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T H E
CHRISTIAN FAITH
ASSERTED AGAINST
Deists, Arians, and Socinians;
IN EIGHT
SERMONS

Preach'd at the
Lady MOYER'S LECTURE
IN THE
CATHEDRAL CHURCH of St. *PAUL*,
1728, 1729.

(*And since greatly* ENLARGED.)

To which is prefixed,
A large PREFACE concerning the *Light* and
the *Law* of NATURE, and the *Expediency* and
Necessity of REVELATION.

By *HENRY FELTON*, D. D.
Late Principal of *Edmund Hall*, Rector of *Whitwell* in
Derbyshire, and Chaplain to his Grace the Duke
of RUTLAND.

1731

O X F O R D,

Printed at the *Theatre*, and are to be Sold by C. RIVINGTON,
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*Presented to the Theological
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T H E
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ASSERTED AGAINST

Deists, Arians, and Socinians.



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TO THE

Right Reverend FATHER in GOD

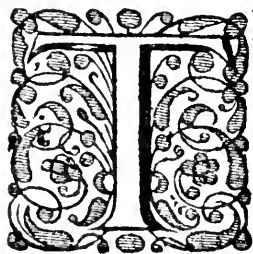
EDMUND

Lord BISHOP

OF

L O N D O N.

My LORD,



THE Sermons contained
ed in this Volume
having been preached
by your Permission,
and two of them,
which had the Ho-
nour of your Presence, having had
the greater Honour of your Appro-
a bation

DEDICATION.

bation also, are now come in most humble wise to present themselves to your Lordship in answer to the Question you were pleased to ask me, whether I designed them for the Press. Which Question I would in great Modesty interpret, as a sort of a Command.

The three First are printed with very few Additions, but upon reading several Pieces since written in the Cause of Infidelity and finding I had leisure enough to write and keep pace with the Press I have greatly enlarged the Others, and taken into Consideration several Points, which have been lately advanced, or rather brought over, and over again; for I can see Nothing, but the Old Cavils revived; and there appeareth Nothing New, or Extraordinary, but greater Malice, less Modesty, and more Prophaneness.

Your

DEDICATION.

Your Lordship's Pious and Paternal Care for the Preservation of your Flock appeareth in your constant Vigilance, and Labours, and more especially in those truly *Pastoral Letters*, which are written with an Authority becoming your high Station, and with that Plainness and Perspicuity in that Spirit of Meekness, and Charity, which ever reconcileth Dignity and Love unto the Sacred Character, you bear, and raiseth in all true Christians great Reverence and Affection to your Person, while they find themselves, as they read, so exceedingly comforted and confirmed in the Faith. For they contain so clear an Account of the Christian Doctrine, and so full and just a State of the several Objections, with such easy and safe Solutions, and such satisfactory Answers to them, that the Nation may be fully instructed, and completely

DEDICATION.

armed against all the Arts and Attempts of Infidelity, for tho' the Letters are addressed to your own Diocese, the Benefit is more Universal, and extendeth to all.

This your Interposition will prove a Powerful Means thro' GOD's Blessing to stemm the Tide and stop the Progress of Infidelity, and tho' there is little Hope of convincing those, who are gon over to the Camp of the Infidels, and become Disciples of them, that sit in the Scorners's Chair, yet your Excellent Endeavours are a strong Preservative against the growing Infection, and Potent enough to expel the Poison, even after it is deeply imbibed, except where, as in Natural Cases, so likewise in Moral, it hath seized the Vitals; For then nothing but a Miracle in the One, and nothing but supereminent Grace infused can prevail against it in the Other.

We

DEDICATION.

We are called upon indeed to throw up all Defences, but those of the Pen, and to expose our selves without any shelter to the Attacks of our Enemies; to stand the Assaults of Blasphemy and Buffoonery, and open our Bosoms to receive those Virulent envenomed Darts, that are thrown against us with a Rage and Fury, that seemeth rather Diabolical than Human.

But surely we are under no Obligation to suffer this Violence, these cruel Mockings and Scourges of the Tongue. Ridicule is no proper Test of Religion, and Blasphemy and Prophaneness can make no Pretensions to Reason and Argument. We have a Right to Defence against such Invaders, as these; but when any Persons will argue seriously, and treat things Sacred with Decency, and carry themselves in these Debates, as becometh Scholars and Gentlemen,
we

DEDICATION.

we scorn to take any Advantage from the Laws, and are always ready to entertain such Adversarys, as These, with great Candour, to weigh considerately whatever they are pleased to offer, and to return them an Answer with all good Temper, and Civility.

Truth can never suffer by a serious and learned Enquiry; but Truth and Religion, and all, that is Venerable and Sacred suffereth, I know not whether more by Outrageous Impiety, or by Ludicrous Drolery. The Dissolution of Religion must necessarily be attended with a Dissolution of Manners, and the Natural Religion so warmly contended for seemeth to be no other, than *That* of following Nature without any Restraint or Reserve.

These Patrons of Infidelity and Advocates for Reason against Revelation are highly exasperated,
we

DEDICATION.

we find, by the Opposition your Lordship hath given them; and the Weight of your Arguments is demonstrated by the Storms, it hath raised against you; but they are no more than Storms: they may overturn a Man, a Forrest, or even a Kingdom by Violence; otherwise, like the Winds, to which they are compared, they are only very Noisy, and very Empty.

Your Lordship by your great and Extensive Learning, and especially by your exact and Eminent Knowledge in the Laws both Civil and Ecclesiastical is able to maintain the Rights, as well as the Faith of the Church; and we are the more assured of the Divine Protection, while in the King we have a Nurfing Father, and in the Queen a Nurfing Mother, and in the Royal Issue such a Beautiful Prospect of deriving these Blessings to our latest Posterity.

That

DEDICATION.

That your Lordship may long live
the Ornament and Defence of this
Church in the highest Stations of it,
and after all your Faithful Services
on Earth meet a more Glorious and
everlasting Reward in Heaven is,
may it please your Lordship, the Fer-
vent Prayer of

Your LORDSHIP'S most Dutiful

and most Obedient Servant

Edmund Hall.
On the Feast of
the Purification
1731-2.

H. Felton.



T H E
P R E F A C E.

WHEN I first undertook this Service, I intended to consider some peculiar Texts, and some singular Points, which the Reverend and Learned Dr Waterland had recommended to me: I have that great Deference for his Judgment, that I am sensible, I could neither desire nor find a more Skilful Hand to point out the most proper Method of managing this Controversy, and I thought my self Happy to be directed in my Choice by so able a Judge.

But upon my Return to Oxford towards the Beginning of the October following, I thought it necessary to take a larger Compass, and so I altered my first Design and proceeded upon another Plan: the Reasons I have intimated in the first Discourse, and I need not enlarge upon them here.

Only since I began this Course of Sermons, I may very justly say, that the Books published in
b the

the Cause of Infidelity have abundantly justified my Choice, and as I proceeded upon the general Principles of those Writers, it is some Satisfaction to find that these Sermons are in some measure an Answer to what they have since advanced, and an Antidote to the Poison, they have dispersed.

*What I delivered concerning the Light of Nature and Revelation according to the first Draught of these Discourses was not so much argued as taken for granted, and therefore I proposed to consider those two Points more distinctly in this Preface, especially since the Light of Nature is set up, as of it self sufficient without the Light of Revelation; but since by the slowness of the Press I have had time greatly to enlarge the whole, and to interweave these Points with the Body of the Work it will not be necessary to treat them so largely, as I intended, tho' there is still Room to say a great deal upon them. especially as several other Points, which I have more lightly touched, will fall in with these: as the Origin and Obligation of the Law of Nature, and the Obligation of the revealed Law likewise: the One containing the Moral: the other prescribing both the Moral, and Positive Dutys of Religion; and from hence it will appear whether the Light and Law of Nature are sufficient to direct and entitle Men to Happiness under the present Defects and Depravity of their Mind: or rather whether Men can now by the Light of Nature and their own Strength alone so conform to and fulfill the Law of Nature, as to entitle themselves to Happiness, and deliver themselves from such Penaltys, as they may
be*

be liable unto for their Transgressions of that Law.

Some of our Adversarys receive, others reject a Revelation; and it may be of good service to all true Believers to see, how far those, who acknowledge a Revelation agree with those, that deny it. Upon Considering the several ways taken by different Writers to oppose Divine Revelation in general, and the Doctrines revealed in particular I could not but observe an exact Conformity of Principles among them, and that the Deists, Arians and Socinians came one and the same way to their several Conclusions, if their Conclusions may be called Distinct when they all equally meet in the Unitarian Scheme: For the Conclusion they all hold is this, The Unity of the GOD-Head in Opposition to any Distinction of Persons in the same Divine Nature and Essence: The Deists, who reject all revealed Religion, cannot indeed have any Regard to the Divine Relations made known by the Scriptures, and therefore they can acknowledge GOD the Father no more, than GOD the Son: this Relation they cannot discover by Reason, and they refuse the Discovery of it by Revelation. The Arians and Socinians admit the Revelation, but deny the Doctrines therein revealed so far, as concerns the Divinity of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and all those Points, which are Consequential thereupon. So that tho' the Arians and Socinians do admit a Revelation, and the Scripture to contain that Revelation, and further, tho' they acknowledge the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost to be therein revealed, and the Son to be spoken of as a Divine Person, to whom is ascribed

Adoration and Dominion, yet they do upon their several suppositions deny the Divinity of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, allowing One Person only, viz. the Father to be truly and properly, that is Essentially and Eternally Divine. To this Purpose the Writers on the Arian side especially, have appropriated several exclusive Terms to the Father, such as Supreme, Unoriginate, &c. from which, whether they will infer it or no, it will follow, that the Son is not properly GOD, or that He is Another besides, and not One GOD with the Father.

That the Terms are exclusive when applied to GOD with respect to the Creature, we do readily allow, but that they are exclusive, when applied to the Father with respect to the Son, and the Holy Ghost we do as constantly deny, together with the Metaphysical Nature of the Son, as if it were Different from the real Essence of the Father. All these I have spoken to already, they are a sort of Language thrown out to amuse and amaze the Reader, and He, that knows not the Trick of laying a great Stress upon Words, that have no meaning, and of repeating with much Earnestness and Solemnity some specious Terms, which seem to be something, but are really nothing to the Purpose, is not acquainted with one prime Secret in these Writers of Controversy.

In the Prosecution of this Argument I thought it necessary to examine the Foundation of all Human Knowledge, to trace it up to its springs, and to derive it thro' all its streams in the whole Course of the Mind from the first Perception and simple Apprehension of things to its utmost Perfection, till from Earthly Objects it rose to Heavenly, and
Reason

The Preface.

V

Reason was instructed and carried beyond this World by Revelation.

It hath been the Artifice of those, who are Enemies to Revelation, to represent it as an Enemy to Reason, and the Unskilful are imposed upon, while it is insinuated, that what is above Reason is therefore against it: This Persuasion may be Simplicity in some, but the Pretence is Contrivance and Design in others, which they lay down as a Maxim, and use as an Engine to carry on the Scheme of Infidelity: If the great Patrons of Reason are indeed persuaded, that what is above Reason is a Contradiction to it, and that Reason can assent to no Truth, but what it comprehends, I must take the Freedom to say, their Reason is not so well exercised as it should be, and if what they assert be true, it is confined in a much narrower Compass, than they imagine: At this rate they may argue against their own only Standards of Knowledge, sensible Evidence and Demonstration, and dispute for ever about Causes and Effects, the Propertys and Appearances of Things, till they can find the Reason of every Property, and see into the Essences themselves. In Experimental Philosophy we are assured of the Facts, tho' in many Instances we can only guess at the Causes, and the manner of their Operation. Nature hath her Secrets, and if you please, her Mysterys. The Divisibility of Quantity: The Quadrature of the Circle: the Propertys of the Loadstone, its Electrical Powers and constant Attachment to the North, are Articles to exercise the Faith of these Philosophers, when they shall find that Demonstration lieth on both sides of the Question, that

what can be Demonstrated cannot be Effected, and that Propertys are manifest, which yet our Reason is not able to account for. The Incomparable Sir Isaac Newton's Works will shew, how high so great a Genius can soar beyond the Reach of Vulgar Understandings, and at the same time how difficult it is to demonstrate the Causes of those Wonderful Effects, which we see in the vast Expanse about us. The Principles of Gravitation, and Attraction, that Universal Magnetism of Nature, tho' rightly assigned, cannot yet themselves be accounted for but from the Virtue, and Impression of the first great Mover, and when this wonderful Man hath given us such noble Demonstrations of the Motions, and Distances of the Heavenly Bodys, we must at last be content to resolve all those Stupendous Appearances into His infinite Wisdom, and Almighty Power, who hath made all things in Number, Weight, and Measure.

Moral Philosophy hath its Difficultys also, and these Boasted Reasoners may dispute whether they be Reasonable Creatures and Free Agents, till they can settle wherein the Freedom of Will and Liberty of Action consist, and whether they act freely by their own Determination, or are impelled, and secretly conducted by a Fatal Necessity: These Questions I shall leave for their Thoughts to feed and ruminate upon, because doubtless their Reason alone is sufficient to resolve all Points relating to the Moral Constitution of Man!

It is the great Commendation of Reason to search into and Contemplate all Natural and Moral Causes throughout the whole Compass of the Creation,

tion, thereby more clearly to display, and the more widely to celebrate the Incomprehensible Greatness, and Infinite Goodness of the Creator, and no Hypothesis is blameable tho' mistaken, but such a One, as leaveth GOD out of the System, and would account for the Natural and Moral World without Him.

Thus the Reason of Man is properly employed, but if Truths Natural and Moral have their Difficultys, and we cannot always account for the Cause and Manner of Natural Operations, why should we imagine, that Supernatural Truths should lie more open to our Comprehension? and refuse to believe what we are not able to comprehend in revealed Religion, when we must believe what we are not able to comprehend in Natural, nor to account for even in the most Common and Familiar Effects of Nature? The Essence of GOD is equally Incomprehensible in Natural Religion and Revealed, and the Essences of Things are equally impervious from a Straw to a Star.

To pass by the former and the future Effects of an Almighty Power in the Resuscitation of the Body and its Re-union to the Soul, we are not able to account for our present Life and Existence: We are fearfully and wonderfully made, and if we refuse the Apostle's information we cannot tell, how we live and move and have our Being. We know not the Term of Union between our Spirits, and Souls, and Bodys: nor after so many useful, and great Discoverys made by Anatomy with relation to the Structure and Conformation of the whole Body, can we account for those Involuntary Motions of the Blood and Spirits, and the seve-
ra!

ral Functions of Animal Life, if we must have perfect Satisfaction in these things, we may doubt at least whether we exist or no; such Sceptics, like Pyrrho, would question, if possible, whether they were dead, even after they were buried, and contrary to the Epigram, the Grave it self would hardly cure such Infidels, as these.

From this transient View we may discern the Unreasonableness of disputing Facts, or not yielding our Assent where there are either Natural, or Supernatural Difficultys to poze us in Transactions relating to this World. But surely the Argument is much stronger for our Assent to the Supernatural Truths of Revelation, as they are removed beyond the Views of our Natural Light, and are not subject to the Evidence of our Senses, nor Examinable by any Observations or Experiments.

*When Propositions, however they may be true are of no Influence, or Obligation upon us, but only Matter of Recreation and Diversion to the Mind, we are at Liberty to receive them or lay them aside without giving our selves the Trouble of Examining the Truth of them: Yet let me add this by the way, that if we don't care to examine, we have no right to pronounce upon them, and no Man should pertinaciously deny even these without proving them to be either False or Impossible; But where Propositions are affirmed by an Authority sufficient to lay us under an Obligation of Believing, and the Nature of them is such, as hath a great Influence upon our Practice, and our Happiness, there, when we understand the Terms, we must give our Assent, altho' they contain Points Myste-
rious and Sublime, which we are not able*

to Comprehend; and therefore there is no withholding our Assent from the great Truths of the Gospel, unless we can show, that any such Proposition implieth a Contradiction, or that the received Sense is False, or that Another must necessarily be the True One.

Thus in the Doctrine of the Trinity, when the Adversarys charge an Impossibility or Contradiction, or take upon themselves to maintain either the Arian, or Socinian Scheme, they go upon wrong suppositions, and argue either Figuratively, or Literaly from Created to Uncreated, and from things Human to Divine; and determine in so peremptory a manner, as if they fully Comprehended an Incomprehensible Subject. But of this I have treated at large, and I hope sufficiently in the following Discourses.

On the other Hand in Things, which we can perfectly conceive, and where an Impossibility and Contradiction are evident in a strict and Literal sense, there we understand them, as they are intended, in a Tropical or Figurative Manner. Thus when our Blessed Lord calleth Himself a Door and a Vine, and his Disciples the Branches, the Expressions are meerly Figurative and Metaphorical as I have considered them already; and no Body, that I know of pretendeth to understand them in a Literal sense: and in all like Cases it is equally absurd to understand Literaly, what is Figuratively spoken

So when of the Sacramental Bread He said, This is my Body, and of the Cup, This Cup is the New Testament in my Blood, which is shed for you, Luke XXII. 19, 20. or as St Matthew
and

and St Mark express it, This is my Blood of the New Testament which is shed for many for the Remission of Sins. Mat. xxvi. 28. Mark xiv. 24. He did not mean, that the Bread then was, or afterwards should be transubstantiated into his Body and Blood, or that the Cup should be transubstantiated into the New Testament of his Blood, or into his Blood it self, but only that these were Symbols and Memorials of his Death: Of his Body, which was broken, and of his Blood which was shed for us, by the Participation of Both which we are made Partakers of all the Benefits of his Passion according to St Paul's Account of this Institution who delivered it to the Corinthians as he had received it from the Lord. 1 Cor. XI. 23, 24, 25. For as the same Apostle demandeth, 1 Cor. X. 16. The Cup of Blessing, which we bless, is it not the Communion of the Blood of Christ? The Bread which we break is it not the Communion of the Body of Christ, and by doing this in remembrance of Him, As often as we eat this Bread and drink this Cup we do shew the Lord's Death till He come. 1 Cor. XI. 26. These Expressions then are thus to be understood in a Figurative, Symbolical, and Commemorative sense, so that the Bread and the Cup are a real Communion of his Body and Blood. The outward Part or visible Sign of this Sacrament is, as our Church Catechism teacheth, Bread and Wine: The inward Part, or Thing signified is the Body and Blood of Christ, which is verily and indeed taken and received in all their real and Spiritual Effects by the Faithful. This is the real Presence, which we hold. He is so present as to annex the very Benefits of his

his Body and Blood to our Communion of the Bread and Wine, which are now made the Spiritual Food and Nourishment of our Souls, that as He loved us and gave Himself for us, we might ever be Partakers of, and give Thanks unto Him for his Unspeakable Gift! But these Expressions, This is my Body &c. cannot be understood of his very Body and Blood according to the Doctrine of Transubstantiation.

This Doctrine we say implies an Impossibility, and a Contradiction, and lies within the Verge, and Examination of our Senses: For besides the insuperable Difficultys attending the supposed Change, which I will presume to call palpable Contradictions, and absolute Impossibilitys, I beg leave to offer two or three Considerations, which tho' they may not add to the weight of these Objections, perhaps may be of service to open the Eyes of those, who are blind to Impossibilitys and Contradictions, or are persuaded at least, that they are to believe them.

One is, that according to their own Doctrine there must either be a double Transubstantiation of the Blood, or the Wine is not Transubstantiated in the Cup, or the Bread is not Transubstantiated into the Blood as well as the Body of Christ: This last they hold, and bring it as a Reason for Communion in one Kind. For this Purpose they have invented a double Commemoration under the Names of a Sacrament and a Sacrifice: One of Christ's glorified Body, in which they say, is the Blood, and this is the Sacrament wherein standeth their Transubstantiation: The other of the suffering Body, where the Blood is shed, and separated,
and

and this is the Sacrifice of the Mass, and here is no Blood in the Body; But surely it is the Body, which was broken, and the Blood which was shed, that according to his Institution, and Revelation to St Paul are the proper Subject of this Commemoration: Of the glorified Body I shall speak again as I proceed.

Another Consideration is, that if they will have these Words of the Institution to be literally understood, they must first settle the true Construction of the Pronoun, This is my Body. If it relates to the Bread it must, according to several of their own Writers, be taken Figuratively. This Bread is my Body, or the sign of my Body. If the Pronoun referreth literally to the Body, then it is an Absurd Tautology, and affirms nothing at all but that this Body is my Body. The Pronoun must refer either to the Bread, or the Body: if to the Bread, then something is distinctly affirmed of it, This Bread is my Body, and the Prædicate cannot destroy the Subject, that it shall be no longer Bread, and when it cannot be literally understood, it must be Figuratively taken, and explained by the Sign, or Communion of the Body of Christ, As, if St Paul had said, The Bread which we break, is it not the Body of Christ? We must necessarily understand it, as He hath really expressed it, Is it not the Communion of the Body of Christ? They ought next to shew, why the Words are not to be literally understood in the second Instance as well as the First, and affirm, that the Cup is as really the Blood, or the New Testament in the Blood, as the Bread is the real and very Body of Christ. Yet here they admit the Figurative sense, tho' they have

have no other Ground for the Distinct Conversion of the Wine into the Blood of Christ. I would only observe, that the Transubstantiation of Wine into Blood, as our Lord changed Water into Wine, and as Water hath been miraculously turned into Blood, is easier to our Apprehension, supposing the Change were but as Evident to our Senses, and yet for the sake of the Entire Transubstantiation of the Bread into the Body and Blood, and tho' the Council of Trent hath distinctly decreed that Conversion of the Wine, yet in this Dispute they generally mean the Change of the Bread into the Body and Blood of Christ.

*A Third Consideration is, whether the Words are to be understood of the Body of Christ in its suffering, or in its glorified State, in its mortal or immortal Condition: If in its suffering State it no longer subsists in such a State, and Bread cannot be changed into what is not: if in its glorified and immortal State, let them answer how such a Body can suffer and die, or be offered up a Sacrifice any more? Whether to solve these Questions or not, yet to defend Communion in one Kind by their Doctrine of Concomitancy they assert first that the Bread is transubstantiated into Christ's glorified Body, and of that only the Laity Communicate: "Is there no Blood," saith one of their latest and best reputed Writers, "in a Living Body, and is not Christ alive and glorified? And do not Catholics believe that very Body, which is glorious in Heaven is really received in the Sacrament?" with more to the same Purpose which I shall presently take Notice of. Afterwards to justify Communion in One Kind he distinguisheth
between*

between the Body and Blood of Christ as it is a Sacrament, and as it is a Sacrifice. As it is a Sacrament it is the glorified Body of Christ together with his Blood as we have seen before, but (to give his own Words) as it is a Sacrifice representing that of the Cross, and the separation of his Sacred Blood from his Body, that being the proper Office of Priests, they only must offer the Unbloody Sacrifice, and consume, as well as consecrate both Kinds to signify the separation of Christ's Blood from his Body on the Cross, when they act as Priests, and say Mass, but if they communicate without saying Mass, they may and do communicate under One Kind. These are remarkable Passages transcribed from a Book entituled, The Case Review'd; or an Answer to the Case Stated, By the Author of the Gentleman instructed MDCCXV. Post-script pag. 10, 11, 12.

I had reason to take Notice of this double Transubstantiation, and Distinction between Christ's Glorified and Suffering Body, there seeming to be two different Exhibitions of Christ's Body: of his Glorious Body in the Sacrament, of his Suffering Body in the Sacrifice of the Mass, so that the Sacrament and the Sacrifice are two different Things, and if they hold Transubstantiation in the Sacrifice, it is quite another thing from Transubstantiation in the Sacrament. But their Doctrine seemeth to want some further Explanation, when they think fit to give it, and to what I have said I shall only add, that this Writer very truly calls the Holy Communion a "Sacrifice representing that of the Cross, signifying, the separation of Christ's
"Blood

"Blood from his Body," pag. 12. But then how are the Bread and Wine Transubstantiated into his Glorified Body? and into his Suffering Body they cannot be: For when this Writer hath told us, that Concomitancy standeth upon this Principle, that where Christ's Living and Glorious Body is, there is his Living and Glorious Blood, he very truly addeth, that they have not been separated, since he expired upon the Cross, nor never will to all Eternity. Post. pag. 10.

This is an obscure and confused sort of an Affair, but it is their Business to clear it, Many Observations will rise from hence against the Doctrine of Transubstantiation, but I shall proceed no further in the Argument at present. I would not mention it at all without being something particular upon it for the sake of Ordinary Readers; In entring upon this Argument in order to justify and maintain the Catholick Doctrine I have distinguished between the Literal and Figurative sense in some clear and manifest Instances, and when our Adversarys shall be able to prove that Christ can be a Son of the same Nature with the Father no more, than He is a Door, or a Vine, and that the Trinity carrieth as evident Impossibility and Contradiction in it as Transubstantiation, we must give up the Catholic Doctrine, and reject the Scriptures, which contain it; But till they can comprehend the Nature and Existence of GOD as fully, as they can the Propertys of Bread we shall refuse the Parallel, and still believe that what is above our Reason implieth not any Contradiction, and that what is Incomprehensible is not Impossible.

Before

Before I proceed, I would entreat those of the Church of Rome to consider the great Mischief, they do to the Christian Faith, by matching their Transubstantiation with the Trinity, and putting them on such a Foot, as if they must stand and fall together: If the One be false, must the other therefore not be True? Because we must contradict our Reason and Senses in the One, cannot we without the same Imputation believe the Other? How they can defend the Trinity, while they do not only hold the Doctrine of Transubstantiation, but make the Trinity a Parallel Doctrine to it for my part I cannot see: To overthrow the First their Adversarys need only disprove the Last, and then the Romanists will quickly find, They have no Way to defend the Faith, but by giving up Transubstantiation, and by shewing the Difference between Things subject to sensible Proof and Examination, and Things confessedly above the Reach of our Understanding. We own the Doctrine of Transubstantiation in some sense to be Incomprehensible, but we do not therefore reject it, because it might nevertheless be True, but we reject it because we plainly see, and are manifestly convinced that it is False: and till they can bring down the Persons of the Trinity to a Parity with Men, and make them, as open and palpable to our Examination as a piece of Bread and a Wafer, we shall always put a Difference, and draw different Conclusions between things that are subject to none of our Senses, and things that are subject to them all.

Since my Writing these Discourses, the sufficiency of Reason alone without Revelation hath been

been loudly asserted, and Pleas and Defences have been entered for it, as if there was a Conspiracy formed against it to cry down the Use, and to deny the Power and Exercise of it in Matters of Religion.

I have in the Course of these Sermons considered the Force and Compass of our Natural Powers, and arguing from the State of Religion over all the World, where it was not guided by some Revelation I have shewed, that Reason was greatly defective, and I do still insist upon it as Fact, that under the Conduct of meer Reason alone Mankind degenerated more and more, that Reason alone, even where it shone in its clearest Light, is among the Philosophers, was not sufficient either to instruct or reform the World.

But because I could not discuss this Point so fully, as might be desired, I proposed in the Preface to consider more distinctly the Light and the Law of Nature, together with the Expediency and Necessity of Revelation.

The Religion of Nature hath of late Years been considered in several Views, and particularly it hath been Delineated by a most accurate and masterly Hand, as it is founded in the Eternal Difference of Good and Evil, which he expresseth by Right and Wrong, or what in his Language amounteth to the same thing by Truth and Falshood. The Obligation he rightly fixeth in the Will of GOD, and deriveth Natural Religion from the great Author of Nature: He resolveth Happiness and Misery into the same Principles also from which he deduceth Natural Religion, and as he maketh them to consist in Pleasure and Pain,

he maketh these to result from Right and Wrong, or the different regard to Truth and Falshood in our Actions. So that Natural Religion, and Happiness, which is the End proposed, are founded in the Truth of Things and acting agreeably thereunto according to the several Relations, Man standeth in, and the Dutys arising from those Relations both to GOD and Man. To which I may add his Proofs of a Divine Being, and of the Immortality of the Soul, and of Future Rewards and Punishments.

This as I understand him, is a short Account of his Scheme, and it is a Deduction becoming so Wise a Man. Here is no Unintelligible Jargon of the Reason and Fitness of Things, nor any rude and Blasphemous Assertions of any Thing Prior to and Independent of GOD Himself, and of GOD's being under an Obligation to Duty; but from him those bold and vain Disputers may learn, That Things are Fit or Unfit as they are Conducive to, or Destructive of some End. That Moral Fitness and Unfitness result from what is Right and Wrong, True and False, and that these arise from the Eternal Distinction of Good and Evil fixed by the GOD of Truth, to whom all Falshood and Wrong are an Eternal Contradiction: The Bare Fitness and Relation of Things do not make the Law, nor induce the Obligation, but GOD is the great Lawgiver, who hath made the Fitness and Unfitness of Things applied to the Nature of Man, and the several Relations and Circumstances, He is placed in, the great Rule, or rather the Subject of his Commands and Prohibitions. This I have ventured to add as the Sense and Collection

lection of this great Philosopher, and it is a full Confutation of those shallow Thinkers who are justly charged with supposing a Law without a Law-giver, and a Religion without a GOD. I shall have more to say upon this Subject before I make an End. However, as the Reasonings of this Excellent Person are for the most part very Abstracted, and Abstruse, and several of his Notions very curious and singular, he hath not, we find, pleased all those, who have treated Morality in the like Abstracted manner. The Exceptions to his Delineation I shall pass over, only I must needs say, I think it hard to insinuate, that this Treatise is at all injurious to revealed Religion: He seemeth indeed to have carried his Enquiries further, than meer Reason without the Scriptures could go; But then he stoppeth just as he is passing the Bounds, & owneth the want of a Guide to lead him on: What he hath delivered is so far from undermining true revealed Religion, as Himself declareth, that he hath rather paved the Way for its Reception, and accordingly in his subsequent Thoughts upon the State and Condition of Man he maketh a Beautiful Transition from the Confines of Reason into those of Revelation. It is a mutual Illustration, and Enforcement of those Truths to find What is so consonant to Reason taught and confirmed by Revelation, and possibly, had it pleased GOD to have lengthened his Days, he might have given us a Delineation of Revealed, as he hath of Natural Religion.

I must upon all Occasions profess my self so great a Friend to all Attempts, which tend to fix the Truth of Morality upon some sure and firm

Foundations, that, altho' they proceed not the same Way, yet if they come to the same End, I look upon them as so many concurrent Proofs in the Cause of Virtue. But this I must take leave to say, That the different Schemes erected upon different Principles, and Each appearing in the Mathematical Guise, are a manifest Proof, that how specious soever the Process may seem, and how capable soever Morality may be of Demonstration in general, It is not capable of it in this Form precisely, For no Body ever yet disputed against Mathematical Demonstration. An Imitation of the Mathematical Form may be used at large, and Abstracted Reasonings are very properly employed in an Irrefragable Chain to bind down the loose Pretenders to Reason, and to silence, if not convince Gainsayers; but this Method is not so proper for Popular Instruction. Morality is a plain thing in itself, and should be taught in a plainer Manner: What is so very Intelligible should be delivered in an Easy Didactical Form; and thus only would I be understood as to any thing, I have said in the way of Censure upon dressing Morality in a Mathematical Garb: What I have dropped of that Kind was pointed against those especially, who are setting up Natural Religion in Opposition to Revealed, till the whole of their Intentions is summed up in this Conclusion, that Natural Religion is, and ever was sufficient for all the Purposes of Man even in this depravity of his Nature, and GOD Himself can impose no other.

It is not my Purpose to pursue the several Maintainers of this Scheme thro' all their Extravagant

travazant and Blasphemous Assertions, but I shall consider the Substance of what hath been advanced among them, and endeavour to confute them rather by a true State of the Case, than by taking their Arguments to Pieces.

And this I shall attempt First,

I. *With regard to the Light and the Law of Nature. Secondly,*

II. *With regard to the Expediency and Necessity of Revelation.*

I. *I have in the Course of these Sermons spoken distinctly of the Light of Nature both in the Common, and the Scripture Account of it; of the Law of Nature I have not treated so expressly, but have rather mentioned it incidentally, as not sufficiently taught in this great Eclipse of our Natural Light: It may be proper therefore to propose my Thoughts more distinctly upon this Subject, and because there is so inseparable a Connection between the Light and the Law of Nature, that we cannot speak clearly of the One without the Other, I shall without repeating more, than will unavoidably recur, deliver myself in a supplementary manner after the following Method.*

1. *I will explain what is meant by the Light of Nature in all its several Degrees.*

2. *What is meant by the Law of Nature.*

3. *And then thirdly we may enquire, How far the Law is Discoverable and Practicable by the Light of Nature.*

1. *For the Light of Nature.*

By this is to be understood not any Innate or Actual Knowledge, but a Faculty of Learning and discerning the Truth and Falshood of Things as they fall under our own Observation, or as they are offered and proposed to us by others. That our Knowledge is not Innate is from hence manifest that our Ideas are not so; and were our Ideas Innate, it would not follow that our Knowledge is so too; For our Ideas are upon Every supposition previous to our Knowledge, and Knowledge consisteth in a proper Distinction, Comparison, and Arrangement of them. The Light of Nature therefore is not any inborn actual Knowledge, but a Capacity of attaining to such Kinds and Degrees of Knowledge, as we apply unto, or are instructed in. The Understanding openeth by Degrees, and is furnished with various kinds of Knowledge according to the various Instruction, it receiveth: We see the daily Progress and Improvement of the Mind, and if, like our Growth, it be less perceptible to ourselves, it is visible enough to others. The Mind itself is Originally like Virgin Tablets without any Impressions or Traces of the Style, like a fair Sheet of Paper without any Stroke or Letter, and is inscribed and filled up by Degrees with all the various Characters and Conceptions, which the World about us, the Instruction of others, and its own Reflections can furnish: The Objects of Sense are the Materials, out of which are gathered the first Rudiments, and the several Stores of Knowledge, and in the Mind, as in a well-ordered Magazine, they are laid up and assorted by themselves according to the several Senses, by which they were brought

brought in. *A Man therefore, that wanteth one of his Senses, wanteth also such a Proportion of Knowledge, unless he can supply the Defect by some secondary, and substituted Means, and understand those things, which are proper to that alone, by the Analogy and Assistance of another. It is endless to argue in so plain a Case, and this is sufficient to shew that there is Originally no Actual or Natural, but only in Process of Time an acquired and gradual Knowledge in the Mind.*

But tho' there be no Original Knowledge, there are some Original Notices, and Apprehensions in the Mind of great Use for the Conservation both of the Natural and Moral Frame of Man. These, as they are Natural Movements and Directions, may very properly be considered, as the first Operations and Appearance of the Light of Nature: One Branch of which directing us to the Preservation of Life is common to us with the rest of the Animal Creation: The Other, which rises from a sense of our own Actions, is peculiar to Man, as He is a Moral Agent.

These, the Natural and Moral Instincts will deserve a more particular Enquiry. The Natural is in a great Measure antecedent to, and independent of that Intellectual Knowledge, which is acquired by the Rational Facultys of the Mind: The Moral Instinct is joyned with and dependeth upon the Knowledge of Moral Truth, and therefore I shall treat of them in the following Order.

1. *First, of the Natural Instinct as distinct from and Antecedent to our Intellectual Knowledge.*

2. *Of*

2. *Of our Intellectual Knowledge Natural and Moral.*

3. *Of the Moral Instinct subsequent to and rising from our Moral Knowledge.*

1. *And first for the Natural Instinct as distinct from and Antecedent to our Intellectual Knowledge.*

For since Man is a Compound Creature of Spirit and Soul and Body, and the Body and Animal Spirits are the Organs and Instruments of the Mind in all its Operations, during this united State, we may justly conclude, that whatever Knowledge riseth from this Compound State, which would not have risen meerly from the Mind alone, may be properly said to rise Originally from the Animal Frame, and therefore those Instincts, which we feel, tho' they be common to the meer Animal Creation, yet inasmuch as they are Natural Notices, may be called one Ray or Portion of the Light of Nature.

In Brutes this Light is not Discursive, as it is in Man, but it serveth to direct them in the Preservation of themselves and their Species, as surely, and effectually as the Eyes in their Head serve to distinguish Objects and to direct their Motions. Man indeed is able to reason upon these Instincts as upon any other Subject of Science, but he generally obcyeth them without Thought or Consideration. No Man deliberateth whether he shall eat or drink when he is pressed by Hunger and Thirst, neither doth any Man reason with Himself, whether he shall fly from a falling House or a Devouring Beast: The first Nisus the first Movement is to avoid the Danger: the second is

to call in our Reason to resist it: The first is a suddain Motion from a Natural Impression, and therefore our Instincts, tho' Common to the Animal Creation are Original Notices: These are truly Innate, and discover to us the first Dawning and Glimmering of the Light of Nature.

2. But there is a Light, which may be called the pure Intellectual Light of Nature to which the Body contributeth nothing but the Materials to work upon, and is no more than an Organ or Instrument without which the Mind in its present State could not perform its Operations. By this Light I understand the Powers, and Facultys of the Mind to discover, and when discovered to apprehend the Truth and Connection of any Proposition, whether Natural or Moral. In Natural Truth this Light directeth us to all the Principles and Conclusions in Arithmetic and Geometry, and the several Parts of Natural Philosophy. Those great Men, who by their own disquisitions discovered and so formed any Mathematical Proposition, discovered it by that Natural Light which sheweth the Proportion and Agreement of one thing to another in a Chain of Consequences, from some Original Propositions, Axioms, and Concessions; and therefore those Principles from which such Truths and Conclusions are deduced are called First Principles, to the Truth of which the Mind necessarily assenteth, as soon as we understand the Terms, in which they are expressed.

But besides this Light, which directeth us in the Investigation of Natural Truth, there is another Branch of it, if I may so divide it, by which we discern all Moral Truth, and the Eternal Differences
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of Good and Evil. This is the Light, which we are here to enquire after, that Light which leadeth us into the Knowledge of Natural Religion.

Taking the Light of Nature in this View, by it we understand in general the same Intellectual Faculty, by which we discern Mathematical or any other Truth, applied to the Discernment of Good and Evil.

It hath of late Years especially been the Turn of several great Writers to investigate Moral Truths in a Mathematical Way. Whether Morality is capable of that strict Form of Demonstration or no, I will venture to assert that it is not less certain and demonstrable in a way suitable and proper to it; because the Demonstration is to be fitted to the Subject, and not the Subject to any particular kind of Demonstration.

In all Geometrical Conclusions, however the Operation is Internal, the Object is always External, Sensible, and Material: In Moral Conclusions the Object and Operations are both Internal, the Practice only is External; and if we were to apply the Scale and the Compass, perhaps we could not measure the Affections of Moral Actions so exactly as we can the Figure and Proportion of Lines, and yet we are not less certain of the Rectitude and Obliquity of Moral Actions, than we are of the Rectitude and Obliquity of a Line. I do not mean whether such an Action as done by such a Person be certainly Good or Bad, for that will depend upon Circumstances, but I intend that the Actions themselves without regard to this or that Person are Good or Bad, and so pronounced upon the first Hearing. In this sense they are rather

ther Propositions than Actions, or else Actions considered only as Materialy Good in themselves, and so they become at once both Instances and Rules of our Duty.

Natural and Moral Truths in some Respects are equally Evident, but the Truths of Morality are generally speaking more Obvious and Evident at their first Proposing than Natural or Artificial Truths. In Natural Truths hardly any thing is immediately Evident beyond first Principles: In Moral Truth the great Lines of our Duty are like first Principles plain and legible at first sight, and presently assented to as soon, as proposed. All the Difficulty and Obscurity arise from applying them to particular Cases and Persons, or more properly from the Practice of them, since the Practice thro' Man's Infirmary is not answerable to his Knowledge.

We are under no Necessity therefore of arriving at Moral Truths by such Methods and Disquisitions, as we use in Physicall and Artificial Subjects; but the Mind hath a nearer Passage to them, and discerneth them sooner, than she doth Those, which employ our Reasoning Facultys in a long Chain and Deduction; it is much Easier to teach Men their Duty, than to make them Mathematicians, and they will learn it sooner from the Scriptures, than from the most refined and Abstracted Treatises and Essays upon it.

Whether the Truths themselves are more discernible, as some Objects are more Visible than others, or whether the Mind hath a sharper, and quicker sight, when they come within her Ken, may perhaps be thought too refined a Speculation.

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The Point may be argued upon both suppositions ; For Moral Truths, tho' they are not any more, than other first Principles, Innate, have in them something so connatural to the Mind of Man because of their Fitneß to his Condition, that they affect our Reason with an Immediate Sympathy, and however Eternal, Abstracted and Independent on us in themselves they be, yet being, as they are required of us, and made Matter of our Duty, founded in our Nature, they immediately touch the Conscience, and by a Kind of Symphony strike, like Unisons, upon the very Strings and Frame of our Constitution.

From hence by an easy Transition we may pass

3. To the Moral Instinct subsequent to and rising from our Moral Knowledge.

For over and above the Knowledge, we acquire by the Light of Nature every Man beareth both an Internal and External Testimony to the great Truths or Dutys of Morality so far, as He is instructed in them. He must first have knowledge of them, or he can be no more affected by them, than an Infant, or an Ideot : and he must have a right Knowledge of them, otherwise he cannot be rightly affected by them ; But upon a true and perfect Knowledge of them, whether obtained by his own Disquisitions, or the Instruction of others, Nature herself both Internally and Externally beareth Witness to them.

By the Internal Evidence I understand both the Consciousness and Conscience, we have of Moral Truth : the first of these denoteth that Natural sense, we have of the Honesty and Turpitude of Moral Actions : the second is that Conviction, we feel within our selves upon Transgression, and
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that Applause of our own Hearts, when we obey the Precepts of Morality. Or more briefly we may say, that Consciousness is the Conviction of Moral Truth, and Conscience of Moral Actions.

The External Evidence is that Shame, which overspreadeth Men's Faces upon the mention of any thing Offensive, and that Confusion, which overwhelmeth them, when apprehended in a Criminal Act. The One is the Guard of Virtue, the Other the Confession of Guilt, and both of them express the Natural sense, we have of foul and dishonest Actions. They shew, that there is a Natural Turpitude in Evil, and that our Minds are formed to discern what is Good and Evil in the great Lines of Morality as justly, as our Senses are formed to perceive their proper Objects. For Truth to the Mind is as Natural, as Colours to the Eye.

I conclude therefore with respect to Moral Truth, that the Light of Nature consisteth in that Intellectual Capacity, we are endued with, of our selves to discern, and from others to learn our Duty: And the great Differences of Good and Evil our selves bear Witness to both outwardly and Inwardly: Inwardly by a Consciousness and Conviction of Truth, and by a Conscience of Duty and Transgression: Outwardly by those Involuntary Emotions of Shame, and Exultation, which discover the quickest sense of Turpitude and Honour. These Natural Springs in the Moral answer to the Instincts in the Natural Constitution. and These are as useful to preserve the Moral, as these are to preserve the Natural Life. They are Our Guard and Monitors and Witnesses in our Duty, and if they are not the Substantial Light
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of Nature it self, we may properly call them a Ray and Effulgence of the Mind both as they shine Inwardly, and break forth Outwardly in a Conviction, we cannot stifle, a Conscience, we cannot controll, and a Shame, we cannot hide.

To these I may add every other Manifestation of Reason in the Actions and Countenance of Men: The Faculty of Speech in a Rational manner, not like Daws, or Parrots (which, when they have said what they have been taught either with or without Connection, have said all they can) is a certain Indication of Reason: The Smile also as well as the Blush of the Face displayeth it, and, like One looking out of the Window, telleth, who lodgeth within.

If any thing more be meant by the Light of Nature, than what every Man is possessed of by Himself, then by the Light of Nature must be understood not only the Reason of Every Man, but the Reason of all Men, and all the Productions of Reason from the Beginning to the End of the World: And so It is not only the particular Reason of every Man, but the Collective Reason of all Men however recorded, and preserved in any Monuments of Arts and Learning. Taking the Light of Nature in this View, It containeth all the Discoverys made, and to be made, and, all true Arguments used, and to be used as long, as Man continueth on the Earth. For the Attainment of this Light therefore we must have Recourse to Instruction, and every Man besides his Natural Capacity will have such a Proportion and Degree of this Light of Nature, as Instruction and Application can furnish him with.

But

But here we must distinguish between the Instruction, as well as the Light of Reason and Revelation. For altho' it is by Reason that we understand what is taught by Revelation, yet those Points not being Originally discoverable by Reason, are to be distinguished from those, that are, and the Light, that discovereth them, is to be distinguished from that Light, to which they are discovered.

*In this Question therefore All, that is contained in the Scriptures, must be excepted, and Morality, as delivered in the Scriptures, must be distinguished from Morality, as delivered in all other Writers, who are neither mediately nor immediately, nearly nor remotely acquainted with the Scriptures: For whatsoever is fairly to be presumed owing to the Scriptures is to be distinguished from the Productions of meer Reason alone, and then if we only distinguish thus far, we shall find a great Difference between the two Lights of Reason and Revelation, and if we distinguish further between those parts of the World, who had a Communication with Revealed Light, and those, who had lost it, we shall still see a far wider Difference between the Light of Reason and Revelation: Perhaps there are no People so Blind and Barbarous, to whom some Glimmerings of a Traditional Revelation at least have not descended: and the Light of Reason seemeth in all Nations to have prevailed in Proportion to the Light they borrowed from Revelation. In this Age and Nation it is Absurd to talk of One in Opposition to the Other, when Reason is so manifestly indebted to Revelation. For the Light of Reason in one
sense*

sense taketh in the Light of Revelation, and so it is mightily improved: But of it self it is a dark and bewildered Guide, if that may be called a Guide, which itself standeth in so much need of Direction.

After this View of the Light I proceed in the next place

2. *To the Law of Nature.*

By the Law of Nature is understood the Rule and Order prescribed to every Being suitable to its several Kind. So to the Sun and Stars their Law is to shine and to disperse their Influences according to their several Degrees of Light, Magnitude, and Distance with respect to the Bodys situated round them: The Law of Planets is to perform their stated Courses according to the largeness of the Sphere in which they move or of the Circle, they describe, and according to the different Degrees of Celerity, with which they are carried either about their own Axis, or round any Common Center.

To Stones and Minerals, and Plants and Trees, their several Propertys are their Law, according to which they grow and operate in producing answerable Effects, and by which they are specifically distinguished from one another.

To the Animal World, besides What Living Creatures have in Common with Stones and Minerals, as Accretion, and with Plants and Trees, as Vegetation, and Circulation of the Juices, the Law of Nature is the Preservation of themselves in the several ways proper to each Kind, and in the several Elements to which they belong.

But

But when we speak of the Law of Nature we take it in a more restrained and peculiar sense, as Man is the Subject of it: and here, not meerly and simply as he is a Rational Creature, but as he is a Compound Rational Creature consisting of Spirit, and Soul, and Body, and acted by the Impressions of Sense, as well as by the Dictates of Reason.

This is clear, because else if with respect to the Law of Nature Man was to be regarded meerly as a Rational Creature, the Law of Nature would be the same to Mankind as to other Intelligent Beings in proportion to the Degrees and Excellency of their Understanding. Now the Law of Nature, or the Law, to which all Intelligent Beings are subject, is such, as supposeth them Free, and requireth them to act according to the Powers, they are endued with, and to the peculiar Commands of their Creator, as they stand in Relation to GOD, and each other. This Law is solely Intellectual, as applied to Beings meerly Spiritual, requiring Purity, Love, and Obedience with respect to GOD, and the most Extensive Benevolence to all other Beings, that are proper Objects of it.

With respect to Man considered as a Compound Person made of Body and Soul as well as Spirit, and acted by Sense as well as Reason, created and born for good Purposes suitable to his Nature, and placed under several Relations to GOD and his Fellow Creatures, the Law of Nature to Him must not only have regard to his peculiar Essence, as distinguished from all other Earthly Creatures by his Reason, but must respect him likewise as

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He is subject to the same Affections, and Appetites of Sense with the Brute Creation, and so thus made and constituted It considereth Him under all his several Relations also.

The Law of Nature then with respect to Man is a Collection of certain Eternal and Unvariable Truths, whereby he is required to improve his Understanding, to regulate his Appetite, and to discharge the several Dutys rising from the several Relations, he standeth in to GOD and the World.

As to the Origin and Obligation of the Law of Nature, we found them in the Essence and Will of GOD: Our Adversarys derive them from the Reason and Fitness of Things considered as previous to, and independent of his Will, and in their Language they lay GOD under an Equal Obligation with his Creatures.

It may be necessary therefore to consider the several parts of this Scheme, with reference to the Account, they give of Morality, and with regard to the Obligation, to which they equally subject the Creator, and the Creature.

That there is a Fitness and Unfitness founded in the different Reason, and Relation of Things is manifest from constant Use and Observation, as this Fitness and Unfitness are applied to us, and understood of the various Means used in prosecuting the End proposed: so Things, or rather Actions are called Fit, as they are conducive to some End, and agreeable to the Condition and Relation, we are placed in, in the World, and in this respect what is Fit for us to do, is ever Fit for every Man under the same Circumstances to have

have done, and to do. Hence ariseth the general Fitness or Unfitness of Things in the same Condition and Relation, and thus this Fitness and Unfitness, as they are taken abstractedly in a Moral sense, and answer to True and False, to Good and Evil, are said to be Eternal; the Reason of them being ever, and unvariably the same.

Whether they be previous to and Independent of the Will of GOD is another Question, for they may be Eternal and Immutable, as they refer to the Eternal Differences of Good and Evil, tho' they be not previous to and independent of his Will. For tho' all Truth in one sense is Antecedent to the Creation of Things, and to any Declaration of GOD, yet it is neither previous to Him, nor independent of Him. For there are Numberless Truths in the Divine Mind, but the Discovery and Manifestation of them depend upon his Pleasure, as the Truths relating to Man and the World about us had not appeared, had not Man been created such as He is. These Truths subsist somewhere: either in the Divine Mind, or in Created Subjects. As they exist in Created Subjects they are only Coæval with those Subjects, as they exist in the Divine Mind they are Eternal. Truth abstractedly considered belongeth to Intellectual Beings only: In GOD it existeth Essentially: in Man Objectively, as it is the Subject both of his Contemplation and his Duty: and thus it must exist, or it hath no Existence at all, and therefore no Eternal Existence but in an Eternal Mind. Otherwise say, ye profound Philosophers, that make the Reason and Fitness of Things antecedent to GOD Himself, whence they were de-

rived into the Divine Mind, and from what Fountain did they spring, or where did they exist separate from the Divine Being? That they are previous to his Will is no otherwise to be conceived than we can conceive Himself to be previous to his Will, and that they are independent of his Will is no otherwise to be conceived than we can conceive his Essence and Attributes to be independent of his Will. These Truths exist Eternally by the same Necessity, by which the Divine Being Himself existeth, but at certain Periods they are manifested in proper Subjects created to understand, to receive, and obey them.

And so both Natural and Moral Truths, as they relate to us, depend upon the Will of GOD, inasmuch as the Creation of proper Subjects dependeth upon his Will. To suppose any thing previous to the First Cause, and independent of the Creator is a Contradiction in Terms, and all Arguments à Priori therefore, that affirm something Distinct from, and Antecedent to GOD, especially that affirm any thing to be Distinct, Antecedent and Independent, labour under the same Contradiction, and suppose something Eternal Besides, and Before what is Eternal.

If any thing may be said to be Independent of the Will of GOD because He cannot alter it, nor make it to be other, than it is, this under due Explanation is readily admitted, but it is nothing to the Purpose: A Lion changed into an Ass is no longer a Lion, and Water changed into Wine, is no longer Water: and so far GOD can alter the Nature of Things, but then the Things will not be the same, they were before. We do not take
upon

upon us saucily and presumptuously to determine what GOD cannot do; We know that He can do every thing, but what implieth an Imperfection, and nothing is impossible with Him, but Falshood and Contradiction: and therefore in this Argument we say, that the Essences of things, and the Truth of Numbers and Proportions are as unalterable as the Truths of Morality. Matter cannot cease to be Matter, while its Property's remain, and tho' it may be modified into Numberless Forms it will be Matter still, unless it shall be annihilated by the same Power, that created it. And so Moral Truths likewise vary with the Subject according to different Relations and Circumstances, but they are ever the same in themselves, and while Man continueth to be Man they are Ever the same to him under the same Circumstances and Relations.

To object that if Moral Truth be not independent of the Will of GOD, it is of a precarious Nature, and dependeth upon his Arbitrary Determination, whether it shall be Truth, or not; this is a False and a Blasphemous Consequence, arguing from Human Will to the Divine, as if the Divine Will were mutable as ours, and to be Arbitrary implied at least a Power, and Possibility of Evil as well as Good, in the Counsels and Actions of the Almighty.

Thus indeed they argue, but surely they mistake the very Essence of GOD, as if Falshood and Wrong could ever enter into it, or as if his Arbitrary Will could ever decree any thing contrary to his Essential Perfections. Whereas He is Arbitrary meerly from his own immutable Perfections, so that He can decree Nothing but what is conso-

nant to his Eternal Goodness and Truth, and every Contradiction to his Will is therefore False and Evil.

The Term Arbitrary as applied to the Will and Actions of Men is generally of Evil Tendency, and therefore of Evil Signification; but applied to GOD, who is the Freest, as He is the most Perfect of all Beings, or more properly the only Perfect Being, the Term Arbitrary can never be understood in an Evil Tyrannical, or Capricious Sense, and therefore for the Almighty to be Arbitrary is no Impeachment of his Goodness, Justice and Truth; and we may say of the Moral Creation, as the Apostle speaketh of the Christian Scheme in the Salvation of Man: That GOD worketh all things after the Counsel of his own Will. Ephes. I. 11.

Among Men indeed, and according to Hobbe's Philosophy, where Power is all the Power, a Man can usurp, and is exercised according to the Will alone of the Supreme Authority, without regard to the Eternal Differences of Right and Wrong, of Good and Evil, there the Sovereign Power may possibly in Fact decree what shall be Vice and what shall be Virtue. This is the Prerogative of Infallibility and Tyranny among Men; but not the Prerogative of GOD, who is alone Infallible. He disclaimeth it as an Infirmary and Imperfection, which cannot approach Him; and therefore GOD being infinitely Perfect, it is both Blasphemous and Absurd to suppose that Truth must be Precarious, because He is Arbitrary.

The Difference between GOD, and his Creatures is this: GOD is Arbitrary in all his Counsels,

jels, and all his Works, both as to the Designment and Accomplishment of them in such Absolute Truth and Perfection, that what He Willeth is always Just, and what He doth is always Right. And therefore with the Psalmist we ought most stedfastly to believe what even the Light of Nature as well as the Psalm revealeth unto us concerning our Almighty Creator, That the Works of his Hands are Verity and Judgment, and all his Commandments are True. Psal. CXI. 7. This we understand, when we say, that GOD is Arbitrary in all his Counsels and Actions, and at full Liberty to pursue his own Determinations without any Impediment from Without, or Restraint from Within.

But when we say that Man is Arbitrary, we do not only include the Freedom, but more especially the Obliquity and Perverseness of his Will. In GOD to act Arbitrarily implieth the highest Liberty, for He acteth solely from the Motives of infinite Goodness and Wisdom: In Man to act Arbitrarily implieth an Imperfection, a Capacity to act in Violation of, or in Conformity to his Duty: and for Man to act Arbitrarily is generally understood to act unreasonably out of the Pride and Insolence, the Vanity and Wantonness of the Heart: Man, such is his Weakness, may vainly attempt to make Virtue Vice, and Vice Virtue: This Power some of the greatest Patrons of Natural Religion, and Enemy of Revelation have ascribed unto Man, but they cannot without equal Weakness, and Wickedness ascribe it unto GOD. To deny, that GOD is Arbitrary so, as to be Master of his own Determinations is no other

other than to say, There is no GOD, or if they acknowledge any, it is to involve both Him and Us in the dismal Doctrine of Inexorable Fate, and Inevitable Necessity: and to say, that if GOD be Arbitrary He may change the Nature of Good and Evil is Blasphemously to charge the Weakness and Folly of Men upon the Indefectible Perfections of GOD.

Our Adversarys in this Argument mistake both the Nature and Notion of Moral Liberty: Is it, do they think, any true Liberty, that Man can transgress his Duty, or make a Foolish Choice? Is it any Degree of Liberty that he is under the Bondage of his Lusts and Passions? and would he not be equaly, or, properly speaking, would he not then only be truly Free, when without Obstruction he could uniformly perform his Duty, and without Distraction still chuse the most desirable Objects? This indeed would be perfect Freedom: Goodness and Liberty always accompany each other, and Sin and Slavery always go together; And GOD is Absolutely Free, because He is Infinitely Good.

As to the other part of the Question concerning the Obligation of the Law of Nature, whether it be founded in, and riseth from the Fitness and Unfitness, the Reason and Relation of Things, or from the Law of GOD, it is readily answered, that in several respects it ariseth from Both. From the Fitness, &c. of things considered as Means conducive to some Certain End: from the Law of GOD requiring us to pursue the End, and consequently to use the Means. The Fitness of Things considered only, as having a Natural Tendency to
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the End, induce no Moral Obligation, unless we are previously obliged to pursue the End. The Artificer, who would contrive a Machine to show the Motions of this Planetary System, is obliged in one sense to use proper Instruments, and work after a just Model, and to balance the Parts in due Proportions to each other; but he is not obliged to make such a Machine; and therefore the Obligation to use the Means is an Improper Obligation: But the Obligation rising from the Law of GOD requircth us to pursue the End of our Creation, the Happiness and Perfection of our Nature, or to speak in the more Modern Language, the Law of GOD requireth us to act according to the Truth and Fiteness, the Reason and Relation of Things, because they are conducive to the Happiness and Perfection of our Nature.

In the common use of the Word Law, we sometimes understand the Rule of Action, and sometimes the Will of a Superior, but the Rule of Action obligeth only, as it is given and enjoined by a Superior. The Rule doth not oblige of it self, but from whence the Rule, from thence also the Obligation is derived. In all Laws the Obligation is derived from the Authority of the Legislator: in none from the Body, or Precepts of the Law: The Obligation, and What we are obliged to are clear different Things, tho' they are called by the same Name, and go under the Common Appellation of the Law. Thus by the Law of the Land we understand the Preceptive part, and by Obligation we understand the Injunctive: By the One Matter of Duty: By the Other the Authority Enacting: and since the

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Matter of the Law cannot oblige of it self, there must be a proper Subject of Obligation, and a Competent Authority to oblige. Otherwise it is supposing Obligation without a Law, and a Law without a Lawgiver, or, as they speak previous to any Law whatsoever; but I shall have occasion to consider this Point further, as we go along; in the mean time it may be necessary to consider more distinctly this Fitness, &c. of things, which are said thus to oblige, and what they are, on whom the Obligation falleth previous to, that is, without any Law at all.

*As to the Fitness, &c. of Things, perhaps the Terms have not been duely weighed, and these Disputers do not well understand what they mean, when they talk in this crude, yet peremptory manner of the Fitness, &c. of Things. Is Fitness an Absolute or a Relative Term? and doth it not equally regard both the Agent and the End? There is indeed Absolute Goodness, and Absolute Truth, as GOD is absolutely Good and True; but there is no more any absolute Fitness, than there is an absolute Relation; when we insist upon the Fitness of Things, the obvious Question is for What, and for Whom are they Fit? And further it may be asked, What are the Things themselves: are they the Actions, or the Agents, or Both? and why are such Actions as are Honest, and Just and True, Fit for such Agents as Men? Is it meerly because they are Good, or is it not moreover, because they are suited to the Nature and Happiness of the Agents? This maketh them Fit, and because they are thus Fit, GOD, who imposeth this Universal Law upon all
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his Creatures that they act suitably to their several Natures, willeth, that Men also act suitably to Theirs. From this Fitness of Things then Men may discover the Will of GOD, and from his Will their Obligation. The Truth and Fitness of Things descend Originally from GOD, He that made us, hath made us also Fit to receive them, by a Correspondent Fitness in our Nature to them, and by adapting them so justly to the End, we are to pursue, and therefore from his Will ariseth our Obligation to act according to them.

If we look upon Man as the Subject, on whom this Obligation falleth, we must consider what Man is, and what the Nature and Consequence of an Obligation are to such a Creature, as Man. Ask then what Man is? He is a Moral Agent: ask what an Obligation is? It is the Force and Virtue of a Law derived from the Right and Authority of the Lawgiver: To say Obligation is a Tie, is a Translation instead of a Definition, and an Empty Tautology nothing to the Purpose: ask what is the Consequence of an Obligation? It is our being accountable for our Actions, and liable to the Penaltys of Transgression. Obligation in this Question is a Juridical or Forin sic Term, and a Man must be accountable for his Actions, or he can be under no Obligation. Obligation otherwise is a loose discretionary Thing; and whatever is the Physical Consequence of his Actions, there can be no Moral nor Judicial Consequence from the Obligation. More Words are needless in so plain a Case: To say a Man is under an Obligation, and not accountable is a Contradiction, and if
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he be accountable, then look, to whom he is accountable, from Him floweth the Obligation; and so the Creature, the Law, and the Obligation are derived from the same Fountain, the great Lord and Creator of all Things.

The Reason and Fitness of Things then are some special Truths adapted to our Nature, and therefore made the Rule of our Actions: This Rule being given us by GOD becometh a Law, of which Men are so conscious and convicted, that not having the outward, and written Law they are said to be a Law unto themselves, their Consciences all the while accusing or excusing them. Whether therefore we consider the Fitness, &c. of things as a Rule, or a Law, they are most strictly Obligatory upon us, when by an hard Catachresis, to give it the softest Term, they are said to be Obligatory upon GOD Himself. This is the last part of the Scheme, and it will ask no very long Process to discuss it.

To make the Reason and Fitness of things previous to and Independent of the Will of GOD, and then to say, that GOD is obliged to act according to the Reason and Fitness of Things: that, as He is a Moral Agent what regulates his Actions is Law: that there may be Obligation without Law, as Law signifies the Will or Command of a Superior, and yet that Duty is not to be supposed without a Superior, and signifies Obligation to conform Actions to some Rule or Law, and that therefore GOD is obliged to conform his Actions to a Rule, This, as it is justly charged upon that sort of Writers, is to speak of GOD, as if they were speaking of Creatures. For it is moreover
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laying Him under the same Obligation, and equally subjecting the great Creator to the same Laws with his Creatures. This we say is strange, and Uncouth Language, but let us consider the Justness and Propriety of it.

Obligation applied to Moral Agents, inferreth, as I have said, their being accountable to some Superior for the Performance or Transgression of their Duty, and if Obligation doth, as they say it doth, presuppose Will and Choice, and Power to act otherwise, then to suppose GOD under Obligation, is to suppose in Him a Will, and Choice, and Power to act contrary to that Obligation, which is a supposition equally Blasphemous, and Absurd.

The Law and Rule then according to which, they say, GOD is obliged to act, are the Reason and Fitness of Things. This by their account is a sort of a Rule or Law, that is previous to the Will of GOD, and to any Laws, Commands, or Injunctions, Divine or Human.

From hence, as they explain themselves, there ariseth Obligation without Law, as Law is used to signify the Will or Command of a Superior: For in that sense, saith a learned Gentleman with great Sagacity, there may be Obligation without Law: in another sense, where Law is used for a Rule of Action (that is a Rule without the Will or Command of a Superior) there, saith he, with equal Profoundness, Obligation always supposeth Law, that is, a Law without the Will of a Superior; which is no other at last, than Obligation without Law, and consequently if Religion hath any Dependance on this strange Law, here is

is Religion without a Deity, and a Law above GOD Himself.

With respect to GOD it may be convenient enough for these Men to suppose Obligation without a Law, and a Law without the Will of a Superior; For it will be difficult to find any Law to oblige Him, or any Will, that is Superior to Him: and in what manner they nevertheless attempt to subject the Creator to the same Laws with his Creatures is a Curiosity which may invite our Attention.

Their Way of doing it is This. They first place GOD in the Rank of Intelligent Beings, and Moral Agents, and then they tell us, Intelligent Beings and Moral Agents are subject to Law. "Moral Virtue, they teach, consists in the Conformity of our Actions to the Reasons of Things in whatever relates to other Intelligent Beings, or our selves, and therefore," pray mind the Consequence, "must be Obligatory to all Intelligent Beings even previous to any Laws, or Commands, or Injunctions Divine or Human.

But first, because Moral Virtue consists in such a Conformity of our Actions to the Reasons of things, doth it therefore follow, that it must be Obligatory to All Intelligent Beings, even previous to any Law, Divine or Human! How this Universal Obligation followeth from this Definition of Virtue antecedently to any Law, the Author may show at his leisure. I ask secondly, whether GOD be included in this Obligation upon all Intelligent Beings? If GOD be included, then Moral Virtue is Obligatory upon GOD, the
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Term is applied to Him, and GOD is equally Subjected with all other Intelligent Beings to the Dutys and Practice of it. I would ask thirdly, What that Law, and Rule is, which is neither Human nor Divine? Whether Moral Virtue be a Rule or a Law? and whether it be a Rule or a Law neither Human, nor Divine?

That GOD is included equally with his Creatures, and equally subject with them to some Rule, or Law, is by these Writers rudely asserted, when they are repeating over and over GOD is obliged to This, and obliged to That: And what they say I shall give as a Reply to these Questions in a few Words taken from One of the great Reasoners among them. "Now GOD," saith this great Reasoner, "is a Moral Agent: therefore "what regulates his Practice is Law. If Duty "then signifies Obligation to conform Actions to "some Rule, or Law, then," saith he, in Consequence of that Author's Principles, whom he writeth against, "GOD is obliged to conform his "Actions to a Rule." But if that Author doth not include GOD, but the Creatures only, when He speaketh of that Law, which regulates the Practice of Moral Agents, then altho' GOD be an Intelligent Being, and a Moral Agent, He is not of the same Nature, Rank and Level with his Creatures, and falleth not consequently under a Law like them: For when it is said that all Moral Agents are subject to a Law, it is manifest, as in a Parallel Case, that He is excepted, who made them subject to a Law.

The Inconsistency and Inconclusiveness of this Scheme are plain enough from this small Draught,
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in which the several Passages asserting this Obligation upon GOD Himself are collected and brought together; and therefore notwithstanding the Distinction between a Law and a Rule which would be very just, were it truly stated, and rightly applied, I do insist upon it, that Obligation previous to all Law is Obligation without Law, and that Obligation without Law supposeth Duty without a Superior, and consequently Religion without a GOD, and yet, if, as they roundly affirm, Law regulates the Practice of GOD Himself, as He is a Moral Agent, they may once more consider, Where is the Obligation previous to all Law.

*But surely it may be said in the highest and most excellent sense, that GOD is a Law unto Himself: that there is no Law Extrinsic, Previous, or superior to Him, and that the Law of his Actions is no other than the Freedom and Perfections of his Nature. There is a Difference between the Rule, which GOD observeth Himself, and the Law, which He prescribeth to all other Agents, and in this Difference with regard to Obligation lieth the true Distinction between a Rule and a Law. The general Rule, which GOD observeth is the manifestation of his Infinite Perfections, and his Goodness, Justice and Truth are disclosed in the Exercise of his Wisdom and Power: The special Rule, which GOD acteth by, both in the Natural and Moral World consisteth in chusing and applying Means proportioned to the End: The Means proportioned to produce all things into Being is the Alone Efficiency of his Almighty WORD: The Means used, that
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the Things so produced should answer the End, which GOD proposed in Creating them, are the several Habitudes, Motions, and Propertyts which He gave and assigned unto them, as they are constituted in themselves, and proportioned and referred to each other in Number, Weight and Measure: tho' I must observe that Number, Weight and Measure might have been less or greater in proportionable Degrees, as it is in Infinite Power to create More or Fewer, Greater or Lesser Worlds at his Pleasure. The Rule therefore which GOD observeth is improperly called a Law with reference to Himself: It is a Rule of his own making, as the Model is entirely of his own Designing. But the same Rule is a Law to the whole Creation: It is the Law of their Motions, Influences and Operations, and altho' they must constantly observe this Law, forasmuch as they cannot alter nor interrupt the Course of it, yet GOD the great Lord of the Universe can interpose at his Pleasure, and alter, divert, and suspend those Laws of Nature, which He hath given. At his great Bidding the Moon shall stand still, and the Sun shall not haste to go down: The Waters also shall stand on a Heap, and the Fire shall have no Force on the Servants of GOD: The WORD, who created, can also heal, and restore, and raise the Sick, the Lame, the Blind, and the Dead. In the Moral World also He is Free at his good Pleasure, and in his own good Time to make what Creatures He pleaseth, Angels, or Men, or other different Forms of Intelligent Beings, which we know not: and He can place them also in what Relations to each

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other He pleaseth; and altho' without his Interposition the Moral Dutys must go on in a perpetual Tenour, yet at his Bidding the Child shall obey GOD rather than his Parents, and the Parent shall offer up his Son unto GOD: Men shall act against the strongest Propensions of Nature, and forsake Father, and Mother, Wife, and Children, yea and their own Lives also, notwithstanding the great Fundamental Law of Self Preservation; and all this they shall do upon the Principles of Natural Religion as well as Revealed, for if there be any Reason and Fitness in any thing, it is above all things Fit and Reasonable that GOD should be obeyed. All Obligation proceedeth from Him, but None can revert upon Him, but what in his Promises and Covenants he hath taken upon Himself. There is no Necessity to constrain his Actions, and there is no Law but his own Eternal Wisdom to direct them: The Rule of his Actions is seen in the manner of his Acting, and floweth from the Infinite Perfections of his Essence for ever. The Natural and the Moral World in the several Kinds, and Differences of Beings are so many Exemplifications of his Attributes from the Sun to a Stone in the Natural World, and from an Angel to a Man in the Moral. To take a View of his Operations in the Natural World, and survey the Wonderful Effects of infinite Goodness moving Him, and of infinite Wisdom directing Him, and of infinite Power accomplishing his Works, I would recommend the three last Chapters but one of the Book of Job, not as a Poetical Sublime Description only, worthy the Greatness and Majesty

jesty of the Speaker, but more especially, as an History of Creation, and the Laws given to the Creatures by their Almighty Creator; and then we may joyn in this devout Confession and Acknowledgment with the Psalmist CXIX. 91. They continue this Day according to thine Ordinances, for all things are thy Servants, and serve thee. And with respect to the Moral World we may ponder in our Minds what Job declareth concerning the Original Law given by GOD unto Man, who was created in his Image to serve Him in Holiness and Righteousness all the days of his Life. And unto Man He said, Behold the Fear of the Lord, that is Wisdom, and to depart from Evil is Understanding. This is afterwards taught and inculcated by David, and by Solomon his Son. The Fear of the Lord is the Beginning of Wisdom, and the Knowledge of the HOLY ONE is Understanding. Job XXVIII. 28. Ps. CXI. 10. Prov. I. 7. IX. 10.

For further satisfaction in this Point I may refer to the Debate, as it hath been lately managed by the Author of the Essay on Moral Obligation, and the Supplement thereunto conferred with the Replis &c. To which I shall add Mr Clark of Hull his Examination &c. together with his Foundation of Morality, which is indeed a Reply beforehand to all that the Gentlemen of the other side have written or shall write. His Censure in these Points is much more just than on the Clarendon History.

I proceed now to the third Enquiry.

3. How far the Law of Nature is Discoverable and Practicable by the Light of Nature alone.

It is asserted by the great Advocates of Reason, as well those, who admit, as those, who deny a Revelation, that Reason alone is sufficient to all the Purposes of Man with reference both to his Temporal and Eternal State, (so far as they, who deny a Revelation, admit of such a State) and it is moreover repeated with unusual Petulancy and Clamour, that Reason is, and ought to be Sufficient.

That the Law of Nature is discoverable by the Light of Nature without any special Revelation is readily admitted; for the Truths of Morality are demonstrable by the clearest and most uncontested Principles of Reason, and they are no sooner proposed and understood, but the Mind immediately assenteth unto them: If Reason ever laboureth under any Error or Ignorance about them, this must be imputed to some Defect and Incapacity in our selves, as that Eye must be faulty, which cannot discern the Object, that is placed before it.

In this Question the Light of Nature and Reason are the same thing, and here again it may be proper to ask whether by Reason is to be understood the particular Reason of every Man, or the Collective Reason of all Men, and whether they speak of Reason in its perfect or imperfect Condition: The Collective Reason of all Men assisted with the best Productions of all Lawgivers and Philosophers, which have been preserved thro' the several Ages of the World, and have descended down even to our Times may possibly be thought Equivalent to that perfect Reason, and Original Light of Nature which shone, as we are taught,

taught, in the Mind of Man at his first Creation. But where in any Nation or all Nations is this Collective Reason to be found in that absolute Clearness and Perfection exclusive of Revelation? And if the Collective Reason were thus complete, how is it sufficient for the Conduct of every Man, unless every Man himself be Master of it, or conducted by it? But in this Question what They assert is This, That the Private and particular Reason of every Man is sufficient for Himself, that is the ordinary Share of Reason, which the generality of Men enjoy, is sufficient to direct them in all their Concerns and Expectations, as they are Reasonable Creatures. Else the sufficiency of Reason is only an Abstracted Notion without any special Application, unless generally speaking every Man's Reason be Sufficient.

The sufficiency of Reason therefore, either Collective or Particular, they may be pleased to demonstrate by some other Arguments, than by Asserting it Is so, because it Ought to be so, and leaving the other part of the Dilemma upon GOD Himself, if it be not so.

For it is argued, "that if Man in his Natural State is accountable for his Actions, and obnoxious to Punishment for his Transgressions, then Man hath a Right to such a Degree of Natural Light, as is sufficient, when duly exercised to discover his Duty, and furnish him with Motives strong enough to engage him in the Practice of it, and of weight enough to balance all those Temptations, he is liable to, so, as to render him inexcusable, if he miscarrys: Otherwise Man is not fairly dealt by." This, as

I apprehend it, leaveth a Charge of Tyranny and Injustice upon GOD, and layeth an Imputation upon the great Maker and Governour of the World, as if He were Defective in his Natural or Moral Capacity, and wanted either Understanding or Disposition to have made things better, or to have dealt fairly and equitably by his Creatures.

This is urged in a Round of the same Expressions over and over, and it is indeed a most horrid and Blasphemous Imputation upon Almighty GOD, if Reason be not so sufficient, as they contend, It is, or it ought to be. Well then, here we stand, look upon the Condition of Human Nature, and say how great are our Natural Perfections, how clear is our Reason, and how sufficient a Guide hath it proved alone in any Age or Nation without Help and Assistance from Revelation?

It is a strange Way to argue against Fact by Hypothesis: and what is the Consequence? Either that GOD is unjust if Reason be not sufficient, or Man is inexcusable, if it be. If Reason is not sufficient, here is a loud Discharge of Blasphemy upon GOD: and if it be, as they contend it is, or ought to be, Sufficient, The Case of Mankind is very dreadful and yet unavoidable as they make it: For the sufficiency contended for is so great, as in all Reason and Equity to render those Inexcusable that miscarry!

We are taught indeed, and do accordingly believe, that God created Man upright, and that we derive our Natural Weakness and Depravity from the Transgression of our first Parents. This the Scriptures teach us, and this seemeth a rational

tional Account to those, who enquire into the Cause of so Universal a Corruption, but will not be allowed by those, who contend for the sufficiency of Reason in its present Condition.

Here again they advance Hypothesis against Fact, and argue, "It cannot be, that Mankind are sufferers in Consequence of Adam's Sin, because it would be unjust and unreasonable, and such a Constitution of Things would be wrong." Which is the same Blasphemy over again, and the same Answer may serve: For either we have derived no Imperfections from Adam, or GOD is unjust, if we have. So that whether we were originally formed, as we are, or have derived any Imperfections from our first Parents Transgression, the Constitution of things is wrong, and the Charge is both ways reflected upon our Maker; The Fact is, we are far from being in that State of Perfection, in which, we may suppose, Adam was created, and if we suppose, that Man was created such, as we find him, I am afraid it will by them be thought a juster Imputation upon the Goodness and Power of GOD, as it is an Undeniable Evidence of Weakness and Imperfection in the Work. But of this as we go on.

I have not Room to enter upon the Debate of GOD's Justice in involving Posterity in the Sin of their First Parents. But thus much may be briefly offered, That Adam is to be considered as a Public Person and Representative of his Posterity, who were virtualy in Him at his Creation, and therefore, his Nature being depraved and corrupted by his Transgression, it necessarily deriveth a Depravity upon his Posterity:

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and this will answer for the Contamination of Sin.

Secondly, Adam is not to be considered only as the Father of Mankind, but as the Head of the Covenant, which GOD made with all Mankind in Him, and this answereth for the Imputation of Guilt upon the Breach of the Covenant. As the Children of Israel were included in the Covenant made with their Fathers, and the Children suffered in several Instances for the Transgression of their Fathers.

If it be urged, that Adam's Facultys were not totally lost, but only so weakened and impaired in him and his Posterity, as rendred them insufficient for the Purposes, for which they were originally given, and that GOD looketh upon Mankind, as thus impaired, and will deal with Man according to the measure of his Abilitys. This, one would think, might take off the Imputation of Injustice, especially, if it appeareth that GOD hath taken our Case into his gracious Consideration and Compassion, and provided meet Helps and Remedys for the Weakness and Imperfections of our Nature.

But this part of the Consideration is overlooked, and instead of answering the Plea they deny the Fact, and all that is offered is, first That it doth not appear from History, that Adam suffered any such Change by his Transgression as is here supposed, which is to say that for any thing, that appears, He was created with the same Inordinate Will and Affections, which we find so predominant in ourselves. But we may reasonably collect, that
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Adam came not so imperfect out of the hands of his Creator, and if the Sacred History doth not in so many Words inform us, that Adam was created in the very Perfection of his Nature, we cannot think the present Frame of our Mind that Image of GOD, in which He was created; but if the Account in Genesis be not so clear, and the Image of GOD doth not imply a Perfection of Mind, rather than stay to dispute that Point at present, we may take what Solomon delivereth for a true History of the Fact, a Fact the most evident to him above all others. Eccles. VII 29. Lo this only have I found, that God created Man upright, but they have sought many Inventions, or if you please Ratiocinations.

For accordingly these Advocates for Reason reason after this Notable manner, That because it is written their Eyes were opened, and the Lord GOD said, Behold the Man is become like one of Us, to know Good and Evil, therefore Adam's discerning Faculty was not impaired, but rather improved by his Transgression: and then by admirable Consequence they infer, that Adam's Transgression had no Effect upon his Posterity, but the Consequence according to this ludicrous, yet stupid Vein of interpreting is, That the Facultys of his Posterity were so far from being hurt, that they likewise were improved by his Transgression. History, Philosophy and Experience are challenged upon this occasion, but History, Philosophy and Experience reclaim against the Challengers, and do all consent and testify, That the particular Disposition and Temper of the Parents are frequently derived to the Children:

Children: *That the General Depravity and Propensions are always transmitted, so that the Depravity of our Nature might serve for a Distinction of our Species; For this we may produce the Testimony of Eliphaz in the XV. Chap. of Job, v. 14. What is Man that he should be clean, or he, which is born of a Woman, that he should be righteous? and of Bildad from the XXV. 4. How then can Man be justified with God, or how can he be clean, that is born of a Woman? to which we may add that Question of Job himself, Chap. XIV. 4. Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? and the Answer is, not one. For the History therefore we will refer to several Passages of the Scripture, for the Philosophy to Job and his Friends, which are as good Authoritys, as Aristotle, Averroes, and Avicenna, and for Experience to all the World, except these singular People: however at last this Effect of Adam's Sin for Arguments sake is supposed.*

Supposing then that Adam's Sin had such an Effect upon all his Posterity, but still with great Consistency denying, that it had any upon Himself, they proceed to argue by this Disjunctive, and Dilemma. The Weakness we are fallen under by Adam's Transgression either doth not render us incapable of Knowing and doing our Duty without further Assistance, or it doth. If it doth not, then Reason alone is sufficient, if it doth then it is said as aforesaid, GOD is unjust, and all is wrong, and if Reason is not, yet it ought to be a sufficient Guide in Religion. O doubtless ye are the Men, and Wisdom shall die with you!

"Surely,"

"Surely," say they, "Man ought in Justice and Equity to have fair play for his Life or rather for his Soul." Yes surely. "GOD hath no Interest to serve by the Miseries of his Creatures:" no certainly. He hath no pleasure in the Death of him that dieth, and desireth not the Death of a Sinner, "He is much more concerned to secure their Happiness to them, than they are to secure it to themselves," (that is, He taketh more Care, not, that He is under a greater Obligation) If this be their meaning, so far we are agreed, and I add, that agreeably hereunto, whatever Defects Man lieth under, GOD hath proposed and provided supplies for them; if the Constitution of things is wrong, as it is reiterately charged, we say, GOD hath not made this wrong Constitution. This is the Effect of Sin alone, the miserable Condition, we are fallen into, and we may as well charge it upon GOD, that we are Sinners, as charge it upon his Justice, that we are not more perfect than we are. "If Reason be not a sufficient Guide," say they, "it ought to be. If Sin endangereth the whole Species, if that Propensity and strong Inclination to Evil, with which we are born, and which cleaveth so close to our Constitution, be almost unavoidable, and by our meer strength alone Insuperable," why then by Parity of Reason after their way, GOD ought not so to constitute things, as thus to endanger such Multitudes of Men. But He did not, and doth not constitute Things thus. These are the necessary Effects and Consequences of Sin; Let them prove then if they can, that God ought to have made Man incapable of Sinning, or to have

have prevented him from it, or that He is Obliged (according to their Dialect) to deliver Man from these Defects, and to reinstate Him in the Perfection of his first Creation, if they believe, he was so created, or however to mend our Constitution, and make it, as it were, over again. This last we say, GOD hath done, and continueth to do by his Grace in Christ Jesus, tho' we do not say, He is obliged to do so.

After all this cometh a Concession, which, were it not presently recalled, seemeth to clear up all these Difficultys, and to vindicate the Justice of GOD in the Condemnation of Sinners. "For if any "one neglects, or abuses any Capacity or Power, "he is invested with, or bringeth any Disadvantage, or Difficulty, or Danger upon himself, "which it was in his Power to have prevented, "All this is chargable upon himself;" And therefore I say, if Men are capable of committing any Voluntary Sin, they are concluded by this Rule; and by our Natural State we are in a most miserable Condition. If it be the Opinion of these People that Men sin by the Necessity of their Constitution, as it seemeth to be, then indeed all this Concession is revoked, and all those Difficultys, Disadvantages and Dangers, which arise from the Constitution of Things, and could not possibly be avoided, (which, say they, is the present Case) are only chargable, as they affirm, upon the Author of that Constitution; and so to justify themselves they go on to Blaspheme their Maker.

Concerning Divine Revelation, given to supply the Defects of our Reason, I shall speak, when the Expediency and Necessity of it come

to be considered: at present I shall only observe, first, that according to these Writers, Men are made as perfect, as they need be, or the Defects are charged upon their Creator, and GOD is impeached as the Author of Sin, so that they are either justly condemned for the Abuse of their Reason, or they cannot be justly condemned at all for any Defects in their Reason, or Constitution. Secondly, This Blasphemy is a Natural Consequence of making GOD Subject to Law, and under an Obligation to act according to the Reason, and Fitness of Things. GOD must do This, and GOD must do That, and from thence we have that decent Language, that GOD is Obligated to Do so, and so: that if Things are Not so, they ought to be so, and then upon a supposition, that Things are not, as they should be, there followeth a most hideous Charge of Blasphemy and Outrage upon GOD Himself: and He is defamed as Unjust and Unequal in his Dealings with Mankind. Which brings to my Mind the Serpent's Reasonings with Eve.

**GOD therefore cannot hurt you, and be Just ;
Not Just, not GOD ; &c. Par. lost. B. IX.**

and of the same kind is his Logic in all the rest of his Speeches.

I have not quoted the Sentences at large, for there is no end of repetition, but I have given their Argument its full Force, and from this View it may appear, that in all that solemnity and shew of close Reasoning there is Nothing but the same thing over again : The Premises are Magisterial Assertions, and the Conclusion is Blasphemy.

As

As to the real sufficiency of Reason, if we leave Supposition, and found the Determination of the Question upon Fact, the Issue will be very short; and then we must refer to the State and Condition of the World under the Conduct of Natural Light alone, both for the Knowledge and Practice of the Law of Nature.

When it is said, that Reason or the Light of Nature is sufficient, we must understand, either, that every Man hath a sufficient Degree of it for his own Conduct, or else, that he must be guided by the Light and Direction of others. To give therefore the utmost Advantage in this Argument, by the Light of Nature we will understand the highest Degrees of it in the most illuminated Minds, and then for the Decision of the Point we must have recourse to the best Writers upon the Religion and Law of Nature, which the Heathen World hath produced: and here without taking Exception, as might be done, to any sparks of Knowledge, which might have risen from some imperfect Traditionary Revelation, it is the more observable that the Light of Nature even so assisted, was not clear enough to give Men a full and complete a View of the Law of Nature in all the several Dutys, and Branches of it: Notwithstanding therefore the Pretences of some great Patrons of Natural Religion to produce a perfect Scheme of Morality from the Greek and Roman Philosophers, we may venture to pronounce that the Scheme will be imperfect, tho' we should allow them to take in Those, who have lived since the Gospel with those, who lived Before. In the mean time it may be very proper for these Gentle-
men

men to shew that the Heathen World in the several Ages and Nations of it was possessed at once of so perfect a System; and it may be no less Entertaining to shew what an Excellent Guide the Light of Nature is, and hath been throughout all Ages and Nations both before and since the Publication of the Gospel, and they may take a View of it, if they please, from the Cape of Good Hope thro' both the Indies, and survey its Native Beauty and Perfection from the Polite Hottentot to the Politer Tartar, and Chinese.

The Ancient Sects of the Sabians, and Magians do bear an Evident Affinity to the old Patriarchal Religion: the Magian Theology, as refined by Zoroastres carrieth a Visible Allusion to the Scriptures, and the great Impostor himself pretended to an Immediate Revelation.

The Sabians were the Fathers of Celestial Idolatry in Worshipping the Sun, and the Moon, and the Stars, as so many Divinitys enshrined, and dwelling in their respective Orbs: But afterwards they made Images of them also. Whether the Magians were really Idolaters, that is whether they really Worshipped the Sun, and the Sacred Fires, may possibly bear some good Disputation; For they seem to have looked upon the Sun, as the Temple of GOD, in which He dwelt, and as a symbol and manifestation of his Presence: So likewise upon their Fires as symbols also; But this is certain, their Theology at first was a Corrupted Tradition of Noah's Religion, and the Refinements of Zoroastres are evidently drawn from the History and Theology of Moses disguised and dressed up in another Form. But were his Theology ne-

ver so unexceptionable in other respects, still the avowed Allowance of the grossest Incest is so flagrant a Corruption in his Moral Scheme, as undeniably evinceth the great Darkeness, and Corruption of their Minds, who did not discern and abhor so abominable a Practice.

Ancient as the Sabians were the Descendants of Ham thro' the Branches of Cush, Mizraim, and Canaan, and they may be accounted the Founders of Terrestrial Idolatry in first Deifying Men, to which they (the Egyptians especially) added the Worship of Beasts also. And since Idolatry is thus the Universal Charge upon the Heathen World, It is alone an invincible Proof of the Insufficiency of the Light of Nature and the Reason of Mankind in the Conduct of Religion; and we may observe, how the Light of Nature grew more and more obscured by the Neglect and Abuses of it, till in some Parts of the World, it was sunk and almost stifled in Ignorance and Error.

But passing over the Heathen World where the Theology of Moses was not known, or if known to some Sages, disguised and dissembled under other Colours, let us look into the State of Natural Religion, not only since the Appearance of the Gospel, but even in those Ages and Nations, where the Gospel hath shined in the greatest Purity and Lustre, and then the Question is how far the Light of Nature is sufficient in Contradistinction and Opposition to the Light of Revelation.

It is most justly and unanswerably observed, that the Differences among the Old Philosophers in the great Questions of Morality and Natural
Reli-

Religion are so many Arguments, that the Light of Nature in them was not sufficient, and the learned Disputes, which are now held among us even under the Light of the Gospel concerning the Foundation, and Obligation, and the very Principles of Morality, show, that the most Excellent Writers have not yet arrived at such certain Conclusions, as the Patrons of the Independent Scheme will acquiesce in; while on the other hand those strenuous Advocates for the sole sufficiency of Reason have given the World such admirable Specimens of its Perfection!

But after all, if these zealous Assertors of the sufficiency of Reason in this its weak and depraved Condition will but admit of one plain and easy Distinction I hope this Controversy may be composed, and all Differences between us settled to our Mutual Satisfaction: The Distinction occur-
reth several Times in the following Discourses, and it is This. There is a great Difference between being able Originally and by our selves alone to Investigate and discover the great Truths of Natural Religion, and the Discerning and assenting to them, when discovered. Reason therefore is sufficient in one sense, and insufficient in another. Left to itself in this its weak and depraved Condition Reason alone hath not been able to recover Men from Superstition and Idolatry, nor to produce one Uniform and perfect Scheme of Morality; Nor in any parts of the Heathen World do we find it sufficient unto this day. But assisted and instructed by those, who know the Truth, Reason is capable of apprehending it, and as fast, as it discerneth it, it assenteth unto it.

That the Light of Nature then is sufficient with proper Helps we do readily allow: Abstractedly considered both the Light and the Law of Nature are perfect: The imperfection, which appeareth in Both, is owing to the Imperfection and Depravity of Man. The Light of Nature is capable of continual Improvement or Diminution, and if it be impaired by Sin, and overclouded with Error, still as long as GOD affordeth Means of Instruction, if any refuse the Assistance, that is offered, the Goodness of GOD is absolved, and the Fault lieth wholly upon themselves.

All, who own a Revelation will surely receive Natural Religion as taught and included in that Revelation, and they, who disown a Revelation, may do well to consider, whether the Scripture Morality be the Dictate of meer Natural Reason, or the Teachings of GOD Himself? If the former, they are obliged to receive the Religion of Nature as therein delineated: if the latter they are not the less obliged to receive it: for whatever dispute there may be about the Revelation, there can be none about the Doctrine. From these Considerations of the Light and the Law of Nature, especially from the Insufficiency of the Light alone, and the Condition of Mankind ever since the Transgression of our first Parents, or, to avoid all Cavil, ever since Men Universally became Sinners, I pass now

II. *To the Expediency and Necessity of Revelation.*

The Consideration of the Necessity may seem indeed to supersede that of the Expediency. For
what

what is Necessary is Expedient, tho' what is Expedient is not therefore Necessary: However since this way of speaking hath obtained, I shall take them Both in order, and before I proceed to either, I will first in few Words explain what is meant by Expediency and what by Necessity, as one may be compared with, and distinguished from the other.

By Expediency we commonly understand some Convenience and Advantage for the readier Dispatch, and the surer Success of our Affairs; or else we mean by it a proper Behaviour in any particular Juncture, and special Circumstances of Things. In the first sense our Blessed Lord telleth his Disciples John XVI. 7. It is expedient for you that I go away &c. In the other sense St Paul writeth to the Corinthians, All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient.

By Necessity we understand such a Situation and Posture of Affairs, as requireth certain peculiar Means for the Redress and Conduct of them; and when we speak of the Necessity of Revelation, our Meaning is, that Man being in a state of Guilt and Condemnation could not receive Assurance of Pardon and Salvation any other way. By the Light of Nature alone Men could not discover the Terms of Pardon and Acceptance, and therefore so far as they are necessary to be known there is a Necessity of some Revelation to declare them.

This then is the Difference between Expediency and Necessity: Necessity is Absolute, Expediency is comparatively preferable to any other Means: the Expediency of Revelation therefore will appear, as it is the best and readiest Help

for the Defects of our Natural Powers: the Necessity of it will appear from the Condition, we are in by reason of Sin: It is expedient with respect to the Dutys of Natural Religion: It is Necessary with regard to our Eternal Salvation: It is expedient, as it teacheth us the Way of GOD more perfectly: It is Necessary, as it openeth unto us the Gate of Everlasting Life.

1. First for the Expediency of Revelation, which I shall briefly propose in these three Instances.

1. As it teacheth the way of GOD more perfectly and plainly.

2. As it layeth Morality on a right Foundation.

3. As it furnisheth proper Motives and Enforcements of Practice.

1. Revelation is Expedient as it teacheth the way of GOD more perfectly, and plainly.

It is not needful to enter upon a Comparison of the Ancient Philosophers with the Scriptures. For how clear soever their Expressions may be, yet their Systems being formed upon imperfect Models according to the several Schools, they followed, must needs be defective, and obscure, compared with the Uniform Agreement and Perspicuity of the Sacred Writings: In their best Systems Virtue is placed between two imaginary Extreams, and measured by a sort of Mathematical Equation; where its approaches to either, leave it in too pendulous and doubtful a Condition; and and the Definitions, however just, are some of them both dark and jejune. That part of Nature!

ral Religion which relateth to GOD is almost omitted, and that part which relateth to a Man's self and his Neighbour is in some Instances incomplete and Erroneous, But the Scriptures are Absolute both in Fulness of Matter, and clearness of Expression: Whatever Beautys may be admired in the Ancients, there is a Simplicity and Majesty in the Scriptures, which deliver the great Dutys of Religion and Morality with an Equal Plainness and Solemnity. The Decalogue alone compriseth more, than Volumes of the Heathen Moralists, and the Sermon on the Mount far surpasseth the noblest and most exalted strains of the Greek and Roman Writers, and if all other Writings were lost, there would be no Lack of them, so long, as the Scripture remaineth, that most precious Treasure and Eternal Fountain of Light and Wisdom, and Truth. The Precepts of the Moralists regulated the outward Actions only, but the Word of GOD reacheth unto the Thoughts and Intents of the Heart; One forbiddeth the Commission of Sin, the Other the first Motions and Inclinations towards it.

It is objected indeed that the Scriptures are obscure in some points of Natural Religion, but it is objected to those parts especially, which advance Morality to an Height and Purity, which the meer Natural Man cannot attain, and therefore the Precepts are not only excepted to as obscure, but they are exploded also as Unreasonable, and impracticable; The Forgiveness of Injurys, the Loving our Enemys, the Doing good to them, that hate us are strange Doctrines to Flesh and Blood. Nothing sheweth the Weakness and Depravity of

our Nature more than the Purity and Perfection of our Rule: It argueth a great Firmness and Strength of Mind to forgive, and to Do good to the Unthankful giveth a Godlike kind of Superiority. The Heathen Writers could observe, that Revenge betrayeth a weak and impotent Mind; the weakest Understandings are subject to the strongest Passions, and the Prevalence of this Passion in the weaker Sex sheweth that it proceedeth from a Poorness and Infirmity of Soul. There is a Necessity of maintaining the Lives and Propertys of Men, and what is dearer to brave and generous Natures their Libertys and their Fame, by a steady and impartial Distribution of Justice and Judgment; But if Men were more Peaceable, and willing to part with their Cloakes, tho' not with their Estates, and to bear with smaller Injurys rather than retort them, there would not, I presume any very ill Consequences follow from cherishing a Spirit of Meekness, Charity and Forgiveness: These Precepts are liable to no Mistakes but those of Hypocrisy and Superstition, and it is the Perverseness of Men, not any Obscurity in the Injunctions, which createth any Difficulty either in the Understanding them, or Obeying them.

2. *Revelation is expedient as it layeth Morality upon a right Foundation.*

The Ancient Moralists among the Greeks, founded their Morality upon the χρησιμον, the ευχρηστον, the ωφέλιμον, the συμφέρον, the αἰρετόν, the ἡδὺ, and the πρέπον, and καλόν, and upon the ἀγαθόν and the δίκαιον, all which Tully happily compriseth under the Utile and Honestum, to which we may
add

add from others, the Bona the Jucunda and Idonea. Their Practice they distinguished into the κατόρθωμα by which they signified the most perfect and Heroic Exercise of Virtue, and the καθήκον, by which they understood the common and lower Dutys of it. The one alluding to an Absolute Rectitude, the other to a suitable Fitness and Convenience of Things. They differed in their Notions according to their several Sects, and in the Variety of Opinions we find them discoursing on Benevolence of Mind, and Beneficence of Action, upon the Beauty of Virtue and a Moral sense of Turpitude and Honour, which cometh to the same thing with the πρέπον and Honestum. In these Notions they are followed by several Modern Writers, who do found Morality on the Truth and Reason and Fitness of Things, which answer to the Terms above mentioned, and take in the Utile as well as the Honestum, if they understand by the Fitness of things any Application of them to an End; otherwise they mean nothing at all, and an independent absolute Fitness is, as we have seen, an unintelligible, and insignificant Term.

I will only add, that to place Morality in the Reason and Fitness of things without regard to any Law, and without respect to any End, is to lay it upon a Foundation, that will bear no Weight, or rather upon no Foundation at all, For the Reason and Fitness of things thus abstractedly understood are but other Words for Morality, and when we talk of the Foundation of Morality, it is absurd to say, It is founded on it self.

Those also among the Moderns, who found Morality upon self Love, or Benevolence, or more truly upon Both, do found it likewise upon a precarious Bottom. These are Both of them rather Principles of Action, than any Rule or Measure of Duty, and their Operative Force dependeth very much on the Passions and Affections, or rather upon Temper and Constitution.

Self Love not sweetned by Benevolence is rather a Base and Pernicious, than a Generous and Virtuous Principle, and Benevolence not tempered with self Love is an Indication of a Weak and improvident Mind: But supposing them duely regulated and equally poised, so as not to preponderate Either against the Other, then indeed, during the fair Season, and Prosperity of Virtue, they will amicably cooperate together, and incline Men not only to be Just, but excite them also to many generous and good-natured Actions; But when Storms arise, and they find themselves exposed to Misery and Ruin, the Principle of self Love is most likely to prevail, and the Charms of Virtue will prove too Weak, when thus they see her in distress.

Add to these therefore all the Beautys of Virtue presented by the finest and most exalted sense of Morality, its intrinsic Excellence and Perfection: the Delight it bringeth to a good Mind in Speculation, heightened and improved ten thousand times by Practice: These also, tho' joyned by the others, we shall find too weak to bear the Weight of Misery and Destruction in the Cause: It requireth an eminent Degree of Fortitude to forgoe the Ease and Affluence and the Pleasures of Life,

Life, a much greater to exchange them for Poverty and Distress; When they are sore pressed, Men will think it one step to Happiness to be removed from Misery, and when they come to ponder the Moments of Happiness against the Scale of Misery, if Virtue hath no Basis but herself to rest on, the Weight of Calamity will oppress her, and either Virtue or Life will be forsaken, when thus miserably she becomes her own Reward.

I will advance one step further and assert, that they, who propose Temporal Happiness as the End of Moral Virtue must also fail, not only because of the different Judgments of Mankind concerning it, and of the Uncertainty of all Temporal Felicity, but for this never failing Reason, because supposing Happiness to rise in proportion to Virtue, Human Virtue can never be so perfect, as to secure any great and lasting Degrees of Happiness, For if Happiness riseth in proportion to Virtue, every Degree of Vice is an Abatement of it, and therefore considering, how the best Natures are tinged and alloyed with Evil we cannot upon this ground promise any sincere Happiness to the Practice of a mixed and irregular Virtue.

Happiness, however it may be mistaken, is the End of all Rational Agents, and it is a firm and immoveable Principle, that Men cannot (even for the sake of Virtue it self) be obliged to expose themselves to Misery without the Promise, and Prospect of an Abundant Compensation. The great Principle of Self Love, which may at other times excite to Virtue, and carry us out to Acts of Friendship and Benevolence, will in great Pressures, and Extremitys call us home from the Assistance

sistance of others to take Care of, and Defend our selves.

I conclude therefore that neither the Reason and Fitness of Things, nor the Pleasures of Benevolence, nor the Beauty of Virtue, nor the purest Moral sense will of themselves, or separately or conjoyned be able to confirm the Mind of Man against Misery, Danger and Death without the Hopes of greater Happiness to succeed.

But after all the vain Efforts of Reason left to herself alone, or acting independently on Revelation, Revelation at last cometh into her Relief, and layeth Morality on a right Foundation: It fixeth and proposeth the Rewards of Virtue, and expressly teacheth, what indeed we might infer from its Conformity to our Nature, that the Dutys of it are the Will and Commands of GOD in order to our Happiness. "For this is the Will of GOD, even your Sanctification," which implieth both Holiness here, and perfect Holiness crowned with Happiness hereafter.

This leadeth to the third Argument for the Expediency of Revelation, and that is Revelation is expedient.

3. *As it furnisheth proper Motives and Enforcements of Practice.*

The great Motives of Action are drawn from the Nature and Certainty of their Consequences, and these Consequences are drawn: The Nature of them from the Relation Man beareth unto GOD, and the Rank, he holdeth in the intelligent Creation: The Certainty of them from the Word and Declaration of GOD Himself.

I pass

I pass over the imperfect Knowledge the Heathen had of a Future State, and shall only observe, that altho' they were involved in great Darkeness and Superstition, yet even their Superstition prevailed more, than the Precepts of their Philosophers, or the Rigor of their Laws, to keep them under some Regard to Virtue; For their Superstitions, however vain and idle, as infused by the Songs of their Poets, and dressed up in the Rites of their Religion, were nevertheless raised from a true Foundation, for they are no other, than the Tradition of some ancient Doctrines varied and obscured by the Fables, and Mythology of the several Nations, thro' which it was derived.

But to give any Motives whatever their due Influence, they must be clear and Evident. Opinions will never operate with any equable Force and Uniformity, and we may see, how strong the Motives must be to have any general Effect, when we find that all the Motives offered in the Gospel are not in Fact sufficient to engage Men in their Duty, altho', like the Evidences of the Gospel, they are abundantly sufficient in their own Nature, and will therefore equally subject the Disobedient and Unbelievers unto the greater Condemnation.

The Motives and Enforcements which the Gospel furnisheth are beyond all Comparison greater and stronger, than Reason and Philosophy, or even the more Ancient Revelations from the Beginning of the World unto Christ had ever offered to Mankind. For He alone hath proposed them in the fullest and most convincing manner, as He alone hath brought Life and Immortality to Light thro' the Gospel.

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But besides the Motives and Enforcements drawn from another World in a full display of Man's future State, we have moreover many others from the Authority, the Love, and Condescension of our Redeemer: His Authority, as a Teacher sent from GOD: His infinite Love and Condescension in taking our Nature, the Form of a Servant upon Him, and Humbling Himself even unto the Death of the Cross for our Salvation: All these, even all that He hath done and suffered for us, call up all the Powers and Energy, the Love and Gratitude of our Souls, and inspire us with the warmest and sublimest Sentiments of Humility, Holiness and Charity, so that we may truly say, the great Articles of our Faith are the surest and most Efficacious Principles of our Practice.

From this Consideration of the Expediency I pass now in the last place to

2. The Necessity of Revelation.

It is and hath been the Inadvertency of some well meaning People to argue the Necessity of Revelation in too General and Absolute Terms, as if it were necessary on GOD's part, that He should make a Revelation of his Will in the great Question of Pardon and Salvation. If this be simply held without stating the Question, and carefully distinguishing in what sense and how far this Necessity is to be asserted, we may involve ourselves in great and inextricable Difficultys from certain Consequences, which we can neither clear nor deny, with regard to the State and Condition of Man ever since the Fall, But upon a true State and Explanation of the Point we shall be able to answer
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the Clamour of those bold Blasphemers, who fear not to prescribe Laws to their Maker, and to charge Him with Partiality and Injustice to his Creatures.

We must distinguish therefore between a Necessity of Revelation on GOD's part, and in what sense He may be thought under any Obligation to give it, and the Necessity of a Revelation on Man's part, and the strict Obligation, he is under, to receive it.

For the Necessity on GOD's part, it is not simply and in itself necessary, that GOD should give us such a Revelation, as He hath vouchsafed us, it not being necessary that He should give us any Revelation at all, any more, than it was necessary, that GOD should receive us to Pardon after we have Transgressed: For GOD had given Man a Law and Covenant at his first Creation, and upon the Breach of that Covenant he had nothing to plead in Bar of Judgment; That GOD was pleased to remit the severest part of the Sentence, and receive Mankind to Favour is an Act of his free Grace and Mercy, and therefore this Revelation is, on GOD's part, an Act of Free Grace and Mercy also. Since then it is absolutely of GOD's Free Grace that we are saved, the Revelation on his part is only necessary as the Pardon could not be offered, nor the Terms proposed any other way. See Serm. III. p. 96.

I pass now to consider the Necessity of a Revelation on Man's part, and this will appear from the State and Condition he was in upon his Transgression: This was a State of Guilt and Condemnation, out of which he was not able to deliver him-

himself, and therefore could only be delivered by that Authority, against which he had offended. Transgression of the Law is Sin, and the Wages of Sin is Death: a Fatal Sentence, which must be executed, or remitted: if remitted, it must be remitted Simply, or upon Terms: But that it will be remitted at all Man cannot say, much less that it will be remitted simply without any Conditions, nor upon what Conditions could he discover, and therefore it is in GOD alone to declare upon what Terms He will pardon. It is said that GOD will pardon Sinners upon Repentance, which is true indeed, as Repentance is founded upon Scripture Terms: Otherwise Repentance is a wide and uncertain Word, and supposing no other Reparation required, we cannot presume that any Repentance is sufficient, which falleth short of a thorow Reformation of Life, and Purification of Mind. It is therefore utterly inconsistent with repeated Transgressions, whether we relapse into Old Sins, or fall into New. I have not room to argue the Case at length; but these Positions, I think, are clear. That it is impossible for us to restore our selves to GOD's Favour, unless we could restore our selves to our Innocence and Integrity. The Imputation of Guilt must be removed, or Man cannot be delivered. The Law exacteth an entire Obedience, and he, that offendeth in one Point is guilty of all. And therefore some Interposition, some Remedy, some Means are Necessary to release him both from the Guilt and Punishment of Sin. What these are, it is not possible for Man to determine. It is therefore in GOD alone to declare his gracious Pardon, and the Terms, upon
which

which He will extend it. This we say, GOD hath been pleased to declare by such an exprefs Revelation, as is highly conformable to his Wisdom, Justice and Mercy, and giveth Men the fullest Assurance of Pardon, and Acceptance at his Hands.

This, with what I have delivered upon this Subject in the following Sheets, may be sufficient to represent the great Necessity of Revelation, to assure Men upon what Terms and Conditions GOD is graciously pleased to admit them to Pardon, and to advance them to Eternal Happiness, and Glory.

It only remaineth now, that I make some Return to those rude and noisy Objections, which I find advanced of late by a strange sort of a Concurrence in the Writings of those, who admit as well as of those, who deny a Revelation. The Objections for the Substance of them are such as these. Why the Revelation was not made Complete and Entire, as it now standeth, from the Beginning? Why as it was given in several parts and portions from Abraham to CHRIST it was not Then, and hath not been Since, and is not Now Universal? And why where it is published it is not Effectual?

To these I shall give a general answer very briefly in Point of Equity, and in Point of Reason, and a more special One in Point of Fact.

1. *In Point of Equity, as it was an Act of Free Grace in GOD to give any Revelation at all, the manner of giving it is entirely at his good Pleasure, both as to the Time and Extent of the Dispensation: That GOD pardoned Adam for the*
Breach

Breach of his Original Covenant in the same Capacity, in which he sinned, as the Father and Representative of Mankind, and admitted him into a new Covenant in the same Publick Character, which consequently included his Posterity; so that as they were liable to the Consequences of his Guilt and Corruption, they were also admitted to Grace and Pardon, while they were in their Father's Loins: That the Promise of Pardon thus given was sufficient for all, who accepted it, and looked for Salvation on the Terms then proposed: That the Sacrifice of Christ was as Effectual, as if it had been immediately offered, in regard of which and the determinate Counsel of GOD, He may be truly called, The Lamb slain from the Foundation of the World: That if Men, when they were graciously restored, sinned yet again, and estranged themselves from GOD, and fell into all manner of Wickedness, It is just in GOD to give them up to the Vileness and Corruption of their own depraved Nature: They are in the Condition of Rebels, who have been pardoned, and do yet rebel again, and it is not to be expected, that GOD should renew his Revelations, as often as Men shall despise and reject them.

2. *In point of Reason, why the Revelation was not made all at once and compleated from the Beginning? Besides the Impropriety of the Objection, as if we were to direct the Counsel and Actions of the Almighty, I answer, It was impossible in the Course and Nature of the thing itself. For at that time the Revelation consisting of a Promise, that the Seed of the Woman should Bruise the Serpent's head, the Woman*

as yet had not conceived, nor was there a Posterity, to whom the Revelation should be made, nor indeed could it be made till several Ages had passed and the Fulness of Time appointed for it was come: It was highly reasonable and also necessary, that the promised Seed should be pointed out and ascertained that He might be surely known, and distinguished, when He should come; and for that Reason as well as to preserve the true Religion Abraham was called, and his Posterity chosen, and it was gradually revealed that this promised Seed should be of Abraham thro' Isaac and Jacob: of the Tribe of Judah, and of the Lineage of David: To this purpose there preceeded a long Train of Prophecys so very particular and circumstantial, setting forth, besides his Family, the Time and Place of his Birth, the Time and Manner also of his Death, that these Prophecys could not be answered, nor the Revelation made in any other Age or Period of the World. It may as well be demanded, why our Blessed Saviour appeared so soon, as why He appeared no sooner, and why He appeareth not to every Age and in every Nation, as why He appeared only once in a small Corner of the World? However we may return an Answer by applying the Words of St Paul, where he teacheth the true purpose of Christ's entring into Heaven it self, now to appear in the presence of God for us. Not that He should offer Himself often, as the High Priest entreth every Year into the Holy Place with the Blood of others (For then must He often have suffered since the Foundation of the World) but Now once in the End of the World,

hath He appeared to put away Sin by the Sacrifice of Himself. Hebr. IX. 24, 25, 26.

3. *In Point of Fact I shall answer more specially, as the Objection is made against Revelation, because it is not Universal.*

It seemeth to be the Opinion of one Objector, to whom I paid my Regards some few pages since, that Revelation is not Necessary, because Reason is, or ought to be sufficient; otherwise the Original Constitution of Things must have been very Defective. To which I have answered already, and therefore shall only add, that Revelation is not only Necessary to supply the Defects, and correct the Errors of Reason, for in that sense we say rather, that it is Expedient; but it is Necessary, to declare GOD's general Pardon, and to mark out the way to Salvation. It is but one part of Revelation to give us a more perfect Rule of Life, and for this our Adversarys do loudly contend, that it is not necessary, because Reason is or ought to be Sufficient; It is another part of Revelation to acquaint us upon what Terms we shall be accepted in a right Practice and Application of the Rule; and Revelation in this sense is strictly Necessary,

*But if it be Necessary in any sense, then it is objected, It ought to have been and to be at all times Universal, "Otherwise numberless Millions
"of People would have been very unequal and
"unkindly dealt by, because they have been de-
"stitute of such a Divine Revelation, as would
"have supplied the Defects, which arise from the
"Original Constitution of things." He should
have said from Sin, for as I have observed before,
there*

there is no Defect in the Original Constitution of Things ; and upon this Fallacy of assigning a wrong Cause all this mighty Show of Argumentation doth turn.

In another Piece, to which I have likewise paid my Regards, the Objection is formed upon this Nice Calculation ; “If Reason be not a sufficient Guide in Matters of Religion, then five parts of six of Mankind at this present time have no sufficient Guide at all, and for four thousand Years together nine hundred ninety nine parts of a thousand had no sufficient Guide to direct them to their Duty,” or, as it is more justly expressed a few lines after, “to teach them the way, by which we may be accepted by GOD.

If Reason then is not a sufficient Guide, the Charge of the Defect is by both these Objectors reflected upon GOD, both as Reason is Insufficient, and Revelation is not Universal.

In what respects Reason is not sufficient thro’ its great Depravity to direct and contain us in our Duty, and because of its natural Limitations that it is not sufficient to teach us the way, how we may be accepted of GOD, I have discoursed already : Upon the one I have argued for the Expediency, upon the other for the Necessity of Revelation.

But as to the Fact we say, that Revelation, so far as it immediately concerned all Mankind, was Universal, and that it did not continue so, that in any Age and Nation it was lost or defaced, and was not preserved in its Original Truth and Simplicity, this is owing to the Degeneracy and Cor-

ruption of Mankind; the want of it therefore is only chargeable upon themselves, and so we shall find this exact Computation both of Time and Numbers to be wrong: It was Universal from Adam to Noah, and from Noah to Abraham; From Abraham to Moſes GOD was not wanting to Mankind, and we may trace the Remains at least of that Primitive Religion thro' several great Extents over all the then known Habitable World, of which sufficient Proof might be given by an Enumeration, and Induction of particulars; but for this I shall refer to the most instructive and entertaining Travels of Cyrus, which may be read with equal Pleasure and Improvement, as they have been presented to the World by an excellent Hand in the Spirit and Manner of the great Fennelon: and more especially I would refer to the two Discourses of the Theology and Mythology of the Ancients at the End. It is true, there is great Variety in the manner of Tradition, but it is true also, that in the main Points there is as great a Consent: The Consent is an Evidence of an Original Revelation, the Variety is an Evidence of the Fallibility and Deviation of Human Reason in Subjects of Divine Revelation: and Both of them give great Evidence to the Scriptures, that they contain the Original Revelation, forasmuch as in them alone all their Errors are corrected, and all their Difficultys are cleared, and in the Gospel their Mighty Prince is fully revealed: The great Mediator: the Light and Saviour of the World!

There still remaineth another Question upon this point, and that is, why the Gospel-Revelation

tion Now it is made, hath not been, and is not yet *Universal*?

To this the Answer is, that we are not obliged to account for the Ways and Dispensations of Almighty GOD; But the same Answer, which satisfieth the Question, why it was not Earlier, will suffice also in this other, why it is not Now Universal, so far, I mean, as to vindicate the Justice of GOD, not to give the Reason of his Proceedings. For if his Justice is absolved in deferring it to the Whole World for so many Ages, it is equally absolved in deferring it still longer to any part of the World; and as none ever perished before the Gospel, but by their own Default, none shall ever perish for want of this Revelation, but by their own Default: That as Multitudes rejected it, when it was first offered to the World, and as it is lost in many Nations, which did once enjoy the Light of the Gospel, the Charge reverteth upon the Infidelity and Wickedness of Man; we may truly say, that the Gospel was so widely spread by the first Preachers of it, that their Sound went out into all the Earth; and their Words unto the Ends of the World. But the Complaint is just, which is made in the Words of Esaias, Lord, who hath believed our Report? GOD knoweth his own Times; the Gospel might possibly have been rejected by those Nations, to which it hath not been offered, and will also be accepted by them, when it shall be rejected by us, and GOD shall have removed our Candlestick also. GOD forced it not upon the World, and they who could resist the Evidence, with which it was introduced, would resist any
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Evidence, that is fit to be offered to a reasonable Creature; and then the Question of these Objectors ought to be, Why was not the Evidence stronger, not why the Revelation is not Universal? Since the Evidence was rejected both by Jew and Gentile, and since it is now rejected by these Objectors themselves!

One Point more remaineth, Why the Revelation, where it is received is not Effectual? As to the Revelation its not being Effectual, that is owing to the same Reason with its not being Universal, namely to the great Depravity and Corruption of Human Nature, and it may as well be asked, why Free Agents are not driven and compelled into their Duty, as why all Men, to whom a Revelation hath been offered, do not receive it, and why those, who do receive it, do not obey it: But these Objections are vain, till they can prove, as in the former Case, that GOD is obliged (according to their Dialect) to offer irresistible Evidence to Moral Agents, and to cause the Gospel to be Universally received, as well as Universally published, and when Universally received, that it be also Universally obeyed, and further, that the Grace to obey it be as irresistible, as the Evidence to prove it. GOD hath graciously done his part towards us, let us seriously consider what we ought to do.

Surely it is very weak to argue, that because Reason is not Effectual, therefore Revelation not being Effectual is also insufficient; for whether Revelation be Effectual or no, It is a great Help and Assistance to Reason, and when Reason still faileth, tho' assisted by Revelation, this is an irrefragable

refragable Argument of the Insufficiency of Reason, but none, that Revelation is insufficient for the Conduct and Conviction of a Rational Creature. Revelation has effected these two things, which Reason in its present state could not of itself perform. It hath given us a more perfect Law by improving Moral Dutys into Evangelical Graces; and it hath afforded the strongest Motives that can be offered to a reasonable Nature: In these Respects we say it is sufficient, and those will be obnoxious to the greater Condemnation, with whom it is not Effectual.

I will only add, that as one Objector acknowledgeth Revelation to be useful for curing Men of Superstition, and bringing them to Reason, let him say in his turn, why Revelation; so far as it is conducive to so excellent an End, is not, and hath not been Universal in all Ages, and why it is not now extended to those Barbarous and Ignorant Nations, who may be truly said to lie in Darkness and in the Shadow of Death.

In the Prosecution of this Work I have differed from the sentiments of two very Great and Extraordinary Men, but in Points so clear, that I trust, I shall be acquitted of all Pride and Petulance. Great Men love to have their peculiar Notions, and Singularitys, and it cannot be expected that the World should subscribe implicitly to their Opinions. Mr Locke I have long thought to have been mistaken in some Points of Philosophy: and the incomparable Sir Isaac Newton happens demonstrably to be so in the Egyptian Chronology. With Respect to Mr Locke I have the Concurrence of a very great and Con-

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summate Author; and I esteem it an Honour to agree with Him, wherever we treat of the same Subject. And to the Authoritys I have produced with regard to Sir Isaac Newton, I may add that of Mr Shuckford, which I had not seen Time enough to refer to it before.

No one will ever make himself considerable meerly by Cavilling at, and Contradicting the greatest and most excellent Authors; But it is the true Freedom of Thinking not to chain our selves to their Opinions, and as the Sacred Writers fall under the Liberty of Thought, as much as any other, it can be no Arrogance to dissent from the greatest Names, and in all Points of Difference I shall not think it any Partiality to show as great a Regard to the Writings of a Prophet, or an Apostle, as to those of a Wit, or a Philosopher.

This Preface being drawn into a much greater Length then I intended, I must omit some other particulars relating to the following Discourses, and so without saying any more I leave them to the Judgment and Candour of the Reader.



A N
I N D E X
O F T H E
P R I N C I P A L P O I N T S
C o n t a i n e d i n t h e s e
D I S C O U R S E S.

S E R M O N I.

J o b X I. 7.

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Thou find out the Almighty unto Perfection?*

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S E R M O N I.

Preached Nov. 7. 1728.

JOB XI. 7.

*Canst Thou by searching find out
GOD? Canst thou find out the Al-
mighty unto Perfection?*

THERE are two Different
sorts of People, who seem
at a mighty Distance from
each other, and yet approach
very near in the Conclusion
and Consequence of their
Doctrines: These are the
Atheist, and the *Deist*: The *Atheist*, that *a Fool*,
who hath said in his Heart, there is no GOD; and
the *Deist*, that vain Undertaker, who presumes
to fathom the Almighty.

He that pretends to believe no God, and He that forms a God by his own Imagination are found in the Conclusion to believe alike as to the Relation, they bear to Him, and the Account, they must give of their Actions. And when the *Deist's* Creed is examined, we shall find, he believes less of a God, and entertains less worthy Conceptions of Him, than those great and Virtuous Men among the Heathen, who were sensible of the Weakness and Depravity of Human Nature, who breathed and panted after Divine Knowledge, and extended their Views as far, as they could reach, to Heaven.

The *Deists* Creed is better known by what he denys, than by what he professeth, and, when all his Negative Articles are collected, we shall have a very slender Account of his Faith. He is willing perhaps to believe a Kind Propitious Being, whose Providence supports him, and whose Mercy will forgive him, if he should be answerable for his Actions; But he acknowledges no Dutys further, than the very Being of Society makes them necessary, nor indeed so far, when they interfere with his Pleasures; and believes no Rewards and Punishments in another Life, if he believes another Life at all, tho' the very Light of Nature gave Mankind very strong, and Vigorous Apprehensions of them.

We know what they deny, We would know what they do really profess. For *Deism* is founded in Infidelity, and springs from a Disbelief of all Revelation: The Light of Reason, and their Natural Religion are the two strong
Delu-

Delusions, they please, and deceive themselves with, and while they think their Reason clear enough to lead them into their Religion, they make Reason their Standard, and further, than it can carry them, exclusive of Revelation, they will not go, and if we consider what their Religion really is, we shall hardly grant, that their Reason or way of Reasoning leads them into any Religion at all: It is one thing to consider Reason in its Original Perfection, and another to consider it as Corrupted and depraved, as weak and obscured: In this state of Things to make Reason the sole Standard of Religion so, as to exclude Revelation, must produce a very weak and imperfect Scheme, and run them upon that fatal Rock of not Believing what they cannot comprehend, when Reason, even in its Original Perfection, cannot comprehend, what nevertheless it must acknowledge and believe.

This one Principle strictly pursued overthroweth all Religion, as well Natural, as Revealed; For if we will believe Nothing, but what we have an adequate Knowledge, and Comprehension of, we can believe nothing of another World, nor so much as of our own Souls, nay we may question the Evidence of our Senses, when they present us with Objects, and every Object is such, whose Natures and Essences we are not able to explain. Upon this Principle there can be no certain Assent. Nothing but Universal Scepticism must prevail.

With these Consequences I am far from charging all those, who deny the Doctrines of

our Faith in the sense, we profess them; But if this Proceeding be unreasonable in the *Deists*, Those who pretend at least to own a Divine Revelation, may consider with themselves, if they do not make Reason the sole Measure and Standard of their Belief as much, as those, who deny it, while they reject the plain Words, in which the Doctrines are revealed, and, because they are not suitable to their Notions in the most obvious sense, explain them in a sense, they persuade themselves at least, that they understand.

From hence it is, that Every one hath his own Scheme and Hypothesis, and while they have differed from the Church, they have differed at the same time no less from one another,

From hence also it is, that in all Disputes, wherewith the Enemys of *Christ* and his Religion have exercised the Church, which is called by his Name, we may observe a strange Conformity of Principles, upon which the Adversarys have proceeded, how different soever their several Heresies and Opinions were.

In the Beginning of *Christianity* its Enemys were either the *Heathen Philosophers* and the *Jews* from without, or some of it's *Profelytes*, either *Jews*, or *Heathen* from within: It is not my Purpose, nor is it any part of my present Business to enumerate the several Heresys, which infested the Infant Church: These are to be found in the Writings of the Apostles, and the Earliest Fathers: And how one Heresie was deduced from another, and how to avoid

avoid one Extreme Conceited men ran into another may be likewise found in the Primitive *Fathers*, the first *Historians*, and the most ancient *Councils*: The *History* of the *Trinitarian Controversie* in Particular has been collected from those ancient Monuments with equal Learning and Fidelity, and afterwards carried thro' all Ages even down to the present Times: and to that excellent Treasure of Truth and Learning all those may be referred, who are curious to know, how these Points have stood, and how they have been defended.

My proper Business at this Time is to Defend the Doctrine of the *Trinity* in *Unity*: the true and proper *Divinity* of our Blessed Lord and Saviour: the Distinct *Personality* and *Absolute Divinity* of the Holy Ghost: These all or some Parts of them are the Province assigned me, but as the whole will not be contained in the Compass of these Discourses, and as the several Parts have been excellently treated and vindicated with great Exactness and unanswerable Learning, I shall address my self rather to a more general Defence of Revelation and the great Doctrines revealed, than undertake a special Defence of any one, or more of these Articles by themselves. These are in much Abler, and more Sufficient Hands, nor would I break into a Controversy, which the present Champions have so gloriously maintained.

I am sensible nevertheless, let me take which way I will, that it is difficult not to tread in the Steps of those, that have gone before me, and much more difficult to follow them with equal

Paces; But this Argument according to the Abilitys and Diligence of its Defenders should be placed in every Point of Light, for its Truth will appear in all, and being handled according to the various manner and method of different Writers, it will be better suited to different Capacitys, and prove of more general Influence and Service in this Cause of Christ.

There is at this time a more pressing Occasion to treat the Argument in a more general way, to discover the Principles of Infidelity, and to lay them open to the World, to show how the Poison spreads and diffuseth it self from one degree of Heresie to another, how it *eateth like Canker, overthrowing the Faith of some,* till at last those miserable Wretches, who are infected with it renounce their Baptism, and *deny the Lord, that bought them.* The *Socinians* should consider this, who do expressly deny, and the *Arians* more especially, if they are not aware of it, who do by Consequence vacate the Satisfaction, Merits, and Mediation of Christ; and so by sapping the Foundation they overthrow the Gospel, and on its Ruins pave a direct Road to Infidelity.

But before I proceed, I would beg leave to premise some general Considerations of great Importance to the whole Controversy in which we are engaged both with Infidels and Heretics, since there is a close Connection between Heresie and Infidelity, and the Arguments for

both are resolved at last into the same Common Principles.

By *Infidels* I do not mean either *Jews*, *Turks*, or *Pagans*, but those, who live within the Pale of the Christian Church, who pass for Christians in the gross and common Denomination, and at the same time deny all revealed Religion: These are they, who call themselves *Deists*. By *Heretics* I do not mean all, who may fall under that Denomination, but particularly the *Unitarians*, whether they be considered as a distinct Sect by themselves, or whether they may be comprized under the *Arian* or *Socinian* Scheme: For the *Arians* and *Socinians* are Both *Unitarians*, tho' upon different Suppositions.

As far, as the *Unitarians* acknowledge any Revelation, it would be injurious in that respect to rank them with the *Deists*: As far, as they hold a strict personal *Unity* of the God-Head in opposition to the *Trinity*, they may seem to stand by themselves: As far, as they deny the Divinity of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, they may be reckoned with the *Arians* and *Socinians*, and as far as the *Arians* and *Socinians* do hold a strict and personal *Unity* of the God-Head, they may, without doing them any Wrong, be accounted *Unitarians*. The close Connection between those of these several Denominations is Evident to a Demonstration, or rather so Evident, that it needs none; and how near the *Unitarians* are allied to the *Deists*, needs no long Process to show; if they think it worth their while, they may disclaim

8 Arians, &c. Unitarians.

claim their Kindred; if not let them lay aside the Scriptures, and then their Schemes, how defective soever, will yet be much less embarrassed.

The utmost difference between the *Deists* and *them*, if there be any *Unitarians*, that are neither *Deists*, nor *Arians*, nor *Socinians*, for I go only on a favourable Supposition, however the utmost difference between the *Deists* and the *Arians*, and *Socinians* is this, that the *Deist* denies all Revelation, while the *Arian* and *Socinian* own a Revelation, and the Scriptures to be that Revelation, however they cavil and doubt and except to some parts of them, to those especially, which contain the Doctrines revealed, and for that Reason, because they contain them.

But to me there is little Difference between denying a Revelation, and denying the Doctrines revealed: The *Arian* will say indeed more, than the *Socinian* hath any Pretence to say, that he owns both the Revelation, and the Doctrine revealed. But when he explains it in a sense utterly subversive of the Words and Terms, in which it is revealed, and his Positions destroy the whole Frame and Oeconomy of the Gospel, it is much the same Thing as to deny it.

I shall not prosecute this Charge against them at present. To deny a Doctrine in express Terms, and to deny it by necessary Consequence is all one: Only the first is the more Open and Ingenuous way: The other more Insidious and Concealed. Thus the Modern

Arians

Arians speak of our Blessed Lord in the most exalted Terms, which, if they mean them in any proper signification, are Blasphemy, when applied to a Creature, but if they mean them, as doubtless they do, in a qualified sense, their Language is utterly inconsistent with their Meaning, and all these high Expressions are only a Veil and Disguise to hide from the World what they dare not openly avow, while they would seem to own the Divinity, they deny.

The great and Fundamental Principle, they all go upon, who deny Revelation, or the great Articles revealed, however varied in Expression, is much the same, and may at last be resolved into this, that what exceeds the Bounds of Human Understanding cannot be the Object of Faith; whereas with Respect to the Mysteries parts of Religion the Reverse is exactly True, and therefore in Consequence of this Principle, they either discard all Revelation, or else bring it down to a Level with their Capacities.

To this Purpose sound these Positions of theirs. 1. That we may not be cramped and limited, and to show that our Ideas extend to what they do not extend, there is advanced by a most Eminent Writer this strange Assertion in Defiance and Contradiction to common Sense, and our own Conviction, that the ^a Idea, which belongs to Spirit is at least as clear, as the Idea, which belongs to Body.

^a Vol. I. B. II. Cap. XXIII. §. 5, 15, 22, 28.

2. Next to keep us within due Compass in the beginning of the third Chapter of the fourth Book he asserts, that we ^acan have Knowledge no further, than we have Ideas, and that our Knowledge doth not reach so far as our Ideas. For after having endeavoured to show, that our Knowledge extends not so far, as our Ideas, he makes this notable Inference, that therefore our Knowledge is Narrower, than our Ideas.

3. Thirdly, It is a Common Principle with these Men, that there is no coming at certain Knowledge without sensible Evidence, and strict Demonstration.

By a Dextrous Jingle of these plausible Sounds they amuse and impose upon the Understandings of Men, and mixing some Truth with manifold Fallhood they tell us, That Mans Knowledge extends no further, than his Ideas, That all Assent is founded upon Knowledge: All Knowledge upon sensible Evidence and Demonstration: and so by ringing the Changes upon these false Maxims, False at least in the Application, they fall into a Necessity of rejecting Natural Religion as well as Revealed: For they cannot Believe what they cannot Know, and they cannot know what they cannot Comprehend.

This is the avowed and open way of Reasoning among some, and the necessary Consequential Reasoning of others. *Infidels* argue thus directly and are clamorous and importu-

nate for strict Evidence and Demonstration: All *Heretics* argue this way by Consequence, while they endeavour to explain and account for the great Mysterys of Faith in a manner, that takes away all Mystery, and for this very Reason, because as the Doctrines are delivered in the Scriptures, and professed in the Church, they cannot comprehend them.

I shall therefore in the remainder of this Discourse examine the Strength of these Principles, and lay open the Fallacy and Mischief of them.

1. The first Position is, that the Idea which belongs to Spirit is at least as clear as the Idea, which belongs to Body, insinuating, that if it be at least as clear it may possibly be clearer, and that we can discourse as clearly and Intelligibly of Spirit, as we can of Matter: or of what is Invisible, and subject to none of our Senses, as of what is Visible and subject to them all, and one Reason given, as the Question is varied, why we have as clear a Notion of the *Substance* of Spirit, as we have of Body, is this Wise one, because we have ^a no clear Idea of Substance whether Bodily or Spiritual at all. As if where we had no Idea of the Substance or Essences of the Things, our Ideas of the things themselves were equally clear; and then as we are equally ignorant of the Essence, we have no more Knowledge of one thing than another. This in Truth, is his Argument false in Supposition, and false in Fact so proved by

^a B. II. Chap. XXIII. §. 5, 15, 16, 22, 25, 26, 30.

the very Instances, he produces. As to the Substances indeed or the real Essence of things we have no proper adequate Idea, Our sharpest Senses cannot discern the Material, nor our strongest Imagination the Immaterial. Of things Immaterial we have properly no Ideas, but of Material we have Ideas so far, as their several Propertyts and Qualityts are subject to our Senses.

1. But to answer more distinctly in the first place and to comply with his Use of the Word, The Idea he hath of Spirit is only the Idea, he hath of an Human Spirit, that it is a Thinking Substance, which supports our Intellectual Operations, as Bodily Substance is the support of Accidents. Whereas Thinking, Doubting, Knowing and a Power of Moving after our Manner do not necessarily belong to a Spirit as such, but to a Spirit in Conjunction with the Body, and the Operations of a Spirit in this Intimate Union with the Body must be very different from the Operation of a pure Spirit without such a Conjunction; and of a pure Spirit separate from the Body we have properly no Idea at all any further, than we can form a Notion, that It is an Immaterial and Immortal Being; but of its Operations we can form no proper Notion: They are something answerable to Thought and Reflection in us; But our Thoughts and Reflection work chiefly upon Material and Sensible Objects, and come to their Conclusions with much Labour and Pains, which cannot be supposed to be the Manner of Pure Spirits in their Operations.

2. Again

2. Again in the second place, We do appeal to our Senses and Experience for the Knowledge, we have of Body, and if we know not the inmost Substance or Substratum, as long as we know the Essential Propertys, we know enough for our Purpose. And tho' if we know, as in some measure we do, the Propertys of Spirit, yet if we have a more distinct perception of the Propertys of Body, the Idea we have of Spirit is not equally clear with the Idea we have of Body: It is said we have as clear an Idea of Thinking as we have of Extension; and this may be true with reference to our own Thoughts, taking what he calls an Idea for the Consciousness, we have of them; Thinking in us is the Exercise of our Minds in Conjunction with our Bodies upon those Objects, we chuse to employ our Thoughts upon; but whether Thinking be Essential to a Spirit as such, is more, than we can determine. Thinking after our manner, which is all the Notion we can form, most certainly is not; and even in this Union of Soul and Body we cannot have any Idea of Thinking separated from the actual Thought it self: We have a Consciousness of it indeed, but no Idea, as we have of sensible Objects, where we have not the Objects themselves, but the Image only or Representation of them in the Mind.

3. In the third place this great Philosopher had surely altered his Opinion, and we may conclude that his Idea of Spirit was not so clear, as his Idea of Body, when in the
² third

third Chapter of his fourth Book he had laboured so hard to argue, that Matter might be capable of Thinking, and leaves it uncertain at last, whether the Soul be a Material, or Immaterial Substance.

2. The second Position is, ^b that we can have Knowledge no further, than we have Ideas, or that our Knowledge extends no further, than our Ideas: Which Maxim is False and Pernicious if strictly understood and applied, as *Infidels* apply it, to direct and proper Ideas. For tho' we can have no Knowledge without Ideas, yet we may extend our Knowledge beyond them: and this we actually do, when we apply the Ideas, we have to form some Conception of those things, whereof we have no Ideas; such are the Conceptions we form of Angels and Spirits, and of the Operations of those Intelligencys, when we conceive them something Correspondent and Analogous to our own Minds and their Operations.

We have no proper and immediate Idea of the World of Spirits, nor of our own Souls considered as separate from the Body; so far are we from having as clear an Idea of Spirit as of Body; and the same Author, who asserts that we have, asserts afterwards, ^c that the Existence of Spirits is not Knowable by us, in Consequence I suppose of the clearness of our Ideas; But how we can have as clear an Idea of Things, whose Existence is not Knowable, as we have

^a Book IV. Cap. III. §. 6, &c. Answer to the Bp of Worcester.

^b See Book IV. Ch. III. §. 1. ^c B. IV. Ch. XI. §. 12.

of Things, whose Existence, we know, must be left to his Admirers to explain. His Instances of ^aFairies and Centaurs are nothing to the Purpose, for we form Ideas of these from the Ideas that we have of Things, which do really exist; and it is impossible for the Mind to form any Idea beyond the real Existence of Things, for tho' a Centaur does not really exist in the Compound Notion, yet as long, as the Mind can joyn the Ideas of a Man and an Horse, and imagine a Creature resulting from the Conjunction of these, the Notion is formed upon the real Existence of Things: whereas, if Spirits do not exist, we can form no Notion of them at all from any thing else, that doth, except it be from our own Spirits; but in the first place, we can form no Idea of them from our own Spirits, as we can of Fairies, and Centaurs, because these Ideas rise from a Combination of things, whose Existence we know by our Senses. In the second place, we can form no Idea of other Spirits from our own, but on a supposition that we had a true Idea of our own Spirits, and on a supposition, that other created Spirits are like ours, whereas we have no Idea of our own Spirits, as they really are in their own Nature, but only a Consciousness of their Operations in this state of Union with the Body, which can give us no Idea of Pure Spirits never joyned to such Organs, as Ours.

But admitting, that the having Ideas of them doth not necessarily prove their Existence, yet

it does not follow that their Existence is not Knowable: There is an Ambiguity and Fallacy in the Expression, as if the Existence of things were not Knowable, unless they were Evident to our Senses, and actually before our Eyes; or as if what is not known one way cannot be known another, or as if what we know by Revelation, we do not know at all. And therefore he tells us, that for the ^aExistence of Finite Spirits as well, as several other Things, we must content ourselves with the Evidence of Faith, and a good Evidence it is: the only ^b*Evidence of Things not seen*, and this way surely we are as certain of the Existence of other Spirits, as we are of the Existence of Mens Spirits, after they have left the Body; So that if we cannot come at this Knowledge by the Deductions of Reason, we may come to it a surer way, and that is by Revelation, and so we believe the Existence of Angels and Spirits: Yet tho' we are convinced of the Existence, we cannot tell the Essence of Spirits, not even of our own, nor can we form any proper Ideas, having no Notion or Conception of them, but by supposing and supplying some Resemblance between our Spirits, and them, and this must be very imperfect, for we have no Conception of our own Spirits, but from their Operations, and those Operations being in Conjunction with the Body must give us very distant and imperfect Notions of the Operations of unbodied Spirits: Of their real Es-

^a Book IV. Ch. XI. §. 12. ^b Hebr. XI. 1.

fence we can frame no Idea, nor is it knowable by us; yet of their Existence we are assured, and our Knowledge in this, as in a thousand Instances besides, tho' originally founded in, is nevertheless extended beyond our Ideas, and I conclude we may have Knowledge of the Existence of Things, where we can have no Idea of the Essence.

2. This Assertion cuts off all Historical Relations, and all Communication with another World: By this our Knowledge is confined to present and sensible Objects alone, nor can we be said to know any thing, but what we have adequate Ideas of, nor the Existence of any thing, but what is actually before our Eyes, or present to some of our Senses, for all other Notions are raised from our Primary Ideas, and where the Ideas fail, our Knowledge also faileth.

1. The Consequence of these Positions, when applied to the Things of another World, is, first, that either we have clear and adequate Ideas, and can discourse of the Nature and Operations of pure Spirit as clearly, and Intelligibly, as we can of Body, and its Property, or we have not any Knowledge of Spirit, and its Operations, as Angel, or Spirit subsists and operates independent of Body, or any material Organs, and when it appears, that we are so far from having as clear an Idea of Spirit, as we have of Body, that we have properly no Idea of it at all, then because our Knowledge reaches no further than our Ideas, we have no Knowledge of Spirits at all.

2. If we apply this Reasoning to the Essence and Attributes of God and the great Articles of Religion, we shall find, that it destroys all Religion *Natural* as well as *Revealed*: For of God we can form no proper Idea, and our Conceptions of Him are formed by transferring the most excellent Ideas we have of Created Nature, and the Notions we have of Spirit from the Operations of our own Minds, to express very imperfectly his most Transcendent and Incomprehensible Nature.

It is true, we can have no Knowledge without Ideas, but we can, as I shall fully prove hereafter, extend our Knowledge beyond them, by applying those Ideas, we have, to express and represent those things to our Minds, of which we can have no proper Ideas, as they are in themselves.

It is said, ^a That we do not know the Essence of God not knowing the Real Essence of a Pebble, of a Fly, or of our own selves; as if because we are ignorant of our own Essence, and of the Essence of Things Animate and Inanimate, we are therefore for that reason ignorant of the Essence of God. Suppose, we knew our own Essence, will it follow, that we could know our Creators? And have we in any Respect so much Knowledge of the Essence of God, as we have of an Insect or a Stone? We have adequate Ideas of their Essential Properties, and so far of their Essence; but we have no adequate Idea of God, and yet surely we

may have a sufficient Knowledge of Him, tho' He doth infinitely transcend our Ideas.

3. When Men do confine their Knowledge to their Ideas of things, as they are in themselves, they do necessarily argue from Material Beings, and Humane Relations to Spiritual and Divine in a Strict Literal Propriety, and so conceive of the Divine Nature, as of themselves; or else if they leave the Strict Literal Application as too gross and Offensive, they run the Divine Revelations mentioned in the Scriptures into meer Figure, Metaphor, and Allusion; One way they fall into *Tritheism*, if they hold the proper Divinity of the Persons: the other way into *Sabellianism* if they allow these Relations to be only Figurative; but if they allow the Reality of the *Persons*, and deny the Divinity of the *Second* and the *Third*, they must be either *Arians* or *Socinians*.

This is the Effect of Confining Knowledge to their Adequate Ideas, and applying those Ideas in a strict and proper Sense, or else in meer Figure and Allusion to that Transcendent Being, who in his Nature and Essence and Manner of Subsisting is the Adorable Object of our Faith so far, as he hath been pleased to reveal Himself, but still, notwithstanding the Revelation, nevertheless above our Comprehension.

3. Thirdly, It is a Common Principle with these Men, in their Opposition to Faith, that all certain Knowledge depends upon sensible Evidence and strict Demonstration, or as they commonly express it negatively, that there is

no coming to certain Knowledge any other way.

This will require a more distinct Consideration, especially as to sensible Evidence, since by this Position all *derivative*, and *Traditionary* Evidence is denied, and the Authority of *that great Author*, I have mentioned, is made use of to take off all Credit from the Testimony, on which our Religion depends.

I shall consider therefore this Point of sensible Evidence separately, and that of sensible Evidence and Demonstration together. And first for sensible Evidence alone.

1. All Evidence is either *immediate* or *derived*. The *immediate* relates to what we hear with our Ears, and see with our Eyes: The *derived* is what is delivered and reported by others: since therefore we were not Eye Witnesses of those Things, which we most assuredly do believe, all the Evidence we can have of them, and of whatever was formerly *transacted*, *written* or *done*, must be from *Testimony*, that is from *Tradition* either *Oral* or *Written*. *Oral* is indeed subject to manifold Variations, and Uncertaintys, and therefore when *Oral* failed it pleased God to continue his Truth and to declare his Will by a *Written Tradition*. The Scriptures are the Conveyers of this *Tradition*, and so far our *Religion* may be called a *Traditional Religion*; But then as Laws once committed to Writing, and faithfully preserved, as sacred Muniments, in the Archives, and Repositorys of any Kingdom, are for ever *Authentic*, and *True*, and as such delivered down
from

from one Age to another, in like manner the *Holy Oracles* having ever subsisted, and been preserved thro' all Ages, since they were respectively Written, have at least the same Authority with *Civil Records*: and thus they are the Proof and Evidence of our Religion, into which all Collateral Proofs are to be resolved. That the Scripture contains the Religion, and the Faith, we contend for, we are able to prove; That those Books, which we receive for such, are the Real Scripture, that is Writings inspired by God we have among other Arguments a most assured Testimony, such a Testimony, as grows surer by Age, and draws Strength from the Opposition it meets with, and hath ever met with in the World.

This I assert in opposition to what is so triumphantly suggested from the Celebrated Author of the *Essay*, *that Traditional Testimonys, the further they are removed from their Original, are the Weaker Proofs*. And this is illustrated by a Rule observed in the Law of our Country, which is, that *tho' the attested Copy of a Record be a good Proof, yet the Copy of a Copy never so well attested, and by never so credible Witnesses will not be admitted as a Proof in Judicature*. Whence he infers, That any Testimony, the farther off it is from the Original Truth, the less Force and Proof it hath, (which is true supposing it to have deviated more and more from the Original Truth, otherwise the Expression is fallacious) and he goes on to explain his Assertion, and argues

2 Book IV. Ch. XVI. §. 10. See Ch. XVIII. §. 4.

in Instances of *Hearsay* or *Report* at second or third Hand, whence he again infers, *That in Traditional Truths each Remove weakens the Force of the Proof.*

Whether the Author intended to apply this to the Scriptures, and to the Proof and Evidence for the Christian Religion I cannot say: I hope he intended no more, than to expose the *Popish Traditions*, and *Old Wives Storys*. But it is certain, that our *Infidels* plume themselves upon this Passage, and apply it directly to the *Scriptures*, and the Proofs, and Evidences of our Faith.

1. But I answer first. That what is true of *Oral Tradition* or Reports by *Hearsay* is not to be applied to *Written Tradition*, and if the Author intended to weaken the Force of *Written Evidence*, as it should seem, he did, by the Instance he brings, then I say, that the Law of the Land is improperly urged; and the Disallowing the *Copy* of a *Copy* of an *attested Record* does not come up to the Point before us.

The Reason, why such a *Copy* is not admitted for Proof in Courts of *Judicature*, is not because the *Copy* of a *Copy* never so well attested by never so credible Witnesses is of *no Credit*; but the Reason, why a *Copy* of a *Copy* is disallowed is this; because we can always have an *attested Copy* from the *Record* it self, and to admit of any other is subject to many Inconveniencys considering the Corruption of Human Nature, and the strong Influences Men are under to support and make good a disputed Title. But what is this to the *Scripture*? If the present Co-
pys.

pys be more than once removed, shall they be no Evidence at all? And what *Parallel* can be drawn between *Public Writings* of an *Universal* Concern published and Communicated to the whole World, and *Writings* relating to *Private* Property: the Proceedings of *Civil Judicatures*, and the *Forms of Law*? The Scriptures are committed as a Sacred *Depositum* to the Keeping of the Church in all Parts of the Christian World: Their being Published in all Languages, Cited by all Writers, appealed to in all Controversys, from the Beginning of Christianity to this Day, are so many Proofs of their Authority; and however Readings and Translations may differ in other Respects, they all conspire in One Doctrine with respect to the great Articles of Faith: Those, that differ in the Interpretation, agree however in the *Text*, nor till of late have the Enemys of Christianity presumed to *alter* the confessed Readings of the *Text* it self.

The Challenges made by all sides to the Scriptures: The Enemys, that have attacked them, and the Defences made to repel those attacks, are so many Testimonys of their Authority, and as they are *Open Records* not *locked* up, like *Court Rolls*, and *Evidences*, but freely published in all Languages, and by that means preserved in all Christian Countrys, they lose nothing of their Original Authority, but run down in a constant Stream thro' all Ages, till, like Rivers, that fall into the Sea, they shall at last be swallowed up in Eternity.

2. My second Answer is, The *Maxim* here laid down, that *in Traditional Truth each Remove weakens the Force of the Proof is False*, and only holds where a *Variation* can be proved in the *Course* of the *Tradition* whether *Oral* or *Written*. But where the *Tradition* is *uniform* especially in *written Tradition* there every *Remove* is so far from *Weakening*, that it *Strengthens* the *Proof* of such *Traditional Truth*. Otherwise what was True in former Ages cannot be received by us, and all Historical Truth falls to the Ground at once: But what *this Author* gives to ^a *Historical Faith* is sufficient to destroy the Position, he advances. That there was such a Person, as *Julius Caesar*, that he *subverted* the *Libertys* of his *Country*, and was *slain* in the *Senate House* are Facts which have descended to us without all Doubt thro' the Hands of several Writers, and we are not less certain at this Distance than the World was above a thousand Years ago of these *Traditionary Truths*: We have indeed the Concurrence of all Preceding Ages up to his Time to confirm them: But suppose any of the *Decads* of *Livy*, which are lost, should be found, and there we should meet with a Piece of History not recorded by other Historians, and afterwards some other Writer should be discovered, who voucheth the same from *Livy* as an *Original Record*, I suppose that neither the *Copy* from it nor the *Original Record* it self, howsoever *True* they *might* be, could appear so *evidently True* to us, as the *History* of *Julius Caesar*

^a Book IV. Ch. XVII. §. 8.

delivered down by so many Writers throughout so many Ages. The *Evidence of Facts* consists not only in the *Goodness* but the *Continuance* of the *Testimony*, and the *Failure* is in *not being able to run up the Traditionary Truth, as high as its Original.*

What I have observed of *Historical Facts* in *General* concludes more strongly for the Truth of our *Religion* in *Particular*: as the more any Evidence hath been weighed and examined, the more certain and Satisfactory it is. And therefore where Facts have been disputed, and the Doctrines of Religion have been Controverted by the Enemys of it, as it ever was, and is the Case of the Christian Religion, the Opposition and Defences still strengthen the Proof thro' all Ages, and in all Nations, especially if the Testimony of Persecutions and Sufferings be added: the more Notorious the Facts: the more canvassed in all Ages and Nations, the stronger still is the Evidence.

2. In the next place let us consider this Principle that there is no coming to certain Knowledge without sensible Evidence, and strict Demonstration as they are joyned together.

But here again, as is the Use of *Sophistical Disputers*, they play with a Word and abuse the World, taking Knowledge in no proper determinate Sense, as if there was no difference between *Faith* and *Science*, between *Knowing* and *Believing*: whereas in the Question before us *Knowledge* is distinguished from *Faith*, tho' it be not opposed unto it. The *Oppositions* to *Faith* are from ^a *Science falsely so called.*

The *Author* of the *Essay* hath distinguished between ^a *Faith* and *Knowledge*, and endeavoured to fix the ^b *Boundarys* of *Faith* and *Reason*: He hath admirably described ^c the *Weakness* of our *Intellectual* Powers, and in the clearest Terms requires our Submission to the ^d *Revelation* of God. He hath expressed his Sentiments in some parts of his Works, as becomes a *Believer*, and what He writes as a *Christian* is a full Answer to what he hath advanced as a *Philosopher*. According to Him we must preserve the Distinction between *Faith* and *Knowledge*, between *Reason* and *Revelation*. *Faith* indeed is founded in *Knowledge*, but its Essential Distinction from it is the believing something we do not know to be as it is asserted, for the sake of what we do know; and so we believe what God reveals, upon the Knowledge, we have, that it is his Revelation. But I answer more particularly.

1. That Objects of *Faith*, as such, are not capable of *sensible Evidence*, and strict *Demonstration*: *Faith* is properly built, tho' on a *Divine Assurance*, yet in the last resolve on *Moral Evidence*, For so the *Divine Assurance* it self is established; and tho' some Men may talk very Familiarly of *Demonstration* in Matters of Religion, and treat some great *Articles* of *Faith* in the way and form of *Demonstration*, yet all this Ostentation when examined to the Bottom is no more, than *Moral Evidence*. *Faith* may be

^a Book IV. Chap. XV. §. 3, &c. ^b Chap. XVIII. ^c Vol. I. Book II. Ch. XXIII. §. 12. ^d Book IV. Ch. XVI. §. 14. Chap. XVIII. §. 9.

built on *Facts*, of which Mankind hath had *Sensible Evidence*, and the Being of God Himself may be proved from several Instances already demonstrated, but the Inferences, that these are good Proofs, that therefore there is a Divine Being, that *Christ* is the Son of God, and so on, these are the work of Reason, by which we arrive at a *Moral Certainty*, and tho' we build remotely upon *Sensitive Evidence* and *Demonstration*, yet the Deductions, we make from them, are not capable of the same *Demonstration*; Thus *Astronomical Demonstrations* may be applied as *Mediums* to prove the Being of a God, but it is the Heavens, and not God, which is the Subject of them. So when Miracles are first proved by *Sensible Evidence*, the Proof to us is like that of other Facts, we are not Eye Witnesses of, by *Moral Evidence* only.

This *Demonstration* is pretended in every thing almost, and if they will call their *Form* of Argument by the Name of *Demonstration*, to whatever Subject it is applied, then I do insist, that these Persons must allow, what they call *Demonstration* in *Morality* or *Metaphysics*, or any other *Science*, is as strictly and necessarily *Conclusive*, as proper *Mathematical* Conclusions are, or else, that this is not truly *Demonstration*, nor are the Subjects capable of it; If they say, that one amounts to the same Evidence with the other, then they acknowledge, that *Moral Certainty* is equal to *Mathematical Demonstration*. I conclude in their own way, that where they can have no *Sensible Evidence*, they can have no *Demonstration*. And if we must believe upon *Sensible*

sible Evidence only, we can believe Nothing on the *Testimony* and *Relation* of others; but I hope we may be obliged to believe what is not Capable of *Sensible Evidence* or of *Demonstrative Proof*.

And therefore I answer secondly,

2. That *Sensible Evidence* and *Demonstration* are Inconsistent with *Faith*, as *Faith* is distinguished from *Knowledge*. Such a *Certainty*, as rises from *Sensible Evidence* and *Demonstration* compels the *Assent*, and we are not at Liberty to withhold it without giving ourselves the Lie, and acting against our strongest Convictions: *The sensible Evidence* from *Without*, and the *Inward* Perception of the Mind together with our Consciousness of its Operations, are the Highest Degree of *Knowledge*, and a sort of *Intuition*, which admits no Reasoning as it needs none, to come at its Conclusions: And *Demonstration* properly so called, tho' it proceeds by certain *Mediums*, and is carried on in a Chain to its Conclusions, produces an Equal Certainty, and we are said to know, and not to believe what we see with our Eyes, perceive in our Minds, and is proved to our Understanding by undeniable *Demonstration*: It is therefore highly Incongruous and Absurd in these Men to require such *Evidence* in *Articles of Faith*, as will make it impossible for us to believe, and those, who will not assent, except where the *Assent* is inevitably *forced*, and must *necessarily follow*, notwithstanding any perverse Affectation, or Opposition of the Will, those Persons can never believe at all.

I answer thirdly, and what I shall now offer, may serve for a Conclusion and Application of this present Discourse,

3. That as *Faith* is a *Christian Grace*, and on our part the Necessary Condition of our Justification, this Demand of *Sensible Evidence* and *Demonstration* utterly destroys it: *Faith* with Respect to Religious Articles is an Affiance and Trust in God: a Recognition of his Veracity, Goodness, and Power, and when we understand what God hath said, we believe it, whether it be an Assertion, that a Thing is so, or any Promise, that it shall be so. Thus we believe that in the *Divine Essence* there are *Three Persons* of *Equal Majesty, Power, and Eternity*: The *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*, as revealed, and asserted in Fact: and thus we believe a *Judgment to come*, because *God hath appointed a Day in which he will judge the World in Righteousness*. Every Point of strict Revelation is an Article of this Nature, and when we understand the Terms of the Proposition, we do believe, tho' we know not the Manner, nor are able to comprehend, *how these things can be*: In *Sensible Evidence* and *Demonstration* there is properly no Concurrence of the Will: We do necessarily assent: in *Articles of Faith*, the Concurrence of the Will is required. For *Faith* is grounded upon *Moral Evidence*, on the *Authority, Testimony, and Veracity* of God Himself delivered to us by the Hands of Men, and there is this Essential Difference between *Moral Certainty*, and *Sensible Evidence*, between

Moral Certainty, and Demonstration, that in the *Latter* the Concurrence of the *Will* is *Forced*, in the *Former* it is *Free*: In the *Latter* it is no Virtue to believe what we do strictly know: in the *Former Faith is imputed to us for Righteousness*, because the *Will* submits, notwithstanding any apparent Difficulty: As in our Actions so in our Belief we are accountable: To deny our Assent, where the Evidence is sufficient, that is, as great as the Nature of thing will admit of, is to act unreasonably: It argues a Wicked Byass and Corruption in the *Will*, and is the great Spring, from which all these Bitter Streams of Heresie and Infidelitie do flow. There is a difference, but not so great perhaps, as is imagined, between *not believing at all*, and *not believing aright*; but strictly and properly speaking, He, that believes in his own sense contrary to the received determined sense of the Church in all Ages, doth not believe the Article proposed any more, than an *Infidel* who professeth not to believe at all.

To conclude therefore, Let us look into our own Hearts, and ^a *examine our selves, whether we be in the Faith*; Let us ^b *take heed, Brethren, lest there be in any of us an Evil Heart of Unbelief in departing from the Living God*: For Unbelief doth Verily grow out of an *Evil Heart*, whether it be tainted with gross Impuritys and external Vices, or whether it be infected with the Inward Corruption of Pride, Conceitedness and Singularity. Let us therefore ^c *cleanse our selves*

^a 2 Cor. XIII. 5. ^b Hebr. III. 12. ^c 2 Cor. VII. 1.

from all Filthiness of the Flesh and Spirit, beseeching God^a the Father of Lights, from whom every Good and Perfect Gift descendeth, that he would give us his Holy Spirit, that He would make us^b clean Hearts, and renew a right Spirit within us thro' Jesus Christ his Eternal, His only Begotten Son, our most merciful Redeemer: our most Blessed Lord and Saviour: our Mediator and Advocate, who ever liveth to make Intercession for us: Thro' Him we have an Access by one Spirit unto the Father: And therefore unto this Sacred and Undivided Trinity, Three Persons, and One Eternal God, The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost be ascribed, as is most due, in all Churches of the Saints All Honour and Glory, Might, Majesty and Dominion for Ever and Ever. Amen.

^a Jam. I. 17. ^b Psal. LI. 10.



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SERMON II.

Preached Dec. 5. 1728.

JOB XI. 7.

*Canst Thou by searching find out
GOD? Canst thou find out the Al-
mighty unto Perfection?*

IN my last Discourse I thought it necessary to enumerate the several *Enemies* of our *Faith*, who live within the *Pale* of the *Christian Church*, such as *Deists*, *Unitarians*, *Arians*, and *Socinians*, as they are distinguished from each other, and as they agree in some Common Principles: as they deny *Revelation* in general, or the *Doctrines revealed* in particular; For the *Deist*, who denys all *Revelation*, doth in this Controversy deny no more, than the *Arian*, and *Socinian*, who

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deny the *Doctrines revealed*, or put such a Construction on them, as amounts to a Denial: He that affirms the *Son of GOD* to be a *Creature*, or that denies his *Eternal Essence* and *Subsistence* with the *Father*, denies the *Doctrine revealed*, whether he supposes the *Son* to have *existed* in any *indefinite* Point of Time, with the *Arians*, or whether he supposes *Him* to have had *no Existence* before his *Incarnation*, and *Birth*, with the *Socinians*.

These do all proceed upon one and the same Fundamental Principle: The *Deist* rejects all *Revelation*, because he cannot explain the *Doctrines revealed*: The *Arians* and *Socinians* receive a *Revelation*, because they think, they can explain it: The *Deist* resteth upon his *Light of Nature* for his *Religion*: The *Arian* and *Socinian* depend upon the *Strength* of their *Reason* for *Theirs*: Each forms his *Creed* upon his own *Hypothesis*, and rather than admit a *Revelation*, or the *Doctrines revealed* in a *sense* contrary to *their own*, they either deny, or overturn the whole *Gospel of Christ*.

To oppose the Perverseness and Errors of these Men, and to lay the Ax to the Root of this Evil, I thought it necessary to enter into a previous Examination of some of their Common Principles, and to shew the Falseness, and Mischief of them; For tho' there is a *Difference* between *Heresy*, and *Infidelity*, as between *no Belief*, and a *wrong Belief*, yet the *Heretic* believes the *Doctrines revealed*, as they are revealed, no more, than an *Infidel* who doth not believe them at all; For it is *all one* in Common
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Construction, *not to believe at all, and to hold a Contradictory Proposition to the Article proposed.*

The *Ground* of their *Misbelief*, and *Unbelief* is also the *same*: They will believe Nothing, that is *above* their *Comprehension*, nor submit to any *Doctrines*, which they cannot in all Points *explain*: For tho' the *Arians* especially talk much of *Ineffable* and *Incomprehensible*, yet they endeavour to *explain* this *Incomprehensible* and to *utter* this *Ineffable*.

I have therefore pursuant to my first Design considered three remarkable *Principles*, which these People do either *expressly* or by *Consequence* proceed upon.

Two of them are false Positions laid down by the Celebrated Author of *Humane Understanding*. The first of which is,

1. That we have as clear an *Idea* of *Spirit*, as we have of *Body*, and of *Thinking*, as we have of *Extension* and *Cohesion* of *Parts*. This *Position* I have considered at large, and shall only add, that as he defines *Spirit* to be a *Thinking Substance*, and expresses his *Idea* of *Spirit* by his *Idea* of *Thinking*, this shows, that we have not, nor can have any proper *Idea* of *Spirit* at all; but all, we do, is by way of *Analogy* from a Consciousness of our Intellectual Operations to form some improper Conception of it, for a *Spirit*, as such, doth not *think* after our manner, and if it did *think*, as our *Spirits* do, still we can form no *Idea* of *Thinking*, nor any *Representation* of it *separate* from our *Thoughts* themselves. For properly speaking we can have an *Idea* of *Nothing* but what is both *Sensible* and *External* to us.

36 *Principles of Infidelity,*

2. His second *Position* is, That we can have *Knowledge* no further, than we can have *Ideas*, or that our *Knowledge* extends not beyond our *Ideas*: This, however meant by *himself*, is understood of *proper* and *direct Ideas*, and so applied in the Cause of *Heresy* and *Infidelity*; And thus by *Confining* their *Knowledge* to their *Ideas*, these Men argue from *Material Beings* to *Spiritual*, and from *Human Relations* to *Divine*, in a strict *Literal Propriety*, or else they turn the great *Mysterys* of *Faith* into mere *Figure* and *Allusion*: This last runs them into *Sabellianism* with respect to the *Ever Blessed TRINITY*: the other into *Tritheism*, if they *admit*, or into either *Arianism*, or *Socinianism* if they *deny* the *Second* and *Third Persons* to be as truly *Divine* as the *First*.

3. The third *Principle*, which they proceed upon is, that *there is no coming at certain Knowledge without sensible Evidence, and Demonstration*. This *Position*, as well as the *two others*, is destructive of all Religion, and confines our *Knowledge* most strictly to *proper* and *direct Ideas*.

1. But first, The Things of another World and many Instances in this are not capable of *sensible Evidence and Demonstration*: The former Demand destroys all *Historical Truth*, and all *Testimony Human and Divine*: the other is a Demand impossible, *strict Demonstration* being confined to *Dimensions, Numbers and Figures*, and their Proportions.

2. Secondly these Demands destroy all *Faith*, as contradistinguish'd to *Knowledge*.

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3. They destroy our *Faith*, as *Faith* is a *Christian Grace*, and on our parts a *necessary Condition* of our *Justification*.

Thus do these Men endeavour to bring every Thing within the Reach of their Capacities: They *extend* their *Ideas* beyond their Limits, as in the *first Instance*, and they *restrain* their *Knowledge* within the Compass of their *Ideas*, as in the *Second*: They insist upon *sensible Evidence*, where it is *not* to be had, and require *Demonstration* in *Points not capable* of it.

All Arguments against the *Being* of a *GOD* in general, as discoverable by the *Light of Nature*, and against the *Revelation* of *Himself* in particular, as delivered in the *Scriptures*, are raised upon this *Foundation*: For if Men will *believe* no further than they *know*, which is indeed *not* to *believe*, and they can *know* no further, than they have *Ideas*, *sensible Evidence*, and *Demonstration*, that is, if they will *believe* no further, than they can *account for* and *demonstrate* to their own *Reason* the *Way* and *Manner* of what is *Incomprehensible*, then I say, the *Deist* can believe a *God* no more, than *He* can believe the great *Mysteries* of our *Faith*, and *Heretics* who believe them no further, than they *imagine* at least, they can *explain* them, fall into the same Consequences, and if they are true to their Principles, cannot believe at all.

Their whole Conduct is Inconsistent with the *Belief* of an *Incomprehensible Being*, and with the *supposition* of a *Revelation* from *Him* in the great *Articles revealed*: For while they endeavour to *explain*, they do in Effect *deny* the *Revelation*,

tion, and give *their own sense*, instead of *GOD's Declaration*, to the World.

I have thought it necessary therefore to obviate this *Fundamental Error*, and to remove this *Stumbling Block* out of the way, before I proceed to any of the great Points of *Revelation*; and to this end I have chosen the Question, which *Zophar* here proposes to *JOB*. *Canst thou by searching find out GOD? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto Perfection?*

Which Words in this way of *Interrogation* do more strongly import the *Negative*, and, as it is evident from the *Context*, they are to be understood of a *full and complete Knowledge of GOD*, as *He* is in *Himself*: in his *Nature and Essence*, together with the *Knowledge of his Attributes*, and particularly of his *Wisdom*, that his *Wisdom* is *Unsearchable*, as *Himself* is *Incomprehensible*: *It is High as Heaven, what canst thou do? Deeper than Hell, what canst thou know?*

The Text therefore, where according to the *Eastern Idiom*, the last Clause is *Exegetical* and *Enforcive* of the first, limits the *Powers and Facultys* of our *Souls*, sets Bounds to our Enquirys, and acquaints us, that there is a *BEING* transcendently above our Comprehension.

That we have a *Knowledge of this BEING* is *supposed*.

That we can Know Him unto *Perfection* is *denied*.

It may be proper therefore with respect to the first to consider,

- I. The *Strength and Compass* of our *Natural Powers*,

Powers, how far they will carry us in our *Knowledge of GOD*.

II. With Reference to the other, That they will not carry us unto *Perfection*, or that by our *Natural Powers* we cannot arrive at a full and *adequate Knowledge* of the *Almighty*.

1. First then we may consider the *Strength* and *Compass* of our *Natural Powers*, how far they will carry us in the *Knowledge of GOD*.

In Order to this I would propose in the first place,

1. To enquire into and fix *What* that is, which is commonly called the *Light of Nature*.

2. In the second *What Account* the *Scripture* gives us of it.

3. And in the third place to *conclude* this Discourse with some proper *Observations* and *Inferences* from these *two Enquiries*.

1. First for the *Light of Nature* in the *Common* received *Notion*. This I take to be the *Reason of Mankind*: that *Faculty of Discoursing* and *Understanding*, whereby we *discern* and *assent* to what is *Right* and *True*, and *discover* what is *False* and *Wrong*.

This *Faculty of Reason* and *Understanding* proceeds in a *limited* and *certain method*: The *Mind of Man* is *Uniform* in its *Operations*, and works after the *same* manner upon the *same* Materials in a *Stated* Progress from his *first Perception* and *Apprehension* of Things to the *last Conclusion*.

For there is one general *Ground Plott*, one *Common Foundation* of *Knowledge*, and *those* are our *Ideas*, by *which* I mean *Those Figures* and
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Impressions, which remain upon the *Imagination* from our *first Perception* and *Apprehension* of *Things*: These *Figures* being received by the *Senses*, and discerned by the *Mind*, are a full and entire *Representation* of the *Things* they stand for, as to their outward *Appearance*: As of a *Man*, or an *Army*, an *House* or a *City*: These I call, however they are made up of *Parts*, as all *Integrals* are, each of them one *Simple and entire Idea*. Upon these the *Mind* employs it self: It unites, compounds, compares, distinguisheth, separates and divides the *Ideas*, it is furnished with, as they have, or as they seem to have an *Agreement* or *Disagreement* with each other.

The whole *Stock* of our *Ideas* is generally, but in the *Judgment* of a most learned *Writer* on this *Argument*, very improperly divided into those of *Sensation*, and those of *Reflection*, as they are assorted by the great *Patron* of that *Distinction*. But our *Thoughts* and *Reflection* are not *Ideas*: They are only the *Notions* and *Conceptions*, we form upon them. *Reflection* is originally founded in, and rises from our *Ideas* of *Sensation*: It is the *Act* or *Operation* of the *Mind* upon them, and to call those *Thoughts*, which rise from *Reflection*, *Ideas*, is to confound the *Operation* of our *Minds*, and make that an *Idea*, which is only the *Result* and *Determination* of the *Mind* upon whatever is the *Subject* of its *Thoughts* and *Reflections*. The *Result* and *Determination* of our *Thoughts* and *Reflection* are various according to the *Subjects* they are employed upon whether *Speculative* or *Practical*: In *Speculative Subjects* when we have fixed a *No-*
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tion we are apt to call it an *Idea*, as of *GOD* and his *Attributes* for Instance; but whether that be an *Idea*, or those be *Ideas* which at best are so imperfect a Representation of an *Incomprehensible*, as well as an *Invisible Being*, is no Question with those, who make *Ideas* stand for the very *Pictures* and *Impressions* of the *Objects themselves*: In *Practical Subjects* no Body will take our Determination to *act* or *not to act* for an *Idea*: no more than in *Argumentation*, which may partake of both, we will call the *Conclusion* from the *Premises* an *Idea*. We have in Reality no *Ideas* whether *Simple* or *Compound*, but from *Sensation*, and when we make a *Compound Idea*, it is still *resolveable* into so many *Simple Ideas*. For properly we have no *Ideas*, but of things *without*, which are *subject* to our *Senses*, and these are *seen* or apprehended in the *Imagination*, as is the *Likeness* of any thing *reflected* in a *Glass*: The *Object* it self is *not* in the *Mirror*, but only the *Image* and *Resemblance* of it, and it is therefore absurd to say, that we have an *Idea* of what is *Actually* in the *Mind*; for *Ideas* are not the *Objects* themselves, but only the *representations* of them *transmitted* to the *Mind* thro' the *Senses*.

However if by *Ideas* we understand every *Notion* and *Conception* of the *Mind*, whether they arise from *outward Impressions* or *inward Considerations*, we only *enlarge* the *Term*, and those *Ideas*, which rise from the *inward Operation* of the *Mind*, are *originally* founded in those, which are formed upon our *sensible* Apprehension of *outward Objects*. These *last* therefore properly speaking are the *only Simple Ideas*; for if there
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be any *Ideas* of *Reflection*, yet they cannot be *Simple Ideas*, because they are of a *Secondary Growth*, and formed *not* by a *Simple*, but a *Reflex Act* of the *Mind*, and therefore, tho' we should *admit* that there are *Ideas* of *Reflection*, we may nevertheless most justly *deny*, that there are any *Simple Ideas* of *Reflection*. For *Perception*, which is reckoned the *first Simple Idea* of *Reflection*, includes in it at least the *Act* of *Simple Apprehension*, and the *thing* so apprehended, but properly speaking the *Act* of *Perception* is *antecedent* even to our most *Simple Ideas*, and till the *Mind* perceives, it is not possessed of its *Ideas*: *Perception* therefore is the *Actual Formation* of the *Idea* rather, than an *Idea* it self; and when we would explain to others, or represent to ourselves what *Perception* is, we represent it to be a *Feeling* or *Consciousness* of the *Impression* made on the *Mind* by *Sensible Objects*; but *this* cannot in any Propriety be called a *Simple Idea*, or indeed *any Idea* at all: for surely there must ever be an Essential Difference between an *Idea* and the *Act* of *Perception*: The *Idea* is *one* Thing, our *Perception* of it is *another*; and every *Act* or *Result* of our *Reflection*, if *such* must be called *Ideas*, must be *Complex*, they cannot *even in Name* be admitted among our *Simple Ideas*. Our *Simple Ideas* are of things *External*, or the *Simple Objects* of our *Senses* continually offering themselves to the *Mind*, and they are there *received* and *treasured up* as soon as in *any degree* we are capable of *apprehending*, and *discerning* one thing from another, even

before we can give them their *proper Names* and *Appellations*.

Our *Simple Ideas* therefore being thus impressed upon the *Mind*, we are stored with them, even *before* we begin *distinctly* to apprehend them, and for that reason they seem to have grown up, as if they had been *born* with us.

By the *Help* and *Application* of these, and from the *Operations* of our own *Minds*, we form *Conceptions* of those *things*, of which we have no proper *Ideas*: We make them the *Symbol* and *Representation* of *Spiritual Beings*, and *Intellectual Truth*, and so we express our *Notions* and *Conceptions* of *Spiritual Things* by the means of that *Analogy* and *Correspondence*, by which our *Ideas*, and the *Soul*, they are lodged in, are *accommodated* to them.

This *Application* of our *Ideas* to express or represent to us the *Nature* of *God* and our *Duty* being as *early*, as our *Apprehensions* of them at first, where the *Mind* has been *cultivated* by a *Religious Education* from our *Infancy*, Those great *Truths* concerning *God* and our *Duty* seem also to have been *born*, and to have *grown up* with us.

To *these* I may add, what answers to what they call *Ideas* of *Reflection*, the several *Operations* of our *Minds* in our *internal Perception* and *Apprehension* of things, together with that *Consciousness*, we have of the *Operations* themselves, and the *Effects*, they produce, whether of *Assenting*, *Dissenting*, or *Doubting*. When our *Minds* and *Bodys*, are in a *right Frame* and *Disposition*,

44 *Some Truths seem Connatural.*

tion, we are so certain of what passes *within* us, that we cannot be deceived, and the *Knowledge* which arises from our *Simple Ideas* of Things *without*, and from our *Consciousness* of the *Operations* of our *Mind within* is so *Direct*, and *Immediate*, that it admits no Proof, since None can be brought, that is stronger, than it self.

Hence it is that in these, and in things of Familiar and daily Acquaintance, whose *Truth* and *Agreement* are *evidently* discerned, we have an *Intuitive* rather, than a *Discursive* Knowledge.

Thus some *Truths* are so *obvious* and *plain*, that they seem *Connatural*, and the *Mind assents*, as soon as the *Terms*, they are proposed in, are *understood*: Other *Truths* there are, which lie *deeper*, and require a most *attentive* Consideration, before they appear to be *evidently certain*.

And therefore, tho' all *Truth*, which the *Mind* of *Man* can discover by its own *Operations*, is properly discovered by the *Light of Nature*, yet in the Common way of Speaking, *those Truths*, which are most *Universally received*, and are of most Concern to Mankind, have obtained that *Character* in *Contradistinction* to *those*, that are brought to Light by a long Process, and Deduction of Reason.

This is the *Difference* between *Moral* and *Mathematical Truths*; *Moral Truths* are *obvious* to the meanest Capacity, and every unprejudiced *Mind* is so convinced of *them*, as neither to *doubt*, nor *mistake* about them, *They* are *not capable* indeed of *Demonstration*, and would be only more *obscure* and *perplexed*, if they were,
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as it is evident, they are made *more* Difficult by the vain Attempts to make them *more* *Demonstrable*.

Mathematical Truths, if we will speak properly, are only capable of *Demonstration*, but as they are not of *general* Concern, the *Bulk* of *Mankind* is not acquainted with *them*, nor are all *Capacities*, tho' *not* deficient in other *Respects*, able to apprehend *them* thro' a long Chain of References from one End to the other.

But still in all *Truths* whether *Divine* or *Moral*, however *Obvious*, or even *Innate*, as if they were *written on the Heart*, they may seem, the *Mind* nevertheless proceeds and arrives at them by a *series* of *Reasoning*, and doth either *infer* the *Truth* and *Obligation* of our *Duty* from the *several Relations*, we bear to *God*, and the *World*, or else we come to the *Knowledge* of *them* by an *Imperceptible Progress*, and so *assent* to *them*, as *they* were taught from the *Beginning*, and inculcated on our *Infant* Years.

In the first way proceed the *Solitary Men*, and *self taught Philosophers*, who yet must have been at a mighty Loss, had they really lived out of all *Converse* with *Books* and *Men*. In the same way likewise proceed all those, who set forth *Natural Religion* in an *Artificial Dress*, and by putting those two *Constituent parts* of it, *Theology* and *Morality* into a *Mathematical Form*, under a *Show* and in the *Language* of *Demonstration*, talk in a *perplexed laborious* manner of the *plainest* Things in the World. For the *Notions* of *GOD* and our *Duty* are *plain* and *obvious*, and

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46 *Obj. against Univ. Consent*

Common Apprehensions do readily receive them, when they are *clearly expressed* without *confounding* the Understanding with what is *Incomprehensible in GOD*, and without *involving* our *Duty* in the *Mazes* of an *impracticable Demonstration*; For after all this vain Affectation, I must observe again that our *plain Notions* of *GOD*, and the *plain Precepts* of *Morality* are no less *certain*, and at the same time *much easier* to be apprehended, than *Mathematical Demonstrations*.

And accordingly in the *other*, in the *plain beaten Road* proceed the *Generality* of *Mankind*, who do not *investigate* these *Truths* by long *Deductions*, but arrive at *them*, as they were *taught*, and *instructed* from their *Youth*, and by this means they come to a *general Agreement* and *uniform Consent* in some *prevailing Truths*.

If all *Mankind* are not agreed in the *same Notions* of *GOD* and *Morality*, it is an *Objection* against the *Light of Nature*, but *none* against the *Truth of Things*: *Truth* is fixed and unalterable, and depends not upon our *Conceptions*: *Virtue* is not the *Less* such, because some *People* in *different Countrys* have *different Opinions* in some *Branches* of it: *Truth* is *Eternal*, tho' not *Innate*: *That* is not *Virtue*, which *Corrupt* and *Ignorant Men* esteem so, but *What in it self carries its own Truth and Excellence*: It is derived from the *Divine Mind*, and therefore implies an *Eternal Contradiction* to whatever is *False* and *Evil*. This *Distinction* is *Eternal* with respect to *GOD*, tho' no *Evil* can approach *Him*; and it is *Real* with respect to *Man*, tho' *Evil* had *never* come into the *World*; We may as well argue against
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the *Being* of a *GOD* from the *Vile Conceptions* of *Men* concerning a *Deity*, as against the *Unvariable* and *Eternal Truth* of *Virtue* from the *different Opinions* of *Mankind*.

This *Argument* from the *different Estimation* of what is *Virtue* and *Vice* in *several Countrys* is as *strong* against the *Light of Nature*, as against *Innate Ideas*: It turns its *Force* upon the *Head* of *those Men*, who have *weakned* the *Foundation* of *Virtue*, and *confounded* the *Distinctions* of *Good* and *Evil*, and fully proves the *Insufficiency* of *mere Natural Light* to lead *Mankind* into the *Knowledge* of *GOD* and their *Duty*.

As for *Innate Ideas* in this *Argument* we do not *maintain*, and there is no *Necessity* of *Asserting* them: we can arrive at *Knowledge* by another *Way*, and as long as *Truth* is so *Connatural* to the *Soul*, as long as our *Intellectual Facultys* are so framed, as presently to *close* with it, when *duely proposed*, it is the same thing, as if *it were written in our Hearts*: And so in a *Figurative* sense the *Knowledge* of *GOD* and the *great Lines* of our *Duty* are said to be: *There* we have such a *Conviction* and *Conscience* of the *Being* of a *GOD*, and of the *great Dutys* of *Religion*, and they are so *deeply impressed* and *engraven* on our *Minds*, that the most *Profligate*, who have once *received them*, can never utterly *deface them*.

And this leads me to the second Enquiry, which is,

2. What Account the *Scriptures* give us of the *Light of Nature*.

The *Scriptures* speak of the *Light of Nature* in several places of the *Old* and *New Testament*,
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and in speaking of it, they do manifestly set forth, and *distinguish* three Parts in it: The *Knowledge of GOD*; the *Knowledge of our Duty*: and that *Natural Conscience of Well or Ill doing*, which is the *necessary Consequence* of our *Knowledge*.

I. As to the *Knowledge* Mankind is there supposed to have of *GOD*, I must observe,

I. That according to the *Scriptures* Mankind was *Originally* instructed in the *Knowledge* of the *True GOD*: The *Sacred Writings* go all along upon the *supposition* of such *Original Instruction*, whether it was given by an *immediate Revelation* from *GOD*, or by an *Internal Illumination* of the *Mind* in our *first Parents*, which is all one in the *Effect*, and supposes in the *Soul of Man* an *Inward Principle* and *Capacity* to *discern*, *receive*, and *assent* to the *Truth* proposed. For according to the *Words of Elihu* in this *Book of Job*: *There is a Spirit in Man*, and the *Inspiration of the Almighty* giveth them *Understanding*: By which (as I apprehend it) he means not that *every Man* is *immediately inspired*, but that the *Spirit of Man* and his *Intellectual Facultys* are a *Divine Principle* breathed into him by *GOD Himself*, *Who*, as he expresses it in the *thirty fifth Chapter*,^b *teacheth us more than the Beasts of the Earth*, and *maketh us wiser, than the Fowls of Heaven*.

Thus discourseth *Elihu*, before there was any *written Revelation*, and this is the fairest Picture of the *Light of Nature* drawn by a Hand not di-

rected by Revelation, For tho' the *Author* or *Compiler* of this *Book* was Inspired to Record faithfully whatever was uttered by *GOD Almighty*, by *Job*, and his Friends, yea even by *Satan* himself, yet the particular Passages which *Job* and his Friends uttered, most certainly those of *Satan*, were *not Inspired*. So it is true, that *Satan* spoke, as is here related, Not, that what he said was true: For here, as ever, he is a *false Accuser*, and a *Murderer*, and a *Liar* from the *Beginning*: Neither did *Job* nor his Friends speak by *Inspiration*, tho' *Job* and *Elihu* spake that, which is *right* and *Good*. But it is manifest his three *Friends* spake their own private Thoughts and Opinions concerning the Ways and Dispensations of *GOD*. ^a For the Lord said unto *Eliphaz the Temanite*, my Wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends, for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant *Job* hath; But *Elihu* was not reprov'd, neither was he required to offer up for himself a *Burnt-offering*, and therefore tho' not inspired, what he delivered was *right* and *approved* by *GOD* Himself: For while the other three speaking by the *Light of Nature* argued wrong and mistook in their Deductions, he spake truly and reasoned justly according to the *Principles* of the *same Natural Light*: For even the *Light of Nature* will teach us this Truth, as the First and most Fundamental Principle of Knowledge, in answer to the *Question* propounded by *GOD* Himself, That it is *GOD*, ^b who hath put

^a XLII. 7. ^b XXXVIII. 36.

Wisdom in the Inward Parts, and hath given Understanding to the Heart.

Not to proceed in a long Examination of this *Natural Light* according to the *Scriptures*, I would only from the account *there* given of it observe these three Things.

1. That tho' the *Light of Nature* alone was not able to discover, or retain the *true Knowledge* of GOD and his *Attributes*, yet that in all Ages and Nations this *Light* shined the clearest where *Religion* was truest, and the further Men departed from the *true Knowledge* of GOD, the *Light of Nature* was the more darkned, till in some *Nations* it was almost extinguished.

From hence it is plain, that as some *Original Revelation* first brought these *Objects* to the *Light of Nature*, the *Light of Nature* discerned them clearly and distinctly according to the *Truth*, as long as they were held unto it, and presented by that *Revelation*. But when the *Revelation* itself was overcast, and the *Original Doctrines* began in process of time to be varied, the *Light of Nature* beheld them no more in their *first Truth* and *Purity*, but then it saw them, as they were obscured and misrepresented by a corrupt Tradition, which grew more and more *Erroneous*, till at last it settled in *Polytheism* and *Idolatry*, and as to *Morality*, in a *Practice* suitable to the *Falseness* of their *Divinity*. Agreeably to this I would observe secondly,

2. That the *Scriptures* ever since the *Fall* represent the *Light of Nature* weakened and obscured to that Degree, that we ought according to our *Blessed Saviour's Admonition*, to
take

^atake heed, that the *Light*, which is in us be not *Darkness*; for if the *Light* that is in us be *Darkness*, how great is that *Darkness*! In this Condition *St Paul* represents the *Gentile World*, ^bwho walk in the *Vanity* of their *Mind*, having the *Understanding* darkened, being alienated from the *Life* of *GOD* by the *Ignorance*, that is in them because of the *Blindness* of their *Hearts*: This was the deplorable Condition of Mankind under the sole Conduct of *Natural Light* alone; and *Solomon* had given us long before the true Reason of it: *GOD* hath made *Man* upright, but they have sought out many *Inventions*. He came *Perfect* and *Spotless* out of the Hands of his *Creator*; but now he hath corrupted and defiled his *Soul*: The *Light* that was in him, burned with *Purity* and *Clearness*, as in the Morning of his *Creation*, and flamed upright like an *acceptable Sacrifice* with a *direct Ascent* to *Heaven*; but now it is *clouded* and *obstructed*, and *beaten down* to *Earth*. It is almost choked, and extinguished by the gross *Vapours* of our *Lusts* and *inordinate Affections*.

This *Blindness* of *Man* is drawn with great Truth and the most lively Expression by a Masterly Hand in the *Book* called the *Wisdom* of *Solomon*, where he is introduced praying to *GOD* for *Wisdom*: And as it is not received for an *Inspired Writing*, it hath this Advantage, that it is a more *uncontested Acknowledgment* made by the *Light of Nature* concerning its own *Weakness*

^a Luke XI. 35. Matth. VI. 23. ^b Ephes. IV. 17, 18. ^c Eccles. VI. 29.

and *Imperfection* very apposite to the *Words* of my *Text*.

^a *What Man is he, that can know the Counsel of GOD? or who can think, what the Will of the LORD is? for the Thoughts of Mortal Men are miserable, and our Devices are but uncertain: for the Corruptible Body presseth down the Soul, and the Earthly Tabernacle weigheth down the Mind, that museth upon many things; And hardly do we guess aright at the things which are upon Earth, and with labour do we find the things that are before us; but the things that are in Heaven who hath searched out? and thy Counsel who hath known? except Thou give Wisdom and send thy Holy Spirit from above?*

Thirdly I would observe,

3. That notwithstanding all these *Defects* GOD *Almighty* ever appeals to the *Light of Nature*, and makes *Mankind accountable* for the *right Use* and *Improvement* of it: For however the *World* thro' its manifold *Corruptions* had lost the *Knowledge* of the *True GOD*, and was sunk into the *Vilest* and most *Abject Idolatry*, yet GOD had given unto Men a *standing* and *perpetual Evidence* of *Himself* in the *Works of Creation*, and in the *Administration* of his *Providence*: To *them* He appeals as to the *Book of Nature* written in the fairest and most distinguished *Characters*: Thus *Paul* and *Barnabas* in restraining the Men of *Lystra* from doing *Sacrifice* unto them, while they preached the *Living GOD*, argued from his *Providence*, that however the *World* was lost in *Ignorance* of the *True GOD*,

^a *Wisd. IX. 13, &c.*

tion, even to the very defacement of *Humane Nature*.

What hath been said of the *Knowledge* Men had of God by the *Light of Nature* as represented in the *Scriptures* may be applied

2. To the Knowledge Men had of His Laws, and their Duty.

For tho' from the Account given in the *first* Chapter of the *Epistle* to the *Romans*, of the *Blindness* and *Degeneracy* of *Men*, we should hardly expect to find any *Law* or *Direction* of *Practice* among *them*, yet in the *second* Chapter the *Apostle* tells us ^a *that when the Gentiles, which have not the Law, do by Nature the Things contained in the Law, these having not the Law are a Law unto themselves*: Some *Fundamental Principles* of *Natural Religion*, however involved in *Superstition* and *Error*, were necessarily preserved: The *Acknowledgment* of a *Divine BEING*, and the *great Rules* of *Justice*, and *Judgment* were necessary to the very *Being* and *Subsistence* of all *Communities*, and so far at least, as the *Support* of *Society* required, if *Nature* had not *taught* them, the *Magistrate* must have *exacted* *them* in the same manner, he now punisheth the Violation of them.

The Knowledge Men had of the Law of God and their Duty was not Perfect or Exact, but still their Capacity of Knowing more, and their Transgression of what they knew rendered them *without Excuse*. There is no Precept of *Morality*, but carries its own Conviction with it. The *Light of Nature* presently discerns the *Rea-*

sonableness and Obligation of it, and however the World degenerated more and more, GOD ALMIGHTY still looked upon Mankind as *accountable* for their *Transgressions*, and *answerable* for their *Abuse of that Reason, and Natural Light*, which *He* had given them. It is said indeed that *the Heathen had not knowledge of his Laws*,^a as we read in our old *Translation*, but this is not to be understood *absolutely*, but *comparatively*, and not of the *Law of Nature especially*, but of the *peculiar Declaration of his Will and Pleasure to the Jews*, as they were his *chosen People*, *He shewed his Word unto Jacob, his Statutes and Ordinances unto Israel: He hath not dealt so with any Nation, neither have the Heathen Knowledge of his Laws.* But for the *Law of Nature*, as it is of *Universal Obligation* He exacts it of all *Mankind*, and will admit of no *Ignorance* as a *Plea* for the *Violation of it*: Whether it were *Originally* revealed and declared by GOD *Himself*, or whether Man by the *Disquisitions of his own Reason* could work out all the several Dutys of it, GOD supposes them to know it, or their *Ignorance* to be *Criminal*, and upon this ground He will judge them *hereafter*; as upon this ground He did all along by his *Prophets* denounce his *Judgments* against them. And it was upon the *Presumption of this Knowledge of their Duty* that GOD sent *Jonah* to the *Ninevites* to preach unto them, and proclaim ^b*Yet forty Days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.* The *Prophet* was not sent to teach them their Duty, but meerly

^a Psal. CXLVII. 20. ^b Jonah III. 4.

56 GOD *applies to Nat. Light.*

to call upon them to repent of their Transgressions, and *they believed GOD, and turned from their Evil ways.* The whole Passage is remarkable, the Application is made to their Natural Knowledge, and the Event was answerable to their Obedience. *And GOD saw their Works, that they turned from their Evil way, and GOD repented of the Evil, that He said He would do unto them, and He did it not.* The great Patrons of Natural Light and Reason against Revelation must at least suppose, besides the sufficiency of that Light, that Mankind hath a perfect Knowledge of GOD and their Duty, and that they are accountable to GOD for their Actions: whether they come to know the Will of GOD by *Reason* or *Revelation* it is all one as to their Obligation. GOD looks upon them as some way or other capable of being informed of their Duty, and whether they will charge themselves with the Knowledge of it, or derive their Knowledge from the Declaration of GOD's Will; whether they will lay their Obligation upon the *Reasonableness* and *Fitness* of things, and deduce the several Dutys from the several *Relations* they stand in to GOD and each other, still their Duty to GOD is the grand and *Fundamental* Doctrine of *Natural Religion* in the first place: and that they are accountable for their Actions is a clear and undeniable Dictate of their Reason.

Together with the *Knowledge* the World had, of GOD and their *Duty*, the *Scriptures* do set forth thirdly,

3. The *Conscience* of *Well* or *Ill doing*, or that *Natural Conscience*, which is the Consequence of their Knowledge.

We have a *Consciousness* within our selves of the Freedom and Nature of our Actions: we are taught by the *Light of Nature* to distinguish between *Good* and *Evil*: Even whilst against our Judgment we do Evil, we ^a *consent unto the Law, that it is Good*. We are inwardly convinced of our Obligation to do our Duty, and to avoid Transgression. From hence arises the *Conscience* of *Well* or *Ill doing*, and from this *Conscience* that Complacency and Satisfaction, which attend the Performance, and that Remorse and Displeasure, which follow the Violation of the great Dutys of Morality, according to the *Apostles* Declaration to the *Gentiles*, ^b *These having not the Law, and yet doing by Nature the Things contained in the Law, are a Law unto themselves, Those of them are a Law unto themselves, οἱ τινες, whosoever among them shew the Work of the Law written in their Hearts, their Conscience also bearing Witness, and their Thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another*; That is each Man's Conscience, who acknowledgeth the *Law of Nature* bearing Witness at the same time, and his Thoughts accusing or excusing him by turns, as he had done Good or Evil: This I take to be the true Construction of the place; For tho' Men may be so hardened, and have their Understanding so darkened, as almost to put out the *Light of Nature* and it's self

^a Rom. VII. 16. ^b Rom. II. 15.

58 *supposed by the Scriptures.*

all Remorse of Conscience, yet where *they are not*^a *past feeling*, where the *Conscience is not*^b *fear-ed as it were with an hot Iron*, the Force of it will exert itself; for the most abandon'd Wretches, mentioned in the first Chapter *know, that they, who do such things, are worthy of Death*; and Solomon hath taught us, that *'the Spirit of Man, by which he means Natural Conscience, is the Candle or Lamp of the Lord, searching all the Inward Parts of the Belly, that is the deepest, and most secret Recesses of our Guilt.*

We have now taken a general View of the *Strength and Compass* of our *Natural Powers*, whether we consider the *Light of Nature* according to the Common Notions of Mankind, or according to the Account given of it in the Scriptures.

I have to the Knowledge of God joyned the Knowledge and Conscience of our Duty, because these depend upon our Knowledge of God, and we may be properly said to know so much of God, as we know of our Duty.

It is a Point of meer Speculation, and no better than an Amusing Problem to enquire, whether the *Light of Nature* is able to direct us *further* in the Knowledge of God, than it appears actually to have *done*.

That all the great *Truths* of *Natural Religion* may be discovered by the meer Strength of *Reason*, we should readily allow, were it not Evident, that *meer Reason* has been very defective both in Speculation and Practice, and the *Light*

a Eph. IV. 19. b 1 Tim. IV. 2. c Prov. XX. 27.

of *Nature* shines not with that strength and clearness, as it did at our first Creation. However it is sufficient to all the Purposes of Conscience and Obligation, that the *great Dutys* of *Natural Religion* however discovered are immediately received and acknowledged by the Mind as undoubted Truths of strict and Eternal *Obligation*.

The Interests, Evidence, and Obligation of Natural Religion being thus far secured, I shall with Reference to the grand Fundamental Article of it in the following Discourses, undertake to prove that tho' the *Light of Nature* directed Men to the Acknowledgment of a DIVINE BEING, yet in this state of Depravity and Darkness it was not able to lead them into the Knowledge of the ONE TRUE GOD, nor to give them right and worthy Conceptions of Him. That it was able neither *Originally* to discover, nor when by other Means made known, to *preserve* the Knowledge of Him in the World.

If we suppose no Original Revelation, we must also suppose the *Knowledge* of the True GOD never to have obtained among Men, till it pleased Him to *reveal* Himself, and no further, than He so revealed Himself. For look into all Nations and Ages the Fact is evident, so far as History can inform us; wherever we find a true Religion we find at the same time a *Revelation*: and false Religions have still prevailed from the Loss or Neglect of the *Original* or *Subsequent* Revelations.

From the *Scriptures* it is plain, that God revealed Himself to Man as soon as He created him,

him, and that He continued such Revelations at proper Intervals to keep up and preserve the Knowledge of Himself in the World: That before the Flood this Knowledge was lost, except in the Family of *Noah*, thro' Universal Wickedness and Neglect, and soon after the Flood it was lost again, except in the Family of *Shem*, when Men departed from the Religion, which *Noah* had been taught and professed, and it had been lost universally, had not God called *Abraham* from his Father's House, and checked Idolatry by a *special Revelation*.

Upon this State of the Fact with regard to the common Notions, and to the *Scripture Account* of the *Light of Nature*, I would for a *Conclusion* offer these following Considerations.

I. That as from the Beginning the *Light of Nature* was guided by an *Original Revelation*, it hath ever since been assisted in those Ages and Nations, where a *special Revelation* never came, by those *Notions* which Mankind *first* received of a *Deity*. Such an *Original Revelation* the Scriptures of the Old Testament declare, as it was derived from *Adam*, and delivered down by *Noah* to his Posterity: And St *Paul* in his ^aEpistle to the *Romans* by the Tenour and whole Drift of his Argument supposes it: For when he assigns the Reasons, which rendered Men *inexcusable* for losing the Knowledge of the True God, and for which God *gave them up to a reprobate Mind*, he charges them, that is the first Idolaters from *Noah*, and likewise all their

Posterity, as they still degenerated more and more, with an *Original Knowledge* of God, and a Neglect of those Natural Manifestations, God had given of Himself, sufficient to have preserved them from such gross Idolatry. Upon this ground he makes good his Inference at the 20th verse, *So that they are without Excuse, because when they knew GOD, they glorified Him not as GOD:* So that at some time Men were in Possession of this Knowledge, And ^a*even as they did not like to retain GOD in their Knowledge, He gave them up* as is there related at large. The Knowledge they once had, refers up therefore to the Days of *Noah*, from whose Death to the Call of *Abraham* there are so few Years, that it is wonderful to think, that Idolatry in so short a space should so Universally prevail, till in the Process of Time from losing the *revealed Knowledge* of God, Mankind sunk into the darkest Ignorance, and lost the *Natural Knowledge* also.

If this Passage does not expressly mention the *Revealed Knowledge*, as it doth the *Natural*, yet it plainly supposes the *Revealed* to have been the *Original Knowledge* Men had of the CREATOR, and the first Sin here charged upon them is an Offence against this Revelation, ^b*Professing themselves Wise they became Fools, And changed the Glory of the Uncorruptible GOD into an Image made like to Corruptible Man, and to Birds, and four footed Beasts, and creeping Things.* This *Glory* of the *Uncorruptible GOD*

is the *Schechinah* or the Manifestation of the Divine Presence, when God vouchsafed to appear and make his Glory Visible unto Men. In these Appearances and Manifestations of his Glory He spoke and conversed with *Mankind*, declaring his *Pleasure* and *Commandments* to them: This therefore was their *Sin*, their *de-basing* the *Divine Glory* of the *Uncorruptible* God, and *representing* it by the *Image* of Corruptible Man; yea so wretchedly Blind and Degenerate they grew, that they *changed his Glory into Images made like unto Birds, and four footed Beasts, and creeping Things*. Thus ^a *they changed the Truth of GOD into a Ly*: they first made these the Symbols of the *Deity*, afterwards the Objects of their *Adoration*, ^b *worshipping and serving the Creature more than the Creator, who is Blessed for ever. Amen.*

^c *For this Cause GOD gave them up to vile Affections, and as they did not like to retain GOD in their Knowledge, He gave them over to a Reprobate Mind.* This whole Discourse of the *Apostle* supposes an Intercourse between God and Man, and consequently an Original Revelation from which Men departed, till they were so lost, and bewildered, as not to discern the Evidence, which Nature gives, when ^d *The Heavens declare the Glory of GOD, and the Firmament sheweth his handy Work*: For tho' *their Sound is gone out into all Lands, and their Words into the Ends of the World, yet there is neither Speech nor*

^a Rom. I. 25. ^b v. 25. ^c v. 26. ^d Ps. XIX. 1, &c.

Two Arguments for a general 63

Language, where their Voice when heard, was truly understood without Revelation expounding it.

Besides this Collection from the *Apostle's* Words, that God did *Originally Reveal Himself* to Mankind, there are these two Arguments for a *General Revelation* at *first*, and a *Special One afterwards*, That all *Instituted Worship* supposes a *Revelation*, and the general Agreement in *Offering Sacrifices*, however the *Rites* were in after times perverted by *Idolatry* and *Superstition*, plainly evinces an *Original Appointment*.

And for a *Special Revelation* the great Writers among the Heathen are so far true, as they agree with the Sacred Writings, and they do still approach *nearer* unto, or depart *further* from the Truth, as their Notions are *more or less* correspondent to the *Sacred Text*.

That this by any immediate Consequence proves the Books of *Moses*, or any other parts of the *Scriptures* to be inspired, I do not say, but as there are no Writings in all Ages backward, besides the *Jewish* to be found, which do Uniformly teach us the Knowledge of the True God, and give us worthy Conceptions of Him, the *Scriptures* cannot be pretended to be wrote by the *meer Light of Nature*, because no such Productions among all other Writers are to be found: and as the Appearances of the True God, and his own Declarations concerning Himself, his *Nature*, and his *Attributes* are there Historically related so every way worthy of Himself, we cannot doubt their being a *Divine Revelation*: And so far, as the *Heathen* Writers were acquainted with *them*, and *enlightened* by *them*,

64 *and special Revelation*

them, as in several *Passages* of their *Books* they seem to have been, we may conclude, that even their *Writings* are far from being the Produce of *meer Natural Reason*, or the *Light of Nature alone*.

2. For to strengthen this arises this second Consideration.

That we have not at this Time any *Writings* remaining either in *History* or *Philosophy*, before our *Saviour's Coming*, that give an Account of *meer Natural Religion* without some mixture of *Revelation*. If there be any Exceptions to this Remark, they must be drawn from those *Ignorant* and *Barbarous Nations*, who have almost lost the very Notions of a *Deity*, and carry besides their *Make* hardly any *Marks of Humanity*: Their *Writings* indeed are not to be expected, but when their *sentiments*, or rather *no sentiments*, are produced, as sometimes they have been by the *Patrons of Natural Religion* for Instances against Universal Consent, they are stronger Instances against the *Light of Nature* it self, and especially against its Ability of its self to teach, or preserve the true Knowledge of GOD.

But in those Nations, where Knowledge has been cultivated by Learning, we may trace a Correspondence with that *Original Revelation* GOD *first* made of Himself to Mankind, and with the more *particular Revelation* He afterwards gave the *Jews*: It is Easy to account how such an *Original Revelation* might be preserved in some general Notions by *Tradition* for some *Generations*, and much easier, how the

Re-

Revelation committed to *Writing* as delivered by *Moses* and the *Prophets*, might be known to those *Sages*, who travelled into all Countrys in search of Knowledge; and from several Passages of their Writings it is Evident, that they were acquainted with the *Doctrines*, if not with the *Sacred Writings* themselves, and were no Strangers to the *Jewish Theology*, by which without acknowledging it they modelled their own Schemes, and mixed some *Truth* with their *Superstitions*.

3. From the *first Chapter* to the *Romans* I would for a Conclusion of all observe, that the *Apostle* in describing the *Idolatry* and *Wickedness* of the World points out the *true Causes* and *Principles* of *Heresy* and *Infidelity*: *They are without Excuse*^a *because that when they knew GOD, they glorified Him not as GOD, neither were Thank-ful, but became vain in their Imaginations, and their foolish Heart was darkned: Professing themselves to be Wise, they became Fools, as all such vain Pretenders are, and the Consequence was, They changed the Glory of the Uncorruptible GOD into Images like unto Beasts and Themselves*: The Causes of so foul an *Apostasie* here assigned are not only the Neglect of those Means of Knowledge, that were afforded them, but more especially their Neglect of *GOD's Worship* and their *Ingratitude*: *Neither were they Thankful*: This Expression denotes *both*: neither in their *Worship* nor *Behaviour* did they return Thanks unto

^a Rom. I. 21, 22.

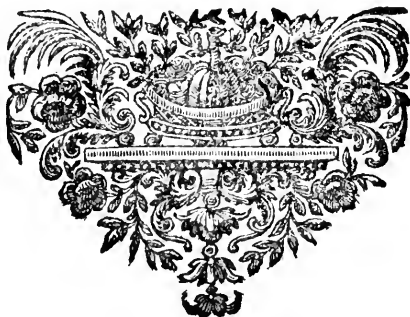
Him: This denotes also their Wickedness and Corruption; and then their Affectation of Wisdom pointed out the Conceitedness and Vanity of their Hearts: *They became vain in their Imagination, and their foolish Heart was darkened*: This Vanity and Self Conceit conspiring with Corrupt and Negligent Minds, betrayed them to the greatest Folly, *Professing themselves to be Wise they became Fools*.

But let us, *my beloved Brethren*, ^a *cast down our Vain Imaginations, and every high thing, that exalteth it self against the Knowledge of GOD, and bring into Captivity every thought to the Obedience of Christ*; that being convinced of the Weakness of our Carnal Reason we may submit our Minds to the Strength and Evidence of the Gospel; an Evidence derived from the *Veracity, Wisdom and Power of GOD*. ^b *Wherefore* according to St Peter's Exhortation, *laying aside all Malice, and all Guile and Hypocrisy, As new born Babies* of pure and unprejudicate Minds, *desire the sincere Milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby*. Thus shall we effectually root out those corrupt Principles of *Herésie and Infidelity*, which grow of a *Proud and a Carnal Mind*. ^c *Wherefore*, as St James directs us, *lay apart all Filthiness and superfluity of Naughtiness, and receive with meekness the Engrafted Word, which is able to save your Souls*.

^a 2 Cor. X. 5. ^b 1 Pet. II. 1, 2. ^c James I. 21.

That this may be the Blessed Effect of his Word in our Hearts, GOD of his Infinite Mercy grant for Jesus Christ his sake,

To whom with the Father and the Holy Spirit be ascribed, as is most due, all Honour and Power, all Praise and Adoration for Ever and Ever. Amen.





S E R M O N I I I .

Preached *Feb.* 6. 1728-9.

JOB XI. 7.

*Canst Thou by searching find out
GOD? Canst thou find out the Al-
mighty unto Perfection?*

MY Endeavours hitherto have been to show the close Connection between *Heresy* and *Infidelity*, as each proceeds upon the same *Common Principles*: Among these the main and *Fundamental Principle* is this, *That all Doctrines and Propositions whatsoever, Revealed, as well as Unrevealed are to be judged of and determined by the Light of Nature and the Strength of Reason*; in Consequence of which we are obliged to believe no further than this *Natural Light* and *Reason* can direct us, that is no further, than we can comprehend,

hend, and account for what we are required to believe.

Now this *Principle* is *partly* True, nor should we make any Exception to the *general* Position, were it not *misapplied* and *diverted* from its genuine Course; as if the *Object* of our *Faith* must be the *Subject* of our *Knowledge* as much as is any *Object* of our *Senses*. For it is True, that we cannot believe against our *Natural Light* and Apprehension of Things, but then it is equally True, that we may believe those Truths, of which we have no Apprehension by the *Light of Nature* to discover them at *first*, nor any Power in the Capacity of our Reason to comprehend them *afterwards*.

This is a Dictate of *Reason*, and *Natural Religion* as well as *Revealed* is founded on it; For in *Natural Religion* there are Truths, which we cannot comprehend, and yet the same Reason, which cannot comprehend them doth nevertheless convince us, that we must believe them; So that tho' there are some *Truths* which by our *Natural Light* we cannot originally discover, as the Existence of *Angels*, and all Points of meer Revelation, and some *Truths* we can never comprehend, as the *Essence* and *Attributes* of God, yet the *Light of Nature* will teach us, that we must believe them, when discovered, tho' we cannot comprehend them.

But the Persons I am concerned with, while they *boast* the *Sufficiency*, do *stop* the *Progress* of this *Light*: They do not only confine their Belief to their Knowledge, but they confine their Knowledge to direct and Adequate Ideas: they pre-

pretend indeed to have clear Ideas, as of *Spirit*, where in Truth they have no Idea at all, and then according to their other Principle, since they can believe no further, than they can know, and since they can know no further, than they have Ideas, they cannot believe any thing of a Spiritual Nature, especially if we add their *third* ground, which is to require *Sensible Evidence* and *Demonstration*; For these destroy all Belief, and Spiritual Beings are not capable of them.

However since they conduct themselves by these *Principles*, and at the same time pretend to make the *Light of Nature* their sole *Guide*, and their own *Reason* the only *Measure* and *Standard* of Belief, without any regard to the *Evidence* and *Authority* upon which any Point is proposed, I thought it not improper to consider this *Pretension*, and in that view after I had examined those *three Principles* of *theirs*, which are so destructive of all Faith, and do contract our Knowledge to narrower Bounds, than Nature her self has set us, I proceeded to the Question in the Text: *Canst Thou by searching find out GOD? Canst Thou find out the Almighty unto Perfection?*

These Words, as I have already said, acquaint us, that there is an Incomprehensible BEING, Transcendently above the utmost reach of our Intellectual Powers.

That we have a *Knowledge* of this Transcendent BEING is *supposed*.

That after our utmost searches we can *Know*
Him

Him unto Perfection is by this form of Speaking most strongly *denied*.

With Respect to both these my purpose was to consider the *Strength* and *Compass* of our *Natural Powers*, how far they will carry us in the Knowledge of God. And in order to this in my last Discourse I proposed first,

1. To enquire into and fix what *That is*, which is *Commonly* called the *Light of Nature*. Secondly,
2. What Account the *Scriptures* give us of it. And thirdly,
3. To Conclude with some proper Observations.

With Regard to the first, I have shewed the Foundation, that Reason proceeds upon in the Attainment of Knowledge, which is derived from those sensible Objects we are Conversant with, and from its own Operations upon them, together with the Consciousness the Mind hath of its own Operations.

This Knowledge is neither *Innate*, nor *Demonstrative*, except in *Mathematical* Conclusions; if it were either, Mens Conceptions concerning God and their Duty would be Uniform, and however Difference of Sentiments may be an Argument against *Innate Ideas*, I have shewed, it is no less an Argument against the *Light of Nature*, and proves it utterly insufficient to lead Mankind into the Knowledge of God and their Duty.

2. As to the Second I observed, that the *Scriptures*

Scriptures speaking of the *Light of Nature*, do distinguish *three parts* in it: The *Knowledge of God*: the *Knowledge of our Duty*: and the *Conscience of Well or Ill doing*, which is the necessary *Consequence* of that *Knowledge*.

But then first they do ascribe the *Knowledge of God* *Originaly to Revelation*: secondly ever since the *Fall* they set forth the *Weakness* and *Depravity of Humane Nature*: and thirdly from the *Scriptures* we find, that notwithstanding the *Defects* brought upon Mankind by the *Fall*, our good God appeals to the *Light of Nature*, and expects of Mankind the due *Improvement* of it for so much, as may be known of God, and for the *Conscience* of their *Duty*.

These two *Accounts* lead us to the second *Proposition*.

II. That we cannot find out the *Almighty* unto *Perfection*. And from them we may learn, first,

1. The *Weakness* of this *Light of Nature* left *unassisted* to it self.

2. Its *Capacity* to extend its *Views* upon proper *Instructions*.

3. That under all possible *Advantages* we cannot attain to a full, and *Adequate Knowledge* of the *Almighty*.

And so I proceed to the further *Consideration* of the *Subject* before us.

1. As to the first, Its *Weakness* when left *unassisted* to it self, the *Light of Nature* may be
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considered in its *Original Strength* and *Perfection*, or in its *depraved State* and *Moral Imperfection*: For either the *Light of Nature* was always in this weak and imperfect State, or it hath at some time been darkned, and our Intellectual Facultys have been impaired: That we came not *Originally* in so Imperfect a State out of the Hands of our *Creator* is highly *probable* from the Deductions of *Reason*: It is *certain* from *Revelation*. Upon the Foot of *Reason* alone, if we should suppose Man to be *Weak*, compared with any higher Order of Intellectual Beings, yet we cannot suppose him *Wicked*: God's Goodness made him not, nor was obliged to make him Wise and Understanding as an Angel, either in the Manner or Measure of his Facultys; but the Goodness of God was engaged to create him Innocent, that is Perfect according to his Nature, and the Rank he holds in the Order and Scale of Being.

We know how forward some People are to make Man's *Guilt*, especially his *Punishment* an *Impeachment* of God's *Goodness*; but these Reasoners must therefore own that it is most Consonant to the Goodness of God *to have Created Man Upright*; and therefore, when we find that the *Weakness* of our *Nature* is derived from our *Guilt*, and accompanied with a *Depravity* of the *Will* and *Affections*, we shall absolve the Goodness of God, and look more carefully into our selves: The most Partial cannot call *this* the *Perfection* of Nature: He that is not sensible of Blindness in his Understanding, Perverseness in his Will, and Disorder in his Affections, is
blinder

blinder than the rest of the World, and his Condition is so much the worse, as he is less sensible of it. We have proper and just Notions of *Perfection*, either *Comparatively* or *Absolutely* considered, and if the present Condition of Human Life can in *any sense* be called a *State of Perfection*, we confound our Language and Conceptions of things, and it is the same, as if we made no Difference between a Man that is Crooked, Lame, and Blind, and a Man that is Straight and Upright with the perfect Use of all his Limbs and Senses.

But upon the *other* supposition, That Man was *Perfect* in his *Intellectual Facultys*: That his *Understanding* was Unclouded: his *Will* Unbiaſſed: his *Affections* Regular, still his *Intellectual Facultys* are *limited* and *circumscribed* within very *narrow Bounds* with respect to *Spiritual Objects*, and indeed to *every Object*, which is removed from an Immediate Communication with the Senses. In the Material World we are ignorant of what is *Invisible*, as are the *Essences* of Things, so as to form any *Ideas* of them at all, or any *Conceptions* of them separate from their *Property*s, and least of all can we attain to a full and adequate *Knowledge of the Almighty*.

In this Case there is no *Difference* between our *Original* and our *present* Condition: The Facultys and Capacitys of the Soul are the same in *both*: However Lust and Passion may blind Men now, they could proceed no further by their *Natural* Strength in the Knowledge of Spiritual Beings and of God Himself, while in a State of Innocence, than they can now in this

Lapsed

Lapsed and Depraved Estate: For the Mind performs her Operations in the same manner: The Ideas: the Apprehension: the Reason, and the Laws of Reasoning are the same: All the Difference is, that we proceed not so readily without Obstruction, nor see so clearly without Prejudice, as in a State of Innocence.

This Difference is however no Argument that our Facultys reach further in a State of Innocence, nor can any thing be inferred from it, but this, that all Infidelity springs from those Evil Affections, which darken the Understanding, that it cannot apprehend aright, and pervert the Will, that it shall not assent to the Truth proposed, nor to the Evidence brought to prove it.

Let these Men therefore suppose which way they will: either that *Reason* was *never* more perfect, and so deny the *Fall*, or that it was once more perfect, and so acknowledge the Scripture Account, this the mean while is certain, that it could proceed no further in the Knowledge of God upon *one* Supposition, than upon the *other*, that is no further than *it* hath done, or hath pretended to do exclusive of *Revelation*, if yet there was ever any Religion in the World not *remotely* founded on some *Original Revelation*, as 'tis not possible to produce any System of true Religion without it.

But if we will suppose *Religion* to have been conducted by the meer *Light of Nature*, we must at the same time suppose, either that the World was once in Possession of some true Religion, or that by the *Light of Nature* alone
Man

Man could not arrive at any true Religion; and supposing this, then I say, that nothing manifests the *Weakness* of this *Natural Light* so evidently, as the Looking into and Examining the *State of Religion* in all Ages and Nations, where the *Original Revelation* was lost and none since received. One Argument against the Being of a GOD hath been drawn from the *Want of Universal Consent*: a most certain Argument may be drawn from it against the *Light of Nature*: For supposing the Fact true, that there was no *Universal Consent*, or supposing it True that there was once, since the World was peopled, an *Universal Consent*: upon the *Former* supposition the *Light of Nature* was not able to discover a GOD: upon the *Latter* (as appears from the old Theology) it was not able truly to discover *Him*.

If we proceed to a further Examination we shall find, what is an undeniable Truth, that upon a supposition, that the *Light of Nature* had ever been able to teach, or ever had taught a true Religion, it was not able to preserve it in the World.

Let the *Patrons* of this *Light* proceed upon any possible Supposition, still they must acknowledge the *Weakness* and *Insufficiency* of it *left meerly to it self*; and it must therefore be Absurd to make this *Light* in its *present* or *former* Condition, since the days of *Adam*, even before his *Fall* the sole Measure and Standard of Religion, exclusive of all other Assistance.

But to balance the Natural or acquired *Insufficiency* of the *Light of Nature*, we may learn
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secondly from the account given of it in the *Scriptures* especially,

2. Its *Capacity* to extend its Views upon proper Assistance and Instruction.

By its *Natural Insufficiency* I understand the *Bounds* and *Limits* beyond which it cannot pass, whether we suppose it in its *Original* Clearness and Perfection, or assisted and improved beyond its Natural Strength by the Light of *Revelation*. By its acquired I understand that *Weakness*, which is contracted thro' the Corruption and Inordinate Affections of the Soul. Take *Nature* in its most perfect State it hath its Limitations: And *Revelation*, which *discovers*, cannot make us *comprehend* the great Truths, it teaches. The *Mind* of Man is not only *Finite*, and its Views are not only *Bounded* with regard to *Divine Objects*, but in its present State, while it dwells in the Body, it is constrained to act according to certain Rules, and thro' the Mediation of those Organs, to which it is most intimately united.

Upon this Subject therefore it may be proper to consider first,

1. What this *Capacity* is, and to what it extends. Secondly,

2. After what Manner the *Mind* proceeds in extending her Views. Thirdly,

3. The *Assistance*, *Instruction*, and *Information* it proceeds upon.

1. As to this *Capacity*, and the *Extent* of it, It is seated in the Understanding and consist;
in

in the Improvement of our *Natural Light* according to the *Operations* of the *Mind* in this necessary and intimate *Conjunction* with the *Body*.

The *Light of Nature* therefore under the present Condition of our *Intellectual Faculty*s may be considered with respect to the *Ability* it hath to discover *Truth* by its *own searches* without any Assistance from others, and with respect to its *Capacity* of receiving and acknowledging any Truths when duely proposed.

As to its *Ability* to discover *Truth* by its own Disquisitions alone, this is a Case meerly *Speculative* and Imaginary; and however it may be distinctly proposed in *Theory*, in *Practice* it will fall in with the other, as our Knowledge improves by daily Converse and Instruction: All Knowledge is really founded in a *Capacity* of Learning: and tho' in some Instances Men may be said to work out things by themselves, which, where it seems to be done, is only a more *laborious way* of Learning, yet they generally arrive at Truth by a shorter way, and take that from the *Information* of others, which they have not Leisure, nor are fitted by Education to examine *Fundamentally* themselves: Thus they act with regard to the most important Truths of the greatest and most universal Concern, and when these are truly stated, and justly proposed, the Mind discerns the Evidence, and assents, as firmly, as if every Man had Originally searched and examined for himself.

The *Light of Nature* therefore with respect to *Knowledge* is not so much an *Ability* of it self
Ori-

Originally to *discover*, as a *Capacity* to *receive* it, when *discovered*. This ever since our first Parents, who were created perfect in Understanding as well as Stature, and were at once illuminated with all Necessary Knowledge, this ever since is the Case of all the Sons of *Adam*: They learn from others what must require unspeakable Pains to work out by themselves. And it is a just *Sarcasm* on the Vanity of Men, because a true Account of their Ignorance, what *Zophar* here adds concerning those bold Intruders into the Secrets of God, who presume to examine and search his Ways. ^a *For vain Man would be Wise, tho' Man be born like a Wild Ass's Colt.*

It may possibly be objected, that Man is capable by his own Reason alone to make out certain Truths, and to come to certain Conclusions: For in some Cases what one makes out to another, that other is able to make out to himself, as in *Mathematical* Demonstrations.

But I answer first, Here is some previous Fundamental Knowledge supposed, and the whole Process in these, as in any other natural Conclusions, is formed upon some *first* and *general Principles*, which Men agree in as fully, as in their most *simple Ideas*.

I answer secondly, that the Question is not concerning *meer Natural Knowledge*, but concerning the *Extent* of our *Knowledge* even to things *Supernatural*: And it is in this Respect we are to consider the *Capacity* we have of raising our Views above Material Objects, and

extending our Knowledge beyond this Visible World.

This shews its *Extent*, and comprehends the Knowledge, we have of God both *Natural* and *Revealed*: It takes in all those Truths, which belong to *Natural Religion*, as contradistinguished to *Revealed*, and all those Truths, which, strictly speaking are known by *Revelation* only: The manner of apprehending is in both Cases the same: We understand the Propositions according to the same Rules of Interpretation in both, and judge of the Proof by the same Rules, as in any other Case we judge of the Nature, Clearness and sufficiency of the Evidence.

For a further and more distinct Explication therefore of this Capacity we may consider, Secondly,

2. After what manner the Mind proceeds in extending its Views.

This leads us to the Operation of our Minds with respect to things of a Spiritual and Invisible Nature in what manner it apprehends them, and in what manner we express our Conceptions of them, especially, when we speak of God with regard to his *Essence*, his *Existence*, and his *Attributes*, which are *Articles* of *Natural Religion* as well, as *Revealed*, and with regard to *those Relations*, under which the *whole* GOD-HEAD subsists in a most Incomprehensible manner, and to those other *Mysteries* also, which are *Articles* of *Revelation* only.

God hath given us no new *Facultys*, by which we may apprehend, nor hath He taught us a

New Language, in which we may express these *Mysteries*; and however all Truths concerning the Divine Nature are to be *Spiritually discerned*, that is in a manner suitable to their Transcendent Excellency, yet we must speak of them in the Language of Men, and GOD Himself in declaring them condescends also to our manner of Speech and Apprehension.

For the Mind of Man, as I have spoken at large, proceeds according to certain and settled Laws in all its Operations founded upon those *Ideas*, which are the ground Work, and Materials of all its Knowledge; and therefore it cannot form any new Conceptions, nor extend its Views without the Help of its first *Ideas*. All its *Ideas* are Originally impressed from sensible Objects, and 'tis the Employment of the Mind to sort them under their several *Classes*, and according to all their various *Relations*, out of which, as from the Letters of an *Alphabet*, are formed Endless *Combinations*: In this Process it considers them either as the *first* and Immediate *Images* of Material Objects, or as the *Symbols*, and *Secondary* Representations of Objects not subject to our Senses, and no other-ways to be conceived, than by the Mediation of those *Ideas*, which are substituted to express them to us; and accordingly so far, as we can frame any Conceptions of the Divine BEING and his Attributes, they are drawn from those Perceptions, we have of all Excellency and Goodness observed in our selves and the World about us.

The Compass of meer *Natural* Knowledge is very narrow, and strictly speaking, confined within the Verge of this World alone: Here that boasted *Maxim*, if any where, is true, that *we have Knowledge no further than we have Ideas*, and if we could not extend and accommodate our *Ideas* of *Material* Objects to things *Spiritual* and *Divine*, we must be shut up within this Visible World, and all our Knowledge would terminate with our Sight, and the rest of our Senses.

But there is in the Soul a Power of enlarging its Views, and extending them to another World according to the Images and Language, in which things *Spiritual* and *Supernatural* are offered to our Understanding; and what we cannot have proper, immediate and direct *Ideas* of, we are taught to form the best Conceptions, we can, by considering the *Analogy*, *Proportion*, and *Correspondence*, which our Sensible *Ideas*, and manner of thinking bear to those things, of which we could otherwise form no Notion or Conception at all.

The Exercise of our Intellectual Faculty in the highest and most eminent Degree is placed, but very erroneously, in a fancied *Abstraction* of the Mind from all material Objects; whereas it really consists in the *Operation* of the Mind upon these *secondary Ideas*, or Comparisons thus applied to things *Spiritual*, and from this Contemplation of them, and raising our Thoughts by this Ascent unto them the *Knowledge*, we so obtain, is called *Speculative*.

This *Speculation* is not the bare looking forth, and casting up our Eyes to Supernatural Truths, but it is forming the best Conceptions we can of them, and then considering them under those determinate Notions and Conceptions: If *Abstraction* be thought necessary to form these Conceptions, yet this *Abstraction* is not the removing our Thoughts from all *Material Objects* and *Sensible Ideas*, but the transferring the general *Notions* we form of all Excellency, Virtue and Goodness to the same Qualitys conceived in Supernatural Beings: And as our best Notions of Excellency, Wisdom and Goodness are first derived from our *Worldly Ideas*, we can never separate these Notions from them, so as to think and reason without them, tho' they may be exalted and applied to Beings far above us, and even to *GOD Himself*. Thus we apply our *Abstracted* Notions of all Perfection, Intellectual, Natural and Moral unto *GOD*, but tho' they are *abstracted*, yet still they are raised from our first Conceptions of Wisdom, Goodness and Power, which we formed originally from our *Sensible Ideas*. The Truth is, the *Abstraction* is really made, before our *abstracted* Notions are applied: A meer Intellectual *Abstraction*, and Consideration of Truths, independent of, and separated from all our *Ideas*, is impracticable in this our present State, where we are so surrounded with outward Objects, and all our Knowledge makes its first Entrance into our Souls by the Senses. We need not distinguish here between the *Logical* and *Metaphysical Abstraction*,

straction, since neither can be sublimated into such a pure Intellectual Conception, as hath no Communication with the Material World. All *Abstractions* have a Constant reference to their *particulars*: They are the *Type*, the *Image*, and *Representative* of them: and with regard to the several *Species* of Beings, they seem to consist in the Notion, we form of the whole *Species* from the Observation, we have made upon *one or more* of the Individuals: *Humanity* is an *abstract* Notion, both as it expresses a Benevolent Quality of the Mind, and the distinguishing Constitution of Man; but this cannot be understood, if it be perfectly disjoyned from its Subject, and however we may talk of and conceive things in the *Abstract*, we must be understood in the *Concrete*, for as from thence it is taken at first, thither it returns at last. Thus *Abstraction* in Moral Subjects is only the forming a general Notion of what is *Just* and *Good*, without actually applying what is *Just* or *Good* to any particular or Individual Being, but *not* without conceiving at the same Time the Notion of a Just and a Good Man in the *Abstract* also. For we can form as general a Notion of a Just and a Good Man, as we can of *Justice* and *Goodness* and *Man*, Separately and Distinctly considered. The Truth is, we can have no Notion, nor can we talk rationally of *Justice* and *Goodness* without supposing a *Subject*, in which they dwell, and when we would represent these our *Abstracted* Thoughts in a plain Intelligible Manner, we cannot do it more clearly than by representing a Man in the *Exer-*

rise of *Justice* and *Goodness*. While we are *in the Body* our *Spirits* cannot act as if we were *out of the Body*: Purely Intellectual *Ideas* entirely *abstracted* from all sensible Objects are an Impossible supposition, however Men have imagined, that in Divine Contemplations especially they can and do *abstract* in this Manner, nay that they cannot conceive the *Things* of Heaven any other way. But this is not to conceive them at all, and in this way we should not be able to express our Conceptions of them: Whenever the most Rapturous and Exalted *Contemplators* endeavour to express their most *abstracted* Thoughts, if they do it *intelligibly*, they will find their *Abstractions* were not so far removed from all Sublunary Things, as they imagined. In these Contemplations all our Conceptions are raised indeed, but still they are the Conceptions, we have of *Sublunary* Excellence and Glory, by which we raise our Minds to that Excellency and Glory, which is *Heavenly* and *Divine*.

There is indeed an *Abstraction* proper to Meditation and Prayer, but *that* is of the *Mind* from the Cares, the Pleasures and Business of the World, *When we seek those things which are above, and set our Affections on them*, as upon Comparison with all Earthly things they are far more Excellent and desirable: *This* is the most rational, and noblest Employment of our Facultys, and gives us the most earnest Desires, and the strongest Anticipations of Heaven,

while *that other* forced and fanciful *Abstraction* of our Thoughts and Conceptions, which is pretended to by some *Metaphysical* Brains, and vainly attempted by some *Visionary* Heads, too often ends either in *Enthusiasm* or *Superstition*, or else in *Scepticism* and *Infidelity*.

The Cure for these Evils is to proceed in a *rational* way, and to use *Abstraction* in a *practicable* and *intelligible* matter. Whatever *abstracted* Notions of Glory and Excellency we have formed, they are still formed upon the Instances and Examples of this World, and we cannot devise a further *Abstraction*, when we would form the sublimest Conceptions. The best way of conceiving them is to consult the Conceptions that come from Heaven, and consider in what Language, and under what images these things are spoken of in Scripture, and when we see that the Scriptures bring Heaven down to Earth, and condescend to our Notions and Language, we may be satisfied to speak in the same way, and to carry our Thoughts to Heaven.

Abstraction has no more to do in forming our Thoughts of *Heavenly*, than of *Earthly* Things, and is *practicable* in the *one* no further, than it is first practised in the *other*. The Knowledge and Contemplation of Spiritual Objects consist not in *Metaphysical Abstractions*, but in suitable and worthy Thoughts, according to the transcendent Excellence of their Nature; Their Excellence is *positive* and *supereminent* in it self; but then as to the manner of conceiving and speaking of these *Spiritual* Objects, we express
our

our selves *Negatively*, when we would signify their Nature, as opposed to *Material Substance*, and by way of *Analogy* and Correspondence to our manner of Thinking, when we would express their *intellectual Operations*: Thus with regard to the Divine BEING, when we conceive *Him* a *Spirit*, we oppose *Him* most Absolutely and simply to any *material* Conceptions: when we conceive *Him* as an *Active Spirit*, our Conceptions are formed upon the Notions, we have, of the Operations of our own Minds acting upon *Material* Objects, and from thence also we derive our Conceptions of the Divine *Attributes* in all those Instances of *Wisdom*, *Goodness*, and *Power*, which according to our several *Relations* we exercise upon the Objects round about us either in a *Physical* or *Moral* way.

From whence it is manifest beyond all Possibility of Doubting, that unless we concluded from our own Intellectual Operations, that we are endued with *Spirits* or an *Immaterial Substance*, we could form no Notion or Conception of GOD at all, nor understand any Terms or Language, in which He could be represented to us.

The manner of Apprehending supposes both the Reality and our Knowledge also of those things, which by way of *Analogy* and Correspondence are extended to higher Objects, and made use of to express them to us. Our Apprehension of *Spiritual* Truths can rise no higher, than our Knowledge of worldly Objects and of our Selves in our own Nature, and our several Relations reaches, except by this

Deduction of our Reason, that what is Excellent in us is more Excellent in them, and when we understand them according to their *Correspondence*, we must at the same time understand them suitably to the *Difference* of their *Natures*: For this *Correspondence* gives us a just Apprehension so far, as it holds, but we can know no further except in a *Negative* sense, and without it we could know nothing of them at all: The Glory of God as displayed in Heaven is set forth by the Similitude or Symbol of Light, and we cannot imagine a Nobler or Brighter Resemblance of it, and yet a Blind Man who hath no Notion of Light, cannot by this Similitude form any Notion of God's Glory, but whatever Notion, he has of Glory in this World, he must make use of and transfer to conceive the Glory of God.

For to close this particular of the *manner*, in which our Views are extended, The Assent of the Mind to any Proposition is founded on the Signification and Force of the Words, and directed by the Agreement or Disagreement of the Terms, and therefore the Terms must be applicable to the Subject, and express something True and determinate either Affirmatively or Negatively according to their Agreement or Disagreement. This Agreement is most clearly discerned in our most *Simple Ideas*, and *Spiritual* Truths are the more clearly apprehended the more they are expressed by, and the nearer Resemblance they bear to our *Simple Ideas*: So likewise in the same Proportion and Degree, in which we perceive the Truth of
any

any Proposition formed upon *Complex* Notions, where the Terms consist of more *Simple Ideas* combined, we perceive the Truth of *Spiritual* Propositions also, as they correspond more or less to such Combinations of those *Simple Ideas*, by which they are expressed.

But before we can argue from the Operations of our own Minds to the Nature of *Spiritual* Beings, and truly understand how to apply our *Ideas* of sensible Things to Things not subject to our Senses, we must be convinced of their Existence, and instructed, so far as we are able to apprehend, in their Nature and Essence: For tho' our Apprehension of *Spiritual* Beings supposes the Existence of our own Spirits and the World about us, yet their Existence depends not on our Apprehension, and we can know it no further, than it is *revealed*.

This brings me to consider thirdly,

3. The *Assistance, Instruction, and Information*, we proceed upon.

This is no other than the *Instruction* of GOD Himself, who hath not left Mankind to follow their own false Imaginations, and to wander for ever in the Errors of their meer *Natural* Light, but hath recalled them to his *Original* Truth, and taught them to conceive rightly and worthily of *Him* and their *Duty*.

All that the *Light of Nature* can do is to arrive at a *First Cause*, and conclude that *First Cause* a most Perfect and Excellent *Being*: or rather *Reason* assents to a *First Cause* either as soon, as it is proposed, or as soon as we are con-

convinced by a train of Arguments, that such a *First Cause* there is: Otherwise, there would be no Necessity of proving it, and an *Atheist* must be an *Impossible* Creature even in *supposition*; But then however the *Light of Nature* directs us to a *First Cause*, and upon Considering and Arguing convinces us so, that *we are without Excuse*, if we believe not, that there is an *Eternal* and *Supreme* BEING, the Creator of All Things; yet it is evident from the eldest Writings of Antiquity, that Mankind had not just and uniform Notions of true Excellency and Perfection, and consequently they were never agreed in the same common Sentiments, nor could ever entertain just and worthy Conceptions of this *First Cause*: So that however they agreed in the *Existence* of some *First Cause*, they differed very much in their Notions of his *Attributes*, and these were so very false and unworthy, that by them even the *Rites* of Religion, and the very *Notions*, as well as *Practice* of *Morality* were corrupted; For *Morality* bears a Natural Proportion to *Theology*, as to the Fountain, whence it is derived: This holds in *Theory*, and Happy should we be, if it held in *Practice* too.

Since then by the meer *Light of Nature* Men could never attain to, or persevere in one *Uniform Consistent* Scheme of Religion, nor agree in their Conceptions of the great and *Fundamental Article* of all Religion, the Divine BEING; we may infer that the *true Knowledge* of GOD must be *derived* from some *other* Fountain.

It is generally taken for granted, that every *Revelation supposes Natural Religion*, that is the *Being* of a God, and the *Dutys* owing to *Him*. This is true with Regard to every *Revelation beyond* the Truths of *Natural Religion*, but it extends not so far, as to exclude *Natural Religion* from being a proper Subject of an *Original Revelation*. That God revealed Himself to *Adam*, and left him not to work out the *Knowledge* of his Maker, and the great Dutys incumbent on him by the meer Strength and Workings of his Reason, like a *Self taught Philosopher* is undoubted in *Fact*, and most probable in *Reason*, That God can reveal Himself to those wretched parts of our *Species*, who are yet ignorant of *Him*, and teach them the true Knowledge of *Him*, and their *Duty* is not to be denied: and whether *He* inspires one among themselves, or whether *He* sends unto them One from the *Christian* World, whether *He* performs this by the Ministry of a *Man* or an *Angel*, or speaks *Himself* from Heaven, it is every way an *Original Revelation* to those miserable People, and as their *Reason* awakens and is instructed, they find that these *Truths* are most Conformable and Convincing to it, and from their suitableness to the *Nature* of Man they are taught, that these are no other, than the *Dutys* of *Natural Religion*. So likewise, when God makes the great *Dutys* of *Natural Religion* the Subject of *Revelation* to Instruct Mankind in the true Knowledge of *Himself*, and to recall them from their Errors, the Truths of *Natural Religion* are indeed supposed, but they are supposed *not* to be truly known

known unto the World: Again when the *Apostles* preached the *Gospel* whether to the *Greeks* or *Romans*, and published it as a *Revelation* of those great Things, which had *been hid from Ages and from Generations*, they were far from supposing that Men were truly acquainted with the *great Dutys* of *Natural Religion*: So far from supposing it, that in preaching to the *Gentiles*, their first Business was, as *St Paul* declares, *a* to open their Eyes, and to turn them from *Darkness* unto *Light*, and from the *Power of Satan* unto *GOD*.

To this Purpose *Barnabas* and *He* preached to the Men of *Lystra* who were about to do Sacrifice unto them, when to restrain them, they *b* rent their Clothes and ran in among the People crying out, and saying, *Sirs, why do ye these things, we also are Men of like Passions with you, and preach unto you, that ye should turn from these Vanities to the Living GOD*; and the Subject of their Sermon was the *Religion of Nature*. In the *XVII* of the *Acts* *c* *St Paul* is preaching on the same Subject to no meaner an Auditory than the Philosophers and supreme Magistrates of *Athens*; and there He declared unto them, the *Unknown GOD*, whom they ignorantly *Worshipped*, and in the Conclusion tells them, that *the times of this Ignorance GOD winked at, but now commandeth all Men every where to repent*. The *Epicureans* who held the Doctrine of *Chance*, and the *Stoics*, who held the World was governed by *Fate*, were equally ignorant of the true God,

a Acts XXVI. 18. *b* Acts XIV. 14, 15. *c* v. 23, &c.

nor do we find any other *Señ* was able to point Him out and declare *WHO HE IS*. In this celebrated *Seat of Learning* Human Reason wanted no Cultivation, and some Few Instances excepted, we find but very distant Approaches to the Truth: It argues the *Perfection* of *Natural Religion*, and the *Imperfection* of *Reason*, that *Reason* left *meerly* to it self hath mistaken so much in the *grand Fundamental Article*, to say nothing at present of its Errors and Defects in the *Moral Scheme*: *Natural Religion* is all *Truth* and *Perfection*, and *Reason* no sooner understands it, but it Assents unto it, that it is *Holy, Just and Good*: but there is a wide Difference between assenting to these *Natural Truths* when discovered, and being able without any Error to discover them. Whatever was the Cause of the first Mistakes, we find they were so early and so Universal, that God saw it necessary to correct them by a *New Revelation*, made first to *Abraham*, and afterwards deposited and continued with the *Children of Israel* his Posterity: And when he gave Mankind a fuller and more ample *Revelation* in the *Gospel* of his SON, It is evident, that in the Promulgation of it to the *Gentiles*, the *Apostles* first set them right in *Natural Religion*, before they proceeded to *those great Articles*, which in Contradistinction to *Natural*, are more peculiarly called *Revealed*. It is true therefore, that the great Truths of *Natural Religion* must be supposed before any other Structure of *Revelation* can be raised; but where Men are grossly ignorant they must be instructed, where they mistake,

take, their Mistakes must be corrected; and when *Natural Religion* is once fully admitted, and understood, then Men are prepared for any further *Revelation*, it shall please God to give them. *Natural Religion* is not so called because *Reason* is able of it self universally and truly to discover it, but because when discovered, it is so agreeable and evident, that *Reason* must consent to the Truth and Obligation of it, whether Men will obey it or not: That there ever was or is any Ignorance or Mistakes about it, must be owing to some *Neglect* or *Defect* of *Reason*, and lay the Fault upon *either*, those who maintain the *full sufficiency* of *Reason* must be accountable for *Both*, especially if the *Defect* is any ways occasioned by their *Neglect*: However the Case may stand, whether gross Ignorance or Error prevail in any Part of the World with regard to *Natural Religion*, those People must be rightly Instructed, and so far *Natural Religion* it self becomes a *proper Subject* of *Revelation*.

Having thus far removed this Difficulty out of the way, it is not my Purpose in this place to enter into the *Necessity* or *Expediency* of a *Revelation*, nor into the Argument, that the *Scriptures* are that *Revelation*: All I shall say to the First Point is this, That as *some* Truths cannot be known at all without a *Revelation*, so far as *those* Truths are *necessary* to be known, a *Revelation* of them is also *necessary*; and as *some* Truths cannot be *so perfectly* known, nor the *Practice* of our *Duty* so *effectually* enforced by the *meer Reasonings* of *Nature* in this our Lapsed and

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corrupt estate, so far at least a *Revelation* is *expedient* if not *necessary* on our Parts to be given.

It is not simply and in it self necessary that GOD should give us such a *Revelation*, as is contained in the *Scripture*, any more than *He* was under any *Necessity* to purpose and prescribe the Order and Method of our *Redemption*; yet when *He* had of his free Grace and Mercy admitted us to Pardon, it was *necessary* so far, as *He* expects the *Performance*, to acquaint us with the *Conditions*, on which He will accept us.

And for the *Scriptures* being this *Revelation*, it is sufficient that *they alone* contain the *Covenant of Grace*, and with respect to *Natural Religion* that *they alone* of all ancient Writings do give us a Just, Uniform, and Consistent account of the *Divine Being* delivered by *Himself*, and that no other Writings do deliver a true and worthy Account of *Him*, but as they agree with the *Scriptures*.

And since GOD alone can teach us to conceive worthily, and to believe rightly of *Him*, we may without further Controversy conclude, that the *Scriptures* are his *Revelation*, in which GOD has manifested *Himself* to the World so far, as we are able to apprehend the Divine Nature, and to form any true Conceptions of his Incomprehensible Essence. As *such* they are received by *those*, with whom our Immediate Controversy lies, and in the Dispute between us we use *them* as our *Common Authority*.

That GOD did *Originally* reveal Himself to the World in a Visible and Audible manner, I have already observed as an Historical Fact, as
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also, that the Degeneracy of the World at first was owing more especially to the Loss of that *Original Revelation*, which alone could stemm the Corruption, while the Truths of it were gradually defaced, till there were hardly any Print or Traces of them remaining, except in the depraved and perverted *Rites of Religion*.

What this *Original Revelation* was we may learn from the Divine Communications with *Adam* and *Noah*, and tho' at the time of *Abraham* the World was Universaly run into *Idolatry*, yet they seemed not *utterly* to have lost the Knowledge of the *true God*; But afterwards in the Days of *Moses*, when the *Iniquity of the Amorites was full*, and the Knowledge of the true God hardly remained, but with the Children of *Israel*, then God saw fit to preserve *Religion* by a *Written*, as before He had taught it by an *Oral Revelation*; And this Method, the *Oral* being still preserved in the *Written*, hath been continued ever since under all his *Dispensations*.

For this Reason, even because of Universal Error and Corruption the great *Dutys of Natural Religion* became the *Subject of Revelation*; and besides those great Truths, which could be known no other way, those also, which were not rightly known, were taught by God *Himself* in a Manner suitable to our Apprehensions, and every way worthy his Glorious and most Adorable Majesty.

Thus we are taught in what manner to receive and understand whatever is affirmed of

the Divine Nature by the *Spirit* of GOD: ^a *For the Things of GOD knoweth no Man, but the Spirit of GOD,* and therefore all the Doctrines of *revealed Religion*, strictly so called, are to be received as so many *Matters of Fact* asserted to be *True*, and as so many *Promises* most *surely* to be *performed*: and they are to be understood according to the plainest, and most obvious signification of the Words, in which they are delivered, so as to aver the Reality of the *Fact* affirmed in them.

At present I shall only add, that since it hath pleased GOD with regard to his *Fæderal* Stipulations and Transactions with Mankind as well, as with regard to his own *Essence* and *Attributes*, to *reveal Himself* in a *Language*, and under *Symbols* and Representations borrowed from Men, we are to understand both the Doctrines supposed discoverable by the *Light of Nature*, and those, which are simply knowable by *Revelation* only, in the same way of *Analogy*, and interpret whatsoever is *revealed* concerning the *Divine Nature* in a manner agreeable to his most Pure and Incomprehensible Essence.

The fuller Prosecution of this *Subject*, concerning the *Interpretation of Divine Truths*, will properly fall under a further and distinct Consideration; and therefore I shall pass at present for a Conclusion of all upon this *Text*, to the *third* and *last* thing, which we learn from these *two*, the *Common* and the *Scripture Account* of the *Light of Nature*, which is *thirdly*,

3. That under all possible Advantages *we cannot find out the Almighty unto Perfection.*

This Head is already drawn to a Point from the two former Considerations of our *Natural Weakness* and *Supernatural Assistance*, and there is no occasion to dwell long upon it, when the more only we consider it, the more undeniably we prove it, and the particular Consideration of the *Divine Being* as Incomprehensible, will fall under some of the remaining *Discourses*.

I presume, it will be allowed even by those, who pretend to believe, there is no God, that upon *supposition* of such a *Being*, they must believe *Him Incomprehensible*: His being *Incomprehensible* is indeed the very Ground of their *Unbelief*, and all the *Unbelief* of *those* also, who deny the *Articles* of our *Faith*, is founded on the same Pretensions, for they will not *believe* them, because they cannot *comprehend* them, and tho' they acknowledge God to be *Incomprehensible*, yet they will bring down and explain the great *Mysterys* of *Faith* to their own Level, till they have denied the *Doctrines*, and have either left no *Mysterys* at all, or if *Any*, *those* more darkned and perplexed with their Absurditys and Contradictions.

The best Notions we can form of a *Deity*, do rise from the Utmost imagination, we can form of the highest Perfections *Natural*, *Moral*, and *Intellectual*, under the unutterable Conceptions of *Eternity* and *Infinity*; but till we can find the *Proportion* between *Finite* and *Infinite*, between *Time* and *Eternity*, and argue strictly

from *Visible* to *Invisible*, and from *Compounded* to *pure Uncompounded Essence*, we cannot presume to argue what the *Divine Nature Is*: Our highest Notions of *Natural*, *Moral*, and *Intellectual* Perfections, by which we shadow out the *Power*, the *Goodness*, and *Wisdom* of GOD, are indeed *True*, but yet *Distant* and *Faint Resemblances* of those *Attributes* in *Him*: They are correspondent indeed in Kind, but to imagine *Wisdom*, *Goodness*, and *Power* to be in GOD, as they are in *us*, and exercised by *Him*, as they are by *us*, is highly Absurd. To add *Infinity* to the *Goodness*, *Wisdom*, and *Power* of *Men* is only to make our Imagination more Monstrous still; and as in *Men* these are Imperfect both in Act and Degree, to ascribe them to GOD is a Contradiction in Terms, expressing so many *Infinite Imperfections*.

Our Notion of *Infinite Perfection* is thought to be rather *Negative* in removing all *Imperfections*, than any ways *Positive* in declaring the *Extent* of what is indeed *immeasurable*: The Term *Infinite* it self, as it is a *Negative*, serves only to teach us, that GOD *is not such a One as our selves*, but *opposed* and *contradistinguished* to every thing within the Compass of our Knowledge.

But tho' *Infinite* be a *Negative* Term, by which we deny any *Imperfection* or *Limitation* of the *Divine Being* and *Attributes*, yet it really implies a *Positive* Assertion of that *Being* and those *Perfections*, which are beyond all *Thought* to conceive, and all *Words* to express: What the *Psalmist* saith of GOD's Commandment we may in
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the most unlimited sense applie to *Himself*. ^a *I see that all things come to an End*: I have seen an End of all *other Perfection*, but *thy Commandment is exceeding Broad*. We see or can conceive a *Beginning*, an *End*, and *Circumscription* of all *created Nature*, but of *GOD* we can conceive no *End* or *Point* from whence *He Begins*: no *End*, no *Period*, where *He* can *End*: We can conceive no *Space*, in which *He* is *contained*: nor any *Expansion* which is *Commensurate* to *Him*: When we say *He fills all Things*, we speak but *improperly*, and do really confine *Him*, who hath no *Dimensions*: For ^b *Heaven and the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain Him*: No *Space*, in which *Numberless Worlds* of the vastest Magnitude may be *poised* and *move* within their several and respective *Orbs*, can bear any equal or possible *Proportion* to *Him*: For all *Matter* and the *Space* or *Place* which *Circumscribes* it, must necessarily be *Finite*, and *Finite* in its *utmost* conceived extension cannot make the least *Approaches* to *Infinite*. So *great* is *GOD* beyond our *Imagination* of *Greatness*! according to the Declaration of *Elihu*, ^c *Behold GOD is Great, and we know Him not, neither can the Number of his Years be searched out*.

The *Mysterys* of his *Eternity* and *Omnipresence*, by which possibly his *Existence* is *best* expressed, swallow up and confound our Understanding, when we attempt in the largest

^a Psal. CXIX. 96. ^b 1 Kings VIII. 27. 2 Chron. II. 6. VI. 18.
^c Job XXXVI. 26.

stretch of our Thoughts to grasp and comprehend them.

We can apprehend *Him*, but according to the Facultys, *He* hath given us: We are forced to speak of *Him* in the Language of *Men*, and when *He* speaks of *Himself*, 'tis in the Language of Men: Even in *Natural Religion* we must confess, that GOD is *not*, as we are forced to express *Him*: That *He* is without *Body*, *Parts*, and *Passions*: and in all these Instances of His being *Incomprehensible*, we have taken the *Divine Being* only as *He* is exhibited by *Natural Religion*, and that *Revelation*, which teaches us that *Religion*.

If in those further Instances therefore, which are *Doctrines* of express *Revelation* only, we are not able to comprehend the *Manner*, *How these things can be*, this should not seem strange to those at least, who *acknowledge* and *receive* that *Revelation*.

For a Conclusion therefore all that in our present state we are able to conceive and know, is *revealed* unto us: By this we may see, how *Imperfect* our *Natural Knowledge* is: we may discern, how it is *corrected* and *improved* by *Revelation*: And as we could not arrive at the *true Knowledge* of GOD without a *Revelation*, nor to any *Knowledge* at all concerning those *Truths*, which are discoverable by *Revelation* only, it follows, that we can know no more of GOD, than *He* hath been pleased to *reveal*, and that our *Capacity* to receive his *Instructions* reaches no further, than the *Bounds*, it hath pleased *Him* in the Creation of *Man*, to set it.

As some Points are utterly beyond our Reach to *discover*, and could only be made known by exprefs *Revelation*, it is not poffible for us to *discover* any one thing more *beyond* what is *Revealed*: We may as well affect the Power of Creation, as the Forming of one Notion or Conception beyond the Nature of Things *Visible*, and the Accounts given us of *Invisible*: All that the moft *peircing Wit*, and the moft *perverse Reason* can do, is to deny or mistake the *Mysterys* both of *Nature*, and *Revelation*, and when they venture to carry their *boasted Reason* into thofe *Depths*, which they cannot *fathom*, they make *Shipwreck of their Faith*, and return either *Infidels* by denying it, or *Heretics* by involving themfelves in manifold Errors about it.

If we confider the Uniform Doctrine of the *Church*, taking the great Points *revealed* in the moft fimple, obvious and natural fignification of the Words, they are delivered in: and the Intricate Mazes, into which the feveral Denominations of *Heretics* have run themfelves by perverting them, we may from hence gather Strength and Affurance, that we are Right, and *Sound in the Faith*. And however the *Church* to obviate thefe feveral forts of *Heretics* hath been forced to ufe feveral *Terms* befides *thofe* ufed in the *Scriptures*, yet we fhall find that *She* ufes them only in Order to defend and hold faft *that Form of Sound Words*, and the very fame Propositions which the *Scripture Terms* exprefs.

But this alfo will be the Subject of fome further Difcourfe.

In the mean time it becomes all those, who acknowledge a *Revelation*, and receive the *Scriptures* as the *Word of GOD*, to receive also what is *revealed* with all Thankfulness and Humility, not going, nor *boasting themselves beyond their Measure*.

GOD *Himself* is One great Incomprehensible *Mystery*: By all our searches we cannot find *Him* out, as in *Himself HE IS*: Nor with all the Advantages our Nature is capable of, *can we find out the Almighty unto Perfection*: He is *Infinite* without *End* or *Limitation*: Nor *Angels* nor *glorified Spirits*, tho' they do see *Him*, nor *we*, tho' *we shall see Him as He is*, will ever be able to comprehend *Him*: We can never come to any *End of Infinity*: while we are in the *Flesh* we can only survey the *Wisdom*, the *Goodness*, and the *Power* of GOD in the *Works of Creation*, and the *Order* of his *Providence*, and the *Manifestation* of his *Mercy*, and all this but very imperfectly while *here* ²*we see thro' a Glass darkly*, and tho' our Views will be enlarged hereafter, and we shall then *see Him Face to Face*, yet still we shall be looking and seeing *further and further* for Ever: The *Perfections* and *Glory* of GOD will open in further Prospects, and into larger Views unto all *Eternity*, For He is ever *Incommensurable* as He is *Eternal*, and were He not *Incomprehensible*, I may suppose our *Happiness* could not be *Everlasting*. He is ever a *Boundless* and *Inexhaustable* Treasure of *Knowledge* and *Contemplation*: What we know

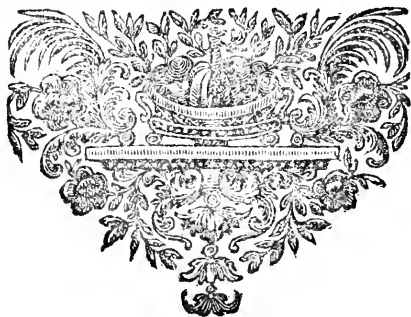
of Him besides his Infinite *Perfections* instructs us that He ever exists in the most Simple and Perfect *Unity* of Nature, and as Himself hath been pleased to discover, in an *Eternal Association* and *Oeconomy* of the *Divine Relations* manifested in the *Scriptures*: He hath revealed Himself to us not only as we are his *Creatures*, but more especially as we are *Sinners* admitted by his *Free Grace* to *Pardon* and *Reconciliation*: This opens a *new Scene* of Things, and God presents Himself to us under those *Relations* in the *Divine Nature*, and under those *Operations* according to the *Oeconomy* displayed in the great Work of our *Redemption*, which it is Impossible for the Heart of Man to conceive: For the Things of GOD knoweth no Man, but the Spirit of GOD: And ^ano Man knoweth the Son, but the Father, neither knoweth any Man the Father, but the Son, and he, to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him: or as it is expressed in St Luke, ^bNo Man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father, and who the Father is, but the Son, and he, to whom the Son will reveal Him.

To conclude, If there were no *Mysterys*, there could be no *Faith* in the highest and most peculiar sense of the Word; and if we will bring down the *Divine Being* to our way of Thinking and Apprehending, as if He was *such an One as ourselves*, we shall by our own strength be able to reason no better then the *Heathen*, and when once we begin to think like them,

^a Matt. XI. 27. ^b Luke X 22.

we shall soon fall into their monstrous Opinions and Absurditys.

To a right *Faith* let us always joyn a suitable *Conversation*, walking worthy of our *Vocation*, and as becometh the *Gospel of Christ*, which alone is able to make us *Wise*, and to lead us unto *Salvation*. And therefore unto the *One Only Living and True GOD* therein declared, the *Father*, the *Son* and the *Holy Ghost*, be ascribed as most due, *All Glory and Blessing, and Adoration for ever. Amen.*





SERMON IV.

Preached *Mar. 6. 1728-9.*

I COR. II. 11.

— *Even so the Things of GOD
knoweth no Man, but the Spirit
of GOD.*



AFTER I had examined the *Principles of Heresy and Infidelity*, I proceeded to consider the *Strength and Compass* of our *Natural Powers*, both as *left to themselves*, and as assisted by *Revelation* to the utmost of their *Capacities*. And the Result of these Enquiries is, that the *Light of Nature* left to it self is not *sufficient* to lead us into the

the Knowledge of God and our *Duty*: That nevertheless it is capable of being *instructed*, and taught the true Knowledge of God by *Revelation*: and lastly, that notwithstanding the *Revelation* God remains still a most *Mysterious* and *Incomprehensible* BEING.

We have seen in the Course of this *Argument*, that *Natural Religion* both as it respects God and our *Duty* had been lost in the World, if it had not been taken into and made Part of the *revealed Will* of God.

We find indeed, that Man was not left to Himself upon his first Creation to search and to reason Himself into the Knowledge of God and his *Duty*: The Divine Communications with Him in *Paradise* are recorded; and afterwards upon his *Fall* the further Purpose and good Pleasure of God towards him is *revealed*: This *Revelation* hath been continued at *sundry times*, and in *divers manners*, in several Parts and Proportions, till at last it was finished and completed by *Christ* and his *Apostles*.

If we compare the *State* of the World *with* and *without* a *Revelation*, and the *State* of Things under a *less*, and more *perfect Revelation*, we shall find that without a *Revelation* Mankind lay in *Darkness* and *Error*, and the *Light of Nature* it self was almost extinguished, so that what is recorded concerning the *Egyptian Darkness* and the Land of *Goshen* in the Book of ^a *Exodus*, may fitly be applied to all the Nations round, *who lay in Darkness and in the Shadow of*

Death: There was Darkness palpable, thick Darkness in all the Land of Egypt, but all the Children of Israel had Light in their Dwellings.

The *Light* still encreased with the *Revelation*, and the more the *Learning* and *Commerce* of the *Jews* spread themselves into other parts of the *World*, the more this *Light* began, tho' but as a *Twilight* in its dawn, to dart some of its beams, and to break in upon *Mankind*.

We commonly distinguish between the *Light of Nature* and *Revelation*, and more especially between *Natural Religion* and *Revealed*. To distinguish thus is convenient enough, because *Revelation* in the more peculiar and restrain'd acceptation, contains those Points, whether of *Doctrine*, or *Positive Institution*, which it was not possible for the *Light of Nature* to discover.

Natural Religion is looked upon as the *Common Law* of all *Mankind*, *Revealed*, as a more *peculiar Dispensation*, obliging *those only*, to whom it is given, or, more properly speaking, to whom it is proposed, for it is at their Peril, if they refuse it.

I. But then I would observe, that *Natural Religion* in the *first View*, supposed *Mankind* in a *State of Innocence*: In the *second* it is founded upon the *Conscience* they have of *God* and their *Duty*: the *Knowledge* of *Good* and *Evil*, and the *Conviction* of having done *Well* or *Ill* continually rising in their *Breasts*.

Several Precepts of *Natural Religion* took their Rise directly from the *Fall of Man*: In the *Decalogue* which containeth the *Religion of Nature*, pronounced by the *Voice*, and written with the

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Finger of God Himself, the *Negative* Precepts are all of this Kind; and when our *Blessed Lord*, who *first* *Published* it, did afterwards ^a reduce this whole *Law* or the *Precepts* of *both Tables* under two *Affirmative* Commands, which were *separately* mentioned by *Moses* in the Books of ^b *Deuteronomy* and ^c *Leviticus*, concerning the *Love of God* and our *Neighbour*, He restored Religion, as it were, to its first and most perfect State, suitable to that *renovation of Mind*, that *Purity* and *Perfection* of Manners which are taught and required by the *Gospel*.

2. Secondly I would observe that *Natural Religion* especially as Man is now the *Subject* of it, owes its Perfection to *Revealed*, both as the *Precepts* are more *clearly* delivered, as the *Common Motives* and *Principles* of Duty are more *strongly* enforced, and particularly, as several *Motives* and *Principles* of Obedience are *entirely* revealed: Some of these are suitable to the *Natural* Notions, Mankind hath, of *Rewards* and *Punishments*, and *Immortality*: Some of them are *peculiar* to the *Gospel*, and entirely drawn from the Method and Oeconomy of Man's Redemption by *Christ Jesus*.

3. Thirdly, we may observe, that there is no *Opposition*, much less *Contradiction*, between *Natural Religion* and *Revealed*: That both consider *Man* in his Relation to *God*: One as His *Creature*; the Other, as a *Sinner*, invited and restored to Grace; Under this double Conside-

^a Matt. XXII. 37, 39. Luke X. 27. ^b Chap. VI. 5. ^c Chap. XIX. 18.

ration of Mankind we see the *Connection* between *Natural Religion* and *Revealed*: That *Revealed* is a *Superstructure* upon the Foundation of *Nature*: With reference to GOD declaring more distinctly *what He is*, and in *what manner He acts* towards us: With reference to *Us* and our *Duty* it is perfective of our Nature, and of every Virtuous Principle in the Mind of Man: And as *Natural Religion* now makes a part of *Revealed*, we can take a View of the entire *Model* at once, and behold the whole *Fabric* rise with equal Strength and Beauty, till it reacheth from Earth to Heaven-

4. *Revealed Religion*, as Contradistinguished to *Natural*, containeth all those Points, which it is impossible for the Thought of Man to discover, or come to the Knowledge of any other way: *Such* are the *Existence* and *Nature* of *Angels*: The several *Prophecys* concerning Future Events: The *Purpose* and *Counsel* of GOD in the Redemption of the World: The *Execution* of that Purpose: The *Reconciliation* of his *Mercy* and *Justice* in the great *Satisfaction* for the *Sins of the whole World*: And in the opening of this *Scene* are discovered the great *Mysterys* of the GOD-HEAD: The FATHER, the SON, and the HOLY GHOST concurring and co-operating in the Salvation of Mankind, together with those great and sublime Truths relating to each of these Divine *Persons*: All these, and more particularly Those concerning the SON the Second Person of this Glorious *Trinity* in his *Incarnation* and *Birth*: the *Distinction* of the *Natures*, and the *Unity* of *Person*: his *Eternal* and
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Temporal Generation, are most Eminently the *Doctrines of Revelation*.

I have made this Deduction for our more orderly Proceeding, till from the *Lowest* we rise to the *Highest* Points of our Religion. And here again I must

1. Observe first, That whatever God pronounces by *Himself*, or by the Ministry of Men is truly and properly a *Revelation* from *Him*; so *Natural Truths*, as proposed by *Him*, become Part of *revealed Religion*.

2. Tho' every Thing, that comes in this Manner from God, may be called His *Revelation*, yet some Points are *Plain* in all respects, and some again are less *Mysterious* than others: Those that are *plain* are the Precepts of the *Decalogue* and many *Positive Institutions* given by *Moses*, only with Respect to such *Institutions*, tho' what is *Commanded* be exceeding *plain*, yet the *reason* of the *Command* is not always *plain*, but for all that, because it comes from God, it must be obeyed: The less *Mysterious* Points are *such* as relate to *Angels* and our selves: The greater and more Transcendent are *such* as relate to God.

3. Thirdly I shall observe, that in Points of pure Revelation, as we could have known *nothing* of them, unless they had been *revealed*, we cannot know *any thing* of them further than they are *revealed*; This is a most evident Proposition, and till any Person is hardy enough to deny it I shall not stay to prove it. Whether so much is *revealed*, as our present Facultys are capable of receiving is a Question, which may serve to exercise the Wits and Sagacity of Men;

Vanity of unravelling Mysterys. 113

Men; but that we cannot imagine any Point *beyond* what is *revealed* is, as undeniable, as that, with reference to the Universe we cannot form to ourselves any *Idea, Notion, or Conception* beyond the Verge of Created Nature. If therefore there be *some* Truths, which cannot be known at all without *Revelation*, and can be known no *further*, than they are *revealed*, then all Attempts to account for, and unravel the *Mysterious* Parts of *Revelation* are vain, and only fit to raise so many *Heresys* upon so many dissonant and precarious *suppositions*, according to every different *Hypothesis*, which the wayward Wit of *Heretics* and *Unbelievers* hath in all Ages invented in direct Contradiction to the *Apostle's* Assertion. *The Things of GOD knoweth no Man, but the Spirit of GOD.*

Every *Heresy* demonstrates the Truth of this Position, while the *Inventors* and *Maintainers* of them affect to be *wise above what is written*, and presume to know the *Things of GOD* beyond what is *revealed*, especially when they presume to determine *What is*, and *What is Not* the *Point revealed*, in full *Contradiction* to the express Words of the *Revelation*.

Thus the *Arians* denying the *Divinity* of the SON in the proper sense, and of the HOLY GHOST in any sense at all, and taking upon themselves to determine in *what* sense the SON is asserted to be GOD, that is in *such* a sense, as proves Him a *Creature*, have by this vain Pretence to Knowledge, and by contradicting what the *Spirit* hath uttered, fully proved the Truth laid down by the *Apostle*: *Even so the*
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Things of GOD knoweth no Man but the Spirit of GOD.

In my further Discourse therefore upon this Subject I shall first *explain*, and then *apply* these Words, as the Argument, I am upon, requires. And first,

I. For the *Explication*.

The *Apostle* is here speaking of the *Wisdom* of God in the whole Designment, Order, and Dispensation of the *Gospel*, which at the *seventh* verse he calleth the *Wisdom of GOD in a Mystery*, or the *hidden and Mysterious Wisdom*, comprehending the whole Work of our *Redemption*, carried on from the *Foundation* of the World thro' all the *Steps* taken towards it in the *Revelations, Institutions, Types* and *Prophecys* recorded in the *Old Testament*, together with the full and absolute *Accomplishment* of it by our LORD *Jesus Christ*, from its *Beginning* in *Grace* to its *Consummation* in *Glory*.

This hidden and Mysterious Wisdom is such, as referring to the Words of ^a *Isaiah*, he tells us, ^b *Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, nor have entered into the Heart of Man to conceive the Things, which GOD hath prepared for them that love Him; But GOD hath revealed them unto us by the Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all Things, yea the Deep Things of GOD. For what Man knoweth the Things of a Man, save the Spirit of a Man, that is in him? Even so the Things of GOD knoweth no Man, but the Spirit of GOD.*

^a *Isai.* LXIV. 4. ^b *1 Cor.* II. 9, 10, &c.

This excellent Passage will afford us a further Consideration for the *Divinity* and *Distinction* of the HOLY GHOST: Here I take it only as an Argument to prove, that Men *cannot know the Things of GOD*, that is the deep and *Mysterious things*, unless they be *revealed*: For as one Man knows not the Thoughts of another's Heart, much less can any Man know the *Counsel* of GOD, and the *Mysterys* and *Secrets* belonging to the *Divine Nature*, unless they be *revealed* unto him.

This *Revelation* is peculiarly attributed to the HOLY GHOST: It was committed to our *Blessed Saviour*, while *He* acted *ministerially*, and discharged his *Prophetic Office* upon Earth, tho' *then essentially* united to the *Father*, and the *Holy Spirit*, ^a *For GOD giveth not the Spirit by Measure unto Him*; and after his *Ascension* *He* revealed *Himself* in a peculiar manner to this *Apostle* from ^b *Heaven*, but as this *Revelation* was to be one *Peculiar* ^c *Office* of the HOLY GHOST, after our *Blessed Lord* was gone away, the *Apostle* speaketh in this place of the *Revelation* by the *Holy Spirit*, which *Himself* also, besides his ^d *special Revelations*, received, as did the *other Apostles*, from the HOLY GHOST.

The Comparison here used is very apposite and proper to illustrate the Truth of this Assertion, and to convince us, that as the *Thoughts* of Men are known only to their own *Hearts*, and no Man knoweth the *Secrets* of another's

^a John III. 34. ^b Acts IX, XXII, XXVI. ^c John XVI, &c.
^d 2 Cor XII.

II6 rendered, applied, & divided.

Breast, unless they be disclosed by *Speech* or *Writing*, or some other *Sign*, it is impossible for us to *know the Things of GOD*, unless they be *revealed* to us by *His Holy Spirit*. *The Things of GOD knoweth no One, but the Spirit of GOD* exclusive of all Men, and in Contradistinction to all created Beings; and the *Things of GOD*, his *Purpose* and *Counsel*, concerning which the *Apostle* is here chiefly speaking, include in them *those Divine Relations*, which *constitute* and *distinguish* the *Three several Persons* subsisting in the GOD-HEAD; These, as well as the *Purpose* and *Counsel* of GOD for the Accomplishment of our *Redemption*, are properly called in this place the *Things of GOD*. For this great *Work* in every *Step*, and throughout the whole *Process* of it, continually presents unto us the FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST. In this View the Words are to be understood, and may be thus rendered in the most literal Form. *For who of Men knoweth the Things of a Man, save the Spirit of a Man, that is in Him? even so the Things of GOD no One knoweth, but the Spirit of GOD.*

II. After this short *Explication*, in *applying* this Assertion of the *Apostle*, as the Argument, I am upon, requireth, and as the *Apostle* himself afterwards *applieth* it to the *Natural Man*, and his *Natural Light* compared with the *Spiritual*, I shall lay down these *three Propositions*.

1. That whatever we know of GOD and our Duty by the *Light of Nature*, we know the same more perfectly by *Revelation*.

2. That

2. That where we have some Knowledge without *Revelation*, we must nevertheless believe according to what is *revealed*.

3. Where we have no Knowledge at all without *Revelation*, we are obliged to take the *Points, Doctrines* and *Articles* exactly and precisely, as they are *revealed*.

1. The first Proposition is, That whatever we know of God and our Duty by the Light of Nature, we know the same more perfectly by Revelation.

With regard to this it hath been acknowledged, that by the Light of Nature we can arrive at a *First Cause*, and conceive Him also a most Perfect and Excellent Being; But then Mankind, when they had lost their *Original* Knowledge of God, soon lost all true and worthy Conceptions of *Him*, and without a Revelation were not able to recover them. This we insist upon as Notorious in Fact, from the state of Religion in all the World, where a subsequent Revelation was not given, as high as *Abraham* even down to our *Saviour's* Coming. Whatever they might have done is not the question: They *might* possibly have continued in the Knowledge and Worship of the true God, as delivered and practised by *Noah* after the Flood: They *might* possibly not have fallen so universally into *Idolatry*, nor have degenerated so basely, as they did in *Morality* and *Religion*; but that they *did* so degenerate is *manifest* and not to be denied.

118 *Defects of Natural Light.*

If any *Patrons* of *Natural Light* and *Religion* shall imagine, that notwithstanding the *Darkness* and *Ignorance* of the *Old Heathen*, the *meer Light of Nature* is *sufficient* to lead them into *Natural Religion*, they may please to consider, that *now* they have a clear *View* and *Delineation* of it in the *Scriptures*, and that however they *reject* it, and *dissemble* the Matter, they do indeed draw their Assistance from *Revelation*, and only *seem* to discover the great *Dutys* of *Natural Religion*, because they perceive their Evidence, as soon as they meet them set in so fair a *Light*, so conformable to right Reason, that they command their *Affent*, and convince them of their *Truth*.

And thus the *Scriptures* fix the *Natural Notions* of GOD beyond what *Men alone* by their *meer Natural Light* had done, and carry the Arguments further, than the *Heathen* could do. This the Method taken with those Fools, who affect to say, *There is no GOD*, doth plainly evince. For it is not enough to show, that there is some Divine Being, but that He is not such a One as the Heathen *Jupiter* for Instance: The *Heathen Theology* could never convince an *Atheist*; for while the *Philosopher* was proving the *Being* of a GOD, the *Atheist* could prove his *Gods* to be *None*: Tho' the *Divine Being* may be proved from *Natural Principles*, yet *Natural Light* in this its darkned Condition could not pursue the Proof: this *Natural Darkness* is removed by *Revelation*, and upon the *plan* of *Natural Religion*, as drawn in the *Scriptures*, all Attempts to demonstrate the *Being* of a GOD, and

These supplied by the Scriptures. 119

and his *Attributes*, serve not only to convince the *Atheist*, but they are designed no less, as they are equally adapted, to reform the *Idolaters*, and *Superstitious* also; and if the Arguments used are such, as are fairly drawn from, and resolvable into *Natural Principles*, we may surely use them, tho' we find them in the *Scriptures*.

For tho' an *Atheist* is not to be argued with upon the *Being* of a GOD from any Revelation as *such*, yet proper Arguments may be contained in that Revelation, and so applied according to the *Principles* of Reason, without insisting at all on the Revelation: However, when once the great Point concerning the *Existence* of a GOD is settled, His *Nature* and *Attributes* may be most surely known and argued, as we find them declared in the *Scriptures*, which we receive as a Revelation from GOD: For there is no Pretence for any one, that is brought to own a GOD, to deny, that GOD may *reveal*, or upon good Evidence, that He hath *revealed Himself*, especially when the Revelation must be confessed to express the great *Truths of Natural Religion* more clearly and perfectly, than any meer *Natural* Writer unacquainted with that *Revelation* hath done; And when the Strength of meer *Natural Light*, and the *Evidence* of *Natural Religion* are so highly extolled and magnified, all, that can be inferred from our *Natural Powers* is *Not That*, which is designed, the *Nonnecessity* of any *Revelation*, but *This*, That *Truth* is so *Congenial* to the Soul of Man, that he cannot without the highest Guilt

refuse it, when it is duely proposed to him upon sufficient Evidence, and a Just Authority.

I have more than once observed, and 'tis of great use to observe it, as oft, as it falleth in our way. that GOD *revealed Himself even* in the *State of Innocence*, while the *Light of Nature* shone in its Native Strength and Lustre; But since the *Fall*, when this Light burneth more dimly, and only some small sparkles of it in Comparison do now appear, it is not possible, that Men should see so clearly by it, as before: Both the *Medium* and the *Organ* are changed: The Eye is weakened, and the Air is darkned: We look now thro' Clouds of Lusts and Passions, and Inordinate Affections, and therefore there must necessarily arise several *Obstructions*, which can only be *removed*, and several *Defects*, which can only be supplied by *Revelation*; and were the *Enemys* of it truly sensible of their Weakness, they would use it, like *Glasses* to help their Eyes, and as an Excellent *Perspective*, which carrieth our Sight further, and sheweth the Object more distinctly, and discovereth several parts in it not discernable by the *naked Eye*.

Whatever the *Light of Nature* could discover, we find set forth to the best Advantage in the Writings of *Plato* and *Tully*: I will not now dispute *what Light Plato* particularly might have borrowed from the *Jews*, nor how that *Light* might thro' various Channels, besides his Works, be conveyed into the *Writings* of the *Roman*; but let the most *partial* compare their Writings, *Divine* and *Excellent* as they are called, with the

Scrip-

below the Scrip. yet commended. 121

Scriptures, and they must see, *how short* they fall of that *real* and *Divine Perfection* both in *Truth* and *Majesty of Thought*, and in *greatness* and *dignity of Expression*: *How doubtfully* they speak of some Points: *how erroneously* of others!

If our *Modern Infidels* in *Christian Countrys* have formed more worthy Conceptions of the *DIVINE BEING*, *that* we presume, and very reasonably, is *owing* even to the *Revelation*, which they *disclaim*; since otherwise their *PARTS* and *ABILITIES* do not appear to be *brighter* or *stronger*, than those of *Socrates*, *Plato*, *Cicero*, and some other great *Genius's* of *Greece* and *Rome*.

But this is a *Concession* by no means to be made them, for they seem not to have agreed in any one determinate *Scheme* or *System* of *Religion*, nor to be *fixed* in any thing but *Unbelief*. They boast of the *Light of Nature*, but will not follow it so far, as it would lead them: they pretend, that it is *perfect*, but their own Schemes shew at once the *Imperfection* of the *Light*, and the *Depravity* of the *Authors*.

Differently from these the great *Genius's* of *Antiquity* behaved: They were deeply sensible of the *Darkness* and *Corruption* of their *Nature*: The best, and wisest of them were still enlarging their views, and gladly laid hold of those imperfect *Traditions*, and eagerly attended to any *Notices*, which conveyed down to them the *Doctrine* of a *Future State*. In this View they entertained the Thoughts of the Souls *Immortality* with the highest Pleasure, and if it were an *Error*, they desired to *enjoy* it.

But

But our *Infidels* are the Reverse of these: They are so far from looking after, that they shut their Eyes against all Revelation: They affect to *doubt* at least of those Points concerning a *Future State*, which these *Heathens* so earnestly *wished* might be *True*, and will rather reject the *Morality* of the *Gospel*, than own the Revelation that conveyeth it: They will not admit those *Precepts* which rise above their *Natural Corruption*, and restrain their *Natural Appetites*, as they call them: Otherwise there can be no Objection against what is *Good* and *Excellent*, let it come from *Heaven* or from *Men*, and *Heaven* surely is the most proper *Fountain*; It is evident therefore (whatever Suppositions we may make of other Causes) that their Refusal both of the *Christian Faith* and *Morality*, for the most part proceedeth from their Sensuality and Lusts: from a disbelief of a *Divine Lawgiver*, and the *Sanctions* of another World: And perhaps the truest Account after all is this, that the *Faith* is *denied* for the *sake* of the *Morality* it *requireth*.

It is Fashionable with these Men especially to extol the Perfection and Excellency of the *Heathen Theology* and *Morality*: and well they may, for the *Heathen* Plan is in many respects more *excellent* than *Theirs*: The *Heathen*, that is the more excellent of them, who began to be awakened from their Slumber, and to be sensible of the Weakness and Misery of *Human Nature*, perceived upon just Reflection the *Original* Excellence of the *Soul*: they saw the *Wound*, and searched, tho' in vain, for the *Cure*: They proceeded upon what they knew, with a desire
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The Old Heathens commended. 123

to know more: Whereas our *Heathen* stop short, and do either *fear* or *refuse* to carry their Enquirys into another World.

But in Answer to the *real* or *pretended* Excellence of the Old *Heathen* Schemes, which the more Excellent they are, the greater Reproach they are also to our *Modern Unbelievers*; We own it to their great Commendation, that some of them have improved the *Light of Nature*, considered as *impaired* and *diminished*, and have been directed by it in those dark Ages much further, than Others: That they had attained to this Conclusion of *one Supreme Cause*: of an *Eternal Being*: of an *Universal Providence*: and were under strong and lively Apprehensions of the *Soul's Immortality*, and a *Future State of Rewards* and *Punishments*: That they expressed themselves with great *Force* and *Beauty* upon several Branches of *Morality*, and formed great and noble Conceptions of the *Deity*: All this we own, and this their *Writings* do evince in many admirable Passages; But that they had attained to so *clear* and *determinate* a *Notion* concerning God and their *Duty*, as we are now able to propose abstracted from the great *Mysterys* revealed, when the Matter is again considered, will not, I suppose, be pretended: And the *Excellency* of their *Writings*, when compared with the *Scriptures*, proves only this Conclusion, that *Whatever* we know of God and our *Duty* by the *Light of Nature*, we know the *same* more *perfectly* by *Revelation*.

I proceed therefore to the *second* Proposition, which is

2. That

124 *Natural Truths to be received*

2. That where we have some Knowledge without *Revelation*, we must nevertheless believe according to what is *revealed*.

This is clear from the former Consideration; for we are obliged to receive all *Truth* in the *highest* and most *perfect* *discoverys*, that are offered to us; if therefore those *Truths*, which we are in some Degree acquainted with by *Nature*, are more fully discovered by *Revelation*, we are obliged to receive *them* as proposed more clearly and perfectly in that *Revelation*. Whether we believe the *Revelation* or no, we must receive the *Truths* of *Natural Religion*: if we will not take them upon the Authority of God in the *Scripture*, yet we must admit them upon the *Principles* of *Natural Reason*, to which they are made known, and therefore those, who reject a *Revelation*, are nevertheless obliged to accept the *Truths* of *Natural Religion*, as they are *more perfectly* set forth and declared by that *Revelation*; for those, who are Enemies to *Revelation*, are not at Liberty to form what Notions, they please, of *Natural Religion*, but are obliged to consent to, and entertain the most *Perfect*, that can be discovered.

True *Religion* both in *Doctrine* and *Practice* is perfective of our *Nature*, and *Truth* is to be embraced, *wherever* it is found, and by *whomsoever* it is offered. The same high Pretensions, which these *Patrons* of *Natural Religion* make to a Zeal for *Truth* in all their bold Enquirys, will oblige them to accept those *Truths* of *Natural Religion*, which the *Scriptures* teach, not only because *Nature* teacheth the same, but especially,

pecially, because they are taught *more perfectly* in the *Scriptures*, than they are by the *Light of Nature* in its present Condition. He that stoppeth short by the way, and will not assent to the Precepts of *Natural Religion* thus proposed, and required, is not that *free and impartial Enquirer* after *Truth*, he pretendeth to be: Sure it can be no Prejudice to *Truth* to suppose it *revealed*, when if Men could discover it themselves in the same *Perfection* they would be obliged to receive it *exclusive* of *Revelation*: How far *Natural Conscience* would induce an *Obligation* we have partly seen in a former *Discourse*; and all the Difference as to the *Precepts* themselves is, that they are not only the *Law of Nature*, but being proposed by the *Scriptures* in the most *perfect* manner, as it becomes the *Divine Laws* to be, they are the *Law of God* also, and derive their *Obligation* not from the the *Precarious Force* of *Natural Conscience* only, but from the *Uniform Authority* of his *Commands*; But because I would not so speak or be understood, as if the *Law of Nature*, and the *Law of God* were *two different Laws*, it will be enough to add, that *It is the same Law imperfectly* discovered by our *Natural Light*, and taught *more perfectly* by the *Word of God*.

It would be of great Advantage, if the *Patrons* of *Natural Light* would *speak out*, and say, which are the *Truths* of *Natural Religion*, as contradistinguished to *Revealed*. Is the *Immortality* of the Soul: Are *future Rewards* and *Punishments*? and consequently a *Judgment to come* any Branches of *Natural Religion*? Are Fear
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and Shame, and Remorse Natural Affections upon Guilt and Transgression? are Joy and Complacency the Natural Result of Innocence and Obedience? If *these* be Dictates of Nature, and Inseparable from our Souls, as Thought it self, we are bound to attend to all these Truths in the clearest Discovery, and the highest Perfection. And if many Difficultys be cleared up, and many Doubts be satisfied by Revelation, concerning the Reason, Ground and Manner of these Things, this ought to be no Prejudice to the *Truths* themselves: I will only add, that when the Enemies of Revelation shall receive the *Doctrines* of *Natural Religion* in that Perfection, they are taught in by the *Scriptures*, they will soon consent to the *Superstructure*, which Revelation raiseth upon them: When they are persuaded of a *Future Judgment* distributed into Rewards and Punishments, they will have no Objection to the Account, the *Scriptures* give us of it.

We may with great Justice insist upon it, that the *Adversarys* of *revealed Religion* declare themselves upon these Heads: Whether they believe a *future State*? whether they can conceive and frame any *System* of *Religion* without it? whether they can, or how far they can discover such a *State* by the *Light of Nature*: And then what Nature from within giveth them any Notices and Apprehensions of they are obliged to believe, when more clearly *revealed*. If the *Light of Nature*, as it directed the *Heathen World*, doth not give us a clear Knowledge of this *Point*, and this *single Point* be a *Fundamental Article* of

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Natural Religion, we are then obliged to follow *that Light* which supplieth the Defects of our *natural Light*, and cleareth up the Manner and Circumstances of a *Judgment to come*.

As the general *Apprehension* is dictated by Nature, and Men, who have once entertained it, cannot easily overcome it: and as the determinate Course and Order of it cannot be known by our *natural Light*, we must be, without further Instruction, as the *Heathen* were, in great Doubts and Perplexitys about it, and live as they did in *fear of Punishment*, and *no settled firm Assurance of Happiness*. The more an *Inquisitive Mind* reasoneth upon the *Common Condition of Mankind*, and searcheth into the *Causes and Consequences of the General Corruption and Depravity of our Nature*, the more he will be *perplexed*, and the more gladly will receive *that Light* which can *guide and direct* him thro' all the *Mazes*, in which he was bewildered. So far as the Knowledge of these things is necessary to the *Practice* even of *Natural Religion*, Men are obliged to receive it, and since less than one fixed and determinate Persuasion will not be *sufficient* to influence our *Practice*, which can never be *uniform and steady* under any *doubts and uncertaintys*, we are therefore obliged to receive these Truths, when *revealed*, as they have their *foundation* in our *natural Apprehensions*, but are fully discovered by *Revelation* only.

This is the Duty of all *sincere Enquirers*, whose searches should be directed to find out the *Truth*, and not to raise *Objections* against it,

it, and under a *Pretence* of *seeking* for it, to *deny* it.

By such an *Enquiry* and *Deduction* these Men may possibly find what they *inwardly* apprehend, and yet are *afraid* to acknowledge, That even in *natural Religion* something *more* than God's *Goodness* is to be considered, and that they may be *punished* for those *Actions* and *Indulgences*, which flow from that *Corruption* of their Nature, which of themselves they are not able to overcome.

Thus we may see, how these Enquiries lead us from *natural Religion* to *revealed* properly so called, and this bringeth me in the third place to shew.

3. That where we have no Knowledge at all without *Revelation*, we are obliged to take the *Points, Doctrines* and *Articles exactly* and *precisely* as they are *revealed*.

By this I do not mean a *strict literal* sense of the Words in all Respects, but only so far a *literal sense*, as they are an *Averment* of some *fact* or *Truth* concerning the *Divine Nature*, and the *Transactions* of God with the *Sons of Men*.

Thus when the *First Person* of the *Ever Blessed Trinity* is called a *Father*, and the *Second a Son* antecedently to the *Incarnation*: when the *Second Person* is set forth, as the *Eternal Son* of the *Father*, with all the proper *Attributes* and *Appellations* of the *Divine Nature*, we are obliged to understand the Words, which express this Relation, of a *true* and *proper Paternity*, and of a *true* and *proper Filiation*; and because the
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whole *Divine Nature* and *Attributes* are *totally* communicated, we do therefore assert the *Divine Relation* to be as *Eternal* as the *Essence*. Again, when the *Son* with respect to this *Eternal Generation*, is called the *Only Begotten*, we are taught, that this *Relation* arises from the *same Foundation* in the GOD-HEAD, as it doth among Men: and that the *Son* is as truly the *Begotten Son* of the *Father* with the *whole Nature* and *Essence* of the *Father* communicated unto *Him*, as *Seth* was the *Son* of *Adam* with the *whole Nature* and *Essence* of *Adam* communicated unto him; But then because, as to the *Manner*, we cannot conceive of *Divine Generation* as we do of *Human*, here the *gross literal sense*, or rather *Conception* of the Words must be laid aside: The Reality of the Fact is only *asserted*: The *Manner*, How it is, is not to be *comprehended*, and it must therefore be understood according to that *Analogy* and *Correspondence*, which truly and clearly setteth forth the Truth and Reality of this *Divine Relation*, that it is Real as in Men, but Suitable to the *Incomprehensible Essence* of the *Divine Nature* which is ever *Eternal*, and ever ONE.

Guarding then against all *gross* and *vulgar* Apprehensions, that the *Divine Relation* between the *Father* and the *Son* should make *two Individuals*, as in *Adam* and *Seth*: and on the other hand against a bare *Metaphorical* Interpretation, as if this *Relation* was merely *Figurative*, and *Allusive* only, we come to the Reality of the *Fact*, and then I say, that, with regard to what is asserted, every point of *Di-*

vine Revelation is to be taken in the same strictness and Propriety with any Matter of Fact historically delivered: and where we can have no *Knowledge* without a *Revelation*, and cannot extend our *Knowledge* beyond what is *revealed*, we must take the *Revelation*, as it is given, in the most plain and obvious sense, and for this plain reason, because otherwise, so various are the Imaginations of Men, we cannot take it in any certain and determinate sense.

In *History* we make no Difficulty to assent to the *Facts* related concerning any *Famous Man* and his *Actions*, unless the *Facts* be contradicted by other *Historians* of equal Credit, but we make no Difficulty, where there is an Agreement of All, or if those that differ, are manifestly *partial*, or on any other account not to be believed: And in *Natural Philosophy* or *Natural History*, as it may very properly be called, we assent also without any difficulty to those *Facts*, which are asserted upon repeated *Experiments* concerning the several *Propertys* of *Natural Bodys*: In *Civil History* there is no Difficulty in accounting for the *Actions* related, except that sometimes the *springs* and *reasons* of them are not known, and yet it would be highly Absurd to Deny the *Fact*, because we know not the *reason*, why it was done: And it would be but an idle and vain Amusement to guess at the true *reason*, when several perhaps may be assigned, and we are not able to prefer one with any certainty to another: In *Natural History* the *Fact* is certain, but the *reason* of it, further than the *outward Appearances*, beyond
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our Reach. That *such Effects* flow from *such Propertyts*, and that the *Propertyts* of Things are known by their *Effects* is certain, but that we do, or can therefore know the *real Essences* of Things, or the *manner*, how such *Effects* flow constantly from such *Causes* or *Propertyts* no Man can reasonably infer: The various *Hypotheses* raised to solve the several *Phænomena*, and *Operations* of *Nature* are a full acknowledgment of the *facts*, and as full a Proof of our *Ignorance* of the real inward *Essence* and Construction of Bodys, and of the *Reasons* and *Manner* of their *Operations* in the several *Effects* they produce, and therefore we must *own* the Fact, tho' we cannot *assign* the Reason of it.

All therefore beyond this Conclusion, that each *specific* Body hath its own determinate and *specific Propertyts* known by certain and uniform *Effects* constantly flowing from them, is meer Conjecture, and random Aim, which can never hit the Mark, and discover the *real Essences* of things, as they are in themselves: That *Gold* is a *Species* of *Metal* of *such a Weight* and *Colour*, *Malleable* and *Ductile* to *such a Degree*, is evident partly to our *Senses*, and further proved by most certain *Experiment*, which is only a confirmation to our *Senses*; but what are the *figure* and *texture* of its Parts we can only guess at, and could we certainly discover, yet we should still be puzzled to account why *such Propertyts* do flow from *such a figure* and *texture* of Parts, and suppose we could from them account for the *Weight*, I suppose, we could not pretend to account for the *Colour* too!

132 *for our Assent to Facts*

If we are so much at a loss in *Natural Philosophy*, if we can really see no further than to the *surface* and *outside*, but cannot pierce into *Essences* of things, why should we imagine, that we are able to see further into the *Things* of GOD, and account for the great *Mysteries* of the *Divine Nature*, when our *Bounds* are set, *beyond* which we cannot *pass*, even in things subject to the constant Examination of our *Senses*? We must take all these things therefore, the *daily Objects* of our *Senses*, just as we find them, as they are expressed and asserted to be by those, who have given us their *History*: It would be highly absurd to deny the *Facts*, or to bend or explain them to any *Hypothesis*, because we may fondly imagine, we can *account* for what in the last resort is not *accountable* for by us. And it must be much more Absurd to raise any *Hypotheses* for solving the great *Mysteries* of *Religion*, and to contradict the *Fact* asserted, because we cannot *account* *How* it should be *so*, as it is asserted *to be*.

In the *Scriptures* it is *revealed* that there is *One* GOD: That in the *Divine Nature* or GOD-Head there are *Three Persons*, so we are forced to call *them*, and must call *them*, till our *Adversarys* can teach us a *more* proper Expression: To each of these the *Incommunicable Name* and *Attributes* of the *One* GOD are ascribed in the fullest and highest Terms without any *Difference* or *Inequality*: That these *Three Persons* are set forth in the *Scriptures* under the several Names of the FATHER, of the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST: That such *Acts* are ascribed to each,

as

as do necessarily infer a *Distinction* of *Persons*, and at the same time such *Attributes*, as evidently prove an *Unity* of *Essence*.

To deny that the *Son* is truly and properly a *Son*, and the *Father* consequently to be truly and properly a *Father*, is to deny the *Fact* asserted in the *Scripture*; and this they do, who depart from the obvious and plain meaning of the *Words*, in which these *Divine Relations* are expressed. Again to deny that the *Name* and *Attributes* of the *One* God are ascribed without any *Reserve* or *Limitation* to the *Son*, even as they are to the *Father*, is to depart from the *Positive* plain *Assertions* of *Scripture*, which, in declaring the *Eternity* of the *Son*, declare also the *Reality* and *Eternity* of the *Relation*: And so concerning the rest of the great *Articles* of our *Faith*.

These, as they are proposed to us, are so many *Positive Assertions*, and must be received as so many *Facts* affirmed by God *Himself*. The plain and primary sense of the words convey these *Assertions* to us, and if we depart from the proper and obvious meaning we shall run on in a perpetual Maze of Error, and multiply different *Senses* without End.

Take the *Sabellian*, the *Arian*, and *Socinian Hypothesis*: each invented to solve *Difficultys*, and to deny the *Truth*, they will either of them show the Unreasonableness and Mischief so to depart from the *Native* signification of the *Words* used to express any Point of *Revelation*, as to deny the *Fact* therein asserted.

The *Sabellian* to secure the *Unity* of the GOD-HEAD denieth the *Distinction* of *Persons*, and so interpreteth all that is *revealed* of the *Father*, of the *Son*, and of the *Holy Ghost* in a purely *figurative* Sense. The *Arian* preserves indeed the *Distinction* of *Persons*, but not in the GOD-HEAD: Therein *he* alloweth only *One Person*, namely the *Father* to be GOD: He denieth the *Divinity* of the other *Two*, excludeth the *Son* from the *Nature* of the *Father*, and the *Holy Ghost* from any *Essential Relation* to either. Thus the *Sabellian* to preserve the *Unity* denieth the *Persons*: The *Arian* for the same reason denieth the *Divinity* of the *Persons*, making the *Son* and the *Holy Ghost* as *Distinct* from the *Father*, as two *Individual Men* are from any *third*, and *each other*; but at the same time infinitely more *inferior* in *Nature*, than one *Man* is or can be in any *Consideration* to another: even as *inferior* as a *Creature* to its *Creator*; for with respect to the *Divine Being*, there is absolutely speaking no *difference* of *Inferiority* or *distance*: *Whatever* is not of the same *Essence* must be infinitely removed, for there are no *degrees* of *More* or *Less* in *Infinity*, and no *Medium* possible to be imagined even by the loftiest *Expressions* between GOD and a *Creature*; But this I shall more largely and particularly consider hereafter.

The *Socinians* out of the *Zeal* for the *Divine Unity* absolutely deny the *Preexistence* of the *Son*, that *He* existed before his *Incarnation*, and they deny any *Personal Existence* of the *Holy Ghost* at all: Otherwise they own the *Divinity*
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of the Son as much, and in as full Terms, as the *Arians*; and indeed I cannot see, wherein the *Arians* have the Advantage by owning his *Pre-existence*, since with respect to *Eternity* Millions of Ages backwards bear no more *Proportion* than *two thousand* Years, and if there ever was a *Time* when *He was Not*, or, to avoid Equivocation, if from *all Eternity He did not Exist*, it is all one as if He had existed but *yesterday*.

Here are three distinct *Hypotheses* founded on the *same Common Principles*, and ending in the *same Common Point*, The *Denial* of the *Trinity*; and they are only three different ways of expressing the *Unitarian Scheme* without openly discarding the *Authority* and *Language* of the *Scriptures*. Each of these: The *Sabellian*, *Arian* and *Socinian*, accommodate their *Interpretations* to their several *Schemes*, and departing from the *Affertions* in Fact, assert *some thing else* in full Contradiction to those *Affertions*: *Each of these* must confess that *one sense* only can be the *True one*, that *two* at least of their *Interpretations* must be wrong: and since they *all*, and *each* of them contradict the common received obvious sense of the *Scriptures*, in which certain *Facts* are *revealed* and asserted concerning the *Divine Nature* and *Persons*, it is a good *Presumption*, that they are *all Mistaken*, especially if we consider the Reason which carrieth them away from the plain Assertion, which is their Disbelief of divine *Mysterys*, and a vain Attempt to *Explain*, what is indeed *Inexplicable*.

136 *Except. to this third Head.*

The *Rules of Interpretation*, so far as the great *Mysterys* of the *Christian Faith* are proposed I shall make the *Subject* of some further Discourses: What I have now insisted upon is a *fundamental Principle* for fixing one certain and determinate *sense*, since if we are at Liberty to understand any Assertion in *fact* after any *other* manner, than the Words in their most natural signification, and construction do plainly import, we may run on to every *possible sense*, which the Perverseness or Wit of Man can invent, and consequently we can never know nor agree in what is the Precise and Determinate Proposition affirmed and propounded to our Belief.

There are only, so far as I can find, *three possible Exceptions* to what I have advanced upon this Subject of understanding the *Language of Revelation* in the most *plain* and *obvious sense* of the Words, when any *Fact* is asserted, or any *Doctrine* proposed.

And they are,

1. That it is *indifferent* what we believe in these great and *mysterious* Points, provided we entertain a *Charitable* Opinion of one another, and *whatever* we *believe*, *believe* at the same time, that *all* in their *different ways* may be *Saved*.

2. That we be *Sincere*.

3. That GOD is *better* pleased, and *more* glorified by *Variety* than *Uniformity* in *Religion*.

1. For

The Pretence of Charity 137

I. For *Charity*. This Pretension hath been formerly made with respect to *Christian* Communion, tho' it be only a Pretension in those, that separate from us: The Rule holdeth among *National* Churches, which *differ* in *Rites* and *Ceremonys*, but *agree* in *Doctrine* and *Government*, and so *Catholic Communion* may be maintained among all the *Churches* of *Christ*; but it doth not hold in *Differences* relating to *Communion*, where *separation* is made from any *National* Church agreeing with the *Catholic* of all Ages, and therefore where any *Seet* or *Denomination* of *Christians* differeth in *Doctrine* and *Government* from a *Church*, which agreeth with the *Catholic*, we cannot allow such *difference* to be a Matter *indifferent*, especially when they break *Communion* upon that account, and set up another *Form* as of *Divine Right* in opposition to the *Form* which we possess from the *Apostles* for Fifteen Hundred Years, till this *Innovation* first appeared.

This is the Case of our *Dissenters* with regard to the *Doctrine* and *Discipline* of the *Church*: and if we add their other Pretences of *Seperation*, as we shall find *them* equally unjustifiable, we shall more clearly see the vanity of this Pretence to *Charity*, since *Schism*, or *Separation* upon *Principle* so warmly defended, and so zealously maintained is inconsistent with the very Being of *Charity* and *Affection*. But supposing they thought, and I doubt not they truly think, that *we may be saved*, we are indeed much obliged to them for their Thoughts, but it is not a *Communion* of *Affections* only, which goeth
still

still further than a bare Charitable Opinion, much less a bare Charitable Thought of each others Salvation, which is required by the *Gospel*, but an *Actual Communion and Fellowship* with one another, in *Opposition* to, and *Condemnation* of all *Schism and Division*. This *Division* those *Churches* avoid, who profess *Communion* with the *Catholic*, and maintain it also with such *Parts* of it, as agree in the true *Doctrine* and *Government*.

Again, where any *Seet* or Denomination of *Christians* differeth from the *Catholic Church* in *Doctrines* so, as in those Differences to require an Agreement of all *Christians* as a *Condition* of Communicating with them, and these *Doctrines* are contrary to *Scripture*, subversive of the true *Faith*, and in many Points downright *Idolatrous*, there we cannot communicate with them, altho' together with these sinful Terms they *hold the Head and Foundation*; but tho' we cannot Communicate with them, yet upon their holding the *Head*, we do *charitably* believe they may be *saved* notwithstanding their *Idolatry*, so far, as they do it *ignorantly*, and *without Conscience of the Idol*.

This is the Case between the *Papists* and *Us*: We cannot *communicate* with them, but we extend our *Charity* to them as far as we can, tho' they return not the same to us. Thus we fulfill the *Royal Law* towards all, who divide *Communion* from us, tho' we do not think this *Charity* sufficient to justify all Differences in *Religion*.

But

Condemned by the XVII Art. 139

But if we consider this Pretension in a more general View, with respect to the *Belief* as well as *Communion* of *Christians*, and with regard to every *Heresy*, and every Form of *Infidelity*, we shall find it set aside by the XVIII Article of our *Church*, which condemneth all those, who presume to say, *That every Man shall be Saved In* (according to the Latin) *By* (according to the English) *the Law, or Sect, which he professeth, so that he be diligent to frame his Life according to that Law, and the Light of Nature.* The reason given is, *That we can be saved by Christ Alone.*

The Truth of this Decision upon the reason given is manifest; otherwise every Man might be left to the meer *Light of Nature*, and there would be no Occasion for the *Gospel* at all: or if we suppose, the *Law* or *Sect* is to be restrained to the *Law* and *Sects*, which prevail among *Christians*, then difference of *Belief* in the great *Articles* of *Faith*, and separation of *Communion* upon all unwarrantable Pretensions are condemned, as well as those, who defend and maintain them by this Position and Pretension of *Charity*.

The Point before us is concerning some *determinate Faith*, and with respect to this Pretension it will be enough to ask whether a *Charitable* Opinion of others will justify our selves, if we believe *wrong*, or if others, who do not believe *aright*, are in any better Condition for our *Charitable* Opinions, to show the vanity and weakness of it.

The utmost, that can be said, is, that we cannot set *Bounds* to God's *Mercy*, nor prescribe
Rules

Rules to his *Grace*, that He may possibly extend his Pardon and Salvation to those, who are Ignorant of his *Gospel*, and accept of those, who, when 'tis offered, do nevertheless refuse it: But of the *first* we can have no Assurance, of the *last* we are assured to the Contrary, we set no *Bounds* to God's *Mercy*, at most we do but *confine* our selves within the *Bounds* Himself hath prescribed. God hath always transacted with Men in the way of *Covenant*, and it is uncertain arguing from his *Uncovenanted* Mercys: To reason from his *Attributes* exclusive of his *Covenant* is also very *precarious*: For with respect to his *Mercy*, from which in this Case Men love to argue, *He* is for ever justified in giving Man a *Covenant* of *Grace*, and receiving him to *Pardon*, after he had *fallen*. We were restored in *Christ* as soon as we fell in *Adam*: And after the Flood we still stood restored in the *Covenant* continued to *Noah*: The *Corruption*, *Ignorance*, and *Idolatry*, that prevailed in his Posterity, are chargeable upon themselves alone for not attending to that *Light* and *Evidence*, which God had given them, so that in all successive Ages *they are without Excuse*.

But supposing the utmost Allowances to the *Gentile* World, what is all this to those who are born within the *Pale* of *Christ's Church*, who call themselves *Christians*, and enjoy the *Light* of the *Gospel*? Is it *indifferent* for these to receive a *Revelation*, or not? or to reject it, as do the *Deists*? or to differ from it, as do the *Arians* and *Socinians*, and every Denomination of *Heretics*? Is *Faith* necessary to *Justification*? and if

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necessary, is it of *that Latitude* to justify all, believe they what they will? To affirm the former condemneth the *Deists*, and all the Enemies of *revealed Religion*: To deny the latter overthroweth the Pretensions of *all*, that differ from the *Faith*: For there is ^a *One Faith* and *one Baptism* into it. Those who differ from this *Faith*, differ from the *Faith* here asserted to be *One*: Those, that *differ* do *virtually* condemn each other, and their *Contentions* with the *Church* are very *unreasonable*, if they thought *Salvation* might be obtained in any *different* Scheme, unless they excluded us alone from all *Hopes* of *Salvation*.

Setting aside therefore this vain Pretence, as if we should be *Saved* in our *own* Errors, because we are so *charitable* as to think, all others shall be *Saved* in *theirs*, we assert and maintain that *Charity* is the Necessary Companion of a *right Faith*; but we deny that it will justify us in a *wrong One*: To think and to hope *charitably* of all Men is our *Christian Duty*, but *Faith* can be no Term of *Salvation*, if *all Men indifferently* in all Professions may be *Saved*: Without *Charity* joyned to the true *Faith* we cannot be *Saved*, for the *Gospel* requireth *that* ^b *Faith*, *which worketh by Love*; but shall we be *Saved*, because we think, that those, who *differ* from us, are in a *state of Salvation*?

However this may be pretended by *some*, in the Mouths of *Heretics* and *Unbelievers* it must sound very strange and absurd: The *Rancour*,

^a Eph. IV. 5. ^b Gal. V. 6.

142 *The Pretence of Sincerity.*

Virulence and Malice, which they express against the *Doctrines* of the Church, and *those*, who profess them; the *Rage and Cruelty*, with which, when they have *Power*, they ever persecute the *Faith* of Christ, are strong *Indications*, and *unanswerable Testimonys* of the *Charity* they bear us: the whole method of their Proceeding: their *Zeal* and *Diffimulation* in opposing the great *Articles* of our *Faith* may convince us at once of their *Ingenuity* and their *Love*; and their *Conduct* towards us may serve to *teach*, or what is rather to be chosen, to *warn* us what Treatment we may expect at their hands.

2. The *second* Exception against understanding the great *Mysterys* of the *Gospel* in the plain obvious sense of the Words is the Pretence of *Sincerity*, as available not only to excuse our Errors, but also at the same time to recommend us to the Favour of God.

Without entring into the Controversy, as it hath been managed on both sides the Question, I shall rather chuse to consider the Argument in a more peculiar View as it is employed in the service of *Infidelity*, and for a Foundation I shall lay down these general *Positions*. That *Sincerity*, like *Charity*, is required in a *Right Faith*, but will not *justify* in a *Wrong*: That *Faith* and not *Sincerity* is the *express Condition* of our *Justification*, and therefore the strict Question is, whether our *Faith* be *Right*, not whether it be *Sincere*; or rather first whether it be *right*, and then whether it be *sincere*.

Sincerity is not peculiar to our *Faith*: It equally regardeth all the Parts of our Lives, and standeth

eth in Opposition to all *Passion, Prejudice, self Interest* and *Partiality*: It suffereth no *Mixtures*: it admitteth of no *Alloy*, and endureth not the least *Byass* of Affection: It is joyned with *Simplicity*, and derived from GOD: and our ^a *Rejoycing*, like St Paul's, must be *this, The Testimony of our Conscience, that in Simplicity and Godly Sincerity, not with fleshly Wisdom, but by the Grace of GOD we have had our Conversation in the World.* To which we may very properly add the following Words of the *Apostle* ^b *for we are not as many, which corrupt the Word of GOD, but as of Sincerity, but as of GOD, in the sight of GOD speak we in Christ.*

There are in this Pretence of *Sincerity* as applied to *Heresy* and *Infidelity* these two *Difficulties*, which deserve the Consideration of all, who rely upon it themselves, or judge of others according to it.

The *first* is the very *supposition*, that in all the *different* and *opposite* Opinions set up against the plain and uniform *Doctrines* of the *Church*, *those*, who hold these Opinions, are *Sincere* according to that *simplicity* and *Godly sincerity* mentioned by St Paul. The *second* is, That supposing *this*, whether they are *thereby* justified.

1. For the *first*, it is a very hard *supposition*, and cannot be *generally* applied to *all* those who embrace different Opinions, especially if we consider that these different Opinions are so many Deviations from the *Faith*, and that St Paul ascribeth all such Deviation to the *Cor-*

144. *Sincerity how far available.*

ruption of the *Mind*: to *Pride*, to *Coveteousness* and *Sensuality*; and then supposing the *Deviation*, the *sincerity* is destroyed. These all laid together are *Difficulties* against the *supposition* of true *sincerity* in the *Opposers* of the *Christian Faith*, which deserve to be considered before it be granted; but *admitting* for Arguments sake, and *supposing* the *Adversarys* of our *Faith* to be *all* of them to a Man, every one *sincere* and *upright* in his Heart, we are next to consider,

2. What it will *avail*.

To say that *Sincerity* will recommend us to the Favour of God, whether we embrace *Truth* or *Error*, is a *Proposition* of that *Latitude*, as not only to destroy the whole *Covenant* of the *Gospel*, but the *Principles* of *Natural Religion* also, and to confound the *distinctions* of *Good* and *Evil*.

To restrain this to *speculative* Truth alone will not remove the Difficulty, as long as Men may be *sincerely* engaged in *Practical* Errors from a *wrong speculation* of *Moral Truth*. The *Truths* of *Morality* are of a *speculative* as well as a *practical* Nature, and must be considered in the way of *Theory*, before we enter upon the *Practice* of them, for the *truth* of our *Practice* will depend on the *justness* of our *sentiments*: The *Opinions* that have been maintained, that these *Truths* are not *Eternal*, *Unvariable* and *Universal*, are *undeniable* Arguments, that *Error* may be followed in *Practice*, and that the *Maintainers* of these *Opinions* and *those*, who *practise* accordingly may be as *sincere*, as any that differ in *meer speculative* Points.

If it shall be said, that *Practical Errors* are Inconsistent with *sincerity*, it is readily allowed, but this cannot be urged by the great *Patrons* of *sincerity* against those, who maintain *Virtue* and *Vice* to be of *Arbitrary Constitution* according to the prevailing *Customs*, *Laws* or *Sentiments* of different *Nations*. In this Case those must be *sincere*, who *practise*, according to their *best* Notions of things, and he that doth a real *Virtuous Action*, may according to the *Judgment* of his *Country* be guilty of a *Vice*, and his *Conscience* supposing it *sincere*, will *reproach* him accordingly. In what *state* the *Religion* and *Light* of *Nature* must be upon these *suppositions* is easy to discern: Nothing can be *fixed* and *certain*, and the great Dutys of *Morality* shall no longer depend on their own *Eternal* and *Unalterable Verity*, but upon the *Customs* and *Opinions* of Men: In these *Opinions*, how Erroneous soever, where they are *National*, Men may be *sincere*, as having been *bred* up in them, and consequently *sincerity* shall justify in *Errors* of *Practice* as well as in *Errors* of *Faith*: This Reasoning holdeth as strictly in *one* Point, as the *other*, and if it be disallowed in the *One*, it cannot be admitted in the *Other*.

There is, as I apprehend it, a *greater Fault* in not *assenting* to, and in *mistaking* or *differing* in *Speculative* Points, than is commonly imagined: All *Truths* are in some sense of a *Moral nature*, and were *Speculative* Truth of no Consequence, still it argues a *Pravity* of *Mind* not to *assent* to any *Truths*, much more to *contradict* them; we must consider our *Capacity* as well as

Right of Judging: and we must be supposed *qualified* to enter into the *abstrusest* Enquirys, or we must not presume to *determine* against them. Otherwise if we are not able to *judge* for our *selves*, our *Judgment* must be directed by *others*, and *he*, that in such a Case will oppose his *Private* to the *Publick* Judgment and Authority, will be *condemned* as an *Obstinate* and *Partial* Man; and let *him* be never so *sincere*, even as *sincere*, as *Ignorance* and *Blindness* can make him, still his *sincerity* will not *avail* him, but will be resolved into a *Blockish* Incapacity to discern the *Truth*, or an *Obstinate* Perverseness in *not acknowledging it*, whenever he pretendeth to pass any *Judgment* upon it.

It is commonly suggested that *Matters of Faith* are *Points of Speculation*, in which we may *safely differ*, provided we are *sincere* in our *searches*, and our *present Persuasion*; if *Articles of Faith* were proposed only, as so many *Problems* of no *Consequence* in the *Determination* of them, there might be some Colour in these suggestions; but as *they* are *Truths* proposed by God Himself of the highest *Consequence* to his *Glory* and our *Salvation*, it will be of *equal* *Consequence* how we believe: and it will prove but an *Indifferent Plea*, that we cannot believe them, or that we do *sincerely disbelieve* them: where God requireth our Assent we can enter no *Plea* for our Denyal or Contradiction. *Charity* and *sincerity* must accompany our *Faith*, and what must so *Indivisibly* go along with a *Right Faith*, will not avail to our *Justification* in a *Wrong*. This *Sincerity* is a *Constant Disposition*

to *Truth* and *Goodness*, and an Uniform Practice answerable to such a Disposition: It is indeed the *Uprightness* and *Integrity* of our Nature, and, when the *Patrons* of it will clearly state what *failings* are consistent with it in this our *lapsed* Condition so as to *justify* a Man in his *Errors*, then, as *Errors* themselves are a *Failing*, they will only prove, that *one Failing* can *justify* another: and whether the present *Opposition* to the *Truth*, that is to the *Faith* as we profess it, proceedeth from any other *sincerity*, than a *sincere Hatred* of it, must be left to *impartial* Men to *consider*.

After all, *Sincerity* is none of the *Terms* proposed for our *Justification*: It is *equally* required in all our *Approaches* to GOD, and in *every* Discharge of our Duty: It fitteth and prepareth us for the Reception of Divine Truths, when offered, but will never justify us independent of those Truths, or in our Denyal and Contradiction of them. And it may be of use and Instruction to us to consider how *Sincerity* is applied to *Faith* in the *Scriptures*: And this I hope will satisfy and compleat this Argument.

Sincerity in the *Gospel* is opposed to *Hypocrisy*, as it respecteth the *Persons* believing, and to all mixture of *Error* with the *Truth*, as it respecteth the *Doctrines* to be *believed*: And it is as strictly required, that the *Doctrine* be *uncorrupt*, as that the *Believer* be *sincere*: If then the *Doctrine* be not *sincere*, the *sincerity* of the Person who holdeth it will not *avail*.

On our Part therefore ^a *holding the Faith*, we must hold a good Conscience also, or like those, who put it away, we shall make shipwrack of the Faith. The ^b Ministers of Christ especially, and Stewards of the Mysterys of GOD must ^c *hold the Mysterys of the Faith in a pure Conscience*.

With respect to the Doctrine, together with ^d *a good Conscience and a Pure*, we must hold fast the form of sound Words, and keep that good Thing, that sacred Depositum, which was committed to us. ^e *Holding fast the faithful Word, as we have been taught*, (or according to the stated Doctrine) that we may be able by sound Doctrine both to exhort and convince the Gainsayers. And besides shewing himself a Pattern of good Works, Titus is required also ^f *in Doctrine to shew Uncorruptness, Gravity, sincerity: sound speech, that cannot be condemned*: here Uncorruptness and Sincerity are words of the same force in the Original, signifying the *unsullied Purity and Integrity* of the Gospel, in opposition to all Heretical Mixtures, and Corrupt Alterations. And sound Speech, sound Doctrine, and the form of sound Words signify the wholesome untainted salutary Truths of the Gospel, that ^g *Grace of GOD, which bringeth Salvation*. And therefore, if ^h *any Man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome Words, even the Words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the Doctrine, which is according to Godliness, even ⁱ the Faith, which was once delivered to the Saints, he is proud knowing no-*

^a 1 Tim. I. 19. ^b 1 Cor. IV. 1. ^c 1 Tim. III. 9. ^d 2 Tim. I. 13, 14. ^e Tit. I. 9. ^f Tit II. 7, 8. ^g ver. 11. ^h 1 Tim. VI, 3, 4. ⁱ Jude, ver. 4.

thing: There is the more *reason* for these *earnest* and *solemn Injunctions*, because ^a *the time will come, when they will not endure sound Doctrine*, and such as were the *Cretians*, ^b *must be rebuked sharply, that they may be found in the Faith*.

Sincerity of Doctrine is so constantly joyned with *sincerity of Mind*, that in the *Scriptures* a *good Conscience* and a *corrupt Faith* are never found together. *Truth* dwelleth with *sincerity*, but ^c *Lies* are spoken in *Hypocrisy*; and tho' we cannot know the *Heart*, yet if we judge by the *direction* of those, who had the *discerning of Spirits*, we shall find, that in his first *Epistle to Timothy* ^d the *Apostle* ascribeth *perverse Disputings* to *Men of Corrupt Minds*, and in his second ^e speaking of those, who *resist the Truth*, he completeth their *Character* by calling them *Men of Corrupt Minds*, *reprobate concerning the Faith*: And the *Apostle* hath further assured us, that ^f *when Men give heed to seducing Spirits and Doctrine of Devils*, *GOD* will send them a *strong Delusion*, that they should not only speak, but also believe a *Lye*. But we ^g know that no *Lye* is of the *Truth*, and may both ask and answer the *Question* with *St John*. *Who is a Lyar, but he that denyeth that Jesus is the Christ*. I have little *Hopes* of convincing *Infidels*, or those, who think they may believe as they please, which amounteth to the same thing as *Misbelieving* or not *Believing* at all; For this *Principle of Sincerity* thus applied taketh away

^a 2 Tim. IV. 3. ^b Tit. I. 13. ^c 1 Tim. IV. 2. ^d 1 Tim. VI. 5. ^e 2 Tim. III. 8. ^f 1 Tim. IV. 1. 2 Theſſal. II. 11, 12. ^g 1 John II. 21, 22.

all *Distinction* between *true* and *false Religion*, and rendereth a Man satisfied in his present Sentiments, be they what they will, whether he hath already set up his rest, or whether he be all his Life long enquiring without any settled Persuasion, unless perpetual Doubts and Uncertaintys, or the present Apprehensions of the Mind may be called a Persuasion.

But I have been so large upon this Head to arm and defend *Believers* against the wily *Arts* and *Sophistry* of these *Seducers*: if their *Principle* be true both *Unity* and *Necessity* of *Faith* are destroyed, and *Salvation* is put on *another* Foot, than the *Gospel*: The *Terms* propounded by the *Scriptures* are vacated, and then we must be Saved not according to the *Word* of God, but to these Men's *Devices*. But those Arguments must be inconclusive, which are built upon such false Suppositions, and all this plausible Pretence of *Sincerity* is nothing, but an *empty Notion* considered in itself, and a *destructive Device*, applied to the *Faith* of *Christ*: We are the truest *Advocates* for *Sincerity*, who both *allow* it, and *insist* upon it. That *Faith* is not *right* which is not *sincere*, and to hold the *Truth* in *Hypocrisy* is to change the *Truth* of God into a *Lye*. But will *sincerity* therefore, supposing it employed in the search of *Truth* justify us in *Error*? What at *most* can but be pleaded in *Extenuation* and *Excuse* is but a *weak Title* to the Favour of God.

In the *Acts* we have *three* very remarkable Instances of the *Acceptance* of *sincere Persons*, as *such*: *two* of them in the search of *Truth*: the

third

Case of the Eunuch, Cornelius, 151
third as he thought, in the full *Possession* of it, and when these general *Patrons* of *Sincerity* can produce any *Parallel* Cases, we shall expect to find the *same*, or some *answerable* Evidence of their *Acceptance*.

The *first* Instance is of the *Eunuch*, who had been at ^a*Jerusalem* for to *Worship*, and in his return was *reading the Prophet Esaias*; and as he was searching after Divine Knowledge he was led into it by *Philip*, who was expressly sent unto him by the *Spirit* for that Purpose.

The *second* is of *Cornelius* ^b *a devout Man, and one that feared GOD with all his House, which gave much Alms to the People, and prayed to GOD alway*. This Person also was in search of Truth, and in a perfect Disposition to find and embrace it: He gave the highest and most undoubted *Marks* of his *sincerity* in his *Prayers* and his *Alms*: and *they came up for a Memorial before GOD*: The Consequence was a Command by an *Angel* to send for *Peter*, who should tell him *what he ought to do*. Thus GOD who is no Respector of Persons, whether they be *Jews* or *Gentiles*, accepted this Centurion, who feared Him, and worked Righteousness, and so accepting him was pleased to call him to a State of Salvation. From these Instances it appeareth that the *sincerity* of these Persons did not give them any strict Right or Title to Salvation, but in order to their Salvation our *Blessed Lord* was pleased to call them to the *Knowledge of his Grace, and to Faith in Him*.

^a Acts VIII. 27, &c. ^b Acts X, 1, 2, &c.

The *third* Instance is of *St Paul*, who was a most *zealous* and *sincere* Persecutor of the *Church of Christ*, and this Person was not in search of Truth, but fixed as he thought, and settled in it. For his Character, *Act. 24. 16.* *Herein he exercised himself to have always a Conscience void of Offence toward GOD and toward Men*; and therefore he might well declare, as he did ^a *That he had lived in all good Conscience before GOD* according to the *Jews Religion* in which ^b *he profited above many, that were his Equals*: ^c *Concerning Zeal, if that be any mark of sincerity, persecuting the Church, touching the Law Blameless.* Yet all these availed him not: For *this* Proof of his sincerity, having been before ^d *a Blasphemer and a Persecutor*, he calleth himself *the chief of sinners*, and ^e *the least of all the Apostles*, not meet to be called an *Apostle*, because he persecuted the *Church of GOD*: The *Righteousness* which is of the *Law* he disclaimeth as insufficient to *Salvation*, and prayeth, that ^f *he may not be found in his own Righteousness, which is of the Law, but that which is thro' Faith, the Righteousness, which is of GOD by Faith.* To what purpose then served his sincerity? not of it self to *justify*, but to *guide* him to the *only* means of *Justification*, even to the same *Jesus*, whom he ^g *had persecuted*: He was called and converted by *Christ* himself to *preach that Faith*, which ^h *he once persecuted and destroyed*: and himself has told us, that he ⁱ *obtained Mercy, because he did it ignorantly, and in Unbelief.*

^a Acts XXIII. 1. ^b Gal. I. 14. ^c Phil. III. 6. ^d 1 Tim. I. 13, 15. ^e 1 Cor. XV. 9. ^f Phil. III. 9. ^g Acts IX. 5. ^h Gal. I. 23. ⁱ 1 Tim. I. 13.

His *sincerity* is undoubted, and his *Character* in all parts answerable to it, yet of it self it had been thro' its *Effects* the *Reason* of his *Condemnation*, not of his *Justification*: To conclude, this *Apostle* hath unanswerably argued that *neither by the ^a Moral, nor Ceremonial Law could any Flesh be saved; since ^ball have sinned and come short of the Glory of God.* He that resteth upon *either* resteth upon his own *Merits*, and his *sincerity* how great soever, is, like his *Morality* blemished with some Sins at least, most certainly with manifold Infirmitys. The Doctrine of *sincerity* thus considered is inconsistent with the whole *Terms* and *Tenour* of the *Gospel*, and can receive no Countenance, but from the *Infidel* and *Pelagian* scheme.

3. The *third* Pretension against a determinate agreement in *Faith*, and the *Scriptures*, which deliver it, is this, That GOD is *better* pleased and *more* glorified by *Variety* then *Uniformity* in Religion.

In the *Creation* indeed GOD is glorified by *Variety*, and it is an Argument of his infinite Wisdom and Power, that he hath made not only so *many* Creatures but so *various*, when every Denomination of Being is different from the rest, and the *Numbers* of them are counted by their *Variety*, And if GOD were as greatly glorified in *Variety* of Religions, as by the *Variety* of his Creatures, there might seem some faint shadow of a Pretence in this fanciful Suggestion. But there is a great difference be-

^a Rom. Gal. passim. ^b Rom. III. 23.

tween GOD's *Productions* and Man's *Conceptions*: *Religion* refers to GOD, who is *One*; and to *Truth*, which is also *One*, and therefore we cannot think of GOD *diversly* and *truly* at the same time. Here *contrary* Opinions cannot be allowed, nor can *Religion* considered only as a *Science* admit, what no other *Science* admits, *different Theorys*, and all *equally* true. *Diversity* in our several *Systems*, when we would frame and adjust the whole Order and Process of the Creation, proceedeth from nothing but our *Ignorance* and *Presumption*: And different Schemes of *Religion*, where we depart either from the *Light of Nature* or from exprefs *Revelation*, are only so many Arguments of our *Ignorance* and *Weakness*: This was evident in the *variety* the *Heathens* had, both of *Gods* and *Religions*, and is no less evident in the several *Heresies* of *Christians*. And is this indeed the way of pleasing and glorifying GOD by a *various* Profession of the *Faith*? as if GOD was pleased with *Error*, and his Honour *more* promoted by *differing* from, than by *agreeing* in the *Truth*. And tho' it is said, that the *Minds* of Men are as *various* as their *Faces*, yet when *Truth* is the *Object*, they must be of one *Mind*, and *variety* only argueth the *perversity* and *depravity* of our *Nature*. GOD is glorified not by the *variety* of our Thoughts, but by the Truth and Union of our Sentiments, by the ^a *casting down Imaginations, and every high thing, that exalteth it self against the Knowledge of GOD, and bringing into Captivity every Thought to the Obedience of Christ*.

So far as *Variety* in Religion is pleaded for and recommended in *Christian* Countrys, not with regard to different *Opinions* in *speculative* Points of an *indifferent* Nature, but with regard to the great *Articles* of *Faith* this may be a sufficient reply: But so far as thro' the manifold Wisdom and Dispensations of God *Variety* of Religions have succeeded in the World, and subsisted at the same time in different parts of the Earth, the Argument in this View deserves a more particular Consideration, both as it may be drawn to bad Purposes, and applied to excellent good ones; and from a just Consideration of it we shall find no Encouragement for *Errors* and *Heresys* in Religion, but great and glorious Occasions to vindicate the *Goodness*, and adore the Infinite *Wisdom*, *Justice* and *Mercy* of God.

There are two things chiefly to be Considered: The *different* Capacitys and Abilitys of Men in all Countrys over all the Earth, and the *different* Degrees of *Light* which God hath afforded Mankind in the several Nations and Ages of the World.

From the *different* Degrees of *Light* which God hath afforded Mankind, there arises a *diversity* of Religion and *Obligation*, and from the *different* *Laws* and *Dispensations* given, we may reasonably conclude, that God will accept of every Man according to the *Dispensation*, under which he lived: And if God hath in his Infinite Wisdom and Mercy provided for the Salvation of Mankind in all Ages notwithstanding the great Weakness and Depravity of their Nature,

156 *the Var. of GOD's Dispensat.*

Nature, his *Goodness* is absolved from all the *Blasphemous* Charges of *Impious* and *Foolish* Men, since He never hath been *wanting* to Mankind, but Mankind have been only *wanting* to themselves.

If we consider Mankind as under the *Law* of *Nature* alone, it will not be material to dispute whether this *Law* and the *Obligation* of it, as it refers to GOD, is made known by the meer *Light* of Nature, or by any *Declaration* from GOD: The *Light* of Nature discovering the *Obligation*, and awakening the *Conscience*, is an *Internal* Revelation, and if Man does obey this *Law*, no doubt he shall be accepted in it.

If we consider Mankind as under the *Law* of *Nature* given and enforced by *Revelation* and a *series* of *Communications* between GOD and Man, we shall then discern the great *Goodness* of GOD to Mankind in all Ages from the Creation of the World; In the State of *Innocence*, the Scriptures assure us, GOD revealed Himself to our first Parents, and when they had *fallen*, He revealed Himself again, at once pronouncing *Judgment* on them and promising *Pardon* to them; Upon the *Terms* of that *Promise* He receives all Mankind, and all his *subsequent* Revelations were given to preserve the Knowledge of true Religion, and to renew and make known this Promise till the *full* Revelation of it by the Coming of *Christ*. From *Adam* unto *Noah* the Knowledge of it was easily preserved, from *Noah* unto *Abraham* likewise it must be known: from *Abraham* and his Descendants the Children of *Ishmael* and *Keturah* it would spread

spread over many Nations in many great and extensive Branches: That notwithstanding these gracious Revelations from *Noah* unto the time of the *Patriarchs* the World degenerated, and fell from the Knowledge and Worship of the true God into *Idolatry*, this is no Impeachment of his *Goodness*; If Men will sin and transgress, they draw the Consequences, be they what they will, upon themselves. Afterwards (as God had chosen *Abraham* and his *Seed*) the Children of *Israel* were a perpetual *Monument* of his true Religion, and a Visible *Assurance* of his *Promise*, which in succeeding Ages was still more clear and express, that it *should* be performed, as they are now a *living Testimony*, that it *is* performed. In other Nations the Knowledge of God was *lost* thro' their own Corruption, in *this* of the *Jews* it was *preserved*: and *preserved* with Difficulty by frequent Corrections and Admonitions, by a Course of severe Judgments, and great Mercys, and by a succession of Prophets, till this *People* were become perfectly *averse* to *Idolatry*, and then as they were dispersed over many Regions of the World, the Providence of God afforded Mankind new means of Instruction in all parts of their *Dispersion*, and all along from the time of *Moses* unto *Christ* a door was left open to receive the *Gentiles* into the *Church* of God, as it stood in the Days of *Noah*, so that in no Age hath He left *Himself* without *Witness* both *Natural* and *Revealed*; and if Men will not attend to the *Natural* Testimony, it is no Wonder they should neglect, and so neglecting entirely

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ly lose the *revealed*: but the *Goodness* of GOD is absolved, and if they *perish*, they *perish* by their own *Default*.

If we place the Argument in another Light with respect to those, who admit of no *Revelation*, then we must suppose the whole World to be under no *other* Religion, than that of *Nature*, and by their *Natural* Strength they must *stand* or *fall*. According to these Men the *Light* of *Nature* is sufficient of it self, so clear and full as to need no other to inform and direct them in their Duty, and if they will act against it, and in defiance of it, *they are without Excuse*. Look upon the *Heathen* World in this View, and say, if *they* perish, how is the *Goodness* of GOD concerned to interpose? Upon this supposition Man must be left to the *Light* of *Nature* alone, no *Revelation* or *Supernatural* Assistance is allowed, and the *Light* of *Nature* being *sufficient*, those that Sin against it, are *self condemned*; So that if no *Revelation* had been ever given, and Men had been *Universally* Transgressors, and *Death* and *Misery* be the Consequence of their Transgression, *what* have they to plead? while they acknowledge the *sufficiency* of their *Guide* and refuse all other Assistance, they absolve the *Goodness* of GOD. What is it to them, whether GOD grants a *Revelation* to one part of the World, and denys it to another? they believe He hath granted it to *none*. They rest upon the *Light* of *Nature* alone; and it can be no Injury to them, that a *Revelation* is vouchsafed, (tho' it is not wanting to those, who can see by the *Light* of *Nature* without it)

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since it may be greatly *desireable*, where wretched Mortals wander on in the Dark, and are not able under the Conduct of that *Guide* alone to recover the right way.

Allowing the *sufficiency* of this *Guide* *their Condemnation is just*, who forsake it, Allowing the *insufficiency* of it the *Goodness* of God is greatly manifested in giving us a new and supplementary *Light*, whereby our Natural *Light* is cleared up, and restored to its Original Brightness, and tho' these Men will not allow the *Scriptures* to be *inspired*, yet we will take them for our *Guide*, and leave them to the best Productions of Natural *Light*, that ever appeared in the World. Upon the Foot of *Revelation*, we allow that there hath been a Variety of Religions answerable to the several Dispensations of God to Mankind. We will call the Religion of *Adam* before the *Fall* pure *Natural* Religion with one Injunction added, which the *Light* of Nature would direct him to obey. After the *Fall* his Religion was still *Natural* Religion with the *institution* of *Sacrifices* added: and such was the Religion of *Noah*, and of all the World unto *Moses*: A *Revelation* indeed is all along concurrent with it, but that *alters* not, it only *enforces* the *Religion* of *Nature*: The *Jews* had a peculiar Dispensation given them, which affected no other People, any further than as it comprised the *Patriarchal* Religion. *That* is the *Religion* of all the World besides, and where the *revealed* part of it is lost, there the *Religion* of *Nature* *stands alone*, and as *before*, all *Nations* might be accepted, who walked according to
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the *Patriarchal*, or *Natural* Religion, all *People*, who have no *Revelation* will also be accepted, that walk according to the *Light* of *Nature*, not in *Violation*, but in *Obedience* to the *Laws* of GOD as delivered in *Natural* Religion.

But where a *Revelation* is received, there we think our selves *obliged* to observe *all* that we find *commanded* in it, to *believe what* that *Revelation* requires, and to do *what* it commands, both with regard to *Natural* and *Instituted* Religion, and upon this *Faith* and *Obedience* we do ground our Hopes of *Salvation*. Whether *Mahometans*, *Indians*, or any *Denomination* of *Heathen* will be accepted is a Question we cannot resolve, much less can we presume to say that GOD is *obliged* to accept *them*. If their several *Religions* carry nothing in them destructive of the *Law* of *Nature*, and *these People* severally live in a just Conformity to it, they are so far upon the same Foot with the rest of the World, who had no *special* Revelation vouchsafed them. This however is not the Case of the *Mahometans*, for they pretend to a *Revelation*, and oppose their *Alcoran* to the *Gospel*. And with reference to *them*, as *Superstition* and *Cruelty* overpreads the *Mahometans*, and as *Idolatry* the *Indians* and other *Heathen*, we must resolve the Acceptance of the *Best* among *them* into the *Uncovenanted* Mercys of GOD.

From the several *Dispensations* of GOD we may pass now to the different *Capacitys* of Men, considered as another Argument for *Variety* in Religion. But it doth not appear to me, that GOD suits Religion, either *Natural* or *Revealed*,

to the *different Capacities* of Men. The *Obligation* in *Both* is *Universal* and *Uniform*: *Universal* to all Mankind in *Natural* Religion, and *Universal* to all, to whom a *Revelation* is given: There are not in *Natural* or *Revealed* Religion different *sets* of *Truths* to be believed, or of *Dutys* to be practiced by the *Vulgar* and the *Learned*, but all are *equally* obliged according to their *Abilities*, *Leisure* and *Opportunities* to *know*, to *believe*, and to *do* them: This will not create a *Variety* of Religion, it only supposes a *further* and *shorter* Progress in *learned* Enquiries, but admits no *differences* in the great *Articles*, whether of *Faith*, or *Practice*. *Faith* is ever *Objectively One*, and the *Law* of *Nature* is always the *same*, and *Religion* *varieth* not according to *Mens Capacities*: but *GOD* will have a *Regard* unto *them*, as *He* alone *knoweth the Heart*, and whether Men have *neglected* or *improved* their *Opportunities* of *Knowledge* according to their several *Abilities*.

In all the *Variety* of *Mens* Parts and *Abilities* here is no room for *Error* in Opposition to *Truth*; From *Infancy* to *Manhood* we encrease in *Understanding* as well as *Stature*, and when we are grown up some are taller, and some are more *Knowing*, than others, but still, as all are *equally Men*, what all do know must be *equally Truth*. There is no *difference* but in the *Degrees* of *Knowledge*, some may know more than others, but the *Knowledge* of all must center and end in *Truth*: In *Natural* Religion and *Revealed*, nothing, but *Truth* must be admitted and professed, whatever *difference* there

is of *Knowledge*, there must be no *Contradiction* to *Truth*. There is a growth in *Christian* as well as in *Natural Knowledge*, and those, who are newly converted, are considered by the *Apostles* as ^a *Babes in Christ*; The *Apostles* adapted their *Teaching* to the *Progress* and *Capacity* of their *Hearers*, and St Paul tells the *Corinthians*, he *spake unto them even as unto* ^b *Babes in Christ*; and in the ^c *Epistle* to the *Hebrews* the *Apostle* marketh out our *Progress* in *Christian Knowledge* from the first *Rudiments* until we come to *Perfection*, reproving at the same time the slowness of their Proficiency: The *Principles of the Doctrine of Christ* are sufficient for *those*, whose *Capacitys* and *Opportunitys* will carry them no further than a plain *Catechetical Knowledge*, and while they continue in the *Truth*, they are still going on in the *right* way, and will be accepted of God. But whatever the *degree* of our *Knowledge* and *Perfection* is, we may remember the *Apostle's* Admonition, *to go on unto Perfection*, and as St Peter exhorteth, *to* ^d *grow in Grace, and in the Knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ*; and against all arguing from *difference* of *Capacity* for *variety* of *Religions* we may allege those excellent words of St Paul, be our *Progress* and *Capacitys* less or greater, ^e *Nevertheless whereunto we have already attained, let us walk by the same Rule, let us mind the same things*.

Should we suppose never so many *Gradations* in Mankind, so many, as intervene from

^a 1 Pet. II. 2. ^b 1 Cor. III. 1. ^c Hebr. V. 12, &c. VI. 1, 2.
^d 2 Pet. III. 18. ^e Phil. III. 16.

a meer *superiority* above *Brutes* to an *Approximation* to *Angels*, still if we suppose Man to be a *Rational* Creature, and *Reason* to be the same in all, *Truth* must ever be its *Object*, and no *Deviation* from it in *Practice* or *Opinion* must be allowed. We are taught, (and I may use it for Illustration) that there are *different* Orders of *Angels*, as there are *different* Orders of *Men*; and we may presume, that in *Heaven*, tho' it be not so upon *Earth*, they, who excell in *Dignity* excell in *Understanding* also, but still what *Variety* soever may arise from their *several* Orders, and how Beautiful soever the Ascent may shew from one *Degree* of a sublime Understanding to another, till it reaches from the *lowest* Order to the *highest* Knowledge a *Created* Nature is *capable* of *receiving*, and *able* to *sustain*, still it is *Truth*, which ascends thro' all the *Degrees*, from the *meanest* *Reasonable* Creature upon *Earth* to the *Angels of the Presence* before the Throne of GOD. *Good* and *Evil*, *Truth* and *Falshood* divided the *Angels* of Heaven, and with respect to Heaven and Eternal Happiness, *these* will divide *all Mankind* at the last Day: The *Light* of Nature is nothing but the *Manifestation* of *Truth*, and the *Light* of *Revelation* is the same: *Revelation* teaches what the *Light* of Nature could not discover, and therefore obliges *those* only, to *whom* it is proposed, and it is a great and gracious Consolation, that with respect to the sublime *Mysterys* of our *Faith*, *Comparative Ignorance* will never hurt us, if it proceeds not from some *Neglect* or *Abuse* of our *Facultys*; But a *Variety* of *Errors* and *Oppositions*

164 *No Varying from Truth.*

of Science falsely so called, which are first devised, and afterwards pertinaciously maintained by those, who arrogate to themselves a *superiority* of Understanding above other Men, *these* are the Dangerous *Rocks* on which *Proud* and *Conceited* Spirits make *Shipwrack* of their *Faith* and *Salvation*.

Whatever *Variety* of Religion may be admitted according to the *various Dispensations* of GOD, no *Variety* of *Error* can be allowed. Religion in a State of *Innocence*, as to the *Form* and *Manner* of it, is *different* from *what* it is in a State of *Sin*, and the Religion of *Noah* was *different* as to its *Form*, from the Religion of *Moses*: and the Religion of the *Gospel* is *different* from *Both*; But still there is *Truth* and nothing but *Truth* in *All*: And then tho' *Variety* of true Religions have prevailed; and it furnishes a Beautiful Scene to behold the *different* Degrees of *Light*, which GOD hath vouchsafed to Mankind in all Ages, and in divers Countrys, yet still no *false* Religion, nor *Falshood* in Religion can be admitted to *diversify* the Prospect, and contribute any thing to the *Delight* of Man, or to the *Glory* of GOD.

So far as *Variety* is consistent with the *truth* of Religion, the *Christian Church* hath ever been *diversified* in the several Branches of it: in the *sundry* Forms and Ceremonies of its *Worship*, but *not* in its Faith and Doctrines is this *variety* to be discerned. Every Nation hath its peculiar *Rites*: they *differ* without *disagreeing*, and while they are *distinguished* by their *several* Usages, they are *united* in the same great *Articles*

cles of their *Faith*. The *Church* of *Rome* is no further *true*, than She *agreeth* with the *Primitive*: All her *variety* is her *shame* and her *error*.

But while the *Patrons* of *Latitude* admire and recommend their boasted *variety*, we shall strive most truly to promote *God's* *Glory* by *Unity* and *Agreement*,^a *endeavouring to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace*, as long as we are persuaded of the unspeakable *Mischiefs* of *Heresie*, and *Division*, and are assured by the *Apostle*, that^b *there is One Body, and One Spirit, even as ye are called in one Hope of your Calling: One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism: One GOD, and Father of All, who is above all, and thro' all, and in you all.*

From these *Exceptions* to it, we may more assuredly learn the absolute *Necessity* of agreeing in *one determinate* Sense with regard to the great *Articles* of our *Faith*: There is no other way to avoid^c *Confusion and every evil Work*, and we must be *like minded*,^d *That we may with one Mind, and one Mouth glorifie GOD, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*: Otherwise instead of being *Stedfast in the Faith*, we shall either be *Infidels*, and deny it, or *Hereticks*, and contradict it, or like^e *Children tossed to and fro with every Wind of Doctrine*. But let us, *my beloved Brethren*, think of these things, and consider what hath been said, and the *Lord* give us *a right Understanding in all Things*.

^a Ephes. IV. 1. ^b 1. 4, 5. ^c Jam. III. 16. ^d Rom. XV. 5, 6. ^e Eph. IV. 14.

Now to the Holy, Blessed and Undivided TRINITY, the FATHER, the SON and the HOLY GHOST, be ascribed, as is most due, all Honour, and Power, all Adoration and Blessing for Eyer and Eyer. Amen.



SER-



SERMON V.

Preached *Apr.* 3. 1729.

I COR. II. 13.

Which Things also we speak, not in the Words, which Man's Wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth.



FROM the eleventh verse it appeareth that *no Man knoweth the Things of God: the Purposes of his Will, and the Secrets of his Nature:* These are revealed to us by the *Spirit, who searcheth all things, even the deep Things of God.* As our own Thoughts, till disclosed, are known to no Man, besides our selves, as our own Spirits only are conscious of them, and not the Spirits of

of other Men, *even so the Things of GOD knoweth no Man, but the Spirit of GOD.*

The Comparison holdeth most strictly, as the *Apostle* puts it with respect to Men: among them no Man knoweth anothers Thoughts, much less can any Man know the Secrets, which belong to GOD; but it doth not hold in the Reverse, For tho' no one but the *Spirit* knoweth the Things of GOD, yet the same *Spirit*, which searcheth the deep Things of GOD, knoweth the Things of Man also, and searcheth all the deepest and most inward Recesses of his Soul, and we may justly apply to the *Holy Spirit* what the *Apostle* asserteth of the *Word of GOD*, ^a *that He is a discerner of the Thoughts and Intents of the Heart, Neither is there any Creature, that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the Eyes of Him, with whom we have to do.*

This Attribute of *Omniscience* is truly incommunicable, and may be considered as challenged by, and ascribed unto GOD in *general*, without any manifest Designation of the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost*, or as challenged by, and ascribed unto *each* of the *Divine Persons* in the same manner without any restraint or limitation. Thus in *general* it is challenged by GOD. ^b *I the LORD search the Hearts, I try the Reins:* and thus it is ascribed unto *Him*, ^c *O Lord of Hosts, that judgest righteously, that tryest the Reins and the Heart*, and the like we meet with in several parallel Places: But tho' the Expres-

^a Hebr. IV. 12. ^b Jer. XI. 20. XX. 12. ^c XI. 20. XX. 12.

sions in the *Old Testament* are usually general, yet in several Passages, if we carefully regard them, they are spoken by, and applied to the *Son*, the *Second Person* in the *GOD-HEAD*. Thus in the first Book of *Samuel* (XVI.) they are spoken of *Him*. *Psalms* XLIV. they are applied unto *Him*. For the Lord spoken of is *David's* Lord, who was the *GOD*, and King, and Ruler of *Jacob*, and ^a*He seeth not as Man seeth. For Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the Heart.* And the *Psalms* is addressed to that *GOD*, who went forth with their Hosts, and wrought all his Wonders for them of old; He was the *LORD* their *GOD*, the living and true *GOD*, and if they had *forgotten the Name of their GOD*, or *stretched forth their hands unto a strange* ^b*God, shall not GOD search this out? for He knoweth the secrets of the Heart.* But in the *New Testament* this his Divine Prerogative is clear and express. In the second of the *Revelations* He asserteth it to *Himself*, ^c*I am He, that searcheth the Reins and the Heart: St John* testifieth that *He* ^d*knew what was in Man.* The other *Evangelists*, that *He knew* ^e*their thoughts*, and the *Apostles* with the whole *Church* in their Common Prayer ascribe this *Omniscience* unto *Him* in the most solemn manner. ^f*Thou, LORD, which knowest the Hearts of all Men.* Concerning the Blessed *Spirit* this Chapter is a sufficient Proof, and expresseth his *Omniscience* in the highest Terms: For the *Spirit*, who know-

^a 1 Sam. XVI. 7. ^b Ps. XLIV. 21. ^c Rev. II. 21. ^d John II. 25. ^e Matt. IX. 4. Mark II. 8, &c. ^f Acts I. 24.

eth the Things of GOD: who searcheth all things, even the deep things of God, must be *Omniscient*, and therefore GOD *hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit*, because *He* hath perfect Knowledge of them, *for the Spirit searcheth all things even the deep things of God*. To the same purpose also the CXXXIX Psalm may be understood, a Psalm in every part setting forth the Divine Omniscience and Omnipresence; To which I may add, as a clearer Evidence, *Rom. VIII.* where we are taught that *the Spirit helpeth our Infirmitys, and maketh Intercession for us* in such a Manner, as evidently shows the *Communication* of Knowledge in the Blessed *Trinity*, where we find, that as the *Spirit knoweth the Things of God, and searcheth all things even the deep Things of God*, Our Blessed Lord also, *He that searcheth the Hearts, knoweth what is the Mind of the Spirit, because He maketh Intercession for the Saints according to the Will of GOD*. Here are *Three Persons* distinctly mentioned: The *Spirit, He that searcheth the Heart*, and *GOD*: and here are *two Intercessions*, that of the *Spirit*, who teaches Men to *pray as they ought*: and so is said to *intercede for them*: and that of our Blessed Lord, who intercedes as a *Mediator for the Saints unto GOD, or according to the Will of GOD*.

But I shall not insist upon this any longer now, and have mentioned it no further at present, than the evident Connection of the *Text* with the rest of the *Apostle's* Argument requires,

where he proves that the Doctrine, which he teacheth is the *hidden Mystrious Wisdom* of GOD, which it was impossible for Man to know, or for the Heart of Man to conceive, namely, the wonderful Purpose, and manner of our *Redemption* by the Concurrence and Co-operation of the *Father*, of the *Son*, and of the *Holy Ghost*, according to the several Part each sustains in that great and amazing Work. All this GOD hath *revealed unto us by his Spirit*, ^a *for the Spirit searcheth all Things, even the deep Things of GOD*: And this *Omniscience* demonstrateth the *Divinity of Essence*, For whosoever knoweth the Things of GOD, as the *Spirit* of a Man knoweth the Things of a Man, is truly and essentially GOD; and as the *Apostle* argueth, *Now* ^b *we have not received the Spirit of the World, but the Spirit, which is of GOD, that we might know the Things, that are freely given us of GOD. Which Things also we speak, not in the Words which Man's Wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing Spiritual Things with Spiritual.*

This is the only way to receive and apprehend them right: In the *Natural* Man there is neither a *Capacity* to discover them, nor a *Disposition* to receive them: while he is guided by his *Reason alone*, they are ^c *Foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are Spiritually discerned*, that is as they are proposed to us by the *Spirit* of GOD in a manner suitable to the *Divine Nature*.

From this passage of the *Apostle* taken altogether, and from the Words, I have chosen, we may learn in *what* manner to *receive*, to *understand*, and to *teach* those *Divine Truths*, which are revealed unto us by the *Spirit* of *GOD*.

In discoursing upon them I shall endeavour to establish some *Rules* for the *right Understanding* of *Divine Truths*, and for the *Interpretation* of *Scripture*, which conveyeth them to us. This I hope will be of use to show, that all *Interpretations*, which contradict the *Doctrines* laid down according to the plain and obvious *Signification* of the Words, and the whole Tenour of *Scripture* must be *wrong*, and that all *Consequences*, which destroy such *Doctrines*, must be *False*.

In Order to this I will show,

I. *Negatively*, that *Divine Truths*, and particularly the great *Mysteries* of *Revelation* are not taught in the same manner with *secular Sciences*, or that *Divine Learning* is to be taught and received in a different way from *Human*. *Which Things also we speak, not in the Words which Man's Wisdom teacheth.*

II. In the second place I will show *Positively* that these *Divine Truths* are to be taught and received, understood and interpreted after a Manner proper and peculiar to themselves, *in the Words which the Holy Ghost teacheth.*

The *Method* of which is here prescribed, *Comparing Spiritual things with Spiritual*. And the *Reason* of it is here given, *Because they are Spiritually discerned.*

As

As to the First, when the *Apostle* saith, we speak, *not in the Words which Man's Wisdom teacheth*, his meaning is not, that *He* and the rest of the *Apostles* spake not in the Language of the People, to whom they preached the *Gospel*, or wrote not in the Tongue of the Country, but that they taught a different Doctrine in Words suited to the Divine Truths, they uttered, to the intent, *That not only unto Men, but unto Principalities and Powers in Heavenly places might be known by the Church the manifold Wisdom of GOD*, as the *Apostle* writes to the ^a *Ephesians*.

By this Expression the *Apostle* doth moreover signify, that altho' the *Doctrine*, he delivers, be *Mysterious*, the *Words* are exceeding *Plain*, and he ^b declares unto them all the *Counsel* of God not in *involved* Allegorical Forms of Speech, such as the *Heathen Mysteries* were wrapped in, but in *direct* and *open* Propositions concerning the whole Course and Order settled and pursued in the great Work of our *Redemption*.

Again by speaking, *not in the Words which Man's Wisdom teacheth* the *Apostle* means, that he speaketh not according to the Rules of Human Eloquence and Persuasion, nor frames his Discourse and Writings after the *Artificial* and *Rhetorical* Composures of the *Grecian Wits* and *Philosophers*, but in that plain Dignity, and noble Simplicity of Speech, which became the Authority and Importance of his Doctrine. ^c *For he came not with Excellency of Speech, and his*

^a Ephes. III. 9, 10. ^b Acts XX. 27. ^c 1 Cor. II. 1, 4, 5.

174 *Of Div. and Secular Learning.*

Preaching was not with enticing Words of Man's Wisdom, that our Faith should not stand in the Wisdom of Men, but in the Power of GOD; Which things also we speak not in the Words, which Man's Wisdom teacheth; And so I proceed to shew

I. *Negatively*, that Divine Truths and particularly the great Mysterys of Revelation are not taught in the same manner with secular Sciences, or that Divine Learning is to be taught and received in a different way from Human, *which things we also speak*, saith the *Apostle*, *not in the Words which Man's Wisdom teacheth.*

The *Gospel* was not drawn from the Schools or Institutions of *Philosophy*: It was not built upon their *maxims*, nor taught in their *method*, nor expressed in their *manner*? It depended not upon the Subtily of Wit, nor the Force of Oratory, nor the Forms of Disputation, nor pretended to any *Demonstration*, but the *Demonstration of the Spirit*: Its Doctrines were proposed upon Divine Testimony and Authority, and expressed with that Plainness and Simplicity, which are proper to the Assertions, and Declarations of GOD: The *Natural* Man cannot discern them: the *Carnal* Mind cannot receive them: Before they were *revealed*, we could not possibly have any Apprehensions of them; after they are *revealed* we cannot comprehend them: We cannot, as in Human Sciences, argue from any *Principles* about them, nor affirm nor deny any thing of them *beside*, or *beyond* what is *revealed*.

For

For to instance in the *Basis* and Reason of all Revelation, since the *Fall* of Man, or *what* amounts to the same thing, since Men universally became, and continue to be Transgressors of the Law of God, we may consider the whole *Purpose* and *Counsel* of GOD for the *Redemption* of the World, which is the Peculiar Subject of the *Apostle's* Discourse in this *Chapter*. How can the *Wisdom* of Man proceed? and *what* hath it to do, but to *believe* and *adore*! For if this gracious *Purpose*, had not been declared, and the whole *Counsel* of God disclosed in the Order and Method of our *Redemption*, the *Reason* of Man could never have *discovered* the *One*, nor the *Heart* of Man ever have *conceived* the *Other*. And now all that Wretched Men can do is either to deny the *Necessity* of such a *Redemption*, or the *Fact*, that we are *so redeemed*, but this is a vain Attempt; for that such a Method of *Redemption* is proposed in the *Scriptures* cannot be *denied*, and the *Fact* that it was accomplished in the manner there related, cannot be *disproved*, and then the *Necessity* of it must in all good Consequence be *acknowledged*. So far as Men have denied the *Fact*, or disputed the *Effect*, they have proceeded either upon the Denial of *Divine Revelation*, or a Misinterpretation of it, but so far as they have argued against the *Necessity* of our *Redemption*, they pretend to have proceeded upon such *Principles*, as the *Light* of *Nature* alone, afforded them; It may be proper therefore to examine what they have advanced upon this *Subject* contrary to the *Apostle*, who hath not instructed us,

176 *Of Atonement by Rep. only*
as they do, in the *Words*, which *Man's Wisdom* teacheth.

Upon Enquiry then we shall find, that it is asserted by *some* who *own*, as well as *others*, who *deny* a *Revelation*, that the *Light of Nature* shows Men the way of *Atoning* for their Sins, That *Repentance* is the way, and that *Forgiveness* certainly follows upon it. So that the *Light of Nature* teaches them, that some *Atonement* is necessary, and that *Repentance* is that *Atonement*.

For *those* who *own* a *Revelation* to say *this*, if they mean it *Absolutely* without any other *Terms*, it is inconsistent with the *Revelation* they acknowledge, for that *Revelation*, which requires *Repentance*, prescribes also the *Terms*, upon which that *Repentance* shall be accepted. For *those*, who *deny* a *Revelation* to say *this* is not so strange, For it is all their *Hope* or *Presumption* rather, if they have any Regard for *Eternal Happiness*, or *Misery*: and for *Both* to say it, I will add, It is only *saying*, it is not *proving*.

The whole Proof rests upon a *supposition* that *Sinful Man* of himself can become *such*, as he ought to be, and upon an *Argument* drawn, from the *Goodness* of God primarily intending the Happiness of his Creatures.

As to the *supposition*, if we examine it by *Fact*, we shall not find it in any Instance true: and as to the *Argument*, it is urged in such a manner, as to conclude, that because God doth *primarily intend*, He must necessarily effect the Happiness of his Creatures. But this will not follow even from his *Goodness*, if that were the only *Attribute* He exercised towards Man: For his

Good-

Goodness, which inclines *Him* to intend the Happiness of his Creatures, can be understood to move *Him* no further, than to create them in such a State, as makes them capable of Happiness, but it doth not necessarily oblige *Him* to maintain them in that State, nor if they fall from it, and forfeit it, to restore them to it.

This is the Case of all *Moral Agents*, who are accountable for their Actions, as they have a Law given them to observe, and *Facultys* to discern the Rectitude and Obligation of it, and are endowed with Liberty of determining themselves to the Observance or Violation of that Law. As *Man* therefore is a free Agent, and accountable for his Actions, he is consequently obnoxious to the Penalties of Transgression, and there the Law of Nature leaves him, and the Light of Nature leaves it also to the great Goodness and Mercy of God to deliver him, but cannot discover that God will deliver him, or is obliged to reinstate him in His Favour. If we argue from God's Goodness alone, we may say, that unless God intended to pardon them, His Goodness would not suffer Men to transgress; and that a Being created for Happiness can never in the Event of all be subject to Misery: which is indeed their Argument.

But when to the Goodness of God we joyn his Justice, and to the Exercise of both upon sinful Man we apply the Consideration of his Wisdom, then we shall find, that Justice may exact the Penalty, which Man hath wilfully incurred by his own Choice and Transgression; and the utmost we can suppose is, that as infinite Good-

178 *Partial & Entire Obedience.*

ness inclines our great Creator to *Mercy*, and infinite *Justice* to *Punishment*, his own infinite *Wisdom* only can direct *Him* in what *manner* and *degree* and upon what *Terms* and *Conditions* He will *extend* his *Mercy*, or *inflict* his *Vengeance* on the several Ranks and Divisions of *Offenders* in all *Ages* and *Nations* under a more or less perfect Knowledge of his *Laws*.

Thus it may be a probable Conclusion, that God will of his great Mercy call Sinners to *Repentance*, but it is no certain Consequence, that *Repentance* only, such as *Transgressors* can arrive at, will *atone* the God, whom they have *offended*.

It may be farther considered, that the *Light* of *Nature* can shew us no Title to *Happiness*, but what is derived from an *uniform Obedience* to the *Law* of God, and according to our *Natural* Notions of *Justice* and *Equity*, it is impossible to suppose, that He who transgresseth this *Law*, should be in the *same* Degree of Favour with God, as He, who *never* transgressed; or as Himself would have been, if He had *never* transgressed: there is a great difference between a *Partial* and an *Entire* Obedience, supposing the *Partial* to be occasioned only by the *neglect* of some *Dutys* that were *commanded*, and so to extend no further than *Sins* of *Omission*; but there is a much wider Difference between *Obedience* and *Transgression*, by the direct *commission* of *Sin* and *violation* of the *Law* in things *prohibited*, and *Natural Light* cannot look upon the *Guilty* and *Disobedient* to be *equally* entituled by *Repentance* only to the Favour of God with the

Sin & Misery, Happ. & Obed. 179

the *Innocent* and *Obedient*, and cannot therefore without some exprefs Assurance certainly conclude, that they will be *accepted* as such.

If we consult the *Wisdom* of Man any further upon this *Point*, we shall find it still more Wavering, and Uncertain, and Inconsistent with itself: Sometimes *this Wisdom* by its *Natural Light* can see an *inseparable Connection* between *Virtue* and *Happiness*, *Vice* and *Misery* even in a Future State, and there indeed it must hold, for in this World the *Connection* is not always *evident*, and the *Distribution* is not *equal* any further, than the *inward Satisfaction* springing in our Minds from a Virtuous Life, and the *inward Uneasiness* and *trouble* rising in our Breasts upon Vicious Practices. This *inequality* is to the *Light of Nature* a most *Cogent* Argument for a *Future State* of *Rewards* and *Punishments*, and tho' it did not *evidently* conclude to the full Satisfaction of the Ancient *Philosophers*, it was a *ground* of great Comfort and Encouragement to Minds that were Virtuously disposed, and searching after *Truth* with a full Desire and Eagerness to attain it.

The *Light of Nature*, and the *Words of Man's Wisdom* teach, that *Penaltys* are for the Good even of the Persons who are *punished*, and that God punishes Offenders only *when* and *no further*, than, their Good requireth, that the design of *Punishment* is the Amendment of Sinners, and Infinite Wisdom knows how to *adjust* the *Punishment* to the *Offence*, that it may be *exactly* fitted to produce the desired *Amendment*.

It is true *Punishment* is primarily intended for the *Good* and *Amendment* of Sinners in *this* Life, but it is something strange, that the *Light* of *Nature* should discover it to be so in the *Other*. According to these Discoverys the *Punishments* in another World are only *temporary*, and *future Penaltys* will certainly end in the *future Happiness* of those, on whom they are inflicted; Thus the *Light* of *Nature* discovers a *Purgatory* also: for the State of Sinners in another World, according to their Assertion, is only a State of *Purgation* and *Amendment*, which is a very convenient Doctrine for those, who can make it as gentle as they please, and so this gainful Invention of *Popery* makes *one* Article in the *Deist's Creed*.

It is further suggested at least by the *Words* which *Man's Wisdom teacheth*, that God is not affected in the least upon his own Account, whether his Laws be observed or not, and wants no *Satisfaction* and *Reparation* of his Honour: It is directly asserted, That *no Man breaks the Divine Laws out of Contempt to his Maker, or imagines he can do GOD any Injury by his Transgressions*.

The Consequence of this should be, that as God is not injured, and no Man sins out of Contempt, and God wants no *Satisfaction*, that there is *no* occasion for *any* Punishment at all, however for no more than conduces to the *Amendment* of the Sinner; and that *Repentance* itself is *unnecessary* so far, as it is intended as any *Satisfaction* for our Offences, or any *Reparation* of God's Honour. *This* is the least they can mean by *Repentance*, and if they do not mean
some

some *Acknowledgment* to GOD as the Party *offended*, and *Sorrow* for having *offended Him*, they mean *Nothing* at all.

That no Man sins out of Contempt of his Maker is a Position that needs only be recited, it is hardly capable of any other Confutation. But sure Men's Transgressions are a Contempt of the Divine Authority, and to condemn His Authority is to condemn GOD Himself. And altho' sinful Man is not able to do any Injury to GOD, as one Man may injure another, tho' neither our *Righteousness* can add to his *Happiness*, nor our *Transgressions* detract from it, yet every Transgressor is injurious to the *Intelligent* Part of the Creation, to which he belongs: he disturbs the great Rule and Order settled for the Government of the World, and must therefore be *answerable* to the great Lord and Governour of All. In this single respect GOD will deal with Men *according* to their *Observance* and *Violation* of his Laws, and were it only for the *Prosecution* of the great and wise *Ends* of his *Government*, and the *Vindication* of his *Providence* in the *Unequal Distribution* of things *here*, He will reward the *Obedient* and punish the *Disobedient*, every Man according to his Works.

It is more than insinuated that the *Christian* Religion represents *Almighty GOD* as a *Tyrannical*, *Cruel Being* full of *Wrath and Fury* ready to glut himself with *Revenge* for the *Injurys* he hath suffered by the breach of his Laws.

This is a most false and Unrighteous Charge on the *Doctrines* of Christianity: The *Scriptures* or rather GOD in the *Scriptures* represents

Himself as a GOD of Vengeance, whose Anger is kindled against Sinners, and whose Justice will most severely punish the Transgressors of his Laws, but the Denunciations are only against the incorrigible and obdurate: otherwise to the good and obedient, and to every penitent and returning Sinner He appears in the most aimiable and endearing Character: ^a For he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the Children of Men: He pardons with Pleasure, and punishes with Reluctance: There is nothing but perfect Harmony in the Divine Nature: His Mercy and Justice are entirely consistent: These with his other Attributes make up the lovely and adorable Name of God, according to the Stile Himself useth in the XXXIV Chapter of Exodus. ^b When the LORD descended in the Cloud, and stood with Moses on the Mount and proclaimed the Name of the LORD, And the LORD passed by before him and proclaimed: The LORD, the LORD GOD, Merciful and Gracious; and tho' He declares, that He will by no means clear the Guilty, that is the Impenitent; He proclaims Himself at the same time to be Merciful and Gracious, Long-suffering, and Abundant in Goodness and Truth. With this fullest Assurance therefore of his Justice and Mercy we may answer the Appeal, which Abraham made unto Him, ^c Shall not the Judge of all the Earth do Right? His Justice and Mercy have each respectively their proper Objects, but the Measures and Exercise of these Attributes upon lesser and more Notorious Of-

^a Lam. III. 33. ^b v. 6, 7. ^c Gen. XVIII. 25.

fenders, upon the *Penitent* and *Obdurate*, cannot, I suppose be settled and adjusted by the *Light* of *Nature*; nor unless we could comprehend the *Wisdom* of God and all his *Views* in the *Government* of the World, and the *Manifestation* of his glorious Attributes to the whole *Intelligent* Creation, could we presume to pronounce *definitively* upon his Proceedings.

And yet these *Patrons* of Natural Light, while they misrepresent the *Christian* Doctrine, as making God to appear an *Arbitrary*, *Cruel*, & *Revengeful* Being, do in the most Blasphemous and Outrageous manner, really charge the Most High with *Tyranny*, *Cruelty*, and *Injustice*, if He proceeds in Punishment further than the Limits, they have prescribed Him, for the Good and Amendment of *Transgressors*.

GOD, we know, is a most pure and simple Being: Neither *Wrath* nor *Pity*, *Love* nor *Hatred*, no *Passions* nor *Affections* have any place in the *Divine* Essence: But these are ascribed to *Him* by way of accommodation to our Capacities, as we shall see in the sequel of these Discourses: We can only conceive the *Transactions* of God with Mankind by these Shadowings and Analogys; and tho' it be only a *Tropical* Expression, when it is said: *His Anger burneth like Fire*, yet the strongest Figures may be too weak to express the Execution of it, and obdurate Sinners may find their Punishment to be something more than a *Metaphor*.

Once more according to these Men *Obedience* to the Law of Nature is a most indispensable Duty, and the *Law it self is previous to and independent*

184 *Deists make GOD inexorable.*

pendent of the Will of GOD: It is founded in the Fitness & Relations, and the Eternal Reason of things: and GOD Himself (as they love to speak) is obliged to direct all his Actions by these Rules: and then it may be a Question, whether GOD Himself without Satisfaction to Justice can any more pardon the Offender, than He can dispence with the Obligation of the Law. Those, who take upon them to determine what GOD must do, and by a Law independent of Himself, they say, He is obliged to do, hardly leave their Maker in my Opinion any Room or Liberty to shew Mercy upon us Miserable Sinners: For Law, an Independent Law, that binds and obliges GOD Himself, is a Deaf and Inexorable thing: and if GOD can not mitigate it, there is no Application open.

These things I have only just mentioned briefly, and incidentally, as they came in my way: The fuller Prosecution of these Points I leave to abler Hands, and shall rather chuse to receive the Doctrine of Reconciliation in the Words of Scripture, than in the Words, which Man's Wisdom teacheth. The Truth is, that from whatever Cause it proceeds, ^a *there is not a just Man upon Earth, that doth good, and sinneth not:* and ^b *in many things we do all offend.* Our best Works will not endure a severe Examination: our Repentance it self is defective: and no Man after the most perfect Repentance can perform an Entire Unsinning Obedience: and who is He, that with regard to Natural Religion alone dares rest his Happiness upon his Obedience, or Repentance, or

^a Eccles. VII. 20. ^b Jam. III. 2.

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Both? If any Doubts should rise concerning the *Perfection* of our *Obedience*, and the *Sufficiency* of *Repentance alone* unto Salvation, and we should not discern that *necessary* Connection between *Goodness* of God and the *Pardon* of Sin, we shall be the better satisfied to find upon *what* Conditions God hath promised his *Pardon*, and that, when of his infinite *Mercy* He was pleased to call Men to *Repentance*, He *provided* at the same time a *Satisfaction* to his *Justice*, and a *supply* for all our *Defects* even in the *best* Obedience we can pay *Him*. This *merciful Provision* is a full *Vindication* of his *Goodness*: It extends to *all*, that truly seek to please *Him* according to the *best Improvement* of the *Light*, He hath afforded *them* under his several Dispensations, in all *Ages* and *Nations* from the *Beginning* to the *End* of the *World*.

And now, by any Light that Nature affords us, or that riseth from the *Words which Man's Wisdom teacheth* we are at a *Loss* about the great and important Doctrine of *Pardon* and *Salvation*: Upon the Principles of Natural Reason alone that God is obliged to pardon *Sin* without an *Atonement* we cannot pretend: upon what *Satisfaction* we cannot prove: upon a *less* or any other than is set forth no Man can argue: The Truth is we could not propose any Terms of Pardon *Before*, we can propose no other *Now*: All the Hopes the World ever entertained, was upon the Foot of some *Atonement*: The Agreement of Mankind in this Opinion is an Argument either of the *Voice of Nature*, or of an *Original Revelation*: let our Adversarys chuse
which

which part they please: the first I think they cannot, and for the sake of certain Consequences they will not: The ancient *Sacrifices* show, that an Expectation of Pardon had at some time been given. No one, but the same God who gave it, could discover how it was to be effected.

Shall we pretend to reason against the Doctrine of our Redemption from any Topics drawn from the *Writings* of the *Moralists*, or from the *Maxims* of *Civil Laws*? can we presume to say upon what Conditions alone God may, much less that upon any other he will pardon us? It is in God to appoint the Satisfaction on his part, and the Conditions on ours: and therefore they, who deny *revealed* Religion abjure the Pardon offered: They, who deny our *Saviour's Satisfaction*, have no grounds to hope it; and those, who vacate that *Satisfaction* by taking from its *Infinite* and *Inestimable Value*, do by Consequence deny it: The *first* is the Case of the *Deists*, the *second* of the *Socinians*, the *third* of the *Arians*, who argue as much against the *Person* that made it, as the *Socinians* against the *Satisfaction* that is made.

If we pass therefore from the Counsel of God to the *Revelation* which followed upon it, and behold the Scene opened, which discloseth to us so far, as is necessary for us to know, how this mighty Work was accomplished, we see the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost*: all the great and glorious *Mysterys* of our Faith displayed to our View in all the several Points *revealed* and taught concerning these Sublime and Incomprehensible Truths.

But then from any *Principles* of *Human Science*, or *Natural Philosophy*, or *Metaphysical Abstractions* are we capable of arguing to the *Divine Nature*? *What it Is: How it exists:* and can we upon the grounds of *Human Reason* pronounce it a *Contradiction* for *Three Persons* to *subsist in One Eternal Effence*? In *Human Relations* it is so far from a *Contradiction*, that there is a *Necessity* for the *Son* to be of the *same Nature* with the *Father*: In *Divine*, it is a *Contradiction* to say the *Effence* is *divided*. There is no just Reasoning from *Human Unity* to *Divine*, nor can we say upon our own *Notions* of *Unity* that *Distinction* is *Inconsistent* with it: Every Man is *One* under a *greater Distinction* in his *Nature*, than the *Divine Effence* can admit of: His *Unity* is composed of *contrary Principles* even of *Body* and *Soul* and *Spirit*, and the *Spiritual Part* of our *Nature* is *One* under such *Distinctions* as cannot agree to the *Divine*; Our *Spirits* are capable of several *Adventitious Additions*, as *Goodness*, *Wisdom* and *Knowledge*, which are *seated* in it as *Accidents* in their *Subjects*, and may be *separated* from it. But *GOD Is what He Is Essentially*, and with *GOD* it is the same thing to *Be*, and to be *Omniscient*, *Wise* and *Good*. And as we cannot conceive nor express the *Divine Unity* but *improperly* by some *Notions* borrowed from *Numbers* and *Individuals*, we cannot argue that the *Relations* revealed in it do *destroy* it.

To deny the *Son* to be of the *same Nature* with the *Father*, is to deny that He is the *Son*, and *admitting* the *Proper Relation* there is no *dividing* the *Effence*: Thus the *Arians*, and all others,

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others, who argue from *Human* Relations to *Divine*, either strictly or figuratively must necessarily contradict the *revealed* Truths, and deny the *Persons*, or else make them *three GODS*, or *one GOD* and *two Creatures*.

These and many other *Absurditys*, even every *Herefy*, take their Rise and Spring from reasoning after the manner of Men upon the *Revelations* of GOD. We have not the same Comprehension of *Divine* Truths, as we have of *Human*: nor do we arrive at them in the same way. We have no proper and direct, much less adequate *Ideas*: We know not the *Divine* Nature, as it *Is* in itself: in its Attributes and manner of subsisting: We have no proper Conceptions of *Eternity* and *Omnipresence*, and what is *Infinite* necessarily exceedeth our largest Apprehensions.

It will be said perhaps, hath *Reason* then *nothing* to do with *Revelation*? must we not examine the Doctrines by certain Rules? and are not we Judges, whether they be True, and in what sense they are so?

1. To which I answer, That *Reason* hath much to do, and is nearly concerned with *Revelation*, that the *Revelation* is made and addressed to our *Reason*: GOD supposes we understand so far, as He requireth us to believe, tho' in what is required there is something Incomprehensible, as in the *Being* of GOD *Himself*, and in every one of his *Attributes*. Here the vain Scoffer can take no Advantage, nor find any Absurdity and Inconsistency to sport with, For of GOD we must acknowledge that *He Is*, and that He is *Incomprehensible*: This we
must

must agree in before we can be said to believe in Him at all, and when we believe the *One*, the more we think of it, we are convinced of the *Other*.

Thus *Reason* judgeth of the *Truth* of *Revelation*, not by comprehending the *Doctrines*, but by understanding the *Propositions* according to the common Signification and Construction of the Words, neither straining plain Expressions to a *Figurative* and *improper* Sense, nor *Figurative* and *Metaphorical* Expressions to a *Strict* and *Literal* Meaning. What is revealed we understand as a *Fact* declared to the World in the same manner, and Propriety of the Terms that we understand any other Proposition, which relates and asserts any other *Fact*: When we *assent* to the *Eternity*, *Omniscience*, and *Omnipotence* of GOD, we *assent* to so many *Facts*, and at the same time *confess*, that we do not *comprehend* them: We can *comprehend* indeed, that GOD *must be Eternal, Omniscient, Omnipotent*, but *Eternity, Omniscience and Omnipotence we cannot comprehend*. We can likewise *comprehend as Fact*, that CHRIST is the SON OF GOD: that *He existed from all Eternity*, and that *He is of the same Nature and Essence, and One with the Father*: But the *Eternal Generation* it self and the *Manner* of the *Divine Unity* we cannot comprehend.

2. *Reason* is Judge of the *Truth*, and of the *Sense* of any *Proposition*, but then, if we deny the *Truth* of a *Proposition* we must prove it to be *false*, or at least *doubtful*, and not *evidently true*. In *Propositions* delivering *Divine Truths*, if we would prove them to be *false*, we must do it
upon

upon the Account either of some *Moral Imperfection*, or *Natural Impossibility*, or *Logical Contradiction*. In the great *Articles of Revelation* no *Moral Imperfection* is pretended, and no *Impossibility* or *Contradiction* can be proved, till it can first be proved, that *Reason* hath a full *Comprehension* of the *Divine Nature and Operations*: and then every *Sense* put upon these *Propositions*, which implies either *Impossibility*, or *Contradictions* must be *False*.

3. *Reason* is *Judge* not only of the *Sense*, so, as to *discern* and *defend* the *true* Meaning, and to *detect*, and *confute* a *false* one, but also of the *Evidence*, wherewith these *Divine Truths* are delivered to the World: For these *Truths* being of the last Importance to the Salvation of Mankind, of *those* especialy, to *whom* they are proposed, it hath pleased God of his great Mercy and Condescension to consider the Depravity, Weakness and Prejudices of sinful Men, and therefore to give *Testimony* to his *Revelations*, and to introduce *them* into the World with such an *Evidence*, as is sufficient to awaken *Attention*, and to convince the *Judgment*: This *Testimony Reason* was *Judge* of *then*, and of the *Evidence* and *Proofs*, that such *Testimony* was given, *Reason* is *Now*, and *Ever* will be the *Judge*: Here again it greatly concerneth all Men, who examine into *Truth*, to place the *Evidence* in the fairest *Light*, to weigh it truly, and to judge impartialy, for if the *Evidence* cannot be disproved, that is if it cannot be shew'd, that it is *false* in *Fact*, or *defective* in *Kind*, those are inexcusable who reject it, especialy those, who

who *first raise Cavils* against it, and afterwards *yield* to their own *Objections*.

4. My further Answer is, that we *may* and *ought* to examine the Doctrines, as we are to ^a *try the Spirits, whether they be of GOD*: and besides the *Rules* I have mentioned, which relate to *those*, to whom the Gospel is proposed for their Conversion to the Faith: as whether there be any *Moral Imperfection*, *Impossibility* or *Contradiction* in the Doctrines, or any *Defect* in the *Evidence*; there are other Rules also given for *those*, who have embraced the Faith to *examine* the Doctrines, and to *try the Spirits, whether they be of GOD*, These are necessary for our *Preservation* and *Continuance* in the Faith, that we may be able to discover all *false Doctrines*, and all *false Pretensions* to the Spirit, even every *Heretical Innovation*, and *Perversion* of the Faith. The *Rules* are partly laid down in the *Scriptures*, and others conformable to them have been given and pursued as *Heresys* arose in the several *Ages* of the Church. One *Rule*, and that a *Fundamental One* is here subjoyned to the *Text*, viz. the *Comparing Spiritual things with Spiritual*: and another *Rule*, whereby to *try the Spirits* is given by St John ^b Beloved, *believe not every Spirit, but try the Spirits, whether they be of GOD. Hereby know ye the Spirit of GOD. Every Spirit that confesseth, that Jesus Christ is come in the Flesh, is of GOD. And every Spirit, that confesseth not, that Jesus Christ is come in the Flesh, is not of GOD. This is that Spirit of Antichrist: and*

^a John IV. 1. ^b 1 John IV. 1, 2, 3.

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as it followeth, ^a *hereby know we the Spirit of Truth, and the Spirit of Error.* If we will accept the *Injunction*, we must take the *Rule* along with it, and it is a Contradiction to *try the Spirits* and *deny the Gospel*. ^b *He that believeth on the Son of GOD, hath the Witness in Himself: He that believeth not GOD, hath made Him a Liar, because he believeth not the Record that GOD gave of his Son: These are the Rules, according to these we are to judge, and they will never deceive us; But to judge of things Divine as we do of Human, to argue strictly from one Case to the other, and to proceed upon this Fundamental Error, that Reason is the Adequate Judge of Revelation so far, as to explain it in several different senses, every Man for himself, when it is really inexplicable, must be, as it hath ever been, an inexhaustible Source of Heresie, and proves in the strongest Terms, that tho' we are to judge, we must judge by proper Rules, and that we cannot believe aright, unless we agree in one Uniform and Determinate Judgment. Reason is Judge within her own Compass and Comprehension, To all beyond we must submit, and upon proper Evidence, that the Doctrines are of God we must believe, and the surest Tryal and Test of the Spirits is Faith in the Revelation. This ever discovered the Spirit of Truth from the Spirit of Error, from Cerinthus to Arius, from Arius to Socinus, and from Socinus to Arius again, as his Heresie is now revived and propagated among us.*

^a 1 John IV. 6. ^b 1 John V. 10.

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Every Deviation from the Primary and Obvious sense of the Scripture Proposition will be a Deviation also from its Language, and when we begin to argue upon Divine Subjects as we do upon Human, we must necessarily *Speak in the Words, which Man's Wisdom teacheth*. Man's Wisdom can see no Difference between three Persons, and three Intelligent Agents, and consequently none between three Persons and three Individuals: *Man's Wisdom* reasoneth from Human Existence to Divine, and cannot conceive that the Father and the Son in the Divine Nature are of the same Essence, tho' Father and Son are confessedly *So* in the Human: and Man's Wisdom will teach, that Father and Son are two distinct Beings, tho' the same Reason must convince us that the Divine Essence is, in the strictest Conception, Indivisible, Eternal, and One. Thus when the Scriptures record that our Blessed Lord declared unto the *Jews*: ^a *I and my Father are One*, and when the Scriptures ascribe unto Him all the Attributes, and with them the Essence of the One True God, Human Wisdom, because it cannot comprehend the Manner, denieth the Fact, and because the Assertions in the first View are too plain, and strong to be eluded, Human Wisdom hath invented a Train of Secondary and Subordinate, Improper and Figurative Interpretations, ^b *Denying the Father and the Son*, as all they, *who deny the Son*, do necessarily *deny the Father also*.

^a John X. 30. ^b 1 John II. 22.

It may possibly be objected as it is loudly charged, that we who, defend the Scripture Doctrine, do equally depart from the Scripture Language, and speak *the Words which Man's Wisdom teacheth*. But to this the Answer is Easy. That we hold the Genuin and Native Sense of the Scriptures, and unless this Sense be perverted and denied, we need not any other Expressions, whereas those, who deny the Doctrine, must necessarily change the Language too. Take the several Doctrines of the *Gnostics* and *Nicolaitans*, of *Ebion* and *Cerinthus*, those first and earliest *Heretics*, and together with them let us compare the Doctrine and Defences of the Apostles, and we shall find the *Primitive Fathers* maintaining the same Doctrine with the *Apostles*, against these, and succeeding *Heresies*, that sprung up from them, or were grafted on them: The *Apostles* Defences are very *Scripture* themselves: The Defences of the *Fathers* are plain Assertions and Proofs of the *Scripture* Doctrine in such Terms, as the Subtilty, Craft, and Subterfuges of the several *Sects* of *Heretics* made it necessary for them to use: They were forced to reason indeed in Words different from the *Scripture*, but the Terms, they used were only opposed to *those* Terms, which the Broachers of *Novel* Doctrines had invented. Not to enter into a Detail of this Matter, it will be sufficient to insist on this one Instance only, That the *Arians* devising the Term *ομοιόδοτοι*, brought the *Catholics* under a Necessity of encountering them with the Term *ομοόδοτοι*, to maintain the ancient Doctrine that

that the *Son* is of the *same* Substance and Essence with the *Father*; For otherwise being only of a *Like* might imply being of a *Different* Substance, and no more, than that, as Man had been, *He* was also made in the Image of *God*. The Term *ομοῦσις* had been used before, and the great Care and Deliberation of the Fathers in pitching upon it on this Occasion, evidently shews what the *Catholic* Doctrine was, as expressed in several Equivalent Terms conformable to the first and genuine sense of the *Scriptures*. And therefore those *Propositions* and *Passages*, we meet with in the Writings of the *Fathers* concerning the True and proper *Relation, Divinity, Incarnation, sufferings, and Resurrection* of the *Son*, whether *Doctrinally* delivered, or *Defensively* urged for the Maintenance of the great Scripture Truths, are *not* to be looked upon, as the *Words, which Man's Wisdom teacheth*.

I proceed therefore in the Second place,

II. To shew *Positively*, how the Things of *God* are to be understood, Namely, that they are to be taught and received, understood and interpreted in a Manner proper and peculiar to themselves, or as the Apostle expresses it, they are to be taught *in the Words, which the Holy Ghost teacheth*.

The *Heathen* Poets both made their *Gods*, and in some Instances invented also a Language peculiar for them different from the Language upon Earth. But Our *God*, the Living and True *God*, hath not, as I have observed be-

fore, used a new Language to convey his *Revelations*, nor hath *He* given us new Facultys to receive them: *He* makes use of the Common Language of Men, and delivereth *Himself* in the Common Terms of Speaking, adapted to our Common Notions and Apprehensions of things: *He* complieth with the *Vulgar* Opinions, and conformeth to the *Popular* Notions, when *He* speaketh of this Earth, and the World about us: *He* condescendeth to speak of *Himself* also after the manner of Men, and to represent his own Attributes under several *Images* and *Symbols* borrowed from the Soul and Body of Man: His *Goodness*, *Mercy* and *Justice* are represented according to our *Moral* Notions: His *Wisdom* and *Power* according to the *Counsels* and *Actions* of Men: and *He* taketh upon *Himself* all our *Passions* and *Affections*, when *He* would set forth and represent unto us his Transactions with Mankind.

But at the same time *God revealeth Himself* to us in this manner, we are instructed not to conceive of Him in the *gross* and *literal* sense of these Expressions: Even our Intellectual Facultys, which bear some nearer Resemblance, as they are in some *sense* the *Image* of God, are nevertheless infinitely inadequate Representations of the Divine Wisdom and Knowledge. ^a *To whom then will ye liken God? or with what likeness will ye compare Him?* saith the Prophet *Isaiah*. ^b *God is not a Man, that He should lie, nor the Son of Man, that He should repent: So*

much *Balaam* truly pronounces of the *Almighty*.
^a *My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD:* and the Difference is in some measure shown at the following verse, tho' it be indeed infinitely greater, than even those words do express, ^b *For as the Heavens are higher than the Earth, so are my Ways higher than your Ways, and my Thoughts than your Thoughts.* So great the Difference, that to say He *thinketh*, is to speak *improperly*, and that He *thinketh* as we do, most *absurdly*. For *what* is our *Thought*, but *Labour*, and *Study*, and *Recollection* proceeding indeed from the Soul or Spirit, but working in Conjunction with the Body.

Thus are the Divine *Presence* and *Operations* also, represented under sensible *Images* and *Symbols* familiar to us, because under those *Adumbrations* only are we able to form any Conceptions of *Them*: These *Images* and these *Symbols* must therefore convince us, that they are only faint Shadows and distant Representations of an Eternal and Incomprehensible *Being*.

But led away with gross Apprehensions *Nature* hath erred, and our boasted *Reason* hath wandered into every *Species* of *Idolatry*, from the *Hosts* of *Heaven* unto the *Beasts* of the *Earth*; and according to the *Symbols* and Representations borrowed from Man, most Nations have also conceived the *Deity* as in a Human Form: It is thus indeed that the *Son* especially, the *Second Person* of the Blessed *Trinity*, appeared to the *Patriarchs*, and thus as such is He spoken

^a Isa. LV. 8. ^b v. 9.

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of, as if indeed He were *then already incarnate*: *Then alone* to be adored in those more familiar Conversations with Men, and *Now* He hath really assumed the *Human Nature* into the *Divine*, still *alone* of all in *Human Form* to be adored.

But God's having appeared in our Likeness, and spoken of Himself in our Language, this led not Men into any Mistake: and when He vouchsafed to appear in Human Form, they were sufficiently guarded against *Idolatry* by the *Schechinah* and the *Glory*, which always attended his visible Appearances: but they were perverted by making sensible Representations of these Appearances, and ^a*changing the Glory of the Uncorruptible GOD into an image made like to corruptible Man, and to Birds, and Fourfooted Beasts, and creeping Things*, and particularly into the Similitude of a Calf ^b*that eateth hay*,: This last was the Absurdity of the *Israelites* themselves, but borrowed, as it should seem, from the ^{*}*Egyptians*: The *Egyptians* were the great

^a Rom. I. 23. ^b Psalm CVI. 20.

* See the most Learned Bp Cumberland's Book entituled *Sanchoniatho's Phœnician History &c.* See also Mr Bedford's Animadversions on Sir *Is. Newton's* Chronology pag. 18 to 25. and more especially his Scripture Chronology, Book IV. Chap. V. to page 447. confuting Sir *Is. Newton's* Notion that *Shisack* is *Sesoftris*. Concerning *Thoth* see Book I. Ch. VI. p. 57, 67, 73. Ch. VII. §. 1. B. II. Ch. VI. §. 85, 86, 114, 129, 131, 132, 133, 141, 142, 143, 144, 151. See also §. 155, 182. Concerning *Letters* see Book V. Ch. II. p. 493, &c. Concerning *Osiris* represented by an Ox, see B. II. Ch. VI. §. 174, 177.

These are some of the Authorities, by which I can justify the Assertions referred to, which I first delivered, as the True and General Opinion, but since the Preaching of these Sermons I find the State of Religion in the first Ages after the Flood very differently

*Minters of Idolatry,** and as they had invented *Hieroglyphical* Characters of Birds and Beasts, and Plants, and Insects to exprefs the *Deity*,

rently represented from what I apprehended it to have been. For tho' the True Religion continued with *Noah*, and *Shem*, and in his Line to *Abraham*, and might poffibly continue for fome time in other Familys, thofe efpecially propagated from *Abraham*, and *Jacob*, yet what I affert is, that *Idolatry* foon prevailed, if worshipping any Objects befides the Creator is properly called Idolatry, whether they were Men Deified, or the Host of Heaven, efpecially the *Sun*, who feems the King and Leader of them all: Even *Abraham's* Family began to be corrupted, and that the True Religion did afterwards revive and prevail for a time in any other parts of the World is owing, as I faid, to his Descendants from *Ishmael* and the Children of *Kenurah*, and to the Descendants of *Eſau*; But notwithstanding thefe, excepting his Offspring, the Charge of Idolatry may very juſtly be General, and particularly it is True, what I have charged upon *Egypt*. For *Ham* was the Father of Idolatry after the Flood: The *Apis* represented *Osiris* the Son of *Ham*; and it is very probable, that the Children of *Iſrael* borrowed their *Golden Calf* from the *Apis*, tho' they did not by their *Calf* deſign to represent the *Egyptian Osiris*, but their own the Living and true GOD: They uſed it as a *Symbol* of the GOD, who brought them out of the Land of *Egypt*, and excelled, as they might think, the *Egyptian Osiris*, as much as *Mofes's* Rod was more *Potent*, than thoſe of the Magicians. But however that may be, for I will not enter into Conjectural Diſputes, nor inſiſt, that poffibly they had never ſeen any other viſible Representation of a Deity, yet when we have nothing better, I may offer Conjectures ſtill, and if *Aaron* did not copy from the *Egyptian Bull*, yet poffibly he could not deviſe any Image more probable, conſidering the Figures of the Cherubims, efpecially if he knew what *Ezekiel* ſaw afterwards in his Viſion. Chap. I. (and perhaps of old there might have been ſuch an Appearance) That among the four Faces of the four Living Creatures, One of them was the Face of an Ox. The *Jews* certainly apprehended ſome *Propriety* in this *Symbol*, ſince we find, that notwithstanding the Diſpleaſure of GOD and the Deſtruction of the Golden Calf in the Wilderneſs, *Jerobaam* many Years after ſet up two Calves in *Dan* and *Bethel*, and ſaid, *Behold thy Gods, O Iſrael, which brought thee up out of the Land of Egypt.* 1 Kings XII. 28, 29. It may be proper to add that according to the *Biſhop* and Mr *Bedford*, in their Judgment upon ancient Hiſtory, *Osiris* was the Father of Husbandry, and Deified by his Son *THOTH* or *Orus* according to the References above: and that Plowing with Oxen was known and uſed in *Egypt* much earlier,

than

they came at last to ascribe *Divinity* to their Leeks, and Worms, and Monkeys, and to adore even the *Images* of the Things, which they had Substituted, whereas *we ought not to think, that the GOD-Head is like to the most glorious Creatures, much less to such groveling abject things, or^a unto Gold, or Silver, and Stone graven by Art and Mans Device.*

This Caution concerning the *Divine Nature* and *Attributes* will teach us, how to understand all other parts of *Divine Revelation*, and then according to those *Conceptions* and Representations, in which God Himself hath set forth the *Divine Nature* and *Attributes*, we are in the same way of *Analogy* and Correspondence of the Terms to understand and interpret all those Truths concerning the *Deity*, which are simply knowable by *Revelation* only. Thus the same *Analogy*, which at once conveyeth to us and secures the *Divine Nature* and Perfections, that we conceive not meanly and unworthily of them, will secure us also in Conceiving all the *Mysteries* of pure *Revelation*, whether they relate to the *Persons revealed*, or to the *Acts* of our *Redemption*.

As that *Language* and those *Symbols*, in which God's *Goodness*, and *Wisdom*, and *Power* are represented, do express what is Real, and Excellent in the *Divine Nature*: That He is Really

than hath been suggested, we may gather from that Prohibition in the Book of *Deuteronomy*. Ch. XXII. 10. *Thou shalt not plow with an Ox. and an Ass.* And for the Antiquity of *Letters* by the by, we may consult the Ancient Story together with the *Bishop* and Mr *Bedford*. See the *References*. ^a Acts XVII. 29.

and Superlatively Powerful, Wise, and Good beyond all, that we can conceive or express, all the *Divine Relations* are likewise as *Real*, according to the Names, they are called by, as are the Goodness, and Wisdom, and Power of GOD: And then as the *Relation* is *Real*, the *Essence* must necessarily be *One* and the *Same*. As concerning the *Divine Attributes*, nothing must be admitted, that will debase them to the Imperfections of Men, so in conceiving of the *Divine Relations*, nothing must be admitted, but what is agreeable to the Divine Nature: For tho' the *Relation* be as real, as among Men, yet at the same time, that we assert, that in the *Unity* of the God-Head there are *Three Persons*, we do unavoidably assert *them* to be also of *One Substance*, of the *same Essence*, *Power* and *Eternity*.

It will be of excellent use therefore for the right understanding and interpreting those *Scriptures*, in which the great *Mysteries* of our *Faith* are delivered to consider this twofold Analogy.

1. The Analogy of Language,
2. And the Analogy of *Faith*.

The Analogy of Language answering to the Manner of the *Apostle's* speaking, *in the Words which the Holy Ghost teacheth*: The Analogy of Faith answering that most excellent Rule He goeth by, of *Comparing Spiritual things with Spiritual*.

In the remainder of this Discourse, as also in the next, I shall first explain more distinctly,

ly, and then more particularly applie these two Rules of Interpretation, each severally by it self.

I. For the Analogy of Language, and the explication of it, *Which things also we Speak, Not in the Words which Man's Wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth.*

For since we are not able to expresse the *Almighty*, as He is in Himself, infinite and inscrutable in his Nature and Perfections, and ^a*Wonderfull in his Works towards the Children of Men*, we are forced to conceive and speak of Him in such *Language*, and according to such *Notions* as we are able to form, or rather *such* as Himself hath taught us to form and accommodate unto Him: In this *Accommodation* consisteth the *Analogy of Language*, and according to the *Correspondence* it beareth to the Divine Nature and Operations, it is to be understood in a more *proper*, or more *Figurative* sense.

For our more orderly Proceeding therefore, it may be necessary to consider the several ways God is pleased to represent Himself unto us in the *Scriptures*: both when He speaketh of Himself, and when He speaketh by the *Prophets*, or is spoken of by the *Sacred Writers*. For sometimes God speaketh of Himself and is spoken of in a *Figurative* and *Metaphorical* manner: Sometimes in an *Emblematical* or *Symbolical* way: Sometimes in a *true* and proper *Analogy*.

I. The *Figurative* and *Metaphorical* way of speaking is not used for *Instruction* and *Infor-*

^a Psal. CVII. 8, &c.

mation, but for *Ornament and Illustration*: It supposeth a *previous* Knowledge of the Things to which it is applied, and expresseth the *Manner*, or giveth the *Description* of any thing under some borrowed Forms, which set it off, and paint it in more lively Colours.

But in speaking of the great God we must observe that those *Forms* of Speech, which exalt other *Subjects*, cannot reach the Greatness and Dignity of *Divine*: And all Language must fail, where the noblest Imagination sinks under the Weight and Glory of its Contemplations: Tho' it hath pleased God to inspire the *Sacred* Writers with the most sublime, that is with the most proper Expressions, these do rather speak the *Lowness* of our Capacitys, than in any degree the *Height* of his Perfections, and the loftiest Style, while it serveth to raise our Thoughts, is yet with all its Pomp no more, than a Debasement of his *Majesty*, bringing it down tho' to the noblest of them, yet still to our Thoughts and Apprehensions: The Mind of Man is too weak to conceive, and not able to bear a brighter display of his Glory: and as no words can give us *Equal*, it is the great Goodness of God in the Holy Scriptures to give us *worthy* Conceptions even in the easiest and most obvious expressions of Him.

The *Figures* therefore employed to express the *Divine* Nature and Actions may be considered as more *Lofty* and more *Familiar*: The more *exalted* setting forth his Majesty and Glory: the more *Familiar* the settled order of his Providence, and his Transactions with the Sons of Men.

With

With reference to the first, the *Eighteenth Psalm* describing his Victorious Presence with his servant *David*, speaketh of Him in the Highest and Strongest *Figures*, in that sublime enaration of his Terror and Glory, and Triumphant Procession from the *sixth* to the *sixteenth* verse: and yet we may observe, that this exceeds not the bare ^a Historical Account of our LORD's descending upon * Mount *Sinai*, where

^a *Exod. XIX.*

* I have subjoined the several Passages, rather than recite them in the Body of the Discourse, and have placed the Historical Fact between the Figurative Descriptions, that the Reader may see how far the Strongest and Sublimest Figures are from exceeding the Truth and Terrors of the Divine Presence among his People.

<i>Psal. XVIII.</i>	<i>Exod. XIX.</i>	<i>Habakkuk III.</i>
The Figurative Description.	The Literal Narration.	The Figurative Description.
7 <i>The Earth shook and trembled, the Foundations also of the Hills moved, and were shaken, because he was wroth.</i>	16 <i>And it came to pass on the third day in the Morning, that there were Thunders, and Lightnings, and a thick Cloud upon the Mount, and the Voice of the Trumpet exceeding loud, so that all the People, that was in the Camp trembled.</i>	3 <i>GOD came from Teman, and the Holy One from Mount Paran. Selah His Glory covered the Heavens, and the Earth was full of his Praise.</i>
8 <i>There went up a smoke out of his Nostrils: and Fire out of his Mouth devoured: Coals were kindled by it.</i>	18 <i>And Mount Sinai was altogether on a Smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in Fire: and the Smoke thereof ascended as the Smoke of a Furnace, and the whole Mount quaked greatly.</i>	4 <i>And his Brightness was as the Light: he had Horns coming out of his Hand, and there was the hiding of his Power.</i>
9 <i>He bowed the Heavens also, and came down: and darkness was under his feet:</i>		5 <i>Before him went the Pestilence: and burning Coals went forth as his Feet.</i>
10 <i>And he rode upon a Cherub, and did fly: yea he did fly upon the Wings of the Wind.</i>		6 <i>He stood and measured the Earth: He beheld and drove asunder the Nations, and the everlasting Mountains were scattered: the perpetual Hills did bow:</i>
11 <i>He made Darkness his secret place: His Pavilion round about him were dark Waters & thick clouds of the Skies.</i>	<i>[And the Mountain burnt with Fire unto the midst of Heaven with Darkness, Clouds, and</i>	<i>ness,</i>
12 <i>At the Bright</i>		

no Figure is employ'd to highten, what in Fact was so Great and Dreadful. Nor is that Wonderful Sublime Description in the Prophet *Habakkuk*, tho' it rises above all Human Imagination, a full Display of his transcendent Glory: To these we may add those exalted Passages in the Book of *Job*, and other parts of the Scripture, which describe his Greatness, and Majesty, and Power, but all these cannot express, what our Thoughts are not able to conceive.

With respect to the second thing setting forth God's *Providence* in the Care and Defence, and Protection of his Servants, He is called in

ness, that was before Him, his thick Clouds passed, Hailstones, and Coals of Fire.	thick Darkness: And the Lord spake unto you out of the midst of the Fire — Deut. IV. 11.	His ways are Everlast- ing.
13 The Lord also thundered in the Hea- vens: and the Highest gave his Voice: Hail- stones, and Coals of Fire.	12] 19 And when the Voice of the Trumpet sounded long, and wax- ed louder and louder,	10 The Mountains saw thee and they trem- bled: the overflowing of the Water passed by: the Deep uttered his Voice, and lifted up his Hands on high.
14 Yea he sent out his Arrows, and scat- tered them: and he shot out Lightnings, and dis- comfited them.	Moses spake, and GOD answered him by a Voice.	11 The Sun and the Moon stood still in their Habitation: at the light of thine Arrows they went, and at the shining of thy glittering Spear.
15 Then the Channels of Waters were seen, and the Foundations were dis- covered: at thy rebuke, O Lord, at the blast of thy Breath of thy Nostrils.		

When the Reader hath compared these together, and seriously considered the Literal Account of our Lord's appearing upon Mount Sinai at the giving of the Law, he may then reflect whether the Description of his last Appearance to judge the World, and the Account of the last Judgment: the Joys of Heaven: and the Miserys of Hell be no more than Fable and Figure.

206 *Of Figures less Sublime.*

the same *Psal* I mentioned just before ^a our *Rock*: our *Fortress*: our *Tower*: our *Buckler*: the *Horn* also of our *Salvation*, and our *Refuge*. These are *Figurative* Expressions, tho' not so sublime as the former, yet of great Dignity, and however plain, yet no less Solemn and Majestic; and innumerable of the like kind are obvious throughout the *Scriptures*: Thus also with regard to God's Transactions with Mankind, His *Eyes*: His *Ears*: and His *Hands*, are used *Metaphorically* to signify his Providence, his *Knowledge*: his *Regard* to us: and his *Power*: So in the *thirty fourth Psalm*^b for his Providence: *The Eyes of the Lord are upon the Righteous, and his Ears are open unto their Cry.* *Psal* the *eighty ninth*^c for his Power: *Thou hast a mighty Arm: strong is thy Hand, and high is thy right Hand.* *Light* is also taken in several senses and all *Metaphorical*. Sometimes for the *Robes* and *Clothing* of the *Almighty*. ^d*Who covereth himself with Light, as with a Garment.* Sometimes for his *Habitation*, ^e*dwelling in the Light, which no Man can approach unto.* Sometimes for our *Guide* and *Defence*: ^f*The Lord is my Light and my Salvation.* Sometimes for *Instruction* and *Revelation*: ^g*I am the Light of the World,* saith our *Blessed Lord*. Sometimes for our *Eternal Happiness*: ^h*The Lord himself shall be unto thee an Everlasting Light, and thy GOD thy Glory.* All these Expressions are *Figurative* and *Allusive* only, because they do not express any thing really *Correspon-*

^a *Psal.* XVIII. 2. ^b *v.* 15. ^c *v.* 13. ^d *Pf.* CIV. 2. ^e *1 Tim.* VI. 16. ^f *Pf.* XXVII. 1. ^g *John.* VIII. 12. ^h *Is.* LX. 19.

dent in the great Subject they are applied to, but are used to set forth more sensibly, and in the way of Similitude and Illustration the Action and manner of one thing by another. These *Metaphorical* Expressions are not themselves *Analogical*, but are built upon, and applied to these *Analogical* Conceptions we had before formed of the *Divine* Being: They are the Work of Fancy and Imagination in all *Human* Compositions, varied and applied to the Subject as the Writer pleaseth, and in *Divine* they are directed, not as necessary to give us proper Notions, but to express the Notions we have in a more Sublime and Beautiful Manner, and therefore tho' these *Metaphorical* Expressions do sometimes carry a Resemblance, yet they do not necessarily imply it; whereas in *Analogy* there is a real Foundation, and GOD is truly *Powerful, Wise, and Good*, beyond all that we can call so among Men, tho' He hath truly neither *Arms*, nor *Ears*, nor *Eyes*.

2. In *Scripture* GOD is sometimes spoken of in an *Emblematical* or purely *Symbolical* way: This is more than *Metaphor*, and yet short of *Reality*: *Metaphors* and other Figures are properly no more than a bare *Mode* of Expression, but *Symbols* and *Emblems* are determinate Signs used and appointed to signify something *real* and determinate in the Subject, to which they are applied: Without this Designment they are indeed no more than *Metaphor*; but thus selected and made significative either of the Subject it self, or of some Property of the Subject, to which they are applied, they do there-
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by become *Types* and *Characters* to express them to us. There is no *real* Resemblance or *Correspondence*, but they are invented and imagined sometimes by the Wit of Man, and sometimes they are chosen and made use of by God Himself, to express, not his *Attributes* indeed, as they are in themselves, yet at least the Exercise and Operation of them in the Government of the World and the Superintendency of his Providence. Thus the same Things as they are differently applied may in one Respect be only *Metaphors*, in another they may be *Symbols*, which are of Arbitrary *Application*, as Words are of Arbitrary Signification. Thus the *Power* of God shall be signified by a *Mighty Hand*, and a *Stretched out Arm*: His *Providence* by an *Eye*, and his *Glory* by an *Irradiated Cloud*, and these, whether *expressed* or *depicted*: In bare *Metaphors* they are meer *Forms* of Speech: in *Symbols* they stand for *Signs* and *Emblems* of the Things they are applied to. Thus *Light* is *Figurative* to express God's *Glory*: The *Cloud* which descended on the ^a *Tabernacle* was a *Symbol* of his *Presence* and his *Glory*: Thus in the second Book of *Chronicles*, ^b where it is said, *The Eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole Earth*, the Expression is *Metaphorical*: In the third and fourth Chapters of *Zechariah*, ^c where *seven Eyes* are said to be *engraven on One Stone*, and to be the *Eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole Earth*, the Expression is *Symbolical*. Both ways the *Eyes* of the Lord are well chosen Ex-

^a Exod. XL. 34. ^b XVI. 9. ^c Zech. III. 9. IV. 10.

pressions, or Representations of his *Providence*, his *Omniscience*, and *Omnipresence*, as in the Book of *Proverbs*^a we read, *The Eyes of the Lord are in Every place, beholding the Evil, and the Good*. And altho' these Expressions and Signs taken from our *Organs* of Sense and Action are not properly *Analogical*, by reason of any *real* Correspondence between God and *Man*, yet as these *Organs* are the means of our attaining to Knowledge: of our exercising our Intellectual Powers, and of Providing for Future Events, they do convey something *Analogical* in the *Effect*, as that God heareth us, when we call upon *Him*, that the *Heavens are the Work of his Hand*, and *his Eyes behold all the Children of Men*: We do therefore readily yield, that tho' God is not what the *Metaphor* speaketh Him, or the *Symbol* representeth Him, yet *He* is truly and in a manner infinitely higher, than we can conceive and express, what is meant and intended by these *Symbols* and *Metaphors*: that is, *He* is Infinitely *Powerful*, *Wise* and *Good*: For *Metaphors* are so far from *destroying*, that they *suppose* the *Reality* of the Things to which they are applied.

· Even in the great *Mysterys* of our *Faith* a *Metaphorical* Interpretation will suppose much more, than those who make it, are willing to allow. For granting, as we do, that the Terms *Father*, *Son*, and *Begotten* are not to be understood in that *strictness* or in the *same* manner, when applied to *Divine* Persons, as they are,

^a Prov. XV. 3.

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when applied to *Human*, yet, if they have any meaning, they must refer to some Subject, and then they imply at least what is equivalent, a *Total Communication* of Nature and Essence from the *First* to the *Second*, and our Adversarys may as well argue against the *Providence*, the *Omniscience* and *Omnipresence* of GOD, because He hath neither *Hands*, nor *Eyes*, nor *Ears*, as against the *Reality* of that *Relation* expressed by the Terms *Father*, *Son*, and *Begotten*, because they are not to be understood in the *strict* and *literal* sense of *Human* Generation, where a Man is procreated from *two* Parents, and makes a *Posterior* and separate *Individual* from *Both*: So in the Terms of *Redemption*, and the *Price* paid for the *Purchase* of that *Redemption*: For the Terms of *Adoption* and *Inheritance* of our being *Heirs of GOD*, and *joynt Heirs with Christ*, tho' the *Price* is not paid exactly as it is for *Captives* among Men, tho' the *Adoption* is not made according to the *Forms* of the *Roman Law*, nor our *Inheritance* conveyed by *Deeds* and *Instruments* of a *Legal Will* and *Testament*, yet the Things signified are *real*, and we are really delivered from *Bondage* and *Death* upon a *Price* and *Satisfaction* paid, more valuable than the whole World can afford, ^aEven the *Blood of Christ, who through the Eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot unto GOD for us*. We are really in the Condition of ^b*Adopted Children*, and ^c*Heirs of an Inheritance Uncorruptible, reserved in Heaven for us*.

^a Heb. IX. 14. ^b Rom. VIII. 15, &c. Gal. IV. 5, &c. ^c 1 Pet. I. 4.
These

suppose the Reality of the Things. 211

These Expressions are more than *Figurative*, and carry in them, as we shall see under the next Consideration a true and proper *Analogy*: They have a real Foundation and *Agreement*, and are strictly and properly applied with no other Difference, than there necessarily is between *Earthly* and *Heavenly* Things: Our *Inheritance* in *Heaven* is as *real* as an *Inheritance* on *Earth*: the *Reversion* more *certain*, and the *Possession* more *enduring*. *Heaven* is a *place*, as well, as *Earth*, and *Happiness* and *Glory* may as properly be possessed in *Heaven*, as *Lands* and *Houses*, *Riches* and *Honours* upon *Earth*: Our *Redemption* is as *real* from *Misery*, as it can be from *Captivity*, and our *Redeemer* is *Mighty*: no *Figurative* and *Imaginary* Person: And here the *Reality* of what the *Scripture* asserts is Evident throughout the whole Order and Work of our *Redemption*: With regard to the *Father*, and the *Son*, the *Relation* is as *real*, as it is among *Men*,^a *For GOD so loved the World, that He sent his only begotten Son, who is in the Bosom of the Father, that whosoever believeth in Him, should not perish, but have everlasting Life*. Here we have the *Real*, even the *Eternal Relation*; and the *Reality* of our *Redemption*, and the *Price* paid for it is no less Evident from the Words of *St Peter*,^b *Forasmuch as ye were not redeemed with Corruptible things, as Silver, and Gold, but with the precious Blood of Christ*.

This brings me to consider Thirdly,

^a John III. 16. I. 18. ^b 1 Pet. I. 18, 19.

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3. The true and proper *Analogy*, in which GOD speaketh of Himself, and is spoken of in the *Scriptures*.

1. By *Analogy* we do not understand the Resemblances drawn from *Etymology*, nor the Minute-nesses of *Grammatical* Terminations, nor any Rules of Language delivered by *Varro* and *Cæsar* had we them entire, by *Tully* and *Quintilian*, nor those laid down by any more *modern* Writers: Nor with the *Rhetoricians* do we make it a meer *Figure* or *Tropical* Scheme of Speech, but we take it in the true Logical Sense, as it is used according to the *Proportion* and *Correspondence*, which is found between *one* thing and *another*, and is strictly *Conclusive*, so far as the *Proportion* and *Correspondence* holds.

In this *Analogy* is founded all our Knowledge of GOD: his *Perfections*, *Relations*, and *Attributes*. Of these we have no direct and immediate *Conceptions*, and we cannot so much as *think*, much less can we *speak* of them but in the same *Conceptions* and Language, in which we think, and speak of our selves and the World about us. We have no Notion of Spiritual Beings, not so much as of our own Spirit, but from the Operations of our Mind, and the Consciouness of what passeth within us, and we cannot form any *Conceptions* of the Divine *Knowledge*, *Understanding* and *Will*, but from those we had first formed of our *own*.

That these *Conceptions* are *adequate* we cannot presume, that there is a *real* Correspondence is certain, and that notwithstanding the Correspondence is *real*, GOD is still *Incomprehensible*

hensible we must acknowledge: For the same *Analogy*, which implies an *Agreement* in some *Respects* evidently inferreth a *Difference* in others. The Resemblance is just, so far as it holds, and gives us right Apprehensions of God, so far as *He* requires us to believe: But our most extended Views are *Finite*, and the Nature of our Conceptions gives us the true Termination of the Prospect. Here we ^a*see thro' a Glass darkly*, and we know but *in* ^b*part*: till we come *Face to Face*, we shall not ^c*see Him as He is*. Our Knowledge is *true*, tho' it is only in *Part*; It is *real*, tho' not *perfect*; and not untill *that* which is *perfect* is come, shall ^d*that, which is in part be done away*. There is an Essential Difference between the *Creator* and the *Creature*, and as we can conceive of the *Creator* only by the most Excellent Conceptions we can form from the *Creature*, we can conceive of *Him* no further than those Conceptions will reach; As we have obvious Notions of a *Father*, and a *Son*, of *Goodness*, *Justice* and *Truth*, of *Knowledge*, *Understanding* and *Will*, We form our Notions of the Divine *Relations* and *Attributes* accordingly, but the Manner, *how* they are in themselves is altogether *inconceivable*, and we know no more of them, than is revealed: For whatever the *Light* of *Nature* discovereth of the Divine *Attributes*, it only testifieth to the Truth of *Revelation*, which discovereth them more perfectly, in a most gracious Exemplification of them throughout the whole

^a 1 Cor. XIII. 12. ^b v. 9. ^c 1 John III. 2. ^d 1 Corinth. XIII. 10.

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Course of God's Transactions, and Communications with Mankind; But still all our Conceptions of God according to *Natural* Religion, or *Revealed*, are formed upon that Analogy and Correspondence which Human Relations, and all created Excellence and Perfection bear, tho' in the smallest Proportion, to the Divine.

By this Correspondence the *Analogy* of Language is distinguished from the *Figurative* and *Metaphorical* Schemes of Speech, as it comprehends and expresseth the very Subject of which we discourse, and therefore we shall find the Distinction as clear between the *Metaphorical*, and *Analogical* Language, when applied to Subjects *Supernatural* and *Divine*, as in *Human* Subjects it is between the *Things* we speak of, and the *manner* of our Speaking. It is true, that in the common use of the Terms, the *Figurative* and *Analogical* Language is too much undistinguished, and one is too promiscuously and carelessly taken for the other. *Metaphor* is taken for *Analogy*, because in *Metaphor*, as it is a sort of a shorter Similitude, there is sometimes an Appearance of some Resemblance: And *Analogy* is taken for *Metaphor*, because our Thoughts and Conceptions are transferred from their Primary Subjects; but such transferring is not *Figurative* but *Real*, otherwise we can have no *real* Conceptions of God, and all our Knowledge and Notions of *Him* will be only *Metaphorical*: *Analogy* differeth Essentially, and Fundamentally from *Metaphor*, even as Fundamentally as the *Substance* differeth from its *Accidents*:
Metaphors

Metaphors are taken, if I may so say, from the thin semblance and surface of Things, and drawn from their sensible and External Propertys, but *Analogy* rises from the very Nature of Things in their *Real* Agreement and Correspondence on *both* sides of the Comparifon. *Metaphors* convey unto us no Knowledge of the Subject, but are applied to those Things, which are previously known and determined, and so they are *Arbitrary* in their *Application*, and *Imaginary* and *Allusive* only in their Resemblance; But *Analogy* containeth and expresseth the Knowledge, we have of Things Supernatural and Divine, in some necessary and determinate manner by substituting our complex Notions of all Sublunary Truth, Excellency, and Glory, to give us just Conceptions, and to inform our *Minds* in the Correspondent Nature of that Truth, Excellency, and Glory, which is Divine. As *Faith* is the ^a *Evidence*, this *Analogy* may be called the *Substance of things not seen*: But *Metaphors* are only the Trappings and Decorations of our Language, and are as properly applied to our *Analogical* Conceptions, as to the Things themselves from which those Conceptions were taken, and in Divine Subjects we may observe, that the Scriptures speak *Metaphorically* of those Attributes, which they had first *Analogically* conceived. Of God's Goodness and Justice and Wisdom and Power, the Conceptions and Language are *Analogical* and *Real*; In setting forth the Exercise of these

Attributes the Expressions are often *Figurative*, and *Metaphorical*.

This is a short account of that Divine *Analogy* taught us in the *Scriptures*, both as it is in it self, and as it is distinguished from the *Figurative* and *Metaphorical* Forms of Speech. The *Uses* of it will appear in every Step we take, and the *Distinction* of this *Analogy* from *Metaphor* is of the *last* Importance, if we would understand any thing *Real* and *Positive* in the Divine Nature and Perfections, and those great Points, which are the peculiar Subject of *Revelation*. It is in this View that I propose to consider this *Analogy* of Language, which God Himself hath taught us when He is pleased to express those Conceptions of Himself, which He requires us to entertain in our Thoughts, both as the Subject of our *Meditation*, and the Object of our *Faith*.

By the means then of this Analogy we are able to conceive of those things, which we could otherwise frame no Notion of, and express our Conceptions in a borrowed Form, by *transferring* those Thoughts and Expressions, which are easy and Familiar to us, to what is more Difficult and Obscure, or beyond the reach of our Knowledge any other way, especially to things Supernatural and *Divine*, of which we can have no direct View, or *Conception*, as they are in *themselves*, and no further, than the *Analogy* between God and his Creatures can lead us; We must first from our selves and the Creation round about us, be furnished with the Knowledge of all that is Good and Excellent in

in the whole compass of the *Intellectual* and *Moral* World, and then apply this Knowledge to the Perfections of God: These Notions must be settled in our Minds, before we can have any conception of the *Divine* Excellence, and without them we can no more imagine or express what the *Divine* Nature is, than a Blind Man can discourse of *Colours*, or a Deaf Man of the *Sound* of a Trumpet.

Thus to form our Notions and Conceptions of God, and in the way up to *Him* of all Spiritual Beings, is properly the Work and Operation of our Mind, by which we first apprehend a *Likeness* and *Conformity*, and then reason by a suitable *Parity* from one thing to another, or else we proceed in *Number*, *Weight* and *Measure*, by *Proportion*, which is also *Parity*, and may be called in Argument, as it is in Arithmetic, the *Golden Rule*. This *Analogy* therefore is *strictly Conclusive*, where it is *truly applied*, and there is no more difference in arguing upon *Divine* Subjects and the real *Proportion* of things, than there is between *Mathematical* Demonstration, and that *Indubitable* Certainty, which is deduced from the highest Principles of Reason; For tho' the Correspondence and Proportion be not *Commensurate* to its Subject, and therefore are not strictly *Univocal*, as the word MAN is, which comprehendeth all the *Individuals* of the *Species*, yet it is Entirely *Univocal* on *one* side of the Comparison, and truly *Univocal* also, so far as the *Correspondence* holdeth with those things, it is applied to, on the *other*. The highest Notions of Excellence and Perfection, tho' they
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are not *commensurate*, are yet most *truly* applied unto God: And the *Analogy* expresth something *Real* and *Determinate*, in Opposition to all *Equivocal*, and meer *Figurative* Forms of Speaking, and thus applied to the *Divine* Nature and *Attributes*, tho' it can neither express the *Manner*, nor reach the *Perfection* of them, yet from our best Notions of *Goodness*, *Wisdom*, and *Power*, it teacheth us to understand, that God is infinitely *Powerful*, *Wise*, and *Good* in the most *Univocal* and *appropriated* Notions of these *Attributes*: So far as we can conceive of God by his Creatures, the *Analogy* holds, and only faileth where being Finite it necessarily must, in expressing the Infinite Perfections and Excellence of the Creator.

In *Human* Subjects we do often speak *Analogically*, tho' there be not that Absolute Necessity for it, as there is in *Divine*: For we may see and Apprehend the things of this World without the Intervention of *Analogy*: Thus we commonly speak of the *Picture*, as of the Man Himself, and of the *Reflection* of any thing in a glass, as of the thing it self so *reflected*: Thus also we speak of *Brutes*, and their Actions in the Terms of our *own*, because of some semblance, they seem to bear to Reason, but especially to the *Passions*, *Appetites*, and *Sensations* of Men; tho' in the last Instance there is no *Discursive Faculty*, nor are their *Passions*, *Appetites* and *Sensations* connected with *Reason*, as in us: in the other there is only a meer *Resemblance*, that hath no *Substance*, as the *Reflection* of a Face in a Glass, or only a meer *surface* of Light and
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Colours, as in a *Picture*: But in all these Instances we have a true Idea and Apprehension of the Object without *Analogy*, as of a *Man* without seeing a *Picture*, or an *Human Form* reflected in a *Glass*, tho' on the other side without a Previous Idea of a *Man* we could have none of the *Picture* representing *him*: We have also a true Conception of *Reason* without considering the *Instinct* and *Actions* of *Brutes*. Here the *Analogy* descendeth from us to them, we do not learn from them, what *Man* is, but we learn that *Brutes* have some Conformity to *Man* in their *Senses* and *Appetites*, and the *Actions* flowing from them: We learn also that the *Picture* giveth a Likeness, and that the *Glass* reflecteth the *Person*, and every *Motion*, that is practised before it.

But in *Divine* Subjects the Case is exactly the *Reverse*: Here the *Analogy* ascendeth and we fall below the Excellencys of the *Divine* Nature infinitely more, than we excell the *Beasts that perish*, or the *Pictures* and *Images* of our selves, since compared with God we are no more than a *shadow*, and he is in Himself above the Comprehension of Man: Of things belonging to another World we have no proper and direct Ideas, much less can we form any just Conceptions of God, as *He* is in *Himself*, in his *Nature* and *Essence*: For *He* is removed from our Senses, and infinitely beyond the reach of our Intellectual Powers; It is by the *Mediation* of something, we find *Correspondent* in our selves, and the World about us, that we can any ways apprehend *Him*, or form any Conceptions of

Him:

Him; For tho' *He* is infinitely removed from our Senfes, and above our Comprehension, yet all our Conceptions of *Him* are derived Originally from the fame Principles with our Knowledge of all other things, and more immediately from the Operation of our Mind, and the Determination of our Will in all the Methods of Understanding and Action; and particularly from the various Workings of our Thoughts upon all our Simple and Compound *Ideas*, till we substitute thofe *Complex* and *Abstracted* Notions, which we have formed of all Perfection to exprefs fo far as *Finite* Conceptions can, the *Infinite* Perfections of Almighty God.

Thus we conceive of God's *Existence* in *that* of his Creatures: Of his *Eternity* by taking away from *Duration* all Beginning, and extending it without *End*, as when we fay, ^a *The Lord endureth for ever*. But then as we can form no Notion of *Existence* and *Eternity*, but from our Conceptions of *created Existence* and *Time*, and as we cannot feparate a perpetual fucceffion of *Motion* and *Moments* from our Thoughts of *Eternal* Duration, this muft convince us, that whatever Correspondence there is between Divine and created *Existence*, and between *Time* and *Eternity*, *Eternity* and *self Existence* are vastly different from the *Existence* of all things by *Creation* and in *Time*: And as there are no *Parts* and *Succeffion* in *Eternity*, there can be no *Difference* of *Existence*, tho' there be a *Diversity* of *Relations* in the Divine *Effence*.

So likewise we conceive of GOD's *Attributes* in our own Notions of Moral Perfection and Wisdom and Power, and tho' we have properly no *Idea* of pure Spirit, neither of Angels, nor our selves, yet when we come to reflect, and to pursue our Reflections, we shall find, that GOD is a Spirit, a pure intellectual *Agent*, if from no other, and many reasons offer, yet from this alone (and unanswerable it is) that we ourselves are *Intelligent Agents*, and then as from a Consciousness to our selves of our own Actions and the Operations of our own Minds, we form some Notion of a Spirit, we form our Conceptions also of GOD *Himself* in some *similar* Reason, and Proportion, tho' we take this all along into our Consideration, that *He* is *Infinite* and *Incomprehensible*.

There is an *Analogy* and Correspondence more or less in an Uninterrupted Gradation throughout the whole Scale and Order of *created* Being: and all this serveth only in the most Excellent and exalted manner, till from the *lowermost* we rise to the *highest* Link of the Chain, to give us some true Notions, tho' infinitely *Inadequate* of our great Creator's Unconceivable Nature, and Unutterable Perfections.

Thus the *Creature* leadeth us up to the *Creator*: In the Universal *Book* of Nature we read *Him*: and in our own *Minds*, as in a *Mirroure*, we behold *Him*: and if this manner of Thinking and Speaking of *Him* by *Analogy* and the *Substitution* of our Conceptions and Language transferred from their *Primary* signification
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conveyeth and expresseth nothing *Real* concerning the Divine Nature, it is impossible to think or to speak of GOD at all.

But this Rule of *Analogy* will be more clearly understood, when we come,

2. *Secondly* to the Use and Application of it, which I shall propose, as I find it made use of and applied by GOD Himself in the *Scriptures*.

And here we are to consider the several Views, in which He hath presented *Himself* to Mankind, as *at sundry times*, and *in divers manners* He hath discovered *Himself* unto them.

1. In the first place He acquaints us WHO HE IS, and instructeth us in his *Nature* and *Attributes* so far as we are able to apprehend them.

2. In the next place He revealeth *Himself* as to his Dealings and Transactions with the Sons of Men, both in the *Ordinary* way of his *Providence*, and the *Extraordinary* way of their *Redemption*.

1. As to his *Nature* and *Attributes*, it is revealed, That GOD is One, and that He subsisteth in Unity of Essence, and Diversity of Relation: that all his *Attributes*, *Natural* and *Moral*, *Communicable* and *Incommunicable*, are so many infinite Perfections constituting One Divine Essence, and possessed *equally* and *infinitely* by *Each* of the Divine *Relations*.

2. With reference to the Extraordinary way of our Redemption, besides the Early Promises made of a Redeemer, and the frequent Re-

Renewals and Confirmations of it, by declaring first, that ^a *He should be of the Seed of the Woman*: afterwards of the ^b *Seed of Abraham*, and of the ^c *House and Lineage of David*, and that a ^d *Virgin* should bear *Him*: together with the *Time* ^e *When*, and the *Place* ^f *Where*, *He should be born*. It is also revealed, that this *Redeemer* is ^g *Immanuel, GOD with us*: the ^h *Mighty GOD*, the *Everlasting Father*, the *Prince of Peace*: the ⁱ *only Begotten Son*: ^k *One with the Father*: that in the *fulness of Time* this *Son of GOD* was ^l *made Man*, and became our *Saviour* ^m and *Redeemer*: paid the *Price* of our *Redemption* ⁿ with *his Blood*: is now our ^o *Mediator*, and *Intercessor*: the ^p *Head* of his *Church*: ^q *King of Kings*: *Lord of Lords*: and the ^r *Great Judge* of the *World*.

3. With regard to the *Ordinary Course* of *GOD's Providence*, which is *Visible* and *Conspicuous* to all, who consider the *Disposition* and *Distribution* of all *Worldly Happiness* and *Misery* both *public* and *private*; it hath pleased *God* besides this *Natural* and *Visible Evidence* of his *Administration* to reveal unto us, that *He* doth govern the *World*, and superintend

^a Gen. III. 15. ^b XII. 3. XVIII. 18. XXII. 18. ^c 2 Sam. VII. 16. Ps. CXXXII. 11, &c. ^d II. VII. 14. Jer. XXXI. 22. ^e Gen. XLIX. 10. Hagg. II. 6, &c. Mal. III. 1. ^f Mic. V. 2. John VII. 42. ^g II. VII. 14. ^h II. IX. 6, &c. ⁱ Joh. I. 14, 18. ^k John X. 30. ^l Gal. IV. 4. Hebr. II. 14, 16. ^m II. XXIX. 22, &c. XLIII. 1, 2. XLIV. 21, &c. LXII. 11, 12. ⁿ Rom. III. 25. Gal. III. 13, &c. Ephes. I. 7. II. 13, &c. Col. I. 14, 20. Heb. IX. 14, &c. X. 5, &c. 1 Pet. I. 18, 19. Rev. I. 5. V. 9. ^o Isa. LIII. 12. Rom. VIII. 27. Hebr. VII. 25. Gal. III. 19, 20. 1 Tim. II. 5. Hebr. VIII. 6. IX. 15. XII. 24. ^p Eph. I. 22. IV. 15. Col. I. 18. II. 19. ^q Rev. XVII. 14. XIX. 16. ^r Gen. XVIII. 25. John V. 27. Acts X. 42. XVII. 31. 2 Cor. V. 10. 2 Tim. IV. 1.

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the Affairs of it: That *He* inspecteth the Hearts and Actions of Men: that *He* directeth all their Counsels, and disposeth of all Events.

And with regard to *Both* the *Ordinary* and *Extraordinary* Way of his Transactions with us: How He looketh upon us, and what are his Sentiments towards us, as we are his *Creatures* and as we are *Sinners*: as we are *Obedient* or *Disobedient* to his Laws, we find *Him* putting on the *Passions* and *Affections* of our Nature, and taking to *Himself* the *Organs* of our Senses, and the *Members* of our Body.

Upon this Plan it may be proper to consider the *Analogy* of Language in these several Views, that we may mark the several Degrees, as it approacheth nearer, or retireth further from the Divine Nature, till at last it vanisheth away, and is lost in a meer *Figurative* and *Metaphorical* Scheme.

1. As to his *Nature* and *Attributes* it is revealed, that *GOD is One*, that He ever subsisteth in *Unity* of *Essence* and *Diversity* of *Relation*: these are Facts peremptorily asserted in the *Scriptures*, as will hereafter appear, and these Assertions are to be understood in a proper *Analogy* of *Language*, which differeth from the Primary and Literal acceptation of the Words, not with regard to the *Reality* of the things themselves, but only as to our *Conceptions* of them: Thus when it is said, that *Christ* is the *Son* of *GOD*: the *Only Begotten* of the *Father*, with respect both to his *Eternal* and *Temporal* Generation: and when Himself declareth, *I and my Father are One*, signifying both the *Unity* of
Essence,

Essence, and the *Diversity of Relation*, the Expressions are to be understood of the *Truth* and *Reality* of these Facts thus delivered in the Language and Conceptions of Men.

Of the Divine *Unity* we can only form a Conception in Exclusion of all *Plurality* or *Multiplication* of Essence under any *Difference* of *Persons*, or *Diversity* of *Relation*: In all *created* *Unity*, such as rises from *Numbers*, or *Individuals*; we cannot conceive any thing as *One*, but in opposition to, and in supposition of a *Second*, or a *Third*, and we either make the *Unit* the *Beginning*, or the *End* of every *Computation*, altho' truly speaking all imaginable *Numbers* however called by the Name of *one* or *ten*, or *ten thousand*, are no more than an *Aggregation* of so many *Units*, named and distinguished by the *Place*, and *Order*, they severally possess. But in the *Divine* Essence the *Unity* is *Absolute* without any possible *Relation* to *Number*, and God is so *First*, as to admit no *Second*, Nothing *before* Him, and Nothing *after* Him, that is, nothing *Second* or *Like* unto Him: and therefore all Distinction must necessarily be comprised in *one* and the same *Indivisible* and *Indiscernible* Essence, in which nothing of a Different Nature can subsist, and the several *Relations* must consequently be *Eternal*. For so we conceive of the *Divine Unity* in Opposition to every *Number* from the *Simplicity* of his Nature, and the *Infinity* of his Perfections; and if we cannot conceive the Manner, how a *Distinction* of *Persons* doth subsist in the strictest *Unity* of Essence, we can only conclude, that God subsisteth *not*

as we do, and that a *Plurality* of Persons doth not infer a *Plurality* of Essence, and that, however we are forced to borrow our Conceptions of the *Divine* Unity from the best Notions we have of *Numerical* and *Created* Unity, we must nevertheless express this *Unity*, as we do some of his *other* Attributes, or at least the *Affections* of his Attributes in a *Negative* sense, and say that GOD is *One* Being in the most Absolute conception, and in the uttermost Denial of *more* Divine Beings, that is of more Gods than *One*: and so we say, that He is *One* in Denial of all *Plurality*, as we say He is *Infinite* and *Immutable* in *denial* of all *Imperfection*.

The *Unity* the mean while is *Real*, tho' we are not able to express it, but by this borrowed and substituted Language taken from *Created* Being: and yet *Nothing Created*, neither *Body* nor *Spirit*, is or can be in its Essence so *much One*, as GOD is *One*: Not *Body*, For all Bodys suppose *Number* and *Division*, and however any singular *Body* is *One* by *Individuation* so as not to be *another*, yet in the Course and Position of *Numbers* it may be the *fourth* or the *fortieth* as well as the *first*, and the *first* is no more *One* than the *fiftieth*. But GOD is no *Individual*, and properly speaking no *Number*, tho' He be *One*: He is no *Individual*, For an *Individual* is *One* distinguished from *more* of the same *Species*: And He is no *Number*, because He is *Infinite*: He is indeed *Unity* it self; and therefore can be no *Number*; For *Number* of any Denomination is a *Comparative* Term, and the *first* supposes a *second*, or at least a *Possibility* of
a se-

a *second*, as evidently as a *second* supposes a *first*.

As *Body* is not, neither is any created *Spirit* so much *One*, as *God* is *One*: For as to our *Spirits*, besides the Essential Distinction of *Understanding* and *Will*, there are as I have observed, Distinctions in them, which the *Divine* Nature cannot admit of, both in the *Intellectual* and *Moral* Improvements of the *Mind*; and for *Higher* Intelligencys, tho' we have a very imperfect Knowledge of them, yet thus much we may conclude, that as they are created & Finite *Spirits*, there may be Endless Degrees in their Excellencys, and therefore Endless Additions and Improvements to them, and *they* still will be, as we also shall, tho' ever approaching nearer, yet for ever at an *Infinite* Distance from the *Divine* Perfections. *God* Himself (His Essence and Attributes) is Ever *One*, and therefore we may conclude that altho' we have no Notion of the *Divine Unity* but by these borrowed *Analogical* Conceptions, yet by these we cannot define what the *Divine Unity* is in *itself*, much less can we argue from our Notion of *Human* Unity either of *Body* or *Soul*, or *Spirit* separately or joyntly considered, that a *Personal* distinction of *Relations* is inconsistent with it.

In the same way of *Analogy* do we conceive the *Relation* of *Father* and *Son*, as the *Son* is said to be the *Begotten* and the *only Begotten* of the *Father*, with Regard both to his *Temporal* and *Eternal* Generation: The Terms *Father*, *Son*, and *Begotten* are as clear when applied by the *Scripture* to the *Divine*, as when they are used

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for the Ordinary Course of *Human* Generation, and the *Relations* rising from it are as clear, as those among Men: the *Correspondence* also is as *real*, tho' the *Manner* be *different*: On both sides there is an equal *Reality*: a true *Father*, a true *Son*, and a true *Relation*; on both sides a *total* Communication of the *whole* Nature and *Essence*, tho' in *Human* Generation the *Communication* is only *Specific*, whereas in *Divine* it is truly and entirely *Essential*, not parted to *more*, nor *partially* communicated to *One*, but *entirely* and *fully* communicated, as the *Divine* Nature *must* be. With regard to *Creatures* their *Nature* it self is *produced*, and in the *Animal* World the *several* Natures are equally and successively communicated by Propagation to every *Individual* of the same *Species*, and so Finite Beings in their several *Classes* possess the *same* Nature *Separately*: But *Infinite* Being in the *Personal* Communication of the *Nature* will admit of no *Separation* or *Multiplication* of *Essence*: And we may as well expect to be *as* God is in his Nature and Perfections, as to *argue* in a *Strict* and *Literal* Propriety from *Human* Relations to *Divine*, as if the *Father* and *Son* in the *Divine* Nature were as *Distinct* and *Separable* as they are in the *Human*: The *Analogical* Language teacheth us so far, as we can apprehend the *Fact* or thing *revealed*, to form our Conceptions according to the Terms the *Revelation* is expressed in, and to believe in the *Father*, and the *only begotten Son* that the *Relation* is as *Real*, as the *Essence* is *Eternal*. We could form no Notion of the *Divine* Relation, but from a *substituted* Correspondence of the

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Human; and we must rest in the *Reality* and Propriety of the Correspondence, tho' the manner of the Divine Generation is Unconceivable and Incomprehensible, as God Himself.

From the *Eternal*, if we pass now to the *Temporal* Generation, we shall here most visibly and undeniably discern the *Truth* of the *Relation*, and at the same time acknowledge the *Analogy* of the *Expression*, and by seeing how it holdeth in the *Temporal* we shall the better conceive the Propriety of *that* Language when applied to the *Eternal* Generation: For both ways our *Blessed* Lord is the *Only begotten Son of GOD*; and the *Analogy* is made more Evident by the *Intervention* of the *Temporal* Generation, whereby He became the *Son* both of God and *Man*: The Truth and Reality of his Conception and Birth are Evident, and when *Jesus* was *conceived of the Holy Ghost*, or by the *Power* of the *Highest*, He is as properly the *Son* of *Him* by whose *Power* He was *conceived*, as of *Her* of *whom* he was *born*. That He was not conceived in the *Ordinary* Way, this maketh the *Analogy*, and the *Truth* of the *Conception* sheweth the *Reality* of the *Correspondence*: Because He was *miraculously* conceived by the *Power* of the *Highest*, He is therefore the *Son* of *GOD*, because He was *made of a Woman*, He is therefore the *Son* of *Man*. The Answer of the Angel that satisfieth *How this shall be*, satisfieth also, *whose Son* He is: ^a *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the Power of the Highest shall overshadow thee, there-*

^a Luke I. 35.

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fore also that Holy Thing which shall be born of thee,
shall be called the Son of GOD. Accordingly with
respect to the *Temporal* Generation and the
Relation arising from it, St John declareth, ^a *The*
WORD *was made Flesh, and dwelt among us, and*
we beheld his Glory, the Glory as of the Only Begot-
ten Son of GOD; and with respect to the *Eternal*
Generation, and consequently to the *Relation*
rising from it, and the Union of the Natures
which followed after, concerning this *WORD*,
who was made Flesh, he had declared before,
^b *In the Beginning was the WORD, and the WORD*
was with GOD, and the WORD was GOD.

In this manner are deduced the several Points
revealed concerning the *Divine Essence*, *Unity*
and *Relation*, particularly the *Relation* between
the *Father* and the *Son*, founded both in the
Eternal and *Temporal* Generation: by the *First*
of which our *Blessed Lord* is the *Eternal Son*,
ever *One* in the strictest and most inviolable
Unity with the *Father*, and ever *distinguished* by
a *Personal Relation* from *Him*: by the *Second* al-
so He is the *Son of GOD* in *both* Natures *United*,
Equal to the Father as to his *Divine*, and *Inferior*
to the Father as to his *Human Nature*: The same
with respect to *Unity* and *Equality* is to be said
of the *Holy Ghost* likewise, and all our *Con-*
ceptions of *Him*, as *sent by*, and *Proceeding from*
the *Father* and the *Son*, are to be formed ac-
cording to the *Analogy* of that *Language*, in
which they are expressed.

To close this great Article. Of the Great
and Incomprehensible God, considered either
Absolutely in *Himself*, or *Relatively* in the *Per-*
sonal

sonal Distinctions of his Eternal and Indivisible *Essence*, we can conceive of *Him* only by *Analogy*. The Doctrinal Points and Revelation concerning *Him* are to be received according to the obvious sense and Propriety of the Words, in which they are proposed by the *Scriptures*, and that is, Not in a *Figurative*, for then *Nothing* is meant at all: and not in a *Literal*, for we cannot *conceive* of GOD, as of *ourselves*, and therefore in an *Analogical* and *Substituted* sense, because in *that alone* GOD is pleased to speak and accommodate *Himself* to *us*, and by that alone can *we* accommodate our speech and sentiments to *Him*: The Language is as proper, when so applied to express the Correspondent *Relation* and *Personality* in the *Divine* Nature, as it is in its *Primary* Use and Application to signify the same *Relation* among *Men*, and when these Conceptions are *substituted* and *transferred* to the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost*, we understand as *real* a *Generation* and *Relation*, that is, as *real* a *Father*, as *real* a *Son*, and as *real* a *Spirit*, as when the *same* Terms are used of the *Father* and *Son* and *Spirit* of a *Man*; but because there is an Unconceivable and Inexpressible Distance and Difference between the *Creator* and the *Creature*, we do not, as all *Heretics* absurdly do, argue in a *strict* manner from *Human* Relations to *Divine*: The *Relation* we say is *real*: the *Manner* *unconceivable*, and we have no way of *thinking*, or *expressing* our Thoughts, or *understanding* any thing at all concerning these *Mysterious* Points, but by that *Analogy* of Expression, which is founded on a
real

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real Correspondence between *Human* Relations and *Divine*, under those *substituted* Conceptions of *Father* and *Son*, which are used by God *Himself* to convey *this* Doctrine to us. And as in the *Generation* of the *Man Christ Jesus* we must allow a *true* Generation, tho' the Manner be *Transcendent* and *Miraculous*, in the *Eternal* we must allow a *true* Generation also, and because both the *Eternal* and *Temporal* are real, tho' not after the strict and Literal Meaning of *Human* Generation, therefore we understand them according to that real Correspondence which our *Analogical* Conceptions and Language do bear unto them.

2. If we consider the Divine *Essence* as expressed in the *Attributes*, both *Natural* and *Moral*, *Communicable* and *Incommunicable*, we can only conceive them by *Analogy*. *Eternity*, which I have already mentioned, we conceive by *Time* and *Duration*, which represented without Beginning or End, carry the nearest *Analogy* to it: *Omnipotence* by the best Notions we can form of *Natural Power*, accommodated and applied to the Visible *Effects* of *Divine*: *Omniscience* by Universal Knowledge: *Omnipresence* by *Ubiquity* filling all imaginable *Space*, and reaching infinitely *beyond*. If there be any thing *real* in *Time*, in *Power*, in *Knowledge*, and *Bodily Presence*, and in the *Circumscribed Subsistence* of *unbodied Spirits* in their *place*, there is something more real in *Eternity*, *Omnipotence*, *Omniscience* and *Omnipresence*, and the small Proportion on the *side* of *Created* Beings evidenceth the greater Reality on the *side* of the *Creator*; and yet, *weak* as our
Power,

Power, small as our *Knowledge*, confined as our *Presence*, and short as our *Time* is, we must have this similar Conception of *Omnipotence*, *Omniscience*, *Omnipresence* and *Eternity*, or we can have none at all.

If we consider the *Moral*, which are usually called the *Communicable Attributes*, the *Analogy* between the *moral Perfections Human* and *Divine* is generally allowed; and commonly thought to be more evident, and the Resemblance to be like at least in kind, how faint soever it is in degree: and it must be owned that our *Abstracted* Notions of *Holiness* and *Justice*, *Fortitude*, *Goodness* and *Truth*, so far, as they are drawn from the Exemplification of them in God Himself, that is so far, as *He* hath revealed them in his Communications with Mankind, are a fair *Transcript* and a true *Copy* of the *Divine Original*; but if we endeavour to form our Notions of *Moral Perfections* from the *Practice* of Men, or the most perfect *Schemes* of Human *Morality* alone, that were ever produced by the *Heathen World*, we shall find that tho' the *Abstract* or *Doctrinal* Notions are true so far, as they correspond to the same Notions in the *Scripture*, and tho' they were exemplified also uniformly in all their Actions, yet both their *Doctrine* and *Practice* approach no nearer to the *Divine Perfections*, than this short Life doth to *Eternity*, or our *Knowledge* to *Omniscience*: and therefore our Notions of the *Moral Attributes* of God must be understood and expressed in the same *Analogy* of Conceptions and Language with the *Natural*.

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But the Truth is, unless we put a Difference between our *Notions* and our *Practice*, we shall hardly discover any *Analogy* at all between the *Moral* Perfections of God and Man. For want of this Distinction the *Heathen* Poets especially, how sublime *Notions* soever they gave the World of the Majesty and Perfection of their *Gods*, did nevertheless debase their Actions, and make them correspond with the *Vices* rather than the *Frailties* and *Infirmities* of *Men*: We see here the *Defect* of the *Heathen Schemes*, and what poor assistance they had from *their* Reason alone, weak and corrupted as it was, whereby to form any suitable and worthy Thoughts of the Divine Perfections: But as we take in the Assistance of *Revelation*, and find all the *Notions* of *Morality* therein taught agreeable to the strictest and truest *Principles* of *Reason*; as we draw our *Notions* of *Just*, and *Good*, and *True*, from the Transactions of God with Men, and found them on the *Divine Practice*, as well as on the *Principles* of *Reason*, we are sure, that proposing the Divine Example for our Pattern, there is so far a just Correspondence between our Actions of the *same* Denomination, and those of our great Lord and Master, and consequently a just Agreement and Proportion in our *Notions* of *Moral* Virtue both *Human* and *Divine*; But still the best and highest *Notions*, we can frame of them, as they are in God, and are exercised by *Him*, are only *Analogical*, that is, *True*, but *Inadequate*: not *commensurate*, but only *holding* in some *similar* Proportion, and the *Goodness* of

of Men both in *Notion* and *Extent* must fall infinitely short of the *Goodness* of GOD.

But there are several *Virtues* in our *Schemes* of Morality which seem *peculiar to Man*, and several *Dutys* which regard his *sinful* and *fallen* Estate; and all these, tho' they be equally founded in the *Reason* of things, according to the *Nature* and *Condition*, *Relation* and *Circumstances* of Mankind, are not *directly* founded in any *immediate* and *proper* Correspondence with the *Moral* Perfections of GOD: but are *reducatively* to be understood, either, as they are *perfective* of our Nature, or their Contrarys *repugnant* to the Divine Purity, Holiness, and Perfection, and so to the *Eternal Reason* of Things, *which* ever constitutes the *Essential* Difference between *Good* and *Evil*.

As we are *Men*, and as we are *Sinners*, what think we of *Humility*, *Temperance* and *Chastity*? *Humility* we should think belongeth not to the Divine Being, for *He* can never *think more highly of Himself*, than *He* ought to think, and *Pride* can never approach *Him*; and yet from *Him* we may learn the sublimest Notions of *Humility*. ^a *For who is like unto the Lord our GOD, who hath his dwelling so high, and yet humblyeth Himself to behold the Things that are in Heaven and Earth?* And when will ^b *this Mind be in us, which was in Christ Jesus, who being in the Form of GOD, yet took upon Him the Form of a Servant, and became Obedient to Death even the Death of the Cross?* With respect to *this Grace* and *Virtue*, tho' we

^a Psal. CXIII. 5, 6. ^b Phil. II. 5, &c.

find an *Analogy* in the *Divine* Practice, and with respect to the *other Virtues* I mentioned, tho' some *Analogy* in the *Divine Holiness* and *Purity*, yet we cannot imagine *them* to be in *GOD*, as they are in *us*, nor in *Unbodied Spirits* as they are in *us* who have *Bodys* to keep under, and *sensual Appetites* to subdue: In *GOD* they are considered as *Perfections* in opposition to the contrary *Defects*: is *us* as *Dutys* to lead *us*, and *Humility* especialy, as a *Duty* to *Exalt* *us*, to *Perfection*. I will not reason here upon the *Obligation* rising from the *Reason* and *Fitness* of things: With respect to *us*, it is undoubted, exclusive of any *other* Command than *that*, which *GOD* hath given *us* in our very *Frame* and *Constitution*; But I will only observe, that we cannot with any Propriety pretend that *GOD* is *obliged* to be *Humble*, *Temperate* and *Chaste*; And to say that *GOD* is *obliged* to be *Pure* and *Holy*, *Just* and *Good*, is exactly as proper as to say, *He* is *obliged* to *exist*, or to *Be what He is*. His *Attributes* and *Essence* are truly the *same*: And the *Name* He gave Himself, I AM WHAT I AM, is fully expressive of *Both*.

From the very *manner* of our Knowledge we may discover how *little* it is we know of the *Divine* Essence even in his *Moral* Perfections, as they are in themselves, by our *Natural* Light alone: The nearest *Analogys* we bear unto *them*, are vastly distant and unequal, and there are some *Dutys* incumbent upon *us*, that cannot by any direct and immediate Conclusion be considered as *Perfections* in the *Divine* Nature.

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But whatever we know of God either by *Reason* or *Revelation* all our Knowledge is conveyed by *Analogy*, and taketh its immediate Rise from that Resemblance, which is found in the Correspondence and Proportion of things compared together. Our Knowledge of God consisteth in the Correspondence, we find between the Divine *Existence, Attributes* and *Operations*, and those *Notions*, we are able to form of *Existence* from *our selves*, who *feel* that we *are*, and from other *Beings*, whom we *see* to *exist*, together with the *Endowments, Facultys* and *Actions* of all *Intelligent Agents*, both *Angels* and *Men*; and the Mind, if it taketh in *Angels*, seemeth to proceed in this manner. From the Notions and the Consciousness, we have of our own *Existence* as *Intelligent* and *Moral* Beings, we conclude to the Singular *Existence* of *Angels* as *Intelligent* and *Moral* Beings, and when we have ascribed *Natural, Intellectual* and *Moral* Endowments to them in a far more Excellent Degree, than we find them in ourselves, we judge, that there is a true Correspondence between our *Spirits* and *Them*, as they are *Created* Spirits as well as *We*, tho' their *manner* of *Acting*, and *Knowing*, as they are *Pure Unbodied* Spirits, must be *different* from *Ours*: and then because we conceive of God, as a Being infinitely *Perfect* in *Knowledge, Goodness* and *Power*, we conceive the *Knowledge, Goodness* and *Power* of *Angels* carried on to *Infinite* Perfection in God: tho' still we must remember, that, however the *Analogy* holdeth in any Higher *Degrees* between God and *Angels*, these Attributes are in *another*

Man-

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Manner in the *Creator*, than in the most glorious of his *Creatures*: If without this *Gradation* we do immediately *substitute* our own Conceptions of *Knowledge*, *Goodness* and *Power*, such as we can form from *our selves alone*, the Correspondence is still, as *real* according to our Proportion, and lower station in the Intelligent and Moral Scale, as it is between Angels and their great Creator.

So far then as we resemble *GOD being made after his Likeness* in the Intellectual Powers, and Energy of the Mind, and are *created also after his Image in Righteousness, and true Holiness*, there is a true and proper *Analogy of Language*, both in *Name* and *Thing*, between the *Intellectual* Facultys of *Man*, and the *Correspondent* Perfections in the *Divine* Nature, as also between the *Moral* Perfections belonging to *Man*, and the *Correspondent* Attributes of *GOD*: and however *weak* and *imperfect* our *Knowledge*, *Goodness* and *Powers* are, we argue with all *Veneration* to the *greater* and most *transcendent Reality*, and *Perfection* of them in the *Divine Being*; and we should even strive to *realize them* more and more in our selves, since we are taught, that the very Perfection of our Nature consisteth in imitating the Excellency of the Divine Original, and improving into a *nearer*, and more *Seraphic* Resemblance of it for ever.

Before I leave this Subject of the *Divine Essence, Relations* and *Attributes*, I would offer something more by way of *recapitulation*, and *Remark* on what I have delivered, and *apply* it to the *Argument* we are upon.

It hath been the constant Method of all the *Adversarys* of the *Christian* Faith to oppose the several great *Articles* of it, either by a meer *Figurative* Interpretation on the *one* Hand, or a strict *Literal* Construction on the *other* so, as to argue in a *strict Literal* sense from *Human* Subjects to *Divine*. The Question is, *How* the several Assertions concerning the *Divine Nature, Relations* and *Attributes* are to be understood? The *Nature* and *Attributes* are indeed the *same*, and there is no *Diversity*, but of *Relation* alone in the *Divine Essence*: only for our more distinct Apprehension, and orderly proceeding, we generally consider the *Nature* and *Attributes* in a several Distribution, and the *Attributes* we commonly divide into *Communicable* and *Incommunicable*: and because we can understand nothing of the *Divine Essence*, but by the *Attributes*, as we know nothing of created *Essences*, but by their *Property*s, we are to consider in *what* way we are to understand the *Attributes*, because in the *same* way we must understand whatever else is revealed concerning the *Divine Essence* and *Operations*.

Of the *Incommunicable* Attributes it is agreed, that we have no *proper, direct* and *adequate* Conceptions, and yet we must acknowledge, that the Conceptions, we have, do represent unto us in some Correspondent manner, the *Truth* and *Reality* of the Things conceived: Of the *Communicable* some have contended, that we have more *proper, direct* and *adequate* Conceptions, and that *Goodness*, and *Truth*, and *Justice* in God are the *same*, that they are in *us*: They
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are *answerable* indeed to the *same* moral Characters in *Men* so far, as to give us just Apprehensions of them, and teach us to practise them towards each other, as we find them exemplified in the *Divine* Exercise of them towards us. But when we come to consider it more attentively, we shall find, that our Conceptions of Them are as *inadequate*, as our Conceptions of his *Incommunicable* Attributes: we have no more *adequate* a Notion of his *Justice*, than of his *Power*; nor of his *Goodness*, than of his *Knowledge*; nor of his *Truth*, than we have of his *Presence*: It will therefore be absurd to suppose that these *Attributes* are in God, as they are in *Men*, and that *they* are exercised by *Him*, as *they* are by *us*: In God *they* are all *Essential*: in *Men* they are *Habitual* or acquired: in God *they* are Infinite in their *Perfection*, *Duration* and *Extent*: in *Men* *imperfect*; *Momentary*, and *confined* as to our *Obligation* and the *Practice* of them in this *Life*; and but few of our *Moral* Dutys will pass the *Verge* of this World: The present *Relations* and *Circumstances*, we stand in, do sink with our Lives, and we shall leave the whole *Decalogue*, as it is in its *present* Form, behind us: Nothing will pass with us into Heaven but *Holiness* and *Purity*, but *Love* and *Charity*: even *Faith* and *Hope*, those *Evangelical* *Graces*, shall determine there, and therefore the ^a*greatest of these is Charity*. So *short* and *inadequate* are our Notions, so *different* is the *Exercise* of these Perfections in *Heaven* and on *Earth*! far more

different between GOD and *us*! and tho' the *Scriptures* give us clearer and fuller Conceptions, than we could form from our own *Abstracted* Reasonings alone, yet even those glorious Manifestations of *them* therein recorded, are only a small *specimen* compared with the brighter Manifestations to numberless Worlds, and *Myriads* of higher Intelligencys in *manifold* Degrees one superior to another, and the *lowest* of them vastly superior to the *largest* Spirit that ever informed an Human Body!

Since then it is not pretended, that we have *proper* and *adequate* Conceptions of the *Incommunicable* Attributes of *Eternity*, *Omnipotence*, *Omniscience*, *Omnipresence*, we cannot understand them *literally* according to the Notions of *Time* and *Power*, and *Knowledge* and *Bodily Presence*, nor yet can we understand them in a *Figurative* sense alone, as if they were only so many *Schemes* and *Forms* of Speech, it remaineth therefore, that we understand them in an *intermediate* sense according to that *Correspondence* and *Proportion*, which *Human* Conceptions can any ways bear to *Divine* Perfection: In the *same* way also the *Communicable* and *Moral* Attributes are to be understood, as they are all *Infinite*, *Eternal*, and *Unconceivable* in any *other*, and then from the confessed Correspondence between our *Abstract* and most Sublime Notions of *Goodness* we form our Conceptions of the *Goodness* of GOD in some *similar* Proportion and Correspondence; and how *inadequate* soever our Conceptions are, the Correspondence is *real*, or we can have *no* Notions of *real* Good-

242 *conceived the same way.* Of
ness either in GOD, or *our selves*. When we speak
of GOD, or when GOD speaketh of *Himself*,
He speaketh according to this *Analogy*, and He
ever communicates *Himself* in such *Conceptions*,
and such *Language*, as we are able to under-
stand: As in *Human* subjects there must be
some thing real to which any *Figurative Mode*
of Speech can be *applied*, in *Divine* subjects also,
something *real* must be conceived, before any
Figurative Forms of Speech can be used about
them. Thus we are supposed to have previous
Conceptions of the *Power* and *Providence*, and
Wisdom, and *Goodness* of GOD, before we can
understand what is *Figuratively* spoken concern-
ing the *Exercise* and *Manifestation* of these *At-
tributes*; For *Figures* do not *furnish* us with
Knowledge, but *suppose it*: *Figures* themselves
without their *Subject* convey no *Idea* or *Conception*
to the Mind, and a *Metaphor* is no further *signi-
ficate*, that it is *fitly* applied.

I pass now from his *Nature* and *Attributes*,

2. To the *Revelation* GOD hath made of
Himself with reference to the *Extraordinary*
Way of our *Redemption*.

Upon this Head I might be the shorter, having
already spoken of the *Person* of our *Redeemer*,
and the *Relation*, He standeth in *both* as to his
Eternal and *Temporal* Generation; but the Do-
ctrine of our *Redemption* in this view of *Analogy*
will require a peculiar Consideration.

According to the *Texts* before Referred to
with regard to the *Person* of our *Redeemer*, it is
revealed in the seventh Chapter of *Isaiah* That
He is Immanuel GOD with us, and as if the Pro-
phesy

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phesy were even then compleated, the *Prophet* in his ninth Chapter speaking of this Future Event proclaimeth, *Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given*; This Manner of speaking so frequent in the Prophecys, those relating to the *Messiah* especially, is highly proper in the Spirit of God, to ^a*whose Eyes all things are open*, to whom all things are present, ^b*who calleth those things, that be not, as though they were*. The Circumstances also of his *Birth*, his *Life* and his *Death*, and all that He should *do* and *suffer* for for us, his *Satisfaction*, *Mediation*, and *Intercession* are severally foretold in the *Old Testament*, and related and asserted as *Facts* in the *New*.

What therefore I would observe concerning the *Prophecys* is *this*, that howsoever *some* of them are delivered in *Figurative* and *Emblematical* Forms, they were all *literally* fulfilled, and our *Blessed Lord* is not only in a *real* and *Analogical* sense the *Son* of the *Father* by an *Eternal* Generation before the Worlds, and not only in the *same Analogical* sense the *Son* of the *Father* by *Temporal* Generation born in the World, but *He* is *Literally* also the *Son of Man* on the part of the *Virgin*, who bare *Him*, and his *Birth* and *all* that followeth upon it are so many *Historical Facts* to be understood as *Literally* as any other History is, notwithstanding that some part of the Relation of what *He* hath *done* and continueth to *do* for our *Salvation*, is to be taken according to our *Analogical* Conceptions correspondent to the *Terms*, in which they are

^a Hebr. IV. 3. ^b Rom. IV. 17.

244 *Analogical in Conception.*

expressed: That He was born, that He lived in the ordinary way of other Men, that *He went about doing Good*, and did many Wonderful Works: That *He suffered, died, was buried, and rose again the third day*, are *Facts* to be *Literally* understood *without* any *Analogical* Conception: That He is our *Redeemer*, our *Mediator*, and *Intercessor*, are also *Facts* as surely to be *believed*, but by reason of the Correspondence between *Temporal* and *Spiritual Redemption Mediation* and *Intercession* to be *Analogically* understood: the *Analogy* affecteth not the *Reality* of the *Facts*, it regardeth only the *Manner* of our *Conceptions*, and the *Expressions* answerable to *such* Conceptions. From hence we may infer according to the Observation, I have offered, that what is *Figuratively* expressed in the *Prophecy* is *Literally* or at least *Analogically* to be understood in the *Fact* and Completion: *Literally*, where the *Fact* answereth both in *Matter* and *Manner* to the *same* among Men; *Analogically*, where the *Fact* is of the *same* Denomination, but not after the *same* Manner, and is yet called by the *same* Name, and expressed in the *same* Terms by reason of the *Correspondence* that is *between* them; as when God setteth forth things *Spiritual*, *Supernatural* and *Divine* in the *Common Language* and *Conceptions* of Men substituted to convey, and express them to us.

With regard then to the *Prophecys*, those things which are *Figuratively* foretold, are to be understood *Literally* in the Application, and *Literally* or *Analogically* in our Conceptions as they are of a *Temporal* or *Spiritual* Nature. Those
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that are *plain* (as many of them are) will direct us to the Meaning of those, that are *Figurative*, and both the *Promises* and *Prophecys* pointing out the *Person* of our *Redeemer*, are many of them so far *Literal* as to determine the sense of those, that are only *Typical*, and whatever *Doubts* may arise from those Schemes of Speech, in which the *Prophecys* and *Promises* are given, these are all cleared up by the Application and Accomplishment of them: For however they may be expressed, the Completion of them is exactly *Literal* in Opposition to all *Allusive* and *Allegorical* Interpretations. For tho' St Paul speaking of the two Sons of *Abraham*: ^a *One by a bond Maid, the other by a free Woman*, calleth these things an *Allegory*, yet such are not the *Prophecys* relating to our LORD: *Allegorys* are built on real or invented *Facts*, and applied like other *Apologues* for Instruction; but *Prophecys* point to future Events, and end in *Facts* hereafter to be done: There is no part of History, but like the History of our *Saviour* and his *Miracles*, it may be turned into *Allegory*: yet the *Allegory* destroyeth not but supposeth the *Fact* already past; as *Prophecy* however *figuratively* expressed, is not merely a *Visionary* representation, but an *Indication* and *Description* of what shall come to pass *Hereafter*: and there is no Pretence to argue for a *Figurative* sense of those *Prophecys*, which have been *Literally* fulfilled.

Thus with respect to the *Literal* or *Analogical* sense according to the *Nature* and *Subject* of the *Prophecy*, when we read, that a ^b *Virgin shall con-*

^a Gal. IV. 22, 24. ^b Isa. VII, IX.

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ceive and bear a Son, and that unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and when for the Completion, we hear the *Angel* proclaiming the *Birth* of *this* Child to the *Shepherds*, ^a *Unto you is born this Day in the City of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord*, we are at no loss to understand, *who* is meant by the *Scepter* and the *Star*: the *Root* and the *Branch*, and the *Horn of Salvation*, especially when we hear *Zecharias* declare, that ^b *GOD hath raised up for us an Horn of Salvation in the House of his servant David*: and our Blessed Lord Himself asserting, ^c *I am the Root and Offspring of David, and the bright and Morning Star*. If there was any Difficulty to understand *Who* is meant by the *Seed of the Woman*, the *Seed of Abraham*, and the *Seed of David*, this is fixed and ascertained, when we read, that ^d *when the Fulness of Time was come GOD sent forth his Son made of a Woman*, that is made Man, and deriving his Human Nature from the Woman, of whom He was made; ^e *Forasmuch then as the Children are partakers of Flesh and Blood, He also took part of the same*: ^f *For verily He took not on Him the Nature of Angels, but He took on Him the Seed of Abraham*, and so genuine is the *Descent*, that thro' *Christ* the *Adoption*, and the other Privileges of it are derived to us, ^g *And if we be Christ's, then are we Abraham's Seed, and Heirs according to the Promise*: His *Descent* from *Abraham* is further manifested by His *Descent* from *David*, and as it was both *promised*,

^a Luke II. 11. ^b Luke I. 69. ^c Rey XXII. 16. ^d Gal. IV. 4. ^e Hebr. II. 14. ^f v. 16. ^g Gal. III. 29.

CHRIST *the Son of David.* 247

and *propheſied*, that *Chriſt* ſhould be *the Son of David*, the *Jews* underſtood both the *Promiſes* and the *Prophecys* in a proper *Literal* true *Perſonal* ſenſe, and accordingly, when our Bleſſed Lord asked, ^a*What think ye of Chriſt? Whoſe Son is He?* They ſay unto Him, *The Son of David*; and tho' He alloweth the *Answer* to be true, yet He propoſeth a *Difficulty* for them to ſolve; *If He be David's Son, how then doth David in Spirit call Him Lord? if David then call Him Lord, how is He his Son?* ^b*How ſay the Scribes, that the Chriſt is the Son of David?* ^c*How ſay they that the Chriſt is David's Son.* The *Answer* to theſe *Questions* will neceſſarily ſhew the *Divine Eſſence* and *Eternal Generation*, and alſo the *Temporal Generation* and *Human Nature* of the *Son*. It is with regard to the *Fiſt*, that *David calleth Him Lord*: It is with reference to the *Second*, that *He is his Son*. This was the *Doctrine* of the *Jewiſh Church* long before, and continued to be ſo at the *time* of our *Saviour's Coming*, both among the *Common People* and the *Scribes*. For ſo ſaid ^dthe *Scribes*, and thus the *two blind men* cry out ^e*Thou Son of David have mercy on us*. And upon his healing the *poſſeſſed* of the *Devil* both *blind* and *dumb*, the *People* were amazed and ſaid, ^f*Is not this the Son of David*: In *St John* we read, that there was a *Contention* among the *People* whether He were the *Chriſt*? ^g*For many of the People ſaid, Of a Truth this is the Prophet*: Others ſaid, *This is the Chriſt*: But ſome ſaid, *Shall*

^a Matth. XXII. 42, 45. ^b Mark XII. 35. ^c Luke XX. 41.
^d See above. ^e Mat. IX. 27. ^f XII. 23. ^g John VII. 40, &c.

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Christ come out of Galilee? Hath not the Scripture said, that Christ cometh of the Seed of David, and out of the Town of Bethlehem, where David was? And thus also the Multitudes cryed, ^a Hosanna to the Son of David. As the Jews expected Him, so the Apostles declared Him to be of the Seed of David. Thus St Peter in his first Sermon to the Jews, applying the Words of the sixteenth Psalm to the Resurrection of our Lord, sheweth that David so intended them, and upon what ground he spoke them. ^b Therefore being a Prophet, and knowing that GOD had sworn with an Oath unto him, that of the Fruit of his Loins according to the Flesh, He would raise up Christ to sit on his Throne, he seeing this before spake of the Resurrection of Christ: Afterwards St Paul, preaching to the Jews of Antioch in Pisidia, deduceth their History in few Words, from their Coming out of Egypt unto David, and declareth unto them, ^c Of this Man's Seed hath GOD according to his Promise raised unto Israel a Saviour Jesus; and the Promise he refers to is particularly this, ^d I will give you the sure Mercys of David. Again in the first Chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, speaking of the Gospel, which God had before declared unto the World by his Prophets in the Holy Scriptures, telleth them, this Gospel of GOD was ^e concerning his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the Seed of David according to the Flesh, and declared to be the Son of GOD with Power according to the Spirit of Holiness by the Re-

^a Mat. XXI. 9. ^b Acts II. 30. ^c Acts XIII. 23. ^d v. 34.
^e Rom I. 1, 2, 3.

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urrection from the Dead. And in his second Epistle he chargeth *Timothy* to ^aremember that *Jesus Christ of the Seed of David* was raised from the Dead. Upon all which passages I would observe, that the *Apostles* *St Peter*, and *St Paul*, do constantly connect this Declaration with the *Resurrection of Christ*, as if the *Resurrection* were not only a Proof, that He was of the *Seed of David*, but as if his being of the *Seed of David* were also an Assurance and Proof of his *Resurrection* according to the Promise of God just now mentioned, *I will give you the sure Mercies of David.*

Where therefore the *Promises* are *Typical* and the *Prophecys* are *Figurative*, they both refer to a *real* Person, and to *real* Facts, as there must in all Cases be a *Subject* supposed, to which any *Types* or *Figures* can be applied. For every *Type* is a *Type of something*, and every *Figure* is of the Nature of a *Prædicate* in a *Proposition*, or of a *Verb*, or *Adjective* in a *Sentence*, or if sometimes the *Nouns* themselves be *Figurative*, then they are *Metonymys* of one Division or other; as the *Scepter* and *Star* stand for the *Kingdom*, the *Power* and the *Glory*, and these again for the *King* Himself: So that altho' in a *Literal* sense our Blessed Lord is neither a *Scepter* nor a *Star*, yet the *Scepter* is an *Ensign* of his *Royalty*, and the *Star* of his *Glory*; the *Sign* is only used for the thing *signified* thereby, and these *Types* and *Figures* are as properly applied to *those* Things, and Persons, which are *Analogically* conceived, as to *those*, which are *Literally* understood.

250 *Titles and Offices of our Lord*

If from the *Prophecys* we pass on to the *Titles* and *Offices* of our Lord, as they are *Historically* related, and *Doctrinally* delivered in the *New Testament*, we shall find, that as the *Character* riseth from the *Office*, or the *Offices* follow upon the *Character*, both his *Actions* and his *Titles* are *Real* and *True*, if not in a *Literal*, at least in an *Analogical* sense in Opposition to all *Figurative* and *Metaphorical* Interpretations: In a *Literal* sense He may be called a *King*: in an *Analogical* sense the *Head of the^a Church, which is his Body*, for there is the same Agreement between a *Mystical*, as there is between a *Political* and a *Natural* Body.

But without insisting on *all*, I shall consider Him under those *Ministerial* Titles especially, which are given Him, as He is our *Saviour*, and do more immediately flow from the *Offices*, He dischargeth, and hath discharged under *that* Denomination. These are the several *Titles* of *Redeemer*, *Mediator*, and *Intercessor*, in the several *Acts* of *Redemption*, *Mediation*, and *Intercession*, as they are represented to have been wrought, and to be still performed by Him.

And first we may consider our Lord under the Title and Character of our *Redeemer* *promised* from the *Foundation of the World*: *typified* and *foretold* in all Ages thro' the *Patriarchal* and *Mosaic* Dispensations, and in the *Fulness of Time* *Coming* into the World, and *Finishing* the great Work, He had undertaken.

^a Ephes. I 22, 23.

It is not my Purpose to enter into the Argument it self with those who deny this gracious Doctrine, but only to shew in *what sense* it is to be understood: *viz.* not *Figuratively*, or *Allegorically*, but *Literaly*, and *Analogically* in several respects, So that our *Redemption*, which is an *Analogical* Conception, is as *real*, as that *Misery*, which is *Literaly* everlasting: And our *Reconciliation*, as our *Sins*, which are *Literaly* most grievous Offences: We are not delivered from a *Figurative* Death, neither are we cleansed from *imaginary* Transgressions, and if any *Figurative* Expressions are used they are not intended to attenuate and rarifie these important and weighty Truths into Air, but to express and describe more strongly the greatness and Aggravation of our *Guilt* and *Misery*, and the *Goodness* and *Severity* of God.

For the Doctrine it self the whole is a *Matter of Revelation* and *Fact*, and cannot be argued by *Reason* any further than *Reason* concurrerth with the plain *Facts* and Doctrines of *Revelation*: We commonly express this Doctrine of *Redemption* by that of *Satisfaction*; It is true, the *Word* it self is not a *Scripture Term*, but the sense and meaning of it is fully contained in the *Scriptures*, and the *Enemys* of our *Faith* do not deny the Doctrine of *Christ's Satisfaction*, because it is not a *Scriptural Term*; but because they deny that *Christ* did bear our Iniquitys, that He suffered for us, and offered Himself a Sacrifice for our Sins; they deny, tho' Himself saith it, that ^a *He came to give his Life a Ransom for Many*,

^a Matt. XX. 28.

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and tho' St Paul testifieth, ^a *that he gave Himself a Ransom for all*, and that He *paid the Price and redeemed us with his Blood, and reconciled us unto GOD.** All these are *Scripture Doctrines*, ex-

^a 1 Tim. II. 6. * Without entering into a Length of Argument, it is enough to produce those Scriptures, which deliver this Doctrine in the strongest Terms: and there needeth no other Confutation of their forced and languid Expositions: That our Blessed Lord was ordained to this Work, and undertook it with his own free Consent we are first informed by Gen. III. 15. our Lord Himself being then appointed Judge, and acting also as Mediator between GOD and Man, and all the Promises of a Saviour and of Redemption by Him are to the same Effect, and need not be recited at large. The Ordainment of Him to this Office we may find in Isaiah XLII. 1 to the seventh verse: 1 Cor. II. 7. more clearly Hebr. V. 4, 5, 6. [And no Man taketh this Honour unto himself, but he that is called of GOD, as was Aaron: So also, Christ glorified not Himself to be made an High-priest; but He, that said unto Him, Thou art my Son — Thou art a Priest for ever after the Order of Melchisedec. ver. 10. Called of GOD an High-priest after the Order of Melchisedec:] His own Willingness is expressed in these pathetic Words Luke XII. 50. [I have a Baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitned, till it be accomplished!] John VI. 51. [and the Bread that I will give is my Flesh, which I will give for the Life of the World.] X. 17, 18. [Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my Life, that I might take it again. No Man taketh it from me; but I lay it down of my self: I have power to lay it down, and I have Power to take it again.] And *Both*: the *Ordainment* of GOD, and his own *Willingness* in Psal. XL. 6, &c. applied Hebr. X. 5, &c. to which being long to transcribe I refer. More Authoritys might be produced, but these are sufficient.

In the next place that *He* took upon Himself, and GOD laid on Him the Iniquitys of us all: we may consult Isaiah LIII. applied to Bodily Diseases by St Matthew VIII. 17. and to Spiritual by St Peter 1 Epist. II. 24. [Who his own self bare our Sins in his own Body on the Tree] (a) That He offered Himself a Sacrifice for the whole World, and (b) redeemed us unto GOD by his Blood the following passages will show: (a) John I. 29. [Behold the Lamb of GOD, which taketh away the Sins of the World.] Rom. IV. 25. [Who was delivered for our Offences.] V. 6 — to 12. 1 Cor. XV. 3. we have the Apostle's exprefs Authority for the Doctrine of the Church. [For I delivered unto you first of all, that which I also received, how that Christ died for our Sins according to the Scriptures.] 2 Cor. V. 14, 21. 1 Cor. V. 7. Gal.

pressed in the clearest Terms, and amount to this, That by his *Death* He *satisfied* or made *Satisfaction* for the *Sins* of the whole World: whereas the *Adversarys* deny any *Vicarial* suffering, any *Expiation*, and make the *Sacrifice* no more than a *Memorial* that *GOD is a Propitious Being*, and of his *Hatred to Sin*: It should rather be a *Memorial* of the *Propitiation*, if any thing could be a *Memorial* of it self; but *Propitiation* they deny, and contradict the whole Tenour of the *Scriptures* upon this Head, by

I. 4. Eph. V. 2, 25. Tit. II. 14. Hebr. II. 10, to v. 18. VII. 27. X. 12. 1 Pet. III. 18. 1 John II. 2. III. 16. From all which places we may collect the true Scripture Doctrine in Scripture Terms according to the true and obvious meaning of the Words, [That Christ hath given Himself for us an Offering and a Sacrifice to GOD: That he laid down his Life for us, and that He is the Propitiation for our Sins, and not for ours only, but also for the Sins of the whole World.]

(b) That He redeemed us unto GOD by his Blood. Mat. XXVI. 28. Mark XIV. 24. Luke XXII. 20. Acts VIII. 32, &c. XX. 28. [— to feed the Church of GOD, which He hath purchased with his own Blood:] Rom. III. 24, 25. [Being justified freely by his Grace through the Redemption that is in Jesus Christ, Whom GOD hath set forth to be a Propitiation through Faith in his Blood.] Eph. I. 7. [In whom we have Redemption through his Blood, even the Forgiveness of Sins. 20. Having made Peace through the Blood of his Cross.] 1 Theff. I. 10. Hebr. IX. 11, &c. [But Christ being come an High-priest of good Things to come &c. by his own Blood he entered in once into the Holy place, having obtained Eternal Redemption for us. For if the Blood of Bulls &c. — How much more shall the Blood of Christ, who through the Eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to GOD, purge your Conscience from dead Works to serve the Living GOD? And for this Cause He is the Mediator of the New Testament:] 26. [But now once in the End of the World hath He appeared to put away Sin by the Sacrifice of Himself. X. 5 — 10, 19, 29. 1 Pet. I. 18, 19. cited before. 1 John I. 7. [the Blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all Sin.] V. 6, 8. Rev. I. 5. [washed us from our Sins in his own Blood.] V. 9. [Hast redeemed us to GOD by thy Blood.] VII. 14.]

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turning the plain and obvious sense of the Words to a *different*, or to *no* Meaning at all.

As to the Pretence, that GOD being *Propitious* needeth not to be *propitiated*, I will only say, that GOD is *Propitious* as He is all *Love* and *Benevolence* in his Nature: and this Infinite *Love* inclined Him immediately to have Mercy upon *fallen* Man, and to *seek* and *admit* a *Satisfaction* to his *Justice*; But there is *another* Love, and that is the *Love* of *Union* and *Friendship*, which we had *broken* and *forfeited* by our Transgression; and to *reunite* us, and *restore* us to *this* Love, there was a *Necessity* of a *Propitiation*, whereby, when we were *Enemys*, we might be *reconciled* unto GOD: That this was effected by our *Saviour's* making an *Atonement* for our *Sins* by his *Blood*, the *Scriptures* cited and referred to abundantly declare: Upon this ground it is, that with respect to the *Essential* Love and Benevolence of GOD, we are said to be ^a *justified freely by his Grace, thro' the Redemption that is in Christ, whom GOD hath set forth to be a Propitiation through Faith in his Blood*: and thus St *John* also teacheth us: ^b *Herein is Love, not that we loved GOD, but that He loved us, and sent his Son to be a Propitiation for our Sins.*

To dispute either about the *Nature* or *Necessity* of the *Satisfaction* required, when there is Nothing to be objected, as *inconsistent* with the *Justice*, *Goodness* or *Mercy* of GOD, is only to raise *precarious* Suppositions against *positive* Assertions, and under a pretence of vindicating

^a Rom. III 24, 25. ^b 1 John IV. 10.

the Divine Honour to *charge* GOD both *foolishly* and *blasphemously* together. *Reason* can discover *Inconsistencys* in Subjects within its own Comprehension, but every thing is not an *Inconsistency*, which we are not able to account for by our *Reason*, and for the great Work of our *Redemption*, how *Incomprehensible* soever *other* Articles are, if we were to try *it* as stated in the *Scriptures*, by the Verdict of our *Reason* alone, the *Doctrine* would stand for ever *acquitted* of all *Objections*. Tho' *Reason* could not discover the *Method*, it can discern both the *Efficacy* and *Justice* of *it*, now *it* is displayed and accomplished in all *its* Parts. After *Man* had offended, it could hardly be a Question, whether any *Satisfaction* or Reparation at all were necessary, and yet if *Reason* could not resolve the *Necessity*, much less is *Reason* able to define *what* Reparation is *sufficient*, and in *what* manner it is to be made. What sheweth the *Necessity* of any *Reparation* sheweth the *Necessity* of *this*, that was made, and *Reason* must assent, since *this* was required, that *no Less* would have *sufficed*.

If GOD be *obliged* (as these Men say He is) to act according to the *Reason* and *Fitness* of *Things* as a Law *External* and *Independent* of Him, and *Previous* to Him, He is consequently obliged to act according to *Justice* as well as *Mercy*, and to preserve *both* these Attributes, as well as the *rest* Inviolable: If Regard then is to be had to his *Justice*, *Reason* must conclude for the *Necessity* of some *Satisfaction*, and because *it costeth more to redeem a Soul*, and no *Man* can by any means *redeem his Brother*, nor give to

GOD

256 *Not of Arbitr. Appointment.*

GOD a *Ransom* for him, some other *Ransom* must be found: since this is the Case, and this World will not afford a *Ransom* or *Atonement* for our *Sins*, we must leave it to GOD both for the *Nature* and *Value* of it; and when we behold the *Ransom* set forth in the *Scriptures*, and consider with what *Solemnity*, *Order* and *Distinction*, the *Promise*, the *Types* and *Completion* of it have been conducted, we may conclude, that no *other* than *This*, and that *This* in no *other* manner could have availed: It is made a Question, whether *this* be of GOD's *arbitrary* Appointment alone, and it is asserted that *it* draweth all its *Efficacy* from the *sole* appointment of GOD: It is more proper to consider whether *it* doth not *rise* from the *Nature* of *Sin*, and from the *Perfections* of GOD; which require not only the *Appointment* of a *Sacrifice*, but the *Sufficiency* of *it* also: if the Prevalence were owing meerly to GOD's *Appointment* alone, a *Lesser*, or *Lower* Sacrifice might have prevailed; but if besides the *Appointment* of GOD, there be also an *Inherent* and *Essential* Excellency in the *Sacrifice* it self, we may well conclude, that no *less* nor *meaner* could have *satisfied*.

The *Necessity* may be also argued from the *Value* of the Satisfaction, because as without a *Necessity* none had been required, without the *highest* Necessity so great a *One* had not been ordained. It is not therefore of *Arbitrary* Appointment, because then a *less* or *another* might have sufficed, nor had the *Eternal* Son engaged to make *it*, if *it* could have been made any *other* way: It was of *Free Grace* in the *Father* to ad-
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mit, and in the *Son* to undertake this great work of *Redemption*, but the *manner* of doing it must be suitable to the Divine *Justice* and *Mercy*; The Divine *Mercy* disposeth God to accept of a *Satisfaction* to his *Justice*; as soon as this was resolved on, the *Declaration* and *Effects* of the Divine *Mercy* appeared, and in view of the *Atonement* to be made, God was already *Propitious* to pardon and to receive Mankind to his *Grace* and *Favour*. One offering was *sufficient*, He was ordained from the *Foundation*, but now once in the *End of the World* hath He appeared to put away Sin by the sacrifice of Himself. This *Work* was of such a nature that no *Created Being* durst undertake it, or could *sustain* it, or could *merit* so highly by it: The *Merit* rose not from the *Acceptance* of God alone, but from the *Dignity* and *Perfection* of the *Sufferer*. As *Man* had *sinned*, *Man* was to *satisfie*: as God was *offended*, God also was to be *appeased*. This, as it appeareth, no One could effect but the Eternal *SON*, and He no other way, than by taking the *Nature*, that had *offended*, upon Him; and so *suffering* in the *Nature* that had *sinned* He derived a *Value* and *Merit* upon his *Sufferings* from the *Perfection* of his *Obedience*, and the *Divinity* of his *Person*. To reconcile Heaven and Earth both *Natures* are joined in his *Person*: And whatever stress seemeth to be laid upon it, that it is said, we are *reconciled* unto God, but no where in the *Scriptures*, that God is *reconciled* unto us, this is no other, how grave and serious soever it soundeth, than a tedious and empty *Cavil*, and a poor impertinent *Quibble*. Where it is said that

258 *Reconciliation Mutual,*

we are *reconciled* unto GOD, the *Reconciliation* is *reciprocal*, and *one* manifestly implieth the *other*: Indeed the Expression is *stronger*, that *we* are *reconciled* unto GOD, for *we* are the *Offenders*, and the *Reconciliation* is properly of the ^a*Offended* to the *Offender*, and unless GOD were *reconciled* unto us, we could never be said to be *reconciled* unto GOD: It is not supposed that *we* were *offended* with GOD and were pleased to restore *Him* to our Favour: This is a sense too *insolent* and *Ridiculous*: We are *Offenders* against Him, and had forfeited his Favour, and were at *Enmity* with GOD; when the *Enmity* was removed, we were *reconciled* unto Him, and his *Reconciliation* to us is wrought by the Method He took to *reconcile* us to Himself. If this be the proper sense of the Words, that the *Offending Party* should be *reconciled* to the *Party Offended*, before the *Party Offended* can be said to be *reconciled* to the *Offender*, there is *indeed* a Material Difference in the two Forms of Expression, and such, as shews the *Necessity* of a *Reconciliation* to be made for us, before GOD will be *reconciled* unto *us*: And as *we* have Nothing of *ourselves*, whereby we can *reconcile ourselves to our Master*, Some Other must work this

^a See 1 Sam. XXIX. 4. For tho' David had not really offended *Saul*, yet He was looked upon as the Offender. Matth. V. 23. It is not, if *thou* have ought against thy Brother, but, if *thou* remembrest that thy Brother have ought against thee — first be reconciled to thy Brother — Rom. V. 10. — if when ye were *Enemys*, ye were reconciled unto GOD, that is, *Offenders*, for so only are we *Enemys*. 1 Cor. VII. 11. The same Instances will shew also, that according to Natural Order and Decency the *Reconciliation* is properly expressed of the *Inferior* to their *Superior*,

Twofold. Our Acceptance 259

Reconciliation for us; The Words in ordinary Use and Acceptation are applied to the *Reconciliation* of *Inferiours* to their *Superiours*, and in common Sense and Construction, when *we* are said to be *reconciled* unto GOD, it is not *our* taking Him into Ours, but his taking us into *his Favour*, that is to be understood.

There is indeed a *twofold* Reconciliation, but not in the *sense* our *Adversarys* would obtrude: *One* is the *Reconciliation* effected by *Christ*, and ascribed both to the *Father* and the *Son*: To the *Father*, as when St Paul teacheth, ^a *All things are of GOD, who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ*: and that GOD was in *Christ* reconciling the *World* unto *Himself*: To the *Son*, Who ^b *hath reconciled both Jew and Gentile unto GOD in one Body by the Cross*: To the *Father*, ^c *For it pleased the Father, that in Him should all fulness dwell, and (having made Peace by the Blood of his Cross) by Him to reconcile all things to Himself* —: To the *Son*, ^d *And you, that were sometime alienated and Enemy in your Mind by wicked Works, yet now hath He reconciled, in the Body of his Flesh thro' Death*. ^e *For when we were Enemy we were reconciled to GOD by the Death of his Son*.

The *other* sense of *Reconciliation* is, Our actual embracing this *Reconciliation*, and being in very deed by *Faith* and *Repentance* reconciled unto GOD. The *Enmity* on his part is removed, and the way to *Reconciliation* is Open, ^f *For through Christ we, both Jew and Gentile have an Access*

^a 1 Cor. V. 18. ^b Eph. II. 16. ^c Col. I. 19, 20. ^d v. 21, 22. ^e Rom. V. 10. ^f Eph. II. 18.

by one Spirit to the Father. The *Apostles* had it in their Commission to publish these *glad Tidings* to the World: accordingly St *Paul*^a declares these *glad Tidings* to the *Jews*, and calleth himself an *Ambassador* for this Purpose in his second *Epistle* to the *Corinthians*, where both the *senses* meet, and are clearly expressed in that Excellent Passage just now recited for the *first*, and I must produce it again for the *second* to shew how they stand together, and mutually refer to each other, ^b *All Things are of GOD who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given unto us the Ministry of Reconciliation, To wit, that GOD was in Christ, reconciling the World unto Himself, not imputing their Trespases unto them, and hath committed unto us the Word of Reconciliation.* There is the *Reconciliation* on GOD's part: Now then we are *Ambassadors for Christ*, as though GOD did beseech you by us: We pray you in *Christ's* stead be ye reconciled to GOD. There is the *Reconciliation* on Ours. So weak and false is the *Socinian* Objection, of so little Weight, and so far from Truth their *Observation*, that the *Contrary* is indeed the Truth. When we are said to be reconciled to GOD by *Christ*, the true meaning is, that GOD is reconciled unto us, and we are therefore most earnestly exhorted to accept this gracious Favour, and on our *parts* to be reconciled to Him.

In the same sense, in which our *Blessed Lord* is set forth in the *Holy Scriptures* as a *Redeemer*, He is also our *Mediator* and *Intercessor*: Our Me-

^a Acts XIII. 32. ^b 2 Cor. V. 18, 19, 20.

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diator (as in other regards) with special respect to that *Sacrifice* He offered up to God on our Behalf. ^a *And for this cause He is the Mediator of the New Testament: Our Intercessor, as He presents our Prayers to the Throne of Grace, and pleadeth the Merits of his Death on our behalf, that as He hath redeemed us, ^b who are by Nature the Children of Wrath, from our Original Guilt, and the Condemnation consequent thereupon, He may redeem us also from all our Actual sins: From the Power of them by his Grace, and from the Punishment of them by his own Blood, by which He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained Eternal Redemption for us.* Thus He is our Advocate and Intercessor according to those comfortable Words of St John, ^d *If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, and He is the Propitiation for our sins.* This also is founded in, and riseth from his Priestly Office; for ^e *this Man because He continueth for ever, hath an Unchangeable Priesthood. Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make Intercession for them.*

If we take the Doctrine of our *Redemption* in the plain and obvious sense of the *Scriptures*, we shall without any Difficulty see the true Meaning and Purport of it, and at the same time discern, how forced and unnatural all those Interpretations are, which run this great Transaction into Metaphor and Allegion only, not only

^a Hebr. IX. 15. ^b Ephes. II. 3. ^c Hebr. IX. 12. ^d 1 John II. 1, 2. ^e Hebr. VII. 24, 25.

262 *Not Metaphorical, but Real*

perverting the settled meaning of the *Words* in all *Languages*, but *denying* also *Historical Truth*, and plain *matter of Fact*. Tho' we cannot exactly parallel the *Redemption* of Mankind by the *Death of Christ* with the *Redemption* of *Captives* and *Criminals* by *Exchange* of *Persons*, or *paying* down the *Price* and *Ransom* agreed upon, tho' *satisfying* for *Sins* is not exactly like *discharging* a *Debt*, because *GOD* is to be looked upon, not only as our *Creditor*, but even in that *Parable of the^a Cruel servant*, as our *Lord* and *Master* also, and we cannot argue *Literally* in every Circumstance from *one Case* to the *other*: If we know not in *what* manner our Blessed Lord *first* offered his *Mediation* between *GOD* and *Man*, and *afterwards* performed it, any farther, than the outward *Action* informeth us: If we cannot state the full *Value*, (as how should we) of his *Inestimable* Blood, nor can tell, how He *interceedeth* for us, in what *Words* and *Gesture*, still we may be firmly assured of our *Redemption*, and of his *Mediation* and *Intercession*: Where there is a *Reality* in the *Correspondence*, the *Conceptions* and *Language* are truly *Analogical*, and as long as we know the *Literal* signification among Men of a *Redeemer* from *Captivity*, and *Bondage*, and *Death*, by Reason of *War*, of *Debt*, and of *Capital Offences*, by *Exchange* and *Substitution*, by *Payment*, *Price* and *Ransom*, we are at no Loss to understand *what* is meant by this *Language*, when applied to our *Spiritual* Estate.

^a Matth. XVIII. 23, &c.

There is moreover a *Correspondence* between *Rebels* against *Earthly Kings* and *States*, who forfeit their *Liberty* and *Life*, and are *attainted* in *themselves* and their *Children*, and *Rebels* against *GOD*, as there is also between the *Pardon* and *Restoration* of both from their *sentence* and *Attainder*, evident and *just* enough to give us proper *Notions* under these Expressions of our *Redemption*. The *Price*, whether it be *Gold*, *Silver*, or *Blood*, is *equally* a *Price*, and the *Value* maketh no *other* Difference, than there is between a *Greater* and *Less*. With respect to *GOD*, *whoever* delivereth us from the *Curse* and *Forfeiture* of the *Law* is our *Redeemer*, with reference to *Sin* and *Bondage* He that maketh us *Free* is as properly our *Redeemer* also, as *he*, that *delivereth* us from *Turkish* Slavery and Captivity: There is no difference, but in the *Kind* of *Bondage*, and the *Superexcellence* of the *Price*, and of the *Person*, that payeth it; the *Analogy* holdeth as far as it can, and only faileth on our *side* of the *Comparison*, where all *Human* things fall short, and reach not the *Value* and *Perfection* of *Divine*.

I thought it necessary so far to fix the *Doctrine* of our *Redemption* agreeably to the *true* Meaning and Signification of the *Scripture Terms*, according to their *Analogical* Acceptation in *Opposition* to that *Figurative* and *Allegorical* Account, which explaineth away every part of this *Doctrine*, and denieth the *Death* and *Sufferings* of *Christ* to be a proper *Sacrifice* and *Propitiation* for our *sins*.

Indeed a *Figurative* Person can only make a *Figurative* Satisfaction, and those, who deny our Lord to be the Eternal Son of God cannot account, *how* a *Creature* alone, much less, *how* a *meer* Man can *satisfie* for the *sins* of the whole World. Perfect *Innocence* can only avail the Man himself who possesseth it, and even the *Innocence* of the Sufferer is in this Case made an *Objection* to the *Justice* of God.

But we bless GOD, *who* of his *Infinite Mercy* hath appointed this great *Atonement*, and we bless our Lord JESUS CHRIST, *who* of his *infinite Love* ^a offered Himself up a *sacrifice* for our *sins*: who ^b *freely* laid down his Life for us, and submitted to his Father's ^c *Will*, and suffered according to the ^d *Determinate Counsel and Foreknowledge* of God: Who therefore *Miraculously* ^e delivered Himself, ^f and escaped from all the *Popular Attempts* and *Fury* of his *Enemies*, ^g and tho' He could still *deliver*, yet He *yielded Himself* at last, when his *Hour was come* according to the *exact* Time ^h *prefixed* and ⁱ *foretold*; and *punctually* ^k fulfilled every *Prophecy* relating to the *Kind* and *Manner* of his *Death* in every *Circumstance*, till at last He cried out, ^l *It is Finished*, and *yielded up the Ghost*.

^a Hebr. IX. 25, 26. ^b John X. 17, 18. ^c Matt. XXVI. 39, 42. Mark XIV. 36. Luke XXII. 42. John IV. 34. V. 30. Hebr. X. 7, &c. ^d Acts II. 23. ^e Luke IV. 30. John VIII. 59. ^f X. 39. ^g XVIII. 6. Mat. XXVI. 53. ^h Dan IX. 24, 26, &c. ⁱ Besides the Prophecys of the Old Testament, Mat. XIX. 18, 19. Mar. X. 32. Luke XVIII. 31, 32, 33. John III. 14. XII. 32, 33. XVIII. 32. ^k For this see the History of the Passion, ^l John XIX. 30.

The Bless. & Benefits thereof. 265

Thus we oppose *real* Facts to *imaginary* Suppositions, and *plain* Construction to *figurative* Interpretation; and until it can be made appear from the *Scriptures* that no *Reparation* is required, and from *Reason* that *none* ought to be required, or if *any* be needful, that *Man* can satisfy for his own sins; and that *Repentance* alone is that *satisfaction*: That *Human* Virtue will be accepted, accompanied and qualified with *Human* Frailty, and moreover mixed and diversified with *Vice*, and all upon *Repentance* alone, imperfect, as the best of our *Actions*, and followed by an *Obedience*, as imperfect, as that, which went before: as this is generally the *Case* of the best Men in the *Practice* of *Moral* Duty upon the bare Principles of *Reason* alone, we shall do well to hold fast the blessed *Hope*, and embrace those exceeding great and precious *Promises*, which are given unto us in the *Gospel*, where we are taught, that *Christ* hath once^a suffered for sin, the Just for the Unjust, that He might bring us to God: That the^b *Imputation* of *Adam's* sin is taken off by the *Imputation* of *Christ's* Righteousness, that our Nature, ^c which is *Corrupt* in *Adam*, is purified and renewed in *Christ*: ^d That as by *Man* came *Death*, by *Man* came also the *Resurrection* of the Dead; and that as in *Adam* all die, in *Christ* shall all be made alive.

I proceed now to consider thirdly

^a 1 Pet. III. 18. ^b Rom. V. 18, 19. X. 4. 1 Cor. I. 30. 2 Cor. V. 21.
^c Rom. V. 12, &c. 2 Cor. V. 17. Gal. VI. 15. Ephes. II. 15. IV.
23, 24. Coloss. III. 10. Tit. III. 5. ^d Rom. V. 12, &c. 1 Cor.
XV. 21, 22.

266 *Of our Passions and Affections.*

3. The *Revelation* GOD hath given us with regard to the *Ordinary* Course of his *Providence*, in which, as well as in the *Extraordinary* Work of our *Redemption*, we find Him putting on the the *Passions* and *Affections* of our *Nature*, and taking to Himself the *Organs* of our *Senses*, and the *Members* of our *Body*, and since the *same* Expressions are used in *all* his *Transactions* with Mankind, I have chosen to consider *them* under the *general* Order of his *Providence* in his *Government* of the World, and exacting *Obedience* to his *Laws*.

As GOD is a most Pure and Simple Being, without *Body*, *Parts* and *Passions*, He admits no mixture or variation in his Nature, and therefore the Language, which ascribeth these unto Him, is wholly *Figurative*, and *Metaphorical*.

This is ever and unvariably true without Exception, with regard to all Expressions taken from the *Organs* of our *Senses*, or the *Members* of our *Body*: but with regard to our *Passions* and *Affections*, because the *same* Words are used to signify the *Perfections* of GOD, and the *Moral* Excellencies as well as the *Passions*, & *Affections* of Men, we must therefore carefully distinguish between the *Analogical* Conception, and the *Figurative* Expression, that is, when the *same* Words do correspond to our *Moral* Perfections, which do also express our *Natural* Affections: since by the *one* are represented his *Attributes*, by the *other* the *motives* and *manner* of His *exercising* them towards us.

This promiscuous use of Words to signify things so widely different in themselves, is owing to the near Affinity there seemeth to be in
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our Nature between the most laudable of our *Passions* and *Affections*, such as *Love* and *Commiseration*, and the sublimest of our *moral* Perfections, which are also called *Love* and *Mercy*, when Man is considered according to the *Uprightness* and *Rectitude*, and not according to the *Declivity* and *Iniquity* of his Nature, and therefore we must distinguish again between *Love*, and *Joy*, and *Mercy*, and *Grief*, as seated in the *Understanding*, and as rising from the *sensual Appetites*: In the *first* consideration they are *Intellectual* Perfections, in the *second* they are *Carnal* Affections: The *first* hold the highest place in the Roll of *Moral* Virtues, and are advanced still higher in the Rank of *Evangelical* Graces: The *other* are only the *subject matter* of our *Duty* in the due Restraint and Direction of *them*: The *first* are always rightly and properly denominated: the *latter* are only entitled to the *same* Name, when they are employed upon proper Objects, and kept within proper Bounds. In us therefore they are to be considered, as *Moral* Perfections in *one respect*, and as *Human* Passions, and *Natural* Affections in *another*. In God they are *first* to be placed among his Perfections and Attributes in Correspondence to the *like* Moral Endowments of our Minds, and then to be looked upon, as *Representations* of the *Motives* by which He acts, and of the *Exercise* of those Perfections in the Government of the World.

The *Passions* not regulated by *Reason* differ nothing from the Impetuosity of *Brutes*, only they are worse, and more pernicious in *Men*;
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because to *Brutes Nature* herself is the *Boundary*, and *Limit* of them, but *Reason*, when it doth not restrain them in Men, serveth only to make them more Fatal in their Contrivances and Attempts for the Gratification of them: As in the *violence* and *sensuality* of these *Passions* and *Affections* Man beareth an *Analogy* to *Brutes*, in the *due* Government, Direction and Regulation of them, these *Affections* bear some *Analogy* to our *Moral* Perfections, and for this reason they have *both* the *same* Denomination, and because of the *Analogy* between *Moral* Perfections *Human* and *Divine*, they obtain the *same* Denomination, when applied to God also. As *Moral* Perfections therefore they are truly *Analogical*, as *Natural* Affections, when applied to God, they are only *Figurative* Expressions.

Love and *Pity*, and *Mercy* and *Compassion*, considered, as *Human Affections*, have no Room in *Divine* Nature, but considered, as *Moral* Excellencies they are correspondent to the *similar* Perfections of God: Thus *Love*, as a *Passion* approacheth not the *Divine* Nature, as a *Moral* Perfection, it is, as it were the *Essence* of the *Divine* Being. For ^aGod is *Love*, He is *Love* with regard to his *Moral*, and God is ^b*Light* with respect to his *Intellectual* Perfections. And as among Men ^c*Love is the fulfilling of the Law*, and so comprehendeth all other Dutys: In the *Divine* Nature also *Love*, *infinite Love*, is the Crown and Completion, and Comprehension of all Perfection: In like manner those *Kindred*

^a 1 John IV. 16. ^b I. 5. ^c Rom. XIII. 10.

Perfections, as I may call them, of *Joy* and *Grief*, of *Tenderness* and *Pity*, may be considered in *GOD*, as ever flowing from the Eternal Fountain of his *Love*; and in *us* likewise, tho' they are commonly esteemed *Affections*, they may be properly considered as so many *streams* from the never failing Spring of *Christian Love*, and *Charity*. Under the Character therefore of *Moral Perfections* we may conceive an *Analogy* between the *Kindness* and *Love* of *GOD* and of *Men*; But because He acteth in a *different* manner from *us*, He giveth us to understand his *Love* by the Correspondence our *Love* is supposed to hold with the *Divine Benevolence*, and representeth the *Exercise* of it under the dearest and tenderest *Affections* of our *Nature*. Accordingly, as a *Father*, we see our gracious *GOD* putting on *Paternal Affections*, and expressing them in the warmest, and most moving Terms: Sometimes in the way of Similitude, ^a *Like as a Father pitieth his own Children, so the Lord pitieth them, that fear Him.* ^b *Can a Woman forget her sucking Child, that she should not have Compassion on the Son of her Womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee.* ^c *When my Father and my Mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up.* Sometimes in *Figurative* and *Metaphorical Allusions*. So the *Prophet* with great Earnestness cryeth out, ^d *Where is thy Zeal and thy Strength, and the sounding of thy Bowels, and thy Mercys?* and thus *GOD* Himself in the

^a Psal. CIII. 13. ^b If. XLIX. 15. ^c Psal. XXVII. 10. ^d If. LXIII. 15.

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strongest and tenderest Terms expresseth the Struggle and Contention of his *Love*, when *Israel* had provoked Him to the last Degree, *How shall I give thee up Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee Israel? How shall I make thee as Admah, how shall I set thee as Zeboim? my Heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together.*

In the *Constitution* of Man there is another *Passion*, which is opposed to *Love*, and from which *contrary* Affections rise: And this is *Anger* with all its *Train* of *Hatred*, *Cruelty* and *Revenge*: These cannot in the *least* Degree be conceived in God, as *they shew themselves in us*; for tho' duely regulated *Anger* and *Punishment* is founded in the very *Existence* and *Reason* of things, and exerted by *Divine* Authority for the *Vindication* of his *Laws*, and by *Human* Authority also derived from *Divine*, for the same *great* and *necessary* End, yet as *Anger* breaketh out in *Private* Men, and upon *Private* Occasions, accompanied with *Hatred* and *Malice* and *implacable* Thirst of *Revenge*, it is a sinful *Passion*, and *Revenge* is a sure Token of an *infirm* and *little* Mind; and therefore, tho' it pleaseth God, as a *Lawgiver*, and a *Judge*, to utter Himself sometimes in the terms of these more violent *Passions*, yet we are assured from the Strength and Perfection of his Nature, that *He is not a Man of like Passions with us*, that He should be *moved*, nor the Son of Man, that He should be *discomposed*; But tho' we cannot ascribe *Anger*, nor any of

the more violent *Affections* unto Him, nor conceive of his *Anger* as a *Passion* and *Commotion* of the Mind, yet from his *Declarations* made against *Sin*, and the *Punishment*, He both *threatneth* and *inflicteth* upon *sinners*, we may learn that his *Disapprobation* of *Sin* is as *great*, as *Sin* it self is *contrary* to the *Essential* Holiness and Purity of his Nature; and therefore tho' there be no proper *Analogy* between the *Anger* of Men, and the *Displeasure* of God, as *Anger* is a *Passion* implanted in *us*, yet there is a proper and true *Analogy* between *Human* Punishment and *Divine*; and the *Anger of the Lord* is so called from the dreadful *Effects*, that follow upon the *Provocations* of obstinate and impenitent Sinners both in this World, and the *Next*.

Thus also we may understand in what sense *Vengeance* is ascribed unto God, not as implying any *revengeful* Thought or Disposition of Mind, but the *Vindication* of his *Honour* on the *Violators* of his *Laws*, and the *Defence* of the *Poor* against their great *Oppressors*. In this sense it is a *Royal* and *Peculiar Prerogative* of his *Throne*: ^a *Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord*, and this no Man may *usurp*, nor is it *lawful* to exercise it unless it be *delegated* unto him. Herein is founded a true *Analogy* between the *King of Kings*, and those *Princes* that *reign by Him*; and this will help us to conceive as we ought of the *Divine Vengeance* and *Displeasure*. Thus the *Prince*, who is the *Vicegerent* and *Minister* of God, is by his *Divine Commission* ^b *Re-*

^a Rom. XII. 19. ^b XIII. 4.

vengeance to execute Wrath upon him that doth Evil; but this he executeth without any Rage in his Mind, or Rancour in his Heart: To take Vengeance and to execute Wrath is not therefore to let loose a Passion, but to discharge a Duty: Justice is never Angry, and Earthly Magistrates do herein imitate the One Supreme Lawgiver, ^a who is able to save and to destroy, inasmuch, as the Anger of God and the King is not seen in the Violence of Passion, but in the Execution of the Laws. So far then the Correspondence holdeth, only, as in all other Analogys between Earth and Heaven, Human Punishments both for Pain and Duration are but weak and short Resemblances of Divine, and therefore however the Expressions setting forth the Wrath of God are Figurative, the Punishment of Offenders is Terrible and Real: It is greater and more dreadful, than the fiercest Expressions drawn from the Anger, and Vengeance, and Inflictions of Men are able to represent in any just Proportion and Degree; and therefore to awaken the Care and Conscience of Men, it hath pleased God in great Mercy to set forth his Terrors in the strongest figures of Torment, Horror and Despair, and to give some Tokens and Sketches of them in his fearful Judgments upon Persons, Citys, and Nations, making them ^b Ensamples to the Ungodly, as ^c Sodom and Gomorrha are set forth for an Example suffering the Vengeance of Eternal Fire.

Knowing therefore ^d the Terror of the Lord we persuade Men, not by representing Him as a

^a Jam. IV. 12. ^b 2 Pet. II. 6. ^c Jude v. 7. ^d 2 Cor. V. 11.

Cruel and Revengeful Being, but as He hath represented Himself in the *Revelations* He hath made of his Wrath against *Blasphemers* and all *Impenitent Sinners*.

I will only add, that altho' the several Expressions of *Love*, and *Anger*, in all their several Operations, taken from the *Bowels* and *Compassion*, the *Rage* and *Provocation* of Men, are merely *Figurative*, yet we must not imagine that they are of no signification, or that God is a *Cruel*, a *Careless*, or a *Changeable* Being.

Against the Truth of these Representations it is argued, that God is not a *Revengeful* and *Implacable* Being, implying, that these Judgments do suppose or make *Him* such. Presuming then that *they* are not true, and shall not be *executed*, as *they* are *threatened*, these same Men treat *them* as vain and empty Terrors: And again, as God is represented to be *angry* and *reconciled*, to *threaten*, and *repent* with regard to the *same* Persons, and People, as they are *obedient* or *disobedient* to his Word, *these* Adversarys represent Him as an *Inconstant* and *Changeable* Being.

He is absolved from *Cruelty* and *Revenge* by the Authority and *Sanction* of his *Laws*, which are not *Arbitrary* and *Positive* alone, but *Moral* and *Eternal* as his own *Truth* and *Rectitude*, in which they do ever *exist*, and from which, in the *several* Periods of Creation (if intelligent Beings have been created at *several* times) *that Reason* and *Fitness* of things, which is the *immediate* Law of all *Moral Agents*, are *derived*. The *Penalty*s follow from the *Rules* of his *Justice*,

S

and

274 *Not Careless and Indolent*, and the *nature* of the *Offenders*, and the *degrees* of their *Offences*; But his *Mercys* all along shine forth in the constant Care, and Sollicitude, He hath expressed, and the effectual means, He hath provided, for the Salvation of all Men, who will turn unto Him; Even his *Threatnings* are an Evidence of his *Love*, and the Arrangement of his Terrors a Powerful Call to Repentance; And for the Execution of them at the last Day, we shall find, that notwithstanding the Blasphemy and Accusations of Unbelieving Men, ^a*He will be justified in his saying, and clear when He is judged.*

But altho' He be *Merciful*, He is not a *Careless* and *Indolent* Being, *Unmindful* of Men's *Behaviour*, and *Insensible* of his *Honour*; for He hath declared, that *He is Strong and Mighty*, ^b*Dreadful*, and ^c*a jealous God*: Jealous of his *Honour*, and Mighty to maintain it; and unless it can be proved from clear Principles of *Reason* that it is inconsistent with Essential Goodness to inflict any *Penaltys* upon Transgressors, and that neither His *Justice* nor *Honour* require Him to punish the *Rebellious* and *Disobedient*: that Men are under *Obligation* to *Duty* without being *accountable* for their *Offences*: that the *Reason* and *Fitness* of things is their *sole Rule*, and that as *these* need no *Lawgiver* to constitute *them*, neither do they need *any* to exact a *Conformity* of Men's *Actions* to *them*, it is both *weak* and *wicked*, and to *no Purpose*, but to lull Men in their Sins, and lull them into a fatal Security,

^a Psal. LI. 4. ^b Mal. I. 14. ^c Exod. XX. 5.

to maintain, that GOD not being liable to *Passion* and *Commotion* of Mind is not *affected* by Man's *Obedience* or *Disobedience*, & therefore *wanteth* no *Reparation* of his *Honour*, and will not *punish*, not any further at most, than the *Good* and *Amendment* of the *Offenders* shall require. This I have touched upon before, but as here it offers again, I will only say, that his *Honour* respects all other parts of the *Intelligent* Creation in whose Eyes He is *dishonoured*, and the *Vindication* of his *Honour* is therefore *Necessary*, as long, as He requireth *Reverence* to his *Name*, and *Obedience* to his *Laws*, that is as long as *Laws* are *necessary* to the *Government* and *Administration* of the *Moral* World. Into *Heaven* no *Evil* thing can enter, and unless the *Adversarys* of *Religion* can prove, that there is not in the *Reason* of things, as close a *Connection* between *Sin* and *Misery*, as there is between *Happiness* and *Obedience*, that we stand in *no Relation* to GOD as our *Sovereign* Lord, and that *Punishment* follows not upon *that* Relation, or at least that *Sinners* can repent *after* Death, and be converted *after* Judgment, it is plain that the *Reason* of their *Punishment* will subsist as long as their *Being*, and a *fixed* Contradiction to *Holiness* must be an *Eternal* Exclusion from *Happiness*: Men are ready enough to receive all that is spoken of the *Divine Love*, and *Mercy*, and *Goodness*, but they ought in the *same* proportion to regard what is said of his *Anger*; For as it is true that GOD is *Love*, it is true also, ^a *that our GOD is a consuming Fire*.

^a Hebr. XII. 29.

276 *Not Changeable. Limbs and*

His *Love* and *Anger*, his *Mercy* and *Justice* are *duely* tempered together, and yet from the *alternate* Exercise of them upon *proper* Objects, God is again misrepresented as an *Inconstant* and *Changeable* Being. To which we answer,

That *this* Conduct inferreth not any *change*, or so much as *changeableness* in the Divine *Nature*, nor any *Inconstancy* or *Variation* in his *Will*, but setteth forth the *fixed*, and *unvariable* Rule of his Actions, and the *settled* Determination and *Immutability* of his Final Sentence on the *Righteous* and the *Wicked*; when He *threatneth* and *exhorteth* he speaketh indeed in the *Passions* and *Affections* of *Men*, but thereby signifieth also the most *certain* Effects of his *Love* and *Displeasure* suited to the *respective* Changes and Alterations of *us* his *Servants* in our *Obedience* and *Disobedience* to his *Laws*: He *punisheth* without *Passion*, and *repenteth* without *Changing*, according as *we* his poor Cteatures do *sin* and *repent*: *We* are ever *Mutable* and *Unstable*, but ^a *He is the same*, and with Him ^b *there is no variableness*, neither *shadow of turning*.

Of those *other* Expressions, in which it hath pleased God to take upon *Him* the *Organs* of our *Senses*, and the *Members* of our *Body* I have spoken so much, that there is the less Occasion of speaking any more: *They* are altogether *Figurative* Forms of Speech applied to those *Conceptions* we have already framed of his *Knowledge*, *Presence*, *Providence* and *Power*. In the *Divine* Being there is *Nothing* *Correspondent* to the

^a Hebr. I. 12. ^b Jam. I. 17.

Senses and *Organs* of Man's *Body*; but there is *something answerable* in the *Effects* well understood by God's *observing* our *Actions*, *receiving* our *Prayers*, and *accepting* our *spiritual Sacrifices*: In the same manner the *Breath* of his *Nostrils*, and the *Breath* of his *Mouth*: The *Operations* of his *Hand*, and his *outstretched Arm* signify the several *effects* of his *Power* and *Providence*, both *Natural* and *Miraculous*: The wonderful *Effects* we see, yet how they were produced, we could not *understand*, but by a *Language* thus suited to our *Capacitys*: So again the *Face* and *Countenance* of God are used to express his *Favour* or *Displeasure*, as it is said, ^a *The Face of the Lord is against them that do Evil*; ^b *His Countenance will behold the thing that is Just*.

There is a plain and evident *Distinction* of each from other between the *Figurative*, the *Literal* and *Analogical* Forms of Speech, and with the *Distinction* there is also a *Connection* and *Dependance* of each upon the other. The *Figurative* always supposeth a *Literal* or *Analogical* sense, and the *Analogical* a *Literal*, and therefore the same things are to be taken *Literally* in *Fact*, which are first *Analogically* conceived, and then *Figuratively* Expressed, Thus for an Instance of these *Figurative* Forms passing thro' an *Analogical*, and terminating in a *Literal* sense, we read, ^c *By the Word of the Lord were the Heavens made, and all the Host of them by the Breath of his Mouth*. Here these Expressions may be considered as *Figurative* so far, as they allude to *Human Speech*,

^a Psal. XXXIV. 16. ^b XI. 7. ^c XXXIII. 6.

278 *The Authority for: The Use,*
and the *Instruments thereof: Analogical*, so far,
as they *correspond* to an *Efficient* Command: and
strictly *Literal*, as it is asserted, that the *Hea-*
vens were made by the *Eternal* ^a *WORD*, and *all*
the Host of them by the *Eternal* ^b *Spirit*.

By using this *Language*, and conveying *Him-*
self to our Minds by these *Conceptions*, GOD
hath *authorised* this way of Speaking: We can-
not see *Him*, nor conceive of *Him*, as *He is*:
so far, as our present Facultys are able to ap-
prehend *Him*, and in *such* manner, as we are
able to *think* and to *speak* of *Him*: *He* hath re-
vealed *Himself* to us, and when we would con-
sider *Him* in our own minds, or express *Him*
to others, (whatever some *Rapturous* and *En-*
thusiastical Imaginations may dream) we cannot
form any other *Thoughts*, nor invent any other
Language, but we are lost and swallowed up in
the Unfathomable Gulph of an *Infinite* Being,
and all beyond is Dark and Incomprehensible.
Otherwise there would be nor *Distance*, nor *Dif-*
ference between GOD and Us, if Human
Thoughts could reach, and were of *Compass* to
comprehend the *Eternal* Majesty and *Essence*, to-
gether with the *Wisdom* and *Counsel* of the *Al-*
mighty.

From what hath been discoursed so largely
upon this Subject, we may now by way of Re-
collection understand, *first* the *Necessity*, *second-*
ly the *Propriety* of this *Analogy* to express things
of a *Divine* and *Invisible* Nature.

^a Joh. I. 3. Hebr. I. 10. ^b Job XXVI. 13.

I. The *Necessity* of it is Evident, because we have no *primary* and *adequate* Expressions for them. We can *express* them only, as we are able to *conceive* them, and as our *Conceptions* cannot, neither can our *Expressions* reach fully to them. We are often able to *conceive*, at least we imagine so, what we are not able to *express*: but he, that pretendeth to *express* more than he *conceiveth*, speaketh without any meaning, and in Effect saith Nothing at all. As our *Conceptions* therefore are originally borrowed from Sensible Objects, and Created Beings, our *Language* is so too: and where we cannot know unto the utmost Perfection, but only in a certain *Proportion* and Degree, there our *Language* must be, as our *Knowledge* is, *Analogous* to the Things we speak of. We can speak of another World only in the *Language* of this, and express *what* otherwise, or of our selves we *knew not*, only by *what* we *know*. And thus *what may be known of GOD is manifest*, so far as GOD hath *skewed it unto us*. In this sense also the *Apostle's* Reasoning would be just, and as from the *Creation* we draw an Argument of a *Creator* founded in the *Analogy* between the wonderful *Effects* and the *supreme Cause*, so from the *Effects* we are taught to *express* the *Almighty Cause* in that *Analogy of Language*, which those great and marvelous Works furnish us with in uttering our most exalted Notions of *his Eternal Power, and GOD-HEAD*.

Thus also when the *Divine Operations* and *Oeconomy* are declared in the great Work of our *Redemption*, and the Terms *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*

Ghost are more fully revealed in their several *Personal* Distinctions both of *Action* and *Relation*, we must *express* these in the same *Analogy* of *Language* they are *revealed* in: and because Words, otherwise familiar to us, are made use of, which cannot be strictly understood as in *Human Relations* and *Operations*, and yet are to be understood as *Affertions* of so many *Facts* and *Realities*, we are therefore necessarily to understand them in the way of *Analogy* suitable to the Distance and Difference between God and us: and thus as they were revealed by the *Holy Ghost*, the *Scriptures*, which contain the *Revelation*, are also the *Words*, which the *Holy Ghost* teacheth.

2. From what hath been said appears the *Propriety* of this *Analogical* Language, that is indeed no other than the *Scripture* Language, which borroweth the Words of Men and applieth them to God; For as our Notions of Worldly Things, are not *strictly* applicable, but indeed at an *Infinite* Distance from the Divine Nature, the *Scripture* useth the best Expressions, we have, to give us such Conceptions of the Divine Being, as we are capable of. Thus the *Spirit* of God takes the *Language* of Men and *Consecrates* it to his own Service: there is an *Appropriation* of Phrase and Sentiments in all the *Holy Writings*; Thus the *outward Visible Church* with the *Rites* and *Institutions* belonging to it are expressed, tho' in the *same* Words, which *Civil* Writers use, yet with a *different Propriety* and Application: So that there is a *Sacred* and *Religious* use of Words borrowed from

from those *Languages* which were then in Being, and applied in an *Analogical* manner to the *Assemblys*, the *Rites*, the *Mysterys*, the *Worship* and *Institutions* of the *Christian Church*; and as these Words are used in a peculiar sense by the *Sacred* and *Christian Writers*, they form as it were a peculiar *Language*. But as these are borrowed to express the *real Church* and *Ministers of Christ* in their several *Orders*, together with the *Rites* and *Institutions* of his *Religion*, in like manner the Common *Language* of Men is made use of to express such *real Facts* or *Doctrines*, as are *revealed* in the *Holy Scriptures* concerning the *Divine Nature*, and the great Work of our *Redemption*; in both the Expressions are *Analogical*, and if we see the *Analogy* more perfectly in things belonging to the *Visible Church*; it is no less *real* in all Points belonging to the *Invisible*: and if there is a *Propriety* in the *Language*, we use, when we speak of God, and his *Attributes* according to the sentiments of *Natural Religion*, there is no less *Propriety* when we speak of God according to *Revealed*: And what is *Revealed* is as *Real* as are his *Attributes*, and both as *Incomprehensible* as they are *Real*.

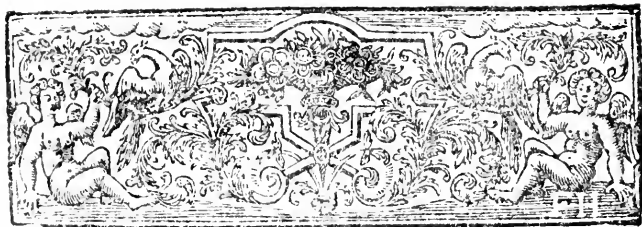
What I have now delivered comes to this Conclusion, that this *Analogy* conveyeth to us the *real Nature* and Perfections of God so far as we are able to conceive or express them, together with all his Transactions with Mankind, and therefore it cannot be interpreted in a meer *Figurative* and *Metaphorical* sense, nor yet in a *gross* and *literal* manner, but in such a way, as is *suitable* to the *Divine Nature* and *Actions*.

In

In this we shall be directed by the *Analogy* of *Faith*, and so be taught to understand what is asserted concerning the *Eternal God-Head* according to the *proper* and *obvious* Signification of the Words, in which the great *Mysterys* of our *Faith* are revealed: And then it will appear, that the *Divine Relations* of *Father* and *Son*, and the *Personal Distinction* of the *Holy Ghost* in the same *Essence* are as *Real*, as the *Divine Essence* and *Attributes* themselves: That our *Redemption* is properly such upon a *Satisfaction* really made, and that our *Inheritance* is *Real*, because *Eternal in the Heavens*.

Of which Eternal Inheritance may we all be Partakers by the Mediation of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Sanctification of the Holy Ghost. To whom &c.





SERMON VI.

Preached *Apr. 24. 1729.*

I COR. II. 13.

— *Comparing Spiritual Things
with Spiritual.*



IN my last Discourse, I proposed to establish some *Rules* for the right *Understanding* of *Divine* Truths, and for the *Interpretation* of the *Scriptures*, which convey them to us.

In Order to this I proceeded to show,

I. *Negatively*, That *Divine* Truths, and particularly the great *Mysteries* of *Revelation* are *not* taught in the same manner with *Secular* Sciences,

Sciences, or that *Divine* Learning is to be taught in a *different* way from *Human* — *Which things also we speak, not in the Words, which Man's Wisdom teacheth.*

II. To shew *Positively* that *They* are to be taught and received, *understood* and *interpreted* in a *manner* proper, and peculiar to *themselves*, in the *Words, which the Holy Ghost teacheth.*

I. Under the *First* Head I have endeavour'd to shew the *difference* between *Divine* Knowledge and *Secular* Science: that we arrive not in the *same* manner at *both*: nor can we argue upon the *same* Principles about them: nor will our *Reasoning* hold from *Human* Subjects to *Divine*: In *Human* Science we have *Simple, Direct,* and *Adequate* Ideas; upon these we can form *immediate* Conceptions; but in *Divine* Subjects we have no *Ideas* at all, nor can we form any *Conceptions* of them, but by *substituting* our sensible *Ideas*: our *Moral* Conceptions, and the *Operations* of our own Minds to express something *Correspondent* in things of a *Spiritual* Nature.

That God is, we know by all the Arguments, which prove his *Existence*: but *What* He Is, and *How* He Subsists we know not in any *Scientific* manner, but only from such faint *Resemblance* and *Correspondence*, as his *Creatures*, infinitely distant from *Him*, can any ways bear unto *Him*.

This *Resemblance* is *Originally* derived from God: He is the only *Prototype*: It is a *Similitude* of his own *impressing* upon our Thoughts
and

and Conceptions: And tho' it may be too refined to say, *we see all Things in GOD*, yet we have no way to see GOD, but in his *Creatures*: and this way of Apprehending *Him* convinces us by all, that we can call *Powerful, Wise, and Good, and Perfect*, that *He* is *such* in an Incomprehensible manner; But to imagine, that these *Attributes* are in *Him*, as *they* are in *us*, or that *He* thinketh and knoweth, as *we* do, *we* may as well imagine, that *He exists*, and *acts* after the *manner of Men*.

For this Reason the *Things* of GOD cannot be *taught* in the *Way*, or in the *Language* of *Human Science* according to the *first* and proper *signification* of the *Words*; For tho' the *Words* be the *same*, yet *they* are *not* applied in their *strict* and *Literal*, but in a *secondary*, and *Analogical* sense, when we speak of the *Things* of GOD, and therefore *they* are *not taught*, and the *Apostle* speaks *not* of *them* in the *Words*, which *Man's Wisdom* teacheth.

This short Recapitulation may serve for the *First Head*, I proceeded in the next place to show,

II. *Positively* that the *Things* of GOD are to be *taught* and *received*, *understood* and *interpreted* in a *manner* proper and peculiar to *themselves*, or as the *Apostle* speaketh, *in the Words*, which the *Holy Ghost* teacheth.

The *Method* of which is here *prescribed*, *Comparing Spiritual Things with Spiritual*:

And the *Reason* of it is also *given*, *because they are Spiritually discerned*.

Upon

Upon this *Head* I have endeavoured to shew in what manner the *Things* of GOD are to be taught and spoken of by *us*, from the Consideration of the *manner* they are taught and spoken of in the *Scriptures*: The *Apostle* distinguisheth very justly between the *Words*, which *Man's Wisdom teacheth*, and the *Words*, which the *Holy Ghost teacheth*; the *Language* indeed is the *same* as to the *Letters*, and *Syllables*, and *Pronunciation*, but the *Words* are differently applied: In *Human Science* they are used in their *first* and proper signification to express our *direct* and *simple Ideas*: and all those *Notions* and *Conceptions* which rise from the various *Combinations* of them; But in *Divine Knowledge* both our *Words* and *Conceptions* are *substituted* to express the *Things* of GOD so far, as they are *Intelligible* by us: Not as they are in *themselves*, for so they are *Inexpressible*, because *Incomprehensible*.

Even in *Natural Religion*, we must form our *Conceptions* of GOD after *this* manner: nor can we truly express *Him*, but in the *Words*, which the *Holy Ghost teacheth*. *Man's Wisdom* was lost and bewildered upon this great Subject, and the *Words* of Men spake *falsely*, nor had we at this time, without a *Revelation*, been able to speak more *worthily* of *Him*. For as we read in the Chapter before, ^a *After that in the Wisdom of GOD, the World by Wisdom knew not GOD, It pleased GOD by the Foolishness of Preaching to save them that believe*: That is, After the World, by the just Judgment of GOD upon their Blind-

ness and Corruption, for their having so soon and so *Universal* run into *Idolatry*, had long lain in *Darkness* and *Error*, it was the *Wisdom* of God to make use of *plain* and *simple* Men in a *plain* and *unaffected* manner, to *preach Him* to the World, thereby convincing the vain *Disputer* and the proud *Philosopher*, that with all their *Wisdom* they could not attain to the *Knowledge* of *Him*.

And because all *Opposition* to the *Special Articles* of *Faith* by those, who *admit* a *Revelation*, is made either by a *Strict* and *Literal*, or else by a *Figurative* and *Metaphorical* Interpretation, and by arguing upon them, as if there was no *Difference* in the *Nature* of God and his *Creatures*, I proposed as the ground of true *Interpretation* to consider this *twofold Analogy*: The *Analogy* of *Language*, and the *Analogy* of *Faith*: The *Analogy* of *Language* answerable to the *Apostle's* speaking in the *Words*, which the *Holy Ghost* teacheth: The *Analogy* of *Faith* answerable to the Rule the *Apostle* here layeth down, of *Comparing Spiritual Things with Spiritual*.

The *Analogy* of *Language* is of great use to show, that *what* is *revealed* of God is not to be *understood* in a *Gross Literal* sense on the one hand, nor in a meer *Figurative* sense on the other, but in a *middle Way*, which gives us true Conceptions of God, so far, as we are able to apprehend *Him*, that is so far, as the whole Extent of created Being serves to express any thing *Correspondent* in the Divine Nature. Speaking therefore of God in the *Language* of the *Scriptures* under those *Similitudes*, *Representations*,

tations, Types and Symbols, which the *Holy Spirit* hath chosen out of the whole Compass of the Creation, is properly, according to this Divine Analogy, to speak in the Words, which the *Holy Ghost* teacheth.

I proceed now in the second place,

2. To the *Analogy* of Faith answering to that most excellent Rule, the *Apostle* goeth by, of comparing Spiritual things with Spiritual.

This is that *Analogy*, which St Paul requireth in his *Epistle* to the ^a*Romans*, and we translate the *Proportion of Faith*, not meaning thereby the *Degree* of it, either in the *Teacher* or the *Hearers*, but the *Agreement* of their *Doctrine* with the *Scriptures* of the *Old Testament*, and all *Parts* of the *Gospel* preached and delivered by our *Lord* and his *Apostles*; and this *Rule* doth now extend to the *New Testament* as well as the *Old*. For there is an Entire *Agreement* and *Consistency* of the *Scriptures* with themselves from one End to the other, from the first dawning of *Revelation*, as a ^b*Light*, that shineth in a dark place, till it ^c*shineth more and more unto a perfect day*. All the *Sacred Writers*, of whom the *Canon* of both Testaments is composed, maintain a perfect Harmony thro' all the parts of the Writings, the latter *Revelations* being still agreeable to, and so many gradual Superstructures upon the former; and tho' they lived in very distant Ages, and were of different Educations, and Callings: Some of them indeed of Royal Birth, and admirable Learning: others

^a Rom. XII. 6. ^b 2 Pet I. 19. ^c Prov. IV. 18.

Poor and Ignorant, plain and Illiterate Men, yet the *meanest* of them speaking by the *same Spirit* express the Divine Nature with the *same Truth* and Dignity, as the *Greatest*, and far beyond the *Wisest*, and most learned *Philosophers*: There is no Difference, but sometime a more Lofty and *Figurative* Style, which yet expresseth no more, than the *plainest* Words, it being only a more pompous *Form*, and Ornament of Speech.

If it be objected, that *Job* Himself and his *Friends* are not *immediately*, his three *Friends* especially, *not at all* inspired in their Speeches, we answer that the *Book* it self is an *inspired Writing*, where the Holy *Penman* was directed to record all that passed in that Heavenly Conversation upon so sad an Occasion, as the *Historical* Books record also the *Actions*, and *Sayings* of *Persons* not inspired: and we reply further, that the *Sentiments* of *Job* and his *Friends*, particularly of *Elihu* the *fourth* Person in the *Dialogue* with Him, were not the *meer* Sentiments of *Natural* Reason and Religion only left entirely to themselves, and wrought up by their own Disquisitions, but they were, tho' most agreeable and evident to *Reason*, derived to them by *Tradition* and *Instruction*, and Originally deduced from *Revelation*. *Job* himself seemeth to have had some special *Revelations*, ^a and he relateth what was *revealed* unto him in the *Visions of the Night*, to which ^b *Elihu* also alludeth, when he entereth upon his Argument

^a Job IV. 12. ^b XXXIII. 15.

with him. To *Traditional Knowledge* Job referreth, when he declareth. ^a *Lo, mine Eye hath seen all this, mine Ear hath heard and understood it,* and *Eliphaz the Temanite* in his answer to him, ^b *With us are both the gray-headed and very aged Men, much elder than thy Father:* and ^c *Elihu,* when he saith, *I will fetch my Knowledge from afar.* An *Original Revelation* is plainly supposed in all those places as so, where mention is made of *Creation*, and of *Angels*, and the *Resurrection*, and the *World to come*, as points that could not be otherwise *at all*, or *not so fully Known*; and for *Instruction* in our *Moral Duty* which might be known by the *Light of Nature* alone, he recurrerth to the *Revelation of GOD.* ^d *And unto Man He said, Behold the Fear of the Lord, that is Wisdom, and to depart from Evil is Understanding.* So then to put them all together, the *Traditional, Special, and Personal Revelation* is expressed by Job in these few Words, ^e *I have heard of thee by the hearing of the Ear, but now mine Eye seeth thee.* And that such a *Tradition* of an *Original Revelation* runs thro' the whole Book may be proved from its *Correspondence* and *Agreement* with all other parts of the *Scripture.*

As the *Writings* of the *Old Testament* therefore are entirely *consistent* with *themselves*, and run down in one perpetual Tenour of *Truth* and *Wisdom*, from the *first* Writer to the *last*, the *New* beareth also a full and compleat *Cor-*

^a Job XIII. 1. ^b XV. 10. ^c XXXVI. 3. ^d XXVIII. 28.
^e XLII. 5.

Agreem. betw. Old and N. Test. 291

response to the *Old*, by an exact *Agreement* of the *Events* with the *Prophecys*, and of the *Antitypes* with the *Types*, which prefigured them: the *Doctrine* also concerning the *One Living and True GOD* is the *same* in *Both*, only as our *Blessed LORD* in his *Person* and *Preaching* fulfilled the *Law* and the *Prophets*, the *Apostles* by their *Writings* still explained, and declared, and shewed that *Completion* more distinctly in every point throughout the *Gospels*, the *Acts*, and their *Epistles*.

In *Both* these, the *Old Testament* and the *New*, we meet with that *Perfection* which riseth from *Symmetry* and *Proportion* in a just *Fitness*, and *Coincidence* of the *parts* with each other: In this consist the *Strength* and *Beauty* of every *Building*, and in this *Analogy* do stand the *Church*, and the *Faith* of *Christ*, which, like us also, who believe, are ^a *built upon the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets*, *Jesus Christ Himself* being the *Chief Corner Stone*.

I would only observe, that as this *Building* had been carrying on thro' *many Ages* by *different Hands*, without any outward *Model*, the *Agreement* and *Consistency* of the several *Parts* can be ascribed only to that one Omnipotent, and Omniscient *Architect*, that *Blessed Spirit*, who in so *masterly* and *admirable* a manner *conducted* and *finished* the *whole Design*. The *Prophets* saw no further, than the *special Revelations* vouchsafed unto them: and the *Apostles* owed all their *Knowledge* in *Christ*, and of the

^a Ephes. II. 20.

292 *ascribed to One Spirit. The*
Mysterys of his Kingdom to the immediate In-
 spiration of the *Holy Ghost*; they were most of
 them poor and illiterate Persons, of a mean
 and simple Education: This the *Chief Priests*
 took Notice of in two of them, and ^a*perceived*
that they were unlearned and ignorant Men, and
 the Observation was true, for so they were,
 and till they were endued with Power from
 on high, ^b*they were dull, and slow of Heart to be-*
lieve all, that the Prophets have spoken concerning
the Sufferings, the Death, and Resurrection of our
Lord, and for the great Article of the *Resur-*
rection, they were so ignorant, even after our
 Lord was risen, that ^c*as yet they knew not the*
Scriptures, that He must rise again from the Dead.
 This I mention to shew, that the *Holy Ghost*,
 who spake by the Prophets, did speak by them
 also in one uniform *Analogy of the Faith* through-
 out the *whole Body of the Scriptures*.

In Order to our right understanding this *A-*
nalogy of Faith we are to consider, *What* points
 are truly and properly *Objects* of our *Faith*, and
 in *what* manner they are proposed to our Be-
 lief; So that by observing *how*, upon *what*
 grounds, and in *what* sense we assent to *some*
 Points, about which we have no Doubt, nor
 Difference, we may learn *how* to understand
 and assent to *those* Propositions also concerning
 which Men have entertained very different O-
 pinions.

The way therefore will be, First to propose
 the *plainer* and more *uncontested* Articles, and

^a Acts IV. 13. ^b Luke XXIV. 23.

Method proposed. Of Faith 293

then to interpret and understand the more *Mysterious* Points in a manner *agreeable* and *consistent* with our Belief of the *other*; that so we may go on, as ^a *the Righteousness of God is revealed, from Faith to Faith*, till having distinctly viewed the several parts by themselves, we may at last behold the Beauty, Harmony, and Agreement of the whole together.

This Course then I shall hold, taking first a more *general*, and then a more *particular* view of the great Subject before us, and proceeding from the more *simple* and *uncontested*, to the more *Mysterious* and *disputed* Points.

1. In *general, Faith*, as it is the Subject of our present Discourse is a firm *Assent* to the *Truth* of a *Proposition* upon the *Testimony* and *Authority* of GOD: This taketh in *Natural* Religion as well as *Revealed* strictly so called, and howsoever we have *Natural* Convictions of the *Being* and *Attributes* of GOD, yet when they are proposed to us more clearly and perfectly in a *Revelation* from *Himself*, they do then become proper *Objects* of *Faith* under the *Distinction* and *Form* of *Revelation*. The GOD of *Abraham* the Living and true GOD was the GOD revealed to the Children of *Israel*, as HE alone, in *whom* they should believe, and *whom* they should serve; Their *Natural* Notions were so far from teaching them the Divine *Unity* in this peculiar sense, that there is *no* GOD, but *One*, that they would *have*, contrary to his express Command, *other* Gods besides *Him*, and *Revelation* it self

was not able for many Ages to root out the *Mistakes* of their *Natural* Apprehension, how *obvious* soever to *Reason* it be, that there is none *other* God but *One*, and how *plain* soever by *Revelation*, that the Lord their God Is HE. Thus the *same* Points may be considered, as *parts* of *Natural* and *Revealed* Religion, as the *same* Dutys are of *Natural* and *Divine* Obligation; and our *Natural* Belief is improved into *Divine* Faith, when the several *Articles* of *Natural* Religion are *revealed* to the World, and our *Assent* is required by the *Word* of God: and thus also in *that* part of *Natural* Religion, which we call *Moral* (however Mankind may be supposed capable of forming the several Branches of it by their own Reasonings and Convictions alone) when the several Dutys of *Morality* are delivered and required by God *Himself*, then we are to look upon ourselves under a *Divine*, as well as *Moral* Obligation to perform them, and so our *Works* become *part* of our *Faith* itself. This *Natural* or *Moral* is a more *general* and *tacit* Obligation: It is the very *Law* of our *Nature*, and as *such* it springs *Originally* from God *Himself*; But when *Morality* is enjoined by the Word of God, the *Obligation* to it becomes more *formal* and *Express*, and it is then strictly and properly *Divine*. As therefore *Moral* Dutys, when practised upon a *Principle* of *Faith*, become *Evangelical* Graces, in like manner the *Truths* of *Natural* Religion relating to God, when proposed in the *Scriptures*, become *Articles* of *Faith*.

But besides the *Truths* of *Natural* Religion concerning the *Being* and *Attributes* of God, and our *Duty* to *Him*, there are many *Truths* of strict *Revelation*, which we could have no Knowledge or Apprehension of by any other means: Of this Kind are all those *Truths* of the Divine Being, which are not included in *Natural* Religion, and I may add, that all *those* *Truths* of *Natural* Religion itself may be considered, as of strict *Revelation* so far, as they are taught and delivered in the *Scriptures* more *perfectly*, than ever they were by the meer strength of *Reason* alone in the corrupt and darkened Estate it was in, since meer *Reason* in such its weak Condition, tho' it necessarily *assenteth* to these *Truths* when *discovered*, was not able to make a full and perfect Discovery, void of all Mistakes, and is therefore really *indebted* to *Revelation* for them: However admitting the Distinction between *Natural* Religion and *Revealed*, we are then to consider *those* *Truths* which are discoverable by *Revelation* only; These are what God hath been pleased to *reveal* concerning the *Divine* Nature, and the *Persons* subsisting in it, together with the whole Plan and Method of our *Redemption* by *Jesus Christ* our Lord.

Concerning these great and sublime *Truths*, *what* we are to believe is plainly expressed, and in *what* particular manner we are to *understand* and *interpret* the Propositions is also plainly to be collected from that *Agreement* and *Consistency*, which must necessarily be found, in all Points
and

and *Articles* of Faith, from one End of the *Scriptures* to the other.

To proceed therefore as I propos'd, to the *Analogy* of Faith in understanding and interpreting the *Scriptures*, the best and most *natural* Method will be *first* to see what is *revealed*, and declared concerning the *Divine* Nature in general, and *afterwards* what is more *specialy* *revealed* concerning this *Divine* Nature, and the *Transactions* of God with Mankind, and then the *last* must be interpreted according to the plain and evident Declarations concerning the *first*.

In the first place therefore, according to this rule, with reference to God and the great *Mysterys* of our Faith the *Unity* of the *Divine* Nature must be asserted, and at the same time the *Divinity* and *Distinction* of the *Persons* preserved, and therefore the *Unity* of *Essence* is to be maintained together with the *Divinity* and *Distinction* of the *Persons* against all who confound the *Distinction*, or deny the *Divinity*, whether they be *Arians*, *Socinians*, and *Sabelians*.

To this purpose I shall *first* consider the several *Revelations* concerning the *Unity* of *Essence*, and the *Divinity* as well as *Distinction* of the *Persons*, to shew, that the *Nature* is truly *One*, and the *Persons* really *Distinct*. And then in the *second* place I shall proceed to argue according to these *Rules* of *Interpretation* upon them.

1. Concerning the *Divine* Nature or God-Head in general, the *Unity* is expressly revealed

ed in those Celebrated Words of ^a *Moses*, which are *afterwards* cited to the *same* Purpose by our ^b *Lord* Himself, and plainly alluded to, as we shall see, by ^c *St Paul*. *Hear, O Israel, the Lord our GOD is one Lord: Jehovah our GOD is One Jehovah.* In *Isaiah*, ^d *thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and his Redeemer the LORD of Hosts: I am the First, and I am the Last, and besides Me there is no GOD, I know not any.* And again having asserted by way of challenge his Omnipotence and Omniscience, he demands, ^e *Is there a GOD besides Me?* and declareth, *yea there is no GOD, I know not any.* In the next ^f *Chapter* He avoweth: *I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no GOD besides me. That they may know from the rising of the Sun and from the West, that there is none besides me; I am the Lord, and there is none else:* exactly answerable to what ^g *Moses* had taught the Children of *Israel*, that the *Lord* He is *GOD* there is none else besides Him. The *Lord* He is *GOD* in *Heaven* above, and in *Earth* beneath, there is none else; and accordingly, this Mighty Lord ^h declareth by his Prophet *Isaiah*. *I am the Lord, that is my Name, and my Glory will I not give to another, nor my Praise to graven images.* And again, ⁱ *I will not give my Glory to another:* only it may possibly be objected that this *last* passage is not meant in the *same* sense with the *first*. The *first* is evidently pointed against *all* the *Gods* and *Idols* of the *Heathen*, in the *last* GOD hath an Eye and regard to the

^a Deut. VI. 4. ^b Mark XII. 29. ^c 1 Cor. VIII. 4. ^d Isai. XLIV. 6—8. ^e XLV. 5, 6, 18, 21, 22. ^f Deut. IV. 35—39. ^g Is. XLII. 8. ^h XLVIII. 11.

298 *by GOD and his Prophets.*

Heathen Nations, lest they should triumph in the Ruin of his People, and therefore saith the Lord, *for my own sake, even for my own sake will I do it: For how should my Name be polluted? and I will not give my Glory to another.* This I thought fit to remark, and if *this* refers not to the *Honour* given to *Idols* I do not insist upon it; It may refer however to the *Honour*, that *would* be given by the *Heathen* to *their Idols*, as if (when they prevailed against the *Israelites*) *their Gods* had prevailed *against* the God of *Israel*. The other Declarations are exceeding plain, and very full to the Purpose.

Answerable to these solemn Asseverations of the Divine *Unity* by *GOD Himself* are the the Prayers and Confessions of his faithful Servants in acknowledgment of it. Thus *David* calleth upon *Him*. ^a *Among the Gods there is none like unto Thee, O Lord, — All Nations shall Worship before Thee, O Lord, and shall glorify thy Name, For Thou art great and doest wondrous things; Thou art GOD alone.* And thus *Hezekiah* addresseth himself in his Prayer, ^b *Thou art the GOD, even Thou alone.* In like manner *Nehemiah* confesseth, ^c *Thou, even Thou art Lord alone.* This also was the Doctrine taught and delivered down from the Fathers to their Children, according to the humble Acknowledgment *David* offereth up to God for his peculiar Grace and Favour to him. ^d *Wherefore thou art great, O Lord, for there is none like Thee, neither is there*

^a Psal. LXXXVI. 8, 9, 10. ^b Is. XXXVII. 16. ^c Neh. IX. 6.
^d 2 Sam. VII. 22.

any GOD beside Thee, according to all that we have heard with our Ears.

These Texts are abundantly sufficient for the *Unity* of GOD-Head, and consequently for the *Appropriation* of the Divine *Attributes* and *Honour*, which are as constantly *applied* to this *One* GOD, and *no other*, as the *Unity* it self is *asserted*, that as the *Psalmist* expresseth it, ^a *Men may know, that Thou, whose Name alone is Jehovah, art the most High over all the Earth.*

2. Under this *Revelation* of the *One* GOD it is particularly *revealed*, that in this *One* GOD-Head there are *Eternally* subsisting the *Father*, the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghost*, whom by reason of their *Relation* and distinct *Acts* and *Offices*, we call *Three Persons*, and from that Number the *Trinity*: which *Three Persons*, or ever Blessed *Trinity* is the *One* GOD of us *Christians*, declared in the *Old*, but more expressly revealed in the *New Testament*, where we have the *Unity* of the GOD-Head, and this *Trinity* of *Persons* plainly and positively asserted: That is, the *Father*, the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghost* are asserted to be *Distinct* by *Relation* and *Office*, and but *One* in *Essence*, of the *same* Majesty and Power, Co-eternal and Co-equal.

They, who oppose this *Doctrine*, either *deny* or *confound* the *Distinction* between *Person* and *Essence*, and this either by making the *whole* *Deity* a *Person*, or by allowing no *Person*, but *that* of the *Father* in the GOD-Head: thereby denying the *Divinity*, however they may admit

300 *Distinction between Person*

the *Personality* of the *Son*, and of the *Holy Ghost*.

Before we enter upon the special Proofs of the *Trinity* from the *Scriptures*, it may not be improper in Answer to these Pretences, to shew,

1. *First*, That *Person* and *Essence* are really *distinct* in themselves, as well as in our *Conceptions* of them:

2. *Secondly*, That the *Scriptures* speak of God according to that *Distinction* sometimes *Essentially*, and sometimes *Personally*, as the Divine *Attributes* are represented in *general*, and the Divine *Oeconomy* and *Transactions* with Mankind are declared in *particular*.

1. *Person* and *Essence* are really *distinct*: That is in all *Beings*, whether *Created*, or *Uncreated* to which the Term *Person* is applied, there is a manifest *Distinction* between the *Essence* and *Personality* of those *Beings*. *Angels* are considered *one* way in their *Essence*, as pure immaterial Spirits, endued with *Understanding* and *Will*: and *another* way in their *Persons*, as sustaining such particular *Characters*, and performing such special *Offices*. *Angels* are not *Persons* by their *Essence*, tho' *Personality* be applied to none, but intelligent Agents, however not by *that* alone, for by *that* alone they cannot be distinguished from each other, and must therefore be discriminated and named from some peculiar *Acts* and *Offices*, which *each* performeth for *Himself*, and maketh it his proper *Act*. Now these are such, as are more *Common*, and *General*, as Praising and A-

doring

doring their Creator, or more *particular*, as executing any *special* Charge and Command, which *He* giveth them. Thus *Michael* the ^a Commander of his Hosts and the ^b Prince of his People *Israel* is from his *Name* and *Office* that *particular Person*: And *Gabriel*, who ^c flyeth upon his *Messages*, and expoundeth the *Visions*, is therefore both by his *Name* and *Office* a *particular Person* also: The ^d *Angel* that appeared to the *Shepherds*, is likewise a *Person* in the Discharge of his *Evangelical Office*, and the same *Angel* with the ^e *Multitude of the Heavenly Host* are so many several *Persons* joyning in the more Common *Act* of Praising GOD, and saying, *Glory be to GOD in the Highest, &c.*

The same may be said of the *Angels*, who appeared to the *Patriarchs* and the People of *Israel*, recorded in the *Old Testament*, and the other *Angels* mentioned in the *New*, especially in the *Revelation*: From all these Instances it is plain, that in *Angels* the *Essence* is *One* thing, the *Personality* another. Their *Essence* is the *same*, and by that there is no *Distinction* of them from one another: Their *Offices* and *Acts* are *Personal*, and from thence they are properly *denominated* and *distinguished*:

It is so likewise among *Men*: The *Essence* is the *same*, the *Personality* riseth from the peculiar *Agency* of every Man in the *Relation* wherein he standeth, whereby his *Action* is peculiarly his *own*.

^a Rev. XII. 7. ^b Dan. X. 13, 21. XII. 1. ^c IX. 21. VIII. 16. Luke I. 11, 19, 26. ^d Luke II. 9. ^e v. 13.

In *Uncreated* Being also the *Essence* is the *same*, and the *Persons* are *severally* distinguished, and denominated from their respective *Acts*, *Office* and *Relation*: But whereas in *Created* Beings the same *General Essence* is parted and divided to all of the *same Kind*, and so becometh *Specifical*, in *Uncreated* Being, as the *Essence* is also the *same*, it is *impossible* to be *parted* into several *Portions*, so as to constitute *Individuals* like *Angels*, or *Men*, for the *Divine Being* admitteth not of any *Specifical* Distribution, because it is *necessarily One*, and therefore out of the *reach* and *possibility* of *Multiplication* or *Division*: and being thus *necessarily indivisible*, we cannot say, that the *Persons* are *Sharers* of any *Part*, where *Each* is *entirely* possessed of the *Whole*. In *Men* and *Angels*, tho' their *Common Nature* and *Essence* is the *same*, yet the *Substance* is multiplied with the several *Individuals*; but in the *GOD-Head*, the *Eternal Three*, the *Father*, the *Son* and the *Holy Ghost* have *One undivided Substance*, from whence is derived the *Unity* of the *GOD-Head*, and a *different* manner of *Subsisting* and *Acting* according to their several *Relation* and *Office*, from whence is derived the *Plurality* of *Persons*.*

* This cannot be better expressed than in the Words of that clear and most judicious Writer the Excellent Mr *Hooker*, who considereth the Constitution and Distinction of the Persons in the same Substance or Essence as formed by their several Propertys or Difference of Subsisting: to which if we add the peculiar Acts and Operations of each, the Distinction is still more evident. These indeed are only Consequents of that first and Fundamental Discrimination of one from the other by the several Propertys. The Distinction is Eternal: The several Offices and Operations

By a *Person* then in the GOD-Head we do not understand the *Divine Essence* absolutely considered, nor yet a *meer Name* and *Quality*, but a true and real *Subsistence* in the *same Essence*, distinguished by *such Acts* and *Relations* as, among us, are diverse from the *Essence*, and yet form the *Persons* of Men: and although we do not read in the *Scriptures*, that there are *Three Persons*, yet we plainly read, that GOD hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, who is the *Brightness of his Glory*, and the express Image or

perations are discovered in the Course of the Divine Dispensations in the Creation and Redemption of the World.

“The Lord our God is but one God. In which Indivisible Unity notwithstanding we adore the Father, as being altogether of himself; we glorify that consubstantial Word, which is the Son; we bless and magnify that Co-essential Spirit eternally proceeding from both, which is the Holy Ghost. Seeing therefore the Father is of none, the Son is of the Father, and the Spirit is of both, they are by these their several Properties really distinguishable from each other. For the Substance of God, with this property *to be of none*, doth make the Person of the Father; the very self-same Substance in number, with this Property *to be of the Father*, maketh the Person of the Son; the same Substance having added unto it the Property of *proceeding from the other two* maketh the Person of the Holy Ghost. So that in every Person there is implied both the Substance of God, which is one; and also that Property which causeth the same Person really and truly to differ from the other two. Every Person hath his own Subsistence, which no other besides hath, although there be others besides of the same Substance: Eccl. Pol. Book V. 5 t. pag. 259. MDCCCV.

I will only add, concerning the Father, that *His being of none* maketh Him the First Person: *The Son being of Him* maketh Him the Father. Thus much according to the State now recited, we may most surely and safely collect from the Revelation it self; but in *what* manner, *How* the Son is the Begotten of the Father, and *How* the Holy Ghost proceedeth from the Father and the Son is utterly incomprehensible, and here we rest our Faith upon the Declaration of the Scriptures, and the Veracity of God.

Character of his Person: not of his *Substance* alone, but peculiarly of his *Personal Subsistence*, for so the Word here used *Hypostasis* signifieth, and He is the *Son* not of the *Deity* or *Divine Essence* at large, for *That* neither *begetteth*, nor is *begotten*, but of the *Father* in that *Essence*, who *begetteth* the *Son* also in the *same*. So that *Person* is here taken not for the *Face* or *Countenance*, or *Superficial Appearance*, but for the very *Nature* and *Essence* of the *Father* communicated to, and *impressed* in the most complete and distinct *Character* upon the *Son*: Even as among *Men* the *Son* is truly the *Express Image* of his *Father*, with his *Father's whole Nature* and *Essence* derived unto him, and stamped, like a perfect *signature* upon him.

Person and *Essence* being thus distinct in *themselves*, as well as in our *Conceptions* of *them*, the *Scriptures*

Secondly, Do speak of God according to that *Distinction*, sometimes *Essentially*, and sometimes *Personally*, as the *Divine Attributes* are represented in *general*, and the *Divine Oeconomy* and *Transactions* with Mankind in *particular*: *Essentially* with respect to the *Unity*: *Personally* with respect to the *Relation*, *Name* and *Actions* of the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost*, whereby they are so distinguished that, tho' the *Essence* be the *same*, *Each* hath his proper *Personality*, and *One* of these cannot be the *Other*.

Thus the *Father*, who *begetteth*, is not the *Son*, who is *begotten*: the *Father*, who *sendeth*, is not the *Son*, who is *sent*, nor the *other way* is the *Son*.

The Persons distinguished so, as 305
Son the Father. ^a For GOD so loved the World, that
He gave his only Begotten Son, and sent Him into
the World. Again, the Holy Ghost, who proceed-
eth from the Father, and the Son, and is sent
by the Father and the Son, is not the Father nor
the Son, from whom He proceedeth, and by whom
He is sent; nor the other way is the Father and
Son the Holy Ghost. This Distinction in the Mis-
sion and Proceeding of the Third from the First
and the Second is evident, where our Saviour
speaketh of the ^b Comforter, which is the Holy
Ghost, whom, saith He, the Father will send in my
Name; — there is the Mission from the Father,
and in the next Chapter, ^c But when the Com-
forter is come, whom I will send unto you from the
Father, --- there is the Mission from the Father,
and the Son: --- ^c even the Spirit of Truth, which
proceedeth from the Father: --- there is his Procef-
sion from the first Person, and the next Chapter
declareth his Proceffion from the second also, and
that not separately, but jointly from Both together.
^d Howbeit when He the Spirit of Truth is come, He
will guide you into all Truth --- He shall not speak of
Himself --- He shall ^d glorifie me, for He shall receive
of mine, and shall shew it unto you. All things, that
the Father hath, are mine, therefore said I, He shall
take of mine, and shall shew it unto you: Here the
Holy Ghost is equally referred to, and proceedeth
from the Father and the Son, and what He re-
ceiveth of the Son, He receiveth of the Father
also. So then in these passages the Order and
Oeconomy of the Divine Persons is set down:

^a John III. 16, 17. ^b XIV. 26. ^c XV. 26. XVI. 13. ^d 14, 15.

The *Father* as the fountain, is neither *begotten*, nor *Proceedeth* from, nor is *sent* by *Any*. The *Son* is *begotten* of, and *sent* by, and *receiveth* from the *Father*: the *Holy Ghost* is *sent* by, and *receiveth* of, and *proceedeth* from *Both*: the *Holy Ghost* therefore is the *Spirit* both of the *Father*, and the *Son*: ^a*GOD hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your Hearts, crying ABBA, Father.* According to our Lord's most solemn Assertion in the tenth of St *John*, often mentioned before, and still to be mentioned again, the *Father* and the *Son* are ^b*One*; and the *Spirit* also is necessarily *One* with *those*, whose *Spirit* He is. For if the *Spirit* of Man, who is composed also of *Body*, be, during this *united* State, *one* with the *Man*, and upon its *Reunion* will be *one* with *him* again, much more the *Spirit* of the *Father* and the *Son* being the same *Spirit*, must necessarily be *One* with the *Father* and the *Son*, *distinct* in *Person*, in *Essence* the *same*, which is just the *Reverse* of the *Essence* and *Personality* of *Man*, where the *Essence* is *Distinct*, as consisting of *Body*, *Soul*, and *Spirit*, and the *Person* *one* and the *same*: from whence we may understand that however *Analogical* Conceptions will help us to such *Apprehensions* of the Divine Being, as our present Facultys are capable of, that there is no arguing in a *Strict Literal* manner from *Human* Personality to *Divine*.

The Distinction is equally clear in the *Old Testament*, as we now can read it by the Light of the *New*, and the *Office* of the *Holy Ghost* is also the

same, particularly that, which St Peter witnesseth unto, ^aFor the Prophecy came not [ever] in old time by the Will of Man, but Holy Men of GOD spake, as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

This Distinction will still be more Evident as we go along to consider the *special Revelation* of the *Father*, the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghost* given us in the *Scripture*.

1. Not to insist on these Passages of the *Old Testament*, which are now controverted, but still evident enough according to the Exposition of the *Ancient Jews*, I shall observe, that the GOD spoken of, and declared in the *Scriptures*, hath from the *Creation* exhibited *Himself* as acting in a Divine *Oeconomy*, and manifesting a *Co-operation* of *Persons* in the first Production of all things, and in all his Dispensations, and Transactions with Mankind ever since.

This is Originally founded on the *first* Chapter of ^b*Genesis*, where we discern the *Co-operation* of certain *Persons* concurring in the *Creation* of the World: The *Father* willing, and Commanding: The *Son*, ^c*by whom also He made the Worlds*, the mighty Efficient Word, which out of *Nothing* called the whole *Creation*, and commanded *Light* out of *Darkness*, and *Order* to rise up from *Confusion*: The *Holy Spirit* of GOD ^d*moving* or hovering upon the face of the *Waters*: And upon the *sixth* Day, when GOD is introduced saying, ^e*let us make Man in our Image, after our Likeness*, the words have not anciently

^a 2 Pet. I. 21. ^b Gen. I. ^c Hebr. I. 2. ^d Gen. I. 2 ^e v. 26.

been interpreted as a *Royal* Form of Speech, but in the way of *Advice* and *Consultation*, as spoken by the *Father* to the *Son*, and the *Holy Spirit*.

There are in all the *Scriptures*, so far as I can recollect, but *five* Instances besides, that I can think any thing to the Purpose, of a *singular* Person speaking in the *first* Person in the *Plural* Number. The *first* is in the third of *Genesis*,
'And the Lord God said, Behold the Man is become as one of us--- Which Speech, however understood, is addressed to *Persons* in *Equality* with *Himself*, and therefore not to *Angels*, nor to any *Creature*, for they are not like unto God, nor to any whom He calleth *One of Us*, and so this Text is another Proof of a *Trinity*, at least of a *Plurality* of *Persons* in the *GOD-Head*. The *second* is in the *Eleventh* Chapter, where upon that Presumptuous Attempt of *Building a City and Tower, whose Top might reach to Heaven*, Men seemed to reach at *Heaven itself* with *Folly* equal to their *Pride*, God is represented as coming down to confound their Language, and He speaketh in the *Plural* Number, *Go to, let us go down and there confound their Language*. This again is not a *Solitary* Speech: it is directed to some *Persons* or other, but whether to the other *Persons* in the *Trinity*, or to *Angels* only, doth not so evidently appear as in the first Instance, because *Angels*, as in other Cases they are *Ministers* of God's *Judgments*, in this also might be employed to confound the Language of Men: However the Words are directed to some *Per-*

sous, whom He calleth upon, for the Expression in the Original is the *same*, which the Children of Men used to one another, ^a *Go to, let us make Brick*, ^b *Go to, let us build*, say they. ^c *Go to, let us go down*, saith the Lord. If this be spoken to the *same* with the First, it is another Proof of a *Plurality* of *Persons* in the *GOD-Head*: If to *Angels*, it is a Proof, that the *Plural* Number tho' used by, is not *used* of a *Singular* Person only. The *third* and *fourth* are in the first Book of *Kings*, and the second Book of *Chronicles*, where when *Ahab* answereth *Jehosaphat*, ^d *there is one Man by whom we may enquire*, he manifestly includeth *Jehosaphat*, as *Jehosaphat* had before included him, when he asked him: ^e *Is there not here a Prophet of the Lord besides, that we might enquire of Him?* For when *Ahab* speaketh of Himself alone, he addeth, *but I hate him*. So when *Ahab* asketh *Micaiah*, ^f *Shall we go up to Ramoth Gilead to Battel*, he speaketh in the *Person* of *Jehosaphat*, as well as his *Own*: For when he speaketh in his *own* *Person*, it is in the *singular* Number. ^g *How many times shall I adjure thee?* The fifth we meet with in the Answer which *Artaxerxes* who was *Smerdis* the *Magian* an *Impostor* and *Usurper* of the Throne from *Cambyses*, called here *Ahasuerus*, sent unto *Rehum* and his *Fellows*. ^h *The Letter which ye sent unto us, hath been read plainly before me*: Here the King speaketh both in the *Singular*, and the

^a Gen. XI. 3. ^b v. 4. ^c v. 7. ^d 1 Kings XXII. 8. ^e v. 7.
^f v. 15. ^g v. 16. See 2 Chron. XVIII. 5, 6, 7, 14, 15. ^h Ezra
 IV. 18.

310 *Old Testament. Those from Plural Number*: In the *Plural* he may possibly include his *Council*, in the *Singular* he goes on in his own Person and commandeth the Work to cease. However supposing, he speaketh of Himself in the *Plural*: It is but *one* Instance and the *most Modern* in the *Bible*. The style, we see is presently turned, and he *enacteth*, and *decreeth* in the *Singular* Number, but if this Style in the *Plural* was usual, we might expect to meet with it, if any where, in the *Edicts* and *Laws* of Princes, especially in the *Pompous* Titles of the *Eastern* Kings, and yet the *Contrary* appeareth. For *Ancient* to this ^a *Nebuchadnezzar's* Decrees run in the *Singular* Number, so do those of ^b *Cyrus*, and of ^c *Darius* the *Mede*, or *Cyaxares* the *second*, and *later* than this, the *Decrees* of ^d *Darius Hystaspes*, and ^e *Artaxerxes Longimanus*, called *Ahasuerus* in the Book of *Esther*: the great Patron and Favourer of the *Jews*. These are *Authoritys* sufficient to overthrow so ill grounded a Presumption of the *Royal Style* in the *Edicts* and *Decrees* of *Kings*.

And yet so low do the Exceptions of *Heretical* Objectors run, that they bring Instances of *single* Persons speaking in the *Plural* Number, where it is manifest, that they do speak in the Name of *others* as well as their *own*: Thus to confront the Text in *Genesis* *Bildad* the *Shubite* is produced as a *Monarch* speaking in the *Royal Style*. ^f *How long will it be ere ye make*

^a Dan. III. 29. IV. 1, 2, &c. ^b Ezra I. 1, 2. ^c Dan. VI. 26. ^d Ezra VI. 8, &c. ^e VII. 21. See *Esther* VIII. 7. ^f Job XVIII. 2.

an End of words? mark and afterwards we will speak. But however *Bildad* might be a *Prince* or a *Potentate*, it is not common to use the *Royal Style* in *private* Conference and Conversation, and here he manifestly includeth either *Elihu*, or the *others* with Himself. *Mark and we will speak*, ^a*Wherefore are we counted as Beasts?* Had he spoken thus *Royally* of Himself alone, he would have said, wherefore are *we* counted as *a Beast*: The *Royal Style* it self, however it setteth forth in the *Plural*, still in the *Oblique Cases* maketh out the *singularity* of the Person: as to instance in *one* for a *thousand*, 'Tis the style of our Kings *Witness our Self*, and not *our selves*.

But further, when in another place he saith, ^b*We are of yesterday, and know nothing*, I suppose, he speaketh not as a *King* of Himself alone, but doth rather make an humble and just Acknowledgment of Human Ignorance, at least of his own, and his Friends about him. *Eliphaz*, who first answered *Job*, was, we may suppose, a *King* also, but he spoke in the *Name* of his Friends as well as his *own*, when he said, *'If we assay to commune with thee, wilt thou be grieved?* and in the *place*, I cited before for *Traditional Religion*, the Form is Comprehensive of more Persons, than the Speaker: ^d*What knowest thou, that we know not? what understandest thou, which is not in us?* These Objections are poor indeed, and these Instances are *more properly*, because *most truly* urged on our side of the

^a Job XVIII. 3. ^b VIII. 9. ^c IV. 2. ^d XV. 9.

Question: The *Plural* Form manifestly implieth a *Plurality of Persons*, and the *Old Testament* affordeth not the shadow of an Authority for their Interpretations.

In the *New Testament*, I find one Passage alleged for the *Royal Style*, and that indeed is from our *Saviour* Himself in his Conference with *Nicodemus*, where He hath these Words: ^a *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, we speak that, we do know, and testifie that, we have seen, and ye receive not our Witness*: If our Lord speaketh here as a *King*, the Style should run, *We say unto thee*: That is the *grand Magisterial Way*; but He speaketh indifferently in both Numbers: ^b *If I have told you Earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of Heavenly things?* Tho' He, and *Nicodemus* only were together, yet He speaketh, as if others had elsewhere spoken the same, and to *Nicodemus*, as if more were present, or these things had been spoken to more than *Nicodemus* only. With *Nicodemus* He includeth the *Jews*, to whom these things had been spoken, and with Himself He includeth at least the *Baptist*. Concerning whom He telleth the *Jews* very appositely to what he doth here discourse with *Nicodemus*, ^c *There is another that beareth Witness of me: ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the Truth. He testified what he had seen, and they received not his Witness.* Appositely to this again in the same Form of Speech our Blessed Lord discourseth with the *Woman of Samaria*, there speaking of the *Jews*

^a John III. 11. ^b v. 12. ^c V. 32, 33.

as well as Himself, as He was one of that *People*. ^a*Ye Worship, ye know not what; we know what we Worship; for Salvation is of the Jews.* When He speaketh of Himself alone, *Jesus* saith unto her, ^b*I that speak unto thee am [he] that is Messias, which is called Christ.* If it be still insisted upon, that our *Saviour* speaketh to *Nicodemus* as a *singular* Person, we must remember, that in all other Instances He declined the *Title*, *Pomp* and *Majesty* of an *Earthly King*; and on the other side we may allege, that He speaketh not in his *own* Name *alone*, but in the *Name* of the *Father* and the *Holy Spirit* also. To what he saith, *Ye receive not our Witness*, we may apply those words of his to the *Jews*, ^c*The Father Himself, which hath sent me, hath born witness of me.* As for *Testimony* so for *Judgment* likewise, ^d*He telleth them: Yet if I judge my Judgment is true, for I am not alone, but I, and the Father that sent me.* I will not bring that place, where he tells his *Disciples*, ^e*Ye shall leave me alone, yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me*; which yet is full and clear, when we consider that other place, ^f*I and my Father are One.* The *Apostles* also use the same Forms of Speech, and yet it is not pretended, that they were *Kings*. *St Paul* speaketh thus in ^ghis own and *Barnabas's* Name, and in the Name of those, whom he joyneth with Himself in the Head of his *Epistles*, or of all the ^h*Apostles*. So doth *St Peter*; and so *St John* in words very apposite to

^a John IV. 22. ^b v. 26. ^c V. 37. ^d VIII. 16. ^e XVI. 32. ^f X. 30. ^g 1 Cor. IX. 5, 6. ^h IV. 9, 10.

314 *The Place of Gen. vindicated.*

those he recordeth of our Lord in his Gospel.
^a *That which was from the Beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our Eyes, which we have looked upon, and our Hands have handled of the Word of Life, That which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you. More needeth not be said; this is sufficient, if any thing can be so, to take away the very poorest Pretence to Cavilling; and less could not be said, when the Adversarys of the Faith shall think the Instance of Bildad the Shuhite and our Lord's Discourse to Nicodemus enough to shew, That God spake after the Manner of Kings, when He said, Let us make Man in our own Image &c. Moses, who was directed by God, that said it, borrowed not his Phrase from the Style of Kings in his Time. Whether Kings afterwards, when they affected Divinity, did not rather borrow this Form from Him is a Problem for the Curious, and an Argument that the Form is not Human, but Divine.*

This Form of Speech therefore as used in the first of *Genesis* infers a *Plurality of Persons*: the *Work* to be done implieth the *Divinity*, and the *Pattern* proposed, the *Unity of Essence*: To create is proper to the Divinity alone, and the *Image* being *one*, shews the *Essence* to be *one* likewise. If God spake then unto *Angels*, that were to make them *Workers*, and *Creators* together with Himself: if to *them* or to any *Creatures* of higher Rank and Excellency, that were to create Man in *their* Image, and after *their* Likeness, as well, as his *own*; but Man was created *only*

in the *Image* of GOD, and after his Likeness, and therefore as a *Plurality* of Persons is expressed, the *Unity* of *Essence* is evidently concluded.

2. After the *Creation*, both during the short Continuance of Man in *Innocence*, and all along after the *Fall*, The Word the Son is understood to be the *Person* who appeared to *Adam* and his Posterity before the Flood, and to the *Patriarchs* after: whose Presence was signified by the Appearance of *Angels*, among whom was One of Sovereign Dignity, who for that Reason is eminently so called: This was the *Angel*, which appeared to *Moses* ^a in *Horeb*, and afterwards came down upon ^b *Mount Sinai*, two different summits rising from the same Foundation; In *Horeb* GOD called to *Moses* out of the burning Bush, and from *Sinai*, which *Moses* also calleth *Horeb*, ^c He delivered the *Law* unto the Children of *Israel*: The same *Angel* whom *Moses* in the Books of ^c *Exodus* and ^c *Deuteronomy* calleth by the Name of GOD, and the Lord, St *Stephen* also in the ^d *Acts* calleth GOD and the Lord. For there appeared to him an *Angel of the Lord*, and the Voice of the Lord came unto him, saying, *I am the GOD of thy Fathers*, This was in the *Wilderness* of *Mount Sinai*. And when the Lord descended afterwards upon *Mount Sinai* and gave the *Law*, saying, *I am the Lord thy GOD*, tho' *Moses* maketh no mention then of an *Angel*, yet St *Stephen* in his Speech before the Coun-

^a Exod. III. 2, 4, 6. ^b XIX, XX. ^c Deut. V. 2. ^d Acts VII. 30, 32, 33.

cil upbraideth that present Generation, and possibly their Fathers also, ^a *who have received the Law by the disposition of Angels, and have not kept it*, referring doubtless to the *Schechinah* which always attended the Divine Presence. And where the Person speaking as well as appearing is more eminently called the *Angel*, no less than the *Eternal Son*, even the Lord our God Himself is there to be understood. This is evident by comparing the several Passages which record these Appearances in the Books of the *Old Testament* alone, but still more evidently, as they are applied and explained in the *New*. This is He, who spake unto ^b *Moses face to face, as a Man speaketh to his Friend*; the same, who appeared to ^c *Joshua*, stiling Himself the *Captain of the Lord's Host*, before whom *Joshua* fell upon his face, and did worship, and said unto Him, *what saith my Lord unto his servant?* And the *Captain of the Lord's Host* said unto *Joshua*, *Loose thy shoe from off thy foot, for the place whereon thou standest is holy*. This is the same, of whom *Isaiah* speaketh, when he relateth, ^d *In the Year that King Uzziab died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a Throne, high, and lifted up, and his Train filled the Temple. Above it stood the Seraphims — and one cried unto another and said, Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of Hosts, the whole Earth is full of his Glory*. For according to *St John* reciting what the Lord commanded afterwards concerning the *Jews*, ^e *These*

^a Acts VII. 53. ^b Exod XXXIII. 11. ^c Josh. V. 14, 15.
^d Is. VI. 1, 2, 3. ^e John XII. 47.

things said Esaias when he saw his Glory, and spake of Him. This is the Lord their God whom they provoked and tempted in the WilderNESS, as it is Historically related by ^a Moses, ^b recorded in the Psalms, and applied by St Paul ^c unto Christ, How oft did they provoke Him in the WilderNESS, and grieved Him in the Desert, Now these things the Apostle telleth us were our Examples, Let not us therefore tempt Christ as some of them also tempted; and in the Epistle to the Hebrews the Apostle applieth the Passage recorded in the Book of Numbers, and the Psalms most expressly to our Lord and Saviour. For of Christ he is speaking, when he saith, To day, if ye will hear his Voice. He it is, who resteth from his Works the seventh day. He it is, Who sware in his Wrath, they shall not enter into his Rest. He it is, to whom the Father speaketh in the Psalms, as is testified by the Apostle to the Hebrews: Thy Throne, O GOD, is for ever and ever, a Sceptre of Righteousness is the Sceptre of thy Kingdom. Thou Lord in the Beginning hast laid the Foundation of the Earth. And unto which of the Angels, but unto Christ alone, both the Lord, and the Son of David, said He at any time, Sit thou on my Right hand, until I make thine Enemys thy Footstool. I am the first, and I am the last, saith the Lord in ^d Isaiah: I am the first, and I am the last, saith Christ in the Revelation.

^a Exod. XVI, XVII, XXXII. Numb. XI, XIV, XVI, XX, XXI, XXV, XXVI. ^b Psal. LXXVIII, CVI, XCV, CX. ^c 1. Cor. X. Hebr. III, IV, I. ^d Isai. XLI, XLIV. Rev. I. 17. XXII. 13.

3. The *Holy Ghost* also is distinguished in the *Old Testament*, not only as He is called the *Spirit* of GOD, but as He is set forth and spoken of as a *several Person*. Many Instances are not to be produced, but those, we meet with, are exceedingly clear and strong. He is the *Spirit of GOD*, ^a *which moved upon the Face of the Waters*, even as a Bird hovereth and broodeth over her Eggs, an Expression this suitable to the Form, He did afterwards assume, when He ^b *descended like a Dove*: And accordingly *Elihu*, who doubtless was acquainted with the true History of the Creation, ascribeth the Creation of Man unto Him, as He is the *Spirit of the Lord GOD, who formed Man from the Ground, and breathed into his Nostrils the Breath of Life*; See how conformable his Words are to the History of *Moses*: ^d *The Spirit of GOD hath made me, and the Breath of the Almighty hath given me Life*. I do not suppose, that *Elihu* had seen the History of *Moses*, but that there was a true account handed down in the Sacred Line, and among the Worshipers of the true GOD: We find the *Spirit* spoken of again as a distinct *Person* from the *Father* and the *Son* in the sixth Chapter of *Isaiah*, ^e *And I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, whom shall I send, and who will go for us*, that is, from and for the *Father*, and the *Son*, and the *Holy Spirit*; *Then said I, Here am I, send me*: The following Words are cited by our Lord Himself, and referred to in all the *Evangelists*,

^a Gen. I. 2. ^b Mat III. 16. ^c Gen. II. 7. ^d Job XXXIII. 4.
^e If. VI. 8.

and by St *Paul* in his *Epistle* to the ^a*Romans*, but the direct and fullest application of them to the *Holy Spirit* is made by the same *Apostle* in his *Sermon* to the *Jews*, when he first came a Prisoner to *Rome*, ^b*Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the Prophet unto our Fathers, saying, Go unto this People and say, &c.* In the Book of ^c*Exodus* we read, that when *Moses went in before the Lord to speak with Him, he took the Vail off until he came out*; and from St *Paul* we learn, that *the Lord is that Spirit*, in whose Presence *Moses* took off the Vail: and the same Spirit, the same Lord St *Paul* calleth also the *Spirit of the Lord*. ^d*Now the Lord is that Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is Liberty.* In this distinct sense likewise the Words are to be understood in the fifty first *Psalms*, where *David* prayeth unto God, ^e*Cast me not away from thy Presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the Joy of thy Salvation, and uphold me with thy free Spirit.* Answerable to this is that Acknowledgment of GOD's Omnipresence, ^f*Whither shall I go then from thy Spirit, or whither shall I flee from thy Presence?* This is that *Spirit*, for disobeying of whom St *Stephen* upbraideth the *Jews*, ^g*Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost, as your Fathers did, so do ye.* And this is He also, *who spake by the Prophets*, according to the Testimony of St *Peter*, *That Holy Men of GOD spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.*

^a Rom. XI. 8. ^b Acts XXVIII. 25. ^c Exod. XXXIV. 34.
^d 2 Cor. III. 17. ^e Psal. LI, 11, 12. ^f CXXXIX. 7. ^g Acts VII. 40.

320 *The Unity again considered.*

Thus stand these *Points* in the *Old Testament*, as most of the *Authoritys* for them are applied in the *New*; and this is enough to shew that in the *Law* and the *Prophets* that as the *Unity* is asserted in the most absolute Exclusion of *more* God's than *One*, together with *Unity* so asserted a *Plurality* of *Persons* is asserted also, but this Declaration is more full and expresse in the *Gospels* and *Epistles*, let us therefore take all these *Points* over again, as *they* are further revealed in the *New Testament*, and then in Correspondence to the *Old* we shall find the *Unity* of the God-Head is plainly asserted in the strongest Terms, and the *Divinity* and *Distinction* of the *Persons* evidently asserted also, while the *Name* and *Attributes* of the One God are as plainly ascribed to the *Father*, to the *Son*, and to the *Holy Ghost*, as the *Unity* of *Essence* is asserted.

1. For the *Unity* of the God-Head. Tho' ^a the *Scribe* was not inspired, who asserted it, and tho' his Assertion is properly to be referred to the Doctrine of the *Old Testament*, yet his Answer being approved of by our *Blessed Saviour* doth fully expresse the Truth according to what our Lord Himself had answered from *Moses* in the verses before ^b *Hear O Israel the Lord our GOD is one Lord*, and both by his own declaration, and by his approbation of the *Scribe* when he said unto Him, ^c *Thou hast said the Truth, for there is one GOD, and there is none other but He*, our Blessed Lord ratifies the *Doctrine* of the *Old Testament* and maketh it the *Doctrine*

a Mark XII. 32. b v. 29. c v. 32.

of the Gospel also. It is objected, that by this Declaration *Christ* excludeth Himself from the GOD-Head, and He cannot be GOD, if the *Lord our GOD is one Lord*, if there is *one GOD*, and *there is none other but He*: But our *Saviour* in this place, as *Moses* in the Book of *Deuteronomy* speaketh absolutely, that *the Lord our GOD is one Lord*: that the *JEHOVAH our GOD is one JEHOVAH*, and this *excludeth* not, but manifestly *includeth* whomsoever the *Name* and *Attributes* of *JEHOVAH* are *ascribed* unto. If therefore *they* be *ascribed* to the *Son*, this *excludeth* not the *Father*, if to the *Father* this *includeth* the *Son*, and so it may be said of the *Holy Ghost* likewise: For He also, as we have seen, is called *JEHOVAH*, and to Him also are the *Divine Attributes* ascribed. The GOD therefore whom we adore, is One *JEHOVAH*; we adore the *Father* and the *Son*, but the *Lord our GOD is one JEHOVAH*, and with the *Father* and the *Son* we adore the *Eternal Spirit*, yet *but One JEHOVAH*. The *Spirit* however *distinct* in *Personal Operation* must be of the *same Essence*, and the *Son* of the *same Nature* with the *Father*. Our Blessed *Saviour* while He asserteth the *Unity*, and repelleth the *Tempter* by the *Scriptures* where it is written, *Thou shalt Worship the Lord thy GOD, and Him only shalt thou serve*, in several Instances admitteth of Divine Adoration and Acknowledgment, nor rebuketh his *Disciple*, when he answered and said unto Him, *My Lord and my GOD*. I will only add, that in several parts of

^a Mat. IV. 10. ^b John XX. 28.

the Book of the *Revelation* He ^a *receiveth* the *Worship*, which his ^b *Angel refuseth*; and it must not be pretended, that Himself is the *Angel*, who refused the *Worship*: For it is expressly said in the same Chapter, ^c *I Jesus have sent my Angel to testify unto you these things*: as before in the nineteenth Chapter where the *Angel* in the same Terms ^d *forbiddeth* the *Worship*, we presently read that the *Apostle* saw ^e *Heaven opened, and he saw Him, whose Name is called the WORD of GOD. KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.*

2. It is with reference to this *Doctrine* and *Fundamental Declaration* of the *Unity*, that the *Apostle* St Paul in his first *Epistle* to the *Corinthians* averreth, that *there is none other GOD but One*, in opposition to all *false Gods* and *false Objects of Worship*, and then declareth, Who this *One GOD* is so far, as to include the *Father* and the *Son*. ^f *We know that an Idol is nothing in the World, and that there is none 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 Christ, by whom are all things, vnd we by Him; These Words are answerable to the Original Declaration of Moses comprising the One GOD, and the One LORD OF JEHOVAH: The Lord our GOD is One Lord; where the One GOD, and the One Lord is*

^a Revelat. V. 8, 9, &c. VI. 10. VII. 10, &c. ^b XX. 9.
^c v. 16. ^d XIX. 10. ^e v. 11, 12, 13, 16. ^f 1 Cor. VIII.
 3, 5, 6.

both by *Moses* and *St Paul* put in *Opposition* and *Contradistinction* to all other that are called *Gods* and *Lords*, as the *Heathen* had many of them.

Here then we have the *Father* and the *Son* asserted to be the ONE GOD and ONE LORD of us *Christians*; and in perfect *Unity* with the *Father*, and the *Son* we have also,

3. The *Holy Ghost*, who together with the *Father* and the *Son* is *Worshipped* and *glorified* in the *Forms* of ^a*Baptism*, and of ^b*Blessing*: In these *Forms* both the *Divinity*, and *Distinction* of his *Person* are asserted, and tho' commonly placed last in Order, He is *Co-eternal* and *Co-equal* with the *Father* and the *Son*, forasmuch as we are *equally Baptized*, and *Blessed* in his *Name*. In all those places, where the *Three Persons* are mentioned together the *Distinction* of the HOLY GHOST, as well, as of the *Father* and the *Son* is evident, in all those places where the *Name*, *Attributes* and *Operation* of GOD are ascribed unto Him, his *Divinity* is also evident, and in his several *Transactions* according to those *Attributes* both the *Divinity* and *Distinction* of his *Person* are manifested unto us.

At the ^c*Baptism* of our *Lord*, we meet the *Three Persons* together. The *Son* in the *Water*, the *Holy Ghost* in the *Air* like a *Dove*, the *Father* in the *Voice*. When our *Blessed Lord* maketh this just inference, ^d*How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to*

^a Matt. XXVIII. 19. ^b 2 Cor. XIII. 14. ^c Mat. III. 16, 17.
^d Luke XI. 13.

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them that ask him? The *Distinction* of *Persons* and particularly of the *Holy Ghost* appeareth. In several parts also of the *Epistles*, those especially of *St Paul* the same *Distinction* is expressed. I forbear the *Texts*, because I have already recited several, and must repeat them in the Progress of these Discourses.

The *Divinity* as well as the *Distinction* of his *Person* is clearly argued in the fifth Chapter of the *Acts*. For *St Peter* questioning *Ananias*,^a *Why hath Satan filled thine Heart to lie unto the Holy Ghost?* telleth him, *Thou hast not lied unto Men, but unto God:* and upon the same ground he asketh the *Wife*,^b *How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord?* To this I may add that noble Proof, which the *Apostle* giveth us in some Lines before the *Text* of the *Divine Attributes* being ascribed unto *Him*, since^c *what Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, neither have entered into the Heart of Man to conceive, even the Things, which GOD hath prepared for them that love Him, These hath GOD revealed to us by His Spirit:* Namely the *Eternal Purpose* and *Method* of our *Redemption*. *For the Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of GOD.* Words very full and exprefs. Searching and Revealing the *deep things* of *GOD* do manifestly comprize the *Unity* and *Divinity* of *Essence*, together with the *Distinction* of his *Person*.

And *Both* these the *Divinity* and *Distinction* of his *Person* are farther manifested in his *several Transactions* and *Operations*, as *He* is the

^a Acts V. 3, 4. ^b v. 9. ^c See I Cor. II. 9, &c. cited before.

and Distinction of his Person. 325

^a *Comforter*, the *Holy Spirit* who ^b *Sanctifieth* all the *Elect* Children of God, ^c whose *Temples* we are, ^d the Pledge and ^e Earnest of our *Salvation*, by whom we are *sealed unto the Day of Redemption*. The peculiar Province, He administereth, giveth us the Distinction: the Nature of his Office the Divinity of his *Person*; But this Argument I have treated of before, and shall have occasion to resume, and insist more largely on it, and tho' *touching* the *same* Subjects over again in *several* places may not be altogether so *accurate* as to treat them and absolve them *at once*, yet it may be more useful, by taking several views of them, and placing them in every Point, which can shew them in the best Light, and to the most Advantage for our Apprehension and Conviction of the Truth.

It is not necessary therefore to produce any more Passages at present for the *Divinity* and *Distinction* of the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghost*: From these, which I mentioned appeareth first the *Unity* of the *GOD-Head*: *There is none other God but One*. Secondly a *Plurality* of *Persons*, namely, the *Father*, the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghost* ever subsisting in this one *GOD-Head*, of the *same Essence* and *Attributes*, *Eternity* and *Power*, *Each* set forth under the *Name*, and proper *Appellations* of the One God: What is *revealed* therefore concerning *Each* of *these Three Persons* is to be *interpreted*, *received*, and *understood*

^a John XIV, XV, XVI. ^b Rom XV. 16. ^c 1 Corinth. VI. 11.
^d Theff. II. 13. ^e 1 Pet. I. 2. ^f 1 Cor. III. 16. VI. 19. ^g 2 Cor.
I. 22. V. 5. ^h Eph. I. 13. IV. 30.

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according to the Constant *Tenour* and *Analogy* of *Faith* relating to the Divine *Unity*, and the *Communication* of the *Eternal Essence* and *Attributes* ascribed to the *Father*, to the *Son*, and to the *Holy Ghost*.

The *Plurality* of *Persons*, and the *Unity* of *Essence* being thus far asserted by the *Scriptures*, at present I shall only subjoyn some few *Examples*, or give an Instance or two, in which the *Unity* and *Trinity* are *mutually* expressed in each other according to the obvious and necessary Interpretation of the Words.

1. The first shall be taken from the eighth Chapter of the *Epistle* to the *Romans*, where the *Apostle* is speaking of the *Spirit* of *Christ* and of *God*, which according to him is *one* and the *same Spirit*, and consequently both the *Son* and the *Spirit* are *One* with the *Father*. Speaking of the Opposition between the *Flesh* and the *Spirit*, that is between our *Carnal Minds*, and the *Spirit* of *God*, he concludeth, ^a *so then they, that are in the flesh, that is the meer Natural Man, cannot please God: But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any Man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.* Here the *Spirit* of *Christ* and of *God* is evidently the *same Spirit*, whose *Graces* are communicated to the *Children of God*. The *Juxta Position* the *Terms*, and their *Reciprocation* with one another is plain enough to convince those, who prefer that way of *Argumentation*, that the *Spirit* of *Christ*

and the Spirit of God is *One Spirit*, indeed it is much clearer than a bare independent unconnected Position of the *Terms* themselves can be. It is even almost as clear at first sight, as *Syllogism* it self, or the references of the *Terms* in *Mathematical* Demonstration, which may possibly be an Objection with those, who decry the use of that strict and conclusive way of *arguing* by the *syllogistical* Form, and prefer the disjoyned *Materials* to the *Building*, or a *Skeleton* to a *Man*; but I enter not now upon the Comparison, and will only infer with the *Apostle*,^a *Now if any Man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of His*: This Spirit therefore called afterwards the Spirit of God, and the^b *Spirit of Adoption*, as before the Spirit of God, and of *Christ*, is *one* and the *same* Spirit indivisibly proceeding from, and Eternally united to the *Father*, and the *Son*, yet *distinct* in *Person* from the *Father* and the *Son*, as the *Spirit of Adoption*, whereby we cry *ABBA, Father*, is not the *Father*, on whom we call, nor the *Son*, thro' whom we call upon the *Father*, but it is the^c *Spirit of his Son whom GOD hath sent forth into your Hearts crying ABBA, Father*. This considering the whole Chapter, and the correspondent Doctrine in the Epistle to the *Galatians*, and other places is the Necessary Meaning of the Words, easy, obvious and unconstrained, expressing the *Blessed Trinity* in the most intimate and closest *Unity*.

^a Rom. VIII. 9. ^b v. 15. ^c Gal. IV. 6.

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2. Another Passage, which I shall produce, where the *Trinity* and *Unity* are intimately expressed in each other is that clear, distinct and celebrated place in *St Paul's* first Epistle to the *Corinthians*, where he first premiseth and layeth down a *Rule*, whereby to try the Spirits, ^a*Wherefore I give you to understand, that no Man speaking by the Spirit of GOD calleth Jesus accursed: and that no Man can say, that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.* And then he referreth them to the Fountain and Dispencer of all Spiritual Gifts, both Ordinary and Extraordinary. ^b*Now there are diversities of Gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of Administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of Operations, but it is the same GOD, which worketh all in all: in the Gifts, and Administrations too.* For these *Gifts*, these *Administrations*, and *Operations*, however they are allotted, the *Gifts* to the *Spirit*, the *Administrations* to our *Lord*, the *Operations* to *GOD the Father*, are yet common, as all external Acts of the *Trinity* are, so that what One doeth that doeth the Other also. The *Three Persons* have each their peculiar Province, and these *Gifts*, *Administrations*, and *Operations* flow more peculiarly from that special Fountain, from which the *Apostle* here deriveth them; but we are taught that tho' the *Father*. ^c*doth the Works, the Son* ^d*worketh also as well as the Father; for what things soever the Father doth, these also doth the Son likewise.* Tho' *Gifts* are pe-

^a 1 Corinth. XII. 3. ^b v. 4, 5, 6. ^c John XIV. 10. ^d V. 17, 19.

cularly derived from the *Holy Ghost*, yet we are taught ^a *that every good and perfect Gift cometh down from the Father of Lights*; and tho' *Administrations* are especially ascribed unto our Lord, yet, that the ^b *Holy Ghost made Overseers over the Church of GOD, which He hath purchased with his own Blood*: And as our Lord, ^c *when he ascended up on high, and gave Gifts unto Men, gave some, Apostles: and some, Prophets, and some, Evangelists, and some, Pastors and Teachers*; GOD also hath ^d *set some in the Church, first Apostles, secondarily Prophets, thirdly Teachers, &c.* And tho' it is the same GOD *which worketh all in all*, yet it is presently said, *all these worketh that One and the self same Spirit, dividing to every Man severally, as He will.* Taking the *Blessed Trinity* in this view the *Distinction* is *Clear*, the *Unity* is *Evident*.

Having thus far stated the *Unity* of the God-Head, together with the *Divinity* and *Distinction* of the *Persons* therein revealed, I proceed now in the second place,

II. To argue according to these *Rules* of *Interpretation* upon them.

In preserving therefore the *Analogy* of *Faith*, we are to take, what is asserted, to be True and Positive in Fact according to the most natural and obvious signification of the Words, and then we are to interpret them agreeably and consistently with what we are taught concerning the *Nature* and *Attributes* of GOD.

^a Jam. I 17. ^b Acts XX. 28. ^c Ephes. IV. 8. 11. ^d 1 Cor. XII. 28. ^e v. 11.

The *Question* is not, whether we can account for the Point revealed, and solve all Difficultys upon the Principles of *Human Reasoning*, but we are to take them, as they are Revealed, and believe them according to that *Rule of Faith*, which is delivered in the *Scriptures*: only in the mean time let *Human Reason* satisfy all Natural Difficultys, which are more properly its province, before it pretendeth to reject Supernatural Truths, for indeed it is not able to account for the least Difficulty rising from the *Essence* of the meanest Creature, even such as a *Worm* or a *Straw*. It is forced to consent to Facts in *Nature*, notwithstanding it cannot account for them, and upon the same and higher Principles also it must assent to Facts of *Revelation*: In these the *Scriptures* are the *Rule*, so that whatsoever is there delivered concerning the *Father*, the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghost*, must be so interpreted, as with the *Unity of Essence* to preserve what is equally asserted, the Reality of the *Relation*, and the Distinction of the *Persons*: and therefore because *Each* is delivered to be GOD both by *Appellation* and *Attributes*, and *there is none other GOD but One*, and we are previously assured by a former *Revelation* of the *Unity* of the *Divine Nature*, That GOD is *One* of an *Eternal*, a most *Simple*, and *Indivisible Essence*, we must understand whatever is revealed concerning the *Father*, the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghost* in a sense consistent with the *Unity*, the *Indivisibility*, and *Eternity* of the GOD-Head.

That there should be *Three Persons* subsisting in *One Eternal undivided Essence*, is what we could

could have no *Apprehensions* of without a *Revelation*: But so it is *revealed*: And as we cannot say, it is *Impossible*, or a *Contradiction*, that it should be so, unless we could prove that God existeth after the manner of *Men*, we have nothing to do, but when we are satisfied of the *Revelation*, to believe, for supposing only the Fact, that *Three Persons* are equally possessed of the *same Divine Attributes*, even in our way of thinking, they must be *Equal* and *One* in *Essence*, as they are *distinct* in *Relation*: We are Judges only of the Fact in the Words in which it is delivered, and of the Evidence which is offered us, that the *Revelation* is from God, and therefore, where we find the *Divine Appellation* and *Attributes* ascribed, there we must acknowledge God to be expressed: and because *there is none other GOD, but One*, and the *Divine Appellation* and *Attributes* are ascribed to the *Father*, to the *Son*, and to the *Holy Ghost*, we do therefore by most certain Consequence collect, that the *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost* is *One GOD*.

To contend that the *Son* cannot, and that the *Holy Ghost* cannot be God, because God is One, is to *deny* the *Revelation*: and to argue from our Notions of *Created Existence*, which yet are short and imperfect, to a *Being Uncreated* and *Divine*, is upon the *Principles* of *Reason* it self most highly *absurd*, as it is absolutely *impossible*.

Of the *Existence* of God we are assured: But how He *existeth* we cannot discover further, than He is pleased to discover to us: That the *Creator existeth* not as we do, we must necessarily

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rily conclude, and when we consider the best Notions we have of *Existence*, we shall soon be convinced, that we have none at all of the *Divine Existence* beyond this necessary Conclusion, which is also *Revelation*, that HE IS: This is the Language of GOD Himself emphatically expressing *who He is* by his Existence. ^a*I AM THAT I AM*: and accordingly He commandeth *Moses* to tell the Children of *Israel*, ^b*I AM hath sent me unto you.*

We cannot form any Notions of *Existence*, but from our Own, or That of Things about us; but to suppose that GOD *existeth* as we do, giveth us not so much an *imperfect*, as a *false* Notion of the *Divine Existence*, and therefore tho' from *our own* we form to our selves some Notion of the *Divine Existence*, yet we must conclude, that GOD *existeth* in a manner most incomprehensible, of which we can frame no just and Adequate Conception: We are ignorant, after all our Vanity and proud Pretensions, we are vastly ignorant of our own *Existence*, in what Physical manner it is, much more then of our *Creator's*. The first Notion we have of *Existence*, is the *meer Being* of any thing, that is subject to our Senses, as of a *stock*, or a *stone*: the next is the *Being* of any thing accompanied with Life and Motion, as of *Plants* and *Animals*: the most perfect is of Rational Beings, as of *our selves*; But of our own *Existence* we have no further Notion, than that we *Respire*, and that we *Think*: If we would know *how* we do exist, the *Apostle* is the best *Philosopher*, refer-

^a Exod. III. 14. ^b Ibid.

ring us for the Continuance to the first Cause of our *Existence*, even to our great Creator. ^a*For in Him we live and move, and have our Being*, that is, we *exist* and *are* in Him.

It hath been the Extravagant Fancy of some *Notional* and *Brain-sick* Writers, that all we see, and Converse with, even our selves, are nothing but *Accidents* and *Appearances*: And with respect to the *Existence* of GOD, it is true, we are no more: Compared with Him we are but *Images* and *Shadows*, as to our *Bodys* in a continual *flux* and *fleeting*, till GOD shall *fix* the *necessary* Proportions, and glorify them for ever. As to our Souls, only *existing* by his free Will, and Almighty Power: nothing is *necessarily existent* but the Divine Essence, and however our Souls are *immortal*, they are made so by Him, *who created all things, and upholdeth all things by the Word of his Power*. But here our *Life* is properly compared to the ^b*shadow, that departeth*; and when we were *created in the Image of GOD*, the *Word* we so translate properly signifies a *Shadow*, or *Adumbration* of the *Deity*. And shall we then measure his *Existence* by *ours*? And boldly pronounce it *impossible* for the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost* to *subsist* in *One Eternal Essence*, when, if they do *subsist at all*, they must *subsist* in *Unity of Essence*.

Others there are, who in attempting to account for the *Existence* of GOD and *themselves*, proceed upon an *Atheistical* Scheme, and resolve the *Divinity* into *Intelligence*, *Life* and *Matter*, *eternally united*, and *differently modified*

^a ACTS XVII. 28. ^b PSAL. CIX. 23.

according to the several Kinds of *Beings*, and the successive Numbers of *Men*. This is no other than *Spinoza's* Hypothesis of *One Substance* revived: and God is supposed to be nothing but *Matter* endued with *Life* and *Intelligence*: It maketh the World *Eternal* according to its present Form, and Order of *Beings*, and denieth God to be a pure Spiritual Being by affirming, that were He *such*, He could not produce *any* Body or Being, such as is *Matter*, *different* from *His* own Nature; and therefore I would observe upon this Principle *He* can create *Nothing at all*: Thus these Men deny a *Creator*, they scoff at all Proofs of a Being *Eternal*, *Simple* and *Uncompounded* in his *Essence*, as *Contradictions* in *Terms*, and while they pretend that the Being of God, of *Him*, whom *we* believe in, is *not demonstrable*, or rather is *impossible*, *such* is their *Blasphemy*! they take upon themselves to *demonstrate* that there is *none* at all, that is *none besides*, or *distinct* from the *Universe*. Such is their *Conceitedness*, and *such* their *Philosophy*!

It is not my Purpose to *digress* and *debate*, I will only *observe* upon it, that unless the *Universe* be *Infinite*, they deny an *Infinite Being*: and if they suppose the *Universe* to be *Infinite*, they still deny an *Infinite Intelligence*; For they teach that there is some certain Quantity of *Intelligence* in the *Universe*, and by making it necessarily to *subsist* in, and to be *dependent on* a certain Quantity of *Matter*, they do *both* ways deny an *Infinite Intelligence*, and an *Infinite Being*.

Upon this Notion of *Intelligence* they would account for *the Existence*, and *Eternity* of *Human*

man Souls, making them *participant* or rather *Portions* of this *Universal Intelligence*, and of the same *Identical Nature* with the *Intelligence* it self: By the same Rule they may make the *Body* Eternal too: For by Death it is resolved into that *Universal Quantity* of *Matter* which is never *encreased* or *diminished*, just as the Soul reunith *with*, or mergeth *in* that *Universal Quantity* of *Intelligence*, (which likewise is never *encreased* nor *diminished*) from which it issued, and subsisted in the *Body* for a *time*. So they make both *Body* and *Soul* to be *parts* of the *Deity*, as this *Universal Intelligence* is *differently modified*, and *successively distributed* into *several Beings*, or *diverse Modifications* of *Matter*; otherwise according to them *GOD* Himself, (*such as theirs*, and then they say true) cannot make the *Soul* Immortal, nor extend a *Finite Being* created in *Time* to an *Infinity* of *Duration* to continue for *ever*.

The sum is this, that as the whole *Quantity* of *Intelligence* is *Eternally* united to the whole *Quantity* of *Matter*, some parts of this *Intelligence* are successively united to some parts or systems of *Matter*, and the several *Beings* of *Men* result from the *Different Modification* of *Matter* and *Spirit*, which I would observe must arise either from *Mechanical*, or *Fortuitous Changes* from one *Form* to another; and not from any *Direction* or *Spontaneous Operation* of the *Deity*: For the *Deity* is no *Distinct Being* it self, but the very same with this *Matter*, and *Spirit*, and *Life* under all the various and successive *Modifications* of them; and therefore
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it is absurd to ask, How the *Deity* *modifieth*, or is *connected* with the *Modifications* of *Matter* and *Spirit*; however it is not impossible to answer it; for if such a *Deity* can act *at all*, it modifies *it self*, and is *connected* with, because *it self* is nothing but, *these Modifications*.

The *Principle* these Men proceed on is the same, I took notice of in the Beginning, that Nothing is *true*, but what is *demonstrable*; this holdeth only in Subjects capable of *Demonstration*, and so far as they are so. But the *Divine Being*, or the *Being* of God is *demonstrable* as far as a *First Cause* is *demonstrable*, and all the *Attributes* also, so far, as from the *Effects* we collect, they are implied in the *First Cause*: Thus the *Natural Attributes* are demonstrable from the *Frame*, and *Order*, and *Disposition* of the *World*, and the *Moral* from the *Nature* of *Man*, and the *Obligations* he is under. But it is familiar with *these Men*, when we say that God is a *Pure Spiritual Uncompounded Eternal Omniscient Being* to say, *this is Absurd, this can't be demonstrated, this is impossible*. And while according to their gross Material Conceptions they pretend to *demonstrate* an *Intelligent Material God*, they *blasphemously* call the very *Notion* of an *Eternal Being* purely *intelligent existing from all Eternity* in an *Immense space Void of Matter*, a *Contradiction in Terms*; whereas there can be no *Contradiction*, but what *Limiteth* and *Circumscribeth* the *Deity*.

And because if the *Universe* or all *Parts* of the *World* *Material* and *Intelligent*, *Animate* or *Inanimate* is the *GOD* of *these Men* exclusive of any *superior independent Being*, all the *Evil* as
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well as *Good* in the World must be imputed to this *strange Deity*, they do therefore deny any *Original Distinction* between *Good* and *Evil*, and make *Moral Evil* as Mechanical and Necessary as they do *Natural*, tho' by the way *Natural Evil* is not Mechanical, nor in it self absolutely necessary, and not at all so finaly, but as it is poenal, and a Consequence of *Moral Evil* going before it. However these People represent *Moral Evil* as necessary and mechanical, as they esteem *Natural* to be, and no more avoidable than the Piercing of a *sword* thro' a *penetrable* Body, or the fall of a *stone* that is thrown up in the Air. So that according to them, there is no such thing as *Natural* or *Moral Evil* in the World; for *Natural Evil* is nothing but the *Disagreeableness of Natural Things to our Senses*, and *Moral Evil* is nothing, but *one Man's Actions being Disagreeable to another*: Such a *Deity* and such *Morality* are every way suitable to each other: This cancelleth all Obligation, and while the *whole* is God, there is also no *Object of Worship*, for why should *one part* of the *Divinity* worship *another*? or if *any* be supposed, a *stock* or a *stone* is as *proper* an *Object*, as *any other*, since the *Worship* must be addressed to a *Deity*, which is as *Essentially Material*, as it is *Intelligent*: The bare representation of these *Schemes* is sufficient to refute them, and for answer, we need not refer these excellent *Reasoners*, these *great Masters of Demonstration* to the *Bible*, and *Revelation*, which they do not admit of, nor to the *Modern Performances of Christian Writers* in a *Philosophical Consideration* of these Points, but

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to *Plato* and *Tully*, nay even to *Aristotle* himself, who, tho' he thought the *World* *Eternal*, as an *Eternal Effect* of the *Supreme Cause*, yet he made it not his *God*, nor disowned a superior, independent, un compounded and *Creative Power*. These Men sometimes speak, as if they acknowledged a *Deity* extrinsic, and diverse from the *World* as ruling & directing the whole; but it is impossible upon their *Plan* to conceive, that an *Eternal Intelligence*, is (in their way of speaking) the *ruling Principle*, which guideth all the *Motions* and *Operations* of *Matter*, since *Matter* is equally a *Principle* with this *Intelligence*, and equally constituteth their *Notion* of a *God*: otherwise, if *Matter* and *Intelligence* were independent *Principles*, *Intelligence*, according to them, could never have created *Matter*, and *Matter* could never have received *Life* and *Intelligence*. One part of this *Affair* may be true, as the other is highly *Blasphemous* and *Atheistical*: *Matter* is not capable of *Intelligence*, nor perhaps of *Life* any further than the *Motions* and *Sensations* of the several parts of an *Animal Body* can be called so. But I say, and so take leave of these *Impious Absurditys* for the present, that what cannot dispose *Matter* into its several *Forms*, can never direct it, nor act at all as a *superior Principle* upon it. *Matter* in their *Scheme* is as much the *Divinity*, as *Life* and *Intelligence*, equally *Eternal*, and equally *Unchangeable*.

These Men deny the *God* of *Heaven* whom *Nature* declareth unto them. Others, who own the *God* of *Nature* deny all *Revelation*, and those, with whom our more immediate *Contro-*
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verfly lies, *own* indeed a *Revelation*, but *deny* the the Doctrines *revealed*, in the *manner*, the *Scriptures* *Reveal them*, for this Reason chiefly, because in the plain naked Construction *they* are *incomprehensible*, we know not *how* or the *manner how these things should be*; and in their way of Construction they can *account*, as they imagine, *how these things are*, and so they take away all *Mystery*, and *deny* the *Divinity revealed*, as much as *others*, that *deny* the *Revelation*.

Here indeed is the *Stumbling-Block*, and *Rock of Offence*, when we will measure the Great God by *our selves*, and attempt *Impossibilities* to explain what is *incomprehensible*, (that is to explain what is *inexplicable*) and to argue upon *Human Principles*, as if because *three Men* or *three Creatures* make *three Individuals*, that therefore *Three Divine Persons* cannot subsist in *One Eternal Undivided Essence*. This is to *suppose*, what our own Reason will tell us is *not* to be *supposed*, that *GOD existeth*, as *we* do; But when once we consider, that *GOD must exist* in a manner vastly different from his *Creatures*, and that He hath revealed to us, that the *Father, Son* and *Holy Ghost* are *equal* of the *same Nature* and *Essence*, then we must, if we assent to the *Fact*, agree also, that *they* are of *one undivided*, because of an *Indivisible Essence*.

This *Argument* I shall pursue further in my next *Discourse*, and conclude at present with an *Application* of what hath been now delivered, to the *Opposers* of the *Christian Faith*, of whatever *Denomination* they may be, who *admit* a *Revelation*, and yet *deny* the Doctrines *revealed*.

1. The *Arians* and *Socinians* do both offend against *these Rules*, and departing from the *Analogy of Faith*, they depart from the *Analogy of Language* too; that is they *interpret* what is *revealed* concerning the *Son* and the *Holy Ghost* either too *grossly* or too *Figuratively*, making them either *Creatures* of a *different* and *divided Essence* from the *Father*, or *elie meer Names* and *Modes* without any *real subsistence* answerable to those *Names*, or the *Operations* ascribed unto them. If they assert the *Divinity* of the *Persons*, they make *Three GODS*: if they allow not the *Divinity*, they make the *Son* and the *Holy Ghost* *meer Creatures*: Here is no *medium*: they must be included in the *One* or the *Other*: There is and we can imagine *no middle* sort of Beings between *GOD* and his *Creatures*: *some* Beings, as the highest *Angels*, are indeed more Excellent, than *others*; but the greatest *Angel* is as much a *Creature*, as a *Worm*. It is absurd therefore and incongruous for the *Arians* and *Socinians* to give the *Name* and *Worship*, where they deny the *Essence* of *GOD*: and with regard to the *Son* especially, (for the *Holy Ghost* they have set aside) to *recognise* his *Titles*, and *deny* his *Divinity*, this is to rank Him under that part of the *Division*, which *St Paul* maketh in *Opposition* to the *true GOD*, among those *that be called Gods*, and flatly to *contradict* the *Apostle*, who placeth the *Son* on the *other side* in the *other Member* of the *Division* equally with the *Father*; But to us there is but *one GOD the Father*; and *one Lord Jesus Christ*.

2. Those, who allow the true and proper *Divinity* without acknowledging a *real Distinction* of *Persons*, do as expressly contradict the *Revelation*, as those, who own the *Distinction* and deny the *Divinity* of the *Persons*. Now the *same* way of *Interpretation*, which convinceth the *Sabellians*, and all that hold with them, of the *Divinity* of the *Persons*, that, *whatever* they are, they are truly *Divine*, would, if attended to, convince them of the *Distinction* too, that, as they are *truly* *Divine*, they are also *really* distinct: And the *same* Rule of *Interpretation*, which convinceth the *Arian* and *Socinian*, and all, that any way hold with them, of the *real* *Distinction* of the *Persons*, would, if applied to *that side* of the *Question*, convince them of the *true* *Divinity* likewise, that the *Father*, the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghost*, as they are *really* distinct, are also *truly* *Divine*.

The *Sabellians* in owning the *Divinity* understand the *Texts*, which ascribe this *Divinity* to to the *Son*, and to the *Holy Ghost*, in the *same* proper and obvious *signification* of the *Words*, as they understand those *Texts*, which ascribe it to the *Father*; and if, maintaining, as they do the *Unity* of the *God-Head*, they would take those *Texts*, which reveal a *Distinction* of *Persons*, in the *same* obvious *sense* with those, which assert the *Divinity*, they must then acknowledge that in the *Unity* of *Essence* there are *Three Persons*, and *One* *God*.

On the other Hand, if the *Arians*, and *Socinians*, and all, that think with them, would reflect upon *what* *Grounds* they acknowledge

this *Distinction* of *Persons*, they will find, there is as *strong* reason for acknowledging the *Divinity* also: And if all *Opposers* of the *Christian* Doctrine would upon the firm *Basis* of the *Divine* *Unity* consider what is expressly *revealed* concerning the *Divine* *Nature*, they must acknowledge the *Divinity* and *Distinction* of *Persons* to be clearly asserted in the *Unity* of *Essence*.

This then is the *Catholic* *Doctrine*, which owneth the *Divinity* with the *Sabellians*, and the *Distinction* of *Persons* with the *Arians*, but still in a true *consistent* sense with the *Divine* *Unity*. And we do therefore most *devoutly* *acknowledge*, and most *zealously* *claim* and *profess* the *Father*, the *Son* and the *Holy* *Ghost*, to be the *One* God of us *Christians*, from all *Eternity* subsisting together after a most *incomprehensible* and *unutterable* manner in the *same* *Nature* and *Essence*, of the *same* *Substance*, *Power*, and *Eternity*.

To whom therefore be ascribed all *Honour*, and *Glory*, and *Worship*: all *Might*, *Majesty*, and *Dominion* in all *Churches* of the *Saints* throughout all *Ages* unto the *End* of the *World*, and for *Ever* and *Ever*. Amen.





S E R M O N VII.

Preached *May* 1. 1729.

I COR. II. 13.

— *Comparing Spiritual Things
with Spiritual.*

IN proposing the *Analogy* of *Faith* as a *Rule of Interpretation*, I have insisted on no more, than what is required in the *Interpretation* of all other Writings, as well as the *Scriptures*; Other Writers may indeed be *inconsistent*, and *contradict* themselves, and yet where we do clearly know their *Principles* and *Opinions*, there, if *what* seemeth at first view a *Contradiction*, be nevertheless capable of

of a fair *Interpretation* consistent with their *known* Principles and Doctrines, we are certainly in all Justice obliged to understand, and *interpret* all *such* Passages in a *Consistent* sense: much more are we obliged to observe this *Rule* in the *Interpretation* of *Scripture*, because all, that own the *Divine Revelation*, must be previously assured, that there can be no real *Inconsistency*; but that there must be a perfect Harmony and *Agreement* of all the *Parts* throughout the *Whole*.

Where the *Grammatical* Construction lieth *indifferent* to two *Interpretations*, one of which maketh a *Consistent*, the other an *Inconsistent* sense, it is easy to determine *which* is to be preferred. So in *various Readings*, if according to *some* the sense be *Inconsistent*, and *Consistent* according to *other* Readings, we may easily determine *which* to follow, especially if the *Consistent* sense agreeth with the most *ancient* Authoritys, whether they be *Copys* or *Citations*: To this I may add, that when the *Construction* and *Interpretation* on the *one* side are *Natural* and *Easy*, on the *other* side *Forced* and *Constrained*: where the *Readings* on *one* side are *ancient* and well *supported*, on the *other* *doubtful*, and *suspected*: where on *one* side from a *Natural* Construction, and the most *Authentic* Readings there ariseth a *Natural* and *Consistent* Interpretation, and an *Unnatural* and *Inconsistent* sense is owing to a *forced* Construction, and *uncommon* Readings on the *other*, the *Rule* is plain; and these short Observations are sufficient to put an End at once to the whole *Arian* and *Socinian* Scheme, especially, if from the *Scriptures* it be carried on and

applied to the Earliest *Fathers* of the *Church*; and then there will appear a perfect *Symmetry* and *Proportion* between the *Scriptures*, and that *Uniform* Profession of the *Faith* built upon *them*, which the *Church* hath ever held fast and inviolable against all *Opposition* and *Innovation* whatever.

And thus the *sense* of the *Primitive* Writers confirmeth *that* of the *Scriptures*, not only as they may be presumed to know the *Doctrines* of the *Church*, and all those ^a things, *which are most surely believed among us*, but as these *Doctrines* do necessarily rise from these *Rules* of *Interpretation*: and as the *Fathers* agree to *this* sense of the *Scriptures*, we should without the *Fathers*, that is, if their *Writings* had never come to our Hands, *interpret* the *Scriptures* to the *same* sense, if we took them only, and understood them in the natural way of an Easy unstrained Construction, founded on the best and most Authentic Readings; especially when *this* sense made the *Scriptures* *Consistent*, and *the* sense our *Adversarys* put upon them, maketh them *inconsistent* with themselves in respect to *those* places particularly, where the *sense* on *both* sides is agreed in, as namely in the *Unity* of the *God-Head*.

When, I say, the *Fathers* agree with the *Scriptures* according to *these* Rules of Interpretation, I do not mean, nor intend, that *all* their *Expositions* and *Interpretations* are agreeable to *these* Rules; For they often fall into *Figurative*

^a Luke I. 1.

346 *The Arg. from Alleg. & Typ.*

and *Allegorical* Interpretations, and therefore we must distinguish between the *Doctrine* they teach, and the *Use* and *Application*, they make of any Passages in the *Scriptures*: In their *Figurative* and *Allegorical Explications*, they are not declaring the *Doctrines* of the *Church*, but are only drawing *Uses* from *some*, especially the *Typical* and *Historical* parts of the *Scripture*: and they did not mean, that those *Scriptures* themselves were merely *Figurative* and *Allegorical*, but they took them and understood them *first* in their *plain* and *Historical* sense, as to the *Facts*, and *Expressions*, and then they *allegorised* upon them according to the *Richness* and *Luxuriance* of their *Imagination*. So that with them the *Allegory* is not the *proper* and *determinate* sense, but only the *Instruction* and *Improvement*, they draw from those several parts of the *Scripture*. This distinguisheth the *Allegorical* from the *Typical* parts: The *Typical* having always a *correspondent* Completion, where the *second* sense is *Literal*; whereas the *Allegorical* are quite the *Reverse*, where the *first* sense is *Literal*, and the *second Figurative* only.

This by the way is also a full Answer to all those, who pretend the *Facts*, especially the *Miracles* recorded in the *Scriptures* are only *Figurative*, *Typical*, or *Allegorical*; but they may as reasonably deny the Truth of *any Facts* recorded in *any History*; and I would observe, that, whereas they make the *Miracles* of our Lord merely *Typical*, and *allegorise* them to a *Spiritual* Meaning and Effect, *Types* themselves both in *Persons* and *Things* are real *Facts*, tho' *Figurative*
and

and *Relative* in their *signification*, so the *Killing of the Passover* was as real a *Fact* as the *Death of Christ*; and *Allegorys* seemably are formed upon *Types* as well as upon other *Facts*, where the *Fact* is *first* acknowledged, *before* the *Allegory* is made.

From hence likewise we are furnished with an *Answer* to all those *Figurative* Explications of the great *Articles* of our *Faith* relating to the *Birth* and *Sufferings* and *Death* and *Resurrection* of our Lord, to the *Truth* of his *Eternal Relation*, that *He* is really the *Son* of the *Father*, and of *all*, that *He* hath *done* for our *Salvation*: These are all explained away in Effect, by *some*, who deny the *Divinity*, and by *others* who deny both the *Divinity* and *Humanity* of *Christ* our Saviour, whereas all *these Points* are strictly to be received, as *so many Historical Facts*, and *Affertions* delivered by God *Himself*, and not to be understood as *so many Figurative* Expressions, and *Allegorical* Conveyances of *Instruction* and *Improvement* to our *Minds*.

It is easy enough to distinguish between a *plain* and *tropical*, a *literal* and *figurative* sense: When our Lord calleth Himself a ^a *Door* and a ^b *Vine*, the sense is *Figurative*: when He saith ^c *I am the Way, the Truth and the Life*, the sense is *Figurative* and *Allegorical*: when *He* is called the *Son of God*, and the *Actions* of his *Life* are recorded, *these* are *all* to be taken in the *plain* accustomed *Literal* meaning of the Words, and it is as unreasonable to turn them to a *Tropical*

^a John X. 9. ^b XV. 1, 5. ^c XIV. 6.

348 *Mysterys to be understood as*
sense, as it is to take *Him literally* for a *Door* or
a *Vine*, and his *Disciples* for the *Branches*.

I have laid it down for a Foundation, that
in the *same* way, in which we are taught to con-
ceive and to speak of GOD and his *Attributes*,
we must also conceive and speak of all the
Things of GOD, which no Man knoweth, but the
Spirit of GOD, and therefore they are taught,
not in the Words which Man's Wisdom teacheth, but
which the Holy Ghost teacheth. Concerning GOD
and his *Attributes* we are assured that in *Him-*
self and his *Perfections He is Incomprehensible*. For
altho' *He* is truly *Powerful, Wise* and *Good* agree-
ably to our best and completest Notions of
Goodness, Wisdom, and Power, yet *He* is *so* in a
manner transcendently different from *what* is
Goodness, Wisdom, and Power in the highest Rank
of *Created Beings, above and beyond all Degrees*
we can imagine, where the *highest* Degrees are
but so many *Limitations* and *Imperfections* with
respect to that Glorious Being, who is *Infinite*
and *Unbounded* in his own *Essential* Excellence
and *Perfections*. For all *Power* is *weak* which
is not *Universal*, and all *Goodness* *deficient* which
reacheth not to every thing, and ^a *our Goodness*,
tho' it could reach to every thing else, even to
the Saints, yet *extendeth not unto thee, O GOD*;
and all *Wisdom* is *short-sighted* which is confined
within the Verge of *Human Speculation*, and
Human Action: nay *Wisdom, Goodness and Power*
are imperfect with regard to their Extent, tho'
moving in the larger Sphere of *Angelical Intelli-*

gences. And therefore, so transcendent is God's Glory, that we can conceive of *Him*, and express his *Attributes* by way of *Analogy* and Resemblance only, not as *He is in Himself*, but as we are any ways able to apprehend *Him*. This *Analogy*, tho' it cannot rise unto it, doth yet express the greatest *Reality*: That GOD is WHAT HE IS in *Essence* and *Perfection* more truly, really and substantially, than we, or any of his Creatures are.

For to instance in his *Power*, which after the utmost stretch of our Imagination is best conceived by its wonderful Effects; What is the *Power* of any Created Being either in *Kind* or *Degree*? In *Degree* it is *Nothing*; in *Kind* it is totally *distinct*, as the Great *Creator* and his *Creation* differ from the *Artificer* and his *Sphere*: and yet when from those Natural *Powers*, which can do *something*, we look up to that *Power*, ^a *who can do every thing*, and consider what *He* hath done, we have then attained to the best Notion, we can frame of a Real and proper *Power*, tho' infinitely short of its *Transcendent Greatness*, as it is in the *Almighty*.

Since then we have no other way of conceiving and expressing the *Divine Nature* and *Attributes*, than this of *Analogy* and Resemblance, which *Himself* hath chosen to reveal them to us; and since in all his other *Revelations*, *He* speaketh in the *same* manner, applying and accommodating *them* to our *primary* Notions and Conceptions of things, we are therefore to re-

350 *The Analogy applied alike.*

ceive and understand whatever *He* hath *revealed* concerning *Himself*, and his *Transactions* with Mankind, as so many *Truths* positively *asserted* by *Him*, that the *Facts* are *Real*, as the *Manner* is *Incomprehensible*.

When therefore it is *revealed*, that *Christ* is the *Son* of *God*, we acknowledge the Truth of the *Relation* to be *Real*, as between *Father*, and *Son* among *Men*; but because the *Son* must be *Essentially* of the *same* Nature with the *Father*, and the *Divine* Nature and *Essence* is ever *One*, therefore the *Son*, tho' *He* maketh a *Distinct Person*, is nevertheless *not* divided from the *Father*, but ever *One* with the *Father* and the *Holy Spirit*: So again, *Begotten* signifieth as real a *Communication* of *Essence*, as among *Men*, but when applied to the *Father* and the *Only Begotten Son*, we cannot understand it grossly after the manner of *Men*, but we believe the *Generation*, that is the *Eternal Communication* of the *Divine Essence* to be as *real*, as the *manner* is *incomprehensible*.

In all these *Revelations*, the same *Analogy* prevaieth, as is used in conceiving, and expressing the *Divine Attributes*, which we cannot conceive, but in those *substituted* Notions, which *God* Himself hath *used* to convey them to us.

Taking the *Language* therefore in this *Analogy*, and understanding the Words, which the *Holy Ghost* teacheth after this manner, there ariseth an exact *Analogy* or Agreement of *Faith* also thro' all the several *Articles* relating to *God*, and our *Redemption*.

This

This I have in some measure explained already so far, as it concerneth the *Unity* of the *God-Head*, and the *Plurality* of *Persons* in that *Unity*, taking *Persons* there for three distinct *Substencys* in the same *One Undivided Essence* according to the several *Property* of their *different* subsisting. All the Confusion, and Contradiction about this Sublime *Mystery* arise from reasoning after the Manner of Men, and taking *Person* in the strict Human acceptation for a distinct *Individual intelligent Agent*, as *three Men* are *three Persons* divided from one another, who know not each others Thoughts, no Man knoweth *the things of Man, save the Spirit of a Man that is in him*: whereas to shew the Difference, and that our Reasonings will not hold, we are assured, that *no one, but the Spirit of God knoweth the things of God*: both of the *Father* and the *Son*, and this *Spirit* of God is therefore, tho' a *distinct Person*, yet *One GOD* with the *Father*, and the *Son*.

To make *Person* and *Intelligent Agent* strictly, and convertibly the same so, as to constitute so many *Individuals* as there are *Persons*, is to argue both *falsely* and *fallaciously* from *Human* Notions to *Divine*, and to make the *Persons* of the *God-Head* to subsist, as *Human Persons* do, as if, because there is but *One God*, *One Divine Being*, therefore there can be but *One Person*, or if *more Persons*, there must be so many *Individuals*. But if we speak Absolutely of God there is properly *no Person* at all to be considered: The *God-Head* it self, the *Divine Essence* is never conceived, as a *Person*: *Person* is properly

a *social* and *relative*, not an *absolute* and *solitary* Term: In the GOD-Head *it self* without the Son there cannot be the *Person* of the *Father*: the *Personality* is founded in the *Relation* and *Operations* of the *Father*, *Son* and *Holy Ghost*, whereby they are *so* distinguished, that *One* is not the *Other*. The *Acts* are some of them *peculiar* and *distinct*: The *Essence*, *Substance* and *Divinity* is *common*, *equal*, and the *same*.

As therefore the *Father*, *Son* and *Holy Ghost* have the same *Attributes* ascribed unto them without any Limitation or Intimation of *Higher* or *Lower*, *Mediate* or *Ultimate*, and all the *Divine Worship* paid, and all the *Divine Attributes* ascribed unto the *Father*, *Son* and *Holy Ghost* do terminate and center in the *One True God*, we are necessarily taught, while we acknowledge every *Person by Himself to be GOD and Lord*, that there is only *One GOD, and no other*: the *Divine Nature* being thus communicated *indivisibly* from the *Father* to the *Son*, and from *both* to the *Holy Ghost*; and when we are able to comprehend *How* the *Divine Nature* subsisteth, and to prove, that the Great GOD must exist, as *we do*, and beget by Multiplication, as *we do*, then these mighty *Reasoners* may be heard, but till then, all the *Nonsense* and *Contradiction* is their *own*, and if they will not keep it, they must be content, when they have uttered it, to *take it back again to themselves*.

In the former Branches of this Discourse, that we might interpret one part of Scripture agreeably to another, I have proved first the *Unity* of the GOD-Head, next the *Distinction* of *Persons*,

Persons with the proper *Divinity* of the *Father*, *Son* and *Holy Ghost* both from the *Old Testament* and the *New*. From *Isaiab* I have proved that *This One only and True GOD* will not give his *Honour* to another, nor his *Praise* to graven *Images*: From *St Paul* I have proved, that the *Father* and the *Son* are placed as one *Member* of the *Division* in Contradistinction to all the false *Nominal Gods* of the *Heathen* on the other side of the *Division*, and from several pregnant passages I have also showed, that the *Holy Ghost* is *GOD*, equal and together with the *Father*, and the *Son*, and from all this I have inferred, as the *Catholic Church* hath always done, that in the *Divine Nature*, there are *Three Persons*, and *One GOD*: That the *Father*, *Son* and *Holy Ghost* is the *One GOD* revealed to us in the *Holy Scriptures*, as first *Creating*, and since *Redeeming* the *World* by a *Wonderful Oeconomy*, and *Dispensation* of *Love* and *Mercy* and *Justice* in that full and abundant *Satisfaction* paid for the *sins* of *Mankind*, comprising the whole *Frame* and *Order* of *Redemption* from our *Forfeiture* in *Adam* to our *Restoration* in *Christ*.

But because in these *Sacred Disquisitions* what is comparatively less obvious and clear is to be interpreted by what is evident, and universally acknowledged, I proposed, that according to this *Analogy of Faith*, whatever is *Fundamentally* laid down prior to any subsequent *Revelation* may be first considered, and then the subsequent *Revelation* interpreted agreeably to the *Former*.

354 *Charge of Metaphysical*

To this End I considered *first*, *What* was *revealed* of God in *general* concerning his *Nature* and *Attributes*, and then *secondly*, *What* hath been *revealed* more *particularly* with reference to the *Divine Oeconomy* and *Transactions* with Mankind.

In interpreting these last points agreeably to the *Divine Nature* in *general*, I did not think it necessary to go over *each* of the several *Attributes*, but did rather refer *all* that need be said, to those *three inherent*, and *inseparable Propertys* of the *Divine Nature* in our first Conceptions of it: *namely*, the *Unity*, *Indivisibility*, and *Eternity*; and then, when we understand what is *revealed* concerning the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost* consistently with this *Unity*, *Indivisibility* and *Eternity*, we have the true and full *Analogy* of *Faith* in one View.

I meddle not with the *Metaphysical Nature* and *Substance* of the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost*, nor do I enquire in *what Metaphysical manner* the *Son* deriveth his *Being* from the *Father*: These Enquiries are vain and absurd: they look and insinuate, as if the *Metaphysical Nature* were different from the *Real*, and that the *Son* had a *distinct* Being from the *Father*, whereas we know not any thing of the *Metaphysical Nature* of God, nor of the *Divine Being*, as He is in *Himself*: There is truly no such thing as a *Metaphysical Nature*, and the *Term* referreth not to the *Nature* of any *thing* it self, but to some *peculiar* way of conceiving, and expressing it. The Scriptures have taught us to conceive and express the *Personal* Subsistence of the *Son* and
the

the *Holy Ghost* by the *Terms Begotten* and *Proceeding*, and from thence we learn, that *Father* is of *None*, that the *Son* is of the *Father* the *Eternal Word*, the *Only Begotten*: That the *Holy Ghost* is of the *Father* and the *Son*, as *proceeding* from, and sent by the *Father*, and the *Son*: This is not a *Metaphysical* Nature, nor a *Metaphysical* Manner; we believe the *Son* is the Begotten of the *Father*, but we presume not to determine in what Manner *He* is *Begotten*. This is altogether *unknown* and *incomprehensible*, and when we venture beyond *Revelation*, and those Conceptions God hath given us of *Himself* in the Scriptures, we plunge our selves in an unfathomable Abyfs: we talk consequently in the dark, and determine erroneously and presumptuously upon those great and tremendous *Mysterys* which are *reverently* to be believed and adored, not *lightly* to be tossed up and down upon the *Tongues* and *Pens* of perverse *Disputers*, nor canvassed, and sifted by Scholastic Subtilyts, and prophane Oppositions.

While our *Adversarys* charge us with these Subtilyts, and cry out, that we support our Cause by a train of *Metaphysical* Terms and *abstracted* Notions, they do themselves retire to those dark Retreats, and cover themselves under a Cloud of Obscure and Ambiguous Expressions. All their Arguments against the plain and obvious sense of the Scriptures, and the *Catholic* Doctrine built thereupon, are nothing but a shew of *Criticism* and *Philosophy* worked up and refined into *Metaphysical* Speculations: On the other hand we do not go about to establish the

Catholic Faith by Metaphysical Conclusions, or Idiomatical Observations: We are contented to defend it against the *Argumentations* of those, who presume to enter into and comprehend the *Manner* of the *Divine* Existence, to define what is *possible*, or *impossible* with respect to *God*, and argue, as if *Existence* were the *same* in the *Creator* and the *Creature*; That is from the *Propertys* of *Created* Being they argue to *Uncreated*, and apply the *Terms* of *Number*, *Species* and *Individuation* in the *same* manner to *one* as the *other*. This we do earnestly oppose, nor do we take upon us haughtily to pronounce, that *what* is *revealed* in *Fact*, is *impossible* in *Nature*. So far, as *Metaphysical* Considerations bear any *Analogy* or Correspondence to *Divine Revelation*, we may apply them, as we do other *substituted* Terms to help us in our *Conceptions* of the *Divine Being*, not to speak *Him* as *He is*, but as according to our best Notions of *Existence*, *Being*, *Substance*, and *Essence*, we are enabled by the Assistance of his own *Revelation* in some measure to apprehend *Him*; and therefore I have chosen to refer my self to *those three* Conceptions, which we necessarily form of the *Divine Nature*: The *Unity*, *Indivisibility* and *Eternity*, as a *Rule*, to which all, that is *revealed* concerning the *One God* must be reduced, and then interpreted agreeably and consistently with it.

It is my Purpose therefore in the remainder of this *Discourse* to apply this *Rule* more exactly, not upon the *Principles* of *Philosophy*, but on the surer *Evidence* of *Scripture*, and by that

Light

Light to consider the Distinction of the *Persons* with regard *to*, and as consistent *with* the *Unity*, *Indivisibility*, and *Eternity* of *Essence*.

The Distinction of the *Persons* manifestly appeareth from the *Offices* and *Operations* ascribed to *Each*: The *Unity*, *Indivisibility*, and *Eternity* from our first Conceptions of the Divine *Nature* as declared in the Scripture. I shall not therefore trouble you with any *Metaphysical* or *Scholastical* Notions in settling the *meaning* and *application* of these Words: *Eternity* I have spoken of before, and shall only add upon this consideration of it, that perhaps it is not to be *defined*, as certainly it is not, *as it is in it self*, because so it is not to be *conceived*; and when we have stretched it *backwards* and *forwards* infinitely beyond all *Time*, we cannot speak of it, but in the *Language* of *Time*; but this we may assuredly lay down, that whatever way of speaking giveth us *any* the most *distant* Notion of a *Beginning* to *exist*, or to *Be*, *such* a *Notion* is as full a Contradiction to, and Denyal of *Eternity*, as any thing, that was made, and began to *exist* in *Time*, can be. *Unity* is opposed to *Number*, and *Indivisibility* to all *compound*, and *extended Beings*: *Unity* expresseth the Singularity, *Indivisibility* the most absolute Simplicity of *Being*, and the *one* doth necessarily suppose and infer the *other*: For God is *One* in the strictest Notion of *Unity* against all *Multiplication*, so as *besides Him there is no God*; He is *so One*, as to suffer no Division, and He is *ever One*, and so *Eternal*: When in this *Unity* we consider the Divinity and Distinction of the *Persons*, if we

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cannot comprehend the manner, it is no *Reproach* to our Understanding, that we cannot by our Rules of reasoning account for all the Mysterys of the God-Head, of which we can know *no more*, nor *any further*, than *what* is *revealed*.

And even here we are not left to collect this *Unity*, *Indivisibility*, and *Eternity* from the Conceptions we must necessarily have, whenever we in applying our Thoughts to this great Subject do think *truly* upon it; but the same Scriptures, which discover the Relation and Distinction of the *Persons*, assert also the Unity of *Essence*, and do therefore constantly speak of the *Son* and the *Holy Ghost* as ever possessed of the *entire* Divine Nature and *Attributes*, which are *truly* and *totally communicated*, but can never be *divided*. They are therefore *distinct Persons*, tho' not *separate Beings*. From hence I would observe by the Way, that *Being* and *Person* in this *Revelation* are not *reciprocal* Terms, as if every *Distinct Person* were a *Distinct Being* also. It is so indeed in *Human* Nature, but for that reason it cannot be so in the *Divine*; For the *Divine* Nature is not like the *Angelical*, or *Human*, a *Species* consisting of *Individuals*, and therein therefore, if there be any Distinction of *Persons*, it must be *consistent* with the Unity of *Essence*.

In this *Argument* the *Principles* of *Reason* assent to the *Voice* of *Revelation* so far, as *Reason* can form any Conclusions upon it. For as *Reason* assenteth, that where the *Divine Nature*, *Appellations*, and *Attributes* are ascribed, there
God

GOD is truly declared, *Reason* also concludeth, that however the *Persons* revealed are *distinct*, the *Essence* is *One* and the *same*, and that tho' the *Persons* are revealed to be *Three*, there is *none* other GOD but *One*. And therefore as I have proposed these great Truths both according to *Reason*, and to *Revelation* entirely consonant to *Reason*, I shall now consider the *Unity* and *Distinction* in another *series* of *Facts*, as they are delivered in the Scriptures.

For tho' possibly it might be conceded that the *Eternal Son* is *One* with the *Father*, yet it is harder to conceive that the *Son Incarnate* is *One* in *Unity* of *Essence* with the *Father*: The *Incarnation*, *poor Estate* and *sufferings* of our *Lord* have always been the great *Rock of Offence*. ^a*Christ crucified is still to the Jews a stumbling Block, and to the Greeks Foolishness*. But supposing the *Son* in his *Divine Nature* to be ever *One* with the *Father*, the *addition* of the *Human* to his *Person* *encreaseth* the *Mystery* indeed, but cannot *dissolve* the *Unity*: and all other *Objections* from the *Poverty*, *Sufferings*, and *Death* of *Christ* would cease, if they duely considered the *two Natures* united in his *Person*, and what is spoken of *Him* in Scripture under the *several* and *joint* Characters of *God* and *Man*. The *Natures* being *distinct*, and the *Person* the *same*, some *Actions* flow from *one Nature*, and *some* from the *other*, and *some* from *both*: *some* are *proper* to the *Humanity*, *some* *peculiar* to the *Divinity*, and *some* to his *gracious* and *merciful Operation* both as *GOD*

and *Man*. We must therefore carefully distinguish *what* is said of *both* Natures severally considered, and *what* is said of the *whole Person*, in whom both *Natures* are *united*. The *Actions proper* to *each* are indifferently applied to *Christ Jesus*, and *those* things are said of the *Son of Man*, which are only *true* of the *Son of God*, but therefore *true* of *Christ Jesus*, because in his *One Person* He is both *God* and *Man*; And so the *Beautiful Constraft* is *unravelled*, and the *Difficultys* rising from the *Different Natures* are *reconciled*: With respect to his *Divine Nature* *Christ* is the *Lord of Glory*, with respect to his *Human* He *suffered* and *died*, and because both *Natures* meet and are united in his *Person*, the *Apostle* speaketh *properly*, when in this Chapter of the *Text* concerning the *Princes of this World* both *Jews* and *Gentile*, he saith, that if ^a *they had known the Wisdom of God in Christ Jesus, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory*.

As *Man* he is said to have *redeemed us unto God by his Blood*: and thus *redeemed* we are the ^b *Church of God, which He hath purchased with his own Blood*. The *Propertys* of each *Nature* remain *separate*, the *Actions* of each as derived from the *same Person* are indifferently affirmed of either. In some *Instances* *one Nature* operateth *alone*, in others *both Natures* are joyned in the *Action* as well as the *Person*: with reference to his *Human Nature* as ^c *concerning the Flesh Christ came of the Fathers*, with respect to his *Divine Nature* He is over all *GOD* blessed for ever. Amen. In

^a 1 Cor. II. 7. ^b Acts XX. 28. ^c Rom. IX. 5.

his *Divine Nature* He is the ^a *Creator* and *Up-holder* of all things: in his *Human* He *hungred* and *thirsted*, and *suffered* and *died*: In *Both* He is our *Mediator*, and hath obtained *Eternal Redemption for us*: As *Man* he *sheddeth his Blood for our sins*: as *GOD* He *saveth us*. In his *Human Nature* He payeth down the *Price*; by his *Divine* he raiseth it to an *Inestimable Value*. As our *Mediator* and *Redeemer* He is possessed of *both Natures*, but the *Person* is the *same*, for tho' the *Natures* be *two*, there is but ^b *One Mediator between GOD and Man the Man Christ Jesus*.

By this Method all that is said of *Christ* is perfectly agreeable and Consistent, and this plain and obvious Interpretation reconcileth all seeming Contrarietys: What is said of the *Son of Man* is possibly the main ground of all Opposition to his *Divinity*, and the Reason of those several *Hypotheses*, upon which the *Natures* are *confounded*, the *Unity of his Person denied*, by which his *Divinity* is explained away, and his *Satisfaction disowned*, and his *Essential Unity* with the *Father*, and the *Holy Spirit* so many ways disputed, and either in *plain Terms*, or by *plain Consequence* so flatly contradicted. But this *Interpretation* answereth every different Scheme, whether it be the *Arian*, *Nestorian*, or *Eutychian*, or any other derived from them, or from which they have been derived, and our Blessed Lord's having assumed the *Human Nature* into the *Divine*, *marketh out* indeed the *Per-*

^a Hebr. I. 2, 3 ^b 1 Tim. II. 9.

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son, but doth not at all *impeach* the Unity of his *Essence*. And so I proceed to this point of the *Unity* before us, relating to our *Lord* with the *Human Nature* now assumed into the *Divine*.

If therefore we can clear the *Unity of Essence* with respect to our *Lord*, we shall easily answer all other *Objections* to every part of that *Revelation*, which relates to the great Work of our *Redemption*: What therefore our *Adversarys* make an *Objection*, while they argue against the *Divinity* of our *Lord* from those *Texts* which have a respect to his *Humanity*, I shall urge as a *Proof* both of the *Distinction* of the *Persons* from the Consideration of his *Humanity*, and of the *Unity of Essence* from the Consideration of his *Divinity*. And to this purpose I do plead,

That even to our Apprehension there can be no stronger Argument of the real Distinction of the *Son* from the *Father*, than the *Incarnation* of our *Lord*: The *Mystery* is *inexplicable*, the *Fact* is *undeniable*: We cannot say that the *Human Nature* cannot be joyned unto, and taken into the *Divine*: for tho' the *Divine Nature* will suffer no *Division*, yet it will admit, as of *Personality*, so of the *Assumption* of another Nature into that *Personality*. Our Ignorance: the Limitation and Weakness of our Reason can be no adequate *Rule* of *what* is *possible* and *impossible* with reference to the *Divine Subsistence*.

The *Son incarnate* therefore is a *distinct Person* from the *Father*; and as the *Incarnation* was effected by the *Holy Ghost*, as for that reason
He

He is also called the Son of God, here is a Distinction of the *Son* from the *Holy Ghost*, as well as from the *Father*. Still the *Persons* are *distinct*: the *Essence* is the *same*: and with regard to the *Son* especially, as in the *Eternal Generation* the *Substance* is not *multiplied*; in the *Temporal* the *Person* is more visibly *distinguished*.

That the *Son* had an *Existence* before *He* was born of the *Virgin*, the *Arians* allow, and the *Socinians* are not to be regarded in the contrary Opinion, since they do offer such manifest Violence to the *Scripture*, and give us so notorious an Instance how the whole Stream and Tenour of the plainest Declarations may be turned into direct contrary Assertions: They ought to shew, that they have some previous Grounds to conclude against it either from the *Nature* of the Thing, or other *Declarations* relating to it, before they take upon them to bend the Scriptures to their Conceits: They should be able to evince that the *Pre-existence* of the *Son* is *impossible* in it self, and that our *Interpretations* are *contrary* to all *Rules of Construction*: and at last they must be able to prove the *Negative*, that our Lord had no *Existence* before his *Incarnation*.

Allowing the *Pre-existence* then, the Question with the *Arians* is whether it be *Temporal* or *Eternal*. I know, they will not call it in *Time*, and yet they will not own it to be *Eternal*; But in this they only impose upon the World and themselves; For tho' it be not *Temporal* or in *Time* with regard to the *Creation* of the *World*, but *millions* of Ages in any undetermined

mined point of Duration before, yet if it *ever* had a *Beginning*, that is *Tantamount* to what we call *Time*, and the very same thing, as if *He* had been *created* in *Time*.

But the Scriptures give us no Intimation of any such distant undetermined Production, much less of any Production in *Time*, but speak plainly of his *Eternal Existence* even in those *Texts* which the *Arians* most confidently advance against it. Such as in the *Proverbs*; ^a *The Lord possessed me*, according to the *Septuagint*, *created me in the beginning of his Ways*: and that of the second *Psalms*; ^b *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee*. For as to the Word [created] in the *Proverbs*, besides the *Propriety* of the *Original* opposed to one single *Translation*, and besides the *Probability* of a *various Lektion* from the *Greek Verb*, which signifieth to *possess*; the word [created] is often used where a *Natural production* or *Generation* is intended, and even here it is explained, ^c *Before the Hills was I brought forth*, ^d *I was set up or anointed from Everlasting*. As to the *Forms* of speaking I have observed elsewhere, that we cannot speak of *Eternity* but in the *Language* of *Time*. In that way of speaking what is said to be in the *Beginning* without a *Connotation* of some *special Time* is understood to be from *Everlasting*. Thus when we read, ^e *In the Beginning GOD created the Heaven, and the Earth*, this denoteth the *Beginning* of *Time* to us, or that *Aera*, which commenced

^a Prov. VIII. 22. ^b Psalm II. 7. ^c Prov. VIII. 25. ^d v. 23.
^e Gen. I. 1

at the *Creation*; and when we read, ^a *In the Beginning was the WORD*, the following Clauses shew, that as no *Time* is denoted, the *meaning* is from *Everlasting*. ^b For the *WORD was with GOD*, and the *WORD was GOD*. ^b *The same was in the Beginning with GOD*. The like may be said with reference to that other Expression. ^c *This day have I begotten Thee*: where without any *Connotation* of *Time*, or *reference* to any *manifestation* of *Him* to the *World*, *Eternity* is signified, and the Expression is most proper to point out that great and Incomprehensible *INSTANT*, which doth ever subsist, and never passeth away, and proceedeth most aptly from the Mouth of *GOD*, with whom ^d *a Thousand*, even innumerable *Thousands of Years are but as one Day*, and is fitly applied to *Him*, who is the ^e *same Yesterday and to Day, and for Ever*. Where any *Time* is pointed out by this Expression, the *day* also is ascertained, as where the *Apostle* applieth it to the ^f *Priestly Office*, and to the ^g *Resurrection of our Lord*: but without any *Time* specified, it setteth forth his ^h *Eternal Generation* as in the *Epistle to the Hebrews*, the first Chapter, where of this *Brightness* of his *Father's Glory*, and *express* Character of *his Person* it is said by way of superiority to the most glorious Creatures, ⁱ *Unto which of the Angels said He at any Time, Thou art my Son this day have I begotten Thee*.

In Opposition to all this, if it be urged that in the *Epistle to the Colossians* He is called

^a John I. 1. ^b v. 2. ^c Psal. II. 7. ^d 2 Pet. III. 8. ^e Heb. XIII. 8. ^f V. 3. ^g Acts XIII. 33. ^h Heb. I. 2, 3. ⁱ v. 5.

366 *The Creator of all things.*

^a *the First-born of every Creature*, I answer, that therefore *He is not a Creature*: there is a wide difference between being *born*, and being *created*: and the *First-born* of every *Creature* signifieth his *Birth* before all *Creation*. ^b For by *Him* were all things *created*: And it may signify also his *Dominion*, and especially his *Sovereignty* over the *Church*, as afterwards and in other places it doth; Thus it signifieth his *Dominion*, for *as his First-born*, the *Father* maketh ^c *Him* higher, than the *Kings of the Earth*, and giveth *Him* ^d *the Heathen for his Inheritance*, and the utmost parts of the *Earth* for his *Possession*: Thus also his *Sovereignty* over the *Church*, as He is the ^e *Head of the Body the Church*: who is the ^f *Beginning*, the *Chief*, the *First-born from the Dead*, that in all things *He might have the Preeminence*: but at the *fifteenth* verse it signifieth his *uncreated Existence* before any thing was *Created*, *He* being *Himself* the *Creator* of all things: after all the *Place* in the *Proverbs* answereth for it self, For it is *Wisdom*, the *Wisdom* or *Word* of *GOD* that *speaketh*, and not as an *Attribute*, but *Personally*, and the *Word* or *Wisdom* of *GOD* cannot be *created*: The *Wisdom* is doubtless *Co-eternal* with, because necessarily included in the *Divine Essence*. Ever *One with the Father*.

These *Difficultys* removed, what the *Scriptures* have delivered concerning the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghost* is an *Unity* and *Eternity* of *Essence* with the *Father*, depending upon this necessary

^a Col. I. 15. ^b v. 16. ^c Ps. LXXXIX. 28. ^d II. 8. ^e Eph. II. 22, 23. ^f Col. I. 18.

Affection of the Divine Nature: that it is *Indivisible*, and that it is *One*. The *Principles of Human Reason*, so far as they constrain our *Assent* to the *Being* of a God, *constrain it* equally to the *Unity of Essence* also.

When therefore we hear the *Scriptures* speak according to the true *Conception* and *Conviction* of our *Reason*, and still preserve the *Unity* of the *Divine Essence* while they reveal unto us the *Father*, and the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghost*, we have *such an Authority, such a Direction for understanding and interpreting this Revelation*, as must be highly satisfactory to us; when the *keeping* to this *Analogy of Faith* maketh every *Article agreeable*, and *consistent*, and the *departing* from it leadeth into manifold *Error, Contradiction and Impossibility*. The *Plurality of Persons* is a *Point of pure Revelation*: The *Unity of Essence* is no *Metaphysical strain or subtilty*, but the plain unavoidable *Dictate of Reason*, and therefore tho' there be *Three Persons*, there is but *One God*, because there is but *One Divine Essence*: and this *Doctrine of the Unity of the Divine Nature* is the *Doctrine of Revelation* as well as *Reason*, and therefore a *Plurality of Persons* must be consistent with it.

If *Reason* can assure us of any thing besides the *Existence* of God, it must assure us of the *Unity*, and therefore *that Knowledge* is most highly reasonable, which in disclosing *Three Divine Persons* discloseth *them* subsisting according to their several *Relations* and *Propertys* in *One* and the *same Eternal Essence*, and constantly

stantly asserteth their *Unity*, that these ^a*Three are One*.

Altho' I use the Words of St *John's* first *Epistle*, I do not lay the *stress* of *this* Doctrine upon *them*: however the *whole Passage* is *controverted*, *these Words* themselves by many *concurrent Testimonys* have a *peculiar Authority*; there is great reason to conclude, they were *read* in the *Original Text*, and are a *genuin* part of it, and, notwithstanding they appear not in the *later Copys*, it is highly probable the whole verse was found in the old *Vatican Exemplar*, upon which the *Complutensian* Edition was chiefly formed*: The *Clause*, I refer to, containeth the *sum* and *substance* of the *Scripture* Doctrine of the *Trinity*, which cannot be expressed in *fewer* or *clearer* Words; But it is not my purpose to digress into the Dispute of that celebrated passage, and I shall prove the *Unity* as applied to the Ever Blessed *Trinity* from *other* places. And first,

1. The *Unity* of the *Father* and the *Son* as Ever in the *Divine*, Now in the *Human* Nature added.

The *Son* is called by St *John* ^b*the only begotten Son*, which is in the *Bosom* of the *Father*, even while *He* was upon *Earth*, He is in the *Bosom* of the *Father*: of the *same Divine Essence*, still *one with the Father*, after *He* had taken *our Nature* upon *Him*: He doth *subsist* then in the *same Es-*

^a I John V. 7. * See the present Ep of *Lichfield's* Excellent Letter to the most learned Dr *Bensley* on this Subject. ^b John I. 18.

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sence with the *Father*, ever begotten by *Him*, and ever indivisible from *Him*, according to his own Declaration made to *Nicodemus*, ^a *No man hath ascended up to Heaven, but He that came down from Heaven, even the Son of Man, which is in Heaven.* Tho' Now on *Earth*, yet still indivisibly *One* in *Heaven* with the *Father*: The *Son of Man* is said to come down from *Heaven*, because the *Son of God* came down, and took our *Nature* upon *Him* and united it in his *Own Person*, and for the same Reason, tho', as yet his *Human Nature* had not been in *Heaven*, yet forasmuch, as it was now united to his *Divine Nature*, He calleth Himself the *Son of Man, which is in Heaven*: Tho' the *Natures* are *Diverse*, the *Person* is the same: *He is not two, but one CHRIST*: and with reference to the *Father*, the *Persons* are distinct, the *Essence* is the same. For tho', as He is the *Son of Man*, He acknowledgeth, ^b *My Father is greater than I*, yet, as He is the *Eternal Son of God* He averreth, ^c *I and my Father are One*: well understood by the *Jews*, who took up stones again to stone *Him*, for *Blasphemy*, as they told *Him*, ^d *because that thou being a Man makest thy self God*, as for the same reason they had taken up ^e stones before to cast at *Him*: and it appeareth from the second Occasion, that for *Him* to say, *I and my Father are One*, and to say ^f *I am the Son of God* are Expressions of the same Equivalence, so explained by Himself, and so understood by the *Jews*; This is an unan-

^a John III. 13. ^b XIV. 28. ^c X. 30. ^d v. 33. ^e VIII. 59. ^f X. 36.

answerable Argument, and sheweth in the strongest and closest Terms, that the *Son* and the *Father* are *One*: of the *same Substance, Power, and Eternity* according to that plain and positive Assertion, ^a*Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was I AM.* And no wonder, they charged Him with *Blasphemy*, and went about to stone Him, when we find before this, that they understood, that to ^b*call God his Father* was to make himself equal with God, Then the *Jews* sought the more to kill him, because he had not only broken the *Sabbath*, but said also, that God was his Father, making himself equal with God; So that the Doctrine of the *Jewish Church* for the *Unity* and *Co equality* of the *Son* with the *Father* is clear, the *Unity* being by them included in the *Equality*; and so they understood his Assertion of his *Unity*, or *being one with the Father*, as is before observed: For tho' *Equality* in Men supposeth no *Unity*, in God it expresseth the *greatest*. For to be equal with God, and to be God is the same thing.

This *Unity* Himself expresseth at other times by his *Dwelling* and *Being in the Father*, and the *Father in Him*, answerable to his *Being in the Bosom of the Father*. This the later *Greek Writers* called *περιχώρησις*, understanding by it the *Mutual Indwelling* of the *Father* and the *Son*, as existing in *Each other* by an *Inseparable Unity of Nature*: In this however they only expressed the *sense* of the *Ancient Church*, which, without using the *Word*, did *this way* explain these Ex-

pressions of our *Saviour*: and they *extended* it also to the *Holy Ghost* of the same *Essence* with the *Father* and the *Son*. This our *Blessed Lord* first allegeth as Explanatory of what He had said at the *thirtieth* Verse, *I and my Father are One*, appealing to his Works ^a *That the Father is in Him*, and *He in the Father*: Therefore they sought again to take Him, for re-asserting in those Words what He had asserted before: *I and my Father are One*. Thus likewise in Consequence of this In-dwelling our *Lord* ^b telleth *Philip*, who demanded of Him, *Lord, shew us the Father, he that hath seen me, hath seen the Father, and how saist thou, shew us the Father? Believeest thou not, that I am in the Father and the Father in me?* and for this He appealeth to the Words, which He speaketh, and to the Works, that He doth: ^c *The Words, that I speak unto you, I speak not of my self: but the Father, that dwelleth in me, He doth the Works*: and this miraculous *Evidence* He therefore urgeth in the most earnest manner, ^d *Believe me, that I am in the Father, and the Father in me, or else believe me for the very Works sake*: this is the only way of *seeing the Father* in his Words and in his Works: in his Words, for our *Lord* speaketh not of Himself: in his Works, which the *Son* worketh jointly with the *Father*, in this *mutual In-dwelling* and *Unity* with the *Father*: ^e *my Father worketh hitherto, and I work*: and then in Justification of his calling God his *Father*, and to assert his *Equality* in *Honour* and *Essence* with the *Father*, He ad-

^a John X. 38. ^b XIV. 8, 9, 10. ^c v. 10. ^d v. 11. ^e V. 17.

deth, ^a *The Son can do Nothing of Himself*, that is without the Father, because of this most intimate Unity: *The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever He doth, these also doth the Son likewise.* For Instance, ^b *As the Father raiseth up the Dead, and quickneth them: even so the Son quickneth whom he will;* and Judgment is committed more peculiarly to Him, that because of this Unity of Action, and Prerogative of Justice ^c *All men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father.* Appositely to the whole and according to the Testimony of the Baptist, ^d *No Man hath seen God at any time; the Only begotten Son, which is in the Bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him, by his Word, and by his Works from the Creation unto the Redemption of the World: and thus only it is, that he that hath seen the Son hath seen the Father also, who dwelleth in the Son, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost dwell mutually in each other, by a sort of Commensurate Circumscription and Circumambieny, as it were, containing each other, whom all the Universe cannot contain.*

Thus is the Father and the Son Essentially united, and so is the Holy Spirit with them, even with the Son, as well as the Father, even with the Son Now subsisting in his double Nature, and therefore distinct, as I said before, from Both, as Each in his Person is from Other.

This Holy Spirit is called the Comforter, to denote his Office, and another Comforter, to denote more particularly the Distinction of his

^a John V. 19. ^b v. 21. ^c v. 22, 23. ^d I. 18.

Person from the *Father* and the *Son*: in those Heavenly Discourses with his *Disciples* our Blessed *Lord* calleth Him *another Comforter*, for Himself was at that time their *Comforter* upon Earth, and is now our *Advocate* in Heaven: but the *Holy Ghost* is now our *Comforter* unto the End of the World. ^a *I will pray the Father and he shall give you another Comforter that he may abide with you for ever.* Again, ^b *The Comforter (which is the Holy Ghost) whom the Father will send in my Name: and in the next Chapter, ^c But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth, which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of me.* The *Holy Ghost* therefore, that *other Comforter*, whom the *Father* will give, whom the *Father* will send in his *Son's Name*, whom the *Son* will send unto them from the *Father*, is essentially united to *Both*, and distinguished also from *Both*, proceeding from, and being sent by the *Father* and the *Son*.

This sheweth the *Unity* is not altered by the *Incarnation* of *Christ*, and that the *Scriptures* speak properly according to the *Indivisibility* of the *Divine Essence*: and so the *Holy Ghost* likewise proceedeth ever, without being separated from the *Father* and the *Son*: This sheweth also the *Distinction* of Persons in the *Unity*, especially as it is declared by our *Lord* now He had taken our *Nature* upon Him: For He alone being the *Person incarnate*, the *Distinction* is hereby more manifest: of Him from the *Father* and the *Holy Spirit*, and of the *Holy Spirit* from the *Father*

^a John XIV. 16. ^b v. 26. ^c XV. 26.

and Him; for He that is sent by the *Father* and the *Son* must be distinct in *Person* from *Both*: This *Distinction* I may sum up in *those* Words of our *Lord* to his *Disciples*, when *sorrow* had filled their hearts, because he had told them of his Departure from them. ^a *Nevertheless I tell you the Truth: It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you.* This *Comforter*, this *other Comforter*, which is the *Holy Ghost*, the *Spirit of Truth*: the *Spirit of Christ* and of *God*, must, tho' distinct in *Person*, be most intimately united to *Both*. And if any thing more be requisite, I may refer to the former Deductions of these Points, as they are placed in another View, to shew that the *Scriptures* speak sometimes *Essentially* and sometimes *Personally*, by the *one* expressing the *Unity*, by the *other* setting forth the *Distinction*. I shall only add, that having mentioned the *eighth Chapter* to the *Romans* to prove the *Omniscience* of the *Holy Spirit* in that He ^b *maketh Intercession for us*, I may here produce it again to prove the *Unity* of his *Essence*, and the *Distinction* of his *Person*: in that passage both the *Father* and the *Son* are contained, and the *Spirit* is expressly named: *For we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit it self maketh Intercession for us.* ^c And He, our *Mediator*, that *searcheth the hearts*, *knoweth what is in the Mind of the Spirit*, because *he maketh Intercession for us according to the Will of God*: or

^a John XVI. 6, 7. ^b Rom. VIII. 26. ^c v. 27.

rather *maketh Intercession unto God for us*. This is spoken of *Christ*, and it is more peculiarly his *Office*, seeing ^a *He ever liveth to make Intercession for us*. *Christ* is said ἐντοϋρχάμεν to *intercede*, the *Spirit* is said ὑπερἐντοϋρχάμεν, over and above to *intercede* by his *supervening Grace* with *those Groanings* of a Pious Soul, *which cannot be uttered*. We know no Union more intimate, than that of the *spirit of a Man, that is in him*; but this expresth not (hardly in any resemblance) the *Divine Unity*. For the Spirit of a Man is of a quite different Nature from the Body, and *separable* from it: As yet it is intimately *united* in our Blessed Saviour only, and will then only be *inseparably united* to us at the *Resurrection of the Dead*: But in the *Divine Nature* the *Unity* is *Eternal*, as the *Substance* is *Indivisible*. In us there is only an *union*: in the *Divine Nature* alone there is *unity*. In the *Conjunction* of Soul and Body there is only an *uniting* of different *Substances* in the *same Person*. In *God alone*, notwithstanding the *Distinction* of *Persons*, the *Unity* is *Essential, Eternal, Substantial, Indivisible*. With reference to the *Son* the *Unity* is evident with respect to his *Eternal Nature*; and this *Unity* is not *dissolved*, but his *Person* more *distinguished* by his *Human*; with reference to the *Holy Ghost* the *Unity* is also *evident*, and the *Distinction* clear to all those, who have so much as heard, and do upon that hearing believe, ^b *that there is any Holy Ghost*.

^a Hebr. VII. 25. ^b Acts XIX. 2.

376 *The Unity consistent with a*

This is then that *Analogy of Faith* which is to guide us in understanding and interpreting the *Language of Revelation*: the Unity of the *GOD-Head*, or that there is none other God, but *One*, is the great Fundamental *Article of Reason and Revelation*: but when we find this *One* God declared under the several Distinctions of *Relation* and *Office*, and still the Unity asserted, even in the most manifest Distinction, even in *that* of the *Son incarnate*, we do acknowledge a Plurality of *Persons* in the Unity of *Essence*, and at the same time avoid all Errors and Absurdities of *more* GOD's *than One*, and of Nominal and Inferior *Gods*, and of ascribing the *Divine Name, Attributes* and *Worship* to a *Creature*.

That the Unity of the *GOD-Head* is according to the *Scriptures* consistent with a *Plurality of Persons*, is evident from hence, that the *Persons* revealed are truly Distinct, while the *Name, Attributes*, and *Worship* of the *One* God are equally ascribed unto them; and however Men may dispute concerning the Application of the *Name* and *Worship*, as that the *Name* is *Titular*, and the *Worship* *subordinate*, they can make no Dispute, where the *Attributes* are equally *ascribed*: For the *Attributes* are the *Essence* of GOD, and if we pretend to have any Conception of *Essence* without *Attributes*, this is nothing but an *Abstract Metaphysical* consideration of *Essence* in general; but when we would conceive the *Divine Essence*, as *distinguished* from all other, we can conceive it in the *Divine Attributes* only; since then the *Divine Attributes* are ascribed to *Three Persons*, and the *Divine Essence* can be but

One,

One, it necessarily follows, that the *Three Persons* must subsist in *One Essence*, according to the *Revelation* which discloseth *Three Persons*, and at the same time every where asserteth, and teacheth, that there is *none other God, but One*: And therefore as it is the great Design and Purpose of the *Scriptures* to assert the Unity of the *God-Head*, and thereby to instruct Men in the true Object of their *Faith, Worship* and *Obedience*, this Assertion of the *Unity* is not intended to *exclude*, but manifestly to *include* the *Son* and the *Holy Ghost* in the great Object of *Faith* and *Adoration*.

To prove that the Unity of the *God-Head* is inconsistent with a *Plurality of Persons*, our *Adversarys* have asserted, that *Person* and *Intelligent Agent* are *reciprocal Terms*, and that every *Person* is an *Individual*: Of *Personality* as applied to *Created* and *Uncreated Intelligences*, as also of *Person*, and *Being*, I have spoken already, but wherever the Objection falleth in, it is proper to resume, and complete the Answer. I have observed already, that tho' we do not find *Personality* applied to any, but intelligent *Agents*, yet that it doth not consist in that alone, and however it is true with respect to created *Intelligences*, whether Angels or Men, that *Person* and *Intelligent Agent* are the *same*, so as to constitute as many *Individuals* as there are *Intelligent Agents*, this is not true with respect to *Uncreated Intelligence*: Angels and Men are indeed so many *Intelligent Beings*, and so many *Individuals* making up their several *Species*: But *God* is not a *Species*, nor can admit of *Individuals*

duals any further, than in this Notion, that the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost* are individually *One*: Distinct in Person according to their Relation and Agency, but *One* only in Substance, and Essence, and Attributes. The *Divine Being* may be called an *Individual*, in Contradistinction to all Created Beings, but His most Simple Unity excludeth all Notion of Individuals, or Plurality of *Beings*, tho' it admitteth a Plurality of *Persons*. As to Internal Acts there is but One *Will* in the *Divine* Nature: as to External, but One *Power* however exercised by the *Father*, by the *Son*, and by the *Holy Ghost*: Appropriate Acts are sufficient to denominate a *Person*: The Unity of *Will* and the same Attributes and Power demonstrate, or point out the Unity of *Essence*. The *Son* is a Distinct Person from the *Father*, but if He be not *One* with the *Father* in Will and Power and Essence, He is a different Being, and if a different Being He must be of a different Nature too: He cannot be the *Son*, as the *Son* is understood to possess the *whole* Nature of the *Father*, unless He be of the same Substance and *Attributes* with the *Father*. For Nature, which among Men is *specific*, is so far the same as all Men are *partakers* of it, but with regard to God the *Essence* cannot be *multiplied* nor *divided* in the *Persons* without being destroyed: The *Human* Nature as *Finite* is derived to all Mankind from the Beginning to the End of the World; but the *Divine* Nature, because it is *Infinite*, cannot be *divided*, and therefore, if in the *Divine* Nature there is a Distinction of *Persons*, there must
needs

needs be an Unity of *Essence*: The same may be said as to the Manner of Subsisting in the same *Essence*, whereby the *Persons* are Fundamentally distinguished, One as the *Father*, another as the *Son*, another as the *Holy Ghost*. The Manner we do not pretend to explain beyond what is Revealed: of the Facts we are assured, and the several *Adversarys* of the *Faith* have run into their several *Heresys* by endeavouring to explain it. They argue from Human Persons and Human Existence to *Divine*: from created Beings to uncreated Being, from Individuals among Men to the same in the *Divine* Nature, and they would argue right were it so, that because Individuals are distinct Beings, and so many Intelligent Agents are so many Persons, therefore in the *Divine* Nature there cannot be a Plurality of Persons, because there cannot be a Plurality of Beings, or Individuals. But let them first try to fix the Principle of *Individuation* even in created Beings, and demonstrate, that *Persons* must subsist after the way of Multiplication and Division in the *Divine Nature*, as they do in the *Human*, and to shew, that it cannot be, as we are taught, and that it must be, as they say, and they may possibly be convinced that their Conclusions are as *Rash* and *Blasphemous*, as they are *Weak* and *Presumptuous*. We are assured that Individuation, whatever it be in *created Substances*, cannot admit of Division when applied to the *Divine Essence*, and when we are assured of the Unity so constantly taught in the *Scripture*, and that the *Persons* there revealed are equally *Divine*,

we

380 *The Argum. à Priori applied*

we do from the very *Principles* of *Reason* conclude, that *these Three are One*.

But this should not seem so strange to *those* especially, who contend that the *Being* of a God may be proved *à Priori*, that is by something, which we must conceive *distinct* from Him, and *antecedent* to Him. This, how gross and contradictory soever it may seem, if strictly understood, to *suppose something before the First*, will nevertheless serve to illustrate and reconcile the *Eternity* of the *Son*, and of the *Holy Ghost*, with the *Eternity* of the *Father*. For if the *Father* be *Eternal* in the most absolute and proper sense, notwithstanding we are to conceive *something before Him*, the *Son* is also *Eternal*, notwithstanding in the Order of our Thoughts we do necessarily conceive the *Father before Him*. This is all, I suppose, that is meant or intended by the Celebrated Argument *à Priori*: Not that any *Necessity* actually existed before God, but that in the order and train of our Thought we conceive a *Necessity of Existence*, before we conceive the *Being*, that *existeth*: and then upon more *solid*, and not on this *imaginary* ground we say, that the *Eternity* of the *Son* and of the *Holy Ghost* is to our Apprehension altogether as consistent with the *Eternity* of the *Father*, as is the *Eternity* of the *Father* with the *antecedent Necessity* of his *Existence*. For the *Father* is an Actual Eternal Being, and cannot communicate his *Nature* without his *Eternity*. But this *Necessity* is no *Being*, and can give no *Existence*: It is merely a *supposition*, and one *Necessity* may suppose another without coming

coming at any End of supposing. I might enlarge upon this *Argument*, as it hath been lately stated to the World; but this is sufficient to shew, how *properly* it may be *used* in Defence of the *Trinity*, since the Existence of the *Son*, and of the *Holy Ghost*, as such, is truly to be proved *à Priori*: the *Son* from the *Father*: the *Holy Ghost* from the *Father* and the *Son*, but because of the Eternity, Indivisibility and Unity of the *Divine Nature*, BOTH Co-eternal, and Co-equal with the *Father*.

The sum amounts to this. The Scriptures have given us the most true and worthy Conceptions of the *Deity*, asserting the Unity and at the same time teaching us to adore the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost* under the *Name*, and with the *Worship* of the *One True God*, deriving the *Son* from the *Father* by way of an Eternal Generation, and the *Holy Ghost* from *Both* by way of Procession, in a full Communication of the same Nature, and a perfect Unity of Essence, distinguishing them all along from each other by their several Offices, and Personal Operations. So that in their Common Nature we see the Order of *Relation*, and in their Offices and Operations we behold the outward Distinction of their *Persons*; and by contemplating the Divine Oeconomy we have a view of the whole Process, Agreement and Consistency of this *Revelation* in all its parts from the first Declaration of the *One True God* to the fuller Discovery of Him in all his Transactions with *Mankind*, and especially in the *Redemption* of the *World*.

It is in this great Work, that the Divine *Order* and *Oeconomy* do principally appear, and as the *Counsel* of God in this Purpose of our *Redemption* was more and more manifested, the *Offices* and *Distinction* of the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost* were still more clearly discovered. That this great Work should be *carried* on and *accomplished* by *Three Persons* of an *Eternal* and *Co-equal Essence* is more, than we could pretend to *discover*: That it could be *accomplished* by *any* of the highest Rank of *created Beings* is more, than we could presume to *determine*: That it is *so accomplished*, as the *Church* teacheth us, the *Scriptures* do *declare*: That it could be effected *no other way*, we may *indubitably* conclude: That those who refuse it in *this way*, can obtain it in *no other*, we are *infallibly* certain.

To conclude therefore I shall address a short *Application* to our *Adversarys* and *ourselves*.

I. First it may be proper for our *Adversarys* and all *Opposers* of this *Doctrine* to reflect, and consider coolly with themselves whether they are at Liberty to believe in these Points, as they please? whether the *Arian* and *Socinian* are *equally* safe upon their *several Schemes*, and He that *rejecteth* a *Revelation* hath the *same Title* to the *Favour* of God with Him, that *receiveth* it? These Questions are partly answered in the *fourth* of these Discourses, and I would rather leave any further Determination upon it to the inward Thoughts and Assurance of every Man, that thinketh of an Eternal State; But whatever is the *Event* to them, we may applaud and
com-

comfort our selves with this strong Consolation, that taking the Propositions in the plain and obvious signification of the Words according to that *Analogy*, in which the *things* of God, not only the more *Mysterious*, as they are accounted, but even his *Attributes* are understood, we are *safe* at least, unless a *Revelation* of a *Contrary*, or a *different* sense be equally *manifest*; and since all *difference* of *Faith* and *Opinion*, (if that may be called *Faith*, which believeth not in the Name of the Son of God) ariseth from departing from *these Rules* of *Interpretation*, we have upon this Consideration also a very strong Presumption, if referred to the Judgment of indifferent People only, and upon the strictest Laws of Reasoning we have an *Indubitable* Certainty, that every *Scheme* so differing from *us*, and *each other* is *wrong*, as they are certainly so many different *Hypotheses* invented to solve those *Mysterious* Difficultys, which are confessedly above our *Comprehension*.

2. Our *Adversarys* may do well to consider what I intimated in the beginning of these Discourses, that all their several *Schemes* tend to one Common *Point*, and like so many *Lines*, however *crookedly* drawn, *meet* at last in one common *Center*, equally ^a *denying the Lord, that bought them*.

According to the best Judgment, I am able to form, they *terminate* in the *Mahometan*, or *Unitarian Scheme*, or else introduce *Polytheism* to the Scandal even of *Mahometans* themselves.

Let the *Arians* particularly consider, that, if they do really believe the *Divinity* of the *Son*, by denying Him to be of the very *Substance* of the *Father*, they make *two Gods*, or else, if they deny his *Divinity*, as most certainly they do, they are downright *Unitarians*. If any shall think it hard to rank the *Unitarians* with the *Mahometans* in this *Article* of *GOD*, let them shew the *Difference*, and it will fall on the *Mahometan* side, especially with respect to the *Arians* and *Socinians*, who acknowledge and receive the *Scriptures*. *Unitarians*, that reject all *Revelation*, differ indeed from *Mahometans*, who receive a *strange sort* of one, that is they receive their *Doctrines* upon the *Pretence* of a *Revelation*; but so far as their *Scheme* is supported by them, they seem to approve the *Mahometan* Notions of the *GOD-Head*, and not to be displeased with their Alliance: However, as if it were of service to their Cause, we may remember, with what *Pomp* and *Approbation* we had *Mahometan Meditations* and *Devotions* recommended from that *Quarter* not many years since.

If the *Arians* and *Socinians* should seriously not suspect, that they are driving to the *Unitarian Scheme*, we may observe nevertheless, how they agree with them upon their several Plans to oppose the *Catholic Doctrine*, and all the while give *no opposition* to one another, unless it be, that some of the *warmer* and *more open* blame *others*, who are more *cautious* and *reserved*: if they do truly believe the *Scriptures* to be the *Word of GOD*, they may *compare* each
others

others Scheme with the *Scripture*, and if from thence they should endeavour reciprocally to confute their Opposite *Tenents*, and to overthrow each others *Platform*, they will discover whether their several ways of Interpretation will then serve to convince another, or to defend themselves.

Mahometism it self hath a mixture of *Christianity*, and the Doctrine of a *Trinity* is not obscurely traced in the Ancient *Philosophy*: It is not *Platonism* brought into the *Church*, but it is an Ancient *Traditionary* Doctrine found in the oldest *Scriptures* and derived into their Writings. As delivered in the *Old Testament* and revealed more clearly in the *New*, the *Doctrine* is full and compleat every way answering the great End and gracious Purposes of *Almighty* God in the Display of his *Attributes* and the *Redemption* of the *World*.

3. Let us, my Beloved *Brethren*, be ever, as we are *consistent* with our selves, receiving the *Holy Scriptures* as the *Oracles* of God, interpreting and understanding them agreeably to that *Analogy* of *Faith*, which *maketh* them of one Tenour and Consistency from the *Beginning* to the *End*, in perfect and universal Agreement with the *Church* thro' all Ages from the *Apostles* unto *this* Day. The Fact hath been abundantly proved by the Labours of *Learned Men* both at *Home* and *Abroad*, but no where with more Learning and Glory, than by the True and Genuin Sons, both *Clergy* and *Laity* of this *Church* and *Nation*.

If we would persevere in the *Faith*, and keep that, which is committed to our *Trust*, we must, as

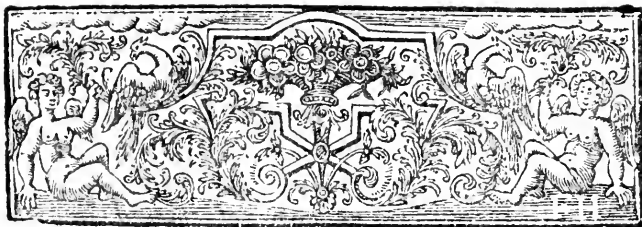
St Paul chargeth Timothy, we must ^a avoid prophane babling, and oppositions of Science falsely so called, which some professing have erred concerning the Faith; since we are assured, that ^b if any Man teach otherwise and consent not to wholesome Words, even the Words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the Doctrine, which is according to Godliness; he is proud, knowing nothing.

The way therefore to this Catholic Agreement is to ^c hold fast the form of sound words, and the ^d Faith, which was once delivered to the Saints: If we observe these Instructions, and the rest, which St Paul especialy sent to several Churches, and gave particularly to Timothy and Titus, we shall ^e know how to behave our selves in the House of GOD, which is the Church of the Living GOD: the Pillar and Ground of Truth. ^f And without Controversy great is the Mystery of Godliness: GOD was manifest in the Flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of Angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the World, received up into Glory.

And therefore unto GOD the Son, together with the Father, and the Holy Ghost be ascribed, as is most due all Glory and Honour and Worship: All Might, Majesty and Dominion for Ever and Ever. Amen.

^a 1 Tim. VI. 20, 21. ² Tim. II. 16. ^b 1 Tim. VI. 3, 4.
^c 2 Tim. I. 13. ^d Jude v. 3. ^e 1 Tim. III. 15. ^f v. 16.





S E R M O N V I I I .

Preached *June 5.* 1729.

I COR. II. 14.

— *Because they are Spiritually discerned.*

THESE Words in their nearer and more remote Connection give us the *Reason*, why the *Natural Man* receiveth not the things of God, neither can he know them. He receiveth them not, because in his *Natural State*, and according to the *Principles of Natural Science* he is indisposed to believe them: He is rather prejudiced against them, and *they are foolishness unto him*: As he receiveth not the *Things of God* from a *Natural Indisposition*, neither can he know them, because they are *Spiritually* dis-

B b 2

discerned: There is a Natural Limitation of his Knowledge, which restraineth it from extending to them: and there is a Natural Blindness in his present estate, which hindereth him from *discerning* them. With respect to the *limitation* of our Knowledge *it hath not entered into the heart of Man to conceive*; with respect to our Natural Blindness, *it hath not entered into the heart of Man to believe them*: with regard to the first we could not *know them*, because *no Man knoweth the things of GOD, but the Spirit of GOD*: with reference to the second we cannot *believe them*, nor when *revealed* can we *know them* in a *saving* manner, *because they are Spiritually discerned*.

From hence also we may collect the Reason why the *Apostle* taught *these things not in the Words, which Man's Wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing Spiritual things with Spiritual, because they are Spiritually discerned*.

There are several senses, in which both Ancient and Modern Writers have explained what is meant by the *Natural Man*; but as some of them are forced and conceited, and none of them, which differ from the Scriptures, true, I shall mention only *these three*, which the Scriptures give us, in as few Words as I can.

1. First the *Natural Man* is sometimes expressed by the *Carnal Man*, and then these Terms are reciprocal, the *Carnal* signifying no more than the mere *Natural Man*: In this sense the *Apostle* useth the Word *Carnal* in the ^a next

Chapter opposing it to *Spiritual*, where by *Carnal* he doth not mean the *Lusts* of the *Flesh*, but only the *Natural Man* in this his *Natural* state of Infirmary, and applieth it to those *Christians* whom he calleth *Babes in Christ*, as being led away with partial Affections to their Teachers, and not yet arrived to a state of Perfection.

2. *Secondly*, By the *Words* preceeding the Text, the *Natural Man* is intended to denote the *inward Frame* and *Constitution* of the Mind, without any respect to the gross and *Carnal Appetite*, so that by our meer *Natural Powers* we cannot know the *Things of God*: even the *hidden Wisdom*, which none of the *Princes*, or *Wise Men of this World* knew, those things, which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard: These are beyond the Ken of our *Intellectual Powers*, which can neither discern them, before they are brought near, and discovered to us, nor discern them afterwards further, than they are discovered. These are the *Deep things of God*. Our Understanding seeth not into them, but *God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit*.

3. *Thirdly*, the *Carnal Mind* is used to signify the *sinful Lusts of the Flesh*, without any regard to the *Natural* state of our *Intellectual Powers*: as in the *eighth Chapter* to the *Romans*,^a where in setting forth the *Opposition* between the *Flesh* and the *Spirit*, the *Apostle* teacheth us, *That they, who are after the Flesh, do mind the things of the Flesh*: That the *Carnal Mind is Enmity with God*, and therefore to be carnally

^a Rom. VIII. 5, 6, 7.

390 *The several senses in*
mind is Death. And thus in describing the
 depraved State and miserable Condition of the
Natural Man before his *Regeneration*, he writeth
 Chap. II. to the ^a*Ephesians*, if we supply the
first verse from the *fifth*, as he passeth from the
second Person to the *first*, speaking sometimes to
 them apart, sometimes including *Himself* and the
Jews, and so I shall lay the whole Passage be-
 fore you, *And you being dead in Trespasses and*
Sins hath He quickned. *Wherein in time past ye*
walked according to the Course of this World,
according to the Prince of the Power of the Air, the
Spirit, that now worketh in the Children of Disobe-
dience: Among whom also we had our Conversation
in times past, in the Lusts of our Flesh, fulfilling the
Desires of the Flesh and of the Mind, and were by
Nature the Children of Wrath, even as others. But
GOD, who is rich in Mercy, for his great Love
wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in
Sins, hath quickned us together with Christ.

This then is the *Natural Man* according to
 the *Lusts of the Flesh* and the *Desires of the Mind*:
 sometimes the *Apostle* alludeth to the Weak and
 Infant state of his *Converts*; sometimes to the
 Natural Limits and Defects of our Intellectual
 Powers, but oftener to the Corruption of the
 the Heart and Defilement of the Mind, and
 in this sense the *One* is promiscuously used for
 the *Other*.

Where then they are reciprocal, the *Carnal*
Mind is indifferently used to denote the *Natu-*
ral Man: As when with respect to the Body

^a Ephes. II. 1, 2, 3, 5.

which they are understood. 391

alone St Peter telleth us, ^a *All Flesh is grass*; and again the Soul, meaning by it that Animate and living Principle, which we have in common with the *Beasts that perish*, sometimes implieth the Carnal, or Bodily part of *Man*, as when he saith, that *in the ° Ark few, that is eight Souls were saved*: For *Man* is denominated sometimes from his *Flesh* and *Body*, sometimes from his *Soul*, or the *Animal part*: and sometimes the Term *Carnal* is applied to his *Natural* and *Intellectual* Powers, as the *Will* is *byassed* and the *Understanding* *darkened* by *Lust* and *Passion*; But how variously soever the Term is applied to *Soul* or *Body*, the *Lusts* themselves are always ascribed to, and expressed by the *sensual Appetite*, and the *grosser* part of our *Nature*: they are emphatically called the *Lusts of the Flesh*, with respect to their prevalence it is, that the *Mind* it self is called *Carnal*, and so the *Carnal Mind is Enmity with God*.

To apply these *Expositions*, The *Natural Man* mentioned in the Text by the meer light of his *Reason* cannot know the *Things of God*, and the *Carnal Mind* immersed in *Fleshly Lusts* cannot relish nor receive them: The *Natural Man* receiveth them not, because not being proposed according to the Maxims of *Philosophy*, nor in the Pomp of *Oratory*, they are *Foolishness unto him*: *Things*, which by his meer *Natural Light* he can neither understand nor account for: Upon this ground, ^c *Christ crucified is to the Jews a stumbling Block, and to the Greeks Foolishness*. And the

^a 1 Pet. I. 24. ^b III. 20. ^c 1 Cor. I. 23.

392 *Method of the Apost. Teaching,*
Carnal Mind is not in a Disposition to receive them, when proposed, nor to continue in them, when professed: if in its Infancy it hath been instructed in the School of *Christianity*, it doth not, when it is afterwards corrupted, like to retain them. These are ever the true Principles of *Infidelity* in not receiving them: of *Heresy* in contradicting them, and of *Apostacy* in departing from them. So evidently do *Apostacy*, *Heresy*, and *Infidelity* spring from the same bitter Root, and flow from the same corrupted Fountain.

Our Natural Incapacity to know the Things of God I have abundantly shewed in several of these Discourses: I have also discoursed at large concerning the Necessity of a Revelation both to declare the Will of God, and to enforce the Obligation of his Laws: And further, that as we cannot attain to a true Knowledge of God and his Attributes without Revelation, there are besides several great and *Mysterious* Points, which can be known by Revelation only: It is with respect to these especially, that the Apostle speaketh in this Chapter, and these are those Things of God, which, above all others, are Spiritually discerned.

As by considering the *Analogy* of Language, and the *Analogy* of Faith, I have endeavoured to lay down some Rules of Interpretation agreeable to the Apostle's manner of Teaching, I shall in this Discourse for a Conclusion of the Whole examine the several Heretical Schemes now prevalent among us, and compare their Way of Discerning, and Judging, and Teaching these Things

Things of God, with the *Method* used by the *Apostle*, and followed by the *Church*.

For if *these things* cannot be known nor received by the meer *Natural Man*, because they are *Spiritually discerned*, there is, and can be but one uniform and consistent Method of coming to the Knowledge of *them*, and this is opposed to *Human Wisdom* and *Human Knowledge* both as to the *Subject* that is treated of, and the *Language* it is treated in. The *Subject* is the *Wisdom* of God, even his *hidden* and *Mysterious Wisdom*, very different from the *Wisdom* of the *World*: The *Language* is not that *Excellency of Speech*, which the *Grecian Orators* and *Philosophers* affected, and the *Apostle's Preaching* was not with *enticing Words* of *Man's Wisdom*, but in the *demonstration of the Spirit* and of *Power*; That our *Faith* should not stand in the *Wisdom* of *Men*, but in the *Power* of *God*. The *Things* are great and glorious, but the *Language* is plain, and the *method* unaffected, the *Periods* are not laboured nor ambitious of any *Ornaments* but what rise from the greatness and importance of the *Subject*. Which *Things* also the *Apostles* spoke not in the *Words* which *Man's Wisdom* teacheth, but which the *Holy Ghost* teacheth. Since therefore they were not taught, we must not judge of the *Things* of *God* according to the *Principles* and *Maxims* of *Human Science*, but according to those *Revelations*, which are given us, concerning the *Divine Nature* and *Attributes*, and we must receive them not according to the *Figurative Schemes* and *Language* of *Human Wisdom*, but according to those plain *Assertions of Fact* delivered in the

Scrip-

Scriptures. This is the only sure way of proceeding, and the *Things of God* are then truly discerned and judged of, when *Spiritual things are compared with Spiritual*, and every part of *Revelation* is received in a sense agreeable to, and consistent with all the other.

It will be proper therefore to consider the *Points* proposed, and the several *Methods of Teaching* them, the *Difficultys* arising on both sides, and the *Consequences* necessarily following the *Genuin Doctrine* of the *Church*, and the *several Schemes* of those who have departed from it.

I. For the *Points* proposed, they have been mentioned already, as they are contained in the great *Subject* of the *Apostle's Discourse*, which he calleth *the hidden Wisdom*, or *the Wisdom of God in a Mystery*: even the *Eternal Purpose* and *Counsel* of God for the *Redemption* of the *World*, and in Consequence of this, the *Opening* and *disclosing* to us the *Divine Order* and *Oeconomy* in the *Manner* and *Method* of its *Accomplishment* by the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost*.

We might never possibly have seen so plainly this *Distinction of Persons* in the *Eternal* and *Ever Glorious God-Head*, had Mankind continued in a state of *Innocence* and *Perfection*: *This manner of Distinction* by their *several Operations* in the great *Work* of our *Redemption*, it is certain, *never* could have appeared; But as the *Fall* was foreseen, and the *Distinction* not obscurely pointed out at the *Creation*, which was *afterwards* more fully discovered at the *Redemption* of the *World*, the clearer *Revelation* of the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost* in the *Redemption*

tion of the World will serve to teach us, how infallibly to *interpret* and *distinguish* the *same Persons* Co-operating in the *Creation*.

In the Scriptures there are *two* distinct *Revelations*: *One* relating to the *Being* and *Attributes* of God with regard to his *Essence* alone, and containing also the *whole Duty of Man* with regard to *Natural Religion*, as Contradistinguished to that, which from the *Nature* of its Subject is more strictly, and peculiarly called *Revealed*, and is for the most part also *antecedent* to it. This *Revelation* respecting *Natural Religion* was made first to the *Patriarchs* from the Beginning of the World: Afterward to the *Children of Israel* under *Moses*, and the whole Succession of their *Prophets*; only we must observe, that all these *Revelations* were joined and accompanied with several Branches of *Instituted Religion*, as of *Sacrifices*, as high as *Adam*: of the *same* again, as high as *Noah*: of *Circumcision* given to *Abraham*, and the whole *Ritual Law* to the *Children of Israel*: In these the *Unity* and *Perfections* of the *Divine Nature* are clearly *revealed*, and the *Divine Worship* and *Honour* are rigorously *restrained* and *asserted* to the *One True God*, and this *Divine Unity*, *Perfections* and *Worship* are as strongly *asserted* in the *New Testament*, as under the *Old*.

The *Other* is what we do strictly and more peculiarly call *Revealed Religion*, such as we could have no Conception of without a *Revelation*, nor any *Conception* further than *what* is *revealed*. This is that *Counsel* of God so often mentioned,

396 *The first of Natural Religion.*

tioned, ^a *Which Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, neither hath it entered into the Heart of Man to conceive by any other Means: even the wonderful, and amazing Work of our Redemption.*

The *first* of these *Revelations* assisteth, and correcteth our *Natural Light*, and convinceth our *Reason*, that *Thus it must Be*: That there is an *Eternal first Cause of Infinite Perfection*. The *second* openeth a Scene otherwise entirely shut up from our View, and informeth us, *How we stand* in our *present Condition* with respect to GOD: *How we are forfeited*, and *How we are restored*: And when *Natural Religion* in our *present State* would prove our *utter Ruin and Condemnation* by Reason of that *Obligation*, we *cannot perform*, and of our *Incapacity* to *satisfy* for the *Violation* of it, *this other Revealed* teacheth, in *what manner* we are enabled to discharge the *Dutys* of it, and upon *what Terms* we are *accepted* in it.

So that if *Revealed Religion* be considered only as an *Help* and *Assistent* to *Natural*, as we cannot in this depraved estate discharge the *Dutys* of *Natural Religion*, and when we have *transgressed*, as ^b *none can redeem his Brother, nor give ransom, nor make agreement unto GOD for him*, It ought in this View alone most thankfully to be received, and all the *Instituted* Parts of it should be considered not only as *Helps* and *Motives* to our *Duty*, but moreover as *Means* of *Pardon* and *Reconciliation* for our *Offences*.

^a 1 Cor. II. 9. ^b Psal. XLIX. 7.

From this mention I have made of *Instituted Religion*, I would not enter into any Debate concerning the *Preference*, or into any *Comparison* between *that* and *Natural*, in point of *Excellence* or *Obligation*: There is indeed no *Room*, nor *Foundation* for *such* a Dispute, and those, who set *one* in Rivalship as it were, against the *other*, do nothing less than endeavour the *Destruction* of *Both*.

It is true the *Institutions* of *Religion* are to be considered as *Means* to the *End*: Of *themselves* they are of no *significancy* or *value*, but only as they are *ordained* of God for those good and gracious Purposes, to which He hath *appointed* them: If The *End* they were *appointed* to promote, were only the *Practice* of *Moral Dutys*, is it *indifferent*, whether they be *observed* or *not*? If *Moral Dutys* may be more perfectly performed by the *Observation* of them, than *without*, even then the *Observation* would be *necessary*: For our parts we embrace them, as great *Helps* in the Discharge of our *Moral Dutys*, and are far from presuming, that we can discharge them as well *without* as *with* the *Use* of these *Means*: *Baptism* engageth us under a *Vow* of *Faith* and *Obedience*: and the *Supper of the Lord* ratifieth and reneweth that *Vow*, as often, as we receive it, and so far, from a due *Consideration* and *Conscience* of our *Vows*, they are *helpful* to *Morality*; But let us not be led into a *Mistake*, the *Practice* of *Morality* is *not* the *only End*: The *last* and *highest Concern* of *Man* is his *chiefest* and *most proper End*, beyond which there can be no *other*, and to which all our *Actions* should be *directed*: In this
sense

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sense the *Præctice* of *Morality* it self is only a *Means* to the *End*: and all Instances of *Faith* and *Obedience* are the *same*; It is true ^a *the End of the Commandment is Charity out of a pure Heart and of a good Conscience*, and, as the *Apostle* addeth, of *Faith unfeigned*: And the End of the Law is *Obedience*; But the End of *Charity* and *Obedience*, *what* they are *ordained* unto, *that* is the proper End of all a Mans *Actions* and *Endeavours*. The End of *Man* therefore with respect to his *Maker* is the *Glory* of *God*, to which he should direct all his *Thoughts* and *Actions*, and to *which* *God* *however* will direct them, and *make* the *Evil* as well as *Good*, the *Sinner* as well as the *Saint* contribute to his *Glory*; for he will be *glorified in all*; for tho' it is our *Eternal Happiness* to promote his *Glory*, It is not in our *Power* to *defeat* it. The *End* of *Man* with regard to *Himself* is his own *Salvation*, and by *intending* the *Glory* of *God* we pursue *both* Ends at once and intend the *Salvation* of our *Souls* also. The *Means* to these are *Obedience* to *God's Will*, however manifested, and the *Performance* of those Conditions, whether of a *Moral* or *Positive Nature*, which He hath *required*: In this view the *Dutys* of *Natural Religion*, thus considered as *Means* to an *End*, do then, when they are *joined* with the *Means* appointed by *Revealed Religion*, become *Accepted* of *God*, and thro' those *Means* *Effectual* to *attain* their *End*. For the *Instituted Dutys* are not only *Motives* and *Means* to the *Practice* of *Morality*, but are also *Instruments* of *deriving* *God's Grace* upon

^a 1 Tim. I. 5.

our Souls, to purify us from Sin as in *Baptism*, and to apply the Seal of *Pardon* thro' the Merits of *Christ's Death*, as in the *Lord's Supper*. This is a short and full, not a tedious and partial Explication of this Matter; This is the whole Truth without any Misrepresentation, or setting one part of our Duty at variance with another: In this the great Goodness and Mercy of God appeareth, in the Pardon of our Sins, and Acceptance of our imperfect Obedience. If this be not the true State of the Case, why then let Men stand boldly on bare naked Foot of Natural Religion alone, and put their Salvation as they must do, upon the full Performance of all the Dutys of it without the Transgression of any; and if they have Transgressed, and if in their best Actions there be found any Flaw or Infirmitie, let them plead their Merits, and challenge their Reward, or claim their Pardon at least upon such Reparation, as they of themselves are able to make for their Offences; and this upon due Consideration will shew a Christian the Obligation and Importance of those Positive Institutions the two Sacraments of our Religion, by which the Interests of Morality are not only promoted, but the great Business of our Salvation also most surely conducted.

Having touched upon this Point I would take some Notice of the Pretence that the End being more noble is therefore preferable to the Means: And so it is, when using the One becomes inconsistent with, or unnecessary to the Pursuit of the Other. Where this is the Case of Positive Institutions, we may presume, that God hath

hath repealed them; so far, as any *Interfering* can be supposed between the *Means* and the *End*, there the *Means* must give place, and in such Cases our *Lord* hath taught us to prefer *Mercy* to *Sacrifice*: The *Positive* Precept must give place, if it shall so fall out, that the Work of *Mercy* will be neglected, should the *Positive* Precept just at that juncture be observed: But yet so far, as *Positive* Institutions are considered as Means to an End, there is a *reciprocal* Relation, and Respect of *Each* to *Other*, and a Man may as reasonably hope to attain his End by neglecting the proper Natural Means, as by neglecting the Positive, which God hath appointed, and thereby made *necessary* to the End. In the Pursuit of Common Ends there is a great variety of Means, and every Man may make choice as he pleaseth, and change them as often as he pleaseth for others, which he finds or imagines to be better adapted. But to *Christians* God hath made his Institutions necessary to the great End they have in view, and they cannot *ordinarily* attain it any *other* way: The two *Sacraments* which *Christ* hath ordained in his Church, whether they were chiefly ordained for the sake of *Morality* or not, are *generally necessary to Salvation*, that is, where they can be administered according to his Institution, and are not neglected upon *Principle* or *Contempt*: Well then, the Means are ordained for the End; therefore, what follows, why therefore regard not the Means: for either they will defeat the End, or the End may be obtained without them: But is this good Consequence?

What-

Whatever may be the Case of meer *outward Profession*, which is altogether *Destructive* and *Vain*, the *Observation* of the Means hath in all other Points been ever thought the surest and most natural Course to the End.

But besides these Points of express *Revelation* and *Command* there are also some other, which relate to *Natural Religion* and are included in our *Natural Apprehensions* of the *Divine Being*. I shall mention but *two*: The *Omniscience* particularly the *Prescience*, and the *Omnipresence* of God.

I. And first for the *Divine Omniscience* particularly as it respecteth the *Prescience* of *Futurity*, and the *Contingency* of *Human Actions*.

The *Socinians* and *Pelagians*, do deny directly, as the strict *Predestinarians* are charged by Consequence to impeach God's *Foreknowledge* of *Contingences*: *These* falling into the Doctrine of *Fate*, and *Those* into that of *Chance*: *These* taking away the *Liberty* of *Action* by *Necessity*, and *Those* by *Contingency*, as he, that acteth *Contingently* acteth with no more *Liberty*, than he, that acteth by *Necessity*: But to illustrate *Both*, there are *Others*, who in the grossest manner do deny the *Divine Prescience*, and they proceed upon the loose *Atheistical Scheme*, supported by the *Socinian* way of Discoursing upon this Subject, which may serve to shew the *Socinians* the *Use* that is made of their Doctrine, and indeed the Connection between them is so close that Confuting the *One* will be a Confutation of the *Other* also.

With regard to the Divine *Attributes* we might indeed expect that every *Sect* which calleth it self *Christian*, doth receive and acknowledge them in one *Uniform* and *Consistent* sense with the *Church*: For this is *Natural Religion*, tho' fixed by *Revelation*, and *Natural* is equally the *Religion* of *All*: of *those* especialy, who believe the *Scriptures*: Difference in these Points sheweth these two things: *first* the *Inability* of our *Reason* to fix the just Conceptions of *Natural Religion*, or to resolve such Questions, as belong to the *Attributes* of GOD: *secondly* that for want of Comprehending, how these things can be, the *Adversarys* are as ready to dispute and deny the *Mysterys* of *Natural Religion*, as of *Revealed*, and their Mistakes are owing to the *same* Causes in *both*: For their *Reason* is in the Dark, when it searcheth into the *Mysterys* of *Omniscience*, and they are are not able to reconcile the *Fore-knowledge* of GOD with the *Contingency* and *Liberty* of *Human Actions*.

But all this is arguing just as in other *Mysterys* they do, from the *Method* and *Limitation* of *Human Knowledge* to *Divine*; whereas if they did truly consider, that GOD's Knowledge is *Infinite* and therefore *Incomprehensible* both as to the Manner and Compass of it, they would never argue against the *Divine Prescience* necessarily concluded in *Omniscience* upon any Difficultys arising from the *Freedom* of *Man's Will* or the *Contingency* of his *Actions*.

If we were not able to clear up the *Mysterys* of *Omniscience*, yet we depend not, as in other *Mysterys*, upon *Divine Revelation* only, but
upon

upon the *Conclusions* of *Reason* also in the Case before us, and as to the present *Question* we are more assured upon the *Principles* of *Natural Religion*, that God is *Omniscient*, than we can be that his *Prescience* reacheth not to *Contingences*, or is inconsistent with the *Liberty* of *Action*; It is therefore both very *unphilosophical* and *absurd* to deny the *Divine Prescience*, which, if it be any kind of *Knowledge*, is evidently included in *Omniscience*: or rather, because there are no *Degrees*, nor *Succession*, nor *Progress* in the *Divine Knowledge*, it is, as I shall shew, the *same* with *Omniscience*. The Impotence of our Reason, and the Scantiness of our Knowledge is no more an Objection to this than to any other of God's *Attributes*, and tho' in our way of thinking it should appear that *Prescience* in us would be inconsistent with the *Contingency* and *Liberty* of *Action*, yet this is no Argument, that it is *so* with God, unless the *Rule* and *Compass* of His *Knowledge* were also the *same* with *Ours*.

I shall just offer some short *Strictures* therefore upon the *Objections* in this arduous Point of the *Prescience* or *Omniscience* of God.

By *Omniscience* without extending it, as we ought, to Numberless Worlds, and therein to all *Natural* and *Moral Agents*, how many kinds of them soever there be, we commonly understand the *Knowledge* and *Foreknowledge* of God relating to this World, and the Actions and Affairs of Men from the Beginning to the End, upon the *Scheme* of *Natural Religion* only, tho' in *Revealed* we find an Intercourse and Com-

404 GOD's *Prescience* of
communication of *Angels*, both *Good* and *Evil* with
Men. And so far as the *Heathen* have taken no-
tice of this Correspondence we must resolve it
into some *Traditionary Revelation*.

But if by *Omniscience* we only understand the
Knowledge of every thing, that *hath* been, or
now is transacted in the World, we contract it
to narrower Bounds, than even *Human Know-*
ledge is confined to; For in *Human Knowledge*
there is a *sort* of *Prescience* according to which
Measures are taken, and *Laws* are framed for
promoting the *Happiness*, and *preventing* or *remov-*
ing the *Miserys* of *Communitys*, and by which al-
so *Private Men* provide against the *Future* in
their *Domestic Concerns*.

However in the *Scheme* of *Natural Religion*,
it is agreed by all, who own a GOD of *Infinite*
Perfections, and believe his *Providence*, that
He is not only *Omniscient*, and that this *Omni-*
science is not only *manifested*, but that it is also
necessary in the *Order* and *Government* of the
World, and that *Prescience* particularly is re-
quired in the *Method* and *Administration* of his
Providence.

This *Prescience* comprises the *Knowledge* of
things *Future*, as *Omniscience* comprehendeth
altogether things *Past*, *Present*, and to *Come*:
And it is this *Knowledge* of the *Future*, which is
principally intended, forasmuch as all *Knowledge*
of *Past* and even *Present*, is *too late* for the
Guidance and *Direction* of *Human Affairs*, and
to exclude the *Knowledge* of *Futurity* is in effect
to exclude *Providence* it self, which in the very
Name, and *Notation* of the Word implieth a *Fore-*
sight

sight and *Provision*; and because this *Knowledge* among other Subjects, hath a special respect to the *Actions* of Men, it must therefore take in Contingences, such, as *Human Actions* are; therefore to deny God's *Foreknowledge* of Contingences and to deny any *Foreknowledge* at all is the *same* thing with respect to Events depending upon *Moral Agents*; and to say, that God knoweth *Future Events* without knowing the *Train* of *Causes*, which shall produce them, is still more hard to conceive. The *Event* is as *Contingent* as the *Action*, and in the ordinary Course the Contingency of the *One* dependeth upon the Contingency of the *Other*. For it is the *Action*, which maketh the Event *Contingent*, otherwise as in *Natural* Causes the Effect would be *Uniform* and *Sure*.

But besides these general Considerations, there is one special Evidence of God's *Foreknowledge* reaching to all Contingences, which is, that in the Course and Administration of his *Providence* He oftentimes *overruleth* the *Actions* of Men to an *Issue* contrary to their *Natural Tendency*: By this means especially He bringeth *Good* out of *Evil*, and thorough this Superindendency and Command of all *Events*, the wisest Counsels and the greatest Strength are defeated by the weakest Instruments: the best laid, and best executed Designs fail of Success, and, what is more remarkable, produce a quite contrary Effect. This might be proved, as things of this Nature require, by an *Induction* of *Particulars* collected from *History* both *Sacred* and *Profane*, for tho' the *Sacr*

Writers are not considered in this Argument as *inspired*, yet they may be used, as of Equal *Credit*, as *True* in their *Relations*, and as *Just* in their *Remarks*, as any other. But for this *Induction* I refer to those, who have made it, and to the *Books* themselves from whence the several Facts are extracted; and then it will appear, that tho' ordinarily speaking, ^a *Without Counsel Purposes are disappointed*; yet in an Extraordinary way, ^b *The Lord bringeth the Counsel of the Heathen to nought, and maketh the Devices of the People of none Effect, and casteth out the Counsel of Princes. But the Counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, and the Thoughts of his Heart to all Generations*: ^c *There are many Devices in a Man's Heart, nevertheless the Counsel of the Lord it shall stand.* Man acts, as he pleases, according to his own *Counsel* and *Devices*, but God seeth thro' the whole Course and Progress of all his *Designs*, and giveth such a *Turn* and *Direction* to them as defeateth the Counsel of the Wise, and disappointeth the Expectation of Men; and surely it is not a Declaration unbecoming the *Almighty*, when He saith, ^d *My Counsel shall stand, I will do all my Pleasure.* This He cannot perform, unless He hath all Contingences in his *View*, and all Events in his *Power*. Whatsoever *Men* design, or howsoever they act, the Event sheweth that It is directed by God, and the Course of our *Actions* sheweth, that *they* are entirely *Free*, while they produce an *Effect*, which neither their own Nature led to, nor

^a Prov. XV. 22. ^b Psal. XXXIII. 10, 11. ^c Prov. XIX. 21.
^d Isa. XLVI. 10.

the *Agents* designed: For tho' He conducteth our Actions to his own Purpose, yet He doth neither by his *Fore-knowledge* necessitate, nor by his *Interposition* constrain us to act in that *particular* Manner, but we do freely propose the *End*, and chuse the *Means* for its accomplishment; but when we have acted, as we please, and our *Actions* considered as *Natural* or *Moral Means* should have a *Correspondent Effect*, He giveth what *Event*, He pleaseth to them. This clearly accounteth for the *Freedom* of our *Actions*, notwithstanding his *Fore-knowledge*, and from the *History* of his *Providence* we may learn, that no Contingency can defeat his *Purpose*, or escape his *Knowledge*: His *Prescience* is established upon undeniable Facts, and if we cannot reconcile it to our way of Thinking and Arguing, we may remember that his *Knowledge* is *infinite*, and his *Wisdom* *Incomprehensible*, as St *Paul* cryeth out in Raptures upon the Contemplation of it. ^a *How unsearchable are his Judgments, and his Ways past finding out?* However, what is *evident* in *Fact*, we may defend in *Reason* so far at least, as to shew, that we are not qualified to determine upon what we cannot understand, and that the *Schemes* of those, who deny the *Divine Prescience* are *some* of them *Blasphemous*, and *all* of them *False*.

Because we are not able to solve all *Questions* relating to these Points we are not therefore to deny them: There are many Doubts of meer *Curiosity*, and 'tis endless travelling in the Mazes

of *Freewill, Necessity, Liberty* and *Contingency*. How we act with *Liberty*, when our Actions are foreseen, would be unanswerable, were our Actions *determined*, as well as *foreseen*, which is the Consequential Objection to the *Predestinarian Scheme*. But *Prescience* no more affecteth our Actions or manner of Acting *before*, than the *Knowledge*, that we have so Acted, affecteth them *afterwards*. Here is a *Series* of Actions, which are beheld all at once, either in *Prospect*, or in *Retrospect*: no *series* of Actions *past* is affected by the the *Retrospect*, nor is any *series* of Actions to come affected by the *Prospect*. It is only taking a *view* of them *altogether* as they *have been*, or *shall be*, and He, that by way of *Prophecy* shall *Advertise us*, what *shall come to pass in the latter Days*, no more influenceth the *Events*, than the *Historian*, that *recordeth them*, for things do not *come to pass*, because they are *foreseen*, but therefore they are *foreseen*, because they *shall come to pass*; To suppose an Action done without being *foreseen* leaveth us at perfect *Liberty*, and to suppose the *same* Action *foreseen* detracteth nothing from that *Liberty*, since it would have been *so* done after the *same* manner, if it had not been *foreseen*.

But further we form wrong Notions of God's *Knowledge* by likening it too strictly both in Manner and Measure to *our Own*. His *Knowledge* groweth not, nor encreaseth, as *Ours* doth, for then it could not be *Infinite*. It admitteth of no *Addition* or *Progression* any more, than his *Eternity* admitteth of any *Succession* of *Ages*, or *Years*, or *Moments*. The Actions, that
are

not Yet, God seeth, just as ^a*He calleth those things, that be not, as though they were.* In his Knowledge, as in his *Eternity* there is Nothing *Future*, and Nothing *Past*: It is *Prescience* with respect to *us*, whose Actions are *called forth* in *Order of Time*, but it is *Knowledge* with reference to God ^b*the High and Lofty One, that inhabiteth Eternity*, and his *Prescience* is the same with his actual *Beholding*: Man, while God seeth *how* he *will* and *doth* act, hath as perfect and convincing a *Consciousness* of the *Liberty*, wherewith he *acteth*, as of his *Actions* themselves; and it will be a strange Conclusion, that God cannot *foresee* them, because Man is *Conscious*, that they are *Free*.

The *Objection* is still weaker from the *Minuteness* and *Circumstances* of Mens *Actions*, and full as absurd, as it would be to suppose it more difficult to do *small* things than *great*; or more properly to suppose any *Difficulty* at all. For, *'is any thing too hard for the Lord?* Is it any *weariness* or *labour* to Him to exert either his *Knowledge* or his *Power*.

Having said this in general with regard to the *Socinian* or *Pelagian* Tenents, I shall observe more especially upon the *Atheistical* Scheme, that those *great* Men of *Parts* and *Penetration* deny God's *Prescience* of *Contingences* for these *Weighty* and *Philosophical* Reasons. Because it *cannot be demonstrated*: because *it is impossible*: because *it is not necessary to the Divine Perfections*: and because *it is incompatible with the Liberty of*

^a Rom. IV. 17. ^b II. LVII. 15. ^c Gen. XVIII. 14.

Action, which I have spoken to already. All this is true with respect to their *Material God*, whose *Intelligence*, that I may speak *Contingently*, may possibly not be *Infinite*, and whose *Knowledge* perhaps may be very *small*, perhaps *smaller* than their *own*: It is indeed impossible, that *such a God* should know *more* than a *Creature*, and that *Being*, which *created Nothing*, may likewise know *Nothing* at all; and I am very sure, it cannot be proved from his *Composition*, that *he is a God of Knowledge*. Neither is it necessary to the *Perfection* of *such a Divinity* to *foresee Contingences*, whose *whole Perfection* is the *Eternal Necessity* of *Existence* under *successive Modifications* of *Eternal Matter* and *Eternal Intelligence* mixed up with a *Life* that is not *Eternal*, but still *flitting* from one *Portion of Matter* to another. The *Prescience* of *such a Deity* can no more be *demonstrated*, than his *Omnipotence*, and while these *Demonstrators* pretend to prove, there is no *Divine Prescience* of *Contingences*, they do at the same time prove in their way, that there is no *Prescience* and no *God* at all.

That a *Divine Prescience* of *Contingences* is not demonstrable from the *Nature* of the *Things* is very true, that is, if they know what they mean, when they talk so *magisterially*, and amuse ordinary *Readers* at every turn with the *Nature* of the *Thing*, the *Things* being *Contingent* is no *Medium* to demonstrate, that they are *foreknowable*; and the *Impossibility*, that *Contingences* can be *foreknown*, may then be *demonstrated*, when they shall be able to *demonstrate*, that there is no *God*, or what cometh
much

much to the same thing, that if there be *Any*, *He must be such a One as Theirs*, which is hardly so good, as being *such a One as Themselves*, since upon their Principles, as they make *Intelligence* dependent upon *Matter*, they cannot prove, that there are any *reasonable* Beings besides Men in the World, nor can they prove, that Man is *reasonable*, but by *Fact*: when they shall be able to prove *themselves* to be *reasonable Beings* from the *Nature* and *Constitution* of the *Mind*, and can truly tell, what *Thought* and *Reason* are, and how far *Matter* is *capable* of them, they will then have overthrown all their own *Hypotheses* and *Demonstrations*.

But some *Foreknowledge* however is allowed: The *God* whom they have *set up*, *foreknoweth* in general for instance, that Man will act as Man according to his *Nature*, just as Plants will grow after their *Kind*; and not only so, but for certain reasons very convenient for themselves, they indulge unto *their God* a *Foreknowledge* more particularly, that *every Man will act according to his Constitution and Completion*, which with them is to act also according to *Nature*: This is a sort of *Foreknowledge*, which if we take it in general, every Man may be possessed of, thus qualified at least, that in the *main* Man will act, like a *Reasonable Creature*: but in *Fact* this *Foreknowledge* would fail, as often as Men *forsook* their *Reason*, and *followed* their *Constitution*: and so the *second Foreknowledge* disappointeth the *first*, and taken in *particular* it is *false in Fact*, and *disproveth* it self also. For *Socrates*, and I might mention many others, did not act
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412 *Of Acting according to*

according to his *Complection*, and every Man must strive against his *Complection*, that is against every predominant Lust and Passion, if he would act according to his *Reasonable Nature*: For these things, truly stated, are so far from being the *same*, that they are *incompatible*: the Truth is, it is the *Duty* of every Man to act according to his *Nature*: It may be the *Condemnation* of any Man to act according to his *Constitution*, especially, if his *Complection* should indicate a Bad one. To act according to *Human Nature*, such, as God created it, is the Law and Perfection of our *Nature*: To follow our *Constitution*, such, as Sin hath made it, is to sink under the Weakness and Depravity of our *Nature*: To act up to the Dignity of our *Nature* is our Glory, to yield our selves up to our particular *Constitution* as Lusts and Passions shall prevail, is our Shame; and whatever these Men may dream, this *Foreknowledge*, which they allow, will be so far from excusing them in following *Nature* according to their *Complections*, that, as they plead it as an Excuse and Authority for their Crime, It is with a Pure and Holy God a great and Blasphemous Aggravation of their Guilt, which by imputation they charge upon God Himself, and they will find in the End, that God's *Foreknowledge* of their *Ways* implieth a *Foreknowledge* of their *Miserys* also.

As to their own *Knowledge* I will venture to pronounce, that they know not what is *Foreknowable* in its own Nature and what is not: But all things are equally known unto God: With respect to *Him* Nothing is *Contingent*, and tho',

tho' with regard to *themselves* and *us*, the Actions of all *free Agents* are *Contingent*, and *we* cannot tell, and very often *themselves* cannot tell *what* they will *do*, yet GOD ever Beholding them as *done*, they are not *Contingent* to *Him*: The reason given, such a one, as it is, why *particular Actions* are not in their *Nature foreknowable* from all *Eternity*, is this; Because the *Agents*, and what they *Act* upon, are not *Eternal*: Which is a reason not against the *foreknowledge* of *particular Actions* or *Contingences* alone; but against *all foreknowledge* whatsoever; For Nothing is *Eternal*, but GOD, and so far is it from being true, that things cannot be *foreseen* that are not *Eternal*, that the *Reverse* is exactly true, that Nothing, which is *Eternal* can be *foreknown*: To suppose that what is *Eternal* is *Foreknowable* is truly a Contradiction in *Terms*, and it is founded upon another Contradiction as flagrant, as *it self*, which is, that there is *something Eternal*, *besides what is Eternal*.

But leaving these *Unbelievers* to themselves, let us rather apply our selves to those, who receive the *Scriptures* as a *Revelation* from GOD, and yet deny GOD's *Foreknowledge* of *Contingences*, when the *Revelation*, they receive, is a *continual Proof* and *Declaration* of it. It will be best therefore to take this *Doctrine* from the *Scriptures*, since it is not only asserted in them, but the *Revelation* of it is also most agreeable to the *Truth* and *Dictates* of *Natural Religion* with regard both to the *Knowledge* and *Foreknowledge* of GOD. ^a *For all things are naked and opened un-*

414 *Of Omnipresence. Not to be to the Eyes of Him with whom we have to do: and thus saith the Lord, ^a I am GOD and there is none like me, Declaring the End from the Beginning, and from ancient Times the Things, that are not yet done. With the Psalmist therefore let us address our selves unto his glorious Throne, and confess, ^b O Lord, thou hast searched me and known me, Thou knowest my downsitting, and mine uprising, thou understandest my Thoughts afar off, long before they arise in my Mind: There is not a Word in my Tongue, but lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether.*

2. The other *Point* is the *Omnipresence* of GOD.

In this also all that own a GOD, as well as all that call themselves *Christians* should agree, seeing it is not only the *Doctrine of Revelation*, but of *Natural Religion* also: And therefore it is the more strange, when to serve an *Hypothesis*, without thinking possibly how the *Omnipresence*, and the *Divine Essence* it self is affected by it, some great and Excellent Persons in their Schemes of *Christian Philosophy* have imagined and conceived of GOD as an *Extended Substance*: which bordereth surely too near upon the *Materialists*, since we cannot conceive an *Extended* Being without conceiving at the same time *Quantity*, and *Limitation*, and *Division*; *Extension* in this *Mysterious Article* can only be *Analogically* understood, and *Figuratively* expressed: GOD is *Essentially every where*, and the *Divine Being* extendeth to every thing, to which the *Power* and *Providence* of GOD reacheth. His

^a Is. XLVI. 9, 10. ^b Psal. CXXXIX. 1, 2, 4.

Omnipresence is in some measure conceived by that *Virtue* and *Energy*, which is *diffused* and *exerted* throughout the whole Creation; and could we suppose ten thousand times ten thousand Worlds beyond the Bounds and Circumscription of those, which compose the Universe, we now behold around us, we must conceive God equally present to *them* also: For, as in *Him* we are truly said to *live and move and have our Being*: the vastest Circumscriptions also *move* and *exist* in *Him*: we cannot say that God is in *Place*, but we can truly say, there is no *Place* removed from his *Presence*; and as we are forced to form our Conceptions by the *Analogy* of *Bodily Presence*, and *local Circumscription*, we may even by considering the *propriety* and *manner* of expressing our selves, when we speak of *Bodily Presence*, form some *easy Conceptions* of the Divine *Omnipresence*. For by *Bodily Presence* we do not mean the *Being* of any *Person* in that *circumscribed* place where he stands, but his being in any place of less or larger Dimensions with *few* or *more*, with *one* or a *multitude* met together. Thus a Man is *present* only with *another* in a *Closet*; With a *Multitude* in a *Church* or an *Army*; and every Man will be *present* at the *great Day* of *Judgment* in that *Spacious Court* with *all* that have *existed* from the *Creation* to the End of the *World*: In this *general Assembly* the Presence of every Man is real, and tho' Bodily, yet is not extended: How much easier is it then to conceive the *Actual Presence* of God in the whole *Universe*, without supposing an *Extended Substance*, or rather how unnecessary

is it to suppose the *Substance* Extended with the *Presence*; when even among Men we can conceive the *Presence* without Extension, nay it is certain that the *Presence* hath no Relation to the *Body* considered as Extended, but *only* considered as being in *such a place*, where *ten thousand* may be *equally present* also. But whatever *Difficultys* some may raise, and others give occasion to, we do not pretend to comprehend the *Omnipresence* any more than the *Omniscience* of God: much less do we presume to argue against it from any *Difficultys* arising to us from the Manner of conceiving it; but are content to believe that He is present to every one of us, as our own most *inward Thoughts*, and in *all Places equally*, only in some with a more *special Regard*, and *Manifestation*, according to our Blessed Lord's Assurance, ^a*Where two or three are gathered together in my Name, there am I in the midst of them*: and in this sense of a *more special Presence* it is said that ^b*Cain went out from the Presence of the Lord*: For otherwise, there is no going from it, as the *Omnipresence* is admirably expressed by the *Psalmist*: ^c*Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy Presence? If I ascend up into Heaven, thou art there: if I make my Bed in Hell, behold 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 shall hold me*. Further than this we cannot stretch

^a Matt. XVIII. 20. ^b Gen. IV. 16. ^c Psal. CXXXIX. 7, 8, 9, 10.

our Imagination; and we assent with all Reverence to his Question; *Am I a GOD at hand, saith the Lord? and not a GOD afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places, that I shall not see him? do not I fill Heaven and Earth, saith the Lord?* All Difficultys are superceded, when we consider, that *He filleth all things*, and yet leaveth *Space* for *All* infinitely beyond all imaginable Conception of Numberless Worlds without *Extension* or any partial *Application* of his *Substance*. For as He is *Eternal* without *succession* of *Time*, He is *Omnipresent* also without *commensuration* to *Place*. This is indeed *amazing*, and perfectly confoundeth our Thoughts; but these are *Attributes* acknowledged by *Natural Religion*, and of all the *rest* we may urge the *same*. For GOD is in all equally *incomprehensible*, nor can we know *Him*, as *He is*, in his Ineffable Perfections. His *Omniscience* and *Omnipresence* are properly joined together, inferring and illustrating each other, and the *same Psalm*, that declareth his *Omniscience*, describeth, as we have seen, in some measure his *Omnipresence* also.

After the Points Propos'd, I come,

2. Secondly to the *Methods* of *teaching* them: not to debate, which is the *best*, but to justify the *Manner* in which we *teach* and deliver the great and important *Doctrines* both of *Natural* and *Revealed Religion*.

Both these *Revelations*, the *Natural* and the *Mystical*, as I may term them, we are to *teach*, as we have *received* them, in the *plain* and ob-

vious meaning of the Words, in which they are delivered, and *consonant* to that *Analogy* and *Accommodation*, in which we are to understand the *Things* of God: That *He is All*, but infinitely more, than we are able to conceive, and exprefs: *Real* and *Incomprehensible* in his *Nature* and *Perfections*, without any the *least* Approaches to *Materiality*, or any *Corporeal* Affections: And then accordingly as we understand the *previous Revelation* of the *Divine Nature* and *Attributes*, we are to receive the *subsequent Revelation* of the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost* in the same way of *Analogy*, and consistently with the *Divine Unity*, and all other, the *Essential* Perfections of the *Deity*. The same *Analogy* runneth thro' *both Revelations*, and a *Literal* and *Figurative* Exposition is equally *destructive* of *Both*: If then we cannot comprehend the *Divine* Perfections, as they are in *themselves*, nor are able by our scantling of Knowledge, the narrow Sphere of our Activity, to dive into the Depths of *Omniscience*, or reach the Immenfity of *Omniprefence*: if by arguing upon them according to our way of Thinking and Speaking we must *debase* the Great God to *ourselves*, and deny his *Attributes*, as they are *Infinite* and *Mysterious* to our Understanding, why fhould we presume to *define*, and *determine* upon the *Manner* of his *Exiftence*? to pronounce it *impossible* for the *Father*, *Son* and *Holy Ghost* *eternally* to *fhift* in *One Indivifible* and *Undivided Effence*?

The Ufe therefore, I would make of this way of arguing upon the *Attributes* is this: That
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in the *same* way, in which we apprehend the *Attributes* of God, we are to take his other *Revelations* also: The *same* way preserveth them *Both* in their *Dignity* and *Consistency*: And the *same* manner of arguing strictly from *Human* Qualities to *Divine* Perfections, & from *Finite* to *Infinite* runneth Men into the *same* Consequences in *Both*: We can conceive the *Relation* of *Father* and *Son*, as clearly and indeed more clearly, than we can *Omniscience* and *Omnipresence*: only let us take the *Divine Relation* in a Manner Consistent with the *Divine Perfection*, and we are no more at a plunge to apprehend an *Eternal Generation*, than *Eternity* it self: nor to believe the *Son* is truly a *Son* with the *Whole Nature* of the *Father*, than that God is *Omniscient*, notwithstanding the *Amazements*, which puzzle Man's *Understanding* to resolve them: In the *Revelation* of *Father*, *Son* and *Holy Ghost* we are concerned no further than the *Fact*: That to each the *Divine Nature* is equally ascribed, and when we search more curiously into the Manner, How these things really are, and take our Measures from *Human* Comparisons in a strict *Literal* Resemblance, then we make either *Three* Gods, or *One* God and *two* *Creatures*: And by the *same* Rule we shall deny the *Divine Omniscience* and *Omnipresence*, or explain them in a way *too gross* and *Offensive*: The *same Principles*, that make Men *Infidels* in Points of *revealed Religion* properly so called, will make them *Infidels* in *Natural Religion* also, and they may be as *Heretical* in their *Opinions* of the *Divine Attributes*,

420 *To take them as proposed*
as of the *Divine Relations* disclosed and asserted
in the *Scriptures*.

The way to *teach* them therefore is to *take* them *as they are proposed* in those *Analogical* and *Substituted* Conceptions, which convey them to us, not vainly endeavouring to explain them according to the several *Schemes* devised for solving such *Difficultys*, as appear to Mens *several* Reason and *different* Manner of *Apprehension*, but *submitting* our Reason to the *Difficultys*, and *believing* the *Eternal Existence* of the *Father, Son* and *Holy Ghost*, revealed to be the *One Only* and *True God*, as we believe Him to be *Omniscient, Omnipresent* and *Eternal*, tho' we are not able to *comprehend* these *Glorious Attributes*.

When therefore the *same Scriptures* which teach us, that there is *none other God but One*, do *incommunicably* restrain the *Divine Appellations, Attributes* and *Worship* to the *One God* by the strictest *Appropriation*: when the *same Scriptures*, thus asserting the *Divine Unity*, teach us also that to the *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost* the *Divine Appellations, Attributes* and *Worship* are ascribed without any *Limitation, Difference, or Inequality*; tho' we cannot comprehend the *Manner* we are obliged to believe the *Fact*, that *These Three are One, subsisting indivisibly in One Eternal Essence, and mutually indwelling in each other*: So far as we understand the Terms, we assent to the plain Proposition, and believe on the *Evidence* and *Authority* of God, who proposeth them to us. Admit the *Facts*, the *Unity of Essence* is a Conclusion to our Reason. We are able to explain the *Attributes* no more than
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the *Divine Subsistence*, and if the *Light of Nature* obligeth us to acknowledge the *Attributes*, and to acknowledge them to be Incomprehensible, the *same Light* upon the *same Principles*, will oblige us to believe all other *Articles of Revelation* also, and the Conclusion is not, that because the *Scriptures* assert the *Divine Unity*, therefore the *Father only is God*, but because the *Scriptures*, which assert the *Unity*, assert also the *same Essence, Attributes, and Worship* to the *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*, therefore the *Son* and the *Holy Ghost* is *One God* with the *Father*.

If we have recourse to our *Natural Reason* alone for the Understanding and Explaining these *Mysterious Truths*, we impose a Task upon it, to which it is no ways equal; but if we set our *Reason* to examine into the Principles and Grounds of our *Believing*, this is a *proper* and *becoming* Employment for it, and we shall then be satisfied, that *Faith* is a Consequence, and in that regard a Duty also of *Natural Religion*, even when it is extended to *Articles of pure Revelation*, or that the *Principles of Natural Religion* oblige us to believe the *Articles of Revelation*: For as it is a first Principle in *Natural Religion* to believe *there is a God*, it is another Principle rising evidently from that, to believe *whatever He delivereth to us, and requireth us to believe*. So that, when we are satisfied, that the *Revelation* is from *God*, we are to receive it, as *such*, notwithstanding *It be*, like *God Himself*, above our *Comprehension*.

To conceive therefore and express the *Nature* and *Attributes*, as well, as what we have been accustomed to call the more *Mysterious Revelations* of GOD, we must use the *Language* and *Conceptions* of *Created Beings* applied in a *Spiritual* sense, suitable to that *One Incomprehensible, Eternal, Invisible Being, the Great and Glorious Lord GOD*, whom we adore. For thus the *Things* of GOD are *Spiritually judged of and discerned* by the *Light of his Holy Spirit*, and by the *Truth of his Eternal Word*, who gave the *Revelation*: And considering that GOD Himself is one great *Mystery*, perhaps nothing can be *revealed* of Him, but what is above our *Comprehension*, and its being *so*, if we pursue the *Thought* as far, as it will carry us, is is so far from being an *Objection*, that, where all other *requisites* concur, it is one sure *Argument* and *Criterion* of a *Divine Revelation*. Of this *Nature* are all the *Revelations* in the *Scripture*, whether discoverable in any degree by the *Light of Nature* or not: The *Articles* of *Natural Religion*, and *that*, which is strictly called *Revealed*, are equally *Incomprehensible*; and the *Endeavours*, that have been used to *explain* them, have only made them the more *obscure*.

To deliver the great *Articles of Faith* in *Scripture Language* only, is, as I have observed, the importunate Demand of those, who *deviate* from the *Faith* contained in the *Scriptures*, and are Clamorous against all *Creeds*, as meer *Human Inventions*, when they are in *Truth* no more than the naked *Declaration* of the *Faith*, or a *Profession* and *Remonstrance* against all *Heresy*

resy and *Abnegation* of it. For my own part I do readily *close* with the *Demand*, and am willing to put the *whole Controversy* upon the *Foot of Scripture* only: If we take the *Propositions*, as expressed in the *Scriptures*, and interpret the *Scriptures* by the *same Rule*, and as we would any *other Book*, we shall be in no danger of *Misbelieving*, but when the plain *Doctrine* delivered in the Words of *Scripture* is *denied*, and the *Scripture Language* is *perverted* by *forced Constructions*, and *inconsistent Interpretations*, it is then necessary to shew the *Falshood* of such *Constructions*, and to defend the *Doctrine* against such *Interpretations*.

Creeds were at first only short Summaries of the *Christian Doctrine*, that especially relating to the *Redemption* of the World, and the *Person* of our *Redeemer*: Every Point concerning Him was not enumerated and expressed, but only the most material and distinguished: as to his *Person* declaring *Who He is*: as to our *Redemption* setting forth *What He did*, and *Suffered* for us. When, with Reference to the *Father*, the *Church* acknowledged *Him* to be *his only Son our Lord*, it was well understood *what* was intended, without entering into any *Controversy* about his *Divinity*, nor, as we still retain them, had the *Church* enlarged upon the First more simple *Forms*, if the great *Truths* believed concerning our *Saviour* had not been *perverted*, and *denied*. In *Disputations* we must follow the *Language* of our *Opponents*: If our *Adversarys* deny the *Divinity* of our *Lord* we must assert it: if the *Adversarys* invent *Explications* and *Distinctions*

inctions we must obviate and answer them: The *Opposers* of the *Faith* first *innovated* in the *Language*: the *Maintainers* of it must of Necessity *reply* in *Terms Opposite*, and by *Propositions Contradictory* to *Theirs*.

Thus, with respect to the *Arians*, *Nestorians*, and *Eutychians*, the *Church* vindicated the *Divinity* of our *Saviour*, the *Unity* of his *Person*, and the *Distinction* of his *Natures*, necessarily using such Expressions, as were most opposite and conclusive against all *Contradiction* and *Evasion*. And thus upon the Whole, God being declared in the *Scriptures* to be *One*, we express this *Doctrine* by the Word *Unity*: The *FATHER*, *SON* and *HOLY GHOST* being declared in the same *Scriptures* to be *GOD*, and being likewise *Personaly* distinguished *Each* from *Other*, we do therefore express this *Doctrine* by a *Trinity* of *Persons* in the *Unity* of *Essence*: and because the *Divine Nature* is *Indivisible*, as we confess every *Person* by *Himself* to be *GOD* and *LORD*, we are brought to this inevitable *Conclusion*, that *there are Three Persons and One GOD*.

This then is the *Faith* of *Christians*, professed, explained and vindicated, according to the clearest and most obvious sense of the *Scriptures*, which deliver it.

To enumerate the Old *Unscriptural* Terms brought in by *Heretics*, and compare them with those *Few* made use of to explain and defend the *Catholic Faith*: and from the *Ancients* to pass on to the *Refinements*, new *Inventions* and *Applications* of the *Moderns* would require a *Dissertation* too long, and too *Curious* for this Place:

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I will only observe that by *Unscriptural* Terms are meant either *such*, as are not to be found in *Scripture*, or *such*, as are not only *not* to be found, but are also *contrary* to the *Scriptures*: Of the *first* sort are *some*, which we are forced to use in this *Controversy*: of the *second* sort are *those* which our *Adversarys* have invented, and they are *Unscriptural* in *both* senses: For all *Terms*, that propound a *Doctrine* contrary to the *Catholic* Faith must either of necessity be *Unscriptural*, or if the *Doctrine* be dressed up in *Scripture* Language, the *Propositions* will be *Contradictory*.

The Word *Person* is, as hath been noted a *Scriptural* Term, tho' the Word *Persons* be not found in the *Scriptures* in the *same* sense we use it, when we say there are *three Persons*; But the Word *Persons* is necessarily understood, and by the Application of *Personality* to *Three*, *Three Persons* are as evidently *implied*, as *One* only is *expressed*. Thus *Person* is applied to the *Father*, and therefore by necessity of *Relation* to the *Son* also. For we have no Conception of a *Father* without a *Son*, nor of a *Son*, but under the Notion of a *Person*, nor of any Peculiar and Appropriate Actions without a *Personal* Agent: And so the *Holy Ghost* is a *Person* also by his peculiar *Subsistence*, *Agency* and *Operations*: The Word is used by our *Adversarys* as frequently as by *our selves*, but by *us* it is used in a *Scriptural*, by *them* in an *Unscriptural* sense; By *us* the Term *One Person* is rightly applied to the *Father*: For *there is One Person of the Father*; and by Consequence, as rightly to the *Son*, For *there is One Person*, that is *another*, and not the *same*

426 *The Unscriptural Terms*

same of the *Son* also; and so to the *Holy Ghost*; But when it is applied to the *Father* alone, in Exclusion of the *Son*, and of the *Holy Ghost*, there it is misapplied, and to a *Scriptural* Term there is affixed an *Unscriptural* Meaning. Thus a *Plurality* of *Persons* is denied, and this Application of the Term argueth *Unity* of *Person* instead of *Unity* of *Essence*. But the Consideration of this *Term* will fall in again, when we come to speak of the *Difficultys* attending the *Catholic Doctrine*, and the several *Heretical Schemes*.

There are other *Terms* used by our Adversaries, which are entirely *Unscriptural*, and convey unto us no manner of Conception concerning the Divine Being by any *Analogy* and Correspondence in the World, such as are *Unoriginated*, *Underived*, *Independent*, *Supremacy*, *Absolutely supreme*, and many others, which are of no *signification* at all, when applied to the *Divine Essence* alone without any respect to the *Creature*: nor of any *Moment* in the *Cause*, if received and admitted under this plain *Distinction*, That they are *true* applied to God in the *Absolute Perfection* of his *Essence* with respect to the whole *Creation*: *Not so*, applied to the *Father* with respect to the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghost*: We know their Meaning in the *first* part, but we know nothing of them in the *second* part of the *Distinction*, unless the *Son* and the *Holy Ghost* be understood to be *Creatures*, at *some time derived from*, and at *all times* depending on the *Father*, as *Creatures* on their *Creator*, and in *this* sense we deny them: With respect to
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the *Order* of our Thoughts, as when we say, that the *Father* is the *First*, and with respect to that manner of Expression, *The Father is of None*, and the *Son is of the Father alone*, neither *made nor Created*, and the *Holy Ghost is of the Father and the Son*, we admit the *Terms* as consistent with the *Eternal Generation* of the *Son*, and the *Eternal Procession* of the *Holy Ghost*. Otherwise, we hold that *None is afore or after other*, *None is Greater or Less than another*, but the *whole Three Persons are Co-eternal together*, and *Co-equal*.

The *Metaphysical Nature* of *God*: and the *Metaphysical Nature* of the *Father* and the *Son*, is another *Unscriptural Term used by them*, and unjustly *imputed to us*, which is brought to amuse and confound the Reader, and hath no manner of signification, as applied in this *Controversy* concerning the true and proper *Divinity* of the *Son of God*. Neither *Father* nor *Son*, as I have said, have any *Metaphysical Nature* at all, and to call *that* the *Essence*, which is only a *Metaphysical way* of Considering it, is highly improper and Absurd: if by *Metaphysical* we mean any thing more than the *Real Nature*, we mean *nothing*, and he, that distinguisheth between *Abstract* and *Real* distinguisheth between *something* and *nothing*. We know not the *Essence* of the *Son*, but by the *Essence* of the *Father*, and so we know it is the *same*: and we know not in what *Metaphysical Manner*, nor *how* in any Manner but that of *Eternal Generation* the *Father* is a *Father*, and the *Son* a *Son*. And after all when we have contemplated the
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428 *Ours agreeable to Scripture.*

Divine Essence in the most *abstracted Metaphysical* Manner, we may *adore* it indeed the more, as *Devout Contemplation* leadeth to *Adoration*, but we shall be so far from *Comprehending* it, that the more *Intensely* we consider it, the more *Incomprehensible* we shall find it: As the more we endeavour to stretch our Thoughts to *Eternity*, the more we are lost, and the deeper we are plunged in the *Abysses* of it.

For our selves in Consequence of the *Divinity*, which we teach, we use the *Terms Uncreate: of one Substance: of the same Substance, Power and Eternity, Co-eternal and Co-equal*, as may be seen in our *Creeds and Articles*: All which necessarily arise as soon, as *Unity of Essence* is acknowledged. And these were *first used*, and are *still continued* to maintain and defend the *Catholic Doctrine* against the *Terms and Distinctions*, which *Heretics*, the *Arians* especially, had invented to *undermine and overthrow* it. The whole Process may be seen in that *Accurate Account of the Trinitarian Controversy*, I mentioned at the Beginning. It is enough to justify our *use* of the *Terms*, that they are entirely correspondent to the *Scripture Doctrine*, and were necessarily occasioned by those, who endeavoured to debase the *Son* unto the Order of *created Beings*, whether *Angelical* or *Human*. This the *Arians* and *Socinians* have attempted, and still upon their several *Hypotheses* continue to attempt.

The Difference then between us is whether the *Son* and the *Holy Ghost* be *One God* with the *Father*, or *Creatures only not Equal*, and not
Eter-

Doctrine not to be palliated. 429

Eternal with the *Father*, Let it be shewn, how we can depart from the *Creeds*, without departing from the *Doctrine*, and there may be some Pretence in desiring these *Expressions*, I have mentioned, to be *laid aside*. As long as we clearly assert the *Doctrine* that the *Son is God*, and the *Holy Ghost is God* truly and properly as the *Father* is, we are not so much concerned for this, or that *manner* of *enlarging* upon, and *expressing* it; but as long as the *Creeds* are a *guard* and *defence* against the *Contrary Doctrines* we cannot *depart* or *vary* from them without *departing* from the *true Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity*. We can neither *leave* these *Points* at *large*, nor *qualify*, nor *palliate* those *Expressions*, which yet are hardly strong enough to prevent all attempts at least of *Evasion*, and *sinister Construction*: and I suppose, I may lay it down as an *Evident* and *Necessary Truth*, that in this *Controversy* we cannot depart from the *Athanasian*, without going into the *Arian*, or *Socinian Creed*.

It is charged upon the *Romish Missionarys*, that they *temper* their *Religion* to make it *Palatable* and agreeable to their *Heathen* Converts, and the Task seemeth pretty Natural and Easy, for when they have won them to the Belief of a *Redeemer*, there is little more in the *External Worship*, beyond the *Worship* of *God*, but changing the *Objects*, and giving them the *Popish Kalender* instead of *their own*: There is no other Difference than between *Christian* and *Heathen* Idolatry; but we can admit of *no Worship* that is not *taught* and *required* in the *Scriptures*.

IF

If some have imagined, they might *qualify* the *Christian Doctrine*, and *suit* it to the *Genius* of those, who are offended with *Mysterys* so much above their *Comprehension*, It is a *Bootless*, as well, as *Unwarrantable Attempt*, and can have no other Effect, than their own *Perversion* from the *Faith*, and giving *Strength* and *Countenance* to *Infidelity*: But we are *tied up* to *stricter Rules*: It is not *lawful* for us to *use such Liberties*: we must not *alter*, nor *add*, nor *diminish* from the *Word* of God, We must keep to the plain *Categorical Assertions* of the *Scripture*, and defend them against all *Contrary* and *Contradictory Propositions*; The *Christian Faith* is not built upon *Hypothesis*, but *Fact*, and is ever *fixed* and *inflexible*, like its *Divine Author*, without all *Variableness*, or any *shadow of turning*.

This therefore and *so strict* is the *Manner of Teaching*. I proceed now in the *third place*,

3. To the *Difficultys* on *both sides*: on the *side* of the *Catholic Doctrine*: and on the *side* of the most *prevailing*, particularly of the *Arian* and *Socinian Schemes*.

If the several *Schemes* proposed did really *solve* all *Difficultys*, and *laboured* under *none* themselves *equal* at least, if not *superior* to those, which they pretend to *solve*, they might challenge more *Attention* and *Regard*, and we should *weigh* them, as *however* indeed we have *done*, and *still* continue *to do*, with the utmost *Care*, before we do absolutely reject them; But, as even then, *one* of their *Schemes* only could be *True*, we should act most wisely in *refusing* them, unless they could evidently prove our *Doctrine*

to be *false*, and then agree *which* of *Theirs* is the *Truth*: There are indeed *several* Ways of coming to the *same* Conclusion, and *several Hypotheses* may end in the *same* Point, but where the *several Schemes* differ in their *Conclusions*, as they are *opposed* to *each other*, however they may drive at the *same* Point, as they are *opposed* to the *Church*, there *one* deserveth no more Consideration than *another*. It is indifferent to us whether the *Arian* or *Socinian* Scheme be preferred by *those*, who oppose the *Divinity* of the *Son*, and when we have done *them*, and *our selves* so much Justice, as to compare them with the *Doctrine* of the *Gospel*, we may sit quietly down with this great and Comfortable Assurance, that if our *Doctrine* be not disproved by *One* Scheme, it is *not* by *Another*: if not by the *Sabelian*, neither by the *Arian*, nor *Socinian*; but the more it is *examined* and *compared*, the more *Clear* and *Evident* its *Truth* doth still appear.

Instead therefore of pretending to solve, we own and embrace the *Difficultys* on our part as inseparable from that *Doctrine*, whose Subject is *Incomprehensible*: The *Difficultys* of the *Christian Faith* are such as necessarily flow from the *Nature* and *Essence* of its *Almighty Author*. What? can Nothing exist, that is above our *Comprehension*? and can nothing be *true*, but what our *Reason* can every way account for? Will we deny that the Sun shineth, because its Lustre is too Bright for our Eyes, and we can look upon it only thro' a clouded Glass, or as its *Light* is reflected, or as it is *refracted* thro' some other

432 *Difference between them.*

Medium? otherwise we may look till we are *blind*, and gaze also on the *Mysterious God-Head* till be are *blind*, unless we are content to look upon those *Mysterys* as they are *revealed*, and here, while we are on this side Heaven, ^ato see through a *Glass darkly*. God ^bdwelleth in the *Light*, which no *Man* can approach unto, whom no *Man* hath seen, or can see, and shall we doubt his *Existence*, because we cannot see his *Face*? We may with equal reason deny the great *Mysterys* of our *Faith*, because they are above the *Strength* of our clearest *Facultys* to discover, and when discovered, to comprehend.

Vain therefore is every *Attempt* to search, when by searching we can never unfold the complicated *Mysterys* of the *Divine Nature*, nor find out the *Almighty unto Perfection*. Could our *Adversarys* shew that our *Assent* to the greatest *Mysterys* of the *Gospel* were resolvable into any thing but *Faith* and the *Veracity of an Incomprehensible God*, we might possibly be induced to think, that *Human Reason* is able to comprehend, whatsoever an *Infinite*, and *Eternal Mind* can reveal; But when their way of solving *Difficultys* is to deny the *Doctrine*, and when their own *Hypotheses* are loaded with *Difficultys* utterly inconsistent with the first *Principles* of *Religion*, we are then the more encouraged, even upon the *Principles* of *Reason* to reject their *Schemes*, and to retain our own *Doctrine*, especially when we consider the *Difficultys on their Part* and ours: On ours the *Difficultys* arise from the *Incomprehen-*

sible Nature and Perfections of GOD: on Theirs the Difficultys arise from plain Contradiction to the Revelation, and their own Explications of it.

We take all the Propositions of *Divine Revelation* in the plain and obvious signification of the *Words*, and understand them in the *same* way of *Analogy* in which we conceive and express all the *Attributes* of GOD: We do not take them in a meer *Figurative* and *Allusive* sense so, as to destroy the *Reality*, nor in a gross *Literal* sense so, as to *make GOD altogether such a one as our selves*, but we understand the *Reality* of the *Facts* in a Manner *suitable* to the *Divine Nature*, and according to His own *previous Revelation* of it, when He asserteth that *He is One*, that *He is Eternal*, that *He will not give his Honour to another*. When we find therefore the *Father* and the *Son* revealed under this *Eternal Relation* with all the *Divine Appellations*, *Attributes*, and *Honours ascribed equally to Both*, we take the *Fact*, as it is, and tho' we are most firmly satisfied, that the *Son* is *not* produced by *Creation*, yet we do believe that *He is the only begotten Son with the whole Essence of the Father communicated to Him, as one Man is the Son of another*.

In like manner the *Holy Ghost* being distinguished from the *Father*, and the *Son*, and at the same time having the *Divine Attributes* and *Worship* ascribed unto *Him* by the *same Scriptures*, which assure us, that *there is none other GOD, but One*, we acknowledge the *Holy Ghost* also to be *One GOD with the Father and the Son*. That *Three Persons* should subsist in *One Eternal Essence* un-

der these *Names* and *Relations*, we could know by *Revelation* only, and since they are spoken of under these *Personal* Distinctions, we have so far used the *Terms*, as from their several *Relation*, *Office*, and *Operations*, to denote the several *Persons*, not so, as to constitute so many *Individuals*, affirming according to the *Revelation* an *Eternal* Distinction of *Persons* in an *Eternal* Unity of *Essence*: and therefore in Virtue of this Sacred Unity The *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost* equally possessing the *Divine Nature* and *Attributes* is the only *Living* and *True God*: the *Ever Blessed* and *Univided Trinity*, whom we adore. We use the Word *Trinity* not only with regard to the *Three Persons*, but to shew the *Co-equality* also, evidently rising from the Unity of *Essence*.

This is our *Doctrine*, even the *Truth*, which is according to *Godliness*, not only, as it promoteth a *Godly Life*, which is too loose a *Limitation* of the Words, but especialy as it regardeth the *true Worship* of God which is the Foundation of a *Godly Life*. The *Doctrine* is no other than the *great Mystery of Godliness*: It includeth a *right Faith*, as the *true Principle of Holiness*, and directeth us to the *Persons* therein manifested, as the *true Object* of our *Adoration*.

On the other hand let us take any *Heretical Scheme* relating to the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost*, we shall find many exprefs Contradictions to *Scripture*, and many insuperable Difficultys rising not from the *Nature* of the *Subject*, but from their *own Explications* of it.

The Heretical Application 435

The Word *Person* is, as we have seen, a *Scriptural* Word, and there expressed ^a by *ὑπόστασις*: and it is also an *Ecclesiastical* Term used and applied in a *different* Manner, both by the *Impugners* and *Defenders* of the *Catholic Faith*: and then it is called *πρόσωπον*. By *ὑπόστασις* is understood in *Scripture*, the *Personal Subsistence*, and in the *Ecclesiastical use* of the Word The *Personal Subsistence* of the *Father*, and of the *Son*, and of the *Holy Ghost* in the same *Substance* or *Essence*: For tho' sometimes it is used to signify *Substance*, yet it is applied more peculiarly to the *Persons Subsisting*: as the *Father* is *one Person Subsisting* of *None*, the *Son* another *Person Subsisting*, as being of the *Father alone*, the *Holy Ghost* a *Third Person Subsisting*, as being of the *Father and the Son*, and therefore of *one undivided Essence* with the *Father*, and the *Son*, and so the Word referreth to the internal Constitution of the *Person*: The other *πρόσωπον* is used in several senses in the *Controversys*, that first occasioned the introducing it, and in the *Catholic Writers* it expressly signifies the *real external manifestation*, or *distinction* of a *Person*; as *Person* is understood in the Common Forms of Speech, and then, as taken from *Human Persons* it is an *Analogical* Term substituted to express that Correspondent Distinction in the *Divine Nature*, which ariseth from *Relation*, *Office*, and *Action* among Men; and accordingly in our Application of it we take it in an *Analogical* sense to distinguish the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy*

Ghost revealed to us in the *Scriptures* under those *Personal* Distinctions in the *same* Sovereign and Eternal *Essence*, and so we use it in a Manner suitable to the *Divine Nature*, which admitteth a Distinction of *Relation* and *Office* in the Order of one, and Oeconomy of the other, but admitteth not of any Difference, or Inequality of *Essence*. Our *Adversarys* using also the *same* Word, apply it either *Figuratively*, understanding by it only a Theatrical imaginary *Person*, as the *Sabellians*, or taking it in a strict literal sense of *Human Persons*, that every *Person* is a distinct and separate Individual *Being* of it self, as do the *Arians* and *Socinians*, as if there were no Difference in *Person Human* and *Divine*; and there could be no distinguishing the *Persons* without dividing the *Essence*.

According therefore to these different Notions the *Sabellians*, *Arians*, and *Socinians* understand the Term, and do alike hold, that in the *Divine Nature* there subsisteth but One *Person* only, that of the *Father*; if the *Sabellians* do indeed admit the *Personality* of the *Father* unthat peculiar *Name* and *Relation*, It is certain they admit not of the *Personality* of the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghost*: they do not indeed deny the *Divinity*, but the *Subsistence* of those *Persons*; supposing *them distinct* they admit *them* to be *Divine*, but they take away the Distinction, and make *them* no more than *Names*, or the *same* God revealed under different *Characters*; and so they destroy at once the *Doctrine* of our *Lord's Incarnation*, and of our *Redemption*, or they make the *Father*, if not the *Father*, the

GOD-Head it self to be *Incarnate*, to have been born, to have suffered, and died.

The *Arians* own the Distinction of *Persons*, but then they deny the Unity of *Essence*, and consequently the *Divinity* and *Eternity* of the *Son*, and of the *Holy Ghost*: At first indeed little was said concerning the *Holy Ghost*, but that *Article* fell in afterwards by unavoidable Consequence, and now according to the *Modern Scheme* the *Holy Ghost* is not only distinct from the *Father* and the *Son*, but different in *Nature*, and inferior to *Both*: The *Son* Himself is debased into the Rank of a *Creature*, and the *Holy Spirit* to a *Creature* still below Him: It is true, the *Arians* talk in very high Terms of his Production after an Incomprehensible Manner in some undetermined space of *Duration* before the Worlds, but they will not allow Him to be *Eternal*, or of the *same Substance with the Father*, and therefore if they will assert Him to be truly GOD, they must assert Him to be another GOD besides the *Father*: or if they explain themselves into a *Nominal, Delegated, Substituted* GOD, they do plainly make Him a *Creature*; for there is, as I have said, no middle Order between GOD and his *Creatures*: The *Creator* and *Creation* divide all possible *Being*: Whatever is not of the *same Substance, Power, and Eternity* with GOD, must absolutely be a *Creature*. It may also be further considered on the *Arian Scheme* whether they do not deny the *Divinity* of the *Father*, as well as the *Son*: That is, whether the *Father* be *Eternal*, if the *Son* be not *Eternal*. So far as *Eternity* is ascribed to GOD

under the *Peculiar Relation and Character* of the *Father*, to deny the *Eternity* of the *Son* weakeneth and undermineth the Proofs for the *Eternity* of the *Father* also. GOD, we know in his *Essence* is Eternal, and if in that *Essence* there be any *Relations*, those *Relations* must be *Eternal* also: if the *Son* therefore be not *Eternal*, He is not properly a *Son*, nor is the *Father* properly a *Father*, and with respect to the *Son* not an *Eternal Father*.

The *Socinians* differ in nothing from the *Arians* with reference to the *Son*, but in denying his *Pre-existence* before his *Incarnation*, and whereas the *Arians* make the *Holy Ghost* a *Creature*, the *Socinians* make Him no more than a *Name* to signify to us the *Divine Virtue* and *Intelligence* of the *Father*: Both of them agree in allowing the *Father* only to be truly GOD, and admitting but One *Person* in the Divine *Essence*; But because the *Scriptures* do expressly ascribe the *Appellations*, and *Attributes* of the One GOD to the *Son*, and to the *Holy Ghost*, the *Arians* and *Socinians* suppose these *Appellations* to be given to the *Son* in a *delegated Commission* of *Sovereignty* and *Dominion*: For the *Holy Ghost*, the *Arians* think it sufficient at most to call Him a *Divine Person* in a loose sense of the Words, and the *Socinians* more consistently without saying *He is a Creature* make Him only a *Name*: Both of them come to the same Conclusion, that the *Father only is GOD*, in Exclusion of the *Son* and the *Holy Spirit*; and this is a necessary Conclusion to those, who deny the *Son* to be of the same *Essence* with the *Father*:
who

who admit not any Distinction of the *Holy Ghost* from the *Father*, or who make Him a *Creature* inferior to the *Son*, as they make the *Son* a *Creature* inferior to the *Father*.

It lieth therefore upon such *Unitarians*, as receive the *Scriptures* to prove that the *Son* and the *Holy Ghost* are *no Persons*, or properly that there is no *Son*, and no *Holy Ghost*: and that what is said of, and ascribed to *either* is meant only of the *Father*. The *Arians*, since they will not say that the *Son* is a *Creature*, and yet deny Him to be GOD of the *same Essence*, and *Power* with the *Father*, must prove, if they can that there are *Degrees* in the *Divinity*: That there is a *Being* who is *Inferior* to GOD and yet no *Creature*: and that the Divine *Attributes* and *Honours* can be ascribed unto the *Son* without the *Essence*. And particularly, that altho' in the Common Notion a *Son* is of the *same Nature* with his *Father*, yet that the *Son* of GOD cannot be of the *same Nature* with the *Father*: Or that the *Father* hath no *Son* begotten in Contradistinction to *Angels*, who are his Sons by Creation, and to *Men*, who are his Sons by Creation and Adoption. These are *some* of the *Difficultys* of the *Arian* Scheme, which are still more plain and inevitable in their Consequences. And the *Difficultys* attending the *Socinian* Plan are as great, as a direct Contradiction to *Scripture*, with respect to the *Pre-existence* of the *Son*, can make them, while they assert Him to be the *Son of Man*, then *first existing*, when he was conceived and born of the *Virgin*. And both *Arians* and *Socinians* have this Common Difficulty to
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440 *The Consequences: More Gods.*

answer, That GOD *hath made*, what he forbiddeth us to make, other Gods besides Himself, either *Spiritual Beings* as the *Arians* hold, or *meer Man* as the *Socinians*: and that when they have made them other Gods, either by Sensible Representations, as the *Idolaters*, or by their own Reasonings, as the *Arians*, &c. they may fall down and Worship them.

4. I proceed therefore in the *fourth* and *last* place to consider the Consequences necessarily following the *genuin Doctrine* of the Church, and the *several Schemes* of those, who have departed from it.

The *Immediate Consequences* of the *Sabellian* I shall not distinctly pursue, since upon the *Figurative* Construction they are equally found in the *Arian* and *Socinian* Scheme, which, as the *Sabellian* doth, overturneth the whole *Order* and *Method* of our *Redemption*, and resolves the *Deity* into the *Person* of the *Father* only. All the Difference is, that the *Arians* make the *Son* and the *Holy Ghost* *Creatures*: The *Socinians* agree with the *Arians* in making the *Son* a *Creature*, and with the *Sabellians* in making the *Holy Ghost* only a *Name*. But the Consequences of the *Arian* and *Socinian* Scheme, as distinct from the *Sabellian* are,

1. First either *making more Gods* than *One*, or *paying Divine Worship* to a *Creature*. To support their Schemes the *Arians* must be able to prove the *Son* to be a *Creature* in his *Pre-existent Nature*, and the *Socinians*, that he hath no other *Nature* than the *Human*, and then both must prove, that *Divine Worship* is to be paid to any other,

other, than the One True GOD: that is either to a *Nominal* GOD or a *Creature* either of the *Arian* or *Socinian* kind. For how clear soever it appears to them, that the *Son is not One GOD of the same Essence with the Father*, and that in their way of Reasoning *He is no more than a Creature of a Supereminent Nature* as say the *Arians*, of *Human Nature* only, as say the *Socinians*, and *Divinely Commissioned* as say *Both*, the *Divine Adoration* is so evident, that *they cannot refuse to pay it*, and because *they* are sensible, that strictly speaking, *Divine Worship is due to GOD alone*, they have been forced to the Expedient of a Mediate and Subordinate Worship for their Delegated and Substituted GOD. Let not the *Arians* therefore any longer prevaricate with the World by pretending, that in any proper sense they believe the *Divinity*, which they so expressly do *deny*: For their *Worship* is proportioned to their *Faith*, and the *Honour*, they allow, sheweth plainly the *Divinity* they hold: In this the *Socinians*, however equally inconsistent, are yet more Ingenuous, and both have this *Position* to maintain, that *Divine Worship is to be paid to any but GOD only*. The *Divinity* of *Christ* is surely more Easy to be proved from the *Scriptures* than that any *Worship* is commanded, or allowed to a *Creature*, and it is more Easy to prove, that *Creature Worship* is absolutely forbidden, than that those are *Creatures*, to whom *Divine Worship* is both *commanded* and *paid*. The *Scriptures* know no Distinction in the *Object*, or the *kind* of *Religious Worship*. The *Object is but One*, and that is GOD, and in the

442 *Mediatorial Worship, What.*

the *Worship* it self there are no Degrees of Supreme and Subordinate : They instance in *Mediatorial* Worship ; but *Mediatorial* Worship is not a *distinct* Worship of the *Mediator* in a lower sense, nor is it an Inferior or Subordinate Worship of the *Father*, nor does it pass thro' *Christ* as a *Medium* to the *Father* : but all the *Worship* we pay to the *Father* is *direct* and *immediate*, even when we address Him thro' the *Mediation* of *Jesus Christ* : As much as *Daniel's* Prayer was *immediately* directed to GOD, when he said, ^a *Now therefore, O our GOD, hear the Prayer of thy servant, and his supplications, and cause thy Face to shine upon thy Sanctuary, that is desolate, for the Lord's sake : Who the Lord is may deserve their serious Consideration, but this is no more a mediate Worship, than when he* ^b *subjoineth, defer not for thy own sake, O my GOD. It is upon the Account of our own Unworthiness, that we need, as a Redeemer, so a Mediator, but Mediation supposes no Inferiority of the Mediator to the Person He mediateth unto. For Kings are Mediators between Kings, and with regard to the Infinite Inequality between GOD and us, as there is* ^c *One Mediator between GOD and Men the Man Christ Jesus, This Mediator is equal to the Father as touching his GOD-Head, and inferior only, as He is partaker of our Nature ; The Associating of which into his own Person maketh Him a fit Mediator between GOD and Man. He hath commanded us to* ^d *pray unto*

^a Dan. IX. 17. ^b v. 19. ^c 1 Tim. II. 5. ^d John XVI. 25, 24.

the *Father* in his Name, and ^a *He is able also to save them to the uttermost, that come unto GOD by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make Intercession for us*, and if this be *Mediatorial Worship*, it differeth nothing from the Supreme and Sovereign *Worship* paid unto the *Father*, except that the *Worship* is more exalted and Divine, which is offered in the Name of *Christ*, than that, which is only offered in our own. *Mediatorial Worship* is not praying to the *Mediator* to pray for us unto the *Father*, but it is praying to the *Father* in the Name of the *Mediator*, and pleading the *All-sufficiency* of his Infinite *Merits* and *Mediation* on our Behalf: And this *Form of Prayer* implieth not any *Inferiority* in *Himself*, but only in *us*: When we pray unto *Christ* and say, *Lord have Mercy upon us*, we pray unto *Him* directly, and our *Worship* terminateth in *Him*; and when in our *Prayers* we call *Him* our *Redeemer*, our *Mediator* and *Advocate*, we do recognize these *Titles* in *Him*, and implore his *Intercession*, as well as plead his *Merits* under these Endearing Names of *Mediator* and *Redeemer*. These Forms are addressed directly and immediately unto *God* and *Christ*, but not directly and immediately from our selves, or in our own Names, or for our own *Merits*: For ^b *we do not present our supplications before GOD for our own Righteousness, but for his great Mercys*. And we hope to be *heard*, as we hope to be *forgiven*, not for our own *Merits*, but for the *Merits* of *Christ* our *Redeemer*. The *Worship* we pay to

^a Hebr. VII. 25. ^b Dan. IX. 18.

444 *Worship of the Son Supreme*

Christ is not the same *Personal Worship* we pay to the *Father*, but it is the same *Supreme Worship*, nor is it paid to *Christ* merely as our *Mediator*, but as our *Mediator* is *GOD* as well as *Man*, and not with regard to his *Office* only, but his *Nature* also; as we adore Him Now in his *Human Nature* united to the *Divine*, not because of the *Human Nature*, but because of the *Divine*: And *Divine Worship* is now commanded to be paid Him, which is Eternally due unto Him, that the *Assumption* of the *Human Nature* might be no Diminution of the Honour due unto the *Divine*, and that no Doubt might arise concerning it, nor Mistake about it, for as with reference to his *Eternal Generation* we read, ^a*Unto which of the Angels said He at any Time, Thou art my Son this day have I begotten Thee?* with reference to his *Temporal* we read, ^b*When He bringeth in the first begotten into the World, He saith, And let all the Angels of GOD Worship Him.* And thus ^c*the Father hath committed all Judgment unto the Son, That all Men should Honour the Son, even as they Honour the Father.* And for his Humiliation, Sufferings and Death, ^d*GOD hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a Name, which is above every Name, That at the Name of Jesus every Knee should bow, of things in Heaven, and things in Earth, and things under the Earth, And that every Tongue should confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the Glory of GOD the Father.* Such is the Exaltation of his Hu-

^a Hebr. I. 5. ^b v. 6. ^c John V. 22, 23. ^d Philip. II. 9, 10, 11.

man Nature, and as St Peter infallibly assureth the Jews, ^a *God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have Crucified both Lord and Christ.* And thus God hath ^b glorified his Son Jesus, according to his Prayer: ^c *I have glorified thee on Earth, I have finished the Work, which thou gavest me to do: And now, O Father, glorifie thou me with thine own self, with the Glory, which I had with Thee before the World was.* This relates all to the *Human Nature* alone, but to the *Human* as then assumed in his Person into the *Divine*: That the *Human Nature* might be no *Impeachment* of his *Honour*, but that together with the *Worship* due unto Him for his *Essential Perfections*, we should *Worship* Him, as our ^d *Redeemer* also, equally with the *Father* the *Object* of our *Adoration*: as we are equally ^e *Baptized*, and equally ^f *Blessed* in his *Name*, and as *Honour* is equally ascribed unto ^g *Him, that sitteth on the Throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever.*

Upon the whole we find not in the Scriptures that the *Son of God* is a *Creature*; we find plainly that He is the *Creator*: we find not that *Worship* is to be paid to any but *God* alone: so far from being *commanded*, that it is *absolutely forbidden* to any else: *Divine Worship* inferreth the *Divine Essence*, and as it is *impossible* to transfer the *Divine Essence*, it is *unlawful* to transfer the *Divine Worship* to a *Creature*: We worship first the *Father* as our *Creator*, and *Christ* as our *Redeemer* in the *Personal Oeconomy* and Consideration of the

^a Acts II. 36. ^b III. 13. ^c John XVII. 4, 5. ^d Rev. V. 9, 12. ^e Mat. XXVIII. 19. ^f 1 Cor. XIII. 14. ^g Rev. V. 13.

446 *No Degrees of Worship.*

Divine Being, but Christ is not therefore Worshipped with lower or any mediate Worship as our Redeemer: To use the Words of our Old Translation, ^aPrayer is made ever unto Him, and daily shall He be praised: The Worship directed unto Him, terminateth in Him, and passeth not to the Father, any more, than the Worship of the Father passeth unto the Son, but the Son is glorified in the Father, and the Father in the Son, according to his Prayer, ^bglorifie thy Son, that thy Son may also glorifie Thee: The Glory is mutual, The Father is glorified under his Personal Character, and the Son under his, but the Glory is equal, The Majesty Co-eternal: The Son is not therefore inferior to the Father, any more than the Father is to the Son, or the Holy Spirit to either, when our Lord saith of Him, ^cHe shall glorifie Me, but He with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified. And it is remarkable that the Son in respect to his Human Nature prayeth unto the Father, but the Holy Spirit, who hath not taken our Nature upon Him, is no where said to pray unto the Father: There is a Personal Distinction only between Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and there is no other Distinction in the Worship; as one is not greater or less than another, the Worship is equal, and admits of no Degrees of Supreme, or Inferior, Mediate, or Immediate, and it is no Impropriety, but the strictest Truth to say, that we pray immediately to the Father, when we pray in the Name of the Son, and beg to be accepted for

a Psal. LXXII. 15. *b* John XVII. 1. *c* XVI. 14.

his *Merits*, and thro' his *Mediation*. By calling Him our *Mediator* we acknowledge Him to be the *Lord*; and his *Mediation*, as it regards our *particular Requests*, is a peculiar Demonstration of his *Omniscience*.

This Point hath been unanswerably *settled* and *maintained* by the most Learned *Defences of some Queries*, and I will only observe that it is impossible to Maintain the *Lawfulness of Inferior subordinate Worship* address'd to *any Creature* upon *any Account*: or offer'd to *any* other than the *Supreme Object* of Worship, but by such *Arguments* as will justify both *Pagan* and *Popish Idolatry*: and perhaps it is from a Conviction, that the same Conclusion reacheth to the *Arian* and *Socinian* which affecteth the *Popish* and *Pagan Practice*, that we have been presented with some formal *Vindications* of the *Heathen* from *Idolatry* by the same *Arguments*, which the *Arians*, *Socinians* and *Papists* use, of Subordinate and Mediate Worship passing thro' the Inferior to the Supreme Object, and terminating there. The *Papists* however are right in the Worship of the *Son*, but the *Arians* and *Socinians* believing Him a *Creature* can no more vindicate their Worship of the *Son*, than the *Papists* can *Theirs* of the *Mother*. The Vindication both of *Heathen* and *Christian Idolatry* is just the same, and both are justified alike by Mediate and Subordinate Worship ultimately referred to, and terminating in God Himself. Whatever Difference there may be in the *Object* of *Christian* and *Heathen Idolatry*, still as the *Worship* in both is *Creature-Worship*, it is by the

Scriptures

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Scriptures equally forbidden: There may be aggravations of *Idolatry*, as of other Sins: but whether we *Worship* an *Angel* of *Light* or an *Angel* of *Darkness*, it is equally *Idolatry*: And before we have any *more Vindications* of the *Heathen* from the Charge of *Idolatry*, let it be well weighed what the *Apostle* saith: ^a *The Things, which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to Devils and not to GOD.* And all, that call themselves *Christians*, should consider the meaning of those Words of ^b *doing service to them, which by Nature are no Gods.*

2. Another *Consequence* is, that the *Arians* are either *Sabellians*, *Polytheists*, or *Unitarians*. They charge us, that upon our *Catholic* Principles we must be either *Sabellians*, or *Tritheists*: And truly if we expounded the Doctrine of the *Trinity* in a meer *Figurative* Way, making the *Father*, *Son* and *Holy Ghost* only *different Manifestations* of the *same Person*, this would be *Sabellianism*, or if we expounded it in a *gross Literal* Way, so as to make the *Three Persons* *three separate Beings* as do the *Arians*, then, if at the same time we held the proper *Divinity* of the *Persons*, this would be *Tritheism*: but when we hold the proper *Divinity* of the *Persons* against the *Arians*, and the *Distinction* against the *Sabellians*, and against *both* the *Divinity* and *Distinction* in the most absolute and perfect *Unity* of *Essence*, we are clear both of *Sabellianism*, and *Tritheism*, and the Charge lieth really upon the *Arians*, who are *Unitarians*, upon *two* sup-

^a 1 Cor. X. 20. ^b Gal. IV. 8.

positions, and *Polytheists* upon a *third*. As far, as they take the *Son* and the *Holy Ghost* into the Scheme of Mans Redemption, and yet allow no *Person* in the GOD-Head but the *Father*, if they believe the *Divinity* of the *Son* and *Holy Ghost*, they are *Sabellians*, that is *Unitarians* upon one Supposition: If they hold the Distinction of the *Persons*, as I think they clearly do, and deny the *Divinity* of the *Son* and the *Holy Ghost*, they are *Unitarians* upon another Supposition; But if they hold the *Son* to be *truly* GOD, they are *Polytheists* upon a *Third*, while they deny Him to be of the *same* Substance with the *Father*. For *He* is, if GOD, either the *same* GOD with the *Father*, or *another* GOD, besides the *Father*. The same is to be said so far, as they pretend to hold any *Divinity* of the *Holy Ghost*, but if they deny the *Divinity* of the *Son* and of the *Holy Ghost*, they are no other than *Unitarians*, that believe the Scriptures, and yet acknowledge not the *Son* and the *Holy Ghost* to be One GOD with the *Father*: The *Unitarians*, who deny *revealed Religion*, are in this *consistent*, that they acknowledge One GOD without considering any *Relation* in Him as a *Father*, further, than as the *Father* and *Creator* of the World; But the *Unitarians* who receive the Scriptures, and acknowledge Him under the *Relation* of a *Father* to a *Son* pre-existent to the *Creation* of the World, are *inconsistent* in denying the *Divinity* of the *Son*, and admitting that of the *Father* only: The *Father* with regard to his *Personal Relation* is no *Father*, unless the *Son* be *Eternally* his *Son*: The *Relation* must

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needs be as *Eternal* as the *Essence*, otherwise the *Son* is not properly a *Son*, any more, than *Angels* and *Men* are the *Sons* of *GOD*: They profess to believe in One *GOD* only; So do we also in the *strictest* and *highest* Notion of the Divine *Unity*: This is the *Language* of *Nature*, and the *Unity* of the *GOD-Head* is the *Grand Universal* Principle: no less the *Doctrine* of *Revelation* than of *Reason*; and so far *Christians* are all agreed in this great *Article* of *Natural* and *Revealed Religion*; But then, that in the Divine *Nature* should subsist *more Persons* than *One*: that therein should be founded the *Eternal Relations* of *Father* and *Son* together with the *Holy Ghost*: One *GOD* in *Essence* and *Attributes*, but distinguished by *Relation*, *Operation*, and *Office*, this we could not have known, unless it had been *Revealed*: The *Unity* of *Essence*, and *Distinction* of *Persons* are acknowledged by *Christians*, and denied by *Arians*, *Socinians* and *Unitarians*, whether the *Unitarians* be those, who *receive* or *reject* a *Revelation*. To those, who *deny Revealed Religion* we have nothing to say, but to recommend to their Consideration the several *Arguments* for it, and the special *Evidences* of it: To *those*, who admit a *Revelation*, and the *Scriptures* to contain that *Revelation*, we have it only to recommend to their Thoughts, whether they admit or reject the *Doctrines* revealed, and are not as strict *Unitarians* in opposition to the *Christian Faith*, as *those*, who reject all *Revelation*? This may furnish a proper Subject of Debate between the *Arians* and *Socinians*: For neither will admit the

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the others Doctrine to be *True*: and yet the *Conclusion* and *Consequences* from *Both* are the *same*: So far as they admit the *Revelation*, and deny the Divine Nature of the *Persons* revealed, they must *Both* end in the *Unitarian* Scheme, or if they will use *Catholic* Language without a *Catholic* Meaning, they must run into the other Consequences of *Sabellianism* or *Polytheism* here charged upon them. We find in the Scriptures, that God is *One* in the most Absolute and Abstract Notion of *Unity*: But we find also an admirable *Order* and *Oeconomy* revealed in the Divine Nature so far, as relates to the *Counsel* and *Work* of the *Creation* and *Redemption* of *Man*: From whence we learn, that, tho' God is *One*, He is not a *solitary Being*: that in the God-Head the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost* are revealed equally possessed of the same Nature and *Attributes*, and at the same Time *Personally distinguished* by *Relation*, *Acts*, and *Office*. The Divine Nature and *Attributes* are ever the same, and however the *Persons* are distinguished, the *Essence* is and can be but *One*. Whatever the *Arians*, and *Socinians*, or any other *Schemists* may do, we dare not acknowledge more God's than *One*, nor dare we pay *Divine Adoration* to a *Creature*.

3. I shall mention but One *Consequence* more, which relateth more immediately to our *Eternal* Salvation, and it is no less than this, that the *Arian* and *Socinian* Schemes do vacate our *Redemption* by *Christ Jesus* our Lord, so far as our *Redemption* dependeth upon the *Person* and *Quality* of our *Redeemer*. For if our *Redemption*

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standeth upon the *Divine Relation* of our Redeemer, and we are to consider not only *what* was done, but especially by *whom*, then to make Him *Other* or *Less*, than He *is*, vacates the *Redemption*, and those, who *believe not*, as we do *in the Name of the Son of God*, believe not in the *same Redeemer*, nor can they upon their own Schemes be made Partakers of his *Redemption*: They cannot indeed *actually* vacate this *Redemption*, and their Opinions can only affect themselves, but cannot alter the *Facts*, nor defeat the *Counsel* of GOD. Only we say, as is usual in this way of Argument, that such *Positions* are *inconsistent* with such *Doctrines*, and the *admitting* them *maketh void* those *Points*, which the Scriptures have asserted; as by cancelling the *Obligation* the *Antinomians* may be said to *make void the Law*, and we may apply what St Paul saith of the *Resurrection* of *Christ* to the *Doctrine* of our *Redemption*. If *Christ* hath not redeemed us ^a our Faith is vain, we are yet in our sins. Our *Redemption* depends upon a *right Faith* concerning our Redeemer, and therefore cannot stand upon the *Arian* or *Socinian* Scheme. For *Christ* is our Redeemer as He is that *very Person* set forth in the Scriptures, and if He were not *that Person*, He could not have been our Redeemer, and tho' the *Arians* do in *Terms* acknowledge the *Redemption*, and by imitating *Catholic* Language seem to save Appearances, yet if they believe not in the *same Saviour*, whom we believe in, that is if *they* believe in

^a 1 Cor. XV. 17.

a *Creature*, and we believe in the Name of the Son of GOD, they make void, the Redemption by Christ Jesus our Lord.

The *Socinians* indeed do with denying the Divinity of our Saviour very Consistently deny his Satisfaction also, and till it can be proved, that a *Creature* can redeem us, we have no Ground to believe, that we are redeemed by a *Creature*, and therefore tho' the *Socinians* to avoid a flat denial may talk of *Redemption* in some general Terms, and tho' the *Arians* may really believe it, yet to Both of them we answer, that the Excellency of the *Creature* addeth nothing in this Case to the Value of the Sacrifice made by Him, for the Distance must still be infinite between the Creator and the *Creature*, and no superadded Dignity or Character can inhanse the Value with GOD, who is supposed to add them, since with the greatest Dignity he is but a *Creature* still. The highest Elevation maketh no Change in his Nature, but only setteth him forth with so many Names and Titles, which carry no Intrinsic Value with that GOD, who gave them: When an Earthly Prince hath raised a Favourite with accumulated Honours to the highest Dignitys in his Kingdom, he may indeed be more Honourable and Glaring in the Eyes of his Fellow Subjects, but to his King He is equally a Subject still; and so the most Excellent Angels, tho' greatly superior to us in Dignity, are no more, than our Fellow servants, and Creatures as much, as we.

Let the *Arians* and *Socinians* therefore turn and wind their Schemes ten thousand ways, and

try them upon a thousand Suppositions differing from the *Catholic* Doctrine they can never bring them to the *Doctrine* of a true and proper *Redemption* by a *Price* and *satisfaction* paid. The *Socinians*, as hath been said, deny it, and turn the whole into a *Figurative* and *Allegorical* Interpretation: So likewise do those *Sects* among us, who deny the *Reality* of our *Saviour's Incarnation*, and *Sufferings*, whatsoever they believe of his *Divinity*; and the *Arians*, who make Him a *Creature*, or any ways less than the *Father* with regard to his *Essence*, do inevitably fall into the *same Consequences*, and tho' they acknowledge the *Reality* of his *Sufferings*, they do infinitely lessen the *Value* of his *Sacrifice*.

Such then are the *Consequences* of the *Arian* and *Socinian* Schemes, but the *Doctrine* of the *Church* in these Points is *Uniform* and *Consistent* according to the whole *Revelation* of God from the *Creation* to the *Redemption* of the World: So that we are *clear* of the *Consequences* charged upon the *Arians* and *Socinians* with regard both to our *Faith* and *Worship*, together with those *Doctrines*, which so immediately concern our *Salvation*: the *satisfaction* of *Christ*, and the *Redemption* of *Man*.

With respect to the *Former* we believe in, and do consequently *Worship* and *Adore One Living* and *True God* as *revealed*, and declared to us under the *Name*, *Personality*, and *Distinction* of the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost* eternally subsisting in *One Undivided Essence*. We *Worship* no *inferior Being*, and altho' we can distinguish an *Order*

Order of Relation, we hold nevertheless the *Eternity* and *Co-equality* of the *Persons*.

And for the *Work* of our *Redemption*, we are taught, that it proceedeth from the *free Grace* and *Mercy* of GOD to Sinners, which yet He would not extend without an *Atonement* to his *Justice*, and a *Renovation* of their *Nature*. This *Atonement* is the *Sacrifice* and the *Death* of *Christ*, which was no sooner *determined* by the *Counsel* and *Will* of GOD, but the *way* to *Salvation* was set open upon *such Terms* and *Conditions*, as it pleased GOD in his *several Dispensations* *successively* to require. With regard to us especially, to whom the *whole Counsel* of GOD is *declared*; we are assured, that ^a*Christ Jesus came into the World to save sinners*: that He ^b*hath redeemed us unto GOD by his Blood*: that GOD is pleased to accept us in his ^c*Beloved Son*: upon his *Mediation* and *Intercession* to *hear* us, to *pardon* our *sins*, and to grant us *such Assistance* and *supplies* of *Grace*, as are *needful* for us to *renew* and *sanctify* our *Nature*, and to enable us from a true *Principle* of *Faith* to perform a *true Evangelical Obedience*.

Thus this *Sacrifice* and *Atonement* once made in the *Fulness* of *Time* being the *Purpose* and *Counsel* of GOD from the *Foundation* of the *World*, extendeth *Backwards* as high as *Adam*; and all the faithful *Servants* of GOD receive the *Benefit* of it from the *Beginning* to the *End* of the *World*: *Those before the Gospel*, upon *such a Faith* as *embraced the Doctrines then revealed*, and according to *such Light*, as was *then* afforded

^a 1 Tim. I. 15. ^b Rev. V. 9. ^c Eph. I. 6.

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them: *Those since the Gospel by such a Faith, as is thereby required according to the Revelation of the whole Counsel of God.*

Thus as the Scriptures teach us, the whole Blessed *Trinity* worketh together for the accomplishment of our *Redemption*: It is entirely the Work of GOD: No *Creature* can claim any Part or Merit in Effecting it: Herein we behold the full Display of the Divine *Order* and *Oeconomy*: By this merciful *Revelation* is the *One* GOD of us *Christians* presented in the Holy Scriptures: In the Accomplishment of this great Work we see the several *Parts* how *assigned* and how *performed*, falling in with, and supporting each other by an intimate and necessary Connection, a reciprocal Virtue, and reference in every *Operation* throughout the *Whole*:* The *Mysterious* part we pretend not to account for: *What* is done, and by *Whom* we believe.

I shall conclude with an *Exhortation* drawn from the *Consequences* of the *Doctrine* which we teach, that we ever stand *firm* and *immoveable* in this *Faith*: That we ^a *continue stedfastly in the Apostles Doctrine and Fellowship, and in breaking of Bread, and in Prayer.* That we ^b *forsake not our own Mercys and Christ Jesus our Lord* ^c *In whom we have Redemption through his Blood, even the Forgiveness of Sins according to the Riches of his Grace.*

Upon this sure Foundation we stand: a *Revelation*, which fully answereth all the Doubts of a Guilty Mind, which quieteth the troubled

^a Acts II. 42. ^b Jonah II. 8. ^c Ephes. I. 7.

Breast, and is an *Anchor* of the Soul both *sure* and *stedfast*, which will never break away. Here we place our *Faith*, our full *Trust* and *Affiance*: Not in *Men* nor in *Angels*, nor in any *created Being*, but in *GOD alone*: Our *Redemption* is compleated by the *Effectual Operation* of the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost* ever subsisting in the same *Consubstantial* and *Undivided Essence*: Whatever *Doubts* might arise from any *satisfaction*, which the most glorious *Creature* could make, are clearly removed by the *Greatness* and *Dignity* of the *Son of GOD*: and how great soever the *Corruption* of our *Nature* is, tho' we cannot be *sanctified* by the *Influence* of any *created Spirit*, we are assured that the *Spirit of GOD*, in ^a*whose Image* we were first *created*, ^b*when the Lord GOD formed Man of the Dust of the Ground, and breathed into his Nostrils the Breath of Life*, *THIS* mighty *Principle* so *Operative* at the *Creation*, is able to ^c*renew a right spirit within us*: to *cleanse* our *Hearts*, and *purify* our *Minds*, to restore us to our *Original Perfection*, and improve it by *Evangelical Graces* unto our perfect *Consummation*, that so ^d*our whole Spirit and Soul and Body may be preserved blameless unto the Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*.

And then to what higher *Degrees* of *Glory* and *Perfection* we may be advanced, still improving and growing more and more perfect for ever, we cannot say. Of this however we are assured, that ^e*Now we are the Sons of GOD*,

^a Gen. I. 27. ^b II. 7. ^c Psal. LI. 10. ^d 1 Thess. V. 23.
^e 1 John III. 2.

and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know, that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is, and be transformed, as it were, into his Divine Likeness by beholding Him; when in the Language of St Paul, ^a *We all with open Face beholding as in a glass, the Glory of the Lord, are changed into the same Image from Glory to Glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord*; that is, when with an *Unveiled Countenance* looking, as thro' a *Perspective*, we shall, by continual viewing that *Mirrou* of *Glory*, be changed continually into a nearer *Resemblance* from one *Degree* of *Glory* to *Another*. ^b *Here, or as yet, we see through a Glass darkly, but then Face to Face*: Here the *Mirrou* we look upon reflects only a *Symbolical* or *Enigmatical* Resemblance, and the *Divine Mysterys* are veiled from our Eyes, and presented to us in *Analogical* Conceptions and *borrowed* Forms: There the glass we look thro' will discover the very *Substance*, and we shall see Face to Face: Now ^c *we do but know in part*, and therefore can only *prophezie* in part, but ^d *then we shall know even as also we are known*: Then only shall we know, when we shall see Him as He is: All *Glory*, all *Blessedness*, and *Love*! For *Faith* shall be swallowed up in *Vision*, and *Hope* shall end in the *Everlasting Fruition* of this *Glorious God-Head*, but *Love* shall endure for ever, ever *streaming* forth from God, and ever *increasing* and *returning* in the most pure *Devotion* to *Him*: and ever *Circumsufed* in the most *Universal Charity* and

^a 2 Cor. III. 18. ^b 1 Cor. XIII. 12. ^c v. 9. ^d v. 12.

Benevolence to all Saints and Angels in the most perfect Communion, in the Worship and Praises of our God for ever.

And therefore with Angels and Archangels, and with all the Company of Heaven, we laud and magnifie GOD's glorious Name, evermore praising Him, and saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord GOD of Hosts: Heaven and Earth are full of thy Glory: Glory be to Thee, O Lord most High. Amen.



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