









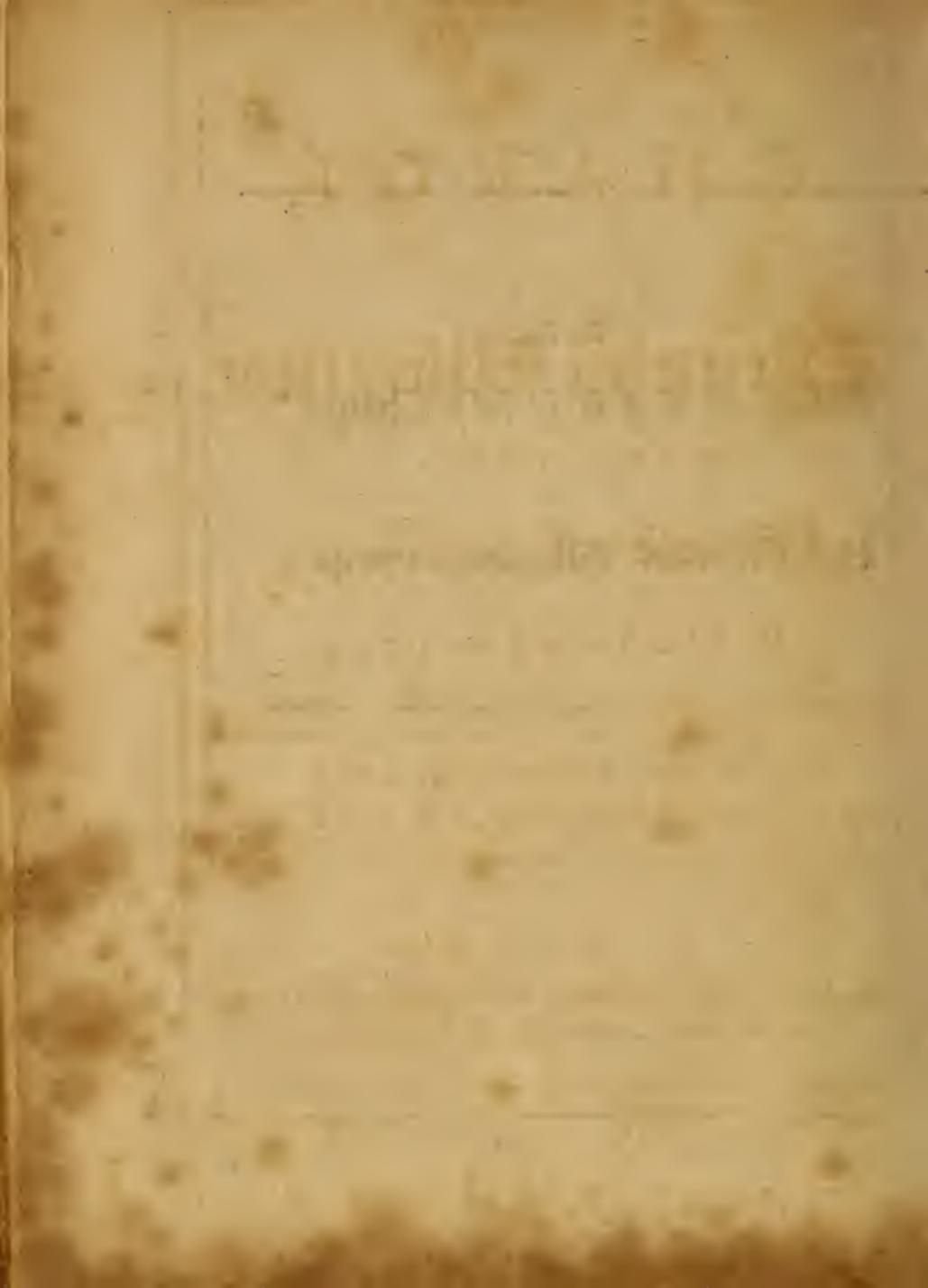
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T H E  
Bishop of *SARUM*'s Charge  
A T  
His Triennial Visitation, 1704.

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A  
C H A R G E

Given at the

Triennial Visitation

O F T H E

Diocese of *Salisbury*,

In O C T O B E R 1704.

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By the Right Reverend Father in God,  
GILBERT <sup>Burnet</sup> Lord Bishop of S A R U M.

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A

## C H A R G E

Given at the

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**W**E meet not together on these Occasions, only to exhibit Instruments, and to see that none intrude into the Service of the Church, but those who are lawfully Called, and duly Authorized: Which, how Formal and Needless soever it may seem to be, yet if it were not done, the Church would be soon over-run with great Disorders. But when this is done, the Chief End of our Meeting is yet before us; That we may quicken and encourage one another to do our Duty, as becomes Persons that are separated from the World, and appropriated to God and his Service. This is properly our *Ἐπισκοπή*, a Looking round our Diocese, and to every Corner of it; an Observing of your Behaviour, and a Harkening to every thing that is offered to us. We hope you do so look to your selves, and to your Flocks, that our Looking after you shall be Matter of Joy, and not of Grief, to us. I wish that I may so speak to you of your Duty, as to set the Sense of my own more home to my self; and that I may be

thereby stirred up to be a Pattern to you ; and may feel the Impressions of what I owe you and the Church so deep and quick upon my own Thoughts, that I may speak of these Things to you with more Advantage, and greater Authority.

There is nothing that will give you a truer View of your selves, than frequently to read over the Offices by which you were Ordained Deacons and Priests. They are much the perfectest, that, if we may judge by all that remains of former Ages, were ever in the Church of God. In the Charges that were then given you, and in the Promises that were then made by you, you will see, what your Duty, and what your Obligations are. If you think it too much every *Ember-Week*, to have a Day of Devotion, of Fasting and Prayer, for examining your selves by these ; yet I hope you will not think it much, on that Week, at the end of which you were Ordained, to read over those Offices ; and to enter into your Consciences, and ask your selves in the presence of God, How you have performed the Vows that you then made ? A Promise to a Man, chiefly when it is solemnly made, is a Sacred Thing : The Breach of it is thought to be base and infamous : What must it then be, to break our Faith to God ? For the Bishop who Ordained you, demanded those Promises of you in the Name of God, and of his Church : So it was to God that you made them ; upon your making them, you were Ordained : So if you break these, and live on in a Violation of them, you have no reason to expect a Blessing from God on your Persons or Concerns. If you have broke loose from your Vows, you have no Claim to him to whom you then seem'd to dedicate your selves, and yet have violated the Faith that

was

was then plighted. Happy they, who, upon a strict Review of themselves, feel, that, in the midst of many Defects and Infirmities, in the main they are studying to mind their Duty, and the Promises they then made. If their Consciences do answer them, that they have, as good and faithful Servants and Stewards, endeavoured to approve themselves to God, and to their People; so that they can say, *Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily, and justly, and unblameably, we have behaved our selves amongst you*; then they may with joy look towards that Crown of Glory, which they shall receive, when the Chief Shepherd shall appear. We have, in a short Word of St. Paul's, a full Character of what we are, and ought to be; *God, whose I am, and whom I serve*. We are his; appropriated to him, upon our own Act and Choice. It is the worst Sort of Sacrilege, to prophane that which is in so immediate a manner separated from the World, and made God's Peculiar. We have reason to glory in this, That we are what the Word *Clergy* imports, *God's Lot and Portion*: But while we call our selves *his*, let us join to it the other Part of the Character, *whom I serve*. We are not his, as so many dead and lifeless Utensils; we ought to serve him, and to maintain the Value that we justly claim, by living and acting suitably to it.

We are ready enough to entertain every thing that may raise the Dignity of our Function: And if we do this only for the Honour of our Master, and that we may serve him to better purpose, and with more Authority, we act as becomes Ambassadors for Christ. An Ambassador, how humble soever he may be in himself, yet must maintain, even in smaller Matters, the Dignity of his Character, and his Master's Honour. But it is on his Master's Account,

and

and not his own. Whereas, he who should only dispute about Punctilio's with an officious Exactness, without ever minding the chief Business he came for, or his Master's Honour in more Important Matters, would make but an Ill Figure, and be both Disowned and Recalled with Disgrace. The best way to maintain the Dignity of our Function, is to Live and to Labour so, that the World may be Convinced, not so much by our Disputing about it, to which Answers will be readily made, right or wrong, as by shewing we deserve it on our own Account. Then the best, and perhaps the greatest Part of our People, will pay us *Double Honour*, if they see that we do not only *Rule well*, but that we *labour in word and doctrine*. They will then be convinced that they ought to *esteem us highly in love for our works sake*. Our Character certainly makes us but a little lower than Angels, if we do *minister* to those that are *the heirs of salvation*; but if we will separate our Dignity from the Work and Labour that belongs to it, the World will be apt to Dispute our Right both to the Respect that we may otherwise justly claim, and to the Provision that the Law has made for us: When they see that we think that those Things belong to our selves on our own Account, and do not belong to our Function, and the Labour that it engages us to. *The labourer is indeed worthy of his hire*: But the words may be justly turned, That the Hire is worthy of a Labourer; and so he that Labours not, what Legal Title forever he may have to the *hire*, yet has not the Equitable and Evangelical Title to it. The best way to maintain the Respect due to our Character, is to respect it our selves; for if the World does not see that we Esteem it our selves, they will quickly Despise it. Primitive Lives, primitive Tempers, and primitive Labours, must recover

1 Tim. 5.  
17.

1 Thef. 5.  
13.

1 Heb. 14.

10. Luk 7.

ver to us the Respect that was paid our Function in the Primitive Times. It may seem an unreasonable Charge, *Let no man despise thee*; but it is certain, that this, in great Measure, depends on our selves: If we render our selves too Familiar, and lay our selves too open to our People, that they see no great Difference between us and themselves, they will soon apprehend that no great Difference is to be made, where they observe no great Distinction. According to the Greek Notion of the Word *Κοινός*, what is Common is also *Prophane*; if we make our selves too Common, we shall soon prophane our Character and render it Contemptible; or rather God will, according to what is Denounced by the Prophet, render us *base and contemptible before all the people, if we the Priests keep not his ways, but are partial in the law*. There is no sort of Partiality so odious, as when we lay heavy Burdens on others, and touch them not our selves. There are words of great Severity delivered by another Prophet, that if we reflect on them with due Attention, others will have less reason to remember them: *The pastors are become brutish, they have not sought the Lord, therefore they shall not prosper, and all their flocks shall be scattered*.

Nothing will give us that Authority in our Labours, nor recommend them so effectually to others, as when they see that we do really believe that, in which we instruct them: And when they observe in us, a Course not only Innocent and Blameless, but of an Exemplary and Shining Conversation. If we content our selves with such a degree of Virtue as keeps us from Censure or Trouble, and rise no higher, this will be lookt on as the effect only of Fear, Interest, or Self-love. If we reflect on the Sacredness of our Character and Employment, we shall not be looking out what are the lowest Degrees of Innocence

that will save us harmless, but rather what are the highest Measures of Holiness to which we can raise our selves. We shall with St. Paul forget *what is behind, and reaching towards the things that are before, we shall still press forward.*

Phil. 3. 13.

There are many things about which Laws and Canons cannot be made, and upon which, Censures cannot be laid, that yet will become very Visible, and will most effectually Disgrace our Persons, and Defeat our Labours. A Course of Levity, of Covetousness, of Passion and Haughtiness, will grow both as Notorious and as Scandalous as some Criminal Actions; and will beget a worse Impression of us, than some single Acts on which Censure may fall. Nothing corrupts the Mind more than an ill Habit continued in and pursued. We must live so, that those among whom we Labour, may see in us a humble and a meek Temper, a charitable and bountiful Disposition, a contempt of the World, with a patient Submission to the Will of God, and a holy and heavenly Conversation. How much soever a good Man ought to avoid all vain Affectations, or the shews of Sanctity; yet his *good works*

3. Mat. 16.

*will shine before men.* They will Shine the more, the more he studiès to hide and cover them: They will make his Face to Shine, and create him more Respect than he will be willing to admit of: *They put to silence the ignorance of foolish men,* if they do not quite overcome and convince them.

2. Pet. 2. 15.

There is a Beauty in true Holiness that will be seen into at last, tho' for a while it may be suspected and doubted. It has a Charm that will at least soften even an Enemy, if it does not quite Conquer him. When all that we do, is such that it ought to be Imitated, then all that we say, will be well Received and duly Weighed.

We ought to live much Retired from the World in Meditation and Study. Our very Retirement from all trifling Conversation, as it shuts out from us many Distracti-  
ons.

ons and Temptations, so it will beget Respect : It has an appearance of Seriousness ; but this if not well employed will grow Uneasy, or sink us into Sloth and Dulness.

The best Exercise in our Retirement, is that which we specially promise among our other Ordination-Vows, That we will be Diligent in Prayers : This is that which will raise our Souls towards God, and give us a true Relish of Divine Matters, with a Delight in them : This will bring us to love our Employment, and every thing relating to it. When Divine Matters possess our Minds, then all our Studies and Exercises about them will be not only easy but pleasant to us. It is by the frequent returns of Prayer, and more particularly of Days or half Days spent in Prayer, that we draw down a Blessing upon us and our Labours ; and if we did set about them, and about our Compositions, and every other part of our Duty, joining and mixing with them Earnest Prayers for Direction and Assistance, and for a Blessing upon them, we might expect a better Account of them ; we our selves should perform every thing with more Spirit and Life, and we should see the Success of it in more eminent Instances : We should have more of an Unction in all our Labours, and should see a much better Effect of them, than we can expect, if we set about them only in a dry and philosophical Manner, which may produce Discourses that are True and Strong, but without Flame or Life.

Another Article of our Ordination-Vow, is, That we will be Diligent in reading the Holy Scriptures, and in the Studies that help to the knowledge of the same ; setting aside the Study of the World and the Flesh. There is a Twofold Study of the Scriptures : One is Critical, to understand the true Meaning of them, to comprehend the main design of Revealed Religion, and the difference of the Two

Dispensations ; but more particularly to know the New Testament : This we ought to read in the Original, and read whole Books together, that we may observe the Scope and Coherence of a whole Epistle ; by which we shall form a clearer Notion of it, than we can do if we read them only in Parcels. The New Testament and the Book of Psalms, are the parts of Scripture we ought to begin our Studies upon : The one is the Text of our Faith ; and the other is a Collection of Devout Compositions, that will ever furnish us with the warmest Strains, and the liveliest Expressions. And for the New Testament, you have the best help to understand it throughly, given late-  
*Dr. Whitty.* ly by one of our own Body, that the World has yet seen. On these Studies you ought to dwell continually, till you have arrived at a clear and distinct Understanding of the New Testament ; and then you may carry on your Studies to all the other Parts of Scripture.

The Study of Controversy will be easy, if once you Understand the Scriptures well. The Corruption of the present Age carrying many to question the first Principles of Religion, and the Authority of Revelation, makes it indispensibly necessary for you, to Study well the Foundations of all Religion : The Being of a God, a Future State, and the Morality of our Actions, as the groundwork of all ; and next to that, the Authority of the Scriptures, and the certain Evidence of the Inspiration of those who delivered Revealed Religion to the World. It is one of the wicked Diversions of Profane Men, to Attack such of the Clergy as they think have not studied those Matters enough ; and to expose them by some extravagant and impious Tests, which they hand about, to make the World laugh at us, or rather at Religion ; when they find we cannot Defend it, and drive them out of these  
 Strong-

Strong-Holds of Satan, as we ought to do. Next to this, we ought so far to look into the Mysterious parts of Religion, as to be able to Stop the Mouths of Adversaries, and to satisfy those that are more Modest, but yet not easy in their Doubting; we ought to separate the Niceties of the Schools, and the Curiosities of some presuming Men, from the Doctrines of Faith, and what is revealed concerning them in the Scriptures. We ought to understand well all the Points of Controversy with the Church of Rome: They have their Missionaries every where at Work; and how much soever we may think our selves safe from them, we ought still to remember these are our most formidable Enemies, who design the Ruin of our Church and Reformation; and the less we either know them, or are aware of them, we are the more in Danger from them: We ought to be well furnished when we encounter them, for they are all well trained in Points of Controversy; especially in that great one that draws all the rest after it, The Authority of the Church, and an Implicit Faith and Obedience to it.

We ought likewise to understand well the Constitution of our own Church, and the Colours upon which any have separated from it: We must acquaint our selves with the most plausible and strongest Arguments that are made use of by those who divide from us; that we may be able to satisfy such honest and weak Minds, as are entangled with them. And we ought to set about this with great Softness and Tenderneſs; *in meekness instructing even those that oppose themselves.* Strong Reasons, mildly managed, with a Spirit of Love, are the proper Methods of bringing back those who have strayed from us. A Scornful Treatment, full of Vehemence and Blushing, with a false Representation, and a feeble Confutation

tation of the Opinions of Dissenters, full only of Noise and Malice; may increase their Numbers, and heighten their Prejudices, but will nor work either on their Reasons; or their Affections.

These are the chief Studies which Clergymen ought to pursue: But beside the Critical Study of the Scripture, there is another sort of Study of it, that is likewise very necessary; which is much easier, for it is only the Labour of the Memory: And this, especially to young People, will be no hard Work; and it will make every thing else easy to them. And it is, the Filling their Memory with many Passages and Parts of Scripture; such Passages where the Sense is clear, and the Weight of them is sensible, will furnish a Man with a great Variety of Noble Expressions: This will be of great use in those Duties of our Function which must be done on the sudden; such as, Visiting the Sick, Comforting the Afflicted, Reproving Offenders, Satisfying Scruples, Answering Objections, and Preparing Persons for the Holy Sacrament. In these Cases, a Man cannot look into Notes, or turn Leaves; but he must be ready to bring them forth out of the good Treasure of his heart, as the Occasion shall require. And he who is well furnished this way, will find the Composing of Sermons an easie Work; proper Thoughts and right Words will readily come in the way of one that is full of the Scripture. And, upon a long Observation, I must tell you, this is that which gives the Dissenters their greatest Strength: For tho they are very defective in the Critical Study of the Scriptures, for if they understood them right they would not divide from us, yet their Discourses are full of them; and this makes great Impression on the People, chiefly when they observe the Defectiveness

ness of those who ought to be better acquainted, and more conversant in those Holy Writings. Two or Three Verses got by heart a day, and often repeated over and over again, would in a few Years time lay in a great Stock this way; which would make the Work of our whole Lives very easy to us. After these Studies are looked into, every Thing that is Study, that raises or entertains the Mind, may have its Use; both to make Retirement more easie to our selves, and our Conversation more acceptable and useful to others.

The Employments of the Clergy in the Discharge of their Cures, are various. We ought first to Officiate with that Gravity and Solemnity, that may best create a Reverence and Attention to the Worship of God; not by a Theatrical Affectation, but by bringing our own Minds to a Seriousness in the performing of it; for that will insensibly modulate the Voice into due Accents, and a right Pronunciation. In Baptism, we ought not to comply with the Vanity of those, who desire us to baptize in their Houses, as a Mark of Distinction: But we ought to consider Distance and a hard Season, chiefly where Danger may be apprehended to the Child; for in those Cases, *Mercy is better than Sacrifice*. We ought to infuse in our People a right Apprehension of the Necessity of receiving the other Sacrament; and, at least, once a Year, give them a full Instruction concerning it. In our Sermons, we ought to put our selves in the room of the unlearned; and consider what they are capable of: The End of Preaching, is first to open some Piece of Instruction so clearly to the People, that they may rightly apprehend it; and then to put it home to their Consciences in the most moving Manner we can think on. They cannot reach long Periods, and laboured In-

ferences.:

ferences: raised Epithets, and a correct Stile, are not understood by them: We must bring things to a Level with their Understandings, in plain Terms, and simple Expressions; for what may shine in Print, will be very dark to an illiterate Auditory. But, to make these our Solemn Labours more effectual, we must carry our selves towards our People like those who love them, and have a tender Care and Concern for them. This will make all that we can say to them be the more hearkened to, and be the better received. We must labour among them in private, from house to house, in season, and out of season; we must *give our selves to these things, be wholly in them, and continue in them; for, in so doing, we shall both save our selves, and them that hear us:* We must remember, that we ought to *feed the Church of God, which he has purchased with his own blood.* If the Honour of God and Religion, if the End for which Christ hath died and rose again, and if the Saving our own Souls as well as the Souls of others, are of any Weight with us; then we shall *take heed to our selves, and to our Doctrine, and to the Flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made us Overseers, that we may feed it, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being examples to the flock; and when the chief Shepherd shall appear, we shall receive a Crown of glory which fadeth not away.*

1 Tim. 4.  
15.

20. Acts  
28.

1 Pet. 5.  
1, 2, 3.

These Duties are at all times incumbent on us: But there are some more Critical Seasons, in which the Concurrence of Signal Providences seem to call us to mind them with more than ordinary Care and Zeal. God has blest us with a QUEEN on the Throne, so Exemplary for Piety, and all Christian Virtues, that we must own it a peculiar Happiness to have such a Sovereign over us.

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So bright an Example, and so great an Encouragement as She gives all Her People, and the particular Regard She has to the Clergy, should make us all ashamed, if we do not follow such a Noble Head and Leader. Princes that in the main are good, are great Blessings; and we ought to cover any Faults that appear in them. *Constantine* and *Theodosius* had their dark Sides; which their Eminent Virtues, and Zeal for Religion, make us willing to forget, or to excuse. But it is the Felicity of our Times, to have a Sovereign that shines in so many good Qualities, without the least Mixture of any bad ones. This appears now more conspicuous since She is placed in such a Light; but it was the same in all the former Parts of Her Life, when She had no other Advantage, but that of Her High Birth: So that we have all reason to hope it will continue so to the end; which God grant may be long delayed. She has a Right Sense of the true Interests of the Church; and has often recommended *Moderation* to all Her People, as the best Security to the Church. She is deeply sensible of the great Unhappiness we lye under, by the Mean Provision that is made for many of the Clergy. God seems to have reserved a Noble Benefaction to Her; which, how it came to be so long hid from our Princes, and not to be thought on at the Restoration, when the Funds were clear, and the Nation was in a full Disposition to have made up every thing to the Crown, that should have been parted with on so Religious an Account, we cannot account for, unless it be, that God reserved it to be one of the Glories of a Reign that is hitherto the Brightest of any in History. Under Her Majesty, we owe great Acknowledgments to my *Lord Treasurer*, for his Care in this Particular; who has as true an Understanding of all that relates to the Church, and as great a Zeal for it, as any of those who are more immediately concerned in it.

While, then, we see such a Prospect of being delivered from that which was one of the justest Reproaches of our Reformation, and has been the Occasion of so much Mischief among us ; Let us with all humble Thankfulness acknowledge God's Goodness to us, in putting so great a Design in the *Queen's* Heart, and for the Progress already made in it ; and let us behave our selves so, that the Nation may think we are in such sort Worthy of so great a Blessing ; that they who only can do it, may be incited in a proper Season, to clear the Funds.

To this great Blessing of such a *Queen* on the Throne, we cannot but observe another at home ; That there is a happy Disposition to Piety and Devotion sprung up among us, particularly among the younger Sort ; which gives us ground to hope, that the next Age shall be better than this is. In the Great City, there is another Appearance at daily Prayers, and at Sacraments, than was known formerly. The Thing is very visible, and begins to spread over the Nation. There is a Noble Zeal in many to have Sin repressed : They are encouraging one another in all the Acts of Piety and Virtue ; and there is great Care taken, in looking after the Education of Poor Children, in keeping them at Schools, and Clothing them, and in Binding them out ; that cannot be enough commended. Funds are made for Printing and Dispersing good Books over the Nation, with many other greater Charities that do daily encrease. This is a Blessing so very particular, sprung up among us, -as it were, by an immediate Hand of Heaven, that we have reason to look on it as a Signal Token to us for good. I am confident, it is not necessary to persuade you to second, or rather, to promote these happy Beginnings of good Things. A Want of Zeal in advancing all things of this kind, would have so ill an Appearance, and bring such a Reproach on

our selves, and on the Church, that I cannot think so ill of any of the Clergy, as to imagine they should be cold, much less backward in Things of this kind. We ought to rejoice in them, and to assist and encourage all who offer themselves willingly to so Noble a Work; and to cultivate, improve, and propagate those Beginnings all we can. This ought to raise a higher Spirit of Devotion and Charity in us, while we see the Laity of their own accord so active and so forward in it. And, as at home we see many things to set us on to more than ordinary Zeal, so the State of Affairs abroad has extraordinary Characters in it: God has raised the Glory of this Nation in this Reign, more particularly this Year, beyond what has ever hapned to us since we were a Nation: Those very Families, and Powers, that have oftner than once designed the Ruin of our Nation, and our Religion, do now fly to us for their Preservation; and God has wrought so great a Deliverance for them by our Gracious QUEEN, and Her *Ever-Renowned General*, that no Age can shew any thing like it. Now all the World looks to us, as to the Nation, by whose means Peace and Liberty are to be secured to all the Nations round about us. It is certain, all *Europe* was at no time in such a Conflagration as it is at present: While we, who are the Head of the Alliance, feel our selves as in a profound Peace, and an overflowing Plenty, even while all about us are wasted by a long and devouring War. What this may produce we may not presume to determine; but it is certain God has now exalted us to a high pitch of Honour.

The Protestant Churches make Application to us for Protection and Favour; and some of them are making great steps towards a nearer Conjunction with our Church, both in Worship and Constitution; and are recommending to all about them a more entire Union with us. This is al-

ready far advanced in some Churches ; and there is a greater Disposition to it than has appeared at any time since our first Reformation.

In such a Conjunction of Affairs both at Home and Abroad, shall we be wanting to our selves, and to our Duty, so far as to sit still, and be slack and negligent, while God seems to call us to more Zeal and Activity? Or shall we fall into Quarrellings among our selves? Shall we raise a new Flame, and not only revive old Disputes, but engage in new ones, and thus disturb our Quiet and Harmony at Home, and begin new Contentions that were not known in former Times, and will scarce be believed in those that are to come? Upon this Occasion I must speak fully of the beginnings and progress of a Flame that has been kindled in this Church ; Tares have been sown, and have grown up fatally among us, of which we may safely say, *an enemy has done this*. An Enemy indeed both to QUEEN and Country, and to Church and State.

I must fetch the first Rise of all from K. *James's* Reign: Then those of the Church, who saw the Papists drawing in the Dissenters to concur with them in their Designs against the Church, applied themselves to the then Prince of *Orange*, desiring him to make use of his Interest in them for diverting them from that : And in those Letters which are yet extant, Assurances were given, That the Church was then in such a Temper, so well convinced of former Errors, that if ever she got out of that Distress, all those Differences would be certainly made up ; and to make this Assurance more Publick, the Archbishop and Bishops in that Petition for which they were Imprisoned and Tried, declared, That they were ready to come to a Temper in those Matters, both in Parliament and Convocation. Upon this it was that the Prince of *Orange* promised in his Declaration,

tion, to use his Endeavours to heal all those Divisions. In order to the performing this, He, by a special Commission, appointed all those Bishops who owned his Authority, He being then set on the Throne, together with a great many of the Clergy, to draw out the Grounds upon which the Dissenters had separated from us, and to offer Expedients in order to the Healing our Breaches. We had before us all the Books and Papers that they had at any time offered, setting forth their Demands; together with many Advices and Propositions which had been made at several times, by some of the best and most Learned of our Divines; of which the late most Learned Bishop of *Worcester* had a great Collection: So we prepared a Scheme to be laid before the Convocation; but did not think that we ourselves, much less that any other Person, was any way limited, or bound to comply with what we resolved to propose: On the contrary, we said, if we saw better Reason, we would change our minds. Yet this, which was only a Council created by the King, to prepare Matters, was complained of, as an Imposing on the Convocation, and as a Limiting of it; and tho' a Royal License was sent them, yet a previous Resolution was taken, To admit of no Alterations. When we saw That, we resolved to be quiet, and leave that Matter to better Times: But then the Enemies of the Civil Government began to work on the Jealousies and Fears of many well-minded Men; and the *Preserving the Church*, was given out as the *Word*, by those who meant *France* or *St. Germain's* by it; and under this fatal Delusion many are apt to be mis-led to this day.

When the Bishops saw so many of the Clergy possessed, with those Fears, it was not thought necessary to bring a Convocation together in some Years. We know how many of the Clergy had groaned long under the Charge and  
Trouble:

Trouble of a Shew of a Convocation, in which nothing was to be done; and therefore in Favour to them, they were not brought in, since they themselves, when a Royal License was offered them, had resolved to make no use of it. Upon this a hideous Outcry was raised, as if no more Convocations were to be held, and so the Church was to be stript of her Authority. A Convocation was opened to silence that Clamour, and then new Claims were put in, and Insisted on, that were never pretended to in any Part of the Christian Church, nor practised in this Church. I shall not repeat what I opened copiously in my last Visitation, in which I acquainted you fully with all this Matter; I shall only tell you what has Occurred since.

The Original Book of the Convocation that sate after the Restoration, is happily found; and by it, it appears that we have not Innovated in any one Particular, but that the whole Dispute with us is one intire Innovation. The present Lower House did desire, That the Archbishop and Bishops would offer an Expedient for putting an end to the Dispute that the Lower House in the former Convocation had began, about intermediate Sessions. To this the Archbishop offered all that was in his Power to offer; That the Clergy might meet in Committees in intermediate Days, as oft and as many as they pleased; and that whensoever Business should be brought regularly before them, they should have full and convenient Time given them, to prepare and debate Matters. More than this, the Archbishop could not offer; he Continues or Prorogues the Convocation by a settled form of a *Schedule*, which is so Ancient, that nothing but the Legislature can alter it: He will not, and he cannot alter it. By that *Schedule* all things are continued in the State in which they are at that time, to the day to which they are Prorogued; so no Session can come between;

for by that the State of Matters may be changed; since a Vote may be put on any Business in a Session, and that changes the State of the Matter. And indeed the Constitution of our Church, as it is derived from the Primitive Pattern, making the Presbyters the Bishops Council, whensoever they come to separate themselves from the Bishops, and pretend to take the Government into their own hands, without staying till the Bishops propose Matters to them for their Advice, our Church is no longer Episcopal but becomes Presbyterian. The Majority of the Lower House that were present, did not Acquiesce in this, but by another Address desired the Archbishop and Bishops to refer the Matter to the Queen, and to such Persons as Her Majesty should appoint to settle it. There are none of all the QUEEN'S Subjects that have a more entire Confidence in Her Justice and Goodness than we have; we can freely submit every thing that is in our own Power, to Her Pleasure. But those Powers that by the Laws of the Church, and of this Nation in particular, are Vested in us, are Trusts that we cannot submit nor refer to any Arbitration. The Archbishop and Bishops could not submit a Right that was so manifestly lodged in them. So the Lower House made a separate Address to the QUEEN, desiring Her to Examine and Settle this Difference: Her Majesty has not yet made any Answer; so the Lower House prepared a Representation, setting forth many Abuses which they have found in some part or other of the Church. This has been since Printed with a Preface that lays great Load on us. We have met with so much hard Usage, that we are now accustomed to it, tho' we had no reason to expect it from the hands from which it comes. We hope we may Challenge the World, and say with St. Paul, *Ye are witnesses, and God also, how we have behaved our selves amongst you.*

*you.* We have our Defects and Infirmities, many Errors and Omissions, for which we Humble our selves before God: But we hope we have this Testimony in all your Consciences, as well as in our own, That we set our selves to do our Duty in Ordination and Confirmation, in Visiting our Diocesses, in Instru&ing our People, and Assisting our Clergy, by all the most particular ways we can think of; and all this we do at least as much as those that have gone before us. So that we have not given any just Occasion to that great Discharge of Slander and Defamation, that has been let loose upon us so long, and with so little regard either to Truth or Decency. If we are hated and calumniated for our Fidelity and Zeal to the QUEEN, and Her Title; to our Church and Religion, and to our Common Liberty and Country, we are willing to bear this, and a much heavier Load, on so good an Account. They that revile us with so bold and so black a Malice, shall answer to God for all their hard and ungodly Speeches and Doings. To that God we commit our Persons, and our Cause, and humbly submit to his Will and Pleasure in all things.

The Representation that I am now to read to you, was no small Surprize to the Archbishops and Bishops. They did expect, in an Address of this kind, made by the Clergy, to have had things proposed to them, which they had Power to Correct; such as, the Restraining Pluralities, the Obliging the Clergy to Residence, to the Discharge of their Duty in Catechising Children, in having Prayers on Week-days, and in Administring the Sacrament more frequently; and to the doing the other Parts of their Duty. It seems, they found no other Defects among themselves, but such as might be some way charged on us. As for most of all the Things in this Paper, we know little relating to them, and had heard of no such Complaints. And as to some things, That

of Private Baptism in particular, it did not seem easy to overcome a Custom that we have always discouraged, but did not see how we could master so Universal a Practice, as prevailed in that Matter. Howsoever, my Lord Archbishop, besides a large Speech that he made, desired every one of us to take out a Copy of this Representation; and to communicate it to our Chancellors, Archdeacons, and our Clergy; and to bring up with us next Winter, an Account both of the Truth of the Facts set forth in it, and of proper Remedies to such as we should find to be true. I can yet hear of nothing in my Diocese, that is set forth in this Paper, except one Particular, in a contested Jurisdiction; which I did not know before; and which, I hope, I have put in a way to be settled. The Ways by which things can come to our knowledge, are First, Presentments. I do not find any of these was ever presented; and even when a Presentment is made, if Evidence is not sent in, the Cause comes presently to an end, after the Party is brought into Court. A Second Way is, in Causes of Instance: When a Prosecution is brought at the Instance of a Party. I am sure, none of these Matters here set forth have been before me in this Method. The Third is, Common Fame; upon which we can prosecute *ex Officio*. Now, as to all these Particulars, tho' I am often in every Corner of my Diocese, and you know, I make it my Business to be well informed in all things relating to the Church; yet I do appeal to you all, if any of you did ever inform me, that any of these things were reported to be done in your Neighbourhood. Yet, after all, I desire you will hearken to the Paper it self, which I am now to read to you; that so you may inform me, if you know any thing relating to any of the Particulars that are set forth in it.

*Here the Paper was Read, and somewhat was said upon every Article in it: But no Information was brought to me in my Eight Visitations, of any of the Matters set forth in it, excepting that of a contested Jurisdiction, and another Particular that was then in Suit in the Temporal Courts.*

And now you see what Things are charged on us, and with what a Spirit the whole Paper is penn'd: But if any thing can be brought out of it that may any way help to mend Matters in the Church, we shall the more easily bear the Hardship that is put on us by it. You owe to our Functions, and we hope to our Labours among you, so much Charity, not to say Respect, as not to hearken to every Report, nor believe every thing that is set about to our Prejudice; especially since you may all know on what Design this is driven, by many who are not so much Our Enemies, as the Queen's and the Nations.

I shall in the next place study to satisfy you as to one Particular, that I hear sticks with many: You do not rightly understand divers of the Grounds on which so many of the Bishops did not, as I presume, think fit to Vote for the Bill against Occasional Conformity, which seems to some to be necessary to secure the Established Church. In this I will endeavour to satisfy you all I can. We who have seen the Progress of Affairs ever since the Year 1662, have plainly seen it was by the means of Occasional Conformity, that the Nation was brought over from their Prejudices, by degrees, to the Communion of the Church: We remember when the Churches of *London* were very thin, that are now full to the Doors: Few came then to Prayers; most dropt in after the Preacher was in the Pulpit. We saw their Prejudices wear off by

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degrees, and these very Persons become zealous and devout in the Service of God, who perhaps would never have come to it, if they had been told at first, that if they once came to it, they must not go and worship God any where else. If this had not always its full effect upon such Occasional Conformists, to bring them over by degrees to an Intire and Constant Conformity; yet generally it had its effect upon their Families and Posterity. So that the putting such a Bar upon those that come into our Communion, looks like the building up a Wall of Partition, or the making a deep Gulf between us, that none may pass over from them to us. It is not easy to find where the great Danger is, that some imagine the Church is in. The QUEEN is zealous for us: All the Nobility and Gentry are with us. There were but Three Families of Note in *Wiltshire*, that encouraged the Meetings, and went to them, when I came first among you: The Posterity of Two of these are now wholly ours. I do not find but one in all the considerable Boroughs of this Diocese, that goes to their Meetings; so I am justified in what I said in another Place. It is true, I hear of late of Four more in one of the smaller Boroughs; one should think this is no formidable Number, in a County that has so great a Representative in Parliament. I speak it freely, but with great Grief, I can see no Danger the Church is in, but what may arise from the Heat and Indiscretion of Some who pretend Zeal to it, but are misled by those who are not of our Church, and yet have got the Credit to inflame those who are of it, and drive them into a Violence that is like to raise a Flame that may consume us.

This leads me to another Reason that had great Weight with many. They saw that all the *Papists*, and all the *Jacobites* of *England* were violently set on carrying the Bill: And tho many promoted it, no doubt, out of a sin-

cere Zeal for the Preservation of the Church, yet when we saw Those who we are sure have no Zeal but to see us Ruin'd, engage with so much Eagerness in promoting it; and that one of the Spitefullest Writers of the Age, who has so publickly declared in Favour of another Pretender to the Crown, has Published so many Virulent Libels upon this Subject, in which he has barefac'dly shewed both his Principles and Designs, we were, I confess, alarm'd at this: We did believe something lay hid and in reserve under it, that we could not see into: And therefore having observed a Zeal about this, that was far greater than the Matter it self seem'd to deserve; we could not think it reasonable to comply with Persons, who have taken too much pains to convince the World of their Ill Designs.

A Third Reason, was from the present State of Affairs both at home and abroad. We found the Nation was much calmed by the Toleration; we saw the Church had gained Strength by it. The Dissenters did not get but lose, both in Numbers, and in the Zeal which a hotter Prosecution had raised. They were content with the Toleration; they were hearty to the Government, and lived peaceably by us; and we can appeal to you all, how quiet all those Matters lay for Ten Years; and what a Flame some Incendiaries have raised among us about them within these last Five Years. We have not been wanting in our Duty, by Preaching, Printing, and private Conferences, to bring Men into a constant Communion with the Church; and in this our Labours have not been without Success: The more successful on this Account, because we have followed St. Paul's Rule, of *instructing those that oppose themselves in meekness*; and because they saw that as we did them no harm, so we meant them none. We have shewed the same Temper to the Schismaticks of the other side; I mean the *Jacobites*, tho' they do not deserve it so well, for they are Restless, whereas

whereas the others are not so ; and they are Enemies to the QUEEN and Her Government ; whereas the others shew all Duty and Respect to both : And perhaps this is their chief Crime in some Peoples Opinion. It is absurd to any Man, to pretend to much Zeal for the Unity of the Church, when at the same time they seem to Esteem and Respect those that Divide from it, in Favour of a pretended Popish Prince supported by *France*. This I am sure is Hypocrisy. As for Affairs Abroad, it is needless to say much to you of the present Conjunction, and of what Importance it is to all the Affairs of *Europe*, as well as to our own Security at Home, that we should continue an United People ; that the Publick Councils should be Clogg'd with nothing but what relates to Common Safety ; and that the Government may not be entangled with Distractions at Home, but may be free to attend wholly to Foreign Affairs. These were some of the Grounds on which we went in that Matter : In which I thought I owed you the Satisfaction of laying them out to you ; as you on the other hand owe your Superiors, that Charity, at least, as not to Censure their Proceedings before you are rightly Informed about them, much less to look on them as the Underminers and Betrayers of the Church ; which with much virulent Stuff of the like Nature, has been very Indecently thrown out upon us, by those from whom we had Reason to look for other Things. But so long as we have quiet in our own Consciences, and dare make our Appeals to God, who knows all Things, we can well bear the Calumnies of those, who hate us for our Loyalty to the *Queen*, and for our Fidelity to our Oaths.

I must add one Particular relating to my self ; which I unwillingly do, because the making an Apology looks as if I needed it : But I am forced to it by a Solemn Denunciation of Heresy ; in which I am compared to one of

This was mentioned only at *Abington*, &c. Two other Places.

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the worst Hereticks that ever was in the Church, *Paulus Samosatenus*, Bishop of *Antioch*; by one who has not thought fit to name himself by any other Character, but that he is one of my Clergy; for he compares himself to *Malchion*, a Presbyter of *Antioch*, who detected the Heresy of his Bishop *Paulus*. I hope I shall speak of this Matter with the Temper that becomes me, how much soever I may have been Provoked. It is Reported of *Malchion*, That he in a Conference in the presence of Notaries, discovered *Paulus*'s Frauds and Errors. I wish this Presbyter would follow that Method. I offer him a Conference in the presence of my Lord Archbishop, and of such as he shall call for; together with such Persons as the Presbyter shall bring along with him, in order to the giving him full Satisfaction: And if he is not Satisfied with this, but will proceed in a Legal way, before him who is my proper Judge, I will take care that he shall be troubled with no Delays, nor be uneasy under the Costs of the Suit. If this Method had been begun with, it had been more like the Gospel; it might have had better Effects, and prevented some Indelicencies, which I am very ready to pass over, and to forget. I am far from thinking that a Bishop who delivers unsound Doctrine, should be covered by his Character, or be privileged from Censure. The Faith and Form of sound Words is a *Depositum* and Trust, chiefly committed to him. But it had been more decent to have begun with private Suggestions, had there been Cause for them; and then if neither Retraction nor Censure had followed on it, a Presbyter was more at his Liberty to have proceeded so openly: But I hope he is Convinced he was too sudden in beginning where he ought to have ended.

There are only Two Particulars in his Book that I think fit now to take Notice of: One is, That he finds such Fault with my having said, not in the Book that he Answers,

swers, but in a former one, That the *Jews* Worshipped the Cloud of Glory ; upon which he makes an Exclamation, Good God! As if the Age and Church was Defiled with such Corrupt Doctrine. A Learned Divine that replied upon one that had Quarrelled with that Expression, had yielded, That it was not Correct ; but that it should have been expressed, That the *Jews* Worshipped *towards* the Cloud of Glory. One would have expected that this might have given Satisfaction ; and that there was no occasion given for such a Tragical Strain. It is a common Expression, that we Bow *to the Altar*, tho' strictly speaking, it is *towards* the Altar. But since that Expression was found Fault with, and the yielding it up was not thought enough ; I will only say this in Justification of it, That I have the greatest Authority in the World with me to justify that Expression : The *Jews* directed their Worship towards the Ark ; and yet both the *Greek* and the *Latin* Bible, the Bibles chiefly in use for a long time in the Christian Church, have it thus : *προσκύνητε τὸ ὑποπόδιον τῶν ποδῶν αὐτοῦ*. And the *Latin* is, *Adorate scabellum pedum ejus*. I hope here is a sufficient Authority to excuse, if not to justify that Expression.

The other Particular much Insisted on, is, That in a Book intended only for Doctrinal Instruction, I had waved the making a Historical Digression, concerning *Nestorius*, Whether he had wrong done him or not ; since some Writers have undertaken to Justify him. Certainly the rest of *Cyrril's* Conduct does not incline us to think very favourably of all he did : And the proceedings against *Nestorius* at *Ephesus* were Summary, not to say Hasty. If he only excepted to the Word *θεοτόκος*, no wonder if while the World was coming out of Heathenism, such a Term might seem to have an ill sound ; as certainly it gave the rise to the Superstition and Idolatry that followed on it to the *B. Virgin*. It would have an odd Sound

to say, That our Mothers bore our Souls. But as to the Doctrine, that the Two Natures were United in one Person, that is so fully Asserted and Explained, that the avoiding to enter on the discussion of a Matter of Fact, did not afford a just Occasion for so publick and so severe a Censure. Whatever the matter of Fact may be, the Definition of the Council of *Ephesus* was Sound and True, That there was such an Union of the Two Natures in Christ, as Constituted one Person; fitly resembled to the Union of the Soul and Body, which Constitute one Man: And this I solemnly declare, I did always, and do still firmly Believe. This I thought fit to say for my own Justification, for no Man, at least no Bishop, ought to be Silent when the soundness of his Faith and Doctrine is called in question, and when he is compared to one of the worst of Hereticks. I leave it to the Person concerned, to reflect on his own Behaviour; and to consider how much further he will proceed in this Matter. I hope you are all sensible of the Occasion given me for this necessary Defence of my self; and that you are fully satisfied with what I have Said and Offered.

And now, my Dear Brethren, let me exhort you by the Bowels of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you may lay aside all Wrath, Strife, Clamour, Evil Surmisings, with the perverse Disputings of Men of Corrupt Minds, and that you may live in Love and Peace, seeking after those things that make for Peace, and by which we may Edify one another. *And the God of love and peace be among you. Amen.*

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THE ROMAN

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## PHIL. II. 1, 2.

*If there be therefore any consolation in Christ,  
if any comfort of love, if any fellowship  
of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies:*

*Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like-minded,  
having the same love, being of one ac-  
cord, and of one mind.*

**T**Here is a particular Vehemence of Style in these Words, which shews the Importance of what is here Pressed, and St. Paul's Earnestness in it. He was now a Prisoner; but the Care of all the Churches lay still upon him: He was sending about his Fellow-Labourers to Visit those that had been Planted by him, and to Water them: He writ Epistles by them, which make a very considerable part of the Text of our Faith. In order to the leading you in to a distinct View of those Times, and of the Design of these Words, I must set before you the State the Churches were in, by reason of a Controversy that was then raised, and was managed with great Heat by many of the Jews, who

were so far Converted to Christianity, as to believe that Jesus was the promised *Messias*; but they could not submit to the laying aside the *Mosaical* Precepts; which they believed, as the *Jews* still do, were to be for ever Binding: Nor could they bear the calling the *Gentiles* to equal Privileges with the *Jews*; allowing these no other Advantage, but that the Gospel was to be first offered to them, and upon their Rejecting it, to the *Gentiles* next.

In Opposition to this, the Apostles did indeed, while they were among the *Jews*, become *Jews*: They complied with their Rites, reckoning that as long as the Destruction of their City and their Temple were Respited, so long there was a Remnant still to be gathered in: And that no Inevitable Prejudices might be laid, to be Scandals and Stumbling-Blocks in their way, they themselves as Born *Jews*, did observe those Rites. But they decreed, not to lay *this Yoke* on the *Gentiles*, it being a Burthen too heavy for them to bear. It render'd it impossible to them to become Christians, if they had been bound to offer Sacrifices, and to observe the Festivities at *Jerusalem*: This was contrary to what our Saviour himself had said to the Woman of *Samaria*, *That the hour was come, in which neither at the mountain of Samaria, nor yet at Jerusalem, they were to worship the Father*; but that the true worshippers

15. Acts  
10.

4 Joh. 21.

worshippers were to worship the Father in Spirit and in Truth. Upon this Dissention, great Heats arose. The Point in it self was of great Consequence; it laid a Bar in the way of the Conversion of the Gentiles, and so obstructed the Progress of Christianity. St. Paul Instructed the Galatians, That this Freedom from that Yoke, was a part of that liberty to which Christ had made them free; and in a very determining Style he tells them, That if they were circumcised, Christ should profit them nothing: And by that, they became debtors to the whole law; and Christ would become of no effect to them; but that they were fallen from grace, or a State of Favour. Thus we see of what Importance this Matter was in it self, and in its Consequences. As this was a great Point, so certainly it was started very unseasonably in the first Beginnings of Christianity: It might have given great Prejudices against it. The Unbelieving Jews were, no doubt, harden'd in their Infidelity, when they saw such Contests among those who received Jesus as the True Messias. The Sharpness with which it was managed, might furnish the Enemies of this Faith, with an Objection to it, That how much Love soever Christians pretended to, yet there were among them debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults. This might bring up an ill report on this

Reli-

Gal. v.  
2, 3, 4.

2 Cor. 12.  
20.

Religion; and it being then in its Infancy, not yet known to the World, it might have obstructed the Progress that was otherwise to be expected to it. This was also maintained in Opposition to the greatest Authority that ever was in the Church. Inspiration and Infallibility, how unjustly soever pretended to since that time, were certainly in the Apostles: They had met, and considered the Matter: Their Decision had a Title set at the Head of it, *It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us*: To which, tho' other Councils have falsely pretended, yet they had a Right to put it in the Front of the Rules set by them. The *Judaizers* maintained their Opinions in a direct Opposition to the Authority that was lodged with the Apostles, and to the Miracles and other extraordinary Gifts by which that was proved: So that the Apostles might have condemned them, as Men that obstinately resisted the Holy Ghost. The Tempers of the Men, the Methods they took, and the Spirit in which they Acted, did not a little aggravate the Matter. They detracted from the Apostles; they studied to lessen their Authority, and even to defame their Persons. Their Malice workt against St. Paul with a particular Fury; so that he was often in perils from those false Brethren. Now, that he was the Prisoner of the Lord, when it might have

have been expected that their Compassions would have been more tender, and their Respect to him heighten'd by the Chains he was in, they studied rather to add *Affliction to his Bonds*. They went on, Preaching Christ, Convincing the World that he was the *True Messias*; and in that, and for that, St. Paul rejoiced: He resolved still to rejoice at it; tho' they did it, *even out of envy and strife; not sincerely, but of contention*; yet that did not alter his Mind: *Notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence or in truth, so Christ was preached, he rejoiced*. Those Men were of such Ill Tempers, that he calls them *dogs, and evil workers*; and he speaks of that Circumcision which they pressed, in a particular Strain of Contempt, calling it the *Concision*; in Opposition to the true Circumcision of the Heart in the Spirit.

1. Phil 15,  
16 17.18.

3. Phil. 2.

2. Rom.  
29.

Take then all together, The Importance of the Controversy, the Time in which it was started, the Authority by which it was judged, and the Spirit with which it was managed; and, I hope, all will be soon convinced, That none of the Matters that divide us, can in any Respect, much less in all Respects, be compared to that Dispute related to in this Epistle.

In the next Place, it may be fit to see, What the Apostle pronounced on the Whole Matter:  
What

What Positions he lays down, and what Directions he gives in it. These we have very clearly and copiously in his Epistle to the Romans, which began early to be distracted by those *doubtful disputations*. He pronounces in general, That the Kingdom of God, or the Dispensation of the Messias, did not consist in *meat and drink*. This relates to One of the Branches of the *Mosaical Law*, concerning Meats Clean and Unclean, which occurred most frequently in Human Life, and therefore is named instead of all the Rest: *But it was Righteousness* it led Men to, an Universal Probity of Life and Manners; *Peace*, an Amicable and Charitable Disposition; and *Joy in the Holy Ghost*, an Inward and Devout Disposition, that made Men rejoice in all their Afflictions and Sufferings.

He adds, *that he, who in these things served Christ, was acceptable to God, and approved of men*: Which plainly shews, that these are the Things that did recommend a Man to God, whatever his Opinions as to other Matters might be. St. Paul carries the Matter further, and asserts, That in contrary Practices, tho' one was certainly in the Right, and the other in the Wrong, yet both might be Offering up an acceptable Piece of Service to God. *One man believed he might eat all things*: Another was so careful of eating Nothing that was Unclean, that he did

eat only herbs. One man esteemed one day more than another; their New Moons and Festivities: Another esteemed every day alike. The one had a true Freedom of Mind; whereas the other was yet entangled with Superstition and Scrupulosity. Yet if both these did, with a sincere Mind, follow what he thought was most acceptable to God, with a devout Mind, *he did it to the Lord.* He that regarded a day religiously, believing he was still bound by the *Mosaical* Precepts, regarded it to the Lord: And he that thought that Distinction of Days was now at an end, in that Freedom of Spirit to which the Gospel had brought him; did in that likewise serve God. He that regarded not the Day, to the Lord he did not regard it. He that did eat freely of all that was set before him, did rejoice in the Liberty with which Christ had made him free; and blessed God for all his Gifts: Whereas he that took care to eat none of the Forbidden Meats, did it out of the Obedience that he thought he owed the Law of *Moses*, that was given by God; and blessed God for that Dispensation.

To these General Positions, *St. Paul* adds Two Rules, by which all Men ought to govern themselves: The One is, *Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.* Every Man ought to bring himself to clear and distinct Notions and Principles, and

to be well assured of these: *Hast thou Faith, or a Persuasion, have it to thy self before God*: So that a Man may be able to appeal to God, that he is endeavouring to walk before him, and to serve him in Singleness of Heart, free from a distracting Scrupulosity, or a diversity of acting; not condemning by one sort of Behaviour, that which he alloweth by another. The Second Rule is, That Men do not judge others, who must stand or fall to their own Master. We ought not to judge our brother, or set him at nought; for we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, and then every one of us shall give an account of himself to God. This is brought further more specially to Two Sorts of Persons: The One were the Men of Clearer, the other, the Men of Narrower Thoughts. The former may be apt to despise the other; as they on their part may be apt to censure these as Libertines: In opposition to which, a Charge is given against both. There is a further Caution enjoined, That no Man should lay a Stumbling-Block in the way of another, by which he might be any way brought to a Snare, or to stumble; that is, in Things in which Men are fully at Liberty, to do, or not, as they please, they are to do nothing that may draw another to act against his Conscience: Nor are they to grieve another, by any thing that they may do,

or not do; for in that Case, they, by so doing, *walked not charitably*. The Concluding Rule is, *Let us therefore follow after the things that make for peace; and things, wherewith one may edifie another*. These are lasting Rules, which may easily be applied to all the Questions that may in any Age be raised in the Church. For tho' those Controversies were soon at an end, by the Destruction of *Jerusalem*; with which an end was put to that Regard that was till then had for the *Mosaical* Precepts; yet they are lasting Decisions, that, if duly attended to, would govern us happily with relation to all Things of a like, and much more to Things of an inferior Nature: For if these were the Maxims by which the Christians of those days were to govern themselves, in Matters of such great Moment; certainly the Inference will be clear, that they ought to be applied to all Matters of a Lower Order, or Nature. All this Introduction, being the Stating the Rules that *St. Paul* sets in this Matter, is no Digression from the Text, nor from my present Purpose.

15 v.  
19 v.

In the Text we have,

- I. The Duties here pressed.
- II. The Motives, by which they are pressed.

τὸ αὐτὸ, &  
τὸ ἐν φρεσίν  
ἑστῆς.

The Duties are, *1st*, To bring themselves to an Agreement in their Minds; to be *like minded*, and *to be of one mind*; to teach the same Doctrine, and perfectly to think the same Things.

*2dly*, Because this cannot always be done, it not being always in a Man's own power to alter his Thoughts, or to carry them over to other Men's Thoughts; yet they should have the *same Love*, which should not be broken or interrupted by that Diversity of Opinion; and be as a Body of Men all acted by One Common Soul.

These are the Duties here recommended. The Motives to them are,

*1st*, If there is any Consolation, or Exhortation in *Christ*, or in the Christian Religion; if either the Authority of its Precepts, or the Happy Offers made to us in it, have that Force, which they ought to have on our Minds.

*2dly*, If there is any Comfort of Love; that is, Either if we have a just Sense of those Joys to which the Love of God gives us a Right; or, if we relish the true Comfort, and happy Calm, that Love and Charity bring with it.

*3dly*, If any Fellowship of the Spirit. If either then they had a Share in those Extraordinary Gifts that flowed from *one Spirit*; or if we still are under the Ordinary Influences of the Divine Spirit.

*4thly*,

4thly, If any Bowels and Mercies. If they had Common Humanity, Pity, and Compassion; and a Regard either to the Body to which they belonged, or to one another.

The Fifth is, From the Regard they had to St. Paul in his Sufferings, if they would give him a Compleat Joy, by their happy Agreement, and mutual Love.

When all these Things are duly Considered, then we shall see thro' the whole Scope, and all the Parts of the Text.

The First Duty pressed, is, That they would bring themselves to an Agreement, and to be of the *same Mind*. The Church is the *Body of Christ*, and that must be *one*, as *Christ the head is one*. We are called to *one body*, to be a United Society. This will be both our Strength, and our Glory. This will make us build up, and fortifie one another; and *provoke one another to love, and to good words*: Which is a Consequence on our holding fast the *profession of our Faith*: And lest all this should be neglected, or interrupted, therefore a special Caution is added, That we should not *forsake the assembling of our selves together*. It is certain, our Obligation to Unity is great, and admits but of One Exception: We ought to maintain this Unity with the Body in which we are, unless they

3. Col 15.

10. Heb.  
23, 24,  
25. v.

have:

have so departed from the Rules Christ has given, that we cannot continue in it without Sin. If any Thing is made such a Part of Worship and Doctrine, which we think so unlawful, that we cannot join with the Body, without doing that which we think a Sin; we cannot be bound to go into it, or to act against our Consciences: Which is the Sense that we have of the Laws of God, and of our Duty arising out of them. But either our Obligation to maintain Unity is only Discretionary, that is, none at all; or it does bind us to do every Thing that is necessary to maintain it, that does not appear to us to be Sinful: And therefore, in such a Case, every Man ought to deal plainly with himself; and ask himself, as in the presence of that God who knows all Things, and that will judge him for that, as well as for every other Thing; Whether he withdraws from the Unity, because he is convinced he should sin if he adhered to it, or if he does it out of any other Principle; being led to it by Education, Custom, or any other Consideration? If his Conscience testifies to him, that he walks sincerely; he may depend upon it, that either his Error, if it should prove to be one, shall be forgiven him; or that he shall be better enlightened, and delivered out of the Error, and the Snare he is then in. *St. Paul* was a  
Blaspheme

Blasphemer and a Persecutor, yet he obtained Mercy; for he was led by an Honest, tho' a Blind Zeal; without Knowledge, as well as without Charity. It is impossible that a good Mind, which zealously pursues what seems to be most acceptable to God, should be left to perish in Error. No Man can reflect on the Obligation to Unity, we being called into One Body; and Christ having prayed so earnestly to his Father, that his Followers might *be one*, and be *kept and made perfect in one*; and not see, that 17. Joli. nothing less than our Duty to God, in not Sinning against him, can justify our Withdrawing our selves from the Body where we are. It is true, a Man's Thoughts are not so directly in his own Power, that he can change or alter them at Pleasure: But first he must see that his Thoughts do really determine him; and that it is not a Compliance with former Practices, Interests, or Passions, that guides him; but that he is really possessed with Apprehensions, from which he cannot yet free himself, that such Things required of him, to maintain the Unity, are Sins. He must see that he judges them to be such, not because he has been told it, or has heard it often said; but that he sees such Reasons in the Scriptures, or in the Nature of Things, which he cannot answer to himself, that make him conclude, those enjoined Practices are Unlawful. Upon all this, a Man ought:

ought to Examine himself often, and solemnly, as in the presence of God.

In the next place, he ought to look well into those Prejudices and Reasons that have formerly entangled him. For Instance, he has perhaps thought, that since in the Church of *Rome* they kneel and adore the *Host* after Consecration, our Kneeling in Receiving the Sacrament, is a Compliance with that Idolatrous Practice. Now if we did not kneel, till after the Consecration, this would have some Force in it: But since we kneel all thro' the whole Action, before as well as after the Consecration, and are all the while in Prayer to God, and by consequence in the Posture of Prayer, according to the First and Best Ages, that always received the Sacrament in the Posture of Prayer; it is plain, that Kneeling, among us, does not import any Adoration of the Elements; against which, both Church and State, have made a most Express and Full Declaration. Thus this Prejudice, with which perhaps many have been carried away, when Examined, will soon be found to have no force in it at all. That against the Cross in Baptism, is as weak; That because Papists use the Cross as a Sort of a Charm, and fancy there is a Divine Virtue accompanying it; therefore we, by using it, comply with that Superstition, and fortifie it.

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belong. *But if ye have bitter Envyng (the Word is Zeal) and Strife in your Hearts, Glory not, and Lie not against the Truth;* such Men are apt to Value themselves upon their Zeal, tho their own Consciences tell them they have no Concern for the Truth, or for gaining any to it. There may be a Policy, and much Dexterity and Skill in Managing this so, that there may be a Wisdom in it: but *that Wisdom descendeth not from above, but is Earthly, Sensual and Devilish;* it carries those three Characters of its Original; the Devil, the World, and the Flesh, which we Renounce in our Baptism: The Consequences of these Arts follow next. *For where Envyng (Zeal) and Strife is, there is Confusion and every Evil Work:* Much Noise and Vehemence, Tumults and Disorders accompany this Zeal. Such Men give themselves, and their Partners, in fury, those Liberties, or are apt to make such Excuses for them, that every Evil Work, especially those that may serve to Advance their Cause, will be Con- nived at, if not Encouraged. But now let us Consider the Beautiful Reverse of all this, in the Characters given of True and Heavenly Wisdom: *The Wisdom that is from Above, is first Pure.* It Begins first at the Purifying a Man's Heart and his Life, without which, all Pretences to Religion are Insignificant and Hypocritical things, it is then

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*Peaceable,*

*Peaceable, Gentle, and Easy to be Entreated; full of Mercy and good Fruits, without Partiality, and without Hypocrisy; and the Fruit of Righteousness is Sown in Peace, of them that make Peace.* These are Characters, that how little soever they abound in the World, yet are the certain Indications of a Mind seasoned with Divine Wisdom.

This is the 2d Branch of the Duty here recommended; it looks so Fair, that it may seem a Superfluous thing to use great Motives, and any Vehemence of Expression, to Perswade us to the Practice of it, either in the one, or in the other Branch of it; yet since St. Paul enforces it with so many Words, of such great Weight, it may be of good use to Consider the Importance of every one of these Motives here urged.

The 1st is, *If there be any Consolation in Christ*, the Word may signify either *Exhortation*, or *Consolation*; in both senses it Furnishes a strong Argument. If there is any Exhortation in Christ? If his Doctrine has that Credit or Authority over us, that we submit to his Yoke, then we must Consider how Indispensably he has Obliged us to these Duties. When he Charges us to Learn of him, he proposes himself to us as our Pattern, in that he was *meeke and Lowly in Heart*. If our Minds were thus Temper'd, it would be Easy to us, both to Bear,  
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and to Forbear: When He was near the End of his Ministry on Earth, he Delivered this as *the new Commandment*, that he gave his Disciples, and in another Place he calls it *his Commandment*, as being *his* in an especial manner; and that was, that his Disciples should Love one another, as he had Loved them; and he made this, the Distinguishing Mark by which they should be known; *if they had Love one to another.* There is such a Peculiar Stile in these Words, and in those Charges, that if we have any regard to his Authority, that laid them on his Followers, we shall Express it, in bringing our selves *to be of the same Mind, and to have the same Love one to another.* If also we have any sense of the *great and strong Consolation* that we have in Christ, the Pardon of Sin, and the Hope of Glory, and Consider that all the return he Asks of us, is, that *we Love one another, as he Loved us*, these Duties will be much minded by us. Upon the Sense of the Ten Thousand Talents that are forgiven us, it is a small return to forgive so Poor a Matter, as ~~two~~ *the* Hundred Pence, the little Injuries that may be done us. We are all to be Eternally together in a Blessed Society above, where there is an Everlasting and Uninterrupted Harmony of Love and Peace, Purchased for us by him, who came *to make Peace*, as he is the *Prince of Peace*; so *Peace on*

*Earth* was a part of the Angelick Hymn Sung at his Birth: He also left *his Peace* to his Church, when he was near Leaving this World. If these things afford us any real joy, and if they do not, what can? Then in return to such mighty Blessings, and to so Solemn a Charge, we shall Study to be *like minded*, and to have the *same Love*, as having one common Soul, or as being *one Body*, under the Influence of one common *Head*.

The 2d Motive is, *If there is any Comfort of Love*, which may either signify, if we Feel the Comfort of being Beloved of God, or if we Feel the Comfort and Happiness of a Loving Temper, and of a Charitable disposition; in both Senses this affords very Perswading Considerations to these Duties. A Man who has been under just and Deep Apprehensions of the Guilt of Sin, and of the Terrors of God; who Considers the Wrath of God, as the most insupportable of all things, and who sees how he has Provoked and deserved it; a Man that has felt the pressure of these Sharp Thoughts on his Mind, when those Clear up, and are Succeeded by that joy, which a just assurance of the Love of God must needs raise, must be so overcome under the sense of such undeserved goodness, that in a Rapture of Thanksgiving, he will say with the Psalmist, *Thou art my Lord, my goodness Extendeth*

not to thee: But to the Saints that are in the Earth, and to the Excellent, in whom is all my Delight. He sees that God is Love, and this Transforms him into that Divine Nature: He is Love, he dwells in Love, for he dwells in God, and God dwells in him: <sup>1 J. 4. 4.</sup> That Love constrains him to forbear, and to forgive: <sup>1 J. 4. 19.</sup> He walks in Love as God has Loved him: And since our Saviour has given us a Warrant to lay claim to that Love and to forgiveness; the first Act of that Love, as we forgive others, and has Barred our Access to it; but as we do frame our Hearts to forgive them, he Studies to be perfect <sup>1 J. 4. 19.</sup> in this as his Heavenly Father is Perfect. The second <sup>3 J. 13.</sup> sense of these Words, is also a very forcible Perswasion to Love: A Man that has felt the true Happiness, and Inward Solace, that he Lives in when his Soul is possessed with Love, and has at any time felt what it is to be under the Power of Wrath, and Strife of bitter Zeal, and of the Partialities, the Jealousies, and Animosities of a Party, feels a very strong Conviction within himself, that the one is of God, and leads to God; and that the other is not so, he is Calm and Gentle, full of Internal and Universal Love, fitted for Devotion, and for every good Work. While he is under the Power of Love he has a Serenity in his Mind, that shines out in a Clearness of Countenance and Behaviour: His words

Words are Soft, because his Thoughts are Quiet ; and there is a winning Charm in his whole Deportment. He feels he is made perfect, by being in this State of Enlarged and Unbounded Goodness to all Mankind, more particularly to all Christians: He wishes well to all Men: He thinks as well as he can of all Men: He speaks well of all Men, and wishes it were in his power to do much good, and he does to all Men on all Occasions, all the good he can. He feels the Happiness of this State to be so like Heaven, and such an approach to it, that he Studies to maintain and encrease this Temper within himself all he can. He reflects on the Sourness of Thought, the Uneasiness of Mind, the Working of Projects, the fear of Disappointments, the Sharpness of Language, the Bitterness of Censure, and the swellings of Envy and Hatred, that Haunt the Men of Faction, that first Disquiet their own Minds, and then render them as uneasy to all others as they are to themselves. The seeing this in others, and the remembering what every one has felt, who has let his Mind at any time ferment that way ; make the Solaces of Love, so much the more sensible, as they rescue him from so black a State, that has too many of the Characters of the Habitations of Darkness and Misery in it, and Translates him into Regions of Light and Love.

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The 3<sup>d</sup> Motive is, *If there is any followiship of the Spirit*, this may either relate to those Extraordinary Gifts that were necessary in the beginnings of Christianity, for giving Authority to a new Doctrine; or it may relate to the more lasting Assistances of the Divine Spirit, which belong so particularly to this new Dispensation. All these both Ordinary and Extraordinary flowing from one Spirit, it was like to bring strange Imputations on Men so qualified, if it had appeared that they were acted with the same bitter Spirit that was in the World. Their Enemies would probably Disparage all their Pretensions to Inspiration, or Spiritual Gifts, if they saw not under these, Union and Love prevailing among them. For tho' their Inspiration was only such a Conduct, that in their Doctrine they were held to deliver the Truth, as they had received it of the Lord; and the Miracles they Wrought were only done to Attest and Confirm that Doctrine, after all which, they Acted as Free and Rational Agents, not being under such an Immediate Conduct, as to restrain their Liberty, so that they were Capable of doing Amis, tho' not of Preaching another Gospel. Therefore any ill Behaviour of theirs, did not destroy their Authority, yet certainly it derogated much from it, so that in order to the shewing the World, that they were all Partakers of one, and the self same Spirit,

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it was highly necessary for them to maintain Unity and Love. And since in succeeding Ages, in which it was not necessary that those Gifts should be continued in the Church, yet all Christians have a Right to hope for a Measure of God's Holy Spirit, to Assist and Direct them in all things; and this Spirit is one, and the Character of this Spirit is Love, as the appearance he once made was in the Form of a Dove, setting forth the Mildness and Gentleness of those, who are Acted and Conducted by it, there is no way to Demonstrate to the World so certainly, that we are led by this Spirit as by our being conformable to him; to whom *the Father gave not the Spirit by Measure.* It will appear that we have our Measure of this Spirit, if we do bring forth the Fruits of the Spirit, which are *Love, Joy, Peace, long Suffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness, and Temperance:* Whereas on the other Hand, if there is among us *Envyng or Zeal, Strife and Divisions, are We not Carnal, and Walk as Men?* By this therefore it must appear that we are filled with the Spirit, when we are *like minded one towards another according to Christ Jesus;* Or in Imitation of him: *That so we may with one Mind, and one Mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

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They use the Cross before Baptism, as an Exorcisme to drive away the Evil Spirit; and this supposes a Divine Power accompanying a Humane Institution, which makes it to be of the Nature of a Sacrament; whereas we use it after Baptism, not as having any Vertue tied to it, but meerly as a Declaration of the Faith we Profess; so that it is only a way of speaking, by a gesture or Action, and has nothing ascribed to it that is in any sort Sacramental; and since the Primitive Christians Gloried so much in the use of the Cross, it is hard to see what Evil there should be, in the continuing the use of it in the first Initiation to Christianity. Thus if Men could be brought to examine their Prejudices with due attention, they might be more easily freed from them, than when they suffer themselves to be possessed too easily by them, especially if they would give their minds this innocent Bias, if it may be so called, to wish that they could join in Communion with the Church. Certainly there is a just force in those general Considerations of our Obligations to Unity, both as it Promotes, as it Fortifies the whole Designe of Religion, and recommends it to all the World, to dispose us so far towards it, as to make us wish we could, with a good Conscience, become Members of it. If this were gained, that would have a very happy In-

fluence on us, to make us see things truer, and to judge better of them.

To this all People ought to add as diligent an Enquiry into the whole Matter, in as Dispassionate a manner as they are capable of making: And that by Reading and Weighing the many plain Books of Instruction that are Written on these Subjects, and by going to Persons who understand the Controversy well, and laying their Objections and Doubtings before them, hearing what they say upon it, laying that up in their Memories, and reflecting seriously upon it when they Commune with their own Hearts; and above all, joining earnest Prayers with it to God, for Light and Direction, that the Eyes of their Understanding may be opened, and enlightened, to discern and follow the Truth. If a Man Practices these things honestly, so that his Conscience tells him, he is acting a sincere part in it, then he is safe: For he has a gracious God, who will not suffer him to Perish in or for that Error, in which he does not persist with a Vicious and Depraved, a Contentious and Self-conceited Mind.

So far I have considered the first Duty of being *like minded* and of *one mind*. The Second Duty is, that we should have, as it were, the *same Soul*, and the *same Love*. This is more in a Man's own Power. Our Understandings

Understandings are not so entirely at our Disposal : For they are more Stubborn ; we must think of things according as they appear to us: So that we are not at all times the Masters of our Thoughts, we cannot lay them down or alter them at pleasure ; but our Wills and Affections are more Flexible and more at Command. When we consider Humane Nature, how weak it is, and how small a Progress it can make ; if it is unhappily ill directed at first setting out, how few are capable of thinking severely, and of Separating Matters from some Colours that are put on them, we shall from hence see great cause to Pity those, who are mistaken, and to bear with them: And it will be a Noble Victory, well becoming a Christian, if we can Conquer them with a Spirit of Love: This is the doing a great act of Charity. The more Dangerous the Errour is, the Charity is the greater.

We ought to look well to our own Thought of those who are under mistakes; for these will have a great Influence on our Behaviour towards them ; if we despise them too much, we shall not be able to Work our selves up to that tender regard that we ought to bear them; nor shall we think them Worthy of our Pains: As on the other hand, this will certainly set them at a greater distance from us. Since this will make us appear Proud

and Insolent, which will harden them in their Prejudices; we must carry our selves towards them, as those who have a fellow-feeling of the Infirmities of Humane Nature, and that can make just allowances for it.

We must make our Judgments of People, chiefly by what they are in the Main. When we see in them clear Characters of Sincerity and Probity, we ought to judge well of them: And to think the better, at least the less Severely of their Mistakes, for the good that we Discern in them, and not think the Worse of that which is good in them, because of the Mixture of some Errors with it. As if because of that, it were not Sincere, but Hypocritical. This being often one of the unhappy effects of Parties. We ought to raise the Value of what is good in all Men, and Lessen the Value of what is Mistaken in them, as much as is reasonable, that we may see which is the most Valuable, and ought to Preponderate in our Thoughts, for this will dispose us to apply our selves to the instructing of them, with the more Care and Affection.

We ought likewise to understand well the strength of those Opinions that we deal with, and know the utmost Force of the Arguments that may be brought for them; for if we make an unfair Representation of them, this will make us be suspected, either as

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not knowing the Matter thoroughly, or as not dealing honestly in it: But when we let People see that we have considered their Arguments well, and State them with all the Strength that can be put in them, then we, by that, prepare them to have a due regard to all that we may say in a Point, which they perceive we understand a right, and in which we give them no reason to think that we intend to impose on them. There is an appearance of fair dealing; that is sometimes so sensible, that by it People are well prepared to think well of every thing that is said to them, when it is introduced with that Advantage.

We ought not to be Irritated or grow uneasy, if the things that we propose, have not an immediate Effect: We must give them time to Work, and bear long with weak Minds; in imitation of our Blessed Saviour:

We must not be too easy to believe ill of those who differ from us: Nor be too rash in reporting it to others. There is too much Lying in one part, and too much Credulity in another part of Mankind, as to all those matters: And in this all sides are too Visibly faulty. When things are reported, that those concerned know to be false, it Heightens their other Prejudices; and makes them look on it as a part of the Cross of Christ, that they are Evil spoken.

spoken of *falsely* for that, in which they may think they are serving him, and so they will reckon it is for *his names sake*: And if they have devout Minds, this will endear their Opinions the more to them: When they see such a Contradiction to St. Paul's Character of Charity, *that it thinketh no Evil but believeth all things*, they will look on a readines to believe or report things to their Prejudice, *as rather a rejoicing in Iniquity, and not a rejoicing in the Truth.*

We must in our whole Deportment shew, that we love those who differ from us; that we wish them no Harm, and do not desire, or Delight in any thing that tends to their Hurt or Ruine: We must not seem to seek occasions against them, to envy them, the Quiet they live in, or to desire to have them in our Power and at Mercy. We must not think them unworthy of our care, because the Law has put them out of our reach, so that we cannot subdue them.

*Ex. l. 34.*  
4.

This comes too near the Character of those Shepherds *that did feed themselves but did not feed the flock: That did Eat the fat and Cloath themselves with Wool, and killed them that were fed; but did not feed the Flock,* of whom the following words may afford much matter for Meditation. *The diseased have ye not Strengthened; neither have ye healed that which was Sick; neither have ye bound up that which was broken; neither have ye brought a-*  
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gain that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost, but with force and cruelty have ye ruled them. The reverse of which, is the Character given by St. Paul of the Servant of the Lord, that he must not *Strive* (Quarrel or Fight) but be Gentle to all Men, apt to teach, Patient, in Meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, if peradventure God will give them Repentance to the acknowledging of Truth: and that they may Recover themselves out of the Snare of the Devil, who are taken Captive by him at his will. As these are the best Characters, so they are the likeliest to Prevail, and to Conquer all; and a Conquest gained by Love is worth our Pains, and will answer them; whereas the Victories, got by Force, or other meaner Methods, are little to be gloried in, and as little to be depended on.

But above all other things, if we intend the Good and Edification of those whom we seek to reclaim by our Labours, we must Study by an exact and exemplary Deportment to give them such an Impression of us, that they may see we are in earnest; promoting the Honour of God, and the Good of Mankind. A lively Zeal and good Morals look well, when joyned together: The goodness of the One, will excuse even the excesses of the Other, at least to a good Degree; whereas a hot Temper and a flaming Zeal, when put on  
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to Hide, or to Compensate for some great Irregularities, will have no good Effect. Such Men will only pass for Incendiaries, who have no concern  
 1 Tim. 4. 12. for other Men's Souls, when they shew so little for their own. A faithful Teacher that would Command and Teach with all Authority, must be an Example to the Believers, in Word, in Conversation, in Charity, in Spirit, in Faith and in Purity. He must fly  
 2 Tim. 2. 23. youthful Lusts, and follow Righteousness, Faith, Charity, and Peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure Heart: And avoid foolish and unlearned Questions, knowing that they render Strife.

There is a Bitter Zeal as well as a Sincere and Charitable one; *Josephus* tells us what a Firey and Savage Spirit acted in the Zealots among the Jews at this very time; some Tincture of that appeared, even among the Converted Jews, chiefly those of the Judaising Sect, which is set forth with much Brightness, and in a lively opposition by *St. James*.  
 3 Tim. 29  
 to the end  
 Those Men of Zeal pretended to Wisdom, therefore he Addresses himself to them: *Who is a Wise Man, and endued with Knowledge amongst you, let him shew out of a good Conversation, his works with Meekness of Wisdom.* This is the first and chief Evidence by which we must Hope to Convince the World: Bitter Zealots will decline this, and take to another Method, to whom the next Words belong:

Ζῆλον τιμωρον.

The 4th Motive is, *If there are any Bowels and Mercies*; if we have common Humanity; if we do either consider the Concerns of the Publick, that suffer by our Divisions; or if we apprehend rightly the Danger that they are in who are mis-led, and are sensible of the Inconvenience that may accrue to our selves by the share that we may come to have in the Mischief that arises from them; Common Humanity will raise Tender Passions upon such a View. We see how much the great Interest of our Religion, our Church and Nation, suffer by these Contentions. Those of the Church of *Rome* understand their own Interest well, and they find their Account in promoting these Contentions. They have had a very Political Management, with relation to them, from the first beginnings of them: They have cast us into many Convulsions, both into the *Fire*, and into the *Water*, making us too hot where we should be cooler, and cold where we should be warm. Nothing but our Divisions among our selves, has stopt the entire Reduction of the Nation from Popery, and kept all things among us in such a low and feeble state: This has retarded the carrying on the Reformation to those things which are yet wanting; while we have been watching one another, and so jealous of one another, that the

M. best:

best Designs have lien neglected, while we have been more animated with the Heat of Parties, than with a true Zeal for those great Ends for which Christ both died and rose again. And now, once more, God has raised the Glory of the Nation beyond even our Hopes; so that all the World looks to our Glorious Queen, and to this Nation, for Peace and Liberty. Nothing is so like, to retard, or even to defeat these Bright Appearances, of a Happiness that may prove as universal as lasting, as our fierce Contentions among our selves: Where are our Bowels and Mercies to our own Church and Countrey? and indeed to all the Churches and Nations round about us? if these cannot prevail on us to *keep the Unity of the Spirit, in the Bond of Peace*, and, above all things, to *put on Charity, which is the Bond of Perfection*? If we have tender compassion to our Neighbours and Brethren, we shall avoid every thing that may either scandalize, grieve, or tempt them. We will make what Tryals we can upon our selves, to bring our selves to be of One Mind with the Body to which we belong, and at least to study to *love one another with a pure heart, fervently*: By this we may hope both to gain and to build up one another in our most Holy Faith. Nor can these Dissentions, with this Alienation of Mind that rises out of them,

continue

continue and grow among us, without our being all in danger by them; not only by that Fret of Thought, and Vexation of Spirit that they may be apt to raise in our Minds, but by the Fatal Effects these may have: For if we go on *biting and devouring one another*, we may in conclusion be *consumed one of another*. The Factions and Animosities that were raised among the *Jews* in the time that these Epistles were writ, were not only Symptoms of a very ill State, but the Real Procurers, in a great measure, of all that Misery and Desolation that came upon them. We are now in such a state, that humanly speaking, nothing can hurt us, but those Factions and Heats that are among us; but no State can be happy and fixed where Incendiaries are at work, and where Mens Minds are fatally prepared for the ill Designs their Enemies may have upon them. If then we have any Tenderness and Bowels for our Church and Nation, for our selves, as well as for others, *let us speak the same thing, that there be no Divisions among us, but that we may be perfectly joined together in the same Mind, and in the same Judgment.*

5 Gal. 13.

1 Cor. 10.

The last Motive is taken from the Joy that this would give St. Paul; and it is made a part of the Injunction, *Fulfil ye my Joy*. The Churches expressed a just regard to St. Paul in his Sufferings;

4. Phil. 14, those of *Philippi* had sent a Supply to him by *Epa-*  
 10 18. *phroditus* : But tho' he received this with due ac-  
 knowledgment, yet the chief, and the most valu-  
 able Expression of their Respect to him, was, *when*  
 4. Phil. 27. *their Conversation was such as became the Gospel of*  
*Christ, and that they stood stedfast in one Spirit, with*  
*one Mind.* This was that which could only give a  
 Mind like our Apostles, a full and compleat Joy :  
 For what pleasure soever Angry and Ill-natur'd  
 Men may have in the Progress of Contention, and  
 in their Success in it, yet to a Good Mind even  
 these Successes are like Victories in a Civil War,  
 where the Whole suffers in the Losses of both sides.  
 The loss of Charity, and the loss of Souls, are such  
 sensible things to every Faithful Pastor, that studies  
 to follow the Example *St. Paul* hath set us, that  
 none of the Triumphs of a Party can balance the  
 Grief which he must feel, who looks full of Pity  
 and Sorrow on all those Brawlings and Quarrels.  
 If the Angels in Heaven rejoice at the Conversion  
 of one Sinner that repenteth, how much greater  
 would their Joy be in such Numbers as are now  
 straying like *Sheep without a Shepherd*, or that are  
 become as *Wolves and Beasts of Prey*, destroying one  
 another, in their being brought into one Fold, and  
 made to love one another? These Breaches threaten  
 Ruin, and open a Way to our Enemies to break  
 in

in upon us: They give Sad Thoughts to those who mourn over them, and have many Dreadful Apprehensions of the Ill Effects that they draw after them: These give such Good Souls Melancholy Thoughts, and Sorrowful Days and Nights, when they find that though they are for Peace, yet if they do but speak of it, those who hate it make ready 120. Pf. 7. for War. These things give Afflicting Thoughts to the Sons of Peace, and make them often in their Secret Mourning say, *O that I had wings like a Dove,* 55 Pf. 6. 8. *then would I fly away and be at rest, I would hasten my Escape from the Windy Storm and Tempest.* They study to maintain that Quiet in their own Minds, of which they see very little round about them in the World; for they see *Violence and Strife in the City.* It gives some relief to hope there is a time coming on, and perhaps near at hand, according to what the most Learned Enquirers into those Matters do believe, in which our most Holy Faith will subdue the whole World, and Universal Love will prevail over all those Heats that have so long distracted *Christendom*; not by any one Party's conquering the rest, but by a Great and General Effusion of a Spirit of Holiness, Love and Peace; by which all, except the Obstinate Corrupters of this Holy Religion, shall submit to its Yoke, and be animated by the same Mind that was in Christ Jesus.

Jesus. And it must be acknowledged, that the Signs of the Times, and the present Situation of Affairs, look very favourably to that Opinion. But if we shall never see such Happy Days on Earth, we know there is Harmony, and Union, Peace and Love in the *Jerusalem* that is above; therefore we ought to be daily looking thither, hastening for the Coming of the Lord Jesus; saying often within our selves, *Come Lord Jesus, even so, come quickly.*

**F I N I S.**

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