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CHRISTIANISMUS PRIMITIVUS:
OR, THE
Ancient Christian Religion,
IN ITS
Nature, Certainty, Excellency, and
Beauty, (Internal and External)
particularly Considered, Asserted,
and Vindicated,
FROM
The many Abuses which have Invaded that
Sacred Profession,
BY
Humane Innovation, or pretended Revelation,
Comprehending likewise
The General Duties of Mankind, in their respective Relations;
And Particularly,
The Obedience of all Christians to MAGISTRATES,
And the Necessity of CHRISTIAN-MODERATION about
things *Dispensable* in Matters of Religion.
WITH
Divers Cases of CONSCIENCE Discussed and Resolved.

By THOMAS GRANTHAM, a Servant of Christ. *And an Analap-
tist, who explains, and justifies the Anabaptists doctrine as approved by his whole
Discourse.*

Slide, Vol. 3.
It was needful for me to write unto you, and Exhort you that you should earnestly contend
for the Faith, which was once delivered unto the Saints.

L O N D O N,
Printed for Francis Smith, at the Sign of the Elephant and Castle
in Cornhill, near the Royal-Exchange, 1678.

OF THE YEAR 1701



The Epistle Dedicatory
TO THE
ENGLISH NATION.
And every Person therein professing Love to Je-
sus Christ, under what Appellation soever :

Particularly to my BRETHREN and KINSMEN
according to the FLESH.

More especially to all the CHURCHES of CHRIST, who
maintain one Baptism of Repentance, for the
Remission of Sins.

SIRS,



S you cannot be lightly Ignorant of the many
Changes which have befallen our Nation in the
case of Religion since first the Christian Faith
was received in this Island; even so, you have
great reason to consider, whether your present
standing in that behalf, be such, as that you may
comfortably apply that speech, 1 Pet. 5. 12.

This is the true Grace of God, wherein ye stand. Or at least-
wise, great cause you have to consider, whether you stand perfect and
complete in all the Will of God, Col. 4. 12. That being the great End
of the Lord, in sending us the Word of his Salvation, even to present
every Man perfect in Christ Jesus, Phil. 1. 28.

After what manner this Nation first received the Christian Faith, does
not so clearly appear from History, as might be desired. The Roman
Party glory much in Austin the Monk, and would have him Eng-
lands Apostle. But Doctor Fulk denies him that Honour: Shew-
ing withal, that when he came hither, he corrupted with Roman mix-
tures, that Christianity which he found among the Britains. And in-
deed, Fabian (though a Papist) shews how he would have imposed
sundry

Rhem. Test.
on 1 Cor. 4.

Fab. Chron.
5. p. f. 107.

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sundry Observations upon them, which the Britains refused, as being contrary to the Doctrine which at first they had received.

If Simon Zelotes, or Joseph of Arimathea, were the first that Preached Christ to this Nation, (as some hold) then we doubt not but the first Churches in this Land, became followers of the Churches which in Judea were in Christ Jesus. And surely, it seems more credible, that one of these should first Preach to the Britains the Word of Life, than that Eaganus, or Dunianus, (sent from Elutherius Bishop of Rome) should do it; these being above an Hundred Years after the time that Joseph of Arimathea flourished, which was Anno 81. the other not till Anno 188.

But however this may be, yet we have the sacred Scriptures, which plainly shew us the Way of the Lord, as it was first delivered to the Churches of Christ in many Nations. And it is that way of Christian Religion which the ensuing Systems are designed to demonstrate. Neither is there any other Gospel to be received by us, though an Angel from Heaven should introduce it: How much less the Children of Men, who are far less in Power and Dignity?

*The most specious pretence under which the Alterations, and manifold Innovations which have befallen the Christian Religion, have been obtruded, Is the Authority of the Church (as if God had given her power) to vary the Administration of Ordinances, or to make Institutions in Religion: But the consequence hath shewed the vanity of such pretences, whilst we have been by this means, in some one Ordinance incumbered with the best part of an hundred Ceremonies, namely the Eucharist, as is observed in the Roman Masses; for which, among other Errors, the Protestants have justly withdrawn their Communion. And it is well observed by some, * That we have an Obligation to the Laws of God, antecedent to those of any Church whatsoever: Nor are we bound to obey those, any further than they are agreeable with these.*

Two causes are assigned, upon which separation from a Church is lawful. 1. When she requires of us, as a condition of her Communion, an acknowledgment and profession of that for a Truth, which we know to be an Error. 2. When she requires of us, as a condition of her Communion, the joyning with her in some Practices, which we know to be against the Law of God. In these two Cases (saith my Author) to withdraw our obedience to the Church is so far from being a Sin, that it is a necessary Duty.

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Now these things being so, I have only this in special request of my Nation, or Countrymen in general, that they will be pleased (and especially the Learned and Pious among them) to devote themselves to the impartial search after Primitive Christianity. And then, that they will vouchsafe to peruse these Labours, approving them only so far as Truth appears in them, and so much it will not be just to deny me, though they be not published with Learning. For which defect, I shall only Apologize in the words of Ludovicus Vives, who finding some defect of Grammar in a passage of Augustine, De Civitat. Dei, saith: If a Modern Divine had plaid the Grammarian thus, he should have heard of it, but Augustine may: But if he and Paul lived now a-days, He should be held a Pedant, or petty Orator, and Paul a Madman, or Heretick.

To my Kinsmen according to the Flesh, in the next place I address myself; I mean the Ancient Family of the Granthams, in the County of Lincoln especially. How welcome such a Dedication will be to you I know not, and therefore shall not name you particularly, you being Persons of Quality in this World, and my Extraction being immediately from your poor Kindred, yet such as were acknowledged by your Progenitors. And though I am one of the lowest of my Fathers House, yet let it not displease you to hear my Voice, whilst in these several Tractates I only bespeak you for God; and in order thereto, beseech you to consider your standing in relation to Christianity, in respect of its Primitive Institution.

I doubt not but it hath been your case, with others, to fall short of that beautiful Order wherein the Gospel was at first recommended to Mankind, by the Lord Christ and his Apostles; occasioned partly by the Traditions which we received from our zealous (though too much misguided) Progenitors, some of them living in the darker times of Popery; and those that Reformed in part, yet could not (perhaps) suddenly escape all the Intrigues wherein they had been bewildered; No, nor to this day may we be too confident, that there hath been (generally) so perfect an escape from them that live in Error, as by some is presumed. Let us honour the Vertues of our Predecessors, who, by how much they departed from the By-paths of their Ancestors, are good Presidents for us to do the like; especially considering how it is written, Ezek. 20. 18, 19. Walk ye not in the Statutes of your Fathers, I am the Lord your God, walk ye in my Statutes, observe my Judgments, and do them.

Let no Worldly Advantages cause you to neglect that Honour which cometh of God only. It was Pauls way to gain the excellent Know-

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ledge

* Mr. Sharps Sermon before the Court of Aldermen, Aug. 23. 74.

Ludovic Vives. Aug. De Civit. Dei. l. 13. c. 24.

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ledg of Christ, by counting his noble Descent, and all things which were gain to him upon a fleshy account, to be but loss in comparison of the knowledge of Christ, the power of his Resurrection, and the fellowship of his Sufferings.

Brethren, my hearts desire and prayer to God for you all, is, that ye may be saved. And though, I hope, you are not unmindful of your Eternal Beatitude, yet being perswaded that these Labours may some way serve you towards your attaining that happy end. I have therefore communicated to you these following Meditations, containing an Epitome of that Doctrine, which (after the strictest search I could make, either in sacred Scripture, or other Writings) hath the nearest and most full agreement with the state of Christian Religion, as it was delivered to the first Churches; whom we are to prefer as our Pattern, in all our enquiries; and to resolve to follow no Man, when we find him forsaking the Footsteps of Christ our Lord, and those his faithful Followers.

Thus committing you to the Grace of God, I leave this Testimony with you, as a faithful evidence of that Honour and Respect which I bear towards you, and to the eternal welfare of your Souls, at the Appearing of the Great God, and our Lord Jesus Christ; who will then make manifest the secrets of all Hearts, and render to every Man according as his Works shall be.

Finally, To all Christian Churches which acknowledg one Baptism of Repentance, for the remission of Sins, I do more especially dedicate these following Treatises, which design the Restauration of Christianity (wherein it is either neglected, or abused) to its Primitive Integrity, both in the form and power of it.

And as Primitive Christianity is the Title, so my care hath been, that the Book might perform in some proportionable measure, what the Title promiseth. Nevertheless, I do readily acknowledg, that my power to perform herein, comes short of my desires, as well as of others expectation. Howbeit, I desire you to take in good part what I was able to do, whilst the innocency of my design by these Endeavours, shall plead against the censures of those Men; who because they cannot excel all Men, think it a dishonour to do any thing.

It is enough for me, that I can faithfully approve my Heart to God in this Work, as aiming sincerely at his Glory in it, and the chief good of all Men by it; being also very sensible, that there is need enough of the Publication of a Work of this nature, in behalf of the Churches professing one Baptism of Repentance, for the remission of Sins; as well in respect of themselves (who are too much strangers one unto another

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ther) as on the account of others misapprehensions (and thereupon misrepresentations) concerning them.

Four sorts of great Actors on the Theatre of Christianity have appeared in the World, viz. The Founders, Advancers, Continuers, and Obstructions of it: Of all which, the latter have been most numerous and prevalent, at least in many Ages. It will therefore concern you (the Churches of Christ) to consider how you are called to perform your parts on the great Stage of Religion. Let it never be said of you, that you came upon the Theatre, but did nothing, much less that you acted dishonourably there.

The Founder and Advancers of Christianity, how famous are their Memories? Never Man spoke like our Saviour. The Prince of this World (i.e. the Devil) came, and had nothing in him; that is, found no evil in him. It was meet the most noble Profession, should have the honour to be founded by Him. John 14.30.

The Advancers of it throughout the World, were famous for their courage and industry; no opposition could prevail against them. They were more than Conquerors through Christ, that loved them. What those have done who were to be Continuers of this sacred Testimony, is not transmitted to us by such authentick Record as the former; yet certainly, worthy things have been done in many Ages, by Christians of that Rank.

Now for our parts, we can never hope to advance Christianity above its Primitive Excellency (as some would vainly pretend to do): It is enough if we can but arrive at the ancient Path, and be Continuers of the Truth, and the Honour of it, as becomes the Churches of Christ; who are (if faithful) as so many Epistles of Christ, read and known of all Men, yea, the pillar and ground of the Truth. 2 Cor. 3.2,3.
1 Tim. 3.15.

And though it must be granted, that many Learned, and in their way very Pious Men, of differing Perswasions from us, have wrote great Volumes on this Argument, and that with great advantage to the Truth. Nevertheless, by reason of some common Error of the Times wherein they lived, and especially such Interests as were not easily to be laid aside, have commonly built (in part at least) upon such Foundations as gave Infirmitie to their whole Work. Among which none more prejudicial, than their seeking to raise up the Temple, or Church of Christ, of the meer natural off-spring of Men, yea, of whole Nations; and forcing on their sentiments about Religion, by coercive proceedings against Mens Estates, Lives, and Liberties.

Now

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Now you, the Baptized Churches, whilst you make every ones Personal Regeneration (at least by profession) necessary to sacred Baptism, and so to their Admission into the Visible Church of Christ; and maintain that Principle, that it pertains not to the Powers of Nations, to force Men to a conformity to the Christian Religion (as it is dignified above the common principles of Natural Religion) you have certainly on this account, the fairest way of all Men professing the Knowledge of Christ, to serve your Generation, in the blessed Restoration of the Christian Church, (and therewith all Christianity it self) to its Primitive Beauty, in the orderly Profession and due Exercise of it. In which respects also, you have great encouragement to prosecute the holy Reformation of Religion (wherein it is wanting) in all amicable Ways, according to the place and capacity wherein ye stand.

And for as much as the Baptized Churches in Lincolnshire, have a more particular interest in these Labours, for that at their Importunity, and by their Encouragement, next to the wise disposing of God's Providence, I have undertaken this Task; and now through the help of God, brought it to this present Effect. I do therefore more particularly recommend these following Discourses to their consideration, confessing that by how much any shall receive Profit in reading them, by so much they are Debtors to the said Churches, as Instruments of their Good in this behalf.

Your Servant in the Gospel

for Jesus sake,

THO. GRANTHAM.

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The CONTENTS of the ensuing TREATISES, According to the order of the Books, Chapters, and Sections.

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§. 2. Of the Oppositions of some Learned Men, and sometimes Papist against Papist, concerning the Original.

§. 3. Of the vanity of Popish Quarrels, about the English Translations of the holy Scriptures.

§. 4. How know we our Copies and Translations to be the Word of God? Answered.

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- §. 1. Of the Obstructions of the Progress of Christianity, and particularly by Popish Vanities.
- §. 2. The Certainty and Excellency of Christian Religion, and first of the Life of Holy Jesus.
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- §. 4. Of his being worshipped by Wise-Men after his Death, chiefly because of his Miraculous Works.
- §. 5. Christ's Miracles above the power of Natural Causes.
- §. 6. Not done by a Diabolical Spirit.
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- §. 8. The Resurrection of Christ the greatest Miracle, and confirms the whole of Christian Doctrine.
- §. 9. It is frivolous to object against that Doctrine which is confirmed by the Resurrection.
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- §. 11. Further of the High-Priest of the New Testament, and of the Sacrifice and Altar.
- §. 12. Of the excellent reward annexed to Christian Religion.
- §. 13. Of the excellency of Christian Precepts above other Religions.
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- §. 15. Of the excellency of Christian Precepts touching Marriage.

- §. 16. Of the Christian Doctrine concerning Earthly Substance.
- §. 17. Of Swearing, and certain Precepts respecting Conversation. See Cases of Conscience.
- §. 18. Of the greatness of the Author, and the marvellous propagation of Christianity.
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- §. 2. Of the Order wherein this Knowledge may be considered.
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- §. 6. Without Beginning, and without any Ending.
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- §. 8. He is Omniscient, nothing can be hid from him.
- §. 9. He is Just, there is no Unrighteousness in him.
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- §. 12. His place of Residence is in Heaven, yet not confin'd to place.
- §. 13. Nothing can be done without his Providence, though contrary to his Will.
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- §. 4. Christ the Saviour of the World did really take a body of Flesh, or was Man by Nature.
- §. 5. Christ did in the place and stead of Mankind, fulfil that Law by which the whole World stood guilty before God.
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- §. 7. The Righteousness of Christ was imputed to Men, and made theirs by Faith.
- §. 8. By the power of his Godhead, he rose again from Death, Bodily: And how the verity of the Gospel depends on the certainty thereof.
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- §. 2. How Infants are of the Church as it contains the whole number of the saved; and how they were not admitted to Practical Ordinances in the first Churches, nor ought to be admitted thereto by us.
- §. 3. A particular Examination of the Primitive Churches, and after the nearest search, no Infant found to partake of Gospel-Ordinances, and particularly

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- ticularly of Baptism; but Believers by profession, are found the only Subjects of such services in the Primitive Churches.
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- §. 2. Christians use no compulsion to uphold their Assemblies: their Fellowship ought to be voluntary, or of free Choice.
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holy manducation than Bread and Wine.

- §. 3. *Of the divine use of the Lord's Table, to set forth Christ, and him crucified, and to come again.*
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and Elders in the Christian Church.

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§. 7. *Of the Office of Deacons in the Church of Christ.*

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And

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With A Defence of the Office of Messengers in the Church to be of Divine Right, as the Office of Bishops, Deacons, &c. to the end of the World.

GOSPEL SEPARATION MAINTAINED,

By

Scripture, Reason, and the Principles on which the Protestants ground their Separation from the Roman Papal Church.

And

The most important Objections against the Separation maintained by the present Baptized Churches, plainly answered, and confirmed by Testimonies, and divers Arguments.

The

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THE INTRODUCTION To the Ensuing TREATISES.

Shewing the Truth and Divine Authority of the Scripture, as being the undoubted Oracles of God, against the vain Cavils of ill-minded and injurious Men.

SECTION I.



Ere it my business herein to deal with those that know not God, the poor Infidel Heathens, I should comfort my self with hopes to overcome their blindness, by comparing the Divine Oracles, with their Diabolical Divinity, or Philosophical Speculations: and thence demonstrating the excellency *Purity of the Christian Law*, above what can be objected against it. Nor would I fear to prevail as much by recounting the Miracles wrought in confirmation of the Christian Faith, as if I could work some Wonders presently among them; Because these things were written; that Men might believe that Jesus is the Christ: and consequently I might not fail of the Effect attending the Cause or Means, or Word of Faith; when in the Fear of God ministered or preached in his Name. Yea, I would not fear to win some, by shewing the impossibility of redeeming our selves: and then by observing that no Doctrine save that of the Holy Scripture directs us to a Saviour, or one who came on purpose to redeem Mankind, by his laying down his own Life for them: neither should I doubt the persuading them to believe the Resurrection of the Dead; and the Judgment to come; by shewing, 1. That the thing must needs be possible with God, who made the World; and 2. The several Instances of those mentioned in the Scripture, who rose from Death to Life; especially the Resurrection of Christ. And I would either shew them, they must believe these Instances, or else believe nothing that by Report, or Writing, had been told them, these being as credible as the other.

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But these are not the Men we have to deal with, a generation of Men, even of those that bear the Christian Name, are risen up to quarrel the Oracles, on which the Christian Faith hath so far a dependance, as if they prove False, Christianity cannot be True.

These kind of Men talk much of the *Originals*, as if nothing else would down with them but the *Original Text*. When yet no Man can say that that very Paper which the Apostles committed those Oracles to, in the first place, hath remained to this day; Nor was it needful, many

Copies being probably more exactly drawn, * and so more fit to be kept for Posterity. To say that the Apostles wrote in Parchment, what they sent to the Churches, is more than can be proved: It's certain some wrote in Paper, 2 *John* v. 12. yet it is rational to believe the same Matter was committed afterward to more durable Materials. My Judgment is, that it was better for the Churches, that these first Sheets should not endure long, the same Matter being now committed to Writing by many Hands throughout the whole World; for had any now these first Draughts to shew, they might abuse the World, and all the Churches in the World,

more than any Man can do by the Copies; as by adding or taking away at pleasure, and who could correct the Original? Were these Manuscripts in the hands of the *Pope*, or his Party, what Mists might they cast upon the Nations, and who could get them out of their hands to discover the Cheat? And the same may be said if these Writings were in the hands of any other Potent Party. But now the Originals being now where to be found, but yet a multitude of Copies, and the same translated by multitudes of Men into several Languages, by this means all are forced to be more peaceable than perhaps they are willing to be, since they have only Copies of the Sacred Oracles, and others have the like, so that they cannot pretend the *Original*, nor quarrel, with any credit, about their Copies. Thus hath God's Wisdom disposed better for the Church than she could have thought or desired. And it is worth observation, that scarce any one of the Churches, to whom *Paul* wrote (except the *Galatians*) had the Original, but only certain Copies written by divers hands, as I shew in the Margin: And why might not these *Copists* possibly vary in some word or tittle, and yet these Sacred Writings never the worse, while the Holy Doctrine therein was not violated? Can we think, that when the Apostles preached, they had still the very self same Phrases? this were idle to imagine, and yet they had the self same Gospel to preach in every place. I speak not this as that I approve of altering the Holy Writings, no not in the least *iota*, yet if casually in Transcribing, or Printing there should be some failure, I do not think that by and by that Copy is to be rejected altogether, or the Authority of the Scripture therefore made null or void; that Men might set up themselves above it, some under pretence of the Church, and others pretending the Spirit, whilest they both reject the Church and Spirit, as held forth, and speaking in the Scripture.

* The *Epist.* ad Heb. was writ by Tim. Heb. 13. *Postscript.* Rom. 16. 24.

J. Tertius who wrote this *Ep.*

Four Brethren wrote the *1 Ep.* to the Corinth.

1 Cor. 16. *Post.*

Two Brethren wrote the *2d.* 2 Cor. 13. *Post.*

Titchicus wrote the *Ep.* ad Eph.

Epaphroditus that to Phillip.

Titch. & Ones. that to Coloss.

Now these Churches had only Copies, the Original being yet in Paul's hand, which 'twas like they never saw.

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SECT.

S E C T. II.

I am sorry to see Learned Men quarrelling as they do, about the Original Scriptures, (or those at least which pass under that Name) *Papists* against *Protestants*, and sometimes *Papists* against *Papists*. Thus *Greg. Martin*, a *Rhemist*, against *Dr. Fulk*, who yet learnedly defends both the Copies, and the English Bible which was taken out of them. How stoutly *Arrias Montanus*, and others with him (though of the *Papacy*) have defended those Copies, which agree with those that were Translated into English, against *Lindanus* and his *Complices* is well known, so that we need not concern our selves in the Quarrel, whilest the Truth finds Defenders even among its Opposers. Nor are the Baptized Churches without Learned Men, and such as have concern'd themselves in this Controversie; yet shall we not build upon their Authority, neither condemn it, knowing no Reason why their Judgment may not pass among other Learned Men. But this I declare to all the World, that I conceive it abundantly satisfactory, that the Copies of the Sacred Oracles, commonly called the *Originals*, have no corrupt Doctrine in them, because, after all that Envy can do, after the greatest sifting, the Objections are of small moment; as all may observe, who shall diligently read the Controversies depending in that Case, between the Learned *Papists* and *Protestants*. And besides, it is certainly impossible (in these days) for any Man whatsoever to corrupt the Greek Copies, there are so many Copies extant to discover the Cheat, and watchful Instruments on all sides, that he that should attempt it, would be sure to meet with no small correction for such bold folly; and we have no reason to doubt but there was as careful Watchmen in the Christian Profession in this behalf, in the first Ages of the Church, as can now be found: And the Apostles themselves lived till there were innumerable Copies of the Sacred Scripture, so that all Churches were furnished with helps that way (in all probability) to discover any Falsifications, if any were made in the Holy Writings: But it should seem that none were so hardy to attempt it in the Apostles Times, only some there were, that by wresting those *Epistles of Holy Paul*, endeavoured thereby the destruction of themselves. This *Peter* gives notice of. And had any denied or corrupted the Writings themselves, we should as well have heard of it as of the other. We therefore conclude, that such hath been the Providence of God, that Men could not corrupt those Holy Writings which he had ordained for the Generations to come; neither can all the Art of Evil Men raise out, or foist into the Greek Copies, so much as one Sentence; but either Friend or Foe would soon detect them. Of the same consideration is the *Hebrew Text*; and beside that, the *Jews* have such a jealous Eye in that case, as some have observed, that it's impossible to corrupt the Sacred Scriptures of the Old Testament, such it became God's Providence so wisely to provide for the contrary; so that we have ground to believe, that no material change hath befallen the Scripture since the Writing thereof to this day.

SECT.

S E C T. III.

The next Quarrel lieth against our *English Translation of the Scriptures*, which the Papists do account *False and Heretical*, &c. A great Noise we have about this by *Greg. Martin*; but I think it's sufficiently still'd by his *Antagonist Dr. Fulk*, to * which I refer my Reader; and yet because every Man cannot read that Disputation, we shall here briefly shew the vanity of this Objection, as to the great Dogmatical part of our Bible in the English Tongue, by an Appeal to their own English Translation of the Rhemists; though it is certain our Translation is nearer the *Greek* Copy than theirs, as appears by *Montanus*, who though a *Papist*, yet he leaves their *Vulgar Latine* (out of which the Rhemists translated) in many hundreds of places I suppose (though I have not Computed them, and translates from the *Greek* as we do) I will set down two Instances in stead of the rest: For Example only; in *Matth.* 3. 2. in favour of your penal satisfaction for Sin, you read from your *Vulgata*, Do Penance, *Penitentiam agere*; yet *Montanus* translates from the *Greek*, *Pœnitementi, Repent.* Again, you read in *Heb.* 13. 16. *Promeretur*, as if we merit God by good Works; but *Montanus* from the *Greek* reads *Bene-placet*, Well pleased; as it is also in our English Translation. And thus is our English Bible defended by a learned and judicious *Papist*, against those who Carp at it; yea, against their *Vulgar Latine* (at least in very many Passages) and English Translation also. And yet surely, when all is said on both sides, that may fairly be said, a little Charity would put an end to these needless Cavils about the English Translation of the Holy Scripture. For it cannot be denied, but Translations are so much the more Excellent, as by how much the Translator was more Able and Honest than others; and it would better become Men to help one another, than to lie Carping at one another, as the manner of some is.

It must needs be a great Breach of Christian Charity to think, that those who have Translated the Scriptures into our Mother Tongue, would purposely give us a false Interpretation of any word, if they in their Conscience knew it to be so. Would they be so foolish thus to abuse their Country, and expose their Credit as Scholars; their Country with themselves, to the peril of Eternal Damnation, and all this only about the true English of an *Hebrew*, or *Greek* phrase. He that shall say this of Men, Learned beyond exception, for such a Work (as it is known our Translators were) that they wilfully, or of set purpose, did Translate falsely (as that is the usual Charge of the *Rhemists* against their Opposites) what doth he else, but give notice, that no Man give credit to him, in his Undertaking to give us a more perfect Translation; and it is upon the matter to expose all Conventions of Learned Men to unavoidable Suspicion.

Finally, So much is the Perfection of the meanest of our Translations, that I fear no Mans growth in Christian Vertue and Knowledge comes up to the pitch of it, why then may it not stand a Witness against those that Contemn it, and scorn to Read it? All the Apostles did not

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Preach the Gospel with the same excellency: All the Evangelists did not write the Gospel with the same stile and exactness; And why must all Interpreters be of the self-same length and breadth, in their exactness in Translating the Gospel? I am perswaded I can find as seeming Contradictions, among the Evangelists, in penning the Divine Story; as any Man can find in the Translations which are extant; we labour to reconcile the seeming Differences in the first, why do we do not so by the latter? Would God there were as great an harmony in Doctrine and Practice, among all that own the Christian Name, as there is among the several Translations, we should soon be one Church, for they are all one Scripture.

S E C T. IV.

I have been very earnestly demanded, by some of the Romish Church, *How I knew our Copies and Translations of the Scriptures to be the true Word of God*: I shall cut my Answer short to this importune Demand; and yet trust to make it plain to every Capacity, only by shewing that the New Testament is God's Holy Oracle; for in so doing, the Law and the Prophets are confirmed, being therein alledged as the Word of God more than an hundred and twenty times, by Christ and his Holy Apostles; and once in general it is said of the Lord Jesus, *That beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, he expounded to his Disciples, in all the Scriptures, the things concerning himself*, Luke 24. Which is a full Evidence that the Scriptures then extant are Authentick; notwithstanding they had been Translated by the *seventy two Interpreters*, long before that time, so that it is needless to enquire further in that case.

And that the New Testament is God's Oracle, I prove after this manner; 1. It is either the Oracle of God, or the Oracle of Satan, or Man's Devices. But it is not Satan's Oracle, nor Man's Devices, Ergo, it is God's Oracle. The Major is evident of it self. And Satan's Oracle it is not, because it teacheth all manner of Vertue and Holy Living; nor can any Iniquity or Impiety be shewed to be the Design thereof, for it doth constantly reprove all Impiety and Iniquity; and who so loveth these Testimonies, and conforms to their Documents, doth hate the Devil above all things. And again, all the workers of Iniquity, and such as love Debauchery, do fly from the Light of the Sacred Writings, having no greater torment in this World, than to be brought to their powerful Evidence against their Impieties, as blessed Experience doth abundantly testify; so that he must have a brazen Forehead that dare contradict it. And that they are not Mens Devices is clear;

1. Because they do not only agree to the Principles of Morality, and humane Vertue, in the highest degrees thereof, but do also heighten their Zeal to Vertue, and enlighten their Understandings in things more excellent, than Principles of a Common Justice, as appears undeniably by a Comparison between those who are actuated by them, and those that are ignorant of them.

2. What is contained in these Writings of the New Testament, as

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Matter of Fact, are no Devised Fables, because the very Adversaries of the Gospel are forced to acknowledge such things were done; and so apparent was the Life, Death, and Miracles of Jesus, (on which the whole Testimony depends) that *Josephus*, the Jewish Historiographer, who lived about these Times, cannot dissemble it, but is forced to confess it, and to say it was scarce lawful to call our Lord Christ a Man, because of the admirable Works which he did.

3. The Sanctity of the Precepts have not a meer humane Stamp, they having no tendency to exalt any but the Lord only; and he so thwart to the humane Will, and worldly Interest, as nothing more; now had corrupt Man had the forming of these Laws, its apparent by the Laws they daily make, that he would have consulted his own Honour and Interest in the making of them.

4. Neither do the Promises contain'd in the New Testament, favour of Man's Device, being of such sublimity, as hath not entered into the Heart of Man to conceive, especially that of the Resurrection of the Body, and the Glory that shall follow, which we see those that leave these Oracles condemn as a Fable, or else make the beatitude they look for, to stand in Carnal Delights, as the *Mahumetans*.

5. Nor are the Threatnings or Judgments against wicked Men, thereby given forth like Men's Imaginations, being a perpetual Torment in everlasting Fire, which is a thing beyond the reach of Man's Conceit how it should be; and therefore derided by those that follow their humane Light only, as a thing incredible.

6. If this Book of the New Testament be Fabulous, or Men's Devices, than no Book whatsoever can escape the like Censure. No History can have so much as Humane Credit: all are lies, if this be not true; seeing upon the same grounds any Man questions this to be a true Record of the Will and Testament of the Lord Christ, all Monuments of Antiquity, Records, Wills, Charters, Donations, Histories, Precepts of Philosophy, and whatsoever is by Writing transmitted to us from the Ages before us, must undergo the same Censure. And then as the first would turn Christianity out of the World, the latter sends away Humanity after it. But if otherwise we will not part with the latter, let us like Men consider, that God hath been as careful over Men in things Religious as Civil; and that it is by his Providence that these Divine Records have out-lived the malice of many wicked Generations who have sought their Destruction, as much as *Herod* sought the life of Christ himself. This way went the Famous *Augustine*, affirming, *That by the disposing of Divine Providence, the Scripture hath gotten the most excellent Authority of any other Books.*

7. Let the Accomplishment of the wonderful Prophecies of Christ, contained in the New Testament, convince a *Few* as well as a *Turk*; and much more Men pretending to love Christ, that these Records are Holy: The Unbelieving *Fews* have had occasion to bewail the Desolation of their City and Nation, as Christ with Tears foretold them, *Luke 19. 42, 43, 44.* and by this let all Men learn to beware how they question the verity of the Residue.

8. *Bellarmine*,

8. *Bellarmine* himself is compelled to allow the Scriptures own Evidence to be of great Authority to prove it the Word of God, *Testes est ipsa Scriptura*, as he is quoted by *Dr. Willit*. This we call God's own Witness, putting his name to these Holy Sayings, that we might have sure confidence. Thus *Augustine*; *God having spoken what he held convenient, first by the Prophets, then by himself*, [meaning the Lord Christ] afterward by his Apostles made that to be Scripture also (which we call Canonical) of the most excellent Authority, on which we rely in things which befall our Understanding.

9. Nor shall we baulk the Testimony, in which the *Romanists* suppose they have the clearest Interest, viz. the Church of Christ, by whom God hath transmitted these Writings (as God's Oracles) to us. But then, will they, will they, this Church is the *Baptized Church; for unto them was committed the Oracles whereof we speak, as the Direction or Inscription of divers of the Holy Epistles do clearly shew: Nor can they deny it, or prove the contrary; and of these first Churches, who saw Christ, and were his Record-bearers? We ought to interpret (saith *Gerson*) that saying of *Augustine*, *I would not believe the Scripture, unless the Authority of the Church did move me*. As for those Churches which succeeded in the Ages following, wherein presently great Divisions happened; these are a far lower Evidence from whence to fetch the Certainty or Authority of these Sacred Books; not much stronger than the Evidence of the present Christians, being proper, neither to this or that Party of them, who still retained the Scriptures as they were delivered; any more than if the *Greek Church* at this day should arrogate that Prerogative; or the *Roman-Papal Church*, who would wrest it from all professing Christianity, to themselves only; whereas in truth, all that acknowledge the Scriptures, and profess to own that way of Christianity at first delivered, may claim this privilege with as good Reason as the *Papists*: However the most pure Churches have the fairest plea in this behalf, and who they are, will I trust, appear in some good measure in the following Treatises. And thus much at present (for we shall have occasion, in our Defence of Christianity, to speak further) to this Question, *How we know the Scriptures to be the Word of God?*

S E C T. V.

It hath likewise been demanded, by those of the Church of *Rome*, *How I knew precisely what was the Word of God?* But we are so far from defining the precise number of the Books of Holy Scripture, that we know they are not all come to our hands, *1 Cor. 5. 9. Phil. 3. 1. Colos. 4. 16.* nor to the hands of others that we can hear of. Neither can I understand, what profit accrues to the Church, by rejecting so many Books as *Apocryphal*, whilst yet they are allowed to be read in the Church as Holy Writings; Nevertheless, it must be granted, that the Books commonly called *Apocrypha*, have been doubted very much, some or all of them, by one or other of great note in the Churches, yea, in the time of *Augustine*, and by *Augustine* himself: The *Macchabees* was not received into

Aug. de Civit. Dei. l. 11. c. 3.

*Acts 2. 41, 42. Rom. 6. 2, 3. Col. 2. 11, 12. Gal. 3. 27. Acts 18. 8. Acts 19. 1, 2, 3. Heb. 6. 1, 2.

John Gerson de Vera Sp.

Aug. de Civit. Dei. l. 11. c. 1.

Aug. de Civit. Dei. l. 1. 18.

into the Canon of Scripture, though esteemed by some as Canonical.

In *Eusebius*, lib. 4. c. 25. we have an account of the Books of the Old Testament; received by the Church in those days, which was given by one in the *second Century*; his words are these, *I compiled in order the Books of the Old Testament, such as were well known, and sent them unto you, whose names are these*;

The five Books of Moses, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numeri, Deuteronomium. Then Jesus Nave, meaning Joshua. The Judges. The Book of Ruth. Four Books of Kings. Two of Chronicles. The Psalms of David. The Proverbs of Solomon. The Book of Wisdom. Ecclesiastes. The Canticles. Job. Esay and Jeremiah the Prophets. One Book of the twelve Prophets. Daniel. Ezekiel. Efdras.

Again in *Euseb.* lib. 3. c. 22. we have this account of the Books of the New Testament. *In the first place, (saith he) the Four-fold Writings of the Evangelists. Next the Acts of the Apostles. Then the Epistles of Paul are to be added. After these the first of John, and that of Peter, which is Authentic. Lastly, if you please, the Revelation of John. The Epistle of James. The Epistle of Jude. The later of Peter. The second and third of John.*

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Cyrlus of Jerusalem reckons the Divine Scripture of the Old Testament but 22 Books. *Epiphanius* is of the same mind, yet adds the Book of Wisdom, and Jesus the Son of Syrick, but does not say that they were kept in the Ark as the 22 Books of the Law and Prophets were.

So that we see the Ancient Christians were not exactly of a mind in the precise Number and Order of the Books of the Holy Scripture, though they had the advantage of Times above us abundantly.

We conclude therefore, that it is more safe to make a Religious Use of all these Books called *Apocryphal*, than rashly to censure or condemn any of them: Howbeit, nothing from hence accrues, that I know, to the advantage of the *Romanists*; yea rather they seem to make advantage of Men's rash Speeches against those Pious Books, wherein are many excellent Precepts of Vertue, and Examples of Faith and Love to God, and to Religion.

The faithful Demonstration whereof, as it concerns Christian Men in the naked Simplicity and ancient Purity thereof, is the great Design of this short Introduction, as well as of the Book it self; to which having thus brought the Readers, I commit them to the Grace and Blessing of God, in their impartial and serious perusal.

Christi-

Christianismus Primitivus:

OR

The Ancient Christian Religion,

IN

Its Nature, Certainty, and Excellency, above any other RELIGION in the World.

BOOK. I.

SECT. I.

Shewing briefly certain great and mischievous Obstructions to the Christian Religion.



AS it is certain we now stand a very great distance from the Primitive Times of Christianity, as well as from the Country where it was first planted, and its Foundation laid in the holy Doctrine, Miracles, and Sufferings of the *Messiah*, the Author thereof, called *The Apostle*, and *High Priest of our Profession*, *Christ Jesus*. So there hath intervened many dreadful Occurrences to render that glorious Profession either suspicious in respect of its Verity, or but of mean consideration in point of Excellency; partly through the prodigious impiety and immorality of many, who have assumed the Christian Name; and partly through the monstrous Alterations, and contradictions in Doctrine and Manners, and the Implacable and Sanguinary Feuds and Animosities, which have fall'n out among the Professors of Christianity, to the great Scandal of the *Jews*, and other Nations, as well as to the unspeakable prejudice of many Lovers of Christianity. Amongst those who have thus injured this holy Calling of Christianity, the *Papists* are not the least Culpable, but very deeply Criminal. To say nothing here of their Sanguinary Practices, notorious throughout the World, it shall not be amiss to recount

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See a Book
called, The
Life and Death
of Mr. Henry
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one only Instance (in stead of a multitude) of their imprudent and mischievous Obstructions of the Advancement of Christ's Interest, among the poor *Jews* in *Hungary*, *October 22. 1650.* where a great Council of the *Jews* were met, to search the Scriptures concerning the *Messiah*, whether he was already come (as saith my Author): when and where after seven Days debate, about the time and manner of his Coming and Person; not a few arguing the possibility of *Jesus* being He, chiefly from his Miracles, and the grievous Desolation and Captivity of their Nation, since his Crucifixion (not to be parallel'd with former Presidents) and the Lord's not Answering their Prayers as he was wont to do. Hereupon the Popes Deputies were called in, *viz.* Two *Jesuites*, two *Franciscans*, and two *Augustine Friars*, to give an account, That if the *Messiah* be come, and if *Jesus* be He, what Rules and Orders had he left for his Followers to walk by?

These Popish Companions being admitted, forgot the Cause of Christ, and spake not a word for him, or it; but at the first on-set, began to solicit them to become Profelytes to their holy Catholick Church, (as they call that of *Rome*) whose Rules and Government, said they, are the only Institutions of Christ, whose *Vicar* the Pope is, &c. And thence descended to Particulars, asserting the Bodily Presence in the Sacrament, the Invocation of Saints, and in particular of the Virgin, who could procure any thing of her Son; the Use of the holy Crofs; the religious Use of Holy-days. As soon as they heard these things, the Assembly broke up in great Tumult, and loud Screeks, crying out, *No Christ, no Woman God, no Images*; many rent their Clothes, and cast dust on their Heads, and cried, *Blasphemy, Blasphemy*. (And thus were these poor *Jews* hardened, instead of being Converted by those Popish Vanities). This Story (as my Author truly saith) is worthy to be written in all Annals and Languages of Christendom, to the eternal Infamy of *Papists* and their Cause.

By this sad Instance we may see, with what Jealousies poor enquiring Souls are as it were round begirt, and put to their Wits-end, by those dismal Occurrences, scarce knowing what to think of this most Innocent and Venerable Profession. To dispel which Clouds, and dissipate that Smoke, which the Devil hath used to darken the Sun and the Moon, and to dim the Eyes of Men, lest the Light of the Glorious Gospel should shine upon them, I conceive it needful in our entrance here, to shew the Certainty and Fidelity of that Religion, which we in England (God willing) to describe according to its Native Purity, and to shew it in such Branches, as are most opposed by the Errors of the Times wherein we live.

And because in an undertaking of this Weight, and common Concern to all that love the Lord *Jesus*, it is not good to go alone, and not finding any that have more pithily and briefly, set forth the Certainty and Excellency of Christianity, than that Learned and Moderate Man, Mr. *Hugo Grotius*; I shall therefore do little more herein, than present the Reader with what he hath calculated, and by sundry Authorities confirmed. And sith the Christian Religion depends mainly upon the Life, Death,

Death, and Resurrection of the Lord Christ, we shall (with our Author) begin our Discourses there, where our Saviour began the Days of his Pilgrimage, for the Salvation of Mankind.

S E C T. II.

That it is certain *Jesus* once lived upon the Earth.

SO uncontrollably evident is this, that *Jesus* the Lord of Christians, *once lived upon the Earth, and that in the Land of Israel*, according to the Prophecies that went before of him; that we hear not of any sort of Adversaries to Christianity that deny it, but rather grant it by deriding his Humility, or that Abject Estate wherein it pleased his Majesty to appear among Men. The *Turks* do not only acknowledg that such a Person there was, but they speak very Honourably of him, as being a Prophet of the Lord, and do greatly abhor the *Jews* for Crucifying so Holy a Man. And *Josephus*, a modest and eminent Writer of the *Jews*, who lived much about the time of the Passion of our Lord, left to Posterity a very remarkable Testimony of the Life and Death of *Jesus*. His words are these:

"At that time was *Jesus* a Wise Man, if it be lawful to call him a Man; for he was the Performer of divers admirable Works, and the Instructor of those who willingly entertained the Truth; and he drew unto him divers *Jews* and *Greeks*, to be his followers. This was Christ, being Accused by the Princes of our Nation before *Pilate*, and afterwards Condemned to the Crofs by him, yet did not those who followed him from the beginning, forbear to love him for the Ignominy of his Death; for he appeared unto them alive the Third Day after, according as the Divine Prophets had before Testified the same, and divers other wonderful Things of him: And from that time forward the Race of the Christians, who have derived their Name from him, hath never ceased. This being so full to our present Purpose, we shall (omitting at present the Evidence of Sacred Writ) forbear to add further Evidence from our Adversaries, of the Life of Blessed *Jesus*; save that we here insert the Testimony of a Heathen Writer, who describes both his Person, manner of Life and Doctrine. Namely *Lentulus* the Procurator, in that Epistle written to the Roman Senate, (which goes under his Name) who residing at *Jerusalem* at the time of the Death of our Saviour, gives this Description of him, *viz.*

"At that time there was one *Jesus*, who was called of the Nations, the Prophet of Truth. A Man goodly to behold, having a reverend Countenance, his Stature somewhat Tall, his Hair after the colour of the ripe Hazel-Nut, from his Ears somewhat crisped, parting it self in the midst of his Head, and waving with the Wind, after the manner of the Nazarites: His Face without wrinkle, mixed with moderate Red: His Beard somewhat copious, tender, and divided at the Chin: His Eyes gray, various and clear. He

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was in Rebuke severe, in Instruction wonderful; Merry with Gravity. He sometimes Wept, but was never seen to Laugh; in Talk full of Understanding, sparing and modest; thus far *Lentulus*. It is true, none of the Evangelists have given any description of the Stature, or Features of Holy Jesus, probably he might advise them the contrary; lest when he came to be worshipped throughout many Nations, Men should erect Images to him, or basely counterfeit his Similitude, and give that Honour to the works of their own Hands, which is only due to him; who as he once lived, and was known in Person both to Jews and Gentiles, to all Nations shall see him, and wail because of him; for though he was dead, yet now liveth for evermore.

S E C T. III.

That Christ was put to an Ignominious Death.

THIS also is no uncertain Report, but a Truth famously known. The memory whereof was so fresh among the Infidels for many Years after, as that the Queen, Mother to *Constantine* the Great, hearing of her Sons Conversion to Christianity, sent him her Letter, wherein she laid great Folly upon him, for that he would put Confidence in such a Man, as suffered himself to be Nailed to a Cross of Wood. And the *Turks* to this Day, as well as the *Jews*, do frequently upbraid the Christians by their Crucified God: Though as God he never died, nor could die; however the Philosopher did conceive the matter, when he cried out, upon occasion of that dreadful Darkness which covered the Earth at his Crucifixion: *The unknown God suffers, by reason of whom the whole World is darkened and shaken.*

S E C T. IV.

Understanding Men worship Christ after his Death because of his Miracles, they were so Great and Indubitate.

AS *Nicodemus* was convinced (as well as many among the *Pharisees*, John 3.2. John 12.42.) that Jesus was a Teacher sent from God, because no Man could do the Miracles which he did, except God were with him; even so these Living Works which he wrought, had the same powerful Influence upon, not the meanest of the People only, but also upon divers Persons of Eminency for Learning and Judgment. Such were *Sergius Paulus*, Governour of *Cyprus*, Acts 13. 12. *Dionysius*, the *Areopagite*, Acts 17. 34. *Policarpus*, who died for his Witness to Christianity, An. 169. *Justin Martyr*, who wrote for the same, An. 142. *Irenæus*, who was famous in Christian Knowledge, An. 180. *Athenagorus*, who Flourished,

Fab. Chron.

Dionysius.

Dionysius.

Policarpus.

Irenæus.

Athenagorus.

Flourished, 180. *Origin*, 208. *Tertullian*, about the same time. *Clement Alexandrinus*, and many more, who being Men of such Excellent Parts, why they should devote themselves to the Worship of a Man, put to a reproachful Death; and hated by his own Nation, even to that Day; especially being almost all bred up in other Religions, which we find to be so powerful a tie upon the Conscience, that it must be some extraordinary Motive that draws off from that. Nor were these Men allured to Christianity by any temptation either of Honour, or Profit; It being then rather a Shame than Credit among Men, and the ready way to Ruine in outwards, to profess that Name. There can in reason no Account be given, but only this: That by diligent Inquisition, such as becomes Prudent Men, in a Business of the greatest Concernment, they had found the same was true, and verified by sufficient Witnesses, which was spread abroad of his Miraculous Works; as of the Sick healed by a word only of his Mouth, and by the touch of his Garment, and openly in grievous and inveterate Diseases: Of sight restored to the Man that was born Blind, and the Fig-tree made fruitless for ever, by the word of his Mouth; and by the same, the boisterous Winds and Waves of the Sea to be stilled. Of the Loaves multiplied more than once, to Feed many thousands, who were Witnesses thereof: Of Water turned into Wine; and the Men raised again to Life; with many more of the same nature, legible throughout the sacred Writings of the New Testament. And this fame sprung from so certain and undoubted an Original, that as the Hebrews in their Talmud openly confess, *Celsus*, that Adversary to Christ, and *Julian the Apostate*, when they wrote against the Christians, had not the boldness to deny that some Miracles were wrought by the Hand of Christ.

S E C T. V.

That these Works were not done by natural force, which worketh by Instrumental Cause. For as they are called Miracles, so it is certain that by the force of Nature, it is impossible by a word of the Mouth only, or touch of the Hand, grievous Diseases should be cured, and that upon the sudden; And that as well when the Patient was absent as present, Luke 7. 10. Again, If these Works might have been in whole, or in part, referred to Natural Efficacy, it may justly be presumed, that some of those that were professed Enemies to Christ himself living, and no less Enemies to his Gospel which he left behind him, would have told us so long since, and have demonstrated the same, either by doing the like, or shewing how without a Miracle those things might be done.

Nor were those Miracles Impostures; Or things done in appearance only: Because most of the Works were done among the People, and in the view of many Learned Men among the People, such as had Wit enough and Malice enough, to observe all the Actions of Christ with curiosity. Nor did they bring anything of that nature against him, when they Arraigned him before the Judgment-Seat, and would have been glad of such Articles, to have rendered him more Obnoxious to their Revenge.

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And besides, the like Works were often repeated, and the Effects not Momentaneous but Permanent. These things weighed, it clearly follows (which the Jews also confess) these Works proceeded from some Spirit, either Good, or Evil. They said (through Malice) against Reason and their own Experience, that these Works (at least his casting out unclean Spirits) was done by Beelzebub the Prince of Devils, blaspheming the Power of God, by which these things were wrought.

S E C T. VI.

Christ's Miracles were not from an Evil Spirit.

That Rational Answer which our Saviour gave to those that envied his Mighty Power; That Satan doth not cast out Satan, for then his Kingdom must (forthwith) come to nought; doth clearly acquit his Works from such impious Imputations, which yet are further cleared. Because the Doctrine of Christ, for Confirmation whereof the Works were done, Heb. 2. 3, 4. is the greatest overthrow of Evil Spirits, whom it forbids us to worship; under the severest Penalties, even that of Eternal Death, and draws us away from all Pollutions, wherewith the Evil Spirits are delighted. As is abundantly shewed by Aug. *De Civitate Dei*, Lib 8. & 9. In the account he there gives of the most obscene and abominable Sacrifices and Services, which were offered by the Heathens to Bacchus, and Priapis. And by blessed Experience we see, where once that Doctrine of Christianity, is received in the Love and Power of it, the worship of Devils and Magick Arts, do forthwith vanish, and the one True God is served with detestation of the Devils, whose power and force was broken by the coming of Christ. As Porphyry (a subtle and bitter Enemy to Christianity) himself acknowledgeth: That Jesus his Ascension to Heaven, caused the publick service of the Gods [that is the Dæmons] to cease. Neither is it Credible, that any Evil Spirit would be so imprudent to effect such things, and that very often, whereby no Honour, or Profit, could redound to himself, (nor loss but gain to Mankind, which we know they labour to obstruct in all they may) but on the contrary, great incommodity and disgrace must thereupon accrue to him. But grant that the Devil should play the fool for once, as oft-times he doth, in taking ways to obstruct, which yet turn to the furtherance of Christian Vertue; yet it no way becomes the Wisdom, and Goodness of God, to permit the Infernal Spirits to deceive Men, in whom was no guile, or design of Evil, and who were devoted to his Fear and Service; such as were the first Disciples of Christ, as both the unblamableness of their Conversation, and the many Calamities endured by them for Conscience sake, in attesting what the Word of God did plainly hold forth, do evidently declare.

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S E C T. VII.

If the Works of Christ proceeded from a Good Spirit, then from God.

IF yet it should be said, that the Miraculous Works of Christ proceeded from a Good Spirit, yet inferiour to God: this is to acknowledge that they pleased God, and pertained to the Honour of God, because the Good Spirits do nothing but what is acceptable in the sight of God; nor do they these things without Authority from God, and to his Glory only. Though it's evident, some of these Works do plainly point at God the Author of them, as the restoring of sundry dead Men to Life again: And we know that God neither doth Miracles, nor suffers them to be done without Cause; for this is the part of a wise Law-maker, not to recede from his own Laws (which in respect of God, is his common way of Providence, and not by Miracles) without some Cause; and that of moment.

Now there can be no other Reason given why these things were done, beside that alledged by Christ, the bearing Witness to his Doctrine, which being now to take place of Moses's Law, so as in many things to put a period to the Obligation thereof; as also to be published throughout the World, to alter the State of Religion every-where, it was requisite the same should be so approved from Heaven: Neither could any of the beholders of these Miracles (among whom were many of a very Pious disposition) conceive in their Minds any other Reason thereof, than to confirm the Doctrine of Jesus. And upon this Ground, very many of the Jews that lived about the times of Jesus, even they that could not be induced to omit any part of Moses Law (the Nazarites and Ebionites) did nevertheless honour Jesus as a Master sent from Heaven.

S E C T. VIII.

The Miracle of the Resurrection of greatest Weight, and confirmed by sufficient Witnesses.

AS from the Miracles wrought by Christ in his Life-time, so we argue from the greatest of Miracles after his Cross, Death, and Burial, namely his Resurrection, and return to Life again. For this, not only as true, but as the principal foundation of their Faith, the Christians of all Times and Places (that are worthy that Appellation) build upon, as that which giveth Life to the whole of Christianity, which had been impossible, had not the first Teachers of Christian Faith certainly perswaded their Auditors, that the thing was so done. Neither could they have perswaded Men endued with Judgment, unless they did affirm themselves Eye-Witnesses, without which Affirmation, no Man, though of

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mean understanding, would have given credit to them, *the thing being so like to things Incredible in the wisdom of Man*; and especially for that they must purchase their Belief so dearly, at the cost of the greatest danger and persecution.

THAT this was affirmed by them with great constancy, even their own Books, and the Writings of other Men do shew; yea, 'tis in their Books, they appealed to the testimony of five hundred Witnesses at once, 1 Cor. 15. 9. It is not a custom of Lyers, in matters of Fact, to appeal to Witnesses so many; nor can it be that so many should conspire to bring in an Evidence, in such a case, contrary to what they knew to be the Truth. Had there been no other Witnesses but those first most famous Propagators of the Christian Doctrine, their Testimony had been sufficient; especially considering that these Witnesses all endured intolerable Ignominy, and other Afflictions, and most of them Death it self, for attesting in the case of Christ's Resurrection, nor what they had by report from others, but what their Eyes beheld, and their Hands had touched, even the Sacred Body of the Lord Jesus being alive, and eating, drinking, and discoursing with them, forty days after he was risen from the dead: So that either this Testimony is most true; or else they must tell a wilful Lye; which in their Conscience and certain Knowledge they must know to be false, and that with the danger of death for so doing. Now this being utterly incredible, that so many Men, and such Men as could not be charged with impiety, should be so mad as to destroy themselves for nothing; it follows that the Resurrection of Christ is as certain and uncontrollable as any thing whatsoever can be known by any Men, in the most certain way of knowing any thing knowable by Man: and if the Evidence given in this case be rejected, there is nothing to be believed which Men report to others, upon the best knowledge of Sight, Hearing, and Touching, that Man is capable to exercise. I conclude then, that the certainty of Christ's Resurrection is to be accounted (even from rational demonstration) among things which are most certain, which are recommended to us at any distance from our reach and sight; or else all things offered to our Understanding must be accounted false or uncertain.

And what we have spoken of those first Witnesses, the same is also true of Paul, who declared openly, that he had seen Christ reigning now in Heaven, 1 Cor. 15. 9. 2 Cor. 12. 4. Acts 22. 3. Yet wanted he none of the Jewish Learning, nor was he out of hope of Honours, if he had gone forward in his Fathers steps. But on the contrary part, he could expect nothing but hatred of his Kindred, travels over all the World, Difficult, Perilous, and Laborious, and last of all Death and Infamy.

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SECT. IX.

The possibility of Christ's Resurrection; and that being gained as undoubtedly true, Christ's Doctrine is evidenced, and Christianity established.

SURELY no Man can fairly deny credence to the Testimonies recited, unless he shall suppose the Resurrection of Christ to be like things which imply a contradiction, impossible to be done: which cannot be said in our case. It might indeed, if one should affirm the same Man alive and dead at the same time; But that a Dead Man should be restored to Life, by his efficacy, who at first gave Life to Man; why this should be counted impossible, there is no cause, nor have wise Men believed it impossible: For Plato hath written the same of Er the Armenian, Heraclides Ponticus of a certain Woman, Herodotus of Aristotle, Plutarch of another; which whether true or false, shew that Learned Men have thought a Resurrection no impossible thing. Neither can any Man that believes there is a God, that he made the World, and is Omnipotent, with any shew of reason question the Resurrection as a thing impossible: for it must needs be every whit as easie (yea far more) to raise a Dead Man to Life, than to make the first Man, yea the whole World of Nothing.

Now if it be neither impossible for Christ to have returned to Life, and evidenced by sufficient Testimony, (wherewith the Jewish Master Bechai being convinced, acknowledged the truth thereof) and the same Christ, as both his own Followers and other Men confess, published a new Doctrine as by Divine Authority; it truly follows that the Doctrine is true, because it cannot consist, neither with the Wisdom or Justice of God, in so excellent a way to honour him who had been guilty of falsehood in so great a matter, especially when he himself, before his Death, foretold his Disciples of his Death, and the kind of Death; and his Resurrection also, adding these things should come to pass for the confirmation of his Doctrine. And thus is the Christian Religion confirmed for a most sure and undoubted verity, above and beyond what can be pretended for Mahometism, Judaism, (as now maintained by the Jews) or any other Religion whatsoever held in opposition thereunto.

SECT. X.

The Christian Religion excels all other Religions in the World.

THE former Arguments are drawn from Matter of Fact, let us now come to those that proceed from the nature of the Doctrine. Surely either all the Worship of God is wholly to be rejected, (which he will

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never agree to, who believes there is a God, and such a God as hath care of the World; and who considers Man, endued both with excellent Understanding, and with Power to chase moral Good and Evil; and therefore having in himself Matter, as of Reward, so of Punishment likewise;) or else this Religion is to be admitted, not only for the evidence of Fact, whereof we have spoken, but also for the things intrinical, and of the very nature of the Religion itself.

Seeing no other Religion in any other Nation or Age can be produced, either more excellent in Reward, or more perfect in Precepts; or for the manner wherby it was commanded to be spread, more admirable: Or which is of greatest moment, the excellency of the High Priest, Sacrifice and Altar, pertaining to Christianity, as that by which the same is consecrated, ratified, and confirmed.

To begin with the High Priest of this Holy Profession, Christ Jesus, who greatly excels Aaron and the Priests descending from him, in respect of his Personal Excellency; being immaculate or sinless, which is not so much as pretended by any of the Priestly Tribe of Israel. For the Law maketh Men High Priests which have infirmity: but the Word of the Oath, which was since the Law, maketh the Son who is consecrated for evermore. They were sinful Men; and therefore did offer first for their own Sins, and then for the Sins of the People, and were not suffered to continue by reason of death. Our High Priest hath abolished Death, liveth ever, hath an unchangeable Priesthood, Heb. 7. 24. Made a Priest with an Oath, by him that swore and will not repent, Thou art a Priest for ever, &c. By so much was Jesus a Surety of a better Testament than that of the Law, as that the one is fading, and the other permanent: He is not a Minister of the Tabernacle pitched by Man, but that which the Lord pitched, being set on the right Hand of the Throne of the Majesty in the Heavens, Heb. 8. 12. This is the Priest of the New Testament, Jesus the Son of God, Heb. 3. 14. On this ground his Followers are encouraged in their Profession, because he is able to save to the uttermost.

Now what can be said by any Nation, Tongue, or People, since the Creation? Did any such Priest arise among the Nations? Sure it is not pretended; but the contrary is granted by consent of all Nations, by the continual interruption of their Sacrifices, by Death and other Changes. The Jews themselves pretend not that any but the Messiah can be such a Priest. It is reported of Rabbi Nathan, that being desired to expound the Scripture, Isa. 52. 3, 4, 5. He was wounded for our Transgressions, &c. Turning to the Hebrew Text, he answered, That the Prophet spake of the Messiah; and further said, That the Spirit of the Messiah was present with God at the fall of Adam and Eve, and in mercy stooped down to Man's Misery, and undertook to bear Man's Infirmity; and thereby made Reconciliation with God; and defended Man from Wrath, otherwise the World could have had no longer continuance, in regard God's Justice could not otherwise have been satisfied. Forasmuch then as the Jews themselves confess the Messiah only to be the Repairer of Mankind, by stooping down to Man's Misery, and undertaking to bear Man's Infirmity, and that without this the World could not continue; It must needs follow that their High Priest-
hood

hood is inferior to the High Priesthood of Christianity, upon this supposition, (which is not hard to prove) that Jesus is the Christ. And consequently that our Religion is more excellent than any other Religion whatsoever, in this respect.

S E C T. XI.

Of the Sacrifice and Altar pertaining to Christianity.

THE Lord Christ being acknowledged the most excellent High Priest, the excellency of his Sacrifice cannot be denied; It being his own most blessed Body, which he freely offered, through the Eternal Spirit (or by virtue of his Divinity) without spot to God for the Sin of Mankind; it is therefore called the Sacrifice of himself, Heb. 9. 26. And of that perpetual Virtue, as that it needs not daily to be offered, (as all other Sacrifices must be repeated) because by one Offering it perfecteth what concerns the necessity of Man; and is to God an Offering of a sweet-smelling savour, Ephel. 5. 2. And doth therefore excel all the Offerings and Sacrifices which were offered by the Law, which stood in Meats, Drinks, the Blood and Flesh of Bulls, Goats, &c. which God hath now rejected, as having no pleasure therein: For how is it possible that such Sacrifices should cleanse the Sin-defiled Consciences of Men? And though many of the Gentiles did sacrifice Humane Flesh unto their false Deities, yet these were polluted Sacrifices, being sinful Flesh, as well as for other Causes, and therefore could not purge others from Sin.

Of the Christian Altar the same consideration is to be had: for sith the Altar sanctifies the Gift, it can be nothing inferior to himself, that is, the Lord Jesus. Though he was pleased to offer his own Body upon the Cross, which Men had prepared for him, and set in an unclean place: But the Altar whereon the Christian Sacrifices are accepted, is said to be before the Throne of God, Rev. 8. 3. where the High Priest himself entred to present his Sacrifices; and so to appear in the presence of God for us. And this is that whereof Christians have right to eat, by Faith, feeding daily upon the Flesh of Christ, which is Meat indeed, and the Blood of Christ, which is Drink indeed. And thus from the excellency of Christ's Sacrifice, and Altar, we infer the Excellency of Christianity it self.

S E C T. XII.

Of the Excellent Reward annexed to the Christian Religion.

NOW concerning the Reward, that is the end proposed to Man, because that (as we use to say) is the first in intention, though last in execution; Moses in the Institutes of Judaick Religion, if we regard (only) the express Covenants of the Law, promised nothing above the good

good things of this Life, a fruitful Land, and plentiful Store, victory over Enemies, long and healthful Age, and hopeful Posterity. What is beyond these, is veiled under Shadows; or to be collected by wise and difficult Ratiocination; [*Which mysterious Discourses, though they were very much unveiled by the Prophets, which that People was blessed with abundantly by God, who cared as well for their Eternal as their Temporal Happiness.*] Yet those that attended only on the Pentateuch, as the *Sadduces*, renounced all hope of good things to be attained after this Life. Among the *Grecians*, who received their Learning from the hands of the *Chaldeans* and *Egyptians*, they that conceived any hope of another Life, after the end of this, spake of it with much hesitancy; as appears in the Disquisitions of *Socrates*, in the Writings of *Tully*, *Seneca*, and others: and when they sought Arguments for it, they found very little certainty; for what they alledg, most of it holds no better for Man than Beasts. This being observed by some others, it is not much to be admired, if they devised a transmigration of Souls, from Men into Beasts; from Beasts into Men. And this again being built on no certain Testimonies or Arguments, and yet it being clear that some end was proposed to Man, others were inclined to say, that Vertue is Reward to it self, and a wife Man is happy enough when he is tormented in the *Bell of Phalaris*. But this also, and not without cause, displeased others, who were sensible enough, that where Dangers, Inconveniences, Torments, and Death are; there Felicity, especially the highest, cannot dwell, unless Men could content themselves with a sound of words without reality; and therefore these Men placed the supream Good, and the end of Man in such things as bring pleasure to the Senses. But this Opinion too is by very many, and that by sound Arguments, refuted, as an Opinion that extinguisheth all Honesty, and degradeth Man, born and erected for higher things, into the rank of brutish Creatures, which with their down-cast looks, regard nothing but what is earthly.

In so many doubts and by-ways Mankind went astray in that Age, when Christ brought into the World the true Knowledge of the end: Not but that it was in a good measure revealed before, and understood by very many; yet not so evidently revealed, and openly set forth to all, as now it was by Christ; who, promised his Followers after this Life, a Life, not only without Death, without Pain and Trouble, but attended also with Joy unspeakable; and that not only to a part of Man, that is, his Soul, of whose hopeful felicity after this Life, was extant (*even among the Heathens*) partly by some Conjecture, and partly by Tradition: But now made as manifest concerning the Body also, with a great deal of reason; that as the Body for the Divine Law often suffers Hurts, Tortures, and Death, so it should at last be partaker of the representation, in the *Glorious Resurrection*. Now the Joys which are promised are not vile, as Banquets to satisfy the sensual Appetite, which the gross Jews hope for after this Life; nor the Pleasures of the Bed, which the *Mahumetans* promise to themselves: These are proper to this frail Life, in the modest use thereof; and by God's Ordinance a Remedy against Fornication. But the Delights of the Life to come, are perpetual vigour of Body, and more than

than Star-like Beauty; in the Soul perfect Understanding, even of God and his Providence, and of what now lies hid; a Will quiet, taken up with the fruition of God especially, and with the admiration and praise of him: briefly, all things better far than can be conceived, by comparison of the best and greatest things we know in this World, *because we shall be like Jesus, for we shall see him as he is*, 1 Cor. 12. 1 John 3. 2.

S E C T. XIII.

Of the Excellency of Christian Precepts; and 1. about the Worship of God.

THE next thing wherein Christian Religion excels all other, that are, or have been, is the exceeding sanctity of Precepts, both in things pertaining to the Worship of God, and the rest. The *Pagan Rites* almost all the World over, as *Porphyry* shews at large, and the *Sea-Voyages* of our Times do confirm, were full of Cruelty: For in most places the custom was, to appease their Gods with humane Blood; a custom which neither the *Grecian Learning*, nor the *Roman Laws* took away. And their most Sacred Mysteries (*as they suppose them*) either of *Ceres*, or *Liber Pater*, were most full of all obscenity, as appeared after the Veil of their secrecy was taken away. Which *Clement Alexandrinus*, and others, largely declare. Moreover, the days consecrate to the honour of their Gods, were celebrated with such Spectacles, as *Cato* was ashamed to be present at.

Now though the *Judaick Religion* had in it nothing unlawful or undecent, yet to keep the People, who were prone to Idolatry, from departing from the Truth, it was encumbered with many Precepts of such things as of themselves were neither good nor evil, namely, slaying of Beasts, Circumcision, the exact Rest of the Sabbath, and the interdiction of sundry sorts of Meats. Some whereof the *Mahumetans* have borrowed, adding to them the prohibition of Wine.

But the Christian Religion teacheth to worship God, the purest Spirit, with Spiritual Purity, and with such Works, as of their own Nature, without any Command, are most fit to be done, *John 4. 24. Rom. 12. 1.* And yet containeth a few solemn Rites by command from Heaven; to commemorate the Love of God in the Gift of his Son; and for Christians to express their Unity and Communion in the Mystery of the Gospel. It commandeth not the Flesh to be Circumcised, but the Lusts of the Flesh, *Rom. 2. 28, 29. Phil. 3. 3.* Not to cease from all Work, but that which is unlawful, and yet to employ much time in the Worship of God. Not to offer unto God the Blood or Fat of Beasts, but if need be, to sacrifice our own Blood for a Testimony to his Truth; and to believe what we give of our Estates to the Poor, to be given to God, *Matth. 6. 4.* Not to abstain from certain kinds of Meats and Drinks, but to use both with that moderation, which is convenient for our Health; And somewhat by

Luke 21. 34.
Mat. 6. 18.
John 12. 14.
Luke 11. 18.
Mat. 21. 31.
Rom. 4. 23.

Fasting, to subdue the Body to the Soul, that it may be the better raised to things above. But the Chief part of *Christian Religion* is placed in a pious Confidence, whereby we being composed to faithful Obedience, rely wholly upon God, and without doubting believe his Promises; whence also Hope springs, and sincere Love, both to God and our Neighbour, so that we observe his Laws not servilely, for fear of punishment, but to please him, and to have him according to his infinite Goodness our Father and Rewarder. Moreover, we are commanded to pray, not that we may obtain Riches, or Honours, or other secular things, that have proved hurtful to those that have desired them; but first, to pray for such things as more immediately relate to the Glory of God, as that his Name may not be profaned, but hallowed or sanctified; that his Kingdom may be advanced in Righteousness, and perfected in its Glory; That his Will may be done, and not ours, but that we in all things may be subject to him. And for our selves, we are allowed to pray for so much of this Worlds goods as Nature wants, leaving the rest to Divine Providence, not over-much caring which way God shall dispose them. But the things which lead to Eternity, those we are taught to ask with all ferventness, that is, pardon of our Sins past, the aid of the Spirit for time to come, whereby fortified against all Errors and Temptations, we may persevere in the way of Piety to the end. This is briefly the Worship of God in Christian Religion, than which certainly nothing can be devised more worthy of God.

S E C T. XIV.

What Christian Religion teacheth more excellently than others, respecting those that trespass against us.

OF the same Heavenly Nature are the Duties required towards our Neighbour, in the Christian Way, which herein excels all others. The Religion of Mahomet, may truly be said to be born in Arms, breaths nothing but Arms, and by Arms is propagated. So the Laconian Institutes, most commended among the Grecians, even by Apollo's Oracle, were all directed to puissance in War, as Aristotle notes, and blames them for it. But the same Aristotle saith amiss himself, when he tells us that War is natural against Barbarians; when the contrary is true, that Nature hath constituted Amity and Society among all Men; which excellent Principle of Love and Friendship is much furthered by the Rules of Christianity. And indeed what is more unjust than for single Acts of Murder to be punished with Death; and destruction of whole Nations, as an honourable Achievement, to be glorified with Triumphs? And yet by what other means, but by War, oftentimes openly unjust, (as themselves confess of the War of *Saracenia* and *Cyprus*) did that so Celebrious City of Rome, rise to so great Renown? And indeed generally, as most worthy Historians have related, Robbery out of their own Bounds, most Nations

accounted

accounted no Dishonour. Aristotle and Cicero, make Revenge a part of Valour. The Gladiators (or Sword-Players) mutual Slaughter, were to the Pagans delightful, among their publick Plays. To expose, or suffer their Children to be devoured by wild Beasts if they were any way Deformed, was ordinary, no Law forbidding it.

The Hebrews truly had a better Law, a more holy Discipline, yet being a People of unruly Passions, some of their Infirmitics were winked at, or indulged, as their eagerness against the seven Nations that had merited Extirpation; wherewith not contented, they had enlarged their hatred to all People different from themselves, the marks whereof to this Day appear in their Prayers, conceived against the Christians. But to satiate their Passion by the Law of Retaliation, to kill the Manslayer by the private hand of a Kinsman, was permitted by the Law, Deut. 19. 21.

But such is the Excellency of the Law of Christ, that it wholly forbids to return Injury, whether in word or deed, lest the Malice we reprove in others, we again approve by Imitation; it commands to do good to the Good especially, and to the Evil too after God's Example, from whose Goodness we have received Sun, Stars, Air, Showres, as common Gifts to all Mankind. Yea, so perfect is the Law of Christ, that it strikes at the root of the detestable sin of Hatred and Murder, not permitting Anger which is attended with Sin, and though Anger may be lawful, yet it is not permitted to Christians to let the Sun go down in their wrath? Nor are they permitted to pray, without an heart as ready to forgive those that trespass against them, as they desire God to be ready to forgive them. In a word, this is the Christian Law, to render to no Man evil for evil, but to overcome evil with good; to love those that hate them, pray for those that spitefully use them and persecute them; Precepts hardly found in any Religion in the World except the Christian, being evidently of a more noble descent and higher Pitch, than the best Moralists can fathom, or attain to.

S E C T. XV.

Of the Excellency of the Law of Christianity above others touching Marriage.

THE conjunction of Male and Female, whereby Mankind is Propagated, is a thing most worthy the care of Laws. It is no wonder it was neglected by the Pagans, when the Gods they adored, are so famous (or rather infamous) for their Whoredoms and Adulteries, to say nothing of Buggery, which they learned by the example of their false Gods; into whose number was refer'd upon that score *Ganymed*, and afterward *Antinous*. The same impurity is frequent among the Mahometans, among the Chinese, and other Nations, it is allowed lawful; and the Greek Philosophers seem to have taken pains to impose upon a foul Thing, a fair and comely Title. Those Greeks, the most Eminent of

of them, having praised a community of Women, what have they else done, but turned the whole City into a common Stews. The very Animals, some of them, observe a conjugal Covenant; How much more should the divinest Creature, Man? That he might not spring out of uncertain Seed, and so the mutual affection that Nature hath kindled between the Parent, and the Children, be utterly extinguished. *How almost incredibly vile the Nations were by unlawful Lusts, is set down by the Apostle, Rom. 1. who in the just judgment of God, they refusing to glorify God, were given up to vile Affections, for even the Women did change the natural use into that which is against Nature; and likewise the Men leaving the natural use of the Women, burned in their Lusts one towards another, Men with Men working that which is unseemly: all which Impurities, are so abandoned where Christianity reigneth, that these things are scarce imagined as possible to be acted; so pure and so powerful is that holy Religion, to the killing such Iniquities.* The Hebrew Law, indeed, forbids all Uncleanness, but allows one Man many Wives, *Deut. 17. 16, 17.* and gives the Husband power to dismiss his Wife upon every cause, *Deut. 24. 1, 2, 3.* Which at this Day is in use, among the Mahumetans, and was of old among the Greeks and Latines, with so great and odious License, that their Wives were out to Use, and lent for a time by the Laconians, and by Cato, *So prodigiously foolish were their Wise Men, and so unwholesome were the Laws under which they lived.*

But the most perfect Law of Christ, pierceth to the very roots of Vices, and condemneth him that assaulted any Womans Chastity, or deflowered her with his lustful Eyes, as guilty in the Judgment of God; who beholds the Heart of Sin desired, though not performed. And seeing all true Friendship is perpetual and indissoluble; justly hath it required that Tie to be such, that contains with the society of Affections, the communion of Bodies too; which without question doth more conduce also to the good education of Children. *Hence our Saviour establisheth Marriage, according to its Institution in Paradise, Mat. 9. 9. where the Lord joyned one Man and one Woman together. And the Apostle, as fully directts every Man to have but one Wife, as every Woman to have but one Husband, 1 Cor. 7.* Among the Pagans, some few Nations were content with single Wives, as the Germans, and Romans. This is the use of Christians, that the affection the Wife intirely bestows on her Husband, may be paid with equal Retribution; and that the Household Government may be more rightly ordered under one Guide, nor permits divers Mothers to bring in discord among the Children.

SECT. XVI.

Of the Excellency of Christian Doctrine about earthly Substance, above what other Laws prescribe.

TO come to the use of such things, as are commonly called Goods, We know Thefts were permitted by some Pagan Nations, namely the

the Egyptians, *Diod. Sic. l. 1. fuit Licurgo*, as also the Spartans; and they that permitted not the like to private Persons, made it their employment in publick; as the Roman Orator once said, If they did restore to every one their own, &c.

The Hebrews indeed did not such things, yet were they permitted to take Use of Strangers, their disposition being favoured by their Law that promised Riches, *Lev. 26. 5. Dent. 28.* to the due observer of it.

But the Christian Law, not only prohibits all kind of Injustice, and that with respect to all Persons, whether Friends, or Enemies; but also forbids us to place our study in those perishing things, *Mat. 6. 24.* Because our mind is not able with sufficient diligence to attend the care of two severals, that do each require the whole Man, and oft-times distract us divers ways. And again, both in getting and keeping Riches, there is a Sollicitude, that draws with it a kind of Servitude, and Vexation, and so corrupteth the delight we hope for out of Riches. And the things wherewith Nature is contented are but few, and to be obtained without much Labour and Expence: Nevertheless if God shall indulge us more than is necessary, we are not commanded to throw it into the Sea, as some Philosophers have unwisely done, nor to detain it without use; but to supply the needs of other Men, either by giving or lending to them that ask, *Mat. 5. 42. Luke 6. 35. 1 Tim. 6. 17.* as it best becomes Men who believe themselves to be Procurators and Stewards of God Almighty, their Father. For a Benefit well bestowed, is Treasure full of good Hope, and is neither subject to the violence of Thieves, nor to variety of other Accidents. Of this true and sincere Liberality, an admirable Example is left us by the Primitive Christians, when even from Macedonia and Achaia, was sent relief to Palestine, *Rom. 15. 25, 26.* just as if the whole World, of those professing the Name and Doctrine of Christ, were but one Family. And there is added in the Law of Christ that Caution also, that our Beneficence be not deflowered by any expectation of recompence, or glory from Men, *Mat. 6. 1, 2.* The Gift loseth its reward from God, if beside God it look at any other representation: Now that no man may (as the manner is) cover his Tenacity, or withholding his hand from good Works, with this pretext, a fear lest himself in old Age, overtaken with some Calamity, should have need of what he is required to give in Alms; our Law promiseth a special care of such as keep those Precepts, *Mat. 6. 32.* and to cherish their Confidence, reminds them of God's Providence, *Mat. 7. 26.* conspicuous in feeding wild Beasts and Cattel, and in adorning the Herbs and Flowers. Now it were an unworthy thing to disbelieve so Good, so Powerful a God, as an ill Debtor, nor to trust him longer than we hold possession of a Pledg.

S E C T. XVII.

Of Swearing, and other Precepts, respecting Conversation.

Other Laws forbid Perjury; but the Christian Law requires us to abstain from all vain Protestations, and from all unnecessary Affirmations; and to be such punctual keepers of our Word, and lovers of Truth in all our Speech, that there may be no need to exact an Oath from us at all. Briefly, there can be nothing found out, in the Law of Nature, the Grecian Philosophers, or in the Sentences of the Hebrews, or other Nations, that is Excellent, concerning Modesty, and Temperance, and Goodness, and discreet Behaviour; concerning Prudence, the Office of Magistrates, honoured by Christianity as God's Ordinance, Rom. 13. requiring every Soul to be subject thereto, for the Lord's sake: Of Parents and Children, Husband and Wife, Master and Servant, but especially touching Vices to be shunned, which by a fair shew of Vertue, deceived most of the Greeks and Romans; namely the itching desires of Honours and Glory. Lastly, The sum of all Precepts, admirable for the solid Brevity, to love God above all things, and our Neighbours as our selves; that is, to do to another, what we would have done unto our selves.

Against this commendation of Christian Religion, it is wont to be objected by some, and particularly the Jews, The great difference of Opinions among Christians: whence is sprung also a multitude of Sects: But though this may better be urged to prove the Doctrine of Christ to be Good than otherwise, sith Satan and wicked Men, always went about to mischief such as walk in the Truth, by stirring up Commotions and Distractions among them, whose differences alter not the Doctrine, which stands as the clearest Witness against such Disorders. Yet we have another Answer ready, viz. That the same accident befalls almost all Arts whatsoever, partly through the imbecility of humane Understanding, and partly because Judgment is overwayed by Affection; yet are these varieties of Opinion wont to consist within the bounds of certain Truths agreed on, whence Arguments are drawn in Disputations of the Questions. As among the Jews (who cannot boast of their Unity) the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes, &c. differed as much as Christians, yet they all acknowledged one Deity, one Law, and one Law-giver; and their differences were about the Exposition of the same Law. The Heathen may not boast in this case: for according to their Nations, so were their Gods; the variety of Gods adored by the same Nation, as may be seen in Homer, of the Wars of Troy, in Aug. de Civitate Dei; of the state of the Romans, Goths, and Vandals. In humane Arts, as the Mathematicks, it is disputed, whether a Circle may be Quadrated: It is agreed on all hands, that equal parts being taken away from Equals, the remainders are equal. The like we see in Physick and Medicine, and other Arts. So also the discrepance among Christians, who were sincere lovers of that Holy One, and his Gospel in general (for all are not Christians that call themselves so) could not (spoil, though

1 Pet. 3. 2.
Mat. 10. 16.
1 Cor. 3. 10, 21.

though it may injure, the Harmony of the Principal Points; that is, the agreement in those Precepts, from which we have especially taken estimation of Christian Religion; the certainty whereof is apparent in this, That whosoever in the heat of their Quarrels seek out matter of difference, yet do not proceed so far, as directly to deny those things commanded by Christ; no not they who will not compose their Life after that Rule; and if any one will be so absurd as to contradict these Precepts of Christianity whereof we have spoken, he must be numbred with the Philosopher that denied the whiteness of Snow. For as these are refuted by Sense, so are they by consent of Christians in all Nations, and of the Books written by the Primitive Christians, and their immediate Successors, who sealed the Faith of Christ with their Blood. What all these acknowledg (especially the Primitive Witnesses) to be the Doctrine of Christ, must be accounted so by every upright Judge; as Plato is believed, Xenophon, and other Socratics, concerning the Doctrine of Socrates; the School of Stoicks, in those things which their Master Zeno taught. And indeed nothing can be objected against the certainty of the Doctrine of the Gospel being Christ's, which will not equally call Moses himself in question, and all Authors of any Form of Doctrine whatsoever, whether such Doctrines were theirs.

S E C T. XVIII.

The Eminency of the Author of Christianity, and the manner of its being propagated, shews it to be very excellent.

ANother Point wherein Christian Religion excels all other which are or may be devised, is the manner whereby it was delivered and propagated; where first we must look upon the Author of the Religion. The Authors of the Grecian Wisdom, confessed the uncertainty of their Doctrine, saying, Truth was as it were drowned in a deep Well, and our Mind like the Night-Owl to the Sun's Light, is dim-sighted to behold things Divine; And therefore it was no mistake in Paul, to say these Disputers of this World through Wisdom knew not God. And beside there were none of them but were some way vicious, either for flattery of Princes, or for impure Love, or for snarling Impudence. All are convinced of Envy one towards another, by this very Argument, their contentions about words, and of things of no moment; and of boldness in God's Service; for that when they believed one God, laying him aside, they worshipped others, and such as they believed to be no Gods, making the Custom of the People the Rule by which they squared their Religion. Lastly, Of the Reward of Piety, they asserted nothing firmly, as is manifest in the last Discourse of Socrates before his Death: And consequently their Religion which could assure nothing in point of Reward, must needs be far from Excellent.

To proceed; Mahumet was the Author of a Religion far and wide dispersed,

Democrit.
apud Cic.
in Acad.

sperfed, but he was all his Life given over to Luft, which his own Followers do not deny, *and his own Alcoran doth make appear, himself saying, That it was allowed to him to have as many Women as he pleased.* And the Reward he promised, confifting in Feasts and Veneries, he gave no affurance it should ever be extant, for his Body is not said to have returned unto Life again, nay to this hour it lies buried at *Medina*.

Next for the Hebrew Law-giver, *Moses*: He was indeed a rare Man, but not excused from all blame, seeing, with much regret, he at last undertook the Message God sent by him to the King of *Egypt*, *Exod. 2. 10.* and shewed some diffidence of God's Promise, about drawing Water from the Rock, *Numb. 20. 12.* as the Hebrews do confess. Neither did he obtain scarce any part of the Reward he promised his People by the Law, being vexed in the Desert with perpetual Seditions, and entred not into the Land of Promise.

But Christ is set forth by his Disciples, without the least spot of Sin; and by his Enemies is not accused of any Fault that can be proved by competent Witnesses. What he prescribed to others, he performed himself; for the Commands laid upon him by God, he faithfully fulfilled, in all his Life most innocent, *1 Pet. 2. 22.* of Injuries and Torments most patient, (as he shewed enduring the Crofs) most Charitable to all Men, even to his Enemies, even to them that cruelly nail'd him to the Crofs, at once suffering their Malice, and praying for them: Then the Reward he promised his Followers, himself is said and proved to have obtained, in a most eminent way. After his Resurrection he was seen, heard, and felt of many: He ascended into Heaven in the sight of the *Eleven*. That he received supream Power there, is demonstrated by the variety of Tongues, *Acts 2. 3, 4.* given to those that were unlearned Men, which can be no Fable, being so openly done in the presence of so many thousands of his Enemies, and that to the Conviction and Conversion of three thousand of them at that very time, that it is impossible to doubt of this, if any thing in any Story, Sacred or Humane, may be believed. And, together with the Gift of Tongues, other marvellous Gifts he poured down upon his Followers, according to his Promise, before he left them. Which as this his faithfulness to these his chosen Disciples, must needs create a most sure confidence in them, with respect to whatsoever he had promised, or ordered to be done; so it will not suffer us to doubt, neither of his Faith, nor of his Power, to render us that Reward which he hath promised. And seeing nothing like this, either is or can be pretended with such demonstration, concerning the Author of any other Religion; Hence we justly collect the Christian Religion is most eminent herein, because the Master thereof himself performed what he commanded, and what he promised, himself obtained; and as far as was hitherto meet, hath fulfilled his Word unto his Adherents.

S E C T. XIX.

Further of the Propagation of Christianity.

Let us now consider the Effects of that Doctrine whereof Christ was Author: Which if we mark well, are of such a Nature, that if God have any care of Humane Affairs, the Doctrine can be believed to be no less than Divine. It was a thing becoming the Divine Providence, to take care that the best things might be most common, and of largest extent: So is Christian Religion, which we see is taught through all *Europe*, yea in the utmost Recesses of the North, and through all *Asia*, the Islands of the Ocean not excepted; through *Egypt* also, and *Ethiopia*, and some other parts of *Africa*; lastly, through *America* too. Nor is it so only in our Time, but in former Ages (and probably with far greater purity) as appears by all Histories; by the Books of Ancient Christians; by the Acts of Synods; by the Books of Ancient Tradition still preserved, even among the Barbarians, of the Journeys and Miracles of *St. Thomas*, *Andrew*, and other Apostles. How far the Name of Christ was spread in their Times among the *Britains*, *Germans*, and other remote Nations, is noted by *Clement*, *Tertullian*, and others; What Religion is there that can equal the Christian in so large a Possession. If you name *Paganism*, you alledge the name, not Religion, for they adored not the same Deity, but some the Stars, some the Elements, some the Beasts, some things of no Substance; neither had they one Rule or Law, nor any common Master of their Religion. The *Jews* indeed are dispersed, but all one Nation; and since the Time of Christ, their Religion hath received no notable encrease. Yea, their Law hath been made known more by Christians than themselves. *Mahometanism* hath enlarged it self into Countries more than enough; but not alone, there is a mixture of the Christian Religion; and in some places the Christians are the greater number, when yet *Mahometans* are not found in many of them, where Christians are. And suppose those Christians, many of them, be much degenerated from the purity of Christianity, and so perhaps do as much disservice, as service to the Christian Cause: Yet still by this means the Divine Law of Christ (the Scriptures) have been translated into most Languages, God hath his Witness in those Nations, setting forth as well the Way to fear and serve him in sincerity, according to his Will, as rebuking those that falsely pretend to that worthy Title of Christian.

S E C T. XX.

The Infirmary and simplicity of the first Preachers of Christianity, shews the excellency of their Ministry or Religion.

THAT saying of Paul, 2 Cor. 3. 7. *We have this Treasure in Earthen Vessels, that the excellency of the Power may be of God, may justly give us occasion to consider with admiration, by what Hands and Instruments Christian Religion was carried so far, that in this respect also it may be compared with others.* We observe how most Men are so affected, that they easily are drawn after the Examples of Princes and Great Men; and the more, if the Example be strengthened with Law and Force. Hence had the Pagan Religions, hence had the Mahometan their increase, as is abundantly shewed by Records of those Times.

But the first Teachers of Christian Religion, were not only without Command (or Authority) but of a very low Condition, Fisher-men, Tent-makers, and the like. And yet by their Labours, the Doctrine within about thirty Years was propagated, not only through all the Parts of the Roman Empire, but even to the Parthians and Indians: Neither at the beginning only, but for three Centuries, by the Hands of private Men, without any Threats, without any temporal Encouragements, and notwithstanding all the opposition of secular Rulers, was this Religion promoted. So that before Constantine gave his Name to Christianity, this was not the lesser part of the Roman World.

Now the Masters of Manners among the Grecians, were commendable for their other Arts, as the Platonists for Geometry, the Peripateticks for Natural History, the Stoicks for Sophistry, the Pythagoreans for Musick; not a few of them, as Plato, Xenophon, Theophrastus, were graced with a kind of admirable Eloquence. But the first Doctors of Christianity had not the aid of any such Art; Their Speech was with great simplicity, and without alluring Ornaments, contemptible naked Precepts, Promises, Threats; which having not of themselves an efficacy equal to such great Progress, we must needs conclude, that either Miracles, or the secret assistance of God, or both, prospered their Work. For the Devil and the Earthly Powers bending continually against them, it can be no other than Almighty God which stood with them; as also is witnessed by the Apostle, 2 Tim. 4.

S E C T.

S E C T. XXI.

The Impediments overcome by Christian Doctrine, shews its Excellency.

BE it further considered, that the first Disciples and Followers of those our Christian Doctors, had not minds unprepossessed of certain former Religions, and so not easie to be framed to the form of the Religion they proposed, but the contrary: and here the pulling down of the old Form according to the Law, might prove more difficult, than setting up the new form of Gospel-Worship. Whereas those that first admitted Mahomet's Law, were generally devoid of any Religious Tye; but contrariwise, where our first Preachers came, the People were ordinarily preingaged to Opinions, and (that second nature Custom) repugnant to these new Doctrines; having been bred up, and by the Authority of their Country Laws, and by their Parents confirmed in Pagan Idolatry, or Jewish Ceremonies. To this Obstruction, was added another as great; that is, most grievous Sufferings, which presented themselves to the Professors at the very entrance of Christianity, to be endured, or feared for that Cause. For seeing human Nature is abhorrent from Evils, it follows that the causes of such Evils are not undertaken without much reluctance; for who that is wise would expose himself, and all his, to inevitable Ruine, but only in a Cause that he is sure will produce thereby an advantage greater than the loss.

The door of preferment was long shut against the Christians, and it's most likely hath been little open at any time to sincere Christians, whilst the way to Exile, or Sequestration lay open. These were lighter Matters; they were also condemned to the Mines, they were afflicted with Torments, the most Cruel that could be invented, and to Death often: So that the Writers of those Times do testifie, by no Famine, by no War, by no Pestilence, was a greater multitude of Men consumed at one time. Neither were the ways of Death vulgar, but Burnings alive, Crosses and Punishments of that sort, which without greatest horror we cannot read, or think upon. And this Cruelty, that continued without any long breathing spaces, (and those Intervals not every where) till about the Reign of Constantine, in the Roman Empire, in other places longer. Yet were these Troubles so far from diminishing the Christians, that on the contrary their Blood was compared to Seed; so fast did they grow up again after the Cutting down.

Here also let us compare with the Christians, other Religions: The Greeks, and other Pagans, accustomed to vaunt and amplify what was their own; number some few, who for their Doctrine suffered Death; some Gymnosopists, Socrates, and a few more. Neither can it be easily denied, but these most noted Persons were emboldened with a desire of transmitting their fame unto Posterity.

But among Christians that suffered Death in the early Times of the Gospel,

pel, for their Doctrine, were very many *Plebeians*, scarce known to their Neighbours, Women, Virgins, Youths, who had no appetite, nor probable hope of a lasting Name; and few of them are by Name recorded in the Martyrologies, in respect of the great number that suffered for the *Christian* Cause, being only honoured with a general Remembrance.

It is worth observing by the way, that by an easie Simulation, as the casting a little Incense upon the Altar of the *Heathen Gods*, very many might have escaped Death; which cannot be said of them (*for such there were among the Philosophers*) who whatsoever thoughts they concealed in their Hearts, certainly their open Actions complied with the vulgar Manners: So that to have died for the Honour of God, is an Honour hardly communicated to any other but *Jews* and *Christians*; nor to the *Jews* at all, since the Times of *Christ*, in former Times but a few of them, if they be compared with *Christians*. More of whom in some one Province, suffered for the Law of *Christ*, than ever did of *Jews*: All whose Patience of that kind, is almost reduced to the time of *Manasses*, and *Antiochus*.

Wherefore, when the *Christian* Religion in this part also, so infinitely exceeds all others, it deserveth to be prefer'd before them. From all that so great multitude of every Kind and Sex, divided by so many Places, and who feared not to die for this Religion, but rather after a wonderful manner of Courage, did many times put themselves into the greatest jeopardy on that Account, contemning the face of the *Presidents*, the Teeth of wild Beasts, Fire, and all Instruments of Torment, as very Straws and Toys, not to be feared or regarded. Upon this account of their love to *Christ*, we must conclude there was some cause of so great Constancy, and no other cause can be imagined but the Light of Truth, and the Spirit of God.

S E C T. XXII.

The Conclusion, reflecting briefly upon the former Discourses.

TO conclude, seeing from the Grounds alledged, Christianity is a Religion as certain, as any thing that is knowable by Men, by virtue of the best Records, or Monuments of Antiquity, whence the knowledge of the Things they receive for true, are gathered; and that not only from the holy Scriptures, (the surest and fullest Witness thereof*) but also from the next Testimonies of greatest Credit and Estimation otherwise alleagable, whether Authorities, or rational Demonstration, inasmuch that all things must be false, if *Christian* Religion be not true, from the same Grounds on which Men build their Objections against the

* Not to insist upon the concurrent evidence of God himself, by his good Spirit in the Conscience of such as receive the Truth in the love of it, sub that Witness (though we in no wise contemn) being more intrinsecal and particular, it not so fully is alledged here, and the rather for that it might seem to be ballanced by Pretences as high as the contrary sides, though in reality it cannot be.

verity

verity thereof: It will, I trust, abundantly satisfy judicious Men, upon their diligent consideration of the Proofs above, collected as you have heard, mostly out of the works of the Learned Author aforesaid; so that it shall be needless here to add any more.

And for the excellency of this holy Profession, sith it therein stands not only upon equal Grounds, with whatsoever may be said for any other Religion which hath yet appeared in the World, but in many things (if not in every thing that renders any thing truly excellent, especially in a Divine, or Spiritual way of Excellency) doth over-match upon the most equal Trial, the most specious Religions any where extant. It follows, that laying aside all Hesitancy, and watching against all low Conceits of the *Christian* Faith, we devote our selves to honour this Holy Calling, in assured confidence of the Beatitude annexed to it.

And because this holy Profession, as other excellent Donations from the Hands of a Gracious God, hath been abused, injured, and rendred thereby less desirable (through the enmity of Satan, and the indiligence of Men) we shall in our following Treatise, endeavour to set forth the *Christian* Religion in its ancient and naked Purity, and therein joyn our Labours with those that sincerely are for *naked Truth*; because she is most lovely in that appearance, disrobing her (as much as in us lieth) of all those gorgeous Vanities, wherewith too many of her pretended Friends have burthened her, thereby rendring her more like the Vanities of the *Gentiles*, than the solemn way of Christianity.

Add further, that which is as crying and dreadful a Consideration as any other: That this holy Title of *Christian*, should be invaded by so many, and yet so few found that walk in any measure of Conformity to her sacred rules of Piety and Morality. Inasmuch, that the Lord may justly complain against this Generation, as he did against the House of *Israel*, Hosea 8. 12. *I have written to him the great Things of my Law, but they are counted a strange Thing.* To remedy all which unanswerable walkings towards a Gracious God (if it may be) are these Treatises written, and in the fear of God recommended to the consideration of all professing Christianity, and to every one that are any way concerned therein.

K

Christi-

Christianismus Primitivus.

The Second BOOK.

Of the Internal part of the Christian Religion.

C H A P. I.

Of the Definition of the Christian Religion.

SECT. I.

IT is a good Rule left us by the Ancients, to regulate our Discourses, specially in things disputable, viz. That the beginning of any thing is the definition thereof. Which in the Case proposed, I take to be fitly made in these words; Religion is a holy resignation of the creature Man to the Will and Service of his Creator, the Omnipotent Commander, and the sole Disposer of the Universe.

Some derive the word Religion from Relego, to read again; thereby intimating, that those only are Religious, who diligently consider and observe what they read. Augustine derives it from the Verb Religo, to bind; and hence Aquinas teacheth, That all Men being Originally in God, and by Creation set, as it were, a-loof from him by the Bond of Religion, are fastned to him. And indeed we find when God had created Adam, lest now he should forget God, he had a just Law given him to oblige him to his Creator, in dutiful Obedience. Howbeit, the general Definition of Religion followed by Christian Writers, is this; To worship God duly, as his infinite Majesty doth deserve, in regard of his Excellency and Preheminency above all things; and for the great Benefits which we have received, and do daily receive at his hand. But yet in mine Opinion, we have a more compleat definition of Religion (especially as it concerns Christianity, the Religion now to be considered) by the Apostle Paul himself, Tit. 2. 11, 12; 13, 14.

13, 14. *The Grace of God which brings Salvation, hath appeared to all Men, teaching us, that denying Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, we should live Soberly, Righteously, and Godly in this present Life; looking for that blessed Hope, the glorious Appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ: who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all Iniquity, and purifie to himself a peculiar People, zealous of good Works.* In this Definition (so I call it) the Apostle layeth the Foundation of a Religious Life, and the Glory consequent to it, upon the Free Grace of God manifest to all Men, and makes Religion it self to consist, 1. In denying all Ungodliness, which comprehends all negative Sanctity. 2. In a Sober, Righteous, and Godly Life, which contains all that lies within the verge of positive Sanctity. 3. It taketh in the great duty of perseverance in Faith, and a zealous performance of Good Works till the consummation of the World. Wherefore from this Definition, I shall proceed to my proposed Subject, i. e. To shew the Nature of the Christian Religion; first, in respect of the Internal part thereof; and secondly, in respect of the External.

S E C T. II.

How eminently necessary it is to regard the Internal Part of Religion, is apparent from *Rom. 2. 28, 29.* *He is not a Jew that is one outwardly, neither is that Circumcision which is outward in the Flesh; But he is a Jew that is one inwardly, and Circumcision is that of the Heart in the Spirit, whose praise is not of Men, but of God.* Not that the Holy Apostle, in this or any other place, either slight or rejects the External part of Religion: for, *Rom. 3. 1, 2.* having occasion to answer an Objection, which some perhaps would make from his former words, gives even Circumcision it self, among the Jews, its due honour. *What advantage then hath the Jew, or what profit is there of Circumcision?* He answers, *Much every way, chiefly because unto them were committed the Oracles of God:* Plainly shewing, That the regular way to claim the Privileges contained in God's Oracles, is, for Men to be imbedded as his Church and Family, by the just observation of his Ordinances. Only this is most evident from the place, that where the Internal part of God's Worship is wanting, the Externals in Religion avail nothing; For the Holy Spirit makes believing with the Heart necessary unto Righteousness, as well as he makes confession with the Mouth necessary unto Salvation, *Rom. 10. 10.* And because we thus find that the Internal part, or belief of the Heart, hath justly the precedency in Christian Religion, I shall propose this method for the more convenient demonstration thereof; discoursing,

1. Concerning the Knowledge of God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent.
2. Concerning the denial of our selves, in point of fleshy Vanities; or, the true Nature of Christian Humility for Sin.
3. Concerning our conformity to Christ in the Spirit of our Minds.
4. Concerning a Christians Hope and Expectation at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

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These Particulars I suppose to be comprehensive enough to give us occasion to discourse all those things which relate to the Internal part of Christianity; to which we shall (God willing) now apply our selves: And first to the first Particular.

C H A P. II.

Of the Knowledge of God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent.

S E C T. I.

Although this present Subject be of the greatest sublimity; Yet sith it is undeniable, that the Salvation of Man dependeth greatly upon the Knowledge thereof, *John 17. 3.* It is therefore necessary that we labour, above all things, to make our discovery with all the clearness we can attain unto in this Particular. And truly such is the Nature of Christianity, that can we but avoid Curiosity, this almost inaccessible Mystery will unveil it self sufficiently, by the Word of Truth, to Christians of the meanest capacity, and yet remain a great Mystery to the most eminent Apostle, *1 Tim. 3. 16.*

Nor shall I (if I could) affect loftiness of Style, or curious Phrases, in the handling this Mystery, lest whilest I should explain it, I make it more obscure. Neither shall I incurber the Reader with a multitude of Opinions, whether of the Heathens, or Apostates: the last having, in the close of all their curious search, resolved upon this dreadful conclusion, *That there is no God at all;* of whom, or of such-like Atheists, this Age affords too many. Yea, of the Heathens, *Plinius Secundus*, reputed one of the wisest Philosophers, could arrive but to this, (as his most fixed Opinion) *That there is no God, but the World it self,* (though he doubted whether there were any God at all). The natural result of which conceit is this, *Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we shall die.* That we may therefore miss these Rocks, and find the Path of Christian Knowledge concerning God, &c. We shall first consider, *in what respect we ought to be ignorant of him.* And though this may seem a new Method, yet surely upon consideration it will be found profitable to lead us to the end designed, even to know God aright. For undeniable it is, that God hath reserved the discovery of himself in a great measure, (if I may so speak); Witness that case of *Moses*, who desired to see the Glory of God, *Exod. 33. 1.* But the Lord refused, saying, *Thou canst not see my Face, for there is no Man shall see my Face and live.* *Job 11. 7, 8, 9.* *Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto Perfection? It is as high as Heaven, what canst thou do? Deeper than Hell, what canst thou know?* *John 1. 18.* *No Man hath seen God at any time.* And again, *1 Tim. 6. 16.* *Who only hath immortality dwelling in the Light which no Man can approach unto, whom no Man hath seen, nor can see.* Hence it's evident, that the full knowledge of God is not attainable in this

Pha. Nat.
Hist. l. 1.

this World; but the most illuminate Christians must and doth confess he knows but in part, sees but darkly as through a Glass, 1 Cor. 13. 9, 12. Yea, it is but a little Portion that we hear of him, Job 26. 14. and therefore must acknowledg we are far from a plenary Knowledge of him. When we consider 1 Cor. 1. 21. That the World through Wisdom knew not God: And how we are exhorted, that in things relating to God, We be not wise in our own conceits, Rom. 12. 6. with 1 Cor. 3. 6. It should teach us to be humbly content with that measure of the Knowledge of God, which his Word accommodates us with, admitting the Wisdom of God, in reserving a more excellent discovery of himself unto that blessed Day of the Appearing of the Great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ. And thus shall we truly account our selves absent from the Lord, whilst we are at home in the Body: And in the mean time avoid all unnecessary Questions, either concerning God, his Shape, and manner of residence in Heaven; or concerning his Works, as what he did before he created the Worlds: knowing that he is not bound to give account of any of these Matters; further than it pleaseth him. And it is just with him to catch the Wise in their own craftiness, by entangling them in such their Enquiries, whilst he giveth Grace to the humble.

Nor is this the only case, wherein we ought to content our selves with humble ignorance, in many Particulars; for in other cases of importance we only have a brief discovery, as it were, in generals: For Example; Touching the Angels, we know indeed that they are ministering Spirits, sent forth to do the Will of God, for them that shall be Heirs of Salvation. But if we curiously enquire when they were created? What is their proper Form? How they reside, and what their Employment is in the Heavens, &c? The result of such Inquisition, is most likely to be that of the Sadducees, who denied that there is any Angel or Spirit. Again, to come home to our selves: If the Question should be about the Soul of Man, What it is? Who can infallibly and fully resolve it? Do not the greatest Disputers about it, conclude at last, That it is hard to say what it is? Yet that Man consists of Soul and Body, is so evident, from the Word of God, and particularly from the Words of Christ, Mat. 10. 28. that nothing but Infidelity it self can question it. Shall we then, nay, must we not content our selves to be ignorant of many Particulars in these lower cases, whilst we know them in general? And shall we not thankfully accept of what it hath pleased God to reveal of himself, albeit he greatly exceed such Discoveries? Let us remember, that a desire to know what God would conceal from Adam, was the cause of his overthrow; and let us, the weak Sons of Adam, beware of ambition of that kind, lest we incur greater condemnation, having so fair a warning in his fatal case before us.

S E C T. II.

Thus then we approach to consider, what may be known of God, according to that Revelation which it hath pleased him to give us of himself, either by his Holy Writings, or by his Works, and continual Providence. All which we are under strict obligation to take notice of, that we

See a Book, Intituled, Of Wisdom.

we may know him, Isa. 40. 26. Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things. For as it is said in David, Psalm 19. The Heavens declare the Glory of God, and the Firmament sheweth his Handy-work. And the Apostle, Rom. 1. 20. For the Invisibile things of him from the Creation of the World are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal Power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse. So that we shall rather shun, as an idle vanity, this Question, i. e. Whether there be any God? than vouchsafe to answer it, with they that make such Demands, fight against Heaven and Earth; yea, the worst of Men, and Devils themselves, are constrained to believe and acknowledg that there is a God, and tremble for fear of him, Jam. 2. 19. But our Business is to set forth the Knowledge of the only true God; to which purpose we descend to these Particulars.

1. That God is One, or there is One only true God; best known to Mankind now, by the Appellation of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
2. His Essence, or Being, is Spiritual, or Incorporeal.
3. That he is Eternal, without Beginning, without End.
4. He is Omnipotent, He doth whatsoever he pleaseth.
5. He is Omniscient, nothing can be hid from him.
6. He is Just, there is no Unrighteousness in him.
7. He is Good and Holy, there is nothing corrupt in him.
8. He is very Gracious, full of Mercy, no Cruelty is in him.
9. He only is Perfect, so as no Imperfection is in him.
10. His place of residence is in Heaven, yet not confin'd to place.
11. Nothing can be done without his Providence, though contrary to his Will.
12. It is unlawful for Men to form any Shape or Image of him, so much as in our thoughts.

Touching the first Particular, That God is One, &c. It is considerable which is said by some, That Infinity admits not of Plurality, sith only one thing can truly be said to be Infinite. Wherefore the Holy Scripture doth with great perspicuity set forth this Truth, that God is One: for if a plurality of Gods be admitted, the number of them cannot be determined; for why there may not be two thousand as well as two, no reason can be shewed: and the experience of those that have been destitute of the knowledge of the One God, in multiplying their Gods, from time to time, (of which we read at large in *Aug. de Civit. Dei.*) sufficiently shews, there is (in a manner) no end of their number; and consequently no certainty whom to worship, or which to give a precedency unto in adoration. Whether the Sun, Moon, Stars, Angels, Men, four-footed Beasts or creeping things, all which have been adored by deluded Men, Rom. 1. 25. Who changed the Truth of God into a Lye, and worshipped and served the Creature more than the Creator, who is God blessed for ever. To divert us from which gross darkness, thus saith the Lord, Isa. 45. 22. I am God, and there is none else: And thus he speaks to controul the vanity of worshipping or depending upon Idols, or any created thing

* They are noted by some to be about 12000.

thing, *vers.* 20, 21. How strictly God by *Moses* recommended this Verity to *Israel*, we may not be ignorant, *Deut.* 6. 4. *Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one Lord.* *Exod.* 20. 3. *Thou shalt have no other Gods before me.* To which agreeth that of the Apostle, *1 Cor.* 8. 4, 5, 6. *We know—that there is no other God but One.* For though there be that are called Gods, whether in Heaven or in Earth, (as there be Gods many, and Lords many); But to us there is but one God, the Father of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus, by whom are all things, and we by him. Now if these words, *There be Gods many*, &c. be taken in a good sense, yet the Phrase is used figuratively, not properly, and they are so called, upon the accounts of some Power or Office committed to them, as we find it *Exod.* 22. 28. & 4. 16. & 7. 1. So that they are only (as the Apostle saith) called Gods. But if we take the words on the worst part, as that is the most agreeable to the scope of the place, sith Idolatry is there the thing opposed, then its evident that these words, *There are Gods many*, &c. are spoken after the manner of Men only, or according to the foolish conceits of Men. Our Lord Christ, the great Apostle of Christianity, delivers this truth very clearly, when he calls his Father, *John* 17. 3. *The only true God.* And confirms the Doctrine of *Moses* in that behalf, *Mark* 12. 29. *Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one Lord;* making it a part of that greatest and first Commandment, that we hearken diligently to that particular.

S E C T. III.

The Unity of the Godhead proved, from the Unity of the Nature and Essence of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

As Christian Doctrine knoweth but one only true God, so it recommendeth us for the most ample discovery (attainable in this World) of this One and Eternal Godhead, unto the Name of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, which some call the Trinity, a Phrase no way offensive to Christianity; yet, as some of the * Ancients, well observe. It is not necessary to impose words upon any Man which God himself hath not used, by which to make known himself. Yet truly this term, *The Trinity*, hath very near affinity with the Language of the Holy Ghost. *1 John* 5. 7. *There are three which bear Record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; these three are One.* We shall therefore briefly speak of the Unity of these Three, in respect of their Nature or Essence; which must either be the same, or else we endanger to rush upon that great Error, viz. to hold two Principles, Beginnings, or first Causes, in distinct Natures; and if we admit two, we may admit twenty, yea, ad infinitum; or if this be avoided, we must deny the Eternity of the Son and Holy Spirit, which is contrary to the Word of God, and the best Antiquity next that of the Holy Scriptures. But that the Son (I speak now in respect of his Divine Essence only) and the Holy Spirit are Eternal, as the Father is Eternal, or consequently of the same Nature or Essence, may be gathered from these Testimonies, *Col.* 1. 16, 17.

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For by him were all things created that are in Heaven, and that are in Earth, Visible and Invisible; whether they be Thrones, or Dominions, or Principalities, or Powers; all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. These things are spoken of the Son of God, as appeareth *vers.* 15. who is expressly said, not only to be before all things, but him also by whom all things were created, and therefore himself was not created, and consequently he is Eternal. For two things only come under consideration in this case; Either he had his beginning in Time, or else is Eternal: That he had not his beginning in time, hear what himself saith *Rev.* 1. 8. compared with *vers.* 17, 18. *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.* The very same words which are used by the Father himself, to demonstrate his Eternity, *Isa.* 41. 4. *I the Lord First, and with the Last I am he.* Again, *Isa.* 44. 6. *I am the First, and I am the Last, and beside me there is no God.* Thus we have the same Testimony, or manner of Speech to reveal to us, the Eternity of Christ as that of the Father. We have yet a further Evidence, *John* 1. 1, &c. *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God; All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.* The things to be noted here (as to the Point in hand) are still, that Christ is the Maker of all things, therefore himself was not made; he was with God in the beginning, even as God was in the beginning; yea, he was God in the beginning, and is openly called the Beginning it self; even as God is said to be the First, as before is shewed.

Again, *Heb.* 1. 2, 8. Christ is called the express Image of his Fathers Person, or rather the express Character of his Substance, καὶ περιπατῶν ὁμοιωσεν αὐτῶν, Character substantia, as Montanus. Whence his Godhead is truly inferred, sith neither of the Angels, or any Created thing, may it be said, that it is the express Character of his Substance. For that he is of a more sublime Essence, than to be compared with any Created thing; For unto what shall we liken God, or where-with shall he be compared? But of the Son 'tis said, *Who being in the form of God, thought it not Robbery to be like, or equal with God; and hence his Godhead is further declared, and therefore his Eternity, is justly inferred; for as those Testimonies which prove his Eternity, do also prove his Godhead, so the Testimonies which prove his Godhead, do prove his Eternity; and thence is concluded, that he is of one Essence with the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.* When therefore it is said, *ver.* 8. *Thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever:* There is both his Godhead and Eternity asserted, with as much clearness, as the Eternity of the Father is asserted, *Psal.* 90. 1. *From everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.* And the like followeth of these words, *Thou Lord, in the beginning laid the foundation of the Earth, and the Heavens are the Works of thy Hands,* *Heb.* 1. 10. with as much truth and clearness, as if we should prove the Eternity and Godhead of the Father, by *Gen.* 1. 1. *In the beginning God created Heaven and Earth;* which I suppose is allowed a cogent Evidence in that respect.

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* Calvin. *In-*
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See a full place to this purpose, *Mat. 5. 2. His going forth hath been of old from everlasting.*

S E C T. IV.

Of the Essence of the Holy Ghost.

That the Holy Ghost is Eternal, and consequently of the Essence of the Father, and so God by Nature, is evident from *Heb. 9. 14. Who through the Eternal Spirit, offered himself, &c.* Here the Holy Spirit is openly said to be Eternal, and though this word Eternal (I acknowledge) is often used to express the Duration of that which once had a Beginning, yet being referred to the Godhead, it must also respect from Eternity to Eternity; or, as the *Psalmist* hath it, *from everlasting to everlasting*, *Psal. 90. 1.* And that in this sense, it agrees to the Holy Spirit, may be gathered from these Grounds: 1. Because he is expressly called God, *Acts 5. 3, 4, 9.* where the false dealing of *Ananias* is said to be a *tempting of the Holy Ghost*, or a *lying unto God*, and *not to Men*. 2. The work of Creation is ascribed to the Holy Ghost, *Gen. 1. 1, 2, 3.* And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the Waters. And God said, *Let there be Light, and there was Light.* *Psal. 104. 30. Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, and they are created.* And hence we gather the Eternity of the Godhead of the Holy Spirit, because God is no where said to create the World, or any part thereof by Angels, or any other created Thing. 3. Because the Holy Ghost is said to proceed, and come forth from the Father, *John 15. 26.* Not by Order, or Designation only, for so the Angels, or Men, may be said to proceed and come forth from God; but here the procession of the Holy Ghost, is evidently distinguished from his sending: *But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you, from the Father; even the Spirit of Truth, which proceedeth and cometh forth from the Father.* And therefore can have no meaning so fitly as this, *viz.* To proceed and come forth of the same Essence, or Substance, of the Father. A like passage we have, concerning Christ's coming forth from the Father, *John 16. 28, 30. I came forth from the Father, and am come into the World; again, I leave the World, and go to my Father.* Upon this the Disciples reply, *Now are we sure thou knowest all things, and needest not that any Man should ask thee; by this we believe, that thou camest forth from God.* The Disciples here cannot intend only this, that they believed Christ was sent from God, for seeing this their Belief is grounded upon the Omniscience of Christ, it must needs follow that they there acknowledged him to be of the very Nature and Essence of God; and so they seem to take our Saviour's words to signify, in *ver. 28.* which now they profess to receive believingly. In like manner, the proceeding of the Holy Ghost from the Father, *John 15. 26.* is better understood of the Nature whereof he is, than of the Commission by which he comes unto us; otherwise, it were not a matter of such special remark. For either Christ, or the Holy Spirit, to come forth from God by Legation, or Appointment only, sith both Angels and Men have frequently received such

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Authority, and accordingly are said to come from God: For instance, of *John the Baptist*, it is said, *There was a Man sent from God, whose name was John.* 4. Because the Holy Ghost is one with the Father, as; the Son is one with the Father, 1 *John 5. These three are one.* If therefore the Son be of the Nature of the Father, and so one with him (as that we have proved) then it followeth, from the like Unity between the Father and the Holy Spirit, that he is of the same Essence, and so God Eternal. 5. The Holy Ghost is called the *Finger of God*, *Luke 11. 20. Mat. 12. 28.* Not as an Instrumental Cause may be termed so, for so this should be no special Prerogative, seeing even wicked Men are said to be the Hand of God in such a sense as that, *Psal. 17. 14.* but as the Power, or Strength of God, by which his Works are wrought; and so it is taken, *Exod. 8. 19.* We may therefore conceive by this Phrase, the *Finger of God*, that the Holy Spirit is of the Essence, Nature, or Substance of God, even as the finger of a Man, is of the substance and nature of his Body; which is the Metaphor here used, to set forth the Unity between the Father and the Holy Spirit. 6. And lastly, Either we must hold, that the Holy Ghost is Eternally God, or else a Created Being: but of the latter, there is not the least intimation in the Word of God, and therefore no way safe to espouse such an Opinion.

Now whether these three, the *Father, Son, and Holy Spirit*, thus one God, as hath been shewed, may fitly be called three Persons, I shall not determine; only this, I say, I see no inconvenience that can attend it, for sith the Father is openly called a *Person*, *Heb. 1.* and the Son, the express Character of his *Person*, or *Substance*, it may seem no way inconvenient to allow the same to the Son, and to the *Holy Spirit*. But for as much as we may, perhaps, have further occasion to touch these things, when we come to the defence of Christianity in the parts opposed, we shall now proceed to speak of the Essence of this One God, who is Blessed for ever. Amen.

S E C T. V.

Of the Nature and Essence of God.

That the Nature, or Essence of God, is Spiritual; not Corporeal, is the subject of our present Discourse; yet certain it is, God hath spoken very briefly in his Word, concerning his Nature, or Essence. And we shall therefore as briefly as we may, note these two things, 1. That he is not Corporeal. 2. That he is a Spiritual Being. 1. Not Corporeal, because all things properly Corporeal, or which hath a Body, are Circumscribable, or may be contained in some Place; but the Heaven of Heavens, cannot contain God, 2 *Chron. 6. 18.* But will God in very deed, dwell with Men upon the Earth? Behold, Heaven, and the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain thee, how much less this House which I have built, *Jer. 23. 24. Can any hide himself in secret places that I cannot see him? Do not I fill Heaven and Earth, saith the Lord?* 2. The Nature, or Essence of God, is Spiritual. Here we have our Blessed Saviour's Testimony;

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The Essence of God is spiritual and incorporeal.

John 4. 24. God is a Spirit: To which, agrees that of the Apostle, *2 Cor. 3. 17. Now the Lord is that Spirit.* By this Immenſity of God, and the Teſtimony of our Saviour, and of the holy Apoſtle, we are taught to think, or conceive of God, contrary to all Bodily Compoſition, (becauſe no Body is capable of ſuch Immenſity) and after a very Spiritual manner; and yet when all is done that can be done, to demonſtrate this Divine Being, we ſhall find more room to admire with Humility, than to diſcourſe with the greateſt Subtilty, for he dwelleth in that Light which no Man can approach unto. So that *Auguſtin* might well ſay (as he is quoted by Mr. Monk) *No where throughout the revealed Will of God, is the Truth ſought out with greater Labour; no where is our finding out of the Truth fruitful; no where do we err with greater danger.* *1 Cor. 15. 34. Some, have not the knowledge of God. I ſpeak this to your ſhame.* For though we cannot know him now perfectly, yet may we in no caſe be wholly ignorant of him.

Auguſtin.

SECT. VI.

That God is
Eternal.

That this God is Eternal, without Beginning, and without End. This Propoſition is warranted by the holy Apoſtle, *Rom. 1. 20.* from what may be ſeen of God, by the Things he hath made, even his Eternal Power and Godhead. And indeed, if his Eternity be not maintained, we ſhall ſoon impeach his Godhead, and *Atheiſm* will obtrude upon us. The *Pſalmiſt* doth fully declare this Truth, *Pſal. 90. 2. Before the Mountains were brought forth, or ever thou haſt formed the Earth, or the World, from everlaſting to everlaſting, thou art God.* And the ſame in *Moſes*, *Deut. 33. 27. The Eternal God is thy Refuge.* *Iſa. 57. 15. He is called the High and Lofty One, that inhabiteth Eternity.* And again, *Iſa. 63. 16. Thy Name is from everlaſting.* *Pſal. 93. 2. Thou art from everlaſting.* *Hab. 1. 12. Art not thou from Everlaſting, O Lord, my God.* So that we may ſay, all the Gods whoſe beginning is known, are Vanity; but this God is our God, for ever and ever. Nor need we add much in this place, partly, for that we are only giving a plain Deſcription of Chriſtianity, as it reſpects the Knowledge of God; and partly, for that we have already in ſome meaſure Evinced the Eternity of the Godhead, when we diſcourſed of the Unity of the Eſſence and Nature of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt; otherwiſe we might by ſundry Arguments illuſtrate this Truth, which yet is beſt defended, by the Evidence of the Scriptures alleged.

SECT. VII.

Of the Omnipotency of God.

That God is Omnipotent, he doth whatſoever he pleaſeth. God hath ſpoke once, yea, twice have I heard this, ſaith *David*, *That Power belongeth to God, Pſal. 62. 11.* God was known to the Fathers, more eſpecially by his Name, *Almighty*, *Exod. 6. 3.* I appeared unto *Abraham*, unto *Iſaac*, and unto *Jacob*, by the Name of *God Almighty.* And with great

great frequency the Holy Scripture gives that Title unto God; from whence we underſtand that God is in no wiſe to be oppoſed by any Power, there is nothing too hard for God; by his Power he made the World, *Jer. 10. 12.* and by his Power he ruleth for ever, *Pſal. 66. 35.* He hath power to caſt into Hell, *Luke 12. 5.* and by his Power he is able to ſubdue all things to himſelf; And ſaith the Prophet, our God is in Heaven; he hath done whatſoever he pleaſeth, in Heaven, in Earth, and in all Places. This is that mighty One who challengeth the moſt Juſt in Acts of Power, *Job, Chap. 38, 39, 40, 41.* This is he who outvieth the greateſt Tyrants; raiſing up *Pharaoh*, that he might ſhew on him his Power, *Exod. 9.* This is he to whom the Righteous aſcribe Power and Dominion, Rule and Government; His Kingdom ruleth over all, *Pſal. 103. 19.* This is he, who though he delegates Power as it pleaſeth him, yet ſhall have all Power delivered up to him, and be all in all: Therefore let us ſay as we are taught by Chriſt, *Thine (O God) is the Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory, for ever. Amen.*

SECT. VIII.

God is Omniscient, nothing can be hid from him.

When we ſay God is Omniscient, we intend both his Preſcience, and immediate obſervation of all things, whether projected or done. As to God's fore-knowledge, thus ſaith God by the Prophet, *Iſa. 44. 7. Who, as I, ſhall call, and declare it, and ſet it in order for me, ſince I appointed the Ancient People; and the things that are coming, let them ſhew unto them.* By this Speech God proves himſelf to be the only true God, declaring hereby that no other could know theſe things as He, they being the things determined by his own Will, and wholly inſcrutable as to any created being. To the ſame purpoſe is that paſſage, *Iſa. 45. 21. Tell ye, and bring them near, 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 Saviour, there is none beſide me.* *David* ſeteth forth the Omniscience and Preſcience of God very fully, *Pſal. 139* throughout; *O Lord, thou haſt ſearched me, and known me; thou knoweſt my down ſitting and up-riſing; thou underſtandeſt my thoughts afar off.*—For there is not a word in my Tongue, but loe, thou knoweſt it altogether. And excludes all created Beings in reſpect of this Knowledge; *Such Knowledge* (ſaith he) *is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it.*—Yea, the Darkneſs hideth not from thee, but the Night ſhineth as the Day; the Darkneſs and the Light are both alike to thee. Herein is the Wonderful Wiſdom of God held forth, in that he knoweth our Thoughts before they be ours, yea, hundred of years before the Creature hath any being at all; *Thine Eyes did ſee my Subſtance, yet being unperfect, and in thy Book all were written, which in continuance were faſhioned, when yet there was none of them,* verſ. 16.

As to his preſent obſervation of all things, we do not ſuppoſe that God knoweth things gradually, or by degrees, for that would argue imperfection

perfection in God: But when we find things spoken to us, sounding that way, as in *Gen. 18. 21. I will go down now, and see now whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come up unto me; and if not, I will know.* For these words are fitted to our capacity, and do teach us that God is slow to anger, and therefore seems to take no notice of many things; not that he is in any-wise ignorant, for it is written, *Heb. 4. 12. All things are naked and open before him with whom we have to do.* And *Prov. 15. 11. Hell and Destruction are before him, i. e. he knows whatsoever is there. How much more the Hearts of the Children of Men.* And what can be supposed more occult or hidden than *Hell, Destruction*, and the *Hearts of Men*? and if all things be naked and open before him, then nothing can be hid from him. And the same is confirmed by rational demonstration; He that made the Ear, shall not he hear? He that gives Man Understanding, shall not he know? And he that made the Eye, shall not he see? It is therefore irrational to think, that any Ignorance is incident to the most High; wherefore he is *Omniscient*.

S E C T. IX.

God is Just, there is no Unrighteousness in him.

It is a very important Question of the Apostle; *Is there Unrighteousness with God? how then should he judge the World?* Shewing the dreadful absurdity of not believing God to be Righteous altogether, an Opinion too common among Men.

1. This Justice or Righteousness whereof we now speak, must not be taken as a thing only attributed unto God, but as that which is essential to him, and without which he would cease to be God. *Dan. 9. 7. O Lord, Righteousness belongeth unto thee.*—*Ascribe ye Righteousness unto our God.* Our Blessed Saviour gives this Appellation to his Father with great solemnity, *John 17. 25. O Righteous Father.* And so do the Holy Angels, *Rev. 16. 5. Thou art Righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be.*

2. His Righteousness is and shall be best known by his Judgments; For whilst he suffereth long, Evil Men say in their Heart, the Lord will not do Good, neither will he do Evil: And God knowing their Thought, detects them, *Psal. 50. These things hast thou done, and I kept silent; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thy self; but I will reprove thee, and set thy sins in order before thine eyes. Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver.* And thus is the Lord known by the Judgment which he executeth. *Yea, the Heavens shall declare his Righteousness, for God is Judge himself, Psalm. 50. 6.*

3. In that we say there is nothing Unrighteous in him, we hold that Unrighteousness had no being from God, being indeed a privation, as the shutting out of Light causeth Darkness; but there is no privation in God, he is the same yesterday, to day, and for ever. The Righteousness of Men is mutable, it being no part of their Essence or Being; but in God,

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to be Righteous, is the same as to be God, and therefore he is called Righteousness itself, *the Lord our Righteousness.* Like as it is said, *God dwelleth in the Light*, so it is as truly said, *That God is Light, and in him is no Darkness at all, 1 John 1. 5.*

S E C T. X.

God is very gracious, full of Mercy, no Cruelty in him.

The Knowledge of God, as he is merciful, is the ground of all Hope to poor Sinners; without this there is no coming to God. *Psal. 138. 3, 4, 7, 8. If thou, Lord, shouldst mark Iniquity; O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared. Let Israel hope in the Lord, for with the Lord there is Mercy; and with him plenteous Redemption: and he shall redeem Israel from all his Iniquities.*

As we have shewed that Righteousness belongeth to God, so 'tis said that Mercy belongeth to him also, *Dan. 9. 9. Which glorious Attribute he hath always displayed to the Children of Men, though not always in the same manner. To Adam, Gen. 3. 15. yea, to Cain himself, Gen. 4. 7. If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? This Negative Interrogative concludes in the Affirmative, viz. Thou shalt be accepted if thou doest well. Thus timely did God lay a Foundation, whereon to build a sure belief, that he is gracious to all Men, even so as to accept their Sacrifice if they do well.*

It was the Grace of God that moved him to warn, and wait upon the Old World so many years as the Ark was a preparing, and therefore called the *Long-suffering of God*, *1 Pet. 3. 20.*

The Covenant made with *Noah*, is full of God's Grace, and established as a Merciful Covenant for ever, *Gen. 9.* and no part of it annulled to this day, but confirmed rather by the Covenants delivered since. When Men had greatly Corrupted themselves, and Darkness had spread itself over the Earth, God sets up the Light of his Grace in the Covenant made with *Abraham*, for the Comfort of all Nations. *Gen. 12. 3. I will bless them that bless thee, and Curse them that curse thee, and in thee shall all Families of the Earth be blessed.*

When the Lord brought *Israel* out of *Egypt*, then again he proclaimed his Name to be the Lord: *The Lord God, Merciful, Gracious, abundant in Goodness and Truth*, *Exod. 34. 6.* *David* sets forth this Gracious Attribute, to be from Everlasting to Everlasting, *Psal. 103.* And his tender Mercies to be over all his Works, *Psal. 145. 9.* His Works and good Providence shew forth the same, inasmuch that all Nations are without Excuse, *Acts 14. 17.* Yea, his making of one Blood all Nations, to dwell upon the face of the Earth; his appointing the bounds of their Habitations, is, that they might seek the Lord and find him, *Acts 17. 26, 27.*

But the most ample Demonstration of the Grace and Mercy of God, is that which hath appeared in the Lord *Jesus Christ*, full of Grace and Truth, *Joh. 1. 12.* And as it is written, *When we were without Strength, in due*

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due time Christ died for the ungodly, Rom. 5. 6. And again, God commended his Love unto us, in that whilst we were Enemies, Christ died for us.

This is the Root-Grace, from whence all our Graces spring, 1 John 4. 10. Herein is Love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son into the World, to be a Propitiation for our Sins. And again, We love him, because he first loved us, 1 John 4. 19.

This Grace, Favour, and Love of God, is of large Extent, every Man hath an Interest in it, Heb. 2. 9. And truly, should any Man be born into the World, since Sin entered into the World, it had been happy for that Man he had never been Born, rather than to have no share in God as he is Gracious; the vilest Creature on Earth, would be more engaged to God than such a Man. But to divert all Concepts of that kind, viz. That there is no Grace extended to some Men. Let us hear what the Record of Truth saith: *The Grace of God which brings Salvation, hath appeared to all Men*, Tit. 2. 11. But after what manner, or measure, we need not much enquire (but rather to mind what it teacheth us, ver. 12.) However, so Gracious was God to the whole World, as that the Propitiation, or Atonement in the Blood of Christ, is for them all, 1 John 2. 2.

The Method in which God will judge the World, shews his Mercy, Grace, and Goodness to the whole World: *For such as had not the Law, shall be judged without the Law; and they that sinned in the Law, shall be judged by the Law*. See the Graciousness of God in this: He will not exact that of Men, they never had from him; he will not enter into Judgment with the Gentiles, on the same Terms that he will judge the Jews, they had five Talents to the Gentiles one; the Improvement is not expected to be equal, but the Non-improvement according to each Mans proportion, shall justly incur the Censure of the Judge. Yet neither doth he in Judgment exact the utmost Mite; for if so, where were his Mercy? he remembreth that we are but Dust, Psal. 103. 14.

Excellently doth the Apostle set out the Grace of God; in the Nature and Extent of it, Rom. 5. 20, 21. where, having shewn how much, how greatly the Gift by the Second Adam, outvies the Loss we had by the First Adam; he then shews the use of the Law, That it entered, that Sin might abound, or appear exceeding Sinful (for by the Law is the knowledge of Sin). At length he displays the Mercy of God, saying, *But where Sin did abound, Grace did much more abound: That as Sin had reigned unto Death, (which sure is general enough) even so might Grace reign through Righteousness unto everlasting Life, through Jesus Christ our Lord*.

Whereas, we say, there is no Cruelty in God; hereby we do exclude in our Thoughts and Belief in God, all such Notions as tend to impeach the great Attribute of his Mercy and Grace, viz. *As to think that he made any Men, or Angels, with purpose or design to cast them into Hell*. Such Cruelty is so contrary to the Nature of God, that he doth not only disclaim it as a thing not in him, Isa. 27. 4. but holds it in Execration by his Word, where ever it is found: *Gen. 49. 7. Cursed be their Anger, for it was fierce, and their Wrath, for it was Cruel*: Proclaiming the sentence of

Death

Death against such as exercise Cruelty, Ezek. 18. 18. *As for his Father, because he cruelly oppressed, — he shall die in his Iniquity*. He that thus severely condemns Cruelty in his Creature, must not be supposed to be cruel to him himself; for all the Vertues that are found in us, are originally in God. But more of these things in due place.

SECT. XI.

God only is Perfect, so as no Imperfection is in him.

All created Beings are dependent upon their respective Causes; and therefore the most Perfect of them have their Imperfections, and yet all have Dependence upon God, Acts 17. *In him we live, move, and have our being*. It is he that bears up the Universe, Psal. 75. 3. *The Earth, and the Inhabitants thereof are dissolved, I bear up the Pillars of the Earth*. We have shewed before, that the Perfection of the Almighty, cannot by searching be found out, whereas the perfection of Created Things is comprehensible and finite: Psal. 119. 69. *I have seen an end of all Perfection, (saith David) but thy Commandment is exceeding broad*. God and his Word, have a Perfection beyond the reach of David. Because therefore we cannot find out the Perfection of God, (though we know he is Perfect) we are refer'd for a competent Discovery thereof, to his Way and Word, Psal. 18. 30. *As for God, his Way is Perfect, the Word of the Lord is Tried*. Psal. 19. 7, 8. *The Law of the Lord is Perfect, converting the Soul: The Statutes of the Lord are pure, making Wise the Simple*. And to his Works, Deut. 32. *He is a Rock, his Work is Perfect, for all his Ways are Judgment; a God of Truth, and without Iniquity, Just and Right is he*.

And indeed, who can contemplate the mighty of Works of God, but must ascribe Perfection to him? whether we consider his Works of Creation, or Providence, the great and wonderful Frabrick of Heaven and Earth; the deep and wide Sea, with innumerable Creatures therein found, do abundantly set forth the Infinite Wisdom and Power of the great Architect, or Builder, of this admirable Frame.

We are refer'd also to his Will, according to the Counsel whereof all Things shall stand, and he will do all his Pleasure, Rom. 12. 2. *Be not conformed to this World, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your Minds; that you may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect Will of God*: And so to acquiesce therein, because it is Perfect. *Thy Will be done on Earth, as it is in Heaven*, Mat. 6. 10.

We are also refer'd to the Gifts of the Spirit of God: for every good and perfect Gift is from him, James 1. 17. And as the things of a Man are not known to any Man, but the Spirit of Man which is in Man; so the things of God knoweth none, but the Spirit of God, which searcheth into the deep things of God.

Which Spirit the Servants of God have received, that by it they may know the things that are freely given them of God; and so know more of the Perfection that is in God: Who is absolute in all the Perfections

of

of Wisdom, Power, Mercy, Justice, &c. and none beside him; for there is none Perfect save the Lord.

S E C T. XII.

His place of Residence is in Heaven, yet not confin'd to Place.

1. Did not the prodigious Opinions of some, give occasion to insist upon this Particular, yet were it necessary to understand somewhat herein; for it must needs be a great stay to the Soul, to know where to find his God. God therefore, by his Holy Child Jesus, hath fully set forth the verity of our Proposition, when he teacheth us to pray after this manner: *Our Father which art in Heaven*, &c. And by his own Example, who in Prayer, did frequently lift up his Eyes to Heaven, *John 17.1*. And by his Ascension declared the same, when a Cloud received him out of the sight of his Disciples, *Acts 1.9*. whereby he fulfilled the Word which he spake, saying, *I ascend to your God, and my God, to your Father, and my Father*. By Heaven, in the words of our Saviour, we must necessarily understand the Created Heaven, that which he made in the Beginning of the World, *Gen. 1.1*. with the Circumstance of the Place, and the equity of the Words, will not bear a Figurative Interpretation; in which sense sometimes the word *Heaven* is used. For had our Saviour intended the Church, or the Heavenly Vertues in himself, he needed not have lift up his Eyes. But I am not now to dispute Opinions, but to prove the Proposition: And thus saith the Lord by the Prophet, *Isa. 66.1*. *The Heaven is my Throne, and the Earth is my Footstool*. So *Acts 7.49*: Our Blessed Saviour informs us, that there is joy in Heaven over one Sinner which repenteth, *Luke 15.7*. which he interprets himself, to be in the presence of the Angels of God, *ver. 10*. And when Stephen, lifting up his eyes stedfastly into Heaven, and saw Jesus Christ sitting on the Right-Hand of God; doubtless the Apparition was according to the common acceptation of such Expressions, God Almighty by these Passages giving us to understand, where his Glorious Presence is more especially resident. According to that in *David*, *Psal. 123.1*. *Unto thee lift I up mine eyes, O thou that dwellest in the Heavens*. And when *Solomon* had built an House for the Name of the Lord, he makes his prayer of Dedication to God in the Heavens, as his proper Dwelling-Place, *1 Kings 8.39*.—*Then hear thou in Heaven, thy Dwelling-Place, and forgive*, &c.

2. *God is not Confin'd to place*. Although the most High God hath chosen Heaven for the Place of his Glorious Presence and Residence, yet doth not that holy Habitation so contain him, but that according to his Pleasure, he is present in every Place, as *David* witnesseth, *Psal. 139. 8, 9, 10*. *Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? And whither shall I flee from thy Presence? If I ascend to Heaven, thou art there; if I take the Wings of the Morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the Sea, even there shall thy Hand lead me; and thy Right-Hand hold me*. And truly, when we consider the Sun in the Firmament of Heaven, which is but a

Created

Created Body, yet presents it self by his radiant Beams to the Universe in so little time as we know; it cannot be incredible that he that made it, should and doth present Himself more universally. And this *Solomon* well understood, and therefore saith, *1 Kings 8.27*. *The Heavens, even the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain thee*. And though it is most true, that the High and lofty One inhabiteth Eternity, and dwelleth in the High and Holy Place, yet with him also that is of a humble and contrite Spirit, *Isa. 57.15*. In the first, he dwelleth by his Glorious Presence; in the latter, by the Spirit of Grace. *Ephes. 2.22*. *Ye are built up an Habitation of God through the Spirit*. After this manner his Church is his Rest, and there will he dwell for ever, *Psal. 68.16*.

S E C T. XIII.

Nothing can be done without God's Providence, though contrary to his Will.

How much the Holy Will of God is contradicted, by the Infigation and Actions of Devils and Wicked Men, is so notorious throughout the Word of God, and the whole World, that it needs no demonstration, seeing it is impossible for him that is perfectly good to will any wicked thing, *Jer. 2.5*. *What Iniquity have your Fathers found in me? Jam. 1.13, 14*. *God tempteth not any Man, but every Man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own Lust, and enticed*. It is granted, by those that hold the Secret Will of God dissonant from us, (which because Secret we shall not dispute) 1. *That the revealed Will is good, because it commands Good only, and makes us good, and leads us to the Everlasting Good, even Heavenly Blessedness*. 2. *It is acceptable, because nothing is pleasing to God, which is not agreeable to his Will; and that doth highly please him, which accordeth with his Law and Gospel*. 3. *Perfect, because it containeth all things belonging to Perfection, &c*. To all this we willingly subscribe. But to call God's Permission, his Will, we suppose to be dangerous; for though he permit or suffer men to do evil, yet he in no wise willet it, but willet it the direct contrary; as appears in his severe threatening of *Adam*; and in him all Mankind, with Death, if he did contrary to his Will, *Gen. 2.17*. The like to *Noah* and his Sons, *Gen. 9*. and in them all Generations of Men that were to succeed them. How frequently doth he rebuke his Ancient People the Jews for this, and would divert them from that which is contrary to his Will (which yet he permitted) with great intreaty, *Jer. 44.4*. *O do not this abominable thing, which I hate*. To which agrees the consent of all Holy Writers resulting in this; *That this is the Will of God, even your Sanctification; and that you abstain from Fornication*, *1 Thess. 4.3*.

2. When we say, that *nothing comes to pass without God's Providence*, We do not mean (as some) *That God hath eternally determined, and that unalterably, all things to be that have been, and that all things are determined by him which are, and that all things shall be, which shall be*. For who dare once imagine that God should unchangeably decree, or decree as all? The manifold Acts of Villany that have been, are, and will yet be

See Willson's
Dictionary of
the last Edit.
in the Word
Providence.

be done in the World : this must unavoidably make him the Author of Sin, and Men, and Devils, the Executors only of his Decrees, which God forbid.

And though it is true, that a Sparrow falls not to the Ground without his Providence, *i. e.* not without his Permission ; yet hath he not decreed eternally that it shall be at such or such a time, or in any cruel way, as it often falleth out directly contrary to his Will, *Deut.* 22. 6. It hath pleased God so to confitute the Creation, especially Mankind, as that he is capable of doing well or ill, and hath left him to a certain kind of Liberty and Power in his Actions : and how he will exercise the same, is not unknown to God ; yet Man is not inevitably compelled (ordinarily) to do this, or forceably restrained from doing that.

We therefore say, That the Providence of God, without which nothing is done, is only his fore-knowledge and permission, in respect of all the wickedness which is done ; and after that manner may he only be said to determine in cases of that Nature ; that is, he determines not to hinder by his restraining such Iniquity, knowing how to advance his Glory another way, even by punishing the disobedient. *Levit.* 26. 23, 24. *And if ye will not be reformed by me, by these things, but will walk contrary unto me ; then will I also walk contrary unto you, and punish you yet seven times for your sins.*

But in all good Actions the case is far otherwise : for he doth not only will and command them to be done, but also co-operates to the doing thereof. *It is he that worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure.* *Isa.* 26. 12. *O Lord, thou wilt ordain Peace for us, for thou hast wrought all our works in us.*

I can do all things through Christ strengthening me. *Heb.* 12. 1, 2. *He is the Author and Finisier of our Faith.* *John* 15. *For without me ye can do nothing.* And therefore to him alone is the Glory due of all that is done well. But on the contrary, the dishonour of all evil Actions is due to Satan, and Wicked Men, the Authors and Actors thereof. *1 Sam.* 24. 13. *Wickedness proceedeth and cometh forth from the Wicked, as saith the Proverb of the Ancients.* *John* 8. 44. *You are of your Father the Devil ; and the Lusts of your Father ye will do. He was a Murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the Truth, because there is no Truth in him. When he speaketh a Lye, he speaketh of his own, for he is a Lye, and the Father of it.*

SECT. XIV.

It is unlawful to form any shape or image of God, so much as in our minds.

What Shape or Form the Invisible God possesseth, in respect of his Existence, is a thing which we ought to be ignorant of, he having not revealed it. And though *Moses* is said to see his back-parts, *Exod.* 33. 23. yet neither is the Form thereof declared by *Moses*, or any other Mortal beside him.

How severely God warned *Israel*, to remember that they saw no similitude in *Horeb*, and that they should therefore never attempt to make any

any similitude of it is evident, *Deut.* 4. 12, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19. *Take ye therefore good heed unto your selves, for you saw no manner of Similitude on the day that the Lord spake unto you in Horeb, out of the midst of the Fire ; Lest you corrupt your selves, and make you a graven Image, the similitude of any Figure, the likeness of Male or Female, the likeness of any Beast that is on the Earth, &c. And lest thou lift up thine Eyes to Heaven, and when thou seest the Sun, and the Moon, and the Stars, even all the Host of Heaven, shouldst be driven to worship them, and serve them, which the Lord thy God hath divided unto all Nations under Heaven.*

Notwithstanding this, great hath been the vanity of *Israel*, and all Nations in this very Evil, wretchedly faining divers Shapes and Forms of God. *Psal.* 106. 20. *They made a Calf in Horeb, and worshipped the Golden Image. Thus they changed their Glory into the similitude of an Ox that eateth Grass.* It were too tedious here to insert the prodigious Shapes of the Gods of many Nations, as set down by *Austin de Civit. Dei.* Indeed it is better to suppress the memory of them, than to name them ; Remembering also how it is written, *Acts* 17. 29. *Forasmuch then as we are the Offspring of God, we ought not to think that the God head is like to Silver or Gold, or the works of Mens hands, &c.*

Sith therefore no Man can describe the Form of God, respecting still his Essence, for otherwise he hath given a gracious description of himself, (as we have seen above) it followeth that we ought not to form in our Minds any similitude of him, *(we ought not so to think, saith the Apostle)* *Isa.* 40. 15, 16, 17. *All Nations before him are as nothing—as the Dust upon the Balance,—the drop of a Bucket. To whom then will ye liken God ? or what Likeness will ye compare unto him ?*

To conclude ; It speaks much of the Wisdom and Mercy of God, in that he hath kept secret his Glorious Presence from us, in this mortal state partly, for that it would certainly be profaned many ways, as we see by experience, in respect of those who are on the one hand superstitiously disposed in making Images to Christ, &c. and on the other hand by cursed Oaths, wherein the Eternity, Life, Soul, precious Blood, his Holy Heart, and dreadful Wounds, are abused and blasphemed from day to day, by *pseudo Christians.* But forasmuch as we know we shall shortly see Face to Face, know as we are known, and be with the Father and the Son where he is, that we may behold his Glory ; our present non-enjoyment thereof, may be an occasion of great force, to give all diligence to those Vertues which give entrance into that everlasting Kingdom and Glory, *2 Pet.* 1. 11. And in the mean time to be content to be ignorant of Him in the things we ought not to know. We read of one caught up into Paradise, who heard things not lawful to be uttered. There are therefore things of an Heavenly Nature, not fit to be known here. Let us strive to be religiously inquisitive after what is knowable only, and then to glorify God according to what we know of him, and be thankful *Rom.* 1. lest otherwise he give us up to vile Affections, and strong Delusions, as he did some in days past, *Rom.* 1. 24. And the same Judgments are extant in our days, for many have changed their Glory for that which is their shame ; and as they liked not to retain God in their knowledge,

ledg, as his Word directs them, hence they justly seem deprived of the knowledge of God, and of Jesus Christ whom he hath sent; attributing the things that are spoken of God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, to something in themselves, which is the ready way to deny that there is any God at all.

Having thus endeavoured to set forth, in a familiar and plain manner, the knowledge of the Godhead, in respect of the Divine Essence of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and the Attributes by which they make known the Godhead to Men. We shall now, God willing, say somewhat of the Lord Jesus, with respect to his Manhood, and the gracious Offices which therein he performed for the Children of Men. For it is in him only that we are compleat, who is the Head of all Principality and Power, *Col. 2. 10.* And given to be Head over all things to the Church, the fulness of him that filleth all in all, *Ephes. 1. 22, 23.*

CHAP. III.

Of the Knowledge of Jesus Christ, whom God hath sent to be the Saviour of the World.

SECT. I.

TO know the Lord Jesus Christ aright, in order to Life Eternal, consideration must first be had of the wretched Estate of Mankind, by reason of Sin entering into the World; and that he is unable, of his own strength, to recover his Fall, so that of necessity he must seek an Helper, and one that is able to save to the uttermost, or else be lost eternally. For, that Mankind is design'd to an Eternal Estate, may be understood; From his Creation, being made the Image of God, after his Likeness; and not the least intimation of Mortality attending him, in case he persevered in his Integrity; Mortality being threatned upon Disobedience, and not otherwise as we read of.

Secondly, The Redemption of Mankind speaks forth this Truth; for that clearly respects a State of Eternity; and therefore presupposes that the State he lost was such: and as Sin put him out of his former Happiness, so Sin may prevent his attaining the Eternal Happiness held forth by the Redeemer, who hath brought Life and Immortality to light by the Gospel. Not but that God had designed his creature Man to an Eternal Estate before the Gospel was preached; Hence I suppose it is called *the Mystery, which from the beginning of the World was hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ.* So that whether we rightly consider the Creation or Redemption of Mankind, from thence it will appear, that God design'd him for a State of Eternity, and put him into a present capacity to enjoy it: But he falling from that Glory wherein he was staid, God, who is rich in Mercy, provided for his recovery a more fixed state of Eternity; And by the Gospel doth now *let all Men see what*

is

is the fellowship of this Mystery which was hid in God, &c.— To the intent that now unto Principalities and Powers in Heavenly Places, might be made known by the Church, the manifold Wisdom of God, according to the Eternal Purpose, which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord, Ephes. 3. 9, 10.

Thirdly, This very thing, that God designed Mankind to an eternal State, is perceivable from the Light which universally Men are endued with: still are they thirsting after something more durable and fixed, than what they have here; and therefore generally they labour for Immortality, though under great mistakes as to the Way by which it's most certainly attained. This is confirmed by the experience of Men generally, and might be evidenced by sundry Testimonies from Heathen Authors, who have excellently discoursed thereof: One Instance shall serve for many.

Hydaspes (agreeing also with *Hermes*, and *Sybilla*) saith, *That Godly Righteous Men being delivered and severed from the Unrighteous, shall with Sybilla, tears and groans lift up their hands to Heaven, imploring the help of Jupiter, Hermes, and thereupon Jupiter shall regard the Earth, hear their Prayers, and destroy the Wicked.* Which (saith *Lactantius*) is all true, save one Passage, *Lactantius* viz. He ascribes that to *Jupiter*, which only God shall do.

Again, This may be understood from the attempt of the Devil upon Mankind: for we do not find that he much envies our Mortal Life; And had *Adams* been such only, what great Conquest had he obtained? For what great matter is it for those that lived an hundred Years ago, whether some died aged Twenty, or others Forty Years, they are all now in the Dust? No, no, it was a better Estate wherein Man was created, which Satan envied; and therefore by Subtlety, prevailed to bring him out of the Favour and Enjoyment of that God, in and with whom he was now capable to live for ever, and to turn his happy Eternity to an unhappy Eternity, like his own: Here he is found a Murderer from the Beginning, *John 8. 44.*

The same may be somewhat felt from the temper of wicked Men. As the thoughts of Eternity torments them, whilst wicked; so they hate above all things, that any Body should labour after it, in the way wherein it's to be found. Now if God had not designed Mankind to a state of Eternity, the Wicked are the most illuminated, which God forbid.

Lastly, It appears from the temper of good Men; for generally such as are truly Vertuous, are bending their desires to an Eternal State, restless till there. This is certainly true by experience of such as *not have*, as well as those that *have* the Sacred Scripture, which seems to inform us, that Man's Original estate, was a state capable of Eternity; and therefore that way he hath a kind of Motion, unless he suppress it by Corruption, and Worldly-mindedness.

By this time we may perceive, that the Fall of Man was no such small thing in the Damage brought upon us, as some conceive; for seeing that the Life fall'n from, or lost, was in it self *Eternal*: Who may not think, but the Penalty for such a fault may justly be Commensurable, or of the same latitude? However, it was a fair Introduction to it, and had not Grace prevented, might have been sadly experienced. But now hath

Grace

Grace prevail'd, and Life and Immortality is brought to light by the Gospel, through the Knowledge of Christ, whom to know is our Way to Life; the Knowledge of whom to make manifest, is our present Business, so far as we have attained.

S E C T. II.

Sheweth that God hath made known his Grace in Christ from the Beginning.

Although God did not speak to the Fathers in times past by his Son, as now he doth in these last Days to us, who have his Sacred Doctrine to contemplate at all times, and in all cases, yet was he made known to such as enquired after him; as it is written, *1 Pet. i. 10, 11, 12. Of which Salvation the Prophets have diligently enquired, who prophesied of the Grace that should come unto you; searching what, and 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.* And unto Adam was a gracious Promise made of the overthrow of the Serpent, whose Head (or Power) God declared should be broken, *i. e.* His Victory made null and void, and the Conquest given to the Woman's Seed; which is most fitly refer'd to Christ, who was manifested to destroy the works of the Devil. And as in the beginning of the Old World, God thus provided that Men might have hope of Salvation; so he left not himself without Witness, as *Abel, Enoch, &c.* Yea, in the very end of that World, we know *Noah* was a Preacher of Righteousness. And Christ is said to preach by his Spirit, to them. And thus was the Gospel preached to them that are Dead, that they might be judged according to Men in the Flesh, but live according to God in the Spirit.

As *Noah* was Christ's Witness to the Old World, so he was to the Beginning of the New, with whom God made a Covenant of Mercy and Justice for all Generations, *Gen. 9. 1. to 18.* Giving the Rain-Bow for a Token of his merciful Remembrance, even then when Judgment should be impending; and by this preaches that he is a Merciful God to this Day.

When Men had in a manner totally forsaken the Lord again, then God chose *Abraham*, and delivered to him the Knowledge of his Mercy in Christ, *Gen. 12.* and declared, the extent of that Blessing should be for all Nations. Thus *Abraham* saw Christ's Day, and rejoiced, *John 8. 56.* who doubtless would not fail to reveal it to others, for therefore did God reveal his Will to him, because he knew he would teach others, *Gen. 18. 17, 18.* After which time, more plenty of Testimonies are found in the Scriptures; as in *Deut. 18. 15. A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your Brethren, Him shall ye hear, &c.* And to omit the Quotations that might be brought, our Saviour's Method for Instruction of his Disciples, may serve for all; concerning which 'tis said, *Luke 24. 27. And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, he expounded*

1 Pet. 3.
1 Pet. 4.

pounded to them in all the Scriptures, the things concerning himself. It seems then, that in all the Prophets, and in all the Scriptures, God took special care that the Knowledge of his Son, might be Communicated to the Children of Men.

And though all Nations had not at all times the Law and Prophets to read, and to inform them in the Knowledge of Christ, yet it is to admiration what Discoveries were made to many concerning him, and more particularly to the *Sybs*, whose words as set down by *August. de Civit. Dei*, I will set down for a Testimony; only first I will set down *Augustine's* opinion of these *Sybs*; *Lib. 18. cap. 23.*

In those Days (saith he) *Sybilla Eritrea* (some say) prophesied. There were many *Sybs* (saith *Varro*) but this *Sybilla* wrote some evident Prophecies of Christ. — *Flavianus*, a Learned and Eloquent Man, (one that had been a *Consuls* Deputy) shewed us a *Greek* Book, saying they were this *Sybs* Verses; where in one place, he shewed us a sort of Verses so composed, that the first Letter of every Verse being taken, they all made these words.

Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς, τοῦ Θεοῦ υἱὸς, σωτὴρ.
Jesus Christus, Dei Filius, Salvator.
Jesus Christ, Son of God, the Saviour.

Moreover, *Augustine* observes out of the works of *Lactantius*, many *Lactantius* Passages of a certain *Sybil*, which he infers together thus: *Afterward he shall be taken by the ungodly, and they shall strike God with wicked hands, and spit their venomous spirits in his Face. He shall yield his holy Back to their strokes, and take their blows with silence, lest they should know that he is the Word, or whence he came to speak to Mortals: They shall crown him with Thorns, they gave him Gall instead of Vinegar to eat; this Table of Hospitality they shall afford. Thou foolish Nation, that knewest not thy God, but crownedst him with Thorn, and feastedst him with bitterness. The Vail of the Temple shall rend in two, and it shall be Dark three hours at Noon-day, then shall he Die, and sleep three Days, and then shall he arise again from Death, and shew the First-fruits of the Resurrection, to them that are called.* All this out of *Lactantius*, as quoted by *Augustine*.

And because the Verses you heard of before, are very considerable, I shall here Infer them also.

J In sign of Dooms-Day, the whole Earth shall sweat,
E Ever to Reign a King in Heavenly Seat.
S Shall come to Judge all Flesh, the Faithful and
U Unfaithful too, before this God shall stand,
S Seeing him high with Saints, in Times last end.
C Corporeal shall he sit, and thence extend
H His Doom on Souls: The Earth shall quite lie waste,
R Ruin'd, or e grown with Thorns, and Men shall cast
I Idols away, and Treasure searching Fire,
S Shall burn the Ground, and thence it shall enquire
T Through Seas and Skies, and break Hells blackest Gates;

S So shall free Light salute the blessed States
 O Of Saints; the Guilty lasting flames shall burn,
 N No Alt so hid, but then to Light shall turn.
 N No Breast so close, but God shall open wide,
 E Each where shall Crys be heard, and Noise beside.

O Of gnashing Teeth, the Sun shall from the Skie
 F Fly forth, and Stars no more move orderly.

G Great Heav'n shall be dissolv'd, the Moon depriv'd
 O Of all her Light; Places at height arriv'd,
 D Deprest; and Valleys raised to their seat:

T There shall be nought to Mortals, high or great,
 H Hills shall lie level with the Plains, the Sea,
 E Endure no Burthen, and the Earth as they

S Shall perish, cleft with Lightning. Every Spring
 A And River burn, the fatal Trump shall Ring
 V Unto the World from Heav'n, a dismal blast,
 I Including Plagues to come for ill Deeds past,
 O Old Chaos through the cleft Mass shall be seen;
 U Unto this Bar shall all Earths Kings convene;
 R Rivers of Fire and Brimstone, flowing from Heav'n.

End, Viv.

More I find of this nature from the *Sybits*, but this shall serve. One Passage worth noting, we have in *Ludovic. Vives*, who gives us an account of the Answer of *Serapis* to *Thules*, King of *Egypt*, in the Wars of *Troy*: who enquiring of him, Who was most Blessed? Received this answer,

πρῶτα θεός, &c.
 δεύτερον υἱὸς θεοῦ, &c.

First God, and then the Son, and next the Spirit,
 All Coeternal one in All and Merit.

From whence it is remarkable, that the Knowledge of Christ was not hid from the Heathen, but by Acts of God's Providence they knew much concerning him. There is no doubt, but much more was done on God's part, than either Sacred Writers, or others, give us an account of, under this very Consideration: God did not delight to satisfy the Curious, but to edify the serious Enquirer. It is certain, we have but an Abridgment of the Doctrine and Works of Christ, no account at all of the Labours of divers of the Apostles; yet here is all the reason in the World, to believe they were mindful of the Trust committed to them. *Paul* tells us, That the Gospel was Preached to every Creature under Heaven, *Col. 1. 23*. He doth not tell us in what Manner, or by what Instruments; it's meet we should herein be ignorant in many things;

things: We may adventure to leave the World to God's Mercy; he will not reap where he hath not sown, nor gather where he hath not strowed. And let us beware, lest whilst we consult the Case of many Nations not known to us, we neglect not the Grace held forth to our selves. As some I fear, because they cannot see how all Men have means afforded to know Christ, they will needs suppose they have none; and then conclude, the knowledge of him is not material; or else, that God hath utterly cast away such Nations. Strange Conclusions, from as strange Premises. Let us remember, *Secret things belong to the Lord our God; but things revealed, to us, and to our Children for ever, that we may keep all the words of his Law* *Deut. 29. 29*.

SECTION III.

Of the Method wherein we intend to treat of the Knowledge of Christ; chiefly concerning his Humanity, and what he did for Mankind in that capacity.

It is very sadly to be considered, how all the parts of Christian Knowledge hath been defaced with Error, and scarce any thing more than this which respects the Knowledge of Christ's Incarnation. Which as it is a great Mystery, *1 Tim. 3. 16*. and hard to be explicated in the full Glory thereof; yet it must be acknowledged also, to be intelligible to very low Capacities, because every Christian is particularly concern'd in the knowledge and belief thereof, as ever they look for eternal Life. Waving therefore the Curiosities of old or later Times, judging it better to suppress in silence Mens various Apprehensions, than to puzzle the Reader with them; we shall content our selves with what is plainly propounded in the Holy Scripture, and generally acknowledged by sober Christians, (with little variation) saving that of late, not above thirty years since, some have espoused dangerous Opinions, so dissonant to the common Faith of Christians, ever since the establishing thereof in the World, that where their Notions are admitted, it is certain the Truth concerning Christ's Incarnation and Resurrection, with the Glory then to follow, will be rejected.

Nor are we here immediately concern'd to treat of the wonderful Union between the Divine and Humane Natures, in that Heavenly Man the Lord Jesus, whose Name *Immanuel*, God with us, doth undoubtedly signify, the uniting of these two Natures, as they never were before that wonderful Conception and Birth of our Saviour, *Matth. 2*. And therefore must not only signify God with us, or with our Nature, by the communication of his Spirit; For so he had often been with the Prophets and other Holy Men from the beginning of the World; yea, and by very remarkable signs of his presence, to *Abraham* and his Seed, who had God nigh unto them, in all they called upon him for: yea, they heard God speak, with audible Voice, out of the Fire, and yet did live: They had also his Presence by special manifestations in his Temple; which sometimes was filled with the Glory of the God of Israel. Yet none of these

these might be called God with us, in that excellent way wherein Christ is said to be God with us. And let it be remembred, that this Name * *Immanuel*, as it signifies the *Strong God*; to be

* *Immanuel*, The Strong God with us, or God made Flesh, Isa. 7. 14. Mat. 1. 23. John 1. 14. The Union of two Natures in one Person of our Redeemer, is noted in this word *Immanuel*. Also his Office as Mediator, &c. Will Christ, Dist. Let. I.

arises from that miraculous Conception and Birth of the Lord Christ, *Isa. 9. 6. Mat. 1. 18, &c.* Not to his being filled with the Holy Ghost from the Womb, for so was *John the Baptist*. Nor to his being sanctified from the Womb, as *Jeremiah*. Nor from any other manner of the Presence of God in a way of Grace or favour only. Nor yet by miraculous operation, enabling him to the Work of his Ministry among Men; For so God had often been with *Moses*, as when he smote the *Egyptians* with so many Plagues, *Exod. 9.* and divided the Red Sea, and gave Water out of the Rock, and Manna from Heaven in the Wilderness. And such a Presence and Union with God, as to be a fellow-worker together with him could not be all; for so God was with the Apostles themselves, *2 Cor. 6. 1.*

Nor can we think, from good grounds, That this *Immanuel* should signify any Created Substance united to us; for the word *us*, referring to his Humanity, the word *God* must refer to an higher Nature, than any that was created or made, be it Angel or Spirit, and therefore must needs be real or very God; as it is also written, *1 John 5. 20.* And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true; and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is very God, and eternal Life.

And for the more familiar discovery of what is needful to be known of him, specially with respect to his Humanity, we shall observe this order; to shew,

1. That the Christ, the Saviour of the World, did really take a Body of Flesh, and was truly Man by Nature.

2. That according to the Will of God, and his Eternal Wisdom, Christ did, in the place and stead of Man-kind, fulfil that Law by which the whole World stood guilty before God.

3. That he really suffered Death, in that Body of Flesh, for the Sins of the World, out of the free Grace and Love he bore unto the World.

4. That the Righteousness performed by Christ is imputed unto Men, and made theirs through Faith, which worketh by Charity; and this Faith is counted to Men for Righteousness.

5. By the Power of his Godhead he rose from the Dead bodily, and became Victor over all the Power of Death, &c.

6. That this Jesus is invested with all Power in Heaven, and in Earth, and become the Universal Lord of Mankind, and Head over his Church in all things.

7. That Christ shall descend from the Created Heavens, whither he is ascended, in the same Body which was raised from the Dead; to judge and determine the final Estate of all Men and Angels to Eternity, at his Appearing and Kingdom.

8. That in the interim Christ dwells in his Church, by his Holy Spirit, whose

whose Office it is to lead into all Truth; not to abrogate what Christ hath taught his Church to observe, nor to introduce a Ministration distinct from that established by the Lord Jesus.

SECT. IV.

That the Christ, the Saviour of the World, did really take a Body of Flesh, and was Man by Nature.

The truth of this Proposition is evident; 1. From the Prophecies which went before of him, *Gen. 3. 15.* He is called the *Seed of the Woman*; and nothing can be so called which is not of Humane Nature, unless in an allegorical or figurative sense; which here must not be admitted, because it would certainly expose us to great uncertainty in the most important business of our Salvation; and no Man shall be able to determine securely what is the undoubted meaning thereof.

2. When God promised, *Gen. 12.* That in the Seed of Abraham all Nations should be blessed; it cannot with any fairness be denied, but that it is plainly interpreted of his Seed according to the Flesh, and referred to the Lord Jesus; *Gal. 3. 16.* Now to Abraham and his Seed were the Promises made. He saith not, And to Seeds, as of many, but as of One, and to Thy Seed, which is Christ. And again, *Heb. 2. 16.* For verily he took not on him the Nature of Angels, but he took on him the Seed of Abraham.

3. When God promised to raise up unto Israel a Prophet like unto Moses, *Deut. 18. 18.* of their Brethren, he plainly intends it of their Essence and Nature; *Rom. 9. 5.* Whose are the Fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is God over all, blessed for ever. For otherwise it could not be of them, if of a distinct Nature from them.

4. When the Prophet saith, Behold, a Virgin shall conceive, and bring forth a Son: the words are not delusory, as it it should only seem to be a Conception, but was really so; and how that should be, without a real participation of her Substance, the Holy Scripture doth not, neither can Philosophy determine: And if here we admit of a Trope or Figure only, we are still exposed to such uncertainty as will undermine the Faith of Christianity.

5. The reality of the accomplishment of these Prophecies, doth confirm our Interpretation of them; for as it is said, the Power of the Highest should overshadow the Holy Virgin, and the Holy Ghost should come upon her; so she did Conceive in her Womb, went her months with Child, and had a Son born of Her, who is also called the Fruit of her Womb: which could not truly and properly be said, but as the Lord Jesus was made of her Substance; as it is said *Gal. 4. 4.* But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a Woman, made under the Law.

6. Christ's receiving Nutriment from her Breasts, as other Children from their Mothers; his growing from an Infant-state to Manhood; his being subject to his Parents; his frequent Eating, Drinking, Sleeping, and

and wearisomness in Labour and Travail; are all evidences of the reality of his Manhood. And last of all;

7. His Death doth most plainly shew that he was really Man, mortal, *i. e.* subject to death even as we. Heb. 2. 9. *We see Jesus made a little lower than the Angels for the suffering of Death.* Acts 2. 23. *Him being delivered by the determinate Counsel and fore-knowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.* John 19. 33. *They came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already;—Then took they the Body of Jesus, and wound it in Linen Cloth.*—There laid they Jesus, to wit, in a new Sepulchre. Rev. 1. 18. *I am he that liveth, and was dead.* Now then considering that the Angelical Nature was too sublime to taste of Death, which was the Punishment due for our Sin, with the condemning Power and Curse of the Law: then a Nature more sublime could not die for us; though the Divine Nature might sympathize with the Humane Nature in his Sufferings for us: so then there is no other Nature, but that which is Humane (except brut Animals) whereof he could partake, and it was Man whom God design'd to redeem. And as by Man came Death, by Man also came the Resurrection from the Dead. Or, if there be any other Nature than these mentioned, whereof Christ may be supposed to partake, yet that is wholly unknown to all Men; and to say he did partake of it, is nothing else but to say we know not what.

We conclude therefore, That it is the security of God's People, to rest in these Testimonies before recited, with other such, as, *Remember that Jesus Christ is of the Seed of David, &c.* 2 Tim. 2. *And knowing that God had sworn with an Oath to him, That of the Fruit of his Loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his Throne,* Acts 2. 30. *Concerning his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who was made of the Seed of David according to the flesh,* Rom. 1. 3. Taking them also in the most proper and open signification, or otherwise, we are inevitably entangled in such Difficulties as no Man can assuile, how-ever things may be coloured with flourishes and subtilties.

S E C T. V.

According to the Will of God, and his Eternal Wisdom, Christ did, in the place and stead of Mankind, fulfil that Law, by which the whole World stood guilty before God.

How deeply Mankind stood indebted to the Righteous God of Heaven and Earth, and how unable he was to pay that score; and how consequently he must inevitably undergo the eternal displeasure of God, with the malediction of his Righteous Law, is excellently set forth, Rom. 3. 9, &c. *Are we better than they? No in no wise: for we have before charged both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; As it is written, There is none Righteous, no not one.—They are all gone out of the way, they are altogether unprofitable, there is none that doth good, no not one.—Now we know, that what things soever the Law saith, it saith to them that are under the Law; that every Mouth may be stopped, and all the World may become subject to the Judgment of God. Therefore by the Deeds of the Law shall no* *Flesh*

Flesh be justified in the sight of God; for by the Law, is the knowledge of Sin. So then, we see there is a Law, by which the whole World stands Guilty; and upon that account, subject to the Judgment of God. It matters not then for the Mode, or Circumstances, under which the Law is given, they both fall short before God. He hath therefore shut up all in Unbelief, or concluded all under Sin; and surely we may conclude, it is, that he may magnifie his Mercy unto all, even to the whole World in this case, as well as to the Jews, Rom. 11. 32.

And as he, even so we, have reason to ascribe Wisdom to God, for it hath appeared Wonderfully; he having designed to magnifie his Mercy in Christ, as the only Physician to Cure the Malady of Mankind, would certainly provide a Plaister commensurable with the Sore, that none may cry out and say, I am undone, I am wounded with the unavoidable wound of Mankind: And there is no Balm for me, the Physician hath made the Plaister so narrow, that Thousands, and ten Thousands, cannot possibly have Healing by it; nay, he hath determined to see us perish without any Remedy. Alas! there is none to save us, neither could we come whole and sound into the World; we are born to be destroyed, and destroyed we must be. To quell which hideous (and indeed most just) complaint (if indeed God had not in his Wisdom provided Relief for them): Behold, thus saith the Lord, Isa. 45. 22. *Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the Earth: for I am God, and there is none else.* Therefore seek to me, and none but me, and ye shall be saved: for I am God; even such a God as delight to save, but not to destroy. Ezek. 18. 23. *Have I any pleasure at all in the death of the Wicked? This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who will have all Men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the Truth,* 1 Tim. 2. 3, 4.

When we are bid to behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the Sins of the World, John 1. 29. are we to except any Person in the World, or the greatest part of the World? God forbid. Are they all become guilty *per force* (except Adam) and have none to justify them? Where is then the Lamb? Behold, here is Fire, the Wood, and the Knife, but where is the Sacrifice, may many say, if indeed the Lamb of God died not for them? But the Holy Ghost resolves the Query to the full, 1 John 2. 2. *He is the Propitiation for our Sins, and not for ours only, but also for the Sins of the whole World.*

Acts 17. The Apostle speaking of Mankind, indefinitely declares that they are all the Offspring of God. And can we think that he will harden himself (like the Esstridge) against his Offspring, as though they were not his? We which are evil by Nature, would not so deal with our Offspring; and surely God transcends us in all Goodness whatsoever.

Under the Parable of the Creditor, and the two Debtors, Luke 7. 40. may fitly be understood *Jew and Gentile*, even whole Mankind; and some Expositors do take it so. Now they were both in one Predicament in this; they had nothing to Pay, though the Debt was not equal. Now the Kingdom of Heaven is compared to him that takes an account of Persons thus engaged, Mat. 18. 21. to 28. Now, saith our Saviour, when they had nothing Pay, he frankly forgave them both, *viz.* caused

sed the Bond to be cancell'd by which they stood obliged, nailing it to his Cross; requiring them in their Capacity, to do likewise one unto another, and to love him.

And from hence, that all Men are bound to love Christ, as their indispensable duty, under pain of *Anathema*, or Execration; *Maran-atha*, till the Lord come (or, as some) even for ever, 1 Cor. 16. 22. Hence we justly infer, that God in Love gave Christ for all Men, even to bless them, in turning every one of them away from their Iniquities, *Acts 3. ult.* And shew me the Man which ought not to love Christ, and then I will shew the Man whom Christ did not love. But if all Men are bound to love him, then it's certain the Will of God was, that his Love should extend to them: *For we love him, because he first loved us.* And herein is Love, not that we loved God, but God loved us, and sent his Son to be a Propitiation for our Sins, 1 John 4. 10, 19. And again, herein perceive we the Love of God, because he laid down his Life for us. The result is this, whom God loved, them Christ died for. All that Christ died for, ought to love him; but all Men ought to love him. *Ergo*, God loved, and Christ died for all Men, who hath therefore obliterated the condemning power of the Law, by which they were indebted to him; so that according to the Will of God, and his Eternal Wisdom, the Door of Salvation is opened to them, and they exhorted to enter therein with thanksgiving, *Psal. 100. 1, 2, 3, 4.*

S E C T. VI.

That Christ did really (not phantastically) suffer Death in his own Body, for the Sins of the World, &c.

That the Death of Christ was real, and accomplished in his own Specific Body, attended with anguish of Soul, under the burthen of the Sins of Men, and the Wrath of God, is that we have need to remember, and hold fast; when we consider how many there be, who labour to divert Men from the true understanding of, and due affiance in the Death and Bloodshed of Christ, which he accomplished at *Jerusalem*, as if it were not that Death and Bloodshed which brings Life unto the World: They boldly saying, *That Blood which cleanseth from Sin, was never seen with mortal eyes*; yea, and that *nothing which was Mortal, was called Christ*. And so would make the Death of Christ, by which he ransomed the World, and the Blood which was shed for Remission of Sins not a real and bodily Death; not real and properly Blood, but a Metaphorical Death and Bloodshed, *viz.* The suffering of the Spirit, when its motions are not obeyed, &c.

But this cannot be the mind of the Scripture, in which the Spirit of God informs us, 1 Cor. 15. That Christ Died, was Buried, and Rose again the third Day, according to the Scriptures. For after that manner (I mean his being oppressed because of Sin) he may be said to have Died (if yet it be fit so to speak) ever since Sin was committed, and so daily Dieth still.

Where-

Wherefore by our asserting the reality of Christ's Death, we design to give testimony to his Death upon the Cross, *Mat. 27.* and only that, as being that, and only that, wherein the price of our Redemption is concern'd; as it is written: *Christ hath redeemed us from the Curse of the Law, being made a Curse for us; as it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a Tree, Gal. 3. 13.* And again, *In that he died, he died unto sin once, Rom. 6. 10.* And again, *Once in the end of the World hath he appeared, to take away sin by the Sacrifice of Himself, Heb. 9. 26.* Not that he often suffered; yea, that we might especially remark the Reality of his Dying for us, the Holy Ghost hath set a special remark upon the reality of the effusion of his precious Blood, *John 19. 33, 34, 35.* *But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was Dead, they brake not his Legs, but one of the Souldiers with a Spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there-out Blood and Water. And he that saw it bare Record, and his Record is true; and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe.* Surely, the Lord foresaw that some would hesitate about the reality of this Bloodshed for Remission of Sin, and therefore hath made as strong provision against that Error, as can be delivered in Sacred Scripture. It is needless to multiply Scriptures to prove this thing further; yet may it not be altogether unuseful to note, how certainly this thing was known to the World, even among the Enemies of Christ, who therefore contemned him, as the *Pharisees* did before them, *Mat. 27. 41, 42.* who were so sensible of the reality of his Death, that they exulted over him, saying, *He saved others, himself he could not save: let him come down from the Cross, &c.*

That Christ was put to an Ignominious Death (saith *Hugo Grotius*) ^{Grot.} is no uncertain Report, but so manifest, as that the Enemies of Christians will avouch the same. The memory of it was so fresh among the Infidels for 300 Years after, as the *Queen-Mother to Constantine*, hearing of her Son's conversion to the Christian Faith, sent him her Letter, wherein she laid great folly upon him, in that he would place his confidence in such a Man as suffered himself to be nailed to a Cross of Wood.

Thus the preaching of the Cross (to wit, Christ Crucified upon the Cross) was foolishness in the judgment of the Wise and Noble: But God forbid that we should glory in any thing save in the Cross (*i. e.* the Sufferings) of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which through Faith, we are reconciled to God.

Certainly, there is no other Death of Christ to be named, than that which he suffered upon the Cross, he being no way subject to Death, but as he was the Man Christ. It is therefore great Vanity, to talk of Christ being dead in Men (as some do speak in our days); for having once died, he dieth no more, Death hath no more dominion over him. Besides, should we allow a little this groundless Notion, to see what the end thereof will be; yet how should such a Death (I mean Mens opposing the Spirit of Christ) be the Redemption of the World? is the World Redeemed by the Spirits being opposed? Sure, this is the Death that cries for Vengeance, if any thing do, *Acts 7. 51.* Or, how are Men

said

said to be reconciled to God by such a supposed Death; for so we are said to be by the Death of his Son. Surely, such a Death ever did, and ever will produce another Effect, even a separation between God and Men, *Isa.* 59. 2.

Avoiding therefore these Vanities, let us rejoyce in the Loving-Kindness of God, who spared not his own Son, but delivered him to Death for us all; so being justified by his Death, we shall be saved by his Life. *Rom.* 5. 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.

SECTION VII.

That the Righteousness of Christ, is imputed to Men, and made theirs through Faith which worketh by Love, and this Faith is accounted unto Men for Righteousness.

How it cometh to pass, that any should take the Righteousness of Christ's Performances, or actual Obedience, to be designed by God only as an excellent Pattern, or Example to Men, is not easie to conceive. When we consider, 1. That we had very excellent Presidents before his coming, such as is hard for us to imitate; whose Examples also even to this Day, remain Patterns to us, *James* 5. 10. Yea, and since his Ascension, his Apostles are very excellent Presidents, even such as few (if any) can fairly pretend to follow. Surely Christ did nothing in vain, or without great need on our part; and yet so eminent was the Pattern of the first Witnesses of Christ, in the Ministration of the Gospel, that they even seem to have followed Christ *κατὰ νόμον*, or step by step, both in active and passive Obedience; at least so far, as that it may seem sufficient for our Example. Now if Christ should be called our Righteousness, only because he is our Pattern, he alone could not be called our Pattern; and consequently, he alone would not be called our Righteousness. But seeing Christ, and Christ alone, may truly be said to be our Righteousness, *Fer.* 23. 6. we must therefore look upon his Righteousness to be of far greater Concernment to us, than the Righteousness of the most holy Saint that ever yet lived; nor will it be easie to do this, unless we hold to that Article, *The imputation of Christ's Righteousness to Men.* And in this case, it's easie to demonstrate the Transcendent Advantages that accrue to us from his Righteousness, and from his only: For where are we bid to look to the Saints for Righteousness? Or where are they said to be made of God unto us Righteousness? Or where are they called our Righteousness? But unto Christ we are thus directed, *Isa.* 46. 12, 13. *Hearken unto me ye stout-hearted, that are far from Righteousness. I bring near my Righteousness, it shall not be far off; and my Salvation shall not tarry.* *Isa.* 45. 24, 25. *I have sworn by my Self, the word is gone out of my Mouth,— every Knee shall bow, &c. Surely, shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength, even to him shall Men come.— In the Lord shall all the Seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory.* This place is applied to Christ, *Phil.* 3. who is also said to be

be made of God unto us Righteousness (as well as) Redemption, &c. *1 Cor.* 1. 30, 31. *That according as it is written, Let him that glorieth, glory in the Lord.*

Righteousness is two-fold, our own Righteousness, (or the Righteousness of the Law) and that which is called the Righteousness of * God, *Phil.* 3. 9.—*And be found in him, not having on my own Righteousness which is of the Law, but that which is through the Faith of Christ, the Righteousness which is of God by Faith.* Again, *The Righteousness of God without the Law, is manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, Rom.* 3. 21. That is, God hath now, in respect of us, cancelled the Law, which stood as an hand-writing against us, and was contrary to us, nailing it to the Cross of Christ. And hath manifested, or shewed forth a way to be made Righteous without the Law; yea, by which we may be justified from all things, from which we could not be justified by the Law; *Acts* 13. 39. Of this Righteousness, *Paul* saith, the Jews were ignorant; and going about to establish their own Righteousness, have not submitted themselves to the Righteousness of God, *Rom.* 10. By submission, in this place, we may not well understand a conforming of our selves to the Precepts of God, (though such submission must be found in us); but this place may be well expounded by *Gal.* 2. 17. *If while we look to be justified by Faith, we our selves are found Sinners.* And again, *Even we have believed in Christ, that we might be justified by the Faith of Christ; and not by the Works of the Law, for by the Works of the Law shall no Flesh be justified.* Thus then the whole World being found guilty before God, could not, by any Righteousness which they have done, lift themselves out of that state of Sin and Misery; wherefore God, in the greatness of his love to Mankind, hath laid help upon One that is mighty to save; who brings near his Righteousness, to those that were far from Righteousness, that in him they might have Righteousness through Faith; though in themselves there is too much demerit, to bear the Appellation of Righteousness.

That God imputes Righteousness to Men without Works, is so plain, that it can never be denied. What is thus imputed, is not acted by us, but expressly reckoned as a matter of free Gift, or Grace; and this can be the Righteousness of none but Christ, as it concerns the Gentiles, who have believed through Grace, because no other way can the Righteousness of God be made ours. And this Righteousness of Christ must needs be that which he wrought in the days of his Pilgrimage: for if we take Righteousness as it is essential to the Godhead, it cannot be imputed to Men; For who is Holy as the Lord? *1 Sam.* 2. 2. The very Heavens are not clean in his sight, *Job* 15. 15. And he is more just than to impute us Righteous, if indeed there were no Righteousness to be imputed to us; and there is none Righteous, no not one. Except therefore the Righteousness of Christ be laid hold on, there is no Righteousness to be imputed to Sinners.

Now whether the Passive Righteousness of Christ only, or his Active Righteousness also, be that which is imputed to Sinners, is doubtful to some; but for my part I take it to be both. This is that fine Linnen, white

* Some do add a third, which they call Civil Righteousness, but I think the Law includes this.

white and clean, which arrayeth the Church of God, *Rev. 19. 7.* And the best Robe which God puts upon returning Sinners, *Luke 15.* Nor can I see to what end Christ did so exactly fulfil the Law, if he did it not for us, or in our stead: and so is the end of the Law for Righteousness to every one that believeth, *Rom. 10.* For though it is true, he was born under the Law, and so stood bound to keep the Law, yet for our sakes he was so born; and consequently all that he did in that capacity, was on our account also, as well as his Sufferings: For the Transgressions committed against the Law, was he crucified in our place and stead, and so it follows, that the whole Righteousness of Christ, Active and Passive, is reckoned as ours through believing. And how it can truly be said, that the Righteousness of the Law is fulfilled in us, unless it be by Christ's fulfilling it for us, I cannot at all conceive; sith it is certain, That the Law was a Yoke, which neither we nor our Fathers were able to bear, *Acts 15.* And though it is true, that Practical Righteousness wrought by the People of God, is a comely, yea, and a necessary Ornament, and may lie within the verge of *Rev. 19. 8.* Yet this I further say, that it is not so immediately signified in that place, as Righteousness Imputative; because the Righteousness there mentioned, is said to be granted to the Saints, (whereas Practical Righteousness is acquired by Industry); *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, 2 Cor. 5. 21.* Now certain it is, Christ was made Sin for us only by imputation, for he had no Sin; and as he was made Sin, so are we made the Righteousness of God in him, which must needs be by the free Imputation of his Righteousness to us; for there is otherwise none Righteous, no not one.

SECT. VIII.

By the Power of his Godhead he rose again from the Dead bodily, and became Victor over all the Power of Death, &c.

The Resurrection of Christ from the Dead, is that upon which the whole of Christianity depends, *1 Cor. 15. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.* And yet such is the Power of Darkness; that in the very days wherein the Apostles lived, the Faith of some was overthrown in this most important Article. Howbeit the truth of our Proposition is evident, *Rom. 6. 4. Christ was raised from the Dead by the Glory of the Father. Destroy this Temple, and in three days I will raise it up, John 2. 19. I have Power to lay down my Life, and I have Power to take it again, John 1. 18.* Which also, was gloriously performed, *Mat. 28. 2.* For though his Adversaries covered his Sepulchre with a mighty Stone, and sealed it also, and set a Watch of Souldiers over it, yet by the Power of God the Earth was moved, the Souldiers fainted, and Christ was raised. Being attested first by the Angels, who said, *Why seek ye the Living among the Dead? He is not here, he is risen; come see the place where the Lord lay, Luke 24. 6, 7. Remember how he spake unto you when he was in Galilee, saying, The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful Men, and be Crucified, and the third day*

day he shall rise again. Which also came to pass, with this glorious Event, That many of the dead Bodies of the Saints arose after he was risen, and went into the Holy City, and appeared unto many, *Mat. 27. 52.*

The reality and certainty of the rising again of the same Body which was crucified, Christ himself confirms by many infallible proofs, *Act. 1. 3: Being seen of his Disciples forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God. And did eat and drink with them after he was risen from the Dead; for he shewed himself alive, and that openly, not to all the People, but to Witnesses chosen before of God, Acts 10. 40.* Yea, that they might be fully ascertained in this grand Point of the Christian Faith, he required them to handle him; to put the Hand into his Side, and the Finger into the print of the Nails; assuring them, that a Spirit hath not Flesh and Bone as they saw he had, *Luke 24. 39.*

Christ's Witnesses being thus amply assured of the truth of the Resurrection, did with great power give evidence thereof, as we read, *Acts 4. 33.* To this also Peter refers that passage in *Psal. 16. 10. Thou wilt not leave my Soul in Hell, neither suffer thy Holy One to see corruption; and Acts 2. 32, 33. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are Witnesses.* Wherefore having so sacred and so full an Evidence, I think it needless to enlarge, yet the Scriptures are very full to set forth the excellency of this Truth, and that mighty Power which was wrought in Christ when he was raised from the Dead, *Ephes. 1. 19, 20.*

And seeing the whole Gospel is but a trifle, yea, a false report, if this Truth fall to the Ground; we are therefore to beware of those, who under specious pretences would delude the Understanding about this Point; telling of Christ being risen in them, risen in Spirit, &c. Which is no way truly applied to the Resurrection of Christ; for Christ never died in respect of his Divine Part, and therefore cannot be said to rise again in that respect: but it was his Manhood only which was capable of such a change, as to die and live again, and that so he did, hear what himself saith, *Rev. 1. 18. I am he that liveth, and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore.*

The veracity of Christ's Resurrection being maintained, the whole Gospel is confirmed; and that to be the most excellent Ministration in the World: for none hath had this Attestation, that the Author thereof was Victor over Death. I conceive, could the Jews believe that he did rise from the Dead, (though their great Objection was about his Godhead) they would soon forsake Moses, or rather be directed by Moses unto Christ. This Miracle of the Resurrection of Christ makes all alive, as it were: It was that which begat the Apostles themselves to a lively hope, *2 Pet. 1. 3. And if we believe that Jesus died and rose again; then they also that sleep in Jesus, shall God bring with him, 1 Thess. 4. 14. &c.* This is that which groundedly makes any Man condemn Death, because he knows he is a conquered Enemy: To condemn it from any other Principle, as some Heathens and others have done, is but desperateness, falsely called Courage: But the Christian Man sees his Captain gone before him, and hath abolished Death, or made it void, and brought Life and Immortality to light by the Gospel. It is Christ only, who by Death, conquered

Hof. 13. 14. conquered him that had the Power of Death. It is he that brings to pass that saying; *O Death, I will be thy Plagues; O Grave, I will be thy Destruction.* Now let the faithful Christian alwayes rejoyce and give thanks to God, who giveth us the Victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

S E C T. I X.

This Lord Jesus Christ is invested with all Power in Heaven and in Earth, and only Head to his Church in all things.

Christ's Investiture with all Power in Heaven and Earth, is asserted by himself, *Mat. 28. 18. All Power is given to me in Heaven and in Earth;* who therefore enters into the full exercise of his Authority, in establishing the Glorious Gospel as a Rule to all the World. *Go ye therefore, teach all Nations. Preach the Gospel to every Creature, &c.* The same is confirmed by the Apostle, *Act. 2. 32. This Jesus hath God raised up.—Being by the right Hand of God exalted,—fulfilling that which was written.* *Psal. 110. 1. The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy Foes thy Footstool.* And again, *Acts 4. 10, 11. Jesus of Nazareth, whom God raised from the Dead.—This is the Stone which was set at naught by you Builders, which is become the Head of the Corner.* The Apostle Paul gives testimony; That God hath set this Lord Jesus at his right Hand, far above all Principalities and Powers, Might and Dominion, and every Name that is named, not only in this World, but also in that which is to come; and hath put all things under his Feet, and given him to be Head over all things to the Church, *Ephes. 1. 20, 21, 22.* And that the Church might have full evidence in this Case, Christ himself hath sent this Testimony from Heaven to his Churches, being ascended thither: *And behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the Keys of Hell and Death, Rev. 1. 18.* It is he that shuteth, and no Man openeth; and openeth, and no Man shutteth. Jesus Christ is that Universal King, highly exalted, according to God's most solemn Decree, *Isa. 45. 23.* To whom every Knee must bow, first or last; and every Tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Yea, it is ordained of God, that all Men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father, *John 5.* And therefore saith the Spirit, *Every Creature which is in Heaven and in Earth, &c. heard I saying, Blessing, and Honour, and Glory, and Power, be unto him that sitteth on the Throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever, Rev. 5. 13.*

From this Sovereignty committed to the Lord Jesus, I observe, 1. The Wisdom of God, in advancing his Holy Child Jesus to this Universal Jurisdiction over the World, specially in things relating to the Souls of Men; and that therefore every Man must give an account to him; *For, for this cause he both died, rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the Dead and Living: so that we must, every one, give an account of our selves unto God.*

2. It's dangerous for any Man to arrogate to himself the Title of Spiritual Head in the Church; for this one Spiritual Body, hath one

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Spiritual Head, the Lord Jesus. Nor is it possible for any one Man to be constituted Head of the Church Universal, neither is it any way reasonable it should be so. Not possible, because such an Head is, or must be Elective, and the Church Universal can never make such an Election. Unreasonable, because all Churches have equal Power, which is made void by such a Constitution. But the greatest reason of all that lies against such an Headship, is, because no Man is fit for it, it's a Work besitting none but the Lord Jesus; He is the Master of the Family. Ministers are all Stewards of the Mysteries of God; Christ tells us he is our Master, but no where requires his Church to call any of his Stewards Masters: All that is required by the great Apostle of the Gentiles, is this, *1 Cor. 4. 1. Let a Man so account of us, as of the Ministers of Christ, and Stewards of the Mysteries of God.*

3. To know Christ in his Exaltation, will teach Men to trust in him; for he can restrain the rage of Saul, and deliver Paul out of the Mouth of the Lion. He supports Steven in the hour of Death, and breaks open the Iron Gate to let Peter out of Prison: He is faithful, who will not suffer his People to be tempted above what they are able, but will, with the Temptation, make a way to escape, that they may be able to bear it.

4. The Knowledge of Christ, as exalted, teacheth subjection to his Will, and to be desirous to be under the Government of such a Prince: To be cautious how we prefer any Laws to his, but especially of conforming our selves to any Laws against his. For though Christ's exaltation at the right Hand of God, to be a Prince and a Saviour, to be Head over all things to the Church, does not prejudice the Government of the World in the Hand of Earthly Princes; yet is his Authority so far advanced above all Power, that he must be obeyed rather than Men, *Acts 4. 19.*

Christ being declared to be endowed with plenary Authority, and having settled the Affairs of his Kingdom, by giving Commandments to his Apostles, &c. He was pleased to enter into his Glory, to ascend the Heavens, and to take his Celestial Throne, according to the evidence of these Scriptures, *Acts 9. 10. & 7. 55.* 'Tis said, He was taken up from his chosen Disciples into Heaven. The Angels avouch the same. Paul avers, That the same that descended into the lower parts of the Earth, did also ascend far above all Heavens. *Ephes. 4. 9, 10. I leave the World, saith Christ, and go to my Father. The Heavens must retain Him, saith Peter, untill the times of the restitution of all things, Acts 3. 21.*

Now when Christ thus ascended, he received Gifts for Men, and sent down the Gifts which he received, to continue in the Church (being such as fit Men for the Work of the Ministry, *Ephes. 4.*) to the end of the World, or till the perfecting of the Saints, (which Gifts are mistaken by some for Christ himself); nay, worse than this, a false Gift, or a confident persuasion of any thing, is too commonly thought, by deceived Souls, to be the Voice of Christ, whom they suppose dwelleth in them: This is doubtless a part of the fulfilling of Christ's Prediction; that many false

false Christs shall arise and deceive many. Remember that *Peter*, that had received largely of Christs Spiritual Gifts, yet teacheth no such thing to be the Ascension of Christ; as the receiving of Gifts and Graces, to give a raisedness of Soul to the Saints, which it may well be feared many suppose to have, which are really ignorant of them. However these Gifts are precious, but Christ the Giver, far more precious; who dwelleth in that Light whom no Man in his mortal state hath seen, nor can approach unto.

S E C T. X.

That Christ shall descend from the Created Heavens, whither he is ascended, in the same Body which was raised from the Dead, to judge and determine the final estate of all Men and Angels to Eternity, at his Appearing and Kingdom.

The second coming of Christ, or his coming to judge the World, is so exprest in the Holy Scriptures, that we may as groundedly look for that his Coming, as the Fathers might look for his coming in the Flesh. But as there was but few received him when he Came, so it may be feared, few wait for his second Appearance: However, our Lord hath assured us, that he will come again: *John 14. 3. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to my self; that where I am, you may be also.* And again, *ver. 28. Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again.* He gave us further assurance hereof, after his Ascension, *Rev. 22. Behold, I come quickly, &c.* The same is asserted by the testimony of Angels, *Acts 1. 11. The same Jesus—shall so come in like manner, as ye have seen him go into Heaven.* Testified also by the Apostles, *And he shall send Jesus, who before was Preached unto you, Acts 3. 20.* St. Paul tells us, Christ shall come with all his Saints, *2 Thes. 4. 16.* for faith he, *The Lord shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Arch-Angels, and with the Trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first.* This is that glorious coming of Christ, which the Saints are taught to wait for, *1 Thes. 1. 10. Ye turned from Idols to serve the Living and True God, and to wait for his Son from Heaven, even Jesus who delivered us from Wrath to come.*

When the Apostle remembers the People of God of this Doctrine, he certifies they had not delivered any cunningly devised Fables, when they made known the Coming, and Power of our Lord Jesus Christ. And though the Holy Ghost fore-saw, that this Truth would be contemned in the latter Days, with bold demands, *Where is the Promise of his coming?* Yet doth it encourage the Children of God, to rest in the assured expectation thereof, *2 Pet. 3. throughout.* Now Christ had been come in Spirit long before this Epistle was written, so *Peter* himself had received him; therefore he can only be understood here, to respect his Personal Appearance, when he shall come to be glorified in his Saints, and to be admired in all them that believe: But to others in flaming Fire, taking Vengeance of them that know not God, nor obey the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, *2 Thes. 1. 7, 8.*

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At this coming, he will determine the final state of Men and Angels: *For he hath appointed a Day in which he will judge the secrets of Men by Jesus Christ, according to the Gospel, Rom. 2. 16.* Yea, he shall judge both the quick and the dead, (as he is appointed) at his Appearing and Kingdom. The Sentence to be then given, is already foretold, *Mat. 25. 41.* And the Devils themselves believe this, and tremble, *James 2. being reserved in Chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great Day, 2 Pet. 2. 4.*

Reason seems to approve this Verity; because otherwise, the greatest part of Iniquity would go unpunished, and the greatest part of Righteousness go without reward. But God is Righteous, and therefore he will render a reward to every Man, according as his work shall be; *Rev. 22.* Before Christ's glorious Tribunal must all Flesh appear, as before a most Righteous Judge, who will make manifest the hidden things of Darkness; and then shall we discern between them that serve God, and them that serve him not.

By Christ's designing, or determining Mans Estate eternally, we intend an endless State, to the Righteous and Wicked respectively. And should we otherwise take the word Eternal than the native force importeth, we cannot avoid making the felicity of the Good, as temporary as the misery of the Bad; which absurdity forbids such an Interpretation. Seeing, First, It cannot be denied that Eternal Life is set out to be perpetual, with as much amplitude of Speech as may be, *1 Pet. 5. 10. Who hath called us unto his Eternal Glory by Jesus Christ. 2 Tim. 2. 10. Therefore I endure all things for the Elects sake, that they may also obtain the Salvation which is in Jesus Christ, with Eternal Glory.* As God's People shall ever be with the Lord after the Resurrection, *1 Thes. 4. 17.* so their Kingdom is to be Everlasting, and their Habitation Eternal, *2 Cor. 5. 1.* Those things we see not, but hope for, are Eternal, *2 Cor. 4. 18.* Our Redemption and Salvation, are Eternal, *Heb. 9. 12, 15.* Our King is Eternal, *1 Tim. 1. 17.* and our Life is Eternal: *Fight therefore the good fight of Faith, lay hold of Eternal Life, 1 Tim. 6. 12.*

On the other side, the Condemnation of wicked Men is Eternal, *John 5. 24.* for it is here put in direct opposition to Eternal Life, *Mark 3. 29.* It is expressly called *Eternal Damnation*, *Mat. 3. 29.* even such as hath no forgiveness in this World, nor in the World to come. The punishment of the Damned, is compared to a Worm that never dieth, and to Fire that never goeth out. The last Judgment is expressly called, the *Eternal Judgment*, *Heb. 6. 2.* and therefore must conclude the Parties concern'd in it respectively, in an equal state with respect to duration, though their portion differ exceedingly; even as much as Light and Darkness differeth, or excellet each other.

Nor need this seem Incredible, that God should cause Men to subsist in torment to Eternity; it's as easie for him to fit a Man to endure in Eternal Misery, as to fit a Man to endure to Eternity in Felicity. As we see an instance of his Power and Providence frequently in this World, where many live longer in great Affliction, than others that have what Felicity this World can afford. Surely, as his Providence rules in these

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Cases, his Power is able to dispose the after-states of Men, according to his Word. He that truly believes there is a God, that made all things of nothing, and by his Power hath caused them to continue in their present admirable Frame for so many thousands of Years, and may continue them if he please, many thousands more; he can never think it Incredible, that God can make Men subsist to Eternity, either in a state of Wrath, or Blessedness.

Let us therefore hear the conclusion of the whole Matter: *Fear God* (saith the Prophet) *and keep his Commandments*,—for God shall bring every Work unto Judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or evil, Eccl. 12. ult. . Because he hath appointed a Day, in the which he will judg the World in Righteousness, whereof he offereth Belief to all Men (*πιστιν παρασχεν παντι ανθρωπω*, *fidem praebeamus omnibus*) in that he hath raised up Christ from the Dead, Acts 17. 31. O, that therefore Men would believe this, that it may be well with them to Eternity!

Montanus.

S E C T. XI.

That in the interim, Christ dwells in his Church by the Holy Spirit, whose Office is to lead into all Truth, not to abrogate what Christ taught his Church to observe, nor to introduce a Ministration distinct from that which was established by the Lord Jesus.

Nor doth our Lord Christ his personal absence from his People on Earth prejudice those whom they love, though they see Him not; and are made to rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of Glory. Because, according to his Promise, he hath sent them a Comforter, even the Holy Ghost to reside with them for ever, *ὁ παρακλητης τὸ αἰῶνος*, *Consolationem seculi*, to the Consummation of the World, Mat. 28. 20. Who dwelleth by his operation in the hearts of the Faithful, for their particular Comfort, Gal. 4. 6. And in the Mystical Body of Christ, by the communication of Spiritual Gifts, Ephes. 4. 16. *From whom the whole Body fitly joyned together, and compacted by that which every joyned supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase in the Body, unto the edifying of it self in Love*: And thus she is an Habitation of God through the Spirit. This Christ promised, John 14. *I will give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of Truth*. The Church is the Temple of the Holy Ghost, 1 Cor. 6. The Sons of God are led by the Spirit of God: and if any Man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his, Rom. 8. 9.

Montan.

This Promise therefore is Universal, made to as many as the Lord shall call, Acts 2. 39. Given to all that obey him; *There is one Body and one Spirit*, even as ye are called in one hope of your Calling, Ephes. 4.

There are certain rules by which this Holy Spirit may be known from the Spirit of Error: 1. Its property is to lead unto all Truth. It doth not stumble at any part of Truth, Gal. 5. 7, 8. *Who did hinder you that you should not obey the Truth? This persuasion cometh not of him that Callesth you*. Christ said, this Spirit would bring all things to Remembrance. It does

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does not lead the Saints to Forgetfulness. It reacheth to pray, *Thy Will be done on Earth, as it is in Heaven*; where sure the whole Will of God is obeyed. It breatheth forth such desires as these, Psal. 119. *O that my ways were directed to keep thy Precepts! Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect to all thy Commandments*.

2. This Spirit doth not speak of it self, John 16. 13. *Howbeit, when the Spirit of Truth is come, he shall guide you unto all Truth: FOR HE SHALL NOT SPEAK OF HIMSELF*: But whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak. He shall not pretend to give any new Ministration, for this would be to dishonour Christ, as not being Head over all things to his Church: But, saith Christ, *he shall glorifie Me*. For he shall take of Mine, and shew it unto you, ver. 14. The Spirit of Truth is certainly known by his adhering to, or leading Men to hearken unto the Doctrine which the Apostles received from Christ. 1 John 4. 6. *Hereby know we the Spirit of Truth, and the Spirit of Error*.

3. As the Spirit of Truth doth not institute any thing in the Church of its own beside or contrary to the Doctrine of Christ, so neither doth it repeal any of his Laws, Gal. 3. 15. *If it be a Mans Covenant, when it is confirmed, no Man disannulleth, or addeth ought thereto*. This Spirit doth Anathematize an Apostle, if he make void the Doctrine which he preached by Christ's Authority; yea, it withstandeth an Angel from Heaven in like manner which shall attempt it, Gal. 1. 6, 8. And hereby are justly avoided as deceitful Spirits, 1. Those which have cumbered Christianity with such a multitude of Traditions, that it's not easie to recount them; as may be shewed in due place. 2. All those Spirits which vainly pretend to lead Men into a more sublime, or spiritual path of Gospel Obedience, than Christ or his Apostles prescribed, and threewithal to neglect the Footsteps of that good Shepherd, and his faithful Ministers.

These Spirits do in effect deny the *Messias*: For it was understood even among the *Samaritans*, that when he came, he would teach them *ALL THINGS*: And indeed, otherwise we must look for another which were upon the matter to deny him. When the Spirit saith thus to the Churches in the Person of Christ, *I will lay upon you no greater Burthen than that which you have already: hold fast till I come*, Rev. 2. Doth he not plainly provide against any or other further Ministrations, and confirm to the coming of our Lord, what they had already? And this too, in opposition to the Doctrine of Balaam, Jezebel, and the *Nicholaitans*. And consequently the Doctrines, or Devices of any whatever.

Thus far touching the Knowledge of Jesus Christ, whom God hath sent to save Mankind, by his Death and Resurrection, to rule them by his Word and Spirit; and in case of Rejection, to punish them with Eternal Condemnation: This is that great Law-giver, who is able to Save and to Destroy. This is he that freed Man from the Yoke of Bondage, and hath established an easie Yoke, even the Law of Liberty; the Law of the Spirit of Life, to make Men free from the Law of Sin and Death. It now remaineth that we prosecute our designed Subject, namely, to describe Christianity, with respect to the Internal parts thereof, which yet remains to be considered. And the first Head which occurs is this:

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1. Concerning the denial of our selves in point of fleshy Vanities ; or the true Nature of Christian Humility for Sin.
2. Concerning our Conformity to Christ in the Spirit of our Mind.
3. The Hope and expectation of a Christian, at the appearing of Jesus Christ ; together with the comfortable parts of the Inheritance they here partake of by the way.

And this shall we do, if God permit, partly to help such Christians as are unmindful of that most necessary part of Religion ; who as they are a reproach to the form of Godliness, so they profit nothing to themselves by their Profession. And partly to still the Adversaries of the Form of Godliness, under a specious (but most false) pretence to the Power ; which operated in Christ and his Faithful Ones, directly opposite to these Mens doings.

CHAP. IV.

Concerning the denial of our selves in point of fleshy Vanities ; or the Nature of Christian Humility for Sin.

SECT. I.

SELF-denial is one of the great things which our Lord Christ held forth to his Followers, both in Life and Doctrine ; and that under such an absolute necessity, as that without it none could be his Disciples, *Luke 9. 23.* And knowing perfectly what was in Man in respect of this, as well as in other Enormities ; he labours to free him from the captivity of this Corruption, as from that Root from whence his Misery had its Original, and which tends to make it perpetual.

Self, I take to be truly expressed, or described thus : *The Will of Man corrupted, and as such, made the Rule of his Actions.* Whereas God never ordain'd Man's Will to have such Dominion, but alway to be in subordination to Reason, and his Will and Reason to be subordinate to the Will of God revealed to him. *Jer. 10. 23. O Lord, I know that the way of Man is not in himself ; it is not in Man that walketh to direct his steps.* And therefore by how much Men are actuated by the impulse of their desires, without regard to the Will of God, or Rational Principles, as regulated by the Will of God ; they are so far guilty of that Iniquity, which is censured by the Apostle, *Ephes. 2. 3. Among whom also we all had our Conversation, in time past, in the Lusts of our Flesh, (or of the Mind) fulfilling the Wills, Covisplings, desideris, of the Flesh, and of the Mind.* In which state a Man is compared very fitly to a Bullock unaccustomed to the Yoke, *Jer. 31. To a wild Ass which useth to snuff up the Wind, Jer. 2. 24.* To a swift Dromedary traversing her ways, *Jer. 2. 23.* as supposing themselves to be Masters of their own ways, saying in effect, Who is Lord over us ? And while the Creature is held in this

this corruption or blindness of Understanding, he cannot serve God ; *For no Man can serve two Masters, Matth. 6. 24.* A necessity therefore there is, that this Will of Man be subdued, because it produceth nothing to Godward ; *God's Children are not born of Flesh, neither of the Will of Man, John 1.* But of the Will of God ; *Of his own Will begat he us, Jam. 1. 18.*

Now the Design of Christ in establishing Christianity, being to destroy this corrupt Principle, the depraved Will of Man, and to advance the Will of God, to be done on Earth as it is in Heaven ; we shall therefore endeavour to set forth the Work of *Self-denial* in its gradual and particular Operations :

1. Powerful conviction of Sin, and Man's wretchedness on that account.
2. An awful consideration of God's Majesty and Justice.
3. Due observation of the patience of God in waiting to be gracious.
4. True sense and sorrow of heart for Sin, as committed against a gracious God.
5. Hatred against Sin in the very first thoughts or motions of it.
6. Humble confession to God, and application to him for mercy.
7. Solemn resolutions henceforth to become subject to the Will of God.

The opening of which Particulars will (I conceive) comprehend, whatsoever is generally to be found in Christian Men, (when becoming such) with respect to the Internal, or inward part of Self-denial, which is our present undertaking ; referring what is concomitant thereto, in point of further actual Obedience, to its proper place, when we come to speak of the External parts of Christian Religion.

SECT. II.

Of the Powerful conviction of Sin, and a sense of the wretchedness of Sinners upon the account of Sin.

For the better attaining to a powerful conviction of Sin, and a sense of Man's wretchedness by reason of Sin, it is necessary to understand the general state of Transgression into which Mankind is involved ; concerning which we find the Scripture giving this Testimony, *That all have sinned, and come short of the Glory of God, Rom. 3. 23. And that by one Man Sin entered into the World,—for that all have sinned, Rom. 5. 12. And that the whole World lieth in Wickedness, 1 John 5. 19.* Which is also evident by common experience, every Nation being greatly corrupted, through the abounding of Iniquity ; and the universality of the ways of Sin doth evince the same, none being free from Mortality, and the Calamities of Mankind : so that the Apostle might well say, That both Jew and Gentile are proved to be under Sin.

The Sin of Mankind is either *Original* or *Actual*. The first is come upon all, even the very Infant State of Mankind lie under it ; of whom that saying is true, *Rom. 5. They have not sinned after the similitude of*

Adam's Transgression. Yet Death reigning over them, proves the Transgression of *Adam* to be upon them. This is that Root Sin, called *the Sin of the World*, John 1. 29. whereof none are free. Nor is it convenient to extenuate or lessen this Sin, either in its nature, or the punishment it brings with it; It being indeed the *filum certissimum*, or leading Thred to all other Iniquities, Mankind being hereby corrupt, *ex origine*, and wholly deprived of the Glory of God, without the intervening Mercy of a Saviour. And hence we find *David*, when complaining of his sinful State, looks back to his corrupt Original, *Psal.* 51. 5. *Behold, I was shapen in Iniquity, and in Sin did my Mother conceive me.* Knowing (as *Job* saith) none can bring a clean thing out of an unclean thing. So that they are not to be despised, who say, That in our humiliation for Sin, we ought to bewail this our sinful Original among the rest of our Iniquities; which hath been to *Adam's* Posterity, like the Sin of Traitors, which bringeth with it corruption of Blood to their Off-spring, for which they must bear the shame of such Transgressions. How do we find that the Sin of Progenitors was wont to be lamented by their Off-spring among the *Israelites*, *Lam.* 5. 7. And is there not the same reason that *Adam's* Children should do the like, as being sensible of the evil Consequences thereof? We also may say, Our Father hath sinned, and we have born his Iniquity.

2. To bring Men to a powerful Conviction, and so to Conversion, the knowledge of our Personal Offences is by all means especially necessary, which are aggravated according to the Circumstances we lie under, in respect of the means which we have to know and to avoid Sin; and therefore those who follow sinful Courses, where the Law of God or his Gospel is published, from time to time, and may be consulted with at their pleasure; who have the Records, or Holy Writings of God by them, must needs be very greatly guilty before God, not only for doing what he hath forbidden, and omitting what he hath commanded, but for that these Sins are committed with an high hand. *John* 9. 41. *If ye were blind, ye should have no Sin; but now ye say ye see, therefore your Sin remaineth.* *John* 15. 24. *If I had not done among them the Works which none other Man did, they had not had Sin; but now have they both seen, and hated both me and my Father.*

And though our Saviour here, say the Jews, had not had Sin, &c. It is certainly to be understood, *not in that respect* in which now they were guilty. For when he else-where teacheth, that it shall be more tollerable for *Sodom* and *Gomorrab*, than for the Cities of *Israel*, where his mighty Works were done; yet he doth not thereby acquit *Sodom*, in the day of Judgment, from most just condemnation: For though they had not so great means as *Ghorazin* and *Bethsaida* had, yet they had means sufficient to leave them without excuse; and among other helps, common to Mankind in general, as the mighty Works of Creation, common Providence, the Principles of Reason, or the Law of Conscience, &c. they had this additional advantage of Righteous *Lot* his living among them; who also shewed them the way of Righteousness; all which must needs render them even self-condemned, when God shall judg Men in Righteousness.

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It is evident therefore, that as the plenitude of means to see and avoid Sin, doth greatly aggravate the Sins of those who abuse such favours: so neither shall those escape whose Advantages are less, because all have that which is this way sufficient; as is well observed by Mr. *J. Calvin*, according to Mr. *J. Goodwin's* quotation of him, which I will here insert, and then proceed to shew the nature of that powerful Conviction of Sin, which is attended with Conversion.

After that Adam was left in such confusion, he was fruitful in his cursed Seed, to bring forth a Generation like unto him; that is to say, vicious, perverse, corrupted; void and destitute of all Good, rich and abounding in Evil. Nevertheless the Lord of his Mercy, who doth not only love, but is himself Love and Charity,—giveth them time and leisure to return unto him, and set themselves to that Obedience from which they had strayed: And though suffering them to go after the desires and wishes of their Lusts, without Laws, without Government, without any correction by his Word: yet he hath given them warnings enough, which might have incited them to seek, taste and find him,—and do him homage according to the dignity of a Lord so good, so powerful, so wise, and eternal.

S E C T. III.

Awful consideration of the Majesty, Justice, and Goodness of God.

Powerful Conviction of Sin, which leads to Salvation, takes its beginning, and is carried on by the help of due consideration, of the Majesty, Justice, and Goodness of God. To which purpose the Lord calleth upon the Wicked, *Psal.* 50. 22. *after this majestic manner, Consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver you.* The Prophet *Habakkuk*, upon contemplation of the Majesty of the Works of God, shews the Effect it produceth; *Chap.* 3. 16. *When I heard, my Belly trembled; my Lips quivered at the Voice; rottenness entered into my Bones, and I trembled in my self, that I might rest in the day of trouble: When he cometh up unto the People, he will invade them with his Troops.* Here we are moved to consider the Majesty and Justice of God, from the observation of what he did to his implacable Enemies of old time, and thence to learn, that he will certainly punish Iniquity: Yea, how often are the Children of Men stirred up to consider what God did to *Pharaoh*, *Baalam*, the *Egyptians*, and the *Midianites*, that so they might beware of provoking the Eyes of his Jealousie, by sinning against him: Yea, and from these his proceedings with Sinners, is his Righteousness understood, as we read, *Micah* 6. 5.

It is the Son that considereth, which turneth from the sinful way, *Ezek.* 18. 28. whilst the careless and forgetful Fools consider not that they do evil. *Ecclef.* 5. 1. When God would convict *Israel* of Sin, he doth it by provoking them to consider their ways, and his Judgments that were upon them for Sin, *Hag.* 1. 5, &c. He that doth not consider that God, in whose Power is the Breath of his Nostrils, will never turn to him, but flatters himself with a persuasion, that God is *such an one as himself*, *Psal.*

50. 20:

50. 20. Or else, that their doings are not very ill, though never so wicked, *Mal. 4. 13. What, have we spoken so much against thee?* But contrariwise the confidante Soul cryeth out, *Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight, Psal. 51. 4.* Certainly, the want of Consideration staves off Conviction, and makes Men give their Souls wicked counsel; as may be seen, *Luke 12. 19. Soul, take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry:* Which may provoke God in justice, even at that very time, to take away their Souls. Let Men therefore consider the severity of God, who (however they flatter themselves) hath said, *I will reprove thee, and set thy Sins in order before thee.* And again, *God shall wound the Head of his Enemies, and the hairy scalp of such as one as goeth on still in his Trespases, Psal. 68. 21.* Let us therefore behold, and consider the goodness and severity of God; his severity to them that fell from him, his goodness to them that continue in his goodness; otherwise they must know a time of cutting off.

The consideration of the brevity of our Life, is a strong motive to Conviction; and hence God himself breatheth forth these Expressions, *O that they were wise, that they would consider their latter end, Deut. 32. 29.* That David might know how frail (infirm and weak) he was, prays that God would make him to know his end, and the measure of his days, *Psal. 39. 4.* It is in vain for any to hope for Remission of Sin, who have not been convicted of, and humbled for it in this World; for when our Saviour saith, *Except ye repent, ye shall all perish, Luke 13. 3.* He points us to a Work which we must pass through before our end come.

The most important Motive to this powerful and effectual Conviction whereof we speak, is that unspeakable Goodness of God manifested in Christ. For how canst thou see the condescension of thy God to send his Son to die for thee, and thou not consider what manner of Love this is? Shall God stretch out his hand all the day long, and wilt thou not regard it? Doth he beseech thee to be reconciled to him, and wilt thou not observe him to comply with such tenders? *2 Cor. 5. 20. Wilt thou harden still thy impenitent Heart, and so treasure up to thy self Wrath against the Day of Wrath? Rom. 1. O foolish People and unwise, do ye thus requite the Lord? Is not He thy Father that hath bought thee? &c.* Consider therefore how great things he hath done for you, *Deut. 32. 6. 1 Sam. 12. 24.*

SECT. IV.

Of the great patience of God in waiting to be gracious to Sinners.

We are taught by the Apostle, *Rom. 2. 4.* that it is the Goodness and Forbearance, or Long-suffering of God, that leads Sinners to Repentance; that is, God designs to overcome them at the last this way. Thus he dealt with the old World, *Gen. 6. 3.* giving them time, or space of Repentance, but they abused his patience, and repented not. Thus he dealt with his Ancient People, suffering their manners in the Wilderness, *Act. 13. 18. Ἐτεροπορίσεν, as a Nurse her Children; yet they were*

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thrown in the Wilderness, *1 Cor. 10.* But the Ninevites improved the Patience of God unto Repentance; and surely such as consider it, will do the same. For what can more oblige a Sinner, than to consider his manifold Provocations, wherewith he hath provoked the Lord the many Days, and Years, wherein he hath made himself obnoxious to the Wrath of God, and yet he is spared? and God is speaking still with this gracious Voice, *Jer. 14. 27. Wilt thou not be made clean? when will it once be?* A like heart-breaking passage we have, *Jer. 2. 32. My People have forgotten me days without number.* The Lord would hereby inform Sinners that he waits, and thinks the time long ere they return to him.

That Parable of our Saviour, *Mat. 2. 36, 37.* sets forth to the Life, the Patience of the Almighty. He sends once, and again, but his Request is denied, and his Messengers beaten and slain; yet his Patience is extended: He will send his only Son, if peradventure Sinners will yet be intreated. What Patience like to this? The Majesty of God being considered on the one hand, and the vileness of the Sinner on the other. Our Blessed Saviour, who is God over all, blessed for ever, hath shewed forth such Patience in order to Sinners Conversion; that who ever contemplates it aright, will even be confounded, and broken as it were in pieces, to consider the Maledicta and Maledicta, the ill Words, and ill Deeds, which he bore on this account. Yea, even now he suffereth with great Patience, the Ennitious Sinner, who, like Saul, breaths forth Persecutions and Blasphemies against him; and whilst he might destroy them; gently bespeaks them thus: *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* This, this was that, which led one Sinner, a chief Sinner, unto Repentance; and doubtless, will effect the same blessed Work, where such his Gracious forbearance is considered, as the Apostle witnesseth, *1 Tim. 1. 16. Howbeit, for this cause I obtained Mercy, that in me Jesus Christ first might shew forth all Long-suffering, for a Pattern to them which should hereafter believe to Life everlasting.* True it is, incorrigible Sinners do abuse all the Patience of God, who though he waits that he may be Gracious, as *Isa. 30. 18.* yet do they wretchedly fulfil the saying; *Isa. 26. 10. Let favour be shewed to the Wicked, yet will he not learn Righteousness; in the Land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the Majesty of the Lord.* And again, *Eccles. 8. 11. Because Sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the hearts of the Sons of Men are fully set in them to do evil.* Thus, though it be most certain, that the Long-suffering of God to us-ward, is an evidence that he is not willing that any should perish, but that by this means they should come to Repentance, and to the knowledge of the Truth, and be saved, *2 Pet. 3. 9.* Yet do they turn this Grace into wantonness, despising the riches of his Goodness, not considering that the forbearance of God should lead them to Repentance. Howbeit, this Grace is not in vain, but effectual upon the serious Soul: *Psal. 86. 15. But thou, O Lord, art a God full of Compassion, and Gracious, Long-suffering, and plenteous in Mercy and Truth; O turn unto me, and have mercy upon me: Give thy strength unto thy Servant, and save the Son of thy Handmaid.*

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SECT.

S E C T. V.

Of true sense, and sorrow for Sin, as committed against a Gracious God.

To see Sin to be exceeding sinful, is an excellent Introduction to Christianity, and so necessary, that the Internal part thereof is not rightly founded without it. Hence, *Rom. 7. 13.* this we learn, That God's powerful manifestation of Himself to the Consciences of Men, when he reveals the dreadful Nature and Effects thereof, is, *that Sin might appear working Death*; that so by his Command, Sin might appear exceeding sinful, testifying that *in the filthiness thereof there is lewdness*, *Ezek. 24. 13.* yea, many aggravations, but above all that, it is committed against that God from whom we receive Life, and Breath, and all good things. The thoughts of this broke the Heart of David, more than all the aggravations of his sin, in the case of *Uriah*. (which yet were very dreadful) *Psal. 51. 4.* *Against Thee, Thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight.* Hence he crieth out, *Psal. 38. 5.* *My Wounds sink and are corrupt, because of my foolishness; there is no soundness in my flesh, because of my sin,—for my Loyns are filled with a loathsome Disease, and there is no soundness in my Flesh.* All which proceeded from the Arrows of the Almighty (as he speaks *ver. 4.*) which are those powerful Convictions that the Law worketh, when by it Sin is revived, or made to shew its strength, *Rom. 7.* And herein is that saying verified, *The Law worketh Wrath*; and causeth the Sinner to cry out, *O wretched Man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this Death*, *Rom. 7. 24.* This sense of Sin is expressed by the pricking of the Heart, *Acts 2. 38.* which proceeds from that word, which is sharper than any two-edged Sword, because it is a Revealer of the thoughts and intents of the Heart, *Heb. 4. 12.* The very secret evils committed long ago and forgotten, are now set before the Sinner; as *Job* speaks, *Job 13. 26.* *Thou makest me possess the sins of my youth*: Yea, as witnesseth another, *Psal. 90. 8.* *Mens secret sins are set in the light of his Countenance.* Upon this followeth a Godly sorrow, *Jer. 31. 19.* *After I was instructed, I repented (saith Ephraim) I swore upon my Thigh, I was ashamed; yea, even confounded, &c.* Of this Matter speaketh David most feelingly, *Psal. 77. 2, 3, 4.* *In the day of my trouble, I sought the Lord; my Sore ran in the night, and ceased not, my Soul refused to be comforted. I remembered God, and was troubled, I complained and my Spirit was overwhelmed; thou holdest mine Eyes waking, I am so troubled I cannot speak.* With which agrees the experience of the most inward Christian, in the time of his Conversion, who is rather struck with astonishment in the consideration of his Miserable Estate, than filled with Words: Whose way is now to mourn in secret, to search with all diligence into his ways and doings in Times past, and in the bitterness of his Soul to pour out his Complaints before the God of Heaven; watching as one that watcheth for the Morning Light, till the Lord have Mercy upon him, without which he apprehends he is for ever lost, *Psal. 130. 5, 6.*

S E C T.

S E C T. VI.

Of hatred against Sin, in the very thought, or first motions to it.

When Godly Sorrow hath thus placed it self in the heart of a Sinner, Satan then enraged, would have him swallowed up, and to that purpose taking occasion by the Law, stirreth up all manner of concupiscence in his Soul, *Rom. 7. 8.* so that he might weary him of that Travel after the New Birth, and reduce him to his old repose in his Iniquities; but God who hath his Eye over his poor Creatures, turns this to Good, and makes the Soul by this fall into a great hatred of Sin, and an irreconcilable indignation against it; *Rom. 7. 15.* *What I hate, that do I, is the sad complaint of such a Sinner.* Of this holy indignation against Sin, we read, *2 Cor. 7. 11.* *For behold, this self-same thing that ye sorrowed after a Godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you; yea, what clearing of your selves; yea, what indignation; yea, what zeal; yea, what revenge, &c.* And now is that Counsel of the Lord, *Psal. 97. 10.* very acceptable; *Ye that love the Lord, hate evil.* And Davids experience is now understood, who saith, *I hate vain Thoughts, I hate and abhor Lying: I hate every false Way*, *Psal. 119.* And this Christian Vertue is the most potent against the sins, wherein the Sinner hath the most offended, *Psal. 101. 3.* *I will set no wicked thing before mine Eyes, I hate the sins of them that turn aside; there shall no such thing cleave to me.* This had been his own great Treasures, who thus speaketh, in that dreadful case of *Uriah*; and is the great object of his dislike, it being ever before him; as he saith, *Psal. 51. 3.* So the sacred Apostle, more nauseates his Sin in persecuting the Church of God, than any thing, *1 Cor. 15. 9.*

This hatred of Sin standeth especially in two things. 1. In flying from it, as from the most dangerous thing in the World, *2 Tim. 2. 22.* *Flee youthful Lusts.* *1 Cor. 6. 18.* *Flee Fornication. Every sin that a Man doth, is without the Body; he that committeth Fornication, sinneth against his own Body.* *1 Pet. 3. 11.* *Eschew evil.* *Ephes. 5. 3, 4.* *But Fornication, and all Uncleanness, or Covetousness, let it not be named among you; neither Filthiness nor foolish Talking, nor Jesting, which are not convenient.*

Secondly, In doing all we can to destroy Sin, both in our selves and others. And here we must bear a free Testimony against it upon all due occasions, as our Place and Capacity requires. For thus doth God himself shew his hatred against Sin by detecting, or making discoveries of it. And this hath been the work of the Righteous, who as they reprov'd, so their righteous Souls were vexed from day to day, with the unlawful deeds of evil Men, *2 Pet. 2. 7, 8.* A true hatred of Sin, will especially lead us to mortifie, crucifie, or kill it; as *Paul*, *1 Cor. 9. 1.* *I beat down my Body, I bring it in subjection.* And as he did thus for himself, he endeavoured to do the like, or at least to see the like done by others, labouring always to turn Men from Darkness to Light, and from the power of Satan unto God; *Having in a readiness, to revenge all disobedience*, *2 Cor. 10. 6.* *And to bring into subjection every thought, to the obedience of Christ,* *ver. 5.*

S E C T.

S E C T. VII.

Of humble confession to God, and application to him for Mercy.

One of the most sure evidences of the reality of the Work of Grace, as it respects the internal part of Christianity, is the deportment of the Sinner between God and his own Soul, in point of *Humiliation, Confession, and Supplication*; and where it is so, there it is thus. All high thoughts of a Mans self are laid aside, he now consults not his Parentage, he gloryeth not in the Honour of this World; his noble Extraction signifies little. If his Father was honourable in Vertue, he is ashamed he should have so vile a Son: If his Father was Vicious, he laments his Pedigree, and most of all, that he hath troden the same vitious steps. When God would humble Israel, he tells them their Father was an *Amorite*, their Mother an *Hittite*, Ezek. 16. 3. When Israel would humble themselves, they say, *We have sinned with our Fathers, we have committed Iniquity, we have done wickedly; our Fathers understood not, &c.* Psal. 106. 6, 7. But most of all, he layeth himself in the Dust, as having the largest Bill against himself. Thus David, Psal. 32. 5. *I acknowledge mine iniquity unto Thee, and my sin have I not hid; I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord: And he forgave the iniquity of my sin.* Here we find forgiveness of Sin, upon confession of Sin; an Evangelical Grace; 1 John 1. 9. *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our Sins, and to cleanse us from all Iniquity.* Our Saviour setteth forth the nature of a true Convert, in this point, Luke 15. in the Parable of the Prodigal, who upon his return to his Father, comes with this humble Confession: *Father, I have sinned against Heaven and against thee, I am not worthy to be called thy Son, make me as one of thy hired Servants.* Under this Speech is set forth the condition of every true Christian, whose Heart is rightly touched with the sense of his Iniquity. Yea, surely the Soul is ever thus humbling it self before God, it can hardly think it ever layeth it self low enough. The words of the Prophet, Prov. 30. 2. are considerable to this purpose: *Surely, I am more brutish than any Man, and have not the understanding of a Man in me.* It is doubtless the nature of true Grace, to abase the Sinner before the Lord exceedingly. Hence the Apostle crys out, *Depart from me, for I am a sinful Man, O Lord,* Luke 5. 8. As if he should say, Lord, I am not fit to come where thou art, I am so vile; and so the pious Centurion, *I am not worthy thou shouldst come under my Roof.* Nor is this the frame of a Christian only in the time of his Conversion, but it remains with him from time to time, finding still occasions of Humiliation; not only from the remembrance of former, but also from the experience of his daily Infirmities, to prosecute his Soul before the Lord, Lam. 3. 19, 20, 21. and Rom. 7. *I find then a Law (saith the Apostle) that when I would do good, evil is present with me; for I delight in the Law of God after the inner Man, but I see another Law in my Members warring against the Law of my Mind.*

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As the truly regenerate Man is deeply humbled before God, and made to acknowledg his Deeds, Acts 19. 18. So he is exceeding much devoted to the Lord in Prayer, especially private Prayer, which he can better perform with sighs and groans, than with words; and yet sometimes finds enlargement to pour forth his Soul in fervent Expressions to his Heavenly Father; who hath great delight in the Prayer of the Upright. In the 88 Psalm, we have an abridgment of those sorrowful Complaints, and fervent Desires, which are wont to proceed from the Faithful Children of God, whose Cries go up to him night and day. As also testifieth our Saviour, who informs us that the Elect do cry unto God *day and night*; And to encourage this Work so acceptable to God, puts forth a Parable, Luke 18. 1. teaching Men to *pray always, and not to faint.* In these Heart-Prayers, or secret Devotions (for as yet the New-born Christian can do little openly) great is the communion such Souls have with God in Spirit: great also is the submission of such Souls to God, for they being truly humbled, do bear the rebukes of the Almighty with great content; their *uncircumcised Hearts being now humbled, they bear the punishment of their Iniquity*, as we read Levit. 26. 41. Yea, they taste the words of the Prophet, Mich. 7. 9. *I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him.—He will bring me forth to the Light, I shall behold his Righteousness.* These are the Souls who justify God in all Fatherly Corrections, as being merciful beyond their desert; who punisheth much less than our Iniquities deserve. If the Lord hide himself; they pursue him with Supplications; if he manifest himself to them, they pray for the continuation of such favours. Thus they continue in Prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving, Col. 4. 2.

S E C T. VIII.

Of the Resolves of duly-humbled Souls.

Holy and hearty Prayers to God, seldom go without some solemn Vows, or Expressions, of Holy Resolutions and Purposes, to be at the dispose of that God to whom such Prayer is only due. And because the sum of all we can purpose or resolve, is to cleave unto the Lord; so the regenerate Soul doth most ardently adhere to him, as Cant. 1. 4. *Draw me, we will run after thee.—We will remember thy Love more than Wine; the Upright love thee.* They are in relation to Christ, resolved as Ruth to Naomi, Ruth 1. 16, 17. even to follow him in life and death. And as for Sin, O how great is the purpose of their Hearts to have no more to do with it. Psal. 17. 3. *Thou hast proved my heart, thou hast visited me in the night, thou hast tried me, and shalt find nothing; I have purposed my mouth shall not transgress.* When David was in trouble, his Prayers and Promises went together, Psal. 66. 13, 14. And so they did in the case of Jacob, Gen. 28. 20, 21, 22. and like faithful Men they performed their Promises when their Prayer was answered. Surely when God healeth the backslidings of poor Creatures, and gives some taste of his Grace, then are they ready to say with Ephraim, *What have I to do any more with Idols?*

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Arthur shall not save us, we will not ride upon Horses, neither will we say to the works of our hands, Ye are our Gods; for in Thee the Fatherless findeth mercy, Hosea 14. 3, 8. And now the great desire of the Heart is, that the enlightned Soul may no longer live to himself, but to him that died for him, and rose again; and thus conforming themselves to the Exhortation, *Acts 11. 23. With purpose of Heart to cleave unto the Lord:* seriously recogitating the vanity of their former ways, they turn their feet unto the Testimonies of the Lord, *Psal. 119. 59.*

Now as in the former Chapters we have endeavoured to set forth the Knowledge of God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, and therewithal shewed the nature of true Faith, as by it we are made partakers of the Righteousness of God, and justified from all things from which we could not be justified by the Law. So in this Chapter, the sum of what we have said, is to shew the nature of true Repentance unto Life, which is one of the great Blessings of the Gospel of God, and was even so from the beginning. For the Law never did, neither ever could give such Repentance unto Men; but being not the ministration of Faith, it worketh Wrath, and leaves Men under condemnation, as we have shewed: For if there had been a Law given which could have given Life, verily Righteousness should have been by the Law, *Gal. 3. 21.* Now, forasmuch as this Mercy of Repentance unto Life, hath in all Ages been granted unto Men: It is thence evident, that the blessed Effect of the Gospel hath been granted to Sinners in all Ages, but more clearly revealed to us in these last times; let us therefore give all diligence to bring forth Fruit meet for such Repentance; lest at the last it be such as ought to be repented of. It is Godly Sorrow that worketh Repentance unto Salvation. A truly contrite Heart becomes a Christian well, even in his progress in the ways of Christianity; because he hath need to pray daily for the forgiveness of those Trespases, which by humane frailty he falleth into. Gospel-Repentance being granted us as a state of Humiliation, admits of more exactness on our part, as well as other Graces; for who can say, There is nothing of Corruption yet unsubdued? And if not, Doth it not call for Humiliation, in order to its effectual purgation? certainly it doth.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Treateth of a Christian Man's Conformity to Christ, in the Spirit of his Mind.

S E C T. I.

WHEN once the Regenerate Man hath put off the Body of the Sins of the Flesh, by the Circumcision of Christ, made without hands, *Col. 2. 11.* Then followeth that great and glorious Work, of putting on the New Man, which after God is created in Righteousness and true Holiness, after the Image of him that created him. Which standeth chiefly in being renewed in the Spirit of our Mind, *Ephes. 4. 22, 23, 24.* which we shall endeavour to demonstrate, by considering;

1. The light esteem our Saviour had of earthly Things; and how his People are therein to follow him.
2. What great esteem he had of Heavenly Things; and how we are to follow him therein.
3. His patience in all manner of Sufferings; and how therein we ought to follow his steps.

And first of the First.

It is most certain, that scarce any thing is so great an Enemy to Religion, as the love of Earthly Things; against which our Saviour bent himself, both by Example and Doctrine, that he might draw his Followers from that which is the bane of Religion.

1. By his Example: Though he was Lord of all, yet was he pleased to come into the World in as mean an equipage as the poorest (saying that he was born of a Kingly Stock) being brought forth in a Stable, and laid in a Manger. So greatly did he condemn the Glory and Riches of this World, that when he appeared in the World to propagate his Heavenly Doctrine, he comforted himself with the poorest of the People, taking his chief Servants out of them. Nor had he whereon to lay his Head, but was often relieved by the Alms of others; and this he did not of necessity, but willingly. And here must the Regenerate Man learn to follow Christ; that is, he must get above all Earthly Enjoyments; he must let this mind be in him, which was also in Christ Jesus, *Ephes. 2. 5.* who thus humbled himself for our Example.

2. The same we learn from his Blessed Doctrine, providing in his first Sermon against Earthly-mindedness, that being the thing which the Gentiles seek after; provoking his Followers to learn, by the common Acts of God's Providence, to be without carefulness, in respect of Food and Rayment; at least so as that our Cares that way, should not impede our seeking, above all things, the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness; pronouncing the state of them that not only trust in Riches, but such as have

have Riches, to be very dangerous, *Mark 10. 20, &c.* Christians are compared to *Pilgrims* and *Strangers* upon the Earth, on purpose to take them off from the love of present things, without which they can never be conformed to Christ; for *if any Man love this World, the Love of God is not in him, 1 John 2. 15.*

It is therefore a vain and foolish thing for Earthly-minded Men, in what Form of Religion soever, to flatter themselves that they are Christians, shall go to Heaven, &c. when our Saviour makes it next to an impossibility. It is a remarkable passage, *Luke 7. 22. And to the Poor the Gospel is preached:* As if our Lord should say, My Business is very little with Rich Men, my Doctrine is little acceptable unto them, 'tis in a manner but lost labour to preach the Gospel to them; they have their Portion in this World, they will none of me. How dreadful is that Voice, *Isa. 5. 1, 2, 3. Go to now ye Rich Men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you: Your Riches are corrupted, and your Garments Moth-eaten. Your Gold and Silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a Witness against you, and shall eat your Flesh as it were Fire; ye have heaped Treasure together for the last Days.* Surely the thoughts of this might cause Men to tremble, who trust in uncertain Riches, and are not rich towards God. Let your conversation be without Covetousness, is a great Exhortation, *Heb. 13. 5. and be content with such things as you have; and to enforce this, a Promise follows, for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.* The true Christian rests upon this, knowing, That they that will be Rich, fall into temptations and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful Lusts, which drown Men in Perdition and Destruction, *1 Tim. 6. 9.* Let the serious Christian consider, that in the Doctrine of Jesus, there is scarce any thing more pressed than this, That Men beware of the things of this World, so as to set the Affection upon them, for a Man's Life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. The true Christian that is conformed to Christ in the Spirit of his Mind, prayeth on this wise, *Give us this day our daily Bread;* Or he is like *Agur, Give me neither Poverty nor Riches, feed me with Food convenient for me, Prov. 30. 8.* In a word, He that will rightly put on the New Man, that will put on the Lord Jesus, must do it without making provision for the Flesh, to fulfil the Lusts thereof, *Rom. 13. 14.* I have read of one of the Ancients, who being asked, *What Vertue makes a Man most acceptable to our Saviour?* He answered with much affection, *That it is Poverty; and that Poverty is the way to Salvation, the Nurse of Humility, the Root of Perfection, and hath many hidden Fruits and Commodities known to very few.* Now though this Passage may be something hyperbolical, yet much truth lieth in it: For what was, or what is the cause, why so few rich and noble Personages receive the Gospel, whilst many of the poorer sort did, and do still receive it? Is it not only this, The one is Rich, the other Poor? There can no other thing be assigned but merely this, for set aside this, and the advantage generally lyeth on their part in many respects. Let therefore that Exhortation, *Col. 3. 2. be acceptable to all Men, Set your Affections on things above, and not on things on the Earth.* For it were better for thee to cast all thy

Riches

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Riches into the Sea, then that thou for thy love thereto shouldst be cast into Hell. Remember, it is our Saviour that saith, no Man can serve two Masters, ye cannot serve God and Mammon, *Mat. 6. 24.* Let us therefore love the Lord our God, and him let us serve.

The Apostle informs us, *That he that is joyed to Christ, is one Spirit, 1 Cor. 6. 17.* And where this Union is effectually made, it cannot be but the things of the World are condemned: Witness the same Apostle, *Phil. 3. 7, 8. But what things were gain to me, them I counted but loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things loss, for the excellency of the Knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but dung, that I may win Christ.* Sure, this is the Man, the Christian Man, whose Pattern we ought to follow, yea, must follow, if we intend to be accepted of Christ; who saith, *He that loveth his own life more than Christ, is not worthy of him.* St. Paul did not only condemn Riches, but the Honours of the World also, which is usually a companion with Riches: And here the true Christian must learn the Mind of Christ, to condescend to Men of low Estate, and not to mind high things. Here the Brother of high Degree is taught to rejoyce that he is Abased, and the Brother of low Degree in that he is Exalted, *James 1. 9, 10.* The Law of Christianity making them equal as Christians, and yet preserves their different Qualities, or Degrees, as Men: *1 Cor. 7. 20. Let every Man abide in the same Calling, wherein he was called, walking with God.*

S E C T. II.

What great esteem Christ had of Heavenly things, and how his People are to follow him therein.

Heavenly things admit of a twofold Consideration, either these that are Practical in this World; or those that respect the Inheritance of the Saints to all Eternity. The latter we shall have occasion to speak of in the next Chapter, the former now falls under our Consideration; concerning which, we find our Blessed Saviour wholly devoted thereunto, according to the Prophecy which went before of him, *Psal. 69. 9. The zeal of thine House hath eaten me up.* And again, *I delight to do thy Will, O God; yea, thy Law is within my Heart. I have preached Righteousness in the great Congregation: Lo, I have not refrained my Lips, O Lord, thou knowest. I have not hid thy Righteousness within my Heart, I have declared thy Faithfulness, and thy Salvation: I have not concealed thy loving Kindness, and thy Truth from the great Congregation, Psal. 4. 8, 9, 10.* Thus we find the Lord Christ greatly affected with the Work of God, even consumed as it were to perform it, inasmuch that he esteemed it more than his material Food, *John 4. 34. My Meat and Drink (saith he) is to do the Will of Him that sent me, and to finish his Work.* Another Instance we have of his great forwardness to fulfil the Will of God in the case of Baptism, travelling in order thereunto from Galilee to Jordan, which was a considerable Journey; and presseth to have it done speedily, with a *suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfil all Righteousness, Mat.*

A a

3. 15.

3. 15. A most excellent Example he was in taking hold of Time to do his Fathers Will, *John 9. 4. I must work the Work of Him that sent me, while it is Day, the Night cometh when no man can work.* Now let us try, and we shall find that the truly Regenerate Man laboureth to follow Christ in these things, even step by step, as fast as may be; for now nothing is so delightful, as to be concern'd in the Work of God. *David saith, A Day in the Lord's Courts, is better than a thousand; to be a Door-keeper there, is better than to dwell in the Tents of Wickedness. The blessed Mans delight is in the Law of the Lord, and in that Law doth he exercise himself Day and Night, Psal. 1. 1, 2. And David rejoiced at the Word of God, as one that findeth great spoils, Psal. 119. 16. Yea, he saith, My zeal hath consumed me, because mine Enemies have forgotten thy words, ver. 139. Expressing the greatness of his affection to the Law of God, Ver. 97. O how love I thy Law! it is my Meditation all the day.* Yea, he had taken these Testimonies as an *Heritage for ever*; and they were the *rejoycing of his Heart*. And what was *David's* temper herein, ought to be, yea, and is doubtless in good measure the Temper and Spirit of all the Faithful Children of God: Who having seen the Beauty of the Lord in his Temple, desire to be often so in his Presence, *Psal. 27. 4.*

So greatly was the Apostles affected with the Work of God in the Gospel, that they desired to give themselves continually to the Ministry of the Word and Prayer, *Acts 6. 4.* And so delighted were the Christians generally in those Days, that they were wholly devoted to the Advancing of the Gospel of God, selling their Possessions to that very end, *Acts 2. 45.* and were continually praising God, and the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved. Whilst the *Galatians* continued in their *pristine Christianity*, such was their fervour, that they are declared to have a Blessedness among them towards Truths Advancement, *Gal. 4. 15.* The Church at *Thessalonica* is praised for their fervent Endeavours, to spread abroad the Gospel in every Place, as well as for the exceeding increase of Faith and Charity among themselves, *1 Thes. 1. 8. 2 Thes. 1. 3.* The zeal of the *Roman Church* is commended, for that their Faith lay not dormant, but was Active; and so spoken of throughout the whole World, *Rom. 1. 8.* The *Ephesian Church* is praised for their Faith in the Lord Jesus, and love to all the Saints, and the Ministry also; for that they laboured and had not fainted, *Ephes. 1. 15. Rev. 2. 3.*

And thus we find, that those Vertues which were so radiant in our Saviour, upon the account of Zeal and Activity in the Work of God, did also shine in the Regenerate very excellently, by which we have occasion to try our selves in respect of Conformity to Christ, whether our Conversation be in Heaven, or Heavenly things; or if otherwise, that we are minding Earthly things, we are far from Christianity, in respect of the Internal part, what profession thereof soever we pretend to. And such Formalists there were, even in the Apostle's time, whom he thus bewails: *Many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are enemies to the Cross of Christ, whose God is their Belly, whose end is Destruction, whose glory is their Shame, who mind Earthly things,*

things, *Phil. 4. 18, 19. Wherefore let us not be conformed to this World, but let us be transformed by the renewing of our minds, Rom. 12. 2.*

S E C T. III.

Of the Patience of Christ in all manner of Sufferings, and how therein we ought to conform our Minds to him.

As it is given to Christians, not only to believe on the Lord Jesus, but also to suffer for his sake, *Phil. 1. 29.* so they are most effectually encouraged thereunto by his famous Example, whereof we are now to treat; and wherewith we find him attended from his Birth to his Death. No sooner is he born, but *Herod* seeks his Life, *Mat. 2. 13.* No sooner doth he consecrate himself to God in sacred Baptism, *Mat. 15. 16.* and in Prayer receives the Holy Spirit, being now sealed therewith, and declared to be the Son of God by Voice from Heaven; but Satan sets upon him by subtilty, trying all sorts of Temptations: And first, such as might arise from necessity, or want of Food, (for Christ was touched with a feeling of our Infirmities, being now an hungred) Satan upon this tempts him to distrust his Sonship, or Relation to God, because exposed to these straits, *Mat. 4. 3. If thou be the Son of God, &c.* And under this Head, are contained all those Temptations which befall his People in the want of Earthly things, which want is supplied by the Word of God, which here Christ feeds upon; who also hath promised not to leave, or forsake his People. After this manner *David* supported himself, *Psal. 119. Unless thy Word had been my delights, I should then have perished in mine Affliction.* Satan knows that Disobedience is incident to humane Frailty; and can he but cause Men to despair of Gods Providence, he works their Ruine: but in this attempt he is vanquished by our Saviour.

The next Assault is, to try if he can draw our Saviour to the sin of *Presumption*, as he did the first *Adam*: *If thou be the Son of God, cast thy self down, &c.* Christ conquers here also by the Word of God, which though it abound with Promises of great preservation to the Children of God, yet doth it also forbid them to presume upon unnecessary Dangers, and unwarrantable Undertakings, *Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.* Now under this Head, are contained all those Transgressions, which come of presuming to go beyond the Word of the Lord; and here we see the way to avoid them.

Satan's last and most plausible Stratagem, is Flattery: He presents our Saviour with the glory of the World, upon condition he would *prevaricate in the matters of Religion.* This our Saviour repulses with greatest Indignation, *Get thee behind me Satan;* it is written, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.* Under this Head are contained all those Flatteries, or alluring Temptations, which may attend God's People, to sway them in Religious Matters, upon hope of Worldly Advantages. In which case, we are instructed by our Saviour's Example, to give no place to the Devil, Who did not forbid Christ to worship

worship God, but to extend something of that nature to him, that so he might have a part with God at least. To this, our Saviour gives a double Answer, 1. *It is written, thou shalt worship the Lord thy God; 2. And Him only shalt thou serve.* God will have no Competitor, he will have all in point of Worship, or nothing. Let no Man then think to unite false Worship with true, till he can unite God with Satan; which will never be. The Temptations of Christ are reckoned among his Sufferings, and so may fitly be reckoned among the sufferings of his Servants; and they are happy that endure and overcome those Temptations, to which for the sake of Christ they are often exposed, who therefore will succour them: *For in that he hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted,* Heb. 2. 18. Yea, those that continue with Christ in his Temptations, have a Kingdom appointed unto them, as Christ had a Kingdom appointed unto him, *Luke 22. 28, 29.*

Satan being thus vanquished, leaves Christ, and after this carries on his design by wicked Men, persecuting our Lord from place to place, exposing him to the contempt of the Proud, the reproach and scorn of the People; and finally, to be Imprisoned, Scourged, Buffeted, Arraigned, Condemned, and Executed, among Evil-doers: All which our Blessed Saviour underwent with great Patience, Constancy, and Resolution; and thus *being made perfect through Sufferings, became Captain of our Salvation.* In all which, we are to learn Conformity with Christ, to arm our selves with the same, 1 Pet. 4. 1. Yea, to get this fortitude and noble frame of a Christian, because Christ our Captain hath gone before us, suffering for us in the Flesh, *leaving us an Example, that we should follow his steps:* And particularly in these, 1. Art thou contemned, or despised for Christ's sake, because thou art of mean Estate in this World? Even so was thy Lord, *Mark 6. Is not this the Carpenter, the Son of Joseph?* 2. Art thou reproached as one acted by a Phanatick, or Diabolical Spirit? So was thy Master, *John 10. 20. He hath a Devil and is mad, why hear ye him?* 3. Art thou accused falsely as one Factious, and Seditious? Even so was Christ, *Luke 23. 5. And they were more fierce, saying, he stirreth up the People. If thou let this Man go, thou art not Cæsars friend,* John 19. 12. 4. Art thou Naked and Derided? So was our Redeemer: *And the Men that held Jesus, mocked him and smote him, and when they had blindfolded him, they stroke him on the Face, and asked him, saying, Prophesie who is it that smote thee? And many other things blasphemously spake they against him,* Luke 22. 63, 64. 5. Art thou Imprisoned and Arraigned as a Malefactor? So was this Prince of Peace, *Isa. 55. 8. He was taken from Prison, and from Judgement.* 6. Art thou Spoiled of all thou hast? So was thy Saviour, *Mark 15. 24. They parted his Garments, casting Lots upon them what every Man should take.* 7. Art thou condemned to Death, as, and amongst Evil-doers? Thy Lord was so, and put to a painful and shameful Death, *Mark 15. 25, 27. And it was the third Hour, and they Crucified him—and two Thieves with him, the one on the Right hand, and the other on his Left.*

Now as we are taught to suffer according to the Will of God, by this admirable Example; so we are to take special regard, that we suffer for the

the same cause, and with the same temper or frame of Spirit. Otherwise a Man may suffer in vain, yea, and be a Persecutor even then when he is a Sufferer; and he is so, when in his Heart he wisheth he had the opportunity to persecute his Adversary. Thus did not our Saviour, he could have rescued himself, or had the Angels to have done it; but he more consults the Will of God, than any such thing. Even so should we patiently commit our selves to God's pleasure in well-doing. *But let none of you suffer as a Murderer, or as a Thief, or as an Evil-doer, or as a Busy-body in other Mens Matters. But if any suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorifie God on this behalf,* 1 Pet. 4. 15, 16.

For further encouragement to follow Christ in this Path, with the Spirit of our Mind; let us behold some Worthies that have gone this way before us, and left the Trophies of Victory behind them. The Apostle Paul is herein inferior to none: He desired to know the fellowship of Christ's Sufferings, *being made conformable unto his Death,* Phil. 3. 10. And assures us, That if he should be offered upon the Service and sacrifice of the Faith of his Brethren, he did therein joy and rejoyce, *Phil. 2. 17.* The Apostles rejoyced that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for the Name of Christ. And Moses long ago had the same Spirit, and counted the Sufferings of Christ greater Riches than all the Treasures of Egypt, *Heb. 11. 26.* And how should they be otherwise esteemed, by such as know that *these light Afflictions which are but for a moment, work for us an exceeding and an eternal weight of Glory.* This Glory is so affixed to Christ's Sufferings, as that we are not secured of it without them, *Rom. 8. 17.—if so be that we suffer with him, that we may also be glorified together.* When the Word of God saith thus, *If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him. If we deny him, he will also deny us,* 2 Tim. 2. 12. We think it should make the sufferings of Christ desirable, with submission to the Will of God; however it must needs take away the terror thereof.

The best way that I know how to make Christ's Sufferings acceptable to his People, is to consider,

1. That Sufferings cannot be avoided, whether we do well or ill; if well, then we suffer from evil Men; if ill, God himself will punish us. If we faithfully confess Christ, we suffer here; If we deny him, we suffer hereafter.

2. That Christ is more excellent than all things, and therefore to be preferred before all things.

3. That in all our sufferings for Righteousness-sake, he bears the greatest burthen, or makes them easie to his People. *God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above what ye are able; but will with the temptation make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it,* 1 Cor. 10. 13.

And lastly, There is a Kingdom assured to faithful Sufferers, *Luke 22. 28. That ye may be counted worthy of the Kingdom, for which ye also suffer,* 2 Thess. 1. 5.

CHAP. VI.

Wherein is considered the Hope, or thing hoped for, at the glorious appearing of Jesus Christ: Together with the comfortable parts of the Inheritance they here partake of by the way.

S E C T. I.

THE hope of the Promise made to the Fathers, (which *Paul* expounds of the Effects of Christ's Resurrection, *Acts* 26. 6, 7, 8.) is said to be that unto which all the twelve Tribes instantly serving God hope to come; which Hope in the most glorious part we have also, as the Anchor of the Soul both sure and steadfast, against the winds of Error and humane Fear: both which would rob us of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light; which in these days is not much set by, but seems to be an idle Tale to the Men of this World. In opposition to whom, we shall endeavour to set forth the blessed Inheritance of the Children of God, that all may know they are no such Bankrupts, as they are generally thought to be. Being indeed the richest for Inheritance of all others; and that whether we respect their present or future State, for that they are joint-Heirs with Christ, *who is appointed Heir of all things*, *Heb.* i. 2. And because this Inheritance is made up of many Blessings, and is received by sundry gradations, we shall begin with that which is first, and so proceed to the last; if so we may any way affect our own Souls, or others, with the contemplation thereof, or with Christianity it self, the way wherein such great Blessings accrue unto us. And this we shall essay to do by a brief view of the ensuing Particulars, wherein this Inheritance consists, which are these; The Heirs of God do inherit,

1. His Righteousness.
2. His Name.
3. His Spirit.
4. All the Privileges of his House.
5. They are Heirs of this World.
6. Of that which is to come.

Of the first of these we have treated *Chap.* 3. *Sett.* 7. so that we shall say the less here. Yet because God's Righteousness is the first thing which his Children inherit from him, and that without which nothing else can be inherited, it is convenient we insist a little upon it here also. It is certain, that by Nature we were all the Children of Wrath, and far from Righteousness. Our Inheritance was Corruption from *Adam*, (*As is the Earthy, such are they that are Earthy*); None are Heirs by that Birth-right of Eternal Life, but must come to it by another Parentage, even by

by the Adoption of Grace, and so through Christ Heirs of God; *Gal.* 3. ult. and so Inheritors of his Righteousness. For this is that great Blessing which *Noah* received, *who became Heir of the Righteousness which is by Faith*; and consequently the rest of the Faithful were Heirs thereof as well as he, *Heb.* 11. 7. This is the Blessing which *Abraham* received, that Righteousness was imputed to him, which was written for us, to whom it shall be imputed also if we believe, *Eccl.* *Rom.* 4. 23, 24. To have Righteousness imputed without the Works of the Law, is the Blessed Man in *David's* account, *Rom.* 4. 6. God's Righteousness to be manifested without the Law, is the great Gospel Grace in *Paul's* account, *Rom.* 3. 21, 22. Yea, it is that to which both the Law and the Prophets bore witness. Our Saviour is foretold to advance the knowledge of this Grace in the Church of God, *Psal.* 40. 10. *I have not hid Thy Righteousness within my Heart, I have declared thy Faithfulness and thy Salvation; I have not concealed thy loving Kindness, and thy Truth from the great Congregation.* Christ fulfilled this Prophecy, *Mat.* 6. 33. *Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness*, holding forth remission of Sins, through believing on the Name of the only begotten Son of God. This Righteousness being not acquired, but imputed, is said to be attained by them *that followed not of Righteousness*; whilst those that followed after Righteousness, *attained not to Righteousness*; and the Reason is given, *because they sought it, not by Faith, but as it were by the Works of the Law*, *Rom.* 9. 30, 31. The Jews are charged with being ignorant of God's Righteousness, but they were no more ignorant of Moral Righteousness than other Men; and very skilful they were in the Righteousness of the Law, so then God's Righteousness, or the Righteousness of Faith, according to which Men are Heirs of Eternal Life, is a Righteousness which may be distinguished, both from Moral and Legal Righteousness, not so much in respect of the Work wrought, as the Person by whom the Work is wrought, (for Christ obeyed his Father in all Righteousness) and in whose stead, and the manner of its being made ours, which is by Faith. Hence (I conceive) *Christ is said to be the end of the Law for Righteousness to every one that believeth*, *Rom.* 10. 3. Yea, He is the Lord our Righteousness; He is made of God unto us Righteousness; in him we freely inherit what belongs to us as Heirs of God; therefore we are Heirs of Righteousness by him, even of that Righteousness which is by Faith.

S E C T. II.

The Children of God inherit their Fathers Name.

By Name here we do not intend so much any particular *Epithite*, as that blessed distinction in point of Quality; which God makes between his People and those that are without. Yet, *Isaiah* prophesies, That when the Gentiles should be called, his Servants should be called by a Name which the Mouth of the Lord should name, *Chap.* 62. 2. And it was God's way to put his Name upon his People in old Time. Hence they plead their right to Inheritance, *Isa.* 63. 19. *We are thine, thou never barest*

barest rule over them, they were not called by thy Name. If we may refer the Appellation of God's People to any particular term, that of *Christian* may be chosen, as befitting their Gospel-State, *Acts* 11. 26. being a name of blessed import, both to distinguish them from the Jewish State, as also to set forth the Graces wherewith they are enriched in the Gospel; *Christian* being derived from that worthy Name *Jesus*, or *Christ*, and signifieth that Holy Unction or Anointing which they have with the Holy One, *1 John* 2. 27. A Name of Consecration, importing the People so denominated, to be set apart to Holy Matters; which the Apostle seems so to interpret, *1 Pet.* 2. 9, 10. *But ye are a Chosen Generation, a Royal Priesthood, an Holy Nation, a Peculiar People; that ye should shew forth the Praises of him, who hath called you out of Darknes into his marvellous Light: which in time past were not a People, but are now the People of God.* Our Lord is said to have, by *Inheritance*, a more excellent Name than the Angels, *Heb.* 1. 4. Wherefore his People being joint-Heirs with him, have that honourable Appellation of the Sons of God, *1 John* 3. 1, 2. which the Apostle admires, *Behold, what manner of Love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the Sons of God. Beloved, now are we the Sons of God.*

It is a matter of weighty consideration, that in Christian Baptism, the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, should be so solemnly named, or the Believer so solemnly baptized into that Name; as if God would hereby declare he owneth those for his Children: And thus he made public declaration from Heaven, that Christ was his Beloved Son at the time of his Baptism, *Matth.* 3. 15, 16, 17. Surely the Name of *Christian*, or *Sons of God*, is now made too common, and very unduly imposed upon Men generally; for it cannot be rightly affixed, where the Graces signified thereby are not in some measure antecedent: It is a Name of signification; and to affix it to a Blank, or improper Subject, is injurious; we must be Sons, before we can inherit the Name of Sons. If *Children, then Heirs*, *Rom.* 8. 17. Yea, *Heirs of God, joynt-Heirs with Christ.* These Children are born, not of Flesh, or the Will of Man, but of the immortal Seed of God's Word: *And this is the Word which by the Gospel is preached unto you,* *1 Pet.* 1. 25. *John* 1. 12.

S E C T. III.

The Children of God inherit the Spirit of God.

As the Earnest is a part of the whole Price, so the Gift of the Spirit is a part of the Inheritance of God's Children; *Ephes.* 1. 13, 14. *After ye believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of Promise, which is the Earnest of your Inheritance, until the Redemption of the purchased Possession, unto the praise of his Glory.* The Promise of the Spirit, received through Faith, is one great part of the Blessing of Abraham, which was to come upon the Gentiles through Jesus Christ, *Gal.* 3. 14. And is one of these great and precious Promises, by which we are made partakers of the Divine Nature, *2 Pet.* 1. 4. That is, by its operation we taste the Heavenly Gifts,

Gifts whilst in this World, and are fitted for an inseparable union with Christ to Eternity. And thus the Powers of the World to come are felt in the Soul [*i. e.* the powerful Ministry of the Gospel, called the World to come, as it was to succeed the Law, *Heb.* 2. 5.] And it is most evident, that without the influence of God's Spirit illuminating our Judgments, and heightning our Affections, and so evidencing with our Spirit that we are the Children of God, we may talk of much; but we truly inherit very little of those Vertues whereof we speak. This is that deceitful state which the Apostle compares to *sounding Brass*, and a *sinkling Cymbal*; namely, to have the Tongues of Men and Angels, *1 Cor.* 13. as it were, and yet be a Stranger to the Fruits of the Spirit of Promise, which seals the Sons of God to the Day of Redemption, *Ephes.* 4. 30. When Paul saith, *No Man can say that Jesus is Christ, but by the Spirit*, *1 Cor.* 12. 3. Sure he means some such thing as this, that no Man can make this profession of Christ sincerely, heartily, and to his comfort here and hereafter, as God hath ordained, but by the Spirit of God; for unless a Man herein be led by the Spirit of God, he is no Child of God, and so no Heir of God. But more of this hereafter.

S E C T. IV.

The Children of God inherit all the Privileges of the House of God.

By the House of God here, we mean the Church of God, in her sojourning state in this World. For to whom pertains the Adoption, or Sonship, to them pertains the Glory; namely, the most glorious of God's Ordinances, by which he prefenceth himself in his Church. Thus was the Ark of the Covenant called the Glory of God, *1 Sam.* 4. 21. *Psal.* 78. 60. Yea, to them pertains the Covenants, the giving of the Law, [which suits with the State of the Church] the Service of God, and the Promises, *Rom.* 9. 4. What is here said of the *Israelites*, is applicable to the Church of Christ, respect being had only to the different Ministrations under which they are constituted. Those only are to be; they only can be taught to observe, or put in practice whatsoever Christ commanded, who were first incorporated into Christ. They only could, and did, continue steadfastly in the Apostles Doctrine and Fellowship, who were first added to the Church, *Acts* 2. 42.

Whilst the *Gentiles* were not the Children of God, they were strangers to the Privileges of the Church of God; but being the Sons of God by Faith, they became Heirs of Eternal Life, *Tit.* 1. 2. And so fellow-Citizens with the Saints, and of the Household of God. More of this also, when we come to treat of the External part of Christianity.

S E C T. V.

God's People are Heirs of this World.

This may seem very improbable, that Christians should be Heirs of this World, or as such to have any part therein. But surely God hath not spoken any thing in vain, his Promises are not yea and nay; but Yea and Amen. Now, whoever possesseth the Earth, it is most certain God's People have the clearest Interest in it, though it is made for the Universe; and being so, it must needs be made for God's People among the rest. And it is theirs by Promise, under a two-fold Consideration; the first General, the second more Especial.

For the General Promises by which God's People have an Interest in present things, even the Christian Church, they are such as these, *Mat. 6. 33. Seek the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.* He that observes the scope of our Saviour in this part of his Sermon, will find that he labours to settle the Minds of Men about matters of Food and Raiment, who being by such cares overpowered, are unapt for the Kingdom of God. Wherefore, that the Heirs of Salvation might have some Consolation upon this account, our Saviour makes them a sure Promise, that all these things shall be added as an overplus is added to the Bargain; For (saith he) *your Heavenly Father knows ye have need of these things.* And that we might the better conceive the certainty of Promises of this kind, he points us to the Care and Providence of God in matters of far less moment, *viz.* His feeding the Fowls of Heaven, who as *David* saith, *Psal. 104.* are satisfied with his Blessing, and what he gives them they gather. He wills us to consider how the Grass of the Field is clothed; that we might from thence understand he will not be unmindful of his People; who, could they live more by Faith in his Word, should less feel the evil of the Cares of this Life.

The holy Apostle, *2 Tim. 4. 8.* delivers the same Doctrine, assuring us, that *Godliness hath the promise of the Life that now is, as well as of that which is to come;* and avers it to be the only profitable exercise which entitles us to all things. When *David* saith, *They that seek the Lord, shall not want any thing that is good,* *Psal. 34. 10.* it is evident, he meaneth particularly common Sustainance; and shews that the way to live and see Good, is to avoid the way of Iniquity, and to do good: *for the Eyes of the Lord are over the Righteous;* meaning to preserve them, and protect them.

The holy Scriptures abound with Passages of this kind, and with Examples of not only common, but special Favours this way bestowed on the People of God: as in the case of *Jacob*, *Gen. 48. 15.* who was fed by the Providence of God all his life long; and he sent a Man (even *Joseph*) beforehand into *Egypt*, to provide for his Servants in the time of Famine. It was God who fed his People in the Wilderness, *in a Land that was not sown*, *Jer. 2. 2.* It was God that turned the Hearts

of

of those that led his People Captive, to shew them Kindness according as they remembered Him, *1 Kings 8. 46. 47. &c.* The same God hath preserved the followers of his dear Son, so that not any of them have been herein forsaken of God. The same *Paul*, that knew what belonged to Straits at some turns, knew what belonged to Fulness at others, *2 Cor. 1. 8. Phil. 4. 18.* And by this variety was he instructed in all things, and had learned in all Estates to be content. And hath left to Posterity, not only his experiments of God's Providence this way, but hath asserted the Saints Interest in all these, as well as in other things, *1 Cor. 3. 21. 22. 23. All things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, and the World, or Life, or Death, all are yours; and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's.* Signifying hereby that, so far as these things may conduce to the well-being of the People of God, they have a sure Interest in them all. Only thus much we are to understand, that those general Promises, admit of intervening Emergencies, for the trial of the Faith and Patience of God's People, who must sometimes be spoiled of their Estates; partly to discover the wickedness of the Wicked, and partly to shew the excellency of the Graces of his Children, in being willing to follow Christ in such Trials with joyfulness, *Heb. 10. 32. 33. 34.* Howbeit, in these very Trials God hath the sovereign dispose of things; and causeth them to work together for the good of them that fear God, *Rom. 8. 28.* As the Experience of many can, and will testify, who have had the honour in these Days, to try the nature and consequence of these light Afflictions, which are but for a moment, *Rom. 8. 18.* So that true for ever is the saying of the Wise man, *Eccles. 8. 12. 13. Though a Sinner do evil an hundred times, and his life be prolonged, yet surely I know it shall be well with them that fear God, that fear before him: but it shall not be well with the Wicked, neither shall he prolong his days—because he feareth not before God.*

Furthermore, Beside this Interest of God's People in things which pertain to this Life, there are very great and special Promises made to them, of far larger enjoyments even upon the Earth; which as the Prophets have foretold, so the same is confirmed by our Saviour, *Mat. 5. 5. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the Earth.* Doubtless the meek did then, and in former times also, inherit the Earth in a way of common Providence, being always generally preserved of the Lord: Our Saviour therefore in this Passage, seems to import some special Favour this way, which God had in store for his own People, even the advancement of that Kingdom whereof the Prophets had spoken, since the beginning of the World: And particularly *Daniel*, *Dan. 7. 27. The Kingdom, and Dominion, and the greatness of the Kingdom under the whole Heaven, shall be given to the People of the Saints of the most High; whose Kingdom is an everlasting Kingdom, and all Dominions shall serve and obey Him.* Either this Prophecy hath been already fulfilled, or is yet to be accomplished; and hitherto nothing has been alledged which answers to the Prophecy; the most glorious Estate of the Church hitherto, being no way answerable to the tenor of those words, whether we consider the Jewish Church, or the

the Christian; and therefore we must look for the fulfilling of these Sayings; which cannot fall to the ground without Accomplishment.

When the Apostles demanded, or enquired, whether Christ would at that time restore the Kingdom to Israel, Acts 1. 6. Our Saviour denies not but that such a thing was to be expected, only opposeth their curiosity about the Time. But when he saith, *The Father had put that in his own Power*, he fairly grants the thing shall be; and having expounded before unto his Disciples all things in the Prophets; and in the *Psalms*, concerning himself, he had doubtless opened things which concerned his Kingdom, as prophesied of by *David* and the rest. And in the second *Psalms*, we have this very remarkable to the case in hand, *That God would set his King upon his holy Hill of Zion; that this King is the Son of God; that the Heavens, and the uttermost parts of the Earth, should be made his Possession: That He should rule them with a Rod of Iron: That Kings are therefore to be Wise, and submit to Him: That all this is decreed and published for Instruction.* Now though some Nations have been made to acknowledge Christ to be the Son of God, and many Kings the same, yet all comes short of the extent of these words abundantly; so that there is yet a Time for the fulfilling that which lieth in them.

The Apostle, Acts 3. 21. speaks of a Time of refreshing which shall come from the Presence of the Lord, wherein there shall be a Restoration of all things, spoken by all the holy Prophets since the World began. Now though the Conversion of *Constantine*, may seem to bid fair for the fulfilling of this Prophecy in the judgment of some; yet sure it falls abundantly short; for there was far more of the World opposite to, than any way disposed to God-ward all his days, and ever since; so that we must conclude a greater Blessing is yet to be expected this way, than hath hitherto been received.

Rom. 8. 19. tells us, *That the earnest expectation of the Creature, waiteth for the manifestation of the Sons of God: And that the whole Creation groans and travaileth in Pain: And that it shall be delivered from the Bondage of Corruption, into the glorious Liberty of the Sons of God.* Doubtless this is a happier Time than hath yet been since the Curse entred upon the Creation, and therefore we may expect the Manifestation of the Sons of God in a state of glorious Liberty, and therewithal the Deliverance of the Creature, or the insensible part of the World, from the Bondage of Corruption.

And because the clearing this place Rom. 8. to stand for us in this matter, will be in effect to remove whatsoever can be objected against us; I shall therefore offer something to that purpose, which I take to be considerable. And though by *Creature* here, we understand the Insensible World, and the *Dumb Creature*; yet we are far from thinking, that they shall be joynt-Heirs with God's Children of Eternal Blessedness. But as *Chrysostome* expounds the place, *Into the Liberty of the Sons of God*, is as much as to say, *Together with the Liberty of the Sons of God*, they shall be freed from the Bondage of Corruption under which they groaned. And *Ambrose* to the same effect, *Habet enim in labore posita Creatura, &c.*

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The Creature travelling in Pain, hath this Comfort, that it shall rest from Travel, when they shall all believe whom God knows are to believe. This I have from a learned * Author, against whom many things are objected, but especially the Authority of *Augustine, Theodoret, Origen, Anselm, Lira, Gregory*; who, either take the place to be intricate as some; That by the Creature, is meant *Angels*: As others some again, take it to be the *Natural Man*: Others, the *Regenerate Man*; and some admit all three; and it's supposed that the meaning of the place is uncertain. To all which my Author answers to this effect:

1. That diversity of Interpretations, does not always infer the uncertainty of Sense.

2. That the Text it self, demonstratively controlleth all these Interpretations. Out of it I argue, and conclude;

1. Angels are not meant, for (it can be) neither the blessed Angels; nor the sinful. Not the Blessed, for they are not subject to Vanity and Corruption (as the Creature here meant, is); neither do they groan and travel to be freed from it, as the Creature is here said to do: Neither are the sinful Angels here meant; for they hope not for, but envy and grieve at the full Adoption of the Sons of God. Neither do they wait and groan for their own final Deliverance, but utterly despair of it, as being certain of their everlasting Rejection.

2. Neither is Man meant (by the Creature in this place): for then it must be either the Regenerate, or Unregenerate. Not the Regenerate, for they are plainly distinguished from the Creature; where it is said, *And not only they, but our selves also, who have the First-fruits of the Spirit.* Nor are the Unregenerate meant; for the Creature (here meant) is subject to Vanity, not of its own will; but evil Men do wittingly and willingly subject themselves thereunto. Again, the Creature longeth for Freedom, but these Unregenerate Men being without Faith, have no hope thereof, &c.

If neither Angels nor Men, then undoubtedly the *Dumb Creature* alone is meant; for there is no Third, yet neither the Imperial Heaven, nor Hell. Not that Heaven, for being the Throne of God, and Seat of Blessed Angels and Saints; not made for our use whilst we are here in *Via*, but reserved to be our Mansion when we shall dwell in *Patria*; it is neither defiled by Sin, nor subject to Vanity. Not Hell, because it is the place of endless Torment,— and may be said to groan for the actual Damnation of the Wicked, but never to wait for the Salvation of the Just. Thus, or to this effect, my Author, who also further shews what manner of Liberty the Creature shall partake of.

Not Beatifical, to behold the Face of God in the fulness of Wisdom, Righteousness, and Peace, that being not incident to any Creature beneath Man: But to be freed from Vanity, and to be restored to its Primitive, or better Perfection which the Creature is capable of, which is a glorious Liberty. Thus much on Rom. 8.

That the Church of God shall yet enjoy a greater Tranquillity than ever she yet attained, we must needs conclude from Rev. 5. 10. & 2d. 4. Because no Man could yet with good Evidence, assign when these thousand

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Years began, or how it can be truly said that Christ and his Saints have reigned upon the Earth. True it is, *Augustine* (a Man once of our mind in this Matter) assigns this thousand Years to commence about the time that divers went on Pilgrimage to the Sepulchres of Martyrs. Mr. Fox takes it to be of a far later date. But sure a matter of this nature, when it shall indeed come to pass, shall be too evident to be conjectured at. The sum of all is this, That the People of God are a People preserved by the Lord, and shall be highly honoured, even in this World: And yet behold, this is but a small thing, in comparison of the things which God hath further prepared for them that love him.

With one Caution I shall conclude this Section, and that is, That we be not too curious in searching into these Mysteries; neither meddle with that Spirit which is too impatient of the time when God shall do this: Let us beware of Carnal Thoughts, as if by humane force these things should be effected. Christians are to keep the Word of God's Patience: Promises of this kind shall be fulfilled. We have no Precepts (that I know of) binding us to set up this Kingdom; I know we are required to be patient unto the coming of the Lord. Let us therefore follow Peace with all Men, and Holiness, so shall we see the Lord. And blessed are the Peace-makers, for they shall be called the Children of God, *Mat. 5. 9.*

SECT. VI.

The Children of God shall inherit Eternal Glory in the World to come.

Here we may better admire, than discourse of the Eternal Inheritance of the Saints. However, this we shall say, That were all that we have said of the Inheritance of the Saints the whole of their Inheritance, it were but of mean consideration, although it far transcends the Glory of the greatest Monarch that ever yet possessed the Earth. And therefore we must look further than these things. What though *Enoch* was translated that he should not see Death, and hath now enjoyed the happiness of that translated Estate many thousands of years; yet should it now terminate, what would all that Blessedness amount to? it should even appear as if it had not been. Nothing therefore but a State of Eternity in Blessedness can make us truly happy; and such is the Inheritance of the Saints, avouched most plainly in the Scriptures of the New Testament, though not wholly obscured in the Old. Christ is said to bring Life and Immortality to light by the Gospel, *2 Tim. 1. 10.* And hath assured his Followers of the possession of an Everlasting Life, and Kingdom, which shall have no end, *Matth. 19. 29.* Besides what they shall enjoy in this World for their faithfulness to him, he adds, and shall inherit Everlasting Life: which according to the Prophet, *Dan. 12. 2.* shall be conferr'd upon God's People at the Resurrection of the Dead. The same is testified *Luke 18. 30.* also *John 3. 36.* He that believeth on the Son, hath Everlasting Life. And again, *John 6. 40.* This is the Will of him that sent me, That every one that seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have Everlasting Life; and I will raise him up at the last day. And that

that the Kingdom they shall inherit is of like duration, appears *Luke 22. 29.* I appoint unto you a Kingdom, as my Father appointed me, whose Kingdom is Everlasting, *2 Pet. 1. 11.* For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly, into the Everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

And when we say this Inheritance shall be received in the World to come, we intend that heavenly Mansion or dwelling-Place, where the most High God, with his Holy Angels, do most gloriously reside above the Starry Heavens. *Psal. 103. 19.* The Lord hath prepared his Throne in the Heavens. *Psal. 115. 16.* The Heaven, even the Heaven of Heavens are the Lords. *Mat. 18. 10.* Angels do always behold the Face of my Father in Heaven. This is the Place prepared by God for the Eternal Rest of those that fear him. *2 Cor. 5. 1.* For we know, if our Earthly House of this Tabernacle were dissolved, we have a Building of God,—eternal in the Heavens. What Heaven can the Apostle speak of here, but that which we intend, seeing it is not received by the most Spiritual Saint till after Death, or some change equivalent to it? The Grave puts a period to the days of Grace, in respect of the Dead, (though it is introductive to the Glory of Eternity) for the Dead know nothing, (we speak only of that part which dieth). *Abraham* is ignorant of his Children, and *Jacob* of his Offspring, *Isa. 63. 16.* *David* is not yet ascended, but in his Sepulchre, *Acts 2.* Yet these (with many more) died in Faith, and in the expectation of a better Country, a City, or Kingdom, that cannot be moved, *Heb. 11.* Yea, a Kingdom more glorious and fixed than the Gospel Church; seeing the Apostle speaks this with respect to the future State of such as were already famous in the Gospel of God, *Heb. 12. 22, to 29.*

And most clearly the Apostle *Peter*, *1 Pet. 1. 4.* evinceth, That those that had already attain'd to a State of Faith and Grace like himself, were born to an Inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven. Now what Heaven can this be, but the same whereof *Paul* speaks, *Col. 3. 1.* where Christ sitteth on the right Hand of God? Which *Stephen* by a miraculous Operation was made to behold, *Acts 7. 55, 56.* But he being full of the Holy Ghost, looked stedfastly into Heaven, and saw the Glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right Hand of God: And said, Behold, I see the Heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right Hand of God. This is that Heaven that must retain Christ until the times of the restitution of all things, *Acts 3.* Who therefore is expressly declared not to be on Earth, *Heb. 8. 4.*

A further evidence we have *1 Thess. 4. 17.* where 'tis said, We shall be caught up, and meet the Lord in the Air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord. The possibility of which glorious Transition, or Ascension, we have evidenced, not only in our Saviour's ascending bodily into Heaven, (*Acts 1.*) but also in *Elijah* who was taken up bodily into Heaven: Sure 'tis as easie with God to cause our Bodies to ascend, as to walk upon the Water, which yet hath been done by Christ in our Nature, or humane State; yea, *Peter* did it in part, and might have done it more had he believed. And to this, that in that day the Bodies of the Saints shall be freed

fired from Corruption, and made like unto the glorious Body of Christ, Phil. 3. 21. and so as capable to ascend the Heavens, as his blessed Body. And indeed if any believe not the ascension of the Saints Bodies to Heaven, it is because they do not believe Christ's Body ascended thither. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, then they also that sleep in Jesus, shall God bring with him, 1 Thess. 4. 14. Neither can those that believe not the Resurrection and Ascension of the Body of Christ which died upon the Cross, and therewithal the dead Bodies of the Saints, (1st. 26. 19.) believe really any great Miracle recorded in the Scripture; seeing the grounds upon which they question the former, will lead them to question the latter, viz. The Translation of Enoch, the taking up of Elijah, (really and bodily); the reviving of the dead Man, upon his being made to touch the Bones of the Prophet: The raising of Lazarus, who came forth of the Grave bound hand and foot: The raising Dorcas and many others. All which are as so many pledges of the certainty of the Resurrection of all Men. For what Reason can any Man shew, why these should all be true, and the other not so? May we not as rationally believe, that we which remain unto the coming of the Lord Jesus, shall be caught up and meet the Lord in the Air, as we do believe that the Prophet was so taken up in a Chariot of Horses and Fire? Is it not as easie to raise a dead Body that hath been dead 4000 years, as to raise one that hath been dead and buried four days? And if once the Resurrection be granted, the glorious Inheritance of the Saints, and the just condemnation of the Wicked cannot be doubted. Now the Resurrection of the Dead, and consequently the Glory to come, as the Inheritance of the Saints, is excellently proved by our Saviour, Matth. 22. 30. where God acknowledging himself to be the God of Abraham, &c. though dead hundreds of years before that word was spoken, our Saviour expounds it of the Life which Abraham shall receive; and therein he is said to live to God, who calleth things that are not, as though they were, Rom. 4. 17. Now we know that by Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, are not meant so many Spirits only, but rather so many Bodies; for the Spirits are not called by those Appellations, but the Bodies are thus denominated: And it's plain, that Christ refers in these Appellations, to that part of those Holy Men which died. And did this reasoning of our Lord Christ convince the Sadduces? and dare any be so vile, as to revive that dangerous Error so powerfully overthrown? Surely such Men have their Consciences seared with an hot Iron.

The two great Ordinances of Christ, to wit, Baptism, and the Lord's Table, do excellently set forth the Resurrection of Christ, and his second coming to glorifie his Church: For wherefore are they cleansed from Sin, if Death were the final end of Man? Let us Eat, and Drink, for to morrow we shall die, is the result of Mens denying this great Truth, 1 Cor. 15. 32.

But now in Baptism we are interested in the Fruits of Christ's Death, and therefore said to be buried with him in Baptism, Rom. 6. 2, 3. and have the answer of a good Conscience, by the Resurrection of Christ from the Dead; who is evidently set forth, dead, buried, and risen again, &c.

for our Justification; and therefore are Men said to have their Sins washed away in, and to be saved by Baptism, namely, because it setteth forth Christ, with the Effects of his Death unto our Understanding; and we on our part by Faith receive, and put on Christ in Baptism, Gal. 3. 27.

Also the Lord's Supper (I mean, as celebrated in Bread and Wine, according to Christ's Commandment, Matth. 26.) gives evidence of the dying of the Lord Jesus, and of the coming again of the same Lord that died; and thus his Resurrection, or conquest over Death, is evidently set forth herein, and the appearing of our Saviour, kept alive in the expectation of his People hereby; Who when he comes, brings his Reward with him. Rev. 22. 12. Behold, I come quickly, and my Reward is with me, to give to every one according as his Work shall be. To them who by patient continuing in well-doing, seek for Glory, &c. Eternal Life. But to them that are contentious, &c. Indignation and Wrath, Rom. 2. 1, to 10. Then shall the Righteous shine forth as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father. Yea, then shall they be free from mortal Delights, and be equal to the Angels of God in Heaven, Luke 20. 36.

CHAP. VII.

Treateth of Angels both Good and Bad; and of the Service of the first, and Disservice of the Last to Mankind.

SECT. I.

Forasmuch as it may conduce much to our Comfort and Admonition, to contemplate this Subject touching the Angelical Powers, we shall not intermit in these our Discourses of the Internal part of Christianity to speak somewhat thereof, although an exact knowledg herein is undoubtedly reserved to Eternity; Howbeit, some things in this case are revealed in the Scriptures, as necessary to be known by the Christian Man, in via, whose duty it is to hold such of them in execration, as shall prove themselves inimical to the Gospel of God, Gal. 1. 4, 8. and whose honour it shall be to judg them, when God shall bring to Light all the hidden things of Darknes, 1 Cor. 6. 3. And that we may not wander into scrutines which are unnecessary, we shall content our selves with the brief consideration of these ensuing Particulars.

1. Of their Original.
2. Their Dignity, and great Number.
3. The Apostasie of some of them.
4. The envy of the Apostate against Man.
5. The Office and Care of the Good to such as fear God.
6. The final Estate of Angels both Good and Bad.

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When *Moses* gives an account of the Creation, *Gen. 2. 1.* he tells us, *Thus were the Heavens and the Earth finished, and all the Host of them:* Which implies the Creation of the Angles, among the rest of the Creatures. For though the Sun, Moon, and Stars, are sometimes called the Host of Heaven; yet they are not all the Host of them, for we find the Angels are so called, *Gen. 32. 2. And the Angels of God met him;* and *Jacob said, This is God's Host.* And *Luke 2. 13. There were with the Angels, (viz. those that first appeared to the Shepherds) a multitude of the Heavenly Host, praising God.* These are the Hosts, unto which the most High God doth so frequently intitle himself as their Lord in the Old Testament, though but once expressed in the New, *Jam. 5. 4.* for the word *Sabbath* and *Hosts* are of the same import. That these Glorious Saints are created Beings, is yet more evident, *Psal. 147.* where the Prophet having called upon the Angels, as well as other parts of the Creation, to praise the Lord, he gives this general Reason for it, *For he commanded, and they were created.* So that how excellent soever they are, yet were they not from Eternity, but took their Being in Time; and by the Word of God they were produced or brought forth in a creaturely capacity, and so to be looked upon, and not to be adored with Divine Honours, as many have vainly fancied, and for which they are reproved by the Apostle, *Col. 2. 18.* As the Error of Adoration of Angels is dangerous, in that it intrencheth upon the Right of him who made them, and hath ordained them to worship him and his Holy Child Jesus, *Heb. 1.* So it is a very gross Error, to deny that there are any Angels or Spirits Celestial, as the *Sadducees* did, because it also taketh away the Glory of the Creator, in that part of his handy-work, which hath gloriously appeared in the Creation and Exaltation of those Heavenly Powers which are modestly to be sought out among the great Works of God, by all such as have pleasure therein.

S E C T. II.

Of the Dignity and great number of Angels.

Here the nature of Angels is first to be considered, which is described to be Heavenly, or Spiritual, elevated above all Terrene, or Sublunary things, *1 Cor. 15. 40.* For though the Sun, Moon, and Stars, be here more expressly noted for Celestial Bodies, yet I see no reason to exempt the Angels from that Appellation, because of the parity which the Saints shall hold with them, when they shall be endowed with Spiritual Bodies, *ver. 44.* compared with *Mat. 22. 30.* However, *Heb. 2. 16. For verily, he took not on him the Nature of Angels, &c.* And again, *ver. 9. Made a little lower than the Angels, for the suffering of Death;* plainly shew, that the Angelical Nature, is Immortal, or such as cannot Die, and therefore dignified in Nature above Mankind, who though by the Power of God might have lived ever, and shall in the Resurrection be immortalized; yet, in respect of his natural Constitution, he is subject to Mortality *ab origine.*

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When the Scripture saith of the Angels, that *He (to wit God) maketh his Angels Spirits, his Ministers a flame of Fire,* *Psal. 104. 4.* Hence the Apostle infers both, that they are created, or made, and that they are by nature Spirits, *Heb. 1. 7.* and thence infers the Godhead of Christ, because he is the Begotten Son of God, and as such in Nature above the Angels, yet admits that they are in a very high state for Creatures.

Again, their Capacity, to be either Visible, or Invisible, shews the sublimity of their Nature, *Numb. 22. 22, to 34.* For it appeareth not that the vivify faculty of *Balaams* Ass, was more quick than *Balaams*; but God would not give him the favour to see the Angel, till he had manifested his Folly. In this the Angels agree with Spirits, whose property is to appear to sight, or to vanish out of sight. What is the proper form of Angels, is hard to determine; yet it is said of them, *Ezek. 1. 5.* that they have the form of a Man. Although 'tis true, the description there given is full of variety, their appearance was in Humane Form; both in the Old Testament, and the New: Nor have we any account of any Similitude more noble, either in Heaven, or in Earth. And to say they have no Form, is to make them (being Creatures) we know not what; nay, what every Man shall fancy. But certain it is, if we in the Resurrection shall bear the form of Men, as that is not to be doubted; and that we shall be like the Angels of God in Heaven, then they also must be like us, and consequently we shall bear much the same Similitude.

As the Angels are called Living Creatures, so a Query may be made, Whether they subsist by Nutriment, or without? I conceive they have a Nutriment fitted to their Heavenly State, not attended with Necessity; for when it is said, *Man did eat Angels food,* meaning Manna, which God rained down from Heaven, called also the Bread of the Mighty, *Psal. 78. 25.* what can we understand less, than that the glorious Angels have a nutriment of that kind? And here again, our parity with the Angels in the Resurrection, infers the truth of this, for then shall we have a capacity to eat and drink; for so had our Saviour, though this Capacity shall be devoid of necessity, for we shall neither hunger nor thirst any more.

* The Dignity of Angels, appears in the *Epithites* given to them, *viz. Thrones, Dominations, Powers, Principalities, &c.* Which Titles must needs signify their great Dignities, as the greatness of their Power and Might, as the Apostle hath it, *2 Pet. 2. 11.*

Nor is it needful (as I suppose) to dispute about the Sovereignty of one of these Orders above another: The saying of *Augustine* is good in this place, *Ego me ipsa ignorare confiteor:* For though their Offices may differ, I rather think they are all immediately subject to one Lord, and not constituted Lords one over another. And though *Michael* is called the Prince, yet he is Prince of the Children of God, *Dan. 10. 21.* *Origen* takes this Angel to be Christ himself; who is also supposed to be called an Angel, *Rev. 8. 3, 4.* because he only can offer up the Prayers of his People acceptably. But if we understand *Michael* here to be an Arch-Angel, yet will it not follow that he hath Power over the Angels; but

but some more especial Trust committed to him by God; who may prefer some of these glorious Creatures to attend more immediately upon his Majesty than others; for so it is said of the Angel *Gabriel*, That he stands in the presence of God, Luke 1. 19. and was sent upon the special occasion of the Conception of our Saviour, and the Baptism his Messenger.

Again, the Dignity of Angels is very great, in that they are said to be the Chariots of God, *Psal. 68. 17. The Chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of Angels, the Lord is among them, &c.* Hence we learn, that the most High God doth transact his great Affairs by them in the Regiment of the World, as pleaseth him. Thus he commissions them to destroy the *Assyrian Army*, 2 *Kings 19. 35.* to correct the Sin of his own People, 2 *Sam. 24. 16, 17.* to defend them against their Enemies, *Josh. 5. 13, 14.* to minister to Christ, *Matth. 4. 11.* to comfort him in his Agony, *Luke 22. 13, 14.* to roll away the Stone from his Sepulchre, making the Earth to quake at his Resurrection, *Matth. 28. 2.* Yea, they are sent to and fro through the whole Earth, *Zach. 1. 10.* These are they who are said to excel in strength, doing the Pleasure of their Heavenly King, and are said to be great in Dignity, 2 *Pet. 2. 11.*

The number of Angels is very great, as our Saviour informs us, when he tells us, he could have had more than twelve Legions of them to rescue him out of the Hands of Men, *Matth. 26. 53.* The same is held forth, *Dan. 7. 10. Ten thousand ministered to him:* Yea, they are expressly said to be innumerable, *Heb. 12. 22. The innumerable company of Angels.*

Thus was the most High God pleased to honour himself, by creating so mighty an Host, even from the beginning of the World, to be the Subjects of his Heavenly Seat, or Place of more especial Residence; who are therefore called the Angels of God in Heaven.

SECTION III.

Of the dreadful Apostacy of some of the Angels.

The Apostacy of some (and that very many) of these glorious Creatures, is evidently set down in Sacred History; and most clearly in the New Testament. Our Saviour, *John 8. 44.* informs us, That the Devil was a Murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the Truth; and saith, He is a lyer, and the Father of it; alluding hereby to the first entrance of Sin into the World, through the Devil's instigation, when he contradicted God, *Gen. 3. 4. Ye shall not surely die,* though God had said they should surely die. This *Moses* leaveth, with the mention of the Serpent, not expressing any thing of the Apostacy of the Angels in this place; which our Saviour fully openeth, and the same doth the Apostle allude to, 2 *Cor. 11. 3.* which is yet further explained, *Rev. 12. 9. & 20. 3. That old Serpent, called the Devil and Satan, which deceiveth the World.*

Many and very strange are the Opinions of Learned Men, both Heathens, Jews, and Christians, touching this Matter, as *Plato, Josephus, Cyrilus,*

Cyrillus, whose Opinions are recounted by Dr. *Wilket* in his *Hexapla in Genesem*; to which I refer the curious Reader; and do rest satisfied in this, that here we so plainly find the defection of the Angels, from that good Estate wherein they were created; for of them it's said, 2 *Pet. 2. 4. God spared not the Angels that sinned.* And as they at the first made use of the Serpent's Organ, from thence to reverberate Falshood; so have they since spoken through Idols, but most of all through evil Men, to the seduction of the World, and the estranging them from the Obedience due to their Creator. Thus those wretched Spirits, by these wicked Engines, do even to this day militate, or fight, against the Fear of the Lord, and all Vertue, having a Prince or chief Devil among them, called *Beelzebub*. Not that the other Infernal Spirits are subject to him to do his Will, for we read not any such Power or Authority given to one Devil over another: But most probably he was an Angel of an higher Order, and so became a Ring-leader out of the Truth, so that the whole is often denominated as from him. As when it is said, *Job 1. 7. The Devil compassed the Earth, walking up and down in it:* It is necessarily to be supposed, That the whole Fraternity of the Devils was Active in that mischievous Perambulation: for they have one mind, (as our Saviour intimates, That Satan doth not cast out Satan) and manage one common design of mischief, as the unanswerableness of Men in their walkings towards God, gives them opportunity, *Dent. 32. 17. They sacrificed to Devils, and not to God.* And for this cause the Lord is said to send evil Angels among them, *Psal. 78. 49.* For when Men chuse their own ways, then God doth in judgment chuse their Delusions, and brings their fear upon them, *1sa. 66. 3, 4.*

This dreadful Apostacy of the Angels, caused a most sad change in the new-made World: and may strike with amazement the most considerate Christian; that he that is most Wise and Omnipotent, should suffer so great a change to befall so glorious a Work in so short a time, and that by his own Servants, or Creatures, whom he had set in a good Estate! But here we must stop our Imaginations, and know it is not of concernment to us to know the occasion of the fall of Angels, about which some have thought this, another that; but it's certainly the way to avoid Error herein, to content our selves not to know it; whilst to assert any thing this way, or that, is almost a sure way to err. God knew how much Wisdom and Strength was fit to be committed to his Creatures respectively, and was not bound to make them stand in that state of necessity; he may do what he pleaseth with his own. That the Sin of the Angels was very great, is evident, not only from our Saviour's description of it, *John 8.* but also from the nature of their Punishment, God having shut them up in Chains under darkness to the Judgment of the great Day, without the least tender of Mercy; whilst Mankind (whose Sin was great) hath a Remedy offered. How their Sin was circumstanced, do not wish to know, sith it is too well known, That what Sin Men do know, they are too apt to imitate, yea, too often study to find out more. If thou knew the Sin of Angels, how knowest thou but thou shouldst commit it, and then how couldst thou escape their Condemnation? It is then a great mercy;

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that of all mischief the Devils do, they are not permitted to divulge this their most black and dreadful Impiety to Men, who yet for all that find too many ways to sin themselves out of the reach of Pardon: for such Sins there are, and they that commit them, seem to vie with the Devils in their most rebellious Impieties. Great is the number of these Diabolical Spirits, *Luke 8. 30. Our Name (say they) is Legion, for we are many.* And sith the whole world is said to be deceived by the Devils, it must needs be that the Multitude is very great; for we must not imagine that one created Spirit can infuse it self through the Universe at the same instant, that being only proper to the Godhead to fill all places at the same time with his presence: But all Creatures, even Angels themselves, are finite; and admit of motion from place to place, and cannot know things universally: So that the number of these Spirits supplies more than enough their other deficiencies to do mischief.

S E C T. IV.

Of the Envy of the Apostate Angels against Mankind.

But more particularly to set forth the envy of these fallen Angels against Mankind, we shall do it briefly; in observing, 1. how he spoiled his happy created State. 2. In labouring to spoil his Redemption: And, 3. his depriving many of Salvation, to whom that Grace is offered: And of these briefly and in general.

We have seen his envious attempt against the first Adam: for being now exposed to the Wrath of God, for leaving his own Habitation, it could be nothing but meer malice which mov'd the Devil to supplant Innocent Adam, seeing he could not better his own estate by destroying him. Whose Fall is the more deplorable, for that he had a capacity to have withstood that Enemy; as appears by the opposition made for a time, *Gen. 3. 2, 3. We may eat of the Fruit of the Trees of the Garden; but of the Fruit of the Tree, which is in the midst of the Garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, lest ye die, neither shall ye touch it, &c.* And surely had our first Parents prosecuted this good Argument, it would have led them to enervate the most specious pretences of the Devil in his lying Reply; who knowing that flattery, with hopes of a better state than God thought fit for him, would be very taking, proceeds that way, perswading them they should be as God, &c. This was the poyson of the Serpent by which Adam fell, and in him his Posterity, as the sequel shewed: for the whole World as it grew, felt the malice of this Adversary, till at last we find all flesh to forsake God's way, and the whole Earth to be filled with violence, *Gen. 6. 11, 12.* Being full of envy, as the Apostle saith, *Rom. 1. 29.* the natural effect of Satan's Operation, *Jam. 4. 5. Do ye think the Scripture saith in vain, The Spirit which dwelleth in us lusteth to Envy?* That is, Man's natural Spirit being influenced by Satan, bringeth forth those envious Qualities one against another: So that Men may read the envious Nature of the Devil in all Nations, whom he has greatly enthral'd in the ways of Perdition and Destruction.

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No less maliciously did he assault the Redeemer of the World, to make fruitless his coming to save the World, *Mat. 4. 1, to 12.* removing him from Place to Place, from Temptation to Temptation, from Argument to Argument, if by any means he might prevail; not to make his own case better, (for that was impossible) but to aggravate Man's misery, which was the greatest evidence of Envy imaginable; and the rather, because it heightens his own condemnation.

The nature of these Evil Angels, (as such) is best seen in the temper of Evil Men, as acted by them. *Cain* is said to be of the Evil One, and slew his Brother; But wherefore slew he him? Because his own Works were Wicked, and his Brothers Righteous. Here's the perfect Image of the Evil Angels, who influence Evil Men to destroy the Good, merely because they are Good; they are therefore called *haters of those that are Good*, *2 Tim. 3. 3.* Through Envy the Son of God was put to death, under the notion of a Deceiver and Malefactor. By which Artifice, the Devil cheated the Jewish Nation generally of Salvation by Christ: for seeing he must die for the Salvation of Men, the Devil could no way more hinder the Fruit of his Death, than to render him as one that died wickedly: And to do it to the life, the High Priest must be his Judge as touching his Doctrine, and he must be crucified among Thieves, and placed as if he were the chief Offender. But God, who foresaw all these Devices, did also pre-declare all this by his Prophets, that so the fulfilling thereof might become the very Argument to vanquish Incredulity, and to confirm the Faith of God's People, to the utter defeating the Devil; for in the thing wherein these Wicked Spirits and Evil Men dealt most proudly, the Lord was above them.

The Devil now seeing the Son of God thus caught up to the Throne of Glory, and that his Name must be exalted above every Name, *Maugre* his envy, he turns his malice against the Righteous Seed, which keep the Commands of God, and the Faith of Jesus, *Rev. 12. ult.* who is therefore called *your Adversary the Devil*, and prosecutes his devouring design against them, as the Lion doth his Prey, *1 Pet. 5. 8.* And very desirous he is to have the most useful Instruments of God's Church, that he may sift or winnow them, or toss them in the Air, and so destroy both them; and the Fruit which might by them be brought forth in the Salvation of Sinners.

How Satan's Envy went out against *Job*, we know by the Scriptures; how he emulates our Souls, we cannot be ignorant, having daily experience of his Internal Allurements and Furies, as also his outward Baits; and manifold Snares. All which have this tendency to quench the Light, and take away the love of the Truth, which God hath shed abroad in our Hearts by the Holy Ghost, chiefly to prevent the exaltation of Christ, and to reign in our Hearts himself by the Spirit of Disobedience. And the better to effect their proud design against the exaltation of Christ, they get into high Places, *Ephes. 6. 22.* not the Air, (as some do interpret the place) but Seats of worldly Judicature: As he did at the Crucifixion of our Lord, where doubtless he was present, if not President, in that erring Council: And the same he did in the Courts of the persecuting Emperors,

Emperors, and all Persecutors to this day. Nor may this seem strange, for his Pride and Envy prompts him to obtrude upon the Church of God, giving out of himself that he is God, *2 Thess. 2. 4.* And thus having exalted himself above all that is worshipped; he frameth mischief by a Law, *Psal. 94. 20.* This done, he sets up a Ministry to preach Christ, of Envy and Strife, to make the Affliction of the Faithful Ministers of God more intollerable, and to turn Christianity in the Power of it, to a meet empty Name; and so doth his Envy prevail, that by this he so corrupts the Word, that Men may have a Zeal of God, and yet not be saved. For all which see *Phil. 1. 15. 2 Cor. 2. 17. Rom. 10. 1, 2, 3, 4.* Thus these wicked Spirits of Devils compared to Frogs, *Rev. 16. 13, 14.* seduce both high and low, infusing their poyson of Envy into their Hearts, the effect whereof is hatred one against another. And this mischief they not only effect in the darker places of the Earth, which is said to be full of the Habitations of Cruelty, but even there also where Men have in some good measure known the Gospel of God, which is a matter of great lamentation; which as it timely shewed it felt among such, so it was early cryed out against by many, and particularly by Clement, in his Epistle to the Corinthians; who upon the occasion of the discords there found, faith, Envy, Contention, Sedition, Persecution, Trouble, War, and Captivity, hath thence proceeded. And then alludes to former times thus; See my Brethren, through Envy and Contention, the murder of a Brother by a Brothers hand. But what would he have said, had he lived to see or hear the unspeakable Cruelties, and malicious Contrivances, since his time, acted by Pretenders to Christianity? Against which we do hereby give our Testimony, acted by whom, or under what form of Profession soever, as being things no way suiting with Christianity, whose main Principles hingeth on this, to render to no Man evil for evil, but to overcome evil with good, *Rom. 12. 21.*

S E C T. V.

Of the Office and Care of Good Angels towards such as fear God.

How greatly the Lord delights in the Children of Men, such as fear him, is very apparent; as in many other, so in the case now to be considered. What is Man, that he should give his Angels charge concerning him? *Psal. 91. 11.* Man is made a little lower than the Angels, yet the Angels must serve him, *Heb. 1. 14.* Are they not all Ministering Spirits, sent forth to do his Will, for them that shall be Heirs of Salvation? Yea, they are said to encamp round about them that fear God, to deliver them. Indeed it may rationally be conceived, That the Evil Angels would certainly destroy the People of God, if not restrained: As is evident in the case of Job, who when God took away the Hedge which was about him, he soon felt the cruel hands of Satan. Now we know that the Lord is able to restrain the malice of the Devils, without Angels to assist; but sith they are his Ministers, 'tis meet they do his Will, whose Will is, that they should guard his People in this evil World, as we shewed from *Heb. 1. 14. Psal. 34. 8. & 91. 11.* And therefore the good Angels do doubtless withstand

withstand the evil Angels in their Attempts against God's People: An Instance of which we have in the case of Moses, when Michael the Arch-Angel contended with the Devil about his Body: Surely the Devil is envious enough against all Saints, and good Angels are not partial: So that we may safely conclude, they guard the Children of God in general, especially having those general Testimonies of the Holy Scripture to confirm us in so believing; besides many particular cases, both in the Old and New Testaments, shewing the care God's Angels have always had of his faithful People.

But here it will admit of consideration, That seeing 'tis said the Angels are Ministering Spirits for them which shall be Heirs of Salvation; whether it follow not from hence, that they have only benefit by the good Angels, and the rest of Mankind left to the tutelage of the Apostate Angels?

To this difficulty I thus Answer: 1. That it seems from our Saviour's words, *Matth. 18. 10.* Their Angels do always behold the Face of my Father in Heaven; That all the Children of Men are at the first under the care of the Good Angels, because what Christ here speaks, he speaks of Infants indefinitely, i. e. he speaks the same of all, that he speaks of any of them. 2. To say that some Infants have no benefit by any Angels at all, will make the business very weak; for so no Man can be assured he hath an interest in such a favour. 3. To say that any are left to the tutelage of the Apostate Angels, is the worst that can be said, and reflects great dishonour upon that God, whose tender mercy is over all his Works; because this is in effect to say, the greater part of Mankind are committed to the tutelage of the Devils, even from their Infancy; and then how should it be avoided, but that they must be wicked of necessity? But this will intrench upon the Attribute of God's Mercy, and his Faithfulness too, who hath said, yea sworn, *That he hath no pleasure in the death of the Wicked, but rather that they turn and live:* And therefore doubtless he hath committed them to better Guardians, even to the care of the Holy Angels; for seeing we are all the Off-spring of God, we cannot think but he renders our happiness, unless we can be so proud to think, That we as Fathers are more benign to our Children, than God is to his Off-spring.

It is certain, God hath sent good Angels to wicked Men, to turn them from their folly; as in the case of Balaam, how faithfully did the Angel reprove him, and set the danger of his evil Enterprize before him: and though it is true, the Angel is said to have a Sword ready to kill him, yet this is no other thing than beset Moses himself, who was in the same danger for not doing his duty to God, *Exod. 4. 24.* Israel had the Angel of God's presence to guard them, and received the Law by the disposition of Angels; yet did their Carcasses fall in the Wilderness, for they were generally a sinful Generation, and vexed the Angel of God, who therefore became their Enemy.

Again, we may know God's way of sending Angels Good or Bad to Men, by his way of sending Prophets unto them; the true Prophets he sends first, and in his own Name, to shew Men the way of Righteousness that

that they may be saved: But when these are rejected, then in judgment he sends them false Prophets, viz. permits them to publish their Delusions, for otherwise he sends them not, 1 Kings 22. 22. Thus God is said to send Men strong Delusions, that they should believe a Lye; namely, because they received not the love of the Truth, that they might be saved, 2 Thess. 2. 10, 11. And after this manner God doth use the Ministry of evil Angels, Psal. 109. 6. Set a wicked Man over him: and let Satan stand at his right hand.—As he loved cursing, so let it come unto him; as he delighted not in blessing, so let it be far from him.

As for the good Angels, they are serviceable to all Men by God's appointment for their good: They are sent to publish glad tidings of great joy for all People, Luke 2. 10, 11. The Heavenly Angels, and God's Faithful Ministers on Earth, do certainly correspond in their Commissions, Desires, and Endeavours. Now for the latter, we know they seek the good of all Men, pray for all Men, preach the Word of Life to all Men. And the Angels of Heaven do encourage them thereto, Acts 5. 20. saying, Go, stand and speak in the Temple, all the words of this Life.

Gen. 19. 13.
2 Kings 19.
35.

Acts 5. 5.
& 13. 8.

If here it be said that the Good Angels destroyed Sodom, slew the Army of Senacherib, &c. It is very true, and so 'tis said, That God hewed the People by the Prophets, and slew them by the words of their mouth. They are also said to be set over Kingdoms, to build and to plant, to root up and to pull down, and called Men of Contention to the whole Earth. And the same may be said of the Messengers or Ministers of the Gospel, who by preaching shall bring down Babylon; who sometimes smote particular Persons with great Judgments, as in the case of Ananias, Simon, and Elymas the Sorcerer. And yet who knows not that the first work of Ministers of the Gospel, is to speak peace to every City, House; every Creature, and to all Nations; in all which the Angels of God are their Comforters, as we shewed. And though the Angel of God was Israel's Conductor, yet when they obeyed not the Voice of God, he turned to be their Enemy. Yea, thus doth God himself, from whom Angels and all Ministers receive their Power; when Men walk contrary to him, he will walk contrary to them, and punish them yet seven times for their Iniquity. However, that saying, The Angels are Ministering Spirits, sent forth to do his Will, for them that shall be Heirs of Salvation, is a most comfortable word to the faithful; in whose good, the ministry of these Heavenly Guides results eternally.

And how exceeding useful the Angels of God are to his Children on Earth, may be understood from the use God formerly made of them: as first he gave the Law by the disposition of Angels, Acts 7. 33. Gal. 3. 19. And how they were concern'd in the discovery of the Birth, Resurrection, Ascension, and second coming of Christ, is evident, Luk. 2. 10. Acts 1. 10, 11. They shall be concern'd in the fall of Babylon, shewing by the throwing a Mill-stone into the Sea, the manner of her Fall; and do rejoice thereat with the Holy Apostles and Prophets. They defend the Worship of God only, when his People step awry in that case, Rev. 19. 20. An Angel comforted Paul, and all that were with him, though many of them were ill Men, Acts 27. 24. And surely they that were so serviceable

able in times past, have not lost their good affection towards the Lord's People, but are the same now as afore-time. We know the Devils are as ready to hurt us as ever. And though it is true they do not now appear that we hear of, (at least not so frequently) as in times past, yet it follows not that they are unmindful of us; for neither do the Devils appear as in times past, yet seek they with no less diligence to harm us than when they so appeared. We know the Spirit of Promise did appear, or give demonstration of his presence in the Church, by the sound (as it were) of a mighty rushing Wind, and cloven Tongues, as of Fire: And though he so appear not now, yet we know he is present with his Church, and find it so by some good experience. In a word, one great cause why we are so little acquainted with the presence of God's Spirit, or those Heavenly Spirits, is because we are so little devoted to God; for whatever Men think, there is a wonderful want of heavenly-mindedness, and a great appearance of earthly-mindedness in Professors generally; I am not ashamed to confess it, though I am greatly ashamed it should be so. O. Let God arise, and let these Enemies (our carnal Affections) be scattered, Psal. 68. 1.

SECT. VI.

Of the final Estate of Angels both Good and Bad.

After the Wise Creator of all things is pleased to permit wonderful Enormities and Revolutions in the World, through the malicious Enterprizes of the Devils or fallen Angels, yet he will certainly put a period to all these Impieties, (for Sin is not Eternal, only Righteousness endureth for ever): In order whereunto, he hath ordained an eternal Judgment to pass upon these wicked Spirits; And in that respect they are said to be cast down to Hell, and to be delivered in Chains under darkness, to be reserved unto Judgment, 2 Pet. 2. 4. Yea, so certain is this determination, that the Devils themselves do fear and tremble in expectation of it; Jam. 2. 19. because they shall not only have a privation of the liberty they now enjoy, but shall suffer the Terrors of the Almighty: a taste whereof they seem to have had, when they cried out, Mat. 8. 19. Art thou come to torment us before the time? For here they both acknowledge their present wretched Estate, and the certainty of their future Misery. And that which makes this Cup the more dreadful, is the eternal duration of it, denounced already by their Judge, Mat. 25. 41. Go ye Cursed into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels. And again, Rev. 20. 9, 10. where, as a just recompence of the rage of wicked Men, it is said, Fire came down from Heaven and devoured them: So also, the Devil that deceived them, was cast into the Lake of Fire and Brimstone, where the Beast and the false Prophet are said to be tormented day and night, for ever and ever. Thus shall the Omnipotent God subdue all the Powers of Wickedness, for he alone is God that made Heaven and Earth, the Seas and Fountains of Water; doing therefore in all places whatsoever he pleaseth; and shall now make his Saints to judge those Infernal Spirits, 1 Cor. 6. 3. by whose instigation they had been so often judged in this World.

World. And that which must needs aggravate their misery, shall be the fence of their first Estate which they fell from: together with this, That they shall sustain this confusion *in the presence of the Holy Angels, and of the Lamb*, Rev. 14. 10, 11. who now shall have them in derision, by filling their Cup of the Wine of the Wrath of God, by the eternity of their Misery; for *the smoke of their torment ascended up for ever and ever*. Lo here is the final state of Apostate Angels.

But on the other hand, The Glory of the Holy Angels shall be so great, as it is not easie to conceive it: Howbeit this we know, That as they have desired to look into the great Mysteries of the Gospel, 1 Pet. 1. 12. and have held with the Saints in those things which are written in the Scriptures of Truth, Dan. 10. 21. so they shall not partake of the fruition or fulness of their Joy, till they gather in the great Harvest of the Saints, whom they have ministred to in this World: for seeing they so greatly rejoyce in the conversion of one Sinner now, what will their rejoycing be when they meet all these Converted Ones in the heavenly Dwelling-places? Seeing now they shall no more be provoked by the sins, either of Sodomites, Gen. 19. 9, to 15. nor with the weaknesses of those who were put under their Guardian-ship, to be Heirs of Salvation, Heb. 1. ult. Nor need we be curious in searching out what this Glory shall be, so much as how to get a clear Interest therein; being abundantly ascertained, that then we shall find, *Fulness of Joy and Pleasures for ever more*, Psal. 16. 11. And though it do not appear what we shall be, yet we are assured *we shall be like Christ, for we shall see him as he is*: And in that glorious Estate 'tis also said, *We shall be as the Angels of God in Heaven*. And thence it follows, that the Glory of the Holy Saints and Angels shall be wonderful. Let us wait and pray for the manifestation of this Glory.

Christi-

Christianismus Primitivus, &c.

THE
SECOND PART
Of the second
TREATISE:

SHEWING
The External part of the Christian Religion, in
the ancient Simplicity and Beauty of it.

CHAP. I.

*Of the true way of gathering Persons into the
Church of Christ.*

AS the Internal Part of Christian Religion is carefully to be preserved, even so a necessity lieth upon the Servants of God to preserve and maintain (as Instruments in his hand) the External Part of the Christian Religion also, lest at any time they be deceived by a specious pretence to the Power, the better to subvert the form of Godliness, or the form of Doctrine which was delivered to the Primitive Churches, Rom. 6. Heb. 6. For certain it is, that where the true power of Godliness dwells, there will not be wanting a due zeal for the form of Godliness also; *I praise you Brethren, that you remember me in all things, and keep the Ordinances, as I delivered them to you*, 1 Cor. 11. 2. and this zeal will be so much the more, as by how much the ways of Truth are opposed

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fed by evil Men, *Pfal. 119. 126, &c. It is time for thee, Lord, to work, for Men have made void thy Law: Therefore I love thy Commandments above Gold, yea above fine Gold: therefore I esteem all thy Precepts concerning all things to be right, and I hate every false way.* And verily where the form of Godliness is neglected, Religion will in a little time either vanish, or become an unknown conceit, every man being at liberty to follow (what he supposes to be) the motions of the Spirit of God, in which there is to great a probability of being mistaken, as in nothing more; for Man's ignorance being very great, and Satan very subtle, and the way of the Lord neglected, Men ly open to every fancy which pleaseth best, or which hath the greatest shew of voluntary Humility or Will-worship, in neglecting the Body, not in any honour to the satisfying of the Flesh, *Col. 2. 18, 23.* To avoid all which dangerous mistakes in Religion, we shall endeavour plainly to set down the practical way of Gods Worship, as settled in the Christian Church by Christ our Lord, and his holy Apostles: And because we know no way so effectual to accomplish this work, as by a clear description of the Church of the living God, in which only can be found the undoubted Worship of God, we shall therefore do what we may briefly to shew this House or Church of God to the Children of Men, and let them measure the pattern, and consider all the ordinances thereof, and the forms thereof, that they may keep all the ordinances thereof, and the forms thereof, and do them, always remembering that the whole circuit of this House is most holy, that being the end of the Lord in all things, which he requires his People to observe; yea, Holiness becomes his house for ever, *Ezek. 43. Plal. 93. 5.*

The definition of a true Church.

For the definition of the Christian Church, we shall not much vary from that which hath therein been done by the ancient or modern Writers. *Lactantius* gives this brief definition of the Church, *Sola Catholica Ecclesia est, &c. It is only the Catholick Church which hath the true worship and service of God.* Our modern Protestants usually define the Church thus, *Where the Word of God is sincerely taught, and the Sacraments rightly administered, there is the true Church.* *Dr. Wollæbius* gives it thus, *The visible Church is a visible society of Men, called to the state of Grace, by the Word and Sacraments.*

Again, The definition of Christ's Church may be taken out of the word *synagoga*, or *Kahal*, *synagoga*, *Ecclesia*, *evocare*, to call, or *Evocatus per Evangelium*, to call, or called out by the Gospel, and then the Church is defin'd, *A company of Men called out of the World, by the voice or Doctrine of Christ, to worship one true God according to his will.* But if the definition be made of the thing it self according to the largest considerations, that it may be this, *The whole number of the saved ones, from the beginning of the World to the end thereof.* This is that Body whereof Christ is said to be the Saviour, *Eph. 5. 23.* called the general Assembly or Church of the first-born who are written in Heaven, which in respect of all the individuals is not known in this World by Men, God only knowing who are his; yet thus much we may say

Heb. 12.

say in general, that such as only fell in Adam, and have no personal guilt of their own, together with all such in every Age and Nation as fear the God of Heaven, and work Righteousness, are rationally supposed to be within the verge of this vast Body, and may by the Grace of God be Heirs of Salvation. Because Christ is the Lamb slain from the beginning to take away the sin of the World, or original sin, in the condemning power of it, as also to abolish Death the effect thereof; so justifying the whole World (who were found guilty by that Law) freely by his Grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a Propitiation through Faith in his Blood, for the remission of sins that are past through the forbearance of God, *Rom. 3. 19, &c.* But the Church or Body of Christ thus considered, as containing the whole number of the saved, is not the immediate subject of our Discourse, and therefore we shall intermit what might be said further in that case, bending our Stile to set forth the Church of Christ as now obliged by Gospel rules, to worship God according to his will, declared in the Holy Scriptures, which are strictly to be observed, for a Testament is of force after Men are dead, *Heb. 9. 16, 17.* And if it be but a mans Covenant, yet when it is confirmed, no man disannulleth or addeth ought thereto, *Gal. 3. 15.* Nor shall we incumber the Reader with the distinctions made by some learned Men in this matter, as that of those in the Church of Christ; some are only Numero, some Numero & Merito, and some Numero Merito & Electione: For though it be very true that some do only fill up the number of visible Professors, and of these some more deserving than others, and yet at last but a few that shall be chosen, as our Saviour teacheth; yet sith we are not Judges in these cases, but must leave secrets to God, we shall only concern our selves with the true or orderly state of Christs Church in the profession of the Gospel, meddling little with the state of the Church of God before Christs Incarnation (but as occasion shall require it) for the Order, State, or Oeconomy of the Church of God hath varied greatly, both in respect of the Subjects and usages thereof. But howsoever God hath spoken in time past to the Fathers, it is all to be so improved, as to serve to the furtherance of the Gospel, that Christ as a Son over his own House or Church, may have the preeminence, as being that Messiah which indeed was to teach us all things, and whose House are we, if we hold fast the confidence, and the rejoycing of the hope firm unto the end, *Heb. 3. 6.* And because our proposed Subject is full of controversy in these days, we shall therefore for the better manifestation of truth, speak distinctly to the particulars here ensuing.

1. Of the state of Infants in general dying in Infancy, and particularly of the state of Infants of Christian Parents.

2. Of the notes or infallible marks, viz. That Doctrine and Form of Worship, by which the Church of Christ is to be known, from the plantation thereof in a Gospel way to the end of the World: And first of the first.

SECT. II.

Of the state of Infants in general, that dying so they are happy.

That we may remove (if possible) all prejudice out of the minds of Men, touching our nonadmission of Infants to the participation of Gospel Ordinances in the visible Church in her Gospel frame, This is that which we hold of Infants generally without doubting, from the words of our Lord, *Mat. 19. 14. Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven*; that Infants are happy Persons, there lying no sentence of eternal condemnation against them, but the contrary is here averred concerning them indefinitely by Christ himself: As also by the Apostle, *Rom. 5. For as in Adam they die, so in Christ shall they be made alive*, the sin of Adam therefore being taken off, as to any future condemnation (for in respect of temporal death they still suffer for it,) and they having no other sin chargeable against them (that we read of) must needs be justified by the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ from wrath to come. And further it is also avouched by our Saviour, of Infants indefinitely, that their ** Angels do always behold the face of God in Heaven*, *Matth. 18. 10.* and not only so, but he saith expressly, *vers. 14.* It is not the will of the Heavenly Father, *that one of these little ones should perish*, and this may very fairly be understood of Infants, seeing God hath declared elsewhere, that he wills not the death of a Sinner, and that *the Son shall not bear the iniquity of the Father*, which (as hath been shewed) can only be true in respect of eternal death. Great cause there is why all Infants should be indemnified in that respect, sith they were no way accessory to any sin at all, and never rejected the Grace of a second Life, which is the cause of death eternal to those that are damned, as our Saviour teacheth, *Joh. 3. 19. Mar. 16. 16.* And hence we conceive ariseth sure ground of comfort concerning all Infants dying such, nor are we alone in this our Doctrine, some of our Adversaries being constrained to avouch it, and particularly *Mr. Baxter*, who though he hath made a great noise in the World, as if Parents could have no ground of hope for their dying Infants, unless they be baptized, &c. yet to the utter confutation of that conceit, he plainly tells us otherwise, in that Piece called *More Proofs*, &c. *Pag. 88, 89.* We hold (saith he) *that all Mankind is brought by Christ under a Covenant of Grace, which is not vain, nor repealed by God, but as their abuse of the Grace of the Covenant may cast them out; for as a Covenant of intire nature or innocency was made with all Mankind with innocent Adam, so a Covenant of Grace was made with all Mankind in lapsed Adam, Gen. 3. 15. in the promised seed, and renewed again with all Mankind in Noah. No man can prove either a limitation of this Covenant to some (till the rest by violating it become the Serpent's seed at least) nor yet that God did ever abrogate it, as it was made to all the World, — for those 4000 years before Christ's Incarnation, the mere decree and promise did serve for mans salvation, &c.* Thus far *Mr. Baxter*. And indeed for any

any to hold that God will damn any Infants, is such a Doctrine as is repugnant to the nature of God, who hates cruelty; but what can be named that looks more like cruelty, than to make Infants, and then cast them into Hell torments, to punish them as much as the Devil himself or the greatest of sinners; shall not the Judge of all the Earth do right? will he punish the innocent Babe with the Devil and his Angels? God forbid, for he delighteth in Mercy, and hath said it is not his will that one of these little ones should perish, and therefore gave his beloved Son to seek and save them in their lost condition, *Matth. 18. 14.* In his gracious hands therefore will we leave the state of Infants in general, who as *Irenaeus* rightly saith, *was made an Infant that he might sanctify Infants*; and shall now consider the state of the Infants of Christians in particular, with respect to such advantage as may pertain to them as such, especially for that great outcry has been made against us, as Persons injurious to Infants of Christians, as being rendered by us to be in no better condition than the Infants of Infidels; howbeit this exclamation will be found injurious to the truth and to us: For,

Of this I am confident, that I never heard or read in the Works of those of our way, that any ever held or maintain'd such a position, *that Infants of Christians have no advantage above the Infants of Heathens, in respect of Gospel Mercies*, but the contrary is to be seen in the Writings of divers learned Assertors of our Principles, as here I shall shew. *Mr. Fisher* pag. 218. of his *Christianismus Redivivus*, hath these words, *Those [Infants] of Christian Parents [I look upon] as having in some sense a prerogative of Seeds, so far as they may be a Seed of Prayers, more than others, and in some sense too a holiness above others, as they may be sanctified to their Parents as blessings — as well as being more likely to be disciplined into the way of holiness and life, by their Godly education of them.* Also *Mr. Tombs* in sundry places of his *Antiped.* Part 3. speaks to the same effect, as in *Pag. 406, 407, 415, 419, 453, 455, 479, 480, 481.* it shall suffice to set down that passage, *Pag. 464.* and leave the Reader to consult the residue at his own convenience, *That the Infants of believing Gentiles, no Members of the visible Church Christian, are not in a worse but better condition, in respect of any real Evangelical blessing, than the Hebrew Infants were with their Churchmembership.* 1. Because the spiritual blessings of Regeneration, indwelling of the Spirit, Justification, remission of Sins, Adoption, Gods favour, Protection, &c. are as much assured to them in Infancy without visible Churchmembership, as they were with it. 2. They do actually enjoy sooner those Mercies, — and in more ample manner without Jewish visible Churchmembership, than they did with it, the Spirit being now more poured out, the Gospel cleared, the Church enlarged, &c. — The Mercy to the Catholick Church is a Mercy to Believers Infants, 1. In that it frees them from legal Burthens. 2. In that there is a near capacity and probability of the best good for them remaining in their Parents or other godly Families. Thus far *Mr. Tombs*, who also in the Pages cited above, doth frequently allow a further benefit to the Infants of Christians

* *Ergo, cum in Baptismo, propter, & per, & Thansgiving, which certainly are all Blessings and Privileges redounding to those Infants through the blessing of the Gospel, which the little ones of Infidels are deprived of, being dedicate rather to Idols than to the Lord; and upon this account it may be said, that the Infants of Christians are holy by prerogative of Seed, being the Children of sanctified Persons who also dedicate them to God, and design them to Christianity, and in this sense may be said to be related to the visible Church, being in a more visible state of Beatitude, as being thus given to God in the Name of Christ from the Womb, who again doth strictly bind the Parents to bring them up (as it were for him) in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.*

Howbeit, from all this, it doth not follow that the Infants of Christians are to be brought to particular duties in the Church, as Baptism, the Lords Table, &c. as is fully granted even by the *Pedobaptists* themselves in every thing, save only their sprinkling and crossing of Infants, which they wrongfully call Baptism, which shall more fully appear in our *Defence*, God permitting, in the mean while let it be considered what we have granted. And certainly had Christians contented themselves in doing to their Infants as Christ did to those which were brought to him, either by praying for them themselves, if capable, or by presenting them to Christ's Ministers that they might do it for them in the most solemn manner, I think this would not be opposed by the baptized Churches; and it is to me a wonder how those that pretend so much care for Infants should wholly omit the doing to them as Christ did, and presume from Christs carriage towards Infants to do quite another thing, which Christ neither did nor commanded to be done. And certainly in this case there hath been a very great mistake, which calls for some careful and speedy reformation, that so the purity of the use of Gospel Ordinances may be attained, according to the usage of the first Churches, in which we only find actual Believers (by Profession at least) admitted to the religious observation or practice of Christs Commands, and not so much as one Infant in those Churches any way concern'd in the duties of the New Covenant, which we shall plainly demonstrate, by a particular enquiry into the state of every Church mentioned in the New Testament, and let the best antiquity (even that of the Holy Scripture) carry the cause, as being the best note by which the true Church may be known, from all such as unduly claim that honourable Title.

SECT III.

That actual Believers only, and no Infants, were admitted communion in Gospel Ordinances in the first Churches.

No Infants of the Primitive Church at Jerusalem.

We shall begin our enquiry in the Church at *Jerusalem*, from the death of our Saviour, and the effusion of the Holy Spirit by the operation

operation whereof in the Ministry of the Apostles, according to the tenour of their Commission, *Mat. 28. 19, 20.* Churches were now to be gathered throughout the whole World. And here we find the Members of this Church enumerated several times, *Act. 1. 13, 14, 15.* The number of names together, were about an hundred and twenty, consisting of both Sexes, Men and Women, who continued in one place together in Prayer and Supplication, and here is not the least hint of any other Person or Persons incorporated into this Body, save actual Professors only. Then *Chap. 2. vers. 40.* We have an account of the first addition to this holy Society of about 3000 souls, who were all such as gladly received the Word preached by the Apostles, and of this company only it is said, they continued stedfastly in the Apostles Doctrine and Fellowship, and in breaking of Bread and in Prayers. Now it may justly be presumed, that these 3000 Persons had pertaining to them not less than 3000 Infants and other Persons in their Families, and yet not the least mention of so much as one of those Infants to be admitted to Baptism, or any practical Ordinance of the Gospel, which is further evident from the unity of Heart and Soul which they had each with other, throughout this whole Body, which is a thing not compossible to Infants, but only to such as are begotten by the good Word of God to the Faith and Fellowship of the Gospel. Again *Act. 4. 4.* We find the former number augmented to 5000, or else an addition of 5000 to the former number, and these also were all such as gave demonstration of their Faith, by that great Grace which was upon them all, lifting up their voice together in Prayer with one accord, *Vers. 33.* which shews the sense of the things of God was upon all their Hearts; and there is yet a further account of the increase of this Church, *Act. 5. 14.* but still it is of Believers only, and Believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of Men and Women. This Church at *Jerusalem* being the first which was settled in a Gospel way, is therefore a good Pattern for all other Churches, and may justly claim priority; and concerning whom we find a more exact account of the form of Christian Doctrine delivered to them than to any other Church, *Heb. 6. 1, 2.* (though we doubt not but all other Churches had the same) the very nature and order of whose first principles or beginning parts of Christianity do shew most clearly, that no Person was admitted to communicate in the Ordinances of Christ as received by them, but actual Believers, for sith repentance from dead works, and faith towards God are made antecedantious to sacred Baptism, and Baptism is acknowledged to be antecedantious to all other privileges in the Church, it must needs follow that none in an Infant-state can be admitted to Gospel Ordinances, according to the tenour of the principles of this first Church.

The evidence on our side is so clear in this case, that Dr. *Bale* confesses in his *End to Controversie*, that if the order here set down *Hib. 6. 1, 2.* should be observed, both Papists and Protestants must cross the Cudgels to the Anabaptists; and when this order ceas'd

de jure, and by what authority another order of propounding Christianity to Men was to be received, no man I presume can give any satisfactory account: But of these things we shall speak more fully in our Defence. What is said from *Act. 2. 39. The promise is to you, and to your Children, &c.* is not only interpreted by the Apostle, only of such of them and their Children, the *Gentiles* and their Children, as the Lord shall call, which is not to be understood of *Infants*, who are not capable to hear the call of the Gospel, but the Protestant Interpreters themselves do so expound it; See *Erasmus's* Paraphrase on *Act. 2. 39.* and *Diodate* Annotations on the same Text.

No Infants of the Church of Samaria.

That numerous Church at *Samaria*, *Act. 8.* is of the same complexion with that at *Jerusalem*: For though we find here as general a conversion as the most we read of, inasmuch that it is said, the whole City, i. e. the People with one accord gave heed to the things which were spoken by *Philip*, *Act. 8. 6.* and when they believed, 'tis said they were baptized, both Men and Women; but not a word of any (no nor so much as one) Infant do we find as added to this Body, which is so great an evidence of the alteration of the state of the Church from what it was in the time of the Law, in respect of Infants, as that this alone might serve to issue the controversy; for who can think, that when we have such a particular account, 1. Of the multitude that received the Gospel; then of the different Sex, both Men and Women, but that we should have had some intimation also of their little Children being added to the Church, if indeed it had been done; but neither now at their first conversion, nor yet when *Peter* and *John* were sent to visit them, and to perform what was wanting among them, in respect of Imposition of Hands, &c. do we find any the least passage in all their transactions, that gives notice of any Infants being brought to any one ordinance in this Church of Christ.

No Infants of the Church of Caesaria in the Primitive State.

The next Christian Congregation which falls under consideration, is that at *Caesaria*, planted by the Apostle *Peter*, *Act. 10.* by whose mouth it pleased God the *Gentiles* should first hear and believe, and here we find those only accepted as fit Persons to be concern'd in the worship of God according to the Gospel, which did fear God and work righteousness, with an intimation also that this was the will of God concerning all Nations, according to the Doctrine of the Lord Christ, *Joh. 4. 14. God is a spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth*, the *Jewish* worship being now to vanish, as being too carnal for the Gospel Church, and consequently the matter or subjects of this Church to be of a more spiritual capacity than those who were generally admitted to legal Ordinances. Still we are destitute of any word that shews Infants incorporated with Believers, as partakers of Gospel Ordinances with them.

Nor

Nor shall we pass by what is decreed of the grace of God vouchsafed to the *Ethiopians* by means of the conversion of the *Eunuch*, *Act. 8.* for it is remarkable, that of all his Attendants we read not of one who received the truth or was baptized, but himself, and here was a clear difference between the Law and the Gospel, in respect of the admission of Members into the Church; for under the Law, if a Person did joyn himself to the Lord, all his Males must be circumcised; but no such Law in the Gospel, that if the Master joyn himself to the Lord, all his Children or Servants are to be baptized; the clean contrary is evident from the case of this *Eunuch*, and in many other cases, where we find in Families, the Master a Believer; when those of his house were not so; and Christ himself shews his Church should not be gathered of whole Families, save as the same should wholly believe, when he foretells, that for the Gospel sake there should be five in one house, divided two against three, and three against two. It is reported by *Eusebius*, that this *Eunuch* was instrumental to enlighten his Countrymen in the Ministry of the Gospel, but not a word of his admission of Infants to Baptism in that Country, nor indeed doth *Eusebius* so much as mention Infant-Church-membership or Baptism in all his History.

No mention of Infant Baptism to the Ethiopian Convert.

Exod. 12. 48.

The Church at *Antioch*, famous for the title of *Christian*, as there first given to the Disciples or Followers of Christ, and it is observable that none but Disciples had that Appellation, *Act. 11. 26.* and though we have an account of a great enlargement of the Church at this place, yet it is only found to be of such as believed and turned to the Lord, as *vers. 21.* and are all exhorted with purpose of heart to cleave unto the Lord, but not a whisper of so much as one Infant brought to any Ordinance of the Gospel among those Christians.

No Infants found admitted to the Primitive Churches at Antioch.

The same may be said of the Churches of Christ in *Syria*, *Cilicia*, &c. to whom and to every of them was that holy Epistle sent, *Act. 15.* prohibiting the eating of meats offered to Idols, Blood, things strangled, and Fornication, by the tenour of this Epistle the whole multitude of the Christians received great consolation, as finding thereby they were freed from the burthen of legal Ceremonies: And the same decrees were delivered to other Churches, *Act. 14. 4.* who were thereby established in the Faith: All which passages, with others to the same purpose, do shew that the continual addition of the Church in every place was of actual Believers, such as turned to God, but not a passage that gives light to any Infants added to any of these Churches. And it is the more strange that no notice is given of any such matter (if indeed Infants had been then baptized) seeing the controversy was about Circumcision, and which now was abrogated or decreed against, and so Infants freed from it, and yet no mention of Baptism or any other rite ordain'd for them instead thereof, which if ever such a thing had been appointed, it would on this occasion have been mentioned in all probability; but contrariwise the Arguments

No Infants of the Primitive Churches at Syria, Cilicia, &c.

C c c

ments used to satisfy those that were doubtful, are taken from the Mercy of God, in taking away the heavy yoke of the Law of bondage, and of the sufficiency of the Grace of God, held forth in the Gospel, for Mans Salvation.

No Infant of
the Primitive
Church at Phi-
lippi.

Although the Church at *Philippi* took her beginning in two Families, to wit of *Zydia*, and of the *Faylor*, yet it is most plain that none but Believers were admitted to the ways of Christ; for those of *Zydia*'s house are said to be Brethren, and capable of receiving exhortation or consolation from the Apostles, *Act. 16. ult.* and consequently not Infants; and those of the *Faylor*'s house are said to hear the Word and to believe in God, and so were baptized, and here again was as fit an occasion to mention Infants baptism (if any such thing had been) as could well offer it self, but not a word to that purpose. To this Church and to every member thereof *Paul* wrote an Epistle, styling them Saints, such as had fellowship in the Gospel from the first day (meaning sure the first day of their admission to the Church) until now, *Phil. 1. 5.* and declares them to be partakers of his Grace, both in his bonds and defence of the Gospel, and these things can in no wise be said of Infants; so that neither yet can any thing be hence gathered for a mixed Body of Infants with grown Persons, believing in Christ as a Church of his constitution.

No Infant of
the Church at
Thessalonica.

The Gospel now advanceth to *Thessalonica*, *Act. 17. 1.* to 9. where we find those only that believed to be joined to *Paul* and *Silas* *μεσσηνισταις* *adjuncti sunt*, vers. 4. and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief Women not a few; observe, still Men and Women are particularly accounted as they were added to the Churches, and why Children are not counted with them, but because they were not in those days joined to the Churches, no sufficient reason can be shewed. What manner of Persons this Church consisted of is further shewed by the Epistles which *Paul* wrote to them, *1 Thess. 1. 3. &c.* for as they are here declared to be believing Persons, and such as received the Word in much affliction with joy in the Holy Ghost; so they were all such as could in some measure understand the Epistle which was sent unto them, and therefore is express charge given (that the Epistle should be read to all the holy Brethren, *1 Thess. 5. 27.*) *I charge you by the Lord, that this Epistle be read to all the holy Brethren*; sure this doth not include Infants, and consequently they were not of the Brotherhood in the Church at *Thessalonica*.

No Infant of
the Primitive
Church at Be-
reca.

Proceed we now to *Berea*, *Act. 17. 13.* where we find the Word preached and received with all readiness of Mind, the Disciples searching the Scriptures daily to see that the things spoken were proved by the Word of God as therein contained; and there many believed, of the honourable Women, and Men not a few; but still no Infant is named, no nor implied in any term here used to signify who were incorporated into a Church-capacity, but believing Persons, both

both Men and Women, are the only Persons we find concern'd in the worship of God according to the Gospel.

We are now come to *Corinth*, *Act. 18. 8.* where we find the Word preached. *Crispus* believing is baptized, his Household also received the Word by Faith, and many of the *Corinthians* hearing the Word, believed and were baptized; and here *Paul* continues a Year and six Months preaching the Word of God among them, but not a word of any Infant added to this Church; neither yet by the Epistles which *Paul* writ to this Church can any such thing be made appear; but rather the contrary, for they are said to be such Persons as called upon the Name of the Lord, being first called to be Saints, and called into the Fellowship of the Lord Jesus, who are all required to speak the same thing, and were all by one Spirit baptized into one Body, and made to drink into one Spirit, were all one Body and one Bread, as they were Partakers of that one Bread of the Lords Table: so that whatsoever is the meaning of *1 Cor. 7. 14.* * yet certain it is Infants were not admitted to this Church or Body, being not admitted to the Lords Table with them.

No Infant of
the Primitive
Church at Co-
rinthus.

* Augustine
saith, Who-
ever that Hol-
iness is, *1 Cor.*
7. 14. It is not
of power to
make Christi-
ans, or remit
sins. And Epi-
mus explains
it of legitimate
fidelity only.

In *Act. 19. 1.* to the end, we find *Paul* at *Ephesus*, where he left some of his Companions, who taught *Apollo* the perfect way of the Lord, and consequently many others. Here we find Brethren who send their Letters of recommendation with *Apollo* to *Corinth*: To this Church we find twelve Persons added at *Paul*'s second coming to *Ephesus*, but nothing said of any Infants added with them; yea, in the Epistle sent to them, they are all said to be Saints and faithful in Christ Jesus, such as to whom was made known the good pleasure of the will of God, *Eph. 1. 1. 9.* such as trusted in Christ after they heard the Word of the Gospel, and were sealed with the Holy Spirit of Promise, and are all commanded, or exhorted to hold the unity of the Spirit in the bond of Peace, having all one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism; all which shews that this Church had no Infants admitted to Fellowship in the Mysteries of the Gospel, for that they were not qualified for the reception of them; and though the Apostle takes occasion to speak particularly of the duty of Children, *Eph. 5. 1.* yet speaks he not a word of Infants, either in the directions which he gives to the Parents or the Children.

No Infant of
the Primitive
Church at E-
phesus.

When *Paul* had saluted the Church at *Casaria*, he goeth into *Galatia*, where he strengthens the Disciples, but he could not strengthen Infants, therefore they are not accounted Disciples, and consequently no Members of the Primitive Churches in *Galatia*; and of these famous Churches we have this account in the Epistle sent to them, they had begun their Christian course in the Spirit, *Gal. 3. 3.* being called to the Grace of God by the Ministry of *Paul*, *Gal. 1. 6.* They were all the sons of God by Faith in Christ Jesus, *Gal. 3. 26.* and had put on Christ Jesus in Baptism, but no passage in all this Epistle gives

No Infant of
the Primitive
Churches in
Galatia.

us any account of so much as one Infant brought to any Ordinance of the Gospel in the practick part in all these Churches.

No Infant of the Primitive Church at Coloss.

The Church at *Coloss* are stiled Saints and faithful Brethren, and such as of whose Faith and Love to all Saints a good report was spread abroad, *Col. 1. 2, 4.* which Faith was wrought in them by hearing the Gospel. These Christians are said to be circumcised with the Circumcision made without hands, in putting off the Body of the sins of the Flesh by the Circumcision of Christ, and to be buried with Christ in Baptism, and therein to be risen with him through Faith; and these things being said of the whole Church and every Member, as much as any Member, it most plainly shews that actual Professors only, and no Infants, were of this Church when *Paul* wrote to them.

No Infant of the Roman Church in the Primitive State.

The Church of *Rome* was in those days like the rest, being called of God to be Saints, and were all actual Believers, such as had their faith spoken of throughout the World, *Rom. 1. 7, 8.* yea they are every one of them, as much as any of them said to have obeyed from the heart the form of Doctrine which was delivered unto them, *Rom. 6.* and are all exhorted to reckon themselves dead unto sin, and as being so dead with Christ they were all buried with him in Baptism; all planted in the likeness of his death, and bound thenceforth to walk in newness of life; yea they were such as had all been servants of sin, and were by the Grace of God made free from sin, to have their fruit unto Holiness, and are said to stand in the Church Christian (and so in Christ) by Faith. Now these things being said of the whole Church, and not one Member to be exempted from these qualifications, at least in the common profession of them: It is most manifest no Infant was admitted to Membership in this Body or Church in the actual profession of the Gospel.

No Infant of the Church at Troas in the first times.

The Church at *Troas* consisted of such Disciples only as had right to the Lords Table, who accordingly met together to celebrate that holy Mystery, *Act. 20. 7.* but sure no Infant was admitted to this holy Ordinance which yet every Disciple and Member had right to; *Ergo*, Infants were neither Disciples nor Members of this Body or Christian society.

No Infant of the Church at Ptolemais in the Primitive State.

The Church at *Ptolemais* are denominated Brethren, *Act. 21. 7.* and such as were capable of salutation from the Apostle and his fellow Ministers, but no word meet we with here neither, that gives us any account of any Infant subject pertaining to the community of these Christians.

No Infant of the Primitive Church at Damascus.

The Church at *Damascus* consisted of Men and Women, *Act. 9. 2.* among whom was *Ananias*, a devout man, by whom *Paul* was baptized upon his conversion, *Act. 22. 16.* These Christians are also called Disciples, but were such as understood the danger *Paul* was in

in by the Governour, who was desirous to apprehend him, wherefore these Disciples let him down over the wall in a Basket, but still we fail of any account of Infants, numbred with Disciples, or to be joyned in Communion with the Church. As for what is vainly pretended to prone such a thing from *Act. 15. 10.* We shall examine the force of that Allegation in our Defence.

We have spoken before of the Church of *Ephesus*; In *Asia* we find six other Churches, viz. Of *Smyrna*, *Pergamos*, *Thyatira*, *Sardis*, *Philadelphia* and *Laudicea*. All those Churches are spoken to by the Spirit, all that have Ears to hear, are to hear what the Spirit saith to the Churches; And by the commendations of some of these Churches, and the reprehensions to others, it's evident no Infants are spoken of, or to in these Epistles, and yet certainly every Disciple and Member in these Churches, are bound to take notice of what was writ to these Churches. It is therefore utterly incredible, that any but actual believers or adult persons professing the Faith, were made Recipients of Gospel ordinances in the Apostles times, because no Footsteps of any such thing is found in any of their holy writings, and hence we conclude with *Jerom*, *non creavimus quia non Legimus*, for neither do we believe it, because we read it not.

Nor is there any thing appears in those general Epistles, written by *James*, *Peter*, *John* and *Jude*, which favours the case of Infants admission to Gospel ordinances as members of the Church, under the exercise of Gospel worship, but rather very much to the contrary; as First,

James salutes all Christians to whom he writes, with the Compellation of Brethren, and shewes they were such a Brother-hood, as were begotten by the word of truth, *Jam. 1. 18.* not as being born of believing Parents; And his speeches to them throughout his Epistle, are such as take no notice of Infants, even there where they are comprehensive of every Member of the Church, as *Jam. 1. 5. If any man lack Wisdom let him ask it of God.* Chap. 4. 10. *Humble your selves under the mighty hand of God.* Chap. 5. 9. *Grudge not one against another Brethren. Be patient Brethren unto the coming of the Lord, &c. Is any afflicted let him pray, Is any merry let him sing Psalms; Brethren if any of you do err from the truth and one convert him, &c.* Doubtless all Church members are concern'd in these duties Equally, as the occasions do occur; and yet it is most evident, Infants are not concerned in any of these matters, and consequently were not of that Brother-hood, to whom these things were written.

The next general Epistles, are those of the Apostle *Peter*, In which we only find those spoken of as Church Members, who had obtained like precious Faith, *2 Per. 1. 1.* And as he Terms them a *Chosen generation*, a *holy Nation*, &c. So he shews this their extraction to be supernatural, being born again (saith he) not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God which liveth and abideth for ever, which he interprets to be the Gospel which was Preached unto them. *1 Pet. 1. ult.* And being thus begotten by the Gospel, they are said to have purified their

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their Souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit; And the least Babes among them are exhorted to desire the sincere Milk of the word that they might grow thereby; which undeniably shews, that no other Babes were admitted to the Church in this Apostles time, then such as were born again by faith in the word of God, without which Faith, the new Birth is not produced. John 1. 12. *For as many as believed, they received power to become the Sons of God.* Furthermore as the description of the Primitive Christians by their birth, shews they were no Infants, Even so, the tenor of all that Instruction which he further gives them doth hold forth the same, Christ having it seems given no order to this faithful Shepherd to concern himself in dispensing Gospel Ordinances to Infants: and yet he was obliged to feed the Flock, the Sheep and Lambs of Christ, John 22. 16. &c. And this he did Faithfully perform, albeit he ministred only to those who were capable of Instruction, and here he feeds, both the pastors and the Sheep, yea the lowest Member among them, even those that were new born. And this I take to be a very convincing Argument, that none but actual believers were incorporated into the Mystical Flock of Christ under the Gospel, because they are not delivered to the care of the pastors of the Church, but little ones are left to the tuition of their Godly Parents, who are obliged to bring them up in the nurture and Admonition of the Lord.

John that beloved Disciple, wrote one general Epistle to the Christians in the Primitive times, in which he particularly sets down the several ranks or degrees that were among them, viz. *Fathers, Young-men and Children*, yet Infants are excepted, for these Children are said to have known the Father, and are therefore to be understood of young or weak converts 1 John 2. 13. to which agrees Heb. 8. 11. *all shall know me from the least to the greatest of them*, which prophesie is fulfilled in the Gospel Church. vers. 13. This Apostle further avers. 1 Eph. 5. 4. *That whatsoever is born of God, overcomes the World, and this is the Victory even our Faith.* Now all Christians are born of God (or at least profess so to be) but Infants do not overcome the World, therefore not born of God (as Christians must do, or else they are no Christians,) though very happy Persons, as hath been shewed, and consequently were not in these dayes concern'd in Church ordinances.

John, that Servant of God, comprehendeth in his general Epistle only such as were known to be sanctified by God, preserved in Christ and called. Now none are called by the Gospel, or voice of God speaking by his Ministers, but such as have Ears to hear. Diode. expounds the place to this effect, sanctified by vertue of Gods grace, by his word and Spirit, defended, &c. in the Faith which they had acquired to the communion of his Body, by vertue of their Spiritual union with him. But these things are only applicable to actual believers; and this word, *called*, is of the same import with that from whence the Lords people are denominated his Church, to wit, because of the effect of the word, by which they are called out of darkness into his marvelous Light. Forasmuch then as God hath not ordained a Ministry, to preach to, or any other way to call Infants into the Church who

who know not the voice of the Shepherd, nor are they capable of exhortation to any duty, nor is any duty of the new Covenant imposed upon them, therefore they are not included in this calling, and as the beginning of this Epistle is not of, or to Infants, so neither do the other parts thereof concern them, in respect of any duty required of Church Members, no not that passage vers. 25. which is as general as any thing that can be spoken to the Church of God, for all the Church and every Member thereof, are to be edified, or built up, in their most holy Faith, to pray in the holy Ghost, to keep themselves in the Love of God, and to wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto Eternal life; but all men know that these things are not compatible to Infants. As for the two particular Epistles of St. John, they are of the same import with the former, for though he write to the Elect Lady and her Children, yet those Children are expressly said to be found walking in the truth, even as they had received a commandment from the Father, 2 John vers. 4. 5. who are also exhorted to look to themselves, that the things which had been wrought were not lost. And in the last of John's Epistles, we find him rejoicing greatly that his Children walked in the truth, namely all such as were under his care as a pastor, for otherwise these were not his Children, but no word have we here that gives notice of Infants to be Church Members, wherefore we may, from all that hath been said hereabout, conclude with great security, that none but the adult that professed Faith actually, were incorporated into the Church of Christ, in the actual profession of the Gospel in the Primitive times. And consequently it was a very great and unwarrantable alteration of the state of the Church; when men devised, and attempted this usage, to prevent the work of conversion, as necessary to mens entering into the Church of Christ, by ushering all Infants in Families, and whole Kingdoms, into the visible Church by Baptism, which yet is but a vain pretence, although it hath been received with never so great or general approbation among men, to whom error is commonly more acceptable than the truth, in the ancient simplicity and purity thereof.

SECT. IV.

Containing certain Arguments, taken out of Mr. Tombes. *Antipædobaptist* 3 part in confirmation of what is said in the preceding Section, viz. That no Infants were Members of the visible Church Christian in the Apostles dayes, nor ought to be in these dayes.

Because the Arguments, as they lye in Mr. Tombes his Books, are very long and interlaced with many references to Mr. Baxter and others, I will here form them in a shorter and more easie Method, The first is this.

Arg. 1. All visible Members in the Church Christian, in Christ and the Apostles dayes, were to be Baptized. This is granted by all that acknowledge Baptism to be an ordinance of Christ. But no In-

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Infants were then to be baptized. This is proved by Mr. *Tombes* Antipæd. 2 part. by divers others, and in this Book. Ergo, no Infants were visible Members of the Church Christian in Christ, and the Apostles dayes.

Arg. 2. All that were visible Members of the Church Christian in the Apostles dayes, were one body and one bread, and did drink into one Spirit, as they were all partakers of that one bread of the Lords Table, 1 Cor. 12. 16. But no Infants were partakers of that one bread of the Lords Table, &c. in the Apostles dayes. Ergo, no Infants were then of the visible body or Church in the Christian profession. The Major is plain from the text alledged, the Minor is granted by all now professing Christianity, none of them bringing Infants to the Lords Table in these dayes.

Arg. 3. They were no Members of the visible Church, who were left out of the number of the whole Church, all the believers, the multitude of the Disciples in all the places where there is an enumeration of the Members of the Church, or mention of the whole Church (i.e. the Church militant) the number of believers or Disciples in the new Testament. But Infants are left out of that number, in all places in the new Testament. Ergo. The Major is evident of it self. The minor he proves by recounting the places where such enumeration is made, nor hath any hitherto been able to shew the mention of any Infant, as a Member of the visible body or Church Christian in the Apostles dayes.

Arg. 4. From the common received definitions of the visible Church he argueth thus. All that are of the visible Church Christian are Faithful, called out of the World by the preaching of the word, do profess the Faith of Christ, visible believers receiving and embracing the Christian Catholick Faith. This he proves *in terminis* by the definition given by the Church of England in Artic. 19. by the answer of the Assembly p. 48. edit. of 1644. By Dr. Reynolds 2 conclus. p. 296. Dr. Hudson vindic. c. 1. p. 12. But no Infant are such, and to prove this he appeals to the doctrine of almost all famous Divines, particularly, *Gulielm Apolonij* considerat. contro. c. 1. p. 8. who joyntly affirm the matter of a visible Church, to be men outwardly called, professing the Faith of Christ, &c.

Arg. 5. They which have not the form constituting, and denominating a visible Christian Church Member, are not such. But Infants, &c. The major he proves by a rule in Logick. Take away the form, and the thing formed is not. If the form denominating agree not, the denomination agrees not. And that profession of Faith, is the Form constituting and denominating a visible Church Member, he proves by many Divines, viz. *Aymes, Norton, Hudson.* &c.

Arg. 6. If Infants be visible Church Members, then there may be a visible Church Christian which consists only of Infants; for a number of visible Members makes a visible Church entire; though not Organical; But this is absurd, Ergo. Infants have not the form of a visible Church Members.

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Arg. 7. If Infants be visible Christian Church Members, then there is some cause thereof; But there is none, Ergo. The Major being apparent, he proves the Minor, by shewing the insufficiency of what is alledged, from the Parents Faith, the Childs sanctity, the covenant, or Law of nature, or any other Covenant; none of them binding the Parents to make, nor enabling them to beget their Infants visible Members of the Christian Church. And it is a true saying of Tertullian, we are not born, but made Christians, nor are we made such by man, but by God. Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new Creature. 2 Cor. 5. 17.

SECT. V.

Of the necessity and great usefulness of Sacred baptism, to a true Church-state, and of the Honours which God by his word hath conferred on that ordinance.

An Error in the beginning of any important work (much more in Religion) is commonly very dangerous to the whole, especially if it happen to be in things, which are any way fundamental to the work it self; And though it is most true that Christ Jesus is the foundation of the Church of God, originally and in the main, yet it is also true, that God hath made several things Fundamentally necessary to an orderly Church-state, in several respects as appears, Heb. 6. 1, 2. Here we have, First, repentance from dead works or Humiliation, for sin; Then a sure trust in the Lord Jesus for justification from sin, which Faith cannot be found in the impenitent, and therefore justly put here, in the second place. Of these two principles we hope sufficient is said above; as also of the two last principles, the resurrection of the dead, and the Eternal judgment. These four great branches of Christian Doctrine, are Fundamentally necessary to the salvation of all Men, to whom the word of this Salvation is sent. Of whom, all such (and such onely) as repent and believe the Gospel, or at least profess so to do, and having opportunity, are by the will of God to be baptized with water, in order to their worshipping Almighty God in a Church capacity, in the visible profession of the Gospel of God, and under that cognizance, through the Spirit of Christ, to militate in the holy warfare of Christianity, against every Spirit which goeth about to pervert the right way of the Lord. The verity of what is here said, shall be demonstrated under these four heads: and First,

1. From the Institution or first delivery of Sacred Baptism.
2. From the Commission given by Christ to his Apostles, for the perpetuity of Baptism.
3. From the practice of Christs Apostles, in pursuance of the said Commission.
4. From the natural and spiritual import of the ordinance it self.

It appeareth Matthew 2 and 3 Chapters, that Jesus being born in Bethlehem, and now almost ready to enter upon the great work, not

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only of our redemption by his death, but also by his Doctrine to change the state of religion throughout the World; that *John* his forerunner, and the preparer of a people for him, was immediately sent of God, to give knowledge of Salvation to the people, by the remission of their sins, or by the baptism of repentance for remission of sins, *Luke 1. 76, 77.* Therefore did he preach the Doctrine and Baptism of Repentance, as the way wherein (through Faith in him that was to come after, to wit Christ Jesus) they were to lay hold of that Salvation, or remission of Sin, held forth, by the will of God in that Ministration.

In the prosecution of whose Ministry, we find great multitudes baptized upon repentance, or confession of Sin. *Matth. 3. 5. Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.* No sinners do we find admitted to this Baptism, but upon their receiving *John's* Doctrine, and professing repentance, and Faith in him that was to come after *Act. 19. 4.* but rather a prohibition to such as thought otherwise to claim an interest therein, *Matth. 3. 7, 8, 9, 10.* compared with *Luk. 7. 29, 30.* For though the Pharisees came to *John's* Baptism, yet when *John* calls upon them for repentance, and no longer to rest upon that natural relation, which they had to *Abraham*, and consequently he did direct them to Christ (as that was his Doctrine to the people *Act. 19. 4.*) then they reject the Counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him. Thus this great Prophet gave clear notice, that God was now purposed to raise up Children another way than by natural extraction, even by Heavenly birth or being born from above *John 3. 3.* and therefore this holy rite was adapted or fitted only for such Children (professedly at least) as the very title thereof [*the Baptism of repentance*] doth plainly shew. And here we find a clear difference between Circumcision and Baptism, in the first Institution of each, the first taking in all the natural seed of *Abraham*, though not concern'd in the Covenant made with *Abraham* (as in the case of *Ismael*) the other leaving out the natural seed of *Abraham*, though in possession of the Covenant made with *Abraham*, *Act. 3. 25.* unless they did the works of *Abraham*. *Matth. 3. 8, 9. John 8. 39.*

This Doctrine and Baptism was of a pure Evangelical nature, call'd therefore the beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God, *Mark. 1. 1.* avouched by Christ to be from Heaven, *Matth. 21. 25.* and highly honoured by the person of the Son of God submitting to, and the voice of the Father from Heaven approving of, and the appearance of the holy Ghost, at the solemnization of Christ's Baptism by *John*, *Matth. 3. 15, 16, 17.* Honoured also with the Title of God's Counsel, and of such importance, as he that rejects it denies *John* to be a Prophet. Yea further honoured by our Saviours promoting it, *John 3. 23.* there he tarried with them and Baptized, *John 4. 1. 2.* He made and Baptized more Disciples than *John* (though Jesus himself Baptized not but his Disciples.) And still the thing chiefly to be minded here is, that

that none are Baptized by Christ (or by his direction) but those that are first made Disciples. And thus was our Lord himself the chief founder of the Gospel in the Heavenly Doctrine of Faith, Repentance, and Baptism for the remission of Sins. Which gracious doctrine and Ministry, was shortly to be spread throughout the World, when Jesus had first fulfilled his personal Ministry in the Land of *Israel*. Now the necessity of this Sacred Ordinance to a true Church-state, is further evident from the Institution or first delivery of it.

1. For that it is sent down from Heaven, as the first Doctrine and Ministry, to take men off from a legal confidence, and to lay the free remission of Sin before them, through Faith in the Gospel of God.

2. This Baptism is joyned with this Gospel repentance, that as repentance being now necessary to the admission of Sinners into the Church of Christ, even so Baptism being joyned thereto, by the will of God, is necessary to the same end.

3. Because such as rejected the Doctrine and Baptism of repentance, were not accepted as persons fit for communion in the Church of Christ, and therefore we are with the greater care and conscience to observe it.

4. It's necessary use in the beginning of Christianity, is most clear in our Saviours diligence to submit to it (for our Example) before he would take in hand to Preach the Gospel, which he would not have done, but that he deemed it fit for his orderly proceeding therein: which is further evident in that he made it the next step in the privileges of the Gospel, to mens Discipleship, *John 4. 1.* and thus much briefly from the Institution of Baptism.

SECT. VI.

Of the Commission for the perpetuity of Baptism.

Had Christ only shewed his mind thus, about this holy Ordinance before his death, it might have been less clear in respect of it's perpetual use in his Church. But as in his life, even so after his death he was the same with respect to this truth; and therefore of those few things, which are recounted of the many which he spake after his resurrection; and of those fewer yet, which are mentioned in his Commission delivered to the Apostles, *Matth. 28. 19, 20.* this holy Ordinance of Baptism is one, and given in special command. *Go ye therefore teach all Nations Baptizing them, &c. Mark 16. 15, 16. Go ye into all the World, preach the Gospel to every Creature, he that believeth and is Baptized shall be saved.*

That by Baptism here is clearly meant, immersion in the Element water in the name, &c. or the Baptism of repentance, for remission of sin is evident, because that Baptism only is delivered preceptively or by command; as also it is such a Baptism as is to be dispensed by Christ's Ministers: but no other Baptism save that of water unto repentance, could be, or ever was practised by them. For to Baptize

with the Holy Ghost, was Christ's peculiar, he only knowing who are fit for that Heavenly donation, *Matth. 3. 11. John 1. 33. The same is he which Baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. Act. 15. 8. And God which knoweth the Hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost.* As for the necessity of this ordinance to a true Church-state, there are only a few wild Notionists that deny it, nevertheless, we will give here also some brief demonstration of it.

Some certain standing way or order, is assigned by Christ to unite or embody his people in a Church capacity; But no way is assigned by Christ without this Ordinance, to embody his people in a Church capacity. *Ergo*, this ordinance is necessary (among other things) to the embodying Christ's people or Disciples in a Church capacity.

That no way is assigned by Christ to embody his people in a Church capacity, without this Ordinance appears, 1. because we find no Church embodied without it in all the New Testament. 2. we find many Churches embodied with the use of this Ordinance (as hath been shewed) and that either proves that all the Churches were embodied after the same manner, or else it will follow that there were diversities of ways used on this account by the Apostles. And then the he that asserts such a thing must shew, how many ways may lawfully be used in this case, and what be they? if two why not ten, 20, or an hundred ways, and then where is that one Heart and one way promised to the Church under Christ's government.

It is therefore necessary that one only way be asserted, or order observed, for the incorporating persons into the Church of Christ, and then the case is clear for us, because this way or order of adding persons to the Church, upon manifestation of repentance, and Faith in the Lord Jesus, accompanied with the Baptism of repentance, for the remission of their Sins is so plain, that nothing can be plainer. *Act. 2. 38, 40. Act. 8. 12. Act. 18. 8. Act. 10. 47, 48.*

Again, either Baptism (as aforesaid) is necessary to the incorporating or embodying Disciples of Christ in a Church capacity, or else it is not necessary at all. For remove it from this place, and then no place can be assign'd for it, nor can any man rationally be blamed for delaying it, if no proper place can be assigned to it, seeing it is but once to be done. And to say this Ordinance is not necessary at all, is all one as to give, 1. a flat contradiction to Christ, who commands it to be observed (as one of the *all things* which he commanded) to the end of the World. 2. to make that branch of the Commission void, or not obliging to us, is plainly to null the whole Commission, *Matth. 28. 19, 28.* And so all things which Christ commanded are abrogated, in the abrogation of this command, else let him that can shew when Christ annulled this part, and established the remainder, which I suppose will never be attempted by wise men. Forasmuch then as some certain way and order remains for embodying Christ's Disciples in a Church capacity, and no way or order found wherein to do it without holy Baptism, and sith to remove this ordinance out of that place, leaves it no known place, but exposes it to an utter neglect; and sith to deny

it to be of any use at all, contradicts the Lord Jesus, and makes his commands contained in the Commission, *Matth. 28.* to cease and be void; I say sith these consequences, so exceeding pernicious, can no way be avoided, but by giving this holy Ordinance its place in the addition of Disciples to the Church of God, hence we further conclude it is of necessity there to be maintained!

SECT VII.

The same confirmed from the Apostles doctrine and practice in pursuance of the Commission, Matth. 28. 19, 20.

How necessary holy Baptism is to the State of a true Church further appears, First, from the Apostles doctrine, to whom Christ immediately gave his Commission, *Matth. 28.* In which we find no man exempt from the dutiful observation of it, as they came to the profession of Christian religion. For thus did the Apostles teach, *Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your Sins. Act. 2. 38. If thou believest with all thy Heart thou mayest be baptized. Act. 10. 47, 48. Can any man forbid water, that these should not be Baptized which have received the holy Ghost, as well as we? and he commanded them to be Baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.* Hence we learn that the Apostles, did not hold men in long suspense about the way of Gods worship, but having set forth Jesus Christ Crucified, and reached the hearts of men by convincing them of Sin, they presently tell their Heart-pricked and enquiring auditors, it is their uncontrollable duty to be Baptized with water (can any man forbid, &c. no such matter) and having thus put off the old Man; and put on Jesus Christ in Baptism, then to make their progress, by continuing steadfastly in the Apostles doctrine and Fellowship, and in breaking bread, and in Prayers, *Act. 2. 41. Act. 10. ult.*

Agreeable to which doctrine was their frequent practice, three thousand being Baptized in one day upon their repentance and receiving the Gospel gladly, *Act. 2. 37, 38, 40, 41.* And according to this pattern, Philip proceeded in the further advance of the Gospel among the Samaritans. *Act. 8. 12.* when they believed they were Baptized both men and women. And as the first Eminent propagators of Christianity observed this method, even so did Paul, among the Gentiles, where he was most conversant, as is evident in the Plantation of the Church at *Philippi, Act. 16. 14. 33, 34, 35.* and the Church at *Corinth. Act. 18. 8.* and by sundry passages in his Epistles, as *Rom. 6. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. Ephes. 4. 5. Gal. 3. 26, 27. Colos. 2. 11, 12.* From whence is fairly collected, that this solemn ordinance had been religiously observed by all those Churches in their plantation. And hence also we conclude the necessity of this holy precept, to an orderly constitution of all Christian Churches to the end of World; the reasons for its continuance in all Churches, being the same for which it was ordained for the first Churches; seeing we have as much need of remission of

All Churches have as much need of Baptism as the primitive Churches.

sins as they, and therefore of the Baptism of repentance for the remission of them as well as they, we have the same need to be dead with Christ as they, and therefore to be buried with Christ in Baptism, as well as they, we are as much obliged to put off the old Man with his Deeds as they, and therefore to be renewed in the Spirit of our mind, to put on Christ in Baptism as well as they, yea we have as much need to hold the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace as they, and therefore have the same need to be engaged to it by one Baptism as well as they, and these things lead us to the fourth point, and that is the nature of the Ordinance it self.

SECT VIII.

Of the necessity of holy Baptism to a true Church-state, From the nature and import of the ordinance it self.

Greatly hath the wisdom of God appeared in forming this holy ordinance of Baptism, that it might be serviceable to his glory and the good of his people, as will easily be perceived by him that considereth the significant expressions, and high titles which the Spirit of God in sacred Scripture joyneth with it, thereby to raise up the minds of the Children of men, to a pious conformity to the will of God requiring it; and to the due observation of the mystery held forth by it. Hence it is called the *Council of God*, Luke 7. 30. *The laver of regeneration*, Tit. 3. 5. *The similitude of Christs death*, Rom. 6. 4. *The figure by which we are saved*, 1 Pet. 3. 21. *That wherein we are buried with Christ*, Colos. 2. 12. Not that the water doth any thing in all this, otherwise then as it is sanctified by the word of God to set forth Christ and him Crucified, and to shew on the creatures part his solemn resignation to the will of God, revealed in the Gospel, &c. Even as the Sanctified bread and wine in the *Table of the Lord*, is called the *body and blood of the Lord*, because of it's Divine use and signification, to set forth (in the Church of God) Christ and him crucified.

Nor is this wisdom of God less, in pitching upon such a service, that as to outward appearance, hath but little beauty or excellency in it, and to place it among the beginnings of Christian religion; but rather very great, seeing by this means he makes manifest the loftyness of many hearts, calling hereby for such kind of abasement as that we find more to follow the example of the Pharisees and lawyers, Luke 7. 30. then follows the example of the *Publicans*, verse the 29. the former *rejected the Council of God, being not Baptized*, the latter *justified God being Baptized*.

And indeed, he that comes rightly to this path of Christianity, doth openly acknowledge (even in this very act) before God and man that he is a poor unclean Creature, and therefore doth wholly cast himself upon the free grace of God, for remission of his Trespases; and though never so high, is glad to receive this low pledge of Gods mercy, at the hands of a despised Minister of Christ, and this in the ablution or wash-

washing in the River after the example of the Chamberlain, or *Lord Treasurer* of the *Queen of Candice*. All which proud Flesh observing, streight through Satans Instigation, abhorreth this as a low and base performance; and though they be convinced, there is none to save them but Christ, and therefore are willing he should serve with their sins, and to be laden with their iniquities; yet will they not have him here in their Lord, or leader though himself hath gon this path before them: and exciting them after this manner. *This it becometh us to fill fill all righteousness* Matth. 3. 15.

CHAP. II.

Of the due form and manner of the Administration of Sacred Baptism.

THAT dreadful rebuke which *David* received from the Lord, because he fought him not after the due order, 1 *Chron.* 15. 13, may justly cause an holy consideration in every serious heart, that considers how men have violated this ordinance of God, to wit baptism, in the form or manner wherein it ought to be performed: As to introduce the way of aspersion or sprinkling a few drops of water upon the forehead of the Subject, and therewith also to make a watry Cross, and this without authority of Scripture, and against the evident practise of Christ and the Primitive Churches. That we may therefore continue our testimony to what is the mind of God in this matter, and shew the great and dangerous mistake that men have fallen into, in not keeping the Ordinances as they were delivered to the Churches, we shall shew that immersion or dipping in the *Element water* in the *name of the Father*, and of the *son* and of the *holy Ghost*, is the due manner and form of Baptism only, and this will appear.

1. From the practice of *John* the Baptist, and those that succeeded him, in the act of Baptizing.
2. From the true signification of the word Baptize, when used to express the act done in this solemn Ordinance.
3. From the intolerable injury offered to Christ, and unavoidable inconveniencies to the Church by altering the form or manner of Baptism.
4. From the agreement between the sign and thing signified in Baptism.
5. From the consent of learned men, who are our opposites herein.

As to the first, thus it is written, Mark 1. 5. *And there went out un-*

*Baptism tryeth
lofty hearts; and
they commonly
reject it.*

John Baptist had no order to sprinkle water upon the people.

to him all the Land of Judea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the River of Jordan, confessing their sins, and John 3. 23. *John was baptizing in Enon near Salem, because there was much water there, and they came and were Baptized.* From these two places it is most evident that *John* had no order to perform this Ordinance, by sprinkling water upon the people; And therefore chose convenient places to do it by immersion; nor need any person go into the water or into the river for such an end, as to have his face washed or sprinkled only. Surely the least spring of water, wherein *John* might have wet his hand only, had been sufficient to sprinkle all the thousands that came unto him to be Baptized, but this would not do, wherefore he chose *Enon* near *Salem*, because there was much water. Now this being rendered as the reason, why *John* Baptized in that place, and the only reason too, it plainly informs us, that he knew not how to baptize with a little water in a Basin, as the manner of many is, who do thereby proclaim to all the World, that they have forsaken *John* the Baptist, who was sent of God to baptize, and have chosen other guides, or their own fancies to be their rule in this matter.

He that is baptized in water, may truly be said to be baptized with water, but he that is sprinkled with water only cannot truly be said to be baptized in water, and yet in Scripture he is to be baptized with and in water are the same things.

Yea they have forsaken Christ himself, and those that succeeded *John* in the solemn service of Baptizing, for Jesus did not only suffer himself to be dipped into Jordan For *ἐσβαλόμενος* may be truly so rendered, and though the word, *ἐν*, may be rendered *with* as well as *in* water, yet the preposition, *ἐν*, at least as used, *Mark* 1. 9. cannot possibly signify *with* but *in* or *into* Jordan, for how absurd would it be to say that Jesus was baptized with *Jordan*, and how congruous to sense and truth too, it is to say, He was dipped in *Jordan*, yet against truth and reason is the way of Christ deserted, by all those that have admitted the devise of sprinkling instead of Baptizing. For when we read that *Jesus came with his Disciples into the Land of Judea, and there he taught with them and Baptized.* John 3. 22. Is it not clear that our Saviour, who was Lord of *John* the Baptist, yet is pleased to follow him in the management of this blessed ordinance, the Baptism of repentance of remission of sins? and therefore was it noted by *John*'s Disciples, as something strange to them, that he to whom *John* bare record, should baptize, and all men go to him. And *John* shews them it was Jesus his right, even in that ministraton to be preferred before him, and rejoiceth that his same begun to spread abroad, and that Jesus was more successful in the work then himself, though he made Disciples only, and ordered his Disciples to baptize them. Surely no man can think that Jesus altered the form or manner of the Administration of this Ordinance, from dipping to sprinkling; for still we find it to have the same appellation of *Baptizing*, without the least hint of variation in name or thing.

And that no alteration was made by Christ, in the manner of this Ordinance is evident from the practise of those, who by virtue of his Commission did Baptize with or in water after his Ascension. *Act* 8. 38. *And they went both down into the water, both Philip and the Eunuch, and he baptized him.* So that still those that succeed in the management

of the Gospel, and Baptism as a Ordinance thereof, kept close to the first pattern, even to go into the water, both the Minister and the subject of Baptism, which is full evidence that they knew no such device as the sprinkling the forehead; for if they had, it would have prevented this descent into the water to be baptized. So that the Apostacy from truth in this particular, of those that have espoused this idle practise of rantizing, is so palpable, that he that runs may read it.

SECT II.

From the true signification of the word Baptize, &c.

The Greek word βαπτίζω is ever used (saith a learned writer) in the original as that whereby this Ordinance is expressed, and whence it derives that denomination of Baptism, the proper plain English of which is, to overhelm, or cover with water, to dip or douze in water; and it is the derivative of βάπτω, which is *tingo, quod sit immergendo*, to dip in manner as they do, that dye cloath or Colours, which is by that total submerison of things in the Liqueur, as is known by common experience — whereupon he summoneth all the learned men in Christendom, to shew out of *Stephanus*, or *Scapula*, the two great Lexicons, that are now of greatest request, that βαπτίζω either doth not signify a total dipping of the immediate Subject that is denominated Baptized, or dipped by it, or that it ever signified such a thing as sprinkling at all.

And he further shews that the word which signifies *sprinkling*; is another word, viz. ἐκρίνω, which is ever used in Scripture by the Spirit, when he speaks of such a thing as sprinkling; It is used three times in one Chapter, viz. *Heb.* 9. 13, 19, 21. and is all along Englished by sprinkling. Neither is there any one place of Scripture, wherein the word ἐκρίνω, is rendered to Baptize, or used to signify Baptizing. Neither is there one Scripture wherein the word βαπτίζω is rendered sprinkling or used to signify such a thing; nor is there any reason why it should be so rendered if you consider The *non-identity*, and deep diversity that is between these two actions, viz. sprinkling and Baptizing, by which as by the second Argument it is most plain, that sprinkling is not only, not the Baptism of Christ; but in truth no Baptism at all. Which he demonstrates, because dipping and sprinkling, are truly two wayes, two forms, two actions, two kinds of actions, so really different in their essentials (as Actions) so specifically diversified in nature, as actions, that even *Homo* and *Brutum*, do not differ more essentially in predicamento substantie; then sprinkling and dipping do differ in the predicament of action, and therefore they cannot be called one and the same. And though dipping and sprinkling are both actions in genere remoto or in genere proximo both wettings; yet are they not one kind of action, or wetting in specie not all one, so as the one may be Universally used instead of the

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other, nor so as to be denominated properly by each other, nor so as that the one is the other.

Wherefore seeing that dipping and sprinkling are not the same thing, they cannot both signifie one self same manner of Baptizing, and when we are commanded to Baptize with water in the name of the Lord Jesus, &c. we are commanded not divers, but one action, as respecting the practick part of that Ordinance, otherwise if the word, Baptize, do signifie variety of actions as distinct from both the former, as they are one from another, yea a fourth, and a fifth, &c. till no man can be certain what to determine shall be the fence, with respect to the act of Baptizing.

SECT III.

From the intolerable injury offered to Christ, and unavoidable inconveniencies to the Church, by altering the form or manner of Baptizing.

In alterations of this kind, the motives leading thereto ought to be such as will justify the alteration which is made; and if any thing do it in this case, it must either be a new mandate from Heaven; or some perfection hereby added to the thing it self, or some greater advantage hereby brought to the Church. But none of these things can be pretended, without apparent injury done to the Lord Jesus, who as he was the Messiah, was to tell us all things, or at least what he did tell us, is in no wise to be contradicted, and yet as to the matter in hand, he so approved of the practice of John the Baptist that he said, *thus it becommeth us to fulfil all righteousness.* And thereupon was baptized of John, in, or into the River Jordan. And God at the same time approves the work, and commands us to hear that his beloved Son, as him in whom he was well pleased, so that there is no ground to think that God ever yet countermanded the order, which he gave to his Servant John; nor have we any reason to think that Christ would contradict his own practice, neither did the holy Apostles change the Ordinance that we read of, and we are sure none since their dayes had more power, or wisdom in this case than they, and therefore Heaven is not concern'd in this alteration, and consequently it cannot be warranted, by any divine Authority.

Neither doth the alteration of the Form of this Ordinance, add to the perfection of it. For as the wise man saith, *what can the man do that comes after the King?* Eccles. 2. 12. or if it do, is not Christ degraded, who could not (according to this conceit) give his own Ordinances their due form, but must leave that for some abler heads; But alas, this trifling usage of sprinkling and crossing the forehead, hath quite spoiled the beauty of the Ordinance, which as Christ established it, does well set forth Christ and him crucified; the Subjects death to Sin, and rising to a new life. Will any say that sprinkling is more decent than dipping, and so the more perfect Form? if so, doth that not still degrade the Lord Christ? was he indecent at all? and yet did he

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not go into the River and was dipped there, and came out of the water when Baptized? sure it is the greatest indecency in the world, to throw aspersions upon Christ or his truth; and it's absurd to talk of mending any thing, if we cannot first shew where it is faulty. *As for God his way is perfect, and every word of God is pure,* we may not impeach what he hath said or done; But see whether this conceit will lead men, if they may take upon them to mend one Ordinance, why not all? and if they have power to alter once, why not twice yea twenty times? and when shall we be sure the ways of God are past your adding perfection to them? and if you make them not better, you make them worse, and why did you meddle with that, which you could not amend? this vanity is sufficiently reproved by the Protestants writings against the Papists about the manifold additions to the service of the Mass, and yet they cannot beware of it in the case of Sacred Baptism, but must bring their sprinklings, crossings, and *spousures* into it.

And lastly the alteration which men have made in this Ordinance, is not more for the profit or advantage of the Church, then it was before, if otherwise: will not this also reflect dishonour upon Christ, who (according to this conceit) either could not, or would not do things in his own Church to the best advantage? surely we have cause to say as those, Mark. 7. 37, *He hath done all things well.* He did well in going down into the water for our Example, in this step of obedience, even as he did well to die for us not only to bear our sins, but also leaving us an Example that we should follow his steps. 1 Pet. 2. *as he suffered for us, that we should follow his steps.* and I doubt not that grudges to follow him in the laver of Baptism, will have him well of his following him to mount Calvary. In a word, he that thinks sprinkling a better form of Baptism than immersion, doth degrade the wisdom and goodness of Christ, and set up sinful Flesh in competition with him.

As Christ is injured by mens innovations in things pertaining to religion, so the Church is brought to great inconveniencies on that account, as experience hath taught the world long since; for beginning to alter Gods wayes, and there is no end, and that which is none of the least inconveniencies, the Church is never certain that she hath any one Ordinance in the purity; nor indeed whether she have them at all. Sometimes general Councils gave the laity both the bread and Cup in the Eucharist; sometimes general Councils deny them the bread and Cup and gave them the bread only. Now if the Institution of Christ himself stand us not instead, who can be sure what is right or wrong in this case? even so in Baptism, sometimes Crossing and sprinkling goes together, sometimes they have been parted, with the Cross many years before he was Baptized, of late some are sprinkled without the Cross at all, among the Papists some dip the head of the Infant into the water, some pour it out of a Glass, upon the face of the Child, If now this great example of our Lord, be not minded (as it is not, by all these innovators, or any of them) how shall the Church be able to know who are the true observers of Christ

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Note, it is granted by the Papists, that their Church did alter the dipping over-head and Ears in water to a little sprinkling upon the face. Certamen Relig.

(a) *vid. Rituali Rom. de sacramentis Baptismi. pag. 40. edit. 1652. Minister baptizant aqua & sponso. et in nomine Domini Amen. et in nomine Domini Amen.*
caput in manu crucis infundunt, baptizant.
Aug. Confess.