him in a cloud of reproach, as in a fat benefice or cathedral dignity; we shall as soon find him at the bar accused of heresy, condemned for blasphemy, as in the courts of kings or princes; for to the instruction and consolation of the people of God be it spoken, "they shall put you out of the synagogues; yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me." Jn.16:2-3. Seeing then, that is clear that it is no worldly peace, it remaineth yet to show you what peace this is which the Gospel preaches. It is not an external peace, but it is internal, yea eternal. It is a lasting, yea an everlasting peace; a peace which no tongue is sufficient to express, nor heart to conceive; it is even the love of Christ that passeth knowledge. Eph.3:19. It is even the peace of God which passeth all, yea, angelical understanding. If some great and mighty angel should undertake to declare this peace to you, I am confident he would confess his abilities too weak; how much more I, that am but dust and ashes? Surely, when I shall have told you all that I am able, I shall not tell you

one-hundredth part; and when you shall understand and believe all that you are able, you shall not attain unto the least part of that glory which shall hereafter be revealed. Though I am not able to speak what you desire, or the thing itself deserves, yet I will endeavour to speak what I am able. And I shall commend unto you a two-fold peace; the first, descending; the second, ascending. The first, is the tidings of the love and reconciliation of the ever-living God unto the sons of men. The second, declares the reconciliation of the sons of men to the ever-living and ever-loving God.

To speak plain; first, I will show how God comes to be reconciled unto men. Bear with the term "reconciled" although improperly spoken of Him that was never an enemy to his elect in Christ. Secondly, I will show you how we come to be reconciled unto God.

For the first, how doth God come to be reconciled to men? I conceive now the drooping conscience that sits in darkness under the cloudy apprehension of an angry judge, under the fearful expectation of a terrible account, to be given unto the consuming fire, will be very attentive to hear that which his heart so thirsteth after, that is, how God may be reconciled. Oh, what shall I do, saith the soul, to obtain the favour of God? What shall I do to turn away his wrathful displeasure from me? Wherewith shall I come before him or how shall I appease him? Attend, therefore, and I shall declare that which thou wilt hardly believe when it is told unto thee. For Lord, "who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?" Isa 53:1. And yet that which I shall declare, if thou canst believe it, will fill thy mouth with laughter, and thy tongue with singing. Psal.126:2. Take this proposition, that God is freely and fully reconciled to the elect, and loveth them in Jesus Christ without any previous dispositions, without any qualifications, without any performances or conditions on their parts, unless to

be polluted and sinful be a previous condition or qualification. This is a bold proposition, will the Pharisee say; this is too good news to be true, will the distressed soul say. But I say, the Lord break your stony hearts, and give you a heart of flesh, that you may submit to his righteousness. And I make no question but the glorious grace of the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, shall abundantly be manifested. The method I intend is to prove the truth of this proposition; to answer six objections; and to make application.

For the proof, when Eve and Adam {in whose loins we all sinned} had eaten the forbidden fruit, and were now become guilty of condemnation, they hear the voice of God walking in the garden, which voice was this, "thou hast eaten, and thou shalt die." They hide themselves from the presence of God, amongst the trees of the garden, when man had sinned and was in a despairing condition, having not so much wit as to think of a Saviour, much less the boldness to ask one at the hands of an offended God. Now, in this case, behold the exceeding love of God towards man, in giving and manifesting the promised seed, as well to the terror of Satan as to the consolation of mankind. "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." Gen.3:15. See, {if I may compare the Creator with the creature,} how the Lord's bowels do yearn upon man. And he cannot refrain himself, but that {lest man should have been swallowed up with sorrow} the blessing of the promised seed shall be first declared, before the Lord pronounced the least curse against man. Father Abraham receiveth the promise in the uncircumcision of his flesh, and unto Adam is the promise revealed in the uncircumcision of his heart. But, lest you should think that some qualification in Adam did forerun the manifestation of the promise, I will refer you unto that place of Scripture

which I am resolved, shall never slip out of my remembrance, and I hope the like of you. "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." II Tim.1:9. What is there that is not comprehended in this word, grace? Here you see that grace was given before the world began. Now, what conditions or qualifications were there in us before the world began? We may safely, therefore, say that the grace of our God was before all conditions, &c., and unto this we will add, in the next place, one text, that like a diamond casteth his lustre in the dark, and ministereth a great measure of the Spirit. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, by grace ye are saved." Eph.2:4-5. What if I shall now prove so bold as to make such a stop at sins, as shall show that that part of the sentence is referred to that which went before; so that we may say in plain terms, that God loved us with his great love, even when we were dead in trespasses and sins. If I shall read it thus, the text will bear it either in the original or in other translations. But if any froward person shall say that I do injury in reading it thus, and that this clause, "dead in trespasses and sins," ought rather to be referred to quickened, which follows after, than to the verb "loved" which goeth before, let this man know that the sense will be one and the same, for when God quickened us, then he loved us with his great love, his love being the cause of quickening, the effect of his love. But thou sayest we were quickened when we were dead in trespasses and sins, and therefore we conclude we were loved with his great love when we were dead in trespasses and sins. For further confirmation, I must entreat you to consider what is written by the apostle in Romans, "for the children

being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth; it was said unto her, the elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." Rom.9:11-13. Now you see God's love set upon Jacob. Where were Jacob's qualifications? He had neither done good nor evil; therefore, it is plain that God loved him before any qualification. But some may confess that the Lord loved him, indeed, before he had done good or evil, and yet may, perchance, ask a question upon a supposition, saying, suppose that after Jacob was born he should have led a wicked and perverse life; suppose that, for some years, he should have been a notorious and profane person, would or could the Lord have continued his love to such a person as this? I answer boldly, yes; for God's love and mercy are mercies of eternity. "But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children," Psal.103:17, not only to everlasting, as eternal in respect to time to come, but also from everlasting, as eternal in respect of that which is past. God's mercies are not only without beginning, but also without ending, as it is so often repeated, even 26 times in the 136th Psalm, "his mercy endureth forever." This is it that is written by the prophet, "for I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." Mal.3:6. Would you know the true reason why the sons of Jacob are not consumed? It is this, the LORD changes not! Should the Lord change as often as we change; should his love increase and decrease towards us, as often as our love to him and obedience to his majesty ebbeth and floweth, the Lord should be more variable than the wind, more changeable than the moon. That the Lord's love alters not hath been sufficiently proved by that which hath been spoken, yet, to the praise of the glory of his grace, I will

proceed to show you, by more testimonies, that the Lord loveth all his elect with his great love, even then, and when they lie weltering in their sins and transgressions. Unto this the Holy Ghost bears witness. "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly." Rom.5:6. For whom Christ died, them the Father and the Son loved; but Christ died for the ungodly that were without strength, therefore such were undoubtedly beloved of God. Lest we should think the first of these propositions to be weak, it is confirmed, verse 8, "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." And very worthy of observation is that which is spoken, verse 10, "for if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." Here we have more proved than I have yet undertaken, for my task is to prove that God was reconciled to us whilst we were enemies. This text saith not only so, but that we were reconciled to God when we were enemies. But of this more shall be spoken hereafter; only for the present we desire to have it granted, that when we were reconciled to God he was, without all doubt, reconciled to us. For our reconciliation to him is not the cause of his reconciliation to us; but contrary, his reconciliation to us is the cause of our reconciliation to him.

Now let us see the argument once again, for whom Christ died these he loved; but Christ died for ungodly, for sinners, for enemies; therefore he loved enemies, sinners, ungodly, and with such a love as is not only verbal but real, not in word but in deed and in truth, as doth already appear by his death and will yet more plainly appear by those acts of love, communicated unto us, even when we were in the state of ungodliness, in the worst estate and condition. Let us consider that place so full of the glory of God, which is written, and say, "thus saith

the Lord GOD unto Jerusalem; thy birth and thy nativity is of the land of Canaan; thy father was an Amorite, and thy mother an Hittite. And as for thy nativity, in the day thou wast born thy navel was not cut, neither wast thou washed in water to supple thee; thou wast not salted at all, nor swaddled at all. None eye pitied thee, to do any of these unto thee, to have compassion upon thee; but thou wast cast out in the open field, to the loathing of thy person, in the day that thou wast born. And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live; yea, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live." Ezek.16:3-6. Why doth the Lord use this ingemination, "in thy blood, in thy blood?" Is it not because he knoweth how hardly we are drawn to believe the glory of his grace, and how ready we are to rob him of the honour of his infinite mercy? The Lord doth as it were say; I know you will wonder at this, that I should say live, before you were washed, salted, or swaddled, while you were in your blood. But I remember the act of my grace which passed upon you even in blood. The Lord loved us not because we were washed and cleansed, but therefore he washed and cleansed us, because he loved us. See the freeness of God's love, "for God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Jn.3:16. This place is well known unto you, it may be here lies hid something, which many of you never discovered, namely that Christ given is the effect of God's love, not the cause. And that the love of God goes before the gift of his Son as the cause goeth before the effect. He therefore gave his Son because he loved.

If this seems strange, that God's love should be more ancient in order of causes than the gift of his Son, because that in him God doth communicate all things unto us, I answer, that Christ is God manifested to us in the

flesh. "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness, God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." I Tim.3:16. And that all the blessings of that love, wherewith the Lord loved us eternally, are manifested only in Christ Jesus, and in him they are fully manifested to have been forever in the bosom of the Father. So that for us to say or think, that Christ purchased the love of the Father for us, is that which I am confident the Redeemer of the world will not challenge unto himself, but say, {as in another case,} it is not mine to give, but it was given to them, to whom it was given before the foundation of the world was laid. Matt.20:23. This is all that I am able to speak, unless it should be lawful for me, in so reverend a mystery, to use a distinction, and to consider in the love of God the original of his love, and the continuation thereof, and to say that the original of his love was before the gift of his Son, as the cause before the effect; but that the continuation of love is to be referred unto the propitiation of the Redeemer, as the effect of that sacrifice which he offered. To speak plain, God's love was before the gift of his Son, as the cause before the effect. But the continuation of that love, that he should love us forever, requires a foregoing propitiation and satisfaction. But when we shall say thus, we fall into a depth unsearchable. When we shall ask why the continuation of his love should rather require a foregoing propitiation, than the original setting of his love upon us? I confess I cannot tell what to say for to clear this; but tremble to speak of this glorious mystery, and desire to refer myself to the judgment of the spiritual, who are able to judge all things and to be instructed by them, whether it be not safer to rest in that which was said before, than, with precise distinctions, to wade into the depth unsearchable. We see the great love of God to

us in our blood, how that he so loved us, that he gave us his Son.

I will now be bold to step a step higher, if higher may be, and to show you that God did not only love us in our blood with his great love; but that his love to us in our blood was as great as ever afterwards. He loved us, I say, with as great love when we were in blood and pollution, as he did afterward when we were cleansed. I know the Pharisee will stamp at this, and say, doth God indeed love as well before conversion as after conversion? Did God love Paul with as great a love when that he persecuted the church, as when he preached the Gospel? I will answer boldly, yea, he did; and that I shall by the assistance of God prove unto you, against men or devils who shall oppose it. That God loved us, being dead in trespasses and sins, you have heard proved. Now give me leave to propound a question, and that is, whether this great love wherewith God loved sinners, be not his infinite love, like himself? Nay, whether is it in any other thing than himself? God is love, I Jn.4:16, and if this be granted, that God's love is infinite to sinners; that it is, like himself, yea, that it is himself, {for love in God is not a quality,} then it will be plain, that his love is not capable of increase or decrease, but is always one and the same. The difference is in us, whose apprehensions do often increase and decrease. Again, is not the love of God to be weighed by the pledges of his love? But we shall find the greatest pledges of his love to be given unto sinners even in the state of ungodliness. What greater pledge than the gift of his Son? In this God commendeth his love, for, as before, Rom.5:8, all the mercies of God are commendations of his love, but none like this. All other gifts are not comparable to the gift of his Son. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Rom.8:32. If all things were laid in one balance, and the

Son of God in the other, no man doubts but that the Son of God would be infinitely beyond all things. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." Jn.15:13. But greater love hath God, in that he laid down his life for his enemies. "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." I Jn.4:9-10. Now that the apostle saith, "in this was manifested the love of God," and, "herein is love," he doth it to this end, that he might show unto us that Christ was the greatest manifestation of God's love, for "hereby perceive we the love of God, that he hath laid down his life for us." I Jn.3:16. These speeches are all comparative, showing us that God's love was manifest in nothing more, or rather nothing so much, as in the death of his Son. Abraham's love to God appeared in many things; but above all, in that he denied not his son, "for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me." Gen.22:12. May not we justly say with admiration unto God, now we know that thou lovest us, because thou hast not withheld thy Son, thine only Son? Thus you see God doth not only love us before conversion, but he loveth us with his great love, yea his greatest love that ever was communicated to the creature; for greater love did God never manifest to the creature, than that he should give his Son. This may more fully appear by several effects of the love of God, communicated unto men by God, in and through his Son, before conversion, faith, &c., or anything in us pre-considered. He "hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world," Eph.1:4; again, "having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he

hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace," 1:5-7, "in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." Eph.1:11. How many acts of God have we here communicated by his grace unto the creature, before repentance, faith, or conversion, or calling! We will add to these, one act of grace more, communicated to the creature in the state of ungodliness, "God justifieth the ungodly." Rom.4:5. Yea, take we sanctification in the common acceptation, may we not say God sanctifieth the ungodly? For men are not sanctified, because they are godly; but are godly, because they are sanctified. Yea, one thing more, even calling itself, effectual calling I mean, goes before conversion, as the cause before the effect; for calling is not an effect of conversion, but conversion is an effect of calling. It is necessary that God call before we can hear; yea, that God open the heart before we can receive.

If I did think that these things needed proof, I would spend time about it. You see now predestination, choosing, redemption, justification, sanctification, calling, opening of the heart, all of them gracious acts of God, communicated unto the creature before the conversion of the creature to God. Let us hear the Lord speaking of his own work upon the creature, "he went on frowardly in the way of his heart; I have seen his ways, and will heal him, I will lead him also, and restore comforts unto him and to his mourners." Isa.57:18. Whom wilt thou heal? O Lord, whom wilt thou restore? Even him whose ways I have seen. What are those ways? Even frowardness and perverseness. He went on frowardly in the way of his heart. See again, Isa.43:25, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." Whose sins will the Lord blot

out? Look we back unto the 22nd verse, "but thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob; but thou hast been weary of me, O Israel," "thou hast bought me no sweet cane with money, neither hast thou filled me with the fat of thy sacrifices, but thou hast made me to serve with thy sins, thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities." Verse 24. See, thou hast been weary of me; yea, thou hast wearied me. This is Jacob's qualification; this is Israel's preparation. Then follows, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions." As if the Lord would say unto his people, as he speaketh by the prophet, "say unto the house of Israel, thus saith the Lord GOD; I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went," Ezek.36:22; or as when Israel was near the confines of Canaan the Lord speaketh thus unto them by Moses, "understand therefore this day, that the LORD thy God is he which goeth over before thee; as a consuming fire he shall destroy them, and he shall bring them down before thy face; so shalt thou drive them out, and destroy them quickly, as the LORD hath said unto thee. Speak not thou in thine heart, after that the LORD thy God hath cast them out from before thee, saying, for my righteousness the LORD hath brought me in to possess this land; but for the wickedness of these nations the LORD doth drive them out from before thee. Not for thy righteousness, or for the uprightness of thine heart, dost thou go to possess their land: but for the wickedness of these nations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee, and that he may perform the word which the LORD sware unto thy fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Understand therefore, that the LORD thy God giveth thee not this good land to possess it for thy righteousness; for thou art a stiffnecked people. Remember, and forget not, how thou provokedst the LORD thy God to wrath in the wilderness; from the day

that thou didst depart out of the land of Egypt, until ye came unto this place, ye have been rebellious against the LORD." Deut.9:3-7. As if the Lord should say, I will blot out your transgressions, but I would have you know the riches of my grace. It is not anything in you that moves me unto it. For there is nothing in you but rebellion; but I do it for my glory's sake. As the prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, "yea, thou heardest not; yea, thou knewest not; yea, from that time that thine ear was not opened; for I knew that thou wouldest deal very treacherously, and wast called a transgressor from the womb. For my name's sake will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off." Isa.48:8-9. This is all the qualification we bring unto God, to win his love and mercy. We are rebellious, we are profane, we are a stiff-necked people. And if the Lord should not love us, until he find lovely conditions in us, surely he must hate us forever. If God should not be reconciled unto us, until we be reconciled unto him, he must continue our enemy forever. Wherefore, considering what hath been said, we will be bold to conclude to the praise of the glory of his grace, that his love and mercy to us is before all qualifications in us; that his love and mercy to us is the cause of all qualifications in us; that his love towards us is as great before faith and conversion as after. There is no difference in him. "For mine own sake, even for mine own sake, will I do it; for how should my name be polluted, and I will not give my glory unto another. Harken unto me, O Jacob and Israel, my called; I am he; I am the first, I also am the last." Isa.48:11-12. "And ye shall know that I am the LORD, when I have wrought with you for my name's sake, not according to your wicked ways, nor according to your corrupt doings, O ye house of Israel, saith the Lord GOD." Ezek.20:44. "Not for your sakes do I this, saith the Lord GOD, be it

known unto you; be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel." Ezek.36:32.

But some will say, peradventure we grant that God thus loveth us, as is before proved; but it may be it was because he foresaw we would be good, repent, believe, &c. Far be it from us to entertain such thoughts. He that well pondereth what hath been said, shall well perceive, that God doth not therefore love us, because he foresaw we will repent and believe, but therefore causeth us to repent and believe in his time, because he loveth us. But to make this also more clear, the Holy Ghost declares, "but after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us." Tit.3:4-5. The pattern according to which God setteth his love upon man, was not anything save his rich mercy; whereby it is plain that, "herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." I Jn.4:10. "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." Jn.15:16. As our father Abraham received the righteousness of faith being yet uncircumcised, and then received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of faith which he had yet being uncircumcised; so, as Abraham was first righteous and then circumcised, not first circumcised and then righteous, so the children of Abraham are first beloved and then converted, not first converted and then beloved. And as God did not account Abraham righteous, because he foresaw he would be circumcised, but therefore he gave him the sign of circumcision, because he had made him righteous; so it is with the children of Abraham, God doth not therefore love them, because he foresees that they will repent and believe, but therefore he causeth them in his time to repent and believe the Gospel, because he loved them. Thus have I done with the first thing propounded in the handling of this

proposition. The second follows, namely the answer unto the several objections.

The first and greatest is this, if God love the elect while they are yet dead in trespasses and sins, and so love them with his great love, and with as great a love before conversion as after, as is before proved, then how is it said, "thou hatest all workers of iniquity?" Psal.5:5. And hither we may refer many places of scripture of like nature. If God hate all the workers of iniquity, how can he be said to love the ungodly? Thus you see, in one short sentence, seemeth to be quite overthrown all that I have hitherto spoken. To wind out of this labyrinth, which some having essayed have further entangled themselves, {with invocation unto God for the wisdom of his Holy Spirit to guide us into the truth,} I will first show what some have said to clear this, and then shall deliver unto you mine own judgment; and yet, I hope, not mine own, but the judgment of the Spirit of God and of most of the saints of God. First then, I find a great cathedral doctor {moving the objection and labouring to give solution} to give us this distinction, that God hates the works but not the persons of his elect. I will not stand to question, whether there may be such a distinction admitted or no, but will take it for granted; and yet I do believe sin to be of that hideous nature, and the justice of God so perfect, that he cannot but hate the person unto whom he imputeth and upon whom he charges sin, if so be the person charged cannot give full, perfect, and present satisfaction. And yet will I not say that the Son of God, upon whom all our iniquities, great and small, were charged, was as at any time a son of hatred {for the Father was eternally well pleased with him} and the reason is, that our sins were no sooner charged upon him, but that he had given full and perfect satisfaction, being the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Rev.13:8. Although the foresaid distinction of person and works should be granted without

further question, yet give me leave to pronounce it nothing pertinent to the solution of the objection in hand. For the text saith, not only he hateth the works, but the workers, that is, the persons working iniquity. Another answer is brought to untie this knot, by a jingling distinction of a two-fold love in God, namely, benevolent and complacent; that the simple may understand there is in God, say they, a love of well-willing, and a love of liking. Now God {say they} loves his elect before their conversion, with the love of well-willing, but not with the love of liking. Like unto which we hear of a distinction not seldom, of the love of election, and the love of justification. God {say they} loves his elect with the love of election, but not with the love of justification.

First of all, I desire you to consider, whether there be not more rhyme than reason in these distinctions; the love of election, and the love of justification, being not diversities of love, or divers degrees of love, but divers manifestations of one and the same infinite love. As when a father hath conveyed an inheritance to his son, there is no new love from the father to the son, but a new manifestation of that love, wherewith the father loved the son before. Secondly, how can it be that God should not like the person whom he loves? There is indeed this difference between human love and divine; men commonly love because they like, but God likes because he loves. Man cannot but love where he likes, and I believe {speaking of the person} God cannot but like where he loves. To make such differences of love in God will, I fear, open a gap to many foul absurdities. But suppose that these things could be so, it will appear that God loves the persons of his elect, not only with a love of benevolence but also with a love of complacence and liking, for this is the voice of the Father from heaven, "this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Matt.3:17. Here is a revelation of the love of liking, "I am

well pleased." The Father is well pleased in his Son. With whom? Surely with those unto whom he had given his Son, that is, all his elect. Again, this answer, if it were beyond all exceptions, yet it is very impertinent to the objection; for the text doth not only say, that God loveth them not with such or such a love, but in plain terms it saith that the Lord hateth them that work iniquity. Now what shall we say, that God loves a person with infinite love, beyond expression or conceit, and yet at the same time hateth the same person with that perfect hatred wherewith he hateth all the workers of iniquity? Let us take heed that we draw not a veil before the face of God, and delude ourselves and others with such frothy and impertinent distinctions.

But I have by this time bred a kind of wonder in you, what I shall speak, seeing that which other men have said. I answer therefore, that this clause, that God hateth all the workers of iniquity, and God loveth the ungodly, are both in Scripture, and therefore both true; yet in a different sense. The first, the Lord hateth all the workers of iniquity is the voice of the Law; the other, the Lord loves sinners, is the voice of the Gospel. Now the Law and the Gospel speak divers things; the one being the manifestation of God's justice, tells us what we are by nature; the other, being the manifestation of God's mercy, tells us what we are by grace in Christ Jesus. The Law saith, that every sinner shall be accursed. The Gospel saith, Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. The Law saith, God will by no means clear the guilty, *Exod.34:7*, whilst the Gospel saith, God justifieth the ungodly. The Law showeth wrath without forgiveness. The Gospel showeth Mercy, Grace and Peace in Jesus Christ. Thus far is the objection answered; but yet all difficulty and scruple not removed; for the Law, you will say, is an eternal verity, whatsoever it saith is true. I confess it so, and one jot or tittle thereof cannot fail. But I say, with the

Apostle, that whatsoever the Law saith, it saith to them only who are under the Law, and to none other. I say again, that the righteousness of the Law is fulfilled by Christ for us all; yea in all that walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, Rom.8:4, so that although the elect of God are sinners in the judgment of the Law, sense, reason, yea, and oftentimes conscience; yet having their sins translated unto the Son of God {in whom they were elected} they have the righteousness of the Law fulfilled in the Mediator, and so become to be accounted righteous in his sight, that as God on the one side delivered the innocent to death, as though he had been a sinner, being made accountable for our sins. So on the other side, God loveth, justifieth, cleareth the guilty and sinners, as if they had been holy, righteous, and blameless. The sum is this, that as Christ was no sinner indeed, and yet a sinner by imputation; so they that are Christ's, are no sinners by imputation, and yet sinners indeed. Thus much for the first objection.

Objection 2. If God be reconciled unto us, before all conditions, &c., how is it that our Saviour saith, "if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses," Matt.6:15, unto which may be joined that which we have, Matt.18:35, "so likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not everyone his brother their trespasses." In which place we see, first, that unless we forgive, God will not forgive us; nay more, that God will reverse the act of his mercy, if after he hath forgiven us ten thousand talents, we shall not forgive one hundred pence; we shall be delivered to the tormentors, until we pay the whole due. For answer to this objection, we must lay down two grounds; the first, that God never reverses the acts of his mercy communicated to his elect. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. Rom.11:29. "God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he

should repent; hath he said, and shall he not do it, or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?" Numb.23:19. The second ground, that God's forgiveness of us is a forerunner of our forgiveness of our brethren. And we cannot truly forgive our brethren, until we do apprehend God's forgiveness of us. "Shouldst not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee?" Matt.18:33. And upon this ground the apostle presseth the Ephesians unto kindness and tenderness of heart, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. Eph.4:32.

But then if this be so, what mean the foresaid places, which strengthen the objection? I answer, that forgiveness is there to be taken for the manifestation of forgiveness; except ye forgive men, neither will your heavenly Father so fully declare and manifest himself unto your consciences. And so this place pertains properly to our reconciliation with God, not unto God's reconciliation with us. That this is not a subtle evasion, but the truth, appears first by a place of scripture; secondly, by the judgment of interpreters upon a like place. The place of scripture is found, Luke 7:47, "wherefore I say unto thee, her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much." What have we here? That this woman's great love was the cause of remission, or that it went before her obtaining of remission, as Bellarmine contends? Verily no, but it is plain, that her remission obtained was the cause of her love. Simon, saith our Saviour, a certain creditor forgave two debtors frankly; whereof the one owed five hundred pence, the other fifty; which of the twain will love him most? Simon answereth well, he to whom he forgave the most. Our Saviour maketh the application, seest thou this woman? Thou lovest me a little, thou hast bidden me to dinner. But when I came into thy house, thou gavest me no water for my feet; but she hath washed my feet with her tears,

and wiped them with the hairs of her head. My head with oil thou didst not anoint, but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment. Thou seest, that I have forgiven thee a few sins, and thou lovest me a little, but this woman hath much forgiven her, therefore she loved much. Lk.7:41-48. Whereby we understand two things; first, that her love was not the cause of forgiveness, but forgiveness the cause of her love. Secondly, that forgiveness in this place includes the manifestation of forgiveness, many sins are forgiven her. The sense is this, it appeareth unto this woman that I have pardoned a multitude of sins for her. This is the scripture.

The judgment of Interpreters in the Protestant Church, upon a like place, is occasioned by an argument urged by Cardinal Bellarmine and other popelings, against the Protestants, on this wise, if, saith he, the Protestants have pardon of all their sins, in such wise, as they say they have, why do they yet pray, forgive us our trespasses, if they be already forgiven? The Protestants answer with one consent; that they do beg at the hand of God, greater certainty, and assurance of his grace towards them; the Petition forgive us our trespasses, may well stand with assurance of pardon. The condemned person that is upon the ladder, having received the pardon of a gracious Prince, hears it read, is assured of it, and rejoices in it, yet this person being called into the presence of the King, if he should fall down and say, pardon me my Lord the King, who could lay folly to his charge? So, we having received the free pardon of sin at his hand already, yet as oft as we come into his presence we cry to the glory of his grace, forgive us our trespasses; for while we beg at the hand of God, that which we have before received, we do magnify his grace, that hath freely given it. Again; who so sure, and certain of pardon, but that he either needeth a greater assurance, or at least

that assurance to be by God's mercy continued. Thus much for the second objection.

The third followeth, if God love us in blood and pollution, as well before conversion as after conversion, then to what purpose serve our faith and good works? First, I answer this objection indirectly, by propounding one question; whether thou thinkest that thy faith and good works can obtain or procure the love and favour of God? If thou sayest no, then why dost thou make this objection? If thou sayest yea, then I demand, who shall give thee faith and good works? Shouldst thou expect them from any other than from the hand of a loving God? Secondly, I answer directly, by showing thee the true office of faith. Although faith do not procure God's love and favour, yet is it to very good purpose, and exceeding precious; that you may know the love of God, and be sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise. "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory." Eph.1:13-14. The original reads it, "in whom believing ye were sealed," so that believing is sealing, and an earnest of the inheritance. Secondly, that believing, you who were under darkness, and in the shadow of death, and saw no light, yea, I say, believing ye might rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith. I Pet.1:8. "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost." Rom.15:13. Thus you see your faith is to very good purpose, and yet not to that purpose, to obtain the love and favour of God.

Thus much for the office of faith; yet do I not undertake to set out unto you the whole office of that most precious gift, but only so much as may serve to

answer the present objection. But secondly, to what purpose serve our good works? I answer, to very good purpose also; namely, to express our thankfulness to God and our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath delivered us from our enemies, "that he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life." Lk.1:74-75. We do not serve God to obtain deliverance by serving of him; but of his free grace obtaining deliverance we serve him. We do not serve God to obtain salvation; but, obtaining salvation freely by Jesus Christ, we offer up our souls and bodies, a living sacrifice of thanksgiving. I answer further, thy good works may be profitable unto men, I Tim.4:15, but not unto God, who is of absolute perfection, and needeth not anything which thou canst do. "Can a man be profitable unto God, as he that is wise may be profitable unto himself? Is it any pleasure to the Almighty, that thou art righteous, or is it gain to him, that thou makest thy ways perfect?" Job 22:2-3.

Thus you see the office of your faith and works. Because we say that God loves us as well before conversion as after, do we therefore make faith and works void? God forbid! Must I needs put out my fire, because I will not set it on the top of the house? No, I will keep it within the chimney, which is the proper place. Woe be to that City, where the fire shall overtop the houses, for fire is precious in the chimney, but dangerous elsewhere. Precious is the gift of faith, if kept within its own sphere; but if we shall begin to lift it up, and place it in the throne of Christ, what fire more dangerous to the soul? The Brazen Serpent was a great blessing so long as Israel looked at it by God's appointment, to be healed of the bites of the fiery serpents; but when once Israel shall burn incense unto it, let it be Nehushtan, a piece of old

cankered brass. II Kings 18:4. Thus for the third objection; the fourth followeth.

If God love us with as great a love before conversion as after, then what need we take care what we do? If we repent and believe, the Lord will love us never the better; if we neither repent nor believe, the Lord will love us never the worse. Answer, I can hardly vouchsafe to give an answer to this objection, because the wise man advises, "answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him." Prov.26:4. And yet I must give an answer, because the wise man commandeth, verse 5, "answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit," and lest if I should pass by this objection thou shouldst triumph as if thou hadst gotten the victory. I answer, therefore, with the apostle, "what then? Shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid." Rom.6:15. This objection was moved by caviling spirits, even in the apostle's time, well-nigh 1600 years ago, and you see the answer. And now the same spirit rages in thee. But I thought what a customer we should have of thee. Thou wouldst make men believe that thou art no justiciary, no papist, not one that seeks to be justified by thy works; and yet if thy works cannot obtain God's favour, if they cannot procure an increase of his love, thou will presently cast off all and give liberty to thy flesh. Give me leave to speak plain, thou art he that turns the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ into wantonness, whose end is destruction, whose god is thy belly, whose glory is thy shame, who mindest earthly things. Phil.3:19. But be it known unto thee, that the grace of God teacheth other things; namely, to deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world. Tit.2:12.

But I perceive by this objection, that thou accounts this a doctrine of liberty, to declare the free love of God

in Jesus Christ; and thou thinkest it were better to hide this from the people, and to terrify them with hell fire, with wrath, and judgment, and with the fiery flashings of Mount Sinai, and to keep them in bondage. I can hardly refrain from giving thee very evil language, that art thus presumptuous and audacious to contradict the Lord Jesus, who hath given commandment that the Gospel of peace should be preached to all nations. I will spare to speak what I think, and commend unto thy consideration the judgment of one of our own countrymen, whose learning was by his adversaries commended, whose constancy and patience in his martyrdom was admired; it was John Fryth, who writes to this effect, "thou mayest preach hell and damnation, and the rendering of a terrible account to a severe judge, &c., seven years together, and yet not make one good Christian man. He that would make a good Christian, let the love of God be the first stone which he lays for the foundation." Thus he speaketh, and, indeed, what motive to obedience so strong as love? "Many waters cannot quench love; neither can the floods drown it." Cant.8:7. What greater fear than that which proceedeth from love? If we have an enemy whom we hate, and we sheathe a sword in his bowels, or cleave his head with a pole-axe, and cry him no mercy; but how careful are we not to do the least injury to a friend? If we tread on his finger we are sorry at the heart. What greater aggravation of sin than to sin against love. Were not he an ungracious and rebellious son amongst men, who should reason thus, I have an indulgent father who loveth me exceedingly, who deems nothing too good for me, who hath given me assurance and possession of his whole inheritance, therefore I will surely neglect him, I will show myself undutiful against him, I will no more regard his commands or attend unto his precepts, but whatsoever will grieve him that will I do. What heart could not afford to cast a stone at the head of such a son of

Belial as this, to dash out his brains? For shame, let the mover of this objection blush and hide his head; let him consider his folly. The case is thine; thou art the man, because God aboundeth in free love, mercy, and kindness, therefore thou wilt abound in wretchedness. I cease to speak any further of this to thy greater shame. The fifth objection follows, which is indeed more mannerly than the former.

Objection 5. If God love us, be reconciled unto us, before our faith and our conversion, then a man may possibly die without faith and yet be saved. I answer, this followeth not, because God hath engaged himself to the contrary, which if he had not done, much might have been said. But we see, he that cannot lie hath engaged himself unto his people. "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people; and they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord, for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest." Heb.8:10-11. "It is written in the prophets, and they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." Jn.6:45. "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." Jn.6:37. "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth, whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." II Thes.2:13-14. So that we say, he that believeth not shall be damned; not because his believing doth alter or change his estate before God, but because the God of truth hath promised that he will not only give us remission, but that he will

also give faith for our consolation, and so faith becometh a note and mark of life everlasting, and final infidelity a sure note of eternal condemnation, that whosoever or whatsoever he be in life or conversation, yet he that believeth not shall be damned. Thus much for the fifth.

Objection 6. The sixth objection, if God love us as you say, why doth he suffer us to live in sin ten, fifty, or sixty years? I answer, what art thou that repliest against God? "How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" Rom.11:33. Again, let us ask Paul why the Lord suffered him {being an elect and chosen vessel} to persecute his saints unto death and bonds, and to cause many to blaspheme; and he will tell us, that in him "first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting." I Tim.1:16. Thirdly; thou mayest as well object, seeing that God is of infinite power, why doth he suffer sin in the world? If thou shouldst, the Lord will give answer, "why dost thou strive against him, for he giveth not account of any of his matters." Job 33:13. "My grace is sufficient for thee." II Cor.12:9. Thus far for the objections; now we come to the third thing propounded, the application of what hath been spoken.

Application 1. In the first place, we will observe the difference between the true religion and the false, from that which hath been spoken. There are many religions in the world, and it fareth with diversities of religions as with diversities of opinions; there is a possibility that they may be all false, but it is altogether impossible that they should be all true. There is but one true Religion, but there are many false; the false Religions seeming to differ exceedingly amongst themselves, in very many things even in the object of worship, and in the matter, and manner; yet be they never so different, there is one common foundation, wherein they do all agree, and wherein they differ from the true. The true

Religion declares unto us a God reconciled, pacified, pleased, a justice already satisfied, a propitiation made, sins taken away; and we have not one jot, not one apex in all the new Covenant to be found of reconciliation to God. The new Covenant manifesting unto us a God already reconciled to us, and the whole ministry of reconciliation propounding our reconciliation to God. Now this is the common character of all false religions of what sort whatsoever, Jews, Turks, Papists, Pharisaical Protestants, Heathen; yea all propound to some degree or other, an angry God, a deity not reconciled, and then prescribe certain means and services whereby to appease his wrath, and to quench his displeasure, and to obtain his love and favor. Man does not oftener seek after salvation, but he naturally stumbles upon this principle, "what shall I do to be saved?" The world would be saved by doing. Luther speaking of this difference, does more than once compare the false religions unto Sampson's foxes, Judges 15:4; their heads looking divers ways, but they were all fastened together by the tails. This comparison we do embrace; yet I had rather compare them to gentlemen's spaniels, which are fastened together by the necks, but loose at the tails. They differ indeed in some circumstances, but in the main substance they agree in one. Do we not see some men contending with the Papists, with wonderful eagerness? Do we not see others tugging, and halting, one this way, the other another, one for this ceremony, and another for that, as though there were a mortal difference between them; yea the difference so great, that it is sometimes the greatest reason for one side to refute this or that because the other uses it. Now he that shall search into the innermost secrets of these antagonists, shall find, them that so eagerly differ about circumstance, {who could have believed it,} to agree in substance. Like ships that sail in the sea a great way asunder, yet all tending to one haven.

All tending to this end, to win or obtain the favor of an angry God. This that hath been spoken may prove a help to administer a spirit of discernment unto the simple, in these distracted times, wherein the Commonwealth is not more distracted than the Church. Now among so many diversities of opinions, how shall we know which is the old and the good way, that we may walk in it? One saith I am Christ, another nay, but I am Christ; for thy direction, search for that religion that abases man, that giveth the glory of grace to God; that propoundeth the free love of God in Jesus Christ, without mixture of anything in the creature, that is the true religion, all the rest are false; that is the true way, and strait line, all the rest are counterfeits, and crooked. This is the first application.

The second application is to correct our idolatrous thoughts and judgments, that we have had of God. What foolish fancies have possessed our souls? How often have we thought God to be like unto ourselves? How many times have we imagined an angry God, a wrathful Majesty, and have sought to appease his indignation by fasting, by prayer, by alms, by tears, and such like things? Oh, foolish man! If God's wrath should not be before appeased, what creature could stand in his sight? Do we not see when some lion-like man is incensed, the whole house trembles, not one servant, no not a son dares come into his presence, before his wrath be over? If we so fear the unjust wrath of man, how terrible would the just wrath of consuming fire be? What great presumption were it for the creature to come into his presence, if his wrath were not appeased? We complain of idolatry crept into our unhappy nation. We complain of bowing, of cringing, of crossing, and many such {Popish} fopperies. Search we, I beseech you, if idolatry have not hitherto crept into your hearts, if you have not set up a great idol, and bowed unto that image, with all its worship. Learn to make clean the inside as well as the

outside of the cup. Learn to banish out of the soul those foolish and vain conceits; learn to see the glory of the face of God in Christ, and to worship him in spirit and in truth. There cannot be a greater idolatry committed than to conceive a possibility of gaining the love and favor of God, by works wrought in the creature. This is as great an idol as that which was set up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon, threescore cubits high. Daniel.3:1. This is the Beast that hath made the whole earth to partake of her fornications.

The third application is to stir us up to admire the exceeding love of God, and his wonderful goodness. Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth, whether ever the like grace were heard of since the mountains were framed. Who could have expected that the Lord should have been half so gracious? Did we ever imagine to hear such a voice from heaven to earth, so full of grace, so full of glory? Had the Lord propounded his love and reconciliation to us, upon hard and difficult conditions, yet if possible, should not we have accounted it a happiness; for what would not the distressed soul have done {witness the acts of our forefathers} for to have purchased remission, and to have obtained the favour of God? But see if any grace be like to this grace. The Lord calleth from heaven, and "as a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered," so will he seek out his sheep, "and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day." Ezek.34:12. The LORD calleth all such as are embraced in his love; yea, all for whom reconciliation hath been made, calling by his Son, Jesus, saying, O ye sons of men, what could I have done, or what could you have wished me to do, more than that which I have done? Behold, I am friends with you, I love you truly; see, have I not given you my Son? And now I beseech you, by my Son, that you would be reconciled unto me; I am friends with you,

be you friends with me. Did we ever think to hear the God of heaven to beseech and entreat us to be reconciled unto God? That man should entreat God to be reconciled was what we might imagine; but that we should find God already reconciled, and praying of man that he would be reconciled, this is grace beyond expression. And as this sets forth the glorious grace of God, and so doth it aggravate our unthankfulness unto God, if we shall neglect so great salvation. Heb.2:3.

If some poor and base man, some notorious person, had offended the magistrates of this city, whereby he had deserved severe punishment, yet the magistrates should send for this offender, and declare themselves satisfied, and entreat him to shake hands with them; if, now, this offender should stubbornly refuse to be reconciled to them whom he had offended, what should we think of such a person? The case is ours, it is we that have offended God, God hath not offended us, yet now, when the offended God shall declare his grace, and send the ministry of reconciliation to us who were offenders, if we shall now refuse and turn away our ears, and refuse to submit to his righteousness, what ingratitude will this be? That we may yet more admire the Grace of our God, the Lord is pleased to use familiar expressions to declare unto us that it pleased God to betroth unto himself a wife, whom he would admit into so much favor as to call him, Ishi, my Husband, unto whom he would vouchsafe so much honor, as to call her his spouse, his love, his dove, &c., and to betroth her unto Himself forever. "And it shall be at that day, saith the LORD, that thou shalt call me Ishi; and shalt call me no more Baali," "and I will betroth thee unto me forever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness; and thou shalt know the LORD." Hos.2:16-20. Who is it unto whom the

Lord vouchsafes such Grace? What person is it to whom the Lord will take to be his spouse? Was there ever such a thing as this heard? That poverty should sue unto riches? That deformity should sue unto beauty? And with reverence and trembling be it spoken that the mighty God of Heaven betroths unto Himself, and swears unto vile, poor, deformed, sinful, diseased and loathsome man. When man intending to take a companion of his love, some aim at nobility, some at beauty, others at riches; these are the three that commonly attract the liking and love of man; but it is not so with God. Look we at the nobility of his spouse, at her parentage, from whence she is descended? "Thus saith the Lord GOD unto Jerusalem; thy birth and thy nativity is of the land of Canaan; thy father was an Amorite, and thy mother an Hittite." Ezek.16:3. She is base born, a daughter of whoredoms. But it may be that beauty might recompense the baseness of her birth. Look we at her beauty; her native beauty is blood and pollution, a deformed creature; her artificial beauty, neither washing, nor swaddling, nor salting. But peradventure, that which was lacking in birth and beauty might be supplied in riches and plenty; {for riches make many marriages;} but let us survey her riches. Behold, instead of an habitation, "thou wast cast out in the open field, to the lothing of thy person, in the day that thou wast born." Ezek.16:5. Instead of illustrious raiment, nothing but nakedness. "Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love; and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness; yea, I swore unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord GOD, and thou becamest mine." Ezek.16:8. Here is a spouse that hath not wherewithal to buy herself a wedding garment. O the depth of the riches of the mercy of God! Neither noble, nor beautiful, nor rich; and yet the Lord hath set his love upon us. Nay, here is one thing exceedeth all this that

hath been spoken. So miserable was our condition that it hath cost the Lord a great dowry; and the Lord must buy us unto Himself, not with silver or gold, not with two hundred foreskins of the Philistines; but with the precious blood of the Son of God. I desire to leave you in admiration of this transcendent love, and to pass unto the fourth application to comfort the distressed soul.

Here are the queries of thy burdened soul answered. What goodness must I find in me? What conditions? What qualifications, before that I believe God to be a Father to me in Christ? What must I do to be saved? Thou seest here the freeness of God's Grace, the glory of his Reconciliation, and I will be bold to say unto thee, as Moses speaketh unto Israel in another case, "fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will show to you today." Exod.14:13. Or as Jahaziel speaketh unto Judah in another case, "ye shall not need to fight in this battle; set yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the LORD with you, O Judah and Jerusalem; fear not, nor be dismayed; tomorrow go out against them; for the LORD will be with you." II Chron.20:17.

What shall I do to obtain the favour of God? I say, know him in Christ favourable unto thee, freely for his own sake. But here the poor soul will object and say, alas; should I believe, that have not one jot of goodness in me; nay more, that have all manner of evil in me. I answer, thou hast as much in thee as God requires at thy hands, to precede his love, to go before his reconciliation. If he had said he could not love thee before such and such conditions, then thou mightest have had cause to distrust his love. But thou hast seen his love to man, even dead in trespasses and sin. He came to call sinners, not the righteous to repentance. Come to him empty of all goodness, and partake of his fulness; come to him hungry and he shall fill thee, thirsty, and he shall satisfy thee.

Oh, what injury do we unto the grace of God, in that we imagine God to be like unto some niggardly man, who will not bid us welcome to his house, unless we bring our cost with us! The Lord looks for nothing at our hands, to obtain his favour; come unto him naked, and he shall clothe thee. But the poor soul will yet object further, and say, my case is yet worse than you perceive; for I am not only void of goodness, I am not only full of filthiness and abomination, but which is worst of all, I cannot leave my sins, I cannot forsake my whoredoms and drunkenness. How oft have I vowed, how oft have I promised, yea, how oft have I sworn, to forsake my sins, and yet all in vain! I have returned with the dog to the vomit, and with the washed sow to wallow in the mire. What say you to my case? If I should now come unto Christ, would he bid me welcome? If I should believe God loving unto me, would it not be the greatest sin unto me? Must not I forsake and leave my sins before I believe? Must not I cast out the rubbish out of my soul, before Christ will love me? Must I not first be washed and cleansed, before Christ will show any favour unto me? Although the answer to this objection do properly belong unto the second thing to be showed, namely, man's reconciliation to God, yet I will speak something, and I desire thee to try one conclusion, to come unto Christ first, and leave thy sins afterward; get power from him to forsake thine iniquities. This is the reason why thy labour hath been in vain, because thou has gone the wrong way to work, that is, to mortify thy sin first, and to come to Christ afterwards. Now how is it possible thou shouldst mortify thy sin before thou believest in his name, when whatsoever is not of faith is sin? Dost thou think to cast out rubbish without him? Dost thou think to bind the strong man by thine own power? Thou art deceived. Wouldst thou mortify thy sin? See the order of the Holy Ghost, "mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness,

inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry, &c.," Col.3:5, therefore, wherefore, verse 1, "if ye be risen with Christ, seek those things that are above," first risen with Christ, then mortify. See the example of Mary, who had seven devils in her; she doth not say, if I could cast out my devils then I would come to Christ, but she cometh and bringeth her seven devils with her, and the Lord casteth them out every one for her. Do thou likewise, bring thy sins with thee, and let him cast them out for thee. If thou say, if I were washed, then I could believe, then I could come boldly to him; I ask thee, who should wash thee? I say, come unto him, soul, and he shall make thee clean. Doth not he call all that labour and are heavy laden? Matt.11:28. The burden and load is sin. He doth not say, lay down your burden first, and then come unto me; but, come unto me laden, and I will give you rest.

But you will say, is it not written that the "unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God; be not deceived, neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, &c.," I Cor.6:9, again, is it not written, "without holiness no man shall see God?" Heb.12:14. To see God, and to inherit the kingdom of God, are nothing else but to believe in God, and his Son Jesus Christ. But this you see cannot be without holiness, therefore I must have holiness first, before I can believe. I answer, the text saith not so, but without holiness no man shall see God. If I should say, without eating and drinking no man can live; wouldst thou presently conclude that I must eat and drink before I be alive, when sense will tell thee I must be alive before I can eat and drink? Yet this is thy arguing, without holiness no man shall see God, therefore we must have holiness before we can see God; when it is evident we must see God before we can have holiness; for, whatsoever is not of faith is sin. Rom.14:23. But the meaning of the place is, that Christ will not only purge the

conscience, but the conversation also of all such as come to him, that is, believe in his name, and that a reformed conversation shall {though not go before} yet accompany a clear apprehension of the grace of God in Christ Jesus. And thus we give a distinct answer unto that other portion of holy scripture, "fornicators shall not inherit the kingdom of God," not that it is to be thought that men must first mortify their sins before they can come to the kingdom of God, but that, entering into the kingdom of God, the Lord would vouchsafe unto them power to reform their lives. And that this is the true sense of the place is plain, by the eleventh verse, "and such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." I Cor.6:11. They were such until they were washed, and how were they washed, even in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. When the buyers and sellers had profaned the temple, the Lord doth not stay while somebody had cast them out, and then go into the temple afterwards, but he enters into the temple first, and making a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple. John 2:15. So fareth it with the temple of thy body, that is profaned with sin, and thy conscience that is defiled with iniquity. Thou must not think that thy conscience must be washed first, and then the Lord to enter afterwards; but the Lord must first enter, and wash thee and purge thee by his blood, which purges the conscience from dead works, to serve the living God. Heb.9:14. Therefore when thou complainest thou canst not leave thy sins; I say, thou hadst the more need to believe in Christ, that thou mightest have power to forsake them.

But, poor soul, thou dost object further, and say, I have been an extortioner, a grinder of the faces of the poor, a thief, a purloiner, and what, shall I venture to believe in Christ before I have made restitution and

satisfaction to them whom I have wronged? Are we not taught out of the fathers, that without restitution no remission? I answer, first, there are many things that are well spoken by the fathers, in one sense, which are perversely applied in another. This sentence is true in respect of reconciliation of man to man, but not true in respect of God to man, or man to God. As when a man shall, by a lawful church, be for extortion excommunicated, the church ought not to receive him again until restitution be made. And thus may we in good sense understand other passages of the fathers, which are otherwise perversely applied by themselves and others. Wilt thou deserve pardon, saith Ambrose, wash away thy sins by tears. This is good, in my first sense of reconciliation of man to man, as when the church shall excommunicate an offender, and he shall humble himself with tears in his eyes, he ought again to be received. But to apply this as a means to reconcile God to man, there can be nothing more abominable.

Thus much by the way, to give thee warning of the gross applications which are made out of the fathers, by those which understand not what they say. But to answer thy doubt, thou fearest to believe because thou hast not made restitution. I say, believe first, make restitution afterwards; for this we have an example beyond all exception, Lk.19:8, "and Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold." If we look back to the sixth verse, there we see that Zacchaeus received Christ joyfully. Zacchaeus was an arch-publican, verse 2, a man that was a sinner, verse 7, yet this sinner, this arch-publican, received Christ first {not into his house only, but into his affections also,} and then he makes restitution afterward. Go and do likewise; thou seest the abundant grace of God above and beyond all obstacles; if

thou canst believe, thou needest not fear, though thou hast been never so sinful. Thus much for the fourth application.

Application, the fifth, if God be so freely reconciled to us, how ought we to be easy to be entreated to be reconciled one to another? The Lord is slow to wrath, and full of compassion, and loving in kindness. Take we heed that we be not full of wrath, and slow to compassion. God is reconciled to us before we ask; how much more ought we to be reconciled to those that have offended us, and say, forgive us? Oh, that we had so much charity in us, as to bear one with another, the stronger with the weaker, that unhappy differences might have an end. Secondly, is God thus freely reconciled to us? Oh, let us be entreated to be reconciled unto him. Which is the second general I have to show unto you; what it is for man to be reconciled to God.

FINIS.

RECONCILLIATION OF MAN TO GOD.

Before I enter to speak of man's reconciliation to God, it is necessary that I premise a distinction, and show you a twofold reconciliation set out unto us in the scriptures; 1st, original reconciliation; 2nd actual reconciliation. Bear with the terms, I confess they are not altogether so fit as I could wish. But I therefore thought fit to use these terms, that I might parallel this distinction unto another, used by divines of original and actual sin. Original reconciliation is wrought without us by another person, yet for us; you may call it the reconciliation of our nature. Actual reconciliation is wrought within us, although not by our own power. This you may call the reconciliation of our persons or consciences, the one being the reconciliation of our nature to God, the other the manifestation of that, and the promised reconciliation to our souls. That this is not an unnecessary distinction you shall find by comparing some scriptures together; the first is Rom.5:10, "when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." Again, Eph.2:16, "that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby." "For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; and, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight." Col.1:19-22.

Consider what is written, "and all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ,

and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." II Cor.5:18,19. Now compare we this with that which we find in the next verse, "we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." II Cor.5:20. In the former place the Apostle told us we were reconciled; and in this place, he beseecheth us to be reconciled. To take up this difference, I say that in the former he speaketh of our original reconciliation, wherein our nature was reconciled to God by Christ, in the second I say, he speaketh of our actual or personal reconciliation, wherein our consciences become reconciled to God, through the apprehension of the reconciliation which Christ hath wrought for us. When we speak of our original reconciliation, I lay down this proposition, that we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, without any previous conditions or dispositions in us, or performed by us. You see it is the act of Christ upon the Cross, it was done by his death; the Lord Christ taking our nature upon Him; and we are said to do that which He did, and to have that done unto us which was done unto Him. As in the first Adam we all sinned before we were, or had committed any actual transgression; so in the second Adam we were reconciled. "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." Rom.5:19. I say we are said to do that which he did, as to be buried with Christ, by baptism into death, Rom.6:4, we are said to be crucified with Christ, as our old man is crucified with Him, Rom.6:6; to be dead and alive with Him. "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom.6:11. We are said to be risen with Him, Col.3:1, which is elegantly set forth by the prophet Hosea, speaking of the resurrection of Christ. He speaketh on this

wise, "after two days will he revive us; in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight." Hos.6:2. Yet more we are said to be placed together in heavenly places with Him, Eph.2:5-6, this is that which I call original reconciliation; whereby we see that not only God was reconciled unto us, but also that our nature was reconciled unto God by the death of His Son, without any condition, or qualification wrought in us. Thus much for our original reconciliation as accomplished in Christ; now follows our actual reconciliation; namely, the manifestation of God's reconciliation to us, and of the reconciliation of our nature to God in Jesus Christ.

Here I lay down this proposition. Man's actual reconciliation to God, necessitates previous dispositions to be wrought in man by the Spirit of God, before God's reconciliation be manifested unto him. Although this proposition needs no proof, in regard that the world so far idolizes conditions and pre-dispositions, that they will hardly admit God to be reconciled to man, without performances in man, surely much less will they think it possible that man should be reconciled unto God, without something wrought in man, yet for our better understanding I will show you the proof of this by certain texts. As, "except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Jn.3:5. "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." Jn.3:3. To enter into and to see the kingdom of God, is that which I call reconciliation to God. To know the favour and love of God towards us in Christ, requires you to see the state of being born again of water and of the Spirit, which is {not to be baptized, as the papists would have it, but} to have such fruits and effects of God's Spirit wrought in us as to purify and cleanse the heart, as water doth the body. Secondly, "except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." Jn.6:53. Mark, I pray you, he doth not say,

that except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, ye have no life in God, or in Christ; but ye have no life in you. Now you see we must eat the flesh of Christ and drink his blood, or else we can have no life in us. To eat his flesh and to drink his blood is to believe in him; to have life in you, is to know God's favour in Jesus Christ, as much as if he should say, except ye believe, ye cannot know God's favour to you in Jesus Christ. Unto this we may add in the third place, "except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." Lk.13:3. And to this place we may also refer that place of which we had occasion to speak somewhat before, "without holiness no man shall see God," Heb.12:14; not only that holiness is concomitant or companion of our seeing of God, but that faith being a part of, {yea the first fruits of holiness,} is that whereby the soul is brought to the sight of God in Jesus Christ. But I am not willing to spend time in larger proof, though you cannot but perceive I might be very large herein; but I will, for your better understanding, confine myself, and go on to show you in particular, what dispositions are wrought in us before we find ourselves in a state of reconciliation to God? And here I have occasion, for the better explaining of this, to commend unto you three sorts of dispositions: 1. Antecedent. 2. Present. 3. Consequent.

Antecedent dispositions I call those which are necessarily pre-supposed in us before we can submit unto God, or be reconciled unto him. They are such dispositions as may be separated from reconciliation in time, yea, they are such dispositions, as are and may be in them which are not reconciled, nor yet ever shall be, so that they are proper, to all the elect, but not only to the elect. 2. Present dispositions I call them that go before reconciliation, as the cause before the effect, yet are never separated from reconciliation in time, but are indeed the very thing whereby the Holy Spirit of God doth

reconcile man to God. 3. Consequent dispositions I call them which do always follow reconciliation, as the effect the cause, although they are inseparable in respect of time. And I therefore undertake to speak of these {although the curious may think me blameworthy for transgressing the rules of method} that we might be warned of a rock and hard place; namely, that we do not confound these dispositions together, and to take those for antecedent which are only consequent; which to my knowledge hath made some souls to make shipwreck for a time, when as they would have in them before they believe such dispositions as are only consequents, and not antecedents of faith.

First, to speak of antecedent dispositions, which necessarily go before our reconciliation to God. They shall be referred unto two heads. The first is the knowledge of sin, with whatsoever is requisite unto the knowledge of sin. The second is the knowledge of the depth of misery by sin to be such, as we can neither help ourselves, neither is it in the power of any other creature for to help us; but that we are undone forever in respect of whatsoever we can do or any other for us. For until the soul be brought to this, there is no hope of reconciling it unto God; for you must know, that it is mere necessity that drives us. We are by nature haters of God, and cannot be brought to come to God in love before we perceive God to love us; such is the malignant nature of man, that if he could make any shift in the world, he would not be beholding to God for help. The prodigal son will never return to his father, so long as he can get clothes for his back and meat for his belly elsewhere; but when he is brought to that place that he would fain have filled his belly with the husks which the swine did eat, and no man gave unto him, Lk.15:16, then he is contented to think of submitting to his father, but not before; if he could have got a living by keeping of hogs, he would not

have returned. Thus it is with man, so long as he is in any hope to escape misery any other way, there is no hope of his returning to God. "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." Matt.9:12. The Pharisee thinketh himself able to establish his own righteousness; and therefore he will not submit to the righteousness of God. Rom.10:3. He cares not a pin for Christ; he is whole, he cares not for the physician. "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." Lk.9:23. No man can follow Christ except he deny himself, his own righteousness and holiness. Would you know a reason, under the determinate counsel of God, why the publicans and harlots received Christ, but the holy Pharisees rejected him, a true pattern of our days? The Pharisees thought themselves able to stand upon their own legs; they were alive in their conceits, and for them to hear of righteousness in another was too great a disparagement unto them and their holiness; when the publicans and strumpets, being convinced of sin, and having no righteousness of their own, they are contented to accept it upon any terms. A rich man, he sometimes scorneth a gift, and saith, nay, but I will buy it, I will give satisfaction for it; but the poor naked man is glad to receive what he wanteth. Thus before the soul of man be brought to be reconciled unto God, it is necessary that it see itself a sinful creature; yea so sinful, that neither crying nor howling can wash it away; yea so sinful, that no correction or amendment of life is able to make satisfaction.

Thus far of the antecedent dispositions, which, as I said before, are proper to all, not only to them that are reconciled to God; for these that I have showed hitherto, may be found in the not reconciled, even as in the reconciled; yea, in the reprobate, even as in the elect. The second sort of dispositions are present, which go before man's reconciliation to God, as the cause before

the effect, but is never separated from it; as being the thing, I say, whereby the Holy Spirit of God doth actually and knowingly {on the part of the believer} reconcile the soul to God. Of this sort I find but one only; namely, of faith or believing. Here are two things to be pondered. The first, that without believing, the soul cannot be perceptively reconciled unto God. The second, that by believing, the soul is knowingly reconciled unto God. For the first, it is proved, "he that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." Jn.3:36. To be reconciled to God is to see life, therefore he that believeth not shall not be reconciled to God, but the apprehension of the wrath of God shall torment his wakened conscience. He that believeth not shall not see life; he shall see nothing but wrath. Secondly, "he that believeth not God hath made him a liar," I Jn.5:10; that is, hath accounted him a liar. Now, who can find in his heart to be reconciled to a liar? Whereby it is plain, that without, or before faith, man cannot be reconciled unto God. For the second, that by believing, the soul becomes to be reconciled unto God, is proved; "he that hath received his testimony, hath set to his seal that God is true." Jn.3:33. "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." Jn.1:12. Whosoever believeth, hath grace bestowed to cry, Abba, Father. And to this place we refer that known text, Rom.5:1, "therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." And this is the proper office of faith, {as it justifieth,} to reconcile the soul and conscience unto God, and to make us at peace with him, by assuring us of his favour and good will towards us in Jesus Christ, manifested in that God gave his only Son to be a propitiation for our sins, and to satisfy whatsoever the justice of God required at his hands. And this is our

receiving of Christ, our putting on of Christ, and our living by faith, if we take faith for believing. Now follows the third sort of inseparable consequences unto our reconciliation, and things that accompany our salvation. These dispositions are, first, joy in the Holy Ghost. Secondly, love to God and his church. Thirdly, new obedience in newness of spirit, and not in oldness of the letter.

First, joy in the Holy Ghost is a necessary consequent and an inseparable companion to our reconciliation by faith; as appears by that which hath been spoken before, touching joying in believing, with joy unspeakable and full of glory. And indeed, how can it be that it should be otherwise; can the men of this world hear of great possessions fallen unto them without joyfulness? How then is it possible, that the children of the living God can come to the apprehension of the fatherly love of God in Christ, but they must needs sing a new song, yea, break forth into singing, and cry aloud, with the blessed virgin, saying, "my soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour." Lk.1:46-47. If I could this day bring you happy tidings of reconciliation between king and parliament, {which the God of heaven effect,} what joy would this work in the hearts of every man here present? How much more shall the tidings of eternal peace by Jesus Christ affect the soul with extraordinary comfort. Hear what the Lord speaks concerning the new Jerusalem, "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away." Rev.21:4. Let others think what they will; I firmly believe the new Jerusalem to be the glorious kingdom of Jesus Christ, {which is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost,} advanced in the conscience of those born anew by the Spirit of Grace. And hither also are to be

referred those glorious things that are spoken of the city of our God, by the Gospel prophet, in these words, "and the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Isa.35:10. This is the promise of our Saviour, "your sorrow shall be turned into joy." Jn.16:20. This is the office of the Holy Ghost, to be the comforter, to speak peace and joy unto his people. And therefore amongst the sundry precious gifts, which are declared to be the fruits of God's Spirit, joy is not the least. Gal.5:22. This is also the lot and inheritance of the saints of God, for we read not of any converts in the Scripture, but we also read of the joy of God's Spirit replenishing their souls. They {even they} who were pricked in their hearts, and knew not what to do, do now eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart. Acts 2:46. The eunuch returns rejoicing, Acts 8:39, and Philip's preaching Christ unto those at Samaria, caused great joy in their midst. Acts 8:8. But why do I stay on particulars? Let us hear the apostle for all, "we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement." Rom.5:11. We rejoice in the hope of the glory of God; and more, we glory in tribulation also. Rom.5:2-3. Can the sun be without his light? Can the fire be without heat? Then also may the called of God, the reconciled to the Father, be without joy and peace in believing? Can a man stop the ebbing or flowing of the water of life? Then may the souls of the reconciled to God be deprived of those floods of comforts which flow from fountains of comforts into the subject of comforts, the souls of the people reconciled to God. This is the first effect of reconciliation, joy, and peace. "For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." Phil.3:3. "Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not,

yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." I Pet.1:8. "And Hannah prayed, and said, my heart rejoiceth in the LORD, mine horn is exalted in the LORD; my mouth is enlarged over mine enemies; because I rejoice in thy salvation." I Sam.2:1.

The second follows, which is, love to God. Love is also an inseparable consequent of man's reconciliation. Can man behold the beauty of God and the glory of his face in Jesus Christ, and the soul not be ravished with love? See the love of the reconciled to God in that garden of sweet expressions, the book of Canticles, "he brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love. Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples, for I am sick of love." Cant.2:4-5. The love of the reconciled to God, it is a great love. "Wherefore I say unto thee, her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much; but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little." Lk.7:47. A love taking great delight and contentment in the object beloved, "my beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand. His head is as the most fine gold, his locks are bushy...his mouth is most sweet; yea, he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem." Cant.5:10-16. Again, it is a restless love that can find no content, can take no rest, {no, not in her bed,} if she may not enjoy the presence of her Beloved. "By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth; I sought him, but I found him not. I will rise now, and go about the city in the streets, and in the broad ways I will seek him whom my soul loveth." Cant.3:1-2. That this love is an inseparable consequent, a daily companion of man's reconciliation to God, will be plain, when we shall see how the Holy Ghost, describing unto us the called of God, setteth them forth by this token of love unto Almighty God. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that

love him." I Cor.2:9. "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Rom.8:28. This ornament of love is like the garment of divers colors, with which all the king's daughters, which were virgins, were appareled. II Sam.13:18. If a woman be seen in the streets without a party colored garment, it is concluded that she is either none of the king's daughters, or at least no virgin; so is this ornament of love, {I say,} that thing wherewith all the people of God, reconciled to him, are adorned. If we see a soul altogether stripped of this ornament, we conclude they are not in the number of God's people, or at least not reconciled, therefore the Holy Ghost concludes, "he that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love." I Jn.4:8. And, as on the affirmative, pronounces, "grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity," Eph.6:24, so also on the negative, "if any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha." I Cor.16:22. Thus you see the consequents of our reconciliation, inseparably conjoined together, so that no creature shall be able to put them asunder; you have seen "peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." Eph.6:23.

The third consequent is new obedience in newness of the spirit. As peace, and joy, and love follow, and attend upon faith, so is new obedience an attendant of love. "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous." I Jn.5:3. "If ye love me, keep my commandments." Jn.14:15. "If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." Jn.14:23.

This is that which I had occasion to speak of before, that the Holy Spirit of God doth not only cleanse the conscience, but in some measure the conversation

also. This is that which I said before, without holiness no man shall see God, and drunkards shall not inherit the kingdom of God, &c., I say again, that Christ entering into the soul, shall drive out whatsoever is profane, and draw up the soul by the cords of love unto new obedience. And to this place we refer hatred of sin, love of virtue, a godly sorrow for transgression committed, revenge upon ourselves for the things that are passed, and a jealous care for that which is to come. But of these particularly I cannot speak, for as Rome was not built on a day, so neither can it be pulled down in an hour, {I mean the doctrine of Rome,} and here I would have made an end of speaking of the consequents of our reconciliation, but that I fear the timorous soul will be ready to say, in thus saying you have filled my heart with sorrow. The consequents of our reconciliation being laid down, I confess they are true; but alas, when I cast an eye back upon mine own soul, I find my joy and comfort little, my love to be less than my joy, and my obedience to be least of all. This, this puts my heart in fear, and makes my soul to tremble. I answer, what is it that thou fearest, O thou of little faith? Thou answerest that thou art afraid that God is not thy God, that he is not reconciled unto thee. See thy error, these things cannot be signs that God is not reconciled unto thee, but they are signs that thou art not fully reconciled unto God, but that thy faith is weak like the bulrush, that thy joy is as little as thy faith, and that thy love and obedience is as imperfect as thy joy. Measure not the reconciliation of God to thy soul by the perfection of thy obedience; for in so doing thou plungest thy soul into miserable doubts. But seeing the imperfection, not of God's reconciliation to thee, but of thy reconciliation to God, cry thou unto the throne of grace, Lord, increase my faith, and make my love and obedience, my joy and peace, to abound more and more, through the Spirit of our God, and the grace of our Lord

Jesus Christ. And thus have I now done with the antecedent, the present, and consequent dispositions of our reconciliation to God. The next thing that I intend is to make application.

It hath been hitherto mine endeavour to declare unto you the mystery of salvation, and to imitate the skillful painter, to give unto every limb and part not only his due proportion, but also his due place, and not to set the head where the foot should be, or the foot where the head. I may, peradventure to many seem guilty of that crime which was laid against the apostle, to turn the world upside down, and to place that in the bottom which others make the top of the building, and to set that upon the roof which others lay for a foundation. But I submit myself to the judgment of the word. Consider we what hath been spoken of God's reconciliation to us without any previous dispositions; of our reconciliation to God, original and actual; and now let us see if these distinctions be founded {as it is before proved} upon the holy scriptures of the prophets and apostles; whether they be not blameworthy that make no difference at all between these two, but confounding heaven and earth together, the creature with the Creator, do most absurdly apply those things which are antecedents or causes of our reconciliation unto God, to be causes of God's reconciliation unto us, drawing a veil before the free grace of God, and keeping the soul from settling upon a sure foundation. The Lord complained of the prophets of old {the false prophets} that they puddled the waters with their feet. When water is puddled, it is not water, but water and dirt mingled together; in a puddle no man can discern whether it be deep or shallow; water is doctrine, puddling is confounding of things together without division or separation. Oh that our days were free from this complaint! Oh, ye pastors of the Lord's flock, that feed his heritage, be you contented to bear the word of

admonition from the meanest of the servants of God. Look back upon the waters that ye have made the heritage of the Lord to drink; consider the pastures which you have set before them; have you not made the Lord's sheep become a prey {sometimes to presumption, sometimes to despair} by your doctrine? Have you not made the souls of the righteous sad, and the souls of the wicked to rejoice? Consider your ways, I pray you; have you not many a time confounded our reconciliation to God, making that to be the cause which is the effect, and that to be the effect which is the cause? Let me beseech you to weigh these things, and to endeavour that your doctrine may be the light of the world, that it may be clear as the crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb. Rev.22:1. You, sheep of the pasture of the Lord, the God of his inheritance, know it your duty aptly to distinguish these things in your own consciences, that you may enjoy the brightness of the glory of the grace of God, set up in your souls. If you search into the reason of your many years' bondage, of your miserable doubting, you shall find your disease in that which hath been spoken, and I hope the remedy also; the Lord give you understanding.

The second application may show unto us the difference between the reconciled and the not reconciled. Although both may be objects of the grace of God, both beloved of the everlasting Father; yet shall you find a vast difference, if you look either upon their conversations or their consciences. The difference of conscience is, the not reconciled have a defiled and polluted conscience; a conscience that is either seared and filled with atheistical carelessness, or at the best, sitting in darkness and the shadow of death, seeing no light, Matt.4:16; when as the consciences of the reconciled do enjoy the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus. Secondly, the conversation of the people not reconciled is, either a

conversation polluted with pharisaical righteousness and blind zeal, {for all zealous persons are not reconciled to God,} seeking to establish its own righteousness in the sight of God, or else a conversation according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience; a conversation in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind. Eph.2:2-3.

The third application shows us an open door for the easy understanding and plain reconciliation of many places of scripture, which seem so exceeding different, as if no way of reconciling could be found. Let us learn to distinguish when God speaketh of his reconciliation to us, and when he speaketh of our reconciliation to him. Let us learn to distinguish between the thing and the manifestation of the thing; the want of which distinction breedeth an horrible confusion in the interpretation of holy scripture. To give an instance, it is written, "ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus," Gal.3:26, as it is written again, "and because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." Gal.4:6. In this last place the Holy Ghost declares sonship to be the cause of giving the Spirit, as also he declares it to be an eternal grace of God, communicated unto his people, being predestinated unto the adoption of sons by Jesus Christ. Eph.1:5. But then, if this be so, how are we said to be sons of God by faith, &c.? I answer, the one speaketh of the thing itself, or of God's reconciliation to us; the other of the manifestation of the thing, or our reconciliation to God.

Again, if the grace of adoption be an eternal grace, how is it said, we are born again by the word, I Pet.1:23, and begotten by the word? James 1:18. I answer, these places are to be understood of the manifestation of adoption, not of the act of adoption itself; and that this is

so, is plain, God hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. I Pet.1:3. A lively hope is the thing unto which we are begotten. And that it is ordinary in scripture to call the manifestation of things by the names of the things themselves, will be plain by two places {I might bring two hundred,} the first is Jer.1:10, "I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant." How doth poor Jeremy destroy nations? Even by declaring the judgments of God in the overthrow of nations; and so thus doth he plant by declaring the merciful promises of God in the restoration of nations. The second place is, Jn.20:23, "whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained." How do the apostles remit and retain sins, but by declaring God's gracious remission to everyone that believeth, &c.?

But some may object and say, why doth not the Lord speak in plain terms? I answer, who art thou that wilt correct the Lord, and teach Him to speak? I answer again, in our Saviour's words, when his disciples ask the question, "why speakest thou unto them in parables?" Matt.13:10. His answer is, "because it is given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to them it is not given." As if he should have said, in respect of you, that are my people, I need not speak more plain for you {being taught of God} are able to understand the mysteries of the kingdom. In respect of others, I will not speak more plain, because to them it is not given to understand the mysteries of the kingdom. Thus far for the application, I now draw to an end. Only I will give you the skeleton or map of that which hath been delivered, in a few words. Consider we the causes of God's reconciliation, as it stands manifested to us in Christ. Secondly, the causes of our reconciliation to God.

God's Reconciliation to Us. Efficient – God's love. Material – Christ's Righteousness. Formal – Imputation of Righteousness. Final – God's glory, and Man's Salvation.

Our Reconciliation to God. Efficient – Principal, Holy Ghost. Instrumental – Faith. Material – Christ's Righteousness. Formal – Apprehension of Christ's Righteousness by Faith. Final – God's glory, and Man's Consolation.

Consider we the difference of these two in their causes. The final cause of God's reconciliation to us is salvation; the final cause of our reconciliation to God is consolation. The Lord fill you with his Spirit, that the apprehension of God's salvation may fill you with eternal consolation. Amen.

FINIS.

The Doctrine and Conversation of John the Baptist.

**Delivered in a Sermon, at a Visitation held at
Baldock, in the County of Hertford, December 9,
1641.**

Contradicted by many of the auditors.

*"But this I confess unto thee, that after the way
which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my
fathers, believing all things which are written in
the law and in the prophets." Acts 24:14.*

**By Henry Denne, and Unworthy Minister
of Christ Jesus, at Pyrton in Hertfordshire.**

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Doctrine and Conversation of John Baptist.

Holy brethren and Fathers, I am at this present time surprised with three passions; with joy, with fear and with grace; my sorrow sympathizes with yours. I'm sorry in the first place, that you have not a wiser man to speak unto you this day; especially so many sitting by; and for this I presume, you are as sorrowful as I. I am right sorry in the second place, that I shall this day trouble you, with so large a discourse, as neither the quantity, nor the quality of the day will well permit, as a remedy for us. Let me entreat your Christian patience, to bear with me; this is my grief. My fear is, besides that ordinary fear, which doth usually follow me at such exercises, especially at extraordinary times, and in unaccustomed places; I have yet another fear, that I shall this day be mistaken, not that I fear the mistaking of my words, for that were well to call your judgments into question; but I fear, lest you should mistake the intentions of my heart, and that I shall be thought, to aim at some particular persons. To clear this, I call the Searcher of all hearts, to record, before whom, I protest this day, that I aim not at any man's person, but that I desire to be free from envy and malice, and to be in perfect charity with all men. And I do here again protest, that what I shall speak, this day, is against the errors and devices, not against the persons of men. This is my fear; and yet my joy is founded upon your fervent charity, joined with your sound judgment. In respect of your charity, I account it a part of my happiness {seeing it is as it is} to speak before you, who will be ready to cover mine infirmities, pardon my sayings, and gently to admonish me, if anything shall be amiss. In respect of your judgment, I account it a further

happiness, that I have this day opportunity, to make confession of my faith, and to communicate my doctrine unto so learned, judicious and indifferent auditors, which that I may do, I betake myself with speed, to a portion of Scripture, selected for this present occasion, written.

"He was a burning and a shining light; and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light." John 5:35.

We read in the first chapter of St. John's Gospel, verse 15, John bearing witness unto the truth; and in my text, the truth bearing witness unto John. In the 16th verse of this present chapter, the Jews refused to bear witness unto the Lord Jesus, and here the Lord refuses to bear witness unto the Jews. "He was a burning and a shining light; and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light." Jn.5:35. "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven." Matt.10:32-33.

This text divides itself, in some sort, like this auditory, into minister and people, "he" and "ye." In some sort it is {I hope} unlike, for here is a good minister, a burning and shining light, and this is his commendation; and then there is a people, disobedient, full of hypocrisy, and inconstancy, willing for a season to rejoice in his light. This is the people's reprehension, and in this you are {I hope} unlike, both good, both holy, and if you are not, I wish you were; and I shall bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you may be.

The minister being the first and worthiest person in my text, I may boldly presume to speak first of him, and in him to consider two things. First, his person. Secondly, his qualification. In speaking of his person, I

will consider two things. First, his name; and secondly, his office.

First of his name, his name is John, so named by the angel Gabriel, for his conception, Lk.1:13, John by interpretation, grace, mercy, or favour of God, the Son of Zacharias, by interpretation, God's remembrance, and Elizabeth, the oath of God; to teach us that the manifestation of God's Mercy and Grace, depends on his Oath and Promise; and this is that which blessed Zechariah expresses in his song, to show mercy to our fathers, for there he alludes to the name of John, "to perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant; the oath which he swore to our father Abraham," Lk.1:72-73, this is Elizabeth. I need not fear the want of matter, having to speak of this person, at whose circumcision, the mouth of his dumb father was opened, and his tongue loosed, to speak so plain and with such blowing eloquence, as never any man, and but one woman ever spake before. Luke 1:68.

But this shall suffice to have spoken of his name; I shall immediately pass unto his office, so soon as I shall put you, my brethren of the laity, in mind of one thing; and you my brethren of the clergy, in mind of another. To you, my memento is, that you from hence observe, that a good and faithful minister is a gift of God, a pledge of his Grace and Mercy, to a people. "And I will set up shepherds over them which shall feed them; and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, saith the LORD." Jer.23:4. "And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding." Jer.3:15. Unto you {brethren} my petition is, that you labor to show yourselves true pastors, sent of God in mercy, and not in judgment, that the people may have cause to rejoice and bless God for you, and be ye not like those idle and wicked shepherds, that eat the fat and clothe themselves with

the wool, but feed not the flock. Ezek.34:3. Thus much for his name. I come now to consider John's office, which is set forth unto us, by the testimonies of Prophets, of an Angel, of Evangelists, and of the Son of God.

First, prophets. "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain; and the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it." Isa.40:3-5. Another prophet is Malachi. "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me; and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in; behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts." Mal.3:1. "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD." Mal.4:5. There is also a third prophet, for I must needs reckon his father Zacharias, among the prophets, "and thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest; for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways; to give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins." Lk.1:76-77.

The second testimony is of the Angel, "for he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God." Lk.1:15-16.

The third testimony is of the Evangelists, "for this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, the voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." Matt.3:3. "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God;

as it is written in the prophets, behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee." Mark 1:1-2. "And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins; as it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying, the voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." Lk.3:3-4. "There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe." Jn.1:6-7.

The fourth testimony is of the ever blessed Son of God, "for this is he, of whom it is written, behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. Verily I say unto you, among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist; notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come." Matt.11:10-14. And my text, which is our Saviour's approbation of John, "he was a burning and a shining light; and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light." Jn.5:35.

And now what shall we think? How great was this man of whom three Prophets, one Angel, four Evangelists, and the Son of God himself gives such ample testimony? This is it that I intend to show, the greatness, and the excellency of John's office. Why? How great is John? Greater than our Father Abraham? What? Greater than Moses? Greater than the Prophets? For answer to this, let us mark the words of our Saviour, "but what went ye out for to see? A prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a prophet." Lk.7:26. It was said of Gregory,

that in respect of his predecessors, he was the worst; in respect of his successors, he was the best. Something contrary may here be said of John, for in respect of his predecessors he was the greatest, but in respect of his successors he was the least. "For I say unto you, among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist; but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he." Lk.7:28. The least in the kingdom of Heaven, that is, the apostles and ministers succeeding them, preaching the Gospel to the world. Though I confess that many have thought the contrary. John is a middle person, between the Law and the Gospel, like the morning light, which is the beginning of the day, lighter than the night, yet not so light as the noonday. Something like that day spoken of by the prophet Zechariah. "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark." Zech.14:6. But we must stay here awhile, are we not deceived? Was John greater than Moses? John did no miracle, Jn.10:41, Moses did many, both in Egypt and in the Wilderness.

I answer first, as we do not measure the true Church, so neither do we value the dignity of persons, by miracles. I answer again, that John did no miracle, is but an opinion of the people, and yet I will not speak of his miraculous springing in the womb of his mother, at the salutation of the Virgin Mary, the mother of our Lord. Is it not the greatest miracle to convert many to God? To give knowledge of Salvation? To show light to them that sit in darkness? If it be not a greater miracle to convert and raise up souls, than to cure bodies, to open spiritual eyes, than to open bodily eyes, how doth our Saviour say, "verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." Jn.14:12. What are these greater things, but the conversion of the peoples and the plentiful gift of the Holy

Spirit, through their preaching? Thus John works miracles, for many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God; he shall turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; and in this respect, as in many others, may he be said, to come in the spirit and power of Elias; and thus it would, I suppose, be no hard matter to prove, that John hath done a greater miracle than Moses. But it may be objected, Moses had a glorious office, that makes his face to shine, that the children of Israel cannot behold it. Exod.34:30. I answer, the office of Moses was glorious indeed, but John's more glorious; Moses was the beginning of a glorious Law, but John is the beginning of a more glorious Gospel. Mark 1:1. To this purpose it is spoken by our blessed Saviour, but "from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." Matt.11:12.

Let Paul speak more plain, "for if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory." II Cor.3:9. Moses is the minister of condemnation, John of righteousness; Moses of death, John of life; but you will say, why then doth not John's face shine? I answer, if you see not his face shine, it is because the lustre thereof hath dazzled your senses, or else because you are blind. John is a light, and the ministers are a light, Matt.5:14, and it is an innate property of light to shine. They shine not like Moses, with a terrible shining, but with an amiable countenance; they shine not like Moses, in the face alone, but even from top to toe, their very feet are beautiful, being shod with the plentiful preparation of the Gospel of Peace. "How beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O prince's daughter!" Song.7:1. "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that

publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!" Isa.52:7.

And lest any should say, that this is meant of Christ alone, and no other, Paul hath provided, "how beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" Rom.10:4. Thus is John greater than his predecessors, but how is he less than his successors? Less than the apostles? Less than the ministers of the Gospel? If we say that John is a light, but the apostles are lights, Matt.5:14, and that these two differ as the greater, and the less. The truth is, that the doctrine of John, and of the apostles differ, the less and greater perfection, as one star differs from another in glory; and this is apparent in Apollos, of whom we read that, "this man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John." Acts 18:25. He knew only the baptism of John, yet did he teach diligently the things of the Lord, whom Aquila and Priscilla, taking under them, "expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly." This difference is plain, and will yet be plainer, when we come to speak of the second thing, which is his qualifications. But in the meantime I must entreat you holy brethren, diligently to ponder two things.

First, the dignity of the Ministry of the Gospel. Secondly, the diversity of the administration of the Peace, and Mercy of God, in his Church. The dignity of this calling, to be greater than John, who is greater than the prophets. Levi had an excellent calling, "seemeth it but a small thing unto you, that the God of Israel hath separated you from the congregation of Israel, to bring you near to himself to do the service of the tabernacle of the LORD, and to stand before the congregation to minister unto them?" Numb.16:9. Let me speak boldly, the calling of the Ministry is greater than that of Levi. Levi

draweth near, the Minister of the Gospel nearer, having more boldness of access, unto the throne of Grace than Levi. "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh." Heb.10:19-20. We are not separated to offer up the blood of bulls and goats, and to burn incense, but separated unto the Gospel of Christ, to feed the heritage of the Lord, with the precious body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. Excellent is the calling of every believer, a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, I Pet.2:9, yet it cannot be denied but the minister of the Gospel has this preeminence. Oh, that we would take care to walk worthy of the high calling, and fear to disgrace this excellent office. The Lord will be sanctified of all them that draw near unto him. "Then Moses said unto Aaron, this is it that the LORD spake, saying, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified. And Aaron held his peace." Lev.10:3.

And you my brethren, may hence learn not to despise, but to reverence the calling of the Ministry, unto which the Saviour of the world hath granted such high privileges. We live in those days, when the clergy is become the voice of the people, yet seem we never so contemptible unto you, we are very necessary and profitable servants for you. Man, by whom all men ordinarily believe, that believe. Let me ask you one question, what two things are most necessary for the being and well-being of a man upon earth? The orator shall answer for you, the sun and the salt, for were it not for the sun, what will become of the fruits of the earth? "And for the precious fruits brought forth by the sun, and for the precious things put forth by the moon." Deut.33:14. Were it not for the salt, how unsavory would all things be? Yea what compounded body could have

subsistence? Now that we may know our duty, and you may see what necessity there is of us, it hath pleased our Lord to compare us to both these in one place. "Ye are the salt of the earth...ye are the light of the world." Matt.5:13-14.

Wherefore let the counsel of an Apostle take place with you, "we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake." I Thes.5:12-13. If this be not prevalent with you, let the warning of our Saviour be considered of you, "he that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me." Lk.10:16.

This is the first thing, and the second thing that I desire you to ponder, is the diversity of the administration of the Grace of God, in the Church of God. God's Mercy, Grace and Favour towards the church, hath always been one and the same, like himself unchangeable; yet hath it been the good pleasure of God, to manifest himself divers ways, at sundry times to the church. "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son." Heb.1:1-2.

In respect of this administration, the church may be divided into three ages. The first, from Adam to Moses. The second, from Moses to John the Baptist. The third, from John the Baptist to the end of the world.

What the state of the church was, from Adam to Moses, to me seems very difficult to set down. I know what some men have said, but I dare determine nothing, as not being able to give either myself or you satisfaction herein.

From Moses to John the Baptist was the administration of the Law, the Covenant that God made with the people of Israel, when he took them by the hand

to lead them out of Egypt. "Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD." Jer.31:32. This Covenant hath its beginning upon Sinai, and its culmination at the preaching of John the Baptist, although that Cardinal Bellarmine cannot abide to hear, that John the Baptist belonged to the New Covenant, but that he was the last minister of the Old. But let us hear our Saviour, "the Law and the Prophets were until John." Lk.16:16. Since that time, the kingdom of Heaven is preached, and every man is pressing unto it. Let us also hear what Mark speaks, "the beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, &c," Mark 1:1, and certainly John preached the Gospel, as will afterwards appear.

From John the Baptist to the end of the world is the ministration of the Gospel or New Covenant, which administration hath its degrees of less and greater perfection, as also had the administration of the Law a difference, from Moses to the Temple, from the Temple to the Messiah, as some of the learned have observed. So the Church under the Gospel is like the moon, that from the new increases to the full, from the full decreases to the wane, and so after increases to the full again. From the new to the full, is from John the Baptist to the Day of Pentecost; from the full to the wane, is from the Time of the Apostles until the Revelation of Antichrist.

And now {brethren} I would not have you think these to be idle speculations, toys and trifles, not worth diving after; let us never account those things idle, which the Lord hath revealed, for whatsoever was written, was written for our learning. Let us not, I say, count those things idle, the knowledge whereof is so necessary for the Interpretation and Reconciliation of Holy Scripture; and by consequence, for the pacification of distressed

consciences, that without it, it is impossible either of these should be done. Distinguish the times, and reconcile the Scriptures. You know who said it, and without distinction of times, what confusion comes to the church, what distraction to distressed consciences?

What is the reason that amongst men professing the same Christ, and reading the same Scriptures, so many irreconcilable controversies do daily arise? Is it not chiefly from hence; that men distinguish not rightly between the Law and the Gospel? He that shall search into the most material controversies, even between the Protestant and the Papist, and look into the original of them, he shall find the error of the Papists to arise chiefly from hence; the want of distinction between Law and Gospel. From this fountain proceeded the troubles of the Church of Antioch. Acts 15:22-41. From this fountain proceeded the apostasy of the Church of Galatia; and from this fountain proceed the perverse disputations of the Popish Schoolmen about repentance. And what heresy is it that hath not a part, either more or less, in this?

There is at this day a complaint in our country, that our sermons are full of contradictions, the multitudes observe them and grievously complaining of them, and this is not the complaint of unlettered men that know nothing, but of many that are able to render a good account of their faith, both in city and country. Let us seriously weigh these things, and consider, whether they arise not from the aforesaid error. It is the part of a faithful minister, to divide the word aright, which in Martin Luther's exposition, is aptly to distinguish between Law and Gospel. It was prophesied by Luther, that after his time the difference between the Law and Gospel should be neglected.

Our age hath proved him too true a Prophet, for it is a thing not ordinarily observed. But will some say,

“what, shall not the Law now be preached?” I say not so, for I wish we could hear it oftener than we do; for I know that the Law is good, if a man use it lawfully; but the fault is not rightly to apply it, as when we apply it to troubled consciences to give satisfaction. Let us take heed of mingling these two, and so producing a confounded and compounded doctrine. Let us not sow the Lord’s field with mingled seed, nor clothe them with a linen woolen garment, Lev.19:19, for whom the Lord hath provided a vesture of fine linen in the righteousness of Christ. Take we good heed that we present not unto the sheep of Christ water, that we have puddled with our feet. Ezek.34:19. What are puddled waters? What is a linen woolen garment? What is mingled seed, but confused and obscure doctrine? Oh, that I might prevail with you {my brethren} unto whom the Lord hath given ability, both inward and outward, for this work, that you would undertake this task, to make this difference known unto the Church of God; for many have begun this work, but none so far finished, but that something is yet desired.

I have thought this to be the task of the angel that shall pour out his vial upon the sun, that power may be given unto it to scorch men, with fire. Howsoever let us think this within ourselves, that he shall never prove a good divine, nor that man a good christian, that neglects this difference.

My brethren of the laity, will be ready to say, what means all this? Is there so great a difference between the Law and the Gospel? What is the Law, but an old Gospel? And what is the Gospel, but an old Law? What is the Law but a thundering Gospel? And what is the Gospel but a fair speaking Law?

I will be bold to say, that they that teach you thus, know nothing of what they say, no whereof they affirm. Tedious it would be to you, for to hear the several differences of these two; I will give you a taste, that so

thereby you may discern the rest. The Gospel saith, the just shall live by faith, the Law saith, the man that does these things shall live in them. "But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident, for, the just shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith; but, the man that doeth them shall live in them." Gal.3:11-12. Again the Law saith, "the man which doeth those things shall live by them." Rom.10:5. The Gospel saith, "that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Rom.10:9. The Law saith, he that breaketh the least commandment shall die. Gal.3:10. The Gospel saith, Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. I Tim.1:15. I will add one instance more, by way of anticipation, of that which follows, it being part of the doctrine of the Baptist, "the Law was given by Moses, but Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ." Jn.1:17.

Mark the opposition, Moses and Christ Jesus; Law, Grace and Truth. Did not Moses preach Grace? No, Moses preached the law of works, which promised mercy to the obedient, but to the transgressors {though never so small} tribulation and anguish. Did not Moses speak truth? Yes, according to the Law and Conscience, but not according as the truth, is, and was, in Christ Jesus.

This was the hidden mystery, kept secret, since the world began, "but now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith." Rom.16:26. The mystery that the prophets searched after, and the angels desired to look into. "Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister

the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into." I Pet.1:11-12.

But you will say, Moses wrote of Christ, and so did all the prophets write of Christ to come, but not present; and of Grace and Truth, hereafter to be revealed, but for the present not manifested. Thus much of the person of John, now follows his qualification.

A burning and shining light.

Burning with zeal, shining with knowledge, teaching us to join zeal to knowledge, and knowledge to zeal, and not in any case to separate these two. Knowledge without zeal, doth but a little good. Zeal without knowledge, doth not a little hurt. Knowledge without zeal, is like a ship that hath true compass, and perfect sea cards, but has no sails and masts. Zeal without knowledge, is like a ship with extraordinary sails, but without compass or pilot, whose sailing is dangerous.

Here might I justly take occasion to recruit some that shine, but they burn not, like a will-o'-the-wisp. Others burn, but they shine not, like a candle under a bushel. Some neither burn, nor shine, whose light is darkness. But if I should go in this path, I should fail of giving satisfaction to the learned auditory, and should come far short of the scope of my text. I must therefore steer in another course, and show you two things. First, how John did both burn and shine in his doctrine, and secondly, how John did both shine and burn in his conversation.

First, John's doctrine was a burning doctrine; it is no new thing {I know} to you to hear of burning doctrine, "did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?"

Lk.24:32. "Is not my word like as a fire, saith the LORD." Jer.23:29. Doctrine may well be compared to fire in two respects. First, fire purifies the gold; and secondly, it consumes the dross. "But who may abide the day of his coming, and who shall stand when he appeareth, for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap; and he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness." Mal.3:2-3. Fire consumes the dross. "For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch." Mal.4:1. But these properties are in fewer words comprehended by the Baptist, for speaking of our Saviour, "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance; but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear; he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire; whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." Matt.3:11-12. And thus must we prove that John's doctrine was a burning doctrine, beyond the Law and the Prophets.

Secondly, shining doctrine; it is the property of light to shine, and by shining to discover whatsoever by reason of darkness, before laid hidden. "But all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light; for whatsoever doth make manifest is light." Eph.5:13. We must also show you that John was a shining doctrine, revealing secrets and bringing hidden things to light, a doctrine excelling in brightness the Law and the Prophets. But before I enter upon this, I must speak a word of exhortation to you all; unto you, holy brethren and fathers, whom the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ hath

made angels of the churches, stewards of the mysteries of the Gospel. This is for you, that you take heed to your doctrine, that it may be a shining doctrine; like the pole-star to the Mariners, or like the day-star to the World. A doctrine revealing hidden truth, bringing "life and immortality to light through the Gospel." II Tim.1:10. A burning doctrine, such as may purify the conscience from dead works to serve the living God, Heb.9:14, the power of God unto Salvation, Rom.1:16, unto such doctrine, there are two things requisite.

First, that we lay a sure foundation; and secondly, that we build rightly thereupon, and make right application of this foundation. I speak not these things {holy brethren} to teach you, by whom I desire rather to be taught; but that I may communicate my doctrine unto you, and give you an account, what course I have taken in preaching the Gospel, unto the people of God committed to my charge; and so much the rather, because my doctrine hath seldom or never been free from cavillations, and exceptions, and especially subject to this unjust report, that I would never dare to speak those things public, before the learned, which I have taught my people at home. I desire therefore to give you a brief, and yet a faithful account of my proceedings, before Almighty God and his people, whereof not a few know that I shall speak the truth.

First, therefore it has been my care to lay a sure and sound foundation. Accounting it better, to lay a foundation, and build nothing thereon, than to build castles in the air without a foundation, which will quickly come to ruin. The foundation that I have endeavored to lay is Jesus Christ. "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." I Cor.3:11. He it is that is made unto us of God, "wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." I Cor.1:30.

The foundation being laid, the next that follows is the right application of this foundation; and this is the greatest task, for I find that the greatest difference between the Protestant and the Papist, is not about the foundation, who it is, but about the true and right application of this foundation. How this Christ becomes ours, before, or in the sight of God; for what learned Papist denies Christ to be the only foundation? What man so impudent, that subscribes not to the verity of this proposition? There is no other name under heaven whereby men must be saved, &c., yet so great is their absurdity in the application of this foundation, that they do no other thing but indirectly deny that which before they did directly confess, and so cannot shake from them that character of antichrist, to deny Christ coming in the flesh.

They imagine a Christ prepared of God for us, and {I dare not say given} sold unto us, upon certain conditions, by us to be performed. They will say that I do them wrong; I will therefore ask the wise Jesuit, how we come to be partakers of Christ's Righteousness, and I am sure I shall hear this answer, by Sacraments, by Penance, Faith and other Good Works, which are as means to apply Christ unto us.

This is the doctrine of the Papists, and I know you are not ignorant, that there is no small difference between the Protestants themselves about this matter. I appeal to your judgments, how they differ from Papists, who say that Christ's righteousness is made ours before God by Faith and True Repentance, which is by them defined to be a sorrow for sin, and amendment of life. I frame this argument, that {according to these self-justifiers} which makes Christ's righteousness ours in the sight of God, may be said truly to justify us before God, or at least, to concur actively to our justification; so Faith, and Sorrow for sin, with amendment of life, make Christ's

righteousness ours in the sight of God; therefore, {fearful be the conclusion,} faith and sorrow for sin, with amendment of life justifies us before God, or at least concur actively to our justification. I believe you judge these not to deserve the name of Protestants! Some Protestant 'holy' men, do say that Christ is made ours {in the sight of God} by Faith alone; Christ being the garment, our Faith the hand that putteth this garment on, yet methinks that here is Christ set forth, upon some conditions, and not so freely given. I must profess my ignorance, that I cannot conceive how faith should put on Christ, apply Christ or make Christ ours in the sight of God? I therefore profess myself openly, to lean unto them that say that Christ's righteousness is made ours in the presence of God, before God, by God's Imputation, before the act of our Faith, and therefore necessarily without it. Even as our sins were made Christ's, so is his righteousness made ours. Now how were our sins made Christ's? Let the Prophet Isaiah speak, "the Lord laid on Him the iniquity of us all," so that God, which calleth things that are not as though they were, makes us righteous by this Imputation of Christ's Righteousness. But it will be objected, how then is Faith said to justify? I answer, if we take Faith for the Object of our Faith {that is Christ} then Faith is properly said to justify us, for by Christ we are justified, he being our righteousness. If we take Faith for the act of our Faith, apprehending this Object, then we are justified by it, declaratively in our Consciences.

So that by this that hath been said, it is plain how we may understand those several portions of Holy Scripture. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth." Rom.8:33. God, as being the efficient cause of our justification. Secondly, "being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him." Rom.5:9. Here is the material cause of our

justification. Both these seem to be comprehended in one, "being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." Rom.3:24. Thirdly, it is faith that justifies, Rom.5:1; that is, declaratively, speaking to our consciences, that we are the children of God in Christ Jesus. Fourthly, it is works that justify, Jas.2:21; that is, outwardly before men, in the judgment of charity.

By this that hath been said, we may resolve a question that is moved by some, how children can be saved, that do not believe? Some say by the habit of faith, some by the faith of their parents, some say by an unknown way. But I say they are saved the same way that all flesh is saved, that are saved, and that is to say by the Righteousness of Christ Imputed. Here is the difference between the one and the other, men of discretion are not only saved, but also know their Salvation, through a lively faith; children are saved, but know not of it before. If now it shall be objected, that he that believed not, shall be damned, I answer first, that this makes as much against those that oppose me, as against me; for the text saith not he that hath not the habit of faith, but he that believeth not, that is, hath not faith in act, shall be damned. Again, it saith not, he that hath not believing parents, but he that believeth not shall be damned. I answer in the second place, that this place {he that believeth not shall be damned} is to be understood, of men and women of years of discretion, in whom final unbelief is an infallible mark of eternal condemnation.

Thus for the right application of the foundation, the next thing is, having settled the conscience upon Christ Jesus, and given it rest upon the Rock, to call for fruits worthy repentance, "I beseech you by the mercies of God, &c.," Rom.12:1, "having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from

all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." II Cor.7:1.

Let us, considering what hath been said, have a care to lay a sure foundation, and to make a right application, that we may clear the way unto the distressed conscience, in the light of the knowledge of God. Far be it from us, to think the duty of a minister discharged, by crying out against Sin, Drunkenness, Adultery, and the rest. These things are to be done in their order; but we must know that there is a difference between a minister of the Gospel, and a moral Philosopher, between Plato and Paul, Aristotle and Apollos. Alas what profits it to salvation if we have reclaimed men from sin to virtue, from drunkenness to temperance, &c., not having laid a sure foundation? Have we brought them any whit nearer the Kingdom of Heaven? Nay, have we not made them seven times more the children of Hell than they were before? Publicans and Harlots enter into the Kingdom of God before you. Far be it from us to build without a foundation!

It is written of Robertus Gallus {who lived anno 1290} that he saw in a vision, a goodly bishop in a glorious robe, blessing the people, but he could see no head that this bishop had, and as he went nearer to see, he espied a head, but it was a wooden one, dry without sense; when he desired to know the meaning of this vision, answer was made, that this was the doctrine of the Church of Rome, as the head is to the body, such is the foundation to the building; far be it from us to build without a foundation. Far be it from us, to spend the time in profane and vain babblings, in fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying.

We read of another vision of Robertus Gallus, that he saw the same bishop as before, but now he was hanged all over with the finest bread, and choicest wine;

yet did he himself gnaw greedily upon a flint stone; Robertus desires to know the meaning of this, and the answer was made again, that this was the manner of the school men, who spent themselves in frivolous and vain disputations.

Take we good heed therefore, that having such precious food as the body and blood of Christ, that we give not a scorpion to him that asks for a fish, or a stone to him that looks for bread, or poison to him that is athirst, and seeks for a drink.

To the people this is also a warning, what you should hunger and thirst after, even burning and shining doctrine; such whereby ye may be built up in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. When you hunt after ear tickling sermons, as they seem witty discourses, I may liken you to little children, which had rather their mother should give them pears and plums, than wholesome food. But it is high time to return from whence I have digressed so long, and to show you how John's was a burning and shining doctrine.

A burning doctrine purifying the conscience, consuming evil manners, in the opinion of man's own righteousness, and the conceits of legal prerogatives. "Think not to say within yourselves, we have Abraham to our father; for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees; therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire." Matt.3:9-10.

A shining doctrine, giving knowledge of Salvation in remission of sins, Lk.1:77, pointing out the Son of God with the finger, "behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world." But methinks I hear you say, that I may spare this labor, for we grant John's to be a burning and a shining doctrine, but how did it burn and shine more than the Law?

I answer, that the Law "sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh," Heb.9:13, and John's doctrine purifies the conscience. Secondly, the Law perfects nothing as pertaining to the conscience, Heb.10:1, but John's doctrine is a perfecting doctrine, insomuch that the believers herein have no more conscience of sin. John's doctrine is the bringing in of a better hope, and that these things may be more plain, we will consider, the difference of that repentance, which was taught by the prophets, from that repentance, which was taught by John.

First, for the repentance preached by the prophets, there is a definition of repentance, which is reprehended by some, {and justly, as coming short of that repentance which is preached under the Gospel,} and it is this, to bewail sins that we have committed or omitted, to forsake those that we have bewailed. This definition seems to me, to express to the full, that repentance which was taught by the prophets, especially if we adjoin purgation of sin by sacrifice. "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy." Prov.28:13. "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well." Isa.1:16. "Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place." Jer.7:3. This then is that repentance as spoken by the prophets, to mourn for sins past, to join amendment to our mournings for the time to come. What is John's repentance more than this?

It is answered, John goes one step higher, and preaches the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. Lk.3:3. I appeal to you, whether it be not better rendered "unto remission" and whether this word "for" doth not sometimes pervert the sense, as likewise in Luke 1:77. I have warrant thus to read it, from the holy and learned translators, who upon the same words, Mk.1:4,

have written "unto" in the margin. As also they that have most faithfully rendered these words, "repentance unto life." Acts 11:18.

I have also other authority so to translate this place, not only from the Latin translations which agree in this, but also by Elfricus {sometimes Archbishop of Canterbury, anno 996,} who translates this preposition in a like manner. But we care little, though let not any think the matter small, for as Aristotle tells us, that one absurdity opens the door to a thousand; and I have read of one scabbed sheep brought out of Spain, that was the original of a general epidemic throughout England, and so we must take heed of small matters. What then? Beza likewise sanctioned the same, giving liberty to English it thus, "repent {that is} be of another mind, seek not by legal ways to establish your righteousness, droop no longer under the spirit of bondage, but believe the full remission of your sins in Jesus Christ that cometh after." This gloss is warranted, "then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus," Acts 19:4, thus John makes low the mountains, cuts off the legal prerogatives, and bringeth down every high imagination and every thought that exalteth itself against God. Thus John lifts up the valleys, comforts the drooping soul, by giving them knowledge of Salvation in remission of sins, and this is John's repentance.

And upon these grounds I believe it is that those worthies since Luther's time have set forth unto us repentance, consisting of these two parts. First, contrition for sin; and secondly, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Or as a worthy countryman of our own, makes out these three parts, contrition, faith, and new obedience. Although if we would speak more properly, we must say, that new obedience is a fruit worthy of repentance, and rather a

consequence of repentance. Divers whom I honor much will not admit that faith should be a part of repentance, but do assign unto repentance these two parts, first, mortification, and secondly, vivification.

Here is a controversy verbal, but none real; for what is true mortification but the apprehension of sin slain by the body of Christ. What is vivification but our new life in Christ? The just shall live by faith.

I have observed some to confine Repentance within the bounds of our conversation, and make no difference between the Repentance which was taught by the Prophets, and that Repentance which was taught by the Son of God, and his Ministers, whose error doth sufficiently appear by that which hath been already spoken. I know this seem strange to some; and yet will they still say, they must agree with men in this, that Faith is a part of true Repentance. Otherwise, what will become of that Doctrine, so often heard in your pulpits; namely, that repentance washes away sin? I demand how and where? Out of the sight of God? No, for it is God that washes, it is God that justifieth; as before, and the blood of Jesus Christ washes us from all sin. How then does Repentance wash away sins out of the Conscience? This is Faith's office to purge the conscience, by declaring the favor of God in Christ Jesus, and neither the office of sorrow, or reformation, which may purge the conversation, but not the conscience.

So then, either make faith a part of true repentance, or else this doctrine will fall quite to the ground and be true in no sense, unless in the judgment of charity, whereby we censor one another. To preach that tears do wash away sins, out of the sight of God is blasphemy against the precious blood of Christ. Besides the hideous effects that this Doctrine works in the Church of God; for the simple people being asked how they think to make satisfaction to God for sin, they have answered

by lamenting and amending. Good people hearken, it is dying, not crying, that must give satisfaction for sins, without blood there is no remission. And it is not the blood of bulls or goats, or the flood of tears that can give satisfaction, but only that water and blood that issued from the side of the wounded Saviour.

Thus John preached remission of sins, as further appears; John's baptism was the same with the apostles, but this baptism sealed remission to every believer, therefore also that.

This argument is prevalent with you, though Cardinal Bellarmine make a truth at it, by denying the major. But you will say, how doth it yet appear that John burned or shines more than the Law or the Prophets? Did not they also preach remission of sins upon true repentance?

I answer, that the prophets must be considered, preaching, either the New Covenant or the Old, for they preached the new also; the Law did not, could not disannul the Covenant that was made to Abraham 430 years before. In the New Covenant the prophet preached eternal remission, but not yet actual remission. In the Old Covenant they preached actual remission by legal services, but not eternal remission; which remission is called by the Apostle a purifying of the flesh.

To make these things more evident, that this proposition {which I know will tingle in the ears of many} the knowledge of both, actual and eternal remission, was no article of the Jewish creed, but a part of that mystery which was kept secret from the giving of the Law, until the time of John the Baptist.

To prove this I might bring this place, "no man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." Jn.1:18. As also this, "for God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to

give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." II Cor.4:6. With many places more of like nature, but to spare this labour I betake myself unto places more plain.

The first, Gal.4:1, "the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all." Who are the heirs under age? Even the Jews, until the fullness of time came, that God sent forth his Son, &c. They were the heirs under age, that differed not from servants. Now I say, they that had knowledge of actual and eternal remission, differed from servants; they that differed nothing from servants, had not knowledge of actual and eternal remission.

The second place is, Gal.4:25, "Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children." They, which were in bondage had not knowledge of actual and eternal remission, which is the greatest freedom. They which had knowledge of both, actual and eternal remission were not in bondage.

But if any shall say, they differ from servants, because they had knowledge of actual remission to come by the promised seed. I answer, that this was acknowledged that they should hereafter differ from servants, which they did not yet for the present. Again, if any say that the bondage of the Jews was not a bondage of conscience, but a yoke of ceremonies. I answer, yes, even a bondage of conscience, which stung their hearts, for {besides the authority of interpreters} it is said, "that the children through fear of death were all their lifetime subject unto bondage." Heb.2:15. Had this bondage been outward and carnal, it would have made life sweet and death bitter, for so we read, "they made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar, and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field; all their service." Exod.1:14. But this is a bondage that makes life sweet and death bitter. What is it that makes death bitter, but

the sting of death? And what is the sting of death, but sin? Wherefore they had conscience of sin.

I ask in the third place, whether the Jews between Moses and John the Baptist were not under the Law? That they were under the Law, is proved. "But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith." Gal.3:23-24. If under the Law then under the curse. "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse." Gal.3:10. To this we may add, Heb.11:39, "these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise." Now may we observe the difference of the promulgation of the New Covenant, in the time of Adam, "the seed of the woman shall break the serpent's head." Gen.3:15.

To Abraham, "in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice." Gen.22:18. In Isaiah's time, "by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities." Isa.53:11. In the time of Moses, "the LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken." Deut.18:15. In the time of Daniel, "seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy." Dan.9:24. Thus the prophets speak of a thing to come, far off; but if any say, they speak sometimes in the present tense, I answer with Peter, "unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the

Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into." I Pet.1:12.

John speaks of the time hard at hand or present, "in those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, and saying, Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," Matt.3:1-2, "the next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world," Jn.1:29, that beareth them upon his shoulders, for I desire you to consider whether there be not a difference between "that" and "which," as I will herein determine nothing.

The Apostles after our Saviour's ascension speak as of a thing actually past and done, showing plainly the way and means whereby the Son of God hath purged and sanctified his church, "who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed." I Pet.2:24. "By one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." Heb.10:14.

Thus in John is begun, and in the Apostles is fulfilled that prophecy, "moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the LORD bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound," Isa.30:26, as the sun in light and glory excels the moon, so do the times of the Gospel excel the Law, in the revelation of the glorious face of the Lord Jesus.

There are I confess many difficulties in the way, but I have not now leisure to remove them. The greatest is, in that the Jews are said to eat "the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them; and that Rock was Christ." I Cor.10:3-4. But I answer, they did eat the same meat, but not after the same manner, for they

did eat Christ to come, not present, and so they did believe actual and eternal remission of sins to come, not present. Thus much of John's doctrine, and now follows his conversation, burning and shining.

First, his burning zeal and charity; and secondly, his shining piety.

First, negatively, what zeal John had not, for here is a block in the way and one that is broader as can be stepped over. Consider we the place of his abode, John lived in the desert; what have we here, John, the prince of hermits? John, founder of the order of hermits? So he hath been styled long ago. Among the hundred orders of religion amongst the Papists, I find none more contrary to charity than this, "behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" Psal.133:1.

But they will object, did not Elijah and John, forsaking the company of men, embrace the desert? I answer, Elijah lives indeed in the desert, for fear of persecution; as it was an appointed time to fly to the wilderness, when Ahab takes an oath of all lands? Was it not such a time, when Jezebel swears by her gods, that she would make him like one of Baal's prophets, by tomorrow at this time? So do we read of many that in this case that had no opportunity but to embrace the desert. Hebrews 11. Thus much for Elijah. As for John, we say he lived not in the wilderness, properly so called, but in his father's house, in the hill country of Judea, which in respect of the barrenness thereof, was called the wilderness, thus say Magdeburgenses, Bucer and Zwingli. And this exposition is not built upon bare conjectures, for we read, "in the wilderness, Betharabah, Middin, and Secacah, and Nibshan, and the city of Salt, and Engedi; six cities with their villages." Jos.15:61-62. So might John live in the desert, yet within the walls of a city. Wherefore, O ye papists, go seek some other patrons for this your will worship, for John and Elijah will not serve your turn.

Thus much for the negative, now follows in the affirmative, that zeal that John had. Great zeal will here appear, if we consider the matter of John's preaching together with the time. Of the matter sufficient hath been said before. The time, the fifteen years of Tiberius, a wicked Emperor, when Herod was Tetrarch, at such a time when truth seemed to have left the earth.

What made John say, shall I preach or shall I forbear? If I forbear, I shall enjoy ease and quiet, with my father's possessions; but if I preach, oh, what a flood of troubles; what a sea of evils is like to overwhelm me? Tiberius is now Emperor, a stranger to God and good manners. A Senate he hath, wise in their own conceits, but so far addicted to superstition, that they have it as a law, that nothing shall be admitted in religion, which hath not first been voted by them. But suppose that they being a great way off, care not for these things. Here is Herod the tetrarch, from whom I look for no good entertainment, for I am no better than the prophets that went before.

But suppose all these to be calm, and to say nothing; what perils are there in mine own Nation? The Sadducees deny the resurrection, the Pharisees after whose pipe the people dance, are a generation of vipers and a brood of hypocrites. They will surely cry out against me for a blasphemer of God and Moses, a setter forth of new worship. Let reason judge, here be not cause enough to stop the minister's mouth, and to make him say, "I will not speak;" yet notwithstanding all this, the Baptist puts on courage, consults not with flesh and blood, but goes on, boldly in his work, and saith thus within himself, let Tiberius rage, the Senate fury, the Sadducees cavil, the Pharisees persecute, I know whom I serve, "I will declare thy name unto my brethren." Heb.2:12.

What doth this teach us, but to put on this zeal and courage, to preach in season and out of season, not

sparing any pains? But thou wilt say, they will not endure sound doctrine, they will persecute me. Hear what Paul says, "but watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry. For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." II Tim.4:5-7.

What is become of Apostolical zeal and Primitive courage, when we are so careful and so fearful, that we dare not inform truly, rebuke boldly, for the fear of displeasing our patrons, the fear of losing, or hope of getting preferment. Let us put on resolution and go forward boldly, like men, that neither care to rise, nor fear to fall.

Thus much of John's zeal, now follows his piety, thus considered. First negatively; and secondly, affirmatively.

First, negatively; a conversation without covetousness, which appears from his habitation, the wilderness; for he follows not the courts of kings and princes; and here is no suitor for preferments, no Simonaical intruder, no pharisaical flatterer, but with a noble Shunammite woman, "he will dwell among his own people." II Kings 4:13. Here is a pattern for our imitation, according to the precept, "let your conversation be without covetousness," Heb.13:5, and "thou, O man of God, flee these things." I Tim.6:11. Let us set before our eyes the holy content of earthly things, which we find in the Apostles of our Lord and Saviour! Remarkable is that of Peter, "silver and gold have I none," Acts 3:6; the worldling will say, mere fool Peter, for we read that many "sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need," Acts 2:45, what, is none fallen to Peter's share, or rather hath he reserved nothing for himself, even nothing? As it is better to make a King than to be a King, so better it is to make many rich, than

to be rich. See what a difference there is between Peter, and that man on earth, who glories so much in Peter's chair, of whose gettings there is no end, whose treasures are without weight and number, whose Triple Crown has one jewel worth over six thousand crowns.

Let us leave him, and see that covetousness be not crept over into England; look we into the church, what mean the keeping up of the ecclesiastical preferments, pluralities, simonies, &c., if all these proceed not from the root of covetousness, pardon my ignorance for then I know not whence they come.

But you will say, that you wonder that I am not afraid to charge such men with covetousness. I answer, I dare not but speak, what I think, being this day set upon the watchtower of the house of Levi, and espying an evil, how shall I hold my peace?

This is a thing reproved even by our adversaries themselves. In a Lateran Council of 310 Bishops, being present under Alexander the Third, it was concluded, that no priest should have two benefices, anno 1179. Again, Richard the costly Archbishop of Canterbury complaints to the Pope, that priests in England held more livings than one, anno 1231; and so it hath been thought that many livings are a good step to a Bishoprick, yet have I read of one John Blund, elected Archbishop of Canterbury, but refused by the Pope, the chief thing objected against him, for holding two benefices without dispensation, anno 1233. John Peckham, Archbishop of Canterbury made a Canon, that no clergymen within his province should hold two livings, anno 1304. If I should tell you what our modern writers said touching this you will say they speak more bitter than the rate of charity will allow of, that non-residents are like whores that put forth their children to nurse, that they may take the greater pleasure.

But I leave these and desire to ask you a question or two, in the words of a learned man, whether ought not

all our works to be done in charity? Answer yes, for whatsoever is not done in charity is nothing worth. The second question, whether it be greater charity to have two livings than one, two great ones than two small ones, I think it would make Democritus weep to hear a clergymen step up to prove that he holds two livings in charity, but if it be granted, that it is greater charity to hold two than one, then are all offenders, that are connected with one, as men that aspire not to the greatest charity. But I leave these things to your further consideration, my prayer shall be, that this scandal shall be removed far from us.

Now let us see whether covetousness be not in the country people also, for from whence proceed frauds and deceits, if not from covetousness? Is it not covetousness to love the world more than we love God? "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." I Jn.2:15. Search then your hearts and consider, whether you have not taken more pains to get, more care to keep the meat that perisheth, than that which endureth unto eternal life?

My exhortation comes now in season, you have a work in hand, to take away images, crucifixes and idols of wood, glass and stone. I condemn you not, I would all such offenses had been long ago thrown into the bottom of the sea; but I desire to inform you, that there is a corner in the temple, wherein stands a great idol; I mean the temple of your bodies. "Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their heart, and put the stumblingblock of their iniquity before their face." Ezek.14:3. What this idol may be called, I have not in a readiness, but the act of this idolatry is covetousness. "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry."

Col.3:5. Therefore let covetousness, which is idolatry, be abandoned, and then go on according to Law and Order, but otherwise both you, and your work, will become ridiculous. "Ye shall utterly destroy all the places, wherein the nations which ye shall possess served their gods, upon the high mountains, and upon the hills, and under every green tree, and ye shall overthrow their altars, and break their pillars, and burn their groves with fire; and ye shall hew down the graven images of their gods, and destroy the names of them out of that place." Deut.12:2-3. Do you not remember what was whispered at the courts of assize some years past? Namely, that the great malefactors condemned the little ones. This perhaps was all but too true; take heed lest some such thing be said of you, that idolaters pluck down images, and yet they embrace that idol mammon in their own heart, though ever eager to pull down idols of glass and stone.

Now follows John's conversation affirmatively. Here two things that are worthy of our consideration. First, his apparel; and secondly, his meat and drink.

First, his apparel; camel's hair and a leather girdle about his loins. I must not say with Eusebius, John in a strange habit; for I believe it ordinary for prophets to wear such garments. "And they answered him, he was an hairy man, and girt with a girdle of leather about his loins; and he said, it is Elijah the Tishbite." II Kings 1:8. "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the prophets shall be ashamed every one of his vision, when he hath prophesied; neither shall they wear a rough garment to deceive." Zech.13:4. We see then that John was neither a velvet nor silken priest, and this teaches modesty and apparel to all, both ministers and people. John was an hairy man, and so are many in our days, but it is the hair of the head, not of the garments. I tell you that coarser garments, and shorter hair is better becoming ministers of God, rather than ruffling silks and long hair. What may

be the reason why Peter giveth precepts of this kind rather to women than men? Is it not because excess in this kind is a womanish and childish vice, unbecoming men professing Christianity? Let us take heed these things prove not a block to our charity, full ill would thou endure to sell thy lands, that canst not spare thy superfluities, to clothe the naked members of Christ Jesus.

Secondly, John's temperance in meat and drink. His drink was neither wine nor strong drink. What then? Even freshwater of Jordan, his meat was locusts. It is observed by some that locusts signify two things. First, small living creatures like our grasshoppers, which were permitted by the Law to be eaten. Lev.11:22. Or else it signifies the tips or shoots of herbs. I leave these things to your verdict, which way soever we take, it comes to this; that John used a tender diet. John's practice is no precept, neither doth it take away our Christian liberty herein, yet it suffices to condemn our excess of riot, when we rise up early to drink wine, and sit till night, till we be enflamed. Isa.5:11. A breach that is made both by ministers and people.

Who would have thought that the true Church of Christ should have been troubled with such a swinish brood? Had I a hundred mouths and as many tongues, I could not express the lewdness of this generation! What censure on earth sharp enough? What place in hell deep enough? Why are ye not ashamed of your doings? "The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau." Gen.27:22. I may well compare you to Penelope, for you weave her web; did I say, compare you to her? No, you are far worse. She un-weaved no more in that night than she weaved in the day time, but you by your abominable works of darkness, pull down more in the night than seven of the most laborious of your brethren can build in a day. We read of John Cremensis, Legate

here in England, anno 1129, when he had disputed at London, as to enforcement of the celibacy of the priests {as it was then called} was taken the same night in bed with a notable whore. This I believe gave termination to all his arguments. Thus do you in some case dissolve in the Tavern, that which you confirmed in the Pulpit, making a mock at the ordinances of God, and seducing those by your conversation, for whom Christ died.

I must call upon those that are in authority, that they would make diligent search after these foxes, that they may be unkenneled, and hunted out of God's vineyard, for they spoil the vines, and crush the tender grapes.

If the courts had been so vigilant as to find out these as non-conformable Ministers, surely by this time the Church would have been as free from them, as the land from wolves. But they have preferred the traditions of men, before the Commandments of Almighty God. And therefore I shall less wonder, if the Lord require it at your hands; and I tell you that conformity hath ever sped the worse for their sakes, who breaking the Commandments of God, think to make amends with conformity to the traditions of men.

Thus much for John's meat, drink and apparel, the imitation whereof hath sometimes deserved no small commendations.

Thus have I done with the first part of my text, concerning the minister; I come now to the second, the people; and here are two things. First, the persons; and secondly, their reprehension.

The persons are ye, what ye? The drunken rabble? The lewd sons of Belial? No, who then? Even the zealous people, as they that are zealous for the Sabbath day, for they are ready to kill our Saviour, for healing on the Sabbath. Zealous for the glory of God according to their knowledge, for they took up stones to stone him, because

he had said that he was the Son of God. Is not here confirmed that which was said before, that zeal and devotion without the knowledge of Christ, maketh a man much worse than ordinary children of hell. Who would have thought, but zeal for the Sabbath and God, had been an undoubted mark of Salvation; but you see the contrary, that zeal without knowledge will take up stones to stone the Lord of Life. How may they then be deceived, that looking upon the alteration of their conversation; they were drunkards, now they are not; they were profaners of God's Sabbath, now not; but now ready with Archimedes to cry, "I have it," and to be wrapped in the third Heavens. But I desire you to consider, Rom.10:3, where of the hardened Jews it is said, that they had a zeal to God, from whence we might take occasion to discuss these questions.

First, whether a desire to be saved be an infallible note of Salvation. Secondly, whether a desire to believe be faith itself, the safest way is to say no; but I leave these to you and desire you to consider more of them. A question would here also be handled is, whether when faith lies hidden, so that we cannot behold, that we believe by the inward testimony of our conscience, that it is possible for our works of piety and charity to assure us of Salvation. I say no, and my reasons are these.

That which makes me doubt of my faith, will make me doubt of the sincerity of my work; plus, how is it possible that I should judge my work sincere when I cannot see that I believe, for whatsoever is not of faith is sin; and finally, what works which are done in faith, that at the same time may be accomplished without faith, even in a spirit of bondage? If you say that the actions indeed are the same, but they differ in the end, I grant it, and in the efficient also; but as I cannot discern the efficient, so neither can I discern the end of my work; and

so when I cannot discern, I believe upon these grounds, and I am bold to determine the question negatively.

But I doubt there are some that will now say, what means this preacher, will he take away the Sabbath? No, though I deny a zealous observation of the Sabbath to be an infallible mark of Salvation, yet I account the willful profanation of the Sabbath, to be a token and sign of a reprobate mind, and mark it, that whosoever is a profaner of God's Sabbath shall be rewarded in this life, with a soul void of the true knowledge of God, and a conservation void of good manners. The Sabbath is a command of God moral and perpetual, which shall never end. The day of the Sabbath is by Apostolical Constitution, though not Divine precept, and we are bound to keep this first day with all reverence. The breach of the Sabbath is no light offense, as appears by the Law, wherein punishments are proportionable to the offense. The Law admits of no sacrifice for Sabbath breakers, "whosoever doeth work therein shall be put to death," Exod.35:2, and the stick gatherer paid for it with his life. Num.15:32-35. How zealous is God for his Sabbath that suffers not the breach of one day to go unpunished. II Chron.36:21¹. The

¹ Indeed, how zealous is God for his Sabbath Rest, as consummated in the work of the Lord Jesus Christ, that suffers not any breach of man's works to be mingled with that sacred accomplishment. "The Jewish Sabbath was only typical of spiritual rest. Let then the Scribes and Pharisees of the age quarrel and strive about their days of the week, their new moons, their meat, drink and legal Sabbaths; they have only the shadow, or what once was a shadow of things to come, but as the things to come of which they were the shadow have now come, our faith embraces the substance, and we will not debate with them about the shadow. Those who would perpetuate the observance of the shadow now virtually deny that the substance has come, as do the Jews who continue the other rites and sacrifices of Judaism deny that the true Messiah has come. Those who observe a legal Sabbath, whether on the seventh or the first, or any other day of the week, clearly indicate that they are not under grace, but under the law, that they are not come to Mount Zion, but are trying to approach the Mount Sinai, and that they are strangers to that

captivity of Judah in Babylon, continues so long till the land had enjoyed her Sabbath; the kingdom of Judah begins with David, ends in Zedekiah, continues the space of 490 years; now as seven years makes one year of sabbaths, so 490 years makes seventy; for divide 490 by seven and the amount is 70. I am not against the Sabbath.

Now follows the people's reprehension, for a reason to rejoice in his light. We will here search the reason of two things. First, why they rejoiced in his light at any time; and secondly, why they rejoice not in his light at all times?

First, why do they rejoice in it at any time? John's doctrine was a new doctrine, and we know new things please exceedingly, "for all the Athenians and Strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing." Acts 17:21.

A gentleman had in his stable two horses, one a very good one, but an old servant, the other a mare, but newly bought; the old is neglected, and the new hath all the respect; the groom sees no other reason of his Master's will, but the nature of man to prefer new things before old. Thus might it be, that this people might embrace the doctrine of John, not because of that

Sabbatical rest which remains for the people of God. The Gospel Sabbath requires the spiritual Israelite to cease from his work, and trust, and rest alone on Christ, for his justification and acceptance with God. As the Sabbath-breaker under the law was to be stoned to death, by all the children of Israel, so the legalist who would attempt to drag the ceremonies of the legal dispensation into the gospel church, or to justify himself before God by the works of the law, is to be stoned, {not with stones literally, but with the smooth stones from the brook of gospel truth,} by all his brethren, until his legal spirit yields up the ghost. Those who have no higher conception of a gospel Sabbath than to suppose it consists in the literal observance of one day out of seven, have yet to learn that "whom the Son makes free, are free indeed." Gilbert Beebe, SIGNS OF THE TIMES, 1865.

excellency; which was indeed in it, but by reason of the novelty. Do we not see it so with us? A new preacher is the man, worth seven old, and a stranger worth seven prophets in their own country, and let me tell you, I'm afraid that the multitude coveting alteration of discipline {I do not charge all} is rather swayed by novelty than sound judgment.

Secondly, it might be that their judgments are astonished at the majesty of the Word of God, as it happens sometimes to the wicked, as we read of Simon. Acts 8:13. First, why did they not rejoice always in his light? "Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while; for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended." Matt.13:21. A peaceable Gospel is like the rich that have many friends, but a persecuted Gospel, like the poor man that is forsaken. John is in prison, and now times are troublesome, and 'tis dangerous to be esteemed as one of his favorites. Thus are men like swallows in religion that are with us in Summer, but the first morning frost or sight of snow drives them away, and they are no more seen.

The second reason, they want root and therefore are soon shaken, having received the word into their mouths, but not into their hearts; into their profession, but not into their possession. I must not prosecute these any further, but give you one exhortation, that you take heed that you be not like those temporary professors, as "children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine," Eph.4:14, of one religion today and another religion tomorrow, like wax that takes the impression of the last seal, that you be no clouds without water carried about every wind, Jude 14, nor with the Galatians, soon removed, Gal.1:6, but that being grounded and settled in Christ, you be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel, Col.1:23; but being rooted

and built up in them, and established in the faith, Col.2:7, that so you be not like the bulrush, yield out to every blast; but like the cedar, which is hardy, or rather like Mount Zion, which cannot be removed. "They that trust in the LORD shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth forever." Psal.125:1.

FINIS

SEVEN ARGUMENTS

to prove, that in order of working God doth justify his elect, before they do actually believe with some answers to the objections that some make against the same. For the confirmation of those that do truly believe, lest they should attribute any part of the office of Christ to the act of their believing.

"Son of man, cause Jerusalem to know her abominations, and say, thus saith the Lord GOD unto Jerusalem; thy birth and thy nativity is of the land of Canaan; thy father was an Amorite, and thy mother an Hittite. And as for thy nativity, in the day thou wast born thy navel was not cut, neither wast thou washed in water to supple thee; thou wast not salted at all, nor swaddled at all. None eye pitied thee, to do any of these unto thee, to have compassion upon thee; but thou wast cast out in the open field, to the lothing of thy person, in the day that thou wast born. And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live; yea, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live."

Ezekiel 16:2-6.

By Henry Denne.

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SEVEN ARGUMENTS,

to prove, that in order of working God doth justify his elect, before they do actually believe with some answers to the objections that some make against the same.

This Proposition being contradicted, that we are justified before God, before the act of our believing; this is the Proposition which I do now undertake to vindicate, by the assistance of the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, whose honour is not a little concerned in it. I will first of all lay down seven Arguments for the confirmation of the Truth; and then I will answer unto five Objections, brought by some against it.

The Proposition.

We are justified before God, before the act of our believing.

Argument I.

Let me speak for those that are not able to speak for themselves; I mean the little babes, to whom belongs the Kingdom of God. I argue thus, infants do not believe; but infants are justified; therefore some that do not believe, are justified; which if it be granted, it will follow, that some are justified before they believe. That infants are justified, need no proof; that infants believe not, must be proved, {as though the Church of England hath long since put it out of doubt.} First, faith cometh by hearing. Rom.10:17. How should they believe in him of whom they have not heard? Shall we say, that infants in the womb

hear the Word? Secondly, Faith is a Knowledge, as some say; a Persuasion as others; a Trust, as others; but infants are capable neither of Trust, Persuasion, or Knowledge; therefore infants are not capable of Faith. But some have said, that infants hear the Word of God, believe in God, and love God, in an unknown way; John the Baptist sprang in his mother's womb for joy, at the salutation of the blessed Virgin; but Saint Augustine did answer long ago, not more wittily than truly, that this was done by a singular Miracle. Neither doth this conclude, other infants to believe any more, then we may conclude, all Asses to be good Counsellors, because we read, that Balaam's Ass spake more wisely than her Master.

Argument II.

He that is in Christ is justified; but we must be in Christ before we can believe, therefore we must be justified, before we can believe. The major is plain and the minor is proved, that we must be in Christ before we can believe, for to believe is a fruit of the Spirit. Likewise, we must be in Christ before we can bear fruit; therefore we must be in Christ, before we can believe. "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me." Jn.15:4. Secondly, if Faith be a good fruit, it is required that men must be good trees before they can bring it forth; otherwise, grapes should be gathered of thorns, and figs of thistles. Matt.12:33. If you will, the argument may be stated thus; he that hath the Spirit of Christ, hath Christ; but we have the Spirit before we believe, therefore we have Christ before we believe.

Argument III.

All the Elect of God are justified before God; but some of the Elect of God do not yet believe, therefore some that

do not believe are justified before God; and so by consequence, before they believe. The Major is proved, they that cannot be charged with anything, are justified; but none of the Elect of God can be charged with anything, therefore the Elect are justified. The Minor is proved. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." Rom.8:33-34. "Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." Rom.4:25.

Argument IV.

They that have their sins taken away, are justified; but the Elect have their sins taken away before they believe; therefore, the Elect are justified before they believe. The Major is proved. "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered." Rom.4:7. The Minor, that the Elect have their sins taken away before they believe, is proved. "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Jn.1:29. "The LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." Isa.53:6. "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree." I Pet.2:24. "Our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed." Rom.6:6. Did Christ take away sin or not? Did he bear them? Did he destroy the body of sin? If you say, No; how will you escape the Sword of the Spirit? If you say, Yea; I desire no more.

Argument V.

We were made sinners in the first Adam, before we had done good or evil; therefore we are made righteous in the second Adam, before we have done good or evil. This consequence is proved, "therefore as by the offence of

one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." Rom.5:18-19. If you will place the emphasis of this text in 'all' and 'many' you will cause the hearts of the Universalists to leap for joy, which you would not willingly do; therefore we must be forced to place the emphasis in 'as' and 'so.' As we all sinned in the loins of the first Adam, so were we all made righteous in the loins of the second Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ; and this agrees with the Ministry of Reconciliation; namely, "that God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." II Cor.5:19. Truly, this Argument was of so great force, that it did wring out of Cardinal Bellarmine this confession, as the Apostle teacheth, that Christ may be put on, without a proper act of our soul. I confess, I differ from the Cardinal, in his means of putting on Christ; yet this his confession I acknowledge to be true.

Argument VI

Where there is full satisfaction made in the parties offended accepting that satisfaction and contented to rest therein, there must needs follow perfect remission of sins; but in Christ crucified {before we believed} was full satisfaction made and God was contented to rest in that Satisfaction. Therefore there will follow perfect remission of sins, &c., "for by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." Heb.10:14. That God is content to rest in that satisfaction, we have the witness of the Father, "this is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." Mt.3:17. "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied." {Is.53:11}

Argument VII.

If we are not justified in his sight before we believe, then are we unjust sinners, workers of iniquity; then doth the Lord hate us, for he hateth all the workers of iniquity. Psal.5:5. You know what absurdities will follow, if you say that we must believe before God can love us; but if God hate us today and love us tomorrow, let Arminius with his disciples hear this and wonder, why they should be blamed that say, we may be loved today and hated tomorrow; children of God today and of the devil tomorrow; when they who would seem their greatest adversaries, will not spare to say, we may be hated today and loved tomorrow; the children of the devil today, and of God tomorrow. But that God loved us first, before we believed, when we were enemies, in our blood, &c., is so plain that I will not willingly so dishonor you, as one to conceive that you will deny it.

Here is an end of the seven Arguments; which {if need had required} might have been seventy. Now I will answer the Objections.

Objection I.

We are justified by Faith; therefore, not before Faith.

Answer.

First, it should have concluded, not before the act of believing. Secondly, I deny the consequence, and say, we may be justified both by it, and yet before, in a different sense. This proposition, that we are justified by Faith is very ambiguous; for he was not a fool who {a hundred years since} said, that this proposition was one of those things hard to be understood; which they that are

unlearned and unstable wrest as they do other Scriptures to their own destruction. II Pet.3:16. I would that our age had not proved it true, that the misunderstanding of this proposition has turned upside down the doctrine of Justification amongst puddling preachers. There is in this proposition two words ambiguous and doubtful; the first, 'justified' which sometimes in Scriptures signifies to be reputed, reckoned or accounted just; as, "it is God that justifieth." Sometimes it is taken for to be declared or manifested to be just. If you take 'justified' in this sense, then I say that we are justified {that is, declared to be just} by believing, faith manifesting to our conscience, that we are just before God; by faith understanding that God hath freely justified us in his Son. Another word ambiguous in this proposition is 'faith' which is diversely taken; sometimes for the act of Faith, or believing; and sometimes for the Object of Faith, the thing believed; as, "faith was reckoned unto him for Righteousness," Rom.4:9; that is the Object of Faith; so that it is all one as if he had said, God or Christ was reckoned to him for Righteousness. If we understand the act of Faith; then I say, as before, that we are not reckoned just by the act of our Faith; if by Faith we understand the Object of our Faith; then I say, that we are reckoned or reputed just by God, in, by, or through Christ Jesus, our Faith.

Objection II.

"He that believeth on him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." Jn.3:18.

Answer.

This is all one with, he that believeth not, shall be damned; which you must understand of final unbelief, which I grant to be a Note of Damnation.

Objection III.

Without Faith it is impossible to please God; therefore we cannot be justified without it.

Answer.

I deny the Consequence; and I perceive so will you also, when you please; for you will affirm, a justified person may displease God; and then, why is it not possible for a man to displease God, and yet be justified? To please God, is so to do those things which God approves in us to be well done; which we cannot do, without Faith. That this is the meaning of the Apostle, is plain by his reason, "for he that cometh unto God, must believe, &c., we cannot come unto God, before we believe; but cannot God come unto us, before we believe. Now Justification is God's act upon a sinner, not a sinners act upon God. This also answereth the next Objection. Whatsoever is not of Faith is sin.

Objection IV.

We are by nature the Children of wrath, &c.

Answer.

This were of some force, if you could prove us altogether in the estate of nature as well in God's account as in our esteem, and so quite exempted from grace until we believe; which you cannot do, for the Apostle witnesseth the contrary, "who hath saved us, and called us with an

holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." II Tim.1:9.

If grace were given before the world began, surely before ever we believed. God is Alpha and Omega; therefore what he promiseth shall certainly come to pass to his own, is done with him, Rev.21:6, for his works were finished from the foundation of the world. Heb.4:3. And so I rest.

A Servant of Jesus Christ to live and die, H.D.

FINIS

A CONFERENCE

**Between a Sick Man and a Minister,
showing the Nature of Presumption,
Despair, and True Living FAITH.**

*"In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be
justified, and shall glory." Isa.45:25.*

*"For I determined not to know anything among
you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified."
I Cor.2:2.*

By Henry Denne.

**An Unworthy Minister of Christ Jesus, at
Pyrton in Hertfordshire.**

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To my well beloved friends and brethren in the Lord, the inhabitants of Pyrton in the County of Hertford, greetings in the Lord Jesus.

Dearly beloved in the Lord, I present these things to your view, you may see in a brief conference, the sum of that doctrine, which {through the Grace of God} I have taught and you have believed. I confess that you have cause to say, that you have heard many things from me, which are not here mentioned; yet this you will witness on my behalf, that here is nothing set down, which you have not before heard. I have in this present discourse imitated the geographer, who intending to describe a large country in a small map, contends himself to set down the chief towns, and let the smallest villages pass without any mention. Thus have I {attempting to draw the substance of ten years sermons into a few lines} contented myself with the description of the most material and fundamental doctrines which I delivered unto you; and this I have done, not only to testify my unfeigned love, which I bear unto you, and my ardent desire that your souls may prosper. But also to signify unto the world, that I am ready to give an account of my faith, and to defend my doctrine {against all opposers} from such clamorous aspirations as have been always laid upon it, but especially when I delivered this sermon, which you have seen already; and I am confident that I shall be able to do this, through the Grace of God, given unto me, by your ardent prayers to God for me, that utterance may be given me, that I may open my mouth boldly, and declare the mystery of the Gospel, to his glory, and your consolation. The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirits. AMEN. Your most unworthy minister,

Henry Denne

***A conference between a sick man, and his pastor;
wherein after ordinary salutations given and
received, the sick man begins thus.***

Sick Man: Sir, what judge you of my spiritual estate and condition?

Minister: Charity judges the best, but what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?

S: I have a steadfast hope in Almighty God that I shall be saved when I die?

M: Blessed is he that is able to give a reason of the hope that is in him, with meekness and fear.

S: I have many reasons of my hope; first, I have an earnest desire to be saved above all things in the world.

M: This reason may deceive you; for it is written, many shall seek to enter, and shall not be able.

S: How then doth the promise stand good, ask and it shall be given unto you, seek and you shall find, knock and it shall be opened? Matt.7:7-8.

M: This promise is not made unto every particular person, but only to the disciples and in them to all believers. "And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye

shall receive." Matt.21:22. "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." Jn.15:7. "Therefore I say unto you, what things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." Mark 11:24.

S: What say you to this gracious promise? "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." Matt.5:6.

M: I say to this as to the former, that this promise is made only to believers. "And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, blessed be ye poor; for yours is the kingdom of God, &c.," Lk.6:20, is it not said, blessed are they that mourn; yet are not all mourners blessed.

S: I have heard, and I think read, that a desire to believe is faith itself.

M: The poor man can tell you, that to be rich and to desire to be rich are two things; even so is faith and a desire to believe, as all that desire to be rich, are not rich; so all that desire to believe, do not believe?

S: Have I thus been deceived?

M: It is requisite that you first prove yourself a believer and member of Christ, then may you apply these promises to yourself, otherwise not, so "he that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." Jn.3:36.

S: Can you show me any that have sought God and not found him?

M: Yes, very many, for thus we read, "then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me," Prov.1:28, "they cried, but there was none to save them; even unto the LORD, but he answered them not," Psal.18:41, "then shall they cry unto the LORD, but he will not hear them; he will even hide his face from them at that time, as they have behaved themselves ill in their doings," Mic.3:4, "when he shall be judged, let him be condemned, and let his prayer become sin." Psal.109:7.

S: These all sought freedom from temporal punishments only.

M: You speak more than you have warrant, for I will show you men seeking after righteousness, yet not attaining it.

S: Then I shall herein be satisfied.

M: We read plainly, that "Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness," Rom.9:31, "but Esaias is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me." Rom.10:20.

S: They sought it not in faith.

M: What you say is true, but neither have you proved that you seek it in faith, which so soon as you shall do, I will be ready to minister words of comfort unto you.

S: Who can hold that which will run away? I have used carefully all means appointed to Salvation, for the attaining thereof.

M: These all may be cut short with "one thing thou lackest," Mark 10:21, let me hear you give me an instance.

S: I have had a care to keep God's Law, to do all things commanded, and to shun all things that are forbidden, to the uttermost of my power, and this is the second reason of my hope.

M: This I hardly believe, it is like that in the Gospel, "the young man saith unto him, all these things have I kept from my youth up," Matt.19:20, but if it be true, what can this reason avail, seeing that "by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight." Rom.3:20.

S: Is it not said, "blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart." Psal.119:2.

M: Have you then kept the Law of God with your whole heart?

S: No, neither can any man keep it, but I have had a desire to keep it, and God accepts the will for the deed.

M: How can that be generally true, seeing the Law saith, "cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." Gal.3:10. Whereby it is plain, that the Law requires under pain of curse, not only to will, but also to do.

S: Is it not written, "for if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not." II Cor.8:12.

M: When the person is first accepted, the will is accepted for the deed; so God accepts of Abraham, as though he had offered his son, Gen.22:16, but if the person be not accepted, the will cannot be accepted for the deed; before you can assure yourselves by this will, you must see that your person be accepted in Christ.

S: Cannot a man attain to life by keeping of the Law of God?

M: Yes, if he keep it in all and every point without any breach at all, Rom.2:7, Deut.11:26-27, but not otherwise, "for whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." Jas.2:10.

S: Why then doth our Saviour direct the young man in the Gospel this way? Matt.19:17.

M: You might have asked as well, to what purpose serveth the Law, and I should have answered you, "it was added

because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made." Gal.3:19.

S: How do you apply this to the purpose?

M: As the Law was given that all might be concluded under sin, Gal.3:22, Rom.3:9, that the world might become guilty before God; and so doth our Saviour gives this direction unto this young man, not that he thought it possible for him to attain life thereby, but that he might discover the pride, arrogancy and deceitfulness of his heart, and answer him according to his own question.

S: I should instant my private prayer to be a mark of my salvation, but I already perceive that it might after the same manner be rejected, unless I could prove it to proceed from faith.

M: What you say is true, for works indeed are an evidence of faith among men, in the judgment of charity, Jas.2:18, but faith is an evidence of our works in the court of conscience, and judgment of certainty, for even the prayer of the wicked is abominable, and whatsoever is not of faith is sin. Rom.14:23.

S: What think you of true repentance, is not that a sure mark of salvation?

M: Without fail.

S: Then here is comfort for me, for I know that I have truly repented.

M: "Not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth." II Cor.10:18. How know you that your repentance is true?

S: By two things, the first is, that I have a heartfelt sorrow for all and every one of my sins.

M: All that do truly repent, do indeed heartily sorrow for sin, II Cor.7:10, but all that do heartily sorrow for sin do not truly repent.

S: Did ever any reprobates sorrow heartily for their sins?

M: Yes. Cain, Gen.4:13; Esau, Gen.27:38; Judas, Matt.27:3. Judas repented himself, and doubtless all that despair do heartily sorrow for sin, as they that are swallowed up with overmuch sorrow. II Cor.2:7.

S: I do not only sorrow for my sins, but I have also a steadfast purpose to forsake all sin, and to walk in all godliness.

M: Doth not our Lord Jesus tell you, "that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." Matt.5:20.

S: Had any of the Scribes and Pharisees a purpose to lead a good life?

M: Hear what Paul {a strict Pharisee} saith of himself, that before his conversion, he was "as touching the righteousness which is in the Law, blameless." Phil.3:6.

S: Yes, but Paul persecuted the church of God.

M: This indeed was a great, but yet unknown sin; but in his own conceit a virtue, Phil.3:6, I Tim.1:13; and this also may be your error, to think you do God service, when indeed you but sin hideously.

S: Is it ordinary for men to be zealous before their true conversion to God?

M: You see the unconverted Jews, of whom the Holy Ghost giveth this testimony, first, that they had a zeal to God; and secondly, that they seek to establish their own righteousness. Rom.10:2-3.

S: I know not what more to say, if this be not true repentance, I pray what is?

M: That shall be showed anon, let us first hear what other evidence you have of Salvation?

S: I have but one only stay more, and if that also shall fail, may the Lord have mercy upon me.

M: Please inform me as to what stay you may be referring to?

S: I love God's people unfeignedly, with all my heart, so what you think you of this?

M: Take heed that your heart deceives you not, and that this prove not also a broken reed to lean upon.

S: How? This also a broken reed to lean upon, why then nothing will please you, I see, for it will be but in vain to talk any further.

M: Be patient {dear brother} and give me leave to search your wound to the quick, for I hope it shall through God's grace, turn to your souls welfare in Christ Jesus.

S: Doth not John say plainly, "we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." I Jn.3:14.

M: This I would not deny, for where unfeigned love to the brethren is found, it may be a testimony of grace received? But I demand how you know you love the brethren?

S: Why, how should I know?

M: By this we know, "if we love God and keep his commandments," I Jn.5:2; and this is his commandment, "that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus

Christ." I Jn.3:23. So that unless we believe truly, we cannot know we love unfeignedly, therefore though our love bear witness to our faith before man, yet our faith bears witness to our love in the secrets of our heart; neither can it ever appear to be true love, that proceeds not from a heart first embracing Christ by faith.

S: What you call true faith, I know not; for I still feel my heart inflamed with love to the brethren.

M: Take heed your heart deceive you not; do not you know some of the children of God, and your brethren in great poverty?

S: Yes, I do.

M: Why then have you not sold either the whole or half of your possessions and divided amongst them?

S: Can I not love them unless I sell my possessions and divide them amongst them?

M: Verily No, for true love binds us not only to lay down our goods, for the brethren, Acts 2:45, but also our lives, where need requires. I Jn.3:16-17.

S: I confess I have not thus loved them.

M: Then have you loved them in word, and not in deed, in tongue and not in truth. I Jn.3:18.

S: I do believe that there are very few that by this mark can be assured of Salvation.

M: I am of your mind then, for when we consider our love to our brethren, to come so far short of the precept and example of our Lord, we shall have greater cause to fear than otherwise.

S: What then should John mean?

M: I do for the present believe, until I shall see ground to the contrary, that John doth principally speak of our assurance, whereby we know one another to be the children of God, "by this shall all men know ye are my disciples, if you have love one to another, Jn.13:35; yet do I not deny but that love or any other virtue having first received testimony from faith, maybe thereby be qualified to bear witness together with faith, and not otherwise.

S: But when I cannot see, I believe, and yet do perceive that I love.

M: The light of the soul is faith; and if faith be obscured, shall not love be much more darkened?

S: Alas, this was my only stay!

M: I dare affirm that he that hath no greater witness in himself than love to the brethren, shall never attain unto assurance of Salvation. "He that believeth on the Son of

God hath the witness in himself; he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." I Jn.5:10-11.

S: Is there any greater witness than love?

M: Yes, which I wonder you have not seen as yet, the Spirit of God bearing witness to our spirits, that we are the children of God, Rom.8:15-16; now the Spirit beareth witness by directing our souls to look to Christ, to behold the Lamb of God, to enable us to cry, Abba Father.

S: Oh, that I had such a spirit, but woe is unto me, how have I hitherto been deceived? How have I also deceived others? My stays are broken and I shall be cast head-long into hell.

M: Say not so!

S: Yes, cursed be the time that ever I laid such a foundation upon the sands, as I thought righteousness had been mine, heaven mine, but now hell opens its gates, and I shall be damned.

M: As you have been hitherto deceived, so I hope that you are also now.

S: Alas, how is it possible that I should now learn the ways of Salvation, when I {as you see} have labored so many years in vain, and profited nothing at all in true godliness?

M: Be not discouraged, only be content to hear what the Lord will speak.

S: Alas, I have scarce an hour to live, and is it possible to work out Heaven in an hour? Is it possible that an hours repentance should make amends for sixty years of ignorance?

M: You multiply words without knowledge, which are no less than blasphemy. How do you think that amends can be made by you, when sixty years repentance cannot make amends for one hours negligence, and you understand not what you say, when you talk of working out Heaven.

S: Are there not many things to be done by us, before we can be saved?

M: What judge you? When it is said that God himself "hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel." II Tim.1:9-10. "For thus saith the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel; in returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength." Isa.30:15. "This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the

weariness to rest; and this is the refreshing." Isa.28:12. "And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever." Isa.32:17. I might add to this, "fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will show to you today." Exod.14:13.

S: These indeed are comfortable words, but this quenches all, for is it not said, "strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." Matt.7:14.

M: This contradicts not what hath been said, for narrow it is indeed and straight to flesh and blood which cannot inherit the kingdom of God, I Cor.15:15, so narrow that the greatest wisdom of man cannot find it. I Cor.2:8.

S: Alas, how shall I do then?

M: Yet, not so straight, for even fools may find it when God teaches, who "hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit," I Cor.2:10, in order "that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God," I Cor.2:12, and how comfortable are the words of our blessed Saviour, "in that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes; even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight." Lk.10:21. Are not all things possible to God? "But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, with men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible." Matt.19:26.

S: Did any ever learn the way to Heaven in so short of time as I have to live?

M: Yes, the thief upon the cross, Lk.23:42; the Jews at Peter's proclamation of the Gospel, Acts 2:41; the jailer, Acts 16:33, with divers others.

S: Now my heart revives within me, the Lord teach me also, and I humbly beseech you to do your best endeavor.

M: God forbid that I should hide anything from you. Do you acknowledge your felt wretchedness in God's sight as a sinner, without any hope or ground {within yourself} to stand upon?

S: Oh, miserable man that I am! Who shall deliver me from this vile estate?

M: Do you think that any creature is able to deliver you, or can you deliver yourself?

S: Help Lord, for vain is the help of man; who shall be able to take away my sins?

M: Hear the goodness of our God, who hath sent his only begotten Son Jesus Christ, to take our nature upon him. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who

through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham." Heb.2:14-16.

S: This I believe.

M: This blessed Son of God, was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of a virgin, was without spot of sin, and in our nature hath wrought all righteousness, and therefore by virtue of this, his righteousness alone, has channeled all blessings promised to the "heirs of salvation," Heb.1:14; indeed, fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of God's "promise in Christ by the Gospel." Eph.3:6. "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS; for he shall save his people from their sins." Matt.1:21. "And he shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities." Psal.130:8. "Tell ye, and bring them near; yea, let them take counsel together; who hath declared this from ancient time, who hath told it from that time, have not I the LORD, and there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me. Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else." Isa.45:21-22.

S: This I also believe to be most true.

M: This same Jesus became a curse for us, suffered reproach and shame, even the death of the cross. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us, for it is written, cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree; that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might

receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." Gal.3:13-14. "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." Acts 5:30-31. "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts 4:11-12.

S: I believe that Christ suffered such things indeed.

M: This same Jesus hath "God raised up, having loosed the pains of death; because it was not possible that he should be holden of it." Acts 2:24. "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day." Lk.24:46. "Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief; when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied; by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities." Isa.53:10-11.

S: This also I believe.

M: By virtue of this precious death and satisfactory sacrifice of Jesus Christ, sinners are reconciled to God, and have now received the atonement, Rom.5:10-11, freedom from all sin, with perfect righteousness. "Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." Rom.4:25. "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the

chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." Isa.53:5-6.

S: I pray have patience, this is more than I yet believe, that Christ hath fully freed any from all sin in this life.

M: Yes, from the imputation of sin, as is plain, for "by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the Law of Moses," Act 13:39, for "the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin," I Jn.1:7. "For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; and, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight." Col.1:19-22.

S: This I cannot deny, yet do I not so fully conceive it.

M: Christ Jesus our Lord hath taken our sins upon himself. "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." Isa.53:4-5. "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." II Cor.5:21. And by his death and suffering

hath given a full, perfect and sufficient satisfaction to God the Father. "And lo a voice from heaven, saying, this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Matt.3:17. "For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." Heb.10:14. "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" Heb.9:14. Christ bore all punishments do unto sin by the Law, as well temporal, as eternal.

S: That Christ Jesus hath freed his elect from all eternal punishments, I readily confess, but I do not believe that he hath freed them from temporal.

M: I will ask you one question, was not the satisfaction of the second Adam, as effectual to our righteousness, as the transgression of the first Adam to our unrighteousness?

S: I dare not say the contrary, for the Apostle saith no less.

M: But by the transgression of the first Adam, we were made subject both to temporal and eternal punishment; therefore by the satisfaction of our Lord Christ, the second Adam, we were made free from both. "But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift; for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences

unto justification. For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ. Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." Rom.5:15-19.

S: Yet, do we not see that God's people have many punishments laid upon them in this present life as weakness, sickness and death?

M: They are fatherly chastisements, rather than punishments, for "when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world." I Cor.11:32. "And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, my son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him, for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." Heb.12:5-6.

S: Let God be just, and every man a liar; I pray do proceed.

M: By virtue of the Lord Jesus Christ's satisfaction unto Divine Justice, God's wrath is appeased, Matt.3:17, and sin is taken away, Jn.1:29, never to be remembered any more. "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."

Heb.8:12. "Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." Heb.2:17. "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy." Dan.9:24. "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied; by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities." Isa.53:11.

S: Lord, so take away my sin; but I pray when is the time that sin is taken away out of the sight of God.

M: Remission of sins is even as ancient as satisfaction for sin and at what time Christ Jesus taketh our sins upon himself at the same time are the persons of God's elect justified before the tribunal of Almighty God.

S: Sir, please show us authority for this, for I have always thought that faith itself, is first in order of causes before our actual Justification in the sight of God?

M: The act of our Faith is a consequent of our Justification, and not an antecedent is plain; for God justifieth the ungodly, Rom.5:10, and we were reconciled, Eph.2:16, to God by the death of his Son when we were enemies. Now believers cannot be called enemies, but friends, Jn.15:15, but we were reconciled when we were enemies, "and the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the "effect of

righteousness quietness and assurance," Isa.32:17, and they that are engrafted into Christ Jesus are justified; but we must be engrafted into Christ Jesus before we can believe, therefore we must be justified before we can believe.

S: How do you prove that we must be engrafted into Christ Jesus before we can believe?

M: To believe is a good fruit, but we can bear no good fruit until we be engrafted into Christ Jesus. "Ye are the branches...for without me ye can do nothing." Jn.15:5. The branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it be incorporated into the Vine. "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." Rom.7:4. "Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God." Phil.1:11.

S: Do we not read, whom he hath called, them he justifieth; where you see that justification is set before calling.

M: The order of words prove nothing, for was it not a ridiculous conceit of the Rabbi, that undertakes to prove unto us, that a certain bullock had horns before hoofs, because it is said, "better than an ox or bullock that hath horns and hoofs," Psal.69:31, and have you forgotten that place which I spake of even now, "who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which

was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began," II Tim.1:9, where you plainly see that saved is set before called.

S: I now see plainly that the world is in darkness, and I do perceive that justification in God's sight, goeth before faith; but I do not yet perceive that remission should be as ancient as satisfaction.

M: Peter saith that Christ "bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness, by whose stripes ye were healed," I Pet.2:24, and John tells us that Christ took them away when he died, Jn.1:29, for if the justice of God hath laid all our iniquities upon his back, hath not his mercy taken them from us? If the Lord Christ did take them away, then are they no more. "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." II Cor.5:21. "And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin." I Jn.3:5. "And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood." Rev.1:5.

S: This is plain.

M: I can show you this by many more arguments, when opportunity shall serve.

S: I pray go forward where you left.

M: This same Jesus is ascended up into Heaven, &c., and there sitteth forever at the right hand of God, to make intercession for us; by virtue whereof, we receive boldness of access unto the throne of Grace, knowing that as our persons are accepted in him, so are our prayers respected in his presence. "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession...let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Heb.4:14-16. "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." Heb.7:25. "Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum, we have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens." Heb.8:1.

S: These indeed are comfortable words to them that have Christ, but how shall Christ be made mine? What works are required of me before Christ can be made mine?

M: You err greatly, neither knowing the Scripture, neither the power of God, nor yet remembering what you have granted even now. "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" Acts 26:8. "Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice." Jn.5:28.

S: I pray, show me my error.

M: First, Christ is not made ours, neither applied unto us, by any works of the Law. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." Tit.3:5-7.

S: This indeed is an error of mine.

M: Your supposition is also absurd, namely, that it is possible for you to do good works before you have Christ, when as before we said, you must have Christ before you can do any good, for as our Lord saith, "without me you can do nothing." Jn.15:5.

S: This was my conceit indeed, that by working righteousness, a man was made righteous.

M: You see that the contrary has been proven true; first, make the tree good, and then his fruit good; for a man must first be righteous, before he can work righteousness; good manners do not make a good man, but a good man worketh good manners.

S: I acknowledge my blindness, I pray then how is Christ made ours?

M: Christ is made ours by God's Imputation or Accounting. "For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for

righteousness. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." Rom 4:3-8.

S: I greatly desire to hear this more fully explained?

M: Look by what way or means our sins were made Christ's; and after the same manner, and by the same means, his Righteousness is made ours; but our sins became his by God's accounting, as the Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all, so by the same account of God, {who calleth things that are not as though they were,} his Righteousness is made ours; and just as he became sin for us, so are we made the Righteousness of God in him; thus are we justified freely by his Grace, by his blood; and thus it is God that justifieth.

S: I pray resolve me one doubt, how then are we said to be justified by faith?

M: Faith is taken two ways; first, for the Object of our Faith; that is the thing which we do believe, as also hope is taken, {for Christ is our hope,} so we are justified by faith; that is, by the blood of Jesus Christ. Secondly; faith is taken for the act of our Faith beholding the glorious Object and so we are assured of our Justification; justified

before God by the Object of our faith, assured by the act of our faith, apprehending this Object.

S: I perceive now that they only are righteous whom God accounteth righteous, whose Salvation is wrought in Christ Jesus; but how shall I know whether Christ hath satisfied for me, and so whether God accounteth me righteous or not?

M: The knowledge of this comes by Faith, for the promise is made to believers; and this is the proper office of faith, {assurance,} to be persuaded of God's mercy to us in particular.

S: Is nothing else required at our hands to procure assurance, but only to believe?

M: When the soul is loaded with the burden of sin and a sense of misery, it is sufficient for assurance to believe God in his promises, &c., for we read of nothing else, "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Acts 16:31. "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts 4:12. "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God." I Jn.5:11-13.

S: What think you of repentance, is not that also necessary?

M: You now give me just occasion to show you that which before you desired, namely, what is true repentance?

S: That have I longed for all this while; I pray declare it unto me.

M: Repentance is a contrition or sorrow for sin, which is joined with faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

S: You make faith a part of repentance, have you any authors for this?

M: Yes, as the learned know, but I wish you not to build your confidence on men, but upon the testimony of God's Word.

S: I pray, show me where this description can be warranted by God's Word?

M: That repentance under the New Covenant doth comprehend faith, will be plain, if you compare the 16th of the Acts, verse 31, with Acts 2:38; in the first place, the question is, what shall I do to be saved; the answer is, believe, &c., and in Acts 2:38, the question is the same, and is thus answered by Peter, "repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ," so therefore either repentance must include faith, or else Peter giveth not a full answer.

S: This is very likely to be so, for there we see that they are bidden to repent, who were pricked in the heart already.

M: It is said that John the Baptist preached repentance, &c., "repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," Matt.3:2, and Paul expounds this, "then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus." Acts 19:4. What more plain than this?

S: Why doth the Holy Ghost use this word repent?

M: It is a very fit word, which signifies, change your minds; now we know the people of the Jews, being under the Law, did seek to establish their own righteousness thereby, which being impossible, the Holy Ghost doth very significantly use this word, that all men should repent, {that is,} change their minds, and look no longer for righteousness from the Law, but look unto the Author of their Salvation before promised, but now at the last manifested. "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith." Heb.12:12. "For consider him." Heb.12:13. "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." Heb.9:28. "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else." Isa.45:22. "And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced." Zech.12:10. "That which was from the beginning, which

we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us; that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." I Jn.1:1-3.

S: Is not newness of life a part of repentance?

M: Yes, faith is our new life, the just shall live by faith. Rom.1:17.

S: Are not good works a part of repentance?

M: They are rather termed in the Book of God, fruits meet for repentance, Matt.3:8, and fruits worthy of repentance. Lk.3:8.

S: Why are they so called?

M: Because they that repent, should be careful above all things to deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and live "soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." Tit.2:12. "As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance, but as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation." I Pet.1:14-15. "Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ." Phil.1:27.

S: I remember that I have read of repentance and faith, as two things in Scripture.

M: I do not say that they are altogether one and the same, but differ as the part and the whole; moreover repentance is sometimes taken in Scripture for an alteration of some one particular act, but that which I have declared, is what John and our blessed Saviour do mean by this word repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand.

S: You said before, that for assurance I must believe, what must I believe?

M: That God hath forgiven you your sins, and given you eternal life in his Son. "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God." I Jn.5:11-13. "Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live, and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?" Jn.11:25-26.

S: Can you show me any reason why I should believe this, rather than Judas?

M: You must not look at reason, but imitate Father Abraham, "who against hope believed in hope." Rom.4:18. "Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer; for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me." Acts 27:25.

S: God doth not say to me in particular, that my sins are forgiven.

M: If you will believe it, he indeed speaks to you in particular, for he speaks to every believer. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." Jn.10:27-28. "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." Jn.10:16.

S: I am a miserable sinner.

M: Otherwise what need have you of Christ, who came to call sinners. "They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick; I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Mark 2:17. Consider not the greatness of your sins, but the greatness of him who bears them, I Pet.1:24; be strong in faith, giving glory to God, "being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform." Rom.4:21. "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Isa.1:18.

S: If I were as holy as Peter, or Paul, I could then believe.

M: Holiness cannot go before faith, but does follow it; look not upon yourself, but upon the sufficient Satisfaction of Christ Jesus. "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Matt.11:28. "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth, whereunto he called you by our Gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." II Thes.2:13-14. "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." Jn.6:37. "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Rev.22:17. Thirsty, and he shall refresh you. "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink." Jn.7:37. Empty, and he shall fill you. "He hath filled the hungry with good things." Lk.1:53. "And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." Jn.6:35.

S: Indeed I do labour and am heavy laden, but how do men come by faith?

M: Faith is the gift of God wrought in the heart by the Holy Ghost upon hearing the word of promise, which word hath been already spoken to you. "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Rom.10:17. "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power

of God." I Cor.1:18. "For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe" I Thes.2:13. "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth; whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." II Thes.2:13-14.

S: How slow am I to believe? Lord help my unbelief! Let me entreat you and the rest of this Christian company to call upon God, that I may believe, and grow in this persuasion of the free pardon and forgiveness of sins in Christ Jesus.

M: With all my heart, the Lord hear our prayer; O, LORD, thou art God alone, which hath made Heaven and Earth, and all that in them is; whom by thy mouth of thy holy Child Jesus hath promised that whatsoever we ask in his name, thou wilt grant unto us. O LORD, behold thy servant, and grant him thy Grace, that he may be filled with thy Holy Spirit of wisdom, understanding and revelation in the knowledge of Christ Jesus; that the eyes of his understanding being enlightened, he may know the hope of thy calling, and the riches of thine inheritance in the saints, that he may be filled with righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost; that he may be sanctified wholly, and let his whole spirit, soul and body be preserved blameless, unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

S: Then may it not prove presumptuous in me to believe the pardon of my sins?

M: Not so long as you believe them pardoned, not for your merit, but for God's mercy sake, in Christ alone.

S: My merit is nothing, his mercy is overall, and Christ is all in all. Col.3:11. How great is the goodness of God towards me, who hath forgiven mine iniquity, and pardoned my sins. "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." Lk.2:29-30.

M: Blessed be the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath not left us destitute of his mercy.

S: "What shall I render unto the LORD for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the LORD." Psal.116:12-13.

M: By the mercy of God, ye are to present your body a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And "be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." Rom.12:1-2. "But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our

Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men." Tit.3:4-8.

S: The LORD direct me in all my ways, for I desire to receive from your hands the holy Communion for the increase of my weak faith, and in remembrance of the precious sufferings of my beloved Saviour; and now whether I live or die, "the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold." Lk.19:8.

M: Glory be to God, for who can deny Salvation to be come to this house, forasmuch as it hath pleased God to begin this good work, which he will continue unto the end, through Jesus Christ our Lord. "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Phil.1:6.
AMEN.

FINIS.

**THE
MAN OF SIN
DISCOVERED**

**Whom the LORD shall Destroy with the
Brightness of his Coming.**

By Henry Denne.

"Yea, he sent out his arrows, and scattered them; and he shot out lightnings, and discomfited them. Then the channels of waters were seen, and the foundations of the world were discovered at thy rebuke, O LORD, at the blast of the breath of thy nostrils." Psal.18:14-15.

"Shout against her round about; she hath given her hand; her foundations are fallen, her walls are thrown down; for it is the vengeance of the LORD; take vengeance upon her; as she hath done, do unto her." Jer.50:15.

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To the Church of God, in God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, Grace and Peace from God our Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ.

Holy and beloved, this little treatise, seeketh not the patronage of the worldly wise, mighty or honorable; it craves not the favour of a virtuous lady, or Christian gentlewomen; it shrouds not itself under the roof of any great lord, or patron; but it lieth prostrate, at your feet; it submits itself, with all humility, unto your censure; whatsoever is well done presumes of your approbation; whatsoever is faulty, expects your meek and gentle correction. Unto your view I am bold to present it, my father, my mother, my brethren, and my sisters. To cast down the man of sin is now the profession of many, and every hand thinks it a happiness, to lop off a branch, from this ever spreading tree. Now every purpose is established by counsel, and with good advice war is made. Prov.20:18. In this spiritual warfare, I have endeavored to contribute my might of consultation; he that strives to take away the spreading boughs of antichrist may seem to do a good work, but will not his labour be almost lost, if it will sprout again, so long as the root remains in the earth. Therefore is it that your unworthy brother, companion in tribulation, hath adventured to lay the mattock unto the root of the trees; therefore have I undermined very foundations of Babel, that the pillar being a plucked away, whereon the whole house is leaning, the fabric may fall upon their heads at once; that the roots being discovered, and cut asunder, the next blast may throw the tree down to the ground, and only then shall the arms thereof be shattered in the fall. This discourse were sometimes since preached unto an auditory; and upon request of some of the hearers, I

have condescended to give you a copy; wherein is something more, but to my knowledge, nothing less than what was spoken. The Lord hath set me as a man of contention. This sermon being as I am persuaded, the very inward cause of all my troubles, and imprisonment; although I confess nothing herein was laid to my charge. That was the subtlety of the serpent, who knew well that he was not able to manage anything against me that was here delivered, and therefore waving this altogether, he hath sought occasion against me {and found it also} in the doctrine of baptism. This was the thing that first of all did enflame the hearts of my opposers and caused them to swell with envy, and to break forth into a rude opposition, which flame could not be quenched, but was more increased, until, through their suggestions and information, I was cast into prison. That it might not fare better with me than with others, the Lord lay not the sin to their charge. Now I do present this unto you, that your wisdom may take into consideration, whether there were any just cause of exception, in that which was delivered, or whether those floods of water, cast out of the mouth, I mean opprobrious and reviling speeches, were not the fruits of him, that is, and will be always opposite unto the truth. Brethren, I desire you to pray for me, that knowledge and utterance, courage and patience, may be given unto me, that I may not cease to speak the things I have believed, that the Lord would give me that honour that whether in bonds, or at liberty, whether by life or by death, I may glorify his name, in the edification of his church in the most holy faith. Brethren farewell. The God of peace fill you with all joy and peace in believing. Amen. He that is the least among you, unworthy the name of a brother,

Henry Denne.

THE MAN OF SIN DISCOVERED, WHOM THE LORD SHALL DESTROY, WITH THE BRIGHTNESS OF HIS COMING.

"Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition." II Thes.2:3.

It will be convenient, before we enter upon these words, to consider the occasion of them, in the coherence of the text, with the following words of the chapter, because some question may arise about them. The Apostle doth beseech them "by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand." II Thes.2:1-2. What is this, the Thessalonians have heard that the day of Christ is at hand, and they are not a little perplexed; is the day of Christ become an unwelcome day? To the church, in God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ? To the people unto whom is preached, grace and peace from God the Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ? Is not the day of Christ, a day of restitution of all things? Acts 3:21. Is not the day of Christ a day of redemption, a day of the glorious liberty of the sons of God, Rom.8:21-23; how then can it be fearful to them who are in God the Father? Doth not the church groan within herself waiting for the adoption, Rom.8:23; doth not the Bride and the Spirit say, Come? And doth not he that heareth say Come? And doth not the voice of the believer, answer, even so, Lord Jesus. Rev.22:17-20. Oh my soul, is anything more welcome unto thee, than the approach of the Son of Righteousness? Oh let him come, and not tarry; why stay the wheels of his chariots so long, and why is he so long in coming? If it be so, why is it thus, with his people? They are troubled, they are shaken in

mind, because they hear that the day of Christ is at hand. Is the day of Christ a trouble, and a heart shake unto the Church of God? No, this it is not, but hence proceeds the trouble, for the Apostle had told them otherwise, viz., that the day of Christ was not yet come. "Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?" II Thes.2:5. Now that Paul should tell them one thing, and write another, that he should contradict himself, or that there should be a division, between his former and his latter speeches; this was the trouble of mind, this was the shaking of heart. For the cure whereof, the Apostle assures them, that he neither sent this message unto them, one way, or other, as the false apostles would have made them believe. But that before the day of Christ, that man of sin must be revealed. Oh that the teachers of the people of God would consider within themselves, from that which hath been spoken, whence the great thoughts of heart do arise, even from the divisions and distractions of the chair. When you are contrary one to another, and many times, one man unto himself, how do you fill the tender souls of the people of God with heavy and insupportable grief.

If then such be the fruit of these divisions, let me beseech you by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, that you labour to be of one mind in the Lord, to speak the same things in Jesus. I will say no more touching the coherence of the text, but come forthwith unto the words read unto you, and "that man of sin be revealed." The whole scope of my discourse shall be to show you why the same wicked one in my text is called, "the man of sin."

The man of sin may seem to be an exceedingly sinful man, and this is true, that Antichrist is an exceedingly sinful one. But this is not all, for he seems to be called the man of sin, in opposition to Christ Jesus who is called THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. Jer.23:6.

Psal.4:1. "But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings," Mal.4:2; a Sun of righteousness, and he is thus called not only because righteousness is the girdle of his loins, Isa.11:5, but also because he hath "filled Zion with righteousness and judgment." Isa.33:5. It is of the design of Christ to pull down sin, and to bring in righteousness, to set up a righteousness, according to that which is written. "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy." Dan.9:24. And therefore is he called the God of righteousness, the Lord our righteousness, the Sun of righteousness, &c., it being the design of antichrist to pull down righteousness, and to set up sin; to build again that which Christ hath pulled down, and to seek to pull down, that which Christ built up, and therefore he is called, the man of sin.

There is no better way, to discern one contrary, than by another, when both are compared together. These two, Christ and Antichrist, the Son of Righteousness and the Man of Sin, being so contrary the one unto the other, as light and darkness. The one will help us in the discerning of the other, and I will therefore first of all endeavour, to declare unto you the office of Christ, inasmuch as it is conversant about sin, and then I shall with great ease, discover unto you the contrary design of antichrist.

For the first, we must consider sin in a threefold relation, according as it is manifested in the Law, by which is the knowledge of sin. 1. Sin in the sight of God, and the design of Christ to take away sin out of the sight of God. 2. Sin in the consciences of God's people, and the design of Christ to take away sin, out of the consciences of God's

people. 3. Sin in the conversation, and the design of Christ to take away sin out of the conversation of his chosen and called people.

I will invert the order, which I have laid down, and endeavour to show unto the last in the first place, viz., that it is the design of Christ to purge the conversations of his chosen and called people; for the smock of hell hath sometimes said, "if I be elected, I may live as I list," but what saith the Spirit of God, "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." I Pet.1:2. That God that hath elected thee in Christ Jesus before the world began, hath elected thee unto obedience, and not unto disobedience. Thou are not chosen to be like the Prince of darkness, to walk in the vanity of thy mind; but to walk in holiness as becometh saints.

The new creature hath this end for one, "for we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Eph.2:10. If the question be asked, why Christ gave himself for us, will not the answer be this, "that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Tit.2:14. When a captive is in prison, the Redeemer pays a ransom, that the captive may be his freeman to serve him in all offices of love. This was, and is our case, when we were captivated under sin, death and hell; the Father sends his Son to deliver us from all these, "that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life." Lk.1:74-75. If we search into the ends of God's sending his Spirit into the hearts of the sons of men, we shall find the first to be, "that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God," I Cor.2:12, and therefore is he called the Spirit of truth, leading into

all truth. John 16:13. Secondly, the second end of the Spirit is to make the soul to rejoice in Christ abundantly, and therefore he is called the Comforter. John 16:7. Thirdly, a third end of the Spirit sent into the hearts of men is to change and alter the affections, and therefore is this Spirit called the Spirit of love, II Tim.1:7, because the fruit of the Spirit is love, Gal.5:22, and love is the fulfilling of the Law. Rom.13:10.

If we search into the ends of the ministry of the Word, we shall find them the very same, for the Word is nothing else but an instrument in the hand of the Spirit, whereby the Spirit is ordinarily administered unto the heart, and I believe it will be no absurdity to say, that the Spirit administers the Spirit by the Word. Now the Word doth not only hold out unto us the Grace of God in Christ, but it doth thereby also teach us, "that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." Tit.2:12. The Word doth not only hold out unto us, precious and sure promises, but it doth also call upon us, with earnestness to "cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." II Cor.7:1. The Word and Spirit are both compared to fire. "Wherefore thus saith the LORD God of hosts, because ye speak this word, behold, I will make my words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood, and it shall devour them." Jer.5:14. "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance; but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear; he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire." Matt.3:11. Now it is the property of fire not only to expel darkness by its light, but also to drive away cold by its heat; and we do not read of any fire, that hath heat without light, except the metaphorical fire of hell, which burns in darkness. Neither do we know any fires that have light without heat, except the meteors of the air, which endure but the

twinkling of an eye, and do presently vanish away. But why do I stay long upon things so plain? Yet before I pass from it all together, give me your patience, unto two or three words of application.

The first is, to free the glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ, and the Revelation of the riches of his Grace from that cloud which doth eclipse it from the eyes and affections of very many, because it hath by reason of evil tongues, and credulous ears incurred an unjust suspicion of liberty and licentiousness. But is this so? We call heaven and earth to record that the Gospel teaches holiness, sobriety, temperance and whatsoever is of good report; yea it teacheth to avoid even the occasions of evil; yea, we call heaven and earth to record whether the Gospel do not draw us unto an holy obedience with as forcible {I will be bold to say, more forcible} and effectual cords than any doctrine whatsoever; for the true Gospel draweth with the cords of love; which is as strong as death, for nothing can be able to resist it, for "many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it." Cant.8:7. I call again, heaven and earth to record, whether any Doctrine can confer such power, {if I speak improperly I will be contented to alter my speech,} whether the Spirit of God does work so powerfully in the soul by any doctrine as by the Doctrine of the Gospel. The Law indeed shows us what is to be done, threatens us heavily if we do not, rewards us plentifully, {in things pertaining to this life,} if we do it; but all this while it ministereth unto us no quickening power; but leaves us dead, yea the more we hear it, {if we hear it aright,} the more dead we are. "For I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died, and the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death." Rom.7:9-10. But the Gospel, the word of Grace, is the ministration of a quickening Spirit, not only calling upon us to do, but also giving

power to perform. Therefore is the word of Grace called healing words, "even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the doctrine which is according to godliness." I Tim.6:3.

But if these things be so, how come so many foul accusations, so many heavy charges are cast upon this Doctrine of Grace? I answer, the servant is not greater than his Master, "for they shall say all manner of evil against you falsely," for Christ's sake. Matt.5:11. I must say of these men, as the Apostle of the Jews, "had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." I Cor.2:8. But now, "they speak evil of those things they understand not." Jude 10. I desire to pray for them, in the words of our crucified Savior, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." The Law of man exempts all blind men from going to war, lest they should do more hurt than good, and be rather burdensome than profitable; and likewise, the Law of God admits of no blind priest to serve in the sanctuary of God. Men used to scare their children with a blind priest, {a very terrible thing,} the builders are ignorant, and therefore have they rejected the chief corner stone. Therefore have they refused the fountains of living waters, and dig unto themselves cisterns which will hold no water. They speak evil of the Gospel, both preachers and people, {like priest, like people,} because they know it not. Lord lay not this sin to their charge, Lord open thou their eyes that the blind may no longer lead the blind.

Having thus far endeavored to free the glorious Gospel from the foul and hell-born aspersion thus unjustly cast upon it, let me in the next place have leave to turn my discourse unto the watchman of Israel, the servants of the Lord, whom he hath been pleased to call unto that office, and burden in the church of Christ, as to be dispensers of his Word, in doctrine and exhortation, in reproof and correction. I beseech you in the name of the

Lord Jesus Christ, that you cease not, instantly to admonish everyone with tears both night and day, Acts 20:31, that you reprove and rebuke unruly walkers, with all authority; that you rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith. Tit.1:13.

A second word of application is, that I may earnestly call upon them, God hath brought unto the knowledge of his Son, that "every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." II Tim.2:19. "If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus; that ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness," Eph.4:21-24, for thus it "becometh saints," Eph.5:3; "for this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication." I Thes.4:3. Herein is God glorified, and so let "your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Matt.5:16.

Herein is the church comforted, the souls of your brethren cheered, "joying and beholding your order, and the stedfastness of your faith in Christ." Col.2:5. Herein they that are without, upon whom the Word hath not had its full power, are sometimes called in, "they also may without the Word be won by the conversation." I Pet.3:1. Now then if the winning of those that are without, if the comfort of your brethren within, if glorifying of God your Father, if the performance of his will, or if there could be anything greater than these, that might be precious in your eyes, let me speak to you in the words of an Apostle, "as obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance, but as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation." I Pet.1:14-15.

I have thus much to speak unto you on the right hand, now give me leave to turn to the left. If so be {which God forbid} that your conversation should be profane, contrary to the holy commandment of our Saviour Jesus Christ, oh what will be the sequel? This is that which in Scripture phrase speaking after the manner of men, is called, to set forth the hideousness of it, grieving of the Holy Spirit of God. "And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." Eph.4:30. This is that which is called in Scripture a defiling of the members of Christ, and of the temple of God, I Cor.3:17; then what thing more hideous can be thought upon? "Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid." I Cor.6:15. "What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?" I Cor.6:19.

As your flesh cannot but tremble to make the members of Christ the members of an harlot, so let the zeal of God's temple incite you to make a scourge of small smarting cords, to wipe out of the temple of our God, whatsoever is contrary to the doctrine of godliness. This is that, {even the careless conversation of professors of godliness,} which opens a gate unto hideous blasphemy, whereby the name of God and his doctrine is evil spoken of. I Tim.6:1. And so you shall do your utmost endeavours hereby {which I hope you will fear to do} to keep back those that are coming in, and to drive the wandering sheep further from the fold of Jesus Christ. This is that whereby Satan gets advantage against you, whereby you lay yourselves open to the snare of the devil, too great temptation and unwholesome lusts. II Tim.2:26. Let me therefore and this with the apostles words, charge every one of you "as a father doth his children, that ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom

and glory." I Thes.2:11-12. Be not careless, but watchful; let piety prevail with you to watch diligently over yourselves, let charity prevail with you to watch as diligently over your brethren.

A third word of application, unto such as hold the truth of God in unrighteousness, unto such {and hereof in the world there are not a few} God grant the church may be free from them, "who profess they know God, but by their works they deny him," Tit.1:16, who increase in profaneness in conversation, as they grow and increase in the measure of revelation. Oh that mine eyes were a fountain of tears, that I might lament over them; oh, that the tears of a dear friend, who {the Lord is my witness} writes not these things with dry eyes, might so far prevail with you, that you would take his words into the deepest of your considerations, that you would repent of the evil of your ways, and submit unto the yoke of Christ; that your conversation may answer your profession.

Have you not seen an heifer unaccustomed to the yoke, stand as gently at the crib, as any other; but bring the yoke, and the very sight of it shall make her kick with the foot, and push with the horn, and seek all means to shun it. I would you would be contented to make the application yourselves; you who stand gently at Christ's crib, you who are contented to hear the sweet promises of the Gospel, containing and holding forth what Christ hath done for you; these things I say you hear with great patience, approbation and delight; but when it comes to this, that you are admonished what you ought to do for Christ in obedience, in thankfulness and love unto him that hath done all things for you. When the church of Christ would put the yoke of Christ upon your neck, and compel you to come in unto her wholesome discipline by her sweet persuasions, you turn it with the foot, you push with the horn, seeking means of evasion, "let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us."

Psal.2:3. Either you will acknowledge no church, or if a church, yet one according to your own heart you cannot find. I have nothing to do to judge you, {I confess that,} for I leave you unto him that judgeth all things, the Lord open your hearts.

And I shall betake myself unto the second consideration, of sin in the consciences of the called people of God. The thing that I have to declare is this, the design of the Lord Jesus Christ to remove sin from the consciences of his called people, whereby those whom the Lord hath called may have the answer of a good conscience towards God, I Pet.3:21, and that the consciences of these who are called of Jesus Christ are made clear, white, pure and undefiled from sin and transgression through the apprehension of the efficacy of the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, whereby they are begotten "unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead," I Pet.1:3, whereby they may have boldness before the throne of grace, even the throne of that God who hath eyes that will behold no iniquity, before the throne of that God, who is a consuming fire. Heb.12:29.

This is the effect of the faith of God's elect, to purify the heart. "And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith." Acts 15:8-9. What can here be meant by the word 'heart' other than conscience? Now if the conscience be pure, it is without spot; if it be not without spot, then is it not pure. That by heart is meant nothing less than the conscience is proved by other places of Scripture. "A sound heart is the life of the flesh." Prov.14:30. "A merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance." Prov.15:13. But lest some should say, that by the word 'heart' is meant less than conscience, I shall desire to speak plain, the Apostle showing the weakness

of legal sacrifices and services, saith, that these "could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience," Heb.9:9, but the Priesthood of Christ Jesus, the Mediator of a better Testament, established upon better promises, hath done that which the Law could not do. "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" Heb.9:14. The Law could not make perfect as pertaining to the conscience, but what the Law could not do in that it was weak, through the infirmities of the flesh, that Christ Jesus hath done by his sacrifice of himself.

We reason thus, if Christ did not purge the conscience, then is it yet impure, then is not his purgation as pertaining to the conscience of more efficacy than legal purgations were, they purged not the conscience, no more than he. But it is plain that he did purge the conscience. Now if he did purge, as pertaining to the conscience, then is the conscience pure and undefiled, and if it be not pure and undefiled, then he did not purge it. But that Christ did purge the conscience is plain because, "the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins." Heb.10:2. It is the drift of the Apostle in this place to show the reason why the Law sacrifices did cease to be offered, because they could not make the comers thereunto perfect, and that they were not made perfect is proved because they had conscience of sin. But now the offering of Christ hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. Heb.10:14. If they be perfected, then are they purged, and if purged, the comers thereunto must have no more conscience of sin. Now they "draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith," having their hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and their bodies washed with pure water. Heb.10:22.

By this we may understand what is meant by those metaphysical speeches which we read of in Rev.3:4, 4:4, 6:11, with many other places, where the saints are set before us in white raiment, from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot. This white raiment signifying not only that purity and cleanliness which they have before God, but also that purity and cleanliness of conscience, consisting in the apprehension of that glorious estate and condition whereunto they were stated by the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I think it is sufficiently proved, that the consciences of the called people of God are purged and purified from all manner of sin and uncleanness, and that it would be lawful for me to proceed, did there not an objection lie in the way, which may be an occasion of stumbling, unto those that are weak, and have not their senses exercised in such manner of questions as these are.

The objection is this, "if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us." I Jn.1:8. "If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us." I Jn.1:10. "For in many things we offend all." James 3:2. Now saith the objection, if we have sin, how can we be clean; and if we be cleansed, how is it that we have sin?

This objection is easily answered by the words immediately going before us; namely, "the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanses us from all sin," I Jn.1:7, and then presently follows, "if we have no sin, &c." Now here will lay the difficulty, for if we be cleansed from all sin, how have we any sin remaining? If we have yet any, how are we cleansed from all sin? For the clearing of an answer, I must entreat you to consider of sin in a twofold respect, as hath been spoken at large before; namely, sin in the conversation and sin in the conscience. The called of God are not quite purged from sin in conversation, for all our

righteousness are as an unclean thing. Isa.64:6. The called of God are quite cleansed from all sin in conscience.

I shall be speaking a riddle to some, to whom it is not given to know the mysteries of the kingdom, but you to whom it is given, will understand what I shall say. The thing is this, that as it is possible, for a man that hath been beyond comparison strict and upright in his conversation to have a foul and polluted conscience, a heart clouded with ignorance, and estranged from the life of God; so is it possible, for a man that hath been an exceeding sinner, and is not yet wholly cleansed from all wickedness in conversation {which no man is} to have a conscience as white as the snow and as pure as the wool; and if this seem a mystery unto you, that sin in the flesh, should stand with purity of conscience, take these reasons to make it plain. If purity of conscience could be found nowhere but where there is purity in the flesh, a pure conscience could not at all be found upon the earth, in regards to the fact that there is none that doeth good, no not one. Rom.3:12. Again, purity of conscience doth not take its rise from purity of conversation, but purity of conversation ariseth from purity of conscience. The original of purity of conscience ariseth hence, from the apprehension of all our impurities and uncleanness to be laid upon Christ, Isa.53:6, to be taken away by Christ. John 1:29. Herein doth the conscience of a believer rest in Christ Jesus crucified and made sin for us.

This that hath been spoken, may serve to open unto us a door of understanding, whereby those places which seem so contrary may be made plain. "If we say we have no sin, &c.," and yet it is said, "he that is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin because he is born of God." I Jn.3:9. What have we here? Is not the Apostle born of God? Are not they to whom he writes born of God? Yes, without contradiction; yet doth he confess, that he and they have

sin, and again he saith, "he that is born of God cannot sin." It is not unknown unto many that shall read this, how many windings, and turnings, how many unsound, and unfavorite distinctions, have been invented by the wit of man to reconcile these places, which are easily reconciled by that which hath been spoken. The called of God {even the most upright of them} have sin in the flesh, they have sin in the conversation; but they have no sin, neither can they have any sin in the conscience; for the true faith of God's elect and sin in the conscience can no more stand together than light and darkness.

Let this that hath been spoken become a touchstone to try our faith by. Doth thy faith purify the heart through the apprehension of the blood of Christ? Doth it cleanse thy conscience from all sin, so that not one remaineth behind? Then hath it this property of a true faith. But when the soul shall thus conceive within itself, that this sin, or that sin lieth yet upon me, if it were not for such, or such a sin, {greater it may be than ordinary,} I should judge myself in a happy condition. Give me leave, with patience, to declare thine error. Surely Christ cleanses not imperfectly, he doth not wash away some stains, and leave others; if he cleanse thee not from this sin, he hath cleansed thee from no sin whatsoever. If he hath not cleansed thee from any one sin, surely he hath washed thee from none at all; for he hath perfected forever them that belong to Him. "For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." Heb.10:14. But thou hast one sin yet unpardoned, not washed away? I demand of thee, who shall wash it away; and when shall it be washed away; seeing that Christ dieth no more, he sheddeth his blood no more, he offereth no more. I confess a man that knows not Christ may presume of the pardon of all his sins, and see his conscience purged by a false Christ; but I will be bold to

affirm, that he that seeth not all his sins taken away, has never known the true Christ.

Thus have we seen the design of the Lord Christ to purge the consciences of his called people, that they shall have no more conscience of sin. Now if this be so, do you desire that I should show you a place where joy and gladness dwell; where sorrow and sighing {in respect of unpardoned sin} have no more place; but everlasting comforts rest upon their heads. Behold, it is the conscience of God's called ones that are brought unto the apprehension of the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, whose joy cannot be taken away and whose comforts cannot be spoiled. Now blessed, thrice blessed are the people that are in such a case. Blessed are the people who know the joyful sound, who have their rest in Christ, who hath showed unto them the "path of life," in whose "presence is fulness of joy," and at his right hand "pleasures for evermore." Psal.16:11.

It is now time that I should come to show you the taking away of sin considered in the third respect, as it is taken away out of the sight of God; the design of Christ by the appointment of the Father, to take away sin, out of the sight of God. Christ is set forth unto us as a Propitiation and a Lamb of Atonement, an Offering for sin. "It pleased the LORD to bruise him, he hath put him to grief; when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand." Isa.53:10. Our first consideration will be to set forth that Christ offered an offering to God. The second will be, to declare the end and effect of that offering.

First, that Christ offered a sin offering to God. Christ was made by God our High Priest. Now every high priest is ordained for men in things pertaining to God to offer up sacrifices for sins. Heb.5:1. This Christ did once, when he offered up himself. Heb.7:1. That is, he once

offered for the sins of the people, which is confirmed unto us. "Who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God." Heb.9:14. By this it appears, that Christ Jesus was an offering unto God. But what was the effect of this offering? Even to make atonement, to make peace, to redeem us from the curse of the Law, from the tribulation, anguish, indignation and wrath which the Law had threatened, and must have of necessity fallen upon us, had not Christ been made a curse for us. But in him the Father hath declared himself well pleased; I say, well pleased in Him, that so through Him the Father might manifest unto us, his eternal pleasure; and we again, might through Him have boldness of access before the Throne of his Grace.

But here comes a difficult question to be discussed, whether wrath and indignation did now lie upon those, for whom Christ stood as Eternal Surety, for sin in respect of God. I answer, no; and my reason is, because we have an High Priest over the house of God, which is without beginning, and end of days, between whom and the Father all things are acted and transacted before the world began; and therefore we read of eternal life promised before the world began. Tit.1:2. But if this be so, how is Christ said to deliver us from wrath?

I will show you in the words of the Apostle, who saith that, "Jesus which delivered us from the wrath to come," I Thes.1:10, which must have fallen upon us, if Christ had not been a Mediator. Give me a time wherein his priesthood and sacrifice were not present and effectual with the Father, and I will grant, that at that time, the creature lieth under wrath. But that you may see that these things were transacted with the Father {according to his good pleasure} before the Messenger of the Covenant had offered himself upon the cross, you have the witness of the Father from heaven, "this is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." The Son had

not yet actually suffered, his blood was not yet shed upon the cross, and yet the Father saith, I am well pleased, I am contented.

The Father is well pleased, but it is in the Son, and that before his sufferings, to show that he was a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Rev.13:8. But if the Father were well pleased before his sufferings, what need was there that his blood should be shed. Will that God which doth nothing in vain, cause the blood of his Son to be shed in vain? Surely not! What is it then? Did the suffering of Christ only respect the satisfaction of the consciences of believers? I answer, that the satisfaction of their consciences was herein respected, I dare not deny, but that the shedding of the blood of Christ did only respect their consciences I dare not affirm. But I must say, that the Justice of God revealed in the Law did require that his blood should be shed, and that the Father manifests himself well pleased in his Son before his passion, doth presuppose {I lack words to express what I would} his death and sufferings {that in respect of man that was yet to come} to be perpetually present with the Father. Great is the mystery of godliness, and who is sufficient for these things? I have thus far declared unto you the office of Christ, in the pulling down of sin. The next thing that I have to declare, is the design of antichrist, in setting up sin, and pulling down righteousness; in seeking to build that which Christ hath destroyed, in destroying that which Christ hath built.

There is a great question as to who is Antichrist, and diverse answer, many things diversely; everyone according to his thoughts; some thinking that the Pope of Rome is Antichrist, some the Bishops, some the Turks, &c, but give me leave to tell you what I conceive, that to tie the name of Antichrist to a particular man, or to any particular succession of men is to confine him unto too narrow a bound. I will not deny but that the Pope is a

principal member of antichrist, of the man of sin, the Head, if you please; but I do believe the Pope and Antichrist to differ, as the part, and the whole, as the head, and the body; and I conceive the great Antichrist to be that mystical body of iniquity which opposes Jesus Christ. Antichrist is as much as to say, against Christ; whosoever doth seek to destroy that which the Lord Jesus hath built up, or to build up that which the Lord hath plucked down, the same is against Christ, and is so much a member of the great Antichrist. That these things may be more plain, I shall consider the Man of Sin in that threefold consideration before spoken of, namely, sin in the conversation, sin in the conscience and sin in the sight of God.

First, sin in the conversation. It cannot be denied, but that he that will endeavour to set up sin in the conversation of the people is indeed against Christ, and so a man of sin, a limb of antichrist; but yet our Saviour hath declared unto us, that the great man of sin, the great Antichrist, shall not be so palpable as to set up sin in the conversation; but that he shall come unto us in great holiness, zeal, and strictness, with eyes and hands lifted up to heaven, as though his conversation were indeed there. Thus is fulfilled that which was forespoken by our Lord. "Beware of false prophets, which come unto you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravaging wolves." Matt.7:15. Like those prophets of old, who did wear rough garments to deceive, Zech.13:4, "for there shall arise false Christs, and false Prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; inasmuch that if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." Matt.24:24. Satan is transformed into an angel of light. "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ; and no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light." II Cor.11:13-14. They are zealous, as they "make a fair show in the flesh."

Gal.6:12. The coming of the man of sin is "after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness." II Thes.2:9-10. "He doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men," Rev.13:13, even bringing many excellent truths of God, kindled at the flames of his altar.

One thing more observable is that such shall be his carriage, that he shall not only deceive others, but himself also; so that in his own esteem he shall be none other than the servant of the true God, and his Son Jesus Christ. We are deceived within ourselves, if we look for Antichrist to come like the heathen Bacebus, staggering up and down in the streets, wallowing in his own vomit; we are deceived, if we look for Antichrist among the lewd sons of Belial, roaring in the taverns. No, we shall find him in the Temple; rather, find him in the Pulpit; you shall find him at devotion, with great zeal, inasmuch that whosoever hath not the spirit of discerning shall presume that he is one of an excellent spirit. Little would any man suspect so much fraud to lie in so holy a breast, {according to appearance,} who could believe that so much cruelty should lurk under a meek countenance? So when we look upon this man of sin, who could have imagined that so much deceit should lurk under so supercilious a brow?

Alas, how open do those men lie unto deceit, which have no other touchstone for doctrine, but the zeal and holiness of the conversation. This must needs be true, say some, for I heard a very holy man deliver it. Alas poor soul, dost not thou know that beast-like doctrine which drops most often from men of holy conversation? Dost not thou see that the man of sin is as tall in the holiness of conversation as the true saints of God, as the Apostles of Christ themselves? His garment as rough, his

countenance as steadfast, the supplications as frequent, his zeal as great. Oh then beware of false prophets, search the Scriptures, try all things.

But you will say, if it be so, how shall I know the man of sin if I meet him? Is it not said, "by their fruits you shall know them." Matt.7:16. If such be the fruits of the man of sin, how shall I be able to discern him? To this I answer, that there are two sorts of fruit; the fruit of conversation and the fruit of doctrine; the fruit of the lips, and the fruit of the hands. "I create the fruit of the lips." Isa.57:19. Now the surest way to discover Antichrist is by the fruit of his lips, by the discipline of his mouth; for if we look upon the Apostles of Christ and the man of sin, we shall find both of them holy in conversation; yea so holy that who can discern them, the one from the other. Therefore must we inspect the voice, and ponder the doctrine. "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed." II Jn.10. "Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." Gal.1:8. When a wolf cometh in sheep's clothing, how shall we discern in the flock, which is the wolf, when both are fleeced alike? Must we not wait until they utter their voices, and then we shall discern that the one bleats and the other barks. We read of a beast, {the Lord to deliver us from him,} who hath horns like a Lamb, and who speaks as a dragon. Rev.13:11. Though we cannot discern him by his horns, yet we may easily know him by his dragon-like speech.

A man of Nigeria did put on a lion skin very artificially upon the back of an ass, and the inhabitants of the place were much terrified, supposing that a lion indeed had come amongst them, until the ass {at his accustomed time} began to bray like an ass; so soon as

they heard, not the roaring lion, but the braying of an ass, their fears were changed into laughter.

What was the course that Jephthah took to discern the Ephraimites from the Gileadites at the banks of the Jordan, for their faces were alike, their harness alike, their colors alike, their garments alike; and yet he discerned them by their tongues. "And the Gileadites took the passages of Jordan before the Ephraimites; and it was so, that when those Ephraimites which were escaped said, Let me go over; that the men of Gilead said unto him, art thou an Ephraimite? If he said, nay; then said they unto him, say now Shibboleth; and he said Sibboleth; for he could not frame to pronounce it right. Then they took him, and slew him at the passages of Jordan; and there fell at that time of the Ephraimites forty and two thousand. Judges 12:5-6. This will be the trial of the man of sin, of the members of antichrist, when they that have their senses exercised, shall discern them to cry Sibboleth in the doctrine of godliness.

Sure it is that this is the only certain way of discerning. There is indeed another way, which is very probable, but not so certain in a double respect. It is by his scarlet coat or gown; for the woman that sits on the beast is arrayed in purple and scarlet color, Rev.17:4, the beast himself was scarlet colored, and the great dragon is for color red, Rev.12:3, and that great city was clothed in fine linen, purple and scarlet. Rev.18:16. Give me leave to ask this man of sin a question.

Question: Who is this that cometh from Zion with dyed garments from Jerusalem?

Answer: I, even I, the man of sin, the son of perdition.

Question: Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat?

Answer: My feet are of iron, and my nails of brass, I have devoured and broken in pieces, and stamped the

residue with my feet, I have made war with the saints, and prevailed against them.

“Then I would know the truth of the fourth beast, which was diverse from all the others, exceeding dreadful, whose teeth were of iron, and his nails of brass; which devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet; and of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell; even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows. I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them.” Dan.7:19-21. I have sprinkled my garments with blood of the saints of the Most High.

A certain note of a false church is persecution. If the true church do persecute, if Sarah will cast out Hagar, she doth what she ought not to do, and the thing is grievous in Abraham’s sight. Seest thou then a generation of men, that are resolved to convert all men {Mohammed like} with guns and pistols, with swords and staves, with fire and faggots, with bonds and imprisonments, {I speak not against defense of the rights, and liberties,} surely this is either the false church of antichrist, the man of sin, the red dragon; or else it is the true church, forgetting the command of her Lord, and Saviour, “let them alone.” Matt.15:14. If the true church do so much forget herself, as thus to do, she must be contented to hear a word of reproof, and to be reminded that, “the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.” II Tim.2:24-25.

But here some will plead for the man of sin, that he doth well to persecute, or at least that the true church doth well to persecute men that are contrary minded; for

did not Asa make a Covenant, that "whosoever would not seek the LORD God of Israel should be put to death, whether small or great, whether man or woman." II Chron.15:13.

I answer, that Elijah prayed, and fire came down from Heaven and devoured the captains with their fifties, II Kings 1:10; yet when the disciples would have had our Saviour to have destroyed the Samaritans, in the like manner, because they would not receive him, they were sharply rebuked of him, "ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of." Lk.9:55. The case between Asa and us, is very different; for first Asa had the direct command of God for what he did, but we have the command of God different. "Let both grow together until the harvest." Matt.13:30. Again, a second difference is, that the whole people were members of a national church by God's appointment, and so were subject to such sensors as the Lord had commanded to be executed upon disobedient members, that they should be cut off; which things were a type of that spiritual death, wherewith that great King of Judah shall avenge himself at his glorious appearing, of all those that would not have him reign over them. Now we do not deny, the church of God has the liberty to proceed against refractory members, by her heavy censors, of delivering over unto Satan; but the question will be, whether or no Asa might lawfully have imposed this Covenant upon the Edomites or Arabians, {if they had been under his power,} and have caused them to turn proselytes whether they would or not.

That the magistrate may punish offenders, against peace and liberty we grant; but that he should compel the conscience to be of this or that judgment in religion we cannot see; that the professors of the Gospel should seek to convert men to the knowledge of the truth, and profession of the same, by torments and cruelties is strange unto us; for we profess that we have not so

learned Christ. Let the kings of the earth recover their rights and privileges by force and might; let them revenge every disobedience according unto merit and dessert, but let the Gospel be propagated by the two edge sword of God's Spirit.

But I must proceed no further in this, but come unto the second consideration of sin in the conscience, unto which I will also join the third, namely the consideration of sin in the sight of God; and herein I shall show you, that it is the design of antichrist, to set up sin in the conscience, and in the sight of God. To persuade the elect, that sin is not yet taken away out of the sight of God, that so he may keep those under bondage, who are yet entangled, that so {if it were possible} he might bring them back again into bondage, who are already escaped, that old serpent envying nothing more than the peace and joy of the saints of God.

This was an old plot of the man of sin, working by a mystery of iniquity in the false apostles of old, who taught the people believing in God, "that except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved." Acts 15:1. As though hitherto, having looked at Salvation accomplished by Christ, and remission of sins in his blood, they had been altogether deceived, and had believed a lie, for according to their doctrine there was more required than this, "for except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, you cannot be saved."

And that the aim of this project was to bring the people into bondage again appears by that exhortation of the Apostle, "stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." Gal.5:1. And that the working of the mystery of iniquity was forming this upon the anvil, appears also in the church of Corinth, "ye suffer, if a man bring you into bondage, if a man devour you, &c.," II Cor.11:20, in which words the Apostle doth set out unto

us the whole, and only aim of those counterfeit apostles, to bring the people into bondage again.

That it was the end and scope of that working mystery of iniquity, to declare sin unpardoned, appears plain by their horrid policy striking at the very root and foundation of all, viz., to deny Christ coming in the flesh, I Jn.2:22, or if come in the flesh, to deny him to be risen again. I Cor.15:12-19. Now if Christ be not come in the flesh, what will follow, but that believers lie yet in their sins. Nay although Christ be come in the flesh, and if he be not risen from the dead, your faith is vain, and ye are yet in your sins. I Cor.15:17. Now that this is the sort and great work that the man of sin so much desires to win from the people of God, that they are yet in their sins, appears plain from the first working of the mystery of iniquity, even in the Apostles days. Thus you see Christ and Antichrist, the Son of righteousness and the man of sin opposed each to one another; what the one builds, the other pulls down; what the one pulls down, the other builds. If it be granted unto me, that he that sets up sin in the sight of God, or consciences of God's called people, after Christ has taken it away, may very justly be called a man of sin, an opposer of Christ Jesus. I shall then proceed, to charge the man of sin more plainly, that his face may be discovered, and his visage known unto those that shall cast their eyes upon him. I shall here presume to challenge Rome, and those that do in any way conspire with her, in many of their foundations, to be opposite unto Christ in the setting up of sin, which he hath taken away.

That baptism taketh away sin, purgeth the soul, not only in conscience, but also in the sight of God, is a doctrine common with Rome's favorites, and boldly held forth by some, without any blushing in the whore's forehead. Now what is this but the man of sin, to deny that the Lamb of God hath taken away the sin of the world? Either Christ hath finished, taken away sin; or he

hath not finished it, by this one and alone offering; if he has not, then hath the Scripture deceived us, {which God forbid should enter into the heart of man,} if he hath taken it away, what truth will be found in this doctrine? I may not forget, to premise a distinction wherewith the whore seeketh to cover her fraud, and the man of sin to shroud his deceit. The distinction is found in Bellarmine, and others, viz., of price and application. In respect of a price paid, they confess that satisfaction is made for all sins, past, present, and to come; but in respect of application of the price, it is made by baptism, &c.

To show the fraud of this distinction, I shall ask one question, whether any perfection be to the creature, without the application of this price? Surely no, for "by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." Heb.10:14. And we have the Revelation of God, that the price is not only paid, but that also the Father is well pleased, and the New Covenant is ratified at the time of the death of the Testator.

That such things as these should come from Rome, that the hot climate of Africa should breed snakes and serpents is no wonder, but who could have thought to have found such in England, professing themselves at variance with the whore, and that should yet stand up in defense of this proposition, that baptism washes away sin, and yet this is too true, as divers can testify whose ears have been witness; and to this purpose {lest their words should seem to want weight} they fly unto that place wherein Ananias speaks to Paul in these words, "and now why tarriest thou, arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." Acts 22:16. A plain text, and for answer to this, I shall produce no other thing then what I then demanded, whether those words were spoken to a believer or an unbeliever? The answer is, to a believer; otherwise, he ought not to have been exhorted to submission unto baptism. If these words

were spoken to a believer, I beseech you to consider seriously, the extent of this argument, which would make us conceive, that sins are not yet pardoned to a believer, but that a believer may have his sins unpardoned, which I leave to your censor. But some will say, what meaneth then this term, "wash away thy sins?" I answer, this is none other then, break off thy sins, a washing in conversation, that it may appear before the face of the world, that thou art another manner of man than hitherto thou hast appeared for to be. They that are already washed in respect of God's imputation, they that are already washed in conscience in respect of manifestation, and apprehension of the Grace of God in Christ Jesus, may yet, and ought to be exhorted to wash in respect of conversation.

Thus you see the subtlety of the serpent and how closely he lurks, how cunningly he behaves himself, to oppose the truth of God, and to set up sin again, and to bring the conscience under bondage.

Now that I have begun, I will be bold to challenge the man of sin, in other of his doctrines, destructive unto the manifestation of the Grace of God, in the remission of sins, viz., his doctrine of repentance, that repentance washes away sin, and that there is no forgiveness with God before repentance, is so commonly and ordinarily known unto you, that it need not be confirmed by testimonies against him. If he should deny that he hath taught the people any such thing, his own mouth will be a witness against him, his own writings will condemn him, and indeed the thing is more plain than can be denied; and he is so far from denying of it, that he will rather stand to defend it; and what more contrary unto the Grace of God?

Now that the original of this error may be discovered, that the weakness of this grand work may be discerned; and a door to answer his objections opened, I

shall desire you to consider the difference, of the manifestation of the remission of sins in Scripture, according to the difference, of the Covenant manifested in the same. In the first Covenant, the worldly sanctuary, Heb.9:1, the carnal commandment, Heb.7:16, I say in that Covenant; as there was no remission for some sins; so, contrition, confession and satisfaction {such as the Law required} of the sinner must needs go before remission of any sin; but in the Grace of the New Covenant in the blood of Jesus Christ, remission of sins, {yea, if that it be granted that faith is the knowledge of remission,} and the manifestation of remission also, must go before godly contrition or confession, {for satisfaction, we cannot well bear with the word,} if it be objected that, that worldly tabernacle was a pattern of heavenly things, for so it was commanded by Moses, that he should "make it according to the fashion which he had seen," Acts 7:44, these things serving "unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle; for, see, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount." Heb.8:5. Now if contrition went before remission in the earthly shadow, then it must needs do so in the endless life; for they were one like another, one the pattern of another.

I answer, that contrition, &c., is considerable in our High Priest, or in the people, {both priest and people, and sacrifice in the Law, being types of our High Priest,} now we say that in the Priest Christ Jesus, contrition went before remission. He was bruised, he was broken, yea he was slain before any remission could be pronounced to the miserable sons of Adam, for without blood there is no remission, Heb.9:22; so that in the Covenant of this endless life, the contrition, confession, {I pray bear with the word,} and satisfaction, blood shedding of Christ the Mediator, must needs go before remission, but that

remission obtained by the Mediator, yea faith {the knowledge of remission} must needs go before the godly contrition or confession of the creature.

I will spend a little time to open these two propositions and to clear the truth of them, that I may take away occasion from them who seek occasion, that they may have no more plea before the people to speak evil of the things they do not understand. For the first of them, that in the Old Covenant, contrition, confession and legal satisfaction went before remission; and although it need no proof, for illustration, I shall speak a word and refer them that desire further satisfaction herein unto the fourth, fifth and sixth chapters of Leviticus, wherein these things are set down at large, and where it is written, "and it shall be, when he shall be guilty in one of these things, that he shall confess that he hath sinned in that thing, and he shall bring his trespass offering unto the LORD for his sin which he hath sinned, a female from the flock, a lamb or a kid of the goats, for a sin offering; and the priest shall make an atonement for him concerning his sin," Lev.5:5-6, "and it, verse 10, shall be forgiven him." This is the law of the sin offering, confession, offering, atonement, and then forgiveness; no forgiveness to be looked for without these, and this also is the prophets, "but if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die. All his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him; in his righteousness that he hath done he shall live." Ezek.18:21-22. This is the prophets, to declare repentance, as a means to obtain remission; and neither remission, nor the knowledge of remission, to go before, but follow contrition; but this is not the Gospel, which is established upon better promises. The Law and the Prophets teach us in that Covenant, to repent and bring our offering, as a means to

obtain remission, to repent for remission; but the Gospel teaches us to repent unto remission, Mark 1:4, it is indeed translated for remission, but unto, is written in the margin. This you shall see more at large in my book entitled, the doctrine of John the Baptist.

The Gospel propoundeth unto us a Sacrifice already offered, Propitiation, Atonement and Reconciliation already made, sin already finished, and then by the Ministry of Reconciliation calleth upon us to repent unto remission. This is the Ministry of Reconciliation, namely, "that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." II Cor.5:19. Christ is our Priest, our Sacrifice, our Atonement; he offered for our sin, he made peace through his blood, and calls upon us to believe this peace and atonement made. But this will more plainly appear, when I shall prove unto you, that not only remission, but even Faith, {the knowledge of remission, whose object is remission of sins in Christ,} must needs be before godly contrition. "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." Rom.14:23. All contrition that proceeds not from Faith is no better than sin; but godly Repentance is not sin. Therefore it is not before Faith, but from Faith; we do not therefore believe remission of sins because we repent; but we therefore repent, because we believe remission of sins in Christ. Again the question is, whether or not, repentance is not a sacrifice of thanksgiving? If so, it presupposes the knowledge of a benefit received. Thirdly, to speak in the language of holy Scripture, is not repentance a sacrifice well pleasing unto God? "But without faith it is impossible to please God." Heb.11:6. I would not be understood, as though I thought the Faith of God's elect to remain any time in the soul void of Repentance; but my meaning is to show you the order of the work of the Spirit of God who produces not Faith by Repentance, but Repentance by Faith. Again, I do not

deny but that there is a repentance of despair, such as was that of Judas, going ordinarily before the knowledge of remission. But this is not godly repentance, this is such repentance that many have had who have yet died in their sins. That I may be the better understood, I shall conclude this with the laying down of certain propositions.

1. No repentance at all goeth before remission, or the non-imputation of sins. 2. That repentance of Judas goeth commonly before the knowledge of remission of sins. 3. Godly repentance goeth not before, but followeth the knowledge of remission of sins. From this that hath been spoken, we have a discovery of the man of sin, setting up sin in the consciences of the people, and in the sight of God. When any shall declare unto you, that you cannot have any forgiveness with God until repentance, when the proposition converted, will and hath been found true, viz., that you cannot repent until you have, and until you perceive forgiveness with God. Doth any man declare unto you Repentance as a means to obtain remission and forgiveness at the hands of the Father? These are the footsteps of the man of sin, of the son of perdition; and you have seen how contrary this is to the Grace of God manifested in the sufferings of the Lord Jesus Christ; and how contrary to the voice of the glorious Gospel, which "through this man {that is Jesus Christ} is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins." Acts 13:38. Let us then learn to be wise, let us learn to discern this wolf by his bark; let the opinion, the show, the profession of holiness be never so great; yet if they bring this doctrine, believe them not, for it is the man of sin, the limbs of antichrist, a wolf in sheep's clothing that seek not to feed you, but to feed upon you. Take heed and beware!

I have now opened a way, and declared unto you how most of the Romish doctrines, may be found guilty of this hideous crime; and how not Rome alone, but the pulpits of England also may be discovered to be filled,

with the man of sin, with the enemies of the Grace of God. But I do not intend to stay upon any more particulars, but I will have an open ear to hear indifferently, what Rome, and her children, and servants can say for themselves, against this accusation brought forth, and laid to their charge; for I think it unreasonable to condemn any before we hear them speak for themselves. I suppose they will say, you do us injury to say we are members of antichrist, of the man of sin; for although we should confess it an error, as you have said, yet can we free ourselves from being members of that man of sin, for it is said of him, in the very next words unto your text, "who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God." II Thes.2:4. Now all know that we are far from this, for we worship the God of Heaven, and fear his name. Nay Rome tells us that we have little reason to challenge them, for opposing all that is called God, or worshiped, when as in another charge, we lay against them, that they worship more gods than they ought. Now unto this apology I answer, that we read of one that said, "Sir I go, but went not," and he is not reputed to have done the will of his Father, whatsoever he said. So if we shall prove that such a doctrine as this exalts itself above God, we shall be able to maintain our charge, and you will be left unable to acquit yourselves. Some by God, in the place cited, do understand the magistrate, who in some sense is called god, "is it not written in your law, I said, ye are gods," Jn.10:34, that the man of sin doth exalt himself above magistrates, and indeed this is true, and worthy our observation, how the man of sin doth closely contend to bring the magistrate in subjection unto himself, to make the magistrate the executioner of his lusts and impieties. But this is too narrow a limitation for the text, which saith, "he exalteth himself above all that is called God," though the

magistrate is called god, yet he is not "all that is called God, or that is worshiped." We shall desire to consider whether this man of sin be excusable in this kind, or not, and to see whether the man of sin doth not exalt himself above the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is blessed for evermore. May not he that exalteth himself above the attributes of God, be truly said to exalt himself above God himself? For nothing is in God, but what is God. We shall then show unto you that the man of sin doth exalt himself above the glorious attributes of God. I will instance in four, truth, wisdom, mercy and justice. And I shall declare how the man of sin, would appear to us to be more true than God; secondly, wiser than God; thirdly, more merciful than God; and fourthly, more just than God.

First, how antichrist opposes the truth of God in his doctrine makes God a liar. The truth of God is, that he hath set forth his Son Jesus Christ to be a propitiation for sin, that he preaches remission in his name; but antichrist will be bold to deny this, and to tell you openly, that these things are no better than fables; Christ hath not, nor will not take away your sins, until you have repented of them. Before your tears of contrition, there is in God no remission for you; Christ's sacrifice and bloodshed cannot avail you until you have washed away your sins by true repentance and sorrow for them. Many things of the like nature your eyes have read, and your ears that hear them are witnesses of, and this is the man of sin, who will impose to be believed under pain of the greatest Anathema; and he will be ready to say thus, that whosoever saith that Jesus Christ hath taken away any man's sin before repentance, let him be accursed. Thus will he be accounted more true than God, who has said the contrary, in large and express terms, setting forth the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus, and the efficacy thereof. God saith one thing, antichrist the contrary; and

he will be believed, otherwise all cannot be well. Now what is this but to oppose God, to exalt himself against the truth of God, and I might instance in many several particulars, wherein the man of sin is neither ashamed, nor afraid, to contradict the very letter of the text, to impose a gloss and interpretation expressly contrary to the manifest revelation of God in his word, but it is not my design to dwell upon particulars, but to show you a way of discerning and discovery in some few, that you may be able for to judge of the rest. Now if to make God a liar, oppose God, if God be not true he is no longer God. Then sure he that desires to be believed, before God, to have his oracles to be accounted more true than God, to make void the truth of God, cannot be freed from exalting himself above God.

Secondly, let us consider if this man of sin do not exalt himself above the wisdom of God, and would be accounted wiser than God. The wisdom of God hath been pleased to set forth his Son Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of the world, and hath given commission to his apostles, to go preach the Gospel, or the glad tidings of the free Grace of God, to all nations, Matt.28:19; yea, as if this were not large enough, to every creature; and to set forth a plain and easy way to them that are taught of God, so plain that the wayfaring men though fools shall not err therein. Isa.35:8. He hath given us a word, to be a light unto our feet, and a lantern unto our path; and this word of Grace the wisdom of God hath commanded to be preached plainly, openly, to every creature. "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him;

neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man." I Cor.2:12-15. This is the wisdom of God, but Rome thinks she hath better policy than this, namely, to lock up the Scriptures in an unknown tongue, and that out of love and zeal, lest the simple ones should abuse it, and misunderstand it, and pervert it; and by this reason they should also lock it up from the learned, who do miserably pervert it. God's wisdom saith, "search the Scriptures," "try the spirits," whilst that wisdom of Rome saith, "let them alone, it is not safe meddling with them." Thus will Rome be wiser than God, and prefer the carnal policy of that man of sin, before the wisdom of the God of righteousness. Thus do his members seek to outwit the God of Heaven, who hath sent glad tidings to be preached to all, upon the house top; and the fullness, and the freeness of the Grace of God to be manifested to all, but what saith the man of sin, that it is not safe course, though these things be true, yet, {as Stephen Gardiner, sometimes of Winchester said on his deathbed,} if the people should know them, all will be marred, for they will abuse it, they will turn the Grace of God into wantonness. Therefore it is fit such things as these should be preached but seldom, or only in private; for this purpose we have stories told us, of a man in Cheapside, a maid I know not where, and a woman in such a lane, that did abuse the glorious tidings of the Gospel. I cannot go to search the truth of these things, which I believe not yet, unless we had better proof, than the report in print; but suppose this be a truth, what then? It is not safe to preach the Gospel, and to set forth the true Grace of God; what consequence is this; because there are many drunkards {and men of no mean rank} in the city, therefore wine must be banished in the city, let it come no more there; this would be in the merchants and wine-makers eyes a very absurd consequence. And

certainly, the consequence on the other part is seven times more absurd; for we have no peremptory command to bring wine into the city, but we have a command to preach the Gospel. A city might well subsist without wine, but the spiritual edification of the people of God cannot subsist without the Gospel. Oh God, I will preach thy Gospel, for thou hast said, go preach, and woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel of Christ, I commit the success unto thee; for thy Gospel is the power of God unto Salvation, and I will not be ashamed of it; it is a sweet savor unto thee, in them that are saved, and in them that perish. I perceive that the foolishness of man would advance itself above thy wisdom; and persuade us {if not compel us} to be silent in thy truth. But let thy servants be filled with the fullness of God, that for Zion's sake they may not hold their peace, and for Jerusalem's sake they may not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth. Isa.62:1.

Thirdly, the man of sin exalteth himself above the mercy of God. He will seem to be more merciful than God. God gave unto man a law, a righteous law, and has threatened the transgression thereof with death; yea he that offends in one point is guilty of all, James 2:10, and "cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." Gal.3:10. Where it is plain, that the Lord denounces a curse upon all persons, that continue not at all times, to perform this righteous law in all things, and not anything of this righteous law shall be abated, for Heaven and Earth shall pass away, but not one jot or tittle of this law shall perish. Matt.5:18. Now what saith the man of sin to this, it cannot enter into his thoughts, but that God will be more merciful than thus, for he will tell you that God accepts the will for the deed, {which he doth indeed in them who are not under the Law but under Grace,} but

unto them unto whom it is spoken that are under the Law, you see what is required; not only to will, but also to do, under the threatenings of a curse. Again, where it is said, he that believeth not shall be damned, Mark 16:16, and where it is said, that Jesus Christ shall be revealed from Heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. II Thes.1:7-8.

Neither will this be credited by man, but he will tell you, that a desire to believe, is faith, and though man do not believe, yet if he desire to believe, he shall be saved. Then must the text be changed, and we must read, he that desires not to believe shall be damned. Again, the justice of God declares unto us, that there is no remission without blood shedding; and yet the man of sin will declare unto us that such or such a sin, which is not pardoned this day, may be pardoned tomorrow, and a pardon may be procured and obtained by the shedding of some tears, {but no man hath yet declared unto us how many;} now it may be they will say, that Christ's blood was shed before, or else tears could not have done it. Did the blood of Christ then make sin only to become pardonable upon our tears? Or did he procure pardon? For I am sure that Christ's blood doth not any new thing, what it did it did at once; and what it hath not done, it will never do; if so be that our sins were not pardoned before our tears, then will it follow, that Christ's blood did only make sin to become pardonable; that he did not procure remission, forgiveness or pardon for us. Thus you see the mercy of God opposed by the man of sin, and the man of sin exalting himself, and seeking to debase God. Now lest anything that is called God should seem to escape, I must in the next place declare unto you the man of sin opposing the justice of God, as he will be more just than God.

God hath given unto man a most righteous and holy law, by which is the knowledge of sin, Rom.3:20 &

7:7, this law he hath set so fast, that Heaven and Earth shall sooner pass away, than one jot or tittle from the law, till all be fulfilled; but when it was impossible for any of the sons of Adam to fulfill the righteous law, in regard that all of them are come short of the glory of God, and there is none that doth good, no not one; it pleased the God of love and mercy to send forth his Son Jesus, in the similitude of sinful flesh, and to condemn sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in them, who live not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Rom.8:4. Now God sets forth in his word, the law fulfilled, righteousness accomplished in his Son Jesus; this he commands to be preached to the world. Now what saith the man of sin, that Christ hath suffered he dare not deny, but that his suffering hath given full satisfaction to the justice of God, required in the law, is that which he is bold to contradict; and therefore they say, that Christ indeed have taken away the guilt of sin, that he hath also taken away the eternal punishment due unto sin, but he hath not {say they} taken away the temporal punishment due to sin; this must either be prevented by us, by our tears, by our humiliation, by our repentance and contrition, otherwise if not prevented it must be endured. Hence do proceed, the doctrine of satisfaction in the schools of Rome; hence proceeds, that clouded doctrine of repentance in the Romish doctors. There being indeed, no doctrine more available to the manifestation of the glory of God, more comfortable to the souls of the people, more profitable to the edification of the Church than the doctrine of true Repentance truly taught and learned. There being also no doctrine more destructive to the Truth of God, and the comfort of his people, then that cloudy and misty doctrine of Repentance taught by the factors of Rome, whereby they seek to overthrow at once, the whole building of the temple of God. The summation of all is this, that whereas God saith that the justice of his

Law is fulfilled, and he is well pleased in his Son to declare that sin and iniquity will be remembered no more; this man of sin will be more just than God, and say, that the Law is not fulfilled until you repent, the Father will not be well pleased in his Son, until you have repented of your sins. Thus you see how the man of sin exalts himself above the Justice, the Mercy, the Wisdom, and the Truth of God; and indeed it will be found true, that there is not any one attribute of God, but he hath sought to depress and to exalt and lift up himself, and his own doctrine; and that by this means he might fulfill that which hath been foretold of him; namely, that he "opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God." As it was fore-spoken of him by the Holy Ghost, "and the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished; for that that is determined shall be done. Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god; for he shall magnify himself above all. But in his estate shall he honour the God of forces; and a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honour with gold, and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things." Dan.11:36-38.

Having taken the first plea of antichrist into consideration, and found it faulty; we will in the next place consider, one thing more which he alleges to prove, that he is not that man of sin, that son of perdition. He will say, it is written, "who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son." I Jn.2:22. "For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist." II Jn.7. From hence Rome, and all her children will argue, that they are not antichrist, that they are not the man of sin because they confess that Jesus is the Christ; yea

whosoever shall deny that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, they hold him accursed. For the better clearing of this, and the opening of some places of Scripture, we must take it into consideration what it is to deny and confess Christ coming in the flesh. There are two things necessary to be believed unto the constitution of the Faith of God's elect, and if either of these shall be found wanting, the faith will be found lame and imperfect; yea, altogether no faith at all. The one is to believe rightly the office of the Mediator and Redeemer; the other is to believe rightly the true Person of Christ; now he that believes the Person, and denies the Office, what doth he else than deny Christ coming in the flesh? Again, he that confesses the Office, but denies the Person is as faulty as the other.

Now according unto this distinction, I find in the world a twofold antichrist, the Hebrew antichrist, and the Latin antichrist; the Jewish antichrist, and the Gentile antichrist. The Jewish antichrist believes indeed the office of the Mediator truly; yea I do believe, that in substance they are able to declare unto us, what is the true office of the Saviour of sinners, when {as they believe} he shall be sent from the Father into the world. But believing his office, they deny his Person, and will not have the crucified Jesus to be the Saviour of sinners, but vainly look for another, for to come unto them; so that you see that, that which is wanting unto the perfection of the Jewish faith, is no more but this, to be truly informed and persuaded concerning the Person of the Messiah. And the consideration of this gives us light to interpret some places of Scripture, which {for want of this consideration} I find to be somewhat mistaken by others of good judgment and zeal. It is written, "I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins; for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." Jn.8:24. And the eunuch demanding of Philip, what was required unto

baptism, and receiving an answer, that to believe with all the heart was the thing required, he makes his confession in these words, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." Acts 8:37. From which places, and some other like, some have gathered, that is sufficient for the Christian faith, to believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God; and yet a man may have the truth faith, though he believed not the remission of sins, in Jesus. These things do indeed require larger dispute than can be afforded unto them at this time, only I desire that it may be considered, that the persons, with whom the dispute was held, Jn.8:22, were of the Jews, who rightly understood the office of the Messiah; and if they were faulty in anything, it was in this, that they ascribed something more unto his office than was to be ascribed, but nothing less. Now there was nothing lacking unto their faith, save rightly to understand the Person of the Redeemer. The same is to be said concerning the eunuch, who was a proselyte of the Jews, for he came to Jerusalem to worship; and therefore under the expectation of the Messiah, whose office he did understand; now it is granted that the man believing the Office of Christ, it is sufficient for him to grant the Person, and acknowledge him. And as the Jews believing the Office, yet denying the Person, were properly against Christ, so the antichrist who confesses Jesus of Nazareth crucified at Golgotha, to be the Son of God, the Messiah of the Lord, may as properly {if not more properly} be called antichrist, who confessing his Person, is bold to deny his Office. We do not lay unto Rome's {or that of many Arminians} charge that they deny the Person of Christ; we have not any controversy with them concerning the Person of Christ, but we charge them with a denial of his Office, with denial of the effect of Christ's death and resurrection. {These two are inseparable, for if we deny the office of Christ, we indeed deny his true Person as well!} For when it shall be

declared that the effect of Christ's death requires on our parts a condition, and that Christ's death is not effectual unto us until the condition on our parts be performed, we say that this is to deny the office of the Messiah, this is to deny the Priesthood and Sacrifice of Christ to take away sin and to finish transgression; and unto us it doth appear, that the pre-requiring of a condition doth diminish the glory of the efficacy of Christ's work.

Now to draw to a conclusion, you that have known the man of sin, will say that I have in part so discovered him in these lines, that they that are weak sighted may be able to discern him; I have done it for this end, that a spirit of discerning may be ministered unto you, that see but dimly and darkly; that whereas the man of sin comes with great deceivableness of unrighteousness, shrouding himself amongst the flock, {for there is not any congregation wherein this man will not creep,} you may be able for to discern him, come he never so covertly and closely. The God of light bring you unto that light which discovers all things, and make you now to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light, delivering you from the power of darkness, and translating you into the kingdom of his dear Son, "in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins." Col.1:12-14.

Glory be to God, but to the man of sin confusion.

FINIS